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Traductions introuvables

# Two French Tragedies of Saint Genest

*The Famous Actor or The Martyrdom of Saint Genest: Tragedy* by Nicolas Mary, sieur Desfontaines

*The Veritable Saint Genest: Tragedy* by Jean de Rotrou

Translated, with Introduction and Notes, by Richard Hillman

#### Référence électronique

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#### Responsable scientifique

**Richard Hillman** 

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Contact : alice.nue@univ-tours.fr

## **Translation** The Famous Actor or The Martyrdom of Saint Genest: Tragedy by Nicolas Mary, sieur Desfontaines

**Richard Hillman** CESR - Université de Tours

## THE FAMOUS ACTOR

## OR

## THE MARTYRDOM OF SAINT GENEST: TRAGEDY

By

Nicolas Mary, sieur Desfontaines

### Actors<sup>1</sup>

Diocletian, Emperor of Rome Aquilinus, favourite of the Emperor Rutilius, Councillor of State to the Emperor Genest, actor Aristide, [actor, who plays the brother of Pamphilie,] confidant of Genest, Anthénor, [actor, who plays the] father of Genest Pamphilie, [actress,] mistress of Genest Luciane, [actress, who plays the sister of Genest<sup>2</sup>] Two Guards

Scene: Rome, a room in the Emperor's palace.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Orig.: "Acteurs", a term overlapping with the profession of several, who are confusingly identified in the original list by their roles in the play-within-the-play; see Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 6.

<sup>2</sup> The original specifies "sœur d'Anthénor" without warrant in the text, as observed by Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 6.

<sup>3</sup> As this suggests, and indeed as the text seems self-consciously to assert, the staging perfectly observes the neo-classical "unity of place". In contrast with Rotrou's play, there is no need for a separate structure to accommodate the play-within-the-play. Genest announces that the troupe will rehearse and perform in the same space where the Emperor has received them (I.iii.204-7), while the intrusion of the supernatural that later converts him takes place off-stage. For his climactic confrontation with Pamphilie, which corresponds to Marcèle's visit to Genest in prison as depicted by Rotrou (V.ii), a change of scene is likewise obviated: Diocletian leaves Pamphilie after an exchange with her and has the prisoner brought in chains to where she awaits him (III.iii.936).

## Act I

## Scene i

Diocletian, Aquilinus, Rutilius, two Guards

#### Aquilinus

	e
I	At last, Caesar, none with your power can compete:
2	In crowning you, Rome puts the whole world at your feet,
3	While so encompassing your destiny with glory
4	That only the gods may pretend to rivalry.
5	Like them, you may doom all, or full pardon bestow;
6	Your eagles are armed with thunderbolts here below.⁴
7	Which, as desires move you, you can take in hand
8	And use, like Jupiter, mortals to reprimand.
9	Your power to command is of the same proportion:
ю	If he reigns in heaven, the earth is your own portion,
II	And if his laws control a hundred deities,
12	You see a thousand kings, when you like, on their knees;
13	Whose power before your greatness supreme bows down
14	And alters to respect at the sight of your crown.
15	The Persians conquered, no Carinus to oppose, <sup>5</sup>
16	Apart from a few Christians, you have no more foes;
17	And that impious sect, although it may conspire,
18	Aims only at the gods, and not at your empire.

#### Diocletian

19	Pointless, Aquilinus, to paint as less severe
20	An evil that this empire is right to fear,
21	For to go against the gods, of crowns the defenders,
22	Undermines the state's most solid and surest pillars.
23	Great I am, it is true: all things to my laws bow,
24	And I may count some kings among my subjects now;

The eagle was the emblem and standard of the Roman legion. 4

Marcus Aurelius Carinus, who reigned briefly as emperor (283-85 C.E.), disputed Diocletian's rise to 5 power and perished in a battle with him, killed by his own officers. Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 9, point out that the challenge from Carinus and a Persian uprising are mentioned as early troubles faced by Diocletian within two pages of Nicolas Coeffetau, *Histoire romaine* (Paris: Cramoisy, 1623).

25	But if even a single sect in Rome defies me,
26	I live a slave—the show of Emperor belies me.
27	Is it subjugation of the whole of mankind
28	In the midst of my court other sovereigns to find?
29	They don't aim, you say, the empire to reverse—
30	They hate the gods only: what evil could be worse?
31	And why would you imagine that they grant respect
32	To kings, if they audaciously the gods reject?
33	No, no: already too great when it shows its head,
34	This evil we must stifle before it can spread,
35	And avenge, by strictly applying our just laws,
36	Of both the earth and the heavens the common cause.

#### Rutilius

37	Suspend a little, my Lord, a decree so dire;
38	Moderate somewhat the force of your righteous ire.
39	Spare Rome at last, and by other expedients
40	Bring its citizens to lawful obedience:
41	Your hangmen have sufficiently on them wreaked carnage;
42	Tortures have sufficiently made proof of their courage;
43	And so far your eyes, equitable Emperor,
44	Have only seen too many spectacles of horror.
45	It's not that the course of the rebels I affect:
46	I have too much aversion to that upstart sect;
47	The Christians I condemn, detest them as you do;
48	Your wish is mine; I worship the same gods as you.
49	But given that the errors which inflame that crew
50	In the end are inward faults which the soul imbue,
51	I find that we expend our efforts uselessly
52	To heal their spirits by harming them bodily.
53	That higher faculty, more noble and erect,
54	By such inferior means is not rendered subject:
55	It views with contempt its irons, laughs at its prison,
56	Following no laws but the principle of Reason <sup>6</sup> —
57	Reason that alone tames the soul, acts as its queen,

6 Cf. symbolism of chains and prison in Rotrou, esp. I.iii.126-28, II.viii.556 ff., III.ii.701-6, III.iv.815-18.

58	And over its impulses as sovereign is seen. <sup>7</sup>
59	To direct these Christians to a dutiful course,
60	Just this once, O Caesar, make the most of her force:
61	Cause Reason to do her work; with examples feed them;
62	Attempt by gentle means to the temples to lead them,
63	And without more compulsion, offer them calm space
64	In which to reflect somewhat on the choice they face.
65	Your torturers' aspect makes their souls shut up tight; <sup>8</sup>
66	Swords only turn them savage; blood fills them with
	spite,
67	While you by your goodness may restore their good sense
68	And cause them to offer the gods due prayers and
	incense.

#### Diocletian

69	Rutilius, your counsel offers a fair prospect,
70	But let us see your notions put into effect,
71	And since such small success has been produced by pain,
72	Try those fine means you mention for what they may gain.
73	I entrust you with this affair of consequence:
74	Your wit is clever, your tongue rich in eloquence;
75	You'll have done no mean feat if, while calming my furor,
76	You can also by your reasons conquer their error.
	Aquilinus
77	The hope is fair indeed, but will be hard to realise.

#### RUTILIUS

78	Quite true that nothing may come of the enterprise,
79	And I can offer no absolute guarantee

- And I can offer no absolute guarantee
  That the outcome with all our wishes will agree.
- 81 But this approach we can try without detriment,
- but this approach we can try without detriment,
- 82 And the trustworthy counsels that heaven has sent,

<sup>7</sup> Ll. 57-68: the original presents some confusion in its use of pronouns and personification, due to the fact that "raison" ("reason") and "âme" ("soul")are both feminine nouns and often allegorised accordingly. The translation attempts to clarify.

<sup>8 &</sup>quot;[M]akes their souls shut up tight": orig. "rend leur âme interdite". The point is that the soul must be in a state to admit the effect of Reason.

83	First, to calm their furious spirits, which estrange them,		
84	Then orderly, in service to the gods, to range them.		
85	Of our worldly affairs those prudent arbiters,		
86	Omnipotent as they are, wish us as their helpers,		
87	And often find a use for instruments less perfect		
88	To produce here below a marvellous effect.		
89	Know then, O Caesar, what I purpose to attempt:		
90	You will think it at first deserving of contempt,		
91	But after due reflection by Your Majesty,		
92	It will appear surprising in its subtlety.		
	Diocletian		
93	What might this precious and novel stratagem be		
94	You wish to use?		
	Rutilius		
	That—right here—you're going to see,		
95	And provided you to my method give consent,		
96	I'll well acquit myself, and furnish you amusement.		
90	The were acquire mysell, and runnish you and semente.		
	Diocletian		
97	Whatever it takes their stubborn hearts to reform.		
	Rutilius		
98	The scaffolds into fine theatres you must transform,		
90 99	And cause to be displayed there, with all due derision,		
100	The errors and the abuses of their religion.		
101	You know how fully the illustrious Genest		
101	Excels in grace and skill, whatever he may play;		
102	And that, by his voice and actions in diverse fashions,		
104	He can at will produce in us his changing passions—		
104	Enliven our spirits or render them depressed,		
106	Loving, disdainful, by pity or wrath possessed,		
107	And by a power sovereign and marvellous,		
107	Imprint upon our hearts all that he shows to us.		
109	Command him, my Lord, to display on stage for you		
109	The superstitions of a crass unwholesome crew,		
110	Who feed themselves on hope and, lulled by idle charms,		

112	Shun pleasure	that pursues an	d waits with	open arms.
				1

- If you still doubt the striking power of his skill,
- 114 Experience it in your palace, if you will,
- And by putting to the trial that marvellous art,
- Feel within yourself what to them it can impart.

#### Diocletian

117	Have him summoned, Aquilinus; we will proceed
118	At once.

## Aquilinus

I obey.

#### RUTILIUS

	Of such trouble there	e's no need.
119	That he is wanted that guard there can let him kno	W.
	Diocletian	
120	He's here?	
	Rutilius	
	Yes, Lord, I left him just a while ago	
121	Along with his companions in the next apartment,	,
122	Where I believe some time in pacing he has spent,	
123	Waiting for both the means and opportunity	
124	To come and offer service to Your Majesty.	
	Diocletian	
125	Bid him enter.	
	Aquilinus	
	Guard	[Exit Guard.]
	Rutilius	
	The troupe is pleasan	it to view
126	And full of zeal, what's more, to give pleasure to yo	
	GUARD [re-entering]	
127	He's here.	

## Diocletian

Let him approach.

## Scene ii

Genest, Pamphilie, Luciane, Anthenor, Aristide, Diocletian, Aquilinus, Rutilius, Guard

#### Genest

	Invincible Emperor,
128	Because Your Majesty will vouchsafe us the honour
129	Sometimes to divert with a stage representation
130	Of this presence August," worthy Rome's veneration,
131	Permit us today to display for you the story,
132	Crudely given form, of some of your deeds of glory,
133	And that by their recital, marvellous to hear,
134	Of the people and the court we may charm the ear.
135	I can offer you, O Caesar, no fairer show
136	Than by making of yourself a splendid tableau;
137	Without falling back on the common histories,
138	Permit me to speak of your famous victories
139	And through your rare exploits to the Romans explain
140	How fortunate they are to live beneath your reign.
141	Permit me your diverse qualities to expose:
142	So many famous laurels won from Persian foes;
143	Barbarians defeated, Carinus subdued,
I44	At last the whole world conquered, or with fear imbued.
145	In that high cause I will make viewers me admire,
146	So that all will hold you in adoration, sire:
147	Even to those jealous of you you will seem perfect.
<u>.</u>	
148	No, friend, I seek from your art another effect.
149	Fame discourses here sufficiently of my glory,

• "August" (identical in original): the capital letter in Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, following the early texts, highlights Genest's allusion to Diocletian's imperial status.

150	And Rome will hardly lose	my deeds from memory.
151	My will I leave to Rutilius to	o express;
152	Aquilinus, order all put in r	readiness:
153	See they lack nothing.	[Exit Diocletian with Aquilinus.]

## Scene iii

## Rutilius, Genest, Pamphilie, Luciane, Anthenor, Aristide

### Rutilius

	If the wish to please moves you,
154	Then learn, my friends, what it is that you have to do.
155	Caesar is the enemy of those craven mortals
156	Whom the incense we owe to our altars appals,
157	And who, approving an upstart prophet's imposture,
158	Adore him as the author of the whole of nature.
159	Render visible their abuse, reveal their error,
160	Make them of humanity the shame and the horror;
161	Poke fun at their beliefs, laugh at their mysteries,
162	Their superstitions and imposed austerities,
163	And their deceiving lures, abounding in illusions,
164	Which mislead their senses and distort their opinions.
165	In short, to ridicule them all occasions seize—
166	But also Jupiter exalt, our Hercules,
167	Our Mars, Apollo, all the other gods besides,
168	Whose age-old worship from our ancestors abides.
169	I cannot bestow on you advice more astute.

### Genest

170	Nor assign us a simpler task to execute.
171	Those rebels—types by both men and the gods reviled—
172	Forced me from my father, and fatherland, exiled.
173	Unable their perverse precepts to tolerate,
I74	I fled here, from their crimes myself to liberate.
175	So that, stirred by the righteous anger they produced,
176	I'll flout the abusive charms by which they're seduced,
177	Show how the idle hope that flatters and unites them
178	Is a dream, a chimera, mere folly that blights them,
179	Which, having managed their feeble minds to suborn,

180	Makes them the universe's laughing-stock and scorn.
181	Is any quirk more droll in their mad extremism
182	Than a novel mystery that they call baptism,
183	Whereby, thanks to three water-drops lightly aspersed,
184	They think they have already the heavens traversed?
185	Surely, one cannot over-marvel at their follies,
186	When they fancy two words and a few ceremonies
187	May in a single instant render them glorious,
188	Purporting partly to own the sky that covers us!
189	It's with just such eminently risible action,
190	Which the best minds have always greeted with detraction,
191	That the sort of entertainments I'll introduce
192	Which Caesar wishes our discourses to produce.
193	A more likely subject we would search for in vain.
194	By that very approach, giving myself free rein,
195	I will in such a bad light the Christians present
196	That they will be out of their minds not to relent:
197	By such means, though mild, more than by torture one
	gains,
198	And often shame has a greater effect than pains.
	Rutilius
199	That is the hope I've led the Emperor to share.
200	Don't lose any time, then: go and yourselves prepare—
201	And do your best to meet such a high expectation.
	Genest
202	We'll content His Majesty with our presentation.
	Rutilius
203	If Caesar is contented, then you will be too.
	Genest
204	We can rehearse without moving—this space will do.
205	For staging, no need of technical preparation:10

**10** L. 205: orig. "Et sans qu'il soit besoin d'apprêts ni de théâtre" – that is, what Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 25, term the "infrastructure matérielle [material infrastructure]" (stage, scenery, etc.) normally deployed for a performance. As for the editors' speculation as to whether the point is to

206	Caesar right here, who holds our art in adoration,
207	Most potent pleasure can derive from our performance,
208	Which well beyond his hopes and wishes will advance."
	Rutilius
209	May the gods grant it! But adieu, I'll leave you
	till
	Genest
210	In two hours at most you will witness our skill. [Exit Rutilius.]

#### Scene iv

## Genest, Pamphilie, Luciane, Anthenor, Aristide

#### Genest

An emperor will decide whom the prize best fits,	
And each of us, aspiring as we do to glory,	
214 Seeks from his rival's hands to snatch the victory. <sup>12</sup>	
215 This glorious employment may alter our fate:	
Let us combat like heroes its rigours ingrate, <sup>13</sup>	
217 And with a spectacle that common fare transcends,	
Acquire both Caesar and Fortune as our friends.	
219 That happy result depends on our work today:	
220 You know as well as I what role we have to play,	

highlight the actors' skill or the author's adherence to the unity of time, it seems evident that both purposes are served.

11 Ll. 207-8: orig. "Peut voir nos actions avec tant de plaisirs / Qu'ils passeront l'espoir et vaincront ses désirs." The promise of pleasing Caesar presumably encompasses his intention of producing a political impact but implicitly goes beyond it.

12 Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 26, doubt the pertinence to the contemporary French theatre of this evocation of professional rivalry. On the other hand, such is strongly implied by the virtually simultaneous representation by different troupes of two tragedies of Genest, one of them arrogating the label of "véritable".

**13** L. 216: orig. "Combattons ses rigueurs par un illustre effort." "Illustre [celebrated]" plays ironically (and untranslatably) on both the work's title (*L'Illustre Comédien*) and the troupe actually performing it (L'Illustre Théâtre). The translation sustains the martial metaphor initiated by "[C]ombattons" and reinforced by "effort", a word which here, as elsewhere in the period, carries military connotations.

221	And without much effort we'll hit on a device
222	To put into action Rutilius' advice.
	Anthenor
223	But what story, then, can provide us with a subject
224	Fitting and adapted to such a splendid project?
	ARISTIDE
225	That of Porphyry or that of Ardaleon, <sup>14</sup>
226	Both by the Empire's masters well looked upon,
227	Who were by the Christians' abuses so suborned
228	That they pledged themselves to the doctrines they had scorned,
229	And by thus embracing a madness without peer,
230	Did in the whole world's eyes mere shameful fools appear.
	Luciane
231	Both of them, as it happens, practised our profession.
	Pamphilie
	And baptism was the first act of their transgression,
232	Which, while those fools' laughable longing it surfeited,
233	Ensured that both property and life they forfeited. <sup>15</sup>
234	Ensured that both property and me they forefield.
	Genest
235	Such principles have often, exposed to the great,
236	Entangled their authors in a contrary fate.
237	From their example, for our purpose, we can learn
238	Theatrically, even if their temple we spurn,
239	Where their blindness caused them in mere water to find
240	Grim poison by which they were to the tomb consigned.
241	But without seeking help from a distant history
242	To inspire our mind and feed our memory,
243	We may recuperate from our own former days
	,

**14** Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 29, observe that these two earlier actor-martyrs, converted while performing mockeries of Chistianity, are cited at the end of Ribadeneira's account of Genest.

**15** Porphyrie's imitation of baptism is singled out by Ribadeneira (p. 781) as sparking his conversion, but the mysteries mocked by Ardaleon are not specified.

244	Matter well assured to gain Caesar's ample praise,
245	If, by a skilful stroke, drawn out with industry,
246	He learns that we have left behind our native country,
247	Our parents, and all that we owned to travel here,
248	Distant from his enemies, his gods to revere.
249	Let me then the order of this mystery <sup>16</sup> state:
250	It falls to Anthenor my father to incarnate,
251	And in a soothing, though deceitful, interview
252	To feign to wish me to become a Christian too.
253	With my sister, who drew me to that erring sect,
254	Luciane here, you know, shared a likeness near-perfect,
255	And will know how—I am certain—on this occasion
256	To imitate her turns of humour and affection.
257	Aristide, moreover, to counteract her folly,
258	We shall present as the brother of Pamphilie,
259	Who will conjure me, by the brilliance of her eyes,
260	Not to betray her—and the gods we authorise.
261	There is our subject—all, at least, you need regard;
262	Then But what does Aquilinus want, and that Guard?

## Scene v

### Aquilinus, Genest, Pamphilie, Luciane, Aristide, Anthenor, a Guard (*carrying gifts*)

#### Aquilinus

263	Heaven favours you, my friends; Fortune's smiles appear;
264	The people admire you; Caesar holds you dear.
265	Of that these gifts I bring you are the certain marks:
266	Receive these presents from the most mighty of monarchs,
267	And believe at all events that these precious objects
268	Of his bounties are but the most trifling effects.

#### Genest

269 These magnificent gifts from one the whole world knows

**16** "[M]ystery": orig. "mystère"; in the context, the term, which can apply both to religious rites and religious theatre, must be employed by Genest with pointed irony. Cf. Rotrou, IV.viii.1396 and n. 90.

270	Betoken the dignity of him that bestows;
271	And we are aware that in his power it lies
272	To extend his benefits beyond all surmise.
273	But of all Caesar's favours of which we may boast,
274	His presence is the one that we value the most,
275	And the wish to please him by plying my profession
276	Is the limit of my desires and ambition. <sup>17</sup>

#### PAMPHILIE

- 278 Our zeal is enormous towards His Majesty,
- 279 And every one of us is thrilled to ravishment
- 280 With the wish to make him, by our service, content.

#### Aquilinus

281	Such fine civilities compel us to confess
282	That our court has no monopoly on politeness,
283	Since we see it in you, brought to such perfect state
284	That wonder, in speaking with you, it must create.18

#### Aristide

285	Ah, but my Lord, your good will by itself suffices,
286	Without confusing with your eloquent devices
287	Those who, with such favours and benefits suffused
288	From Caesar and yourself, are already confused. <sup>19</sup>

#### LUCIANE

289 Yes, my Lord...

17 Ll. 275-76: the rhyme "profession/ambition" (identical words) is present in the original.

<sup>18</sup> The self-conscious trading of (literally) courtly compliments between the actors and the courtiers is taken by Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 38, at face value as a defence of the respectability of actors, and it certainly makes this impression on Aquilinus: cf. his exalted analysis of theatrical art at II.i.305 ff. There is room, however, for admiring the actors' verbal dexterity ironically as adroit imitation, given their previous speech among themselves. For a nearly contemporary spoof (1637) of refined compliments as a minor genre in a self-consciously theatrical context, cf. Jean Desmarets de Saint-Sorlin, *The Visionaries*, trans. Richard Hillman, introd. Michel Bitot (Tours: Presses Universitaires François-Rabelais, 2021), II.iv.543.

**<sup>19</sup>** Ll. 286-88: The repetition of "confusing"/"confused", in the sense of "overwhelmed", is modelled on the original ("confondiez"/"confus").

#### Aquilinus

Let us leave off there. My ears and eyes, So charmed to see and hear each marvellous surprise, Caused me to linger, regardless of my intents, And consequently robbed you of some precious moments. The Emperor is waiting.

#### Anthenor

That is all we ask.

#### Genest

294	You may assure him we are ready for the task,
295	And that we are merely waiting for his command
296	To offer him diversion right here where we stand.

## Act II

## Scene i Diocletian, Aquilinus, Rutilius, *and followers*

#### Diocletian

297	Rutilius, we shall see now if that high rate
298	You give our actors is just and legitimate,
299	And if these great spirits that you esteem so perfect
300	Will produce in my own a similar effect.
301	To take you at your word, my court can boast no grace
302	That theirs does not easily surmount and efface,
303	To the point where one would suppose that all perfections
304	Have their origin in their words and in their actions. <sup>20</sup>

20 Ll. 303-4: The rhyme "perfections"/"actions" (identical words in French) is present in the original.

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305	Whatever praise Rutilius on them confers,
306	His sentiment is just, and mine wholly concurs.
307	Although certain dullards deem their art a disgrace,
308	Within it vulgar minds have not the slightest place,
309	Nor bodies ungainly,21 nor any whose appearance
310	May not at least promise to gain a hopeful glance. <sup>22</sup>
311	The theatre is severe, and seeks those qualities
312	Which may induce the great to admire its bounties.
313	The charm of the voice becomes its mere weakest link
314	If it is not matched with ability to think,
315	And gesture can lend it nothing but feeble forces,
316	If a ray divine does not govern its discourses.
317	Besides judgement, subtlety and strong memory,
318	Assurance is indispensable for its glory,
319	And elegance even in the manner of dress
320	Is no trivial matter for actor—or actress. <sup>23</sup>

#### Aquilinus

#### DIOCLETIAN

321	Well, then, we shall soon realise the experience:
322	Have them begin, and let us lend them our silence.

### Scene ii

#### Luciane, Genest

#### LUCIANE

323Ah, brother, if nothing can shake your stubborn state,324Then consider my tears ... [kneels]

#### Genest

... which will carry no weight.

**21** "[U]ngainly": orig. "mal composés".

22 L. 310: orig. "Ne puisse au moins donner quelque belle espérance". The "hope" in question would seem to be that of visually engaging the spectator's interest.

23 "[A]ctor – or actress": The original "acteur" would have been understood as inclusive, but I take the liberty of the addition, given the attention paid by Rotrou, by way of Marcèle, to a distinction that must have been commonplace; cf. Rotrou, esp. II.ii.349 ff. and III.viii.1029-30.

325	Ah, that's too much—now get up! Luciane, in vain
326	You think I can be brought beneath that law profane
327	Of which a new prophet—and poor expositor <sup>24</sup> —
328	Made himself some time ago the ludicrous author.
329	I have no taste at all for those vain fantasies
330	With which he knew how our forefathers' minds to seize.
331	I can make better use of my reason's rich foison <sup>25</sup>
332	And detect, in the midst of the nectar, the poison.

LUCIANE

333 May Heaven please.
------------------------

#### Genest

	Your wishes, like your tears, you'll find
334	Quite useless as weapons to overcome my mind.
335	Do you think that to be by relations upbraided
336	Could render me by their idle raptures persuaded?
337	No, no, my judgement—firmer, on more solid ground—
338	Could not brook counsel so treacherously unsound
339	And follow someone put in bonds, a type unknown,
340	Who was in his sad fate abandoned by his own.

#### LUCIANE

341	But that abandoned one, whom your spirit abhors,
342	Is the almighty God even Heaven adores,
343	Who fills all with glory at His august aspect
344	And makes the angels above tremble with respect.
345	He was born without grandeur or pomp, without light,
346	But in the obscurity His cradle shone bright,
347	For scarcely was He present when all feared His law,
348	And though still a child, kings trembled with fear and
	awe. <sup>26</sup>
349	To trust the greatest sages known to former ages,

**24** "[A]nd poor expositor": orig. "et trop faible Docteur".

**<sup>25</sup>** "[M]y reason's rich foison": orig. "des droits de ma raison".

**<sup>26</sup>** Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 45, note the allusion to Herod's fear at the prophecy of a future king of Judea; in keeping with the following reference to the *magi*, obviously evoked is the contrast between divine omnipotence and illusory worldly power.

350	From Princes of the East He received the homages,
351	And the star which guided the magi in that case
352	Was a token that they sought a God's dwelling-place.
353	He lived, as the story has it, and as you say,
354	In ignominy, and died in a shameful way—
355	Sold, denied, slighted by those who with Him had stood,
356	At last nailed in disgrace on some pieces of wood.27
357	But by that very means, though it's hard to believe,
358	He purports by His shame your glory to achieve,
359	And with His precious blood being the only price,
360	Will buy on your behalf a share of paradise.

#### Genest

361	How your soul is seized by deceitful expectation,
362	If that futile idea is its only foundation,
363	And how false is happiness which, by a sad blow,
364	From death accompanied by shame is thought to flow!
365	Rally to the party of those exalted powers
366	Through whom rich recompenses for our vows are ours;
367	Who make themselves adored in many climes diverse, <sup>28</sup>
368	And make our Caesars masters of the universe.
369	To follow their example, we cannot go wrong:
370	Our duties in temples, as in their courts, belong:
371	And since by destiny we have been made their subjects,
372	Let us not direct our vows to different objects.
373	But let us change our speech. Anthenor, who approaches,
374	Would find in our discussion matter for reproaches.
375	Undoubtedly, stricken by the same dart as you,
376	He comes now to assail me and add his blows too.

[Enter Anthenor]

**27** "[I]n disgrace on some pieces of wood": orig. "Sur un infâme bois". The translation respects the apparent intention to avoid evoking the cross as symbol of redemption; Luciane is repeating anti-Christian denigration prior to repudiating it.

**28** "[M]any climes diverse": orig. "cent climats divers" – similar poetic exaggeration.

## Scene iii Anthenor, Genest, Luciane

	Anthenor
377	Well, then, has that rebel spirit yielded at last?
	Luciane
378	As little as the rock, resisting the storm's blast,
379	Which scorns the assaults of both the wind and the sea,
380	And to our eyes still more solid appears to be.
	Genest
381	Indeed, it is well chosen, that comparison:
382	My spirit and the rock have quite a lot in common.
383	For if one by the winds can by no means be shaken,
384	Sighs to move the other, too, are pains vainly taken.
	Anthenor
385	Ah son, if that spirit did not keep you from seeing
386	That speaking to you is the author of your being,
387	If it were far more solid, harder than a rock,
388	By rights that obligation would deal it a shock.
	Genest
389	Yes, I owe you for my birth, for seeing the light;
390	My body owes you obedience by that right.
391	But the spirit that moves me heaven makes me know,
392	And to the gods alone that high tribute I owe.
	Anthenor
393	No, to that God of power
	Genest
	Merely a pretence
394	You formerly denounced.
	Anthenor

Whom now I reverence.

	Genest
395	Say, rather, a god your fatuous dreams have feigned.
	Anthenor
396	A God by whom everything lives and is sustained,
397	And who, an immortal life on you to bestow,
398	Agreed to have his ravished from him here below.
	Genest
399	On me? I beg no gift from his last gasp of breath
400	And do not view my life as coming from his death.
	Anthenor
401	Horrible impiety! Hateful blasphemy!
	Genest
402	But of which baptismal water can make me free.29
	Anthenor
403	Yes, my son, follow me there
	Genest
	Ah, not so much haste!
	Anthenor
404	What, will you now turn back, on such a fair road placed?
	Genest
405	Yes, just as from a precipice I'd turn away,
406	Where you would have me with you to destruction stray.
	Anthenor
407	No, I want to save you with me, not have you die.
	Genest
408	Just mind your own business and let me be.

**29** He is leading his father on by mocking his belief, as the sequel shows.

#### Anthenor

Why?

#### Genest

409	Because, subjected to your constant idle chatter,	
410	I'm weary of so many words, so little matter.	
	Anthenor	
411	Well, then, since my voice has no good effect on you,	
412	Do not just stop listening—stop seeing me, too!	
413	Go, monster! I'll follow the rule that you decree	
414	And will abandon you, as you abandon me!30	
	Luciane	
415	Brother—	
	Anthenor	
	Leave that object there in his loathsome state,	
416	His gods at leisure for succour to supplicate.	
417	They will exalt his fortunes to the greatest heights,	
418	While your true affection, which troubles him, he	
	slights. [Exeunt Anthenor and Luciane.]	

### Scene iv Genest, Pamphilie, Aristide

#### Genest

#### 419

This storm, Anthenor,<sup>31</sup> leaves my spirits quite intact;

**<sup>30</sup>** As Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, point out (n. 52), and as the ensuing references to his "fortunes" confirm, the threat of paternal disinheritance now hangs over Genest.

**<sup>31</sup>** While it is normal for the names of the actors in the play-within-the-play to figure in the scene and speech headings of the published version, instead of the names of the characters they play (cf. the practice of Rotrou), it seems strange to have Genest integrate Anthenor's name into this apostrophe addressed to his (unnamed) father. Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 53, note the anomaly but do not really explain it. It seems possible to detect a signal that the re-enactment of Genest's break with his family is now over, and that the scene shifts to his subsequent history, with both him and Pamphilie "playing" themselves.

420	Expecting it, I was not surprised by the fact,
421	And for some little while, I had myself resigned:
422	I'd seen the lightning, knew thunder not far behind.
423	But just like the dazzle of that heavenly light
424	Which after the storm shows fairer and shines more bright,
425	The brilliance divine of the eyes of Pamphilie
426	Came to dispel the despond of my melancholy
427	And by those stars of love, with many a sweet glance,
428	In affliction the beauty of my days enhance.
429	Marvellous example of precious constancy,
430	Dear object of my vows, my hope's expectancy,
431	It is at last from you alone, who rule my fate,
432	That the verdict of life or death I now await.32
433	All betrays me, Madame; by all I'm persecuted;
434	Heaven has me its victim of worst ills deputed.
435	Yet the hardest blows caresses to me would seem,
436	If they left me still the honour of your esteem.
437	That hope weighs well against my fortunes in the scale:
438	It is the only succour that may me avail,
439	And since your heart is expansive and generous,
440	I dare not yet declare my anguish onerous.
	Pamphilie
44I	What is your sorrow, and of what are you so scared?
442	Already, without knowing, your hurt I have shared,
443	And my love has such force that you would do it wrong
444	To think it, when matched with whims of fortune, less strong.
445	Your cherished qualities, with your vows and your flame,
446	For much too long have to my soul enforced their claim.
447	And in spite of your suspicions, you may be sure
448	There is no hardship it cannot, unchanged, endure.
449	But please tell us, at last, where your misfortune lies.

While the language of religious devotion is of course commonplace in contemporary expressions of 32 secular love, the context throws Genest's near-idolatry here into relief.

452

#### Genest

450	In a passion repugnant to my sacred ties,	
451	In zeal without reason, wilfulness unconfined-	_

The power, in sum, of a spirit wholly blind.

#### PAMPHILIE

A father, no doubt, would force you to make a change, 453 And have you inconstantly your vows rearrange? 454

#### Genest

- He would, Pamphilie, he certainly would—but learn 455 That unjustified desires I coldly spurn, 456 And that before my heart his rash demands will meet, 457 458
  - My love will sacrifice my poor life at your feet.

#### PAMPHILIE

459	I am far from wishing such a horrid effect.
460	And perhaps, in the end, his choice is so far perfect
461	It moves him to take this mildly coercive measure,
462	Which provokes in you such transports—or feigned
	displeasure.

#### Genest

463	Ah, of the hard misfortunes whose blows on me fall,
464	This is the most hurtful, the rudest of them all!
465	What, with all things fatal to me, when all reject me,
466	Today does even Pamphilie herself suspect me?
467	No, no, Madame, no—all suspicion put away
468	Of wanting my vows, or your beauties, to betray.
469	This unhappy change my father would force on me
470	Concerns our altars, and not you personally.
47 <sup>I</sup>	He does not disallow that your eyes I adore,
472	But for his god's sake I must worship ours no more,
473	And as if I, too, his abusive error prized,
474	I am supposed to get myself, like him, baptised.
475	But rather than prove in love or belief ingrate—
476	Rather than either my vows or faith violate—
477	May those powerful hands that the thunder produce
478	With a red streak of fire to dust me reduce;

479	May I become of both the gods and men the horror,
480	Of all the elements experience the furor,
481	And if to that point my judgement gives out on me,
482	May I be forever hated by Pamphilie.
	Aristide
483	What, is this the reason for your troubled abstraction?
484	Is this the occasion that causes your distraction?
485	And a sister's and father's importunity
486	Is the ill behind your despair and misery?
487	Let your heart, my dear friend, manifest greater vigour;
488	Treat with scorn all their speeches and reject their
	rigour.
489	It's in trials and great storms, where courage is
	required,
490	That the most constant spirits makes themselves admired.
491	Let thunder and lightning rage—of them take no care,
492	As their futile blows strike nothing but empty air.
493	The gods concerned by these menaces made in vain
494	Will soon put a stop to the slights that you sustain,
495	And to see them over with is Fate's own desire:
496	It only brings you down so as to raise you higher—
497	Soon to render your soul a measure of content,
498	Your low fortune lifted, made a bright ornament.
499	And it will make you confess that it was severe
500	Just to bring a happier day with sunshine clear.
501	The sun quits his dark couch daily to show his flame,
502	And often the road to glory passes through shame.
503	It is true that when with unjust power you deal,
504	You can lose your property, but hope you still feel,
505	Because the immortals' heavenly providence
506	Your losses can redeem with ample recompense,
507	And, far from your father's angry society,
508	Yield you the fruits of your courage and piety.
	Genest

509	Aristide, please believe me: concern for my fortunes
510	Is not, among my hardships, what most importunes,
511	Since, as you affirm, I can find elsewhere with ease

512	Both hopes that are sweeter and better destinies.
513	But can you think the love that binds me faithfully
514	Could ever permit me to desert Pamphilie?
515	Can you imagine that it lies within my might,
516	My love being boundless, to live out of her sight?
517	No, no, far from her graces with their godlike powers,
518	Mere harsh thorns to me would be the loveliest flowers;
519	I would detest a throne, and sceptres as my gains
520	Would please me much less than the honour of my chains.
521	But if a father's cruelty inexorable
522	Makes me today to myself unrecognisable—
523	If I must remain in this miserable state,
524	Which of friends, goods and spirit leaves me desolate
525	(Excuse me for such speech, due to my melancholy)—
526	What will become our passions, dear Pamphilie?
527	I well know that your heart is large and generous,
528	But you're a woman, and my sadness is onerous.

### Pamphilie

529	It is true, I am a woman: in that I glory,
530	Because today that name will mark my victory,
531	When in my sex enough spirit I demonstrate
532	To best you in defeating the shrewd turns of Fate.
533	I will hardly repeat in this place that I love you,
534	That my love is as strong as your manifold virtue:
535	By my eyes and sighs it's been a thousand times spoken,
536	And they are much better than my voice as a token.
537	But whatever the rigours inflicted by Fate—
538	If you were in a still more deplorable state—
539	Of fidelity unequalled I you assure,
540	Which is certain as far as the tomb to endure.

## Genest

	GENESI
541	Well, then, in my affliction's pain I will believe
542	That nature in you a prodigy did conceive,
543	And that, in giving birth to you, it caused to be
544	A perfect miracle of love and constancy.
545	Even if your bountiful soothing of my feeling
546	Displays your skill in speaking rather than in healing,

547	Nevertheless, I am willing, to calm my furor,
548	My spirit to deceive with such a lovely error.
549	Yes, Madam, I could wish that my spirit were vain
550	Enough to suppose yours touched and moved by my pain,
551	And be persuaded that a flame of love thus kindled
552	Will in your soul outlast your days, and not have dwindled.
553	But while you may be generous to that degree,
554	Can I consent to see you live in misery,
555	And that it would be tacitly insinuated
556	That your prosperous hopes by me were dissipated?
557	Well, Madam? Grant that in the chaos that afflicts me,
558	My reason on this one occasion contradicts me,
559	And that today, for your good, it reveals to you,
560	Though in surprising fashion, a love that is true.
	Aristide
561	Of your flame, dear friend, we are well enough aware.
562	I see in these speeches of yours your soul laid bare,
563	And amid so many passionate perturbations,
564	I find it easy to discern your inclinations.
565	I well know your heart's constancy and faith are
	real,
566	For what it adores showing always the same zeal,
567	And that you'd find an empire an irksome care
568	Without that precious happiness that we, too, share.33
569	But equally well I know that your noble courage
570	Balks at consenting to concede the least advantage,
571	So that those two motions, successively in play,
572	Of love and glory, <sup>34</sup> combat in you for the sway.
573	But would you free yourself from this uncertainty,
574	Which feeds both your transports and your anxiety,

<sup>33</sup> L. 568: orig. "Si ce rare bonheur ne nous était commun". As noted by Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, ll. 567-78 are "peu limpides [not really clear]" (n. 64), and Aristide might be referring either to his feelings for Pamphilie as her brother or to his own love for Luciane. The translation allows for a simpler third meaning – namely, that Genest's amorous happiness is infectious.

**<sup>34</sup>** "[G]lory": orig. "gloire". As often, the word attracts military imagery even in the general sense of "honourable reputation".

575	Listen to the advice that I'll bestow on you:
576	You say that Anthenor wants to abandon you
577	And deny your hope for your rightful heritage,
578	Unless in his own error your soul you engage;
579	Inform him, to attain the object of your will,
580	That his prayers and desires you wish to fulfil,
581	And by a clever ruse, for that purpose devised,
582	Pretend that you are eager to be, like him, baptised.
583	According to their far-fetched law, they represent
584	That mysteries are vain unless belief is present,
585	So that, within your heart despising their strange
	notions,
586	You'll merely have gone through the ceremony's motions,
587	Which, not having brought the baptism to conclusion,
588	Will just produce in you a ludicrous illusion.35
589	Acquire, then, true wealth by means of empty forms:
590	And thus, dear friend, a little water calms great
	storms. <sup>36</sup>
591	Act so that which harms all those who believe in it
592	For you at least today will bring a benefit
593	And transform itself to the very kind of water
594	That poured from heaven on Acrisius's daughter. <sup>37</sup>
	Genest
595	But to follow that advice will the gods insult.
	Aristide
596	To follow this advice will glorify their cult,
597	Since to your aversion to this doctrine new-coined
598	The contempt that your heart feels for it will be joined,
599	And thus to our sacred altars' honour assure
600	Immortal vows coming from a soul that is pure.

**<sup>35</sup>** As observed by Bourquin and de Reyff, eds, n. 66, Aristide strangely seems to allow here for the ritual's potential power for believers.

**<sup>36</sup>** Bourquin and de Reyff, eds, n. 98, aptly cite the proverb, "petite pluie abat grand vent [a little rain defeats strong wind]", which Aristide is wryly adapting.

<sup>37</sup> I.e., Danaë, on whom Zeus descended in a golden shower.

	Genest	
601	What's your view, dear Par	nphilie, of this business?
	Pamphili	E
602	I fear.	
	Aristidi	2
	What do you fear?	
	Pamphili	E
		Everything.
	Aristidi	2
		Gods, what madness!
603	••	an two water-drops put out
604	His flaming torch of love,	whose ardour's not in doubt?
	Pamphili	E
605	No, but this error might a	: last on him prevail,
606	And for us that would grav	ve consequences entail.
	Genest	
607	Ah, that my mind is so un	sound do not suppose!
	Pamphili	E
608	All right, then, go ahead a	nd do as you propose.
	Genest	
609	This affair must be manag	ed with dexterity.
	Aristidi	
610	Leave everything to me; ye	our father I'll go see,
611	And so subtly I can his un	e
612	That, blinded by the bait o	f the scheme we intend,
613	He'll never, as my words w	rill be shrewdly arrayed,
614	In the least suspect the tra	
615	But, to put an end to our s	peeches over-lengthy,
616	Go, you two, to the Chisti	ans' temple—wait there for
	me.	[Exeunt separately.]

## Act III

## Scene i

Diocletian, Aquilinus, Rutilius

#### Diocletian

Rutilius, I grant they are incomparable,
And all they represent I find quite admirable:
How the agreement of their voices with their actions
Skilfully expresses the whole range of their passions! <sup>38</sup>
How well they can lament, or anger imitate!
What power their love-talk has to ingratiate!
And how they apply themselves with graceful appeal
To depicting a torment which they do not feel!
Did it not strike you when you heard Luciane plead
In favour of the Christians and their profane creed?
She defended their error with such cogent art
That I sometimes imagined she spoke from the heart,
And that the stroke she then appeared to have sustained
Was quite real in its effect and not at all feigned.

#### RUTILIUS

631	True, my Lord, but did it not also strike your sense
632	To hear Genest arguing in his own defence?
633	With how much deft intelligence, courage and verve
634	Did he the higher claim of our altars preserve!
635	And, finally, with what artistry and invention
636	He bears himself to bring contempt on their religion! <sup>39</sup>
637	Yes, his great subtlety has never had its equal!

#### Aquilinus

638

Wait, Sire, you'll soon see many a miracle,<sup>40</sup>

**38** Ll. 619-20 are calculated to echo II.i.303-4; the rhyme "actions/passions" (identical in French) is present in the original.

**39** Ll. 635-36: The rhyme "invention"/"religion" (identical in French) is present in the original.

**40** "[M]any a miracle": orig. "des merveilles". There is evident irony in the way Aquilinus' figurative use of the term anticipates its literal realisation.

639	Which will ravish your senses with so much delight
640	You will not believe it, though it is in your sight.

## Scene ii

### Diocletian, Aquilinus, Rutilius, *and followers*. Genest, Pamphilie, Aristide, Luciane, Anthenor

## Genest [entering]

641	Where am I? What have I seen? What heavenly flame
642	First dazzled my eyes, then into my spirit came?
643	What ray of light, able to purify my soul,
644	Dispelled the error that by stealth had seized control. <sup>41</sup>
645	I believe, I am Christian, and that extreme grace
646	Whose effects I feel is baptism's holy trace.

#### Pamphilie

647	Christian?	Who	did	that?

#### Genest

I am.

#### Aristide

Some dream you recall . . .

#### Genest

648

An Angel made me so.

#### Anthenor

In front of who?

#### Genest

Of all.

**41** "[B]y stealth had seized control": orig. "surpris [surprised]"; the term was often used in a military context for capturing someone or something (cf. the expression "surprise attack").

	Luciane
649	And yet not a single person saw this adventure.
	RUTILIUS (to the Emperor)
650	Now he will serve up to them some far-fetched imposture.
	Aquilinus
651	How well he feigns!
	Diocletian
	Quite true—his feigning takes the prize,
652	And surely he charms the ear as well as the eyes.
	Genest
653	What? Did you not see that brilliant illumination
654	Whose marvellous effects, beyond my expectation,
655	With such sudden radiance burst into this place, <sup>42</sup>
656	When the minister of a God filled it with grace.
	Aristide
657	What minister, what god? You're telling us a fable.
	Genest
658	No, my friends, the things I recount are veritable.
659	Here a while ago, when by you I was discovered
660	Down on my knees, eyes raised to heaven, head uncovered,
661	I saw—oh, what a marvel scarcely conceivable!—

42 "[T]his place": orig. "ce lieu", in which "ce" could mean "this" or "that". The latter might seem more logical, given that the audience has seen nothing of the kind, but "ici" in l. 559 unequivocally means "here". Genest's narrative thus presents the fundamental interpretative puzzle observed by Bourquin and de Reyff, eds, n. 75. Two possibilities, neither capable of proof, might be added to their analysis: 1) Genest's epiphany was indeed a "dream" (l. 649) or "fable" (l. 657), as Aristide asserts, in the sense of a wholly interior experience of divine grace; 2) a scene of divine baptism was indeed staged, as in Rotrou's analogue (cf. Rotrou, IV.v.1251 S.D.), where, however, the angel (termed a "minister" [l. 1251], as in Desfontaines [l. 656]), remains invisible to both on- and off-stage audiences. Was such a scene removed from Desfontaines's play, perhaps as performed as well as published? Might supplying that omission be part of Rotrou's claim to furnish a "veritable" (l. 658; orig. "véritables")? Also supported, in that case, would be the prior existence of *L'Illustre Comédien*.

**RICHARD HILLMAN** 

662	Through that vault above a prodigy admirable:43
663	An angel a thousand times fairer than the sun,
664	And who, promising happiness second to none,
665	Declared that he came, if I would believe his story,
666	Expressly to enfold me in rays of his glory.
667	Then all my senses, charmed in hopeful ravishment,
668	Carried my spirit to this state of high content,
669	Which, overflowing my heart with infinite joy,
670	Made before my eyes this ceremony deploy:
671	The angel, whose appearance there my mind astonished,
672	In one hand an imposing book with writing brandished,
673	Where, as heaven's grace seconded my ardent eyes,
674	The sins of my life I was quick to recognise;
675	But with drops of water, which his other hand poured,
676	At once I saw the words erased, white space restored,
677	And by an effect which surpasses those of nature,
678	My heart became more calm, my soul was made more pure.
679	There it is: that is what I saw, those my emotions,
680	And what delivered me to such rapturous motions.
681	Far from me from now on, figments of fantasy,
682	Scourges of weak minds, unable deep truths to see!44
683	To you, false gods, no more tribute of fear I yield,
684	Nor to vain thunderbolts, which in paintings you wield;
685	I no longer know you, I detest you—retire!
686	And my heart, enkindled by celestial fire,
687	Adores a living God, whose overwhelming power
688	Shows itself everywhere and causes all to cower.45

DIOCLETIAN This feigning, Aquilinus, I find discontents me.

**43** The repeated rhymes on "...able" (ll. 657-58, 661-62) are imitated from the original, where they are part of the rhetorical effect.

45 L. 688: orig. "Se fait craindre partout, et partout se fait voir."

689

<sup>44</sup> L. 682: orig. "Fléaux des faibles esprits, et des Ames vulgaires", with "vulgaires" in the sense of "common", as the translation attempts to convey. While Genest's discourse might be dismissible as a parody of the arrogance attributed to Christians, Diocletian's reaction in ll. 689-90 suggests irritation at the insults aimed at pagan believers, and not least at himself, especially given his quasi-divine position as emperor. It is to the point that Genest declares his new faith in terms of the Christian god's omnipotence and capacity to inspire universal fear – see esp. below, ll. 687-88.

690

Stop it.

#### Genest

It's not yet time, O Cae	esar, to silence me!
691 That Lord of Lords, who is almighty I	King of Kings,
692 Whose law the whole universe to reve	erence brings,
693 Beneath whom hell trembles, whom t	he heavens adore,
694 Wills me to continue and prompts me	e to say more.
695 Know, Emperor, that the God who ca	n all command,
696 Whose power I felt myself, and His m	ighty hand,
697 When I had it in mind to mock at Hi	s decrees, <sup>46</sup>
698 Has caused the greatest of miracles me	e to seize,
699 Turning an idolater into His worshipp	per
700 And making a subject out of His perso	ecutor. <sup>47</sup>
<sup>701</sup> Supposing I would entertain—oh, str	ange event!—
702 Only simple mortals, I made angels co	ontent,
703 And with the sole intention of pleasin	ig your eyes,
704 Unawares I pleased the Emperor of th	e Skies.48
705 It is true that, deprived of that ultimat	te grace,
706 I once spewed a thousand blasphemie	s in His face,
707But in the lying speeches that my tong	gue unrolled,
708 It was not myself speaking but hell that	at controlled—
709 That common enemy of all things tha	t bear life,
710 Which wholly builds its empire on sir	n and strife,49
711 And, having fooled my senses and sed	uced my reason,

**46** "[D]ecrees": orig. "oracles".

<sup>47</sup> Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 80, point out that the notion of Genest's theatrical practice of mocking Christian rites, as found in the sources, infiltrates this passage in a way beyond his presentation by Desfontaines. Still, such mockery is explicitly the object of the command performance (see above, I.i.109-10, I.iii.159 ff.), while ll. 705-6 below do not restrict his "blasphemies" to stage performances. The act of ridicule immediately at issue is, of course, the pretended baptism.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Rotrou, IV.vii.1365-66. The close resemblance is one of those noted by Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 80 and Introduction, p. 404, who also cite the common source in Surius (p. 917). Cf. Ribadeneira, p. 917: "J'ai tâché de plaire à l'Empereur de la terre; & celui du Ciel m'a regardé d'un bon œil, & reçu en sa grace." As elsewhere, Baudoin offers a more dramatic rendering: "Je me suis jusques icy rendu complaisant à vos passions, ô puissant Empereur de la terre; et cependant celuy du Ciel a bien daigné me regarder d'un œil fauorable" (p. 142).

**<sup>49</sup>** "[S]in and strife": orig. "crime", which here clearly carries a broad meaning. The divine empire is now opposed to both the earthly and the infernal ones – discourse hardly likely to please Diocletian.

712	In my heart had implanted that dangerous poison. <sup>50</sup>
713	But the infinite bounties of my God at last
714	All those horrible thoughts from my soul have outcast,
715	And, Caesar, be it known, to the end of my days
716	I have no more voice but what serves to speak His praise,
717	To proclaim to the two ends of the earth this wonder:
718	That He is sole sovereign, sole lord of the thunder,
719	Of heaven, angels, mortals and the elements—
720	In short, alone worthy of our altars and incense.
	Diocletian
721	He has lost his senses, and his distracted soul
722	Sends his tongue, like his mind, spinning out of control.
	Genest
723	No, no—never did I reason with sounder judgement
724	Than when I turned against your gods and your intent;
725	And if I lost it, it was when my guilty speech
726	Basely agreed your idols' favour to beseech.
	Diocletian
727	Ha! Don't anger me—enough of your insolence,
728	Or we'll have you treated like those who have no sense.
	Genest
729	That's not at all the treatment that I have in view,
730	For then I'd be treated in the same way as you.
	Diocletian
<b>5</b> 31	To Caesar, Rome's Emperor, they don't so behave.
731	to Caesar, Rome's Emperor, they don't so behave.
	Genest
732	You're not treated as a sovereign but as a slave,
733	For, far from willing that high Goodness to obey—
734	That God from whom all royalty derives its sway—
735	Often you pay homage, at some courtier's whim,

50 It seems important to retain the original's near-rhyme "reason/poison" (identical in French).

736	To an image some poor craftsman had made for him,
737	Who followed his fancy, or that of such false men,
738	To fashion gods for you, who are your masters then.
	Diocletian
739	Just look at him! Moved by such audacious outrage,
740	He'd try to bring Achilles or Hector on stage.
	Genest
74I	No, no, my soul, which reason now can well restrain,
742	No longer lets within it an idea so vain.
743	I know myself, Caesar, and know what I am, too.
	Diocletian
744	But do you know, traitor, what I'm able to do?
	Genest
745	Yes—the fact of your power cannot be ignored:
746	I know that you are feared, and in Rome are adored.
747	Yet I well know, too, my role by a God assigned—
748	My body is yours to torment but not my mind.
	Diocletian
749	We shall put to the proof that lofty constancy.
	Genest
750	Do it now, and right away the result you'll see:
751	Order your torturers to weigh me down with chains.
	Diocletian
752	They'll teach you the respect your perfidy disdains,
753	If you do not make up your mind your speech to alter.
	Genest
754	One never changes while one's courage does not falter.
	Diocletian
755	Yet nevertheless one must perish or comply.

#### Then here you see me ready, tyrant—let me die!<sup>51</sup> 756 Bring on, bring on at once those blessing-bearing<sup>52</sup> 757 chains. Instruments of my glory, as well as my pains. 758 And for hateful fetters as of now take back these— 759 (throwing his scarf<sup>3</sup>, back at him) Which once made me the slave of your divinities. 760 Let those who did not see that miracle divine, 761 Which only now ravished these eyes and ears of mine, 762 Abjectly adhere to your vain magnificence 763 And look with an envious eye upon your presents. 764 As for me, who have just seen the most splendid marks 765 Of the power of Him who gives commands to monarchs, 766 I no longer have desires so criminal: 767 Your gifts are transitory, while His are eternal; 768 His favours are those of a God, yours of a man, 769 And heaven's honours well worth any merely Roman. 770 Give the order, Emperor, and hasten my torment: 771 You are deferring my glory and my content. 772 Cause my body the most extreme pains to endure; 773 Stir up your tormentors, invent new kinds of torture: 774 And, following an impulse that quite well you know, 775 Avenge a little water with a bloody flow, 776 For its divine effect has given me such grace 777 That today I brave your menaces to your face. 778

Genest

<sup>51 &</sup>quot;[L]et me die": orig. "allons mourir", a formula elsewhere associated with heroic resolution to face death. Bourquin and de Reyff, eds, n. 89, cite the verbatim repetition of lines from Desfontaines's own *Martyr de Saint Eustache*, but the expression was also associated with pagan suicide in sixteenth-century "Humanist" tragedy, notably in the representations of Cleopatra by Étienne Jodelle and Nicolas de Montreux. See Richard Hillman, *French Reflections in the Shakespearean Tragic: Three Case Studies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), p. 99.

**<sup>52</sup>** "[B]lessing-bearing": orig. "bienheureuses" – a word with strong religious associations, thanks principally to its recurrent use in the "Beatitudes" in the sense of "blessed" (Mat. 5:3-11).

**<sup>53</sup>** "[S]carf": orig. "écharpe" – an ancient Roman mark of allegiance or party affiliation, in this case of imperial loyalty. Bourquin and de Reyff, eds, n. 90, plausibly suggest that it may be among the tokens of Diocletian's esteem delivered by Aquilinus at I.v.266. The word is singular but Genest speaks of "ces liens odieux" in the plural (hence "these"), imagining the scarf as truer chains than those just mentioned.

#### DIOCLETIAN You may brave me, rebel, but for your treachery 779 Fire along with iron will compensate me. 780 Take him out of my sight, soldiers, drag him away; 781 Put him to the torture without the least delay, 782 And there let him feel such excruciating pains 783 That he will think death less horrid than what he 784 sustains. [*Exeunt Genest and guards.*] Follow, Rutilius— see if it is possible 785 To quell the arrogance of that heart invincible: 786 Threaten, flatter, beg, importune—anything vow; 787 Offer him treasure—yes, even that I'll allow— 788 Offices, honours, and all that Rome can supply 789 A man's greatest hopeful wishes to gratify. 790 If he is willing to concede and quit his error, 791 His true remorse may even now disarm my furor. 792 But if he keeps on playing the rebel, unruly, 793 Let him be exposed to a fire most cruelly, 794 Which, as to his traitor's flesh it's slowly applied, 795 With countless tortures will burn him till he has died. 796

#### Rutilius

#### Diocletian

#### Go.

[Exit Rutilius.]

### Scene iii Diocletian, Aquilinus, [*enter, guarded,*] Anthenor,

# Pamphilie, Luciane, Aristide

#### Diocletian<sup>54</sup>

Base instruments!

798	It is you I destine for the most bitter torments.
799	By you he was suborned, by your speeches seduced,

54 The speech-heading is given in the early texts, though not in Bourquin and de Reyff, eds.

800	But you'll find the fruit of your treason now produced.
801	Yes—I'll be revenged for such a palpable outrage,
802	And not distinguish among you by sex or age,
803	With no pity present my anger to appease.
804	Aquilinus.

### LUCIANE

Ah, Caesar I embrace your knees.

#### Diocletian

804(a)	Impertinent!
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#### Anthenor

Caesar . . .

### Diocletian

Your tears in vain pretend<sup>55</sup>

805	To disarm my righteous rigour, which will not bend.
806	After flaunting in my palace such disrespect,
807	What favour can you possibly dare to expect?
808	Might you suppose that, having been so insolent,
809	All you need do today is beg me to be clement?
810	No, no—crimes as heinous as yours are never pardoned
811	With the same facility with which they were done,
812	And lenity would bring forth others free from fear,
813	If I did not make your own punishments severe.
814	And so

#### PAMPHILIE

	Oh, Caesar, what extreme unhappiness
815	Can render us today mistrusted by Your Highness?
816	Against your power, my Lord, what is our offence?
817	Are we made criminals by our obedience?
818	You gave the order, and we hastened to obey you:
819	To carry out your wishes—is that to betray you?

**<sup>55</sup>** The editions of 1645 and 1646 confirm that this is a complete verse-line and should be both printed and counted as such, as is not the case in Bourquin and de Reyff, eds. To maintain conformity with the modern edition, I consider the line as 804(a).

820	For what crime, then, can we be accounted culpable?
821	Of what treasons do you consider us capable?
822	We have not aimed a blow at the gods or the state;
823	Our own misfortune is all that we perpetrate.
824	It's not that I would seek, by speaking in this way,
825	To turn back the anger that holds you in its sway.
826	In the wretched muddle to which fate relegates me,
827	I don't dream that calm seas or a safe port awaits me,
828	And I would blame myself for desire too base
829	If my voice for my life were to present a case.
830	No, don't expect from me such craven sentiments:
831	Pronounce, if it suits you, my fatal punishments;
832	You will see me perish both constant and content.
833	But spare, O Caesar, a troupe that is innocent,
834	Who have always prudently in each single action
835	Considered both their duty and your satisfaction.

### Diocletian

836	So, then, your duty consists in displeasing me?
837	In promising one thing, performing the contrary?
838	In coming to suborn—before my eyes!—a subject,
839	And then forcing him at last our gods to reject?
840	Perhaps you dismiss such an act of impudence
841	As mere amusement, sport that is quite innocent?
842	But trust me, if this stroke meets with impunity,
843	Then I am short on both rancour and memory.
844	No, no, traitors, after such a savage attack,
845	Don't you suppose that fighting spirit <sup>se</sup> I will lack!
846	You are joined by your crime, as well as by your fate:
847	Your destinies, therefore, I shall not separate.
848	You share the same purpose and the same point of view, <sup>57</sup>
849	And you shall endure identical vengeance, too.

### Aristide

850

Caesar, in the name of the gods, hear my advice:

<sup>56</sup> 

<sup>&</sup>quot;[F]ighting spirit": orig. "courage". "[P]oint of view": orig. "intelligence". 57

851	See what the objects are that you will sacrifice.
852	If your righteous anger makes victims necessary,
853	At least take care to chose those who deserve to be,
854	And let no cruel sentence, hastily assigned,
855	See innocence with guilt to destruction consigned.

#### Aquilinus

856	It is true that one might, with plausibility,
857	Distinguish between their crimes considerably.
858	Anthenor and his daughter

#### ANTHENOR

#### Mighty Emperor, Permit me, in a few words, to correct your error. 859 Luciane was not my daughter, my Lord, in life: 860 I never had children, nor do I have a wife. 861 And however the Christians we have imitated, 862 We have no other gods than those you have mandated. 863 All those fictive names of son and father supposed-864 His pretended wishes, feigned anger when opposed-865 Were merely effects that, as directed, we furnished 866 To please that traitor, whose change likewise us 867 astonished.

#### LUCIANE

868	No, my Lord, if Genest, as we could not expect,
869	Changed his belief and lost all dutiful respect,
870	His alone was the crime, and today he alone
871	On the present occasion must for it atone.
872	Of his audacity we never bore a trace,
873	And we should not be made to share in his disgrace.
874	If, in his madness, he manifests mutiny,
875	Need his unhappy failing change our destiny?
876	And must we needs be as his accomplices numbered,
877	If we were never with his caprices encumbered?
878	The very instant that he took the Christians' part
879	From all his interests we set our own apart,
880	And, our souls from his passions thoroughly estranged,
881	Pitied, and also deplored, his thoughts so deranged—
882	Condemned his arrogance, execrated his furor,

883	And viewed his insolence with a deep sense of horror.
	Diocletian
884	How were those blameworthy precepts to you supplied
885	Which just now the crimes of the Christians justified?
	Luciane
886	By a curious desire, which cannot shock,
887	Since I entertained it only so I might mock,
888	And still today those egregious lies, as it seems,
889	Are accounted in my spirit nothing but dreams.
	Diocletian
890	If you abhor, as you say, the Christians' abuses,
891	Put the discourse you maintain to practical uses:
892	Go and seek out Genest, and do your best to daunt
893	His obdurate heart with those reasons you now flaunt.
894	A nimble wit, united with bodily grace,
895	Generally puts remarkable force in place;
896	Assist a little your eloquence with your eyes:
897	A fair object always a rebel mollifies.
898	Thus my anger ceases, and yields to your allurements.58
899	Behave so that Genest welcomes your blandishments,
900	And that his heart, made a conquest by such fair arms,
901	May render us indebted to your potent charms.
	LUCIANE
902	I am quite prepared, O Caesar, to carry out
903	Your wishes and commands, without the slightest doubt,
904	Alhough I am far from being so presumptuous
905	As to dare to expect the end will be glorious.
906	But I will not hold back, because it is your will,
907	And for want of attractions, will employ my skill.
908	But then, my Lord, do not forget that Pamphilie
909	Has long exerted over him her mastery,
910	And that the glory of that happy feat was due
911	To her alacrity of tongue and her eyes, too.

**58** Diocletian's language turns notably "courtly" here.

RICHARD HILLMAN

	PAMPHILIE
912	Oh, change your speech, Luciane, and cease to endow
913	Me with a power that the results disavow!
914	His morbid <sup>59</sup> project has made it only too plain
915	That I am, in his eyes, an object of disdain,
916	And that the passion you imagine keeps him tame
917	Is feeble fire glowing only to my shame.
918	So what would you have me do at the present hour?
919	What? Simply give way to faintheartedness and cower?
920	After his change, should I praise his audacity?
921	Or should I pour forth tears, or implore his clemency?
922	No, no—his treason shatters all affinities:
923	Vengeance I seek—for me and our divinities.
924	Caesar, if that ingrate reveals no change of heart,
925	Spare your tormentors—my rage will tear him apart!
926	You cannot inflict upon him a crueller blow
927	Than I—just leave the task to me—will make him know.
928	And you will recognise that fell iron and fire
929	Are nothing when compared with a fierce woman's ire,
930	When she, whether from rashness or frivolity,
931	Has been slighted in love, or in fidelity.
	Diocletian
932	I like your spirit and appreciate your zeal.
933	All right—to that faithless lover make no appeal.
934	But if, in his madness, he remains obstinate,

#### PAMPHILIE

935

936

937

I wish him to be handed over to your hate.

weighted,

He shall be brought to your feet, with heavy chains

Then, unless he yields, to your rage be immolated.<sup>60</sup>

**<sup>59</sup>** "[M]orbid": orig. "funeste".

**<sup>60</sup>** "[T]o your rage be immolated": orig. "qu'on l'immole à ta haine". In the context, the language of sacrifice is deployed with pointed irony.

# Act IV

## Scene i

## Pamphilie, Aristide

#### Pamphilie

938	What? Can that obstinate heart by nothing be bent?
	Aristide
939	No. He will be brought before you at any moment.

940 I give you fair warnin	ng.
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#### PAMPHILIE

### Where?

#### Aristide

	In this very place,
941	So that—if he can (tainted by treason so base)—
942	He may renounce his error in the same location
943	Where Caesar and the gods saw his abomination.

### PAMPHILIE

	+ + + +
944	How do you know this? <sup>61</sup>
777	

#### Aristide

	By Rutilius' command,
945	Who, seeing him able all attempts to withstand,
946	And that our best efforts had not the least effect
947	In curing his blinded spirit of its gross defect,
948	Informed me that he would send that rebel to you,
949	And that I should come ahead to make sure you knew,
950	So that your mind a ready supply might provide
951	Of shafts to hurl at him which he can't turn aside.

**<sup>61</sup>** Pamphilie's ignorance and Aristide's explanation here seem somewhat out of joint with the end of the previous scene – perhaps a suggestion of a certain artifice on her part? (Cf. the Introduction, pp. 10-11.)

	Pamphilie
952	And what shall I do, Aristide, when that occurs?
	Aristide
953	You know far better than I do that traitor's humours.
	Pamphilie
954	Yet me, as much as you—or more—he has betrayed.
	Aristide
955	It is of your anger that he is most afraid.
	Pamphilie
956	He fears me?
	Aristide
	So I believe.
	Pamphilie
	On what evidence?
957	Does he not treat me with supreme indifference?
958	And am I not for him a contemptible object?
	Aristide
959	Your name, however, has a powerful effect.
960	For he could never, when your beauties were evoked,
961	Stifle his ardent sighs, and on his tears he choked.
	Pamphilie
962	After his rank treasons and such egregious slights,
963	His weeping and his sighs make unconvincing sights.
964	The ingrate has changed, and whatever one supposes,
965	What once he did for love, mere habit now imposes.
	Aristide
966	To comply with Caesar's will, you simply must try him—
967	Rutilius so orders.

#### Pamphilie

	Well, go notify him <sup>62</sup>
968	That, in order to tame that overweening heart,
969	My hate and my love to the full will play their part.
970	Go—let me mull over this troubling task I face.

#### Aristide

971	Farewell. In a moment you'll see him in this place.	
		$\begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{T} & \cdot & \mathbf{A} & \cdot & \cdot & \mathbf{I} \end{bmatrix}^{-1}$

[*Exit Aristide*.]

## Scene ii

	PAMPHILIE [alone]
972	Blind tyrants that my poor soul claim
973	And take your turns to dominate—
974	Contempt and vengeance, love and hate:
975	What ending will my furors have, what end my flame? <sup>63</sup>
976	Hate, must your laws be my choice?
977	Love, must I listen to your voice?
978	Must I rush to seek out vengeance?
979	Or, with a more noble disdain,
980	Should I dedicate my allegiance
981	To forgetting the ardours that cause my heart pain?
982	Oh gods, how within me contend
983	Choices and wishes—and surmise!
984	How a lover's weeping and sighs
985	Impose on my soul a suffering without end! <sup>64</sup>
986	No, eyes of mine, don't grant him sight;
987	Just leave him in his deadly plight
988	And our hatred thoroughly slake—
989	Or, since he called you by false names,

62 I.e., according to the context, Rutilius, although the pronoun references in the passage waver indistinctly between him and Genest.

**63** L. 975: orig. "Où se termineront mes fureurs, ou ma flamme". Although it makes little difference to the translation, Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 102, suggest that the "ou [or]" of the early editions might also be taken as "où [where]". Such a reading would, I think, weaken the effect of Pamphilie's doubt at this moment about the nature of her feelings.

64 At issue is the sincerity of Genest's signs of passion; cf. above, IV.i.962-65.

990	May you, once his life-stars, take
991	Now rather the office of his funeral flames.
992	But alas! What do I desire?
993	Where am I being blindly sent?
994	To his death may I consent
995	And not in that instant myself from life retire?
996	No, by no means: withdraw, my furor,
997	Despite his crime, despite his error.
998	That I love him still I sense
999	And today acknowledge quite
1000	I arm you at my own expense
1001	When cruelly against him I try you to incite.
1002	But the ingrate's here—let me my weakness control.
1003	Oh, this encounter kills me!

## Scene iii Pamphilie, Genest, Two Guards

#### Pamphilie

	Well, treacherous soul!
1004	So, here you are in chains, and those degrading ties—
1005	Are they gentler than mine, more precious in your eyes?
1006	Perhaps for your sentiments my yoke was too rude;
1007	I repaid your services with ingratitude.
1008	My way of receiving your vows was all too cold,
1009	Or I importuned you with ardour all too bold.
1010	Oh yes, I said so—that your coward's inhibitions,
IOII	No less than your sighing, were merely feigned
	conditions, <sup>65</sup>
1012	And that your despair, born so strangely out of season,
1013	Was the secret harbinger of some sort of treason!
1014	But never presume I'll endure, unfaithful one,

**65** Bourquin and de Reyff, eds, n. 105, take this accusation of hypocrisy as necessarily referring – incongruously – to Pamphilie's role in the play-within-the-play. A simpler, more plausible reading may be that, in the heat of the moment, she is developing, in a chiastic structure, the two possible interpretations of his apparent infidelity proposed in ll. 1009-10 – that is, either that he felt his advances rebuffed or that he withdrew in the face of hers.

1015	That hurtful injury to my vows should be done.
1016	I wish that a punishment both prompt and severe
1017	In your perfidious blood that offence may clear,
1018	And show that thanks to me your fate will be more dire
1019	Than just for affronting the gods or the Empire.

### Genest

1020	All right, then, execute your overflowing rage;
1021	Only for that I stand before you. Take advantage!
1022	Here I am ready, Madam, a victim enchained;
1023	My fate, dealt at your feet, will be gladly sustained.
1024	As you do so, your eyes, taking your rigour's part,
1025	Will point out to your hands the pathway to my heart.
1026	Or if they do not wish to give themselves such trouble,
1027	Take arms—here it is. Strike, cruel and beautiful!
1028	Futile as your gods' incapable thunderbolts,
1029	Their force is too feeble to give my senses jolts.66
1030	Perform it, Pamphilie, your fierce outrage perform!
1031	My heart scarcely trembles at such a trifling storm:
1032	You once saw it hot, with amorous fire glowing;
1033	For your better content now see it with blood flowing.
1034	But if even now I may hope some grace to see,
1035	Allow that, prior to the blow that threatens me,
1036	I may dare to enquire what egregious fault
1037	Is driving you, Madam, to this cruel assault.

### Pamphilie

1038	What fault, disloyal man? O gods, what impudence!
1039	He is virtue itself, the soul of innocence!
1040	He never fell short in love or fidelity;
1041	He never was false to the Emperor or me.
1042	Of baptism he never uttered words in favour;
1043	Never did language of his of blasphemy savour.
1044	Crimes, you righteous gods? He's done nothing to
	displease,
1045	And you are simply wrong to be his enemies.

**66** "[T]o give my senses jolts": orig. "pour étonner mes sens".

49

RICHARD HILLMAN

1046	Insolent man! Is that how you wish me to flatter?
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#### Genest

	GLILLOI
1047	No, no, you may let your anger against me shatter,
1048	And if, to fulfil your vengeance, that will not do,
1049	Add the Emperor and your offended gods, too.
1050	But when you brand me a traitor, call me forsworn—
1051	Neither of those injuries can by me be borne.
1052	For here, despite your words, the heavens are my witness
1053	That never did my love deserve those slanders less.
1054	Formerly, indeed, it could to my charge be laid
1055	That, in flattering your eyes, your soul I betrayed
1056	And transported your spirit into fair impressions
1057	Which actually were nothing but empty illusions. <sup>67</sup>
1058	Yes, I was betraying you when my blinded soul
1059	Merely burned for you with ardour out of control
1060	And, corrupting my heart with its unjust desires,
1061	Loved you far less than its own agreeable fires.
1062	But, Madam, today, when my flame burns much more pure
1063	Than that up above in its elemental nature,68
1064	When veritable love impels me you to cherish—
1065	So much that I wish to leave all for you and perish—
1066	Can you, and not commit a wrong, call me unfaithful,
1067	A traitor, a rebel, perjured, fickle, ungrateful?
	Pamphilie
1068	What names, then, do you think yourself worthy of
	bearing,
1069	When we see you turning your back on all, uncaring?
1070	When, oppressed by those dark vapours of melancholy,
1071	For mere illusions you abandon Pamphilie?
1072	When you change your allegiance and no respect heed?
	xxxx1 1 1 1 1 1 . 1

When the gods you betray, and your prince, and your creed?

<sup>67</sup> The rhyme "impressions"/"illusions" (identical in French) is present in the original.

<sup>68</sup> The reference is to the sphere of fire, the highest sublunary sphere in the Ptolemaic concept of the universe, since fire is the purest element.

	Genest
1074	Oh, how treason is beautiful and innocent,
1075	How blameworthy is fidelity, how delinquent,
1076	When they concern a tyrant and divinities
1077	That are nothing but horrible monstrosities!
1078	How sweet to be free of a yoke so detestable
1079	And choose the rule of a Monarch so adorable,
1080	Whose palace and court are in the heavens above,
1081	And who is all gentleness, all justice, all love!
1082	Oh, my precious Pamphilie, if only you knew
1083	What ignorant night, like a tomb, encloses you,
1084	And if, redeemed by that miraculous star's light
1085	Whose dazzle drew me from the blindness of my night,
1086	You might receive a ray of that sovereign grace
1087	That could within my heart such noble boldness place,
1088	How, compared with your own, would you my fortune bless,
1089	Which you would reckon as a Christian's happiness!
1090	And how, to wear of that state the glorious marks, <sup>69</sup>
1091	Would you make small account of the favours of monarchs!
1092	It is by that splendid means that I wish today
1093	Veritable love for you, Madam, to display,
1094	And make you confess that I did not break my vow
1095	Except in order to cherish you better now.
1096	Lord, if Your goodness deigns to listen to my prayer,
1097	Accord to Pamphilie
	Pamphilie
	Wretched man, stop right there!
1098	What would you ask?
	Genest
	That His bliss, which over all reigns,
1099	May save the other half of myself that remains,
1100	And permit at least that before death stops my effort,
1101	I may stretch out my hand to lead her safe to port.
1102	If over you I gain that brilliant victory,

#### Genest

**69** Evidently alluding to his chains.

1103	Let that happy outcome contribute to my glory!
1104	How sweet will be my fate, how I will die content,
1105	If I can bring to fruition that bold intent.
1106	Let us not put it off. Listen, Madam, if you—
	Pamphilie
1107	In vain you try with your ruses my soul to woo.
	Genest
1108	Oh, only believe, and then the King of the Skies
1109	Will take away the blindfold that covers your eyes,
1110	And you will discover unequalled brilliant things,
IIII	Marvels from which incomparable wonder springs.
1112	Make use here and now of the torch of faith's own flame—
1113	Or, if it dazzles you, hear me speak in its name.
1114	Just consider well my words and give them due weight:
1115	Tell me what effects these idols of yours create;
1116	What have they ever executed here below
1117	That causes us their power or godhead to know?
1118	Do you think that gods made of wood or gold or stone,
1119	Whose being is bounded by their shadow alone <sup>70</sup> —
1120	Gods that are nothing more than inanimate objects,
1121	Owing to a mortal's hand and iron their aspects—
1122	Could, with words that mighty miracles multiply,
1123	Have created man, the air, the land, sea and sky?
1124	Ruled the elements, strewed the heavens, star by star,
1125	Made all those beauties that shine for our eyes from far?
1126	And everywhere placed that order incomparable
1127	Which keeps the universe in a state admirable?
1128	No, all those demons, those gods in their impotence,
1129	Upon whom, so uselessly, you squander your incense,
1130	Have never, whatever credit their fraud received,
1131	One single atom <sup>71</sup> in all of nature conceived—
1132	Which, to conclude, in its perfect magnificence

**<sup>70</sup>** "[B]ounded by their shadow alone": orig. "borné dans l'ombre qui l'enserre" – that is, presumably, having no existence beyond the shadow surrounding the physical object.

**<sup>71</sup>** "[A]tom": orig. "atome" – a term which, as observed by Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 118, had warrant in Aristotelian, as well as Epicurean, tradition.

1133	Is a brilliant work of the God I reverence.
1134	Yes, Madam, He is the master who all composed:72
1135	I was ignorant, but that knowledge He imposed;
1136	And, provided that your soul desires to see,
1137	That same benefit lies in your capacity.
1138	By no means refuse it, my precious Pamphilie:
1139	Let your soul thereby with mine in alliance be,
1140	And grant that today, by such a splendid bond tied,
1141	Our two hearts may thus be forever unified.
1142	Now you perceive how extreme is my love for you.

#### PAMPHILIE

1143 You love me.

#### Genest

	Yes—and far more than myself, it's true,
1144	Since to come to your rescue, and to make you sure,
1145	Whatever brutal torments I'll have to endure—
1146	Whatever horrid tortures their rage can deploy—
1147	I'll be seen to run to them with abounding joy,
1148	As long as with my blood I can for you acquire
1149	Happiness that, with me, you are bound to desire.

#### PAMPHILIE

1150

#### Genest

	You sigh. Oh, doubtless a timorous mind
1151	Strives against your desire and keeps it confined.
1152	You are afraid of death—a tyrant makes you quail.73

Alas!

**<sup>72</sup>** "[T]he master who all composed": orig. "l'auteur et le maître", which likewise carries a suggestion of artistic creation.

**<sup>73</sup>** "[A] tyrant makes you quail": orig. "un Tyran vous fait peur". One can imagine different ways of delivering this half-line, some of which would sway the identity of the "tyrant" from the Emperor towards Death itself. But the reference below in 1. 1160 is unambiguous.

#### PAMPHILIE No, no—do not suppose my heart's courage<sup>74</sup> can fail: 1153 That sigh, expression of a holy tenderness, 1154 Is proof of my repentance, not my feebleness. 1155 I follow you, dear love—I believe and I yield: 1156 Your God reigns in my heart, from me has won the field.75 1157 Already that great happiness ravishes me, 1158 Gazing at your chains with an eye of jealousy: 1159 I burn till a tyrant his torturers commands 1160 With these glorious burdens to weigh down my hands; 1161 I cannot seize them—let me help them to sustain;<sup>76</sup> 1162 Yes, these fetters are my fetters, this my own chain, 1163 Since by the effects this sweet rigour can impart, 1164 It passes even now from your hands to my heart. 1165 Genest Pamphilie! Oh, transports that fill me full of glory! 1166 Scene iv Diocletian, Aquilinus, Rutilius, [Pamphilie], Genest, Anthenor, Aristide, Luciane, and the Guards **RUTILIUS** My Lord, she has no doubt obtained the victory: 1167 In her eyes there sparkles a visible elation. 1168

#### Diocletian

Well, what you have you done for our gods' gratification?

#### PAMPHILIE

More than I ought to have.

74 "[H]eart's courage": orig. "cœur".

1169

1170

**<sup>75</sup>** "[F]rom me has won the field": orig. "triomphe de moi".

**<sup>76</sup>** L. 1162: orig. "Ne pouvant les ravir qu'au moins je les soutienne". She may (or may not) make a gesture towards removing his chains before simply helping to bear their weight; the following lines seem to imply physical contact. One wonders whether any reaction is envisaged for the two Guards present.

#### Diocletian

	That may be arrogance,
1171	Subject to reprimand and deserving of penance—
1172	The more so since you fell short of the end you sought. <sup>77</sup>
1173	Yet you declare that you have done more than you ought:
1174	True, one does too much when a spirit is culpable
1175	And sets his will against becoming reasonable,
1176	For once it is clear that he refuses to yield,
1177	By extreme rigour must the argument be sealed.
1178	But although your reasons in combatting this rebel
1179	Have not rendered his heart more loyal or more humble,
1180	I am far from wishing to rob you of the prize
1181	We owe you for your efforts in the enterprise.
1182	Just like you, Luciane, Aristide, and Anthenor
1183	Applied their efforts in vain to persuade that traitor,
1184	And yet I paid their portion with a hand so free
1185	That they will not complain against the gods or me.
	Aristide
1186	No, my Lord, the value placed on us by your splendour
1187	Bears witness to your magnificence and your grandeur,
1188	And we would be ungrateful to the gods and you
1189	If ever we lacked the zeal or faith that are due.
1190	Yes, command us, Caesar, to your will we incline,
1191	And a thousand times would lay our lives on the line,
1192	And seek, in a brutal combat's bitterest throes,
1193	With glory to perish in the midst of your foes.
1194	Let wonder, Pamphilie, you too, like us, astound
1195	At the Emperor's precious <sup>78</sup> bonds in which we're wound:
1196	Of gifts for us his treasury is never short;
1197	We are honoured with choicest places at his court;

And by special bounty, which I can scarcely credit,

We rise out of nothing to glory's very summit.

**<sup>77</sup>** Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 123, plausibly propose that Diocletian reacts to the fact that Genest is still in chains. I follow their elucidation of this elliptical passage.

**<sup>78</sup>** L. 1195: orig. "Les adorables nœuds dont l'Emperour nous lie". The image depends on the contrast with Genest's chains, as Pamphilie's rejoinder confirms (ll. 1214-21). Regrettably, English "adorable" here would lend Aristide's servility an incongruously fey quality.

RICHARD HILLMAN

	FAMPHILIE
1200	Compliant slave and fearfully servile flatterer,
1201	Who make yourself even of gross faults the worshipper!
1202	I am ashamed of the grovelling you display
1203	To gain false felicity and your soul betray.
1204	If on a potentate's favour you stake your hope,
1205	Beware of advancing on a slippery slope;
1206	At a great mountain's base may gape a great abyss,
1207	And regret quite often follows hard upon bliss.
1208	Blame, instead of praising, this criminal largesse,
1209	Which will gain you an eternity of distress,
1210	And with a steadfast heart that pomp behind you leave,
1211	Whose morbid glitter lures you only to deceive.
1212	Or, if you simply cannot tear yourself away
1213	From these shameful honours' and abject pleasures' sway,
1214	Adore <sup>79</sup> the chain that fetters you, if you so wish,
1215	But look—here are the bonds that Pamphilie will
	cherish—
1216	Bonds that, even as I do, you ought to desire,
1217	And in which we'd be more than happy to expire.
1218	Yes—there is my hope, and there is my recompense:
1219	Bestow them on me, Caesar, in my great impatience;
1220	And by that fair gift—you've said one to me is due <sup>80</sup> —
1221	You will do more for me than they have gained from you.
1222	I am a Christian.

#### PAMPHILIE

LUCIANE

Alas!

#### Anthenor

It's that traitor's spell.<sup>81</sup>

**<sup>79</sup>** "Adore": original "Adore", which picks up "adorables" in l. 1195.

**<sup>80</sup>** "[W]hich you've said to me is due": orig. "que tu dois à mes vœux". The reference must be to the promise made by Diocletian in ll. 1180-81; cf. Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 126. The translation aims to clarify this.

<sup>81</sup> The accusation that Christians practised magic was widespread among their pagan persecutors.

#### DIOCLETIAN

1223	What rage <sup>82</sup> inflames my soul—O you gods, can you tell?
1224	What? Instead of service, we meet with mockery!
1225	We are deceived, defied—oh, I am wild with fury!
1226	There's no retaining it—let thunder be produced;
1227	Let those insolents be blasted, to dust reduced!
1228	Go, Rutilius.

## RUTILIUS

### Where?

#### Diocletian

Take that rebel away.

1229

You know my orders.

#### Rutilius

Come.

Genest

At last the happy day!

1230 My Pamphilie, farewell!<sup>83</sup>

Scene v

Diocletian, Pamphilie, Luciane, Anthenor, Aristide, Aquilinus

#### PAMPHILIE

What's this? Must we be parted?

DIOCLETIAN

Oh no—you'll follow him.

#### PAMPHILIE

Why, then, savage hard-hearted,<sup>84</sup>

1232 Do you not let me his paces accompany?

1231

<sup>82 &</sup>quot;[R]age" (identical in French): the word is key to a reminiscence of the raging devils of the mysteries.

**<sup>83</sup>** "[F]arewell": orig. "Adieu", which of course is charged with religious significance.

**<sup>84</sup>** "[S]avage hard-hearted": orig. "ô Barbare".

1233	Do you suppose these splendours have appeal for me?
1234	No, no—these false pleasures upon me cast no spell. <sup>85</sup>
1235	He will finish his days—finish my life as well.
1236	So you will see, whatever he must undergo,
1237	That what love has joined, separation cannot know. <sup>86</sup>
	Diocletian
1238	You'd be better advised to beg me to be clement.
	Pamphilie
1239	Your fury for my taste is scarcely violent.
1240	Why do you delay, tyrant, to have it applied?
	Diocletian
1241	Then that's your desire? It shall be satisfied.
1242	But after this refusal, no pardon expect:
1243	The same fate will follow from your joint disrespect,
1244	For since one crime in common sufficiently ties you,
1245	The self-same punishment is able to chastise you.
	Pamphilie
1246	Along with the same torments, we'll share the same glory.
	Aquilinus
1247	But before the combat you sing of victory.
1248	Death is, to the staunchest spirit, a thing of terror.
	Pamphilie
1249	In cowards like you it always inspires horror—
1250	Its mere name strikes fear; but a heart noble and hale
1251	Looks it squarely in the face without turning pale.
	Diocletian
1252	Perhaps you count on that god's succour to appear,

**85** The translation points up her accusation that, contrary to Anthenor's declaration in l. 1222, it is her erstwhile companions who have fallen victim to enchantment.

86 Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 127, note the reference to Matthew 19:6, which forms part of the marriage service.

1253	Which a scoundrel like him <sup>87</sup> dared to promise you here.
1254	But in your extreme peril you would hope in vain
1255	For such help as he did not for himself obtain
1256	To save you from a death that he could not prevent,
1257	And my power should make you fear as imminent.

	Pamphilie
1258	Colossus of mud and clay, <sup>88</sup>
1259	Whom a timid people obey,
1260	Do you really dare those criminal words to speak,
1261	Between your grandeur and His own to make equation?
1262	And do you not know, you mortal wretched and weak,
1263	That His bounty is your foundation,
1264	And that you'll be dust tomorrow at God's command,
1265	If He withdraws His hand? <sup>89</sup>
1266	You, whom He has made in His image;
1267	You kings, who take from Him the homage
1268	Which is owed to His altars by rightful respect,

On the popularity and uses of interpolated stanzaic lyrics in the period's dramaturgy, by Desfontaines particularly, see Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, *Tragédies hagiographiques*, Introduction, pp. 29-30. Cf. the effusion of the imprisoned Genest in Rotrou, V.i.1431-70. A thorough technical analysis of the convention is furnished by Jacques Scherer, *La Dramaturgie classique en France*, rev. ed. Colette Scherer (Saint-Genouph: Nizet, 2001), pp. 284-97, who does not, however, mention Desfontaines's *L'Illustre Comédien*; Marie-France Hilgar, *La Mode des stances dans le théâtre tragique français*, *1610-1687* (Paris: Nizet, 1974), does include this example (p. 166) but does not go beyond basic description. No critic seems to have appreciated the contrast between Pamphilie's conventional earlier lyric, focused on terrestrial love, and the present exalted one.

For a parody of the stanzaic mode in a quite different context, see Desmarets de Saint-Sorlin, *The Visionaries*, trad. Hillman, III.iv.921-70.

**89** The idea of God as present in and sanctioning his creation is a familiar one; Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 129, aptly cite the book of Wisdom (Sapientia), which was apocryphal for Protestants; see Wisdom 11:21-27 (Douai-Reims version).

<sup>87 &</sup>quot;[A] scoundrel like him": "un fourbe comme lui". Genest is assimilated to Christ, designated in the common pagan manner as an outlaw and imposter. Cf. above, II.ii.353-56, as well as Rotrou, II.viii.591 ff.

<sup>88</sup> Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 128, point out the allusion to Daniel 2:31-45. The context is Daniel's prophecy to Nebuchadnezzar of the future of Babylon, the archetype of earthly glory – hence a prototype of Rome – which is ephemeral, in opposition to the heavenly city of God, the New Jerusalem. The stanzaic pattern of Pamphilie's speech supports its inspired prophetic quality, which makes it a quasi-typological pendant to her stanzas of anguished inner conflict at IV.ii.971-1001 and helps to carry it beyond a direct rebuke of Diocletian's tyranny.

1269	Just because you crown your heads with a little circlet,
1270	Do you dare, pride-swollen, His power to neglect,
1271	And your condition forget,
1272	And make comparison between your quality
1273	And His high majesty?
1274	Salmoneus' mere effigies, <sup>90</sup>
1275	Would you govern destinies?
1276	Is it your place to rule over men and their fate?
1277	Are you at all able with life them to inspire—
1278	Whose power presumes their deaths to precipitate
1279	Just to satisfy your desire?
1280	And what right permits you to sustain your own projects
1281	With the blood of His subjects?
1282	The earth he suspended in place—
1283	Does it contain within its space
1284	Any bodies whose motion your voices can cause?
1285	Yet you, who are unable in the whole of nature
1286	To make one solitary atom by your laws,
1287	Work the destruction of His creature.
1288	Daily before His eyes the cruellest means you take
1289	The work of His hands to break.
1290	But the mixed blood and tears that flow
1291	From those whom your weapons lay low
1292	Cry out for justice to His lofty tribunal, <sup>91</sup>
1293	While His subjects their unjust oppression lament,

**90** Orig.: "vous petits Salmonées". In mythology, Salmoneus, King of Elis, imitated the thunder and lightning of Zeus and was punished by him; Pamphilie thus denigrates kings as petty imitators of a blasphemous imitator. See *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), *s.v.*; henceforth cited as *OCD*. He is depicted by Virgil as punished in the underworld (*Aeneid*, VI.585-94).

**91** Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 132, compare the appeal to God of Abel's blood after his slaying by Cain (Genesis 4:10). More immediately to the point in the hagiographical context is the typological fulfilment of that first murder in the evocation of the martyrs in Revelation 6:9-10:

I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? (Authorised Version)

1294	And at their plaint He will open his arsenal
1295	To draw from it such punishment
1296	That constrained then and there <sup>92</sup> to confess you shall be
1297	Your God is only He.

#### Diocletian

1298	And my righteous anger ample proof will afford
1299	That I, despite him, am your master and your lord.
1300	Aquilinus, take her, for she's sung her last note,93
1301	And with her lover watching, have them cut her throat.

# Act V

### Scene i Anthenor, Luciane, Aristide

#### Anthenor

1302	So close to yet another precious benefit,94
1303	Your desire's fruition, of your hopes the surfeit,
1304	At such a high degree of glory and of favour,
1305	What is the cause of Aristide's troubled <sup>95</sup> behaviour?
1306	What sudden change occurred to pull your spirits down?
1307	Your gaze turns upward to the sky, you smile and frown,
1308	You sigh.

**92** "[T]hen and there": orig. "en ce lieu".

**<sup>93</sup>** "[F]or she's sung her last note": the translation presumes to add this image to the original, where Diocletian simply orders her instant removal ("Dépêchez ... qu'on l'ôte promptement"), so as to link his fearful sense of menace (anticipating his reaction at the play's conclusion) to her lyrical outburst. In this context, to cut her throat is not merely to punish but specifically to silence her.

**<sup>94</sup>** Orig. "Si proche d'ajouter à tant de récompenses". The translation employs "precious" ironically to recall Aristide's previous attitude; cf. above IV.iv.1195.

**<sup>95</sup>** "[T]roubled": orig. "rêveur" (lit. "dreamy"), but the sense here extends to serious disquiet.

#### Aristide Alas!

#### Alas

#### Anthenor

	So what can be the explanation
1309	Of your manifesting such a great alteration?
1310	Destiny, which once hard against you barred the gate, <sup>96</sup>
1311	Now harbours towards you neither anger nor hate,
1312	Its fondness such, by the gods' generosity,
1313	That others are jealous of your prosperity.
1314	To complete your happiness, what else would be due?
1315	The Emperor holds you dear; Luciane loves you,
1316	For indeed that object divine of your affections
1317	Responds with ardour to your amorous intentions. <sup>97</sup>
1318	What then is causing your uneasiness of mind,
1319	Which so out of keeping with your fortune we find?
1320	Please, dear Aristide, at least our worries dispel:
1321	Do it for Anthenor, and Luciane as well.

### Aristide

1322	Oh, how ridiculous is your request, and vain!
1323	Can you be unaware of the cause of my pain?
1324	The arrows that wounded me—have they passed you by?
1325	Your actress comrade <sup>98</sup> —O gods!—is about to die,
1326	And he whose charms you were accustomed to revere
1327	Goes with her to death, and in your eyes not a tear.
1328	O heavens, let the slightest fillip change our fate,
1329	If it can't for one morning keep a constant state!
1330	And so, then, splendid Genest and rare Pamphilie,
1331	They let you die—what's more, forget you instantly!
1332	And by traits of cowardice I cannot endure,
1333	My weeping to see you perish attracts their censure.
1334	I'm even expected a joyful brow to show.

**<sup>96</sup>** As pointed out by Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 134, Anthenor alludes to the marginal existence of the players prior to their installation as favoured courtiers.

**<sup>97</sup>** Since there has been no previous mention of this relationship (Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 135), it is implicitly presented as accompanying the actors' accession to new status and wealth.

**<sup>98</sup>** "[C]omrade actress": orig. "compagne".

1335	But before you see Heaven's lightning launch a blow
1336	And pierce with its dread bolts this insensible heart,
1337	Let me never seem to play such an unkind part.
1338	No, no—this heart aims high <sup>99</sup> but is not barbarous,
1339	And the fate of those from whom they now will sever us
1340	Is too atrociously appalling not to shock
1341	With more grief than might be expected from a rock. <sup>100</sup>

#### LUCIANE

1342	Indeed, these sentiments great tenderness distill,
1343	Expressed, unless I mistake, with all the more skill
1344	Because today they can hide, in such able fashion,
1345	Beneath a mask of pity your ruse and your passion.
1346	But it's in vain, ingrate, that your soul, so ill-
	tuned, 'or
1347	Hopes to conceal from me the dart that dealt its wound
1348	Your alteration only makes me too aware
1349	Of the cause of your flame, and so of your despair.
1350	When strokes as sharp as that afflict a heart with pain,
1351	It's difficult indeed to suffer and to feign;
1352	The tongue from time to time may maintain a disguise,
1353	But when it falls silent, speech still comes through the
	eyes,
1354	And the heart, overwhelmed by the heat of its flame,
1355	By its sighs manifests those wounds that the soul maim.
	Anthenor

- 1356So it once was that, when I dared not to declare1357My ardour, which sent endless sighs into the air,
- 1358 My eyes and my transports gave you a way to see,
- 1359 Much better than my speeches, what you caused to be.

**<sup>99</sup>** "[T]his heart aims high": orig. "ce cœur est grand" – in the sense of being ambitious (Bourqui et de Reyff, eds, n. 137).

**<sup>100</sup>** Ll. 1340-41: orig. "Est trop infortuné pour ne pas arracher / Des regrets qu'ils pourraient attendre d'un Rocher". The expression is elliptical, but Anthenor's bitter irony at the expense of his fellow actors is clear.

**<sup>101</sup>** "[I]ll-tuned": orig. "insensé".

[Exit Luciane.]

	LUCIANE
1360	So it once was that your falsely pretended passions
1361	Deceived my simple innocence, and my affections. <sup>102</sup>
1362	So it once was that Luciane, fooled by trickery,
1363	Was nothing to your mind but a theme of mockery,
1364	While in secret your heart, firmly anchored elsewhere,
1365	On another beauty lavished its ardent care.
1366	But now at last, my reason, in better array,
1367	Tears off the blindfold that had made me lose my way,
1368	And if in my breast any spark I still detect,
1369	I will reserve its ardour for some other object.
1370	Love, love, unfaithful man, love your Pamphilie—go!
1371	Even when she is dead, the chain that links you follow,
1372	And if for one fair deed your cowardice leaves room,
1373	Go, unhappy lover, and join her in the tomb!
1374	Go—what stops you? If you think you'll surprise me,
	don't!
	Anthenor
1375	Oh, Madam, listen.
	Luciane
	I can't bear to hear—I won't!
1376	I've had more than my fill of that treacherous discourse,
1377	Which formerly infused my heart with loving force,
1378	And which, in the wake of too evident an outrage,
1379	Produces there at present bitter spite and rage.
1380	But follow me, you traitor, you'll grasp my intent.
1381	Up till now you've had only one loss to lament;
1382	Soon you will be able for another to pine:
1383	You know the fate of one; come and discover mine.
1384	And if, as you maintain, your heart is nobly great,
1385	Come and, with one bold blow, both of us imitate!

#### LUCIANE

**102** The rhyme "passions"/"affections" (identical in French) is present in the original.

Adieu.

1386

### Scene ii Aristide, Anthenor

#### Aristide

	What thunderbolt upon my soul has burst!103
1387	So, then, for a simple plaint that my lips traversed
1388	And some sentiments, fully justified, of pity,
1389	Drawn out of my heart by long-standing amity,
1390	Luciane will—good gods!—as faithless me berate?
1391	Wait for Aristide, ungrateful beauty, just wait,
1392	And his heart torn out, which you accuse wrongfully,
1393	Will by my <sup>104</sup> death cause you at least my love to see.
1394	But I call in vain; let's follow the fugitive
1395	And disabuse her, or otherwise cease to live.
1396	Come on! <sup>105</sup>

#### Anthenor

	Oh, restrain this transport for your own sake;
1397	Let this flowing torrent pass by and rage forsake.
1398	Her pride swells ever higher, the more it's opposed,
1399	And to greater violence you'll find it disposed.
1400	Allow her turbulence the chance to take its ease;
1401	You will see these towering waves themselves appease
1402	And bring, in succession to this furious storm,
1403	A calm which greater happiness for you will form,
1404	Proceeding from a mind subservient to reason
1405	And not a flood of passions produced out of season.

#### Aristide

1406	Oh, that cruel one!—you don't know to what extent
1407	She has a proud, unfeeling, haughty temperament:

**103** The image ironically recalls the heavenly punishment he anticipated if he failed to lament the fate of Pamphilie; cf. above, V.i.1335-36.

**104** The shift from third- to first-person here, an apparent mark of emotional agitation, is confirmed by both early texts; cf. Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 139.

**105** "[C]ome on": orig. "Allons"; by rhetorical convention, he is probably exhorting himself as much as his companion, especially in putting his life on the line, but the following sequence confirms that he wants Anthenor's support.

1408	She will not let herself be tamed so easily;
1409	That disdain of hers will feed her hostility
1410	And doubtless provide her with certain confirmation
1411	Of all she believes that bolsters my denigration.
1412	Therefore, let's go, the more so because in this furor
1413	I don't wish to show myself before the Emperor.
1414	Here he comes. Quick, then!

### Anthenor

Come on.

[Exeunt.]

## Scene iii Diocletian, Rutilius, *and attendants*

#### . .

### Diocletian

So, Rutilius,

1415	The tortures have proved but of little use to us,
1416	And that desperate man bears without murmuring
1417	All that, short of death, one's capable of enduring?

### Rutilius

1418	Yes, Caesar. All the torments he endures and slights;
1419	You'd say that in his heart he treats them as delights—
1420	Indeed that, with his blood gushing forth on all sides,
1421	Within a blissful bath amid pleasures he glides.
1422	There is no torment known that we have not employed:
1423	All he suffered, looking as if all were enjoyed.
1424	Both the flame and the iron that tore his flesh loose
1425	Could not force him the tiniest sigh to produce.
1426	His courage grows with his torments and stature gains;
1427	The torturers, more than he, are moved by his pains;
1428	And while everyone pities or weeps for his fate,
1429	He alone sees his death prepared, and gazes straight.

#### Diocletian

1430	No doubt he is provided with strength by his charms. $^{\scriptscriptstyle \rm IO6}$
1431	But how did Pamphilie react amid these harms?

#### RUTILIUS

1422	Is there, for me to tell, or you to hear, a way?
1432	I'm forced either to displease you, or disobey,
1433	And I fear, O Caesar, that my obedience
1434	May obligate me here to commit an offence,
1435	
1436	If a painful tale must make you visualise
1437	A spectacle at which I scarce could trust my eyes.
1438	But hear of an occurrence, since it is your pleasure,
1439	That is novel and unheard of in all of nature.
1440	According to the orders and decree you sent,
1441	Our criminals, already led to punishment,
1442	With torturers and populace following there,
I443	Were displayed one after the other in the square,
I444	When Genest, turning his eyes on every side,
1445	Rested his glances on Pamphilie, whom he spied,
1446	Who, without seeming troubled or at all affected,
I447	Mutually to him in turn her sight directed.
1448	These silent exchanges between spirits most agile107
1449	Having taken their voices' place a certain while,
1450	Then paused, so permitting within the tongue's full reach
1451	The power to proffer loudly this woeful speech:
1452	"See, O resplendent conqueror," said Pamphilie,
1453	"See, my dear love, if my courage is failing me.
1454	See if I tremble, as I look death in the eye:
1455	No, no, I fear nothing; together let us die.
1456	And since we shall be joined above in sacred union,108
1457	Let our blood, shed on this dear scaffold in profusion,
1458	Sign the contract and serve as the initial pledge
1459	We will have given in surety of our marriage.
1460	In the place of rich jewels, we'll have these chains

**106** Cf. above, IV.iv.1222 and n. 81.

**<sup>107</sup>** "[S]pirits most agile": orig. "esprits plus adroits"; the wording suggests a literal and active meeting of minds in the space between them.

**<sup>108</sup>** "[S]acred union": orig. "saint Hymen", according to the familiar metonymy.

1484

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	instead;
1461	These grim preparations make our delightful bed,
1462	The torturers to officiate and this presence
1463	To furnish ornament, pomp and magnificence."
1464	At these words, her lover, his face perfect composure,
1465	Replied with a glance, and towards her made a gesture
1466	Signifying clearly just how much he approved
1467	Of that haughty <sup>109</sup> figure, astoudingly unmoved.
1468	At last, when both had been prepared for their ordeal,
1469	We saw them vie with each other first pain to feel
1470	And, as in a combat full of honour and glory,
1471	Dispute between them that sorrowful victory
1472	Whose bloody effect stuns the spirit through the eyes,
1473	And of which death is at once the end and the prize. <sup>110</sup>
I474	First, to strike fear into that arrogant young thing,
1475	The executioner raised a torch fiercely burning,
1476	Then finally to Genest directed his aim,
1477	Pitilessly to his body applied the flame:
1478	The fire caught, produced such pitiful <sup>111</sup> effect
1479	That all were touched by it—except that victim abject,
1480	Who with lively ardour, although half burnt alive,
1481	Instead of dying from it, seemed rather to thrive:
1482	The torturers lost heart, we wondered at the sight.
	Diocletian
1483	And in my heart I'm perishing from rage and spite <sup>112</sup>

That I cannot strangle him with my own hands' force!

**<sup>109</sup>** "[H]aughty": orig. "superbe" – Rutilius' evocation of her overweening pride (cf. below, ll. 1474 and 1504-5) coexists with his admiration despite himself.

<sup>110</sup> With the torture sequence that follows, cf. Rotrou, III.ii.741-48 and V.vii.1731-38.

<sup>111</sup> The keynote of pity is likewise repeated in ll. 1477-78 of the original ("sans pitié", "pitoyable").

<sup>112</sup> L. 1483: orig. "Et je crève en mon cœur de dépit et de rage" – once again, recognisably the language of the mystery play devils. Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 145, signal a grammatical ambiguity in the relation between this and the following line, which they prefer to take as a separate exclamation ("Oh, I wish I could...!"). The diabolic echo emerges more strongly, however, if Diocletian's inward fury is intimately linked to his actual impotence, as a reminder that the devil has no power over the truly faithful, whose model is the suffering Christ himself.

1485	After the fire, to iron they had recourse:
1486	A soldier with the hooks of steel <sup>113</sup> into him tore,
1487	As he dragged them covered himself with spouting gore.
1488	But the self-same colour, as all was turned to red,
1489	The stupefied crowd in different ways affected:
1490	Some were stricken with pity to the very soul;
1491	Motions of fear or horror over others stole;
1492	And among so many transfixed to that degree,
1493	The guilty one remained unmoved—and only he.
1494	Seeing that our actions on that side were in vain,
1495	We subjected that ingrate to new forms of pain,
1496	And in order still harsher torment to impart
1497	Sought by way of his eyes to penetrate his heart.
1498	But that tactic to no avail did we employ:
1499	Pamphilie, like him, did nothing but thrill with joy,
1500	And, viewing the torturers' approach without horror,
1501	Did her best by her speeches to excite their furor.
1502	You would say that initially that beauty charmed them,
1503	That despite their severity her grace <sup>114</sup> disarmed them,
1504	And that the dauntless pride apparent in her aspect,
1505	Far from angering them, inspired their respect.
1506	Still, their duty (or my voice) dispelled that vain
	whim,
1507	And, transforming their divinity to a victim,
1508	One of them raised his arm and dealt a sudden stroke
1509	Able the end of her life—and spell <sup>115</sup> —to provoke.
1510	Genest burned with impatience, longing her to follow;
1511	He said that to live was the worst pain he could know,
1512	And I believe, Caesar, that he was quite sincere.
1513	What's more, should he not die, he'll be a source of

#### RUTILIUS

**113** "[H]ooks of steel": orig. "ongles d'acier" – a standard instrument of torture, usually "de fer" ("of iron"). See *Le trésor de la langue française* (online at <http://atilf.atilf.fr/tlf.htm> [accessed 26 March 2023]), *s.v.* "ongle", def. B.I.

**114** "[G]race": orig. "grâce", no doubt with unintended spiritual resonance.

**115** "[S]pell": orig. "sort", which might mean "fate" or "destiny" but in the context must refer mockingly to the magical effect she momentarily seemed to exert, and which ironically signals her true spiritual power, in keeping with the evocation of Christ's passion in l. 1527. On this sense of "sort", see *Le trésor de la langue française, s.v.*, def. E. Cf. above, IV.iv.1222 and n. 81, and below, V.iv.1527.

	fear:
1514	I'm afraid that his constancy just might incense
1515	The people in the end to acts of violence.
1516	That is the occasion that has brought me here now.
	Diocletian
1517	Return and finish him right away, anyhow.
1518	See that Rome is delivered from that pestilence
1519	Before our state suffers some dire consequence.
1520	Go.

#### Rutilius

I obey, my Lord.

[Exit Rutilius.]

## Scene iv

### Diocletian, and attendants

#### Diocletian

	So, then, this stark-mad race
1521	Prefer to have their throats cut in the public place
1522	Than to worship our gods and my pardon implore,
1523	And amid the delights untroubled days <sup>116</sup> outpour,
1524	To live pampered with pleasures, honours and possessions.
1525	Ye gods, what stirs these Christians with such crazed
	obsessions?
1526	They pour out their blood, simply throw away their lives,
1527	And, impiously charmed, so that their false hope thrives,
1528	By no torturing, no torment of any kind
1529	Can they be torn from delusion and made less blind.
1530	Yet we must either their audacity outface
1531	Or down to the last of them extinguish the race.
1532	But what does Aquilinus want? He seems distraught.

[Enter Aquilinus.]

**<sup>116</sup>** "[U]ntroubled days": orig. "bonace", whose literal meaning was calm weather at sea.

## Scene v

## Diocletian, Aquilinus, and attendants

## AOUILINUS

	ne on inves
1533	Caesar, what I saw has left me quite overwrought.
	Dioletian
1534	What is it, then? Say quickly. What troubles your mind?
1535	Have the Christians provoked disturbance of some kind?
1536	Is there some seditious faction that agitates
1537	In defiance of my desires and my dictates?
1538	Speak. Do not keep me any longer in suspense.
	Aquilinus
1539	No, Lord. All love—or fear—your potent eminence,
1540	And respect for the gods, or fear of being killed,
1541	Will keep dutiful the most daringly strong-willed.
1542	That's not at all the cause, then, which my spirit
	troubles,
1543	But rather a sad event.
	Diocletian
	What? Now my fear doubles;
1544	I tremble, and I burn with desire to know
1545	What strange misfortunes these are that can move you so.
	Aquilinus
1546	You may steady your nerves and banish far this fear,
1547	Which without reason renders your pure soul less clear.
1548	What I witnessed, Caesar, was hard for me to bear,
1549	But this sad event is in no way your affair—
1550	Unless perhaps you should be induced by compassion
1551	To pity, like me, some whom an excess of passion
1552	Lately lent, as I watched, the Tiber as a grave,
1553	With nobody in a position them to save.
1554	When Pamphilie to the public place I had led,
1555	Where by death her outrage had to be expiated,
1556	I was on my way back here when there met my sight

1557	A spectacle of horror, tenderness and fright.
1558	Luciane, by some profound inner wound distressed,
1559	Plunged into the Tiber just where the bridge is highest;
1560	Her body, some while tossed by the waves' revolutions,
1561	Caused the birth, though quite dead, of other
	resolutions:"7
1562	Aristide, devastated when he saw she'd perished—
1563	She whom, even as dearly as himself, he cherished—
1564	Sought to share her destiny, and by a like blow
1565	To find within those waters his own death below.
1566	Anthenor foresaw his funereal intent,
1567	With feeble vigour <sup>118</sup> tried his furor to prevent,
1568	But since bodily strength with furor must accrue,
1569	The despair of one alone carried off the two:
1570	Grappled together they tumbled into the waves;
1571	Their fall caused to gape open deep watery caves,
1572	Which, having three times swallowed them, three times up-
	cast,
1573	Stifled forever their living spirits at last.
1574	That is what I saw. Judge whether it is possible
1575	To see such misfortune and remain insensible;
1576	No, Caesar, and anyone with a heart and eyes
1577	At such prodigies must feel strong pity arise.
Diocletian	
1578	This strange occurrence, I will readily confess,
1579	To the most hardened soul would have caused much
	distress,
1580	And a barbarian's heart, challenged in such fashion,
1581	Would have echoed your sentiment and your compassion.
1582	But forget, Aquilinus, that pity so tender,
1583	Which towards a few subjects you could not but render,

**<sup>117</sup>** "[R]esolutions": orig. "complots", which here cannot carry its usual modern sense of "conspiracy" and so must retain its more neutral medieval meaning of "Accord, engagement entre plusieurs personnes" (*Dictionnaire du moyen français [1330-1500]*, online at <a href="http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/complot">http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/complot</a>, def. B; accessed 25 March 2023).

**<sup>118</sup>** "[F]eeble vigour": orig. "la vigour qui lui reste"/"his remaining vigour". Anthenor, of course, as the actor who played Genest's father, is an older man.

1584	And reserve your voice, your sighs and your lamentations
1585	Henceforth for pitying my flood of tribulations.
1586	Yes, keep your store of pity wholly for my fate:
1587	It could not have more matter more appropriate,
1588	Since those whom heaven regards with a hostile eye
1589	Comparison may deem more fortunate than I.
1590	Yes, despite grandeur, all pomp Rome bestows and can,
1591	I now know, Aquilinus, that I am a man—
1592	But a man abandoned, an outcast vilified,
1593	A man by whom men and the gods are horrified.

## Aquilinus

1594	What is this you're saying, my Lord? What pain so strong,
1595	Afflicting you so, could suddenly come along?
1596	All fear you, all bow down, all venerate your law:
1597	You alone are held by the Queen of Kings <sup>119</sup> in awe.
1598	Banish far from you, then, this soul-infecting care:
1599	The throne is a sanctuary—no fear comes there.
1600	The whole world's eyes upon you all dangers disperse:
1601	You could perish only with all the universe.

### Diocletian

1602	Oh, to cure me of the ill that has me in thrall,
1603	How little serves flattering speech, or not at all!
1604	And how, to pull me free from the pains I'm now tasting,
1605	My subjects, in their efforts, those efforts are wasting!
1606	In vain I wield a sceptre, in vain was I crowned;
1607	In vain do great throngs follow me, and me surround;
1608	In vain am I a monarch who gains victories,
1609	If in my heart already lurk all my enemies—
1610	If I feel cruel war raging within my soul,
1611	If I myself rebel against my own control,
1612	And if I must drag along with me everywhere
1613	Horror and frightfulness, self-reproach and despair.
1614	All seems to me fatal, carrying deadly sense:
1615	Days streaked with lightning, air tainted with

**119** "Queen of Kings" – i.e., Rome (Bourqui and de Reyff, eds, n. 149).

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	pestilence;
1616	The sky red with fires, with blood the earth red, too;
1617	The sun lacking its light and its placement askew.
1618	Gods! Do you not see those terrible ghosts surround me,
1619	Who pour out their horrible howlings all around me?
1620	Do you hear those long-drawn-out groanings, as I do,
1621	Whose mournful accents with gloom my feelings imbue?
1622	Oh rage, oh despair, oh pain that is killing me!
1623	But what new star, bright in that cloud, is this I see?
1624	What divinity more beautiful than the day
1625	Still deigns in this dark place to send its light this
	way?
1626	Oh, my pain is eased, my fear slips from memory;
1627	Heaven!—I see Genest and with him Pamphilie:
1628	Countless beautiful objects both of them surround;
1629	Each bears a palm in the hand; both of them are crowned. <sup>120</sup>
1630	Dear shadows, pardon, and from the sky where you dwell,
1631	Calm the horrible tempests that my spirit swell.
1632	I was cruel towards you, and by my fury stirred,
1633	But amongst our gods you shall from this time be numbered.
1634	For you both I shall raise up illustrious <sup>121</sup> tombs
1635	Whose tops will touch the vaults of heaven's starry rooms
1636	And serve as a sign and witness for ages hence
1637	Both of my repentance and of your innocence.
1638	But alas! At once those bright images are torn
1639	From me, despair returns and my fears are reborn.
1640	O gods, unjust gods, who my troubles contemplate,
1641	Who see my torments and the horror of my state,
1642	Moderate, you cruel ones, the pains I endure:
1643	I avenged your altars, acted your wounds to cure.
1644	Then if you don't wish to be believed powerless,
1645	You must appease the agony of my distress.

**<sup>120</sup>** The traditional signs of martyrdom in Diocletian's vision contrast with his futile symbols of earthly victory and monarchy in ll. 1606-9 above. On the palm in particular, see M. Hassett, "Palm in Christian Symbolism", *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911), New Advent, online at <a href="http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11432a.htm">http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11432a.htm</a>> (accessed 25 March 2023).

**<sup>121</sup>** "[I]llustrious": orig. "illustres" – with an evocation, inevitably, of the "illustre comédien" and the "illustre théâtre".

1646	But if, unrighteous gods, my death at last is due,
1647	Finish with your torments, with haste my end pursue.

END