

Appendix

The Italian text is from Marzia Minutelli's transcription of Dolfo's letters to Francesco beginning at line 14 of letter XXVII. The translation I have made is aimed to be literal rather than to possess any poetic merit.

Sì che, essendo usanza mia, senza menzogna, menando universalmente equale la misura, in biasimare et mordere la vita et costumi da(m)nabili de tuti li Principi et Signori de ogni sorte, io non tasso né tocho in occulto o publico la Vostra Signoria, anzi da me sempre è exceptuata da la regola malèdica: che a dir pur lo vero senza adulatione tanti sono smesurati li defecti innumerabili de li altri et tanto abominevoli che li vostri sono per nulla reputatu; si como disse la bona donna che, apresso al marito nel lecto dormendo, sognava che era giunta in uno publico et spacioso mercato, dove erano li bigogni de li cazi da vendere.

Et molte donne cum gran calcha, a regato, per comprare de la desiata mercantia, una l'altra baldanzosamente si urtavano per paura non li manchasse de quilli fructi smisurati mai più da loro né visti né palpati, quantunque li fosse abundantissimamente di tal roba, che haveria tuto 'l paese fornito non di uno, ma de più et più; ma timendo non li mancasseno, le pazarelle spingeano l'una l'altra et faceano rumore et furia dove non bisognava, a guisa de uno sposa novello (o innamorato) che daprima gode il suo desio de la bramata sposa (o donna): che de dì, di nocte, in piedi et iacendo, ne le camere, ne le alle, ne li anditi, suso le schale, suso ogni bancha, suso la nuda terra, ne li granari, ne le tuate, ne le cusine et ovunque si trova havere agio et commoditate, cum basi, cum tochi, cum facti, in ogni lato gode lo ardentissimo suo amore, parendo debia mancare l'aqua a la fonte, non sapendo che la prurigine de la femine è infinita et mai non ha conclusione ne fondo (peroché dicono li naturali che l'homo ha solo doi testicoli et la femina ne ha septe, et perciò è tanto fortarda).

Avienne che questa bona donna, sognando et aliegra sopra ogni altra letitia vedendo la multitudine di la gratissima merce et fornita de dinari, spiò in uno bigonzo esser uno bello cazo grosso lungo et bianco, che tuto sfumava, che pareva quello è depincto nel bagno di ordinato per

As I am not accustomed to lying, and I employ the same criterion to condemn and to criticise the intolerable life and morals of princes and masters of every kind, I do not censor myself nor touch Your Grace in secret or in public. But, I make an exception on your account, avoiding slanderous practices. For, to be honest, others' defects are so numerous and so abominable that your matters seem a trifle in comparison - just as it was told by that 'good' woman, who, while sleeping next to her husband in bed, dreamt that she had come to a public and spacious market where there were vessels of pricks for sale. And since many women crowded competing to buy the desired merchandise, they boldly shoved each other, fearing that they would lack that enormous fruit, never more to be seen or touched by them, although there was an abundance of that thing which could fully supply not only the whole village but many more. But, fearing that they would be left wanting, those silly women shoved one another and made noise and created chaos, although it was unnecessary. It was like a new groom (or lover), who for the first time enjoys his passion with his lusting bride (or lover): so that by day and night, standing up and lying down, either in their rooms, or in the corridors, the service rooms, on the stairs, on every bench, on the bare ground, or the granary, or the *tuate*, the kitchen and wherever it is easy and comfortable, with kisses, caresses and deeds, in every way he enjoys his very ardent love, as if a spring was lacking water, not knowing that the desire of a woman is infinite and can never have a conclusion or end (thus naturalists say that man has only two testicles and the woman has seven, and therefore is incredibly greedy). It happened that this 'good' woman, dreaming, and happy above any other joy on seeing the multitude of welcome wares, and since she had money, spied in the vessel a beautiful large one, big, long and white, lo nostro Monsignor Bentivoglio.

45 Et, volendolo comparare, una altra donna, che al
mercato era venuta per fornirse de uno bestiolo,
gettò l'occhio a questo medesimo cerse; et ad uno
medesimo tempo furon preste de le mano,
50 pigliando una per la bursa, l'altra per la testa, et
tiravano, ciascuna a piena forza per sbrancharlo
di mano a la compagna: pur, niuna si allentava a
relaxare la impresa.

Ma, dopo longa contentione lassato stare in poso
quello animaleto, incomenciono a scapliarse et
55 far a pugni, per modo che, menando davvero le
pugna, percoteva lo marito che apresso li
dormiva.

Di che, forte maravigliato et adirato de la
insolentia de la moglie, cum pugni et cridi la
60 svegliò et cum molte rampogne la minazava.

Alhora la bona donna, ridendo et chiedendo
perdono, cum riso et solazo raccontò al marito il
bello ordine del delectevole sogno; el quale
audito et per tale ragionamento arritato, el
65 marito li domandò:

Dime, per toa fede, moglie mia, quanto si
vendevano li cazi de la sorte et grosseza che è li
mio?

Et, postolo in mano a la moglie, che lo attastasse
70 (el quale, Signor Marchese, era al mio iudicio
grosso quanto il vostro o alquanto più), repose
la donna cum uno legiadro ghigno:

Li cazi di questa sorte non si vendevano, anzi
stavano in terra fora de li bigongi, et erano cum
75 piedi piedi scaltizati, cum ciò sia cosa che tanto
erano li altri grossi, longhu, belli, duri et arditi
che di queste cazesse non si faceva extima
alcuna!

gleaming so much that it seemed like the one
depicted in the bathroom commissioned by our
Monsignor Bentivoglio.

Another woman, wanting to buy one, came to the
market to furnish herself with a little beast and
casted an eye to this same virile member.
Simultaneously, they quickly grabbed the
member, one clutching the scrotum, the other the
head, and they pulled, each with all their might,
to pull it away from the hand of their opponent.
But neither one restrained and loosened their
grip.

But after a long dispute, having left that little
animal in peace, they began to grab hair and to
hit each other, in such a way that, throwing
punches around, the 'good' woman struck her
husband who was sleeping next to her.

Whereof, greatly stunned and angry at his wife's
insolence, he awoke her with punches and cries
and threatened her with many rebukes.

Then the 'good' woman, giggling and asking for
forgiveness, with a laugh and amusement,
recounted to her husband the sequence of her
delightful dream. The husband, listening and
agitated by the story, asked her:

"Tell me, in good faith, my wife, how much were
the pricks sold for, which were the same type
and size as mine?"

And, placing his prick in the hand of his wife, so
that she might well certify it (which, Sir Marquis,
was to my judgement as big as yours or perhaps
bigger), the woman responded with a lovely grin:
"The pricks of this sort were not on sale. Instead,
they were on the ground beside the vessels, and
were trampled beneath feet. For the others were
all so big, long, beautiful, hard and vigorous, that
these little pricks among those others had no
value."

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