

MISCELLANEOUS PLAYS,

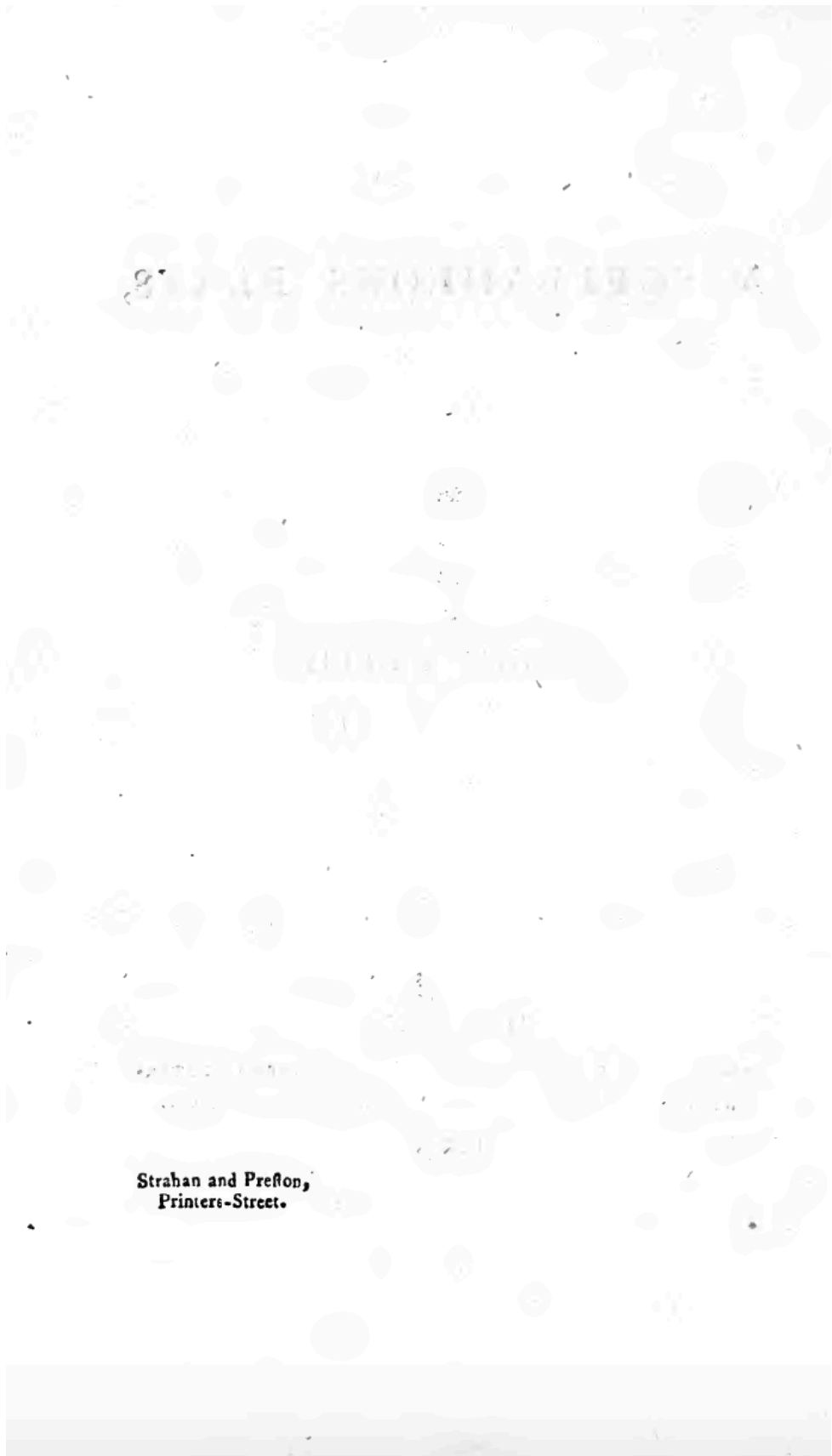
BY

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME, PATER-  
NOSTER-RROW, AND A. CONSTABLE AND CO. EDINBURGH.

1804.



Strahan and Prefton,  
Printers-Street.

## TO THE READER.

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**T**HOUGH I have already met with so much indulgence from the public for a work obscured with many faults, and might venture, without great mistrust, to bring before it the Plays which I now offer, unaccompanied by any previous demand upon the attention of my reader, which is generally an unwelcome thing, I must nevertheless beg for a few minutes to trespass upon his patience.—It has been and still is, my strongest desire to add a few pieces to the stock of what may be called our national or permanently acting plays, how unequal soever my abilities may be to the object of my ambition \*. I have, therefore, in the “Series of Plays,” though pursuing a particular plan, endeavoured fully to delineate the character of the chief person of each drama, independently of his being the subject of a particular passion; so that we might have an idea of what kind of a man he would have been had no

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\* See page 58. of the introduction to the “Series of Plays.”

circumstances ever arisen to bring that passion violently into action. I have endeavoured also distinctly to discriminate the inferior characters, because they, not being allowed to exhibit violent passion, lest they should too much interfere with the principal object, had more need of such distinct discrimination to prevent them from being altogether insignificant, and to prevent each play from becoming a mere picture of passion which might be tedious and heavy to an audience accustomed to variety of character and incident. This I have done, how unskilfully soever I may have done it, with a hope, which I will not yet abandon, that some of the dramas belonging to that work may hereafter be thought worthy of being admitted into that class of plays to which I am so desirous of adding something. However, I am sensible that, were those plays more successful than I dare flatter myself to expect, they all require too much power of expression and delicacy of discrimination in the actor who represents the principal character—the whole depends too much on the exertion of one individual, and such a one too as can very rarely be found, ever to become plays that will commonly be brought upon the stage\*. Convinced of this,

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\* Let it not be supposed from the above that I have the slightest intention of discontinuing the "Series of Plays." So far from it, I hope that work will go on the better for being occasionally broke in upon by pieces of a different kind; and though I admit they are not altogether well

as well as wishing sometimes to vary my employment, I have long since proposed to myself not to confine my pen entirely to one task, but to write from time to time, as inclination might lead me or circumstances suggest, an unconnected or (may I so call it?) a free, independent play, that might have a chance of pleasing upon a stage, circumstanced as stages generally are, with no particular advantages. I have wished to leave behind me in the world a few plays, some of which might have a chance of continuing to be acted even in our canvass theatres and barns; and of preserving to my name some remembrance with those who are lovers of that species of amusement which I have above every other enjoyed.

I am well aware, however, that having succeeded in one species of writing gives us no sure grounds to presume that we shall be equally fortunate in any other; no, not even in that which most nearly approaches to it. Not only the epic poet may write a bad tragedy, but the sonnet writer may find himself greatly at a loss in composing a few tender couplets for music. I have seldom seen any piece, not appearing to me to possess great merit (for such things I have seen), succeed upon the stage, without feeling inclined to say to myself, "don't despise this: very probably in

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fitted for the stage, as it is commonly circumstanced, I still think plays upon that plan are capable of being made upon the stage more interesting than any other species of drama.

attempting, even upon no higher grounds, such success as the present, and giving to it also the whole bent of your thoughts, you would find yourself miserably disappointed." I offer to the public, therefore, a work of a kind so nearly related to that in which I have already had some degree of success and encouragement, with almost the diffidence of an entirely inexperienced writer.

To publish a volume of miscellaneous plays, I am very sensible, is making a large demand upon the attention of my readers, and exposing the plays themselves likewise to the danger of being read in a way that will diminish their effect, and in every way prove a great disadvantage to them. People are in the habit of reading but one new play at a time, which by this means makes a full undivided impression upon the mind; and though we are not obliged to read all the plays of a volume, one following another, so that they must crowd, and jostle, and tread upon one another's heels; yet who, with a new work in his hands, if he be at all pleased with it, will shut up the book after the first portion of it is over, and wait till he has properly digested what he has got before he proceed with the remainder? I am inclined to believe that each of the plays in the series has at first suffered considerably from being read in this manner; but in pieces connected with one another this mode of publication is in some degree necessary, at least there is in it more propriety. So much am I convinced of this, that it was at one time my intention to publish these

plays only one at a time, and it is with some difficulty that I have been prevailed upon to give up this intention. May I then beg of my reader to pardon, in the first place, so great a demand upon his attention by offering at once a volume of plays to his perusal; in the next place, to have the goodness not to read it hastily, but to pause, some days at least, between each play, that they may have in this respect the same advantages which new plays generally have. Let him not smile: this last is a request which I earnestly make, and if it is not complied with, I shall almost be tempted to think myself hardly treated\*.

I must also mention, that each of the plays contained in this volume has been, at one time or other, offered for representation to one or other of

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\* It may be urged, indeed, that unconnected poems bound up together, and almost every other species of composition must suffer for being read in hasty succession in the same way. And so in some degree they do. But in reading descriptions of nature, successions of thoughts, and narratives of every kind, the ideas they represent to the mind are as troops drawn out before it in loose marshalled array, whose most animated movements it surveys still as a spectator; whilst in reading a drama, where every character speaks immediately in his own person, we by sympathy rush, as it were, ourselves into the battle, and fight under every man's coat of mail by turns. This is an exercise of the mind so close and vigorous, that we retire from it exhausted; and if curiosity should urge us on without sufficient rest to the next engagement that calls for us, we enter the field bewildered, and spiritless, and weak.

our winter theatres, and been rejected. This my reader will readily believe is not done in the spirit of vanity; and I beg of him also to believe, that neither is it at all done in that of complaint. I merely mention it, because otherwise it must have appeared absurd to introduce from the press what has been expressly written to come before the public in a different manner, without making any attempt to present it in its own peculiar mode. I must, in this case, have either appeared pusillanimously timid in shrinking from that open trial to which my contemporaries submit, or fullenly and ungraciously fastidious.

The chief thing to be regretted in this failure of my attempts is, that having no opportunity of seeing any of my pieces exhibited, many faults respecting stage effect and general impression will to me remain undiscovered, and those I may hereafter write be of course unimproved. Another disadvantage, perhaps, may present itself to the mind of my reader; viz. that not having the trial of their merits immediately in prospect, I may become careless or forgetful of those requisites in the drama that peculiarly refer to the stage. But if I know any thing at all of my own character, this will not be the case. I shall persevere in my task, circumstanced as I am, with as anxious unremitting an attention to every thing that regards the theatre as if I were there forthwith to receive the full reward of all my labours, or complete and irretrievable condemnation. So strong is my attachment to the



drama of my native country, at the head of which stands one whom every British heart thinks of with pride, that a distant and uncertain hope of having even but a very few of the pieces I offer to the public represented to it with approbation, when some partiality for them as plays that have been frequently read shall have put into the power of future managers to bring them upon the stage with less risk of loss than would be at present incurred, is sufficient to animate me to every exertion that I am capable of making.

But I perceive a smile rising upon the cheek of my reader at the sanguine calculations of human vanity, and in his place I should most probably smile too. Let that smile, however, be tempered with respect, when it is considered how much mankind is indebted to this pleasing but deceitful principle in our nature. It is necessary that we should have some flattery to carry us on with what is arduous and uncertain, and who will give it to us in a manner so kindly and applicable to our necessities as even we our own selves? How poor and stationary must the affairs of men have remained, had every one, at the beginning of a new undertaking, considered the probability of its success with the cool, temperate mind of his reasonable, unconcerned neighbour?

It is now time to say something of the particular plays here offered to the public.

In the first I have attempted, in the character of Rayner, to exhibit a young man of an easy, amiable

temper, with delicacy of sentiment and a well principled mind, tempted, in the extremity of distress, to join with unworthy men in the proposed commission of a detestable deed ; and afterwards, under one of the severest trials that human fortitude can be called upon to endure, bearing himself up, not with the proud and lofty firmness of a hero, but with the struggles of a man, who, conscious of the weakness of nature within him, feels diffident of himself to the last, and modestly aims at no more than what, being a soldier and the son of a brave father, he considers as respectable and becoming. One who aspires not to admiration but shrinks from contempt ; and who being naturally brave in the field, and of a light buoyant disposition, bears up throughout with an animation and cheerfulness by no means inconsistent with a considerable degree of the dread of death, when called upon to encounter it with deliberation and certainty. To him I have opposed the character of a young man, in whom, though with some good affections, there is a foundation of natural depravity, greatly strengthened by the bad education he has received from an absurdly indulgent mother, brought by his crimes to an untimely end, and meeting it with a very different spirit.

Of the characters of the two principal women in this piece, opposed to two women of a very different description I shall say nothing. The second and inferior persons of the drama I have endeavoured to delineate with sufficient discrimination to

make us feel acquainted with them, though much force or originality is a praise which I readily grant they are not entitled to.

I am afraid the varied conduct of the whole, sometimes gay and even ludicrous, sometimes tender or distressing, but scarcely at any time solemn or dignified, will be displeasing to those who are accustomed to admire tragedy in its more exalted form. I flatter myself, however, that as I have not, for the sake of variety, introduced any under-plot nor patched scenes unconnected with the main business, but have endeavoured to make every thing arise naturally from the circumstances of the story, I shall not on this score be very much censured\*.

This play was written many years ago, when I was not very old, and still younger from my ignorance of every thing regarding literature than from my years. This, however, I do not mention as any apology for its defects. A work that cannot be read with approbation unless the mind is continu-

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\* That part of the scene, Act III. in the court of the prison, where the songs of the confined chief of banditti and a slight sketch of his character are introduced, though very appropriate to the place, stands loose from the business of the play, and may therefore be considered as superfluous and contradicting what I have said above. But as it is short, and is a fancy come into my head from hearing stories in my childhood of Rob Roy, our Robin Hood of Scotland, I cannot find in my heart to blot it out, though, either on the stage or in the closet, I make any body welcome to do it for me by passing it over.

ally referring to the particular circumstances under which it was written, ought not to be brought before the public, but (when those circumstances are very extraordinary) as a literary curiosity. Reading over this work, after it had been laid by for such a length of time that it was to me almost like the work of a stranger, I thought there was sufficient matter in it, with some alterations, to make an interesting play, not unsuited to the common circumstances of even our country theatres; and indeed I have altered it so considerably that full one half of it may be said to be newly written. In the original it was uniformly written in blank verse, and in many of the scenes, particularly those approaching to comic, my reader will readily believe it was sufficiently rugged and hobbling; I have, therefore, taken the liberty of writing in plain prose all those parts where I thought blank verse would be cumbersome and stilted. The only scenes in the play that remain exactly or nearly as they stood in the original are, that between Rayner and the Old Man of the wood, in which I have scarcely altered a single word, and that, Act IV. Scene III. between Zaterloo and his mother.

A play, with the scene laid in Germany, and opening with a noisy meeting of midnight robbers over their wine, will, I believe, suggest to my readers certain sources from which he will suppose my ideas must certainly have been taken. Will he give me perfect credit when I assure him, at the time this play was written, I had not only never read any

German plays, but was even ignorant that such things as German plays of any reputation existed? I hope—I am almost bold enough to say, I know that he will. And that I may not abuse his faith by smuggling any thing under its protection not strictly entitled to it, I must inform him that the short scene between Rayner and his servant Herman, which I thought in some degree necessary to shew the character and temper of the master, and to interest us in his favour before the great action of the piece begins, was entirely introduced in my later alterations, and is therefore liable to whatever charge of imitation it may seem to deserve, though I have not been sensible, in writing it, of having any particular class of authors in my mind.

Of the comedy that follows it I shall say but little. To those who are chiefly accustomed, in works of this kind, to admire quick turns of thought, pointed expression, witty repartee, and the ludicrous display of the transient passing follies and fashions of the world, this play will have but few attractions. The representation of a few characters, not, I believe, “over-stepping the modesty of nature,” who are connected together in a very simple plot, carried on throughout with cheerfulness, unmixed with any pretensions to great refinement of sentiment, or delicate strokes of tenderness, is all this piece has to boast of: and with no higher pretensions, the greater proportion of my readers will not, I flatter myself, find fault with me for having made it a kind of division or stepping-stone between

the two tragedies; where, if they do not enjoy a brilliant sunshine, they may at least have a little flickering of the sunbeams to play upon them as they pass from one sombre gloom to another. It has lain by me for many years, and has received a very few inconsiderable alterations.

The last play of this volume was written in the hope of being brought out upon our largest theatre, enriched as it then was by two actors whose noble appearance and strong powers of expression seemed to me peculiarly suited to its two principal characters. The subject of it is taken from Gibbon's account of the siege of Constantinople by the Turks. It was a subject that pressed itself upon me, at a time when I had no thoughts of writing at all, and (if I may use the expression) *would* be written upon. The character there displayed of Constantine Paleologus, the last of the Cæsars, a modest, affectionate, domestic man; nursed in a luxurious court in habits of indulgence and indolence; without ambition, even without hope, rousing himself up on the approach of unavoidable ruin; and deserted by every christian prince in Europe, deserted by his own worthless and enervated subjects, supported alone by a generous band, chiefly of strangers, devoting themselves to him from generous attachment;—to see him thus circumstanced, nobly fronting the storm, and perishing as became the last of a long line of kings, the last of the Romans;—this was a view of man—of noble and dignified exertion which it was impossible for me to resist, though well

aware that no play I am capable of writing can ever be equal to what such a subject deserves. So much was I pleased with those generous ties—may I be permitted to make use of a scripture phrase, and say, those “cords of a man?” binding together the noble Paleologus and his brave imperial band, that, had I followed my own inclination, delineating those would have been the principal object of the piece. But convinced that something more was requisite to interest a common audience, and give sufficient variety to the scenes, I introduced the character of Valeria, and brought forward the domestic qualities of Constantine as well as those of the unfortunate prince and beloved leader.

Mahomet and Justiniani are the only characters in the piece, Constantine excepted, that are not imaginary. The first will be found, I hope, to correspond with the character given of him by the historian. To alter, for the idle convenience of poetry, conspicuous, or indeed any characters that have been known in the world, appears to me highly blameable, though in filling up an outline given us by history we cannot well avoid heightening or diminishing the general effect. Justiniani, if I well remember (for I have not the history by me at present to refer to), was a noble Genoese, who, after a life distinguished for military honour, disgraced himself by being the first to turn his back when the Turks attacked the breach on the day of the last general assault, and was the immediate cause of the city being taken. He is said after-

wards on this account to have died of a broken heart. I have endeavoured to represent him as a proud man with a high sense of honour, rather than natively brave, and therefore particularly punctilious in every thing that concerns the reputation of a soldier. To him I have ventured to oppose a military character of a very different description, in the commander of the Genoese vessels which so gallantly forced their way into the port of Constantinople during the siege; and if I have dwelt too much on the rough generous gallantry of a brave seaman, and given too many allusions throughout the whole to the dangers and vicissitudes of a seafaring life, my country, which has owed so much to brave men of this class, will stand forth in my defence, and say, that a Briton upon this subject writes proudly, and therefore is tempted to write profusely. In the other imaginary characters, particularly that of Othus, I have endeavoured to accord with the circumstances of the times; for it is to be remembered, that slothful and corrupted as the inhabitants of Constantinople then were, amongst them were still to be found the chief remains of ancient literature and refinement\*.

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\* The character of Othoric, or rather the circumstance of his death, I have taken from an account I have read somewhere, I believe in one of Dr. Moore's Novels, of a Highland serjeant, who saved himself by a similar stratagem from the torments prepared for him by the American Indians.



Perhaps in the conduct of this tragedy I have sometimes weakened the interest of it by attending too much to magnificence and show. But it was intended for a large theatre, where a play is rather looked at than listened to, and where, indeed, by a great proportion of the audience, it cannot be heard; and though I might now very easily remove that show, yet to place in its stead what it has most probably kept back, would be almost impossible. For that which has probably been prevented by it, should have been woven and incorporated into the original texture of the piece, and cannot afterwards be inserted here and there in streaks and patches. It has also, I am inclined to believe, received some injury from my having had, when I sketched my two chief characters, the actors who I intended should represent them, too much in my thoughts. This is a fault, and I am sensible it is so: but those who have seen and admired the great powers of those actors in the highest line of tragedy, will easily admit that I have not sinned without a strong temptation. I hope also that this, standing alone, as a single offence of the kind, amongst a considerable number of plays which, if I live long enough, my present task will probably increase to, may be forgiven.

I am sensible there is not that strength and compactness of plot; that close connection of events producing one another in this play, which is a great perfection in every dramatic work, and which I am sorry to say is a perfection that is not to be found

in any work of mine that I have hitherto published. However, I flatter myself I have in this instance a good excuse to make. It appears to me that, in taking the subject of a poem or play from real story, we are not warranted, even by the prerogatives of bardship, to assign imaginary causes to great public events. We may accompany those events with imaginary characters and circumstances of no great importance, that alter them no more in the mind of the reader than the garniture with which a painter decorates the barrenness of some well-known rock or mountain that serves for a landmark to the inhabitants of the surrounding country. He may clothe its rugged sides with brushwood, and hang a few storm-stunted oaks on its bare peaks; he may throw a thin covering of mist on some untoward line of its acclivity, and bring into stronger light the bold storied towerings of its pillared cliffs; he may even stretch the rainbow of heaven over its gigantic head, but its large and general form must remain unaltered. To have made a romantic passion for Valeria the cause of Mahomet's besieging the city, would, I believe, have pleased the generality of readers, and have made this play appear to them more like what a play ought to be; but I must then have done what I consider as wrong.

It would be impertinent to proceed farther in pointing out the merit, if it has any, or demerit of this tragedy, of which I cannot pretend to be a very clear-sighted or impartial judge. I leave it, with its companions, to my reader, who will, I doubt not,

peruse them all with reasonable indulgence, and more than this it would be foolish even to desire. If I find that, upon the whole, these plays have given more pleasure to the public than the reverse, I shall not the less cheerfully bring forward, at some future time, those which remain behind, because their faults shall have been fully exposed to the censure they deserve.



**R A Y N E R :**

**A TRAGEDY,**

**IN FIVE ACTS.**

**B**

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN:

RAYNER.

COUNT ZATERLOO, *a worthless dissipated nobleman  
of ruined fortune, and chief of a band of lawless  
ruined men, like himself.*

BERNARD, } *Gentlemen and followers of Zaterloo.*  
SEBASTIAN, }

HARDIBRAND, *an old general.*

MARDONIO, *a monk.*

*Old Man of the Wood.*

OHIO, *a negro attached to the prison.*

HERMAN, *servant to Rayner.*

RICHARD.

BERTRAM.

GOBAS.

*Keeper of the Prison, Clown, Executioners, Turnkey,  
Jailor, Messenger, Landlord, Confessor, Crowd,  
&c.*

WOMEN:

ELIZABETH.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO, *mother to Zaterloo.*

MIRA, *a courtesan.*

ALICE, *friend to Mira.*

SCENE,—Germany, *near the frontiers of Poland and  
Silesia.*

# R A Y N E R.

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## ACT I.

SCENE I. *A noise of voices and unruly merriment is heard, whilst the curtain draws up, and discovers Count Zaterloo, Bernard, Sebastian, and others of their band, seated round a table with wine, &c.*

COUNT ZATERLOO.

**H**A! ha! ha! ha! with all this noisy mirth,  
Should some grave stranger, on his way misled,  
Now push the door a-jar, and look upon us  
Thus set, what class of men should we be deem'd?  
A set of light hearts, snug in fortune's lap,  
Who will not go to bed because we may?  
Or club of sharpers, flush'd with full success,  
New from the spoiling of some simple fool?  
Or troop of strolling players, at our ease,  
After the labours of our kingly sorrows,  
With throats new cool'd at as great charge of wine  
As our tough lungs have cost of lady's tears?

BERNARD.

No, no, thou hast not hit upon it yet:  
He'd take thee for the heir of some old miser,

Treating thy friends, as first fruits of thy kingdom,  
 With flowing bumpers to the quiet rest  
 Of thy good kinsman's soul.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Yes, Bernard, thou say'st well: and thy dark  
 visage,  
 Lank and unfuited to all mirth, would mark thee  
 The undertaker, who amongst the guests  
 Had come on matters of his fable trade,  
 Grinning a strange, uncomely, jaw-bone smile  
 O'er the fair prospect of his future gains.

SEBASTIAN.

Methinks, at least, in this gay, jolly band,  
 He scarcely would discover needy men,  
 Who better days have seen.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Tut, man! thou art too grave; thou art too  
 grave—  
 Which of you sung that song with merry lay  
 Some few nights since? Come, let us have it now.

S O N G.

*Ye who fain would happy be,  
 Give the hand, and join with me :  
 They who toil the weary day,  
 They who bend with locks of grey,  
 They who tread the beaten way,  
 Fools who work that we may play,*



*Fold their weary arms to sleep,  
Come, let us our vigil keep.*

*Fellows, join, and never fear ;  
Ye who would be happy, hear.  
With the sober and the meek,  
Lighter flies the passing week ?  
In his dwelling warm and sleek,  
Brighter smiles the rich man's cheek ?  
Wiser things may wise men say,  
But we are wiser far than they.*

*Come, light spirits, light and free,  
Wiseſt they who fooliſh be.  
He who hammers at the pot,  
He who brews for every ſot,  
He who made my hoſe and coat,  
Is a better man I wot ;  
Yet were we form'd, events declare,  
He to work and I to wear.*

*Miſtreſs of the miſty ſhroud,  
O, lovely moon ! come from thy cloud.  
When thou o'erlook'ſt the ocean's brine,  
Ourſelves we view in floods of wine.  
Our conſtancy reſembles thine ;  
Like thee in borrow'd robes we ſhine ;  
Then let us, in thy kindred light,  
Still wake, the rulers of the night.*

COUNT ZATERLOO.

It is a song of Halbert's, is it not?  
He was a social jolly-hearted mate,  
And had a knack of making ready rhymes.

BERNARD.

I knew him well: what has become of him?

COUNT ZATERLOO (*pretending not to hear*).  
Fill up your glafs, and let the flask go round.

BERNARD.

What has become of Halbert, dost thou know?

COUNT ZATERLOO (*still pretending not to hear*).  
This wine is richly flavour'd, is it not?

BERNARD.

It is.—But Halbert; know ye aught of him?

COUNT ZATERLOO.

The devil take thy question, asking spirit!  
For when thou get'st a notion by the skirt,  
Thou, like an English bull-dog, keep'st thy hold,  
And wilt not let it go.—  
He shot himself in prison some months since:  
Now, there's thine answer for thee; art thou satis-  
fied?

(*A deep and long pause; then Zaterloo starts  
up as if he recollected something.*)

He will be with us ere I've pav'd his way.

SEBASTIAN. —

Hast thou some new associate to propose?

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Know ye the younger branch of Valvo's house?  
Whose valiant father left him but his sword  
And his proud spirit, thro' this changeful world  
To shape his way, with heart as truly tempered  
To all the softest witch'ries of refinement  
As e'er own'd cherish'd heir of wide domains,  
In palace nurs'd.

SEBASTIAN.

I've seen him when a youth.  
But he since then has of a foreign state  
The soldier been; and had not now returned,  
But in the hope, 'tis said, of being heir  
To his great uncle's vast and rich possessions,  
Of which that villain Hubert has depriv'd him  
With treach'rous wiles. Poor heart! he has my  
pity.  
'Tis said a ling'ring fever seiz'd upon him  
From disappointment; and I marvel not;  
The stroke was most severe.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

And felt more keenly,  
For that he left behind him, in the country  
To which he now belongs, a gentle maid  
And his betroth'd, with whom he thought to share

His promis'd wealth.  
 But these things rest.—Thus driven as we are  
 To this uncertain, daring course of life,  
 The stronger and the more respectable  
 Our band, the greater chance of prospering.  
 Our number is too small; and, by my soul,  
 To see a mean, plebeian, vulgar knave,  
 Admitted of our fellowship, still rubs  
 Against my nature. Such a man as Rayner  
 Is precious, and, once gain'd, is sure and steadfast,  
 But few days since I met him, dark and thoughtful,  
 With melancholy and unwonted gait  
 Slow faunt'ring thro' lone, unfrequented paths,  
 Like one whose soul from man's observing eye  
 Shrinks gall'd, as shrinks the member newly torn  
 From every flightest touch. Seeing him thus,  
 I mark'd him for my man,

BERNARD.

Did'st thou accost him?

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Yes; when to my greeting,  
 "Thou see'st I am unhappy, go thy ways,"  
 He fretful said, and turn'd. I still persisted,  
 With soothing words which thrill'd against his heart,  
 (For in our youthful days we once were playmates,)  
 Like the sweet tones of some forgotten song,  
 Till, like a pent-up flood swoln to the height,  
 He pour'd his griefs into my breast with tears,

Such as the manliest men in their cross'd lives  
Are sometimes forc'd to shed.

SEBASTIAN.

And spoke he of his love?

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Nay, there indeed  
He was reserv'd ; but that part of his story,  
Which I from sure authority have learnt,  
I still thro' broken words could shrewdly read,  
Altho' he nam'd it not.

BERNARD.

Hast thou explain'd to him our course of life?

COUNT ZATERLOO.

No, that had been too much : but can't thou  
doubt,  
Suff'ring such wrongs as Hubert's artful baseness  
Has put upon him, he will scruple long,  
Thus circumstanc'd, to join his arm with ours  
In murd'ring the rich villain?

BERNARD (*looking at Sebastian, who shrinks back*),

I pray thee call it shooting ! that plain word  
Still makes Sebastian, like a squeamish dame,  
Shrink and look lily-fac'd. To shoot a man  
As one in battle shoots a fronted foe ;  
As from the tavern's broil, in measur'd field,  
One shoots a friend, is nought :—but that word  
murder—

It hath a horrid sound ; pray thee, good captain,  
 Remember 'tis a band of gentlemen  
 Thou dost command, and let such gentle phrase  
 Fall from thy tongue as gentle ears may suit.  
*(Omnes laughing loud at Sebastian.)*

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Hush ! Rayner is at hand, I hear his steps.

*Enter Rayner.*

I give you welcome, Rayner, with my heart :  
 These are my friends, of whom I well might boast,  
 But that it seems like boasting of myself.  
 Here, take your place, and join our fellowship.  
 There is but little need of ceremony  
 With those whom like misfortunes bring together.

RAYNER.

I take my seat, honour'd in such a place ;  
 And so far to misfortune am indebted,  
 Which has procur'd it for me. *(Sits down.)*

BERNARD *(drinking to Rayner).*

This do I fill to future fellowship :  
 To that which makes, at fortune's lowest ebb,  
 A few brave men united, mock the world  
 And all its good-boy rules ; enabling them  
 Boldly to seize their portion of life's feast,  
 Which griping av'rice or unjust oppression  
 Would from them snatch, whilst with insulting  
 scorn  
 It mocks their poverty and patient want.

RAYNER.

Thou truly say'st ; at least I have observ'd  
That those who bear misfortunes over meekly  
Do but persuade mankind that they and want  
Are all too fitly match'd to be disjoin'd,  
And so to it they leave them.

BERNARD.

'Tis ever so :  
Even good men then neglect them ; but the base,  
They, who by mean and undermining arts  
To o'ergrown wealth attain, like the ass's heel  
'Gainst the sick lion's low and lanken breast  
Spurn at them.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Yes, good Bernard, thou speak'st truly.  
For I myself, who, as thou know'st right well,  
Am not too meekly to misfortune bent,  
Have somewhat of the worthless ass's kick  
Against my bosom felt.—'Lone and unarm'd—  
Had but one brave companion by my side  
My anger shar'd, full dearly had the knave—  
But let it pass—he had a brave man's curse,  
And that will rest upon him.

BERNARD.

But, pray thee, Count, tell us the circumstance,  
Thou speak'st in mystery.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

A few days since, returning near my home,  
 Upon a narrow path rais'd from a road  
 With mud choak'd up, behind me trampling came,  
 A band of liv'ried rascals at his heels,  
 In all his awkward state, a puff'd-up worldling,  
 And rode me off my way; whilst looking back,  
 He turned his head with a malicious grin  
 At the poor spatter'd wretch, who in the mud  
 Stood showering curses on him.

RAYNER.

Ay, 'tis the curfed insolence of wealth  
 That makes the poor man poor. Thou wert un-  
 arm'd?

COUNT ZATERLOO.

I was; or by this hand, poor as I am,  
 I should have spent a brace of bullets on him  
 With much good-will.

RAYNER.

Know'st thou the villain's name?

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Faith, I'm almost ashamed to tell it thee.  
 Thou know'st him well; he is a rich man now;  
 His name is Hubert.

RAYNER.

There lives no blacker villain on the earth



Than him who bears it.—But thou know'st it all.  
 When from a distant country, where with honour  
 I earn'd a soldier's pittance, the fair promises  
 Of a near kinsman tempted me, and I,  
 Tho' by my nature most incautious;  
 And little skill'd to gain by flatt'ring arts  
 An old man's love, high in his favour stood;  
 That villain Hubert rous'd his jealous nature  
 With artful tales of slights and heir-like wishes,  
 And side-long mock'ry of his feebleness,  
 Till, in the bitterness of changed love,  
 All his vast wealth he did bequeath to him,  
 And left me here, ev'n in this stranger's land,  
 (For years of absence makes it so to me,)  
 A disappointed, friendless, unknown man,  
 Poor and depressed, such as you see me now.

BERNARD.

Double, detested, cruel-hearted villain!

COUNT ZATERLOO (*starting up with affected vehemence*).

By heaven he dies, as I do wear this arm!

(*they all start up.*)

Defended by a host of liv'ried knaves,  
 I'd seek him out alone.

BERNARD.

Thou shalt not go alone; here, heart and hand  
 We will all join thee in so good a cause.

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

My arm is at thy will.

SECOND GENTLEMAN.

Take my aid too ;  
We never can be bold in better cause.

THIRD GENTLEMAN (*on receiving a sign from Zaterloo*).

Then, Sirs, you must be speedy with your vengeance,  
For I am well inform'd that on to-morrow,  
With all his treasure, for a distant province  
He will begin his journey towards eve.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Ha! then good fortune leads him to our hands ;  
How goes he guarded ?

THIRD GENTLEMAN.

With a slender train.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Then thanks to fortune's fav'ring smiles, which  
thus,  
Whilst we but seek revenge for a friend's wrongs,  
So kindly throws into our heedless way  
The easy cure of our necessities.  
Yes, let us seize the greedy gluttoned villain!

Let us disgorge him of his ill-got gains!  
He long enough has rioted in ease,  
Whilst better men have felt the gripe of want.

BERNARD.

Yes, let it be so, let the villain die !

COUNT ZATERLOO.

What say'st thou, Rayner ? thou alone art silent.

RAYNER.

The wrongs are mine, and if with indignation  
They fill your breasts, in strong desire of vengeance  
Ye well may guess I am not far behind :  
But there's a law above all human bonds,  
Which damps the eager beating of my heart,  
And says, " do thou no murder."

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Well, clear thy knitted brows, nor look thus  
strangely.  
We both are form'd, my friend, to know like feel-  
ings,  
Like wants and wishes, and from better days  
Both are reduced to fortune's lowest ebb :  
And I as well as thou, standing thus singly,  
Can feed my fancy up with strong conceits  
Of what in letter'd lore is virtue term'd,  
And bear its darkest frowns. There was a time,  
When sharing ev'ry wish and ev'ry view  
With one of weaker frame and softer soul ;

Yet forced by the dark frowns of adverse fortune  
 To live a willing outlaw from her presence,  
 Because I could not bear to come before her  
 A poor despised man, rest of that comeliness  
 And honest grace which independence gives,  
 To bid her throw aside her flowing robes  
 And decent ornaments of maiden pride,  
 Unveil the sweetness of her shelter'd beauty  
 To beating mid-day heats and chilling winds,  
 And be a wand'ring vagrant by my side;—  
 There was a time, my friend, when thus beset  
 At view of any means to better fortune,  
 A stronger pow'r had ris'n within my breast  
 And mock'd at law. But, standing thus alone,  
 I can as well as thou forego the gain  
 Which this occasion offers.—Let it pass!  
 There is within us, be it superstition,  
 Th' unscann'd opinions from our childhood cherish'd,  
 Or natural instinct, still a strong aversion  
 To ev'ry act of blood. Let us yield to it,  
 We will not strain our nature from its bent:  
 We'll do no violent deed.

RAYNER. (*catching hold of Zaterloo with great agitation*).

O thou hast mov'd me! thou hast conjur'd  
 thought!  
 Wert thou—Wert thou indeed thus circumstanc'd?  
 And thy deserted love; what was her fate?

COUNT ZATERLOO.

She felt not long the cruel separation:

One lovely bush of the pale virgin thorn,  
 Bent o'er a little heap of lowly turf,  
 Is all the sad memorial of her worth ;  
 All that remains to mark where she is laid.

RAYNER.

Oh! Oh! and was it thus!

COUNT ZATERLOO.

But let us now shake off these dismal thoughts,  
 This hour was meant for social fellowship :  
 Resume your seats, my friends, and, gentle Rayner,  
 Clear up thy cloudy brows and take thy place.

RAYNER.

I fain would be excus'd.

COUNT ZATERLOO (*gently forcing him to sit down*).

Nay, no excuse :

Thou must perforce a social hour or two  
 Spend with us. To ye all, my noble friends,  
 I fill this cup. (*drinks.*)

—— Bernard, how goes thy suit?  
 Hast thou yet to thy greedy Lawyer's pocket  
 Convey'd thy hindmost ducat? Ha, ha, ha!  
 Had he, with arms in hand, ta'en from thee boldly  
 Half of the sum, thou would'st have call'd him  
 robber.

Ha, ha, ha! (*laughing heartily.*)

BERNARD.

Yes, thou may'st laugh :

C

We nice distinctions make.—I had an uncle,  
Who once upon a time —

COUNT ZATERLOO.

I hope, good Bernard,  
Thy story will be shorter than thy suit.

*(Rayner, who has been sitting in gloomy thoughtfulness, without attending to any thing around him, whilst Zaterloo has been keeping an eye of observation on him, now rises up in great agitation to go away.)*

COUNT ZATERLOO.

What is the matter, Rayner?

RAYNER.

I am disturb'd—I know not how I am—  
Let me take leave, I pray you.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Thou shalt not quit us thus. What is the matter?

RAYNER.

Question me not: my thoughts are all confus'd:  
There is a strong temptation fasten'd on me.  
I am not well.

COUNT ZATERLOO *(aside to Bernard)*.

Ay, now it works upon him:

This will do —

*(Aloud and preventing Rayner from going.)*

If thou'rt unwell, art thou not with thy friends?

RAYNER.

If ye indeed are friends, not spirits enleagu'd  
To force me to my ruin, let me go —  
Let me go to my home.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

What, dost thou call a bare unfurnish'd chamber,  
With griping Landlord clam'ring in thine ears  
For what he knows thou canst not give, thy home?

RAYNER (*sighing deeply*).

I have no other.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Stay thou here with us :

In the next chamber thou shalt rest a while.  
Lead him, my kind Sebastian, by the hand :  
There is a sort of woman's kindliness  
About thy nature which befits thee best  
To be a sick man's friend. I'll follow you.

(*Exit Rayner, leaning on Sebastian, turning  
about to his friends triumphantly as they  
go off.*)

I have secur'd my man. (*A voice heard without.*)  
But hark ! a voice without ! It is my mother's.  
Secure the lettic'd door. Plague on her kindness  
To haunt me here ! I have forgot my promise.  
(*To Bernard.*) Make fast the lettic'd door and  
answer for me.

BERNARD (*after fastening a door of lettice work  
through which the Countess is seen*).

Who's there ? what want ye ?

COUNTESS ZATERLOO (*without*).

I want my son: I pray you is he here?

BERNARD.

He is not here.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO (*without*).

Nay, say not so, I think he is with you.  
O tell him I have sat these three long hours,  
Counting the weary beatings of the clock,  
Which slowly portion'd out the promis'd time  
That brought him not to bless me with his sight.  
If he is well, why does he thus forget?  
And if he is not, as I fear he is not,  
Tell me the worst, and let me be with him  
To smooth his couch and raise his sickly head.

COUNT ZATERLOO (*aside to Bernard*).

Tell her it is unseemly for a mother  
To run about like a new foolish wife.

BERNARD.

If you complain thus movingly, fair widow,  
We shall believe you seek a second husband  
In lieu of your good son; and by my truth  
It were a better errand.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

O base of thought, as most unblest of speech!  
My son is not with you: it cannot be:  
I did him wrong to seek him in such company.



BERNARD (*speaking loud after her as she retires from the door.*)

Not far from hence, there is a nightly meeting  
Of worthy, sober, well-disposed folks,  
Who once a week do offer up their prayers  
And chant most faintly hymns till morning dawn,  
It is more likely you will find him there.

(*Omnes laughing.*)

COUNT ZATERLOO.

She's gone.

BERNARD.

Yes, yes; come from thy hiding place.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Now what a most unreasonable woman!  
Thinks she, thus ripen'd to these manly years,  
That I must run whene'er my finger aches  
To lean my silly head upon her lap?  
'Tis well I have no wife.

BERNARD.

Ay, so it is.

There is no pleasing those high legal dames  
With endless claims upon a man's regard:  
Heaven save us from them all!

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Well, this I drink to precious liberty:

He is a fool indeed who parts with that.

*(A loud voice and bustling heard without.)*

What's this comes next to plague us?

BERNARD.

'Tis Mira's voice.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Haft thou not sent to say, that urgent bus'ness  
Detains me from her banquet?

BERNARD.

I have ; I sent to her a written message.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Keep fast the door and I will stand conceal'd.

*(Conceals himself, and Mira appears thro' the  
latticed door.)*

MIRA *(without)*.

Where is Count Zaterloo? Let me pass on.

BERNARD.

Affairs of greatest consequence detain him,  
My beauteous Mira ; and I needs must say  
That now you may not pass. —  
He's much concern'd : early upon the morrow  
He will be with you.

MIRA.

Upon the morrow ! prate not thus to me !  
He shall to-night go with me where I list,

Or never see my face again. To-morrow !  
 Open the door I say ! this weakly barrier  
 Shall not oppose my way.

*(Beating violently against the door.)*

COUNT ZATERLOO *(aside to Bernard)*.

Faith I believe we must e'en let her in,  
 She may do some rash thing, if we persist.

*(Bernard unbolts the door ; Zaterloo comes from  
 his concealment ; and enter Mira, superbly dress'd,  
 and in a violent passion.)*

MIRA.

Is this the way you keep your promises ?  
 Is this your faith ? is this your gallantry ?

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Mira, my gentle love, I pray thee hear me !  
 I sent to tell thee bus'ness of great moment.

MIRA.

Yes, yes ! I have receiv'd your scurvy message.  
 And well I know that ev'ry paltry matter  
 Is cause sufficient for neglecting me.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Thou know'st to be from thee is painful to me.

MIRA.

So it should seem, by taking so much care  
 To comfort ye the while. *(pointing to the wine, &c.)*  
 You do your bus'ness jovially, methinks.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Thou art too warm : accuse me as thou wilt  
Of aught but want of love.

MIRA.

O thou deceitful man ! I know thee well :  
Thou talk'st of love and thou wouldst break my  
heart.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Indeed I am to blame, my gentle love ;  
Yet be not thus : in token of forgiveness  
This friendly cup receive, and smile upon me.  
*(Offering her a cup, which she dashes to the ground.)*

MIRA.

Off with thy hateful gifts ! nought from thy hands  
Will I receive ; I scorn thy offering.  
Ev'n the rich robe thou hast so often promis'd me :  
Ay and so oft forgot, so I must call it,  
I would now scorn, since thou dost flight my love.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Indeed, my Mira, thou shalt have that robe  
Before two days be past : I swear to thee.  
Then do not look so frowningly, my love ;  
I know thou hast a soft relenting nature ;  
Smile my forgiveness.

MIRA.

O thou provoking man ! thou know'st full well

It is thyself and not thy gifts I prize :  
 Thou know'st too well how my fond doating heart  
 Is moved with the soft witch'ry of thy tongue ;  
 Yet thou wilt vex me thus, and break my heart.  
 Oh ! 'tis too much ! (*pretending to burst into tears.*)

COUNT ZATERLOO.

I cannot see thee weep : what would'st thou  
 have ?

MIRA.

I will have nought, unless you go with me.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

I cannot now, for I have urgent bus'ness.

MIRA.

Then stay, and never see my face again.  
 O that some friendly hand would end my days,  
 Since I have lived to see me thus despis'd.

COUNT ZATERLOO (*aside to Bernard*).

Bernard, I think I must e'en go with her.  
 See thou to Rayner : I will soon return.  
 (*Aloud.*) Then let us go, my love, thou dost com-  
 pel me.  
 Thy hand, sweet Mira. (*Exeunt Zaterloo and Mira.*)

BERNARD.

Well, gentle friends, it is blest liberty  
 Our noble chief enjoys. I must to Rayner.

Stay if you will, and keep ye merry here.

(*Omnes.*) No, we are tir'd, we will retire to rest.

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II. Rayner's Lodgings.

*Enter RAYNER alone.*

RAYNER.

Be still, ye idle thoughts that tofs me thus,  
 Changing like restless waves, but ever dark ;  
 Or some one of you o'er his fellows rise,  
 And bear a steady rule. Adversity !  
 Thou'ft come upon me like an ambush'd foe  
 In armed strength. If I had mark'd thy course,  
 I might have girt myself for thine approach,  
 While distant still, and met thee like a man.  
 But when new-fetter'd in a lover's bonds,  
 And dazzled too with hope's deceitful brightness,  
 Cam'ft thou like a thick cloud of defart sand,  
 And in dark night o'erwhelm'd me : deepest night,  
 Thro' which no waking vision ever gleams,  
 Save thy grim visage only, loathly want,  
 In all thy varied forms of misery.  
 My night, my day dreams, ah ! how are ye changed,  
 Since in the new-betroth'd, the lover's fancy,  
 Ye wove your sheeny maze of mingled thoughts,  
 Like sparkling dew-webs in the early Sun !

(*after a pause.*)

Elizabeth ! methinks ev'n now I see her,  
 As in the horrors of my last night's dream,  
 When, after following her thro' flood and fire,

She turn'd to me, and her weak arms stretch'd  
forth.

But ah! how changed, how pale, and spent, and  
keen!

As if already blighting poverty,  
That portion which her love must share with me,  
Had marr'd—cease, cease, base thought, it shall not  
be!

*(Enter Herman with a knapsack on his back,  
as if prepared for a journey.)*

What, my good Herman, art thou so soon ready?

HERMAN.

Yes, my dear master, but if you think it too soon,  
I will not go to-day. Nay if it were not that you  
force me to go, I should as soon have thought of  
deserting my friend (pardon my boldness, sir) in a  
wild wood amongst savages, as leaving you here in  
this strange place in the state you are in at present.  
Pardon my boldness, sir.

RAYNER.

Thou hast no boldness to pardon, Herman: thou  
art well entitled to call thyself my friend; there is  
not one amongst those who have borne that name,  
who would have done more for me than thou hast  
done.

HERMAN.

Ah sir!

RAYNER *(assuming a look of cheerfulness)*.

Fy, do not look so sadly upon me, man; thanks

to thy good nursing, and the good broth thou hast made me, I am getting strong again : and as for the state of my coffers, for which thou so much concernest thyself, do not let that disturb thee. My tide of means is, to be sure, pretty well ebb'd just now ; but some wind or other will spring up to set it a flowing again. In the mean time thou knowest I would travel alone : perhaps I may ramble about a little while mysteriously, like the wandering Jew or some of those lonely philosophers which thy old stories tell thee about, and there is no knowing what I may find out to do me good. The philosopher's stone, thou knowest, may as well fall into my hands as those of any other wanderer, so pray thee, man, dont look so ruefully upon me.

HERMAN.

Ah, my dear master ! there is something here that hangs heavy on my heart, and says, if I leave you now, some evil will befall you : I beseech you let me stay with you, I shall find something to do in this town, and I can

RAYNER.

No, no, no ! Speak of this no more—we have argued this point already. And what is this which thou puttest down so slyly upon the table ? (*taking up a little packet which Herman has put secretly upon the table.*) Ha ! the jewels I have given thee in room of thy wages ! out upon it ! thou wilt make me angry with thee now, and it grieves me to be angry



with thee. Put it up, put it up : I command thee to do it ; and thou knowest I have not often used this stern word.

HERMAN.

O no, fir ! You have not indeed used it ; and I shall never meet with another master like you.

RAYNER.

Thou wilt meet, I hope, my dear Herman, with a far better master than I have been to thee, though not with one for whom thou wilt do so much kindly service as thou hast done for me ; and for this cause, perhaps, thou wilt not love him so much. God prosper thee for it, wherever thou goest !—Take this embrace and blessing for all thou hast done for me. Farewel ! farewel ! thou must be gone now ; indeed thou must. God blefs thee, my good Herman.

*(Pushing Herman gently off the stage, who wipes his eyes and seems unwilling to go.)*

*Exit Herman.)*

RAYNER *(alone)*.

Now am I left alone : there's no one near me  
That e'er hath loved or cared for me. Methinks  
I now can better look i'th' surly face  
Mine alter'd state, and bear to be in want.

I am alone, and I am glad of it.

Alas ! chang'd heart of mine ! what is that state  
Which gives to thee such thoughts ?—Elizabeth—  
At it again ! This strong idea still !

I am distracted when I think of this,  
 Therefore I must not, if I would be honest.  
 Those men—or are they men or are they devils?  
 With whom I met last night; they've fasten'd on  
 me  
 Fell thoughts, which, tho' I spurn them, haunt me  
 still.

Would I had never met them! —  
 Here comes my landlord with his furly face  
 Of debts and claims, and ev'ry irksome thing.

*(Enter Landlord with a letter.)*

Good morrow, Landlord.

LANDLORD.

I thank you, sir; I am glad to hear you call me  
 Landlord, for I began to be afraid you had mistaken  
 me for your Host.

RAYNER.

I understand you well enough, and indeed I have  
 proved your patience, or rather your impatience,  
 much longer than I wished. You have a letter in  
 your hand.

LANDLORD *(giving it)*.

There, Sir; if it bring you the news of any good  
 luck, I shall be glad of it.

RAYNER *(agitated)*.

From Elizabeth.—Good morning—good morn-  
 ing to you.

LANDLORD.

Read it, fir, and see if it bring you any good news; it is time now to look for some change in your favour.

RAYNER.

I cannot open it whilst thou art here. Have the goodness at least not to stand so near me.

LANDLORD.

So I must not occupy a place in my own house, forsooth, for fear of offending the good folks who do me the honour to live in it. (*retires to the bottom of the stage muttering to himself.*)

RAYNER (*after opening the letter with great emotion and reading it*).

O what is this! ———  
Abandon'd by the friend with whom she liv'd,  
And coming here to join me with all speed!  
O God! O God! (*sinks down upon a chair in violent agitation.*)

LANDLORD. (*running up to him*).

What is the matter now?

RAYNER.

Beyone, begone! I cannot answer thee.

*Enter* COUNT ZATERLOO.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Ha, Rayner! how is't with thee? thou look'st wildly.

(*To Landlord.*) Speak to me, friend: he heeds not what I say:

Has any new misfortune happen'd to him?

LANDLORD.

I fear there has, fir.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Rouse thee up, brave Rayner,  
A friend is come to thee.

RAYNER (*Starting up*).

Ha, is it thee?

Com'st thou upon me now, my tempter? now,  
Ev'n in my very moment of distraction?

Thou know'st thy time: some fiend has whisper'd  
to thee.

Ay, ay! say what thou wilt.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Thou'rt surely mad; I came not, on my word,  
To say aught to thee which an honest ear  
Might not receive; nor will I even speak,  
Since it so moves thee —

RAYNER (*interrupting him eagerly*).

Ah, but thou must !  
Thou must speak that, which, in its darkest hour,  
Push'd to extremity, 'midst ringing dizziness  
The ear of desperation doth receive,  
And I must listen to it.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

What, say'st thou so? 'Tis well (*aside*), but be  
more prudent,  
We are o'erheard. (*looking suspiciously to Landlord,  
who has retired a few paces behind.*)  
Come with me to my lodgings ;  
There wait my friends; all things shall be concerted:  
Come with me instantly ; the time is precious.

RAYNER (*in a tone of despair, clasping his hands  
vehemently*).

Ay, ay ! I'll go with thee.

(*Exeunt Count Zaterloo and Rayner:  
Manet Landlord.*)

LANDLORD (*coming forward*).

What's this I've overheard? Is this devil now  
going to tempt the poor distressed young man to do  
some foul deed in his necessity?—I have tempted  
him too, with my hard-hearted murmuring about  
the few wretched pounds that he owes me. I'll  
run after him and say, I don't care whether he pay  
me or not. (*running to the door and then stopping*

D

*(Softly.)* No, no ! softly, softly ! I dare say it is only some sharpening business they have got on hand, such as needy Gentlemen are sometimes forced to follow : I have got my conscience newly cleared off at confession last week, and I am to make an offering next holy day to the shrine of our patron St. Bernard ; this is no time, goodsooth, to lose such a sum upon scruples. *(Exit.)*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

RAYNER *(in a tone of despair, sighing, his hands outstretched.)*  
 Alas ! I'll go with thee  
 (Enter Count Zastrow and Rayner.)  
 My dear landlord.

LANDLORD *(coming forward.)*  
 What's this I've overheard ? Is this devil now  
 going to tempt the poor distressed young man to do  
 some foul deed in his necessity ?—I have caught  
 him out, and my hard heart would not permit me  
 to let him go. He shall be here now. *(The  
 door opens, and the Count and Rayner enter.)*  
 Now, what's the matter ?

D

## ACT II.

SCENE I. *A wood: dark night, with a pale gleam of distant lightning seen once or twice on the edge of the horizon. Advancing by the bottom of the stage, a few moving lights, as if from lanthorns, are seen, and at the same time several signal-calls and loud whistles are heard, with the distant answer returned to them from another part of the wood: Enter Count Zaterloo, Rayner, Sebastian, and others of the band, armed, and a few of them bearing in their hands dark lanthorns. It is particularly requested if this play should ever be acted, that no light may be permitted upon the stage but that which proceeds from the lanthorns only.*

COUNT ZATERLOO (*to Sebastian*).

They must be near: didst thou not hear their call?

SEBASTIAN.

Methought I did; but who in this wild wood  
 May credit give to either eye or ear?  
 How oft we've been deceiv'd with our own voices,  
 From rocky precipice or hollow cave,  
 'Midst the confused sound of rustling leaves,  
 And creaking boughs, and cries of nightly birds,  
 Returning seeming answer!

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Rayner, where standest thou?

D 2

RAYNER.

Here, on thy left.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Surely these wild scenes have depriv'd thy tongue  
Of speech. Let's hear thy voice's sound, good man,  
To say thou art alive. Thou'rt marvellous silent:  
Didst thou not also hear them?

RAYNER.

I know not truly if I did. Around me,  
All seems like the dark mingled mimicry  
Of fev'rish sleep; in which the half-doubting mind,  
Wilder'd and weary, with a deep-drawn breath,  
Says to itself, "Shall I not wake?"

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Fy, man!

Wilt thou not keep thy soldier's spirit up?  
To-morrow's sun will be thy waking time,  
And thou wilt wake a rich man and a free.

RAYNER.

My waking time!—no, no! I must sleep on,  
And have no waking.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Ha! does thy mind misgive thee on the brink?

RAYNER.

What passes in my mind, to thee is nothing,



If my hand do the work that's fasten'd on me.  
 Let's pass to it as quickly as thou wilt,  
 And do not speak to me. —

*Enter Bernard and others, armed &c.*

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Well met, my friends! well met! for we  
 despair'd  
 Of ever seeing you.

SEBASTIAN.

Yet we have heard your voices many times,  
 Now calling us on this side, now on that,  
 As tho' you had from place to place still skipp'd,  
 Like Will o'the Wisp, to lose us on our way.

BERNARD.

We've far'd alike; so have we thought of you.

COUNT ZATERLOO,

Have you discover'd aught of those we seek?

BERNARD.

No; all is still, as far as we have travers'd:  
 No gleaming torch gives notice from afar,  
 Nor trampling hoofs found on the distant road.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Then must we take again our sev'ral routs,  
 That haply we may learn, ere he approach,

What strength we have to face, and how he travels;  
 And that we may not wander thus again,  
 This aged oak shall be our meeting place;  
 Where having join'd, we'll by a shorter compass  
 Attack them near the centre of the wood.

SEBASTIAN.

The night grows wond'rous dark: deep-swellings  
 gusts  
 And sultry stillness take the rule by turn;  
 Whilst o'er our heads the black and heavy clouds  
 Roll slowly on. This surely bodes a storm.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

I hope the devil will raise no tempest now,  
 To save this child of his, and from his journey  
 Make him turn back, crossing our fortunes.

BERNARD.

Fear not!  
 For, be the tempest of the devil's raising,  
 It will do thee no harm. To his good favour  
 Thou hast (wrong not thy merit) claims too strong.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Then come on, friends, and I shall be your  
 warrant!  
 Growl sky and earth and air, ne'er trouble ye;  
 They are secure who have a friend at court.

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II. *A different part of the wood, wild and savage: the Scene still darken'd, and a storm of thunder and lightning, accompanied with hail.*

*Enter* RAYNER.

RAYNER.

I know not where these men have shelter'd them.  
I've mis'd their signal: this loud stunning din  
Devours all other sounds. Where shall I go?  
Athwart this arch of deep embodied darkness,  
Swift shiv'ring lightnings glare, from end to end  
Mantling the welkin o'er in vivid flames;  
Or from aloft, like sheeted cataracts  
Of liquid fire, seem pour'd. Ev'n o'er my head  
The soft and misty-textur'd clouds seem chang'd  
To piles of harden'd rocks, which from their base,  
Like the up-breaking of a ruin'd world,  
Are hurl'd with force tremendous. Patt'ring hail  
Beats on my shrinking form with spiteful pith:  
Where shall I shelter me? Ha! thro' the trees  
Peers, near at hand, a small but settled light:  
I will make quickly towards it; perhaps  
There may be some lone dwelling in the wood.

*(Exit.*

SCENE III. *The inside of a cave: an Old man discover'd sitting by a small table made of coarse planks, with a lamp burning dimly upon it: the thunder heard still very loud.*

OLD MAN.

Doth angry heav'n still roll its loudest peal

O'er th' unblest head? Ay, thro' its deaf'ning roar  
 I hear the blood-avenging Spirit's voice,  
 And, as each furious turmoil spends its strength,  
 Still sounds up on the far-receding storm  
 Their distant growl.

'Tis hell that sends its fire and devils up  
 To lord it in the air. The very wind,  
 Rising in fitful eddies, horribly sounds,  
 Like bursts of damn'd howlings from beneath.

Is this a storm of nature's elements?

O, no, no, no! the blood-avenging spirits  
 Ride on the madding clouds: there is no place,  
 Not in the wildest den, wherein may rest  
 The unblest head. *(Knocking heard without.)*

—— Ha! knocking at my door!

*(Pauses and listens much alarmed: knocking heard still louder.)*

Say, who art thou that knock'st so furiously?  
 Think'st thou the clouds are sparing of their din,  
 That thou must thunder too? Say who thou art,  
 And what thou would'st at such an hour as this,  
 In such a place?

RAYNER *(without)*.

I am a lone, and tempest-beaten traveller,  
 Who humbly begs a shelter from the night,

OLD MAN.

Then art thou come where guest yet never  
 enter'd,

RAYNER (*without*).

I do not ask admittance as a guest,  
Would'st thou not save a creature from destruction,  
Ev'n a dumb animal? unbar the door,  
And let me lay my body under shelter.

(*Old Man makes no answer; the storm heard very loud.*)

RAYNER (*without*).

If thou'rt a man in nature as in voice,  
Thou canst not sit at peace beneath thy roof,  
And shut a stranger out to the rude night.  
I would, so circumstanced, have shelter'd thee.

OLD MAN.

He tries to move me with a soothing voice.

(*Aside.*)

(*Aloud.*) Thou art a knave; I will not let thee in.

RAYNER (*without*).

Belike I am, yet do not fear my wiles:  
All men are honest in a night like this.

OLD MAN,

Then I will let thee in, whoe'er thou art:  
Thou hast some sense, shouldst thou lack better  
things. (*He unbars a small door, and Rayner  
enters much ruffled and exhausted by the  
storm, and without his hat.*)

RAYNER.

I'm much beholden to thee.

OLD MAN.

No, thou art not.

RAYNER.

The violence of the night must plead my pardon,  
For breaking thus unask'd upon your rest.  
But wand'ring from my way, I know not how,  
And losing my companions of the road,  
Deep in the 'tangled wood the storm o'ertook me ;  
When spying thro' the trees this glimm'ring lamp,  
And judging it, as now it doth appear,  
The mid-night taper of some holy man,  
Such as do oft in dreary wilds like this  
Hold their abode, I ventur'd onwards.

(Old Man, offering him bread and dried fruits.)

OLD MAN.

Perhaps thou'rt hungry.

RAYNER.

I thank you gratefully.

OLD MAN.

There is no need.  
Fall to, if thou hast any mind to it.

RAYNER.

I thank you truly, but I am not hungry.

OLD MAN.

Perhaps thou'rt dainty : I've naught else to give  
thee.

RAYNER.

I should despise myself, if any food  
Could bear such value in my estimation,  
As that it should to me a straw's worth seem,  
To feed on homeliest, or on richest fare.

OLD MAN.

So much the better. (*They sit down.*)

RAYNER.

If I may guess from all I see around me,  
The luxuries and follies of the world  
Have long been banish'd here.

(*Old Man looks sternly at Rayner, who looks  
fixedly upon him again, and both remain for  
some time silent.*)

OLD MAN.

Why look'st thou so?  
What is there in my face that thou would'st scan?  
I'm old and live alone: what would'st thou know?

RAYNER.

I crave your pardon, and repress all wishes  
That may disturb you.

OLD MAN.

The night wears on, let us both go to rest.

RAYNER.

I thank you, for in truth I'm very tir'd.

RAYNER.

OLD MAN (*pointing to his couch*).

There is thy place.

RAYNER.

Nay, I am young; the ground shall be my couch.  
I will not take your bed.

(*Old Man then gives Rayner a cloak, which he wraps about him, laying himself down in a corner of the cave. The storm now heard at a distance. After walking up and down for some time, the Old Man goes close up to Rayner, who appears asleep, and looks earnestly upon him; Rayner opening his eyes seems surprised.*)

OLD MAN,

Be not afraid, I will not cut thy throat.

RAYNER (*starting half up from the ground*).

Nay, heaven such deed forbend! I fear thee not:  
I can defend myself. (*Grasping his sword.*)

OLD MAN.

Be not offended; but methought thy looks  
Did seem as tho' thou wert afraid of me.  
Rest thou in peace—rest thou in peace, young  
man:

I would not do thee harm for many worlds.

(*Rayner goes to rest again, still keeping his drawn sword in his hand. The Old Man goes to rest likewise, but shortly after starts from his couch in great agitation.*)



OLD MAN.

It is mine hour of horror : 'tis upon me !  
 I hear th'approaching found of feet unearthly :  
 I feel the pent-up vapour's chilly breath  
 Burst from the yawning vault :—It is at hand.

*(Turning towards the door as if he saw some one enter.)*

Ha ! com'ft thou still in white and sheeted weeds,  
 With hand thus pointing to thy bloody side ?  
 Thy grave is deep enough in hallow'd ground !  
 Why com'ft thou ever, on my midnight rest ?  
 What dost thou want ? If thou hast power, as  
 seeming,

Stretch forth thine arm and take my life ; then free  
 From fleshy fears, in nature as thyself,  
 I'll follow thee to hell, and there abide  
 The fearing flames : but here, upon this earth,  
 Is placed between the living and the dead :  
 An awful mystery of separation,  
 Which makes their meeting frightful and unhallow'd.

*(In the vehemence of his agitation, he throws out his arm and strikes it against Rayner, who alarmed at his ravings has left his resting-place, and stolen softly behind him.)*

Ha ! what art thou ? *(starting and turning round to Rayner.)*

RAYNER.

Nay, thou with bristling locks, loose-knocking  
 joints

And fixed eyeballs starting in their sockets,  
Who speak't thus wildly to the vacant space,  
Say rather, what art thou.

OLD MAN.

I am a murderer. (*Rayner starts back from him  
and drops his sword.*)

Ah! wherefore dost thou stare so strangely on me?  
There's no blood on me now! 'tis long since past.  
Hast thou thyself no crime, that thus from me  
Thou dost in horror shrink?

RAYNER.

Most miserable man!

OLD MAN.

Thou truly say'st, for I am most miserable.

RAYNER.

And what am I? (*After a disturbed pause.*)

The storm did rage and bellow thro' the air,  
And the red lightning shiver'd:  
No traveller would venture on his way  
In such a night.—O, blessed, blessed storm!  
For yet it hath not been, and shall be never.  
Most great and Merciful! sav'd from this gulf,  
May I to thee look up?—No: in the dust—

(*As he bows himself to the earth, and is about to  
kneel, the report of fire arms is heard without,  
and he starts up again.*)

'Tis done!—O, it is done!—the horrible act!

(*Exit, beating his forehead violently.*)

OLD MAN.

What may this be? some band of nightly robbers  
Is near my cave, committing violent deeds.  
Thy light, weak flame, shall not again betray me,  
And lure unwelcome visitors. (*Puts out the lamp ;  
and after a dark pause, enter Count Zaterloo  
supporting himself on First Gentleman, who  
bears a dark lantern, which he sets down on  
the ground, and fastens the door of the cave  
carefully behind them.*)

COUNT ZATERLOO.

I am wounded grievously: who would have  
thought  
Of such a powerful guard of armed men  
Attending on his journey. He is slain:  
Did'st thou not see him fall?

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

Yes; we have kill'd our bird, but lost the eggs.  
Fortune has play'd us false, yet we've escap'd:  
Here we may rest; this cave is tenanted  
With some lone being whom we may controul,  
And take possession—— (*discovering Old Man.*)  
—— Something living here!  
What art thou?

OLD MAN.

I am a thing no better than yourselves.

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

The better then for thee that thou art so.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Conduct me onward : I perceive an opening  
Which leads, I guess, to some more close recess :  
Lay me down there for I am very faint.

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

I will obey thee. — Come thou too, old man ;  
Not from my sight one moment must thou budge.  
Come on : for, mark me well, should'st thou betray

us,

Tho' fetter'd down with chains in grated dungeons,  
Our arms were long enough to reach to thee.

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE IV. *Another part of the wood ; at a distance, on the back ground, are discovered two men watching a dead body by the light of a torch stuck between the boughs of a tree ; the stage otherwise perfectly dark.*

*Enter* GOBUS *on the front of the stage.*

GOBUS.

I fear they will all escape from us amongst these tangled paths and vile perplexing thickets. A man cannot get on half a dozen of paces here but some cursed clawing thing catches hold of him, and when he turns round to collar his enemy, with a good hearty curse in his mouth, it is nothing but a

thorn-bush or a briar after all. A plague upon't !  
I'll run no more after them if they should never be  
taken.—Who's there ?

*Enter a* COMPANION.

COMPANION.

What, are you here, Gobus ? I thought you  
had been in search of the robbers.

GOBUS.

So I was ; but what does it signify ? they have all  
got the start of us now, and we can scarcely ex-  
pect they will have the civility to wait till we come  
up with them.

COMPANION.

Ay, Ay, Gobus, that is a lazy man's argument.  
Why, there was one of them seen by Bertram not  
five minutes since, with his head uncovered, stalk-  
ing strangely amongst the trees like a madman, and  
he vows he will follow the scent through every path  
of the wood but he will have him, either alive or  
dead.

GOBUS.

But if he be a young stout robber, he may knock  
Bertram on the head in the mean time, and relieve  
him from the obligation of keeping his vow.

COMPANION.

Never fear that : his bugle-horn is by his side,  
and as soon as he comes up with him he will give

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his companions notice, and they will run to his assistance.

GOBUS.

Well, well, let them manage it the best way they can, and let us join our friends yonder, who keep watch by the body; there is good store of dried sticks in that corner, we may make a fire and warm ourselves till they return.

*(Horn heard without.)*

COMPANION.  
Ha! there is the signal, and close at hand too. He has caught his man and wants assistance; let us run to him, or the villain will escape.

*(Exit Companion and Gobus, who follows rather unwillingly, whilst the men who were watching the body run eagerly to the front of the stage.)*

FIRST MAN.

It founded to the right hand of us; let us strike into this path.

*(Horn sounds again.)*

SECOND MAN.

Ay, there it founds again; it is to this hand of us, but it is so dark there is no finding our way.

FIRST MAN.

We have been so long by the torch-light that the darkness is darker to us: run back and

fetch the light with thee. *(Several other attendants from different parts of the wood run across the stage, calling to one another with great eagerness, whilst the Second Man running back again to the bottom of the stage, snatches the torch from the tree, and comes forward with it.)*

*Enter* BERTRAM, GOBUS, and others, with Rayner as their prisoner.)

GOBUS *(speaking as they enter)*.

Here is light! here is light, friends! bring him near it, I pray you, that we may see what kind of a fish we have caught in our net. Ay, just as I said now, as hang'd a looking villain as ever scowl'd thro' the grates of a dungeon. See what a wild murderous look he has with his eyes! this is the very man that did the deed I warrant ye. Let us pull the cords faster round his arms tho': if he get one of his mischievous hands loose again, there is no knowing which of our brains he may knock out first.

FIRST MAN.

It will never be thine, I am sure, thou'rt always safe when the knocking out of brains is going on.

GOBUS.

As I'm a finner he'll get one of his hands loose if we do not take care of him. *(Attempting to tighten the cords round Rayner's arms.)*

BERTRAM (*putting him away with indignation*).

For shame, man, he is bound tight enough; I will not suffer thee to lay a finger upon him: and as for the hang'd face thou talk'st of, alack a day! it goes to my heart to see him, such a goodly-looking gentleman, for such I'll be sworn he is.

GOBUS.

Ay, no doubt! it is ever thus with thee. Thou did'st never in thy life see a thief go to the gallows without crying out, "alack a day! what a fine looking fellow it is!" Ay, and if he could but make shift to howl out half a verse of a psalm along with his father confessor, thou wert sure to knotch him down upon thy holiday tables as one of the new made faints. Ay, there be no such great faints now-a-days as those who pass, with the help of a Dominican, thro' the hangman's hands to the other world; he beats your pope and your cardinals all to nothing in smuggling a finner cleverly in by the back door to heaven.

BERTRAM.

So much the better for thee; it is the only chance thou hast of ever getting there.—Stand off, I say (*pushing Gobus away*), and do not stare thus upon the prisoner! art thou not ashamed to stare in an unhappy man's face after this fashion? we don't know what hard fate may have brought him into these circumstances (*to the attendants*). Move on: we are losing time here.



COBUS.

What, will you not pinion him more closely?

BERTRAM.

No, beast! I would rather flea the skin off that fool's back of thine than gall a hair's breadth of his body (*in a softened voice to Rayner*). Speak, Sir, if the rope hurts your arms; we will not use you cruelly.

RAYNER.

What did'st thou say to me? was there kindness in thy voice?

BERTRAM.

Yes, Sir, there was kindness in it. Do the ropes hurt your arms? if they do we will loosen them a little.

RAYNER.

I wist not that my arms were bound: but if thou hast any kindness in thee, give me a drink of water when thou can'st get it, for my mouth is very parched.

BERTRAM.

Yes, Sir, that you shall not want, tho' I should pay gold for it.—Move on, comrades: the night is far advanced, and we must guard the dead body of our master and the prisoner back to the city before the morning break. (*Exeunt.*)

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

## ACT III.

*A spacious court with a magnificent building in front :  
a great concourse of people are discovered as if  
waiting in expectation of some fight.*

## FIRST CROWD.

THE court is marvellously long of breaking up ;  
I'm tir'd of waiting ; and yet I don't like to lose  
the fight, after having stay'd so long for it.

## SECOND CROWD.

I fear it will go hard with the young man.

## THIRD CROWD.

I fear it will, poor gentleman !

## WOMAN CROWD.

Ah ! poor young man ! it is an awful end.

## SECOND CROWD.

Ay, I remember well the last criminal that was  
condemned here ; a strong-built man he was, tho'  
somewhat up in years. O, how pale he look'd as  
they led him out from court ! I think I stood upon  
this very spot as he pass'd by me ; and the fixed

strong look of his features too—It was a piteous fight!

THIRD CROWD.

Ah, man! but that was nothing to the execution. I paid half a dollar for a place near the scaffold; and it would have made any body's heart drop blood to have seen him when he lifted up the handkerchief from his eyes, and took his last look of the day-light, and all the living creatures about him.

SECOND CROWD.

Ay, man, that a human creature should be thus thrust out of the world by human creatures like himself; it is a piteous thing!

*(Enter a man from the court.)*

OMNES *(eagerly)*.

What news? what news of the prisoner?

MAN.

He has just finished his defence, in which he has acquitted himself so nobly, setting off his words too with such a manly grace, that it is thought by every body he will be set free.

SECOND CROWD.

Indeed! I should not have expected this now; spoke so nobly say'st thou?

FIRST CROWD.

Yes, yes, noble blood makes noble speaking.

R A Y N E R :

WOMAN CROWD.

Well, and is it not best so? poor young man!  
I'm sure I'm glad of it.

FIRST CROWD.

And an't I so too, milk-fac'd doll! tho' I hate  
to be kept so long staring for nothing. I wonder  
what brought me here in a murrain to it!

SECOND WOMAN.

La! then we shan't see him pass by with the  
chains upon his legs.

FIRST CROWD.

No, no! nor nothing at all. Come let me pass,  
I have been too long here. (*Pressing through the  
crowd to get out.*)

WOMAN CROWD.

O, you tread upon my toes!

FIRST CROWD.

Devil take you and your toes both! can't you  
keep them out of people's way then!

WOMAN CROWD.

Plague take it! what had we all to do to come  
here like so many fools!

(*Enter a second Man from the court.*)

SECOND CROWD.

Here comes another man from the court (*calling  
to the man*). Ho, friend! is he acquitted yet?

SECOND MAN.

No, nor like to be; the judge is just about to pronounce sentence upon him, but something came so cold over my heart I could not stay to hear it.

*(Several of the mob climb eagerly up upon the walls of the building, and look in at the windows.)*

CROWD *(below)*.

What do you see there, firs!

CROWD *(above)*.

The judge is just risen from his seat, and the black signal is lifted up.

OMNES,

Hush! hush! and let us listen! *(A deep pause.)*

CROWD *(above)*.

Sentence is past now.

CROWD *(below)*,

God have mercy on him!

THIRD CROWD,

I would not wear my head upon his shoulders for all the prince's coffers.

FIRST CROWD,

Alas! poor man! he is but a youth,

SECOND CROWD.

Yet he must be cut off in the flower of his days.

FIRST CROWD.

It is an awful thing!

WOMAN CROWD.

Ah! but a youth, and a goodly-looking youth too, I warrant ye.

SECOND WOMAN.

Alack a-day! many a one falls into crimes, but all do not pay the forfeit.

THIRD CROWD.

Ha! who comes this way so fair and so gentle in her mein; thus tofs'd and 'tangled amidst the pressing crowd, like a stalk of wild flower in a bed of nettles? Come, clear the way there, and let the lady pass.

*Enter ELIZABETH attended by RICHARD, the crowd making way for her.*

ELIZABETH.

I'm much obliged to you.

RICHARD.

We thank you, good Sirs! My mistress and I are both strangers in this town, and the nearest way to your best inn, as we are told, is thro' this

court; but the crowd is so great I think we had better turn back again.

ELIZABETH.

What is the meaning of this eager multitude,  
So gather'd round the entry to this palace?

THIRD CROWD.

It is no palace, madam, but a public court: there is a gentleman of noble birth who is just now condemned to death for murder, and we are waiting to see him led forth from his trial; you had better stop a little while and see the sight too.

ELIZABETH.

O, no! I'm come here in an evil hour!—A gentleman of noble birth—Alas! but that the crime is murder 'twere most pitcous.

OMNES (*eagerly*).

There he comes! see, see! there he comes!  
*Enter RAYNER, fettered and guarded from the court, followed by BERTRAM and others, and advances slowly towards the front of the stage, the crowd opening and making a lane for him on every side.*

FIRST CROWD.

What a noble gait he has even in his shackles!

SECOND CROWD.

Oh! oh! that such a man should come to this!

ELIZABETH (*after gazing eagerly at the distant prisoner*).

Merciful heaven! the form has strong resemblance.

RICHARD.

Sweet mistress, be not terrified with forms;  
'Tis but a distant form.

ELIZABETH.

Ha! then it strikes thee too!—Merciful God!

RICHARD.

Patience, dear madam! now as he advances,  
We shall be certified of the deception.  
Rayner is not so tall as this young man,  
Nor of a make so slender; no, nor yet——

ELIZABETH.

Peace, peace! for he advances. (*Watching the prisoner as he advances with a countenance of distracted eagerness, till he comes near her; then, uttering a loud shriek, falls down, and is supported by Richard and several of the crowd.*)

OFFICER (*conducting Rayner*).

What fainting maid is this obstructs the way?  
Let not the crowd so closely press around her.  
Open the way, and let the pris'ner pass.

RAYNER (*upon the crowd opening and discovering Elizabeth*).

O, sight of misery! my Elizabeth!  
The last and fellest stroke of angry heaven  
Falls on this cursed head.



OFFICER.

What may this mean? let us pass on: we stop not  
Whate'er betide.

RAYNER.

Nay, but you do: for here there is a power  
Stronger than law or judgment. Give me way:  
It is permitted me by ev'ry sense  
Of human sympathy, were I ev'n bound  
With chains tenfold enlock'd. (*Bending over  
Elizabeth.*)

Thou loveliest, and thou dearest! O thou part  
Of my most inmost self! art thou thus stricken?  
Falls this stroke on thee? (*Kneeling down and en-  
deavouring to support her, but finding himself  
prevented by his chain.*)

Is there not strength in the soul's agony  
To burst e'en bands of iron. (*Trying furiously to  
burst his fetters, but cannot; then with a sub-  
dued voice*)

Am I indeed a base condemned wretch,  
Cut off from ev'ry claim and tie of nature?  
(*Turning to the officer.*)

Thou who dost wear the law's authority,  
May it not be permitted for the love  
Of piteous charity?—Shall strangers' hands  
Whilst I am thus—O, do not let it be!

OFFICER.

No, no! move on: it cannot be permitted.

RAYNER (*fiercely roused*).

What, say'st thou so? (*Turning to the crowd.*)

Ye who surround me too,  
Each with the form and countenance of a man,  
Say ye 'tis not permitted?  
To you I do stretch forth these fetter'd hands,  
And call you men: O, let me not miscall you!

VOICES FROM THE CROWD.

Fie, on't! unbind his hands, unbind his hands,  
And we will stand his sureties.

BERTRAM (*stepping forward in a supplicating posture to the officer*).

Do but unbind his hands a little space,  
And shoot me thro' the head if he escape.  
My arm secured him; be my recompense  
This one request.

OFFICER (*to Bertram*).

Go to; thou art a brave man but a weak one.  
(*To the guard*) Move on; we halt no longer.

CROWD.

By all good saints we stand by the brave Bertram,  
And he shall be unshackled. (*Menacingly.*)

OFFICER.

Soldiers, present your muskets to these madmen,  
And let *them* speak; the pris'ner halts no longer;  
Move on. (*A tumult between the crowd and the guard, and Rayner is forced off the stage by the soldiers.*)

## FIRST CROWD.

Shame light on such hard-hearted cruelty!

## SECOND CROWD.

If there had been but six of us with arms in our hands he durst not have put this affront upon us.

## THIRD CROWD.

But who looks to the lady? She is amongst strangers it seems, and has only this poor old man to take care of her.

## OMNES.

We will take care of her then; we will take care of her: ay, and she shall be waited upon like an empress.

## SECOND CROWD.

Ay, so she shall, let the cost be what it will. I am only a poor cobbler, God knows, yet I will pawn the last awl in my stall but she shall be waited upon like an empress. See! see! she begins to revive again.

ELIZABETH (*opening her eyes with a heavy sigh*).

Is it all vanish'd? 'twas a dreadful vision!

(*Looking on the crowd around her.*)

O, no! the crowd is here still—it is real;  
And he is led away—horrible! horrible!

(*Faints again, and is carried off the stage by Richard and the crowd.*)

SCENE II. *A square court, surrounded on all sides by the gloomy walls of a prison, the windows of which are narrow and grated, and the heads of one or two of the prisoners seen looking ruefully through the grates.*

*Enter HARDIBRAND, and looks round him for some time without speaking.*

HARDIBRAND.

Gloomy enough, gloomy enough in faith!  
 Ah! what a wond'rous mass of dreary walls,  
 Whose frowning sides are rest in narrow slips  
 As I have seen full oft some sea-worn cliff,  
 Pierc'd with the murky holes of savage birds.  
 Ah! here the birds within are clipt o' wing,  
 And cannot fly away.

*(Enter Ohio with a tankard in his hand, crossing the stage.)*

Holla, my friend! I pray thee not so fast;  
 Inform me, if thou canst, where I may find  
 The keeper of the prison.

OHIO.

Know you what prince you speak to? faucy  
 knave!  
 I'll have thee scorch'd, and flead, and piece-meal  
 torn,  
 If thou dost call me friend.

HARDIBRAND.

Good words at least; I meant thee no offence.  
 I see thou hast a tankard in thy hand,

And will not question thy high dignity.  
Softly ; here's money for thee. (*Giving him money.*)

OHIO.

Silver pieces !  
He ! he ! he ! he ! hast thou got more of them ?

HARDIBRAND.

Nay, thou art greedy ; answer first my question ;  
Tell me at which of all these gloomy doors  
I needs must knock to find out the chief jailor.  
Thou look'st like some fetch-carry to the prisoners ;  
Dost understand me ?

OHIO.

Ay, there's the place, go knock at yonder door.

HARDIBRAND (*after knocking*).

This door is close nail'd up, and cannot open.

OHIO (*grinning maliciously, and pointing to another door*).

No, thou art wrong ; it is the door hard by,  
With those black portals. (*Hardibrand knocks at  
the other door.*)

Knock a little louder.

HARDIBRAND (*after knocking some time*).

A plague upon't ! there is no one within.

F

OHIO (*still grinning maliciously*).

No, thou art wrong again, it is not there;  
It is that door upon the other side.

(*Pointing to the opposite wall.*)

HARDIBRAND.

What, dost thou jest with me, malicious varlet?  
I'll beat thee if thou tell'st me false again.

OHIO.

Negroes be very stupid, master friend.

*Enter the KEEPER of the Prison.*

KEEPER (*to Ohio*).

Thou canker-worm! thou black-envenom'd toad!  
Art thou a playing thy malicious tricks?  
Get from my sight, thou pitchy viper, go!

(*Exit Ohio.*)

HARDIBRAND.

What black thing is it? it appears, methinks,  
Not worth thine anger.

KEEPER.

That man, may't please you, Sir, was born a prince.

HARDIBRAND.

I do not catch thy jest.

KEEPER.

I do not jest, I speak in sober earnest ;  
He is an Afric prince of royal line.

HARDIBRAND.

What say'st thou ! that poor wretch who sneaketh  
yonder  
Upon those two black shanks ?     *(Pointing off the  
stage.)*

KEEPER.

Yes, even he :  
When but a youth, stol'n from his noble parents,  
He for a slave was sold, and many hardships  
By sea and land hath pass'd.

HARDIBRAND.

And now to be the base thing that he is !  
Well, well, proceed.

KEEPER.

At last a surly master brought him here,  
Who, thinking him unfit for further service,  
As then a fest'ring wound wore hard upon him,  
With but a scanty sum to bury him,  
Left him with me. He, ne'ertheless, recover'd ;  
And tho' full proud and fullen at the first,  
Tam'd by the love of wine which strongly tempts  
him,  
He by degrees forgot his princely pride,

And has been long established in these walls  
 To carry liquor for the prisoners.  
 But such a cursed, spite-envenom'd toad!—

## HARDIBRAND.

Out on't! thou'ft told a tale that wrings my  
 heart.

Of royal line; born to command, and dignified  
 By sufferings and dangers past, which makes  
 The meanest man ennobled: yet behold him;  
 (*Pointing off the stage.*)

How by the wall he fide-long straddles on  
 With his base tankard!—O, the sneaking varlet!  
 It makes me weep to hear his piteous tale,  
 Yet my blood boils to run and cudgel him.  
 But let us on our way.

## KEEPER.

You are a noble stranger, as I guess,  
 And wish to be conducted thro' the prison.  
 It is an ancient building of great strength,  
 And many strangers visit it.

## HARDIBRAND.

It is indeed a place of ancient note.  
 Have you at present many criminals  
 Within these walls?

## KEEPER.

Our number is, thank God! respectable,  
 Though not what it has been in better days.



HARDIBRAND.

In better days!—Well, do thou lead the way.

*(As they are about to go off the stage, they are stopped by a voice singing from one of the highest windows.)*

## SONG.

*Sweetly dawns the early day,  
Rise, my love, and come away :  
Leave thy grim and grated tower,  
Bounding walls, and step-dame's lower ;  
'Don thy weeds and come with me,  
Light and happy are the free.*

*No fair mansion hails me lord,  
Dainties smoke not on my board ;  
Yet full carelefs by my side,  
Shalt thou range the forest wide ;  
Tho' finer far the rich may be,  
Light and happy are the free.*

HARDIBRAND.

Alas, poor soul! I would that thou wert free!  
What weary thrall is this that sings so sweetly?

KEEPER.

A restless, daring outlaw ;  
A fellow who hath aw'd the country round,  
And levied contributions like a king,

'To feast his jolly mates in wood and wild ;  
 Yea, been the very arbiter of fortune,  
 And as his freakish humors bit, hath lifted  
 At one broad sweep the churl's fav'd gear to  
     leave it  
 In the poor lab'rer's cot, whose hard-worn palm  
 Had never chuck'd a ducat 'gainst its fellow.

HARDIBRAND.

'Tis a brave heart ! has he been long confined ?  
 But list ! he sings again.

SONG.

*Light on the hanging bough we'll swing,  
 Or range the thicket cool,  
 Or sit upon the bank and sing,  
 Or bathe us in the pool.*

HARDIBRAND.

Poor pent up wretch ! thy soul roves far from  
 home.

SONG.

*Well, good-man time, or blunt or keen,  
 Move thee slow or take thy leisure,  
 Longest day will bring its e'en,  
 Weary lives but run a measure.*

HARDIBRAND.

'Tis even so, brave heart, or blunt or keen,  
 Thy measure has its stint.

*Enter BERTRAM from one of the doors of the prison.*

I think thou hast the air of an old soldier :

*(To Bertram as he is hurrying past him.)*

Such, without greeting, never pass me by.

Ha, Bertram ! is it thee ?

BERTRAM.

What, mine old General ?

HARDIBRAND.

Yes, and mine old soldier.

How dost thou, man ? how has it far'd with thee  
Since thou hast left the service ?

BERTRAM.

I thank your honour ; much as others find it ;  
I have no cause to grumble at my lot.

HARDIBRAND.

'Tis well, but what's the matter with thee now ?  
Thine eyes are red with weeping, and thy face  
Looks ruefully.

BERTRAM.

I've been to visit, here, a noble youth,  
Who is condemn'd to die.

HARDIBRAND.

A noble youth !

RAYNER:

BERTRAM.

Yea, and a foldier too.

HARDIBRAND.

A foldier!

BERTRAM.

Ay, your honour, and the Son  
Of a most gallant foldier.

HARDIBRAND.

But he is innocent?

BERTRAM.

He is condemn'd.

HARDIBRAND.

Shame on it! were he twenty times condemn'd,  
He's innocent as are these filver'd locks.*(Laying his hand vebemently on his head.)*

What is his name?

BERTRAM.

Rayner.

HARDIBRAND.

Ha! son to my old comrade, Rayner!  
Out on the fools! I would as soon believe  
That this right hand of mine had pilfer'd gold

As Rayner's son have done a deed of shame.  
Come, lead me back with thee, for I must see him.

BERTRAM.

Heav'n bless your honour ! O, if by your means  
He might have grace !

HARDIBRAND.

Come, let us go to him.

BERTRAM.

Not now, an' please you : he is now engaged  
With one most dear to him. But an hour hence  
I will conduct you to his cell.

HARDIBRAND.

So be it.

Mean time, stay thou with me, and tell me more  
Of this unhappy youth : I have a mind,  
With the good keeper's leave, to view the prison.

*(Exeunt.)*

*Enter MIRA and ALICE by opposite sides, both muffled up in cloaks and their faces conceal'd.)*

MIRA *(stopping Alice)*.

Nay, glide not past me thus with muffled face :  
'Tis I, a visitor to these grim walls,  
On the same errand with thyself. How goes it  
With our enthralled colleague ? doth he promise  
Silence to keep in that which touches us  
Of this transaction, for the which he's bound ?

ALICE.

He is but half persuaded ; go thyself  
And use thy arts — hush, here's a stranger near us.

*Enter a Man who gives a letter mysteriously to  
Mira, and upon her making a sign to him, re-  
tires to the bottom of the stage whilst she  
reads it.*

What read'st thou there, I pray thee, that thy brows  
Knit thus ungraciously at ev'ry line ?

MIRA.

Know'st thou that I must doff my silken robes,  
Despoil my hair of its fair ornaments,  
And clothe me in a gown of palmer's grey,  
With clouted shoon and pilgrim's staff in hand  
To bear me o'er rude glens and dreary wastes  
To share a stony couch and empty board,  
All for the proving of my right true love  
For one in great distress. Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !  
So doth this letter modestly request :  
I pray thee read it.

ALICE (*reading the letter*).

“ A deadly wound rankles in my side, and I  
have no skilful hand to dress it, and no kind friend  
to comfort me. I am laid upon the cold earth, and  
feel many wants I never knew before. If thou hast  
any love for me, and as thou hast often wish'd to  
prove that love, come to me quickly : but conceal  
thyself in the coarse weeds of a Pilgrim ; my life is  
a forfeit to the law if any one should discover where

I am. A friend in disguise will give into thy hands this letter, and conduct thee to thy miserable Zaterloo." (*returning the letter.*) And what say'st thou to this?

MIRA.

I have in truth, upon my hands already Troubles enough; this is, thou know'st, no time To take upon me ruin'd men's distresses.

ALICE.

But 'tis thyself hast brought this ruin on him : 'Twas thy extravagance.

MIRA.

Thou art a fool !  
His life's a forfeit to the law : 'tis time,  
Good time, in faith ! I should have done with him.  
Why dost thou bend these frowning looks on me ?  
How many in my place would for the recompence  
Betray him to the officers of justice ?  
But I, thou know'st right well, detest all baseness,  
Therefore I will not.

ALICE.

Hush, hush ! thou speak'st too loud :  
Some one approaches.

*Enter* COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO (*to Mira*).

I pray you, Madam, pardon this intrusion ;  
Tracing your steps, I have made bold to follow you.

I am the mother of an only son,  
 Who for these many days I have not seen :  
 I know right well naught is conceal'd from you  
 Of what concerns him ; let me know, I pray you,  
 Where I may find my child.

MIRA.

Madam, you speak to one who in his secrets  
 Has small concern.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Nay, now, I pray you, do not keep it from me :  
 I come not with a parent's stern rebuke :  
 Do tell me where he is, for love of grace :  
 Or, if you will not, say if he is sick,  
 Or if he is distress'd with any want.  
 Do, for love's sake ! I have no child but him.

MIRA (*giving her the letter*).

There, Madam ; this is all I know of him.  
 'Twas yonder stranger gave it to my hand ;  
(*Pointing to the man.*)  
 We need not interrupt you with our presence ;  
 And so good day. — (*Exeunt Mira and Alice.*)

COUNTESS ZATERLOO (*after reading the letter*).

Alas, my son ! and art thou low and wounded ?  
 Stretch'd on the cold ground of thy hiding place  
 In want and fear ? Oh art thou come to this !  
 Thou who didst smile in thy fair op'ning morn,  
 As cherubs smile who point the way to heaven.



And would'st thou have a stranger come to thee?

Alas! alas! where can thy aching head

So softly rest as on a parent's lap?

Yes, I will wrap me in the Pilgrim's weeds,

Nor storm nor rugged wild shall bar my way.

And tho' declining years impare my strength,

These arms shall yet support thy feeble frame,

When fairer friends desert thee.

*(To the Messenger, beckoning him to come forward.)*

Good friend, this is no place to question thee!

Come with me to my home.

*(Exeunt.)*

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

## ACT IV.

*The inside of the Prison : Rayner and Elizabeth are discovered sitting sorrowfully by one another in earnest discourse.*

RAYNER:

Thou sayest well, my sweet Elizabeth ;  
 In this I have against thy love offended.  
 But in the brightness of fair days, in all  
 The careless gaiety of unruffled youth,  
 Smiling like others of thy sex, I loved thee ;  
 Nor knew that thou wert also form'd to strive  
 With the braced firmness of unyielding virtue  
 In the dark storms of life—alike to flourish  
 In sunshine or in shade.—Alas ! alas !  
 It was the thoughts of seeing thee—but cease !  
 The die is cast ; I'll speak of it no more :  
 The gleam which shews to me thy wond'rous  
 excellence  
 Glares also on the dark and lowering path  
 That must our way divide.

ELIZABETH.

O no ! as are our hearts, our way is one,  
 And cannot be divided. Strong affection  
 Contends with all things, and o'ercometh all things.  
 I will unto thee cling with strength so terrible,  
 That human hands the hold will ne'er unlock.

RAYNER.

Alas, my love ! these are thy words of woe,  
 And have no meaning but to speak thy woe :  
 Dark fate hangs o'er us, and we needs must part.  
 The strong affection that o'ercometh all things,  
 Shall fight for us indeed, and shall o'ercome :  
 But in a better world the vantage lies  
 Which it shall gain for us ; here, from this earth  
 We must take different roads and climb to it,  
 As in some pitiless storm two 'nighted travellers  
 Lose on a wild'ring heath their 'tangled way,  
 And meet again.

ELIZABETH.

Ay, but thy way, thy way, my gentle Rayner—  
 It is a terrible one.  
 Oh flesh and blood shrinks from the horrid pass !  
 Death comes to thee, not as he visiteth  
 The sick man's bed, pillow'd with weeping friends :  
 O no ! nor yet as on the battle's field  
 He meets the blood-warm'd soldier in his mail,  
 Greeting him proudly.—Thou must bend thy neck,  
 This neck round which mine arms now circled  
 close  
 Do feel the loving warmth of youthful life :  
 'Thou must beneath the stroke.—O horrid ! horrid !

RAYNER (*supporting her from sinking to the ground*).

My dear Elizabeth, my most belov'd !  
 Thou art affrighted with a horrid picture

By thine own fancy trac'd ; look not upon it :  
 All is not dreadful in the actual proof  
 Which on th' approach frowns darkly. Rouse thy  
 spirit ;

And be not unto me at this dark push  
 My heaviest let ; thou who should'st be my stay.

*(She groans heavily.)*

What means that heavy groan ? I'll speak its mean-  
 ing,

And say, that thou to nature's weakness hast  
 The tribute paid, and now wilt rouse thyself  
 To meet with noble firmness what perforce  
 Must be ; and to a lorn and luckless man,  
 Who holds in this wide world but thou alone,  
 Prove a firm, gen'rous, and heart-buoyant mate,  
 In the dark hour. Do I not speak it rightly ?

ELIZABETH.

Thou dost, thou dost ! if nature's weakness in me  
 Would yield to the heart's will.

*(Falling on his neck in a burst of sorrow.)*

*Enter* FATHER MARDONIO.

MARDONIO.

My children, ye have been in woeful conference  
 Too long : chide not my zeal that hither brings me  
 To break upon it. On you both be shed  
 Heav'n's pitying mercy !

RAYNER.

Amen, good Father ! thou dost call us children

With a most piteous and kindly voice :  
 Here is a daughter who in this bad world  
 Will yet remain to want a father's care ;  
 Thus let me form a tie which shall be sacred ;  
     *( Putting Elizabeth's hand into Mardonio's. )*  
 She has no parent.

*Enter KEEPER of the Prison.*

What brings thee here? we would be left in  
 peace.

KEEPER *(to Rayner)*.

I am by a right noble stranger urged,  
 Who says he has in many a rough campaign  
 Serv'd with your valiant father in the wars,  
 To let him have admittance to your presence.  
 Bertram conducts him hither.

RAYNER.

Serv'd with mine honour'd father! and thus cir-  
     cumstanc'd,  
 Now comes to see his son! Well, be it so :  
 This is no time for pride to winch and rear,  
 And turn its back upon the patt'ring hail,  
 Bearing the thunder's shock. Let it e'en be :  
 Admit him instantly. *( Calling him back. )*  
 ———Nay, e'er thou goest,  
 What is he call'd?

KEEPER.

The Gen'ral Hardibrand.

G

RAYNER.

An honour'd name. *(Exit Keeper.*  
 Retire, my love: *(to Elizabeth.)*  
 I cannot bear to have thy woes exposed  
 Before a stranger's gaze.

*(She retires with Mardonio to an obscure part  
 of the Prison at the bottom of the Stage.)*

*Enter HARDIBRAND and BERTRAM.*

HARDIBRAND *(to Bertram: stopping short as he  
 enters, and gazing upon Rayner, who is turned  
 away from them and looking after Elizabeth).*

It is the son of Rayner: in his form  
 And face, tho' thus half turn'd from us, I see  
 His father. Still a foldier and a gentleman  
 In ev'ry plight he seem'd. A clown or child  
 Had sworn him such clad in a woollen rug.  
*(Advancing to Rayner.)*

Young foldier, I did know your gallant father;  
 Regard me not as an intruding stranger.

RAYNER.

I thank you, courteous sir: in other days  
 Such greeting to my heart had been most welcome.  
 A gallant father and condemned son  
 May in the letter'd registers of kindred  
 Alliance have; but in the mind's pure record,  
 They no relation bear: let your brave friend  
 Still be to you as one who had no son.

HARDIBRAND.

No, boy ; that sentiment bespeaks thy blood.  
 Heed not those fetter'd hands : look in my face,  
 Look in my face with the full confidence  
 Of a brave man ; for such I'll swear thou art.  
 Think'st thou that I am come to visit thee  
 In whining pity as a guilty man ?  
 No, by the rood ! if I had thought thee such,  
 Being the son of him whose form thou wear'st,  
 I should have curs'd thee. Thou by mis'ry press'd,  
 Hast strongly tempted been, I know thy story :  
 Bertram has told it me : and spite of courts,  
 And black-rob'd judges, laws, and learn'd decisions,  
 I do believe it as I do my creed.  
 Shame on them ! is all favour and respect  
 For brave and noble blood forgotten quite ?

RAYNER.

Ah, do not fear ! they will remember that,  
 And nail some sable trappings to my coffin.

HARDIBRAND.

I would that to their grave and pompous chairs  
 Their asses' ears were nail'd ! Think they that men,  
 Brave men, for thou thyself—What corps I pray  
 thee  
 Didst thou belong to in thy Prince's service ?

RAYNER.

The first division of his fourth brigade  
 Was that in which I serv'd.

HARDIBRAND.

Thou hast companion been to no mean men.  
 Those six brave officers of that division,  
 Who on the fam'd redoubt, in his last siege,  
 Did in the teeth o' th' en'my's fiercest fire  
 Their daring lodgement make, must needs of course  
 Be known to thee.

RAYNER.

I knew them well; five of them were my friends.

HARDIBRAND.

And not the sixth?

RAYNER.

He was, alas! my greatest enemy;  
 To him I owe these bonds.

HARDIBRAND.

A curse light on his head, brave tho' he be!

RAYNER.

O curse him not, for woes enough already  
 Rest on his wretched head.

*(Bowing low and putting his hand on his head.)*

HARDIBRAND.

Ha! thou thyself,—thou wert thyself the sixth!  
 Thank heav'n for this! Then let them if they will  
 Upon a thousand scaffolds take thy life,



And spike thy head a thousand feet aloft ;  
Still will I say thy father had a son.

*(Rushing into his arms.)*

Come to my soldier's heart, thou noble bird  
Of a brave nest !—Must thou indeed be pluck'd  
And cast to kites ? By heav'n thou shalt not die !  
Shall such a man as thou art from his post  
Be sham'd and push'd for one rash desp'rate act ?  
It shall not be, my child ! it shall not be !

RAYNER *(smiling)*.

In faith, good Gen'ral, could your zeal prevent it,  
I am not yet so tir'd of this bad world,  
But I could well submit me to the change.

HARDIBRAND.

I'll with all speed unto the Governor,  
Nor be discourag'd, tho' he loudly prate  
That grace and pardon will but leave at liberty  
The perpetrators of such lawless deeds  
To do the like again, with such poor cant.

*(Elizabeth, who has been behind backs, listening  
eagerly to their conversation, and stealing  
nearer to them by degrees in her eagerness to  
hear it, now rushes forward, and throws her-  
self at Hardibrand's feet.)*

ELIZABETH.

We ask not liberty ; we ask but life.  
O grant us this, and keep us where they will,  
Or as they will. We shall do no disquiet.  
O let them grant us life, and we will bless them !

And would'st thou have me live, Elizabeth,  
 Forlorn and sad, in lothly dungeon pent,  
 Kept from the very use of mine own limbs,  
 A poor, lost, caged thing?

ELIZABETH.

Would not I live with thee? would not I cheer  
 thee?

Would'st thou be lonely then? would'st thou be  
 sad?

I'd clear away the dark unwholesome air,  
 And make a little parlour of thy cell.

With cheerful labour eke our little means,  
 And go abroad at times to fetch thee in  
 The news and passing stories of the day.

I'd read thee books: I'd fit and sing to thee:  
 And every thing would to our willing minds  
 Some observation bring to cheer our hours.

Yea, ev'n the varied voices of the wind  
 O' winter nights would be a play to us.

Nay, turn not from me thus, my gentle Rayner!  
 How many suffer the extremes of pain,

Ay, lop their limbs away, in lowest plight  
 Few years to spend upon a weary couch

With scarce a friend their sickly draughts to  
 mingle!

And dost thou grudge to spend thy life with me?

RAYNER.

I could live with thee in a pitchy mine;

In the cleft crevice of a savage den,  
 Where coils the snake, and bats and owlets roost,  
 And cheerful light of day no entrance finds.  
 But would'st thou have me live degraded also ;  
 Humbled and low ? No, liberty or nought  
 Must be our boon.

HARDIBRAND.

And thou shalt have it too, my noble youth :  
 Thou hast upon thy side a better advocate  
 Than these grey hairs of mine. *(To Elizabeth.)*  
 Bless that fair face ! it was not made for nothing.  
 We'll have our boon ; such as befits us too.  
 No, hang them if we stoop to halving it !  
*(Taking her eagerly by the hand.)*  
 Come with me quickly ; let us lose no time :  
 Angel from heaven thou art, and with heav'n's  
 power  
 Thou'lt plead and wilt prevail.

RAYNER.

In truth thou wilt expose thyself, my love,  
 And draw some new misfortune on thy head.  
*(Endeavouring to draw her away from Hardibrand.)*

ELIZABETH *(to Hardibrand)*.

What new misfortune ? can they kill thee twice ?  
 We're tardy : O move quickly ! lose no time.

HARDIBRAND.

Yes, come, and Bertram here will guide our way :  
 His heart is in the cause.

BERTRAM.

Yes heart and soul, my Gen'ral. Would my  
zeal  
Could now make some amends for what those  
hands  
Against him have unwittingly committed.  
O that the fellest pains had shrunk their nerves  
Ere I had seiz'd upon him !

RAYNER.

Cease, good Bertram !  
Cease to upbraid thyself. Thou didst thy duty  
Like a brave man, and thou art in my mind  
Not he who seiz'd, but he whose gen'rous pity  
Did, in my fullen state, first shew me kindness.  
*(Bertram kisses his hand.)*  
Go go ! they wait for thee.

BERTRAM.

They shall not wait. Would that we were  
return'd,  
Bearing good tidings !

HARDIBRAND.

O fear it not, my heart says that we shall.  
*(Exeunt Elizabeth, Hardibrand and Bertram.  
Manent Rayner and Mardonio.)*

MARDONIO.

{ Hope oft, my son, unbraces the girt mind,

And to the conflict turns it loofely forth,  
Weak and divided. I'm disturb'd for thee.

RAYNER.

I thank thee, Father, but the crime of blood  
Your governor hath ne'er yet pardon'd; therefore  
Be not disturb'd for me; my hopes are fmall.

MARDONIO.

So much the better. Now to pious thoughts  
We will direct—Who comes to interrupt us?

*Enter the TURNKEY.*

RAYNER.

It is the turnkey; a poor man who, tho'  
His fate in life favours not the kind growth  
Of foft affections, has shewn kindness to me.  
He wears upon his face the aukwardness  
And hesitating look of one who comes  
To ask some favour; send him not away.  
(*To Turnkey*) What dost thou want, good friend?  
out with it, man!  
We are not very stern.

TURNKEY.

Please you, it has to me long been a priv'lege  
To shew the curious peasantry and boors,  
Who from the country flock o' holy days,  
Thro' his strait prison bars, the famous robber,  
That over-head is cell'd; and now a company  
Waits here without to see him, but he's fullen,  
And will not shew himself. If it might please you

But for a moment opposite your grate  
 To stand, without great wrong to any one,  
 You might pass for him, and do me great kindness,  
 Or the good Father there, if he be willing  
 To doff his cowl and turn him to the light,  
 He hath a good thick beard, and a stern eye,  
 That would be better still.

RAYNER (*laughing*).

Ha! ha! ha! what say ye to it, Father?  
 (*Laughing again more violently than at first.*)

MARDONIO (*turning out the Turnkey in a passion,  
 and returning sternly to Rayner*).

What means this wild and most unnatural mirth?  
 This lightness of the soul, strange and unsuited  
 To thy unhappy state? it shocks me much.  
 Approaching death brings naught to scare the good,  
 Yet has it wherewithal to awe the boldest:  
 And there are seasons when the lightest soul  
 Is call'd on to look inward on itself  
 In awful seriousness.

RAYNER,

Thou dost me wrong; indeed thou dost me  
 wrong.  
 I laugh'd, but, faith! I am not light of soul;  
 And he who most misfortune's scourge hath felt  
 Will tell thee laughter is the child of mis'ry.  
 Ere sin brought wretchedness into the world,  
 The soberness of undisturbed bliss



RAYNER.

Yes, in great mercy, for the which I'd bow  
 In truer thankfulness, my good Mardonio,  
 Ev'n with these fears of nature on my mind,  
 Than for the blessing of my spared life,  
 Were it now proffer'd me.

*(They retire into the obscurity of the dungeon, at  
 the bottom of the stage, and the Scene closes  
 on them.)*

SCENE II. *A small apartment in a solitary cottage  
 in the country: Enter Count Zaterloo, supported  
 by an attendant and followed by the Countess in the  
 disguise of a Pilgrim; both of them wearing masks.  
 She places a pillow for his head on a couch or sick  
 chair, and he is placed upon it, apparently with  
 pain.*

COUNTESS ZATERLOO *(to Attendant)*.

There, set him gently down; this will support  
 him,

*(To Count Zaterloo.)* How art thou now? I fear  
 thou'rt very faint

After so long a journey.

*(To Attendant.)* We have no farther need of thine  
 assistance:

Thou wilt retire, but be upon the watch.

*(Exit Attendant.)*

COUNT ZATERLOO *(unmasking)*.

Now, charming Mira, lay disguise aside;



Speak thine own natural voice, and be thyself :  
 There is no eye to look upon us now ;  
 No more excuse for this mysteriouness.  
 Let me now look upon thy face and bless it !  
 Thou hast done well by me : thou'rt wond'rous  
 gentle.

I knew thee fair and charming, but I knew not  
 Thou wert of such a soft and kindly nature.  
*(The Countess unmasks and looks at him sorrowfully.)*  
 Ha, mother ! is it you ?

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Who should it be ? where should'st thou look for  
 kindness ?

When we are sick where can we turn for succour ;  
 When we are wretched where can we complain ;  
 And when the world looks cold and furlly on us,  
 Where can we go to meet a warmer eye  
 With such sure confidence as to a mother ?  
 The world may scowl, acquaintance may forsake,  
 Friends may neglect, and lovers know a change,  
 But when a mother doth forsake her child,  
 Men lift their hands and cry, " a prodigy ! "

COUNT ZATERLOO *(taking hold of both her hands  
 and kissing them)*.

O mother ! I have been a thankless child !  
 I've given thee hoary hairs before thy time ;  
 And added weight to thy declining years,  
 Who should have been their stay.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Be calm, my son, for I do not upbraid thee.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Wretch that I am! I was an only son,  
 And therefore bound by no divided-tie  
 To be to thee thy hold and thy support.  
 I was a widow's son, and therefore bound  
 By every generous and manly tie  
 To be in filial duty most devoted.  
 O I have vilely done! I feel it now;  
 But if I live to be a man again,  
 I'll prove a better son to thee, dear mother.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

I know thou wilt, my dearest Zaterloo;  
 And do not thus upbraid thyself too sharply;  
 I've been a foolish mother to thy youth,  
 But thou wilt pardon me.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Of this no more—How came you by my letter?  
 If you did intercept it on its way,  
 Mira is faithful still.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

It was from Mira's hand that I received it.  
 She tofs'd it at me with a jeering smile.  
 When I with anxious tears inquired for thee.

COUNT ZATERLOO (*rising half from his seat in great passion.*)

O faithless, faithless woman! she it was,  
Who made of me the cursed thing I am!  
I've been a fool indeed and well requited.  
Base, avaricious and ungrateful—oh!

(*Putting his hand on his side as if seized with sudden pain.*)

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Such agitation suits not with thy state:  
What ails thee now?

COUNT ZATERLOO.

The pain, the pain! it has return'd again  
With increased violence.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

God fend thee ease! why dost thou look so  
wildly,  
And grasp my hand so hard? What is't disturbs  
thee?

COUNT ZATERLOO.

My time on earth is short.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Nay, say not so: thou may'st recover still.  
O why this seeming agony of mind?  
'Tis not the pain that racks thee.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

There's blood upon my head : I am accursed.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Good heaven forbend ! thou wand'rest in thy  
speech.

Thy life I know is forfeit to the law  
By some unlawful act, but oh no blood !

COUNT ZATERLOO.

O for a short respite ! but 'twill not be :  
I feel my time is near.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Thou wand'rest much : there's something on thy  
mind,  
Dark'ning thy fancy.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

'Twas I that did it—I that murder'd him :  
He who must suffer for it did it not.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

What words are these ? my blood runs cold to  
hear them.

COUNT ZATERLOO (*alarm'd*).

Be still, be still ! there's some one at the door  
All round me is expos'd and infecure.

(Countess Zaterloo goes to the door and receives something from a Servant, shutting the door immediately.)

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

It is a servant come to fetch me something.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Has he not heard it? he has heard it all!

(*In violent alarm and agitation.*)

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Be still, be still! it is impossible.  
Thou'st wak'd the pain again; I see thee tremble.

COUNT ZATERLOO (*writhing as if in great pain*).

Ay, this will master me: 'twill have me now:  
What can be done? O for a short reprieve!

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Alas, my child! what would'st thou have me do?

COUNT ZATERLOO.

I would have time turn'd backward in his course,  
And what is past ne'er to have been: myself  
A thing that no existence ever had.  
Canst thou do this for me?

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Alas! I cannot.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Then curst be thy early mother's cares!

H

Would thou had'st lifted up my infant form  
 And dash'd it on the stones ! I had not liv'd—  
 I had not lived to curse thee for thy pains.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

And dost thou curse me then ?

COUNT ZATERLOO (*soften'd*).

O no ! I do not !  
 I did not curse thee, mother : was it so ?

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

No, no, thou didst not : yet I have deserv'd—  
 I was a mother selfish in my fondness ;  
 And with indulgence, senseless and extreme,  
 Blasted the goodly promise of thy youth.

COUNT ZATERLOO (*rising half up alarm'd from  
 his couch*).

Hark ! there's a noise again ! hast thou more  
 servants  
 Coming with errands to thee ?—We're discover'd !

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Be not so soon alarm'd : it is impossible.

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Is there an inner chamber ? lead me there ;  
*(Pointing to a door.)*
 I cannot rest in this. *(Stopping short eagerly as she  
 is leading him out with great difficulty.)*  
 ——— Thine absence haply  
 From thine own house, suspicion may create :

Return to it again, and thro' the day  
 Live there as thou art wont ; by fall of eve  
 Thou'lt come to me again.—I'm very weak  
 I must lean hard upon thee.

*(Exit, looking suspiciously behind him as if he  
 heard a noise, and supported with great diffi-  
 culty by his mother.)*

SCENE III. *The Countess Zaterloo's house : enter  
 COUNTESS and a Female ATTENDANT.*

ATTENDANT.

Ah ! wherefore, madam, are you thus disturb'd,  
 Pacing from room to room with restless change,  
 And turning still a keen and anxious ear  
 To every noise ? What can I do for you ?

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Cease, cease ! thou canst do nothing, my good girl :  
 I have a cause, but do not seek to know it.

*Enter a SERVANT.*

SERVANT.

There is a stranger——

COUNTESS ZATERLOO *(starting with alarm)*.

Ha ! what dost thou say ?  
 A stranger ! what appearance does he wear ?  
 Is there but one ? Looks he suspiciously ?

SERVANT.

Be not alarmed, madam ; 'tis a woman.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO (*feigning composure*).

Thou art a fool to think I am alarm'd :  
Or man or woman, whosoe'er it be,  
I am unwell, and must not be disturb'd.

SERVANT.

It is a lady of distinguish'd mein,  
Tho' much in grief, and she so earnestly  
Pleads for admittance that I am compell'd—  
Pardon me, madam ; but to look upon her  
Would move your heart to pity.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Let her enter. (*Exit Servant.*)

Who may this be ? why do I tremble thus ?  
In grief !—the wretched surely will not come  
In guileful seeming to betray the wretched.  
(*To Attendant.*) Know'st thou who this may be ?

ATTENDANT.

Indeed I do not.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Retire then to a distance : here she comes :  
But do not leave the chamber.

(*Attendant retires to the bottom of the stage, and  
enter Elizabeth with her hair and dress dis-  
ordered, like one distracted with grief.*)

ELIZABETH.

Madam, I come a stranger to your presence,



By misery embolden'd, and urg'd on  
 By desperation. In your pity only  
 Lives all the hope of my most wretched state :  
 O kill it not ! push me not to the brink  
 Of misery so deep and terrible !  
 Have pity ! O have pity on my woe !  
 Thou art a woman, and a woman's heart  
 Will not be shut against a wretched woman.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

What would'st thou ask ? thou dost with too  
 much grief  
 Conceal the point and object of thy suit.

ELIZABETH.

There is in prison bound, condemn'd to die,  
 And for a crime by others hands committed,  
 A noble youth, and my betrothed love :  
 Your son—O shrink not back, nor look so sternly !  
 Your son, as secret rumour hath inform'd me,  
 Mortally wounded and with little hope  
 Of life, can ample testimony give,  
 Being himself of those who did the deed,  
 That Rayner did it not :—O let him then,  
 In whate'er secret place he lies conceal'd,  
 In pity let him true confession make ;  
 And we will bless him—Heav'n will pardon him !

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Despair hath made thee mad ! art thou aware  
 What thou dost ask of me ? Go to our governors ;

They may have pity on thee ; but from me  
It were an act against the sense of nature.

ELIZABETH,

Nay, say not so ! I have for mercy sued  
At the proud feet of power, and been rejected :  
What injury can reach a dying man ?  
Can his few hours of breathing poise the scales  
'Gainst the whole term of a man's reckon'd life  
In youth's best strength ?

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Go, thou hast been deceiv'd with a false tale ;  
And, were it true, hope ends not but with life ;  
Heaven only knows who is a dying man.

ELIZABETH.

For blessed charity close not your pity  
Against all other feelings but your own !  
*(Clasping the Countess' knees and kissing her hand.)*  
Sweet lady ! gentle lady ! dearest lady !  
O be not ruthless to a soul bow'd down  
In extreme wretchedness !

COUNTESS ZATERLOO,

Cease, cease ! unlock thy hold ; embrace me  
not !  
Has he for whom thou plead'st from out o' thyself  
Receiv'd his being ? press'd with infant lips  
Thy yearning bosom ? smiled upon thy knees,

And blest'st thine ear with his first voice of words?  
 Away, away! despair has made thee mad,  
 That thus thou hang'st upon me.

ELIZABETH.

O he for whom I plead is to my soul  
 Its soul: is to my fancy its bound world,  
 In which it lives and moves; all else beyond  
 Darkness, annihilation. O have pity!  
 For well thou say'st, despair has made me mad.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Let go, let go! thou with a tigress striv'st,  
 Defending her bay'd whelp: I have no pity.  
 Heav'n will have pity on thee! let me go;  
 Unlock thy desp'rate hold.

*(Breaks from her and runs out, and Elizabeth,  
 quite overcome, sinks upon the ground, the At-  
 tendant rushing forward from the bottom of  
 the stage to support her.)*

*Enter* FATHER MARDONIO.

MARDONIO *(raising her)*.

My daughter, heav'n will send in its good time  
 The aid that is appointed for thy state.  
 Contend no more, but to its righteous will  
 Submit thyself. Let me conduct thee hence.

*(Exit Mardonio and Attendant supporting her.  
 Re-enter the Countess, looking fearfully round  
 her as she enters.)*

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

She is gone now: thank God that she is gone!

There is a horrid conflict in my mind.  
What shall I do? I strongly am beset.  
I will go quickly to some holy man,  
And ghostly counsel ask.

*(Exit, crossing the stage with a quick irresolute  
step, sometimes stopping to consider, and then  
hurrying on again.)*

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

## ACT V.

*A spacious outer Room in the Prison.*

*Enter an UNDER-JAILOR and a CLOWN.*

CLOWN.

I PRAY thee now, my good friend, here is a piece of money for thee—very good money too; thou may'st look o' both sides of it an' thou wilt: it has been wrapped up in the foot of my old holiday stockings since last Michaelmas twelvemonth, and neither sun nor wind has blown upon it. Take it, man, thou art heartily welcome to it if thou canst put me into a good place near the scaffold, or a place where I may see him upon the scaffold; for I am five and thirty years old next Shrove-Tuesday, when the time comes round, and I have never yet seen in all my born days so much as a thief set i' the stocks.

JAILOR.

Poor man! thou hast lived in most deplorable ignorance indeed. But stand aside a little, here is the famous executioner of Olmutz a-coming, who has been sent for expressly to do the job; for our own is but a titular hangman; he has all the honours of the office, but little experience in the duties of it.

CLOWN.

O dickens, I'll creep into a corner then, and have a good look of him. A man that has cut off men's heads, save us all! he must have a strange bloody look about him for certain.

*Enter two EXECUTIONERS, speaking as they enter.*

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

What! no execution in this town for these ten years past! Lord pity you all for a set of poor devils indeed? Why I have known a smaller town than this keep ye up a first executioner for the capital business, with a second man under him for your petty cart-tail and pillory work; ay, and keep them handsomely employed too. No execution in such a town as this for these ten years past! one might as well live amongst the savages,

SECOND EXECUTIONER.

It is a pitiful thing to be sure, but don't despise us altogether, Mr. Master: we shall improve by and by, please God; and here is a fair beginning for it too, if the Lord prosper us.

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

Ay, thou wilt, perhaps, have the honour of hanging a thief or two before thou art the age of Methuselah; but I warrant ye, the beheading of this young nobleman here by the famous executioner of Olmutz will be remembered amongst you

for generations to come. It will be the grand date from which every thing will be reckoned ; ay, your very grand children will boast that their fathers were present at the fight,

## SECOND EXECUTIONER.

I make no doubt on't, my master, but you are a very capital man in your way : Lord forbid that I should envy the greatness of any one ; but I would have you to know that there have been others in the world as good as yourself ere now ; my own father cut off Baron Kollam's head upon this very scaffold that we now hear them hammering at.

## FIRST EXECUTIONER.

Some wandering hocus-pocus Baron, I suppose, that sold nostrums for the tooth-ach. I always put such fellows into the hands of my underling to operate upon ; I never count the dealing with them as your prime work, tho' for certain we must call it your head-work ; ha ! ha ! ha ! (*holding out his axe in a vain-glorious manner.*) Seest thou this axe of mine ? The best blood of the country has been upon its edge : to have had one's father or brother under its stroke, let me tell thee, is equal to a patent of nobility.

## SECOND EXECUTIONER.

Well, be it so : I envy no man, God be praised ! tho' thou art set over my head upon this occasion. I have whipp'd, branded, and pilloried in great

meekness and humility for these seven years past ; but the humble shall be exalted at last, and I shall have better work to do, by and by, God willing. Let us have no more contention about it.—Who's there? (*observing Jailor and Clown.*) Ay, Jailor, do thou go and kick up the black prince, he is snoring in some corner near us, and send him for some brandy.

(*Jailor coming forward, with the Clown creeping after him, half afraid.*)

JAILOR.

The black prince is no where to be found ; he has not been seen since the cells were locked.

SECOND EXECUTIONER.

Go fetch us some liquor thyself then.

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

But who is this sneaking behind thee, and afraid to show his face?

JAILOR.

Only a poor countryman, a friend of mine, who wanted to look at you as you pass.

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

Yes, yes, every body has a curiosity to look at extraordinary persons. (*to Clown.*) Come forward man, and don't be afraid. Did'st thou ever be-



fore see any thing better than a poor parish priest, or a scrubby lord of the village? did'st thou, eh?

CLOWN (*abashed*).

I don't know, please you: my brother did once stand within a team's length of the Prince of Carara, when he passed through our village on his way to Franconia.

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

So then thou art not the first of thy family that has seen a great man. But don't be afraid, my good fellow, I a'nt proud nor haughty as many of them be: thou shalt even shake hands with me an' thou wilt. ( *Holding out his hand to Clown, who shrinks from him, and puts his hands behind his back.* )

CLOWN.

No, I thank you; I ben't much of a hand-shaker: I have got a little fore on my thumb, may it please you; I thank you all the same as tho' I did.

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

Ay, thou art too mannerly to call it the thing that we wot of. Well, thou art a good sort of fellow; don't be abash'd: thou see'st I am very condescending to thee. Come, then, thou shalt drink a cup of liquor with me. Follow us into the next ward, my good friend.

CLOWN (*shrinking from him again*).

O na, fave your prence! I'll go with the jailor here.

FIRST EXECUTIONER (*to Second Executioner*).

Ay, he is but a poor bashful clown, and don't know how to behave himself in good company.

(*Exeunt Executioners.*)

CLOWN.

Shake hands with him, Mary preserve us! it sets the very ends of my fingers a dingling. Drink out of the same mug with him too! (*sputtering with his lips*) poh! poh! poh! the taste of raw heads and carrion is on my lips at the thoughts of it. (*To Jailor.*) Come let us go out of this place; I be long enough here. (*stepping short as he goes off.*) What noise and hammering is this we hear?

JAILOR.

It is the workmen putting up the scaffold.

CLOWN (*starting*).

What, are we so near to it? mercy on us! let me get out of this place, for it puts me into a terrible quandary.

JAILOR.

If this be the mettle thou art made of, thou had'st better take thy money again, and I'll give thy place

for the fight to somebody that has got a stouter heart than thou hast.

## CLOWN.

Na, na, I won't do that neither; I have a huge desire to see how a man looks when he is going to have his head cut off, and I'll stay for the fight tho' I should swoon for it. Poor man! poor man! what frightful things there be in this world when one's mind sets a thinking upon it!—Is he a tall man now, (*to Jailor*) or a short man? a pale-faced man, or——ay, pale enough, I warrant. Mercy on us! I shall think of him many a night after this before I go to sleep. Poor man! poor man! what terrible things there be in this world if a body does but think of them.

(*Exeunt Clown and Jailor.*)

SCENE II. *A dungeon; Rayner discovered sitting at a table by the light of a lamp, with a book in his hand; the clock from a neighbouring steeple strikes three, and he, roused with the sound, lays down the book.*

## RAYNER.

This bell speaks with a deep and fullen voice :  
 The time comes on apace with silent speed.  
 Is it indeed so late? (*Looking at his watch.*)  
 It is even so.  
 (*Pausing, and looking still at the watch.*)  
 How soon time flies away ! yet, as I watch it,

Methinks, by the slow progress of this hand,  
 I should have liv'd an age since yesterday,  
 And have an age to live. Still on it creeps,  
 Each little moment at another's heels,  
 Till hours, days, years, and ages are made up  
 Of such small parts as these, and men look back,  
 Worn and bewilder'd, wond'ring how it is.  
 Thou trav'lest like a ship in the wide ocean,  
 Which hath no bounding shore to mark its progress;  
 O Time! ere long I shall have done with thee.  
 When next thou ledest on thy nightly shades,  
 Tho' many a weary heart thy steps may count,  
 Thy midnight 'larum shall not waken me.  
 Then shall I be a thing, at thought of which  
 The roused soul swells boundless and sublime,  
 Or wheels in wildness of unfathom'd fears:  
 A thought; a consciousness; unbodied spirit.  
 Who but would shrink from this? It goes hard  
     with thee,  
 Social connected man; it goes hard with thee  
 To be turned out into a state unknown,  
 From all thy kind, an individual being.  
 But wherefore shrink? came we not thus to earth?  
 And he who sent, prepar'd reception for us.  
 Ay, glorious are the things that are prepar'd,  
 As we believe!—yet, heaven pardon me!  
 I fain would sculk beneath my wonted cov'ring,  
 Mean as it is.  
 Ah, Time! when next thou fill'st thy nightly term,  
 Where shall I be? Fye! fye upon thee still!  
 E'en where weak infancy, and tim'rous age,

And maiden fearfulness have gone before thee ;  
 And where, as well as him of firmest soul,  
 The meanly-minded and the coward are.  
 Then trust thy nature, at th'approaching push,  
 The mind doth shape itself to its own wants,  
 And can bear all things. (*Rising from his seat, and  
 walking several times backward and forward.*)  
 I know not how it is, I'm wond'rous heavy ;  
 Fain would I rest a while. This weary frame  
 Has but a little more to do for me,  
 And yet it asks for rest. I'll lay me down :  
 It may be possible that I shall sleep,  
 After these weary tossings of the mind ;  
 I feel as tho' I should. (*Goes to sleep, covering him-  
 self with a cloak.*)

*Enter OHIO, creeping out from a hiding-place at the  
 bottom of the stage, and going softly up to Rayner,  
 looks for some time upon him with a malicious grin.*

OHIO.

Thou hast lov'd negroes' blood, I warrant thee.  
 Dost sleep? ay, they will waken thee ere long,  
 And cut thy head off. They'll put thee to rest ;  
 They'll close thine eyes for thee without thy leave ;  
 They'll bloat thy white skin for thee, lily-face.  
 Come, less harm will I do thee than thy fellows :  
 My sides are cold : a dead man needs no cloak.

*(Beginning gently to pull off Rayner's cloak, who  
 starts from his sleep, and looks at him in  
 amazement.)*

I

RAYNER.

Ha! what hole of the earth hath cast thee up?  
 What thing art thou? and what would'st thou  
 with me?

OHIO.

My fides are cold; a dead man needs no cloak.

RAYNER.

'Tis true indeed, but do not strip the living.  
 Where dost thou run to now? where wert thou hid?

OHIO (*after running to his hiding-place, and fetching  
 out a stick, which he presents to Rayner*).

Beat me thyself, but do not tell of me.

RAYNER.

I would not harm thee for a greater fault.  
 I'm sorry thou art cold; here is my cloak:  
 Thou hast said well; a dead man needs it not.  
 I know thee now; thou art the wretched negro  
 Who serves the prisoners; I have observ'd thee:  
 I'm sorry for thee; thou art bare enough,  
 And winter is at hand.

OHIO.

Ha! art thou sorry that the negro's cold?  
 Where wert thou born who art so pitiful?  
 I will not take thy cloak, but I will love thee.  
 They shall not cut thy head off.

RAYNER.

Go thy ways;  
 Go sculk within thy hiding place again,  
 And, when the cell is open'd, save thyself.

OHIO.  
They shan't cut off thy head.

RAYNER.

Now, pray thee go.

OHIO.

I'll kiss thy feet; I'll spend my blood for thee.

RAYNER.

I do beseech thee go! there's some one coming:  
I hear them at the door. (*Pushes him hastily off.*)

*Enter HARDIBRAND, advancing slowly to Rayner,  
his eyes cast upon the ground.*

RAYNER.

Good morrow, general: where's thy friendly  
hand?

Why dost thou turn thine eyes aside, and fear  
To look me in the face? Is there upon it  
Aught that betrays the workings of the mind  
Too strongly mark'd? I will confess to thee  
I've struggl'd hard, I've felt the fears of nature;  
But yet I have the spirit of a man  
That will uphold me: therefore, my brave friend,  
Do me the grace to look upon me boldly;  
I'll not disgrace thee.

HARDIBRAND.

No, my valiant boy!  
I know thou'lt not disgrace me, nor will I

Put shame on thee by wearing on this morn  
 A weeping face : I will be valiant too.  
 We will not, Rayner, tho' thou'rt thus—Oh! oh!  
*(Bursting into tears.)*

RAYNER.

My gen'rous friend, my second father, why  
 Wilt thou oppress me thus?

HARDIBRAND.

Bear with me, bear with me ; I meant to brave it,  
 And I will brave it. But to thee, my son,  
 In thy distress, encompass'd as thou art,  
 My heart so strongly has enlink'd itself,  
 That to part from thee, boy, is ——  
*(Falling on his neck, and bursting again into tears.)*

*Enter* MARDONIO.

MARDONIO *(after looking at them for some time, and  
 in a solemn imposing tone of voice).*

The strength of man sinks in the hour of trial ;  
 But there doth live a pow'r that to the battle  
 Girdeth the weak : Heaven's vivifying grace,  
 And strength, and holy confidence be thine,  
 Who art in mercy stricken ! *(Holding up his right  
 hand to heaven, whilst Rayner, approaching  
 with reverence, bows himself beneath it very  
 low.)*

RAYNER.

Thanks to thee, father ! these are words of power,  
 And I do feel their strength. Beneath that hand



Which hath in mercy stricken me, I bow ;  
 Yea bow, the nobler and the bolder grown,  
 For such humility.—(*Familiarly*) How goes the  
 time ?  
 Does day begin to dawn ?

MARDONIO.

Grey light peeps faintly o'er the eastern towers.

RAYNER.

The time is then advanc'd ; we'll husband it.  
 Come close to me, my friends. (*Taking Hardibrand  
 and Mardonio each by the hand, and pressing  
 them close to his breast.*)  
 Of worldly cares, upon my mind there rests  
 But only those which I have mention'd to you.  
 Yet, in this solemn hour, let me remind you :—  
 My poor Elizabeth——

HARDIBRAND (*eagerly*).

Thou'lt said enough :  
 She is my child and heiress of my lands  
 To the last rood.—Ah ! what avails it now !

RAYNER.

How shall a dying man find thanks for this,  
 Whose day is clos'd ? I will attempt no thanks.  
 The other with that closely presses on me :—  
 Mardonio, upon thee must hang this boon :—  
 That miserable man of whom I've told you ;  
 Now living in the hell of his remorse,  
 Cut off from human intercourse ; whose horrors

And midnight visions sav'd this hand from blood;  
I fain——

HARDIBRAND (*again eagerly interrupting him*).

Fear not! fear not! he shall be sav'd;  
And shall with human beings yet consort  
In blessed charity, if ghostly care  
From holiest men procur'd, or off'rings made  
To ev'ry sacred shrine on christian ground  
Can give him peace.

RAYNER (*smiling and pressing Hardibrand to his bosom*).

With all the prompt and gen'rous profusion  
Of eager youth dost thou, mine aged friend,  
Take every thing upon thee. Be it so.  
And good Mardonio with his sober counsel  
Will aid thy bounty. Here I join your hands:  
My worldly cares are clos'd.

*Enter ELIZABETH, followed by Richard and Bertram, who remain on the back ground whilst she comes slowly forward; Rayner turning round on hearing them enter.*

Ah! who is this?

Alas! alas! it is Elizabeth.

(*Holding out his hand to her.*)

Advance, my love; thou'rt ever welcome here.  
How does it fare with thee?

ELIZABETH.

It is all mist and darkness with me now;  
I know not how it fares with me.

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RAYNER.

Alas!

'Thou gentle soul! a dark cloud o'er thee hangs,  
But the sun will again break thro' the gloom,  
And, in the soberness of calm remembrance,  
Thou wilt look back upon misfortunes past  
Like tempests that are laid. Thou dost not heed me:  
Thou dost not speak to me. Alas! Alas!  
What shall I say to thee?  
I've lov'd thee well, and would have lov'd thee  
long,

Had it so been—But thou shalt be belov'd!  
Heaven will take charge of thee when I'm at rest:  
The kindly and the good shall be thy kindred,  
(*Putting her hand in Hardibrand's.*)

And ev'ry sorrowful and gentle heart  
Shall knit itself to thee, and call thee sister.

(*Elizabeth makes a motion with her hand as if  
she would speak, and he pauses, but she is  
silent.*)

What meant, my love, that motion of thy hand?

MARDONIO.

She fain would speak to thee, but has no voice.

RAYNER.

I know it well, Elizabeth; no voice  
Need'st thou to tell me how thou'st dearly lov'd  
me,  
And dearly do I prize it; 'tis my pride,

E'en humbl'd as I am, it is my pride.  
 Heaven's dearest blessings rest upon thy head!—  
 And now, since we must part, do in thy love,  
 Do for me this last grace; bid me farewell,  
 And let my earthly sorrows now be clos'd.  
 Heaven's blessing rest upon thee!

*(He kisses her, and she turns to go away, Rayner looking after her as she goes, but presently returns again.)*

RAYNER.

Thou art return'd, my soul, what would'st thou have?

ELIZABETH *(in a broken voice)*.

A thought—a wish did press upon my heart,  
 But it is gone.

RAYNER.

I thank thee for thy wish;  
 It is a good one, tho' thou canst not speak it,  
 And it will do me good. But leave me! leave me!  
 Thou wilt unfit me for a task of strength.

*(Elizabeth again attempts to go away, but still returns.)*

Ah, wherefore still! wilt thou be cruel to me?

ELIZABETH.

O, no! O, no! I know not what I do;  
 It is all mist and darkness with me now;  
 I look upon thee, but I see thee not.

Let me once more but feel thy hand in mine  
 And fend me where ye will : my being then.  
 Is at an end. (*They embrace again, and she still  
 continues to hang upon him.*)

RAYNER (*to Bertram and Richard*).

O, lead her hence, and have some mercy on me !  
 My father died i' the field a valiant death,  
 And shall his son upon the scaffold die  
 O'ercome and weak, rest of that decent firmness  
 Which ev'n the base and vulgar there assume ?  
 O lead her hence ! in mercy lead her hence !

(*Bertram and Richard tear her from him, and  
 lead her away, whilst he turns his back, and  
 hides his face with his hands.*)

ELIZABETH (*stopping short, and tossing up her arms  
 distractedly as they are leading her out*).

Reprieve ! reprieve ! I hear a voice i' the air !  
 I hear it yet again !

RAYNER (*uncovering his face, and looking about  
 eagerly, whilst Hardibrand rushes forward impe-  
 tuously from the bottom of the stage, where he has  
 been pacing backward and forward with hasty  
 strides*).

Is't any thing ?

MARDONIO.

Alas no ! all is silent : 'tis the fancy  
 Of fond distraction list'ning to itself.

HARDIBRAND.

Nay, it was something : Bertram, thou did'st hear it ?

BERTRAM.

No, I heard nothing.

HARDIBRAND.

What, nor thou, good Richard.

RICHARD.

No, nothing.

ELIZABETH (*holding up her arm distractedly as Richard and Bertram lead her off*).

And is it nothing ! no redemption near !

(*Exeunt Elizabeth, Richard, and Bertram, whilst Rayner, uttering a deep groan, hides his face, and Hardibrand returns with hasty strides to the bottom of the stage.*)

RAYNER (*uncovering his face*).

Is she gone now ?

MARDONIO.

She is.

RAYNER.

Thank God for it ! Now to our task :

(*Stepping forward with assumed firmness.*)

What of it now remains we shall o'er-matter.

Pray thee how goes the time ? But pardon me !

I have too oft enquir'd how goes the time :

It is my weakness.

MARDONIO.

The morning now advances.

RAYNER.

So I reckon'd.

We too shall put ourselves in forwardness :  
And so, good father, to your ghostly guidance  
I do commend myself.

*Enter JAILOR.*

JAILOR.

The officers of justice are arrived,  
And wait the presence of the prisoner.

RAYNER.

They come upon us sooner than we wist ;  
But 'tis so much the better.

*(To Mardonio aside.)*

Shall we have time allow'd us for retirement,  
Before they lead me forth ?

MARDONIO.

'Tis ever so allow'd.

RAYNER.

Come then, I feel me stronger than I was :  
'Twill soon be past ; the work goes on apace.

*(Taking hold of Hardibrand and Mardonio as  
he goes out.)*

Your arm, I pray :—I know not how it is ;

My head feels dizzy, but my limbs are firm.  
 Good Hardibrand, think'st thou I shall disgrace  
 thee?

HARDIBRAND.

No, by the mass! I'll give them this old carcase  
 To hack for crow's meat if thou shrink'st one hair's  
 breadth

From the comportment of a gallant soldier,  
 And of a brave man's son.

RAYNER (*Smiling with a gratified look*).

I thank thee.

Methinks I now tread, as I onward move,  
 With more elastic and dilating step,  
 As if a spirit of pride within me stirr'd,  
 Buoying me up on the swoln billows ridge.

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III. *An outer garden-room or portico in the house where Zaterloo is concealed; enter Countess and a Confessor, with two Attendants bearing Zaterloo on a small couch, which they set down on the middle of the stage; the Attendants retire.*

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

The air revives him: look, I pray thee, father,  
 How the fresh air revives him: say not then  
 All hope is banish'd quite.—Thou skak'st thy head:  
 But whilst I see upon his moving breast  
 One heave of breath, betok'ning life within,



I'll grasp at hope, and will not let it go.

(*Bending over the couch.*)

My son! my son! hear'st thou my voice, my son?

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Yes, mother: I have had a fearful struggle.

'Tis a strong enemy that grapples with me,

And I must yield to him.—O pious father!

Pray thou for mercy on me.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Yes, my son,

This holy man shall pray for thee; the shrines

Of holiest saints be gifted for thee; masses

And sacred hymns be chanted for thy peace:—

And thou thyself, even 'midst thine agony,

Hast spoken precious words of heav'nly grace;

Therefore be comforted.

COUNT ZATERLOO (*Shaking his head*).

There is no comfort here: dark, veil'd, and  
terrible,

That which abides me; and how short a space——

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

O thou may'st yet recover!

CONFESSOR.

Lady, forbear! this is no time to soothe

With flatt'ring hopes: his term is near its close;

Therefore, I do again entreat it of you,

Send off the messenger with his confession,

Lest it should be too late to save the innocent,  
 And he be sent unto his long account  
 With a most heavy charge upon his head.

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Thou mak'st me tremble.—Ho! there, you  
 without!

Send here the messenger. (*Calling off the stage.*)

—His steed is ready:

He shall forthwith depart.

*Enter MESSENGER.*

CONFESSOR (*to Messenger*).

Take thou this packet, and with full-bent speed  
 Go to the city to the governor,  
 And see thou give it into his own hand,  
 With charges that he read it instantly.  
 It is of precious moment to *his* life  
 Who on the scaffold should this morning suffer.  
 Quick mount thy horse: few minutes goaded speed  
 Will take thee to the gates.

MESSENGER.

Few minutes goaded speed, five leagues to master!

CONFESSOR.

Five leagues! thou'rt mad.

MESSENGER.

No, marry! know ye not  
 The flooded river hath last night broke down  
 The nearer bridge?

CONFESSOR.

What, art thou sure of this?

MESSENGER.

I am now come from gazing on the sight.  
From bank to bank the red swollen river roars ;  
And on the deep and slowly-rolling mass  
Of its strong centre-tide, grimly and dark,  
The wrecks of cottages, whole ricks of grain,  
Trunks of huge trees torn by the roots,—ay, save  
us!

And floating carcases of perish'd things,  
Bloated and black, are borne along ; whilst currents  
Cross-set and furious, meeting adverse streams  
On rude uneven surface, far beyond  
The water's natural bed, do loudly war  
And terrible contest hold ; and swelling eddies  
With dizzy whirling fury, toss aloft  
Their surgy waves i' the air, and scatter round  
Their ceaseless bick'ring gleams of jagged foam,  
All fiercely whit'ning in the morning light.  
Crowds now are standing upon either shore  
In awful silence ; not a sound is heard  
But the flood's awful voice, and from the city  
A dismal bell heard thro' the air by starts,  
Already tolling for the execution.

CONFESSOR.

What's to be done ? fate seems to war against us.  
No, no ! we'll not despair ! Mount thy fleet horse,

Life and death's in thy speed :—  
 Let naught one moment stop thee on thy way :  
 All things are possible to vig'rous zeal :  
 Life and death's in thy speed : depart ! depart !  
 And heaven be with thine efforts.

*(Exit Messenger, after receiving the packet.)*

COUNT ZATERLOO.

Is he gone ? is it done ?

CONFESSOR.

Yes he is gone : God grant he be in time,  
 For unto human reck'ning 'tis impossible!  
*(To Countess with an upbraiding look.)*  
 Half an hour sooner—

COUNTESS ZATERLOO.

Oh, torment me not !  
 Who could foresee this hind'rance ?—O, good father !  
 Look to thy penitent. Upon his count'nance  
 There's something new and terrible. Speak to him :  
 Go close to him, good father.—O my son !

COUNT ZATERLOO.

I feel within me now—this is the feeling :  
 I am upon the brink, the dreadful brink :  
 It is a fearful gulf I have to shoot.  
 O yet support me ! in this racking pain  
 I still may hold a space the grasp of life,

And keep back from the dark and horrid— Oh!

(*uttering a deep groan*) It is upon me!

(*Struggles and expires with a faint groan.*

*Countess, wringing her hands in agony of grief, is hurried off the stage by the Confessor and Attendants, who rush in and take hold of her.*)

SCENE IV. *An open square before the great gate of the prison: a Crowd of spectators, with guards, &c. are discovered, waiting for the coming forth of Rayner to his execution, and a solemn bell is heard at intervals. The gate opens, and enter Rayner walking between Mardonio and Hardibrand, and followed by Richard and Bertram, preceded and followed by guards, officers, &c. The procession moves slowly over the stage, and exeunt, followed by the greater part of the Crowd, though a good many of them still remain upon the stage. Then re-enter Hardibrand and Richard, followed by one or two of the Crowd: Hardibrand walking up and down in a perturbed manner, and Richard leaning his back against the side-scene, where he continues motionless with his eyes fixed on the ground. The murmur of the multitude is heard for some time without, and then ceases, followed by a dead silence.*

FIRST CROWD.

The found of the multitude is still now.

SECOND CROWD (*looking out*).

I fancy, by the crowd who stand all gather'd

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round yonder in dead silence, he is now preparing for the block.

## THIRD CROWD.

It must be so: mercy on us, what a mantle of human faces there be spread round on every side, and not one sound of voice amongst them all!

*(A long pause.)*

HARDIBRAND *(starting and stopping suddenly, to First Crowd)*.

Didst thou hear aught?

## FIRST CROWD.

No, they are still silent.

## HARDIBRAND.

Look out, I pray thee, and tell me what thou see'st.

*(First Crowd looks out.)*

What dost thou gaze at with so broad an eye?

## FIRST CROWD.

The executioner is now mounted upon the platform, and the prisoner—O! I cannot look any more! *(A loud confused noise is heard without.)*

## HARDIBRAND.

What's that?

## SECOND CROWD.

It is like the cry of a great multitude when they look upon something that is terrible.

## FIRST CROWD.

Then the stroke is given, and it is all over now.

*(Hardibrand turns hastily away, and rushes to the other end of the stage, whilst Richard gives a heavy groan, and still remains motionless. A shout is heard without.)*

HARDIBRAND *(returning furiously from the bottom of the stage).*

More of that horrible din!—  
May they bring down the welkin on their heads!

SECOND CROWD *(to First Crowd).*

What art thou looking at now?

## FIRST CROWD.

Nay, there is nothing to look at now: the platform is down, and the crowd is returning home again.

*Enter OHIO, running across the stage.*

## OHIO.

I've done it! I've done it! I've done it! *(Exit.*  
*Enter a MESSENGER in great haste, followed by a Civil Officer.*

## FIRST CROWD.

Where are you running to so fast?

RAYNER:

MESSENGER.

Is the execution over?

FIRST CROWD.

Yes, it is over.

MESSENGER.

Ah! then I am too late.

FIRST CROWD.

What mean ye by that?

MESSENGER.

I brought a pardon for him.

HARDIBRAND (*rushing upon the messenger and collaring him*)-

A pardon! O confound your tardy speed!  
Had you upon some paltry wager strove,  
You had run faster.—O, thou cursed fool!  
O had'st thou sped, I'd made a rich man of thee!

MESSENGER (*disentangling himself*).

My steed and I across the high-swoln flood,  
Those on the shore shrieking to see our boldness,  
Have fearless swam some miles short of the pass  
Which we must else have gain'd, or, by my faith,  
I had been later.



HARDIBRAND.

Thou liest, thou curfed fool! thou should'ft have  
 sped  
 Swift as a bullet from the cannon's mouth.

*(Collaring him again.)*

*Enter* RAYNER, MARDONIO, BERTRAM, and  
 CROWD.

MARDONIO *(to Hardibrand, pulling him back from  
 the Messenger).*

Hold, general! what hath the poor man done?

HARDIBRAND.

What has he done! he's brought a pardon, fiend!

*(The Crowd give a great shout crying out "par-  
 don, pardon," and Hardibrand, turning round  
 at the noise, and seeing Rayner, springs for-  
 ward, and catches him in his arms.)*

God blefs us all, and let us keep our wits!

Is this true seeing that my eyes are blest with?

O welcome, welcome! this is wonderful!

My boy! my noble boy! my gallant boy!

Thou art a man again, and I—I'm mad:

My head wheels round, but 'tis a blessed madness.

What say'ft thou? art thou filent?

Hast no voice?

RAYNER.

To be upon the verge of death is awful;

And awful from that verge to be recall'd.

God blefs ye! O God blefs ye! I am spent;

But let me draw my breath a little while,

And I will thank you—I will—Bear with me :  
I cannot speak. (*Recovering himself, and seeing the  
Crowd gather round him with joyful and sym-  
pathizing looks.*)

Surely 'tis a kind world I have return'd to ;  
There's sympathy and love in ev'ry heart.

MARDONIO. (*to Messenger*).

Where is the pardon? let me have it friend,  
That I may read it. (*Messenger gives him a paper,  
which he reads.*)

We charge thee upon our authority to set the  
(*Reading the rest low to himself.*)

What! call ye this a pardon which acquits  
The prisoner as guiltless of the crime?  
May God be praised! how has all this been?

MESSENGER.

Count Zaterloo, who on his death-bed lies,  
In deep remorse, a paper of confession,  
Attested by a priest and his own mother,  
Caus'd to be drawn, which to the governor  
I've brought, I wot, as quickly as I might,  
Tho' (*pointing to Hardibrand*) this good gentleman—

HARDIBRAND (*embracing the Messenger*),

O no! O no! thou'rt a brave fellow now,  
And as I've said I'll make a rich man of thee.  
But I'm bewilder'd still: how hath it been  
That he is fav'd, seeing no pardon reach'd him?

MARDONIO.

Yes, thou may'st wonder! for some unknown  
friend

Had fawn across the main prop of the scaffold,  
So that the headsmen mounting first, the platform  
Fell with a crash; and he, all maim'd and bruise'd,  
Unfit to do his office, was perforce——

HARDIBRAND.

Ay, ay, 'tis plain, thou need'st not tell me more.—  
But he the unknown friend ——

*Enter OHIO, running exultingly.*

OHIO.

'Twas I that did it!  
Beat me and scourge me as ye list: I did it!  
He offer'd me his cloak: he pitied me;  
And I have paid him back.

HARDIBRAND.

Ha! well done and well said, my brave black  
thing!  
Art thou a prince? in faith I think thou art:  
I'll take thee home, and make a man of thee.  
No, no! (*pointing to Rayner*) here is my son, my  
heir, my child:  
All that I have is his: he will reward thee.  
Thou hast a gen'rous mind, altho' debas'd  
With vile oppression and unmanly scorn.

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RAYNER (*taking Ohio and Hardibrand both by the hand*).

What shall I say to you? my heart would speak  
What my voice cannot. O! and here comes one  
Who mocks all power of words.

(*Enter Elizabeth running, and rushes into Rayner's arms; the Crowd then eagerly gathers round them, and closes upon them.*)

MARDONIO (*stepping out from the crowd, and looking upon them.*)

Yes, gather round him, kindly souls tho' rude,  
In the true artless sympathy of nature;  
For he is one o'er whom the storm has roll'd  
In awful power, but spar'd the thunderbolt.—  
When urg'd by strong temptation to the brink  
Of guilt and ruin, stands the virtuous mind  
With scarce a step between; all pitying heaven,  
Severe in mercy, chast'ning in its love,  
Oftimes, in dark and awful visitation,  
Doth interpose, and leads the wand'rer back  
To the straight path, to be forever after  
A firm, undaunted, onward-bearing traveller,  
Strong in humility, who swerves no more.

(*Exeunt.*)