

Thomas Middleton's "The Changeling"

—Imprisoned by Sexual Mis-expectations—

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トーマス・ミドルトンの “ザ・チェンジリング”

— 予期せざる愛に囚われて —

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Abstract

One of the remarkable qualities of human nature is the ability to change at any given moment in time. People change for a variety of reasons — money, love, honor, or any one of a host of other factors. With change, however, comes same kind of consequence — either a positive or a negative. This play explores the fate of an aristocratic adolescent betrothed to a man she does not love. And to what lengths she will go to be rid of him. The reader is taken on a wild tour of the human heart and given subtle insight into basic Judeo-Christian values.

Keywords: change, service, contract, honor, love-blindness, marriage, aristocracy, master, servant, murder, reward, ring, naivety, virginity, Judeo-Christian, Beatrice, De Flores, Alsemero, Piracquo, Vermandero, Alicante

The Changeling (1622), written by Thomas Middleton and William Rowley, is the tale of a young nobleman from Valentia, Alsemero, and his confrontation with love at first sight. Alsemero sees his love, Beatrice-Joanna, for the first time in a church where he falls madly in love with her. He is unaware of her background, personality, habits and yet he stops his voyage to Malta in order to try and be with her. The first scene sets the atmosphere of beauty and love, which later turns into death and betrayal.

Alsemero: The place where I first met her was in the church. And now I met her again in the church. What kind of event is foretold by that? Nothing but what I imagine. Why should my destiny be full of tear? This place is good-by, and so in my purpose. I love her beauty and want to marry her. And marriage, it seems to me, could be compared with Eden [Adam's Paradise] because it is man's rightful state — if he can achieve it. The church was where we met, so that's the place we should be joined in marriage. So church gives us a chance to begin our relationship as well as perfecting it. (Act I, scene i)

From this point in the play, an atmosphere of reverence and piety is created, although we cannot presume Alsemero is a pious man or a conformist, rather, we must assume that Christian morality will serve as the backdrop for the events of the play. Perhaps, Alsemero was merely praying for a good voyage praying to St. Christopher while in the church, and it is in here where he has the feelings of lust and sexual passion for Beatrice-Joanna. This is quickly brought to the reader's attention from the servant. No sooner does the servant makes his comments about the young couple when Alsemero and Beatrice meet at the church and he kisses her. This shocks Jasperino, his friend:

Jasperino: [Asides] what is this! The unalterable laws of the Medes certainly have been subverted. Great woman with a kiss unbelievable! This will be weirder and better news at Valentia than if he had ransomed half of Greece from Turks. (Act I, scene i)

Alsemero and Beatrice engage in dialogue where Alsemero discloses he is gifted in science and art which pleases Beatrice incredibly. Beatrice is impressed of Alsemero which reveals her aristocratic background as science and art would probably not interest the common girl. Beatrice realizes that Alsemero could make her happy and decides she would like to marry him. Unfortunately, she is already been engaged to Alonzo Piracquo, the man to whom her father had promised her hand, five days ago.

Beatrice: [Aside] I wish we could turn the clock back five days! Certainly, my eyes made a mistake: This man was meant for me. The timing was almost perfect but now the chance has gone!

On the surface, the merry, carefree conversation between Alsemero and Beatrice is interrupted by her servant De Flores who brings a news of Beatrice's father's arrival. The news changed her mood altogether which worries Alsemero, although he doesn't know the details about Beatrice's situation. Everything becomes clear after her father, Vermandero, comes into their conversation. Alsemero is asked about his country and his father was revealed to be Vermandero's good friend. Vermandero invites him to the Castle for his daughter's wedding to Piracquo, which is scheduled to be held within the week. Being informed and shocked, Alsemero changes his mind to leave the place. Vermandero's strong insistence as well as Beatrice's awkward invitation forces Alsemero to reluctantly accept their offer. As Beatrice senses Alsemero's embarrassment, she tries to entice him by dropping her glove. Seeing this, Vermandero orders De Flores to pick it up and return it to Beatrice. Beatrice becomes infuriated and chastises him after her father leaves.

Beatrice: Damn your (pernickety, petty-minded) boldness!
Who told you bend down (for the glove)? That glove won't touch my hands again; there,
because the other one is (soiled).
I will get rid of this one too [takes off and throws down the other glove]. Take them and use
them (peel off) your horrible skin and revitalize yourself, like a snake.

From the beginning, Beatrice abhors this servant De Flores, not only for his ugly appearance caused by some skin disease but also his insidious nature as he stalks her relentlessly, seeming to enjoy her insults and argument. In spite of Beatrice's contempt and abhorrence for him, De Flores cannot stop his longing for her. De Flores knows he hasn't a chance in a million to be with her, yet he pokes into any business that involves master and servant. He masochistically says,

De Flores: Here's a favor that come with misfortune! Now I know she would rather see my skin used as leather for dancing shoes than for me to thrust my fingers into her (sockets/silky folds).
I know she hates me but I cannot help loving her. It doesn't matter. if only to make her angry, I will confine harassing her. Even if I get nothing else, I will have what I want. (Act I Scene ii)

In the beginning of Act II, scene i Beatrice asks Jasperino to hand Alsemero a note which invites him to her room in the castle.

Beatrice: How smart Alsemero is in his choice of friends. That means Alsemero uses good judgement to make the right decision.
Thus, I can't be more justified in anything than in choosing him (as my husband). Because it is a principle, a man that can choose wisely the bosom friend to communicate his mind, will show good reason in every choice he makes. I think I love him now with good discretion, and I can clearly see the way towards recognizing his merit. A true person sparkles like a diamond; In darkness, you can see him, which usually can't be seen, and dark shadowed love comes.
But this is the best intellectual faculties with intellectual eyes.
Why does my father waste his breadth talking to me about Alonzo de Piracquo? His blessing is given only if I respect his name (Vermandero) by marrying well, or else the name is taken away, and it directs its power against me and thus changed into a curse. I must think of a quick way to solve this problem.

Slowly but steadily Beatrice's love of Alsemero and her disdain, even hatred, for her marriage to Piracquo contaminates her mind and she begins to lose her better judgement and think irrational thoughts. She feels there is no time to waste, as her marriage to Piracquo is looming close on the horizon. Alsemero would have accepted his fate? not to be Beatrice's husband ? however their love is too strong and confines them to each other.

Beatrice: I can see before me everything I want; This is what I pray to heaven for, and heaven answers by sending what we need. My sweetest necessity is you coming to me. How happy this meeting and this kiss would be if it were not opposed by many people. This poor kiss has a hateful enemy (=Alonzo) who would want to poison it if he knew about it.
How happy I would be if there were nobody in the world with name "Piracquo," But that is too much to hope for!

Alsemero: One good act will ally both your fears, and I'll tell you what it is, too, because you are so

distressed. If you get rid of Alonzo (the cause), you also eliminate your father's command (Take away the cause and the effect must cease). Therefore, two worries are blow out by one puff of air (We can kill two birds with one stone).

Beatrice: I beg you let me try to understand you, sir.

What is this extraordinarily happy course of action that you intend to pursue?

Alsemero: The most honorable quality in a man, courage. I'll send a challenge of single combat to Piracquo immediately.

Beatrice: What? Do you call that the way to extinguish my fear, when, paradoxically, it will only make me more afraid. You, who I love more than anything else, will put yourself in huge danger by fighting Piracquo. Please don't talk such nonsense, sir. If you won, you would be in a dangerous situations, not being able to be mine. You would be arrested, or you would have to be a fugitive from justice, forever. I'm glad I've thought about this before you did something rash. Oh, don't get involved in such a business, sir! This is the way to bring a sorrow into my life that could only end when I die. The tears would continue until stopped by the dust in my grave. Such bloody criminality is fitting only for a much uglier face (De Flores). I greatly regret that through my contempt for him, I have ruined the chance of using him. He'd have done it without question. But I still don't know what use might be found for that ugly face!

Alsemero: Lady

Beatrice: [Aside] Why do cunning men often use a lot of poison: one poison drives out another! Where was my cunning?

Alsemero: Lady, you are not listening to me.

Beatrice: I interpret your meaning in a special way, sir. [Alonzo Piracquo must be removed] The present situation is not in our favor as much as the future situation might be, but we have to take advantage of the situation like thrifty guys spend their money very cautiously until good times roll.

Alsemero: You are wise, Lady.

Beatrice-Joanna, though utterly unscrupulous and virtuous, is a devilishly clever woman who allows her mind to become muddled in the notion of marrying another man. It is often said that love is blind. In this case, loves makes people blind to their own reality and the world around them. Beatrice's is derailed from the moral tracks of Christian Europe, as she is blinded by her love for Alsemero and is willing to be party to this deed. Beatrice-Joanna's tragedy stems from her youth and ignorance of the world. Her immaturity can be attributed to her urge for love, that is to say her love-blindness, and thus leads her down path from which she cannot return.

De Flores: [Aside] I have observed their meeting, and was very surprised.

What will happen to Alonzo? I'm sure both of them can't be satisfied unless she cheats. With luck, I'll put in for a share of her sexual favors: Because if a woman flies from her husband's part, this bird will then spread and mount, just like arithmetic, one, ten, a hundred, a thousand — soon she is dishing out passion rations to a whole troop of men. Now I can look forward to being savagely abused again, but I have to see her.

After eavesdropping on their dialogue, De Flores cannot conceal his astonishment, on the other hand, he feels he could seize the opportunity to receive some kind of love from Beatrice because of his wishful thinking that once a woman betrays her husband, she would have illicit connection with one man after the other. At this stage he doesn't want either Piracquo or Alsemero to be married to Beatrice.

There is a particular scene in the play which reveals Beatrice's immaturity superbly. The scene shows her

engaged in a dialogue with the cold, shady De Flores. In this scene, Beatrice insinuates that she is in love with another man. What is more, she suggests that her true love is De Flores. Her immaturity, though comically revealed, is evident here. Her presupposition that servants should obey their masters is clearly evident as she is part of the aristocracy. Her decision to use De Flores in her sinister plot to avoid managing Piracquo proves to be one of her major downfalls.

Obviously Beatrice is not a machiavellian politician nor is she a mastermind of any kind. She is a child who is in love with another man and will do anything to be with him, even murder. She is blinded by her love for Alsemero and is led by her feelings down an increasingly more complicated labyrinth. She ultimately tries to settle the problem by employing her servant De Flores, who is caught in the web of unreciprocated love with her.

Beatrice: [Aside] Why, suppose I hated him as much as youth and beauty hates death. Must I show my abhorrence? Can I keep my secret, and use him for my purpose? Look, he's here. [Talks to him]
De Flores.

De Flores: [Aside] Ha, I will go mad with joy! She called my name elegantly.
De Flores, she didn't call me rogue or rascal.

Beatrice: What have you done to your face recently? You have met with a good doctor. It seems to me that you do not usually look so attractive.

De Flores: [I am not; This is the same countenance, right down to each hair and pimple, which she called scabby less than an hour ago.]
What's going on?

Beatrice: Come here, come near, man!

De Flores: [Aside] I feel as if I'm almost completely in heaven. ...Her finger touched me! She smells of perfume.I was lucky to be alive ...

Beatrice: Let us try — Oh, my De Flores!

De Flores: [Aside] How about that? She already called me, "My De Flores!"

Beatrice: I wish that creation

De Flores: Ah yes, procreation is what you mean.

Beatrice: Had made me a man. (Born a man.)

De Flores: No, that's not what you mean.

Beatrice: Oh, it is the soul of freedom! Then I should not be forced to marry any man I hate so very much; Then I should have the power to go against the things I hate, even to banish them of my sight forever.

De Flores: Oh, heaven sent opportunity! Without having to change your sex, you can be fulfilled in your wishes. "In" me, you can have a man and a half.

Beatrice: In you, De Flores? There's reason to do that.

De Flores: Don't take it away from me. I would go down on my knees to do this service for you. [De Flores kneels.]

Beatrice: You are too ardent to be speak truthfully. There is much horror in serving me, blood and danger. Are these really things you want so badly to do?

De Flores: If you understood how precious (wonderful) it would be for me to be employed doing any service for you, you would say that I failed to use enough reverence at that time you gave me my instructions.

Beatrice: [Aside] It seems to me this is too excessive, perhaps his needs are those of hungry man, and to

- such men gold tastes like manna from heaven. [Talks to De Flores] Stand up.
- De Flores: I want to do the service first.
- Beatrice: [Aside] Possibly his desire is weighing him down. [Gives him money] — This is to encourage you. To the degree that you are courageous and your service is dangerous, your reward will be commensurate.
- De Flores: That is what I have expected. I have already assured myself about that, and I know it will be appropriately compensated; it's a ravishing thought!
- Beatrice: Right! Unleash your fury on him.
- De Flores: I can't wait to get stuck in.
- Beatrice: Alonzo de Piracquo.
- De Flores: His life is almost over. He won't be seen anymore. [De Flores stands up]
- Beatrice: How lovely you look to me now! No man has ever been rewarded more dearly than you will be.
- De Flores: That is the motivation for me.
- Beatrice: Be extremely careful in the execution.
- De Flores: Why, don't both of our lives depend upon this throw of the dice?
- Beatrice: Then I'll throw all my worries on your performance.
- De Flores: Those worries will never come back to hurt you.
- Beatrice: When you've done the deed, I will supply you with everything; You need for your escape. You can live in luxury in another country.
- De Flores: Yes, yes, we'll talk about it later.
- Beatrice: [Aside] I will get rid of two disgusting things all at once. Piracquo, and dog face De Flores. [Exit Beatrice]
- De Flores: Oh, my passion! It seems to me that I can already feel her in my arms. Beatrice's lewd fingers scraping my beard, and because she's so pleased, even praising this ugly face. Hunger and desire, they'll sometimes praise base and devour them, and, even stranger, they prefer them to fancier alternatives. Some women have strange tastes. I'm speaking too loudly: Here comes a man who will go to bed with no feast, but will not wake up to have dinner tomorrow. [Alonzo comes in]

In plotting the murder of Piracquo, Beatrice-Joanna is remarkably similar to the cold and calculating Lady Macbeth. Beatrice-Joanna naively believes that after Piracquo is murdered, Alsemero will win her and De Flores will quietly disappear with some financial rewards. During his dialogue with Beatrice, De Flores may have only half believed her, especially since he already overheard her and Alsemero discussing the removal of Piracquo. De Flores could have for seen that things would not go as smoothly as Beatrice thought. From De Flores's perspective, Beatrice-Joanna is a child who lives to play with toys and his one-sided love for her is deeply twisted in his mind. Half-believing his own fantasy and half believing he is being deceived, De Flores decides to help her in her insidious plot. He hopes that Beatrice will "see the light" and marry him, not Alsemero.

Immediately after this scene, De Flores meets with Piracquo because he wants to visit Vermandero's Castle. De Flores ushers Piracquo into the vault where he unsheathes his swords, murders Piracquo, and cuts off his ring finger in order to prove to Beatrice the evil deed is done. After murdering Piracquo, De Flores is pregnant with anticipation of seeing his love, Beatrice, and showing her what he has done for her. He fully expects his payment to be sexual in nature, in part because he feels he has beaten out Alonzo Piracquo for her love.

- De Flores: [Aside] My thoughts are feasting on the prospect of doing the dead. I feel no heaviness about it, the hassle is a small price to pay for all the sweet repayment I am promised in return.

Beatrice: (Isn't that) De Flores?

De Flores: My lady?

Beatrice: Your demeanor indicates good news.

De Flores: Everything is fitting: the time, conditions, your desires, as well as my performance (labor).

Beatrice: You have done it then?

De Flores: Piracquo is no more (dead).

Beatrice: I'm so happy, I'm starting to cry with joy.

De Flores: I have some token proof of it.

Beatrice: For me?

De Flores: But it was given somewhat unwillingly; I couldn't get the ring without the finger. [Shows her the finger of Piracquo.]

Beatrice: Goodness me! What have you done?

De Flores: Why, is this any worse than my having killed him completely? I cut his heart-strings — that's far more serious than just cutting off a finger. I mean, a greedy man, who sticks his hand into a tasty dish, might also lose his finger if another diner's knife accidentally chopped it off.

Beatrice: I don't understand you, De Flores?

De Flores: And I have made him send it back to you as his (Piracquo's) last gift. I didn't want to leave it there because I'm sure that dead men don't need jewels. And he was equally unwilling to let it go because the ring and finger were stuck together to go closely, it was as if they had merged into a single thing.

Beatrice: When the stag is caught, the gamekeeper gets his payments; this is equally applicable to you. You will get everything from dead men.

Please go and bury the finger — but keep the stone because you can soon take advantage of it — it's true value, it assures you, is around three hundred ducats.

De Flores: But it's not enough to cover my conscience or protect it against the guilt gnawing at me ? even though it's very beautiful. Oh well, because this is to be my wage, I'll take it; Great men have taught me to accept a financial reward for my service, even though I believe my true merit to be above such a thing.

Beatrice: You should rightfully scorn such payment. Besides, you are mistaken, the jewel is not given to you by way of reward.

De Flores: No, I should think so, lady; you would soon see my contempt for it if it were a reward.

Beatrice: You look as if you feel insulted.

De Flores: It's strange, lady, it's impossible that my service should elicit such a reproach from you. Am I insulted? Do you really think so? I'm hardly likely to feel offended so soon after performing so well for you — I should strike while the iron is hot.

Beatrice: I would make me feel miserable if I had offended you, sir.

De Flores: I know that very well, if it were so: that would be the most acute misery.

Beatrice: Good, that settled our little misunderstanding. Look here, sir. here's three thousand golden florins: You can see I haven't valued your work cheaply.

De Flores: What do you mean? Money? Now you are starting to make me angry.

Beatrice: How do I anger you, De Flores?

De Flores: Are you going to put me down in the rank of low-life who will destroy anything just to get money? Do you offer money in exchange for the life blood of a man? In your way of thinking, is there anything highly valuable which would be too high a sum for my reward? (Can anything compensate me for such a deed?)

Beatrice: I don't understand you.

- De Flores: I could have hired any common or variety murderer for this amount of money, and I could have had peace of mind by having someone else do the murder.
- Beatrice: [Aside] Good heavens! I'm now in much more trouble than I was before: I don't know what will please him. [Talks to De Flores] I'm getting rather worried now. Please go away as quickly as possible. and if you are too modest to state the exact amount of money that will satisfy you, then paper does not blush nearly so readily. Just send me your demand in writing, and I'll send that amount on to you. but please leave here now.
- De Flores: Me? I'm not moving unless you go.
- Beatrice: What do you mean?
- De Flores: Why, aren't you just as guilty in this, in just as deep as me? So we should stick together as closely as that ring and finger. Come on, your worries are giving you only bad advice. If I disappear now, suspicion would fall on you immediately. There would be no salvation for you.
- Beatrice: [Aside] He touches a nerve , but he's right.
- De Flores: Neither would it be appropriate for us two, bound together so tightly, to part and live asunder. [De Flores tries to kiss her.]
- Beatrice: What are you doing? I don't like the looks of this.
- De Flores: You are very unfriendly. There is no place for unfriendliness between us.
- Beatrice: [Aside] The man is talking crazy.
- De Flores: Come on, kiss me with passion now.
- Beatrice: [Aside] Good Heavens, I fear him!
- De Flores: Soon I will refuse to stand around for so long for your kisses.
- Beatrice: Beware, De Flores, of forgetting my rank and propriety. Otherwise, it will soon ruin us —
- De Flores: You should beware of yourself first; really, you've become very forgetful of your proper obligation to me. You are very guilty in this respect.
- Beatrice: [Aside] He's being far forward, but I'm being blamed for it!
- De Flores: I have relieved you of your trouble; think about that now I must be relieved by you; it's only Christian kindness. Justice dictates that we understand my feelings, you must give yourself to me!
- Beatrice: Out of the question.
- De Flores: Hurry up!
- Beatrice: Oh, I will never do it! Go much further away from me to say such things, so that I won't be able to hear it at all. I never want to hear such offensive talk again even in return for you doing a similar service for me.
- De Flores: Not so fast, Lady, not so fast! You still haven't paid for my last service to you. Oh, doing this act has got my blood up. I was as desperate to do it as the parched earth is for water, when it rains. Didn't you notice how I threw myself into my work, even begged for it? Why did I go to all that trouble? You see I have some disdain for taking the money you offered me. It's not that I don't want the money, because I really do — but, in due course, I will get my riches and make use of them — but I never valued money so highly when I started in this business because wealth is less important to me than pleasure. And if I were not certain in my belief that your virginity is still perfectly intact, then I would grudgingly accept the cash, and would feel that was only the half of what I had hoped for.
- Beatrice: Why it's impossible that you can be so wicked, or harbor such cunning cruelty, as to equate his demise, to the demise of my virginity!
Your speech is so forward and vicious, I can't see any way of forgiving it while retaining my composure and modesty.

- De Flores: You go too far, you forget yourself! Isn't it outrageous for a woman dipped in blood as a murderer to complain about the bloody surrender of your virginity?
- Beatrice: I wish I could have been tied forever to a hateful marriage with Piracquo rather than to hear what you just said! Just about the huge difference between our ranks in society-keep your place.
- De Flores: Just search your conscience, and find me in there. In there, you'll see I am your equal. Come on, don't try to take refuge in the excuse of your high birth, rather admit what this act has turned you into; that's all you are now. You have to forget the superiority of your family to mine: You are now the creature of the deed; by becoming a murderers, you have lost the original innocence of Eve and your parenthood. And I lay claim to you now that Paradise has expelled you and turned you into the same thing as me.
- Beatrice: You think we are the same, filthy bastard?
- De Flores: Yes, my beautiful killer. Are you provoking me by claiming to a pure virgin when in fact your passionate desire is that of a whore?
Your passion changed from your first love, Alonzo, and that's a type of prostitution of your heart; and now he's dead that opens the path for Alsemero. Like me, you have an interest in forbidden fruit. But if I can't enjoy his, I'll run all your hopes of a happy marriage. I'll tell the world everything. I have nothing to lose because I place no value in my life.
- Beatrice: De Flores!
- De Flores: Telling everything will make me feel better. I'm angry now. Cupid's fiery arrow threatens to start a blaze that will turn my heart into ashes.
- Beatrice: Oh, sir, listen to my pleas!
- De Flores: If you refuse my love in life, you will be my partner in death and shame.
- Beatrice: Wait, listen to me now once and for all. [Kneels] I will give you all the wealth I have — all my gold and jewels; just let me go in poverty to my bed with my honor intact, and I'll consider myself to still be rich.
- De Flores: This will silence you: all the wealth of Valencia wouldn't be enough to dissuade me from taking my pleasure. Can you stop fate from taking its inexorable course just by crying? As soon as you can do that, I will change my inexorable course, too.
- Beatrice: Revenge has begun; I see murder only triggers more sins. When I was created in my mother's womb, was so great a curse laid upon me that I must give myself to a viper before I do so with a man?
- De Flores: Come on, stand up, and hide your blushes in my bosom. [Put her on her feet.] Silence is one of the best aspects of pleasure. By surrendering yourself to my desire, you will have peace for ever more. It's sad to see my little turtle-dove breathing heavily! But you'll soon come to love what you are so afraid of and hesitant to embrace. [They leave.]

When Beatrice hears her bridegroom is no longer breathing she feels like shedding tears of joy. Her hands are stained with the blood of Piracquo, although she has yet to realize or appreciate what death actually is until De Flores gives her the severed finger with the wedding ring of Piracquo. Showing her the finger is also a way for De Flores to show his commitment to her, his love for her.

De Flores is the handmaiden of murder and carries out the murder because he is the servant of Beatrice. Consequently, she is obligated to both reward De Flores for his service and take responsibility for her role in the crime. The reward Beatrice intends to pay is financial or material as well as sending him overseas. After seeing the severed finger of Piracquo and the ring (which was a family heirloom), she orders De Flores to bury the finger and keep the ring. This angers De Flores because Beatrice was not happy about the service. De Flores was expecting a different reaction to the death of Piracquo, possibly an deluge of love or an epiphany of love for him.

De Flores is further incensed when she offers him three thousand gold florins as Beatrice still thinks fiscal reward will settle her debt. The immaturity and naivety of Beatrice teens is evident here as well as De Flores' saviness and cunning of his mid thirties.

The claim that Beatrice's youth and subsequent naivety is further substantiated by the fact that she is blind to the repercussions of any contract, especially one in which a crime is to be committed. Moreover, Beatrice is ignorant to the psyche of De Flores, and presumably to others around her. In their original dialogue about the murder of Piracquo, De Flores gives some very clear-cut, obvious insight into his notions of "rewards". She still thinks that they have a master-servant relationship and does not recognize his real motive — lust and virginity. When De Flores states that he wants her as his reward, she is completely blindsided and unprepared to handle this crushing blow.

Her indignation is rebuked by his. Beatrice states, "I cannot see which way I can forgive it without my modesty." De Flores replies, "Push, you forgive yourself. A woman dipped in blood and talks of modesty?" Here blood relationship that they now have. De Flores feels that one blood should offset the other and they should be married. This is what De Flores is insinuating and he sneers at the notion that once a virgin loses her virginity it is foolish of her to remain chaste as she has already lost her worth. De Flores, however, does not value virtue, he values her virginity.

All is now clear to Beatrice. She now fully realizes De Flores' sinister motivation behind his eagerness for her virginity. The invitation to help murder Piracquo is a gift and De Flores is all too happy to help as he knows what he wants as his reward. Again, it cannot be overstressed that Beatrice's youth and naivety lead to her making this contract with De Flores which, ultimately initiates her own demise. When these expectations of reward are not met, De Flores begins to blackmail her into sex by threatening to reveal her role in the murder of Piracquo. De Flores will not accept any kind of material reward, "not even all the wealth in Valencia," and more shockingly, places no value in his own life. At this point Beatrice realizes she is doomed unless she succumb and give herself to this vulgar, lustful, heartless servant.

In order to understand how and why Beatrice arrived in the position she did, we must examine the contract she and De Flores made. The contract was their binding agreement and it had flaws in it. It was flawed from the beginning on two fronts: first Beatrice's deal of De Flores involves a murder, which is in direct opposition of fundamental Judeo-Christian values; second De Flores is as eager to help the woman he loves, De Flores is blinded, or at least blurred, by his diluted lust for Beatrice. Beatrice sees this as a business contract, nothing more and intends to reward De Flores financially or materially, certainly not sexually. De Flores, who is blinded by his lust for Beatrice, misinterprets his reward as sexual, not financial. Beatrice's failure to understand the nature of what her servant intends resulted from her immaturity as a person with judgement or even such a person makes some error because of love-blindness.

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