

A CRITICAL EDITION OF THOMAS MIDDLETON'S
MORE DISSEMBLERS BESIDES WOMEN

Dissertation for the Degree of Ph. D.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
FRANK TOLLE MASON
1974



This is to certify that the
thesis entitled

**A Critical Edition of Thomas Middleton's
Mere Dissemblers Besides Women**
presented by

Frank Telle Masen

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in English


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Date

19 February 1974

ABSTRACT

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By

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Thomas Middleton's More Dissemblers Besides Women was published together with Women Beware Women in an octavo volume entitled Two New Playes by Humphrey Moseley in 1657. The present edition, based on a collation of eleven copies of the 1657 octavo, offers an old-spelling text with a recording of textual variants, glossarial and explanatory notes, and a critical and textual introduction.

The introduction consists of four chapters. Chapter I deals with the dates of the play's composition and production and its subsequent stage history. An entry in the office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels, in October, 1623, refers to More Dissemblers as an "Old Play." Scraps of internal evidence, Middleton's connection with the King's Men (who owned the play), and a tempting gap in Middleton's known productivity, together with Herbert's admittedly vague remark, suggest a tentative date of c. 1615 for its composition. The only recorded performance of the play, at Whitehall on Twelfth Night, 1623-4, was also noted in Herbert's office-book, but several other 17th-century documents provide circumstantial evidence that the play

continued to be performed until the closing of the theaters and was perhaps revived after the Restoration.

Chapter II examines possible general sources for the play and attempts to show how Middleton adapts attitudes disseminated by popular non-dramatic literature to his own ironic point of view. No immediate source for the play has been discovered, but there is evidence to suggest that Middleton drew upon ideas expressed in domestic books such as Joannes Ludovicus Vives' Instruction of Christen Women in his characterization of the Duchess and in his treatment of the main plot's ostensible subject, the proper behavior for a widow. Quotations from several domestic books are cited to show their reliance upon Pauline precepts in reference to the ideal widow's conduct and to illuminate by ironic juxtaposition the career of Middleton's Duchess and the rationalizations of the Cardinal in support of her. A secondary matter under consideration is the appearance of a tribe of gipsies in Act IV. Here, Middleton draws upon anti-gipsy propaganda as expressed in numerous Elizabethan and Jacobean pamphlets in presenting his gipsies as thieves and whores. However, Middleton's low comic handling of the gipsies blunts the moral indignation of the pamphlets; he uses his gipsies as a reductio ad absurdum of the posing and dissembling in the play.

Chapter III focusses on the genre of the play. Although the 1657 octavo identifies More Dissemblers as a comedy, the play has often been viewed as a tragicomedy in

the Fletcherian mould. It is here proposed that the basic pattern of the play conforms to Middleton's comic techniques, as established in his earlier comedies, and that the characteristics of Fletcherian tragicomedy, as outlined by Ristine, Waith, and others, do not appreciably influence either the structure or the tone of the play. A detailed analysis of ironic patterns in the play, particularly in regard to Middleton's handling of the Duchess, is given to support this proposal.

Chapter IV considers textual problems and includes a descriptive analysis of the octavo (contents, collation, spelling and punctuation, and press corrections), an examination of the nature of the printer's copy, and a brief account of the printing. The printer was Thomas Newcomb. The play was apparently printed from a carefully prepared scribal copy, and advances a good text. Evidence is offered to the effect that the printer's copy was neither a playhouse manuscript nor a Middleton holograph. The text affords no clear evidence of more than one compositor. There are variations in spelling and in the use of punctuation, but these are not frequent or consistent enough to establish definite separate patterns. There is, however, evidence that the play was set by formes rather than seriatim. The evidence of the running-titles leads to several inferences concerning the order of the formes through the press. Substantive press corrections are few and most often involve punctuation. In general, the corrected state is

authoritative. Readings from John Leanerd's The Rambling Justice, a Restoration comedy which appropriates two scenes from Middleton's play, are rejected as lacking authority. Editorial policy is outlined at the end of the chapter.

The old-spelling text of the play follows the introduction. Included with the text are textual, glossarial, and explanatory annotations.

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A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English

1974

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am deeply indebted to Professor George R. Price, whose encouragement, knowledge, and generous advice made the completion of this study possible;

To Professors Arnold Williams and Harry R. Hoppe for their cooperation and guidance;

To Gloria Rawls, my typist, and Mr. and Mrs. Gary J. Mason, my proofreaders, for their special care with a demanding text.

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FOREWORD

Thomas Middleton's More Dissemblers Besides Women is hardly a milestone in the history of the Jacobean drama, nor does it loom as one of the major achievements of Middleton's dramatic genius. Little critical attention has been paid to the play, less even than to most of Middleton's second-rate works, and no extensive analysis has been offered by the scholarly community. In critical and scholarly discussions of Middleton's development as a playwright, More Dissemblers Besides Women is usually either referred to only in passing or altogether ignored.

Despite the play's obvious faults, it is rather difficult to understand such a general lack of interest. Middleton is, after all, an important figure in the history of the English Renaissance drama, and even his minor works should be of some concern to scholars. There is a need for a more careful and detailed evaluation of the play than has yet been presented. Too often, quick and superficial condemnation has served in place of thoughtful and balanced criticism. For More Dissemblers, though deeply flawed, especially in characterization, is not a contemptible production. It offers some of the very qualities for which much of Middleton's work has been widely admired, chiefly in

its uncomprising irony and anti-romanticism, its deft handling of complicated intrigue, and its thematic unity. The play is worth exploring, not only as an example of Middleton's weaknesses, but also as an illustration of at least some of his merits. Although its faults perhaps overshadow its virtues, More Dissemblers Besides Women deserves more critical and scholarly consideration as a production of an outstanding Jacobean dramatist than it has yet been accorded.

DATE AND STAGE HISTORY

Only scanty evidence has survived to indicate either the date of composition of More Dissemblers Besides Women or that of its first performance. The earliest contemporary reference to the play, occurring in the office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels, suggests that it was written and possibly acted well before October 17, 1623, when Herbert's entry was made. Herbert's note refers to the re-licensing of the play: "For the King's Company, An Old Play, called, More Dissemblers besides Women: allowed by Sir George Bucke; and being free from alterations was allowed by me, for a new play, called, The Devil of Dowgate, or Usury put to use: Written by Fletcher."¹ The entry appears to suggest a vague relationship between the licensing of the two plays, but Herbert probably intended no such relationship to be inferred. Either Chalmers was careless in his transcription, as Bentley proposes,² or Herbert himself lost his train of thought in a moment of distraction

¹George Chalmers, A Supplemental Apology for the Believers in the Shakspeare-Papers (London: Thomas Egerton, 1799), pp. 215-16.

²G. E. Bentley, The Jacobean and Caroline Stage, IV (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 888-89.

or haste; clearly, an error has been made. Nevertheless, Herbert's note fixes the date of composition of Middleton's play no later than March, 1622, when Sir George Buc went mad and Sir John Astley or Ashley assumed the duties of the Master of the Revels.³

The entry in Herbert's office-book is much more ambiguous regarding an early limit for composition and performance of the play. The information that the play was originally licensed by Sir George Buc is not very helpful in dating. Buc became the Master of the Revels in 1610 and remained in that office until he went mad early in 1622. However, he apparently exercised licensing power in the Office of the Revels even before he gained control of the Mastership, for he acted as Tilney's deputy as early as 1597.⁴ Thus, Buc's licensing activities in the Office of the Revels cover too wide a span of time to help confine the date of More Dissemblers Besides Women within reasonably narrow limits.

The dating of the play, then, depends largely upon Herbert's remark that in 1623, More Dissemblers was an "old" play, upon the fact that it had been previously licensed and enough time had elapsed so that Herbert thought a new license necessary, and upon what little and tentative

³Bentley, VII (1968), 43.

⁴The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert, ed. Joseph Quincy Adams (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1917), p. 7.

internal evidence the play affords. As might be expected, when facts are not to be found and even clues are so few and so vague, scholarship is forced to resort to conjecture, and in the case of Middleton a very tempting gap in known productivity exists for the few years following A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613).

It is not particularly surprising, therefore, to find Malone offering 1615 as a conceivable if not confirmable date for the play.⁵ Alexander Dyce also interprets Herbert's entry as an indication that More Dissemblers was "produced a considerable time previous to the year 1623."⁶ A. H. Bullen, however, takes Herbert's "old" to mean nothing more than previously licensed, and suggests a date much closer to Herbert's re-licensing of the play.⁷ Unfortunately, none of these scholars offers evidence to corroborate his opinion. Fleay, at least, provides an argument, though a rather weak one, to support his view that the play is rather late; his early limit, however, seems unaccountably arbitrary. The original license for the play, he submits, must have been issued by Buc "before Ashley succeeded him, 1622, May 22, but not, as Dyce says,

⁵R. C. Bald, "The Chronology of Thomas Middleton's Plays," MLR, XXXII (1937), 41.

⁶The Works of Thomas Middleton, III (London: Edward Lumley, 1840), 553.

⁷The Works of Thomas Middleton, I (London: J. C. Nimmo, 1885), lxxvii.

'a considerable time' before. On the contrary, the play had probably not been yet acted; had it been, there would have been no need to refer it to Herbert at all. I cannot date it earlier than Christmas 1621, nor later than May 1622.

'I had rather meet a witch far north,' i.2, looks as if Middleton were busy in his alteration of Macbeth."⁸ Fleay's contention that the re-licensing by Herbert implied that the play had not yet been acted has been disputed, and his reference to Middleton's The Witch, dubious at best, is probably inaccurate as to the date of that play as well.⁹

R. C. Bald accepts Malone's guess of 1615 on the basis that this date "will do as well as any until further evidence comes to hand."¹⁰ Bentley is similarly honest if not helpful; 1615 seems to him "a not impossible date."¹¹

Schelling, who assigns More Dissemblers to 1623, following The Spanish Gypsy in 1622, believes both plays to have been outgrowths of the success of Ben Jonson's masque, The Gipsies Metamorphosed,¹² presented at court in August, 1621. But aside from the impossibility of so late a date

⁸Frederick Gard Fleay, A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama, 1559-1642, II (London: Reeves and Turner, 1891), 103-04.

⁹Bentley, IV, 889.

¹⁰Bald, 41.

¹¹Bentley, IV, 889.

¹²Felix E. Schelling, Elizabethan Drama, 1558-1642, II (New York: Russell & Russell, 1959), 217-218.

for Middleton's comedy, Schelling's view hints at a highly improbable relationship between the three productions.

More Dissemblers Besides Women contains only one scene in which gipsies actually appear on the stage, although they are alluded to throughout the play. Even though the scene is perhaps the most memorable part of the play, such a brief and casual treatment of a subject presumably made popular by Jonson's masque seems a curiously ineffectual response to the demands of audience taste, especially in the light of the more elaborate and romantic presentation of the tribe in The Spanish Gipsy.

Malone's "c. 1615" is perhaps the most likely date after all. Middleton's association with the King's Men began at approximately this time; none of his earlier plays, at any rate, are known to have been written for this distinguished company,¹³ and it is unlikely, though conceivable, that More Dissemblers Besides Women was acquired by the King's Men from another company for which it was originally written. Since Middleton was dealing regularly with the King's Men at this time, and since no hint exists to the contrary, it seems reasonable to assume that he sold the play directly to them. Although he continued to write for other companies as well, his connection with the King's Men continued through the remainder of his career,

¹³Bentley, IV, 857.

climaxing in the brief but spectacularly popular run of A Game at Chesse in August, 1624.

That More Dissemblers followed A Chaste Maid in Cheapside is suggested, though not proved, by the appearance of a slightly altered form of the first stanza of the Welsh Gentlewoman's song to Tim Yellowhammer (A Chaste Maid, IV, i, 162-187) in More Dissemblers, I, iv. Two extra lines occur in the version sung by the Page to Dondolo in More Dissemblers: "Of the short Velvet Mask, he was deviser,/ That wives may kiss, the husband's ne'r the wiser." In these lines, Cupid's invention provides at least an indirect reference to the motifs of disguise and dissembling and sexual intrigue so central to the play, and it is therefore probable that the lines are indeed additions, intended to adapt the song more perfectly to its setting in the play. Still, the possibility exists that either the entire scene, the song itself, or the two lines were later interpolations into an early play.

In The Widow, a play of uncertain date in which Middleton appears to have had a rather busy hand, a reference is made to one of the gipsies' songs from More Dissemblers, IV, ii. Latrocinio, about to rob the unsuspecting Martia, agrees to sing a song:

<u>Latrocinio.</u>	Le' me see now--one confounds another, sir-- You've heard this certainly, "Come, my dainty doxies"?
<u>Martia.</u>	O, that is all the country over, sir. There's scarce a gentlewoman but has that pricked. (III, i. 17-20).

Bald's date for The Widow, 1616, has generally been accepted,¹⁴ and unless the song was originally independent of its setting in More Dissemblers--and it has not been discovered in any other source--the reference in The Widow suggests that More Dissemblers preceded that play.

Such scraps of evidence are of course inconclusive, but taken together with the play's greater emphasis on the ironies of intrigue and situation than character, and its complete lack of romanticism, they indicate a date considerably earlier than Herbert's re-licensing. In the degree of dramatic skill with which it is executed, and even more markedly in the techniques it employs, More Dissemblers Besides Women bears closer kinship to such productions as No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's, The Witch, and The Widow, all dated c. 1615-16 by Bald,¹⁵ than to the later achievements upon which Middleton's reputation largely rests, the tragicomedies and tragedies of the 1620's.

A second entry in Herbert's office-book, dated 1623-4, January 6, concerns an actual court performance of the comedy. "Upon Twelfe Night, the maske being put off, More Dissemblers besides Women, by the King's company, the prince only being there. Att Whitehall." Sir Henry felt strongly enough about the play to add a rare personal

¹⁴Bald, 41.

¹⁵Bald, 43.

reaction in the margin; "The worst play that ere I saw."¹⁶ Middleton's comedy appears to have been a sudden replacement; the masque originally scheduled for Twelfth Night, Jonson's Neptune's Triumph, which had been carefully rehearsed and elaborately prepared for, had to be cancelled at the last minute "by reason of the Kings indisposition as was pretended, but the true cause is thought to be the competition of the French and Spanish ambassadors, which could not be accomodated in presence, and whethersoever of them were absent yt wold sound to his disgrace."¹⁷ Neptune's Triumph celebrated the return of the Prince from his famous visit to Spain, and hinted broadly at the general feeling of relief that the marriage negotiations had broken down; it is therefore possible that its "postponement" was at least in part due to objections by the Spanish ambassador aimed at the content of the masque. At any rate, Jonson's masque became a casualty of national pride, and never was subsequently performed, although as late as January 3, expectations for its success were high. "Here is much practising against the maske on Twelfth Night and many meetings at noblemens houses in the afternoones."¹⁸ With the cancellation of Neptune's Triumph, the King's Men must

¹⁶Adams, Herbert, p. 51.

¹⁷The Letters of John Chamberlain, ed. Norman Egbert McClure, II (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939), 538-39.

¹⁸McClure, Chamberlain, II, 538.

have been called in on short notice, and under such conditions their obvious recourse would have been to perform a play that had met with audience approval in the past. More Dissemblers had been re-licensed approximately eleven weeks previously, and had no doubt been produced in the theater; some measure of audience response was therefore available to the company. Since the company could have performed any other play currently in production, the choice of More Dissemblers for a festive occasion indicates that the play had been well received in the theater. Under the special circumstances of the court performance, then, Sir Henry Herbert's condemnation can hardly be taken as a fair gauge of the popularity of More Dissemblers Besides Women. Surely the dashed expectations of the Prince, who had been in charge of the production of Jonson's masque, must have put a damper on the evening, and considering the original plans to invite the Spanish ambassador and other dignitaries, Herbert's statement that only the Prince was in attendance seems almost pathetic. The occasion was probably more gloomy than celebrative, and a frustrated audience could not have been expected to respond with much enthusiasm to the play presented as a substitution for such a potentially exciting entertainment.

The title, More Dissemblers Besides Women, appears on a list of King's Men's plays to be protected against printers, dated 7 August, 1641. The list, drawn up by order of the Earl of Essex, the new Lord Chamberlain, is addressed

to the Masters and Wardens of the Stationers' Company. The King's Men apparently feared that some of the plays in their current repertory were about to be published, and in a note accompanying his list, Essex forbids such publication without the consent of the King's Men. The appearance of More Dissemblers Besides Women on such a list shows that it was still being acted or at least that it still could be acted with profit to the company. At any rate, the comedy appears to have been considered worth protecting from the press, a clear indication that it was still at least moderately popular only a year before the closing of the theaters.¹⁹

Although no record of an actual performance of Middleton's comedy after the Restoration has been preserved, the title, More Dissemblers than Weomen, occurs among a number of plays allotted to Thomas Killigrew, c. January 12, 1668/9. The note accompanying this list reads: "Plays Acted at the Theatre Royall. A Catalogue of part of His Ma^{tes} Servants Playes as they were formerly acted at the Blackfryers & now allowed of to his Ma^{tes} Servants at y^e New Theatre."²⁰ It is therefore possible, though not demonstrable, that More Dissemblers was performed after the Restoration, and the Lord Chamberlain's note implies that

¹⁹Bentley, I (1941), 65-66.

²⁰Allardyce Nicoll, A History of English Drama, 1660-1900, I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 353-54.

Killigrew at least thought the play of some commercial value. The fact that the catalogued plays had been previously acted at the Blackfriars is no surprise, although this information is not given elsewhere; More Dissemblers Besides Women contains many of the usual characteristics of a play written for a private theater, especially in its emphasis on singing and dancing.²¹

If More Dissemblers Besides Women was performed after the Restoration, however, it is rather doubtful that it was a great success. A play by John Leanerd called The Rambling Justice, or The Jealous Husbands, acted at Drury Lane c. March, 1677/8 and printed in 1678,²² adapts and in some parts plagiarizes two scenes from Middleton's comedy. Act II, scene i, of Leanerd's play copies almost verbatim the conversation between Lactantio and Dondolo in More Dissemblers, III, i, and for Act II, scene ii of his comedy, Leanerd appropriates Middleton's gipsy scene, IV, ii. Leanerd seems not to have hesitated to plunder Middleton without the least acknowledgement. No doubt such plagiarism reflects some admiration for his source on Leanerd's part, but it also suggests that Middleton's play was no longer

²¹Bentley, IV, 889.

²²Nicoll, I, 418.

widely known, since Leanerd apparently felt that he could quietly absorb Middleton's work into his own.²³

The play was probably acted, then, with at least limited success, throughout much of the seventeenth century, although its popularity presumably declined rather sharply after the Restoration. No actual performance of More Dissemblers Besides Women, however, has been recorded since the one so utterly condemned by Herbert on Twelfth Night, 1623/4.

²³But see Gerard Langbaine, An Account of the English Dramatick Poets (Oxford: George West and Henry Clements, 1691), p. 320. "A great part of it [The Rambling Justice] is stoln from a Comedy of Middleton's call'd More Dissemblers Besides Women . . . but since our Author [Leanerd] is forc'd to strole like One of that Tribe [i.e. gipsies] for a Livelihood, with the Issue of other Men's Brains, I leave him to his hard Stars; tho' possibly Gipsy-like, he begs with stoln Children, that he may raise the more Compassion . . ."

SOURCES

No immediate source has been discovered for More Dissemblers Besides Women. It has long been thought that the play was based on an Italian novella, but scholarship has been unable to identify one which even remotely approximates the details of Middleton's comedy. Nevertheless, the suggestion is attractive if for no other reason than that the play is set in Milan and depends for its effect upon intrigue, an almost ubiquitous element in the Italian short story of the Renaissance. Either in the original or in translations and adaptations by Painter, Fenton, and others, the immense popularity of the novellas of Boccaccio, Cinthio, Bandello, Straparola, etc., as source material for Elizabethan and Jacobean dramas hardly needs to be recounted here.¹ However, since no perfect parallel to the play has been recognized and generally accepted, the possibility exists that a lost or yet unidentified Italian novella provided the inspiration and the basic outline of the plot of More Dissemblers Besides Women.

¹See Mary Augusta Scott, Elizabethan Translations from the Italian (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1916), pp. xxxvii-lxxxii.

Italian history has yielded no likely sources for the play, either, although two scholars have hesitantly advanced the proposal that St. Carlo Borromeo (1538-1584), Cardinal and Archbishop of Milan, may have been Middleton's model for the Cardinal.² The suggestion is very doubtful. Borromeo was a disciplinarian with a fondness for chastity which is hardly surprising, but nothing in his career suggests involvement in any such escapades as are represented in More Dissemblers, and his unwavering sincerity and zeal do not in any way correspond to the moral vacillation exhibited by Middleton's Cardinal.

Concerning Middleton's city comedies, R. C. Bald has pointed out the difficulty of identifying specific written sources since Middleton typically dealt with popular material, subjects treated in pamphlets, tracts, and even common talk.³ To a slightly lesser extent, a similar argument might be plausibly advanced about More Dissemblers Besides Women. While the plot of the comedy is intricate, its complications are worked out in fairly conventional stage terms, stock characters, disguises, mistaken intentions, and deliberate prevarications; few episodes, in fact, escape such conventions clearly enough to suggest

²A. W. Ward, A History of English Dramatic Literature to the Death of Queen Anne, II (London: MacMillan & Co., Ltd., 1899), 507, n.2. Paul De Reul, Présentation du Théâtre Jacobéen de Marston à Beaumont et Fletcher (Anvers: J. E. Buschmann, 1946), p. 162.

³"The Sources of Middleton's City Comedies", JEGP, XXXIII (1934), 373-387.

that a specific primary source was necessarily used. Clearly, what informs the play with individuality is not Middleton's use of convention, but rather his treatment of convention, not the involved plot itself, but rather the point of view for which the plot provides a framework. A few central popular issues involved in the play and, to some extent, even the implications which emerge from Middleton's treatment of these issues can be traced to possible general sources, even though no obvious immediate source is available.

The issue which dominates the main plot, perhaps to the detriment of characterization and plausibility, is that of the re-marriage of widows. The controversies surrounding such re-marriages were hardly new; most of the arguments employed in the numerous sixteenth and seventeenth century tracts and domestic books dealing with the subject either directly quoted or paraphrased St. Paul's doctrines in I Timothy, v and the more famous passage I Corinthians, vii, 8-9: "I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn." Although Pauline doctrine generally opposed re-marriage, it did make allowances for the weakness of the flesh, and therefore permitted some flexibility in interpretation.⁴ The varying attitudes toward re-marriage

⁴Lu Emily Pearson, "Elizabethan Widows," in Stanford Studies in Language and Literature, ed. Hardin Craig (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1941), pp. 124-142.

voiced by both the Duchess and the Cardinal in More Dissemblers have precedent in many of the popular sixteenth and seventeenth century domestic books concerned, at least in part, with the problems of widowhood and the behavior of widows. Even Lactantio's jeering remark in the opening scene, "A moneths constancy / Is held a vertue in a City-widow," plays on the common cynicism with which the activities of widows, especially young widows, were viewed.⁵ Alexander Niccholes, in A Discourse of Marriage and Wiving (1615), exemplifies the critical attitude toward widows adopted by some of the writers of domestic books. He warns the wife-hunter to avoid a widow at all costs because "The end of her marriage is lust and ease, more then affection or love" (D₄v and E₁). In I, iii, 3-13, Middleton ironically allows his Duchess to give full assent to this cynical attitude before she herself falls under the curse.

How happily
Might woman live, methinks, confin'd within
The knowledge of one Husband?
What comes of more, rather proclaims Desire
Prince of affections, then religious love;
Brings frailty and our weakness into question;
'Mongst our Male enemies, makes Widows tears,
Rather the cup of laughter then of pity.
What credit can our sorrows have with men,
When in some moneths space, they turn light again;
Feast, dance, and go in colours?

Joannes Ludovicus Vives, in his Instruction of Christen Women, one of the earliest and most influential of the domestic books, first published in English in 1529 and

⁵Pearson, passim.

republished in 1541, discusses the problems of widowhood in great detail and provides precepts which bear upon the conduct of widows. These rules of behavior were repeated by other writers again and again throughout the sixteenth century; and by the early seventeenth century they had been almost completely absorbed into popular culture. Although Middleton need not have turned directly to the domestic books as sources, his play clearly shows the effect of their influence on popular attitudes toward widows in the behavior and ruminations of the Duchess and the Cardinal. Vives will serve to illustrate the nature of this influence.

The Duchess' reliance on the Cardinal as a spiritual guide conforms to a practice advocated by Vives. "And fynally, lette her ever use the counsayle of that man, that she knoweth hath good wytte, and wold her profet, and is trusty."⁶ The Cardinal, in fact, seems to be an author himself; he claims to have written volumes in praise of the Duchess' constancy to her vow. As a self-designated expert, he ought to be in a position to provide the Duchess with authoritative instruction. Indeed, previous to the opening of the play, and presumably under the tutelage of the Cardinal, the Duchess has led an exemplary life as a widow for seven years. A heavy emphasis is laid upon her oath of chastity, sworn by the bedside of her dying husband, who could not bear to think of her re-marrying. Such an oath

⁶1541 ed., m4^r.

is recommended by Vives, even if it is taken after the death of the husband: "Let her kepe the remembraunce of her housbonde with reverence, and nat with wepyng: and let her take for a solempne and a great othe, to swere by her housbandes soule, and let her live and do so, as she shal thinke to please her housbande, beyng nowe no man but a spirite purified, and a devine thyng."⁷ The Duchess has abided by her oath for seven years as the play opens, and she has done so, as Vives advises, in retirement from the world. "Thus saynt Paul saith, Thus saint Hieronime, Thus saynt Ambrose, Thus saynt Augustyne, Thus all sayntes and holy men with one voyce and opynion say, That wepynge, and mournyng, solitarines, and fastyng, be the most precious dowries and ornamentes of a wydow. Moreover, what feastes, what playes and daunces a wydowe shulde use, saynt Paule dothe shewe, whan he byddeth her be in prayer daye and nyghte."⁸ In such seclusion the Duchess has protected her vow, and for her steadfastness she has been rewarded by the Cardinal's praise and her own vanity.

It can easily be seen that the counsel of the First Lord in I, ii, 29-36, is a frontal attack upon Vives' position. He tells the Cardinal that it is imperative that the Duchess' virtue be tested by being brought into direct contact with the outside world. The advice of the First

⁷₁₄^r-₁₄^v.

⁸_{m1}^v.

Lord is also a commonplace, like St. Paul's counsel, but it arises from dramatic convention and, in this case at least, character motivation rather than from the domestic books. The dramatic necessity for the First Lord's challenge to the Duchess' constancy is obvious; the play can go no further without the conflict it provides. The First Lord's arguments, later taken up by the Cardinal himself, are paralleled in plays dealing not only with widows, but even with wives and maids; in fact, they are applied in almost any situation involving female constancy. In The Second Maiden's Tragedy, the subplot of which has been compared to More Dissemblers Besides Women,⁹ Anselmus, distrusting the fidelity of his wife, proposes a test in terms similar to those of the First Lord: ". . . but saie shees all chast, yet, is that her goodness? / what labour ist for woman to keep constant / thats never tride or tempted . . . o what a lazie vertue / is chastetie in a woman if no synne / should laye temptation toot . . ." ¹⁰ In the drama, the viewpoint expressed by the First Lord and Anselmus almost inevitably brings about the downfall of the lady in question; and the domestic books, as if in agreement with the outcome of such dramatic situations, continually warn against exposing widows to the dangers of temptation. "For in courtes, and

⁹Richard Hindry Barker, Thomas Middleton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), p. 114.

¹⁰ed. W. W. Greg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1909), p. 10, 11. 290-300.

in resort of men, and gathering of people, a wydow shuld nat medle. In the whiche places there is great jeoperdy of those thynges, that a wydow ought to set moste by. And a wydow, that is chast, honest, of good fame, and vertuous ought to do so, that she may do good, nat only to her selfe, but also to other folkes. A brode, and afore many mennes eies and handlynges, shamfastnes by litel and litell gothe away, and honestie and chastite commeth in jeoperdy: and though they be nat overcomen, yet they be sore assayled."¹¹

The career of Middleton's Duchess, then, is almost a textbook illustration of the fears expressed by writers like Vives and the even more openly cynical Niccholes.¹² Put to the test of social intercourse, she promptly rejects her vow, loses her honesty, and makes a serious though unsuccessful attempt to lose her chastity as well.

Yet even the delinquent widow found comfort and advice in the domestic books, and both the Duchess and the Cardinal are quick to espouse the letter, if not the spirit, of their position on re-marriage. Vives, not surprisingly, turns back to St. Paul: "I woulde counsaile a good woman to continue in holy wydowheade, namely if she have

¹¹Vives, nl^r.

¹²See also Cornelius Agrippa, The Commendation of Matrimony (London, 1540). Stephen Guazzo, The Civile Conversation, (London, 1581). Torquato Tasso, The Householders Philosophie (London, 1588). William Heale, An Apologie for Women (Oxford, 1609). Joseph Swetnam, The Araignment of Lewde, Idle, Froward, and Unconstant Women (London, 1615).

chyldrene: whiche thing is thentent and fruite of
 matrimonie. But and she doubt, lest she can not avoyde the
 prickes of nature with that lyfe, lette her geve an eare
 unto saint Paule the apostle, writyng unto the Corinthians
 in this wise: I saie to unmaryed women and wydowes, it
 were good for theim, if they kepte theim selfe even as I am,
 but yet if they can not suffre, let them marie. For it is
 better to marie than bourne."¹³ Such reasoning underlies
 the rhetoric of rationalization used by both the Duchess
 herself and the Cardinal; both are now forced to recognize
 the reality of the flesh subverting the pride of the
 spirit yet at the same time to maintain the appearance of
 sanctity. It is the Cardinal who offers the subtlest
 rationalizations for his new attitude toward the possi-
 bility of re-marriage for the Duchess, and it is of more
 than passing interest that he draws upon ideas expressed in
 the domestic books. In private, he tells Lactantio that
 "The present barrenness of our name and house" (III, i, 163)
 demands his immediate marriage to the Duchess, who dotes on
 him. In public, to the assembly of the Lords of Milan, he
 argues that the need for an heir to the Duchy dictates that
 the Duchess re-marry in spite of her vow. The requirement
 of succession, according to some of the domestic books,
 validates the desire of a widow to re-marry. Torquato
 Tasso, for example, states that "forasmuch as customs & the

¹³_{n4} r.

Lawes dyspence with them in this, the woman as well as the man may without shame undertake the second Marriage, especially if they do it for desire of succession (a desire most naturall in all reasonable creatures) but happier are they that have but once in all theyr life been tyed with that band."¹⁴ Such a liberal and reasonable viewpoint is, as it happens, well suited to the Cardinal's needs as he attempts to persuade the Lords to adopt a new, albeit predetermined, party line. He further argues that chastity in married life is even more virtuous than in maidenhood or widowhood simply because the married woman is tempted by greater opportunities for unfaithfulness than the maid or widow; she is less likely to be discovered since she is protected by her status. The virtuous maid or widow, on the other hand, operates under "The fear of shame, more then the fear of Heaven" (III, i, 293). Consequently, as a faithful wife, the Duchess would be even more praiseworthy than as a chaste widow.

The domestic books often substantiate the conclusions reached by the Cardinal. Vives, for instance, insists that "A maryed woman oughte to be of greater chastite than an unmarried."¹⁵ To the Cardinal's closing maxim, "If she that might offend safe, does not erre, / What's chaste in others, is most rare in her" (III, i, 304-5), Vives lends his

¹⁴The Householders Philosophie, Cl^v.

¹⁵sl^r.

precedent: "And as saynt Hieronyme sayth, she is chaste in dede, that may do ivell and she lyst, and wyl not."¹⁶

However, the Cardinal's artful manipulation of logic in his deeply cynical argument does not follow the usual pattern of the domestic books. Vives, arriving at a conclusion almost identical to the Cardinal's, uses a contrary, though equally cynical analysis. He reasons that the widow has more freedom to sin than the married woman, who is inhibited by fear of her husband. "For often tymes wydowes do shewe what they have been in marriage, and under the lybertie of wydowheed, open and shewe that whiche they kepte in before for feare of theyr housbandes. As byrdes, when they be out of theyr cagis, by and by tourn to their olde conditions. Lykewise many women shewe out at ones the vices that they dissembled (so as they coulde whyle that theyr housbandes lyved) after that the lettes that they had of theyr housbandes be taken away. For then shall it be knowen, what nature or condition a woman is of, whan she maye do what she wyl." ¹⁷ The viewpoints expressed by both the Cardinal and Vives, nevertheless, assume that most women will sin if given the opportunity, and they therefore hinge on the safety with which illicit activities may be conducted. In both cases, the woman who remains chaste under conditions which would offer the highest degree of safety to the sinner

¹⁶_{m2}^v.

¹⁷_{m2}^r-_{m2}^v.

is worthy of the greatest praise. The Cardinal's argument differs in detail from that advanced by Vives, but the Cardinal, after all, is trying to achieve a specific goal, to convince the Lords that the Duchess should re-marry. Under the circumstances, it is not difficult to imagine Middleton adapting and even deliberately distorting a well-known argument for comic effect and in order to portray the hypocrisy and casuistry of the Cardinal.

That Middleton was acquainted with some of the domestic books seems at least a likely possibility, especially since in III, i, 290, the Cardinal refers to the opinions of "some writers" concerning chastity in married life as compared to chastity in single life. At any rate, whether directly or through their influence on public opinion, the domestic books and religious tracts dealing with marriage and widowhood are reflected throughout the play to an extent perhaps greater than in most other Elizabethan and Jacobean dramas treating similar subject material. The widow was, of course, a stock character on the Jacobean stage, especially in the city comedies, in which Middleton himself had helped to fashion her familiar role as the fortune-hunter's prize. This stage tradition depicted her as rich, personally ambitious, dominating sometimes to the point of shrewishness, sometimes gullible, but more often cunning, and usually lascivious. In More Dissemblers Besides Women the Duchess clearly partakes of that stereotype, but as an active and pivotal character,

not just a prize to be schemed over, she is also viewed satirically as an embodiment of weaknesses popularly ascribed to real widows and of problems faced by real widows. She is really of more interest as a representative than as a character, and even the intrigues in which she and the Cardinal engage are only extensions of the problem she faces as a type. Everything rotates around the role of the widow; the Duchess' vow of chastity and her attempt to repudiate it under the influence of her passion for Andrugio, never far from the surface of the play, emerge to impel almost every scene in which she appears. As a representative figure, then, the Duchess is developed along lines suggested partly by stage convention and partly by the writers of domestic books and tracts.

The remarkable, though brief, appearance of the gipsies in IV, ii can also perhaps be related to some possible secondary sources. Many of the pamphlets dealing with the Elizabethan underworld, the rogues, vagabonds, and other assorted criminals who roamed and terrorized both town and countryside, mention gipsies, also known as Egyptians or Moon-men. The gipsies probably reached England at the end of the fifteenth or the beginning of the sixteenth century, and "as early as 1530 Parliament begins to legislate with exceptional severity against gypsy vagrants, as thieves and fortunetellers."¹⁸ The unsavoury

¹⁸A. V. Judges, The Elizabethan Underworld (London: George Routledge & Sons Ltd., 1930), p. xxv.

reputation of the gipsies grew throughout the sixteenth century, and strictures against them became stronger and stronger, until in 1562, "the third gypsy act went on to the statute book, prescribing the penalty of death not only for those who were actually 'Egyptians' or pretended to be such, but also for those found in the company of vagabonds calling themselves 'Egyptians.'"¹⁹ Pamphleteers such as Thomas Harman reflect both the fear of the gipsies which propagated such repressive legislation and the fascination they apparently evoked among the common people. In A Caveat or Warning for Common Cursitors, Vulgarly Called Vagabonds (1566), Harman refers to the suppression of "the wretched, wily wandering vagabonds calling themselves Egyptians, deeply dissembling and long hiding and covering their deep, deceitful practices, feeding the rude common people, wholly addicted and given to novelties, toys, and new inventions; delighting them with the strangeness of the attire of their heads, and practising palmistry to such as would know their fortunes; and, to be short, all thieves and whores . . ." ²⁰ Thomas Dekker describes them, in a passage suggesting the scene in which Dondolo is gipsified, as "a people more scattered than Jews, and more hated; beggarly in apparel, barbarous in condition, beastly in behavior, and bloody if they meet advantage. A man that

¹⁹Judges, p. 496, n.5.

²⁰In Judges, p. 64.

sees them would swear they had all the yellow jaundice, or that they were tawny Moors' bastards, for no red-ochre-man carries a face of a more filthy complexion. Yet are they not born so, neither has the sun burnt them so, but they are painted so; yet are they not good painters neither, for they do not make faces, but mar faces. By a by-name they are called gypsies; they call themselves Egyptians; others in mockery call them moon-men."²¹ The cheating and stealing practiced by the regiments of gypsies are the basis of most of the continued attacks against them by both politicians and pamphleteers. Samuel Rowlands, in a pamphlet called Martin Markall, Beadle of Bridewell, His Defense and Answers to the Bellman of London (1610), almost paraphrases the complaint registered by Harman nearly half a century earlier, referring to the gypsies as "a sort of rogues that lived and do yet live by cozening and deceit, practising the art called legerdemain, or fast-and-loose, whereby they got to themselves no small credit among the country people by their deep dissembling and deceitful practices . . ."²² Middleton, clearly, is not so quick to condemn as the pamphleteers, but he does adopt their conventional view of the gypsies as thieves and whores. The light-hearted low comedy in which they engage prevents any very severe moral judgment, yet the Captain admits to both thievery and

²¹Lantern and Candlelight (1608), in Judges, p. 344.

²²In Judges, p. 420.

swindling, Dondolo is robbed on stage, Aurelia is accepted into the tribe on the basis of her parents' supposed shady backgrounds, Dondolo on the basis of two uncles hanged for robbery and "a brave cut-purse to my Cozen-German" (IV, ii, 113). And Aurelia is almost immediately designated as Dondolo's doxy.

The Captain and his crew are a far cry from the romanticized gipsies, including noblemen in disguise, who appear in Middleton's later collaboration with Rowley, The Spanish Gypsy. In that play, Alvarez, the leader of the gipsies, draws the distinction very clearly: "Gipsies, but no tanned ones; no red-ochre rascals umbered with soot and bacon as the English gipsies are, that sally out upon pullen, lie in ambuscado for a rope of onions, as if they were Welsh free-booters; no, our stile has higher steps to climb over, Spanish gipsies, noble gipsies" (II, i, 6-11).²³ The gipsies in More Dissemblers Besides Women, despite their presence in an Italian setting, speak and act like the English gipsies so contemptuously described by Alvarez and by the pamphleteers.

There is no reason to suppose, however, that Middleton used the pamphlets as primary sources. The attitudes they disseminated were common; it is not crucial to identify a particular written source. Gipsies had appeared in masques

²³Bullen, Works, VI, 134.

during the sixteenth century,²⁴ and were popular in ballads as well.²⁵ Of special interest is a ballad called "The brave English Jipsie", of uncertain date, but published by John Trundle. Because the ballad was sung to the tune of "The Spanish Gipsy", and because it markedly contrasts English gipsies to Spanish gipsies, Collier thought it bore some relationship to Middleton and Rowley's The Spanish Gipsy, although he was unable to determine whether the ballad preceded or postdated the play.²⁶ Whatever the affinity between the ballad and The Spanish Gipsy, "The brave English Jipsie" contains not only a view of gipsy life more akin to that in More Dissemblers, but even a few verbal parallels to the Captain's dialogue, and especially to the song, "Come my dainty Doxes". To argue that such parallels as a rhyme between "tipsey" and "gipsey" are anything but accidental would of course be conjectural at best; nevertheless, such a parallel does indicate the kind of context in which English gipsies might be expected to appear, and "The brave English Jipsie", whatever its date, provides further evidence in both style and humor that the

²⁴Documents Relating to the Revels at Court in the Time of King Edward VI and Queen Mary, ed. Albert Feuillerat in Materialien zur Kunde des alteren Englischen Dramas, XLIV (Louvain: A. Uystpruyst, 1914), 16, 190-192.

²⁵Charles Read Baskervill, The Elizabethan Jig (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), p. 149.

²⁶A Book of Roxburghe Ballads, ed. John Payne Collier (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1847), p. 183.

gipsy scene in More Dissemblers Besides Women copies no specific literary source, but rather has its origins in a long tradition of gipsy lore and anti-gipsy propaganda.

If it is true that Middleton used attitudes expressed in popular literature as background material for his play, it is equally true that such attitudes are adjusted in large measure to the specific context in which they are set. Despite its other weaknesses, More Dissemblers Besides Women is a remarkably unified play. Obviously, a Duchess who really understood herself from the beginning of the play would provide neither conflict nor irony. To the extent that the Duchess activates the main plot and participates in the comedy, the play depends upon two views of the widow: the ideal widow, whose standards are implied by the domestic books, and delineated by both the Cardinal and the Duchess herself at the beginning of the play; and the actual widow, whose weaknesses are enumerated by the domestic books, acted out by the Duchess during the course of the play, and maintained rather than quenched by the self-indulgent sophistry of the well-intentioned but weak Cardinal. By intensifying the ironies inherent but unaccented in the position of the domestic writers, Middleton achieves, especially through the use of the dissembling motif, a goal quite different from theirs, a universal goal more suitable to comic drama than to didactic literature. He explores, in comic yet uncompromising terms, the ironic tension resulting from people trying to be what they are not, trying

to have what they cannot have, and failing, not once, but time after time. The Duchess is probably the clearest illustration of this irony, but it is exhibited in the career of almost every character in the play.

Even the gipsy scene drives home the point with the gipsifying of Dondolo. The transformation of Dondolo into what he most desires to be, a full-fledged member of the tribe, with a little bacon grease and a smattering of gipsy cant parodies in low comedy the elaborate disguising and posing undertaken by all the other characters in the play. While confirming, through the mouths and actions of the gipsies themselves, the kinds of attacks made against them by the pamphleteers, Middleton uses the gipsies as a kind of reductio ad absurdum for the lying and cheating that occurs in the play, and ironically posits their way of life as Dondolo's ideal. By implication, the bacon grease by which Dondolo attains his goal is no less substantial and no more ridiculous than the posing of the Duchess, the rationalizing of the Cardinal, the disguising of Aurelia and the Page, and the hypocrisy of Lactantio.

GENRE

The influence of Fletcherian tragicomedy upon much of Middleton's later work has been discerned and regretted by several prominent scholars of the Jacobean drama, and a few of Middleton's own plays have been traditionally classified, with ample justification, as tragicomedies. In the case of More Dissemblers Besides Women, however, the question of genre has never been definitively settled. Although the separate title page of the 1657 octavo identifies the play specifically as a comedy, scholars have not unanimously agreed that the final effect of the play is comic. Indeed, the most recent studies of the play have suggested that it more properly belongs to the genre of tragicomedy, that the characteristics of Fletcherian tragicomedy are pervasive in it.¹ The notion that More Dissemblers Besides Women is a mixed play is not, however, original with Barker and Schoenbaum; A. H. Thorndike grouped it with A Fair Quarrel, The Witch, and The Spanish Gypsy as comedies which "partake of the common characteristics of later tragicomedy."²

¹Samuel Schoenbaum, "Middleton's Tragicomedies", MP, LIV (1956), 15-16. Barker, pp. 96-100.

²English Comedy (New York: MacMillan Co., 1929), p. 220.

In general, those who take the position that the play is indeed a tragicomedy concentrate their attention on the characterization of the Duchess, arguing that her recognition of the inadequacy of her beauty to attract Andrugio away from Aurelia, a younger and fairer rival, is or ought to be tragic. "The discovery," Barker states, "is tragic--or should be--and Middleton just fails, I think, to realize its full implications. He has his character take it quite calmly, even perhaps a little priggishly."³

But the Duchess' calm acceptance of defeat is perhaps appropriate considering Middleton's development of her character; her fairness and composure, most critics agree, make her the most sympathetic character in the play. Furthermore, her discovery of a preferred rival is not itself necessarily tragic, for even before Aurelia's appearance, the Duchess seems to realize that Andrugio does not love her. Finally, the Duchess' own feelings toward Andrugio are ambiguous; at times, she seems more in love with the idea of herself in love than with Andrugio. Middleton's treatment of the Duchess' self-delusion about her passion for Andrugio mutes the possible tragic implications of her position.

In Act IV, scene iii, when the Duchess first offers herself to Andrugio, the General's reaction is hardly encouraging, and when he shows signs of rejecting her

³Barker, p. 98.

advances, the Duchess hastily calls for Lactantio and the guards to take him back into custody, as if to prevent his protest and protect her own vanity. To be rejected utterly would be unthinkable. But the appearance of Aurelia provides the Duchess with a path of honorable retreat, a means to save face. At the beginning of Act V, scene ii, the Duchess expresses disbelief at Celia's report that Andrugio loves Aurelia (still in her gipsy disguise), but she is really more concerned about her own honor than about the possibility that Andrugio does not return her love. The Duchess' initial reaction to Celia's story is illuminating: "She cannot be so bad as you report, / Whom he so firmly loves (V, ii, 25-6)". She is willing to concede, even before confronting Andrugio again, that the General might not love her; what disturbs her is the idea that the object of his affections could be "so base a Creature". Such misplaced devotion would be an affront to the Duchess' own beauty and dignity, a blow to her vanity, and it is only after she has seen for herself the "gipsified" Aurelia that the Duchess really becomes angry with Andrugio. "A wrong done to Beauty, / Is greater then an injury done to Love, / And we'll less pardon it; for had it been / A creature whose perfection had outshin'd me, / It had been honorable judgment in him, / And to my peace a noble satisfaction: / But as it is, 'tis monstrous above folly! (V, ii, 65-71)". It seems clear that at least on an emotional level, the Duchess has made an easy adjustment to

Andrugio's lack of passion for her even before the General admits loving Aurelia. She has transferred the question of love to a question of honor, and once her honor is satisfied (when Aurelia doffs her disguise to reveal herself as young and beautiful), the Duchess can make a graceful and perhaps even relieved withdrawal. But the Duchess' unimpassioned acceptance of defeat and reassertion of her original vow is not a forced happy ending to a potentially tragic situation in the Fletcherian manner. Her calmness in the face of rejection calls into question the depth of her love for Andrugio, suggests that she has seen through her own self-delusion, and logically concludes Middleton's treatment of the widow problem; having fallen to temptation (as the domestic writers would have predicted), she now sees her weakness clearly enough to return to seclusion (as the domestic writers would have advised). She understands that she must accept reality, and to treat her tragically at this point, to have her rail at her fate, would be to deny her recognition of self altogether.

Even more crucial to the Duchess' rather casual attitude in the final scene is the ironic turnabout which is so typical of Middleton's dramatic construction.⁴ Every dissembler in the play is also a victim of dissembling, and the play's title, it should be remembered, assumes that women are dissemblers. "A fundamental element in

⁴Barker, pp. 53, 151-152.

Middleton's success in his own day and, perhaps, one of the reasons for the neglect of him by scholarship in our time is the theme of roguish intrigue which dominates his comedies in a boisterous manner. . . . The material of these comedies is such stuff as 'problem plays' are made of; and yet the consequences of the rogue's actions are scarcely suggested because no one seems to take his fellows seriously."⁵ Although Dunkel is writing of Middleton's city comedies, his remarks might, with a slight shift of emphasis, apply to More Dissemblers Besides Women. For here, roguishness is not the province of a central character; it is universal, and it is manifested in a wide variety of forms, especially in disguise and intrigue. Aurelia disguises herself first as a gentleman from Rome and later as a gipsy. The Page is, of course, Lactantio's mistress in disguise. Dondolo disguises himself as a gipsy, and there is a clear suggestion (IV, ii, 196-9) that many of the other members of the tribe have also used bacon grease to change identities. Even the rather dull-witted Andrugio disguises himself as a poor soldier in order to gain the confidence of Aurelia's Father and arrange her escape from the fort (II, iv). Related to the disguise as a false means of achieving goals is the posing of Lactantio, who dissembles innocence and piety as he shuffles two

⁵W. D. Dunkel, The Dramatic Technique of Middleton in his Comedies of London Life (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1925), pp. 9-10.

mistresses (the Page and Aurelia) and aims at the Duchess; who declares friendship for Andrugio while plotting his downfall; who flatters the Cardinal's ego in order to assure his inheritance. The Cardinal, too, engages in intrigue when he attempts to satisfy the Duchess' supposed desire for Lactantio and gain her great wealth for his nephew by convincing the Lords of Milan that the Duchess' vow of chastity--a vow which he has praised her for upholding faithfully for seven years--is destructive and needs to be abandoned. Aurelia cynically uses Andrugio to escape from her father only to desert him in favor of Lactantio. The Duchess cannot be isolated from this sort of amoral intrigue. She uses the Cardinal to rationalize her awkward position and make her desire to remarry acceptable to the Lords of Milan, and she convinces him that she is interested in Lactantio, although she really intends to marry Andrugio. Her cruel manipulation of Lactantio to gain access to Andrugio is even more sinister, for although she dislikes him immediately, she has no idea that he is a scapegrace who deserves to be tricked.

That Middleton intended the Duchess to be viewed, in part, as a rogue is suggested by the elaborate ironic parallel he draws between the careers of the Duchess and Aurelia as schemers. Each professes love for the object of the other's affections in order to reach the object of her own. Each is gleeful at the ingenuity of her plan when it seems to be succeeding. Aurelia, having sent Andrugio off

to complete arrangements for her escape, remarks: "Out upon't, I smile / To think how I have fitted him with an Office; / His love takes pains to bring our loves together, / Much like your man that labors to get treasure, / To keep his wife high for another's pleasure (II, iii, 124-28)."

The Duchess, having sent Lactantio off to arrest Andrugio on an illegitimate charge, remarks: "Why here's the happiness of my desires, / The means safe, unsuspected, far from thought; / His state is like the world's condition right, / Greedy of gain, either by fraud or stealth; / And whil'st one toils, another gets the wealth (III, ii, 135-39)."

Aurelia rebuffs Andrugio for Lactantio only to find herself rejected because Lactantio prefers the Duchess. The Duchess rebuffs Lactantio for Andrugio only to find herself rejected because Andrugio prefers Aurelia. Despite the great differences in character between Andrugio and Lactantio, the implicit comparison between the two women is too neat to be unintentional. Both women suffer the humiliation of the biter bit, both attain a degree of self-perception, and both return to their original positions--Aurelia to her "first love", Andrugio, and the Duchess to her vow.

Despite its serious implications, then, the enlightenment of the Duchess conforms to Middleton's basic comic pattern.

This is not to say that the Duchess deserves no sympathy; it is, rather, to suggest that her acceptance of reality is complete and strong, not merely a pathetic withdrawal. She has learned to recognize and deal with her

weakness. She has also learned, like Lactantio and the others, that dissembling provides its own punishment. The exposed Lactantio states the idea most succinctly in an image: "Pox of pride, / It lays a man i'th' mire still, like a Jade / That has too many tricks, and ne'r a good one (V, ii, 228-30)." If the Duchess rises above the other characters, it is not because her situation approaches tragedy, but because her recognition and acceptance of her situation is more mature than theirs. Such recognition, however, does not alienate her from the comic mode. It is, in fact, the Duchess who imposes reconciliation upon the other characters at the end of the play. She convinces the outraged Cardinal not to disinherit Lactantio by offering a dowry of ten thousand ducats for the Page. She speaks for Aurelia's absent father in approving the marriage of Aurelia and Andrugio--a match which has been opposed by Aurelia's Father consistently throughout the play. These selfless actions suggest that the Duchess has learned her lesson well, and the final reconciliation blunts any severe moral condemnation of the characters from within the play.

In addition, Middleton's dramatic technique in More Dissemblers Besides Women follows the practice of his earlier comedies rather than that of Fletcherian tragicomedy. According to Ristine, the most characteristic feature of Fletcherian tragicomic dramaturgy is the surprising denouement. "In Fletcherian tragicomedy . . . Suspense is maintained until the very end, and the action,

whether advanced from the start by constant reversals and surprisals of fortune or led up to one serious climax, may end either in a triumph or catastrophe so far as the spectators have any means of divining. This trait of technic--the absolute concealment of the character of the denouement--from now on becomes a most important and determining factor in tragicomedy, and is rarely neglected by future cultivators of the form."⁶ Surprises are indeed frequent in Fletcherian tragicomedy, not only in the denouement, but also in sudden and inexplicable emotional explosions and in disguises hidden from the audience for the purpose of startling revelations. Thus, at the end of Philaster, when the page, Bellario, is accused of an illicit relationship with Arethusa, much to Philaster's displeasure, Bellario is found to be in reality a girl--Euphrasia, the daughter of Dion, herself in love with Philaster. Both the characters on the stage and the audience itself are deliberately left unprepared for the unmasking--the effect is almost that of a deus ex machina.

Middleton himself uses the technique of surprise in a few of his tragicomedies. In the last scene of The Witch, the reappearance of the Duke, presumed murdered by Almachildes, clears the repentant Duchess of her part in the conspiracy, and the Duchess clears herself of adultery

⁶Frank Humphrey Ristine, English Tragicomedy: Its Origin and History (New York: Columbia University Press, 1910), p. 123.

by announcing that she tricked Almachildes with a hired strumpet. The recovery of the Colonel, supposedly on his death-bed as a result of a wound received in a duel with Captain Ager, lends an element of surprise to the denouement of A Fair Quarrel. However, it is much more typical of Middleton to employ suspense rather than surprise, as Dunkel notes of the London comedies; "The audience understands the situation in which the dramatis personae are struggling. In other words, these comedies are full of surprises for the characters on the stage; whereas the audience, better informed, waits for the effect of the surprise on the dramatis personae."⁷ In Middleton's comedies, then, characters tend to reveal themselves early to the audience, though not to each other. Thus, the denouement is not absolutely concealed as in Fletcherian tragicomedy; an omniscient audience derives pleasure, not from surprise, but from anticipation of the impact of the inevitable revelations upon the deluded characters and of the maneuvers leading to revelation. In More Dissemblers Besides Women, Middleton clearly intends the audience to be aware of each complication as it develops. No disguises are hidden from the audience. Motivations underlying the posing and plotting of every character are carefully explained, either in conversation with an ally or in soliloquy. Middleton takes great pains to prepare the

⁷p. 21.

audience for every twist of plot; the play contains an inordinate number of soliloquies with a largely expository function. The plot is, in fact, so complex that expository soliloquies, though often seeming contrived and clumsy, are perhaps necessary.

Many scenes in More Dissemblers Besides Women depend on the audience's knowledge of disguises and concealed intentions for comic effect. Perhaps the clearest example is the scene in which the Page, Lactantio's mistress in disguise, receives instruction in singing and dancing (V, i). The rough humor of the scene, replete with double entendres, hinges on the audience's awareness that the Page is a girl and that she is pregnant. The other characters on the stage, of course, do not share this knowledge, and when the Page momentarily forgets herself and curtsies during one of the dances, the dancing master, Sinquapace, is outraged. Although the conclusion of the scene has been universally condemned as cruel and "intolerably gross",⁸ the confusion caused by the Page's collapse and her outcry for a midwife is arranged to entertain an audience that has been in on the joke from the start. In fact, Middleton's unorthodox, realistic treatment of the girl-page, a conventional figure in romantic drama,⁹ demands clear perception by the audience

⁸Bullen, Works, I, lxxvii.

⁹V. O. Freeburg, Disguise Plots in Elizabethan Drama (New York: Columbia University Press, 1915), pp. 61-101.

throughout the play. In a scene more crucial to the main plot, the Duchess impels Lactantio to forge a love-letter to her, supposedly signed by Andrugio (III, ii). Ostensibly, her purpose is to discredit the General in order to please Lactantio, his enemy, but she really plans to use the letter to gain access to Andrugio and declare her love for him--in fact, she later comes close to using it as blackmail to force him to marry her. The irony of Lactantio's glee as he contemplates the destruction of his rival can only be appreciated by an audience that understands the Duchess' secret intentions, at least in a general way. The Duchess' asides throughout the scene, joking at Lactantio's eager foolishness, provide the framework necessary for the audience to perceive the irony.

Eugene M. Waith lists eight basic characteristics of fully developed Fletcherian tragicomedy: imitation of the manners of the familiar world, remoteness from the familiar world, intricacy of plot, the improbable hypothesis, the atmosphere of evil, Protean characters, "lively touches of passion", and the language of emotion.¹⁰ Although several of these traits are to be found not only in tragicomedies preceding Beaumont and Fletcher, as Herrick notes,¹¹ but also in comedies of intrigue, Waith's analysis is

¹⁰The Pattern of Tragicomedy in Beaumont and Fletcher (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), pp. 36-40.

¹¹Marvin T. Herrick, Tragicomedy (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1962), p. 263.

helpful because he insists on the conjunction of these qualities to produce the Fletcherian tragicomic pattern-- "we must bear in mind that no single characteristic exists independently of its fellows."¹² Presumably, then, a play may incorporate one or more of Waith's characteristics without conforming to the general technique of Fletcherian tragicomedy. More Dissemblers Besides Women, for example, clearly employs an intricate plot, although it differs from the plot of A King and No King (Waith's example) in that surprise is not a major element in Middleton's play. More Dissemblers Besides Women, however, does contain "symmetrical contrasts and parallels" and its plot "imposes upon experience a formal and intricate scheme."¹³ Middleton's characters are Protean in the sense that "they sometimes conceal what they are beneath disguises and sometimes pretend to be what they are not."¹⁴ Unlike the characters of Fletcherian tragicomedy, however, they undergo changes which are often psychologically veritable--though of course accelerated on the stage--and when distortion occurs, as in the case of the Cardinal's sudden change of attitude, its aim is thematic development rather than the exploitation of emotions. (Even the Cardinal's change is given some

¹²Waith, p. 36.

¹³Waith, p. 37.

¹⁴Waith, p. 35.

psychological verisimilitude by his divided loyalty and his propensity to rationalize.)

On the other hand, the hypothesis of Middleton's play, as the domestic books suggest, is neither improbable nor sensational, even though it is, out of theatrical necessity, exaggerated. The central treatment of the widow question links the play to a real issue in the real world; it is not merely a hypothetical issue in a hypothetical world. There is no active atmosphere of evil in Middleton's play; almost all commentators have agreed that Middleton's characters, with the possible exception of Lactantio, are weak rather than evil. The play contains nothing to compare with the "horror felt by . . . Arbaces himself at the passions which have engulfed him."¹⁵ The Duchess has a few passing self-recriminations, but once she has embarked upon her pursuit of Andrugio, she feels little, if any, guilt for her abandonment of her vow. Only the Cardinal has a very highly developed sense of sin, and he is largely negated as a moral or emotional force in the play by his easy vacillation and his blindness to his own weaknesses. The play simply is not emotionally charged; its lack of emotion, in either situation or language, is what separates it most distinctly from Fletcherian tragicomedy. Emotions have no independent life in the play; in fact, they have very little life at all. The reveries of both the Duchess and the

¹⁵Waith, p. 38.

Cardinal tend to focus on strategy rather than feeling, and the few emotional outbursts are undermined by their self-delusion. The Duchess' angry response to Andrugio's love for the gipsified Aurelia avoids the question of love altogether. The Cardinal's wrath at the hypocrisy of Lactantio smooths over his own. Emotion in Fletcherian tragicomedy may be dishonest, as Waith suggests,¹⁶ but an attempt is made to present it convincingly; in Middleton's play, it is more often self-deception, and the audience is expected to perceive its hollowness even though the character does not.

In Waith's terms, then, More Dissemblers Besides Women would seem to be more familiar than remote, more lifelike than formalized.¹⁷ It is perhaps "theatrical" to the extent that it has an Italian setting and contains an exotic gipsy scene, but its orientation is psychological and realistic.

Middleton's technique, then, operates to keep the audience informed when the characters themselves are not, and results in a gap of irony between audience and characters. An irony which undercuts romanticism, in fact, informs More Dissemblers Besides Women to an extent that would seem incompatible with the melodrama of Fletcherian tragicomedy. If the essence of Fletcherian tragicomedy is "the element of romance, the withdrawal from the pursuit of

¹⁶Waith, p. 39.

¹⁷Waith, pp. 36-37.

reality,"¹⁸ and if "the more romantic the comedy, the more apt it is to approach tragicomedy,"¹⁹ Middleton's play hardly fits the Fletcherian mould. Every character in the play is forced to abandon romantic day-dreams and accept reality. The Page is biologically reduced to her reality at the end of Act V, scene i, but only after she has been tormented and humiliated. Middleton treats her harshly, even though she is perhaps the least guilty and certainly the most sinned against of all the dissemblers, because she represents a romantic convention that needs to be satirized. Lactantio is denied his dream of authority, exposed to the wrath of his self-righteous uncle, and forced to marry the Page, a woman he still considers a "quean." The Cardinal suffers a tongue-lashing from the Duchess and the public embarrassment of having utterly misjudged his nephew. Andrugio, having apparently gained all his desires when the Duchess consents to his marriage to Aurelia, is stunned to find that Aurelia, given a choice, prefers Lactantio. Moments later, he accepts her apology and takes her back, but his self-confidence has clearly been shaken. Both Aurelia and the Duchess are rejected by the men they love. All of the major characters in the play are treated within an ironic framework of self-deception as well as dissembling,

¹⁸Una M. Ellis-Fermor, The Jacobean Drama (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1935), p. 202.

¹⁹Herrick, p. 264.

and at the end, all are finally awakened as well as unmasked. Thus, although the play is dark in its implications about the human ego, the consequences of dissembling are never allowed to approach tragedy, nor to dissolve into the wish-fulfillment of Fletcherian tragicomedy. They are neither fatal, as in tragedy, nor threatened but ultimately withheld, as in tragicomedy. They are painful but instructive.²⁰

²⁰Since this chapter was written, an excellent discussion of the play has been published in David M. Holmes' The Art of Thomas Middleton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. 59-77.

THE TEXT

On September 9, 1653, Humphrey Moseley, the publisher and bookseller, entered a group of 41 plays in the Stationers' Register. Among the plays listed were the following by "Mr Tho. Middleton":

More Dissemblers besides women
A right-woman, or women beware of women
No witt, no helpe like a woman
The Puritan Maid, modest wife & wanton widdow¹

Thus, even though More Dissemblers Besides Women was not actually printed until 1657, Moseley claimed the printing rights to the play four years earlier. It is therefore likely that he had a manuscript copy of the play in his possession or at least knew where one was obtainable as early as 1653. John Curtis Reed believes that "Moseley bought from the playhouses a group of plays that they had at hand, and he intended to publish them at his leisure."² He may even have intended to use some of the manuscripts for trade purposes, for many of the plays on his lists remained unpublished. Reed suggests that Moseley registered these

¹W. W. Greg, A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1939-59), I, 60-61.

²"Humphrey Moseley, Publisher", Oxford Bibliographical Society, Proceedings and Papers, II (1927-30), part II, 68.

unpublished plays to "secure them from being acted without his consent."³ It is likely, at any rate, that Moseley sometimes dealt directly with the acting companies, and that he sometimes used an intermediary. In connection with The Widow, for instance, Langbaine remarks that "Mr. Alexander Gough, a great lover of Plays . . . helpt Mr. Moseley the bookseller to this, and several other Dramatick Manuscripts . . ."⁴ It is not particularly surprising that Moseley waited four years before actually publishing the play, since lists of his publications during the early and middle 1650's were voluminous. His output, during his entire career, included large numbers of plays, the first collected edition of Milton's poems (1645-6), and the works of Cartwright, Crashaw, D'Avenant, Denham, Donne, Fanshaw, Howell, Vaughan, and Waller.⁵ In analyzing the prefaces that Moseley wrote for many of the books he published, Reed concludes that Moseley "wanted to advertise the books, and he wanted to assert his own position as a critic and guardian of good literature--in other words, to advertise himself."⁶ Reed also cites evidence in

³Reed, p. 68.

⁴Langbaine, p. 298.

⁵Henry R. Plomer, A Dictionary of the Booksellers and Printers Who Were At Work in England, Scotland, and Ireland from 1641 to 1667 (Oxford: The Bibliographical Society, 1907), pp. 132-33.

⁶Reed, p. 69.

commendatory poems addressed to Moseley that his reputation as a judge and publisher of literature was high.⁷

Moseley frequently published advertisements of his books already in print and those forthcoming; Richard Brome's Five New Plays (1653), for instance, contains a list of 135 works, and Sir Aston Cokain's Dianea (1654) has a list of 180 items.⁸ Of particular interest is Separate List VI A (1656), copies of which have been discovered in The Country Captaine, and the Varietie . . . by a Person of Honor . . . 1649, Six New Plays . . . by James Shirley . . . 1653, and No {Wit / Help} like a Womans . . . by Tho. Middleton . . . 1657.⁹ At the end of the list, under a section headed "Books I do purpose to Print very speedtly [sic]", appear the following plays:

244. More Dissemblers then Women.

245. Women beware Women.

246. No {Witt / Help} like a Womans.

All three plays are again attributed to "Tho. Midleton, Gent."

The octavo volume, Two New Playes, was issued by Moseley in 1657. It contains prefatory material and the texts of More Dissemblers Besides Women and Women Beware Women. The collation is as follows:

⁷Reed, pp. 64-67.

⁸Plomer, p. 133.

⁹Greg, Bibliography, III, pp. 1178-9.

8⁰, ¶I A⁴B--N⁸O⁴. 105 leaves, paged (B1) 1-197 [misprinting 6 as 4, 142-3 as 140-1]. (The misprinted pages do not affect pagination in the remainder of the volume.)

Page ¶I^r is blank. On ¶I^v is an unsigned engraved portrait inscribed "Vera Effigies Tho: Midletoni Gent:". This portrait, the only known picture of Middleton, has been ascribed to the engraver, Thomas Cross.¹⁰ Sig. A1 is the joint title page, which is set as follows: TWO NEW / PLAYES. / VIZ. [Brace covering four lines of play titles] More DISSEMBLERS / besides WOMEN. / WOMEN beware / WOMEN. / [Rule] / WRITTEN / By Tho. Middleton, Gent. / [Rule] / [Ornament] / [Rule] / London, Printed for Humphrey Moseley and are to be sold / at his Shop at the Prince's Arms in St. Pauls / Churchyard. 1657.

Sig. A1^v is blank. A2 is the title page for More Dissemblers Besides Women, which is set as follows: MORE / DISSEMBLERS / BESIDES / WOMEN. / [Rule] / A / COMEDY, / BY / Tho. Middleton, Gent. / [Rule] / [Ornament] / [Rule] / LONDON: / Printed for Humphrey Moseley, 1657.

Sig. A2^v is blank. On A3 and A3^v, there is a prose address by Moseley to the reader. A4 contains a commendatory poem on Women Beware Women, "Upon The Tragedy of My Familiar Acquaintance, Tho. Middleton", by Nathaniel Richards. A4^v lists "The Actors Names" for More Dissemblers Besides Women.

¹⁰James Caulfield, Callographiana: The Printsellers [sic] Chronicle and Collectors [sic] Guide To . . . Engraved British Portraits (London: G. Smeeton, 1814), p. 93.

The text of More Dissemblers begins on B1 and runs through G2. Sig. G2^v is blank. G3 is the title page for Women Beware Women. G3^v contains the Dramatis Personae for Women Beware Women. The text of Women Beware Women begins on G4 and runs through O3. Signatures O3^v, O4, and O4^v are blank.

Elizabeth Jacobs has demonstrated, in a scrutiny of ornaments employed in the octavo, that the printer was Thomas Newcomb. The key device in her identification, appearing on the individual title pages for both More Dissemblers Besides Women and Women Beware Women, is a closed thistle bud framed by a rectangle of leaves and thistle flowers. The ornament is flawed by a thin horizontal break running across the face slightly above the center. This device, along with several others used in Two New Playes, may be found in Thomas Blount's Glossographia, a 1656 octavo in which the printer is named in the imprint as Thomas Newcomb, as well as in several other books printed for Moseley (including Middleton's No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's, 1657.)¹¹

After serving a seven year apprenticeship, Newcomb married Ruth Raworth, the widow of John Raworth, in 1648,¹²

¹¹Elizabeth Jacobs, "A Critical Edition of Thomas Middleton's Women Beware Women," Diss. University of Wisconsin 1941, pp. xvi-xix. C. William Miller, "Thomas Newcomb: A Restoration Printer's Ornament Stock," Studies in Bibliography, III (1950), 155-170. The individual title-page ornament for More Dissemblers and Women Beware Women is No. 15 among Miller's illustrations, and the joint title-page ornament is No. 14.

¹²Miller, p. 156.

and took over Raworth's printing business in the Parish of St. Bennet, Paul's Wharf, Thames Street. He printed much Commonwealth literature and belles lettres in the 1650's, and continued to flourish after the Restoration. A survey taken on July 29, 1668 reported him to have three presses and a proof press, one apprentice, seven compositors, and five pressmen. He also held a partnership in the King's Printing House in the Savoy, and printed the Oxford and London Gazettes.¹³ According to Miller, "one finds few prominent writers of history, science, theology, or literature in the last half of the century who had not had one or more compositions run off Newcomb's presses."¹⁴ This claim may be slightly exaggerated, but it does suggest the range and volume of Newcomb's production. As a printer of literature, he included the following in his output:

Lachrymae Musarum: The Tears of the Muses, elegies on the death of Lord Hastings collected by Richard Brome (1649); Payne Fisher's poems in several collections; D'Avenant's Gondibert: An Heroic Poem (1651); several of Milton's tracts; Elise, or Innocencie Guilty, a romance printed for Moseley in 1655; Raleigh's The Cabinet-Council, with a short preface by Milton (1658); Hooker's Works (1666); Dryden's The Wild Gallant (1669); and Walton's Lives of

¹³Plomer, p. 136.

¹⁴Miller, p. 155.

Donne, Wotton, Hooker, and Herbert (1670).¹⁵ In addition, he printed for Moseley Three New Playes by Philip Massinger (1655), Lodowick Carlell's The Passionate Lovers (1655), and Middleton's No Wit, No Help like a Woman's (1657).¹⁶

The octavo presents a good text of More Dissemblers Besides Women. Only a few passages seem confused; on sig. F2, for instance, an obvious stage direction--"Here they sing Pricksong"--is printed as part of a line in Crotchet's speech, although it is separated by dashes and parentheses from the rest of the speech. Such a mistake, however, may be attributed almost certainly to the compositor and not to the printer's copy, for the sense of the passage is clear. There is a loose thread dangling in the play--the First Lord's ambition to become a suitor to the Duchess (sig. D5) is not pursued later in the play and woven into the web of intrigue and counter-intrigue. However, the failure to pick up this minor thread of the plot does not necessarily indicate an abbreviated or corrupt text; it may merely indicate authorial oversight or even deliberate characterization of the First Lord as addicted to empty boasting.

¹⁵W. Carew Hazlitt, ed., Handbook to the Popular, Poetical, and Dramatic Literature of Great Britain from the Invention of Printing to the Restoration (London: J. R. Smith, 1867), and Supplements.

¹⁶Jacobs, p. xviii. See p. xix for additional plays and poems which may have been printed by Newcomb.

Other evidence of a bad text--broken meter, gaps in the dialogue, imperfect grammar--is insubstantial.¹⁷

The printer's copy seems not to have been a prompt-book, for the usual characteristics of texts printed from prompt copies are not apparent in the octavo.¹⁸ No actors' names are mentioned in the text, and the stage directions, in general, show little concern for stage business. Although entrances are clearly marked and only one is omitted, none are anticipated. There are two references in the stage directions to off-stage noises--"Cornets: And a shout within" (sig. B7^V) and "Knocks within" (sig. D5)--but neither of these is anticipated.

Five stage directions note necessary properties, but none clearly indicates the hand of a prompter. On sig. B3^V, Lactantio enters "with a Book." Although the book is not directly alluded to in the dialogue, it is clearly an adjunct to Lactantio's pose of meditation. The stage direction is immediately preceded by the Cardinal's announcement of Lactantio's appearance and followed by a line in which the Cardinal directly addresses Lactantio; since Lactantio is presumably on stage when the Cardinal

¹⁷Harry R. Hoppe, The Bad Quarto of Romeo and Juliet (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1948), p. 57.

¹⁸Ronald B. McKerrow, "The Elizabethan Printer and Dramatic Manuscripts," The Library, 4th Ser., 12 (1932), 270-72. W. W. Greg, The Shakespeare First Folio (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1955), pp. 112-142.

speaks to him, the stage direction gives no advance warning for the prompter to have the book ready. Another stage direction--"Enter Page with a Letter" (sig. B4^V)--presents a similar case, except that the letter is immediately referred to in the dialogue. Still another--"Enter Dondolo and the Page with a Shirt" (sig. B8^V)--occurs at the beginning of a scene, and the Page mentions the shirt in the first line of dialogue. A direction on sig. B8--"During these Songs, Andrugio peruses a Letter delivered him by a Lord, and then closes with this Song below"--is printed after twenty lines of song and is followed by only two more lines before Andrugio's exit. Thus, the stage direction is adequate for a reader, but not placed to meet the need of a prompter to have the letter ready as a property. On sig. E1, the gipsies enter "with Booties of Hens, and Ducks, & c. singing." The hens and ducks are referred to specifically in the dialogue much later in the scene (sigs. E2 and E2^V), and the stage direction might therefore be taken as anticipatory. However, booty of various kinds (including hens) is also mentioned in the gipsies' opening song, so that the anticipatory function of the stage direction is greatly reduced. Also, the author would be quite as likely as the prompter to suggest that booty be associated with the gipsies. Furthermore, the unspecific number of gipsies demanded by the stage direction seems uncharacteristic of a prompter's annotations.

Indeed, although they are generally quite full, several of the stage directions exhibit a vagueness which would be surprising in a prompt copy. A stage direction on sig. B2, for example, calls for the "L. Cardinal in his Closet, and two or three Lords." The scene has speaking parts for three Lords, and although only the First Lord is of even minimal importance in the play and two Lords could easily perform the scene, more precision might be expected in a prompter's note. Several stage directions refer in a general way to costuming--"Enter Aurelia like a Gentleman" (sig. B5), "Enter Father, Governor, Aurelia, and Andrugio disguised" (sig. C5^V), and "Enter Aurelia like a Gipsey" (sig. D8). However, these directions indicating disguise are probably too vague and certainly too late to be of much use for a prompter, yet they are absolutely necessary for a reader to understand the dialogue and to imagine the complicated interaction of characters on the stage.

That the printer's copy was not the author's foul papers is almost certain. Middleton's habits of spelling and punctuation, displayed in the holograph Trinity MS of A Game at Chesse¹⁹ and the seventeen pages of the Huntington MS of the same play written in the author's own hand,²⁰

¹⁹R. C. Bald, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1929).

²⁰George R. Price, "The Huntington MS. of A game at chesse," The Huntington Library Quarterly, 17 (1953), 86.

clearly are not in evidence in the octavo, and it is doubtful that compositorial preferences alone would so thoroughly have obliterated Middleton's idiosyncracies. It cannot, perhaps, be maintained with absolute certainty that the compositor's spellings have not simply superseded those of his manuscript; however, T. H. Hill has shown that it is possible, at least in some cases, to detect the spelling habits of a particular author or scribe in a printed text as well as those of one or more compositors,²¹ and if it is possible to show the presence of an author with known habits, it should also be possible to show his absence.

Many of Middleton's distinctive spellings have been enumerated.²² He consistently uses double e in bee, hee, shee, and mee, but this spelling does not occur in the octavo of More Dissemblers Besides Women. Middleton's preference for the unvoiced preterite and past participle is -t (as in blest or curst); in More Dissemblers I count 38 examples (or about 44%) of this form as against 49 examples (or about 56%) of other forms, especially -'d (as in escap'd), -ed (as in forced), and -'t (as in talk't). These varying forms are so thoroughly scattered throughout the text that no clear pattern emerges, and it is difficult

²¹"Spelling and the Bibliographer," The Library, 5th Ser., 18 (1963), 1-28.

²²George R. Price, "The Early Editions of A trick to catch the old one," The Library, 5th Ser., 22 (1967), 210-11. Thomas Middleton, Women Beware Women, ed. Charles Barber (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1969), pp. 13-14.

to determine whether the relative frequency of the -t spelling indicates a trace of Middleton's hand, scribal sharing of this single spelling habit, or mere inconsistency on the part of the compositor. Some, at least, of the verb forms ending in -t are merely standard (i.e. kept, spent). The fact that no other distinctively Middletonian characteristics recur so often as the -t ending in More Dissemblers lends support to a theory of scribal or compositorial origin. For the voiced preterite or past participle ending, Middleton prefers -de (usde) or -d (cald). No examples of the first form and only two examples of the second (requird and toild) appear in More Dissemblers. The usual form in the octavo is either -'d (vow'd) or -ed (delivered). Middleton's use of the suffixes nes (boldnes) and lesse (fadomlesse) do not occur in More Dissemblers. His tendency to use y in diphthongs--ay (inhumayne), -ey (neyther), and -oy (voyce)--is not reflected in More Dissemblers; only five such spellings (less than 1%) occur in the octavo text--aym, rejoyce, poyson, Heyday (which is elsewhere spelled heiday) and joyn'd each appear once. Whereas Middleton is regular in his use of -ei (as in feild), the text of More Dissemblers is almost evenly divided between -ie (grief) and -ei (theif); these two examples, in fact, occur on successive lines. The spelling -ee (theeves) also occurs once. Since the -ei spelling is not really very distinctive, and since the two spellings are mixed in the octavo, no conclusions may be safely drawn from the evidence.

Middleton invariably doubles the final letter of monosyllabic verbs and nouns with a short vowel preceded and followed by consonants (lett, sitt); only one instance of this spelling (begg'd) occurs in More Dissemblers. Middleton writes -dg to indicate a soft -g, especially after -n (frindge); in More Dissemblers, this spelling does not appear after -n, and occurs only once elsewhere (quartridges). Middleton's peculiar use of the apostrophe in the plural pronoun e'm and the phrases sha's and ha's is absent from the text of More Dissemblers. Middleton favors -ie to the final unstressed -y (holie); in More Dissemblers, the -ie spelling occurs 10 times (less than 3%). Middleton's practice of doubling final l after a short vowel (naturall) is not reproduced in More Dissemblers. Middleton usually writes -nck for -nk (except in thinke and thanke); More Dissemblers contains no instances of this spelling. Middleton prefers a -z spelling in words like suffize and exercize, while in More Dissemblers, -s or -c is consistently used in such words. Price lists Middleton's favored spellings for 38 common words; Barber adds 6 more to the list.²³ Of these 44 Middleton spellings, only four (honor, vertue, pretious, and rellish) occur in More Dissemblers.

Although such statistics may be insignificant individually, and although they do not provide identifiable

²³Price, "Early Editions", p. 211; Barber, p. 14.

spelling patterns in the text, taken together they do indicate that Middleton's known spelling habits are not substantially reproduced in the octavo of More Dissemblers Besides Women. Barber notes that the spellings in Women Beware Women are "very similar" to those in More Dissemblers, but that Middleton's spellings are "remote" from both texts.²⁴ Although it might be natural to assume that the compositor is responsible for the spelling similarities in the two texts, Barber reasons that if Moseley had acquired very old copies of the two plays, scribal transcription might have been necessary, and the same scribe might have been employed to copy both texts.²⁵ Playhouse manuscripts acquired by Moseley might have been difficult to read, and it would no doubt have been advantageous to re-direct the text toward a reader in any case. The late date of the octavo and the four year time lapse between Moseley's entry in the Stationers' Register and the actual publication of Two New Playes give credibility to Barber's argument, and it is, as he points out, difficult to believe that the compositor alone would have so thoroughly "modernized" the spelling of a Middleton holograph.²⁶ Thus, it seems likely that the printer's copy was a scribal transcript, probably

²⁴ Barber, p. 14.

²⁵ Barber, p. 14.

²⁶ Barber, p. 14.

of a playhouse MS, made in the 1650's for the purpose of cleaning up the text and pointing it toward readers.

The punctuation of the octavo of More Dissemblers, which also contrasts with Middleton's known practice, supports this view. Middleton habitually relies on the comma, not only to separate independent clauses, but sometimes even to end speeches. He occasionally uses the semicolon at the end of speeches. Colons and periods are infrequent in his manuscripts.²⁷ A typical speech from More Dissemblers reveals a much heavier style of punctuation than Middleton's:

And after that, farewell sweet Sir for ever.
 A good kinde Gentleman to serve our turn with,
 But not for lasting: I have chose a Stuff
 Will wear out two of him, and one finer too:
 I like not him that has two Mistresses;
 War, and his sweet-heart, he can ne'r please both:
 And War's a soaker, she's no friend to us,
 Turns a man home sometimes to his Mistress,
 Some forty ounces poorer then he went.
 All his discourse out of the Book of Surgery,
 Seer-cloth, and Salve, and lies you, all in Tents,
 Like your Camp-Victlers: Out upon't, I smile
 To think how I have fitted him with an office;
 His love takes pains to bring our loves together,
 Much like your man that labors to get treasure,
 To keep his wife high for anothers pleasure. (sig. C7^v)

The use of colons, semicolons, and periods exemplified here and frequent throughout the text is very uncharacteristic of Middleton.

No clear evidence of more than one compositor is offered by the text of More Dissemblers Besides Women.

²⁷Price, "Early Editions", p. 212.

There are, of course, variations in spelling and in the use of punctuation, but these are not frequent or consistent enough to establish definite separate patterns. In addition, several tests used to determine the number and shares of compositors fail to yield decisive results.²⁸ Apostrophes are consistently used in contractions. With one exception (sig. B3^V), all entrances are centered, and with only three exceptions (sigs. B3^V, B4^V, and B5), all entrances are separated from the text by spaces. There are a few minor inconsistencies in the spellings of speech prefixes: the prefix for Aurelia's Father is sometimes abbreviated Fath. and sometimes written out; that for the Governor of the Fort of Milan is sometimes abbreviated Gover. and sometimes Govern.; Celia's name is sometimes abbreviated Cel. and sometimes spelled out; and Lactantio's name, usually abbreviated Lact., once appears as Lactant. (sig. G1). But the fact that alternate spellings sometimes occur on the same page (sigs. B5^V and F2, for example) suggests that the variation is probably not due to different compositors.

Since Newcomb's shop was a flourishing and presumably well-ordered business, one might expect that his compositors routinely cast off copy and set by formes for the sake of economy. In the case of More Dissemblers Besides Women, both inferential and textual evidence suggest that such

²⁸George R. Price, "The Authorship and the Bibliography of The Revenger's Tragedy," The Library, 5th Ser., 15 (1960), 272.

a procedure was followed. Since the printer's copy was probably in a scribal hand, and since the play itself is mostly in verse, it would not have been difficult for the compositor to make his estimates. The condition of the octavo text itself suggests that few miscalculations occurred and only minor adjustments were required. The usual number of lines of print per page is thirty-six; nine pages of the eighty-three have fewer lines. It was apparently the compositor's habit to set entrances and scene headings off from the text of the play by spaces. With only three exceptions (sigs. B3^V, B4^V, and B5), all entrances and scene headings are so set off. With no exceptions, when an entrance or scene heading occurs at the top of the page (sigs. B5, B6^V, D8, E4, F5^V, and F7^V), it is set off by two spaces (rather than the usual one) from the running title. The extra leading might have been used in these cases to draw attention to the entrance or scene heading, to distinguish it from a normal line of text. As a result, five of these six pages have thirty-five lines of text; only E4 has the standard thirty-six. Four other pages (D7^V, E1^V, E3^V, and F5) are also underrun by a line or more.

On most of these pages, there are signs of minor adjustments due to miscalculation in casting off of copy. On sig. B3^V, the entrance of a servant appears on the same line as the Cardinal's call for him, and the servant's exit a moment later is omitted. Although the page is in verse, the lack of spacing for the entrance and the omission of the

exit suggest a small error in casting off of copy. On sigs. B4^V and B5, two entrances are centered, but not separated from the dialogue by spaces; the omitted leading again seems an attempt to adjust for a mistake by the compositor. Sigs. B6^V and B7 are clearly underrun. The scene heading and stage direction at the top of B6^V takes up two lines even though it could easily have been printed on one, and three times on B7 a line of verse is stretched by very wide spacing between words to two lines of print. Sig. D7^V has three lines of white paper at the bottom of the page; the catchword, which would normally be on line thirty-seven, appears on the third line of white paper (line thirty-six), perhaps in an attempt by the compositor to disguise the space of white. Together D7^V and D8 contain an act-division and three centered entrances; it is probable that the compositor overestimated the amount of copy for these pages, and found himself with extra space. Sigs. E1^V and E2 contain a mixture of prose and verse and some gibberish on E1^V in which the division of lines of verse is uncertain. The compositor set the gibberish in one long line of verse (two lines of print) and two short lines of verse (two lines of print). The second short line of verse rhymes with the long line, and the two short lines probably could have been set in one line of print. It is therefore possible that the decision to divide the two short lines of verse between two lines of print was an attempt to stretch copy on the page. A clearer case of underrunning occurs on E2; line

thirty-six consists of a single syllable which could easily have been set in line thirty-five. Sigs. E3^V and E4 contain prose dialogue and some irregular verse. There is a blank line at the bottom of E3^V, and there are several obvious attempts to stretch copy by wide spacing between words on E4. Sigs. F4^V and F5 are in prose and verse, and are badly underrun. At the bottom of F5, there are six lines of white paper; the catchword appears in line thirty-four. Sig. F5^V appears a normal thirty-six-line page (counting the extra leading at the top for a scene heading), but F6 contains two attempts to add a line of print by stretching a line of verse with wide spacing between words. Sigs. F7^V and F8 show no sign of adjustments.

In general, miscalculations result from the compositor overestimating the amount of copy needed to fill a given sequence of pages and leaving too much space. The errors, however, are usually small and the adjustments reasonable. It seems fair to conclude that care was taken to avoid crowding and to preserve a pleasing appearance for the pages of the octavo.

In format, the octavo appears normal. I have found no evidence of half-sheet imposition in the main body of the text, although it is possible that the half-sheet A1-A4 was either printed alone by half-sheet imposition or was printed with 01-04 on one sheet by half-sheet imposition. In the other gatherings, the signatures are normal and regular for an octavo; the first four leaves of each

gathering are signed. Such a system of signing would appear to be of no advantage in half-sheet imposition. According to McKerrow, half-sheet imposition might be employed to allow a "manifest saving in the amount of type required", or to "facilitate the economical distribution of work between compositor and pressman" by allowing the printing to begin when fewer pages have been composed.²⁹ But it is doubtful that there was pressure upon Newcomb's supply of type; his shop was large and presumably well-supplied. It seems unlikely, too, that haste in the printing of the octavo took precedence over the inconvenience and extra labor involved in sewing most books printed by half-sheet imposition.³⁰ The octavo does not elsewhere seem printed with undue haste.

The evidence of the running titles of the play as to its imposition and printing is not absolutely conclusive, but does, perhaps, admit several inferences. The running titles are in italics, and each page of the octavo contains a full running title reading More Dissemblers Besides Women. Peculiarities of type characters and inking and measurements of the length of running titles have made it possible to identify many, but not all of the titles. Nevertheless,

²⁹Ronald B. McKerrow, An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1928), pp. 67-68.

³⁰McKerrow, Introduction, p. 67.

several tentative conclusions may be drawn even from the incomplete evidence.

Two sets of running titles, in general one for the inner formes and the other for the outer formes, were apparently used. A probable sequence of imposition is as follows: B_o , B_i , C_o , C_i , D_o , D_i , E_i , E_o , F_i , F_o , G_i , G_o . A transfer of several running titles from D_o to E_i suggests that in gathering E the inner forme was imposed and printed before the outer forme. This change in sequence suggests that in the last sheet of the play, G_i preceded G_o . However, it is possible that the compositor began Women Beware Women with the outer forme, in which case G_o preceded G_i . As far as the evidence indicates, no signs of accidental disturbance or unusual delay in the printing process appear in the transfer of skeletons from forme to forme.

I have collated eleven copies of More Dissemblers Besides Women for the present edition. The locations of these copies and their abbreviated forms are as follows:

Huntington Library (Hun)

Boston Public Library (BPL)

Newberry Library (N)

Folger Shakespeare Library (F)

Harvard (Har)

Yale (Y)

Princeton (P)

British Museum, shelf list 643.b.37 (BM1)

British Museum, shelf list 162.d.28 (BM2)

Bodleian Library, shelf list MAL.247 (4)--(B1)

Bodleian Library, shelf list 8^o.C.19.ART.B5 (4)--(B2)

I have found fifteen press-variants in these eleven copies, distributed among Forme B (outer), Forme C (inner), and Forme D (inner), as follows:

<u>Signature</u>	<u>Variants</u>
B2 ^v	pitty 'em] P, B1 (uncorrected) pity 'em] Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2 (corrected)
B2 ^v	woman] P, B1 (uncorrected) woman,] Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2 (corrected)
B2 ^v	her] P, B1 (uncorrected) her,] Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2 (corrected)
B3	owners] P, B1 (uncorrected) owners,] Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2 (corrected)
B3	erre,] P, B1 (uncorrected) erre;] Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2 (corrected)
B3	joys,] P, B1 (uncorrected) joys.] Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2 (corrected)
B4 ^v	Lord;] P, B1 (uncorrected) Lord,] Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2 (corrected)
B4 ^v	credit] P, B1 (uncorrected) credit,] Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2 (corrected)
B6 ^v	pity.] P, B1 (uncorrected) pity?] Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2 (corrected)

SignatureVariants

B8 ^v	me] P, B1 (uncorrected) me,] Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2 (corrected)
C8	<u>Dissemlers</u>] Hun, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2 (uncorrected) <u>Dissemblers</u>] BPL, N, P, B1 (corrected)
D1 ^v	with no] Hun, Har (uncorrected) with me] BPL, N, F, Y, P, BM1, BM2, B1, B2 (corrected)
D7 ^v	shape,] Hun, Har (uncorrected) shape] BPL, N, F, Y, P, BM1, BM2, B1, B2 (corrected)
D7 ^v	freedom,] Hun, Har (uncorrected) freedom] BPL, N, F, Y, P, BM1, BM2, B1, B2 (corrected)
D8	crosses;] Hun, Har (uncorrected) crosses!] BPL, N, F, Y, P, BM1, BM2, B1, B2 (corrected)

It may be seen that of the fifteen variants, twelve involve changes of punctuation, two involve spelling changes, and only one involves the change of a word. The press corrections in outer B tend to strengthen punctuation; given the generally heavy punctuation of the octavo, it seems unlikely that press corrections would lighten punctuation in most cases, and the number of copies in which the variants appear suggests that the lighter punctuation belongs to the earlier state. In inner C, the running title on sig. C8 is misspelled "More Dissemlers Besides Women" in seven copies and corrected to read "More Dissemblers Besides Women" in four copies. That a press correction, rather than a dropped letter, occurred is indicated by the fact that the

same running title appears on sig. B8 as "More Dissembers Besides Women" in all eleven copies. The direction of change in inner D is determined in part by the number of copies in which the variants appear and in part by the correction of a word on sig. D1^V in the following passage:

" . . . there's no good Fellowship in this Dandiprat, this Dive-dapper, as is in other Pages; they'd go a swimming with [no--me] familiarly i' th' heat of Summer, and clap what you call 'ems." The correction of "no" to "me" seems demanded, and the original error is plausible in the light of the compositor's reading of the manuscript. In Secretary hand, o and e are very similar, and it is also conceivable that n and m could be confused. It is much less likely that the compositor changed "me" to "no" and forgot to add a word or to change "familiarly" to "familiarity"--and such press corrections would have been difficult in any case. It follows that other variants in inner D in the copies containing "me" are also corrections unless they are attributable to accident.

Corrections within each forme seem to have been made at the same time, since only two states occur for each forme; however, it is possible that copies I have been unable to examine might establish a third state. Also, as W. W. Greg has pointed out, "it by no means follows that every variant in the corrected state is itself a correction. It is quite conceivable that when the compositor unlocked the type of the forme in order to make the corrections

indicated by the reader, accidents may have happened to it, which he had to set right to the best of his ability, and that in endeavouring to do so he may have introduced errors. Thus any particular variant may be due to a failure on the part of the compositor and have had nothing whatever to do with the press reader."³¹ Greg's suggestion might account for the puzzling spelling change on sig. B2^V, but the pattern of the variants in More Dissemblers Besides Women implies that most of the changes were purposeful.

In all but two cases, I have adopted the corrected readings in the text as better suited to the spelling and punctuation of the text as a whole and as more authoritative. In these two instances, both in outer B, the uncorrected readings simply seem more logical. I have, of course, recorded the alternate readings in textual annotations.

Restoration adaptations of Elizabethan and Jacobean plays may sometimes be useful in interpreting and reconstructing the original texts, but to say that John Learder's The Rambling Justice is a Restoration adaptation of More Dissemblers Besides Women is to stretch a point. Learder's plot, best characterized by his play's subtitle, The Jealous Husbands, is a complicated and silly series of episodes in which two foolish husbands, Sir Arthur Twilight and Contentious Surly, attempt to keep themselves

³¹The Variants in the First Quarto of "King Lear"
(London: The Bibliographical Society, 1940), pp. 38-39.

from being cuckolded by their discontented wives. The intrigues center around Sir Generall Amorous, a young rake who has already enjoyed Surly's wife, Petulant Easy, and who, during the course of the play, schemes to enjoy Sir Arthur's wife, Eudoria. Spywell, Sir Generall's quick-witted servant, and Bramble, Sir Arthur's bumbling servant, add to the intrigue. Sir Geoffry Jolt, the Rambling Justice of the title, clumsily attempts to seduce almost every woman in the play, but is made the butt of numerous practical jokes. John Twiford, a foppish madman, puts in several appearances without really being integrated into the plot.

Only in two scenes does the play bear any relationship to More Dissemblers Besides Women. In Act II, scene i, Sir Generall Amorous receives news from Bramble about Eudoria, who is being closely watched by her jealous husband. Following this conversation, Bramble, who has been mistreated by his master, Sir Arthur, decides to join a tribe of gipsies. The language is taken, in large part, from More Dissemblers, Act III, scene i, in which Dondolo reports to Lactantio about Aurelia's confinement in the castle and then determines to become a gipsy when Lactantio insults him. Much of Middleton's dialogue is repeated verbatim by Leanerd, although there are, of course, modifications to adapt it more perfectly to Leanerd's plot. In Act II, scene ii of The Rambling Justice, both Eudoria and Petulant Easy have escaped from their husbands and disguised

themselves as gipsies. Meanwhile, Bramble is gipsified by the Captain of the gipsies. The scene corresponds in large measure to More Dissemblers, Act IV, scene ii, in which Aurelia is disguised as a gipsy and Dondolo is gipsified. Again, much of Leanerd's language is borrowed directly from Middleton, although some of Middleton's dialogue is omitted, and Leanerd adds some dialogue of his own.

Leanerd's versions of Middleton's scenes do not appear to have any textual authority. In a few instances, he slightly modifies Middleton's language and provides some clarification of its meaning. I have not adopted Leanerd's readings in these cases, but they do appear in several annotations. For the most part, however, Leanerd's play is not very useful in interpreting Middleton's.

The present edition is a conservative, old-spelling text based on the editorial policies outlined by Greg and Bowers.³² Punctuation has been emended only when necessary to clarify the text, and alterations have been recorded in the textual annotations, with one exception. I have silently modified punctuation in a few places to end speeches with full stops or dashes instead of the occasional commas or colons of the octavo. I have retained the capitalization and spelling of the octavo, but have

³²W. W. Greg, The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1954), pp. x-liv. Fredson Bowers, Textual and Literary Criticism (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1959), pp. 117-150.

substituted the modern s for the long f, and have modernized the usage of i, j, u, and y. Speech headings have been normalized, and stage directions which I have supplied have been bracketed. No attempt has been made to reproduce typographical features of the octavo such as catchwords, running titles, oversized capital letters, and ornaments.

More Dissemblers Besides Women was printed three times during the Nineteenth Century. Since the text was modernized in all three editions, I have not included them in the collation. However, I have consulted Dilke, Dyce, and Bullen in the preparation of the text, and textual or explanatory notes based upon their editions are indicated in the annotations.

The text contains three kinds of notes--textual, glossarial, and explanatory. The textual notes include a recording of press corrections, octavo readings in all cases of emendation, and a few instances of emendation by other editors or readings from The Rambling Justice which I have rejected but thought worth recording. Preferred readings are placed before the bracket and alternate readings after it. Glossarial notes are based, unless otherwise indicated, upon the Oxford English Dictionary; however, they are sometimes combined with explanatory notes. A brief bibliography of sources for explanatory notes (with abbreviations) follows:

Editions of Middleton

Dilke. [C. W. Dilke, ed.] Old English Plays; being a Selection from the Early Dramatic Writers, Vol. IV. London: John Martin, 1815.

Dyce. Alexander Dyce, ed. The Works of Thomas Middleton, Vol. III. London: Edward Lumley, 1840.

Bullen. A. H. Bullen, ed. The Works of Thomas Middleton, 8 vols. London: J. C. Nimmo, 1885-86. (Quotations from Middleton's plays are taken from this edition.)

Editions of other dramatists

Fredson Bowers, ed. The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon, Vol. I. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966.

C. H. Herford, Percy and Evelyn Simpson, eds. Ben Jonson, Vols. VII and X. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941, 1950.

F. L. Lucas, ed. The Complete Works of John Webster, Vol. II. London: Chatto & Windus, 1927.

William Allan Neilson and Charles Jarvis Hill, eds. The Complete Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare. Cambridge, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1942.

Reference

Harman. Thomas Harman. A Caveat for Common Cursitors. London, 1566.

Judges. A. V. Judges. The Elizabethan Underworld. London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1930.

Nares. R. Nares. Glossary of Words, Phrases, Names, and Allusions. London: George Routledge, 1905.

Shakespeare's Bawdy. Eric Partridge. Shakespeare's Bawdy. New York: Dutton Paperbacks, 1960.

Sh. Eng. Walter Raleigh, Sidney Lee, and C. T. Onions, eds. Shakespeare's England, Vol. II. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1916.

Sugden. E. H. Sugden. A Topographical Dictionary to the Works of Shakespeare and His Fellow Dramatists. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1925.

Tilley. M. P. Tilley. Dictionary of Proverbs in England
in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. Ann Arbor:
University of Michigan Press, 1950.

The Actors Names.

Lord Cardinal of Milan.
Lactantio, his Nephew.
Andrugio, General of Milan.
Father to Aurelia.
Lords of Milan.
Governor of the Fort, Servant to Aurelia.
Crotchet, a Singing Master.¹
Sinquapace, a Dancing Master.²
Usher to Sinquapace.
Dondolo, Servant to Lactantio.³

Dutchess of Milan.
Celia, her Waiting-Gentlewoman.
Aurelia, Mistress to Andrugio and Lactantio.
Page, Lactantio's old Sweet-heart disguised.
Servants.

Scaen Milan.

¹Crotchet] a note of half the value of a minim.

²Sinquapace] the cinquepace, a lively five-step dance.

³Dondolo] "a shallow-pate, a silly gull." (John Florio, A World of Wordes, or Dictionary of the Italian and English Tongues, London: E. Blount and W. Barret, 1611.)

MORE DISSEMBLERS BESIDES WOMEN.

The First Part.¹

Act. 1. Scaen. 1.

Enter Lactantio, and Aurelia, and Servant.

SONG.

Musick.

TO be chaste, is Womans glory,
'Tis her fame and honors story.
Here sits she in Funeral weeds,
Onely bright in vertuous deeds.
Come and read her life and praise,
That singing weeps, and sighing plays.

Lact. WElcome Souls Musick: I have been listening here
To melancholly strains from the Dutchess lodgings.
That strange great Widow, that has vow'd so stifly
Never to know loves heat in a second Husband: 10
And she has kept the Fort most valiantly
(To th' wonder of her Sex) this seven years day;
And that's no sorry tryal. A moneths constancy
Is held a vertue in a City-widow,
And are they excel'd by so much more i' th' Court?
'My faith a rare example for our Wives.
Heavens blessing of her heart for't poor Soul,
Sh'ad need have somewhat to comfort her.
What wouldst thou do? Faith now
If I were dead, suppose I wear thy Husband, 20
(As shortly I will be, and that's as good)
Speak freely, and thou lov'st me.
Aur. Alas Sir,
I should not have the leasure to make Vows,
For dying presently, I should be dead
Before you were laid out.
Lact. Now fye upon thee for a hasty dier,
Wouldst thou not see me buried?
Aur. Talk not on't Sir,
These many years, unless you take delight 30
To see me swoun, or make a ghost of me.

¹The First Part.] No sequel to the play has been discovered.

Lact. Alas poor Soul, I'll kiss thee into colour,
 Canst thou paint pale so quickly, I perceive then
 Thou'dst go beyond the Dutchess in her vow,
 Thou'dst die indeed: What's he?

Aur. Be settled Sir,

Spend neither doubt, nor fear upon that fellow,
 Health cannot be more trusty to mans life,
 Then he to my necessities in love.

Lact. I take him of thy word, and praise his face, 40

Though he look scurvily, I will think hereafter
 That honesty may walk with fire in's Nose,
 As well as brave desert in broken clothes:
 But for thy further safety, I've provided
 A shape, that at first sight will start thy modesty,
 And make thee blush perhaps; but 'twill away
 After a qualm or two. Virginity

Has been put often to those shifts before thee
 Upon extremities; a little boldness
 Cannot be call'd immodesty, especially 50

When there's no means without it, for our safeties;
 Thou knowest my Uncle the Lord Cardinal
 Wears so severe an eye, so strict and holy,
 It not endures the sight of Woman-kinde
 About his Lodgings;

Hardly a Matron of Four-score's admitted,
 Though she be worn to gums, she comes not there,
 To mumble Mattens, all his admiration
 Is plac'd upon the Dutchess; he likes her, 60

Because she keeps her vow, and likes not any;

So do's he love that man, above his Book,
 That loves no woman, for my Fortunes sake then,

For I am like to be his onely Heir,

I must dissemble and appear as fair

To his opinion, as the brow of Piety;

As void of all impureness as an Altar,

Thine ear----that, and we are safe.

Aur. You make me blush Sir.

Lact. 'Tis but a star shot from a beauteous cheek,

It blazes Beauties bounty, and hurts nothing. 70

Aur. The power of Love commands me.

Lact. I shall wither in comforts, till I see thee.

Exeunt.

³² I'll] i'll all copies of oct.

⁶³ Heir, (Dilke)] Heir. oct.

³³ paint pale] turn pale.

⁷⁰ blazes] reports abroad.

Scaen. 2. Enter L. Cardinal in his Closet,
and two or three Lords.

L. Card. My Lords, I have work for you, when you have hours
Free from the cares of State, bestow your eyes
Upon those abstracts of the Dutchess vertues,
My studies ornaments. I make her Constancy
The holy Mistress of my contemplation,
Whole volumes have I writ in zealous praise
Of her eternal vow: I have no power
To suffer Vertue to go thinly clad,
I that have ever been in youth, an old man
To pleasures and to women, and could never love,
but pity 'em, 10
And all their momentary frantick follies.
Here I stand up in admiration,
And bow to the chaste health of our great Dutchess,
Kissing her constant name. O my fair Lords,
When we finde grace confirm'd, especially
In a creature that's so doubtful as a woman,
We're spirit ravish'd, men of our probation
Feel the Sphears Musick playing in their Souls
So long, unto the eternizing of her sex.
Sh'as kept her vow so strictly, and as chaste 20
As everlasting life is kept for Vertue,
Ev'n from the sight of men, to make her oath
As uncorrupt as th'honor of a Virgin
That must be strict in thought, or else that title,
Like one of Fraillties ruines, shrinks to dust.
No longer she's a Virgin then she's just.
1. Lord. Chaste Sir, the Truth and Justice of her Vow
To her deceased Lord's able to make poor
Mans treasury of praises. But methinks
She that has no temptation set before her, 30

¹⁰pity 'em, Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2] pitty 'em,
P, Bl.

¹⁴name. (Dyce)] name, oct.

¹⁶woman, Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2] woman P, Bl.

¹⁸Sphears Musick (Dilke)] Sphears, Musick oct.

²¹Vertue, (Dilke)] Vertue. oct.

²⁶Virgin then (Dyce)] Virgin, then oct.

¹⁷probation] moral discipline or trial, especially in a
religious order.

Her Vertue has no conquest; then would her constancy
 Shine in the brightest goodness of her glory,
 If she would give admittance, see, and be seen;
 And yet resist, and conquer. There were argument
 For Angels, 't would out-reach the life of praise,
 Set in Mortalities shortness. I speak this
 Not for Religion, but for love of her,
 Whom I wish less religious, and more loving:
 But I fear she's too constant, that's her fault,
 But 'tis so rare, few of her sex are took with't, 40
 And that makes some amends.

L. Card. You have put my zeal into a way, my Lord.
 I shall not be at peace, till I make perfect;
 I'll make her victory harder, 'tis my crown
 When I bring grace to great'st perfection;
 And I dare trust that daughter with a world,
 None but her vow and she. I know she wears
 A constancy, will not deceive my praises,
 A Faith so noble; she that once knows Heaven,
 Need put in no security for her truth; 50
 I dare believe her face, use all the art,
 Temptation, witcheries, sleights, and subtleties,
 You Temporal Lords, and all your means can practise.

2. Lord. My Lord, not any we.

L. Card. Her resolute goodness
 Shall as a Rock stand firm, and send the sin
 That beat against it, into the bosom of the owners, weeping.

3. Lord. We wish her vertues so.

L. Card. O give me pardon,
 I have lost my self in her, upon my friends. 60
 Your charitable censures I beseech,
 So dear her white fame is to my souls love,
 'Tis an affliction but to hear it question'd,

³⁷her, Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2] her P, B1.

⁵⁷owners, Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2] owners P, B1.

⁵⁸wish] with oct.

⁶³affliction but (Dilke)] affliction; but oct.

⁵¹face] outward appearance, the countenance as expressive
 of feeling or character (OED). Dilke emended to
 "faith". Dyce and Bullen altered the line to read,
 "I dare believe her. Face, use all the art,".

⁶⁰I . . . friends.] i.e. I have been so absorbed with her
 that I have ignored my friends.

She's my religious triumph.

If you desire a belief rightly to her,
Think she can never waver, then you'r sure.
She has a fixed heart, it cannot erre;
He kills my hopes of woman, that doubts her.

1. Lord. No more, my Lord, 'tis fixt.

L. Card. Believe my Judgment, 70

I never praise in vain, nor ever spent
Opinion idly, or lost hopes of any,
Where I once plac'd it; welcome as my joys,
Now you all part believers of her Vertue.

All L. We are the same most firmly.

L. Card. Good opinion

In others reward you, and all your actions. [Exeunt Lords.]
Who's neer us? Enter a Servant.

Serv. My Lord.

L. Card. Call our Nephew: There's a work too 80

That for bloods sake I labor to make perfect,
And it comes on with joy; he's but a youth
To speak of years, yet I dare venture him
To old mens goodnesses and gravities,
For his strict manners, and win glory by him;
And for the chastness of his continence
(Which is a rare grace in the spring of man)
He do's excel the youth of all our time,
Which gift of his more then affinity,
Draws my affection in great plenty to him. 90
The company of a woman is as fearful to him,
As death to guilty men: I've seen him blush,
When but a Maid was nam'd; I'm proud of him,
Heaven be not angry for't: He's near of kin
In disposition to me. I shall do much for him
In life time, but in death I shall do all;
There he will finde my love. He's yet too yong
In years to rise in state, but his good parts
Will bring him in the sooner: Here he comes.

Enter Lactantio with a Book.

What at thy Meditation? half in Heaven. 100

Lact. The better half my Lord, my minde's there still.

And when the heart's above, the body walks here

But like an idle Serving-man below,

Gaping and waiting for his Masters coming.

L. Card. What man in age, could bring forth graver thoughts?

Lact. He that lives Fourscore years, is but like one

That stays here for a Friend; when death comes, then

⁶⁷erre; Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2] erre, P, B1.

⁷³joys, P, B1] joys. Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2.

Away he goes, and is ne'er seen again.
 I wonder at the yongmen of our days,
 That they can dote on pleasure, or what 'tis 110
 They give that title too, unless in mockage.
 There's nothing I can finde upon the Earth,
 Worthy the name of pleasure, unless't be
 To laugh at folly; which indeed good Charity
 Should rather pittie: But of all the frenzies
 That follow flesh and blood (O reverend Uncle)
 The most ridiculous is to fawn on women;
 There's no excuse for that, 'tis such a madness,
 There is no cure set down for't, no Physitian
 Ever spent hour about it, for they ghest 120
 'Twas all in vain, when they first lov'd themselves,
 And never since durst practise, cry Heu mihi,
 That's all the help they have for't. I had rather meet
 A Witch far North, then a fine Fool in love,
 The sight would less afflict me; but for modesty,
 And your grave presence, that learns men respect,
 I should fall foul in words upon fond man
 That can forget his excellence and honor,
 His serious Meditations being the end
 Of his Creation, to learn well to die, 130
 And live a prisoner to a womans eye.
 Can there be greater thralldom, greater folly?
L. Card. In making him my heir, I make good works,
 And they give wealth a blessing, where on the contrary,
 What curses does he heap upon his soul
 That leaves his riches to a riotous yong man,
 To be consum'd on Surfeits, Pride, and Harlots,
 Peace be upon that spirit, whose life provides
 A quiet rest for mine.

125 me;] me, oct.

125 modesty,] modesty; oct.

122 Heu mihi] alas, woe is me. Cf. Ovid, Metamorphoses, i, 523: "ei mihi, quod nullis amor est sanabilis herbis." Frank Justus Miller, ed. (New York: G. Putnam's Sons, 1925), Vol. 1. "Nowe wo is me that neare an herbe can heale the hurt of love." W.H.D. Rouse, ed., Shakespeare's Ovid (the Golding translation) (New York: W. W. Norton & Co. Paperback, 1966), p. 33, l.637.

124 A Witch far North] The north was traditionally the dwelling place of evil spirits. Cf. la Pucelle's conjuration, Henry VI, Part I, V, iii, 5-6: "You speedy helpers, that are substitutes Under the lordly monarch of the north."

Enter Page with a Letter.

Lact. How now, the news? 140

Page. A Letter Sir, brought by a Gentleman
That lately came from Rome.

Lact. [Aside.] That's she, she's come:
I fear not to admit her in his presence;
There is the like already. I'm writ chaste
In my grave Uncles thoughts, and honest meanings
Think all men's like their own--Thou look'st so pale,
What ail'st thou here a' late.

Page. I doubt I have cause Sir.

Lact. Why, what's the news? 150

Page. I fear Sir I'm with childe.

Lact. With childe; peace, peace, speak low.

Page. 'Twill prove I fear so.

Lact. Beshrew my heart for that----Desire the Gentleman
To walk a turn or two.

L. Card. What Gentleman?

Lact. One lately come from Rome, my Lord, in credit,
With L. Vincentio; so the Letter speaks him.

L. Card. Admit him, my kinde Boy; the prettiest Servant 160
That ever man was blest with; 'tis so meek,
So good and gentle, 'twas the best almsdeed
That ere you did, to keep him. I have oft took him
Weeping alone (poor Boy) at the remembrance
Of his lost friends; which as he says, the Sea
Swallow'd with all their substance.

Lact. 'Tis a truth Sir,
Has cost the poor Boy many a feeling tear,
And me some too, for company. In such pity,
I always spend my part: Here comes the Gentleman. 170

Enter Aurelia like a Gentleman.

L. Card. Welcome to Milan Sir, how is the health
Of L. Vincentio.

Aur. May it please your Grace,

¹⁵⁸ Lord, Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2] Lord; P, B1.

¹⁵⁸ credit, Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2] credit
P, B1.

¹⁴⁵ There . . . already] Lactantio is referring to the Page,
also a female disguised as a male.

¹⁶³⁻¹⁶⁶ I . . . substance.] Middleton seems to be mocking
the romantic shipwrecked background of girl-pages
like Viola in Twelfth Night.

I left it well and happy, and I hope
The same: Blest Fortune keeps it.

L. Card. I hear your near him.

Aur. One of his Chamber, my Lord.

Lact. I'd near wish one of her condition nearer,
Then to be one of mine.

L. Card. Your news is pleasing;

180

Whilst you remain in Milan, I request you,
To know the welcome of no house but ours.

Aur. Thanks to your Grace.

L. Card. I'll leave you to confer;

I'll to the Dutchess, and labor her perfection.

Exit Cardinal.

Lact. Then thus begins our conference, I arrest thee
In Cupids name, deliver up your weapon,
It is not for your wearing, Venus knows it.

Here's a fit thing indeed, nay, Hangers and all,
Away with 'em, out upon 'em, things of trouble,
And out of use with you: Now y'are my prisoner,
And till you swear you love me, all, and onely,
You part not from mine arms.

190

Aur. I swear it willingly.

Lact. And that you do renounce the Generals love
That heretofore laid claim to you.

Aur. My heart bids me,

You need not teach me, that my eye ne'r knew
A perfect choice, till it stood blest with you.
There's yet a rival, whom you little dream of,
Tax me with him, and I'll swear too, I hate him.
I'll thrust 'em both together in one Oath,
And send 'em to some pair of waiting-women,
To solder up their credits.

200

Lact. Prethee what's he?

Another yet, for laughter sake discover him.

Aur. The Governor of the Fort.

Lact. That old dri'd Neat's tongue.

Aur. A Gentleman after my Fathers relish.

192 onely,] onely oct.

193 You] You, oct.

197 me,] me oct.

205 he?] he oct.

179 one of mine.] i.e. one of my Chamber.

189 Hangers] A hanger was a strap or loop on a sword belt,
from which the sword hung.

204 solder up] repair, patch up.

Enter Father and Governor.

Father. By your kinde favors Gentlemen. 210

Aur. O my Father,
We are both betray'd.

Lact. Peace, you may prove too fearful.
To whom your business Sir.

Father. To the Lord Cardinal,
If it would please your self, or that yong Gentleman,
To grace me with admittance.

Lact. I will see Sir,
The Gentlemans a stranger, new come o'er.
He understands you not---Loff tro veen, Tant umbro,
Hoff Tufftee 220
Locumber shaw.

Aur. Quisquimken, sapadlaman, Fool-urchin old Astrata.

Father. Nay, and that be the Language, we can speak't too:
Strumpettikin,

Bold Harlottum Queaninisma, Whoremongeria.
Shame to thy Sex, and sorrow to thy Father.
Is this a shape for reputation?
And modesty to mask in? Thou too cunning
For credulous goodness.

Did not a reverent respect and honor
That's due unto the Sanctimonious peace 230
Of this Lords house, restrain my voice and anger,
And teach it soft Humility: I would lift
Both your disgraces to the height of grief
That you have rais'd in me; but to shame you
I will not cast a blemish upon Vertue.
Call that your happiness, and the dearest too,
That such a bold attempt could ever boast off.
We'll see if a strong Fort can hold you now,
Take her Sir to you.

Gover. How have I deserv'd 240
The strangeness of this hour?

Father. Talk not so tamely,
For you Sir, thank the reverence of this place,
Or your Hypocrisie I had put out of grace,
I had 'ifaith, if ever I can fit you,
Expect to hear from me. Exeunt [with Aurelia]:

Lact. I thank you Sir,
The Cough o'th'Lungs requite you: I could curse him
Into diseases by whole dozens now.
But one's enough to begger him, if he light 250
Upon a wise Physitian. 'Tis a labor
To keep those little wits I have about me.
Still did I dream that Villain would betray her.
I'll never trust slave with a parboil'd nose again.

215 Father.] Fath. oct.

I must devise some trick to excuse her absence
 Now to my Uncle too; there is no mischeif
 But brings one Villain or other still
 Ev'n close at heels on't. I'm pain'd at heart:
 If ever there were hope of me to die
 For love, 'tis now, I never felt such gripings: 260
 If I can scape this Climacterical year,
 Women ne'er trust me, though you hear me swear.
 Kept with him in the Fort, why there's no hope
 Of ever meeting now; my ways not thither,
 Love bless us with some means to get together,
 And I'll pay all the old reck'nings. Exit.

Scaen. 3. Enter Dutchess, above, and Celia.

Dutch. What a contented rest rewards my minde
 For faithfulness; I give it Constancy,
 And it returns me Peace: How happily
 Might woman live, methinks, confin'd within
 The knowledge of one Husband?
 What comes of more, rather proclaims Desire
 Prince of affections, then religious love;
 Brings frailty and our weakness into question;
 'Mongst our Male enemies, makes Widows tears,
 Rather the cup of laughter then of pity. 10
 What credit can our sorrows have with men,
 When in some moneths space, they turn light again;
 Feast, dance, and go in colours? If my vow
 Were yet to make, I would not sleep without it,
 Or make a Faith as perfect to my self
 In resolution, as a vow would come to;
 And do as much right so to Constancy,
 As strictness could require: For 'tis our goodness,
 And not our strength that do's it. I am arm'd now
 'Gainst all deserts in man, be't Valor, Wisdom, 20
 Curtesie, Comeliness, nay, Truth it self,
 Which seldom keeps him company. I commend
 The Vertues highly, as I do an Instrument
 When the Case hangs by th'Wall; but man himself
 Never comes near my heart.

²⁶⁶reck'nings.] rock'nings. oct.

¹⁰pity. P, B1] pity? Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2.

²⁶¹Climacterical] critical, dangerous. In astrology, every seventh year was climacterical.

Enter Lord Cardinal.

L. Card. The blessing of Perfection to your thoughts, Lady,
For I'm resolv'd they are good ones.

Dutch. Honor of greatness,
Friend to my vow, and Father to my fame,
Welcome, as Peace to Temples. 30

L. Card. I bring War.

Dutch. How Sir?

L. Card. A harder fight: If now you conquer,
You crown my praises double.

Dutch. What's your aim Sir?

L. Card. To astonish sin, and all her tempting evils,
And make your goodness shine more glorious,
When your fair noble vow show'd you the way
To excellence in vertue, to keep back
The fears that might discourage you at first, 40
Pitying your strength, it shew'd you not the worst.

'Tis not enough for Tapers to burn bright,
But to be seen, so to lend others light,
Yet not impair themselves, their flame as pure,
As when it shin'd in secret, so t'abide
Temptations, is the Souls flame truly try'd.

I have an ambition, but a vertuous one,
I would have nothing want to your Perfection.

Dutch. Is there a doubt found yet, is it so hard
For woman to recover, with all diligence, 50
And a true fasting faith from sensual pleasure,
What many of her sex has so long lost:

Can you believe that any sight of man,
Held he the worth of Millions in one spirit,
Had power to alter me.

L. Card. No, there's my hope,
My credit, and my triumph.

Dutch. I'll no more,
Keep strictly private, since the glory on't
Is but a vertue question'd; I'll come forth 60
And show my self to all, the world shall witness,
That like the Sun, my Constancy can look
On Earth's corruptions, and shine clear it self.

L. Card. Hold conquest now, and I have all my wishes.

Cornets: And a shout within.

Dutch. The meaning of that sudden shout, my Lord.

L. Card. Seignior Andrugio, General of the Field,
Successful in his Fortunes, is arriv'd,
And met by all the gallant hopes of Milan
Welcom'd with Laurel wreaths, and Hymns of praises.

⁵⁶L. Card.] L. Card: oct.

⁵⁶hope,] bope, oct.

Vouchsafe but you, to give him the first grace Madam, 70
 Of your so long hid presence, he has then
 All honors that can bless victorious man.
Dutch. You shall prevail grave Sir.

Enter Andrugio, attended with the Nobility and State,
like a Victor.

SONG.

Musick.

LAurel is a Victors due,
I give it you,
I give it you.
Thy name with praise,
Thy brow with bays;
We circle round.
All men rejoyce 80
With cheerful voice,
To see thee like a Conqueror crown'd.

A Cupid discending, sings this.
I am a little Conqueror too
For wreaths of bays,
There's Arms of cross,
And that's my due.
I give the flaming heart,
It is my crest.
And by the Mothers side,
The weeping eye, 90
The sighing brest.
It is not power in you, fair beauties,
If I command Love, 'tis your duties. Ascend.

During these Songs, Andrugio peruses a Letter
 delivered him by a Lord, and then [the masque]
 closes with this Song below.

Welcome, Welcome, Son of Fame,
Honor triumphs in thy Name.
Exeunt in State.

85 Arms of cross,] Arms crossed on the breast (the attitude
 of a moody lover). (Bullen.) Cf. Love's Labours
Lost, III, i, 183:
 "Regent of love-rhymes, lord of folded arms."
Philaster, II, iii, 52-3.
 "if it be love
 To sit crosse arm'd, and thinke away the day . . ."

Lord. Alas poor Gentleman! I brought him news
 That like a Cloud spread over all his glories,
 When he mist her, whom his eye greedily sought for,
 His welcome seem'd so poor, he took no joy in't;
 But when he found her, by her Father forc'd 100
 To the old Governors love, and kept so strictly,
 A coldness strook his heart; there is no State
 So firmly happy, but feels Envies might.
 I know Lactantio, Nephew to the Cardinal,
 Hates him as deeply as a Richman death;
 And yet his welcome shew'd as fair and friendly,
 As his that wore the truest love to him.
 When in his wishes he could drink his blood,
 And make his heart the sweetness of his food. Exit.
Celia. Madam, Madam. 110
Dutch. Beshrew thy heart, do'st thou not see me busie:
 You shew your manners.
Celia. In the name of Goodness,
 What ails my Lady?
Dutch. I confess I'm mortal,
 There's no defending on't, 'tis cruel flattery
 To make a Lady believe otherways.
 Is not this flesh? Can you drive heat from fire?
 So may you love from this; for Love and Death
 Are Brothers in this Kingdom, onely Death 120
 Comes by the Mothers side, and that's the surest.
 That General is wondrous fortunate,
 Has won another field since, and a victory
 That credits all the rest: He may more boast on't,
 Then of a thousand conquests. I am lost,
 Utterly lost, where are my Women now,
 Alas what help's in them, what strength have they?
 I call to a weak guard, when I call them,
 In rescuing me, they'd be themselves o'er-come,
 When I that profest war, am overthrown. 130
 What hope's in them then, that nev'r stir'd from home?
 My Faith is gone for ever, my Reputation with the Cardinal,
 My Fame, my Praise, my Liberty, my Peace,
 Chang'd for a restless Passion: Oh hard spight
 To lose my seven years victory at one sight. Exit.

⁹⁸for,] for; oct.

¹²⁹me, Hun, BPL, N, F, Har, Y, BM1, BM2, B2] me P, B1.

¹⁰⁵Hates . . . death;] Cf. Women Beware Women, III, i, 111-12:
 "this is dreadful now as sudden death
 To some rich men."

¹²⁴credits] secures belief or credit for, accredits.

Scaen. 4. Enter Dondolo, and the Page with a Shirt.

Page. I prethee Dondolo, take this shirt, and air it a little against my Master rises, I'had rather do any thing then do't y'faith.

Dond. O monstrous, horrible, terrible, intollerable! Are not you big enough to air a shirt; were it a smock now, you liquorish Page, you'd be hang'd, ere you'd part from't. If thou do'st not prove as arrant a smell-smock, as any the Town affords, in a Term time, I'll lose my judgment in Wenching.

Page. Pish; here Dondolo, prethee take it. 10

Dond. It's no more but up and ride with you then? All my generation were Bedles and Officers; and do you think I'm so easily intreated? you shall finde a harder peece of work (Boy) then you imagine, to get any thing from my hands; I will not disgenerate so much from the nature of my kinred; you must bribe me one way or other, if you look to have any thing done, or else you may do't your self. 'Twas just my Fathers humor when he bore office; you know my minde Page, The Song, the Song; I must either have the Song, you sung to my Master last night, when he went to Bed, or I'll not do a stitch of service for you, from one weeks end to the other. As I am a Gentleman, you shall brush Cloaks, make clean Spurs, nay, pull of strait Boots, although in the tugging, you chance to fall and hazard the breaking of your little Buttocks; I'll take no more pity of your Maribones, then a Butchers Dog of a Rump of Beef; nay, ka me, ka thee, If you will ease the Melancholy of my minde with singing, I will deliver you from the calamity of Boots-haling. 20

Page. Alas you know I cannot sing. 30

Dond. Take heed, you may speak at such an hour, that your voice may be clean taken away from you: I have known many a good Gentlewoman say so much as you say now, and have presently gone to Bed, and lay speechless; 'Tis not good to jest, as old Chaucer was wont to say, that broad famous English Poet. Cannot you sing say you?

⁷smell-smock] a licentious man. Cf. The Family of Love, II, iii, 87: "To prevent this smell-smock, I'll to my friend."

²⁶Maribones] marrow-bones; specifically, the knees.

²⁷ka me, ka thee] proverbial, cf. Tilley, p. 352. "You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours."

Oh that a Boy should so keep cut with his Mother, and be given to dissembling.

Page. Faith to your knowledge in't, ill may seem well; But as I hope in comforts, I've no skill.

40

Dond. A pox of skill, give me plain simple cunning: Why should not singing be as well got without skill, as the getting of children; you shall have the arrant'st Fool do as much there, as the wisest Coxcomb of 'em all, let 'em have all the help of Doctors put to 'em; both the directions of Physitians, and the erections of Pothecaries; you shall have a plain Hobnail'd Countrey-Fellow, marrying some Dairy-wench, tumble out two of a year, and sometimes three, By'rlady, as the crop falls out; and your nice paling Physicking-Gentlefolks, some one in nine years, and hardly then a whole one, as it should be; the wanting of some Apricock, or something, looses a member on him, or quite spoils it. Come will you sing, that I may warm the shirt; by this light, he shall put it on cold for me else.

50

Page. A Song or two I learnt, with hearing Gentlewomen practise themselves.

Dond. Come, you are so modest now, 'tis pity that thou was't ever bred to be thrust through a pair of Canions; thou wouldst have made a pretty foolish Waiting-woman, but for one thing. Wil't' sing?

60

Page. As well as I can Dondolo.

Dond. Give me the shirt then, I'll warm't as well I can too. Why look you Whoreson Cockscomb, this is a smock.

Page. No 'tis my Masters shirt.

Dond. Why that's true too,

Who knows not that; why 'tis the fashion Fool,

³⁷keep cut with] follow the example of (Bullen). Cf. Women Beware Women, IV, ii, 184-5:

"Well, I had a mother,
I can dissemble too."

⁴⁶erections] In alchemy, to "erect figures" is to cast horoscopes, but here, "erections" probably means "concoctions".

⁵²the wanting of some Apricock] Traditionally, pregnant women craved apricots. Cf. The Duchess of Malfi, II, ii, 1-3. "So, so: ther's no question but her teatchines and most vulterous eating of the Apricocks, are apparant signes of breeding . . ."

⁵⁹Canions] ornamental rolls, sometimes indented, sometimes plain or straight, laid like sausages round the ends of the legs of breeches.

All your yong Gallants here of late wear smocks;
Those without Beards especially.

70

Page. Why what's the reason Sir.

Dond. Marry very great reason in't: A yong gallant
lying a Bed with his Wench, if the Constable should
chance to come up and search, being both in smocks,
they'd be taken for Sisters; and I hope a Constable
dare go no further: And as for the knowing of their
Heads, that's well enough too; for I know many yong
Gentlemen, wear longer hair then their Mistresses.

Page. 'Tis a hot world the whilst.

Dond. Nay, that's most certain,
And a most witty age of a bald one; for all Languages
y'have many daughters so well brought up, they speak
French naturally at fifteen, and they are turn'd to
the Spanish and Italian half a year after.

80

Page. That's like learning the Grammar first, and
the Accidence after;

They go backward so.

Dond. The fitter for the Italian; thou'st no wit Boy,
Hadst had a Tutor, he'd have taught thee that.

Come, come, that I may be gone Boy?

90

SONG.

Musick.

Page. CUpid is Venus onely joy,

But he's a wanton Boy:

A very, very wanton Boy.

He shoots at Ladies naked Brests;

He is the cause of most mens Crests;

I mean upon the Forehead,

Invisible, but horrid.

Of the short Velvet Mask, he was deviser,

That wives may kiss, the husband's ne'r the wiser.

'Twas he first thought upon the way,

To keep a Ladies Lips in play.

100

⁸⁰Dond.] Dond oct.

⁸¹witty age] cunning time. Cf. Women Beware Women, II,
ii, 401-03. "it's a witty age;

Never were finer snares for women's honesties

Than are devis'd in these days . . . "

⁸¹bald] trivial.

s.d. SONG.] This song, with two lines cut, appears as the
first stanza of a Song in A Chaste Maid in Cheapside,
IV, i, 162 ff.

Dond. Oh rich, ravishing, rare, and inticing: Well,
go thy ways, for as sweet a Brested Page, as ever lay at
his Masters feet in a Truckle-bed.

Page. You'll hie you in straight Dondolo? Exit.

Dond. I'll not miss you.

This smockified shirt, or shirted smock,
I will go taste; let me see what's a clock,
I must to th'Castle straight to see his love,
Either by hook or crook: My Master storming 110
Sent me last night, but I'll be gone this morning. Exit.

¹⁰³Brested] voiced, but almost certainly a double entendre
is intended. Cf. Women Beware Women, III, ii, 120:
"Ay, and a sweet breast too, my lord, I hope."
Also cf. Twelfth Night, II, iii, 19-20:
"the fool has an excellent breast."

¹⁰⁴Truckle-bed] A servant's bed without legs, running on
castors. It could be wheeled under the standing
bed in which the master slept. Cf. A Game at Chesse,
II, i, 195:
"Hath laid them all in truckle-beds, methinks."

¹¹⁰by hook or crook] proverbial, cf. Tilley, p. 318.

Act. 2. Scaen. 1.

Enter Dutchess and Celia.

Dutch. SEek out the lightest colours can be got;
 The youthful'st dressings; Tauny is too sad.
 I am not thirty yet, I have wronged my time,
 To go so long in black, like a Petitioner.
 See that the Powder that I use about me,
 Be rich in Cassia.

Cel. Here's a sudden change.

Dutch. Oh I'm undone in Faith: Stay, art thou certain
Lactantio, Nephew to the Cardinal,
 Was present in the late entertainment of the General? 10

Cel. Upon my reputation with your Excellence,
 These eyes beheld him: He came foremost, Madam,
 'Twas he in black and yellow.

Dutch. Nay, 'tis no matter, either for himself
 Or for the affectation of his colours,
 So you be sure he was there.

Cel. As sure as sight
 Can discern man from man, Madam.

Exit.

Dutch. It suffices. 20
 Oh an ill cause had need of many helps,
 Much art, and many friends, I, and those mighty,
 Or else it sets in shame. A Faith once lost,
 Requires great cunning, er't be entertain'd
 Into the Brest of a belief again.
 There's no condition so unfortunate,
 Poor, miserable, to any Creature given,
 As hers that breaks in vow, she breaks with Heaven.

Enter Lord Cardinal.

L. Card. Increase of health, and a redoubled courage
 To Chasteties great Soldier: what so sad Madam?
 The memorie of her seven yeares deceased Lord 30
 Springs yet into her eyes, as fresh and full
 As at the seaventh houre after his departure:
 What a perpetual Fountain is her vertue?
 Too much to afflict your self with ancient sorrow
 Is not so strictly for your strength requird:
 Your vow is charge enough, believe me 'tis Madam,
 You need no waightier task.

Dutch. Religious Sir,
 You heard the last words of my dying Lord.

L. Card. Which I shall nev'r forget. 40

⁶Cassia an inferior kind of cinnamon; poetically, a
 fragrant shrub or plant.

Dutch. May I entreat

Your goodness but to speake'em over to me
As neere as memory can befriend your utterance,
That I may think a while I stand in presence
Of my departing Husband.

L. Card. What's your meaning

In this, most vertuous Madam?

Dutch. 'Tis a curtesie

I stand in need of Sir, at this time specially,
Urge it no further yet; as it proves to me,
You shall hear from me, onely I desire it
Effectually from you Sir, that's my request.

50

L. Card. I wonder, yet I'll spare to question farther.
You shall have your desire.

Dutch. I thank you Sir.

A blessing come along with't.

L. Card. [Recollecting] You see my Lords, what all
— Earths glory is

Rightly defin'd in me, uncertain breath;
A dream of threescore years to the long sleeper,
To most not half the time. Beware Ambition,
Heaven is not reach'd with Pride, but with submission,
And you Lord Cardinal labor to perfect
Good purposes begun, be what you seem,
Stedfast, and uncorrupt, your actions noble,
Your goodness simple, without gain or art,
And not in vesture hollier then in heart.

60

But 'tis a pain, more then the pangs of death,
To think that we must part, Fellow of life,
Thou richness of my joys, kinde and deer Princess.
Death had no sting, but for our separation,
T'would come more calm then an ev'nings peace,
That brings on rest to labors: Thou art so precious,
I should depart in everlasting envy

70

Unto the man, that ever should enjoy thee:

Oh a new torment strikes his force into me,
When I but think on't, I am rack'd and torn,
Pity me in thy vertues.

Dutch. My lov'd Lord,

Let your confirm'd opinion of my life,

My love, my faithful love, seal an assurance

80

⁴⁶meaning (Dilke)] meaning? oct.

⁴⁷this, most (Dilke)] this most oct.

⁶⁸Fellow (Dilke)] Fellows oct.

⁶⁸life, (Dilke)] life. oct.

⁷⁹your] you oct.

Of quiet to your spirit, that no forgetfulness
 Can cast a sleep so deadly on my Sences,
 To draw my affections to a second liking.

L. Card. 'T'as ever been the promise, and the spring
 Of my great love to thee. For once to marry
 Is honorable in woman, and her ignorance
 Stands for a vertue, coming new and fresh;
 But second marriage shews desires in flesh:
 Thence lust, and heat, and common custom grows,
 But she's part Virgin, who but one man knows. 90
 I here expect a work of thy great Faith;
 At my last parting, I can crave no more,
 And with thy vow, I rest my self for ever,
 My soul and it shall flie to Heaven together:
 Seal to my spirit that quiet satisfaction,
 And I go hence in Peace.

Dutch. Then here I vow, never--

L. Card. Why Madam?

Dutch. I can go no further.

L. Card. What have you forgot your vow? 100

Dutch. I have, too certainly.

L. Card. Your vow? that cannot be; it follows now,
 Just where I left.

Dutch. My frailty gets before it,
 Nothing prevails but ill.

L. Card. What ail you Madam?

Dutch. Sir, I'm in love.

L. Card. Oh all you powers of Chastity,
 Look to this woman, let her not faint now
 For honor of your selves: If she be lost, 110
 I know not where to seek my hope in woman.
 Madam, Oh Madam.

Dutch. My desires are sickned
 Beyond recovery of good counsel Sir.

L. Card. What mischeif ow'd a malice to the Sex,
 To work this spiteful ill; better the man
 Had never known Creation, then to live
 Th'unlucky ruine of so fair a Temple;
 Yet think upon your vow, revive in Faith,
 Those are eternal things. What are all pleasures, 120
 Flatteries of men, and Follies upon Earth
 To your most excellent goodness? Oh she's dead,
 Stark cold to any vertuous claim within her.

⁹¹Faith;] Faith, oct.

⁹⁵spirit] spirit, oct.

⁹⁷never--(Dilke)] never. oct.

⁹⁸L. Card.] L. Card oct.

What now is heat, is sins. Have I approved
 Your constancy for this, call'd your Faith noble,
 Writ volumes of your victories and vertues?
 I have undone my judgment, lost my praises,
 Blemish'd the truth of my opinion.

Give me the man, that I may pour him out
 To all contempt and curses.

130

Dutch. The mans innocent,
 Full of desert and grace, his name Lactantio.
L. Card. How?

Dutch. Your Nephew.

L. Card. My Nephew!

Dutch. Beshrew the sight of him; he lives not Sir,
 That could have conquer'd me, himself excepted.

L. Card. He that I lov'd so dearly, does he wear
 Such killing poyson in his eye to sanctity?

140

He has undone himself for ever by't,
 Has lost a friend of me, and a more sure one.
 Farewel all natural pittty; though my affection
 Could hardly spare him from my sight an hour,
 I'll lose him now eternally, and strive
 To live without him; he shall straight to Rome.

Dutch. Not if you love my health, or life, my Lord.

L. Card. This day he shall set forth.

Dutch. Dispatch me rather.

L. Card. I'll send him far enough.

Dutch. Send me to death first.

150

L. Card. No Basilisk that strikes dead pure affection
 With venomous eye, lives under my protection. Exit.

Dutch. Now my conditions worse then ev'r 'twas yet,

My cunning takes not with him: Has broke through

The Net, that with all art was set for him,

And left the snarer here herself intangled

With her own toils. Oh what are we poor souls,

When our dissembling fails us? Surely Creatures

As full of want, as any Nation can be

That scarce have food to keep bare life about 'em:

160

Had this but took effect, what a fair way

Had I made for my love to th'General,

And cut of all suspect, all reprehension?

My hopes are kill'd i'th' blossom.

Exit.

142 pittty;] pittty, oct.

145 without] withont oct.

139 Such . . . eye] The reference is to the basilisk or
 cockatrice (cf. l. 151), a fabulous serpent whose
 glance was considered fatal.

Scaen. 2. Enter L. Cardinal.

L. Card. Let me think upon't,
 Set holy anger by a while, there's time
 Allow'd for natural argument: 'Tis she
 That loves my Nephew, she that loves, loves first;
 What cause have I to lay a blame on him then?
 He's in no fault in this; say 'twas his fortune
 At the free entertainment of the General,
 'Mongst others the deserts and hopes of Milan,
 To come into her sight, where's th'offence yet?
 What sin was that in him? man's sight and presence 10
 Are free to publick view: She might as well
 Have fixed her hearts love then upon some other,
 I would t'had lighted any where but there,
 Yet I may erre to wish't, since it appears
 The hand of Heaven, that onely pickt him out
 To reward vertue in him by this Fortune,
 And through affection I'm half conquer'd now,
 I love his good, as dearly as her vow,
 Yet there my credit lives in works and praises:
 I never found a harder fight within me, 20
 Since zeal first taught me war; say I should labor
 To quench this love, and so quench life and all;
 As by all likelihood it would prove her death:
 For it must needs be granted, she affects him
 As dearly, as the power of love can force,
 Since her vow awes her not, that was her Saint.
 What right could that be to Religion
 To be her end, and disposes my Kinsman;
 No I will bear in pity to her heart,
 The rest commend to Fortune, and my Art. Exit. 30

Scaen. 3. Enter Father, Governor, Aurelia, and
Andrugio disguised.

Gover. I like him passing well.

Father. He's a tall fellow.

Andr. A couple of tall wits: I have seen some service Sir.

s.d. Scaen. 2.] Scaen. 3. oct. The octavo does not
 indicate a Scene 2.

¹³lighted] lighted, oct.

²¹war;] war, oct.

s.d. Scaen. 3.] Scaen. 4. oct.

²Father.] Fath. oct.

Gover. Nay so it seems by thy discourse good-fellow.

Andr. Good-fellow, calls me theif familiarly:

I could shew many marks of resolution,

But modesty could wish'em rather hidden:

I fetcht home three and twenty wounds together

In one set battel, where I was defeated

At the same time of the third part of my Nose,

10

But meeting with a skilful Surgeon,

Took order for my snuffling.

Gover. And a Nose

Well heal'd, is counted a good cure in these days,

It saves many a mans honesty, which else

Is quickly drawn into suspition.

This night shall bring you acquainted with your charge;

In the mean time you and your valors welcome.

Would we had more store of you, although they come

With fewer marks about 'em.

20

Father. So wish I Sir. Exeunt Father and Governor.

Andr. [Aside.] I was about to call her; and she stays

Of her own gift, as if she knew my minde;

Certain she knew me not, not possible.

Aur. [Aside.] What if I left my token, and my Letter

With this strange fellow, so to be convey'd

Without suspition to Lactantio's servant:

Not so, I'll trust no fresh-man with such secrets;

His ignorance may mistake, and giv't to one

That may belong to th'General; for I know

30

He sets some spies about me, but all he gets

Shall not be worth his pains. I would Lactantio

Would seek some means to free me from this place,

'Tis prisonment enough to be a Maid;

But to be mew'd up too, that case is hard,

As if a Toy were kept, by a double guard.

Andr. [Aside.] Away she steals again, not minding me.

'Twas not at me she offer'd: [To Aurelia] Hark you

Gentlewoman.

Aur. With me Sir?

Andr. I could call you by your name;

40

But Gentle's the best attribute to woman. [Doffs his disguise.]

²¹Father.] Fath. oct.

⁵ Good-fellow] a cant term for a thief or robber. Cf. A Trick to Catch the Old One, II, i, 19-20:

"Lucre. Welcome good fellow.

Host. He calls me thief at first sight."

¹³⁻¹⁶ a Nose . . . suspition.] Probably a reference to nasal degeneration caused by syphilis.

Aur. Andrugio, Oh as welcome to my Lips,
As morning Dew to Roses: My first love.

Andr. Why have you more then?

Aur. What a word was there?

More then thy self, what woman could desire
If reason had a part of her Creation?
For loving you, you see Sir I'm a prisoner;
There's all the cause they have against me Sir.
A happy persecution, I so count on't;
If any thing be done to me for your sake,
'Tis pleasing to me.

50

Andr. Are you not abus'd,
Either through force, or by your own consent;
Hold you your honor perfect and unstain'd;
Are you the same still, that at my departure,
My honest thoughts maintain'd you to my heart?

Aur. The same most just.

Andr. Swear't.

Aur. By my hope of fruitfulness,
Love, and agreement, the three joys of marriage.

60

Andr. I am confirm'd, and in requital on't,
Ere long expect your freedom.

Aur. Oh you flatter me,
It is a wrong to make a wretch too happy,
So suddenly upon affliction.
Beshrew me, if I be not sick upon't;
'Tis like a surfeit after a great feast.
My freedom said you?

Andr. Do'st o'rcome you so?

70

Aur. Temptation never overcame a sinner
More pleasingly, then this sweet news my heart.
Here's secret joy can witness, I am proud on't.
Andr. Violence I will not use, I come a friend,
'Twere madness to force that, which wit can end.

Aur. Most vertuously deliver'd.

Andr. Thou art in raptures.

Aur. My love, my love.

Andr. Most vertuously deliver'd,
Spoke like the sister of a Puritan Midwife:
Will you embrace the means that I have thought on,
With all the speed you can?

80

Aur. Sir any thing.

You cannot name't too dangerous, or too homely.

Andr. Fie, you over-act your happiness,
You drive slight things to wonders.

⁵⁰on't;] on't, oct.

⁸⁴homely] 1. simple, unadorned, 2. unpolished, crude.

Aur. Blame me not Sir,
You know not my affection.

Andr. Will you hear me,
There are a sect of pilfiring juggling people,
The vulgar tongue call Gipseys. 90

Aur. True, the same Sir.
I saw the like this morning: Say no more Sir;
I apprehend you fully.

Andr. What, you do not?

Aur. No: Hark you Sir. [Whispers to him.]

Andr. Now by this light 'tis true.
Sure if you prove as quick as your conceit,
You'll be an exc'lent breeder.

Aur. I should do reason by the Mothers side Sir, 100
If Fortune do her part, in a good Getter.

Andr. That's not to do now (sweet) the man stands near thee.

Aur. Long may he stand most fortunately Sir,
Whom her kinde goodness has appointed for me.

Andr. A while I'll take my leave to avoid suspicion.

Aur. I do commend your course; good Sir forget me not.

Andr. All comforts sooner.

Aur. Liberty is sweet, Sir.

Andr. I know there's nothing sweeter, next to love,
But health it self, which is the Prince of life. 110

Aur. Your knowledge raise you Sir.

Andr. Farewel till evening. Exit Andrugio.

Aur. And after that, farewel sweet Sir for ever.

A good kinde Gentleman to serve our turn with,
But not for lasting: I have chose a Stuff
Will wear out two of him, and one finer too:

I like not him that has two Mistresses,
War, and his sweet-heart; he can ne'r please both:

And War's a soaker, she's no friend to us,
Turns a man home sometimes to his Mistress, 120
Some forty ounces poorer then he went.

117Mistresses,] Mistresses; oct.

118sweet-heart;] sweet-heart, oct.

⁹⁸quick] said of a female in the stage of pregnancy at
which the motion of the foetus is felt.

¹⁰⁴her] i.e. Fortune's. Aurelia is thinking of Lactantio.

¹¹⁹soaker,] drainer, exhauster.

All his discourse out of the Book of Surgery,
 Seer-cloth, and Salve, and lies you, all in Tents,
 Like your Camp-Victlers: Out upon't, I smile
 To think how I have fitted him with an office;
 His love takes pains to bring our loves together,
 Much like your man that labors to get treasure,
 To keep his wife high for anothers pleasure. Exit.

¹²³Seer-cloth] cloth smeared or impregnated with wax or
 some glutinous matter: used as a plaster in surgery.

¹²³Tents] rolls or pledgets, usually of soft absorbent
 material, often medicated, or sometimes of a
 medicinal substance, used to search and cleanse
 a wound, or to keep open or distend a wound, sore,
 or natural orifice. Cf. The Duchess of Malfi,
 I, i, 111-112:
 "She told him (my Lord) he was a pittifull fellow,
 to lie, like the Children of Ismael, all in tents."

¹²⁴Camp-Victlers] army provisioners.

Act. 3. Scaen. 1.

Enter Lactantio, and Page.Page. Think of your shame and mine.Lact. I prethee peace,
Thou art th'unfortunat'st peece of taking business,
That ever man repented, when day peep'd;
I'll ne'r keep such a peece of Touch-wood again,
And I were rid of thee once. Wel fare those
That never sham'd their Master, I have had such,
And I may live to see the time again;
I do not doubt on't.Page. If my too much kindness 10
Receive your anger onely for reward,
The harder is my fortune; I must tell you Sir,
To stir your care up to prevention,
(Misfortunes must be told as well as blessings)
When I left all my friends in Mantua,
For your loves sake alone, then with strange oaths
You promis'd present marriage.Lact. With strange oaths quoth'a,
They're not so strange to me, I have sworn the same things, 20
I am sure forty times over; not so little.
I may be perfect in 'em, for my standing.Page. You see 'tis high time now Sir.Lact. Yes, yes, yes,
Marriage is nothing with you; a toy till death.
If I should marry all those I have promis'd,
'Twould make one Vicar hoarse, ere he could dispatch us:
[Aside] I must devise some shift, when she grows big,
Those Masculine Hose will shortly prove too little:
What if she were convey'd to Nurses house;
A good sure old Wench; and she'd love the childe well, 30
Because she suckl'd the Father: No ill course
By my Mortality, I may hit worse.⁶Wel fare] Welfare oct.¹²fortune;] fortune, oct.

³taking business] i.e. in sexual giving and taking. "Taking" may also mean "showing the natural effect of" sexual intercourse--i.e. becoming pregnant. The phrase is then related to Touch-wood in 1. 5.

⁵Touch-wood] easily inflammable kindling. As a piece of sexual tinder, the Page "takes".

Enter Dondolo.

Now Dondolo, the news.

Dond. The news?

Lact. How do's she.

Dond. Soft, soft Sir, you think 'tis nothing to get news
out o'th'Castle;

I was there.

Lact. Well Sir.

Dond. As you know a merry fellow may pass any where.

Lact. So Sir.

40

Dond. Never in better fooling in my life.

Lact. What's this to th' purpose?

Dond. Nay 'twas nothing to th' purpose, that's certain.

Lact. How Wretched this slave makes me! Didst not see her?

Dond. I saw her.

Lact. Well, what said she then?

Dond. Not a word Sir.

Lact. How, not a word?

Dond. Proves her the better Maid;

For Virgins should be seen more then they'r heard.

50

Lact. Exceeding good Sir; you are no sweet villain.

Dond. No Faith Sir; for you keep me in foul Linnen.

Lact. Turn'd scurvy rimer are you?

Dond. Not scurvy neither,

Though I be somewhat itchy in the profession;

If you could hear me out with patience, I know her minde

As well as if I were in her belly.

Lact. Thou saidst ev'n now, she never spake a word.

Dond. But she gave certain signs, and that's as good.

Lact. Canst thou conceive by signs?

60

Dond. Oh passing well Sir,

Ev'n from an Infant; did you nev'r know that?

I was the happiest childe in all our Country,

I was born of a dumb woman.

Lact. How?

Dond. Stark dumb Sir: My Father had a rare bargain of
her, a rich peniworth; there would have been but too much
money given for her. A Justice of Peace was about her,
but my Father being then Constable, carried her before him.

Lact. Well since we are entred into these dumb shews,
What were the signs she gave you? 70

Dond. Many and good, Sir.

Imprimis, she first gap'd, but that I ghes'd

Was done for want of air, cause she's kept close;

But had she been abroad, and gapt as much,

T'had been another case; then cast she up

Her pretty eye, and wink't; the word me thought was then

⁵⁰Virgins . . . heard] proverbial. Cf. Tilley, p. 405 (M45).

Come not till twitter light: Next, thus her fingers went,
 As who should say, I'd fain have a hole broke to 'scape away.
 Then look'd upon her watch, and twice she nodded, 80
 As who should say, The hour will come Sweet-heart
 That I shall make two Noddies of my Keepers.
Lact. A third of thee. Is this your Mother tongue?
My hopes are much the wiser for this Language,
 There is no such curse in love to an arrant ass.
Dond. O yes, Sir, yes, an arrant whore's far worse. You
 nev'r lin railing on me, from one weeks end to another:
 But you can keep a little Tit-mouse Page there, that's
 good for nothing, but to carry Tooth-picks, put up your
 Pipe or so, that's all he's good for; he cannot make him 90
 ready as he should do, I am fain to truss his points
 ev'ry morning. Yet the proud scornful Ape, when all the
 lodgings were taken up with strangers th'other night,
 he would not suffer me to come to Bed to him, but kickt
 and prickt, and pinch'd me, like an Urchin; there's no
 good quality in him. Oh my Conscience I think he scarce
 knows how to stride a Horse; I saw him with a little
 hunting Nag, but thus high t'other day, and he was fain
 to lead him to a high rail, and get up like a Butter-
 wench; there's no good Fellowship in this Dandiprat, 100

⁸⁶Dond.] Dond oct.

⁷⁸twitter light] twilight. Cf. Your Five Gallants, V, i,
 5-6: "You can steal secretly hither, you mystical
 quean you, at twilight, twitter-lights!"

⁸²Noddies] fools, simpletons.

⁸⁷lin] cease.

⁹⁵Urchin] 1. hedgehog, 2. sprite, 3. brat.

⁹⁸hunting Nag] a small riding horse or pony.

¹⁰⁰Dandiprat] a small, insignificant, or contemptible
 person. The term is often applied to pages and
 dwarfs. There was a small coin by this name. A
 character in Blurt, Master Constable has the name.

this Dive-dapper, as is in other Pages; they'd go a swimming with me familiarly i'th' heat of Summer, and clap what you call 'ems: But I could never get that little Monkey yet to put off his Breeches. A tender, puling, nice, chitty fac'd Squal 'tis.
Lact. Is this the good you do me? his love's wretched, And most distress'd, that must make use of Fools.
Dond. [Aside] Fool to my face still! that's unreasonable; I will be a knave one day for this trick, Or it shall cost me a fall, though it be from a Gibbet, 110
 It has been many a proper mans last leap.
 Nay sure I'll be quite out of the precincts of a Fool, if I live but two days to an end: I will turn Gipsey presently, and that's the high-way to the dantiest knave that ever Mothers Son took journey too. Oh those dear Gipseys, they live the merriest lives, eat sweet stoln Hens, pluckt over Pales or Hedges by a twitch; they are nev'r without a plump and lovely Goose, or beautiful Sow-pig; those things I saw with mine own eyes to day; they call those vanities, and triffling pilfries: 120
 But if a privy search were made amongst 'em, they should finde other manner of ware about 'em; Cups, Rings, and Silver Spoons, by'r Lady, Bracelets, Pearl Neck-laces, and Chains of Gold sometimes; they are the wittiest theeves: I'll stay no longer, but ev'n go look what I can steal, now presently, and so begin to bring my self acquainted with 'em. Exit.
Lact. Nothing I fear so much, as in this time Of my dull absence, her first love, the General Will wind himself into her affection, 130

102^{me} BPL, N, F, Y, P, BM1, BM2, B1, B2] no Hun, Har. The reading "with no familiarity" does not seem possible, since "clapping what you call 'ems" seems to Dondolo a sign of good fellowship in other Pages, as contrasted to the coldness of the present Page. The other Pages, apparently, were familiar.

105^{chitty-fac'd]} having a thin pinched face; child-faced, girl-faced.

105^{Squal]} a small or insignificant person. The term is usually applied to girls, and therefore has connotations of effeminacy.

101^{Dive-dapper]} a small diving waterfowl; a dabchick. Cf. A Trick to Catch the Old One, IV, v, 137-138: "Behold the little dive-dapper of damnation, Gulf the userer . . ."

By secret gifts and Letters; there's the mischief;
 I have no enemy like him, though my policy
 Dissembled him a welcome, no mans hate
 Can stick more close unto a loath'd disease,
 Then mine to him.

Enter Lord Cardinal.

L. Card. What ails this pretty Boy to weep so often?
Tell me the cause childe; how his eyes stand full!
 Beshrew you Nephew, you're too bitter to him;
 He is so soft, th'unkindness of a word
 Melts him into a woman; 'lass poor Boy, 140
 Thou shalt not serve him longer; 'twere great pity
 That thou shouldst wait upon an angry Master.
 I have promis'd thee to one will make much of thee,
 And hold thy weak youth in most deer respect.

Page. Oh I beseech your Grace, that I may serve
 No Master else.

L. Card. Thou shalt not: Mine's a Mistress,
 The greatest Mistress in all Milan, Boy;
 The Dutchess self.

Page. Nor her, nor any. 150

L. Card. Cease Boy,
 Thou knowest not thine own happiness, through fondness,
 And therefore must be learn't; go dry thine eyes.

Page. This rather is the way to make 'em moister. Exit Page.

L. Card. Now Nephew, Nephew.

Lact. Oh y'have snatcht my spirit Sir,
 From the divinest Meditation
 That ever made Soul happy.

L. Card. [Aside] I am afraid

I shall have as much toil to bring him on now, 160
 As I had pains to keep her off from him.

[To Lactantio] I have thought it fit Nephew, considering
 The present barrenness of our name and house,
 (The onely Famine of succeeding honor)
 To move the ripeness of your time to marriage.

Lact. How Sir, to marriage?

L. Card. Yes, to a fruitful life;

We must not all be strict; so generation
 Would lose her right; thou'rt yong, 'tis my desire
 To see thee bestow'd happily in my life time. 170

Lact. Does your Grace well remember who I am,
 When you speak this?

L. Card. Yes, very perfectly;

Y'are a yong man, full in the grace of life,
 And made to do love credit; proper, handsome,
 And for affection, pregnant.

Lact. I beseech you Sir,
 Take off your praises, rather then bestow 'em
 Upon so frail a use, alas you know Sir,
 I know not what love is, or what you speak of; 180
 If woman be amongst it, I shall swoun; take her away
 For contemplation's sake; most serious Uncle,
 Name no such thing to me.

L. Card. Come, come you'r fond:
 Prove but so strict and obstinate in age,
 And you are well to pass. There's honest love
 Allow'd you now for recreation;
 The years will come when all delights must leave you.
 Stick close to Vertue then; in the mean time
 There's honorable joys to keep youth company; 190
 And if death take you there, dying no adulterer,
 You'r out of his eternal reach, defie him.
 List hither, come to me, and with great thankfulness,
 Welcome thy Fortunes; 'tis the Dutchess loves thee.

Lact. The Dutchess!

L. Card. Dotes on thee: Will die for thee,
 Unless she may enjoy thee.

Lact. She must die then.

L. Card. How?

Lact. Alas, do you think she ever means to do't Sir? 200
 I'll sooner believe all a woman speaks,
 Then that she'll die for love: She has a vow my Lord,
 That will keep life in her.

L. Card. Believe me then,
 That should have bounteous interest in thy Faith,
 She's thine, and not her vows--[Aside] the more my sorrow
 My toil, and my destruction.

Lact. [Aside] My blood dances.

L. Card. And though that bashful Maiden vertue in thee,
 That never held familiar league with woman, 210
 Binds fast all pity to her heart that loves thee,
 Let me prevail, my counsel stands up to thee;
 Embrace it as the fulness of thy Fortunes,
 As if all blessings upon Earth were clos'd
 Within one happiness; for such an other
 Whole life could never meet with; go and present

199 L. Card.] L. Card oct.

206 vows--the] vows, the oct. Other editors give the words
 following "vows" to Lactantio, but they make more
 sense as a muttered expression of the Cardinal's
 own distress and uneasiness as he reverses his
 seven years' support of the Duchess' vow and labors
 to make her renunciation of it acceptable.

211 thee,] thee. oct.

Your service, and your love, but on your hopes
Do it religiously: [Aside] What need I doubt him,
Whom Chastity locks up?

Lact. [Aside] Oh Envy, hadst thou no other means to
come by vertue, 220

But by such treachery! The Dutchess love!
Thou wouldst be sure to aim it high enough,
Thou knew'st full well 'twas no prevailing else.
[To L. Cardinal] Sir, what your will commands, mine
shall fulfil:

I'll teach my heart in all t'obey your will.

Enter Lords.

L. Card. A thing you shall not lose by. Here come the Lords,
Go follow you the course that I advised you;
The comfort of thy presence is expected;
Away with speed to Court, she languishes
For one deer sight of thee. For life's sake haste, 230
You lose my favor if you let her perish.

Lact. [Aside] And art thou come brave Fortune, the reward
Of neat hypocrisie, that ever book't it,
Or turn'd up transitory white o'th' eye
After the Feminine rapture: Dutchess and I
Were a fit match, can be deny'd of no man;
The best dissembler lights on the best woman;
'Twere sin to part us. Exit.

L. Card. You Lights of State, Truths Friends, much
honored Lords, 240
Faithful admirers of our Dutchess vertues,
And firm Believers; it appears as plain
As knowledge to the eyes of industry,
That neither private motion, which holds counsel
Often with womans frailty, and her blood,
Nor publick sight, the lightning of temptations,
Which from the eye strikes sparks into the bosom,
And sets whole hearts on fire, hath power to raise
A heat in her 'bove that which feeds chaste life,
And gives that cherishing means; she's the same still,
And seems so seriously imploy'd in soul, 250
As if she could not tend to cast an eye
Upon deserts so low as those in man.

It merits famous memory I confess;
Yet many times when I behold her youth,
And think upon the lost hopes of posterity,
Succession, and the royal fruits of Beauty,
All by the rashness of one vow made desperate,
It goes so near my heart, I feel it painful,
And wakes me into pity oftentimes,
When others sleep unmov'd. 260

1 Lord. I speak it faithfully,
For 'tis poor fame to boast of a disease,

Your Grace has not endured that pain alone;
 T'has been a grief of mine, but where's the remedy?
L. Card. True, there your Lordship spake enough in little;
 There's nothing to be hoped for but repulses;
 She's not to seek for armor against love,
 That has bid battel to his powers so long;
 He that should try her now, had need come strong,
 And with more force then his own Arguments, 270
 Or he may part disgrac'd, being put to flight;
 That Soldier's tough, has been in seven years fight,
 Her vow's invincible; for you must grant this,
 If those desires train'd up in flesh and blood
 To war continually 'gainst good intents,
 Prove all too weak for her, having advantage
 Both of her sex, and her unskilfulness
 At a Spiritual weapon, wanting knowledge
 To manage resolution, and yet win;
 What force can a poor Argument bring in? 280
 The Books that I have publish'd in her praise,
 Commend her constancy, and that's Fame-worthy;
 But if you read me o'r with eyes of enemies,
 You cannot justly, and with honor tax me,
 That I dissuade her life from marriage there:
 Now Heaven, and fruitfulness forbid, not I:
 She may be constant there, and the hard war
 Of Chastity, is held a vertuous strife,
 As rare in marriage, as in single life;
 Nay, by some writers rarer; hear their reasons, 290
 And you'll approve 'em fairly. She that's single,
 Either in Maid or Widow, oftentimes
 The fear of shame, more then the fear of Heaven,
 Keeps chaste, and constant; when the tempest comes
 She knows she has no shelter for her sin,
 It must endure the weathers of all censure:
 Nothing but Sea and Air, that poor Bark feels,
 When she in wedlock is like a safe vessel
 That lies at anchor; come what weathers can,
 She has her Harbor: At her great unlading, 300
 Much may be stoln, and little waste; the Master
 Thinks himself rich enough with what he has,
 And holds content by that. How think you now Lords?
 If she that might offend safe, does not erre,
 What's chaste in others, is most rare in her.
 2 Lord. What wisdom but approves it?
 1 Lord. But my Lord,
 This should be told to her it concerns most;
 Pity such good things should be spoke and lost.
L. Card. That were the way to lose 'em utterly, 310
 You quite forget her vow; yet now I think on't,

What is that vow? 'Twas but a thing inforc'd,
Was it not Lords?

1 Lord. Meerly compell'd indeed.

L. Card. Onely to please the Duke, and forced vertue
Fails in her merit, there's no crown prepar'd for't:
What have we done, my Lords? I fear we have sin'd
In too much strictness to uphold her in't,
In cherishing her will; for womans goodness
Takes counsel of that first, and then determines. 320

She cannot truly be call'd constant now,
If she persever; rather obstinate,
The Vow appearing forced, as it proves,
Try'd by our purer thoughts: The grace and triumph
Of all her victories, are but idle glories;
She wilful, and we enemies to succession.
I will not take rest, till I tell her soul
As freely as I talk to those I keep.

Lords. And we'll all second you, my Lord.

L. Card. Agreed. 330

We'll knit such knots of Arguments so fast,
All wit in her shall not undo in hast.

2 Lord. Nay sure, I think all we shall be too hard for her,
Else she's a huge wilde Creature.

1 Lord. If we win,

And she yeild marriage, then will I strike in. Exeunt.

Scaen. 2. Enter Dutchess and Celia.

Dutch. Thou tell'st me happy things, if they be certain,
To bring my wishes about wondrous strangely.

Lactantio Nephew to the Cardinal,

The Generals secret enemy?

Cel. Most true Madam,

I had it from a Gentleman, my Kinsman,

That knows the best part of Lactantio's bosom.

Dutch. It happens passing fortunately, to save

Employment in another; he will 'come now

A necessary property; he may thank

The need and use we have of him for his welcome. Knocks within. 10

Now who's that knocks? [Celia exits and then returns.]

Cel. Madam, 'tis he, with speed.

I thought he had brought his horse to th' Chamber door,

He made such haste and noise.

Dutch. Admit him prethee,

And have a care your heart be true and secret.

Cel. Take life away from't, when it fails you Madam. Exit.

¹¹Knocks within.] This stage direction occurs on 1.12
in oct.

Enter Lactantio.

Dutch. Enough; I know thee wise.
 He comes with haste indeed: Are you come now Sir? 20
 You should have staid yet longer, and have found me
 Dead, to requite your haste.
Lact. Love bless you better Madam.
Dutch. Must I bid welcome to the man undoes me,
 The cause of my vows breach, my honor's enemy;
 One that does all the mischief to my fame,
 And mocks my seven years conquest with his name?
 This is a force of Love was never felt;
 But I'll not grudge at Fortune, I will take
 Captivity cheerfully: Here, seise upon me, 30
 And if thy heart can be so pitiless
 To chain me up for ever in those arms,
 I'll take it mildly, I, and thank my Stars,
 For w'are all subject to the chance of wars.
Lact. We are so, yet take comfort vanquish'd Dutchess,
 I'll use you like an honorable prisoner,
 You shall be entreated; day shall be
 Free for all sports to you, the night for me;
 That's all I challenge, all the rest is thine;
 And for your fare 't' shall be no worse then mine. 40
Dutch. Nay then I'm heartily pleasant, and as merry
 As one that owes no malice, and that's well Sir;
 You cannot say so much for your part, can you?
Lact. Faith all that I ow, is to one man, Madam,
 And so can few men say: Marry that malice
 Wears no dead flesh about it, 'tis a stinger.
Dutch. What is he that shall dare to be your enemy,
 Having our friendship, if he be a servant
 And subject to our Law?
Lact. Yes, trust me Madam, 50
 Of a vilde fellow, I hold him a true subject;
 There's many arrant knaves, that are good subjects,
 Some for their livings sakes, some for their lives,
 That will unseen, eat men, and drink their wives.
Dutch. They are as much in fault that know such people,
 And yet conceal 'em from the whips of Justice.
 For love's sake give me in your foe betimes,
 Before he vex you further; I will order him
 To your hearts wishes, load him with disgraces,
 That your revenge shall rather pity him, 60
 Then wish more weight upon him.

⁴⁴Lact.] Lact oct.

⁴⁶dead flesh . . . stinger.] Perhaps the stinger of an insect; dead flesh, in contrast, would be harmless.

Lact. Say you so Madam!

Here's a blest hour, that feeds both love and hate;
Then take thy time brave malice: Vertuous Princess,
The onely enemy that my veng'ance points to,
Lives in Andrugio.

Dutch. What the General?

Lact. That's the man, Madam.

Dutch. Are you serious Sir?

Lact. As at my prayers.

70

Dutch. We meet happily then

In both our wishes; he's the onely man
My will has had a longing to disgrace,
For divers capital contempts; my memory
Shall call 'em all together now; nay Sir,
I'll bring his faith in War, now into question,
And his late conference with th'enemy.

Lact. By'r Lady a shrewd business, and a dangerous.
Seignior, your neck's a cracking.

Dutch. Stay, stay Sir, take Pen and Ink.

80

Lact. Here's both, and Paper, Madam.

Dutch. I'll take him in a fine trap.

Lact. That were exc'llent.

Dutch. A Letter so writ, would abuse him strangely.

Lact. Good Madam, let me understand your minde,
And then take you no care for his abusing,
I serve for nothing else. I can write fast and fair
Most true Orthography, and observe my stops.

Dutch. Stay, stay a while,

You do not know his hand.

90

Lact. A bastard Roman,

Much like mine own. I could go near it Madam.

Dutch. Marry and shall.

Lact. We were once great together,
And writ Spanish Epistles one to another,
To exercise the Language.

Dutch. Did you so?

It shall be a bold Letter of temptation
With his name to't, as writ, and sent to me.

Lact. Can be no better Lady; stick there Madam,
And never seek further.

100

Dutch. Begin thus: Fair Dutchess, say:

We must use flattery, if we imitate man,
'Twill nev'r be thought his Pen else.

Lact. Most fair Dutchess.

Dutch. What need you have put in most, yet since 'tis in,
Let 't ev'n go on, few women would finde fault with't;
We all love to be best, but seldom mend:
Go on Sir.

Lact. Most fair Dutchess! Here's an admiration point. 110
Dutch. The report of your vow shall not fear me.
Lact. Fear me: Two stops at fear me.
Dutch. I know y'are but a woman.
Lact. But a woman; a comma at woman.
Dutch. And what a woman is, a wiseman knows.
Lact. Wise-man knows: A Full-prick there.
Dutch. Perhaps my condition may seem blunt to you.
Lact. Blunt to you: A comma here again.
Dutch. But no mans love can be more sharp set.
Lact. Sharp set, there a colon; for colon is sharp set 120
 oftentimes.
Dutch. And I know desires in both sexes have skill at
 that weapon.
Lact. Skill at that weapon: A Full-prick here, at weapon.
Dutch. So, that will be enough: Subscribe it thus now.
 One that vows service to your affections: Seignior such a
 one.
Lact. Seignior Andrugio: G. that stands for General.
Dutch. [Aside] And you shall stand for Goose-cap:
 [To Lactantio] Give me that,
 Betake you to your business; speedily Sir,
 We give you full authority from our person,
 In right of Reputation, Truth, and Honor,
 To take a strong Guard, and attach his body. 130
 That done, to bring him presently before us,
 Then we know what to do.
Lact. My hate findes wings.
Mans spirit flies swift to all revengeful things. Exit.
Dutch. Why here's the happiness of my desires,
 The means safe, unsuspected, far from thought;
 His state is like the world's condition right,
 Greedy of gain, either by fraud or stealth;
 And whil'st one toils, another gets the wealth. Exit.

110 Lact.] Lact oct.

119 sharp set] keen, eager.

120 colon] the belly or guts. Cf. A Chaste Maid in Cheapside,
 II, ii, 79: "Lent? what cares colon here for Lent?"

126 Goose-cap] booby, numskull.

Act. 4. Scaen. 1.

Enter Andrugio.

Andr. NOW Fortune shew thy self the Friend of Love,
Make her way plain, and safe; cast all their eyes
 That guard the Castle, into a thicker blindness then thine own,
 Darker then Ignorance or Idolatry,
 That in that shape my love may pass unknown,
 And by her freedom set my comforts free.
 This is the place appointed for our meeting,
 Yet comes she not, I am covetous of her sight;
 That Gipsey habit alters her so far
 From knowledge that our purpose cannot erre; 10
 She might have been here now, by this time largely
 And much to spare: I would not miss her now
 In this plight, for the loss of a years joy.
 She's ignorant of this house, nor knows she where,
 Or which way to bestow her self through fear.

Enter Lactantio with a Guard.

Lact. Close with him Gentlemen. In the Dutchess name
 We do attach your body.

Andr. How, my body!

What means this rudeness?

Lact. You adde to your offences, 20
Calling that rudeness, that is fair command,
 Immaculate Justice, and the Dutchess pleasure.

Andr. Seignior Lactantio, Oh are you the Speaker?

Lact. I am what I am made.

Andr. Shew me my crime.

Lact. I fear you'll have too many shewn you Sir.

Andr. The Father of untruths possesses thy spirit,
 As he commands thy tongue: I defie fear,
 But in my love, it onely settles there.

Lact. Bring him along. 30

Andr. Let Laws severest browe

Bend at my deeds, my innocence shall rise
 A shame to thee, and all my enemies.

Lact. Y'are much the happier man.

Andr. Oh my hard crosses!

Grant me the third part of one hours stay.

Lact. Sir, not a minute.

⁵ shape BPL, N, F, Y, P, BM1, BM2, B1, B2] shape, Hun, Har.

⁶ freedom BPL, N, F, Y, P, BM1, BM2, B1, B2] freedom,
 Hun, Har.

⁸ comes she not, I (Dilke)] comes she, I oct.

³⁵ crosses! BPL, N, F, Y, P, BM1, BM2, B1, B2] crosses; Hun, Har.

Andr. Oh she's lost.

Lact. Away.

Exeunt.

Scaen. 2. Enter Aurelia like a Gipsey.

Aur. I'm happily escap'd, not one pursues me,
 This shape's too cunning for 'em; all the sport was
 The Porter would needs know his fortune of me
 As I past by him: 'Twas such a plunge to me,
 I knew not how to bear my self; at last
 I did resolve of somewhat, look'd in's hand,
 Then shook my head, bad him make much on's eyes,
 He would lose his sight clean, long before he dies,
 And so away went I, he lost the sight of me quickly.
 I told him his fortune truer for nothing, then some 10
 Of my Complexion, that would have couzen'd him of his money.
 This is the place of meeting; where's this man now,
 That has took all this care and pains for nothing?
 The use of him is at the last cast now,
 Shall onely bring me to my former face again,
 And see me somewhat cleanlier at his cost,
 And then farewell Andrugio; when I am handsome
 I'm for another straight: I wonder troth
 That he would miss me thus, I could have took
 Many occasions besides this, to have left him, 20
 I'm not in want, he need not give me any;
 A womans will has still enough to spare
 To help her friends, and need be: What, not yet?
 What will become of me in this shape then?
 If I know where to go, I'm no dissembler;
 And I'll not lose my part in one woman so,
 For such a trifle, to forswear my self:
 But comes he not indeed?

Enter Dondolo.

Dond. Oh Ex'lent, by this light here's one of them.

26-27 And . . . trifle] Cf. The Rambling Justice, sigs.
 D1^v-D2: " . . . and I'de not lose that part of
 woman for such a trifle."

⁴plunge] dilemma, crisis.

¹⁴at the last cast] proverbial, Cf. Tilley, p. 84 (C115).

²⁶part] actor's role. Aurelia will not expose herself by
 taking off her disguise merely because she is lost.
 But cf. textual note.

I thank my Stars: I learnt that phrase in the Half-Moon Tavern. By your leave good Gipsey, I pray how far off is your company? 30

Aur. Oh happiness! This is the merry Fellow

My love Seignior Lactantio takes delight in;

I'll send him away speedily, with the news

Of my so strange and fortunate escape,

And he'll provide my safety at an instant.

My friend, thou serv'st Seignior Lactantio.

Dond. Who I serve? Gipsey, I scorn your motion;

and if the rest of your company give me no better 40

words, I will hinder 'em the stealing of more Pully

then fifty Poulterers were ever worth, and prove a

heavier enemy to all their Pig-booties; they shall

travel like Jews, that hate Swines flesh, and never

get a Sowe by th'ear all their life time. I serve

Lactantio? I scorn to serve any Body, I am more

Gipsey-minded then so; though my face look of a

Christian colour, if my belly were ript up, you shall

finde my heart as black as any patch about you. The 50

truth is, I am as arrant a theif, as the proudest of

your company, I'll except none: I am run away from

my Master in the state of a Fool, and till I be a

perfect knave, I never mean to return again.

Aur. I'm nev'r the happier for this Fortune now,

It did but mock me.

Dond. Here they come: Here they come.

Enter a company of Gipseys, Men and Women, with Booties of Hens, and Ducks, & c. singing.

Musick.

30-31 Half-Moon Tavern] There were Half-Moon Taverns in the Strand, Bedford St., Cheapside, Aldersgate St. and Milk St. (Sugden). Dondolo may also be alluding to the sobriquet, "Moon-men", often applied to gypsies.

39 I . . . motion] proverbial, Cf. Tilley, p. 478 (M1209).

45 a Sowe . . . ear] proverbial, Cf. Tilley, p. 621 (S 684).
"To get a Sow by the right ear" means "to have luck or success."

49 patch] Perhaps an eye-patch; also a clown, fool, dolt.

SONG.

Cap. Come my dainty Doxes,
My Dells, my Dells most deer.
We have neither House nor Land,
Yet never want good cheer. 60

All. We never want good cheer.

Cap. We take no care for Candle, Rents,
 2. We lie.
 3. We snort.

Cap. We sport in Tents.
Then rouze betimes, and steal our dinners.
Our store is never taken
Without Pigs, Hens, or Bacon,
And that's good meat for sinners.
At Wakes and Fairs we cozen, 70
Poor Country folks by dozen.

If one have money, he disburses,
Whilst some tell fortunes, some pick purses:
Rather then be out of use
We'll steal Garters, Hose, or Shoes,
Boots, or Spurs with gingling Rowels,
Shirts or Napkins, Smocks or Towels.
Come live with us, come live with us,
All you that love your eases;
He that's a Gipsey, 80
May be drunk or tipsey,
At what hour he pleases.

All. We laugh, we quaff, we roar, we scuffle.
We cheat, we drab, we filtch, we shuffle.

Dond. Oh sweet! they deserve to be hang'd for ravishing
 of me.

Aur. What will become of me, if I seem fearful now,
 Or offer sudden flight? then I betray my self;
 I must do neither.

Cap. Ousabel, camcheteroon, puscatelion, hows-drows.

⁷²he] be oct.

⁵⁷Doxes] whores. Cf. Harman . . . "These doxies be broken
 and spoiled of their maidenhead by the upright-men,
 and then they have their name of doxies, and not
 afore. And afterward she is common and indifferent
 for any that will use her, as homo is a common name
 to all men." (In Judges, p. 105.)

⁵⁸Dells] Cf. Harman . . . "A dell is a young wench, able
 for generation, and not yet known or broken by the
 upright-man." (In Judges, p. 107.)

2. Rumbos stragadelion
Alla piskitch in Sows-clows.
Oh, Oh!

90

Dond. Piskitch in howse-clout.

I shall nev'r keep a good tongue in my head, till I get
 this Language.

Cap. Umbra fill kevolliden, magro-pye.

Dond. He calls her Magot o' pie.

Aur. I love your Language well, but understand it not.

Cap. Hah.

Aur. I am but lately turn'd to your profession,

Yet from my youth, I ever lov'd it deerly,

100

But never could attain to't: Steal I can;

It was a thing I ever was brought up to,

My Father was a Miller, and my Mother

A Taylors widow.

Dond. She's a thief on both sides.

Cap. Give me thy hand, thou art no Bastard born,

We have not a more true bred thief amongst us.

All. Not any Captain.

Dond. I pray take me into some grace amongst you too,

for though I claim no goodness from my parents to help

110

me forward into your Society, I had two Uncles that

were both hang'd for robberies, if that will serve your

turn, and a brave cut-purse to my Cozen-german: If

kinred will be taken, I am as neer a kin to a thief

as any of you that had Fathers and Mothers.

Cap. What is it thou requirest, noble Cozen?

Dond. Cozen! nay, and we be so near a kin already,

now we are sober, we shall be sworn Brothers when we

are drunk: The naked truth is Sir, I would be made a

Gipsey as fast as you could devise.

120

Cap. A Gipsey!

Dond. I with all the speed you can Sir; the very

sight of those stoln Hens, eggs me forward horribly.

Cap. Here's dainty Ducks too Boy.

Dond. I see 'em but too well; I would they were all

rotten rosted, and stuf't with Onions.

¹²³horribly.] horribly oct.

⁹⁶Magot o' pie] magpie.

¹⁰³⁻¹⁰⁵My Father . . . sides] Millers and tailors were
 proverbially dishonest. Cf. The Widow, IV, ii, 41-44.
 "The miller's a white devil; he wears his theft
 Like innocence in badges most apparently
 Upon his nose, sometimes between his lips;
 The tailor modestly between his legs."

Cap. Lov'st thou the common food of Egypt, Onions?
 Dond. I, and Garlick too: I have smelt out many a
 Knave by't; but I could never smell mine own breath
 yet, and that's many a mans fault; he can smell out a 130
 Knave in another sometimes three yards off, yet his
 Nose standing so nigh his mouth, he can never smell
 out himself.
 Cap. A pregnant Gipseey.
 All. A most witty sinner.
 Cap. Stretch forth thy hand Coz; art thou fortunate?
 Dond. How? fortunate! nay, I cannot tell that my self;
 wherefore do I come to you but to learn that? I have
 sometimes found money in old shooes, but if I had not
 stoln more then I have found, I had had but a scurvy 140
 thin-cheek'd fortune on't.
 Cap. Here's a fair Table. [While the Captain reads
his palm, he also steals his money.]
 Dond. I, so has many a man, that has given over house-
 keeping, a fair Table, when there's neither cloth, nor
 meat upon't.
 Cap. What a brave line of life's here, look you Gipseys.
 Dond. I have known as brave a line end in a halter.
 Cap. But thou art born to pretious fortune.
 Dond. The Devil I am.

127 Egypt] Eygpt oct.

147 line (Dilke)] live oct.; life (The Rambling Justice,
 sig. D3.)

127 Egypt] "Gipsy in its early form gipcyan is aphetic for
Egyptian." (Herford and Simpson, vol. X, p. 615.)

127 Onions] cf. The Spanish Gypsy, II, i, 7-9:
 "the English gipsies . . . that sally out upon pullen,
 lie in ambuscado for a rope of onions . . ."

139 money . . . shooes] "This is an allusion to a popular
 superstition, that the fairies, from their love of
 cleanliness, used at night to drop money into the
 shoes of good servants as a reward" (Dilke).

142 Table] the quadrangular space between certain lines in
 the palm of the hand.

146 line of life] i.e. in palm reading. Cf. The Gypsies
Metamorphos'd, ll. 289-290:
 "You lue chaste and single, and have buried yo^r wife,
 And meane not to marrie by the line of yo^r life."

Cap. Bette, Bucketto. 150
Dond. How, to beat Bucks?
Cap. Stealee Bacono.
Dond. Oh, to steal Bacon, that's the better fortune
o'th' two indeed.
Cap. Thou wilt be shortly Captain of the Gipseys.
Dond. I would you'd make me Corporal i'th' mean time;
Or Standard-bearer to the Womens Regiment.
Cap. Much may be done for love.
Dond. Nay here's some money: I know an Office comes
not all for love, a Pox of your Lime-twigs, you hav't 160
all already.
Cap. It lies but here in cash for thine own use Boy.
Dond. Nay an't lie there once, I shall hardly come to
the fingring on't in haste; yet make me an apt Scholler,
and I care not: Teach me but so much Gipsey, to steal
as much more from another, and the Devil do you good
of that.
Cap. Thou shalt have all thy heart requires:
First, here's a Girl for thy desires,
This Doxey fresh, this new come Dell 170
Shall lie by thy sweet side and swell:
Get me Gipseys brave and tauny;
With Cheek full plump, and Hip full brauny.
Look you prove industrious dealers
To serve the Commonwealth with stealers,
That th'unhous'd race of Fortune-tellers
May never fail to cheat Town-dwellers;
Or to our universal grief,
Leave Country Fairs without a Theif.
This is all you have to do, 180
Save ev'ry hour a filch or two,
Be it money, cloth or pullen,
When the ev'nings browe looks sullen.
Loose no time, for then 'tis pretious,
Let your sleights be fine, facetious;
Which hoping you'll observe, to try thee
With rusty Bacon, thus I Gipsifie thee.
Dond. Do you use to do't with Bacon.
Cap. Evermore.

160 [Lime-twigs] twigs smeared with birdlime for catching birds; i.e. sticky fingers.

188 Do . . . Bacon] Cf. The Gypsies Metamorphos'd, ll. 1212-1215:
"To change yo^r Complexion
Wth the noble Confection
Of wallnutte and hoggs greace,
Better than dogs greace;"

Dond. By this light, the Rats will take me now for some 190
Hogs Cheek, and eat up my face when I am asleep; I shall
 have nev'r a bit left by to morrow morning; and lying
 open mouth'd as I use to do, I shall look for all the
 world like a Mouse-trap baited with Bacon.

Cap. Why here's a face like thine, so done,
 Onely grain'd in by the Sun, and this, and these.

Dond. Faith, then there's a company of Bacon faces of
 you, and I am one now to make up the number: We are a
 kinde of conscionable people, and 'twere well thought 200
 upon for to steal Bacon, and black our faces with't:
 Tis like one that commits sin, and writes his faults
 in his forehead.

Cap. Wit whether wilt thou?

Dond. Marry to the next pocket I can come at; and if
 it be a Gentlemans, I wish a whole quarters rent in't:
 Is this my in dock, out nettle. What's Gipsey for her?

Cap. Your doxey she.

Dond. Oh right, are you my doxey sirra.

Aur. I'll be thy doxey, and thy dell, 210
 With thee I'll live, for thee I'll steal:
 From Fair to Fair, from Wake to Wake,
 I'll ramble still for thy sweet sake.

Dond. Oh dainty fine doxey; she speaks the Language
 as familiarly already, as if sh'ad been begot of a
 Canter. I pray Captain, what's gipsey for the hind
 quarter of a Woman?

Cap. Nosario.

Dond. Nosario: Why what's gipsey for my Nose then?

204 Dond.] Dond oct.

205 Gentlemans oct.] Landlords The Rambling Justice.

218 Dond.] Dond oct.

203 Wit whether wilt thou?] proverbial, cf. Tilley, p. 737
 (W570).

206 in dock, out nettle] "The words 'in dock, out nettle',
 allude, I believe, to a practice still sometimes found
 among children, of laying the leaf of the butter-dock
 upon a place that has been stung by a nettle, and
 repeating, as a kind of charm, the words, 'in dock, out
 nettle', as long as the application is continued"
 (Dilke). Cf. Tilley, p. 162 (D421-422): "This
 phrase . . . became a proverbial expression for
 changeableness and inconstancy."

215 Canter] one who uses the "cant" of thieves; a rogue,
 vagabond.

Cap. Why Arsinio.

Dond. Arsinio? Faith 'me thinks you might have devised 220
a sweeter word for't.

Enter Father and Governor.

Cap. Stop, stop, fresh booties, Gentle folks, Seignioroes,
Calavario, Fulkadelio.

2 Gip. La gnambrol a tumbrel.

Dond. How: Give me one word amongst you, that I may be
doing too.

Aur. [Aside] Yonder they are again, Oh guiltiness,
Thou put'st more trembling fear into a Maid
Then the first wedding night. Take courage wench
Thy face cannot betray thee with a blush now.

Father. Which way she took her flight Sir, none can gness, 230
Or how she scap't.

Gover. Out at some Window certainly.

Father. Oh 'tis a bold daring Baggage.

Gover. See good fortune Sir,

The Gipseys, they're the cunningst people living.

Father. They cunning? what a confidence have you Sir,
No wiseman's faith was ever set in fortunes.

Gover. You are the wilfulst man against all learning still:
I will be hang'd now, if I hear not news of her amongst
this company.

Father. You are a Gentleman of the flatt'ring'st hopes 240
That ev'r lost woman yet.

Gover. Come hither Gipsy.

Aur. [Aside] Luck now, or I'm undone,---What says my
Master,

Bless me with a silver cross,
And I will tell you all your loss.

Gover. Lo you there Sir, all my loss, at first word too,
There is no cunning in these Gipseys now.

Father. Sure I'll hear more of this.

Gover. Here's silver for you.

Aur. Now attend your fortunes story, 250
You lov'd a Maid.

²²⁹Thy . . . now] i.e. because it is blackened in disguise.

²⁴⁴silver cross] a coin with the figure of the cross stamped
upon one side. Cf. The Gypsies Metamorphos'd, ll.

416-418:

"I pry'thee dispose

Some small peece of siluer, it shalbe no losse,

But onelie to make the signe of the Crosse."

Gover. Right.

Aur. She never lov'd you.

You shall finde my words are true.

Gover. 'Mass I am afraid so.

Aur. You were about

To keep her in, but could not do't.

Alas the while she would not stay

The cough o'th' Lungs blew her away;

And which is worse, you'll be so crost,

260

You'll never finde the thing that's lost;

Yet oftentimes your sight will fear her,

She'll be near you, and yet you nev'r the nearer.

Let her go, and be the gladder;

She'd but shame you, if you had her.

Ten Counsellors could never school her,

She's so wilde, you could not rule her.

Gover. In troth I am of thy minde, yet I'd fain finde her.

Aur. Soonest then, when you least minde her;

But if you mean to take her tripping,

270

Make but haste, she's now a shipping.

Gover. I ever dreamed so much.

Father. Hie to the Key,

We'll mar your voyage, you shall brook no Sea.

Exit Father and Governor.

Cap. Cheteroon: High Gulleroon.

Dond. Filcheroon, pursse-fulleroon: I can say somewhat too.

All. Excellent Gipse, witty rare Doxey.

Dond. I would not change my Dell for a dozen of black

Bell-weathers.

Cap. Our wealth swells high my Boys.

Dond. Our wealth swells high my Boys.

280

Cap. Let ev'ry Gipse

Dance with his Doxey,

And then drink, drink for joy.

Dond. Let ev'ry Gipse

Dance with his Doxey,

And then drink, drink for joy.

All. And then drink, drink for joy. Exit with a strange
wilde fashion'd dance to the Hoboys or Cornets.

259 cough o'th' Lungs] i.e. "the symptoms of age and infirmity in the lover proposed by the father" (Dilke).

278 Bell-weathers] the leading sheep of a flock, on whose neck a bell is hung.

Scaen. 3. Enter Dutchess, Lord Cardinal, and other Lords, Celia.

L. Card. That which is meerly call'd a will in woman,
I cannot always title it with a vertue.

Dutch. Oh good Sir spare me.

L. Card. Spare your self, good Madam.

Extreamest Justice is not so severe
To great offenders, as your own forc'd strictness
To beauty, youth and time; you'll answer for't.

Dutch. Sir settle your own peace, let me make mine.

L. Card. But here's a heart must pity it, when it
— thinks on't,

I finde compassion, though the smart be yours.

10

1 Lord. None here but do's the like.

2 Lord. Believe it Madam,

You have much wrong'd your time.

1 Lord. Nay, let your Grace

But think upon the barrenness of succession.

2 Lord. Nay more, a Vow enforc'd.

Dutch. What do you all

Forsake me then, and take part with yon man;
Not one friend have I left! do they all fight
Under th'inglorious banner of his censure,
Serve under his opinion?

20

L. Card. So will all Madam,

Whose judgments can but taste a rightful cause,
I look for more force yet; nay, your own women
Will shortly rise against you, when they know
The war to be so just and honorable

As marriage is: You cannot name that woman,
Will not come ready arm'd for such a cause:
Can Chastity be any whit impair'd

By that which makes it perfect? Answer Madam,

30

Do you profess constancy, and yet live alone?

How can that hold! y'are constant then to none.

That's a dead vertue, goodness must have practice,
Or else it ceases; then is woman said

To be love chaste, knowing but one mans bed:

A mighty vertue; beside, fruitfulness

Is part of the salvation of your sex;

And the true use of Wedlocks time and space,

Is womans exercise for Faith and Grace.

Dutch. Oh what have you done my Lord?

40

L. Card. Laid the way plain

To knowledge of your self and your Creation,

Unbound a forced Vow, that was but knit

By the strange jealousie of your dying Lord,

Sinful i'th' fastning.

Dutch. All the powres of Constancy

Will curse you for this deed.

L. Card. You speak in pain Madam,

And so I take your words, like one in sickness

That rails at his best friend: I know a change 50
 Of disposition has a violent working
 In all of us; 'tis fit it should have time
 And counsel with it self: May you be fruitful Madam
 In all the blessings of an honor'd love.

I Lord. In all your wishes fortunate, [Aside] and I
 The cheif of 'em my self.

L. Card. Peace be at your heart Lady.

I Lord. [Aside] And love, say I.

L. Card. We'll leave good thoughts now, to bring in
 themselves. Exit Lords.

Dutch. O there's no art like a religious cunning, 60
 It carries away all things smooth before it.
 How subtilly has his wit dealt with the Lords
 To fetch in their perswasions, to a business
 That stands in need of none, yeilds of it self
 As most we women do, when we seem farthest?
 But little thinks the Cardinal he's requited
 After the same proportion of deceit
 As he sets down for others.

Enter Page.

Oh here's the pretty Boy, he preferr'd to me,
 I never saw a meeker, gentler youth 70
 Yet made for mans beginning: How unfit
 Was that poor fool, to be Lactantio's Page,
 He would have spoil'd him quite, in one year utterly,
 There had been no hope of him. Come hither childe,
 I have forgot thy name.

Page. Antonio, Madam.

Dutch. Antonio! so thou toldst me; I must chide thee,
 Why didst thou weep, when thou cam'st first to serve me?

Page. At the distrust of mine own merits Madam,
 Knowing I was not born to those deserts 80
 To please so great a Mistress.

Dutch. 'Las poor Boy,
 That's nothing in thee, but thy modest fear
 Which makes amends faster then thou canst erre:
 It shall be my care to have him well brought up
 As a youth apt for good things. Celia---

Cel. Madam.

Dutch. Has he bestow'd his hour to day for Musick?

Cel. Yes, he has Madam.

Dutch. How do you finde his voice? 90

Cel. A pretty womanish faint sprawling voice Madam,
 But 'twill grow strong in time, if he take care
 To keep it when he has it from fond exercises.

Dutch. Give order to the dancing School-master,
 Observe an hour with him.

⁸⁹Cel.] Cel oct.

Cel. It shall be done Lady;
He is well made for dancing, thick i'th' Chest Madam,
 He will turn long and strongly.
Dutch. He shall not be behinde a quality,
 That aptness in him or our cost can purchase, 100
 And see he lose no time.
Cel. I'll take that order Madam.
Page. Singing and dancing! 'las my case is worse,
 I rather need a Midwife, and a Nurse. Exit Celia and Page.
Dutch. Lactantio, my procurer not return'd yet?
His malice, I have fitted with an office,
 Which he takes pleasure to discharge with rigor:
 He comes, and with him, my hearts Conqueror,
 My pleasing thraldom's near.

Enter General, Lactantio and the Guard.

Andr. Not know the cause? 110
Lact. Yes, you shall soon do that now, to the ruine
 Of your neck-part, or some nine years imprisonment;
 You meet with mercy, and you scape with that;
 Beside your Lands all begg'd and seis'd upon;
 That's admirable favor. Here's the Dutchess.
Dutch. Oh Sir y'are welcome.
Lact. Marry bless me still
 From such a welcome.
Dutch. You are hard to come by,
 It seems Sir by the guilt of your long stay. 120
Andr. My guilt good Madam.
Dutch. Sure y'had much ado
 To take him, had you not? speak truth Lactantio,
 And leave all favor, were you not in danger?
Lact. Faith something neer it Madam: He grew head-strong,
 Furious and fierce; but 'tis not my condition
 To speak the worst things of mine enemy Madam,
 Therein I hold mine honor: But had fury
 Burst into all the violent storms that ever
 Plaid over anger in tempestuous man, 130
 I would have brought him to your Graces presence,
 Dead or alive.

¹⁰⁵Dutch.] Dutch oct.

¹¹²imprisonment;] imprisonment, oct.

¹³⁰man,] man. oct.

¹¹⁴begg'd] entreated for.

Dutch. You would not Sir?

Andr. What pride

Of pamper'd blood has mounted up to this puckfoist?

If any way uncounsel'd of my judgment,

My ignorance has stept into some error,

(Which I could heart'ly curse) and so brought on me

Your great displeasure, let me feel my sin

In the full weight of Justice, vertuous Madam,

140

And let it wake me throughly. But chaste Lady,

Out of the bounty of your Grace, permit not

This perfum'd parcel of curl'd powder'd hair

To cast me in the poor rellish of his censure.

Dutch. It shall not need good Sir; we are our self

Of power sufficient to judge you, nev'r doubt it Sir.

Withdraw Lactantio; carefully place your Guard

I'th' next Room.

Lact. You'll but fare the worse;

You see your niceness spoils you; you'll go nigh now

150

To feel your sin indeed.

Exit Lactantio and Guard.

Andr. Hell-mouth be with thee.

Was ever malice seen yet to gape wider

For mans misfortunes?

Dutch. First Sir, I should think

You could not be so impudent to deny,

What your own knowledge proves to you.

Andr. That were a sin Madam,

More gross then flattery spent upon a villain.

Dutch. Your own confession dooms you Sir.

160

Andr. Why Madam.

Dutch. Do not you know I made a serious vow

At my Lords death, never to marry more?

Andr. That's a truth Madam, I'm a witness to.

Dutch. Is't so Sir? you'll be taken presently,

This man needs no accuser. Knowing so much,

How durst you then attempt so bold a business

As to sollicite me (so strictly settled)

With tempting Letters, and loose lines of love?

Andr. Who I do't Madam?

170

Dutch. Sure the man will shortly

Deny he lives, although he walks and breathes.

Andr. Better destruction snatch me quick from sight

Of humane eyes, then I should sin so boldly.

Dutch. 'Twas well I kept it then from rage or fire,

For my truths credit: Look you Sir, read out,

You know the hand and name.

Andr. Andrugio!

172 ^{breathes}] breath oct.

135 ^{puckfoist}] puckfist, puff-ball, an empty braggart.

Dutch. And if such things be fit, the world shall judge!

Andr. Madam.

180

Dutch. Pish; that's not so; it begins otherwise,
Pray look again Sir; how you'd slight your knowledge.

Andr. By all the reputation I late won.

Dutch. Nay, and you dare not read Sir, I am gone.

Andr. Read? most fair Dutchess.

Dutch. Oh, have you found it now?

There's a sweet flatt'ring phrase for a beginning,
You thought belike, that would o'rcome me.

Andr. I Madam?

Dutch. Nay on Sir, you are slothful.

190

Andr. The report of your Vow shall not fear me.

Dutch. No? are you so resolute? 'Tis well for you Sir.

Andr. I know y'are but a woman.

Dutch. Well, what then Sir?

Andr. And what a woman is, a wiseman knows.

Dutch. Let him know what he can, he's glad to get us.

Andr. Perhaps my condition may seem blunt to you.

Dutch. Well; we finde no fault with your bluntness.

Andr. But no mans love can be more sharp set.

Dutch. I there's good stuff now.

200

Andr. And I know desires in both sexes have skill at
that weapon.

Dutch. Weapon! You begin like a Flatterer, and end
like a Fencer.

Are these fit lines now to be sent to us?

Andr. Now by the honor of a man, his truth Madam,
My name's abus'd.

Dutch. Fie, fie, deny your hand!

I will not deny mine; here take it freely Sir,

And with it my true constant heart for ever.

I never disgrac'd man that sought my favor.

Andr. What mean you Madam?

210

Dutch. To requite you Sir

By curtesie, I hold my reputation,

And you shall taste it: Sir, in as plain truth

As the old time walk'd in, when love was simple

And knew no art, nor guile, I affect you;

My heart has made her choice. I love you Sir

Above my vow; the frown that met you first,

Wore not the livery of anger Sir,

But of deep policy: I made your enemy

The Instrument for all; there you may praise me,

220

And 'twill not be ill given.

Andr. Here's a strange Language!

The constancy of love bless me from learning on't,

Although ambition would soon teach it others.

Madam, the service of whole life is yours. But---

Dutch. Enough; thou'rt mine for ever. Within there.

Enter Lactantio, and the Guard.

Lact. Madam.

Dutch. Lay hands upon him, bear him hence,
See he be kept close prisoner in our Pallace,
The time's not yet ripe for our Nuptial Sollace. Exit. 230

Lact. This you could clear your self.

Andr. There's a voice that wearies me
More then mine own distractions.

Lact. You are innocent?

Andr. I have not a time idle enough from passion,
To give this Devil an answer: Oh she's lost!
Curst be that love, by which a better's crost.
There my heart's settled.

Lact. How is he disgrac'd,

And I advanc'd in love? Faith he that can 240
Wish more to his enemy, is a spightful man,
And worthy to be punish'd. Exeunt.

Act. 5. Scaen. 1.

Enter Page, Celia, and Crotchet.

Cel. Sir I'm of that opinion, being kept hard to't,
In troth I think he'll take his prick-song well.

Crotch. G, sol, re ut: you gness not right y'faith.
Mistress, you'll finde y'are in an error straight:

Come on Sir, lay the Books down; you shall see now.

Page. [Aside] Would I'd an honest Caudle next my heart,
Let whoso would Sol Fa, I'd give them my part.

In troth methinks I have a great longing in me

To bite a peece of the Musitians Nose off;

But I'll rather lose my longing, then spoil the poor mans 10

Singing; the very tip will serve my turn, methinks if I

Could get it, that he might well spare; his Nose is of

The longest---Oh my back.

Crotch. You shall hear that; rehearse your Gamot Boy.

Page. Who'd be thus toild for love, and want the joy?

Crotch. Why when? begin Sir: I must stay your leisure.

Page. Gamot, a re, b me, & c.

Crotch. Ee la: Aloft, above the clouds my Boy.

Page. It must be a better note then Ela Sir,

That brings Musitians thither; they're too hasty, 20

The most part of 'em, to take such a journey,

And must needs fall by th'way.

Crotch. How many Cliffs be there?

¹Cel.] Cel oct.

⁷whoso] whose oct. who as (Dilke), who (Dyce).

²prick-song] "Music sung from notes written or 'pricked',
as distinguished from that sung from memory or by ear."
(Sh. Eng., ii, 44.)

⁶Caudle] a warm drink consisting of thin gruel, mixed with
wine or ale, sweetened and spiced, given chiefly to
sick people, especially women in childbed.

¹⁴Gamot] Guido d' Arezzo's "Great Scale", comprising the
seven hexachords or partial scales, and consisting of
all the recognized notes used in medieval music.
(Sh. Eng., ii, 39.)

¹⁸Ee la] the highest note in the gamot. Each hexachord
consists of six notes with the associated syllables,
ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la.

Page. One Cliff Sir.

Crotch. Oh intolerable heretick

To voice and musick! Do you know but one Cliff?

Page. No more; indeed I Sir, and at this time,
I know too much of that.

Crotch. How many Notes be there?

Page. Eight Sir, I fear me I shall finde nine shortly, 30
To my great shame and sorrow:---Oh my stomach!

Crotch. Will you repeat your notes then? I must Sol Fa
you, why when Sir?

Page. A large, a long, a brief, a semibrief, a minom, a
crotchet,

A quaver, a semiquaver.

²⁴[Cliff] a character placed on a particular line of a stave, to indicate the name and pitch of the notes standing on that line. (Sh. Eng., ii, 35.) Also, the pudendum (Shakespeare's Bawdy, 88). Cf. Troilus and Cressida, V, ii, 10-11: "And any man may sing her, if he can take her cliff. She's noted."

³⁰nine] The Page is perhaps punning on several senses of the implied ninth "note": 1. attention, notice (when her pregnancy is discovered), 2. stigma or reproach, 3. tune (i.e. her groaning and shrieking in labor). (C. T. Onions, A Shakespeare Glossary, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969, orig. publ. 1911.)

³²Sol Fa] a musical scale or exercise; the set of syllables sung to the respective notes of the major scale. (Sh. Eng., ii, 46.)

³⁴large] the longest note recognized in early notation, equivalent to two or three 'longs', according to the rhythm employed.

³⁴long] a note equivalent to two or three breves.

³⁴brief] i.e. breve. A note of the value of two semi-breves.

³⁴semibrief] i.e. semibreve. A note having half the length of a breve.

³⁴minom] a note of half the value of a semibreve.

³⁴crotchet] a note of half the value of a minim.

³⁵quaver] a note equal in length to half a crotchet or one-eighth of a semibreve.

³⁵semiquaver] a note half the length of a quaver, the sixteenth part of a semibreve.

Crotch. Oh, have you found the way?

Page. Never trust me

If I have not lost my wind with naming of 'em.

Crotch. Come Boy, your mindes upon some other thing now:

Set to your Song.

40

Page. Was ever Wench so punish'd?

Crotch. Ut. Come begin.

Page. Ut me re fa sol la.

Crotch. Keep time you foolish Boy---- Here they sing

How like you this Madona?

Pricksong.

Cel. Pretty,

He will do well in time being kept under.

Crotch. I'll make his ears sore, and his knuckles ake else.

Cel. And that's the way to bring a Boy to goodness Sir.

Crotch. There's many now waxt proper Gentlemen,

50

Whom I have nipt i'th' ear Wench, that's my comfort.

Come sing me over the last song I taught you:

Y'are perfect in that sure, look you keep time well,

Or here I'll notch your faults up. Sol, Sol, begin Boy.

Musick. Song.

Cel. So y'have done well Sir.

Here comes the dancing Master now, y'are discharg'd.

Enter Sinquapace the Dancer.

Sinq. Oh Seignior Crotchet, Oh.

Crotch. A minom rest, two cliffs, and a semibrief.

In the name

Of Alamire, what's the matter Sir?

60

Sinq. The horriblest disaster that ever disgrac'd the
lofty cunning of a dancer.

44-45 In the octavo, the lines are printed as follows:

"Keep time you foolish Boy---(Here they sing Pricksong)
How like you this Madoua?"

45 Madona] Madoua oct.

46 Cel.] Celia. oct.

50 Crotch.] Crotch oct.

47 under] 1. subject to instruction, guidance, 2. in the
lower musical part, 3. sexually subservient.

60 Alamire] the note "A" of the octave, which was la of
Guido's second hexachord, mi of the third, and re
of the fourth, was distinguished as A la-mi-re.
(Sh. Eng., ii, 32.)

Crotch. Be fa be me: Heaven forbid man.

Sing. Oh---oo---the most cruel Fortune!

Crotch. That semiquaver is no friend to you,
That I must tell you; 'tis not for a Dancer
To put his voice so hard to't, every workman
Must use his own tools Sir, de fa sol man, dilate
The matter to me.

Sing. Faith riding upon my Foot-cloth, as I use to do, 70
coming through a croud by chance, I let fall my Fiddle.

Crotch. De sol re. Your Fiddle Sir?

Sing. Oh that such an instrument should be made to
betray a poor Gentleman! nay, which is more lamentable,
whose luck should it be to take up this unfortunate
Fiddle, but a Barbers Prentice, who cryed out presently,
according to his nature; You trim Gentleman on
Horsback, y'have lost your Fiddle, your worships Fiddle;
seeing me upon my Foot-cloth, the mannerly Cockscomb
could say no less. But away rid I Sir, put my horse to 80
a caranto pace, and left my Fiddle behinde me.

Crotch. De la sol re.

Sing. I, was't not a strange fortune, an excellent
Treble-vial; by my Troth 'twas my Masters, when I was
but a pumper, that is a puller on of Gentlemens Pumps.

Crotch. C, c, sol fa: I knew you then Sir.

Sing. But I make no question, but I shall hear on't
shortly at one Brokers or another, for I know the Barber
will scourse it away for some old Cittron.

Crotch. E la me, my life for yours on that Sir; I must 90
to my other Schollers, my hour calls me away: I leave
you to your Practice, Fa sol la. Fare you well Sir. Exit.

⁶³Be fa be me:] Be fa beme: oct.

⁸⁴Treble-vial:] Treble-vial, oct.

⁷⁰Foot-cloth] a large richly-ornamented cloth laid over the
back of a horse and hanging down to the ground on each
side; considered as a mark of dignity and state.

⁸¹caranto] coranto, a fast dance in 2/4 time. (Sh. Eng.,
ii, 448-449.)

⁸⁸⁻⁸⁹Barber . . . Cittron] Cittrons were guitar-like
instruments, strung with wire, and played with a
plectrum or quill. They were kept in barbers' shops
for the use of the customers. (Sh. Eng., ii, 34-35.)

⁸⁹scourse] barter, exchange.

Sing. The Lavalto's of a merry heart be with you Sir;
and a merry heart makes a good singing man; a man may
love to hear himself talk, when he carries pith in's
mouth----Metereza Celia.

Cel. Seignior Sinquapace, the welcom'st Gentleman alive of
A Dancer. This is the youth, he can do little yet;

'Tis Pricksong very poorly; he is one
Must have it put into him; somewhat dull Sir. 100

Sing. As you are all at first. You know 'twas long
Ere you could learn your doubles.

Cel. I that's true Sir,
But I can tickl't now. Fa, la, la & c.

Lo you, how like you me now Sir?

Sing. Marry pray for the Founder, here he stands; long
may he live to receive quartridges, go brave, and pay
his Mercer wondrous duly, I, and his jealous Laundress,
that for the love she bears him starches yellow, poor
Soul; my own flesh knows I wrong her not. Come 110
Metereza, once more shake your great hips, and your
little heels, since you begin to fall in of your self,
and dance over the end of the caranto I taught you
last night.

Cel. The tune's clear out of my head Sir.

Sing. A Pox of my little Usher, how long he stayes too
with the second part of the former Fiddle! Come, I'll

Sol fa it, i'th' mean time, Fa, la, la, la, & c.
perfectly excellent. I will make you fit to dance with
the best Christian Gentleman in Europe, and keep time 120
with him for his heart, ere I give you over.

Cel. Nay, I know I shall do well Sir, and I am somewhat proud on't,
But 'twas my Mothers fault, when she danced with the Duke
of Florence.

Sing. Why you'll never dance well, while you live, if
you be not proud. I know that by my self; I may teach
my heart out, if you have not the grace to follow me.

Cel. I warrant you for that Sir.

Sing. Gentlewomen that are good Schollers
Will come as near their Masters, as they can; 130
I have known some lye with 'em for their better

⁹³Lavalto's] lavolta, a form of galliard consisting of a
turn of the body with two steps, a high spring,
and a pause with feet close together. (Sh. Eng.,
ii, 448.)

⁹⁶Metereza] mistress. "Probably meant as Italian; but only
Frenchified Italian, made from maitresse" (Nares).

¹⁰²doubles] a step in dancing.

¹⁰⁷quartridges] a quarter's wages.

understanding, I speak not this to draw you on forsooth; use your pleasure; if you come y'are welcome, you shall see a fine lodging, a dish of Comfits, Musick, and sweet Linnen.

Cel. And trust me Sir, no woman can wish more in this world, Unless it be ten pound i'th' Chamber window, Laid ready in good gold against she rises.

Sing. Those things are got in a morning Wench with me.

Cel. Indeed, I hold the morning the best time of getting; So says my Sister; she's a Lawyers wife Sir, 140 And should know what belongs to cases best:

A fitter time for this; I must not talk

Too long of womens matters before Boys.

He's very raw, you must take pains with him,

It is the Dutchess minde it should be so; she loves him

Well I tell you---- Exit.

Sing. How, love him? he's too little for any womans Love i'th' Town, by three handfuls: I wonder of a great woman, sh'as no more wit y'faith; one of my pitch were somewhat tolerable. 150

Enter Usher.

Oh are you come! who would be thus plagued with a Dandiprat Usher! how many kicks do you deserve in conscience?

Usher. Your Horse is safe Sir.

Sing. Now I talk't of kicking, 'twas well remembred, is not the Footcloth stoln yet?

Usher. More by good hap then any cunning Sir: Would any Gentleman but you, get a Tailors son to walk his Horse, in this dear time of black Velvet?

Sing. Troth thou saist true; thy care has got thy pardon; I'll venture so no more. Come my yong Scholler, I am 160 ready for you now.

Page. Alas 'twill kill me,

I'm even as full of qualms as heart can bear:

How shall I do to hold up? Alas Sir

I can dance nothing but ill-favor'dly,

A strain or two of Passa-Measures Galliard.

133 pleasure;] pleasure, oct.

141 cases] Case = pudendum, because it sheathes a sword
(Shakespeare's Bawdy, 85).

151 Dandiprat] cf. note for III, i, 100.

157 Tailors son . . . Velvet?] cf. note for IV, ii, 111-113.

166 Passa-Measures] "Passamezzo" is an early Italian dance, probably a variety of the pavane, performed less solemnly and more quickly. (Sh. Eng., ii, 445).

Sing. Marry y'are forwarder then I conceiv'd you,
 A toward Stripling; enter him Nicholao,
 For the fool's bashful, as they are all at first
 Till they be once well entred. 170
 Usher. Passa-Measures Sir?
 Sing. I Sir, I hope you hear me; mark him now Boy. Dance.
 Ha well done, exc'llent Boys----Dainty fine Springals;
 The glory of Dancers Hall, if they had any;
 And of all Professions, they had most need of one
 For room to practise in, yet they have none.
 O times! O manners! you have very little.
 Why should the leaden heel'd Plumber have his Hall,
 And the light-footed Dancer none at all?
 But Fortune de la guardo, things must be: 180
 We're born to teach in Back-houses and Nooks,
 Garrets sometimes, where't rains upon our Books.
 Come on Sir, are you ready? first your honor.
 Page. I'll wish no fo, a greater cross upon her.
 Sing. Curtsey, heiday! Run to him Nicholao, by this
 light he will shame me; he makes curtsey like a
 Chamber-maid.

172 Dance.] (Dance.) oct.

181 We're] W're oct.

173 Springals] youths (Bullen). Cf. The Duchess of Malfi,
 II, i, 165-166:
 "I should have discover'd apparently
 The young spring-hall cutting a caper in her belly."

178 Why . . . Hall] According to Sugden, the Plumbers were
 without a hall, but Col. Robert J. Blackham (London's
Livery Companies, London: Sampson, Low, Marston & Co.,
 Ltd., 1931) states that they "had a Hall in Chequer
 Yard, Bush Lane, which was destroyed in the Great
 Fire, but twice rebuilt" (p. 252). Middleton also
 associates plumbing and dancing in A Chaste Maid in
Cheapside, I, i, 20-22:
 "You dance like a plumber's daughter, and deserve
 Two thousand pound in lead to your marriage,
 And not in goldsmith's ware."

180 Fortune de la guardo] Dilke has "fortune de la guerre",
 while both Dyce and Bullen read "fortuna della guerra".

183 honor] bow, curtsey, obeisance. Cf. Charles Barber,
 "A Rare Use of the Word Honour as a Criterion of
 Middleton's Authorship," English Studies, 38 (1957),
 161-68.

Usher. Why what do you mean Page! are you mad? did you ever see a Boy begin a Dance, and make curtesy like a Wench before?

190

Page. Troth I was thinking of another thing;
And quite forgot my self, I pray forgive me Sir.

Sing. Come make amends then now with a good leg, and dance it sprightly: What a beastly leg has he made there now, 'twould vex ones heart out: Now begin Boy, Oh, oh, oh, oh, & c. open thy Knees, wider, wider, wider, wider; did you ever see a Boy dance clencht up, he needs a pick-lock; out upon thee for an arrant Ass, an arrant Ass, I shall lose my credit by thee, a pest'lence on thee. Here Boy hold the Vial, let me come to him, I shall get more disgrace by this little Monkey now, then by all the Ladies that ever I taught. Come on Sir now; cast thy leg out from thee, lift it up aloft Boy; a Pox, his knees are soader'd together, they're sow'd together; canst not stride? Oh I could eat thee up, I could eat thee up, and begin upon thy hinder quarter, thy hinder quarter: I shall never teach this Boy without a skrew, his knees must be opened with a Vice, or there's no good to be done upon him----Who taught you to dance Boy?

200

Page. It is but little Sir that I can do.

210

Sing. No; I'll be sworn for you.

Page. And that Seignior Laurentio taught me Sir.

Sing. Seignior Laurentio was an arrant Cockscomb,
And fit to teach none but White-bakers children

To knead their knees together. You can turn above ground Boy?

Page. Not I Sir; my turns rather under-ground.

Sing. We'll see what you can do; I love to try
What's in my Schollers, the first hour I teach them:
Shew him a close trick now Nicholao.

Ha, dainty Stripling! come Boy.

220

Page. 'Lass not I Sir,

I am not for lofty tricks, indeed I am not Sir.

Sing. How; such another word, down goes your Hose Boy.

Page. Alas 'tis time for me to do any thing then. [Tries to leap, but falls.]

Sing. Heyday he's down; is this your lofty trick Boy?

Usher. O Master, the Boy swoons; he's dead I fear me.

Sing. Dead! I nev'r knew one die with a lofty trick before.

Up Sirrah, up.

Page. A Midwife, run for a Midwife.

217 do;] do, oct.

216 under-ground] perhaps hidden, secret. Or perhaps the Page is referring to the grave; i.e., the pain and anxiety are killing her.

219 close] possibly either compact or concluding.

Sing. A Midwife! By this light the Boy's with childe. 230
 A miracle! Some Woman is the Father.
 The World's turn'd upside down; sure if Men breed,
 Women must get, one never could do both yet.
 No marv'l you danc'd close-knee'd the Sinquapace:
 Put up my Fiddle, here's a stranger case----

Exeunt Sinquapace and Page.

Usher. That 'tis I'll swear; 'twill make the Dutchess wonder.
 I fear me 'twill bring dancing out of request,
 And hinder our profession for a time:
 Your Women that are closely got with childe,
 Will put themselves clean out of exercise, 240
 And will not venture now for fear of meeting
 Their shames in a Caranto, specially
 If they be near their time: Well in my knowledge,
 If that should happen, we are sure to lose
 Many a good Waiting-woman, that's now over shooes.
 Alas the while---- Exit.

Scaen. 2. Enter the Dutchess and Celia.

Dutch. Thou tell'st me things are enemies to reason,
 I cannot get my Faith to entertain 'em,
 And I hope nev'r shall.

Cel. 'Tis too true Madam.

Dutch. I say 'tis false: 'Twere better th'hadst been dumb,
 Then spoke a truth s'unpleasing; thou shalt get
 But little praise by't: He whom we affect
 To place his love upon so base a Creature!

Cel. Nay ugliness it self, you'd say so Madam,
 If you but saw her once, a stowling Gipsey, 10
 No Christian that is born a Hinde could love her,
 She's the Suns Master-peece for tawniness;
 Yet have I seen Andrugio's arms about her,
 Perceived his hollow whisprings in her ear,
 His joys at meeting her.

Dutch. What joy could that be?

Cel. Such Madam, I have seldom seen it equal'd;
 He kist her with that greediness of affection,
 As if her lips had been as red as yours. 20
 I look'd still when he would be black in mouth,
 Like Boys with eating Hedg-berries: Nay, more Madam,
 He brib'd one of his Keepers with ten Duckets

²³²down;] down, oct.

¹⁹her (Dilke)] his oct.

²²Duckets] silver coins of Italy.

To finde her out amongst a flight of Gipseys.
Dutch. I'll have that Keeper hang'd, and you for malice,
 She cannot be so bad as you report,
 Whom he so firmly loves; you're false in much,
 And I will have you try'd; go fetch her to us: Exit Celia.
 He cannot be himself, and appear guilty
 Of such gross folly, has an eye of judgment,
 And that will overlook him: This Wench fails 30
 In understanding service; she must home,
 Live at her house i'th' Country, she decays
 In beauty and discretion: Who has't brought there?

Enter Celia and Aurelia.

Cel. This is she Madam.
Dutch. Youth and whiteness bless me,
 It is not possible: He talk'd sensibly
 Within this hour, this cannot be: How does he?
 I fear me my restraint has made him mad.
Cel. His health is perfect, Madam.
Dutch. You are perfect 40
 In falshood still, he's certainly distracted:
 Though I'd be loth to foul my words upon her,
 She looks so beastly, yet I'll ask the question,
 Are you belov'd (sweet face) of Andrugio?
Aur. Yes show'r'ly Mistress, he done love me
 'Bove all the Girls that shine above me.
 Full often has he sweetly kist me,
 And wept as often when he mist me:
 Swore he was to marry none,
 But me alone. 50
Dutch. Out on thee; marry thee? away with her.
Clear mine eyes of her: Exit Aurelia.
 A Curat that has got his place by Simony,
 Is not half black enough to marry thee.
 Surely the man's far spent, how ere he carries it;
 He's without question mad, but I nev'r knew
 Man bear it better before company.

²⁶loves;] loves, oct.

⁵⁵it;] it, oct.

⁵⁶mad,] mad; oct.

³⁰overlook] watch over, look after.

⁴⁵⁻⁶Yes . . . above me] Aurelia is affecting a gipsy
 dialect.

The love of Woman wears so thick a blindness,
 It sees no fault, but onely mans unkindness;
 And that's so gross, it may be felt: Here Celia 60
 Take this; with speed command Andrugio to us,
 And his guard from him.

Cel. It shall strait be done Madam. Exit.

Dutch. I'll look into his carriage more judiciously,
 When I next get him. A wrong done to Beauty,
 Is greater then an injury done to Love,
 And we'll less pardon it; for had it been
 A creature whose perfection had out-shin'd me,
 It had been honorable judgment in him,
 And to my peace a noble satisfaction: 70
 But as it is, 'tis monstrous above folly!
 Look he be mad indeed, and throughly gone,
 Or he pays deerly for't: 'Tis not
 The ordinary madness of a Gentleman,
 That shall excuse him here; 'had better lose
 His wits eternally, then lose my Grace:
 So strange is the condition of his fall,
 He's safe in nothing, but in loss of all.

Enter Andrugio.

He comes: Now by the Fruits of all my hopes,
 A man that has his wits, cannot look better; 80
 It likes me well enough, there's life in's eye,
 And civil health in's Cheek; he stands with judgment,
 And bears his body well: What ails this man?
 Sure I durst venture him 'mongst a thousand Ladies.
 Let 'em shoot all their scoffs, which makes none laugh
 But their own Waiting-women, and they dare do no otherwise.
 Come neerer Sir: I pray keep further off,
 Now I remember you.

Andr. What new trick's in this now?

Dutch. How long have you been mad Sir? 90

Andr. Mad! a great time Lady;

Since I first knew I should not sin, yet sin'd;
 That's now some thirty years; By'r Lady upwards.

Dutch. This man speaks reason, wondrous feelingly,
 Enough to teach the rudest Soul good manners.
 You cannot be excus'd with lightness now,
 Or frantick fits; y'are able to instruct Sir,
 And be a light to men. If you have errors,

⁵⁹but] bnt oct.

⁶³Cel.] Cel oct.

⁹⁴Dutch.] Dutch oct.

⁹⁷y'are] y're oct.

They be not ignorant in you, but wilful,
 And in that state I seise on 'em. Did I
 Bring thee acquainted lately with my heart!
 And when thou thought'st a storm of anger took thee,
 It in a moment clear'd up all to love,
 To the abusing of thy spiteful enemy
 That sought to fix his malice upon thee,
 And couldst thou so requite me?

Andr. How! good Madam.

Dutch. To wrong all worth in man, to deal so basely
 Upon contempt it self, disdain and loathsomness;
 A thing whose face through ugliness frights children;
 A stragling Gipsey!

Andr. See how you may erre, Madam,
 Through wrongful information; by my hopes
 Of truth and mercy, there is no such love
 Bestow'd upon a creature so unworthy.

Dutch. No, then you cannot flie me; fetch her back:
 And though the sight of her displease mine eye
 Worse then th'offensiv'st object, Earth and Nature
 Can present to us; yet for truths probation,
 We will endur't contentfully: What now
 Art thou return'd without her?

Enter Celia and Aurelia [undisguised.]

Andr. No Madam: This is she my peace dwells in,
 If here be either baseness of discent,
 Rudeness of manners or deformity
 In face or fashion, I have lost, I'll yeild it;
 Tax me severely Madam.

Dutch. How thou standst,
 As dumb as the Salt-pillar; where's this Gipsey? [Celia
points to Aurelia]

What no? I cannot blame thee then for silence.
 Now I'm confounded too, and take part with thee.

Aur. Your pardon, and your pity, vertuous Madam.
 Cruel restraint joyn'd with the power of love,
 Taught me that art, in that disguise I 'scap'd
 The hardness of my Fortunes; you that see

What loves force is, good Madam pity me. [Kneels.]

Andr. Your Grace has ever been the friend of truth;
 And here 'tis set before you. [Kneels.]

128 s.d. taken from Dilke.

111 stragling] roving, wandering.

128 Salt-pillar] Lot's wife was changed into a pillar of salt
 while fleeing from Sodom. (Gen. 19:26).

Dutch. I confess

I have no wrong at all; she's yonger, fairer.
 He has not now dishonor'd me in choice,
 I much commend his noble care and judgment.
 'Twas a just cross led in by a temptation,
 For offering but to part from my dear Vow,
 And I'll embrace it cheerfully: Rise both,
 The joys of faithful marriage bless your souls,
 I will not part you.

140

Andr. Vertues crown be yours Madam.

Enter Lactantio.

Aur. [Aside] Oh there appears the life of all my wishes;
 [To the Duchess.] Is your Grace pleas'd out of your
 bounteous goodness

To a poor Virgins comforts, I shall freely
 Enjoy whom my heart loves?

150

Dutch. Our word is past,
 Enjoy without disturbance.

Aur. There Lactantio

Spread thy arms open wide, to welcome her
 That has wrought all this means to rest in thee.

Andr. Death of my joys; how's this?

Lact. Prethee away fond Fool, hast' no shame in thee,
 Th'art bold and ignorant, what ere thou art.

Aur. What ere I am, do not you know me then?

160

Lact. Yes for some Waiting-vessel, but the times
 Are chang'd with me, if y'had the grace to know 'em.

I look'd for more respect, I am not spoke withal
 After this rate I tell you; learn hereafter
 To know what belongs to me; you shall see
 All the Court teach you shortly. Farewel Manners.

Dutch. I'll mark the event of this.

Aur. I've undone my self two ways at once;
 Lost a great deal of time,
 And now I am like to lose more. O my fortune!
 I was nineteen yesterday, and partly vow'd
 To have a childe by twenty, if not twain:
 To see how Maids are crost! but I'm plagu'd justly:

170

151 loves?] loves. oct.

165 me;] me, oct.

168-69 I've . . . time,] Oct. prints as one line.

161 Waiting-vessel] attendant, servant.

And she that makes a fool of her first love,
Let her ne'r look to prosper, Sir.

Andr. Oh falshood!

Aur. Have you forgiveness in you? There's more hope of me
Then of a Maid that never yet offended.

Andr. Make me your property?

Aur. I'll promise you,

180

I'll never make you worse: And Sir you know
There are worse things for women to make men.
But by my hope of children, (and all lawful)
I'll be as true for ever to your Bed

As she, in thought or deed, that never err'd.

Andr. I'll once believe a woman, be it but to strengthen
Weak faith in other men: I have a love
That covers all thy faults.

Enter Lord Cardinal and the Lords.

L. Card. Nephew, prepare thy self

With meekness and thanksgiving to receive

190

Thy reverend fortune: Amongst all the Lords,
Her close affection now makes choice of thee.

Lact. Alas I'm not to learn to know that now.

Where could she make choice here, if I were missing?

'Twould trouble the whole State, and puzzle 'em all
To finde out such another.

L. Card. 'Tis high time Madam,

If your Grace please, to make election now.

Behold, they are all assembled!

Dutch. What election?

200

You speak things strange to me Sir.

L. Card. How! good Madam.

Dutch. Give me your meaning plainly like a Father.

You are too religious Sir to deal in Riddles.

L. Card. Is there a plainer way then leads to marriage, Madam,
And the man set before you?

Dutch. O Blasphemy

To Sanctimonious Faith! comes it from you Sir?

An ill example; know you what you speak,

Or who you are? Is not my Vow in place?

210

How dare you be so bold Sir? Say a woman

Were tempt with a temptation, must you presently

Take all th'advantage on't?

L. Card. Is this in earnest, Madam?

Dutch. Heaven pardon you; if you do not think so Sir,

Y'have much to answer for: But I will leave you;

Return I humbly now from whence I fell.

All you blest powers that Register the Vows
Of Virgins and chaste Matrons, look on me

179 property] a mere means to an end, an instrument, a tool.

With eyes of mercy; seal forgiveness to me 220
 By signs of inward peace; and to be surer,
 That I will never fail your good hopes of me,
 I binde my self more strictly. All my riches
 I'll speedily commend to holy uses;
 This Temple unto some religious Sanctuary,
 Where all my time to come I will allow
 For fruitful thoughts; so knit I up my Vow.
Lact. [Aside.] This is to hawk at Eagles: Pox of pride,
 It lays a man i'th' mire still, like a Jade
 That has too many tricks, and ne'r a good one. 230
 I must gape high, I'm in a sweet case now,
 I was sure of one, and now I have lost her too.
Dutch. I know, my Lord, all that great studious care
 Is for your Kinsman; he's provided for
 According to his merits. [Signals. The Page, undisguised,
enters.]
L. Card. How's that! good Madam?
Dutch. Upon the firmness of my Faith it's true Sir;
 See here's the Gentlewoman; the match was made
 Near forty weeks ago; He knows the time Sir,
 Better then I can tell him, and the poor Gentlewoman 240
 Better then he: But being Religious Sir, and fearing you,
 He durst not own her for his wife till now,
 Onely contracted with her in mans apparel,
 For the more modesty, because he was bashful,
 And never could endure the sight of woman,
 For fear that you should see her: This was he
 Chose for my love; this Page prefer'd to me.
Lact. [Aside] I'm paid with mine own money.
L. Card. Dare hypocrisie,
 For fear of vengeance, sit so close to Vertue. 250
 Steal'st thou a holy vestment from Religion,
 To cloath forbidden Lust with? th'open villain
 Goes before thee to mercy, and his Penitency
 Is blest with a more sweet and quick return.
 I utterly disclaim all blood in thee.
 I'll sooner make a Parracide my heir,
 Then such a monster. O forgive me Madam!
 Th'apprehension of the wrong to you
 Has a sins wait at it. I forget all Charity,
 When I but think upon him. 260

228 Lact.] Lactant. oct.

252 villain (Dilke)] villainy oct.

231 gape] aim.

259 wait] i.e. weight (Dilke).

Dutch. Nay, my Lord,
 At our request, since we are pleas'd to pardon,
 And send remission to all former errors,
 Which conscionable Justice now sets right,
 From you we expect patience; h'as had punishment
 Enough in his false hopes; trust me he has Sir;
 They have requited his dissembling largely.
 And to erect your falling-goodness to him,
 We'll begin first our self: Ten thousand Duckets
 The Gentlewoman shall bring out of our Treasure, 270
 To make her dowry.
L. Card. None has the true way
 Of over-coming anger with meek vertue,
 Like your compassionate Grace.
Lact. [Aside] Curse of this fortune:
 This 'tis to meddle with taking stuff, whose Belly cannot
 be confin'd in a Waste-band: Pray what have you done with
 the Breeches, we shall have need of 'em shortly; and we
 get children so fast, they are too good to be cast away.
 My Son and Heir need not scorn to wear what his Mother 280
 has left off: I had my fortune told me by a Gipse
 seven years ago; she said then I should be the spoil of
 many a Maid, and at seven years end marry a Quean for
 my labor, which falls out wicked and true.
Dutch. We all have faults; look not so much on his.
 Who lives i'th' world that never did amiss?
 For you Aurelia, I commend your choice,
 Y'have one after our heart: And though your Father
 Be not in presence, we'll assure his voice;
 Doubt not his liking, his o'r-joying rather: 290
 You Sir embrace your own, 'tis your full due;
 No Page serves me more, that once dwells with you.
 Oh they that search out mans intents, shall finde
 There's more Dissemblers then of Women kinde.
Exeunt.

FINIS.

282_{ago;]} ago, oct.

284_{labor,]} labor; oct.

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