

To The Bitter End.

PS 3-58  
W 523

A

TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

ADAIR WELCKER.



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## TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

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### PERSONS REPRESENTED.

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <i>Arden</i> .....              | An old man                                       |
| <i>Mrs. Arden</i> .....         | His wife.  |
| <i>Lily Arden</i> .....         | His daughter.                                    |
| <i>Mrs. Stone</i> .....         |  |
| <i>Josephine</i> .....          | Niece of Mrs. Stone's                            |
| <i>Mr. Bitworth Stone</i> ..... | Son of Mrs. Stone's.                             |
| <i>Godfrey</i> .....            | Lover of Josephine's.                            |
| <i>Blackwell</i> .....          | { Half servant; whole<br>friend of Mrs. Stone's. |
| <i>Willie</i> .....             | { A child of Lily Arden<br>and Bitworth Stone.   |
| <i>Catherine</i> .....          | { Deserted wife of Black<br>well.                |
| <i>A Detective</i> .....        |  |
| <i>A Minister</i> .....         |  |
|                                 | Relatives, Servants, etc.                        |

PS 3158  
W528

# TO THE BITTER END.

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—A little garden in the rear of a neat, but small cottage, in San Francisco. The cottage L. C. in the back-ground. A gate R. C. that opens upon a pathway, that leads round to the front. A door C. opening into the back part of the house.

LILY and JOSEPHINE discovered.

*Lily.* Yes, Josephine, my kindest, dearest friend,  
These hard misfortunes have come one by one  
And settled here upon my father's house.  
The first, and hardest, was my brother's death :—  
A cruel, cruel blow ; for in his heart  
Did nothing dwell but love. When last I saw thee  
We little thought he'd take so soon the wings  
Of Death, and fly away to Heaven.

*Josephine.* Ah, Lily !  
My poor, poor friend ; my heart is bleeding for thee !

*Lily.* The burning fever first did scorch his brow ;  
Then sickness racked him with her cruel pains ;—  
I hear him now, with his poor, piteous wail  
Call out for help, in his delirium.

A soothing sleep at last drove off his pain,  
And, while he slept, all stood around his bed,  
With anxious faces, waiting till he waked.  
At last he ope'd his eyes, and smiled on us,  
And asked that we would raise him up, and then  
He sang a hymn, and said good-bye, and died.

*Jos.* Oh Lily ! Lily ! I know 'tis hard—'tis very hard !

*Lily.* And then did more misfortune follow on  
The heels of this ;—my father lost his land—  
Thus runs the tale forever down and downward !

*Jos.* Ah, what a demon is adversity,  
That when he once hath seized upon a man,  
Will lead him to the death !  
But, Lily, look you up, for when to-day  
Is grown a yesterday, we smile at its  
Misfortune.

*Lily.* But often will my memories fly  
Back to my childhood's home, like swallows that still seek  
Their nests torn down by cruel Winter's storms.  
Can I forget the old back stairs, where oft  
My little brother's feet came, step by step ?  
The little room, where, watching his worn face that night,

We saw him die? And then there was a vine  
 Where all the birds of summer came to woo :—  
 It was a honey-suckle vine, and oft  
 The Sun's rays stealing came, through its soft leaves,  
 To wake me i' the morning.

[Bell rings at front of the house.

Who can it be?

- Jos.* My aunt here in her carriage,  
 To take me home. But list! yes, 'tis her voice.  
*Mrs. Sto.* [within.] This change to poverty has ta'en the life  
 From out their lazy limbs. [Rings again.]  
*Lily.* My parents must have gone without, to take  
 Their evening walk; and they have locked the door.  
 I'll go round to the front. [Exit through gate R. C.  
*Mrs. Sto.* Ha, now! not yet? but I will bring them up.  
 [Rings violently.]  
*Josephine.* I know not why it is; my aunt does seem  
 To have a strange dislike for my sweet friend,  
 And, turning from her, it does reach her parents.

Enter through gate R. C. MRS. STONE, LILY and BLACKWELL.

- Mrs. Sto.* Well, Niece,  
 Did you grow tired while waiting for me here?  
*Jos.* No, Aunt; here, with my friend, the fleeting hours  
 Were gilded o'er with golden happiness!  
*Mrs. Sto.* A gentle friend, indeed! So sweet is she  
 That all the baby stars do press their faces  
 Against the windows in the vault of Heaven,  
 To gaze down on her lovely innocence!  
 And I know one (thy cousin, Josephine),  
 Whose eye was captured by her innocence :—  
 He listened to her soft and cooing words,  
 Which chased each other out her snowy throat,  
 As soft and innocent as doves' notes are—  
 And all the world does know, the dove does never coo  
 To win her charmed mate—'tis all for innocence.

*Black.* Hell's innocence!

- Jos.* The mind that does imagine guilt in others,  
 For that imagination often hath  
 A strong foundation resting in itself.  
*Mrs. Sto.* Now stop thy magpie chattering; come,  
 To our home.  
*Jos.* Good-bye, sweet Lily, 'till we meet again. [when  
*Mrs. Sto.* [aside to Blackwell.] A tender morsel 'tis of pleasure,  
 We have a power that, wand-like, we can wield  
 To make men tremble!—you make a waste of time—  
 Come, Josephine!

[Exeunt MRS. STONE, BLACKWELL and JOSEPHINE, through gate R. C.]

- Lily.* One hath a frowning face to wither smiles;  
 The other smiles—will they be withered?  
 [Exit through door C. into the house.]

Enter through gate R. C. MR. and MRS. ARDEN, and they sit together on a  
 bench L. under some trees.

- Mrs. Ard.* The little money that we still have left  
 Is going fast; soon will it all be gone—what then?  
*Ard.* Ay, that I'd ask my wife; what then?

*Mrs. Ard.* I'll tell thee what: then will starvation come,  
And cling upon us 'till the flesh is gone.

*Ard.* I've done my best to gain a livelihood;  
From morn to night have wandered round these streets;  
Asked oft for work, but did receive rebuffs,  
And met cold looks, that silent insult bore;  
My clothes jeered at; oft cut by former friends:  
And when I asked but for a little work,  
They took it as an impudence in me!  
Ah! I have dragged through many a dreary day,  
Until the heart did weary grow, and sick,  
And 'till I wished to lay me down and die,  
Like some poor dog, I've seen lie i' the gutter!  
But then the thought of thee, and of my child,  
Came to my mind, and urged me on again;  
And now, for this, you taunt me with the pain—  
The poverty I've wrought—Oh! tis too much!

*Mrs. Ard.* I taunt thee? No! I cast no taunt at thee;  
But, still, I think our daughter might have deigned  
To drop her selfishness, and think of us,  
Who, she perhaps may know, have given her being:  
But, like a queen that hath ten million pounds,  
She coldly did reject young Stone, her lover,  
Because, forsooth, she thought she ne'er could love him!

*Ard.* All this is strange—I never heard of this!—  
And is it long that he hath woo'd my daughter?

*Mrs. Ard.* As long as summer is, with winter placed behind it,  
Hath he been wooing her beneath thy eyes.

*Ard.* I knew that, like another visitor,  
A few short evenings had he spent with her.

*Mrs. Ard.* Why, e'en as sure as came the night, of late,  
This wooer came, and in our Lily's ear  
Did whisper; but she put rough barriers there;  
Yet still he poured his soft words in her ear  
Until the hour grew late, and the poor lights  
Did grow a-weary guarding off the dark.  
But she had not an answer for this love,  
In all her pride, and all her selfishness!

*Ard.* Oh, wife! let not these hard thoughts rise in thee.  
Selfish, say you? A thought of selfishness  
Ne'er dared to stray across her gentle heart!  
And pride?—Oh think not that, my wife! These hardships  
That you now feel, have left a bitterness  
To ruffle up the smoothness of your thoughts.

*Mrs. Ard.* And he does give a golden reason for  
His wooing!

*Ard.* And would you make a bargain of our child?  
Oh no, my wife! I know, a year ago,  
You had not thought like this: and soon again,  
When better times have brightened up before us,  
Your thoughts will take again their former course.

*Mrs. Ard.* Nay, but she must not drive kind fortune off,  
That now does almost beg to do her favors.  
But thus it is through all the length of life:  
Fortune we use not when 'tis in our power,  
And, when it has escaped, we rue its loss!

*Enter LILY, through house-door c.*

Tell me now, Lily, why like you not your wooer?  
 He has good looks;—such looks had pleased me well,  
 When I was of your age;—a manly form,  
 A gallant bearing, and a sparkling eye,  
 That speaks an unheard language, sweeter far  
 Than the soft-tongued nightingale could speak.  
 And he would give an ample fortune to thee.

*Lily.* I have a reason that I may not give;  
 A reason, that would make me rather work  
 Until the flesh is worn from off these arms,  
 Before I would consent to be his bride!

*Ard.* Nor shall my darling, forced against her will,  
 Give up her hand to one she does not love,  
 While lives her father, with a breast so broad,  
 That it may yet brave off life's beating storms!

[*Exit ARDEN into the house c.*]

*Mrs. Ard.* Again, I ask, why can you love him not?

*Lily.* And still, I say, I have a reason, mother,  
 That I would keep a prisoner in this brain,  
 'Till Death draws back the bolts to let it free!

*Mrs. Ard.* But I'm thy mother, child; should not thy secrets  
 Be known to me, as well as to thyself?

*Lily.* Since mother, then, you still wish that I should  
 Give thee my secret: know that this man's mother,  
 Without a cause, hath so insulted me,  
 As never woman did since day dawned to me!  
 With cruel, bitter sneers, hid in a smile,  
 At first she did insinuate that I  
 Was but a poor, low wretch, that sought, with wily arts,  
 To steal away th' affections of her son,  
 Who, though I did look coldly on his wooing,  
 Hath still persisted in his ill-born suit.

*Mrs. Ard.* And I suppose that something she hath said,  
 Which, though her words no masked meanings bore,  
 Did so appear to your suspicious mind.

*Lily.* Ah yes, my mother; they bore meanings sharp  
 As knives, with which they pierced me to the heart!  
 At times, when she did say some bitter thing,  
 She smiled the while, with that hard, chilling smile,  
 That speaks in every tongue; and all the while  
 Methought I saw young demons in her eyes;  
 Those eyes that blazed with fire new-brought from Hell!  
 Ah, no; I cannot ever marry him,  
 For then she'd smile upon my very dreams!

*Mrs. Ard.* If she's a woman; are you not another?  
 Poor, timid thing; I fain must pity thee;  
 Thou wast not made for such a world as this,  
 A wicked world, that brings thee grievances.

*Lily.* I tell thee, mother, a bitter life's before me  
 If I do take his hand; none of life's joys  
 Will ever reach my heart; dark shadows only  
 Will fall from off the years that, like to trains  
 Of funerals, will slowly cross the heaven.  
 My days will be like nights of bitterness,  
 My nights like shrouded days.  
 There is a voice deep down within my heart  
 Proclaims this doom to me. Whether this be

A spirit, speaking with a voice from Heaven,  
I know not ; but I know the voice speaks truth.  
Tell me now, mother,  
Shall I surrender up my hand to him ?

*Mrs. Ard.* I am too old, my child, to be deceived  
By these thy foolish fancies ; since you ask  
For my opinion, in such rounded terms,  
I say that, in thy place, I'd marry him.

*Lily.* Mother, it shall be done !

*Mrs. Ard.* Lily, say not  
Hereafter, that I have advised thee to it.  
I only say, that I would marry him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—An open place in front of Mrs. STONE'S house in Berkeley :  
the full Moon rises over the hills.

*Enter* GODFREY, R.

*Godfrey.* Before the night came here was she to meet me ;  
Either some strange mischance hath fallen her,  
Or else kind-hearted Night hath drawn her veil,  
Before the time, to keep the hot-rayed Sun  
From off her face. Now come the little stars ;  
Through every crack of Heaven do they peep down  
To catch a view of her o'er-lovely face !  
But now she comes ! I hear her steps  
Making sweet music for th' enraptured air !

*Enter* JOSEPHINE, L.

*Josephine.* And did you think that I would never come ?

*Godfrey.* The hours did truly seem stretched out so long,  
I might have named them never ; but since now  
I see thee here, the evil of that time  
Does serve but as a contrast to these moments,  
That, like to sunbeams, frightened by the night,  
Do swiftly flee away !

*Josephine.* I had been here,  
But that some envious demon held me back,  
Now placing this, now that, across my path !

*Godfrey.* 'Tis strange, then, that the mighty fairy legions  
Sallied not forth to guard thee 'gainst this demon ;  
For I know that these fairies love thee well :—  
I've seen them oft, wrapt in a cloak of sunbeams,  
Coming, unknown to thee, to steal sweet kisses  
From off thy rosy lips ; at other times  
Bearing the hue from off thy lovely cheek  
To paint their home, the cloud-placed rainbow, with !

*Josephine.* You seem to be acquainted well with these  
Same tiny beings from another world.  
'Tis only through the gate of midnight dreams,  
Be it now known, that we may enter in  
The fairy kingdom ; so these compliments  
Are fancies only, born within a dream.

*Godfrey.* Speak you of dreams, my lovely Josephine ?  
Then I'll tell you that has reality  
Stamped on its face. You know I've loved you long ;—  
Deny it not with those hard frowns ; and yet

E'en they do well become thy gentle face ;—  
 I've loved thee long, and well, and now I ask  
 A greater boon than all :—that hand of thine !  
 No answer now ? Ah ! in thy eye I see  
 The hard word " No " look forth ; Oh banish it  
 From that sweet place, where heretofore  
 Kind smiles alone a dwelling had !

*Josephine.* Perhaps it was not there ; or, if it was,  
 'Tis banished.

In answering thus, it may have seemed that I  
 Have been too soon in so surrendering  
 My hand to thee ; if so, this my excuse—

*Godfrey.* You give excuse ? no, no, 'twere better far  
 To crush the silly laws ! Oh now is all  
 My happiness complete !

*Josephine.* And in the center of this happiness  
 I'm forced to tear myself away from you !  
 But blessings rest

Within the thought we soon shall meet again !

*Godfrey.* Oh go not yet ; the hour is not yet late !

*Josephine.* Nay, but the Moon is sinking o'er the hill ;  
 See how her poor, wan face, looks thin and pale.  
 I wonder hath she lost some one of those  
 Her myriad, star-browed children, that  
 She weeps while she majestically moves  
 Through night's blue heaven ?

*Godfrey.* If she is weeping, then I'll pity her ;  
 For, while I feel the sweetness of thy love,  
 I cannot think but all the world is sad !

*Josephine.* The tide of night hath nearly reached the top ;  
 Now must I tear myself away from thee !  
 These hours were stolen from underneath the eyes  
 Of my Aunt, who does harshly watch my conduct.

*Godfrey.* Oh not yet, Josephine ! the stars  
 That mark the minute places in the sky  
 Have not been three times rounded by the hand  
 Of stillness, that doth mark the hour of night !

*Josephine.* Were I to mark the hours upon this clock,  
 The morning light would guide me to my home.

*Godfrey.* The hours of time have shorter grown of late.

*Josephine.* Oh, Godfrey, would that I might yet remain !  
 But in this world is still a cruel fate,  
 And I must tear myself away from thee !

Good-bye, my love, good-bye ! [Exit JOSEPHINE, R.]

*Godfrey.* Gone ? And is she gone ? Oh, evening breeze  
 Bear these my blessings after her. [Exit Godfrey, L.]

*Enter L. MRS. STONE and BLACKWELL, cautiously.*

*Mrs. Sto.* You have already sworn an oath so strong  
 That it would bind the fleeting clouds together,  
 And tie the winds from North, and East, and South,  
 Until the earth did rest in drowsy stillness !

*Black.* Ay, I am bound to bind up in this brain  
 Your every word, and ev'n your smallest whisper.  
 If this be not enough, I'll swear again—

By all the stars of Heaven, by Earth, by Sea, I swear—

*Mrs. Sto.* Nay, hush—



An' I had not a stronger hold on thee,  
I would not give an unsubstantial shadow  
For all thy oaths. But, now, let's to the business.  
You know the father of my niece is dead?

*Black.* Of Josephine?—ay, dead

As skeletons down in the deep dead sea!

*Mrs. Sto.* And more than this, you know her father had  
A fortune that—

*Black.* He lost in speculation.

*Mrs. Sto.* No; there's our point; he never lost a dime,  
As most men did believe; but when at last  
He lay upon the bed of death, he called  
To me, and bade me bring him pen and ink;  
Then, with his trembling hand he wrote his will,  
And gave that will to me.

By its wording, I was Executor:—

His property, which money was in bank,  
In three days was to be drawn out by me,  
And, till her twentieth year, in land invested.  
Now, as you know, upon th' Atlantic shore  
Her father died.

Some relatives she still hath living there,  
Of whom she knows not, nor shall ever know  
While thought still hath a home within my brain.

*Black.* [*aside.*] There thought will dwell till  
Hell hath smoked it out!

But why hold out such secrecy o'er this?

*Mrs. Sto.* Be not impatient; know you not that Heaven  
Has placed the sharpest thought in that same creature,  
That on its belly o'er the earth creeps slowest?

*Black.* So you go on; upon your belly creep,  
Or in that way that pleases you the best.

*Mrs. Sto.* Then I would have you wed this Josephine.

*Black.* Me wed the girl?

*Mrs. Sto.* You wed the girl?—methinks a mighty honor—

*Black.* Ay, honor, yes; but if 'tis but for honor,  
Then, be it known, I am no marrying man.

*Mrs. Sto.* But if I add a small-sized fortune to it?

*Black.* Ay, there you speak! my ear opes wide his<sup>d</sup> door  
To let that sound come tripping gaily in!

*Mrs. Sto.* Hark, then, to me: If you will marry her,  
And take her off to some far distant land  
Where her kinsfolk can never hear of her,  
Then you shall have a third of all her fortune.  
Are you agreed?

*Black.* Am I agreed? Will you not give me more?

*Mrs. Sto.* I'll see thee broiled upon a grid-iron first!

*Black.* Then surely I'm agreed.

*Mrs. Sto.* Then thus it is

Arranged. This Winter go we to New York;  
There will you marry her, and take her off  
To the Australian land: Then I'll come back  
To this bright Western shore,  
And while I do invent some pretty tales,  
To please the ears of those few friends she hath,  
Will gladly use the fortune, which kind fate  
Hath gently laid a-down upon my lap.

Since now this business, of so great import  
To you and me, is o'er, we may as well depart.

*Black.* Nay, not so quick ; am I to ne'er return,  
With this sweet bride, to my own native land ?

*Mrs. Sto.* Not with thy bride ; but if she dies out there  
Of pestilence, or by the ague chill,  
Or if, perchance, some reptile taste her blood ;  
Or if some wild beast tear her limb from limb ;—  
And of these dangers there are many there :—  
Then may you come back to your native land !

*Black.* Then you may see me roasted on a griddle,  
Or turned to fodder for the Devil's mares !  
I'll not accept such terms as you have made !

*Mrs. Sto.* Did you not say you would accept my terms ?

*Black.* Did I, i' faith, then will I change them now.

*Mrs. Sto.* For twenty years you've served me as a friend,—  
Perhaps, at first, I did not think on this,—  
Considering, then, thy many years of service,  
I'll make thy fortune half as great again.

*Black.* Now, like a Stoic I must perforce accept.

*Mrs. Sto.* Then is our business over. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—A dining room in MRS. STONE'S house in Berkeley.

*Enter Servants.*

*1st Serv't.* How long will't be before they have returned ?

*2d Serv't.* From church ? the time will be one hour.

*3d Serv't.* And that, by my arithmetic, will leave

Three hours for us to make the dinner ready.

*1st Serv't.* [to servant girl.] You saw the marrying, Nell ; how

*Nell.* How went it off ? it went off as a hearse [went it off ?]  
Over a precipice.

*2d Serv't.* I take you not :—

You know, good Nell, your wit does shine so bright

That ours is blinded by it. Then tell us

How looked the bridegroom, and how looked the bride ?

*Nell.* Nay, I'll not that ; I'll tell how looked the bride,

And then how looked the bridegroom.

*2d Serv't.* As you will.

*Nell.* Ay, as I will ; then listen now to me :—

When all were gone I hurried to the church,

And, as I entered in, wild echoes rushed

From out their hiding places—then, like fiends

Cried out to one another !

Then came the minister,

And they stood up : the bride like a sweet lily,

On which black night doth scowl with her dark face—

Ev'n then dark clouds of gloom did seem to rise

From out a saddened heart, to circle round

Her lovely snow-white brow !

And, all the while the minister did read,

The dreary winds, in deepest sorrow moaned ;

Now loud and wildly moaning, 'till his voice [again.]

Was drowned : Then, when they ceased, we heard his voice

*3d Serv't.* Last night I woke about the midnight hour,

To hear wings fluttering in the darkened air,

And then I heard the howl of dogs without,

Come riding down upon the fearful gale !

I have not dared to speak of this before,

But now I speak, since cause for it is found.

*1st Serv't.* And I was waked from out a horrid dream  
By that same sound ;—then trembled all the house.  
Against the window panes each heavy blast  
Led on the rain, and when the heavy gale  
Dragged off a cloud, caught on the pointed Moon,  
By her dim light I saw, from cloud to cloud,  
Strange white-faced spirits one another chase !

*Neil.* Ah, sadly do I fear me for this wedding !

[Roar of carriages.  
But here they come !—then quickly to your posts !

[*Exeunt.*

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—A room in ARDEN'S cottage in the outskirts of San Francisco.

*Enter JOSEPHINE and LILY.*

*Lily.* Yes ; I am spending at my father's house,  
A few short days ; the first in many months.  
The little babe is growing better now,  
Since his hard sickness hath been driven off.

*Jos.* Now am I glad, to see that face of thine  
That long hath been o'erspread with gloomy sadness,  
Covered again with Summer sunnèd joy !

*Lily.* The joy you know not, that 'tis to a mother,  
To have the care and nursing of her babe ;  
A poor, tender, and innocent young flower,  
Just springing up to meet life's pelting storms ;  
Then does the mother take it to her breast  
And guards 'it with a love that's greater than great death :—  
But tell me, Josephine, is it then true  
That you must leave for New York City soon ?

*Jos.* Would it were not ; alas, it is too true !

*Lily.* But you will soon return ?

*Jos.* I think we will be gone about three months.

*Lily.* Goes Blackwell with you ?

*Jos.* Yes ; he will go ; I almost hate that man ;  
For he has got a smooth and oily tongue,  
And eyes to freeze the blood.

An eye like his a snake would love to have.  
His skin has, too, a sleek and oily look,  
That is not seen upon an honest man.

*Lily.* And how is it your aunt has such a friendship  
For such a man ?

*Jos.* That I know not ;  
Nor does her only son, thy husband, know.

*Lily.* 'Tis strange !

*Jos.* Ay, strange it is ; but, Lily, I have here  
Some letters which my father gave to me,  
That time he lay upon the bed of death,  
Which he told me to open when I reached  
My twentieth year. I ask that you will keep  
Good charge of them, 'till I return again.

*Lily.* Let not a thought in fear arise for them ;  
Better I'll guard them than if they were my own.

*Enter MR. and MRS. ARDEN.*

*Arld.* And so you must so soon depart from us ?  
Would I could now bestow a fortune on you  
Before you go ; for you deserve it well ;  
Deny it not with those thy lovely blushes,  
That are the overflowings of a soul  
That hath ten thousand fortunes in its purity !  
Since I have not a fortune to give thee,  
Receive that which I have—an old man's blessing !  
Though I would give it, if I had it now,  
I ask not fortune to shower wealth on thee ;  
For could these shining things have tongues and speak,  
'Tis my belief they'd tell more darkened tales  
Of weary heart pains, guilty consciences,  
Than they could e'er invent of happiness.  
But I would have thy breast free from those cares  
That keep men waked o' nights ;—that on the heart  
Do sit and brood, 'till but a nightmare's left ;—  
From the hard pain and galling bitterness  
Which a low spirit to a higher may give.  
And, with my blessing, do I say farewell !

*Mrs. Arld.* And let my blessing be aside of his !

*Jos.* Farewell ! My fondest hope's to soon return again !

[*Exit JOSEPHINE.*]

*Mrs. Arld.* How swiftly Time, upon unwearied wing,  
Is ever fleeing back into the past :—  
The monster future slowly creeps on towards us,  
While that poor sparrow, Time, affrighted flies  
Into the Past, that prison cage, which, closed,  
There's none so strong can ever open it.  
It seems but yesterday that Lily, here,  
Gave up her hand to her young, loving husband ;  
And then seemed Josephine but still a child,  
That now is turned into a full grown woman.

*Arld.* Life's but a breath, borne off by meanest winds ;  
Or word, that, writ upon the Ocean's shore,  
The waves will wash away !  
A fleeting thing, that sleeps, and wakes, and dies ;  
A dream that is dreamed and is over !

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A bed-room in a hotel in New York. A door L. 2. E., through which enter BLACKWELL and MRS. STONE. A door R. C., which opens into a room behind the first. R. 2. E. a window with curtains hanging on either side.

*Black.* Thy niece looks colder on me every hour !

*Mrs. Sto.* Ha ! is it so ? and hath

Thy love not prospered ?

*Black.* Prospered ? I'd sooner woo the porcupine  
Than woo thy niece ; for when I moved near her,  
She shot her scornful glances,  
As swift as flames from out a mitrailleuse,  
And when I called her "rose," she called me "villain !"  
Then, when I spoke of love, she said my tongue

Had stained that word, so that she ne'er again  
 Could stand and hear it uttered, patiently !  
 I then sent out my thoughts o'er all creation  
 A-wandering, to gather pretty names,  
 Which, garnished with sweet accent, I did call her :  
 But, all the while, she stamped with her small foot,  
 Nor would she lend attention to my speech.

*Mrs. Sto.* And, like a craven, you gave up the fight !  
 Oh that I were a man, but for an hour,  
 Then I'd make such a wooing for these maidens,  
 As they have never dreamed of heretofore.  
 Not with a mournful look, would I gaze at them,  
 But with a glance that reached their very souls,  
 And they did tremble 'till their knees waged war  
 With one another !  
 For every soft and silly sigh they gave,  
 I'd give a curse, that so would frighten Love,  
 That, trembling, he would hide behind their tears !

But come, poor coward ; at thy work again ;  
 I'll be at hand to give thee my protection,  
 If you are vanquished for a second time.  
 I'll go call Josephine, and bring her here,  
 That you may woo, and then I'll slip behind  
 This hanging curtain, there to note your progress. [*Exit.*]

*Black.* Were I now one of these warm-hearted fools,  
 This Josephine I'd call a flower, and send up tears  
 To weep in my two eyes, for she, unlike the oak,  
 Has no protection 'gainst the howling storms.  
 I'd harp upon her child-like innocence,  
 And then, perchance, some burning tears of mine  
 Would warm the heart, 'till I did grow so soft,  
 I'd love the little birds, and fear to crush  
 A creeping worm !  
 But should I marry her, at first she'd weep,  
 And pale her face would grow ; but then we cannot  
 Forever look upon the blushing rose ;  
 At times 'tis best to see the cold-faced lily.

*Enter JOSEPHINE through door R. C., followed by MRS. STONE who steps  
 behind the window-curtain unperceived by her.*

But here she comes !

*Jos.* My aunt told me you had some weighty matter  
 To tell me.

*Black.* The matter is of such weight  
 My thought can hardly lift it unto you.—  
 Oh now, my sweet, my bright-eyed Josephine !—

*Jos.* Again this insolence !—and has my aunt  
 Given her consent to this—my degradation ?  
 It cannot be ! Ah no, it cannot be !

*Black.* Why, look on me, is it a degradation  
 That I have asked thee for thy hand—thy love ?  
 But this is but a mockery of anger,  
 That's in thy eyes ; a shadow of a frown,  
 That's on thy brow ; come let me take that hand  
 To see if anger trembles in it too !

*Jos.* Stand off, villain !

*Black.* Now you grow cruel, lovely Josephine,

And in thy eye a tear—a little tear—

It well becomes that pretty face of thine !

Thou'lt not say “no,” that word would be my dooms-man !

*Jos.* With all my strength I hurl then “No !” at thee.

*Black.* And I hurl “Yes !” for, be it known to thee,

It is decided you shall be my wife !

*Jos.* It is decided ? Who has made decision ?

*Black.* Thy aunt and I, myself, have done it.

*Jos.* In her 'twas generous thus to give away  
Another's hand !

*Black.* Ay, it was generous,

And, for the gift, I thank her heartily !

I ne'er received so sweet a gift before :—

There is a pleasing variation in

Your character ; now 'tis all fire, and now

As calm as is a silent summer's morn !

*Jos.* But I will find a judge to guard me 'gainst—

*Mrs. Sto.* [*entering from behind the curtain.*] I am your judge,  
[and you shall marry him,

Or, by the Heaven, we'll say that you're insane,

Or that he is your lawful husband now ;

Or other tales will find to plead against thee !

*Jos.* And, ere I marry him, I'll find a judge

That's called Death, who cannot hear your tales !

[*Springs to the door L. 2. E. and rushes out.*

*Black.* [*starts after her.*] I'll follow her ! [recklessness !

*Mrs. Sto.* [*holding him back.*] No, that would be the height of

She will return when leech-like hunger

Begins to suck her blood !

*Black.* But she may plunge into the bay's deep waters,—

*Mrs. Sto.* Then is the fortune made.

*Black.* 'Tis true ; then is fortune assured to us—

*Mrs. Sto.* To us, say you ? and is your mind gone wrong ;

Or do you sleep, and in that sleep are dreaming?—

To us ! ha, ha ! to us !

*Black.* To us, I say : did you not make agreement

With me, that I should have a sum denoted

If I should marry with this niece of yours ?

*Mrs. Sto.* Ay ! if you married her.

*Black.* And would you have me marry her dead body ?

*Mrs. Sto.* If 'tis your pleasure to go marry her dead body,

Go marry it ; but I'll not pay you for it.

*Black.* Then, if she dies, you will not pay the sum ?

*Mrs. Sto.* No !

*Black.* Then I'll expose such deeds of thine as will

Make men's flesh creep !

*Mrs. Sto.* And I'll expose

A deed of thine—a morsel delicate

To feed a hungry halter on !—Ha ! you

Knew not that I had knowledge of this deed !

*Black.* May curses on thee fall from Heaven like rain !

*Mrs. Sto.* A fit one thou to call upon high Heaven !

But think not on her body being dead,

For, I predict that, ere a week be past,

Will she return, and then, by marrying her,

You shall obtain reward.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—Time, night. A wharf at the end of a street in New York.  
Snowing.

*Enter JOSEPHINE.*

*Jos.* Howl! howl! howl! ye chilly winter winds!  
Tear off this poor, weak flesh of mine!  
And you,  
Cold, cruel Winter, bring still your vast hordes on  
Of snowflakes, armèd with a shield of white,  
That pierce me with their lance of chilliness:—  
Yet, even they have pity; for, when they strike  
Upon my cheek, they melt into soft tears.  
Each hurrying cloud of Heaven grows black with anger,  
To see me here; a poor, weak thing,  
That never wished them harm! And, in  
Each corner of these stony buildings, winds  
Do howl and hiss at me. Oh, all the world  
Has grown my enemy. How cold! how cold it is!  
Three days ago—three icy, freezing days—  
Was it three days? But I will see: it now  
Is night, and then there was another night,  
And then there were three cold, cold days,  
When never a sun did deign to smile on me!  
Three days? three days? and then two chilly nights,—  
No; how was it? [*Counts on her fingers.*]  
I fear my weary brain  
Is hushed to sleep by this hard Winter's wind!  
But now I'm free! Oh free! free! free! But what is free?  
Tell me, ye pretty things—white-breasted snows,  
And are ye free? Methinks, then, it is wrong  
To let all things be free;—there's one thing, though:  
There is a tyrant governing in the world—  
His name is Hunger. Oh! I'm hungry, and  
So cold! yet I will try to drag me on!

[*Gets up and moves on.*]

Perhaps there is humanity in the world yet—

[*Stops surprised at finding herself at the end of the wharf.*]

And is this now the end?

Where goest thou, thou deep and rushing tide?  
And canst thou lead me where there is no pain?  
No chilling snows, no cruel, stinging pains?  
What! no answer here but stillness deep?  
Were I to take this leap, a muddy bottom  
Would I deep down rest on. And then I'd die,  
And my poor, useless hands, would sway about  
To every motion of the silent water;  
And then the fish would come to gape down at  
And see themselves in my wide, staring eyes,  
And then, affrighted, would they dart away!  
The moving tide would take me, inch by inch,  
'Till all alone I rested in the Ocean:  
And there, perchance,  
I'd lay me 'twixt two whitened skeletons  
Of sailors dead long centuries ago;  
And there we'd lie, and rattle our dead bones  
Until the Judgment Day. Yet this is better  
Than the hard, cruel world! I'll take the leap!

*Enter L.U.E. CATHERINE, who creeps up and lays her hand on her shoulder.*

*Catherine.* Nay, what is this? Have you a thousand lives,  
To cast one off at every childish fancy?  
Look up at me, my cheeks are sunk, like yours,  
And hunger, too, hath sunken in my eyes,  
'Till they seem resting in two open tombs.  
Come now with me; nay, think no more on death;  
*I'll* pity thee, and *I* will be thy friend:—  
I have not food, nor kindly shelter for thee;  
But, still, I have a heart, from which all warmth  
Is not yet driven by this icy Winter!  
Come, let thy thoughts of death be banishèd!

*Jos.* Thou art an angel, sent from Heaven down  
To save me from this rashness! I was like  
One walking in a dream.  
And when

You spoke the spell was broken that fast bound me.  
You spoke but now of hard misfortunes that  
Had happened to you: tell them now to me,  
That we may gently bear with one another.

*Cath.* You'd hear my tale? 'tis not a pretty tale,  
Of how a lover woo'd and prosperèd;  
But how he woo'd, and how, with cruelty,  
He crushed the rose when broken from the stem!  
I had a home once, like those ye may see  
When, hungrily, you wander Christmas nights,  
From the cold streets, to see the happy faces  
That past the windows flit with looks of joy.  
Once my face, too, did through a window shine  
Lit by the soul's soft light, the light of happiness:—  
That home is gone, for, on a fated night,  
I did present this hand to one who ne'er  
Laid aught of value on the gift I gave;  
But ever grew to hate me more and more;  
I know not why—I never did know why;  
But oft I noticed when his face was turned  
From me away, and bore a smile upon it,  
That smile swift vanished if he looked towards me,  
And angry hate sprang quickly to his eyes!  
And then, at times, he'd strike me in the face,  
And laugh to see the darkened spot come there!  
One night he took me to a gloomy street,  
And pierced me with a chilly-bladed dagger!  
Nay, but when he did think the breath was gone,  
He called me back, and wept so piteously,  
That, though my mouth could not, my heart forgave him.

*Jos.* Forgive the man that, in his cruelty,  
Did stab thee with a chilly-bladed dagger?

*Cath.* Ay, for my love was such a love, that it  
Did call a thousand small excuses up,  
That plead for him, with words so filled with music,  
That they did calm my frowning soul, that judged  
Until it gave the sentence of forgiveness!

*Jos.* And where is he, thy cruel husband, now?

*Cath.* My ear has grown a-weary, waiting long  
To have some bird-like message light on it,



To whisper to me of his whereabouts.—

Oh I do fear that we will never, never meet again !

*Jos.* How strong is woman's love ;—Oh God how freezing  
Is grown this dark night's wind ;—in listening to  
Thy sorrows, had I ev'n forgot the wind. [*Storm increases.*]

*Cath.* I know a place that lends far better shelter  
Than this one does ; then come and let us thither ;  
We'll lie together, and may both keep warm,

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—A valley back of Berkeley.

*Mrs. Stone discovered.*

*Mrs. Sto.* A life of hate : the morn does lead in hate,  
Until at night 'tis crushèd off by sleep.  
But I have tried to change this life of mine ;  
And often I have wept. Oh, how they'd laugh  
To hear me say I'd wept.  
But if they laugh, I have a laugh of mine,  
And such a laugh as rings in tombs at night.  
A strange, queer world is this ; here all is war.  
Here men, with eager eyes, strive on to get  
The bread from other's mouths :  
Big animals do eat the smaller kind,  
And men each other. Then I'll sharpen up  
These teeth of mine.—But here my poor fool comes.

*Enter GODFREY.*

*Godfrey.* Oh, tell me quickly now of Josephine.

*Mrs. Sto.* I fear that you will never see her more.

*Godf.* What, never see her ?

*Mrs. Sto.* Not in this world, but in that better world.

*Godf.* But I will seek her.

*Mrs. Sto.* Ah ? and how will you ?

*Godf.* First will I ask of you, where has she gone ?

*Mrs. Sto.* And I know not ; for, in an angry mood,  
She parted from me.

*Godf.* Oh, now have all the hardest strokes of life,  
At one fell swoop come down upon my head.  
Ah, now no more for me the morning breeze  
Will play sweet music on the stringèd sunbeams,  
Nor lark sing out his sweet accompnyment ;  
But only melancholy, hearse-like tunes.

No hope, say you, that I may find her yet ?

*Mrs. Sto.* Here does my son's wife walk at even-time,  
Come here then in one hour, and ask of her :  
For letters came to her from Josephine.

*Godf.* Ten thousand thanks to thee, my dearest friend. [*Exit R.*]

*Mrs. Sto.* A poor, poor fool.  
Now for my son, with his suspicious mind ;—  
And I have poured suspicions in his ear,  
Until such tumults raged within his breast,

That he was like a frothing, cagéd madman,—  
But here he comes, and much before the time.

*Enter* STONE.

*Stone.* Who told you, mother, that they had met here?

[*Mrs. Stone and her son hide behind a large rock, L.*

*Mrs. Sto.* My, son, these eyes have seen it, gazed on it,  
And sorrowed, Oh so deeply, at the sight.

*Sto.* Often, say you, that they have met together?

*Mrs. Sto.* As oft as twilight blinds the eyes of day.

*Sto.* Oh, God, what sorrows mingle in with life.

But yesterday I loved a gentle wife  
That then seemed pure, but now is stained black  
As Hell with infamy! But I'll not believe it!  
You are not sure? Oh, say you were not sure—  
Say that—Was it not dark?

*Mrs. Sto.* Yes, it was dark; but through that darkness pierced  
These eyes as keenly as the new-waked Sun.

*Sto.* And then he clasped her hand?

*Mrs. Sto.* A saddest truth; he then did clasp her hand.

*Sto.* And did address her from his bended knees?

*Mrs. Sto.* And sued, and sighed, and called her "angel:"  
Wept when she chid, and smiled to see her smile.

*Sto.* Then she was pleased to hear this villain's suit?

*Mrs. Sto.* She did not scorn it.

*Sto.* Now, by the Heavens, I'll cut his throat!

*Mrs. Sto.* Nay, wait, and see these gentle lovers meet,  
And hear them speak through sighs and lazy glances.  
'Tis a sweet place to see these lovers meet.  
From all the world, fairies here meet o' nights,  
And hold their merry meetings. Here Summer  
So loves to dwell, that, when she needs must go,  
She shrouds the sky around with clouds of crepe.  
Here the best songsters, from Earth's choir of birds,  
Do flood the air with music—a lovely valley.

*Sto.* It has no signs of loveliness for me,  
But only bleak, high-rising mountain tops,  
And sadness here is king.  
Ha!

*Enter* LILY walking in meditation.

*Lily.* Like some still stream, in which the oak-galls rest,  
Her hate more bitter grows with every day;  
And like a dagger moving in the dark,  
Her words have meanings, that I see alone,  
And I believe that this grandam, of late,  
Would teach my boy to hate his loving mother.

[*Enter* GODFREY, R.

*Godf.* Oh, use, kind lady, now that charity  
Which all the world has chargéd to your goodness—  
I ask that thou wilt tell me where is she,  
The gentle maiden calléd Josephine?

*Lily.* Why, then, has some misfortune fallen her?

*Godf.* Nay, seem not now as if you were astonished.

*Lily.* But in pure truth it does astonish me;  
I know of no mishap;—  
Oh, tell me quickly who has injured her?

*Godf.* I know of none ; but tell me now which part  
Of the round world is blessed with her sweet presence ?

*Lily.* I know not.

*Godf.* [*Aside.*] By heavens she carries it out well !  
But I must urge more strongly.

[*Kneels at LILY'S feet.*]

*Sto.* Death !

*Mrs. Sto.* There's more to come.

*Godf.* Now do I cast me at your very feet,  
And thus shall all my words be bended down  
While they are pleading anxiously before you.  
Oh, lady, hear, my love for her is strong  
As is the knot which joins the day to night.

*Mrs. Sto.* His love must needs be strong—did you hear him ?

*Sto.* Yes, I did hear him doom my life to devils !  
But I will hence !

*Mrs. Sto.* Sweet son, be not so hasty—there's much to come.  
Calmly await its coming.

*Sto.* Fool that I was, to take her to this breast,  
When she, perchance, hath oft lain on another's.  
Oh, that the sun would now scorch out her eyes,  
That lustfully looked love upon his face !  
See how the wretch now gently smiles again !  
Oh God ! why am I thus so greatly cursed ?  
But I will hence ; it pains these eyes of mine  
To look upon her devilish guiltiness.

*Mrs. Sto.* Nay, stay, sweet son, and see the end of it.

*Sto.* I'd blind these eyes, dared they to look upon it.

[*Exit STONE, followed by his mother.*]

*Lily.* I swear to you, by yonder heaven above,  
I know not where she is.

*Godf.* Then I have been deceived.

*Lily.* Deceived ? no, I  
Have not deceived thee.

*Godf.* But another has.

*Lily.* And who, that other ?

*Godf.* That I cannot tell thee now ;  
But I will find her, and I'll have revenge  
Upon her foe.

For, if I am not wrong in my suspicions,  
Some threat'ning cloud now hangs o'er Josephine.  
Oh that I had quick lightnings for my coursers ;  
A chariot, whose wheels were wrought of thought,  
To speed me quickly to my loved one's side.  
Oh, that the stars which look on both of us  
Could send me messages down on their rays  
About my love—my Josephine.

Would while I slept, my thoughts would steal without  
This brain of mine, and wander o'er the earth  
In search of her,  
And on the surface of a dream write of her.

*Re-enter STONE.*

*Lily.* And have you come for me, my husband ?

*Sto.* Ay, I have come.

*Godf.* Good evening, sir.

[*night.*]

*Sto.* Good evening, sir. I'll meet you at another time. Good

- Lily.* Oh, why that brow so dark?  
Has aught of evil happened to you?  
Oh let me share thy sorrow as thy joy. [*Exit* GODFREY.  
They say a gentle wife can cure a pain.
- Sto.* Soft sounds to come from such a sepulcher—  
Oh, would that now my swelling heart would burst!
- Lily.* Speak not, sweet husband, such hard words to me—  
You never spoke so harshly heretofore.
- Sto.* Oh, what a wretch! so hardened, and so young.  
A face, that takes the lily's whiteness on,  
To hide a basest purpose. Then she hath  
Two eyes that mock the sky's blue innocence,  
And yet they look from out a soul so dark.
- Lily.* Oh, cease thy cruel words; if I've done wrong,  
I'll drown that wrong in tears.
- Sto.* If you had tears, as many as the ocean,  
'Twould ne'er be wept away. Nay, come not near  
Me in your guiltiness.
- Lily.* And is it thus?  
Oh Heaven, have mercy on me!  
But I'm not guilty; Oh, I am not guilty.  
Oh listen now to me; hear me, sweet husband,  
I am not guilty; no, I am not guilty.  
Alas, I have no more than these two eyes  
And this poor tongue, to plead my innocence.
- Sto.* And they are false!
- Lily.* None, none to speak for me!  
Oh that the winds had tongues, and silent night,  
That creeps in every place; but all are dumb;  
Dumb, dumb, dumb.
- Sto.* Ay, they are dumb, and hold their tongues in pity,  
Lest, speaking, they would tell your guiltiness.
- Lily.* When I am lying on the bed of death,  
Come to me, husband; then will you believe me.
- Sto.* Not even then; but I'll not parley longer; I'll be divorced;  
Would I were dead; for I have seen thy guilt.  
And now depart, no longer stain my sight  
With thy cursed presence!
- Lily.* And where then shall I go?  
Into the night?
- Sto.* Into the night. 'Tis well you have a night  
To hide your shame.
- Lily.* Kiss me, sweet husband, ere we part forever,  
And if you pass my grave, when I am dead,  
Know that the dead one there forgives you all.
- Sto.* I'll never more pollute my lips on yours.
- Lily.* Good-bye, my husband. Now my heart is broke. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Night-time. ARDEN and wife sitting at a table C. in a room  
in their little cottage. A lounge R.

*Ard.* Methinks, at last, that fortune's tide has ta'en  
An upward turn.

*Mrs. Ard.* I'll not believe it 'till that tide doth run  
As swift as slides, far up the ocean's beach,  
The thund'ring wave.

*Ard.* Our Lily hath, as you do know, a husband  
Gentle and kind ;  
And fortune hath, of late, glanced kindly on me—

*Mrs. Ard.* Heard you aught, then ?

*Ard.* No.

*Mrs. Ard.* Listen !

*Ard.* I hear no sound.

*Mrs. Ard.* Perhaps 'twas but a false imagination  
That did deceive me.

*Ard.* What was it ?

*Mrs. Ard.* I surely thought I heard a woman's wail,  
Which half was hushed up by this sad night's wind.

*Ard.* Oft doth imagination act truth's part  
So well, that even reason is deceived.

*Mrs. Ard.* Hush ! [*Low wail heard.*]

*Ard.* Surely that was a woman's voice.

*Mrs. Ard.* So I thought.

*Ard.* Then I'll go out and see who it may be.

[*Exit.*]

*Mrs. Ard.* 'Tis some poor beggar, perchance,  
That mocks a moan to gain our charity.

*Enter ARDEN with LILY leaning on his shoulder for support.*

*Lily.* Make up the little bed for me, Oh mother, now ;  
There let me die, for I am grown a-weary of this world.  
[*ARDEN leads her to a lounge on which she lies down.*]

*Mrs. Ard.* Why, what's the matter, Lily, what's the matter ?

*Ard.* Tell your old father, Lily ; are you sick ?

*Lily.* I'm sick of living—sick of living now !

*Mrs. Ard.* But speak out and be plain.

*Lily.* Hard thoughts of sadness crush my rising words.

*Ard.* Has living being dared to hurt my child ?

By Heaven, and if they have, I'll tear them limb from limb !

*Lily.* Nay, father, ask the question not of me ;  
But let me die, and leave the bitter world ;  
For since that day, when I was born, it seems  
That I have been the cause of strivings here—  
Then let me quietly lay down to die,  
And leave this world to peace.

*Ard.* Nay Lily, let not your thought be overcome  
By this down-heartedness—here is your mother,  
That loves you, daughter, as none else can love,  
Your father, too, and then your gentle boy.

*Lily.* I have no boy ! oh God, I have no boy !

*Mrs. Ard.* What ! is he dead ?

*Lily.* For me, death's hand's upon him.  
Oh heaven, look pity down upon a poor,  
Pained heart, and, with that glance, melt these hard bonds,  
That hold it here to earth : oh heaven, oh heaven ! oh  
And is it dark, my father ? is it dark ? [heaven !  
What are those bright things, shining in my face ?—  
Oh I do see, red glaring demons eyes !  
And is it dark ?—oh now I do remember—  
The stream of recollection, flowing back,  
Will crush me now—oh yes 'twill crush me now—  
Oh save me father, save me, save me, save me !—  
See, there they come !

*Ard.* I'm here, my darling child ; what is it ?

- Lily.* Sweet beings tell me—tell me that again—  
Like flower-spirits sleeping on a moonbeam,  
Are your sweet whispers—no pain is there say you ?  
Sleep, sleep—hush mother, hear—what does— [sleeps.]
- Ard.* Earth's harshest troubles have tormented her,  
Till reason was e'en spirited away,  
But now she sleeps—in sleep let her be dead,  
Until she wakens with renewed life—  
Did she not say her child was dead to her ?
- Mrs. Ard.* My memory does tell me that she did.
- Ard.* I cannot work its meaning out.
- Mrs. Ard.* A dead child, yet he lives—and is he lost ?
- Ard.* Nay, that would not have raised this mighty tempest  
In her poor mind.
- Lily.* [dreaming.] "Not even then."
- Mrs. Ard.* Hush! listen to her words.
- Lily.* Where?—but who goes by my grave—  
You still will love me, Willie?—divorced—
- Ard.* Divorced! then has he broke the law of mighty God?—  
I'm an old man, wife; that ne'er did injure  
A man, or beast on earth; and when God looks  
Upon my memory,  
Life's sweet recording Angel, he will find  
That I ne'er tried to harm a butterfly.  
Where in the sky, of this my heart, white clouds  
Of love did only reign; has anger come,  
In darkened clouds, swift rising o'er th' horizon—  
But ah, that anger is of no avail;  
What shall I do? if I should take the law,  
The law loves not to look on poverty,  
And did I take the law in my own hands  
These grey hairs would be called a murderers.
- Mrs. Ard.* His mother, though, hath kindness in her heart,—  
This is the impression she hath given me,  
And you do know, my gentle husband, that  
In nature's problems I am seldom wrong.  
She will wipe off the opinion that her son—  
For some false reason,—hath gained of our Lily.
- Ard.* I love the woman not; but it may be  
That I do her injustice.
- Mrs. Ard.* That you surely do!
- Ard.* God only knows, if I am wrong may he  
With pity glance on one of those poor worms;  
Which he does deign to see, through worlds of stars;  
Apost the mighty Sun, and past the Moon,  
Below the mountain tops, and by an ant-hill,  
Crawling along, down in some new-born wrinkle,  
Upon this small earth's face. [round me,
- Lily.* [wakes.] Where am I now? methought the night was  
And, by a horrid dream, was I chased through it.
- Mrs. Ard.* How feel you, Lily? and are you better now?
- Lily.* Then all is true! oh that I'd slept for aye,  
Then had it been naught but a child of sleep,  
A thing so small, it ne'er could do me harm.  
Better? yes, mother, I am better grown,  
For there is a Physician that is now  
Fast healing all my pains—his name his Death.

*Mrs. Ard.* Speak not so, Lily, for you make me weep.

*Ard.* Cheer up, my child, time yet hath garnered for us  
Full many happy days in the near future :—  
And what could we do, darling, without thee.

*Lily.* When I am gone do not grieve for me father,  
One that was ever in the way while here,  
Will in a better dwelling be ; then grieve ye not, —  
And it may be, that while ye sleep, your souls  
Will leave their day-time home  
To wander with me o'er the earth at midnight.  
Now, father, lift me from this resting place,  
And help me, mother, to my little room.  
To-morrow bring my Willie here to me,  
To see his mother ere her soul has fled.

[*She leans one arm on her father's shoulder, and one on her mother's, and so is helped out.*]

SCENE III.—A room in Stone's house in Berkeley.

STONE *discovered.*

*Sto.* Oh, this anxiety doth strain the nerves,  
Until a breath might break them ;  
Another to-morrow ? Then I'll to the court,  
And have this bond of marriage broke in twain.

*Ard.* Young man, I've come to ask a favor of you—  
Of you, my daughter's and my injurer,  
But were she not now at the door of death  
I'd never ask the smallest favor of you.  
No ; not if thou didst own this breath of mine,  
And, by the gift, could save me from black Death.

[*Enter ARDEN,*

*Sto.* She now is dying say you ? no, she will not die.

*Ard.* How, sir, do you know that ?

*Sto.* Because I know whereof is her disease.

*Ard.* And I know, that 'tis from the hard effect  
Of a long course of studied cruelty.

*Sto.* Nay, it hath not been of a long duration,  
With one hard blow it came, unto my knowledge.

*Ard.* What came unto thy knowledge ?

*Sto.* Her guiltiness.

*Ard.* What, wretch ! [*raises his cane to strike him, but drops it*  
[*aside.*] But down wild anger ! [*on second thought.*

For I must hold these passions well in check,  
Or all her hope for happiness is ruined.

[*to him.*] But, man, I'll try to speak more calmly to thee,  
And, if my voice does tremble, lay't to age.  
Long years have brought me troubles in this world.

*Sto.* Old man, I have a great respect for thee ;  
I know thou lov'st thy daughter, and 'tis well,  
Perhaps, that thou shouldst never know the truth,  
Did truth bring thee such sorrow as is mine.

*Ard.* I know how it is, as thou, too, dost know ;  
You, who have ruined my poor, gentle child !

*Sto.* An' you will have it that way, have it so.  
Now tell me, what is that same favor, which  
You spoke of in the past—the past just flown ?

*Ard.* It is no favor that I ask of thee ;  
It is that which I have right to demand :—  
My daughter's child.

- Sto.* Thy daughter's child is mine.  
*Ard.* It now belongs to both, ere long, it will  
 Belong to you alone.  
*Sto.* What would you with him ?  
*Ard.* I now would take him to his mother's breast,  
 For 'tis her wish to see him ere she dies.  
*Sto.* I grant her wish ; but this you too must know,  
 That when she does recover from her sickness,  
 The child remains not with her—by the law ;  
 He will belong to me.  
*Ard.* I know not that, for it does all depend  
 On circumstances of the case in hand. [*Exit ARDEN.*]  
*Sto.* Where am I now ? and is this place the earth ?  
 And are there stars, and is there night and day ?—  
 Or is it that from which we soon will wake ?  
 A fleeting, half-seen thing—a dream ? [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—New York State. Open country, mountains surrounding.

*Enter CATHERINE and JOSEPHINE, who stop by a stream.*

- Cath.* Come, let us rest here on this mossy bank ;  
 This long day's walk hath made my limbs grow weary.  
*Jos.* A pretty spot is this. Methinks that here  
 The busy bee must spend his holidays ;  
 The humming-bird, that drinks from flower-made cups ;  
 The ant, that does build up his mighty cities,  
 Come here to rest. And then, perchance, they feast :  
 For tables having a white lily's leaf,  
 For napkins, white rose leaves, and for their plates  
 The golden buttercups.  
*Cath.* A broken sunbeam for their knives and forks.  
*Jos.* Aye, that was well ; and for their food, the bee  
 Would fetch his honey.  
 And when the dinner was removed, they'd have  
 A silver cloud, brought from the sky above,  
 To dance upon.  
*Cath.* And for a sky, they'd have  
 A maiden's dream of love, to hang o'erhead.  
*Jos.* A pretty way is this to bid the hours  
 That are unwelcome, to depart from us.  
 This silver cloud you'd have them dance upon,  
 Brings back to mind the falling clouds of snow—  
 When first we met ;—thank God that I do now  
 Feel its cold chill, but in imagination :—  
 Sweet Catherine, do you recall the hour ?  
*Cath.* Ah, well do I, and two conflicting feelings,  
 Like night and day, do meet in memory :  
 The one—the bright one—tells me then I met thee,  
 The other, dark, does tell me of the storm.  
 And as the night is but a shadow of the day,  
 So is the suff'ring of that dreary hour  
 A shadow only to the joy of thee !  
*Jos.* Sweet friend, I thank thee ; would that all my thanks  
 Did bear a thousand blessings on their backs :—  
 We have been friends in dark misfortune's hour,  
 Let us be friends forever.  
*Cath.* Though we have  
 No other food, will live on that till death.



*Jos.* Last night I dreamed of those far off at home—  
At home, said I?—I never had a home—  
Of that far land, upon the Western shore,  
Of which I told thee.

*Cath.* Nay, you did not tell me,  
Except that once you had a few friends there;—  
But tell me now, while we are resting here,  
About those friends.

[Enter GODFREY and a DETECTIVE.]

*Jos.* But who are these, that come with eagerness  
Peering out through their eyes. What; can it be?

*Cath.* Who?

*Godf.* Now are you found at last, my heart's sweet treasure!

*Jos.* Found, found, found!

*Godf.* Ay found, my darling, after searching long  
And wearily for you.

*Jos.* Now is the odor of life's flowers of joy  
Borne to me by the breath of happiness,  
Oh 'tis too sweet to be a thing of earth!  
This happiness is far too sweet for earth,  
Some envious thing will soon be creeping in  
To murder it.

*Godf.* Oh that I had a pen, the which could write  
The rose's breath, the drooping lily's hue;  
Then would I place, 'mid breath of flowers that die  
Upon the lonely prairie, while awaiting  
For the return of its long absent mate;  
Or birds that wept out songs of melody,  
And in a prison died; the tales of these  
Sweet moments.

*Jos.* Now let me make known to thee, Godfrey,  
My only friend, except yourself, on earth.

*Godf.* As thou hast been the friend of Josephine  
I know that thou art gentle, loving, kind,  
And I do covet back the years now gone  
In which I might have known thee.

*Cath.* And all joy,  
That ye have felt at meeting have I shared  
With you. And now may time, with each year, reap  
A harvest of her greatest blessings for you—  
Farewell! [starts to go.]

*Jos.* Nay, but you shall not go!  
You have  
Been sister to me in adversity,  
By your own wish; and now, by my command,  
You shall be sister in prosperity.

*Godf.* There, Josephine did speak my thought for me.

*Jos.* Then let us quickly to the Sun-set State.

*Godf.* [aside to Detective.] And thy reward shall be in a propor-  
To this our joy. [Exit.]

SCENE V.—Same as Scene II, Act III.

MRS. ARDEN discovered, R. LILY discovered lying on a bed, L.

*Mrs. Ard.* And are you better, Lily?

*Lily.* Far better, mother.

*Mrs. Ard.* Better, my child?

*Lily.* Yes, mother, for the hour of death is gliding  
Swiftly, swiftly, down the hill of time.

*Mrs. Ard.* Oh don't speak so despondingly, my child!

*Lily.* My spirits now are sunken deep down in  
The prison of despair.

*Mrs. Ard.* Nay, think not so; now have I news for thee,  
'Twill make thy spirits like to sun-lit clouds  
That move through Summer's sky.

*Lily.* What is it, mother?

*Mrs. Ard.* Thy Willie's here.

*Lily.* Then God hath given an answer to my prayer.

Go call him, mother.

[*Exit* MRS. ARDEN.]

*Lily.* Oh life, thou'st been a cruel master to me,  
But I forgive thee for this latest boon.

*Enter* WILLIE.

*Lily.* Sweet boy, at last you've come to bless these eyes;  
Kiss me, my darling, kiss again poor Mamma.

*Will.* What makes your face so white, my Mamma?

*Lily.* Sickness, Willie.

*Will.* But what has made you sick?

*Lily.* Sorrow and pain.

*Will.* 'Twas a cruel pain to make your face so white;—a very  
cruel pain;—but 'twill away, will't not?

*Lily.* Yes, Willie; soon, soon now—

Do you remember, my boy, how, long ago, I told you of  
a bright city beyond the clouds?—beyond the little  
stars that you see peering through the dark at night?

*Will.* Where the gold-winged Angels are?

*Lily.* Yes; Mamma will soon go there.

*Will.* And will you be an angel, too, and play sweet music on a  
golden harp?

*Lily.* I know not, Willie; but there will be the music of rest;  
for there is no more pain; no aching hearts, Willie.

The poor, poor soul, that's been so weary here, does there  
find rest.

There the still river of peace flows ever on; no darkness  
enters there; they need no night to sleep; but all is  
day, ay, day forever there—

Oh happiness! and there is ever rest;

There rest the weary, and there the broken-hearted.

No pain—no pain—no pa— — —

[*dies.*]

*Will.* Don't look that way, sweet Mamma—oh now wake up—  
Stare not so hard at me; wake, wake, wake!

*Enter* MRS. ARDEN.

*Mrs. Ard.* Do you feel better now, my child?—What! dead?

Oh now is all the beauty in the earth

A dead thing on my heart, a desert there;

Oh now are all the sorrows of the Earth

In one great climax here!—Thou art not dead?

Oh say, with those white lips, thou art not dead!

Great Heaven, have pity on a poor, sad thing,

From whom rough death has torn her only child!

*Enter* ARDEN.

*Ard.* Why do you weep?—Great God she is not dead?—

Nay, Lily, thou 'rt not dead?—speak to thy father—

Thy poor old father, Lily!—What, no words?—

Dead, dead, dead ; 'tis a cruel word ; 'twill murder  
 All reason that is left ! Forever gone ?  
 Oh Heaven, in pity kill me ; release me !  
 For now is all my life of nothing worth ;  
 Take it, ye winds, and blow it o'er the earth !  
 Dead ? say you ? Nay, but that's too hard ! Change it :  
 Some gentler word put there. Dead ? Hush my child ;  
 Weep not so hard ; your mother only sleeps.

*Will.* And will she wake again ?

*Mrs. Ard.* Ay ! angels in Heaven have already lifted  
 The sleep from off her eyes.

*Ard.* But sixty-five ? they say men live to seventy ;  
 And these, my years, have each borne on his back,  
 His weight of sorrow ; but none like to this ! —  
 Kind Death release me, too ! Oh, how I loved her !  
 And in one moment—a poor, piteous moment,—  
 It all was done !

*Mrs.* Grieve not so hard, good husband ;  
 The shadow black of death, while rounding Earth,  
 Must sometime fall on all ;—a lightning flash,  
 And then this life is swallowed up by death.

*Ard.* Then, sorrow, stand back, I will not grieve ; I'll keep  
 Thee closed up in this heart until it burst.  
 Now am I calm. Come, wife, I will with thee  
 Prepare her burial. [*Exeunt.*

## ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A room in ARDEN'S cottage.

*MRS. STONE* discovered *L.* Enter *R. 2 E. a Minister.*

*Minister.* And the poor child's gone.

*Mrs. Sto.* Ay, gone !

*Min.* As gentle as the soft-breathed morning breeze :  
 The birds ceased singing their sweet hymns of praise  
 To hear her voice.  
 Methinks the flowers will wear a robe of mourning  
 For this poor Lily dead.  
 And all men loved her.

*Mrs. Sto.* I say, one did not.

*Min.* I cannot believe it.

*Mrs. Sto.* I know it well ; a cruel, cursèd wretch,  
 That ever sought to do her injury.

*Min.* Nay, be not harsh ; this is no time for that ;  
 But rather Death should lend us charity.

*Mrs. Sto.* Would'st be charitable to a devil ?  
 A very cursèd devil ? Great God ! have mercy on me !

*Min.* On thee ?

*Mrs. Sto.* Aye, man ; on me !  
 Does not Hell shine out through<sup>o</sup> these eyes of mine ;  
 And in my heart cans't thou not see hot Hell ?  
 Methinks 'twould make a very beacon flame  
 To light the world ! Oh, cursèd, cursèd wretch !

*Min.* Nay, calm thyself.

*Mrs. Sto.* A dagger alone might calm me ! Oh, Oh, Oh !  
 I never thought that it would come to this !  
 And dead ? back, horrid word !

- A poor, poor thing, that never did me wrong,  
And, in requital, I have caused her death—killed her !
- Min.* What ! you killed her ?
- Mrs. Sto.* Not with a dagger, fool ;  
But with a far worse instrument—'twas hate !
- Min.* Perchance you do deceive yourself ; be calm ;  
We all at times have said some bitter things.
- Mrs. Sto.* Bitter ! bitter ! Were all the clouds in Heaven,  
Of vapory, nut-gall juice, they'd be shame-faced  
By this strong bitterness that mingled with my hate.
- Min.* Speak not so loud.
- Mrs. Sto.* Think you that she will hear, who's dead in there ?—  
Her parents are without to buy a coffin.
- Min.* And if you hated her what cause had you ?
- Mrs. Sto.* Ay, that is right, a little bit of sternness.  
A demon whispered in my heart of hate.
- Min.* Be not disturbed, 'tis your imagination  
That hath been worked on by your deepest sorrow :—  
Lily did never speak a word of you but in a voice of kind-
- Mrs. Sto.* You knew her not, and I knew her too well ; [ness.  
She never did complain beneath my practice,  
That gained success by using fiendish arts.  
But when I saw her lie so still and dead,  
Her cold lips seemed so sadly to rebuke me—  
Not harshly, as I oft had wounded her,  
But with the voice of death so silently ;  
Oh then did memories swift flash on me  
As the wild hurricane ; and each did have  
For me a well-deserved curse in 's mouth.  
Her poor, white cheek—and I had made it so—  
Oh God, how then stood out each scene before me,  
Where I had injured her, like fiends that torment ;  
You are a man of God ; say, is there comfort  
For murderers ?
- Min.* Repent.
- Mrs. Sto.* I have repented in hot flames of fire ;  
For when I walk about the echoes of  
My footsteps scream out murderer ;  
The breeze of heaven does steal up to my ear,  
To leave there whispers ringing murderer !

*Enter* STONE.

- Sto.* Long have I sought you, for I just have learned  
That she is dead, whom once I loved so well.
- Mrs. Sto.* And yet  
Should have loved well, but that cursed jealousy  
Did blind thy silly eyes !
- Sto.* Nay, but I saw.
- Mrs. Sto.* Saw her that was as pure as light of heaven  
Most foully wronged. Now will I tell the truth,  
And I, a devil, will right her reputation,  
Which I, a devil, have so blackenéd.
- Sto.* But did you not show me how that they met ;  
How his advances did she all accept ;  
How she rebukéd not when he knelt to her,  
But, with a smiling face, accepted all ?

*Mrs. Sto.* When he was asking her to tell him where  
His Josephine had gone.

*Sto.* And was't that way?

*Mrs. Sto.* Ay, that it was.

*Sto.* And you did know it then?

*Mrs. Sto.* I did.

*Sto.* Accursed wretch! may heaven—

*Min.* Curse not! to God alone be punishment.

*Sto.* Oh it is hard, and then I was so cruel,  
Heaping hard names upon her gentle head,  
While she bore all, and said "I do forgive you."  
And then, unlike a man, more like a fiend,  
I sent her out into the chilly night.  
So true of heart! and yet so injuréd.

Oh mother, mother, why have you done this?

*Mrs. Sto.* The answer that I once had given—is gone,  
Her poor, dead face did drive it far from me.

*Sto.* You injure me, and cannot tell the why?  
Bitter my life, and murder all its joy;  
Stain a sweet Angel with thy most foul words,  
And cannot tell the why? oh 'tis too much!  
Would I had died before I injured her;  
Would had the lightnings torn my limbs apart,  
And the great thunder crashed the heavens above  
Till they did fall a shattered heap upon me;  
But now I'm cursed, a most accursed wretch. [Exit.]

*Mrs. Sto.* And now I ask of thee at what  
Hour shall we bring her for the burial?

*Min.* At ten o'clock, for in the following hour—  
But no, 'tis needless!

*Mrs. Sto.* And then, perhaps, you'll say a few short prayers,  
And sing a hymn; a little weeping, and  
Some earth thrown in; and then 'twill all be over.

*Min.* All over here; but I must leave thee, for  
I've work to do. [Exit.]

*Mrs. Sto.* And I will give thee more, ere time be old.  
There's mercy in a dagger's point, and I will taste it!  
Or, better fate there may be found in drowning:—  
Cold-blooded fishes, would ye greet me then?  
Perhaps a shark would take me 'twixt his teeth,  
And munch, and munch, and munch—a murderer!

*Enter BLACKWELL.*

And you, too, here? Come you Death's courier  
To tell the death of Josephine?

*Black.* Dead? no.

*Mrs. Sto.* Then I have naught to do with thee. Leave me!

*Black.* What! is her mind estranged?

I bring you joy.

*Mrs. Sto.* Joy lives not now; it hath died long ago.

*Black.* To-morrow Josephine is to be married.

*Mrs. Sto.* I know it well: to-morrow Lily's buried.

At eleven, said he? ye s, truly, that he said.

*Black.* I said not that—good Heaven, is Lily dead?

*Mrs. Sto.* Dead? yes, she is dead.

*Black.* I knew not of it.

*Mrs. Sto.* You might have known it for a year that's past.

*Black.* Her mind is ill; in truth, a lunatic.

I ever thought her mind might come to this. [Exit.]

*Mrs. Sto.* A lunatic, ha ! ha ! I may be one.

[*Exit.*

*Enter MR. and MRS. ARDEN.*

*Ard.* How went the long night with you ?

*Mrs. Ard.* I could not sleep ;  
My thoughts of Lily were so wide awake,  
That from my staring eyes sleep fled affrighted.  
At times I did half doze, and then I thought  
I heard our Lily's spirit hovering near ;  
And then I'd wake, and find myself a-listening,  
But I could hear naught but the sound of stillness,  
That in my ear did ring its dreary tone.  
And then again I wept myself to sleep ;  
And, in that sleep, I heard a voice speak to me,  
And, as I listened, I knew that the voice  
Was Lily's voice, as years ago I heard it.  
The lilies came this morning.

*Ard.* Ay, that is right ; the white, white lilies,  
Plucked from their stem of life like our own Lily ;  
Lay them upon her.

*Mrs. Ard.* While I laid on the lilies, one by one,  
I thought the heart that beat in me would break,  
For she seemed sleeping, only that she breathed not ;  
And her poor eyes were gazing up to Heaven,  
As if, with them, she told life's sorrows there ;  
And Oh, her cheek, so thin it was, and pale,  
And her white lips were ope'd just wide enough  
To let an unsaid prayer pass through.

*Ard.* Do you remember, wife, how kind she was  
Daring all dangers, that she might help those  
Who were oppressed ; loving whom none else loved ;  
Smiling on all with that sweet smile of hers,  
Which taught us how the sunlight shone in Heaven ?

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Inside of a church. GODFREY, JOSEPHINE, bridesmaids, &c., sitting in the front pew. A wedding march is played on the organ, and the marriage party go forward and arrange themselves at front of the altar. Two sextons standing at a door in the side of the church L. 1. E. The minister enters at the vestry door L. C., and at the same time enter through the door L. 1. E. pall-bearers carrying LILY's coffin. Not perceiving the marriage party, at first, they walk about half way up the aisle, followed by the mourners.

*Curtain falls.*

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—A church-yard. Time, evening.

*Enter MRS. STONE, with her face heavily veiled.*

*Mrs Sto.* I've grown a very baby since her death,  
Kneeling, and praying that perchance sometime  
When does her spirit wing its way to Earth,  
'Twill have compassion on its murderer.  
But to the world, that mimicry of Hell,  
I'll act my devil's part. A poor fool I,

That when my mind was charg'd with distraction,  
 I rushed out to a meek-faced minister.  
 But time's returned me back my mask again ;  
 The same cold brow, the cold as iron eye,  
 To stare a fiend out of his countenance.  
 Come down, sweet night, throw thy light garment o'er me,  
 [Kneels at LILY'S grave.  
 For I would not that man should see me pray.

*Enter BLACKWELL.*

*Black.* And you a-praying ; ha ! ha ! ha !

*Mrs. Sto.* [rising.] Even here, too, are you then, fiend of fate ?

*Black.* Ambition hath not raised me up that high.

*Mrs. Sto.* Why do you, then, so follow me of late ?

Were I to hide me in yon ghastly vault,  
 Methinks you'd find me there.

*Black.* Ay, I would cast

The rotting bones at thee ; and hollow skulls,  
 'Till echoes shrieked beneath each coffin lid.

*Mrs. Sto.* Have you no fear to speak thus in this place ?

Here where pale ghosts do walk these nightly hours,  
 Wailing for sins once done upon this Earth.

*Enter CATHERINE, who hides unperceived behind a tombstone.*

*Black.* Came there a legion of white ghosts here now  
 I'd dare them all to pass this dagger's point.

*Mrs. Sto.* A dagger, ha ! to murder dead men with ?

*Black.* Dead corpses, no ; but living ones perhaps.

Nay, does your face turn white, your face ? ha ! ha !

*Cath.* Ha ! ha !

*Black.* Did you hear that ?

*Mrs. Sto.* 'Tis but a ghost, to dare your dagger's point.

But why flees all the blood from out your face ?

Methinks 'tis white and milky as the Moon.

Nay, call now back that sentinel of health,  
 The blood, into your cheek ; thou art too bold.

*Black.* I do ; I dare the fiercest fiends of Hell !

'Twas but an echo. But no more of this.

I've followed thee because

Of weighty purposes, that in the mind

Have wandered long, like your unresting sprites.

*Mrs. Sto.* And what may be thy weighty purposes ?

Tell them to me. I long have been thy partner

In secrecy ; I'd be thy partner still.

*Black.* Then this is it : I fain would have from thee

The fortune which you once did promise me.

*Mrs. Sto.* Is this an hour to ask such things of me ?

*Black.* I know not by what name you call the hour ;

But this I know, I love it's look full well,

For in it does a fortune wait for me ;

Or else there is a death that waits for thee.

*Mrs. Sto.* A death, say you ? nay, you cannot mean that.

You would not have these lips, that now speak to you,

Closed up for aye ? Your only friend on earth,

The one that's known thee for these twenty years,

To lie here weltering in the blood you spill ?

*Black.* But, then, I will, if she have not the money  
That patiently I've waited for so long.

*Mrs. Sto.* Think well on it; have my deeds been such to you  
That you should pay in terms of enmity?  
And, if I have not money, can my death  
Have value as a payment when 'tis made?  
Think on the deed; 'twill haunt you when you sleep;  
And while you wake, 'twill be a horrid shadow,  
That conscience says all men do look upon.

*Black.* Conscience, or fiends, or Hell, or what you will;  
If you have not the money, then you die!

*Mrs. Sto.* If it must be, take this my answer!  
[*Draws a dagger from her bosom and stabs him.*]

*Black.* Curse you! you've killed me!

*Cath.* Murder! murder! murder!

*Mrs. Sto.* Ha! are the bloodhounds on my track so soon?  
But I was never made to run from them. [*Exit walking.*]

*Cath.* [*kneels down by Blackwell's side.*] Met once again, but only  
met too late;

Alas! he's dead; upon his lips I'll lay  
This cheek of mine; perhaps some lingering breath  
Is hovering still where it has lived so long.

*Black.* Stand back, she-wolf! great Heaven, art thou a spirit?  
An airy mockery of my murdered wife?  
But I will fear thee not, thou horrid sprite,  
Though thou put on thy look of coldest horror;  
Torment—

*Cath.* But I'm no sprite; I am thy wife.

*Black.* So dead men lie, as well as do the living—

*Cath.* Oh waste not

That breath more precious than this life can tell;  
Think quickly, for the time of thought is short;  
And let each thought be bearer of belief.  
I am thy own, and still thy loving wife.

*Black.* Thy voice does have a natural ring. But no,  
With a cold-hearted dagger did I pierce  
Her harmless breast.

*Cath.* Not from my body fled the breath away.

*Black.* How came you in this place, if you are living being?

*Cath.* A providence,

That shapes man's course on earth, hath led me to  
This land. To tell the why to thee,  
Would be to make a silly waste of time.  
But this, in briefness, will I tell thy ear:  
To-day I saw thee walking in the street,  
And knew thee well; for long has memory  
Kept watchful guard upon that face of thine.  
And, when I saw thee, at a distance followed,  
Trembling in fear of this my new-found joy;  
And, ere you stopped, the Sun drew off the day,  
And sent refreshéd night to guard the earth.  
When I came up I saw thee speaking to  
A woman, that was half hid by the night;  
And then, because of fear to taste my joy  
Too soon, I sat me down behind a tombstone.

*Black.* One sin then less to drag me down to Hell.



*Cath.* Now will I ask that which, for long, long years,  
I've hoped to ask, until the heart did grow  
Hope sick :

If it is true, (which I cannot believe,)
 That you did have intent to murder me.

*Black.* Nay, ask me not, for life is ebbing fast ;  
But think that I did not intend to kill thee.  
Oh how hard pains chase swiftly through my body !  
Ah, pain, thou art a music brought from Hell !

*Cath.* Oh, would that I might bear thy pain for thee !  
In sharing it, the time would be recalled  
When everything between us two was shared.  
Then would come back those happiest hours of life,  
When first I gave my love, my all, to thee.  
Dost thou remember how the morning breeze  
Was telling the birds what pretty tales to sing,  
And how they sang, and only sang of love ;  
And how the brook did music play upon  
The pebbles, that were ever rolling on ;  
And how you laid your head upon my breast,  
And said that you would love me then, and ever ?

*Black.* Yes, I remember all ; but these harsh pains  
Do make a target of my memory.

*Cath.* Alas, that I cannot a sharer be  
In this thy pain, as then I shared thy love.  
But lay thy head upon this breast of mine,  
And then I'll weep a flood of chilly tears  
To cool thy burning pain. Now say to me,  
And ease my anxious mind ere you depart,  
You had no wish to kill me with the dagger.

*Black.* My life is short ; my breath is failing fast—

*Cath.* Oh, tell me quickly, then.

*Black.* I did ! Curse on  
Thy woman's curiosity. Oh, this has ended me !  
[Groans and dies.]

*Cath.* Gone, gone, gone, yet will I love thee still :  
For once those arms did clasp me round with love ;  
Those dead lips kissed me once—I love them yet.  
And those poor eyes did look so lovingly.  
Oh dead, dead, dead !

SCENE II.—A room in GODFREY'S house. MR. and MRS. ARDEN, CATH-  
ERINE, JOSEPHINE, and relatives assembled.

*Mrs. Ard.* We should beware in judging Josephine,  
For, through mistake, I once did wrong poor Lily.  
We think not, when we have our loved ones round us,  
And pain them with a bitter sneer, or word,  
That it may be before the hour of midnight,  
Or ere the sun be sunken down in darkness,  
Their souls may pass out on that face of night,  
Or wing its way adown the sun's last ray ;  
And then ? The pale lip cannot answer then.

*Jos.* I do not seek to injure any one,  
But hope to prove my aunt has done no wrong.  
These letters, that I left in Lily's charge,  
That, since her death, you have returned to me,  
State, in my father's writing, that he left

A fortune for me with this aunt of mine,  
Which, on my twentieth year she was to give me ;  
But she has never spoken to me of it,  
And I know now that she is very poor ;  
So here before her relatives I'd charge her,  
With keeping from me that which is my own.

*Enter GODFREY.*

*Godf.* And did you hear the horrid news last night ?  
That friend of Lily's mother-in-law is murdered.  
The man called Blackwell.

*Mrs. Ard.* Murdered ? Who murdered him ?

*Godf.* 'Tis only known a woman did the deed.

*Mrs. Ard.* How was that known, and yet the murderer not ?

*Godf.* A woman, once his wife long years ago,  
Who had not seen him for those many years,  
Saw him, and knew him, on the day he died ;  
And, when she saw him, followed after him.  
The time was evening, and beneath its shade,  
She saw him go in through a grave-yard gate ;  
A woman there spoke to him for a time,  
Then murdered him, and turned and fled away.

*Jos.* My husband, what have you learned of my aunt ?

*Godf.* 'Tis very clear that she has spent the fortune.

*Relatives.* O horrid monster ! did she spend it all ?

*Godf.* Soon she will be here, and will tell you then.

*Mrs. Ard.* And does she know why you have called her here ?

*Godf.* She does not know.

*Enter MRS. STONE.*

*Mrs. Sto.* This has resemblance to a merry-meeting,  
So bright the faces of this company ;  
You should know, Josephine, such things I like not,  
Then why have you made me partaker of it ?

*Godf.* I fear 'twill be as sad a merry-making,  
As men do make upon a funeral.

*Mrs. Sto.* A funeral ? what ? but it cannot be.

*Jos.* Ay, but it is ; and sad the heart of mine,  
That forces out the words, to tell it thee.

*Mrs. Sto.* A funeral ; but who is't now that's dead ?

*Jos.* My love for thee.

*Mrs. Sto.* Thy love for me ? ha ! ha ! and is it so ?  
Then be it known to thee, I feed not on thy love ;  
And did I wear it for a garment on  
This back of mine, I would not feel it there ;  
Nor will it raise a fortune up to me—

*Jos.* But, by a fortune, was it lost to thee.

*Mrs. Sto.* What is your meaning now ?

*Jos.* My words hold out their meaning.

*Mrs. Sto.* But that meaning is clothed in affectation,  
If you would speak to me, speak simply.

*Godf.* For you 'tis not to ask simplicity ;  
Nay, but 'twere better far to drag around thee  
All abstruce words, to shield from us thy guilt.

*Mrs. Sto.* Guilt?

*Jos.* Nay, put no injured look upon thy face;  
Thy actions all are stamped with guiltiness.  
Turn thy eyes backward over twenty years:  
Canst thou see back, upon the plain of time,  
A dying father and his orphan child?  
There canst thou picture, too, a guilty woman  
Who robbed that orphan of its earthly all?  
Nay, hold not back; lay out the truth before us.

*Mrs. Sto.* And 'twas for this you trapped me in this place:  
To injure me with wrongful slanderings?  
But think you I will meekly play the lamb?  
Make way there; let me pass.

[Tries to go out through a locked door.]

*Godf.* The door is locked.

*Mrs. Sto.* I'd crush the lock were it of adamant.

*Godf.* Thy hand, methinks, is far too soft for that;  
But calm thyself; here are you brought for judgment;  
These are thy judges that are seated here.

*Mrs. Sto.* These doll-faced innocents here seated round?  
Ha! ha! a pretty company is it!

And can they bear the angry tigress' glance?

*Godf.* They will bear thine.

*Mrs. Sto.* Nay, but this all is but some silly joke?

*Godf.* Would that it were no more; but, as I live--

*Mrs. Sto.* But as you live--and all the life you have  
Might by a tiny sparrow's brain be bounded--  
Then judge ahead; and ye, ye moon-faced judges,  
Put now a look of weighty wisdom on;  
Be wise in looks if ye be not in thought.  
Keep your ears stretched to catch the slightest sound,  
Nay, never look amazed. When judgment's done,  
Beware, or I do tear your sleepy eyes out!  
Now, that I'm done, may you proceed to work!

*Godf.* Then be it known, full evidence is found,  
That you have made, what was once Josephine's--  
A fortune left her by her father dead--  
Your own; and were you man, and not a woman,  
You should be named thief!

*Mrs. Sto.* And were you man, and woman not, false liar,  
I'd throttle thee!--now judge, wax faces, judge!

*Jos.* The time has not yet come for judgment on thee;  
Another tale 'gainst thee I'm forced to tell:  
Long was it locked a secret in my breast,  
'Till I did share that secret with my husband;  
Then, be it known to all this company,  
That this, my aunt, that ever was so loving,  
On a false plea, did take me from my home  
'To far New York, and there did strive to wed me--

*Mrs. Sto.* Nay, you do draw all patience from my breast  
By your slow speech. I'll tell your tale,  
Then will the end more quickly come. Grave judges:  
My niece would say I wished to marry her,  
To a poor devil that would take her hand  
For a few thousand dollars; take her where

She would be from my sight, while I here spent  
 The money that her father left to her.  
 Now judge me daughter of the devil, or  
 A fiend, or what you will. But speak  
 A word to ease my ears, that itch to hear  
 A word from heads so grave.

[ *Knocking at the door.*

*Godf.* Who knocks.

[*within.*] *Police.* Two officers of law.

*Mrs. Sto.* Ha! stands it so?—the blessing of the devil  
 I leave to all of you! Such friends, such piteous friends!  
 Curse all of you—like sparks of midnight fire  
 May curses fall on you!  
 The glistening gold and Death are all man's earthly friends;  
 The last I love the best; come, kiss me, Death!

[*Draws a dagger from her bosom and stabs herself.*

Now on! now on! ye hounds, upon the dying hare!

END.







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