

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Thomas Middleton

Table of Contents

<u>The Second Maiden's Tragedy</u>	1
<u>Thomas Middleton</u>	2
<u>I.[i. The court]</u>	3
<u>II.[i. Govianus' house]</u>	23
<u>III.[i. Govianus' house]</u>	40
<u>IV.[i. Anselmus' house]</u>	51
<u>V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]</u>	69

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Thomas Middleton

[Dramatis Personae in order of appearance:

The TYRANT, the usurping king

GOVIANUS, the deposed king

MEMPHONIUS }

SOPHONIRUS } nobles

HELVETIUS }

FIRST and SECOND NOBLES

The LADY, daughter to Helvetius, afterwards her spirit

VOTARIUS, friend to Anselmus

ANSELMUS, brother to Govianus

The WIFE to Anselmus

LEONELLA, her waiting-woman

BELLARIUS, lover to Leonella

A GUARD

SERVANT to Govianus

FIRST and SECOND FELLOWS

FOUR SOLDIERS

PAGE to Govianus

TWO SERVANTS to Anselmus

Nobles, Fellows, Attendants to the Tyrant]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

I.[i. The court]

Enter the new usurping Tyrant; the Nobles of his faction, Memphonius, Sophonirus, Helvetius, with others; the right heir Govianus, deposed. A sennet.

TYRANT

Thus high, my lords, your powers and constant loves
Hath fixed our glories like unmoved stars
That know not what it is to fall or err.
We're now the kingdom's love, and he that was
Flattered awhile so stands before us now
Readier for doom than dignity.

GOVIANUS

So much
Can the adulterate friendship of mankind,
False fortune's sister, bring to pass on kings,
And lay usurpers sunning in their glories
Like adders in warm beams.

TYRANT

There was but one
In whom my heart took pleasure (amongst women),
One in the whole creation, and in her
You dared to be my rival. Was't not bold?
Now we are king, she'll leave the lower path
And find the way to us. Helvetius,
It is thy daughter. Happier than a king
And far above him, for she kneels to thee
Whom we have kneeled to, richer in one smile
That came from her than she in all thy blessings!
If thou be'st proud, thou art to be forgiven;
It is no deadly sin in thee. While she lives,
High lust is not more natural to youth
Than that to thee: be not afraid to die in't;
'Tis but the sin of joy. There is no gladness
But has a pride it lives by—that's the oil
That feeds it into flames. Let her be sent for,
And honourably attended, as beseems
Her that we make our queen. My [lords] Memphonius
And Sophonirus, take into your care
The royal business of my heart. Conduct her
With a respect equal with that to us.
If more, it shall be pardon'd; so still err.
You honour us, but ourself honours her.

MEMPHONIUS

[Aside] Strange fortune! Does he make his queen of her?

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Exit Memphonius.

SOPHONIRUS

[Aside] I have a wife; would she were so preferred!
I could be but her subject; so I'm now.
I allow her her one friend to stop her mouth
And keep her quiet; give him his table free,
And the huge feeding of his great stone-horse
With which he rides in pomp about the city
Only to speak to gallants in bay-windows.
Marry, his lodging he pays dearly for:
He gets me all my children; there I save by't.
Beside, I draw my life out by the bargain
Some twelve years longer than the times appointed,
When my young prodigal gallant kicks up's heels
At one and thirty, and lies dead and rotten
Some five and forty years before I'm coffined.
'Tis the right way to keep a woman honest;
One friend is barricado to a hundred
And keeps 'em out. Nay, more, a husband's sure
To have his children all of one man's getting,
And he that performs best can have no better.
I'm e'en as happy then that save a labour.

Exit Sophonirus.

TYRANT

Thy honours with thy daughter's love shall rise;
I shall read thy deservings in her eyes.

HELVETIUS

Oh, may they be eternal books of pleasure,
To show you all delight!

GOVIANUS

The loss of her sits closer to my heart
Than that of kingdom or the whorish pomp
Of this world's titles that with flattery swells us
And makes us die like beasts fat for destruction.
Oh, she's a woman, and her eye will stand
Upon advancement, never weary yonder;
But when she turns her head by chance and sees
The fortunes that are my companions,
She'll snatch her eyes off, and repent the looking.

TYRANT

'Tis well advised. We doom thee, Govianus,
To banishment forever from our kingdom.

GOVIANUS

What could be worse to one whose heart is locked

I.[i. The court]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Up in another's bosom? Banishment!
And why not death? Is that too easy for me?

TYRANT

But that the world would call our way to dignity
A path of blood,
It should be the first act in all our reign.

GOVIANUS

She's lost forever. [To Nobles] Farewell, virtuous men,
Too honest for your greatness! Now y'are mightier
Than when we knew the kingdom, your styles heavier.
Then, ponderous nobility, farewell.

[FIRST] NOBLE

How's that, sir?

GOVIANUS

Weighty and serious. Oh, sir, is it you?
I knew you one and twenty and a lord
When your discretion sucked. Is't come from nurse yet?
You scorn to be a scholar; you were born better.
You have good lands; that's the best grounds of learning.
If you can conster but your doctor's bill,
Pierce your wife's waiting-women, and decline your tenants
Till they're all beggars, with new fines and rackings,
Y'are scholar good enough for a lady's son
That's born to living. If you list to read,
Ride but to th' city and bestow your looks
On the court library, the mercers' books;
They'll quickly furnish you. Do but entertain
A tailor for your tutor, to expound
All the hard stuff to you, by what name and title
Soever they be called.

[FIRST] NOBLE

I thank you, sir.

GOVIANUS

'Tis happy you have learned so much manners,
Since you have so little wit. Fare you well, sir.

TYRANT

Let him be stayed awhile.

[SECOND] NOBLE

Stay!

[FIRST] NOBLE

You must stay, sir.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

GOVIANUS

He's not so honest, sure, to change his mind,
Revoke his doom. Hell has more hope on him.

TYRANT

We have not ended yet; the worst part's coming.
Thy banishment were gentle were that all.
But, t'afflict thy soul, before thou goest
Thou shalt behold the heav'n that thou must lose,
In her that must be mine.
Then to be banished, then to be deprived,
Shows the full torment we provide for thee.

GOVIANUS

Here's a right tyrant now; he will not bate me
Th' affliction of my soul; he will have all parts
Suffer together.

Enter [Memphonius and Sophonirus] with the Lady clad in black.

Now I see my loss;
I never shall recover't. My mind's beggared.

TYRANT

Black! Whence risse that cloud? Can such a thing be seen
In honour's glorious day, the sky so clear?
Why mourns the kingdom's mistress? Does she come
To meet advancement in a funeral garment?
Back! She forgot herself. 'Twas too much joy
That bred this error, and we heartily pardon't.
Go, bring me her hither like an illustrious bride
With her best beams about her: let her jewels
Be worth ten cities; that beseems our mistress,
And not a widow's case, a suit to weep in.

LADY

I am not to be altered.

TYRANT

How!

LADY

I have a mind
That must be shifted ere I cast off these,
Or I shall wear strange colours. 'Tis not titles
Nor all the bastard honours of this frame
That I am taken with. I come not hither
To please the eye of glory, but of goodness,
And that concerns not you, sir; you're for greatness.
I dare not deal with you. I have found my match,
And I will never loose him.

l.[i. The court]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

GOVIANUS

If there be man
Above a king in fortunes, read my story
And you shall find him there. Farewell, poor kingdom.
[To Tyrant] Take it to help thee; thou hast need on't now.
I see thee in distress, more miserable
Than some thou lay'st taxations on, poor subjects.
Thou art all beset with storms, more overcast
Than ever any man that brightness flattered.
'Tis only wretchedness to be there with thee,
And happiness to be here.

TYRANT

Sure some dream crowned me.
If it were possible to be less than nothing,
I wake the man you seek for. There's the kingdom
Within yon valley fixed, while I stand here
Kissing false hopes upon a frozen mountain,
Without the confines. I am he that's banished;
The king walks yonder, chose by her affection,
Which is the surer side, for where she goes
Her eye removes the court. What is he here
Can spare a look? They're all employed on her.
HELVETIUS! Thou art not worth the waking neither.
I lose but time in thee. Go sleep again.
Like an old man, thou canst do nothing;
Thou tak'st no pain at all to earn thine honours.
Which way shall we be able to pay thee
To thy content, when we receive not ours?
The master of the work must needs decay
When he wants means and sees his servant play.

HELVETIUS

[To Lady] Have I bestowed so many blessings on thee
And do they all return to me in a curse?
Is that the use I ha' for 'em? Be not to me
A burden ten times heavier than my years.
Thou'dst wont to be kind to me and observe
What I thought pleasing. Go, entreat the king.

LADY

I will do more for you, sir; y'are my father.
I'll kiss him too.

[Kisses Govianus.]

HELVETIUS

How am I dealt withal!

LADY

I.[i. The court]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Why, that's the usurper, sir; this is the king.
I happened righter than you thought I had.
And were all kingdoms of the earth his own
As sure as this is not, and this dear gentleman
As poor as virtue and almost as friendless,
I would not change this misery for that sceptre,
Wherein I had part with him. Sir, be cheerful.
'Tis not the reeling fortune of great state
Or low condition that I cast mine eye at;
It is the man I seek, the rest I loose
As things unworthy to be kept or noted.
Fortunes are but the outsides of true worth;
It is the mind that sets his master forth.

TYRANT

Has there so many bodies been hewn down,
Like trees in progress, to cut out a way
That was ne'er known, for us and our affections,
And is our game so crossed? There stands the first
Of all her kind that ever refused greatness.
A woman to set light by sovereignty!
What age bring her forth and hide that book?
'Tis their desire most commonly to rule
More than their part comes to: sometimes their husbands.

HELVETIUS

'Tis in your power, my lord, to force her to you
And pluck her from his arms.

TYRANT

Thou talk'st unkindly;
That had been done before thy thought begot it
If my affection could be so hard-hearted
To stand upon such payment. It must come
Gently and kindly, like a debt of love,
Or 'tis not worth receiving.

GOVIANUS

Now, usurper,
I wish no happier freedom than the banishment
That thou hast laid upon me.

TYRANT

[Aside] Oh, he kills me
At mine own weapon! 'Tis I that live in exile
Should she forsake the land. I'll feign some cause
Far from the grief itself to call it back.—
That doom of banishment was but lent to thee
To make a trial of thy factious spirit,
Which flames in thy desire. Thou wouldst be gone:
There is some combination betwixt thee

I.[i. The court]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

And foreign plots; thou hast some powers to raise,
Which to prevent, thy banishment we revoke,
Confine thee to thy house nearest our court,
And place a guard about thee. Lord Memphonius,
See it effected.

MEMPHONIUS

With best care, my lord.

GOVIANUS

Confine me? Here's my liberty in mine arms;
I wish no better to bring me consent.
Love's best freedom is close prisonment.

Exeunt Lady and Govianus [with Memphonius].

TYRANT

Methinks the day e'en darkens at her absence.
I stand as in a shade, when a great cloud
Muffles the sun, whose beams shine afar off
On tow'rs and mountains, but I keep the valleys,
The place that is last served.

HELVETIUS

My lord.

TYRANT

Your reason, sir.

HELVETIUS

Your grace is mild to all but your own bosom.
They should have both been sent to several prisons,
And not committed to each other's arms.
There's a hot durance. He'll ne'er wish more freedom.

TYRANT

'Tis true; let 'em be both forced back.
Stay, we command you!
Thou talk'st not like a statesman. Had my wrath
Took hold of such extremity at first,
They'd lived suspectful still, warned by their fears;
Where, now that liberty makes 'em more secure,
I'll take 'em at my pleasure. It gives thee
Freer access to play the father for us
And ply her to our will.

HELVETIUS

Mass, so it does,
Let a man think on't twice! Your grace hath happened
Upon a strange way, yet it proves the nearest.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

TYRANT

Nay, more, to vex his soul give command straight
They be divided into several rooms,
Where he may only have a sight of her,
To his mind's torment, but his arms and lips
Locked up like felons from her.

HELVETIUS

Now you win me.
I like that cruelty passing well, my lord.

TYRANT

Give order with all speed.

HELVETIUS

Though I be old,
I need no spur, my lord. Honour pricks me.
I do beseech your grace, look cheerfully.
You shall not want content, if it be locked
In any blood of mine: the key's your own;
You shall command the wards.

TYRANT

Say'st thou so, sir?
I were ingrateful, then, should I see thee
Want honour, that provides content for me.

Exeunt. A flourish.

[I.ii. Anselmus' house]

Enter Lord Anselmus, the deposed king's brother, with his friend Votarius.

VOTARIUS

Pray, sir, confine your thoughts and excuse me.
Methinks the deposed king your brother's sorrow
Should find you business enough.

ANSELMUS

How, Votarius!
Sorrow for him? Weak ignorance talks not like thee.
Why, he was never happier.

VOTARIUS

Pray prove that, sir.

ANSELMUS

H'as lost the kingdom, but his mind's restored.
Which is the larger empire? Prithce tell me.
Dominions have their limits; the whole earth
Is but a prisoner, nor the sea her jailor,

I.[i. The court]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

That with a silver hoop locks in her body;
They're fellow prisoners, though the sea look bigger
Because he is in office and pride swells him.
But the unbounded kingdom of the mind
Is as unlimitable as heav'n,
That glorious court of spirits, all honest courtiers.
Sir, if thou lov'st me, turn thine eye to me
And look not after him that needs thee not.
My brother's well attended; peace and pleasure
Are never from his sight. He has his mistress;
She brought those servants and bestowed them on him.
But who brings mine?

VOTARIUS

Had you not both long since
By a kind, worthy lady, your chaste wife?

ANSELMUS

That's it that I take pains with thee to be sure of.
What true report can I send to my soul
Of that I know not? We must only think
Our ladies are good people, and so live with 'em,
A fine security for them! Our own thoughts
Make the best fools of us; next to them, our wives.
But say she's all chaste, yet, is that her goodness?
What labour is't for woman to keep constant
That's never tried or tempted? Where's her fight?
The war's within her breast, her honest anger
Against the impudence of flesh and hell.
So let me know the lady of my rest
Or I shall never sleep well. Give not me
The thing that is thought good, but what's approved so.
So wise men choose. Oh, what a lazy virtue
Is chastity in a woman if no sin
Should lay temptation to't! Prithee set to her,
And bring my peace along with thee.

VOTARIUS

You put to me
A business that will do my words more shame
Than ever they got honour among women.
Lascivious courtings among sinful mistresses
Come ever seasonably, please best.
But let the boldest ruffian touch the ear
Of modest ladies with adulterous sounds,
Their very looks confound him and force grace
Into that cheek where impudence sets her seal.
That work is never undertook with courage
That makes his master blush. However, sir,
What profit can return to you by knowing
That which you do already, with more toil?

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Must a man needs, in having a rich diamond,
Put it between a hammer and an anvil
And, not believing the true worth and value,
Break it in pieces to find out the goodness,
And in the finding lose it? Good sir, think on't!
Nor does it taste of wit to try their strengths
That are created sickly, nor of manhood.
We ought not to put blocks in women's ways,
For some too often fall upon plain ground.
Let me dissuade you, sir.

ANSELMUS

Have I a friend?
And has my love so little interest in him
That I must trust some stranger with my heart
And go to seek him out?

VOTARIUS

Nay, hark you, sir.
I am so jealous of your weakness
That, rather than you should lie prostituted
Before a stranger's triumph, I would venture
A whole hour's shaming for you.

ANSELMUS

Be worth thy word, then.

Enter Wife.

Yonder she comes. [Aside] I'll have an ear to you both.
I love to have such things at the first hand. [Retires.]

VOTARIUS

[Aside] I'll put him off with somewhat; guile in this
Falls in with honest dealing. Oh, who could move
Adultery to yon face? So rude a sin
May not come near the meekness of her eye.
My client's cause looks so dishonestly
I'll ne'er be seen to plead in't.

WIFE

What, Votarius!

VOTARIUS

Good morrow, virtuous madam.

WIFE

Was my lord
Seen lately here?

VOTARIUS

I.[i. The court]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

He's newly walked forth, lady.

WIFE

How was he attended?

VOTARIUS

Faith, I think with none, madam.

WIFE

That sorrow for the king his brother's fortune
Prevails too much with him, and leads him strangely
From company and delight.

VOTARIUS

[Aside] How she's beguiled in him!
There's no such natural touch, search all his bosom.—
That grief's too bold with him indeed, sweet madam,
And draws him from the pleasure of his time,
But 'tis a business of affection
That must be done. We owe a pity, madam,
To all men's misery, but especially
To those afflictions that claim kindred of us:
We're forced to feel 'em; all compassion else
Is but a work of charity, this, of nature,
And ties our pity in a bond of blood.

WIFE

Yet, sir, there is a date set to all sorrows.
Nothing is everlasting in this world.
Your counsel will prevail; persuade him, good sir,
To fall into life's happiness again
And leave the desolate path. I want his company.
He walks at midnight in thick shady woods
Where scarce the moon is starlight. I have watched him
In silver nights when all the earth was dressed
Up like a virgin in white innocent beams;
Stood in my window, cold and thinly clad,
T'observe him through the bounty of the moon
That liberally bestowed her graces on me.
And when the morning dew began to fall,
Then was my time to weep. H'as lost his kindness,
Forgot the way of wedlock, and become
A stranger to the joys and rites of love.
He's not so good as a lord ought to be;
Pray tell him so from me, sir.

VOTARIUS

That will I, madam.

Exit Wife.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Now must I dress a strange dish for his humour.

ANSELMUS

[Aside] Call you this courting? Life, not one word near it!
There was no syllable but was twelve score off.
My faith, hot temptation! Woman's chastity
In such a conflict had great need of one
To keep the bridge. 'Twas dangerous for the time.
Why, what fantastic faiths are in these days
Made without substance! Whom should a man trust
In matters about love?

[Comes forward.]

VOTARIUS

Mass, here he comes too!

ANSELMUS

How now, Votarius? What's the news for us?

VOTARIUS

You set me to a task, sir, that will find
Ten ages work enough, and then unfinished.
Bring sin before her? Why, it stands more quaking
Than if a judge should frown on't. Three such fits
Would shake it into goodness, and quite beggar
The under-kingdom. Not the art of man,
Woman, or devil--

ANSELMUS

Oh, peace, man! Prithee, peace!

VOTARIUS

Can make her fit for lust.

ANSELMUS

Yet again, sir?
Where lives that mistress of thine, Votarius,
That taught thee to dissemble? I'd fain learn.
She makes good scholars.

VOTARIUS

How, my lord!

ANSELMUS

Thou art the son of falsehood. Prithee leave me.
How truly constant, charitable, and helpful
Is woman unto woman in affairs
That touch affection and the peace of spirit,
But man to man how crooked and unkind!
I thank my jealousy I heard thee all,

l.[i. The court]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

For I heard nothing; now thou'rt sure I did.

VOTARIUS

Now, by this light, then, wipe but off this score,
Since y'are so bent, and if I ever run
In debt again to falsehood and dissemblance
For want of better means, tear the remembrance of me
From your best thoughts.

ANSELMUS

For thy vow's sake, I pardon thee.
Thy oath is now sufficient watch itself
Over thy actions. I discharge my jealousy;
I ha' no more use for't now. To give thee way,
I'll have an absence made purposely for thee
And presently take horse. I'll leave behind me
An opportunity that shall fear no starting;
Let but thy pains deserve it.

VOTARIUS

I am bound to't.

ANSELMUS

For a small time, farewell, then. Hark thee—

VOTARIUS

Oh, good sir,
It will do wondrous well!

Exit Anselmus.

What a wild seed
Suspicion sows in him, and takes small ground for't!
How happy were this lord if he would leave
To tempt his fate and be resolved he were so;
He would be but too rich.
Man has some enemy still that keeps him back
In all his fortunes, and his mind is his,
And that's a mighty adversary. I had rather
Have twenty kings my enemies than that part,
For let me be at war with earth and hell
So that be friends with me. I ha' sworn to make
A trial of her faith; I must put on.

Enter Wife.

A courtier's face and do't; mine own will shame me.

WIFE

This is most strange of all. How one distraction
Seconds another!

[i. The court]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

VOTARIUS

What's the news, sweet madam?

WIFE

H'as took his horse, but left his leave untaken.
What should I think on't, sir? Did ever lord
Depart so rudely from his lady's presence?

VOTARIUS

Did he forget your lip?

WIFE

He forgot all
That nobleness remembers.

VOTARIUS

I'm ashamed on him.
Let me help, madam, to repair his manners
And mend that unkind faith.

[Attempts to kiss her.]

WIFE

Sir, pray forbear!
You forget worse than he.

VOTARIUS

[Aside] So virtue save me,
I have enough already.

WIFE

'Tis himself
Must make amends, good sir, for his own faults.

VOTARIUS

[Aside] I would he'd do't, then, and ne'er trouble me in't.—
But, madam, you perceive he takes the course
To be far off from that. He's rode from home;
But his unkindness stays, and keeps with you.
Let whose will please his wife, he rides his horse;
That's all the care he takes. I pity you, madam;
Y'ave an unpleasing lord: would 'twere not so.
I should rejoice with you.
You're young; the very spring's upon you now:
The roses on your cheeks are but new blown.
Take you together, y'are a pleasant garden
Where all the sweetness of man's comfort breathes.
But what is it to be a work of beauty
And want the heart that should delight in you?
You still retain your goodness in yourselves,

I.[i. The court]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

But then you lose your glory, which is all.
The grace of every benefit is the use,
And is't not pity you should want your grace?
Look you like one whose lord should walk in groves
About the peace of midnight? Alas, madam,
'Tis to me wondrous how you should spare the day
From amorous clips, much less the general season
When all the world's a gamester.
That face deserves a friend of heart and spirit,
Discourse, and motion, indeed such a one
That should observe you, madam, without ceasing,
And not a weary lord.

WIFE

Sure I was married, sir,
In a dear year of love, when scarcity
And famine of affection vexed poor ladies,
Which makes my heart so needy; it ne'er knew
Plenty of comfort yet.

VOTARIUS

Why, that's your folly,
To keep your mind so miserably, madam.
Change into better times; I'll lead you to 'em.
What bounty shall your friend expect for his!
Oh, you that can be hard to your own heart,
How would you use your friend's? If I thought kindly,
I'd be the man myself should serve your pleasure.

WIFE

How, sir!

VOTARIUS

Nay, and ne'er miss you too. I'd not come sneaking
Like a retainer once a week or so
To show myself before you for my livery.
I'd follow business like a household servant;
Carry my work before me, and dispatch
Before my lord be up, and make no words on't:
The sign of a good servant.

WIFE

'Tis not friendly done, sir,
To take a lady at advantage thus,
Set all her wrongs before her, and then tempt her.

VOTARIUS

[Aside] Heart, I grow fond myself! 'Twas well she waked me
Before the dead sleep of adultery took me;
'Twas stealing on me. Up, you honest thoughts,
And keep watch for your master! I must hence:

I.[i. The court]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

I do not like my health; 't 'as a strange relish.
Pray heav'n I plucked mine eyes back time enough!
I'll never see her more. I praised the garden,
But little thought a bed of snakes lay hid in't.

WIFE

[Aside] I know not how I am. I'll call my woman.—
Stay, for I fear thou'rt too far gone already.

VOTARIUS

[Aside] I'll see her but once more. Do thy worst, love;
Thou art too young, fond boy, to master me.—
I come to tell you, madam, and that plainly,
I'll see your face no more. Take 't how you please.

WIFE

You will not offer violence to me, sir,
In my lord's absence? What does that touch you
If I want comfort?

VOTARIUS

Will you take your answer?

WIFE

It is not honest in you to tempt woman;
When her distresses take away her strength,
How is she able to withstand her enemy?

VOTARIUS

I would fain leave your sight and I could possible.

WIFE

What is't to you, good sir, if I be pleased
To weep myself away, and run thus violently
Into the arms of death, and kiss destruction?
Does this concern you now?

VOTARIUS

Ay, marry, does it!
What serve these arms for but to pluck you back,
These lips but to prevent all other tasters
And keep that cup of nectar for themselves?
[Aside] Heart, I'm beguiled again! Forgive me, heav'n;
My lips have been naught with her. Sin's mere witchcraft.
Break all the engines of life's frame in pieces,
I will be master once, and whip the boy
Home to his mother's lap. Face, fare thee well.

Exit Votarius.

WIFE

l.[i. The court]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

VOTARIUS? Sir? My friend? Thanks heav'n, he's gone,
And he shall never come so near again.
I'll have my frailty watched ever; henceforward
I'll no more trust it single; it betrays me
Into the hands of folly! Where's my woman?

Enter Leonella.

My trusty Leonella!

LEONELLA
Call you, madam?

WIFE
Call I; I want attendance. Where are you?

LEONELLA
Never far from you, madam.

WIFE
Pray be nearer,
Or there is some that will and thank you too;
Nay, perhaps bribe you to be absent from me.

LEONELLA
How, madam!

WIFE
Is that strange to a lady's woman?
There are such things i' th' world, many such buyers
And sellers of a woman's name and honour,
Though you be young in bribes, and never came
To the flesh market yet. Beshrew your heart
For keeping so long from me!

LEONELLA
What ail you, madam?

WIFE
Somewhat commands me, and takes all the power
Of myself from me.

LEONELLA
What should that be, lady?

WIFE
When did you see Votarius?

LEONELLA
[Aside] Is that next?
Nay, then, I have your ladyship in the wind.—

I.[i. The court]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

I saw him lately, madam.

WIFE

Whom didst see?

LEONELLA

VOTARIUS.

WIFE

What have I to do with him
More than another man? Say he be fair,
And his parts proper both of mind and body,
You praise him but in vain in telling me so.

LEONELLA

[Aside] Yea, madam, are you prattling in your sleep?
'Tis well my lord and you lie in two beds.

WIFE

I was ne'er so ill. I thank you, Leonella,
My negligent woman! Here you showed your service.

LEONELLA

[Aside] Life, have I power or means to stop a sluice
At a high water? What would sh'ave me do in't?

WIFE

I charge thee, while thou liv'st with me, henceforward
Use not an hour's absence from my sight.

Exit [Wife].

LEONELLA

By my faith, madam, you shall pardon me.
I have a love of mine own to look to,
And he must have his breakfast. Pist! Bellarius!

Enter Bellarius muffled in his cloak.

BELLARIUS

Leonella?

LEONELLA

Come forth, and show yourself a gentleman,
Although most commonly they hide their heads
As you do there, methinks. And why a taffety muffler?
Show your face, man. I'm not ashamed on you.

BELLARIUS

I fear the servants.

[i. The court]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

LEONELLA

And they fear their mistress, and ne'er think on you.
Their thoughts are upon dinner and great dishes.
If one thing hap (impossible to fail to,
I can see so far in't) you shall walk boldly, sir,
And openly in view through every room
About the house; and let the proudest meet thee,
I charge you give no way to 'em.

BELLARIUS

How thou talk'st!

LEONELLA

I can avoid the fool, and give you reason for't.

BELLARIUS

'Tis more than I should do, if I asked more on thee.
I prithee tell me how.

LEONELLA

With ease, i'faith, sir.
My lady's heart is wondrous busy, sir,
About the entertainment of a friend too,
And she and I must bear with one another
Or we shall make but a mad house betwixt us.

BELLARIUS

I'm bold to throw my cloak off at this news,
Which I ne'er durst before, and kiss thee freelier!
What is he, sirrah?

LEONELLA

Faith, an indifferent fellow
With good long legs, a near friend of my lord's.

BELLARIUS

A near friend of my lady's, you would say!
His name, I prithee?

LEONELLA

One Votarius, sir.

BELLARIUS

What sayest thou?

LEONELLA

He walks under the same title.

BELLARIUS

The only enemy that my life can show me!

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

LEONELLA

Your enemy? Let my spleen then alone with him.
Stay you your anger; I'll confound him for you.

BELLARIUS

As how, I prithee?

LEONELLA

I'll prevent his venery;
He shall ne'er lie with my lady.

BELLARIUS

Troth, I thank you!
Life, that's the way to save him! Art thou mad?
Whereas the other way he confounds himself
And lies more naked to revenge and mischief.

LEONELLA

Then let him lie with her, and the devil go with him!
He shall have all my furtherance.

BELLARIUS

Why, now you pray heartily, and speak to purpose.

Exeunt.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

II.[i. Govianus' house]

Enter the Lady of Govianus, with a Servant.

LADY

Who is't would speak with us?

SERVANT

My lord your father.

LADY

My father? Pray make haste; he waits too long.
Entreat him hither.

[Exit Servant.]

In despite of all
The tyrant's cruelties, we have got that friendship
E'en of the guard that he has placed about us:
My lord and I have free access together,
As much as I would ask of liberty.
They'll trust us largely now, and keep sometimes
Three hours from us, a rare courtesy
In jailor's children.

Enter Helvetius.

Some mild news, I hope,
Comes with my father. No, his looks are sad.
There is some further tyranny. Let it fall;
Our constant suff'rings shall amaze it.

[Kneels to Helvetius.]

HELVETIUS

Rise;
I will not bless thee. Thy obedience
Is after custom, as most rich men pray,
Whose saint is only fashion and vainglory.
So 'tis with thee in thy dissembled duty:
There is no religion in't, no reverent love,
Only for fashion and the praise of men.

LADY

Why should you think so, sir?

HELVETIUS

Think? You come too late
If you seek there for me. I know't and see't.
I'll sooner give my blessing to a drunkard,

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Whom the ridiculous power of wine makes humble
As foolish use makes thee. Base-spirited girl,
That canst not think above disgrace and beggary
When glory is set for thee and thy seed,
Advancement for thy father, beside joy
Able to make a latter spring in me
In this my fourscore summer, and renew me
With a reversion yet of heat and youth!
But the dejection of thy mind and spirit
Makes me, thy father, guilty of a fault
That draws thy birth in question, and e'en wrongs
Thy mother in her ashes being at peace
With heav'n and man. Had not her life and virtues
Been seals unto her faith, I should think thee now
The work of some hired servant, some house-tailor,
And no one part of my endeavour in thee!
Had I neglected greatness, or not rather
Pursued almost to my eternal hazard,
Thou'dst ne'er been a lord's daughter.

LADY

Had I been
A shepherd's, I'd been happier and more peaceful.

HELVETIUS

Thy very seed will curse thee in thy age
When they shall hear the story of thy weakness:
How in thy youth thy fortunes tendered thee
A kingdom for thy servant, which thou lefts
Basely to serve thyself. What dost thou in this
But merely cozen thy posterity
Of royalty and succession, and thyself
Of dignity present?

LADY

Sir, your king did well
'Mongst all his nobles to pick out yourself
And send you with these words. His politic grace
Knew what he did, for well he might imagine
None else should have been heard; they'd had their answer
Before the question had been half way thorough.
But, dearest sir, I owe to you a reverence,
A debt which both begins and ends with life,
Never till then discharged, 'tis so long-lasting.
Yet could you be more precious than a father,
Which, next a husband, is the richest treasure
Mortality can show us, you should pardon me
(And yet confess too that you found me kind)
To hear your words, though I withstood your mind.

HELVETIUS

Il.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Say you so, daughter? Troth, I thank you kindly.
I am in hope to rise well by your means,
Or you to raise yourself. We're both beholding to you.
Well, since I cannot win you, I commend you;
I praise your constancy and pardon you.
Take Govianus to you, make the most of him;
Pick out your husband there, so you'll but grant me
One light request that follows.

LADY

Heaven forbid else, sir!

HELVETIUS

Give me the choosing of your friend, that's all.

LADY

How, sir? My friend? A light request indeed.
Somewhat too light, sir, either for my wearing
Or your own gravity, and you look on't well.

HELVETIUS

Push, talk like a courtier, girl, not like a fool!
Thou know'st the end of greatness, and hast wit
Above the flight of twenty feathered mistresses
That glister in the sun of princes' favours.
Thou hast discourse in thee, fit for a king's fellowship,
A princely carriage and astonishing presence.
What should a husband do with all this goodness?
Alas, one end an't is too much for him;
Nor is it fit a subject should be master
Of such a jewel. 'Tis in the king's power
To take it for the forfeit; but I come
To bear thee gently to his bed of honours,
All force forgotten. He commends him to thee
With more than the humility of a servant,
That since thou wilt not yield to be his queen,
Be yet his mistress: he shall be content
With that or nothing; he shall ask no more.
And with what easiness that is performed,
Most of your women know. Having a husband,
That kindness costs thee nothing; y'ave that in
All over and above to your first bargain,
And that's a brave advantage for a woman
If she be wise, as I suspect not thee.
And having youth, and beauty, and a husband,
Thou'st all the wish of woman. Take thy time, then;
Make thy best market.

LADY

Can you assure me, sir,
Whether my father spake this, or some spirit

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Of evil-wishing that has for a time
Hired his voice of him, to beguile me that way,
Presuming on his power and my obedience?
I'd gladly know, that I might frame my answer
According to the speaker.

HELVETIUS

How now, baggage!
Am I in question with thee? Does thy scorn cast
So think an ignorance before thine eyes
That I am forgotten too? Who is't speaks to thee
But I thy father?

Enter Govianus discharging a pistol. [Helvetius falls.]

GOVIANUS

The more monstrous he!
Art down but with the bare voice of my fury?
Up, ancient sinner; thou'rt but mocked with death.
I missed thee purposely; thank this dear creature.
Oh, hast thou been anything beside her father
I'd made a fearful separation on thee:
I would have sent thy soul to a darker prison
Than any made of clay, and thy dead body
As a token to the lustful king thy master!
Art thou struck down so soon with the short sound
Of this small earthen instrument, and dost thou
So little fear th' eternal noise of hell?
What's she? Does she not bear thy daughter's name?
How stirs thy blood, sir? Is there a dead feeling
Of all things fatherly and honest in thee?
Say thou couldst be content, for greatness' sake,
To end the last act of thy life in panderism
(As you perhaps will say your betters do),
Must it needs follow that unmanly sin
Can work upon the weakness of no woman
But hers whose name and honour natural love
Bids thee preserve more charily than eyesight,
Health, or thy sense? Can promotion's thirst
Make such a father? Turn a grave old lord
To a white-headed squire? Make him so base
To buy his honours with his daughter's soul
And the perpetual shaming of his blood?
Hast thou the leisure, thou forgetful man,
To think upon advancement at these years?
What wouldst thou do with greatness? Dost thou hope
To fray death with't, or hast thou that conceit
That honour will restore thy youth again?
Thou art but mocked, old fellow: 'tis not so;
Thy hopes abuse thee. Follow thine own business
And list not to the sirens of the world.

II.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Alas, thou hadst more need kneel at an altar
Than to a chair of state,
And search thy conscience for thy sins of youth:
That's work enough for age; it needs no greater.
Thou'rt called within: thy very eyes look inward
To teach thy thoughts the way, and thy affections;
But miserable notes that conscience sings
That cannot truly pray, for flattering kings.

HELVETIUS

This was well searched indeed, and without favouring.
Blessing reward thee! Such a wound as mine
Did need a pitiless surgeon. Smart on, soul;
Thou't feel the less hereafter. Sir, I thank you;
I ever saw my life in a false glass
Until this friendly hour. With what fair faces
My sins would look on me! But now truth shows 'em,
How loathsome and how monstrous are their forms.

[Kneels to Govianus.]

Be you my king and master still; henceforward
My knee shall know no other earthly lord.
Well may I spend this life to do you service,
That sets my soul in her eternal way.

GOVIANUS

Rise, rise, Helvetius!

HELVETIUS

I'll see both your hands
Set to my pardon first.

GOVIANUS

Mine shall bring hers.

LADY

Now, sir, I honour you for your goodness chiefly.
Y'are my most worthy father: you speak like him;
The first voice was not his. My joy and reverence
Strive which should be most seen. [As they raise him] Let our hands, sir,
Raise you from earth thus high, and may it prove
The first ascent of your immortal rising,
Never to fall again.

HELVETIUS

A spring of blessings
Keep ever with thee, and the fruit thy lord's.

GOVIANUS

I ha' lost an enemy and have found a father.

II.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Exeunt.

[II.ii. Anselmus' house]

Enter Votarius sadly.

VOTARIUS

All's gone; there's nothing but the prodigal left:
I have played away my soul at one short game
Where e'en the winner loses.
Pursuing sin, how often did I shun thee!
How swift art thou afoot, beyond man's goodness,
Which has a lazy pace! So was I caught.
A curse upon the cause! Man in these days
Is not content to have his lady honest,
And so rest pleased with her without more toil,
But he must have her tried, forsooth, and tempted;
And when she proves a quean then he lies quiet,
Like one that has a watch of curious making,
Thinking to be more cunning than the workman,
Never gives over tamp'ring with the wheels
Till either spring be weakened, balance bowed,
Or some wrong pin put in, and so spoils all.
How I could curse myself! Most business else
Delight[s] in the dispatch; that's the best grace to't.
Only this work of blind, repented lust
Hangs shame and sadness on his master's cheek.
Yet wise men take no warning--

Enter Wife.

Nor can I now.
Her very sight strikes my repentance backward;
It cannot stand against her. Chamber thoughts
And words that have sport in 'em, they're for ladies.

WIFE

My best and dearest servant!

VOTARIUS

Worthiest mistress!

Enter Leonella.

[LEONELLA]

Madam!

WIFE

Who's that? My woman? She's myself.
Proceed, sir.

II.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

LEONELLA

Not if you love your honour, madam.
I came to give you warning my lord's come.

VOTARIUS

How!

WIFE

My lord!

LEONELLA

[Aside] Alas, poor vessels, how this tempest tosses 'em!
They're driven both asunder in a twinkling;
Down goes the sails here, and main mast yonder.
Here rides a bark with better fortune yet;
I fear no tossing, come what weather will.
I have a trick to hold out water still.

VOTARIUS

[Aside] His very name shoots like a fever through me,
Now hot, now cold. Which cheek shall I turn toward him,
For fear he should read guiltiness in my looks?
I would he would keep from home like a wise man;
'Tis no place for him now. I would not see him
Of any friend alive. It is not fit
We two should come together; we have abused
Each other mightily: he used me ill
To employ me thus, and I ha' used him worse.
I'm too much even with him.

Enter Anselmus.

Yonder's a sight on him.

WIFE

My loved and honoured lord! Most welcome, sir.

[They kiss.]

LEONELLA

[Aside] Oh, there's a kiss! Methinks my lord might taste
Dissimulation rank in't, if he had wit.
He takes but of the breath of his friend's lip.
A second kiss is here, but that she keeps
For her first friend. We women have no cunning!

WIFE

You parted strangely from me.

ANSELMUS

Il.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

That's forgotten.

VOTARIUS! I make speed to be in thine arms.

[Embraces Votarius.]

VOTARIUS

You never come too soon, sir.

ANSELMUS

How goes business?

VOTARIUS

Pray think upon some other subject, sir.

What news at court?

ANSELMUS

Pish, answer me!

VOTARIUS

Alas, sir, would you have me work by wonders,
To strike fire out of ice? Y'are a strange lord, sir.
Put me to possible things and find 'em finished
At your return to me. I can say no more.

ANSELMUS

[Taking him aside] I see by this thou didst not try her thoroughly.

VOTARIUS

How, sir, not thoroughly! By this light, he lives not
That could make trial of a woman better.

ANSELMUS

I fear thou wast too slack.

VOTARIUS

Good faith, you wrong me, sir.
She never found it so.

ANSELMUS

Then I've a jewel,
And nothing shall be thought too precious for her.
I may advance my forehead and boast purely.
Methinks I see her worth with clear eyes now.
Oh, when a man's opinion is at peace,
'Tis a fine life to marry! No state's like it.
[To Wife] My worthy lady, freely I confess
To thy wronged heart, my passion had alate
Put rudeness on me, which I now put off.
I will no more seem so unfashionable
For pleasure and the chamber of a lady.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

WIFE

I'm glad you're changed so well, sir.

VOTARIUS

[Aside] Thank himself for't.

Exeunt Wife and Anselmus.

LEONELLA

[Aside] This comes like physic when the party's dead.
Flows kindness now, when 'tis so ill deserved?
This is the fortune still. Well, for this trick,
I'll save my husband and his friend a labour;
I'll never marry as long as I'm honest,
For commonly queans have the kindest husbands.

Exit Leonella, manet Votarius.

VOTARIUS

I do not like his company now; 'tis irksome.
His eye offends me. Methinks 'tis not kindly
We two should live together in one house,
And 'tis impossible to remove me hence.
I must not give way first. She is my mistress,
And that's a degree kinder than a wife.
Women are always better to their friends
Than to their husbands, and more true to them.
Then let the worst give place, whom she 'as least need on,
He that can best be spared, and that's her husband.
I do not like his overboldness with her;
He's too familiar with the face I love.
I fear the sickness of affection;
I feel a grudging on't. I shall grow jealous
E'en of that pleasure which she has by law,
I shall go so near with her!

Enter Bellarius passing over the stage.

Ha, what's he?
Life, 'tis Bellarius, my rank enemy!
Mine eye snatched so much sight of him. What's his business?
His face half darkened, stealing through the house
With a whoremaster's pace: I like it not.
This lady will be served like a great woman,
With more attendants, I perceive, than one;
She has her shift of friends. My enemy one?
Do we both shun each other's company
In all assemblies public, at all meetings,
And drink to one another in one mistress?
My very thought's my poison. 'Tis high time
To seek for help. Where is our head physician?

II.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

A doctor of my making and that lecher's!
Oh, woman, when thou once leav'st to be good,
Thou car'st not who stands next thee! Every sin
Is a companion for thee, for thy once-cracked honesty
Is like the breaking of whole money:
It never comes to good, but wastes away.

Enter Anselmus.

ANSELMUS
VOTARIUS.

VOTARIUS
Ha!

ANSELMUS
We miss you, sir, within.

VOTARIUS
I missed you more without. Would you had come sooner, sir!

ANSELMUS
Why, what's the business?

VOTARIUS
You should ha' seen a fellow,
A common bawdy-house ferret, one Bellarius,
Steal through this room, his whorish barren face
Three-quarters muffled. He is somewhere hid
About the house, sir.

ANSELMUS
Which way took the villain,
That marriage felon, one that robs the mind,
Twenty times worse than any highway striker?
Speak, which way took he?

VOTARIUS
Marry, my lord, I think—
Let me see, which way was't now? Up yon stairs.

ANSELMUS
The way to chamb'ring! Did not I say still
All thy temptations were too faint and lazy?
Thou didst not play 'em home.

VOTARIUS
To tell you true, sir,
I found her yielding ere I left her last,
And wavering in her faith.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

ANSELMUS

Did not I think so?

VOTARIUS

That makes me suspect him.

ANSELMUS

Why, partial man!

Couldst thou hide this from me, so dearly sought for,

And rather waste thy pity upon her?

Thou'rt not so kind as my heart praised thee to me.

Hark!

VOTARIUS

'Tis his footing, certain.

ANSELMUS

Are you chambered?

I'll fetch you from aloft.

Exit Anselmus.

VOTARIUS

He takes my work

And toils to bring me ease. This use I'll make on him:

His care shall watch to keep all strange thieves out

Whiles I familiarly go in and rob him

Like one that knows the house.

But how has rashness and my jealousy used me!

Out of my vengeance to mine enemy

Confessed her yielding, I have locked myself

From mine own liberty with that key. Revenge

Does no man good but to his greatest harm.

Suspect and malice, like a mingled cup,

Made me soon drunk. I knew not what I spoke,

And that may get me pardon.

Enter Anselmus, a dagger in his hand, with Leonella.

LEONELLA

Why, my lord!

ANSELMUS

Confess, thou mystical panderess! Run, Votarius,

To the back gate; the guilty slave leaped out

And scaped me so. This strumpet locked him up

In her own chamber!

Exit Votarius.

LEONELLA

Il.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Hold, my lord! I might;
He is my husband, sir!

ANSELMUS

Oh, soul of cunning!
Came that arch-subtlety from thy lady's counsel
Or thine own sudden craft? Confess to me
How oft thou hast been a bawd to their close actions,
Or all thy light goes out!

LEONELLA

My lord, believe me,
In troth, I love a man too well myself
To bring him to my mistress.

ANSELMUS

Leave thy sporting,
Or my next offer makes thy heart weep blood!

LEONELLA

Oh, spare that strength, my lord, and I'll reveal
A secret that concerns you, for this does not.

ANSELMUS

Back, back, my fury, then:
It shall not touch thy breast. Speak freely. What is't?

LEONELLA

VOTARIUS and my lady are false gamesters;
They use foul play, my lord.

ANSELMUS

Thou liest!

LEONELLA

Reward me then
For all together; if it prove not so,
I'll never bestow time to ask your pity.

ANSELMUS

VOTARIUS and thy lady! 'Twill ask days
Ere it be settled in belief. So, rise;
Go get thee to thy chamber.

Exit.

LEONELLA

A pox on you!
You hindered me of better business, thank you.
H'as frayed a secret from me; would he were whipped!
Faith, from a woman a thing's quickly slipped.

Il.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Exit.

[II.iii. The court]

Enter the Tyrant with Sophonirus, Memphonius, and other Nobles. A flourish.

TYRANT

My joys have all false hearts; there's nothing true to me
That's either kind or pleasant. I'm hardly dealt withal.
I must not miss her; I want her sight too long.
Where's this old fellow?

SOPHONIRUS

Here's one, my lord, of threescore and sev'ntein.

TYRANT

Push, that old limber ass puts in his head still!

HELVETIUS! Where is he?

MEMPHONIUS

Not yet returned, my lord.

Enter Helvetius.

TYRANT

Your lordship lies.

Here comes the kingdom's father. Who amongst you

Dares say this worthy man has not made speed?

I would fain hear that fellow.

SOPHONIRUS

[Aside] I'll not be he.

I like the standing of my head too well

To have it mended.

TYRANT

[To Helvetius] Thy sight quickens me.

I find a better health when thou art present

Than all times else can bring me! Is the answer

As pleasing as thyself?

HELVETIUS

Of what, my lord?

TYRANT

Of what? Fie, no! He did not say so, did he?

SOPHONIRUS

Oh, no, my lord, not he spoke no such word.

[Aside] I'll say as he would ha't, for I'd be loath

II.[j. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

To have my body used like butcher's meat.

TYRANT

When comes she to our bed?

HELVETIUS

Who, my lord?

TYRANT

Hark!

You heard that plain amongst you?

SOPHONIRUS

Oh, my lord,

As plain as my wife's tongue, that drowns a sance bell.

[Aside] Let me alone to lay about for honour;

I'll shift for one.

TYRANT

When comes the lady, sir,

That Govianus keeps?

HELVETIUS

Why, that's my daughter.

TYRANT

Oh, is it so? Have you unlocked your memory?

What says she to us?

HELVETIUS

Nothing.

TYRANT

How thou tempt'st us!

What didst thou say to her, being sent from us?

HELVETIUS

More than was honest, yet it was but little.

TYRANT

How cruelly thou work'st upon our patience,

Having advantage 'cause thou art her father!

But be not bold too far; if duty leave thee,

Respect will fall from us.

HELVETIUS

Have I kept life

So long till it looks white upon my head,

Been threescore years a courtier, and a flatterer

Not above threescore hours, which time's repented

Amongst my greatest follies, and am I at these days

Il.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Fit for no place but bawd to mine own flesh?
You'll prefer all your old courtiers to good services.
If your lust keep but hot some twenty winters,
We are like to have a virtuous world of wives,
Daughters, and sisters, besides kinswomen
And cousin-germans removed up and down
Where'er you please to have 'em! Are white hairs
A colour fit for panders and flesh-brokers,
Which are the honoured ornaments of age,
To which e'en kings owe reverence as they're men
And greater in their goodness than their greatness?
And must I take my pay all in base money?
I was a lord born, set by all court grace,
And am I thrust now to a squire's place?

TYRANT

How comes the moon to change so in this man
That was at full but now in all performance,
And swifter than my wishes? I beshrew that virtue
That busied herself with him. She might have found
Some other work; the man was fit for me
Before she spoiled him. She has wronged my heart in't
And marred me a good workman. Now his art fails him,
What makes the man at court? This is no place
For fellows of no parts; he lives not here
That puts himself from action when we need him.
I take off all thy honours and bestow 'em
On any of this rank that will deserve 'em.

SOPHONIRUS

My lord, that's I. Trouble your grace no further.
I'll undertake to bring her to your bed
With some ten words. Marry, they're special charms:
No lady can withstand 'em; a witch taught me 'em.
If you doubt me, I'll leave my wife in pawn
For my true loyalty, and your majesty
May pass away the time till I return.
I have a care in all things.

TYRANT

That may thrive best
Which the least hope looks after, but, however,
Force shall help nature. I'll be too sure now.
Thy willingness may be fortunate; we employ thee.

SOPHONIRUS

Then I'll go fetch my wife, and take my journey.

TYRANT

Stay, we require no pledge; we think thee honest.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

SOPHONIRUS

[Aside] Troth, the worse luck for me; we had both been made by't:
It was the way to make my wife great too.

TYRANT

[To Helvetius] I'll teach thee to be wide and strange to me!
Thou't feel thyself light shortly. I'll not leave thee
A title to put on, but the bare name
That men must call thee by, and know thee miserable.

HELVETIUS

'Tis miserable, king, to be of thy making
And leave a better workman. If thy honours
Only keep life in baseness, take 'em to thee,
And give 'em to the hungry. There's one gapes.

SOPHONIRUS

One that will swallow you, sir, for that jest,
And all your titles after.

HELVETIUS

The devil follow 'em!
There's room enough for him too. Leave me, thou king,
As poor as truth; the gentlewoman I now serve,
And never will forsake her for her plainness:
That shall not alter me!

TYRANT

No? Our guard within there!

Enter Guard.

[GUARD]

My lord?

TYRANT

Bear that old fellow to our castle prisoner.
Give charge he be kept close.

HELVETIUS

Close prisoner?
Why, my heart thanks thee. I shall have more time
And liberty to virtue in one hour
Than all those threescore years I was a courtier.
So by imprisonment I sustain great loss:
Heav'n opens to that man the world keeps close.

Exit [with Guard].

SOPHONIRUS

[Aside] But I'll not go to prison to try that.

Il.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Give me the open world; there's a good air.

TYRANT

I would fain send death after him, but I dare not;
He knows I dare not: that would give just cause
Of her unkindness everlasting to me.
His life may thank his daughter. Sophonirus,
Here, take this jewel, bear it as a token
To our heart's saint. 'Twill do thy words no harm.
Speech may do much, but wealth's a greater charm
Than any made of words, and, to be sure,
If one or both should fail, I provide farther.
Call forth those resolute fellows whom our clemency
Saved from a death of shame in time of war
For field offenses. Give 'em charge from us
They arm themselves with speed, beset the house
Of Govianus round, that if thou fail'st,
Or stay'st beyond the time thou leav'st with them,
They may with violence break in themselves
And seize on her for our use.

Exeunt. Manet Sophonirus.

SOPHONIRUS

They're not so saucy
To seize on her for their own, I hope,
As there are many knaves will begin first
And bring their lords the bottom. I have been served so
A hundred times myself, by a scurvy page
That I kept once;
But my wife loved him, and I could not help it.

A flourish. Exit.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

III.[i. Govianus' house]

Enter Govianus with his Lady and a Servant.

GOVIANUS

What is he?

SERVANT

An old lord come from court.

GOVIANUS

He should be wise by's years; he will not dare
To come about such business: 'tis not man's work.
Art sure he desired conference with thy lady?

SERVANT

Sure, sir.

GOVIANUS

Faith, thou'rt mistook; 'tis with me, certain.
Let's do the man no wrong; go, know it truly, sir.

SERVANT

[Aside] This a strange humour, we must know things twice.

Exit.

GOVIANUS

There's no man is so dull but he will weigh
The work he undertakes, and set about it
E'en in the best sobriety of judgment,
With all his senses watchful. Then his guilt
Does equal his for whom 'tis undertaken.

Enter Servant.

What says he now?

SERVANT

E'en as he said at first, sir.
H'as business to my lady from the king.

GOVIANUS

Still from the king! He will not come near, will he?

SERVANT

Yes, when he knows he shall, sir.

GOVIANUS

I cannot think it.

III.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Let him be tried.

SERVANT

Small trial will serve him, I warrant you, sir.

[Exit.]

GOVIANUS

Sure honesty has left man. Has fear forsook him?
Yes, faith, there is no fear where there's no grace.

LADY

What way shall I devise to give him his answer?
Denial is not strong enough to serve, sir.

GOVIANUS

No, 't must have other helps.

Enter Sophonirus.

I see he dares.
Oh, patience, I shall lose a friend of thee!

SOPHONIRUS

I bring thee, precious lady, this dear stone
And commendations from the king my master.

GOVIANUS

[Drawing his sword] I set before thee, panderous lord, this steel,
And much good do't thy heart! Fall to, and spare not!

[Stabs Sophonirus.]

LADY

'Las, what have you done, my lord?

GOVIANUS

Why, sent a bawd
Home to his lodging; nothing else, sweetheart.

SOPHONIRUS

Well, you have killed me, sir, and there's an end;
But you'll get nothing by the hand, my lord,
When all your cards are counted. There be gamesters,
Not far off, will set upon the winner
And make a poor lord on you ere th'ave left you.
I'm fetched in like a fool to pay the reck'ning,
Yet you'll save nothing by't.

GOVIANUS

What riddle's this?

III.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

SOPHONIRUS

There she stands by thee now, who yet ere midnight
Must lie by the king's side.

GOVIANUS

Who speaks that lie?

SOPHONIRUS

One hour will make it true: she cannot scape
No more than I from death; y'ave a great gain on't
And you look well about you, that's my comfort:
The house is round beset with armed men
That know their time, when to break in and seize on her.

LADY

My lord!

GOVIANUS

'Tis boldly done to trouble me
When I've such business to dispatch. Within there!

Enter Servant.

[SERVANT]

My lord?

GOVIANUS

Look out, and tell me what thou seest.

[Exit Servant.]

SOPHONIRUS

How quickly now my death will be revenged,
Before the king's first sleep! I depart laughing
To think upon the deed.

[Dies.]

GOVIANUS

'Tis thy banquet.
Down, villain, to thy everlasting weeping,
That canst rejoice so in the rape of virtue,
And sing light tunes in tempests, when near shipwrecked,
And have no plank to save us!

Enter Servant.

Now, sir, quickly.

SERVANT

III.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Which way soe'er I cast mine eye, my lord,
Out of all parts a' th' house, I may see fellows
Gathered in companies and all whispering
Like men for treachery busy—

LADY

'Tis confirmed.

SERVANT

Their eyes still fixed upon the doors and windows.

GOVIANUS

I think thou'st never done; thou lov'st to talk on't.
'Tis fine discourse. Prithee find other business.

SERVANT

Nay, I am gone. I'm a man quickly sneaped.

Exit.

GOVIANUS

H'as flattered me with safety for this hour.

LADY

Have you leisure to stand idle? Why, my lord,
It is for me they come.

GOVIANUS

For thee, my glory,
The riches of my youth, it is for thee.

LADY

Then is your care so cold? Will you be robbed
And have such warning of the thieves? Come on, sir!
Fall to your business; lay your hands about you.
Do not think scorn to work. A resolute captain
Will rather fling the treasure of his bark
Into whales' throats than pirates should be gorged with't.
Be not less man than he. Thou art master yet,
And all's at thy disposing. Take thy time;
Prevent mine enemy. Away with me;
Let me no more be seen. I'm like that treasure
Dangerous to him that keeps it. Rid thy hands on't.

GOVIANUS

I cannot loose thee so.

LADY

Shall I be taken
And lost the cruel'st way? Then wouldst thou curse
That love that sent forth pity to my life,

III.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Too late thou wouldst.

GOVIANUS

Oh, this extremity!
Hast thou no way to scape 'em but in soul?
Must I meet peace in thy destruction
Or will it ne'er come at me?
'Tis a most miserable way to get it.
I had rather be content to live without it
Than pay so dear for't, and yet lose it too.

LADY

Sir, you do nothing; there's no valour in you.
Y'are the worst friend to a lady in affliction
That ever love made his companion.
For honour's sake, dispatch me! Thy own thoughts
Should stir thee to this act more than my weakness.
The sufferer should not do't. I speak thy part,
Dull and forgetful man, and all to help thee!
Is it thy mind to have me seized upon
And borne with violence to the tyrant's bed,
There forced unto the lust of all his days?

GOVIANUS

Oh, no, thou liv'st no longer now I think on't.
I take thee at all hazard.

LADY

Oh, stay! Hold, sir!

GOVIANUS

LADY,

What had you made me done now? You never cease
Till you prepare me cruel 'gainst my heart,
And then you turn 't upon my hand and mock me.

LADY

Cowardly flesh,
Thou show'st thy faintness still; I felt thee shake
E'en when the storm came near thee. Thou'rt the same.
But 'twas not for thy fear I put death by;
I had forgot a chief and worthy business
Whose strange neglect would have made me forgotten
Where I desire to be remembered most.
I will be ready straight, sir.

[Kneels in prayer.]

GOVIANUS

Oh, poor lady,
Why might not she expire now in that prayer,

III.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Since she must die, and never try worse ways?
'Tis not so happy, for we often see
Condemned men sick to death, yet 'tis their fortune
To recover to their execution
And rise again in heath to set in shame!
What if I steal a death unseen of her now,
And close up all my miseries, with mine eyes?
Oh, fie!
And leave her here alone? That were unmanly.

LADY

My lord, be now as sudden as you please, sir.
I am ready to your hand.

GOVIANUS

But that's not ready.
'Tis the hard'st work that ever man was put to;
I know not which way to begin to come to't.
Believe me, I shall never kill thee well;
I shall but shame myself. It were but folly,
Dear soul, to boast of more than I can perform.
I shall not have the power to do thee right in't.
Thou deserv'st death with speed, a quick dispatch,
The pain but of a twinkling, and so sleep.
If I do't, I shall make thee live too long
And so spoil all that way. I prithee excuse me.

LADY

I should not be disturbed and you did well, sir.
I have prepared myself for rest and silence
And took my leave of words. I am like one
Removing from her house, that locks up all,
And rather than she would displace her goods,
Makes shift with anything for the time she stays.
Then look not for more speech; th' extremity speaks
Enough to serve us both had we no tongues!

Knock.

Hark!

WITHIN

Lord Sophonirus!

GOVIANUS

Which hand shall I take?

LADY

Art thou yet ignorant? There is no way
But through my bosom.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

GOVIANUS

Must I lose thee then?

LADY

Th'are but thine enemies that tell thee so.
His lust may part me from thee, but death, never;
Thou canst not lose me there, for, dying thine,
Thou dost enjoy me still. Kings cannot rob thee.

Knock.

WITHIN

Do you hear, my lord?

LADY

Is it yet time, or no?
Honour remember thee!

GOVIANUS

I must; come. Prepare thyself.

LADY

Never more dearly welcome.

[Govianus] runs at her [with his sword] and falls by the way in a sound.

Alas, sir!

My lord, my love! Oh, thou poor-spirited man!
He's gone before me. Did I trust to thee,
And hast thou served me so? Left all the work
Upon my hand, and stole away so smoothly?
There was not equal suffering shown in this;
And yet I cannot blame thee. Every man
Would seek his rest. Eternal peace sleep with thee!
[Taking his sword] Thou art my servant now; come, thou hast lost
A fearful master, but art now preferred
Unto the service of a resolute lady,
One that knows how to employ thee, and scorns death
As much as great men fear it. Where's hell's ministers,
The tyrant's watch and guard? 'Tis of much worth,
When with this key the prisoner can slip forth!

Kills herself. Knock.

GOVIANUS

How now! What noise is this? I heard doors beaten.

A great knocking again.

Where are my servants? Let men knock so loud
Their master cannot sleep!

III.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Knock.

WITHIN

The time's expired,
And we'll break in, my lord!

GOVIANUS

Ha! Where's my sword?
I had forgot my business. [Sees the Lady.] Oh, 'tis done,
And never was beholding to my hand!
Was I so hard to thee, so disrespectful of thee,
To put all this to thee? Why, it was more
Than I was able to perform myself
With all the courage that I could take to me.
It tired me; I was fain to fall, and rest.
And hast thou, valiant woman, overcome
Thy honour's enemies with thine own white hand,
Where virgin-victory sits, all without help?
Eternal praise go with thee! Spare not now;
Make all the haste you can. I'll plant this bawd
Against the door, the fittest place for him,
That when with ungoverned weapons they rush in,
Blinded with fury, they may take his death
Into the purple number of their deeds,
And wipe it off from mine.

[Places the body of Sophonirus against the door.] Knock within.

How now, forbear!
My lord's at hand.

WITHIN

My lord, and ten lords more,
I hope the king's officers are above 'em all.

[They attempt to open the door.]

GOVIANUS

Life, what do you do? Take heed!

Enter the Fellows well weaponed [and stab Sophonirus].

Bless the old man!
My lord, All-Ass, my lord, he's gone!

FIRST [FELLOW]

Heart, farewell he, then!
We have no eyes to pierce thorough inch boards.
'Twas his own folly. The king must be served,
And shall. The best is, we shall ne'er be hanged for't,

III.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

There's such a number guilty.

GOVIANUS

Poor my lord!

He went some twice ambassador, and behaved himself
So wittily in all his actions!

SECOND [FELLOW]

My lord! What's she?

GOVIANUS

Let me see.

What should she be? Now I remember her.

Oh, she was a worthy creature
Before destruction grew so inward with her!

FIRST [FELLOW]

Well, for her worthiness, that's no work of ours.
You have a lady, sir; the king commands her
To court with speed, and we must force her thither.

GOVIANUS

Alas, she'll never strive with you; she was born
E'en with the spirit of meekness. Is't for the king?

FIRST [FELLOW]

For his own royal and most gracious lust,
Or let me ne'er be trusted.

GOVIANUS

Take her, then.

SECOND [FELLOW]

Spoke like an honest subject, by my troth.
I'll do the like myself to serve my prince.
Where is she, sir?

GOVIANUS

Look but upon yon face,
Then do but tell me where you think she is.

SECOND [FELLOW]

Life, she's not here!

GOVIANUS

She's yonder.

FIRST [FELLOW]

Faith, she's gone
Where we shall ne'er come at her, I see that.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

GOVIANUS

No, nor thy master neither. Now I praise
Her resolution; 'tis a triumph to me
When I see those about her.

SECOND [FELLOW]

How came this, sir?
The king must know.

GOVIANUS

From yon old fellow's prattling.
All your intents he revealed largely to her,
And she was troubled with a foolish pride
To stand upon her honour, and so died.
'Twas a strange trick of her. Few of your ladies
In ord'nary will believe it: they abhor it;
They'll sooner kill themselves with lust than for it.

FIRST [FELLOW]

We have done the king good service to kill him,
More than we were aware on; but this news
Will make a mad court. 'Twill be a hard office
To be a flatterer now; his grace will run
Into so many moods there'll be no finding on him:
As good seek a wild hare without a hound now.
A vengeance of your babbling! These old fellows
Will hearken after secrets as their lives,
But keep 'em in e'en as they keep their wives.

ALL [FELLOWS]

We have watched fairly.

Exeunt [with the body of Sophonirus]. Manet Govianus.

GOVIANUS

What a comfort 'tis
To see 'em gone without her! Faith, she told me
Her everlasting sleep would bring me joy,
Yet I was still unwilling to believe her,
Her life was so sweet to me, like some man
In time of sickness that would rather wish,
To please his fearful flesh, his former health
Restored to him, than death; when, after trial,
If it were possible, ten thousand worlds
Could not entice him to return again
And walk upon the earth from whence he flew.
So stood my wish, joyed in her life and breath;
Now gone, there is no heav'n but after death!
Come, thou delicious treasure of mankind,
To him that knows what virtuous woman is
And can discretely love her. The whole world

III.[i. Govianus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Yields not a jewel like her, ransack rocks
And caves beneath the deep. Oh, thou fair spring
Of honest and religious desires,
Fountain of weeping honour, I will kiss thee
After death's marble lip! Thou'rt cold enough
To lie entombed now by my father's side.
Without offence in kin[d]red there I'll place thee,
With one I loved the dearest next thee.
Help me to mourn, all that love chastity.

Exit [with her body].

IV.[i. Anselmus' house]

Enter Votarius with Anselmus' [Wife].

VOTARIUS

[Prithee] forgive me, madam; come, thou shalt.

WIFE

I'faith, 'twas strangely done, sir.

VOTARIUS

I confess it.

WIFE

Is that enough to help it, sir? 'Tis easy
To draw a lady's honour in suspicion,
But not so soon recovered and confirmed
To the first faith again from whence you brought it.
Your wit was fetched out about other business
Or such forgetfulness had never seized you.

VOTARIUS

'Twas but an overflowing, a spring tide
In my affection, raised by too much love,
And that's the worst words you can give it, madam.

WIFE

Jealous of me?

VOTARIUS

Life, you'd 'a' sworn yourself, madam,
Had you been in my body, and changed cases,
To see a fellow with a guilty pace
Glide through the room, his face three quarters nighted,
As if a deed of darkness had hung on him--

WIFE

I tell you twice, 'twas my bold woman's friend.
Hell take her impudence!

VOTARIUS

Why, I have done, madam.

WIFE

Y've done too late, sir. Who shall do the rest now?
Confessed me yielding! Was thy way too free?
Why didst thou long to be restrained? Pray speak, sir.

VOTARIUS

A man cannot cozen you of the sin of weakness,

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Or borrow it of a woman for one hour,
But how he's wondered at, where, search your lives,
We shall ne'er find it from you. We can suffer you
To play away your days in idleness,
And hide your imperfections with our loves,
Or the most part of you would appear strange creatures,
And now 'tis but our chance to make an offer
And snatch at folly, running, yet to see
How earnest y'are against us, as if we had robbed you
Of the best gift your natural mother left you!

WIFE

'Tis worth a kiss, i'faith, and thou shalt ha't
Were there not one more left for my lord's supper.
And now, sir, I've bethought myself.

VOTARIUS

That's happy!

WIFE

You say we're weak, but the best wits on you all
Are glad of our advice, for aught I see,
And hardly thrive without us.

VOTARIUS

I'll say so too.
To give you encouragement and advance your virtues
'Tis not good always to keep down a woman.

WIFE

Well, sir, since y'ave begun to make my lord
A doubtful man of me, keep on that course
And ply his faith still with that poor belief
That I'm inclining unto wantonness.
Take heed you pass no further now.

VOTARIUS

Why, dost think
I'll be twice mad together in one moon?
That were too much for any freeman's son
After his father's funeral.

WIFE

Well, then thus, sir.
Upholding still the same, as being emboldened
By some loose glance of mine, you shall attempt,
After y'ave placed my lord in some near closet,
To thrust yourself into my chamber rudely,
As if the game went forward to your thinking.
Then leave the rest to me. I'll so reward thee
With bitterness of words—but prithee pardon 'em—

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

My lord shall swear me into honesty
Enough to serve his mind all his life after.
Nay, for a need, I'll draw some rapier forth,
That shall come near my hand as 'twere by chance,
And set a lively face upon my rage.
But fear thou nothing; I too dearly love thee
To let harm touch thee.

VOTARIUS

Oh, it likes me rarely!
I'll choose a precious time for't.

WIFE

Go thy ways; I'm glad I had it for thee.

Exit Votarius. Enter Leonella.

[LEONELLA]

Madam, my lord entreats your company.

WIFE

Pshaw ye!

LEONELLA

Pshaw ye!
My lords entreats your company.

WIFE

What [now]?
Are ye so short-heeled?

LEONELLA

I am as my betters are, then!

WIFE

How came you by such impudence alate, minion?
Y'are not content to entertain your playfellow
In your own chamber closely, which I think
Is large allowance for a lady's woman.
There's many a good knight's daughter is in service
And cannot get such favour of her mistress
But what she has by stealth; she and the chambermaid
Are glad of one between 'em: and must you
Give such bold freedom to your long-nosed fellow
That every room must take a taste of him?

LEONELLA

Does that offend your ladyship?

WIFE

How think you, forsooth?

IV.[i. Anselmus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

LEONELLA

Then he shall do't again!

WIFE

What!

LEONELLA

And again, madam,
So often till it please your ladyship;
And when you like it, he shall do't no more.

WIFE

What's this?

LEONELLA

I know no difference, virtuous madam,
But in love all have privilege alike.

WIFE

Y'are a bold quean!

LEONELLA

And are not you my mistress?

WIFE

This well, i'faith!

LEONELLA

[Aside] You spare not your own flesh no more than I;
Hell take me and I spare you!

WIFE

[Aside] Oh, the wrongs
That ladies do their honours when they make
Their slaves familiar with their weaknesses!
They're ever thus rewarded for that deed:
They stand in fear e'en of the grooms they feed.
I must be forced to speak my woman fair now,
And be first friends with her. Nay, all too little.
She may undo me at her pleasure else;
She knows the way so well, myself not better.
My wanton folly made a key for her
To all the private treasure of my heart;
She may do what she list.--Come, Leonella,
I am not angry with thee.

LEONELLA

Pish!

WIFE

IV.[i. Anselmus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Faith, I am not.

LEONELLA

Why, what care I and you be?

WIFE

Prithee forgive me.

LEONELLA

I have nothing to say to you.

WIFE

Come, thou shalt wear this jewel for my sake.

A kiss, and friends; we'll never quarrel more.

LEONELLA

Nay, choose you, faith. The best is, and you do,

You know who'll have the worst on't.

WIFE

[Aside] True: myself.

LEONELLA

[Aside] Little thinks she I have set her forth already.

I please my lord, yet keep her in awe too.

WIFE

One thing I had forgot: I prithee, wench,
Steal to Votarius closely and remember him
To wear some privy armour then about him,
That I may feign a fury without fear.

LEONELLA

Armour? When, madam?

WIFE

See now, I chid thee
When I least thought upon thee; thou'rt my best hand:
I cannot be without thee. Thus then, sirrah.
To beat away suspicion from the thoughts
Of ruder list'ning servants about house,
I have advised Votarius at fit time
Boldly to force his way into my chamber,
The admittance being denied him, and the passage
Kept strict by thee, my necessary woman.
La, there I should ha' missed thy help again!
At which attempt, I'll take occasion
To dissemble such an anger, that the world
Shall ever after swear us to their thoughts
As clear and free from any fleshly knowledge
[As] nearest kindred are, or ought to be,

IV.[i. Anselmus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Or what can more express it, if that failed.

LEONELLA

You know I'm always at your service, madam.
But why some privy armour?

WIFE

Marry, sweetheart,
The best is yet forgotten. Thou shalt hang
A weapon in some corner of the chamber,
Yonder, or there—

LEONELLA

Or anywhere. Why, i'faith, madam,
Do you think I'm to learn now to hang a weapon?
As much as I'm incapable of what follows,
I've all your mind without book. Think it done, madam.

WIFE

Thanks, my good wench. I'll never call thee worse.

Exit Wife.

LEONELLA

Faith, y'are like to ha't again, and you do, madam.

Enter Bellarius.

BELLARIUS

What, art alone?

LEONELLA

Cuds me, what make you here, sir?
You're a bold, long-nosed fellow!

BELLARIUS

How!

LEONELLA

So my lady says.
Faith, she and I have had a bout for you, sir,
But she got nothing by't.

BELLARIUS

Did not I say still
Thou wouldst be too adventurous?

LEONELLA

Ne'er a whit, sir!
I made her glad to seek my friendship first.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

BELLARIUS

By my faith, that showed well. If you come off
So brave a conqueress, to't again, and spare not.
I know not which way you should get more honour.

LEONELLA

She trusts me now to cast a mist, forsooth,
Before the servants' eyes. I must remember
VOTARIUS to come once with privy armour
Into her chamber, when with a feigned fury
And rapier drawn, which I must lay a' purpose
Ready for her dissemblance, she will seem
T'act wonders for her juggling honesty.

BELLARIUS

I wish no ripper vengeance. Canst conceive me?
VOTARIUS is my enemy.

LEONELLA

That's stale news, sir.

BELLARIUS

Mark what I say to thee. Forget of purpose
That privy armour; do not bless his soul
With so much warning, nor his hated body
With such sure safety. Here express thy love.
Lay some empoisoned weapon next her hand,
That in that play he may be lost forever;
I'd have him kept no longer. Away with him!
One touch will set him flying; let him go.

LEONELLA

Bribe me but with a kiss, it shall be so.

Exeunt.

[IV.ii. The court]

Enter Tyrant wondrous [discontentedly], Nobles [including Memphonius] afar off.

[FIRST] NOBLE

My lord.

TYRANT

Begone, or never see life more!
I'll send thee far enough from court! Memphonius!
Where's he now?

MEMPHONIUS

Ever at your highness' service.

IV.[i. Anselmus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

TYRANT

How dar'st thou be so near when we have threatened
Death to thy fellow? Have we lost our power,
Or thou thy fear? Leave us, in time of grace;
'Twill be too late anon.

MEMPHONIUS

[Aside] I think 'tis so
With thee already.

TYRANT

Dead! And I so healthful!
There's no equality in this. Stay!

MEMPHONIUS

Sir?

TYRANT

Where is that fellow brought the first report to us?

MEMPHONIUS

He waits without.

TYRANT

I charge thee, give command
That he be executed speedily,
As thou't stand firm thyself.

MEMPHONIUS

[Aside] Now, by my faith,
His tongue has helped his neck to a sweet bargain!

Exit Memphonius.

TYRANT

Her own fair hand so cruel! Did she choose
Destruction before me? Was I no better?
How much am I exalted to my face,
And, where I would be graced, how little worthy!
There's few kings know how rich they are in goodness,
Or what estate they have in grace and virtue.
There is so much deceit in glozers' tongues,
The truth is taken from us. We know nothing
But what is for their purpose: that's our stint;
We are allowed no more. Oh, wretched greatness!
I'll cause a sessions for my flatterers
And have 'em all hanged up. 'Tis done too late.
Oh, she's destroyed, married to death and silence,
Which nothing can divorce: riches, nor laws,
Nor all the violence that this frame can raise.
I've lost the comfort of her sight forever.

IV.[i. Anselmus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

I cannot call this life that flames within me,
But everlasting torment lighted up
To show my soul her beggary! A new joy
Is come to visit me in spite of death.
It takes me of that sudden, I'm ashamed
Of my provision, but a friend will bear.
Within there!

Enter [Soldiers].

FIRST SOLDIER

Sir?

SECOND SOLDIER

My lord?

TYRANT

The men I wished for,
For secrecy and employment. Go, give order
That Govianus be released.

FOURTH SOLDIER

Released, sir?

TYRANT

Set free!

[Exit Fourth Soldier.]

And then I trust he will fly the kingdom
And never know my purpose. Run, sir, you;
Bring me the keys of the cathedral straight.

FIRST SOLDIER

[Aside] Are you so holy now? Do you curse all day
And go to pray at midnight?

Exit.

TYRANT

Provide you, sirs, close lanthorns and a pickaxe.
Away, be speedy!

SECOND SOLDIER

[Aside] Lanthorns and a pickaxe?
Life, does he mean to bury himself alive, trow?

[Exeunt Second and Third Soldiers.]

TYRANT

Death nor the marble prison my love sleeps in

IV.[i. Anselmus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Shall keep her body locked from mine arms;
I must not be so cozened. Though her life
Was like a widow's state made o'er in policy
To defeat me and my too-confident heart,
'Twas a most cruel wisdom to herself,
As much to me that loved her.

Enter [First Soldier with keys].

What, returned?

FIRST SOLDIER

Here be the keys, my lord.

TYRANT

I thank thy speed.

[Enter Second and Third Soldiers with lanterns and a pickaxe.]

Here comes the rest full furnished. Follow me,
And wealth shall follow you.

Exit.

FIRST SOLDIER

Wealth! By this light,
We go to rob a church. I hold my life
The money will ne'er thrive; that's a sure saw:
"What's got from grace is ever spent in law."

Exeunt. Enter [Memphonius].

[MEMPHONIUS]

What strange fits grow upon him! Here alate
His soul has got a very dreadful leader.
What should he make in the cathedral now,
The hour so deep in night? All his intents
Are contrary to man, in spirit or blood.
He waxes heavy in his noble minds;
His moods are such, they cannot bear the weight,
Nor will not long, if there be truth in whispers.
The honourable father of the state,
Noble Helvetius, all the lords agree
By some close policy shortly to set free.

[Exit.]

[IV.iii. A cathedral, before the Lady's tomb]

Enter the Tyrant [with Soldiers] again at a farther door, which opened brings [them] to the tomb where the Lady lies buried. The tomb here discovered, richly set forth.

IV.[i. Anselmus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

TYRANT

Softly, softly.

Let's give this place the peace that it requires.

The vaults e'en chide our steps with murmuring sounds,

For making bold so late. It must be done.

FIRST SOLDIER

I fear nothing but the whorish ghost of a quean I kept once. She swore she would so haunt me I should never pray in quiet for her, and I have kept myself from church this fifteen year to prevent her.

TYRANT

The monument woos me; I must run and kiss it.

Now trust me if the tears do not e'en stand

Upon the marble. What slow springs have I!

'Twas weeping to itself before I came.

How pity strikes e'en through insensible things

And makes them shame our dullness!

Thou house of silence, and the calms of rest

After tempestuous life, I claim of thee

A mistress, one of the most beauteous sleepers

That ever lay so cold, not yet due to thee

By natural death, but cruelly forced hither

Many a fair year before the world could spare her.

We miss her 'mongst the glories of our court

When they be numbered up. All thy still strength,

Thou grey-eyed monument, shall not keep her from us.

[To Second Soldier] Strike, villain, though the echo rail us all

Into ridiculous deafness! Pierce the jaws

Of this cold, ponderous creature.

SECOND SOLDIER

Sir!

TYRANT

Why strik'st thou not?

SECOND SOLDIER

I shall not hold the axe fast, I'm afraid, sir.

TYRANT

Oh, shame of men! A soldier and so limber?

SECOND SOLDIER

'Tis out of my element to be in a church, sir.

Give me the open field and turn me loose, sir.

TYRANT

True, there thou hast room enough to run away.

[To First Soldier] Take thou the axe from him.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

FIRST SOLDIER

I beseech your grace,
'Twill come to a worse hand. You'll find us all
Of one mind for the church, I can assure you, sir.

TYRANT

Nor thou?

THIRD SOLDIER

I love not to disquiet ghosts,
Of any people living; that's my humour, sir!

TYRANT

Oh, slaves of one opinion! Give me't from thee,
Thou man made out of fear! [Seizes the axe.]

SECOND SOLDIER

[Aside] By my faith, I'm glad
I'm rid on't. I that was ne'er before in cathedral
And have the batt'ring of a lady's tomb
Lie hard upon my conscience at first coming:
I should get much by that! It shall be a warning to me;
I'll ne'er come here again.

TYRANT

[Striking the tomb] No, wilt not yield?
Art thou so loath to part from her?

FIRST SOLDIER

[Aside] Life, what means he?
Has he no feeling with him? By this light, if I be not afraid to stay any longer, I'm a stone-cutter. Very fear will
go nigh to turn me of some religion or other, and so make me forfeit my lieutenantship.

TYRANT

Oh, have we got the mastery? Help, you vassals!
Freeze you in idleness and can see us sweat?

SECOND SOLDIER

We sweat with fear as much as work can make us.

TYRANT

Remove the stone that I may see my mistress.
Set to your hands, you villains, and that nimbly,
Or the same axe shall make you all fly open!

ALL [SOLDIERS]

Oh, good my lord!

TYRANT

I must not be delayed!

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

FIRST SOLDIER

This is ten thousand times worse than ent'ring upon a breach.
'Tis the first stone that ever I took off
From any lady; marry, I have brought 'em many:
Fair diamonds, sapphires, rubies.

[They remove the stone.]

TYRANT

Oh, blessed object!
I never shall be weary to behold thee;
I could eternally stand thus and see thee.
Why, 'tis not possible death should look so fair;
Life is not more illustrious when health smiles on't.
She's only pale, the colour of the court,
And most attractive; mistresses most strive for't
And their lascivious servants best affect it.
Where be these lazy hands again?

SOLDIERS

My lord!

TYRANT

Take up her body.

FIRST SOLDIER

How, my lord!

TYRANT

Her body!

FIRST SOLDIER

She's dead, my lord!

TYRANT

True; if she were alive,
Such slaves as you should not come near to touch her.
Do't, and with all best reverence; place her here.

FIRST SOLDIER

Not only, sir, with reverence, but with fear.
You shall have more than your own asking once.
I am afraid of nothing but she'll rise
At the first jog, and save us all a labour.

SECOND SOLDIER

Then we were best take her up and never touch her.

FIRST SOLDIER

Life, how can that be? Does fear make thee mad?
I've took up many a woman in my days,

IV.[i. Anselmus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

But never with less pleasure, I protest!

TYRANT

Oh, the moon rises! What reflection
Is thrown about this sanctified building
E'en in a twinkling! How the monuments glisten,
As if death's palaces were all massy silver
And scorned the name of marble! Art thou cold?
I have no faith in't yet; I believe none.
Madam! 'Tis I, sweet lady. Prithee speak!
'Tis thy love calls on thee, thy king, thy servant.
No? Not a word? All prisoners to pale silence?
I'll prove a kiss.

FIRST SOLIDER

[Aside] Here's fine chill venery!
'Twould make a pander's heels ache. I'll be sworn
All my teeth chatter in my head to see't.

TYRANT

By th' mass, thou'rt cold indeed! Beshrew thee for't!
Unkind to thine own blood? Hard-hearted lady!
What injury hast thou offered to the youth
And pleasure of thy days! Refuse the court
And steal to this hard lodging: was that wisdom?
Oh, I could chide thee with mine eye brimful,
And weep out my forgiveness when I ha' done!
Nothing hurt thee but want of woman's counsel:
Hadst thou but asked th' opinion of most ladies,
Thou'dst never come to this; they would have told thee
How dear a treasure life and youth had been.
'Tis that they fear to lose; the very name
Can make more gaudy tremblers in a minute
Than heaven or sin or hell: those are last thought on.
And where got'st thou such boldness from the rest
Of all thy timorous sex, to do a deed here
Upon thyself would plunge the world's best soldier
And make him twice bethink him, and again,
And yet give over? Since thy life has left me,
I'll clasp the body for the spirit that dwelt in't,
And love the house still for the mistress' sake.
Thou art mine now, spite of destruction
And Govianus, and I will possess thee.
I once read of a Herod, whose affection
Pursued a virgin's love, as I did thine,
Who for the hate she owed him killed herself,
As thou too rashly didst, without all pity.
Yet he preserved her body dead in honey,
And kept her long after her funeral.
But I'll unlock the treasure house of art
With keys of gold, and bestow all on thee.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Here, slaves, receive her humbly from our arms.
Upon your knees, you villains! All's too little
If you should sweep the pavement with your lips.

FIRST SOLDIER

[Aside] What strange brooms he invents!

TYRANT

So reverently
Bear her before us gently to our palace.
Place you the stone again where first we found it.

Exeunt [with body]. Manet First Soldier.

FIRST SOLDIER

Life, must this on now to deceive all comers
And covet emptiness? 'Tis for all the world
Like a great city—pie brought to a table
Where there be many hands that lay about:
The lid's shut close when all the meat's picked out,
Yet stands to make a show and cozen people.

Exit.

[IV.iv. The Lady's tomb]

Enter Govianus in black, a book in his hand, his Page carrying a torch before him.

GOVIANUS

Already mine eye melts. The monument
No sooner stood before it but a tear
Ran swiftly from me to express her duty.
Temple of honour, I salute thee early,
The time that my griefs rise. Chamber of peace,
Where wounded virtue sleeps locked from the world,
I bring to be acquainted with thy silence
Sorrows that love no noise; they dwell all inward,
Where truth and love in every man should dwell.
Be ready, boy; give me the strain again.
'Twill show well here; whilst in my grief's devotion
At every rest mine eye lets fall a bead
To keep the number perfect.

GOVIANUS kneels at the tomb [wondrous] passionately. His Page sings.

The song.

If ever pity were well placed
On true desert and virtuous honour,
It could ne'er be better graced;
Freely then bestow 't upon her.

IV.[i. Anselmus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Never lady earned her fame
In virtue's war with greater strife;
To preserve her constant name
She gave up beauty, youth, and life.
There she sleeps,
And here he weeps,
The lord unto so rare a wife.

Weep, weep, and mourn lament,
You virgins that pass by her,
For if praise come by death again,
I doubt few will lie nigh her.

GOVIANUS

Thou art an honest boy. 'Tis done like one
That has a feeling of his master's passions
And the unmatched worth of his dead mistress.
Thy better years shall find me good to thee,
When understanding ripens in thy soul,
Which truly makes the man, and not long time.
Prithee withdraw a little, and attend me
At cloister door.

PAGE

It shall be done, my lord.

[Exit.]

GOVIANUS

Eternal maid of honour, whose chaste body
Lies here like virtue's close and hidden seed,
To spring forth glorious to eternity
At the everlasting harvest—

WITHIN

I am not here.

GOVIANUS

What's that? Who is not here? I'm forced to question it.
Some idle sounds the beaten vaults send forth.

On a sudden, in a kind of noise like a wind, the doors clattering, the tombstone flies open, and a great light appears in the midst of the tomb; his Lady, as went out, standing just before him all in white, stuck with jewels, and a great crucifix on her breast.

Mercy, look to me! Faith, I fly to thee!
Keep a strong watch about me! Now thy friendship!
Oh, never came astonishment and fear
So pleasing to mankind! I take delight
To have my breast shake and my hair stand stiff.
If this be horror, let it never die!
Came all the pains of hell in that shape to me,

IV.[i. Anselmus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

I should endure 'em smiling. Keep me still
In terror, I beseech thee. I'd not change
This fever for felicity of man
Or all the pleasures of ten thousand ages.

LADY

Dear lord, I come to tell you all my wrongs.

GOVIANUS

Welcome! Who wrongs the spirit of my love?
Thou art above the injuries of blood;
They cannot reach thee now. What dares offend thee?
No life that has the weight of flesh upon't
And treads as I do can now wrong my mistress.

LADY

The peace that death allows me is not mine;
The monument is robbed. Behold, I'm gone;
My body taken up.

GOVIANUS

'Tis gone indeed!
What villain dares so fearfully run in debt
To black eternity?

LADY

He that dares do more:
The tyrant!

GOVIANUS

All the miseries below
Reward his boldness!

LADY

I am now at court
In his own private chamber. There he woos me
And plies his suit to me with as serious pains
As if the short flame of mortality
Were lighted up again in my cold breast,
Folds me within his arms and often sets
A sinful kiss upon my senseless lip,
Weeps when he sees the paleness of my cheek,
And will send privately for a hand of art
That may dissemble life upon my face
To please his lustful eye.

GOVIANUS

Oh, piteous wrongs!
Inhuman injuries without grace or mercy!

LADY

IV.[i. Anselmus' house]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

I leave 'em to thy thought, dearest of men.
My rest is lost; thou must restore 't again.

GOVIANUS

Oh, fly me not so soon!

LADY

Farewell, true lord.

Exit Lady.

GOVIANUS

I cannot spare thee yet. I'll make myself
Over to death too, and we'll walk together
Like loving spirits; I prithee let's do so!
She's snatched away by fate, and I talk sickly.
I must dispatch this business upon earth
Before I take that journey.
I'll to my brother for his aid or counsel.
So wrong'd! Oh, heav'n, put armour on my spirit!
Her body I will place in her first rest,
Or in th' attempt lock death into my breast.

Exit.

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

Enter Votarius with Anselmus the husband.

VOTARIUS

You shall stand here, my lord, unseen, and hear all.
Do I deal now like a right friend with you?

ANSELMUS

Like a most faithful.

VOTARIUS

You shall have her mind e'en as it comes to me,
Though I undo her by't. Your friendship, sir,
Is the sweet mistress that I only serve.
I prize the roughness of a man's embrace
Before the soft lips of a hundred ladies.

ANSELMUS

And that's an honest mind of thee.

VOTARIUS

Lock yourself, sir,
Into that closet, and be sure none see you.
Trust not a creature. We'll have all run clear
E'en as the heart affords it.

ANSELMUS

'Tis a match, sir.

[Retires to closet.]

VOTARIUS

Troth, he says true there. 'Tis a match indeed.
He does not know the strength of his own words,
For, if he did, there were no mast'ring on him!
H'as cleft the pin in two with a blind man's eyes.
Though I shoot wide, I'll cozen him of the game.

Exit. [Enter] Leonella above in a gallery with her love Bellarius.

LEONELLA

Dost thou see thine enemy walk?

BELLARIUS

I would I did not.

LEONELLA

Prithee rest quiet, man; I have fee'd one for him:
A trusty catchpole, too, that will be sure on him.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Thou know'st this gallery well: 'tis at thy use now;
'T'as been at mine full often. Thou mayst sit
Like a most private gallant in yon corner,
See all the play and ne'er be seen thyself.

BELLARIUS

Therefore I chose it.

LEONELLA

Thou shalt see my lady
Play her part naturally, more to the life
Than she's aware on.

BELLARIUS

There must I be pleased.
Thou'rt one of the actors; thou't be missed anon.

LEONELLA

Alas, a woman's action's always ready.
Yet I'll down now I think on't.

BELLARIUS

Do; 'tis time, i'faith.

Descendet Leonella.

ANSELMUS

[Aside] I know not yet where I should plant belief,
I am so strangely toss'd between two tales.
I'm told by my wife's woman the deed's done,
And in Votarius' tongue 'tis yet to come:
The castle is but upon yielding yet;
'Tis not delivered up. Well, we shall find
The mystery shortly. I will entertain
The patience of a prisoner i' th' meantime.

Locks himself in. Enter Anselmus' [Wife] and Leonella.

WIFE

[Aside to her] Is all set ready, wench?

LEONELLA

Push, madam, all.

WIFE

[Aloud] Tell me not so. She lives not for a lady
That has less peace than I.

LEONELLA

Nay, good sweet madam,
You would not think how much this passion alters you.

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

It drinks up all the beauty of your cheek;
I promise you, madam, you have lost much blood.

WIFE

Let it draw death upon me, for till then
I shall be mistress of no true content.
Who could endure hourly temptation
And bear it as I do?

LEONELLA

Nay, that's most certain,
Unless it were myself, again. I can do't;
I suffer the like daily. You should complain, madam.

WIFE

Which way? Were that wisdom? Prithee, wench, to whom?

LEONELLA

To him that makes all whole again, my lord,
To one that, if he be a kind, good husband,
Will let you bear no more than you are able.

WIFE

Thou know'st not what thou speak'st. Why, my lord's he
That gives him the house—freedom, all his boldness,
Keeps him a' purpose here to war with me.

LEONELLA

Now I hold wiser of my lord than so.
He knows the world; he would not be so idle.

WIFE

I speak sad truth to thee. I am not private
In mine own chamber, such his imprudence is.
Nay, my repenting time is scarce blessed from him;
He will offend my prayers.

LEONELLA

Out upon him!
I believe, madam, he's of no religion.

WIFE

He serves my lord, and that's enough for him,
And [preys] upon poor ladies like myself:
There's all the gentleman's devotion!

LEONELLA

Marry, the devil of hell give him his blessing!

WIFE

Pray watch the door, and suffer none to trouble us

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Unless it be my lord.

LEONELLA

[Aside] 'Twas finely spoke, that;
My lord indeed is the most trouble to her.
Now must I show a piece of service here.
How do I spend my days! Life, shall I never
Get higher than a lady's doorkeeper?
I must be married as my lady is, first,
And then my maid may do as much for me.

WIFE

Oh, miserable time! Except my lord
Do wake in honourable pity to me
And rid this vicious gamester from his house,
Whom I have checked so often, here I vow
I'll imitate my noble sister's fate,
Late mistress to the worthy Govianus,
And cast away my life as [she] did hers.

Enter Votarius to the door within.

LEONELLA

Back! Y'are too forward, sir. There's no coming for you.

VOTARIUS

How, Mistress Len, my lady's smock-woman!
Am I no farther in your duty yet?

LEONELLA

Duty! Look for't of them you keep under, sir.

VOTARIUS

You'll let me in?

LEONELLA

Who would you speak withal?

VOTARIUS

With the best lady you make curtsy to.

LEONELLA

She will not speak with you.

VOTARIUS

Have you her mind?
I scorn to take her answer of her broker.

LEONELLA

Madam!

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

WIFE

What's there? How now, sir, what's your business?
We see your boldness plain.

VOTARIUS

I came to see you, madam.

WIFE

Farewell, then; though 'twas impudence too much
When I was private.

VOTARIUS

Madam!

WIFE

Life, he was born
To beggar all my patience!

VOTARIUS

I'm bold
Still to prefer my love. Your woman hears me not.

WIFE

Where's modesty and honour? Have I not thrice
Answered thy lust?

LEONELLA

[Aside] Byrlady, I think oft'ner.

WIFE

And dar'st thou yet look with temptation on us?
Since nothing will prevail, come death, come vengeance!
I will forget the weakness of my kind
And force thee from my chamber!

[Thrusts at him with the sword.]

VOTARIUS

How now, lady!
'Ud's life, you prick me, madam!

WIFE

[Aside to him] Prithee peace;
I will not hurt thee.—Will you yet be gone, sir?

LEONELLA

He's upon going, I think.

VOTARIUS

Madam! Heart, you deal false with me! Oh, I feel it!
Y'are a most treacherous lady! This thy glory?

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

My breast is all afire! Oh!

[Dies.]

LEONELLA

Ha, ha, ha!

ANSELMUS

[Coming from the closet] Ha! I believe her constancy too late,
Confirmed e'en in the blood of my best friend!

[Seizing the sword] Take thou my vengeance, thou bold, perjurious strumpet,
That durst accuse thy virtuous lady falsely!

Kills Leonella. Enter Bellarius [descending from the gallery].

BELLARIUS

[Aside] Oh, deadly poison after a sweet banquet!
What make I here? I had forgot my heart.

I am an actor too, and never thought on't;
The blackness of this season cannot miss me.--
[Drawing a sword] Sirrah, you, lord!

WIFE

Is he there? Welcome, ruin!

BELLARIUS

There is a life due to me in that bosom
For this poor gentlewoman.

ANSELMUS

And art thou then receiver?
I'll pay thee largely, slave, for thy last scape!

They make a dangerous pass at one another. The Wife purposely runs between, and is killed by them both.

WIFE

I come, Votarius!

[Dies.]

ANSELMUS

[To Bellarius] Hold, if manhood guide thee!
[Kneeling beside his Wife] Oh, what has fury done?

BELLARIUS

What has it done now?
Why, killed an honourable whore, that's all.

ANSELMUS

Villain, I'll seal that lie upon thy heart!
A constant lady!

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

BELLARIUS

To the devil, as could be!
Heart, must I prick you forward? Either up
Or, sir, I'll take my chance. Thou couldst kill her
Without repenting that deserved more pity,
And spend'st thy time and tears upon a quean—

ANSELMUS

Slave!

BELLARIUS

That was deceived once in her own deceit!

[They fight and wound each other mortally.]

As I am now. The poison I prepared
Upon that weapon for mine enemy's bosom
Is bold to take acquaintance of my blood too,
And serves us both to make up death withal.

ANSELMUS

I ask no more of destiny but to fall
Close by the chaste side of my virtuous mistress.
If all the treasure of my weeping strength
Be left so wealthy but to purchase that,
I have the dear wish of a great man's spirit.
[Dragging himself to her] Yet favour me, oh, yet! [Reaching her] I thank thee, fate.
I expire cheerfully and give death a smile.

ANSELMUS [seemingly] dies.

BELLARIUS

Oh, rage! I pity now mine enemy's flesh.

Enter Govianus with Servants.

GOVIANUS

Where should he be?

FIRST SERVANT

My lady, sir, will tell you.
She's in her chamber here.

SECOND SERVANT

[Seeing the bodies] Oh, my lord!

GOVIANUS

Peace!
My honourable brother, madam, all,
So many dreadful deeds, and not one tongue

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Left to proclaim 'em?

BELLARIUS

Yes, here, if a voice
Some minute long may satisfy your ear;
I've that time allowed it.

GOVIANUS

'Tis enough.
Bestow it quickly ere death snatch it from thee.

BELLARIUS

That lord, your brother, made his friend Votarius
To tempt his lady. She was won to lust,
The act revealed here by her serving-woman.
But that wise, close adulteress, stored with art
To prey upon the weakness of that lord,
Dissembled a great rage upon her love
And indeed killed him; which so won her husband,
He slew this right discoverer in his fury,
Who being my mistress, I was moved in heart
To take some pains with him, and h'as paid me for't.
As for the cunning lady, I commend her.
She performed that which never woman tried:
She ran upon two weapons and so died.
Now you have all, I hope I shall sleep quiet.

Dies.

ANSELMUS

Oh, thunder that awakes me e'en from death
And makes me curse my confidence with cold lips!
I feel his words in flames about by soul;
H'as more than killed me.

GOVIANUS

Brother!

ANSELMUS

I repent the smile
That I bestowed on destiny! A whore!
[To Wife] I fling thee thus from my believing breast
With all the strength I have; my rage is great
Although my veins grow beggars. Now I sue
To die far from thee; may we never meet!
Were my soul bid to joy's eternal banquet,
And were assured to find thee there a guest,
I'd sup with torments and refuse that feast.
Oh, thou beguiler of man's easy trust!
"The serpent's wisdom is in women's lust."

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Dies.

GOVIANUS

Is death so long a-coming to mankind
It must be met halfways? 'Las, the full time
Is to eternity but a minute, a [.]
Was that so long to stay? Oh, cruel speed!
There's few men pay their debts before their day;
If they be ready at their time, 'tis well,
And but a few that are so. What strange haste
Was made among these people! My heart weeps for't.
[To Servants] Go, bear those bodies to a place more comely.

[Servants carry out the bodies.]

Brother, I came for thy advice, but I
Find thee so ill a counsellor to thyself
That I repent my pains and depart sighing.
The body of my love is still at court;
I am not well to think on't. The poor spirit
Was with me once again about it, troth,
And I can put it off no more for shame,
Though I desire to have it haunt me still
And never give me over, 'tis so pleasing.
I must to court. I've plighted my faith to't;
'T'as opened me the way to the revenge.
TYRANT, I'll run thee on a dangerous shelf,
Though I be forced to fly this land myself.

Exit.

[V.ii. The court]

Enter Tyrant with attendants.

TYRANT

In vain my spirit wrestles with my blood;
Affection will be mistress here on earth.
The house is hers; the soul is but a tenant.
I ha' tasked myself but with the abstinence
Of one poor hour, yet cannot conquer that;
I cannot keep from sight of her so long:
I starve mine eye too much. Go, bring her forth,
As we have caused her body to be decked
In all the glorious riches of our palace.

[Exit an attendant.]

Our mind has felt a famine for the time;
All comfort has been dear and scarce with us.
The times are altered since. Strike on, sweet harmony!

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Music.

A braver world comes toward us.

Enter [First and Second] Soldiers with the Lady. They bring the body in a chair, dressed up in black velvet which sets out the paleness of the hands and face, and a fair chain of pearl 'cross her breast, and the crucifix above it. He stands silent awhile, letting the music play, beckoning the Soldiers that bring her in to make obeisance to her, and he himself makes a low honour to the body and kisses the hand. A song within, in voices.

Song.

Oh, what is beauty, that's so much adored?
A flatt'ring glass that cozens her beholders.
One night of death makes it look pale and horrid;
The dainty preserved flesh, how soon it moulders.
To love it living it bewitcheth many,
But after life is seldom heard of any.

FIRST SOLDIER

[Aside] By this hand, mere idolatry. I make curtsy
To my damnation. I have learned so much,
Though I could never know the meaning yet
Of all my Latin prayers, nor ne'er sought for't.

TYRANT

How pleasing art thou to us even in death!
I love thee yet, above all women living,
And shall do sev'n year hence.
I can see nothing to be mended in thee
But the too constant paleness of thy cheek.
I'd give the kingdom but to purchase there
The breadth of a red rose, in natural colour,
And think it the best bargain
That ever king made yet; but fate's my hindrance,
And I must only rest content with art,
And that I'll have in spite on't! Is he come, sir?

SECOND SOLDIER

Who, my lord?

TYRANT

Dull! The fellow that we sent
For a court schoolmaster, a picture-drawer,
A ladies' forenoon tutor. Is he come, sir?

FIRST SOLDIER

Not yet returned, my lord.

TYRANT

The fool belike
Makes his choice carefully, for so we charged him,
To fit our close deeds with some private hand.

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

It is no shame for thee, most silent mistress,
To stand in need of art,
When youth and all thy warm friends has forsook thee.
Women alive are glad to seek her friendship
To make up the fair number of their graces,
Or else the reck'ning would fall short sometimes,
And servants would look out for better wages.

Enter Third Soldier with Govianus [disguised].

SECOND SOLDIER
He's come, my lord.

TYRANT
Depart, then.

[Exeunt First and Second Soldiers and attendants. Manet Third Soldier.]

Is that he?

THIRD SOLDIER
The privat'st I could get, my lord.

GOVIANUS
[Aside] Oh, heav'n, marry patience to my spirit!
Give me a sober fury, I beseech thee,
A rage that may not overcharge my blood
And do myself most hurt! [To the Lady] 'Tis strange to me
To see thee here at court, and gone from hence.
Didst thou make haste to leave the world for this?
And kept in the worst corner!
Oh, who dares play with destiny but he
That wears security so thick upon him
The thought of death and hell cannot pierce through!

TYRANT
[To Third Soldier] 'Twas circumspectly carried. Leave us; go.

[Exit Third Soldier.]

Be nearer, sir. Thou'rt much commended to us.

GOVIANUS
It is the hand, my lord, commends the workman.

TYRANT
Thou speak'st both modesty and truth in that.
We need that art that thou art master of.

GOVIANUS
My king is master both of that and me.

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

TYRANT

Look on yon face and tell me what it wants.

GOVIANUS

Which, that, sir?

TYRANT

That! What wants it?

GOVIANUS

Troth, my lord,
Some thousand years' sleep and a marble pillow.

TYRANT

What's that? [Aside] Observe it still: all the best arts
Hath the most fools and drunkards to their masters.—
Thy apprehension has too gross a film
To be employed at court. What colour wants she?

GOVIANUS

By my troth, all, sir. I see none she has,
Nor none she cares for.

TYRANT

[Aside] I am overmatched here.

GOVIANUS

A lower chamber with less noise were kindlier
For her, poor woman, whatsoe'er she was.

TYRANT

But how if we be pleased to have it thus,
And thou well hired to do what we command?
Is not your work for money?

GOVIANUS

Yes, my lord.
I would not trust at court and I could choose.

TYRANT

Let but thy art hide death upon her face,
That now looks fearfully on us, and but strive
To give our eye delight in that pale part
Which draws so many pities from these springs,
And thy reward for't shall outlast thy end,
And reach to thy friend's fortunes, and his friend.

GOVIANUS

Say you so, my lord? I'll work out my heart, then,
But I'll show art enough.

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

TYRANT

About it, then.
I never wished so seriously for health
After long sickness.

GOVIANUS

[Aside] A religious trembling shakes me by the hand
And bids me put by such unhallowed business,
But revenge calls for't, and it must go forward.
'Tis time the spirit of my love took rest;
Poor soul, 'tis weary, much abused and toiled.

[He paints her face and secretly applies poison to her lips.]

TYRANT

Could I now send for one to renew heat
Within her bosom, that were a fine workman!
I should but too much love him. But alas,
'Tis as impossible for living fire
To take hold there,
As for dead ashes to burn back again
Into those hard, tough bodies whence they fell.
Life is removed from her now, as the warmth
Of the bright sun from us when it makes winter
And kills with unkind coldness. So is't yonder;
An everlasting frost hangs now upon her.
And as in such a season men will force
A heat into their bloods with exercise,
In spite of extreme weather, so shall we
By art force beauty on yon lady's face
Though death sit frowning on't a storm of hail
To beat it off. Our pleasure shall prevail.

GOVIANUS

My lord.

TYRANT

Hast done so soon?

GOVIANUS

That's as your grace
Gives approbation.

TYRANT

Oh, she lives again!
She'll presently speak to me. Keep her up;
I'll have her swoon no more: there's treachery in't.
Does she not feel warm to thee?

GOVIANUS

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Very little, sir.

TYRANT

The heat wants cherishing, then. Our arms and lips
Shall labour life into her. Wake, sweet mistress!
'Tis I that call thee at the door of life. [Kisses her.] Ha!
I talk so long to death, I'm sick myself.
Methinks an evil scent still follows me.

GOVIANUS

Maybe 'tis nothing but the colour, sir,
That I laid on.

TYRANT

Is that so strong?

GOVIANUS

Yes, faith, sir,
'Twas the best poison I could get for money.

[Removes his disguise.]

TYRANT

GOVIANUS!

GOVIANUS

Oh, thou sacrilegious villain!
Thou thief of rest, robber of monuments!
Cannot the body after funeral
Sleep in the grave for thee? Must it be raised
Only to please the wickedness of thine eye?
Does all things end with death and not thy lust?
Hast thou devised a new way to damnation,
More dreadful than the soul of any sin
Did ever pass yet between earth and hell?
Dost strive to be particularly plagued
Above all ghosts beside? Is thy pride such
Thou scorn'st a partner in thy torments too?

TYRANT

What fury gave thee boldness to attempt
This deed, for which I'll doom thee with a death
Beyond the Frenchman's tortures?

GOVIANUS

I smile at thee.
Draw all the death that ever mankind suffered
Unto one head to help thine own invention,
And make my end as rare as this thy sin
And full as fearful to the eyes of women,
My spirit shall fly singing to his lodging

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

In midst of that rough weather. Doom me, tyrant.
Had I feared death, I'd never appeared noble
To seal this act upon me, which e'en honours me
Unto my mistress' spirit: it loves me for't.
I told my heart 'twould prove destruction to't,
Who, hearing 'twas for her, charged me to do't.

TYRANT

Thy glories shall be shortened! Who's within there?

Enter the ghost [of the Lady] in the same form as the [body of the] Lady is dress'd in the chair.

I called not thee, thou enemy to firmness,
Mortality's earthquake!

GOVIANUS

Welcome to mine eyes
As is the dayspring from the morning's womb
Unto that wretch whose nights are tedious
As liberty to captives, health to labourers,
And life still to old people, never weary on't,
So welcome art thou to me! The deed's done,
Thou queen of spirits; he has his end upon him.
Thy body shall return to rise again,
For thy abuser falls, and has no pow'r
To vex thee farther now.

[LADY]

My truest love,
Live ever honoured here and blessed above.

[Exit.]

TYRANT

Oh, if there be a hell for flesh and spirit,
'Tis built within this bosom!

Enter Nobles [including Memphonius].

My lords, treason!

GOVIANUS

Now, death, I'm for thee. Welcome!

TYRANT

Your king's poisoned!

MEMPHONIUS

The king of heav'n be praised for't!

TYRANT

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

Lay hold on him,
On Govianus!

MEMPHONIUS

E'en with the best loves
And truest hearts that ever subjects owed.

TYRANT

How's that? I charge you both, lay hands on him!

MEMPHONIUS

Look you, my lord, your will shall be obeyed.

Enter Helvetius.

Here comes another; we'll have his hand too.

HELVETIUS

You shall have both mine, if that work go forward,
Beside my voice and knee.

TYRANT

HELVETIUS!

Then my destruction was confirmed amongst 'em;
Premeditation wrought it! Oh, my torments!

ALL [NOBLES]

Live Govianus long our virtuous king!

Flourish.

TYRANT

That thunder strikes me dead.

[Dies.]

GOVIANUS

I cannot better
Reward my joys than with astonished silence,
For all the wealth of words is not of power
To make up thanks for you, my honoured lords!
I'm like a man plucked up from many waters,
That never looked for help, and am here placed
Upon this cheerful mountain where prosperity
Shoots forth her richest beam.

MEMPHONIUS

Long-injured lord,
The tyranny of his actions grew so weighty,
His life so vicious—

V.[i. Anselmus' house, the bedchamber]

The Second Maiden's Tragedy

HELVETIUS

To which this is witness—
Monster in sin!—this, the disquieted body
Of my too resolute child in honour's war—

MEMPHONIUS

That he become as hateful to our minds—

HELVETIUS

As death's unwelcome to a house of riches,
Or what can more express it.

GOVIANUS

Well, he's gone,
And all the kingdom's evils perish with him.
And since the body of that virtuous lady
Is taken from her rest, in memory
Of her admired mistress, 'tis our will
It receive honour dead, as it took part
With us in all afflictions when it lived.
Here place her in this throne; crown her our queen,
The first and last that ever we make ours,
Her constancy strikes so much firmness in us.
That honour done, let her be solemnly borne
Unto the house of peace from whence she came
As queen of silence.

The spirit [of the Lady] enters again and stays to go out with the body, as it were attending it.

Oh, welcome, blessed spirit!
Thou need'st not mistrust me; I have a care
As jealous as thine own. We'll see it done
And not believe report. Our zeal is such
We cannot reverence chastity too much.
Lead on!
I would those ladies that fill honour's rooms
Might all be borne so honest to their tombs.

Recorders or other solemn music plays them out.

FINIS