

son that they work upon rules which are grounded upon certainty. For one of them will tell you that you shall shortly have some evil luck fall upon you, and within half an hour after, you shall find your pocket picked or your purse cut. These are those Egyptian grasshoppers²⁵⁰ that eat up the fruits of the earth and destroy the poor cornfields, to sweep whose swarms out of this kingdom there are no other means but the sharpness of the most infamous and basest kinds of punishment. For if the ugly body of this monster be suffered to grow and fatten itself with mischiefs and disorder, it will have a neck so sinewy and so brawny that the arm of the law will have much ado to strike off the head, sithence every day the members of it increase and it gathers new joints and new forces by *triggers*, *anglers*, cheaters, *morts*, yeomen's daughters that have taken some by-blows^o and to avoid shame fall into their sins, and other servants both men and maids that have been pilferers, with all the rest of that damned regiment marching together in the first army of the Bellman, who, running away from their own colours^o (which are bad enough), serve under these, being the worst.

Lucifer's *lanceprizado*^o that stood aloof to behold the musterings^o of these hell-hounds took delight to see them double their files^o so nimbly, but held it no policy to come near them, for the Devil himself durst scarce have done that. Away therefore he gallops, knowing that at one time or other they would all come to fetch their pay in hell.

by-blows side blows; (fig.) illegitimate children. colours in military use, a flag or banner; heraldic arms. lanceprizado lance-corporal. musterings assembling of soldiers for inspection or induction into service. double their files increase in files to twice their length by marching, other files into them.

CHAPTER 9

*The Infection of the Suburbs.*²⁵¹

The Infernal Promoter, being wearied with riding up and down the country, was glad when he had gotten the City over his head. But the City being not able to hold him within the freedom^o because he was a foreigner, the gates were set wide open for him to pass through, and into the suburbs he went. And what saw he there? More alehouses than there are taverns in all Spain and France.²⁵² Are they so dry in the suburbs? Yes, pockily dry.²⁵³ What saw he besides?

He saw the doors of notorious carted bawds²⁵⁴ like hell-gates stand night and day wide open, with a pair of harlots in taffeta^o dic pilet lantiez gowns, like two painted posts garnishing out those doors, being better to the house than a double sign.^o When the door of a poor artificer, if his child had died but with one token^o of death about^o him, was close rammed up^o and guarded for fear others should have been infected, yet the plague that a whore-house lays upon a city is worse, yet is laughed at, if not laughed at, yet not looked into, or if looked into, winked at.

The tradesman having his house locked up, Ioseph his customers, is put from work and undone, whilst in the meantime the strumpet is set on^o work and maintained, perhaps, by those that undo the others. Give thanks, O wide-mouthed hell! Laugh, Lucifer, at this! Dance for joy, all you devils!²⁵⁵

Beelzebub keeps the register book of all the bawds, panders, and courtesans, and he knows that these suburb sinners have no hands to live upon but their legs. Every prentice passing by them can say, "There sits a whore." Without putting them to their book,^o they will swear so much themselves. If so, are not constables,

freedom district under the City's control. taffeta glossy, ostentatious silk fabric. sign identifying device marked on houses infected with bubonic plague. token mark (of bubonic plague). about on. close rammed up forcefully shut up. set on urged to, sent forward to. putting them to their book studying, learning.

churchwardens, bailiffs, beadies, and other officers pillars and pillows to all the villainies that are by these committed? Are they not parcel-bawds^o to wink at such damned abuses, considering they have whips in their own hands and may draw blood if they please? Is not the landlord of such rents the Grand-bawd, and the door-keeping mistress of such a house of sin but his Under-bawd, sihence he takes twenty-pounds rent every year for a vaulting-school,²⁵⁷ which from no artificers living by the hardness of the hand could be worth five pound? And that twenty-pound rent he knows must be pressed out of petticoats. His money smells of sin. The very silver looks pale because it was earned by lust.

How happy, therefore, were cities if they had no suburbs, sihence they serve but as caves where monsters are bred up to devour the cities themselves. Would the Devil hire a villain to spill blood? There he shall find him. One to blaspheme? There he hath choice. A pander that would court a matron^o at her prayers? He's there. A cheater that would turn his own father a beggar? He's there too. A harlot that would murder her new-born infant? She lies in, ^o there.

What a wretched womb hath a strumpet, which being for the most part barren of children, is notwithstanding the only bed that breeds up these serpents! Upon that one stalk grow all these mischiefs. She is the cockatrice²⁵⁸ that hatcheth all these eggs of evils. When the Devil takes the anatomy of^o all damnable sins, he looks only upon her body. When she dies, he sits as her coroner. When her soul comes to hell, all shun that there, as they fly from a body struck with the plague here. She hath her door-keeper, and she herself is the Devil's chambermaid. And yet for all this, that^o she's so dangerous and detestable, when she hath croaked like a raven²⁵⁹ on the eaves, then comes she into the house like a dove. When her villainies (like the moat about a castle) are rank,

parcel-bawds bawds to some degree. matron married woman, usually portrayed as morally dignified and of high social standing. lies in gives birth. takes the anatomy of dissects. that inasmuch as, because.

thick, and muddy with standing long together, then to purge herself is she drained out of the suburbs as though her corruption were there left behind her, and as a clear stream is let into the City.

*What Armour a Harlot wears coming
out of the Suburbs to besiege
the City within the Walls*

Upon what perch, then, does she sit? What part plays she then? Only the Puritan. If before she ruffled^o in silks, now is she more civilly attired than a midwife.²⁶⁰ If before she swaggered in taverns, now with the snail she stirs not out of doors. And where must her lodging be taken up but in the house of some citizen whose known reputation she borrows, or rather steals, putting it on as a cloak to cover her deformities? Yet even in that hath she an art too, for he shall be of such a profession that all corners may enter without the danger of any eyes to watch them. As, for example, she will lie in some scrivener's house, and so, under the colour^o of coming to have a bond^o made, she herself may write *Noverrint unizersi*.²⁶¹ And though the law threaten to hit her never^o so often, yet hath she subtle defences to ward off the blows. For if gallants haunt the house, then spreads she these colours^o she is a captain's or a lieutenant's wife in the Low Countries, and they come with letters from the soldier her husband. If merchants resort to her, then hoists she up these sails: she is wife to the master of a ship, and they bring news that her husband's put in^o the Straits^o or at Venice, at Aleppo,^o Alexandria,^o or Scanderoun,^o etc. If shopkeepers come to her with "What do you lack?" in their mouths, then she takes up such and such commodities to send them to Rye, to Bristol, to York, etc., where her husband dwells. ruffled bore herself proudly. colour semblance. bond deed. never ever. colours fictions. put in entered the port (or harbour) at. Straits Straits of Gibraltar. Aleppo in the sixteenth century, the principal market of the Middle East. Alexandria Egyptian free port. Scanderoun Iskenderun: a major seaport in southern Turkey.

But if the stream of her fortunes run low, and that none but apron-men^o launch forth there, then keeps she a politic sempster's shop^o or^o she starches them.

Perhaps she is so politic that none shall be noted to board^o her. If so, then she sails upon these points of the compass:²⁶² so soon as ever she is rigged,^o and all her furniture^o on, forth she launcheth into those streets that are most frequented, where the first man that she meets of her acquaintance shall, without much pulling, get her into a tavern. Out of him she kisses a breakfast and then leaves him. The next she meets does, upon as easy pulleys, draw her to a tavern again. Out of him she cogs^o a dinner and then leaves him. The third man squires^o her to a play, which being ended, and the wine offered and taken (for she's no recusant to refuse anything) him she leaves too. And being set upon by a fourth, him she answers at his own weapon,^o sups with him, and drinks *upsy Friese*,^o till the clock striking twelve, and the drawers^o being drowsy, away they march arm in arm, being at every footstep fearful to be set upon by the band of halberdiers²⁶³ that lie scouting in rug gowns^o to cut off such midnight stragglers. But the word being given, and "Who goes there?" with "Come before the constable" being shot at them, they vail^o presently and come, she taking upon her to answer all the billmen²⁶⁴ and their leader, between whom and her suppose^o you hear this sleepy dialogue.

"Where have you been so late?"

apron-men aproners: those whose trade or occupation requires them to wear aprons. **politic sempster's shop** skilfully or craftily managed seamstress's shop. **or before.** **board** make sexual advances to. **rigged** dressed; fictitiously enhanced in value. **furniture** apparel; armour. **cogs** (cant) wheedles. **squires** escorts. **answers** at his own weapon satisfies his demand; answers to his charge. **upsy Friese** according to the Frisian fashion; excessively. **drawers** tapsters. **rug gowns** gowns made of thick, coarse wool. **vail** yield. **suppose** supposition; argument.

"At supper, forsooth, with my uncle here" (if he be well bearded)^o or "with my brother" (if the hair be but budding forth), "and he is bringing me home."

"Are you married?"

"Yes, forsooth."

"What's^o your husband?"

"Such a nobleman's man," or "such a justice's clerk," and then *Pro facili* names some alderman of London, to whom she persuades herself *inultis vox sua* one or other of the bench of brown-bills^o are beholding.

"Where lie you?"^o

"At such a man's house." *Sic tenues evanescit in auris:*²⁶⁶ and thus by stopping the constable's mouth with sugar-plums, that's to say, whilst she poisons him with sweet words, the punk vanisheth. O Lantern and Candlelight, how art thou made a blind ass because thou hast but one eye to see withal. Be not so gulled, be not so dull in understanding. Do thou but follow aloof^o those two tame pigeons, and thou shalt find that her new uncle lies by^o all that night to make his kinswoman one of mine aunts.^o Or if she be not in travail all night, they spend some half an hour together, but what do they? Marry, they do that which the constable should have done for them both in the streets, that's to say, commit, commit!

You guardians over so great a princess as this eldest daughter of King Brutus.²⁶⁷ You twice-twelve fathers and governors over the noblest city:^o why are you so careful to plant trees to beautify your outward walks, yet suffer the goodliest garden within to be overrun with stinking weeds? You are the pruning-knives that should lop off such idle, such unprofitable, and such destroying branches from the vine. The beams of your authority should purge the air of such infection. Your breath of justice should scatter these

well bearded of age, experience; strong, virile. **What's** who is. **brown-bills** types of halberds (short spears) used by watchmen and foot-soldiers. **Where lie you** Where do you live? **aloof** at a distance. **lies by** from the expression "to lie by," i.e., "to have sexual intercourse with" (*OED*, 2nd ed.). **aunts** bawds; prostitutes. **noblest city** London, Dekker's birthplace.

foggy vapours and drive them out of your gates as chaff tossed abroad by the winds.

But stay. Is our walking spirit become an orator to persuade? No. But the Bellman of London, with whom he met in this perambulation of his, and to whom he betrayed himself and opened his very bosom (hereafter you shall hear), is bold to take upon him that speaker's office.

CHAPTER 10

*Of Jingleers:° Or the Knavery of Horse-courser's° in Smithfield Discovered.*²⁶⁸

At the end of fierce battles, the only rendezvous° for lame soldiers to retire unto is an hospital. And at the end of a long progress,° the only ground for a tired jade to run in is some blind° country fair, where he may be sure to be sold. To those markets of unwholesome horse-flesh, like so many kites° to feed upon carrion, do all the horse-courser that roost about the City fly one after another. And whereas in buying all other commodities men strive to have the best, how great soever the price be, only the horse-courser is of a baser mind, for the worst horse-flesh, so it be cheap, does best go down with him. He cares for nothing but a fair outside and a handsome shape, like those that hire whores, though there be a hundred diseases within; he, as the other, ventures upon them all.

The first lesson, therefore, that a horse-courser takes out° when he comes to one of these markets is to make choice of such nags, geldings, or mares especially as are fat, fair, and well-favoured to the eye. And because men delight to behold beautiful colours, and that some colours are more delicate, even in beasts, than

Jingleers dishonest horse-dealers. *Horse-courser's* horse-dealers. *rendezvous* (military) place where troops are appointed to assemble. *progress* journey. *blind* obscure, out of the way. *kites* birds of prey, having long wings, forked tails, and toothless bills; (fig.) greedy, rapacious individuals. *takes out* learns.

others are, he will so near as he can bargain for those horses that have the daintiest complexion: as the milk-white, the gray, the dapple-gray, the coal-black with his proper marks (as the white star in the forehead, the white heel, etc.), or the bright bay with the like proper marks also. And the goodlier proportion the beast carries, or the fairer marks or colour that he bears are or ought to be watchwords, as it were, to him that afterwards buys him of the horse-courser, that° he be not cozened with an over-price for a bad pennyworth,° because such horses, belonging for the most part to gentlemen, are seldom or never sold away, but upon some foul quality or some incurable disease which the beast is fallen into. The best colours are therefore the best cloaks to hide those faults that most disfigure a horse. And next unto colour, his pace doth oftentimes deceive and go beyond° a very quick° judgment.

Some of these horse-hunters are as nimble knaves in finding out the infirmities of a jade as a barber is in drawing of teeth, and, albeit without casting his water,° he does more readily reckon up all the aches, cramps, cricks,° and whatsoever disease else lies in his bones, and for those diseases seems utterly to dislike him. Yet if by looking upon the dial° within his mouth he find that his years have struck but five, six, or seven and that he proves but young, or that his diseases are but newly growing upon him if they be outward, or have but hair and skin to hide them if they be inward, let him swear never so damnably that it is but a jade, yet he will be sure to fasten upon him.

So, then, a horse-courser, to get the merchant that out of his sound judgement buys the fairest, the best-bred, and the noblest horses, selling them again for breed or service with plainness° and honesty, is as the cheater to the fair gamester. He is indeed a mere

that so that. *bad pennyworth* bad deal or bargain. *go beyond* find a way around. *quick* keen, perceptive. *casting his water* diagnosing disease by inspecting his urine. *cricks* types of distemper in horses affecting the muscles of the neck and back. *dial* clock, timepiece. *plainness* openness, frankness.