

The Psychosurgery Scenes of **THE BLUNTING OF ECK** (*Eccius Dedolatus*)

Translated from the Latin and Greek original

by

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*Our scene begins with the arrival at ECK's house of Eck's STUDENT and a SURGEON from Leipzig. (Click [here](#) or [here](#) to read the Latin and Greek original.)*

STUDENT     *(knocking)* Boy! Boy...! Hey, boy!  
A SERVANT   *(cracking the door)* Who kicked the crap out of our door, like some kind of centaur?  
STUDENT     Will you open up and tell your master we've made it?  
SERVANT     *(to ECK, inside)* Sir! The doctors from Leipzig are here. [...]  
  
ECK           *(coming out; to the STUDENT)* Is that guy with you the doctor my friends in Leipzig sent me? [...]  
  
STUDENT     He's a surgeon, actually. The other doctors were all busy dealing with the plague, so they couldn't make it. They sent him for you, and trust me, he's a total expert at what he does.  
ECK           *(to the SURGEON)* Come here, surgeon. Have you ever cured other people, too?  
SURGEON     *(confidently)* Thousands of 'em.  
ECK           Wow! They weren't *all* restored to their original state, were they?  
SURGEON     The majority of them got treated in such a way that they never got sick again.  
ECK           Huh! What interventions did you use to help them?  
SURGEON     Different ones, depending on their illness. Fire, a knife, the rack, a rope: that's what I used to rid over 500 people of incurable diseases.  
ECK           Get outta here!  
SURGEON     With others, even though I couldn't cure them, I still managed to relieve their symptoms temporarily. You see, I ablated anything that was beyond treatment: I cut some people's tongues out, gouged out the eyes from others, and I used beatings to stop persistent itch for other people.  
ECK           That's...really incredible. Well, are you up to treating me, too?  
SURGEON     I'm not sure yet, since the first thing I have to do is determine which of your chemicals is out of balance, and then draw up a complete treatment plan. [...]

*In an interview that follows, the SURGEON diagnoses ECK with an excess of black bile, the ancient equivalent of low serotonin levels: an alleged chemical imbalance that causes depression. Eck's FRIENDS talk him into undergoing treatment. On the SURGEON's order, they fetch seven STRONG MEN to come and "blunt" ECK's "edges" away with cudgels. Next, the SURGEON has a BARBER come and shave ECK's head, cut off part of his tongue, and extract a tooth—all in the name of treatment. Finally, the SURGEON gives ECK a huge dose of opium and wine that makes him throw up and have diarrhea—thus excreting all kinds of bad ideas. We resume the translation with the SURGEON's decision to open ECK's chest, where (in classical thought) the emotions were thought to reside. ECK, now strapped to a table, is unconscious, while his FRIENDS stand by watching. (Click [here](#) or [here](#) to read the Latin and Greek original.)*

SURGEON Now that his chest is exposed, the skin must be removed. (*peels back ECK's skin, peers inside, and winces*) Look at that eczema! Look at that psoriasis! ...no, no, it's gangrene...actually, it's full-blown cancer!

FRIENDS Who would've ever thought such lovely skin was hiding such malignant tumors?

SURGEON (*to the STRONG MEN*) Warm up the cauter and sharpen my knife! Some of this has to be cut out, and some has to be burned out.

FRIENDS (*looking into ECK's chest*) God almighty, look at that tumor!

SURGEON That's **conceitedness**. (Greek *alazoneia* = Latin *superbia*)

FRIENDS ...and that carcinoma!

SURGEON That's **manipulativeness**. (Greek *sycephantia*)

FRIENDS ...and this swollen gland?

SURGEON **Narcissism**. (Greek *philautia* = Latin *sui amor*)

FRIENDS ...and look at that ulcer!

SURGEON That's **addiction**. (Greek *asotia* = Latin *luxuria*)

FRIENDS ...what about this swelling?

SURGEON **Hypocrisy**. (Greek *hypocrisis*)

FRIENDS ...and that sore?

SURGEON **Insincerity**. (Greek *kolakeia* = Latin *adulatio*)

FRIENDS ...and this boil?

SURGEON **Deceitfulness**. (Greek *apate* = Latin *deceptio*)

FRIENDS ...and these protuberances?

SURGEON **Impulsivity**, (Greek *propeteia* = Latin *temeritas*)  
whose followers are envy and vice of every kind, as if they were all clogging up a sewer together.

*As the FRIENDS look on, the SURGEON burns or ablates these various defects away, and sews ECK's chest back up. When the SURGEON next attempts to cut off ECK's penis and testicles—to treat his "aggression"—ECK wakes up. Despite his frantic protests, the SURGEON makes the cut. ECK then pronounces himself happier and more compliant than before: a successful surgery!*