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ARBASTO

The Anatomy of Fortune

Wherein is discovered by a pithy and pleasant discourse that the highest state of prosperity is oft-times the first step to mishap, and that to stay upon fortune's lot is to tread on brittle glass

Wherein also gentlemen may find pleasant conceits to purge melancholy, and perfect counsel to prevent misfortune

By Robert Greene, Master of Art.

*Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit vile dulci.*

Imprinted at London in Fleet Street beneath the Conduit at the sign of St. John Evangelist  
by H. Jackson.  
1584.

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To the right honourable and virtuous lady, the Lady Mary Talbot, wife to the right honourable Gilbert, Lord Talbot, Robert Greene wisheth increase of honour and virtue.

Myron, that unskillful painter of Greece, never drew any picture but the counterfeit of Jupiter, saying that if it were ill wrought, his worthiness should countenance out the meanness of his work; if well, commend the perfection of his art. In the like manner fareth it with me (right Honourable), who having unskillfully shadowed with bad colours the counterfeit of Fortune, presume boldly to shroud it under your Ladyship's patronage, as able to defend it be it never so mean, and to countenance it were it never so good, being of Decius' mind, who thought himself safe under the shield of Caesar.

Poor Irus, coming into the temple of Pallas, seeing her portrayed with a spear in the one hand and a book in the other, noting thereby as well her inward virtue as her outward valour, said: *Despiteful poverty, thou shalt not yet keep me from honouring Pallas, though from giving her presents.* So hearing of your Ladyship's exquisite perfection, as well in outward shape as in virtuous qualities, drawn with a deep desire to show what a dutiful affection I owe to such noble and virtuous personages, although want sought to hinder my will, yet I thought rather to fault in the defect of ability than not to show in effect the forwardness of my desire, which, wishing to bring forth a mountain, hath scarcely afforded a molehill, & willing to show your Honour Alexander's picture, is far unable to present you with Agrippa's shadows.

But I hope your Ladyship will deal with me as Caesar did with his young soldiers, who accepted of their service not only when they performed what they should, but when they practised what they could. Thus resting assured of your Ladyship's courtesy, praying continually for the increase of your honour, with all things that you would wish or I imagine, I end.

Your Ladyship's most dutiful to command,  
Robert Greene.

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To the gentlemen readers, health.

Alexander, whether wearied with Bucephalus' pace or desirous of novelties, as the nature of man delighteth in change, rode on a time on Hephestion's horse, for which being reprehended by one of his captains, he made him this answer: *Though all*, quoth he, *cannot have Bucephalus' courage, yet this is a horse*. So, gentlemen, if some too curious carp at your courtesy that vouchsafe to take a view of this unperfect pamphlet, I hope you will answer: *Though it be not excellent, yet it is a book*, being herein of Augustus' mind, who demanded why he read Ennius and not Virgil, answered: *Why*, quoth he, *is not Ennius also a poet?* Though none but Apelles was famous for his art, yet others were counted painters. All might not wash with Homer, yet divers dipped their fingers in his basin. I afford not, gentlemen, what I would, but what I can, trusting so you will think of me, and accept of my work. And in this hope I rest.

Yours to use,  
Robert Greene.

## ARBASTO; THE ANATOMY OF FORTUNE

Sailing towards Candy, after that I had long time been tossed with infortunate tempests, forced by wind and wave, our course not well guided by our compass, happily arrived at the city of Sidon, where being set on shore I straight with my companions went to offer incense to ye goddess of prosperity which the citizens call Astarte, whither being come, my devotion done and my oblations offered up, desirous to take a view of the ancient monuments of the temple I passed through many places where most sumptuous sepulchres were erected, which being seen, as I thought to have gone to my lodging I spied a cell having the door open, whereinto as I entered I saw an arch-flamen sitting (as I supposed) at his orisons (for so was the priest of the goddess termed), who, being clothed in white satin robes and crowned with a diadem of perfect gold, learned his head upon his right hand, pouring forth streams of waterish tears as outward signs of some inward passions, and held in his left hand the counterfeit of fortune with one foot trod on a polyp fish and with the other on a chameleon, as assured badges of his [sic for 'her'?] certain mutability. Driven into a dump with the sight of this strange devise, as I long gazed at the unacquainted gesture of this old flamen, willing to know both the cause of his care and what the picture of fortune did import, I was so bold as to waken him out of his passion with this parle:

*Father, quoth I, if my presumption be great in pressing so rashly into so secret & sacred a place, yet I hope, weighing my will, you will somewhat excuse my boldness, for I have not presumed as thinking to give any just occasion of offence, but as a stranger desirous to see the monuments of this ancient temple, which as I narrowly viewed, happening by chance into this your cell, and seeing your old age perplexed with strange passions, stayed as one willing to learn what disaster hap hath driven you into these strange dumps, which if I without offence may request, & you without prejudice grant, I shall find myself by duty bound to requite your undeserved courtesy.*

After I had uttered these words, staying a good space to hear what the old man would answer, seeing that he did not so much as vouchsafe to give an ear to my parle or an eye to my person, but still gazed on the picture of fortune, as I was ready to course him from his harbour with a deeper blast, I saw a present metamorphosis of his mind, for from tears he fell to trifling, from louring to laughing, from mourning to mirth, yet never casting his eye from fortune's counterfeit, till at last, after he had long smiled (as I thought) at the picture, he as in despite cast it from him, and taking his lute, played a dump whereunto he warbled out these words:

*Whereat erewhile I wept, I laugh,  
That which I feared, I now despise;  
My victor once, my vassal is,  
My foe constrained, my weal supply;  
Thus do I triumph on my foe;  
I weep at weal, I laugh at woe.*

*My care is cur'd, yet hath none end,*

*Not that I want, but that I have;  
My chance was change, yet still I stay,  
I would have less, and yet I crave;  
Aye me, poor wretch, that thus do live  
Constrained to take, yet forced to give.*

*She whose delights are signs of death,  
Who when she smiles begins to lour,  
Constant in this, that still she change,  
Her sweetest gifts time proves but sour;  
I live in care, crossed with her guile,  
Through her I weep, at her I smile.*

The old sire having with sighs sobbed out this sorrowful ditty, I was driven into a maze what the contrary contents of these verses should mean, until at last, casting his eye aside and seeing me stand so solemnly, he burst forth into these choleric terms:

*Friend, quoth he, if so I may term thee, thou hast either not heard much, or learned very little; either thy courtesy is small, or thy conditions too currish, that seekest to come to council before thou be called. If the secrecy of my cell, or the reverence of my age, or thy small acquaintance with me were not sufficient to hold thee from pressing so nigh, yet seeing me thus solemnly perplexed, thou mightest, for modesty's sake, have left me to my secret and sorrowful passions. If it be the custom of thy country to be so discourteous, I like not the fruit of such a soil; if thy own reckless folly to be thus rash, I crave not to be acquainted with such a bold guest, but whether it be, as thou camest in without my leave, I wish thee to go out by just command.*

He had no sooner uttered these words but he was ready to take up the picture if I had not hindered him with this reply:

*Sir, quoth I, where the offence is confessed, there the fault is half pardoned, and those facts that are committed by ignorance always claim them pardons by course. I grant that I have been too rash, but I repent, and therefore hope you will take the less offence, & the sooner excuse my folly. Faults committed by will gain oft-times but a check; then mine, done by ignorance, shall, I hope, escape without a mate. Penalties are enjoined by the will more than by the work, and things done amiss, saith Tully, ever ought to be measured by the intent, and not by ye mere action, which considered, if my presence hath been prejudicial to your passions, I hope you will think I offended as a stranger, and will pardon me, as one sorry for so rash an enterprise.*

The old man very attentively hearing my talk, having somewhat digested his choler, rising up from his seat made me this friendly answer:

*Friend, quoth he, all is not gold that glisters. The smoothest talk hath oft-times the smallest truth. The sun, when it glistereth most bright, then breedeth the greatest shower. When the boar layeth down his bristles, then he meaneth to strike. The painter casteth*

*the fairest colour over the foulest board, and strangers' flatterings are oft-times but mere fallations, yet whether thy talk be truth or tales, whether thou comest to note my passions as a spy, or hast by chance hit into my cell as a stranger, I care not. For if thou envy me as a foe, I force thee not in that I fear not the spite of fortune; if thou muse at my sudden motions as one desirous to be acquainted with my case, it shall little avail thee to hear it, and be a great grief for me to rehearse it.*

*O, sir, quoth I, if my credit might be such as without desert to obtain so much favour, or if the prayer of a poor stranger might prevail to persuade you to unfold the cause of these your sudden passions, I should think my former travails countervaile[d] with this your friendly courtesy.*

*It is good, indeed, quoth he, by other men's harms to learn to beware. Phoebus had never been so wary of Vulcan if Mars his mishap had not bid him take heed; Ulysses had not so wisely eschewed Circe's charms if he had not seen before his fellows transformed, and perhaps the hearing of my former cares may free thee from ensuing calamity.*

*I have been myself a prince, which am now subject unto power; alate a mighty potentate, and now constrained to live under a servile law; not contented erewhile with a princely palace, now sufficiently satisfied with a poor cell, and yet this present want exceeds my wonted weal. I then had too much in penury, and now I lack in superfluity, being cloyed with abundance (yet having nothing) in that my mind remaineth satisfied. Fortune, yea, fortune in favouring me hath made me most infortunate, siren-like hiding under music, misery; under pleasure, pain; under mirth, mourning; like the sugared honeycomb, which while a man toucheth, he is stung with bees. She presenteth fair shapes which prove but fading shadows; she proffereth mountains, and perhaps keepeth promise, but the gains of those golden mines is loss and misery. None rode on Sejanus' horse which got not mishap; none touched the goal [sic for 'gold'] of Tholossa [=Tolosa] whom some disaster chance did not assail, neither hath any been advanced by fortune which in time hath not been crossed with some hapless calamity.*

*I speak this by experience, which I pray the gods thou never try by proof, for he only is to be thought happy whom the inconstant favour of fortune hath not made happy. The picture which thou seest here is the perfect counterpart of her inconstant conditions, for she, like the polyp fish, turneth herself into the likeness of every object, and with the chameleon taketh her whole delight in change, being sure in nothing but in this, that she is not sure, which inconstancy, after I had known by too much proof, I began to arm myself against her guiles, and to count her fawning flattery and her frowns of no force, not to accept her as a friend but to despise her as a foe, and in despite of her feigned deity to oppose myself against her fickle power, which I have found the greatest shield to shroud me from her secret injuries. I have left my palace, and taken me to a simple cell; in the one I found often displeasure, but in the other never but contentation. From a prince of the earth I am become a priest to the gods, seeking only by this obscure life to please the[m] and displease fortune, whose picture, when I see, I weep that I was so fond as to be subject to such a servile dame, and I laugh that at last I triumph both over mine own affections and over fortune. Thus, friend, since thou hast heard the cause of my*

*care, cease off to inquire farther in the case; pass from my cell and leave me to my passions, for to procure my grief and not thy gain were but to offer me double loss.*

After he had uttered these words, perceiving by his parley that he was a mighty prince, I began with more reverence to excuse my rashness, framing my talk to this effect:

*I am sorry, quoth I, if sorrow might be amends for that which is amiss, that my hasty folly hath offended your Highness, and that my poor presence hath been prejudicial to your princely passions, but since the fault once committed may be repented but not reclaimed, I hope your Highness will pardon my unwitting wilfulness, and take had-I-wist for an excuse of so sudden an offence, which granted, the desire I have to hear of your strange hap do make me pass manners in being importunate with your Majesty to hear the tragical chance of this your strange change.*

*Well, quoth he, since thy desire is such, and time allows me convenient leisure, sit down and thou shalt hear what trust there is to be given to inconstant fortune.*

Arbasto.

I was, quoth he, until I waxed weary of my diadem, king of the famous country of Denmark, wherein after Bosphorus deceased, for so was my father called, I reigned in happy prosperity, coming to the crown at the age of one and twenty years, being so honoured of my subjects for my virtue and so loved for my courtesy as I did not only gain the hearts of mine own countrymen, but also win the goodwill of strangers. I could not complain of lack in that my greatest want was store. I feared not the force of foreign foes, for I knew none but were my faithful friends. I doubted no misfortune, for I could see no way for me to mishap; nay, if I had been wise, I might the more have feared misery in that I was so fully pampered up with felicity. But I, poor wretch, was not daunted with any dread because I saw no present danger; I thought, the sea being calm, there could come no tempest, that from the clear air could ensue no storm, that quiet ease was not the mother of dissention, and that where fortune once tuned, in the strings could never be found any discord.

But, O fond and infortunate Arbasto, for so is my name, and therefore infortunate in that thou art Arbasto, thou now hast tried, though by [sic for 'through thy?'] hapless experience, that when Nilus filled up his bounds, ensued a dearth; when the angelica is laden with most seed, then he dieth; when music was heard in the Capitol, then the Romans were plagued with pestilence; when Circes [=Circe] proffered most gifts, she pretended most guile, and that when fortune hath deprived thee of most care, then she means to drown thee in the greatest calamity, for as thus I safely floated in the seas of security and bathed in the streams of bliss, fortune, thinking at length to give me the mate, began thus to proffer the check.

I having but one only brother called Tebaldo, whom forced by nature I most entirely loved and liked, who sojourning in France, as one desirous to see the manners of strange countries and to furnish himself with all qualities fit for a worthy gentleman, I unhappily

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received news that he was cowardly without cause slain in the French court, which so appalled my senses as nature most cruelly exclaimed against fortune, insomuch that, scorched with the flame of speedy revenge, contrary to the counsel of my nobles, with a resolute mind I determined to invade France, and either to bring the whole realm to ruin, or else to hazard life and limb in the battle. Well, no persuasion being able to drive me from this settled determination, I caused my ships to be rigged, and with as much speed as might be, sailed into France with a great navy, where I had no sooner landed my soldiers, but as a professed foe craving no other recompense for my brother's death but their destruction, I burned their borders, fired their forts, rased their towns and cities to the earth, using no mercy but in this, that having deprived them of their possessions, I also bereaved them of their lives.

Pelorus, hearing with what violence I had invaded his land (for so the French King was called), fearing that he was not able to withstand my force seeing that fortune so favoured my enterprise, passed speedily with his whole host unto Orleans, whither I hasted without any great resistance, laying valiantly a strait siege to the city, which after I had divers times assaulted, & had so shaken the walls with cannon-shot that they were forced to strengthen them with new countermures, Pelorus, half daunted with my desperate attempts, coveted secretly to conclude a peace. To colour therefore this his intent with a false shadow, he speedily dispatched an herald to entreat a truce of 3 months, which being unhappily granted, and therefore unhappily because granted, it was lawful for them of Denmark peaceably to pass into the city, and for them of Orleans quietly to come into our camp.

While thus the truce continued, I, being desirous to take a view of the French court, accompanied with my nobles went to Pelorus, who willing to show his martial courage by using courtesy to his foe, gave me very sumptuous and friendly entertainment. But alas, such disaster hap ensued of this my fond desire that death had been thrice more welcome than such endless distress. For Pelorus had only two daughters, the eldest called Myrania, the youngest named Doralicia, so fair and well featured as Venus would have been jealous if Adonis had lived to see their beauties, but especially lovely Doralicia, and therefore more lovely because I so entirely loved, was so beautified with the gifts of nature and so adorned with more than earthly perfection as she seemed to be framed by nature to blemish nature, and that beauty had skipped beyond her skill in framing a piece of such curious workmanship, for that which in her (respecting her other perfections) was of no price would be counted in others a pearl, her greatest want would in others be thought a store, so that if anything lacked in her, it was not to be sought for in any earthly creature.

This Doralicia, being appointed by unjust fortune to be the instrument of my fall, accompanied with her sister Myrania and other ladies, came into the chamber where her father and I was in parle, whose gorgeous presence so appalled my senses that I stood astonished, as if with Perseus' shield I had been made a senseless picture, not knowing from whence this sudden & uncertain passion should proceed, yet this fond affection I felt to rule my fancy, that as the dormouse cannot shut his eye as long as he lieth in the beam of ye sun, as the deer cannot cease from braying where the herb moly groweth, so



could not I but stare on the face of Doralicia as long as her beauty was such an heavenly object. She, narrowly marking my gazing looks, straight perceived that I was galled, and therefore, to show how lightly she accounted of my liking, passed out of the chamber with a coy and courtly countenance, but Myrania, as one perceiving and pitying my passions, seemed with her looks to say in heart: *Arbasto, farewell.*

These two goddesses being gone, feeling my mind somewhat perplexed, I took my leave of Pelorus and departed. Coming home to my tent, fraught with a thousand toyish fancies, I began to conjecture what should be the cause of these contrary motions. The effects I felt; the occasion I could not find. Applying therefore a contrary salve to my sore, it did rather increase than cure the malady, for company was a corrosive, not a comfort. Thinking music should be a preservative, I found it a poison, and to be solitary, I found it the sink of all sorrow, for then strange thoughts, unacquainted passions, pinching fantasies, waking visions and slumbering watchings disquieted my head. Methought I saw the counterfeit of Doralicia before mine eyes; then the harmony of her speech sounded in mine ears; her looks, her gestures, yea, all her actions were particularly deciphered by a secret imagination. Wrapped thus in a labyrinth of endless fancies, when reason could not suppress will, nor wisdom control affection, but that wit (though inveigled) yet disdained the use of a guide, I then cast my cards and found by manifest proof that the lunatic fit which so distempered my brains was that frantic passion which fools and poets call love, which known, blaming myself of cowardice, that beauty should make me bend, I fell at last into these terms:

*Why, Arbasto, quoth I, art thou so squeamish that thou canst not see wine but thou must surfeit? Canst thou not draw nigh the fire and warm thee but thou must with Satyrus kiss it and burn thee? Art thou so little master of thy affections that if thou gaze on a picture thou must with Pygmalion be passionate? Canst thou not pass through Paphos but thou must offer to Venus? Does thou think it injury to Cupid to look if thou dost not love? Ah, fond fool, know this: fire is to be used, but not to be handled; the baaran flower is to be worn in the hand, not chawed in the mouth; the precious stone echites is to be applied outwardly, not to be taken inwardly, and beauty is made to feed the eye, not to fetter the heart. Wilt thou than swallow up the bait which thou knowest to be bane? Wilt thou hazard at that which cannot be had without harm? No, stretch not too far, wade not too deep. Use beauty, but serve it not; shake the tree, but taste not of the fruit, lest thou find it too hard to be digested.*

*Why, but beauty is a god, and will be obeyed; love looketh to command, not to be conquered. Juno strove but once with Venus, and she was vanquished; Jupiter resisted Cupid, but he went by the worst. It is hard for thee with the crab to swim against the stream, or with the salamander to strive against the fire, for in wrestling with a fresh wound, thou shalt but make the sore more dangerous. Can beauty, fond fool, be resisted, which make[s] the gods to bow? Love himself yielded to the feature of Psyche, and thinkest thou thy fancy of greater force?*

*Yea, but what fondness is this, Arbasto, to soothe thyself in thy folly? Thou didst come a captain, and wilt thou return a captive? Thy intent was to conquer, not to be vanquished;*

*to fight with the lance, not to be foiled with love; to use thy spear, not thy pen; to challenge Mars, not to dally with Venus. How dost thou think to subdue France, which canst not rule thine own affections? Art thou able to quail a kingdom, which canst not quell thine own mind? No, it will be hard for thee to go in triumph, which art not so much as lord of thyself. But Arbasto, if thou wilt needs love, use it as a toy to pass away the time, which thou mayest take up at thy lust, and lay down at thine own pleasure. Love? Why Arbasto, does thou dream? Whom shouldst thou love? Doralicia? What, thy foe, one that wisheth thy mishap, and partly prayeth to the gods for thy misfortune? No, sure thou art not so fond.*

And with that, as I uttered these words, such thoughts, such sighs, such sobs, such tears assailed me as I was stricken dumb with the extremity of these hellish passions, scarce being able to draw my breath for a good space, till at last recovering my senses, I fell to my former sorrow in this sort:

*Yes, alas, Arbasto, it is the luckless love of Doralicia, and therefore the more luckless because thou lovest Doralicia, that hath thus enchanted thy affections. She is not thy friend whom thou mayest hope to get, but thy foe, whom thou art sure not to gain, for dost thou think she will requite thy merit with meed, or repay thy love with liking? No, she hateth thee, Arbasto, as sworn Pelorus' foe, and her enemy. Can she love thee which seekest her father's life? Nay, did she love, yet could she think thou dost like, which layest siege to her city? No, unless by love she were blinded with too much love. Sith then to fancy thy foe is with the cockatrice to peck against the steel, subdue thy affections, be master of thy mind, use will as thy subject, not as thy sovereign; so mayest thou triumph, and laugh at Cupid, saying: Fond boy, I was in love; what then?*

I had no sooner sealed up these secret meditations with a sorrowful sigh, but lest being solitary I should fall into farther dumps, I went out of my tent to pass away the time with some pleasant parle, thinking this the fittest means to drive away idle fancies, hoping that hot love would be soon cold, that the greatest bavin was but a blaze, and that the most violent storm was ever least permanent.

Well, to see how love and fortune can play false when they list, I was not so drowned in desires toward Doralicia as poor Myrania burned with affection towards me. For Venus, willing to show she was a woman by her wilful contrarities, so fired her fancies with the form of my feature as the poor lady was perplexed with a thousand sundry passions. One while she sought with hate to rase out love, but that was with the deer to feed against the wind; another while she devised which way to gain her desire, but then, alas, she heaped coals upon her head, for she saw no spark of hope to procure so good hap. Driven thus into sundry dumps, she fell as last into these terms:

*Alas, Myrania, quoth she, happy, yea thrice happy are those maids which are born in the isle Meroe, which in their virginity are suffered to see none but him whom they shall marry, and being wives are forbidden by the law to see any man but their husband until they be past fifty. In this country, Myrania, beauty is used as a natural gift, not honoured as a supernatural god, and they love only one because love cannot force them to like any*

*other, so that they sow their love in joy, and reap it in pleasure. Would God thou hadst been born on this soil, or brought up in the same sort; so shouldst thou have triumphed over beauty as a slave, which now leadeth thee as a servile captive.*

*O infortunate Myrania, and therefore infortunate because Myrania, hast thou so little force to withstand fancy as at the first alarm thou must yield to affection? Canst thou not look with Salmacis but thou must love? Canst thou not see with Smylax but thou must sigh? Canst thou not view Narcissus with Echo but thou must be vowed to his beauty? Learn, learn, fond fool by others' mishaps to beware, for she that loveth in haste oft-times, nay always, repenteth at leisure. The Hippianes, anointing themselves in the fat of the fish mugra, pass through most furious flames without any peril. The people called Psilli, as long as they sacrifice unto Vesta, can be hurt with no venomous serpents. Telephus, as long as he wore ye counterfeit of Pallas' shield, was invulnerable, and thou, as long as thy mind is fraught with the chaste thoughts of Diana, canst never be fired with the hapless flame of Venus. Arm thyself with reason, and thou mayest pass through Cytheria [=Cythera] without danger; let thy will and wit be directed with advised counsel, and thou mayest say: Cupid, I defy thee.*

*Ah, Myrania, things are soon promised, but not so easily performed; it is easy to sound the victory, but passing hard to obtain the conquest. All can say: I would overcome, but few or none return with triumph. Beauty is therefore to be obeyed because it is beauty, and love to be feared of men because honoured of the gods. Dare reason abide the brunt when beauty bids the battle? Can wisdom win the field when love is captain? No, no, love is without law, and therefore above all law, honoured in heaven, feared in earth, and a very terror to the infernal ghosts. Bow, then, unto that, Myrania, whereunto lawless necessity doth bend; be not so fond as with Xerxes to bind the ocean sea in fetters. Fight not with ye Rascians against ye wind; seek not with them of Scyrus to shoot against the stars. Contend not with Niobe against Latona, nor strive not with Sappho against Venus, for love, being a lord, looks to command by power, and to be obeyed by force.*

*Truth, Myrania, but what then? To love is easy, & perhaps good, but to like well is hard, & a doubtful chance. Fan[c]y thy fill, fond fool, so thou bend not thy affection to thy fath[er]'s foe, for to love him who seeks his life is to war against nature & fortune. Is there none worthy to be thy fere but Arbasto, that cursed enemy to thy country? Can none win thy goodwill but the bloody wretch who seeketh to breed thy father's bane? Can the eagle and the bird osiphage [=ossifrage?] build in one tree? Will the falcon & the dove covet to sit on one perch? Will the ape & the bear be tied in one tether? Will the fox & the lamb lie in one den? No, they want reason, & yet nature suffers them not to live against nature. Wilt thou then be so wilful or witless, as having reason to guide nature, yet to be more unnatural than unreasonable creatures? Be sure, if thou fall in this thou strivest against the gods, & in striving with them, look for a most sharp revenge.*

*Tush, I know this, but hath not love set down his sentence, & shall I appeal from his censure? Shall I deny that which ye destinies have decreed? No, for though Cydippe [=Cydippe] rebelled for a time, yet she was forced at last to make suit to Venus for a pardon, & I may seek to hate Arbasto, but never find where to begin to dislike him.*

And with that, such fiery passions oppressed her as she was fain to send forth scalding sighs somewhat to ease her inflamed fancy, which being sorrowfully sobbed forth, she had begun afresh to pour forth her pitiful complaints if her sister Doralice, being accompanied with other gentlewomen, had not driven her out of these dumps, whom she no sooner spied, but leaving her passions she waxed pleasant, covering care with conceits, & a mourning heart with a merry countenance, lest her sorrowful looks might give ye company occasion to conjecture somewhat was amiss.

But I, alas, which felt ye furious flames of fancy to broil incessantly within my breast, could not so cunningly dissemble my passions but all my peers saw I was perplexed, for whereas before this sudden chance Pelorus' misfortune procured my mirth, now the foil which I reaped by affection drave me to a deeper misery. In ye day (to the increasing of my care), I spent the time in solitary dumps; in the night, affected thoughts & visions suffered me scarce to slumber, for alas, there is no greater enemy to the mind than in love to live without hope, which doubt was the sum of my endless sorrow, that in seeing myself fettered I could see no hope at all of my freedom. Yet to mitigate my misery, I thought to walk from ye camp toward the city, that I might at the least feed my eye with the sight of that place wherein the mistress of my heart was harboured, taking with me only for companion a duke of my country called Egerio, unto whom I durst best commit my secret affairs, who noting my unaccustomed passions, conjecturing the cause of my care by the outward effects, coveting carefully to apply a salve to my sore and to drive me from such drowsy thoughts, wakened me from my dumps with this pleasant devise:

*Sir, quoth he, I have often marvelled, and yet cannot cease to muse at the madness of those men whom the common people think to honour with the glorious title of lovers, who when rashly they purchase their own mishap in placing their affection where either their disability or the destinies deny success to their suits, do either pass their days in endless dolour, or prevent misery by untimely death. If these passionate patients listened as little to Venus' allurements as I to Cupid's flatteries, few men should have cause to call the gods unjust, or women cruel, for I think of love as Mylciades [=Miltiades?] the Athenian did, who was wont to say that of all the plagues wherewith the gods did afflict mortal men, love was the greatest, in that they sought that as an heavenly bliss which at last they found their fatal bane.*

Hearing Egerio thus cunningly and covertly to touch me at the quick, thought to dally with him in this wise:

*Why Egerio, quoth I, dost thou count it a madness to love, or dost thou think him rash which yieldeth unto affection? Knowest thou not that love is divine, and therefore commandeth by power, and that he enjoineth by destiny & cannot be resisted? I am not of that mind with Mylciades [=Miltiades?] that love is a plague, but rather I think he is favoured of ye gods that is a happy lover.*

*Truth, quoth he, but who is happy in love? He that hath the happiest success? No, for I count him most unhappy which in love is most happy.*

*Why then, Egerio, quoth I, thou thinkest him unhappy in that he loveth.*

*Or else, may it please your Highness, quoth he, I should think amiss, for shall I count him fortunate which for one dram of prosperity reapeth a whole pound of misery, or shall I esteem that lover happy whose greatest gain is but golden grief? Nay, that is never to be called pleasure which is sauced with pain, nor that good luck whose guerdon is loss.*

*Sith, Egerio, quoth I, thou dost thus broadly blaspheme against Cupid, tell me why thou thinkest ill of love.*

*Because, sir, quoth he, it is love, being such a frantic frenzy which so infecteth the minds of men as under ye taste of nectar they are poisoned with the water of Styx, for as he which was charmed by Lara sought still to hear her enchantment, or as the deer, after once he browseth on the tamarisk-tree will not be driven away till he dieth, so our amorous lovers have their senseless senses so besotted with the power of this lascivious god that they count not themselves happy but in their supposed unhappiness, being at most ease in disquiet, at greatest rest when they are most troubled, seeking contentation in care, delight in misery, and hunting greedily after that which always bringeth endless harm.*

*This is but your sentence, Egerio, quoth I, but what reasons have you to confirm your censure?*

*Such, quoth he, as your Highness can neither mislike nor infringe, for the first step to love is the loss of liberty, tying the mind to the will of her who, either too curious, little respecteth his suit, or too coy, smally regardeth his service, yet he is so blinded with the veil of fond affection that he counteth her sullenness, soberness; her vain chariness, virtuous chastity; if she be wanton, he counteth her witty; if too familiar, courteous, so besotted with the drugs of doting love that every fault is a virtue, and though every string be out of tune, yet the music cannot sound amiss, resembling Tamantus the painter, who shadowed the worst pictures with the freshest colours.*

*The pains that lovers take for hunting after loss, if their minds were not charmed with some secret enchantment, were able either to keep their fancies from being inflamed, or else to cool desire, being already kindled, for the days are spent in thoughts, the nights in dreams, both in danger, either beguiling us of that we had, or promising us that we have not, the head fraught with fantasies, fired with jealousy, troubled with both. Yea, so many inconveniences wait upon love as to reckon them all were infinite, and to taste but one of them intolerable, being always begun with grief, continued with sorrow, and ended with death, for it is a pain shadowed with pleasure, and a joy stuffed with misery. So that I conclude, that as none never saw the altars of Basyris [=Bassareus?] with[+out] sorrow, nor banqueted with Pholus without surfeiting, so as impossible it is to deal with Cupid and not gain either speedy death or endless danger.*

As I was ready to reply to Egerio's reasons, drawing to a small thicket of trees which was hard adjoining to the city, I spied where some of the French dames were friendly sitting about a clear fountain, of whom, after I had taken a narrow view, I easily perceived they were 3 ladies (accompanied only with one page), namely Myrania, Doralice, & their nurse called Madam Vecchia, which sudden sight so appalled my senses as if I had been appointed a new judge to the three goddesses in the valley of Ida. Yet seeing before my eyes the mistress of my thoughts, and the saint unto whom I did owe my devotion, I began to take heart at grace, thinking that by this fit opportunity love and fortune began to favour my enterprise. Willing therefore not to permit [sic for 'omit?'] so good an occasion, I boldly paced to them, whom I saluted in this sort:

*Fair ladies, quoth I, the sight of your surpassing beauty so dazzled my eyes as at the first I was in doubt whether I should honour you as heavenly nymphs or salute you as earthly creatures, but as I was in this dump, I readily called to mind the figure of your divine faces, which being at my coming to your father's court by some secret influence most surely imprinted in my fancy, I have hitherto without any spark of forgetfulness perfectly retained, feeling ever since in my heart such strange passions and unaccustomed devotion to your beauty and virtues as I would think the gods and fortune did favour me if either I might find occasion to manifest my affection, or live to do you service.*

Doralice, hearing me thus strangely to salute her, although she saw herself in the hands of her father's foe, yet as nothing dismayed, with a coy countenance she gave me this crabbish answer:

*Sir, quoth she, if at the first look you took us for nymphs by the perfection of our divine beauty, it seemeth unto us that either your women in Denmark are very foul, or your sight sore blemished since your coming into France, for we know our imperfections far unworthy of such dissembled praise. But Diomedes smiled most when he pretended greatest mischief; Syron [=Scyron?] entertained his guests best when he mean to entreat them worst; Lycaon feasted Jupiter when he sought to betray him; the hyena ever fawneth at her prey; the sirens sing when they mean to enchant; Circes [=Circe] is most pleasant when she presenteth poison, and so you, in praising our beauty, seek to spill our blood; in extolling our perfection, to make us most imperfect; in wishing openly our weal, secretly to work our death and destruction. For we are not so inveigled with self-love, nor so senseless to conceive but that we think he little favoureth the stems that cutteth down the old stock; he little respecteth the twig that tendereth not the root; & he lightly loveth the child that deadly hateth the father. Polyxena counted Achilles a flatterer because he continued the siege against Troy; Cressid therefore forsook Troilus because he warred against the Grecians, & we cannot count him a privy friend which is our open foe.*

*Why, madam, quoth I, did not Tarpeia favour Tatius, though a foe to Rome? Did not Scylla respect Minos though he besieged Nisus?*

*Truth, sir, quoth Myrania, but the gains they got was perpetual shame and endless discredit, for the one was slain by the Sabines, ye other rejected by Minos. The young*

*fawns cannot abide to look on the tiger; the halcyons are no sooner hatched, but they hate the eagle; Andromache would never trust the fair speeches of Pyrrhus, nor Dido laugh when she saw Hierbas [=Hiarbas?] smile. Where the party is known for a professed foe, there suspicious hate ensueth of course, & fond were that person that would think well of him that proffereth poison, though in a golden pot.*

*Madam, quoth I, [+I?] know it is hard where mistrust is harboured to infer belief, or to procure credit where his truth is called in question, but I wish no better success to happen to myself than in heart I do imagine to you all, swearing by the gods that I do honour your beauties & virtues so much that if I had won the conquest and you were my captives, yet I would honour you as my sovereigns, and obey you as a loving subject.*

*But I pray God, quoth Madam Vecchia, you have never occasion to show us such favour, or we cause to stand to your courtesy, for I doubt we should find your glowing heat turned to a chilling cold, and your great promises to small performance. In the meantime (and with that she took Myrania and Doralicia by the hands), we will leave you to return to the camp, and we will repair to the city, willing to give you thanks for your goodwill when we find you a friend, and not before.*

*Nay, madam, quoth I, not so, for construe of my meaning how you please, or accept of my company how you list, I will not be so discourteous to leave you so slenderly guided as in the guard of this little page. And with that, taking Doralicia by the hand, willing not to let slip so fit opportunity, I began to court her on this manner:*

*The choice is hard, Madam Doralice, quoth I, where the party is compelled either by silence to die with grief, or by unfolding his mind to live with shame, yet so sweet is the desire of life, and so bitter the passions of love that I am enforced to prefer an unseemly suit before an untimely death. Loath am I to speak, and in despair I am to speed, in the one showing myself a coward, in the other weighing mine own case. For considering what love is, I faint, and thinking how I am counted a foe, I fear. But sith where love commandeth, there it is folly to resist, so it is, madam, that intending to be a victor, I am become a vassal; coming to conquer, I am caught a captive; seeking to bring other into thrall, alas, I have lost mine own liberty. Your heavenly beauty hath brought me into bondage; your exquisite perfection hath snared my freedom; your virtuous qualities hath subdued my mind, as only your courtesy may free me from care, or your cruelty cross me with calamity. To recount the sorrows I have sustained since I first was inveigled with thy beauty, or the service I have vowed unto thy virtue, since thou dost count my talk, though never so true, but as mere toys, were rather to breed in thee an admiration than a belief. But this I added [sic for 'avow'?] for the time, which the end shall try for a truth, that so faithful is my affection, and so loyal is my love, that if thou take not pity of my passions, either my life shall be too short, or my misery too long.*

Doralicia, hearing attentively my talk, oft-times changed colour, as one in great choler, being so inflamed with a melancholic kind of hate as she was not of a long time able to utter one word, yet at last, with a face full of fury, she burst forth into these despitiful terms:

*Why, Arbasto, quoth she, art thou of late become frantic, or dost thou think me in a frenzy? Hast thou been bitten with the serpent amphisbena, which procureth madness, or dost thou suppose me fraught with some lunatic fits? For thy speech makes me think either thou art troubled with the one, or that thou counts me cumbered with the other. If this thy poisoned parle were in jest, it was too broad, weighing the case; if in earnest, too bad, considering the person, for to talk of peace amidst the pikes showeth either a coward or a counterfeit, and to sue for love by hate, either frenzy or folly. It is a mad hare, Arbasto, that will be caught with a tabor, a greedy fish that cometh to a bare hook, a blind goose that runneth to the fox's sermon, and she a loving fool that stoopeth to her enemy's lure. No, no, think I am not so fond, or at least hope not to find me so foolish as with Phryne to fancy Cecrops, with Harpalice to like Archemorus, with Scylla to love Minos, with careless minions so far to forget mine honour, mine honesty, my parents & my country as to love, nay not deadly to hate him which is a foe to the least of these, for experience teacheth me that the fairer the stone is in the toad's head, the more pestilent is the poison in her bowels; the brighter the serpent's scales be, the more infectious is her breath; and the talk of an enemy, the more it is seasoned with delight, the more it savoureth of despite. Cease then to seek for love where thou shalt find nothing but hate, for assure thyself, if thou didst fancy as faithfully as thou dost flatter falsely, yet the guerdon for thy love should be only this, that I will pray incessantly to the gods in thy life to pester thee with earthy torments, and after death, to plague thee with hellish tortures.*

Although these bitter blasts of Doralicia had been a sufficient cooling card to quench fond affection, yet as the cold water causeth the sea-coal to burn more freshly, so her spiteful terms far more inflamed my desire that I made her this friendly reply:

*Alas, madam, weigh my case with equity; if you hate me as I am a foe to Pelorus, yet favour me as I am a friend to Doralicia. If you loathe me as a conqueror of your country, yet pity me as I am a captive to your beauty. If you vouchsafe not to listen to the lure of your enemy, yet hear the passionate complaints of a perplexed lover, who leading others in triumph, yet he himself liveth in most hapless servitude. If I have done amiss, Doralicia, I will make amends; if I have committed a fault, I will both requite it and recompense it. As I have been thy father's foe, so I will be his faithful friend; as I have sought his bale, so I will procure his bliss; yea, I will go against the hair in all things, so I may please thee in anything.*

But as I was about to make a longer discourse, she cut me off in this wise:

*In faith, sir, quoth she, so well I do like you that you cannot more displease me than in seeking to please me, for if I knew no other cause to hate thee, yet this would suffice, that I cannot but dislike thee. Be therefore my father's friend or his foe, like him or hate him, yet this assure thyself, I will never love thee.*

And with that she flung from me in a great chafe. Reply I could not, for by this we were come to the gates of the city, where (though unwilling), I took my leave of them in this sort:



*I am sorry, ladies, that such is my luck, and so unhappy is my lot, that in offering myself a companion I have greatly offended you with my company, yet since I cannot strive against chance, I think myself happy that fortune hath honoured me with the fruition of your presence, hoping when time shall try my words no tales but truth, you will at least make me amends with crying peccau. In the meanwhile, I commit you to the tuition of the gods, praying fortune rather to plague me with all mishap than to cross you with any chip of mischance.*

The thanks I had for this my friendly courtesy was a coy disdainful look of Doralicia, and a churlish *Vale* of the old trot Vecchia, but Myrania, as one stung with the prick of fancy, bade me farewell with a more courteous close:

*If, sir, quoth she, the secret intent of your friendship had been agreeable to the outward manner of your courtesy, we had without rubbing our memories ere this yielded you great thanks for your company, but sith you greet us with a Judas kiss, we think we have small cause to gratify you for your kindness; notwithstanding, lest you should accuse us wholly of discourtesy, we say we thank you, whatsoever we think. And with that she cast on me such a loving look as she seemed to play loath to depart.*

Well, they now returning to the court, and I now retiring to the camp feeling myself deeply perplexed, yet as much as I could dissembled my passions, willing in love not to be counted a lover, jesting therefore with Egerio, I thus began to draw him on:

*How now, Egerio, quoth I, hath not the beauty of these fair ladies brought you from your fond heresy? Will you not be content for blaspheming of love in penance to carry a burning faggot before Cupid? Methought your eyes were gazing, wheresoever your heart was gadding. But tell me in good troth, is not Doralicia worthy to be loved?*

*Yes, sir, quoth he, if she were not Doralicia, for as she is beautiful, she is liked of all, but as she is Pelorus' daughter, not to be desired of Arbasto, lest in seeking to gain her love, he getteth that which he least looketh for.*

*Why, Egerio, quoth I, what ill luck can ensue of love when I mean not to venture but upon trust, nor to trust without sufficient trial?*

*Such, quoth he, as happened to Achilles by Polyxena, and yet he feared Priamus. But alas, sir, I sigh to think and I sorrow to see that reason should yield to affection, liberty to love, freedom to fancy; that Venus should bear the target, and Mars the distaff; that Omphale should handle the club, and Hercules the spindle; that Alexander should crouch, and Campaspe be coy; that a warlike mind should yield to a little wavering beauty; and that a prince whose prowess could not be subdued, should of love become subject at the first shot.*

*What, Egerio, quoth I, knowest thou not that he whom no mortal creature can control, love can command; that no dignity is able to resist Cupid's deity? Achilles was*

*invulnerable, yet wounded by fancy; Hercules not to be conquered of any, yet quickly vanquished by affection; Mars able to resist Jupiter, but not to withstand beauty. Love is not only kindled in the eye by desire, but engraven in the mind by destiny, which neither reason can eschew, nor wisdom expel.*

*The more pity, quoth he, for poor men, and the greater impiety in the gods, that in giving love free liberty they granted him a lawless privilege. But since Cupid will be obeyed, and Arbasto is willing to be obedient, would God love had either aimed amiss, or else had not made Doralicia the mart [sic for 'mark'?).*

I, not willing that Egerio should be privy to my passions, told him that what I spoke was in jest, and that if ever I did fancy, as yet I knew not what it meant; I would use love as the Persians did the sun, who in the morning honour it as a god, and at noontide curse it as a devil. Concealing thus my care, the covered sparks burst into great flames, that coming to my tent, I was forced to cast myself upon my bed, where I sobbed forth sorrowfully these words:

*Alas, Arbasto, how art thou perplexed! Thou both livest in ill hap, and lovest without hope. Thou burnest in desire, and art cooled with disdain. Thou art bidden to the feast by love, and art beaten with the spit by beauty. But what then, dost thou count it care which thou sufferest for Doralicia, who shameth Venus for her hue, and staineth Diana for her chastity?*

*Yea, but Arbasto, the more beauty she hath, ye more pride, and the more virtue, the more preciseness. None must play on Mercury's pipe but Orpheus, none rule Lucifer but Phoebus, none wear Venus in a tablet but Alexander, nor none enjoy Doralicia but such a one as far exceedeth thee in person and parentage. Thou seest she hath denied thy suit, disdained thy service, lightly respected thy love, and finally [sic for 'smally'?] regarded thy liking, only promising this, while she lives to be thy protested foe.*

*And what then, fond fool, wilt thou shrink for an April shower? Knowest thou not that a denial at the first is a grant, and a gentle answer a flattering flout, that the more they seem at ye first to loathe, the more they love at the last? Is not Venus painted catching at the ball with her hands which she seemeth to spurn at with her foot? Doth not the myrrh-tree, being hewn, yield no sap, which not moved, poureth forth syrup, and women, being wooed, deny that which of themselves they most earnestly desire? The stone sandastra is not so hard but, being beat in the fire, it may be wrought; no ivory so tough but, seasoned with zutho, it may be engraven; no hawk so haggard which in time may not be called to the lure, nor no woman so wilful which by some means may not be won. Hope the best, then, and be bold, for love and fortune careth not for cowards.*

*Tush, Arbasto, what needest thou pine thus in hapless passions, or seek for that with sorrow which thou mayest obtain with a small suit? Raise but thy siege, grant but conditions of peace, show but a friendly countenance to Pelorus, and he neither will nor dare deny thee his daughter Doralicia. Do this, then, Arbasto. Nay, I will do it, and that*

*with speed, for now I agree to Tully that it is good Iniquissimam pacem iustissimo bello anteponeere [=To place the most iniquitous peace before the most unjust war].*

Well, being resolved upon this point, I felt my mind disburdened of a thousand cares wherewith before I was clogged, feeding myself with the hope of that pleasure which, when I enjoyed, should recompense my former pain.

But alas, poor Myrania could not feel one minute of such ease, for she uncessantly turned the stone with Sisyphus, rolled on the wheel with Ixion, and filled the bottomless tubs with Belydes, insomuch that when she could find no means to mitigate her malady, she fell into these bitter complaints:

*Ah, Myrania, ah wretched wench, Myrania, how art thou without reason which sufferest reason to yield unto appetite, wisdom unto sensual will, and a free mind unto servile love, but I perceive when the vine riseth, it wreatheth about the elm, when the hop groweth high, it hath need of a pole, and when virgins wax in years, they follow that which belongeth to their youth: love. Love, yea, but they love expecting some good hap, and I, alas, both love and live without all hope, for Arbasto is my foe, and yet if he were my friend, he liketh not me; he looketh only upon Doralicia. Sith, then, Myrania, thou art pinched, and hast none to pity thy passions, dissemble thy love, though it shorten thy life, for better it were to die with grief than live with shame. The spring is full of water, yet is not seen. The leaf of ye tree alpyna, though it be wet, looketh always dry, and a wise lover, be she never so much tormented, behaveth herself as though she were not touched. Yea, but fire cannot be hidden in the flax without smoke, nor musk in the bosom without smell, nor love in the breast without suspicion. Why, then, seek some means to manifest thy love to Arbasto, for as the stone draconites can by no means be polished unless the lapidary burn it, so thy mind can by no medicine be cured unless Arbasto ease it. Alas, Arbasto; sweet Arbasto!*

And with that she fetched such a groaning sight that one of her maids came into the chamber, who by her presence putting her from her passions, sat so long by till, tired with drowsy thoughts, she fell in a slumber.

Fortune frowning thus upon her (as I supposed) and fawning upon me, I set my foot on the fairest sands, although at last I found them most fickle, thinking I must needs tread the measures right when fortune piped ye dance, but though I threw at all, yet my chance was hard, for Pelorus, trifling for truce, pretended treason; making a show of fear, sought subtly how to overthrow me by deceit, saying that in ruling of empires there is required as great policy as prowess; in governing an estate, close cruelty doth more good than open clemency; for the obtaining of a kingdom as well mischief as mercy is to be practiced; that better he had commit an inconvenience in breaking his oath than suffer a mischief by keeping his promise. Setting down the staff therefore on this secure perjury, thus it fell out.

After two or three days were past, accompanied only with Egerio and a few of my guard, I went to Orleans, determining both to conclude a peace and to demand Doralicia in

marriage, where no sooner I arrived and was entered into the gates of the city but I found Pelorus and all his men in arms, which sight so appalled my senses that I stood as one transformed, fearing that which presently I found true, for Pelorus, having his force inflamed with furious choler, commanded his captains to lay hold on me and to carry me to close prison, swearing that no less than the loss of life should mitigate his fury. And raging in this choler, after he had lodged me up in limbo, he went with all his army to the camp, where finding my soldiers secure, as men little doubting such mishap, he made such a monstrous and merciless slaughter as of fifty thousand he left few alive; those which remained he plagued with all kind of slavery. Returning home with this shameful triumph, he commanded that in the midst of the city there should be made a great scaffold, whereupon within ten days I should be executed. These heavy and hapless news being come to my ears, such sorrowful passions perplexed my mind as after floods of brinish tears, I burst forth into these bitter terms:

*O infortunate Arbasto, quoth I, and therefore the more infortunate because Arbasto, art thou not worthy of this mishap, which wilfully sought thy own misery? Canst thou accuse the gods, which didst strive against the gods? Canst thou condemn fortune, which hast warred against nature and fortune? No, no, in suffering reason to yield unto appetite, wisdom unto will, and wit unto affection, thou hast procured thine own death, and thy soldiers' destruction. Love, yea, love it is that hath procured thy loss, beauty that hath bred thy bale, fancy that hath given thee the foil, and thine own witless will that hath wrought thy woe. The more is thy pain, and the less thou art to be pitied. Was there [-there] none to like but Doralicia? None to choose but thy foe? None to love but thy enemy? O vile wretch, fraught with careless folly!*

And with that, as I was ready to exclaim against my curzed [sic] destiny, I heard the prison door open, where I saw presently to enter Myrania, Doralicia and Madam Vecchia, who seeing me sit in such sorrowful dumps, began to smile at my dolour and to laugh at my mishap which wilfully thrust myself into such misery. Thinking therefore to aggravate my grief by rubbing afresh my sore, Doralice began to gall me on this sort:

*Hearing, Arbasto, quoth she, that you were come to prosecute your suit, playing the good captain that for the first foil giveth not over the field, I thought good to give you a smiling look in recompense of your flattering love, lest if I should not be so courteous to so kind a gentleman, the world should account me ingrateful.*

*Truth, sister, quoth Myrania, it seems he is a passing amorous lover, but it is pity he hath very ill luck. He chooseth his chaffer well, but yet is an unskilful chapman, for if he buy at such an unreasonable rate, he is like (sell how he can) to live by the loss.*

*Tush, quoth Madam Vecchia, he playeth like the dragon, who sucking blood out of the elephant, killeth him, and with the same poisoneth herself; so Arbasto, seeking to betray others, is himself taken in the trap, a just reward for so unjust dealing, and a fit revenge for so reckless an enemy.*

*And yet, quoth Doralicia, his purpose hath taken small place, for whatsoever his mind was, his malice hath wanted might, wherein he resembleth the serpent porphirius, who is full of poison, but being toothless, hurteth none but himself. Surely whatsoever his chance be, he hath made a very good choice, for he preferreth sweet love before bitter death, & the hope of everlasting fame before the fear of momentary misfortune. He shall now for his constancy be canonized in Denmark for a saint, & his subjects may boast and say that Arbasto, our king, died for love.*

Egerio, seeing that extremity of grief would not suffer me to utter one word, not able any longer to abide these frumps, crossed her with this choleric reply:

*Gentlewoman, quoth he, although I so term you rather to show mine own courtesy than to decipher your conditions, it seemeth nurture hath taught you very few manners, or nature afforded very small modesty, that seeing one in distress you should laugh at his dolour, and where the party is crossed with mishap you should with bitter taunts increase his misery. If he be your foe, he hath now the foil; he is taken in the snare; his life hangeth in the balance. Though your father be without piety, yet in that you are a woman, be not without pity. Hate him if you please, as he is your enemy, but despise him not as he is Arbasto, a king, and your hapless lover. We are captives, not to a worthy conqueror, but to a wretched caitiff; not vanquished by prowess, but by perjury; not by fight, but by falsehood, who in our lives, to thy father's loss, won continual fame, and by our death, to thy father's discredit, he shall purchase unto him perpetual infamy.*

Doralicia, not willing to suffer him wade any further, cut him short in this manner:

*Sir, quoth she, if brags could stand for payment, I am sure you would not die in any man's debt, but if your prowess had been as good as your prattle, you need not have danced within so short a tether. Craven cocks crow loudest, fearful curs bark most, and a heartless coward hath always more tongue than a haughty captain. But I bear with you, for I doubt the fear of death and danger hath driven thy master into a cold palsy, and hath made thee either frantic or lunatic, the one showing his melancholy, the other bewraying thy choler. Willing therefore as a friend you should pass over your passions with more patience, we will leave you as we found you, unless you mean to be shriven, and then I will send you a ghostly father.*

*Our confession, good mistress, quoth Egerio, requires but a small shrift, for we have very little to say but that Arbasto repents that ever he loved such a perverse minion, and that ever I trusted such a perjured traitor.*

The gentlewoman took this for a farewell, passing merrily to the palace and leaving us sitting sorrowfully in the prison, bewailing our mishap with tears, and exclaiming against fortune with bitter curses. What our complaints were, it little availeth to rehearse, for it would but drive thee into dumps, and redouble my dolour. Suffice this, that we were so long tormented with care that at last we were past cure, counting this our greatest calamity, that living, every hour we looked to die.

Well, as thus we were drowned in distress, so poor Myrania had her mind doubtfully perplexed. Nature claimed by due to have the pre-eminence, and love fought by force to win the supremacy; nature brought in Pelorus' aged hairs to make the challenge, and love presented Arbasto's sweet face to be the champion. Tossed thus with two contrary tempests, at last she began thus to plead with her passions:

*Ah, thrice infortunate Myrania, what strange fits be these that burn thee with heat and yet thou shakest with cold, thy body in a shivering sweat and in a flaming ice, melting like wax & yet as hard as the adamant? Is it love? Then would it were death, for likelier it is that thou shalt lose thy life than win thy love. Ah, hapless Arbasto! Would to God thy virtues were less than thy beauty, or my virtues greater than my affections; so should I either quickly free myself from fancy, or be less subject unto folly. But alas, I feel in my mind fierce skirmishes between reason and appetite, love and wisdom, danger and desire; the one persuade me to hate Arbasto as a foe, the other constrain me to love him as a friend. If I consent to the first, I end my days with death; if to the last, I shall lead my life with infamy. What shall I then do? Ah, Myrania, either swallow the juice of mandrake, which may cast thee into a dead sleep, or chew the herb carysium, which may cause thee to hate everything; so shall thou either die in thy slumber, or dislike Arbasto by thy potion.*

*Tush, poor wench, what follies be these? Wilt thou with the wolf bark at the moon, or with the young griffins peck against the stars? Dost thou think to quench fire with a sword, or with affection to mortify love? No, no, if thou be wise, suffer not the grass to be cut from under thy feet; strike while the iron is hot; make thy market while the chaffer is set to sale. Now Arbasto is thine own, now thou mayest win him by love and wear him by law. Thou mayest free him from misery without thy father's mishap; thou mayest save his life without thy father's loss; thou mayest grant thy goodwill unto love, and yet not falsify thy faith unto nature. Can Arbasto, which is so courteous, become so cruel but he will requite thy love with loyalty, thy faithful fancy with unfeigned affection? No, no, he will and must love thee of force, since thou hast granted him his life of free will. He will like thee in thy youth, and honour thee in thine age; he will be the port of prosperity wherein thou mayest rest, and the haven of happiness wherein thou mayest harbour without harm, so that thou may say of him as Andromache said by Hector: Tu Dominus, tu vir tu mihi frater eris.*

*Yea, but Myrania, yet look before thou leap, and learn by other men's harms to beware. Ariadne loved Theseus, freed him from the monstrous Minotaur, taught him to pass the labyrinth, yea, forsook parents and country for his cause, and yet the guerdon he gave her for her goodwill was to leave her a desolate wretch in a desert wilderness. Medea saved Jason from the danger of the dragons, and yet she found him trothless. Phyllis harboured Demiphon [sic for 'Demophon'], and Dido Aeneas, yet both repaid their love with hate. Tush, the fairest flower hath not the best scent; the lapidaries choose not the stone by the outward colour, but by the secret virtue. Paris was fair, yet false; Thyestes was beautiful, but deceitful; Vulcan was carved in white ivory, yet a smith. The precious stones of Mausaulous' [=Mausolus'] sepulchre could not make the dead carcass sweet.*

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*Beauty, Myrania, is not always accompanied with virtue, honesty and constancy, but oft-times fraught with vice and perjury.*

*What then? If some were traitors, shall Arbasto be trothless? If some were false, shall he be faithless? No, his beauty and virtue hath won me, and he himself shall wear me. I will forsake father, friends and country for his cause; yea, I will venture limb and life to free him from danger, in despite of froward fortune and the destinies.*

Myrania, being thus resolute in her opinion, began to cast beyond the moon and to frame a thousand devises in her head to bring her purpose to pass, fearing every shadow, doubting every wind, stumbling at the least straw, yet at ye last, pricked forward by fancy, she thought to prevent all cause of fear in this wise.

The evening before she went to achieve her enterprise, she secretly sent for the jailer by one of her maids to whom she durst commit her secret affairs, who being taught by her mistress to play her part cunningly, brought the jailer into Myrania's chamber by a postern gate, so that they were neither seen nor suspected of any, where he no sooner came but he was courteously entertained of the young lady, who feigning that she had to debate with him of weighty affairs, called him into her closet, where treading upon a false board, he fell up to the shoulders, not being able to help himself, but that he there ended his life.

Myrania having desperately achieved this deed, she straight sought not to rob him of his coin but to bereave him of his keys, which after she had gotten, and conveyed his carcass into a secret place, she went in her night-gown, accompanied only with her maid, to the prison.

Arbasto and Egerio, hearing the doors open at such an unaccustomed hour, began straight to conjecture that Pelorus meant to murder them secretly, lest his own people should accuse him of cruelty, but as they looked to have seen the jailer, they spied Myrania in her night-gown, which sudden and unlooked for sight so appalled their senses as they were driven into a maze till Myrania wakened them from their dumps with this sugared harmony:

*I perceive, Arbasto, quoth she, that my presence doth make thee to muse, and my sudden arrival hath driven thee into a maze what strange wind should land me on this coast. In troth, thou mayest think either my message is great or my modestly little, either that I take small care of myself or repose very great trust in thee, who at a time unfit for my calling have without any guard come to a stranger, a captive, yea, and my father's fatal foe. I confess it is a fault if I were not forced, but since necessity hath no law, I think I have the less broken the law.*

*But to leave off these needless preambles where delay breeds no less danger than death, know this, Arbasto, that since thy first arrival at my father's court, mine eyes have been so dazzled with the beams of thy beauty, and my mind so snared with the view of thy virtues, as thou only art the man whom in heart I love and like. Seeing thee therefore*

*drowned here by adverse fortune in most hapless distress, willing to manifest the loyalty of my love in effect which I have protested in words, I have rather chosen to hazard both my life and honour than not to offer thee peace if thou wilt agree unto the conditions. As my father hath wrought thy woe, I will work thy weal; as he hath sought thy bale, I will procure thy bliss. From penury, I will set thee in prosperity. I will free thee from prison, from danger, yea, from death itself. I will, in yielding to love, dissent from nature to leave my father, friends & country, and pass with thee into Denmark. And to cut off speeches which might seem to savour either of flattery or deceit, as thou art the first unto whom I have vowed my love, so shalt thou be the last, requiring no meed for my merit nor no other guerdon for my goodwill but that thou will take me to thy wife, and in pledge of my troth, see here the keys and all other things provided for our speedy passage.*

Myrania had no sooner uttered these words but my mind was so ravished as I was driven into an ecstasy for joy, seeing that the terror of death was taken away with the hope of life, that from heaviness I should be restored to happiness, and from most careful misery to most secure felicity. I therefore framed her this answer:

*Ah, Myrania, the purest emerald shineth brightest when it hath no oil [sic for 'foil'?), and truth delighteth when it is apparelled worst. Flatter I will not; faithful I must be, willed from the one by conscience, and driven to the other by your courtesy, which by how much the less I have merited it by desert, by so much the more I am bound to requite it by duty. To decipher in coloured discourses and to paint out with curious shadows how humbly I accept of your offer, and how greatly I think myself beholding to the gods for blessing me with such an happy chance, what my loyalty and trust shall be, were but to prove that which your Ladyship, hoping of my constancy, hath not put in question. The guerdon you crave for your goodwill is such that if your courtesy had not forced me to it by constraint, yet your beauty and virtues are so great as fancy would have compelled me by consent. Myrania, what thou canst wish in a true and trusty lover, I promise to perform, swearing unto thee that the floods shall flow against their streams, the earth shall mount against his course, yea, my carcass shall be consumed unto dust and ashes before my mind shall be found disloyal, and to this I call the gods to witness, of whom I desire no longer to live than I mean simply to love.*

*Oh, Arbasto, quoth she, would God I had never seen thee, or that I may find thy works according to thy words; otherwise shall I have cause to wish I had been more cruel, or less courteous. But love will not let me doubt the worst, but bids me hope the best. Yet thus much I may say, when Jason was in danger, who more faithful; when Theseus feared the labyrinth, who more loyal; when Demophoon suffered shipwreck, who more loving? But I will not say what I think, Arbasto, because thou shalt not suspect I fear.*

*Madam, quoth Egerio, Arbasto is my sovereign, and I both honour and fear him as a subject, yet if he should but once in heart think to be disloyal to Myrania, the gods confound me with all earthly plagues if I would not of a trusty friend become his mortal foe.*



*'Tis easy to persuade her, Egerio, quoth she, who already is most willing to believe. Let us leave, therefore, these needless protestations, and go to the purpose. Delay breeds danger; time tarrieth for no man. Speed in necessity is the best spur; let us haste, therefore, till we get out of France, lest if we be prevented, it bred my mishap, and your fatal misery.*

Upon this we stayed not, but shutting the prison close, gat covertly out of the city, passing through France with many fearful perils which to rehearse were either needless or bootless; suffice this, we at last happily arrived at Denmark, where how I was welcomed home with triumphs were too long to relate. But how Pelorus was perplexed after he knew of our happy departure, though (God wot) most hapless unto him, I refer to thy good consideration to conjecture. The old father fretted not so fast in his melancholy but Doralicia chafed as much in her choler, blaspheming bitterly both against me & her sister Myrania, but as words break no bones, so we cared the less for her scolding, fearing not ye noise of the piece as long as we were without danger of shot.

Well, leaving them in their dumps, to us again, which floated in delight. Fickle fortune having now hoised us up to the top of her inconstant wheel, seeing how careless I slumbered in the cradle of security, thought to make me a very mirror of her mutability, for she began afresh to turn my tippet in this wise.

As daily I flattered Myrania, for fancy her I could not, promising with speed to call a parliament for the confirmation of the marriage, I still felt the stumps of my old love I bare to Doralicia to stick in my stomach; the more closely I covered the sparks, the more the flame burst forth. I found absence to increase affection, not to decrease fancy; in the day my mind doted of her virtues; in the night I dreamed of her beauty. Yea, Cupid began to encounter me with such fresh camizados as by distance my distress was far more augmented; such sighs, such sobs, such thoughts, such pains and passions perplexed me as I felt this last assault worse than the former battery. If I loved Doralicia in France, I now liked her thrice better being in Denmark; if in presence her person pleased me, now in absence her perfection more contented me. To conclude, I sware to myself with a solemn sigh: *Doralicia was, is and shall be the mistress of my heart in despite of the froward destinies.* Yet amazed at mine own folly, I began thus to muse with myself:

*O foolish Arbasto, nay, rather frantic fondling, hast thou less reason than unreasonable creatures? The tiger fleeth the train, the lion escheweth the nets, the deer avoideth the coils [sic for 'toils'?] because they are taken with these instruments, and art thou so mad as, having escaped the pikes, wilfully to thrust thyself into peril? The child, being burnt, hateth the fire, but thou, being an old fool, wilt with the worm naptitia no sooner come out of the coals but thou wilt leap into ye flame. But alas, what then? I see ye measure of love is to have no mean, & the end to be everlasting, that to love is allotted to all, but to be happy in love incident to few. Why, shall I be so mad to love Doralicia, or so fraught with ingrateful perjury as not to like Myrania? The one hath crossed me with bitter girds, the other courted me with sweet glances. Doralicia hath rewarded me with disdain, Myrania entreated me with desire. The one hath saved my life, the other sought my death. O Arbasto, thou seest the best, but I fear like to follow the worst.*

*Alas, I cannot but love Doralicia. What then? What resteth for me to do but to die with patience, seeing I cannot live with pleasure? Yea, Arbasto, die. Die rather with a secret scar than an open scorn, for thou mayest well sue, but never shalt have good success. And yet lions fawn when they are clawed, the most cruel tigers stoop when they are tickled, and women, though never so obstinate, yield when they are courted. There is no pearl so hard but vinegar breaketh, no diamond so stony but blood mollifieth, no heart so stiff but love weakeneth. What though Doralicia sought thy death? Perhaps now she repents, and will give thee life. Though at the first she cast thee a stone, she will now throw thee an apple. Why, then, Arbasto, assault her once again with a fresh charge; seek to get that by letters which thou couldst not gain by talk, for one lie [sic for 'line'?] is of more force to persuade than a month's parle, for in writing, thou mayest so set down thy passions and her perfections as she shall have cause to think well of thee, and better of herself, but yet so warely as it shall be hard for her to judge whether thy love be more faithful, or her beauty amiable.*

I having thus determined with myself, thought as covertly as I could to conceal my affairs lest either Myrania or Egerio should spy my halting. Conveying therefore my affairs as cunningly as I could, I privily sent an ambassador to Pelorus to entreat for a contract between us, and also to crave his daughter Doralicia in marriage, promising to send him Myrania safe upon this consent, and withal I framed a letter to Doralicia to this effect:

*Arbasto to the fairest Doralicia, health.*

*Such and so extreme are the passions of love, Doralicia, that the more they are quenched by disdain, the greater flame is increased by desire, and the more they are galled with hate, the more they gape after love, like to the stone topazon, which being once kindled, burneth most vehemently in the water. I speak this (the greater is my grief) by proof and experience, for having my heart scorched with the beams of thy beauty and my mind inflamed with thy singular virtue, neither can thy bitter looks abate my love, nor thy extreme discourtesy diminish my affection. No, Doralicia, I am not he that will leave the sweet eglantine because it pricks my finger, and refuse the gold in the fire because it burnt my hand, for the mind of a faithful lover is neither to be daunted with despite nor affrighted with danger, but as the loadstone, what wind soever doth blow, turneth always to the north, so the love of Arbasto is ever more bent to the beauty and virtue of Doralicia, whatsoever misfortune happeneth. Yea, it fareth with me as with the herb basil, the which the more it is crushed, the sooner it springeth, or the pure spice, which the more it is poun[d]ed, the sweeter it smelleth, or the camomile, which the more it is trodden with the feet, the more it flourisheth; so in these extremities, beaten down to the ground with disdain, yet my love reacheth to the top of the house with hope. Sith, then, Doralicia, thy beauty hath made the sore, let thy bounty apply the salve; as thy virtue hath caused my malady, so let thy mercy give the medicine. Repay not my constancy with cruelty, requite not my love with hate and my desire with despite, lest thou procure my speedy death and thy endless infamy. Thus hoping thou wilt have some remorse of my passions, I attend thy final sentence and my fatal destiny.*

*Thine ever, though never thine, Arbasto.*

As soon as I had written my letter, I dispatched the messenger as speedily and privily as might be, who within the space of three weeks arrived at Orleans, where delivering his embassy to Pelorus and my letter to Doralicia, he stayed for an answer the space of ten days, in which time Pelorus, consulting with his council, was very willing to grant me his daughter in marriage but that by no means he could win the goodwill of Doralicia. Seeing therefore no persuasions could prevail, he dispatched my messenger with a denial, and Doralicia returned me this froward answer:

*Doralicia to Arbasto.*

*Where didst thou learn, fond fool, that being forbidden to be bold, thou shouldst grow impudent, that willed to leave off thy suit, yet thou shouldst be importunate? Dost thou think with the spaniel by fawning when thou art beaten to make thy foe thy friend? No, let other deem of thee what they list; I will still count thee a cur. Dost thou think I will be drawn by thy counterfeit conceits, as the straw by the jet, or as the gold by the mineral chrysocolla? No, no, if thou seekest to obtain favour at my hands, thou dost strive to wring water out of the pumice, and dost work the means to increase thine own shame and my severity, for as by instinct of nature there is a secret hate between the vine and the cabash [=cabbage?], between the box and the gourd, and between the iron and ye theamides, so in my mind I feel a secret grudge between Arbasto and Doralicia. Cease then to gape for that thou shalt never get, and take this both for a warning and an answer, that if thou prosecute thy suit, thou dost but persecute thyself, for I am neither to be wooed by thy passions whilst thou livest, nor to repent me of my rigour when thou art dead. For this I swear, that I will never consent to love him whose sight (if I may so say with modesty) is more bitter unto me than death. Short I am, though sharp, for I love not to flatter. Take this therefore for thy farewell, that I live to hate thee.*

*Willing after death, if it could be, to be thy foe, Doralicia.*

After that the messenger was returned to Denmark, and that I had received and read the letter, such sundry thoughts assailed me that I became almost frantic: fear, despair, grief, hate, choler, wrath, desire of revenge, and what not so tormented my mind that I fell to raging against the gods, to railing at Doralicia, and to cursing of all womankind. [+I] conceived such an extreme hate against her as before I loved her not so heartily as now I loathed her hatefully, counting myself an ungrateful wretch towards Myrania, and calling to mind her beauty and virtue, her bounty and courtesy, I fell more deeply in love with her than ever with Doralicia, so that I could not spare one glance from gazing on her person, nor draw my mind from musing on her perfection, a sudden change, but also a sorrowful chance.

For Myrania, seeing me soused in these sorrowful dumps, began straight without casting water to conjecture my disease, and to shoot at that which indeed she hit without any great aim. But as love is most suspicious, so she began to doubt the worst, fearing that as yet the beauty of Doralicia was not blotted out of my mind. Searching therefore narrowly

what she could either hear or learn of my secrets, at last she found out that which wrought her final mishap and my fatal misery. For by luckless chance leaving the door of my closet open, Myrania, thinking to find me at my muses, stumbled on the copy of the letter which I sent to Doralicia, and upon the answer which I received from that ruthless minion, which after she had read, perceiving how traitorously I had requited her love with hate, she conveyed herself covertly into her chamber, where, after she had almost dimmed her sight with floods of tears, and burst her heart with blowing sighs, she fell into these woeful complaints:

*O infortunate Myrania, O hapless Myrania, yea, O thrice accursed Myrania, whom fortune by spite seeketh to foil, whom the destinies by fate are appointed to plague, and whom the gods by justice will and must most cruelly revenge. Thou hast been a parricide to thy father in seeking to destroy him by thy disobedience, thou art a traitor to thy country in saving the enemy of the commonwealth, and thou art a foe to nature in loving disloyal Arbasto, and can the gods but plague these monstrous injuries? No, no, Myrania, thou hast deserved more mishap than either fortune can or will afford thee. Ah, cruel and accursed Arbasto; I see now that it fareth with thee as with the panther, which having made one astonished with his fair sight, seeketh to devour him with bloody pursuit, & with me, poor wench, as it doth with them that view the basilisk, whose eyes procure delight to the looker at the first glimpse, but death at the second glance. Alas, was there none to like but thy foe, none to love but Arbasto, none to fancy but a perjured dame [sic for 'man'?), none to match with but such a flattering mate? Now hath thy lawless love gained a most luckless end. Now thou triest by experience that the tree alpyna is smooth to be touched, but bitter to be tasted, that the fairest serpent is most infectious, the finest colour soonest stained, the clearest glass most brittle, and that lovers, though they bear a delicate show, yet they have a deceitful substance, that if they have honey in their mouths, yet they have gall in their hearts. The more is the pity in thee to trust without trial, and the greater impiety in him to be a traitor, being so well trusted.*

*Is this the courtesy of Denmark towards friends, to entreat them so despitefully? Is my goodwill not only rejected without cause, but also disdained without colour? Alas, what shall I do in this extremity, being a forlorn wretch in a foreign county? Which way shall I turn me, of whom shall I seek remedy? Pelorus will reject me, and why should he not? Arbasto hath rejected me, and why should he? The one I have offended with too much grief, the other I have served with too great goodwill. Ye one is lost with love, the other with hate, Pelorus because I cared not for him, Arbasto because I cared for him but alas too much.*

And with that she fetched such a sigh as witnessed a heart pained with most intolerable passions; yea, care and grief so fiercely and freshly assaulted her as she fell into a fever, refusing all sustenance, wishing and calling for nothing but death.

While she thus pined away with grief, I sought to search out her sore, but I could not perceive the cause of her sorrow; only I did conjecture this, that she doubted my nobles would not consent to our marriage. To rid her therefore of this care I presently called a parliament, where without any great controversy it was concluded.

This news being come to the ears of Myrania, it no whit decreased her dolour, but did rather far the more augment her distress, which made Egerio to muse, and drave me into a great maze, so that accompanied with my nobles I went to comfort her and to carry her news that if she could but come into ye chamber of presence, she should there be crowned queen. But alas, when I came and saw her so altered in one week, wasted to the hard bones, more like a ghost than a living creature, I began thus to comfort her:

*Ah, Myrania, quoth I, more loved of me than mine own life, and more dear unto me than myself, would God I might be plagued with all earthly diseases so I might see thee free from distress, but can Arbasto be without sorrow to see Myrania oppressed with sickness? How can he but sink in calamity to see her but once touched with care? Alas, unfold unto me thy sore, & I will apply the salve; make me privy to thy malady, and I will procure a medicine. If want of wealth work thy woe, thou hast the kingdom of Denmark to dispose at thy pleasure; if absence from friends, thou hast such a friend of thy loving spouse Arbasto as death itself shall never dissolve our love.*

I had no sooner uttered this word but Myrania, as one possessed with some hellish fury, start up in her bed with staring looks and wrathful countenance, seeming by her raging gesture to be in a frenzy, but being kept down by her ladies, she roared out these hateful curses:

*O vile wretches, quoth she, will you not suffer me in my life to revenge myself on that perjured traitor Arbasto? Yet shall you not deny me but after death my ghost shall torment him with ghastly visions. O thrice accursed caitiff, dost thou seem to help me with thy scabbard and secretly hurt me with thy sword? Dost thou proffer me honey openly, and privily present me with gall? Does thou say thou wilt cure me with love when thou seekest to kill me with hate? Have I redeemed thee from mishap, and wilt thou requite me with misery? Was I the means to save thy life, & wilt thou without cause procure my death? Have I forsaken my country, betrayed my father, yea, sinned against the gods and nature for thy sake, & yet wilt thou kill me with discourtesy? O hapless Myrania, could not Medea's mishap have made thee beware? Could not Ariadne's ill luck have taught thee to take heed? Could not Phyllis' misfortune have feared thee from the like folly, but thou must like and love a stragglng stranger? Ay me, that repentance should ever come too late, for now I sigh and sorrow, but had-I-wist comes out of time. Folly is sooner remembered than redressed, & time may be repented, but not recalled.*

*But I see it is a practice in men to have as little care of their own oaths as of their ladies' honours, imitating Jupiter, who never kept oath he sware to Juno. Didst thou not, false Arbasto, protest with solemn vows, when thy life did hang in the balance, that thy love to Myrania should be always loyal, and hast thou not since sent and sued secretly to win the goodwill of Doralice? Didst thou not swear to take me to thy mate, & hast thou not since sought to contract with her a new match? Thou didst promise to be true unto me, but hast proved trusty unto her. What should I say? Thou hast presented her with pleasant drinks, and poisoned me with bitter potions, the more is my penury, and the greater is thy perjury. But, vile wretch, dost thou think this thy villainy shall be unrevenged? No, no;*

*Egerio, I hope the gods have appointed thee to revenge my injuries; thou hast sworn it, and I fear not but thou wilt perform it. And that thou mayest know I exclaim not without cause, see here the letters which have passed between this false traitor & Doralice.*

The sight of these letters so galled my guilty conscience as I stood as one astonished, not knowing what to do. Excuse myself I could not; confirm my love I durst not, yet at last, the water standing in mine eyes, clasping her hand in mine, I was ready to crave pardon if she had not prevented me with these injurious speeches:

*Clear thyself, traitorous Arbasto, thou canst not; persuade me, thou shalt not; forgive thee, I will not. Cease therefore to speak, for in none of these thou shalt speed. Egerio, I saved thy life; then revenge my death, & so content I die, yet only discontent in this, that I cannot live to hate Arbasto so long as I have loved him.*

And with that, turning upon her left side, with a gasping sigh she gave up the ghost, which sight drave me into such a desperate mind that if Egerio and the rest had not holden me, I had sent my soul with hers to the grave. But being carried by force to my bed, I lay for certain days oppressed with such sorrow as if I had been in a trance; cursing & accusing myself of ingratitude, of perjury, and of most despicable disloyalty, I lay perplexed with incessant passions.

Well, this heavy and hapless news being noised in France, Pelorus, taking the death of his daughter to heart, in short time died, leaving Doralice the only inheritor of his kingdom.

But yet see how fortune framed up this tragedy, who meant to cast Doralice from most happy felicity to most hapless misery, for she seeing that no sinister chance could change my affection, that neither the length of time nor the distance of place, the spite of fortune, the fear of death, nor her most cruel discourtesy could diminish my love, musing, I say, on this my inviolable constancy, Cupid, meaning to revenge, seeing her now at discover, drew home to the head, and stroke her so deep at the heart as in despite of Vesta she veiled bonnet, and giving a groan, sobbed forth secretly to herself these words: *Alas, I love Arbasto, and none but Arbasto.*

Venus, seeing that her boy had so well played the man, began to triumph over Doralicia, who now was in her dumps, striving as yet between love and hate, till fancy set in her foot, and then she yielded up the bulwark in these peaceable terms:

*Why, how now, Doralicia, quoth she, dost thou dream or dote? Is it folly or frenzy, melancholy or madness that driveth thee thus into dumps, and so strangely distresseth thee with dolour? What fond thoughts, what unacquainted passions, what slumbering imaginations are these which perplexeth thee? Dost thou now feel fire to spring out of the cold flint, heat to fry amidst the chilling frost, love to come from hate, and desire from disdain? Dost thou fare as though thou hadst been drenched in the river Iellus in Phrygia, which at ye first breedeth sorrow through extreme cold, but forthwith burneth the sinews through raging heat? Hath Venus now in despite of Vesta made thee veil bonnet? The more (poor wench) is thy mishap, and the worse is thy fortune, for love,*

*though never so sweet, cannot be digested without a most sharp sauce, faring like the gold that is never perfect till it haht passed through the furnace.*

*Love, Doralice, but whom dost thou love? Arbasto? What, the man whom even now thou didst so deadly hate? Hast thou so little force over thy affections as to fancy thy foe? No, no, fond fool! Arbasto is thy friend, and one that honoureth thee as a saint, and would serve thee as his sovereign, that loveth and liketh thee as much as thou canst desire, but more than thou dost deserve, who being bitterly crossed with discourtesy could never be touched with inconstancy, but still remaineth like to Aristotle's quadratus, which howsoever it is turned, always standeth steadfast. Thou canst not, then, of conscience, Doralice, but repay his love with liking, and his firm fancy with mutual affection. He is beautiful to please thy eye, virtuous to content thy mind, rich to maintain thine honour, of birth to countervail thy parentage, wise, courteous & constant, and what wouldst thou have more?*

*Yea, but alas, I have rejected his service, & now he will not respect my suit; I have detested him, and now he will despise me. I have requited his goodwill with cruelty, and he will revenge me with contempt. Better hadst thou then conceal it with grief than reveal it to thy own shame, for if thou aim at the white and miss ye mark, thou shalt be pointed at of those that hate thee, pitied of those that love thee, scorned of by him, and talked of by all; suffer rather, then, poor Doralice, death by silence than derision by revealing the [sic for 'thy'?] secrets, for death cutteth off all care, but derision breedeth endless calamity.*

*Tush, dost thou think Arbasto can so harden his heart as to hate thee, so master his affections as to fly from fancy, that he will become so proud as to refuse thy proffer? No, if thou sendest him but one line, it will more charm him than all Circe's enchantments; if thou lendest but one friendly look, it will be more esteemed of him than life. Why, but Doralice?*

And with that, she sat still as one in a trance, building castles in the air, hanging between fear and hope, trust and despair, doubt and assurance. To rid herself, therefore, from these dumps, she took her lute, whereupon she played this ditty:

*In time we see that silver drops  
The craggy stones make soft,  
The slowest snail in time we see  
Doth creep and climb aloft.*

*With feeble puffs the tallest pine  
In tract of time doth fall;  
The hardest heart in time doth yield  
To Venus' luring call.*

*Where chilling frost alate did nip,  
There flasheth now a fire;*

*Where deep disdain bred noisome hate,  
There kindleth now desire.*

*Time causeth hope to have his hap;  
What care in time not eased?  
In time I loathed that now I love,  
In both, content and pleased.*

Doralicia, having ended her ditty, laid down her lute and betook herself to her former passions, wherein she had not long plodded but she determined to write unto me with as much speed as might be, framing her letters to this effect:

*Doralicia to Arbasto, health.*

*Weighing with myself, Arbasto, that to be unjust is to offer injury to the gods, and that without cause to be cruel is against all conscience, I have thought good to make amends for that which is amiss, and of a feigned foe to become thy faithful friend, for since the receipt of thy letters, calling to mind the perfection of thy body and perfectness of thy mind, thy beauty and virtue, thy courtesy and constancy, I have been so snared with fancy and fettered with affection as the idea of thy person hath pinched me with most hapless passions. If I have been reckless of thy goodwill, I repent me; if ruthless through cruel speeches, I recant them, as one loving now that alate I loathed, and desiring that which even now I despised, which as often as I call to mind I cannot but blush to myself for shame, and fall out with myself for anger.*

*But the purest diamond is to be cut before it be worn, the frankincense is to be burnt before it be smelled, & lovers are to be tried before they be trusted, lest shining like ye carbuncle as though they had fire, yet being touched they prove passing cold, for the mind by trial once scoured of mistrust becometh more fit ever after for belief, so that, Arbasto, as I have pined thee with bitter pills, I will now pamper thee with sweet potions; as I have galled thee with cruelty, I will heal thee with courtesy. Yea, if thy good nature can forget that which my ill tongue doth repent, or thy most constant kindness forgive that my unbridled fury did commit, I will countervail my former discourtesy with ensuing constancy. I will be as ready after to take an injury as I was to give an offence. Thou shalt find my love and duty such and so great as either Doralice can perform or Arbasto desire. And thus committing my life and my living into your hands, I attend thine answer, and rest more thine than her own, Doralicia.*

The messenger by whom she sent this message, making speed to perform his mistress' command, arrived within few days at Denmark, where delivering me the letter, I was greatly amazed at the sight thereof, musing what the contents should be. At last unripping the seals, I perceived to what saint Doralice bent her devotion, but the shower came too late when the grass was withered, yet I stood for a time astonished, hovering between love and hate. But at the last, such loathsome misliking of her former discourtesy so incensed my mind that to despise her, and to despise fortune, I returned her speedily this hateful answer:



*To Doralice, neither health nor good hap.*

*I received thy letters, Doralicia, which no sooner I read with mine eyes but I threw into the fire with my hand, lest by viewing them I should grow into great fury, or by keeping them show thee any friendship. For we shun the place of pestilence for fear of infection, the eyes of the catherismes because of diseases, the sight of the cockatrice for fear of death, Circe's drinks as dreading charms, and sirens' tunes, doubting enchantments. Should I not then eschew thy alluring baits when thou hast galled me with the hook? Yea, I will and must, lest I be entrapped with thy subtilty, or entangled with thy sorcery.*

*Truly, Doralicia, that once I loved thee I cannot deny; that now, being free, I should fall to such folly I more than utterly refuse. For as before I liked thee in constant hope, so now I loathe with hateful contempt, comparing thy cursed nature to the herb basil, which both engendereth serpents and killeth them; so the show of thy virtue inflamed me with love, but the trial of thy vanity hath quenched it with hate. Hate? Yea, I more than hate thee, most cruel and ingrateful monster, whose beauty I hope was given thee of the gods as well to procure thine own misery as others' mishap, which if I might live to see, as Infortunio did by Eriphila, I would think I did lead my hapless life to a most happy end.*

*Thus thou seest how I account of thy love and accept of thy letters, esteeming the one as filthy chaffer and the other as forged charms, and saying to them both that proffered service stinks. Waste more wind I will not; to spend more time is most ill spent. Therefore take this as a farewell, that if I hear of thy good hap, I live displeased; if of thy misfortune, content; if of thy death, most sorrowful that the gods did not give thee many days and much distress. So wishing thee what spite either fortune or the fates can afford, adieu.*

*Sworn thy foe to death, Arbasto.*

Doralicia having received these letters, and read the contents, was so impatient in her passions that she fell into a frenzy, having nothing in her mouth but *Arbasto, Arbasto*, ever doubling this word with such pitiful cries and screeches as would have moved anyone but me to remorse. She continued not in this case long before she died. But I, alas, leading still a loathsome life, was more cruelly crossed by fortune, for Egerio conspiring with the peers of my realm, in short time by civil wars dispossessed me of my crown and kingdom. Forced then to flee by mine own subjects, after some travel I arrived at this place, where considering with myself the fickle inconstancy of unjust fortune, I have ever since lived content in this cell to despite fortune, one while sorrowing for the mishap of Myrania, and another while joying at the misery of Doralicia, but always smiling that by contemning fortune I learn to lead her in triumph. Thus thou hast heard why in mean estate I pass my days content. Rest therefore satisfied, that thus I have lived, and thus I mean to die.

FINIS.

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Imprinted at London by John Windet and Thomas Judson for Hugh Jackson.  
Anno 1584.