

# The Devil's Law-Case by John Webster

M/M R&D, BS, SmS, QS

## The Devil's Law-Case

Contarino: You'll not forgo your interest in my mistress?

Ercole: My sword shall answer that; come, are you ready?

C: Before you fight, sir, think upon your cause;  
It is a wondrous foul one, and I wish  
That all your exercise, these four days past,  
Had been employ'd in a most fervent prayer,  
And the foul sin for which you are to fight  
Chiefly remember'd in't.

E: I'd as soon take  
Your counsel in divinity at this present,  
As I would take a kind direction from you  
For the managing my weapon; and indeed,  
Both would show much alike.  
Come, are you ready?

C: Bethink yourself,  
How fair the object is that we contend for.

E: O, I cannot forget it.

C: You are hurt

E: Did you come hither only to tell me so,  
Or to do it?

C: Your cause, your cause, sir:  
Will you yet be a man of conscience, and make  
Restitution for your rage upon your deathbed?

E: Never, till the grave gather one of us.

C: That was fair, and home, I think.

E: You prate as if you were in a fence-school.

C: Spare your youth, have compassion on yourself.

E: When I am all in pieces! I am now unfit  
For any lady's bed; take the rest with you.

C: I am lost in too much daring. Yield your sword.

E: To the pangs of death I shall, but not to thee.

C: You are now at my repairing or confusion;  
Beg your life.

E: O most foolishly demanded!  
To bid me beg that which thou canst not give.