

Wherein Is Declared, That By Overliberall Commending The Chastity Of Women, It Falleth Out (Oftentimes) To Be Very Dangerous, Especially By The Meanes Of Treacherers Who Yet (In The Ende) Are Justly Punnished For Their Treachery.

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Madam Eliza having ended her compassionate discourse, which indeede had moved all the rest to sighing; the Queene, who was faire, comely of stature, and tarrying a very majesticall countenance, smiling more familiarly then the other, spake to them thus. It is very necessary, that the promise made to Dioneus, should carefully be kept, and because now there remaineth none, to report any more Novels, but onely he and my selfe: I must first deliver mine, and he (who takes it for an honour) to be the last in relating his owne, last let him be for his owne deliverance. Then pausing a little while, thus she began againe.

Many times among vulgar people, it hath passed as a common Proverbe: That the deceiver is often trampled on, by such as he hath deceived. And this cannot shew it selfe (by any reason) to be true, except such accidents as awaite on treachery, doe really make a just discovery thereof. And therefore according to the course of this day observed, I am the woman that must make good what I have saide for the approbation of that Proverbe: no way (I hope) distastfull to you in the hearing, but advantageable to preserve you from any such beguiling.

There was a faire and goodly Inne in Paris, much frequented by many great Italian Merchants, according to such variety of occasions and businesse, as urged their often resorting thither. One night among many other, having had a merry Supper together, they began to discourse on divers matters, and falling from one relation to another; they communed in very friendly manner, concerning their wives, lefte at home in their houses. Quoth the first, I cannot well imagine what my wife is now doing, but I am able to say for my selfe, that if a pretty female should fall into my company: I could easily forget my love to my wife, and make use of such an advantage offered. A second replied; And trust me, I should do no lesse, because I am perswaded, that if my wife be willing to wander, the law is in her owne hand, and I am farre enough from home: dumbe walles blab no tales, and offences unknowne are sildome or never called in question. A third man unapt in censure, with his former fellowes of the Jury; and it plainly appeared, that all the rest were of the same opinion, condemning their wives over-rashly, and alledging, that when husbands strayed so far from home, their wives had wit enough to make use of their time.

Onely one man among them all, named Bernardo Lomellino, and dwelling in Geneway, maintained the contrary; boldly avouching, that by the especiall favour of Fortune, he had a wife so perfectly compleate in all graces and vertues, as any Lady in the world possibly could be, and that Italy scarsely contained her equall. But, she was goodly of person, and yet very young, quicke, quaint, milde, and courteous, and not any thing appertaining to the office of a wife, either for domesticke affayres, or any other imployment whatsoever, but in womanhoode shee went beyond all other. No Lord, Knight, Esquire, or Gentleman, could bee better served at his Table, then himselfe dayly was, with more wisdom, modesty and discretion. After all this, hee praised her for riding, hawking, hunting, fishing, fowling, reading, writing, enditing, and most absolute keeping his Bookes of accounts, that neither himselfe, or any other Merchant could therein excell her. After infinite other commendations, he came to the former point of their argument, concerning the easie falling of women into wantonnesse, maintaining (with a solemne oath) that no woman possibly could be more chaste and honest then she: in which respect, he was verily perswaded, that if he stayed from her ten years space (yea all his life time) out of his house; yet never would shee falsifie her faith to him, or be lewdly allured by any other man.

Amongst these Merchants thus communing together, there was a young proper man, named Ambroginolo of Placentia, who began to laugh at the last prayes which Bernardo had used of his Wife, and seeming to make a mockerie thereof, demaunded, if the Emperour had given him this priviledge, above all other married men? Bernardo being somewhat offended, answered: No Emperour hath done it, but the especiall blessing of heaven, exceeding all the Emperours on the earth in grace, and thereby have received this favour; whereto Ambroginolo presently thus

replied. Bernardo, without all question to the contrary, I beleeve that what thou hast said, is true; but (for ought I can perceiue) thou hast slender judgement in the Nature of things: because, if thou didst observe them well, thou couldst not be of so grosse understanding. For, by comprehending matters in their true kinde and nature, thou wouldst speake of them more correctly then thou doest. And to the end, thou mayest not imagine, that we who have spoken of our Wives, doe thinke any otherwise of them, then as well and honestly as thou canst of thine, nor that any thing else did urge these speeches of them, or falling into this kinde of discourse, but onely by a naturall instinct and admonition, I wil proceede familiarly, a little further with thee, upon the matter alreadie propounded. I have evermore understoode, that man was the most noble creature, formed by God to live in this World, and woman in the next degree to him: but man, as generally is beleevd, and as is discerned by apparant effects is the most perfect of both. Having then the most perfection in him, without all doubt, he must be so much the more firme and constant. So in like manner, it hath beene, and is universally graunted, that Woman is more various and mutable, may be approved by and the reason thereof may be approved by many naturall circumstances, which were needlesse now to make any mention of. If a man then be possessed of the greater stability, and yet cannot containe himselfe from condescending, I say not to one that entreates him, but to desire any other that please him; and beside, to covet the enjoying of his owne pleasing contentment (a thing not chancing to him once in a moneth, but infinite times in a dayes space). What can you then conceive of a fraile Woman, subject (by nature) to entreaties, flatteries, giftes, perswasions, and a thousand other inticing meanes, which a man (that is affected to her) can use? Doest thou thinke then that she hath any power to containe? Assuredly, though thou shouldest rest so resolved, yet cannot I be of the same opinion. For I am sure thou beleevest, and must needs confesse it, that thy wife is a Woman, made of flesh and blood, as other women are: if it be so, she cannot bee without the same desires, and the weaknesse or strength as other women have, to resist naturall appetites as her owne are. In regard whereof, it is meerey impossible (although she be most honest) but she must needs doe that which other Women doe: for there is nothing else possible, either to be denied or affirmed to the contrary, as thou most unadvisedly hast done.

Bernardo answered in this manner. I am a Merchant, and no Philosopher, and like a Merchant I meane to answer thee. I am not to learne, that these accidents by thee related, may happen to fooles, who are voide of understanding or shame: but such as are wise, and endued with vertue, have alwayes such a precious esteeme of their honour, that they wil containe those principles of constancie, which men are meerey carelesse of, and I justifie my wife to be one of them. Beleeve me Bernardo, replied Ambrogino, if so often as thy wives minde is addicted to wanton folly, a badge of scorne should arise on thy forehead, to render testimony of hir female frailty, I beleeve the number of them would be more, then willingly you would wish them to be. And among all married men in every degree, the notes are so secret of their wives imperfections, that the sharpest sight is not able to discern them: and the wiser sort of men are willing not to know them; because shame and losse of honour is never imposed, but in cases evident and apparant.

Perswade thy selfe then Bernardo, that what women may accomplish in secret, they will rarely faile to doe: or if they abstaine, it is through feare and folly. Wherefore, hold it for a certaine rule, that that is onely chaste, that never was solicited personally, or if she endured any such suite, either shee answered yea, or no. And albeit I know this to be true, by many infallible and naturall reasons, yet could I not speak so exactly as I doe, if I had not tried experimentally, the humours and affections of divers Women. Yea, and let me tell thee more Bernardo, were I in private company with thy wife, howsoever thou presumest to thinke her to be, I should account it a matter of no impossibility, to finde in her the selfesame frailty.

Bernardoes blood now began to boyle, and patience being a little put downe by choller, thus he replied. A combat of words requires over-long continuance; for I maintaine the matter which thou deniest, and all this sorts to nothing in the end. But seeing thou presumest, that all women are so apt and tractable, and thy selfe so confident of thine owne power: I willingly yeeld (for the

better assurance of my wifes constant loyalty) to have my head smitten off, if thou canst winne her to any such dishonest act, by any meanes whatsoever thou canst use unto her; which if thou canst not doe, thou shalt onely loose a thousand duckets of Gold. Now began Ambroginolo to be heated with these words, answering thus. Bernardo, if I had won the wager, I know not what I should doe with thy head; but if thou be willing to stand upon the prooffe, pawne downe five thousand Duckets of gold, (a matter of much lesse value then thy head) against a thousand Duckets of mine, granting me a lawfull limited time, which I require to be no more then the space of three moneths, after the day of my departing hence. I will stand bound to goe for Geneway, and there winne such kinde consent of thy Wife, as shall be to mine owne content. In witness whereof, I will bring backe with me such private and especiall tokens, as thou thy selfe shalt confesse that I have not failed. Provided, that thou doe first promise upon thy faith, to absent thy selfe thence during my limitted time, and be no hinderance to me by thy Letters, concerning the attempt by me undertaken.

Bernardo saide, Be it a bargaine, am the man that will make good my five thousand Duckets; and albeit the other Merchants then present, earnestly laboured to breake the wager, knowing great harme must needs ensue thereon: yet both the parties were so hot and fiery, as all the other men spake to no effect, but writings was made, sealed, and delivered under either of their hands, Bernardo remaining at Paris, and Ambroginolo departing for Geneway. There he remained some few dayes, to learne the streetes name where Bernardo dwelt, as also the conditions and qualities of his Wife, which scarcely pleased him when he heard them; because they were farre beyond her Husbands relation, and shee reputed to be the onely wonder of women; whereby he plainly perceived, that he had undertaken a very idle enterprise, yet would he not give it over so, but proceeded therein a little further.

He wrought such meanes, that he came acquainted with a poore woman, who often frequented Bernardoes house, and was greatly in favour with his wife; upon whose poverty he so prevailed, by earnest perswasions, but much more by large gifts of money, that he won her to further him in this manner following. A faire and artificiall Chest he caused to be purposely made, wherein himselfe might be aptly contained, and so conveyed into the House of Bernardoes Wife, under colour of a formall excuse; that the poore woman should be absent from the City two or three dayes, and shee must keepe it safe till shee returne. The Gentlewoman suspecting no guile, but that the Chest was the receptacle of all the womans wealth; would trust it in no other roome, then her owne Bed-chamber, which was the place where Ambroginolo most desired to bee.

Being thus conveyed into the Chamber, the night going on apace, and the Gentlewoman fast asleepe in her bed, a lighted Taper stood burning on the Table by her, as in her Husbands absence shee ever used to have: Ambroginolo softly opened the Chest, according as cunningly hee had contrived it, and stepping forth in his sockes made of cloath, observed the scituation of the Chamber, the paintings, pictures, and beautifull hangings, with all things else that were remarkable, which perfectly he committed to his memory. Going neere to the bed, he saw her lie there sweetly sleeping, and her young Daughter in like manner by her, she seeming then as compleate and pleasing a creature, as when shee was attired in her best bravery. No especiall note or marke could hee descrie, whereof he might make credible report, but onely a small wart upon her left pappe, with some few hairees growing thereon, appearing to be as yellow as gold.

Sufficient had he seene, and durst presume no further; but taking one of her Rings, which lay upon the Table, a purse of hers, hanging by on the wall, a light wearing Robe of silke, and her girdle, all which he put into the Chest; and being in himselfe, closed it fast as it was before, so continuing there in the Chamber two severall nights, the Gentlewoman neither mistrusting or missing any thing. The third day being come, the poore woman, according as formerly was concluded, came to have home her Chest againe, and brought it safely into her owne house; where Ambroginolo comming forth of it, satisfied the poore woman to her owne liking, returning (with all the forenamed things) so fast as conveniently he could to Paris.

Being arrived there long before his limmitted time, he called the Merchants together, who were present at the passed words and wager; avouching before Bernardo, that he had won his five thousand Duckets, and performed the taske he undertooke. To make good his protestation, first he described the forme of the Chamber, the curious pictures hanging about it, in what manner the bed stood, and every circumstance else beside. Next he shewed the severall things, which he brought away thence with him, affirming that he had received them of her selfe. Bernardo confessed, that his description of the Chamber was true, and acknowledged moreover, that these other things did belong to his Wife: But (quoth he) this may be gotten, by corrupting some servant of mine, both for intelligence of the Chamber, as also of the Ring, Purse, and what else is beside; all which suffice not to win the wager, without some other more apparant and pregnant token. In troth, answered Ambroginolo, me thinkes these should serve for sufficient proofes; but seeing thou art so desirous to know more: I plainly tell thee, that faire Genevra thy Wife, hath a small round wart upon her left pappe, and some few little golden haire growing thereon.

When Bernardo heard these words, they were as so many stabs to his heart, yea, beyond all compasse of patient sufferance, and by the changing of his colour, it was noted manifestly, (being unable to utter one word) that Ambroginolo had spoken nothing but the truth. Within a while after, he saide; Gentlemen, that which Ambroginolo hath saide, is very true, wherefore let him come when he will, and he shall be paide; which accordingly he performed on the very next day, even to the utmost penny, departing then from Paris towards Geneway, with a most malicious intention to his Wife: Being come neere to the City, he would not enter it, but rode to a Country house of his, standing about tenne miles distant thence. Being there arrived, he called a servant, in whom hee reposed especiall trust, sending him to Geneway with two Horses, writing to his Wife, that he was returned, and shee should come thither to see him. But secretly he charged his servant, that so soone as he had brought her to a convenient place, he should there kill her, without any pittie or compassion, and then returne to him againe.

When the servant was come to Geneway, and had delivered his Letter and message, Genevra gave him most joyfull welcome, and on the morrow morning mounting on Horse-backe with the servant, rode merrily towards the Country house; divers things shee discoursed on by the way, till they descended into a deepe solitary valey, very thickly beset with high and huge spreading Trees, which the servant supposed to be a meete place, for the execution of his Masters command. Suddenly drawing forth his Sword, and holding Genevra fast by the arme, he saide; Mistresse, quickly commend your soule to God, for you must die, before you passe any further. Genevra seeing the naked Sword, and hearing the words so peremptorily delivered, fearefully answered; Alas deare friend, mercy for Gods sake; and before thou kill me, tell me wherein I have offended thee, and why thou must kill me? Alas good Mistresse replied the servant, you have not any way offended me, but in what occasion you have displeased your Husband, it is utterly unknowne to me: for he hath strictly commanded me, without respect of pittie or compassion, to kill you by the way as I bring you, and if I doe it not, he hath sworne to hang me by the necke. You know good Mistresse, how much I stand obliged to him, and how impossible it is for me, to contradict any thing that he commandeth. God is my witsse, that I am truly compassionate of you, and yet (by no meanes) may I let you live.

Genevra kneeling before him weeping, wringing her hands, thus replied. Wilt thou turne Monster, and be a murtherer of her that never wronged thee, to please another man, and on a bare command? God, who truly knoweth all things, is my faithfull witsse, that I never committed any offence, whereby to deserve the dislike of my Husband, much lesse so harsh a recompence as this is. But flying from mine owne justification, and appealing to thy manly mercy, thou mayest (wert thou but so well pleased) in a moment satisfie both thy Master and me, in such manner as I will make plaine and apparant to thee. Take thou my garments, spare me onely thy doublet, and such a Bonnet as is fitting for a man, so returne with my habite to thy Master, assuring him, that the deede is done. And here I sweare to thee, by that life which I enjoy but by

thy mercy, I will so strangely disguise my selfe, and wander so far off from these Countries, as neither he or thou, nor any person belonging to these parts, shall ever heare any tydings of me. The servant, who had no great good will to kill her, very easily grew pittifull, tooke off her upper garments, and gave her a poore ragged doublet, a sillie Chapperone, and such small store of money as he had, desiring her to forsake that Country, and so left her to walke on foote out of the valley. When he came to his Maister, and had delivered him her garments, he assured him, that he had not onely accomplished his commaund, but also was most secure from any discovery: because he had no sooner done the deede, but foure or five very ravenous Woolves, came presently running to the dead bodie, and gave it buriall in their bellyes. Bernardo soone after returning to Geneway, was much blamed for such unkinde cruelty to his wife; but his constant avouching of her treason to him (according then to the Countries custome) did cleare him from all pursuite of Law.

Poor Genevra was left thus alone and disconsolate, and night stealing fast upon her, shee went to a silly village neere adjoining, where (by the meanes of a good olde woman) she got such provision as the place afforded, making the doublet fit to her body, and converting her petticoate to a paire of breeches, according to the Mariners fashion: then cutting her haire, and quaintly disguised like unto a Saylor, she went to the Sea coast. By good fortune, she met there with a Gentleman of Cathalogna, whose name was Signior Enchararcho, who came on land from his Ship, which lay hulling there about Albagia, to refresh himselfe at a pleasant Spring. Enchararcho taking her to be a man, as shee appeared no otherwise by her habite; upon some conference passing betweene them, shee was entertayned into his service, and being brought aboard the Ship, she went under the name of Sicurano da Finale. There shee had better apparrell bestowne on her by the Gentleman, and her service proved so pleasing and acceptable to him, that hee liked her care and diligence beyond all comparison.

It came to passe within a short while after, that this Gentleman of Cathalogna sayled (with some charge of his) into Alexandria, carrying thither certaine Faulcons, which he presented to the Soldan, who oftentimes welcommed this Gentleman to his table, where he observed the behaviour of Sicurano, attending on his Maisters Trencher, and therewith was so highly pleased; that hee requested to have him from the Gentleman, who (for his more advancement) willingly parted with his so lately entertained servant. Sicurano was so ready and discreet in his daily services, that he grew in as great grace with the Soldan, as before hee had done with Enchararcho.

At a certaine season in the yeare, as customary order (there observed) had formerly beene, in the City of Acres which was under the Soldanes subjection, there yeerely met a great assembly of Merchants, as Christians, Moores, jewes, Sarazens, and many other Nations besides, as at a common Mart or Fayre. And to the end, that the Merchants (for the better sale of their goods) might be there in the safer assurance, the Soldane used to send thither some of his ordinarie Officers, and a strong guard of Souldiers beside, to defend them from all injuries and molestation, because he reaped thereby no meane benefit. And who should be now sent about this businesse, but his new elected favourite Sicurano, because she was skilfull and. perfect in the Languages. Sicurano being come to Acres, as Lord and Captaine of the Guard for the Merchants, and for the safety of their Merchandizes, she discharged her office most commendably, walking with her traine thorough every part of the Fayre, where she observed a worthy company of Merchants, Sicilians, Pisans, Genewayes, Venetians, and other Italians, whom the more willingly she noted, in remembrance of her native Country. At one especiall time among other, chancing into a Shop or Booth belonging to the Venetians, she espied (hanging up with other costly wares) a Purse and a Girdle, which sodainly she remembered to be sometime her owne; whereat she was not a little abashed in her minde. But without making any such outward shew, courteously she requested to know whose they were, and whether they should be sold, or no.

Ambrogino of Placentia, was likewise come thither, and great store of Merchandizes hee had brought with him, in a Carracke appertaining to the Venetians, and hee hearing the Captaine of

the Guard demaund whose they were, stepped fourth before him, and smiling, answered: That they were his, but not to be solde; yet if hee liked them, gladly he would bestow them on him. Sicurano seeing him smile, suspected least himselfe had (by some unfitting behaviour) beene the occasion thereof: and therefore, with a more setled countenance, hee said: Perhaps thou smilest, because I that am a man, professing Armes, should question after such womanish toys.

Ambroginolo replyed, My Lord, pardon mee, I smile not at you, or at your demaund, but at the manner how I came by these things.

Sicurano, upon this answere, was ten times more desirous then before, and saide: If Fortune favoured thee in friendly maner, by the obtaining of these things: if it may be spoken, tell mee how thou hadst them. My Lord (answered Ambroginolo) these things (with many more besides) were given me by a Gentlewoman of Geneway, named Madam Genevra, the wife to one Bernardo Lomellino, in recompence of one nights lodging with her, and she desired me to keepe them for her sake. Now, the maine reason of my smiling, was the remembrance of her husbands folly, in waging five thousand Duckets of Gold, against one thousand of mine, that I should not obtaine my will of his Wife; which I did, and thereby won the wager. But hee, who better deserved to be punished for his folly, then shee, who was but sicke of all womens disease; returning from Paris to Geneway, caused her to be slaine, as afterward it was reported by himselfe.

When Sicurano heard this horrible lye, immediately shee conceived, that this was the occasion of her husbands hatred to her, and all the hard haps which she had since suffered: whereupon, shee reputed it for more then a mortall sinne, if such a villaine should passe without due punishment. Sicurano seemed to like well this report, and grew into such familiarity with Ambroginolo, that (by her perswasions) when the Fayre was ended, shee tooke him higher with her into Alexandria, and all his Wares along with him, furnishing him with a fit and convenient shop, where he made great benefite of his Merchandizes, trusting all his monies in the Captaines custody, because it was the safest course for him, and so hee continued there with no meane contentment.

Much did shee pittie her Husbands perplexity, devising by what good and warrantable meanes she might make knowne her innocency to him; wherein her place and authority did greatly sted her, and she wrought with divers gallant Merchants of Geneway that then remained in Alexandria, and by vertue of the Soldans friendly letters beside, to bring him thither upon an lall occasion. Come he did, albeit in especiall in poore and meane order, which soone was better altered by her appointment, and he verie honourably (though in private) entertained by divers of her woorthie friends, till time did favour what she further intended.

In the expectation of Bernardoes arrivall, shee had so prevayled with Ambrogiriolo, that the same tale which he formerly told to her, he delivered againe in presence of the Soldan, who seemed to be wel pleased with it. But after shee had once seene her Husband, shee thought upon her more serious businesse; providing her selfe of an apt opportunity, when shee entreated such favour of the Soldan, that both the men might bee brought before him; where if Ambroginolo would not confesse (without constraint) that which he had made his vaunt of concerning Bernardoes wife, he might be compelled thereto perforce. Sicuranoes word was a Law with the Soldane, so that Ambroginolo and Bernardo being brought face to face, the Soldane with a sterne and angry countenance, in the presence of a most Princely Assembly, commanded Ambroginolo to declare the truth, upon perill of his life, by what meanes he won the Wager of the five thousand Golden Duckets he received of Bernardo. Ambroginolo seeing Sicurano there present, upon whose favour he wholly relyed, yet perceiving her lookes likewise to be as dreadful as the Soldans, and hearing her threaten him with most greevous torments except he revealed the truth indeed; you may easily guesse in what condition he stood at that instant.<

Frownes and fury he beheld on either side, and Bernardo standing before him, with a world of famous witnesses, to heare his lye confounded by his owne confession, and his tongue to denie what it had before so constantly avouched. Yet dreaming on no other pain or penalty, but restoring backe the five thousand Duckets of gold, and the other things by him purloyned, truly

he revealed the whole forme of his falshood. Then Sicurano according as the Soldane had formerly commanded him, turning to Bernardo, saide. And thou, upon the suggestion of this foule lye, what didst thou to thy Wife? Being (quoth Bernardo) overcome with for the losse of my money, and the dishonor I supposed to receive by my Wife; I caused a servant of mine to kill her, and as hee credibly avouched, her body was devoured by ravenous Wolves in a moment after. These things being thus spoken and heard, in the presence of the Soldan, and no reason (as yet) made knowne, why the case was so seriously urged, and to what end it would succede: Sicurano spake in this manner to the Soldane. My gracious Lord, you may plainly perceive, in what degree that poore Gentlewoman might make her vaunt, beeing so well provided, both of a loving friend, and a husband. Such was the friends love, that in an instant, and by a wicked lye, hee robbed her both of her renowne and honour, and bereft her also of her husband. And her husband, rather crediting anothers falshood, then the invincible trueth, whereof he had faithfull knowledge, by long and very honorable experience; caused her to be slaine, and made foode for devouring Wolves. Beside all this, such was the good will and affection borne to that Woman both by friend and husband, that the longest continuer of them in her company, makes them alike in knowledge of her. But because your great wisdom knoweth perfectly what each of them have worthily deserved: if you please (in your ever-knowne gracious benignity) to permit the punishment of the deceiver, and pardon the partie so diceyved; I will procure such meanes, that she shall appeare here in your presence, and theirs.

The Soldane, being desirous to give Sicurano all manner of satisfaction, having followed the course so indistrously, bad him to produce the Woman, and hee was well contented. Whereat Bernardo stode much amazed, because he verity beleevved that she was dead. And Ambroginolo foreseeing already a preparation for punishment, feared, that the repayment of the money would not now serve his turne: not knowing also, what he should further hope or suspect, if the woman her selfe did personally appeare, which hee imagined would be a miracle. Sicurano having thus obtained the Soldanes permission, teares, humbling her selfe at his feete, in a moment she lost her manly voyce and demeanour, as knowing that she was now no longer to use them, but must truly witness what she was indeed, and therefore thus spake.

Great Soldane, I am the miserable and unfortunate Genevra, that for the space of sixe whole yeeres, have wandered through the world, in the habite of a man, falsely and most maliciously slaundered, by this villainous Traytor Ambroginolo, and by this unkinde cruell husband, betrayed to his servant to be slaine, and left to be devoured by savage beasts. Afterward, desiring such garments as better fitted for her, and shewing her breasts, she made it apparant before the Soldane and his assistants, that shee was the very same woman indeede. Then turning her selfe to Ambroginolo, with more then manly courage, she demanded of him, when, and where it was, that he lay with her, as (villainously) he was not ashamed to make his vaunt? But hee, having already acknowledged the contrarie, being stricken dumbe with shamefull disgrace, was not able to utter one word.

The Soldane, who had alwayes reputed Sicurano to be a man, having heard and scene so admirable an accident; was so amazed in his minde, that many times he was very doubtfull, whether this was a dreame, or an absolute relation of trueth. But, after hee had more seriously considered thereon, and found it to be reall and infallible: with extraordinary gracious praises, he commended the life, constancy, condition and vertues of Genevra, whom (til that time) he had alwayes called Sicurano. So committing her to the company of honourable Ladies, to be changed from her manly habite; he pardoned Bernardo her husband (according to her request formerly made) although hee had more justly deserved death: which likewise himselfe confessed, and falling at the feet of Genevra, desired her (in teares) to forgive his rash transgression, which most lovingly she did, kissing and embracing him a thousand times.

Then the Soldane strictly commaunded, that on some high and eminent place of the Citie, Ambroginolo should be bound and impaled on a stake, having his naked body noited all over with hony, and never to bee taken off, untill (of it selfe) it fell in peeces, which, according to the

sentence, was presently performed. Next, he gave expresse charge, that all his mony and goods should be given to Genevra, which valued above ten thousand double Duckets. Forthwith a solemne Feast was prepared, wherein much honor was done to Bernardo, being the husband of Genevra: and to her, as to a most worthy woman, and matchlesse wife, he gave in costly jewels, as also vessels of gold and silver plate, so much as did amount to above ten thousand double Duckets more.

When the feasting was finished, he caused a Ship to be furnished for them, graunting them license to depart from Geneway when they pleased; whither they returned most richly and joyfully, being welcomed home with great honour, especially Madam Genevra, whom every one supposed to be dead; and alwayes after, so long as she lived, shee was most famous for her manifold vertues. But as for Ambroginolo, the verie same day that hee was impaled on the stake, annoited with honey, and fixed in the place appointed, to his no meane torment: he not onely died, but likewise was devoured to the bare bones, by Flies, Waspes, and Hornets, whereof the Country notoriously aboundeth. And his bones, in full forme and fashion, remained strangely blacke for a long time after, knit together by the sinewes; as a witnesse to many thousands of people, which afterward beheld the Carkasse of his wickednesse against so good and vertuous a Woman, that had not so much as a thought of any evill towards him. And thus was the Proverbe truly verified, that shame succeedeth after ugly sinne, and the deceiver is trampled and trod, by such as himselfe hath deceived.