

THE WHITE DEVIL

John Webster

FLAM: I have a strange thing in me, to th'which
I cannot give a name, without it be
Compassion. - I pray leave me.

Exit FRANCISO.

This night I'll know the utmost of my fate,
I'll be resolv'd what my rich sister means
T'assign rue for my service : I have liv'd.
Riotously ill, like some that live in court;
And sometimes, when my face was full of smiles
Have felt the maze of conscience in my breast.
Oft gay and honour'd robes those tortures try,-
We think cag'd birds sing, when indeed they cry.

Enter ERACCIANO's Ghost, in his leather cassock and breeches,

boots, [and] a cowl, [in his hand] a pot of lily-flowers
with a skull in't.

Hal I can stand thee. Nearer, nearer yet.
What a mockery hath death made of thee ?
Thou look'st sad.
In what place art thou ? in you starry gallery,
Or in the cursed dungeon ? No ? not speak ?
Pray, sir, resolve me, what religion's best
For a man to die in? or is it in your knowledge
To answer me how long I have to live?
That's the most necessary question.
Not answer? Are you still like some great men
That only walk like shadows up and down,
And to no purpose? say:-
The Ghost throws earth upon
him and shows him the skull.

What's that? O fatal! he throws earth upon me.
A dead man's skull beneath the roots of flowers.
I pray speak sir,
Make us believe, dead men hold-conference
With their familiars-, and many times
Will come to bed to them, and eat with them.

Exit GHOST.

He's gone; and see, the skull and earth are vanish'd.

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This is beyond melancholy.
I do dare my fate
To do its worst. Now to my sister's lodging,
And sum up all these horrors; the disgrace
The prince threw on me; next the piteous sight
Of my dead brother; and my mother's dotage;
And last this terrible vision. All these
Shall with Victoria's bounty turn to good,
Or I will drown this weapon in her blood.

(Exit.)