

Excerpt from Jew of Malta by Christopher Marlowe

Enter Machevill

Machevill

Albeit the world think Machiavel is dead,
Yet was his soul but flown beyond the Alps;
And, now the Guise is dead, is come from France,
To view this land, and frolic with his friends.
To some perhaps my name is odious;
But such as love me guard me from their tongues,
And let them know that I am Machiavel,
And weigh not men, and therefore not mens words.
Admired I am of those that hate me most.
Though some speak openly against my books,
Yet will they read me and thereby attain
To Peter's chair; and when they cast me off,
Are poisoned by my climbing followers.
I count religion but a childish toy
And hold there is no sin but ignorance.
Birds of the air will tell of murders past?
I am ashamed to hear such fooleries.
Many will talk of title to a crown.
What right had Caesar to the empire?
Might first made kings, and laws were then most sure
When, like the Draco's, they were writ in blood.
Hence comes it that a strong built citadel
Commands much more than letters can import:
Which maxim had but Phalaris observed,
He'd never bellowed in a brazen bull,
Of great ones envy: o'the poor petty wights
Let me be envied and not pitied!
But whither am I bound? I come not, I,
To read a lecture here in Britanie,
But to present the tragedy of a Jew
Who smiles to see how full his bags are crammed,
Which money was not got without my means
I crave but this. Grace him as he deserves,

And let him not be entertained the worse
Because he favours me.