Boccaccio’s Miraculous Art of Storytelling: Dec. I.1, II.1 and VI.10

The aim of this paper is to highlight unifying patterns in some of the Decameron’s tales that deal with the topic of miracles: I.1, Ser Cepperello; II.1, Martellino; and VI.10, Fra Cipolla. These three novelle are interconnected by elements that suggest we read them as a triptych about the delicate matter of belief in miracles.

As Pier Massimo Forni showed, consciously organized complex forms link the single texts in the Decameron system to one another.1 Sometimes these links provide the occasion for a mutual validation between members of the brigade, and sometimes for ironic rewriting or even parodical reversal.2 My research moves along these lines, identifying characteristics of responsiveness among I.1, II.1, and VI.10.

Both I.1 and VI.10 are built upon multiple narrative levels. In I.1 we can identify a meta-novella: the main narrator tells a story about the brigade, and one member of the brigade, Panfilo, narrates the story of Cepperello, who, in turn, tells the story of himself as the perfect Christian. Here, as in Fra Cipolla’s account, the protagonist is the same as the narrator but modified by the clever lies that transform an almost demonic creature into an example of chastity and virtue. But Cepperello’s fictional self-portrait is in itself a figure of irony – a rewriting and point-by-point reversal of the description given by Panfilo at the beginning of the tale: there Cepperello was a professional liar, one who “testimonianze false con sommo diletto diceva, richiesto e non richiesto;”3 in his confession, Cepperello claims that the only false witness he ever bore was to save a woman from a violent husband. The real Cepperello – a man “delle femine […] cosí vago come sono i cani de’ bastoni; del contrario piú che alcuno altro tristo uomo si dilettava”4 – in his confession reluctantly admits, lest he commit vainglory, to being “cosí vergine come […] usci’ del corpo della mamma mia.”5 His avowal of gluttony during confession is a masterwork of ironic hyperbole: “con quello diletto e con quello appetito l’acqua bevuta aveva, e specialmente quando avesse alcuna fatica durata o adorando o andando in pellegrinaggio, che fanno i gran bevitori il vino; e molte volte aveva disiderato d’averle cotali insalatuzze d’erbuce.”6 The ridiculous zeal of denouncing a craving for herbs and water as gluttony clashes marvelously with the figure of the real Cepperello as “Gulosissimo e bevitor grande, tanto che alcuna volta sconciamente gli facea noia”7 preparing for the graver sins to come. In Panfilo’s description,

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Cepperello is a murderer and the most irascible of men; in his confession he only unleashes his wrath against the sacrilegious, blasphemous, and tavern-goers – a righteous reaction, like the one by which Dante wins Virgil’s commendation for pushing away Filippo Argenti, except that we know that Cepperello “a chiesa non usava giammai, e i sacramenti di quella tutti come vil cosa con abominevoli parole scherniva; e cosi in contrario le taverne e gli altri disonesti luoghi visitava volentieri e usavaglì.” The same care and devotion that the real Cepperello puts forth with regard to stealing, the confessional, re-born Cepperello puts into donating four farthings he found in excess in his merchant’s box to the poor.

With this painstaking, contrapuntal revision, Cepperello writes his new self as the perfect Christian, the ultimate saint – the reverse of the novel Judas figure he was at the beginning. Cepperello goes from “pig-gior uomo che mai nascesse” to the epitome of a saint.

The presence of the aware audience – the two Florentines who know the truth – is essential for the successful result of his sacrilegious joke. Cepperello’s awareness that the merchants know that his confession is false and that he is deceiving the friar, the whole monastery, the worshippers, and lastly the entire Christendom, who raised a repellent sinner to the honor of sainthood, makes his satisfaction much greater than it would have been if no one knew the truth about his final deception. The biggest of all ironies is that Cepperello’s lie must be unveiled to show its author’s ability: had there been no one to collect and diffuse the real version of the story, Cepperello’s confession would have been worth nothing, and Fanfili, or we, would never have learned it.

Cepperello’s fictional speech, like that of his worthy colleague, orator Fra Cipolla, is made necessary by a situation that implies danger for someone. The Florentine merchants hosting Cepperello are in danger of not only losing their reputation and their business in the town, but also being killed by a rioting mob:

... il popolo di questa terra, il quale sì per lo mestier nostro, il quale loro pare iniquissimo e tutto il giorno ne dicon male, e sì per la volontà che hanno di rubarci, veggendo ciò si leverà a romore e griderà: ‘Questi lombardi cani, li quali a chiesa non sono voluti ricevere, non ci si voglion più sostenere’; e correrannoci alle case e per avventura non solamente l’avere ci ruberanno ma forse ci torranno oltre a ciò le persone: di che noi in ogni guisa stiam male se costui muore. (Dec.I.1.26)

Both fictional speeches (Cepperello’s and Cipolla’s) go beyond mere goal accomplishment in their artistic quality: Cepperello could have told an ordinary man’s confession in order to save the merchants from danger and shame, but he takes his confession to an extreme for the fun of the hoax. Fra Cipolla, the other master of oratory – a new Cicero or Quintilian indeed – faces a crowd full of expectations about the relic
of the archangel Gabriel he has promised to show. When, instead of the promised feather, he finds charcoals, the clever friar crafts a fantastic story on the spot to bewilder his audience, which results in a double wonder: not only is the charcoal a miraculous relic, too, but it was God’s direct intervention that led his hand to it instead of to the feather.

Cipolla’s oratorical technique is quite simple: he makes up names of places, perhaps after well-known streets of Florence, in a quick succession rich with details and novelty so as to baffle the slow minds of his audience. But before he can serve up the grand finale to his listeners, he has to validate the authenticity of the relics he is about to present so that those relics can later guarantee the veracity of the miracle he will invoke. How does he do so? By relating his abbot’s initial caution regarding showing them and then claiming previous miracles for the relics themselves:

È il vero che il mio maggiore non ha mai sofferto che io l’abbia mostrato infino a tanto che certificato non s’è se desse sono o no; ma ora che per certi miracoli fatti da esse e per lettere ricevute dal Patriarca fatto n’è certo m’ha conceduta licenza che io le mostri; ma io, temendo di fidarli altrui, sempre le porto meco. (Dec.VI.10.48)

Note Cipolla’s bravura, here: not only does he claim that the relics are authentic because they have performed miracles, so these miracles are also real, but he even inserts a hidden rebuke for his negligent servant, Guccio Imbratta, by stating that he would never entrust them to anyone. This ironic wink, addressed to Guccio as well as the two yet unknown pranksters, contrasts with the thought of Guccio’s negligence which ran through Cipolla’s mind when he found the charcoal in the box.

After the fireworks of his travel account, he foists not one, but two miracles on his audience: God’s leading his hand to take the wrong box and the “extraordinary” effect of St. Lawrence’s coals, since “chiunque da questi carboni in segno di croce è tocco, tutto quello anno può viver sicuro che fuoco nol cocerà che non si senta.”10 Cipolla’s artful speech is all balanced on amphibology: from the outset of his speech/journey to the land of Menzogna, the friar’s words “play on a double-level effect, duping the faithful Certaldei with the apparent meaning, and winking, with the real meaning, to the intelligence of the two pranksters (Giovanni del Bragoniera and Biagio Pizzini) and the readers.”11 This is what Dilwyn Knox calls mendacium ironicum12 — a statement that is only apparently wondrous or extraordinary. In fact, whoever is touched by the coals may live secure that he will indeed feel any fire that touches him! (This is the same rhetorical ploy Panfilo uses for Cepperello who “avea grandissima vergogna quando uno de’ suoi strumenti, come che pochi ne facesse, fosse altro che falso trovato.”13)
Ironically, strictly speaking, Cipolla does not even lie about the miracle because the unsophisticated Certaldesi are, at this point, so bedazzled by the sparkling galore of exoticism that they do not realize the obviousness of his sentence. The audience hears what they expect to hear: whoever is touched by the charcoals will feel no fire, in antiphrasis with the real meaning. The dull tautology, the pure obviousness, and the musicality of the final hendecasyllable are cast like a magic formula onto the simpleminded crowd.

This sudden switch from anticipated extraordinariness to what is obvious and flippant appears to be the signature of Fra Cipolla’s oration: always playing on the edge of risk, he actually leaves a chance for his audience to see the trick because, by listening carefully to the real meaning of the words, the swindle would be evident. But the simpleminded Certaldesi are incapable of such subtlety and are thus ravished in the swirls of invention. The beginning of the oration already points to this style: “Signori e donne, voi dovete sapere che, essendo io ancora molto giovane, io fui mandato in quelle parti dove apparisce il sole, e fummi commesso con espresso comandamento che io cercassi tanto che io trovasi i privilegi del Porcellana, i quali, ancora che a bollar niente costassero, molto più utili sono a altrui che a noi.”

Manlio Pastore Stocchi notes that Fra Cipolla’s account bears a debt to a very popular literary scheme of the time: the *itinerarium ultramarinum*, which were travellers’ voyage accounts, especially those of merchants journeying to the East, such as Marco Polo’s *Mihione*. Thus, when we read “io fui mandato in quelle parti dove apparisce il sole,” we are tempted to understand “where the sun rises,” that is “to the East,” but Cipolla says instead “where the sun is visible,” so “to no particular place.” The “Privilegi del Porcellana” are something mysterious just made up by the clever friar from the name of a Florentine street, so in spite of the evocative name, they mean nothing, are worth nothing (“a bollar niente costassero”), and serve no purpose (“molto più utili a altrui che a noi”). And a few lines below, “… molti de’ nostri frati e d’altre religioni troval assai, li quali tutti il disagio andavano per l’amor di Dio schifando, poco dell’altrui fatiche curandosi dove la loro utilità vedessero seguitare,” where the expectable traditional depiction of the helping missionary is subtly reversed into the image of the lazy friars who, pretending to care about other people’s trouble, would rather seek their own advantage.

The novelle of Cepperello and Fra Cipolla share a number of structural similarities in scene arrangement. In both we find the following:

- a third-level narrator who makes an invented self the protagonist of the story (the good Christian Cepperello; Cipolla the wayfarer);
- a deceived audience unaware of the truth and appearing quite ready to believe in miracles (the confessor, who reverberates Cepperello’s story onto the Burgundians; the Certaldesi);
- and a second audience which knows the truth (the two merchants
eavesdropping on Cepperello’s confession from behind a wall;
Giovanni del Bragoniera and Biagio Pizzini hiding among the
crowd and enjoying Cipolla’s tale more than anyone else because
they know it is a big yarn.) In fact, the smothered laughter of the
merchants hiding behind the wooden plank is echoed in Giovanni
and Biagio’s outward gales of laughter.17
- a faked miracle (Cepperello’s irreprehensible conduct and God
leading Cipolla’s hand to the box with saint Lawrence’s coals).
When the two protagonists speak, they have an audience of many.
Even Cepperello knows that if he is good enough to convince the friar
of his sanctity, his speech will be turned into the subject-matter of sermons and his lie will be disseminated by the clergy (the organ that is, ironically, supposed to check the veracity of miracles), which will make his deception even more complete. And these audiences will easily believe what they are told, not only because their orators are extremely refined ones, but also because believing something is, after all, what they are there for. The Certaldei, as much as the friar, listen to the speech uncritically (the confessor does too, not because he is simple-minded, but because his faith keeps him from conceiving that anyone could attach more importance to a joke than to the salvation of his own soul); they are willing to trust the orator as long as his speech fulfils the characteristics of genre (the ars praedicandi for Fra Cipolla and the intimate confession for Cepperello).

Fra Cipolla’s account of his fictional journey also represents a meta-


novella: we read a story told by Boccaccio about Dioneo who tells a story about a friar named Cipolla who tells a story about himself. Thus the protagonist of the inside story is still Cipolla, although an invented one, who appears to be younger, adventurous, and an experienced traveler as opposed to the lazy and modest figure presented at the story’s beginning. The false Cipolla ventures in the East and gains the friendship of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, the venerable Nonmiblasmete Sevoipiace, who offers him several relics from his collection.

The polemic against the church’s granting easy approvals for sanctifica-
tions and miracles patently underlies both Cepperello’s and Cipolla’s tales and is heavily stressed in the absurd canonization of “il piggior uomo che mai nascesse” and in Cipolla’s long listing of the sacred items in Nonmiblasmete’s collection. This topic is also at the core of II.1, the story of Martellino in Treviso. A Florentine jester, Martellino earns his living with his friends Stecchi and Marchese by entertaining the nobles in the courts with his traveling show. When the three get to Treviso, they find the city in a state of unrest because of a humble porter who has just died in the odor of sanctity. What is more, at the moment of his death the bells of the Treviso cathedral began to toll of their own accord. The three jesters become so captivated with this
story that they want to see the body of the saint. But how are they going to wade their way through the thick crowd? Martellino knows: he will pretend to be a paralytic while Stecchi and Marchese will hold him up, and the people will have to make way for them. But the hoax slips out of their hands when Martellino simulates a sudden healing and the crowd invokes the miracle: the Florentines’ initial goal was simply to see the saint, but their improvisatory nature takes over and they impress a multitude of believers with a miracle. Things precipitate when another Florentine, who is coincidentally in Treviso, recognizes Martellino and blows his cover: “Domine fallo tristo! [. . .] Egli è stato sempre diritto come qualunque è l’un di noi, ma sa meglio che altro uomo, come voi avete potuto vedere, far queste ciance di contraffarsi in qualunque forma vuole.” 18 At this point the crowd grows into a mob and starts beating and kicking Martellino for impersonating a paralytic and mocking the saints:

Sia preso questo traditore e beffatore di Dio e de’ santi, il quale, non essendo attratto, per ischernire il nostro santo e noi, qui a guisa d’attratto è venuto!” E così dicendo il pigliarono e giù del luogo dove era il tirarono, e presolo per li capelli e stracciati tutti i panni indosso gli’inchinaciarono a dare delle pugna e de’ calci; né parea a colui essere uomo che a questo far non correa. Martellin gridava “Mercé per Dio!” e quanto poteva s’aiutava, ma ciò era niente: la calca gli multiplicava ognora addosso maggiore. La qual cosa veggendo Stecchi e Marchese cominciarono fra sé a dire che la cosa stava male, e di sé medesimi dubitando non ardivano a aiutarlo anzi con gli altri insieme gridando ch’el fosse morto, avendo nondimeno pensiero tuttavia come trarre il potesserò delle mani del popolo; il quale fermamente l’avrebbe usciso, se uno argomento no fosse stato il qual Marchese subitamente prese.19

Marchese’s argomento is to report Martellino to the police for theft, causing him to be arrested and, thus, saving him from the beating which would have certainly killed him.20 Eventually Martellino is indeed arrested for theft and spared fair punishment thanks to the intervention of yet one more Florentine, Sandro Agolanti, who, Deus ex machina, beseeches the lord of Treviso to set the jester free.

This story bears several points in common with those of Cepperello and Cipolla, so that it can be considered, in the system of forme complexe that Forni identifies, a response to Cepperello’s story and an anticipation of Cipolla’s. First of all, we can identify a structure in the layout of the scene which is similar to that in I.1 and VI.10, for II.1 contains the following:

- a deceived audience unaware of the truth (the Trevigiani, like the Burgundians and the Certaldesi, are quite ready to believe in miracles but also potentially dangerous should they become a mob);
- a second audience aware of the truth (Stecchi and Marchese as well as the Florentine who recognizes Martellino);
- and a faked miracle (the healing) plus another miracle (the cathedral’s bells tolling on their own) on which Neifile (and therefore the author) does not take a stance.

Given these precedents, when the reader gets to VI.10 he knows how dangerous it is to simulate a miracle: Martellino’s nearly deadly beating prepares the reader to anticipate serious trouble for Fra Cipolla as he opens his box before a crowd full of expectations. Boccaccio further prepares this ground with one more novella on the way to VI.10. In IV.2, the tale of the agnolo Gabriello, another unlikely friar, Alberto, is forced to abandon his archangel Gabriel accoutrements in his mistress’s chamber when her family discovers the affair:

I cognati della donna entrati nella camera trovarono che l’agnolo Gabriello, quivi avendo lasciate l’ali, se n’era volato.21

Alberto, too, simulates a miracle: in order to seduce Lisetta he lets her believe that no less than the archangel Gabriel has fallen in love with her and subsequently beds her by impersonating Gabriel. Now, Lisetta is as ingenuous as she is vain, and Alberto has an easy way with her, at least until her brothers-in-law enter the picture. This scene and the danger it brings immediately come to mind when Cipolla publicly announces that he will be displaying his relic – the feather which Gabriel left in Mary’s chamber after the annunciation:

“questa è una delle penne dell’agnol Gabriello, la quale nella camera della Vergine Maria rimase quando egli la venne ad annunziare in Nazarette.”22

Frate Alberto, like Martellino, will end up severely battered, publicly ridiculed, and imprisoned, indeed even dead in prison. Pampinea will close her tale by stating that Frate Alberto ended up vituperated and imprisoned because he “ardi di farsi l’agnolo Gabriello.”23 His sin, in other words, was not so much his deception of Lisetta, who after all was all too ready to accept whatever fabrication would appease her vanity, as his impersonation of the angel Gabriel and his simulation of a miracle.

The procession of worshipping Certaldesi, submitting to the grotesque rite of being marked with charcoal, mirrors the Burgundians thronging around Cepperellog’s body to touch it and tear off a bit of his clothes. In I.1. and VI.10, the relics are consumed by the faithful as they approach to receive their benefits: Cipolla’s charcoals are consumed as he daubs crosses on the people’s vests, and the nearly-savage assault of the Burgundians, eager to touch the saint, almost destroys Cepperello’s body.

con la maggior calca del mondo da tutti fu andato a baciargli i piedi e le mani, e tutti i panni gli furono indosso stracciati, tenendosi beato chi pure un poco di quelli potesse avere.24
The textual link between novella I.1 and novella II.1 appears clear when we read the real quasi-dismemberment of the body of Martinello (who had started his simulation precisely to get near the saint’s body and touch it):

Il pigliaron e giú del luogo dove era il tirarono, e presolo per li capelli e stracciatili tutti i panni indosso gl’incominciarono a dare delle pugna e de’ calci.25

The reverence of the Burgadians touching Saint Cepperello’s body is ironically reversed, with the same wording, in the hateful attack on Martellino by the Trevigiani. This novella, with its scene of an enraged mob, realizes the danger foreshadowed in the story of Cepperello and nourishes the expectation of danger in the story of Cipolla. The responsiveness of these three novelle pivots on Martellino’s violent beating, which makes him so battered he almost becomes the paralytic he had impersonated or even the dead body he wanted to touch. The triptych of these novelle points at a negative exemplum of what can happen to those who make fun of their neighbors “e massimamente di quelle cose che sono da reverire”26 – i.e., miracles.

In this context, the consumption of the relics (Cepperello’s corpse, St. Lawrence’s charcoals, and wretched Martellino’s body) becomes a symbol of the inflation of false miracles: real miracles might lose their significance and be misbelieved if the clergy continue to take advantage of the humbles’ gullibility. Hence the double polemic against the ignorants who do not deserve real saints or real miracles and against the superficiality of some clergy in dealing with the delicate matter of miracles. The Decameron’s author does not solve the doubt about Cepperello’s metaphysical destiny; Boccaccio does not venture in defense of the church as the warden of faith, but rather lets the evident corruption of the institution paradoxically prove the truth of the Christian faith, as in I.2, the novella of Abraham the Jew who travels to Rome, eager to see by his own eyes the heart of the Christian Faith, and is so shocked by the scandalous corruption of the Papal See that he ends up converting to Christianity because, he reasons, if this religion has so many followers despite the terrible example of the clergy, it certainly is the right one.

Boccaccio bows at Cepperello’s and Fra Cipolla’s rhetorical ability, pitting their successes against Martellino’s failure. What, then, makes the art of Cepperello and Cipolla different from Martellino’s? Neifile’s insistence on the word “contraffare”27 with respect to Martellino’s masquerade reveals a valuable hint regarding Boccaccio’s rhetorical strategy: pointing to the jester’s nature as a counterfeiter. Martellino’s act fails because it is a pantomime, a merely physical performance. Its nearly deadly outcome restates the power of words over deeds. On the contrary, it is the miraculous art of storytelling that can bring salvation
and safety both within the tales and without. Storytelling, indeed, is a healthy practice: the ten youngsters use words in the form of stories as entertainment and psychological therapy against the terrible perils of plague-ridden Florence.\textsuperscript{28} Storytelling, with its \textit{diletto} and \textit{utile consiglio}, is the help Boccaccio offers the women of his intended audience.\textsuperscript{29} The \textit{Decameron} is meant as a therapeutic intervention not only for these lovesick women but also for the critical situation in Florence after the devastation of the plague.

The power of words to shape reality has been stressed before, to different extents: Giovanni Getto highlights Cepperello’s rhetoric as that of an “artist of pure word” and Giorgio Barberi Squarotti depicts Cepperello as a competitor with God himself.\textsuperscript{30} Pier Massimo Forni points out that, in III.5, Zima’s speech proposes and realizes an alternative reality: the reality that would have existed if the husband had not prohibited his wife from speaking.\textsuperscript{31} This effect also follows after Cepperello’s words: by depicting himself as a saint, he actually becomes a saint (at least to human eyes), the real man being dead and replaced by the new, legendary character created by his fiction and made famous by the friar. On the contrary, and ironically, Martellino’s pathetic pantomime gets him “tutto pesto e tutto rotto”\textsuperscript{32} and nearly killed, and it almost causes him to become the paralytic he had pretended to be.

The real miracle in Cepperello’s and Cipolla’s stories is, then, that words, if used skillfully, can shape reality, changing one’s destiny in this life and perhaps the next (if Cepperello did indeed go to Heaven). We can then steal a page from Guido Almani’s book\textsuperscript{33} and make out the figure of the author behind these excellent liars. If this is so, Boccaccio is to the \textit{Decameron} what the storytellers are to their lies. Boccaccio’s words, then, like the storytellers’, are imbued with the miraculous power to change reality.

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NOTES
3 “False witness he bore, solicited or unsolicited, with boundless delight;” \textit{Dec.} I.1.11. Translated by J.M. Rigg, London, 1921 (first printed 1903).
4 “as fond of women as a dog is of the stick: in the use against nature he had not his match among the most abandoned.” Dec. I.1.14.

5 “I am virgin even as when I issued from my mother’s womb.” Dec. I.1.39.

6 “he had quaffed the water with as good a gusto and as much enjoyment, more particularly when fatigued by devotion or pilgrimage, as great drinkers quaff their wine; and oftentimes he had felt a craving for such dainty dishes of herbs.” Dec. I.1.41.

7 “most glutinous . . . and inordinately fond of his cups, whereby he sometimes brought upon himself both shame and suffering.” Dec.1.14.

8 “was never seen at church, held all the sacraments vile things, and derided them in language of horrible ribaldry. On the other hand he resorted readily to the tavern.” Dec. I.1.14.

9 “the folk of these parts, who reprobate our trade as iniquitous and revile it all day long, and would fain rob us, will seize their opportunity, and raise a tumult, and make a raid upon our houses, crying: ‘A way with these Lombard dogs, whom the Church excludes from her pale;’ and will certainly strip us of our goods, and perhaps take our lives also; so that in any case we stand to lose if this man die.” Dec.I.1.26, my emphasis.

10 “who has the sign of the cross made upon him with these coals, may live secure for the whole of the ensuing year, that fire shall not touch him, that he feel it not.” Dec. VI.10.51.


13 “Great was his shame when they [Cepperello’s documents] were found anything but false.” Dec I.1.10.


15 It is Branca that attributes the meaning of “si vede,” “è visibile” to “apparisse.” V. Branca ed, Decameron, Einaudi, 1980, 768, in footnote.

16 “I met with many of our own brethren, and of other religious not a few, intent one and all on eschewing hardship for the love of God, making little account of others’ toil, so they might ensue their own advantage,” Dec. VI.10.39.

17 “Avevan tanto riso ch’eran creduti smascellare” (“They . . . laughed till they thought their jaws would break;”) Dec. VI.10.55.

18 “God’s curse upon him [. . .] He has always been as straight as any of us; he has merely shown you that he knows better than any man alive how to play this trick of putting on any counterfeit semblance that he chooses.” Dec. II.1.14–16.

19 “Seize this traitor who mocks at God and His saints; who, being no paralytic, has come hither in the guise of a paralytic to deride our patron saint and us.” So saying, they laid hands on him, dragged him down from where he stood, seized him by the hair, tore the clothes from his back, and fell to beating and kicking him, so that it seemed to him as if all the world were upon him. He
cried out: "Pity, for God's sake," and defended himself as best he could: all in vain, however; the press became thicker and thicker moment by moment. Which Stecchi and Marchese observing began to say one to the other that 'twas a bad business; yet, being apprehensive on their own account, they did not venture to come to his assistance, but cried out with the rest that he ought to die, at the same time, however, casting about how they might find the means to rescue him from the hands of the people, who would certainly have killed him, but for a diversion which Marchese hastily effected." Dec. II.1.17–21.

20 "avendo nondimeno pensiero tuttavia come trarre il potessero delle mani del popolo; il quale fermamente l'avrebbe ucciso," Dec. II.1.20.

21 "... the lady's brothers-in-law entered the room, and found that the Angel Gabriel had taken flight, leaving his wings behind him." Dec. IV.2.47, my emphasis.

22 "One of the feathers of the Angel Gabriel, which he left behind him in the room of the Virgin Mary, when he came to make her the annunciation in Nazareth." Dec. VI.11, my emphasis.

23 "presumed to counterfeit the Angel Gabriel." Dec. IV.2.58.

24 "they tore off the cerements, each thinking himself blessed to have but a scrap thereof in his possession;" Dec. I.1.86, my emphasis.

25 "they laid hands on him, dragged him down from where he stood, seized him by the hair, tore the clothes from his back, and fell to beating and kicking him, so that it seemed to him as if all the world were upon him." Dec. II.1.18, my emphasis.

26 "Especially of things worthy to be had in reverence." Dec. I.1.2.

27 "l'uno era chiamato Stecchi, l'altro Martellino e il terzo Marchese, uomini li quali, le corti de' signor visitando, di contraffarsi e con nuovi atti contraffac- cendo qualunque altro uomo li veditori solazzavano." Dec. II.1.6; "Io mi contraffarò a guisa d'uno attratto." Dec. II.1.10; "Egli è stato sempre diritto come qualunque è l'un di noi, ma sa meglio che altro uomo, come voi avete potuto vedere, far queste ciance di contraffarsi in qualunque forma vuole." Dec. II.1.16.


29 "Who shall read them, may derive both pleasure from the entertaining matters set forth therein, and also good counsel, in that they may learn what to shun, and likewise what to pursue." Dec. Prom, 14.


31 P.M. Forni, Adventures in Speech, 94–94.
32 “All bruised and battered” Dec. II.1.22.

WORKS CONSULTED: