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the Annotated Popular Edition of

The COMICAL HISTORY  
of ALPHONSUS,  
KING OF ARAGON

By Robert Greene

Written c. 1588-1591

Earliest Extant Edition: 1599

Featuring complete and easy-to-read annotations.

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# The COMICAL HISTORY of ALPHONSUS, KING OF ARAGON

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## DRAMATIS PERSONAE:

### European Characters:

*Carinus*, the rightful heir to the crown of Aragon.

*Alphonsus*, his son.

*Flaminius*, King of Aragon.

*Albinus*, a Lord of Aragon

*Laelius*, a Lord of Aragon

*Miles*, a Lord of Aragon

*Belinus*, King of Naples.

*Fabius*, a Lord of Naples.

*Duke of Millain (Milan)*.

### Eastern Characters:

*Amurack*, the Great Turk.

*Fausta*, wife to Amurack.

*Iphigina*, their daughter.

*Arcastus*, King of the Moors.

*Claramont*, King of Barbary.

*Crocon*, King of Arabia.

*Faustus*, King of Babylon.

*Bajazet*, a lord.

*Two Priests* of Mahomet.

*Medea*, an enchantress.

### Supernatural Characters:

*Mahomet* (speaking from a Brazen Head).

*Venus*, goddess of love.

*The Nine Muses*.

Provost, Soldiers, Janissaries, etc.

## INTRODUCTION to the PLAY.

There is no point in denying that *Alphonsus, King of Aragon*, Robert Greene's first effort as a dramatist, is clearly inferior to Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, the play (or plays, really) that inspired it. Having said that, a modern reader can still enjoy Greene's tale of his own unconquerable hero, and will appreciate the fact that, unlike the works of other lesser playwrights, *Alphonsus* does move briskly along, with armies swooping breathlessly on and off the stage. Throw in Elizabethan drama's first talking brass head, and a lot of revenge and murder, and the reader will be amply rewarded.

The language of *Alphonsus* is also comparatively easy to follow, making it an excellent starter-play for those who are new to English Renaissance drama.

## OUR PLAY'S SOURCE

The text of this play was originally adapted from the 1876 edition of Greene's plays edited by Alexander Dyce, but was then carefully compared to the original 1594 quarto. Consequently, much of the original wording and spelling from this earliest printing of the play has been reinstated.

## NOTES ON THE ANNOTATIONS

Mention in the annotations of various editors refers to the notes supplied by these scholars for their editions of this play. Their works are 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.

Footnotes in the text correspond as follows:

1. *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) online.
2. Crystal, David and Ben. *Shakespeare's Words*.

London; New York: Penguin, 2002.

3. Collins, J. Churton. *The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1905.

4. Dyce, Rev. Alexander. *The Dramatic and Poetical Works of Robert Greene and George Peele*. London: George Routledge and Sons: 1874.

5. Dickinson, Thomas H., ed. *Robert Greene*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1909?

## NOTES.

### A. Alphonsus – Not a History.

*Alphonsus, King of Aragon*, is a lot of things, but a history play it is not. The author, **Robert Greene**, was notoriously careless with respect to the accuracy of his allusions to even well-known mythological stories (he frequently invented facts related to the gods and goddesses of ancient Greece and Rome), so it is not surprising that he had no particular interest in ensuring that the plots of his stories involving real-life personages had any semblance to what happened in real life!

Still, it may be worth taking a quick look at the actual background of our play's two historically-based figures, *Alphonsus*, the King of Aragon, and *Amurack*, the Sultan of Turkey.

#### **I. Main Character: Alphonsus, King of Aragon.**

The character of Alphonsus is ostensibly based on the early Renaissance figure *Alfonso V of Aragon* (1396-1458). In 1416, Alfonso, aged 20, succeeded his father as King of Aragon. Alfonso quickly found himself unsatisfied to rule quietly over a kingdom at peace. His life from 1420 became that of an adventurer, beginning with military attacks on Sardinia, Sicily and Corsica in an effort to increase his domains.

At some point during these early escapades, the King of Aragon became the paramour of *Joanna II, Queen of Naples*. Alfonso himself entered Naples in 1421, at which time Joanna formally adopted the Aragonese King and made him her heir.<sup>6</sup>

Joan's own soap-operatic story is worthy of its own play: Joanna inherited the kingdom of Naples in 1414 on the death of her brother *King Ladislas*. We better let the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1911) take her story from here; it was during Joanna's reign, we are told, that the Kingdom of Naples

"sank to the lowest depths of degradation. In 1415, Joanna married *James of Bourbon*, who kept his wife in a state of semi-confinement, murdered her lover *Pandolfo Alogo*, and imprisoned her chief captain *Sforza*; but his arrogance drove the barons to rebellion, and they made him renounce the royal dignity and abandon the kingdom. The history of the next few years is a maze of intrigue between Joanna, Sforza, *Giovanni Carraciolo*, the queen's new lover, Alphonso of Aragon, whom she adopted as her heir, and *Louis III* of Anjou, whom we find pitted against each other in every possible combination."

When Joanna died in 1435, Alfonso inherited the crown of Naples, but he had to fight to take possession of his patrimony. His struggle began inauspiciously, when he was captured in battle against the Genoese. His natural charm, however, won over his captor, *Duke Filippo Maria Visconti of Milan* (who also ruled Genoa), and together they renewed the fight for Naples against an alliance comprised of Venice, Florence and the Pope.<sup>6</sup>

Alfonso conquered Naples in 1442, and set up court there in 1443.<sup>6</sup> Once installed in his new seat, Alfonso never returned to his homeland.

It was from Naples that Alfonso, nicknamed "the Magnanimous", led one of the most brilliant courts of Europe, becoming internationally famous for his patronage of the arts and proving to be a genuine promoter of the Italian Renaissance.

Alfonso also invested heavily in the defense of Europe against the growing menace of the nascent Ottoman Empire.<sup>6</sup> In our play, the Ottoman Empire is portrayed as mature and powerful, but in reality, in the early 15th century, the extent of Turkish control was still limited to only northern Asia Minor and a fair-sized part of the lower Balkans. In fact, the Ottomans would not even conquer Constantinople until 1453, just five years before Alfonso's death in 1458.

## **II. Main Character: Amurack, Sultan of Turkey.**

Our play's "Great Turk" is named *Amurack*, Greene's alternate appellation for the Ottoman Sultan *Murad II* (or *Amurath II*, as he was called in 16th century England), whose rule of the growing Turkish empire (1421-1444 and 1446-1451) coincided roughly with Alfonso's presence in Italy and rule in Naples.

Murad II was an important early leader of the Ottomans, serving as Sultan at a time when the Turks still only controlled northern Asia Minor and the area comprising modern Bulgaria. *Constantinople*, which Murad tried but failed to conquer in 1422, remained in the possession of the dying Byzantine Empire until 1453 (when it finally fell to Murad's son *Mehmed II*).

Murad spent much of his reign fighting against the Serbians and Hungarians, hoping to extend the dominions of his empire into Europe. It was in this period that the famous Hungarian patriot *Janos Hunyadi* won his greatest victories over the Turks, leading Murad to agree to a 10-year truce with the Hungarians in 1444. When Murad's eldest son died that same year, Murad abdicated in favour of *Mahommad*, his next eldest son, expecting to live out his remaining life in peace and quiet.

When the Christian powers attacked the Ottomans in violation of the truce, Murad quickly returned to military service, leading the forces which crushed the Europeans at the *Battle of Varna* on 10 November 1444 (the European treachery and ensuing climactic battle had in fact been depicted in Marlowe's second *Tamburlaine* play).

A revolt by the janissaries convinced Murad to re-assume the throne in 1446, and he spent the last few years of his life continuing the struggle against Europe, before passing away in 1451.

Of Murad, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1911) writes, "he is generally described as kind and gentle in disposition, and devoted to the interests of his country."

Information for this article was adapted primarily from the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1911), except where indicated by footnote, in which cases the source was the modern website of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Britannica.com.<sup>6</sup>

### **B. Greene's First Play.**

Robert Greene (1558-1592) was already an experienced writer and pamphleteer when he decided to put pen to paper to compose his first play (his decision seems likely to have been influenced by the great success of his friend Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* plays of 1586-7). Like the first dramas of Marlowe and George Peele before him,

Greene's rookie effort relies on a number of old-fashioned conventions, especially in his extensive use of rhyming couplets throughout the work.

A play's *rhyming couplets* served a number of potential purposes, tending to be introduced by an author to signal to the audience:

- (1) the end of a speech;
- (2) the end of a character's part in a scene, sometimes spoken immediately before the character exited the stage;
- (3) the end of a scene or act;
- (4) the expression of a sententious bit of wisdom or proverbial sentiment; or
- (5) the summing up of a situation.

A given rhyming couplet could serve more than one of these purposes at the same time, and, of course, rhyming couplets could pop up at any time for no reason at all.

Greene employed rhyming couplets in an additional and unusual way: in several scenes, as two characters converse, each of their speeches concludes with a rhyming couplet.

*Alphonsus* is steeped in rhyming couplets, so much so that we will eschew our normal practice of identifying them for the reader, except in certain more interesting cases. However, you may wish to seek them out yourself as you read, and identify which of the above listed functions individual rhyming couplets serve.

### C. Greene Channels *Tamburlaine*.

It is frequently noted that Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* plays were heavily influential in the development of Elizabethan drama (not least because they confirmed the power of iambic pentameter, which became the fixed mode of versifying for the rest of the era).

However, it is only by *reading* the plays of Marlowe's contemporaries (such as Greene and George Peele) that we can truly appreciate the depth of the impression made by Marlowe on his fellow playwrights, who sought not just to replicate Marlowe's success, but even his style, borrowing, to an inordinate degree, seemingly every element of his plays, including language and phrasing, character types, scene ideas and dialogue.

Hence, in *Alphonsus*, Robert Greene's initial effort at playwriting, our new-born dramatist chose to tell the tale of his own *Tamburlaine*-like conqueror, the supremely confident, always-victorious Alfonso, King of Aragon. Greene's play even takes place in roughly the same era as did the *Tamburlaine* plays (late 14th – early 15th centuries), and also focuses to a large extent on the Muslim near-east, just as his predecessor's plays did.

Greene further notably borrowed much of the language of *Tamburlaine* for *Alphonsus*, even adapting entire passages in obvious imitation. As an example of another borrowed idea, we may point out how in *Alphonsus*, just as in *Tamburlaine*, the leaders of opposing armies engaged in a ceremonial taunt-fest before joining battle.

Greene even cheekily borrows the name of *Bajazeth*, the Ottoman Sultan, from *Tamburlaine I*, and gives it to one of his own kings!

(Greene also gives one of his characters the name of *Faustus*, but it is unclear if this was done in smart imitation of the magician of Marlowe's play; *Alphonsus* might have been written before *Faustus*.)

#### **D. Geographical Confusion in *Alphonsus*.**

Elizabethan plays are infamous for their numerous internal inconsistencies, what modern editors might call issues of "continuity". In *Alphonsus*, the primary problem arises from the lack of clues as to the actual geographical setting of the scenes.

The play features a plethora of battles, fought by 6 distinct armies: those of Aragon, Naples, and Milan; the combined armies of the kings Crocon and Faustus; the Amazon army of Queen Fausta; and the army of the Ottoman Sultan Amurack. The various armies rush to and fro, seemingly only separated by a few miles instead of many hundreds of miles, appearing before and disappearing from each other as the action hurries breathlessly from one battle to the next.

The best way to approach such lack of "realism" in Elizabethan drama is – to ignore it. We adopt the setting locations suggested by Dickinson, but the locations don't really matter. If one tries too hard to plot the movement of *Alphonsus*' characters and armies on a map, the most likely outcome will be the onset of a minor fit of madness.

#### **E. Religious and Pagan Imagery in *Alphonsus*.**

Educated Elizabethan dramatists led an interesting double intellectual life: on the one hand, during their inevitably classical educations, they were forced to spend striking amounts of time studying Latin and the great Roman texts such as Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; on the other hand, they lived in an era when daily life revolved to a great extent around Christian precepts and preaching.

The result was a fascinating fusion of frames of reference, so that Elizabethan plays are saturated simultaneously with Christian imagery and theology on the one hand and allusions to the mythological stories, gods, heroes and heroines of ancient Rome (and to a much lesser extent, Greece) on the other. Speeches of the period's stage characters continuously weave between both modern religious and ancient pagan references, often even combining the two in the same sentence or allusion.

Robert Greene's play *Alphonsus, King of Aragon*, is striking for the almost complete absence of the normal Christian imagery found in other Elizabethan plays. This is especially curious, because our play's *eastern* characters make continual references to the Islamic religion that guides their behaviour, just as much as Christian principles (presumably) directed the lives of their European counterparts.

Whether Greene intended his characters to ever think in modern theological terms cannot be known, but to the extent that his late-Medieval European characters are meant to represent real people, they should be expected to mold all of their thoughts and actions around their Catholic God, just as *Alphonsus*' Muslim characters live their lives in explicit deference to the inclinations of their own god!

#### **F. Scene Breaks, Settings, and Stage Directions.**

*Alphonsus, King of Aragon*, was originally published in a 1599 quarto. As usual, we lean towards adhering to the wording of this earliest volume as much as possible.

Words or syllables which have been added to the original text to clarify the sense or repair the meter are surrounded by hard brackets [ ];

these additions are often adopted from the suggestions of later editors. A director who wishes to remain truer to the original text may of course choose to omit any of the supplementary wording.

The 1599 quarto does not divide *Alphonsus* into Acts and Scenes, or provide settings or asides. Act and scene breaks and setting have been adapted primarily from Dickinson;<sup>5</sup> asides have been adopted from Dyce.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, as is our normal practice, a good number of the quarto's stage directions have been modified, and others added, usually without comment, to give clarity to the action. Most of these changes are adopted from Dyce.

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## ACT I.

### PROLOGUE

*The trumpets sound thrice.*

*Venus is let down from the top of the stage*

- 1 **Venus.** Poets are scarce, when goddesses themselves  
2 Are forced to leave their high and stately seats,  
Placed on the top of high Olympus' Mount,  
4 To seek them out, to pen their champion's praise.

**Prologue:** each Act will begin with a Prologue, spoken by the goddess Venus, our play's official narrator. Alphonsus' Prologues are a bit old-fashioned, in that they not only summarize and comment on the action so far, but in some cases also describe the action to come in the new Act.

**The Trumpets sound thrice:** Dyce notes that three trumpet flourishes usually preceded the drawing of an Elizabethan curtain (located halfway back of the stage), signaling the commencing of the play.

**Entering Character:** the goddess of beauty *Venus* is lowered onto the stage by means of a crane, a bit of machinery commonly engaged to lower deities and other supernatural beings from the sky or heavens down to earth.

Since the play closes with Venus being raised up and off of the stage as she sits on a throne, she may be lowered onto the stage in the same manner.

**Summary of the Prologue:** because no poet exists who is willing to write about, and hence immortalize, the deeds of the great Alphonsus, Venus herself is forced to take on the task of telling his story. But all poets need the help of the Muse of epic poetry, Calliope, to inspire them, so Venus must recruit Calliope to assist her in this role.

The idea of the Muse as a poet's motivator is an ancient one. The first line of Homer's *Iliad*, for example, reads, "*Sing, goddess* (referring to the Muse), *the anger of Peleus' son Achilles and its devastation...*"<sup>7</sup> and in the opening passage of Virgil's *Aeneid*, we find the narrator crying out, "*O Muse, the causes tell!*"<sup>8</sup>

1-4: Venus bemoans the need for deities to descend to earth to try to find poets to write about their heroes. She speaks of goddesses in general, but really means only herself.

**Olympus' Mount** = Greece's tallest mountain, Mt. Olympus, was the traditional home of the mythological gods.  
**them** (line 4) = ie. poets.

6 The time hath been when Homer's sugared Muse  
Did make each echo to repeat his verse,  
  
That every coward that durst crack a spear,  
  
8 And tilt and tourney for his lady's sake,  
  
Was painted out in colours of such price  
  
10 As might become the proudest potentate.  
  
But now-a-days so irksome idless' slights,  
12 And cursèd charms have witched each student's mind,  
That death it is to any of them all,  
14 If that their hands to penning you do call. –  
  
Oh Virgil, Virgil! wert thou now alive,  
  
16 Whose painful pen in stout Augustus' days,  
  
Did dain to let the base and silly flea  
18 To scape away without thy praise of her,

*pen...praise* = compose poetry lauding a valorous fighter.

5-6: Venus remembers a time when the *Muse of Homer* regularly inspired other poets to write verse similar to his. *sugared* = eloquent.<sup>1</sup>

7-10: even the least likely men were immortalized in such terms as would be appropriate for the greatest monarch. *durst...spear* = dared engage in combat, as with a spear.

8: *tilt* = joust, ie. the familiar sport of two men riding at each other, each trying to unhorse his opponent with the use of a long lance.

*tourney* = engage in another martial exercise in which "a number of combatants, mounted and in armour, and divided into two parties, fought with blunted weapons and under certain restrictions, for the prize of valour" (OED).

9: ie. was portrayed (*painted*) in such glowing terms of high praise; note the art metaphor.

*price* = value or estimation.<sup>1</sup>  
= be appropriate for. = most exalted.<sup>1</sup>

11-14: Venus explains that contemporary scholars prefer idleness over the composition of poetry, as if magic has been employed to cast spells on them, causing them to shrink from writing epic verse, a task which they avoid, as if there were no worse punishment than to be summoned to do so.

*irksome idless' slights* = tedious or loathsome idleness' trifles.<sup>1</sup>

*idless'* = *idless* was a poetic and disyllabic form of *idleness*. The quarto prints *idels*, correctly emended by Dyce as shown.

*slights* = trifles, toys; but Dyce prints *sleights*, which means trickery, cunning or artifice.<sup>1</sup>

*witched* = ie. bewitched.

15-20: if Virgil were alive today, then without doubt he himself would have composed an epic poem about Alphonsus.

*Virgil* = greatest of Roman poets, lived 70-19 B.C., hence contemporaneously with the first Roman Emperor *Augustus* (63 B.C.-14 A.D.), and composer of the *Aeneid*, on which he was still working at the time of his death.

16: *painful* = diligent, labouring.<sup>1,2</sup>

*stout* = valiant.

17-18: Virgil is humorously described as unwilling to let even a flea escape notice without writing a panegyric to it.

The lines allude to the poem entitled *Culex*, or *The Gnat* (which Greene calls a *flea*), attributed to Virgil, in which a gnat is described as biting a shepherd in the eye, waking him in time to save him from being bitten by a nearby venomous snake; having killed the gnat as he awoke, the shepherd is haunted by the gnat, who reproaches him in a dream for ungratefully killing it in return for saving his life. On

I do not doubt but long or ere this time,  
 20 Alphonsus' fame unto the heavens should climb;

Alphonsus' fame, that man of Jove his seed,  
 22 Sprung from the loins of the immortal gods,  
 24 Whose sire, although he habit on the earth,  
 May claim a portion in the fiery pole,  
 As well as any one whate'er he be.

26 But, setting by Alphonsus' power divine,  
 What man alive, or now amongst the ghosts,  
 28 Could countervail his courage and his strength?  
 But thou art dead, yea, Virgil, thou art gone,  
 30 And all his acts drowned in oblivion. –  
 And all his acts drowned in oblivion?

32 No, Venus, no, though poets prove unkind,  
 And loath to stand in penning of his deeds,

34 Yet rather than they shall be clean forgot,

36 I, which was wont to follow Cupid's games  
 Will put in ure Minerva's sacred art;

38 And this my hand, which used for to pen  
 The praise of love and Cupid's peerless power,

awakening, the guilt-laden shepherd builds a cenotaph for the gnat.

*dain* = disdain, scorn.<sup>1</sup>

*silly* = insignificant.<sup>1</sup>

*scape* = ie. escape.

= ie. before long,

= *Heaven* was usually pronounced as a monosyllable in Elizabethan poetry, with the *v* essentially omitted: *Hea'n*, or, here, *hea'ns*. The rule applied to most disyllabic words with a median *v*, such as *even* and *given*; however, in this play, such words are pronounced in two syllables as often as they are in one.

= ie. metaphorical offspring of Jove, king of the gods; hence, meaning "god-like".

22: descended from the gods.

23-25: "Alphonsus' father, though he lives on earth (and is thus mortal), has as much right to demand a place in the heavens as has any other human, whoever he is."

*habit* = dwells, resides; *habit* is not an abbreviated form of *inhabit*, but rather directly derived from the French *habiter*.<sup>1</sup>

*the fiery pole* = though the exact meaning is obscure, the expression is a metaphor for the heavens; the *fiery pole* perhaps refers to the fiery region, the layer of fire thought to surround the layer of air which in turn surrounds the earth; *pole* refers to the ends of the axis around which the spheres of the universe spun, rotating around the earth, which in Ptolemaic theory sits at the center of the universe.

= putting aside. = godlike qualities.

= ie. dead.

= match, equal.

= ie. all of Alphonsus' heroic deeds are forgotten.

31: Venus reconsiders her last assertion.

= ie. because they have neglected to write about Alphonsus.

33: ie. and greatly prefer to avoid making any effort to immortalize Alphonsus in verse.

*stand in* = insist on.<sup>3</sup>

= ie. Alphonsus' deeds. = completely forgotten.

35-36: ie. "I, Venus, who am more accustomed to seeking out amorous activity, will assume to act the poetess."

*Cupid's games* = ie. love; *Cupid*, Venus' son, is the cherubic god of love, famous for mischievously shooting his victims with arrows which caused them to fall hopelessly in love.

*in ure* = in use.

*Minerva's sacred art* = ie. poetry; Minerva was, amongst other things, the goddess of poetry.

= has been used.

= unmatched.

40	Will now begin to treat of <u>bloody Mars</u> , Of <u>doughty</u> deeds and valiant victories.	39-40: Venus will now (unusually for her) write of war. <i>bloody Mars</i> = ie. war. <i>Mars</i> is the god of war. <i>doughty</i> = worthy. <b>line 40:</b> note the line's neat double alliteration.
42		<b>Entering Characters:</b> the nine sister-goddesses known as
44	<i>The nine Muses enter:</i> <i>Melpomene</i> (Muse of Tragedy), <i>Clio</i> (History), <i>Erato</i> (Love Poetry), <i>Euterpe</i> (Music), <i>Terpsichore</i> (Dance), <i>Thalia</i> (Comedy), <i>Urania</i> (Astronomy), <i>Polymnia</i> (Rhetoric), and <i>Calliope</i> (Epic Poetry).	the <i>Muses</i> were the patrons of the arts and inspirers of artists. Only <i>Calliope</i> , <i>Melpomene</i> and <i>Erato</i> will speak any lines.
48		
50	All of them are playing upon sundry instruments, except for <i>Calliope</i> , who comes last, her head hanging. She is not playing her instrument.	50-51: <i>Calliope</i> is depressed because no one writes epic poetry any more. Consequently, she has no clients, unlike her other sisters.
52		
54	But see <u>whereas</u> the stately Muses come, Whose harmony doth very far surpass The heavenly music of <u>Apollo's pipe</u> !	= ie. where, here.  = <i>Apollo</i> , the god of music, was often portrayed playing either a lute (ie. an early guitar) or a lyre (an early harp). Renaissance literature occasionally finds <i>Apollo</i> playing the <i>pipe</i> (an early recorder).
56	But what means this? <u>Melpómenē</u> herself	= the stress in the name of the Muse of tragedy is on the second syllable: <i>mel-PO-me-ne</i> .
58	With all her sisters <u>sound</u> their instruments, Only excepted fair <u>Calliopē</u> ,	= play. = also stressed on its second syllable: <i>ca-LI-o-pe</i> .
60	Who, coming last and hanging down her head, Doth plainly <u>shew</u> by outward actions What secret sorrow doth torment her heart.	= ie. show, a common alternate form.
62		
64	[ <i>Stands aside.</i> ]  <b>Melp.</b> <i>Calliopē</i> , thou which so oft didst <u>crake</u>	63: Venus steps back, so that she is able to watch the entering Muses while remaining unobserved herself.  65ff: <i>Melpomene</i> and her sisters tease poor <i>Calliope</i> for her lack of clients. <i>crake</i> = boast, <sup>3,4</sup> an alternate form of <i>crack</i> ; <sup>1</sup> but <i>crake</i> was also a distinct word, meaning "to croak", ie. to speak in a harsh and grating manner. <sup>1</sup>
66	How that such clients clustered to thy court, By <u>thick and threefold</u> , as not any one	66-68: "how so many poets sought your patronage (ie. your assistance in composing verse), while the rest of us had so few in comparison." <i>thick and threefold</i> = common expression indicating a large number. <sup>1</sup>
68	Of all thy sisters might compare with thee,	
70	Where be thy scholars now become, I <u>trow</u> ?	= suppose, ie. wonder.
72	Where are they vanished in such sudden <u>sort</u> , That, while as we do play upon our strings, You stand still <u>lazing</u> , and have <u>naught</u> to do?	= manner.  = passing time in indolence or ease. = nothing.
74	<b>Clio.</b> <i>Melpómenē</i> , <u>make you a why of that</u> ?	= <i>Clio</i> asks ironically if <i>Melpomene</i> is really puzzled by <i>Calliope</i> 's slump.
76	I know full oft you have [ <u>in</u> ] authors read,  The higher tree, the sooner is his fall,	= ie. read in books.  76: older version of the common sentiment, "the bigger they are, the harder they fall"; <i>Calliope</i> , who was once the most

78 And they which first do flourish and bear sway,  
Upon the sudden vanish clean away.

80 **Call.** Mock on apace; my back is broad enough  
To bear your flouts, as many as they be.

82 That year is rare that ne'er feels winter's storms;  
That tree is fertile which ne'er wanteth fruit;

84 And that same Muse hath heapèd well in store,  
Which never wanteth clients at her door.

86 But yet, my sisters, when the surgent seas  
Have ebbed their fill, their waves do rise again,  
88 And fill their banks up to the very brims;

90 And when my pipe hath eased herself a while,  
Such store of suitors shall my seat frequent,

That you shall see my scholars be not spent.

92 **Erato.** Spent, quoth you, sister? Then we were to blame,  
94 If we should say your scholars all were spent.

96 But, pray now, tell me when your painful pen  
Will rest enough?

98 **Melp.** When husbandmen shear hogs.

100 **Venus.** [Coming forward]  
Melpómenē, Eráto, and the rest,  
102 From thickest shrubs dame Venus did espy

in-demand of the Muses, seems to have been completely forgotten.

= "those individuals who" = ie. are (the most) influential.  
= completely.

80f: Calliope employs various metaphors to suggest that all processes are cyclical, so that her come-back is only a matter of time.

**Mock on apace** = the sense is, "you just keep on teasing me"; the expression **on apace**, as in "*to march on apace*" or "*come on apace*", was usually used to indicate a steady rate or speed of movement.

80-81: **my back...they be** = common phrasing used to indicate that one can handle whatever burden is loaded onto one.

**flouts** = instances of scoffing or jeering.<sup>1</sup>

82-83: even the most positive or productive phenomena cannot be expected to escape periods of decline.

**wanteth** = lacks.

84-85: a Muse who has an unending supply of clients has obviously saved up a good supply of them; Calliope is (perhaps with light sarcasm) implying that such a situation would be unusual or rare, if not impossible, ie. that her sisters are in no position to poke fun of her for something which they themselves will have suffered from time to time.

86-88: now Calliope considers the opposite side of the coin she described in lines 82-85: any cyclic phenomena can be expected, after having reached its nadir, to rise again.

**surgent** = surging.

**ebbed their fill** = receded to their lowest levels.

= Calliope's instrument. = rested, remained silent.

90: ie. such a great number of poets will flock to her.

**frequent** = a verb, stressed on its second syllable.

= "will not be used up", ie. there will be a never-ending number of them.

89-91: Calliope's silent **pipe** is a metaphor for the clients she no longer has.

= "you say". = would be.

94: there may be a pun here with **spent**, which could also mean "worn out",<sup>1</sup> e.g., "how could we possibly point out that your clients are worn-out, when you don't have any?"

95-96: "but please tell me (**pray now**), when will your labouring (**painful**)<sup>2</sup> pen have finally gotten enough rest?" Calliope's pen (a metaphor for the writing of epic verse), like her music, is presently unemployed. The sisters are spiteful!

= which is to say, never: **hogs** don't get **sheared**.

**husbandmen** = farmers.<sup>1</sup>

= witness.

<p>104 The mortal hatred which you <u>jointly</u> bear Unto your sister high Calliopë. What, do you think if that the tree do bend, 106 It follows therefore that it <u>needs</u> must break?</p> <p>And since her pipe a little while doth rest,</p> <p>108 It never shall be able <u>for to sound</u>? Yes, Muses, yes, <u>if that</u> she will <u>vouchsafe</u></p> <p>110 To <u>entertain</u> Dame Venus in <u>her school</u>,</p> <p>And further me with her instructiöns, 112 She shall have scholars which will <u>dain</u> to be In any other Muse's company. 114</p> <p><b>Call.</b> Most sacred Venus, do you doubt of that? 116 Calliopë would think <u>her three times blessed</u> <u>For to</u> receive a goddess in her school, 118 Especially so high an one as you, <u>Which</u> rules the earth, and guides the heavens too. 120</p> <p><b>Venus.</b> Then <u>sound</u> your pipes, and let us <u>bend</u> our steps 122 Unto the top of high <u>Parnassus Hill</u>,</p> <p>And there together <u>do</u> our best <u>devoir</u> 124 <u>For to</u> describe Alphonsus' warlike fame, And, in the manner of a <u>comedy</u>, 126 <u>Set down</u> his noble valour <u>presently</u>.</p> <p>128 <b>Call.</b> As Venus <u>wills</u>, so <u>bids</u> Calliopë. 130 <b>Melp.</b> And as <u>you</u> bid, your sisters do agree.</p> <p>132 [Exeunt.]</p>	<p>= together.</p> <p>105-6: a metaphor for Calliope's bad luck, which, Venus asserts, should not be expected to crush her. <i>needs</i> = necessarily.</p> <p>107: ie. "just because Calliope has no clients right now"; Venus picks up on Calliope's piping metaphor of lines 89-91 above.</p> <p>= to be played (again). = if. = deign, be so gracious as.</p> <p>110: <i>entertain</i> = accept. <i>her school</i> = Calliope's "place of instruction", perhaps "music school", as a metaphor for Calliope accepting Venus as her client, to help her write an epic poem about Alphonsus.</p> <p>= disdain, scorn. 110-3: once Calliope helps Venus write about Alphonsus, the Muse can expect the epic poetry business to pick up again!</p> <p>= ie. herself. = ie. greatly honoured. = ie. to; <i>for to</i> is used for <i>to</i> throughout the play.</p> <p>= who.</p> <p>= play. = direct. = ie. <i>Mt. Parnassus</i> in central Greece, traditional home of the Muses.<sup>9</sup> 123: to <i>do devoir</i> is to endeavor or do one's best effort.<sup>1</sup> = to. = play with a non-tragic ending. = relate, put words to paper.<sup>1</sup> = in short order.</p> <p>= wishes. = commands.</p> <p>130: with Venus in charge, the sisters will not disobey or contradict Calliope (<i>you</i>) in any way.</p> <p>132: Venus walks off stage in the company of Calliope and the other Muses. For the rest of the play, Venus will enter and exit the stage on foot for each of her appearances (excepting the last, when, at the play's close, she will be lifted back up out of view of the audience to signal her return to the heavens).</p>
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**ACT I, SCENE I.**

*Near Naples.*

*Enter Carinus (the father), and Alphonsus (his son).*

**Entering Characters:** the motivating force of our play is that *Carinus*, and hence his son *Alphonsus*, are the rightful heirs to throne of Aragon, but through the treachery of

1 *Carin.* My noble son, since first I did recount

2 The noble acts your predecessors did  
3 In Aragon, against their warlike foes,  
4 I never yet could see thee joy at all,  
5 But hanging down thy head as malcontent,  
6 Thy youthful days in mourning have been spent.  
7 Tell me, Alphonsus, what might be the cause  
8 That makes thee thus to pine away with care?  
9 Hath old Carinus done thee any offence

10 In reckoning up these stories unto thee? –

11 What, ne'er a word but mum? Alphonsus, speak,  
12 Unless your father's fatal day you seek.

13 *Alphon.* Although, dear father, I have often vowed  
14 Ne'er to unfold the secrets of my heart  
15 To any man or woman, whosome'er  
16 Dwells underneath the circle of the sky;

17 Yet do your words so conjure me, dear sire,  
18 That needs I must fulfill that you require.

19 Then so it is. Amongst the famous tales  
20 Which you rehearsed done by our sires in war,  
21 Whenas you came unto your father's days,  
22 With sobbing notes, with sighs and blubbering tears,  
23 And much ado, at length you thus began;

24 “Next to Alphonsus should my father come

Carinus' uncle, Carinus and his descendants were removed from the line of succession.

Though not completely clear, the backstory seems to be as follows: *Carinus'* grandfather (named **Alphonsus**, see line 25 below) had been King of Aragon, and on his death, the crown should have passed to his eldest son, **Ferdinandus** (Carinus' father); however, Ferdinandus was murdered by Carinus' uncle, Ferdinandus' younger brother, who usurped the throne. When Carinus' uncle died, possession of the throne was grabbed by the uncle's son, **Flaminius** (Carinus' cousin).

After Carinus' father Ferdinandus was slain, Carinus and his son Alphonsus were exiled from Aragon (they should perhaps have been grateful that they too were not murdered).

Dickinson places this scene near Naples, implying that it was to where Carinus and Alphonsus fled after their banishment from Aragon.

1-6: as far as Carinus can remember (which he measures by when he first began to tell stories of their family's glorious ancestors), his son Alphonsus has been in a melancholy mood.

= be joyful (a verb).

= spend his time in obvious distress. = anxiety.  
= ie. "offended thee?"

10: there is a pause after this line is spoken, as Carinus waits in vain for Alphonsus to respond.

*reckoning up* =ie. recounting; to *reckon up* means to "count up" or list.<sup>1</sup>

= expression used to mean "silent".

= day of death, ie. death.

= reveal.

= whosoever, an archaic word by the late 16th century.

= ie. lives on the earth.

*circle of the sky* = perhaps referring to the sun's orbit.<sup>1</sup>

= beseech.<sup>1,2</sup>

= necessarily. = "do what you demand", ie. "answer your question."

= recounted. = fathers, ie. ancestors.

= when. = ie. "your own".

= fuss.

25-30: Alphonsus, more for the audience's sake than for his father's, recounts the tribulations that have led them to this moment.

*Next to Alphonsus* = ie. "after my grandfather King

26 For to possess the diadem by right  
Of Aragon, but that the wicked wretch,  
28 His younger brother, with aspiring mind,  
By secret treason robbed him of his life,  
30 And me his son of that which was my due.”  
These words, my sire, did so torment my mind,  
32 As, had I been with Ixion in hell,  
The ravening bird could never plague me worse;

34 For ever since my mind hath troubled been  
Which way I might revenge this traitorous fact,  
36 And that recover which is ours by right.

38 **Carin.** Ah, my Alphonsus, never think on that;  
In vain it is to strive against the stream.

40 The crown is lost, and now in hucksters' hands,

And all our hope is cast into the dust.  
42 Bridle these thoughts, and learn the same of me, –  
A quiet life doth pass an empery.

44 **Alphon.** Yet, noble father, ere Carinus' brood  
46 Shall brook his foe for to usurp his seat,

He'll die the death with honour in the field,  
48 And so his life and sorrows briefly end.

But did I know my froward fate were such  
50 As I should fail in this my just attempt,

This sword, dear father, should the author be  
52 To make an end of this my tragedy.

Therefore, sweet sire, remain you here a while,

Alphonsus".

**come** = ie. have come.

= ambitious.

32-33: Alphonsus' mythology is confused: he likely means to refer to the giant **Tityus**, a son of Jupiter, who, in return for insulting the goddess Diana, was chained up somewhere in deep hell, where a vulture forever gnawed on his liver. His prostrate body was said to cover nine acres.

**Ixion** was a mortal whose father-in-law tried to extort Ixion's wedding presents from him: in revenge, Ixion invited the man to his home, wherein he caused his father-in-law to fall into a pit filled with fire, killing him; Ixion was pardoned by Jupiter, who invited him to a feast, but Ixion repaid his host by trying to seduce Jupiter's wife Juno. He was punished by being tied by his hands and feet to a wheel which forever spun around in the underworld.

**Ixion** is pronounced with the stress on its first syllable here: *IX-i-on*.

**ravening** = ravenous.

**plague** = afflict.

= deed.

= ie. the crown.

39: a proverbial conceit.

= expression meaning "beyond recovery";<sup>1</sup> **huckster** is a surprisingly old word, dating back to the 12th century. It was originally used to describe a peddler or middleman of some sort. By the 16th century, it was also being applied in its modern sense, to one who would sink to the lowest level to make money.

= unto.

= curb, control.<sup>1</sup> = from.

43: a man who lives without strife lives a life worthy of an emperor.

45-46: "before your offspring (**brood**, meaning Alphonsus himself) permits (**Shall brook**) your enemy to rob you of the throne".

= ie. on the battlefield.

= soon.<sup>1</sup>

49-50: "and even if I knew that I was destined to fail in attempting this righteous act".

**froward** = adverse.<sup>2</sup>

51-52: ie. "I would kill myself"; with **author** and **tragedy**, a literary metaphor.

**make an end of** = conclude.

54 56	And let me <u>walk my fortune for to try</u> . I do not doubt but, <u>ere the time be long</u> , I'll <u>quite his cost</u> , or else myself will die.	= "leave here ( <i>walk</i> ) <sup>1</sup> in order to test my fortune." = before long, soon enough. = "repay his expenses", ie. "pay him back for what he has done to us"; <i>to quite the cost</i> was a commercial expression.
58	<b>Carin.</b> My noble son, since <u>that thy mind is such</u> <u>For to revenge thy father's foul abuse</u> ,	= ie. "you have made up your mind". = ie. to. = wrong, insult.
60	As that my words may <u>not a whit</u> prevail To stay thy journey, go with <u>happy</u> fate,	60-61: <i>As that...journey</i> = ie. "so that nothing I say will stop you from leaving." <i>not a whit</i> = not a bit. <i>happy</i> = lucky.
62 64	And soon return unto thy father's <u>cell</u> , With such a <u>train</u> as Julius Caesar came To noble Rome, <u>whenas</u> he had <u>achieved</u>	= humble home. <sup>2</sup> = following, retinue. = when. = ie. succeeded at becoming, <sup>3</sup> attained the position of. <sup>5</sup>
	The mighty monarch of <u>the triple world</u> .	= ie. the entire known world: the ancients divided the world into three continents, Europe, Asia and Libya (Africa), surrounded by ocean. Greene will re-use this expression several times in the play.
66	Meantime, Carinus in this <u>silly grove</u> Will spend his days with prayer[s] and <u>horizons</u>	= simple or rude woods. <sup>5</sup> = orisons, a synonym for "prayers", with the stress on its first syllable; the alternate, and older, spelling of <i>horizon</i> for <i>orison</i> was probably obsolete by the Renaissance. The collocation <i>prayers and orisons</i> was a common one.
68 70	To mighty Jove to <u>further thine intent</u> . Farewell, dear son, Alphonsus, fare you well.	= "promote or assist you in your goals."
		<b>The Use of Jove in Alphonsus:</b> Elizabethan stage-characters live in a delightful world in which they seem to simultaneously believe in, and hence continuously refer to, both the Christian God and the pagan gods of ancient mythology. A minor literary consequence of this juxtaposition was that Elizabethan dramatists frequently used the name of the king of the pagan gods <i>Jove</i> to refer to the Christian <i>God</i> . Our play is unusual, however, in that there are no explicit references to God (except when used as a simple expletive, ie. non-substantively, e.g., <i>God speed</i> , <i>God wot</i> ). Our characters are seen to only refer to and address <i>Jove</i> .
		Did Greene intend his Medieval Western characters to be pagans? The answer is of course unknowable (see Note E in the Introduction for a larger discussion).
	[Exit Carinus.]	
72 74	<b>Alphon.</b> And is he gone? Then <u>hie</u> , Alphonsus, hie, To <u>try</u> thy fortune where thy <u>Fates</u> do call.	= hurry. 74: <i>try</i> = test.
		<i>Fates</i> = the <i>Fates</i> were three sister-goddesses who were sometimes alluded to, as here, in their role as general determiners of an individual's fortune.
	A noble mind disdains to hide his head,	75-76: an honourable man scorns to avoid danger, thus

76	And let his foes [to] triumph in his <u>overthrow</u> .	giving his enemies the opportunity to celebrate his defeat. <i>overthrow</i> = ruin, deposition from power. <sup>1</sup>
78	[As <i>Alphonsus</i> is about to go out, <i>Albinus</i> enters.]	<b>Entering Characters:</b> <i>Albinus</i> is an Aragonese lord serving as an officer in the army of the King of Naples.
80	<i>Alb.</i> [ <i>Aside</i> ] What loitering fellow have we spied here? – Presume not, villain, further for to go,	80: the editor has labeled this line as an <i>Aside</i> .
82	<u>Unless</u> you do at length the same repent.	82: a vague threat to do injury to <i>Alphonsus</i> if he does not stop and identify himself. <i>Unless</i> = lest. <sup>4</sup>
84	[ <i>Alphonsus</i> comes towards <i>Albinus</i> .]	
86	<i>Alphon.</i> “Villain,” say’st thou? nay, “villain” <u>in thy throat!</u>	= phrase used to "throw" a person's words back "in his face".
88	What, know’st thou, <u>skipjack</u> , whom thou "villain" call’st?	= whippersnapper, impertinent fellow. <sup>1</sup>
90	<i>Alb.</i> A common <u>vassal</u> I do villain call.	= slave. <sup>1</sup>
92	<i>Alphon.</i> That shall thou soon <u>approve</u> , persuade thyself, Or else I’ll die, or thou shalt die for me.	91-92: ie. "you better back that insult up, believe it, or one of us will die." <i>approve</i> = prove, ie. make good on. <sup>1</sup>
94	<i>Alb.</i> [ <i>Aside</i> ] What, do I dream, or do my <u>dazzling</u> eyes Deceive me? Is’t <i>Alphonsus</i> that I see?	= ie. dazzled or dazed. <sup>1</sup> note the extended alliteration from <i>do</i> in this line through <i>Deceive</i> in the next.
96	Doth now <i>Medea</i> use her <u>wonted charms</u> For to delude <i>Albinus</i> ’ <u>fantasy</u> ?	96-97: "has <i>Medea</i> used her accustomed magic ( <i>wonted charms</i> ) to trick my mind ( <i>fantasy</i> ) <sup>2</sup> ?" <i>Medea</i> was the name of a famous sorceress of ancient Greek myth, but also a distinct character (also a witch) in our play.
98	Or doth black <u>Pluto</u> , King of dark <u>Avern</u> , Seek [for] to <u>flout</u> me with his counterfeit?	98-99: "or does <i>Pluto</i> (the god of Hades) look to mock ( <i>flout</i> ) me by sending me a doppelganger of <i>Alphonsus</i> ?" <i>Avern</i> = "hell", though <i>Avern</i> (usually spelled <i>Avernus</i> ) is properly a lake situated at the entrance to Hades; <i>Avernus</i> ' vapours were so toxic that birds fell dead if they attempted to fly over it.
100	His body like to <i>Alphonsus</i> ' <u>framèd</u> is;	= shaped, formed; the line's meter is off: perhaps <i>to</i> can be omitted.
102	His face resembles much <i>Alphonsus</i> ’ <u>hue</u> ; His noble mind declares him for no less. –	= complexion, appearance. <sup>2</sup> 102: the stranger's bearing and speech suggest he must be <i>Alphonsus</i> .
104	'Tis he indeed. <u>Woe worth</u> <i>Albinus</i> , Whose babbling tongue hath caused his own <u>annoy</u> !	103-4: <i>Albinus</i> , finally accepting the fact that it is indeed <i>Alphonsus</i> standing before him, bitterly regrets the harsh words he has used with him. <i>Woe worth</i> = common expression of grief. <sup>1</sup> <i>annoy</i> = vexation. <sup>1</sup>
106	Why doth not <i>Jove</i> send from the glittering skies His thunderbolts to <u>chastise</u> this <u>offence</u> ?	105-6: the king of the gods was responsible for thunder and lightning. <i>chastise</i> = punish. <i>offense</i> = transgression.
	Why doth <u>Dame Terra</u> <u>cease</u> with greedy jaws	107: <i>Dame Terra</i> = ie. Latinized version of the expression "mother earth". <i>cease</i> = ie. "refrain" or "fail", though <i>cease</i> properly

108 To swallow up Albinus presently?  
What, shall I fly and hide my traitorous head  
110 From stout Alphonsus whom I so misused?

Or shall I yield? – Tush, yielding is in vain,

112 Nor can I fly, but he will follow me.  
Then cast thyself down at his grace's feet,  
114 Confess thy fault, and ready make thy breast  
To entertain thy well-deservèd death.

[Albinus kneels.]

118 **Alphon.** What news, my friend? Why are you [now]  
so blank,

120 That erst before did vaunt it to the skies?

122 **Alb.** Pardon, dear lord! Albinus pardon craves  
For this offence, which, by the heavens I vow,  
124 Unwittingly I did unto your grace;  
For had I known Alphonsus had been here,  
126 Ere that my tongue had spoke so traitorously,  
This hand should make my very soul to die.

128 **Alphon.** Rise up, my friend, thy pardon soon is got.

[Albinus rises up.]

132 But, prithce, tell me what the cause might be,  
134 That in such sort thou erst upbraid'st me?

136 **Alb.** Most mighty prince, since first your father's sire  
Did yield his ghost unto the sisters three,

138 And old Carinus forcèd was to fly  
His native soil and royal diadem;  
140 I, for because I seemèd to complain  
Against their treason, shortly was forewarned  
142 Ne'er more to haunt the bounds of Aragon  
On pain of death. Then, like a man forlorn,  
144 I sought about to find some resting-place;  
And at the length did hap upon this shore,

146 Where shewing forth my cruèl banishment,

was used to refer to an action that was in progress before stopping.

= right now.

= run away.

= valiant. = mistreated.<sup>1</sup>

111: it is unclear what exactly Albinus means here by considering, and then rejecting, **yielding** to Alphonsus, given that he will throw himself at his sovereign's feet in a moment and beg for mercy. In a military context, yield usually means "surrender".

= flee. = "chase me", ie. "hunt me down."

= ie. "instead".

114-5: **ready...death** = present his chest to Alphonsus, so that his true king may drive a sword into it.

119-120: Alphonsus drops the mask, at least a bit: he has recognized Albinus all along.

**blank** = pale.

120: ie. "you who moments ago did so loudly brag?"

= before.

127: poetically, "I would have killed myself."

= alternate form of "pray thee", meaning "please".

= manner. = just now.

= ie. "your grandfather".

137: "did die".

**the sisters three** = ie. the Fates, the three sister-deities who determined the length of each person's life.

140-2: Albinus himself was forced into exile for speaking out against the usurpation of the Aragonese throne.

144-5: Albinus took to the sea to find a new home.

= happen.

146: ie. "where, having explained my situation".

**shewing forth** = ie. "showing forth": making evident, demonstrating.<sup>1</sup>

<p>By King Belinus I am <u>succoured</u>.</p> <p>148 But now, my lord, to answer your <u>demand</u>,</p> <p>150 It happens so, that the usurping king Of Aragon makes war upon this land For certain tribute which he claimeth here;</p> <p>152 Wherefore Belinus sent me round about His country, for to gather up [his] men 154 For to withstand this most injurious foe; Which being done, returning with the king, 156 Despitefully I did so taunt your grace, Imagining you had some soldier been, 158 The which, for fear, had sneakèd from the camp.</p> <p>160 <b>Alphon.</b> Enough, Albinus, I do know thy mind.</p> <p>162 But may it be that these thy happy news Should be of truth, or have you forgèd them?</p> <p>164 <b>Alb.</b> The gods forbid that ere Albinus' tongue Should once be found to forge a feignèd tale, 166 Especially unto his sovereign lord: But if Alphonsus think that I do feign, 168 Stay here a while, and you shall plainly see My words be true, <u>whenas</u> you do perceive 170 <u>Our royal army</u> march before your face – The which, if't please my noble lord to <u>stay</u>, 172 I'll hasten on with all the speed I may.</p> <p>174 <b>Alphon.</b> Make haste, Albinus, if you love my life; But yet beware, <u>whenas</u> your army comes, 176 You do not make as though you do me know,</p> <p>For I awhile a <u>soldier base</u> will be, 178 Until I find time more conveniènt To <u>shew</u>, Albinus, what is mine intent.</p> <p>180 <b>Alb.</b> Whate'er Alphonsus <u>fittest doth esteem</u>, 182 Albinus for his <u>profit</u> best will <u>deem</u>.</p> <p>184 <span style="text-align: right;">[Exit Albinus.]</span></p> <p>186 <b>Alphon.</b> Now do I see both gods and Fortune too Do join their powers to raise Alphonsus' fame; 188 For in this <u>broil</u> I do not greatly doubt But that I shall my <u>cousin's</u> courage tame. –</p> <p>190 But see whereas Belinus' army comes, And he himself, unless <u>I guess awry</u>: 192 Whoe'er it be, <u>I do not pass a pin</u>;</p>	<p>147: the King of Naples Belinus gave Albinus sanctuary. <b>succoured</b> = assisted.</p> <p>= question.</p> <p>149-151: the present king of Aragon Flaminius has been demanding that Belinus pay him tribute; since Belinus has refused to do, the two nations have gone to war. In fact, Flaminius has already invaded Italy with an army.</p> <p>152-4: Albinus was tasked with gathering out of the countryside an army with which Belinus could defend Italy against the invading Aragonese.</p> <p>157-8: Albinus explains he thought Alphonsus was one of Belinus' drafted soldiers trying to desert.</p> <p>160: Alphonsus knows Albinus well, and the latter need not explain himself any further.</p> <p>161-2: despite his assurance of line 160, Alphonsus questions whether Albinus is lying to him, in order to prompt Albinus to explicitly avow his allegiance to Alphonsus. As befits a great leader, Alphonsus will prove himself to be a master manipulator of men.</p> <p>= when. = ie. the army of Belinus. = remain here.</p> <p>= when. 176: Alphonsus asks Albinus to pretend he does not recognize him. = ie. a common soldier.</p> <p>= show.</p> <p>= judges is the appropriate thing to do. = (Alphonsus') benefit. = decide (to do).</p> <p>= conflict. = ie. his father's cousin Flaminius; <b>cousin</b> was a generic term used to refer to any of one's kin.</p> <p>= "I am mistaken". = ie. "I could not care (<b>pass</b>) less".</p>
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Alphonsus means his soldier for to be.

[*He stands aside.*]

195: Alphonsus steps back in order to watch the goings-on, while he himself remains unobserved.

**Exile in Italy:** when Albinus fled from Aragon to Naples, he needed Belinus' permission to remain in Italy, or so he tells us; Carinus and Alphonsus, on the other hand, appear to have arrived and taken up residence near Naples in complete anonymity, and without the government's permission. It seems unlikely that the disinherited king and prince could have lived in Italy all these years unrecognized, but realism was never Greene's strong-suit.

## ACT I, SCENE II.

*The Camp of Belinus.*

*Enter **Belinus** (King of Naples), **Albinus**, **Fabius**, marching with their soldiers (and make a stand).*

**Entering Character: Belinus** is the King of Naples. He is leading his army to meet the invading Aragonese, who are led by their king Flaminus (Alphonsus' enemy).

The Aragonese **Albinus**, whom we have met, is an exiled Aragonese who was extended sanctuary and befriended by Belinus, and who now fights on behalf of his new patron.

While no background on Fabius is provided, he appears to be a lord or high-ranking officer who serves under Belinus. As he remains loyal to his king throughout the play, we may assume he is Neapolitan.

The representative soldiers of Belinus' army tramp onto the stage, then halt (they **make a stand**).<sup>1</sup>

1 **Belin.** Thus far, my lords, we trained have our camp

= ie. "have led our troops".

2 For to encounter haughty Aragon,

**trained** = to **train** is to bring or conduct.<sup>1</sup>

= in order to. = ie. the King of Aragon; it was conventional to refer to a monarch by the name of the territory he ruled.

Who with a mighty power of stragglng mates

= army. = vagrant or straying fellows; Belinus speaks contemptuously of his foe.

= attacked.

4 Hath traitorously assailed this our land,  
And burning towns, and sacking cities fair,  
6 Doth play the devil wheresome'er he comes.

= bring havoc and ruin.<sup>1</sup> = ie. wherever.

8 Now, as we are informèd by our scouts,

= city.

= renown, a common alternate form.

8 He marcheth on unto our chiefest seat,

= in order to surround it. = troops or companies of soldiers.

10 For to begirt it with his bands about,

= in due time.

10 And so at length, the which high Jove forbid,

12 To sack the same, as erst he other did.

= like he has already done to other cities; the Aragonese army seems to have landed in Italy a while ago and been left so far to rampage freely across the land.

If which should hap, Belinus were undone,

13: if Naples too were to be sacked, it would be the end of Belinus.

**undone** = ruined.

14 His country spoiled, and all his subject[s] slain:

	<u>Wherefore your sovereign thinketh it most meet</u>	= on account of which. <sup>1</sup> = ie. "I". = appropriate.
16	For to <u>prevent</u> the fury of the foe,	16-20: Belinius plans to bring his army into the city of Naples (and hence behind the protection of its walls), from which his men can make their last stand.
18	And <u>Naples' succour</u> , that distressed town,	<i>prevent</i> = anticipate.
	By entering in, <u>ere Aragon doth come</u> ,	<i>Naples' succour</i> = ie. (in order) to assist Naples.
	With all our men, which will sufficient be	<i>ere Aragon doth come</i> = ie. before Flaminius (and the army of Aragon) arrives.
20	For to withstand their cruël <u>battery</u> .	<i>battery</i> = assault or bombardment. <sup>2</sup>
		<b>22-41 (below):</b> Albinus engages in one of the lengthiest metaphors which can be found in Elizabethan drama.
		In Albinus' analogy, the <i>serpent</i> represents the Kingdom of Naples, and the <i>serpent's head</i> its capital city Naples.
		Collins observes that the "absurd" superstition described by Albinus was likely Greene's own invention, without antecedent anywhere in literature or myth.
22	<i>Alb.</i> The <u>silly</u> serpent, found by <u>country-swain</u> ,	= lowly. = (a) peasant or rustic.
	And cut in pieces by his furious blows,	
24	Yet if her head do scape away untouched,	= ie. the serpent's head.
	As many write, <u>it</u> very strangely goes	
26	To fetch an herb, with which in little time	= body. = unite.
	Her battered <u>corpse</u> again she doth <u>conjoin</u> :	= farmer's.
28	But if by chance the <u>ploughman's</u> sturdy staff	= happen.
	Do <u>hap</u> to hit upon the serpent's head,	= ie. even if the remainder of the body is untouched.
30	And bruise the same, <u>though all the rest be sound</u> ,	<i>sound</i> = unharmed. <sup>1</sup>
	Yet doth the silly serpent lie for dead,	
32	Nor can the rest of all her body serve	= balm, healing ointment.
	To find a <u>salve</u> which may her life preserve.	22-33: to summarize Albinus' point, a decapitated snake's unharmed head can, alone, save the body, and thus preserve the snake's life, but the unharmed body alone cannot do likewise, if the head is uninjured.
		= ie. "applying the lesson to the present circumstances".
34	<u>Even so</u> , my lord, if Naples once be lost,	
	Which is the head of all your grace's land,	
36	<u>Easy it were</u> for the malicious foe	= ie. it would then be easy.
	To get the other cities in their hand:	
38	But if from them that Naples town be free,	
	I do not doubt but safe the rest shall be:	
40	And therefore, mighty king, I think it best,	= help. = ie. the remainder of the kingdom.
	To <u>succour</u> Naples rather than <u>the rest</u> .	38-41: Albinus' didactic speech concludes with a pair of rhyming couplets.
42		= splendidly. = an oath.
44	<i>Belin.</i> 'Tis <u>bravely</u> spoken; <u>by my crown</u> I swear,	
	I like thy counsel, and will follow it.	
46		46: Alphonusus, we may note, has not left the stage since the Act's opening; he has been observing Belinius since the latter entered the stage at the beginning of this scene.
	[ <i>He points toward Alphonusus.</i> ]	
48	But hark, Albinus, dost thou know the man,	= facing. <sup>1</sup>
	That doth so closely <u>overthwart us</u> stand?	
50		

**Alb.** Not I, my lord, nor never saw him yet.  
 52  
 54 **Belin.** Then, prithce, go, and ask him presently,  
 56 What countryman he is, and why he comes  
 58 Into this place? Perhaps he is some one,  
 60 That is sent hither as a secret spy  
 62 To hear and see in secret what we do.  
 64  
 [Albinus and Fabius go toward Alphonsus.]  
 66 **Alb.** My friend, what art thou, that so like a spy  
 68 Dost sneak about Belinus' royal camp?  
 70  
 72 **Alphon.** I am a man.  
 74  
 76 **Fabius.** A man? We know the same:  
 78 But prithce, tell me, and set scoffing by,  
 80 What countryman thou art, and why you come,  
 82 That we may soon resolve the king thereof?  
 84  
 86 **Alphon.** Why, say, I am a soldier.  
 88  
 90 **Fabius.** Of whose band?  
 92  
 94 **Alphon.** Of his that will most wages to me give.  
 96  
 98 **Fabius.** But will you be  
 100 Content to serve Belinus in his wars?  
 102  
 104 **Alphon.** Ay, if he'll reward me as I do deserve,  
 106 And grant whate'er I win, it shall be mine  
 108 Incontinent.  
 110  
 112 **Alb.** Believe me, sir, your service costly is:  
 114 But stay a while, and I will bring you word  
 116 What King Belinus says unto the same.  
 118  
 [Albinus goes toward Belinus.]  
 120  
 122 **Belin.** What news, Albinus? Who is that we see?  
 124  
 126 **Alb.** It is, my lord, a soldier that you see,  
 128 Who fain would serve your grace in these your wars,  
 130 But that, I fear, his service is too dear.  
 132  
 134 **Belin.** Too dear, why so? What doth the soldier crave?  
 136  
 138 **Alb.** He craves, my lord, all things that with his sword  
 140 He doth obtain, whatever that they be.  
 142  
 144 **Belin.** [To Alphonsus]  
 146 Content, my friend; if thou wilt succour me,  
 148 Whate'er you get, that challenge as thine own,

51: Albinus fulfills his promise to pretend not to recognize Alphonsus.  
 Note the use of the double negative (*nor never*), a still common practice in the 16th century.  
 = please. = right away.  
 = to here.  
 61ff: in the presence of Fabius, Albinus must role-play in front of Alphonsus.  
*what* = who.  
 = "we already know that."  
 = "putting aside your mocking or sarcasm".  
 = inform.  
 75: Alphonsus poses as a mercenary soldier.  
 = ie. pleased, satisfied.  
 81-82: Alphonsus has a plan: he will demand, in return for his services to Belinus, that anything he individually conquers and captures should be unconditionally and immediately (*Incontinent*, an adverb)<sup>1</sup> granted to him.  
 = expensive.  
 = gladly.  
 = expensive.  
 = demand.  
 = agreed. = ie. fight on Belinus' behalf.  
 = ie. "that thing you may demand by right".

104	Belinus gives it <u>frankly</u> unto thee, <u>Although</u> it be the crown of Aragon.	= freely, unconditionally. <sup>2</sup> = even if; we see a bit of foreshadowing here.
106	Come on therefore, and let us <u>hie apace</u>	= hurry.
	To Naples town, <u>whereas by this</u> , I know,	= where by now.
108	Our foes have pitched their tents against our walls.	108: Belinus expects the Aragonese have begun to besiege Naples.
110	<b>Alphon.</b> March on, my lord, for I will follow you; –	
	[ <i>Aside</i> ] And do not doubt but, <u>ere the time be long</u> ,	= before long, soon enough.
112	I shall obtain the crown of Aragon.	111-2: <i>Aside</i> added by editor.
114	[ <i>Exeunt.</i> ]	
END OF ACT I.		

## ACT II.

### PROLOGUE.

Alarum.  
*Enter Venus.*

= normally, the common stage direction *alarum* refers to a call to arms, a musical command advising men to prepare for imminent battle. Here, however, the *alarum* acts simply as a musical introduction signaling the entrance of Venus and the beginning of the new Act.

1 *Venus.* Thus from the pit of pilgrim's poverty  
2 Alphonsus gins by step and step to climb

1: Venus' speech begins with an attractive bit of alliteration.  
2: *gins* = begins.

*by step and step* = invented by Greene, this expression is an interesting alternative to "step by step", and one that was adopted by a few succeeding writers.

Unto the top of friendly Fortune's wheel.

3: personified *Fortune* controlled a standing *wheel* which she spun around to sometimes raise, and sometimes lower, the luck and circumstances of each individual. Fortune's wheel was at present very *friendly* towards Alphonsus.

4 From banished state, as you have plainly seen,  
He is transformed into a soldier's life,  
6 And marcheth in the ensign of the king  
Of worthy Naples, which Belinus hight;

= condition.

= "under the banner".

= "is called".

8 Not for because that he doth love him so,  
But that he may revenge him on his foe.

8-9: Alphonsus fights for Belinus not because of any affection he bears for the king, but rather to get revenge on the usurpers (represented by Flaminius, who is leading an Aragonese army against Belinus) who stole his father's crown

10 Now on the top of lustly barbèd steed  
He mounted is, in glittering armour clad,  
12 Seeking about the troops of Aragon,

= a vigorous war horse covered with armour (*barbed*).<sup>1</sup>

11-12: Alphonsus is riding around, seeking the army from Aragon.

For to encounter with his traitorous niece.

13: *For to encounter* = seeking to meet up with.

14 How he doth speed, and what doth him befall,  
Mark this our act, for it doth show it all.

*niece* = could be used, as here, to refer to a male relative.

= make out, succeed. = happens to him.

= observe.

16  
[*Exit Venus.*]

### ACT II, SCENE I.

*A Battlefield.*

*Strike up alarum.*

= call to arms.

*Enter Flaminius at one door, Alphonsus at another:  
they fight; Alphonsus kills Flaminius.*

**Entering Characters:** we finally meet *Flaminius*, the present King of Aragon, and cousin to Alphonsus' father Carinus. Carinus' uncle (the father of Flaminius) had murdered Carinus' father, the legitimate heir to the throne, to take the throne of Aragon from that branch of the family, and on his death, passed the crown on to his own son Flaminius.

1 **Alphon.** Go pack thou hence unto the Stygian lake,

2 And make report unto thy traitorous sire

4 How well thou hast enjoyed the diadem  
Which he by treason set upon thy head;  
And if he ask thee who did send thee down,  
6 Alphonsus say, who now must wear thy crown.

8 *Alarum.*  
10 *Enter Laelius.*

12 **Lael.** Traitor, how darest thou look me in the face,  
Whose mighty king thou traitorously hast slain?  
What, dost thou think Flaminius hath no friends  
14 For to revenge his death on thee again?  
Yes, be you sure that, ere you scape from hence,  
16 Thy gasping ghost shall bear him company,  
Or else myself, fighting for his defense,  
18 Will be content by those thy hands to die.

20 **Alphon.** Laelius, few words would better thee become,

Especially as now the case doth stand;  
22 And didst thou know whom thou dost threaten thus,  
We should you have more calmer out of hand:  
24 For, Laelius, know, that I Alphonsus am,  
The son and heir to old Carinus, whom  
26 The traitorous father of Flaminius  
Did secretly bereave of his diadem.  
28 But see the just revenge of mighty Jove!  
The father dead, the son is likewise slain  
30 By that man's hand who they did count as dead,  
Yet doth survive to wear the diadem,  
32 When they themselves accompany the ghosts  
Which wander round about the Stygian fields.

34 *[Laelius gazes upon Alphonsus.]*

36 Muse not hereat, for it is true, I say;  
38 I am Alphonsus, whom thou hast misused.

40 **Lael.** The man whose death I did so oft lament!

42 *[Kneels.]*

44 Then pardon me for these uncourteous words,

Unfortunately, Flaminius is killed as soon as he appears on the stage, and so is deprived of the opportunity to speak any lines.

1: **Go pack thou hence** = "depart from here", an imperative.  
**the Stygian lake** = properly the River Styx, but used here to mean simply "Hades". **Stygian** is the adjectival form of **Styx**, the primary waterway of the underworld, and the one the souls of the dead had to cross to reach hell.

= ie. Flaminius' father, the original usurper of the Aragonese crown (who, being dead, would now be a resident of Hades).

3-4: Alphonsus bitterly mocks Flaminius.

= "tell him it was Alphonsus".

**Entering Character: Laelius** is an Aragonese soldier. He sees that Alphonsus (whom he does not recognize) has killed his king.

= the stress is on the second syllable of **Flaminius**.

= before. = escape. = here.

16-18: Laelius challenges Alphonsus, but allows that one of them must die.

= "fit you better", ie. "make you appear more noble and manly".  
= situation.

23: awkwardly, "I would at once (**out of hand**)<sup>1,3</sup> have you in a more peaceable frame of mind."

= rob, dispossess (of). = omitted by Dyce for the sake of the meter.

= ie. Alphonsus'. = account as or believe to be dead.

= while. = ie. Flaminius and his father. = souls.

= ie. Hades; for **Stygian**, see the note at line 1 above.

= "do not stand there wondering".

= mistreated.

= frequently mourn.

<p>46</p> <p>48</p> <p>50</p> <p>52</p> <p>54</p> <p>56</p> <p>58</p> <p>60</p> <p>62</p> <p>64</p> <p>66</p> <p>68</p> <p>70</p> <p>72</p> <p>74</p> <p>76</p> <p>78</p> <p>80</p> <p>82</p> <p>84</p>	<p>The which I in my rage did utter forth,  <u>Pricked</u> by the duty <u>of a loyal mind</u>;</p> <p>Pardon, Alphonsus, this my first offence,  And let me die if e'er I <u>flite</u> again.</p> <p><b>Alphon.</b> Laelius, I <u>fain</u> would pardon this offence,  And <u>eke</u> accept thee to my <u>grace</u> again,</p> <p>But that I fear that, when I stand in need  And want your help, you will your lord betray.  How say you, Laelius, may I trust to thee?</p> <p><b>Lael.</b> Ay, noble lord, by all the gods I vow;  <u>For first shall heavens want stars</u>, and foaming seas  <u>Want</u> watery drops, before I'll traitor be  Unto Alphonsus, whom I honour so.</p> <p><b>Alphon.</b> Well then, arise;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[<i>Laelius rises.</i>]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">and <u>for because</u> I'll <u>try</u>  If that thy words and deeds be both alike,  Go <u>haste</u> and fetch the <u>youths</u> of Aragon,  Which now I hear have <u>turned their heels</u> and fled;</p> <p>Tell them <u>your chance</u>, and bring them back again  Into this wood; where in ambushment lie,  Until I send or come for you myself.</p> <p><b>Lael.</b> I will, my lord.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[<i>Exit Laelius.</i>]</p> <p><b>Alphon.</b> Full little thinks Belinus and his <u>peers</u>  What thoughts Alphonsus casteth in his mind;</p> <p>For if they did, they would not greatly <u>haste</u>  To <u>pay the same the which</u> they promised me.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Enter Belinus, Albinus, Fabius,  with their soldiers, marching.</i></p>	<p>= urged. = ie. loyal to Flaminius, the king he was serving.  It may be worth noting that on the scale of honourability,  Laelius must fall a notch or two below Albinus, who was  openly critical when Carinus' father was overthrown, and  nobly suffered exile rather than adapt to the new  circumstances. Laelius, on the other hand, does not indicate  he followed any course other than to quietly shift his  allegiance to the usurping line of the royal family.</p> <p>= "contend (against you)" or "scold (you)".<sup>1,3</sup></p> <p>= gladly.  = also. = favour.</p> <p>52-54: as he did with Albinus in Act I.i, Alphonsus chal-  lenges Laelius to prove his loyalty to him; it is not likely that  Alphonsus genuinely worries about Laelius, even though the  latter remained in Aragon in the service of the king who  usurped the throne.</p> <p>= "it should first happen that the sky loses its stars".  = lack.</p> <p>= ie. because. = test.  66: "whether your actions will match your words".  = quickly. = ie. the young soldiers.  = old expression describing those running away from an  encounter.  = "what has happened to you".</p> <p><b>17-71:</b> though not clear yet, Belinus and his Neapolitan army  have thrashed the invading Aragonese, due in no small part  to Alphonsus, who, fighting on behalf of Belinus, not only  killed the Aragonese king Flaminius, but also did  considerable damage amongst the Aragonese troops.</p> <p>75: Alphonsus alone (excepting the corpse of Flaminius)  remains on-stage, and delivers a brief monologue at lines  77-80 below.</p> <p>77-78: "Belinus and his nobles (<i>peers</i>) have no idea what I  am thinking", ie. what Alphonsus is scheming to do.</p> <p>= hurry.  = "pay me that which".</p> <p><b>85-91 (below):</b> in an extended simile, Belinus compares</p>
---	--	---

86 **Belin.** Like simple sheep, when shepherd absent is  
 Far from his flock, assailed by greedy wolves,  
 Do scattering fly about, some here, some there,  
 88 To keep their bodies from their ravening jaws,  
 So do the fearful youths of Aragon  
 90 Run round about the green and pleasant plains,  
 And hide their heads from Neapolitans;  
 92 Such terror have their strong and sturdy blows  
Struck to their hearts, as for a world of gold,  
 94 I warrant you, they will not come again. –  
 But, noble lords, where is the knight become  
 96 Which made the blood besprinkle all the place  
Whereas he did encounter with his foe?  
 98 My friend Albinus, know you where he is?

100 **Alb.** Not I, my lord, for since in thickest ranks  
 I saw him chase Flaminius at the heels,  
 102 I never yet could set mine eyes on him.

104 *[Albinus spies out Alphonsus,  
 and shews him to Belinus.]*  
 106

But see, my lord, whereas the warrior stands,  
 108 Or else my sight doth fail me at this time.

110 **Belin.** 'Tis he indeed, who, as I do suppose,  
 Hath slain the king, or else some other lord.  
 112 For well I wot, a carcass I do see  
Hard at his feet, lie struggling on the ground.  
 114 Come on, Albinus, we will try the truth.

116 *[Belinus and Albinus go towards Alphonsus.]*  
 118 Hail to the noble victor of our foes!

120 **Alphon.** Thanks, mighty prince, but yet I seek not this:  
 It is not words must recompense my pain,  
 122 But deeds: when first I took up arms for you,  
 Your promise was, whate'er my sword did win  
 124 In fight, as his Alphonsus should it crave.

126 *[Alphonsus shows Belinus Flaminius,  
 who lieth all this while dead at his feet.]*  
 128

See, then, where lies thy foe Flaminius,  
 130 Whose crown my sword hath conquered in the field;  
 Therefore, Belinus, make no long delay,  
 132 But that discharge you promised for to pay.

134 **Belin.** Will nothing else satisfy thy conquering mind  
 Besides the crown? – Well, since thou hast it won,

those scattered Aragonese whom he has defeated to a flock  
 of sheep running in all directions to escape a pack of wolves.

= vulnerable, foolish.  
 = the quarto prints the singular *wolf*, emended by Dyce.

= ie. the wolves'. = ravenous.  
 = ie. the soldiers of Aragon.

= ie. the Neapolitans'.  
 = struck, an alternate form. = ie. the Aragonese's. = that.  
 = guarantee. = ie. the Aragonese. = return.  
 = ie. Alphonsus.

96-97: in the recent battle, Alphonsus was seen to have  
 committed great slaughter amongst the soldiers of  
 Aragon.  
**Whereas** = where.

= ie. where the fighting was the heaviest.  
 = ie. closely.  
 = have not yet.

= points him out.

= where, there.

= know.  
 = next to. = Flaminius is actually quite dead.  
 = discover what actually happened.

= mere words, only an honourable salute.  
 = repay. = "efforts (on your behalf)".

= "for himself". = demand.

= here.

= settle, as a debt. = ie. to.

134: the line is unmetrical; Dyce suggests emending *nothing*  
 to *naught*, but *else* could also be omitted.

136	Thou shalt it have, though <u>far against my will</u> .	= "it is not at all what I wish to do."
138	[ <i>Alphonsus sits in <u>the chair</u>;</i>	= Alphonsus seats himself on a throne which is fortuitously available.
140	<i>Belinus takes the crown off of Flaminius' head, and puts it on that of Alphonsus.</i> ]	
142	Here doth Belinus crown thee with his hand The king of Aragon.	
144	[ <i>Sound trumpets and drums within.</i> ]	
146	What, are you pleased?	
148	<b>Alphon.</b> Not so, Belinus, till you <u>promise me</u>	= ie. "swear to give to me".
150	All things belonging to the royal crown	= disyllabic version of <b>lords</b> .
152	Of Aragon, and make your <u>lordings</u> swear	= ie. to.
154	<u>For to defend me to their utmost power</u>	= "oppose me" or "refuse to treat me or acknowledge me as the King of Aragon."
156	Against all men that shall <u>gainsay the same</u> .	
158	<b>Belin.</b> <u>Mark</u> , what belonged <u>erst</u> unto the crown	= "pay attention". = before.
160	Of Aragon, that <u>challenge</u> as thine own;	= "you may demand as a right".
162	Belinus gives it <u>frankly</u> unto thee,	= unconditionally.
164	And swears by all the powers of glittering skies	158-161: Belinus vows to give Alphonsus everything due to him as King of Aragon, so long as doing so does not create any disadvantage to the Kingdom of Naples or to Belinus himself.
166	To do my best for to <u>maintain</u> the same,	<b>maintain</b> = support, back up.
168	So that it be not prejudiciäl	
170	Unto mine honour, or my country-soil.	
172	<b>Alb.</b> And by the sacred seat of mighty Jove	
174	Albinus swears that first he'll die the death	
176	Before he'll see Alphonsus suffer wrong.	
178	<b>Fabius.</b> What erst Albinus vowed we jointly vow.	167: Fabius speaks for all of Belinus' nobles.
180	<b>Alphon.</b> Thanks, mighty lords; but yet I greatly fear	
182	That very few will keep the oaths they swear. –	
184	But what, Belinus, why stand you so long,	171ff: Alphonsus suddenly and dramatically raises the ante, claiming that Belinus owes <i>him homage</i> as his feudal lord!
186	And <u>cease from offering</u> homage unto me?	= ie. fail to offer.
188	What, know you not that I thy sovereign am,	
190	Crownèd by thee and all thy other lords,	
192	And now confirmèd by your solemn oaths?	
194	Feed not thyself with <u>fond persuasiöns</u> ,	176: "do not deceive yourself with foolish beliefs ( <i>fond persuasions</i> )".
196	But presently come yield thy crown to me,	
198	And do me homage, or by heavens I swear	177-8: <b>come yield...homage</b> = in the feudal and formal ceremony of <b>homage</b> , a subject (here, ostensibly Belinus) acknowledges that he possesses land or a position on his lord's sufferance. Alphonsus, thus, is demanding Belinus humiliatingly recognize Alphonsus as his overlord, and that he himself is but a deputy king of the Aragonese leader. According to the <i>Encyclopedia Britannica</i> , the ceremony of <b>homage</b> consists of the vassal, or subject, surrendering himself to the lord by kneeling and giving his joined hands to the lord; the lord in turn clasps the vassal's hands in his

I'll force thee do it maugre all thy train.

180 **Belin.** How now, base brat! What, are thy wits thine own,  
 182 That thou dar'st thus abraid me in my land?

"Tis best for thee these speeches to recall,  
 184 Or else, by Jove, I'll make thee to repent  
 186 That e'er thou sett'st thy foot in Naples' soil.

**Alphon.** "Base brat," say'st thou? as good a man as thou:  
 188 But say I came but of a base descent,

My deeds shall make my glory for to shine  
 190 As clear as Luna in a winter's night.  
 192 But for because thou bragg'st so of thy birth,  
 I'll see how it shall profit thee anon.

194 **Fabius.** Alphonus, cease from these thy threatening  
 words,  
 And lay aside this thy presumptuous mind,  
 196 Or else be sure thou shalt the same repent.

198 **Alphon.** How now, sir boy, will you be prattling too?

"Tis best for thee to hold thy tattling tongue,  
 200 Unless I send some one to scourge thy breech.

Why, then, I see, 'tis time to look about,  
 202 When every boy Alphonus dares control:

But be they sure, ere Phoebus' golden beams  
 204 Have compassèd the circle of the sky,

I'll clog their tongues, since nothing else will serve  
 206 To keep those vild and threatening speeches in. –  
 Farewell, Belinus, look thou to thyself;  
 208 Alphonus means to have thy crown ere night.

210 [Exit Alphonus.]

212 **Belin.** What, is he gone? The devil break his neck,  
 The fiends of hell torment his traitorous corpse!  
 214 Is this the quittance of Belinus' grace,

own, symbolically accepting the "surrender".<sup>10</sup> Here, Alphonus further demands a formal surrendering of Belinus' crown, which the Aragonese would presumably then hand back to Belinus as a symbolic bestowing of the latter's right to possession of the Neapolitan throne.

= "to perform it in spite of all your retinue", ie. "even with your being backed up by all your nobles."

= ie. "have you gone mad".

182: **abraid** = upbraid, ie. reproach;<sup>1</sup> **abraid** was probably already obsolete by the turn of the 17th century, being replaced by **upbraid**.

**my** = ie. "my own".

= take back.

= ie. "I am as".

188: "but let us accept for the sake of argument that I am descended from a family of low social rank".

= the moon, as a personified deity.

= "your own birth in a family of great status".

192: "I'll soon (**anon**) find out what good it does you."

194ff: Fabius will remain loyal to Belinus throughout the play.

= drop, abandon. = impertinent way of thinking.

198: **sir boy** = a mocking title; Alphonus will taunt Fabius in part for his youth.

**prattling** = chattering childishly.<sup>1</sup>

= chattering, babbling.<sup>1</sup>

= lest.<sup>4</sup> = "whip or flog your buttocks", as would be done to a young lad.

= "dares try to order Alphonus (me) around."<sup>1</sup>

203-4: "but such (of you) boys who oppose me can be sure, that before one more day passes".

**Phoebus'** = ie. the sun's: **Phoebus** was an alternate name for Apollo in his guise as the sun god.

**compassed** = travelled (in a circular direction).<sup>1</sup>

= confine by means of attaching a heavy block of wood.<sup>1</sup>

= vile. = utterances.

= ie. "to thy own safety."

= before.

= ie. how Alphonus repays

<p>216 Which <u>he</u> did <u>shew</u> unto that thankless wretch, That <u>runagate</u>, that <u>rakehell</u>, yea, that thief? For, well I <u>wot</u>, he hath robbed me of a crown.</p> <p>218 If ever he had sprung from gentle blood, He would not thus <u>misuse</u> his <u>favourer</u>.</p> <p>220 <i>Alb.</i> "That runagate, that rakehell, yea, that thief"!</p> <p>222 Stay there, <u>sir king</u>, your mouth runs over-much; It ill becomes <u>the subject</u> for to use 224 Such traitorous terms against <u>his sovereign</u>. Know <u>thou</u>, Belinus, that Carinus' son</p> <p>226 Is neither rakehell, nor [a] runagate: But be thou sure that, ere the darksome <u>night</u> 228 Do drive God <u>Phoebus</u> to his <u>Thetis'</u> lap,</p> <p>230 Both thou, and all the rest of this thy <u>train</u>, Shall well repent the words which you have <u>sain</u>.</p> <p>232 <i>Belin.</i> What, traitorous villain, dost thou threaten me? – Lay hold on him, and see he do not scape; 234 I'll teach the slave to know to whom he speaks.</p> <p>236 [They seize Albinus.]</p> <p>238 <i>Alb.</i> To thee I speak, and to thy <u>fellows</u> all; And though as now you have me in your power, 240 Yet doubt I not but that in little <u>space</u> These eyes shall see thy treason <u>recompensed</u>, 242 And then I mean to <u>vaunt of</u> our victory.</p> <p>244 <i>Belin.</i> Nay, proud Albinus, never build on that; For <u>though</u> the gods do <u>chance</u> for to appoint 246 Alphonsus victor of Belinus' land, Yet shalt thou never live to see that day: – 248 And therefore, Fabius, stand not lingering, But <u>presently</u> slash off his traitorous head.</p> <p>250 <i>Alb.</i> Slash off his head? As though Albinus' head 252 Were then so easy to be slashèd off. <u>In faith</u>, sir, no; when you are gone and dead, 254 I hope to flourish like the pleasant spring.</p> <p>256 <i>Belin.</i> Why, how now, Fabius! what, do you stand <u>in doubt</u></p>	<p>= Belinus, ie. "I". = ie. "show", as always. = runaway or wanderer.<sup>1</sup> = scoundrel.<sup>1</sup> = know; the line has an extra syllable: <i>hath</i> could be omitted.</p> <p>218: "if he had really descended from noble blood". 219: <i>misuse</i> = mistreat or deceive.<sup>2</sup> <i>favourer</i> = ie. Belinus himself, who showed Alphonsus such great favour.</p> <p>221f: Albinus suddenly turns on Belinus, revealing himself to be Alphonsus' ally. = contemptuous form of address. = ie. Belinus. = ie. Alphonsus. = Albinus dramatically switches pronouns, addressing the king with the insulting <i>thee</i>.</p> <p>227-8: <i>ere the...lap</i> = poetically, "before night falls"; <i>night</i> is described as <i>driving</i> the sun (<i>Phoebus</i>, the sun god) into the sea. <i>Thetis</i> was a water nymph who lived in the depths of the sea. Christopher Marlowe was the first to describe a sunset in the metaphorical (and mythological) terms of the sun (or its god) as laying down with Thetis, an image that was very popular with subsequent writers.</p> <p>= retinue. = likely archaic word for "said", used to make a rhyming couplet of Albinus' final two lines.</p> <p>236: stage direction added by editor.</p> <p>= companions, used contemptuously. = time. = repaid. = boast over; <i>of</i> is omitted by Dyce for the sake of the meter.</p> <p>244: Albinus should not <i>build</i> up his expectations on such a mistaken belief. = even if. = happen.</p> <p>= immediately.</p> <p>= truly. 254: a pause follows this line, as Fabius fails to carry out Belinus' command.</p> <p>= ie. hesitating, unsure.</p>
--	--

258 To do the deed? what fear you? who dares seek  
 For to revenge his death on thee again,  
 Since that Belinus did command it so?

260 Or are you waxed so dainty, that you dare  
 Not use your sword for staining of your hands?  
 262 If it be so, then let me see thy sword,  
 And I will be his butcher for this time.

264  
 [Fabius gives Belinus his sword drawn.]

266 Now, Sir Albinus, are you of the mind  
 268 That erst you were? What, do you look to see  
 And triumph in Belinus' overthrow?  
 270 I hope the very sight of this my blade  
 Hath changed your mind into another tune.

272  
**Alb.** Not so, Belinus, I am constant still.  
 274 My mind is like to the asbeston-stone,  
 Which, if it once be heat in flames of fire,  
 276 Denieth to becomen cold again:

Even so am I, and shall be till I die;

278 And though I should see Atropos appear  
 With knife in hand, to slit my threed in twain,  
 280 Yet ne'er Albinus should persuaded be  
 But that Belinus he should vanquished see.

282  
**Belin.** Nay, then, Albinus since that words are vain  
 284 For to persuade you from this heresy,  
 This sword shall sure put you out of doubt.

286  
 [Belinus offers to strike off Albinus' head;  
 288 *alarum*;

*enter Alphonsus and his men; Belinus and Fabius  
 290 fly, followed by Alphonsus and Albinus.]*

257-9: **who dares...it so** = "are you afraid that someone will get revenge on you for slaying Albinus, even though I commanded that you do this?"

= "grown so delicate or over-nice".<sup>1</sup>  
 = ie. because it would stain.

= previously, moments ago.

256-271: like a villain in a James Bond movie who has captured the agent and is about to murder him, Belinus wastes much time unnecessarily talking instead of killing, giving his foe the opportunity to escape his fate.

= ie. of a fixed mind.

274-6: the **asbeston stone** was a legendary stone thought to be unquenchable once it was set on fire.<sup>1</sup>  
**asbeston** = alternate form of **asbestos**.

274-7: Albinus' analogy. in which he compares his unchangeable mind to the unquenchable burning asbeston stone, is not a particularly satisfying one.

278-9: ie. "and though I know my death is near".

**Atropos** was one of the three-sister deities known as the Fates, who were responsible for determining the length of each individual's life; Atropos' specific job was to cut each individual's **thread** of life when it was time for that person's death. Greene gives Atropos a **knife** with which to do the job, though she was usually portrayed employing a pair of shears.

**threed** = alternate form of **thread**.  
**in twain** = two.

= "it is useless for me to say anymore".

= incorrect thinking.

285: **sure** is likely pronounced as a disyllable: *SU-er*.

= ie. begins to.

288: calls to arms sound.

289-290: a party of Aragonese, now led by Alphonsus and Albinus, chase Belinus and Fabius off the stage!

We should note that this action does not represent a general assault by the entire Aragonese army, because, as we shall see in the next scene, these troops are still demoralized from their defeat at the hands of the Neapolitan army in the play's first battle.

## ACT II, SCENE II.

Another Part of the Battlefield.

Enter *Laelius, Miles, and others.*

1 *Lael.* My noble Lords of Aragon, I know  
2 You wonder much what might the occasion be  
That Laelius, which erst did fly the field,  
4 Doth egg you forwards now unto the wars;  
  
But when you hear my reason, out of doubt  
6 You'll be content with this my rash attempt.  
When first our king, Flaminius I do mean,  
8 Did set upon the Neapolitans,  
The worst of you did know and plainly see  
10 How far they were unable to withstand  
  
The mighty forces of our royal camp,  
12 Until such time as froward fates we thought,  
Although the fates ordained it for our gain,  
  
14 Did send a stranger stout, whose sturdy blows  
And force alone did cause our overthrow.  
16 But to our purpose: this same martial knight  
Did hap to hit upon Flaminius,  
  
18 And lent our king then such a friendly blow  
As that his gasping ghost to Limbo went.  
  
20 Which when I saw, and seeking to revenge,  
  
My noble lords, did hap on such a prize  
22 As never king nor keiser got the like.

**Entering Characters:** the Aragonese *Laelius*, we remember, had remained in Aragon after Carinus' father, the legitimate heir to the throne, had been slain by his brother. Laelius switched his allegiance to the usurper, and then to the usurper's son Flaminius who succeeded him. Laelius served in the Aragonese army that invaded Italy, but when he discovered that his king was dead, and Alphonsus was still alive, Laelius easily switched loyalties once again, back into Alphonsus' camp.

In the first battle between the Aragonese and the Neapolitans (led by their king Belinus), the victory belonged to Belinus, in large part because of the effective (and bloody) fighting done by Alphonsus on behalf of Belinus.

Now, Laelius must convince his fellow Aragonese that they too should transfer their allegiance to Alphonsus.

*Miles* is a lord and an officer of the Aragonese army. As a matter of stagecraft, when Miles speaks, he speaks for the rest of the army.

= pronounce as *th' occasion*, in three syllables.

= who earlier did run away from the battlefield; note how Laelius speaks of himself in the third person.  
= urge.

= without doubt.

6: "you will be satisfied regarding (the explanation for) my ill-advised (*rash*) action" (*attempt* = effort).<sup>1</sup>

9-15: "even the least soldierly amongst you could sense an easy victory over the army of Naples, until a stranger appeared, who alone defeated us."

12-13: the syntax is awkward, but the sense is clear: "what appears at first glance to be an adverse (*froward*) development brought about by Destiny was actually one that accrues to our benefit."

= courageous.

= defeat.<sup>1</sup>

= happen. = encounter.

18-19: an oddly ironic description of Alphonsus' slaying of Flaminius.

*ghost* = soul.

*Limbo* = occasionally used, as here, for "hell".<sup>1</sup>

20: at first, Laelius planned to revenge his king's death by killing Flaminius' slayer.

21-22: but he ended up stumbling upon such a gift, the likes of which no monarch had ever received before.

*keiser* = emperor;<sup>1</sup> the collocation of *king* and *keiser* was so common in the 16th century that it is surprising that it appears so rarely in the period's drama.

24 **Miles.** Laelius, of force we must confess to thee,  
 We wondered all, whenas you did persuade  
 26 Us to return unto the wars again;  
 But since our marvel is increased much  
 28 By these your words which sound of happiness:  
 Therefore, good Laelius, make no tarrying,  
 30 But soon unfold thy happy chance to us.  
 32 **Lael.** Then, friends and fellow soldiers, hark to me;

When Laelius thought for to revenge his king  
 34 On that same knight, instead of mortal foe,  
 I found him for to be our chiefest friend.  
 36  
 38 **Miles.** Our chiefest friend! I hardly can believe  
 That he, which made such bloody massacres  
Of stout Italians, can in any point

40 Bear friendship to the country or the king.

42 **Lael.** As for your king, Milës, I hold with you,

He bare no friendship to Flaminius,  
 44 But hated him as bloody Atropos;  
 But for your country, Laelius doth avow  
 46 He loves as well as any other land,  
 Yea, sure, he loves it best of all the world.  
 48 And for because you shall not think that I  
 Do say the same without a reason why,  
 50 Know that the knight Alphonsus hath to name,  
 Both son and heir to old Carinus, whom  
 52 Flaminius' sire bereaved of his crown;

Who did not seek the ruin of our host  
 54 For any envy he did bear to us,

But to revenge him on his mortal foe;  
 56 Which by the help of high celestial Jove  
 He hath achieved with honour in the field.  
 58

= "necessarily", "we have no choice but that".

25: "we were puzzled as to why you would talk us into resuming battle against Belinus" (when the Aragonese had just been so soundly whipped by the Italians).

= wonder, astonishment.<sup>1</sup>

= good fortune.

= delay no longer.

30: "but reveal at once the fortunate outcome or event to us."

32ff: notice how Laelius drags out the tension for his listeners, refusing to get to the point for an excruciating period of time.

**hark** = listen.

= ie. Flaminius.

39: **Of stout Italians** = a likely error, but perhaps, "on behalf of the arrogant or fierce Italians".<sup>1</sup>

**in any point** = the sense of this expression is "in even the slightest or least way".

40: the familiar collocation of **king** and **country** became common in the 1570's.

**the** = ie. "our".

42: **Miles** = a disyllable; except for here, where the stress seems to be on the second syllable, the stress in **Miles** will usually be on the first.

**hold with** = agree with, am of the same mind as.

= "as much as he does murderous **Atropos**;" see the note on Atropos at Act II.i.278-9 above.

= ie. as for. = "I swear".

42-49: Laelius' delay in revealing the name of the hero is agonizing.

= robbed.

53-54: "Alphonsus did not fight so desperately and damagingly against our army (**host**) because of any malice (**envy**) he had for us".

= ie. but instead. = ie. himself. = ie. Flaminius.

**1-57: Laelius' Tightrope:** Laelius' task here was a difficult one: his purpose in dragging out the climax of his story may have been to distract his audience from the fact that he is ultimately asking them to overlook the slaughter Alphonsus

60 **Miles.** Alphonsus, man! I'll ne'er persuaded be  
That ere Alphonsus may survive again,  
62 Who with Carinus, many years ago,  
Was said to wander in the Stygian fields.

64 **Lael.** Truth, noble Milës: these mine ears have heard,  
For certainty reported unto me,  
66 That old Carinus, with his peerless son,  
Had felt the sharpness of the Sisters' shears;

68 And had I not of late Alphonsus seen  
In good estate, though all the world should say  
70 He is alive, I would not credit them.  
But, fellow soldiers, wend you back with me,  
72 And let us lurk within the secret shade  
Which he himself appointed unto us;  
74 And if you find my words to be untroth,  
Then let me die to recompense the wrong.

76  
78 *[Alarum;  
re-enter Albinus with his sword drawn.]*

80 **Alb.** Laelius, make haste: soldiers of Aragon,  
Set lingering by, and come and help your king,  
82 I mean Alphonsus, who, whilst that he did  
Pursue Belinus at the very heels,  
84 Was suddenly environèd about

With all the troops of mighty Millain-land.

86  
88 **Miles.** What news is this? and is it very so?  
Is our Alphonsus yet in human state,  
Whom all the world did judge for to be dead?  
90 Yet can I scarce give credit to the same. –

Give credit! Yes, and since the Millain Duke

has just committed amongst the Aragonese army, and to instead recognize what good fortune they have stumbled into onto the return of their legitimate king Alphonsus.

62: ie. was rumoured to have been dead.

= it is true. = ie. "this news I too".

67: ie. "had died"; yet another reference to the Fates, and the **shears** used by the third sister Atropos to cut the thread of life for all individuals when their time of death has arrived.

= recently.

= condition, health.

= believe.

= walk.

= hide.<sup>1</sup> = shadows of the trees, which hide the men.

= false.

= repay.

**Entering Character: Albinus** enters the stage in a hurry. You may note that though Albinus had fought against the Aragonese (as did Alphonsus) in the play's initial battle, his doing so does not appear to have required an excuse or explanation, as Laelius was compelled to make on behalf of Alphonsus in order to get the Aragonese soldiers to accept the return of their legitimate leader.

81: "quit your tarrying".

= surrounded.

85: Albinus reveals that the Duke of Milan has arrived with his own army to help Belinus repulse the Aragonese invaders.

**Millain-land** = ie. the Dukedom of Milan; Greene employed the common alternate spelling **Millain** (and sometimes **Millaine**) for **Milan**; we will adopt the spelling **Millain** (whose spelling suggests it is pronounced to rhyme with **rain**) in our text of the play, but **Milan** in the notes. **Millain**, we may further note, is to be stressed on its first syllable.

= ie. "exactly as you say", "just so".<sup>1</sup>

= ie. in physical, as opposed to spiritual, condition, ie. alive.

= believe.

91-92: **and since...friendship** = information provided later in the play suggests that the Duke of Milan had played a role in the coup against Carinus' father; in pursuing Alphonsus,

92 Hath broke his league of friendship, be he sure,

94 Ere Cynthia, the shining lamp of night,  
Doth scale the heavens with her hornèd head,

96 Both he and his shall very plainly see  
The league is burst, that causèd long the glee.

98 **Lael.** And could the traitor harbour in his breast  
Such mortal treason 'gainst his sovereign,  
100 As when he should with fire and sword defend  
Him from his foes, he seeks his overthrow?  
102 March on, my friends: I ne'er shall joy at all,  
Until I see that bloody traitor's fall.

104 [Exeunt.]

106 [Alarum;

108 *Belinus flies, followed by Laelius;*  
*Fabius flies, followed by Albinus;*

110 *the Duke of Millain flies, followed by Miles.]*

END OF ACT II.

then, the Duke (in assaulting Alphonsus individually) cannot be said to be breaking any alliance he had with Alphonsus.

= "he may be certain", "he may count on it".

93-94: briefly, "before the moon rises tonight".

**Cynthia** = name for the personified and deified moon.  
**horned head** = reference to the shape of the crescent moon.

**line 94:** note the line's aspirated alliteration, which continues into the next line with **he and his**.

= ie. the Duke of Milan and his soldiers.

96: the alliance, which for so long was enjoyed by both lands, has been broken.

= ie. the Duke of Milan.

= ie. Alphonsus.

= a very common collocation from the mid-16th century on.

= feel joy.

107-110: the battle between the Aragonese army and the combined host of Naples and Milan rages: the various kings and officers run across the stage, with each of our villains being chased by one of our heroes respectively.

## ACT III.

### PROLOGUE.

*Alarum;*  
*And then enter Venus.*

1 **Venus.** No sooner did Alphonsus with his troop  
2 Set on the soldiers of Belinus' band,  
3 But that the fury of his sturdy blows  
4 Did strike such terror to their daunted minds  
5 That glad was he which could escape away  
6 With life and limb, forth of that bloody fray.  
7 Belinus flies unto the Turkish soil,  
8 To crave the aid of Amurack their king;

Unto the which he willingly did consent,

10 And sends Belinus, with two other kings,  
11 To know God Mahomet's pleasure in the same.

12 Meantime the empress by Medea's help  
13 Did use such charms that Amurack did see,  
14 In soundest sleep, what afterward should hap.  
15 How Amurack did recompense her pain,  
16 With mickle more, this act shall shew you plain.

18 [Exit Venus.]

### ACT III, SCENE I.

*Camp of Alphonsus, near Naples.*

*Enter one, carrying two crowns upon a crest:*

***Alphonsus, Albinus, Laelius and Miles,**  
*with their soldiers.**

1 **Alphon.** Welcome, brave youths of Aragon, to me,  
2 Yea, welcome, Milès, Laelius, and the rest,  
3 Whose prowess alone hath been the only cause  
4 That we, like victors, have subdued our foes.  
5 Lord, what a pleasure was it to my mind  
6 To see Belinus, which not long before  
7 Did with his threatenings terrify the gods,

**Prologue III:** beginning with line 7 in this Prologue, Venus describes the action to come, rather than only summarizing what has occurred so far.

= dispirited or terrified.<sup>1</sup>  
= ie. any of Belinus' soldiers.  
= ie. from out of.  
= flees. = ie. Turkey.  
= beg for.

= ie. Amurack; the line has an extra unmetrical syllable: **he willingly did consent** could be emended to **he willingly consented**, which was acceptable usage in the 16th century.

11: to learn whether the Muslim **god Mahomet** would give his blessing to the Turks to help Belinus out.

= ie. Amurack's wife. = ie. a sorceress.  
= magic spells. = which caused Amurack to see.  
= in his dreams. = happen.  
= repay his wife for her efforts.  
= much. = ie. show.

= a man. = likely meaning **crest**, or linen cloth.<sup>1</sup>

**Entering Characters:** the Aragonese **Albinus, Laelius** and **Miles** accompany their king **Alphonsus** onto the stage. The army of Aragon has, in a second battle, thoroughly whipped both Belinus' army of Naples and the army of the Duke of Milan.

= the **youth** of the Aragonese soldiers is frequently emphasized.

= reason.

7: Alphonsus is pleasantly sarcastic.  
**threatenings** = threats, ie. blustering.

8 Now scud apace from warlike Laelius' blows.

The Duke of Millain, he increased our sport,

10 When doubting that his force was over-weak

For to withstand, Milës, thy sturdy arm,  
12 Did give more credence to his frisking skips  
Than to the sharpness of his cutting blade.

14 What Fabius did to pleasure us withal,

Albinus knows as well as I myself;  
16 For well I wot, if that thy tirèd steed  
Had been as fresh and swift in foot as his,  
18 He should have felt, yea known for certainty,  
To check Alphonsus, did deserve to die.

20 Briefly, my friends and fellow peers in arms,  
The worst of you do deserve such mickle praise

22 As that my tongue denies for to set forth  
The demi-parcel of your valiant deeds;

24 So that, perforce, I must by duty be  
Bound to you all for this your courtesy.

26

**Miles.** Not so, my lord; for if our willing arms  
28 Have pleased you so much as you do say,  
We have done naught but that becometh us  
30 For to defend our mighty sovereign.

As for my part, I count my labour small,  
32 Yea though it had been twice as much again,  
Since that Alphonsus doth accept thereof.

8f: Alphonsus will generously give individual credit to several of his soldiers for their heroic actions during the battle.

*scud apace* = run speedily (away).

9: the entry of the Duke of Milan and his army into the battle only served to add to the entertainment or recreation of Alphonsus and his troops.

10-11: **When doubting...withstand** = at the moment the Aragonese (or Miles) suspected (**doubting** = suspecting) the Milanese were too weak to repulse (**withstand**) another assault.

Dyce, however, proposes emending **When** to **Who**, perhaps subtly changing the meaning of the line to suggest that it is the Duke who recognized that his men could not possibly stand up to one more assault.

11-13: **Miles...blade** = Miles took it on himself to launch an attack on the Duke, suspecting that he would run away rather than stand and fight.

*frisking skips* = brisk running away.<sup>1</sup>

14: ie. "(and) what Fabius did to gratify us": Alphonsus continues to speak of the enemy in lightly ironic terms.

*withal* = with.

= know. = ie. Albinus'. = war-horse.

= ie. Fabius'.

19: ie. that anyone who gets in the way of Alphonsus should expect to be killed. A line seems to be missing between lines 18 and 19.

21: **worst** = "least deserving".

**do** = omitted by Dyce for the sake of the meter.

**such mickle** = so much.

22-23: "that I am unable to describe sufficiently even a portion of your heroic acts."

*demi-parcel* = half.<sup>1</sup>

= necessarily.

= obliged.

**The Italian Leaders:** we may note that, despite the heroic actions of the Aragonese nobles described by Alphonsus, the Italian commanders Belinus, Fabius and the Duke of Milan all survived the battle, successfully evading their pursuers.

29-30: "we did not do anything except that which is fitting for us to do in order to fight for our own king;" Alphonsus has definitely won over the Aragonese.

31-33: ie. "as for me, I consider or judge my efforts to count for next to nothing, even if I had done twice as much as I did, since (or so long as) Alphonsus deigns to accept

34	<i>Alphon.</i> Thanks, worthy Milës: [but] lest all the world	my work on his behalf."
36	Should <u>count</u> Alphonsus thankless for to be,	= judge, reckon.
38	Laelius sit down, and, Milës, sit by him, And <u>that receive the</u> which your swords have won.	= awkwardly, "receive that".
40	[ <i>Laelius and Miles sit down.</i> ]	40: we may assume the nobles sit down on some furniture that may double for thrones.
42	First, for because thou, Laelius, in <u>these broils</u> , By martial <u>might</u> , didst proud Belinus chase	= these quarrels, ie. this war. = prowess.
44	From troop to troop, from side to side about,	44: ie. "all over the place": the image is of Belinus dipping in and out amongst his soldiers, trying to evade Laelius as the latter doggedly pursued him.
46	And never ceased from this thy swift pursuit Until thou hadst obtained his royal crown, Therefore, I say, I'll do thee <u>naught</u> but right, And give thee that [the] which thou well hast won.	= nothing.
50	[ <i>Sets the crown on his head.</i> ]	42-62: Greene skillfully incorporates a neat bit of parallelism: just as Alphonsus demanded, and received, the crown of Aragon in return for killing its king, so he rewards Laelius with the rule of Naples for his defeating Belinus, and promotes Miles, who chased away the Duke of Milan, with the crown of Milan.
52	Here doth Alphonsus crown thee, Laelius, King Of Naples-town, with all <u>dominiöns</u>	= territories.
54	That <u>erst</u> belonged to our traitorous foe, That proud Belinus in his <u>regiment</u> . –	= formerly. = rule or sway. <sup>4</sup>
56	[ <i>Trumpets and drums sound.</i> ]	
58	Milës, thy share the Millain Dukedom is, For, well I <u>wot</u> , thy sword deserved no less;	= know.
62	[ <i>Alphonsus sets the crown on his head.</i> ]	
64	The which Alphonsus <u>frankly</u> giveth thee, In presence of his warlike men-at-arms; And if that any <u>stomach</u> this my deed, Alphonsus can revenge thy wrong with speed.	= freely, unconditionally. 66-67: "if any of you does resent ( <i>stomach</i> , a verb) what I have done here, I can quickly repay you for the injury done to you;" Alphonsus, again speaking with light irony, is actually threatening to kill anyone who disagrees with his placing Laelius and Miles on their respective thrones.
68	[ <i>Trumpets and drums sound.</i> ]	
70	Now to Albinus, which in all my <u>toils</u>	= battles. <sup>1</sup>
72	I have both faithful, yea, and friendly <u>found</u> : Since that the gods and friendly Fates assign	= ie. "found to be."
74	This present time to me to recompense The sundry pleasures thou hast done <u>to</u> me, Sit down by <u>them</u> , and on thy faithful head	= ie. for. = ie. Laelius and Miles.
76	[ <i>Alphonsus takes the crown from his own head.</i> ]	
78	Receive the crown of peerless Aragon.	

82	<b>Alb.</b> Pardon, dear lord, Albinus at this time; It ill becomes me for to wear a crown	82: Albinus stops Alphonsus from placing the crown of Aragon on his head.
84	Whenas my lord is destitute himself. Why, high Alphonsus, if I should receive	84: when Alphonsus himself is without a crown.
86	This crown of you, the which high Jove forbid, Where would yourself obtain a diadem?	
88	Naples is gone, Millain possessèd is, And <u>naught</u> is left for you but Aragon.	88: Naples and Milan have each been assigned a new monarch. = nothing.
90		
92	<b>Alphon.</b> And naught is left for me but Aragon? Yes, surely, yes, my Fates have so decreed, That Aragon should be too base a thing	93-94: Alphonsus believes he is destined for bigger and better things than to be satisfied with becoming the mere King of Aragon.
94	For to obtain Alphonsus for her king.  What, hear you not how that our scattered foes, Belinus, Fabius, and the Millain Duke, Are fled for <u>succour</u> to the Turkish court?	96-97: Alphonsus is slightly mistaken: the Duke of Milan is wandering around the Italian countryside, in hiding after his shameful defeat. <i>succour</i> = assistance.
98	And think you not that Amurack their king Will, with the mightiest <u>power</u> of all his land, Seek to revenge Belinus' overthrow?	= army.
100	Then doubt I not but, <u>ere</u> these <u>broils</u> do end, Alphonsus shall possess the diadem That Amurack now wears upon his head.	= before. = wars.
102	Sit down therefóre, and that receive <u>of</u> me The which the Fates appointed unto thee.	102-3: Wow! Alphonsus reveals that his goal is to become nothing less than the head of the Ottoman Empire!  = from.
104		
106	<b>Alb.</b> Thou king of Heaven, which by thy power divine	107-110: Albinus prays to Jove, asking him to witness the fact that he (Albinus) unwillingly accepts the crown of Aragon. = ie. the heart of every person who is alive.
108	Dost see the secrets of <u>each liver's heart</u> , Bear record now with what unwilling mind I do receive the crown of Aragon.	
110		
112	<i>[Albinus sit down by Laelius and Miles; And Alphonsus set the crown on his head.]</i>	
114		
116	<b>Alphon.</b> Arise, Albinus, King of Aragon, Crownèd by me, who, till my gasping <u>ghost</u> Do <u>part asunder</u> from my <u>breathless</u> corpse,	= soul. = separate. = literally "without breath".
118	Will be thy shield against all men alive That for thy kingdom any way do strive.	118-9: in this rhyming couplet, Alphonsus swears to protect Albinus' crown from any and all enemies who try to strip the kingdom away from Albinus.
120		
122	<i>[Trumpets and drums sound.]</i>	
124	Now since we have, in such an happy hour, Confirmed three kings, come, let us march with speed Into <u>the city</u> , for to celebrate With mirth and joy this blissful festival.	= ie. Naples.
126		
128	<i>[Exeunt.]</i>	

ACT III, SCENE II.

*Palace of Amurack at Constantinople.*

*Enter Amurack, Belinus, Fabius, Arcastus (King of Moors), Claramont (King of Barbary), and Bajazet, with their train.*

1 **Amur.** Welcome, Belinus, to thy cousin's court,  
2 Whose late arrival in such posting pace  
Doth bring both joy and sorrow to us all;  
4 Sorrow, because the Fates have been so false  
To let Alphonsus drive thee from thy land,  
6 And joy, since that now mighty Mahomet

**Scene II:** the play's location now dramatically changes to Turkey. We may note here that our story contains a number of historical anachronisms – if we accept the setting of the play to correspond with the life of the real Alphonsus, Alfonso V of Aragon, (1396-1458, ruled Aragon from 1416). Alfonso attacked Naples for the first time in 1421, and then again in 1442, when he finally captured and took over the city, and transferred his court there.

The Ottomans at this time, just beginning their phenomenal growth, controlled only northern Asia Minor and most of modern Bulgaria in this period. The Ottomans did not capture Constantinople itself until 1453, and it was not until the late 15th century, and well into the 16th, that they conquered the rest of Asia Minor, Palestine, and then finally the greater part of North Africa.

We may also note that even at its height, the Ottomans' control of the coast of North Africa only extended so far as Algeria, and never included Morocco in its territories. Despite that, Greene includes the King of Morocco as one of the Ottoman Sultan's deputy kings.

**Entering Characters:** former King of Naples **Belinus** and his followers (represented by his faithful soldier **Fabius**) have fled east to the court of the Turkish Sultan **Amurack**. For purposes of our play, the Ottoman Empire was imagined at this time to extend its control over all of North Africa.

Hence we find appearing in Amurack's court several of his deputy kings, including **Arcastus** (who rules **Morocco**), and **Claramont** (who rules **Barbary**, that part of North Africa between Morocco and Egypt). We also should not take too seriously Greene's decision to give some of his play's Muslim characters Latin and French names.

We never really find out who the Turk **Bajazet** is, so Dyce assigns him the description of "a lord" in his list of characters.

1: as will become clear, Amurack and Belinus, the (now former) King of Naples, are related by marriage.

**cousin's** = kin's.

= recent arrival (here). = a hurry.

= disloyal; the Fates were sometimes described, as here, as having generic control over people's fortunes.

6-8: Amurack gives credit for all the good things that transpire to **Mahomet**, a vague blending perhaps of an imagined Muslim god and the prophet Muhammad.

**Mahomet** = 16th century name for **Muhammad** (570-632 A.D.), founder of Islam; the English spelling of his name began to change so as to start with **Mu-** and to conclude with a **-d** only after the turn of the 17th century. In this play, **Mahomet** is referred to as the Turks' god, and is also sometimes called by the alternate name **Mahound**.

	Hath given me cause to <u>recompense at full</u>	= repay fully.
8	The <u>sundry</u> pleasures I received <u>of thee</u> .	8: Amurack appears to have previously visited Belinus, who grandly entertained the Sultan at the time. <i>sundry</i> = various, many. <i>of thee</i> = "from thee".
10	Therefore, Belinus, do but ask and have, For Amurack doth grant whate'er you <u>crave</u> .	= request.
12	<b>Belin.</b> Thou <u>second sun</u> , which with thy <u>glimsing</u> beams	12: Elizabethan characters frequently flattered their heroes by referring to them as either the sun, or, as here, a <i>second sun</i> . <i>glimsing</i> = glimmering; <sup>1</sup> <i>glimse</i> (and its derivative <i>glimsing</i> ) was an alternate form of <i>glimpse</i> (and <i>glimpsing</i> ).
	Dost <u>clarify</u> each corner of the earth,	= illuminate. <sup>1</sup>
14	Belinus comes not, as erst <u>Midas</u> did	14-17: with this mythical reference, Belinus indicates he has not come to ask the Sultan for money.
16	To mighty <u>Bacchus</u> , to desire of him That whatsoe'er at any time he touched Might turnèd be to gold <u>incontinent</u> .	<i>Midas</i> was the wealthy and avaricious king of Phrygia; the god of wine <i>Bacchus</i> rewarded Midas (who had royally entertained the god's companion, Silenus) by granting him a wish. Midas asked, and was given, the ability to turn anything he touched into gold. The wish went awry when Midas realized that even food and drink turned to gold at his touch, causing him to slowly starve. <i>incontinent</i> = at once. <sup>2</sup>
18	Nor do I come as <u>Jupiter</u> did erst	18-21: similarly, Belinus has not come seeking a woman from Amurack to satisfy his lust ( <i>concupiscence</i> ).
20	Unto the palace of <u>Amphitron</u> , For any <u>fond</u> or foul <u>concupiscence</u> , <u>Which I do bear</u> to <u>Alcumena's hue</u> .	<i>Alcumena</i> , or Alcmena, was a mortal woman of Thebes. While her husband Amphitron was away on a military campaign, <i>Jupiter</i> appeared one night to her in her husband's form, and he so enjoyed laying with her that he stayed with her for two nights. When Amphitron returned from the wars, he was surprised by the lack of welcome he received from his wife. After comparing notes, they realized it was the king of the gods who had lain with her, and she subsequently gave birth to Hercules. <i>fond</i> = foolish. <i>Which I do bear</i> = perhaps, <i>Which he did bear</i> would make more sense here. <i>hue</i> = beauty. <sup>4</sup>
22	But as poor <u>Saturn</u> , forced by mighty <u>Jove</u>	22-27: in a final mythical analogy, Belinus reveals that he is seeking military assistance from Amurack, in order to defeat the man who overthrew him.
24	To fly his country, banished and forlorn,	22-25: Belinus compares himself to mighty <i>Saturn</i> , the Titan god who ruled the earth, until he was overthrown by his son Jupiter in the War of the Titans. Jupiter ( <i>Jove</i> ) actually punished his father by burying him in the deepest part of the earth.
26	Did <u>crave</u> the aide of <u>Troös</u> , <u>King of Troy</u> ,	
28	So comes Belinus to high Amurack; And if he can but once your aid obtain, He <u>turns</u> with speed to Naples back again.	The detail that Saturn sought the aid of the <i>King of Troy</i> appears to have been invented by Greene (at least in part: one earlier work, Thomas Cooper's 1578 <i>Thesaurus Lingua</i> , asserts that after Jupiter overthrew Saturn, the latter was "chased...out of hys kingdome into italy: where he hydde

30 **Amur.** My aid, Belinus! Do you doubt of that?  
If all the men-at-arms of Africa,  
Of Asia likewise, will sufficient be  
32 To press the pomp of that usurping mate,  
Assure thyself, thy kingdom shall be thine,  
34 If Mahomet say ay unto the same;

For were I sure to vanquish all our foes,  
36 And find such spoils in ransacking their tents  
As never any keiser did obtain,  
38 Yet would I not set foot forth of this land,  
If Mahomet our journey did withstand.

40 **Belin.** Nor would Belinus, for King Croesus' trash,

42 Wish Amurack [so] to displease the gods,  
In pleasuring me in such a trifling toy.

44 Then, mighty monarch, if it be thy will,  
Get their consents, and then the act fulfill.

46 **Amur.** You counsel well; therefore, Belinus, haste,  
48 And, Claramont, go bear him company,  
With King Arcastus, to the city walls:  
50 Then bend with speed unto the darksome grove,  
Where Mahomet this many a hundred year  
52 Hath prophesied unto our ancestors.  
Tell to his priests that Amurack, your king,

*himselſe a long tyme in that Countrey*"), who was known to frequently make up mythological facts as it suited him. Collins observes that "Greene is full of this pseudo-mythology".

**Troos** = Homer described **Troos** (a disyllable here, *TRO-os*), or Tros, as the "lord of the Trojans" (Lattimore, *The Iliad*, Book 20.230);<sup>7</sup> the city of Troy and the Trojan people were named after Troos, and the royal family of Troy descended from him, but he himself was not actually King of Troy.<sup>7</sup> The conceit that Troos was a king of Troy can be traced back at least as far back as to William Caxton's translation of Frenchman Raoul Lefevre's *The History of Troy*.

Collins incorrectly states that the spelling **Troos** was invented by Greene, since Caxton, and others after him, used that spelling as well before it was adopted by Greene.

**turns** = ie. returns.

30-34: if it were necessary to gather every soldier in Asia and Africa to drive Alphonsus out of Italy, Amurack would do so, guaranteeing to Belinus the return of his throne – but only if they get Mahomet's pre-approval for this project!

**press the pomp** = "attack the majesty".

**mate** = fellow (contemptuous).

**say ay** = "says yes", ie. assents.

= ie. "even if I were certain".

= plunder.

37: "as no monarch ever found before".

= ie. out of Turkey.

= oppose, deny.

1-77: you may wish to note how each of the speeches in this section of the scene end with rhyming couplets.

= ie. for all the wealth possessed by King Croesus.

**King Croesus'** = **Croesus** (pronounced *KREE-sus*) was King of Lydia (reigned 560-547 B.C.), a region corresponding to modern western Turkey.<sup>11</sup> Croesus' wealth was both legendary and proverbial.

**trash** = contemptuous term for money.

43: ie. "in doing me such a small favour".

**toy** = insignificant thing or idea.<sup>1</sup>

41-45: Belinus and Fabius, though seemingly European characters, will prove to be surprisingly (and nobly) solicitous of the play's Muslim characters' regard for their own god; it is even possible that Belinus and Fabius are to be understood to be Muslim in their own right, but Greene's intentions here (if he had any) remain vague.

= advise.

= ie. and presumably exit the city through its gates.

= proceed.<sup>2</sup> = dark woods.

= ie. for centuries.

54	Is now selecting all his men-at-arms To set upon that proud Alphonsus' troop.	54: "is now gathering his army".
56	(The cause you know, and can inform them well, That makes me <u>take these bloody broils in hand</u> );	56-57: Belinus can explain all this to Claramont and Arcastus as they make their way to Mahomet. <i>take...hand</i> = "take a part in this bloody quarrel."
58	And say, that I desire their sacred god, That Mahomet which ruleth all the skies,	
60	To send me word, and that most speedily, Which of us shall obtain the victory.	
62		
	[ <i>Exeunt all except Bajazet and Amurack.</i> ]	
64	You, Bajazet, go <u>post away apace</u>	= ride hurriedly away.
66	To <u>Syria</u> , <u>Scythia</u> , and <u>Albania</u> ,	66-69: Bajazet should go raise soldiers from all lands which serve as vassal-states to the Ottomans.
68	To Babylon, with Mesopotamia, Asia, Armenia, and all other lands Which owe their homage to high Amurack;	<b>line 66:</b> <i>Syria</i> and <i>Scythia</i> are disyllables. <i>Scythia</i> = large and relatively undefined region located north of the Black Sea, once home to the still-mysterious peoples known as the Scythians. <i>Albania</i> = region located just west of the Caspian Sea. Collins notes that this roll-call of geographical names was inspired by a similar recital from <i>Tamburlaine, Part One</i> (lines I.i.109-205): <i>Emperor of Asia and Persia;</i> <i>Great Lord of Media and Armenia;</i> <i>Duke of Africa and Albania, etc.</i>
70	<u>Charge</u> all their kings with <u>expedition</u> To gather up the <u>chiefest</u> men-at-arms	= command. = all haste.
72	Which now <u>remain</u> in their dominions,  And on the <u>twenty day</u> of the same month,	= greatest. = dwell, reside.
74	To come and wait on Amurack their king, At his chief city <u>Constantinople</u> .	73: <i>twenty</i> was the word of choice in the 16th century to mean <i>twentieth</i> (the disyllable <i>twentith</i> was also commonly employed until the turn of the 17th century, when <i>twentieth</i> became the accepted form of the word. The modern form <i>twentieth</i> made its first appearance in 1535's <i>Coverdale Bible</i> ).  = modern Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. As noted above, the Byzantine capital did not fall to the Ottomans until some years after the events of this play ostensibly took place.
76	Tell them, moreover, that who so doth <u>fail</u> , <u>Naught</u> else but death from prison shall him bail.	= ie. fail to appear. 77: only death will be able to bail him out of prison, ie. he will live out the rest of his life in prison. <i>Naught</i> = nothing.
78		
	[ <i>Exit Bajazet.</i> ]	79: after this fleeting appearance, and without having said a word, Bajazet disappears from the play.
80	[ <i>Sound music within.</i> ]	
82	What heavenly music soundeth in my ear?	
84	<u>Peace</u> , Amurack, and <u>hearken</u> to the same.	= "be quiet". = listen.
86	[ <i>Amurack hearkens to the music, and falls asleep.</i> ]	

88 *Enter Medea, Fausta (the Empress),  
Iphigina (her daughter).*

90 *Medea.* Now have our charms fulfilled our minds full well;

92 High Amurack is lullèd fast asleep,  
And doubt I not but, ere he wakes again,  
94 You shall perceive Medea did not gibe,  
Whenas she put this practice in your mind: –  
96 Sit, worthy Fausta, at thy spouse his feet.

98 Iphigina, sit thou on the other side:

[*Fausta and Iphigina sit down at Amurack's feet.*]

100 Whate'er you see, be not aghast thereat,  
102 But bear in mind what Amurack doth chat. –

104 [*Medea does ceremonies belonging to conjuring.*]

106 Thou, which wert wont, in Agamemnon's days,

108 To utter forth Apollo's oracles  
At sacred Delphos, Calchas I do mean,

110 I charge thee come; all lingering set aside,  
Unless the penance you thereof abide:

I conjure thee, by Pluto's loathsome lake,

**Entering Characters:** *Medea* is a sorceress. There was a famous witch named Medea in ancient Greek mythology, but Dyce points out that our play's Medea is distinct from the witch of myth. The empress *Fausta* is the wife of Amurack, and *Iphigina* their young unmarried daughter. Needless to say, the latter two characters are completely fictional.

91: "now my magic spells (*charms*) have achieved that which I intended them to do (*fulfilled our minds*)."<sup>1</sup>

= before.

= see. = "was not taunting you".<sup>1</sup>

95: ie. "when she proposed this scheme (*practice*) to you."

= ie. spouse's.

= *Iphigina* will normally be pronounced with the stress on its second syllable: *i-PHI-gi-na*, though in this first case, the stress may fall on the first.

101-2: whatever Fausta and Iphigina will witness, they should not be afraid (*aghast*)<sup>1</sup> (as Amurack is only talking in his sleep, and nothing terrible is actually happening to him), but they should pay close attention to what he says.

104: Medea begins to cast more spells: she is summoning the spirit of the mythological prophet *Calchas*, who appeared in the *Iliad*. Calchas most famously advised the Greeks, when their ships were unable to sail to Troy due to adverse winds, that they would need to sacrifice Agamemnon's daughter (named Iphigina, oddly enough) in order to pacify the gods.

106ff: Medea addresses Calchas.

*wont* = accustomed.

*in Agamemnon's days* = ie. in the period in which the Trojan War took place.

*Agamemnon's* = *Agamemnon* was the King of Mycenae, and the overall commander of the Greek forces that fought against Troy.

107-8: it was thought that Calchas channeled knowledge of the future from the great god *Apollo*. The detail of line 108, however, is not correct: the Greek town of Delphi (often written incorrectly, as here, as *Delphos*, by Elizabethans)<sup>3</sup> was the location of the *oracle* of Apollo (where people could visit an oracle, or seer, and, for a fee, receive advice from Apollo through the oracle). Calchas, however, was never mentioned as having served at Delphi himself.

= order. = to appear. = "do not dawdle or delay".

110: "unless you are awaiting (*abide* = wait for) your opportunity to undergo penance"; an obscure line.

111-3: *by Pluto's...Phlegethon* = Medea swears on a number of figures related to the underworld.

*by Pluto's...lake* = ie. "I swear on hell", an oath: with *by*, one swears *on* something. *Pluto* is the god of Hades. Contemporary literature frequently referred to the "lake of

112 By all the hags which harbour in the same,  
 By stinking Styx, and filthy Phlegethon,

114 To come with speed, and truly to fulfill  
 That which Medea to thee straight shall will.

116 *[Calchas rises up, in a white surplice  
 118 and a cardinal's miter.]*

120 **Calch.** Thou wretched witch, when wilt thou make an end  
 Of troubling us with these thy cursèd charms?  
 122 What meanst thou thus to call me from my grave?  
 Shall ne'er my ghost obtain his quiet rest?

124 **Medea.** Yes, Calchas, yes, your rest doth now approach;  
 126 Medea means to trouble thee no more,  
Whenas thou hast fulfilled her mind this once.

128 Go, get thee hence to Pluto back again,  
 And there inquire of the Destinies

130 How Amurack shall speed in these his wars?  
Peruse their books, and mark what is decreed

132 By Jove himself, and all his fellow gods;  
 And when thou knowst the certainty thereof,  
 134 By fleshless visions shew it presently  
 To Amurack, in pain of penalty.

136

**Calch.** Forced by thy charm, though with unwilling mind,  
 138 I haste to hell, the certainty to find.

140 *[Calchas sinks down from where he came up.]*

hell", though usually in the Christian context of a punishing lake of fire and brimstone into which the worst sinners were cast.

112: **hags** = female demons, though likely referring specifically to the goddesses of vengeance known as the Furies,<sup>1</sup> who were thought to reside (**harbour**)<sup>1</sup> in Hades.

113: Medea mentions two of Hades' streams: **Styx** was hell's primary river, across which souls had to travel to reach their final destination in the afterlife; **Phlegethon** was a river of fire.

Note the neat double alliteration of line 113.

= perform.

= forthwith shall demand.

117-8: Calchas **rises up** through the stage's trapdoor.

Surprisingly, Calchas appears dressed in the garb of a Christian cleric. A **surplice** is a white, long-sleeved linen vestment, and a **miter** is the tall headdress worn normally by bishops.<sup>1</sup>

= its.

= when. = "done what she wants"; Medea recycles an expression she used in line 91 above.

= ie. Hades.

129: **inquire** = a trisyllable here.<sup>4</sup>

**the Destinies** = ie. the aforementioned Fates, who spun out each individual's destiny.

= succeed, ie. make out.

131: **Peruse their books** = research their imagined books in which are written the fates of all men.

**mark** = note.

134-5: Medea orders Calchas to show Amurack in his dreams what will happen to him if he makes war on Alphonsus.

**fleshless** = abstract, incorporeal.

**shew** = show.

**in pain of penalty** = ie. "or suffer the consequences," a seeming threat by Medea to Calchas, should the latter fail to perform the witch's command.

**Consultation with Calchas:** note that, while Amurack himself seeks the advice of his Muslim god, his wife, through Medea, employs ancient pagan figures to obtain

142 **Medea.** Now, peerless princes, I must needs be gone;

My hasty business calls me from this place.

144 There resteth naught, but that you bear in mind  
What Amurack, in this his fit, doth say;  
146 For mark, what dreaming, madam, he doth prate,  
Assure yourself, that that shall be his fate.

148 **Fausta.** Though very loath to let thee so depart,  
150 Farewell, Medea, easer of my heart.

152 [Exit Medea.]

154 [Instruments sound within.]

156 **Amur.** [Speaking in a dream]

What, Amurack, doest thou begin to nod?

158 Is this the care that thou hast of thy wars?

As when thou shouldst be prancing of thy steed,  
160 To egg thy soldiers forward in thy wars,  
Thou sittest moping by the fire-side?  
162 See where thy viceroys grovel on the ground;  
Look where Belinus breatheth forth his ghost;  
164 Behold by millions how thy men do fall  
Before Alphonsus, like to silly sheep;  
166 And canst thou stand still lazing in this sort? –  
No, proud Alphonsus, Amurack doth fly  
168 To quail thy courage, and that speedily. –

170 [Instruments sound within.]

172 And dost thou think, thou proud injurious god,  
Mahound I mean, since thy vain prophesies

similar counsel. Elizabethan characters easily and without self-consciousness slipped between and blended early mythological and contemporary theological allusions.

142: *princes* = could be used, as here, to refer to female royalty.

*must needs be gone* = "have to leave."

143: there really is nothing of note that requires Medea to leave the scene, other than that her absence here furthers the plot.

= remains nothing.

= spell, or transitory state,<sup>1</sup> ie. in which he will be dreaming.

= speak of, babble.

154: this bit of music indicates that Amurack is entering a dream state.

156-168: Amurack is dreaming that distant Ottoman armies are being smashed by Alphonsus and his Aragonese, while Amurack himself is still in Turkey, where he should be hurrying his own troops to Italy to meet Alphonsus.

157: the dreaming Sultan, believing himself to be awake, worries that he is getting so drowsy that he is about to fall asleep!

158: Amurack rebukes himself: "is that the extent of your concern for your military affairs?"

= on.

= urge.

= a camp-fire.

= deputy kings.

= "is dying": *ghost* = soul.

165: "in front of Alphonsus, like defenseless (*silly*) sheep."

= ie. "like this?"

= rushes, hurries.

= daunt or dispirit Alphonsus.<sup>1</sup>

170ff: each interval of music signals a transition to a new scene in Amurack's dream, as if it were a play.

173: *Mahound* = technically, a god imagined by westerners to be worshipped by Muslims;<sup>1</sup> in our play, Greene uses *Mahound* interchangeably with *Mahomet* (Greene usually employs *Mahound* when he needs a disyllabic version of the prophet's name, and *Mahomet* when he needs a trisyllable). According to the OED, *Mahound* could be pronounced to rhyme with either *mound* or *mooned*.

174 Led Amurack into this doleful case,  
 To have his princely feet in irons clapped,  
 176 Which erst the proudest kings were forced to kiss,  
 That thou shalt scape unpunished for the same?  
 178 No, no, as soon as by the help of Jove  
 I scape this bondage, down go all thy groves,  
 180 Thy altars tumble round about the streets,  
 And whereas erst we sacrificed to thee,  
 182 Now all the Turks thy mortal foes shall be. –

184 *[Instruments sound within.]*

186 Behold the gem and jewel of mine age,  
 See where she comes, whose heavenly majesty  
 188 Doth far surpass the brave and gorgeous pace  
 Which Cytherea, daughter unto Jove,  
 190 Did put in ure whenas she had obtained  
 The golden apple at the shepherd's hands.

192 See, worthy Fausta, where Alphonsus stands,  
 Whose valiant courage could not daunted be  
 194 With all the men-at-arms of Africa;  
 See now he stands, as one that lately saw  
 196 Medusa's head, or Gorgon's hoary hue. –

*vain* = empty, worthless.

= distressing situation.

175: Amurack is dreaming that he has been captured by Alphonsus and is being held in chains.

= previously, before now.

= ie. Mahomet. = escape.

= Amurack is peeved at his god, and vows to tear down the woods in which the latter dwells.

= where previously.

172-182: in our play's "real life", Mahomet's advice has not yet been passed onto Amurack, but in his dream, the Sultan appears to have obtained his god's consent to attack Alphonsus; but now that Alphonsus has emerged from the battle victorious, Amurack gravely censures Mahomet. Unfortunately for the Sultan, Mahomet hears everything he is saying here, and will respond with understandably, if unfair (it was a dream, after all), indignation.

186: Amurack now sees his wife Fausta approaching.

187-191: *whose heavenly...pace* = Fausta's manner of walking (*pace*) surpasses in nobility and gracefulness that of Venus (*Cytherea*).

189-191: Amurack alludes to the famous myth known as "The Judgment of Paris": the Trojan prince Paris was selected by the three goddesses Juno, Venus and Minerva to decide which of them was the most beautiful. The winner was to receive a *golden* ball or *apple*. Paris decided on Venus, and was rewarded with possession of the Spartan queen Helen, an outcome which led directly to the Trojan War.

*Cytherea* = alternate name for Venus, derived from the name of the town of *Cythera* in Crete. One birth-story of the goddess was that she arose from the foam of the sea off the shore of Crete, and it was in Cythera where she first stepped on land. There was a second tradition which stated that Venus was the *daughter* of *Jove* and the Titan goddess Dione.

*in ure* = in use or into practice.<sup>1</sup>

*at the shepherd's hands* = ie. "from Paris"; the *shepherd* is Paris, who was known to haunt Mt. Ida (the scene of the beauty contest) in the guise of a shepherd.

= by; Amurack refers to his own enormous army.

195-6: Amurack imagines Alphonsus standing perfectly still, frozen in place as if he had just seen Medusa.

*lately* = just.

*Medusa's head* = Medusa was one of three sisters known as the *Gorgons* (Medusa was mortal, her sisters not); Medusa's famous head, with its hair of serpents, was so

terrifying that anyone who looked directly upon it was turned to stone.

*Gorgon's hoary hue* = properly speaking, the expression *hoary hue* should be used to describe the sister goddesses known as the Graea, or "grey ones" (*hoary* = grey), who were actually sisters of the Gorgons. The Graea most famously shared but a single eye and tooth, which they passed around amongst them. Greene's description of the *Gorgons* as possessing a *hoary hue* (rather than the Graea) is thus misplaced.<sup>12</sup>

= marriage. = announced.

= Dyce emends *haw* to *hah*, but also wonders if *haw* is a misprint for *how*, or *ho*, an exclamation used to indicate surprise or triumph.

= a common intensifier.

207ff: Fausta has forgotten Medea's admonition that whatever Amurack spoke of reflected only his dream, not reality.

= expression of reproach.

= manner.

212-4: by acceding to Iphigina marrying Alphonsus, Amurack has broken his vow to help Belinus destroy the Aragonese.

*sware* = swore, an alternate form; *sware* was more common in the 16th century, but then *swore* became increasingly preferred around the turn of the 17th century.

213: the warm connection between the Turkish ruling family and Belinus is now explained: Fausta is a kinswoman of the deposed King of Naples!

*niece* = kin or relative, sometimes used for "nephew".<sup>1</sup>

= removed, obliterated.<sup>1</sup> = completely.<sup>1</sup>

= ie. forgotten.

= that. = ie. when.

= ie. seek (instead).

222-5: Fausta threatens to gather an army of Amazons to oppose both Alphonsus and her husband!

*Amazones* = see the note at line 225 below.

= ie. prevent the marriage from taking place.

**Amazones:** the location and spelling of *Amazones* throughout the play suggest it should be pronounced in four

198 [Instruments sound within.]

200 And can it be that it may happen so?  
201 Can Fortune prove so friendly unto me  
202 As that Alphonsus loves Iphigina?  
The match is made, the wedding is decreed.

204 Sound trumpets, haw! strike drums for mirth and glee!

And three times welcome son-in-law to me.

206 [Fausta rises up in a fury, and wakes Amurack.]

208 **Fausta.** Fie, Amurack, what wicked words be these?  
210 How canst thou look thy Fausta in her face,  
Whom thou hast wronged in this shameful sort?

212 And are the vows so solemnly you sware

Unto Belinus, my most friendly niece,

214 Now washed so clearly from thy traitorous heart?  
Is all the rancour which you erst did bear  
216 Unto Alphonsus worn so out of mind,  
As, where thou should'st pursue him to [the] death,  
218 You seek to give our daughter to his hands?  
The gods forbid that such a heinous deed  
220 With my consent should ever be decreed;  
And rather than thou shouldst it bring to pass,  
222 If all the army of Amázonès

Will be sufficient to withhold the same,  
224 Assure thyself that Fausta means to fight  
'Gainst Amurack for to maintain the right.

226  
228  
230  
232  
234  
236  
238  
240  
242  
244  
246  
248  
250  
252

**Iphig.** Yea, mother, say – which Mahomet forbid –  
That in this conflict you should have the foil,

Ere that Alphonsus should be called my spouse,  
This heart, this hand, yea, and this blade, should be  
A readier means to finish that decree.

[*Amurack rises in a rage from his chair.*]

**Amur.** What threatening words thus thunder in mine ears?  
Or who are they amongst the mortal troops,  
That dares presume to use such threats to me?  
The proudest kings and keisers of the land  
Are glad to feed me in my fantasy;

And shall I suffer, then, each prattling dame  
For to upbraid me in this spiteful sort?  
No, by the heavens, first will I lose my crown,  
My wife, my children, yea, my life and all.

And therefore, Fausta, thou which Amurack  
Did'st tender erst as the apple of mine eye,

Avoid my court, and, if thou lov'st thy life,

Approach not nigh unto my regiment.  
As for this carping girl, Iphigina,  
Take her with thee to bear thee company,  
And in my land I rede be seen no more,

For if you do, you both shall die therefóre.

[*Exit Amurack.*]

syllables, with the stress on the second: *a-MA-zo-nes*.

The **Amazons** were the famous tribe of warrior women, said to reside variously in Asia Minor and Scythia. In his influential *Thesaurus Lingua* of 1578, Thomas Cooper wrote that the Amazons slaughtered any male babies born amongst them, and sliced off the right breasts of their girls, so that the breast would not interfere with the future warrior's ability to throw a spear.

= suppose.

= be defeated (*foil* = defeat).

229-231: Iphigina will kill herself before she marries the King of Aragon.

**Ere** = before.

**this blade** = Iphigina gestures towards or raises the sword she is carrying.

**readier** = prompter.<sup>1</sup>

**finish that decree** = put an end to the arrangement of her marriage to Alphonsus; Iphigina refers specifically to the **decree** of lines 203 and 220.

233: having heard enough from his impudent wife and daughter, Amurack explodes in a fit of fury.

= ie. "(mere) mortals"; **troops** = collection of persons.

238-9: "even the greatest monarchs of the empire are pleased to serve or fulfill my every whim or desire (**fantasy**)."<sup>1</sup>

**kings and keisers** = ie. rulers; this is the second use of this expression in the play.

= put up with. = chattering, gossiping.

= manner.

243: this part of Amurack's vow is very similar to that of Iphigina's in line 230 above.

245: "did previously regard (**tender**)<sup>2</sup> as the apple of my eye".

**the apple...eye** = the **apple** of the common expression "apple of my eye" (referring to something precious) is actually the pupil of the eye; note that **the apple** should be pronounced as **th' apple**.

246-251: wow! Amurack banishes his wife and daughter from the empire!

= near. = kingdom, dominion.<sup>1,4</sup>

= querulous, fault-finding.<sup>1</sup>

= advise.<sup>1</sup>

**244, 251:** in this speech, **therefore** is pronounced the first time (line 244) with the stress on its first syllable, and the second time (here in line 251), on its second.

254	<i>Fausta.</i> Nay, then, I see 'tis time to look about,	
256	Delay is <u>dangerous</u> , and <u>procureth</u> <u>harm</u> :	256: the conceit that <i>delay</i> brings <i>danger</i> or leads to <i>harm</i> was proverbial. <i>dangerous</i> = a disyllable: <i>DAN-g'rous</i> . <i>procureth</i> = invites, brings about. <sup>2</sup>
	The <u>wanton</u> colt is tamèd in <u>his</u> youth;	257-260: through analogy, Fausta berates herself for letting Amurack dominate her; if she had responded sooner, she would not be now in exile. <b>line 257:</b> ie. if one waits to tame a wild horse until it is grown, it will be too late to do so easily or successfully. <i>wanton</i> = wild. <sup>2</sup> <i>his</i> = ie. its.
258	Wounds must be cured when they be fresh and <u>green</u> ;	= synonym for <i>fresh</i> .
	And <u>pleurisies</u> , when they begin to <u>breed</u> ,	259: <i>pleurisies</i> = sharp pains in the side, or more specifically inflammation of the lungs' linings; <sup>1</sup> note the treatment of <i>pleurisy</i> as a count noun. <i>breed</i> = develop.
260	With little care are driven away with speed.	260: can be, with just a little timely attention and treatment, quickly eliminated.
262	Had Fausta then, when Amurack begun With spiteful speeches to control and check,	262: "with his malicious manner of speaking to restrain and rebuke me"; Fausta seems to be describing Amurack as an abusive husband.
	Sought to prevent it by her <u>martial</u> force,	263: ie. sought to put an end to Amurack's dominance with a fierce and forceful ( <i>martial</i> ) response.
264	This banishment had never happed to me.	265-272 ( <b>below</b> ): an unusual analogy: when a pregnant mother hedgehog ( <i>echinus</i> ) is about to give birth, she will postpone the delivery to avoid the pains of childbirth; but during this period of delay, her babies' spines grow <i>long and sharp</i> , which doubles the pain the mother must bear when she finally delivers her litter (Collins, p.286). Similarly, by waiting to respond to Amurack's abusive demeanor until it was too late, Fausta finds herself worse off than if she had done something about it sooner.
	But the <u>echinus</u> , fearing to be gored,	= hedgehog.
266	Doth keep her younglings in her paunch so long,	= spines. = grown.
	Till, when their <u>pricks</u> be <u>waxen</u> long and sharp,	= mother.
268	They put their <u>dam</u> at length to double pain:	269-270: Fausta claims to hate war ( <i>the broils of Mars</i> ),
270	And I, because I loathed <u>the broils of Mars</u> , Bridled my thoughts and pressèd down my rage;	which led her to repress her instinct to fight back against Amurack.
	In recompense of which my good intent,	= ie. in compensation or repayment for doing the right thing.
272	I have received this woeful banishment. –	= fortunate.
	Woeful, said I? Nay, <u>happy</u> I did mean,	
274	If that be happy which doth set one free;	
	For by this means I do not doubt ere long	
276	But Fausta shall <u>with ease</u> revenge <u>her wrong</u> . –	= easily. = ie. the injury done to her by her husband.
	Come, daughter, come: my mind foretelleth me	

278 That Amurack shall soon requited be.

### ACT III, SCENE III.

*A Grove.*

*As Fausta and Iphigina are going out,  
enter Medea, meeting them.*

1 **Medea.** Fausta, what means this sudden flight of yours?  
2 Why do you leave your husband's princely court,  
And all alone pass through these thickest groves,  
4 More fit to harbour brutish savage beasts  
Than to receive so high a queen as you?

6 Although your credit would not stay your steps  
From bending them into these darkish dens,

8 Yet should the danger which is imminent  
To every one which passeth by these paths,  
10 Keep you at home with fair Iphigina.

What foolish toy hath tickled you to this?  
12 I greatly fear some hap hath hit amiss.

14 **Fausta.** No toy, Medea, tickled Fausta's head,  
Nor foolish fancy led me to these groves,  
16 But earnest business eggs my trembling steps  
To pass all dangers, whatsoever they be.  
18 I banished am, Medea, I, which erst  
Was Empress over all the triple world,  
20 Am banished now from palace and from  Pomp.  
But if the gods be favourers to me,  
22 Ere twenty days I will revenged be.

24 **Medea.** I thought as much, when first from thickest leaves  
I saw you trudging in such posting pace.  
26 But to the purpose: what may be the cause  
Of this [so] strange and sudden banishment?

28 **Fausta.** The cause, ask you? A simple cause, God wot:  
30 'Twas neither treason, nor yet felony,  
But for because I blamed his foolishness.

32 **Medea.** I hear you say so, but I greatly fear,  
34 Ere that your tale be brought unto an end,  
You'll prove yourself the author of the same.

= repaid.

Note that Fausta and Iphigina do not exit the stage; instead, the scene changes to some woods, and we are to understand that the ladies have left Constantinople on their way to exile.

**Entering Characters:** the Ottoman empress **Fausta** and her daughter **Iphigina**, having been banished by the emperor Amurack, flee Turkey; they are met, rather coincidentally, in the woods by the witch **Medea**.

= woods.

= ie. which are more fit. = shelter.<sup>2</sup>

= admit.

6-7: "although your reputation has not prevented you from directing (**bending**) your steps into this dark place".

**stay** = restrain, check.

**dens** = lairs or abodes, as of beasts.<sup>1</sup>

8-10: in modern English, **should** would be placed at the end of line 9, after **paths**: the danger **should** have kept Fausta out of the woods.

= fancy. = moved, provoked. = ie. to do this.

= ie. something has gone wrong.

**hap** = occurrence.

= urges, pushes. = ie. trembling from fear.

= "who previously".

= the known settled world; see the Note at Act i.i.65.

= all majesty and ceremony.

= ie. within.

= a fast walk, ie. a hurry.

= point.

= knows.

= nor a high crime.

31: ie. "but only because I spoke out against Amurack's foolish talk."

= before.

35: Fausta will prove to have foolishly caused her own

36	But pray, be brief, what folly did your spouse? And how will you revenge your wrong on him?	troubles; note the brief metaphor with <i>tale</i> and <i>author</i> in lines 34 and 35.
38		
40	<b>Fausta.</b> "What folly", <u>quoth you?</u> Such as never yet Was heard or seen, <u>since Phoebus first gan shine.</u>	= "you say". = since the sun first began ( <i>gan</i> ) to shine. <i>Phoebus</i> = the sun god, ie. the sun.
42	You know how he was gathering in all haste His men-at-arms, to set upon the <u>troop</u> Of proud Alphonsus; yea, you well do know How you and I did do the best we could To make him <u>shew</u> us in his drowsy dream What afterward should happen in his wars. <u>Much talk he had</u> , which now I have forgot. But <u>at the length</u> , this surely was <u>decreed</u> , How that Alphonsus and Iphigina Should be conjoined in <u>Juno's sacred rites</u> . Which when I heard, as one that did despise That such a <u>traitor</u> should be <u>son</u> to me, I did rebuke my husband Amurack: And since my words could <u>take no better place</u> , My sword with help of all Amázonës Shall make him soon repent his foolishness.	= army.  = ie. show.  = "he said a great deal". = in the end. <sup>1</sup> = determined, arranged. <sup>1,2</sup>  = ie. marriage; <i>Juno</i> was the goddess of marriage.  = ie. Alphonsus. = ie. son-in-law.  = ie. accomplish nothing more.
58	<b>Medea.</b> This is the cause, then, of your banishment? And now you go unto Amázonë To gather all your maidens <u>in array</u> , To set upon the mighty Amurack? Oh, foolish queen, what meant you by this talk? Those prattling speeches have <u>undone</u> you all. Do you disdain to have that mighty prince, I mean Alphonsus, <u>counted</u> for your <u>son</u> ? I tell you, Fausta, he is born to be The ruler of a mighty monarchy. I must confess the <u>powers</u> of Amurack Be great; <u>his confines</u> stretch both far and near; Yet are they not the third part of the lands Which shall be ruled by Alphonsus' hands – And yet you <u>dain</u> to call him son-in-law. But when you see his sharp and cutting sword Piercing the heart of this your gallant girl, You'll curse the hour wherein you did <u>deny</u> To join Alphonsus with Iphigina.	= into military formations <sup>1</sup> or military preparedness. <sup>2</sup>  = ruined.  = ie. accounted. = ie. son-in-law.  = army. = the boundaries of his territories.  = scorn. 73-74: a metaphor for Alphonsus' causing Iphigina to fall in love with him. = refuse; <sup>1</sup> alternate form of <i>deny</i> .
78	<b>Fausta.</b> The gods forbid that e'er it happen so.	
80	<b>Medea.</b> Nay, never pray, for it must happen so.	
82	<b>Fausta.</b> And is there, then, <u>no remedy for it</u> ?	= ie. no way to avoid the expected outcome.
84	<b>Medea.</b> No, none but one, and that you have <u>forsworn</u> .	= vowed not to do, referring to Fausta's oath to never give her consent to her daughter's marriage to Alphonsus.
86	<b>Fausta.</b> As though an oath can <u>bridle so my mind</u> As that I dare not break a thousand oaths For to <u>eschew</u> the danger imminent! Speak, good Medea, tell that way to me,	= curb or check her mind, and hence her actions.  = avoid.

90	And I will do it, whatsoe'er it be.	
92	<b>Medea.</b> Then, as already you have well <u>decreed</u> ,	= decided. <sup>1</sup>
	<u>Pack to</u> your country, and in readiness	= depart for.
94	Select the army of Amázonës;	= army.
	When you have done, march with your female <u>troop</u>	= help.
96	To Naples' town, to <u>succour</u> Amurack;	
	And so, by marriage of Iphigina,	= completely.
98	You soon shall drive the danger <u>clean</u> away.	
100	<b>Iphig.</b> So shall we soon eschew <u>Charybdis'</u> lake, And headlong fall to <u>Scylla's</u> greedy <u>gulf</u> .	100-1: metaphorically and mythologically, Iphigina has to choose between two undesirable options (represented by Charybdis and Scylla): to fight against her father, or to save him by marrying Alphonsus. <b>Charybdis</b> and <b>Scylla</b> were a famous pair of monsters that threatened sailors of the Strait of Messina, located between Sicily and the mainland of Italy. <b>Scylla</b> (in reality, a perilous rock) lived on the shore and plucked and ate mariners who sailed too close to her, and <b>Charybdis</b> was a dangerous whirlpool in the waters of the strait itself. <b>gulf</b> = an abyss or whirlpool; Greene misattributes <b>gulf</b> to Scylla: in contemporary literature, <b>gulf</b> was normally used, as was appropriate, to describe Charybdis, not Scylla.
102	I vowed before, and now do vow again, Before I wed Alphonsus, I'll be slain.	102-3: Iphigina, unlike her mother, remains strongly opposed to her union with Alphonsus.
104		
106	<b>Medea.</b> In vain it is to strive against the stream; Fates must be followed, and the gods' decree Must needs take place in every kind of cause.	106-7: a running theme of ancient mythology was that no being, either god or mortal, could escape whatever fate had in store for him or her, and that each person's fate had been long predetermined (see line 109).
108	Therefore, fair maid, <u>bridle these brutish thoughts</u> ,	= "restrain (ie. suppress) this primitive way of thinking (referring for Iphigina's preference for death over marriage).
	And learn to <u>follow</u> what the Fates assign.	= go along with, accept.
		<b>110-124 (below):</b> Medea drives home her point about the inevitability of fate with a heavy hand, recalling at length two important examples, in one case involving a god and in the other a mortal, illustrating the futility of trying to prevent outcomes or events which have been destined to take place.
		<b>110-8 (below), example 1:</b> the Titan god <b>Saturn</b> ruled the universe, but his parents Gaia and Uranus had predicted that he would be overthrown by his son. To avoid this fate, Saturn swallowed all of his children by his wife Rhea. Rhea, unhappy, saved her sixth child <b>Jupiter</b> by hiding him in a cave and tricking Jupiter by giving him a stone wrapped in swaddling clothes, which he consumed, thinking it was the infant. Jupiter grew up to overthrow his father.
110	When Saturn heard that Jupiter his son Should drive him headlong from his heavenly seat	
112	Down to the bottom of the dark <u>Avern</u> ,	112: ie. down to hell ( <b>Avern</b> ), but specifically a reference to Tartarus, the deepest part of Hades, to which Saturn and his

114 He did command his mother presently  
 To do to death the young and guiltless child;  
 But what of that? The mother loathed in heart  
 116 For to commit so vile a massacre;  
 Yea, Jove did live, and, as the Fates did say,  
 118 From heavenly seat drave Saturn clean away.

120 What did avail the castle all of steel,  
 The which Acrisius caused to be made  
 To keep his daughter Danaë clogged in?  
 122 She was with child for all her castle's force;  
 And by that child Acrisius, her sire,  
 124 Was after slain, so did the Fates require.  
 A thousand examples I could bring hereof;  
 126 But marble stones needs no colouring,

128 And that which every one doth know for truth  
 Needs no examples to confirm the same.  
 That which the Fates appoint must happen so,  
 130 Though heavenly Jove and all the gods say no.

132 **Fausta.** Iphigina, she say[e]th naught but truth;  
 Fates must be followed in their just decrees;  
 134 And therefore, setting all delays aside,  
 Come let us wend unto Amázonē,  
 136 And gather up our forces out of hand.

138 **Iphig.** Since Fausta wills, and Fates do so command,  
 Iphigina will never it withstand.  
 140

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF ACT III.

fellow Titan deities were imprisoned after Jupiter's usurpation of his father.

*Avern* = properly, a lake situated at the entrance to Hades

118: *drave* = alternate form of *drove*; *drave* is another word whose use was more common in the 16th century, but was eclipsed by *drove* by the turn of the 17th.

*clean* = completely.

**119-124 (below) example 2: Acrisius**, the king of Argos, received an oracle that the future son of his daughter *Danae* would grow up to kill him. To prevent this event, Acrisius kept Danae locked away in a brass or bronze tower. Jupiter visited her in the form of a shower of gold, which impregnated her, resulting in the birth of the Greek hero Perseus. The king tried to kill mother and child by setting them to sea in a chest, but they were rescued. In adulthood, Perseus accidentally killed Acrisius during funeral games when a discus he threw fatally struck his grandfather.

= obstructed or fettered,<sup>1</sup> not exactly the right word.

122: she became pregnant despite her solitary confinement in the tower.

125: there is an extraneous syllable in this line.

126: literally suggesting that *marble*, with its natural **colouring**, is so gorgeous that it needs no paint; the analogy suggested by this newly-minted proverb is that the conceit that one's fate cannot be escaped is so obvious that it really doesn't need illustrations to be convincingly proved (lines 127-8).

Collins suggests *stones* is a disyllable (*STO-nes*), but Dyce instead proposes emending *stones needs* to *stones do need*.

= ie. Medea. = nothing.

= ie. "make our way to".

= ie. an army. = at once.<sup>1</sup>

= resist; Iphigina – at least for the moment – resigns herself to her fated end.

136-9: the scene ends with a dramatic rhyming triplet!

## ACT IV.

### PROLOGUE.

*Enter Venus.*

1 **Venus.** Thus have you seen how Amurack himself,  
2 Fausta his wife, and every other king  
Which hold their sceptres at the Turk his hands,  
4 Are now in arms, intending to destroy,  
And bring to naught, the Prince of Aragon.  
6 Charms have been used by wise Medea's art,  
To know before what afterward shall hap;

8 And King Belinus, with high Claramont,  
Joined to Arcastus, which with princely pomp  
10 Doth rule and govern all the warlike Moors,  
Are sent as legates to God Mahomet,  
12 To know his counsel in these high affairs.

Mahound, provoked by Amurack's discourse,  
14 Which, as you heard, he in his dream did use,  
Denies to play the prophet any more;

16 But, by the long entreaty of his priests,

18 He prophesies in such a crafty sort  
As that the hearers needs must laugh for sport.

20 Yet poor Belinus, with his fellow kings,  
Did give such credence to that forged tale  
As that they lost their dearest lives thereby,  
22 And Amurack became a prisoner  
Unto Alphonsus, as straight shall appear.

24

[*Exit Venus.*]

### ACT IV, SCENE I.

*The Temple of Mahomet.*

*Let there be a Brazen Head set in the middle  
of the place behind the stage, out of the which  
cast flames of fire; drums rumble within.*

3: who keeps his crown on the Ottoman Sultan's sufferance.

= ruin.

= beforehand.

8-12: Amurack, we remember, had sent the deposed King of Naples Belinus, along the kings Claramont and Arcastus, to learn whether Mahomet would give his blessing for the Sultan to go to war against Alphonsus.

**which** (line 9) = who.

13-23: the remainder of the speech foreshadows the events to come in Act IV.

13-15: Mahomet heard, and is angered by, the harsh words Amurack used against him in his dream of Act III.ii, and has decided to give no more oracles to the Turks.

**Mahound** = alternate disyllabic name for **Mahomet**.

16: ie. the Muslim clerics begged Mahomet not to quit serving them.

17-18: Mahomet's prophecy for the visiting kings was deceptively wily, so much so that the neutral observer would chuckle at the god's cleverness.

19-21: but Amurack's kings believed Mahomet's auguries, and it cost them their lives.

= immediately, forthwith.

**Act IV:** here we are introduced to the greatest of all Elizabethan stage props, a talking brass (**brazen**) head. A similar oracular head appears more famously in Greene's well-known later play *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*.

It is through the Brazen Head that Mahomet makes his pronouncements.

**within** = off-stage.

	<i>Enter two Priests.</i>	<b>Entering Characters:</b> the two <i>Priests</i> are Muslim clerics.
1	<b>1st Priest.</b> My fellow priest of <u>Mahound's</u> holy house,	1-3: the 1st Priest wonders if his companion has any
2	What can you judge of these strange miracles	thoughts regarding the strange, even unprecedented,
4	Which daily happen in this sacred seat?	phenomena emanating from the Brazen Head.
	[Drums rumble within.]	<b>Mahound</b> , we remember, is a disyllabic alternate name
6	Hark, what a rumbling rattleth in our ears!	for <b>Mahomet</b> .
8	[Flakes of fire are cast forth <u>of the Brazen Head</u> .]	= from.
10	See flakes of fire proceeding from the mouth	= the sense is, "try as I may to comprehend this"; <b>wit</b> is a
12	Of Mahomet, that god of peerless power!	catch-all term for intelligence and cleverness.
	Nor can I tell, <u>with all the wit I have</u> ,	14: briefly, "what Mahomet wants;" <b>crave</b> = demand.
14	What Mahomet, by these his signs, doth <u>crave</u> .	16-20: the 2nd Priest has served as a cleric for thirty years.
16	<b>2nd Priest.</b> Thrice ten times <u>Phoebus</u> with his golden	<b>Phoebus</b> = the sun god, ie. the sun, as before.
	beams	17: "has traced a circular path", referring to the sun having
	Hath compassèd the circle of the sky,	revolved around the earth thirty times; this conceit is
		consistent with the usual Elizabethan acceptance, at least for
18	Thrice ten times <u>Ceres</u> hath her workmen hired,	literary purposes, that all celestial objects revolve around the
	And filled her barns with fruitful crops of corn,	earth.
20	Since first in priesthood I did lead my life;	18: ie. thirty growing seasons have passed.
		<b>Ceres</b> = goddess of grain.
		16-20: Collins notes that these lines appear to have been
		parodied by Shakespeare in Act III of <i>Hamlet</i> . The following
		are the opening spoken lines of the play-within-the-play of
		Scene ii (lines 167-171):
		<i>Full thirty times hath Phoebus' cart gone round Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground, And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen About the world have times twelve thirties been, Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands Unite commutual in most sacred bands.</i>
22	Yet in this time I never heard before	23-24: the 2nd Priest concludes his speech with the same
	Such fearful sounds, nor saw such wondrous sights;	two lines as did the 1st Priest at lines 13-14 above.
	Nor can I tell, with all the wit I have,	26-36: Mahomet is not happy.
24	What Mahomet, by these his signs, doth crave.	27: Mahomet mocks the Priests by throwing their own
26	<b>Mahom.</b> [ <i>Speaking out of the Brazen Head</i> ]	words ( <b>nor can I tell</b> , lines 13 and 23) back at them.
	<u>You cannot tell</u> , nor will you seek to know:	= grown.
28	Oh, perverse priest[s], how careless are you <u>waxed</u> ,	29: Mahomet suggests that Alphonsus and his army are
	As when my foes approach unto my gates,	heading towards Ottoman lands, and even to Con-
		stantinople itself!
30	You stand <u>still</u> talking of "I cannot tell"!	= ever, continuously.

<p>Go, <u>pack you hence</u>, and meet <u>the Turkish kings</u>,  32 Which now are drawing <u>to my temple ward</u>;</p> <p>Tell them from me, God <u>Mahomet</u> is disposed  34 To prophesy no more to Amurack,  36 Since that his tongue is <u>waxen</u> now so free,  As that it needs must chat and rail at me.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[<i>The Priests kneel.</i>]</p>	<p>= "get going quickly". = ie. Claramont and Arcastus.  = ie. "toward my temple"; this is an interesting Medieval construction, in which the separated syllables of <i>toward</i> (<i>to</i> and <i>ward</i>) surround the object toward which motion occurs, e.g., "<i>turn to the earth-ward</i>" (1656).  = a disyllable here: <i>MAH-'met</i>.</p>
<p><i>Ist Priest.</i> Oh Mahomet, if all the solemn prayers  Which from our childhood we have offered thee,  42 Can make thee <u>call this sentence back again</u>,  Bring not thy priest[s] into this dangerous state!  44 For when the Turk doth hear of this repulse,  We shall be sure to die the death thereof.</p> <p>46 <b>Mahom.</b> [<i>Speaking out of the Brazen Head</i>]</p>	<p>35-36: Mahomet is peeved that Alphonsus harangued him at Act III.ii: this seems not a little unfair, since Amurack spoke his censorious words involuntarily while dreaming.  <i>waxen</i> = grown.</p> <p>= ie. "take back what you just said".</p>
<p>Thou sayest truth: go call the princes in:  I'll prophesy unto them for this once;  50 But in <u>such wise</u> as they shall neither boast,  Nor you be hurt in any <u>kind of wise</u>.</p> <p>52 <b>Belinus, Claramont, Arcastus and Fabius</b>  54 <i>are brought in by the Priests.</i></p>	<p>44-45: if Amurack learns that Mahomet, through the Brazen Head, refuses to speak anymore, the Sultan will blame the Head's caretakers, ie. the Priests, and have them executed.</p> <p>47-51: surprisingly, Mahomet relents; one does not expect a god to back down from any pronouncement he makes, especially in response to a supplicant's cowardly pleading.</p> <p>49-51: Mahomet will make an oracle just this once more, but in a manner that will ultimately fail to satisfy the kings, and still protect his Priests from harm. The god is coy here: the nature of his prophesy will seem to be a positive one, but will prove deceptive.  <i>such wise</i> = such a way.  <i>kind of wise</i> = way or manner.</p>
<p>56 <i>Ist Priest.</i> You kings of Turkey, Mahomet our god,  <u>By sacred science</u> having notice that  58 You were sent legates from high Amurack</p> <p>Unto this place, commanded us, his priests,  60 That we should cause you make as <u>mickle</u> speed  As well you might, to hear for certainty  62 Of that shall happen to your king and ye.</p>	<p><b>Entering Characters:</b> <i>Belinus</i>, the deposed King of Naples, and the Kings <i>Claramont</i> (of the Moors) and <i>Arcastus</i> (of Barbary) had been sent by Amurack back in Act III.ii.47f to learn whether Mahomet would approve of the Sultan's project to bring his army out of Turkey to fight against Alphonsus alongside of Belinus.  <i>Fabius</i>, one of Belinus' faithful officers, has loyally stuck with his king through all the latter's ill fortune.</p> <p>57-59: <b>By sacred...this place</b> = the Priests point out that Mahomet knew the royal visitors were approaching; but since Mahomet is a supernatural being, it seems superfluous for the priests to point out that he learned this intelligence <b>by sacred science</b>, which appears to mean "by magic" specifically, or "by supernatural means" generally. The expression <i>sacred science</i> had been used previously in the 16th century to refer to astronomy and astrology.</p> <p>59-62: <b>commanded...and ye</b> = Mahomet ordered the Priests to urge the kings to waste no time and get right to listening to what the god has to say to them.  <i>mickle</i> = much.</p>

64	<b>Belin.</b> For that intent we came into this place; And <u>sithens</u> that the mighty Mahomet	= since, a disyllabic form. = ie. "to tell us exactly this".
66	Is now at leisure <u>for to tell the same</u> ,	
68	Let us make haste and take time while we may, For mickle danger happeneth through delay.	67-68: this is the second time in the play that a character has observed that delay is dangerous. Such proverbial wisdom was often expressed on stage, as here, in a rhyming couplet.
70	<b>2nd Priest.</b> <u>Truth</u> , worthy king, and therefore you yourself,	= ie. "this is true".
72	With your companions, kneel before this place, And listen well what Mahomet doth say.	
74	<b>Belin.</b> As you do <u>will</u> , we jointly will obey.	= desire.
76	[All kneel down before the Brazen Head.]	
78	<b>Mahom.</b> [Speaking out of the Brazen Head] Princes of Turkey, and ambassadors	
80	Of Amurack to mighty Mahomet, I <u>needs must muse</u> that you, which <u>erst</u> have been	= necessarily must (pause to) wonder. = in prior times. = most eager or unhesitating. <sup>1</sup> = ie. the whole world.
82	The <u>readiest</u> soldiers of <u>the triple world</u> ,	
84	Are now become so slack in your affairs, <u>As</u> , when you should with bloody blade in hand Be hacking <u>helms in thickest of your foes</u> ,	= that. = ie. helmets. = where enemy soldiers appeared in the greatest density on the field of battle, ie. where the fighting is heaviest and the most dangerous. = ie. "ever idly wasting time here".
86	You stand <u>still loitering in the Turkish soil</u> .	
88	What, know you not, how that it is decreed By all the gods, and chiefly by myself, That you with triumph should all crownèd be?	89: you may wish to make a point of remembering this part of the god's prophesy. = in case.
90	Make haste, [then] kings, <u>lest when</u> the Fates do see How carelessly you do neglect their words,	
92	They call a council, and force Mahomet Against his will <u>some other things to set</u> .	93: to say something else, ie. to alter his prophesy.
94	Send Fabius back to Amurack again, To <u>haste</u> him forwards in his enterprise;	= urge, press.
96	And march you on, with all the troops you have, <u>To Naples ward</u> , to conquer <u>Aragon</u> ,	97: <b>To Naples ward</b> = ie. towards Naples; see the note at line 32 above. <b>Aragon</b> = ie. Alphonsus.
98	For, if you <u>stay</u> , both you and all your men  Must needs be sent down straight to <u>Limbo-den</u> .	= delay, tarry. <sup>1</sup>  99: briefly, "will die." <b>Limbo-den</b> = ie. hell. The suffix <b>den</b> (perhaps adapted in its meaning of "hole in the ground", OED def. 2) seems to have been added solely to fill in the meter.
100	<b>2nd Priest.</b> Muse not, brave kings, at Mahomet's discourse,	101: "do not stand there pondering the god's words.
102	For <u>mark</u> what he <u>forth of</u> that mouth doth say, Assure yourselves it <u>needs</u> must happen so.	= note. = from out of. = necessarily.
104	Therefore make haste, go mount you on your steeds, And set upon Alphonsus <u>presently</u> :	= right away.
106	So shall you reap great honour for your <u>pain</u> ,	= effort, labour.

<p>108 And scape the scourge which else the Fates ordain.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[<i>All rise up.</i>]</p>	<p>= and in doing so, escape the punishment which the Fates have ordained must happen, should they not follow Mahomet's advice.</p>
<p>110 <b>Belin.</b> Then, proud Alphonsus, <u>look thou to thy crown</u>:</p> <p>112 Belinus comes, in glittering armour <u>clad</u>,</p> <p>114 All ready <u>prest</u> for to revenge the <u>wrong</u></p> <p>116 Which, <u>not long since</u>, you <u>offered</u> unto him;</p> <p>118 And since we have God Mahound on our side,</p> <p>120 The victory must <u>needs</u> to us <u>betide</u>.</p> <p>122 <b>Clar.</b> Worthy Belinus, <u>set such threats away</u>,</p> <p>124 And let us haste as fast as horse can trot</p> <p>126 To set upon presumptuous Aragon. –</p> <p>128 You Fabius, haste, as Mahound did command,</p> <p>130 To Amurack with all the speed you may.</p>	<p>= "you better look to the safety of".</p> <p>= dressed.</p> <p>= prepared.<sup>5</sup> = injury, insult.</p> <p>= ie. only recently. = tendered, did.</p> <p>= necessarily. = happen, occur.</p> <p>= ie. "stop (standing there) blustering so much".</p> <p>122-9: the scene concludes with a pair of rhyming couplets.</p>
<p>124 <b>Fabius.</b> With willing mind I hasten on my way.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[<i>Exit Fabius.</i>]</p> <p>128 <b>Belin.</b> And thinking long till that we be in fight,</p> <p>130 Belinus hastes to <u>quail</u> Alphonsus' might.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[<i>Exeunt.</i>]</p>	<p>129: "I hurry to destroy (<i>quail</i>) Alphonsus' power.<sup>1</sup></p> <p><b>Mahomet's Orders:</b> it is worth noting that Mahomet's directive to Belinus and the Ottoman deputy kings to take their armies and attack Alphonsus without Amurack directly contravenes the Sultan's orders to simply find out if the Muslim god assents to a military intervention against the Aragonese (Act III.ii.50-61).</p>
<p><u>ACT IV, SCENE II.</u></p>	
<p><i>Near Naples.</i></p>	
<p><u><i>Alarum awhile.</i></u></p>	
<p><i>Enter Carinus.</i></p>	
<p>1 <b>Carin.</b> No sooner had God <u>Phoebus</u>' brightsome beams</p> <p>2 Begun to dive within the Western seas,</p> <p>4 And darksome <u>Nox</u> had spread about the earth</p> <p>4 Her blackish mantle, but a drowsy sleep</p> <p>6 Did take possession of Carinus' sense,</p> <p>6 And <u>Morpheus</u> showed me strange disguisèd <u>shapes</u>.</p>	<p>= repeated calls to arms are heard.</p> <p><b>Entering Character:</b> neither we nor Alphonsus have seen Alphonsus' father <b>Carinus</b> since we left him at his hovel in the play's opening scene. Carinus is dressed in the unassuming clothes of a pilgrim, or traveller, which may consist of a coarse gray gown and sandals.</p> <p>1-2: ie. "no sooner had the sun set"; yet another reference to the sun-god <b>Phoebus</b>.</p> <p>3-4: <b>And darksome...mantle</b> = ie. and night began to fall. <b>Nox</b> = rarely mentioned primordial goddess of the night.<sup>13</sup></p> <p>6: Carinus had strange dreams. <b>Morpheus</b> = god of dreams; the quarto prints <b>Morphei</b>, emended properly as shown by Dyce. <b>shapes</b> = images.<sup>1</sup></p>

<p>8 Methought I saw Alphonsus, my dear son, Placed in a throne all glittering clear with gold, 10 Bedecked with diamonds, pearls and precious stones, Which shined so clear, and glittered all so bright, <u>Hyperion's coach</u> that well be <u>termed</u> it might.</p>	<p>7-27: Greene, through Carinus, engages in some heavy-handed foreshadowing.</p> <p>11: Alphonsus' throne was so bright (lines 7-10) that it might have been called (<i>termed</i>) Hyperion's coach.</p> <p><i>Hyperion's coach</i> = <i>Hyperion</i> was yet another name for the sun-god, who was imagined to bear the sun across the sky each day as he rode in a chariot (<i>coach</i>) pulled by a team of horses; note that the quarto prints <i>couch</i> for <i>coach</i>, emended as shown by Dyce.</p>
<p>12 Above his head a canopy was set, Not <u>decked</u> with plumes, as other <u>princes</u> use, 14 But all beset with heads of conquered kings, <u>Installed with</u> crowns, which made a gallant <u>shew</u>, 16 And <u>strook</u> a terror to the viewers' hearts. Under his feet lay groveling on the ground 18 Thousand of princes, which he in his wars By martial might did conquer and bring low: 20 Some lay as dead as either <u>stock or stone</u>,</p>	<p>= adorned. = monarchs.</p> <p>= invested with, ie. wearing. = ie. show. = ie. struck.</p> <p>= wood or rock; the common expression <i>stock or stone</i> was usually used to contemptuously refer to a false idol, e.g., "<i>they...worship a dead stocke or stone</i>" (1571), but in the 1590's we begin to find this collocation used to figuratively describe a person who is either dead or standing motionless.</p>
<p>Some other[s] <u>tumbled</u>, wounded to the death;</p>	<p>= fell over.</p>
<p>22 But most of them, as to their sovereign king, Did offer duly homage unto him.</p>	<p>22-23: but most of the conquered enemy acknowledged Alphonsus to be their overlord.</p>
<p>24 As thus I stood beholding of this <u> Pomp</u>, Methought Alphonsus did <u>espy me out</u>, 26 And, <u>at a trice</u>, he <u>leaving throne alone</u>, Came to embrace me in his blessed arms. 28 Then noise of drums and sound of trumpets shrill Did wake Carinus from this pleasant dream. 30 Something, I know, is now <u>foreshewn</u> by this: The gods <u>forfend</u> that <u>ought</u> should <u>hap amiss</u>.</p>	<p>= majestic scene. = "notice or see me". = in but a moment. = "walking away from his throne".</p> <p>= foreshown, ie. foreshadowed, prefigured.<sup>1</sup> = forbid. = anything. = go wrong.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">[Carinus walk up and down.]</p>	<p>33: we are to understand Carinus is on his journey to seek out his son.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">34 <i>Enter the Duke of Millain in pilgrim's apparel.</i></p>	<p><b>Entering Character:</b> in Act III.ii, the <i>Duke of Milan</i> had brought his army south to join Belinus in trying to oust the Aragonese invaders, now led by Alphonsus, but of course the Italians were soundly defeated. We last saw the Duke being chased across the stage by Miles, but he appears to have survived. Now he travels the land a fugitive, disguised as a pilgrim.</p>
<p>36 <b>Duke.</b> This is the chance of fickle <u>Fortune's wheel</u>;</p>	<p>37: the Duke muses on the unpredictability of luck; as we move into the final third of the play, we will notice an increase in the number of allusions to the <i>wheel</i> personified <i>Fortune</i> spins, arbitrarily raising and lowering the circumstances of all individuals.</p>
<p>38 A prince at morn, a <u>pilgrim</u> ere't be night.</p>	<p>38: a man can be (or "I was") a king in the morning, but a <i>pilgrim</i> (ie. and thus a pauper) before nightfall.</p>

<p>40 I, <u>which erewhile</u> did <u>dain for</u> to possess The proudest palace of the western world, Would now be glad a cottage for to find 42 To hide my head; so Fortune hath assigned. Thrice <u>Hesperus</u> with pomp and peerless pride</p>	<p>= "who a short time ago".<sup>2</sup> = scorn. 43-48: briefly, three nights have passed since the Duke has eaten or drunk anything. <i>Hesperus</i> = the evening star, Venus; note the nice alliteration of lines 43 (with <i>p-</i>) and 44 (with <i>h-</i>).</p>
<p>44 Hath <u>heaved his head forth of</u> the eastern seas,</p>	<p>44: risen from out of.</p>
<p>46 Thrice <u>Cynthia</u>, with <u>Phoebus'</u> borrowed beams, Hath shewn her beauty through the darkish clouds,</p>	<p>45-46: the moon has risen three times. In contrast to the Elizabethan poet's insistence that the earth was the center of the universe, the era's authors did happily acknowledge that the moon (personified as <i>Cynthia</i>) only <i>appeared</i> to shine because it reflected the rays of the sun (<i>Phoebus</i>).</p>
<p>48 Since that I, wretched duke, have <u>tasted aught</u>, Or drunk a drop of any kind of drink. Instead of beds set forth with <u>ebony</u>, 50 The greenish grass hath been my resting place; And, <u>for</u> my pillow stuffed with down, 52 The hardish <u>hillocks</u> have <u>sufficed my turn</u>. Thus I, <u>which erst</u> had all things at my <u>will</u>, 54 A life more hard than death do follow still.</p>	<p>= eaten anything. = a hard black wood.<sup>1</sup> = in place of. = small mounds of dirt or rocks.<sup>1</sup> = served this purpose. = who previously. = command or desire.</p>
<p>56 <b>Carin.</b> [<i>Aside</i>] Methinks I hear, not very far from hence, Some woeful <u>wight</u> lamenting his <u>mischance</u>: 58 I'll go and see if that I can <u>espy</u></p>	<p>= person. = bad luck. = see.</p>
<p>Him where he sits, or overhear his talk.</p>	<p>59: Carinus seems to be aware of the odd Elizabethan dramatic convention in which a character, though believing he or she is alone, will speak aloud his or her thoughts and feelings for the benefit of the audience, as well as for any eavesdroppers within earshot.</p>
<p>60 <b>Duke.</b> O Millain, Millain, little dost thou <u>think</u>, 62 How that thy Duke is now in such distress! For if thou didst, I soon should be released 64 <u>Forth of</u> this greedy gulf of misery.</p>	<p>= know. = from.</p>
<p>66 <b>Carin.</b> [<i>Aside</i>] The Millain Duke! I thought as much before, When first I glanced mine eyes upon his face. 68 This is the man which was the only cause That I was forced to fly from Aragon:</p>	<p>68-69: here is a new twist to our story, but how the Duke of Milan was responsible for Carinus losing his throne and being forced into exile is never explained.</p>
<p>70 High Jove be praised, which hath <u>allotted</u> me So fit a time to <u>quite</u> that injury. – 72 Pilgrim, <u>God speed</u>.</p>	<p>= dealt to or granted. = repay. = common expression of good will.</p>
<p>74 <b>Duke.</b> Welcome, <u>grave sir</u>, to me.</p>	<p>= <i>grave</i> could be used, as here, as part of a respectful form of address.</p>
<p>76 <b>Carin.</b> Methought as now I heard you for to speak Of Millain-land: pray, do you know the same?</p>	

78	<b>Duke.</b> Ay, agèd father, I have cause to know	
80	Both Millain-land and all the <u>parts thereof</u> .	= regions pertaining to it.
82	<b>Carin.</b> Why then, I doubt not but you can <u>resolve</u>	= inform, answer.
84	Me of a question that I shall <u>demand</u> .	= ask.
86	<b>Duke.</b> Ay, that I can, whatever that it be.	
88	<b>Carin.</b> Then, to be brief: not twenty <u>winters past</u> ,	= ie. years ago.
90	When these my limbs, which withered are with age, Were in the prime and spring of all their youth, I <u>still</u> desirous, as young gallants be, To <u>see the fashions</u> of Arabia,	= having always been. = ie. "see the manners and customs of", a common expression. <sup>1</sup>
92	<u>My native soil</u> , and <u>in this pilgrim's weed</u> ,	92: <b>My native soil</b> = another odd and unexplained detail. <b>in this...weed</b> = ie. "dressed in this pilgrim's outfit ( <b>weed</b> )".
94	Began to travel through <u>unkennèd</u> lands. Much ground I <u>past</u> , and many soils I saw;	= strange or unfamiliar. <sup>1</sup> = travelled.
96	But when my feet in Millain-land I set, Such sumptuous triumphs daily there I saw As never in my life I <u>found the like</u> .	95-96: Carinus arrived in Milan in time to see some magnificent celebration taking place. = had ever come across or seen before.
98	I pray, good sir, what might <u>the occasion</u> be, That made the Millains make such mirth and glee?	= pronounced as <i>th' occasion</i> , in three syllables.
100	<b>Duke.</b> This solemn joy, whereof you now do speak,	99: note the line's extended alliteration.
102	Was not solèmnizèd, my friend, <u>in vain</u> ,	101-2: the festival Carinus had witnessed in Milan had not been held for no reason ( <b>in vain</b> ).
104	For at that time there came into the land The happiest <u>tidings</u> that <u>they</u> e'er did hear;	= news. = ie. the Milanese.
106	For news was brought upon that solemn day Unto our court, that <u>Ferdinandus</u> proud	= we finally learn the name of Carinus' father, the murdered King of Aragon!
108	Was slain himself, Carinus and his son Were banished both for <u>ever</u> from Aragon; And for these happy news that joy was made.	= pronounced <i>e'er</i> .
110	<b>Carin.</b> But what, <u>I pray</u> , did afterward become	= ie. "please tell me".
112	Of old Carinus with his banished son? What, hear you nothing of them all this while?	
114	<b>Duke.</b> Yes, <u>too-too-much</u> , the Millain Duke may say.	= "I have heard too much", ie. more than he wants to.
116	Alphonsus first by secret means did get To be a soldier in Belinus' wars,	
118	Wherein he did behave himself so well As that he got the Crown of Aragon;	= ie. of the crown.
120	Which being got, he <u>dispossessed</u> also The king Belinus which had <u>fostered him</u> .	= ie. the sense is, "taken him under his wing".
122	As for Carinus, he is dead and gone: I <u>would</u> his son were his <u>companiön</u> .	= wish. = ie. companion in death.
124	<b>Carin.</b> A blister build upon that traitor's tongue!	
126	But, <u>for</u> thy friendship which thou <u>shewed'st</u> me,	= ie. in return for. = ie. showed.

128 Take that of me, I frankly give it thee.  
130 [Carinus stabs the Duke of Millain, who dies.]  
132 Now will I haste to Naples with all speed,  
134 To see if Fortune will so favour me  
To view Alphonsus in his happy state.  
[Exit Carinus.]

### ACT IV, SCENE III.

*The Palace at Constantinople.*

*Enter Amurack, Crocon (King of Arabia),  
Faustus (King of Babylon), Fabius,  
with the Provost and Janissaries.*

1 **Amur.** Fabius, come hither: what is that thou sayest?  
2 What did god Mahound prophesy to us?  
Why do our viceroys wend unto the wars  
4 Before their king had notice of the same?  
What, do they think to play bob-fool with me?  
6 Or are they waxed so frolic now of late,  
Since that they had the leading of our bands,  
8 As that they think that mighty Amurack  
Dares do no other than to soothe them up? –  
10 Why speak'st thou not? What fond or frantic fit  
Did make those careless kings to venture it?  
12 **Fabius.** Pardon, dear lord; no frantic fit at all,

= from. = generously.<sup>1</sup>

131-3: Carinus' only wish is to see his son at the apex of his success.

**The Setting of Scene III:** Dickinson places the scene at a "camp of Amurack, near Naples", yet Amurack had clearly asserted he would never leave Turkey without Mahomet's consent, which he has not yet received.

**Entering Characters:** *Amurack* enters with two different deputy kings than we have met before, *Crocon* (King of Arabia) and *Faustus* (King of Babylon). The new monarchs represent all of Amurack's deputy kings who have brought their armies to Turkey to prepare for an empire-wide attack on Alphonsus in Italy.

*Fabius*, we remember, had been sent (along with Belinus and the Ottoman deputy kings Claramont and Arcastus) by Amurack to consult Mahomet, but alone was instructed by the godhead to return to the Sultan, to report on the god's prophesy.

Also accompanying the monarchs is a *Provost*, who serves as a military police officer, and the elite body of Turkish soldiers known as *Janissaries*.

**1-11 (below):** Fabius has just returned to Amurack and reported to him that Belinus, Claramont and Arcastus have taken their combined armies out of Turkey and into Italy to attack Alphonsus, as Mahomet had ordered them to do.

= here.

= "me", the royal "we".

= "my". = deputy kings. = go.

= "make a fool of me"; the verb *to bob* meant "to make a fool of".<sup>1</sup>

= grown so playful or merry recently; *frolic* can also be used to describe one who gleefully plays pranks.<sup>1</sup>  
= troops.

8-9: that they do not worry that Amurack will do anything other than to humour them (*soothe them up*), ie. acquiesce to their actions.

= foolish or mad seizure or attack.

= negligent, thoughtless. = risk.

14	No <u>frolic vain</u> , nor no <u>presumptuous mind</u> ,	= merry humour. = impertinent thinking. Note the line's double negative, a common feature of Elizabethan writing.
16	Did make your viceroys take these wars in hand; But forced they were by Mahound's prophecy To <u>do the same</u> , or else resolve to die.	= ie. do so.
18		
20	<i>Amur.</i> So, sir, I hear you, but can scarce believe That Mahomet would <u>charge</u> them <u>go before</u> , Against Alphonsus, with so small a <u>troop</u> ,	= order. = to go on ahead of or without Amurack. = body of soldiers or army.
22	Whose number far exceeds <u>King Xerxes' troop</u> .	22: Amurack exaggerates; the Sultan compares the size of Alphonsus' army to that of <i>Xerxes</i> , the Persian king who invaded Greece in 480-479 B.C. with an army which the ancient historian Herodotus asserted numbered in the millions. Collins and Dyce both note that the repetition of <i>troop</i> in line 22 was likely the result of a printer's error, stemming from the typographer's eye-catching <i>troop</i> from line 21. The original word here thus is lost, and so the editors suggest replacing line 22's <i>troop</i> with, for example, <i>host</i> .
24	<i>Fabius.</i> Yes, noble lord, and more than that, <u>he</u> said That, <u>ere that</u> you, with these your warlike men, Should come to bring your <u>succour</u> to the field, Belinus, Claramont, and Arcastus too	= ie. Mahomet. = before. = assistance.
26		
28	Should all be crowned with crowns of <u>beaten</u> gold, And borne with triumph round about their tents.	= hammered or worked, or purest. <sup>1</sup>
30	<i>Amur.</i> With triumph, man! Did Mahound tell them so? –	31ff: Amurack has a hard time believing Mahomet's ostensible prediction that Belinus and the deputy kings alone will defeat Alphonsus.
32	Provost, go <u>carry</u> Fabius <u>presently</u> Unto the <u>Marshalsea</u> ; there let him rest,	= conduct, escort. = now. = <i>Marshalsea</i> was the name of a London prison, hence used here to mean "prison" generally, <sup>14</sup> but the anachronism is still jarring; Collins is quotable here, as he explains that "these extraordinary violations of propriety are not uncommon in the Elizabethan dramatists" (p. 288). <sup>3</sup>
34	<u>Clapped sure and safe</u> in fetters all of steel, Till Amurack <u>discharge</u> him from the same;	= placed (promptly). <sup>1</sup> = ie. securely. = free.
36	<u>For be he sure</u> , unless it happen so As he did say Mahound did prophesy, By this my hand forthwith the slave shall die.	36-38: Fabius will be held prisoner until Amurack can confirm whether Fabius is telling him the truth; if he is lying, the Sultan will have him killed. <i>For be he sure</i> (line 36) = "for he may be certain", ie. he can count on it.
38		
40	[As Fabius is being <u>carried out</u> , enter a <i>Soldier</i> .]	= conducted.
42	<i>Sold.</i> Stay, Provost, stay, let Fabius alone: More fitteth now that every lusty lad Be buckling on his helmet, than to stand In carrying soldiers to the Marshalsea.	43-44: <i>More fitteth...helmet</i> = "it would be more appropriate at this time for every vigorous lad to be fastening on his helmet".
44		
46	<i>Amur.</i> Why, <u>what</u> art thou, that darest <u>once</u> presume	= who. = on this occasion.

48	For to gainsay that Amurack did bid?	48: "to contradict what Amurack ordered?"
50	<b>Sold.</b> I am, my Lord, the wretched'st man alive, Born underneath the planet of <u>mishap</u> ;	= misfortune; the Soldier alludes to the common conceit that the alignment of the planets and stars at one's birth determined his or her fortune.
52	<u>Erewhile</u> a soldier of Belinus' band, But now –	52: the Soldier served in Belinus' army. <b>Erewhile</b> = formerly.
54	<b>Amur.</b> What now?	55: ie. "and what are you now?"
56	<b>Sold.</b> The mirror of mishap;	57: "I am the image of misfortune."
58	Whose <u>captain is</u> slain, and all his army dead, Only excepted me, unhappy wretch.	= ie. "chief is", <sup>1</sup> referring to Belinus; should be pronounced as <b>captain's</b> .
60	<b>Amur.</b> What news is this? And is Belinus slain?	
62	Is this the crown which Mahomet did say He should with triumph wear upon his head?	
64	Is this the honour which that cursèd god Did prophesy should happen to them all?	
66	Oh Daedalus, <u>and</u> wert thou now alive, To fasten wings upon high Amurack, 68 Mahound should know, and that for certainty, That Turkish kings can <u>brook no injury</u> !	<b>66-69 (below)</b> : with a reference to the well-known mythological figure <b>Daedalus</b> , Amurack wishes he could fly up to Heaven so he could teach Mahomet a lesson for misleading the Sultan's kings! <b>Daedalus</b> = this famous Athenian craftsman and his son Icarus were kept in prison by King Minos of Crete. Daedalus fashioned wings for himself and his son out of feathers held together with wax, and the pair used the wings to fly away and escape Crete. Icarus, unfortunately, did not heed his father's advice not to fly too high, and the sun melted the young man's wings, causing him to plunge to his death in the sea. 66: <b>and</b> = if.  = tolerate no wrong or insult.
70	<b>Fabius.</b> Tush, tush, my lord; I wonder what you mean, 72 Thus to exclaim against high Mahomet: I'll <u>lay</u> my life that, <u>ere</u> this day be past, 74 You shall perceive <u>his tidings all be waste</u> .	= bet. = before. = "the Soldier's (so-called) news was only idle talk or gossip." <sup>1</sup>
76	<b>Amur.</b> " <u>We shall perceive</u> ", accursèd Fabius! Suffice it not that thou hast been the man 78 That first didst <u>beat those babbles in my brain</u> ,	76: the astounded Amurack repeats Fabius' words back to him, but employing the royal "we" for "I".  = "pound this foolish talk into my mind"; <b>beat</b> suggests a sense of force or insistence. Note also the line's pulsing alliteration.  = ie. feel even worse.
80	But that, to help me <u>forward in my grief</u> , Thou seekest to confirm so foul a lie?	80: "you still insist that what you reported is true?" Amurack accuses Fabius of lying to him when he reported that Belinus, Claramont and Arcastus would be wearing crowns in triumph, believing instead the survivor's more credible

<p>82 Go get thee hence, and tell <u>thy traitorous king</u>  84 [Amurack stabs Fabius, who dies.]</p>	<p>news that the allied armies were wiped out.  = ie. the deceased Belinus.</p>
<p>86 What gift you <u>had</u>, <u>which</u> did such tidings bring. –  88 And now, my lords, since nothing else will serve,  <u>Buckle</u> your helms, clap on your <u>steelèd coats</u>,  90 Mount on your steeds, take lances in your hands;  For Amurack doth mean this very day  Proud Mahomet with weapons to <u>assay</u>.</p>	<p>= received. = "(you) who".  = strap on. = armour.  = put to the test: Amurack is determined to discover if Mahomet has been lying all along. Clearly something is amiss, as Mahomet's words do not match the reality on the ground.</p>
	<p><b>Compression of Time:</b> in the previous scene, Mahomet instructed (1) Claramont and Arcastus to take their armies out of Turkey to challenge Alphonsus, and (2) Fabius to return to Amurack to give his report on the oracle. But you, the reader, may not have even picked up the fact that in practically <i>the exact same brief time</i> it would have taken Fabius to return to the palace from Mahomet's temple, Belinus and the deputy kings went to collect their armies, marched out of Turkey, met, fought, and were massacred by the Aragonese, after which the lone allied survivor made it all the way back to Constantinople to show himself to the Sultan.  This dramatic technique, called <i>Compression of Time</i>, permits events which take place off stage to occur with greater-than-possible rapidity than the events portrayed on-stage. The effect of the technique is to subtly speed up the action and increase the drama.</p>
<p>92 <b>Sold.</b> Mercy, high monarch! [i]t is no time now  94 To spend the day in such vain threatenings  Against our god, the mighty Mahomet.  <u>More fitteth</u> thee to place thy men-at-arms  96 In battle 'ray, for to <u>withstand</u> your foes,  98 Which now are drawing towards you with speed.</p>	<p>= it would be more appropriate.  = array, ie. formations. = resist, repulse.</p>
<p>[Drums sound <u>within</u>.]</p>	<p>99: Alphonsus' army approaches; <i>within</i> = off-stage.  The setting of the scene has subtly shifted to Italy, to where Amurack has delivered his army in response to the reported defeat of Belinus and the Ottoman allies.</p>
<p>100 Hark, how their drums with <u>dub-a-dub</u> do come!  102 To arms, high lord, and <u>set these trifles by</u>,  That you may set upon them valiantly.</p>	<p>= literary sound of drumming.  = put aside these minor issues.</p>
<p>104 <b>Amur.</b> And do they come? You kings of Turkey[-land],  106 Now is the time in which your warlike arms  Must raise your names above the starry skies.  108 Call to your mind your predecessors' acts,  Whose martial might, <u>this many a hundred year</u>,</p>	<p>= for many centuries; again, we must point out that the Ottoman empire was still in its infancy in this period, and its role as the principal bogeyman of the west was only just beginning.</p>

110	Did keep <u>those fearful dogs</u> in dread and awe, And let your weapons show Alphonsus <u>plain</u> ,	= ie. Europeans. = manifestly, clearly, openly. <sup>1</sup>
112	That though that they be clappèd up in <u>clay</u> ,	112: perhaps, "that even if Turkey's trees (representing family trees) are covered with <b>clay</b> (so as to keep them from sprouting new branches)", but the line is ultimately obscure; contemporary literature describe using <b>clay</b> to set grafts of branches from one tree into another.
114	Yet there be branches sprung up from those trees, In Turkish land, which <u>brook no injuries</u> .	113-4: "yet (they will learn that) there are lines of family (metaphoric branches) in Turkey which tolerate no insult or transgression. <b>brook no injuries</b> = Amurack just used this expression above in line 69. There is a noticeable increase in the number of repeated phrases as we head towards the last act, a seeming sign that Greene was in a hurry to finish the play.
116	Besides the same, remember with yourselves What foes we have; <u>not mighty Tamburlaine</u> ,	= ie. "we are not up against Tamburlaine", the towering 14th-15th century conqueror of much of Asia, and of course a character familiar to London audiences, thanks to the success of the pair of plays written about him by Christopher Marlowe in the 1580's.
118	Nor soldiers trainèd up amongst the wars, But <u>fearful boors</u> , <u>picked from their rural flock</u> ,	117-8: Alphonsus' army is not comprised of professional soldiers, but of timorous peasants ( <b>fearful boors</b> ), <sup>1</sup> recruited or impressed from the fields. <b>boors</b> = the quarto prints <b>bodies</b> here, emended as shown by Dyce. <b>picked...flock</b> = Amurack specifically describes the Aragonese as shepherds, dragged from their charges to fight for Alphonsus.
120	Which, till this time, were wholly ignorant What weapons meant, or <u>bloody Mars doth crave</u> .	119-120: the new recruits have not only lived their entire lives completely untrained in arms, but they have no idea of the violence and bloodshed war will bring to their numbers. <b>what bloody Mars doth crave</b> = "what wartime will demand from them"; the god of war is described as possessing a blood-lust, which the Aragonese will have to expect to satisfy.
	More would I say, but horses that be <u>free</u>	121-4: <b>horses...the same</b> = like horses that are keen ( <b>free</b> ) <sup>1</sup> to run or work, inspired and eager soldiers need no motivational speeches to push them forward to engage the enemy. Of course, Amurack's nod to this truism has not kept him from speaking himself at length to his soldiers.
122	Do need no spurs, and soldiers which themselves Long and desire to <u>buckle</u> with the foe,	= grapple, encounter in a fight.
124	Do need no words to <u>egg</u> them to the same.	= urge, incite.
126	<i>Enter Alphonsus,</i>	
128	<i>with a canopy carried over him by three lords, having over each corner a king's head crowned; with him, Albinus, Laelius, and Miles, with crowns on their heads, and their Soldiers.</i>	= over-hanging covering. <sup>1</sup> 128: set on the top of each of the poles at three of the canopy's corners is a human head wearing a crown.
132	Besides the same, behold <u>whereas</u> our foes Are marching towards us most speedily.	= where.
134	Courage, my lords, ours is the victory.	

136 **Alphon.** Thou pagan dog, how dar'st thou be so bold  
 To set thy foot within Alphonsus' land?  
 138 What, art thou come to view thy wretched kings,  
 Whose traitorous heads bedeck my tent so well?  
 140 Or else, thou hearing that on top thereof  
 There is a place left vacant, art thou come  
 142 To have thy head possess the highest seat?  
 If it be so, lie down, and this my sword  
 144 Shall presently that honour thee afford.  
 If not, pack hence, or by the heavens I vow,  
 146 Both thou and thine shall very soon perceive  
 That he that seeks to move my patiënce  
 148 Must yield his life to me for recompense.

= look at. = Belinus, Claramont and Arcastus.  
 = adorn.  
 = ie. on top of the canopy.  
 = immediately. = provide.  
 = depart.  
 = "you and your followers or soldiers".  
 = test.  
 = in repayment.

**The Heads on the Canopy:** the significance of Mahomet's prophesy ("That you with triumph should all crownèd be" Act IV.i.89) to the three consulting kings now becomes evident, and it turns out he was not lying after all: the kings' heads *are* crowned in triumph – only it is Alphonsus' triumph, not their own.

Oracles had been notoriously ambiguous since ancient times. When Croesus, the king of Lydia, asked the oracle of Pythia if he should attack the Persians, the oracle told him that if he did so, he would destroy a great empire. Croesus did attack, and an empire was destroyed – his own.

150 **Amur.** Why, proud Alphonsus, think'st thou Amurack,  
 Whose mighty force doth terrify the gods,  
 152 Can e'er be found to turn his heels, and fly  
 Away for fear from such a boy as thou?  
 154 No, no, although that Mars this mickle while  
 Hath fortified thy weak and feeble arm,  
 156 And Fortune oft hath viewed with friendly face  
 Thy armies marching victors from the field,  
 158 Yet at the presence of high Amurack  
 Fortune shall change, and Mars, that god of might,  
 160 Shall succour me, and leave Alphonsus quite.

= "for some time now".  
 = strengthened.  
 156-7: Fortune has been smiling on Alphonsus' army.  
 158: "yet now that Amurack is here".  
 = help. = abandon.

162 **Alphon.** Pagan, I say, thou greatly art deceived.  
 I clap up Fortune in a cage of gold,  
 164 To make her turn her wheel as I think best;  
 And as for Mars, whom you do say will change,

= imprison.  
 = ie. exchange whom he will favour.

166 He moping sits behind the kitchen-door,  
Prest at command of every scullion's mouth,  
 168 Who dares not stir, nor once to move a whit,  
 For fear Alphonsus then should stomach it.

166-169: Alphonsus portrays Mars as completely subservient to him, as if the god were the lowest menial working in a kitchen, ready (**Prest**) to answer to the command of every other kitchen-lackey (**scullion**),<sup>1</sup> and who is afraid to stir even the slightest bit (**nor once to move a whit**), out of fear that Alphonsus will take offense (**stomach it**).<sup>1</sup>

170 **Amur.** Blasphémous dog, I wonder that the earth  
 172 Doth cease from renting underneath thy feet,  
 To swallow up that cankered corpse of thine.  
 174 I muse that Jove can bridle so his ire  
 As, when he hears his brother so misused,  
 176 He can refrain from sending thunderbolts

= am amazed.  
 = refrains from opening up.  
 = corrupted body.  
 = wonder. = control, restrain.  
 = ie. Amurack, as a fellow-king. = mistreated.

178	By <u>thick and threefold</u> , to revenge his wrong. – Mars fight for me, and Fortune be my guide! And I'll be victor, <u>whatsome'er betide</u> .	= in large number, <sup>1</sup> another re-used expression. = whatever happens. <sup>1</sup>
180	<i>Alb.</i> Pray loud enough, lest that you pray in vain:	181: ie. "if you don't pray loudly enough, then your prayers will not be heard."
182	Perhaps God <u>Mars</u> and <u>Fortune</u> is asleep.	182: ie. "or maybe <i>Mars</i> and <i>Fortune</i> are sleeping, which is why they do not hear your prayers." <i>is</i> = understandably, Dyce emends <i>is</i> to <i>are</i> . 181-2: Collins notes the echo here of 1 Kings 18:27: " <i>And at noon Eliiah mocked them, and said, 'Cry loud, for he is a god: either he talketh or pursueth his enemies, or is in his journey, or it may be that he sleepeth, and must be awaked.'</i> " (Geneva Bible, 1560).
184	<i>Amur.</i> And Mars lies slumbering on his downy bed, Yet do not think but that the <u>power</u> we have,	= army.
186	<u>Without</u> the help of those celestial gods, Will be sufficient, yea, with <u>small ado</u> ,	= ie. even without.
188	Alphonsus' stragglng army to subdue.	= little fuss or trouble. <sup>1</sup>
190	<i>Lael.</i> <u>You had need as then</u> to call for Mahomet,  With hellish <u>hags</u> [for] to perform the same.	= "it will be necessary then for you".  191: "who will have to be the one to overcome us, with the help of his female demons ( <i>hags</i> ) from hell;" <i>hags</i> likely refers to the avenging spirits known as the Furies, who were said to reside in Hades. Note the easy mingling of contemporary Muslim and ancient pagan imagery.
192	<i>Faustus.</i> High Amurack, I wonder what you mean,	193-8: Faustus censures Amurack for wasting time talking instead of jumping into battle; but see the note at line 198 below.
194	That, when you may, with little <u>toil</u> or none Compel these dogs to <u>keep their tongues in peace</u> ,	= effort. = ie. keep quiet.
196	You let them stand still barking in this sort: Believe me, sovereign, I do blush to see	
198	These beggars' brats to chat so frolicly.	193-8: with his rebuke, Faustus misses the point of the verbal sparring between the Sultan and Alphonsus: ever since <i>Tamburlaine</i> had been produced, it was practically a requirement of Elizabethan stage-craft that opposing commanders engage in a long round of exchanging insults before entering into battle.
200	<i>Alphon.</i> How now, sir boy! Let Amurack himself, Or any <u>he</u> , the proudest of you all,	200-3: Alphonsus challenges Amurack, or any one of his soldiers (who is brave enough to do so), to meet him in single combat. <i>he</i> = ie. man.
202	But offer once for to unsheath his sword, If that he dares, for all the power you have.	
204	<i>Amur.</i> What, <u>dar'st thou us?</u> Myself will <u>venture it</u> . –	= ie. "are you challenging me?" = risk it, take a chance.
206	To arms, my mates!	206: Amurack's acceptance of Alphonsus' challenge to fight him one-on-one is not a substitute for an all-in fight between the two sides.
208	<i>Amurack draws his sword; Alphonsus and all the other kings draw theirs.</i>	
210	<i>Alarum: Amurack and his company fly, followed by Alphonsus and his company.</i>	= flee.

END OF ACT IV.

## ACT V.

### PROLOGUE.

*Alarum.*  
*Enter Venus.*

1 *Venus.* Fierce is the fight, and bloody is the broil.

2 No sooner had the roaring cannon shot

Spit forth the venom of their fired paunch,

4 And with their pellets sent such troops of souls

6 Down to the bottom of the dark Avern,  
As that it covered all the Stygian fields;

8 But, on a sudden, all the men-at-arms,  
Which mounted were on lusty coursers' backs,  
Did rush together with so great a noise  
10 As that I thought the giants one time more  
Did scale the heavens, as erst they did before.

12 Long time Dame Fortune tempered so her wheel  
As that there was no vantage to be seen  
14 On any side, but equal was the gain;  
But at the length, so God and Fates decreed,  
16 Alphonsus was the victor of the field,  
And Amurack became his prisoner;  
18 Who so remained, until his daughter came,  
And by her marrying, did his pardon frame.

20

[*Exit Venus.*]

### ACT V, SCENE I.

*A Battlefield near Naples.*

*Alarum:*  
*Amurack flies, followed by Alphonsus,*  
*who takes him prisoner and carries him in.*

**Entering Character:** *Venus* describes the battle begun at the end of the previous scene between Alphonsus and Amurack as one that hung in the balance for a lengthy period of time before settling finally in Alphonsus' favour.

= battle.<sup>2</sup>

= the expression *cannon shot* is a noun, usually referring strictly to the ammunition fired by a cannon, or the discharging itself of a cannon;<sup>1</sup> but occasionally, as here, *cannot shot* seems to be used to mean simply "cannon".

= out. = the cannons' lit stomachs or guts, a metaphor.

4: *pellets* = cannonballs, missiles.<sup>1</sup>

*such* = so many.

*troops* = bands or companies, with obvious military application.

= ie. hell; see the note at Act I.i.98.

6: that the numerous newly-arrived souls of line 4 completely filled up Hades (*the Stygian fields*, see the note at Act II.i.1).

*it* = ie. they.

= suddenly.

= upon the backs of vigorous chargers.<sup>2</sup>

10-11: allusion to the Battle of the Giants, in which a race of monsters born from Mother Earth, called the *Giants*, sought, but failed, to overthrow the Olympian gods.

12-14: for a long time, *Fortune* so modulated the turning of her wheel that neither side gained the upper hand.

= ie. Amurack's. = procure, bring about.<sup>1</sup>

*Alarum.*  
*As Crocon and Faustus are flying,*  
*enter Fausta and Iphigina, with their army,*  
*meeting them.*

1 **Fausta.** You Turkish kings, what sudden flight is this?  
2 What means the men, which for their valiant prowess  
Were dreaded erst clean through the triple world,

4 Thus cowardly to turn their backs and fly?  
What froward fortune happened on your side?  
6 I hope your king in safety doth abide?

8 **Crocon.** Ay, noble madam, Amurack doth live,  
And long I hope he shall enjoy his life;  
10 But yet I fear, unless more succour come,  
12 We shall both lose our King and sovereign.

14 **Fausta.** How so, King Crocon? Dost thou speak in jest,  
To prove if Fausta would lament his death?  
Or else hath any thing happed him amiss?  
16 Speak quickly, Crocon, what the cause might be,  
That thou dost utter forth these words to me.

18 **Crocon.** Then, worthy Fausta, know that Amurack,  
20 Our mighty king, and your approved spouse,  
22 Pricked with desire of everlasting fame,  
As he was pressing in the thickest ranks

Of Aragonians, was, with much ado,

24 At length took prisoner by Alphonsus' hands.  
So that, unless you succour soon do bring,  
26 You lose your spouse, and we shall want our king.

28 **Iphig.** O hapless hap, oh dire and cruël fate!  
What injury hath Amurack, my sire,  
30 Done to the gods, which now I know are wrath,  
Although unjustly and without a cause?

32 For well I wot, not any other king,  
Which now doth live, or since the world begun  
34 Did sway a sceptre, had a greater care  
To please the gods than mighty Amurack.

36 And for to quite our father's great good will,

Seek they thus basely all his fame to spill?

38 **Fausta.** Iphigina, leave off these woeful tunes:  
40 It is not words can cure and ease this wound,  
But warlike swords; not tears, but sturdy spears.  
42 High Amurack is prisoner to our foes:

**Entering Characters:** next, Amurack's deputy kings run across the stage, right into the army of Amazons led by **Fausta** and **Iphigina**, who enter from the stage's other side.

**Scene I:** you may wish to note how all but one of the speeches in this brief scene end in rhyming couplets.

= who.

3: "were previously feared throughout the entire world".  
**clean** = wholly.

= perverse.

= ie. Amurack. = remain.

= aid.

= ie. "the two of us shall lose".

= test.

= "gone wrong for him".

= esteemed.<sup>1</sup>

= inspired or incited.

= pushing forward, ie. fighting.

23: **Aragonians** = both **Aragonese** and **Aragonians** were used in the 16th century to describe people from Aragon.  
**ado** = difficulty.<sup>1</sup>

= lose.<sup>1</sup>

= unlucky luck or accident of fortune.<sup>1</sup>

= angry; a rare use of **wrath** as an adjective.

32-35: no ruler was ever more pious than Amurack.

**wot** = know.

= in order to repay. = ie. "my"; Iphigina employs the royal "we".

37: "are the gods trying to dishonourably (**basely**)<sup>1</sup> destroy (**spill**) his reputation (**fame**)?"

= cease. = mournful, sorrowful.

40-41: "words cannot save Amurack now; we are going to have to fight!"

44 What then? Think you that our Amázonës,  
Joined with the forces of the Turkish troop,  
Are not sufficient for to set him free?  
46 Yes, daughter, yes, I mean not for to sleep,  
Until he's free, or we him company keep. –  
48 March on, my mates.

50 [Exeunt.]

## ACT V, SCENE II.

*Another Part of the Battlefield.*

*Alarum:*

*Alphonsus flies, followed by Iphigina.*

1 **Iphig.** How now, Alphonsus! You which never yet  
2 Could meet your equal in the feats of arms,  
How haps it now that in such sudden sort  
4 You fly the presence of a silly maid?  
What, have you found mine arm of such a force  
6 As that you think your body over-weak  
For to withstand the fury of my blows?  
8 Or do you else disdain to fight with me,  
For staining of your high nobility?

10

12 **Alphon.** No, dainty dame, I would not have thee think  
That ever thou or any other wight  
Shall live to see Alphonsus fly the field  
14 From any king or keiser whosome'er:  
First will I die in thickest of my foe,  
16 Before I will disbase mine honour so.  
Nor do I scorn, thou goddess, for to stain  
18 My proress with thee, although it be a shame  
For knights to combat with the female sect:  
20 But love, sweet mouse, hath so benumbed my wit,  
That, though I would, I must refrain from it.

22

24 **Iphig.** I thought as much when first I came to wars;  
Your noble acts were fitter to be writ

Within the tables of Dame Venus' son,

26 Than in God Mars his warlike registers:

Whenas your lords are hacking helms abroad,

28 And make their spears to shiver in the air,

Your mind is busied in fond Cupid's toys.

= "to", as always.

= ie. "or until we too have been captured (by Alphonsus)."  
*company* = a disyllable here: *COMP*-*'ny*.

**Entering Characters:** a surprising development: *Alphonsus* is running away from *Iphigina*!

= who.

= happens. = manner.  
= weak, powerless.<sup>1</sup>

= ie. "is too weak".

8-9: Iphigina alludes to a medieval notion that a warrior should avoid fighting one-on-one with an opponent of lower status; the idea is that the reputation of the higher-ranking combatant will suffer for seemingly taking advantage of a lesser opponent – especially a woman!

= person.

= flee the battlefield.

= ie. whosoever.

= debase.

= to blemish or damage.<sup>1</sup>

= (reputation for) valour or manliness.<sup>1</sup> = disgrace.<sup>1</sup>

= sex.

= common term of endearment.

= ie. "even if I wanted to (oppose you)".

23-26: Iphigina recognized that Alphonsus has been acting more like a lover than a warrior.

*writ* = written, ie. recorded.

25: in Cupid's writing tablet or notebook (*tables*);<sup>2</sup> the cherubic god of love Cupid was the *son* of *Venus*.

= records, book of accounts.

27: "while your own nobles are roaming around (*abroad*) slashing at (their opponents') helmets".

28: ie. and are causing their spears to splinter (*shiver*)<sup>1</sup> in close combat.

= foolish. = trifles.

30	Come on, <u>i'faith</u> , I'll teach you <u>for to</u> know, We came to fight, and not to love, <u>I trow</u> .	= truly. = ie. to. = "I trust" or "I believe"; but the expression really has no significance; rather, it is an "expletive", used to fill out the line of verse. <sup>1</sup>
32	<b>Alphon.</b> Nay, <u>virgin</u> , <u>stay</u> . And if thou wilt <u>vouchsafe</u>	= maiden. = hold on. = deign.
34	To entertain Alphonsus' <u>simple</u> suit, Thou shalt ere long be <u>monarch of the world</u> :	= "to accept my sincere ( <i>simple</i> ) <sup>1</sup> courtship". = ie. as Alphonsus' empress.
36	All christened kings, with all your pagan dogs,  Shall <u>bend their knees</u> unto Iphigina;	36: ie. "all kings, Christian or not": the line's first half is practically the play's only substantive reference to Christianity, while its second half is gratuitous in its insult. <i>christened</i> = baptized.  = ie. bow, take a knee.
38	<u>The Indian soil</u> shall be thine at command,  Where every step thou settest on the ground Shall be receivèd on the golden mines;	= ie. India; Elizabethan stage-adventurers, taking their cue from <i>Tamburlaine</i> , regularly included <i>India</i> in their litany of conquered, or expected-to-be conquered, locales, whether or not the historical record supported such assertions.  39-40: Elizabethan dramatists frequently alluded to India's supposed fabulous material wealth.
40	Rich <u>Pactolus</u> , that river of <u>account</u> ,	41-42: the river <i>Pactolus</i> flows from <i>Mt. Tmolus</i> in the ancient state of Lydia, located in today's far-western Turkey. Pactolus was thought to carry a great deal of gold dust in its currents. <sup>14</sup>
42	Which doth descend from top of <u>Tmolus Mount</u> ,	<i>account</i> = worth, importance. <sup>1</sup> <i>Tmolus</i> = the quarto prints <i>Tiuole</i> , emended by Dyce as shown.
44	Shall be thine own, and all the world beside, If you will grant to be Alphonsus' bride.	
46	<b>Iphig.</b> Alphonsus' bride? Nay, villain, do not think	= control, dominate.
48	That fame or riches can so <u>rule</u> my thoughts	= ie. Alphonsus, in the third person.
50	As for to make me love and fancy <u>him</u> Whom I do hate, and in such <u>sort</u> despise, <u>As</u> if my death could bring <u>to pass</u> his <u>bane</u> , I would not long from <u>Pluto's port</u> <u>remain</u> .	= manner, a way. = that. = about. = destruction. 51: ie. "then I would not delay dying." <i>Pluto' port</i> = ie. Hades. <i>remain</i> = stay away.
52	<b>Alphon.</b> Nay then, proud peacock, since thou art so <u>stout</u>	= arrogant.
54	As that <u>entreaty</u> will not <u>move</u> thy mind	= ie. "(even my) begging (you)". = stir or excite. <sup>1</sup>
56	For to consent to be my wedded spouse, Thou shalt, in spite of gods and Fortune too, Serve high Alphonsus as a concubine.	
58	<b>Iphig.</b> I'll rather die then ever that shall <u>hap</u> .	= happen.
60	<b>Alphon.</b> And thou shalt die unless it come to pass.	
62	<i>[Alphonsus and Iphigina fight.</i>	
64	<i>Iphigina flies, followed by Alphonsus.]</i>	63-64: we may assume Alphonsus could kill Iphigina if he wanted to, but it would not reflect well on him to slay a woman. He may still be holding out hope that she will change her mind toward him.

## ACT V, SCENE III.

*The Camp of Alphonsus.*

*Alarum.*

*Enter Alphonsus with his rapier, Albinus, Laelius, Miles, with their soldiers.*

*Amurack, Fausta, Iphigina, Crocon and Faustus, all bound, with their hands behind them.*

*Amurack looks angrily on Fausta.*

*Enter Medea.*

1 *Medea.* Nay, Amurack, this is no time to jar,  
2 Although thy wife did, in her frantic mood,  
Use speeches which might better have been spared,  
4 Yet do thou not judge the same time to be  
A season to requite that injury.

6 More fitteth thee, with all the wit thou hast,  
To call to mind which way thou mayst release  
8 Thyself, thy wife, and fair Iphigina,  
Forth of the power of stout Alphonsus' hands.  
10 For, well I wot, since first you breathèd breath,  
You never were so nigh the snares of death.  
12 Now, Amurack, your high and kingly seat,  
Your royal sceptre, and your stately crown,  
14 Your mighty country, and your men-at-arms,  
Be conquered all, and can no succour bring.  
16 Put, then, no trust in these same paltry toys,

18 But call to mind that thou a prisoner art,  
Clapped up in chains, whose life and death depends  
Upon the hands of thy most mortal foe.  
20 Then take thou heed, that whatsome'er he say,  
Thou doest not once presume for to gainsay.

22 *Amur.* Away, you fool! Think you your cursèd charms  
24 Can bridle so the mind of Amurack  
As that he will stand croaching to his foe?

**Entering Characters:** *Alphonsus* victory is complete: the Aragonese have crushed not only the Turkish army of Amurack, but also the Amazons led by Fausta and Iphigina. *rapier* = a sharp-pointed, thin sword, more suitable for fencing and self-defense than for battle.<sup>1</sup>

**Entering Characters:** all of the defeated leaders enter the stage bound.

**Entering Character:** as *Medea* enters the stage, she observes that *Amurack* is frowning on his wife, and responds accordingly.

= quarrel, be in a state of disharmony.

= insane, mad.

3: say things that would better have been left unsaid.

4-5: "yet do not think this is the right time (*season*) to get revenge on her for her transgression." Dyce emends *the* to *this*, but *the* was acceptable current usage.

6-9: "it would be more appropriate for you, with all your cleverness, to figure out a way to free yourself and your family from out of Alphonsus' grip."

= know. = ie. "since you were first born."

= near.

= help.

= unimportant trifles; Medea means that in this situation, none of Amurack's trappings of office can do him any good.

= remember.

= ie. "(and) your".

= ie. Alphonsus.

21: "you do not be so arrogant as to contradict him."

= restrain, reign in.

= bowing down; *croaching* was an alternate form of *crouching*, to which the word is usually emended.

26	No, no, be sure that, if <u>that beggar's brat</u>	= ie. Alphonsus, the son of Carinus, whom he refers to in his present condition as a beggar.
28	Do dare but once to contrary my will, I'll make him soon in heart for to repent That e'er such words 'gainst Amurack he spent.	27-29: Amurack is stubborn, not yet ready to accept that his position is irredeemable. Note the rare use of <b>contrary</b> as a verb, both here and at line 43 below.
30	<b>Medea.</b> Then, since thou dost disdain my good advice,	= "things turn out badly for you".
32	Look to thyself, and if <u>you fare amiss</u> ,	= ie. safely.
34	Remember that Medea counsel gave, Which might you <u>safe</u> from all those perils save. –	= ie. "you are no better off than your husband".
36	But, Fausta, you, <u>as well you have begun</u> ,	= ie. "my".
38	Beware you follow still <u>your friend's</u> advice: If that Alphonsus do desire of thee	= contradict.
40	To have your daughter for his wedded spouse, Beware you do not once the same <u>gainsay</u> ,	= lest.
42	<u>Unless</u> with death he do your rashness pay.	= person.
44	<b>Fausta.</b> No, worthy <u>wight</u> ; first Fausta means to die Before Alphonsus she will <u>contrary</u> .	= oppose.
46	<b>Medea.</b> Why, then, farewell. – But you, Iphigina, Beware you do not <u>over-squeamish wax</u> ,	= grow too finicky or fussy.
48	<u>Whenas</u> your mother giveth her consent.	= when.
50	<b>Iphig.</b> The gods forbid that e'er I should gainsay That which Medea bids me to obey.	49-50: Iphigina finally seems prepared to relent, and follow Medea's advice.
52	[Exit Medea.]	
54	[Alphonsus, who all this while has been talking to Albinus, rises up out of his chair.]	
56	<b>Alphon.</b> Now, Amurack, the proud blasphemous dogs, For so you <u>termed</u> us, which did brawl and rail Against God <u>Mars</u> , and fickle <u>Fortune's</u> wheel,	58: <b>termed</b> = called. 58-59: <b>which did...wheel</b> = ie. "you, Amurack, who did so raise a clamour and complain against Mars and Fortune". <sup>1</sup> Actually, neither side has denounced the pagan deities; Amurack only made the point that sooner or later, <b>Mars</b> and <b>Fortune</b> would come to treat Alphonsus with disfavour.
60	Have <u>got</u> the goal for all your solemn prayers. Yourself are <u>prisoner</u> , which as then did think	= achieved; Amurack is ironic. = a disyllable here: <i>PRIS-'ner</i> .
62	That all the forces of the triple world Were insufficient to fulfill <u>the same</u> .	= ie. the prayers of line 60.
64	How like you this? Is Fortune of such might, Or hath God Mars such force or power divine,	
66	As that he can, with all the power he hath, Set thee and thine forth of Alphonsus hands?	67: ie. "free you and your family from out of my hands?"
68	I do not think but that your hope's so small <u>As that</u> you would with very willing mind	= ie. that.
70	Yield for my spouse the fair Iphigina, <u>On that condition</u> , that without delay	= ie. if Amurack consents to Alphonsus marrying Iphigina.
72	Fausta and you may <u>scot-free</u> scape away.	= without suffering any consequences; the original form of this still-common expression was <b>shot-free</b> , which can be traced back to Old English.

74 **Amur.** What, think'st thou, villain, that high Amurack  
Bears such a mind as, for the fear of death,

76 He'll yield his daughter, yea, his only joy,  
Into the hands of such a dunghill knight?

78 No, traitor, no; for [though] as now I lie  
Clapped up in irons and with bolts of steel,  
80 Yet do there lurk within the Turkish soil

Such troops of soldiers, that with small ado,  
82 They'll set me scot-free from your men and you,

84 **Alphon.** "Villain," sayest thou? "Traitor" and  
"dunghill knight"?

Now, by the heavens, since that thou dost deny  
86 For to fulfill that which in gentle wise  
Alphonsus craves, both thou and all thy train  
88 Shall with your lives requite that injury. –  
Albinus, lay hold of Amurack,  
90 And carry him to prison presently,  
There to remain until I do return  
92 Into my tent; for, by high Jove, I vow,  
Unless he wax more calmer out of hand,

94 His head amongst his fellow-kings shall stand.

96 **Amur.** No, villain, think not that the fear of death  
Shall make me calmer while I draw my breath.

98

[Amurack exits in custody of Albinus.]

100

102 **Alphon.** Now, Laelius, take you Iphigina,  
Her mother Fausta, with these other kings,  
And put them into prisons severally;  
104 For Amurack's stout stomach shall undo  
Both he himself and all his other crew,

106

108 **Fausta.** [Kneeling]  
O sacred prince, if that the salt-brine tears,  
Distilling down poor Fausta's withered cheeks,  
110 Can mollify the hardness of your heart,  
Lessen this judgment, which thou in thy rage  
112 Hast given on thy luckless prisoners.

114 **Alphon.** Woman, away! My word is gone and past;  
Now, if I would, I cannot call it back.  
116 You might have yielded at my first demand,  
And then you need[ed] not to fear this hap. –

118

[Fausta rises.]

120

Laelius, make haste, and go thou presently

75: ie. "possesses such a (weak and cowardly) mind, that, out of fear of dying".

= quite an insult; **dunghill**, meaning "base" or "worthless", was commonly used as an adjective.

= ie. there do.

81-82: with the end of the play in sight, Greene, perhaps revealing an over-eagerness to be done with it, increasingly re-uses expressions from earlier in the play, and even from this Act, such as **with...ado** and **scot-free**.

**small ado** = little trouble or fuss.

85-87: **since...craves** = "since you won't give me that which I am asking for politely".

= followers.

= repay. = insult.

= seize.

= grow. = such double-comparatives were not uncommon in the era's writing.

94: ie. Amurack's own severed head shall join those of his fellow kings on Alphonsus' canopy.

= ie. "so long as I live."

= ie. in individual cells.

= proud temper. = bring to ruin.

= judicial decision.<sup>1</sup>

= "even if I wanted to".

= unfortunate outcome.

116-7: there has been no indication in the play that Fausta (unlike Iphigina) had ever met Alphonsus before this moment.

= immediately.

122	For to fulfill that I commanded thee.	
124	<b>Iphig.</b> [ <i>Kneeling</i> ] Mighty Alphonsus, since my mother's suit	
126	Is so rejected that <u>in any case</u>	= no matter what.
128	You will not grant us pardon for her sake, I now will <u>try</u> if that my woeful prayers May plead for pity at your grace's feet.	= test, determine.
130	When first you did, <u>amongst the thickest ranks</u> ,	= in the heaviest fighting.
132	All clad in glittering arms encounter me, You know yourself what love you did <u>protest</u>	= profess.
134	You then did bear unto Iphigina. Then for that love, if any love you had, Revoke this sentence, which is <u>too-too</u> bad.	= overly.
136		
138	<b>Alphon.</b> No, damsel; he that will not when he <u>may</u> , When he desires shall surely purchase <u>nay</u> :	137-8: proverbial: he that refuses an offer made the first time can expect to be turned down when he, changing his mind, asks for the thing later. The expression was usually written in a way so as to rhyme <i>may</i> with <i>nay</i> , e.g. " <i>he that wyl not when he may, when he wold he shall haue nay</i> " (from John Heywood's 1555 <i>Epigrammes</i> , the likely original source of the proverb).
140		
142	If that you had, when first I <u>proffer</u> made, Yielded to me, <u>mark</u> , what I promised you I would have done; but since you did deny, Look for denial at Alphonsus' hands.	= ie. "(my) offer". = listen.
144		
146	<i>[Iphigina rises up and stands aside. Albinus re-enters; Alphonsus talk with Albinus.]</i>	= stage direction added by editor: Albinus' return from having escorted Amurack to a prison-cell is not indicated in the quarto.
148	<i>Enter Carinus in pilgrim's apparel.</i>	
150	<b>Carin.</b> [ <i>Aside</i> ] O friendly Fortune, now thou <u>shew'st</u> thy power In raising up my son from <u>banished state</u>	= ie. showest, but a monosyllable. = (his) condition of exile.
152	Unto the top of thy most mighty wheel! – But <u>what be these</u> , which at his sacred feet	= "who are these people".
154	Do seem to plead for mercy at his hands? I'll go and <u>sift this matter to the full</u> . –	= investigate this matter thoroughly through questioning. <sup>1</sup>
156		
158	<i>[Carinus goes toward Alphonsus, and speaks to one of his soldiers.]</i>	
160	Sir Knight, <u>and</u> may a pilgrim be so bold To put your person to such <u>mickle pain</u>	= if. 161: ie. "as to put you to great trouble ( <i>mickle pain</i> )".
162	For to inform me what great king is this, And <u>what</u> these be, which, in such woeful <u>sort</u> ,	= who. = manner.
164	Do seem to seek for mercy at his hands?	
166	<b>Soldier.</b> Pilgrim, the king that sits on stately throne Is called Alphonsus; and this matron <u>hight</u>	= is called.
168	Fausta, the wife to Amurack the Turk; That is their daughter, fair Iphigina;	
170	Both which, together with the Turk himself,	

172	He did take prisoners in a battle fought.	
174	[ <i>Alphonsus spies out Carinus.</i> ]	
176	<b>Alphon.</b> And can the gods be found so kind to me As that Carinus now I do <u>espy</u> ?	= perceive.
178	'Tis he indeed. – Come on, Albinus: The mighty conquest which I have achieved, And victories the which I <u>oft</u> have won,	= often.
180	Bring not such pleasure to Alphonsus' heart As now my father's presence doth impart.	
182	[ <i>Alphonsus and Albinus go toward Carinus; Alphonsus stands looking on him.</i> ]	
186	<b>Carin.</b> What, ne'er a word, Alphonsus? art thou dumb? Or doth my presence so perturb thy mind	
188	That, for because I come <u>in pilgrim's weed</u> , You think each word which you do spend to me	= dressed like a pilgrim; <b>weed</b> = outfit, costume.
190	A great disgrace unto your name to be? Why speak'st thou not? if that my place you crave,	
192	I will be gone, and you my place shall have.	
194	<b>Alphon.</b> Nay, father, stay; the gods of Heaven forbid That e'er Alphonsus should desire or wish	
196	To <u>have his absence</u> whom he doth account  To be the [very] <u>lodestone</u> of his life!	= desire the absence of the man.  197: ie. to be the man he follows closely; a <b>lodestone</b> is a magnet. Dickinson prefers to emend this to <b>loadstar</b> , which refers to something or someone that acts as a guiding force, but there is evidence that <b>lodestone</b> was used in this same context elsewhere in contemporary literature.
198	What, though the Fates and Fortune, both in one, Have been content to <u>call</u> your loving son	= ie. raise.
200	From beggar's state unto this princely seat, Should I, therefore, disdain my aged sire?	
202	No, first both crown and life I will detest, Before such <u>venom</u> breed within my breast.	= poisonous feelings.
204	What <u>erst</u> I did, the sudden joy I took To see Carinus in such happy state, Did make me do, and nothing else at all, High Jove himself do I to witness call.	204-6: awkwardly, "that thing I just did (ie. stand before you mutely), I did because of the joy I felt at seeing you, and nothing else".
208	<b>Carin.</b> These words are vain; I knew as much before.	209: Alphonsus' explanation is unnecessary: Carinus admits he was only joshing his son.
210	But yet, Alphonsus, I <u>must wonder needs</u> That you, whose years are prone to <u>Cupid's snares</u> ,	= necessarily wonder. 211: that Alphonsus, who is of an age when he is liable to fall in love. <b>Cupid's snares</b> = ie. getting caught in the traps of the god of love.
212	Can <u>suffer</u> such a goddess as <u>this dame</u> Thus for to shed such <u>store</u> of crystal tears.	= permit. = ie. Iphigina. = a great supply.
214	Believe me, son, although my years be <u>spent</u> , Her sighs and sobs in <u>twain</u> my heart do <u>rent</u> .	= used up. = two. = tear.

216	<i>Alphon.</i> Like power, dear father, had she over me,	= a similar.
218	Until <u>for</u> love I, looking to receive	= "in return (for my)"
	Love back again, not only was denied,	
220	But also taunted in most spiteful <u>sort</u> :	= manner.
	Which made me loathe that which I erst did love,	221: both Iphigina's rejection and taunting of Alphonsus
222	As she herself, with all her friends, shall prove.	drove him to hate her.
224	<i>Carin.</i> How now, Alphonsus! You which have so long	
	Been trainèd up in <u>bloody broils of Mars</u> ,	= ie. warfare.
226	What, know you not that castles are not won	226-8: a common metaphor: winning a woman is like con-
	At first assault, and women are not wooed	quering a fortress; neither should be expected to be won
228	When first their suitors <u>proffer</u> love to them?	over easily on the first attempt.
		<i>proffer</i> = offer.
	As for my part, I should <u>account</u> that maid	= consider.
230	A <u>wanton</u> wench, <u>unconstant</u> , <u>lewd</u> and <u>light</u> ,	230: <i>wanton</i> , <i>lewd</i> and <i>light</i> all mean "promiscuous"
		and "unchaste"; <i>unconstant</i> = fickle or unfaithful.
	That yields the field before she venture fight;	231: Carinus returns to his military metaphor in his
		description here of a woman who throws herself at a man in
		response to only his first attempt to woo her.
232	Especially unto her mortal foe,	
	As you were then unto Iphigina.	
234	But, for because I see you fitter are	
	To <u>enter lists</u> and combat with your foes	= engage in tournament games, ie. martial contests, as a
236	Then court fair ladies in God Cupid's tents,	Medieval knight might take part in.
	Carinus means your spokesman for to be,	
238	And if that she consent, you shall agree.	
240	<i>Alphon.</i> What you command, Alphonsus must not <u>fly</u> ,	= run away from, ie. contradict or disobey.
	Though <u>otherwise</u> perhaps he would deny.	= in other circumstances, ie. if it were anyone else telling
		him what to do.
242		= stop. <sup>1</sup>
	<i>Carin.</i> Then, dainty damsel, <u>stint</u> these trickling tears,	
244	Cease sighs and sobs, yea, make a merry cheer:	= obtained.
	Your pardon is already <u>purchasèd</u> ,	246: "so long as you are not too fastidious or overly scru-
246	So that you be not over-curious	pulous." <sup>1,4</sup>
	In granting to Alphonsus' just demand.	
248		249: <i>no curiuser...degree</i> = "I will be no fussier than is
	<i>Iphig.</i> Thanks, mighty prince: no curiuser I'll be	appropriate for a girl of my rank"; Iphigina reserves the right
250	Then doth become a maid of my degree.	to keep up appearances at least to a mild degree, and behave
		as would be expected of a princess, ie. not jumping too
		eagerly into the arms of her captor.
252	<i>Carin.</i> The gods forbid that e'er Carinus tongue	
	Should go about to make a maid consent	= propriety or chastity would not allow her to do. <sup>2</sup>
254	Unto the thing which <u>modesty denies</u> .	
	That which I ask is neither hurt to thee,	
256	Danger to parents, nor disgrace to friends,	
	But good and honest, and will profit bring	
258	To thee and those <u>which lean unto that thing</u> .	= "who will look for support from or will rely on this thing
		that I am about to propose" (ie. a union between Alphonsus
		and Iphigina).
	And that is this: since first Alphonsus' eyes	
260	Did hap to glance upon your heavenly <u>hue</u> ,	= appearance.

262 And saw the rare perfection of the same,  
 He hath desired to become your spouse:  
 Now, if you will unto the same agree,  
 264 I dare assure you that you shall be free.

266 **Iphig.** Pardon, dear lord; the world goes very hard  
 When womenkind are forcèd for to woo.  
 268 If that your son had lovèd me so well,  
 Why did he not inform me of the same?  
 270

**Carin.** Why did he not? what, have you clean forgot  
 272 What ample proffers he did make to you,  
 When, hand to hand, he did encounter you?  
 274

**Iphig.** No, worthy sir, I have not it forgot;  
 276 But Cupid cannot enter in the breast  
 Where Mars before had took possession.  
 278 That was no time to talk of Venus' games  
 When all our fellows were pressed in the wars.  
 280

**Carin.** Well, let that pass: now canst thou be content  
 282 To love Alphonsus, and become his spouse?

284 **Iphig.** Ay, if the high Alphonsus could vouchsafe  
 To entertain me as his wedded spouse.  
 286

**Alphon.** If that he could! what, dost thou doubt of that?  
 288 Jason did jet whenas he had obtained  
 The golden fleece by wise Medea's art;

290 The Greeks rejoicèd when they had subdued  
 The famous bulwarks of most stately Troy;  
 292 But all their mirth was nothing in respect  
 Of this my joy, since that I now have got  
 294 That which I long desired in my heart.

296 **Carin.** But what says Fausta to her daughter's choice?

298 **Fausta.** Fausta doth say, the gods have been her friends,  
 To let her live to see Iphigina

= ie. "the world has become a very difficult place (to live in)", a common expression.  
 = ie. to court men (instead, as is more appropriate, of the other way around).  
 = completely.  
 = extensive (ie. repeated) offers.<sup>1</sup>  
 = ie. in combat; we may note that the details of Alphonsus' earlier meeting with Iphigina were never actually related to Carinus.

276-7: one cannot be thinking of love when one is in the midst of battle.

= companions. = drafted to join with a campaigning army.

= deign.  
 = welcome, accept.

288-289: Jason exulted (*did jet, jet* being a verb) after he captured the *golden fleece* with the help of Medea's magic. We may note that *jet* was typically used to describe a boastful strut.

The reference is to the famous story of Jason and his companions, known as the Argonauts, who sailed to Colchis on the eastern shore of the Black Sea to find the Golden Fleece. Unfortunately, the Fleece was protected by a deadly dragon. Luckily, the witch Medea, daughter of the local king, having fallen in love with Jason, gave him a magic ointment which protected him from the dragon's lethal fire, allowing him to slay the monster.

The mentioning of *Medea* here is interesting, because a sorceress named Medea is a character in our play. As noted earlier, Dyce felt it important enough to point out, in a footnote to his cast of characters, that the two are distinct.

*art* = cunning.<sup>1</sup>

= conquered.  
 = fortifications, ie. walls.

300	Bestowèd so unto her heart's content.	
302	<b>Alphon.</b> Thanks, mighty empress, for your <u>gentleness</u> ;	= affability (in this matter).
304	And, if Alphonsus can at any time With all his power <u>requite</u> this courtesy,	= repay.
306	You shall perceive how kindly he doth take Your <u>forwardness</u> in this <u>his happy chance</u> .	306: <i>forwardness</i> = eagerness. <i>his happy chance</i> = ie. fortunate thing which has happened to him.
308	<b>Carin.</b> Albinus, go call forth Amurack: We'll see what he doth say unto this match. –	
310		
312	<i>[Exit Albinus; he brings forth Amurack.]</i>	
314	Most mighty Turk, I, with my warlike son Alphonsus, loathing that so great a prince As you should live in such unseemly <u>sort</u> ,	= manner.
316	Have sent for you to <u>proffer</u> life or death; Life, if you do consent to our demand,	= "offer (you)".
318	And death, if that you dare <u>gainsay</u> the same. Your wife, high Fausta, with Iphigina,	= contradict, refuse.
320	Have <u>given</u> consent that this my warlike son Should have your daughter for his <u>bedfellow</u> :	= pronounce in one syllable, ie. <i>gi'n</i> . = wife, spouse. <sup>1</sup>
322	Now <u>resteth naught</u> but that you do agree, And so to <u>purchase sure</u> tranquility.	= there remains nothing else (to prevent this marriage). = obtain certain.
324		
326	<b>Amur.</b> <i>[Aside]</i> Now, Amurack, <u>advise thee</u> what thou say'st: Bethink thee well what answer thou wilt make:	= ie. think carefully about.
328	Thy life and death dependeth on thy words. If thou deny to be Alphonsus' <u>sire</u> ,	= ie. father-in-law.
330	Death is thy share; but if that thou consent, Thy life is saved. – Consent! nay, rather die;	
332	Should I consent to give Iphigina Into the hands of such a <u>beggar's brat</u> ?	= Carinus is the <i>beggar</i> ; another recycled phrase: see line 26 above.
334	What, Amurack, thou dost deceive thyself; Alphonsus is the son unto a king;	
336	What then? the[n] worthy of thy daughter's love. She <u>is agreed</u> , and Fausta is content;	= has agreed or is agreeable.
338	Then Amurack will not be discontent. –	
340	<i>[Amurack takes Iphigina by the hand, and gives her to Alphonsus.]</i>	
342		
344	Here, brave Alphonsus, take thou <u>at</u> my hand Iphigina, I give her unto thee; And for her dowry, when her father die[s],	= from.
346	Thou shalt possess the Turkish empery.	346: wow! in this way, Alphonsus' goal of becoming ruler of the Ottoman Empire will be realized!
	Take her, I say, and live <u>King Nestor's years</u> :	= which is to say, "to be very old"; <i>Nestor</i> was a famous elderly warrior who fought for the Greeks against the Trojans; his name was proverbial for a long life.
348	So <u>would the Turk</u> and all his noble peers.	= wishes. = ie. Amurack himself.

350	<i>Alphon.</i> <u>Immortal</u> thanks I give unto your grace.	= everlasting. <sup>1</sup>
352	<i>Carin.</i> Now, worthy princes, since, by help of Jove, <u>On either side</u> the wedding is decreed,	= by both parties, ie. families.
354	Come, let us <u>wend</u> to Naples speedily, For to solémnize it with mirth and glee.	= go.
356		
358	<i>Amur.</i> As you do will, we jointly do agree.	
	[ <i>Exeunt.</i> ]	
	<u>EPILOGUE.</u>	
	<i>Enter Venus with the Muses.</i>	
1	<i>Venus.</i> Now, worthy Muses, with unwilling mind	
2	Venus is forced to trudge to heavens again, <u>For</u> Jupiter, that God of peerless power,	= because.
4	Proclaimèd hath a solemn festival In honour of dame <u>Danae's luckless</u> death;	5: once again, Greene has engaged in sloppy mythologizing: <i>Danae</i> did not die a <i>luckless death</i> (see her story above at Act III.iii.118). Collins assumes the reference is supposed to be to the mortal maiden Semele, who was killed when Jove appeared before her in all his godhead. <i>Danae's = Danae</i> , usually a trisyllable, is a disyllable here.
6	Unto the which, in pain of his displeasure, He hath invited all <u>the immortal</u> gods	= pronounce as <i>th' immortal</i> .
8	And goddesses, so that I must be there, Unless I will his high displeasure bear.	
10	You see Alphonsus hath, with much ado, At length obtainèd fair Iphigina,	
12	<u>Of</u> Amurack her father, for his wife; Who now are going <u>to the temple wards</u> ,	= from. = ie. "towards the temple"; see the note above at Act IV.1.32.
14	For to perform <u>Dame Juno's sacred</u> rites; Where we will leave them till the feast be done,	= ie. the wedding ceremony; <i>Juno</i> was the goddess of marriage.
16	Which, in the heavens, by this time is begun. Meantime, dear Muses, wander you not far	
18	Forth <u>of</u> the path of <u>high Parnassus' hill</u> ,	= from. = ie. Mt. Parnassus, the traditional home of the Muses.
	That, when I come to finish up his life,	19: Venus suggests she is not done yet recounting the life of Alphonsus; this line has usually been interpreted to indicate that Greene was planning to write a second part to the play, just as Marlowe before him had written a sequel to <i>Tamburlaine</i> .
20	You may be ready <u>for to succour</u> me; Adieu, dear dames; farewell, Calliopè.	= to help.
22		
24	<i>Call.</i> Adieu, you sacred goddess of the sky.	
	[ <i>Exit Venus;</i>	
26	<i>Or, if you can conveniently, let a <u>chair</u> come down</i>	26-27: this is the actual stage direction from the quarto; it

28	<i>from the top of the stage and draw her up.]</i>	gives the director the option of letting Venus simply walk off the stage, or, if the stage machinery exists, to lower her throne ( <i>chair</i> ) from above; Venus could then sit upon her throne and be lifted back up to Heaven and out of view of the audience.
30	Well, loving sisters, since that she is gone, Come, let us haste unto Parnassus' hill, As <u>Cytherea</u> did [us] lately will.	31: "as Venus desired us to do;" for <i>Cytherea</i> as an alternate name for Venus, see the note at Act III.ii.189-191.
32	<b>Melp.</b> Then make you haste her mind for to fulfill.	33: "then hurry to do what she wants us to do."
34	<i>[Exeunt omnes, playing on their instruments.]</i>	37: Calliope is also now playing her pipe; we recall that in the play's opening Prologue, Calliope was too depressed to play her instrument along with her sisters. Thus, the play, in a very cute and clever way, circles back and symmetrically ties together the conclusion of the play to its very beginning.
	<i>FINIS.</i>	

## FOOTNOTES.

Footnotes in the text correspond as follows:

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