

The Duchess of Malfi Quotations

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Ferdinand says:

"I would have their bodies

Burnt in a coal-pit..." (Act II, Scene V)

Exp

: Ferdinand threatens a cruel death for his sister and her family.

The Cardinal says:

"Thy curiosity

Hath undone thee: thou'rt poisoned with that book;" (Act V, Scene II)

Exp:

The Cardinal tells Julia her urge to know his secret has killed her, as she kisses a poisoned Bible.

Ferdinand says:

"Cover her face: mine eyes dazzle: she died young." (Act IV, Scene II)

Exp:

After the Duchess's murder, Ferdinand cannot look at her and realizes what he has done.

Bosola says in his final moment:

"O, this gloomy world!

...deep pit of darkness." (Act V, Scene V)

Exp:

As Bosola is dying, he feels sorrow about the dark and hopeless world.

Bosola says:

***"Sir, I served your tyranny, and rather strove
To satisfy yourself than all the world."*** (Act IV, Scene II)

Exp: Bosola admits he did evil to please Ferdinand, not for his own will.

Bosola says:

"I am a tomb-maker." (Act IV, Scene II)

Exp:

Bosola calls himself a tomb-maker, showing his role in causing death.

Bosola says:

"I am angry with myself now that I wake." (Act IV, Scene II)

Exp:

Bosola regrets his actions and feels guilty after the Duchess's death.

Duchess says:

***"I pray thee, look thou giv'st my little boy
Some syrup for his cold, and let the girl
Say her prayers ere she sleep."*** (Act IV, Scene II)

Exp:

Facing death, the Duchess asks Cariola to care for her children with love.

Moral lesson: Honesty, integrity, and true love are always more valuable than power, pride, or cruelty. The play shows that Greed, cruelty, and abuse of power not only destroy the life of the criminal but also create pain and turmoil in the lives of everyone around him.