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This documentary edition has been edited to provide an accurate and transparent transcription of a single copy of the earliest surviving print edition of this play. Further material, including editorial policy and XML files of the play, is available on the EMED website. EMED texts are edited and encoded by Meaghan Brown, Michael Poston, and Elizabeth Williamson, and build on work done by the EEBO-TCP and the Shakespeare His Contemporaries project. This project is funded by a Humanities Collections and Reference Resources grant from the NEH’s Division of Preservation and Access.

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THE
REVENGER’S
TRAGEDY.

As it hath been sundry times Acted,
by the King’s Majesty’s
Servants.

AT LONDON
Printed by G. ELD, and are to be sold at his
house in Fleet lane at the sign of the
Printer’s Press.
1607.

The Revengers Tragedy.

ACT. 1. SCENA 1.

Enter Vindice, the Duke, Duchess, Lusurioso her son,
Spurio the bastard, with a train, pass over the
Stage with Torchlight.

Vindice DUke: royal lecher; go, gray-haired adultery,
And thou his son, as impious steeped as he:
And thou his bastard true-begot in evil:
And thou his Duchess that will do with Devil,
Four exc’llent Characters — O that marrowless age,
Would stuff the hollow Bones with damned desires,
And ’stead of heat kindle infernal fires,
Within the spendthrift veins of a dry Duke,
A parched and juiceless luxur. O God! one
That has scarce blood enough to live upon.
And he to riot it like a son and heir?
O the thought of that
Turns my abused heartstrings into fret.
Thou sallow picture of my poisoned love,
My study’s ornament, thou shell of Death,
Once the bright face of my betrothed Lady,
When life and beauty naturally filled out
Those ragged imperfections;
When two heaven-pointed Diamonds were set
In those unsightly Rings; — then ’twas a face
So far beyond the artificial shine
Of any woman’s bought complexion
That the uprightest man, (if such there be,
That sin but seven times a day) broke custom
And made up eight with looking after her,
Oh she was able to ha’ made a Usurer’s son
Melt all his patrimony in a kiss,
And what his father fifty years told
To have consumed, and yet his suit been cold:
But oh accursed Palace!
Thee when thou wert appareled in thy flesh,
The old Duke poisoned,
Because thy purer part would not consent

Unto his palsy-lust, for old men lustful
Do show like young men angry, eager violent,
Outbid like their limited performances
O ’ware an old man hot, and vicious
„Age as in gold, in lust is covetous.
Vengeance thou murder’s Quit-rent, and whereby
Thou show’st thyself Tenant to Tragedy,
Oh keep thy day, hour, minute, I beseech,
For those thou hast determined: hum: who e’er knew
Murder unpaid, faith give Revenge her due
Sh’as kept touch hitherto — be merry, merry,
Advance thee, O thou terror to fat folks
To have their costly three-piled flesh worn off
As bare as this — for banquets: ease and laughter,
Can make great men, as greatness goes by clay,
But wise men little are more great than they?

Enter her brother Hippolito.

Hippolito  Still sighing o’er death’s vizard.
Vindice  Brother welcome,

What comfort bring’st thou? how go things at Court?
Hippolito  In silk and silver brother: never braver.
Vindice  Puh,

Thou play’st upon my meaning prithee say
Has that bald Madam, Opportunity?
Yet thought upon ’s, speak are we happy yet?
Thy wrongs and mine are for one scabbard fit.
Hippolito  It may prove happiness?
Vindice  What is ’t may prove?

Give me to taste.
Hippolito  Give me your hearing then,
You know my place at Court.
Vindice  Ay; the Duke’s Chamber
But ’tis a marvel thou ’rt not turned out yet!
Hippolito  Faith I have been shoved at, but ’twas still my hap
To hold by th’ Duchess’ skirt, you guess at that,
Whom such a Coat keeps up can ne’er fall flat,
But to the purpose.
Last evening predecessor unto this,
The Duke’s son warily enquired for me,
Whose pleasure I attended: he began,
By policy to open and unhusk me
About the time and common rumor:
But I had so much wit to keep my thoughts
Up in their built houses, yet afforded him
An idle satisfaction without danger,
But the whole aim, and scope of his intent
Ended in this, conjuring me in private,
To seek some strange-digested fellow forth:
Of ill-contented nature, either disgraced
In former times, or by new grooms displaced,
Since his Stepmother’s nuptials, such a blood
A man that were for evil only good;
To give you the true word some base-coined Pander?

\textit{Vindice} \quad I reach you, for I know his heat is such,

Were there as many Concubines as Ladies
He would not be contained, he must fly out:
I wonder how ill featured, vild proportioned.
That one should be: if she were made for woman,
Whom at the Insurrection of his lust
He would refuse for once, heart, I think none,
Next to a skull, though more unsound than one
Each face he meets he strongly dotes upon.

\textit{Hippolito} \quad Brother y’ave truly spoke him?
He knows not you, but I’ll swear you know him.

\textit{Vindice} \quad And therefore i’ll put on that knave for once,
And be a right man then, a man o’ th’ Time,
For to be honest is not to be i’ th’ world,
Brother i’ll be that strange composed fellow.

\textit{Hippolito} \quad And i’ll prefer you brother.
\textit{Vindice} \quad Go to then,
The small’st advantage fattens wronged men
It may point out, occasion, if I meet her,
I’ll hold her by the foretop fast enough;
Or like the \textit{French Mole} heave up hair and all,
I have a habit that will fit it quaintly,
Here comes our Mother. \textit{Hippolito} \quad And Sister.

\textit{Vindice} \quad We must coin.
Women are apt you know to take false money,
But I dare stake my soul for these two creatures
Only excuse excepted that they’ll swallow,
Because their sex is easy in belief.

\textit{Mother} \quad What news from \textit{Court} son Carlo?
\textit{Hippolito} \quad Faith Mother,
’Tis whispered there the Duchess’ youngest son
Has played a Rape on Lord Antonio’s wife.
  
Mother  On that religious Lady!
  
Castiza  Royal blood: monster he deserves to die,
  
If Italy had no more hopes but he.
  
Vindice  Sister y’ave sentenced most direct, and true,
The Law’s a woman, and would she were you:
Mother I must take leave of you.
  
Mother  Leave for what?
  
Vindice  I Intend speedy travail.
  
Hippolito  That he does Madam. Mother  Speedy indeed!
  
Vindice  For since my worthy father’s funeral,
My life’s unnaturally to me, e’en compelled
As if I lived now when I should be dead.
  
Mother  Indeed he was a worthy Gentleman
Had his estate been fellow to his mind.
  
Vindice  The Duke did much deject him.
  
Mother  Much?
  
Vindice  Too much.
And through disgrace oft smothered in his spirit,
When it would mount, surely I think he died
Of discontent: the Nobleman’s consumption.
  
Mother  Most sure he did!
  
Vindice  Did he? ’lack, — you know all
You were his midnight secretary.
  
Mother  No.
He was too wise to trust me with his thoughts.
  
Vindice  I’ faith then father thou wast wise indeed,
,,Wives are but made to go to bed and feed.
Come mother, sister: you’ll bring me onward brother?
  
Hippolito  I will.

Vindice  I’ll quickly turn into another.    Exeunt.

Enter the old Duke, Lussiurioso, his son, the Duchess; the Bastard,
the Duchess’ two sons Ambitioso, and Supervacuo, the
third her youngest brought out with Officers for the Rape two
Judges.
Duke.       Duchess it is your youngest son, we’re sorry,
His violent Act has e’en drawn blood of honor
And stained our honors,
Thrown ink upon the forehead of our state
Which envious spirits will dip their pens into
After our death; and blot us in our Tombs.
For that which would seem treason in our lives
Is laughter when we’re dead. who dares now whisper
That dares not then speak out, and e’en proclaim,
With loud words and broad pens our closest shame.
Judge       Your grace hath spoke like to your silver years
Full of confirmed gravity; — for what is it to have,
A flattering false insculption on a Tomb:
And in men’s hearts reproach, the bowelled Corpse,
May be seared in, but with free tongue I speak,
„The faults of great men through their fierce clothes break,

   Duke    They do, we’re sorry for ’t, it is our fate,
To live in fear and die to live in hate,
I leave him to your sentence doom him Lords
The fact is great; whilst I sit by and sigh.

   Duchess    My gracious Lord I pray be merciful,
Although his trespass far exceed his years,
Think him to be your own as I am yours,
Call him not son-in-law: the law I fear
Will fall too soon upon his name and him:
Temper his fault with pity?

   Lussurioso    Good my Lord.
Then ’twill not taste so bitter and unpleasant
Upon the Judges’ palate, for offenses
Gilt o’er with mercy, show like fairest women,
Good only for their beauties, which washed off: no sin is uglier

   Ambitioso    I beseech your grace,
Be soft and mild, let not Relentless Law,

Look with an iron forehead on our brother.

   Spurio    He yields small comfort yet, hope he shall die,
And if a bastard’s wish might stand in force,
Would all the court were turned into a corse,

   Duchess    No pity yet? must I rise fruitless then,
A wonder in a woman; are my knees,
Of such low — metal — that without Respect —

1. Judge    Let the offender stand forth,
’Tis the Duke’s pleasure that Impartial Doom,
Shall take first hold of his unclean attempt,
A Rape! why ’tis the very core of lust,
Double Adultery.

   Junior    So Sir.

2. Judge    And which was worse,
Committed on the Lord Antonio’s wife,
That General honest Lady, confess my Lord!
What moved you to ’t?

   Junior    why flesh and blood my Lord.
What should move men unto a woman else,

   Lussurioso    O do not jest thy doom, trust not an axe
Or sword too far; the Law is a wise serpent
And quickly can beguile thee of thy life,
Though marriage only has made thee my brother,
I love thee so far, play not with thy Death,

   Junior    I thank you troth, good admonitions faith,
If i’d the grace now to make use of them,

1. Judge    That Lady’s name has spread such a fair wing
Over all Italy; that if our Tongues,
Were sparing toward the Fact, Judgement itself,
Would be condemned and suffer in men’s thoughts,

  Junior    Well then 'tis done, and it would please me well
Were it to do again: sure she’s a Goddess,
For i’d no power to see her, and to live,
It falls out true in this for I must die,
Her beauty was ordained to be my scaffold,
And yet methinks I might be easier ceased,
My fault being sport, let me but die in jest,

  1. Judge    This be the sentence,

  Duchess    O keep ’t upon your Tongue, let it not slip,
Death too soon steals out of a Lawyer’s lip,
Be not so cruel-wise?

  1. Judge    Your Grace must pardon us,
’Tis but the Justice of the Law.

  Duchess    The Law,
Is grown more subtle than a woman should be.

  Spurio     Now, now he dies, rid ’em away.

  Duchess    O what it is to have an old-cool Duke,
To be as slack in tongue, as in performance.

  1. Judge    Confirmed, this be the doom irrevocable.

  Duchess    Oh!    1. Judge    Tomorrow early.

  Duchess    Pray be a-bed my Lord.

  1. Judge    Your Grace much wrongs yourself.

  Ambitioso  No ’tis that tongue,
You’re too much right, does do us too much wrong.

  1. Judge    Let that offender —

  Duchess    Live, and be in health.


  Spurio     Pox on ’t,
What makes my Dad speak now?

  Duke.    We will defer the judgement till next sitting,
In the meantime let him be kept close prisoner:
Guard bear him hence.

  Ambitioso  Brother, this makes for thee,
Fear not, we’ll have a trick to set thee free.

  Junior    Brother, I will expect it from you both; and in that hope
I rest.    Supervacuo    Farewell, be merry.    Exit with a guard.

  Spurio     Delayed, deferred nay then if judgement have cold blood,
Flattery and bribes will kill it.

  Duke.    About it then my Lords with your best powers,
More serious business calls upon our hours.    Exeunt manet Duchess

  Duchess    Wast ever known step-Duchess was so mild,
And calm as I? some now would plot his death,
With easy Doctors, those loose-living men,
And make his withered Grace fall to his Grave,
And keep Church better?
Some second wife would do this, and dispatch
Her double-loathed Lord at meat and sleep,
Indeed 'tis true an old man's twice a child,
Mine cannot speak, one of his single words,
Would quite have freed my youngest dearest son
From death or durance, and have made him walk
With a bold foot upon the thorny law,
Whose Prickles should bow under him, but 'tis not,
And therefore wedlock faith shall be forgot,
I'll kill him in his forehead, hate there feed,
That wound is deepest though it never bleed:
And here comes he whom my heart points unto,
His bastard son, but my love’s true-begot,
Many a wealthy letter have I sent him,
Swelled up with Jewels, and the timorous man
Is yet but coldly kind,
That Jewel's mine that quivers in his ear,
Mocking his Master's chillness and vain fear,
H's as spied me now.

Spurio Madam? your Grace so private.
My duty on your hand.

Duchess Upon my hand sir, troth I think you'd fear,
To kiss my hand too if my lip stood there,
Spurio Witness I would not Madam.
Duchess 'Tis a wonder,
For ceremony has made many fools,
It is as easy way unto a Duchess,
As to a Hatted-dame, (if her love answer)
But that by timorous honors, pale respects,
Idle degrees of fear, men make their ways
Hard of themselves — what have you thought of me?

Spurio Madam I ever think of you, in duty,

Regard and —

Duchess Puh, upon my love I mean.

Spurio I would 'twere love, but 't has a fouler name
Than lust; you are my father’s wife, your Grace may guess now,
What I could call it.

Duchess Why th'art his son but falsely,
'Tis a hard question whether he begot thee.

Spurio I' faith 'tis true too; I'm an uncertain man,
Of more uncertain woman; may be his groom o' th' stable begot me, you know I know not, he could ride a horse well, a
shrewd suspicion marry — he was wondrous tall, he had his
length i’ faith, for peeping over half-shut holiday windows,
Men would desire him ’light, when he was afoot,
He made a goodly show under a Penthouse,
And when he rid, his Hat would check the signs, and clatter Barbers’ Basins.

*Duchess* Nay set you a-horseback once, You’ll ne’er light off.

*Spurio* Indeed I am a beggar.

*Duchess* That’s more the sign thou art Great — but to our love.

Let it stand firm both in thought and mind, That the Duke was thy Father, as no doubt then He bid fair for ’t, thy injury is the more, For had he cut thee a right Diamond, Thou hadst been next set in the Dukedom’s Ring, When his worn self like Age’s easy slave, Had dropped out of the Collet into th’ Grave; What wrong can equal this? canst thou be tame And think upon ’t.

*Spurio* No mad and think upon ’t.

*Duchess* Who would not be revenged of such a father, E’en in the worst way? I would thank that sin, That could most injury him, and be in league with it, Oh what a grief ’tis, that a man should live But once i’ th’ world, and then to live a Bastard, The curse o’ the womb, the thief of Nature, Begot against the seventh commandment, Half damned in the conception, by the justice Of that unbribed everlasting law.

*Spurio* Oh I’d a hot-backed Devil to my father.

*Duchess* Would not this mad e’en patience, make blood rough? Who but an Eunuch would not sin? his bed By one false minute disinherited.

*Spurio* Ay, there’s the vengeance that my birth was wrapped in, I’ll be revenged for all, now hate begin,

I’ll call foul Incest but a Venial sin.

*Duchess* Cold still: in vain then must a Duchess woo?

*Spurio* Madam I blush to say what I will do.

*Duchess* Thence flew sweet comfort, earnest and farewell.

*Spurio* Oh one incestuous kiss picks open hell.

*Duchess* Faith now old Duke; my vengeance shall reach high, I’ll arm thy brow with woman’s Heraldry.

*Spurio* Duke, thou didst do me wrong, and by thy Act Adultery is my nature; Faith if the truth were known, I was begot After some gluttonous dinner, some stirring dish Was my first father; when deep healths went round, And Ladies’ cheeks were painted red with Wine, Their tongues as short and nimble as their heels Uttering words sweet and thick; and when they rise, Were merrily disposed to fall again, In such a whispering and withdrawing hour,
When base male-Bawds kept Sentinel at stairhead
Was I stol’n softly; oh — damnation met
The sin of feasts, drunken adultery.
I feel it swell me; my revenge is just,
I was begot in impudent Wine and Lust:
Stepmother I consent to thy desires,
I love thy mischief well, but I hate thee,
And those three Cubs thy sons, wishing confusion
Death and disgrace may be their Epitaphs,
As for my brother the Duke’s only son,
Whose birth is more beholding to report
Than mine, and yet perhaps as falsely sown.
(Women must not be trusted with their own)
I’ll loose my days upon him hate all I,
Duke on thy brow I’ll draw my Bastardy.
For indeed a bastard by nature should make Cuckolds,
Because he is the son of a Cuckold-maker.

Enter Vindici and Hippolito, Vindici in disguise to
attend Lord Lussurioso the Duke’s son.

Vindice What brother? am I far enough from myself?
Hippolito As if another man had been sent whole
Into the world, and none wist how he came.

Vindice It will confirm me bold: the child o’ th’ Court,
Let blushes dwell i’ th’ Country impudence!
Thou Goddess of the palace, Mistress of Mistresses
To whom the costly perfumed-people pray,
Strike thou my forehead into dauntless Marble;
Mine eyes to steady Sapphires: turn my visage,
And if I must needs glow, let me blush inward
That this immodest season may not spy,
That scholar in my cheeks, fool-bashfulness.
That Maid in the old time, whose flush of Grace
Would never suffer her to get good clothes;
Our maids are wiser; and are less ashamed,
Save Grace the bawd I seldom hear Grace named!

Hippolito Nay brother you reach out o’ th’ Verge now, — ’Sfoot
the Duke’s son, settle your looks.

Vindice Pray let me not be doubted. Hippolito My Lord —
Lussurioso Hippolito? — be absent leave us.
Hippolito My Lord after long search, wary inquiries
And politic siftings, I made choice of yon fellow,
Whom I guess rare for many deep employments;
This our age swims within him: and if Time
Had so much hair, I should take him for Time,
He is so near kin to this present minute?

Lussurioso ’Tis enough.
We thank thee: yet words are but great men’s blanks
Gold though it be dumb does utter the best thanks.
Hippolito  Your plenteous honor — an exc’lent fellow my Lord.

Lussurioso  So, give us leave — welcome, be not far off, we must be better acquainted, push, be bold with us, thy hand:

Vindice  With all my heart i’ faith how dost sweet Musk-cat.
When shall we lie together?

Lussurioso  Wondrous knave!
Gather him into boldness, ’Sfoot the slave’s
Already as familiar as an Ague,
And shakes me at his pleasure, friend I can
Forget myself in private, but else where,
I pray do you remember me.

Vindice  Oh very well sir — I conster myself saucy!
Lussurioso  What hast been,
Of what profession.
Vindice  A bone-setter!  Lussurioso  A bone-setter!
Vindice  A bawd my Lord,
One that sets bones together.
Lussurioso  Notable bluntness?
Fit, fit for me, e’en trained up to my hand
Thou hast been Scrivener to much knavery then.
Vindice  Fool, to abundance sir; I have been witness
To the surrenders of a thousand virgins,
And not so little,
I have seen Patrimonies washed a-pieces
Fruit-fields turned into bastards,
And in a world of Acres,
Not so much dust due to the heir ’twas left to
As would well gravel a petition
Lussurioso  Fine villain? troth I like him wondrously
He’s e’en shaped for my purpose, then thou know’st
I’ th’ world strange lust.
Vindice  O Dutch lust! fulsome lust!
Drunken procreation, which begets, so many drunkards;
Some father dreads not (gone to bed in wine) to slide from the mother,
And cling the daughter-in-law,
Some Uncles are adulterous with their Nieces,
Brothers with brothers’ wives, O hour of Incest!
Any kin now next to the Rim o’ th’ sister
Is man’s meat in these days, and in the morning
When they are up and dressed, and their mask on,
Who can perceive this? save that eternal eye
That sees through flesh and all, well: — If any thing be damned?
It will be twelve o’clock at night; that twelve
Will never scape;
It is the Judas of the hours; wherein,
Honest salvation is betrayed to sin,
Lussurioso  In troth it is too? but let this talk glide
It is our blood to err, though hell gaped loud

Ladies know *Lucifer* fell, yet still are proud!
Now sir? wert thou as secret as thou ’rt subtle,  
And deeply fathomed into all estates  
I would embrace thee for a near employment,  
And thou shouldst swell in money, and be able  
To make lame beggars crouch to thee.

*Vindice*  My Lord?

Secret? I ne’er had that disease o’ th’ mother  
I praise my father: why are men made close?  
But to keep thoughts in best, I grant you this  
Tell but some woman a secret overnight,  
Your doctor may find it in the urinal i’ th’ morning,  
But my Lord.

*Lussurioso*  So, thou ’rt confirmed in me  
And thus I enter thee.

*Vindice*  This Indian devil,  
Will quickly enter any man: but a Usurer,  
He prevents that, by ent’ring the devil first.

*Lussurioso*  Attend me, I am past my depth in lust  
And I must swim or drown, all my desires  
Are levelled at a Virgin not far from Court,  
To whom I have conveyed by Messenger  
Many waxed Lines, full of my neatest spirit,  
And jewels that were able to ravish her  
Without the help of man; all which and more  
She foolish chaste sent back, the messengers,  
Receiving frowns for answers.

*Vindice*  Possible!  
’Tis a rare *Phoenix* whoe’er she be,  
If your desires be such, she so repugnant,  
In troth my Lord i’d be revenged and marry her.

*Lussurioso*  Push; the dowry of her blood and of her fortunes,  
Are both too mean, — good enough to be bad withal  
I’m one of that number can defend  
Marriage is good: yet rather keep a friend,  
Give me my bed by stealth — there’s true delight  
What breeds a loathing in ’t, but night by night.

*Vindice*  A very fine religion?

*Lussurioso*  Therefore thus,  
I’ll trust thee in the business of my heart  
Because I see thee well experienced  
In this Luxurious day wherein we breathe,  
Go thou, and with a smooth enchanting tongue  
Bewitch her ears, and Cozen her of all Grace
Enter upon the portion of her soul,  
Her honor, which she calls her chastity  
And bring it into expense, for honesty  
Is like a stock of money laid to sleep,  
Which ne’er so little broke, does never keep:

*Vindice* You have giv’n ’t the Tang i’ faith my Lord  
Make known the Lady to me, and my brain,  
Shall swell with strange Invention: I will move it  
Till I expire with speaking, and drop down  
Without a word to save me; — but i’l work ——

*Lussurioso* We thank thee, and will raise thee: — receive her name,  
it is the only daughter, to Madam Gratiana the late widow.  
*Vindice* Oh, my sister, my sister? —  
*Lussurioso* Why dost walk aside?  
*Vindice* My Lord, I was thinking how I might begin  
As thus, oh Lady — or twenty hundred devices,  
Her very bodkin will put a man in.

*Lussurioso* Ay, or the wagging of her hair.  
*Vindice* No, that shall put you in my Lord.  
*Lussurioso* Shall ’t? why content, dost know the daughter then?  
*Vindice* O exc’lent well by sight.  
*Lussurioso* That was her brother  
That did prefer thee to us.

*Vindice* My Lord I think so,  
I knew I had seen him somewhere —  
*Lussurioso* And therefore prithee let thy heart to him,  
Be as a Virgin, close.  
*Vindice* Oh me good Lord.  
*Lussurioso* We may laugh at that simple age within him;  
*Vindice* Ha, ha, ha.  
*Lussurioso* Himself being made the subtle instrument,  
To wind up a good fellow.

*Vindice* That’s I my Lord.  
*Lussurioso* That’s thou.

To entice and work his sister.

*Vindice* A pure novice?  
*Lussurioso* ’Twas finely managed.  
*Vindice* Gallantly carried;  
A pretty-perfumed villain.

*Lussurioso* I’ve bethought me  
If she prove chaste still and immovable,  
Venture upon the Mother, and with gifts  
As I will furnish thee, begin with her.

*Vindice* Oh fie, fie, that’s the wrong end my Lord. ’Tis mere impossible  
that a mother by any gifts should become a bawd to her  
own Daughter!

*Lussurioso* Nay then I see thou ’rt but a puny in the subtle Mystery of  
a woman: — why ’tis held now no dainty dish: The name  
Is so in league with age, that nowadays  
It does Eclipse three quarters of a Mother;  
*Vindice* Dost so my Lord?
Let me alone then to Eclipse the fourth.

_Lussurioso_ Why well said, come i’ll furnish thee, but first swear to be true in all.

_Vindice_ True? _Lussurioso_ Nay but swear!

_Vindice_ Swear? — I hope your honor little doubts my faith.

_Lussurioso_ Yet for my humor’s sake cause I love swearing.

_Vindice_ ‘Cause you love swearing, ’slud I will.

_Lussurioso_ Why enough,

Ere long look to be made of better stuff.

_Vindice_ That will do well indeed my Lord.

_Lussurioso_ Attend me?

_Vindice_ Oh.

Now let me burst, I’ve eaten Noble poison,
We are made strange fellows, brother, innocent villains,
Wilt not be angry when thou hear’st on ’t, think’st thou?
I’ faith thou shalt; swear me to foul my sister.
Sword I durst make a promise of him to thee,
Thou shalt disheir him, it shall be thine honor,
And yet now angry froth is down in me,
It would not prove the meanest policy
In this disguise to try the faith of both,
Another might have had the selfsame office,

Some slave, that would have wrought effectually,
Ay and perhaps o’erwrought ’em, therefore I,
Being thought travailed, will apply myself,
Unto the selfsame form, forget my nature,
As if no part about me were kin to ’em,
So touch ’em, — though I durst almost for good,
Venture my lands in heaven upon their good.

Exit.

_Enter the discontented Lord Antonio, whose wife the Duchess’s youngest Son ravished; he Discovering the body of her dead to certain Lords: and Hippolito._

_Lord Antonio_ Draw nearer Lords and be sad witnesses
Of a fair comely building newly fall’n,
Being falsely undermined: violent rape
Has played a glorious act, behold my Lords
A sight that strikes man out of me:

_Piero_ That virtuous Lady? _Antonio_ Precedent for wives?

_Hippolito_ The blush of many women, whose chaste presence,
Would e’en call shame up to their cheeks,
And make pale wanton sinners have good colors. —

_Lord Antonio_ Dead!

Her honor first drunk poison, and her life,
Being fellows in one house did pledge her honor,

_Piero_ O grief of many!

_Lord Antonio_ I marked not this before.

A prayer Book the pillow to her cheek,
This was her rich confection, and another
Plastered in her right hand, with a leaf tucked up,  
Pointing to these words.  

*Melius virtute mori. Quam per Dedecus vivere.*

True and effectual it is indeed.  

*Hippolito* My Lord since you invite us to your sorrows,  
Let’s truly taste ‘em, that with equal comfort,  
As to ourselves we may relieve your wrongs,  
We have grief too, that yet walks without Tongue,  

*Curae leves loquentur. Majores stupent.*

*Lord Antonio* You deal with truth my Lord.  
Lend me but your Attentions, and I’ll cut  
Long grief into short words: last revelling night.  

When Torchlight made an artificial noon  
About the Court, some Courtiers in the masque,  
Putting on better faces than their own,  
Being full of fraud and flattery: amongst whom,  
The Duchess’s youngest son (that moth to honor)  
Filled up a Room; and with long lust to eat,  
Into my wearing; amongst all the Ladies,  
Singled out that dear form; who ever lived,  
As cold in Lust as she is now in death;  
(Which that step-Duchess — Monster knew too well;)  
And therefore in the height of all the revels,  
When Music was hard loudest, Courtiers busiest,  
And Ladies great with laughter; — O Vicious minute!  
Unfit but for relation to be spoke of,  
Then with a face more impudent than his vizard  
He harried her amidst a throng of Panders,  
That live upon damnation of both kinds,  
And fed the ravenous vulture of his lust,  
(O death to think on ‘t) she her honor forced,  
Deemed it a nobler dowry for her name,  
To die with poison than to live with shame.  

*Hippolito* A wondrous Lady; of rare fire compact,  
Sh’as made her name an Empress by that act,  

*Piero* My Lord what judgement follows the offender?  

*Lord Antonio* Faith none my Lord it cools and is deferred,  

*Piero* Delay the doom for rape?  

*Lord Antonio* O you must note who ’tis should die,  
The Duchess’ son, she’ll look to be a saver,  
„Judgement in this age is ne’er kin to favor.  

*Hippolito* Nay then step forth thou Bribeless officer;  
I bind you all in steel to bind you surely,  
Here let your oaths meet, to be kept and paid,  
Which else will stick like rust, and shame the blade,  
Strengthen my vow, that if at the next sitting,  
Judgement speak all in gold, and spare the blood  
Of such a serpent, e’en before their seats,
To let his soul out, which long since was found,
Guilty in heaven.


All. We swear it and will act it,
Lord Antonio Kind Gentlemen, I thank you in mine Ire,
Hippolito ’Twere pity?
The ruins of so fair a Monument,
Should not be dipped in the defacer’s blood,
Piero. Her funeral shall be wealthy, for her name,
Merits a tomb of pearl; my Lord Antonio,
For this time wipe your Lady from your eyes,
No doubt our grief and yours may one day court it,
When we are more familiar with Revenge,
Lord Antonio That is my comfort Gentlemen, and I joy,
In this one happiness above the rest,
Which will be called a miracle at last,
That being an old man i’d a wife so chaste. Exeunt.

ACTUS. 2. SCAENA 1.
Enter Castiza the sister.

Castiza How hardly shall that maiden be beset,
Whose only fortunes, are her constant thoughts,
That has no other child’s part but her honor,
That Keeps her low; and empty in estate.
Maids and their honors are like poor beginners,
Were not sin rich there would be fewer sinners;
Why had not virtue a revenue? well,
I know the cause, ’twould have impoverished hell.
How now Dondolo.
Dondolo Madonna, there is one as they say a thing of flesh and
blood, a man I take him by his beard that would very desirously
mouth to mouth with you.

Castiza What’s that?
Dondolo Show his teeth in your company,
Castiza I understand thee not;
Dondolo Why speak with you Madonna!
Castiza Why say so madman, and cut off a great deal of dirty
way; had it not been better spoke in ordinary words that one
would speak with me.
Dondolo Ha, ha, that’s as ordinary as two shillings, I would strive

a little to show myself in my place, a Gentleman-usher scorns
to use the Phrase and fancy of a servingman.

Castiza Yours be your one sir, go direct him hither,
I hope some happy tidings from my brother,
That lately travailed, whom my soul affects.
Here he comes.

Enter Vindice her brother disguised.

Vindice Lady the best of wishes to your sex.

Fair skins and new gowns,

Castiza Oh they shall thank you sir,

Whence this,

Vindice Oh from a dear and worthy friend,
mighty! Castiza From whom?

Vindice The Duke’s son!

Castiza Receive that!

A box o’ th’ ear to her Brother.

I swore I’d put anger in my hand,
And pass the Virgin limits of myself,
To him that next appeared in that base office,
To be his sin’s Attorney, bear to him,
That figure of my hate upon thy cheek
Whilst ’tis yet hot, and I’ll reward thee for ’t,
Tell him my honor shall have a rich name,
When several harlots shall share his with shame,
Farewell commend me to him in my hate!

Exit.

Vindice It is the sweetest Box,
That e’er my nose came nigh,
The finest drawn-work cuff that e’er was worn,
I’ll love this blow for ever, and this cheek
Shall still hence forward take the wall of this.
Oh I’m above my tongue: most constant sister,
In this thou hast right honorable shown,
Many are called by their honor that have none,
Thou art approved for ever in my thoughts.
It is not in the power of words to taint thee,
And yet for the salvation of my oath,
As my resolve in that point; I will lay,
Hard siege unto my Mother, though I know,

A Siren’s tongue could not bewitch her so.
Mass fitly here she comes, thanks my disguise,
Madam good afternoon.

Mother Y’ are welcome sir?

Vindice The Next of Italy commends him to you,
Our mighty expectation, the Duke’s son.

Mother I think myself much honored, that he pleases,
To rank me in his thoughts.

Vindice So may you Lady:
One that is like to be our sudden Duke,
The Crown gapes for him every tide, and then
Commander o’er us all, do but think on him,
How blessed were they now that could please him
E’en with anything almost.

Mother Ay, save their honor?

Vindice Tut, one would let a little of that go too
And ne’er be seen in ’t: ne’er be seen it, mark you,
I’d wink and let it go —

Mother   Marry but I would not.
Vindice   Marry but I would I hope, I know you would too,
If you’d that blood now which you gave your daughter,
To her indeed ’tis, this wheel comes about,
That man that must be all this, perhaps ere morning
(For his white father does but mold away)
Has long desired your daughter. Mother   Desired?

Vindice   Nay but hear me,
He desires now that will command hereafter,
Therefore be wise, I speak as more a friend
To you than him; Madam, I know y’ are poor,
And ’lack the day, there are too many poor Ladies already
Why should you vex the number? ’tis despised,
Live wealthy, rightly understand the world,
And chide away that foolish — Country girl
Keeps company with your daughter, chastity,

Mother   Oh fie, fie, the riches of the world cannot hire a mother
to such a most unnatural task.

Vindice   No, but a thousand Angels can,
Men have no power, Angels must work you to ’t,

The world descends into such base-born evils
That forty Angels can make fourscore devils,
There will be fools still I perceive, still fool.
Would I be poor dejected, scorned of greatness,
Swept from the Palace, and see other daughters
Spring with the dew o’ th’ Court, having mine own
So much desired and loved — by the Duke’s son,
No, I would raise my state upon her breast
And call her eyes my Tenants, I would count
My yearly maintenance upon her cheeks:
Take Coach upon her lip, and all, her parts
Should keep men after men, and I would ride,
In pleasure upon pleasure:
You took great pains for her, once when it was,
Let her requite it now, though it be but some
You brought her forth, she may well bring you home,

Mother   O heavens! this overcomes me?
Vindice   Not I hope, already?

Mother   It is too strong for me, men know that know us,
We are so weak their words can overthrow us,
He touched me nearly made my virtues bate
When his tongue struck upon my poor estate.

Vindice   I e’en quake to proceed, my spirit turns edge?
I fear me she’s unmothered, yet I’ll venture,
„That woman is all male, whom none can Enter?
What think you now Lady, speak are you wiser?
What said advancement to you: thus it said!
The daughter’s fall lifts up the mother’s head:
Did it not Madam? but i’ll swear it does
In many places, tut, this age fears no man,
,, ’Tis no shame to be bad, because ’tis common.

Mother  Ay that’s the comfort on ’t.
Vindice  The comfort on ’t!
I keep the best for last, can these persuade you
To forget heaven — and — Mother  Ay these are they?
Vindice  Oh!
Mother  That enchant our sex,
These are the means that govern our affections, — that woman

Will not be troubled with the mother long,
That sees the comfortable shine of you,
I blush to think what for your sakes I’ll do!

Vindice  O suff’ring heaven with thy invisible finger,
E’en at this Instant turn the precious side
Of both mine eyeballs inward, not to see myself,

Mother  Look you sir.  Vindice  Holla.

Mother  Let this thank your pains.
Vindice  O you’re a kind Madman;
Mother  I’ll see how I can move,
Vindice  Your words will sting,
Mother  If she be still chaste I’ll ne’er call her mine,
Vindice  Spoke truer than you meant it,

Mother  Daughter Castiza.  Castiza Madam,
Vindice  O she’s yonder.
Meet her: troops of celestial Soldiers guard her heart.
Yon dam has devils enough to take her part,

Castiza  Madam what makes yon evil-officed man,
In presence of you;  Mother  Why?

Castiza  He lately brought
Immodest writing sent from the Duke’s son
To tempt me to dishonorable Act,

Mother  Dishonorable Act? — good honorable fool,
That wouldst be honest cause thou wouldst be so,
Producing no one reason but thy will.
And ’t as a good report, prettily commended,
But pray by whom; mean people; ignorant people,
The better sort I’m sure cannot abide it,
And by what rule shouldst we square out our lives,
But by our better’s actions? oh if thou knew’st
What ’twere to lose it, thou would never keep it:
But there’s a cold curse laid upon all Maids,
Whilst other clip the Sun they clasp the shades!

Virginity is paradise, locked up.
You cannot come by yourselves without fee.
And ’twas decreed that man should keep the key!
Deny advancement, treasure, the Duke’s son,

Castiza I cry you mercy. Lady I mistook you,

Pray did you see my Mother; which way went you?
Pray God I have not lost her.

Vindice Prettily put by.
Mother Are you as proud to me as coy to him?
Do you not know me now?

Castiza Why are you she?
The world’s so changed, one shape into another,
It is a wise child now that knows her mother?

Vindice Most right i’ faith.
Mother I owe your cheek my hand,
For that presumption now, but I’ll forget it,
Come you shall leave those childish ’haviors,
And understand your Time, Fortunes flow to you,
What will you be a Girl?
If all feared drowning, that spy waves ashore,
Gold would grow rich, and all the Merchants poor.

Castiza It is a pretty saying of a wicked one, but methinks now
It does not show so well out of your mouth,
Better in his.

Vindice Faith bad enough in both,
Were I in earnest as I’ll seem no less?
I wonder Lady your own mother’s words,
Cannot be taken, nor stand in full force.
’Tis honesty you urge; what’s honesty?
’Tis but heaven’s beggar; and what woman is so foolish to
keep honesty,
And be not able to keep herself? No,
Times are grown wiser and will keep less charge,
A Maid that has small portion now intends,
To break up house, and live upon her friends
How blessed are you, you have happiness alone,
Others must fall to thousands, you to one,
Sufficient in himself to make your forehead
Dazzle the world with Jewels, and petitionary people
Start at your presence.

Mother Oh if I were young, I should be ravished.
Castiza Ay to lose your honor.
Vindice ’Slid how can you lose your honor?

To deal with my Lord’s Grace,
He’ll add more honor to it by his Title,
Your Mother will tell you how.

Mother That I will.
Vindice O think upon the pleasure of the Palace,
Secured ease and state; the stirring meats,  
Ready to move out of the dishes, that e’en now quicken when they’re eaten,  
Banquets abroad by Torchlight, Musics, sports,  
Bareheaded vassals, that had ne’er the fortune  
To keep on their own Hats, but let horns wear ’em.  
Nine Coaches waiting — hurry, hurry, hurry.  

*Castiza*  
Ay to the Devil.  

*Vindice*  
Ay to the Devil, to th’ Duke by my faith.  

*Mother*  
Ay to the Duke: daughter you’d scorn to think o’ th’  
Devil and you were there once.  

*Vindice*  
True, for most there are as proud as he for his heart i’ faith  
Who’d sit at home in a neglected room,  
Dealing her short-lived beauty to the pictures,  
That are as useless as old men, when those  
Poorer in face and fortune than herself,  
Walk with a hundred Acres on their backs,  
Fair Meadows cut into Green foreparts — oh  
It was the greatest blessing ever happened to women;  
When Farmer’s sons agreed, and met again,  
To wash their hands, and come up Gentlemen;  
The commonwealth has flourished ever since,  
Lands that were mete by the Rod, that labors spared,  
Tailors ride down, and measure ’em by the yard;  
Fair trees, those comely foretops of the Field,  
Are cut to maintain head-tires — much untold,  
All thrives but Chastity, she lies a-cold,  
Nay shall I come nearer to you, mark but this:  
Why are there so few honest women, but because ’tis the poorer  
profession, that’s accounted best, that’s best followed, least in  
trade, least in fashion, and that’s not honesty believe it, and do  
but note the love and dejected price of it:  

*Lost but a Pearl, we search and cannot brook it.*  

*But that once gone, who is so mad to look it.*

*Mother.* Troth he says true.  

*Castiza* False, I defy you both:  
I have endured you with an ear of fire,  
Your Tongues have struck hot irons on my face;  
Mother, come from that poisonous woman there.  

*Mother.* Where?  

*Castiza* Do you not see her, she’s too inward then:  
Slave perish in thy office: you heavens please,  
Henceforth to make the Mother a disease,  
Which first begins with me, yet I’ve outgone you.  

*Exit.*  

*Vindice* O Angels clap your wings upon the skies,  
And give this Virgin Crystal plaudities?  

*Mother* Peevish, coy, foolish, but return this answer,  
My Lord shall be most welcome, when his pleasure  
Conducts him this way, I will sway mine own,
Women with women can work best alone.

_Vindice_ Indeed I’ll tell him so;
O more uncivil, more unnatural,
Than those base-titled creatures that look downward,
Why does not heaven turn black, or with a frown
Undo the world — why does not earth start up,
And strike the sins that tread upon ’t — oh;
Were ’t not for gold and women; there would be no damnation,
Hell would look like a Lord’s Great Kitchen without fire in ’t;
But ’twas decreed before the world began,
That they should be the hooks to catch, at man.

_Exit._

_Enter_ Lussurioso, _with_ Hippolito,

_Vindice’s brother._

_Lussurioso_ I much applaud thy judgement, thou art well read in a fellow,
And ’tis the deepest Art to study man;
I know this, which I never learnt in schools,
The world’s divided into knaves and fools.

_Hippolito_ Knave in your face my Lord, behind your back.

_Lussurioso_ And I much thank thee, that thou hast preferred,
A fellow of discourse — well mingled,
And whose brain Time hath seasoned.

_Hippolito_ True my Lord,

We shall find season once I hope; — O villain!
To make such an unnatural slave of me; — but —

_Lussurioso_ Mass here he comes.

_Hippolito_ And now shall I have free leave to depart.

_Lussurioso_ Your absence, leave us.

_Hippolito_ Are not my thoughts true?
I must remove; but brother you may stay,
Heart, we are both made Bawds a new-found way?

_Exit._

_Lussurioso_ Now, we’re an even number? a third man’s dangerous,
Especially her brother, say, be free,
Have I a pleasure toward. _Vindice_ Oh my Lord.

_Lussurioso_ Ravish me in thine answer, art thou rare,
Hast thou beguiled her of salvation,
And rubbed hell o’er with honey; is she a woman?

_Vindice_ In all but in Desire.

_Lussurioso_ Then she’s in nothing, — I bate in courage now.

_Vindice_ The words I brought,

Might well have made indifferent honest, naught,
A right good woman in these days is changed,
Into white money with less labor far,
Many a Maid has turned to Mahomet,
With easier working; I dust undertake
Upon the pawn and forfeit of my life.
With half those words to flat a Puritan’s wife,
But she is close and good; — yet ’tis a doubt by this time; oh
the mother, the mother?

*Lussurioso* I never thought their sex had been a wonder,

Until this minute? what fruit from the Mother?

*Vindice* Now must I blister my soul, be forsworn,

Or shame the woman that received me first,

I will be true, thou liv’st not to proclaim,

Spoke to a dying man, shame has no shame.

My Lord.  *Lussurioso* Who’s that?

*Vindice* Here’s none but I my Lord.

*Lussurioso* What would thy haste utter?


*Vindice* The Maid being dull, having no mind to travel,

Into unknown lands, what did me I straight,

But set spurs to the Mother; golden spurs,

Will put her to a false gallop in a trice,

*Lussurioso* Is ’t possible that in this.

The Mother should be damned before the daughter?

*Vindice* Oh, that’s good manners my Lord, the Mother for her

age must go foremost you know.

*Lussurioso* Thou ’st spoke that true! but where comes in this comfort.

*Vindice* In a fine place my Lord — the unnatural mother,

Did with her tongue so hard beset her honor,

That the poor fool was struck to silent wonder,

Yet still the maid like an unlighted Taper,

Was cold and chaste, save that her Mother’s breath,

Did blow fire on her cheeks, the girl departed,

But the good ancient Madam half mad, threw me

These promising words, which I took deeply note of;

My Lord shall be most welcome,

*Lussurioso* Faith I thank her,

*Vindice* When his pleasure conducts him this way.

*Lussurioso* That shall be soon i’ faith,  *Vindice* I will sway mine own,

*Lussurioso* She does the wiser I commend her for ’t,

*Vindice* Women with women can work best alone,

*Lussurioso* By this light and so they can, give ’em their due, men are

not comparable to ’em.

*Vindice* No that’s true, for you shall have one woman knit

more in a hour than any man can Ravel again in seven and

twenty year.

*Lussurioso* Now my desires are happy, I’ll make ’em freemen now,

Thou art a precious fellow, faith I love thee,

Be wise and make it thy revenue, beg, leg,

What office couldst thou be Ambitious for?

*Vindice* Office my Lord marry if I might have my wish I would

have one that was never begged yet,

*Lussurioso* Nay then thou canst have none.

*Vindice* Yes my Lord I could pick out another office yet, nay

and keep a horse and drab upon ’t,
Lussurioso  Prithee good bluntness tell me.
Vindice  Why I would desire but this my Lord, to have all the fees behind the Arras; and all the farthingales that fall plump about twelve o’clock at night upon the Rushes.
Lussurioso  Thou ’rt a mad apprehensive knave, dost think to make any great purchase of that.
Vindice  Oh ’tis an unknown thing my Lord, I wonder ’t has been missed so long?
Lussurioso  Well, this night i’ll visit her, and ’tis till then A year in my desires—farewell, attend,
Trust me with thy preferment.  Exit.
Vindice  My loved Lord;
Oh shall I kill him o’ th’ wrong side now, no!
Sword thou wast never a backbiter yet,
I’ll pierce him to his face, he shall die, looking upon me,
Thy veins are swelled with lust, this shall unfill ’em,
Great men were Gods, if beggars could not kill ’em,
Forgive me heaven, to call my mother wicked,
Oh lessen not my days upon the earth
I cannot honor her, by this I fear me
Her tongue has turned my sister into use.
I was a villain not to be forsworn:
To this our lecherous hope, the Duke’s son,
For Lawyers, Merchants, some divines and all,
Count beneficial perjury a sin small,
It shall go hard yet, but i’ll guard her honor
And keep the ports sure?  Enter Hippolito.
Hippolito  Brother how goes the world? I would know news of you
But I have news to tell you.
Vindice  What in the name of knavery?
Hippolito  Knavery faith,
This vicious old Duke’s worthily abused
The pen of his bastard writes him Cuckold!
Vindice  His bastard?
Hippolito  Pray believe it, he and the Duchess,
By night meet in their linen, they have been seen
By stair-foot panders!
Vindice  Oh sin foul and deep,
Great faults are winked at when the Duke’s asleep,
See, see, here comes the Spurio.
Hippolito  Monstrous Luxur?

Vindice  Unbraced: two of his valiant bawds with him.
O There’s a wicked whisper; hell is in his ear
Stay let’s observe his passage —
Spurio  Oh but are you sure on ’t.
Servant  My Lord most sure on 't, for 'twas spoke by one,
That is most inward with the Duke’s son’s lust:
That he intends within this hour to steal,
Unto Hippolito’s sister, whose chaste life
The mother has corrupted for his use.

Spurio  Sweet word, sweet occasion, faith then brother
I’ll disinherit you in as short time,
As I was when I was begot in haste:
I’ll damn you at your pleasure: precious deed
Come let our passing out be soft and wary.

Exeunt.

Vindice  Mark, there, there, that step, now to the Duchess,
This their second meeting, writes the Duke Cuckold
With new additions, his horns newly revived:
Night! thou that look’st like funeral Herald’s fees
Torn down betimes i’ th’ morning, thou hangest fitly
To Grace those sins that have no grace at all,
Now ’tis full sea a-bed over the world,
There’s juggling of all sides, some that were Maids
E’en at Sunset are now perhaps i’ th’ Toll-book,
This woman in immodest thin apparel:
Let’s in her friend by water, here a Dame
Cunning, nails leather-hinges to a door,
To avoid proclamation,
Now Cuckolds are a-quoyning, apace, apace, apace, apace?
And careful sisters spin that thread i’ th’ night,
That does maintain them and their bawds i’ th’ day!

Hippolito  You flow well brother?

Vindice  Puh I’m shallow yet,
Too sparing and too modest, shall I tell thee,
If every trick were told that’s dealt by night
There are few here that would not blush outright.

Hippolito  I am of that belief too.

Vindice  Who’s this comes,

Vindice  The Duke’s son up so late, — brother fall back,
And you shall learn, some mischief, — my good Lord.

Lussurioso  Piato, why the man I wished for, come,
I do embrace this season for the fittest
To taste of that young Lady?  Vindice  Heart, and hell.

Hippolito  Damned villain.

Vindice  I ha’ no way now to cross it, but to kill him.

Lussurioso  Come only thou and I.  Vindice  My Lord my Lord.

Lussurioso  Why dost thou start us?

Vindice  I’d almost forgot — the bastard!  Lussurioso  What of him?

Vindice  This night, this hour — this minute, now.

Lussurioso  What? what?  Vindice  Shadows the Duchess —

Lussurioso  Horrible word.

Vindice  And like strong poison eats,
Into the Duke your father’s forehead.  Lussurioso  Oh.
Vindice  He makes horn royal.  Lussurioso  Most ignoble slave?
Vindice  This is the fruit of two beds.  Lussurioso  I am mad.
Vindice  That passage he trod warily:  Lussurioso  He did!
Vindice  And hushed his villains every step he took.
Lussurioso  His villains? i’ll confound them.
Vindice  Take ’em finely, finely, now.
Lussurioso  The Duchess’ Chamber–door shall not control me.  Exeunt

Hippolito  Good, happy, swift, there’s gunpowder i’ th’ Court,
Wild-fire at midnight, in this heedless fury
He may show violence to cross himself,
I’ll follow the Event.  Exit.

Lussurioso  Where is that villain?
Vindice  Softly my Lord and you may take ’em twisted.
Lussurioso  I care not how!
Vindice  Oh ’twill be glorious,
To kill ’em doubled, when they’re heaped, be soft my Lord.
Lussurioso  Away my spleen is not so lazy, thus and thus,
I’ll shake their eyelids ope, and with my sword
Shut ’em again for ever; — villain, strumpet —

Duke  You upper Guard defend us.  Duchess  Treason, treason.
Duke  Oh take me not in sleep, I have great sins, I must have days,
Nay months dear son, with penitential heaves,
To lift ’em out, and not to die unclear,

O thou wilt kill me both in heaven and here.
Lussurioso  I am amazed to death.
Duke.  Nay villain traitor,
Worse than the foulest Epithet, now I’l gripe thee
E’en with the Nerves of wrath, and throw thy head
Amongst the Lawyers guard.

Enter Nobles and sons.

1. Noble.  How comes the quiet of your Grace disturbed?
Duke.  This boy that should be myself after me,
Would be myself before me, and in heat
Of that ambition bloodily rushed in
Intending to depose me in my bed?
Duchess  He called his Father villain; and me strumpet,
A word that I abhor to ’file my lips with.
Ambitious  That was not so well done Brother?
Lussurioso  I am abused — I know there’s no excuse can do me good.
Vindice  ’Tis now good policy to be from sight,
His vicious purpose to our sister’s honor,
Is crossed beyond our thought.
Hippolito  You little dreamt his Father slept here.
Vindice  Oh ’twas far beyond me.
But since it fell so; — without frightful word,
Would he had killed him, ’twould have eased our swords.
Enter Spurio with his villains.

Spurio  Y’ are villains, Fablers,
You have knaves’ chins, and harlots’ tongues, you lie,
And I will damn you with one meal a day.

1. Servant  O good my Lord!
Spurio  ’Sblood you shall never sup.
2. Servant  O I beseech you sir.
Spurio  To let my sword — Catch cold so long and miss him.
1. Servant  Troth my Lord — ’Twas his intent to meet there.
Spurio  Heart he’s yonder?
Ha? what news here? is the day out o’ th’ socket,

That it is Noon at Midnight; the Court up,
How comes the Guard so saucy with his elbows?

Lussurioso  The Bastard here?
Nay then the truth of my intent shall out,
My Lord and Father hear me. Duke. Bear him hence.

Lussurioso  I can with loyalty excuse.
Duke.  Excuse? to prison with the Villain,
Death shall not long lag after him.

Spurio  Good i’ faith, then ’tis not much amiss,
Lussurioso  Brothers, my best release lies on your tongues,
I pray persuade for me.

Ambitioso  It is our duties: make yourself sure of us.
Supervacuo  We’ll sweat in pleading.
Lussurioso  And I may live to thank you.  Exeunt.

Ambitioso  No, thy death shall thank me better.
Spurio  He’s gone: I’ll after him,
And know his trespass, seem to bear a part
In all his ills, but with a Puritan heart.  Exit.

Ambitioso  Now brother, let our hate and love be woven
So subtly together, that in speaking one word for his life,
We may make three for his death,
The craftiest pleader gets most gold for breath.

Supervacuo  Set on, I’ll not be far behind you brother.
Duke.  Is ’t possible a son should be disobedient as far as
the sword: it is the highest he can go no farther.

Ambitioso  My gracious Lord, take pity, — Duke. Pity boys?
Ambitioso  Nay we’d be loath to move your Grace too much,
We know the trespass is unpardonable,
Black, wicked, and unnatural,

Supervacuo  In a Son, oh Monstrous.
Ambitioso  Yet my Lord,
A Duke’s soft hand strokes the rough head of law,
And makes it lie smooth.  Duke  But my hand shall ne’er do ’t.

Ambitioso  That as you please my Lord.
Supervacuo  We must needs confess,
Some father would have entered into hate,
So deadly pointed, that before his eyes,
He would ha’ seen the execution sound,

Without corrupted favor?

Ambitioso  But my Lord,
Your Grace may live the wonder of all times,
In pard’ning that offense which never yet
Had face to beg a pardon.  Duke.  Honey, how’s this?

Ambitioso  Forgive him good my Lord, he’s your own son,
And I must needs say ’twas the vildlier done.

Supervacuo  He’s the next heir — yet this true reason gathers,
None can possess that dispossess their fathers:
Be merciful; —

Duke.  Here’s no Stepmother’s wit,
I’ll try ’em both upon their love and hate.

Ambitioso  Be merciful — although — Duke.  You have prevailed,
My wrath like flaming wax hath spent itself,
I know ’twas but some peevious Moon in him: go, let him be released.

Supervacuo  ’Sfoot how now Brother?

Ambitioso  Your Grace doth please to speak beside your spleen,
I would it were so happy?  Duke.  Why go, release him.

Supervacuo  O my good Lord, I know the fault’s too weighty,
And full of general loathing; too inhuman,
Rather by all men’s voices worthy death.

Duke.  ’Tis true too; here then, receive this signet, doom shall pass,
Direct it to the Judges, he shall die
Ere many days, make haste.

Ambitioso  All speed that may be,
We could have wished his burden not so sore,
We knew your Grace did but delay before.

Duke.  Here’s Envy with a poor thin cover o’er ’t,
Like Scarlet hid in lawn, easily spied through,
This their ambition by the Mother’s side,
Is dangerous, and for safety must be purged,
I will prevent their envies, sure it was
But some mistaken fury in our son,
Which these aspiring boys would climb upon:
He shall be released suddenly.

Enter Nobles.

1. Noble  Good morning to your Grace.
Duke.  Welcome my Lords.

2. Noble  Our knees shall take away the office of our feet for ever,

Unless your Grace bestow a father’s eye,
Upon the Clouded fortunes of your son,
And in compassionate virtue grant him that,
Which makes e’en mean men happy; liberty

_Duke_ How seriously their loves and honors woo
For that, which I am about to pray them do
Which, rise my Lords, your knees sign his release,
We freely pardon him.

1. _Noble_ We owe your Grace much thanks, and he much duty. _Exeunt._

_Duke_ It well becomes that Judge to nod at crimes,
That does commit greater himself and lives:
I may forgive a disobedient error,
That expect pardon for adultery
And in my old days am a youth in lust:
Many a beauty have I turned to poison
In the denial, covetous of all,
Age hot, is like a Monster to be seen:
My hairs are white, and yet my sins are Green.

ACT. 3.

_Enter Ambitioso, and Supervacuo?_

_Supervacuo_ Brother, let my opinion sway you once,
I speak it for the best, to have him die:
Surest and soonest, if the signet come,
Unto the judge’s hands, why then his doom,
Will be deferred till sittings and Court-days:
Juries and further, — Faiths are bought and sold,
Oaths in these days are but the skin of gold.

_Ambitioso_ In troth ’tis true too!
_Supervacuo_ Then let’s set by the Judges
And fall to the Officers, ’tis but mistaking
The Duke our father’s meaning, and where he named,
Ere many days, ’tis but forgetting that
And, have him die i’ th’ morning.

_Ambitioso_ Excellent,
Then am I heir — Duke in a minute.
_Supervacuo_ Nay,
And he were once puffed out, here is a pin.

Should quickly prick your bladder.

_Ambitioso_ Blast occasion,
He being packed, we’ll have some trick and wile,
To wind our younger brother out of prison,
That lies in for the Rape, the Lady’s dead,
And people’s thoughts will soon be buried.

_Supervacuo_ We may with safety do ’t, and live and feed,
The Duchess’ sons are too proud to bleed,

_Ambitioso_ We are i’ faith to say true. — come let’s not linger
I’ll to the Officers, go you before,
And set an edge upon the Executioner.

_Supervacuo_ Let me alone to grind him. _Exit._

_Ambitioso_ Meet; farewell,
I am next now, I rise just in that place,  
Where thou ’rt cut off, upon thy Neck kind brother,  
The falling of one head, lifts up another.          
            
Exit.

Enter with the Nobles, Lussurioso from prison.

Lussurioso    My Lords? I am so much indebted to your loves,  
For this, O this delivery.

  1. Noble    But our duties, my Lord, unto the hopes that grow in you,  
Lussurioso    If ere I live to be myself i’ll thank you,  
O liberty thou sweet and heavenly Dame;  
But hell for prison is too mild a name.          
            
Exeunt.

Enter Ambitioso, and Supervacuo? with Officers.

Ambitioso    Officers? here’s the Duke’s signet, your firm warrant,  
Brings the command of present death along with it  
Unto our brother, the Duke’s son; we are sorry,  
That we are so unnaturally employed  
In such an unkind Office, fitter far  
For enemies than brothers.

Supervacuo    But you know,  
The Duke’s command must be obeyed.

  1. Officer    It must and shall my Lord — this morning then,  
So suddenly?

Ambitioso    Ay alas poor good-soul,  
He must break fast betimes, the executioner  
Stands ready to put forth his cowardly valor.

  2. Officer    Already?

Supervacuo    Already i’ faith, O sir, destruction hies,  
And that is least Impudent, soonest dies,  

  1. Officer    Troth you say true my Lord we take our leaves,  
Our Office shall be sound, we’ll not delay,  
The third part of a minute.

Ambitioso    Therein you show.  
Yourselves good men, and upright officers,  
Pray let him die as private as he may,  
Do him that favor, for the gaping people.  
Will but trouble him at his prayers,  
And make him curse, and swear, and so die black.  
Will you be so far Kind?

  1. Officer    It shall be done my Lord.  
Ambitioso    Why we do thank you, if we live to be,  
You shall have a better office,

  2. Officer    Your good Lordship,

Supervacuo    Commend us to the scaffold in our tears.

  1. Officer    We’ll weep and do your commendations,       Exeunt.
Ambitioso    Fine fools in office! Supervacuo Things fall out so fit.
Ambitioso    So happily, come brother ere next clock,  
His head will be made serve a bigger block.          
            
Exeunt.

Enter in prison Junior Brother,  

Junior    Keeper.    Keeper    My Lord.
Junior  No news lately from our brothers?
Are they unmindful of us?

Keeper   My Lord a messenger came newly in and brought this from 'em,

Junior  Nothing but paper comforts?
I looked for my delivery before this,
Had they been worth their oaths — prithee be from us.
Now what say you forsooth, speak out I pray,
   Brother be of good cheer,
'Slud it begins like a whore with good cheer,
   Thou shalt not be long a prisoner.
Not five and thirty year like a bankrupt, I think so,
   We have thought upon a device to get thee out by a trick!
By a trick, pox o' your trick and it be so long a-playing.
   And so rest comforted, be merry and expect it suddenly!
Be merry, hang merry, draw and quarter merry, I'll be mad!

Is 't not strange that a man should lie in a whole month for a woman,
well, we shall see how sudden our brothers: will be in
their promise, I must expect still a trick! I shall not be long a
prisoner, how now, what news?

Keeper   Bad news my Lord I am discharged of you.

Junior  Slave call'st thou that bad news, I thank you brothers.

Keeper   My Lord 'twill prove so, here come the Officers,
Into whose hands I must commit you.

Junior  Ha, Officers, what, why?

1. Officer   You must pardon us my Lord,
Our Office must be sound, here is our warrant
The signet from the Duke, you must straight suffer.

Junior  Suffer? i'll suffer you to be gone, i'll suffer you,
To come no more, what would you have me suffer?

2. Officer   My Lord those words were better changed to prayers,
The time's but brief with you, prepare to die.

Junior.  Sure 'tis not so.  3. Officer   It is too true my Lord.
Junior.  I tell you 'tis not, for the Duke my father,
Deferred me till next sitting, and I look
E'en every minute threescore times an hour,
For a release, a trick wrought by my brothers.

1. Officer   A trick my Lord? if you expect such comfort,
Your hopes as fruitless as a barren woman:
Your brothers were the unhappy messengers,
That brought this powerful token for your death.

Junior.  My brothers, no, no.

2. Officer   'Tis most true my Lord.

Junior.  My brothers to bring a warrant for my death
How strange this shows?

3. Officer   There's no delaying time.
Junior.  Desire 'em hither, call 'em up, my brothers?
They shall deny it to your faces.

1. Officer   My Lord,
They’re far enough by this, at least at Court,
And this most strict command they left behind ’em,
When grief swam in their eyes, they showed like brothers,
Brimful of heavy sorrow: but the Duke
Must have his pleasure.  

1. Officer  
These were their last words which my memory bears,
*Commend us to the Scaffold in our tears.*

Junior.  
Pox dry their tears, what should I do with tears?

I hate ’em worse than any Citizen’s son
Can hate salt water; here came a letter now,
New-bleeding from their Pens, scarce stinted yet,
Would I’d been torn in pieces when I tore it,
Look you officious whoresons words of comfort,
*Not long a Prisoner.*

1. Officer  
It says true in that sir, for you must suffer presently.

Junior.  
A villainous Duns, upon the letter knavish exposition,
Look you then here sir: *We’ll get thee out by a trick says he.*

2. Officer  
That may hold too sir, for you know a Trick is commonly
four Cards, which was meant by us four officers.

Junior.  
Worse and worse dealing.

1. Officer  
The hour beckons us,
The headsman waits, lift up your eyes to heaven.

Junior.  
I thank you faith; good pretty-wholesome counsel,
I should look up to heaven as you said,
Whilst he behind me cozens me of my head,
Ay that’s the Trick.  

3. Officer  
You delay too long my Lord.

Junior.  
Stay good Authority’s Bastards, since I must
Through Brother’s perjury die, O let me venom
Their souls with curses.  

1. Officer  
Come ’tis no time to curse.

Junior.  
Must I bleed then, without respect of sign? well —
My fault was sweet sport, which the world approves,
I die for that which every woman loves.  

*Exeunt.*

Enter Vindice with Hippolito his brother.

Vindice  
O sweet, delectable, rare, happy, ravishing,

Hippolito  
Why what’s the matter brother?

Vindice  
O ’tis able, to make a man spring up, and knock his forehead
Against yon silver ceiling.

Hippolito  
Prithee tell me,
Why may not I partake with you? you vowed once
To give me share to every tragic thought.

Vindice  
By th’ Mass I think I did too,
Then I’ll divide it to thee, — the old Duke
Thinking my outward shape, and inward heart

Are cut out of one piece; (for he that prates his secrets,
His heart stands o’ th’ outside) hires me by price:
To greet him with a Lady,
In some fit place veiled from the eyes o’ th’ Court,
Some darkened blushless Angle, that is guilty
Of his forefathers’ lusts, and great-folks’ riots,
To which (I easily to maintain my shape)
Consented, and did wish his impudent grace
To meet her here in this unsunned lodge,
Wherein ’tis night at noon, and here the rather,
Because unto the torturing of his soul,
The Bastard and the Duchess have appointed
Their meeting too in this luxurious circle,
Which most afflicting sight will kill his eyes
Before we kill the rest of him.

_Hippolito_ ’Twill i’ faith, most dreadfully digested,
I see not how you could have missed me brother.

_Vindice_ True, but the violence of my joy forgot it.

_Hippolito_ Ay, but where’s that Lady now?

_Vindice_ Oh at that word,
I’m lost again, you cannot find me yet
I’m in a throng of happy Apprehensions.
He’s suited for a Lady, I have took care
For a delicious lip, a sparkling eye,
You shall be witness brother;
Be ready stand with your hat off.

_Hippolito_ Why brother, brother.

_Vindice_ Art thou beguiled now? tut, a Lady can,
At such all hid, beguile a wiser man,
Have I not fitted the old surfeiter
With a quaint piece of beauty, age and bare bone
Are e’er allied in action; here’s an eye,
Able to tempt a great man — to serve God,
A pretty hanging lip, that has forgot got now to dissemble
Methinks this mouth should make a swearer tremble.
A drunkard clasp his teeth, and not undo 'em,
To suffer wet damnation to run through 'em.
Here’s a cheek keeps her color let the wind go whistle,
Spout Rain, we fear thee not, be hot or cold
All’s one with us; and is not he absurd,
Whose fortunes are upon their faces set,
That fear no other God but wind and wet.

Hippolito  Brother y’ave spoke that right,
Is this the form that living shone so bright?

Vindice  The very same,
And now methinks I could e’en chide myself,
For doting on her beauty, though her death
Shall be revenged after no common action;
Does the Silkworm expend her yellow labors
For thee? for thee does she undo herself?
Are Lordships sold to maintain Ladyships
For the poor benefit of a bewitching minute?
Why does yon fellow falsify highways
And put his life between the Judge’s lips,
To refine such a thing, keeps horse and men
To beat their valors for her?
Surely we’re all mad people, and they
Whom we think are, are not, we mistake those,
’Tis we are mad in sense, they but in clothes.

Hippolito  Faith and in clothes too we, give us our due.

Vindice  Does every proud and self-affecting Dame
Camphire her face for this? and grieve her Maker
In sinful baths of milk, — when many an infant starves,
For her superfluous outside, all for this?
Who now bids twenty pound a night, prepares
Music, perfumes, and sweetmeats, all are hushed,
Thou mayst lie chaste now! it were fine methinks:
To have thee seen at Revels, forgetful feasts,
And unclean Brothels; sure ’twould fright the sinner
And make him a good coward, put a Reveller,
Out of his Antic amble
And cloy an Epicure with empty dishes?
Here might a scornful and ambitious woman,
Look through and through herself, — see Ladies, with false forms,
You deceive men, but cannot deceive worms.
Now to my tragic business, look you brother,
I have not fashioned this only — for show
And useless property, no, it shall bear a part
E’en in it own Revenge. This very skull,
Whose Mistress the Duke poisoned, with this drug
The mortal curse of the earth; shall be revenged
In the like strain, and kiss his lips to death,
As much as the dumb thing can, he shall feel:
What fails in poison, we’ll supply in steel.

*Hippolito*  
Brother I do applaud thy constant vengeance,
The quaintness of thy malice above thought.

*Vindice*  
So ’tis laid on: now come and welcome Duke, 
I have her for thee, I protest it brother: 
Methinks she makes almost as fair a sign 
As some old gentlewoman in a Periwig? 
Hide thy face now for shame, thou hadst need have a Mask now 
’Tis vain when beauty flows, but when it fleets 
This would become graves better than the streets.

*Hippolito*  
You have my voice in that; hark, the Duke’s come.

*Vindice*  
Peace, let’s observe what company he brings, 
And how he does absent ’em, for you know 
He’ll wish all private, — brother fall you back a little, 
With the bony Lady. *Hippolito*  
That I will.

*Vindice*  
So, so, — now nine years’ vengeance crowd into a minute!

*Duke*  
You shall have leave to leave us, with this charge, 
Upon your lives, if we be missed by th’ Duchess 
Or any of the Nobles, to give out, 
We’re privately rid forth. *Vindice*  
Oh happiness!

*Duke*  
With some few honorable gentlemen you may say, 
You may name those that are away from Court.

*Gentleman*  
Your will and pleasure shall be done my Lord.

*Vindice*  
Privately rid forth, 
He strives to make sure work on ’t — your good grace?

*Duke*  
Piato, well done hast brought her, what Lady is ’t? 
*Vindice*  
Faith my Lord a Country Lady, a little bashful at first 
as most of them are, but after the first kiss my Lord the worst is 
past with them, your grace knows now what you have to do; 
sh’as somewhat a grave look with her — but —

*Duke*  
I love that best, conduct her.

*Vindice*  
Have at all.

*Duke*  
In gravest looks the Greatest faults seem less 
Give me that sin that’s robbed in Holiness.

*Vindice*  
Back with the Torch; brother raise the perfumes.

*Duke*  
How sweet can a Duke breathe? age has no fault, 
Pleasure should meet in a perfumed mist, 
Lady sweetly encountered, I came from Court I must be bold 
with you, oh, what’s this, oh!

*Vindice*  
royal villain, white devil; *Duke*. Oh.

*Vindice*  
Brother — place the Torch here, that his affrighted eyeballs 
May start into those hollows, Duke; dost know 
Yon dreadful vizard, view it well, ’tis the skull 
Of Gloriana, whom thou poisoned’st last. 

*Duke*  
Oh, ’t has poisoned me.

*Vindice*  
Didst not know that till now? 
*Duke*  
What are you two? 
*Vindice*  
Villains all three? — the very ragged bone,
Has been sufficiently revenged.

*Duke* Oh *Hippolito*? call treason.

*Hippolito* Yes my good Lord, treason, treason, treason. *stamping on him.*

*Duke* Then I’m betrayed.

*Vindice* Alas poor Lecher in the hands of knaves,

A slavish Duke is baser than his slaves.

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*Duke.* My teeth are eaten out. *Vindice* Hadst any left.

*Hippolito* I think but few.

*Vindice* Then those that did eat are eaten. *Duke* O my tongue.

*Vindice* Your tongue? ’twill teach you to kiss closer,

Not like a **Slobbering Dutchman**, you have eyes still:

Look monster, what a Lady hast thou made me,

My once betrothed wife.

*Duke* Is it thou villain, nay then —

*Vindice* ’Tis I, ’tis *Vindici,* ’tis I.

*Hippolito* And let this comfort thee: our Lord and Father

Fell sick upon the infection of thy frowns,

And died in sadness; be that thy hope of life. *Duke.* Oh?

*Vindice* He had his tongue, yet grief made him die speechless.

Puh, ’tis but early yet, now i’ll begin

To stick thy soul with Ulcers, I will make

Thy spirit grievous sore, it shall not rest,

But like some pestilent man toss in thy breast— (mark me duke)

Thou ’rt a renowned, high, and mighty Cuckold. *Duke.* Oh!

*Vindice* Thy Bastard, thy bastard rides a-hunting in thy brow.

*Duke.* Millions of deaths.

*Vindice* Nay to afflict thee more,

Here in this lodge they meet for damned clips,

Those eyes shall see the incest of their lips.

*Duke.* Is there a hell besides this, villains? *Vindice* Villain?

Nay heaven is just, scorns are the hires of scorns,

I ne’er knew yet Adulterer without horns.

*Hippolito* Once ere they die ’tis quit.

*Vindice* Hark the music,

Their banquet is prepared, they’re coming —

*Duke.* Oh, kill me not with that sight.

*Vindice* Thou shalt not lose that sight for all thy Dukedom.

*Duke.* Traitors, murderers?

*Vindice* What? is not thy tongue eaten out yet?

Then we’ll invent a silence? brother stifle the Torch,

*Duke.* Treason, murder?

*Vindice* Nay faith, we’ll have you hushed now with thy dagger

Nail down his tongue, and mine shall keep possession

About his heart, if he but gasp he dies,

---

We dread not death to quittance injuries; — Brother,
If he but wink, not brooking the foul object,
Let our two other hands tear up his lids,
And make his eyes like Comets shine through blood,
When the bad bleeds, then is the Tragedy good,

    Hippolito    Whist, brother, music’s at our ear, they come.

Enter the Bastard meeting the Duchess.

    Spurio    Had not that kiss a taste of sin ’twere sweet.
    Duchess    Why there’s no pleasure sweet but it is sinful.

    Spurio    True, such a bitter sweetness fate hath given,
Best side to us, is the worst side to heaven.
    Duchess    Push, come: ’tis the old Duke thy doubtful Father,
The thought of him rubs heaven in thy way,
But I protest by yonder waxen fire,
Forget him, or i’ll poison him.

    Spurio    Madam, you urge a thought which ne’er had life,
So deadly do I loathe him for my birth,
That if he took me hasped within his bed,
I would add murder to adultery,
And with my sword give up his years to death.

    Duchess    Why now thou ’rt sociable, let’s in and feast,
Loud’st Music sound: pleasure is Banquet’s guest.   Exeunt.
    Duke     I cannot brook — Vindice The Brook is turned to blood.
    Hippolito Thanks to loud Music.   Vindice ’Twas our friend indeed,
’Tis state in Music for a Duke to bleed:
The Dukedom wants a head, though yet unknown,
As fast as they peep up, let’s cut ’em down.   Exeunt.

Enter the Duchess’ two sons, Ambitioso and Supervacuo.

    Ambitioso    Was not his execution rarely plotted?
We are the Duke’s sons now.

    Supervacuo    Ay you may thank my policy for that.
    Ambitioso    Your policy, for what?
    Supervacuo    Why wasn’t not my invention brother,
To slip the Judges, and in lesser compass,
Did not I draw the model of his death,
Advising you to sudden officers,
And e’en extemporal execution.

    Ambitioso    Heart, ’twas a thing I thought on too.

    Supervacuo    You thought on ’t too, ’sfoot slander not your thoughts
With glorious untruth, I know ’twas from you.
    Ambitioso    Sir I say, ’twas in my head.

    Supervacuo    Ay, like your brains then,
Ne’er to come out as long as you lived.
    Ambitioso    You’d have the honor on ’t forsooth, that your wit
Lead him to the scaffold,
    Supervacuo    Since it is my due,
I’ll publish ’t, but I’ll ha ’t in spite of you.
    Ambitioso    Methinks y’ are much too bold, you should a little
Remember us brother, next to be honest Duke.
Enter Lussurioso.

Ay, it shall be as easy for you to be Duke,
As to be honest, and that’s never i’ faith.

Well, cold he is by this time, and because
We’re both ambitious, be it our amity,
And let the glory be shared equally. I am content to that.

This night our younger brother shall out of prison,
I have a trick. A trick, prithee what is ’t?

We’ll get him out by a wile. Prithee what wile?
No sir, you shall not know it, till ’t be done,
For then you’d swear ’twere yours.

How now, what’s he? One of the officers.
Desired news. How now my friend?
My Lords, under your pardon, I am allotted
To that desertless office, to present you
With the yet bleeding head. Ha, ha, excellent.
All’s sure our own: Brother, canst weep think’st thou?
’Twould grace our Flattery much; think of some Dame,
’Twill teach thee to resemble.
I have thought, — Now for yourself.
Our sorrows are so fluent,
Our eyes o’erflow our tongues, words spoke in tears,
Are like the murmurs of the waters, the sound
Is loudly heard, but cannot be distinguished.
How died he pray? O full of rage and spleen.
He died most valiantly then, we’re glad to hear it.
We could not woo him once to pray.
He showed himself a Gentleman in that: give him his due.

But in the steed of prayer, he drew forth oaths.
Then did he pray dear heart,
Although you understood him not.
My Lords,
E’en at his last, with pardon be it spoke,
He cursed you both.
He cursed us? ’las good soul.
It was not in our powers, but the Duke’s pleasure,
Finely dissembled o’ both sides, sweet fate,
O happy opportunity.

Now my Lords. Both. Oh! —
Why do you shun me Brothers?
You may come nearer now;
The savor of the prison has forsook me,
I thank such kind Lords as yourselves, I’m free.
Alive! In health!
Released?
We were both e’en amazed with joy to see it,
I am much to thank you.
Faith we spared no tongue, unto my Lord the Duke.
I know your delivery brother
Exit Lussurioso

ACT. 4. SCENE 1.

Enter Lussurioso with Hippolito.

Lussurioso Hippolito. Hippolito My Lord:

Has your good Lordship aught to command me in?

Lussurioso I prithee leave us.

Hippolito How’s this? come and leave us? Lussurioso Hippolito.

Hippolito Your honor — I stand ready for any duteous employment.

Lussurioso Heart, what mak’st thou here?

Hippolito A pretty Lordly humor:

He bids me to be present, to depart; something has stung his honor?

Lussurioso Be nearer, draw nearer:

Y’ are not so good methinks, I’m angry with you.

Hippolito With me my Lord? I’m angry with myself for ’t.

Lussurioso You did prefer a goodly fellow to me,

’Twas wittily elected, ’twas, I thought

Had been a villain, and he proves a Knave?

To me a Knave.
Hippolito I chose him for the best my Lord,
’Tis much my sorrow, if neglect in him, breed discontent in you.

Lussurioso Neglect, ’twas will: Judge of it,
Firmly to tell of an incredible Act,
Not to be thought, less to be spoken of,
Twixt my Stepmother and the Bastard, oh,
Incestuous sweets between ’em.

Hippolito Fie my Lord.

Lussurioso I in kind loyalty to my father’s forehead,
Made this a desperate arm, and in that fury,
Committed treason on the lawful bed,
And with my sword e’en razed my father’s bosom,
For which I was within a stroke of death.

Hippolito Alack, I’m sorry; ’sfoot just upon the stroke,
Jars in my brother, ’twill be villainous Music.

Vindice My honored Lord. Enter Vindice

Lussurioso Away prithee forsake us, hereafter we’ll not know thee.

Vindice Not know me my Lord, your Lordship cannot choose.

Lussurioso Begone I say, thou art a false knave.

Vindice Why the easier to be known, my Lord.

Lussurioso Push, I shall prove too bitter with a word,
Make thee a perpetual prisoner,
And lay this iron-age upon thee,

Vindice Mum, for there’s a doom would make a woman dumb,
Missing the bastard next him, the wind’s come about,

Now ’tis my brother’s turn to stay mine to go out. Exit Vindice

Lussurioso H’as greatly moved me. Hippolito Much to blame i’ faith.

Lussurioso But i’ll recover, to his ruin: ’twas told me lately,
I know not whether falsely, that you’d a brother,

Hippolito Who I, yes my good Lord, I have a brother

Lussurioso How chance the Court ne’er saw him? of what nature?

How does he apply his hours?

Hippolito Faith to curse Fates,
Who, as he thinks, ordained him to be poor,
Keeps at home full of want, and discontent.

Lussurioso There’s hope in him, for discontent and want
Is the best clay to mold, a villain of;

Hippolito, wish him repair to us,
If there be aught in him to please our blood,
For thy sake we’ll advance him, and build fair
His meanest fortunes: for it is in us
To rear up Towers from cottages.

Hippolito It is so my Lord, he will attend your honor,
But he’s a man, in whom much melancholy dwells.

Lussurioso Why the better: bring him to Court.
Enter Vindice and Hippolito, Vindice out of his disguise. 

Hippolito With willingness and speed,
Whom he cast off e’en now, must now succeed,
Brother disguise must off,
In thine own shape now, i’ll prefer thee to him:
How strangely does himself work to undo him. Exit.

Lussurioso This fellow will come fitly, he shall kill,
That other slave, that did abuse my spleen,
And made it swell to Treason, I have put
Much of my heart into him, he must die.
He that knows great men’s secrets and proves slight,
That man ne’er lives to see his Beard turn white:
Ay he shall speed him: I’ll employ thee brother,
Slaves are but Nails, to drive out one another?
He being of black condition, suitable
To want and ill content, hope of preferment
Will grind him to an Edge — The Nobles enter.

1. Noble Good days unto your honor.
2. Noble Saw you my Lord the Duke?
3. Noble Not since two hours before noon my Lord,
And then he privately rid forth.
Lussurioso Oh he’s rode forth.

1. Noble ’Twas wondrous privately,
2. Noble There’s none i’ th’ Court had any knowledge on ’t.
Lussurioso His Grace is old, and sudden, ’tis no treason
To say, the Duke my Father has a humor,
Or such a Toy about him; what in us
Would appear light, in him seems virtuous.

3. Noble ’Tis Oracle my Lord.

Enter Vindice and Hippolito, Vindice out of his disguise.

Hippolito So, so, all’s as it should be, y’ are yourself.

Vindice How that great villain puts me to my shifts.

Hippolito He that did lately in disguise reject thee;
Shall now thou art thyself, as much respect thee.

Vindice ’Twill be the quainter fallacy; but brother,
’Sfoot what use will he put me to now think’st thou?

Hippolito Nay you must pardon me in that, I know not:
H’as some employment for you: but what ’tis
He and his Secretary the Devil knows best.

Vindice Well I must suit my tongue to his desires,
What color soe’er they be; hoping at last
To pile up all my wishes on his breast,
Hippolito  Faith Brother he himself shows the way.

Vindice  Now the Duke is dead, the realm is clad in clay:
His death being not yet known, under his name
The people still are governed; well, thou his son
Art not long-lived, thou shalt not joy his death:
To kill thee then, I should most honor thee;
For 'twould stand firm in every man’s belief,
Thou 'st a kind child, and only died'st with grief.

Hippolito  You fetch about well, but let’s talk in present,
How will you appear in fashion different,
As well as in apparel, to make all things possible:
If you be but once tripped, we fall for ever.
It is not the least policy to be doubtful,
You must change tongue: — familiar was your first.

Vindice  Why I’ll bear me in some strain of melancholy,
And string myself with heavy-sounding Wire,
Like such an Instrument, that speaks merry things sadly.

Hippolito  Then 'tis as I meant,
I gave you out at first in discontent.

Vindice  I’ll turn myself, and then —

Hippolito  ’Sfoot here he comes: hast thought upon ’t.

Vindice  Salute him, fear not me. Lussurioso Hippolito.

Hippolito  Your Lordship. Lussurioso What’s he yonder?

Hippolito  'Tis Vindice, my discontented Brother,
Whom, 'cording to your will I’ve brought to Court.

Lussurioso,  Is that thy brother? beshrew me, a good presence,
I wonder h’as been from the Court so long?
Come nearer.

Hippolito  Brother, Lord Lussurioso the Duke son.

Lussurioso  Be more near to us, welcome, nearer yet. Snatches off
his hat and makes legs to him.

Vindice  How don you? god you god den.

Lussurioso  We thank thee?

How strangely such a course-homely salute,
Shows in the Palace, where we greet in fire:
Nimble and desperate tongues, should we name,
God in a salutation, 'twould ne’er be stood on ’t, — heaven!
Tell me, what has made thee so melancholy.

Vindice  Why, going to Law.

Lussurioso  Why will that make a man melancholy?

Vindice  Yes, to look long upon ink and black buckram — I
went me to law in Anno Quadragesimo secundo, and I waded
out of it, in Anno sextagesimo tertio.

Lussurioso  What, three and twenty years in law?

Vindice  I have known those that have been five and fifty and,
all about Pullen and Pigs.

Lussurioso  May it be possible such men should breathe,
To vex the Terms so much. Vindice ’Tis food to some my Lord.
There are old men at the present, that are so poisoned
with the affectation of law-words, (having had many suits canvased,) that their common talk is nothing but Barbary Latin:
they cannot so much as pray, but in law, that their sins may be removed, with a writ of Error, and their souls fetched up to heaven, with a sasarara.

Hippolito  It seems most strange to me,
Yet all the world meets round in the same bent:
Where the hearts set, there goes the tongue’s consent,
How dost apply thy studies fellow?

Vindice  Study? why to think how a great rich man lies a-dying,
and a poor Cobbler tolls the bell for him? how he cannot depart the world, and see the great chest-stand before him, when he lies speechless, how he will point you readily to all the boxes, and when he is past all memory, as the gossips guess, then thinks he of forfeitures and obligations, nay when to all men’s hearings he whurls and rattles in the throat he’s busy threat’ning his poor Tenants? and this would last me now some seven years’ thinking or thereabouts? but, I have a

Conceit a-coming in picture upon this, I draw it myself,
which i’ faith la I’ll present to your honor, you shall not choose but like it for your Lordship shall give me nothing for it,

Lussurioso  Nay you mistake me then,
For I am published bountiful enough,
Let’s taste of your conceit.

Vindice  In picture my Lord.  Lussurioso  Ay in picture,

Vindice  Marry this it is — A usuring Father to be boiling in hell, and his son and Heir with a Whore dancing over him.

Hippolito  H’as pared him to the quick.

Lussurioso  The conceit’s pretty i’ faith,
But take ’t upon my life ’twill ne’er be liked.

Vindice  No, why I’m sure the whore will be liked well enough.

Hippolito  Ay if she were out o’ th’ picture he’d like her then himself.

Vindice  And as for the son and heir, he shall be an eyesore to no young Revellers, for he shall be drawn in cloth-of-gold breeches.

Lussurioso  And thou hast put my meaning in the pockets.
And canst not draw that out, my thought was this,
To see the picture of a usuring father
Boiling in hell, our rich men would ne’er like it,

Vindice  O true I cry you heart’ly mercy I know the reason, for some of ’em had rather be damned indeed, than damned in colors.

Lussurioso  A parlous melancholy, h’as wit enough,
To murder any man, and I’ll give him means,
I think thou art ill-moneyed;

Vindice  Money, ho, ho,
’T has been my want so long, ’tis now my scoff.
I’ve e’en forgot what color silver’s of,

Lussurioso  It hits as I could wish,  Vindice  I get good clothes,
Of those that dread my humor, and for table-room,
I feed on those that cannot be rid of me,
Lussurioso  Somewhat to set thee up withal,
Vindice  O mine eyes, Lussurioso  How now man.

Vindice  Almost struck blind,
This bright unusual shine, to me seems proud,
I dare not look till the sun be in a cloud,
Lussurioso  I think I shall affect his melancholy,

How are they now.  Vindice  The better for your asking.
Lussurioso  You shall be better yet if you but fasten,
Truly on my intent, now y’ are both present
I will unbrace such a close private villain,
Unto your vengeful swords, the like ne’er heard of,
Who hath disgraced you much and injured us,
Hippolito  Disgraced us my Lord?
Lussurioso  Ay Hippolito.
I kept it here till now that both your angers,
Might meet him at once,
Vindice  I’m covetous,
To know the villain,
Lussurioso  You know him that slave Pandar,
Piato  whom we threatened last
With irons in perpetual prisonment;
Vindice  All this is I.  Hippolito  Is ’t he my Lord?
Lussurioso  I’ll tell you, you first preferred him to me.
Vindice  Did you brother.  Hippolito  I did indeed?
Lussurioso  And the ungrateful villain,
To quit that kindness, strongly wrought with me,
Being as you see a likely man for pleasure,
With jewels to corrupt your virgin sister.
Hippolito  Oh villain, Vindice  He shall surely die that did it.
Lussurioso  I far from thinking any Virgin harm.
Especially knowing her to be as chaste
As that part which scarce suffers to be touched,
Th’ eye would not endure him,
Vindice  Would you not my Lord,
’Twas wondrous honorably done,
Lussurioso  But with some five frowns kept him out,
Vindice  Out slave.
Lussurioso  What did me he but in revenge of that,
Went of his own free will to make infirm,
Your sister’s honor, whom I honor with my soul,
For chaste respect, and not prevailing there,
(As ’twas but desperate folly to attempt it,)
In mere spleen, by the way, waylays your mother,
Whose honor being a coward as it seems.
Yielded by little force.  

**Vindice**  Coward indeed.  

**Lussurioso**  He proud of their advantage, (as he thought)  

Brought me these news for happy, but I, heaven forgive me for ’t.  

**Vindice**  What did your honor.  

**Lussurioso**  In rage pushed him from me.  

Trampled beneath his throat, spurned him, and bruised:  

Indeed I was too cruel to say troth.  

**Hippolito**  Most Nobly managed.  

**Vindice**  Has not heaven an ear? Is all the lightning wasted?  

**Lussurioso**  If I now were so impatient in a modest cause,  

What should you be?  

**Vindice**  Full mad, he shall not live  

To see the Moon change.  

**Lussurioso**  He’s about the Palace,  

**Hippolito**  entice him this way, that thy brother  

May take full mark of him.  

**Hippolito**  Heart? — that shall not need my Lord,  

I can direct him so far.  

**Lussurioso**  Yet for my hate’s sake,  

Go, wind him this way? i’ll see him bleed myself.  

**Hippolito**  What now brother?  

**Vindice**  Nay e’en what you will — y’ are put to ’t brother?  

**Hippolito**  An impossible task, I’ll swear,  

To bring him hither, that’s already here.  

**Exit Hippolito**  

**Lussurioso**  Thy name, I have forgot it?  

**Vindice**  Vindice my Lord.  

**Lussurioso**  ’Tis a good name that.  

**Vindice**  Ay, a Revenger.  

**Lussurioso**  It does betoken courage, thou shouldst be valiant,  

And kill thine enemies.  

**Vindice**  That’s my hope my Lord.  

**Lussurioso**  This slave is one.  

**Vindice**  I’ll doom him.  

**Lussurioso**  Then i’ll praise thee?  

Do thou observe me best, and I’ll best raise thee.  

**Enter. Hippolito**  

**Vindice**  Indeed, I thank you.  

**Lussurioso**  Now Hippolito, where’s the slave Pandar?  

**Hippolito**  Your good Lordship,  

Would have a loathsome sight of him, much offensive?  

He’s not in case now to be seen my Lord,  

The worst of all the deadly sins is in him:  

That beggarly damnation, drunkenness.  

**Lussurioso**  Then he’s a double-slave.  

**Vindice**  ’Twas well conveyed, upon a sudden wit.  

**Lussurioso**  What, are you both,  

Firmly resolved, i’ll see him dead myself.  

**Vindice**  Or else, let not us live.  

**Lussurioso**  You may direct your brother to take note of him.  

**Hippolito**  I shall.  

**Lussurioso**  Rise but in this, and you shall never fall.  

**Vindice**  Your honor’s Vassals.
Lussurioso  This was wisely carried,
Deep policy in us, makes fools of such:
Then must a slave die, when he knows too much.  Exit Lussurioso

Vindice  O thou almighty patience, ’tis my wonder,
That such a fellow, impudent and wicked,
Should not be cloven as he stood:
Or with a secret wind burst open!
Is there no thunder left, or is ’t kept up
In stock for heavier vengeance, there it goes!

Hippolito  Brother we lose ourselves?
Vindice  But I have found it,
’Twill hold, ’tis sure, thanks, thanks to any spirit,
That mingled it ’mongst my inventions.

Hippolito  What is ’t?
Vindice  ’Tis sound, and good, thou shalt partake it,
I’m hired to kill myself.  Hippolito  True.

Vindice  Prithee mark it,
And the old Duke being dead, but not conveyed,
For he’s already missed too, and you know:
Murder will peep out of the closest husk.  Hippolito  Most true?

Vindice  What say you then to this device,
If we dressed up the body of the Duke.

Hippolito  In that disguise of yours.
Vindice  Y’ are quick, y’ have reached it.

Hippolito  I like it wondrously.
Vindice  And being in drink, as you have published him,
To lean him on his elbow, as if sleep had caught him:
Which claims most interest in such sluggy men.

Hippolito  Good yet, but here’s a doubt,

Methought by th’ Duke’s son to kill that pandar,
Shall when he is known be thought to kill the Duke.

Vindice  Neither, O thanks, it is substantial
For that disguise being on him, which I wore,
It will be thought I, which he calls the Pandar, did kill the Duke,
and fled away in his apparel, leaving him so disguised, to avoid
swift pursuit.  Hippolito  Firmer, and firmer.

Vindice  Nay doubt not ’tis in grain, I warrant it hold color.

Hippolito  Let’s about it.

Vindice  But by the way too, now I think on ’t, brother,
Let’s conjure that base devil out of our Mother.  Exeunt.

Enter the Duchess arm in arm with the Bastard: he seemeth lasciviously
to her, after them, Enter Supervacuo, running with a rapier,
his Brother stops him.

Spurio  Madam, unlock yourself, should it be seen,
Your arm would be suspected.

Duchess  Who is ’t that dares suspect, or this, or these?
May not we deal our favors where we please?

Spurio  I’m, confident, you may.  Exeunt.
Enter Vindice and Hippolito, bringing out their Mother one by one shoulder, and the other by the other, with daggers in their hands.

Ambitioso 'Sfoot brother hold.

Supervacuo Wouldst let the Bastard shame us?

Ambitioso Hold, hold, brother? there's fitter time than now.

Supervacuo Now when I see it. Ambitioso 'Tis too much seen already.

Supervacuo Seen and known,

The Nobler she's, the baser is she grown.

Ambitioso If she were bent lasciviously, the fault

Of mighty women, that sleep soft, — O death,

Must she needs choose such an unequal sinner:

To make all worse.

Supervacuo A Bastard, the Duke's Bastard, Shame heaped on shame.

Ambitioso O our disgrace.

Most women have small waist the world throughout,

But their desires are thousand miles about.

Supervacuo Come stay not here, let's after, and prevent,

Or else they'll sin faster than we'll repent.

Enter Vindice and Hippolito, bringing out their Mother one by one shoulder, and the other by the other, with daggers in their hands.

Vindice O thou? for whom no name is bad enough.

Mother What means my sons what will you murder me?

Vindice Wicked, unnatural Parents.

Hippolito Fiend of women.

Mother Oh! are sons turned monsters? help.

Vindice In vain.

Mother Are you so barbarous to set Iron nipples upon the breast that gave you suck.

Vindice That breast,

Is turned to Quarled poison.

Mother Cut not your days for 't, am not I your mother?

Vindice Thou dost usurp that title now by fraud

For in that shell of mother breeds a bawd.

Mother A bawd? O name far loathsome than hell.

Hippolito It should be so knew'st thou thy Office well.

Mother I hate it.

Vindice Ah is 't possible, Thou only, you powers on high,

That women should dissemble when they die.

Mother Dissemble.

Vindice Did not the Duke's son direct

A fellow, of the world's condition, hither,

That did corrupt all that was good in thee:

Made thee uncivilly forget thyself,

And work our sister to his lust.

Mother Who I,

That had been monstrous? I defy that man:

For any such intent, none lives so pure,

But shall be soiled with slander, — good son believe it not.

Vindice Oh I'm in doubt,

Exeunt.
Whether I’m myself, or no,
Stay, let me look again upon this face.
Who shall be saved when mothers have no grace.
  Hippolito ’Twould make one half despair.
  Vindice I was the man,
Defy me, now? let’s see, do ’t modestly.
  Mother O hell unto my soul.
  Vindice In that disguise, I sent from the Duke’s son,
Tried you, and found you base metal,

As any villain might have done.
  Mother O no, no tongue but yours could have bewitched me so.
  Vindice O nimble in damnation, quick in tune,
There is no devil could strike fire so soon:
I am confuted in a word.
  Mother Oh sons, forgive me, to myself i’ll prove more true,
You that should honor me, I kneel to you.
  Vindice A mother to give aim to her own daughter.
  Hippolito True brother, how far beyond nature ’tis,
Though many Mothers do ’t.
  Vindice Nay and you draw tears once, go you to bed,
Wet will make iron blush and change to red:
Brother it rains, ’twill spoil your dagger, house it.
  Hippolito ’Tis done.
  Vindice I’ faith ’tis a sweet shower, it does much good,
The fruitful grounds, and meadows of her soul,
Has been long dry: pour down thou blessed dew,
Rise Mother, troth this shower has made you higher.
  Mother O you heavens? take this infectious spot out of my soul,
I’ll rinse it in seven waters of mine eyes?
Make my tears salt enough to taste of grace,
To weep, is to our sex: naturally given:
But to weep truly that’s a gift from heaven?
  Vindice Nay I’ll kiss you now: kiss her brother?
Let’s marry her to our souls, wherein’s no lust,
And honorably love her.  Hippolito Let it be.
  Vindice For honest women are so seld and rare,
’Tis good to cherish those poor few that are.
Oh you of easy wax, do but imagine
Now the disease has left you, how leprously
That Office would have clinged unto your forehead,
All mothers that had any graceful hue,
Would have worn masks to hide their face at you:
It would have grown to this, at your foul name;
Green-colored maids would have turned red with shame?
  Hippolito And then our sister full of hire, and baseness.
  Vindice There had been boiling led again,
The duke’s sons great Concubine:
A drab of State, a cloth-o’-silver slut,
To have her train borne up, and her soul trail i’ th’ dirt; great.

_Hippolito_ To be miserably great, rich to be eternally wretched.

_Vindice_ O common madness:

Ask but the thriving’st harlot in cold blood,
She’d give the world to make her honor good,
Perhaps you’ll say but only to th’ Duke’s son,
In private; why, she first begins with one,
Who afterward to thousand proves a whore:

„Break Ice in one place, it will crack in more.

_Mother._ Most certainly applied?

_Hippolito_ Oh Brother, you forget our business.

_Vindice_ And well remembered, joy’s a subtle elf,
I think man’s happiest, when he forgets himself:
Farewell once dried, now holy-watered Mead,
Our hearts wear Feathers, that before wore Lead.

_Mother._ I’ll give you this, that one I never knew
Plead better, for, and ’gainst the Devil, than you.

_Vindice_ You make me proud on ’t.

_Hippolito_ Commend us in all virtue to our Sister.

_Vindice_ Ay for the love of heaven, to that true maid.

_Mother._ With my best words.

_Vindice_ Why that was motherly said.

_Mother._ I wonder now what fury did transport me?

I feel good thoughts begin to settle in me.
Oh with what forehead can I look on her?
Whose honor I’ve so impiously beset,
And here she comes,

_Castiza_ Now mother, you have wrought with me so strongly,
That what for my advancement, as to calm
The trouble of your tongue: I am content.

_Mother._ Content, to what?

_Castiza_ To do as you have wished me,
To prostitute my breast to the Duke’s son:
And put myself to common Usury.

_Mother._ I hope you will not so.

_Castiza_ Hope you I will not?

That’s not the hope you look to be saved in.

_Mother._ Truth but it is.

_Castiza_ Do not deceive yourself,
I am, as you e’en out of Marble wrought,
What would you now, are ye not pleased yet with me,
You shall not wish me to be more lascivious
Than I intend to be. _Mother._ Strike not me cold,

_Castiza_ How often have you charged me on your blessing
To be a cursed woman — when you knew,
Exeunt.

Enter Vindice and Hippolito.

Vindice So, so, he leans well, take heed you wake him not brother

Hippolito I warrant you my life for yours.

Vindice That's a good lay, for I must kill myself?

Brother that's I: that sits for me: do you mark it,
And I must stand ready here to make away myself yonder — I

Your blessing had no force to make me lewd,
You laid your curse upon me, that did more,
The mother’s curse is heavy, where that fights,
Suns set in storm, and daughters lose their lights?

Mother Good child, dear maid, if there be any spark

Of heavenly intellectual fire within thee, oh let my breath,
Revive it to a flame:
Put not all out, with woman’s willful follies,
I am recovered of that foul disease
That haunts too many mothers, kind forgive me,
Make me not sick in health? — if then
My words prevailed when they were wickedness,
How much more now when they are just and good?

Castiza I wonder what you mean, are not you she
For whose infect persuasions I could scarce
Kneel out my prayers, and had much ado
In three hours’ reading, to untwist so much
Of the black serpent, as you wound about me.

Mother 'Tis unfruitful, held tedious to repeat what’s past,
I’m now your present Mother. Castiza Push, now ’tis too late,

Mother Bethink again, thou know’st not what thou sayst.

Castiza No, deny advancement, treasure, the Duke’s son.

Mother O see, I spoke those words, and now they poison me:

What will the deed do then?
Advancement, true: as high as shame can pitch,
For Treasure; whoe’er knew a harlot rich?
Or could build by the purchase of her sin,
An hospital to keep their bastards in: The Duke’s son,
Oh when women are young Courtiers, they are sure to be old beggars,
To know the miseries most harlots taste,
Thou ’dost wish thyself unborn, when thou art unchaste.

Castiza O mother let me twine about your neck,

And kiss you till my soul melt on your lips,
I did but this to try you. Mother O speak truth.

Castiza Indeed I did not, for no tongue has force to alter me from honest
If maidens would, men’s words could have no power,
A virgin honor is a crystal Tower.
Which being weak is guarded with good spirits,
Until she basely yields no ill inherits.

Mother O happy child! faith and thy birth hath saved me,
’Mongst thousand daughters happiest of all others,

Buy thou a glass for maids, and I for mothers.

Exeunt.
must sit to be killed, and stand to kill myself, I could vary it
not so little as thrice over again, ’t has some eight returns like
Michaelmas Term. Hippolito That’s enow a conscience.

Vindice But sirrah does the Duke’s son come single?
Hippolito No, there’s the hell on ’t, his faith’s too feeble to go alone?
he brings flesh-flies after him, that will buzz against supper
time, and hum for his coming out.

Vindice Ah the fly-flop of vengeance beat ’em to pieces? here
was the sweetest occasion, the fittest hour, to have made my
revenge familiar with him, show him the body of the Duke his
father, and how quaintly he died like a Politician in hugger-mugger,
made no man acquainted with it, and in Catastrophe
slain him over his father’s breast, and oh I’m mad to lose such a
sweet opportunity.

Hippolito Nay push, prithee be content! there’s no remedy present,
may not hereafter times open in as fair faces as this.
Vindice They may if they can paint so well?
Hippolito Come, now to avoid all suspicion, let’s forsake this room,
and be going to meet the Duke’s son.

Vindice Content, I’m for any weather? heart step close, here he comes?
Enter Lussario.

Hippolito My honored Lord? Lussurioso Oh me; you both present.
Vindice E’en newly my Lord, just as your Lordship entered now? about
this place we had notice given he should be, but in some
loathsomely plight or other.

Hippolito Came your honor private?
Lussurioso Private enough for this: only a few
Attend my coming out. Hippolito Death rot those few.

Lussurioso Stay yonder’s the slave.
Vindice Mass there’s the slave indeed my Lord;
’Tis a good child, he calls his Father slave.

Lussurioso Ay, that’s the villain, the damned villain: softly,
Tread easy.

Vindice Puh, I warrant you my Lord, we’ll stifle in our breaths.
Lussurioso That will do well:
Base rogue, thou sleepest thy last, ’tis policy,
To have him killed in ’s sleep, for if he waked
He would betray all to them.

Vindice But my Lord. Lussurioso Ha, what sayst?
Vindice Shall we kill him now he’s drunk? Lussurioso Ay best of all.
Vindice Why then will he ne’er live to be sober?
Lussurioso No matter, let him reel to hell.
Vindice But being so full of liquor, I fear he will put out all the fire,
Lussurioso Thou art a mad breast.
Vindice And leave none to warm your Lordship’s Golls withal;
For he that dies drunk, falls into hell fire like a Bucket o’ water,
quish quish.

Lussurioso Come be ready, nake your swords, think of your wrongs
This slave has injured you.

*Vindice*  Troth so he has, and he has paid well for ’t.

*Lussurioso*  Meet with him now.

*Vindice*  You’ll bear us out my Lord?

*Lussurioso*  Puh, am I a Lord for nothing think you, quickly, now.

*Vindice*  Sa, sa, sa: thump, there he lies.

*Lussurioso*  Nimbly done, ha? oh, villains, murderers,

’Tis the old Duke my father.  *Vindice*  That’s a jest.

*Lussurioso*  What stiff and cold already?

O pardon me to call you from your names:

’Tis none of your deed, — that villain *Piato*

Whom you thought now to kill, has murdered him,
And left him thus disguised.  *Hippolito*  And not unlikely.

*Vindice*  O rascal was he not ashamed,
To put the Duke into a greasy doublet.

*Lussurioso*  He has been cold and stiff who knows, how long?

*Vindice*  Marry that do I.

*Lussurioso*  No words I pray, of any thing intended:

*Vindice*  Oh my Lord.

*Hippolito*  I would faine have your Lordship think that we have
small reason to prate.

*Lussurioso*  Faith thou sayst true?  i’ll forthwith send to Court,

For all the Nobles, Bastard, Duchess, all?

How here by miracle we found him dead,
And in his raiment that foul villain fled.

*Vindice*  That will be the best way my Lord, to clear us all: let’s

cast about to be clear.

*Lussurioso*  Ho, Nencio, Sordido, and the rest.  Enter all.


*Lussurioso*  Be witnesses of a strange spectacle:

Choosing for private conference that sad room

We found the Duke my father ’gealed in blood.

1. Attendant  My Lord the Duke — run hie thee Nencio,

Startle the Court by signifying so much.

*Vindice*  Thus much by wit a deep Revenger can:

When murders known, to be the clearest man

We’re fardest off, and with as bold an eye,

Survey his body as the standers by.

*Lussurioso*  My royal father, too basely let blood,

By a malevolent slave.

*Hippolito*  Hark? he calls thee slave again.  *Vindice*  H’as lost, he may.

*Lussurioso*  Oh sight, look hither, see, his lips are gnawn with poison.

*Vindice*  How — his lips by th’ mass they be.

*Lussurioso*  O villain — O rogue — O slave — O rascal:

*Hippolito*  O good deceit, he quits him with like terms.


*Ambitious*  Over what roof hangs this prodigious Comet,

In deadly fire.
Lussurioso  Behold, behold my Lords the Duke my father’s murdered by a vassal, that owes this habit, and here left disguised.

Duchess  My Lord and husband.  2. Noble  Reverend Majesty.

1. Noble  I have seen these clothes, often attending on him.

Vindice  That Nobleman, has been i’ th’ Country, for he does not lie?

Supervacuo  Learn of our mother let’s dissemble too, I am glad he’s vanished; so I hope are you?

Ambitioso  Ay you may take my word for ’t.

Spurio  Old Dad, dead?

Ay, one of his cast sins will send the Fates Most hearty commendations by his own son, I’ll tug in the new stream, till strength be done.

Lussurioso  Where be those two, that did affirm to us? My Lord the Duke was privately rid forth?

1. Noble  O pardon us my Lords, he gave that charge

Upon our lives if he were missed at Court, To answer so; he rode not anywhere,

We left him private with that fellow here? Vindice  Confirmed.

Lussurioso  O heavens, that false charge was his death, Impudent Beggars, durst you to our face, Maintain such a false answer? bear him straight to execution.

1. Noble  My Lord? Lussurioso  Urge me no more.

In this the excuse, may be called half the murder?

Vindice  You’ve sentenced well.

Lussurioso  Away see it be done.

Vindice  Could you not stick: see what confession doth?

Who would not lie when men are hanged for truth?

Hippolito  Brother how happy is our vengeance.

Vindice  Why it hits, past the apprehension of indifferent wits.

Lussurioso,  My Lord let post-horse be sent, Into all places to entrap the villain,

Vindice  Post-horse ha ha.

Noble  My Lord, we’re something bold to know our duty?

Your father’s accidentally departed, The titles that were due to him, meet you.

Lussurioso  Meet me? I’m not at leisure my good Lord, I’ve many griefs to dispatch out o’ th’ way:

Welcome sweet titles, — talk to me my Lords, Of sepulchers, and mighty Emperor’s bones, That’s thought for me.

Vindice  So, one may see by this, How foreign markets go:

Courtiers have feet o’ th’ nines, and tongues o’ th’ twelves,

They flatter Dukes and Dukes flatter themselves.

Noble  My Lord it is your shine must comfort us.
**Lussurioso**  Alas I shine in tears like the Sun in April.
**Noble**  You're now my Lord's grace?
**Lussurioso**  My Lord's grace? I perceive you'll have it so.
**Noble**  'Tis but your own.
**Lussurioso**  Then heavens give me grace to be so?
**Vindice**  He prays well for himself.
**Noble**  Madam all sorrows,
Must run their circles into joys, no doubt but time,
Will make the murderer bring forth himself.
**Vindice**  He were an Ass then i' faith?
**Noble**  Madam all sorrows,
Must run their circles into joys, no doubt but time,
Will make the murderer bring forth himself.
**Vindice**  He prays well for himself.
**Noble**  'Tis but your own.
**Lussurioso**  Then heavens give me grace to be so?
**Vindice**  He prays well for himself.
**Noble**  Madam all sorrows,
Must run their circles into joys, no doubt but time,
Will make the murderer bring forth himself.
**Vindice**  He were an Ass then i' faith?
**Noble**  In the mean season,
Let us bethink the latest funeral honors:
Due to the Duke's cold body, — and withal,
Calling to memory our new happiness,
Spread in his royal son, — Lords Gentlemen,
Prepare for Revels.  **Vindice**  Revels.
**Noble**  Time hath several falls,
Griefs lift up joys, feasts put down funerals.
**Lussurioso**  Come then my Lords, my favors to you all,
The Duchess is suspected, foully bent,
I'll begin Dukedom with her banishment?  **Exeunt Duke**

**Hippolito**  Revels.  **Nobles and Duchess.**

**Vindice**  Ay, that's the word, we are firm yet,
Strike one strain more, and then we crown our wit.  **Exeunt Brothers**

**Spurio**  Well, have the fairest mark, — (so said the Duke when he begot me,) And if I miss his heart or near about,
Then have at any, a Bastard scorns to be out.

**Supervacuo**  Not'st thou that Spurio brother.

**Ambitioso**  Yes I note him to our shame.

**Supervacuo**  He shall not live, his hair shall not grow much longer?
in this time of Revels tricks may be set afoot, seest thou yon new Moon, it shall outlive the new Duke by much, this hand shall dispossess him, then we're mighty.
A masque is treason's license, that build upon?
'Tis murder’s best face when a wizard’s on.  **Exit Supervacuo**

**Ambitioso**  Is 't so, 'tis very good,
And do you think to be Duke then, kind brother:
I'll see fair play, drop one, and there lies t' other.  **Exit Ambitioso**

**Enter Vindice and Hippolito, with Piero and other Lords.**

**Vindice**  My Lords; be all of Music, strike old griefs into other countries
That flow in too much milk, and have faint livers,
Not daring to stab home their discontents:
Let our hid flames break out, as fire, as lightning,
To blast this villainous Dukedom: vexed with sin;
Wind up your souls to their full height again.

**Piero.**  How?  1. **Noble**  Which way?

3. **Noble**  Any way: our wrongs are such,
We cannot justly be revenged too much.

_ Vindice_ You shall have all enough: — Revels are toward,
And those few Nobles that have long suppressed you,
Are busied to the furnishing of a Mask:
And do affect to make a pleasant tale on ’t,
The Masking suits are fashioning, now comes in
That which must glad us all — we to take pattern
Of all those suits, the color, trimming, fashion,
E’en to an undistinguished hair almost:
Then ent’ring first, observing the true form,
Within a strain or two we shall find leisure,
To steal our swords out handsomely,
And when they think their pleasure sweet and good,
In midst of all their joys, they shall sigh blood.

_Piero_ Weightily, effectually, _3. Noble_ before the ’t other Maskers come.
_Vindice_ We’re gone, all done and past.
_Piero_ But how for the Duke’s guard? _Vindice_ Let that alone,
By one and one their strengths shall be drunk down,
_Hippolito_ There are five hundred Gentlemen in the action,
That will apply themselves, and not stand idle.
_Piero_ Oh let us hug your bosoms. _Vindice_ Come my Lords,
Prepare for deeds, let other times have words.

_Exeunt._

_In a dumb show, the possessing of the young Duke.
with all his Nobles: Then sounding Music.
A furnished Table is brought forth: then enters the Duke
and his Nobles to the banquet. A blazing-star appeareth._

_Noble._ Many harmonious hours, and choicest pleasures,
Fill up the royal numbers of your years.

_Lussurioso_ My Lords we’re pleased to thank you? — though we know,
’Tis but your duty now to wish it so.

_Noble_ That shine makes us all happy.

_3. Noble_ His Grace frowns?

_2. Noble_ Yet we must say he smiles. _1. Noble_ I think we must.

_Lussurioso_ That foul Incontinent Duchess we have banished,
The Bastard shall not live: after these Revels
I’ll begin strange ones; he and the stepsons,
Shall pay their lives for the first subsidies,
We must not frown so soon, else ’t ’ad been now?

_1. Noble_ My gracious Lord please you prepare for pleasure,
The masque is not far off.

_Lussurioso_ We are for pleasure,
Beshrew thee, what art thou? mad’st me start?
Thou hast committed treason, — A blazing star.

_1, Noble_ A blazing star, O where my Lord. _Lussurioso_ Spy out.

_2. Noble_ See, see, my Lords, a wondrous dreadful one.

_Lussurioso_ I am not pleased at that ill-knotted fire,
That bushing flaring star, — am not I Duke?
It should not quake me now: had it appeared,
Before it, I might then have justly feared,
But yet they say, whom art and learning Weds:
When stars were locks, they threaten great men’s heads,
Is it so? you are read my Lords.

1. Noble  May it please your Grace,
It shows great anger.

Lussurioso  That does not please our Grace.

2. Noble  Yet here’s the comfort my Lord, many times
When it seems most it threatens farthest off.

Lussurioso  Faith and I think so too.

1. Noble  Beside my Lord,
You’re gracefully established with the loves
Of all your subjects: and for natural death,
I hope it will be threescore years a-coming.

Lussurioso  True, no more but threescore years.

1. Noble  Fourscore I hope my Lord:  2, Noble  And five-score, I,

3, Noble  But ’tis my hope my Lord, you shall ne’er die.

Lussurioso  Give me thy hand, these others I rebuke,
He that hopes so, is fittest for a Duke:
Thou shalt sit next me, take your places Lords,
We’re ready now for sports, let ’em set on.
You thing? we shall forget you quite anon!


Enter the Masque of
Lussurioso  Ah ’tis well, Revengers the two Brothers, and
Brothers, and Bastard, you dance next in hell?  two Lords more.

The Revengers dance?

At the end, steal out their swords, and these four kill the four at
the Table, in their Chairs. It thunders.

Vindice  Mark, Thunder?
Dost know thy cue, thou big-voiced crier?
Duke’s groans, are thunder’s watchwords,

Hippolito  So my Lords, You have enough.

Vindice  Come let’s away, no ling’ring.  Exeunt.

Hippolito  Follow, go?

Vindice  No power is angry when the lustful die,
When thunder claps, heaven likes the tragedy.  Exit Vindice

Lussurioso  Oh, oh.

Enter the other Masque of intended murderers? Stepsons; Bastard;
and a fourth man, coming in dancing, the Duke recovers a
little in voice, and groans, — calls a guard, treason.

At which they all start out of their measure, and turning towards
the Table, they find them all to be murdered.

Spurio  Whose groan was that? Lussurioso  Treason, a guard.
Ambitioso  How now? all murdered! Supervacuo  Murdered!

4. Noble  And those his Nobles?
Ambitioso  Here’s a labor saved,
I thought to have sped him, ’Sblood how came this.

Spurio  Then I proclaim myself, now I am Duke.
Enter the first men.

*Ambitioso* Thou Duke, brother thou liest.

*Spurio* Slave so dost thou?

*4. Noble* Base villain hast thou slain my Lord and Master.

Enter the first men.

*Vindice* Pistols, treason, murder, help, guard my Lord the Duke.

*Hippolito* Lay hold upon this Traitors? *Lussurioso* Oh.

*Vindice* Alas, the Duke is murdered. *Hippolito* And the Nobles.

*Vindice* Surgeons, Surgeons, — heart does he breathe so long.

*Antonio* A piteous tragedy, able to **make**.

An old man’s eyes bloodshot; *Lussurioso* Oh.

*Vindice* Look to my Lord the Duke—a vengeance throttle him.

Confess thou murderous and unhollowed man,

Didst thou kill all these?

*4. Noble* None but the Bastard I,

*Vindice* How came the Duke slain then;

*4. Noble* We found him so, *Lussurioso* O villain,

*Vindice* Hark. *Lussurioso* Those in the masque did murder us,

*Vindice* Law you now sir.

O marble impudence! will you confess now?

*4. Noble* ’Slud ’tis all false,

*Antonio* Away with that foul monster,

Dipped in a Prince’s blood.

*4. Noble* Heart ’tis a lie,

*Antonio* Let him have bitter execution,

*Vindice* New marrow no I cannot be expressed,

How fares my Lord the Duke.

*Lussurioso* Farewell to all,

He that climbs highest has the greatest fall,

My tongue is out of office.

*Vindice* Air Gentlemen, air,

Now thou ’lt not prate on ’t, ’twas Vindice murdered thee,

*Lussurioso* Oh. *Vindice* Murdered thy Father.

*Lussurioso* Oh.

*Vindice* And I am he tell — tell nobody, so so, the Duke’s departed,

*Antonio* It was a deadly hand that wounded him,

The rest, ambitious who should rule and sway,

After his death were so made all away,

*Vindice* My Lord was unlikely, *Hippolito* Now the hope,

Of Italy lies in your reverend years?

*Vindice* Your hair, will make the silver age again,

When there was fewer but more honest men,

*Antonio* The burden’s weighty and will press age down,

May I so rule that heaven **may** keep the crown,

*Vindice* The rape of your good Lady has been quited,

With death on death. *Antonio* Just is the Law above
But of all things it puts me most to wonder
How the old Duke came murdered  

Antonio  It was the strangeliest carried, I not heard of the like,
Hippolito  ’Twas all done for the best my Lord,
Vindice  All for your grace’s good? we may be bold to speak it now,
’Twas somewhat witty carried though we say it.
’Twas we two murdered him,  Antonio  You two?
Vindice  None else i’ faith my Lord nay ’twas well managed,
Antonio  Lay hands upon those villains.  Vindice  How? on us?
Antonio  Bear ’em to speedy execution,
Vindice  Heart was’t not for your good my Lord?
Antonio  My good away with ’em such an old man as he,
You that would murder him would murder me,
Vindice  Is ’t come about;  Hippolito  ’Sfoot brother you begun,
Vindice  May not we set as well as the Duke’s son,
Thou hast no conscience, are we not revenged?
Is there one enemy left alive amongst those?
’Tis time to die, when we are ourselves our foes.
When murders shut deeds close, this curse does seal ’em,
If none disclose ’em they themselves reveal ’em!
This murder might have slept in tongueless brass,
But for ourselves, and the world died an ass;
Now I remember too, here was Piato.
Brought forth a knavish sentence once, no doubt (said he) but time
Will make the murderer bring forth himself?
’Tis well he died, he was a witch,
And now my Lord, since we are in for ever:
This work was ours which else might have been slipped,
And if we list we could have Nobles clipped,
And go for less than beggars, but we hate
To bleed so cowardly we have enough,
I’ faith, we’re well, our Mother turned, our Sister true,
We die after a nest of Dukes, adieu,
Antonio  How subtly was that murder closed, bear up,
Those tragic bodies, ’tis a heavy season:
Pray heaven their blood may wash away all treason.

FINIS.
Textual Notes

1. 3 (2-b): The regularized reading *Vindice* is amended from the original *Vendici*.
2. 55 (3-a): The regularized reading *her* comes from the original *her*, though possible variants include *his*.
3. 120 (4-a): The regularized reading *Court* is amended from the original *Cour*.
4. 226 (5-a): The regularized reading *methinks* is amended from the original *my thinks*.
5. 384 (7-b): The regularized reading *Mistresses* is amended from the original *Mistesses*.
6. 651 (11-a): The regularized reading *Should* is amended from the original *Sould*.
7. 1146 (17-b): The regularized reading *Grace* is amended from the original *Gtace*.
8. 1169 (17-b): The regularized reading *will* is amended from the original *wlll*.
9. 1598 (23-b): The regularized reading *Slobbering* is amended from the original *Flobbering*.
10. 1673 (24-b): The regularized reading *Supervacuo* is amended from the original *Spu*.
11. 1686 (24-b): The regularized reading *our* is amended from the original *out*.
12. 1785 (26-a): The regularized reading *desperate* is amended from the original *desperare*.
13. 1800 (26-a): The regularized reading *come* is amended from the original *comes*.
14. 1952 (28-a): The letters *ets* in this word are printed beneath the line, due to slipped type. EMED reinstates the letters to the correct position.
15. 1956 (28-a): The regularized reading *know* is amended from the original *hnow*.
16. 1995 (28-b): The regularized reading *surely* is amended from the original *furely*.
17. 2107 (30-a): The regularized reading *Wouldst* is amended from the original *Woult*.
18. 2318 (32-b): The regularized reading *loathsome* is supplied for the original [*◇*].
19. 2318 (32-b): The regularized reading *plight* is supplied for the original [*◇*].
20. 2318 (32-b): The regularized reading *or* is supplied for the original [*◇*].
21. 2318 (32-b): The regularized reading *other* is supplied for the original [*◇*].
22. 2318 (32-b): The regularized reading *. is supplied for the original [**].
23. 2337 (33-a): The regularized reading *breast* comes from the original *brest*, though possible variants include *beast*.
24. 2464 (34-b): The regularized reading *Ambitioso* is amended from the original *And..*
25. 2549 (36-a): The regularized reading *fittest* is amended from the original *sittest*.
26. 2587 (36-b): The regularized reading *make* is amended from the original *wake*.
27. 2621 (36-b): The regularized reading *may* is amended from the original *nay*.
28. 2633 (37-a): The regularized reading *to* is amended from the original *two*.
29. 2657 (37-a): The regularized reading *closed* is amended from the original *elosde*. 