

The Dunciad

Book I

Verse 46:

- | 45 *In clouded Majesty here Dulness Shone;*
- | 46 ***Four guardian Virtues, round, support her throne.***

What we will find with general analysis is that one of the verses of a couplet will be iambic pentameter, and the other will have a minor variation. In his instance, the first verse is of the expected iambicity.

- | 45 **Īn clōud | ěd Māj | ěstȳ | hĕre Dūl | nĕss shōne**

For the companion verse, minor variations will mostly mean that a three-syllable foot has been substituted for an iamb. There may also be the possibility of a clipped foot, pause or half-foot at some point. It is obvious that the verse cannot be interpreted as a series of iamb:

- | 46 ~ Fōur | gūardiān | Vĭrtūes rōund | sŭppōrt | hĕr thrōne

Where possible, it is preferable that a three or four syllables will sit in the one metrical foot. Remember that this is merely a preference and not a necessity. Metrical feet are not always *sense units* and the word or name may well be broken, *normally* at most, over two feet.

We would say that *four* should have speech stress to emphasize how many *guardian Virtues*. There are also two points where there may be more speech stress than the implied metrical accent. These are the last syllable of *guardian* and the first syllable of *Virtues*. However, the combination of dactyl and anapest achieves a wonderful effect in the sounding of the beginning of the verse added dramatic effect.

Verse 47:

47 ***Fierce Champion Fortitude, that knows no fears***
18 *Of hisses, blows or want, or loss of ears.*

The companion verse (48) skips along beautifully in its iamb dance:

48 **Ŏf hīss | ēs blōws | őr wānt | őr lōss | ők ēars**

There is definitely no substitution for iambs in this verse, however we can sense a minor variations for the first verse, and we may feel it around the word *fortitude*.

47 **Fierce Chāmp | iōn | Fōrtitūde | thăt knōws | nō fēars**

Thus the first verse is not too different to the second other than a dactyl in the third foot. Iambs complete the verse giving a very satisfying rhythm.

As is the case, the reader may opt for a slightly more dramatic beginning placing a stronger speech stress on *Fierce* which would then have *Champion* also as a dactyl:

47 **~ Fierce | Chāmpiōn | Fōrtitūde | thăt knōws | nō fēars**

This interpretation comes as no surprise since both *Champion* and *Fortitude* take more of the personification and would have the emphasis on the first syllable.

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