ElizabethanDrama.org
presents
the Annotated Popular Edition of

THE VIRGIN-MARTYR

by Thomas Dekker
and Philip Massinger
First Published 1622

Featuring complete and easy-to-read annotations.

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The Virgin-Martyr
By Thomas Dekker
and Philip Massinger
First Published 1622.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

_Dioclesian_, Emperor of Rome.
_Artemia_, daughter to Dioclesian.
_Maximinus_, Emperor of Rome.

_Sapritius_, Governor of Caesarea.
_Antoninus_, son to Sapritius.
_Sempronius_, captain of Sapritius' guards.
_Macrinus_, friend to Antoninus.

_Theophilus_, a zealous persecutor of the Christians.
_Calista_, daughter to Theophilus.
_Christeta_, daughter to Theophilus.
_Harpax_, an evil spirit, following Theophilus in the shape of a Secretary.
_Julianus_, servant of Theophilus.
_Geta_, servant of Theophilus.

_Dorothea_, the Virgin-Martyr.
_Angelo_, a good spirit, serving Dorothea in the habit of a Page.
_Hircius_, a whoremaster, servant of Dorothea.
_Spungius_, a drunkard, servant of Dorothea.

_King of Pontus._
_King of Epire._
_King of Macedon._

_Priest_ of Jupiter.
_British slave._

Officers and Executioners.

SCENE: Caesarea in Palestine.

INTRODUCTION to the PLAY

_The Virgin Martyr_ was a popular play, no doubt in part thanks to its bipolar tonality; on the one hand, the play includes, in its story of an early Christian martyr, some of the most beautiful and exquisite verse in the entire canon; on the other hand, the prose dialogues between the two base servants, Hircius and Spungius, are among the most vulgar of the era. Dekker is considered responsible for _The Virgin Martyr's_ rudest sections, while the play's most affecting scenes are Massinger's.

OUR PLAY'S SOURCE

The text of the play is taken from Arthur Symon's edition of the plays of _Philip Massinger_, cited in the footnotes below at #4, but with some of the 1622 quarto's original spellings and word choices restored.

NOTES on the ANNOTATIONS

Mention of Gifford and Symons in the annotations refers to the notes provided by these editors in their respective editions of our play, each cited fully below.

The most commonly cited sources are listed in the footnotes immediately below. The complete list of footnotes appears at the end of this play.

The footnotes in the annotations correspond as follows:
1. _Oxford English Dictionary_ (OED) online.
Historical Background to The Virgin Martyr.

The first two centuries A.D. had been witness to the great Roman Peace, or *Pax Romana*, a long period of growth, success and consolidation of the Roman Empire. The third century, however, introduced five decades (A.D. 235-284) of civil wars and upheavals. Some measure of stability finally returned to the empire in the form of *Diocletian* (A.D. 245-313), emperor 284-305. Diocletian, a formidable soldier of humble background, was acclaimed emperor by his troops in A.D. 284 at the death of the current emperor Numerianus.

With the empire overwhelmed by invasions of barbarians and uprisings from seemingly all corners, Diocletian erected an unprecedented tetrarchy to rule the empire; he selected *Maximian* to be co-Augustus (the senior title) with him first in A.D. 286, and later appointed two "junior" rulers, *Constantius Chlorus* and *Galerius Maximianus*, titled "Caesars", in 292. Each of the four were responsible for ruling different parts of the empire. Diocletian claiming the wealthy eastern portion for himself, ruling from Nicomedia, located in what now is north-western Turkey.

Diocletian has come down in history most famous for what the *Catholic Encyclopedia* called the “most terrible of all of the ten persecutions of the early Church”.6 Interestingly, the church flourished during the early part of his reign, but under the influence of Galerius, Diocletian began in A.D. 303 a general suppression of the newish religion. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* is worth quoting here:

"An edict was issued 'to tear down the churches to the foundations and to destroy the Sacred Scriptures by fire'...Three further edicts (303-304) marked successive stages in the severity of the persecution: the first ordering that the bishops, presbyters, and deacons should be imprisoned; the second that they should be tortured and compelled by every means to sacrifice; the third including the laity as well as the clergy. The atrocious cruelty with which these edicts were enforced, and the vast numbers of those who suffered for the Faith are attested by Eusebius and the Acts of the Martyrs. We read even of the massacre of the whole population of a town because they declared themselves Christians."

Diocletian continued his string of unique actions by actually retiring from the tetrarchy in 305, living out his remaining years in peace at his newly-built palace in what is now Split, Croatia, spending his time, we have been told, growing cabbages.

Outside St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice stands a porphyry statue of medium height, portraying the four tetrarchs in a show of unity.

Authorship.

All scenes involving Hircius and Spungius are attributed to Dekker (II.i, II.iii, III.iii, IV.ii); Dekker is generally also given credit for the short scenes II.ii and iii, and V.i.

Massinger is unanimously assigned most of the rest of the play, specifically, Act I, then III.i and ii, IV.iii, and V.ii.

Act IV.i is a little dicier to analyze. Gifford assigned it to Massinger, but there is much stylistic evidence to suggest Dekker had at least a significant hand in this scene. Two key pieces of evidence point to Dekker's authorship of IV.i: these are discussed in the notes appearing at the end of our play.

Settings, Scene Breaks and Stage Directions.

The original quartos do not provide settings for the play; all this edition's indicated settings are adopted from Gifford.

The original quarto of The Virgin Martyr was divided into five Acts, but the Acts were not divided into Scenes; we have adopted the scene breaks employed by all the previous editors.

Finally, as is our normal practice, some stage directions have been added, and
some modified, for purposes of clarity. Most of these minor changes are adopted from Gifford.
ACT I.

SCENE I.

The Governor's Palace.

Enter Theophilus and Harpax.

1 Theophilus. Come to Caesarea to-night!

4 Harpax. Most true, sir.

6 Theophilus. The emperor in person!

8 Harpax. Do I live?

10 Theophilus. 'Tis wondrous strange! The marches of great princes, Like to the motions of prodigious meteors,

And were it possible so great an army, Though covered with the night, could be so near,

The governor cannot be so unfriended

Among the many that attend his person, But by some secret means, he should have notice Of Caesar's purpose; – in this then excuse me,

If I appear incredulous.

The Scene: the action of the play takes place in Caesarea, a city on the coast of what is now Israel; Caesarea was the capital of the Roman province of Judea.5

The Time of the Play: the persecution of Christians under Dioclesian began in A.D. 303; since Dioclesian resigned his emperorship in 305, the play must take between those years.

Entering Characters: Theophilus is the Roman officer in charge of persecuting Christians; Harpax is an evil spirit in human disguise, working as Theophilus' secretary.

1: The play opens with Theophilus learning from Harpax that the Roman Emperor Dioclesian himself is coming to visit Caesarea. This is a classic Massinger-style opening, in which we join a conversation already in progress.

9: marches = movements, usually applied to an army. princes = sovereigns.

= ominous or evil-omened, a typical attribute of comets (called meteors).

= Fame is "rumour" personified; because everyone pays close attention to the emperor's doings, Fame will let people everywhere know where he is going (hence Fame is a harbinger), which, in this case, would give the governor time to prepare for the emperor's visit.

= shrouded with, i.e. hidden by.

15-18: The governor...purpose = Theophilus can't believe that the emperor, accompanied by an entire army, could be so close to the city without somebody sending the news ahead to the governor, whom he expects would have spies (secret means) in the army or train of the emperor to do so.

18: Caesar = actually, Dioclesian's title was "Augustus", which he shared with his co-emperor, Maximian; Caesar was a junior title, given to two other men who also helped run the empire. Caesar is used throughout the play to refer to Dioclesian. See the Introductory Note to the play for details on Dioclesian's power-sharing.

purpose = the reason for Dioclesian's dropping by so unexpectedly.

19: Harpax has used his supernatural abilities to learn of, and
Harp. At your pleasure.

Theo. Yet, when I call to mind you never failed me
In things more difficult, but have discovered
Deeds that were done thousand leagues distant from me,
When neither woods, nor caves, nor secret vaults,
No, nor the Power they serve, could keep these Christians
Or from my reach or punishment, but thy magic
Still laid them open; I begin again
To be as confident as heretofore,
It is not possible thy powerful art
Should meet a check, or fail.

Enter the Priest of Jupiter, bearing the image of
Jupiter, and followed by Calista and Christeta.

Harp. Look on the Vestals.

The holy pledges that the gods have given you,
Your chaste, fair daughters. Were't not to upbraid
A service to a master not unthankful,
I could say these, in spite of your prevention,

Seduced by an imagined faith, not reason,

(Which is the strength of nature), quite forsaking
The gentile gods, had yielded up themselves
To this new-found religion. This I crossed,
Discovered their intents, taught you to use,
With gentle words and mild persuasions,
The power and the authority of a father,
Set off with cruel threats; and so reclaimed 'em:
And, whereas they with torment should have died,
− [Aside] (Hell's furies to me, had they undergone it!) −

then warn Theophilus of, the emperor's impending visit.
Though Theophilus has become used to his Secretary's
miraculous ability to sniff out Christians in the land, this
news is still too incredible to be believed.

= a league was about three miles.
= ie. the Christian God.
= either.
= ie. Harpax's supernatural abilities.
= king of the gods. = bust.¹

Entering characters: Calista and Christeta are Theophilus' daughters.

= Theophilus' daughters are priestesses, dedicated to
serving Jupiter.

39-41: Were't not…I could say = "except that it would make it seem like I am criticizing you, who have been grateful for my services, I might mention..." Notice that Harpax tells Theophilus anyway that which he says he shouldn't tell him.

41-49: Harpax reminds Theophilus how his daughters had converted to Christianity, but thanks to a combination of begging and the threat of torture from Theophilus, they reverted to the ancient religion. Harpax was responsible for discovering, and reporting to Theophilus, the girls' original conversion.

The earliest editions of our play printed this in line 41, but the emendation by earlier editors to these is a satisfactory one, providing a subject for had yielded up themselves in line 44 below.

42-43: reason…nature = the instinctive side of man, nature, is frequently opposed in the era's literature to reason, the rational side of man, which should control his innate and often self-destructive nature.

= ie. the gods of the Romans; gentile = pagan.
= thwarted.
= Harpax's euphemism for torture or the threat of torture.
= them.

51: in this aside, Harpax, as a representative of hell, expresses his secret relief that the girls did not choose to submit to torture for their beliefs long enough to die as martyrs - this would have been a black mark against him!
They are now votaries in great Jupiter's temple,
And, by his priest instructed, grown familiar
With all the mysteries, nay, the most abstruse ones,
Belonging to his deity.

Twas a benefit,
For which I ever owe you. − Hail, Jove's flamen!
Have these my daughters reconciled themselves,
Abandoning forever the Christian way,
To your opinion?

And are constant in it.
They teach their teachers with their depth of judgment,
And are with arguments able to convert
The enemies to our gods, and answer all
They can object against us.

My dear daughters!
We dare dispute against this new-sprung sect,
In private or in public.

My best lady,
Perséver in it.

And what we maintain,
We will seal with our bloods.

Brave resolution!
I e'en grow fat to see my labours prosper.

I young again. − To your devotions.
Do −
My prayers be present with you.

O my Harpax!
Thou engine of my wishes, thou that steel'st
My bloody resolutions, thou that arm'st
My eyes 'gainst womanish tears and soft compassion;
Instructing me, without a sigh, to look on
Babes torn by violence from their mothers' breasts
To feed the fire, and with them make one flame;
Old men, as beasts, in beasts' skins torn by dogs;
Virgins and matrons tire the executioners;
= ie. they have vowed to serve the god.
= Theophilus greets the priest (flamen) serving Jupiter;
Jove is an alternative name for the king of the gods;
note that dashes are used to indicate when a speaker is switching addressees.

= their enemies, ie. Christians.
= recently come into existence; since the play would have taken place sometime between A.D. 303 and 305,
Christianity could not really be said to be new-sprung,
though certainly it was in its infancy compared to the Roman religion.
= in the era's drama, persever (persevere) was normally stressed on the second syllable.
77: "and the position we defend".
= attest or ratify.¹

= a metaphor for a successful individual, who would have access to enough food to grow fat.
83: ie. "and I grow young again; - go back, then, to your prayers."

91-93: Theophilus implies that he might find it difficult to torture Christians as he does, were it not for Harpax's emotional support.
engine = means or instrument.²

= ie. a sigh of compassion or weakness. = ie. how to.

= like. = as reported in Foxe's Book of Martyrs (1563),
under the emperor Nero, Christians might be sewn into the skins of wild beasts, then torn to death by ravenous dogs.⁷
98: ie. "there are so many unmarried and married women
Yet I, unsatisfied, think their torments easy —

_Harp._ And in that, just, not cruel.

_Theo._ Were all sceptres
That grace the hands of kings made into one,
And offered me, all crowns laid at my feet,
I would _contemn_ them all, — thus spit at them;
So I to _all posterities_ might be called

The strongest champion of the Pagan gods,
And _rooter-out_ of Christians.

_Harp._ Oh, mine own,
Mine own dear lord! to further this great work,
I ever live thy slave.

_Enter Sapritius and Sempronius._

_Theo._ No more — the governor.

_Sap._ Keep the ports close, and let the guards be doubled;
Disarm the Christians; call it death in any
To wear a sword, or in his house to have one.

_Semp._ I shall be careful, sir.

_Sap._ Twill well become you.
Such as refuse to offer sacrifice
To any of our gods, put to the torture.

Grub up this growing mischief by the roots;
And know, when we are merciful to them,
We to ourselves are cruel.

_Semp._ You pour oil
On fire that burns already at the height:
I know the emperor's edict, and my charge,
And they shall find no favour.

_Theo._ My good lord,
This care is timely for the entertainment
Of our great master, who this night in person
Comes here to thank you.

_Sap._ Who! the emperor?

_virgins_ and _matrons_, respectively) to torture and execute that it exhausts their punishers."

101: ie. Theophilus' actions are _just_, not _cruel._

= _scorn_.

= so long as. = those who succeed them; _posterity_ was frequently used like this in the plural.

= one who eradicates something; this interesting noun had been used at least as far back as 1560.¹

**Entering Characters:** _Sapritius_ is the governor of Caesarea; _Sempronius_ is the Captain of the Guards, ie. the head of the soldiery in the city.

="keep the gates of the city closed"; Sapritius is giving out orders to implement harsher measures against the Christians.

126-7: being a Christian did not mean one was automatically destined to be tortured; the Romans generally gave their victims numerous opportunities to recant, by simply disavowing the Christian God, or taking part in a sacrifice. The Romans' primary theological worry was that the gods would not look on them propitiously if they saw that any mortal was neglecting them.

The Roman relationship with their gods was one of _quid pro quo_; in return for prayers and offerings, the gods were expected to bring good fortune to their devotees.

= _dig up_;² note the line's weeding metaphor.

132-3: ie. "you are instructing me to do that which I am already fired up about doing."

= _ie. the emperor._
Harp. To clear your doubts, he does return in triumph, Kings lackeying by his triumphant chariot;

And in this glorious victory, my lord, You have an ample share: for know, your son, The ne'er-enough-commended Antoninus, So well hath fleshed his maiden sword, and dyed His snowy plumes so deep in enemies' blood,

That, besides public grace beyond his hopes, There are rewards propounded.

Sap. I would know No mean in thine, could this be true.

Harp. My head Answer the forfeit.

Sap. Of his victory There was some rumour; but it was assured, The army passed a full day's journey higher, Into the country.

Harp. It was so determined;

But, for the further honour of your son, And to observe the government of the city, And with what rigour, or remiss indulgence, The Christians are pursued, he makes his stay here:

[Trumpets afar off.]

For proof, his trumpets speak his near arrival.

Sap. Haste, good Sempronius, draw up our guards, And with all ceremonious pomp receive The conquering army. Let our garrison speak Their welcome in loud shouts, the city show Her state and wealth.

Semp. I'm gone.
[Exit Sempronius.]

Sap. O, I am ravished
With this great honour! cherish, good Theophilus,
This knowing scholar. Send [for] your fair daughters;
I will present them to the emperor,
And in their sweet conversion, as a mirror,
Express your zeal and duty.

Theo. Fetch them, good Harpax.

[Exit Harpax.]

Enter Sempronius, at the head of the guard,
soldiers leading three kings bound;
Antoninus and Macrinus bearing the Emperor's
_eagles_: Dioclesian with a gilt laurel on his head,

leading in Artemia: Sapritius kisses the Emperor's hand, 
then embraces his Son;
Harpax brings in Calista and Christeta. 
Loud shouts.

Diocl. So: at all parts I find Caesarea

Completely governed: the licentious soldier
Confined in modest limits, and the people
Taught to obey, and, not compelled with rigour:
The ancient Roman discipline revived,
Which raised Rome to her greatness, and proclaimed her 
The glorious mistress of the conquered world;
But, above all, the service of the gods
So zealously observed, that, good Sapritius,
In words to thank you for your care and duty,
Were much unworthy Dioclesian's honour,
Or his magnificence to his loyal servants −
But I shall find a time with noble titles
To recompense your merits.

Sap. Mightiest Caesar,
Whose power upon this globe of earth is equal
To Jove's in heaven; whose victorious triumphs
On proud rebellious kings that stir against it,
Are perfect figures of his immortal trophies
Won in the Giants' war; whose conquering sword,
Guided by his strong arm, as deadly kills
As did his thunder! all that I have done,

Or, if my strength were centupled, could do,

= overwhelmed with joy.²

= this learned person,² ie. Harpax. = added by Gifford.

189-190: Sapritius will describe to the emperor how the agreeable return of Theophilus' daughters to the pagan religion is a reflection of their father's dedication to his job.

Entering characters: Antoninus is the son of Sapritius the governor; Macrinus is his best friend. = the _eagle_ was the famous Roman military symbol of a sculptured eagle on top of a pole.¹

Entering character: Artemia is the emperor Dioclesian's daughter.

206: _ Completely governed_ = thoroughly well-governed.

206-211: _the licentious…world_ = Dioclesian is pleased to find law and order throughout the city, and credits the governor's success on the revival of the long-lost Roman discipline.

= to.

214-8: a common sentiment in the era's drama: the emperor will demonstrate his gratitude with tangible rewards - words of thanks alone would be unbefitting and ungracious.

_magnificence_ (line 216) = generosity.⁴

220-225: _Mightiest Caesar…war_ = Sapritius compares Dioclesian's victory over the rebellious kings to the victory of the Olympian gods (Jupiter and his generation) over the race of Giants who challenged their supremacy for control of the universe.⁸

_Are perfect figures of_ = are exactly like.²

= "as Jupiter smotes individuals with his lightning-bolt" (his weapon of choice).

Note how in lines 224-7, Massinger uses _his_ repeatedly, and potentially confusingly, to indicate first Jupiter (224), then Dioclesian (226), and finally Jupiter again (227).

= increased a hundredfold.
Comes short of what my loyalty must **challenge**.
But, if in any thing I have deserved
Great Caesar's smile, 'tis in my humble care
Still to preserve the honour of those gods,
That make him what he is: my **zeal** to them
I ever have expressed in my **fell** hate
Against the Christian sect that, with one blow,
(Ascribing all things to an unknown Power.)
Would strike down all their temples, and allows them

Nor sacrifice nor altars.

**Diocl.** Thou, in this,
Walk'st hand in hand with me: my will and power
Shall not alone confirm, but honour all
That are in this most **forward**.

**Sap.** Sacred Caesar,
If your imperial majesty stand pleased
To shower your favours upon such as are
The boldest champions of our religion,
Look on this reverend man,

[**Points to Theophilus.**]
to whom the power
Of searching out and punishing such delinquents
Was by your choice committed: and, for proof,
He hath deserved the grace imposed upon him,
And with a fair and even hand proceeded,
Partial to none, not to himself, or those
Of equal nearness to himself, behold
This pair of virgins.

**Diocl.** What are these?

**Sap.** His daughters.

**Artem.** Now by your sacred fortune, they are fair ones,
Exceeding fair ones: would 'twere in my power
To make them mine!

**Theo.** They are the gods', great lady.
They were most happy in your service else:
On these, when they fell from their father's faith,
I used a judge's power, entreaties failing
(They being seduced) to win them to adore
The holy Powers we worship; I put on
The scarlet robe of bold authority,
And, as they had been **strangers to my blood**,
Presented them, in the most horrid form,
All kinds of tortures; part of which they suffered
With Roman constancy.

Artém., And could you endure,
Being a father, to behold their limbs
Extended on the rack?

Theo., I did; but must
Confess there was a strange contention in me,
Between the impartial office of a judge,
And pity of a father; to help justice
Compassion fell: – yet still I was a father;
For e'en then, when the flinty hangman's whips
Were worn with stripes spent on their tender limbs,
I kneeled, and wept, and begged them, though they would
Be cruel to themselves, they would take pity
On my grey hairs: now note a sudden change,
Which I with joy remember; those, whom torture,
Nor fear of death could terrify, were o'ercome
By seeing of my sufferings; and so won,
Returning to the faith that they were born in,
I gave them to the gods: and be assured,
I that used justice with a rigorous hand,
Upon such beauteous virgins, and mine own,
Will use no favour, where the cause commands me,
To any other; but, as rocks, be deaf
To all entreaties.

Diocl. Thou deserv'st thy place;
Still hold it, and with honour. Things thus ordered
Touching the gods, 'tis lawful to descend
To human cares, and exercise that power
Heaven has conferred upon me; – which that you,
Rebels and traitors to the power of Rome,
Should not with all extremities undergo.
What can you urge to qualify your crimes,
Or mitigate my anger?

K. of Epire. We are now
Slaves to thy power, that yesterday were kings,
And had command o’er others; we confess
Our grandfathers paid your tribute, yet left us,
As their forefathers had, desire of freedom.
And, if you Romans hold it glorious honour
Not only to defend what is your own,
But to enlarge your empire, (though our fortune
Denies that happiness,) who can accuse
The famished mouth, if it attempt to feed?
Or such whose fetters eat into their freedoms,
If they desire to shake them off?

K. of Pontus. We stand

= ie. a nation might be left to govern itself so long as it paid
a tax to Rome to signify its submission.

The last examples, to prove how uncertain
All human happiness is; and are prepared
To endure the worst.

K. of Macedon. That spoke, which now is highest
In Fortune’s wheel, must, when she turns it next,
Decline as low as we are. This considered,

Taught the Egyptian Hercules, Sesostris,
That had his chariot drawn by captive kings,
To free them from that slavery; — but to hope

Such mercy from a Roman were mere madness:
We are familiar with what cruelty
Rome, since her infant greatness, ever used
Such as she triumphed over; age nor sex
Exempted from her tyranny; sceptered princes
Kept in her common dungeons, and their children,
In scorn trained up in base mechanic arts,
For public bondmen. In the catalogue
Of those unfortunate men, we expect to have
Our names remembered.

Diocl. In all growing empires,

= chains.

= Pontus was a district in Asia Minor on the southern
shore of the Black Sea.27

= latest.

336: Macedon = the land north of Thessaly in Greece.

336-8: a common reference to personified Fortune,
who in spinning her wheel arbitrarily raises the circumstances
of some while lowering those of others; spoke
refers to the spoke of Fortune’s wheel.

339-341: the ancient Greek historian Herodotus wrote about
a great conquering king of Egypt named Sesostris (though
there were several kings of that name in the times long
predating the Romans). Herodotus wrote that Sesostris
celebrated those cities that showed great valour in resisting
him by erecting inscribed pillars in those cities, which told
the honourable tale of their defense against him.10

= would be absolute.

= ie. since Rome first became great. = treated.

= kings, monarchs.

= the lowest forms of manual labour.
= slaves owned by the state.

= even is generally pronounced, for purposes of meter, as
a one-syllable word: e’en.

= ie. foundation.1

361-2: weak Perseus…Aemilius = Perses was the last king
of an independent Macedon, ruling from 179 B.C. until his
defeat to Rome in 168 B.C., when he was captured at the
Battle of Pydna by the Roman consul L. Aemilius Paulus.
Dioclesian is thinking about how Paulus treated Perses with
great leniency after Perses had degraded himself with a
Of Epire, Pontus, and of Macedon,
That I with courtesy can use my prisoners,
As well as make them mine by force, provided
That they are noble enemies: such I found you,
Before I made you mine: and, since you were so,
You have not lost the courages of princes,
Although the fortune. Had you borne yourselves
Dejectedly, and base, no slavery
Had been too easy for you: but such is
The power of noble valour, that we love it
Even in our enemies, and, taken with it,
Desire to make them friends, as I will you.

K. of Epire. Mock us not, Caesar.

Diocl. By the gods, I do not.
Unloose their bonds; – I now as friends embrace you.
Give them their crowns again.

K. of Pontus. We are twice o’ercome;
By courage, and by courtesy.

K. of Macedon. But this latter
Shall teach us to live ever faithful vassals
To Dioclesian, and the power of Rome.

K. of Epire. All kingdoms fall before her!

K. of Pontus. And all kings
Contend to honour Caesar!

Diocl. I believe
Your tongues are the true trumpets of your hearts,
And in it I most happy. Queen of fate,
Imperious Fortune! mix some light disaster
With my so many joys, to season them,

And give them sweeter relish: I’m girt round
With true felicity: faithful subjects here,
Here bold commanders, here with new-made friends;
But, what’s the crown of all, in thee, Artemia,
My only child, whose love to me and duty
Strive to exceed each other!

Artem. I make payment
But of a debt, which I stand bound to tender
As a daughter and a subject.

Diocl. Which requires yet
A retribütion from me, Artemia,
Tied by a father’s care, how to bestow
A jewèl, of all things to me most precious:

shameful display of supplication; later Paulus, ever magnanimous, even procured Perses' release after he had been brought to Rome and thrown in prison.

= treat.

= kings.

= “though you have lost the fortune of kings.”

397-9: Imperious...relish = a nice bit of psychological insight from our author: Dioclesian recognizes that good fortune is easier to appreciate when it is set off by some unhappiness.

= surrounded.

= bliss.

= ie. the now-released kings.

= recompense.
Nor will I therefore longer keep thee from
The chief joys of creation, marriage rites;
Which that thou mayst with greater pleasures taste of,
Thou shalt not like with mine eyes, but thine own.

Among these kings, forgetting they were captives;
Or these, remembering not they are my subjects,
Make choice of any: By Jove's dreadful thunder,
My will shall rank with thine.

Artem. It is a bounty
The daughters of great princes seldom meet with;
For they, to make up breaches in the state,
Or for some other public ends, are forced
To match where they affect not. May my life
Deserve this favour!

Diocl. Speak; I long to know
The man thou wilt make happy.

Artem. If that titles,
Or the adorèd name of Queen could take me,
Here would I fix mine eyes, and look no further;
But these are baits to take a mean-born lady,
Not her that boldly may call Caesar father;
In that I can bring honour unto any,
But from no king that lives receives addition:
To raise desert and virtue by my fortune,
Though in a low estate, were greater glory
Than to mix greatness with a prince that owes
No worth but that name only.

Diocl. I commend thee,
'Tis like myself.

Artem. If, then, of men beneath me,
My choice is to be made, where shall I seek,
But among those that best deserve from you?
That have served you most faithfully; that in dangers
Have stood next to you; that have interposed
Their breasts as shields of proof, to dull the swords
Aimed at your bosom; that have spent their blood
To crown your brows with laurel?

Mac. Cytherea.
Great Queen of Love, be now propitious to me!

417: a nice figure of speech by the emperor: rather than Dioclesian choose Artemia's husband, as is his right
do, she may select her own.

418-9: Artemia may choose a husband from any of the men present, king or noble.

421: "what you want is what I want."

425-7: For they...affect not = Artemia recognizes Dioclesian's exceptional gift; normally the daughters of kings are forced to marry husbands who have been selected for political reasons, such as to cement alliances with foreign powers.

match (line 427) = marry.
affect = love.

= "if it was the case that".
= the sense is, "was important to me".
= ie. on one of the kings.

= ie. a woman of low rank, who would grab the opportunity to marry a king like it was bait and raise her own status.

437: "and not the daughter of the emperor, who is not concerned with raising her own rank by marrying a king."

438: instead, it is Artemia who brings status to her husband, no matter who or what rank he is.

= the editors generally emend receives to receive. = a title.

440-1: "to marry a virtuous man who deserves such good fortune would be a more glorious thing to do".

= owns.

= Macrinus prays to Venus to cause the princess to choose him for a husband; Cytherea was one of Venus' alternative names, which was derived from the Greek
Harp. [to Sapritius.] Now mark what I foretold.

Anton. [Aside] Her eye's on me. Fair Venus' son, draw forth a leaden dart, And, that she may hate me, transfix her with it;

Or, if thou needs wilt use a golden one, Shoot it in the behalf of any other: Thou know'st I am thy votary elsewhere.

Artem. [Advances to Antoninus.] Sir.

Theo. How he blushes!

Sap. Welcome, fool, thy fortune.

Artem. I am no object to divert your eye From the beholding.

Anton. Rather a bright sun, Too glorious for him to gaze upon, That took not first flight from the eagle's aerie. As I look on the temples, or the gods, And with that reverence, lady, I behold you, And shall do ever.

Artem. And it will become you, While thus we stand at distance; but, if love, Love born out of the assurance of your virtues, Teach me to stoop so low –

Anton. O, rather take A higher flight.

Artem. Why, fear you to be raised? Say I put off the dreadful awe that waits On majesty, or with you share my beams,

Nay, make you to outshine me; change the name Of Subject into Lord, rob you of service That's due from you to me; and in me make it Duty to honour you, would you refuse me?

island Cythera, from off whose shores she was said to have been born.\textsuperscript{11}

461: in this aside, Harpax reminds the governor of another of his predictions.

464-5: Cupid, the cherubic god of love, shot golden arrows at those he wished to fall deeply in love, but arrows of lead at those whom he would cause to feel hatred for another.

= devotee; Antoninus is in love with someone else.

470-1: oh no! Artemia has selected Antoninus to be her husband.

472: an uncomfortable silence likely follows Artemia's selection; Theophilus and Sapritius react to Antoninus' embarrassment and delay in responding.

= an imperative: the governor, muttering to himself perhaps, pleads for his son to embrace his good luck.

476: Stand = "look at you standing there". angel = the Romans frequently (and improbably) slip into using Christian imagery.

481-6: Antoninus awkwardly tries to excuse his unexpected reaction, or lack thereof.

= nest.

493-4: Antoninus suggests Artemia should seek a husband of higher status than himself.

497-8: Say I...majesty = "suppose I peel off the dread-causing awe that attends all members of a royal family". = Artemia picks up on Antoninus' sun metaphor, begun at line 481.

499-502: change...refuse me? = Artemia is risking sounding like she is begging: she offers to honour Antoninus as her superior if he will marry her, rather than the other way around; Antoninus in turn risks
Anton. Refuse you, madam! such a worm as I am, 
Refuse what kings upon their knees would sue for! 
Call it, great lady, by another name; 
An humble modesty, that would not match 
A molehill with Olympus.

Artem. He that's famous 
For honourable actions in the war, 
As you are, Antoninus, a proved soldier, 
Is fellow to a king.

Anton. If you love valour, 
As 'tis a kingly virtue, seek it out, 
And cherish it in a king: there it shines brightest, 
And yields the bravest luster. Look on Epire, 
A prince, in whom it is incorporate; 
And let it not disgrace him that he was 
O'ercome by Caesar; it was victory, 
To stand so long against him: had you seen him, 
How in one bloody scene he did discharge 
The parts of a commander and a soldier, 
Wise in direction, bold in execution; 
You would have said, great Caesar's self excepted, 
The world yields not his equal.

Artem. Yet I have heard, 
Encountering him alone in the head of his troop, 
You took him prisoner.

K. of Epire. 'Tis a truth, great princess; 
I'll not detract from valour.

Anton. 'Twas mere fortune; 
Courage had no hand in it.

Theo. Did ever man 
Strive so against his own good?

Sap. Spiritless villain! 
How I am tortured! By the immortal gods, 
I now could kill him.

Diocl. Hold, Sapritius, hold, 
On our displeasure hold!

Harp. Why, this would make 
A father mad, 'tis not to be endured; 
Your honour's tainted in't.

Sap. By heaven, it is; 
I shall think of it.

Harp. 'Tis not to be forgotten.

offending the princess if he doesn't quickly take up 
her offer.

= marry.
= the Greek mountain which serves as the home of the gods.

= ie. virtue. = combined, united in one body.²

= management of the battle.

542-4: Sapritius is furious that his son is messing up this 
great honour - and perhaps recognizing the disgrace this 
might bring upon him.

549-556: Harpax, in opposition to Dioclesian, encourages 
Sapritius to continue to get worked up over the em- 
barrassment Antonius is causing him.
Artem. Nay, kneel not, sir; I am no ravisher.
Nor so far gone in fond affection to you,
But that I can retire, my honour safe: —
Yet say, heretofore, that thou hast neglected
What, but seen in possession of another,
Will make thee mad with envy.

Anton. In her looks
Revenge is written.

Mac. As you love your life,
Study to appease her.

Anton. Gracious madam, hear me.

Artem. And be again refused?

Anton. The tender of
My life, my service, or, since you vouchsafe it,
My love, my heart, my all: and pardon me,
Pardon, dread princess, that I made some scruple
To leave a valley of security,
To mount up to the hill of majesty,
On which, the nearer Jove, the nearer lightning.

What knew I, but your grace made trial of me;
Durst I presume t' embrace, where but to touch
With an unmannered hand, was death? the fox,
When he saw first the forest's king, the lion,
Was almost dead with fear; the second view
Only a little daunted him; the third,
He durst salute him boldly: pray you, apply this;
And you shall find a little time will teach me
To look with more familiar eyes upon you,
Than duty yet allows me.

Sap. Well excused.

Artem. You may redeem all yet.

Diocl. And, that he may
Have means and opportunity to do so,
Artemia, I leave you my substitute
In fair Caesarea.

Sap. And here, as yourself,
We will obey and serve her.

Diocl. So you prove hers, I wish no other heir;
Think on't: – be careful of your charge, Theophilus;
Sapritius, be you my daughter's guardian. Your company I wish, confederate princes,

In our Dalmatian wars; which finished

With victory I hope, and Maximinus,
Our brother and copartner in the empire,

At my request won to confirm as much,
The kingdoms I took from you we'll restore,
And make you greater than you were before.

[Exeunt all but Antoninus and Macrinus.]

Anton. Oh, I am lost forever! lost, Macrinus!
The anchor of the wretched, hope, forsakes me,
And with one blast of Fortune all my light
Of happiness is put out.

Mac. You are like to those
That are ill only 'cause they are too well;
That, surfeiting in the excess of blessings,
Call their abundance want. What could you wish,
That is not fall'n upon you? honour, greatness,
Respect, wealth, favour, the whole world for a dower;

And with a princess, whose excelling form
Exceeds her fortune.

Anton. Yet poison still is poison,
Though drunk in gold; and all these flattering glories
To me, ready to starve, a painted banquet,
And no essential food. When I am scorched

With fire, can flames in any other quench me?
What is her love to me, greatness, or empire,  
That am slave to another, who alone  
Can give me ease or freedom?

Mac. Sir, you point at  
Your dotage on the scornful Dorothea:

Is she, though fair, the same day to be named  
With best Artemia? In all their courses,  
Wise men propose their ends: with sweet Artemia,  
There comes along pleasure, security,  
Ushered by all that in this life is precious:  
With Dorothea (though her birth be noble,  
The daughter to a senator of Rome,  
By him left rich, yet with a private wealth,  
And far inferior to yours) arrives  
The emperor's frown, which, like a mortal plague,  
Speaks death is near; the princess' heavy scorn,  
Under which you will shrink; your father's fury,  
Which to resist, even pity forbids: —  
And but remember that she stands suspected  
A favourer of the Christian sect; she brings  
Not danger, but assured destruction with her.  
This truly weighed, one smile of great Artemia  
Is to be cherished, and preferred before  
All joys in Dorothea: therefore leave her.

Anton. In what thou think'st thou art most wise, thou art  
Grossly abused, Macrinus, and most foolish.  
For any man to match above his rank,  
Is but to sell his liberty. With Artemia  
I still must live a servant; but enjoying  
Divinest Dorothea, I shall rule,  
Rule as becomes a husband: for the danger.  
Or call it, if you will, assured destruction,

I slight it thus. — If, then, thou art my friend,  
As I dare swear thou art, and wilt not take  
A governor's place upon thee, be my helper.

Mac. You know I dare, and will do anything;  
Put me unto the test.

Anton. Go then, Macrinus,  
To Dorothea; tell her I have worn,  
In all the battailes I have fought, her figure,  
Her figure in my heart, which, like a deity,  
Hath still protected me. Thou canst speak well;  
And of thy choicest language spare a little,  
To make her understand how much I love her,  
And how I languish for her. Bear these jewels,  
Sent in the way of sacrifice, not service,
As to my goddess: all 

Or fears that may deter me, say, this morning

I mean to visit her by the name of friendship:

− No words to contradict this.

Mac. I am yours:

And, if my travail this way be ill spent,

Judge not my readier will by the event.

[Exeunt.]

END OF ACT I.
ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Room in Dorothea's House.

Enter Spungius and Hircius.

Entering characters: Spungius and Hircius are servants of Dorothea; the two despicable men provide the comic relief of the play. The scenes with these characters are of a brand of comedy so low and vulgar that pre-20th century editions of the play sometimes printed it with the servants' scenes excised!

As for our plot, it appears that Dorothea had employed Spungius and Hircius at a moment when they were about to be hanged for some unspecified crimes; their lives were spared on the condition that she take custody of them, which she did on the condition that they convert to Christianity - which they did to their eternal regret.

1 Spun. Turn Christian! Would he that first tempted me to have my shoes walk upon Christian soles, had turned me into a capon; for I am sure now, the stones of all my pleasure, in this fleshly life, are cut off.

3-4: the stones of all my pleasure = stones was common slang for "testicles"; the thing to note about the dialogues of Hircius and Spungius is their employment of hilariously absurd metaphors such as this, as well as their continuous word-play.

3: capon = castrated young cock.

5 Hirc. So then, if any coxcomb has a galloping desire to ride, here's a gelding, if he can but sit him.

7: here's a gelding = ie. "here's a castrated horse", meaning Spungius.

sit him = ie. "ride him."

6 Spun. I kick, for all that, like a horse; − look else.

8 Hirc. But that is a kickish jade, fellow Spungius. Have not I as much cause to complain as thou hast? When I was a pagan, there was an infidel punk of mine, would have let me come upon trust for my corvetting: a pox of your Christian coxatrices! they cry, like poulterers' wives, "No money, no coney."

10 Spun. Bacchus, the god of brewed wine and sugar, grand patron of rob-pots, upsy-freesy tipplers, and

12 Entering characters: Spungius and Hircius are servants of Dorothea; the two despicable men provide the comic relief of the play. The scenes with these characters are of a brand of comedy so low and vulgar that pre-20th century editions of the play sometimes printed it with the servants' scenes excised!

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= "I wish".

3: capon = castrated young cock.

3-4: the stones of all my pleasure = stones was common slang for "testicles"; the thing to note about the dialogues of Hircius and Spungius is their employment of hilariously absurd metaphors such as this, as well as their continuous word-play.

= common term for fool, with cox (or "cocks") punning with capon.

7: here's a gelding = ie. "here's a castrated horse", meaning Spungius.

sit him = ie. "ride him."

= an irritable (kickish), old, worn-down horse.

= prostitute.

14: come upon trust = ie. the prostitute would provide services on credit; but come in its most crude sense was likely already current in the early 17th century, and may indeed have been the intended meaning employed by Hircius.1

1 corvetting = curvetting, ie. leaping about, used here as a euphemism for having sex.1

15: coxatrices = cockatrices, ie. prostitutes.4

poulterers = those who deal in game, eggs and poultry.

= rabbit, but punning with cunny, a term used for the female genitalia.1

= the god of wine; Spungius' name itself, "spunge", suggests his predilection for drinking.

19: rob-pots = heavy drinkers.1

upsey-freesy = heavy (with respect to drinking).1
tipplers = excessive drinkers.¹

super-naculum = super-naculum is pseudo-Latin, meaning "to the last drop";¹ the phrase, which originated in France, was applied to the following custom: after finishing his drink, a man would pour what he thought would be the literal last drop out of his cup onto a finger nail; if he could not make it stand on his nail (because the drop was too large), he would be obliged to drink again.⁴

It is worth noting that the dramatist Thomas Nashe had in 1592 published a pamphlet, Pierce Penniless, in which he described a drinker as follows: "now, he is no body that cannot drinke super nagulum, carouse the hunters' hoope, quaffe vpsey freze crosse, etc."

warden of Vintners' hall, ale-conner, mayor of all victualling-houses, the sole liquid benefactor to bawdy-houses; lanceprezado to red noses, and invincible adelantado over the armado of pimplled, deep-scarleted, rubified, and carbuncled faces —

Hir. What of all this?

Spun. This boon Bacchanalian stinker, did I make legs to.

Hir. Scurvy ones, when thou wert drunk.

Spun. There is no danger of losing a man's years by making these indentures: he that will not now and then be Calabingo, is worse than a Calamoothe. When I was

20 super-naculum takers; this Bacchus, who is head

21 Vintner's hall = the vintners of London have had their own guild (or livery) since 1363; their original hall was a large, presumably wooden building which burnt down during the Great Fire of 1666.

13 ale-conner = an officer responsible for ensuring that the price of ale fell within the statutory limit.

22 bawdy-houses = brothels.

23 lanceprezado = lanceprisdao, ie. the lowest grade of non-commissioned officer in a company of foot-soldiers.

24 red-noses = drunks, whose noses are red from excessive drink.

24 adelantado = a Spanish governor.

25 armado = obvious reference to the Spanish armada, here meaning simply a group of persons.

26 Hirs. = made red (from drinking). = covered with red postules.

27: "What's your point?"

29: boon = good (from the French bon, surviving in the phrase "boon companion").

1 stinker = one who stinks, a word used by Dekker in an earlier play, but emended by all the editors of this play to skinker, meaning a tapster, one who draws alcohol.

31 make legs = bow.

34: ie. dying early, in retribution or punishment; years was the word which appeared here in all the early editions, but the editors generally emend it to ears, referring to the cropping of one's ears as a form of criminal punishment.

36: Dekker seems to be adopting and distorting a couple of words which he used in an earlier play, Sir Thomas Wyatt, a collaboration with John Webster, in which a character abusively describes "a spaniard" as "a camocho, a callimanco."

Camocho itself is a unique adaptation of the Italian word
a pagan, and kneeled to this Bacchus, I durst outdrink a lord; but your Christian lords out-bowl me. I was in hope to lead a sober life, when I was converted; but, now amongst the Christians, I can no sooner stagger out of one alehouse, but I reel into another: they have whole streets of nothing but drinking-rooms, and drabbing-chambers, jumbled together.

**Hir.** Bawdy Priapus, the first schoolmaster that taught butchers how to stick pricks in flesh, and make it swell.

thou know'st, was the only ningle that I cared for under the moon; but, since I left him to follow a scurvy lady, what with her praying and our fasting, if now I come to a wench, and offer to use her anything hardly (telling her, being a Christian, she must endure,) she presently handles me as if I were a clove, and cleaves me with disdain, as if I were a calves' head.

**Spun.** I see no remedy, fellow Hircius, but that thou and I must be half pagans, and half Christians; for we know very fools that are Christians.

**Hir.** Right: the quarters of Christians are good for nothing but to feed crows.

**Spun.** True: Christian brokers, thou know'st, are made up of the quarters of Christians; parboil one of these rogues, and he is not meat for a dog: no, no, I am resolved to have an infidel's heart, though in show I carry a Christian's face.

**Hir.** Thy last shall serve my foot: so will I.

**Spun.** Our whimpering lady and mistress sent me with two great baskets full of beef, mutton, veal, and goose, fellow Hircius –

**Hir.** And woodcock, fellow Spungius.

**Spun.** Upon the poor lean ass-fellow, on which I ride, to all the almswomen: what think'st thou I have done with all this good cheer?

camasco, referring to a fabric; camocho appears nowhere else in English literature; callimanco was a more common word referring to a type of woolen fabric in which the woven checkered pattern appears only on one side.\(^1\)

= dared.

= out-drink; a bowl was a drinking vessel;\(^1\) Spungius is complaining that the Christians drink more than the pagans do.

= whoring.

= a son of Bacchus and Venus, and a god of fertility, Priapus was known for his extreme ugliness and large genitalia.\(^1\)

= a prick was a hole, but the overtly crude play on words is obvious; swell continues the gross punning.

= a male friend and perhaps lover.\(^1\)

= ie. Dorothea.

= "treat her harshly".

= ie. calf's head; in this common expression, calf was normally expressed in the plural. Note also the word-play with clove, cleaves and calves.

= veritable or complete.\(^1\)

= sections of the body, procured as a result of being "drawn and quartered", humorously punning on half Christians.\(^1\)

= peddlers, intermediaries, or pimps.\(^1\)

64-66: I am...face = from now on, Spungius will revert to his pagan beliefs and behaviour, at least in front of Dorothea and her faithful servant Angelo.

= "the last thing you mentioned (a Christian's face) is suitable for kicking."

= ie. Dorothea, whom they work for.

= a bird proverbially used to refer to a fool or dupe.

= ie. an ass, a beast of burden.

= ie. to deliver to. = ie. women who receive alms.\(^1\)

= typical word-play from Spungius: cheer can refer specifically to food or provisions, while the proverbial phrase good cheer refers to one's good humor.\(^1\)
Hir. Eat it; or be choked else.

Spun. Would my ass, basket and all, were in thy maw, if I did! No, as I am a demi-pagan, I sold the victuals, and coined the money into bottle-pots of wine.

Hir. Therein thou showed'st thyself a perfect demi-Christian too, to let the poor beg, starve, and hang, or die a the pip. Our puling, snotty-nose lady sent me out likewise with a purse of money, to relieve and release prisoners: — Did I so, think you?

Spun. Would thy ribs were turned into grates of iron then.

Hir. As I am a total pagan, I swore they should be hanged first; for, sirrah Spungius, I lay at my old ward of lechery, and cried, “A pox in your two-penny wards!” and so I took scurvy common flesh for the money.

Spun. And wisely done; for our lady, sending it to prisoners, had bestowed it out upon lousy knaves: and thou, to save that labour, cast’st it away upon rotten whores.

Hir. All my fear is of that pink-an-eye jack-an-apes boy, her page.

Spun. As I am a pagan from my cod-piece downward, that white-faced monkey frights me too. I stole but a = "I would wish". = throat or stomach,²
= half or partial,¹ see line 56 above.
= a large half-gallon vessel or tankard for drinking.¹
Spungius sold the goods he was supposed to deliver to the poor and used the money to get drunk.

88: a the = used frequently for of the.
   pip = a disease, perhaps of the mouth; originally a respiratory ailment of birds, characterized by a scaly white patch on the tongue; hence a human disease of the mouth.¹
   puling = whining.
   snotty-nose = one whose nose is dripping with nasal mucus, hence a contemptible person; Dekker had used the term snotty-nose in his play with Thomas Middleton, The Honest Whore, of 1604, though the expression itself dates back to 1578; the word snot in English goes back at least to 1420, and is related to snite (to wipe one's nose, a word in use at least as far back as 1100), and even snout.¹

89-90: to relieve...prisoners = English prisoners were expected to purchase their own provisions; those without money were completely dependent on the alms of others or those on the outside. An imprisoned debtor could be released if he could find a way to pay his debt, or have it paid for him.

92: Would = "I wish" or "I expect".
   were = "would be" or "would have".
   grates of iron = as would appear on a prison window.

96: sirrah = a mock or informal term of address.
   I lay...lechery = Hircius spent the alms money at his favourite brothel.

98: two-penny wards = the name for the next-to-lowest section of a London prison, the worst being the "hole".

99: filthy.⁴
   = ie. diseased.²

105: pink-an-eye = ie. pinkany, a term of endearment, pet.
   jack-an-apes = a name for a monkey, a common pet of society ladies in those days.

108: cod-piece = a reference to that most notorious of the era's fashions, the extra appendage attached to the front of a man's hose.

= pale, as from illness or shock.¹
dirty pudding, last day, out of an alms-basket, to give

my dog when he was hungry, and the peaking chitface
page hit me in the teeth with it.

Hir. With the dirty pudding! so he did me once with a
cow-turd, which in knavery I would have crumbed into

one's porridge, who was half a pagan too. The smug
dandiprat smells us out, whatsoever we are doing.

Spun. Does he? let him take heed I prove not his
back-friend: I'll make him curse his smelling what I do.

Hir. 'Tis my lady spoils the boy; for he is ever at her
tail, and she is never well but in his company.

Enter Angelo with a book, and a taper
lighted; seeing him, they counterfeit devotion.

Ang. O! now your hearts make ladders of your eyes,
In show to climb to Heaven, when your devotion
Walks upon crutches. Where did you waste your time,
When the religious man was on his knees,
Speaking the heavenly language?

Spun. Why, fellow Angelo, we were speaking in
pedlar's French, I hope.

Hir. We ha' not been idle, take it upon my word.

Ang. Have you the baskets emptied, which your lady
Sent, from her charitable hands, to women
That dwell upon her pity?

Spun. Emptied them! yes; I'd be loth to have my belly
so empty; yet, I am sure, I munched not one bit of them
neither.

Ang. And went your money to the prisoners?

Hir. Went! no; I carried it, and with these fingers paid
it away.

Ang. What way? the devil's way, the way of sin,
The way of hot damnation, way of lust? –

110-1: dirty pudding...dog = there is an allusion here
to the common proverb, "hungry dogs will eat dirty
pudding".
last day = yesterday.

111: peaking = sneaking.¹
chitface = pinched face; usually written chitty-faced.¹

= an ancient word, descended from the Old English tord.¹
In its earliest appearances, we find cow turd written as
cow tord.

= a contemptible word for a dwarf; the two servants refer
repeatedly throughout the play to Angelo's smallish stature,
which may suggest the part was written with a particular
under-sized actor in mind.

= false friend, ie. secret enemy.⁴

122-3: he is...tail = he is always beside her, though perhaps
with an additional rude suggestion.

Entering character: Angelo is Dorothea's "angelic" serv-
vant: like Harpax, he too is clairvoyant, but he is holy,
and devoted to Christianity in general, and Dorothea in
particular.
taper = light, candle.
counterfeit devotion = pretend to be at prayer.

128ff: note that the admirable Angelo speaks in verse,
whereas the vulgar Spungius and Hircius speak only in
prose.
128-9: make ladders...Heaven = an interesting
metaphor for the lifting of one's eyes to the heavens in
prayer.

= the slang of the criminal class, and hence gibberish in
general.¹

= have.

143-5: technically, of course, Spungius is not lying.
And you, to wash away the poor man's bread
In bowls of drunkenness?

Spun. Drunkenness! yes, yes, I use to be drunk; our
next neighbour's man, called Christopher, hath often
seen me drunk, hath he not?

Hir. Or me given so to the flesh! my cheeks speak my
doings.

Ang. Avaunt, ye thieves and hollow hypocrites!
Your hearts to me lie open like black books,
And there I read your doings.

Spun. And what do you read in my heart?

Hir. Or in mine? come, amiable Angelo, beat the flint
of your brains.

Spun. And let's see what sparks of wit fly out to kindle
your carebruns.

Ang. Your names even brand you; you are Spungius
called
And like a spunge, you suck up liquorous wines,
Till your soul reels to hell.

Spung. To hell! can any drunkard's legs carry him so far?

Ang. For blood of grapes you sold the widows' food,
And, starving them, 'tis murder; what's this but hell? −
Hircius your name, and goatish is your nature:
You snatch the meat out of the prisoner's mouth,
To fatten harlots: is not this hell too?
No angel, but the devil, waits on you.

Spun. Shall I cut his throat?

Hir. No; better burn him, for I think he is a witch; but
soothe, soothe him.

Spun. Fellow Angelo, true it is, that falling into the
company of wicked he-Christians, for my part −

Hir. And she-ones, for mine, − we have them swim in
shoals hard by −

Spun. We must confess, I took too much out of the
pot; and he of t'other hollow commodity.
Hir. Yes, indeed, we laid Jill on both of us: we
cozened the poor; but 'tis a common thing: many a
one, that counts himself a better Christian than we two, has done it, by this light.

Spun. But pray, sweet Angelo, play not the tell-tale to my lady; and, if you take us creeping into any of these mouse-holes of sin anymore, let cats flay off our skins.

Hir. And put nothing but the poisoned tails of rats into those skins.

Ang. Will you dishonour her sweet charity, Who saved you from the tree of death and shame?

Hir. Would I were hanged, rather than thus be told of my faults!

Spun. She took us, 'tis true, from the gallows; yet I hope she will not bar yeomen sprats to have their swinge.

Ang. She comes − beware and mend.

Hir. Let's break his neck, and bid him mend.

Enter Dorothea.

Dor. Have you my messages, sent to the poor, Delivered with good hands, not robbing them Of any jot was theirs?

Spun. Rob them, lady! I hope neither my fellow nor I am thieves.

Hir. Delivered with good hands, madam! else let me never lick my fingers more when I eat buttered fish.

Dor. Who cheat the poor, and from them pluck their alms, Pilfer from Heaven; and there are thunderbolts, From thence to beat them ever. Do not lie; Were you both faithful, true distributors?

Spun. Lie, madam! what grief is it to see you turn swaggerer, and give your poor-minded rascally servants the lie!
Dor. I'm glad you do not; if those wretched people
Tell you they pine for want of anything,
Whisper but to mine ear, and you shall furnish them.

Hir. Whisper! nay, lady, for my part I'll cry whoop.

Ang. Play no more, villains, with so good a lady;
For, if you do –

Spun. Are we Christians?

Hir. The foul fiend snap all pagans for me!

Ang. Away, and, once more, mend.

Spun. Takes us for botchers.

Hir. A patch, a patch!

[Exeunt Spungius and Hiricius.]

Dor. My book and taper.

Ang. Here, most holy mistress.

Dor. Thy voice sends forth such music, that I never
Was ravished with a more celestial sound.

Were every servant in the world like thee,
So full of goodness, angels would come down
To dwell with us: thy name is Angelo,
And like that name thou art; get thee to rest,
Thy youth with too much watching is oppressed.

Ang. No, my dear lady, I could weary stars,
And force the wakeful moon to lose her eyes,
By my late watching, but to wait on you.
When at your prayers you kneel before the altar,
Methinks I'm singing with some quire in Heaven,

So blest I hold me in your company:
Therefore, my most loved mistress, do not bid
Your boy, so serviceable, to get hence;
For then you break his heart.

Dor. Be nigh me still, then;
In golden letters down I'll set that day
Which gave thee to me. Little did I hope
To meet such worlds of comfort in thyself,
This little, pretty body; when I, coming
Forth of the temple, heard my beggar-boy,
My sweet-faced, godly beggar-boy, crave an alms,
Which with glad hand I gave, with lucky hand! –
And when I took thee home, my most chaste bosom,
Methought, was filled with no hot wanton fire,
But with a holy flame, mounting since higher,
On wings of cherubins, than it did before.

Ang. Proud am I, that my lady's modest eye
So likes so poor a servant.

Dor. I have offered
Handfuls of gold but to behold thy parents.
I would leave kingdoms, were I queen of some,
To dwell with thy good father; for, the son
Bewitching me so deeply with his presence,
He that begot him must do't ten times more.
I pray thee, my sweet boy, show me thy parents;
Be not ashamed.

Ang. I am not: I did never
Know who my mother was: but, by yon palace,
Filled with bright heavenly courtiers, I dare assure you,
And pawn these eyes upon it, and this hand,
My father is in Heaven: and, pretty mistress,
If your illustrious hour-glass spend his sand
No worse than yet it does, upon my life.

You and I both shall meet my father there,
And he shall bid you welcome.

Dor. A blessed day!
We all long to be there, but lose the way.

[Exeunt.]

ACT II, SCENE II.

A Street, near Dorothea's House.

Enter Macrinus, met by Theophilus and Harpax.

= ie. cherubins: there are three broad classes (hierarchies) of angels, and three sub-classes (choirs) of angels assigned to each of the hierarchies. The highest hierarchy is called the counselors; the highest choir of the counselors are the seraphim, and the cherub make up the second choir (Metford, p. 26).

306-310: 
Proud am I, that my lady's modest eye
So likes so poor a servant.

312-314: Bewitching me so deeply with his presence,
He that begot him must do't ten times more.
I pray thee, my sweet boy, show me thy parents;
Be not ashamed.

316: I am not: I did never
Know who my mother was: but, by yon palace,
Filled with bright heavenly courtiers, I dare assure you,
And pawn these eyes upon it, and this hand,
My father is in Heaven: and, pretty mistress,
If your illustrious hour-glass spend his sand
No worse than yet it does, upon my life.

= Angelo cryptically refers to God.

322-3: If your...it does = ie. "if you should live out the rest of your life behaving as you have until now". The running hour-glass, of course, stands in for the passing of Dorothea's life.

spend his sand = ie. spends its sand; note the typical lack of agreement between subject (hour-glass) and verb (spend).

upon my life = "I would bet my life".

= a big idea expressed almost as an afterthought; the Bible contains numerous verses alluding to staying on the right path.

326-328: A big idea expressed almost as an afterthought; the Bible contains numerous verses alluding to staying on the right path.

330: [Exeunt.]
Theo. The Sun, god of the day, guide thee, Macrinus!

Mac. And thee, Theophilus!

Theo. Glad'st thou in such scorn? I call my wish back.

Mac. I'm in haste.

Theo. One word, Take the least hand of time up: − stay.

Mac. Be brief.

Theo. As thought: I prithee tell me, good Macrinus, How health and our fair princess lay together This night, for you can tell; courtiers have flies That buzz all news unto them.

Mac. She slept but ill.

Theo. Double thy courtesy; how does Antoninus?

Mac. Ill, well, straight, crooked, − I know not how.

Theo. Once more; − Thy head is full of windmills: − when doth the princess Fill a bed full of beauty, and bestow it On Antoninus, on the wedding-night?

Mac. I know not.

Theo. No! thou art the manuscript Where Antoninus writes down all his secrets: Honest Macrinus, tell me.

Mac. Fare you well, sir.

[Exit Macrinus.]

Harp. Honesty is some fiend, and frights him hence;
A many courtiers love it not.

Theo. What piece

Of this state-wheel, which winds up Antoninus, Is broke, it runs so jarringly? the man

Is from himself divided. O thou, the eye By which I wonders see, tell me, my Harpax, What gad-fly tickles this Macrinus so, That, flinging up the tail, he breaks thus from me.

Harp. Oh, sir, his brain-pan is a bed of snakes,

Whose stings shoot through his eye-balls, whose poisonous spawn Ingenders such a fry of speckled villainies.

That, unless charms more strong than adamant Be used, the Roman angel's wings shall melt,

And Caesar's diadem be from his head Spurned by base feet; the laurel which he wears, Returning victor, be enforced to kiss That which it hates, the fire. And can this ram, This Antoninus-engine, being made ready To so much mischief, keep a steady motion? – His eyes and feet, you see, give strange assaults.

Theo. I'm turned a marble statue at thy language, Which printed is in such crabbed characters, It puzzles all my reading: what, in the name Of Pluto, now is hatching?

Harp. This Macrinus, The line is, upon which love-errands run

= ie. "many a courtier"; *a many* was a common variant of the more common *many a*. Harpax comments on the deception that permeates any court.

44-45: *What piece...Antoninus* = Theophilus uses the image of a turning wheel to represent the churning forward of government business.

45-46: *which winds...jarringly* = like Fortune's wheel, the *state-wheel* has lifted Antoninus' status, but something is amiss; though *winds up* might also mean "excites" in this context.¹

= ie. suffers from inner conflict.¹ = ie. Harpax.

= a type of fly notorious for annoying cattle.¹

= the phrase suggests "turn tail" (meaning to run away), which itself dates back to the early 16th century.

52-63: in this speech, the clairvoyant Harpax suggests that Antoninus and Macrinus are up to no good, but his cryptic language and dense metaphors only confuse Theophilus.

*brain-pan* = skull.¹

53-54: *whose poisonous...villainies* = whose toxic eggs (*spawn*) give birth to (or produce, ie. *ingender*) such a brood (*fry*) of evil acts (*villainies*). A typically dense dramatic metaphor.

*speckled* = describes the morally defective nature of sin.¹

= legendary mineral of great hardness.²

= ie. eagles, referring to the sculptured eagles appearing on Roman standards on the top of the poles; some editors change *angels* to *eagles*, but Gifford notes that *angel* was frequently used to refer to birds in Elizabethan literature.

= kicked.

60-61: *this ram...engine* = Antoninus is compared to a battering *ram: engine* was used to describe any large instrument of warfare.

*assaults* continues the war imagery.

= hard-to-decipher letters, ie. poor penmanship.¹

= god of the underworld. = the use of *hatching* as applied to a plot or idea goes back at least to the mid-16th century.¹

= the early quartos print *time* here, which later editors emend to *line*: Gifford suggests *line* refers to fireworks, which were often displayed on a rope or line.¹,³
Twixt Antoninus and that ghost of women,
The bloodless Dorothea, who in prayer
And meditation, mocking all your gods,
Drinks up her ruby colour; yet Antoninus
Plays the Endymion to this pale-faced moon,
Courts, seeks to catch her eyes —

Theo. And what of this?

Harp. These are but creeping billows,
Not got to shore yet: but if Dorothea
Fall on his bosom, and be fired with love, —
Your coldest women do so, — had you ink
Brewed from th' infernal Styx, not all that blackness
Can make a thing so foul as the dishonours,
Disgraces, buffetings, and most base affronts
Upon the bright Artemia, star o' th' court,
Great Caesar's daughter.

Theo. I now constr thee.

Harp. Nay, more; a firmament of clouds, being filled
With Jove's artillery, shot down at once,
To push your gods in pieces, cannot give,
With all those thunderbolts, so deep a blow
To the religion there, and pagan lore,
As this; for Dorothea hates your gods,
And, if she once blast Antoninus' soul,
Making it foul like hers, oh! the example —

Theo. Eats through Caesarea's heart like liquid poison.
Have I invented tortures to tear Christians,
To see but which, could all that feel hell's torments

Have leave to stand aloof here on earth's stage.

They would be mad till they again descended,
Holding the pains most horrid of such souls,
May-games to those of mine: has this my hand
Set down a Christian's execution
In such dire postures, that the very hangman
Fell at my foot dead, hearing but their figures;
And shall Macrinus and his fellow-masquer

= between. = spirit.
= as a ghost, Dorothea would be literally without blood, but also suggesting the absence of normal human passions.
= ie. since she is bloodless, Dorothea would be pale.
76: the moon goddess, Selene, put Endymion, who was either a king or shepherd, to perpetual sleep, so that she could lie with him without his knowing: the story of Endymion was the subject of a 1588 play by John Lyly.
81-82: These are...shore yet = a lovely metaphor of ocean swells representing Antoninus' as yet unsuccessful attempts to woo Dorothea. Harpax's speeches in this scene, filled with unusual and often vague allusions and metaphors, are some of the most interesting in the play.

= the most important river of the underworld.
= beatings.¹
= early and common form of construe, ie. understand.¹
= sky.
= ie. Jupiter's thunderbolts, his weapon of choice for killing people and smashing things.
= smash.
= doctrine, teachings.¹

= who.

105: Have leave to = have been given permission to. earth's stage = the metaphor of earth as a stage has been used since at least as far back as the mid-16th century.

= judging.
= ie. compared to.

= ie. fell in a feint. = ie. just to hear their descriptions.
= Harpax compares Macrinus and Antoninus to participants in a masked performance (a masque), a common form of entertainment of the era, containing allegorical characters and dancing.
103-113: a typical complex dramatic sentence: "Have I invented new ways to torture Christians (line 103), just so I could live to see (to see but which), despite the most horrible natures of my tortures and executions (summary of 104-111), Macrinus and Antoninus foil my efforts to destroy the Christians?"

The middle section (104-111: could all...figures) can be expanded as follows: "were all the occupants of hell released from their torments below in order to be able to witness what I do to the Christians (104-5), they would go mad until they could return to Hades (106), and consider what they undergo in hell to be like the games people play on May Day, compared to my tortures (107-8); my executions are so cruel, even the hangmen faint to hear them described (110-111: that the...figures)."

116 For drilling thy quick brains in this rich plot
Of tortures 'gainst these Christians: on; I hug thee!

118 Both hug and holy me: to this Dorothea,
Fly thou and I in thunder.

122 Not for kingdoms
Piled upon kingdoms: there's a villain page
Waits on her, whom I would not for the world
Hold traffic with; I do so hate his sight,
That, should I look on him, I must sink down.

128 I will not lose thee then, her to confound:
None but this head with glories shall be crowned.

130 Oh! mine own as I would wish thee!

[Exeunt.]
Now, sir, you may go on.

I then must study
A new arithmetic, to sum up the virtues
Which Antoninus gracefully become.
There is in him so much man, so much goodness,
So much of honour, and of all things else,
Which make our being excellent, that from his store

He can enough lend others; yet, much taken from him,
The want shall be as little as when seas
Lend from their bounty, to fill up the poorness
Of needy rivers.

Sir, he is more indebted
To you for praise, than you to him that owes it.

If queens, viewing his presents paid to the whiteness
Of your chaste hand alone, should be ambitious
But to be parted in their numerous shares;
This he counts nothing: could you see main armies
Make battalies in the quarrel of his valour,
That 'tis the best, the truest; this were nothing;
The greatness of his state, his father's voice
And arm, owing Caesarea, he ne'er boasts of;

The sunbeams which the emperor throws upon him
Shine there but as in water, and gild him
Not with one spot of pride; no, dearest beauty,
All these, heaped up together in one scale,
Cannot weigh down the love he bears to you,
Being put into the other.

Could gold buy you
To speak thus for a friend, you, sir, are worthy
Of more than I will number; and this your language
Hath power to win upon another woman,
Top of whose heart the feathers of this world
Are gaily stuck: but all which first you named,
And now this last, his love, to me are nothing.

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To speak thus for a friend, you, sir, are worthy
Of more than I will number; and this your language
Hath power to win upon another woman,
Top of whose heart the feathers of this world
Are gaily stuck: but all which first you named,
And now this last, his love, to me are nothing.

Enter Antoninus.

You make me a sad messenger; – but himself
Being come in person, shall, I hope, hear from you
Music more pleasing.
Anton. Has your ear, Macrinus, Heard none, then?

Mac. None I like.

Anton. But can there be In such a noble casket, wherein lie Beauty and chastity in their full perfections, A rocky heart, killing with cruélty A life that's prostrated beneath your feet?

Dor. I am guilty of a shame I yet ne'er knew, Thus to hold parley with you; − pray, sir, pardon.

Anton. Good sweetness, you now have it, and shall go: Be but so merciful, before your wounding me With such a mortal weapon as "farewell", To let me murmur to your virgin ear What I was loth to lay on any tongue But this mine own.

Dor. If one immodest accent Fly out, I hate you everlastingly.

Anton. My true love dares not do it.

Mac. Hermes inspire thee!

Enter above, Artemia, Sapritius, Theophilus, Spungius, and Hirclus.

Spun. See you, do you see? − Our work is done; the fish you angle for is nibbling at the hook, and therefore untruss the cod-piece-point of our reward, no matter if the breeches of conscience fall about our heels.

Theo. The gold you earn is here; dam up your mouths, And no words of it.

Hir. No; nor no words from you of too much damning neither. I know women sell themselves daily, and are hackneyed out for silver: why may not we, then, betray

= literally a small box for storing valuables, metaphorically applied to Dorothea's person.

= unyielding.

= have a conversation. = Dorothea's modesty causes her to excuse herself from this possibly inappropriate discussion.

= chaste.

= Hermes is the Greek name for the Roman Mercury; here Macrinus is invoking him in his role as god of eloquence or oratory.

= a convention of the era's drama allowed characters to appear on the elevated balcony at the back of the stage in order to spy on others; the princess and court officials have bribed Hircius and Spungius to give them access into Dorothea's house so they could see Antoninus' dealings with Dorothea.

= untie (untruss) the point, which is the lace that attaches the cod-piece to a man's trousers; within this silly metaphor for handing over his reward, Spungius also perhaps inadvertently puns on his fishing metaphor with cod.

94: "Our breeches fell down to our heels." The absurd metaphors continue.

96-97: Theophilus hands payment over to Hirclus and Spungius.

= another pun, here on dam / damn.

= offered for sale; hackney as a noun also could refer
a scurvy mistress for gold?

Spun. She saved us from the gallows, and, only to keep one proverb from breaking his neck, we'll hang her.

Theo. 'Tis well done; go, go, y'are my fine white boys.

Spun. If your red boys, 'tis well known more ill-favoured faces than ours are painted.

Sap. Those fellows trouble us.

Theo. Away, away!

Hir. I to my sweet placket.

Spun. And I to my full pot.

[Exeunt Hircius and Spungius.]

Anton. Come, let me tune you:—glaze not thus your eyes With self-love of a vowed virginity; Make every man your glass; you see our sex Do never murder propagation; We all desire your sweet society, And, if you bar me from it, you do kill me, And of my blood are guilty.

Artem. O base villain!

Sap. Bridle your rage, sweet princess.

Anton. Could not my fortunes, Reared higher far than yours, be worthy of you, Methinks my dear affection makes you mine.

Dor. Sir, for your fortunes, were they mines of gold, He that I love is richer; and for worth, You are to him lower than any slave Is to a monarch.

Sap. So insolent, base Christian!

Dor. Can I, with wearing out my knees before him, Get you but be his servant, you shall boast You're equal to a king.

Sap. Confusion on thee,

specifically to a prostitute.¹

105: one proverb...neck = ie. "one proverb from going unfulfilled"; the specific proverb Spungius is referring to is unclear; candidates include "she's a woman, and therefore to be won", and "he that is born to be hanged shall never be drowned".  

his = its.

¹ a term of endearment.⁴

109-110: "but if we are your red boys, it is well known that uglier people than us cover their faces with make-up (ie. are painted).

red boys = perhaps a reference to the redness of the faces of alcoholics like himself; but red boy had also been used to describe a red-headed child in a 1596 publication.

= the opening at the front of a petticoat;² with his new-found money, Hircius is off to see his favourite prostitute.

² = ie. of liquor.

= ie. "re-fashion your feelings towards me."

= mirror.

125: the sense is that men are never responsible for rejecting mating, and in turn multiplying the species.

130: Artemia was still under the impression that Antoninus was going to marry her; her outrage is natural.

134-6: "even if my superior rank and position do not make me worthy of your love, then my love for you alone should be enough to make you mine."

143: the governor is incensed that Dorothea should speak so insultingly to his son.

² = "if I". = ie. by praying to God.

= destruction, ruination.
For playing thus the lying sorceress!

Anton. Your mocks are great ones; none beneath the sun
Will I be servant to. − On my knees I beg it,
Pity me, wondrous maid.

Sap. I curse thy baseness.

Theo. Listen to more.

Dor. O kneel not, sir, to me.

Anton. This knee is emblem of an humbled heart:
That heart which tortured is with your disdain,
Justly for scorning others, even this heart,
To which for pity such a princess sues,
As in her hand offers me all the world,
Great Caesar's daughter.

Artem. Slave, thou liest.

Anton. Yet this
Is adamant to her, that melts to you

In drops of blood.

Theo. A very dog!

Anton. Perhaps
Tis my religion makes you knit the brow:

Yet be you mine, and ever be your own:
I ne'er will screw your conscience from that Power
On which you Christians lean.

Sap. I can no longer
Fret out my life with weeping at thee, villain.
[Aloud.] Sirrah!

Would, when I got thee, the high Thunderer's hand
Had struck thee in the womb!

Mac. We are betrayed.

Artem. Is that the idol, traitor, which thou kneel'st to,
Trampling upon my beauty?

Theo. Sirrah bandog!

Wilt thou in pieces tear our Jupiter
For her? our Mars for her? our Sol for her? −
A whore! a hell-hound! In this globe of brains.
Macrinus and Dorothea that will exceed in savagery any other that he has yet to date invented.

= the *Furies* were goddesses with the appearance of monsters, whose job it was to punish those who committed certain crimes, such as murder or disobedience to one's parents, by bringing perpetual misery to them.¹¹

¹¹ scraping or digging.²

= ie. a torture. = *horrid* does not appear in the OED.

wretch.²

= ie. overcome or defeated in their purpose

211: ie. with one large wave (*billow*) they are *overwhelmed*.

213-4: Dorothea mocks Antoninus for being intimidated by a woman, ie. Artemia.

= Antoninus means a comet, usually seen as an evil omen.

= ie. subject to.

= its, ie. life's.

= having left the balcony, the nobles reenter on the main stage below.

231-2: *My father's...use* = Artemia alludes to her authority to rule Caesarea, as handed to her by her father the emperor.

= perhaps a reference to Aesop's fable of the lion who initially intended to angrily kill a mouse when the mouse woke him up; but the mouse begged piteously for its life, and the laughing lion spared him.¹⁶

235-244: Artemia wants Antoninus swiftly put to death, but Macrinus and Dorothea tortured.
Points to Macrinus.

In pieces rack that bawd too.

Sap. Albeit the reverence
I owe our gods and you, are, in my bosom,
Torrents so strong that pity quite lies drowned
From saving this young man, yet, when I see
What face death gives him, and that a thing within me
Says 'tis my son, I am forced to be a man.
And grow fond of his life, which thus I beg.

Artem. And I deny.

Anton. Sir, you dishonour me,
To sue for that which I disclaim to have.
I shall more glory in my sufferings gain
Than you in giving judgment, since I offer
My blood up to your anger; nor do I kneel
To keep a wretched life of mine from ruin:
Preserve this temple, builded fair as yours is,
And Caesar never went in greater triumph,
Than I shall to the scaffold.

Artem. Are you so brave, sir?
Set forward to his triumph, and let those two
Go cursing along with him.

Dor. No, but pitying,
For my part, I, that you lose ten times more
By torturing me, than I that dare your tortures:
Through all the army of my sins, I have even
Laboured to break, and cope with death to th' face.
The visage of a hangman frights not me;
The sight of whips, racks, gibbets, axes, fires,
Are scaffoldings by which my soul climbs up
To an eternal habitacion.

Theo. Caesar's imperial daughter! hear me speak.
Let not this Christian thing, in this her pageantry
Of proud deriding both our gods and Caesar,
Build to herself a kingdom in her death,
Going laughing from us: no; her bitterest torment
Shall be to feel her constancy beaten down:
The bravery of her resolution lie
Battered, by argument, into such pieces,
That she again shall, on her belly, creep
To kiss the pavements of our paynim gods.

Artem. How to be done?

Theo. I'll send my daughters to her,
And they shall turn her rocky faith to wax;
else spit at me, let me be made your slave,

And meet no Roman's but a villain's grave.

**Art.** Thy prisoner let her be, then; and, Sapritius, 

Your son and that, be yours: death shall be sent

To him that suffers them, by voice or letters,

Christian to beggary brought grow desperate.

**Dor.** Still on the bread of poverty let me feed.

**Ang.** O! my admired mistress, quench not out

The holy fires within you, though temptations

Shower down upon you: clasp thine armour on,

Fight well, and thou shalt see, after these wars,

Thy head wear sunbeams, and thy feet touch stars.

[Exeunt all but Angelo.]

**Enter Hircius and Spungius.**

**Hir.** How now, Angelo; how is it, how is it? What

thread spins that whore Fortune upon her wheel now?

**Spun. Comesta, comesta, poor knave?**

**Hir.** Com a porte vous, com a porte vous, my petite garson?

**Spun. Me partha wee comrade, my half-inch of man's

flesh, how run the dice of this cheating world, ha?

**Ang.** Too well on your sides; you are hid in gold,

O'er head and ears.

= ie. and thus be able to mold Dorothea back to the Roman religion.

= or else, ie. "if they do not succeed".

296: Romans were customarily buried; criminals might be crucified, their bodies left to rot on the cross.

298-301: Artemia rescinds her death sentence; she allows Theophilus to take Dorothea into custody, to be "re-educated" by his daughters, and Antoninus (your son) and Macrinus (and that) will be taken into custody by Sapritius, who is to prevent them from communicating with each other.

= plunder, ie. "confiscate (all her possessions)."

= always. = the metaphorical phrase bread of poverty first appeared in English letters in 1594. Technically, the bread of poverty refers to the unleavened bread eaten during Passover, mentioned in Deuteronomy 16:3.18

= ie. the armour of God, referred to in Ephesians 6:11 and 6:13.

316-7: Hircius mocks Angelo for the bad turn of his and Dorothea's luck.

= personified Fortune spins her wheel, arbitrarily raising the circumstances of some people while lowering those of others.

319: Symons takes Spungius' comesta as an attempt at Italian, come sta, meaning "how are you?" 4

321-2: Hircius responds with his butchered French version of "how are you" (Comment vous portez-vous), followed by "my little boy?" (mon petite garcon). 4

324: Me partha = the intended meaning of this phrase is more uncertain; Symons favours reading it as Spungius' mangling of the Italian Mi parla, or "speak to me." wee comrade = various epithets such as this directed towards Angelo suggest he is undersized.

325: how run…world = Spungius suggests Angelo has rolled his metaphorical dice poorly, and that he stands no chance when the fix is in against him.

= ie. "the dice are rolling in your favour;" Angelo has noticed the purses on the servants' persons, their reward for letting Artemia and the other nobles into Dorothea's home.
O'er head and ears = completely immersed, a common phrase.

= a reference to the pictorial signs that identified and hung in front of shops; gingle-boys means coins; the use of gingle-boys here pre-dates its earliest recorded use in the OED by 20 years.¹

334: arse = this enjoyable word has existed in Germanic languages since time out of mind.¹

fag-end = extreme end.¹

= allusion to the ancient Greek notion, as described by the 8th century B.C. poet Hesiod, that humanity has passed through five ages: the golden age first, then silver, bronze, heroic, and iron; the ages describe a decline in the state of mankind.

337-9: a common allusion to the successful man who leaves his money to a prodigal son who squanders it all; ass is used both in its derogatory sense and to refer, with loading, to the pack animal.

coxcomb = fool.

340 = ie. his purse.

ambry = food pantry.⁴

344 = ie. "if only it would".

348 = ie. "I would drink".

352 = ie. "call gold poison!" = "not one woman-beater".

354 = an instrument for threshing corn,¹ punning with thrasher.

356 = the extraneous matter removed from precious metals which have been melted and purified, a term used contemptuously to describe gold and wealth in general.¹

360 = ie. betraying Dorothea.

368 = alternate word for drip.

369: a vaguely dirty metaphor for the bad turn of Dorothea's circumstances.

smock = ladies' underwear.
pieces.

**Ang.** For love you bear to her, for some good turns done you by me, give me one piece of silver.

**Hir.** How! a piece of silver! if thou wert an angel of gold, I would not put thee into white money unless I weighed thee; and I weigh thee not a rush.

**Spun.** A piece of silver! I never had but two calves in my life, and those my mother left me; I will rather part from the fat of them than from a mustard-token's worth of argent.

**Hir.** And so, sweet nit, we crawl from thee.

**Spun.** Adieu, demi-dandiprat, adieu!

**Ang.** Stay, — one word yet; you now are full of gold.

**Hir.** I would be sorry my dog were so full of the pox.

**Spun.** Or any sow of mine of the meazles either.

**Ang.** Go, go! you're beggars both; you are not worth that leather on your feet.

**Hir.** Away, away, boy!

**Spun.** Page, you do nothing but set patches on the soles of your jests.

**Ang.** I am glad I tried your love, which, see! I want not, so long as this is full.

**Both.** And so long as this, so long as this.

**Hir.** Spungius, you are a pickpocket.

**Spun.** Hircius, thou hast ninned: “So long as!” — not so much money is left as will buy a louse.

**Hir.** Thou art a thief, and thou liest in that gut through which thy wine runs, if thou deniest it.

**Spun.** Thou liest deeper than the bottom of mine enraged pocket, if thou affrontest it.

**Ang.** No blows, no bitter language; — all your gold gone!

**Spun.** Can the devil creep into one's breeches?

**Hir.** Yes, if his horns once get into the cod-piece.

**Ang.** Come, sigh not; I so little am in love with that whose loss kills you, that, see! 'tis yours.
All yours: divide the heap in equal share, 
So you will go along with me to prison, 
And in our mistress' sorrows bear a part: 
Say, will you?

Both. Will we!

Spun. If she were going to hanging, no gallows should 
part us.

Hir. Let us both be turned into a rope of onions, if we 
do not.

Ang. Follow me, then; repair your bad deeds past; 
Happy are men, when their best days are last!

Spun. True, master Angelo; pray, sir, lead the way.

[Exit Angelo.]

Hir. Let him lead that way, but follow thou me this 
way.

Spun. I live in a jail!

Hir. Away, and shift for ourselves. She'll do we'll 

enough there; for prisoners are more hungry after 
mutton than catchpoles after prisoners.

Spun. Let her starve then, if a whole jail will not fill 
her belly.

[Exeunt.]

END OF ACT II.

429-431: the return of the gold, however, is conditioned on 
Spungius and Hircius visiting Dorothea in prison with 
Angelo.

435-6: Spungius' motive for his willingness to go watch 
Dorothea be hanged is not necessarily an altruistic one!

= onions strung together, with a pun on the rope of the 
gallows.

= ie. their last ones.

441-2: Angelo concludes his part in the scene with a 
rhyming couplet.

451: Spungius expresses his astonishment at the idea. 

jail = the earliest quartos print layle here (j's were 
usually printed as i's), but subsequent editors emend this 
to gaol; iayle was the preferred spelling until the 1650's.

= take care of, provide for.

455: mutton = euphemism for women's genitalia. 
catchpoles = officers in charge of arresting debtors.¹
ACT III.

SCENE I.

A Room in Dorothea's House.

Enter Sapritius, Theophilus, Priest, Calista, and Christeta.

Sap. Sick to the death, I fear.

Theo. I meet your sorrow, with my true feeling of it.

Sap. She's a witch, a sorceress, Theophilus; my son
Is charmed by her enchanting eyes; and, like
An image made of wax, her beams of beauty
Melt him to nothing: all my hopes in him,
And all his gotten honours, find their grave
In his strange dotage on her. Would, when first
He saw and loved her, that the earth had opened,
And swallowed both alive!

Theo. There's hope left yet.

Sap. Not any: though the princess were appeased,
All title in her love surrendered up;
Yet this coy Christiän is so transported
With her religion, that unless my son
(But let him perish first!) drink the same potion,
And be of her belief, she'll not vouchsafe
To be his lawful wife.

Priest. But, once removed
From her opinion, as I rest assured
The reasons of these holy maids will win her,
You'll find her tractable to anything,
For your content or his.

Theo. If she refuse it,
The Stygian damps, breeding infectious airs,
The mandrake's shrieks, the basilisk's killing eye,

Enter Characters: a reminder: Sapritius is the governor of Caesarea, and father of Antoninus; Theophilus is in charge of enforcing the Christian persecutions; his daughters are reconverted pagans, Calista and Christeta.

1: Sapritius worries that Antoninus is dying.

= infatuation. = ie. if only.

= Artemia, the daughter of the emperor Dioclesian, had been persuaded not to immediately execute those who had offended her and Rome - Dorothea, Antoninus and Macrinus.

= brought to high emotion.

= ie. convert to Dorothea's religion. = deign, agree.

= belief.

= arguments. = ie. Calista and Christeta.

33-34: Theophilus lists several legendary killers:
(1) the toxic vapors (damps) of the River Styx in Hades (Stygian = "of the River Styx");
(2) the mandrake plant, with its forked roots, was said to resemble a human body; when it was pulled from the ground, it would shriek, and any person who heard it was believed to go mad or die; and
(3) the basilisk was a fabled serpent whose glance was believed to be lethal.
The dreadful lightning that does crush the bones
And never singe the skin, shall not appear
Less fatal to her than my zeal made hot
With love unto my gods. I have deferred it.
In hopes to draw back this apostata,
Which will be greater honour than her death,
Unto her father's faith; and, to that end,
Have brought my daughters hither.

Cat. And we doubt not
To do what you desire.

Sap. Let her be sent for.
Prosper in your good work; and were I not
To attend the princess, I would see and hear
How you succeed.

Theo. I am commanded too,
I'll bear you company.

Sap. Give them your ring,
To lead her as in triumph, if they win her,
Before her highness.

[Exit Sapritius.]

Theo. Spare no promises,
Persuasions, or threats, I do conjure you:
If you prevail, 'tis the most glorious work
You ever undertook.

Enter Dorothea and Angelo.

Priest. She comes.

Theo. We leave you;
Be constant, and be careful.

[Exeunt Theophilus and Priest.]

Calis. We are sorry
To meet you under guard.

Dor. But I more grieved
You are at liberty. So well I love you,
That I could wish, for such a cause as mine,
You were my fellow-prisoners. Prithee, Angelo,
Reach us some chairs. Please you sit –

Calis. We thank you:
Our visit is for love, love to your safety.

Christ. Our conference must be private; pray you, therefore,
Command your boy to leave us.
Dor. You may trust him
With any secret that concerns my life;
Falsehood and he are strangers: had you, ladies,
Been blessed with such a servant, you had never
Forsook that way, your journey even half ended,
That lead to joys eternal. In the place
Of loose lascivious mirth, he would have stirred you
To holy meditations; and so far
He is from flattery, that he would have told you,
Your pride being at the height, how miserable
And wretched things you were, that, for an hour
Of pleasure here, have made a desperate sale
Of all your right in happiness hereafter.

He must not leave me; without him I fall:
In this life he's my servant, in the other
A wished companion.

Ang. ’Tis not in the devil,
Nor all his wicked arts, to shake such goodness.

Dor. But you were speaking, lady.

Calis. As a friend
And lover of your safety, and I pray you
So to receive it; and, if you remember
How near in love our parents were, that we,
Even from the cradle, were brought up together,
Our amity increasing with our years,
We cannot stand suspected.

Dor. To the purpose.

Calis. We come, then, as good angels, Dorothea,
To make you happy; and the means so easy
That, be not you an enemy to yourself,
Already you enjoy it.

Christ. Look on us,
Ruined as you are, once, and brought unto it,
By your persuasion.

Calis. But what followed, lady?
Leaving those blessings which our gods gave freely,
And showered upon us with a prodigal hand, −
As to be noble born, youth, beauty, wealth,
And the free use of these without control,
Check, curb, or stop, such is our law's indulgence! −
All happiness forsook us; bonds and fetters,
For amorous twines; the rack and hangman's whips,
In place of choice delights; our parents' curses
Instead of blessings; scorn, neglect, contempt,
Fell thick upon us.

= ie. abandoned Christianity.
= instead, in place.

= its.

100-2: for an hour...hereafter = "you would have sold all of your future happiness just to experience one hour of Christian bliss in Angelo's presence."

have (line 101) = ie. "you would have".

= ie. the next life (in Heaven).

107-8: "Even Satan, with all his evil tricks, could not shake Dorothea from her faith."

115: Dorothea's parents were friends with Theophilus and his wife.

120: "get to the point."

= there is obvious irony in Calista's use of a Christian term to describe her sister and herself.

= "you would be enjoying it."

128-9: "our lives were almost ruined once before, as yours is now, thanks to your converting us to Christianity."

= generous.

= restraint.

= in place of. = embraces.¹

131-141: Calista blames Christianity for the unhappiness the conversion of she and her sister had brought them, as if torture and hatred for the followers of Christ were innate
proper properties of Christianity, rather than tools and attributes of its enemies.

143: "once we carefully reconsidered our decision".

= the arguments the sisters make inadvertently reveal both the strengths and limitations of their pagan faith: their gods exist primarily to bring them tangible good fortune on earth, but no more.

= a reference to the divided hooves ascribed to the devil.

161-2: Now to put on…silence = ie. "to remain quiet as would normally become a young lady".
= who. = would be.

= deceiving.

= fishes; part of the fishing metaphor with baits, nets and prey.

181-2: or call them…the same = Dorothea asks whether the girls would call their parents gods and goddesses if they engaged in the same disgraceful behavior as the Roman deities were known to engage in.

187-9: Dorothea's refers to some of Jupiter's more notorious attributes:

(1) adulterer = Jupiter was a serial rapist; one time, for example, he disguised himself as the husband of Alcimena of Thebes in order to sleep with her;

(2) ravisher = Jupiter regularly disguised himself as an animal in order to sneak up on young maidens and take them
by force;

(3) almost a parricide = in order to become king of the gods, Jupiter overthrow his father, Cronus, afterwards banishing him to Tartarus, a place far below hell; and

(4) incestuous = Jupiter married his sister Juno.

= lasciviousness.

203-4: ie. "I think you know me better than that, otherwise my affection for you is misplaced."

209: Flora was the goddess of flowers and spring, but later Christian writers reported that she was a prostitute.\textsuperscript{11} stews = brothels.

= ie. "read the stories of the gods as recorded by those".

= who.

214: ie. the stories are too vulgar for Dorothea to repeat in detail.

219-220: Jupiter famously took the form of a beautiful bull in order to approach the maiden Europa; playfully caressing the bull, Europa jumped on his back, at which point Jupiter plunged into the ocean and swam to Crete (hence the ship), where he raped her; they had three children, including the Minotaur.

We should note that most editors, including the usually conservative Gifford, emend ship, which appeared in all the early editions, to shape.

221-2: Neptune…day-labourer = Neptune, the god of the sea, was said to have with Apollo manually built the walls of Troy for Laomedon, the king of Troy.\textsuperscript{11}

222-3: Apollo…for bread = as punishment for having slain the Cyclops, Apollo was required to act as a servant to Admetus, the king of Pharses, for a year.\textsuperscript{11}

223-4: the Lemnian…for hire = a reference to Vulcan, the god of fire, usually portrayed as a blacksmith; his job was to create lightning bolts for Jupiter, as well as to take on any jobs given him by the other gods, such as making armour
and works of art, for deities and humans alike.

Vulcan once took the side of his mother Juno when she was arguing with his father Jupiter; the latter was so angry he threw Vulcan off Mt. Olympus down to the earth, where he landed on the island of Lemnos (hence the epithet Lemnian), permanently crippling one of his legs. Lemnos was Vulcan's favourite place on earth, and he enjoyed staying among the natives there who had nursed him after his fall from Olympus. 11

224-5: Prometheus...vulture = as punishment for having delivered fire to mankind, Jupiter had the demi-god
Prometheus bound to a pillar, where he was attacked by an eagle which gnawed out his liver every day, the liver growing back every night; this went on for years, until Jupiter permitted Hercules to rescue him. 11

We may note the earliest editions print Lyometheus or Lymotheus for Prometheus in line 224, properly emended by all the editors.

still-growing = ever-growing.

226: one of the oldest gods, Saturn, the king of the gods in his generation, was overthrown by his son Jupiter, who had his father bound in chains for eternity in Tartarus.

adamant (line 226) = legendary material of proverbially great hardness.

226-230: Gifford suggests this didactic story of the Egyptian god of the dead, Osiris, was invented by Massinger.

236-255: Gifford suggests this didactic story of the Egyptian god of the dead, Osiris, was invented by Massinger.

= ie. raw material. 1

= defeated: 1 ie. the god failed to give the king his victory.

= alternate form of basin.

= ie. his god was useless to him.

= ie. amity was restored.
To put their trust in dross.

Calis. Oh, that I had been born
Without a father!

Christ. Piety to him
Hath ruined us forever.

Dor. Think not so;
You may repair all yet: the attribute
That speaks His Godhead most, is merciful:
Revenge is proper to the fiends you worship,
Yet cannot strike without His leave. − You weep, −
Oh, 'tis a heavenly shower! celestial balm
To cure your wounded conscience! let it fall,
Fall thick upon it; and, when that is spent,
I'll help it with another of my tears:
And may your true repentance prove the child
Of my true sorrow, never mother had
A birth so happy!

Calis. We are caught ourselves,
That came to take you; and, assured of conquest,
We are your captives.

Dor. And in that you triumph:
Your victory had been eternal loss,
And this your loss immortal gain. Fix here,
And you shall feel yourselves inwardly armed
'Gainst tortures, death, and hell: − but, take heed, sisters,
Though of a father, you fall not into
A second and a worse apostacy.

Calis. Never, oh never! steeled by your example,
We dare the worst of tyranny.

Christ. Here's our warrant,
You shall along and witness it.

Dor. Be confirmed then;
And rest assured, the more you suffer here,
The more your glory, you to Heaven more dear.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III, SCENE II.

The Governor's Palace.

Enter Artemia, Sapritius, Theophilus, and Harpax.
Artem. Sapritius, though your son deserves no pity,
We grieve his sickness: his contempt of us,
We cast behind us, and look back upon
His service done to Caesar, that weighs down
Our just displeasure. If his malady
Have growth from his restraint, or that you think
His liberty can cure him, let him have it:
Say, we forgive him freely.

Sap. Your grace binds us,
Ever your humblest vassals.

Artem. Use all means
For his recovery; though yet I love him,
I will not force affection. If the Christian,
Whose beauty hath out-rivalled mine, be won
To be of our belief, let him enjoy her;
That all may know, when the cause wills, I can
Command my own desires.

Theo. Be happy then,
My lord Sapritius: I am confident,
Such eloquence and sweet persuasion dwells
Upon my daughters' tongues, that they will work her
To anything they please.

Sap. I wish they may!
Yet 'tis no easy task to undertake,
To alter a perverse and obstinate woman.

[A shout within: loud music.]

Enter Sempronius.

Semp. My lord, your daughters,
The pillars of our faith, having converted,
For so report gives out, the Christian lady,
The image of great Jupiter borne before them,
Sue for access.

Theo. My soul divined as much.
Blest be the time when first they saw this light!
Their mother, when she bore them to support
My feeble age, filled not my longing heart
With so much joy as they in this good work
Have thrown upon me.

Enter Priest with the Image of Jupiter,
incense and censers: followed by
Calista and Christeta, leading Dorothea.
Welcome, oh, *thrice welcome*, Daughters, both of my body and my mind! Let me embrace in you my bliss, my comfort; And Dorothea, now more welcome too, Then if you never had fallen off! I am ravished With the excess of joy: — speak, happy daughters, The blest event.

_Calis._ We never gained so much By any undertaking.

_Theo._ O my dear girl, Our gods reward thee!

_Dor._ Nor was ever time, On my part, better spent.

_Christ._ We are all now Of one opinion.

_Theo._ My best Christeta! — Madam, if ever you did grace to worth, Vouchsafe your princely hands.

_Artem._ Most willingly — Do you refuse it!

_Calis._ Let us first deserve it.

_Theo._ My own child still! here set our god; prepare The incense quickly. Come, fair Dorothea, I will myself support you; — now kneel down, And pay your vows to Jupiter.

_Dor._ I shall do it Better by their example.

_Theo._ They shall guide you; They are familiar with the sacrifice. — Forward, my twins of comfort, and, to teach her, Make a joint offering.

_Christ._ Thus — [They both spit at the image, throw it down, and *spurn* it.]

_Calis._ And thus —

_Harp._ Profane, And impious! stand you now like a statue? Are you the champion of the gods? where is Your holy zeal, your anger?

_Theo._ I am *blasted*; And, as my feet were rooted here, I find I have no motion; I *would* I had no sight too!

= typical phrase of emphasis.

= spoken to Artemia.

81-82: Artemia offers to grasp hands or embrace the ladies, but they refuse her, perhaps stepping back from her.

= Theophilus understands his daughters' rejection of Artemia's embrace to be a result of their modesty.

= kick.

106-9: Harpax reacts to Theophilus' failure to stop or move against the destruction of the statue.

= ruined or discredited.

= wish.
Or if my eyes can serve to any use,
Give me, thou injured Power! a sea of tears,
To expiate this madness in my daughters;
For, being themselves, they would have trembled at
So blasphemous a deed in any other: —
For my sake, hold awhile thy dreadful thunder,
And give me patience to demand a reason
For this accursèd act.

Dor. ’Twas bravely done.

Theo. Peace, damned enchantress, peace! — I should look on you
With eyes made red with fury, and my hand,
That shakes with rage, should much outstrip my tongue,
And seal my vengeance on your hearts; — but nature,
To you that have fallen once, bids me again
To be a father. Oh! how durst you tempt
The anger of great Jove?

Dor. Alack, poor Jove!

He is no swaggerer! how smug he stands!
He’ll take a kick, or anything.

Sap. Stop her mouth.

Dor. It is the patient’st godling; do not fear him;
He would not hurt the thief that stole away
Two of his golden locks; indeed he could not:
And still ’tis the same quiet thing.

Theo. Blasphemer!
Ingenious cruelty shall punish this;
Thou art past hope: but for you yet, dear daughters,
Again bewitched, the dew of mild forgiveness
May gently fall, provided you deserve it
With true contrition: be yourselves again;
Sue to th’ offended deity.

Christ. Not to be
The mistress of the earth.

Calis. I will not offer
A grain of incense to it, much less kneel,
Nor look on it but with contempt and scorn,
To have a thousand years conferred upon me

= ie. Jupiter, and his broken bust.
= the sense is, "if they had been in their right minds".
= "quiet!"
= alternative name for Jupiter.
= an expression of grief, used here ironically of course by Dorothea; alack appeared in English about two centuries after its synonym alas.¹
= blusterer, or one who acts in a superior manner;¹ Dorothea mocks the god's inability to defend himself.

¹39: patient’st = most patient; we should note that all the original editions print ancient’st here, which all the editors emend.

godling = little god; Dorothea continues to sneer at the impotent Jupiter.

¹52-3: Christeta would not ask for forgiveness even to become the mistress of the earth; the expression mistress of the earth appeared in a couple of contemporary publications as an epithet for Summer, the daughter of Spring.
Of worldly blessings. We profess ourselves
to be, like Dorothea, Christians;
And owe her for that happiness.

Theo. My ears receive, in hearing this, all deadly charms,
Powerful to make man wretched.

Artem. Are these they
You bragged could convert others!

Sap. That want strength
To stand, themselves!

Harp. Your honour is engaged.
The credit of your cause depends upon it;
Something you must do suddenly.

Theo. And I will.

Harp. They merit death; but, falling by your hand,
’Twill be recorded for a just revenge,
And holy fury in you.

Theo. Do not blow
The furnace of a wrath thrice hot already;
Ætna is in my breast, wildfire burns here,
Which only blood must quench. — Incensèd Power!
Which from my infancy I have adored,
Look down with favourable beams upon
The sacrifice, though not allowed thy priest,
Which I will offer to thee; and be pleased,
My fiery zeal inciting me to act it,
To call that justice others may style murder. —
Come, you accursed, thus by the hair I drag you
Before this holy altar; thus look on you,
Less pitiful than tigers to their prey:
And thus, with mine own hand, I take that life
Which I gave to you.

[Kills them.]

Dor. O, most cruel butcher!

Theo. My anger ends not here: hell’s dreadful porter,
Receive into thy ever-open gates
Their damned souls, and let the Furies’ whips
On them alone be wasted; and, when death
Closes these eyes, ’twill be Elysium to me

To hear their shrieks and howlings. Make me, Pluto,
Thy instrument to furnish thee with souls
Of that accursèd sect; nor let me fall,
Till my fell vengeance hath consumed them all.

[Exit, Harpax hugging him.]

Artem. Tis a brave zeal.

Enter Angelo, smiling.

Dor. Oh, call him back again,
Call back your hangman! here's one prisoner left
To be the subject of his knife.

Artem. Not so;
We are not so near reconciled unto thee; −
Thou shalt not perish such an easy way.
Be she your charge, Sapritius, now; and suffer
None to come near her, till we have found out
Some torments worthy of her.

Ang. Courage, mistress,
These martyrs but prepare your glorious fate;
You shall exceed them, and not imitate.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III, SCENE III.

A Room in Dorothea's House.

Enter Spungius and Hircius, ragged,
at opposite doors.

Hir. Spungius!

Spun. My fine rogue, how is it? how goes this tottered
world?

Hir. Hast any money?

Spun. Money! no. The tavern ivy clings about my
money, and kills it. Hast thou any money?

Hir. No. My money is a mad bull; and finding any gap
opened, away it runs.

Spun. I see then a tavern and a bawdy-house have
faces much alike; the one hath red grates next the door,
the other hath peeping-holes within doors: the tavern

= savage.¹

= excellent.

217: the earliest editions print Enter Artemia laughing, which, as Gifford notes, makes no sense, since Artemia is still on-stage; I have accepted Gifford's suggested emendation to the stage direction of the 1661 quarto, as printed here.

= meaning herself.

= permit.

= ie. Christeta and Calista.

= ie. merely imitate them.

= Hircius and Spungius enter from different parts of the stage, running onto each other accidentally.

= alternate spelling of tattered.

= "have you".

8-9: ie. Spungius spent all his money on drink.

= brothel.

= a reference to the checker-pattern on a tavern's door-post.¹

= ie. peep-holes.
hath evermore a bush, the bawdy-house sometimes neither hedge nor bush. From a tavern a man comes reeling; from a bawdy-house, not able to stand. In the tavern you are cozened with paltry wine; in a bawdy-house by a painted whore: money may have wine, and a whore will have money; but to neither can you cry, “Drawer, you rogue!” or, “Keep door, rotten bawd!”

without a silver whistle. We are justly plagued, therefore, for running from our mistress.

Hir. Thou didst; I did not: yet I had run too, but that one gave me turpentine pills, and that stayed my running.

Spun. Well! the thread of my life is drawn through the needle of necessity, whose eye, looking upon my lousy breeches, cries out it cannot mend them; which so pricks the linings of my body (and those are, heart, lights, lungs, guts, and midriff), that I beg on my knees to have Atropos, the tailor to the Destinies, to take her shears, and cut my thread in two; or to heat the iron goose of mortality, and so press me to death.

Hir. Sure thy father was some botcher, and thy hungry tongue bit off these shreds of complaints, to patch up the elbows of thy nitty eloquence.

Spun. And what was thy father?

Hir. A low-minded cobbler, a cobbler whose zeal set = see the note above at lines 8-9.
= perhaps a particularly vulgar reference to pubic hair.
= this phrase parallels reeling, but is clearly bawdy.
= cheated. = cheap.
= covered with make-up. = procure, ie. "get you".

23: "Drawer, you rogue!" = a call for the attention of the man who draws your drink.
"Keep door, rotten bawd!" = an imperative to the house madam to keep anyone out of the room in which the client has engaged a prostitute for her services.

24: without a silver whistle = ie. without paying; the metaphor is of a man unsuccessfully whistling for attention, unless the whistle is accompanied by money.
In contemporary literature, a person in charge was said to command others by means of a silver whistle.
plagued = tormented, ie. punished or paid.

= ie. Dorothea.
= would have.

28: one = ie. someone.
turpentine pills = turpentine was known to cause diarrhea.  
stayed my running = "kept me from running away".

30ff: vulgar and despicable as they are, Hircius and Spungius must be acknowledged to be entertaining speakers, weaving their dense and rather silly metaphors.

= filthy, filled with lice.

33: linings = contents.  
lights = generally understood to mean lungs,  
though contemporary literature sometimes used the two words separately, as here, as if they referred to different organs.

= diaphragm. 

= a goddess, and one of the three Fates (or Destinies), who measured out the length of each person's life on a line of thread; Atropos was responsible for ending one's life by cutting the thread (hence Spungius calls her a tailor).

= a goose was a tailor's smoothing-iron.

= clothing mender; note the metaphor with shreds and patch.

= infested with the eggs of lice.
many a woman upright; the remembrance of whose awl
(I now having nothing) thrusts such scurvy stitches into
my soul, that the heel of my happiness is gone awry.

**Spun.** Pity that e'er thou trod'st thy shoe awry.

**Hir.** Long I cannot last; for all sowterly wax of comfort
melting away, and misery taking the length of my foot,
it boots not me to sue for life, when all my hopes are
seam- rent, and go wet-shod.

**Spun.** This shows thou art a cobbler 's son, by going
through-stitch: O Hircius, would thou and I were so happy to be cobblers!

**Hir.** So would I; for both of us being weary of our
lives, should then be sure of shoemakers' ends.

**Spun.** I see the beginning of my end, for I am almost
starved.

**Hir.** So am not I; but I am more than famished.

**Spun.** All the members in my body are in a rebellion
one against another.

**Hir.** So are mine; and nothing but a cook, being a
constable, can appease them, presenting to my nose,
instead of his painted staff, a spit full of roast meat.

**Spun.** But in this rebellion, what uproars do they make!
my belly cries to my mouth, "Why dost not gape and
feed me?"

**Hir.** And my mouth sets out a throat to my hand, "Why
dost thou not lift up meat, and cram my chops with it?"

**Spun.** Then my hand hath a fling at mine eyes, because
they look not out, and shark for victuals.

**Hir.** Which mine eyes seeing, full of tears, cry aloud,
and curse my feet, for not ambling up and down to feed
colon; sithence, if good meat be in any place, 'tis known
my feet can smell.

**Spun.** But then my feet, like lazy rogues, lie still, and
had rather do nothing than run to and fro to purchase
anything.

**Hir.** Why, among so many millions of people, should
thou and I only be miserable tatterdemallions,
ragamuffins, and lousy desperates?

**Spun.** Thou art a mere I-am-an-o, I-am-an-as: consider

= a tool for piercing holes.¹
= askew.¹
= troddest, ie. did tread.
= an adjective for resembling a souter, another name for
a cobbler;¹ note how Hircius continues the absurd
shoemaker metaphors in these lines.
= "is useless for me", with obvious pun. = beg for my life.
= torn at the seams.¹ = with wet feet.¹
= a stitch drawn completely through material, hence a
metaphor for completing any action or doing something
thoroughly.¹
= punning on the ends of shoemakers' thread.¹

= a constable might carry a staff of office, which could be
tipped with a cap of metal, or painted.¹
= "don't you open wide".
= jaws.
= ie. seek food in the manner of a shark; this use of shark
as a verb was common in 17th century literature.

87-88: feed colon = "satisfy my hunger".
= old word for "since".
= (1) can smell out the food, and (2) are smelly.

= the population of London at this time was around half a
million;²⁰ of England, about 5 million.²¹
= persons in tattered clothing.¹
= complete. = Spungius condemns Hircius for feeling
the whole world, and 'tis as we are.

Hir. Lousy, beggarly! thou whoreson assafœtida!

Spun. Worse; all totterings, all out of frame, thou fooliamini!

Hir. As how, arsenic? come, make the world smart.

Spun. Old honour goes on crutches, beggary rides  
carroched; honest men make feasts, knaves sit at tables,  
cowards are lapped in velvet, soldiers (as we) in rags;  
beauty turns whore, whore, bawd, and both die of the  
pox; why, then, when all the world stumbles, should  
thou and I walk upright?

Hir. Stop, look! who's yonder?

Enter Angelo.

Spun. Fellow Angelo! how does my little man, well?

Ang. Yes; And would you did so! Where are your clothes?

Hir. Clothes! You see every woman almost go in her  
loose gown, and why should not we have our clothes  
loose?

Spun. Would they were loose!

Ang. Why, where are they?

Spun. Where many a velvet cloak, I warrant, at this  
hour, keeps them company; they are pawned to a  
broker.

Ang. Why pawned? where's all the gold I left with you?

Hir. The gold! we put that into a scrivener's hands, and  
he hath cozened us.

Spun. And therefore, I prithee, Angelo, if thou hast  
another purse, let it be confiscate, and brought to  
devastation.
Ang. Are you made all of lies? I know which way
Your gilt-winged pieces flew. I will no more
Be mocked by you: be sorry for your riots.

Tame your wild flesh by labour; eat the bread
Got with hard hands; let sorrow be your whip,
To draw drops of repentance from your heart:
When I read this amendment in your eyes,
You shall not want; till then, my pity dies.

[Exit Angelo.]

Spun. Is it not a shame, that this scurvy puerilis should
give us lessons.

Hir. I have dwelt, thou know'st, a long time in the
suburbs of the conscience, and they are ever bawdy; but
now my heart shall take a house within the walls of
honesty.

Enter Harpax aloof.

Spun. O you drawers of wine, draw me no more to the
bar of beggary; the sound of “Score a pottle of sack” is
worse than the noise of a scolding oyster-wench, or two
cats incorporating.

Harp. This must not be. I do not like when conscience
Thaws; keep her frozen still.

[Comes forward.]

How now, my masters!
Dejected? drooping? drowned in tears? clothes torn?
Lean, and ill-coloured? sighing? where's the whirlwind
Which raises all these mischiefs? I have seen you
Drawn better on't. O! but a spirit told me
You both would come to this, when in you thrust
Yourselves into the service of that lady,
Who shortly now must die. Where's now her praying?
What good got you by wearing out your feet,
To run on scurvy errands to the poor,
And to bear money to a sort of rogues
And lousy prisoners?

Hir. Pox on them! I never prospered since I did it.

142-3: brought to devastation = wasted.
= Angelo puns on gilt and guilt.¹
= debouchery;² Angelo here begins a series of imperatives,
insinuating the servants to reform; only when they mend
their ways will he help them.
= ie. hardened or coarsened with manual labour.
= go lacking.
= child.¹
= the suburbs, found outside the city walls, were the tra-
ditional location of the brothels of a Renaissance city.
161-9: Hircius and Spungius contemplate reforming.

164: note that Harpax only dares appear after Angelo has
exited the scene.
alof = behind, ie. sneaking; Harpax does not make
himself immediately visible to the boys on stage.
166: score = one's debt at a tavern was recorded by a series
of markings (scores).
pottle = tankard holding a half-gallon.
sack = a white wine.
= a woman who sells oysters.
= mating.
171-2: Harpax hears in Spungius' words the possibility of
the boys' reformation, which he will quickly quash.
= it.
= the original quarto prints wearing your our feete; the
emendation is based on the 1631 edition.
= collection.
= filthy.
= have not.
Spun. Had I been a pagan still, I should not have
spit white for want of drink; but come to any vintner
now, and bid him trust me, because I turned Christian,
and he cries, Puh!

Harp. You're rightly served; before that peevish lady
Had to do with you, women, wine and money
Flowed in abundance with you, did it not?

Hir. O, those days! those days!
Harp. Beat not your breasts, tear not your hair in madness;
Those days shall come again, be ruled by me;
And better, mark me, better.
Spun. I have seen you, sir, as I take it, an attendant on
the Lord Theophilus.

Harp. Yes, yes; in show his servant; but − hark, hither! −
Take heed nobody listens.

Spun. Not a mouse stirs.

Harp. I am a prince disguised.

Hir. Disguised! how? drunk?
Harp. Yes, my fine boy! I'll drink too, and be drunk;
I am a prince, and any man by me,
Let him but keep my rules, shall soon grow rich,
Exceeding rich, most infinitely rich:
He that shall serve me is not starved from pleasures
As other poor knaves are; no, take their fill.

Spun. But that, sir, we're so ragged −

Harp. You'll say, you'd serve me?

Hir. Before any master under the zodiac.

Harp. For clothes no matter; I've a mind to both.
And one thing I like in you; now that you see
The bonfire of your lady's state burnt out,
You give it over, do you not?

Hir. Let her be hanged!

Spun. And poxed!

Harp. Why, now you're mine;
Come, let my bosom touch you.

Spun. We have bugs, sir.
Harp. There's money, fetch your clothes home; there's for you.

Hir. Avoid, vermin! give over our mistress - a man cannot prosper worse, if he serve the devil.

Harp. How! the devil? I'll tell you what now of the devil, He's no such horrid creature: cloven-footed, Black, saucer-eyed, his nostrils breathing fire, as These lying Christians make him.

Both. No!

Harp. He's more loving To man, than man to man is.

Hir. Is he so? Would we two might come acquainted with him!

Harp. You shall: he's a wondrous good fellow, loves a cup of wine, a whore, anything. You have money; it's ten to one but I'll bring him to some tavern to you or other.

Spun. I'll bespeak the best room in the house for him.

Harp. Some people he cannot endure.

Hir. We'll give him no such cause.

Harp. He hates a civil lawyer, as a soldier does peace.

Spun. How a commoner?

Harp. Loves him from the teeth outward.

Spun. Pray, my lord and prince, let me encounter you with one foolish question: does the devil eat any mace in his broth?

Harp. Exceeding much, when his burning fever takes him; and then he has the knuckles of a bailiff boiled to his breakfast.

Hir. Then, my lord, he loves a catchpole, does he not?

Harp. As a bearward doth a dog. A catchpole! he hath sworn, if ever he dies, to make a serjeant his heir, and a yeoman his overseer.
Spun. How if he come to any great man’s gate, will the porter let him come in, sir?

Harp. Oh! he loves porters of great men’s gates, because they are ever so near the wicket.

Hir. Do not they whom he makes much on, for all his stroking their cheeks, lead hellish lives under him?

Harp. No, no, no, no; he will be damned before he hurts any man: do but you (when you are thoroughly acquainted with him) ask for anything, see if it does not come.

Spun. Anything!

Harp. Call for a delicate rare whore, she is brought you.

Hir. Oh! my elbow itches. Will the devil keep the door?

Harp. Be drunk as a beggar, he helps you home.

Spun. O my fine devil! some watchman, I warrant; I wonder who is his constable.

Harp. Will you swear, roar, swagger? he claps you −

Hir. How? on the chops?

Harp. No, on the shoulder; and cries, “O, my brave boys!” Will any of you kill a man?

Spun. Yes, yes; I, I.

Harp. What is his word? “Hang! hang! ’tis nothing.” − Or stab a woman?

Hir. Yes, yes; I, I.

Harp. Here is the worst word he gives you: “A pox on’t, go on!”

Hir. O inveigling rascal! – I am ravished.

Harp. Go, get your clothes; turn up your glass of youth, And let the sands run merrily: nor do I care From what a lavish hand your money flies, So you give none away to beggars −

Hir. Hang them!
Harp. And to the scrubbing poor.

Hir. I'll see them hanged first.

Harp. One service you must do me.

Both. Anything;

Harp. Your mistress, Dorothea, ere she suffers,
Is to be put to tortures: have you hearts
To tear her into shrieks, to fetch her soul
Up in the pangs of death, yet not to die?

Hir. Suppose this she, and that I had no hands, here's
my teeth.

Spun. Suppose this she, and that I had no teeth, here's
my nails.

Hir. But will not you be there, sir?

Harp. No, not for hills of diamonds; the grand master,
Who schools her in the Christian discipline,
Abhors my company: should I be there,
You'd think all hell broke loose, we should so quarrel.
Ply you this business; he, her flesh who spares,
Is lost, and in my love never more shares.

[Exit Harpax.]

Spun. Here's a master, you rogue!

Hir. Sure he cannot choose but have a horrible number
of servants.

[Exeunt.]

END OF ACT III.
ACT IV.

SCENE I.

The Governor's Palace.

Antoninus on a bed asleep, with Doctors about him; Sapritius and Macrinus.

1 Sap. O you, that are half gods, lengthen that life

2 Their deities lend us; turn o'er all the volumes
3 Of your mysterious Aesculapian science,
4 T' increase the number of this young man's days:
5 And, for each minute of his time prolonged,
6 Your fee shall be a piece of Roman gold
7 With Caesar's stamp, such as he sends his captains
8 When in the wars they earn well: do but save him,
9 And, as he's half myself, be you all mine.

10 Doct. What art can do, we promise; physic's hand

12 As apt is to destroy as to preserve,

14 If Heaven make not the med'cine: all this while,
15 Our skill hath combat held with his disease;
16 But 'tis so armed, and a deep melancholy.
18 To be such in part with death, we are in fear
19 The grave must mock our labours.

20 Mac. I have been
21 His keeper in this sickness, with such eyes
22 As I have seen my mother watch o'er me;
23 And, from that observation, sure I find
24 It is a midwife must deliver him.

26 Sap. Is he with child? a midwife!

28 Mac. Yes, with child;
29 And will, I fear, lose life, if by a woman
30 He is not brought to bed. Stand by his pillow
31 Some little while, and, in his broken slumbers,
32 Him shall you hear cry out on Dorothea;
33 And, when his arms fly open to catch her,
34 Closing together, he falls fast asleep,
Pleased with embracings of her airy form.
Physicians but torment him, his disease
Laughs at their gibberish language; let him hear
The voice of Dorothea, nay, but the name,
He starts up with high colour in his face:
She, or none, cures him; and how that can be,
The princess' strict command, barring that happiness,
To me impossible seems.

Sap. To me it shall not;
I'll be no subject to the greatest Caesar
Was ever crowned with laurel, rather than cease
To be a father.

[Exit Sapritius.]

Mac. Silence, sir, he wakes.

Anton. Thou kill'st me, Dorothea; oh, Dorothea!

Mac. She's here: − enjoy her.

Anton. Where? Why do you mock me?
Age on my head hath stuck no white hairs yet,
Yet I'm an old man, a fond doting fool
Upon a woman. I, to buy her beauty,
And she, for my acquaintance, hazards hers:
Yet, for our equal sufferings, none holds out
A hand of pity.

Doct. Let him have some music.

Anton. Hell on your fiddling!

[Starts from his bed.]

Doct. Take again your bed, sir;
Sleep is a sovereign physic.

Anton. Take an ass's head, sir:
Confusion on your fooleries, your charms! −
Thou stinking glister-pipe, where's the god of rest.

Thy pills and base apothecary drugs
Threatened to bring unto me? Out, you impostors!
Quacksalving, cheating mountebanks! your skill
Is to make sound men sick, and sick men kill.

Mac. Oh, be yourself, dear friend.

Anton. Myself, Macrinus!
How can I be myself, when I am mangled
Into a thousand pieces? here moves my head,
But where's my heart? wherever – that lies dead.

Re-enter Sapritius, dragging in Dorothea
by the hair, Angelo following.

Sap. Follow me, thou damned sorceress! Call up thy
spirits,
And, if they can, now let them from my hand
Untwine these witching hairs.

Anton. I am that spirit:
Or, if I be not, were you not my father,
One made of iron should hew that hand in pieces,
That so defaces this sweet monument
Of my love's beauty.

Sap. Art thou sick?

Anton. To death.

Sap. Wouldst thou recover?

Anton. Would I live in bliss!

Sap. And do thine eyes shoot daggers at that man
That brings thee health?

Anton. It is not in the world.

Sap. It's here.

Anton. To treasure, by enchantment locked
In caves as deep as hell, am I as near.

Sap. Break that enchanted cave: entér, and rifle
The spoils thy lust hunts after; I descend
To a base office, and become thy pander,
In bringing thee this proud thing: make her thy whore,
Thy health lies here; if she deny to give it,
Force it: imagine thou assault'st a town's

Weak wall: to't, 'tis thine own, but beat this down. –
Come, and, unseen, be witness to this battery,
How the coy strumpet yields.

Doct. Shall the boy stay, sir?
No matter for the boy: pages are used
to these odd bawdy shufflings; and, indeed, are
Those little young snakes in a Fury's head,
Will sting worse than the great ones. Let the pimp stay.

[Exeunt Sapritius, Macrinus, and Doctors.]

O, guard me, angels!
What tragedy must begin now?

When a tiger
Leaps into a timorous herd, with ravenous jaws,
Being hunger-starved, what tragedy then begins?

Death: I am happy so; you, hitherto,
Have still had goodness sphered within your eyes,
Let not that orb be broken.

Fear not, mistress;
If he dare offer violence, we two
Are strong enough for such a sickly man.

What is your horrid purpose, sir? your eye
Bears danger in it.

I must −

Speak it out.

Climb that sweet virgin tree.

Plague o' your trees!

And pluck that fruit which none, I think, e'er tasted.

A soldier, and stand fumbling so!

Oh, kill me,
And Heaven will take it as a sacrifice;
But, if you play the ravisher, there is
A hell to swallow you.

Let her swallow thee!

Rise: − for the Roman empire, Dorothea,
I would not wound thine honour. Pleasures forced
Are unripe apples; sour, not worth the plucking:
Yet, let me tell you, 'tis my father's will,
That I should seize upon you, as my prey;
Which I abhor, as much as the blackest sin
The villainy of man did ever act.

[Sapritius breaks in with Macrinus.]

Dor. Die happy for this language!

Sap. Die a slave,
A blockish idiot!

Mac. Dear sir, vex him not.

Sap. Yes, and vex thee too; both, I think, are geldings:
Cold, phlegmatic bastard, thou'rt no brat of mine:

One spark of me, when I had heat like thine,
By this had made a bonfire: a tempting whore,
For whom thou'rt mad, thrust e'en into thine arms,
And stand'st thou puling! Had a tailor seen her

At this advantage, he, with his cross capers,
Had ruffled her by this. But thou shalt curse

Thy dalliance, and here, before her eyes,
Tear thy own flesh in pieces, when a slave
In hot lust bastes himself, and gluts those pleasures
Thy niceness durst not touch. − Call out a slave;
You, captain of our guard, fetch a slave hither.

Anton. What will you do, dear sir?

Sap. Teach her a trade,
Which many would learn in less than half an hour, −
To play the whore.

Enter a Slave.

Mac. A slave is come; what now?

Sap. Thou hast bones and flesh
Enough to ply thy labour; from what country
Wert thou ta'en prisoner, here to be our slave?

Slave. From Britain.

Sap. In the west ocean?
Slave. Yes.

Sap. An island?

Slave. Yes.

Sap. I'm fitted: of all nations
Our Roman swords e'er conquered, none comes near
The Briton for true whoring. Sirrah, fellow,
What wouldst thou do to gain thy liberty?

Slave. Do! liberty! fight naked with a lion,
Venture to pluck a standard from the heart
Of an armed legion. Liberty! I'd thus
Bestride a rampire, and defiance spit
I' the face of death, then, when the battering ram
Was fetching his career backward, to pash

Me with his horns in pieces. To shake my chains off,
And that I could not do't but by thy death,
Stood'st thou on this dry shore, I on a rock
Ten pyramids high, down would I leap to kill thee,
Or die myself: what is for man to do,
I'll venture on, to be no more a slave.

Sap. Thou shalt, then, be no slave, for I will set thee
Upon a piece of work is fit for man,
Brave for a Briton: — drag that thing aside,
And ravish her.

Slave. And ravish her! is this your manly service?
A devil scorns to do't; 'tis for a beast,
A villain, not a man: I am, as yet,
But half a slave; but, when that work is past,
A damnèd whole one, a black ugly slave,
The slave of all base slaves: — do't thyself, Roman,
'Tis drudgery fit for thee.

Sap. He's bewitched too:
Bind him, and with a bastinado give him,
Upon his naked belly, two hundred blows.

Slave. Thou art more slave than I.

[He is carried off.]

Dor. That Power supernal, on whom waits my soul,
Is captain o'er my chastity.

Anton. Good sir, give o'er;
The more you wrong her, yourself's vexed the more.
Plagues light on her and thee! — thus down I throw
Thy harlot, thus by th’ hair nail her to earth.
Call in ten slaves, let every one discover
What lust desires, and surfeit here his fill.
Call in ten slaves.

Enter Slaves.

Mac. They are come, sir, at your call.

Sap. Oh, oh!

[Falls down.]

Enter Theophilus.

Theo. Where is the governor?

Anton. There’s my wretched father.

Theo. My lord Sapritius — he's not dead! — my lord!
That witch there —

Anton. ’Tis no Roman gods can strike
These fearful terrors. O, thou happy maid,
Forgive this wicked purpose of my father.

Dor. I do.

Theo. Gone, gone; he's peppered. It is thou
Hast done this act infernal.

Dor. Heaven pardon you!
And if my wrongs from thence pull vengeance down,
(I can no miracles work), yet, from my soul,
Pray to those Powers I serve, he may recover.

Theo. He stirs — help, raise him up, — my lord!

Sap. Where am I?

Theo. One cheek is blasted.

Sap. Blasted! where's the lamia
That tears my entrails? I’m bewitched; seize on her.

Dor. I’m here; do what you please.

Theo. Spurn her to th’ bar.

Dor. Come, boy, being there, more near to Heaven we are.

Sap. Kick harder; go out, witch!

[Exeunt all but Antoninus.]
Anton. O bloody hangmen! Thine own gods give thee breath!
Each of thy tortures is my several death.

[Exit.]

ACT IV, SCENE II.

A Public Square.

Enter Harpax, Hircius, and Spungius.

Harp. Do you like my service now? say, am not I
A master worth attendance?

Spun. Attendance! I had rather lick clean the soles
of your dirty boots, than wear the richest suit of any
infected lord, whose rotten life hangs between the two
poles.

Hir. A lord's suit! I would not give up the cloak of
your service, to meet the splayfoot estate of any
left-eyed knight above the antipodes; because they are
unlucky to meet.

Harp. This day I'll try your loves to me; 'tis only
But well to use the agility of your arms.

Spun. Or legs, I'm lusty at them.

Hir. Or any other member that has no legs.

Spun. Thou'lt run into some hole.

Hir. If I meet one that's more than my match, and that
I cannot stand in their hands, I must and will creep on
my knees.

Harp. Hear me, my little team of villains, hear me;
I cannot teach you fencing with these cudgels,
Yet you must use them; lay them on but soundly;
That's all.

Hir. Nay, if we come to mauling once, puh!

Spun. But what walnut-tree is it we must beat?

Harp. Your mistress.

Hir. How! my mistress? I begin to have a Christian

= "an individual death to me"; the scene ends with a
rhyming couplet.

= ie. worth serving.

= ie. perhaps with the plague or venereal disease, but could
also refer to moral corruption.¹

= an awkward foot that points outward.¹

¹ left-eyed = unable to see clearly.¹

¹ antipodes = opposite ends of the earth.¹

¹11-12: they are...to meet = perhaps a reference to the
unlucky nature of the left side.

= today. = test.

17: ie. Spungius' legs are as vigorous (lusty) as his arms.

= limb;² Hircius is being vaguely dirty.

= ie. to hide, but also vaguely obscene.

23-25: Hircius is now more obviously dirty; stand, with
in their hands, is clearly bawdy.

= ie. like a team of horses, working together.¹

= here Harpax hands the boys a pair of rods with which to
beat Dorothea.

= beating.

= The Encyclopedia Britannica (1911) reports that in
some parts of England, walnut trees are thrashed with
poles to knock down the nuts, but wryly notes "this is
not a commendable mode of collecting them."⁵
heart made of sweet butter, I melt; I cannot strike a
woman.

Spun. Nor I, unless she scratch;—bum my mistress!

Harp. You're coxcombs, silly animals.

Hir. What's that?

Harp. Drones, asses, blinded moles, that dare not thrust
Your arms out to catch fortune; say, you fall off.
It must be done. You are converted rascals,
And, that once spread abroad, why, every slave
Will kick you, call you motley Christiâns,
Arid half-faced Christians.

Spun. The guts of my conscience begin to be of
whitleather.

Hir. I doubt me, I shall have no sweet butter in me.

Harp. Deny this, and each pagan whom you meet
Shall forkèd fingers thrust into your eyes—

Hir. If we be cuckolds.

Harp. Do this, and every god the Gentiles bow to
Shall add a fadome to your line of years.

Spun. A hundred fadome, I desire no more.

Hir. I desire but one inch longer.

Harp. The senators will, as you pass along,
Clap you upon your shoulders with this hand,
And with this give you gold: when you are dead,
Happy that man shall be can get a nail,
The paring,—nay, the dirt under the nail,
Of any of you both, to say, this dirt
Belonged to Spungius or Hircius.

Spun. They shall not want dirt under my nails, I will
keep them long of purpose, for now my fingers itch to
be at her.

Hir. The first thing I do, I'll take her over the lips.

= another term for beat or strike.¹

= fools.

46: "What silly animals?"

48f: Harpax berates the boys for their hesitancy to beat
Dorothea, as if they were Christians.
= ie. "you part company from her".¹

= with pinched faces.¹

= leather which has been softened by treating with alum
and salt;¹ hence, Spungius' resolve is weakening.

= "I suspect"; this is an example of the grammatical form
known as the ethical dative; the superfluous me after
the verb gives added emphasis.

61: a surprising reference to a move made popular by the
Three Stooges in the 20th century.

= men whose wives have cheated on them; the symbol of
a cuckold was a pair of horns worn by the husband -
Hircius has seized on Harpax's use of the word forked
to make a connection.

= pagans, ie. Romans faithful to their own gods.

66: Harpax uses a metaphor for determining the depth of
a body of water, by lowering into it a length of rope
(a "plumb line" with a lead ball attached to its end); a
fadome - an alternate spelling for fathom - was the
length of one's outstretched arms, about 6 feet.¹

= it is hardly necessary to point out the gutter in which
Hircius' mind lies.

74-78: when...Hircius = Harpax alludes to the Christian
obsession with collecting relics of dead saints; it was
not unheard of for entrepreneurial vultures to sit outside
the home of a dying holy person, ready to seize
physical specimens of the body the moment death
occurred.

= lack.

= for that.

= strike.¹
Spun. And I the hips, – we may strike anywhere?

Harp. Yes, anywhere.

Hir. Then I know where I’ll hit her.

Harp. Prosper, and be mine own; stand by, I must not
To see this done; great business calls me hence:
He's made can make her curse his violence.

[Exit Harpax.]

Spun. Fear it not, sir; her ribs shall be basted.

Hir. I’ll come upon her with rounce, robble-hobble,
and thwick-thwack-thirlery bouncing.

Enter Dorothea, led prisoner, a Guard attending;
Sapritius, Theophilus, Angelo, and a Hangman,
who sets up a pillar in the middle of the stage;
Sapritius and Theophilus sit; Angelo stands by Dorothea.

Sap. According to our Roman customs, bind
That Christian to a pillar.

Theo. Infernal Furies,
Could they into my hand thrust all their whips
To tear thy flesh, thy soul, ’tis not a torture
Fit to the vengeance I should heap on thee,
For wrongs done me – me! for flagitious facts,
By thee done to our gods; yet, so it stand,
To great Caesarea's governor's high pleasure,
Bow but thy knee to Jupiter, and offer
Any slight sacrifice; or do but swear
By Caesar's fortune, and be free.

Sap. Thou shalt.

Dor. Not for all Caesar's fortune, were it chained
To more worlds than are kingdoms in the world,
And all those worlds drawn after him. I defy
Your hangmen; you now show me whither to fly.

Sap. Are her tormentors ready?

= a reference to a wrestling move, in which a wrestler takes
down his opponent by flipping him over his hips; note
Spungius' joke involves rhyming hips with lips.

90: again, vaguely bawdy.

= ie. "cannot be present".

94: "whoever can break Dorothea's stoicism, and get her
to curse him who tortures her, is made for life."
93-94: Note also that Harpax ends with part in the
scene with a rhyming couplet.

= a pun and metaphor; to baste meant to beat, in addition
to its meaning in cooking.

100-1: both rounce robble hobble and thwick thwack
thirlery bouncing were nonsense phrases used by the
16th century poet Richard Stanyhurst in his 1582
translation of The First Four Books of the Aeneid of
Virgil to describe the sound of thunder. Thwick thwack
alone was used to describe the falling of continuous
blows.¹

= torturer.

103-6: Stage Directions: the quarto reads in part, a Hang-
man with cords in some ugly shape, sets up a pillar in the
middle of the stage; I have mostly accepted Gifford's
modification of the directions.

113-4: not a torture / Fit to = not a cruel enough torture
to be worthy of.

= wicked deeds, a common collocation.¹

118-120: the Romans were actually lenient to apostates,
requiring only a minimum acknowledgment of their gods
to avoid retribution; of course, if a Christian refused
to give in at all, harsh punishment could be expected.

124-6: a subtle but quite interesting metaphor of Caesar's
fortune dragging behind it on chains all the nations of
the world.

= (to) where.
Ang. Shrink not, dear mistress.

Spun. and Hir. My lord, we are ready for the business.

Dor. You two! whom I like fostered children fed, And lengthened out your starvèd life with bread; You be my hangmen! whom, when up the ladder Death haled you to be strangled, I fetched down, Clothed you, and warmed you, you two my tormentors!

Both. Yes, we.

Dor. Divine Powers pardon you!

Sap. Strike.

[They strike at her. Angelo kneeling holds her fast.]

Theo. Beat out her brains.

Dor. Receive me, you bright angels!

Sap. Faster, slaves.

Spun. Faster! I am out of breath, I am sure; if I were to beat a buck, I can strike no harder.

Hir. O mine arms! I cannot lift 'em to my head.

Dor. Joy above joys! are my tormentors weary In torturing me, and, in my sufferings, I fainting in no limb! tyrants, strike home, And feast your fury full.

Theo. These dogs are curs,

[Comes from his seat.]

Which snarl, yet bite not. See, my lord, her face Has more bewitching beauty than before: Proud whore, it smiles! cannot an eye start out, With these?

Hir. No, sir, nor the bridge of her nose fall; 'tis full of iron-work.

Sap. Let's view the cudgels, are they not counterfeit?

Ang. There fix thine eye still; – thy glorious crown must come Not from soft pleasure, but by martyrdom. There fix thine eye still; – when we next do meet, Not thorns, but roses, shall bear up thy feet:

133: we may wonder why Theophilus allowed Harpax to talk him into letting Hircius and Spungius be Dorothea's torturers; no doubt there were more experienced men he could have turned to.

= personified Death had called them to climb the gallows.

151: Dorothea expects to be killed outright.

= the phrase refers to the practice of beating clothes with a pole to wash them.¹

= Hircius makes a secondary allusion to a symptom of advanced syphilis, in which the body's cartilage deteriorated, causing the patient's nose to collapse.

= rods.

= ie. towards Heaven.

¹ Advanced syphilis referred to the advanced stage of the disease characterized by damage to the nervous system and other organs. It often included symptoms like the collapse of the nasal cartilage. This detail adds a layer of medical realism to Shakespeare's portrayal of the effects of torture.
There fix thine eye still.

[Exit Angelo.]

Dor. Ever, ever, ever!

Enter Harpax, sneaking.

Theo. We're mocked; these bats have power to fell down giants
Yet her skin is not scarred.

Sap. What rogues are these?

Theo. Cannot these force a shriek?

[Beats Spungius.]

Spun. Oh! a woman has one of my ribs, and now five more are broken.

Theo. Cannot this make her roar?

[Beats Hircius; he roars.]

Sap. Who hired these slaves? what are they?

Spun. We serve that noble gentleman, there; he enticed us to this dry beating: oh! for one half pot!

Harp. My servants! two base rogues, and sometime servants
To her, and for that cause forbear to hurt her.

Sap. Unbind her; hang up these.

Theo. Hang the two hounds on the next tree.

Hir. Hang us! master Harpax, what a devil, shall we be thus used?

Harp. What bandogs but you two would worry a woman?

Your mistress? I but clapped you, you flew on.

Say I should get your lives, each rascal beggar

Would, when he met you, cry out, “Hell-hounds! traitors!”

Spit at you, fling dirt at you; and no woman
Ever endure your sight: ’tis your best course
Now, had you secret knives, to stab yourselves; —

189: terrified of Angelo, Harpax has waited till Angelo left the stage before entering himself.

191-2: Theophilus, who has been examining the rods, is satisfied they should have caused catastrophic injury to Dorothea; she, of course, has been supernaturally protected from harm.

210: dry beating = technically a beating that does not draw blood, but used to describe any severe pounding.¹

one half pot = ie. even a small drink.

= former.

= reason. = ie. refuse.

= these two.

= Theophilus had previously referred to the two servants as dogs in line 165.

= a common expression equivalent to the modern "what the hell"; this is not the first time the servants have unintentionally connected Harpax to Satan.

= treated.

= chained-up dogs. = used to describe dogs tearing the throats of sheep or other victims.¹

224f: Harpax suggests they are not worth saving, as they would be despised by the citizens of Rome for failing in their task.

get your lives = ie. "preserve your lives".

226-7: and no woman...your sight = this would be especially grievous to Hircius!
But, since you have not, go and be hanged.

_Hir._ I thank you.

_Harp._ 'Tis your best course.

_Theo._ Why stay they trifling here? To the gallows drag them by the heels; − away!

_Spun._ By the heels! no, sir, we have legs to do us that service.

_Hir._ Ay, ay, if no woman can endure my sight, away with me.

_Harp._ Dispatch them.

_Spun._ The devil dispatch thee!

[Exeunt Guard with Spungius and Hircius.]

_Sap._ Death this day rides in triumph, Theophilus. See this witch made away too.

_Theo._ My soul thirsts for it. Come, I myself the hangman's part could play.

_Dor._ O haste me to my coronation day!

[Exeunt]

**ACT IV, SCENE III.**

_The Place of Execution._

_A scaffold, block, &c._

_Enter Antoninus, supported by Macrinus, and Servants._

_Anton._ Is this the place where virtue is to suffer, And _heavenly beauty_, leaving this base earth, To make a glad return _from whence_ it came? Is it, Macrinus?

_Mac._ By this preparation, You well may rest assured that Dorothea This hour is to die here.

_Anton._ Then with her dies The _abstract_ of all sweetness that's in woman! Set me down, friend, that, _ere_ the iron hand Of death close up mine eyes, they may at once Take my last leave both of this light and her: For, she being gone, the glorious sun himself

235: "what are the hangmen waiting for?"
To me’s Cimmerian darkness.

Mac. Strange affection!
Cupid once more hath changed his shafts with Death,
And kills, instead of giving life.

Anton. Nay, weep not;
Though tears of friendship be a sovereign balm,
On me they’re cast away. It is decreed
That I must die with her; our clew of life
Was spun together.

Mac. Yet, sir, ’tis my wonder,
That you, who, hearing only what she suffers,
Partake of all her tortures, yet will be,
To add to our calamity, an eyewitness
Of her last tragic scene, which must pierce deeper,
And make the wound more desperate.

Anton. Oh, Macrinus!
’Twould linger out my torments else, not kill me,
Which is the end I aim at; being to die too,
What instrument more glorious can I wish for,
Than what is made sharp by my constant love
And true affection? It may be, the duty
And loyal service with which I pursued her,
And sealed it with my death, will be remembered
Among her blessèd actions: and what honour
Can I desire beyond it?

Enter a Guard, bringing in Dorothea,

Mac. a Headsman before her:
followed by Theophilus, Sapritius, and Harpax.

See, she comes;
How sweet her innocence appears! more like
To Heaven itself than any sacrifice
That can be offered to it. By my hopes
Of joys hereafter, the sight makes me doubtful
In my belief; nor can I think our gods
Are good, or to be served, that take delight
In offerings of this kind: that, to maintain
Their power, deface the master-piece of nature,

= "to me is like". = the land of a people known as the Cimmerians was proverbial for its darkness.

= unnatural passion.

19: changed = exchanged.
19-20: Cupid, the god of love, usually shoots an arrow at an individual to cause that person to fall in love; here, however, his arrow brings death, albeit indirectly, as the expected deaths of Dorothea and Antonius have come about as a side effect of Antoninus' falling in love with Dorothea.

Gifford identifies this allusion as derived from a verse by the Dutch poet Janus Secundus (1511-1536), whose Elegies include the brief tale of Death and Love (Cupid) each shooting and together killing a young man with their respective arrows; the two allegorical characters, in retrieving their missiles, each accidentally picks up the arrow of the other, and havoc ensues (Elegies, Book II, Elegie 6).³

= effective healing ointment.¹
= ie. wasted.

= thread of life, as spun by the Fates (see the note at Act III.iii.35); the earliest meaning of the word clew, or clue, is thread, or a ball of thread or yarn.¹

= ie. “it would only serve to prolong”.
= ie. Antoninus hopes to die alongside Dorothea.

54-55: the sight...belief = ie. Antoninus questions his own belief in the Roman gods.

= the Romans, like the Greeks before them, regularly sacrificed animals to their gods.
Which they themselves come short of. She ascends, and every step raises her nearer Heaven. – What god soe'er thou art, that must enjoy her, receive in her a boundless happiness!  

Sap. You are to blame to let him come abroad.

Mac. It was his will; and we were left to serve him, not command him.

Anton. Good sir, be not offended; nor deny my last of pleasures in this happy object, that I shall e'er be blest with.

Theo. Now, proud contemner of us, and of our gods, tremble to think it is not in the Power thou serv'st to save thee. Not all the riches of the sea, increased by violent shipwrecks, nor the unsearched mines (Mammon's unknown exchequer), shall redeem thee; and, therefore, having first with horror weighed what 'tis to die, and to die young; to part with all pleasures and delights; lastly, to go where all antipathies to comfort dwell, Furies behind, about thee, and before thee; and, to add to affliction, the remembrance of the Elysian joys thou might'st have tasted, hadst thou not turned apostata to those gods that so reward their servants; let despair prevent the hangman's sword, and on this scaffold make thy first entrance into hell.

Anton. She smiles, unmoved, by Mars! as if she were assured Death, looking on her constancy, would forget the use of his inevitable hand.

Theo. Derided too! dispatch, I say.

Dor. Thou fool!

That gloriest in having power to ravish a trifle from me I am weary of. What is this life to me? not worth a thought; or, if it be esteemed, 'tis that I lose it to win a better: even thy malice serves to me but as a ladder to mount up to such a height of happiness, where I shall look down with scorn on thee, and on the world; where, circled with true pleasures, placed above
The reach of death or time, 'twill be my glory
To think at what an easy price I bought it.

There's a perpetual spring, perpetual youth:
No joint-benumbing cold, nor scorching heat,
Famine, nor age, have any being there.
Forget, for shame, your Tempe: bury in

Oblivion your feigned Hesperian orchards: −
The golden fruit, kept by the watchful dragon.
Which did require Hercules to get it,

Compared with what grows in all plenty there,
Deserves not to be named. The Power I serve
Laughs at your happy Araby, or the
Elysian shades: for He hath made His bowers
Better in deed, than you can fancy yours.

Anton. O, take me thither with you!

Dor. Trace my steps,
And be assured you shall.

Sap. With my own hands
I'll rather stop that little breath is left thee,
And rob thy killing fever.

Theo. By no means:
Let him go with her: do, seduced young man,
And wait upon thy saint in death; do, do:
And, when you come to that imagined place,
That place of all delights − pray you, observe me, −
And meet those cursèd things I once called daughters,
Whom I have sent as harbingers before you:
If there be any truth in your religion,
In thankfulness to me, that with care hasten
Your journey thither, pray you send me some
Small pittance of that curious fruit you boast of.

113-121: Dorothea names several attractive locations which suffer in comparison to the sublime beauty she expects to find in Heaven.

Tempe = a proverbially beautiful river valley in Thessaly, Greece; when Xerxes invaded their land in 480 B.C., the Greeks initially planned to meet the Persians in the defile of the valley, but finding it undefendable, retreated to Thermopylae.5

114-116: Hercules' 11th Labour was to bring back several golden apples from an orchard protected by three or four nymphs known as the Hesperides and a 100-headed dragon called Ladon; unable to find the orchard (which was located at the northern end of the world), Hercules took on the task of holding up the heavens on his shoulders from Atlas, while Atlas (who hated his job) went to procure some of the golden fruit. Atlas was going to leave Hercules to carry his load forever, but Hercules tricked Atlas into taking the heavens back onto his own shoulders by asking Atlas to take the weight for only a moment to allow Hercules to put on some padding: Hercules of course left Atlas at this point, and returned the golden apples to Eurystheus, the king who was in charge of giving Hercules his impossible tasks.20 require = this is the reading of the original quartos, but the editors add a or your after require; require, however, could be trisyllabic: re-QUI-er.

= there exists, there is.

120: Elysian shades = those souls that live in Elysium, the joyful part of Hades.

bowers = dwelling, ie. Heaven.

= "I would"; Sapritius would rather kill Antoninus than let him fawningly follow Dorothea up the steps of the gallows.

= "listen closely".

= see lines 115-8, in which Dorothea brags about the
Anton. Grant that I may go with her, and I will.

Sap. Wilt thou in thy last minute damn thyself?

Theo. The gates to hell are open.

Dor. Know, thou tyrant, Thou agent for the devil, thy great master,
Though thou art most unworthy to taste of it,
I can, and will.

Enter Angelo, in the Angel's habit.

Harp. Oh! mountains fall upon me,
Or hide me in the bottom of the deep,
Where light may never find me!

Theo. What's the matter?

Sap. This is prodigious, and confirms her witchcraft.

Theo. Harpax, my Harpax, speak!

Harp. I dare not stay:

Should I but hear her once more, I were lost.
Some whirlwind snatch me from this cursèd place,
To which compared (and with what now I suffer,) Hell's torments are sweet slumbers!

[Exit Harpax.]

Sap. Follow him.

Theo. He is distracted, and I must not lose him. —
Thy charms upon my servant, cursèd witch,
Give thee a short reprieve. Let her not die
Till my return.

[Exeunt Sapritius and Theophilus.]

Anton. She minds him not: what object
Is her eye fixed on?

Mac. I see nothing.

Anton. Mark her.

Dor. Thou glorious minister of the Power I serve!
(For thou art more than mortal,) is't for me,
Poor sinner, thou art pleased awhile to leave
Thy heavenly habitation, and vouchsafest,

fruit that grows in Heaven; Theophilus is of course speaking sarcastically.

= ie. dressed as an angel, perhaps wearing a long, wide-sleeved flowing garment - and of course wings.

161: only Dorothea can see Angelo.

= ominous, a prodigy; Sapritius is concerned that the normally stoic Harpax has lost his composure.

167-171: it is possible that Harpax can also see Angelo; or he may be sufficiently experienced in these matters to simply recognize the latter is present based on Dorothea's countenance.

= would be.

177-180: Theophilus is so dependent on Harpax that he momentarily halts the execution to find out first what has happened to his Secretary.

= Antoninus notices that Dorothea, distracted by some vision, appears not to have heard Theophilus.

= "watch her closely."

= Dorothea has always used thou to address Angelo as a signal of her intimate affection for him.
Though glorified, to take my servant's habit? –
For, put off thy divinity, so looked
My lovely Angelo.

Ang.  Know, I am the same;
And still the servant to your piety.
Your zealous prayers and pious deeds first won me
(But 'twas by His command to whom you sent them)
To guide your steps. I tried your charity,
When in a beggar's shape you took me up,
And clothed my naked limbs, and after fed,
As you believed, my famished mouth. Learn all,
By your example, to look on the poor
With gentle eyes! for in such habits, often,
Angels desire an alms. I never left you,
Nor will I now; for I am sent to carry
Your pure and innocent soul to joys eternal,
Your martyrdom once suffered: and before it,
Ask any thing from me, and rest assured,
You shall obtain it.

Dor.  I am largely paid
For all my torments. Since I find such grace,
Grant that the love of this young man to me,
In which he languisheth to death, may be
Changed to the love of Heaven.

Ang.  I will perform it:
And in that instant when the sword sets free
Your happy soul, his shall have liberty.
Is there aught else?

Dor.  For proof that I forgive
My persecutor, who in scorn desired
To taste of that most sacred fruit I go to,
After my death, as sent from me, be pleased
To give him of it.

Ang.  Willingly, dear mistress.

Mac.  I am amazed.

Anton.  I feel a holy fire,
That yields a comfortable heat within me;
I am quite altered from the thing I was.
See! I can stand, and go alone; thus kneel
To heavenly Dorothea, touch her hand
With a religious kiss.

Ang.  [Kneels.]

Re-enter Sapritius and Theophilus,

Sap.  He is well now,
But will not be drawn back.

**Theo.** It matters not, 
We can discharge this work without his help. 
But see your son. 

**Sap.** Villain! 

**Anton.** Sir, I beseech you, 
Being so near our ends, **divorce us not.** 

**Theo.** I'll quickly make a separation of them: 
Hast thou **aught** else to say? 

**Dor.** Nothing, but to blame 
Thy tardiness in sending me to rest; 
My peace is made with Heaven, to which my soul 
 Begins to take her flight; **strike, O! strike quickly:** 
And, though you are unmoved to see my death, 
Hereafter, when my story shall be read, 
As they were present now, the hearers shall 
Say this of Dorothea, with wet eyes, 
“**She lived a virgin,** and a virgin dies.” 

[**Her head is struck off.**] 

**Anton.** O, take my soul along, to wait on thine! 

**Mac.** Your son sinks too. 

[**Antoninus falls.**] 

**Sap.** Already dead! 

**Theo.** Die all 
**That are**, or favour this accursèd sect: 
I triumph in their ends, and will raise up 
A hill of their dead carcasses, **to o'erlook** 
The **Pyrenean hills**, but I'll root out 
These superstitious fools, and leave the world 
No name of Christian. 

[Loud music: Exit Angelo, having first laid 
 *his hand upon the mouths of Antoninus and Dorothea.*] 

**Sap.** Ha! heavenly music! 

**Mac.** ‘**Tis in the air.** 

**Theo.** Illusions of the devil, 
Wrought by some witch of her religion, 
**That fain would** make her death a miracle: 
It frights not me. Because he is your son, 
Let him have burial; but let her body 
Be cast forth with contempt in some highway, 

= ie. "don't separate me from Dorothea".

= anything.

263-4: "why are you taking so long to send me to where I desire to go?"

= the executioner will be chopping her head off.

268-271: a common dramatic motif was to imagine one's tale being told as a moral lesson by future generations.

= chaste or unspoiled maiden

= such dramatic and gory moments were always enjoyed by 16th and 17th century audiences.

279: Antoninus dies.

= "who either are members of".

= ie. "that will be higher than".

= ie. the Pyrenees mountains.

= would like to.
And be to vultures and to dogs a prey.

[Exeunt.]

END OF ACT IV.
ACT V.

SCENE I.

The study of Theophilus.

Entere Theophilus in his Study: books about him.

The scene begins with a monologue by our play's official Christian persecutor, The Virgin Martyr's lengthiest speech.

1-5: Is't holiday...stirring = Theophilus wonders where all the Christians are, that he is having difficulty finding any to torture.

= lack. = worshippers of idols, ie. Christians.

= "just like a fastidious or highly-skilled painter".2

= excellent.

10-12: continuing to compare himself to a painter of great works, Theophilus worries that he will have to live on memories (shadows) of his tortures, since there seem to be no possibilities for actual ones (substances) left for him to enjoy.

 Shadows = comic entertainments, referring to Theophilus' tortures, of course meant ironically.

want = lack.

13: muster-book = a register in which a census is recorded.1

hell-hounds = fiends, dogs of hell;1 Theophilus has no more names of Christians to add to his list of victims.

= doth Theophilus protest too much? Or, as Gifford suggests, is he speaking the genuine truth? Gifford believes that Theophilus expresses his lack of visceral hate for the Christians to distinguish himself (for the audience's understanding) from Sapritius, whose dislike for the Christians is real and deep-rooted.1

= passion born from religious duty.

20f. Theophilus is reading a treatise on the British barbarians; Britannia was of course a province of the Roman Empire - during the time of Dioclesian, one of his Caesars, Constantius Chlorus, was fighting locals there. Needless to say, the name Great Britain is an anachronism.

22f. Gifford suggests the gruesome descriptions of torture of British barbarians and Christians were derived from ancient sources, and were likely written by Dekker.
Ha! – ha!

Again, again, – East Anglas, – oh! East Angles:

*Bandalogs, kept three days hungry, worried*

A thousand British rascals, stied up fat

Of purpose, stripped naked, and disarmed.

I could outstare a year of suns and moons,
To sit at these sweet bull-baitings, so I

Could thereby but one Christian win to fall
In adoration to my Jupiter.

– Twelve hundred

Eyes bored with augers out – Oh! eleven thousand

Torn by wild beasts: two hundred rammèd in the earth
To the armpits, and full platters round about them,
But far enough for reaching:

Eat, dogs, ha! ha! ha!

*He rises.*

Tush, all these tortures are but fillipings.

Fleabiting; I, before the Destinies

My bottom did wind up, would flesh myself

Once more upon someone remarkable
Above all these. This Christian slut was well,

Consort,

Enter Angelo with a basket
filled with fruit and flowers.

A pretty one; but let such horror follow
The next I feed with torments, that when Rome
Shall hear it, her foundation at the sound
May feel an earthquake. – How now?

28: Theophilus originally misreads the name of the tribe or region.
There is a bit of anachronism here, as tribes such as the Angles and Saxons did not arrive in Britain until the fifth century, after the Romans had abandoned the island.

30-32: Theophilus' treatise describes starved, vicious dogs (*bandogs*) being released to attack and tear apart (*worry*) Britons who had been fattened and confined in smallish quarters (*stied*) like pigs.

= as in bear-baiting, hungry dogs could be released to brawl with a tied-up bull, a familiar entertainment in 16th and 17th century London.

= Theophilus seems to be admitting that he has yet to convert one Christian back to the Roman beliefs.

= an *auger* was a carpenter's tool used to *bore* holes in wood.¹

= full of food, that is.
= i.e. so that the victims could not reach the food; *for* here means "to prevent".

= flicks with a finger.¹

50-53: *I…all these* = "just once more, before I die, I wish I could practice great violence on one more great Christian."

*the Destinies* = the Fates, the three goddesses that measure out the length of each person's life.

= "just once more, before I die, I wish I could practice great violence on one more great Christian."
= "What's going on?"

56: *My bottom did wind up* = a metaphor involving a core (*bottom*)¹ on which thread or yarn could be wound (hence *did wind up*) to represent Theophilus' life being brought to its end; this is a particularly interesting image, as the Fates (or *Destinies*) are usually imagined to end a person's life by cutting the thread of life.

*flesh* = gratify one's lust for violence.¹

= i.e. Dorothea.
= excellent.

= musicians prepare to play.³
Ang. Are you amazed, sir?
So great a Roman spirit – and doth it tremble!

Theo. How cam'st thou in? to whom thy business?
Ang. To you;
I had a mistress, late sent hence by you
Upon a bloody errand; you entreated,
That, when she came into that blessèd garden
Whither she knew she went, and where, now happy,
She feeds upon all joy, she would send to you
Some of that garden fruit and flowers; which here,
To have her promise saved, are brought by me.

Theo. Cannot I see this garden?
Ang. Yes, if the Master
Will give you entrance.

[He vanishes.]

Theo. 'Tis a tempting fruit,
And the most bright-cheeked child I ever viewed;
Sweet smelling, goodly fruit. What flowers are these?
In Dioclesian's gardens; the most beauteous,
Compared with these, are weeds: is it not February,
The second day she died? frost, ice, and snow
Hang on the beard of winter: where's the sun
That gilds this summer? pretty, sweet boy, say,
In what country shall a man find this garden? –
My delicate boy, – gone! vanished! within there,
Julianus and Geta! –

Enter Julianus and Geta.

Both. My lord.

Theo. Are my gates shut?

Geta. And guarded.

Theo. Saw you not
A boy?

Jul. Where?

Theo. Here he entered; a young lad;
A thousand blessings danced upon his eyes;
A smoothfaced, glorious thing, that brought this basket.
Geta. No, sir!

Theo. Away – but be in reach, if my voice calls you.

[Exeunt Julianus and Geta.]

No! – vanished, and not seen! – be thou a spirit,
Sent from that witch to mock me, I am sure
This is essential, and, howe'er it grows,
Will taste it.

[Eats of the fruit.]

Harp. [within.] Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Theo. So good! I'll have some more, sure.

Harp. Ha, ha, ha, ha! great liquorous fool!

Theo. What art thou?

Harp. A fisherman.

Theo. What dost thou catch?

Harp. Souls, souls; a fish called souls.

Theo. Geta!

Enter Geta.

Geta. My lord.

Harp. [Within.] Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Theo. What insolent slave is this, dares laugh at me?
Or what is’t the dog grins at so?

Geta. I neither know, my lord, at what, nor whom; for there is none without but my fellow Julianus, and he is making a garland for Jupiter.

Theo. Jupiter! all within me is not well;
And yet not sick.

Harp. [Laughing louder, within.] Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Theo. What's thy name, slave?

Harp. [At one end.] Go look.

Geta. Tis Harpax' voice.

Theo. Harpax! go, drag the caitiff to my foot,
That I may stamp upon him.
Harp. [At the other end.] Fool, thou liest!

Geta. He's yonder, now, my lord.

Theo. Watch thou that end,
Whilst I make good this.

Harp. [In the middle.] Ha, ha, ha ha!

Theo. He is at barley-break, and the last couple
Are now in hell.
Search for him.

[Exit Geta.]

All this ground, methink, is bloody,
And paved with thousands of those Christians' eyes
Whom I have tortured; and they stare upon me.
What was this apparition? sure it had
A shape angelical. Mine eyes, though dazzled
And daunted at first sight, tell me it wore
A pair of glorious wings; yes, they were wings;
And hence he flew: − 'tis vanished! Jupiter,
For all my sacrifices done to him,
Never once gave me smile. − How can stone smile,
Or wooden image laugh?

[MUSIC.]

Ha! I remember
Such music gave a welcome to my ear,
When the fair youth came to me: − 'tis in the air,
Or from some better place; a Power divine,
Though my dark ignorance on my soul does shine,
And makes me see a conscience all stained o'er,
Nay, drowned and damned forever in Christian gore.

Harp. [Within.] Ha, ha, ha!

Theo. Again! − What dainty relish on my tongue
This fruit hath left! some angel hath me fed;
If so toothful, I will be banqueted.

[EATS AGAIN.]

Enter Harpax in a fearful shape,
fire flashing out of the Study.

Harp. Hold!

Theo. Not for Caesar.

Harp. But for me thou shalt.

= Harpax's voice suddenly seems to come from a different direction.

= barley-break was a commonly referred-to game of what is basically "tag" played by three couples; while holding hands, the couple in the middle tries to catch the other couples. This middle position was referred to as hell; here, Harpax is the game's prey.

= the editors all change this to methinks, but methink was very common in the era.

= ie. Angelo.

1 = tasty. = feasted.

217: Entering Character: Harpax appears in his true satanic guise.

= "Stop!"

222: "I wouldn't stop if the emperor himself ordered me to."

= Harpax has previously always used the respectful you when addressing Theophilus; but now, in revealing his true nature, Harpax switches to thee, signifying his assumption of the superior position in the relationship.
Theo. Thou art no twin to him that last was here. 
Ye Powers, whom my soul bids me reverence, guard me! 
What art thou?

Harp. I am thy master.

Theo. Mine!

Harp. And thou my everlasting slave; that Harpax, 
Who hand in hand hath led thee to thy hell, 
Am I.

Theo. Avaunt!

Harp. I will not; cast thou down 
That basket with the things in't, and fetch up 
What thou hast swallowed, and then take a drink, 
Which I shall give thee, and I'm gone.

Theo. My fruit? 
Does this offend thee? see! 
[Eats again.]

Harp. Spet it to the earth, 
And tread upon it, or I'll piecemeal tear thee.

Theo. Art thou with this affrighted? see, here's more. 
[Pulls out a handful of flowers.]

Harp. Fling them away. I'll take thee else, and hang thee 
In a contorted chain of icicles, 
In the frigid zone: down with them!

Theo. At the bottom 
One thing I found not yet. See! 
[Holds up a cross of flowers.]

Harp. Oh! I am tortured.

Theo. Can this do't? hence, thou fiend infernal, hence! 

Harp. Clasp Jupiter's image, and away with that.

Theo. At thee I'll fling that Jupiter; for methinks, 
I serve a better master: he now checks me 
For murdering my two daughters, put on by thee — 
By thy damned rhetoric did I hunt the life 
Of Dorothea, the holy virgin-martyr. 
She is not angry with the axe, nor me, 
But sends these presents to me; and I'll travel 
O'er worlds to find, and from her white hand 
Beg a forgiveness.
Harp. No; I'll bind thee here.

Theo. I serve a strength above thine; this small weapon, Methinks, is armour hard enough.

Harp. Keep from me.

[Sinks a little.]

Theo. Art posting to thy centre? down, hell-hound! down! Me hast thou lost. That arm, which hurls thee hence, Save me, and set me up, the strong defence In the fair Christian's quarrel!

Enter Angelo.

Ang. Fix thy foot there, Nor be thou shaken with a Caesar's voice, Though thousand deaths were in it; and I then Will bring thee to a river, that shall wash Thy bloody hands clean and more white than snow; And to that garden where these blest things grow, And to that martyred virgin, who hath sent That heavenly token to thee: spread this brave wing,

And serve, then Caesar, a far greater king.

[Exit Angelo.]

Theo. It is, it is, some angel. Vanished again! Oh, come back, ravishing boy! bright messenger! Thou hast, by these mine eyes fixed on thy beauty, Illumined all my soul. Now look I back On my black tyrannies, which, as they did Outdare the bloodiest, thou, blest spirit, that lead'st me, Teach me what I must to do, and, to do well, That my last act the best may parallel.

[Exit.]

ACT V, SCENE II.

Dioclesian's Palace.

Enter Dioclesian, Maximinus, the Kings of Epire, Pontus, and Macedon, meeting Artemia; Attendants.

Scene II: Gifford commends the beauty of Massinger's poetry in this scene, asserting it to be "unsurpassed in the English language."
when she lamentably chose Antoninus for a husband.
The three listed kings originally appeared as rebel-captives of Dioclesian, but he had freed them as a token of his magnanimity.

1: Artemia is still not able to get over the sting of her rejection by Antoninus; servant technically means "lover", but the sense here is more like "beloved".

22-23: Love is...the same = Artemia recognizes that Cupid's character never changes, and that whom he causes to fall in love with whom is completely arbitrary; in other words, she understands that people have no control over whom they fall or not fall in love with.

24: His bow and arrows are the same: great Julius. That to his successors left the name of Caesar, Whom war could never tame, that with dry eyes

26: Beheld the large plains of Pharsalia covered

With the dead carcasses of senators

And citizens of Rome; when the world knew
No other lord but him, struck deep in years too,
(And men gray-haired forget the lusts of youth,) After all this, meeting fair Cleopatra,
A suppliant too, the magic of her eye,
Even in his pride of conquest, took him captive:

Artem. Glory and conquest still attend upon
Triumphant Caesar!

Diocl. Let thy wish, fair daughter,
Be equally divided; and hereafter
Learn thou to know and reverence Maximinus,
Whose power, with mine united, makes one Caesar.

Max. But that I fear 'twould be held flattery,
The bonds considered in which we stand tied,
As love and empire, I should say, till now
I ne'er had seen a lady I thought worthy
To be my mistress.

Artem. Sir, you shew yourself
Both courtier and soldier; but take heed,
Take heed, my lord, though my dull-pointed beauty,
Stained by a harsh refusal in my servant

Cannot dart forth such beams as may inflame you,
You may encounter such a powerful one,
That with a pleasing heat will thaw your heart,

Though bound in ribs of ice. Love still is Love,

His bow and arrows are the same: great Julius,
That to his successors left the name of Caesar,
Whom war could never tame, that with dry eyes

Beheld the large plains of Pharsalia covered

With the dead carcasses of senators

And citizens of Rome; when the world knew
No other lord but him, struck deep in years too,
(And men gray-haired forget the lusts of youth,) After all this, meeting fair Cleopatra,
A suppliant too, the magic of her eye,
Even in his pride of conquest, took him captive:

7: Maximinus, as discussed earlier at Act I.i.611-2, is a composite of Dioclesian's co-Augustus, Maximian, and the Caesar Galerius Maximianus.

This is as good a place as any to mention that the real Diocletian did have a daughter, but her name was Valeria, not Artemia; in real life, she married the Caesar Galerius.\(^5\)

= considered.

18: Artemia is still not able to get over the sting of her rejection by Antoninus; servant technically means "lover", but the sense here is more like "beloved".

20-22: Artemia expresses her worry that Maximinus, like Antoninus, might fall in love with another woman, even as he is married to her.

22-23: Love is...the same = Artemia recognizes that Cupid's character never changes, and that whom he causes to fall in love with whom is completely arbitrary; in other words, she understands that people have no control over whom they fall or not fall in love with.

= ie. Julius Caesar.

= ie. without crying.

= Pharsalus in Greece was the location of Caesar's smashing victory over Pompey in the great Roman Civil War (A.D. 48).\(^5\)

= many of the senators of Rome had fought on the side of Pompey.

= Caesar would have been 54 years old in 48 B.C. when he first met Cleopatra; she would have been about 20 at the time. The couple had a son, Caesarion.\(^5\)

32-33: Caesar came to Egypt with his army after the Battle of Pharsalus to find Cleopatra in a power struggle with
Nor are you more secure.

Max. Were you deformed,
(But, by the gods, you are most excellent),
Your gravity and discretion would o’ercome me;
And I should be more proud in being prisoner
To your fair virtues, than of all the honours,
Wealth, title, empire, that my sword hath purchased.

Diocl. This meets my wishes. Welcome it, Artemia,
With outstretched arms, and study to forget
That Antoninus ever was: thy fate
Reserved thee for this better choice; embrace it.

K. of Epire. This happy match brings new nerves to
give strength
To our continued league.

Diocl. Hymen himself
Will bless this marriage, which we’ll solemnize
In the presence of these kings.

K. of Pontus. Who rest most happy,
To be eye-witnesses of a match that brings
Peace to the empire.

Diocl. We much thank your loves;
But where’s Sapritius, our governor,
And our most zealous provost, good Theophilus?
If ever prince were blest in a true servant,
Or could the gods be debtors to a man,
Both they and we stand far engaged to cherish
His piety and service.

Artem. Sir, the governor
Brooks sadly his son’s loss, although he turned
Apostata in death; but bold Theophilus,
Who, for the same cause, in my presence sealed
His holy anger on his daughters’ hearts,
Having with tortures first tried to convert her,
Dragged the bewitching Christian to the scaffold,
And saw her lose her head.

Diocl. He is all worthy:
And from his own mouth I would gladly hear
The manner how she suffered.

Artem. ’Twill be delivered
With such contempt and scorn (I know his nature,)
That rather ’twill beget your highness’ laughter
Than the least pity.

Diocl. To that end I would hear it.

Enter Theophilus, Sapritius, and Macrinus.
Artem. He comes; with him the governor.

 Diocl. O, Sapritius, I am to chide you for your tenderness; But yet, remembering that you are a father, I will forget it. — Good Theophilus, I'll speak with you anon —

[To Sapritius] Nearer, your ear.

 Theo. [Aside to Macrinus] By Antoninus' soul, I do conjure you, And though not for religion, for his friendship, Without demanding what's the cause that moves me, Receive my signet; — by the power of this, Go to my prisons, and release all Christians That are in fetters there by my command.

 Mac. But what shall follow?

 Theo. Haste then to the port; You there shall find two tall ships ready rigged, In which embark the poor distressed souls, And bear them from the reach of tyranny. Enquire not whither you are bound; the Deity That they adore will give you prosperous winds, And make your voyage such, and largely pay for Your hazard, and your travail. Leave me here; There is a scene that I must act alone: Haste, good Macrinus; and the great God guide you!

 Mac. I'll undertak't, there's something prompts me to it; 'Tis to save innocent blood, a saint-like act; And to be merciful has never been By moral men themselves esteemed a sin.

[Exit Macrinus.]

 Diocl. You know your charge?

 Sap. And will with care observe it.

 Diocl. For I profess he is not Caesar's friend That sheds a tear for any torture that A Christian suffers. — Welcome, my best servant, My careful, zealous provost! thou hast toiled To satisfy my will, though in extremes: I love thee for't; thou art firm rock, no changeling. Prithee deliver, and for my sake do it, Without excess of bitterness or scoffs, Before my brother and these kings, how took The Christian her death?

 Theo. And such a presence,
Though every private head in this large room
Were circled round with an imperial crown,
Her story will deserve, it is so full
Of excellence and wonder.

 Diocl. Ha! how is this?

 Theo. O! mark it, therefore, and with that attention,
 As you would hear an embassy from Heaven
 By a winged legate; for the truth delivered,
 Both how, and what, this blessèd virgin suffered,
 And Dorothea but hereafter named,
 You will rise up with reverence, and no more,
 As things unworthy of your thoughts, remember
 What the canónized Spartan ladies were,

 Which lying Greece so boasts of. Your own matrons,

 Your Roman dames, whose figures you yet keep
 As holy relics, in her history

 Will find a second urn: Gracchus' Cornelia,
 Paulina, that in death desired to follow
 Her husband Seneca, nor Brutus' Portia,
 That swallowed burning coals to overtake him,

 Though all their several worths were given to one,
 With this is to be mentioned.

 Max. Is he mad?
Diocl. Why, they did die, Theophilus, and boldly: This did no more.

Theo. They, out of desperation, Or for vain glory of an after-name, Parted with life: this had not mutinous sons, As the rash Gracchi were; nor was this saint A doting mother, as Cornelia was. This lost no husband, in whose overthrow Her wealth and honour sunk; no fear of want Did make her being tedious; but, aiming At an immortal crown, and in His cause Who only can bestow it; who sent down Legions of ministering angels to bear up Her spotless soul to Heaven; who entertained it With choice celestial music, equal to The motion of the spheres; she, uncompelled,

Changed this life for a better. My lord Sapritius, You were present at her death; did you e'er hear Such ravishing sounds?

Sap. Yet you said then 'twas witchcraft, And devilish illusions.

Theo. I then heard it With sinful ears, and belched out blasphemous words Against His Deity, which then I knew not, Nor did believe in him.

Diocl. Why, dost thou now? Or dar'st thou, in our hearing −

Theo. Were my voice As loud as is His thunder, to be heard Through all the world, all potentates on earth Ready to burst with rage, should they but hear it; Though hell, to aid their malice, lent her furies, Yet I would speak, and speak again, and boldly, I am a Christian, and the Powers you worship, But dreams of fools and madmen.

Max. Lay hands on him.

Diocl. Thou twice a child! for doting age so makes thee, Thou couldst not else, thy pilgrimage of life Being almost past through, in this last moment Destroy whate'er thou hast done good or great − Thy youth did promise much; and, grown a man, Thou mad'st it good, and, with increase of years,
Thy actions still bettered: as the sun,
Thou did'st rise gloriously, kept'st a constant course
In all thy journey; and now, in the evening,
When thou should'st pass with honour to thy rest,
Wilt thou fall like a meteor?

Yet confess
That thou art mad, and that thy tongue and heart
Had no agreement.

Do; no way is left, else,
To save thy life, Theophilus.

But, refuse it,
Destruction as horrid, and as sudden,
Shall fall upon thee, as if hell stood open,
And thou wert sinking thither.

Hear me, yet;
Hear, for my service past.

What will he say?

As ever I deserved your favour, hear me,
And grant one boon; 'tis not for life I sue for;
Nor is it fit that I, that ne'er knew pity
To any Christian, being one myself,
Should look for any: no, I rather beg
The utmost of your cruelty. I stand
Accomptable for thousand Christians’ deaths;
And, were it possible that I could die
A day for every one, then live again
To be again tormented, 'twere to me
An easy penance, and I should pass through
A gentle cleansing fire; but, that denied me,
It being beyond the strength of feeble nature,
My suit is, you would have no pity on me.
In mine own house there are a thousand engines
Of studied cruelty, which I did prepare
For miserable Christians; let me feel,
As the Sicilian did his brazen bull,
The horrid'st you can find; and I will say,
In death, that you are merciful.

Despair not;
In this thou shalt prevail. Go fetch them hither:

[Exit some of the Guard.]

Death shall put on a thousand shapes at once,
And so appear before thee; racks, and whips! –
Thy flesh, with burning pincers torn, shall feed

---

219-223: *as the sun...meteor* = note Dioclesian's extended metaphor of Theophilus and his life as a rising and eventually setting sun.

226-7: *thy tongue...agreement* = a neat metaphor for saying and thinking different things.

237-8: "please listen to what I have to say, if for no other reason than out respect for my lifetime of service to Rome."

= favour.

= accountable.

= note the ease with which Theophilus has picked up Christian lingo.

= request.

= instruments or machines (of torture).

= an allusion to the 7th century B.C. Sicilian ruler Phalaris, famous for his cruelty; he is most remembered for a brass (brazen) bull that was constructed for him as a device of torture: the victims would be placed inside the bull, which would be roasted over a fire; the screams of the occupant would sound like the roar of the bull.\(^{11}\)

*horrid'st* (line 260) = horridest, most horrid.

= "don't worry" (sarcastic).
The fire that heats them; and what's wanting to
The torture of thy body, I'll supply
In punishing thy mind. Fetch all the Christians
That are in hold; and here, before his face,
Cut them in pieces.

_Theo._ Tis not in thy power:
It was the first good deed I ever did.
They are removed out of thy reach; howe'er,
I was determined for my sins to die,
I first took order for their liberty,
And still I dare thy worst.

Re-enter Guard with racks
and other instruments of torture.

_Diocl._ Bind him, I say;
Make every artery and sinew crack:
The slave that makes him give the loudest shriek
Shall have ten thousand drachmas: wretch! I'll force thee
To curse the Power thou worship'st.

_Theo._ Never, never;
No breath of mine shall e'er be spent on Him,
But what shall speak His majesty or mercy.

_[They torment him.] = torture.

I'm honoured in my sufferings. Weak tormentors,
More tortures, more: – alas! you are unskilful –
For Heaven's sake more; my breast is yet untorn:
Here purchase the reward that was propounded.
The irons cool, – here are arms yet, and thighs;
Spare no part of me.

_Max._ He endures beyond
The sufferance of a man.

_Sap._ No sigh nor groan,
To witness he hath feeling.

_Diocl._ Harder, villains!

_Enter Harpax.

_Harp._ Unless that he blaspheme, he's lost forever.
If torments ever could bring forth despair,
Let these compel him to it: – Oh me!
My ancient enemies again!

_[Falls down.]

_Enter Dorothea in a white robe,
a crown upon her head, led in by Angelo;
Antoninus, Calista, and Christeta following,
all in white, but less glorious;
Angelo holds out a crown to Theophilus.

Theo. Most glorious vision! —
Did c'e'r so hard a bed yield man a dream
So heavenly as this? I am confirmed,
Confirmed, you blessed spirits, and make haste
To take that crown of immortality
You offer to me. Death, till this blest minute,
I never thought thee slow-paced; nor would I
Hasten thee now, for any pain I suffer,
But that thou keep'st me from a glorious wreath,
Which through this stormy way I would creep to,
And, humbly kneeling, with humility wear it.
Oh! now I feel thee: — blessed spirits! I come;
And, witness for me all these wounds and scars,
I die a soldier in the Christian wars.

[Dies.]

Sap. I have seen thousands tortured, but ne'er yet
A constancy like this.

Harp. I am twice damned.

Ang. Hast to thy place appointed, cursed fiend!
In spite of hell, this soldier's not thy prey;
'Tis I have won, thou that hast lost the day.

[Harpax sinks with thunder and lightning.]

[Exit with Dorothea, &c.]

Diocl. I think the centre of the earth be cracked, —
Yet I stand still unmoved, and will go on:
The persecution that is here begun,
Through all the world with violence shall run.

[Flourish. Exeunt.]

FINIS

Postscript 1: Dioclesian, along with his co-Augustus, retired from public life in A.D. 305, to be replaced as co-Augusti by the Caesars, Galerius Maximianus and Constantius Chlorus. The persecution of Christians, having failed in all of its goals, was formally ended in 311.

Chlorus' son Constantine was proclaimed emperor by his troops in 306 upon the death of his father, and after a long war, became de facto emperor of, well, the entire empire. After establishing a new Roman capital at Byzantium, Constantine officially legalized Christianity with the Edict of Milan of 313 A.D.

Postscript 2: Dorothea is an actual saint, whose feast day is February 5. According to Catholic lore, she was a native of Caesarea. Having refused to give up her faith during the Dioclesian persecutions, she was sentenced to die. On her way to execution, Dorothea was taunted by Theophilus, the governor's secretary, who asked her to send him a basket of
fruit from the garden of her Heaven. When at the moment of her death an angel appeared to him bearing three apples and three roses, even though it was the middle of winter, he instantly converted, and he himself was martyred (Metford, p.100).
The Authors' Invented Words

Like all of the writers of the era, Philip Massinger and Thomas Dekker made up words when they felt like it, usually by adding prefixes and suffixes to known words, combining words, or using a word in a way not yet used before. The following is a list of words and phrases from *The Virgin Martyr* that research suggests were either first used, or were first used with a given meaning, in our play.

The lists are separated based on assumed authorship; see the note at the beginning of the play.

**Philip Massinger's New Words**

- the expression **dare one's worst**.
- **dull-pointed**
- **joint-benumbing**
- **outrival**

**Thomas Dekker's New Words**

- **armada/armado** (first time applied to a group of people; suggested by OED but unconfirmed)
- **bug** (meaning bed-bugs specifically; suggested by OED but unconfirmed)
- **carebruns** (malapropism for cerebrum)
- **caroched**
- **chitface** (variation of older chitty-face)
- **clyster-pipe** (used as a contemptuous term for a doctor; assigned to Dekker based on assumption he wrote Act IV.i, in which this term appears)
- **commoner** (meaning a common lawyer, first use here suggested by OED, but unconfirmed)
- **conster** (meaning to understand one's meaning)
- the expression **to cry whoop**
- **deep-scarleted**
- **demi-dandiprat**
- **drabbing chamber**
- the expression "one's **eyes shoot daggers** at another" (assigned to Dekker based on assumption he wrote Act IV.i, in which this term appears)
- the expression **to feed colon**
- **gilt-winged**
- **gingle-boy**
- **horrider**
- **I-am-an-as**
- **I-am-an-o**
- **incorporate** (meaning to copulate)
- the expression **not for a hill of (something)**
- **out-bowl**
- **poor-minded**
- **she-thrasher**
- **snotty nose** (as an adjective)
- **state-wheel** (not in OED, but it would be, if Shakespeare had written it)
- **still-negligent**
- **toothful** (meaning pleasant tasting)

**Thomas Dekker's Recycled Words**

Every dramatist of England's golden age had his own collection of signature words and phrases that would appear in more than one of his plays; Christopher Marlowe, for example, loved the word *empery*, and Massinger was addicted to the expression **fall what can fall**.
When a play was thought to be composed by more than one author, the appearance of these oft-turned-to words can help identify which playwright was responsible for a particular scene.

It has long been believed that Thomas Dekker was the author of the scenes involving Hircius and Spungius. There are several pieces of evidence for this: the scenes involving the two servants possess the following tell-tale characteristics:

1. Massinger rarely wrote in prose;
2. a relative absence of verse lines split over multiple speakers in these scenes, a technique which Massinger used unremittingly;
3. a higher density of new words in these scenes; and finally,
4. the presence of a large number of words which appeared in previous plays of Dekker’s; here is a list of a number of such words:

   - awry
   - commodity (meaning prostitute)
   - low-minded
   - mustard token
   - ragamuffin
   - scrubbing (as an adjective)
   - snotty nose
   - splayfoot
   - tatterdemalion
   - (shoemaker’s) wax
   - yeoman (as an adjective)

**Authorship of Act IV.i**

There are two key pieces of evidence which point to Dekker being largely, or even fully, responsible for having written Act IV.i. (1) an analysis of the density of words with either a -tion ending, of which Massinger was fond, or words in which the tion, tian, or sion ending was pronounced as two syllables (a metrical device which Massinger was very fond of using), e.g. per-sua-si-on instead of per-sua-sion (such an extra syllable is indicated by an umlaut appearing over the o or a, i.e. tiön or iän).

We have calculated the combined density of these words appearing in each scene using the following formula:

\[
\text{density} = \frac{\text{[100(# of appearances)]}}{\# \text{ lines in the scene}}
\]

The result: those scenes unanimously assigned to Massinger result in a density of greater than 2.0, those credited to Dekker, less than 2.0 (except for the very short Act II.ii).

And Act IV.i? the density of these words is only 0.59.

(2) There are a number of recycled Dekker words which appear in the Act IV.i. The words in question are as follows:

   - Aesculapian (line 3)
   - quacksalving (line 79)
   - shuffling (as a noun, line 133)
   - cross-caper (line 202)
NOTES on the ANNOTATIONS

The footnotes in the annotations correspond as follows:

1. OED online.