

Allegorical Action and Elizabethan Staging

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Most scholars accept Bernard Spivack's formulation that, except for an occasional throwback, the period after 1590 "marks the dead end and dissolution of the allegorical drama, at least on the popular stage."¹ Spivack places the allegorical figures of Robert Wilson's *The Cobbler's Prophecy* (1590) "at the barrier dividing the morality from the play of literal plot and personae which grew up alongside it during the first three quarters of the century and replaced it entirely in the final quarter."² If extant plays are to be the yardstick, then identifiable allegorical personae do not survive as part of the mainstream of Elizabethan professional drama. Yet Spivack's claim that "literal plot and personae" superseded the older technique "entirely" is an overstatement. Readers of Shakespeare will remember Rumor "*painted full of tongues*" in *The Second Part of Henry the Fourth* and Time carrying an hour glass in *The Winter's Tale* ("I turn my glass").³ Others may recall the Good and Evil Angels in Christopher Marlowe's *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* (1592); Revenge in Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (1587); Tamora assuming the disguise of Revenge in Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Titus Andronicus* (1594); and Fortune, Virtue, and Vice as significant presences at the outset of Thomas Dekker's *Old Fortunatus* (1599). Personae with allegorical names are most often found in dumb shows, as in *A Warning for Fair Women* (1599), an item in the repertory of Shakespeare's company. Allegorical figures also appear in framing

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scenes, wherein named figures provide a thematic thrust for the literal scenes, often in the form of a contest: Venus and Fortune in *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune* (1582); Comedy and Envy in *Mucedorus* (1590); Love, Fortune, and Death in *Soliman and Perseda* (1590); and Truth, Homicide, and Avarice in Robert Yarrington's *The Two Lamentable Tragedies* (1594).

My focus, however, is upon what I term allegory in action, wherein such figures somehow enter into the play's dominant verisimilar world. For example, in *A Knack to Know a Knave* (1592), the playwright uses a larger, overarching plot based upon legendary English history to frame the titular plot concerned with the evils of contemporary society.⁴ In the opening scene, King Edgar and Bishop Dunstan grant a commission to Honesty, the play's central figure, to seek out abuses in the kingdom and bring them to justice. A sizeable part of what follows is devoted to the devices used by this clearly labeled prime mover to expose before the king the four knaves: Perin the Courtier, Cuthbert the Coneycatcher, Walter "that-would-have-more" the Farmer, and the Priest.⁵ Figures that offer a positive example are in the minority in a play primarily concerned with the exposure of knavery. One episode contrasts Walter the Farmer, who disdains hospitality or any activity that does not yield profit, with the Knight and the Squire, who give much of their wealth away, feed their servants well, and help out those in need (including two poor men nearly arrested by the Farmer). When the corrupt Courtier goes off to a meal with the Farmer, Honesty is welcomed by the Knight. Honesty allegorizes the situation: "Marry, and I thank you too; for now the world may say, / That Honesty dines with Hospitality to-day."⁶ The playwright has mounted his critique of the ills of the kingdom by combining an allegorical prime mover with four figures that represent the Court, the City, the Farm, and the Priesthood.

Honesty's role in *Knack to Know a Knave* is an example of my first category of allegory in action in which an allegorical-symbolic action is apparent today to any reader with access to the relevant plays. For another highly visible example of ideas in action, consider three instances where a figure rises up from apparent death: Barabas in Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* (1589), Malevole-Altfront in John Marston's *The Malcontent* (1604), and Falstaff in Shakespeare's *The First Part of Henry the Fourth* (1597). Marlowe has the Maltese Christians heave the Jew's apparently dead body over a wall, thereby (supposedly) ridding themselves forever of this enemy within, but Barabas rises from his supposed death to lead the Turks into Malta. Ferneze's naive account of

the downfall of the Jew and his cohorts (“the heavens are just. / Their deaths were like their lives, then think not of em”) is misleading, for what Barabas stands for will not be cast off that easily.⁷ Marston’s archvillain Mendoza thinks he has poisoned his accomplice in crime, but the playgoer sees the true duke Altofront, heretofore disguised as Malevole the malcontent, rise and soon regain his dukedom.⁸ And Shakespeare’s Falstaff is counterfeiting (a term repeated nine times in the prose speech at his rising) since what he embodies for Prince Hal and the kingdom is not so easily eliminated.⁹ In all three instances, an apparent demise sets up a significant comment on the world of the play.

My second category of allegory in action consists of actions less visible to us but resonant for the original playgoers and therefore only recovered through recourse to theater history. Consider, for example, a device found in the late moral plays and echoed in a later generation of dramatic works: the Vice’s exit to Hell on the Devil’s back at the end of the Vice’s career. Only one extant play, Ulpian Fulwell’s *Like Will to Like* (1568) features this specific action; according to the stage direction, the Vice (Nichol Newfangle) “rideth away on the DEVIL’S back.”¹⁰ Similarly, in William Wager’s *Enough Is as Good as a Feast* (1560), Satan praises Covetousness (the Vice figure) and then is directed to “Bear him out upon his back.”¹¹ In Wager’s *The Longer Thou Livest* (1559), however, a vicious protagonist rather than the Vice exits in this fashion. The foolish Moros asks to be carried away by the Devil, and Confusion, the figure of retribution, obliges him: “I will carry thee to the devil indeed; / The world shall be well rid of a fool.”¹²

This bit of stage business, although obscure today, remained familiar to the next generation of playgoers and dramatists. In 1592, Thomas Nashe attacks the usurer who “shall ryde to Hell on the deuils backe (as it is in the olde Morrall).”¹³ In 1603, Samuel Harsnett describes “the old Church-playes, when the nimble Vice would skip vp nimbly like a Iack an Apes into the deuils necke, and ride the deuil a course, and belabour him with his wooden dagger, til he made him roare.”¹⁴ Several other late Elizabethan plays incorporate a version of this exit. In *Knack to Know a Knave*, the Bailiff of Hexham, the father of the four knaves, is carried off at his death by a devil: “Enter Devil, and carry him away.”¹⁵ In Robert Greene’s *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1589), the clownish Miles meets a devil, expresses interest in visiting Hell, puts on spurs, and announces “Oh, Lord, here’s even a goodly marvel, when a man rides to hell on the devil’s back.” The stage direction reads “*Exeunt roaring.*”¹⁶ In Thomas Lodge and Greene’s *A Looking-Glass*

for *London and England* (1590), a figure tries to frighten Adam the clown by masquerading as a devil and offering a familiar threat: “come get up on my backe, that I may carrie thee.”¹⁷

Of particular interest are Ben Jonson’s comments on this notable exit. Jonson has one of his foolish choric figures in *The Staple of News* (1626) praise the Devil who “would carry away the Vice on his backe, quicke to Hell, in euery Play where he came, and reforme abuses.”¹⁸ In 1619, Jonson told William Drummond that “according to Comedia Vetus, jn England the divell was brought jn either w^t one Vice or other, the Play done the divel caried away the Vice.”¹⁹ Jonson’s comment to Drummond highlights the irony of *The Devil Is an Ass* (1616), where Iniquity, the Vice figure, inverts the image and carries off Pug, the inept devil figure: “The *Diuell* was wont to carry away the euill; / But, now, the Euill out-carries the *Diuell*.”²⁰

To consider the various iterations of this stage business is to raise a question about a climactic moment in *1 Henry IV*. After Falstaff rises up from his apparent death, the stage direction reads “*He takes up Hotspur on his back*” (V.iv.129). If indeed Shakespeare is invoking here one of the best-remembered images of moral drama, how are we to understand the configuration? The figure being picked up and eventually carried off is not Prince Hal or the Vice-like Falstaff but rather Hotspur, “the king of honor” (IV.i.10). As acknowledged in his dying speech, Hotspur has been stripped of his “proud titles” by Prince Hal (V.iv.79). Moreover, Hotspur has suffered the ignominy of “a new wound in [his] thigh” courtesy of Falstaff’s sword (V.iv.128). When the prince says to Falstaff “come, bring your luggage nobly on your back” (V.iv.156), we see how both Hal and Falstaff have triumphed over Hotspur, albeit in different senses.²¹ Hal’s triumph (the most significant in a series of triumphs) symbolizes the decisive role of the prince, while Falstaff’s triumph signals the success and failure of certain concepts of valor. The wound in the thigh and Falstaff’s carrying off of Hotspur’s corpse enact not only Hotspur’s physical failure but also the failure of Hotspur’s limited and limiting definition of honor. The stage business presents the contrast between what has failed (Hotspur’s myopic chivalry and impolitic choices), what has survived (Falstaff’s concept of “discretion” [V.iv.120]), and what is essential to England’s health (the role and values of the Prince of Wales).

A link between Falstaff’s carrying off of Hotspur and a climactic action in moral drama is possible—at least for playgoers of the 1590s and for theater historians of later generations—thanks to

the presence of the action in several extant plays, subsequent allusions, and Jonson's inversion of the image. What remains is a third and highly elusive category of allegory in action: were there comparable bits of staging—actions less visible than figures rising from the dead and images not as well documented as one character carried off on another's back—that served as signifiers in the original theatrical vocabulary but are no longer apparent given the dearth of stage directions and the small fraction of plays that have survived?²²

This question has no easy answer. To foreground the problem, consider one puzzling yet suggestive example. The opening stage direction of one of the earliest extant plays linked to purpose-built theaters in London, *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune* (1582), reads, "Enter MERCURY: then riseth a Fury: then enter the assembly of the gods, JUPITER with JUNO, APOLLO with MINERVA, MARS and SATURN, after VULCAN with VENUS: the Fury sets debate amongst them."²³ Jupiter addresses the quarreling gods, asking "whence springs this strife of late? / Who are the authors of this mutiny?" but quickly recognizes the cause as "thou Fury fell, / Bred in the dungeon of the deepest hell."²⁴ The Fury, Tisiphone, then makes her case and initiates the Venus versus Fortune debate that frames the play. What is not clear, however, given the absence of dialogue, is how "*the Fury sets debate amongst them.*" Some action is required if an amicable beginning is to be turned to strife and mutiny, but how would such an intervention have been signaled?

A possible answer is provided by two moments of explicit allegorical staging in another play almost two decades later, *Histrio-Mastix, or the Player Whipt* (1599). In this anomalous six-act play sometimes attributed to Marston, a distinctive allegorical figure accompanied by appropriate attendants presides over each act.²⁵ Peace (along with Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy) is followed by Plenty (with Plutus, Ceres, and Bacchus), then Pride (with Vainglory, Hypocrisy, and Contempt), then Envy, then War (with Ambition, Fury, Horror, and Ruin), and finally Poverty (with Famine, Sickness, Bondage, and Sluttishness). Peace returns in act VI to pay homage to Astraea, the allegorical embodiment of Queen Elizabeth. Anthony Caputi notes the play is a "crude allegorical dramatization of two Renaissance commonplaces," the idea that a continuous cycle governs the fortunes of society and the belief that the way out of this cyclical trap is through learning and Christian stoicism.²⁶ In each act of *Histrio-Mastix*, the dominant allegorical figure influ-

ences several levels of society (as represented by four nobles, four merchants and lawyers, commoners, and a group of players) in order to present a panoramic view of society through a moral-allegorical lens. In act I, for example, under the aegis of Peace the nobles adopt the arts, the merchants and lawyers improve themselves through study, and harvest folk sing a song of plenty.²⁷

As is often the case, the stage business that is to accompany the allegorical action is rarely spelled out. At the outset of act III, Lady Pride plays the role of temptress in the manner of the moral play Vice figure. Pride instills in the group of lawyers and merchants a desire for the latest fashions and a disdain for sumptuary laws and other regulations but no actions or gestures are signaled. In act V, under the aegis of War, a series of civil disturbances emerge initiated by Fury: “*A noise within crying, Liberty, liberty. Enter a sort of Russetings and Mechanicalls, (Fury leading them) and crying confusedly,*” but no designated actions or properties are linked to Fury (sig. F3v). Rather, the sequence concludes with “*Enter all the factions of Noblemen, Peasants, and Cittizens fighting: the ruder sorte driue in the rest and cry a sacke, a sacke, Hauoke, hauoke, Burne the Lawyers bookes; teare the Silkes out of the shops*” (sig. G1r). Here the playwright has Fury lead a group onto the stage but provides no distinctive details.

The playwright does provide one distinctive bit of allegorical stage business that occurs twice: one character breathing upon or among a group of characters. At the end of act III, the nobles fall asleep after quarreling. At this point, “*Enter Envy alone to all the Actors sleeping on the Stage: the musicke sounding: shee breaths amongst them*” (sig. E1v). Envy, unlike the other dominant allegorical figures, has no attendants—her nature, she informs us, “is to worke alone, / As hating any Agent but her self”—so that now in place of Pride “The breath of *Envy* fills the empty world” (sig. E1v–E2r). After this soliloquy, the nobles awake and begin act IV badly infected with Envy. Similarly, at the outset of act V, War instructs Ambition to

fly through the land,
And enter euery brest of noble blood,
Infect their honored mindes with factious thoughts,
And make them glister in opposed armes.

(sig. F1r)

Ambition, in response, declares “*Ambition like a Pestilence doth fly, / To poison Honour and Nobility*” (sig. F1r). Afterward, the stage directions read, “*Enter Mauortius and Larius on one side, Philarchus and Hiletus on the other with weapons Drawne: Chrisoganus betweene them. Ambition breathing amongst them*” (sig. F2v).

Most references to breath or breathing in stage directions are linked to fights in which figures pause to breathe or are out of breath, as when Coriolanus “*fights till they be driven in breathless.*”²⁸ An exception is found in a comic encounter in Thomas Middleton’s *The Puritan Widow* (1606), wherein a vainglorious, swearing corporal accosts three Puritans. One Puritan declares, “we know the breath of man is weak”; in response, the corporal “*breathes upon*” him. That Puritan then comments, “I warrant, if the wind stood right, a man might smell him from the top of Newgate to the leads of Ludgate.”²⁹ However, to my knowledge, the “*breathing amongst them*” locution in a stage direction is unique to *Histrion-Mastix*—although it may signal how such allegorical personae act out their influence elsewhere, such as the dumb shows of *Warning for Fair Women*. As one possible implementation, imagine a figure with an upward palm cupped under his mouth or with both hands positioned at the sides of his mouth breathing into the faces or ears of the victims.

To the readers of later generations, *Histrion-Mastix* initially appears as a curiosity or a throwback, especially when juxtaposed with contemporary plays such as Shakespeare’s *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar* (1599) and *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* (1601). Yet, as only a small percentage of plays have survived from the late 1590s and early 1600s, on what basis should a student of theatrical practice characterize what constitutes a norm for this period? Would Envy’s or Ambition’s breathing in the midst of a group of susceptible figures be seen as merely a bizarre onstage anomaly? Or could this stage action have signified elsewhere in what we today read as verisimilar situations?

To make such a suggestion is to enter the misty realm of conjecture, for hard evidence is lacking to support such a claim. The dialogue from *Histrion-Mastix* links the breathing action to mental infection, pestilence, and poison. Recall Ambition’s directive to “[i]nfect their honored minds with factious thoughts” and his self-description as a “pestilence” that “doth fly, / To poison Honor and Nobility.” If such infectious breathing in the midst of a group or in the ear of an individual figure was a recognizable onstage image, it did not start with *Histrion-Mastix* but likely had its origin in the Vice figure, the agent of corruption in the late moral drama.

Indeed, in a 2010 workshop at the University of Toronto, the actor playing Haphazard (Adam Lazarus) in the central temptation scene from R. B.'s *Apius and Virginia* (1564), though he was not aware of the *Histrion-Mastix* signal, used a comparable gesture (repeatedly bringing his hand to his mouth, then extending it toward Apius) as he poisoned the mind of his victim.³⁰

I can offer no firm evidence for the use of this action in rabble-rousing scenes such as Jack Cade's exhortation to his followers in his first appearance in *The Second Part of Henry the Sixth* (ca. 1591) where such movement among a group would have been appropriate. Parson Ball's comparable thirty-five-line exhortation in *The Life and Death of Jack Straw* (1591), one of the few long speeches in a short play, emphasizes a similar populist message—"The rich have all, the poor live in misery."³¹ Ball's speech ends with the call to

make division equally
Of each man's goods indifferently,
And rightly may you follow arms
To rid you from these civil harms.³²

To have the actor move about the stage as an agent of infection would make good theatrical sense, but no such signal is provided. In the forum scene of *Julius Caesar*, Brutus remains aloof from the plebeians, ascending to the pulpit in act III, scene ii, line 11 and exiting at line 61.³³ Antony is also told to "go up into the public chair," but after speaking from this removed position, he descends to incite the crowd (III.ii.63). His provocation of the crowd is achieved by the skillful use of three properties (Caesar's mantle, body, and will), but the overall effect is comparable to that of Fury in *Histrion-Mastix*, as heard in the plebeians' closing lines: "fire the traitors' houses," "Pluck down benches," "Pluck down forms, windows, any thing" (III.ii.255 and III.ii.258–9). Again, circulating among the group while using a distinctive hand-breathing motion would be quite effective at this moment (as opposed to Antony's initial "Nay, press not so upon me, stand far off" [III.ii.167]), and such an action would fit with Antony's summary lines when alone onstage: "Now let it work. Mischief thou art afoot, / Take thou what course thou wilt!" (III.ii.260–1).

Would allegorical actions of infection, pestilence, and poison (as seen in *Histrion-Mastix*) also pertain to one-on-one deceptions? Consider scenes of seduction wherein one character could circle another. Such staging could reinforce the theme of corruption in

a number of scenes from satiric comedies (for example, Mosca's handling of figures such as Corvino and Bonario in Jonson's *Volpone, or the Fox* [1606]) or moments in some tragedies where our expectations about psychological realism may not be satisfied (for example, Wendoll's seduction of Ann Frankford in Thomas Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness* [1603]). Again, with only dialogue as evidence, I can offer no support for such staging in the many comparable scenes in the Shakespeare canon. Relevant perhaps is Iago's scheming in *The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice* (1604); he plans to use Desdemona's pleading to Othello on behalf of Cassio as evidence to destroy all three figures. Iago, following his design to "pour this pestilence into [Othello's] ear," gradually poisons his victim's mind in the temptation scene of act III, scene iii.³⁴ Later in the play, Iago stands over a prostrate Othello and says "Work on, / My medicine, [work]!"³⁵

The most pertinent scene, as I imagine it, is found in act I, scene vi of *Cymbeline*, a pivotal moment that breaks down into a series of segments. Upon first seeing Imogen, a daunted Jachimo reacts in allegorical terms: "Boldness be my friend; / Arm me audacity from head to foot."³⁶ Jachimo's first move, an account of Posthumus's supposed infidelity, does have an effect on Imogen, but his conclusion ("Be reveng'd") and his offer ("Let me my service tender on your lips") backfires: Imogen responds, "Away, I do condemn mine ears that have / So long attended thee" (I.vi.126 and I.vi.140–2). Jachimo's explanation for such boldness ("I have spoke this to know if your affiance / Were deeply rooted") does redeem him, however, and his final request—to safeguard the trunk in Imogen's bedchamber—is granted (I.vi.163–4). If distinctive gestures and movement accompanied the initial lies, subsequent justification, and placement of the trunk, then the development of Imogen's vulnerability could have been staged physically for the playgoer.

My suggested stagings do not constitute proof, for clearly I have ventured into the land of the three Ps: presumably, probably, and perhaps. As one who has spent decades wrestling with the extant stage directions, I am aware of how little we know about onstage practice in this period and how difficult the task of recovering what that first generation of playgoers actually saw at the Globe, Blackfriars, and other theaters. The three signals from *Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune* and *Histrion-Mastix* are only a small cluster in comparison to what can be provided for other actions, costumes, and properties. Nonetheless, the key question remains: in any attempt to reconstruct what happened on the

early modern stage, what constitutes evidence? Moreover, how should we deal with apparent anomalies that do not fit comfortably with today's reflexes that favor realism and verisimilitude? If our expectations are keyed solely to those assumptions, are we losing sight of alternative ways in which ideas and emotions may have been conveyed in the original theatrical vocabulary? My proposals about staging are easier to defend with figures arising from apparent death or one character carrying off another at a play's climax as opposed to ambiguous stage directions (such as "*sets debate amongst them*" or "*breathes amongst them*"). In defense of my extrapolations, however, how are we to know what has been lost in translation into our theatrical idiom? This issue remains, to return one last time to Falstaff, "a question to be ask'd" (*1 Henry IV*, II.iv.410).

NOTES

¹ Bernard Spivack, *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil: The History of a Metaphor in Relation to His Major Villains* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1958), p. 252.

² Spivack, p. 235. The date of *The Cobbler's Prophecy* is taken from Alfred Harbage, *Annals of English Drama, 975–1700: An Analytical Record of All Plays, Extant or Lost, Chronologically Arranged and Indexed by Authors, Titles, Dramatic Companies, &c.*, ed. S. Schoenbaum, rev. edn. (1940; rpt. London: Methuen, 1964). Unless otherwise noted, the dates of all subsequent plays referenced in this essay are from Harbage.

³ Shakespeare, *The Second Part of Henry the Fourth*, in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans, 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997), 1:928–73, induction, s.d.; and Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, in *Riverside Shakespeare*, 2:1612–55, IV.i.16.

⁴ W. Carew Hazlitt, ed., *A Knack to Know a Knave, in A Select Collection of Old English Plays, Originally Published by Robert Dodsley in the Year 1744*, 4th edn., 15 vols. (London: Reeves and Turner, 1874), 6:503–91. Subsequent references to this collection will appear as Hazlitt's Dodsley in the notes.

⁵ *Knack to Know a Knave*, 6:590.

⁶ *Knack to Know a Knave*, 6:553.

⁷ Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, ed. N. W. Bawcutt (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1978), V.i.55–6.

⁸ John Marston, *The Malcontent*, ed. George K. Hunter, *Revels Plays* (London: Methuen, 1975), V.iv.

⁹ See Shakespeare, *The First Part of Henry the Fourth*, in *Riverside Shakespeare*, 1:884–927, V.iv.111–29. Subsequent references to *The First Part of Henry the Fourth*, hereafter *1 Henry IV*, are from this edition and will appear parenthetically in the text by act, scene, and line number. Interpretations of this rich (and entertaining) moment will vary widely depending upon how the reader sees the Hal-Falstaff relationship. If the emergence from appar-

ent death comes as a surprise to the playgoer, then the action serves as a form of what I term theatrical italics, a moment that cries out for attention.

¹⁰ Ulpian Fulwell, *Like Will to Like*, in Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, 3:303–59, 357.

¹¹ William Wager, *Enough Is as Good as a Feast*, in *The Longer Thou Livest and Enough Is as Good as a Feast*, ed. R. Mark Benbow (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1967), pp. 79–146, 143, s.d.

¹² Wager, *The Longer Thou Livest*, in *Longer Thou Livest and Enough Is as Good as a Feast*, pp. 1–78, 74, lines 1855–6.

¹³ Thomas Nashe, *The Works of Thomas Nashe, Edited from the Original Texts*, ed. Ronald B. McKerrow, 5 vols. (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1910), 2:99.

¹⁴ Samuel Harsnett, *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures to Withdraw the Harts of Her Maiesties Subiects from Their Allegiance, and from the Truth of Christian Religion Professed in England, Vnder the Pretence of Casting Out Devils* (London, 1603), pp. 114–5; EEBO STC (2d edn.) 12880.

¹⁵ *Knack to Know a Knave*, 6:520.

¹⁶ Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, ed. Daniel Seltzer (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1963), scene xv, s.d., p. 93.

¹⁷ Thomas Lodge and Greene, *A Looking-Glass for London and England*, ed. W. W. Greg (London: Oxford Univ. Press for the Malone Society, 1932), lines 1716–7.

¹⁸ Ben Jonson, *The Staple of News*, in *Ben Jonson*, ed. C. H. Herford, Percy Simpson, and Evelyn Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925–52), 6:273–384, 303, intermeane.64–66.

¹⁹ Jonson, “Informations be Ben Johnston [sic] to W. D. When He Came to Scotland upon Foot,” in appendix I to *Ben Jonson*, 1:132–78, 143–4, lines 410–2.

²⁰ Jonson, *The Devil Is an Ass*, in *Ben Jonson*, 6:145–272, 262, V.vi.76–7.

²¹ As with Falstaff's rising from apparent death, interpretations of this distinctive exit will vary widely. For my reading of the play that includes these two moments, see Dessen, “Dual Protagonists in *I Henry IV*,” in *Shakespeare and the Late Moral Plays* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1986), pp. 55–90.

²² E. K. Chambers finds roughly 300 plays extant from 1586 to 1616 and notes that there is reason to suppose this total “only represents a comparatively small fraction of the complete crop” of those years (*The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols. [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923], 3:182).

²³ *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune*, in Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, 6:143–243, 145, s.d.

²⁴ *Rare Triumphs*, 6:145.

²⁵ *Histrion-Mastix, or the Player Whipt*, ed. John S. Farmer (Amersham UK: Tudor Facsimile Texts, 1912). Subsequent references to *Histrion-Mastix* are from this edition and will appear parenthetically in the text by signature number. For a dissenting view about Marston's authorship, see Roslyn Knutson, “*Histrion-Mastix*: Not by John Marston,” *SP* 98, 3 (Summer 2001): 359–77.

²⁶ Anthony Caputi, *John Marston, Satirist* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1961), p. 82.

²⁷ In act II, the players perform a moral play that recalls Jonson's observations in *The Staple of News*: the play within *Histrion-Mastix* includes the stage direction “*Enter a roaring Devil with the Vice on his back, Iniquity in one hand, and Juventus in the other*” (C4r).

²⁸ Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Coriolanus*, in *Riverside Shakespeare*, 2:1440–88, I.viii, s.d., p. 1452. For a full account of the use of breathing in stage directions, see Dessen and Leslie Thomson, s.v. “breath, breathe,” in *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580–1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999), pp. 38–9.

²⁹ Thomas Middleton, *The Puritan Widow*, ed. Donna B. Hamilton, in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, ed. Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007), pp. 509–42, I.iii.24–5; I.iii, s.d., p. 518; and I.iii.28–30.

³⁰ This 2010 workshop at the University of Toronto titled “Inside Out” was funded by an Andrew Mellon Foundation emeritus grant and involved a director (Peter Cockett), eleven actors, a costumer, and a dramaturge. The focus was on a series of psychomachia tug-of-war scenes, both allegorical and postallegorical. An audience saw experimental staging of segments from two late moral plays (*The Tide Tarrieth No Man* and *Apius and Virginia*) followed by comparable scenes in Shakespeare, Marlowe, Thomas Dekker, and Thomas Heywood in which figures made key choices.

³¹ *The Life and Death of Jack Straw*, in Hazlitt’s Dodsley, 5:375–414, 382.

³² *The Life and Death of Jack Straw*, 5:381–2.

³³ Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*, in *Riverside Shakespeare*, 2:1151–81, III.ii, s.d., pp. 1166–7. Subsequent references to *Julius Caesar* are from this edition and will appear parenthetically in the text and notes by act, scene, and line number.

³⁴ Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice*, in *Riverside Shakespeare*, 2:1246–96, II.iii.356.

³⁵ Shakespeare, *Othello*, IV.i.44–5.

³⁶ Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, in *Riverside Shakespeare*, 2:1565–1611, I.vi.18–9. Subsequent references to *Cymbeline* are from this edition and will appear parenthetically in the text by act, scene, and line number.