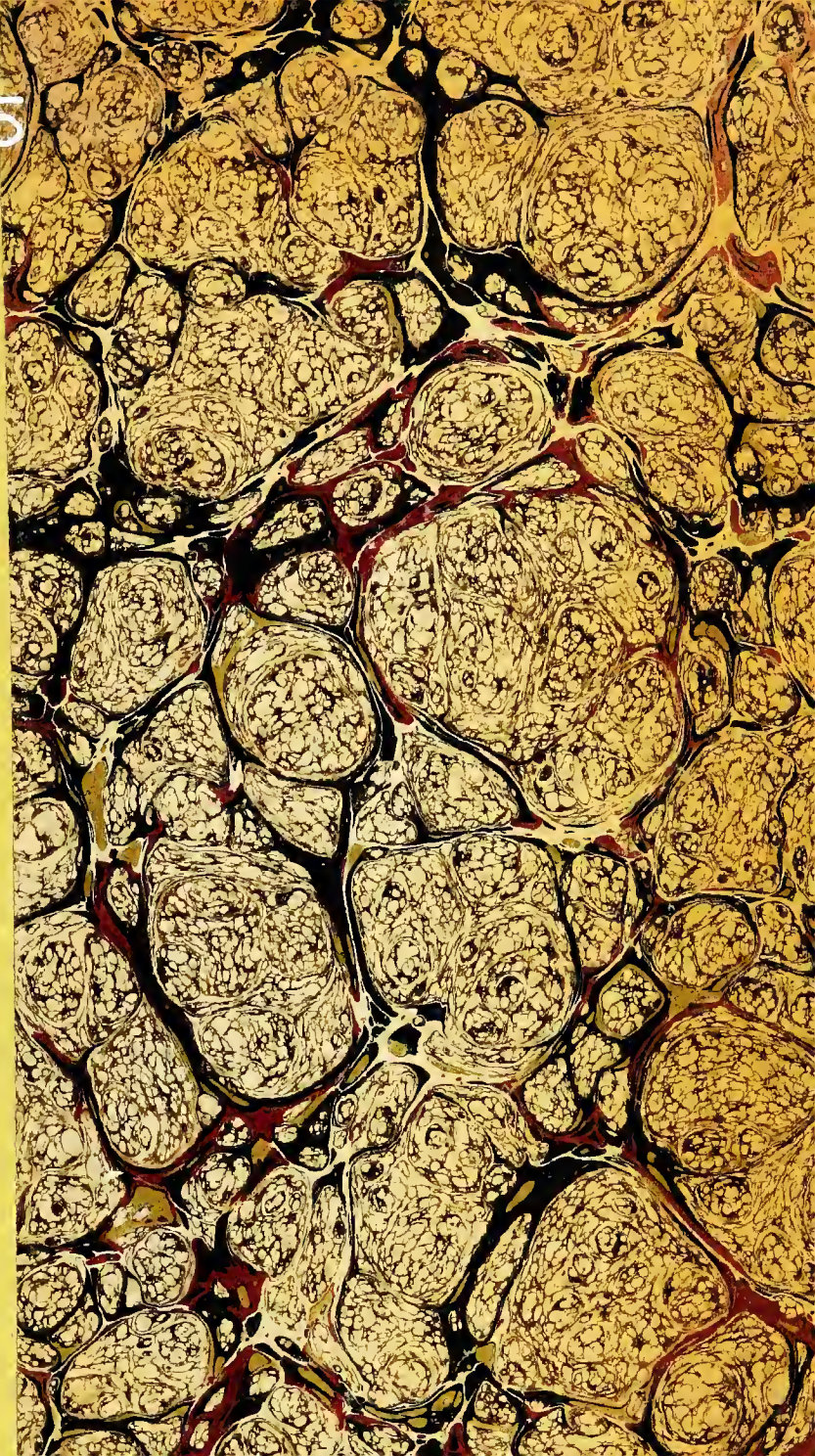
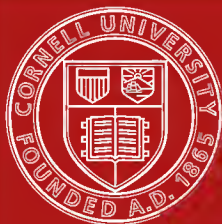


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ARISTON:

A TRAGEDY

FROM THE OLD GRECIAN LIFE.

BY JOHN M. LEAVITT.

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ARISTON: A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Athens, in which a symposium has been just finished.*

ARISTIPPUS.

IOLO, hold him—hold him, lest he fall!
Our common manhood sinks in him to earth.

PHILIPPON.

Jove! how the fellow reels! yet heavy seems
And helpless as the dead.

ARISTIPPUS.

Ariston, stand!
Stand like a man, and be once more thyself!
No overloaded ship out on the sea,
And struck by winds, and bang'd by spiteful waves,
Would toss and veer in such a staggering way.

IOLO.

How beautiful the rule of not too much—
That bound where wine brings sparkle to the wit,
But not a flame to craze, and burn the brain!

PHILIPPON.

A first glass shunn'd, no second could make harm:
Our gods may err to ever crown our feasts,
Since where none touch, none then can turn to beasts.

ARISTIPPUS.

Cease thy philosophy, and lend thy hand!
Our strength is vain.

[ARISTON falls.]

Our friend is down once more—
Down like a satyr snoring off his cups.

IOLO.

Athens ne'er show'd a form so fine, a heart

So brave, so true—yet her Hyperion lies
A dribbling drunkard, senseless on the floor—

The lustres gone from two half-open'd eyes,

Vacant and red—a face that look'd a god's
Most pitifully blank—a head and limbs,
Whence Phidias took the majesty of Jove,
Immortal making his Olympian king,
Lie low together in that heap of flesh—
A soul that talk'd with stars, and molded men,

And made to strike from States ignoble chains,

Itself a slave to wine, bestial and dull
In sottish sleep!

Enter CALOPHOS.

CALOPHOS.

Ye heav'ns! I grieve o'er this.
Oh! worse than death the sight! An eyeless skull,
Whose worms proclaim our last and loathsome doom,
Less sad than such a soul, so self-disgraced!

Where was your pledge to watch and
help our friend?

IOLLO.

Where, rather, teacher, thine own power
to save?

See there thy work—the end of thy wise
ways!

Thy boast and paragon too weak for
wine—

The pride of thy free school a helpless
slave!

CALOPHOS.

Surprise and shame have stirr'd me into
storm,

While reason, seeking truth, is slow and
calm.

Here let us ask why men thus curse
themselves,

Earth's bounty turning into pain, and
death.

I say the cause of drunkenness is one.

ARISTIPPUS.

Calophos, I deny! One loves his wine
From jollity, because it wings his wit,
And warms his blood, until his merry
heart

With laughter bubbles o'er; while this
man drinks

To drive away life's gloom, and gild his
clouds

With light and joy.

IOLLO.

My friend, with rotund flesh,
Imbibes as sponges soak the dews of
morn,

While his own brother, dry and lank and
thin,

Guzzles like some old pipe when summer
suns

Have touch'd earth's gracious springs
and made them low.

PHILIPPON.

Ariston is the type of each, and all—
Here Plato's genus, drunkenness, in one!

CALOPHOS.

Yet is the cause the same, e'en if I grant
Our gods help on the ill, and teach us
men;

Immortal Bacchus will make mortals reel.

Olympus drunk, the earth will stagger
more!

ARISTIPPUS.

Tripp'd thou at last—the thing's impos-
sible!

CALOPHOS.

Lads, not too fast! Youth is a snorting
horse

That dashes on the chariot to its wreck,
Where age will drive as silent as its rein.

IOLLO.

Our Calophos, well said! Now for your
proofs?

CALOPHOS.

You grant Ariston is a type of all,
And hence that true of him, is true of
man.

What earth could give of good he has
possess'd—

Youth, beauty, rank, gold, slaves, estates,
and friends;

The spark of genius flash'd out from his
eye,

And Athens half-adored her godlike son.
This world for none had ever brighter
smiles,

Yet in his soul a void, which unfill'd here,
In wine forgets itself, and seeks to lose

In wild and fever'd joys, or dead'ning
sleep,

Its own infinity, and by its shame
Itself immortal shows—a drunkard's cup
Proves kinship to the gods!

*[While CALOPHOS speaks, ARISTON, arising un-
noticed, secures an immense flagon, and
drops into it an exciting drug.]*

IOLLO.

My Calophos,
Behold the test of thy philosophy!

If thou be right, that flagon drain'd will
make

Ariston Jove, and for Olympus fit.

CALOPHOS.

Quick! I say, quick! arrest his clasping
hand!

PHILIPPON.

Nay! master, thou hast shown wine
proves us gods;

Then let him drink, and plume his wings
divine!

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

CALOPHOS.

Ariston, stop! 'tis fire for thee and death!
That drug burns to his blood and makes
him mad!

Wrench quick the flagon from his clutch
and lip!

[They rush at ARISTON, who resists, and drives them off.]

ARISTON.

Master! I waked in time to hear thy
words.

Hail, sparkling cup, thou spring of deity!
Both fancy's fire and reason's wing in
thee!

Thou balm of sorrow, and thou cure of
pain!

Nay, heav'n itself is in thy flush and
gleam!

Wise Calophos, thy thoughts have sober'd
me!

Blest, magic wine, gay daughter of the sun,
Whose own paternal rays thy virtues
flash,

That man may drink the nectar of the
gods,

Who says a serpent coils round in this
cup

To sting my sense and poison life and joy?
How bright thy bubbling brim with flash-
ing proofs

Of an immortal light that knows no cloud!
Calophos, I drink to thy philosophy.

[They again seek to prevent ARISTON, who succeeds in draining the flagon, and, when the struggle ends, is excited into frenzy.]

IOLO.

Gods, how the rascal raves! his eyes
stand out

As bursting from his head! his thews
seem steel—

No blind Cyclops ever had such strength!
Master, in wine this potency divine!

CALOPHOS.

Ariston, pupil, friend, be still! be calm!

ARISTON.

Ye heavens, the room flies round! my head
is hot!

Put out these flames that blaze about my
flesh!

Kill, kill these snakes that glare, and
twist, and hiss,

And crawl from out my hair! Oh! blast-
ing sights,

Where hell has burst to earth to clasp in
fire!

Oh! Help ye! water! help, and quench
these flames!

[HELIA, the mother of ARISTON, enters, silently takes his hand, and subdues him at once.]

Mother, I own thy spell! Thy look of
love

Goes to my heart, and cools my burning
brain!

Lead where thou wilt, and I will follow
thee—

No words! no words! 'tis silence moves
my soul,

And speech but maddens me!

[Exeunt, HELIA leading her son by the hand.]

CALOPHOS.

Maternal love!

More is thy magic than philosophy!

Where reason fails, thy touch the tiger
tames;

Love is more potent than immortal
truth,

And when States built by force lie ghastly
wrecks,

'Tis she will make in human hearts a
throne

So strong our earth will be one brother-
hood.

SCENE II.—A Room in ALCANDER'S
house in Athens.

ALCANDER.

O brother, Athens can not be so base.

Her honors on my brow for twice ten
years

Are proofs she knows how much she owes
my love.

HEROCLES.

Thy love of her, Alcander, or thyself?

Hast thou not lived and blossom'd on the
State,

And hung thy family tree with flowers
and fruits?

Democracies are quick to read men
through,

And weigh what they deserve of good,
or ill;

Too oft their breath with envy merit
blasts,
And hurls from Fortune's height their
idols down.

ALCANDER.

Heracles, thou art bold; I think, too bold.
Athens will never dare to frown on me!
If she is false, I'll pay her back tenfold.

HEROCLES.

Ha! this thy love! The tiger feed—a child
May stroke his skin, and count his varied
stripes:
Keep back his meat—he glares and shows
his fangs.

ALCANDER.

Not e'en from thee such insults will I bear:
Thy words are blunt beyond a brother's
right.

The mob shall not exile me with the shell.
All the best blood of Greece is in our
veins!

Nay! from the gods themselves our
pedigree.

Thrice round my brow the crown has
hung its leaves,
While shook the Agora with shouts that
moved

Minerva throned on her Acropolis.

HEROCLES.

The mountain-tree invites the thunderbolt
Which blazes harmless o'er the modest
vale.

Athens, Alcander, have you not yet
learn'd?

Just where she most exalts she most
suspects:

Shrill envy hisses in her wildest praise;
Her hand binds on the crown to tear it
off;

She dooms her noblest worth to banish-
ment:

The warmer her embrace, the blow more
sure.

ALCANDER.

Curse on her fickle mobs! thy words
are true;

But she shall find in me at last her match.
The snake, untouch'd, will slumber in his
coil:

Yet, struck, will dart the venom from his
fang,
Till all the quivering flesh thrills with the
pang.

HEROCLES.

Thy threats but prove thy heart to Greece
most false.

True love to her has not its life in self,
Seeks not its own, o'er pride exalts the
State,

And like the tree whose shatter'd length
lies low,

Will from old roots lift high new boughs
to heaven.

ALCANDER.

I've been a fool; duped by the crowd's
vile breath;

Fortune has beam'd across my sky so
bright,

I thought could never come the shades
of night.

HEROCLES.

While shines the day prepare for storm,
and gloom.

Who mounts a gorgeous chariot of clouds
To seek the gilding sun, must know one
blast

May turn his painted splendors back to air,
And drop him mid the crowd who wait
with yells

To see their idol fall.

ALCANDER.

O Heracles,

I dread myself! I feel my frailty here!
Help me, ye gods, and keep me from my
wreck!

Now I do see earth's blessings leave a
gloom

As sculptured figures crown'd with grace
and light

Cast spectral shadows in the brilliant sun.

HEROCLES.

Thou art indeed above a precipice;
A democrat from choice I may escape.

Thy boasted birth from gods, thy dignities,
Thy wealth, all tempt the blow. Thy
stately form,

Thy head made for a king, thy spurning
foot,

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

Thine eyes which flash o'er crowds as
made to serve,
Awake instinctive envy and distrust :
The men thy name who shout, thine
exile mean ;
Unmaking thee to show *their* gift thy
power,
Which Fame loud trumpets o'er a listen-
ing world.

ALCANDER.

Why trust we then the treacherous mob
to rule ?
Let Persia plant her throne in our free
Greece !
Better one king than a vile tyrant crowd.

HEROCLES.

Just what I thought : here doth thy peril
lie :
Thy secret heart inclines thee to a throne,
And this the people know. Thy doom is
plain.
The shell will drive thee hence to live
with kings :
Yet not for them, for *all* this world was
made.

Our citizens, so fickle, so disdain'd,
Such children in the Agora's debate,
Upon the battle-field are matchless
men.

They have wall'd Attica with adamant,
And Asia's banner'd tyrants have defied.
The people shall at length be lords of
earth.

Our Athens shines the type of that bright
day
When they who own the State the State
shall sway.

*Enter Servants, bearing ARISTON on a litter,
stupified after a debauch, and covered with
a robe.]*

ALCANDER.

Stop, knaves ! What bear you there ?

FIRST SERVANT.

We may not tell.

ALCANDER.

Tell, rascals, tell ! At once take off that
robe !

SECOND SERVANT.

Master, the sight will only stir thy rage.
I pray thee pause !

ALCANDER.

Cease, slave, I say—obey !

These servile dogs grow brazen like our
mobs.

[The Servants draw aside the robe.]

Ah ! there the thorn that pierces through
my pride ;

Our house's blot, our huge black spectral
wo.

My image traced on that unconscious
wretch !

My pedigree brought down from gods to
brutes !

Take, take the breathing infamy away !
Never again that curse beneath my roof.

Enter HELIA.]

HELIA.

My lord, relent !

ALCANDER.

Helia, is that *thy* son,

His features turn'd to loathsomeness by
wine ?

From thee, not me, his foul, disgraceful
taint.

HELIA.

His only hold on virtue is our love :

But cut that tie, and he is doomed to
death—

Nay, worse ! his life will be a curse and
pang.

ALCANDER.

But yesterday, before the Parthenon,
Whose pillar'd majesty might awe a
beast,

I saw him ivy-crown'd, a bacchanal
With thyrsus beating off the pelting boys,
Who laugh'd to see and hear the stag-
gering wretch,

And gloated o'er my shame and grief, and
ragè.

HELIA.

Forgive, forgive our boy ! In mercy look !
All mortals frail should weep when
mortals sin ;

How then should parents bathe with tears
a son !

ALCANDER.

His presence in our house will madden
me ;

His face now wakes a demon in my soul.

HELIA.

[Kneeling before ALCANDER.]

Let pity move thy breast! Recall thy
kiss

First press'd on his sweet lips—the light
on thee

From his joy-sparkling eye—the answer-
ing smile

Which stirr'd thy father's heart—the prat-
tled word

Whose music-thrill awaked a world of
love—

His childhood's beauty, and his boyhood's
morn—

His glory of young manhood in a face
And form that seem'd for bright Apollos
made—

Moving to say, "There goes the pride of
Greece!"

Save, save our son, and bind him to thy
heart!

Exalting him, Alcander, lift thyself!

Oh! kindle for our house from gloom a
light!

Thy life beats in his blood—from thee he
takes

His majesty which mirrors only thine—
From out thy love was born his manly
soul:

By thee cast off, he wanders forth a
wretch,

In earth's dark night doom'd but to black
despair.

ALCANDER.

My heart is touch'd, and yet I fear thy
plea.

Expell'd our roof, we purge off his dis-
grace.

HELIA.

Oh! what can stop a mother's words of
love?

I kneel between my darling son and wo,
One hand in his, the other clasping thine,
And make 'twixt him and thee a link of
life.

I kiss thy feet; I beg thee to relent;
Let these warm drops melt down thy
stern resolve!

Oh, in his haggard face I beauty see
Come back, and love and light and hope.

He yet shall rise a man, our city's pride,
The glory of our State and age, and
thine.

Oh! where he goes I go, to live, to die!
With kisses on his lips I seal my vow.

HEROCLES.

A mother's cry, Alcander, should be
heard;

The gods speak to thee in those touching
tears.

ALCANDER.

Once more I yield; but my last weakness
this:

His next offense shall drive him from my
roof.

We will withdraw, and leave him to him-
himself

Until his soul returns from its debauch.

*[The Servants place the robe over ARISTON,
and all leave the room. He soon after
rises.]*

ARISTON.

Her tones of love down through my
spirit pierced

And scatter'd from its sleep the fumes of
wine.

A tranquil glory lingers round this spot
Like beams when radiant gods leave earth
for heaven.

Yes! here a presence of divinity
Which bathes my being with celestial
light,

My manhood wakes, and gilds my future
o'er.

Oh! matchless magic of a mother's love,
Which sees in midnight day, hope in de-
spair,

In death itself a promise of new life,
And hues with heaven the face of wild
debauch.

O man, thy heart how cold, how sharp,
how hard—

'Tis ice, 'tis stone, 'tis steel, 'tis adamant—
While woman's sympathies make Pluto
soft!

Hence may I conquer self, and Athens give
A life redeem'd from vice to liberty!

[Enter CALOPHOS.]

My master, friend, oh, help me keep my
vow!

Tell me, hast thou ever seen thine angel.

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

CALPHOS.

'Tis to my soul, not to mine eye he speaks.
In the still night, or when my way grows
dark,
And I, o'erborne, am sinking 'neath life's
load,
A whisper shows my path, a hand unseen
Clasps mine to hold me up, and a light
shines
Before my doubtful steps.

ARISTON.

My guide is flesh'd—
Is seen, is touch'd, is heard—yet is in me
A tone of love soft as an evening sigh—
A shape which glides in beauty to my
side,
Outshining nymphs—a presence bright
about
My erring life, which melts to tears,
And smiles like Virtue's image on my
heart.

CALPHOS.

I have become thy jest, and thou dost
mock.
Oh, can Ariston join the jeering crowd,
And speak such words to hurt and wound
his friend?

ARISTON.

Nay! Calophos, I own in thee some
power
That lifts thy nature o'er the common
herd,
And helps thee climb to truth's pure
mountain-height
While others crawl in mists through
crooked vales—
A Guide invisible who leads thee on
To immortality.

CALPHOS.

It is most true—
True as the voice of winds—true as the
light
Which folds around our world with life
and bloom—
Or that in man which yearns to ever be.

ARISTON.

Dost thou remember, Calophos, the day
When in the fight, beneath my boyish
arm

Nine soldiers fell, and lay piled round in
heaps,
Helm upon helm, and shield on shatter'd
shield,
While I stood wounded on the slippery
ground—
My corselet cleft, a spear-thrust in my
breast,
O'er all my armor blood, and reel'd my
brain
And steps? Now in mine ear that battle-
roar—
Now swift I see thee come, strike right
and left,
And snatch me from my foes, and bear
me off
As Troy's great hero saved his sire from
flames.

CALPHOS.

And my old back can feel thy carcass
now
Press on it sore. Jove, how thy dangling
legs
Struck on my heels, as I went staggering
on
Beneath thy weight which made me pant
for breath!

ARISTON.

Well, Calophos, not in that thick of death,
That clash of meeting swords, that ring
of shields,
The tramp, the groans, the shouts of
battle's hell
Where ghosts flew shrieking o'er the pain
and blood,
Was I so weak, so lost, as here and now.
I am a slave—a mean, ignoble slave—
Slave to myself—slave to the foe I hate.
I vow to break my chain, and tighten it ;
I curse the cup, and press it to my lips ;
I loathe the serpent's cold and snaky coil,
Yet clasp it round my flesh ; the fang
invite
Whose poison-fire burns in my madden'd
blood,
To scorch my brain, to blast my hope,
and life,
And wake its hissing phantoms twisting
round.
But a new strength is in me, Calophos!

Not from thy words, though wise; not
 from thy school,
 Whose fame will gild o'er time; not from
 our gods,
 Whose revels make their heaven worse
 than our earth.
 My mother's love, forgetful of itself,
 Spurning the laws of custom and of sex,
 Has search'd me in my haunts, come to
 our feasts;
 Nay! in the jeering crowd, the midnight
 street,
 Has lifted me from earth, thrill'd with its
 touch,
 Its tone, its look, its smile, till in my flesh
 Its virtue seem'd infused, and in my heart
 And will a power awaked above mine
 own,
 Through which I feel I yet shall be a
 man.

SCENE III.—*A Banqueting-room in Athens, where the guests, garlanded, are reclining around a table.*—ARISTON *presides over the feast.*

IOLO.

Ariston, folly thus to make a feast
 And touch no cup. Athens will laugh at
 thee.

Sings.

Youth is the time for Wine,
 Whose sparkling flow
 Makes pleasure glow.
 Do gods create the vine?
 Then man should sip
 With grateful lip
 Bright gushing tides
 Which heaven provides.

PHILIPPON.

To Cupid drink, or on thy festal throne
 He'll strike thee howling with a thistle-
 spear;
 And his wee tribes, who live in bloom to sip
 The dew of flowers, will hiss and sting
 thee off.

Sings.

Wine is the spark of Love,
 Whose thrill and fire
 Keen joys inspire.
 Gods feel its flames above.

Quick! snatch the bliss
 From its sweet kiss,
 Since heaven, they say,
 Has shown the way.

ARISTIPPON.

To Bacchus drink, or he'll draw out thine
 ears;

Old Pan shall stride thy back, and with
 his hoofs

Punch in thy sides, while Fauns and
 Dryads pierce

With swords of thorn, and twist thee
 round with vines.

Sings.

Wine is the spice of Wit,
 Whose shouts arise
 To please the skies.
 Gods round their feasts will sit
 To joke and smile
 And care beguile,
 Till heaven will shine
 With wit and wine.

ARISTON.

Excuse, my friends! I pray, this once
 excuse!

IOLO.

Ariston, nay! quick! pledge us in a cup!

ARISTON.

[Pours out some wine, and holds it before a lamp.]

I would not cloud, my friends, our festival;
 And yet you drive me into serious words.

PHILIPPON.

Ariston, cease! and curses on your
 gloom!

All sing.

Wine lends a wing, that Joy
 May fly away
 From Care grown gray;
 Gods have no hard employ.
 Then flower-crowns bring;
 We'll drink and sing
 Till heaven shall hear
 Our louder cheer.

ARISTON.

How bright this cup! Behold its spar-
 kles dance

And flash their joy! Oh, burns my thirst-
 ing lip

But for a drop! My soul grows mad to
 rush

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

And quench its flames, and lose in wine
its wo.

Yet see beneath that light an adder coil
Whose sting is death, while hell lies
sleeping there,

To wake, may be, with an eternal pang.
O friends, one slightest sip would ruin
me,

Would set my blood on fire, palsy my
will,

Craze in my madden'd brain, my man-
hood slay,

And turn me to a beast—or worse, a
fiend.

Nay! I will never touch! My foe I feel
At last beneath my feet! I triumph o'er
Myself, and know Ariston is a man.

I pour this cup an offering to the gods,
And go wherever destiny may lead.

Now see before your eyes how hard for
slaves

From Pleasure's gilded chains to burst-
away!

*Persons representing Deities of Greece enter.—
JUPITER OLYMPUS, with his scepter, takes his
throne, his eagle at his feet, and at his side
JUNO, under a rainbow, with her peacock.—
On the one hand stand BACCHUS, VENUS,
and CUPID, with PAN and his Fauns, and
Satyrs.—On the other hand are APOLLO,
DIANA, and MARS, with the Muses, Nymphs,
and Graces.]*

JUPITER.

The majesty of heaven and earth, I
come

To hear your songs, and victory award—
I, who Olympus rule, and deathless gods,
Here grasp my scepter'd thunderbolt,
while sits

Beneath my feet yon kingly bird, the
lord

Of air and sky, whose gaze is o'er the
world,

Type of my high and universal rule.

Juno, my Queen, encircled by her bow
Of glittering light, appears with radiant
smiles,

While that bright thing of eyes in purple
gemm'd

And gold shows mortals her omniscience.

We now your songs await. Bacchus,
begin!

BACCHUS.

When young Spring breathes, and curls the
vine,

I watch its root;
And bud and shoot,

And grape and mantling leaf are mine.
From trunk to twig I make glad juices run,
Till glows the landscape purpling in the sun.

Now, Fauns and Satyrs, sing, and bless!
Pan, tune thy pipe!
The world is ripe.

Those hanging clusters pull and press!
Around the earth let bursting currents flow,
And shouts attest to heaven our joy below.

My crowns of ivy weave and bring!
Let Age and Care
Our banquet share,

And foaming wine-cups sparkles fling,
And kings and beggars swell the festal cry,
And gods for joy on earth forsake the sky.

JUPITER.

Apollo, king of day, respond in song!

APOLLO.

Nay! bend the noble bow!
The graceful quiver take!

Let nerve and muscle grow!

Let strength your courage make!
And thus on form and brow impress
The majesty of manliness.

Then strike the sounding lyre
Till your broad bosoms thrill,
And every pulse is fire,

And deathless grows the will!
Soon Greece will crown you in the game
With laurels of eternal fame.

See round my head these rays!

I, who the sun-steeds guide,
The earth, the heaven make blaze,
And life in light provide.

I counsel you to turn from wine,
And in the beams of virtue shine!

JUPITER.

Haste, Beauty's Queen, and try thy tuneful
tongue!

VENUS.

Kiss'd by the morn, from the foam of the sea
As I slept on its wave,
Bright Beauty her glory threw over me,
And I smiled as she gave.

Ch, soon in my breast glow'd Love with his
fire,

And quick-quiver'd the thrill
That conquers e'en Jove, the all-ruling sire,
Whom I lead at my will.

Immortals fly forth my train to attend,

And where brightens my face,
Olympus will rush its cycles to spend
In my beauty's embrace.

JUPITER.

Pure as a summer moon, Diana, sing!

DIANA.

Red midnight comets from their blazing hair
Will drop down horror on the waken'd
earth;

And guilty Pleasures, like their fatal glare,
Start only wo and terror into birth.

'Tis I who rule in peace the virgin-moon,
Calm type of lawful wedlock's cloudless
bliss;

Oh, at the marriage-altar seek life's boon,
And find the purest joy in virtue's kiss.

When bow and quiver on my shoulder press
As I at morn may brush the sparkling dew,
Oft smiling will I pause your home to bless,
And richest mercies o'er your life will strew.

JUPITER.

Quick, merry Cupid, charm us with thy
lay!

CUPID.

The rose my home,
My boat a shell,
O'er earth I roam
To cast my spell;

And when above the clouds I seek to fly,
These radiant wings will bear me to the sky.

My head beams light!
My heart thrills love,
And all things bright
Wake where I move;

And heaven bends down to take me with a
smile,
Since my small arrows men and gods beguile.

Make bare your heart!
I twang my bow,
Whose pointed dart
Rules all below;

And e'en immortals, when I make them dream,
Too brief will find eternal cycles seem.

JUPITER.

Grim God of Battles, peal thy note of war!

MARS.

Nay! clash the helm, and shield!
Brass-armor'd seek the field!
The battle-spear swift hurl
Where chariots flame, and whirl!
Prize on your face the scars
Which make you dear to Mars!

Your country served, return
When War's fires cease to burn:
Find deathless your renown
If Greece shall bind the crown,
And o'er a grateful land
Shall make your statues stand.

Yes! seek my nobler strife,
Giving strength, valor, life;
In heaven's eternal plan
But Battle makes the man,
Then brightens on the sky
His immortality.

JUPITER.

Valor and virtue here have won the prize
In noble strains which please both earth
and heaven.

But, lo, I see approach my Hercules:
In this world's clay the grace and fire of
gods—

Immortal glory shrined in mortal form!
See painted Pleasure lures him to his
death,

While Virtue stands, and smiling shows
him heaven!

*Enter HERCULES, preceded by Pleasure and
Virtue, who in pantomime enter in opposite
directions.]*

He stops! Ah! Passion stirs her flames.
But lo,

When Duty calls, he leaves the flowers of
vice,

And shuts his ear against her syren song,
And chooses virtue's safe, but rugged
steep

While from the skies burst forth celestial
strains.

*[Exit Gods and their Attendants amid tri-
umphant music.]*

ARISTON.

My friends, you saw the struggles of my
soul

In this bright pageant acted to your gaze:
As good and evil gods strove here in song,
So vice and virtue battled for my life,

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

And kept unfix'd an ever-deviuous will.
 None longer linger'd in the revel's blaze ;
 None oft'ner sipp'd the bloom of honey'd
 love ;
 None deeper quaff'd mad joys from each
 full cup :
 But now I feel another destiny ;
 I'll break the coils that wind around my
 soul
 And hurl away this thirsting Cerberus ;

In toil, in peril win my fair name back,
 And place my image in the Agora
 Crown'd with the light of an immortal
 worth.
 Oh, should I fall unpitied by the gods,
 Since you, my friends, will never know
 my grave,
 To plant a cypress o'er my exiled dust,
 Let memory with a tear blot out my
 faults !

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Garden in Athens, in view
 of the Sea and the Acropolis.*

ARISTON.

ATHENA glows o'er the Acropolis
 Until she seems a goddess in the sun,
 Whose lingering glory turns her form to
 flame
 And flashes from her spear, while oppo-
 site,
 The moon is lifting from the sea her face
 Round, calm, and full, and there the star
 of love
 Looks bright as Eos when he eyes the
 gods,
 And from its urn of light drops peace on
 earth.
 Now trembling into heaven are night's
 pure lamps
 Which come from age to age, a mys-
 tery.
 A breath of flowers is in the evening air,
 And as the moonbeams slant along the
 grass
 The crimson of the rose is turn'd to gold,
 And shadows spread their silence o'er my
 heart,
 While passion's waves sink gentle as
 this dew,
 And reason bathes my soul in calm re-
 solve.
 O Ino, come—than yon starr'd blue that
 round
 Ensphears our world, more sweet and
 pure thy love
 Which circles me, and smiles my canopy.

Enter Ino.]

INO.

Found, truant, found !

ARISTON.

Then for thy pay a kiss !

INO.

Not yet, bad boy—my lips refuse until
 My ear and heart are both appeas'd by
 thee.

The thrill of love comes from united souls.

ARISTON.

Are not ours one, now and forever, Ino ?

INO.

Ariston, one ! when thou art running
 off

Like some scared school-boy from his
 master's rod,

Or a base fellow who has plunder'd
 shrines,

Or traitor who has Athens sold for gold.
 Is it a man who will from perils fly ?

Stand like a hero where thou art, and
 fight,

And kisses thou shalt have from lips of
 mine

More than the rose-leaves, or the smiles
 of spring,

The notes of birds, the beams of summer
 moons,

And all the other sentimental things
 Which crazy lovers in their letters stuff,

Lug into songs, or else distill to tears

When evening turns up languid eyes
 tow'rd stars.

ARISTON.

Ino, I am in sorry mood for jokes.
Once, girl, I would have laugh'd, and
answer'd thee,
And stol'n a kiss despite thy feign'd push,
Clasping thee struggling to the arms you
wish'd.
But now a soberness is o'er my life :
Before me is a battle long and hard.

INO.

'Tis not in sighs, and tears, and faces
stern,
Mid fear and gloom, dwells the most fix'd
resolve.
The bird that brightest carols o'er its
nest
Fights for its brood when ravens croak
and fly.
Our smiles as well as tears must help the
will,
And the gay laugh gives vigor to the
thought.
We mortals, like the earth, need sun and
cloud.

ARISTON.

'Tis so, my girl! thou like a ray of morn
Hast follow'd me, as light the forms of
gods,
While I was yet a beast, lost to myself
And thee—a slave to wine—an outcast
wretch.

INO.

'Twas heaven lent me its strength, and
whisper'd hope.
Behold yon oak wave o'er the moon its
boughs,
While earth is glad to see the child she
bears!
This towering tree once in an acorn
slept
Amid decay, and circled by the worm ;
Yet from that seed this giant majesty !
Thus thou shalt stand aloft the pride of
Greece,
And I, thy little Ino, 'neath thy shade.
There, that is fanciful enough for thee.

ARISTON.

May all good gods smile on thy prophecy !
E'en more than they art thou and Helia
true.

Oh, woman's love, it seems a silver'd
thread
Bent down by dews, and trembling to the
stars
Beneath some fairy foot, and yet has
strength,
More than a cable's cords, to anchor man
On virtue's rock when midnight perils
roar.

INO.

And yet Ariston from his blessings flies ;
Leaves those he loves, and turns their
eyes to tears,
The tendrils tearing which clasp round
his heart.
Why hide from home? why steal away
disguised ?

ARISTON.

I'll tell thee, girl! My chain is snapp'd—
my foe
Beneath my feet—my will doth stand a
rock ;
Yet still in Athens, mid old scenes and
friends,
I seem a thing upon the whirlpool's edge,
That circles round, imperill'd, not en-
gulf'd.
As age the cheek, vice wrinkles o'er the
soul,
Leaves scars, and wounds, and wild and
burning thoughts,
And voids, and hells behind. Its dead
worms gnaw ;
While its pale ghosts haunt shivering
night and day.
Oh, terrible the war! Old habits cling
Like centipedes, and burrow in the flesh,
And taint the blood. They must be
rooted out
As interlacing roots which gardens spoil ;
And that takes time, and will, and smiles
from gods.
By heaven's high help I'll make my life
anew,
From its foundations build mid other
lands
And other men ; and when my soul is
strong,
Transfigured in the glory virtue gives,
I'll bring it back to Athens, and to thee.

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

So will the gods, and so my fate decrees.
But there draws near what figure robed
in black?

INO.

Thy mother comes.

ARISTON.

Helia! can this be she,
With frenzy in her eye, while sadness sits
Pale on her face, the sister of despair?
Never yon moon has shone o'er such a
wreck.

HELIA, who has been seen in the distance, approaches, with CALOPHOS behind her unnoticed.

HELIA.

Oh! he has gone! my son! my son! my
son!

Jove bore him off, and left me lone and
sad!

This poor heart aches!—Gods, give me
back my boy!

Quick take this weight away or I will die.
O moon! on thy bright feet bring down
my son,

Or let me go to thee! Earth is too dark!

ARISTON.

Do you not know me, mother? Ariston,
Thy dear son! Look in my face! Your
own boy's

Voice you hear! Heaven have mercy on
our house!

HELIA.

Sings.]

My boy is in the sky:
Jove took him there;
Lone in the world I cry
Despair! despair!

My head is all a fire;
My life a sea
Whose billows never tire
In beating me.

Oh, help me, moon, to thee!
Quick I will fly,
My boy, my boy to see,
Or die—or die!

ARISTON.

O mother, you will break my heart in
twain!

My Ino, let her hear thy loving voice!
Touch her dear hand with thine, and lead
her off!

INO.

It is, our Helia, Ino thou dost see!
Ino loves thee, Helia! come with Ino!

HELIA.

Thou art a goddess, girl! I'll follow thee
On moonbeams up to Jove, and find my
boy.

INO.

Yes! come with me! we both Ariston
love!

[Exit HELIA, led away by INO, while CALOPHOS remains.]

ARISTON.

O Calophos, say, can my path thus lead
Me o'er my mother's heart! How can I
leave

Her in her wo? My absence crazes her!
'Tis hard, too hard!

CALOPHOS.

Ariston, life is hard—
Spun forth by tearless Fates, blind in their
work,
Since, could they see, their threads would
drop from grief,
And being cease to be. The *right* alone
Is guide through this wild maze of things.

ARISTON.

My friend,
The seed I sow'd I reap. Vice, a spoil'd
boy

With waving curls and roguish looks,
will, once

A man, plant on his slaves a tyrant-foot,
Leer out from bloodshot eyes, and with a
whip

Of hissing scorpions cut into the flesh;
And when we break his chains we far
must fly,

To heal the wounds left by his serpent-
stings.

CALOPHOS.

Better to fly than be again in bonds,
And feel his lash!

ARISTON.

Too true, my Calophos!
My absence and Alcander's perfidy
Have thus the brain of Helia overturn'd.
My path to virtue winds o'er rocks, along
The chasm's edge, up to the light of
heaven.

CALOPHOS.

Thy lips are guards, not sluices to thy
mind :

Hence learn what else would bring me
to the block,

Or send the hemlock's torpor through
my blood.

Who touch her gods will Athens rage to
kill,

And yet my son will seek their aid in vain.

ARISTON.

I cry, and they are still.

CALOPHOS.

When Jove's a swan,
Or showering gold, a bull for beauty
mad,

All-burning to encoil some luscious maid,
Small time has he, or care, for mortal
prayers.

Mars clasping Venus in their silken net ;
Or Bacchus puff'd, and purple as his
wine !

Mercurius stealing bright Apollo's lyre ;
Queen Juno jealous of Minerva's shield,
While all Olympus laughs to see them
brawl ;

Grim gods with swords, on chariots,
butch'ring men,

What noble guides are these to love and
truth !

Bards coin'd the lies for priests, who turn
to gain

Our mortal fears—lies into marble carved,
And temples wrought, and shrines and
altars raised,

Which move in pictures, and which thrill
in song—

Base lies to please the sense, and fancy
charm—

From man they sprang—hence vile as
man himself.

There is a Power, of all cause, law and
soul,

Who, like the air embracing round our
world,

Wide nature folds—her universal life—
And breathes new strength in those who
seek the right,

And gives new eyes to see the path of
light.

ARISTON.

As some sweet spirit of the viewless air
Will toss our words from hill across to
hill,

Repeated oft in murmurs dying far,
Long through my soul has echoed what
you tell.

Not light more suits the eye whose organs
drink

Its shining floods, and image this fair
world,

Than fitted to my needs are thy bold
thoughts,

Which fill a void within ; and these the
strains

That make the groves of Plato musical,
As a low note of rare celestial sound
Floats forth amid wild instrumental din
Soft as the blue through thunder-roaring
clouds.

CALOPHOS.

Now let me tell where I life's secret
learn'd.

After our Persian fight you saw a Jew
Sick in our camp—a venerable man—
Whose eye dilate look'd through the
gloom of death

Across the grave. He told of oracles—
A law, a temple, and a priesthood too,
With yet a brighter hope and joy for
man—

Whose light prophetic streams out from
the Jew,

And falls in few and distant rays on
Greece.

Up to the Maker thus we follow truth,
As to the gracious father of the day
We track his beams which shine in deep-
est caves,

Or glance their gladness to the poor
man's hut,

Or flash in glory round the towers of
kings.

ARISTON.

Thine angel is His guiding voice within,
Thus named to not offend the common
herd.

CALOPHOS.

Ariston, you have guessed—my fancy
this—

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

<p>Itself on shore, or heaven falls down in floods. 'Tis thus we hold thee in the grasp of fate, Enclosed 'twixt Persian spears and Grecian hate.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Exit KING, and his Courtiers.]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ALCANDER.</p> <p>What line can fathom my deep infamy ! Oh ! how my past shows bright in this lone gloom ! Athens, thine image shines, most beautiful ! New glory rests on thy Acropolis ! Thy Parthenon, how grand ! Immortal shapes Crowd from thine Agora ! Athena's helm Gleams o'er thy walls above Jove's majesty ! And then my wife, my son, my friends, my home— All make in memory now a paradise. O eyes, but weep till vengeance stops your dew !</p>	<p>The husband loves the bride who charm'd his youth, Yet, stain'd by her his bed, will choke her cries— Will rend with steel the form he half adores, And drop his tears down in the blood he sheds. Athens, 'tis thus with thee—the more my love, The more my hate will blaze in ruin o'er. An exile I, whom earth can give nor home Nor grave—never in eyes for me a tear— In hearts, distrust—to kill me, murderous hands— Around me nought save seas of gore and gloom, And rocks and gulfs impassable to me— Stung ever onward to the doom I dread, Afraid to live, and more afraid to die, To my sold soul is left its one dire work— By Persian swords to draw forth Grecian blood, And quench the fire of my eternal hate."</p>
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ACT III.

<p>SCENE I.—<i>A Grove between the Grecian and Persian Camps.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">* ALCANDER.</p> <p>YE gods, is this my doom ? In Athens I Dragg'd to the light the crew who bar- ter'd off Themselves for bribes—vermin fix'd on the State To suck its blood into their bloated flesh, And who out-hunger the hyena's maw— Like vipers sting, like vultures live on death. I loath'd the wretch who sold his soul, then fawn'd For higher bids—polluting all he touch'd, False to the State, and to his buyers false. There Greek bribed Greek—I am by Per- sia own'd. Black spectral fingers reach across the sea,</p>	<p>And with my bond forever lash me on. O Greece, thy stones cry out against my sin— Thy waving banners flaunt it to the winds ; The swords of heroes flash it in mine eyes ; The seas in midnight yells fierce roar it forth ; The hills to hills shout my dire treason back ; And the still stars and the great sun look down On me in scorn—so paid my pride and rage ! <i>Enter a Persian Emissary, in a Grecian garb.</i> Who goes there ? Stand !</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PERSIAN. I come from Persia's king</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ALCANDER. Ho ! guard ! A spy !</p>
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PERSIAN.

Be still, or thou art dead !

ALCANDER.

What means thy threat ? So near our
camp, my word
Will flash around thy heart ten thousand
spears.

PERSIAN.

This scroll, Alcander, is thy pass to me.

ALCANDER.

I know thee not—a lie !

PERSIAN.

'Tis truth, false Greek.

ALCANDER.

What, this to me, and here ! I'll have
thy life.

PERSIAN.

Nay ! pause ! put up thy sword, and
note

This parchment in my hand—my helm
and shield !

It will ward off from me all Greece, and
thee—

These lines of thine would stir your
camp to storm,

And bring upon thy head an army's
wrath.

ALCANDER.

Thy riddles cease, and tell what tempts
thee here !

PERSIAN.

Behold thy bond—thy name, thy seal, thy
pledge !

Redeem thy promise to the king of
kings ;

Take this our gold, your allies buy, and
give

Greece to our arms !

ALCANDER.

Nay ! slave, hand me my bond,
Or feel my sword ! I'll tear my infamy
To shreds, and scatter to the winds its
proofs !

My bond, or death ! Ho ! guards ! fall on
this spy !

Give me my bond !

PERSIAN.

Be not too fast, my Greek !
This is the copy of thy treasonous pact,
And if destroyed, out from our royal chest

Would leap thy bond, thy ghost to haunt
thy life,

To scare thy dreams, and hurl all Greece
on thee !

I dare thy blow, that on thyself would fall,
And give thy carcass to the vulture's beak
Cast out on lonely shores ; to furies send
Thy shivering soul, and blacken thee with
shame.

Receive our gold, and with it do our work !
Dost thou consent ?

ALCANDER.

In evil hour, compell'd
By flashing swords, I wrote my name
from fear.

But slight the deed, and vast the penalty !
Ye gods, no place for pardon to my tears !
Must I be goaded on by fate to death !

PERSIAN.

See thou to that ! 'tis ours to claim our
right.

Tell to the Greeks our weapons forced
thy name,

And made a coward sell their liberties !
This more than treason would arouse
their rage.

ARISTON and INO are seen in the distance.]

Behold thy chief ! Ha ! how thy color flies !
One word of mine to him will seal thy
doom.

Thy path is plain ! fulfill thy bond, or die !

ALCANDER.

Soft, Persian, soft ! stand back ! we will
retire

Deep in the wood, and there talk o'er our
plans.

I'll take your gold ! I only tested thee,
To prove thee from the king. Greece I
do hate,

And yon vain boy, her chief—to ruin both,
I dare eternal flames hot as my pride.

*[ALCANDER and the Persian withdraw, while
ARISTON and INO enter together.]*

INO.

Ere you left Greece, when training for the
games,

Who was the slave that waited in your
tent—
A rosy boy ?

A fool will risk his life before his time ;
I choose to save my lips, and teach the men
Who else would dig for truth and me a grave.

ARISTON.

Born, Master, in my breast new life and hope ;

Yea, pluming there a new immortal wing,
Whose soaring strength shall bear me o'er the clouds

To Him who is the spring and sum of all—

Eternal essence bright of truth and love.
I will go hence with cheerful step to war,
And win the crown of a self-conquer'd soul—

Now heav'n's own warrior arm'd in steel and brass

Wrought by no mortal hands, and fit for gods,

And flashing far the beams which dazzle foes.

SCENE II.—*The Court of Persia.*

KING.

Greeks, I thought, stranger, never bent to kings ;

Yet thou art down low as my eunuch lies
To kiss my feet.

ALCANDER.

'Tis wisdom's part to be
And do and speak as those with whom we live :

Hence come this Persian garb, my words and deeds.

KING.

Thou art but here to sell thy land for gold,

And hurl thy selfish vengeance back on Greece.

With this thy end, to this thy acts conform.

Now, no disguise—if we together work,
Each must the other know without a veil.

ALCANDER.

Not thus, O king. Athens forgot my life
That sought her good, and madly banish'd me.

I hence thy royal power would plant in Greece,
Which should prefer thy throne to rabble rule.

KING.

Ha ! all thy hope and wish to bless thy State,

Which I had deem'd thee here to basely sell.

Pure is thy aim to save immortal Greece
From tyrant mobs, and not avenge thyself !
Yet, if the shell had not thine exile made,
Who more than thee had stood against our arms ?

Nay ! own the truth—thy pride, thy rage have moved

To draw my fleets and troops to Attica,
And with my Persian scepter scourge thy land.

A traitor always veils his reason's eye
To make his head false as he knows his heart.

ALCANDER.

O king, with insults thou hast met my plans.

A Grecian sword may find a Persian heart
Beneath a monarch's robe.

KING.

Just what I thought—
He who his country sells will murder him
Who buys—most false to both—all for himself—

Cold as the gold he grasps, or hot his rage,
As his own purpose serves.

ALCANDER.

O king, I go—
No Grecian can endure thy Persian pride—
Before I know this blade will leap to thee.

KING.

Stand, traitor, stand ! thou hast no more a will !

Stay there thou must, and do thy proffered work.

Keep in that spot ! move not from it a space

Wide as a hair above thy plotting brain !
Behold these spears which bristle round my throne,

Whose glittering points cry thirsting for thy blood !

Where wilt thou go? Who barter's off for
 hate,
 Or gain, the soil, base Greek, which gave
 him birth,
 No more a country has, nor can have
 friends.
 Cursed by the sold, and scorned by those
 who buy,
 Nought he can call his own, but his black
 heart—
 A mean and loathsome waif upon the
 world.

ALCANDER.

I will not bear thy words, O king, but leave
 Thy face and court.

KING.

Stay, Grecian! thou must stay!
 Here is this bond, and it must have thy
 name!

ALCANDER.

I will not sign!

KING.

Thou shalt!

ALCANDER.

Never, O king—

But I will tear the deed, and fling about
 Thy throne its rent and scatter'd parts,
 and tell

Thee to thy face I will not write my
 shame.

KING.

Brave Greek, we'll see! Guards, draw
 your swords, and stand

Around this wretch! A hundred naked
 points

Flash in thine eyes! Thy name! quick,
 down thy name!

Come closer, slaves! Ha! now the traitor
 shakes!

I see he likes not this bright gleam of
 steel.

Alcander, 'tis thy bond—drawn by thy-
 self—

By which you're pledged to give o'er
 Greece to me,

While I to thee ten talents pay in gold:
 It wants thy name to make the pact com-
 plete.

ALCANDER.

But should I sign, the act compell'd by thee
 Can hold me not.

KING.

That risk I take— tis thine

To fix thy name.

ALCANDER.

Forced by thy guards, I yield—
 Circled by death, with swords aim'd at
 my heart,

I write my name, but not my faith I give.
 Escaped from thee, hence, know me, king
 thy foe.

[ALCANDER signs.

KING.

Wretch! thou art ours! thy flesh, thy
 soul, thy life

Belong henceforth to us! Go home to
 Greece!

Thy deed will follow thee! Thy name
 subscribed

By thine own pen, to Athens sent, will be
 A mortgage on thy treacherous neck,
 and make

Thee do that which thou most will loathe
 —will chain

Thee to our throne, a slave to work our
 will;

Though far away will move the hand we
 buy,

And open to our gold the gates of Greece;
 Or else will give thy carcass to the mob,
 And bring thy brother vultures on thy
 flesh,

Clouding thy house with black eternal
 shame.

We can not love, but we can use thee,
 Greek!

Thy land we hate! our armies on her soil
 Like clouds have been dissolved! Our
 ships yet lie

All shatter'd on her shores! Our trophies
 hang

Above her shrines, her streets and tem-
 ples deck,

And we will pluck them thence by force,
 or guile.

Thee we despise! thy race forever hate,
 Which, unsubdued, will overthrow all
 kings,

And give this world to lawless liberty.

We will pour over Greece, weak by thy
 gifts,

A Persian deluge, as when ocean heaves

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

ARISTON.

Oh, blacker grows my life, supernal
gods!

A father's blood spots o'er this moonlit
earth,

And that red mouth cries out, "Thou
parricide!"

A sire kill'd by his son, as gives a tree
Its wood to help the ax which cuts it
down;

As wings the bird a shaft to its own
breast.

Yes! I have pierced the heart which fill'd
my veins—

Have quench'd the flame which lit my
soul to life.

But yet a traitor's that majestic form!
Those hands grasp'd Persia's gold! that
head did plot

The death of Greece—bent cringing to a
king—

A spirit held which hate has hurl'd to
hell.

Both shame and grief are in the drops I
weep:

The father melts mine eye to filial tears;
The traitor turns its gushing floods to ice.
Thus liberty groans up through death to
light.

Yet here, my father's flesh my altar now,
His blood my sacrifice, I, Freedom's
priest,

Kneel down, and swear to fight till
Greece be free.

SCENE II.—*A Tent in the Grecian Camp,
where the Archon and Generals sit in
council.*

ARCHON.

The trumpet's breath has call'd our coun-
cil now

To hear proposals from the Persian king.
Shall Greece at all receive his embassy?

HEROCLES.

What harm to see a tyrant's messengers?
Nor fear nor falsehood can impose on
men.

I must advise that we should hear the
terms:

If they advantage, ours will be the gain;

If they insult, 'twill rouse, and weld the
States.

CALOPHOS.

I think with Herocles that we should know
The foe's first aim; nor should his pres-
ence dread

In his ambassador. Our enemy
To see and hear will stir our hearts anew;
May wake in Greece more true and firm
resolve.

ARCHON.

Are all agreed to hear the Persian speak?

ALL.

Agreed! agreed!

ARCHON.

Herald, announce our will!

The Persian Ambassador is introduced.]

AMBASSADOR.

All hail, ye men of Greece most true and
brave!

I have come to you from the king of
kings,

Who, like the sun, would shed his beams
on all,

And make a world in his bright smile
rejoice.

ARCHON.

We have decreed to know thy monarch's
wish,

Supposing always nothing will be urged
To hurt the pride, or stain the name of
Greece.

This understood, we wait to hear thy
words.

AMBASSADOR.

My task is brief! My king's compassion's
great:

He fain would spare your blood, and
give you peace.

Our arms possess your land, our ships
your sea;

On yon high mountain-rocks amid the
clouds

Our monarch sits with Greece beneath
his feet:

White gleam his tents; his millions flash
round fear:

An ocean he, an earthquake to o'erwhelm,
Before destroying, sends you terms of
grace:

When you bring earth and water to his throne,
 He will recall his troops, except a guard,
 Impose slight burdens on your tribute State,
 And through his satrap rule o'er Greece
 in love.

ARCHON.

'Tis not for us, who feel no fear, to ask
 For grace: our trust, our cause and
 swords.

Had'st thou made threats of chains and
 fire for Greece,
 She-would have scorn'd thee hence. We
 can not grant,

Yet will discuss thy terms. The council
 now,

When you withdraw; will interchange
 their views.

[Exit Ambassador.

Let the gods speak before frail man
 begins!

But heaven can counsel earth in such an
 hour,

Which must decide the future of our
 State.

Bring in the priest!

[Enter Priest.]

Most venerable man,

What say the victims, and the oracle?

PRIEST.

I'll tell, ye Greeks, what I have seen, and
 heard:

To eye and ear the gracious gods have
 spoken.

White as the snow of Helicon, a lamb
 Was on Apollo's altar laid, and burn'd:
 The flame was bright—the blaze more
 pure than morn—

Soon smoke curl'd up, and from its rolling
 clouds

An eagle flew, as if 'twas born of them:
 Then flashing down, he sat with balanced
 wing

On Delphi's pinnacle, and eyed the sun.
 This is a sign from heaven of victory.

ARCHON.

But, priest, have you yet ask'd the Pyth-
 oness?

She from her tripod tells what will the
 Fates.

PRIEST.

Before our Delphi's shrine, with streaming
 locks,

With eyes that seem'd two sparks of
 lightning-fire,

In whispers first, that rose to thunder-
 bursts,

Mid smoke and flame, the frenzied priest-
 ess cried:

When ocean conquers land,
 And the sun leaves the sky,
 Greece Persia will command,
 And Liberty shall die.

[Exit Priest.

ARCHON.

These words declare to us our victory;

Yet is our peril great: it is with us

Or life or death—'tis chains, or liberty.

Calm prudence sits in council with the
 brave;

And courage takes no risk that it can
 shun.

Let each speak boldly what each freely
 thinks;

From various views is largest wisdom
 born.

Alcander, tell us first what you advise!

ALCANDER.

You, youthful chief, I'm sure, will under-
 stand

That my fresh wounds may make my
 cause seem weak,

Since blood drain'd from the veins bedims
 the mind.

Nor are the times propitious to my
 plea.

Once Greece preferr'd gray hairs to curls
 of youth,

And scars to boasts, and deeds to elo-
 quence;

Now heroes hide, and boys to office flash,
 While passion rules with wild impetuous
 sway.

We seek not laurels, but the good of
 Greece;

Our aim not crowns for us, but life to her.
 Now what the truth? Our soil swarms
 o'er with troops [roll

Innum'rous as the sea-waves when they
 And fling their fury on the trembling shore:

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

ARISTON:

By Jove, what mean you, Ino?
You knew him not.

INO.

Indeed! perhaps too well.
With grace he brush'd your robes, and
comb'd your curls,
And kept, mid summer's fires, your gob-
let full
Of water sparkling from the fountain's
brim.

Once, when your chariot with its lion-
crest

Whirl'd through the dust, and thunder'd
by the goal,

While you like Mars stood high with
guiding reins

And sounding lash, and Greece decreed a
crown

Around a head unknown, he pick'd for
you

The ivy from the dust, there fallen down,
And bound it on your hair.

ARISTON.

How knew you this?

My brain is in a maze—it is—it is—
But I shut out the thought.

INO.

In Lydia, too,

When you had scaled a wall, and a fierce
blow

Had dash'd you to the ground, that other
slave

Wiped off the blood, pour'd balm into
your wound,

And nursed, through weary weeks, you
back to health.

ARISTON.

Ino, thou art a witch—in secret league
With some supernal power—'twas birds
of air

Steer'd by the gods from Asia bore this
news.

INO.

Feel here if I have wings! they are not
grown.

May be I borrow'd his from Mercury;
Or Cupid bound his pinions on my feet.

Again, at Tyre, the king, who gave a
feast,

Laugh'd at your fast from wine, and
challenged you:

Then your third boy, black-eyed, and
mischievous,

Who bore your cup, fell down, and spill'd
it o'er,

And saved your vow, but earn'd, oh! such
an oath

As shook Olympus on its mountain-seat
With all its gods.

ARISTON.

If now Alexander's page,

Why not once mine? A woman's wit
will match

A woman's love, and do what scares a
man.

INO.

And whea, return'd to Greece, the grap-
pling ships

Like claspng tigers fought, and tinged
the sea—

You gaining fame that makes you archon
now,

Then, e'en as now, your name unknown
to Greece—

Who near your side did watch each manly
blow,

And spread upon the deck beneath the
stars

A couch where evening winds touch'd
light your cheek

With envied kiss, and fann'd you as you
slept?

ARISTON.

Ino, I see it all—'twas thou, 'twas thou!
'Tis this explains the mysteries of years:

I felt a sacred presence round my life—
My angel thou—thy love in Protean

shapes,
And far-off lands—on sea and shore—
found out

My devious way, and track'd my steps, to
save.

Come to my arms! Henceforth I'll wor-
ship thee,

And not the gods.

INO.

Archon, be not so rash—

The chief of Greece must not clasp round
a slave—

Alcander's page by his commander kiss'd !
Hands off ! the act will hurl thee from
thy place,

And cost thy life ! See how I quench the
flames

I make so fierce ! Most meek the mas-
ter is

To mind a slave ! But wait till victory
Her crown immortal on thy conquering
brow,

And then, before all Greece, the slave
will deign

To touch thy hand ; or more, perchance
thy lips.

ARISTON.

My soul, subdued from vice, may claim
thy love :

From habit's coil set free, oh, be my wife !
[They embrace.]

Each here to each we pledge our hearts,
and lives.

May Peace soon come to link in wed-
lock's chain !

Now perils press—some foe lurks in our
camp.

Ye powers who made yon moon, and bent
yon dome

In starry glory round our circled earth,
Our country watch, and girdle with your
care,

And for her freedom give us strength to
die !

INO.

Alcander is our bane—within his tent
Are doves who daily bear to Persian eyes
His messages.

ARISTON.

Thus knows our foe our plans
Before their bud can blossom into flower.
A traitor-presence seems ubiquitous,
And yet is vail'd from our most search-
ing gaze.

Ye heavens, oh, must a son a father
track

Like hounds a covert fox earth'd for his
death !

*HELIA enters, still crazed, supposing herself
Ceres in search of Proserpine.—She is
crowned with flowers, and carries bearded
sheaves.]*

As long months since, ye gods, my
mother comes !

HELIA.

'Twas Pluto stole my dear—she lives in
hell—

Oh, weep, with Ceres weep, and weep
and weep !

ARISTON.

How can I bear this sight ! It tears my
soul ;

More worn and sad than when I left our
home !

HELIA.

Sings.]

O king 'of night, hear, hear my cry !
Give back my child !

A gloom is on the earth and sky
That makes me wild.

O'er hell's black mouth I scatter flowers,
And fruits and sheaves,
To charm you up, infernal powers,
Where Ceres grieves.

Send over Styx, send from your night
My child to-day !

Proserpine give to the light,
I pray, I pray !

*Enter ALCANDER, who does not know ARISTON
as his son.]*

ALCANDER.

Ha ! here my page ! Boy, I have sought
thee long !

And Helia, thou—who brought thee to
the camp ?

The slave shall feel the whip who let thee
loose.

Both follow me !

HELIA.

Pluto has come from hell !

My child ! my child ! oh, give me back
my child !

ALCANDER.

Quick, wife, and slave, or I will force
you on.

ARISTON.

Alcander, nay ! thou shalt not be thus
harsh.

ALCANDER.

Shalt, archon, shalt ! thy insults stain my
name,

And leave a blot thy blood alone can
cleanse.

*[INO rushes away with HELIA ; while ALCANDER
assaults ARISTON, and falls insensible, after
a brief, but, as it turns out, not fatal contest.]*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Tent of the King, in the Persian Camp.*

KING.

WHO art thou, Greek?

ALCANDER.

One thou hast seen before,
O king, prays from the ground, and asks
thy grace.

KING.

Thy face is strange, yet o'er my mem'ry
floats

An image of the past that seems like thee.
Ha! now 'tis plain—changed thou art,
Alcander—

Thy hair more gray, and much more bent
thy form,

And in thy haggard eye a fiercer look.

ALCANDER.

Have I perform'd my work, immortal
king?

'Tis *that* made white my locks; *that*
shook my nerves;

That kindles in my glance a wilder fire.

Is not my bond fulfill'd—each promise
met,

And more, for thee—divided, Greece—her
friends

Bought off by me—she, cowering at thy
feet?

No part of my old pact but fully met.

KING.

O Greek, 'tis true—the motive we'll not
scan—

Revenge, or hate, or what—thou hast for
us

Been active as the winds, fiercer than fire,
And tireless as the sea. Our gold through
thee

Has poison'd Greece, until her bloated
flesh

Is falling off itself from round her heart.

Yea! soon our arms will push her to her
gravè,

And with her bury freedom from the
world.

In her new archon all her hope of life.

ALCANDER.

Curse on his upstart head! I'll bring it low.

KING.

He is thy foe and ours—take him away,
And Persia soon shall chain the limbs of
Greece,

Forever fetter'd 'neath my conq'ring
foot:

No price to thee too great for such an end.

ALCANDER.

I ask not gold—I only ask my bond,
Whose work achieved is now to thee no
use—

A parchment dead—a carcass void of soul,
Its stench I'd hide away—a useless
corpse

To thee—to me a ghost most terrible,
That haunts my sleep, and stirs up ugly
dreams,

And with a leering eye stares o'er my
life.

I want my bond—my bond—give me my
bond,

And thou for it shall have thy pay in
blood.

KING.

Alcander, thou art mad—thy look is
wild—

Thy hand clasps round thy sword with
eager clutch—

I fear thy ways.

ALCANDER.

My work has shaken me—
In killing Greece I have unnerved myself,
And her own specter stands along my
path

To torture me. See, there, it cries; and
glares,

And will not down until I have my bond
To silence it—my whim's to get my
bond—

To hold it thus—to feel it in my palm,
And scan it well, and know it is my
bond.

I'll give it to the fire—I'll see its smoke
Roll off o'er heaven each token of the past.

My bond! my bond! It will wipe out my thoughts,
And cleanse my soul, and lay this ghost for me.

My bond, O king! I say, hand o'er my bond!

KING.

Thou art most fierce—thy reason is disturb'd

By these remorseful memories of thy life.
How to us canst thou be answerable?

ALCANDER.

Give me my bond, and that will tell me how.

KING.

We will, if thou for it the archon slay:
Persia will bless thee, too, with rank and gold.

ALCANDER.

What such poor stuff to me! Nought but my bond!

The tiger says, what, to the silly kid
Who gambols near his lair? A spring, a tooth,

A piercing claw! then a low growl of joy
As he sits gorging flesh, and stain'd with blood,

While sparks fly out from his too eager eyes,

And quivers with delight his spotted skin.
'Tis nature in the beast, and not his crime:
He wants the kid—the kid was made for him—

'Twas right the kid should feel his hungry jaw.

So I, O king, first wrong'd by Greece,
then struck

Down by her chief, urged on by hate and fate,

To my own self but true, will kill my foe,
And thine. My bond give me, and he shall die.

KING.

It is not with me now, but three leagues off

Lies in my chest—thy promise pass'd to me,

I'll get thy bond, and tie it on thy dove,
Whose wing shall bear it to thee ere this eve.

ALCANDER.

O king, enough! I trust to thee my bond:
Send it through air to fly more swift than winds,

And pass on clouds the lightnings as they wink,

Bringing across the pathless track of heaven

To nestle in my breast my white-wing'd dove,

Meek-eyed and beautiful, that bears my bond;

And back his mate will sail with news to thee

About his neck that e'en will turn to blood

The skies along his way, make red the earth,

And hurl down Greece to writhe in her own gore—

While thou and I will yell to see her die.

SCENE II.—ALCANDER'S *Tent, in the Grecian Camp.*—INO *disguised as his Page.*

ALCANDER.

Boy, see this flame! It curls up with a joy,

And seems to say, "Aha! I love my work."

Give it more oil!

INO.

The lamp will hold no more,

ALCANDER.

Then with the bellows blow and fan the fire!

Breathe on it, air, to aid me blast my foe!
It can not burn too eagerly for me.

Note in the flask that small but shining drop!

Canst tell, my boy, what in its globe doth sleep?

INO.

My master, no! How could a slave guess that?

I am no alchemist, as thou, to sway
The shining stars, to bind or loose the winds,

And raise the waves, or bring from herbs with fire

Can we beat back the flood? When we
 can hurl
 The billows from the sands. 'Tis no dis-
 grace,
 If brave men yield, whose blood has
 flow'd like ours,
 To save, at last, the State. Here, a weak
 few,
 And there a multitude—our coffers low,
 Against exhaustless gold—our discords
 fierce,
 While to our foe one will. Chains, fire,
 and death,
 If we resist; safety, if we submit.
 Let Greece repose beneath the Persian
 throne,
 And catch the brightness of an empire's
 beams!

HEROCLES.

Say, have my ears deceived? or is it so?
 Has Greece been counsel'd to crouch
 down a slave?
 Shall she bring earth to kings? her past
 blot out,
 And stain the glory which her fathers
 gave?
 How blush their shades to hear from us,
 base sons,
 We can not guard what they for us have
 won!
 Nay! what they conquer'd we will now
 defend,
 Or, fighting, die! a grave before such
 peace!
 'Tis said, our chief is young! At least
 he's brave—
 He bares his arm to strike where age
 would yield.
 Twice in the games he won from all the
 prize;
 Twice led our arms o'er death to victory,
 Till sea and land exult to tell his fame.
 Incarnate Greece lives in his form, and
 sheds
 Round glory where her hero fights, strew-
 ing
 With crowns his path to an immortal
 name.
 Are States disjoin'd? 'tis Persian gold
 divides.

Say, who, Alcander, scatters it conceal'd,
 And fills our camp with fears, and dark
 distrusts?
 Wilt *thou* to Persia bear demanded
 earth?
Thou carry water to the feet of kings?
 Wilt *thou* cringe there a slave, where
 Greece will hiss
 Thee with eternal scorn? We'll never
 yield:
 'Tis ours to fight for Greece, not give her
 chains,
 And bring a time, when, every fetter rent,
 Our race shall rise to universal sway.
 The gods choose us for freedom's mighty
 war,
 And in their strength is immortality.

CALOPHOS.

The powers above will smile if we will
 fight,
 Since heaven helps those to strike who
 will the blow.
 Upon our altars fires propitious blaze;
 Omens to triumph point, and oracles,
 So that the gods will blast us if we
 pause,
 While men will call us cowards in their
 scorn.
 Raise, Greeks, the battle-shout of liberty!
 When younger, I hurl'd down the rushing
 foe,
 And with his corpses piled our bloody
 soil:
 Again this wrinkled hand shall grasp the
 spear,
 And wave the sword—this whiten'd
 head shall feel
 The flashing helm where warriors strike
 and die
 To drive back tyrants who would chain
 our Greece.
 Let cowards shrink, and traitors counsel
 peace!

ALCANDER.

Cowards! for me this word!—traitors!
 for me!
 Gray hairs a license claim! Who dares
 to prove
 What Calophos would hint?

ARISTON:

ARCHON.

Alcander, cease!
No challenge I permit in such a place.

ALCANDER.

Swell not, vain youth, with pride! Thy
words beware!

Behold this wound! Our eyes have seen
it bleed.

Thy flesh next rent may let thy life ooze out!

ARCHON.

Speak thus again, and I will call the
guard,

And chain thee to the earth—dare this
no more!

ALCANDER.

Dare, archon, dare! An upstart thou,
unknown,

Till chance did make thee rule o'er better
men,

While in my veins the oldest blood of
Greece.

Who art thou, youth?

ARCHON.

Thy son!

ALCANDER:

A lie!

ARCHON.

'Tis true!

ALCANDER.

That drunkard left my home, and died at
sea.

ARCHON.

My beard has grown, and war has bronzed
my face,

From which time long has worn the lines
of vice;

But here the proof! Behold upon my arm
A word traced there in infancy by thee—

Nor loved by thee, although mark'd by
thy hand—

Ariston read—then on my finger note
The seal of our own house set round in
gold!

HEROCLES.

Nephew, come to my arms—the mist
clears off—

We learn why thus our hearts beat warm
for thee,

And for her son Greece felt such sym-
pathy.

CALOPHOS.

Ariston, hail! Thy voice, thy looks I know,
And marvel thy disguise could hide thee so.

ALL.

Ariston, hail! All Greece will answer,
Hail!

ALCANDER.

Be still, ye dupes, nor trust the silly lie.
Which time will tear, and fling in scorn
away.

Yet if my son, be his a father's curse!

ARISTON.

Here to this council I unfold my name,
Giving my secret to the ear of Greece,
Lest it may perish in the battle-shock.

Wild Pleasure stain'd my life! Love
snatch'd from vice,

Watch'd o'er my way, and gave me back
to Greece,

That I, with you, may keep her free, or die.
For her henceforth we live, ourselves
forgot.

Her form I see as when Athena lifts
Through some dark cloud on the Acro-
polis

Her glittering helmet to the beams of
morn,

And flashes from the sun her light o'er all.
O Athens, Sparta, Corinth, Thebes, be
one!

Bury your strife, and here for freedom
stand!

Soon then before her glance will tyrants
fly:

A soul resolved is strength—is victory.
Hurl Persia from yon hill—drive off her
king!

Her fleets and armies sink ye, Grecians,
press'd

Beneath the weight of the eternal sea!
Our deeds will move our sons to nobler
deeds,

Will thrill in songs, in brass and marble live,
To glory shaped by art's immortal touch.

Only from martyr-drops is Freedom born:
The flames we light o'er all the world
shall blaze,

And in their splendor coming ages say—
Behold the spot where Greece saved Lib-
erty!

Look from these eyes; speak out from
these cold lips

Which here I kiss, and to this marbled
flesh

Give grace that rivals heaven! Oh, smile,
ye gods!

Oh! he who hides in earth the form he
loves

Entombs his life, and makes the world a
grave.

She breathes! she stirs! I thank the
listening Powers!

SCENE III.—*A Dungeon.*—ALCANDER *in*
chains.

ALCANDER.

Ye gods! my brain is fire! my heart is stone.
Wild horrors through these walls! What
sights, what sounds

Strike on mine eyes, mine ears, and shake
my soul!

Grim, goblin shapes come creeping o'er
my gloom;

Graves gape beneath, and spirits shriek
above;

Old warriors seam'd with wounds, meek
matrons slain,

And mangled babes, with their reproach-
ful eyes

Look down on me, while furies rush with
chain,

And torch, and knife, to blast the land I
loved.

All Greece, with corpses piled, lies on my
breast,

Mid moans, and tears, with an eternal
weight:

The cause—my bond, which signed me
o'er to hell

To do its work, and drive me on in night
Across the Stygian realm, forever on—

An everlasting lash to cut my soul.
The traitor sells himself, and buys such

joy!
This poison-drop for me, not him, my cure!

Enter ARISTON, bearing a lamp.]

Out of my sight! This is the worst of
all!

The deadly snake more welcome here
than thee.

ARISTON.

Father, forgive! 'tis Fate decrees our
doom.

ALCANDER.

What, wretch, forgive! that word I will
blot out

From memory, whence too I'd banish
thee.

Look on my chain! who bound it to my
wrist?

'Twas *thou!* Who pierced my flesh, and
left this scar?

Again, 'twas *thou!* Who sent me to this
gloom,

And on my forehead fix'd a traitor's
mark?

Ariston, *thou!*

ARISTON.

I can undo it all,
And set thee free. To-morrow we must
fight:

We fear, not Persian arms, but Persian
gold,

And know not whom to trust. On battle's
edge

Greece trembles o'er a sea of dismal
doubt;

Chief, chief suspects; and soldier, soldier
fears.

Show who is bought, and we will spare
thy life,

Forget thy past, thy name and place
restore,

And give its glory to our clouded house.

ALCANDER.

Let Athens die! My hand would hurl,
not quench

The torch of blasting war. Her, ingrate, I
Hate first, and thee the next, thou parric-
ide!

Let Persia plant on Grecian soil her
throne,

And rule with iron hand our dastard
mobs!

Should I accept thy boon, I yet would live
On Greece's roll a blot, while thou, my

son,
Would'st shine in contrast with a father's
shame.

ARISTON.

My father, nay! do not suspect me thus!

I only seek in thine the good of Greece :
She first, she last, before or you or me :
Save Athens from the Persian sword and chain!

ALCANDER.

Should I confess, you'd stand a traitor's son ;
Tainted thy blood ; thy house and name a curse :

Thy welfare and mine own would seal my lips.

ARISTON.

Thou dost relent! Thy heart melts o'er thy son!

I fall down at thy feet! Oh, bless me here!

Then help me snatch from death imperil'd Greece!

ALCANDER.

Relent! I do! ha! would 'twere with a blow.

This chain which weighs on me doth save thy life:

But shake it off, and know how soft my heart!

Relent! I do! as tigers mouth'd in blood.

Relent! I do! like furies when they kill. Give me in peace my chain, and infamy!

At least my prison should be free from thee!

Leave me my cell, since thee I can not drive.

Besides, where are thy proofs? Thy quest presumes

My guilt—that I need grace from Greece and thee.

ARISTON.

Too much we know—thy bond is in my hand,

Borne through the air from Persia's camp to me

About thy dove, to prove to Greece thy crime.

ALCANDER.

My hour has come! my bond, with thee, is death!

This snaps the tie which binds to this grim earth.

Alcander can not live if lives his son.

My hate to thee, a babe, was prophecy—
It show'd thee spotted with thy father's blood.

This drop my hope! my all is circled here!

'Tis on my lip! I feel within its fire;

It burns my brain, and turns my veins to flame:

Thy work, my son! These death-pangs, all, from thee!

My slayer thou, I gasp to curse thy soul,

And leave in death eternal hate for thee.

[Dies

ARISTON.

Oh, this, indeed, is death! His touch, like stone,

Chills on my flesh—about him all is ice ;
His limb, cold as the chain that binds it round!

In this dim flame his eyes stare on me hate,

And on his lip stands yet his lingering curse.

His guilty soul breathes horror through this cell!

Oh, wretched son, to have so ill a sire!

Athene, from these clouds shine forth on Greece!

Our hearts unite! hurl ruin on our foes!

Let morning shake them with a mortal dread,

And evening see them driven from our soil,

While victory binds round Greece immortal beams

In which far ages shall exult o'er earth!

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

Their sleeping powers that cure, or kill
for thee.

ALCANDER.

In Persia I learn'd that, from an old sage
Who read the heavens e'en as the books
he wrote,

And moved to life, or death, the elements.
His hair was snow, but then his eye was
flame,

And to his glance all hidden things stood
plain.

He taught me how to make yon glittering
drop,

Where life and death are lying side by
side—

There Persia's fate, and there the fate of
Greece—

All in a drop—a little sparkling drop—
To me, above all gold, or Asian gems.

Boy, I am free! See if the dove has
come!

INO.

(Standing at the tent door.)

The moon is up, just lifting from the sea.
Oh, quick she climbs above the summer
mists,

Flinging across the waves her track of
beams

Aloft from heaven—but in her light flies
nought—

All void, and motionless the moonlit air.

ALCANDER.

Thou liest, slave—look out with sharper
gaze.

I can not leave my fire—no, not for my
bond,

Which is by me less wish'd than this sweet
drop.

The bond! the drop! dear types of life
and death.

What dove is missing now from out our
cote?

That is the darling that will bring me rest.

INO.

He is a Syrian dove, and of the flock
I noted him the king. No arrow shot
From bright Apollo's bow, wing'd with
his beams,

Will fly more swift and true than he
will bear

Thy message to thy tent.

ALCANDER.

A noble bird!

His full and swelling breast with silver'd
hues

Gleams like the moon. His pointed pin-
ions seem

As made to outspeed winds. Oh, round
his neck,

And sailing on the air, Alcander's fate!

INO.

Why is it, master, that our Grecian doves
All fly but to and from the Persian
camp?

ALCANDER.

What means that, boy? Stand here
before this flame!

A guileless soul is beaming from thy face,
Although it sometimes seems as from the
past.

Thy glance is clear! Be still! I wish
no words;

My trust is in thine eyes, and not thy
lips.

If false, thy heart shall quiver on this
steel.

INO.

How thou dost scare thy slave! E'en in
thy dreams

Thy teeth will gnash—thy words freeze
o'er my blood.

ALCANDER.

What hast thou heard me say? tell, on
thy life!

INO.

Last night, when cried the watch the hour
of three,

The lamp was low: while I toss'd on my
bed,

In the dim ray, I saw thee work thy
face,

And grind thy jaw—thine eyes stood
from thy head—

Thy hands were clasp'd, and round thy
limbs did twist

In agony, and from thy breast came
moans.

ALCANDER.

Boy, 'twas a dream, and yet its torment
dire:

The moon pass'd o'er the sun fringed
round with flame,

And darkness sat on earth with twilight
 mix'd;
 The stars next turn'd to blood, and whirl-
 ing fell
 Caught in a comet's hair, while all the
 sky
 Seem'd like my shriveling bond—birds
 sought their boughs,
 And beasts cower'd to their dens—the
 bat came forth,
 And hooting owl, and shapes stalk'd
 through the gloom.
 Then on her cloud Athena grasp'd her
 helm,
 And shook her snakes at me to twist and
 hiss:
 She seized my hair! she flung me from
 the sky,
 While monsters swarm'd o'er Greece to
 tear my flesh.
 But, boy, enough! Look for the bird
 once more!

INO.

I see it cross the moon! it comes! it
 comes!
 I hear its wings! It circles o'er our
 tent!

ALCANDER.

Quick! slave, quick! quick! I can not
 leave my fire!
 Take from the dove my bond, and bring
 it here!
 It is thy life! without my bond, come
 not!

[INO goes to the dove, and untying the bond,
 flings it behind the tent to ARISTON, and
 brings a blank piece of paper to ALCANDER.]

INO.

My master, all is right! Here is thy
 bond!

I knew our Syrian bird was true of wing.

ALCANDER.

Here, slave, here, quick! I want to grasp
 my bond.

Thanks to the gods! I'm safe if Persia
 falls,

And Grecian eyes should search her con-
 quer'd camp!

My bond will not betray! Once in this
 light

I'll read it o'er, and give it to the flames

To roll away my infamy in air.

[He opens the paper in the lamp-light.]

'Tis blank! I'm duped! the villain king's
 a cheat!

He lied—the Fates are at my throat to
 clutch,

To kill—the ghost of Greece looks glaring
 there!

Slave, art thou false? Come, find my
 bond, or die!

INO.

Master, oh, blame not me! I wrong thee
 not!

I took that from the dove tied on his neck,
 And brought it thee.

ALCANDER.

Out, slave! search for my bond
 With me! bring forth the lamp, and find
 the dove!

[They go out of the tent together, and while look-
 ing around, ARISTON enters from behind with
 Soldiers.]

ARISTON.

We seize Alcander in the name of Greece.

ALCANDER.

Back, I say, back! nor dare to touch my
 flesh!

Base slave who sold my blood, I hurl thee
 down.

[ALCANDER flings INO to the ground.]

Come on! come all! I chains and
 Greece defy!

Mean upstart, I will never yield to
 thee!

You stand, and fear, and own my better
 blood.

Your fetters shall not bind Alcander's
 arm.

[After a short, but severe struggle, ALCANDER is
 bound, and forced away.]

ARISTON.

My Ino sinks, struck by my father's hand!
 Oh, live, my heart, or I will die with thee!

Now from the stream I'll bathe her cold
 white brow.

Bring back, ye glistening drops, her life to
 me!

Start, start one pulse to give this cheek its
 bloom!

Ino! Ino! hear thy Ariston's voice!

Come, spirit, back, and dwell in this fair
 clay!

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Grove, before a Temple of MINERVA.*

ARISTON.

I AM once more a Greek, and joyance leaps
On through my blood fresh as this morning air,
Whose bosom throbs to fill the world with life.
The jug is o'er for Greece, and me; and hence,
Like some sad Jew, I'll live no more on groans:
Our manhood grows but in the light of joy.

INO.

Right glad am I, Ariston, at thy words:
Old thou before thy time—a Greek is gay,
Lives like a bird whose pulse has thrills of glee,
And sings each day, as if no next would be.

ARISTON.

Ino, I've had enough to sober me—
A father's death, a mother's wreck, the wars
Of struggling Greece—

INO.

Hush! hush! the shadow comes—

ARISTON.

And then the battle to subdue myself—

INO.

Enough: I'll run away—with kisses stop
Thy mouth, and thrust thy sadness down,
and keep

It down from me. Go seek the crown in
games,

Chase on the hills the boar, smile at
thyself

Hung in the "Clouds" to make thy
neighbors laugh:

Romp, joke, and play the fool; but do
not sigh.

Woman loves sunshine in the eye of man,
Has faith in him who in himself has hope,
Wants not dry trunks, but trees, stately
and strong,

That lift aloft with joy their tops to
heaven,

To screen her, shrinking, from the storm
and sun.

ARISTON.

Well done, philosopher! Plato, avaunt—
Sell off thy cloak, and give to us thy
groves—

Us, partners hence in wisdom's gainful
trade!

INO.

Ariston, nay, before I join with thee
In teaching Greece, my tyro, tell me
first,

Tell, was it I, or not, who track'd thy
step,

And follow'd like a ghost to watch thy
ways;

Or others paid by me to bring report.

ARISTON.

Young wise-cloak it was thou—a pretty
boy, [glee.

Graceful and trim, and spicing life with

INO.

I say not it was I—but this I think,
Her air was manly if her cheek were
smooth—

Ah! once, twice, thrice, she changed her
look and name,

And e'en thyself did rival in the camp,
And took from thee almost the soldiers'
hearts,

Who stroked her sunny locks, pull'd out
her curls,

Said heaven began a girl, then made a
boy;

While, swaggering, she did joke more
than they all.

ARISTON.

My Ino, stop—that was not, was not
thou?

INO.

Strange if that boy had won thy place
and fame:

Thine Ino might have stood instead of
thee

To please in marble's white the eye of
Greece.

ARISTON.

Do say no more! Draw o'er those days
a veil!

INO.

Ariston, that the woman wakes in me.
I have no blush for what I did for thee.
Was I unsex'd? that monster horrible,
A man in woman's form? a spirit male,
With female nerves, and voice that
squeaks out thoughts

To show in flesh and soul eternal jar?
Love sanctified the deed, preserved my
sex.

Look on my cheek! there sits a woman's
bloom!

Gaze in my eye! there beams a woman's
light!

Search through my heart! there lives a
woman's love,

And my whole nature glories in itself.

ARISTON.

Right, my brave girl, my guide, and better
part!

I more than thee should boast the blessed
deed.

A truce! a kiss!

INO.

My lips are thine; then take
Thine own—there—there. Be hence a
wiser boy!

ARISTON.

Give me thy page's dress, and it shall
hang

High o'er Minerva's shrine, a gift of love
To heaven from me, and dear next to
thyself.

INO.

Sober, once more—but did I say 'twas I
Who follow'd thee? Well, now I'll take
it back.

I joked, I lied—it was some other dunce
Who loved thee much—moonstruck—by
Cupid hit—

Perhaps my shade, that left myself behind
In Greece, to glide o'er earth to find its
mate,

And jealous keep him in her watchful
eye.

Trust not too much 'twas I, for, over-
fond,

I'd make thee sick, and tire thee of my
love,

Since men in us like coyness more than
sighs,

And value what they think they may not
get.

But see thy mother, there! Smiles leave
us now:

She seems a form in which the gods
breathe grace,

Pleased to behold a matron's dignity.

Enter HELIA.]

HELIA.

I've pass'd hell's mouth, and Styx, and
Pluto seen,

To get my child, and come back to the day.
All earth I've search'd, and walk'd on
ocean's floor,

Olympus climb'd, and thence stepp'd into
heaven

To ask from Jove my child, my lost, lost
child!

INO.

Look, Helia, here!

HELIA.

Strange! strange! that voice I know,
And it is like the murmur of the sea
So sad in shells, or moans along the
shores.

INO.

I Ino am!

HELIA.

Oh, yes! that name I've heard—
It floats up from the past. A cloud lifts
from

My memory.

ARISTON.

O mother! I'm thy son!

HELIA.

How dear that tone, and how familiar too!
'Tis like Ariston's prattle when a child,
More manly grown. There, there I see
him now—

His curls, his dress—my boy, yes, 'tis my
boy!

ARISTON.

Our Helia! mother, look! Ariston I!
Oh, touch my face, and gaze into my eye,
And know thy son!

HELIA.

Yes, and 'twas thee I've seen
In marble stand along the Agora :
My boy was flesh, not stone.

INO.

Our Helia, nay !
These were his images placed there by
Greece ;
This is thy son, thy true, thine only son !

HELIA.

Here ! let me touch thy hand, and feel
thy face ;
My fingers tell my brain more than mine
eyes.
The same ! the same ! he who in marble
stood !
My son in flesh ! I've found my boy, my
boy !
My gloom is gone ! I see a light like day !
Ariston, thou, and Ino by thy side !
I know you both, and take you to my
heart.

[All embrace.]

The world is fill'd with joy too great for
life.
Athene, goddess, from yon temple look,
And hear my words—to thee I vow
myself,
And for thine altar promise grateful
lambs,
While heaven and earth glow o'er with
light and song !

*Enter Girls and Boys, garlanded, who dance,
singing, around HELIA, INO, and ARISTON.]*

Hail, son of Greece ! once like Mars in the
morning
Bursting through battle-clouds, red to the
sight !
Now peaceful o'er heaven thy glory adorning
Sends wide round the earth the beams of
thy light !

Hail, son of Greece ! we beheld thee stand
lashing
Thy steeds from thy car, on-whirl'd to the
goal ;
And then in the sun thine olive-crown flashing
Up to the skies made our plaudits to roll.
Hail, son of Greece ! when the Persian's
mad minions
Bore torch and chain to the land that we love,

Thou seem'd an eagle hurl'd swift on his
pinions
Down from his mountain-nest, scaring the
dove.

Hail, son of Greece ! bright around thee thy
glory
As that on the heads of heroes doth shine :
ARISTON shall live in song and in story ;
Immortal with Greece his name shall
entwine.

SCENE II.—*A Porch before the Temple of
JUPITER, in the midst of a Grove.*

HEROCLES.

How bright Apollo drives his steeds
to-day,
That earth and sky may smile in light on
Greece !
The air breathes joyous life ! the sea-
waves dance ;
Sweet flowers from brilliant leaves give
grateful scents ;
The very birds seem glad, and azure-
crown'd
Hymettus in his love stands kissing
heaven.

CALOPHOS.

Some Power unknown has thus hurl'd off
our foe,
Who more than Jove deserves a temple
here !
Be thanks to Him who sits throned o'er
our gods !
One day the Persian's arms are girdling
Greece ;
The next, on land sees but his ghastly
dead,
And strewn upon the sea his shatter'd
ships.

ARISTON.

But terrible the price of liberty !
Brave Aristippus, Philippon the true,
lolo, with the shades ! With batter'd
helm,
And shield, and spear-pierced through the
neck, the first
I saw beneath a Median's foot pour out
his life.
The next, on snorting horse, whose eye
shot fire.

Was, dangling, hurl'd far on amid the foe,
Where Syrian darts in clouds hid from
my view.

Iolo, O ye gods, how hard his fate !
I saw him stagger, fighting as he fell,
Gash'd o'er with wounds, and striking to
the last,

Till on the earth, a Persian cleft his head,
And toss'd, in hate, it gory through the
air.

May such a sight no more salute mine
eyes !

CALOPHOS.

Well, now 'tis o'er—the dead beyond
recall ;

And it is ours in joy to give our thanks.

ARISTON.

Ah ! master, know that I have paid thy
debt.

Who press'd my back—as once I lay on
his—

Than I a heavier weight—with shorter legs
But bigger calves—enough to tire an ox—
Pursued by Persian wolves who wish'd
his flesh—

And groaning like some school-boy in the
spring

O'er-stuff'd with fruit ? I will not tell his
name.

CALOPHOS.

Ariston, truce, and keep thy secret well,
Or both of us will dangle from the
"Clouds."

HEROCLES.

And, nephew, I must cut thy brilliant
plumes

Before the players tear them on the stage,
While Greece laughs at the man who
saved her life.

Thy youth appear'd, in one mad charge
of thine,

Hurling a handful on a Persian horde ;
And up the hill, besides, thy murderous
rush.

ARISTON.

The only test of war is victory ;
That gives a crown where we deserve an
ax.

Our hope was not in flesh ! it was in
SOULS.

Muscle to muscle match'd, and man to
man,
And ship to ship, we were a few mad
boys

Striving to hurl away the ponderous sea.
Our will, and not our arms, our glory
gain'd.

One soldier strong in love to Greece is
like

A god in heaven's immortal panoply ;
And they who first stood firm 'gainst
Persian gold

Were then 'gainst Persian power invin-
cible.

Besides, despair but wins by boldest
deeds :

The *onward* snowflakes make the ava-
lanche ;

The *onward* flames will mountains wrap
in fire.

HEROCLES.

Ariston, 'tis well said ; and on the stage
May Greece prove kind to thee as I am
now !

But, see ! there come the spoils of Jupiter !
Well may our joy burst to exultant shouts.

ARISTON.

Yea ! let these trophies stir the heart of
Greece

And loose her lip to shake the dome of
heaven !

*Enter People and Soldiers, bearing the spoils of
battle.—After a brief interval, they separate
into a small and a large party, representing
Greece and Persia.—Then, in a mock fight,
the latter flies vanquished.]*

CALOPHOS.

See there a tatter'd Syrian banner float
Stiff with its splendid blazonry of gold !

One Spartan snatch'd it from a hundred
guards.

There come the quiver of a Scythian
chief,

An Arab's bow, and a fire-breathing
horse !

Behold a Persian shield round as the sun
That flashes from its brass ! That
Median helm

With batter'd crest, sat on some royal
brow ;

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

* A jewel there burns like an eye of Mars—
Beneath the crown of a long line of
kings!
Robes, girdles, chariots, arms—pile after
pile—
On sea and land our noble triumph show.

HEROCLES.

The crowd divides—on this side, few for
Greece,

And there, on that a multitudinous foe!
How loud the shouts! How wild the
mimic fight!

The Persian flies, while planted in his
camp

Our Grecian flag in triumph waves its
folds!

Good Calophos, the trophies are prepared.
Herald, peal o'er the grove a signal-blast!

*[The trumpet sounds, and all the people collect
before the porch of the temple, where the
trophies have been piled.]*

HEROCLES.

Let all Greece bow while earth gives
thanks to heav'n!

[All kneel.]

THE PRIEST.

Olympian Jove, we to thy image kneel,
And feel thy majesty, pleased now by
blood.

Thine, nature's crown, and thine, this
lower world.

Thine eye beholds, thy power encircles
all,

While nations can but rise and fall in
thee.

From thy high throne of clouds regard
our Greece,

Accept her thanks for thundering on her
foes,

And to her soil eternal freedom grant!
The spoils receive we place before thee

now,
And smile propitious while we utter
praise!

[All arise.]

HEROCLES.

Now, Calophos, discharge thy gracious
task!

CALOPHOS.

For her whose vigilance was bless'd to
Greece

Has been decreed this dove of Persian
gold:

The Agora to Ino votes the gift.

ARISTON.

To Athens thanks! I'll give it to my
wife.

CALOPHOS.

And here a picture set around with gems:
A youth on flowers sleeps near a preci-
pice,

Beneath which roars a torrent over rocks;
A mother sits beside her dreaming son;
Above I read these words in letter'd
gold—

"Helia's maternal love has Athens
saved."

ARISTON.

My tears dropp'd on the gift attest our
thanks.

CALOPHOS.

Ariston, taken from our battle-spoils
I hold a crown for thine own brow
decreed:

Bright-blazon'd on its jewel'd rim I see—
"All Greece ARISTON calls Deliverer."

*[ARISTON kneels, and is crowned by CALOPHOS
amid shouts of the people; and then rising,
speaks.]*

ARISTON.

My Calophos! first honor to the gods,
From whose immortal wings drops vic-
tory,

And in whose will men are but instru-
ments.

As their own gift we take the praise of
Greece;

Yet I, amid these shouts, and 'neath this
crown,

Stand here to blush since I can boast no
scar,

While I see those who from grim battle
snatch'd

Not graceful wreaths, but victory with
wounds.

The private soldier bears the brunt of
war,

And wins the garland his commander
wears.

There is a man whose arm is on the
field!

Another there who left behind his blood;

ARISTON.

<p>That soldier's eyes, cut into by a sword, Roll now in night and pain, nor see this pomp ; While, he, a sailor, on a grappling ship Lost both his hands, which, dropping, tinged the sea. Yon brave man's breast was pierced by Scythian darts,` And from this vet'ran's flesh I pluck'd a spear. Then where our dead—true saviors of our soil? Go where the jackals yell, the vultures fly,</p>	<p>To find their dust whose spirits smile` o'er Greece ! High on the soil where battle laid them low Be ours to raise their monuments in brass Carved from their spoils ; and their immortal names, Stamp'd on our coins, and chanted in our songs, Hand to our sons, taught thus to die for Greece ! Eternal Freedom lives in martyr deeds.</p>
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