

The Changeling

Thomas Middleton

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The Changeling

Thomas Middleton

Dramatis Personae

VERMANDERO, father to Beatrice
TOMAZO de Piracquo, a noble lord
ALONZO de Piracquo, his brother, suitor to Beatrice
ALSEMERO, a nobleman, afterwards married to Beatrice
JASPERINO, his friend
ALIBIUS, a jealous doctor
LOLLIO, his man
PEDRO, friend to Antonio
ANTONIO, the changeling
FRANCISCUS, the counterfeit madman
DEFLORES, servant to Vermandero
MADMEN
[Two] SERVANTS [to Alsemero]
[A SERVANT to Vermandero]
BEATRICE [Joanna], daughter to Vermandero
DIAPHANTA, her waiting woman
ISABELLA, wife to Alibius

The Scene: Alicant

I.[i. A street near the harbor]

Enter Alsemero.

ALSEMERO

'Twas in the temple where I first beheld her,
And now again the same; what omen yet
Follows of that? None but imaginary.
Why should my hopes or fate be timorous?
The place is holy, so is my intent:
I love her beauties to the holy purpose,
And that methinks admits comparison
With man's first creation, the place blest,
And is his right home back, if he achieve it.
The church hath first begun our interview
And that's the place must join us into one,
So there's beginning and perfection too.

Enter Jasperino.

JASPERINO

O sir, are you here? Come, the wind's fair with you;
Y'are like to have a swift and pleasant passage.

ALSEMERO

The Changeling

The Changeling

Sure y'are deceived, friend; 'tis contrary
In my best judgment.

JASPERINO

What, for Malta?
If you could buy a gale amongst the witches,
They could not serve you such a lucky pennyworth
As comes a' God's name.

ALSEMERO

Even now I observ'd
The temple's vane to turn full in my face;
I know 'tis against me.

JASPERINO

Against you?
Then you know not where you are.

ALSEMERO

Not well indeed.

JASPERINO

Are you not well, sir?

ALSEMERO

Yes, Jasperino,
Unless there be some hidden malady
Within me that I understand not.

JASPERINO

And that
I begin to doubt, sir; I never knew
Your inclinations to travels at a pause
With any cause to hinder it till now.
Ashore you were wont to call your servants up,
And help to trap your horses for the speed.
At sea I have seen you weigh the anchor with 'em,
Hoist sails for fear to lose the foremost breath,
Be in continual prayers for fair winds;
And have you chang'd your orisons?

ALSEMERO

No, friend,
I keep the same church, same devotion.

JASPERINO

Lover I'm sure y'are none: the stoic
Was found in you long ago; your mother
Nor best friends, who have set snares of beauty,
Ay, and choice ones too, could never trap you that way.
What might be the cause?

The Changeling

ALSEMERO

Lord, how violent
Thou art: I was but meditating of
Somewhat I heard within the temple.

JASPERINO

Is this violence? 'Tis but idleness
Compar'd with your haste yesterday.

ALSEMERO

I'm all this while a-going, man.

Enter [Two] Servants [to Alsemero].

JASPERINO

Backwards, I think, sir. Look, your servants.

FIRST SERVANT

The seamen call; shall we board your trunks?

ALSEMERO

No, not today.

JASPERINO

'Tis the critical day,
It seems, and the sign in Aquarius.

SECOND SERVANT

We must not to sea today; this smoke will bring forth fire.

ALSEMERO

Keep all on shore; I do not know the end,
Which needs I must do, of an affair in hand
Ere I can go to sea.

FIRST SERVANT

Well, your pleasure.

SECOND SERVANT

[Aside to First Servant] Let him e'en take his leisure too; we are safer on land.

Exeunt [Alsemero's] Servants. Enter Beatrice, Diaphanta, and Servants. [Alsemero bows to Beatrice and kisses her.]

JASPERINO

[Aside] How now! The laws of the Medes are chang'd sure: salute a woman! He kisses too: wonderful! Where learnt he this? And does it perfectly too; in my conscience he ne'er rehears'd it before. Nay, go on, this will be stranger and better news at Valencia than if he had ransom'd half Greece from the Turk!

BEATRICE

The Changeling

The Changeling

You are a scholar, sir.

ALSEMERO

A weak one, lady.

BEATRICE

Which of the sciences is this love you speak of?

ALSEMERO

From your tongue I take it to be music.

BEATRICE

You are skillful in't, can sing at first sight.

ALSEMERO

And I have show'd you all my skill at once.
I want more words to express me further
And must be forc'd to repetition:
I love you dearly.

BEATRICE

Be better advis'd, sir:
Our eyes are sentinels unto our judgments,
And should give certain judgment what they see;
But they are rash sometimes, and tell us wonders
Of common things, which when our judgments find,
They can then check the eyes, and call them blind.

ALSEMERO

But I am further, lady; yesterday
Was mine eyes' employment, and hither now
They brought my judgment, where are both agreed.
Both houses then consenting, 'tis agreed,
Only there wants the confirmation
By the hand royal; that's your part, lady.

BEATRICE

Oh, there's one above me, sir. [Aside] For five days past
To be recall'd! Sure, mine eyes were mistaken;
This was the man was meant me. That he should come
So near his time, and miss it!

JASPERINO

[Aside] We might have come by the carriers from Valencia, I see, and sav'd all our sea-provision: we are at
farthest sure. Methinks I should do something too; I meant to be a venturer in this voyage. Yonder's another
vessel: I'll board her; if she be lawful prize, down goes her topsail!

Enter Deflores.

DEFLORES

Lady, your father—

The Changeling

BEATRICE

Is in health, I hope.

DEFLORES

Your eye shall instantly instruct you, lady.
He's coming hitherward.

BEATRICE

What needed then
Your duteous preface? I had rather
He had come unexpected; you must stall
A good presence with unnecessary blabbing:
And how welcome for your part you are,
I'm sure you know.

DEFLORES

[Aside] [Will't] never mend, this scorn,
One side nor other? Must I be enjoin'd
To follow still whilst she flies from me? Well,
Fates do your worst, I'll please myself with sight
Of her, at all opportunities,
If but to spite her anger. I know she had
Rather see me dead than living, and yet
She knows no cause for't but a peevish will.

ALSEMERO

You seem'd displeas'd, lady, on the sudden.

BEATRICE

Your pardon, sir, 'tis my infirmity,
Nor can I other reason render you
Than his or hers, [of] some particular thing
They must abandon as a deadly poison,
Which to a thousand other tastes were wholesome;
Such to mine eyes is that same fellow there,
The same that report speaks of the basilisk.

ALSEMERO

This is a frequent frailty in our nature;
There's scarce a man amongst a thousand sound
But hath his imperfection: one distastes
The scent of roses, which to infinites
Most pleasing is and odoriferous.
One oil, the enemy of poison,
Another wine, the cheerer of the heart,
And lively refresher of the countenance.
Indeed this fault, if so it be, is general:
There's scarce a thing but is both lov'd and loath'd;
Myself, I must confess, have the same frailty.

The Changeling

BEATRICE

And what may be your poison, sir? I am bold with you.

ALSEMERO

What might be your desire perhaps, a cherry.

BEATRICE

I am no enemy to any creature
My memory has but yon gentleman.

ALSEMERO

He does ill to tempt your sight, if he knew it.

BEATRICE

He cannot be ignorant of that, sir;
I have not spar'd to tell him so, and I want
To help myself, since he's a gentleman
In good respect with my father and follows him.

ALSEMERO

He's out of his place then now.

JASPERINO

I am a mad wag, wench.

DIAPHANTA

So methinks; but for your comfort I can tell you we have a doctor in the city that undertakes the cure of such.

JASPERINO

Tush, I know what physic is best for the state of mine own body.

DIAPHANTA

'Tis scarce a well-govern'd state, I believe.

JASPERINO

I could show thee such a thing with an [ingredient] that we two would compound together, and if it did not tame the maddest blood i' th' town for two hours after, I'll ne'er profess physic again.

DIAPHANTA

A little poppy, sir, were good to cause you sleep.

JASPERINO

Poppy! I'll give thee a pop i' th' lips for that first, and begin there. [He kisses her.] Poppy is one simple indeed, and cuckoo, what you call't, another: I'll discover no more now; another time I'll show thee all.

Enter Vermandero and Servants.

BEATRICE

My father, sir.

VERMANDERO

The Changeling

Oh, Joanna, I came to meet thee.
Your devotion's ended?

BEATRICE

For this time, sir.
[Aside] I shall change my saint, I fear me: I find
A giddy turning in me.—Sir, this while
I am beholding to this gentleman
Who left his own way to keep me company,
And in discourse I find him much desirous
To see your castle: he hath deserv'd it, sir,
If ye please to grant it.

VERMANDERO

With all my heart, sir.
Yet there's an article between: I must know
Your country. We use not to give survey
Of our chief strengths to strangers; our citadels
Are plac'd conspicuous to outward view
On promonts' tops, but within are secrets.

ALSEMERO

A Valencian, sir.

VERMANDERO

A Valencian?
That's native, sir; of what name, I beseech you?

ALSEMERO

Alsemero, sir.

VERMANDERO

Alsemero? Not the son
Of John de Alsemero?

ALSEMERO

The same, sir.

VERMANDERO

My best love bids you welcome.

BEATRICE

[Aside] He was wont
To call me so, and then he speaks a most
Unfeigned truth.

VERMANDERO

Oh, sir, I knew your father.
We two were in acquaintance long ago
Before our chins were worth iulan down,
And so continued till the stamp of time

The Changeling

Had coin'd us into silver. Well, he's gone;
A good soldier went with him.

ALSEMERO

You went together in that, sir.

VERMANDERO

No, by Saint Jaques, I came behind him;
Yet I have done somewhat too. An unhappy day
Swallowed him at last at Gibraltar
In fight with those rebellious Hollanders,
Was it not so?

ALSEMERO

Whose death I had reveng'd,
Or followed him in fate, had not the late league
Prevented me.

VERMANDERO

Ay, ay, 'twas time to breath.
Oh, Joanna, I should ha' told thee news:
I saw Piracquo lately.

BEATRICE

[Aside] That's ill news.

VERMANDERO

He's hot preparing for this day of triumph;
Thou must be a bride within this sevensnight.

ALSEMERO

[Aside] Ha!

BEATRICE

Nay, good sir, be not so violent; with speed
I cannot render satisfaction
Unto the dear companion of my soul,
Virginity, whom I thus long have liv'd with,
And part with it so rude and suddenly,
Can such friends divide never to meet again
Without a solemn farewell?

VERMANDERO

Tush, tush, there's a toy.

ALSEMERO

[Aside] I must now part, and never meet again
With any joy on earth.—Sir, your pardon,
My affairs call on me.

VERMANDERO

The Changeling

How, sir? By no means;
Not chang'd so soon, I hope? You must see my castle
And her best entertainment ere we part;
I shall think myself unkindly us'd else.
Come, come, let's on; I had good hope your stay
Had been a while with us in Alicant;
I might have bid you to my daughter's wedding.

ALSEMERO

[Aside] He means to feast me, and poisons me beforehand.--
I should be dearly glad to be there, sir,
Did my occasions suit as I could wish.

BEATRICE

I shall be sorry if you be not there
When it is done, sir, but not so suddenly.

VERMANDERO

I tell you, sir, the gentleman's complete,
A courtier and a gallant, enrich'd
With many fair and noble ornaments;
I would not change him for a son-in-law
For any he in Spain, the proudest he,
And we have great ones, that you know.

ALSEMERO

He's much
Bound to you, sir.

VERMANDERO

He shall be bound to me,
As fast as this tie can hold him; I'll want
My will else.

BEATRICE

[Aside] I shall want mine if you do it.

VERMANDERO

But come, by the way I'll tell you more of him.

ALSEMERO

[Aside] How shall I dare to venture in his castle
When he discharges murderers at the gate?
But I must on, for back I cannot go.

BEATRICE

[Aside] Not this serpent gone yet?

VERMANDERO

Look, girl, thy glove's fall'n;
Stay, stay, Deflores, help a little.

The Changeling

DEFLORES

Here, lady.

[He hands Beatrice her glove.]

BEATRICE

Mischief on your officious forwardness;
Who bade you stoop? They touch my hand no more:
There, for t'other's sake I part with this;
Take 'em and draw thine own skin off with 'em.

Exeunt. [Manet Deflores.]

DEFLORES

Here's a favour come with a mischief: now
I know she had rather wear my pelt tann'd
In a pair of dancing pumps than I should
Thrust my fingers into her sockets here.
I know she hates me, yet cannot choose but love her:
No matter, if but to vex her, I'll haunt her still;
Though I get nothing else, I'll have my will.

Exit.

[I.ii. A room in Alibius's house]

Enter Alibius and Lollo.

ALIBIUS

Lollo, I must trust thee with a secret,
But thou must keep it.

LOLLIO

I was ever close to a secret, sir.

ALIBIUS

The diligence that I have found in thee,
The care and industry already past,
Assures me of thy good continuance.
Lollo, I have a wife.

LOLLIO

Fie, sir, 'tis too late to keep her secret; she's known to be married all the town and country over.

ALIBIUS

Thou goest too fast, my Lollo: that knowledge
I allow no man can be [barr'd] it;
But there is a knowledge which is nearer,
Deeper and sweeter, Lollo.

The Changeling

LOLLIO

Well, sir, let us handle that between you and I.

ALBIUS

'Tis that I go about man; Lollio,
My wife is young.

LOLLIO

So much the worse to be kept secret, sir.

ALBIUS

Why, now thou meet'st the substance of the point:
I am old, Lollio.

LOLLIO

No, sir, 'tis I am old Lollio.

ALBIUS

Yet why may not this concord and sympathize?
Old trees and young plants often grow together,
Well enough agreeing.

LOLLIO

Ay, sir, but the old trees raise themselves higher and broader than the young plants.

ALBIUS

Shrewd application: there's the fear, man.
I would wear my ring on my own finger;
Whilst it is borrowed it is none of mine,
But his that useth it.

LOLLIO

You must keep it on still then; if it but lie by, one or other will be thrusting into't.

ALBIUS

Thou conceiv'st me, Lollio; here thy watchful eye
Must have employment. I cannot always be at home.

LOLLIO

I dare swear you cannot.

ALBIUS

I must look out.

LOLLIO

I know't, you must look out, 'tis every man's case.

ALBIUS

Here I do say must thy employment be.
To watch her treadings, and in my absence
Supply my place.

The Changeling

LOLLIO

I'll do my best, sir; yet surely I cannot see who you should have cause to be jealous of.

ALIBIUS

Thy reason for that, Lollo? 'Tis a comfortable question.

LOLLIO

We have but two sorts of people in the house, and both under the whip, that's fools and madmen; the one has not wit enough to be knaves, and the other not knavery enough to be fools.

ALIBIUS

Ay, those are all my patients, Lollo.
I do profess the cure of either sort:
My trade, my living 'tis, I thrive by it.
But here's the care that mixes with my thrift:
The daily visitants that come to see
My brainsick patients I would not have
To see my wife. Gallants I do observe
Of quick, enticing eyes, rich in habits,
Of stature and proportion very comely:
These are most shrewd temptations, Lollo.

LOLLIO

They may be easily answered, sir. If they come to see the fools and madmen, you and I may serve the turn, and let my mistress alone; she's of neither sort.

ALIBIUS

'Tis a good ward. Indeed, come they to see
Our madmen or our fools; let 'em see no more
Than what they come for. By that consequent
They must not see her. I'm sure she's no fool.

LOLLIO

And I'm sure she's no madman.

ALIBIUS

Hold that buckler fast, Lollo; my trust
Is on thee, and I account it firm and strong.
What hour is't, Lollo?

LOLLIO

Towards belly hour, sir.

ALIBIUS

Dinner time? Thou mean'st twelve a' clock.

LOLLIO

Yes, sir, for every part has his hour. We wake at six and look about us, that's eye hour; at seven we should pray, that's knee hour; at eight walk, that's leg hour; at nine gather flowers, and pluck a rose, that's nose hour; at ten we drink, that's mouth hour; at eleven lay about us for victuals, that's hand hour; at twelve go to dinner, that's belly

The Changeling

hour.

ALBIUS

Profoundly, Lollo; it will be long
Ere all thy scholars learn this lesson, and
I did look to have a new one entered. Stay,
I think my expectation is come home.

Enter Pedro and Antonio like an idiot.

PEDRO

Save you, sir, my business speaks itself;
This sight takes off the labour of my tongue.

ALBIUS

Ay, ay, sir,
'Tis plain enough, you mean him for my patient.

PEDRO

[Giving Alibius money] And if your pains prove but commodious,
To give but some little strength to his sick
And weak part of nature in him, these are
But patterns to show you of the whole pieces
That will follow to you, beside the charge
Of diet, washing, and other necessaries
Fully defrayed.

ALBIUS

Believe it, sir, there shall no care be wanting.

LOLLIO

Sir, an officer in this place may deserve something; the trouble will pass through my hands.

PEDRO

[Giving Lollo money] 'Tis fit something should come to your hands then, sir.

LOLLIO

Yes, sir, 'tis I must keep him sweet, and read to him; what is his name?

PEDRO

His name is Antonio; marry, we use but half to him, only Tony.

LOLLIO

Tony, Tony, 'tis enough, and a very good name for a fool. What's your name, Tony?

ANTONIO

He, he, he; well, I thank you, cousin, he, he, he.

LOLLIO

Good boy, hold up your head. He can laugh; I perceive by that he is no beast.

The Changeling

PEDRO

Well, sir,
If you can raise him but to any height,
Any degree of wit, might he attain,
As I might say, to creep but on all four
Towards the chair of wit or walk on crutches,
'Twould add an honour to your worthy pains,
And a great family might pray for you,
To which he should be heir had he discretion
To claim and guide his own; assure you, sir,
He is a gentleman.

LOLLIO

Nay, there's nobody doubted that. At first sight I knew him for a gentleman; he looks no other yet.

PEDRO

Let him have good attendance and sweet lodging.

LOLLIO

As good as my mistress lies in, sir, and as you allow us time and means, we can raise him to the higher degree of discretion.

PEDRO

Nay, there shall no cost want, sir.

LOLLIO

He will hardly be stretch'd up to the wit of a magnifico.

PEDRO

Oh, no, that's not to be expected; far shorter will be enough.

LOLLIO

I warrant you [I'll] make him fit to bear office in five weeks; I'll undertake to wind him up to the wit of constable.

PEDRO

If it be lower than that, it might serve turn.

LOLLIO

No, fie, to level him with a headborough, beadle, or watchman, were but little better than he is; constable I'll able him: if he do come to be a justice afterwards, let him thank the keeper. Or I'll go further with you; say I do bring him up to my own pitch, say I make him as wise as myself.

PEDRO

Why, there I would have it.

LOLLIO

Well, go to, either I'll be as arrant a fool as he, or he shall be as wise as I, and then I think 'twill serve his turn.

PEDRO

Nay, I do like thy wit passing well.

The Changeling

LOLLIO

Yes, you may; yet if I had not been a fool, I had had more wit than I have too. Remember what state you find me in.

PEDRO

I will, and so leave you: your best cares, I beseech you.

ALBIUS

Take you none with you; leave 'em all with us.

Exit Pedro.

ANTONIO

Oh, my cousin's gone; cousin, cousin, oh!

LOLLIO

Peace, peace, Tony: you must not cry, child; you must be whipp'd if you do. Your cousin is here still; I am your cousin, Tony.

ANTONIO

He, he, then I'll not cry, if thou beest my cousin, he, he, he.

LOLLIO

I were best try his wit a little, that I may know what form to place him in.

ALBIUS

Ay, do, Lollio, do.

LOLLIO

I must ask him easy questions at first. Tony, how many true fingers has a tailor on his right hand?

ANTONIO

As many as on his left, cousin.

LOLLIO

Good, and how many on both?

ANTONIO

Two less than a deuce, cousin.

LOLLIO

Very well answered; I come to you again, cousin Tony: how many fools goes to a wise man?

ANTONIO

Forty in a day sometimes, cousin.

LOLLIO

Forty in a day? How prove you that?

ANTONIO

All that fall out amongst themselves, and go to a lawyer to be made friends.

The Changeling

LOLLIO

A parlous fool; he must sit in the fourth form at least, I perceive that. I come again, Tony: how many knaves make an honest man?

ANTONIO

I know not that, cousin.

LOLLIO

No, the question is too hard for you: I'll tell you, cousin. There's three knaves may make an honest man, a sergeant, a jailer, and a beadle: the sergeant catches him, the jailer holds him, and the beadle lashes him; and if he be not honest then, the hangman must cure him.

ANTONIO

Ha, ha, ha, that's fine sport, cousin.

ALBIUS

This was too deep a question for the fool, Lollio.

LOLLIO

Yes, this might have serv'd yourself, though I say't; once more and you shall go play, Tony.

ANTONIO

Ay, play at push-pin cousin, ha, he.

LOLLIO

So thou shalt; say how many fools are here.

ANTONIO

Two, cousin, thou and I.

LOLLIO

Nay, y'are too forward there, Tony; mark my question: how many fools and knaves are here? A fool before a knave, a fool behind a knave, between every two fools a knave, how many fools, how many knaves?

ANTONIO

I never learnt so far, cousin.

ALBIUS

Thou putt'st too hard questions to him, Lollio.

LOLLIO

I'll make him understand it easily. Cousin, stand there.

ANTONIO

Ay, cousin.

LOLLIO

Master, stand you next the fool.

ALBIUS

The Changeling

Well, Lollio.

LOLLIO

Here's my place. Mark now, Tony: there a fool before a knave.

ANTONIO

That's I, cousin.

LOLLIO

Here's a fool behind a knave, that's I, and between us two fools there is a knave, that's my master; 'tis but we three, that's all.

ANTONIO

We three, we three, cousin.

Madmen [shout from] within.

[FIRST MADMAN]

Put's head i' th' pillory, the bread's too little!

[SECOND MADMAN]

Fly, fly, and he catches the swallow!

[THIRD MADMAN]

Give her more onion, or the devil put the rope about her crag!

LOLLIO

You may hear what time of day it is: the chimes of Bedlam goes.

ALIBIUS

Peace, peace, or the wire comes!

[FIRST MADMAN]

Cat whore, cat whore, her parmasant, her parmasant!

ALIBIUS

Peace, I say! Their hour's come, they must be fed, Lollio.

LOLLIO

There's no hope of recovery of that Welsh madman: was undone by a mouse that spoil'd him a parmasant; lost his wits for't.

ALIBIUS

Go to your charge, Lollio, I'll to mine.

LOLLIO

Go you to your madmen's ward, let me alone with your fools.

ALIBIUS

And remember my last charge, Lollio.

The Changeling

LOLLIO

Of which your patients do you think I am?

Exit [Alibius].

Come, Tony, you must amongst your school–fellows now; there's pretty scholars amongst 'em, I can tell you: there's some of 'em at stultus, stulta, stultum.

ANTONIO

I would see the madmen, cousin, if they would not bite me.

LOLLIO

No, they shall not bite thee, Tony.

ANTONIO

They bite when they are at dinner, do they not, coz?

LOLLIO

They bite at dinner indeed, Tony. Well, I hope to get credit by thee; I like thee the best of all the scholars that ever I brought up, and thou shalt prove a wise man, or I'll prove a fool myself.

Exeunt.

II.[i. A chamber in the castle]

Enter Beatrice and Jasperino severally.

BEATRICE

Oh, sir, I'm ready now for that fair service
Which makes the name of friend sit glorious on you.
Good angels and this conduct be your guide;
Fitness of time and place is there set down, sir.

[She hands him a paper.]

JASPERINO

The joy I shall return rewards my service.

Exit.

BEATRICE

How wise is Alsemero in his friend!
It is a sign he makes his choice with judgment.
Then I appear in nothing more approv'd
Than making choice of him;
For 'tis a principle, he that can choose
That bosom well, who of his thoughts partakes,
Proves most discreet in every choice he makes.

The Changeling

Methinks I love now with the eyes of judgment
And see the way to merit, clearly see it.
A true deserver like a diamond sparkles:
In darkness you may see him, that's in absence,
Which is the greatest darkness falls on love;
Yet is he best discern'd then
With intellectual eyesight. What's Piracquo
My father spends his breath for? And his blessing
Is only mine as I regard his name,
Else it goes from me, and turns head against me,
Transform'd into a curse. Some speedy way
Must be remembered; he's so forward too,
So urgent that way, scarce allows me breath
To speak to my new comforts.

Enter Deflores.

DEFLORES

[Aside] Yonder's she.
What ever ails me? Now alate especially
I can as well be hang'd as refrain seeing her;
Some twenty times a day, nay, not so little,
Do I force errands, frame ways and excuses
To come into her sight, and I have small reason for't,
And less encouragement; for she baits me still
Every time worse than other, does profess herself
The cruelest enemy to my face in town,
At no hand can abide the sight of me,
As if danger, or ill luck, hung in my looks.
I must confess my face is bad enough,
But I know far worse has better fortune,
And not endur'd alone, but doted on;
And yet such pick-hair'd faces, chins like witches',
Here and there five hairs whispering in a corner,
As if they grew in fear one of another,
Wrinkles like troughs, where swine deformity swills
The tears of perjury that lie there like wash,
Fallen from the slimy and dishonest eye.
Yet such a one [plucks] sweets without restraint,
And has the grace of beauty to his sweet.
Though my hard fate has thrust me out to servitude,
I tumbled into th' world a gentleman.
She turns her blessed eye upon me now,
And I'll endure all storms before I part with 't.

BEATRICE

Again!
[Aside] This ominous ill-fac'd fellow more disturbs me
Than all my other passions!

DEFLORES

II.[i. A chamber in the castle]

The Changeling

[Aside] Now 't begins again;
I'll stand this storm of hail though the stones pelt me.

BEATRICE

Thy business? What's thy business?

DEFLORES

[Aside] Soft and fair,
I cannot part so soon now.

BEATRICE

[Aside] The villain's fix'd.—
Thou standing toad—pool!

DEFLORES

[Aside] The shower falls amain now.

BEATRICE

Who sent thee? What's thy errand? Leave my sight!

DEFLORES

My lord your father charg'd me to deliver
A message to you.

BEATRICE

What, another since?
Do't and be hang'd then, let me be rid of thee!

DEFLORES

True service merits mercy.

BEATRICE

What's thy message?

DEFLORES

Let beauty settle but in patience,
You shall hear all.

BEATRICE

A dallying, trifling torment!

DEFLORES

Signior Alonzo de Piracquo, lady,
Sole brother to Tomazo de Piracquo—

BEATRICE

Slave, when wilt make an end?

DEFLORES

Too soon I shall.

The Changeling

BEATRICE

What all this while of him?

DEFLORES

The said Alonzo,
With the foresaid Tomazo—

BEATRICE

Yet again!

DEFLORES

Is new alighted.

BEATRICE

Vengeance strike the news!
Thou thing most loath'd, what cause was there in this
To bring thee to my sight?

DEFLORES

My lord your father
Charg'd me to seek you out.

BEATRICE

Is there no other
To send his errand by?

DEFLORES

It seems 'tis my luck
To be i' th' way still.

BEATRICE

Get thee from me.

DEFLORES

So.
[Aside] Why, am not I an ass to devise ways
Thus to be rail'd at? I must see her still;
I shall have a mad qualm within this hour again,
I know't, and like a common Garden bull,
I do but take breath to be lugg'd again.
What this may bode I know not; I'll despair the less
Because there's daily precedents of bad faces
Belov'd beyond all reason. These foul chops
May come into favour one day 'mongst his fellows:
Wrangling has prov'd the mistress of good pastime;
As children cry themselves asleep, I ha' seen
Women have chid themselves abed to men.

Exit Deflores.

BEATRICE

II.[i. A chamber in the castle]

The Changeling

I never see this fellow but I think
Of some harm towards me: danger's in my mind still;
I scarce leave trembling of an hour after.
The next good mood I find my father in
I'll get him quite discarded. Oh, I was
Lost in this small disturbance and forgot
Affliction's fiercer torrent that now comes,
To bear down all my comforts!

Enter Vermandero, Alonzo, Tomazo.

VERMANDERO

Y'are both welcome,
But an especial one belongs to you, sir,
To whose most noble name our love presents
The addition of a son, our son Alonzo.

ALONZO

The treasury of honour cannot bring forth
A title I should more rejoice in, sir.

VERMANDERO

You have improv'd it well. Daughter, prepare;
The day will steal upon thee suddenly.

BEATRICE

[Aside] Howe'er, I will be sure to keep the night,
If it should come so near me.

[Vermandero and Beatrice talk apart.]

TOMAZO

Alonzo.

ALONZO

Brother.

TOMAZO

In troth I see small welcome in her eye.

ALONZO

Fie, you are too severe a censurer
Of love in all points; there's no bringing on you.
If lovers should mark everything a fault,
Affection would be like an ill-set book,
Whose faults might prove as big as half the volume.

BEATRICE

That's all I do entreat.

VERMANDERO

II.[i. A chamber in the castle]

The Changeling

It is but reasonable;
I'll see what my son says to't. Son Alonzo,
Here's a motion made but to reprieve
A maidenhead three days longer; the request
Is not far out of reason, for indeed
The former time is pinching.

ALONZO

Though my joys
Be set back so much time as I could wish
They had been forward, yet since she desires it,
The time is set as pleasing as before,
I find no gladness wanting.

VERMANDERO

May I ever
Meet it in that point still. Y'are nobly welcome, sirs.

Exeunt Vermandero and Beatrice.

TOMAZO

So, did you mark the dullness of her parting now?

ALONZO

What dullness? Thou art so exceptious still.

TOMAZO

Why, let it go then; I am but a fool
To mark your harms so heedfully.

ALONZO

Where's the oversight?

TOMAZO

Come, your faith's cozened in her, strongly cozened;
Unsettle your affection with all speed
Wisdom can bring it to, your peace is ruin'd else.
Think what a torment 'tis to marry one
Whose heart is leapt into another's bosom:
If ever pleasure she receive from thee,
It comes not in thy name, or of thy gift.
She lies but with another in thine arms,
He the half-father unto all thy children
In the conception; if he get 'em not,
She helps to get 'em for him in his passions,
And how dangerous
And shameful her restraint may go in time to,
It is not to be thought on without sufferings.

ALONZO

You speak as if she lov'd some other then.

II.[i. A chamber in the castle]

The Changeling

TOMAZO

Do you apprehend so slowly?

ALONZO

Nay, and that
Be your fear only, I am safe enough;
Preserve your friendship and your counsel, brother,
For times of more distress. I should depart
An enemy, a dangerous, deadly one
To any but thyself that should but think
She knew the meaning of inconstancy,
Much less the use and practice; yet w'are friends.
Pray let no more be urg'd; I can endure
Much till I meet an injury to her,
Then I am not myself. Farewell, sweet brother;
How much w'are bound to heaven to depart lovingly!

Exit.

TOMAZO

Why, here is love's tame madness! Thus a man
Quickly steals into his vexation.

Exit.

[II.ii. Another chamber]

Enter Diaphanta and Alsemero.

DIAPHANTA

The place is my charge; you have kept your hour,
And the reward of a just meeting bless you.
I hear my lady coming; complete gentleman,
I dare not be too busy with my praises,
Th'are dangerous things to deal with.

Exit.

ALSEMERO

This goes well.
These women are the ladies' cabinets;
Things of most precious trust are [lock'd] into 'em.

Enter Beatrice.

BEATRICE

I have within mine eye all my desires;
Requests that holy prayers ascend heaven for
And brings 'em down to furnish our defects
Come not more sweet to our necessities

II.[j. A chamber in the castle]

The Changeling

Than thou unto my wishes.

ALSEMERO

W'are so like
In our expressions, lady, that unless I borrow
The same words, I shall never find their equals.

BEATRICE

How happy were this meeting, this embrace,
If it were free from envy! This poor kiss,
It has an enemy, a hateful one
That wishes poison to't. How well were I now
If there were none such name known as Piracquo,
Nor no such tie as the command of parents!
I should be but too much blessed.

ALSEMERO

One good service
Would strike off both your fears, and I'll go near it too,
Since you are so distress'd: remove the cause,
The command ceases; so there's two fears blown out
With one and the same blast.

BEATRICE

Pray let me find you, sir.
What might that service be so strangely happy?

ALSEMERO

The honourablest peace 'bout man, valour.
I'll send a challenge to Piracquo instantly.

BEATRICE

How? Call you that extinguishing of fear
When 'tis the only way to keep it flaming?
Are not you ventured in the action
That's all my joys and comforts? Pray no more, sir.
Say you prevail'd, [you're] danger's and not mine then:
The law would claim you from me, or obscurity
Be made the grave to bury you alive.
I'm glad these thoughts come forth; oh, keep not one
Of this condition, sir! Here was a course
Found to bring sorrow on her way to death:
The tears would ne'er 'a' dried till dust had chok'd 'em.
Blood—guiltiness becomes a fouler visage,
And now I think on one— [Aside] I was too blame:
I ha' marr'd so good a market with my scorn.
'T had been done questionless. The ugliest creature
Creation fram'd for some use, yet to see
I could not mark so much where it should be.

ALSEMERO

II.[i. A chamber in the castle]

The Changeling

Lady.

BEATRICE

[Aside] Why, men of art make much of poison,
Keep one to expel another; where was my art?

ALSEMERO

Lady, you hear not me.

BEATRICE

I do especially, sir;
The present times are not so sure of our side
As those hereafter may be; we must use 'em then
As thrifty folks their wealth, sparingly now
Till the time opens.

ALSEMERO

You teach wisdom, lady.

BEATRICE

Within there, Diaphanta!

Enter Diaphanta.

DIAPHANTA

Do you call, madam?

BEATRICE

Perfect your service, and conduct this gentleman
The private way you brought him.

DIAPHANTA

I shall, madam.

ALSEMERO

My love's as firm as love e'er built upon.

Exeunt Diaphanta and Alsemero. Enter Deflores.

DEFLORES

[Aside] I have watch'd this meeting, and do wonder much
What shall become of t'other; I'm sure both
Cannot be serv'd unless she transgress. Happily
Then I'll put in for one: for if a woman
Fly from one point, from him she makes a husband,
She spreads and mounts then like arithmetic,
One, ten, one hundred, one thousand, ten thousand,
Proves in time sutler to an army royal.
Now do I look to be most richly rail'd at,
Yet I must see her.

The Changeling

BEATRICE

[Aside] Why, put case I loath'd him
As much as youth and beauty hates a sepulcher,
Must I needs show it? Cannot I keep that secret,
And serve my turn upon him? See, he's here.—
Deflores.

DEFLORES

[Aside] Ha, I shall run mad with joy!
She call'd me fairly by my name, Deflores,
And neither rogue nor rascal.

BEATRICE

What ha' you done
To your face alate? Y'ave met with some good physician;
Y'ave prun'd yourself, methinks: you were not wont
To look so amorously.

DEFLORES

[Aside] Not I;
'Tis the same physnomy to a hair and pimple
Which she call'd scurvy scarce an hour ago:
How is this?

BEATRICE

Come hither, nearer, man.

DEFLORES

[Aside] I'm up to the chin in heaven!

BEATRICE

Turn, let me see.
Fah! 'Tis but the heat of the liver, I perceive 't.
I thought it had been worse.

DEFLORES

[Aside] Her fingers touch'd me;
She smells all amber.

BEATRICE

I'll make a water, for you shall cleanse this
Within a fortnight.

DEFLORES

With your own hands, lady?

BEATRICE

Yes, mine own, sir; in a work of cure,
I'll trust no other.

DEFLORES

II.[i. A chamber in the castle]

The Changeling

[Aside] 'Tis half an act of pleasure
To hear her talk thus to me.

BEATRICE

When w'are us'd
To a hard face, 'tis not so unpleasing;
It mends still in opinion, hourly mends:
I see it by experience.

DEFLORES

[Aside] I was blest
To light upon this minute; I'll make use on't.

BEATRICE

Hardness becomes the visage of a man well;
It argues service, resolution, manhood,
If cause were of employment.

DEFLORES

'Twould be soon seen,
If e'er your ladyship had cause to use it.
I would but wish the honour of a service
So happy as that mounts to.

BEATRICE

[Aside] We shall try you.—
Oh, my Deflores!

DEFLORES

[Aside] How's that?
She calls me hers already, my Deflores!—
You were about to sigh out somewhat, madam.

BEATRICE

No, was I? I forgot. Oh!

DEFLORES

There 'tis again,
The very fellow on't!

BEATRICE

You are too quick, sir.

DEFLORES

There's no excuse for't, now I heard it twice, madam:
That sigh would fain have utterance. Take pity on't
And lend it a free word; 'las, how it labours
For liberty! I hear the murmur yet
Beat at your bosom.

BEATRICE

II.[i. A chamber in the castle]

The Changeling

Would creation—

DEFLORES

Ay, well said, that's it.

BEATRICE

Had form'd me man.

DEFLORES

Nay, that's not it.

BEATRICE

Oh, 'tis the soul of freedom!

I should not then be forc'd to marry one

I hate beyond all depths; I should have power

Then to oppose my loathings, nay, remove 'em

Forever from my sight.

DEFLORES

Oh, blest occasion!

[Kneeling] Without change to your sex, you have your wishes.

Claim so much man in me.

BEATRICE

In thee, Deflores?

There's small cause for that.

DEFLORES

Put it not from me;

It's a service that I kneel for to you.

BEATRICE

You are too violent to mean faithfully;

There's horror in my service, blood and danger:

Can those be things to sue for?

DEFLORES

If you knew

How sweet it were to me to be employed

In any act of yours, you would say then

I fail'd and us'd not reverence enough

When I receive the charge on't.

BEATRICE

[Aside] This is much,

Methinks; belike his wants are greedy, and

To such gold tastes like angels' food.—Rise.

DEFLORES

I'll have the work first.

The Changeling

BEATRICE

[Aside] Possible his need
Is strong upon him. [Offering him money] There's to encourage thee;
As thou art forward and thy service dangerous,
Thy reward shall be precious.

DEFLORES

That I have thought on;
I have assur'd myself of that beforehand,
And know it will be precious: the thought ravishes!

BEATRICE

Then take him to thy fury.

DEFLORES

I thirst for him.

BEATRICE

Alonzo de Piracquo.

DEFLORES

[Rises.] His end's upon him; he shall be seen no more.

BEATRICE

How lovely now dost thou appear to me!
Never was man dearlier rewarded.

DEFLORES

I do think of that.

BEATRICE

Be wondrous careful in the execution.

DEFLORES

Why, are not both our lives upon the cast?

BEATRICE

Then I throw all my fears upon thy service.

DEFLORES

They ne'er shall rise to hurt you.

BEATRICE

When the deed's done,
I'll furnish thee with all things for thy flight;
Thou may'st live bravely in another country.

DEFLORES

Ay, ay, we'll talk of that hereafter.

BEATRICE

II.[i. A chamber in the castle]

The Changeling

[Aside] I shall rid myself of two inveterate loathings
At one time: Piracquo and his dog-face.

Exit.

DEFLORES

Oh, my blood! Methinks I feel her in mine arms already,
Her wanton fingers combing out this beard,
And being pleased, praising this bad face!
Hunger and pleasure, they'll commend sometimes
Slovenly dishes and feed heartily on 'em,
Nay, which is stranger, refuse daintier for 'em.
Some women are odd feeders. I'm too loud.
Here comes the man goes supperless to bed,
Yet shall not rise tomorrow to his dinner.

Enter Alonzo.

ALONZO

Deflores.

DEFLORES

My kind, honorable lord.

ALONZO

I am glad I ha' met with thee.

DEFLORES

Sir.

ALONZO

Thou canst show me the full strength of the castle?

DEFLORES

That I can, sir.

ALONZO

I much desire it.

DEFLORES

And if the ways and straits of some of the passages
Be not too tedious for you, I will assure
You worth your time and sight, my lord.

ALONZO

Puh, that
Shall be no hinderance.

DEFLORES

I'm your servant then.
'Tis now near dinner time; 'gainst your lordship's rising

II.[i. A chamber in the castle]

The Changeling

I'll have the keys about me.

ALONZO

Thanks, kind Deflores.

DEFLORES

[Aside] He's safely thrust upon me beyond hopes.

Exeunt. In the act—time Deflores hides a naked rapier.

III.[i. A narrow passage]

Enter Alonzo and Deflores.

DEFLORES

Yes, here are all the keys; I was afraid, my lord,
I'd wanted for the postern: this is it.
I've all, I've all, my lord: this for the sconce.

ALONZO

'Tis a most spacious and impregnable fort.

DEFLORES

You'll tell me more, my lord. This descent
Is somewhat narrow: we shall never pass
Well with our weapons; they'll but trouble us.

ALONZO

Thou sayst true.

DEFLORES

Pray let me help your lordship.

ALONZO

'Tis done. Thanks, kind Deflores.

DEFLORES

Here are hooks, my lord,
To hang such things on purpose.

ALONZO

Lead, I'll follow thee.

Exit at one door and enter at the other.

[III.ii. A vault]

DEFLORES

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

All this is nothing; you shall see anon
A place you little dream on.

ALONZO

I am glad
I have this leisure: all your master's house
Imagine I ha' taken a gondola.

DEFLORES

All but myself, sir, [aside] which makes up my safety.--
My lord, I'll place you at a casement here,
Will show you the full strength of all the castle.
Look, spend your eye a while upon that object.

ALONZO

Here's rich variety, Deflores.

DEFLORES

Yes, sir.

ALONZO

Goodly munition.

DEFLORES

Ay, there's ordnance, sir;
No bastard metal will ring you a peal like bells
At great men's funerals. Keep your eye straight, my lord;
Take special notice of that sponce before you,
There you may dwell awhile.

ALONZO

I am upon't.

DEFLORES

And so am I. [Stabs him.]

ALONZO

Deflores, oh, Deflores,
Whose malice hast thou put on?

DEFLORES

Do you question
A work of secrecy? I must silence you. [Stabs him.]

ALONZO

Oh, oh, oh!

DEFLORES

I must silence you. [Stabs him; Alonzo dies.]
So, here's an undertaking well accomplish'd.
This vault serves to good use now. Ha! What's that

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

Threw sparkles in my eye? Oh, 'tis a diamond
He wears upon his finger: it was well found,
This will approve the work.

[He tries to take the ring off.]

What, so fast on?
Not part in death? I'll take a speedy course then:
Finger and all shall off. [Cuts off his finger.] So, now I'll clear
The passages from all suspect or fear.

Exit with body.

[III.iii. A room in Alibius's house]
Enter Isabella and Lollio.

ISABELLA

Why, sirrah? Whence have you commission
To fetter the doors against me? If you
Keep me in a cage, pray whistle to me,
Let me be doing something.

LOLLIO

You shall be doing, if it please you; I'll whistle to you if you'll pipe after.

ISABELLA

Is it your master's pleasure, or your own,
To keep me in this pinfold?

LOLLIO

'Tis for my masters pleasure, lest being taken in another man's corn, you might be pounded in another place.

ISABELLA

'Tis very well, and he'll prove very wise.

LOLLIO

He says you have company enough in the house, if you please to be sociable, of all sorts of people.

ISABELLA

Of all sorts? Why, here's none but fools and madmen.

LOLLIO

Very well: and where will you find any other, if you should go abroad? There's my master, and I to boot too.

ISABELLA

Of either sort one, a madman and a fool.

LOLLIO

I would ev'n participate of both then if I were as you. I know y'are half mad already; be half foolish too.

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

ISABELLA

Y'are a brave, saucy rascal! Come on, sir,
Afford me then the pleasure of your bedlam;
You were commending once today to me
Your last come lunatic: what a proper
Body there was without brains to guide it,
And what a pitiful delight appear'd
In that defect, as if your wisdom had found
A mirth in madness. Pray, sir, let me partake
If there be such a pleasure.

LOLLIO

If I do not show you the handsomest, discreetest madman, one that I may call the understanding madman, then say I am a fool.

ISABELLA

Well, a match, I will say so.

LOLLIO

When you have a taste of the madman, you shall, if you please, see Fools' College o' th' side. I seldom lock there; 'tis but shooting a bolt or two, and you are amongst 'em.

Exit.

[Within] Come on, sir, let me see how handsomely you'll behave yourself now.

Enter Lollio, Franciscus.

FRANCISCUS

How sweetly she looks! Oh, but there's a wrinkle in her brow as deep as philosophy. Anacreon, drink to my mistress' health; I'll pledge it. Stay, stay, there's a spider in the cup! No, 'tis but a grape-stone: swallow it, fear nothing, poet; so, so, lift higher.

ISABELLA

Alack, alack, 'tis too full of pity
To be laugh'd at! How fell he mad? Canst thou tell?

LOLLIO

For love, mistress. He was a pretty poet too, and that set him forwards first; the Muses then forsook him, he ran mad for a chambermaid, yet she was but a dwarf neither.

FRANCISCUS

Hail bright Titania!
Why stand'st thou idle on these flowery banks?
Oberon is dancing with his dryads.
I'll gather daisies, primrose, violets,
And bind them in a verse of poesy.

LOLLIO

[Showing him a whip] Not too near, you see your danger.

The Changeling

FRANCISCUS

Oh, hold thy hand, great Diomed!
Thou feed'st thy horses well, they shall obey thee.
Get up; Bucephalus kneels. [Gets down on all fours.]

LOLLIO

You see how I awe my flock? A shepherd has not his dog at more obedience.

ISABELLA

His conscience is unquiet; sure that was
The cause of this. A proper gentleman.

FRANCISCUS

Come hither, Aesculapius, hide the poison.

LOLLIO

[Hiding his whip] Well, 'tis hid.

FRANCISCUS

[Rising] Didst thou never hear of one Tiresias, a famous poet?

LOLLIO

Yes, that kept tame wild-geese.

FRANCISCUS

That's he; I am the man.

LOLLIO

No.

FRANCISCUS

Yes, but make no words on't; I was a man seven years ago,

LOLLIO

A stripling, I think you might.

FRANCISCUS

Now I'm a woman, all feminine.

LOLLIO

I would I might see that.

FRANCISCUS

Juno struck me blind.

LOLLIO

I'll ne'er believe that; for a woman, they say, has an eye more than a man.

FRANCISCUS

I say she struck me blind.

The Changeling

LOLLIO

And Luna made you mad; you have two trades to beg with.

FRANCISCUS

Luna is now big-bellied, and there's room
For both of us to ride with Hecate;
I'll drag thee up into her silver sphere,
And there we'll kick the dog, and beat the bush
That barks against the witches of the night.
The swift lycanthropi that walks the round,
We'll tear their wolvisk skins, and save the sheep. [Beats Lollio.]

LOLLIO

Is't come to this? Nay, then, my poison comes forth again! Mad slave, indeed, abuse your keeper? [Shows him the whip.]

ISABELLA

I prithee hence with him, now he grows dangerous.

FRANCISCUS

[Singing] Sweet love pity me, give me leave to lie with thee.

LOLLIO

No, I'll see you wiser first. To your own kennel.

FRANCISCUS

No noise, she sleeps, draw all the curtains round;
Let no soft sound molest the pretty soul
But love, and love creeps in at a mouse-hole.

LOLLIO

I would you would get into your hole.

Exit Franciscus.

Now, mistress, I will bring you another sort; you shall be fool'd another while. Tony, come hither, Tony, look who's yonder, Tony.

Enter Antonio.

ANTONIO

Cousin, is it not my aunt?

LOLLIO

Yes, 'tis one of 'em, Tony.

ANTONIO

He, he, how do you, uncle?

LOLLIO

Fear him not, mistress, 'tis a gentle nidget; you may play with him, as safely with him as with his bauble.

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

ISABELLA

How long hast thou been a fool?

ANTONIO

Ever since I came hither, cousin.

ISABELLA

Cousin? I'm none of thy cousins, fool.

LOLLIO

Oh, mistress, fools have always so much wit as to claim their kindred.

MADMAN within

Bounce, bounce, he falls, he falls!

ISABELLA

Hark you, your scholars in the upper room are out of order.

LOLLIO

Must I come amongst you there? Keep you the fool, mistress; I'll go up and play left-handed Orlando amongst the madmen.

Exit.

ISABELLA

Well, sir.

ANTONIO

'Tis opportuneful now, sweet lady! Nay,
Cast no amazing eye upon this change.

ISABELLA

Ha!

ANTONIO

This shape of folly shrouds your dearest love,
The truest servant to your powerful beauties,
Whose magic had this force thus to transform me.

ISABELLA

You are a fine fool indeed.

ANTONIO

Oh, 'tis not strange.
Love has an intellect that runs through all
The scrutinous sciences and, like
A cunning poet, catches a quantity
Of every knowledge, yet brings all home
Into one mystery, into one secret
That he proceeds in.

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

ISABELLA

Y'are a parlous fool.

ANTONIO

No danger in me: I bring naught but love
And his soft, wounding shafts to strike you with.
Try but one arrow; if it hurt you,
I'll stand you twenty back in recompense.

ISABELLA

A forward fool, too.

ANTONIO

This was love's teaching;
A thousand ways he fashion'd out my way,
And this I found the safest and nearest
To tread the galaxia to my star.

ISABELLA

Profound withal. Certain you dream'd of this;
Love never taught it waking.

ANTONIO

Take no acquaintance
Of these outward follies; there is within
A gentleman that loves you.

ISABELLA

When I see him,
I'll speak with him; so in the meantime
Keep your habit, it becomes you well enough.
As you are a gentleman, I'll not discover you;
That's all the favour that you must expect.
When you are weary, you may leave the school;
For all this while you have but play'd the fool.

Enter Lollio.

ANTONIO

And must again. He, he, I thank you, cousin;
I'll be your valentine tomorrow morning.

LOLLIO

How do you like the fool, mistress?

ISABELLA

Passing well, sir.

LOLLIO

Is he not witty, pretty well for a fool?

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

ISABELLA

If he hold on as he begins, he is like to come to something!

LOLLIO

Ay, thank a good tutor. You may put him to't; he begins to answer pretty hard questions. Tony, how many is five times six?

ANTONIO

Five times six is six times five.

LOLLIO

What arithmetician could have answer'd better? How many is one hundred and seven?

ANTONIO

One hundred and seven is seven hundred and one, cousin.

LOLLIO

This is no wit to speak on. Will you be rid of the fool now?

ISABELLA

By no means; let him stay a little.

MADMAN within

Catch there, catch the last couple in hell!

LOLLIO

Again? Must I come amongst you? Would my master were come home! I am not able to govern both these wards together.

Exit.

ANTONIO

Why should a minute of love's hour be lost?

ISABELLA

Fie, out again! I had rather you kept
Your other posture: you become not your tongue
When you speak from your clothes.

ANTONIO

How can he freeze
Lives near so sweet a warmth? Shall I alone
Walk through the orchard of the Hesperides.
And cowardly not dare to pull an apple?
This with the red cheeks I must venture for.

Enter Lollio above.

ISABELLA

Take heed, there's giants keep 'em.

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

[Antonio kisses her.]

LOLLIO

How now, fool, are you good at that? Have you read Lipsius? He's past Ars Amandi; I believe I must put harder questions to him, I perceive that.

ISABELLA

You are bold without fear, too.

ANTONIO

What should I fear,
Having all joys about me? Do you smile,
And love shall play the wanton on your lip,
Meet and retire, retire and meet again:
Look you but cheerfully, and in your eyes
I shall behold mine own deformity,
And dress myself up fairer; I know this shape
Becomes me not, but in those bright mirrors
I shall array me handsomely.

LOLLIO

[Aside] Cuckoo, cuckoo!

Exit. [Enter] Madmen above, some as birds, others as beasts. [Exit Madmen.]

ANTONIO

What are these?

ISABELLA

Of fear enough to part us,
Yet are they but our schools of lunatics,
That act their fantasies in any shapes
Suiting their present thoughts: if sad, they cry;
If mirth be their conceit, they laugh again.
Sometimes they imitate the beasts and birds,
Singing or howling, braying, barking; all
As their wild fancies prompt 'em.

Enter Lollio.

ANTONIO

These are no fears.

ISABELLA

But here's a large one, my man.

ANTONIO

Ha, he, that's fine sport indeed, cousin.

LOLLIO

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

I would my master were come home; 'tis too much for one shepherd to govern two of these flocks. Nor can I believe that one churchman can instruct two benefices at once: there will be some incurable mad of the one side and very fools on the other. Come, Tony.

ANTONIO

Prithee, cousin, let me stay here still.

LOLLIO

No, you must to your book now you have play'd sufficiently.

ISABELLA

Your fool is grown wondrous witty.

LOLLIO

Well, I'll say nothing; but I do not think but he will put you down one of these days.

Exeunt Lollio and Antonio.

ISABELLA

Here the restrained current might make breach,
Spite of the watchful bankers. Would a woman stray,
She need not gad abroad to seek her sin;
It would be brought home one ways or other:
The needle's point will to the fixed north,
Such drawing arctics women's beauties are.

Enter Lollio.

LOLLIO

How dost thou, sweet rogue?

ISABELLA

How now?

LOLLIO

Come, there are degrees; one fool may be better than another.

ISABELLA

What's the matter?

LOLLIO

Nay, if thou giv'st thy mind to fools, flesh, have at thee!

[Tries to kiss her.]

ISABELLA

You bold slave, you!

LOLLIO

I could follow now as t'other fool did:
[Imitating Antonio] "What should I fear,

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

Having all joys about me? Do you smile,
And love shall play the wanton on your lip,
Meet and retire, retire and meet again:
Look you but cheerfully, and in your eyes
I shall behold mine own deformity,
And dress myself up fairer; I know this shape
Becomes me not—"

And so as it follows. But is not this the more foolish way? Come, sweet rogue, kiss me, my little Lacedemonian.
Let me feel how thy pulses beat; thou hast a thing about thee would do a man pleasure, I'll lay my hand on't.

ISABELLA

Sirrah, no more! I see you have discovered
This love's knight-errant, who hath made adventure
For purchase of my love; be silent, mute,
Mute as a statue, or his injunction
For me enjoying shall be to cut thy throat.
I'll do it, though for no other purpose,
And be sure he'll not refuse it.

LOLLIO

My share, that's all; I'll have my fool's part with you.

ISABELLA

No more: your master!

Enter Alibius.

ALIBIUS

Sweet, how dost thou?

ISABELLA

Your bounden servant, sir.

ALIBIUS

Fie, fie, sweetheart,
No more of that.

ISABELLA

You were best lock me up.

ALIBIUS

In my arms and bosom, my sweet Isabella,
I'll lock thee up most nearly. Lollio,
We have employment, we have task in hand;
At noble Vermandero's, our castle-captain,
There is a nuptial to be solemnis'd,
Beatrice Joanna his fair daughter, bride,
For which the gentleman hath bespoke our pains:
A mixture of our madmen and our fools
To finish, as it were, and make the fag
Of all the revels, the third night from the first.

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

Only an unexpected passage over,
To make a frightful pleasure, that is all,
But not the all I aim at. Could we so act it,
To teach it in a wild, distracted measure,
Though out of form and figure, breaking time's head,
It were no matter: 'twould be heal'd again
In one age or other, if not in this.
This, this, Lollio: there's a good reward begun,
And will beget a bounty, be it known.

LOLLIO

This is easy, sir, I'll warrant you. You have about you fools and madmen that can dance very well, and 'tis no wonder your best dancers are not the wisest men: the reason is, with often jumping they jolt their brains down into their feet, that their wits lie more in their heels than in their heads.

ALBIUS

Honest Lollio, thou giv'st me a good reason
And a comfort in it.

ISABELLA

Y'ave a fine trade on't;
Madmen and fools are a staple commodity.

ALBIUS

Oh, wife, we must eat, wear clothes, and live:
Just at the lawyer's haven we arrive,
By madmen and by fools we both do thrive.

Exeunt.

[III.iv. A chamber in the castle]

Enter Vermandero, Alsemero, Jasperino, and Beatrice.

VERMANDERO

Valencia speaks so nobly of you, sir,
I wish I had a daughter now for you.

ALSEMERO

The fellow of this creature were a partner
For a king's love.

VERMANDERO

I had her fellow once, sir,
But heaven has married her to joys eternal;
'Twere sin to wish her in this vale again.
Come, sir, your friend and you shall see the pleasures
Which my health chiefly joys in.

ALSEMERO

I hear the beauty of this seat largely.

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

VERMANDERO

It falls much short of that.

Exeunt. Manet Beatrice.

BEATRICE

So, here's one step
Into my father's favour; time will fix him.
I have got him now the liberty of the house;
So wisdom by degrees works out her freedom.
And if that eye be darkened that offends me—
I wait but that eclipse—this gentleman
Shall soon shine glorious in my father's liking,
Through the refulgent virtue of my love.

Enter Deflores.

DEFLORES

[Aside] My thoughts are at a banquet for the deed:
I feel no weight in't; 'tis but light and cheap
For the sweet recompense that I set down for't.

BEATRICE

Deflores.

DEFLORES

Lady.

BEATRICE

Thy looks promise cheerfully.

DEFLORES

All things are answerable: time, circumstance,
Your wishes and my service.

BEATRICE

Is it done then?

DEFLORES

Piracquo is no more.

BEATRICE

My joys start at mine eyes; our sweet'st delights
Are evermore born weeping.

DEFLORES

I've a token for you.

BEATRICE

For me?

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

DEFLORES

But it was sent somewhat unwillingly:
I could not get the ring without the finger.

BEATRICE

Bless me! What hast thou done?

DEFLORES

Why, is that more
Than killing the whole man? I cut his heart strings.
A greedy hand thrust in a dish at court
In a mistake hath had as much as this.

BEATRICE

'Tis the first token my father made me send him.

DEFLORES

And I made him send it back again
For his last token. I was loathe to leave it,
And I'm sure dead men have no use of jewels;
He was as loath to part with't, for it stuck
As if the flesh and it were both one substance.

BEATRICE

At the stag's fall the keeper has his fees;
'Tis soon apply'd: all dead men's fees are yours, sir.
I pray bury the finger, but the stone
You may make use on shortly; the true value,
Take't of my truth, is near three hundred ducats.

DEFLORES

'Twill hardly buy a capcase for one's conscience, though,
To keep it from the worm, as fine as 'tis.
Well, being my fees I'll take it;
Great men have taught me that, or else my merit
Would scorn the way on't.

BEATRICE

It might justly, sir.
Why, thou mistak'st, Deflores: 'tis not given
In state of recompense.

DEFLORES

No, I hope so, lady;
You should soon witness my contempt to't then.

BEATRICE

Prithee, thou look'st as if thou wert offended.

DEFLORES

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

That were strange, lady; 'tis not possible
My service should draw such a cause from you.
Offended? Could you think so? That were much
For one of my performance, and so warm
Yet in my service.

BEATRICE

'Twere misery in me to give you cause, sir.

DEFLORES

I know so much; it were so, misery
In her most sharp condition.

BEATRICE

'Tis resolv'd then.
Look you, sir, here's three thousand golden florins;
I have not meanly thought upon thy merit.

DEFLORES

What, salary? Now you move me!

BEATRICE

How, Deflores?

DEFLORES

Do you place me in the rank of verminous fellows
To destroy things for wages? Offer gold?
The lifeblood of man! Is anything
Valued too precious for my recompense?

BEATRICE

I understand thee not.

DEFLORES

I could ha' hir'd
A journeyman in murder at this rate,
And mine own conscience might have [slept at ease]
And have had the work brought home!

BEATRICE

[Aside] I'm in a labyrinth;
What will content him? I would fain be rid of him.—
I'll double the sum, sir.

DEFLORES

You take a course
To double my vexation, that's the good you do.

BEATRICE

[Aside] Bless me! I am now in worse plight than I was;
I know not what will please him.—For my fear's sake,

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

I prithee make away with all speed possible.
And if thou be'st so modest not to name
The sum that will content thee, paper blushes not:
Send thy demand in writing, it shall follow thee;
But prithee take thy flight.

DEFLORES

You must fly too then.

BEATRICE

I?

DEFLORES

I'll not stir a foot else.

BEATRICE

What's your meaning?

DEFLORES

Why, are not you as guilty, in, I'm sure,
As deep as I? And we should stick together.
Come, your fears counsel you but ill: my absence
Would draw suspect upon you instantly;
There were no rescue for you.

BEATRICE

[Aside] He speaks home.

DEFLORES

Nor is it fit we two engag'd so jointly
Should part and live asunder.

[He tries to kiss her.]

BEATRICE

How now, sir?
This shows not well.

DEFLORES

What makes your lip so strange?
This must not be 'twixt us.

BEATRICE

[Aside] The man talks wildly.

DEFLORES

Come, kiss me with a zeal now!

BEATRICE

[Aside] Heaven, I doubt him!

The Changeling

DEFLORES

I will not stand so long to beg 'em shortly.

BEATRICE

Take heed, Deflores, of forgetfulness;
'Twill soon betray us.

DEFLORES

Take you heed first;
Faith, y'are grown much forgetful: y'are too blame in't.

BEATRICE

[Aside] He's bold, and I am blam'd for't.

DEFLORES

I have eas'd
You of your trouble; think on't: I'm in pain
And must be eas'd of you; 'tis a charity.
Justice invites your blood to understand me.

BEATRICE

I dare not.

DEFLORES

Quickly.

BEATRICE

Oh, I never shall!
Speak it yet further off that I may lose
What has been spoken, and no sound remain on't!
I would not hear so much offence again
For such another deed.

DEFLORES

Soft, lady, soft;
The last is not yet paid for. Oh, this act
Has put me into spirit; I was as greedy on't
As the parch'd earth of moisture when the clouds weep.
Did you not mark I wrought myself into't?
Nay, sued and kneel'd for't? Why was all that pains took?
You see I have thrown contempt upon your gold;
Not that I want it [not], for I do piteously:
In order I will come unto't and make use on't.
But 'twas not held so precious to begin with,
For I place wealth after the heels of pleasure,
And were I not resolv'd in my belief
That thy virginity were perfect in thee,
I should but take my recompense with grudging,
As if I had but half my hopes I agreed for.

BEATRICE

III.[i. A narrow passage]

The Changeling

Why, 'tis impossible thou canst be so wicked,
Or shelter such a cunning cruelty,
To make his death the murderer of my honour!
Thy language is so bold and vicious,
I cannot see which way I can forgive it
With any modesty.

DEFLORES

Push, you forget yourself:
A woman dipp'd in blood and talk of modesty!

BEATRICE

Oh, misery of sin! Would I had been bound
Perpetually unto my living hate
In that Piracquo than to hear these words!
Think but upon the distance that creation
Set 'twixt thy blood and mine, and keep thee there.

DEFLORES

Look but into your conscience, read me there:
'Tis a true book; you'll find me there your equal.
Push, fly not to your birth, but settle you
In what the act has made you; y'are no more now.
You must forget your parentage to me;
Y'are the deeds creature: by that name
You lost your first condition, and I challenge you,
As peace and innocency has turn'd you out
And made you one with me.

BEATRICE

With thee, foul villain?

DEFLORES

Yes, my fair murderess. Do you urge me?
Though thou writ'st maid, thou whore in thy affection,
'Twas chang'd from thy first love, and that's a kind
Of whoredom in thy heart; and he's chang'd now
To bring thy second on, thy Alsemero,
Whom, by all sweets that ever darkness tasted,
If I enjoy thee not, thou ne'er enjoy'st.
I'll blast the hopes and joys of marriage;
I'll confess all, my life I rate at nothing.

BEATRICE

Deflores.

DEFLORES

I shall rest from all lovers' plagues then;
I live in pain now: that shooting eye
Will burn my heart to cinders.

The Changeling

BEATRICE

Oh, sir, hear me!

DEFLORES

She that in life and love refuses me,
In death and shame my partner she shall be.

BEATRICE

Stay, hear me once for all: I make thee master
Of all the wealth I have in gold and jewels;
Let me go poor unto my bed with honour
And I am rich in all things.

DEFLORES

Let this silence thee:
The wealth of all Valencia shall not buy
My pleasure from me.
Can you weep fate from its determin'd purpose?
So soon may [you] weep me.

BEATRICE

Vengeance begins;
Murder, I see, is followed by more sins.
Was my creation in the womb so curs'd
It must engender with a viper first?

DEFLORES

Come, rise and shroud your blushes in my bosom;
Silence is one of pleasure's best receipts:
Thy peace is wrought forever in this yielding.
'Las, how the turtle pants! Thou'lt love anon
What thou so fear'st and faint'st to venture on.

Exeunt.

[Dumb Show]

Enter Gentlemen, Vermandero meeting them with action of wonderment at the flight of [Alonzo de] Piracquo.
Enter Alsemero with Jasperino and Gallants; Vermandero points to him, the Gentlemen seeming to applaud the choice. [Exeunt Vermandero,] Alsemero, Jasperino, and Gentlemen [and Gallants]; [enter] Beatrice the bride, following in great state, accompanied with Diaphanta, Isabella, and other Gentlewomen. [Enter] Deflores after all, smiling at the accident; Alonzo's Ghost appears to Deflores in the midst of his smile, startles him, showing him the hand whose finger he had cut off. They pass over in great solemnity.

IV.[i. Alsemero's chamber]

Enter Beatrice.

The Changeling

BEATRICE

This fellow has undone me endlessly;
Never was bride so fearfully distress'd.
The more I think upon th' ensuing night,
And whom I am to cope with in embraces—
One [who's] ennobled both in blood and mind,
So clear in understanding, that's my plague now,
Before whose judgment will my fault appear
Like malefactors' crimes before tribunals,
There is no hiding on't—the more I dive
Into my own distress. How a wise man
Stands for a great calamity! There's no venturing
Into his bed, what course soe'er I light upon,
Without my shame, which may grow up to danger.
He cannot but in justice strangle me
As I lie by him, as a cheater use me;
'Tis a precious craft to play with a false die
Before a cunning gamester. Here's his closet,
The key left in't, and he abroad i' th' park.
Sure 'twas forgot; I'll be so bold as look in't.
Bless me! A right physician's closet 'tis,
Set round with vials, every one her mark too.
Sure he does practice physic for his own use,
Which may be safely call'd your great man's wisdom.
What manuscript lies here? The Book of Experiment,
Call'd Secrets in Nature: so 'tis, 'tis so.
[Reading] "How to know whether a woman be with child or no."
I hope I am not yet; if he should try, though—
Let me see, folio forty-five. Here 'tis,
The leaf tuck'd down upon't, the place suspicious.
[Reading] "If you would know whether a woman be with child or not, give her two spoonfuls of the white water
in glass C."
Where's that glass C? Oh, yonder I see't now.
[Reading] "And if she be with child, she sleeps full twelve hours after; if not, not."
None of that water comes into my belly.
I'll know you from a hundred; I could break you now
Or turn you into milk, and so beguile
The master of the mystery, but I'll look to you.
Ha! That which is next, is ten times worse.
[Reading] "How to know whether a woman be a maid or not."
If that should be apply'd, what would become of me?
Belike he has a strong faith of my purity,
That never yet made proof; but this he calls
[Reading] "A merry slight but true experiment,
The author, Antonius Mizaldus.
Give the party you suspect the quantity of a spoonful of the water in the glass M, which upon her that is a maid
makes three several effects: 'twill make her incontinently gape, then fall into a sudden sneezing, last into a violent
laughing; else dull, heavy, and lumpish."
Where had I been?
I fear it, yet 'tis seven hours to bedtime.

The Changeling

Enter Diaphanta.

DIAPHANTA

Cuds, madam, are you here?

BEATRICE

[Aside] Seeing that wench now,
A trick comes in my mind; 'tis a nice piece
Gold cannot purchase.—I come hither, wench,
To look my lord.

DIAPHANTA

[Aside] Would I had such a cause
To look him too.—Why, he's i' th' park, madam.

BEATRICE

There let him be.

DIAPHANTA

Ay, madam, let him compass
Whole parks and forests, as great rangers do;
At roosting time a little lodge can hold 'em.
Earth-conquering Alexander, that thought the world
Too narrow for him, in the end had but his pit-hole.

BEATRICE

I fear thou art not modest, Diaphanta.

DIAPHANTA

Your thoughts are so unwilling to be known, madam;
'Tis ever the bride's fashion towards bedtime
To set light by her joys, as if she ow'd 'em not.

BEATRICE

Her joys? Her fears, thou wouldst say.

DIAPHANTA

Fear of what?

BEATRICE

Art thou a maid, and talk'st so to a maid?
You leave a blushing business behind,
Beshrew your heart for't.

DIAPHANTA

Do you mean good sooth, madam?

BEATRICE

Well, if I'd thought upon the fear at first,
Man should have been unknown.

DIAPHANTA

Is't possible?

BEATRICE

I will give a thousand ducats to that woman
Would try what my fear were, and tell me true
Tomorrow when she gets from 't: as she likes
I might perhaps be drawn to 't.

DIAPHANTA

Are you in earnest?

BEATRICE

Do you get the woman, then challenge me,
And see if I'll fly from 't; but I must tell you
This by the way, she must be a true maid,
Else there's no trial, my fears are not hers else.

DIAPHANTA

Nay, she that I would put into your hands, madam,
Shall be a maid.

BEATRICE

You know I should be sham'd else,
Because she lies for me.

DIAPHANTA

'Tis a strange humour:
But are you serious still? Would you resign
Your first night's pleasure and give money too?

BEATRICE

As willingly as live. [Aside] Alas, the gold
Is but a by-bet to wedge in the honour.

DIAPHANTA

I do not know how the world goes abroad
For faith or honesty; there's both requir'd in this.
Madam, what say you to me, and stray no further?
I've a good mind, in troth, to earn your money.

BEATRICE

Y'are too quick, I fear, to be a maid.

DIAPHANTA

How? Not a maid? Nay, then, you urge me, madam,
Your honourable self is not a truer
With all your fears upon you—

BEATRICE

[Aside] Bad enough then.

IV.[i. Alsemero's chamber]

The Changeling

DIAPHANTA

Then I with all my lightsome joys about me.

BEATRICE

I'm glad to hear 't; then you dare put your honesty
Upon an easy trial.

DIAPHANTA

Easy? Anything.

BEATRICE

[Going to the closet] I'll come to you straight.

DIAPHANTA

[Aside] She will not search me, will she,
Like the forewoman of a female jury?

BEATRICE

Glass M. Ay, this is it. Look, Diaphanta,
You take no worse than I do.

[She drinks and hands Diaphanta the glass.]

DIAPHANTA

And in so doing
I will not question what 'tis, but take it.

[She drinks.]

BEATRICE

[Aside] Now if the experiment be true, 'twill praise itself,
And give me noble ease. [Diaphanta gapes.] Begins already,
There's the first symptom. [Diaphanta sneezes.] And what haste it makes
To fall into the second, there by this time:
Most admirable secret! On the contrary,
It stirs not me a whit, which most concerns it.

DIAPHANTA

Ha, ha, ha!

BEATRICE

[Aside] Just in all things and in order,
As if 'twere circumscrib'd, one accident
Gives way unto another.

DIAPHANTA

Ha, ha, ha!

BEATRICE

How now, wench?

IV.[i. Alsemero's chamber]

The Changeling

DIAPHANTA

Ha, ha, ha, I am so, so light
At heart, ha, ha, ha. so pleasurable!
But one swig more, sweet madam.

BEATRICE

Ay, tomorrow;
We shall have time to sit by 't.

DIAPHANTA

Now I'm sad again.

BEATRICE

[Aside] It lays itself so gently too.—Come, wench,
Most honest Diaphanta I dare call thee now.

DIAPHANTA

Pray tell me, madam, what trick call you this?

BEATRICE

I'll tell thee all hereafter; we must study
The carriage of this business.

DIAPHANTA

I shall carry 't well
Because I love the burthen.

BEATRICE

About midnight
You must not fail to steal forth gently
That I may use the place.

DIAPHANTA

Oh, fear not, madam;
I shall be cool by that time. The bride's place,
And with a thousand ducats! I'm for a justice now:
I bring a portion with me; I scorn small fools!

Exeunt.

[IV.ii. A chamber in the castle]
Enter Vermandero and Servant.

VERMANDERO

I tell thee, knave, mine honour is in question,
A thing till now free from suspicion,
Nor ever was there cause. Who of my gentlemen are absent?
Tell me and truly how many and who.

IV.[i. Alsemero's chamber]

The Changeling

SERVANT

Antonio, sir, and Franciscus.

VERMANDERO

When did they leave the castle?

SERVANT

Some ten days since, sir, the one intending to Briamata, th'other for Valencia.

VERMANDERO

The time accuses 'um: a charge of murder
Is brought within my castle gate, Piracquo's murder;
I dare not answer faithfully their absence.
A strict command of apprehension
Shall pursue 'um suddenly, and either wipe
The stain off clear or openly discover it.
Provide me winged warrants for the purpose.

Enter Tomazo.

See, I am set on again.

Exit Servant.

TOMAZO

I claim a brother of you.

VERMANDERO

Y'are too hot;
Seek him not here.

TOMAZO

Yes, 'mongst your dearest bloods;
If my peace find no fairer satisfaction,
This is the place must yield account for him,
For here I left him, and the hasty tie
Of this snatch'd marriage gives strong testimony
Of his most certain ruin.

VERMANDERO

Certain falsehood!
This is the place indeed; his breach of faith
Has too much marr'd both my abused love,
The honourable love I reserv'd for him,
And mock'd my daughter's joy. The prepar'd morning
Blush'd at his infidelity; he left
Contempt and scorn to throw upon those friends
Whose belief hurt 'em: oh, 'twas most ignoble
To take his flight so unexpectedly
And throw such public wrongs on those that lov'd him!

The Changeling

TOMAZO

Then this is all your answer?

VERMANDERO

'Tis too fair

For one of his alliance, and I warn you

That this place no more see you.

Exit. Enter Deflores.

TOMAZO

The best is,

There is more ground to meet a man's revenge on.

Honest Deflores.

DEFLORES

That's my name indeed.

Saw you the bride? Good sweet sir, which way took she?

TOMAZO

I have blest mine eyes from seeing such a false one.

DEFLORES

[Aside] I'd fain get off; this man's not for my company:

I smell his brother's blood when I come near him.

TOMAZO

Come hither, kind and true one; I remember

My brother lov'd thee well.

DEFLORES

Oh, purely, dear sir!

[Aside] Methinks I am now again a-killing on him,

He brings it so fresh to me.

TOMAZO

Thou canst guess, sirrah,

One honest friend has an instinct of jealousy

At some foul guilty person.

DEFLORES

'Las, sir,

I am so charitable, I think none

Worse than myself. You did not see the bride then?

TOMAZO

I prithee name her not. Is she not wicked?

DEFLORES

No, no, a pretty, easy, round-pack'd sinner,

As your most ladies are, else you might think

IV.[i. Alsemero's chamber]

The Changeling

I flatter'd her; but, sir, at no hand wicked
Till th'are so old their sins and vices meet,
And they salute witches. I am call'd, I think, sir.
[Aside] His company ev'n o'erlays my conscience.

Exit.

TOMAZO

That Deflores has a wondrous honest heart.
He'll bring it out in time, I'm assur'd on't.

Enter Alsemero.

[Aside] Oh, here's the glorious master of the day's joy.
['Twill] not be long till he and I do reckon.—Sir.

ALSEMERO

You are most welcome.

TOMAZO

You may call that word back;
I do not think I am, nor wish to be.

ALSEMERO

'Tis strange you found the way to this house then.

TOMAZO

Would I'd ne'er known the cause. I'm none of those, sir,
That come to give you joy and swill your wine;
'Tis a more precious liquor that must lay
The fiery thirst I bring.

ALSEMERO

Your words and you
Appear to me great strangers.

TOMAZO

Time and our swords
May make us more acquainted; this the business:
I should have a brother in your place;
How treachery and malice have dispos'd of him,
I'm bound to enquire of him which holds his right,
Which never could come fairly.

ALSEMERO

You must look
To answer for that word, sir.

TOMAZO

Fear you not;
I'll have it ready drawn at our next meeting.

IV.[i. Alsemero's chamber]

The Changeling

Keep your day solemn. Farewell, I disturb it not;
I'll bear the smart with patience for a time.

Exit.

ALSEMERO

'Tis somewhat ominous, this, a quarrel entered
Upon this day; my innocence relieves me,
I should be wondrous sad else.

Enter Jasperino.

Jasperino,
I have news to tell thee, strange news.

JASPERINO

I ha' some too,
I think as strange as yours; would I might keep
Mine, so my faith and friendship might be kept in't.
Faith, sir, dispense a little with my zeal,
And let it cool in this.

ALSEMERO

This puts me on,
And blames thee for thy slowness.

JASPERINO

All may prove nothing,
Only a friendly fear that leapt from me, sir.

ALSEMERO

No question it may prove nothing; let's partake it, though.

JASPERINO

'Twas Diaphanta's chance—for to that wench
I pretend honest love, and she deserves it—
To leave me in a back part of the house,
A place we chose for private conference;
She was no sooner gone, but instantly
I heard your bride's voice in the next room to me
And, lending more attention, found Deflores
Louder than she.

ALSEMERO

Deflores? Thou art out now.

JASPERINO

You'll tell me more anon.

ALSEMERO

Still I'll prevent thee:

IV.[i. Alsemero's chamber]

The Changeling

The very sight of him is poison to her.

JASPERINO

That made me stagger too, but Diaphanta
At her return confirm'd it.

ALSEMERO

Diaphanta!

JASPERINO

Then fell we both to listen, and words pass'd
Like those that challenge interest in a woman.

ALSEMERO

Peace, quench thy zeal; 'tis dangerous to thy bosom

JASPERINO

Then truth is full of peril.

ALSEMERO

Such truths are.

Oh, were she the sole glory of the earth,
Had eyes that could shoot fire into kings' breasts,
And touch'd, she sleeps not here; yet I have time,
Though night be near, to be resolv'd hereof,
And prithee do not weigh me by my passions.

JASPERINO

I never weigh'd friend so.

ALSEMERO

Done charitably.

[Giving him a key] That key will lead thee to a pretty secret
By a Chaldean taught me, and I've [made]
My study upon some; bring from my closet
A glass inscrib'd there with the letter M,
And question not my purpose.

JASPERINO

It shall be done, sir.

Exit.

ALSEMERO

How can this hang together? Not an hour since
Her woman came pleading her lady's fears,
Deliver'd her for the most timorous virgin
That ever shrunk at man's name, and so modest
She charg'd her weep out her request to me
That she might come obscurely to my bosom.

The Changeling

Enter Beatrice.

BEATRICE

[Aside] All things go well; my woman's preparing yonder
For her sweet voyage, which grieves me to lose:
Necessity compels it; I lose all else.

ALSEMERO

[Aside] Push, modesty's shrine is set in yonder forehead.
I cannot be too sure though.--My Joanna.

BEATRICE

Sir, I was bold to weep a message to you;
Pardon my modest fears.

ALSEMERO

[Aside] The dove's not meeker.
She's abus'd, questionless.

Enter Jasperino.

Oh, are you come, sir?

BEATRICE

[Aside] The glass, upon my life! I see the letter.

JASPERINO

Sir, this is M.

ALSEMERO

'Tis it.

BEATRICE

[Aside] I am suspected.

ALSEMERO

How fitly our bride comes to partake with us!

BEATRICE

What is't, my lord?

ALSEMERO

No hurt.

BEATRICE

Sir, pardon me,
I seldom taste of any composition.

ALSEMERO

But this upon my warrant you shall venture on.

The Changeling

BEATRICE

I fear 'twill make me ill.

ALSEMERO

Heaven forbid that.

BEATRICE

[Aside] I'm put now to my cunning; th' effects I know,
If I can now but feign 'em handsomely.

ALSEMERO

[Aside to Jasperino] It has that secret virtue it ne'er miss'd, sir,
Upon a virgin.

JASPERINO

[Aside to Alsemero] Treble qualified.

[Beatrice gapes, then sneezes.]

ALSEMERO

[Aside to Jasperino] By all that's virtuous, it takes there, proceeds!

JASPERINO

[Aside to Alsemero] This is the strangest trick to know a maid by.

BEATRICE

Ha, ha, ha!
You have given me joy of heart to drink, my lord.

ALSEMERO

No, thou hast given me such joy of heart
That never can be blasted.

BEATRICE

What's the matter, sir?

ALSEMERO

[Aside to Jasperino] See, now 'tis settled in a melancholy,
Keeps both the time and method.—My Joanna,
Chaste as the breath of heaven or morning's womb
That brings the day forth, thus my love encloses thee.

[He embraces her.] Exeunt.

[IV.iii. A room in Alibius's house]
Enter Isabella and Lollo.

ISABELLA

Oh heaven! Is this the waiting moon?
Does love turn fool, run mad, and all [at] once?

IV.[i. Alsemero's chamber]

The Changeling

Sirrah, here's a madman akin to the fool too,
A lunatic lover.

LOLLIO

No, no, not he I brought the letter from.

ISABELLA

Compare his inside with his out and tell me.

LOLLIO

The out's mad, I'm sure of that; I had a taste on't. [Reading] "To the bright Andromeda, chief chambermaid to the knight of the sun, at the sign of Scorpio, in the middle region, sent by the bellows-mender of Æolus. Pay the post." This is stark madness.

ISABELLA

Now mark the inside. [He opens the letter and she reads over his shoulder.] "Sweet lady, having now cast off this counterfeit cover of a madman, I appear to your best judgment a true and faithful lover of your beauty."

LOLLIO

He is mad still.

ISABELLA

[Reading] "If any fault you find, chide those perfections in you which have made me imperfect; 'tis the same sun that causeth to grow and enforceth to wither"—

LOLLIO

Oh, rogue!

ISABELLA

[Reading] "Shapes and transhapes, destroys and builds again. I come in winter to you dismantled of my proper ornaments; by the sweet splendour of your cheerful smiles, I spring and live a lover."

LOLLIO

Mad rascal still.

ISABELLA

[Reading] "Tread him not under foot that shall appear an honour to your bounties. I remain, mad till I speak with you, from whom I expect my cure, yours all, or one beside himself, Franciscus."

LOLLIO

You are like to have a fine time on't. My master and I may give over our professions; I do not think but you can cure fools and madmen faster than we, with little pains too.

ISABELLA

Very likely.

LOLLIO

One thing I must tell you, mistress: you perceive that I am privy to your skill; if I find you minister once and set up the trade, I put in for my thirds. I shall be mad or fool else.

ISABELLA

IV.[i. Alsemero's chamber]

The Changeling

The first place is thine, believe it, Lollio;
If I do fall—

LOLLIO
I fall upon you.

ISABELLA
So.

LOLLIO
Well, I stand to my venture.

ISABELLA
But thy counsel now: how shall I deal with 'um?

LOLLIO
[Why,] do you mean to deal with 'um?

ISABELLA
Nay, the fair understanding: how to use 'um.

LOLLIO
Abuse 'um: that's the way to mad the fool and make a fool of the madman, and then you use 'um kindly.

ISABELLA
'Tis easy. I'll practise; do thou observe it:
The key of thy wardrobe.

[He gives her the key.]

LOLLIO
There; fit yourself for 'um, and I'll fit 'um both for you.

ISABELLA
Take thou no further notice than the outside.

Exit.

LOLLIO
Not an inch; I'll put you to the inside.

Enter Alibius.

ALIBIUS
Lollio, art there? Will all be perfect, think'st thou?
Tomorrow night, as if to close up the solemnity,
Vermandero expects us.

LOLLIO
I mistrust the madmen most; the fools will do well enough:
I have taken pains with them.

IV.[i. Alsemero's chamber]

The Changeling

ALIBIUS

Tush, they cannot miss; the more absurdity,
The more commends it, so no rough behaviours
Affright the ladies: they are nice things, thou know'st.

LOLLIO

You need not fear, sir; so long as we are there with our commanding pizzles, they'll be as tame as the ladies themselves.

ALIBIUS

I will see them once more rehearse before they go.

LOLLIO

I was about it, sir; look you to the madmen's morris, and let me alone with the other. There is one or two that I mistrust their fooling; I'll instruct them, and then they shall rehearse the whole measure.

ALIBIUS

Do so; I'll see the music prepar'd: but, Lollo,
By the way, how does my wife brook her restraint?
Does she not grudge at it?

LOLLIO

So, so. She takes some pleasure in the house; she would abroad else. You must allow her a little more length; she's kept too short.

ALIBIUS

She shall along to Vermandero's with us;
That will serve her for a month's liberty.

LOLLIO

What's that on your face, sir?

ALIBIUS

Where, Lollo? I see nothing.

LOLLIO

Cry you mercy, sir, 'tis your nose! It show'd like the trunk of a young elephant.

ALIBIUS

Away, rascal: I'll prepare the music, Lollo.

Exit Alibius.

LOLLIO

Do, sir; and I'll dance the whilst. Tony, where art thou, Tony?

Enter Antonio.

ANTONIO

Here, cousin. Where art thou?

IV.[i. Alsemero's chamber]

The Changeling

LOLLIO

Come, Tony, the footmanship I taught you.

ANTONIO

I had rather ride, cousin.

LOLLIO

Ay, a whip take you, but I'll keep you out. Vault in; look you, Tony: [dancing] fa, la la la la.

ANTONIO

[Dancing] Fa, la la la la.

LOLLIO

There, an honour.

ANTONIO

Is this an honour, coz? [Bows.]

LOLLIO

Yes, and it please your worship.

ANTONIO

Does honour bend in the hams, coz?

LOLLIO

Marry, does it, as low as worship, squireship, nay, yeomanry itself sometimes, from whence it first stiffened. There rise a caper.

ANTONIO

Caper after an honour, coz?

LOLLIO

Very proper, for honour is but a caper, rise[s] as fast and high, has a knee or two, and falls to th' ground again. You can remember your figure, Tony?

Exit.

ANTONIO

Yes, cousin, when I see thy figure, I can remember mine.

Enter Isabella [dressed as a madwoman. Antonio resumes dancing].

ISABELLA

Hey, how he treads the air!
Shoo, shoo, t'other way: he burns his wings else;
Here's wax enough below, Icarus, more
Than will be canceled these eighteen moons.
He's down, he's down; what a terrible fall he had!
Stand up, thou son of Cretan Dedalus,
And let us tread the lower labyrinth;

IV.[i. Alsemero's chamber]

The Changeling

I'll bring thee to the clue.

ANTONIO

Prithee, coz, let me alone.

ISABELLA

Art thou not drown'd?
About thy head I saw a heap of clouds
Wrapp'd like a Turkish turban on thy back,
A crook'd chameleon—colour'd rainbow hung
Like a tiara down unto thy hams.
Let me suck out those billows in thy belly;
Hark how they roar and rumble in the [straits]!
Bless thee from the pirates.

[Attempts to kiss him.]

ANTONIO

Pox upon you, let me alone!

ISABELLA

Why shouldst thou mount so high as Mercury
Unless thou hadst reversion of his place?
Stay in the moon with me, Endymion,
And we will rule these wild rebellious waves
That would have drown'd my love.

ANTONIO

I'll kick thee if again thou touch me,
Thou wild unshapen antic; I am no fool,
You bedlam!

ISABELLA

But you are as sure as I am, mad.
Have I put on this habit of a frantic
With love as full of fury to beguile
The nimble eye of watchful jealousy,
And am I thus rewarded?

ANTONIO

Ha, dearest beauty!

ISABELLA

No, I have no beauty now,
Nor never had, but what was in my garments.
You a quick-sighted lover? Come not near me.
Keep your caparisons, y'are aptly clad;
I came a feigner to return stark mad.

Exit. Enter Lollo.

The Changeling

ANTONIO

Stay, or I shall change condition
And become as you are.

LOLLIO

Why, Tony, whither now? Why, fool!

ANTONIO

Whose fool, usher of idiots? You coxcomb!
I have fool'd too much.

LOLLIO

You were best be mad another while then.

ANTONIO

So I am, stark mad, I have cause enough;
And I could throw the full effects on thee,
And beat thee like a fury.

LOLLIO

Do not, do not! I shall not forbear the gentleman under the fool, if you do. Alas, I saw through your fox-skin before now. Come, I can give you comfort: my mistress loves you, and there is as arrant a madman i' th' house as you are a fool, your rival, whom she loves not. If after the masque we can rid her of him, you earn her love, she says, and the fool shall ride her.

ANTONIO

May I believe thee?

LOLLIO

Yes, or you may choose whether you will or no.

ANTONIO

She's eas'd of him; I have a good quarrel on't.

LOLLIO

Well, keep your old station yet, and be quiet.

ANTONIO

Tell her I will deserve her love.

LOLLIO

And you are like to have your desire.

[Exit Antonio.] Enter Franciscus.

FRANCISCUS

Down, down, down a-down a-down, and then with a horse-trick
To kick Latona's forehead and break her bow string.

LOLLIO

[Aside] This is t'other counterfeit; I'll put him out of his humour. [Reading] "Sweet lady, having now cast this

IV.[i. Alsemero's chamber]

The Changeling

counterfeit cover of a madman, I appear to your best judgment a true and faithful lover of your beauty." This is pretty well for a madman.

FRANCISCUS

Ha! What's that?

LOLLIO

[Reading] "Chide those perfections in you which made me imperfect."

FRANCISCUS

I am discover'd to the fool.

LOLLIO

[Aside] I hope to discover the fool in you ere I have done with you. [Reading] "Yours all, or one beside himself, Franciscus." [Aside] This madman will mend sure.

FRANCISCUS

What do you read, sirrah?

LOLLIO

Your destiny, sir; you'll be hang'd for this trick and another that I know.

FRANCISCUS

Art thou of counsel with thy mistress?

LOLLIO

Next her apron strings.

FRANCISCUS

Give me thy hand.

LOLLIO

Stay, let me put yours in my pocket first. [Puts the letter in his pocket.] Your hand is true, is it not? It will not pick? I partly fear it, because I think it does lie.

FRANCISCUS

Not in a syllable.

LOLLIO

So, if you love my mistress so well as you have handled the matter here, you are like to be cur'd of your madness.

FRANCISCUS

And none but she can cure it.

LOLLIO

Well, I'll give you over then, and she shall cast your water next.

FRANCISCUS

[Giving him money] Take for thy pains past.

LOLLIO

IV.[i. Alsemero's chamber]

The Changeling

I shall deserve more, sir, I hope; my mistress loves you, but must have some proof of your love to her.

FRANCISCUS

There I meet my wishes.

LOLLIO

That will not serve; you must meet her enemy and yours.

FRANCISCUS

He's dead already.

LOLLIO

Will you tell me that, and I parted but now with him?

FRANCISCUS

Show me the man.

LOLLIO

Ay, that's a right course now: see him before you kill him, in any case; and yet it needs not go so far neither: 'tis but a fool that haunts the house, and my mistress in the shape of an idiot. Bang but his fools' coat well-favouredly, and 'tis well.

FRANCISCUS

Soundly, soundly.

LOLLIO

Only reserve him till the masque be past; and if you find him not now in the dance yourself, I'll show you. In, in: my master!

Enter Albius.

FRANCISCUS

[Dancing] He handles him like a feather. Hey!

[Exit.]

ALBIUS

Well said! In a readiness, Lollio?

LOLLIO

Yes, sir.

ALBIUS

Away then, and guide them in, Lollio;
Entreat your mistress to see this sight.
Hark, is there not one incurable fool
That might be begg'd? I have friends.

LOLLIO

I have him for you, one that shall deserve it too.

The Changeling

ALBIUS

Good boy, Lollo.

[Lollo brings on the Madmen and Fools.] The Madmen and Fools dance.

'Tis perfect: well fit but once these strains,
We shall have coin and credit for our pains.

Exeunt.

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

Enter Beatrice. A clock strikes one.

BEATRICE

One struck, and yet she lies by't. Oh, my fears,
This strumpet serves her own ends, 'tis apparent now,
Devours the pleasure with a greedy appetite,
And never minds my honour or my peace,
Makes havoc of my right; but she pays dearly for't:
No trusting of her life with such a secret,
That cannot rule her blood to keep her promise.
Beside, I have some suspicion of her faith to me,
Because I was suspected of my lord,
And it must come from her. Hark, by my horrors,
Another clock strike[s] two.

Strike two. Enter Deflores.

DEFLORES

Pist, where are you?

BEATRICE

Deflores?

DEFLORES

Ay. Is she not come from him yet?

BEATRICE

As I am a living soul, not.

DEFLORES

Sure the devil
Hath sow'd his itch within her; who'd trust
A waiting-woman?

BEATRICE

I must trust somebody.

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

DEFLORES

Push, they are termagants.
Especially when they fall upon their masters
And have their ladies' first fruits, th'are mad whelps;
You cannot stave 'em off from game royal then.
You are so harsh and hardy, ask no counsel;
And I could have help'd you to a[n] apothecary's daughter
Would have fall'n off before eleven, and thank['d] you too.

BEATRICE

Oh me, not yet? This whore forgets herself.

DEFLORES

The rascal fares so well. Look, y'are undone:
The day–star, by this hand; see [Phosphorus] plain yonder.

BEATRICE

Advise me now to fall upon some ruin;
There is no counsel safe else.

DEFLORES

Peace, I ha't now:
For we must force a rising; there's no remedy.

BEATRICE

How? Take heed of that.

DEFLORES

Tush, be you quiet
Or else give over all.

BEATRICE

Prithee, I ha' done then.

DEFLORES

This is my reach: I'll set some part afire
Of Diaphanta's chamber.

BEATRICE

How? Fire, sir?
That may endanger the whole house.

DEFLORES

You talk of danger when your fame's on fire?

BEATRICE

That's true. Do what thou wilt now.

DEFLORES

Push, I aim

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

At a most rich success, strikes all dead sure.
The chimney being afire, and some light parcels
Of the least danger in her chamber only,
If Diaphanta should be met by chance then
Far from her lodging, which is now suspicious,
It would be thought her fears and affright then
Drove her to seek for succour; if not seen
Or met at all, as that's the likeliest,
For her own shame she'll hasten towards her lodging.
I will be ready with a piece high-charg'd,
As 'twere to cleanse the chimney: there, 'tis proper now,
But she shall be the mark.

BEATRICE

I'm forc'd to love thee now,
'Cause thou provid'st so carefully for my honour.

DEFLORES

'Slid, it concerns the safety of us both,
Our pleasure and continuance.

BEATRICE

One word now,
Prithee: how for the servants?

DEFLORES

I'll dispatch them,
Some one way, some another, in the hurry
For buckets, hooks, ladders. Fear not you;
The deed shall find its time, and I've thought since
Upon a safe conveyance for the body too.
How this fire purifies wit! Watch you your minute.

BEATRICE

Fear keeps my soul upon't; I cannot stray from't.

Enter Alonzo's Ghost.

DEFLORES

Ha! What art thou that tak'st away the light
'Twixt that star and me? I dread thee not!
'Twas but a mist of conscience. All's clear again.

Exit [Deflores].

BEATRICE

Who's that, Deflores? Bless me! It slides by.

[Exit Ghost.]

Some ill thing haunts the house; 't has left behind it

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

A shivering sweat upon me: I'm afraid now.
This night hath been so tedious. Oh, this strumpet!
Had she a thousand lives, he should not leave her
Till he had destroy'd the last.

[Strikes] three a' clock.

List! Oh, my terrors,
Three struck by St. Sebastian's!

WITHIN
Fire, fire, fire!

BEATRICE
Already! How rare is that man's speed!
How heartily he serves me! His face loathes one,
But look upon his care, who would not love him?
The east is not more beauteous than his service.

WITHIN
Fire, fire, fire!

Enter Deflores. Servants pass over, ring a bell.

DEFLORES
Away, dispatch!
Hooks, buckets, ladders; that's well said!
The fire bell rings, the chimney works, my charge:
The piece is ready.

Exit.

BEATRICE
Here's a man worth loving!
Oh, y'are a jewel!

Enter Diaphanta.

DIAPHANTA
Pardon frailty, madam;
In troth, I was so well, I ev'n forgot myself.

BEATRICE
Y'have made trim work.

DIAPHANTA
What?

BEATRICE
Hie quickly to your chamber;
Your reward follows you.

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

DIAPHANTA

I never made
So sweet a bargain.

Exit. Enter Alsemero.

ALSEMERO

Oh, my dear Joanna!
Alas, art thou risen too? I was coming,
My absolute treasure.

BEATRICE

When I miss'd you,
I could not choose but follow.

ALSEMERO

Th'art all sweetness.
The fire is not so dangerous.

BEATRICE

Think you so, sir?

ALSEMERO

I prithee, tremble not: believe me, 'tis not.

Enter Vermandero, Jasperino.

VERMANDERO

Oh, bless my house and me!

ALSEMERO

My lord your father.

Enter Deflores with a piece.

VERMANDERO

Knave, whither goes that piece?

DEFLORES

To scour the chimney,

Exit.

VERMANDERO

Oh, well said, well said;
That fellow's good on all occasions.

BEATRICE

A wondrous necessary man, my lord.

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

VERMANDERO

He hath a ready wit; he's worth 'em all, sir:
Dog at a house [on] fire; I ha' seen him sing'd ere now.

The piece goes off.

Ha, there he goes!

BEATRICE

'Tis done.

ALSEMERO

Come, sweet, to bed now;
Thou wilt get cold.

BEATRICE

Alas, the fear keeps that out:
My heart will find no quiet till I hear
How Diaphanta, my poor woman, fares;
It is her chamber, sir, her lodging chamber.

VERMANDERO

How should the fire come there?

BEATRICE

As good a soul as ever lady countenanc'd,
But in her chamber negligent and heavy.
She scap'd a mine twice.

VERMANDERO

Twice?

BEATRICE

Strangely twice, sir.

VERMANDERO

Those sleepy sluts are dangerous in a house,
And they be ne'er so good.

Enter Deflores.

DEFLORES

Oh, poor virginity!
Thou hast paid dearly for't.

VERMANDERO

Bless us! What's that?

DEFLORES

A thing you all knew once: Diaphanta's burnt.

The Changeling

BEATRICE

My woman, oh, my woman!

DEFLORES

Now the flames are
Greedy of her; burnt, burnt, burnt to death, sir.

BEATRICE

Oh, my presaging soul!

ALSEMERO

Not a tear more,
I charge you by the last embrace I gave you
In bed before this rais'd us.

BEATRICE

Now you tie me;
Were it my sister now she gets no more.

Enter Servant.

VERMANDERO

How now?

SERVANT

All danger's past; you may now take
Your rests, my lords: the fire is throughly quench'd.
Ah, poor gentlewoman, how soon was she stifled!

BEATRICE

Deflores, what is left of her inter,
And we as mourners all will follow her:
I will entreat that honour to my servant,
Ev'n of my lord himself.

ALSEMERO

Command it, sweetness.

BEATRICE

Which of you spied the fire first?

DEFLORES

'Twas I, madam.

BEATRICE

And took such pains in't too? A double goodness!
'Twere well he were rewarded.

VERMANDERO

He shall be.
Deflores, call upon me.

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

ALSEMERO

And upon me, sir.

Exeunt. [Manet Deflores.]

DEFLORES

Rewarded? Precious, here's a trick beyond me;
I see in all bouts both of sport and wit
Always a woman strives for the last hit.

Exit.

[V.ii. A chamber]

Enter Tomazo.

TOMAZO

I cannot taste the benefits of life
With the same relish I was wont to do.
Man I grow weary of, and hold his fellowship
A treacherous, bloody friendship, and because
I am ignorant in whom my wrath should settle,
I must think all men villains; and the next
I meet, who'er he be, the murderer
Of my most worthy brother.

Enter Deflores, passes over the stage.

Ha! What's he?

Oh, the fellow that some call honest Deflores;
But methinks honesty was hard bested
To come there for a lodging, as if a queen
Should make her palace of a pest-house.
I find a contrariety in nature
Betwixt that face and me. The least occasion
Would give me game upon him; yet he's so foul
One would scarce touch [him] with a sword he loved
And made account of. So most deadly venomous,
He would go [near] to poison any weapon
That should draw blood on him; one must resolve
Never to use that sword again in fight
In way of honest manhood that strikes him.
Some river must devour 't; 'twere not fit
That any man should find it.

Enter Deflores.

What, again?

He walks a' purpose by, sure, to choke me up,
To infect my blood.

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

DEFLORES

My worthy noble lord.

TOMAZO

Dost offer to come near and breath upon me?

[Strikes him.]

DEFLORES

A blow.

[Deflores draws his weapon.]

TOMAZO

Yea, are you so prepar'd?
I'll rather like a soldier die by th' sword
Then like a politician by thy poison.

DEFLORES

Hold, my lord, as you are honourable.

TOMAZO

All slaves that kill by poison are still cowards.

DEFLORES

[Aside] I cannot strike: I see his brother's wounds
Fresh bleeding in his eye, as in a crystal.—
I will not question this; I know y'are noble.
I take my injury with thanks given, sir,
Like a wise lawyer, and as a favour,
Will wear it for the worthy hand that gave it.
[Aside] Why this from him that yesterday appear'd
So strangely loving to me? Oh, but instinct
Is of a subtler strain; guilt must not walk
So near his lodge again: he came [near] me now.

Exit.

TOMAZO

All league with mankind I renounce forever
Till I find this murderer. Not so much
As common courtesy but I'll lock up,
For in the state of ignorance I live in,
A brother may salute his brother's murderer,
And wish good speed to th' villain in a greeting.

Enter Vermandero, Alibius and Isabella.

VERMANDERO

Noble Piracquo.

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

TOMAZO

Pray keep on your way, sir,
I've nothing to say to you.

VERMANDERO

Comforts bless you, sir.

TOMAZO

I have forsworn complement, in troth I have, sir;
As you are merely man, I have not left
A good wish for you, nor any here.

VERMANDERO

Unless you be so far in love with grief
You will not part from't upon any terms,
We bring that news will make a welcome for us.

TOMAZO

What news can that be?

VERMANDERO

Throw no scornful smile
Upon the zeal I bring you, tis worth more, sir:
Two of the chiefest men I kept about me
I hide not from the law or your just vengeance.

TOMAZO

Ha!

VERMANDERO

To give your peace more ample satisfaction,
Thank these discoverers.

TOMAZO

If you bring that calm,
Name but the manner I shall ask forgiveness in
For that contemptuous smile upon you:
I'll perfect it with reverence that belongs
Unto a sacred altar.

[Kneels.]

VERMANDERO

[Raising him] Good sir, rise,
Why, now you over-do as much a' this hand
As you fell short a' t'other. Speak, Alibius.

ALIBIUS

'Twas my wife's fortune, as she is most lucky
At a discovery to find out lately

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

Within our hospital of fools and madmen
Two counterfeits slipp'd into these disguises,
Their names, Franciscus and Antonio.

VERMANDERO

Both mine, sir, and I ask no favour for 'em.

ALBIUS

Now that which draws suspicion to their habits,
The time of their disguisings agrees justly
With the day of the murder.

TOMAZO

Oh, blest revelation!

VERMANDERO

Nay more, nay more, sir, I'll not spare mine own
In way of justice: they both feign'd a journey
To Briamata, and so wrought out their leaves;
My love was so abus'd in't.

TOMAZO

Time's too precious
To run in waste now; you have brought a peace
The riches of five kingdoms could not purchase.
Be my most happy conduct. I thirst for 'em:
Like subtle lightning will I wind about 'em
And melt their marrow in 'em.

Exeunt.

[V.iii. Alsemero's chamber]

Enter Alsemero and Jasperino.

JASPERINO

Your confidence, I'm sure, is now of proof.
The prospect from the garden has show'd
Enough for deep suspicion.

ALSEMERO

The black mask
That so continually was worn upon't
Condemns the face for ugly ere 't be seen,
Her despite to him, and so seeming bottomless.

JASPERINO

Touch it home then; 'tis not a shallow probe
Can search this ulcer soundly: I fear you'll find it
Full of corruption. 'Tis fit I leave you.
She meets you opportunely from that walk;

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

She took the back door at his parting with her.

Exit Jasperino.

ALSEMERO

Did my fate wait for this unhappy stroke
At my first sight of woman?

Enter Beatrice.

She's here.

BEATRICE

Alsemero!

ALSEMERO

How do you?

BEATRICE

How do I?
Alas! How do you? You look not well.

ALSEMERO

You read me well enough; I am not well.

BEATRICE

Not well, sir? Is't in my power to better you?

ALSEMERO

Yes.

BEATRICE

Nay, then y'are cur'd again.

ALSEMERO

Pray resolve me one question, lady.

BEATRICE

If I can.

ALSEMERO

None can so sure. Are you honest?

BEATRICE

Ha, ha, ha, that's a broad question, my lord.

ALSEMERO

But that's not a modest answer, my lady:
Do you laugh? My doubts are strong upon me

BEATRICE

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

'Tis innocence that smiles, and no rough brow
Can take away the dimple in her cheek.
Say I should strain a tear to fill the vault,
Which would you give the better faith to?

ALSEMERO

'Twere but hypocrisy of a sadder colour,
But the same stuff; neither your smiles nor tears
Shall move or flatter me from my belief:
You are a whore.

BEATRICE

What a horrid sound it hath!
It blasts a beauty to deformity;
Upon what face soever that breath falls,
It strikes it ugly: oh, you have ruin'd
What you can ne'er repair again!

ALSEMERO

I'll all demolish and seek out truth within you,
If there be any left: let your sweet tongue
Prevent your heart's rifling; there I'll ransack
And tear out my suspicion.

BEATRICE

You may, sir,
'Tis an easy passage; yet if you please,
Show me the ground whereon you lost your love.
My spotless virtue may but tread on that
Before I perish.

ALSEMERO

Unanswerable;
A ground you cannot stand on: you fall down
Beneath all grace and goodness when you set
Your ticklish heel on't. There was a visor
O'er that cunning face, and that became you;
Now impudence in triumph rides upon't.
How comes this tender reconciliation else
'Twixt you and your despite, your rancorous loathing,
Deflores? He that your eye was sore at sight of,
He's now become your arms' supporter, your
Lips' saint.

BEATRICE

Is there the cause?

ALSEMERO

Worse: your lust's devil,
Your adultery.

The Changeling

BEATRICE

Would any but yourself say that,
'Twould turn him to a villain.

ALSEMERO

'Twas witness'd
By the counsel of your bosom, Diaphanta.

BEATRICE

Is your witness dead then?

ALSEMERO

'Tis to be fear'd
It was the wages of her knowledge, poor soul;
She liv'd not long after the discovery.

BEATRICE

Then hear a story of not much less horror
Than this your false suspicion is beguil'd with.
To your bed's scandal I stand up innocence,
Which even the guilt of one black other deed
Will stand for proof of: your love has made me
A cruel murderess.

ALSEMERO

Ha!

BEATRICE

A bloody one.
I have kiss'd poison for't, strok'd a serpent,
That thing of hate, worthy in my esteem
Of no better employment, and him most worthy
To be so employ'd I caus'd to murder
That innocent Piracquo, having no
Better means than that worst, to assure
Yourself to me.

ALSEMERO

Oh, the place itself e'er since
Has crying been for vengeance, the temple
Where blood and beauty first unlawfully
Fir'd their devotion and quench'd the right one.
'Twas in my fears at first: 'twill have it now.
Oh, thou art all deform'd!

BEATRICE

Forget not, sir,
It for your sake was done: shall greater dangers
Make the less welcome?

ALSEMERO

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

Oh, thou shouldst have gone
A thousand leagues about to have avoided
This dangerous bridge of blood; here we are lost.

BEATRICE

Remember I am true unto your bed.

ALSEMERO

The bed itself's a charnel, the sheets shrouds
For murdered carcasses; it must ask pause
What I must do in this. Meantime you shall
Be my prisoner only; enter my closet.

Exit Beatrice.

I'll be your keeper yet. Oh, in what part
Of this sad story shall I first begin?

Enter Deflores.

Ha! This same fellow has put me in.
Deflores.

DEFLORES

Noble Alsemero!

ALSEMERO

I can tell you
News, sir: my wife has her commended to you.

DEFLORES

That's news indeed, my lord; I think she would
Commend me to the gallows if she could,
She ever lov'd me so well. I thank her.

ALSEMERO

What's this blood upon your band, Deflores?

DEFLORES

Blood? No, sure 'twas wash'd since.

ALSEMERO

Since when, man?

DEFLORES

Since t'other day I got a knock
In a sword and dagger school; I think 'tis out.

ALSEMERO

Yes, 'tis almost out, but 'tis perceiv'd, though.
I had forgot my message; this it is:

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

What price goes murder?

DEFLORES

How, sir?

ALSEMERO

I ask you, sir:
My wife's behindhand with you, she tells me,
For a brave, bloody blow you gave for her sake
Upon Piracquo.

DEFLORES

Upon? 'Twas quite through him, sure.
Has she confess'd it?

ALSEMERO

As sure as death to both of you,
And much more than that.

DEFLORES

It could not be much more;
'Twas but one thing, and that she's a whore.

ALSEMERO

[It] could not choose but follow. Oh, cunning devils!
How should blind men know you from fair-fac'd saints?

BEATRICE within

He lies, the villain does belie me!

DEFLORES

Let me go to her, sir.

ALSEMERO

Nay, you shall to her.
Peace, crying crocodile, your sounds are heard;
Take your prey to you! Get you into her, sir.

Exit Deflores.

I'll be your pander now; rehearse again
Your scene of lust, that you may be perfect
When you shall come to act it to the black audience
Where howls and gnashings shall be music to you.
Clip your adulteress freely; 'tis the pilot
Will guide you to the Mare Mortuum,
Where you shall sink to fathoms bottomless.

Enter Vermandero, Alibius, Isabella, Tomazo, Franciscus, and Antonio.

VERMANDERO

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

Oh, Alsemero. I have a wonder for you.

ALSEMERO

No, sir, 'tis I, I have a wonder for you.

VERMANDERO

I have suspicion near as proof itself
For Piracquo's murder.

ALSEMERO

Sir, I have proof
Beyond suspicion for Piracquo's murder.

VERMANDERO

Beseech you hear me: these two have been disguis'd
E'er since the deed was done.

ALSEMERO

I have two other
That were more close disguis'd then your two could be,
E'er since the deed was done.

VERMANDERO

You'll hear me: these mine own servants--

ALSEMERO

Hear me: those nearer than your servants
That shall acquit them and prove them guiltless.

FRANCISCUS

That may be done with easy truth, sir.

TOMAZO

How is my cause bandied through your delays!
'Tis urgent in blood, and calls for haste;
Give me a brother alive or dead:
Alive, a wife with him; if dead, for both
A recompense for murder and adultery.

BEATRICE within

Oh, oh, oh!

ALSEMERO

Hark, 'tis coming to you.

DEFLORES within

Nay, I'll along for company.

BEATRICE within

Oh, oh!

The Changeling

VERMANDERO

What horrid sounds are these?

ALSEMERO

Come forth, you twins of mischief.

Enter Deflores bringing in Beatrice [wounded].

DEFLORES

Here we are; if you have any more
To say to us, speak quickly. I shall not
Give you the hearing else; I am so stout yet,
And so, I think, that broken rib of mankind.

VERMANDERO

An host of enemies entered my citadel
Could not amaze like this. Joanna, Beatrice Joanna!

BEATRICE

Oh, come not near me, sir; I shall defile you.
I am that of your blood was taken from you
For your better health; look no more upon't,
But cast it to the ground regardlessly:
Let the common sewer take it from distinction.
Beneath the stars, upon yon meteor
Ever [hung] my fate, 'mongst things corruptible;
I ne'er could pluck it from him. My loathing
Was prophet to the rest but ne'er believ'd;
Mine honour fell with him, and now my life.
Alsemero, I am a stranger to your bed;
Your bed was coz'ned on the nuptial night,
For which your false bride died.

ALSEMERO

Diaphanta!

DEFLORES

Yes, and the while I coupled with your mate
At barley-break; now we are left in hell.

VERMANDERO

We are all there; it circumscribes [us] here.

DEFLORES

I lov'd this woman in spite of her heart;
Her love I earn'd out of Piracquo's murder.

TOMAZO

Ha, my brother's murderer!

DEFLORES

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

Yes, and her honour's prize
Was my reward; I thank life for nothing
But that pleasure: it was so sweet to me
That I have drunk up all, left none behind
For any man to pledge me.

VERMANDERO

Horrid villain!
Keep life in him for further tortures.

DEFLORES

No,
I can prevent you; here's my penknife still.
It is but one thread more, [stabbing himself] and now 'tis cut.
Make haste, Joanna, by that token to thee:
Canst not forget, so lately put in mind,
I would not go to leave thee far behind.

Dies.

BEATRICE

Forgive me, Alsemero, all forgive;
'Tis time to die when 'tis a shame to live.

Dies.

VERMANDERO

Oh, my name is entered now in that record
Where till this fatal hour 'twas never read!

ALSEMERO

Let it be blotted out; let your heart lose it,
And it can never look you in the face,
Nor tell a tale behind the back of life
To your dishonour. Justice hath so right
The guilty hit, that innocence is quit
By proclamation, and may joy again.
Sir, you are sensible of what truth hath done;
'Tis the best comfort that your grief can find.

TOMAZO

Sir, I am satisfied; my injuries
Lie dead before me. I can exact no more,
Unless my soul were loose and could o'ertake
Those black fugitives that are fled from thence
To take a second vengeance; but there are wraths
Deeper than mine, 'tis to be fear'd, about 'em.

ALSEMERO

What an opacous body had that moon
That last chang'd on us! Here's beauty chang'd

V.[i. A gallery in the castle]

The Changeling

To ugly whoredom, here servant obedience
To a master sin, imperious murder.
I, a suppos'd husband, chang'd embraces
With wantonness, but that was paid before;
Your change is come too, from an ignorant wrath
To knowing friendship. Are there any more on's?

ANTONIO

Yes, sir, I was chang'd too, from a little ass as I was to a great fool as I am; and had like to ha' been chang'd to the gallows but that you know my innocence always excuses me.

FRANCISCUS

I was chang'd from a little wit to be stark mad, almost for the same purpose.

ISABELLA

[To Alibius] Your change is still behind,
But deserve best your transformation.
You are a jealous coxcomb, keep schools of folly,
And teach your scholars how to break your own head.

ALBIUS

I see all apparent, wife, and will change now
Into a better husband, and never keep scholars
That shall be wiser than myself.

ALSEMERO

Sir, you have yet a son's duty living;
Please you accept it. Let that your sorrow,
As it goes from your eye, go from your heart;
Man and his sorrow at the grave must part.

EPILOGUE

ALSEMERO

All we can do to comfort one another,
To stay a brother's sorrow for a brother,
To dry a child from the kind father's eyes,
Is to no purpose; it rather multiplies.
Your only smiles have power to cause relive
The dead again, or in their rooms to give
Brother a new brother, father a child:
If these appear, all griefs are reconcil'd.

Exeunt omnes.