

# **Volpone**

Ben Jonson

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# Volpone

Ben Jonson

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Volpone

by

Ben Jonson

*Prepared from 1607 Quarto (STC 14783) by Hugh Craig, D of English, U of Newcastle. OTA A-1433-A*

Act 1

Scene 1.1

A

Good morning to the Day; and, next, my Gold:  
Open the shrine, that I may see my Saint.  
Hayle the worlds soule, and mine. More glad then is  
The teeming earth, to see the longd-for Sunne  
Peepe through the hornes of the Cælestiall Ram,  
Am I, to view thy splendor, darkening his:  
That lying here, amongst my other hoordes,  
Shew'st like a flame, by night; or like the Day  
Strooke out of Chaos, when all darkenes fled  
Unto the center. O thou Son of Sol,  
(But brighter then thy father) let me kisse,  
With adoration, thee, and euery relique  
Of sacred treasure, in this blessed roome.  
Well did wise Poets, by thy glorious name,  
Title that age, which they would have the best;  
Thou being the best of things: and far transcending  
All stile of ioy, in children, parents, friends,  
Or any other waking dreame on earth.  
Thy lookes when they to Venus did ascribe,  
They should have given her twenty thousand Cupids;  
Such are thy beauties, and our loves. Deare Saint,  
Riches, the dombe God, that giu'st all men tongues;

Volpone

That canst do naught, and yet mak'st men do all things;  
The price of soules; euen hell, with thee to boote,  
Is made worth heauen. Thou art vertue, fame,  
Honor, and all things else. Who can get thee  
He shall be noble, valiant, honest, wise, ---

**B**

And what he will Sir. Riches are in fortune  
A greater good, then wisdom is in nature.

**A**

True, my beloved Mosca. Yet, I glory  
More in the cunning purchase of my wealth,  
Then in the glad possession; since I gaine  
No common way: I vse no trade, no venter;  
I wound no earth with plow-shares; fat no beasts  
To feede the Shambles; have no mills for iron,  
Oyle, corne, or men, to grinde them into poulder;  
I blow no subtill glasse; expose no shippes  
To threatnings of the furrow-faced sea;  
I turne no moneys, in the publike banke;  
Nor vsure priuate.

**B**

No Sir, nor deuoure  
Soft prodigalls. You shall have some will swallow  
A melting heire, as glibly, as your Dutch  
Will pills of butter, and ne're purge for it;  
Teare forth the fathers of poore families  
Out of their beds, and coffin them aliue,  
In some kinde, clasping prison, where their bones  
May be forth-comming, when the flesh is rotten:  
But your sweet nature doth abhorre these courses;  
You loath, the widdowes, or the orphans teares  
Should washe your pauements; or their pityous cries  
Ring in your roofes: and beate the ayre, for vengeance.

**A**

Right, Mosca, I do loath it.

**B**

And besides, Sir,  
You are not like a thresher, that doth stand  
With a huge flaile, watching a heape of corne,  
And, hungry, dares not taste the smallest graine,  
But feedes on mallowes, and such bitter herbes;

Nor like the merchant, who hath fill'd his vaults  
With Romagnia, and rich Candian wines,  
Yet drinks the lees of Lombards vineger:  
You will not lie in straw, whilst mothes, and wormes  
Feed on your sumptuous hangings, and soft bedds.  
You know the vse of riches, and dare give, now,  
From that bright heape, to me, your poore obseruer,  
Or to your Dwarfe, or your Hermaphrodite,  
Your Eunuch, or what other household-trifle  
Your pleasure allowes maint'nance.

**A**

Hold thee, Mosca,  
Take of my hand; thou strik'st on truth, in all:  
And they are enuious, terme thee Parasite.  
Call forth my Dwarfe, my Eunuch, and my Foole,  
And let them make me sport. What should I do,  
But cocker up my Genius, and liue free  
To all delights, my fortune calls me too?  
I have no wife, no parent, childe, allye,  
To give my substance too; but whome I make,  
Must be my heyre: and this makes men obserue me,  
This drawes new clients, dayly, to my house,  
Women, and men, of euery sexe, and age,  
That bring me presents, send me plate, coyne, iewels,  
With hope, that when I die, (which they expect  
Each greedy minute) it shall then returne  
Ten-fold upon them; whilst some, couetous  
Aboue the rest, seeke to engrosse me, whole,  
And counter-worke, the one, unto the other,  
Contend in gifts, as they would seeme, in love:  
All which I suffer, playing with their hopes,  
And am content to coyne them into profit,  
To looke upon their kindnesse, and take more,  
And looke on that; still, bearing them in hand,  
Letting the cherry knock against their lips,

**K**

And, drawe it, by their mouths, and back againe. How now!

## Scene 1.2

**K**

Now roome, for fresh Gamsters, who do will you to know,  
They do bring you neither Play, nor Vniuersity Show;  
And therefore do intreat you, that whatsoever they reherse,

## Volpone

May not fare a whit the worse, for the false pase of the verse.  
If you wonder at this, you will wonder more, ere we passe,  
For know, here is inclos'd the Soule of Pithagoras,  
That Iugler divine, as hereafter shall follow;  
Which Soule (fast, and loose, sir) came first from Apollo,  
And was breath'd into A Ethalides; Mercurius his son,  
Where it had the gift to remember all that euer was done.  
From thence it fled forth, and made quicke transmigration  
To goldy-lockt Euphorbus, who was kill'd, in good fashion,  
At the seege of old Troy, by the Cuckold of Sparta.  
Hermotimus was next (I finde it, in my Charta')  
To whom it did passe, where no sooner it was missing,  
But with one Pirrus, of Delos, it learn'd to go a fishing:  
And thence, did it enter the Sophist of Greece.  
From Pithagore, she went into a beautifull peece,  
Hight Aspasia, the Meretrix; and the next tosse of her  
Was, againe, of a Whore, she became a Philosopher,  
Crates the Cynick: (as it selfe doth relate it)  
Since, Kings, Knights, and Beggars, Knaues, Lords and Fooles gat it,  
Besides, Oxe, and Asse, cammel, Mule, Goat, and Brock,  
In all which it hath spoke, as in the Coblers Cock.  
But I come not here, to discourse of that matter,  
Or his One, Two, or Three, or his greath Oath, by Quater,  
His Musicks, his Trigon, his golden Thigh,  
Or his telling how Elements shift: but I  
Would aske, how of late, thou best suffered translation,  
And shifted thy coat, in these dayes of Reformation?

**V**

Like one of the Reformed, a Foole, as you see,  
Counting all old Doctrine heresie:

**K**

But not on thine own forbid meates hast thou venter'd?

**V**

On fish, when first, a Carthusian I enter'd.

**K**

Why, then thy dogmaticall Silence hath left thee?

**V**

Of that an obstreperous Lawyer bereft me.

**K**

Volpone

O wonderfull change! when Sir Lawyer forsooke thee,  
For Pithagore's sake, what body then tooke thee?

**V**

A good dull Moyle.

**K**

And how?: by that meanes,  
Thou wert brought to allow of the eating of Beanes?

**V**

Yes.

**K**

But, from the Moyle, into whome didst thou passe?

**V**

Into a very strange Beast, by some Writers cal'd an Asse;  
By others, a precise, pure, illuminate Brother,  
Of those deuoure flesh, and sometimes one another:  
And will drop you forth a libell, or a sanctified lie,  
Betwixt euery spooneful of a Natiuity Pie.

**K**

Now quit thee, for Heauen, of that profane nation;  
And gently, report thy next transmigration.

**V**

To the same that I am.

**K**

A Creature of delight?  
And (what is more then a Foole) an Hermaphrodite?  
Now 'pray thee, sweete Soule, in all thy variation,  
Which Body wouldst thou choose, to take up thy station?

**V**

Troth, this I am in, euen here would I tarry.

**K**

Because here, the delight of each Sexe thou canst varie?

**V**

Alas, those pleasures be stale, and forsaken;  
No, it is your Foole, wherewith I am so taken,  
The onely one Creature, that I can call blessed:  
For all other formes I have prou'd most distressed.

**K**

Spoke true, as thou wert in Pithagoras still.  
This learned opinion we celebrate will,  
Fellow Eunuch (as behooues us) with all our wit, and arte,  
To dignifie that, whereof our selues are so great, and special a part.

**A**

Now very, very pretty: Mosca, this  
Was thy inuention?

**B**

If it please my Patron,  
Not else.

**A**

It doth good Mosca.

**B**

Then it was Sir

**V**

Fooles, they are the onely Nation  
Worth mens enuy, or admiration;  
Free from care, or sorrow-taking,  
Themselues, and others merry making:  
All they speake, or do, is sterling.  
Your Foole, he is your great mans dearling,  
And your Ladies sport, and pleasure;  
Tongue, and Bable are his treasure.  
His very face begetteth laughter,  
And he speakes truth, free from slaughter;  
He is the grace of euery feast,  
And, sometimes, the cheefest guest:  
Hath his trencher, and his stoole,  
When wit shall waite upon the Foole:  
O, who would not be  
He, he, he?



**A**

Who is that? away, looke Mosca.

**B**

Foole, be gon,  
It is Signior Voltore, the Aduocate,  
I know him, by his knock.

**A**

Fetch me my gowne,  
My fures, and night-caps; say, my couch is changing:  
And let him intertaine himselfe, a while,  
Within in the gallery. Now, now, my clients  
Beginne their visitation; Vulture, Kite,  
Rauen, and gor-Crowe, all my birds of prey,  
That think me turning carcasse, now they come:  
I am not for them yet. How now? the newes?

**B**

A peece of plate, Sir.

**A**

Of what bignesse?

**B**

Huge,  
Massie, and antique, with your name inscrib'd,  
And armes ingrauen.

**A**

Good, And not a Foxe  
Stretch'd on the earth, with fine delusiue sleights,  
Mocking a gaping Crow? ha, Mosca?

**B**

Sharpe, Sir.

**A**

Give me my fures. Why dost thou laugh so, man?

**B**

I cannot choose, Sir, when I apprehend  
What thoughts he has (within) now, as he walks:  
That this might be the last gift, he should give;  
That this would fetch you; if you died to day,  
And gaue him all, what he should be to morrow;  
What large returne would come of all his venters;  
How he should worship'd be, and reuerenc'd;  
Ride, with his furies, and foote-cloths; waited on  
By heards of Fooles, and clients; have cleare way  
Made for his moyle, as letter'd as himselfe;  
Be cald the great, and learned Aduocate:  
And then concludes, there is nought impossible.

**A**

Yes, to be learned, Mosca;

**B**

O no: rich  
Implies it. Hood an asse, with reuerend purple,  
So you can hide his two ambitious eares,  
And, he shall passe for a cathedrall Doctor.

**A**

My caps, my caps, good Mosca, fetch him in.

**B**

Stay, Sir, your ointment for your eyes.

**A**

That is true;  
Dispatch, dispatch: I long to have possession  
Of my new present.

**B**

That, and thousands more,  
I hope, to see you lord of.

**A**

Thankes, kind Mosca.

**B**

And that, when I am lost in blended dust,

And hundred such, as I am, in succession —

**A**

Nay, that were too much, Mosca.

**B**

You shall liue,  
Still, to delude these Harpyeis.

**A**

Louing Mosca,  
It is well, my pillow now, and let him enter.  
Now, my fain'd Cough, my Pthisick, and my Goute,  
My Apoplexie, Palsie, and Catarrhe,  
Helpe, with your forced functions, this my posture,  
Wherein, this three yeare, I have milk'd their hopes.  
He comes, I heare him (vh, vh, vh, vh) o.

### Scene 1.3

**B**

You still are, what you were, Sir. Onely you  
(Of all the rest) are he, commands his love:  
And you do wisely to preserue it, thus,  
With early visitation, and kinde notes  
Of your good meaning to him, which, I know,  
Cannot but come most gratefull. Patron, Sir.  
Here is Signior Voltore is come —

**A**

What say you?

**B**

Sir Signior Voltore is come, this morning,  
To visit you.

**A**

I thanke him.

**B**

And hath brought

Volpone

A peece of antique plate, bought of S t Marke,  
With which he here presents you.

**A**  
He is welcome.  
Pray him, to come more often.

**B**  
Yes.

**E**  
What saies he?

**B**  
He thanks you, and desires you see him often.

**A**  
Mosca.

**B**  
My Patron?

**A**  
Bring him neare, where is he?  
I long to feele his hand.

**B**  
The plate is here Sir.

**E**  
How fare you Sir?

**A**  
I thanke you, Signior Voltore.  
Where is the plate? mine eyes are bad.

**E**  
I am sorry,  
To see you still thus weake.

**B**

That he is not weaker.

**A**

You are too munificent.

**E**

No Sir. would to heauen,  
I could as well give health to you, as that plate.

**A**

You give Sir what you can. I thanke you. Your love  
Hath tast in this, and shall not be vnanswer'd.  
I pray you see me often.

**E**

Yes, I shall Sir.

**A**

Be not far from me.

**B**

Do you obserue that Sir?

**A**

Hearken unto me, still. It will concerne you.

**B**

You are a happy man Sir, know your good.

**A**

I cannot now last long.

**B**

You are his heyre Sir.

**E**

Am I?

**A**

I feele me going, (vh,vh,vh,vh.)  
I am sayling to my port, (vh,vh,vh,vh?)  
And I am glad, I am so neere my haven.

**B**

Alas, kinde gentleman, well, we must all go.

**E**

But, Mosca.

**B**

Age will conquer.

**E**

'Pray thee heare me.  
Am I inscrib'd his heire, for certain?

**B**

Are you?  
I do beseech you Sir you will vouchsafe  
To write me, in your family. All my hopes,  
Depend upon your worship; I am lost,  
Except the rising Sunne do shine on me.

**E**

It shall both shine, and warme thee, Mosca.

**B**

Sir.  
I am a man, that have not done your love  
All the worst offices here I weare your keys,  
See all your coffers, and your caskets lockt,  
Keepe the poore inuentorie of your iewels,  
Your plate, and moneyes, am your Steward Sir.  
Husband your goods here.

**E**

But am I sole heyre?

**B**

Without a partner Sir confirmde this morning;  
The waxe is warme yet, and the inke scarce dry  
Upon the parchment:

**E**

Happy, happy me!  
By what good chance, sweete Mosca?

**B**

Your desert Sir;  
I know no second cause.

**E**

Thy modesty  
Is loath to know it; well, we shall requite it.

**B**

He euer lik'd your course Sir. That first tooke him.  
I, oft, have heard him say, how he admir'd  
Men of your large profession, that could speake  
To euery cause, and things mere contraries,  
Till they were hearse againe, yet all be Law;  
That, with most quicke agility, could turne,  
And returne; make knots, and vndoe them;  
Give forked councell; take prouoking gold  
On eyther hand, and put it up: These men,  
He knewe, would thriue, with their humility.  
And (for his part) he thought, he should be blest  
To have his heyre of such a suffering spirit,  
So wise, so graue, of so perplex'd a tongue,  
And loud withall, that would not wag, nor scarce  
Lie still, without a fee; when euery word  
Your worship but lets fall, is a Cecchine.  
Who is that? One knockes, I would not have you seen Sir.  
And yet -- pretend you came, and went in hast;  
I will fashion an excuse. And, gentle Sir,  
When you do come to swim, in golden lard,  
Up to the armes, in honey, that your chin  
Is borne up stiffe, with fatnesse of the flood,  
Think on your vassall; but remember me:  
I have not beene your worst of clients.

**E**

Mosca --

**B**

When will you have your inventory brought, Sir  
Or see a copy of the Will? Anone,  
I will bring them to you Sir. Away, be gone,  
Put business in your face.

**A**

Excellent Mosca!  
Come hither, let me kiss thee.

**B**

Keep you still Sir.  
Here is Corbaccio.

**A**

Set the plate away,  
The Vulture is gone, and the old Raven is come.

## Scene 1.4

**B**

Betake you, to your silence, and your sleep:  
Stand there, and multiply. Now, shall we see  
A wretch, who is (indeed) more impotent,  
Then this can feign to be; yet hopes to hop  
Over his grave. Signior Corbaccio,  
You are very welcome, Sir.

**D**

How does your Patron?

**B**

Troth as he did, Sir, no amends.

**D**

What? mends he?

**B**

No, Sir: he is rather worse.



**D**

That is well. Where is he?

**B**

Upon his couch Sir, newly fall'n a sleepe.

**D**

Does he sleepe well?

**B**

No winke, Sir, all this night,  
Nor yesterday, but slumbers.

**D**

Good. He should take  
Some counsell of Physitians: I have brought him  
An Opiate here, from mine own Doctor --

**B**

He will not heare of drugs.

**D**

Why? I my selfe  
Stood by while it was made; saw all the ingredients:  
And know, it cannot but most gently worke.  
My life for his, it is but to make him sleepe.

**A**

Aye, his last sleepe, if he would take it.

**B**

Sir.  
He has no faith in Physick:

**D**

'Say you? 'say you?

**B**

He has no faith in Physick: He does think  
Most of your Doctors are the greater danger,  
And worse disease, to escape. I often have

Heard him protest, that your Physitian  
Should neuer be his heyre.

**D**

Not I his heyre?

**B**

Not your Physitian, Sir.

**D**

O, no, no, no,  
I do not meane it.

**B**

No Sir, nor their fees  
He cannot brooke: He sayes, they flea a man,  
Before they kill him.

**D**

Right, I conceiue you.

**B**

And then, they do it by experiment;  
For which the Law not onely doth absolue them,  
But giues them great reward: And, he is loath  
To hire his death, so.

**D**

It is true, they kill,  
With as much licence, as a Iudge.

**B**

Nay more;  
For he but kills, Sir, where the Law condemnes,  
And these can kill him, too;

**D**

Aye, or me:  
Or any man. How does his Apoplexe?  
Is that strong on him, still?

**B**

Most violent.  
His speech is broken, and his eyes are set,  
His face drawne longer, then it was wont --

**D**

How? how?  
Stronger, then he was wont?

**B**

No, Sir: his face  
Drawne longer, then it was wont.

**D**

O, good.

**B**

His mouth  
Is euer gaping, and his eye-lids hang.

**D**

Good.

**B**

A freezing numnesse stiffens all his ioynts,  
And makes the colour of his flesh like lead.

**D**

It is good.

**B**

His pulse beats slow, and dull.

**D**

Good symptomes, still.

**B**

And, from his braine --

**D**

Ha? how? not from his braine?

**B**

Yes, Sir, and from his braine ---

**D**

I conceiue you, good.

**B**

Flowes a cold sweat, with a continuall rhowme,  
Forth the resolued corners of his eyes.

**D**

Is it possible? yet I am better, ha!  
How does he, with the swimming of his head?

**B**

O, Sir it is past the Scotomy; he, now,  
Hath lost his feeling, and hath left to snort:  
You hardly can perceiue him, that he breaths.

**D**

Excellent, excellent, sure I shall outlast him:  
This makes me yong againe, a score of yeares.

**B**

I was a coming for you, Sir.

**D**

Has he made his Will?  
What has he giu'n me?

**B**

No, Sir.

**D**

Nothing? ha?

**B**

He has not made his Will, Sir.

**D**

O, o, o.

But what did Voltore, the Lawyer, here?

**B**

He smelt a carcasse Sir, when he but heard  
My maister was about his Testament;  
As I did vrge him to it, for your good —

**D**

He came unto him, did he? I thought so.

**B**

Yes, and presented him this peece of plate.

**D**

To be his heire?

**B**

I do not know Sir.

**D**

True,  
I know it too.

**B**

By your own scale, Sir.

**D**

Well,  
I shall preuent him, yet. See Mosca, looke,  
Here, I have brought a bag of bright Cecchines,  
Will quite weigh downe his plate.

**B**

Yea marry, Sir.  
This is true Physick, this your sacred Medicine,  
No talke of Opiates, to this great Elixir.

**D**

It is Aurum palpabile, if not potable.

**B**

It shall be minister'd to him, in his boule?

**D**

Aye, do, do, do.

**B**

Most blessed Cordiall,  
This will recouer him.

**D**

Yes, do, do, do.

**B**

I think, it were not best, Sir.

**D**

What?

**B**

To recouer him.

**D**

O, no, no, no; by no meanes.

**B**

Why, Sir. this  
Will work some strange effect if he but feele it.

**D**

It is true, therefore forbear; I will take my venter:  
Give me it againe.

**B**

At no hand, pardon me;  
You shall not do your selfe that wrong Sir I  
Will so aduise you, you shall have it all.

**D**

How?

**B**

All Sir it is your right, your own; no man  
Can claime a part: it is yours, without a riuall,  
Decre'd by destiny.

**D**

How? how, good Mosca?

**B**

I will tell you Sir. This fit he shall recouer;

**D**

I do conceiue you.

**B**

And, on first aduantage  
Of his gain'd sense, will I re-importune him  
Unto the making of his Testament:  
And shew him this.

**D**

Good, good.

**B**

It is better yet,  
If you will heare, Sir.

**D**

Yes, with all my heart.

**B**

Now, would I counsell you, make home with speed;  
There, frame a Will; whereto you shall inscribe  
My maister your sole heyre.

**D**

And disinherit  
My son?

**B**

O Sir, the better: for that colour  
Shall make it much more taking.

**D**

O, but colour?

**B**

This Will Sir, you shall send it unto me.  
Now, when I come to inforce (as I will do)  
Your cares, your watchings, and your many prayers,  
Your more then many gifts, your this dayes present,  
And last, produce your Will; where (without thought,  
Or least regard, unto your proper issue,  
A son so braue, and highly meriting)  
The streame of your diuerted love hath throwne you  
Upon my maister, and made him your heyre:  
He cannot be so stupide, or stone dead,  
But, out of conscience, and mere gratitude ---

**D**

He must pronounce me, his?

**B**

It is true.

**D**

This plot  
Did I think on before.

**B**

I do beleeeue it.

**D**

Do you not beleeeue it?

**B**

Yes Sir.



*D*  
Mine own proiect.

*B*  
Which when he hath done, Sir.

*D*  
Publish'd me his heire?

*B*  
And you so certaine, to suruiue him.

*D*  
Aye.

*B*  
Beeing so lusty a man.

*D*  
It is true.

*B*  
Yes Sir.

*D*  
I thought on that too. See, how he should be  
The very organ, to expresse my thoughts!

*B*  
You have not onely done your selfe a good,

*D*  
But multiplied it on my son?

*B*  
It is right, Sir.

*D*

Still, my invention.

**B**

'Lasse Sir, heauen knowes,  
It hath beene all my study, all my care,  
(I even grow grey withall) how to worke things --

**D**

I do conceiue, sweet Mosca.

**B**

You are he,  
For whom I labour, here.

**D**

Aye, do, do, do:  
I will straight about it.

**B**

Rooke go with you, Rauen.

**D**

I know thee honest.

**B**

You do lie, Sir.

**D**

And --

**B**

Your knowledge is no better then your eares, Sir.

**D**

I do not doubt, to be a father to thee.

**B**

Nor I, to gull my brother of his blessing.

**D**

I may have my youth restor'd to me, why not?

**B**

Your worship is a precious asse.

**D**

What sayest thou?

**B**

I do desire your worship, to make hast, Sir.

**D**

It is done, it is done, I go.

**A**

O, I shall burst;  
Let out my sides, let out my sides —

**B**

Containe  
Your fluxe of laughter, Sir; you know, this hope  
Is such a baite, it couers any hooke.

**A**

O, but thy working, and thy placing it!  
I cannot hold; good rascall, let me kisse thee:  
I neuer knew thee, in so rare a humor.

**B**

Alas Sir, I but do, as I am taught;  
Follow your graue instructions; give them words;  
Powre oyle into their eares: and send them hence.

**A**

It is true, it is true. What a rare punishment  
Is auarice, to it selfe?

**B**

Aye, with our help, Sir.

**A**

So many cares, so many maladies,  
So many feares attending on old age,  
Yea, death so often call'd on, as no wish  
Can be more frequent with them, their limbes faint,  
Their senses dull, their seeing, hearing, going  
All dead before them; yea, their very teeth,  
Their instruments of eating, failing them:  
Yet this is reckon'd life! Nay, here was one;  
Is now gone home, that wishes to liue longer!  
Feeles not his gout, nor palsy, faines himselfe  
Yonger, by scores of yeares, flatters his age,  
With confident bellying it, hopes he may  
With charmes, like A Eson, have his youth restor'd,  
And with these thoughts so battens, as if Fate  
Would be as easily cheated on, as he,  
And all turnes ayre! Who is that, there, now? a third?

**B**

Close, to your couch againe: I heare his voice.  
It is Coruino, our spruce merchant.

**A**

Dead.

**B**

Another bout, Sir, with your eyes. Who is there?

## Scene 1.5

**B**

Signior Coruino! come most wisht for! O,  
How happy were you, if you knew it, now!

**C**

Why? what? wherein?

**B**

The tardie houre is come, Sir.

**C**

He is not dead?

**B**

Not dead, Sir, but as good;  
He knowes no man.

**C**

How shall I do then?

**B**

Why sir?

**C**

I have brought him, here, a Pearle.

**B**

Perhaps, he has  
So much remembrance left, as to know you, Sir;  
He still calls on you, nothing but your name  
Is in his mouth: Is your Pearle orient, Sir?

**C**

Venice was neuer owner of the like.

**A**

Signior Coruino.

**B**

Hearke.

**A**

Signior  
Coruino.

**B**

He calls you, step and give it him. He is here, Sir,  
And he has brought you a rich Pearle.

**C**

How do you

Sir?

Tell him, it doubles the twelfe Caract.

**B**

Sir,

He cannot vnderstand, his hearing is gone;

And yet it comforts him, to see you --

**C**

Say,

I have a Diamant for him, too.

**B**

Best shew it Sir,

Put it into his hand; it is onely there

He apprehends: He has his feeling, yet.

See, how he graspes it!

**C**

'Lasse, good gentleman!

How pittifull the sight is!

**B**

Tut, forget Sir.

The weeping of an heyre should still be laughter,

Vnder a visor.

**C**

Why? am I his heyre?

**B**

Sir, I am sworne, I may not shew the Will,

Till he be dead: But, here has beene Corbaccio,

Here has beene Voltore, here were others too,

I cannot nomber them, they were so many,

All gaping here for legacyes; but I,

Taking the vantage of his naming you,

(Signior Coruino, Signior Coruino,) tooke

Paper, and pen, and ynke, and there I ask'd him,

Whom he would have his heyre? Coruino: Who

Should be executor, Coruino: And,

To any question, he was silent too,

I still interpreted the noddess, he made,

(Though weakenesse) for consent: and sent home the others,

Nothing bequeath'd them, but to crie, and curse.

*C*

O, my deare Mosca. Does he not perceiue us?

*B*

No more then a blinde harper. He knowes no man,  
No face of friend, nor name of any seruant,  
Who it was that fed him last, or gaue him drinke:  
Not those, he hath begotten, or brought up  
Can he remember.

*C*

Has he children?

*B*

Bastards,  
Some dozen, or more, that he begot on beggars,  
Gipseys, and Iewes, and Black-moores, when he was drunke.  
Knew you not that Sir? it is the common fable.  
The Dwarfe, the Foole, the Eunuch are all his;  
He is the true father of his familie,  
In all, saue me: but he has giu'n them nothing.

*C*

That is well, that is well. Art sure he does not heare us?

*B*

Sure Sir? why looke you, credit your own sense.  
The Poxe approach, and adde to your diseases,  
If it would send you hence the sooner, Sir.  
For, your incontinence, it hath deseru'd it  
Thoroughly, and thoroughly, and the Plague to boot.  
(You may come neere, Sir) Would you would once close  
Those filthy eyes of yours, that flowe with slime,  
Like two frog-pits; and those same hanging cheekes,  
Couer'd with hide, in steede of skinne: (nay helpe, Sir)  
That looke like frozen dish-clouts, set on end.

*C*

Or, like an old smoak'd wall, on which the raine  
Ran downe in streakes.

**B**

Excellent, Sir, speake out;  
You may be lowder yet: A Culuering,  
Discharged in his eare would hardly bore it.

**C**

His nose is like a common sewre, still running;

**B**

It is good: and, what his mouth?

**C**

A very draught.

**B**

O stop it up —

**C**

By no meanes;

**B**

'Pray you let me.  
Faith, I could stifle him, rarely, with a pillow,  
As well, as any woman, that should keepe him.

**C**

Do as you will, but I will be gone.

**B**

Be so;  
It is your presence makes him last so long.

**C**

I pray you, vse no violence.

**B**

No, Sir? why?  
Why should you be thus scrupulous? 'pray you, Sir.

**C**



Nay, at your discretion.

**B**

Well, good Sir, be gone.

**C**

I will not trouble him now, to take my Pearle?

**B**

Puh, nor your Diamant. What a needlesse care  
Is this afflicts you? Is not all, here yours?  
Am not I here? whom you have made? your creature?  
That owe my beeing to you?

**C**

Gratefull Mosca:  
Thou art my friend, my fellow, my companion,  
My partner, and shalt share in all my fortunes.

**B**

Excepting one.

**C**

What is that?

**B**

Your gallant wife, Sir.  
Now, is he gone; we had no other meanes,  
To shoote him hence, but this.

**A**

My diuine Mosca!  
Thou hast to day out-gone thy selfe. Who is there?  
I will be troubled with no more. Prepare  
Me musicke, dances, banquets, all delights;  
The Turke is not more sensual, in his pleasures,  
Then will Volpone. Let me see, a Pearle?  
A Diamant? Plat? Cecchines? good mornings purchase;  
Why this is better then rob Churches, yet:  
Or fat, by eating (once a mon'th) a man.  
Who is it?

**B**

The beauteous Lady Would-bee, Sir.  
Wife, to the English Knight, Sir Politique Would-bee,  
(This is the stile, Sir, is directed me)  
Hath sent to know, how you have slept to night,  
And if you would be visited.

**A**

Not, now.  
Some three houres, hence —

**B**

I told the Squire, so much.

**A**

When I am high with mirth, and wine; then, then.  
'Fore heauen, I wonder at the desperate valure  
Of the bold English, that they dare let loose  
Their wiues, to all encounters!

**B**

Sir, this Knight  
Had not his name for nothing, he is politique,  
And knowes, how ere his wife affect strange ayres,  
She hath not yet the face, to be dishonest.  
But had she Signior Coruino's wiues face —

**A**

Has she so rare a face?

**B**

O Sir, the wonder,  
The blazing Starre of Italy; a wench  
Of the first yeare, a beauty, ripe, as haruest!  
Whose skinne is whiter then a Swan, all ouer!  
Then siluer, snow, or lillies! a soft lip,  
Would tempt you to eternity of kissing!  
And flesh, that melteth, in the touch, to bloud!  
Bright as your gold, and lovely, as your gold!

**A**

Why had not I knowne this, before?

**B**

Alas,  
Sir.  
My selfe, but yesterday, discover'd it.

**A**

How might I see her?

**B**

O, not possible;  
She is kept as warily, as is your gold:  
Neuer does come abroad, neuer takes ayre,  
But at a windore. All her lookes are sweet,  
As the first grapes, or cherries; and are watch'd  
As neare, as they are.

**A**

I must see her —

**B**

Sir.  
There is a guard, of ten spies thick, upon her;  
All his whole houshold: each of which is set  
Upon his fellow, and have all their charge,  
When he goes out, when he comes in, examin'd.

**A**

I will go see her, though but at her windore.

**B**

In some disguise, then?

**A**

That is true, I must  
Maintaine mine own shape, still, the same: we will think.

## Act 2

### Scene 2.1

**F**

Sir, to a wise man, all the world is his foile.  
It is not Italy, nor France, nor Europe,  
That must bound me, if my Fates call me forth.  
Yet, I protest, it is no salt desire  
Of seeing Countries, shifting a Religion,  
Nor any dis-affection to the State  
Where I was bred, (and, unto which I owe  
My dearest plots) hath brought me out; much lesse,  
That idle, antique, stale, grey-headed proiect  
Of knowing mens mindes, and manners, with Vlisses:  
But, a peculiar humour of my wiues,  
Layd for this height of Venice, to obserue,  
To quote, to learne the language, and so forth --  
I hope you trauell, Sir, with licence?

**G**

Yes.

**F**

I dare the safelier conuerse -- How long, Sir,  
Since you left England?

**G**

Seauen weekes.

**F**

So lately!  
You have not beene with my Lord Ambassador?

**G**

Not yet, Sir.

**F**

'Pray you, what newes, Sir, vents our climate?  
I heard, last night, a most strange thing reported  
By some of my Lords followers, and I long  
To heare, how it will be seconded!

**G**

What was it, Sir?

**F**

Marry, Sir, of a Rauen, that should build  
In a ship royall of the Kings.

**G**

This fellow  
Does he gull me, trow? or is gull'd? your name Sir?

**F**

My name is Politique Would-bee.

**G**

O, that speaks him.  
A Knight, Sir?

**F**

A poore Knight, Sir.

**G**

Your Lady  
Lies here, in Venice, for intelligence  
Of tires, and fashions, and behaiour,  
Among the Curtizans? the fine Lady Would-be?

**F**

Yes; Sir; the spider, and the bee, oft times,  
Suck from one flower.

**G**

Good Sir Politique!  
I crie you mercy; I have heard much of you:  
It is true, Sir, of your Rauen.

**F**

On your knowledge?

**G**

Yes, and your Lions whelping, in the Tower.

**F**

Another whelpe?

**G**

Another, Sir.

**F**

Now heauen!  
What prodigies be these? The Fires at Berwike!  
And the new Starre! these things concurring, strange!  
And full of omen! Saw you those Meteors?

**G**

I did Sir.

**F**

Fearefull! Pray you Sir, confirme me,  
Were there three Porcpisces seene, aboue the Bridge,  
As they give out?

**G**

Sixe, and a Sturgeon, Sir.

**F**

I am astonish'd.

**G**

Nay sir, be not so;  
I will tell you a greater prodigie, then these —

**F**

What should these things portend!

**G**

The very day  
(Let me be sure) that I put forth from London,  
There was a Whale discouer'd, in the riuer,  
As high as Woollwich, that had waited there  
(Few know how many moneths) for the subuersion  
Of the Stode-Fleete.

**F**

Is it possible? Beleeue it,  
It was either sent from Spaine, or the Arch-duke,

Spinola's Whale, upon my life, my credit;  
Will they not leaue these proiects? Worthy Sir,  
Some other newes.

**G**

Faith, Stone, the Foole, is dead;  
And they do lack a tauerne–Foole, extremely.

**F**

Is Mass' Stone dead?

**G**

He is dead Sir; why? I hope  
You thought him not immortall? O this Knight  
(Were he well knowne) would be a precious thing  
To fit our English Stage: He that should write  
But such a fellow, should be thought to faine  
Extremely, if not maliciously.

**F**

Stone dead?

**G**

Dead. Lord! how deeply Sir you apprehend it?  
He was no kinsman to you?

**F**

That I know of.  
Well! that same fellow was an vnknowne Foole.

**G**

And yet you know him, it seemes?

**F**

I did so. Sir,  
I knew him one of the most dangerous heads  
Liuing within the State, and so I held him.

**G**

Indeed Sir?

**F**

While he liu'd, in action.  
He has receiu'd weekely intelligence,  
Upon my knowledge, out of the Low Countries,  
(For all parts of the world) in cabages;  
And those dispens'd, againe, to Ambassadors,  
In oranges, musk–melons, apricocks,  
Limons, pome–citrons, and such like: sometimes,  
In Colchester–oysters, and your Selsey–cockles.

**G**

You make me wonder!

**F**

Sir. upon my knowledge.  
Nay, I, have obseru'd him, at your publique Ordinary,  
Take his aduertisement, from a Traueller  
(A conceald States–man) in a trencher of meate;  
And, instantly, before the meale was done,  
Conuay an answer in a tooth–pick.

**G**

Strange!  
How could this be, Sir?

**F**

Why, the meate was cut  
So like his character, and so layd, as he  
Must easily read the cipher.

**G**

I have heard, he could not read, Sir.

**F**

So, it was giuen out,  
(In pollitie,) by those, that did imploy him:  
But he could read, and had your languages,  
And to it, as sound a noddle --

**G**

I have heard, Sir,  
That your Babiouns were spies; and that they were  
A kinde of subtle Nation, neare to China:



**F**

Aye, aye, your Mamuluchi. Faith, they had  
Their hand in a French plot, or two; but they  
Were so extremely giuen to women, as  
They made discouery of all: Yet I  
Had my aduises here (on wensday last)  
From one of their own coat, they were return'd,  
Made their relations (as the fashion is)  
And now stand faire, for fresh imployment.

**G**

'Hart!  
This Sir Poll: will be ignorant of nothing.  
It seemes Sir, you know all?

**F**

Not all Sir. But,  
I have some generall notions; I do love  
To note, and to obserue: Though I liue out,  
Free from the actiue torrent, yet I would marke  
The currents, and the passages of things,  
For mine own priuate vse; and know the ebbes,  
And flowes of State.

**G**

Beleeueit, Sir, I hold  
My selfe, in no small tie, unto my fortunes,  
For casting me thus luckely, upon you;  
Whose knowledge (if your bounty equall it)  
May do me great assistance, in instruction  
For my behaiour, and my bearing, which  
Is yet so rude, and raw —

**F**

Why? came you forth  
Empty of rules, for trauayle?

**G**

Faith, I had  
Some common ones, from out that vulgar Grammar,  
Which he, that cri'd Italian to me, taught me.

**F**

Why, this it is, that spoiles all our braue blouds,

Trusting our hopefull gentry unto Pedants,  
Fellowes of out-side, and mere barke. You seeme  
To be a gentleman, of ingenuous race —  
I not professe it, but my fate hath beene  
To be, where I have been consulted with,  
In this high kinde, touching some great mens sons,  
Persons of bloud, and honor —

*G*

Who be these, Sir?

## Scene 2.2

*B*

Vnder that windore, there it must be. The same:

*F*

Fellowes, to mount a banke! Did your instructor  
In the deare Tongues, neuer discourse to you  
Of the Italian Montebankes?

*G*

Yes, Sir.

*F*

Why,  
Here shall you see one.

*G*

They are Quack-saluers,  
Fellowes, that liue by venting oyles, and drugs?

*F*

Was that the character he gaue you of them?

*G*

As I remember.

*F*

Pittie his ignorance.

They are the onely-knowing men of Europe,  
Great, generall Schollers, excellent Phisitians,  
Most admir'd States-men, profest Faurites,  
And cabinet-Councillors, to the greatest Princes:  
The onely Languag'd-men, of all the world.

**G**

And, I have heard, they are most lewd impostors;  
Made all of termes, and shreds; no lesse beliers  
Of great-mens fauors, then their own vile med'cines;  
Which they will vtter upon monstrous othes:  
Selling that drug, for two pence, ere they part,  
Which they have valew'd at twelue crownes, before.

**F**

Sir, calumnies are answer'd best with silence;  
Your selfe shall iudge. Who is it mounts, my friends?

**B**

Scoto of Mantua, Sir.

**F**

Is it he? nay, then  
I will proudly promise, Sir, you shall behold  
Another man, then has beene phant'sied to you.  
I wonder, yet, that he should mount his banke  
Here, in this nooke, that has beene wont to appeare  
In face of the Piazza! Here, he comes

**A**

Mount Zany,

**X**

Follow, follow, follow, follow, follow.

**F**

See how the people follow him! he is a man  
May write 10000. Crownes, in Banke, here. Note,  
Marke but his gesture; I do vse to obserue  
The state he keepes, in getting up!

**G**

It is worth it, Sir.

## Volpone

**A**

Most noble Gent: and my worthy Patrons, it may seeme strange, that I, your Scoto Mantuano, who was euer wont to fixe my Banke in face of the publike Piazza, neare the shelter of the portico, to the Procuratia, should, now (after eight months absence, from this illustrious Citty of Venice) humbly retire my selfe, into an obscure nooke of the Piazza;

**F**

Did not I, now, obiect the same?

**G**

Peace, Sir.

**A**

Let me tel you: I am not (as your Lombard Prouerbe sayth) cold on my feete, or content to part with my commodities at a cheaper rate, then I accustomed; looke not for it. Nor, that the calumnious reports of that impudent detractor, and shame to our profession, (Alessandro Buttone, I meane) who gaue out, in publike, I was condemn'd a'Sforzato to the Galleys, for poysoning the Cardinall Bemboos — Cooke, hath at all attached, much lesse deieted me. No, no, worthie Gent: (to tell you true) I cannot indure, to see the rable of these ground Ciarlitani, that spread their clokes on the pauement, as if they meant to do feates of actiuitie, and then come in, lamely, with their mouldy tales out of Boccacio, like stale Tabarine, the Fabulist: some of them discoursing their trauells, and of their tedious captiuitie in the Turkes Galleyes, when indeed (were the truth knowne) they were the Christians Galleyes, where very temperately, they eate bread, and drunke water, as a wholesome pennance (enjoynd them by their Confessors) for base pilferies.

**F**

Note but his bearing, and contempt of these.

**A**

These turdy–facy–nasty–patie–lousie–farticall rogues, with one poore groats–worth of vnprepar'd antimony, finely wrapt up in seuerall 'Scartoccios, are able, very well, to kill their twenty a weeke, and play; yet these meagre steru'd spirits, who have halfe stopt the organs of their mindes with earthy oppilations, want not their fauourers among your shriuel'd, sallad–eating Artizans: who are ouerioy'd, that they may have their halfeperth of Physick, though it purge them into another world, makes no matter.

**F**

Excellent! have you heard better Language, Sir?

Volpone

*A*

Well, let them go. And Gentlemen, honourable Gentlemen, know, that for this time, our Banque, being thus remou'd from the clamours of the Canaglia, shall be the Scene of pleasure, and delight; For I have nothing to sell, little or nothing to sell:

*F*

I told you, Sir; his ende.

*G*

You did so, Sir.

*A*

I protest, I, and my sixe seruants, are not able to make of this pretious liquor, so fast, as it is fetch'd away from my lodging, by Gentlemen of your Citty; strangers of the Terra-ferma; worshipful Merchants; aye, and Senators too: who, euer since my arriuall, have detained me to their vses, by their splendidous liberalities. And worthily. For what auayles your rich man to have his magazines stufte with Moscadelli, or the purest grape, when his Physitians prescribe him (on paine of death) to drinke nothing but water, cocted with Anise-seeds? O health! health! the blessing of the rich, the riches of the poore! who can buy thee at too deare a rate, since there is no enjoying this world, without thee? Be not then so sparing of your purses, honorable Gentlemen, as to abridge the naturall course of life —

*G*

You see his ende?

*F*

Aye, is it good?

*A*

For, when a humide Fluxe, or Catarrhe, by the mutability of ayre, falls from your head, into an arme or shouilder, or any other part; take you a Duckat, or your Cecchine of gold, and applie to the place affected: see, what good effect it can worke. No, no, it is this blessed Vnguento, this rare Extraction, that hath onely power to disperse all malignant humors, that proceede, either of hot, cold, moist or windy causes —

*G*

I would he had put in dry too.

## Volpone

**F**

'pray you, obserue.

**A**

To fortifie the most indigest, and crude stomacke, aye, were it of one, that (through extreame weakenesse) vomited blood, applying onely a warme napkin to the place, after the vnction, and fricace; For the Vertigine, in the head, putting but a drop into your nostrills, likewise, behind the eares; a most soueraigne, and approoued remedy. The Mall-caduco, Crampes, Convulsions, Paralysies, Epilepsies, Tremor-cordia, retired-Nerues, ill Vapours of the spleene, Stoppings of the Liuer, the Stone, the Strangury, Hernia ventosa, Iliaca passio; stops a Disenteria, immediatly; easeth the torsion of the small guts: and cures Melancolia hypocondriaca, being taken and applyed, according to my printed Receipt. For, this is the Physitian, this the medicine; this councells, this cures; this giues the direction, this works the effect: and (in summe) both together may be term'd an abstract of the theorick, and practick in the A Esculapian Art. It will cost you eight Crownes. And, Zan Fritada, 'pray thee sing a verse, extempore, in honour of it.

**F**

How do you like him, Sir?

**G**

Most strangely, I!

**F**

Is not his language rare?

**G**

But Alchimy,  
I neuer heard the like: or Broughtons bookes.

**A**

Had old Hippocrates, or Galen,  
(That to their bookes put med'cines all in)  
But knowne this secret, they had neuer  
(Of which they will be guilty euer)  
Beene murderers of so much paper,  
Or wasted many a hurtlesse taper:  
No Indian drug had ere beene famed,  
Tabacco, Sassafras not named;  
Ne yet, of Guacum one small stick, Sir,  
Nor Raymund Lullies greate Elixir.  
Ne, had beene knowne the danish Gonswart.  
Or Paracelsus, with his long-sword.

**G**

All this, yet, will not do, eight Crownes is high.

**A**

No more; Gentlemen, if I had but time to discourse to you the miraculous effects of this my oyle, surnamed oglio del Scoto, with the count-lesse catalogue of those I have cured of the aforesayd, and many more diseases, the Pattents and Priuiledges of all the Princes, and Common-wealthes of Christendome, or but the depositions of those that appear'd on my part, before the Signiry of the Sanita', and most learned Colledge of Physitians; where I was authorized, upon notice taken of the admirable vertues of my medicaments, and mine own excellency, in matter of rare, and vnknowne secrets, not onely to disperse them publiquely in this famous Citty, but in all the Territories, that happely ioy vnder the gouernment of the most pious and magnificent States of Italy. But may some other gallant fellow say, O, there be diuers, that make profession to have as good, and as experimented receipts, as yours: Indeed, very many have assay'd, like Apes, in imitation of that, which is really, and essentially in me, to make of this oyle; bestow'd great cost in furnaces, stilles, alembekes, continuall fires, and preparation of the ingredients, as indeede there goes to it sixe hundred seuerall Simples, beside, some quantity of humane fat, for the conglutination, which we buy of the Anatomistes; But, when these Practitioners come to the last decoction, blow, blow, puff, puff, and all flies in fumo: ha, ha, ha. Poore wretches! I rather pittie their folly, and indiscretion, then their losse of time, and money; for those may be recouer'd by industry: but to be a Foole borne is a disease incurable. For my selfe, I alwaies from my youth have indeaur'd to get the rarest secrets, and booke them; eyther in exchange, or for money; I spared nor cost, nor labour, where anything was worthy to be learned. And Gentlemen, honourable Gentlemen, I will vndertake (by vertue of Chymicall Art) out of the honourable hat, that couers your head, to extract the foure Elements; that is to say, the Fire, Ayre, Water, and Earth, and returne you your felt, without burne, or staine. For, whilst others have beene at the balloo, I have beene at my booke: and am now past the craggy pathes of study, and come to the flowrie plaines of honour, and reputation.

**F**

I do assure you, Sir, that is his ayme.

**A**

But, to our price.

**G**

And that withall, Sir Poll.

**A**

You all know (honourable Gentlemen) I neuer valew'd this ampulla, or violl, at lesse then eight Crownes, but for this time, I am content, to be depriu'd of it for sixe; sixe Crownes is the price; and lesse, in curtesie, I know you cannot offer me; take it, or leaue it, howsoeuer, both it, and I am at your seruice. I aske you not, as the valew of the thing, for then I should demand of you a thousand Crownes, so the Cardinalls Montalto, Fernese, the great Duke of Tuscany, my Gossip, with diuers other Princes have giuen me; but I despise money: only to shew my affection to you, honorable Gentlemen, and your illustrious State here, I have neglected the messages of these Princes, mine own offices, fram'd my iourney hither, onely to present you with the fructs of my trauells. Tune your voyces once more, to the touch of your instruments, and give the honorable assembly some delightfull

recreation.

**G**

What monstrous, and most painefull circumstance  
Is here, to get some three, or foure Gazets?  
Some three-pence, in the whole, for that it will come to

**A**

You that would last long, list to my song,  
Make no more coyle, but buy of this oyle.  
Would you be euer faire? and yong?  
Stout of teeth? and strong of tongue?  
Tart of palat? quick of eare?  
Sharpe of sight? of nostrill cleare?  
Moist of hand? and light of foot?  
(Or I will come neerer to it)  
Would you liue free from all diseases?  
Do the act, your mistres pleases;  
Yet fright all aches from your bones?  
Here is a med'cine, for the nones.

Well, I am in a humor (at this time) to make a present of the small quantity my coffer containes: to the rich, in courtesie, and to the poore, for Gods sake. Wherefore, now marke; I ask'd you sixe Crownes, and sixe Crownes, at other times, you have payd me; you shall not give me sixe Crownes, nor fiue, nor foure, nor three, nor two, nor one; nor halfe a Duckat; no, nor a Muccinigo: six pence it will cost you, or sixe hundred pound — expect no lower price, for by the banner of my front, I will not bate a bagatine, that I will have, onely, a pledge of your loves, to carry something from amongst you, to shew, I am not contemn'd by you. Therefore, now, tosse your handkerchiefes, chearefully, chearefully; and be aduertised, that the first heroique spirit, that deignes to grace me, with a handkerchiefe, I will give it a little remembrance of something, beside, shall please it better, then if I had presented it with a double Pistolet.

**G**

Will you be that heroique Sparke, Sir Pol?  
O see! the windore has preuented you.

**A**

Lady, I kisse your bounty; and, for this timely grace, you have done your poore Scoto of Mantua, I will returne you, ouer and aboue my oyle, a secret, of that high, and inestimable nature, shall make you for euer enamour'd on that minute, wherein your eye first descended on so meane, yet not altogether to be despis'd an obiect. Here is a Poulder, conceal'd in this paper, of which, if I should speake to the worth, nine thousand volumes were but as one page, that page as a line, that line as a word; so short is this Pilgrimage of man (which some call Life) to the expressing of it: would I reflect on the price? why, the whole World were but as an Empire, that Empire as a Prouince, that Prouince as a Banke, that Banke as a priuate Purse, to the purchase of it. I will, onely, tell you; it is the Poulder, that made Venus a Goddess (giuen her by Apollo) that kept her perpetually yong, clear'd her



## Volpone

wrinkles, firm'd her gummnes, fill'd her skinne, colour'd her hayre; From her, deriu'd to Helen, and at the sack of Troy (vnfortunately) lost: Till now, in this our age, it was as happily recouer'd, by a studious Antiquary, out of some ruines of Asia, who sent a moyetie of it, to the Court of France (but much sophisticated) wherewith the Ladyes there, now, colour their hayre. The rest (at this present) remaines with me; extracted, to a Quint essence: so that, where euer it but touches, in youth it perpetually preserues, in age restores the complexion; seats your teeth, did they dance like Virginall iacks, firme as a wall; makes them white, as Iuory, that were black, as —

### Scene 2.3

*C*

Bloud of the deuill, and my shame! come downe, here;  
Come downe: No house but mine to make your Scene?  
Signior Flaminio, will you downe, Sir? downe?  
What is my wife your Franciscina? Sir?  
No windores on the whole Piazza, here,  
To make your properties, but mine? but mine?  
Hart! ere to morrow, I shall be new christen'd,  
And cald the Pantalone di Besogniosi,  
About the towne.

*G*

What should this meane, Sir Poll?

*F*

Some trick of State, beleeeue it. I will home.

*G*

It may be some designe on you:

*F*

I know not.  
I will stand upon my gard.

*G*

It is your best, Sir.

*F*

This three weekes, all my aduises, all my letters  
They have beene intercepted.

*G*

Indeed, Sir?  
Best have a care.

*F*  
Nay so I will.

*G*  
This Knight,  
I may not loose him, for my mirth, till night.

## Scene 2.4

*A*  
O I am wounded.

*B*  
Where, Sir?

*A*  
Not without;  
Those blowes were nothing: I could beare them euer.  
But angry Cupid, boultng from her eyes,  
Hath shot himselfe into me, like a flame;  
Where, now, he flings about his burning heat,  
As in a furnace, some ambitious fire,  
Whose vent is stopt. The fight is all within me.  
I cannot liue, except thou helpe me, Mosca;  
My liuer melts, and I, without the hope  
Of some soft ayre, from her refreshing breath,  
Am but a heape of cinders.

*B*  
'Lasse, good Sir,  
Would you had neuer seene her.

*A*  
Nay, would thou  
Hadst neuer told me of her.

*B*  
Sir it is true;

I do confesse, I was vnfortunate,  
And you vnhappy: but I am bound in conscience.  
No lesse then duety, to effect my best  
To your release of torment, and I will, Sir.

**A**  
Deare Mosca, shall I hope?

**B**  
Sir, more then deare,  
I will not bidd you to dispaire of ought,  
Within a humane compasse.

**A**  
O, there spoke  
My better Angell. Mosca, take my keyes,  
Gold, plate, and iewells, all is at thy deuotion;  
Employ them, how thou wilt; nay, coyne me, too:  
So thou, in this, but crowne my longings. Mosca?

**B**  
Vse but your patience.

**A**  
So I have.

**B**  
I doubt not  
But bring successe to your desires.

**A**  
Nay, then,  
I not repent me of my late disguise.

**B**  
If you can horne him, Sir, you neede not.

**A**  
True:  
Besides, I neuer meant him for my heyre.  
Is not the colour of my beards. and eye-browes,  
To make me knowne?

**B**

No iot.

**A**

I did it well.

**B**

So well, would I could follow you in mine,  
With halfe the happinesse; and, yet, I would  
Escape your Epilogue.

**A**

But, were they gull'd  
With a beleefe, that I was Scoto?

**B**

Sir,  
Scoto himselfe could hardly have distinguish'd;  
I have not time to flatter you, we will part:  
And, as I prosper, so applaud my art.

## Scene 2.5

**C**

Death of mine honour, with the citties Foole?  
A iugling, tooth-drawing, prating Montebanke?  
And, at a publique windore? where whilst he,  
With his strain'd action, and his dole of faces,  
To his drug-Lecture draws your itching eares,  
A crewe of old, vn-mari'd, noted lechers,  
Stood leering up, like Satyres; and you smile,  
Most graciously? and fanne you fauours forth,  
To give your hote Spectators satisfaction?  
What; was your Montebanke their call? their whistle?  
Or were you 'enamour'd on his copper rings?  
His saffron iewell, with the toade-stone in it?  
Or his imbroydred sute, with the cope-stitch,  
Made of a herse-cloath? or his old tilt-feather?  
Or his starch'd beard? well; you shall have him, yes.  
He shall come home, and minister unto you  
The fricace, for the Mother. Or, let me see,  
I think, you had rather mount? would you not mount?

## Volpone

Why, if you will mount, you may; yes truly, you may:  
And so, you may be seene, downe to the foote.  
Get you a citterne, Lady Vanity,  
And be a Dealer, with the Vertuous Man;  
Make on: I will but protest myselfe a cuckold,  
And saue your dowry. I am a Dutchman, I;  
For, if you thought me an Italian,  
You would be damn'd, ere you did this, you Whore:  
Thou wouldst tremble, to imagine, that the murder  
Of father, mother, brother, all thy race,  
Should follow, as the subiect of my iustice.

*I*

Good Sir, have pacience.

*C*

What couldst thou propose  
Lesse to thy selfe, then, in this heate of wrath,  
And stung with my dishonour, I should strike  
This steele unto thee, with as many stabs,  
As thou wert gaz'd upon with goatish eyes?

*I*

Alas Sir, be appeas'd; I could not think  
My beeing at the windore should more, now,  
Moue your impatience, then at other times:

*C*

No? not to seeke, and entertaine a parlee;  
With a knowne knaue? before a multitude?  
You were an Actor, with your handkercheife;  
Which he, most sweetly, kist in the receipt,  
And might (no doubt) returne it, with a letter,  
And point the place, where you might meete: your sisters,  
Your mothers, or your aunts might serue the turne.

*I*

Why, deare Sir, when do I make these excuses?  
Or euer stirre, abroad, but to the Church?  
And that, so seldome —

*C*

Well, it shall be lesse;  
And thy restraint, before, was liberty,  
To what I now decree: And therefore, marke me.

First, I will have this baudy light damn'd up;  
And, till it be done, some two, or three yards of,  
I will chalke a line: ore which, if thou but (chance  
To) set thy desp'rate foote; more hell, more horror,  
More wilde, remorcelesse rage shall seize on thee,  
Then on a Coniurer, that had heed-lesse left,  
His Circles saftie, ere his Deuill was layd.  
Then, here is a lock, which I will hang upon thee;  
And, now I think of it, I will keepe thee back-wards;  
Thy lodging shall be back-wards; thy walkes back-wards;  
Thy prospect-all be back-wards; and no pleasure,  
That thou shalt know, but back-wards: Nay, since you force  
My honest nature, know, it is your own  
Being too open, makes me vse you thus.  
Since you will not containe your subtill nostrills  
In a sweete roome, but, they must snuffe the ayre  
Of ranke, and sweaty passengers -- One knocks.  
Away, and be not seene, paine of thy life;  
Not looke toward the windore: if thou dost --  
(Nay stay, heare this) let me not prosper, Whore,  
But I will make thee an Anatomy,  
Dissect thee mine own selfe, and read a lecture  
Upon thee, to the citty, and in publique.  
Away. Who is there?

*V*

It is Signior Mosca, Sir.

## Scene 2.6

*C*

Let him come in, his master is dead: There is yet  
Some good, to helpe the bad. My Mosca, welcome;  
I gesse your newes.

*B*

I feare, you cannot, Sir.

*C*

Is it not his death?

*B*

Rather, the contrary.

**C**

Not his recovery?

**B**

Yes, Sir,

**C**

I am curst,  
I am bewitch'd, my crosses meete to vex me.  
How? how? how? how?

**B**

Why, Sir, with Scotto's oyle;  
Corbaccio, and Voltore brought of it,  
Whilst I was busy in an inner roome —

**C**

Death! that damn'd Mountebanke; but, for the Law,  
Now, I could kill the raskall: it cannot be,  
His oyle should have that vertue. Have not I  
Knowne him a common rogue, come fidling in  
To the Osteria, with a tumbling whore,  
And, when he has done all his forc'd tricks, beene glad  
Of a poore spoonefull of ded wine, with flies in it?  
It cannot be. All his ingredients  
Are a sheepes gall, a rosted bitches marrow,  
Some fewe sod earewigs pounded caterpillers,  
A little capons grease, and fasting spittle:  
I know hem, to a dram.

**B**

I know not, Sir,  
But some of it, there they pour'd into his eares,  
Some in his nostrills, and recouer'd him;  
Applying but the fricace.

**C**

Pox on that fricace.

**B**

And since to seeme the more officious,  
And flatt'ring of his health, there, they have had  
(At extreme fees) the Colledge of Physitians

Consulting on him how they might restore him;  
 Where, one would have a cataplasme of spices,  
 Another a flead Ape clapt to his brest,  
 A third would have it a Dog, a fourth an oyle  
 With wilde Cates skinnes: At last, they all resolu'd  
 That, to preserue him, was no other meanes,  
 But some yong woman must be streight sought out,  
 Lusty, and ful if iuice, to sleepe by him;  
 And, to this seruice (most vnhappily,  
 And most vnwillingly) am I now imploy'd,  
 Which, here, I thought to pre-acquaint you with,  
 For your aduise, since it concernes you most,  
 Because, I would not do that thing might crosse  
 Your ends, on whome I have my whole dependance, Sir:  
 Yet if I do it not, they may delate  
 My slacknesse to my Patron, worke me out  
 Of his opinion; and there, all your hopes,  
 Venters, or whatsoever, are all frustrate.  
 I do but tell you, Sir. Besides, they are all  
 Now striuing, who shall first present him. Therefore --  
 I could intreate you, breefly, conclude some-what:  
 Preuent them if you can.

**C**

Death to my hopes!  
 This is my villanous fortune! best to hire  
 Some common Curtezan?

**B**

Aye, I thought on that, Sir.  
 But they are all so subtle, full of art,  
 And age againe, doting, and flexible,  
 So as -- I cannot tell -- we may perchance  
 Light on a queane, may cheate us all.

**C**

It is true.

**B**

No, no: it must be one, that has no tricks, Sir,  
 Some simple thing, a creature, made unto it;  
 Some wench you may command. Have you no kinswoman?  
 Gods son -- Think, think, think, think, think, think, think, Sir.  
 One of the Doctors offer'd, there, his daughter.

**C**



How!

**B**

Yes, Signior Lupo, the Physitian,

**C**

His daughter?

**B**

And a virgin, Sir. Why? Alasse  
He knowes the state of his body, what it is;  
That naught can warme his bloud Sir, but a feuer;  
Nor any incantation raise his spirit:  
A long forgetfullnesse hath seiz'd that part.  
Besides, Sir, who shall know it? some one, or two.

**C**

I pray thee give me leaue: If any man  
But I had had this luck — The thing in it selfe,  
I know, is nothing — Wherefore should not I  
As well command my bloud, and my affections,  
As this dull Doctor? In the point of honor,  
The cases are all one, of wife, and daughter.

**B**

I heare him comming.

**C**

She shall do it: it is done.  
Slight, if this Doctor that is not engag'd,  
Vnlesse it be for his councill (which is nothing)  
Offer his daughter, what should I, that am  
So deeply in? I will preuent him, wretch!  
Couetous wretch! Mosca, I have determin'd.

**B**

How Sir?

**C**

We will make all sure. The party, you wot of,  
Shall be mine own wife, Mosca.

**B**

Sir. The thing,  
(But that I would not seeme to counsell you)  
I should have motion'd to you at the first:  
And, make your count, you have cut all their throtes.  
Why! it is directly taking a possession!  
And, in his next fit, we may let him go.  
It is but to pul the pillow, from his head,  
And he is thratled: it had beene done, before,  
But for your scrupulous doubts.

**C**

Aye, a plague on it,  
My conscience fooles my wit. Well, I will be briefe,  
And so be thou, least they should be before us:  
Go home, prepare him, tell him, with what zeale,  
And willingnesse, I do it: sweare it was,  
On the first hearing, (as thou mayst do, truely)  
Mine own free motion.

**B**

Sir, I warrant you,  
I will so possesse him with it, that the rest  
Of his steru'd clients shall be banisht, all;  
And onely you receiu'd. But come not, Sir,  
Vntill I send, for I have something, else  
To ripen, for your good (you must not know it)

**C**

But do not you forget to send, now.

**B**

Feare not.

## Scene 2.7

**C**

Where are you, wife? my Celia? wife? what, blubbering?  
Come, drye those teares. I think, thou thought'st me in earnest?  
Ha? by this light, I talk'd so but to trie thee.  
Me thinkes, the lightnesse of the occasion  
Should have confirm'd thee. Come, I am not iealous:

*I*  
No?

*C*  
Faith, I am not I, nor neuer was:  
It is a poore, vnprofitable humor.  
Do not I know, if women have a will,  
They will do against all the watches, of the world?  
And that the feircest spies, are tam'd with gold?  
Tut, I am confident in thee thou shalt see it:  
And see, I will give thee cause too, to beleuee it.  
Come, kisse me. Go, and make thee ready straight,  
In all thy best attire, thy choicest iewells,  
Put them all on, and, with them, thy best looks:  
We are inuited to a solemne feast,  
At old Volpone's, where it shall appeare  
How far I am free, from iealousie, or feare.

### Act 3

#### Scene 3.1

*B*  
I Feare, I shall begin to grow in love  
With my deare selfe, and my most prosp'rous parts,  
They do so spring, and burgeon; I can feele  
A whimsey in my bloud: (I know not how)  
Successe hath made me wanton. I could skip  
Out of my skinne, now, like a subtill snake,  
I am so limber. O! Your Parasite  
Is a most pretious thing, dropt from aboue,  
Not bred amongst clods, and clot-poules, here on earth.  
I muse, the Mysterie was not made a Science,  
It is so liberally profest! Almost,  
All the wise world is little else, in nature,  
But Parasites, or Sub-parasites. And, yet,  
I meane not those, that have your bare Towne-art,  
To know, who is fit to feede them; have no house,  
No family, no care, and therefore mould  
Tales for mens eares, to baite that sense; or get  
Kitchin-inuention, and some stale receipts  
To please the belly, and the groine; nor those,  
With their Court-dog-trickes, that can fawne, and fleere,  
Make their revenue out of legges, and faces,  
Eccho my-Lord, and lick away a moath:  
But you fine, elegant rascall, that can rise,

And stoope (almost together) like an arrow;  
Shoote through the aire, as nimbly as a starre;  
Turne short, as doth a swallow; and be here,  
And there, and here, and yonder, all at once;  
Present to any humour, all occasion;  
And change a visor, swifter, then a thought.  
This is the creature, had the art borne with him;  
Toyles not to learne it, but doth practise it  
Out of most excellent nature: And such sparkes,  
Are the true Parasites, others but their Zani's.

### Scene 3.2

**B**

Who is this? Bonario? old Corbaccio's son?  
The person I was bound to seeke. Fayre Sir,  
You are happ'ly met.

**J**

That cannot be by thee.

**B**

Why Sir?

**J**

Nay 'pray thee know thy way, and leaue me;  
I would be loath to inter-change discourse,  
With such a mate, as thou art

**B**

Curteous Sir.  
Scorne not my pouerty.

**J**

Not I, by heauen,  
But thou shalt give me leaue to hate thy basenesse.

**B**

Basenesse?

**J**

Aye Answer me, Is not thy sloth  
Sufficient argument? thy flattery?  
Thy meanes of feeding?

**B**

Heauen, be good to me.  
These imputations are too common, Sir,  
And eas'ly stuck on vertue, when she is poore;  
You are vnequall to me, and how ere  
Your sentence may be righteous yet you are not,  
That ere you know me, thus, proceed in censure:  
S t Marke beare witness against you, it is inhumane.

**J**

What? does he weepe? the signe is soft, and good;  
I do repent me, that I was so harsh.

**B**

It is true, that sway'd, by strong necessity,  
I am enforc'd to eate my carefull bread  
With too much obsequy; it is true, beside,  
That I am faine to spin mine own poore rayment,  
Out of my mere obseruance, being not borne,  
To a free fortune: but that I have done  
Base offices, in rending friends asunder,  
Diuiding families, betraying councells,  
Whispering false lies, or mining men with prayes,  
Train'd their credulitie with periuries,  
Corrupted chastity, or am in love  
With mine own tender ease, but would not rather  
Proue the most rugged, and laborious course,  
That might redeeme, my present estimation;  
Let me here perish, in all hope of goodnesse.

**J**

This cannot be a personated passion.  
I was to blame, so to mistake thy nature;  
'Pray thee forgiue me: and speake out thy bus'nesse.

**B**

Sir, it concernes you; and though I may seeme,  
At first, to make a maine offence, in manners,  
And in my gratitude, unto my maister,  
Yet, for the pure love, which I beare all right,  
And hatred of the wrong, I must reueale it.  
This very houre, your father is in purpose

To disinherit you —

**J**

How?

**B**

And thrust you forth,  
As a mere stranger to his bloud; it is true, Sir:  
The worke no way ingaeth me, but, as  
I claime an interest in the generall state  
Of goodnesse, and true vertue, which I heare  
To abound in you: and, for which mere respect,  
Without a second ayme, Sir, I have done it.

**J**

This tale hath lost thee much of the late trust,  
Thou hadst with me; it is impossible:  
I know not how to lend it any thought,  
My father should be so vnnaturall.

**B**

It is a confidence, that well becomes  
Your piety; and form'd (no doubt) it is,  
From your own simple innocence: which makes  
Your wrong more monstrous, and abhor'd. But, Sir,  
I now, will tell you more. This very minute,  
It is, or will be doing: And, if you  
Shall be but pleas'd to goe with me, I will bring you,  
(I dare not say where you shall see, but) where  
Your eare shall be a witsse of the deed;  
Heare your selfe written Bastard; and profest  
The common issue of the earth.

**J**

I am maz'd.

**B**

Sir, if I do it not, draw your iust sword,  
And score your vengeance, on my front, and face;  
Marke me your villayne: You have too much wrong,  
And I do suffer for you, Sir. My heart  
Weepes bloud, in anguish —

**J**

Lead. I follow thee.

### Scene 3.3

**A**

Mosca stayes long, me thines. Bring forth your sports  
And helpe, to make the wretched time more sweete.

**K**

Dwarfe, Foole, and Eunuch, well mett here we be.  
A question it were now, whether of us three,  
Being, all, the knowne delicates, of a rich man,  
In pleasing him, claime the precedency can?

**V**

I claime for my selfe.  
And, so doth the Foole.

**K**

It is foolish indeed: let me set you both to schoole.  
First, for your Dwarfe, he is little, and witty,  
And euery thing, as it is little, is pritty;  
Else, why do men say to a creature (of my shape)  
So soone as they see him, it is a pritty little Ape?  
And, why a pritty Ape? but for pleasing imitation  
Of greater mens action, in a ridiculous fashion.  
Beside, this feat body of mine doth not craue  
Halfe the meat, drinke, and cloth, one of your bulkes will have.  
Admit, your Fooles face be the Mother of Laughter,  
Yet, for his braine, it must alwaies come after:  
And, though that do feede him, it is a pittifull case,  
His body is beholding to such a bad face.

**A**

Who is there? my couch, Away, looke Nano, see:  
Give me my cappes, first — go, enquire. Now, Cupid  
Send it be Mosca, and with faire returne.

**K**

It is the beauteous Madam —

**A**

Would-bee? is it?

**K**

The same.

**A**

Now, torment on me; squire her in:  
For she will enter, or dwell here for euer.  
Nay, quickly, that my fit were past. I feare  
A second hell too, that my loathing this  
Will quite expell my appetite to the other:  
Would she were taking, now, her tedious leaue.  
Lord, how it threates me, what I am to suffer!

### Scene 3.4

**H**

I thanke you, good Sir. 'Pray you signifie  
Unto your Patron, I am here. This band  
Shewes not my neck inough (I trouble you, Sir,  
Let me request you, bid one of my women  
Come hether to me) In good faith, I, am drest  
Most fauorably, to day, it is no matter,  
It is well inough. Looke, see, these petulant things,  
How they have done this!

**A**

I do feele the Feuer  
Entring, in at mine eares; O, for a charme  
To fright it hence.

**H**

Come nearer: Is this curle  
In his right place? or this? why is this highter  
Then all the rest? you have not wash'd your eies, yet?  
Or do they not stand euen in your head?  
Where is your fellow? call her.

**K**

Now, St Marke  
Deliuer us: anone, she will beate her women,  
Because her nose is red.



**H**

I pray you, view  
This tire, forsooth; are all things apt, or no

**W**

One haire a little, here, sticks out, forsooth.

**H**

Does it so forsooth? and where was your deare sight  
When it did so, forsooth? what now? bird-eyd?  
And you too? 'pray you both approach, and mend it.  
Now (by that light) I muse, you are not asham'd,  
I, that have preach'd these things, so oft, unto you,  
Read you the principles, argu'd all the grounds,  
Disputed euery grace, euery fitnessse,  
Call'd you to councell of so frequent dressings --

**K**

(More carefully, then of your fame, or honor)

**H**

Made you acquainted, what an ample dowry  
The knowledge of these things would be unto you,  
Able, alone, to get you Noble husbands  
At your returne: And you, thus, to neglect it?  
Besides, you seeing what a curious Nation  
The Italians are, what will they say of me?  
The English lady cannot dresse her selfe;  
Here is a fine imputation, to our Country:  
Well, goe your waies, and stay, in the next roome.  
This fucus was too course too, it is no matter.  
Good-Sir, you will give them entertaynement?

**A**

The storme comes toward me.

**H**

How does my Volp?

**A**

Troubled with noyse, I cannot sleepe; I dreamt'  
That a strange Fury entred, now, my house,  
And, with the dreadfull tempest of her breath,

Did cleave my rooffe asunder.

*H*

Beleeue me, and I  
Had the most fearefull dreame, could I remember it —

*A*

Out on my fate; I have giu'n her the occasion  
How to torment me: she will tell me hers.

*H*

Me thought, the golden Mediocrity  
Polite, and delicate —

*A*

O, if you do love me,  
No more; I sweate, and suffer, at the mention  
Of any dreame: feele, how I tremble yet.

*H*

Alasse, good soule! the Passion of the heart.  
Seed-pearle were good now, boild with sirrope of Apples,  
Tincture of Gold, and Currall, Citron-pills,  
Your Elicampane roote, Mirobalanes —

*A*

Ay me, I have ta'ne a grasse-hopper by the wing.

*H*

Burnt silke, and Amber, you have Muscadell  
Good in the house —

*A*

You will not drinke, and part?

*H*

No, feare not that. I doubt, we shall not get  
Some English saffron (halfe a dram would serue)  
Your sixteene Cloves, a little Muske, dri'd Mintes,  
Buglosse, and barley-meale —

*A*

She is in againe,  
Before I fayn'd diseases, now I have one.

*H*

And these appli'd, with a right scarlet-cloth ---

*A*

Another floud of words! a very torrent!

*H*

Shall I, Sir, make you a Poultise?

*A*

No, no, no;  
I am very well: you neede prescribe no more.

*H*

I have, a little, studied Physick; but, now,  
I am all for Musique: saue, in the forenoones,  
An houre, or two, for Paynting. I would have  
A Lady, indeed, to have all, Letters, and Artes,  
Be able to discourse, to write, to paynt,  
But principall (as Plato holds) your Musique  
(And, so does wise Pithagoras, I take it)  
Is your true rapture; when there is concent  
In face, in voice, and clothes: and is, indeed,  
Our sexes chiefest ornament.

*A*

The Poe+t;  
As old in time, as Plato, and as knowing,  
Says that your highest female grace is Silence.

*H*

Which of your Poe+ts? Petrarch? or Tasso? or Dante?  
Guerrini? Ariosto? Aretino?  
Cieco di Hadria? I have read them all.

*A*

Is euery thing a cause, to my distruction?

*H*

I think, I have two or three of them, about me.

*A*

The sunne, the sea will sooner, both, stand still,  
Then her æternall tongue; nothing can scape it.

*H*

Here is Pastor Fido ---

*A*

Professe obstinate silence,  
That is, now, my safest.

*H*

All our English Writers,  
I meane such, as are happy in the Italian,  
Will deigne to steal out of this Author, mainely;  
Almost as much, as from Montagnie;  
He has so moderne, and facile a veine,  
Fitting the time, and catching the Court-ear.  
Your Petrarch is more passionate, yet he,  
In dayes of Sonetting, trusted them, with much:  
Dante is hard, and fewe can vnderstand him.  
But, for a desperate wit, there is Aretine;  
Onely, his pictures are a little obscene ---  
You marke me not?

*A*

Alasse, my mind is perturb'd.

*H*

Why in such cases we must cure our selues,  
Make vse of our Philosophie ---

*A*

O 'ay me.

*H*

And, as we find our passions do rebell,  
Encounter them with reason; or diuert them,  
By giuing scope unto some other humour  
Of lesser danger: As, in politique bodyes,

Volpone

There is nothing, more doth ouerwhelme the iudgment,  
And clouds the vnderstanding, then too much  
Setling, and fixing, and (as it were) subsiding  
Upon one obiect. For the incorporating  
Of these same outward things, into that part,  
Which we call mentall, leaues some certaine fæces,  
That stop the organs, and as Plato sayes,  
Assassinates our Knowledge.

*A*  
Now, the spirit  
Of patience helpe me.

*H*  
Come, in faith, I must  
Visit you more, a dayes; and make you well:  
Laugh, and be lusty.

*A*  
My good Angell saue me.

*H*  
There was but one sole man, in all the world,  
With whom I ere could sympathize; and he  
Would lie you often three, foure houres together,  
To heare me speake: and be (sometime) so rap't,  
As he would answer me, quite from the purpose,  
Like you, and you are like him, iust. I will discourse  
(And it be but only, Sir, to bring you a sleepe)  
How we did spend our time, and loves, together,  
For some sixe yeares.

*A*  
O, o, o, o, o, o.

*H*  
For we were Coætanei, and brought up —

*A*  
Some power, some fate, some fortune rescue me.

### Scene 3.5

**B**

God saue you, Madam.

**H**

Good Sir.

**A**

Mosca? welcome,  
Welcome to my redemption.

**B**

Why, Sir?

**A**

O,  
Rid me of this my torture, quickly, there;  
My Madam, with the euerlasting voyce:  
The Bells, in time of pestilence, ne're made  
Like noyse, or were in that perpetuall motion;  
The Cock-pit comes not neare it. All my house,  
But now, steam'd like a bath, with her thicke breath.  
A Lawyer could not have beene heard; nor scarce  
Another Woman such a hayle of words  
She has let fall. For hells sake, ridd her hence.

**B**

Has she presented?

**A**

O, I do not care,  
I will take her absence, upon any price,  
With any losse.

**B**

Madam.

**H**

I have brought your Patron

A toy, a cap here, of mine own worke —

**B**

It is well,  
I had forgot to tell you, I saw your Knight,  
Where you would little think it —

**H**

Where?

**B**

Many,  
Where yet, if you make hast you may apprehend him,  
Rowing upon the water in a gondole,  
With the most cunning Curtizan, of Venice.

**H**

Is it true?

**B**

Pursue them, and beleeue your eyes;  
Leaue me, to make your gift. I knew, it would take.  
For lightly, they, that vse themselues most licence,  
Are still most iealous.

**A**

Mosca, hearty thanks,  
For thy quick fiction, and deliury of me.  
Now, to my hopes, what saist thou?

**H**

But do you heare, Sir?

**A**

Againe; I feare a paroxisme.

**H**

Which way  
Row'd they together?

**B**

Toward the Rialto.

**H**

I pray you, lend me your Dwarf.

**B**

I pray you, take him --  
Your hopes, Sir, are like happy blossomes, fayre,  
And promise timely fruct, if you will stay  
But the maturing; keepe you, at your couch,  
Corbaccio will arriue straight, with the Will:  
When he is gone, I will tell you more.

**A**

My bloud,  
My spirits are return'd; I am aliue:  
And like your wanton gam'ster, at Primero,  
Whose thought had whisper'd to him not go lesse,  
Me thinks I lie, and drawe -- for an encounter.

### Scene 3.6

**B**

Sir, here conceald, you may here all. But 'pray you  
Have patience, Sir; the same is your father, knocks:  
I am compeld, to leaue you.

**J**

Do so. Yet,  
Cannot my thought imagine this a truth.

### Scene 3.7

**B**

Death on me! you are come too soone, what meant you?  
Did not I say, I would send?

**C**

Yes, but I feard  
You might forget it, and then they preuent us.



**B**

Preuent? did ere man hast so, for his hornes?  
A Courtier would not ply it so, for a place.  
Well, now there is no helping it, stay here;  
I will presently returne.

**C**

Where are you, Celia?  
You know not, wherefore I have brought you hether?

**I**

Not well, except you told me.

**C**

Now, I will:  
Hearke hether.

**B**

Sir, your father hath sent word,  
It will be halfe an houre, ere he come;  
And therefore, if you please to walke, the while,  
Into that gallery — at the vpper end,  
There are some bookes, to entertaine the time:  
And I will take care, no man shall come unto you, Sir.

**J**

Yes, I will stay there; I do doubt this fellow.

**B**

There, he is farre inough; he can heare nothing:  
And, for his father, I can keepe him of.

**C**

Nay, now, there is no starting back; and therefore,  
Resolue upon it: I have so decree'd.  
It must be done. Nor, would I moue it, afore,  
Because I would auoyd all shifts and tricks,  
That might deny me.

**I**

Sir, let me beseech you,  
Affect not these strange trialls; if you doubt

My chastity, why lock me up, for euer:  
Make me the heyre of darkenesse. Let me liue,  
Where I may please your feares, if not your trust.

*C*

Beleeue it, I have no such humor, I.  
All that I speake, I meane; yet I am not mad:  
Not horne-mad, see you? Go to, shew your selfe  
Obedient, and a wife.

*I*

O heauen!

*C*

I say it,  
Do so.

*I*

Was this the traine?

*C*

I have told you reasons;  
What the Phisitians have set downe; how much,  
It may concerne me; what my ingagements are;  
My meanes; and the necessity of those meanes,  
For my recouery: wherefore, if you be  
Loyall, and mine, be wonne, respect my venture.

*I*

Before your honour?

*C*

Honour? tut, a breath;  
There is no such thing, in nature: a mere terme  
Inuented to awe fooles. What is my gold  
The worse, for touching? clothes, for being look'd on?  
Why, this is no more. An old, decrepitate wretch,  
That has no sense, no sinewe; takes his meate  
With others fingers; onely knowes to gape,  
When you do scald his gummes; a voice; a shadow;  
And, what can this man hurt you?

*I*

Lord! what spirit  
Is this hath entred him?

*C*

And for your same,  
That is such a ligg; as if I would go tell it,  
Crie it, on the Piazza! who shall know it?  
But he, that cannot speake it; and this fellow,  
Whose lippes are in my pocket: saue your selfe,  
If you will proclaime it, you may. I know no other,  
Should come to know it.

*I*

Are heauen, and Saints then nothing?  
Will they be blind, or stupide?

*C*

How?

*I*

Good Sir,  
Be iealous stil, æmulate them; and think  
What hate they burne with, toward euery sinne.

*C*

I graunt you; if I thought it were a sinne,  
I would not vrge you. Should I offer this  
To some young Frenchman, or hot Tuscan bloud,  
That had read Aretine, conn'd all his printes,  
Knew euery quirke within lusts Laborinth,  
And were profest Cristique, in lechery;  
And I would loope upon him, and applaud him,  
This were a sinne: but here, it is contrary,  
A pious worke, mere charity, for Physick,  
And honest politie, to assure mine own.

*I*

O heauen, canst thou suffer such a change?

*A*

Thou art mine honor, Mosca and my pride,  
My ioy, my tickling, my delight: go, bring them.

**B**

Please you drawe neare, Sir.

**C**

Come on, what ---

You will not be rebellious? By that light ---

**B**

Sir, Signior Coruino, here, is come to see you,

**A**

O.

**B**

And, hearing of the consultation had,  
So lately, for your health, is come to offer,  
Or rather, Sir, to prostitute ---

**C**

Thankes, sweete Mosca,

**B**

Freely, vna -- sk'd, or vn -- intreated --

**C**

Well.

**B**

(As the true, feruent instance of his love)  
His own most faire, and proper wife; the beauty,  
Onely of price, in Venice ---

**C**

It is well vrg'd.

**B**

To be your comfortresse, and to preserue you.

**A**

Alasse, I am past already. 'Pray you, thanke him,

Volpone

For his good care, and promptnesse. But for that,  
It is a vaine labour, eene to fight, against heauen;  
Applying fire to a stone: (uh, uh, uh, uh,)  
Making a dead leafe grow againe. I take  
His wishes gently, though; and, you may tell him,  
What I have done for him: Mary, my state is hopelesse,  
Will him, to pray for me: and to vse his fortune,  
With reuerence, when he comes to it.

**B**

Do you heare, Sir?  
Go to him, with your wife.

**C**

Heart of my father!  
Wilt thou persist thus? Come. I pray thee, come.  
Thou seest it is nothing: Celia. By this hand,  
I shall grow violent. Come, do it, I say.

**I**

Sir, kill me, rather: I will take downe poyson,  
Eate burning coales, do any thing —

**C**

Be damn'd.  
(Heart I will drag thee hence, home, by the haire;  
Cry thee a strumpet, through the streetes; rip up  
Thy mouth, unto thine eares; and slit thy nose,  
Like a raw rotchet — Do not tempt me, come,  
Yeld, I am loth — (Death) I will buy some slaue,  
Whom I will kill, and binde thee to him, aliue;  
And, at my windore, hang you forth: deusing  
Some monstrous crime, which I, in CAPITAL letters,  
Will eate into thy flesh, with Aqua-fortis,  
And burning cor'siues, on this stubborne brest.  
Now, by the bloud, thou hast incens'd, I will do it.

**I**

Sir, what you please, you may, I am your Martyr.

**C**

Be not thus obstinate, I have not deseru'd it:  
Think, who it is, intreats you. 'Pray thee, sweete;  
(Good'faith) thou shalt have iewells, gownes, attires,  
What thou wilt think, and aske — Do, but, goe kisse him.

Volpone

Or touch him, but. For my sake. At my sute.  
This once. No? Not? I shall remember this.  
Will you disgrace me, thus? Do you thirst my vndoing?

**B**

Nay, gentle Lady, be aduis'd.

**C**

No, no. She has watch'd her time. God's precious --- this is skiruy: it is very skiruie: And you are ---

**B**

Nay good, Sir.

**C**

An errant Locust, by heauen, a Locust. Whore,  
Crocodile, that hast thy teares prepar'd,  
Expecting, how thou wilt bid hem flow.

**B**

Nay, 'Pray you, Sir,  
She will consider.

**I**

Would my life would serue  
To satisfie ---

**C**

(S'Death) if she would but speake to him,  
And saue my reputation, it were somewhat;  
But, spightfully to affect my vtter ruine:

**B**

Aye, now you have put your fortune, in her hands.  
Why in faith, it is her modesty, I must quit her;  
If you were absent, she would be more comming;  
I know it: and dare vndertake for her.  
What woman can, before her husband? 'pray you,  
Let us departe, and leaue her, here.

**C**

Sweete Celia,  
 Thou mayst redeeme all, yet; I will say no more:  
 If not, esteeme your selfe as lost, -- Nay, stay there.

*I*

O God, and his good Angells! whether, whether  
 Is shame fled humane brests? that, with such ease,  
 Men dare put of your honors, and their own?  
 Is that, which euer was a cause of life,  
 Now place'd beneath the basest circumstance?  
 And modesty an exile made, for money?

*A*

Aye in Coruino, and such earth-fed mindes,  
 That neuer tasted the true heau'n of love.  
 Assure thee, Celia, he that would sell thee,  
 Onely for hope of gaine, and that vncertaine,  
 He would have sold his part of Paradise  
 For ready money, had he met a Cope-man.  
 Why art thou maz'd, to see me thus reuiu'd?  
 Rather, applaud thy beauties miracle;  
 It is thy great worke: that hath, not now alone,  
 But sundry times, rays'd me, in seuerall shapes,  
 And, but this morning, like a Mountebanke;  
 To see thee at thy windore. Aye, before  
 I would have left my practise, for thy love,  
 In varying figures, I would have contended  
 With the blew Proteus, or the horned Floud.  
 Now, art thou welcome.

*I*

Sir.

*A*

Nay, flie me not;  
 Nor, let thy false imagination  
 That I was bedrid, make thee think, I am so:  
 Thou shalt not find it. I am, now, as fresh,  
 As hot, as high, and, in as Iouiall plight,  
 As when (in that so celebrated Scene,  
 At recitation of our Como edie,  
 For entertayment of the great Valoys)  
 I acted yong Antinou+s; and atracted  
 The eyes, and eares of all the Ladies, present,  
 To admire each gracefull gesture, note, and footing.  
 Come, my Celia, let us proue,  
 While we can, the sports of love;

Time will not be ours, for euer,  
 He, at length, our good will seuer;  
 Spend not then his guiftes, in vaine.  
 Sunnes, that set, may rise againe:  
 But if, once, we loose this light,  
 It is with us perpetuall night.  
 Why should we deferre our ioyes?  
 Fame, and rumor are but toyes.  
 Cannot we delude the eyes  
 Of a few poore houshold–spies?  
 Or his easier eares beguile,  
 Thus remooued, by our wife?  
 It is no sinne, loves fruicts to steale;  
 But the sweete thefts to reveale:  
 To be taken, to be seene,  
 These have crimes accounted beene.

*I*

Some serene blast me, or dire lightning strike  
 This my offending face.

*A*

Why droopes my Celia?  
 Thou hast, in place of a base husband, found  
 A worthy lover: vse thy fortune well,  
 With secrecy, and pleasure. See, behold,  
 What thou art Queene of; not in expectation,  
 As I feede others: but possess'd, and crown'd.  
 See, here, a rope of pearle; and each, more orient  
 Then that the braue A Egiptian Queene carrous'd:  
 Dissolue, and drinke them. See, a Carbuncle,  
 May put out both the eyes of our St Marke;  
 A Diamant, would have bought Lollia Paulina,  
 When she came in, like star–light, hid with iewells,  
 That were the spoyles of Prouinces; take these,  
 And weare, and loose them: Yet, remains an Eare–ring  
 To purchase them againe, and this whole State.  
 A Gem, but worth a priuate patrimony,  
 Is nothing: we will eate such at a meale.  
 The heads of parrots, tongues of nightingalles,  
 The braynes of peacocks, and of estriches  
 Shall be our foode: and, could we get the phoenix,  
 (Though Nature lost her kind) she were our dish.

*I*

Good Sir, these things might moue a minde affected  
 With such delights; but I, whose innocence  
 Is all I can think wealthy, or worth the enjoying,



And, which once lost, I have nought to loose beyond it,  
 Cannot be taken with these sensuall baytes:  
 If you have conscience --

*A*

It is the Beggers vertue,  
 If thou hast wisdom, heare me Celia.  
 Thy bathes shall be the iuyce of Iuly-flowers,  
 Spirit of roses, and of violets,  
 The milke of vnicornes, and panthers breath  
 Gather'd in bagges, and mixt with Cretan wines.  
 Our drinke shall be prepared gold, and amber;  
 Which we will take, vntill my rooffe whirl round  
 With the vertigo: and my Dwarfe shall dance,  
 My Eunuch sing, my Foole make up the antique.  
 Whilst, we, in changed shapes, act Ouids tales,  
 Thou, like Europa now, and I like Ioue,  
 Then I like Mars, and thou like Erycine,  
 So, of the rest, till we have quite run through  
 And weary'd all the fables of the Gods.  
 Then will I have thee, in more moderne formes,  
 Attired like some sprightly Dame of France,  
 Braue Tuscan lady, or proud Spanish Beautie;  
 Sometimes, unto the Persian Sophies Wife;  
 Or the grand-Signiors Mistresse; and, for change,  
 To one of our most arte-full Curtezans,  
 Or some quick Negro, or cold Russian;  
 And I will meete thee, in as many shapes:  
 Where we may, so, trans-fuse our wandring soules,  
 Out at our lippes, and score up summes of pleasures,  
 That the curious shall not know,  
 How to tell them, as they flow;  
 And the enuious, when they find  
 What there number is, be pind.

*I*

If you have eares, that will be pierc'd -- or eyes,  
 That can be open'd -- a heart, may be touch'd --  
 Or any part, that yet sounds man, about you --  
 If you have touch of holy Saints -- or Heauen --  
 Do me the grace, to let me scape -- if not,  
 Be bountifull, and kill me -- you do know,  
 I am a creature, hether ill betrayd,  
 By one, whose shame I would forget it were --  
 If you will daigne me neither of these graces,  
 Yet feede your wrath, Sir, rather then your lust --  
 (It is a vice, comes nearer manlinesse --)  
 And punish that vnhappy crime of nature,  
 Which you miscall my beauty -- Flea my face,

Or poison it, with oyntments, for seducing  
Your bloud to this rebellion -- Rub these hands,  
With what may cause an eating leprosie,  
Even to my bones, and marrow -- Any thing,  
That may dis-fauour me, saue in my honour --  
And I will kneele to you, 'pray for you, pay downe  
A thousand howrely vowes, Sir, for your health --  
Report, and think you vertuous --

*A*

Think me cold,  
Frosen, and impotent, and so report me?  
That I had Nestor's hernia, thou wouldst think.  
I do degenerate, and abuse my Nation,  
To play with oportunity, thus long:  
I should have done the act, and then have parlee'd.  
Yeeld, or I will force thee.

*I*

O, iust God.

*A*

In vaine --

*J*

Forbeare, foule rauisher, libidinous swine,  
Free the forc'd lady, or thou dy'st, Impostor.  
But that I am loath to snatch thy punishment  
Out of the hand of Iustice, thou shouldst, yet,  
Be made the timely sacrifice of vengeance,  
Before this Altar, and this drosse, thy Idoll.  
Lady, let us quit the place, it is the den  
Of villany; feare nought you have a guard:  
And he, ere long, shall meete his iust reward.

*A*

Fall on me, roofe, and bury me in ruine,  
Become my graue, that wert my shelter. O,  
I am vn-masqu'd, vn-spirited, vn-done,  
Betray'd to beggary, to infamy --

### Scene 3.8

**B**

Where shall I runne, most wretched shame of men,  
To beate out my vn-luckie braines?

**A**

Here, here.  
What? dost thou bleede?

**B**

O, that his well-driu'n sword  
Had beene so curteous, to have cleft me downe,  
Unto the nauill; e're I liu'd to see  
My life, my hopes, my spirits, my Patron, all  
Thus desperately engaged, by my error.

**A**

Woe, on thy fortune.

**B**

And my follies, Sir.

**A**

Thou hast made me miserable.

**B**

And my selfe, Sir.  
Who would have thought, he would have harken'd, so?

**A**

What shall we do?

**B**

I know not, if my heart  
Could expiate the mischance, I would pluck it out.  
Will you be pleas'd to hang me? or cut my throate?  
And I will requite you, Sir. Let us die like Romanes,  
Since we have liu'd, like Grecians.

**A**

Hearke, who is there?  
I heare some footing, Officers, the Saffi,  
Come to apprehend us! I do feele the brand

Hissing, already, at my fore-head: now,  
Mine eares are boring.

**B**

To your couch, Sir, you  
Make that place good, how euer. Guilty men  
Suspect, what they deserue still. Signior Corbaccio!

### Scene 3.9

**D**

Why! how now? Mosca!

**B**

O, vndone, amaz'd, Sir.  
Your son (I know not, by what accident)  
Acquainted with your purpose, to my Patron,  
Touching your Will, and making him your heire;  
Entred our house with violence, his sword drawne,  
Sought for you, call'd you wretch, vnnaturall,  
Vow'd he would kill you.

**D**

Me?

**B**

Yes, and my Patron.

**D**

This act, shall disinherit him indeed:  
Here is the Will.

**B**

It is well, Sir.

**D**

Right, and well.  
Be you as carefull, now, for me.

**B**

My life, Sir,  
Is not more tenderd, I am onely yours.

**D**  
How does he? will he die shortly, think'st thou?

**B**  
I feare  
He will out—last May.

**D**  
To day?

**B**  
No, last—out May, Sir,

**D**  
Couldst thou not give him a dram?

**B**  
O by no meanes, Sir.

**D**  
Nay, I will not bid you.

**E**  
This is a knaue, I see.

**B**  
How, Signior Voltore! did he heare me?

**E**  
Parasite,

**B**  
Who is that? O, Sir, most timely welcome —

**E**  
Scarce,

To the discovery of your tricks, I feare.  
You are his, onely? and mine, also? are you not?

**B**  
Who? I, Sir?

**E**  
You, Sir. What devise is this  
About a Will?

**B**  
A plot for you, Sir.

**E**  
Come,  
Put not your foysts upon me, I shall sent them.

**B**  
Did you not heare it?

**E**  
Yes, I heare, Corbaccio  
Hath made your Patron, there, his heire.

**B**  
It is true,  
By my devise, drawne to it by my plot,  
With hope —

**E**  
Your Patron should reciprocate?  
And, you have promis'd?

**B**  
For your good, I did, Sir.  
Nay more, I told his son, brought, hid him here,  
Where he might heare his father passe the deed:  
Being perswaded to it, by this thought, Sir,  
That the vnnaturallnesse, first, of the act,  
And then, his fathers oft disclayming in him,  
Which I did meane to helpe on, would sure enrage him  
To do some violence upon his parent,

On which the law should take sufficient hold,  
And you be stated in a double hope:  
Truth be my comfort, and my conscience,  
My onely ayme was, to dig you a fortune  
Out of these two, old, rotten Sepulchers ---

**E**

I cry thee mercy Mosca.

**B**

Worth your patience,  
And your great merit, Sir. And, see the change!

**E**

Why? what successe?

**B**

Most happlesse! you must helpe, Sir.  
Whilst we expected the old Rauen, in comes  
Coruino's wife, sent hether, by her husband ---

**E**

What, with a present?

**B**

No, Sir, On visitation;  
(I will tell you how, anone) and, staying long,  
The youth, he growes impatient, rushes forth,  
Seizeth the lady, wound's me, makes her sweare  
(Or he would murder her, that was his vow)  
To affirme my patron would have done her rape:  
Which how vnlike it is, you see! and, hence,  
With that pretext, he is gone, to accuse his father;  
Defame my Patron; defeate you ---

**E**

Where is her husband?  
Let him be sent for, streight.

**B**

Sir, I will go fetch him.

*E*

Bring him, to the Scrutineo.

*B*

Sir, I Will.

*E*

This must be stopt.

*B*

O, you do nobly, Sir.

Alasse, it was labor'd all, Sir, for your good;

Nor was there want of counsell, in the plot:

But fortune can, at any time, ore throw

The proiects of a hundred learned Clearkes, Sir.

*D*

What is that?

*E*

Wilt please you, Sir, to go along?

*B*

Patron, go in, and pray for our successe.

*A*

Need makes deuotion; Heauen your labor blesse.

## Act 4

### Scene 4.1

*F*

I told you, Sir, it was a plot: you see

What obseruation is. You mention'd me,

For some instructions: I will tell you, Sir,

(Since we are met, here, in this height of Venice)

Some few perticulars, I have set downe,

Onely, for this meridian, fit to be knowne

Of your crude Trauailer, and they are these.



I will not touch, Sir, at your phrase, or clothes,  
For they are old.

**G**

Sir, I have better.

**F**

Pardon

I meant, as they are Theames.

**G**

O, Sir, proceed:

I will slander you no more of wit, good Sir.

**F**

First, for your garbe, it must be graue, and serious,  
Very reseru'd, and lock't; not tell a secret,  
On any termes, not to your father; scarce  
A fable, but with caution; make sure choise  
Both of your company, and discourse; beware,  
You neuer speake a truth --

**G**

How?

**F**

Not to strangers,  
For those be they, you must conuerse with, most;  
Others I would not know, Sir, but, at distance,  
So as I still might be a sauer, in them:  
You shall have tricks, else, past upon you, hourelly.  
And then, for your Religion, professe none;  
But wonder, at the diuersity of all;  
And, for your part, protest, were there no other  
But simply the Lawes, of the Land, you could content you:  
Nic: Machiauell, and Monsieur Bodine, both,  
Were of this minde. Then, must you learne the vse,  
And handling of your siluer forke, at meales;  
The mettall of your glasse -- These are maine matters,  
With your Italian, and to know the hower,  
When you must eat your melons, and your figges.

**G**

Is that a point of State, too?

**F**

Here it is,  
For your Venetian, if he see a man  
Preposterous, in the least, he has him straight;  
He has: he strippes him. I will acquaint you, Sir,  
I now have liu'd here (it is some fourteene monthes)  
Within the first weeke, of my landing here,  
All tooke me for a Citizen of Venice:  
I knew the formes, so well —

**G**

And nothing else.

**F**

I had read Contarene, tooke me a house,  
Dealt with my Iewes, to furnish it with moueables —  
Well, if I could but finde one man — one man,  
To mine own heart, whome I durst trust — I would —

**G**

What? what, Sir?

**F**

Make him rich; make him a fortune:  
He should not think, againe. I would command it.

**G**

As how?

**F**

With certaine proiects, that I have:  
Which, I may not discover.

**G**

If I had  
But one to wager with, I would lay odds, now,  
He tells me, instantly.

**F**

One is, (and that  
I care not greatly, who knowes) to serue the State

Of Venice, with red herrings, for three yeares,  
And at a certaine rate, from Rotterdam,  
Where I have correspondence. There is a letter,  
Sent me from one of the States, and to that purpose;  
He cannot write his name, but that is his marke.

**G**

He is a Chaundler?

**F**

No, a Cheesemonger.  
There are some other two, with whome I treat  
About the same negotiation;  
And — I will vndertake it: For, it is thus,  
I will do it with ease, I have cast it all. Your hoigh  
Carries but three men in her, and a boy;  
And she shall make me three returnes, a yeare:  
So, if there come but one of three, I saue,  
If two, I can defalke. But, this is now,  
If my mayne proiect faile.

**G**

Then, you have otheres?  
I should be loath to draw the subtill ayre

**F**

Of such a place, without my thousand aymes.  
I will not dissemble, Sir, where ere I come,  
I love to be consideratiue; and, it is true,  
I have, at my free houres, thought upon  
Some certaine Goods, unto the State of Venice,  
Which I do call my Cautions: and, Sir, which  
I meane (in hope of pension) to propound  
To the great Councell, then unto the Forty,  
So to the Ten. My meanes are made already —

**G**

By whome?

**F**

Sir, one, that though his place be obscure,  
Yet, he can sway, and they will heare him. He is  
A Commandadore.

**G**

What, a common sergeant?

**F**

Sir, such, as they are, put it in their mouthes,  
What they should say, sometimes: as well as greater.  
I think I have my notes, to shew you —

**G**

Good, Sir.

**F**

But, you shall sweare unto me, on your gentry,  
Not to anticipate —

**G**

I, Sir?

**F**

Nor reueale  
A circumstance — My paper is not with me.

**G**

O, but, you can remember, Sir.

**F**

My first is  
Concerning Tinder-boxes. You must know,  
No family is, here, without its boxe;  
Now Sir, it being so portable a thing,  
Put case, that you, or I were ill affected  
Unto the State: Sir, with it, in our pockets,  
Might not I go into the Arsenale?  
Or you? come out againe? and none the wiser?

**G**

Except your selfe, Sir.

**F**

Go to, then. I, therefore,  
Aduertise to the State, how fit it were,  
That none, but such as were knowne Patriots,

Sound lovers of their country, should be sufferd  
To enjoy them in their houses: And, euen those,  
Seald, at some office, and at such a bignesse,  
As might not lurke in pockets.

**G**  
Admirable!

**F**  
My next is, how to enquire, and be resolu'd,  
By present demonstration, whether a Ship,  
Newly arriued from Soria, or from  
And suspected part of all the Leuant,  
Be guilty of the Plague: And, where they vse  
To lie out forty, fifty dayes, sometimes,  
About the Lazaretto, for their triall;  
I will saue that charge, and losse unto the merchant,  
And, in an houre, cleare the doubt.

**G**  
Indeede, Sir?

**F**  
Or -- I will loose my labour.

**G**  
``My faith, that is much.

**F**  
Nay, Sir, conceiue me. It will cost me, in onions,  
Some thirty Liu'res --

**G**  
Which is one pound sterling.

**F**  
Beside my water-workes: For this I do, Sir.  
First, I bring in your ship, 'twixt two brickwalles;  
(But those the State shall venter) on the one  
I straine me a fayre tarre-paulin; and, in that,  
I stick my onions, cut in halfes: the other  
Is full of loope holes, out at which, I thrust  
The noses of my bellowes; and, those bellowes

Volpone

I keepe, with water–workes, in perpetuall motion,  
Which is the easi'st matter of a hundred.)  
Now, Sir, your onion, which doth naturally  
Attract the infection, and your bellows, blowing  
The aire upon him, will shew (instantly)  
By his chang'd colour, if there be contagion;  
Or else, remaine as faire, as at the first:  
Now it is knowne, it is nothing.

**G**

You are right, Sir.

**F**

I would, I had my note.

**G**

'Faith, so would I:  
But, you have done well, for once, Sir.

**F**

Were I false,  
Or would be made so, I could shew you reasons,  
How I could sell this State, now, to the Turke;  
Spight of their Gallies, or their --

**G**

Pray you, Sir Poll.

**F**

I have them not, about me.

**G**

That I fear'd.  
They are there, Sir?

**F**

No. This is my Diary,  
Wherein I note my actions of the day.

**G**

'Pray you, let us see, Sir. What is here? Notandum,  
A Rat had gnawne my spur–lethers; notwithstanding,

I put on new, and did go forth: but, first,  
I threw three beanes ouer the threshold. Item,  
I went, and bought two tooth-pickes, whereof one  
I burst, immediatly, in a discourse  
With a dutch Merchant, about Racion del stato.  
From him, I went, and payd a moccinigo,  
For peeing my silke stockings; by the way,  
I cheapend sprats: and at St Markes, I vrin'd.  
'Faith, these are politique notes!

**F**

Sir, I do slippe  
No action of my life, thus, but I quote it.

**G**

Beleeue me, it is wise!

**F**

Nay, Sir, read forth.

## Scene 4.2

**H**

Where should this loose Knight be, trow? sure he is hous'd.

**K**

Why, then he is fast.

**H**

Aye, he plaies both, with me:  
I pray you, stay. This heate will do more harme  
To my complexion, then his heart is worth;  
(I do not care to hinder, but to take him)  
How it comes of!

**W**

My maister is, yonder.

**H**

Where?

**W**

With a yong Gentleman.

**H**

That same is the party,  
In mans apparell. 'Pray you, Sir, iog my Knight:  
I will be tender to his reputation,  
How euer he demerit.

**F**

My Lady!

**G**

Where?

**F**

It is she indeed Sir, you shall know her. She is,  
Were she not mine, a Lady of that merite,  
For fashion, and behaiour; and, for beauty  
I durst compare --

**G**

It seemes, you are not iealous,  
That dare commend her.

**F**

Nay, and for discourse --

**G**

Beeing your wife, she cannot misse that.

**F**

Madame,  
Here is a Gentleman, 'pray you, vse him, fayrely,  
He seemes a youth, but he is --

**H**

None?

**F**



Yes, one  
Has put his face, as soone, into the world --

**H**  
You meane, as early? but to day?

**F**  
How is this?

**H**  
Why in this habit, Sir, you apprehend me.  
Well Mr Would-bee, this doth not become you;  
I had thought, the odour, Sir, of your good name,  
Had beene more precious to you; that you would not  
Have done this dire massacre, on your honour;  
One of your grauitie, and ranke, besides:  
But, Knights, I see, care little for the oath  
They make to Ladies; chiefly their own Ladies.

**F**  
Now by my Spurres (the Symbole of my Knight-hood)

**G**  
(Lord! how his brayne is humbled, for an oath)

**F**  
I reach you not.

**H**  
Right, Sir, your politie  
May beare it through, thus. Sir, a word with you.  
I would be loath, to contest, publikely,  
With any Gentlewoman or to seeme  
Froward, or violent (as the Courtier sayes)  
It comes too neare rusticity, in a Lady,  
Which I would shun, by all meanes: and, how-euer  
I may deserue from Mr Would-bee, yet,  
To have one fayre Gentlewoman, thus, be made  
The vnkind instrument, to wrong another,  
And one she knowes not; aye, and to perseuer:  
In my poore iudgement, is not warranted  
From being a solo ecisme in our sexe,  
If not in manners.

**G**

How is this!

**F**

Sweete Madame,  
Come nearer to your ayme.

**H**

Mary, and will, Sir.  
Since you prouoke me, with your impudence,  
And laughter of your light land—Syren, here,  
Your Sporus, your Hermaphrodite —

**G**

What is here:  
Poe+tique fury, and Historique stormes?

**F**

The Gentleman, beleeeue it, is of worth,  
And of our Nation.

**H**

Aye, your white—Friars nation?  
Come, I blush for you, M r Would—bee, I;  
And am asham'd, you should have no more forehead,  
Then, thus, to be the Patron, or Saint George  
To a lewd harlot, a base fricatrice,  
A female deuill, in a male out—side.

**F**

Nay,  
And you be such a one! I must bid, adieu  
To your delights. The case appeares too liquide.

**H**

Aye, you may carry it cleare, with your State—face;  
But, for your Carniuale Concupiscence,  
Who here is fled, for liberty of conscience,  
From furious persecution of the Marshall,  
Her will I disc'ple.

**G**

This is fine, In faith!  
And do you vse this, often? is this part  
Of your wits exercise, against you have occasion?  
Madam --

**H**  
Go to, Sir.

**G**  
Do you heare me, Lady?  
Why, if your Knight have set you to begge shirts,  
Or to inuite me home, you might have done it  
A nearer way, by farre:

**H**  
This cannot worke you,  
Out of my snare.

**G**  
Why? am I in it, then?  
Indeed, your husband told me, you were fayre,  
And so you are; onely, your nose enclines  
(That side, that is next the Sunne) to the Queene--apple:

**H**  
This cannot be indur'd, by any patience.

### Scene 4.3

**B**  
What is the matter, Madame?

**H**  
If the Senate  
Right not my quest, in this; I will protest them,  
To all the world, no Aristocracye.

**B**  
What is the iniurie, Lady?

**H**

Why, the callet,  
You told me of, here I have ta'ne disguis'd.

**B**

Who? this? What meanes your Ladiship? The creature  
I mention'd to you, is apprehended, now,  
Before the Senate, you shall see her --

**H**

Where?

**B**

I will bring you to her. This yong Gentleman  
I saw him land, this morning, at the Port.

**H**

Is it possible! how has my iudgement wander'd?  
Sir, I must, blushing, say to you, I have err'd:  
And plead your pardon.

**G**

What! more changes, yet?

**H**

I hope, you have not the malice to remember  
A Gentlewomans passion. If you stay,  
In Venice, here, please you to vse me, Sir --

**B**

Will you goe, Madam?

**H**

'Pray you, Sir, vse me. In faith,  
The more you vse me the more I shall conceiue,  
You have forgot our quarrell.

**G**

This is rare!  
Sir Politique Would-bee? No, Sir Politique Baud.  
To bring me, thus, acquainted with his wife!  
Well, wise Sir Pol: since you have practis'd, thus,

Upon my freshman–ship, I will trie your salt–head,  
What prooffe it is against a counter–plot.

#### Scene 4.4

*E*

Well, now you know the carriage of the businesse,  
Your constancy is all, that is requir'd  
Unto the safety of it.

*B*

Is the lie  
Safely conuaid amongst us? Is that sure?  
Knowes euery man his burden?

*C*

Yes.

*B*

Then, shrinke not.

*C*

But, knowes the Aduocate the truth?

*B*

O, Sir,  
By no meanes. I deuis'd a formall tale,  
That salu'd your reputation. But, be valiant, Sir.

*C*

I feare no one, but him; that, this his pleading  
Should make him stand for a co–heire --

*B*

Co–halter,  
Hang him: we will but vse his tongue, his noise,  
As we do Croakers, here.

*C*

Aye, what shall he do?

**B**

When we have done, you meane?

**C**

Yes.

**B**

Why, we will think,  
Sell him for Mummia, he is halfe dust already.  
Do not you smile, to see this Buffalo,  
How he does sport it with his head? -- I should  
If all were well, and past. Sir, onely you  
Are here, that shall enjoy the crop of all,  
And these not know for whome they toile.

**D**

Aye, peace.

**B**

But you shall eate it. Much. Worshipfull Sir,  
Mercury sit upon your thundring tongue,  
Or the French Hercules, and make your language  
As conquering as his club, to beate along,  
(As with a tempest) flat, our aduersaries;  
But, much more, yours, Sir.

**E**

Here they come, have done.

**B**

I have another witsesse, if you neede, Sir,  
I can produce.

**E**

Who is it?

**B**

Sir, I have her.

## Scene 4.5

*O*

The like of this the Senate neuer heard of.

*M*

It will come most strange to them, when we report it.

*O*

The Gentlewoman has beene euer held  
Of vn-reproued name.

*N*

So has the youth.

*O*

The more vnnaturall part that of his father.

*M*

More, of the husband.

*L*

I not know to give  
His act a name, it is so monstrous!

*O*

But the Impostor, he is a thing created  
To exceed example!

*L*

And all after times!

*M*

I neuer heard a true voluptuary.  
Discrīb'd, but him.

*N*

Appeare yet those were cited?

**V**

All, but the old magnifico, Volpone.

**L**

Why is not he here?

**B**

Please your Fatherhoods,  
Here is his Avuocate. Himselfe is, so weake,  
So feeble --

**O**

What are you?

**J**

His Parasite,  
His Knaue, his Pandar -- I beseech the Court,  
He may be forc'd to come, that your graue eies  
May beare strong witnessse of his strange impostures.

**E**

Upon my faith, and credit, with your vertues,  
He is not able to endure the ayre.

**M**

Bring him, howe euer.

**N**

We will see him.

**O**

Fetch him.

**E**

Your Father-hoodes fit pleasures be obey'd,  
But sure, the sight will rather moouue your pittyes,  
Then indignation; may it please the Court,  
In the meane time, he may be heard in me:  
I know this Place most voide of preiudice,  
And therefore craue it, since we have no reason



To feare our truth should hurt our cause.

*N*

Speake free.

*E*

Then know, most honor'd Fathers, I must now  
Discouer, to your strangely abused eares,  
The most prodigious, and most frontlesse piece  
Of solid impudence, and trechery,  
That euer vicious nature yet brought forth  
To shame the State of Venice. This lewd woman  
(That wants no artificiall lookes, or teares,  
To helpe the visor, she has now put on)  
Hath long beene knowne a close aduultresse,  
To that lasciuious youth there, not suspected,  
I say, but knowne; and taken, in the act,  
With him; and by this man, the easie husband,  
Pardon'd: whose timelesse bounty makes him, now,  
Stand here, the most vnhappy, innocent person,  
That euer mans own vertue made accus'd.  
For these, not knowing how to owe a gift  
Of that deare grace, but with their shame; being plac'd  
So aboue all powers of their gratitude,  
Began to hate the benefit; and, in place  
Of thanks, deuise to extirpe the memory  
Of such an act: wherein, I pray your Father-hoods,  
To obserue the malice, yea, the rage of creatures  
Discouer'd in their euils; and what heart  
Such take, euen, from their crimes. But that, anone,  
Will more appeare. This Gentleman, the father,  
Hearing of this foule fact, with many others,  
That dayly strooke at his too-tender eares,  
And, grieu'd in nothing more, then that he could not  
Preserue himselfe a parent (his sons ill  
Growing to that strange floud) at last decreed  
To dis-inherit him.

*L*

These be strange turnes!

*M*

The yong mans fame was euer faire, and honest.

*E*

So much more full of danger is his vice,

Volpone

That can beguile so, vnder shade of vertue.  
But as I said (my honour'd Sires) his father  
Having this settled purpose, (by what meanes  
To him betray'd, we know not) and this day  
Appointed for the deed, that Parricide,  
(I cannot stile him better) by confederacy  
Preparing this his Paramour, to be there,  
Entred Volpone's house (who was the man  
Your Father-hoods must vnderstand, design'd  
For the inheritance) there, sought his father;  
But, with what purpose sought he him, my Sires?  
(I tremble to pronounce it, that a son  
Unto a father, and to such a father  
Should have so foule, felonious intent)  
It was, to murder him. When, being preuented  
By his more happy absence, what then did he?  
Not check his wicked thoughts; no, now new deedes:  
(Mischiefe doth euer ende. Where it begins)  
An act of horror, Fathers! he drag'd forth  
The aged Gentleman, that had there lien, bed-rid,  
Three yeares, and more, out off his innocent couch,  
Naked upon the floore, there left him; wounded  
His seruant in the face; and, with this strumpet  
The stale to his for'gd practise, who was glad  
To be so actiue, (I shall here desire  
Your Father-hoods to note but my collections,  
As most remarkable) thought, at once, to stop  
His fathers ends; discredit his free choise,  
In the old Gentleman; redeeme themselues,  
By laying infamy, upon this man  
To whome, with blushing, they should woe their liues.

*L*

What proofes have you of this?

*J*

Most honour'd Fathers,  
I humbly craue, there be no credite giuen  
To this mans mercenary tongue.

*M*

Forbeare.

*J*

His soule moues in his face.

*N*  
O, Sir.

*J*  
This fellow,  
For six sols more, would pleade against his Maker.

*L*  
You do forget your selfe.

*E*  
Nay, nay, graue Fathers,  
Let him have scope; can any man imagine  
That he will spare his accuser, that would not  
Have spar'd his parent?

*L*  
Well, produce your proofes.

*I*  
I would, I could forget, I were a creature.

*E*  
Signior Corbaccio.

*O*  
What is he?

*E*  
The father.

*M*  
Has he had an oath?

*V*  
Yes.

*D*  
What must I do now?

*V*

Your testimony is crau'd.

*D*

Speake to the knaue?

I will have my mouth, first, stopt with earth; my heart

Abhors his knowledge: I disclaime in him

*L*

But, for what cause?

*D*

The mere portent of nature.

He is an vtter stranger to my loynes.

*J*

Have they made you to this?

*D*

I will not heare thee,

Monster of men, swine, goate, wolfe, Parricide,

Speake not, thou viper.

*J*

Sir, I will sit downe,

And rather wish my innocence should suffer,

Then I resist the authority of a father.

*E*

Signior Coruino.

*M*

This is strange!

*L*

Who is this?

*V*

The husband.

*O*

Is he sworne?

*V*

He is.

*N*

Speake then.

*C*

This woman (please your Father-hoods) is a whore,  
Of most hot exercise, more then a partrich,  
Upon record --

*L*

No more.

*C*

Neighes, like a gennet.

*V*

Preserue the honour of the Court.

*C*

I shall,  
And modesty of your most reuerend eares.  
And, yet, I hope that I may say, these eyes  
Have seene her glew'd unto that peece of Cedar;  
That fine well-timber'd gallant: and that, here,  
The letters may be read, through the horne,  
That make the story perfect.

*B*

Excellent, Sir.

*C*

There is no harme in this, now, is there?

*B*

None.

*C*

Or if I said, I hop'd that she were onward  
To her damnation, if there be a hell  
Greater then whore, and woman; a good Christian  
May make the doubt.

*N*

His griefe hath made him frantique.

*L*

Remoue him, hence.

*M*

Looke to the woman.

*C*

Rare!  
Prettily fain'd! againe!

*O*

Stand from about her.

*L*

Give her the ayre.

*N*

What can you say?

*B*

My wound  
(May it please your wisdomes) speakes for me, receiu'd  
In ayde of my good Patron, when he mist  
His sought for father, when that well-taught dame  
Had her Qu: giuen her, to crie out a rape.

*J*

O, Most lay'd impudence! Fathers.

*N*

Sir, be silent,  
You had your hearing free, so must they theirs.

*M*

I do begin to doubt the imposture, here.

*O*

This woman, has too many moods.

*E*

Graue Fathers,  
She is a creature, of a most profest,  
And prostituted lewdnesse.

*C*

Most impetuous,  
Vnsatisfied, graue Fathers.

*E*

May her faynings  
Not take your wisdomes: but, this day, she bayted  
A stranger, a graue Knight, with her loose eeyes,  
And more lasciuious kisses. This man saw them  
Together, on the water, in a Gondola.

*B*

Here is the Lady herselfe, that saw them too,  
Without; who, then, had in the open streetes  
Pursew'd them, but for sauing her Knights honour.

*L*

Produce that Lady.

*M*

Let her come.

*O*

These things  
They strike, with wonder!

*N*

I am turn'd a stone!

## Scene 4.6

*B*

Be resolute, Madam.

*H*

Aye, this same is she.

Out, thou Chameleon harlot; now, thine eyes  
Vie teares with the Hyæna: darst thou looke  
Upon my wronged face? I crie your pardons.  
I feare, I have (forgettingly) transgrest  
Against the dignity of the Court —

*M*

No, Madame.

*H*

And beene exorbitant —

*O*

You have not, Lady.  
These proofes are strong.

*H*

Surely, I had no purpose,  
To scandalize your Honors, or my sexes.

*N*

We do beleeeue it.

*H*

Surely, you may beleeeue it.

*M*

Madame, we do.

*H*



Indeede, you may; my breeding  
Is not so course --

*O*  
We know it.

*H*  
To offend  
With pertinacy --

*N*  
Lady.

*H*  
Such a presence;  
No, surely.

*L*  
We well think it.

*H*  
You may think it.

*L*  
Let her o'recome. What witnesses have you,  
To make good your report?

*J*  
Our consciences:

*I*  
And heauen, that neuer fayles the innocent.

*O*  
These are no testimonies.

*J*  
Not, in your Courts,  
Where multitude, and clamour, ouercomes.

*L*

Nay, then you do waxe insolent.

*E*

Here, here,  
The testimony comes, that will conuince,  
And put to vtter dumbnesse, their bold tongues.  
See here, graue Fathers, here is the Rauisher,  
The Rider on mens wiues, the great Impostor,  
The grand Voluptuary: Do you not think,  
These limbes should affect Venery? or these eyes  
Couet a concubine? 'Pray you, marke these hands,  
Are they not fit to stroke a Ladies brests?  
Perhaps, he doth dissemble.

*J*

So he does.

*E*

Would you have him tortur'd?

*J*

I would have him prou'd.

*E*

Best trie him, then, with goades, or burning Irons;  
Put him to the strappado; I have heard,  
The Rack hath cur'd the goute; faith, give it him,  
And helpe him of a malady, be courteous:  
I will vndertake, before these honor'd Fathers,  
He shall have, yet, as many left diseases,  
As she has knowne adulterers, or thou strumpets.  
O, my most equall Hearers, if these deedes,  
Acts, of this bold, and most exorbitant straine,  
May passe with suffrance; what one Cittizen,  
But owes the forfeit of his life, yea fame,  
To him that dares traduce him? Which of you  
Are safe, my honord Fathers? I would aske  
(With leaue of your graue Father-hoods) if their plot  
Have any face, or colour like to truth?  
Or if, unto the dullest nostrill, here,  
It smell not ranke, and most abhorred flander?  
I craue your care of this good Gentleman,  
Whose life is much indanger'd, by their fable;  
And, as for them, I will conclude with this,

Volpone

That vicious persons when they are hot, and flesh'd  
In impious acts, their constancy abounds:  
Damn'd deedes are done with greatest confidence.

*L*

Take them to custody, and seuer them.

*M*

It is pittie, two such prodigies should liue.

*L*

Let the old Gentleman be return'd, with care;  
I am sorry, our credulity wrong'd him.

*O*

These are two creatures!

*N*

I have an earthquake in me!

*M*

Their shame (euen in their cradles) fled their faces.

*O*

You have done a worthy seruice to the State, Sir,  
In their discouery.

*L*

You shall heare, ere night,  
What punishment the Court decrees upon them.

*E*

We thanke your Father-hoods. How like you it?

*B*

Rare.  
I would have your tongue, Sir, tipt with gold, for this;  
I would have you be the heyre to the whole Citty;  
The earth I would have want men, ere you want liuing:  
They are bount to erect your Statue, in St Markes.  
Signior Coruino, I would have you goe,

And shew your selfe, that you have conquer'd.

*C*  
Yes.

*B*  
It was much better, that you should professe  
Your selfe a cuckold, thus; then that the other  
Should have beene prou'd.

*C*  
Nay I consider'd that;  
Now it is her fault:

*B*  
Then, it had beene yours.

*C*  
True, I do doubt this Aduocate, still.

*B*  
In faith,  
You need not, I dare ease you of that care.

*C*  
I trust thee, Mosca.

*B*  
As your, own soule, Sir.

*D*  
Mosca.

*B*  
Now for your businesse, Sir.

*D*  
How? have you busines?

**B**

Yes, yours, Sir.

**D**

O, none else?

**B**

None else, not I.

**D**

Be carefull, then.

**B**

Rest you, with both your eies, Sir.

**D**

Dispatch it,

**B**

Instantly.

**D**

And looke, that all,  
What-euer, be put in, iewells, plate, moneyes,  
House-holdstuffe, bedding, curtines.

**B**

Curtine-rings, Sir.  
Onely, the Aduocates fee must be deducted.

**D**

I will pay him, now: you will be too prodigall.

**B**

Sir. I must tender it.

**D**

Two Cecchines is well?

**B**

No, sixe, Sir.

**D**

It is too much.

**B**

He talk'd a great while,  
You must consider that, Sir.

**D**

Well, there is three ---

**B**

I will give it him.

**D**

Do so, and there is for thee.

**B**

Bountifull bones! What horride strange offence  
Did he commit against nature, in his youth,  
Worthy this age? You see, Sir, how I worke  
Unto your ends; take you no notice.

**E**

No,  
I will leaue you.

**B**

All, is yours; the Deuill, and all,  
Good Aduocate. Madame, I will bring you home.

**H**

No, I will go see your Patron.

**B**

That you shall not:  
I will tell you, why. My purpose is, to vrge  
My patron to reforme his Will; and, for  
The zeale, you have shew'n to day, whereas before

You were but third, or fourth, you shall be now  
Put in the first; which would appeare as beg'd,  
If you be present. Therefore —

*H*

You shall sway me.

## Act 5

### Scene 5.1

*A*

Well, I am here; and all this brunt is past:  
I ne're was in dislike with my disguise,  
Till this fled moment; here, it was good, in priuate,  
But, in your publike, Caue, whilst I breath.  
'Fore God, my left legge began to have the crampe;  
And I appre'nded, straight, some power had strooke me  
With a dead Palsey: Well, I must be merry,  
And shake it off. A many of these feares  
Would put me into some villanous disease,  
Should they come thick upon me: I will preuent them.  
Give me a boule of lusty wine, to fright  
This humor from my heart; (Hum, hum, hum)  
It is almost gone, already: I shall conquer.  
Any deuse, now, of rare, ingenious knauery,  
That would possesse me with a violent laughter,  
Would make me up, againe: So, so, so, so.  
This heate is life; it is blood, by this time: Mosca!

### Scene 5.2

*B*

How now, Sir? does the day looke cleare againe?  
Are we recouerd? and wrought out of error,  
Into our way? to see our path, before us?  
Is our trade free, once more?

*A*

Exquisite Mosca!

*B*

Was it not carry'd learnedly?

*A*

And stoutly.  
Good wits are greatest in extremities.

*B*

It were a folly, beyond thought, to trust  
Any grand act unto a cowardly spirit:  
You are not taken with it, enough, me thinkes?

*A*

O, more, then if I had enjoy'd the wench:  
The pleasure of all woman-kind is not like it.

*B*

Why, now you speake, Sir. We must, here be fixt;  
Here, we must rest; this is our maister-peice;  
We cannot think, to goe beyond this.

*A*

True.  
Thou hast playd thy prise, my precious Mosca.

*B*

Nay Sir,  
To gull the Court —

*A*

And, quite diuert the torrent,  
Upon the innocent.

*B*

Yes, and to make  
So rare a Musique, out of Discordes —

*A*

Right.  
That, yet, to me is the strangest! how thou hast borne it!  
That these (being so diuided amongst them selues)  
Should not sent some-what, or in me, or thee,  
Or doubt their own side.



**B**

True. They will not see it;  
Too much light blinds them, I think: each of them  
Is so possest, and stuf with his own hopes,  
That any thing, unto the contrary,  
Neuer so true, or neuer so apparent,  
Neuer so palpable, they will resist it --

**A**

Like a temptation of the Deuill.

**B**

Right Sir.  
Merchants may talke of trade, and your great Signiors  
Of land, that yeelds well; but if Italy  
Have any glebe, more fructfull, then these fellowes,  
I am deceiu'd. Did not your Aduocate rare?

**A**

O, my most honor'd Fathers, my graue Fathers,  
Vnder correction of your Father-hoods,  
What face of truth is, here? If these strange deedes  
May passe, most honour'd Fathers -- I had much a do  
To forbear laughing.

**B**

It seem'd to me, you sweate, Sir.

**A**

In troth, I did a little.

**B**

But confesse, Sir,  
Were you not daunted?

**A**

In good faith, I was  
A little in a mist; but not deieted:  
Neuer, but still my selfe.

**B**

Volpone

I think it, Sir.  
Now (so truth helpe me) I must needes say this, Sir,  
And, out of conscience; for your Aduocate:  
He has taken paynes, in faith, Sir, and deseru'd,  
In my poore iudgement, I speake it, vnder fauour,  
Not to contrary you, Sir, very richly —  
Well — to be cosend.

**A**  
Troth, and I think so too,  
By that I heard him, in the latter ende.

**B**  
O, but before, Sir; had you heard him, first,  
Draw it to certaine heads, then aggrauate,  
Then vse his vehement figures — I look'd stil,  
When he would shift a shirt; and, doing this  
Out of pure love, no hope of gaine —

**A**  
It is right.  
I cannot answer him, Mosca, as I would,  
Not yet; but, for thy sake, at thy intreaty,  
I will beginne, euen now, to vex them all:  
This very instant.

**B**  
Good, Sir.

**A**  
Call the Dwarfe,  
And Eunuch, forth.

**B**  
Castrone, Nano.

**K**  
Here.

**A**  
Shall we have a Iig, now?

**B**

What you please, Sir.

**A**

Goe,  
Straight, give out, about the streetes, you two,  
That I am dead; do it, with constancy,  
Sadly, do you heare? impute it to the grieffe  
Of this late slander.

**B**

What do you meane Sir?

**A**

O,  
I shall have, instantly, my Vulture, Crow,  
Rauen, come flying hither (on the newes)  
To peck for carrion, my shee-Wolfe, and all,  
Greedy, and full of expectation —

**B**

And then, to have it rauish'd from their mouths?

**A**

It is true, I will have thee put on a gowne,  
And take upon thee, as thou wert mine heire;  
Shew them a Will; Open that chest, and reach  
Forth one of those, that has the Blankes. I will straight  
Put in thy name.

**B**

It will be rare, Sir.

**A**

Aye  
When they even gape, and finde themselues deluded,

**B**

Yes.

**A**

And, thou vse them skiruily. Dispatch,

Get on thy gowne.

**B**

But, what, Sir, if they aske  
After the body?

**A**

Say, it was corrupted,

**B**

I will say it stunke, Sir; and was faine to have it  
Coffin'd up instantly, and sent away.

**A**

Any thing, what thou wilt. Hold, here is my Will.  
Get thee a cap, a count-booke, pen and inke,  
Papers afore thee; sit, as thou wert taking  
An inuentry of parcells: I will get up,  
Behind the curtine, on a stoole, and hearken;  
Sometime, peepe ouer; see, how they do looke;  
With what degrees, their bloud doth leaue their faces;  
O, it will afforde me a rare meale of laughter.

**B**

Your Aduocate will turne starke dull, upon it.

**A**

It will take of his Oratories edge.

**B**

But your Clarissimo, old round-backe, he  
Will crumpe you, like a hog-louse, with the touch.

**A**

And what Coruino?

**B**

O, Sir, looke for him,  
To morrow morning, with a rope, and a dagger,  
To visite all the streetes; he must runne madd.  
My Lady too, that came into the Court,  
To beare false witnessse, for your Worship.

**A**

Yes,  
And kist me 'fore the Fathers; when my face  
Flow'd all with oyles.

**B**

And sweate — Sir. Why, your gold  
Is such another med'cine, it dries up  
All those offensiue sauors! It tranformes  
The most deformed, and restores them lovely,  
As it were the strange poe+ticall Girdle. IOVE  
Could not inuent, to himselfe, a shroud more subtle,  
To passe Acrisius guardes. It is the thing  
Makes all the world her grace, her youth, her beauty.

**A**

I think, she loves me.

**B**

Who? the Lady, Sir?  
She is iealous of you.

**A**

Dost thou say so?

**B**

Hearke,  
There is some, already.

**A**

Looke.

**B**

It is the Vulture:  
He has the quickest sent.

**A**

I will to my place,  
Thou, to thy posture,

**B**

I am set.

**A**

But, Mosca,  
Play the Artificer now, torture them, rarely.

### **Scene 5.3**

**E**

How now, my Mosca?

**B**

Turkie Carpets, nine --

**E**

Taking an inventory? that is well.

**B**

Two Sutes of bedding, Tissew --

**E**

Where is the Will?  
Let me read that, the while.

**D**

So, set me downe:  
And get you home.

**E**

Is he come, now, to trouble us?

**B**

Of Cloth of gold, two more--

**D**

Is it done, Mosca?

**B**

Of seuerall vellets, eight —

**E**

I like his care.

**D**

Dost thou not heare?

**C**

Ha? is the houre come, Mosca?

**A**

Aye, now, they muster.

**C**

What does the Aduocate, here?  
Or this Corbaccio?

**D**

What do these here?

**H**

Mosca?  
Is his thred spunne?

**B**

Eight Chests of Linnen —

**A**

O,  
My fine Dame would-bee, too!

**C**

Mosca, the Will,  
That I may shew it these, and rid hem hence.

**B**

Six Chests of Diaper foure of Damasske — There.

**D**

Is that the Will?

**B**

Downe-Beds, and Boulsters ---

**A**

Rare!

Be busie still. Now, they begin to flutter:  
They neuer think of me. Looke, see, see, see!  
How their swift eies runne ouer the long deed,  
Unto the Name, and to the Legacies,  
What is bequeath'd them, there ---

**B**

Ten Sutes of Hangings ---

**A**

Aye, in their garters, Mosca. Now, their hopes  
Are at the gaspe.

**E**

Mosca the heire?

**D**

What is that?

**A**

My Aduocate is dumbe, Looke to my Merchant,  
He has heard of some strange storme, a ship is lost:  
He faintes. My Lady will swoune. Old Glazen-eies,  
He hath not reach'd his dispaire, yet.

**D**

All these  
Are out of hope, I am sure the man.

**C**

But, Mosca ---



**B**

Two Cabinets.

**C**

Is this in earnest?

**B**

One  
Of Ebony ---

**C**

Or, do you but delude me?

**B**

The other, Mother of Pearle --- I am very busie.  
Good faith, it is a fortune throwne upon me ---  
Item, one Salt of Agat --- not my seeking.

**H**

Do you heare, Sir?

**B**

A perfum'd Boxe --- 'pray you forbear,  
You see I am troubled --- made of an Onyx ---

**H**

How!

**B**

To morrow, or next day, I shall be at leasure,  
To talke with you all.

**C**

Is this my large hopes issue?

**H**

Sir, I must have a fayrer answer.

**B**

Madame?

Volpone

Mary, and shall: 'pray you, fairely quit my house.  
Nay, raise no tempest with your lookes; but, hearke you:  
Remember, what your Ladyship offerd me,  
To put you in, an heire; go to, think on it.  
And what you said, eene your best Madames did  
For maintaynance, and why not you? Inough.  
Go home, and vse the poore Sir Poll. Your Knight, well;  
For feare I tell some riddles; Go, be melancholique.

*A*

O, my fine Deuill!

*C*

Mosca, 'pray you a word.

*B*

Lord! will not you take your dispatch hence, yet?  
Me thinks (of all) you should have beene the example.  
Why should you stay, here? with what thought? what promise?  
Heare you; do not you know, I know you an asse?  
And, that you would; most faine, have beene a wittoll,  
If fortune would have let you? that you are  
A declar'd cuckold, on good termes? This Pearle,  
You will say, was yours? right. This Diamant?  
I will not deny it, but thanke you. Much here, else?  
It may be so. Why, think that these good workes  
May helpe to hide your bad: I will not betray you,  
Although you be but extraordinary,  
And have it onely in title, it sufficeth.  
Go home; be melancholique, too: or mad.

*A*

Rare Mosca! how his villany becomes him.

*E*

Certaine, he doth delude all these, for me.

*D*

Mosca the heire?

*A*

O, his fowre eies have found it.

**D**

I am cosen'd, cheated, by a Parasite—slaue;  
Harlot, thou hast gul'd me.

**B**

Yes, Sir. Stop your mouth,  
Or I shall draw the only tooth, is left.  
Are not you he, that filthy couetous wretch,  
With the three legges, that, here, in hope of prey,  
Have, any time this three yeare, snuft about,  
With your most grou'ling nose; and would have hir'd  
Me, to the pois'ning of my Patron? Sir?  
Are not you he, that have, to day, in Court,  
Profess'd the dis—inheriting of your son?  
Periur'd your selfe? goe home, and die, and stinke;  
If you but croake a sillable, all comes out:  
Away, and call your porters, go, go stinke.

**A**

Excellent varlet!

**E**

Now, my faithfull Mosca,  
I finde thy constancie.

**B**

Sir?

**E**

Sincere.

**B**

A Table  
Of Porphiry — I mar'le, you will be thus troublesome.

**A**

Nay, leaue off now, they are gone.

**B**

Why? who are you?  
What? who did send for you? O crie you mercy,  
Reuerend Sir: good faith, I am grieu'd for you,  
That any chance of mine should thus defeate

Your (I must needs say) most deseruing trauailes:  
 But, I protest, Sir, it was cast upon me,  
 And I could, almost, wish to be without it,  
 But, that the will of the dead must be obseru'd,  
 Mary, my ioy is, that you need it not,  
 You have a gift, Sir, (thanke your education)  
 Will neuer let you want, while there are men,  
 And malice to breed causes. Would I had  
 But halfe the like, for all my fortune, Sir.  
 If I have any sutes (as I do hope,  
 Things being so easie, and direct, I shall not)  
 I will make bold with your obstreperous aide,  
 (Conceiue me) for your fee, Sir. In meane time,  
 You, that have so much law, I know have the conscience,  
 Not to be couetous of what is mine.  
 Good Sir, I thanke you, for my plate; it will helpe  
 To set up a yong man. Good faith, you looke  
 As you were costiuē; best goe home, and purge, Sir,

**A**

Bid him, eate lettice well: my witty mischiefe,  
 Let me embrace thee. O, that I could now  
 Transforme thee to a Venus — Mosca, goe,  
 Streight, take my habite of Clarissimo,  
 And walke the streets; be seene, torment them more:  
 We must purseew, as well as plot. Who would  
 Have lost this feast?

**B**

I doubt, it will loose them.

**A**

O, my recouery shall recouer all,  
 That I could now but think on some disguise,  
 To meete them in: and aske them questions.  
 How I would vexe them still, at euery turne?

**B**

Sir, I can fit you.

**A**

Canst thou?

**B**

Yes. I know

One of the Commandadori, Sir, so like you,  
Him will I streight make drunke, and bring you his habite.

**A**

A rare disguise, and answering thy braine!  
O, I will be a sharpe disease unto them.

**B**

Sir you must looke for curses —

**A**

Till they burst;  
The FOXE fares euer best, when he is curst.

### **Scene 5.4**

**G**

Am I inough disguis'd?

**V**

I warrant you.

**G**

All my ambition is to fright him, onely.

**V**

If you could ship him away, twere excellent,  
To Zant, or to Alepo?

**G**

Yes, and have his  
Aduentures put in the Booke of voyages.  
And his guld story registred, for truth?  
Well, Gentlemen, when I am in, a while;  
And that you think us warme in our discourse,  
Know your approaches.

**V**

Trust it, to our care.

**G**

'Saeue you faire Lady. Is Sir Poll. within?

**W**

I do not know, Sir.

**G**

'Pray you, say unto him,  
Here is a merchant, upon earnest businesse,  
Desires to speake with him.

**W**

I will see, Sir.

**G**

'Pray you.  
I see, the Family is all female, here.

**W**

He says, Sir, he has waighty affaires of State,  
That now require him whole; some other time,  
You may possesse him.

**G**

Pray you, say againe,  
If those require him whole; these will exact him,  
Whereof I bring him tideings. What might be  
His graue affaire of State, now? how, to make  
Bolognian sauseges, here, in Venice, sparing  
One of the Ingredients.

**W**

Sir, he says, he knowes  
By your word tidings, that you are no States-man,  
And therefore, wills you stay.

**G**

Sweet, 'pray you returne him,  
I have not read so many Proclamations,  
And studied them, for words, as he has done —  
But, here he deignes to come.

**F**

Sir!! I must craue  
Your courteous pardon; There hath chanc'd (to day)  
Vnkinde disaster, 'twixt my Lady, and me:  
And I was penning my Apologie  
To give her satisfaction, as you came, now.

**G**

Sir, I am greiu'd, I bring you worse disaster;  
The Gentleman, you met at the Port, to day,  
That told you, he was newly arriu'd --

**F**

Aye, was  
A fugitiue--Punke?

**G**

No, Sir, a Spie, set on you,  
And he has made relation to the Senate,  
That you profest to him, to have a plot,  
To sell the State of Venice, to the Turke.

**F**

O me.

**G**

For which, warrants are sign'd by this time,  
To apprehend you, and to search your study,  
For papers --

**F**

Alasse, Sir. I have none, but notes,  
Drawne out of Play--bookes--

**G**

All the better, Sir.

**F**

And some Essayes. What shall I do?

**G**

Sir, Best  
Conuay your selfe into a Sugar–Chest;  
Or, if you could lie round, a Frayle were rare:  
And I could send you, aboard.

**F**  
Sir, I but talk'd so,  
For discourse sake, merely.

**G**  
Hearke, they are there.

**F**  
I am a wretch, a wretch.

**G**  
What, will you do Sir?  
Have you nere a Curren–Butt to leape into?  
They will put you to the Rack, you must be sodaine.

**F**  
Sir, I have an ingine —

**V**  
Sir Politique Would–be?  
Where is he?

**F**  
That I have thought upon, before time.

**G**  
What is it?

**F**  
I shall ne're indure the torture.  
Mary, it is, Sir, of a Tortoyse–shell,  
Apted, for these extremities: 'Pray you Sir, helpe me.  
Here, I have a place, Sir, to put back my leggs,  
Please you to lay it on, Sir, with this cap,  
And my black gloves, I will lie, Sir, like a Tortoyse,  
Till they are gone,



**G**

And, call you this an engine?

**F**

Mine own devise — Good Sir, bid my wiues women  
To burne my papers.

**V**

Where is he hid?  
We must,  
And will, sure, finde him.  
Which is his study?  
What  
Are you, Sir?

**G**

I am a merchant, that came here  
To looke upon this Tortoyse.

**V**

How?  
St Marke!  
What Beast is this?

**G**

It is a Fish.

**V**

Come out, here.

**G**

Nay, you may strike him, Sir, and tread upon him:  
He will beare a cart.

**V**

What, to runne ouer him?

**G**

Yes.

**V**

Let us iumpe, upon him;  
Can he not goe?

**G**

He creepes Sir.

**V**

Let us see him creepe

**G**

No, good Sir, you will hurt him.

**V**

(Heart) I will see him creepe; or prick his gutts.  
Come out, here.

**G**

'Pray you, Sir , (creepe a little)

**V**

Forth.  
Yet further.

**G**

Good Sir. (creepe)

**V**

We will see his leggs.  
Gods 'so he has garters!  
Aye, and gloves!  
Is this  
Your fearefull Tortoyse?

**G**

Now, Sir Poll. We are euen;  
For your next proiect, I shall be prepar'd:  
I am sory, for the funerall of your notes, Sir.

**V**

It were a rare motion, to be seene in Fleete–street!

Aye, in the Terme.  
Or Smithfield, in the Faire.  
Me thinkes, it is but a melancholique sight!

**G**  
Farewell, most politique Tortoyse.

**F**  
Where is my Lady?  
Knowes she of this?

**W**  
I know not, Sir.

**F**  
Enquire.  
O, I shall be the fable of all feasts;  
The freight of the Gazetti; ship-boies tale;  
And, which is worst, euen talke for Ordinaries.

**W**  
My Lady is come most melancholique, home,  
And says, Sir, she will straight to sea, for Physick.

**F**  
And I, to shunne, this place, and clime for euer;  
Creeping, with house, on back: and think it well,  
To shrinke my poore head, in my politique shell,

## Scene 5.5

**A**  
Am I then like him?

**B**  
O, Sir, you are he:  
No man can seuer you.

**A**  
Good.

**B**

But, what am I?

**A**

'Fore heau'n, a braue Clarissimo, thou becom'st it!  
Pitty, thou wert not borne one.

**B**

If I hold  
My made one, it will be well.

**A**

I will goe, and see  
What newes, first, at the Court.

**B**

Do so. My FOXE  
Is out on his hole, and, ere he shall re-enter,  
I will make him languish, in his borrow'd case,  
Except he come to composition, with me:  
Androgyno, Castrone, Nano.

**X**

Here.

**B**

Go, recreate your selues, abroad; go, sport:  
So, now I have the keies, and am possest.  
Since he will, needes, be dead, afore his time,  
I will burie him, or gaine by him; I am his heyre:  
And so will keepe me, till he share at least.  
To cosen him of all, were but a cheat  
Well plac'd; no man would construe it a sinne:  
Let his sport pay for it, this is call'd the FOXE-trap.

## Scene 5.6

**D**

They say, the Court is set.

*C*

We must mainteine  
Our first tale good, for both our reputations.

*D*

Why? mine is no tale: my son would, there, have kild me.

*C*

That is true, I had forgot; Mine is, I am sure  
But, for your Will, Sir.

*D*

Aye, I will come upon him,  
For that, hereafter; now his Patron is dead.

*A*

Signior Coruino! and Corbaccio! Sir,  
Much ioy unto you.

*C*

Of what?

*A*

The sodaine good,  
Dropt down upon you --

*D*

Where?

*A*

(And, none knowes how)  
From old Volpone, Sir.

*D*

Out, errant Knaue.

*A*

Let not your too much wealth, Sir, make you furious.

*D*

Away, thou varlet.

*A*

Why Sir?

*D*

Dost thou mock me?

*A*

You mock the world, Sir, did you not change Wills?

*D*

Out, harlot.

*A*

O! belike you are the man,  
Signior Coruino? 'faith, you carry it well;  
You grow not mad withall: I love your spirit.  
You are not ouer-leauend, with your fortune.  
You should have some would swell, now, like a wine-fat,  
With such an Autumne -- Did he give you all, Sir?

*D*

Auoid, you Rascall.

*A*

'Troth, your wife has shew'ne  
Her selfe a very woman; but, you are well,  
You need not care, you have a good estate,  
To beare it out Sir: better, by this chance.  
Except Corbaccio have a share?

*C*

Hence varlet.

*A*

You will not be a' knowne, Sir: it is wise,  
Thus do all Gam'sters, at all games, dissemble;  
No man will seeme to winne: here, comes my Vulture,  
Heaung his beake up in the ayre, and snuffing.

## Scene 5.7

*E*

Ovt–stript thus, by a Parasite? a slaue?  
Would run on errands? and make less, for crums?  
Well, what I will do —

*A*

The Court stayer for your worship.  
I ee'ne reioyce, Sir, at your worships happinesse,  
And, that it fell into so learned hands,  
That vnderstand the fingering.

*E*

What do you meane?

*A*

I meane to be a sutor to your worship,  
For the small tenement, out of reparations;  
That, at the end of your long row of houses,  
By the Piscaria: It was, in Volpone's time,  
Your predecessor, e're he grew diseas'd,  
A handsome, pretty, custom'd baudy–house,  
As any was in Venice (none disprais'd)  
But fell with him; His body, and that house  
Decay'd, together.

*E*

Come, Sir, leaue your prating.

*A*

Why, if your worship give me but your hand,  
That I may have the refusall; I have done.  
It is a meere toy, to you, Sir; candle rents:  
As your learn'd worship knowes —

*E*

What do I know?

*A*

Mary, no end of your wealth, Sir, God decrease it.

*E*

Mistaking knaue! what, mockst thou my mis–fortune?

*A*

His blessing on your heart, Sir, would it were more.  
Now, to my first, againe; at the next corner.  
(MOSCA passant)

## Scene 5.8

*D*

See, in our habite! see the impudent varlet!

*C*

That I could shoote mine eyes at him, like gunstones.

*A*

But, is this true, Sir, of the Parasite?

*D*

Againe, to afflict us? Monster!

*A*

In good faith, Sir,  
I am hartily greeu'd, a beard of your graue length  
Should be so ouer–reach'd. I neuer brook'd  
That Parasites hayre, me thought his nose should cosen,  
There still was somewhat, in his looke, did promise  
The bane of a Clarissimo.

*D*

Knaue --

*A*

Me thinkes,  
Yet you, that are so traded in the world,  
A witty merchant, the fine bird, Coruino,  
That have such morall Emblemes on your name,  
Should not have sung your shame; and dropt your cheese:



To let the FOXE laugh at your emptinesse.

*C*

Sirrah, you think, the priuiledge of the place,  
And your red saucy cap, that seemes (to me)  
Nayl'd to your iolt-head, with those two Cecchines,  
Can warrant your abuses; come you, hither:  
You shall perceiue, Sir, I dare beate you. Approach.

*A*

No hast, Sir, I do know your valure, well,  
Since you durst publish what you are, Sir.

*C*

Tarry,  
I would speake , with you.

*A*

Sir, another time --

*C*

Nay, now.

*A*

O God, Sir! I were a wise man  
Would stand the fury of a distracted cuckold.

*D*

What! come againe?

*A*

Upon them, Mosca; saue me.

*D*

The ayre is infected, where he breathes.

*C*

Lets fly him.

*A*

Excellent Basiliske! Turne upon the Vulture.

## Scene 5.9

*E*

Well, flesh–flie, it is Sommer with you now;  
Your Winter will come on.

*B*

Good Aduocate,  
'Pray thee, not rayle, nor threaten out of place, thus;  
Thou wilt make a solo ecisme (as Madam sayes)  
Get you a biggen, more: your brayne breakes loose.

*E*

Well, Sir.

*A*

Would you have me beate the insolent slaue?  
Throwe durt, upon his first good cloathes?

*E*

This same  
Is, doubtlesse, some Familiar!

*A*

Sir, the Court,  
In troth, stayes for you. I am madd, a Mule,  
That neuer read Iustinian, should get up,  
And ride an Aduocate. Had you no quirk,  
To auoide gullage, Sir., by such a creature?  
I hope you do but iest; he has not done it:  
This is but confederacy, to blinde the rest.  
You are the heyre?

*E*

A strange, officious,  
Trouble–some knaue! thou dost torment me.

*A*

I know --

It cannot be, sir, that you should be consen'd;  
It is not within the wit of man, to do it:  
You are so wise, so prudent -- And, it is fit,  
That wealth, and wisdom still, should go together --

## Scene 5.10

*O*

Are all the parties, here?

*V*

All but the Advocate.

*M*

And, here he comes.

*L*

Then bring them forth to sentence.

*E*

O my most honour'd Fathers, let your mercy  
Once winne upon your iustice, to forgiue --  
I am distracted --

*A*

What will he do, now?

*E*

O,  
I know not which to addresse my selfe to, first,  
Whether your Father-hoods, or these innocents --

*C*

Will he betray himselfe,

*E*

Whome, equally,  
I have abus'd, out of most couetous endes --

*C*

The man is mad!

*D*

What is that?

*C*

He is possest.

*V*

For which; now strooke in conscience, here I prostrate  
My selfe, at you offended feete, for pardon.

*X*

Arise.

*I*

O heau'n, how iust thou art!

*A*

I am caught  
In myne own noose --

*C*

Be constant. Sir, nought now  
Can helpe, but impudence.

*L*

Speake forward.

*V*

Silence.

*E*

It is not passion in me, reuerend Fathers,  
But onely conscience, conscience, my good Sires,  
That makes me, now, tell trueth. That Parasite,  
That Knaue hath been the instrument of all --

*L*

Volpone

Where is that Knaue? fetch him.

*A*

I go.

*C*

Graue Fathers,  
This man is distracted, he confest it, now;  
For, hoping to be old Volpone's heyre,  
Who now is dead --

*N*

How?

*M*

Is Volpone dead?

*C*

Dead since, graue Fathers --

*J*

O, sure vengeance!

*L*

Stay, --  
Then, he was no deceiuer?

*E*

O, no, none:  
The Parasite, graue Fathers --

*C*

He does speake,  
Out of mere enuie, 'cause the seruant is made  
The thing, he gap't for; please your Father-hoods,  
This is the truth: though, I will not iustifie  
The other, but he may be somewhere faulty.

*E*

Aye, to your hopes, as well as mine, Coruino:  
But I will vse modesty. 'Pleaseth your wisdomes

Volpone

To view these certaine notes, and but conferre them;  
As I hope fauour, they shall speake cleare truth.

*C*

The Deuill has entred him.

*J*

Or bides in you.

*O*

We have done ill, by a publike Officer,  
To send for him, if he be heire;

*M*

For whome?

*O*

Him, that they call the Parasite.

*N*

It is true;  
He is a man, of great estate, now left.

*O*

Goe you, and learne his name; and say, the Court  
Intreates his presence, here: but, to the clearing  
Of some few doubts.

*M*

This same is a labyrinth!

*L*

Stand you unto your first report?

*C*

My state,  
My life, my fame —

*J*

Where is it?

*C*

Are at the stake

*L*

Is yours so too?

*D*

The Aduocate is a knave:  
And has a forked tongue --

*M*

Speake to the point.

*D*

So is the Parasite, too.

*L*

This is confusion.

*E*

I do beseech your Father-hoods, read but those;

*C*

And credit nothing, the false spirit hath writ:  
It cannot be (my Sires) but he is possest.

## Scene 5.11

*A*

To make a snare, for mine own neck! and run  
My head into it, wilfully! with laughter!  
When I had newly scap't, was free, and cleare!  
Out of mere wantonnesse! o, the dull Deuill  
Was in this braine of mine, when I deuis'd it;  
And Mosca gaue it second: he must now  
Helpe to seare up this veyne, or we bleed dead.  
How now! who let you loose? whether go you, now?  
What? to bury Ginger bread? or to drowne Kitlings?

**K**

Sir, Maister Mosca call'd us out of dores,  
And bid us all go play, and tooke the keyes.

**V**

Yes.

**A**

Did Maister Mosca take the keyes? why, so!  
I am farder, in. These are my fine conceipts!  
I must be merry, with a mischiefe to me!  
What a vile wretch was I, that could not beare  
My fortune, soberly? I must have my Crotchets!  
And my Conundrums! well, go you, and seeke him:  
His meaning may be truer, then my feare.  
Bid him he, streight, come to me, to the Court;  
Thether will I; and, if it be possible,  
Vn-screw my Aduocate, upon new hopes:  
When I prouok'd him, then I lost my selfe.

## Scene 5.12

**L**

These things can ne're be reconcil'd. He, here,  
Professeth, that the Gentleman was wrong'd;  
And that the Gentlewoman was brought thether,  
Forc'd by her husband: and there left.

**E**

Most true.

**I**

How ready is heau'n to those, that pray.

**L**

But, that  
Volpone would have rauish'd her, he holds  
Vtterly false; knowing his impotence.

**C**

Graue Fathers, he is possest; againe, I say



Possest: nay, if there be possession,  
And obsession, he has both.

*N*  
Here comes our Officer.

*A*  
The Parasite will streight be, here, graue Fathers.

*O*  
You might inuent some other name, Sir varlet.

*N*  
Did not the Notarie meet him?

*A*  
Not, that I know.

*O*  
His comming will cleare all.

*M*  
Yet it is misty.

*E*  
May it please your Father-hoods --

*A*  
Sir, the Parasite  
Will'd me to tell you, that his Maister liues;  
That you are still the man; your hopes the same;  
And this was, onely a iest --

*E*  
How?

*A*  
Sir, to trie  
If you were firme, and how you stood affected.

*E*

Art sure he liues?

*A*

Do I liue, Sir?

*E*

O me!

I was too violent.

*A*

Sir, you may redeeme it,  
They said, you were possest; fall downe, and seeme so:  
I will helpe to make it good. God blesse the man!  
Stop your wind hard, and swell: See, see, see, see!  
He vomits crooked pinnes! his eyes are set,  
Like a dead hares, hung in a poulters shop!  
His mouth is running away! Do you see, Signior?  
Now, it is in his belly!

*C*

Aye, the Deuill!

*A*

Now, in his throate.

*C*

Aye, I perceiue it plaine.

*A*

It will out, it will out; stand cleere. See, where it flyes!  
In shape of a blew toad, with a bates wings!  
Do not you see it, Sir?

*D*

What? I think I do.

*C*

It is too manifest.

*A*

Looke! he comes to himselfe!

*E*

Where am I?

*A*

Take good heart, the worst is past, Sir.  
You are dis-possesst.

*L*

What accident is this?

*M*

Sodaine, and full of wonder!

*N*

If he were  
Possesst, as it appeares, all this is nothing.

*C*

He has beene, often, subiect to these fitts.

*L*

Shew him that writing, do you know it, Sir?

*A*

Deny it, Sir, forweare it, know it not.

*E*

Yes, I do know it well, it is my hand:

*A*

But all, that it containes, is false.

*J*

O practise!

*M*

Volpone

What maze is this!

*L*

Is he not guilty, then,  
Whome you, there, name the Parasite?

*E*

Graue Fathers,  
No more then, his good Patron, old Volpone.

*O*

Why, he is dead?

*E*

O no, my honor'd Fathers,  
He liues --

*L*

How! liues?

*E*

Liues.

*M*

This is subtler, yet!

*N*

You sayd, he was dead?

*E*

Neuer.

*N*

You sayd so?

*C*

I heard so.

*O*

Volpone

Here comes the Gentleman, make him way.

*N*  
A stoole.

*O*  
A proper man! and, were Volpone dead,  
A fit match for my daughter.

*N*  
Give him way.

*A*  
Mosca, I was almost lost, the Aduocate  
Had betrayd all; but, now, it is recouer'd:  
All is on the henge againe --- say, I am liuing.

*B*  
What busie knaue is this. Most reuerend Fathers,  
I sooner had attended your graue pleasures,  
But that my order, for the funerall  
Of my deare Patron did require me ---

*A*  
(Mosca!)

*B*  
Whome I intend to bury, like a Gentleman ---

*A*  
Aye, quick, and cosen me of all.

*M*  
Still stranger!  
More intricate!

*L*  
And come about, againe!

*O*

Volpone

It is a match, my daughter is bestow'd.

**B**

(Will you give me halfe?)

**A**

First I will be hang'd.

**B**

I know,  
Your voice is good, cry not so low'd)

**L**

Demand  
The Aduocate. Sir, did not you affirme,  
Volpone was aliue?

**A**

Yes, and he is;  
This Gent'man told me, so. (Thou shalt have halfe.)

**B**

Whose drunkard is this same? speake some, that know him:  
I neuer saw his face. (I cannot now  
Afford it you so cheape.

**A**

No?)

**L**

What say you?

**E**

The Officer told me.

**A**

I did, graue Fathers,  
And will maintayne, he liues, with mine own life.  
And that this creature told me. (I was borne,  
With all good starres my enemies.)

**B**

Most graue Fathers,  
If such an insolence, as this, must passe  
Upon me, I am silent: it was not this,  
For which you sent, I hope.

**M**

Take him away.

**A**

(Mosca.)

**N**

Let him be whipt.

**A**

(Wilt thou betray me? Cosen me?)

**N**

And taught, to beare himselfe  
Toward a person of his ranke.

**O**

Away.

**B**

I humbly thanke your Father-hoods.

**A**

Soft, soft: whipt?  
And loose all that I have? If I confesse,  
It cannot be much more.

**O**

Sir, are you married?  
88>

**A**

They will be ally'd, anone; I must be resolute:  
The FOXE shall, here, vncase.

Volpone

**B**

(Patron.)

**A**

Nay, now,  
My ruines shall not come alone; your match  
I will hinder sure: my substance shall not glew you,  
Nor screw you, into a Family.

**B**

(Why, Patron!)

**A**

I am Volpone, and this is my Knaue;  
This, his own Knaue; This, auarices Foole;  
This, a Chimo era of Wittall, Foole, and Knaue;  
And, reuerend Fathers, since we all can hope  
Nought, but a sentence, let us not now dispaire it.  
You heare me breife.

**C**

May it please your Father-hoods --

**V**

Silence.

**L**

The knot is now vndone, by miracle!

**M**

Nothing can be more clear.

**N**

Or, can more proue  
These innocent.

**L**

Give them their liberty.



*J*

Heauen could not, long, let such grosse crimes be hid.

*M*

If this be held the high way, to get riches,  
May I be poore.

*N*

This is not the gaine, but torment.

*L*

These possesse wealth, as sick men possesse Feuers,  
Which, trulyer, may be sayd to possesse them.

*M*

Disroabe that Parasite.

*X*

Most honor'd Fathers —

*L*

Can you plead ought to stay the course of Iustice?  
If you can, speake.

*X*

We beg fauor,

*I*

And mercy.

*L*

You hurt your innocence, suing for the guilty.  
Stand forth; and, first, the Parasite. You appeare  
To have beene the chiefest minister, if not plotter,  
In all these leud impostures; and now, lastly,  
Have, with your impudence, abus'd the Court,  
And habite of a Gentleman of Venice,  
Being a fellow of no birth or bloud:  
For which, our sentence is, first thou be whipt;  
Then liue perpetuall prisoner in our Gallies.

*E*

I thanke you, for him.

*B*

Bane to thy woluish nature.

*L*

Deliuier him to the Saffi. Thou, Volpone,  
By bloud, and ranke a Gentleman, canst not fall  
Vnder like censure; But our iudgement on thee  
Is, that thy substance all be straight confiscate  
To the Hospitall, of the Incurabili:  
And, since the most was gotten by imposture,  
By fayning lame, gout, palsey and such diseases,  
Thou art to lie in prison, cramp't with irons,  
Till thou bee'st sick, and lame indeed. Remoue him.

*A*

This is call'd mortifiyng of a FOXE.

*L*

Thou Voltore, to take away the scandale  
Thou hast giu'n all worthy men, of thy profession,  
Art banish'd from their Fellowship, and our State.  
Corbaccio, bring him neare. We here possesse  
Thy son, of all thy estate; and confine thee  
To the Monastery of San' Spirito:  
Where since thou knewst not how to liue well here,  
Thou shalt be learn'd to die well.

*D*

Ha! what said he?

*V*

You shall know anone, Sir.

*L*

Thou Coruino, shalt  
Be straight imbarqu'd from thine own house, and row'd  
Round about Venice, thorough the grand Canale,  
Wearing a cap, with fayre, long Asses eares,  
In steed of hornes: and so, to mount (a paper  
Pin'd on thy brest) to the Berlino --

*C*

Yes,  
And, have mine eyes beat out with stinking fish,  
Brus'd fruit and rotten egges -- it is well. I am glad,  
I shall not see my shame, yet.

*L*

And to expiate  
Thy wrongs done to thy wife, thou art to send her  
Home, to her father, with her dowrie trebled:  
And these are all your Iudgements --

*X*

(Honour'd Fathers.

*L*

Which may not be reuok'd. Now, you begin  
When crimes are done, and past, and to be punish'd,  
To think what your crimes are; away, with them.  
Let all, that see these vices thus rewarded,  
Take heart, and love to study them. Mischiefes feed  
Like beasts, till they be fat, and then they bleed.

*A*

The seasoning of a Play is the applause,  
Now, though the Foxe be punish'd by the lawes,  
He, yet, doth hope there is no suffring due,  
For any fact, which he hath done against you;  
If there be, censure him: here he, doubtfull, stands.

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