

Contemptuous, yet unhandsome; as among
 Lecherous humors, there is one that judges
 No wenches wholesome but coarse country drudges.
 Graius stays still at home here, and because
 Some preachers, vile ambitious bawds, and laws,
 Still new like fashions, bid him think that she
 Which dwells with us is only perfect, he
 Embrace her whom his godfathers will
 Tender to him, being tender, as wards still
 Take such wives as their guardians offer, or
 Pay values.⁸ Careless Phrygius doth abhor
 All, because all cannot be good, as one,
 Knowing some women whores, dares marry none.
 Cracchus loves all as one, and thinks that so

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As women do in diverse countries go
 In divers habits, yet are still one kind,
 So doth, so is Religion; and this blind-
 ness too much light breeds; but unmoved thou
 Of force must one, and forced but one allow;

70

And the right, ask thy father which is she,
 Let him ask his, though truth and falsehood be
 Near twins, yet truth a little elder is;
 Be busy to seek her, believe me this,

75

He's not of none, nor worst,⁹ that seeks the best.
 To adore, or scorn an image, or protest,
 May all be bad; doubt wisely; in strange way
 To stand inquiring right is not to stray;

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To sleep, or run wrong is. On a huge hill,
 Cragged and steep, Truth stands, and he that will
 Reach her, about must, and about must go;
 And what the hill's suddenness resists, win so;
 Yet strive so, that before age, death's twilight,
 Thy soul rest, for none can work in that night.
 To will implies delay, therefore now do.

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Hard deeds, the body's pains; hard knowledge too
 The mind's endeavors reach,¹ and mysteries
 Are like the sun, dazzling, yet plain to all eyes.
 Keep the truth which thou hast found; men do not stand

90

In so ill case here that God hath with His hand
 Signed kings blank charters to kill whom they hate,
 Nor are they vicars, but hangmen to fate.

Fool and wretch, wilt thou let thy soul be tied
 To man's laws, by which she shall not be tried
 At the last day? Oh, wilt it then boot? thee
 To say a Philip, or a Gregory,

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8. Sums paid for refusing an arranged marriage; here compared to fines recusants paid for not attending the national church.
 9. Not of no faith, nor the worst faith.

1. Difficult deeds are accomplished by the body's pains; difficult knowledge is attained by the mind's endeavors.
 2. Profit.

A Harry, or a Martin³ taught thee this?
 Is not this excuse for mere contances
 Equally strong? Cannot both sides say so?
 That thou mayest rightly obey power, her bounds know;
 Those passed, her nature, and name is changed; to be
 Then humble to her is idolatry.
 As streams are, power is; those blest flowers that dwell
 At the rough stream's calm head, thrive and do well,
 But having left their roots, and themselves given
 To the stream's tyrannous rage, alas, are driven
 Through mills, and rocks, and woods, and at last, almost
 Consumed in going, in the sea are lost:
 So perish souls, which more choose men's unjust
 Power from God claimed, than God Himself to trust.

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Satire IV

Well, I may now receive,⁴ and die; my sin
 Indeed is great, but I have been in
 A purgatory,⁵ such as feared hell is
 A recreation, and scant map of this.
 My mind, neither with pride's itch, nor yet hath been
 Poisoned with love to see, or to be seen.
 I had no suit there, nor new suit to show,
 Yet went to Court; but as Glaze⁶ which did go
 To a Mass in jest, caught, was fain to disburse
 The hundred marks, which is the Statute's curse,⁷
 Before he 'scaped, so it pleased my destiny
 (Guilty of my sin of going), to think me
 As prone to all ill, and of good as forget-
 ful, as proud, as lustful, and as much in debt,
 As vain, as witless, and as false as they
 Which dwell at Court, for once going that way.
 Therefore I suffered this; towards me did run
 A thing more strange than on Nile's slime the sun
 Ever bred,⁸ or all which into Noah's Ark came:
 A thing, which would have posed⁹ Adam to name:
 Stranger than seven antiquaries' studies,¹
 Than Afric's monsters, Guiana's rarities,¹
 Stranger than strangers;² one, who for a Dane,

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3. Philip II of Spain; Pope Gregory XIII or Gregory XIV; Henry VIII of England; Martin Luther.
 4. Receive the last sacrament—Extreme Unction. Some editors suggest Holy Communion.
 5. I.e., the Court.
 6. A fictitious character whose name (Glaze in some manuscripts) indicates superficiality.
 7. Statutory fine for attending Mass.
 8. According to Pliny, the sun spontaneously gen-

erated small creatures from the Nile's mud.
 9. Confounded.
 1. Exotic creatures—including people—"whose heads appear not above their shoulders" and others with "eyes in their shoulders, and their mouths in the middle of their breasts"—as described in Sir Walter Raleigh's *The Discovery of Guiana* (1596).
 2. Foreigners.

In the Danes' Massacre³ had sure been slain,
 If he had lived then: and without help dies.
 When next the 'prentices' gainst strangers rise.⁴
 One, whom the watch at noon⁵ lets scarce go by,
 One, to whom, the examining Justice sure would cry,
 "Sir, by your priesthood⁶ tell me what you are."
 His clothes were strange, though coarse; and black, though bare;⁷
 Sleeveless his jerkin was, and it had been
 Velvet, but 'twas now (so much ground was seen)
 Become tuffaffay;⁸ and our children shall
 See it plain rash⁹ awhile, then naught at all.
 This thing hath travelled, and saith, speaks all tongues;
 And only knoweth what to all states belongs.
 Made of the accents, and best phrase of all these,
 He speaks one language; if strange meats displease,
 Art¹ can deceive, or hunger force my taste,
 But pedant's motley tongue, soldier's bombast,
 Mountebank's drugtongue,² nor the terms of law
 Are strong enough preparatives,³ to draw
 Me to bear this, yet I must be content
 With his tongue: in his tongue, called compliment:
 In which he can win widows, and pay scores,
 Make men speak treason, cozen⁴ subtlest whores,
 Out-flatter favourites, or out-lie either
 Jovius, or Surlus,⁵ or both together.
 He names me, and comes to me; I whisper, "God!
 How have I sinned, that thy wrath's furious rod,
 This fellow, chooseth me?" He saith, "Sir,
 I love your judgement; whom do you prefer,
 For the best linguist?" And I siliily
 Said, that I thought Calepine's Dictionary,⁶
 "Nay but of men, most sweet Sir". Beza⁷ then,
 Some Jesuits, and two reverend men
 Of our two Academies, I named. There
 He stopped me, and said, "Nay, your Apostles were
 Good pretty linguists, and so Panurge⁸ was;
 Yet a poor gentleman, all these may pass
 By travail."⁹ Then, as if he would have sold

3. In 1012, the Danes in England were slaughtered by King Ethelred the Unready.
 4. In 1517, the apprentices of London rioted against foreign traders.
 5. The guard in full daylight.
 6. Catholic priests were liable to prosecution and execution.
 7. Threshbare.
 8. Tuffeta or thin glossy silk with tufts.
 9. Smooth fabric.
 1. The culinary art.
 2. The jargon of quick doctors.
 3. Medical term referring to means by which a patient is prepared for treatment; also, an appetizer.
 4. Cheat.
 5. Paulus Jovius (1483-1552) and Laurentius Surlus (1522-1578), whose Counterreformation tracts infuriated Protestants.
 6. Polygot dictionary edited by Ambrose Calepine in 1502.
 7. French Calvinist Theodore de Beza, who translated the Greek New Testament into Latin.
 8. Polygot character in Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel*.
 9. A pun on travel and toil.

His tongue, he praised it, and such wonders told
 That I was fain to say, "If you had lived, Sir,
 Time enough to have been interpreter
 To Babel's bricklayers, sure the Tower had stood."¹
 He adds, "If of Court life you knew the good,
 You would leave loneliness."² I said, "Not alone
 My loneliness is; but Spartan's fashion,³
 To teach by painting drunkards, doth not last
 Now; Aretime's pictures⁴ have made few chaste;
 No more can princes' Courts, though there be few
 Better pictures of vice, teach me virtue";
 He, like to a high stretched lute string squeaked, "O Sir,
 'Tis sweet to talk of kings." "At Westminster,"
 Said I, "the man that keeps the Abbey tombs,
 And for his price doth with whoever comes,
 Of all our Harrys, and our Edwards talk,
 Your ears shall hear naught, but kings; your eyes meet
 Kings only; The way to it, is King Street."⁴
 He snacked, and cried, "He's base, mechanic,⁵ coarse,
 So are all your Englishmen in their discourse.
 Are not your Frenchmen neat?" "Mine? as you see,
 I have but one Frenchman, look, he follows me."
 "Certes they are neatly clothed. I of this mind am,
 Your only wearing is your grogram."⁶
 "Not so Sir, I have more." Under this pitch⁷
 He would not fly; I chafed⁸ him; but as itch
 Scratched into smart, and as blunt iron ground
 Into an edge, hurts worse: so, I (fool) found,
 Crossing⁹ hurt me; to fit my sullenness,
 He to another key his style doth address,
 And asks, "What news?" I tell him of new plays.
 He takes my hand, and as a still,¹ which stays
 A semi-breve² 'twixt each drop, he niggardly,
 As loth to enrich me, so tells many a lie,
 More than ten Holinsheds, or Halls, or Stows,³
 Of trivial household trash he knows; he knows
 When the Queen frowned, or smiled, and he knows what
 A subtle statesman may gather of that.
 He knows who loves; whom; and who by poison

1. God prevented men from completing the tower of Babel by fracturing their common language into many.
 2. The Spartans commonly dissuaded their young men from drinking by exhibiting drunken slaves.
 3. Erotic paintings by Giulio Romano, acornman.
 4. Dante.
 5. Men who acquire, as opposed to inherit, rank.
 6. Mews are stables; balloon is a game like handball; diet refers both to church councils and to these courtiers are in debt.
 7. Grogram, a coarse fabric.
 8. The height to which a trained falcon flies, with possible puns on other meanings of "pitch."
 9. Teased.
 1. I.e., disputing him.
 2. Distillate apparatus.
 3. Aphrodisiac foods: stews are brothels.
 4. I.e., both rich and poor feel want.
 1. Ledger books of Cheapside tailors, to whom these courtiers are in debt.

Hastes to an office's reversion;⁴
 He knows who hath sold his land, and now doth beg
 A licence, old iron, books, shoes, and egg-
 Shells to transport; shortly boys shall not play
 At span-counter, or blow-point,⁵ but they pay
 Toll to some courtier; and wiser than all us,
 He knows what lady is not painted; thus
 He with home-meats⁶ tries me; I belch, spew, spit,
 Look pale, and sickly, like a patient; yet
 He thrusts on more; and as if he undertook
 To say *Gallo-Belgicus*⁷ without book
 Speaks of all states, and deeds, that have been since
 The Spaniards came, to the loss of Arnims.⁸
 Like a big wife, at sight of loathed meat,
 Ready to travai: so I sigh, and sweat
 To hear this Macaron⁹ talk: in vain; for yet,
 Either my humour, or his own to fit,
 He like a privileged spy, whom nothing can
 Discredit, libels now 'gainst each great man.
 He names a price for every office paid;
 He saith, our wars thrive ill, because delayed;
 That offices are entailed,¹ and that there are
 Perpetuities of them, lasting as far
 As the last day; and that great officers,
 Do with the pirates share, and Dunkirkers.²
 Who wastes in meat, in clothes, in horse, he notes;
 Who loves whores, who boys, and who goats.
 I more amazed than Circe's prisoners,³ when
 They felt themselves turn beasts, felt myself then
 Becoming traitor, and methought I saw
 One of our giant Statues ope his jaw
 To suck me in; for hearing him, I found
 That as burnt venom'd lechers do grow sound
 By giving others their sores,⁴ I might grow
 Guilty, and be free: therefore I did show
 All signs of loathing; but since I am in,
 I must pay mine, and my forefathers' sin
 To the last farthing; therefore to my power⁵
 Toughly and stubbornly I bear this cross; but the hour
 Of mercy now was come; he tries to bring
 Me to pay a fine to 'scape his torturing,
 And says, "Sir, can you spare me"; I said, "Willingly";

4. Right of succession.
 5. Children's games.
 6. Good晚餐.
 7. The culinary art.
 8. The jargon of quack doctors.
 9. Medical term referring to means by which a
 1. Settled in perpetuity.
 2. Dunkirk was a haven for pirates, who were later transferred into Latin.
 3. Polyglot character in Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel*.
 4. A pun on travel and toll.

"Nay, Sir, can you spare me a crown?" Thankfully I
 Gave it, as ransom; but as fiddlers, still,
 Though they be paid to be gone, yet needs will
 Thrust one more jig upon you; so did he
 With his long complimentary thanks vex me.
 But he is gone, thanks to his needy want,
 And the prerogative of my crown; scant
 His thanks were ended, when I, (which did see
 All the Court filled with more strange things than he)
 Ran from thence with such or more haste, than one
 Who fears more actions, doth make from prison.
 At home in wholesome solitariness
 My precious soul began, the wretchedness
 Of suitors at Court to mourn, and a trance
 Like his, who dreamed he saw hell,⁶ did advance
 Itself on me, such men as he saw there,
 I saw at Court, and worse, and more; low fear
 Becomes the guilty, not the accuser; then,
 Shall I, none's slave, of high-born, or raised men?
 Fear frowns? And, my mistress Truth, betray thee
 To the huffing braggart, puffed nobility?
 No, no, thou which since yesterday hast been
 Almost about the whole world, hast thou seen,
 O sun, in all thy journey, vanity,
 Such as swells the bladder of our Court? I
 Think he which made your waxen garden, and
 Transported it from Italy to stand
 With us, at London, flouts our Presence, for
 Just such gay painted things, which no sap, nor
 Taste have in them, ours are; and natural
 Some of the stocks are, their fruits, bastard all.
 'Tis ten a-clock and past; all whom the mews,
 Balloon, tennis, diet, or the stews,⁸
 Had all the morning held, now the second
 Time made ready, that day, in flocks, are found
 In the Presence, and I, (God pardon me),
 As fresh, and sweet their appais be, as be
 The fields they sold to buy them; "For a King
 Those hose are," cry the flatterers; and bring
 Them next week to the theatre to sell;
 Wants reach all states;⁹ me seems they do as well
 At stage, as Court; all are players; who'er looks
 (For themselves dare not go) o'er Cheapside books,¹
 Shall find their wardrobe's inventory. Now,

6. Dante.
 7. Men who acquire, as opposed to inherit, rank.
 8. Mews are stables; balloon is a game like hand-ball; diet refers both to church councils and to
 9. I.e., both rich and poor feel want.
 1. Ledger books of Cheapside tailors, to whom these courtiers are in debt.

- The ladies come; as pirates, which do know
That there came weak ships fraught with cochineal,²
The men board them; and praise, as they think, well,
Their beauties; they the men's wits; both are bought.
Why good wits ne'er wear scarlet gowns,³ I thought
This cause: these men, men's wits for speeches buy,
And women buy all reds which scarlets dye.
He called her beauty lime-twigs, her hair net;⁴
She fears her drugs ill laid,⁵ her hair loose set.
Would not Heraclitus laugh to see Maccine,⁶
From hat, to shoe, himself at door refine,
As if the Presence were a moschite,⁷ and lift
His skirts and hose, and call his clothes to shift,
Making them confess not only mortal
Great stains and holes in them, but vermal
Feathers and dust, wherewith they fornicate;
And then by Durer's rules⁸ survey the state
Of his each limb, and with strings the odds tries
Of his neck to his leg, and waist to thighs.
So in immaculate clothes, and symmetry
Perfect as circles, with such nicely
As a young preacher at his first time goes
To preach, he enters, and a lady which owes
Him not so much as good will, he arrests,
And unto her protests protests protests⁹
So much as at Rome would serve to have thrown
Ten Cardinals into the Inquisition;
And whispered "By Jesu", so often, that a
Pursuivant¹ would have ravished him away
For saying of our Lady's psalter,² but 'tis fit
That they each other plague, they merit it.
But here comes Clorius³ that will plague them both,
Who, in the other extreme, only doth
Call a rough carelessness, good fashion;
Whose cloak his spurs tear, whom he spits on
He cares not, his ill words do no harm
To him; he rusheth in, as if "Arm, arm,"
He meant to cry; and though his face be as ill
As theirs which in old hangings⁴ whip Christ, still
He strives to look worse, he keeps all in awe;
Jests like a licensed fool, commands like law.

Tired, now I leave this place, and but pleased so
As men which from gaols to execution go,
Go through the great chamber (why is it hung
With the seven deadly sins?).⁵ Being among
Those Ascaparts,⁶ men big enough to throw
Charing Cross⁷ for a bar, men that do know
No token of worth, but Queen's man, and fine
Living, barrels of beef, flagons of wine,
I shook like a spied spy. Preachers which are
Seas of wit and arts, you can, then dare,
Drown the sins of this place, for, for me
Which am but a scarce brook, it enough shall be
To wash the stains away; though I yet
With Maccabees' modesty,⁸ the known merit
Of my work lessen: yet some wise man shall,
I hope, esteem my wits canonical.

Satire V

- Thou shalt not laugh in this leaf, Muse, nor they
Whom any pity warms; he⁹ which did lay
Rules to make courtiers, (he being understood
May make good courtiers, but who courtiers good?)
Frees from the sting of jests all who in extreme
Are wretched or wicked: of these two a theme
Charity and liberty¹ give me. What is he
Who officers' rage, and suitors' misery
Can write, and jest? If all things be in all,
As I think, since all, which were, are, and shall
Be, be made of the same elements:
Each thing, each thing implies or represents.
Then man is a world, in which, officers
Are the vast ravishing seas, and suitors,
Springs; now full, now shallow, now dry; which, to
That which drowns them, run: these self² reasons do
Prove the world a man, in which, officers
Are the devouring stomach, and suitors
The excrements, which they void; all men are dust,
How much worse are suitors, who to men's lust
Are made preys. O worse than dust, or worm's meat,
For they do eat you now, whose selves worms shall eat.
They are the mills which grind you, yet you are

2. Coloring agent used in rouge.
3. Gowns of high rank or government office.
4. Title compliments, both referring to ways of capturing small birds.
5. Makeup badly applied.
6. Heraclitus, known as "the weeping philosopher," here laughs at Maccine, whose name is invented (like Glaze—see p. 75, n. 6).
7. As if the Queen's presence were a mosque.

8. Albrecht Durer's *Of Human Proportion* (1526) set rules for proportions of the human body.
9. He protests love; he protests that she must not protest. He is protestant.
1. Officer who investigates charges of Popery.
2. Saying the Rosary, a Catholic act of worship.
3. Like Maccine and Glaze, fictitious.
4. Tapestries.

5. Tapestries illustrating the seven deadly sins.
6. Ascapart was a legendary giant, thirty feet tall.
7. Huge Gothic cross erected by Edward I.
8. The Book of the Maccabees concludes "And if [this work] has been well . . . written, that is what I wanted; but if it is poor . . . that was all I could do."
9. Castiglione, author of *The Courtier* (1528).

1. Charity toward the wretched; liberty to censure the wicked.
2. Same.