

The Honest Whore, Part One

Thomas Middleton

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The Honest Whore, Part One

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[Dramatis Personae (in order of appearance)]

Gasparo Trebatzi, DUKE of Milan
Count HIPOLITO, in love with Infelice
MATHEO, his friend
FUSTIGO, brother to Viola
A PORTER
VIOLA, wife to Candido
DOCTOR Benedict
Two SERVANTS to the Duke
INFELICE, daughter to the Duke
CASTRUCHIO }
FLUELLO } courtiers
PIORATTO }
GEORGE, prentice to Candido
Two other PRENTICES to Candido
CANDIDO, a linen-draper
ROGER, a pander
BELLAFRONT, a whore
An OFFICER
Madame Fingerlock, a BAWD
SERVANT to Hipolito
Corporal CRAMBO
Lieutenant POH
The DOCTOR'S MAN
ANSELMO, a friar
A SWEEPER at the Bethlehem Monastery
SINEZI, a courtier
Three MADMEN
Officers
The scene: Milan]

I.i. [A street]

Enter at one door a funeral, a coronet lying on the hearse, scutcheons and garlands hanging on the sides, attended by Gasparo Trebatzi, Duke of Milan, Castruchio, Sinezi, Pioratto, Fluello, and others. At another door, enter Hipolito in discontented appearance, Matheo, a gentleman his friend, labouring to hold him back.

DUKE

Behold, yon comet shows his head again;
Twice hath he thus at cross-turns thrown on us
Prodigious looks, twice hath he troubled
The waters of our eyes. See, he's turn'd wild;
Go on, in God's name.

ALL

On afore there, ho!

DUKE

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Kinsmen and friends, take from your manly sides
Your weapons to keep back the desp'rate boy
From doing violence to the innocent dead.

HIPOLITO

I pray thee, dear Matheo!

MATHEO

Come, y'are mad!

HIPOLITO

I do arrest thee, murderer! Set down,
Villains, set down that sorrow, 'tis all mine.

DUKE

I do beseech you all, for my blood's sake
Send hence your milder spirits, and let wrath
Join in confederacy with your weapons' points;
If he proceed to vex us, let your swords
Seek out his bowels: funeral grief loathes words.

ALL

Set on.

HIPOLITO

Set down the body!

MATHEO

Oh, my lord!
Y'are wrong. I' th' open street! You see she's dead.

HIPOLITO

I know she is not dead.

DUKE

Frantic young man,
Wilt thou believe these gentlemen? Pray speak:
Thou dost abuse my child, and mock'st the tears
That here are shed for her. If to behold
Those roses withered that set out her cheeks,
That pair of stars that gave her body light
Dark'ned and dim forever, all those rivers
That fed her veins with warm and crimson streams
Frozen and dried up: if these be signs of death,
Then is she dead. Thou unreligious youth,
Art not asham'd to empty all these eyes
Of funeral tears, a debt due to the dead
As mirth is to the living? Sham'st thou not
To have them stare on thee? Hark, thou art curs'd
Even to thy face by those that scarce can speak!

HIPOLITO

My lord.

DUKE

What wouldst thou have? Is she not dead?

HIPOLITO

Oh, you ha' kill'd her by your cruelty!

DUKE

Admit I had, thou kill'st her now again,
And art more savage than a barbarous moor.

HIPOLITO

Let me but kiss her pale and bloodless lip.

DUKE

Oh, fie, fie, fie!

HIPOLITO

Or if not touch her, let me look on her.

MATHEO

As you regard your honour—

HIPOLITO

Honour? Smoke!

MATHEO

Or if you lov'd her living, spare her now.

DUKE

Ay, well done, sir; you play the gentleman.
Steal hence. 'Tis nobly done. Away. I'll join
My force to yours to stop this violent torment.
Pass on.

Exeunt [courtiers and attendants] with funeral.

HIPOLITO

Matheo, thou dost wound me more.

MATHEO

I give you physic, noble friend, not wounds.

DUKE

Oh, well said, well done, a true gentleman!
Alack, I know the sea of lovers' rage
Comes rushing with so strong a tide: it beats
And bears down all respects of life, of honour,
Of friends, of foes. Forget her, gallant youth.

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HIPOLITO

Forget her?

DUKE

Nay, nay, be but patient.
For why? Death's hand hath sued a strict divorce
'Twixt her and thee? What's beauty but a corpse?
What but fair sand—dust are earth's purest forms?
Queens' bodies are but trunks to put in worms.

MATHEO

[Aside to Duke] Speak no more sentences, my good lord, but slip hence. You see they are but fits; I'll rule him, I warrant ye. Ay, so, tread gingerly, your grace is here somewhat too long already.

[Exit Duke.]

[Aside] 'Sblood, the jest were now, if having ta'en some knocks o' th' pate already, he should get loose again, and like a mad ox toss my new black cloaks into the kennel! I must humour his lordship.—My Lord Hipolito, is it in your stomach to go to dinner?

HIPOLITO

Where is the body?

MATHEO

The body, as the duke spake very wisely, is gone to be worm'd.

HIPOLITO

I cannot rest: I'll meet it at next turn;
I'll see how my love looks.

Matheo holds him in's arms.

MATHEO

How your love looks? Worse than a scarecrow. Wrestle not with me: the great fellow gives the fall, for a ducat!

HIPOLITO

I shall forget myself!

MATHEO

Pray do so, leave yourself behind yourself, and go whither you will. 'Sfoot, do you long to have base rogues that maintain a Saint Anthony's fire in their noses by nothing but two-penny ale make ballads of you? If the duke had but so much mettle in him as is in a cobbler's awl, he would ha' been a vex'd thing: he and his train had blown you up, but that their powder has taken the wet of cowards; you'll bleed three pottles of Aligant, by this light, if you follow 'em, and then we shall have a hole made in a wrong place, to have surgeons roll thee up like a baby in swaddling clouts.

HIPOLITO

What day is today, Matheo?

MATHEO

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Yea, marry, this is an easy question: why, today is, let me see, Thursday.

HIPOLITO

Oh, Thursday.

MATHEO

Here's a coil for a dead commodity! 'Sfoot, women when they are alive are but dead commodities, for you shall have one woman lie upon many men's hands!

HIPOLITO

She died on Monday then.

MATHEO

And that's the most villainous day of all the week to die in. And she was well, and ate a mess of water—gruel on Monday morning.

HIPOLITO

Ay, it cannot be
Such a bright taper should burn out so soon.

MATHEO

Oh, yes, my lord, so soon: why, I ha' known them that at dinner have been as well, and had so much health, that they were glad to pledge it, yet before three a' clock have been found dead drunk.

HIPOLITO

On Thursday buried, and on Monday died!
Quick haste, byrlady: sure her winding sheet
Was laid out 'fore her body, and the worms,
That now must feast with her, were even bespoke,
And solemnly invited like strange guests.

MATHEO

Strange feeders they are indeed, my lord, and, like your jester or young courtier, will enter upon any man's trencher without bidding.

HIPOLITO

Curs'd be that day forever that [robb'd] her
Of breath, and me of bliss: henceforth let it stand
Within the wizards' book, the calendar,
Mark'd with a marginal finger, to be chosen
By thieves, by villains, and black murderers
As the best day for them to labour in.
If henceforth this adulterous bawdy world
Be got with child with treason, sacrilege,
Atheism, rapes, treacherous friendship, perjury,
Slander, the beggar's sin, lies, sin of fools,
Or any other damn'd impieties,
On Monday let 'em be delivered!
I swear to thee, Matheo, by my soul,
Hereafter weekly on that day I'll glue
Mine eyelids down, because they shall not gaze

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On any female cheek. And being lock'd up
In my close chamber, there I'll meditate
On nothing but my Infelice's end,
Or on a dead man's skull draw out mine own.

MATHEO

You'll do all these good works now every Monday because it is so bad, but I hope upon Tuesday morning I shall take you with a wench.

HIPOLITO

If ever whilst frail blood through my veins run,
On woman's beams I throw affection,
Save her that's dead, or that I loosely fly
To th' shore of any other wafting eye,
Let me not prosper, heaven! I will be true,
Even to her dust and ashes: could her tomb
Stand whilst I liv'd, so long that it might rot,
That should fall down, but she be ne'er forgot.

MATHEO

If you have this strange monster, honesty, in your belly, why, so jig-makers and chroniclers shall pick something out of you: but and I smell not you and a bawdy house out within these ten days, let my nose be as big as an English bag-pudding. I'll follow your lordship, though it be to the place aforementioned.

Exeunt.

[I.ii. A street]

Enter Fustigo in some fantastic sea-suit at one door, a Porter meets him at another.

FUSTIGO

How now, porter, will she come?

PORTER

If I may trust a woman, sir, she will come.

FUSTIGO

[Giving him money] There's for thy pains, godamercy. If ever I stand in need of a wench that will come with a wet finger, porter, thou shalt earn my money before any clarissimo in Milan, yet, so God sa' me, she's mine own sister body and soul, as I am a Christian gentleman! Farewell, I'll ponder till she come: thou hast been no bawd in fetching this woman, I assure thee.

PORTER

No matter if I had, sir: better men than porters are bawds.

FUSTIGO

Oh, God, sir, many that have borne offices! But, porter, art sure thou went'st into a true house?

PORTER

I think so, for I met with no thieves.

The Honest Whore, Part One

FUSTIGO

Nay, but art sure it was my sister Viola?

PORTER

I am sure by all superscriptions it was the party you ciphered.

FUSTIGO

Not very tall?

PORTER

Nor very low: a middling woman.

FUSTIGO

'Twas she, faith, 'twas she! A pretty plump cheek like mine?

PORTER

At a blush, a little very much like you.

FUSTIGO

Gods—so, I would not for a ducat she had kick'd up her heels, for I ha' spent an abomination this voyage; marry, I did it amongst sailors and gentlemen. [Giving him money] There's a little modicum more, porter, for making thee stay; farewell, honest porter.

PORTER

I am in your debt, sir; God preserve you.

FUSTIGO

Not so neither, good porter.

Exit. Enter Viola.

God's lid, yonder she comes! Sister Viola, I am glad to see you stirring. It's news to have me here, is't not, sister?

VIOLA

Yes, trust me: I wond'ered who should be so bold to send for me. You are welcome to Milan, brother.

FUSTIGO

Troth, sister, I heard you were married to a very rich chuff, and I was very sorry for it, that I had no better clothes, and that made me send, for you know we Milaners love to strut upon Spanish leather. And how does all our friends?

VIOLA

Very well. You ha' travelled enough now, I trow, to sow your wild oats.

FUSTIGO

A pox on 'em! Wild oats? I ha' not an oat to throw at a horse. Troth, sister, I ha' sow'd my oats, and reap'd two hundred ducats if I had 'em. Here, marry, I must entreat you to lend me some thirty or forty till the ship come; by this hand, I'll discharge at my day, by this hand.

VIOLA

These are your old oaths.

The Honest Whore, Part One

FUSTIGO

Why, sister, do you think I'll forswear my hand?

VIOLA

Well, well, you shall have them: put yourself into better fashion, because I must employ you in a serious matter.

FUSTIGO

I'll sweat like a horse if I like the matter.

VIOLA

You ha' cast off all your old swaggering humours.

FUSTIGO

I had not sail'd a league in that great fishpond, the sea, but I cast up my very gall.

VIOLA

I am the more sorry, for I must employ a true swaggerer.

FUSTIGO

Nay, by this iron, sister, they shall find I am powder and touch-box if they put fire once into me.

VIOLA

Then lend me your ears.

FUSTIGO

Mine ears are yours, dear sister.

VIOLA

I am married to a man that has wealth enough, and wit enough.

FUSTIGO

A linen-draper I was told, sister.

VIOLA

Very true, a grave citizen; I want nothing that a wife can wish from a husband. But here's the spite: he has not all things belonging to a man.

FUSTIGO

God's my life, he's a very mandrake, or else, God bless us, one a' these whiblins, and that's worse! And then all the children that he gets lawfully of your body, sister, are bastards by a statute.

VIOLA

Oh, you run over me too fast, brother! I have heard it often said that he who cannot be angry is no man. I am sure my husband is a man in print for all things else save only in this: no tempest can move him.

FUSTIGO

'Slid, would he had been at sea with us, he should ha' been mov'd and mov'd again, for I'll be sworn, la, our drunken ship reel'd like a Dutchman!

VIOLA

The Honest Whore, Part One

No loss of goods can increase in him a wrinkle, no crabbed language make his countenance sour, the stubbornness of no servant shake him; he has no more gall in him than a dove, no more sting than an ant. Musician will he never be, yet I find much music in him, but he loves no frets, and is so free from anger that many times I am ready to bite off my tongue, because it wants that virtue which all women's tongues have, to anger their husbands. Brother, mine can by no thunder turn him into a sharpness.

FUSTIGO

Belike his blood, sister, is well-brew'd then.

VIOLA

I protest to thee, Fustigo, I love him most affectionately, but I know not—I ha' such a tickling within me, such a strange longing; nay, verily I do long.

FUSTIGO

Then y'are with child, sister, by all signs and tokens; nay, I am partly a physician, and partly something else: I ha' read Albertus Magnus, and Aristotle's Emblems.

VIOLA

Y'are wide a' th' bow hand still, brother: my longings are not wanton, but wayward: I long to have my patient husband eat up a whole porcupine, to the intent the bristling quills may stick about his lips like a Flemish mustacho, and be shot at me. I shall be leaner than the new moon, unless I can make him horn-mad.

FUSTIGO

'Sfoot, half a quarter of an hour does that: make him a cuckold!

VIOLA

Puh, he would count such a cut no unkindness!

FUSTIGO

The honestest citizen he. Then make him drunk and cut off his beard.

VIOLA

Fie, fie, idle, idle: he's no Frenchman, to fret at the loss of a little scald hair. No, brother, thus it shall be, you must be secret.

FUSTIGO

As your midwife, I protest, sister, or a barber-surgeon.

VIOLA

Repair to the Tortoise here in Saint Christopher's Street. I will send you money; turn yourself into a brave man: instead of the arms of your mistress, let your sword and your military scarf hang about your neck.

FUSTIGO

I must have a great horseman's French feather too, sister.

VIOLA

Oh, by any means, to show your light head, else your hat will sit like a coxcomb! To be brief, you must be in all points a most terrible wide-mouth'd swaggerer.

FUSTIGO

Nay, for swaggering points let me alone.

The Honest Whore, Part One

VIOLA

Resort then to our shop, and, in my husband's presence, kiss me, snatch rings, jewels, or anything so you give it back again, brother, in secret.

FUSTIGO

By this hand, sister.

VIOLA

Swear as if you came but new from knighting.

FUSTIGO

Nay, I'll swear after four hundred a year.

VIOLA

Swagger worse than a lieutenant among freshwater soldiers; call me your love, your ingle, your cousin, or so, but sister at no hand.

FUSTIGO

No, no, it shall be cousin, or rather coz: that's the gulling word between the citizens' wives and their madcaps, that man 'em to the garden. To call you one a' mine aunts, sister, were as good as call you arrant whore; no, no, let me alone to cousin you rarely.

VIOLA

H'as heard I have a brother, but never saw him, therefore put on a good face.

FUSTIGO

The best in Milan, I warrant.

VIOLA

Take up wares, but pay nothing, rifle my bosom, my pocket, my purse, the boxes for money to dice withal; but, brother, you must give all back again in secret.

FUSTIGO

By this welkin that here roars, I will, or else let me never know what a secret is! Why, sister, do you think I'll coney-catch you, when you are my cousin? God's my life, then I were a stark ass! If I fret not his guts, beg me for a fool.

VIOLA

Be circumspect, and do so then. Farewell.

FUSTIGO

The Tortoise, sister? I'll stay there. Forty ducats.

Exit.

VIOLA

Thither I'll send. This law can none deny:
Women must have their longings, or they die.

Exit.

The Honest Whore, Part One

[I.iii. A private chamber of the Duke's]
[Enter] Gasparo the Duke, Doctor Benedict, two Servants.

DUKE

Give charge that none do enter, lock the doors,
And fellows, what your eyes and ears receive,
Upon your lives trust not the gadding air
To carry the least part of it: the glass,
The hourglass.

DOCTOR

Here, my lord.

DUKE

Ah, 'tis near spent.
But Doctor Benedict, does your art speak truth?
Art sure the soporiferous stream will ebb,
And leave the crystal banks of her white body
Pure as they were at first just at the hour?

DOCTOR

Just at the hour, my lord.

DUKE

Uncurtain her.

[The Doctor draws the curtain to reveal Infelice in bed.]

Softly, see, doctor, what a coldish heat
Spreads over all her body.

DOCTOR

Now it works:
The vital spirits that by a sleepy charm
Were bound up fast, and threw an icy [crust]
On her exterior parts, now 'gin to break.
Trouble her not, my lord.

DUKE

Some stools! You call'd
For music, did you not?

[The Servants bring stools. Soft music.]

Oh ho, it speaks,
It speaks! Watch, sirs, her waking, note those sands.
Doctor, sit down. A dukedom that should weigh
Mine own down twice, being put into one scale,
And that fond desperate boy, Hipolito,

The Honest Whore, Part One

Making the weight up, should not at my hands
Buy her i' th' tother, were her state more light
Than hers who makes a dowry up with alms.
Doctor, I'll starve her on the Appenine
Ere he shall marry her. I must confess,
Hipolito is nobly borne, a man
(Did not mine enemies' blood boil in his veins)
Whom I would court to be my son-in-law.
But princes whose high spleens for empery swell
Are not with easy art made parallel.

SECOND SERVANT

She wakes, my lord.

DUKE

Look, Doctor Benedict.
I charge you on your lives maintain for truth
Whate'er the doctor or myself aver,
For you shall bear her hence to Bergamo.

INFELICE

Oh, God, what fearful dreams!

DOCTOR

Lady.

INFELICE

Ha?

DUKE

Girl.
Why, Infelice, how is't now, ha? Speak.

INFELICE

I'm well. What makes this doctor here? I'm well.

DUKE

Thou wert not so even now: sickness' pale hand
Laid hold on thee even in the midst of feasting,
And when a cup crown'd with thy lover's health
Had touch'd thy lips, a sensible cold dew
Stood on thy cheeks, as if that death had wept
To see such beauty alter.

INFELICE

I remember
I sat at banquet, but felt no such change.

DUKE

Thou hast forgot then how a messenger
Came wildly in with this unsavoury news

The Honest Whore, Part One

That he was dead.

INFELICE

What messenger? Who's dead?

DUKE

Hipolito. Alack, wring not thy hands.

INFELICE

I saw no messenger, heard no such news.

DOCTOR

Trust me you did, sweet lady.

DUKE

La you now.

BOTH SERVANTS

Yes, indeed, madam.

DUKE

La you now. [Aside to Servants] 'Tis well, good knaves.

INFELICE

You ha' slain him, and now you'll murder me!

DUKE

Good Infelice, vex not thus thyself:
Of this the bad report before did strike
So coldly to thy heart, that the swift currents
Of life were all frozen up.

INFELICE

It is untrue,
'Tis most untrue! Oh, most unnatural father!

DUKE

And we had much to do by art's best cunning
To fetch life back again.

DOCTOR

Most certain, lady.

DUKE

Why, la you now, you'll not believe me. Friends,
Sweat we not all, had we not much to do?

[BOTH SERVANTS]

Yes, indeed, my lord, much.

DUKE

The Honest Whore, Part One

Death drew such fearful pictures in thy face,
That were Hipolito alive again,
I'd kneel and woo the noble gentleman
To be thy husband; now I sore repent
My sharpness to him and his family.
Nay, do not weep for him; we all must die.
Doctor, this place where she so oft hath seen
His lively presence hurts her, does it not?

DOCTOR

Doubtless, my lord, it does.

DUKE

It does, it does.

Therefore, sweet girl, thou shalt to Bergamo.

INFELICE

Even where you will, in any place there's woe.

DUKE

A coach is ready. Bergamo doth stand
In a most wholesome air: sweet walks, there's deer—
Ay, thou shalt hunt and send us venison,
Which like some goddess in the Cyprian groves,
Thine own fair hand shall strike. Sirs, you shall teach her
To stand and how to shoot. Ay, she shall hunt.
Cast off this sorrow. In, girl, and prepare
This night to ride away to Bergamo.

INFELICE

Oh, most unhappy maid!

Exit.

DUKE

Follow her close.
No words that she was buried, on your lives,
Or that her ghost walks now after she's dead;
I'll hang you if you name a funeral.

FIRST SERVANT

I'll speak Greek, my lord, ere I speak that deadly word.

SECOND SERVANT

And I'll speak Welsh, which is harder than Greek.

DUKE

Away, look to her.

Exeunt [Servants].

The Honest Whore, Part One

Doctor Benedict,
Did you observe how her complexion alt' red
Upon his name and death? Oh, would 'twere true!

DOCTOR

It may, my lord.

DUKE

May? How? I wish his death.

DOCTOR

And you may have your wish; say but the word,
And 'tis a strong spell to rip up his grave.
I have good knowledge with Hipolito;
He calls me friend: I'll creep into his bosom
And sting him there to death; poison can do't.

DUKE

Perform it; I'll create thee half mine heir.

DOCTOR

It shall be done, although the fact be foul.

DUKE

Greatness hides sin, the guilt upon my soul.

Exeunt.

[I.iv. The court]

Enter Castruchio, Pioratto, and Fluello.

CASTRUCHIO

Signior Pioratto, Signior Fluello, shall's be merry? Shall's play the wags now?

FLUELLO

Ay, anything that may beget the child of laughter.

CASTRUCHIO

Truth, I have a pretty sportive conceit new crept into my brain will move excellent mirth.

PIORATTO

Let's ha't, let's ha't, and where shall the scene of mirth lie?

CASTRUCHIO

At Signior Candido's house, the patient man, nay, the monstrous patient man; they say his blood is immoveable, that he has taken all patience from a man, and all constancy from a woman.

FLUELLO

That makes so many whores nowadays.

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CASTRUCHIO

Ay, and so many knaves too.

PIORATTO

Well, sir.

CASTRUCHIO

To conclude, the report goes, he's so mild, so affable, so suffering, that nothing indeed can move him: now do but think what sport it will be to make this fellow, the mirror of patience, as angry, as vex'd, and as mad as an English cuckold.

FLUELLO

Oh, 'twere admirable mirth, that! But how wilt be done, signior?

CASTRUCHIO

Let me alone: I have a trick, a conceit, a thing, a device will sting him, i'faith, if he have but a thimble full of blood in's belly, or a spleen not so big as a tavern token.

PIORATTO

Thou stir him? Thou move him? Thou anger him? Alas, I know his approved temper. Thou vex him? Why, he has a patience above man's injuries: thou mayest sooner raise a spleen in an angel than rough humour in him. Why, I'll give you instance for it. This wonderfully temper'd Signior Candido upon a time invited home to his house certain Neapolitan lords of curious taste, and no mean palates, conjuring his wife of all loves to prepare cheer fitting for such honourable trenchermen. She, just of a woman's nature, covetous to try the uttermost of vexation, and thinking at last to get the start of his humour, willingly neglected the preparation, and became unfurnish'd, not only of dainty, but of ordinary dishes. He, according to the mildness of his breast, entertained the lords, and with courtly discourse beguiled the time, as much as a citizen might do. To conclude, they were hungry lords, for there came no meat in; their stomachs were plainly gull'd, and their teeth deluded, and, if anger could have seiz'd a man, there was matter enough, i'faith, to vex any citizen in the world if he were not too much made a fool by his wife.

FLUELLO

Ay, I'll swear for't. 'Sfoot, had it been my case, I should ha' play'd mad tricks with my wife and family! First I would ha' spitted the men, stew'd the maids, and bak'd the mistress, and so served them in.

PIORATTO

Why, 'twould ha' tempted any blood but his.
And thou to vex him? Thou to anger him
With some poor shallow jest?

CASTRUCHIO

'Sblood, Signior Pioratto, you that disparage my conceit, I'll wage a hundred ducats upon the head on't that it moves him, frets him, and galls him!

PIORATTO

Done; 'tis a lay, join golls on't. Witness, Signior Fluello.

CASTRUCHIO

Witness: 'tis done.
Come, follow me: the house is not far off.
I'll thrust him from his humour, vex his breast,
And win a hundred ducats by one jest.

The Honest Whore, Part One

Exeunt.

[I.v. Candido's shop]

Enter Candido's wife [Viola], George, and two Prentices in the shop.

[VIOLA]

Come, you put up your wares in good order here, do you not think you? One piece cast this way, another that way? You had need have a patient master indeed.

GEORGE

[Aside] Ay, I'll be sworn, for we have a curs'd mistress.

[VIOLA]

You mumble. Do you mumble? I would your master or I could be a note more angry, for two patient folks in a house spoil all the servants that ever shall come under them.

FIRST PRENTICE

[Aside] You patient! Ay, so is the devil when he is horn-mad.

Enter Castruchio, Fluello, and Pioratto.

ALL THREE [PRENTICES]

Gentlemen, what do you lack? What is't you buy? See fine hollands, fine cambrics, fine lawns.

GEORGE

What is't you lack?

SECOND PRENTICE

What is't you buy?

CASTRUCHIO

Where's Signior Candido thy master?

GEORGE

Faith, signior, he's a little negotiated; he'll appear presently.

CASTRUCHIO

Fellow, let's see a lawn, a choice one, sirrah.

GEORGE

The best in all Milan, gentlemen, and this is the piece. I can fit you gentlemen with fine calicoes too for doublets, the only sweet fashion now, most delicate and courtly, a meek gentle calico, cut upon two double affable taffetas, ah, most neat, feat, and unmatchable!

FLUELLO

[Aside to Pioratto] A notable, voluble-tongu'd villain!

PIORATTO

[Aside to Fluello] I warrant this fellow was never begot without much prating.

The Honest Whore, Part One

CASTRUCHIO

What, and is this she, sayst thou?

GEORGE

Ay, and the purest she that ever you finger'd since you were a gentleman: look how even she is, look how clean she is, ha, as even as the brow of Cynthia, and as clean as your sons and heirs when they ha' spent all!

CASTRUCHIO

Puh, thou talk'st! Pox on't, 'tis rough!

GEORGE

How! Is she rough? But if you bid pox on't, sir, 'twill take away the roughness presently.

FLUELLO

Ha, signior! Has he fitted your French curse?

GEORGE

Look you, gentleman, here's another; compare them I pray, compara Virgilium cum Homero, compare virgins with harlots.

CASTRUCHIO

Puh, I ha' seen better, and as you term them, evener and cleaner.

GEORGE

You may see further for your mind, but trust me you shall not find better for your body.

Enter Candido.

CASTRUCHIO

[Aside to Fluello and Pioratto] Oh, here he comes! Let's make as tho' we pass.—Come, come, we'll try in some other shop.

CANDIDO

How now? What's the matter?

GEORGE

The gentlemen find fault with this lawn, fall out with it, and without a cause too.

CANDIDO

Without a cause!

And that makes you to let 'em pass away?

Ah, may I crave a word with you gentlemen?

FLUELLO

[Aside to Castruchio] He calls us.

CASTRUCHIO

[Aside to Fluello] Makes the better for the jest.

CANDIDO

The Honest Whore, Part One

I pray come near, y'are very welcome, gallants;
Pray pardon my man's rudeness, for I fear me
H'as talk'd above a prentice with you. Lawns?
Look you, kind gentlemen. This? No. Ay, this:
Take this upon my honest-dealing faith
To be a true weave, not too hard, nor slack,
But e'en as far from falsehood as from black.

CASTRUCHIO

Well, how do you rate it?

CANDIDO

Very conscionably: eighteen shillings a yard.

CASTRUCHIO

That's too dear. How many yards does the whole piece contain, think you?

CANDIDO

Why, some seventeen yards I think, or thereabouts.
How much would serve your turn, I pray?

CASTRUCHIO

Why, let me see. Would it were better too.

CANDIDO

Truth, 'tis the best in Milan at few words.

CASTRUCHIO

Well, let me have then—a whole pennyworth.

CANDIDO

Ha, ha! Y'are a merry gentleman.

CASTRUCHIO

A penn'orth I say.

CANDIDO

Of lawn!

CASTRUCHIO

Of lawn? Ay, of lawn, a penn'orth. 'Sblood, dost not hear? A whole penn'orth! Are you deaf?

CANDIDO

Deaf? No, sir, but I must tell you,
Our wares do seldom meet such customers.

CASTRUCHIO

Nay, and you and your lawns be so squeamish, fare you well.

CANDIDO

Pray stay, a word, pray, signior. For what purpose is it I beseech you?

CASTRUCHIO

'Sblood, what's that to you? I'll have a pennyworth.

CANDIDO

A pennyworth! Why, you shall. I'll serve you presently.

SECOND PRENTICE

'Sfoot, a pennyworth, mistress!

[VIOLA]

A pennyworth! Call you these gentlemen?

CASTRUCHIO

[To Candido, who is beginning to cut] No, no: not there.

CANDIDO

What then, kind gentleman? What, at this corner here?

CASTRUCHIO

Nor there neither.

I'll have it just in the middle, or else not.

CANDIDO

Just in the middle? Ha! You shall too. What?

Have you a single penny?

CASTRUCHIO

Yes, here's one.

CANDIDO

Lend it me I pray.

FLUELLO

[Aside] An ex'lent followed jest.

[VIOLA]

What, will he spoil the lawn now?

CANDIDO

Patience, good wife.

[VIOLA]

Ay, that patience makes a fool of you. Gentlemen, you might ha' found some other citizen to have made a kind gull on besides my husband.

CANDIDO

Pray, gentlemen, take her to be a woman;
Do not regard her language. Oh, kind soul,
Such words will drive away my customers.

The Honest Whore, Part One

[VIOLA]

Customers with a murrain! Call you these customers?

CANDIDO

Patience, good wife.

[VIOLA]

Pax a' your patience!

GEORGE

'Sfoot, mistress, I warrant these are some cheating companions!

CANDIDO

Look you, gentleman, there's your ware; I thank you.
I have your money here; pray know my shop,
Pray let me have your custom.

[VIOLA]

Custom, quoth 'a!

CANDIDO

Let me take more of your money.

[VIOLA]

You had need so.

PIORATTO

[Taking Castruchio aside] Hark in thine ear: t' hast lost an hundred ducats.

CASTRUCHIO

Well, well, I know't. Is't possible that homo
Should be nor man nor woman, not once mov'd?
No, not at such an injury, not at all!
Sure he's a pigeon, for he has no gall.

FLUELLO

Come, come, y'are angry tho' you smother it.
Y'are vex'd, i'faith, confess.

CANDIDO

Why, gentlemen,
Should you conceit me to be vex'd or mov'd?
He has my ware, I have his money for't,
And that's no argument I am angry. No,
The best logician cannot prove me so.

FLUELLO

Oh, but the hateful name of a pennyworth of lawn,
And then cut out i' th' middle of the piece!
[Aside] Pah, I guess it by myself, would move a lamb
Were he a linen-drapeer, 'twould, i'faith!

The Honest Whore, Part One

CANDIDO

Well, give me leave to answer you for that:
We are set here to please all customers,
Their humours and their fancies, offend none;
We get by many, if we leese by one.
Maybe his mind stood to no more than that;
A pen'worth serves him, and 'mongst trades 'tis found,
Deny a penn'orth, it may cross a pound.
Oh, he that means to thrive with patient eye
Must please the devil if he come to buy!

FLUELLO

Oh, wondrous man, patient 'bove wrong or woe,
How bless'd were men if women could be so!

CANDIDO

And to express how well my breast is pleas'd
And satisfied in all: George, fill a beaker.

Exit George.

I'll drink unto that gentleman who lately
Bestowed his money with me.

[VIOLA]

God's my life,
We shall have all our gains drunk out in beakers
To make amends for pennyworths of lawn!

Enter George.

CANDIDO

Here, wife, begin you to the gentleman.

[VIOLA]

I begin to him? [Throws down the beaker.]

CANDIDO

George, fill 't up again:
'Twas my fault, my hand shook.

Exit George.

PIORATTO

[Aside] How strangely this doth show!
A patient man link'd with a waspish shrow.

FLUELLO

[Taking Castruchio aside] A silver and gilt beaker! I have a trick
To work upon that beaker: sure 'twill fret him;

The Honest Whore, Part One

It cannot choose but vex him. Signior Castruchio,
In pity to thee, I have a conceit
Will save thy hundred ducats yet; 'twill do't,
And work him to impatience.

CASTRUCHIO

Sweet Fluello,
I should be bountiful to that conceit.

FLUELLO

Well 'tis enough.

Enter George.

CANDIDO

Here, gentleman to you:
I wish your custom; y'are exceeding welcome.

CASTRUCHIO

I pledge you, Signior Candido.
[Aside to Pioratto] Here to you, that must receive a hundred ducats.

PIORATTO

[Aside to Castruchio] I'll pledge them deep, i'faith, Castruchio.—
Signior Fluello?

FLUELLO

Come, play 't off to me;
I am your last man.

CANDIDO

George, supply the cup.

FLUELLO

So, so, good honest George.
Here, Signior Candido, all this to you.

CANDIDO

Oh, you must pardon me, I use it not.

FLUELLO

Will you not pledge me then?

CANDIDO

Yes, but not that:
Great love is shown in little.

FLUELLO

Blurt on your sentences!
'Sfoot, you shall pledge me all!

The Honest Whore, Part One

CANDIDO

Indeed I shall not.

FLUELLO

Not pledge me? 'Sblood, I'll carry away the beaker then!

CANDIDO

The beaker! Oh, that at your pleasure, sir.

FLUELLO

Now, by this drink, I will.

CASTRUCHIO

Pledge him, he'll do't else.

FLUELLO

So, I ha' done you right, on my thumbnail.

What, will you pledge me now?

CANDIDO

You know me, sir:

I am not of that sin.

FLUELLO

Why then, farewell;

I'll bear away the beaker, by this light.

CANDIDO

That's as you please; 'tis very good.

FLUELLO

Nay, it doth please me, and as you say, 'tis a very good one.

Farewell, Signior Candido.

PIORATTO

Farewell, Candido.

CANDIDO

Y'are welcome, gentlemen.

CASTRUCHIO

[Aside] Heart, not mov'd yet?

I think his patience is above our wit!

Exeunt [Castruchio, Fluello, Pioratto].

GEORGE

I told you before, mistress, they were all cheaters.

[VIOLA]

Why, fool! Why, husband! Why, madman! I hope you will not let 'em sneak away so with a silver and gilt beaker,

The Honest Whore, Part One

the best in the house too. [To Prentices] Go, fellows, make hue and cry after them.

CANDIDO

Pray, let your tongue lie still, all will be well.
Come hither, George; hie to the constable,
And in calm order wish him to attach them:
Make no great stir, because they're gentlemen,
And a thing partly done in merriment;
'Tis but a size above a jest, thou know'st,
Therefore pursue it mildly. Go, be gone;
The constable's hard by, bring him along.
Make haste again.

Exit George.

[VIOLA]

Oh, y'are a goodly patient woodcock, are you not now? See what your patience comes too! Everyone saddles you and rides you, you'll be shortly the common stone-horse of Milan: a woman's well holp'd up with such a meacock. I had rather have a husband that would swaddle me thrice a day than such a one that will be gull'd twice in half an hour. Oh, I could burn all the wares in my shop for anger!

CANDIDO

Pray wear a peaceful temper. Be my wife,
That is, be patient, for a wife and husband
Share but one soul between them. This being known,
Why should not one soul then agree in one?

[VIOLA]

Hang your agreements! But if my beaker be gone—

Exit. Enter Castruchio, Fluello, Pioratto, and George.

CANDIDO

Oh, here they come!

GEORGE

The constable, sir, let 'em come along with me because there should be no wond'ring; he stays at door.

CASTRUCHIO

Constable, goodman Abram.

FLUELLO

Now, Signior Candido. 'Sblood, why do you attach us?

CASTRUCHIO

'Sheart! Attach us!

CANDIDO

Nay, swear not, gallants:
Your oaths may move your souls, but not move me.
You have a silver beaker of my wife's.

FLUELLO

You say not true: 'tis gilt.

CANDIDO

Then you say true.
And being gilt, the guilt lies more on you.

CASTRUCHIO

I hope y'are not angry, sir.

CANDIDO

Then you hope right,
For I am not angry.

PIORATTO

No, but a little mov'd.

CANDIDO

I mov'd! 'Twas you were mov'd: you were brought hither.

CASTRUCHIO

But you, out of your anger and impatience,
Caus'd us to be attach'd.

CANDIDO

Nay, you misplace it.
Out of my quiet sufferance I did that,
And not of any wrath; had I shown anger,
I should have then pursu'd you with the law,
And hunted you to shame, as many worldlings
Do build their anger upon feebler grounds.
The more's the pity: many lose their lives
For scarce so much coin as will hide their palm,
Which is most cruel; those have vexed spirits
That pursue lives. In this opinion rest:
The loss of millions could not move my breast.

FLUELLO

Thou art a bless'd man, and with peace dost deal;
Such a meek spirit can bless a commonweal.

CANDIDO

Gentlemen, now 'tis upon eating time;
Pray, part not hence, but dine with me today.

CASTRUCHIO

I never heard a courtier yet say nay
To such a motion. I'll not be the first.

PIORATTO

The Honest Whore, Part One

Nor I.

FLUELLO

Nor I.

CANDIDO

The constable shall bear you company;
George, call him in. Let the world say what it can,
Nothing can drive me from a patient man.

Exeunt.

[II.i. A brothel]

Enter Roger with a stool, cushion, looking-glass, and chafing-dish. Those being set down, he pulls out of his pocket a vial with white colour in it, and two boxes, one with white, another red painting. He places all things in order and a candle by them, singing with the ends of old ballads as he does it. At last Bellafront, as he rubs his cheek with the colours, whistles within.

ROGER

Anon, forsooth!

BELLAFRONT

[Within] What are you playing the rogue about?

ROGER

About you, forsooth: I'm drawing up a hole in your white silk stocking.

BELLAFRONT

[Within] Is my glass there? And my boxes of complexion?

ROGER

Yes, forsooth, your boxes of complexion are here, I think; yes, 'tis here. Here's your two complexions, and if I had all the four complexions, I should ne'er set a good face upon't. Some men I see are born under hard-favour'd planets as well as women. Zounds, I look worse now than I did before, and it makes her face glister most damnably; there's knavery in daubing, I hold my life, or else this is only female pomatum.

Enter Bellafront not full ready, without a gown; she sits down, with her bodkin curls her hair, colours her lips.

BELLAFRONT

Where's my ruff and poker, you blockhead?

ROGER

Your ruff and your poker are ingend'ring together upon the cupboard of the court, or the court-cupboard.

BELLAFRONT

Fetch 'em. Is the pox in your hams, you can go no faster?

[II.i. A brothel]

The Honest Whore, Part One

ROGER

Would the pox were in your fingers, unless you could leave flinging. Catch!

Exit.

BELLAFRONT

I'll catch you, you dog, by and by! Do you grumble?

She sings.

Cupid is a God,
As naked as my nail;
I'll whip him with a rod
If he my true love fail.

[Enter Roger.]

ROGER

There's your ruff. Shall I poke it?

BELLAFRONT

Yes, honest Roger. No, stay: prithee, good boy, hold here. [Singing] "Down, down, down, down, I fall down and arise I never shall."

ROGER

Troth, mistress, then leave the trade if you shall never rise.

BELLAFRONT

What trade, goodman Abram?

ROGER

Why that of down and arise, or the falling trade.

BELLAFRONT

I'll fall with you by and by.

ROGER

If you do I know who shall smart for't.
Troth, Mistress, what do I look like now?

BELLAFRONT

Like as you are: a panderly, sixpenny rascal.

ROGER

I may thank you for that: no, faith, I look like an old proverb, "Hold the candle before the devil."

BELLAFRONT

'Ud's life, I'll stick my knife in your guts and you prate to me so. What!

She sings.

Well met, pug, the pearl of beauty, umh, umh.

[II.i. A brothel]

The Honest Whore, Part One

How now, sir knave, you forget your duty, umh, umh.
Marry muff, sir, are you grown so dainty? Fa, la, la, etc.
Is it you, sir? The worst of twenty, fa, la, la, leera la.
Pox on you, how dost thou hold my glass?

ROGER

Why, as I hold your door: with my fingers.

BELLAFRONT

Nay, pray thee, sweet honey Roger, hold up handsomely. (Sing.) "Pretty wantons warble, etc." We shall ha' guests today, I lay my little maidenhead: my nose itches so.

ROGER

I said so too last night, when our fleas twing'd me.

BELLAFRONT

So poke my ruff now. My gown, my gown. Have I my fall?
Where's my fall, Roger?

One knocks.

ROGER

Your fall, forsooth, is behind.

BELLAFRONT

Gods my pittikins, some fool or other knocks.

ROGER

Shall I open to the fool, mistress?

BELLAFRONT

And all these baubles lying thus? Away with it quickly. Ay, ay, knock and be damn'd, whosoever you be. So, give the fresh salmon line now: let him come ashore, he shall serve for my breakfast, tho' he go against my stomach.

Roger fetch in Fluello, Castruchio, and Pioratto.

FLUELLO

Morrow, coz.

CASTRUCHIO

How does my sweet acquaintance?

PIORATTO

Save thee, little marmoset. How dost thou, good pretty rogue?

BELLAFRONT

Well, godamercy, good pretty rascal.

FLUELLO

Roger, some light I prithee.

ROGER

[ll.i. A brothel]

The Honest Whore, Part One

You shall, signior, for we that live here in this vale of misery are as dark as hell.

Exit for a candle.

CASTRUCHIO

Good tobacco, Fluello?

FLUELLO

Smell!

PIORATTO

It may be tickling gear, for it plays with my nose already.

Enter Roger.

ROGER

Here's another light angel, signior.

BELLAFRONT

What? You pied curtal, what's that you are neighing?

ROGER

I say God send us the light of heaven, or some more angels.

BELLAFRONT

Go fetch some wine, and drink half of it.

ROGER

I must fetch some wine, gentlemen, and drink half of it.

FLUELLO

Here, Roger.

CASTRUCHIO

No, let me send pritheer.

FLUELLO

Hold, you canker worm.

ROGER

You shall send both, if you please, signiors.

PIORATTO

Stay, what's best to drink a-mornings?

ROGER

Hypocras, sir, for my mistress, if I fetch it, is most dear to her.

FLUELLO

Hypocras! There then, here's a teston for you, you snake.

The Honest Whore, Part One

ROGER

Right, sir, here's three shillings sixpence for a pottle and a manchet.

Exit.

CASTRUCHIO

Here's most Herculean tobacco; ha' some, acquaintance?

BELLAFRONT

Fah, not I; makes your breath stink, like the piss of a fox. Acquaintance, where supp'd you last night?

CASTRUCHIO

At a place, sweet acquaintance, where your health danc'd the canaries, i'faith; you should ha' been there.

BELLAFRONT

Ay, there among your punks. Marry, fah, hang 'em! Scorn 't! Will you never leave sucking of eggs in other folks' hens' nests?

CASTRUCHIO

Why, in good troth, if you'll trust me, acquaintance, there was not one hen at the board. Ask Fluello.

FLUELLO

No, faith, coz; none but cocks. Signior Malavolta drunk to thee.

BELLAFRONT

Oh, a pure beagle! That horse–leech there?

FLUELLO

And the knight, Sir Oliver Lollo, swore he would bestow a taffeta petticoat on thee but to break his fast with thee.

BELLAFRONT

With me! I'll choke him then; hang him, mole–catcher! It's the dreaming'st snotty–nose.

PIORATTO

Well, many took that Lollo for a fool, but he's a subtle fool.

BELLAFRONT

Ay, and he has fellows: of all filthy dry–fisted knights, I cannot abide that he should touch me.

CASTRUCHIO

Why, wench? Is he scabbed?

BELLAFRONT

Hang him, he'll not live to be so honest, nor to the credit, to have scabs about him; his betters have 'em. But I hate to wear out any of his coarse knighthood, because he's made like an alderman's nightgown, fac'st all with cony before, and within nothing but fox. This sweet Oliver will eat mutton till he be ready to burst, but the lean–jaw'd slave will not pay for the scraping of his trencher.

PIORATTO

Plague him, set him beneath the salt, and let him not touch a bit till everyone has had his full cut.

The Honest Whore, Part One

FLUELLO

Sordello the gentleman–usher came into us too; marry, 'twas in our cheese, for he had been to borrow money for his lord of a citizen.

CASTRUCHIO

What an ass is that lord to borrow money of a citizen!

BELLAFRONT

Nay, God's my pity, what an ass is that citizen to lend money to a lord!

Enter Matheo and Hipolito, who, saluting the company as a stranger, walks off. Roger comes in sadly behind them with a pottle–pot and stands aloof off.

MATHEO

Save you gallants. Signior Fluello, exceedingly well met, as I may say.

FLUELLO

Signior Matheo, exceedingly well met too, as I may say.

MATHEO

And how fares my little pretty mistress?

BELLAFRONT

E'en as my little pretty servant; sees three court dishes before her, and not one good bit in them. [To Roger] How now? Why the devil stand'st thou so? Art in a trance?

ROGER

Yes, forsooth.

BELLAFRONT

Why dost not fill out their wine?

ROGER

Forsooth, 'tis fill'd out already: all the wine that the signior has bestow'd upon you is cast away, a porter ran [a–tilt] at me, and so [fac'd] me down that I had not a drop.

BELLAFRONT

I'm accurs'd to let such a withered artichoke–faced rascal grow under my nose! Now you look like an old he–cat, going to the gallows: I'll be hang'd if he ha' not put up the money to cony–catch us all.

ROGER

No, truly, forsooth, 'tis not put up yet.

BELLAFRONT

How many gentlemen hast thou served thus?

ROGER

None but five hundred, besides prentices and serving–men.

BELLAFRONT

Dost think I pocket it up at thy hands?

[ll.i. A brothel]

The Honest Whore, Part One

ROGER

Yes, forsooth, I fear you will pocket it up.

BELLAFRONT

Fie, fie, cut my lace, good servant! I shall ha' the mother presently, I'm so vex'd at this horse-plum!

FLUELLO

Plague, not for a scald pottle of wine!

MATHEO

Nay, sweet Bellafront, for a little pig's wash.

CASTRUCHIO

Here, Roger, fetch more; a mischance, i'faith, acquaintance.

BELLAFRONT

Out of my sight, thou ungodly puritanical creature!

ROGER

For the tother pottle? Yes, forsooth.

Exit.

BELLAFRONT

Spill that too! What gentleman is that, servant? Your friend?

MATHEO

Gods—so, a stool, a stool! If you love me, mistress, entertain this gentleman respectfully and bid him welcome.

BELLAFRONT

He's very welcome. Pray, sir, sit.

HIPOLITO

Thanks, lady.

FLUELLO

Count Hipolito, is't not? Cry you mercy, signior, you walk here all this while and we not heed you? Let me bestow a stool upon you, beseech you. You are a stranger here; we know the fashions a' th' house.

CASTRUCHIO

Please you be here, my lord.

Tobacco.

HIPOLITO

No, good Castruchio.

FLUELLO

You have abandoned the court I see, my lord, since the death of your mistress; well, she was a delicate piece. Beseech you, sweet; come, let us serve under the colours of your acquaintance still, for all that. Please you to

[ll.i. A brothel]

The Honest Whore, Part One

meet here at the lodging of my coz, I shall bestow a banquet upon you.

HIPOLITO

I never can deserve this kindness, sir.
What may this lady be whom you call coz?

FLUELLO

Faith, sir, a poor gentlewoman, of passing good carriage, one that has some suits in law, and lies here in an attorney's house.

HIPOLITO

Is she married?

FLUELLO

Hah, as all your punks are, a captain's wife or so! Never saw her before, my lord?

HIPOLITO

Never; trust me, a goodly creature.

FLUELLO

By gad, when you know her as we do, you'll swear she is the prettiest, kindest, sweetest, most bewitching honest ape under the pole! A skin, your satin is not more soft, nor lawn whiter.

HIPOLITO

Belike then she's some sale courtesan.

FLUELLO

Troth, as all your best faces are, a good wench.

HIPOLITO

Great pity that she's a good wench.

MATHEO

Thou shalt have it, i'faith, mistress. How now, signiors? What? Whispering? Did not I lay a wager I should take you within seven days in a house of vanity?

HIPOLITO

You did, and I beshrew your heart, you have won.

MATHEO

How do you like my mistress?

HIPOLITO

Well, for such a mistress: better, if your mistress be not your master.
I must break manners, gentlemen; fare you well.

MATHEO

'Sfoot, you shall not leave us!

BELLAFRONT

The gentleman likes not the taste of our company.

[ll.i. A brothel]

The Honest Whore, Part One

OMNES [COURTIERS]

Beseech you, stay.

HIPOLITO

Trust me, my affairs beckon for me; pardon me.

MATHEO

Will you call for me half an hour hence here?

HIPOLITO

Perhaps I shall.

MATHEO

Perhaps? Fah! I know you can swear to me you will.

HIPOLITO

Since you will press me on my word, I will.

Exit.

BELLAFRONT

What sullen picture is this, servant?

MATHEO

It's Count Hipolito, the brave count.

PIORATTO

As gallant a spirit as any in Milan, you sweet Jew.

FLUELLO

Oh, he's a most essential gentleman, coz!

CASTRUCHIO

Did you never hear of Count Hipolito, acquaintance?

BELLAFRONT

Marry muff a' your counts, and be no more life in 'em.

MATHEO

He's so malcontent! Sirrah Bellafront, and you be honest gallants, let's sup together, and have the count with us: thou shalt sit at the upper end, punk.

BELLAFRONT

Punk, you sous'd gurnet!

MATHEO

King's truce: come, I'll bestow the supper to have him but laugh.

CASTRUCHIO

He betrays his youth too grossly to that tyrant melancholy.

[ll.i. A brothel]

The Honest Whore, Part One

MATHEO

All this is for a woman.

BELLAFRONT

A woman? Some whore! What sweet jewel is't?

PIORATTO

Would she heard you.

FLUELLO

Troth, so would I.

CASTRUCHIO

And I, by heaven.

BELLAFRONT

Nay, good servant, what woman?

MATHEO

Pah!

BELLAFRONT

Prithee tell me, a buss and tell me: I warrant he's an honest fellow if he take on thus for a wench. Good rogue, who?

MATHEO

By th' Lord I will not, must not, faith, mistress. Is't a match, sirs, this night at th' Antelope? For there's best wine and good boys.

OMNES [COURTIERS]

It's done; at th' Antelope.

BELLAFRONT

I cannot be there tonight.

MATHEO

Cannot? By th' Lord, you shall.

BELLAFRONT

By the lady, I will not. Shall!

FLUELLO

Why then, put it off till Friday. Wut come then, coz?

BELLAFRONT

Well.

Enter Roger.

MATHEO

[II.i. A brothel]

The Honest Whore, Part One

Y'are the waspishest ape. Roger, put your mistress in mind, your scurvy mistress here, to sup with us on Friday next. Y'are best come like a madwoman without a band in your waistcoat, and the linings of your kirtle outward, like every common hackney that steals out at the back gate of her sweet knight's lodging.

BELLAFRONT

Go, go, hang yourself!

CASTRUCHIO

It's dinner time, Matheo. Shall's hence?

OMNES [COURTIERS]

Yes, yes; farewell, wench.

BELLAFRONT

Farewell, boys.

Exeunt [courtiers].

Roger, what wine sent they for?

ROGER

Bastard wine, for if it had been truly begotten, it would not ha' been asham'd to come in; here's six shillings to pay for nursing the bastard.

BELLAFRONT

A company of rooks! Oh, good sweet Roger, run to the poulter's and buy me some fine larks.

ROGER

No woodcocks?

BELLAFRONT

Yes, faith, a couple, if they be not dear.

ROGER

I'll buy but one: there's one already here.

Exit. Enter Hipolito.

HIPOLITO

Is the gentleman my friend departed, mistress?

BELLAFRONT

His back is but new-turn'd, sir.

HIPOLITO

Fare you well.

BELLAFRONT

I can direct you to him.

HIPOLITO

[ll.i. A brothel]

The Honest Whore, Part One

Can you? Pray.

BELLAFRONT

If you please stay, he'll not be absent long.

HIPOLITO

I care not much.

BELLAFRONT

Pray sit, forsooth.

HIPOLITO

I'm hot.

If may use your room, I'll rather walk.

BELLAFRONT

At your best pleasure. Whew! Some rubbers there.

HIPOLITO

Indeed, I'll none. Indeed I will not: thanks.

Pretty—fine—lodging. I perceive my friend

Is old in your acquaintance.

BELLAFRONT

Troth, sir, he comes

As other gentlemen, to spend spare hours;

If yourself like our roof, such as it is,

Your own acquaintance may be as old as his.

HIPOLITO

Say I did like, what welcome should I find?

BELLAFRONT

Such as my present fortunes can afford.

HIPOLITO

But would you let me play Matheo's part?

BELLAFRONT

What part?

HIPOLITO

Why, embrace you, dally with you, kiss.

Faith, tell me, will you leave him and love me?

BELLAFRONT

I am in bonds to no man, sir.

HIPOLITO

Why, then,

Y'are free for any man: if any, me.

[ll.i. A brothel]

The Honest Whore, Part One

But I must tell you, lady, were you mine,
You should be all mine: I could brook no sharers;
I should be covetous and sweep up all.
I should be pleasure's usurer; faith, I should.

BELLAFRONT

Oh, fate!

HIPOLITO

Why sigh you, lady? May I know?

BELLAFRONT

'T has never been my fortune yet to single
Out that one man whose love could fellow mine,
As I have ever wish'd it. Oh, my stars!
Had I but met with one kind gentleman,
That would have purchas'd sin alone (to himself,
For his own private use, although scarce proper)
Indifferent handsome, meetly legg'd and thighed,
And my allowance reasonable—i'faith,
According to my body—by my troth,
I would have been as true unto his pleasures,
Yea, and as loyal to his afternoons
As ever a poor gentlewoman could be.

HIPOLITO

This were well now to one but newly fledg'd,
And scarce a day old in this subtle world:
'Twere pretty art, good birdlime, cunning net.
But come, come, faith, confess: how many men
Have drunk this selfsame protestation
From that red 'ticing lip?

BELLAFRONT

Indeed, not any.

HIPOLITO

Indeed? And blush not!

BELLAFRONT

No, in truth not any.

HIPOLITO

Indeed! In truth! How warily you swear!
'Tis well; if ill, it be not: yet had I
The ruffian in me, and were drawn before you
But in light colours, I do know indeed
You would not swear indeed, but thunder oaths
That should shake heaven, drown the harmonious spheres,
And pierce a soul that lov'd her maker's honour
With horror and amazement.

[ll.i. A brothel]

BELLAFRONT

Shall I swear?
Will you believe me then?

HIPOLITO

Worst then of all:
Our sins by custom seem at last but small.
Were I but o'er your threshold, a next man,
And after him a next, and then a fourth
Should have this golden hook and lascivious bait
Thrown out to the full length. Why, let me tell you,
I ha' seen letters sent from that white hand,
Tuning such music to Matheo's ear.

BELLAFRONT

Matheo! That's true, but if you'll believe
My honest tongue, mine eyes no sooner met you
But they convey'd and led you to my heart.

HIPOLITO

Oh, you cannot feign with me! Why, I know, lady,
This is the common fashion of you all,
To hook in a kind gentleman, and then
Abuse his coin, conveying it to your lover;
And in the end you show him a French trick,
And so you leave him, that a coach may run
Between his legs for breadth.

BELLAFRONT

Oh, by my soul!
Not I: therein I'll prove an honest whore
In being true to one, and to no more.

HIPOLITO

If any be dispos'd to trust your oath,
Let him: I'll not be he. I know you feign
All that you speak, ay, for a mingled harlot
Is true in nothing but in being false.
What, shall I teach you how to loathe yourself?
And mildly too, not without sense or reason.

BELLAFRONT

I am content, I would fain loathe myself
If you not love me.

HIPOLITO

Then if your gracious blood
Be not all wasted, I shall assay to do't.
Lend me your silence and attention.
You have no soul; that makes you weigh so light:

The Honest Whore, Part One

Heaven's treasure bought it
And half a crown hath sold it, for your body,
It's like the common shore that still receives
All the town's filth. The sin of many men
Is within you, and thus much I suppose,
That if all your committers stood in rank,
They'd make a lane in which your shame might dwell,
And with their spaces reach from hence to hell.
Nay, shall I urge it more? There has been known
As many by one harlot, maim'd and dismemb'red,
As would ha' stuff'd an hospital: this I might
Apply to you, and perhaps do you right.
Oh, y'are as base as any beast that bears:
Your body is e'en hir'd, and so are theirs!
For gold and sparkling jewels, if he can,
You'll let a Jew get you with Christian,
Be he a Moor, a Tartar, tho' his face
Look uglier than a dead man's skull;
Could the devil put on a human shape,
If his purse shake out crowns, up then he gets.
Whores will be rid to hell with golden bits:
So that y'are crueller than Turks, for they
Sell Christians only, you sell yourselves away.
Why, those that love you, hate you, and will term you
Liquorish damnation, wish themselves half sunk
After the sin is laid out, and e'en curse
Their fruitless riot, for what one begets
Another poisons. Lust and murder hit:
A tree being often shook, what fruit can knit?

BELLAFRONT

Oh, me unhappy!

HIPOLITO

I can vex you more:
A harlot is like Dunkirk, true to none,
Swallows both English, Spanish, fulsome Dutch,
Back-door'd Italian, last of all the French.
And he sticks to you, faith, gives you your diet,
Brings you acquainted first with monsieur doctor,
And then you know what follows.

BELLAFRONT

Misery:
Rank, stinking, and most loathsome misery!

HIPOLITO

Methinks a toad is happier than a whore
That with one poison swells; with thousands more
The other stocks her veins. Harlot? Fie, fie!
You are the miserablest creatures breathing,

[ll.i. A brothel]

The Honest Whore, Part One

The very slaves of nature; mark me else:
You put on rich attires, others' eyes wear them,
You eat, but to supply your blood with sin,
And this strange curse e'en haunts you to your graves.
From fools you get, and spend it upon slaves.
Like bears and apes, y'are baited and show tricks
For money, but your bawd the sweetness licks.
Indeed you are their journey-women, and do
All base and damn'd works they list set you to,
So that you ne'er are rich, for do but show me,
In present memory or in ages past,
The fairest and most famous courtesan
Whose flesh was dear'st, that rais'd the price of sin
And held it up, to whose intemperate bosom
Princes, earls, lords, the worst has been a knight,
The mean'st a gentleman, have off'red up
Whole hecatombs of sighs, and rain'd in showers
Handfuls of gold, yet for all this, at last
Diseases suck'd her marrow, then grew so poor
That she has begg'd, e'en at a beggar's door.
And, wherein heav'n has a finger, when this idol
From coast to coast has leapt on foreign shores,
And had more worship than th' outlandish whores,
When several nations have gone over her,
When for each several city she has seen
Her maidenhead has been new and been sold dear,
Did live well there, and might have died unknown
And undefam'd, back comes she to her own,
And there both miserably lives and dies,
Scorn'd even of those that once ador'd her eyes,
As if her fatal-circled life thus ran:
Her pride should end there where it first began.
What, do you weep to hear your story read?
Nay, if you spoil your cheeks, I'll read no more.

BELLAFRONT

Oh, yes, I pray, proceed!
Indeed, 'twill do me good to weep indeed.

HIPOLITO

To give those tears a relish, this I add:
Y'are like the Jews, scatter'd, in no place certain,
Your days are tedious, your hours burdensome;
And were 't not for full suppers, midnight revels,
Dancing, wine, riotous meetings, which do drown
And bury quite in you all virtuous thoughts,
And on your eyelids hang so heavily
They have no power to look so high as heaven,
You'd sit and muse on nothing but despair.
Curse that devil lust that so burns up your blood
And in ten thousand shivers break your glass

The Honest Whore, Part One

For his temptation! Say you taste delight,
To have a golden gull from rise to set,
To meet you in his hot luxurious arms,
Yet your nights pay for all: I know you dream
Of warrants, whips, and beadles, and then start
At a door's windy creak, think every weasel
To be a constable and every rat
A long-tail'd officer. Are you now not slaves?
Oh, you have damnation without pleasure for it!
Such is the state of harlots. To conclude,
When you are old and can well paint no more,
You turn bawd, and are then worse than before.
Make use of this; farewell.

BELLAFRONT

Oh, I pray, stay!

HIPOLITO

I see Matheo comes not. Time hath barr'd me;
Would all the harlots in the town had heard me.

Exit.

BELLAFRONT

Stay yet a little longer. No? Quite gone!
Curs'd be that minute—for it was no more
So soon a maid is chang'd into a whore—
Wherein I first fell, be it forever black!
Yet why should sweet Hipolito shun mine eyes,
For whose true love I would become pure-honest,
Hate the world's mixtures and the smiles of gold?
Am I not fair? Why should he fly me then?
Fair creatures are desir'd, not scorn'd of men.
How many gallants have drunk healths to me
Out of their dagger'd arms, and thought them bless'd,
Enjoying but mine eyes at prodigal feasts!
And does Hipolito detest my love?
Oh, sure their heedless lusts but flatt'ring me!
I am not pleasing, beautiful nor young;
Hipolito hath spied some ugly blemish,
Eclipsing all my beauties: I am foul.
Harlot! Ay, that's the spot that taints my soul.
His weapon left here? Oh, fit instrument
To let forth all the poison of my flesh!
Thy master hates me 'cause my blood hath rang'd,
But when 'tis forth, then he'll believe I'm chang'd.

Enter Hipolito.

HIPOLITO

Mad woman, what art doing?

[ll.i. A brothel]

The Honest Whore, Part One

BELLAFRONT

Either love me
Or cleave my bosom on thy rapier's point!
Yet do not neither, for thou then destroy'st
That which I love thee for, thy virtues. Here, here
Th'art crueller and kill'st me with disdain;
To die so sheds no blood, yet 'tis worse pain.

Exit Hipolito.

Not speak to me! Not look! Not bid farewell!
Hated! This must not be. Some means I'll try.
Would all whores were as honest now as I.

[Exit.]

[III.i. Candido's shop]

Enter Candido, his wife [Viola], George, and two Prentices in the shop; Fustigo enters, walking by.

GEORGE

See, gentlemen, what you lack! A fine holland, a fine cambric, see what you buy!

FIRST PRENTICE

Holland for shirts, cambric for bands! What is't you lack?

FUSTIGO

[Aside] 'Sfoot, I lack 'em all; nay, more, I lack money to buy 'em. Let me see, let me look again. Mass, this is the shop!—[Approaching Viola] What, coz! Sweet coz! How dost, i'faith, since last night after candlelight? We had good sport, i'faith, had we not? And when shall's laugh again?

[VIOLA]

When you will, cousin.

FUSTIGO

Spoke like a kind Lacedemonian: I see yonder's thy husband.

[VIOLA]

Ay, there's the sweet youth, God bless him.

FUSTIGO

And how is't cousin? And how? How is't, thou squall?

[VIOLA]

Well, cousin, how fare you?

[III.i. Candido's shop]

The Honest Whore, Part One

FUSTIGO

How fare I? Troth, for sixpence a meal, wench, as well as heart can wish, with calves' chaldrons and chitterlings; besides I have a punk after supper, as good as a roasted apple.

CANDIDO

Are you my wife's cousin?

FUSTIGO

I am, sir; what hast thou to do with that?

CANDIDO

Oh, nothing but y'are welcome.

FUSTIGO

The devil's dung in thy teeth: I'll be welcome whether thou wilt or no, I! What ring's this, coz? Very pretty and fantastical; i'faith, let's see it.

[VIOLA]

Puh! Nay, you wrench my finger!

FUSTIGO

I ha' sworn I'll ha't, and I hope you will not let my oaths be crack'd in the ring, will you? I hope, sir, you are not mallicolly at this for all your great looks. Are you angry?

CANDIDO

Angry? Not I, sir; nay, if she can part
So easily with her ring, 'tis with my heart.

GEORGE

Suffer this, sir, and suffer all, a whoreson gull, to—

CANDIDO

Peace, George; when she has reap'd what I have sown,
She'll say one grain tastes better of her own
Than whole sheaves gather'd from another's land:
Wit's never good till bought at a dear hand.

GEORGE

But in the meantime she makes an ass of somebody.

SECOND PRENTICE

See, see, see, sir, as you turn your back, they do nothing but kiss.

CANDIDO

No matter, let 'em; when I touch her lip,
I shall not feel his kisses, no, nor miss
Any of her lip: no harm in kissing is.
Look to your business, pray, make up your wares.

FUSTIGO

Troth, coz, and well rememb'red, I would thou wouldst give me five yards of lawn to make my punk some falling

The Honest Whore, Part One

bands a' the fashion, three falling one upon another, for that's the new edition now; she's out of linen horribly too: troth, sh'as never a good smock to her back neither, but one that has a great many patches in't, and that I'm fain to wear myself for want of shift too. Prithee put me into wholesome napery, and bestow some clean commodities upon us.

[VIOLA]

Reach me those cambrics and the lawns hither.

CANDIDO

What to do, wife? To lavish out my goods upon a fool?

FUSTIGO

Fool! 'Snails, eat the fool, or I'll so batter your crown that it shall scarce go for five shillings!

SECOND PRENTICE

Do you hear, sir? Y'are best be quiet and say a fool tells you so.

FUSTIGO

Nails, I think so, for thou tell'st me!

CANDIDO

Are you angry, sir, because I nam'd thee fool?
Trust me, you are not wise in mine own house
And to my face to play the antic thus:
If you'll needs play the madman, choose a stage
Of lesser compass, where few eyes may note
Your action's error; but if still you miss,
As here you do, for one clap ten will hiss.

FUSTIGO

Zounds, cousin, he talks to me as if I were a scurvy tragedian!

SECOND PRENTICE

[Taking George aside] Sirrah George, I ha' thought upon a device how to break his pate, beat him soundly, and ship him away.

GEORGE

Do't.

SECOND PRENTICE

I'll go in, pass thorough the house, give some of our fellow prentices the watchword when they shall enter, then come and fetch my master in by a wile, and place one in the hall to hold him in conference, whilst we cudgel the gull out of his coxcomb.

GEORGE

Do't! Away, do't!

[VIOLA]

Must I call twice for these cambrics and lawns?

CANDIDO

[III.i. Candido's shop]

The Honest Whore, Part One

Nay, see, you anger her, George; prithee dispatch.

SECOND PRENTICE

Two of the choicest pieces are in the warehouse, sir.

CANDIDO

Go fetch them presently.

FUSTIGO

Ay, do; make haste, sirrah.

Exit [Second] Prentice.

CANDIDO

Why were you such a stranger all this while, being my wife's cousin?

FUSTIGO

Stranger? No, sir, I'm a natural Milaner born.

CANDIDO

I perceive still it is your natural guise to mistake me, but you are welcome, sir; I much wish your acquaintance.

FUSTIGO

My acquaintance? I scorn that, i'faith; I hope my acquaintance goes in chains of gold three and fifty times double: you know who I mean, coz; the posts of his gate are a-painting too.

Enter the [Second] Prentice.

SECOND PRENTICE

Signior Pandulfo the merchant desires conference with you.

CANDIDO

Signior Pandulfo? I'll be with him straight.
Attend your mistress and the gentleman.

Exit.

[VIOLA]

When do you show those pieces?

FUSTIGO

Ay, when do you show those pieces?

OMNES [PRENTICES]

Presently, sir, presently; we are but charging them.

FUSTIGO

Come, sirrah, you flatcap, where be these whites?

GEORGE

Flatcap? [Aside to him] Hark in your ear, sir: y'are a flat fool, an ass, a gull, and I'll thrum you!—Do you see this

[III.i. Candido's shop]

The Honest Whore, Part One

cambric, sir?

FUSTIGO

'Sfoot, coz, a good jest! Did you hear him? He told me in my ear I was "a flat fool, an ass, a gull, and I'll thrum you. Do you see this cambric, sir?"

[VIOLA]

What, not my men, I hope?

FUSTIGO

No, not your men, but one of your men, i'faith.

FIRST PRENTICE

I pray, sir, come hither. What say you to this? Here's an excellent good one.

FUSTIGO

Ay, marry, this likes me well; cut me off some half score yards.

SECOND PRENTICE

[Aside to him] Let your whores cut; y'are an impudent coxcomb: you get none; and yet I'll thrum you!—A very good cambric, sir.

FUSTIGO

Again, again, as God judge me! 'Sfoot, coz, they stand thrumming here with me all day, and yet I get nothing!

FIRST PRENTICE

[Aside to him] A word, I pray, sir: you must not be angry; prentices have hot bloods, young fellows.—What say you to this piece? Look you, 'tis so delicate, so soft, so even, so fine a thread that a lady may wear it.

FUSTIGO

'Sfoot, I think so: if a knight marry my punk, a lady shall wear it. Cut me off twenty yards; th'art an honest lad.

FIRST PRENTICE

[Aside to him] Not without money, gull, and I'll thrum you too!

OMNES [PRENTICES]

[Aside to him] Gull, we'll thrum you!

FUSTIGO

Oh, Lord, sister, did you not hear something cry thump? Zounds, your men here make a plain ass of me!

[VIOLA]

What, to my face so impudent?

GEORGE

Ay, in a cause so honest, we'll not suffer
Our master's goods to vanish moneyless.

[VIOLA]

You will not suffer them?

The Honest Whore, Part One

SECOND PRENTICE

No, and you may blush
In going about to vex so mild a breast
As is our master's.

[VIOLA]

Take away those pieces.
Cousin, I give them freely.

FUSTIGO

Mass, and I'll take 'em as freely!

OMNES [PRENTICES]

We'll make you lay 'em down again more freely.

[They beat Fustigo.]

[VIOLA]

Help, help, my brother will be murdered!

Enter Candido.

CANDIDO

How now, what coil is here? Forbear, I say!

GEORGE

He calls us flatcaps and abuses us.

CANDIDO

Why, sirs? Do such examples flow from me?

[VIOLA]

They are of your keeping, sir. Alas, poor brother!

FUSTIGO

I'faith, they ha' pepper'd me, sister! Look, does 't spin? Call you these prentices? I'll ne'er play at cards more when clubs is trump. I have a goodly coxcomb, sister, have I not?

CANDIDO

Sister and brother, brother to my wife!

FUSTIGO

If you have any skill in heraldry, you may soon know that: break but her pate, and you shall see her blood and mine is all one.

CANDIDO

A surgeon, run, a surgeon!

[Exit First Prentice.]

Why then wore you that forged name of cousin?

[III.i. Candido's shop]

The Honest Whore, Part One

FUSTIGO

Because it's a common thing to call coz and ningle nowadays all the world over.

CANDIDO

Cousin! A name of much deceit, folly and sin,
For under that common abused word
Many an honest temp'red citizen
Is made a monster, and his wife train'd out
To foul adulterous action, full of fraud
I may well call that word "a city's bawd."

FUSTIGO

Troth, brother, my sister would needs ha' me take upon me to gull your patience a little, but it has made double
gules on my coxcomb.

[VIOLA]

What, playing the woman? Blabbing now, you fool?

CANDIDO

Oh, my wife did but exercise a jest upon your wit.

FUSTIGO

'Sfoot, my wit bleeds for't, methinks!

CANDIDO

Then let this warning more of sense afford:
The name of cousin is a bloody word.

FUSTIGO

I'll ne'er call coz again whilst I live, to have such a coil about it: this should be a coronation day, for my head runs
claret lustily.

Exit. Enter an Officer.

CANDIDO

Go wish the surgeon to have great respect.

[Exit Second Prentice.]

How now, my friend; what, do they sit today?

OFFICER

Yes, sir, they expect you at the senate-house.

CANDIDO

I thank your pains; I'll not be last man there.

Exit Officer.

My gown, George, go, my gown.

[III.i. Candido's shop]

The Honest Whore, Part One

[Exit George.]

A happy land,
Where grave men meet each cause to understand,
Whose consciences are not cut out in bribes
To gull the poor man's right, but in even scales
Peize rich and poor without corruption's vails.

[Enter George.]

Come, where's the gown?

GEORGE

I cannot find the key, sir.

CANDIDO

Request it of your mistress.

[VIOLA]

Come not to me for any key.
I'll not be troubled to deliver it.

CANDIDO

Good wife, kind wife, it is a needful trouble,
But for my gown.

[VIOLA]

Moths swallow down your gown!
You set my teeth an edge with talking on't.

CANDIDO

Nay, prithee, sweet, I cannot meet without it;
I should have a great fine set on my head.

[VIOLA]

Set on your coxcomb: tush, fine me no fines!

CANDIDO

Believe me, sweet, none greets the senate-house
Without his robe of reverence, that's his gown.

[VIOLA]

Well, then y'are like to cross that custom once:
You get nor key, nor gown, and so depart.
[Aside] This trick will vex him sure and fret his heart.

Exit.

CANDIDO

Stay, let me see, I must have some device;

[III.i. Candido's shop]

The Honest Whore, Part One

My cloak's too short: fie, fie, no cloak will do't!
It must be something fashioned like a gown,
With my arms out. Oh, George, come hither, George!
I prithee lend me thine advice.

GEORGE

Troth, sir, were it any but you, they would break open chest.

CANDIDO

Oh, no! Break open chest? That's a thief's office;
Therein you counsel me against my blood:
'Twould show impatience that; any meek means
I would be glad to embrace. Mass, I have got it!
Go, step up, fetch me down one of the carpets,
The saddest colour'd carpet, honest George;
Cut thou a hole i' th' middle for my neck,
Two for mine arms. Nay, prithee look not strange.

GEORGE

I hope you do not think, sir, as you mean.

CANDIDO

Prithee about it quickly, the hour chides me:
Warily, George, softly, take heed of eyes.

Exit George.

Out of two evils he's accounted wise
That can pick out the least; the fine impos'd
For an ungowned senator, is about
Forty cruzadoes, the carpet not 'bove four.
Thus have I chosen the lesser evil yet,
Preserv'd my patience, foil'd her desperate wit.

Enter George.

GEORGE

Here, sir, here's the carpet.

CANDIDO

Oh, well done, George; we'll cut it just i' th' midst.
'Tis very well, I thank thee; help it on.

GEORGE

It must come over your head, sir, like a wench's petticoat.

CANDIDO

Th'art in the right, good George, it must indeed.
Fetch me a nightcap, for I'll gird it close,
As if my health were queasy: 'twill show well
For a rude careless nightgown, will 't not, think'st?

[III.i. Candido's shop]

The Honest Whore, Part One

GEORGE

Indifferent well, sir, for a nightgown, being girt and pleated.

CANDIDO

Ay, and a nightcap on my head.

GEORGE

That's true, sir; I'll run and fetch one, and a staff.

Exit George.

CANDIDO

For thus they cannot choose but conster it,
One that is out of health takes no delight,
Wears his apparel without appetite,
And puts on heedless raiment without form.

Enter George.

So, so, kind George, be secret now, and prithee
Do not laugh at me till I'm out of sight.

GEORGE

I laugh? Not I, sir.

CANDIDO

Now to the senate-house:
Methinks I'd rather wear without a frown
A patient carpet than an angry gown.

Exit.

GEORGE

Now looks my master just like one of our carpet knights, only he's somewhat the honestest of the two.

Enter Candido's wife [Viola].

[VIOLA]

What, is your master gone?

GEORGE

Yes, forsooth, his back is but new-turn'd.

[VIOLA]

And in his cloak? Did he not vex and swear?

GEORGE

[Aside] No, but he'll make you swear anon.—No, indeed, he went away like a lamb.

[VIOLA]

[III.i. Candido's shop]

The Honest Whore, Part One

Key sink to hell: still patient, patient still!
I am with child to vex him. Prithee, George,
If e'er thou look'st for favour at my hands,
Uphold one jest for me.

GEORGE

Against my master?

[VIOLA]

'Tis a mere jest, in faith. Say, wilt thou do't?

GEORGE

Well, what is't?

[VIOLA]

Here, take this key, thou know'st where all things lie;
Put on thy master's best apparel, gown,
Chain, cap, ruff, everything: be like himself,
And 'gainst his coming home, walk in the shop,
Feign the same carriage and his patient look.
'Twill breed but a jest, thou know'st; speak, wilt thou?

GEORGE

'Twill wrong my master's patience.

[VIOLA]

Prithee, George.

GEORGE

Well, if you'll save me harmless and put me under covert bar'n, I am content to please you, provided it may breed no wrong against him.

[VIOLA]

No wrong at all; here take the key, be gone:
If any vex him, this; if not this, none.

Exeunt.

[III.ii. The brothel]

Enter a Bawd and Roger.

BAWD

Oh, Roger, Roger, where's your mistress, where's your mistress? There's the finest, neatest gentleman at my house but newly come over! Oh, where is she, where is she, where is she?

ROGER

My mistress is abroad, but not amongst 'em: my mistress is not the whore now that you take her for.

BAWD

How! Is she not a whore? Do you go about to take away her good name, Roger? You are a fine pander indeed!

[III.i. Candido's shop]

The Honest Whore, Part One

ROGER

I tell you, Madonna Fingerlock, I am not sad for nothing; I ha' not eaten one good meal this three and thirty days: I had wont to get sixteen pence by fetching a pottle of Hypocras, but now those days are past. We had as good doings, Madonna Fingerlock, she withindoors and I without, as any poor young couple in Milan.

BAWD

Gods my life, and is she chang'd now?

ROGER

I ha' lost by her squeamishness, more than would have builded twelve bawdy houses.

[BAWD]

And had she no time to turn honest but now? What a vile woman is this! Twenty pound a night, I'll be sworn, Roger, in good gold and no silver: why here was a time, if she should ha' pick'd out a time, it could not be better! Gold enough stirring; choice of men, choice of hair, choice of beards, choice of legs, and choice of every, every, everything: it cannot sink into my head, that she should be such an ass, Roger, I never believe it.

ROGER

Here she comes now.

Enter Bellafront.

BAWD

Oh, sweet madonna, on with your loose gown, your felt and your feather. There's the sweetest, prop'rest, gallantest gentleman at my house: he smells all of musk and ambergris, his pocket full of crowns, flame-colour'd doublet, red satin hose, carnation silk stockings, and a leg and a body, oh!

BELLAFRONT

Hence, thou our sex's monster, poisonous bawd,
Lust's factor, and damnation's orator,
Gossip of hell! Were all the harlots' sins
Which the whole world contains numb'red together,
Thine far exceeds them all; of all the creatures
That ever were created, thou art basest!
What serpent would beguile thee of thy office?
It is detestable, for thou liv'st
Upon the dregs of harlots, guard'st the door,
Whilst couples go to dancing. Oh, coarse devil!
Thou art the bastard's curse (thou brand'st his birth),
The lecher's French disease (for thou dry-suck'st him),
The harlot's poison, and thine own confusion.

BAWD

Mary come up with a pox, have you nobody to rail against but your bawd now?

BELLAFRONT

And you, knave pander, kinsman to a bawd—

ROGER

You and I, madonna, are cousins.

[III.i. Candido's shop]

The Honest Whore, Part One

BELLAFRONT

Of the same blood and making, near allied,
Thou, that slave to sixpence, base–metall'd villain!

ROGER

Sixpence? Nay, that's not so: I never took under two shillings fourpence; I hope I know my fee.

BELLAFRONT

I know not against which most to inveigh,
For both of you are damn'd so equally.
Thou never spar'st for oaths, swear'st anything,
As if thy soul were made of shoe–leather:
"God damn me, gentleman, if she be within,"
When in the next room she's found dallying.

ROGER

If it be my vocation to swear, every man in his vocation: I hope my betters swear and damn themselves, and why should not I?

BELLAFRONT

Roger, you cheat kind gentlemen?

ROGER

The more gulls they.

BELLAFRONT

Slave, I cashier thee!

BAWD

And you do cashier him, he shall be entertain'd.

ROGER

Shall I? Then blurt a' your service!

BELLAFRONT

As hell would have it, entertain'd by you!
I dare the devil himself to match those two.

Exit.

BAWD

Marry gup, are you grown so holy, so pure, so honest with a pox?

ROGER

Scurvy, honest punk! But stay, madonna, how must our agreement be now? For you know I am to have all the comings in at the hall door, and you at the chamber door.

BAWD

True, Roger, except my vails.

The Honest Whore, Part One

ROGER

Vails? What vails?

BAWD

Why, as thus: if a couple come in a coach, and light to lie down a little, then, Roger, that's my fee, and you may walk abroad, for the coachman himself is their pander.

ROGER

Is 'a' so? In truth, I have almost forgot for want of exercise. But how if I fetch this citizen's wife to that gull, and that madonna to that gallant, how then?

BAWD

Why then, Roger, you are to have sixpence a lane: so many lanes, so many sixpences.

ROGER

Is't so? Then I see we two shall agree and live together.

BAWD

Ay, Roger, so long as there be any taverns and bawdy houses in Milan.

Exeunt.

[III.iii. Bellafront's chamber]

Enter Bellafront with a lute; pen, ink and paper being plac'd before her.

Song.

[BELLAFRONT]

The courtier's flatt'ring jewels

(Temptation's only fools),

The lawyer's ill-got moneys

(That suck up poor bees' honeys),

The citizen's son's riot,

The gallant['s] costly diet

(Silks and velvets, pearls and ambers)

Shall not draw me to their chambers.

Silks and velvets, etc.

She writes.

Oh, 'tis in vain to write! It will not please:

Ink on this paper would ha' but presented

The foul black spots that stick upon my soul,

And rather make me loathsomer than wrought

My love's impression in Hipolito's thought.

No, I must turn the chaste leaves of my breast,

And pick out some sweet means to breed my rest.

Hipolito, believe me I will be

As true unto thy heart as thy heart to thee,

And hate all men, their gifts and company.

Enter Matheo, Castruchio, Fluello, Pioratto.

[III.i. Candido's shop]

The Honest Whore, Part One

MATHEO

You, goody punk, subaudi cockatrice! Oh, y'are a sweet whore of your promise, are you not, think you? How well you came to supper to us last night: mew, a whore and break her word! Nay, you may blush and hold down your head at it well enough. 'Sfoot, ask these gallants if we stay'd not till we were as hungry as sergeants!

FLUELLO

Ay, and their yeoman too.

CASTRUCHIO

Nay, faith, acquaintance, let me tell you, you forgot yourself too much: we had excellent cheer, rare vintage, and were drunk after supper.

PIORATTO

And when we were in our woodcocks, sweet rogue, a brace of gulls, dwelling here in the city, came in and paid all the shot.

MATHEO

Pox on her, let her alone.

BELLAFRONT

Oh, I pray do, if you be gentlemen!
I pray depart the house; beshrew the door
For being so easily entreated: faith,
I lent but little ear unto your talk;
My mind was busied otherwise in troth,
And so your words did unregarded pass.
Let this suffice, I am not as I was.

FLUELLO

I am not what I was! No, I'll be sworn thou art not, for thou wert honest at five, and now th'art a punk at fifteen; thou wert yesterday a simple whore, and now th'art a cunning coney—catching baggage today.

BELLAFRONT

I'll say I'm worse. I pray forsake me then;
I do desire you leave me, gentlemen,
And leave yourselves. Oh, be not what you are,
Spendthrifts of soul and body!
Let me persuade you to forsake all harlots,
Worse than the deadliest poisons; they are worse,
For o'er their souls hangs an eternal curse:
In being slaves to slaves, their labours perish;
Th'are seldom bless'd with fruit, for ere it blossoms,
Many a worm confounds it.
They have no issue but foul, ugly ones
That run along with them, e'en to their graves,
For stead of children, they breed rank diseases,
And all you gallants can bestow on them
Is that French infant, which ne'er acts but speaks.
What shallow son and heir then, foolish gallant,
Would waste all his inheritance to purchase

The Honest Whore, Part One

A filthy, loath'd disease, and pawn his body
To a dry evil? That usury's worst of all,
When th' interest will eat out the principal.

MATHEO

[Aside] 'Sfoot, she gulls 'em the best! This is always her fashion when she would be rid of any company that she cares not for, to enjoy mine alone.

FLUELLO

What's here? Instructions, admonitions, and caveats? Come out, you scabbard of vengeance!

MATHEO

Fluello, spurn your hounds when they fist, you shall not spurn my punk; I can tell you my blood is vex'd.

FLUELLO

Pox a' your blood! Make it a quarrel.

MATHEO

Y'are a slave. Will that serve turn?

[Matheo and Fluello draw.]

[CASTRUCHIO, PIORATTO]

'Sblood, hold, hold!

CASTRUCHIO

Matheo, Fluello, for shame, put up!

MATHEO

Spurn my sweet varlet!

BELLAFRONT

Oh, how many thus
Mov'd with a little folly have let out
Their souls in brothel houses, fell down and died
Just at their harlot's foot, as 'twere in pride?

FLUELLO

Matheo, we shall meet!

MATHEO

Ay, ay, anywhere, saving at church: pray take heed we meet not there.

FLUELLO

Adieu, damnation.

CASTRUCHIO

Cockatrice, farewell.

PIORATTO

There's more deceit in women than in hell.

[III.i. Candido's shop]

The Honest Whore, Part One

Exeunt [Castruchio, Fluello, Pioratto].

MATHEO

Ha, ha, thou dost gull 'em so rarely, so naturally. If I did not think thou hadst been in earnest. Thou art a sweet rogue for't, i'faith.

BELLAFRONT

Why are not you gone too, Signior Matheo?
I pray depart my house: you may believe me;
In troth I have no part of harlot in me.

MATHEO

How's this?

BELLAFRONT

Indeed, I love you not, but hate you worse
Than any man, because you were the first
Gave money for my soul; you brake the ice,
Which after turn'd a puddle: I was led
By your temptation to be miserable.
I pray seek out some other that will fall,
Or rather I pray seek out none at all.

MATHEO

Is't possible to be impossible, an honest whore! I have heard many honest wenches turn strumpets with a wet finger, but for a harlot to turn honest is one of Hercules' labours. It was more easy for him in one night to make fifty queans than to make one of them honest again in fifty years. Come, I hope thou dost but jest.

BELLAFRONT

'Tis time to leave off jesting; I had almost
Jested away salvation: I shall love you,
If you will soon forsake me.

MATHEO

God buy thee.

BELLAFRONT

Oh, tempt no more women; shun their weighty curse!
Women at best are bad; make them not worse.
You gladly seek our sex's overthrow,
But not to raise our states for all your wrongs.
Will you vouchsafe me but due recompense
To marry with me?

MATHEO

How! Marry with a punk, a cockatrice, a harlot? Marry foh, I'll be burnt thorough the nose first!

BELLAFRONT

Why la, these are your oaths; you love to undo us,
To put heaven from us, whilst our best hours waste:

[III.i. Candido's shop]

The Honest Whore, Part One

You love to make us lewd, but never chaste.

MATHEO

I'll hear no more of this: this ground upon
Th'art damn'd for alt'ring thy religion.

Exit.

BELLAFRONT

Thy lust and sin speak so much. Go thou my ruin,
The first fall my soul took; by my example
I hope few maidens now will put their heads
Under men's girdles: who least trusts, is most wise;
Men's oaths do cast a mist before our eyes.
My best of wit be ready: now I go,
By some device to greet Hipolito.

[Exit.]

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

Enter a Servant setting out a table, on which he places a skull, a picture, a book, and a taper.

SERVANT

So, this is Monday morning, and now must I to my huswif'ry: would I had been created a shoemaker, for all the gentle craft are gentlemen every Monday by their copy and scorn then to work one true stitch. My master means sure to turn me into a student, for here's my book, here my desk, here my light, this my close chamber, and here my punk: so that this dull drowsy first day of the week makes me half a priest, half a chandler, half a painter, half a sexton, ay, and half a bawd, for all this day my office is to do nothing but keep the door. To prove it, look you, this good face and yonder gentleman, so soon as ever my back's turn'd, will be naught together.

Enter Hipolito.

HIPOLITO

Are all the windows shut?

SERVANT

Close, sir, as the fist of a courtier that hath stood in three reigns.

HIPOLITO

Thou art a faithful servant and observ'st
The calendar, both of my solemn vows
And ceremonious sorrow. Get thee gone;
I charge thee on thy life let not the sound
Of any woman's voice pierce through that door.

SERVANT

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

If they do, my lord, I'll pierce some of them.
What will your lordship have to breakfast?

HIPOLITO

Sighs.

SERVANT

What to dinner?

HIPOLITO

Tears.

SERVANT

The one of them, my lord, will fill you too full of wind, the other wet you too much. What to supper?

HIPOLITO

That which now thou canst not get me, the constancy of a woman.

SERVANT

Indeed that's harder to come by than ever was Ostend.

HIPOLITO

Prithee away.

SERVANT

I'll make away myself presently, which few servants will do for their lords, but rather help to make them away.
Now to my door-keeping; I hope to pick something out of it.

Exit.

HIPOLITO

[Taking up her picture] My Infelice's face: her brow, her eye,
The dimple on her cheek, and such sweet skill
Hath from the cunning workman's pencil flown,
These lips look fresh and lively as her own,
Seeming to move and speak. 'Las! Now I see
The reason why fond women love to buy
Adulterate complexion: here 'tis read
False colours last after the true be dead.
Of all the roses grafted on her cheeks,
Of all the graces dancing in her eyes,
Of all the music set upon her tongue,
Of all that was past woman's excellence
In her white bosom, look, a painted board
Circumscribes all! Earth can no bliss afford.
Nothing of her, but this? This cannot speak,
It has no lap for me to rest upon,
No lip worth tasting: here the worms will feed,
As in her coffin. Hence then, idle art:
True love's best pictur'd in a true love's heart.
Here art thou drawn, sweet maid, till this be dead,

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

So that thou liv'st twice, twice art buried.
Thou figure of my friend, lie there. What's here?
[Taking up the skull] Perhaps this shrewd pate was mine enemy's.
'Las! Say it were: I need not fear him now.
For all his braves, his contumelious breath,
His frowns (tho' dagger-pointed), all his plots
(Tho' ne'er so mischievous), his Italian pills,
His quarrels, and that common fence, his law:
See, see, they're all eaten out; here's not left one!
How clean they're pick'd away! To the bare bone!
How mad are mortals then to rear great names
On tops of swelling houses! Or to wear out
Their fingers' ends in dirt to scrape up gold!
Not caring, so that sumpter-horse the back
Be hung with gaudy trappings, with what coarse,
Yea, rags most beggarly, they clothe the soul!
Yet after all their gayness looks thus foul.
What fools are men to build a garish tomb,
Only to save the carcass whilst it rots,
To maintain 't long in stinking, make good carrion,
But leave no good deeds to preserve them sound,
For good deeds keep men sweet long above ground,
And must all come to this: fools, wise, all hither;
Must all heads thus at last be laid together.
Draw me my picture then, thou grave neat workman,
After this fashion, not like this: these colours
In time kissing but air will be kiss'd off,
But here's a fellow; that which he lays on,
Till doomsday, alters not complexion.
Death's the best painter then. They that draw shapes
And live by wicked faces are but God's apes:
They come but near the life, and there they stay.
This fellow draws life too: his art is fuller;
The pictures which he makes are without colour.

Enter his Servant.

SERVANT

Here's a person would speak with you, sir.

HIPOLITO

Hah!

SERVANT

A parson, sir, would speak with you.

HIPOLITO

Vicar?

SERVANT

Vicar? No, sir, h'as too good a face to be a vicar yet. A youth, a very youth.

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

HIPOLITO

What youth? Of man or woman? Lock the doors.

SERVANT

If it be a woman, marybones and potato pies keep me for meddling with her, for the thing has got the breeches. 'Tis a male varlet sure, my lord, for a woman's tailor ne'er measur'd him.

HIPOLITO

Let him give thee his message and be gone.

SERVANT

He says he's Signior Matheo's man, but I know he lies.

HIPOLITO

How dost thou know it?

SERVANT

'Cause h'as ne'er a beard: 'tis his boy, I think, sir, whosoe'er paid for his nursing.

HIPOLITO

Send him and keep the door.

[Exit Servant. Hipolito] reads.

"Fata si liceat mihi
Fingere arbitrio meo
Temperem Zephyro levi
Vela."

I'd sail, were I to choose, not in the ocean;
Cedars are shaken when shrubs do feel no bruise.

Enter Bellafront like a page [and hands him a paper, keeping her face averted].

How? From Matheo?

BELLAFRONT

Yes, my lord.

HIPOLITO

Art sick?

BELLAFRONT

Not all in health, my lord.

HIPOLITO

Keep off.

BELLAFRONT

I do.

[Aside] Hard fate when women are compell'd to woo.

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

HIPOLITO

This paper does speak nothing.

BELLAFRONT

Yes, my lord,
Matter of life it speaks, and therefore writ
In hidden character; to me instruction
My master gives, and, 'less you please to stay
Till you both meet, I can the text display.

HIPOLITO

Do so: read out.

BELLAFRONT

[Showing her face] I am already out:
Look on my face and read the strangest story!

HIPOLITO

What villain, ho!

Enter his Servant.

SERVANT

Call you my lord?

HIPOLITO

Thou slave, thou hast let in the devil!

SERVANT

Lord bless us, where? He's not cloven, my lord, that I can see: besides the devil goes more like a gentleman than a page. Good my lord, boon couragio.

HIPOLITO

Thou hast let in a woman in man's shape,
And thou art damn'd for't.

SERVANT

Not damn'd I hope for putting in a woman to a lord.

HIPOLITO

Fetch me my rapier! Do not: I shall kill thee.
Purge this infected chamber of that plague
That runs upon me thus! Slave, thrust her hence!

SERVANT

Alas, my lord, I shall never be able to thrust her hence without help. Come, mermaid, you must to sea again.

BELLAFRONT

Hear me but speak, my words shall be all music:
Hear me but speak.

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

HIPOLITO

Another beats the door;
T'other she—devil, look.

SERVANT

Why then hell's broke loose.

HIPOLITO

Hence, guard the chamber: let no more come on;
One woman serves for man's damnation.

Exit [Servant].

Beshrew thee, thou dost make me violate
The chastest and most sanctimonious vow
That e'er was ent'red in the court of heaven:
I was on meditation's spotless wings,
Upon my journey thither; like a storm
Thou beats my ripened cogitations
Flat to the ground, and like a thief dost stand
To steal devotion from the holy land.

BELLAFRONT

If woman were thy mother, if thy heart
Be not all marble—or if't marble be,
Let my tears soften it to pity me—
I do beseech thee do not thus with scorn
Destroy a woman.

HIPOLITO

Woman, I beseech thee
Get thee some other suit, this fits thee not;
I would not grant it to a kneeling queen:
I cannot love thee, nor I must not. See
The copy of that obligation
Where my soul's bound in heavy penalties.

BELLAFRONT

She's dead, you told me; she'll let fall her suit.

HIPOLITO

My vows to her fled after her to heaven;
Were thine eyes clear as mine, thou mightst behold her
Watching upon yon battlements of stars
How I observe them: should I break my bond,
This board would rive in twain, these wooden lips
Call me most perjur'd villain; let it suffice,
I ha' set thee in the path. Is't not a sign
I love thee when with one so most, most dear,
I'll have thee fellows? All are fellows there.

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

BELLAFRONT

Be greater than a king; save not a body,
But from eternal shipwreck keep a soul:
If not, and that again, sin's path I tread;
The grief be mine, the guilt fall on thy head.

HIPOLITO

Stay and take physic for it; read this book,
Ask counsel of this head what's to be done:
He'll strike it dead that 'tis damnation
If you turn Turk again. Oh, do it not!
Tho' heaven cannot allure you to do well
From doing ill, let hell fright you, and learn this:
The soul whose bosom lust did never touch
Is God's fair bride, and maidens' souls are such;
The soul that leaving chastity's white shore
Swims in hot sensual streams, is the devil's whore.

Enter his servant.

How now! Who comes?

SERVANT

No more knaves, my lord, that wear smocks. Here's a letter from Doctor Benedict; I would not enter his man, tho' he had hairs at his mouth, for fear he should be a woman, for some women have beards. Marry, they are half witches! 'Slid, you are a sweet youth to wear a codpiece and have no pins to stick upon't!

HIPOLITO

I'll meet the doctor, tell him; yet tonight
I cannot, but at morrow rising sun
I will not fail. Go, woman; fare thee well.

Exeunt [Hipolito and his Servant].

BELLAFRONT

The lowest fall can be but into hell;
It does not move him. I must therefore fly
From this undoing city, and with tears
Wash off all anger from my father's brow:
He cannot sure but joy seeing me new born.
A woman honest first and then turn whore
Is, as with me, common to thousands more,
But from a strumpet to turn chaste, that sound
Has oft been heard, that woman hardly found.

Exit.

[IV.ii. A street]

Enter Fustigo, Crambo and Poh.

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

FUSTIGO

[Giving them money] Hold up your hands, gentlemen: here's one, two, three—nay, I warrant, they are sound pistols and without flaws, I had them of my sister, and I know she uses to put up nothing that's crack'd—three, four, five, six, seven, eight and nine. By this hand bring me but a piece of his blood, and you shall have nine more. I'll lurk in a tavern not far off, and provide supper to close up the end of the tragedy. The linen-draper's, remember: stand to't, I beseech you, and play your parts perfectly.

CRAMBO

Look you, signior, 'tis not your gold that we weigh.

FUSTIGO

Nay, nay, weigh it and spare not; if it lack one grain of corn, I'll give you a bushel of wheat to make it up.

CRAMBO

But by your favour, signior, which of the servants is it, because we'll punish justly.

FUSTIGO

Marry, 'tis the head man; you shall taste him by his tongue: a pretty, tall, prating fellow with a Tuscalonian beard.

POH

Tuscalonian: very good.

FUSTIGO

Cods life, I was ne'er so thrumm'd since I was a gentleman: my coxcomb was dry-beaten as if my hair had been hemp!

CRAMBO

We'll dry-beat some of them.

FUSTIGO

Nay, it grew so high that my sister cried murder out very manfully: I have her consent in a manner to have him pepper'd, else I'll not do't to win more than ten cheaters do at a rifling. Break but his pate or so, only his mazer, because I'll have his head in a cloth as well as mine; he's a linen-draper and may take enough. I could enter mine action of battery against him, but we mayhaps be both dead and rotten before the lawyers would end it.

CRAMBO

No more to do but ensconce yourself i' th' tavern; provide no great cheer, couple of capons, some pheasants, plovers, an orangeado pie or so: but how bloody soe'er the day be, sally you not forth.

FUSTIGO

No, no, nay, if I stir, somebody shall stink; I'll not budge: I'll lie like a dog in a manger.

CRAMBO

Well, well, to the tavern; let not our supper be raw, for you shall have blood enough, your belly full.

FUSTIGO

That's all, so God sa' me, I thirst after: blood for blood, bump for bump, nose for nose, head for head, plaster for plaster, and so farewell. What shall I call your names, because I'll leave word if any such come to the bar.

CRAMBO

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

My name is Corporal Crambo.

POH

And mine, Lieutenant Poh.

CRAMBO

Poh is as tall a man as ever opened oyster; I would not be the devil to meet Poh. Farewell.

FUSTIGO

Nor I, by this light, if Poh be such a Poh.

Exeunt.

[IV.iii. Candido's shop]

Enter Candido's wife [Viola] in her shop, and the two Prentices.

[VIOLA]

What's a' clock now?

SECOND PRENTICE

'Tis almost twelve.

[VIOLA]

That's well.

The senate will leave wording presently.

But is George ready?

SECOND PRENTICE

Yes, forsooth, he's furbish'd.

[VIOLA]

Now as you ever hope to win my favour,
Throw both your duties and respects on him
With the like awe as if he were your master;
Let not your looks betray it with a smile,
Or jeering glance to any customer:
Keep a true settled countenance, and beware
You laugh not whatsoever you hear or see.

SECOND PRENTICE

I warrant you, mistress, let us alone for keeping our countenance, for if I list, there's never a fool in all Milan shall make me laugh, let him play the fool never so like an ass, whether it be the fat court fool or the lean city fool.

[VIOLA]

Enough then, call down George.

SECOND PRENTICE

I hear him coming.

Enter George.

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

[VIOLA]

Be ready with your legs then; let me see
How curtsy would become him. Gallantly!
Beshrew my blood, a proper seemly man,
Of a choice carriage, walks with a good port.

GEORGE

I thank you, mistress; my back's broad enough now my master's gown's on.

[VIOLA]

Sure I should think it were the least of sin
To mistake the master and to let him in.

GEORGE

'Twere a good comedy of errors, that, i'faith.

SECOND PRENTICE

Whist, whist, my master!

[VIOLA]

You all know your tasks.

Enter Candido and exit presently.

God's my life, what's that he has got upon's back? Who can tell?

GEORGE

That can I, but I will not.

[VIOLA]

Girt about him like a madman! What, has he lost his cloak too? This is the maddest fashion that e'er I saw! What said he, George, when he pass'd by thee?

GEORGE

Troth, mistress, nothing. Not so much as a bee, he did not hum; not so much as a bawd, he did not hem; not so much as a cuckold, he did not ha; neither hum, hem, nor ha, only star'd me in the face, past along, and made haste in, as if my looks had work'd with him to give him a stool.

[VIOLA]

Sure he's vex'd now; this trick has mov'd his spleen:
He's ang'red now because he utt'ed nothing;
And wordless wrath breaks out more violent.
Maybe he'll strive for place when he comes down,
But if thou lov'st me, George, afford him none.

GEORGE

Nay, let me alone to play my master's prize, as long as my mistress warrants me. I'm sure I have his best clothes on, and I scorn to give place to any that is inferior in apparel to me: that's an axiom, a principle, and is observ'd as much as the fashion; let that persuade you then, that I'll shoulder with him for the upper hand in the shop, as long as this chain will maintain it.

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

[VIOLA]

Spoke with the spirit of a master, tho' with the tongue of a prentice.

Enter Candido like a prentice.

Why, how now, madman? What in your tricky coats?

CANDIDO

Oh, peace, good mistress!

Enter Crambo and Poh.

See what you lack, what is't you buy? Pure calicoes, fine hollands, choice cambrics, neat lawns! See what you buy! Pray come near, my master will use you well; he can afford you a pennyworth.

[VIOLA]

Ay, that he can, out of a whole piece of lawn, i'faith.

CANDIDO

Pray see your choice here, gentlemen.

[VIOLA]

[Aside] Oh, fine fool! What a madman! A patient madman! Whoever heard of the like? Well, sir, I'll fit you and your humour presently. What? Cross-points? I'll untie 'em all in a trice; I'll vex you, faith.—Boy, take your cloak; quick, come.

Exit [with First Prentice].

CANDIDO

Be covered, George; this chain and welted gown
Bare to this coat: then the world's upside down.

GEORGE

Umh, umh, hum.

CRAMBO

That's the shop, and there's the fellow.

POH

Ay, but the master is walking in there.

CRAMBO

No matter, we'll in.

POH

'Sblood, dost long to lie in limbo?

CRAMBO

And limbo be in hell, I care not.

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

CANDIDO

Look you, gentlemen, your choice: cambrics?

CRAMBO

No, sir, some shirting.

CANDIDO

You shall.

CRAMBO

Have you none of this strip'd canvas for doublets?

CANDIDO

None strip'd, sir, but plain.

SECOND PRENTICE

I think there be one piece strip'd within.

GEORGE

Step, sirrah, and fetch it, hum, hum, hum.

[Exit Second Prentice.]

CANDIDO

Look you, gentlemen, I'll make but one spreading; here's a piece of cloth, fine, yet shall wear like iron: 'tis without fault, take this upon my word, 'tis without fault.

CRAMBO

Then 'tis better than you, sirrah.

CANDIDO

Ay, and a number more. Oh, that each soul
Were but as spotless as this innocent white
And had as few breaks in it!

CRAMBO

'Twould have some then. There was a fray here last day in this shop.

CANDIDO

There was indeed a little flea-biting.

POH

A gentleman had his pate broke. Call you that but a flea-biting?

CANDIDO

He had so.

CRAMBO

Zounds, do you stand in't?

He strikes him.

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

GEORGE

'Sfoot! Clubs, clubs, prentices! Down with 'em! Ah, you rogues, strike a citizen in's shop?

[The Prentices rush in and with George they disarm and beat Crambo and Poh.]

CANDIDO

None of you stir; I pray, forbear, good George.

CRAMBO

I beseech you, sir, we mistook our marks; deliver us our weapons.

GEORGE

Your head bleeds, sir: cry clubs!

CANDIDO

I say you shall not; pray be patient.
Give them their weapons. Sirs, you're best be gone;
I tell you here are boys more tough than bears:
Hence, lest more fists do walk about your ears.

BOTH [CRAMBO AND POH]

We thank you, sir.

Exeunt [Crambo and Poh].

CANDIDO

You shall not follow them.
Let them alone pray, this did me no harm;
Troth, I was cold, and the blow made me warm.
I thank 'em for't; besides I had decreed
To have a vein prick'd: I did mean to bleed,
So that there's money sav'd. They are honest men;
Pray use 'em well when they appear again.

GEORGE

Yes, sir, we'll use 'em like honest men.

CANDIDO

Ay, well said, George, like honest men, tho' they be arrant knaves, for that's the phrase of the city. Help to lay up these wares.

Enter Candido's wife [Viola] with Officers [to one side].

[VIOLA]

Yonder he stands.

[FIRST] OFFICER

What, in a prentice coat?

[VIOLA]

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

Ay, ay, mad, mad; pray take heed.

CANDIDO

How now? What news with them? What make they with my wife? Officers? Is she attach'd? Look to your wares.

[VIOLA]

He talks to himself. Oh, he's much gone indeed!

[FIRST] OFFICER

Pray pluck up a good heart; be not so fearful.

Sirs, hark, we'll gather to him by degrees.

[VIOLA]

Ay, ay, by degrees I pray. Oh, me! What makes he with the lawn in his hand; he'll tear all the ware in my shop.

[FIRST] OFFICER

Fear not, we'll catch him on a sudden.

[VIOLA]

Oh, you had need do so! Pray take heed of your warrant.

[FIRST] OFFICER

I warrant, mistress. [Approaching Candido] Now, Signior Candido?

CANDIDO

Now, sir, what news with you, sir?

[VIOLA]

What news with you, he says. Oh, he's far gone!

[FIRST] OFFICER

I pray fear nothing, let's alone with him.

Signior, you look not like yourself methinks.

[To Second Officer] Steal you a' t'other side.—Y'are chang'd, y'are alt'red.

CANDIDO

Chang'd, sir? Why, true, sir. Is change strange? 'Tis not the fashion unless it alter? Monarchs turn to beggars, beggars creep into the nests of princes, masters serve their prentices, ladies their serving-men, men turn to women.

[FIRST] OFFICER

And women turn to men.

CANDIDO

Ay, and women turn to men, you say true. Ha, ha, a mad world, a mad world!

[The Officers seize Candido, and the Second Officer begins to bind him.]

[FIRST] OFFICER

Have we caught you, sir?

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

CANDIDO

Caught me? Well, well, you have caught me.

[VIOLA]

He laughs in your faces.

GEORGE

A rescue, prentices, my master's catchpol'd!

[FIRST] OFFICER

I charge you keep the peace, or have your legs gartered with irons; we have from the duke a warrant strong enough for what we do.

CANDIDO

I pray rest quiet; I desire no rescue.

[VIOLA]

La, he desires no rescue! 'Las, poor heart,
He talks against himself.

CANDIDO

Well, what's the matter?

[FIRST] OFFICER

Look to that arm;
Pray make sure work: double the cord.

CANDIDO

Why, why?

[VIOLA]

Look how his head goes! Should he get but loose,
Oh, 'twere as much as all our lives were worth!

[FIRST] OFFICER

Fear not, we'll make all sure for our own safety.

CANDIDO

Are you at leisure now? Well, what's the matter?
Why do I enter into bonds thus, ha?

[FIRST] OFFICER

Because y'are mad, put fear upon your wife.

[VIOLA]

Oh, ay, I went in danger of my life, every minute!

CANDIDO

What? Am I mad say you, and I not know it?

[FIRST] OFFICER

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

That proves you mad, because you know it not.

[VIOLA]

Pray talk as little to him as you can;
You see he's too far spent.

CANDIDO

Bound with strong cord?
A sister's thread, i'faith, had been enough
To lead me anywhere. Wife, do you long?
You are mad too, or else you do me wrong.

GEORGE

But are you mad indeed, master?

CANDIDO

My wife says so,
And what she says, George, is all truth you know.
And whither now? To Beth'lem Monastery?
Ha? Whither?

[FIRST] OFFICER

Faith, e'en to the madmen's pound.

CANDIDO

A' God's name, still I feel my patience sound.

Exeunt [Candido with Officers].

GEORGE

Come, we'll see whither he goes. If the master be mad, we are his servants and must follow his steps: we'll be madcaps too. Farewell, mistress, you shall have us all in Bedlam.

Exeunt [George and the other Prentices].

[VIOLA]

I think I ha' fitted now you and your clothes!
If this move not his patience, nothing can;
I'll swear then I have a saint and not a man.

Exit.

[IV.iv. Doctor Benedict's house]

Enter Duke, Doctor, Fluello, Castruchio, Pioratto.

DUKE

Give us a little leave.

[Exeunt Fluello, Castruchio, and Pioratto.]

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

Doctor, your news.

DOCTOR

I sent for him, my lord. At last he came,
And did receive all speech that went from me
As gilded pills made to prolong his health:
My credit with him wrought it, for some men
Swallow even empty hooks, like fools that fear
No drowning where 'tis deepest 'cause 'tis clear.
In th' end we sat and ate: a health I drank
To Infelice's sweet departed soul;
This train I knew would take.

DUKE

'Twas excellent.

DOCTOR

He fell with such devotion on his knees
To pledge the same--

DUKE

Fond, superstitious fool!

DOCTOR

That had he been inflam'd with zeal of prayer,
He could not power 't out with more reverence.
About my neck he hung, wept on my cheek,
Kiss'd it, and swore he would adore my lips
Because they brought forth Infelice's name.

DUKE

Ha, ha! Alack, alack!

DOCTOR

The cup he lifts up high, and thus he said,
"Here, noble maid," drinks, and was poisoned.

DUKE

And died?

DOCTOR

And died, my lord.

DUKE

Thou in that word
Hast piec'd mine aged hours out with more years
Than thou hast taken from Hipolito.
A noble youth he was, but lesser branches
Hind'ring the greater's growth must be lopp'd off
And feed the fire. Doctor, w'are now all thine,
And use us so. Be bold.

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

DOCTOR

Thanks, gracious lord.
My honoured lord--

DUKE

Hmh?

DOCTOR

I do beseech your grace to bury deep
This bloody act of mine.

DUKE

Nay, nay, for that,
Doctor, look you to't. Me it shall not move;
They're curs'd that ill do, not that ill do love.

DOCTOR

You throw an angry forehead on my face,
But be you pleas'd, backward thus for to look,
That for your good this evil I undertook--

DUKE

Ay, ay, we conster so.

DOCTOR

And only for your love--

DUKE

Confess'd, 'tis true.

DOCTOR

Nor let it stand against me as a bar
To thrust me from your presence, nor believe,
As princes have quick thoughts, that now my finger
Being deep'd in blood I will not spare the hand,
But that for gold, as what can gold not do,
I may be hir'd to work the like on you.

DUKE

Which to prevent--

DOCTOR

'Tis from my heart as far--

DUKE

No matter, doctor, 'cause I'll fearless sleep;
And that you shall stand clear of that suspicion
I banish thee forever from my court.
This principle is old but true as fate:
Kings may love treason, but the traitor hate.

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

Exit.

DOCTOR

Is't so? Nay then, duke, your stale principle
With one as stale the doctor thus shall quit:
He falls himself that digs another's pit.
How now!

Enter the Doctor's Man.

Where is he? Will he meet me?

DOCTOR'S MAN

Meet you, sir! He might have met with three fencers in this time and have received less hurt than by meeting one doctor of physic! Why, sir, h'as walk'd under the old abbey wall yonder this hour till he's more cold than a citizen's country house in January; you may smell him behind, sir. La you, yonder he comes.

DOCTOR

Leave me.

Enter Hipolito.

DOCTOR'S MAN

I' th' lurch, if you will.

Exit.

DOCTOR

Oh, my most noble friend!

HIPOLITO

Few but yourself
Could have intic'd me thus to trust the air
With my close sighs. You send for me. What news?

DOCTOR

Come, you must doff this black, dye that pale cheek
Into his own colour; go. Attire yourself
Fresh as a bridegroom when he meets his bride.
The duke has done much treason to thy love;
'Tis now revealed, 'tis now to be reveng'd.
Be merry, honour'd friend: thy lady lives.

HIPOLITO

What lady?

DOCTOR

Infelice. She's reviv'd.
Reviv'd? Alack! Death never had the heart
To take breath from her.

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

The Honest Whore, Part One

HIPOLITO

Umh, I thank you, sir.
Physic prolongs life when it cannot save:
This helps not my hopes; mine are in their grave.
You do some wrong to mock me.

DOCTOR

By that love
Which I have ever borne you, what I speak
Is truth: the maiden lives. That funeral,
Duke's tears, the mourning was all counterfeit:
A sleepy draught cozen'd the world and you;
I was his minister and then chamb'red up
To stop discovery.

HIPOLITO

Oh, treacherous duke!

DOCTOR

He cannot hope so certainly for bliss,
As he believes that I have poison'd you.
He woo'd me to't, I yielded, and confirm'd him
In his most bloody thoughts.

HIPOLITO

A very devil!

DOCTOR

Her did he closely coach to Bergamo,
And thither—

HIPOLITO

Will I ride! Stood Bergamo
In the low countries of black hell, I'll to her.

DOCTOR

You shall to her, but not to Bergamo.
How passion makes you fly beyond yourself!
Much of that weary journey I ha' cut off,
For she by letters hath intelligence
Of your supposed death, her own interment,
And all those plots, which that false duke her father
Has wrought against you. And she'll meet you.

HIPOLITO

Oh, when?

DOCTOR

Nay, see how covetous are your desires;
Early tomorrow morn.

[IV.i. Hipolito's chamber]

HIPOLITO

Oh, where, good father?

DOCTOR

At Beth'lem Monastery. Are you pleas'd now?

HIPOLITO

At Beth'lem monastery. The place well fits:
It is the school where those that lose their wits
Practise again to get them. I am sick
Of that disease; all love is lunatic.

DOCTOR

We'll steal away this night in some disguise;
Father Anselmo, a most reverend friar,
Expects our coming, before whom we'll lay
Reasons so strong that he shall yield in bands
Of holy wedlock to tie both your hands.

HIPOLITO

This is such happiness
That to believe it 'tis impossible!

DOCTOR

Let all your joys then die in misbelief;
I will reveal no more.

HIPOLITO

Oh, yes, good father,
I am so well acquainted with despair,
I know not how to hope: I believe all.

DOCTOR

We'll hence this night; much must be done, much said,
But if the doctor fail not in his charms,
Your lady shall ere morning fill these arms.

HIPOLITO

Heavenly physician, far thy fame shall spread,
That mak'st two lovers speak when they be dead.

Exeunt.

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

[Enter] Candido's wife [Viola] and George; Pioratto meets them.

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

[VIOLA]

Oh, watch, good George, watch which way the duke comes.

GEORGE

Here comes one of the butterflies; ask him.

[VIOLA]

Pray, sir, comes the duke this way?

PIORATTO

He's upon coming, mistress.

Exit.

[VIOLA]

I thank you, sir.

Exit [Pioratto].

George, are there many mad folks where thy master lies?

GEORGE

Oh, yes, of all countries some, but especially mad Greeks; they swarm. Troth, mistress, the world is altered with you; you had not wont to stand thus with a paper humbly complaining, but you're well enough serv'd: provender prick'd you, as it does many of our city-wives besides.

[VIOLA]

Dost think, George, we shall get him forth?

GEORGE

Truly, mistress, I cannot tell; I think you'll hardly get him forth. Why, 'tis strange! 'Sfoot, I have known many women that have had mad rascals to their husbands, whom they would belabour by all means possible to keep 'em in their right wits, but of a woman to long to turn a tame man into a madman, why, the devil himself was never us'd so by his dam!

[VIOLA]

How does he talk, George? Ha, good George, tell me!

GEORGE

Why, you're best go see.

[VIOLA]

Alas, I am afraid.

GEORGE

Afraid! You had more need be asham'd: he may rather be afraid of you.

[VIOLA]

But, George, he's not stark mad, is he? He does not rave, he's not horn-mad, George, is he?

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

GEORGE

Nay, I know not that, but he talks like a justice of peace, of a thousand matters and to no purpose.

[VIOLA]

I'll to the monastery: I shall be mad till I enjoy him, I shall be sick till I see him, yet when I do see him, I shall weep out mine eyes.

GEORGE

Ay, I'd fain see a woman weep out her eyes; that's as true as to say a man's cloak burns when it hangs in the water. I know you'll weep, mistress, but what says the painted cloth:

"Trust not a woman when she cries,
For she'll pump water from her eyes
With a wet finger, and in faster showers
Than April when he rains down flowers."

[VIOLA]

Ay, but George, that painted cloth is worthy to be hang'd up for lying, all women have not tears at will unless they have good cause.

GEORGE

Ay, but mistress, how easily will they find a cause, and as one of our cheese-trenchers says very learnedly:

"As out of wormwood bees suck honey,
As from poor clients lawyers firk money
As parsley from a roasted coney,
So, tho' the day be ne'er so sunny,
If wives will have it rain, down then it drives:
The calmest husbands make the [stormiest] wives."

[VIOLA]

[True], George, but I ha' done storming now.

GEORGE

Why, that's well done, good mistress; throw aside this fashion of your humour: be not so fantastical in wearing it; storm no more, long no more. This longing has made you come short of many a good thing that you might have had from my master. Here comes the duke.

Enter Duke, Fluello, Pioratto, Sinezi.

[VIOLA]

Oh, I beseech you pardon my offense,
In that I durst abuse your grace's warrant!
Deliver forth my husband, good my lord.

DUKE

Who is her husband?

FLUELLO

Candido, my lord.

DUKE

Where is he?

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

[VIOLA]

He's among the lunatics.
He was a man made up without a gall;
Nothing could move him, nothing could convert
His meek blood into fury: yet like a monster,
I often beat at the most constant rock
Of his unshaken patience, and did long
To vex him.

DUKE

Did you so?

[VIOLA]

And for that purpose,
Had warrant from your grace to carry him
To Beth'lem Monastery, whence they will not free him
Without your grace's hand that sent him in.

DUKE

You have long'd fair. 'Tis you are mad, I fear;
It's fit to fetch him thence and keep you there.
If he be mad, why would you have him forth?

GEORGE

And please your grace, he's not stark mad, but only talks like a young gentleman, somewhat fantastically, that's all: there's a thousand about your court, city, and country madder than he.

DUKE

Provide a warrant, you shall have our hand.

GEORGE

Here's a warrant ready drawn, my lord.

DUKE

Get pen and ink, get pen and ink.

Enter Castruchio.

CASTRUCHIO

Where is my lord the duke?

DUKE

How now? More madmen?

CASTRUCHIO

I have strange news, my lord,

DUKE

Of what? Of what?

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

CASTRUCHIO

Of Infelice and a marriage.

DUKE

Ha! Where? With whom?

CASTRUCHIO

Hipolito.

GEORGE

[Offering the Duke a pen] Here, my lord.

DUKE

Hence with that woman, void the room!

FLUELLO

Away, the duke's vex'd.

GEORGE

Whoop! Come, mistress, the duke's mad too.

Exeunt [Viola and George].

DUKE

Who told me that Hipolito was dead?

CASTRUCHIO

He that can make any man dead, the doctor; but, my lord, he's as full of life as wild-fire, and as quick. Hipolito, the doctor, and one more rid hence this evening; the inn at which they light is Beth'lem Monastery: Infelice comes from Bergamo and meets them there. Hipolito is mad, for he means this day to be married; the afternoon is the hour, and Friar Anselmo is the knitter.

DUKE

From Bergamo? Is't possible? It cannot be,
It cannot be.

CASTRUCHIO

I will not swear, my lord,
But this intelligence I took from one
Whose brains works in the plot.

DUKE

What's he?

CASTRUCHIO

Matheo.

FLUELLO

Matheo knows all.

PIORATTO

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

He's Hipolito's bosom.

DUKE

How far stands Beth'lem hence?

OMNES [COURTIERS]

Six or seven miles.

DUKE

Is't even so!

Not married till the afternoon, you say?

Stay, stay, let's work out some prevention. How!

This is most strange! Can none but madmen serve

To dress their wedding dinner? All of you,

Get presently to horse; disguise yourselves

Like country gentlemen,

Or riding citizens, or so, and take

Each man a several path, but let us meet

At Beth'lem Monastery, some space of time

Being spent between the arrival each of other,

As if we came to see the lunatics.

To horse, away! Be secret on your lives;

Love must be punish'd that unjustly thrives.

Exeunt [all but Fluello].

FLUELLO

Be secret on your lives! Castruchio,

Y'are but a scurvy spaniel. Honest lord,

Good lady! Zounds, their love is just, 'tis good!

And I'll prevent you, tho' I swim in blood.

Exit.

[V.ii. Bethlehem Monastery]

Enter Friar Anselmo, Hipolito, Matheo, Infelice.

HIPOLITO

Nay, nay, resolve, good father, or deny.

ANSELMO

You press me to an act both full of danger

And full of happiness, for I behold

Your father's frowns, his threats, nay, perhaps death

To him that dare do this; yet noble lord,

Such comfortable beams break through these clouds

By this bless'd marriage; that, your honour'd word

Being pawn'd in my defense, I will tie fast

The holy wedding knot.

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

HIPOLITO

Tush, fear not the duke.

ANSELMO

Oh, son,
Wisely to fear is to be free from fear.

HIPOLITO

You have our words, and you shall have our lives,
To guard you safe from all ensuing danger.

MATHEO

Ay, ay, chop 'em up and away.

ANSELMO

Stay: when is't fit for me, safest for you,
To entertain this business?

HIPOLITO

Not till the evening.

ANSELMO

Be 't so; there is a chapel stands hard by,
Upon the west end of the abbey wall:
Thither convey yourselves, and when the sun
Hath turn'd his back upon this upper world,
I'll marry you; that done, no thund'ring voice
Can break the sacred bond. Yet lady, here
You are most safe.

INFELICE

Father, your love's most dear.

MATHEO

Ay, well said. Lock us into some little room by ourselves that we may be mad for an hour or two.

HIPOLITO

Oh, good Matheo, no, let's make no noise.

MATHEO

How! No noise! Do you know where you are? 'Sfoot, amongst all the madcaps in Milan, so that to throw the house out at window will be the better, and no man will suspect that we lurk here to steal mutton: the more sober we are, the more scurvy 'tis. And tho' the friar tell us that here we are safest, I'm not of his mind, for if those lay here that had lost their money, none would ever look after them, but here are none but those that have lost their wits, so that if hue and cry be made, hither they'll come, and my reason is, because none goes be married till he be stark mad.

Enter Fluello.

HIPOLITO

Muffle yourselves; yonder's Fluello.

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

MATHEO

Zounds!

FLUELLO

Oh, my lord, these cloaks are not for this rain; the tempest is too great: I come sweating to tell you of it that you may get out of it.

MATHEO

Why, what's the matter?

FLUELLO

What's the matter? You have matter'd it fair: the duke's at hand.

OMNES

The duke?

FLUELLO

The very duke.

HIPOLITO

Then all our plots
Are turn'd upon our heads, and we are blown up
With our own underminings. 'Sfoot, how comes he?
What villain durst betray our being here?

FLUELLO

Castruchio, Castruchio told the duke, and Matheo here told Castruchio.

HIPOLITO

Would you betray me to Castruchio?

MATHEO

'Sfoot, he damn'd himself to the pit of hell if he spake on't again!

HIPOLITO

So did you swear to me, so were you damn'd.

MATHEO

Pox on 'em, and there be no faith in men, if a man shall not believe oaths! He took bread and salt, by this light, that he would never open his lips.

HIPOLITO

Oh God, oh God!

ANSELMO

Son, be not desperate;
Have patience: you shall trip your enemy down
By his own sleights. How far is the duke hence?

FLUELLO

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

He's but new set out. Castruchio, Pioratto, and Sinezi come along with him: you have time enough yet to prevent them if you have but courage.

ANSELMO

You shall steal secretly into the chapel
And presently be married; if the duke
Abide here still, spite of ten thousand eyes,
You shall scape hence like friars.

HIPOLITO

Oh, bless'd disguise! Oh, happy man!

ANSELMO

Talk not of happiness till your clos'd hand
Have her by th' forehead, like the lock of time.
Be not too slow nor hasty now you climb
Up to the tower of bliss, only be wary
And patient, that's all: if you like my plot,
Build and dispatch; if not, farewell, then not.

HIPOLITO

Oh, yes, we do applaud it; we'll dispute
No longer, but will hence and execute.
Fluello, you'll stay here; let us be gone.
The ground that frighted lovers tread upon
Is stuck with thorns.

ANSELMO

Come then, away: 'tis meet,
To escape those thorns, to put on winged feet.

Exeunt [Hipolito, Infelice, and Anselmo].

MATHEO

No words I pray, Fluello, for it stands us upon.

FLUELLO

Oh, sir, let that be your lesson.

[Exit Matheo.]

Alas, poor lovers, on what hopes and fears
Men toss themselves for women! When she's got
The best has in her that which pleaseth not.

Enter to Fluello the Duke, Castruchio, Pioratto, and Sinezi from several doors muffled.

DUKE

Who's there?

CASTRUCHIO

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

My lord.

DUKE

Peace, send that lord away:
A lordship will spoil all; let's be all fellows.
What's he?

CASTRUCHIO

Fluello, or else Sinezi by his little legs.

OMNES

All friends, all friends.

DUKE

What, met upon the very point of time!
Is this the place?

PIORATTO

This is the place, my lord.

DUKE

Dream you on lordships! Come, no more lords, pray.
You have not seen these lovers yet?

OMNES [COURTIERS]

Not yet.

DUKE

Castruchio, art thou sure this wedding feat
Is not till afternoon?

CASTRUCHIO

So 'tis given out, my lord.

DUKE

Nay, nay, 'tis like; thieves must observe their hours:
Lovers watch minutes like astronomers.
How shall the interim hours by us be spent?

FLUELLO

Let's all go see the madmen.

OMNES

Mass, content.

Enter a Sweeper.

DUKE

Oh, here comes one; question him, question him.

FLUELLO

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

How now, honest fellow. Dost thou belong to the house?

[SWEEPER]

Yes, forsooth, I am one of the implements; I sweep the madmen's rooms, and fetch straw for 'em, and buy chains to tie 'em, and rods to whip 'em. I was a mad wag myself here once, but I thank Father Anselm: he lash'd me into my right mind again.

DUKE

[Aside to Castruchio] Anselmo is the friar must marry them;
Question him where he is.

CASTRUCHIO

And where is Father Anselmo now?

[SWEEPER]

Marry, he's gone but e'en now.

DUKE

Ay, well done. Tell me, whither is he gone?

[SWEEPER]

Why, to God A'mighty.

FLUELLO

Ha, ha, this fellow is a fool, talks idly!

PIORATTO

Sirrah, are all the mad folks in Milan brought hither?

[SWEEPER]

How! All! There's a wise question indeed. Why, if all the mad folks in Milan should come hither, there would not be left ten men in the city.

DUKE

Few gentlemen or courtiers here, ha?

[SWEEPER]

Oh, yes! Abundance, abundance! Lands no sooner fall into their hands, but straight they run out a' their wits. Citizens' sons and heirs are free of the house by their father's copy. Farmers' sons come hither like geese in flocks and when they ha' sold all their cornfields, here they sit and pick the straws.

SINEZI

Methinks you should have women here as well as men.

[SWEEPER]

Oh, ay, a plague on 'em! There's no ho with them; they are madder than march hares.

FLUELLO

Are there no lawyers here amongst you?

[SWEEPER]

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

Oh, no, not one: never any lawyer! We dare not let a lawyer come in, for he'll make 'em mad faster than we can recover 'em.

DUKE

And how long is't e'er you recover any of these?

[SWEEPER]

Why, according to the quantity of the moon that's got into 'em. An alderman's son will be mad a great while, a very great while, especially if his friends left him well. A whore will hardly come to her wits again. A puritan, there's no hope of him, unless he may pull down the steeple and hang himself i' th' bell-ropes.

FLUELLO

I perceive all sorts of fish come to your net.

[SWEEPER]

Yes, in truth, we have blocks for all heads; we have good store of wild oats here, for the courtier is mad at the citizen, the citizen is mad at the country man, the shoemaker is mad at the cobbler, the cobbler at the carman, the punk is mad that the merchant's wife is no whore, the merchant's wife is mad that the punk is so common a whore--

Enter Anselmo.

Gods--so, here's Father Anselm! Pray say nothing that I tell tales out of the school.

Exit.

OMNES [NOBLES]

God bless you, father.

ANSELMO

Thank you, gentlemen.

CASTRUCHIO

Pray may we see some of those wretched souls
That here are in your keeping?

ANSELMO

Yes, you shall,
But, gentlemen, I must disarm you then.
There are of mad men, as there are of tame,
All humour'd not alike: we have here some,
So apish and fantastic, play with a feather,
And tho 'twould grieve a soul to see God's image
So blemish'd and defac'd, yet do they act
Such antic and such pretty lunacies,
That spite of sorrow they will make you smile;
Others again we have like hungry lions,
Fierce as wild bulls, untamable as flies,
And these have oftentimes from strangers' sides
Snatch'd rapiers suddenly and done much harm,
Whom if you'll see, you must be weaponless.

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

OMNES [NOBLES]

With all our hearts.

ANSELMO

[Calling offstage] Here, take these weapons in.

[Enter Sweeper, then exits with their swords.]

Stand off a little pray; so, so, 'tis well.
I'll show you here a man that was sometimes
A very grave and wealthy citizen,
Has serv'd a prenticeship to this misfortune,
Been here seven years, and dwelt in Bergamo.

DUKE

How fell he from himself?

ANSELMO

By loss at sea.
I'll stand aside; question him you alone,
For if he spy me, he'll not speak a word
Unless he's throughly vex'd.

Discovers an old man, [the First Madman,] wrapp'd in a net.

FLUELLO

Alas, poor soul.

CASTRUCHIO

A very old man.

DUKE

God speed, father.

FIRST MADMAN

God speed the plough: thou shalt not speed me.

PIORATTO

We see you, old man, for all you dance in a net.

FIRST MADMAN

True, but thou wilt dance in a halter, and I shall not see thee.

ANSELMO

Oh, do not vex him, pray!

CASTRUCHIO

Are you a fisherman, father?

FIRST MADMAN

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

No, I'm neither fish nor flesh.

FLUELLO

What do you with that net then?

FIRST MADMAN

Dost not see, fool? There's a fresh salmon in't. If you step one foot furdur, you'll be over shoes, for you see I'm over head and ear in the saltwater, and if you fall into this whirlpool where I am, y'are drown'd, y'are a drown'd rat! I am fishing here for five ships, but I cannot have a good draught, for my net breaks still, and breaks, but I'll break some of your necks and I catch you in my clutches. Stay, stay, stay, stay, stay. Where's the wind, where's the wind, where's the wind, where's the wind? Out, you gulls, you goose-caps, you gudgeon-eaters! Do you look for the wind in the heavens? Ha, ha, ha, ha! No, no, look there, look there, look there! The wind is always at that door. Hark how it blows, poof, poof, poof!

OMNES [NOBLES]

Ha, ha, ha!

FIRST MADMAN

Do you laugh at God's creatures? Do you mock old age, you rogues? Is this gray beard and head counterfeit, that you cry, "Ha, ha, ha?" Sirrah, art not thou my eldest son?

PIORATTO

Yes indeed, father.

FIRST MADMAN

Then th'art a fool, for my eldest son had a polt foot, crooked legs, a vergis face, and a pear-colour'd beard; I made him a scholar, and he made himself a fool. Sirrah! Thou there! Hold out thy hand.

DUKE

My hand? Well, here 'tis.

FIRST MADMAN

Look, look, look, look: has he not long nails and short hair?

FLUELLO

Yes, monstrous short hair and abominable long nails.

FIRST MADMAN

Tenpenny nails, are they not?

FLUELLO

Yes, tenpenny nails.

FIRST MADMAN

Such nails had my second boy. Kneel down, thou varlet, and ask thy father blessing. Such nails had my middlemost son and I made him a promoter, and he scrap'd, and scrap'd, and scrap'd till he got the devil and all, but he scrap'd thus, and thus, and thus, and it went under his legs, till at length a company of kites taking him for carrion swept up all, all, all, all, all, all, all. If you love your lives, look to yourselves. See, see, see, see, the Turks' galleys are fighting with my ships! Bounce goes the guns! "Oooh!" cry the men. Romble romble go the waters. Alas! There! 'Tis sunk, 'tis sunk! I am undone, I am undone! You are the damn'd pirates have undone me! You are, by th' Lord, you are, you are, stop 'em, you are!

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

ANSELMO

Why, how now, sirrah! Must I fall to tame you?

FIRST MADMAN

Tame me? No, I'll be madder than a roasted cat. See, see, I am burnt with gunpowder; these are our close fights.

ANSELMO

I'll whip you if you grow unruly thus.

FIRST MADMAN

Whip me? Out, you toad! Whip me? What justice is this, to whip me because I'm a beggar? Alas, I am a poor man, a very poor man! I am starv'd, and have had no meat by this light, ever since the great flood. I am a poor man.

ANSELMO

Well, well, be quiet and you shall have meat.

FIRST MADMAN

Ay, ay, pray do, for look you here be my guts. These are my ribs; you may look through my ribs. See how my guts come out! These are my red guts, my very guts, oh, oh!

ANSELMO

Take him in there.

[Enter the Sweeper and takes away the First Madman.]

OMNES [NOBLES]

A very piteous sight.

CASTRUCHIO

Father, I see you have a busy charge.

ANSELMO

They must be us'd like children, pleas'd with toys,
And anon whipp'd for their unruliness.
I'll show you now a pair quite different
From him that's gone; he was all words, and these,
Unless you urge 'em, seldom spend their speech,
But save their tongues. La you!

[Enter the Second and Third Madmen.]

This hithermost
Fell from the happy quietness of mind,
About a maiden that he lov'd and died.
He followed her to church, being full of tears,
And as her body went into the ground,
He fell stark mad. That is a married man
Was jealous of a fair but, as some say,
A very virtuous wife, and that spoil'd him.

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

SECOND MADMAN

All these are whoremongers and lay with my wife! Whore, whore, whore, whore, whore!

FLUELLO

Observe him.

SECOND MADMAN

Gaffer shoemaker, you pull'd on my wife's pumps, and then crept into her pantofles: lie there, lie there. This was her tailor; you cut out her loose-bodied gown and put in a yard more than I allowed her. Lie there by the shoemaker. Oh, master doctor, are you here? You gave me a purgation and then crept into my wife's chamber to feel her pulses, and you said, and she said, and her maid said that they went pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat. Doctor, I'll put you anon into my wife's urinal. Heigh, come aloft, Jack! This was her schoolmaster, and taught her to play upon the virginals: still his jacks leapt up, up; you prick'd her out nothing but bawdy lessons, but I'll prick you all! Fiddler, doctor, tailor, shoemaker; shoemaker, fiddler, doctor, tailor: so, lie with my wife again now!

CASTRUCHIO

See how he notes the other now he feeds.

SECOND MADMAN

Give me some porridge.

THIRD MADMAN

I'll give thee none.

SECOND MADMAN

Give me some porridge.

THIRD MADMAN

I'll not give thee a bit.

SECOND MADMAN

Give me that flap-dragon.

THIRD MADMAN

I'll not give thee a spoonful. Thou liest; it's no dragon, 'tis a parrot that I bought for my sweetheart, and I'll keep it.

SECOND MADMAN

Here's an almond for parrot.

THIRD MADMAN

Hang thyself.

SECOND MADMAN

Here's a rope for parrot.

THIRD MADMAN

Eat it, for I'll eat this.

SECOND MADMAN

I'll shoot at thee and thou 't give me none.

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

THIRD MADMAN

Wut thou?

SECOND MADMAN

I'll run a-tilt at thee and thou 't give me none.

THIRD MADMAN

Wut thou? Do and thou dar'st!

SECOND MADMAN

Bounce!

THIRD MADMAN

Oh! I am slain! Murder, murder, murder, I am slain, my brains are beaten out!

ANSELMO

How now, you villains! Bring me whips! I'll whip you!

THIRD MADMAN

I am dead, I am slain! Ring out the bell, for I am dead!

DUKE

How will you do now, sirrah? You ha' kill'd him.

SECOND MADMAN

I'll answer 't at sessions: he was eating of almond-butter, and I long'd for't; the child had never been delivered out of my belly, if I had not kill'd him. I'll answer 't at sessions, so my wife may be burnt i' th' hand too.

[Enter the Sweeper.]

ANSELMO

Take 'em in both: bury him, for he's dead.

THIRD MADMAN

Ay, indeed, I am dead; put me I pray into a good pit hole.

SECOND MADMAN

I'll answer 't at sessions.

Exeunt [Sweeper with Madmen]. Enter Bellafront mad.

ANSELMO

How now, huswife, whither gad you?

BELLAFRONT

A-nutting, forsooth. How do you, gaffer? How do you, gaffer? There's a French curtsy for you too.

FLUELLO

[Aside] 'Tis Bellafront!

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

PIORATTO

[Aside] 'Tis the punk, by th' Lord!

DUKE

Father, what's she I pray?

ANSELMO

As yet I know not;
She came but in this day, talks little idly,
And therefore has the freedom of the house.

BELLAFRONT

Do not you know me? Nor you? Nor you, nor you?

OMNES [COURTIERS]

No indeed.

BELLAFRONT

Then you are an ass, and you are an ass, and you are an ass, for I know you.

ANSELMO

Why, what are they? Come, tell me, what are they?

BELLAFRONT

Three fishwives. Will you buy any gudgeons?

Enter Hipolito, Matheo, and Infelice disguis'd in the habits of friars.

God's santy, yonder come friars! I know them too. How do you, friar?

ANSELMO

Nay, nay, away, you must not trouble friars.
[Aside to Hipolito] The duke is here; speak nothing.

BELLAFRONT

Nay, indeed, you shall not go: we'll run at barley-break first, and you shall be in hell.

MATHEO

[Aside to Hipolito] My punk turn'd mad whore, as all her fellows are?

HIPOLITO

[Aside to Matheo] Speak nothing, but steal hence when you spy time.

ANSELMO

I'll lock you up if y'are unruly, fie!

BELLAFRONT

Fie! Marry foh, they shall not go indeed till I ha' told 'em their fortunes.

DUKE

Good father, give her leave.

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

BELLAFRONT

I pray, good father, and I'll give you my blessing.

ANSELMO

Well then, be brief, but if you are thus unruly,
I'll have you lock'd up fast.

PIORATTO

Come to their fortunes.

BELLAFRONT

Let me see—one, two, three, and four—I'll begin with the little friar first. Here's a fine hand indeed; I never saw friar have such a dainty hand. Here's a hand for a lady. You ha' good fortune now.
Oh, see, see what a thread here's spun:
You love a friar better than a nun,
Yet long you'll love no friar, not no friar's son.

Bow a little.

The line of life is out, yet I'm afraid
For all you're holy, you'll not die a maid.
God give you joy.
Now to you, Friar Tuck.

MATHEO

God send me good luck.

BELLAFRONT

You love one, and one loves you.
You are a false knave, and she's a Jew.
Here is a dial that false ever goes.

MATHEO

Oh, your wit drops!

BELLAFRONT

Troth, so does your nose.
[To Hipolito] Nay, let's shake hands with you too;
Pray open. Here's a fine hand.
Ho, friar, ho! God be here,
So he had need: you'll keep good cheer.
Here's a free table, but a frozen breast,
For you'll starve those that love you best.
Yet you have good fortune, for if I am no liar,
Then you are no friar, nor you, nor you no friar.

Discovers them.

Ha, ha, ha, ha!

The Honest Whore, Part One

DUKE

Are holy habits cloaks for villainy?
Draw all your weapons!

HIPOLITO

Do, draw all your weapons!

DUKE

Where are your weapons? Draw!

OMNES [COURTIERS]

The friar has gull'd us of 'em.

MATHEO

Oh, rare trick!
You ha' learnt one mad point of arithmetic.

HIPOLITO

Why swells your spleen so high? Against what bosom
Would you your weapons draw? Hers? 'Tis your daughter's!
Mine? 'Tis your son's!

DUKE

Son?

MATHEO

Son, by yonder sun.

HIPOLITO

You cannot shed blood here, but 'tis your own;
To spill your own blood were damnation.
Lay smooth that wrinkled brow, and I will throw
Myself beneath your feet;
Let it be rugged still and flinted o'er,
What can come forth but sparkles that will burn
Yourself and us? She's mine; my claim's most good:
She's mine by marriage, tho' she's yours by blood.

ANSELMO

[Kneeling] I have a hand, dear lord, deep in this act,
For I foresaw this storm, yet willingly
Put forth to meet it. Oft have I seen a father
Washing the wounds of his dear son in tears,
A son to curse the sword that struck his father,
Both slain i' th' quarrel of your families.
Those scars are now ta'en off, and I beseech you
To seal our pardon; all was to this end,
To turn the ancient hates of your two houses
To fresh green friendship, that your loves might look
Like the spring's forehead, comfortably sweet,
And your vex'd souls in peaceful union meet.

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

Their blood will now be yours, yours will be theirs,
And happiness shall crown your silver hairs.

FLUELLO

You see, my lord, there's now no remedy.

OMNES

Beseech your lordship!

DUKE

You beseech fair: you have me in place fit
To bridle me. Rise, friar; you may be glad
You can make madmen tame and tame men mad.
Since fate hath conquered, I must rest content;
To strive now would but add new punishment.
I yield unto your happiness; be bless'd:
Our families shall henceforth breathe in rest.

OMNES

Oh, happy change!

DUKE

Yours now is my consent;
I throw upon your joys my full content.

BELLAFRONT

Am not I a good girl for finding the friar in the well? Gods—so, you are a brave man! Will not you buy me some sugar—plums because I am so good a fortune—teller?

DUKE

Would thou hadst wit, thou pretty soul, to ask
As I have will to give.

BELLAFRONT

Pretty soul! A pretty soul is better than a pretty body. Do not you know my pretty soul? I know you. Is not your name Matheo?

MATHEO

Yes, lamb.

BELLAFRONT

Baa, lamb! There you lie, for I am mutton. Look, fine man, he was mad for me once, and I was mad for him once, and he was mad for her once, and were you never mad? Yes, I warrant. I had a fine jewel once, a very fine jewel, and that naughty man stole it away from me, a very fine jewel.

DUKE

What jewel, pretty maid?

BELLAFRONT

Maid? Nay, that's a lie. Oh, 'twas a very rich jewel call'd a maidenhead, and had not you it, leerer?

The Honest Whore, Part One

MATHEO

Out, you mad ass! Away!

DUKE

Had he thy maidenhead?
He shall make thee amends and marry thee.

BELLAFRONT

Shall he? Oh, brave Arthur of Bradley then!

DUKE

And if he bear the mind of a gentleman,
I know he will.

MATHEO

I think I rifled her of some such paltry jewel.

DUKE

Did you? Then marry her; you see the wrong
Has led her spirits into a lunacy.

MATHEO

How, marry her, my lord? 'Sfoot, marry a madwoman? Let a man get the tamest wife he can come by, she'll be mad enough afterward, do what he can.

DUKE

Nay then, Father Anselmo here shall do his best
To bring her to her wits, and will you then?

MATHEO

I cannot tell I may choose.

DUKE

Nay, then law shall compel: I tell you, sir,
So much her hard fate moves me, you should not breathe
Under this air unless you married her.

MATHEO

Well then, when her wits stand in their right place I'll marry her.

BELLAFRONT

I thank your grace. Matheo, thou art mine;
I am not mad, but put on this disguise
Only for you, my lord, for you can tell
Much wonder of me: but you are gone; farewell.
Matheo, thou didst first turn my soul black;
Now make it white again: I do protest,
I'm pure as fire now, chaste as Cynthia's breast.

HIPOLITO

I durst be sworn, Matheo, she's indeed.

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

MATHEO

Cony-catch'd, gull'd! Must I sail in your fly-boat
Because I help'd to rear your mainmast first?
Plague 'found you for't! 'Tis well:
The cuckold's stamp goes current in all nations.
Some men have horns given them at their creations:
If I be one of those, why, so it's better
To take a common wench and make her good,
Than one that simpers and at first will scarce
Be tempted forth over the threshold door,
Yet in one se'nnight, zounds, turns arrant whore!
Come wench, thou shalt be mine, give me thy golls;
We'll talk of legs hereafter. See, my lord;
God give us joy.

OMNES

God give you joy.

Enter Candido's wife [Viola] and George.

GEORGE

Come, mistress, we are in Bedlam now. Mass, and see we come in pudding-time, for here's the duke.

[VIOLA]

My husband, good my lord.

DUKE

Have I thy husband?

CASTRUCHIO

It's Candido, my lord; he's here among the lunatics. Father Anselmo, pray fetch him forth.

[Exit Anselmo.]

This madwoman is his wife, and tho' she were not with child, yet did she long most spitefully to have her husband mad, and because she would be sure he should turn Jew, she plac'd him here in Beth'lem.

Enter Candido with Anselmo.

Yonder he comes.

DUKE

Come hither, signior. Are you mad?

CANDIDO

You are not mad.

DUKE

Why, I know that.

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

CANDIDO

Then may you know I am not mad that know
You are not mad, and that you are the duke.
None is mad here but one. How do you, wife?
What do you long for now? Pardon, my lord,
She had lost her child's nose else. I did cut out
Pennyworths of lawn, the lawn was yet mine own;
A carpet was my gown, yet 'twas mine own;
I wore my man's coat, yet the cloth mine own;
Had a crack'd crown, the crown was yet mine own:
She says for this I'm mad; were her words true,
I should be mad indeed. Oh, foolish skill,
Is patience madness? I'll be a madman still.

[VIOLA]

[Kneeling] Forgive me and I'll vex your spirit no more.

DUKE

Come, come, we'll have you friends; join hearts, join hands.

CANDIDO

See my lord, we are even.
Nay, rise, for ill deeds kneel unto none but heaven.

DUKE

Signior, methinks patience has laid on you
Such heavy weight that you should loathe it.

CANDIDO

Loathe it?

DUKE

For he whose breast is tender, blood so cool
That no wrongs heat it, is a patient fool.
What comfort do you find in being so calm?

CANDIDO

That which green wounds receive from sovereign balm:
Patience, my lord. Why, 'tis the soul of peace.
Of all the virtues 'tis near'st kin to heaven.
It makes men look like gods; the best of men
That e'er wore earth about him was a sufferer,
A soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit,
The first true gentleman that ever breath'd.
The stock of patience then cannot be poor;
All it desires, it has: what monarch more?
It is the greatest enemy to law
That can be, for it doth embrace all wrongs,
And so chains up lawyers' and women's tongues.
'Tis the perpetual prisoner's liberty,
His walks and orchards; 'tis the bondslave's freedom,

[V.i. Outside the Duke's castle]

The Honest Whore, Part One

And makes him seem proud of each iron chain,
As tho' he wore it more for state than pain.
It is the beggar's music, and thus sings,
Although their bodies beg, their souls are kings.
Oh, my dread liege, it is the sap of bliss,
Rears us aloft, makes men and angels kiss,
And, last of all, to end a household strife,
It is the honey 'gainst a waspish wife!

DUKE

Thou giv'st it lively colours. Who dare say
He's mad whose words march in so good array?
'Twere sin all women should such husbands have,
For every man must then be his wife's slave.
Come therefore, you shall teach our court to shine;
So calm a spirit is worth a golden mine:
Wives with meek husbands that to vex them long
In Bedlam must they dwell, else dwell they wrong.

Exeunt.

FINIS