















THE  
MAGAZINE OF HISTORY

WITH  
NOTES AND QUERIES

Extra Number—No. 20

RARE LINCOLNIANA—No. 2

MADAME SURRETT, A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS

*By the late James Webb Rogers*

WILLIAM ABBATT

410 EAST 32D STREET,

∴

∴

NEW YORK

1912







# MADAME SURRATT

A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS

By

J. W. ROGERS

of the Washington Bar

## TO THE PUBLIC

Harmony being now restored and the Union preserved, I have endeavored to present the terrific scenes with which our great Rebellion closed; and beg leave to suggest that the harsh expressions, put here into the mouths of both Confederate and Federal actors, find no place in my own heart, nor in the hearts, I trust, of any of my countrymen in either section of the Union; but in writing a drama of the times I found it necessary to make the representatives of either party speak as they formerly felt. If my work should live, it will stand as a beacon over a bloody sea, to warn our children, when we who fought upon it shall have passed away.

J. W. ROGERS.

Washington, D. C.

Thomas J. Brashears, Printer,  
1879

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Reprinted

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(Being Extra No. 20 of THE MAGAZINE OF HISTORY WITH NOTES AND QUERIES.)

MADAME SURRETT

*Drama in Five Acts,*

By

J. W. Rogers, of the Washington Bar,

To be followed by

*“Pins in the Backs of Small Bugs,”*

Satyres for the Times

Hon. R. Merrick said on the trial of John H. Surratt:  
“I presume there are but few persons in the United States who have not expressed the opinion that the mother of the prisoner at the bar was executed without sufficient evidence to convict her.”

Malice to none ; but charity for all.

Abraham Lincoln.

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Copyright and Playright Secured

1879

## EDITOR'S PREFACE

Among the rarest of Lincoln items are two plays—neither was ever put on the stage—one of which we here present to our readers. It was written by the late James Webb Rogers, of Washington, who was a clergyman and served in the Confederate army before studying law.

It is so scarce that but one copy, to our knowledge, has ever been sold at auction, and being unable to obtain one for reprinting, we are indebted to the New York Historical Society for permission to make a copy of the one owned by them.

Should we succeed in finding a copy of the second play, it will also appear as one of our "Extras" in due time.





## DEDICATION

This Drama is inscribed to my friend Frank Golden, of Washington City, a successful merchant, and an honest man. Had fortune blessed him with literary advantages, as nature endowed him with mother wit and a noble heart, he would have shone as brightly in letters, as he does in the mercantile and social world.





## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

PRESIDENT LINCOLN AND FAMILY

PRESIDENT JOHNSON

MADAME SURRETT

ANNIE SURRETT

JOHN H. SURRETT

LIEUTENANT JOHN Y. BEALL, C. S. A.

LILY BEALL

J. WILKES BOOTH

EDWIN BOOTH

AGNES BOOTH

HENRY WARD BEECHER

GENERAL MUSSY \*

JOHN H. MORGAN

WILLIAM H. SEWARD

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY

PAYNE (POWELL) CONSPIRATORS

ATZERODT

HEROLD

DR. MARY TROTTER

BAKER AND CONGER, DETECTIVES

JEFFERSON DAVIS

ROBERT E. LEE

GHOSTS, OFFICERS, SOLDIERS, &c.

\* This character is presumably intended for Lieut. Col. and Medical Inspector William H. Mussey, M.D. (1818-82.)



## MADAME SURRATT

### ACT I

SCENE I—*Road near Arlington—Sentinel on Guard.*

#### FIRST SENTINEL

More numerous than pigeons, when they cloud  
The face of Heaven, by their stormy wings,  
Come ghostly couriers, sweeping overhead  
To Arlington;  
And from the bowels of Earth  
Grey spirits mount,  
To the same dread spot for conference.  
Perhaps the war is closing, and those counselors,  
Of other generations, taking part,  
May now be agitating terms of peace.  
Last night they flocked around me; but by Heaven!  
I would not gaze upon that crowd again—  
My hairs on end, and cold drops flaring over me,  
For all the pomp and glory of the war.  
Their port mysterious, and unsocial eyes,  
The smell of coffins, on their midnight robes,  
And deep sepulchral voices fright my soul.

*(Alarmed at foot falls. Enter 2nd Sentinel.)*

'Tis but the sentinel to take my watch.  
Thank God 'twas not that bloodless caravan!  
Most welcome, sentinel; you are just in time—  
Now, fall asleep as soon as possible.



## SECOND SENTINEL

Asleep?

## FIRST SENTINEL

Aye, post you to the dusky land of Nod,  
Or sights more terrible than dreams will come.

## SECOND SENTINEL

What of that rumor, in the camp—  
That ghosts and goblins fright our soldiers here?  
Say, sentinel, what time do they appear?

## FIRST SENTINEL

Sometimes early; sometimes late they come;  
But when the mocking-bird, with dulcet note,  
Sweetens the midnight air, and whip-poor-wills  
Bewail so piteously, the master's lash.  
If suddenly they hush, and in a tone  
Of trepidation, cautious and subdued,  
Give unlinked harmonies, as in soliloquy,  
Then look, and on yon Heights of Arlington,  
You'll see whole troops of disembodied spirits.

## SECOND SENTINEL

To see a ghost hath been my life-long prayer—  
My nurses told me of them long ago; ha! ha! ha!  
And preachers—ha! ha! ha!—they make their living by them.  
But say, soldier, have you really seen such?

## FIRST SENTINEL

Last night I saw them—Aye, and heard them too—

Asses can see their provender, and fools,  
 Born to be damned—mere brutes, see nothing more;  
 But I was born with a caul on my face,  
 And, in fact, all lofty souls can see spirits.  
 They walk about the world most numerous,  
 When nations tremble, or great States dissolve,  
 As in Jerusalem, when “they that slept arose  
 And came into the holy city,  
 And appeared to many”; for those prisoners felt  
 The Roman Empire shake, when God was on the Cross.  
 There! there they go!—your prayer is answered soon—  
 So follow them; but as for me,  
 I’ll see a livelier company.

(Exit)

SECOND SENTINEL

To the limit of my watch will I follow them—  
 If spies, to capture, and if ghosts, to prove,  
 O that I had a silver bullet now!

(Exit)

SCENE II—*Arlington Cemetery—Ghosts of Washington and other American heroes—Federal and Confederate Ghosts—Of Columbus, De Soto and other discoverers—Pocahontas, Powhatan and other Indian Chiefs—John Brown on side of stage, near the audience—Music, “Star Spangled Banner” Banner Thirteen Stars, Waving.*

WASHINGTON

These direful tidings, and this day of blood,  
 Cry loud to Heaven! and Heaven appoints this conference.  
 Let him who rendered in immortal verse  
 Our banner—Key \* of Maryland—first speak.

\* Throughout the original this is printed “Keys.”

## ALL

Key, Key—a song from Key.

## KEY

When Freedom, crushed and bleeding on the ground,  
 Abandoned every other hope for man,  
 To Heaven she cried, and Heaven, in pity, gave  
 This new-born world, uprising from the sea.  
 Its hills came forth, with kine and cattle crowned,  
 And all the valleys teemed with jocund song.  
 Like cowed monks the misty mountains rose,  
 To Heaven's high altar, lighted by the stars;  
 Cecilian thunders leaped along the skies,  
 And lightnings darted in the face of kings.  
 Great rivers, flashing to the sun, rolled on,  
 And solitude stood listening to their cataracts.  
 Beneath the virgin soil were golden yams,  
 More luscious than the roots of Ind or Africa.  
 Enormous melons lay upon the ground,  
 With nectar filled—a banquet for the Gods!  
 Gigantic birds, unknown to other climes,  
 With coral neck, and beard upon their breasts,  
 Of consequential step, and curious gobelins,  
 Strutted unconscious of a tyrant's power—  
 A mammoth corn with golden ears was there,  
 And fruit perennial smiled in every grove,  
 Upon ten thousand plains fair flowers bloomed,  
 And o'er them, like the billows of the sea,  
 Dashed the wild herd of plunging buffalo.  
 The waves—the waters laughed, and winds sang loud,  
 To freedom weeping on that distant shore—  
 Up from the dust she sprang, on whirlwinds flew,  
 To climb the mountains of her own bright world—

Thence gazing on her children, all abroad,  
 And lifting high on standard to the breeze,  
 She spread her stars upon its ample folds,  
 And welcomed all the nations of the Earth.  
 Accursed be he who strikes that banner down!  
 Thrice cursed her sons who would not lift it up.  
 Let Death and leanness enter in their ranks,  
 While Hell gapes wide to take them down!

## POWHATAN

Behold a king—no jewel in his crown,  
 But feathered from his own imperial bird.  
 Powhatan salutes ye—Minnehaha's Lord,  
 And Pocahontas' father—cheated of his child,  
 Who pined and perished in a foreign land—  
 Behold him standing where his fathers stood—  
 Ere yet the canting Christian crushed his heart—  
 Burnt down his wigwam, stole his child,  
 And murdered Minnehaha in her bed.  
 Truth hast thou told, for once, thou lying tongue:  
 "Upon ten thousand plains, fair flowers bloomed,  
 And o'er them, like the billows of the sea,  
 Dashed the wild herd of plunging buffalo."  
 Those flowers, now drooping with papooses' blood,  
 And slain, like buffalo, their warlike sires;  
 But chanting still their war songs as they died.  
 They cursed your friendship, and your power defied.  
 Well hast thou said, the waters laughed—  
 Ah, yes, my Minnehaha; fare-thee-well!  
 Thou Laughing Water; fare-thee-well!  
 O, my Minnehaha! ha! ha! ha!

*(Exit, sobbing. Exeunt Indians.)*

## JOHN BROWN

Now stand rebuked thou squeaking trump of liberty;  
 Harken to me, and I will tell thee more.  
 The red man, and the black man, both are *men*.  
 Your lofty strain might more become  
 Some patriot, taught by Christian charity—  
 Some Wilberforce, or Cowper, when he cried:  
 "I would not have a slave to till my ground,  
 To fan me when I sleep, and tremble when I wake,  
 For all the wealth of India bought,  
 Or sinews ever earned."  
 Vile Anthropophagæ! your fathers all  
 Traded in human flesh, poor flesh and blood!  
 But I was Freedom's first apostle on these shores,  
 And struck, at Harper's Ferry, for the rights of man.

## KEY

To purchase captives, and to give them homes,  
 Redeeming them from death, or Pagan rule;  
 Was ever merciful; but he who first  
 Enslaved the free-born soul, must bear the mark of Cain.

## PATRICK HENRY

The captive once enthralled, no Christian law  
 Forbade his change of masters, nay, sweet mercy,  
 Throughout all time, compelled her favored sons,  
 To buy the captive from a cruel lord—  
 From Jew or Vandal—Turk or Infidel,  
 And use his service, for the ransom paid.  
 'Twas thus our Washington, his fuglemen  
 Restrained, with firm, but gentle hand.  
 Lo, Washington my witness! for he soothed,

With lighter chain the captive, driven to his door,  
 Aye, by your fathers, driven to Arlington,  
 Chilblains upon their feet, and fetters on their hands,  
 But like those hemorrhoids, once on Israel sent,  
 The blains and fetters now return to you.

## WASHINGTON

Charles Carroll, speak.

## ALL

Hear! hear! Charles Carroll of Carrollton, hear! hear!

## CARROLL

When freedom first upon these shores unfurled  
 The banner of the cross, all earth rejoiced,  
 But lo, a cloud uprising from the sea—  
 At first no bigger than a prophet's hand,  
 Yet destined soon to burst upon mankind!  
 England's armadas, staggering on the deep,  
 Drag Africa in chains across the wave:  
 And freedom shrieks—commingling her sad tears  
 With thine, O Cleopatra, falling fast  
 On Plymouth Rock, and freezing as they fall;  
 For there the slaver packed with dusky forms,  
 First vomited its curse and slavery on these shores;  
 The *Mayflower* bore them, and her pilgrims sang  
 Loud songs to Liberty, imploring Heaven  
 To lull the storm, and land each cargo safe.  
 And when the cable rustled on the shore,  
 The captives' freedom lost for ever more  
 Those glorious Pilgrim Saints, all English born,  
 Rolled their white eyes to Heaven and twanged each nasal horn,

Returning thanks that God had given to that shore  
 To be baptized, the poor benighted blackamore.  
 New England's avarice, and her prayerful sons  
 Transfer the prisoner, to Southern clime;  
 And take Virginia's gold *their price for blood*.  
 But all may yet be well; for Heaven is watchful,  
 Though her children weep—sweet mercy pleads  
 Before the King of Kings—Pope Urban too,  
 And Benedict, on every slaver's mast—  
 Aye! though a King should charter it,  
 Have launched the dreadful curse of Rome.  
 The prisoner transferred to Southern clime,  
 May yet be free: for mutual jealousies  
 Of North and South, may break his chain.  
 Their rival interests, and the shock of arms—  
 But not their charity, can shatter it;  
 For one his service—one his vote—demands—  
 But see, on yonder heights of Arlington—  
 One eagle holds a trembling bird—  
 Another eagle crouching for the prey  
 Rushes to combat—lo! they fight and die;  
 But see! the bird hath mounted to the sky.  
 Then lift thy standards, freedom, and thy cross display.  
 Peal all thy thunders, let thy cannon peal,  
 For every chain is shattered, and the bondman free.

(Music. "*Hail Columbia.*")

#### WASHINGTON

The storm is passing, and the union saved;  
 The Blue and the Gray shall mingle, side by side;  
 One Union banner waving over all,  
 With glory's sentinel to guard our graves,  
 And keep his watch, till time shall be no more.



(*Enter Seceded States, dressed in mourning, each with a star on her forehead, and a cross in her hand.*)

## FIRST STATE

As deputy for these fair States, I come,  
To ask a place upon that glorious banner.

## ALL

Father of our country, hail! admit us there.

## WASHINGTON

Then lift each cross to Heaven, and swear  
To guard that banner, till the day of doom.

## ALL

We swear! we swear!  
Amen! Amen! (Music. "*Star Spangled Banner.*")

## KEY

That cross so glorious on the battle field,  
Hath ten fold glory now, in sorrow's hand;  
Go plant it then, above your glorious dead;  
And leave it there, Oh, leave it on those graves,  
That heave along like ocean's troubled waves.  
Protect it there, 'gainst each invader's hand,  
For they are all cradled in their native land.  
Perhaps mistaken in their fiery zeal;  
But all Americans, true as their steel;  
Perchance too zealous for a doubtful right,  
But Martyrs to their faith, they fell in fight:  
Then twine the wreath, and let your crosses tell,

To coming time, where fruitless valor fell.  
 Where sleep the brave, who left upon the cliffs of time  
 Their names immortal, and their deeds sublime.  
 A moment's anger, like the tempest's wrath,  
 Swept in its fury o'er our country's path.  
 But there she stands, triumphant o'er the storm,  
 Our stars and stripes, around her glorious form.  
 Her sword still red, but lifted high to Heaven,  
 Proclaims the tempest past, the past forgiven:  
 Alas! She weeps, 'tis now her sacred trust,  
 To watch each warrior's grave, and guard his dust—  
 To guard the glory of each soldier's name,  
 And consecrate it to his Country's fame.  
 No foreign flag shall wave above her dead,  
 Nor tyrant foot, nor timid slave shall tread,  
 Where Canby fought, or Stonewall Jackson bled.  
 But glory's banner, to their fathers dear,  
 Shall catch from every wounded heart a tear,  
 And shine, a rainbow, bright as when it spanned  
 The first wild storm that swept our native land.

#### WASHINGTON

Yon morning star, our captain in the sky,  
 Commands us to retire to our tents.

#### GENERAL MORGAN

Stay, stay, regardless of the morning star.  
 Your loving harmonies are beautiful indeed,  
 Then hie ye to your green, well-tended graves,  
 While we return to brushwood and to rocks.  
 Where vultures tore our flesh and left our bones;  
 Where weeping mothers seek for us in vain,

And toil as slaves to keep a little life  
 Still in our baby brothers telling them the tale—  
 And when our fortunes stolen shall be returned,  
 And when magnanimous as ye pretend,  
 The nation gives us graves and hands to tend them.  
 Aye, then; but not till then, our dust can mingle.

## JOHN BROWN

You lie! your fortunes were not stolen—we took  
 In spoils of war, the gold which ye had coined  
 From human blood—'Twas I that lead the van,  
 At Harper's Ferry first I struck for liberty,  
 When your unequal laws, accursed and hellish,  
 Did hang me like a dog till dead, dead, dead!  
 Then all the North was caught into a blaze,  
 For I was there—(ha! ha! ha!) "John Brown was marching on,"  
 Your moderate men, as Jackson—ours too—  
 Such snivellers as Ellsworth I detest,  
 And Lincoln also, a soft-hearted fool,  
 Favors the rebels whom a man of grit  
 Had hung, and shot as fast as they were caught.  
 I'd burn the serpents—men and women too,  
 And send them writhing down to hell,  
 For trading in human flesh, and turning men to beasts.  
 God gave no property to man; but force  
 First seized it trampling down the weak,  
 And weakness yielded to the brave and powerful  
 So strength prevailed and property arose;  
 But they who sing, "*John Brown is marching on,*"  
 Will one day raze yon cities from their base—  
 God speed the day, and hell light up their torches!  
 New York, Chicago, Pittsburg, and St. Louis, all  
 Shall have their guillotines, to make France tremble—

For her little spurt of blood, was as nothing to that glorious sea.  
 Give me the men who carry fire and sword,  
 Give me a Morton, Sherman or a Wade,  
 To sweep with besoms of destruction—  
 Then go, ye rebels, to the rocks again—  
 Ye have no country and deserve no graves!

## GENERAL MORGAN

What though we have no country—our fathers,  
 Led up by Washington, defended yours;  
 And struck the British lion at your door:  
 What tho' their sons should have no graves—  
 "On fame's eternal camping ground,  
 Our silent tents are spread,  
 And Glory guards, with solemn round,  
 The bivouac of our dead."

## WASHINGTON

This war of words avail us not;  
 The Conference is ended—let us hence.

*(Exit.)*

## JOHN BROWN

Go to, ye snivellers, for I alone  
 Rushed single handed on the Devil's own;  
 And have a right to walk by day, while you  
 Are frightened by a little morning dew—  
 A cock can scare ye, but yon morning star  
 Was my companion at the gate of war—  
 At Harper's Ferry, o'er the gulches wide,  
 It led my army to the other side,  
 Clambering o'er rocks, by cyclops flung,  
 In some great battle when the world was young  
 It saw me strike—Aye! sees me striking still

Giving to other men my stubborn will.

(*Booth passes and Exit.*)

There! there! Wilkes Booth! now for a little sport.

I'll make the crater of his soul my fort,  
And Freedom's banner, from its heights unfurled,  
Shall lead a host of Devils through the world;

For lofty souls, by hellish impulse driven,  
Are Hell's best arsenals, when touching Heaven;  
And his, though dipped in Heaven's ethereal blue,  
Hath craters vast, for Hell to thunder through;

Then let me seize its heights, and hold the while,  
Gazing on all beneath with lurid smile;

Then from its pinnacles, all stained with blood,  
I'll leap into the raging multitude;

And give to working men a higher law,  
To hold the world and capital in awe.

Till Freemen of the North,  
Whose children feed on broth,  
Light up the avenging fire,  
Leaping from spire to spire—

My spirit soaring higher;  
Till toiling millions, find their shackles gone,  
And shout to Heaven, "John Brown is marching on."

(*Enter Booth, and exit.*)

See, see, he comes again, but paler far  
Than when I met him, at the gate of war;  
For then a volunteer—most valiant man,  
He joined Virginia's troops, to meet my clan—  
At Charleston guarded me, and saw me die.

But time avenges every villainy—  
What though he live, I have a grudge to take,  
Which all the villain's blood can never slake,

Then let me drive him on in crime, till men  
 Pursue him, like the tiger to his den—  
 Start at his name, instinctive turning round,  
 To find a hissing serpent in its sound,  
 Mothers all trembling—clasping in their arms  
 Scared infants as his passing shade alarms;  
 While wrinkled hags, by wolves and witches nursed,  
 Cover their faces at his name accursed.  
 Rise, rise! ye mantles of the dead, and tear  
 The womb of time, that I may see him struggling there.  
 See! See! he strikes at yonder towering heads  
 Whose murdered millions lie in gory beds,  
 And now prophetic demons, in their rage  
 Ride on the storm—now stoop to yonder stage  
 And now a prophet's mantle on the air  
 Shakes pestilence and death—my hangman there  
 Strikes Lincoln down; and yonder shooting star,  
 Reveals the last dread tragedy of war!  
 See! See! the villain comes; but knows it not,  
 That I have marked the very hour, and spot—  
 Then rise, ye curtains, of the night and show  
 The violets withering, where his foot-prints glow,  
 Ye Devils rise and plunge into his soul,  
 Till the whole world shall shake from pole to pole—  
 But when the deed is done, and darkness shrouds the sun,  
 And Lincoln lies upon his bier,  
 Pursue the blood-stained murderer,  
 Still whispering in his ear,  
 John Brown is marching on—is here!  
 And when in fire and flame, the villain dies,  
 Let thunder peals proclaim it through the skies!

(*Exit.*)

(*Enter J. Wilkes Booth.*)

## BOOTH

Hyperion, like a chariot all on fire,  
 Rides up among the stars, and grey cold morning  
 Opes once more her eyes on yonder Capitol—  
 Once more Virginia shakes her clanking chains,  
 And lifts them up imploringly to Arlington—  
 Nest of her eagles! once so dear to thee!  
 O Liberty! thy cradle and thy tomb!  
 O glorious Arlington! Home of a hero!  
 Thy festive arches loath to let them die,  
 Repeated oft the words of Washington,  
 While Madison, Monroe and Jefferson  
 Held high discourse on forms of human right;  
 Or bent the bow, when strung too long,  
 To ladies fair, in many a social hour!  
 Here oft, alas! my own exulting voice  
 Rang out in childhood's unsuspecting glee—  
 And other voices calling me to play  
 Now silent in their stiff and gory gray.  
 Ah! yes, the stage is sad, when those we played with  
 Have all gone to rest! Then hear my vow  
 Ye murdered and neglected ones, whose bones  
 Lie bleaching on the hill sides where we played:  
 Not unavenged your ghosts shall walk this scene—  
 Envious of the foeman, sleeping in your beds,  
 And proud to stick their blue plebeian noses  
 Even in death, beneath the kerchief of a Custis—  
 To have it said that they were lodged at Arlington!  
 Ye, our Fathers—Sons of the South, look down!  
 And thou, Virginia—mother of Statesmen—  
 Wake with the morning; but awake to weep!  
 For your fair bosom, once bedecked wi' flowers,  
 All brooched and jewelled o'er with golden corn,



Heaves only now with graves—a nation's sepulchre!  
 And thou, my Maryland, dear to this heart,  
 Look down from yonder hills, and judge me kindly,  
 Like some poor mother, half demented, thou  
 Dost rock the cradle of thy buried children,  
 Still muttering thine own immortal poet's song,  
 Though half the stars have fallen from his banner—  
 I cannot sing that song, but I can perish,  
 And wrestling—clutching yon strong columns,  
 I will drag them down, and Dagon's host  
 Shall perish with me!

Hark! hark! the reveille of yonder camp!  
 Its rumbling cannon, presage of a storm,  
 Surcharged with thunder, and the bolts of death  
 Those clattering horses and war-bearing messengers;  
 Like vultures balanced on the dusky cloud  
 That merry marching, measured to the fife,  
 The drum and trumpet—shouts, and neighing steeds,  
 Proclaim new levies and a countless host  
 To batten on the South, already sunk so low—  
 Nothing but *Intervention* now can save us—  
 What if mad havoc, riding in the air,  
 Should pluck the tallest tassels of the field!  
 What if a President and his whole Cabinet  
 Were taken up the Heaven?—Confusion dire  
 All order would confound, till France and England  
 Recognized the South, and left her children free!  
 Down busy thoughts! but when I play to-night  
 Richard the Third shall live within my soul,  
 And from the furnace of his blasted spirit  
 I will snatch a firebrand to light the world—  
 Will tear this darkness from my native sky,  
 And set the Southern Cross in glory there!

(*Exit.*)

SCENE III—*Same—Road near Arlington—Enter Captain Thornton Powel—Cloak over gray uniform, supporting Lilly Beall.*

POWEL

Come, come, be brave, the worst is over now,  
 Yon sail awaits us, and the wind blows fair—  
 See! see the topmast! how its streamers wave  
 And point us to the Capitol! The guards  
 Can thus be flanked, and your brave brother saved—  
 Once in the city, we can aid him—  
 Madame Surratt to espouse his cause,  
 And Booth to plead it with the President—  
 Come, come, once more be brave; be brave and win,  
 For never yet could prison bar, nor rib of steel,  
 Withstand the pleadings of an angel's tongue!

LILLY

Alas, my poor brother—now in chains!  
 I feel that he can never be exchanged.  
 You wiser men may little understand it,  
 But woman's heart is all a prophecy,  
 And what we know—is only what we feel—  
 Ah, no, we are too powerless to save him.

*(Sinks by the road.)*

O so weary! frightened all night long,  
 And trembling more for you, than for myself,  
 My woman's heart grows faint, and dies within me.  
 Thrice have you slain the guards, and thrice these hands,  
 Staunching their wounds, took up the dreadful tale.  
*(Lifts up her hands red with blood.)*

I cannot wash it off, lest to your soul

The damning spot should fly—for we are one—  
 At least were once, till with an angry grasp,  
 Unlike your own, you tore me from those offices,  
 By pity prompted for a dying foe.  
 But now we part, for life is ebbing fast,  
 And life, without you, were worse than death.  
 But take this rosary, press it to your heart,  
 And when the flowers of spring shall bloom once more  
 To hide these bloody hands from Heaven and offer  
 Sacrifice for our sins; O then remember me!  
 Go back to camp; you cannot pass yon guard;  
 Go, Thornton, fight the battles of the South,  
 And leave me here to die! Farewell! farewell!  
 Yet swear, before our parting—swear once more,  
 To love me, Thornton, and to keep me in your heart!  
 (*Taking rosary and twining it on his wrist.*)

POWEL

We'll have no parting yet; but let me swear,  
 And on a soldier's sword, (*draws*) and by the stars,  
 Dumb witnesses, whose soft and dewy eyes  
 Have looked through Southern bowers on our love,  
 And by yon mocking-bird, rehearsing it  
 To roses, bent upon their tearful boughs;  
 And by the moon, whose silvery bow in Heaven,  
 Was snatched by Cupid when he made us one—  
 One heart—one soul—one life, and one Eternity!  
 I swear to love thee; and to save thy brother!

LILLY—*Rising*

Those words, like nectar poured into my soul,  
 Supply new strength—now I can go,

For gentle words to woman's heart are more  
 Than all the pomp and glory of the world!  
 Lead on! and I will follow thee  
 Though tempests rave and torrents sweep our path!

POWEL—*kissing her*

Remember, love, our new-born name—  
 Yours Lilly Boyd—mine Payne—remember, Payne!  
 For Beall and Powel would betray our colors.  
 (*Exeunt. Voice behind the scenes.*)

FIRST SENTINEL

Halt! halt!

Sentinel fires—Clash of arms—They fight back to the stage  
 and around it—Sentinel falls.

PAYNE

O that the wrongs and ruins of the South  
 Were centered in this arm—its thunderbolt  
 That struck thee down, should strike the North as well,  
 And quench with blood the very fires of Hell.

(*Exit.*)

SCENE IV—*Richmond—Before the President's Mansion—Enter  
 soldiers, and citizens serenading.*

FIRST CITIZEN

That's Jeff Davis' house. Come, let's give him *Dixie*.

SECOND CITIZEN

Let's call him out, and have a speech first.

THIRD CITIZEN

No, no, *Dixie* first, and then the speech.

## FOURTH CITIZEN

We want no *Dixie* now—first for the speech—  
 And if he brings good news from Lee or Longstreet  
 Then we'll have *Dixie*, but they say that Petersburg  
 Has fallen—first make him tell the news—  
 And then if good, wind up with *Dixie*—  
 But if the news be bad, we'll shake him for it.  
 D——n if I don't lead the crowd to make him squall.

## OFFICER

Peace! Peace! vile braggart! you carpet-bag!  
 You d——d tobacco speculator—fool!  
 You wore a cockade but never fired a gun.  
 And your vile crowd have brought us to this pass.  
 Dare you criticise and underrate  
 The foremost man of all his time?  
 Why, Yankeedom and the whole South once vied  
 To stamp him current for the bank of fame!  
 And you to flip, and ring his metal—bah!  
 Were you in Mexico? at Monterey?  
 At Buena Vista? Where did you enlist?  
 Our forlorn hope, he led at Monterey,  
 I saw him mounting Fort Diavolo,  
 Throttling the cannon—daring death—  
 Our starry banner waving in his hand  
 Like wingéd seraphim defying war!  
 Begrimed with powder, and besmeared with blood,  
 He bore it upward—onward—Monterey was won!  
 “And there he stood, an Eagle in the sun.”  
 At Buena Vista next our cause seemed lost—  
 Taylor and Bragg were yielding to the storm;  
 When fresh as condors from the mountain heights,  
 Rushed down ten thousand lancers on our left.

There stood Jeff Davis—Mississippi's sons  
 His hope of victory—lo! they seem to fly.  
 His center first retiring, 'til it formed  
 Into an open V; but while each branch  
 Of that dread letter on the field of blood  
 Seemed to retreat, and thus drew in the foe  
 As flies into the yawning crocodile,  
 He halted suddenly, and faced about;  
 His Mississippi rifles blazed along each line;  
 And like a bosky hill, bathed in the sun,  
 Or mounted mysterious, rising in those wilds —  
 Or rather like a hill of blasted pines,  
 Those Lancers—and their shattered lances lay—  
 Jeff Davis master of the field;  
 And glittering on the heights of fame!  
 Wild with delight, a glorious nation then  
 Her preferments and honors proffered him;  
 Her power supreme, to hold the helm of way,  
 She gave into his hands, her record—his!  
 Then Senator, he scorned and held at bay,  
 Like a great mountain, standing in the sea,  
 The raging billows of fanatic strife—  
 'Til warning them in vain, his hope had fled;  
 And now tho' battling 'gainst the world in arms,  
 He leads the land of Washington to war.  
 For four long years, undaunted and sublime,  
 He stands—the brightest mark upon the cliff's of Time!  
 (*Soldiers—Huzza! Huzza! Huzza!*)  
 Davis! Davis! Davis! Huzza! Huzza! Huzza!  
 (*Enter Davis on balcony.*)

Fellow Citizens:—It always gives me pleasure to meet you, for  
 I know your devotion to the cause of liberty and to the sovereignty  
 of States.

Greece in her palmyest day, was a great Confederate government—as such, she fought at Thermopylae, Platea and Salamis; Nor ever yielded to domestic or foreign tyrants, until her sovereign States succumbed to Federal power. You, fellow citizens, are fighting for States' rights, and for State sovereignty, guarded by Constitutional authority. You are fighting against Federal power, a mere creature and servant of the States—Your cause is just, and millions of brave men throughout the North now shackled by the grip of war, are with you. They hold as you do, that no aggregation of States—no vast mob of many nations—no raging commune should dictate to a free-born people, and enslave their sons. What though we fail in battle, these brave men, inspired by your example, will yet sustain the cause for which your sons are bleeding. Remember the real issue—slavery was only an exciting element, trumped up by cunning demagogues to lead the mob. They know full well, that our slaves are by far the happiest peasantry on earth—better in their condition now, than when driven by Yankee masters; from whom our fathers purchased them; and this the negroes understand; they also understand that their condition is infinitely better than that of many white slaves of the North, some of whose masters so cruelly oppress them. Then let us keep to the issue—the sovereignty of the States—and should our last army go down in battle, our cause will still survive. The whole world now combined against us, may conquer on the field. But the brave and true men of the North threatened by a raging commune, will clamor for Constitutional safeguards; and be compelled to call our sons, in peaceful armor—or, if need be, with the sword—perhaps ourselves—to fight for Constitutional liberty, and for the rights of man.

Fellow citizens and fellow soldiers, I bid you good night.

ALL

Huzza! Huzza! Huzza!

(*Exeunt.*)



## ACT II

SCENE I—*President's Mansion—Lincoln reading MSS.—Music—  
John Brown, in the distance.*

## LINCOLN

We want no commune here—want no secession neither—  
No John Brown marching on, nor squealing *Dixie*;  
Except it be to play them for a little sport—  
Key was a Southern man and born in Maryland,  
And his *Star Spangled Banner* will be played  
With *Hail Columbia*, till the day of doom.  
For golden songs descending to a nation,  
Make through all time her best inheritance;  
And the recreant wretch, who could relinquish them,  
So dear to his fathers, whether North or South,  
And in a corner, like a cricket chant,  
“*John Brown is marching on,*” or *Dixie*—  
O I have no patience with such men!  
So when the commune bawl, or Southern fool  
Sticks a cockade upon his fiery breast;  
I know the fitful storm must pass away;  
Impartial men, on either side, will lead  
The people and return ere long to union.  
So let the fools rip, a day is near at hand  
When reason can be seated on her throne,  
And this great union snatched from ruin,  
Our stars and stripes shall float along the sky  
Wherever the sun shines or waters roll!  
Secession is a thing most foul and pitiable,  
A kind of cross-eyed, ill-contrived abortive—

Ben Butler in another form; but uglier—  
 A blot upon the North, as well as on the South—  
 A rope of sand, disintegrated from the start—  
 The laughing-stock, and jest of all mankind!  
 Never were sane men so thoroughly misled!  
 As they who clamor for secession—  
 Whether in Massachusetts or in Carolina—  
 For Massachusetts first conceived the monster,  
 And her grim legislature gave it birth—  
 Jeff Davis took it to his arms, and now  
 The whole world trembles in its presence.  
 'Tis but the commune in another form—  
 States riding on the storms of human passion,  
 Poor John Brown marching on, and nothing else.

*(Enter a messenger, bearing dispatches—  
 Lincoln reads them.)*

Well, the Rebellion drags along, and though  
 Its back is broken, still its fiery fangs  
 Are dangerous as ever, and its rattling tail  
 Forewarns that they may “fight to the last ditch;”  
 And fight they will, if driven to despair—  
 If we insist on blotting out their States  
 And turning them to Provinces—if soldiers  
 Must be kept to garrison their homes;  
 And men like Butler give those soldiers leave,  
 For fancied insults, or a scornful look  
 To make their daughters women of the town.  
 By heavens! they’ll fight it out, and I would too.  
 Now some would burn and crucify the South,  
 Beechers and Brownlows, and a host of saints  
 All preaching love, to cut Confederate throats.  
 But I myself was born in old Kentucky,  
 And have a soft place in my heart for her.

My dear old mother sleeps among her hills,  
 My fathers too all sleep in Old Virginia,  
 And her greatest statesmen have been my friends,  
 But "by the eternal Gods," as Jackson said,  
 "I'd hang them high as Haman to preserve this Union."  
 Yet could we make an honorable peace  
 The South should have protection, and return  
 To join us in a great regenerated country.  
 Freedom to all inscribed upon our banner,  
 And in our hearts "forgiveness for the past."  
*"Malice to none; but charity for all."*  
 And when this tempest shall have passed away  
 The mystic chords of memory stretched  
 From every soldier's grave, to every heart  
 In this great land shall swell the pæan of our victory!  
*(Exit.)*

SCENE II—*President's grounds—Enter Dr. Mary Trotter in male attire—Beecher meeting her.*

DR. MARY

O Mr. Beecher! Mr. Beecher, how fortunate to  
 Meet you here. Come now, introduce me to the President.

BEECHER

Certainly—He'll be here in a moment —  
 Dr. you are looking remarkably well—  
 See, there he comes!

*(Lincoln approaches.)*

## BEECHER

Allow me to present you, Mr. President,  
Our great Surgeon, Dr. Mary Trotter.—

## LINCOLN

Indeed! I'm glad to meet you, Dr. Mary,  
So, Dr., you cut soldiers' legs off, eh? ha! ha! ha!  
But don't you feel queer, when you cut a man? ha! ha! ha!  
Take care, Dr., that you don't get your own leg broke.  
For then you'll have to send for Beecher.

## DR. MARY

No need of sending, he'll be sure to come,  
Like a good pastor—loving all his lambs!  
But, Mr. President, I came from Ford's,  
To ask your Cabinet to Booth's great play.  
Here are the invitations—ten in number.

*(Giving them.)*

Oh, he's an angel, sir—almost a God—  
And all the women of the town are crazy for him.

## LINCOLN

I hope you are not a woman of the town—

## DR. MARY

O yes I am, but hold to woman's rights—

## LINCOLN

Take care that you don't hold to something else,  
For Booth would make you change your politics,

And if you married him—one thing I know,  
 He'd have them breeches off, and make you wear a frock.  
 Good-bye!—Good-bye—ha! ha! ha!

DR. MARY

No, sir; I'll wear them to the bitter end—

(*Exit.*)

LINCOLN—(*laughing*)

Beecher, which is her bitter end?

BEECHER

Perhaps your excellence, she means her *latter* end,  
 A most important thing; for all must die—  
 The cares of State, the coronet and crown—  
 Uphevings of a mighty land like this  
 And of our little bosoms—all must sink  
 To rest, and be forgotten in the grave.  
 Then “the true inwardness” must all come out.  
 To me, to you—and all of us, that day  
 Approaches like a thief—“nest hiding” then—  
 Our loves and hates, and all our little schemes  
 Will leave us “on the ragged edge,” of time—  
 Each in his narrow bed and married to the worm!

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III—*Booth's room in Washington—Portraits on the wall  
 of the Booths, Beall, and Lilly.*

BOOTH

Richard was a villain “of the whole cloth;”

And sweet relenting nature never touched  
 A single chord in his abandoned bosom.  
 He slew alike the innocent and guilty,  
 To make their trunks his stepping-stones to power;  
 This I was never formed for, but by Heaven!—  
 As Curtius leaped into a gulf, so I,  
 To save my native land, would plunge  
 Into the seething cauldron of a nation's wrath—  
 Nor Heaven, nor earth nor hell could pluck me thence;  
 But ere one leaps into a gulf, perhaps—  
 'Twere well to write some record on the cliff,  
 That they who come hereafter may divine  
 What hopes he built upon, and why he fell.

*(Writes letter to Clark and leaves it on table.)*

Yes, in the fiery tempest that must rise,  
 Naught less than miracles could save me;  
 Lascivious Fortune then, to Judas turned,  
 May crack upon my cheeks; but I will hurl  
 Her kisses back to meet their swords and staves,  
 And fall at last, if fall I must,  
 Like Brutus, not sustained by Senators—  
 No! not like Brutus, with a host of friends,  
 Creeping behind the kisses of a Casca, no!  
 But like Niagara, all alone in power,  
 One patriot soul shall leap upon the gulf  
 And leave eternal rainbows where it plunged!  
 Not sixty Senators to vanquish Cæsar,  
 But one strong arm to prop a falling cause—  
 Like Brutus striking for the rights of man,  
 Perhaps like Brutus, on the plains of Phillippi,  
 Weltering in blood, despairing and abandoned,  
 Traduced, and scorned, and hated for the time  
 That Cæsar's armies parceled out the world;

Yet living on and honored by mankind;  
 So be't; and when the world forgets a Brutus  
 Then, but not till then, my fame shall die.  
 For I will live when yonder dome shall piecemeal fall,  
 When yonder trumpets to the judgment call,  
 And ruin writes the epitaph of all!

(*Enter Thornton Powel.*)

Why, Thornton Powel, Heavens! how came you here?  
 How pass their lines! What news, my boy?

POWEL

How pass their lines? I have a ready tongue,  
 Whose thirsty edge (*drawing bloody sword*) lapping the blood of  
 dogs  
 For three contentious nights, can answer you.  
 Challenged at every turn, pursued, hemmed in,  
 And fighting inch by inch, this, my best friend,  
 Procured our passage hither!

BOOTH

What from our army? What news, my boy?

POWEL

My grey-haired sire—God! can it be true!  
 Pursuit being vain, they sought my father's house,  
 And slew him, helpless, pleading for his life.  
 My sisters then, to save themselves from shame,  
 Lucretia's guiltless dagger seized and died;  
 I saw it not—yet see it standing there—  
 Yon blazing roof! the tears and blood that fell.  
 Freeze me with horror while the tale I tell.

## BOOTH

Horrible! most horrible! Oh, it was  
 A dark and damned—most infernal deed;  
 Yet they who perish now are Fortune's favorites,  
 Nursed in a quiet cell, protected, safe,  
 And mingling with the dust for which they died.  
 Unused to fawning, your Virginia blood  
 Could never crawl and creep as things do here.  
 Better to die and bid the world farewell,  
 To stride the withers of some windy blast,  
 And ride through lightnings to the gate of Heaven,  
 Than lick a master's hand for place and power.  
 O I do hate the creeping things called men—  
 And most those Southern men who skulk and cringe—  
 The smell of mules and negroes they delight in;  
 But powder scares them, and the villains crawl.  
 Take comfort then—cheer up—'twill all be well.  
 What from our army? What from Lee?  
 What of the truce at City Point?

## POWEL

All overtures for peace have been rejected,  
 And our bleeding army, stung to their wounds  
 By base conditions offered, flew to arms.  
 I fear that all is over—our base is cut.  
 And Sheridan goes raiding in the rear;  
 Lee struggles like a storm-tossed vessel stranded,  
 When every billow sweeps her groaning deck,  
 God only knows how long she'll weather it!

## BOOTH

Then shall we have another act to play!



Rome's Campus Martius, with her three conspirators,  
Shall take the stage in Washington. What think you?

POWEL

You speak in parables. Speak out,  
For I was always blunt—perhaps too frank.  
Speak out and show the bottom of your mind.

BOOTH

Richard the Third is on the boards to-night,  
And you shall learn the lesson while I play.

POWEL

Impossible, for I return to-night.

BOOTH

Whither?

POWEL

To my command.

BOOTH

Then wherefore did you come?

POWEL (*Pointing to Lilly's picture.*)

T' escort that lady.

BOOTH

What! Lilly Beall? and is she here?

## POWEL

At Madame Surratt's; but we have changed our names.  
Remember to call her Lilly Boyd; as for me,  
My name is Payne. Be sure to get it right,  
For should the bloodhounds scent my track  
They'd hang me for a spy.

## BOOTH

A halter would then take the place of Lilly's arms.  
O that I too could have so fair a gibbet!  
For one less beautiful might soon be mine!  
Say, why this risk, and wherefore did she come?

## PAYNE

Of course you know her brother has been captured?

## BOOTH

Lieutenant Beall? No, not a word; come, tell it me.

## PAYNE

Captured, beyond all doubt, and t' escort his sister  
I come on furlough; but return to-night,  
And you should see her to New York.  
Where she expects to find him.

## BOOTH

By Heaven! he's dearer to this love-lack heart  
Than all my kindred—brothers, sisters—all,  
Except my mother and my murdered friends.  
Captured, you tell me? Where and when?

## PAYNE

Some telegrams we sent will soon be answered,  
 And you shall know to-night what prison holds him.  
 My time is short. Take Lilly to your charge;  
 I have a long and dangerous road before me.

*Going, shakes hands. "Good-night."*

BOOTH—(*Holding Powel confidingly.*)

Stay! stay!

When you return to camp remember this—  
 And should it happen, say "I told you so."—  
 Mark well my words, and pin them to your heart.  
 Defeats are sometimes turned to victory;  
 A single arm can sometimes turn the tide of war.  
 Now, I am hatching up a brand new play;  
 Be ready for your part; take *Brutus* if you like.

## POWEL

O! that of Brutus could be moulded now,  
 And leaping from the fiery furnace of this war,  
 Bring curses down upon his towering head,  
 From hypocrites and villains to the end of time!

## BOOTH

Say Powel, did you know that Brutus was a coward?

## POWEL

"He was the noblest Roman of them all."

## BOOTH

Aye, but his gizzard was so thin of grit

That Cassius was required to grind its purpose.  
 Else, had its blunted edge proved most abortive;  
 And to speak truly, mine needs whetting too;  
 But you could grind it, Powel, to such keenness  
 That it would rip the very womb of time,  
 And send great spirits thro' to Heaven—yea;  
 Could cleave the dome of yonder Capitol.  
 Come, tell me, Powel, do you see anything?  
 Look in my eye; behold your image there.

*(Holding his hand; puts the other arm around him.)*

Perhaps our hearts, now laid together thus,  
 And linked so long in boyhood's trustful love,  
 Like shells, by tyrant Neptune cast ashore—  
 Might whisper "vengeance"—"Brutus," "Cassius"—"Home."

POWEL—*(Releases himself.)*

Would God that I were Cassius, and could find  
 A Brutus bold enough to strike my palm!

BOOTH—*(Striking palms.)*

Soft! soft! Now, should our armies fail, do you  
 Mount as Virginius did, and ride to Rome—  
 The very valleys shouting to your horse's hoofs—  
 Virginia's valleys shouting back to Heaven:  
 "*Sic Semper Tyrannis!*" Rome is free!

POWEL

How shall I read in all this trash,  
 The purpose of your soul. Speak out.

BOOTH

What if the President were sent to Heaven,  
 Would France and England recognize the South?

## POWEL

If Cerberus should meet me in the way,  
 I'd off with both his heads, while you forsooth,  
 Would decollate but one, to make the dog more hideous.

## BOOTH

No dread of law? No qualms of conscience, eh.

## POWEL

Conscience and law? Yes, these shall point the way,  
 As taught us by the statesmen of our day.  
 "A higher law" has lately been proclaimed,  
 As better far that what our fathers framed;  
 Seward proclaimed it; Lincoln holds it good,  
 To fill the world with misery and blood.  
 "That higher law" deprived us of the slaves  
 Our fathers purchased from the canting knaves,  
 Because forsooth we would not wear the chain  
 Of tariffs levied only for their gain.  
 They crushed State-rights, to make that chain secure,  
 Then gave to Federal power what States possessed before,  
 And having numbers—Vandals from afar—  
 "Cried havoc and let slip the dogs of war."  
 Down came their armies, and the fiends accursed  
 Our homes invaded with infernal lust.  
 From blazing roofs our helpless women driven,  
 Made suicide their last appeal to Heaven,  
 Imploring God, yet tearing wide their wounds,  
 At sight of which o'er sickened nature swoons.  
 All this and more the conscience justifies,  
 If we may trust their snivelling and their lies.  
 That "*Higher Law*" a mask for crime,

To suit the pious knavery of our time,  
 Command me then, and if our armies fail,  
 Prepare your play, and put me in the cast,  
 For I will fight, and fight them to the last.

(*Exit.*)

BOOTH

His heart was gentle as his love for Lilly,  
 Ere this unnatural war had tongued its wounds;  
 And yet to the tiger's fierceness could it rise  
 Where o'ertopping insolence presumed too far,  
 I well remember how he struck a giant once,  
 For giving insults to a helpless woman,  
 First with his hand; but drawing then his sword,  
 He clove the villain to his buttocks.  
 With three such men, knit firmly to my soul,  
 This drama could be played; but without such  
 'Twould drag upon the stage, and prove abortive.  
 Yet every actor cannot be a star,  
 And I must cast this piece for humbler stock.

(*Knocks. Enter Herold, dressed gaily with flowers.*)

HEROLD

They say that we are wondrously alike.  
 "Now is the winter of our discontent  
 Made glorious summer by the sun of York"—

BOOTH

Come, butterfly, if I should blow a candle out  
 Could you blow out another?  
 Tell Atzerodt to come in here.

(*Exit Herold.*)

This shallow boy will ape me to the last;  
 And like the monkey, shaving as his master,  
 The poor thing, ere long, may vent his windpipe.  
 Vain of my friendship, he would die to serve me,  
 While Atzerodt, for money, would encounter h-ll;  
 And yet I scarcely fancy thus with murders  
 To conspire. What is conscience after all?  
 Perhaps the ghost of early training throws  
 Its shadow on the path of desperate deeds,  
 Or creeps behind to hold the elbow back.  
 O coward conscience, trembling at a nightmare!  
 Poor spaniel, pawing at thy master's door!  
 Vile shadow, cast by some obtrusive light—  
 Ah, yes, a light! and that is what we dread—  
 A light more piercing than th' unpupiled eye  
 Of day—burning like phosphorus in bones—  
 Unseen and covered by the womb of darkness,  
 Yet giving keenness to the stings of memory,  
 And penetrating every chamber of the soul,  
 Let him who boasts his freedom bawl with fools;  
 But all of us are slaves and cowards from the start!

*(Enter Herold and Atzerodt—Booth abstracted.)*

ATZERODT

Vell Master Booth, vy did you send for me?

BOOTH

Not now, not now, eh; some other time will do.  
 For I, eh, am going; but both of you, eh, remember  
 I'll need your services some other time—  
 Yours, Atzerodt, for money—Herold, yours  
 For love. Both meet me here to-morrow night.



ATZERODT

Vell, de best time for anyting is now.

BOOTH

No, no; not now; some other time; some other time.

ATZERODT

Vell, shentlemens, mit money you can buy me,  
For I can cut dem throats as good as any man.

BOOTH

Why do you speak of cutting throats?

HEROLD

He takes us both for murderers.

ATZERODT

Yes, shentlemens, I listened mit de key-hole  
Ven you and Payne vas fightin' fur de last;  
Mine Got, I knows it all—give me de monish,  
Tells me vat fur do—gives me de knife,  
An' tells me who, fur dead mens tells no tales.

BOOTH

Begone, base cut-throat. Go! begone, begone!

(*Aside.*)

O how the villain freezes up my blood.

ATZERODT—*Going*

Vell, you sent fur me, and I can go;

But if I tells de policeman, vat fur den?  
 And Dr. Mary Trotter—vat for her?  
 She listens mit de key-hole, too! ha, ha;  
 Vat if she tell de President! vot den!  
 Sometings, you bet I don't likes pretty vell.

(*Going.*)

BOOTH

Stay, stay; my blood was frozen by your villainy;  
 But meet me, in the green-room, when the play  
 Shall warm it. Then will I cast your several parts.

(*Exit H. and A. As they go out John Brown rises with serpents over Booth's head. Booth looking at his watch.*)

'Tis just an hour ere the play begins;  
 But *Richard* shall be aped as ne'er before on earth.  
 For I will fit the deep intents of his dark soul  
 So nicely to mine own, that all shall cry  
 "'Tis he! 'tis he!" My father's ghost once more.  
 Shall put the buskin on—his father's too,  
 Shall stride the stage, and fill my soul  
 With all the fiery vengeance of our race.

(*Enter Dr. Mary Trotter.*)

What, again obtruding! Woman, go, go,  
 Take back your letter with its sickening vows—  
 Its baby-puking of immodest love.

DR. MARY—(*Snatching it.*)

Then give it me, and learn that woman's wrath  
 Hath ten-fold fury for her love.

(*Reads aside.*)

Mary E. Surratt, aha!—a pretty thing to love!

(*Aside, reads.*)

Remember your promise to write or come early;  
 John will be off to Richmond in the morning.  
 Aha! From home. The widow there?

*(To Booth.)*

And you to spurn me for a wrinkled hag!  
 The strumpet; I'll tear her very eyes out;  
 The Rebel wench; I'll hang her on a gibbet,  
 And you shall dangle by your lady love.  
 The hag! I'll give you both a swinging hammock  
 For your marriage bed! I'll—I'll—

BOOTH

I cannot bear your costume, and your face  
 Pecks like a hawk, into my very soul.  
 Whether man or woman, whate'er thou art,  
 Monster—I cannot brook your presence—go!

DR. MARY

Now mark me, Traitor, I will have your heart.  
 Since beauty cannot win it, fury can;  
 For I will clutch it in these polycarpal bones,  
 And hurl it down, and stamp it in the dust,  
 Or snatch it on my cane, and swing it high,  
 Then will I hang it in the marketplace,  
 To be pecked at by hawks, and vultures tamed  
 To loyal citizens, since men have turned to beasts.  
 Go, Traitor; scheme with Atzerodt and Payne;  
 But I will put detectives on your track.  
 Ha! ha! I'll have your heart, ha! ha! ha!  
 And her's—her eyes—her heart—her neck with yours.  
 Ha! ha! ha! ha!

*(Exit.)*

## BOOTH

Poor double-sexed, and most unnatural thing—  
 Essence of Yankee impudence and guile;  
 I'll play my part so boldly, and with art  
 So like to Tarquin Brutus, that your charge  
 Shall fly to chaff. A pretty thing to love!  
 Crow-footed Time now clawing at her temples;  
 The shadow of his wing upon her cheek,  
 And his black beak bent down between her eyes—  
 That forkéd costume, too. O hideous!  
 But I am wasting gaslight on too poor a thing.

*(Turns off the gas.)*

*Richard* now waits to don me with his hump,  
 To breath his fiery vengeance in my soul,  
 And I will lead his ghastly crowd to crimes  
 Unaudited in these most Christian times;  
 When Tyrants, in the gorgon mask of law,  
 Our kindred slay, to hold the world in awe,  
 We, too—without a mask—on Freedom's heights  
 Will strike them down, and perish with our rights!

*(Exit Booth.)*

SCENE IV—*Booth's Room—Beall's and Lilly's portraits on the wall—Enter Conger and Baker, detectives.*

## BAKER

Are you quite sure that this is his room?

## CONGER

No, not sure.

..

BAKER

Well, I am sure of one thing.

CONGER

What's that?

BAKER

Why, that we detectives might be shot  
As well as any other men.

CONGER

And Booth is a dead shot with a pistol.

BAKER

Let's be sure—strike a light.

CONGER

O no danger—his play won't be out for two hours yet. He plays  
Richard the Third to-night; and that's a long play. Besides,  
Dr. Mary brought us to the door, and of course she knows his  
room.

*(Striking a light.)*

Yes, no mistake, this is it.

BAKER

How do you know:

CONGER

That's his picture there, and there's the picture of Lieut. Beall.

And that's Beall's sister, the girl we saw at Madame Surratt's—Now be quick; this is his room; let's go through it.

*(Pulling open the table drawer.)*

BAKER

Hold on; these pictures might give some clue. Tell me again. Who is this Beall?

CONGER

Why, he's the fellow they captured raiding on St. Albans. A captain of artillery. First with Stonewall Jackson—now a lieutenant in the Confederate Navy.

BAKER

Lieutenant Beall, you say? The same our dispatches spoke of?

CONGER

The very same—condemned to be shot or hanged next Friday. That's his sister. Both infernal rebels.

BAKER

But tell me—what of this Booth?

CONGER

Why, he's the great actor.

BAKER

Fool! I know that; but what about his antecedents. You can't shadow a man properly till you know all about him.

## CONGER

His forefathers, for generations past,  
 Have been the greatest actors on the stage.  
 Descended from the Jews, they still inherit  
 Those gifts of genius, energy and thrift  
 Which make Judea's name a proverb thro' the world!  
 And notwithstanding England's cruel prejudice,  
 She cradles them in old Westminster Abbey.  
 His father was a wonder on the stage—  
 And J. Wilkes Booth inherits all his genius.

## BAKER

What kin is he to Edwin Booth?

## CONGER

I'll take that back, for Edwin is his brother;  
 And both stars of the first magnitude.  
 The glory of our stage.

## BAKER

O I know Edwin Booth, and he knows me;  
 But I always took him for an Englishman.

## CONGER

No, not he; they're all to the manor born;  
 All born in Maryland. Their mother still  
 Presides in the old homestead and they have  
 Sisters, and another brilliant brother, named—  
 I think his name is Junius Brutus Booth—  
 And, on their mother's side, they claim affinities  
 With General Lee—the Powels, Bealls and Madisons—  
 All families of great note in old Virginia—  
 But Edwin is a Union man.



## BAKER

Now, I see it all—be quick.

Let's go through the papers.

*(They rummage in drawers, and scatter letters on floor—  
Baker at bureau, and Conger reads letters at table.)*

Here are a thousand letters from the women.

## CONGER

Yes, they are all crazy for him, ha! ha! ha!

Hear this. Ha! ha! ha! ha! *Reads.*

"I have read of Gods in history, but never saw one till you played last night." ha! ha! ha!

"Let me but bow down and kiss your footprints

They make the very ground burn with glory.

Then spurn me, if you can. This will be my last letter. If you should not answer it, I will call at your hotel this evening, to demand it." Ha! ha! ha!

## BAKER

*(Reading letter left on table, during Conger's reading.)*

I knew it! Hell's to pay!

*(Reads:)* "To J. S. Clark, Theatrical Manager, Philadelphia."

## CONGER

Clark is his brother-in-law.

BAKER *(Reads.)*

"Dear Clark, our once bright stripes look like bloody gashes on the face of Heaven." ;

## CONGER

That sounds like craziness.

BAKER (*Reading on.*)

“I know how foolish I shall be deemed for taking such a step as this, where on one side I have many friends, and everything to make me happy, where my profession alone has gained me an income of more than \$20,000 a year, and where my personal ambition in my profession has such a great field of labor. On the other hand, the South has never bestowed upon me one kind word—a place where now I have no friends, except beneath the sod, a place where I must either become a private soldier or a beggar. To give up all the former for the latter, besides my mother and sisters, whom I love so dearly, (although they differ from me so widely in opinion) seems insane; but God is my judge. For be my motive good or bad, of one thing I am sure, *the lasting condemnation of the North*. I love peace more than life. Have loved the Union beyond expression. For four years have I waited, hoped, prayed for the dark clouds to break and for a restoration of our former sunshine. To wait longer would be a crime. All hope for peace is dead. My prayers have proved as idle as my hopes. God’s will be done. I go to see and share the bitter end.”\*

CONGER

You can’t make anything out of that.

BAKER

I can’t, eh?

CONGER

No, he talks the same way to Lincoln himself.

\* This letter is preserved in Townsend’s letters to the *New York Sun*.

BAKER

Then Lincoln's a fool—that's all.

*(Exeunt. Enter Miss Agnes Booth.)*

AGNES BOOTH

Alas! this news falls heavily. My brother  
Almost sank beneath it; and Lilly Beall—  
Poor child! her moaning haunts me still.

*(Enter Edwin Booth.)*

Edwin, Edwin; where is Wilkes?

E. BOOTH

Not yet returned.

A. BOOTH

Not yet, Edwin? have you seen him since?

E. BOOTH

Only a moment, when he rushed out from the stage.  
This acting Richard always make him mad—  
More reckless than father, when he played his Brutus;  
But I never saw him half so wild before—  
And then to make the matter worse, that news  
From poor Lieutenant Beall affects him sorely.  
You must to bed, Agnes; I shall find him soon.

*(Exeunt.)*

*(Same scene—Booth's room—Enter Wilkes Booth—Glances  
at letters on the floor.)*

W. BOOTH

Well, the play is ended, and ended well.

Richard no longer now affects the stage,  
And vanished like a dream, are all his actors.  
Yet still on many a weary couch, where sleep  
Begets fantastic images, more real,  
They play the King, and those unhappy children—  
Their auditors, whose just applause inspired,  
Gone with them to mysterious and oblivious realms,  
Now play unconsciously their several parts—  
Mere mimicry of that eternal sleep,  
When the great closing scenes shall be adjusted,  
And the last curtain falls!  
O that I, too, could sleep! but I cannot.  
Thou, Lieutenant Beall, condemned to die.  
Thou canst not sleep, and why should I!  
But the current of war must have its course,  
And we poor pismires can only peep up  
At the spurs of our booted and brave masters.  
They call it liberty, and yet invade  
All that is sacred in the rights of man.  
Home is no longer private, and even love's whispers  
Are blown through trumpets to the giggling crowd.  
'Tis not the people of that mighty nation,  
For whom our fathers took Cornwallis' sword—  
On old Virginia's soil—and paid her blood.  
No; the people are ever friends to liberty;  
But base politicians—both North and South—  
Have driven us to this verge of ruin.  
Black weeds of mourning darken all the land;  
Millions of orphans, wailing thro' the night,  
Ask for their fathers, to be answered by a tear.  
And other millions, born to purple, now  
To poverty reduced, shiver with cold,  
While low-born insolence rides over them.

O my country! land of the free, farewell!  
 And thou, my Maryland, O my Maryland!  
 Thy hearthstones shattered and thy children slain—  
 Farewell! (*Turning to Beall's picture.*)  
 'Twas a fond impulse to return to thee,  
 Poor shadow of a thousand manly virtues!  
 Who would not stand abashed before such majesty!  
 And all the more in this room with its memories.  
 Aye; this chamber, graceless as that garden  
 Where the vile serpent coiled our mother Eve,  
 And slimed those flowers fresh from God's own hand—  
 This chamber, shiftless as a country stage,  
 Where revellers drank down the beaded hours,  
 Sparkling for better purposes, and where  
 Bright eyes and swimming forms, like th' unfrocked wind,  
 Unheralded and unattended, came and went.  
 O conscience, conscience; would that I could slay thee!  
 O for some talisman to conjure back  
 Thy clattering horses, unrelenting time!

(*Enter young girl richly attired.*)

What, so young, so fair, so beautiful!  
 Perhaps high-born and to some mother tied  
 By sunbeams, twisted from a father's brow.  
 Poor child! are these thy letters? Take them back.

(*Gives letters.*)

Go, go! Go to some cloister, child, and wed  
 With your imagination, Heaven's sweet Prince—  
 Not *Richard*—he's an arrant rake, a murderer.  
 Go throw thyself upon that mother's heart again,  
 And suck once more the flowers of Paradise;  
 But fly those painted men you see upon the stage.  
 We are not formed to love as angels love.  
 I have a sister, too—a mother—go, go!

Methought those letters came from some enthusiast  
 Tutored in the world's arts, and fit for me.  
 But now I quake to find thee on that crater;  
 Fly! or hell will suck thy childish feet.

*(Exit girl: Turning to Beall's picture.)*

O my brave friend! From thee I learned such lessons,  
 As high-born souls and chivalry impart.

*(Turning to Lilly's picture.)*

And thou, sweet angel, shining on my soul,  
 As lilies that sup up the ripples of the lake,  
 To shed their sweetness o'er its garnished waters,  
 So thou did'st drink some surface of my better self,  
 Unconscious of the horrid depths that lie beneath!  
 O I must fly this chamber with its memories.  
 I'll seek again the midnight stage  
 Which suits the purpose of my darkened soul—  
 The midnight stage! So like to death itself!  
 Perhaps my murdered friends might meet me there;  
 And other spirits, cutting through the curtain,  
 May gleam upon me like ten thousand swords.  
 Why not? They walked from Paradise to Calvary!  
 All ages—all great intellects beheld them.  
 Even Socrates, earth's prime Philosopher,  
 Had a familiar spirit; tho' fools laughed.  
 So hucksters in Jerusalem, and Athens,  
 Giggled in the temples, as now they do.  
 Devils have made assaults on human souls,  
 And shaped themselves to every form—  
 From writhing serpent, up to man's estate.  
 Angels in Gethsemane, 'tis said,  
 Appeared to Christ, and bore a cup to strengthen him.  
 The Devil, too, once hurled him high in air,  
 And placed him on a pinnacle of God's temple—

Thence to a lofty mountain, and arrayed  
 Before him all the kingdoms of the world!  
 Was every age made up of knaves and villains?  
 Or is our little span the only one  
 Unworthy visits from th' unseen world?  
 Or are we such peddlers, and base shopkeepers,  
 That like the meaner sort of olden time  
 We see no spirits—our noses stuck in samples.  
 No, no; mere hucksters never saw the stars—  
 Much less th' invisible host which they portend.  
 Stars are but shadows, cast by spirits close to God;  
 And such are serpents, too, by Devils formed.  
 Ah! yes, great goblins of the ancient globe  
 Do walk about this world; and I will meet them  
 On that same stage where *Richard* fell to-night—  
 Thither my steps! and you, ye spirits impalpable,  
 Scorned by the vulgar—known to lofty souls—  
 Ye ghosts angelic—pure and sanctified,  
 And you, ye devils, visible in darkness,  
 Rise at my bidding! follow to the midnight stage!  
 (*Exit. Enter John Brown's ghost.*)

## JOHN BROWN

Aye! follow thee we will—to hell begone,  
 And tell them there, “John Brown is marching on.” (*Exit.*)

SCENE V—*Scene in street, by gaslight—Conger and Baker in dumb show—Dr. Mary explaining a letter.*

## BAKER

I see nothing in that letter—nothing—  
 Madame Surratt could surely ask a friend  
 To visit her; and what more could you make of it?



## DR. MARY

True, the letter, taken by itself, is nothing—  
 But like the occipital and ginglemus bones,  
 It links together high and lower parts.  
 You shadow Booth, and leave his friends to me.  
 Herold and Atzerodt have rooms adjoining his;  
 And I'll consult the key-hole for their secrets,  
 Till the vile plot comes to view.

## BAKER

Good! Good! Eavesdrop the villains while they drink,  
 But when they bubble over, note it down.

## DR. MARY

O Captain, I've a glorious mission now;  
 Leave all to me; I'll send them up some beer,  
 And never plummet sank into the sea  
 As I will plunge into their seething souls.

## BAKER

A good beginning! but the fox must wait,  
 Often to watch his chickens at the gate.  
 Keep to your post, and make that key-hole hear  
 The very whispers of their foaming beer. *(Exeunt.)*

SCENE VI—*Atzerodt and Herold drinking—Atzerodt's room.*

## ATZERODT

Now dot is de best beer you ever drinks.  
 Dot's no bottled beer, but fresh from de keg—  
 Beer, you see, he gits flat no time at all—  
 De gas all fly away!

## HEROLD

Then drink before it flies.  
 I'm tight already; but you're a fine fellow,  
 And I'll do anything in the world for you.  
 I'll even drink your beer.

(*Enter Dr. Mary Trotter.*)

Why, Dr. Mary, as I live! Come, Come! ..  
 You spinster-bottle! let me fill you up.

## DR. MARY

I hate you men; your whiskey and tobacco;  
 But diagnosis argues each necessity;  
 And my diaphragm demands some beer.

## HEROLD

The world demands that you shall have a bier.

## DR. MARY

Give me a drink. (*Drinks.*)  
 My pleura argues pleurisy;  
 And my pneuma indicates pneumonia.  
 Have you read my book on bulls and horses yet?  
 It maps the conjugations of you men.

## HEROLD

I never read such books; they shock my piety.  
 Come drink again, you wormy shrimp;  
 There's nothing like good lager for the bots.  
 (*Offering bottle.*)  
 You bottle fly, with wings upon your hips!  
 No mouth, but this, would ever touch your lips.

DR. MARY

If bottle flies delight in carrion, I  
Should drink with you, whenever I am dry.

HEROLD

You centipede—you little rattlesnake!  
You pitchfork! Do you take me for a rake!

DR. MARY

If snakes have rattles in their tails—egad!  
Your rattles all are in your head.  
If I am forked, so are other folk.  
Then, where's the marrow of your joke?

HEROLD

You forked thing! Not see it! Why,  
When meadows kiss the dusky sky  
Pitchforks and rakes together lie.

*(She boxes him, and dances out, singing Shoo Fly.)*

Well, now to business. Where is Johnson's room.

ATZERODT

Just under us, and mit de shootin'—  
I drops de pistol here, den runs away.

*(Uncovers hole in the floor.)*

HEROLD

Great God! there's Johnson in his bed!

ATZERODT

Ja— he'sh been drunk all day—last night.

Sh! sh! sh! (*Listen and takes broom.*)

Vot if she listens mit de keyhole, now!

Sh! sh! sh! Vait! vait!

(*Slips to the door and opens suddenly—In falls Dr. Mary.*)

Mine God! Vot am dot? Vot is it?

Murder! Murder! Vot is it?

(*Beats Dr. Mary with a broom.*)

## ACT III

SCENE I—*Theatre*—*Enter John Brown's Ghost, and Devils with Snakes.*

## JOHN BROWN

He bade us follow, to the midnight stage—  
 And doing our own will, we humor his.  
 When first I crept into his soul at Arlington  
 He trembled like an aspen; and conceived  
 The poison, which I smeared upon his liver,  
 Pregnant now, with raw heads and bloody bones;  
 But as I urge him onward to the deed,  
 His soul recoils and plunges to and fro,  
 Like waters dashing to Ontario,  
 Just ere they reach Niagara's rock,  
 To clear it with an earthquake shock!  
 See! see! he comes! ye waters boil;  
 And Hell's red serpents 'round him coil.

*(Enter Booth.)*

## BOOTH

Their costumes all in base confusion,  
 Like leaves of Autumn, scattered here and there,  
 Proclaim the last act finished, and the players gone.  
 So we who wear our bodies for the cast  
 Must soon sling them down, or hang them up—  
 An ugly thought! and yet, a welcome one;  
 For every actor whether great or small—  
 Whether on this stage, or the big world

Contaminated by its loathsome fumes,  
 Bemoans some secret ill, and sighs for rest.  
 O that I too, could fly this fishless brook  
 And meet, on yonder green celestial hill,  
 My kindred, and the friends of youth.  
 Alas! how changed, at midnight, is the stage!  
 Its music, actors, beauty, gone so soon—  
 In one short hour! Ah, yes; the stage is sad,  
 When those we played with have all gone to rest!

*(John Brown holds a serpent over him.)*

God! can I stand it? My brain reels!  
 They will not—shall not shoot Lieutenant Beall!  
 My very heart-strings burst, and my mind wanders!  
 'Twill make me mad. They dare not shoot him!  
 Perhaps a song might soothe me. I'll try it. *(Sings.)*

“I feel like one who treads alone  
 Some banquet hall deserted,  
 Whose lights are gone, whose guests are flown,  
 And all but he departed.”

No, it soothes me not. O for some sweet minstrel!  
 Could Lilly but be here, with her sad harp—  
 The same she struck in yonder happy home  
 For her brave brother—doomed to die so soon,  
 Could she but bring that wilderness of song,  
 This evil spirit instantly would fly,  
 As Merodach from Saul, when David played.

JOHN BROWN *(Aside)*

Tell Merodach to come in here. *(Laughs.)*  
*(Booth holds his head, as in agony, sitting.)*

## BOOTH

'Twere better far to spare the poor fool's life—  
 For after all, he's not the worst of men.  
 In sooth he's a good man, and has a kind heart;  
 But good is as good doth; and not doing well—  
 Gives the lie to simulation and punches  
 In its teeth. I'll try his goodness for a pardon;  
 And if he leave Lieutenant Beall to perish,  
 This dagger then shall probe his rottenness,  
 And let its filth flow, to knock men's noses up—  
 Tho' all the hypocrites from Hell shout murder! *(Exit.)*

## BROWN

Still, on the dreadful brink, his soul  
 Recoils—too cowardly to plunge;  
 Next he'll be praying—then farewell  
 To all my conjurations. See, he comes again.  
*(Enter Merodach—a serpent with baboon's head.)*  
 Go Merodach, and climb to his imagination—  
 Climb to its very heights, and coil about them,  
 Lashing with fiery tail each lofty peak,  
 And from its pinnacles spit fire to heaven. *(Enter Booth.)*

## BOOTH

I'll try another song from poor Tom Moore. *(Sings.)*  
 "When true hearts lie withered,  
 And fond ones are flown;  
 O who would inhabit  
 This bleak world alone."

Then dearest of angels—*(Kneels—Devils fly—Snakes run off.)*



No longer delay!  
 Come spread your bright pinions,  
 And bear me away! (*Rising.*)  
 Who knows but that one single prayer  
 Might throw all Hell into confusion!  
 But was it prayer! or Tom Moore's spirit  
 Falling on my heart! 'Tis the poet's gift,  
 To weave mysterious measures for the soul;  
 And make calamity a cup of consolation.  
 Perhaps this was all; and yet I do feel  
 As though a serpent had uncoiled my heart,  
 And dropped back to Hell.  
 I'd pray again, but prayers are mere wind—  
 The big winds only bump about the world;  
 Then why should smaller ones puff up to Heaven!  
 (*Angels vanish and devils steal back exulting.*)

No—I'll wrestle with these devils all alone.  
 "Go, tell your masters of Corioli  
 That, like an eagle in a *dove cote*,  
 I fluttered your Volscians. Alone I did it!"  
 (*Enter Conger on balcony, unseen by Booth.*)

Poor Lilly! when that message came to-night—  
 All tears and agony—she fell upon my knees,  
 Clung to her Prince, and bathed his robes in tears.  
 O that the Prince could save him! Yes, sweet Lilly,  
 Fairest flower of the field! to die for him  
 Would lead ambition to a nobler stage,  
 And make a tragedy to suit me well!  
 She reminds me of the "Last Rose of Summer"—  
 For other sisters blossomed in that garden then,  
 When Beall was radiant as the noon-day sun,  
 And gave those blossoms half their beauty.  
 I'll sing that song for her sake. (*Sings.*)

“Thus kindly I scatter thy leaves o’er the bed,  
Where thy mates of the garden lie scentless and dead.”

By heavens! I’ll scatter the leaves o’er *his* bed!  
’Twould be a charity to send her with him,  
And nothing could please the poor child now.  
(*Drawing dagger.*)—I’d send her sweet spirit to the skies,  
And lay her lily form upon his grave—  
Then would I slay their enemies, and follow them  
To play this tragedy on some mysterious stage!  
Who goes there? I saw them passing—all in red—  
Lincoln and Johnson; Seward and his crew.  
Now they climb up the masts, like monkeys—  
Red jackets on them—red caps too, ha! ha! ha!  
*(Clasping his head.)*

O that this too billowy brain unheaving  
Would let the ships down that prance upon ’t!  
Their giddy masts are tickling the big clouds,  
To make them laugh loud thunder, and poor Lincoln  
Tells anecdotes to the man i’ the moon.  
*(Conger gives great attention.)*

Good natured soul, I’ll help him up higher,  
To ride on Pegasus, or Capricorn thro’ Heaven.  
Give us your foot, boy, bounce! Away he flies! ha! ha! ha!

#### CONGER

Mad! Mad as a March hare!

#### BOOTH

And now, if I know myself, the king trembled.  
How he leaped down from his lofty throne

When those players probed him to the quick.  
*Laughs.* , "How did the galled jade wince!" ha! ha! ha!  
 Yes, the rulers of this most wicked world,  
 Tho' riding on the heads of groaning millions,  
 Are tenfold weaker than a coward's knees,  
 While justice, even when hanging on a cross,  
 Can shake the universe.  
 But was it *Hamlet*, or *King Lear* we played?  
 Upon my soul, I do forget what play was acted—  
 Or was it *Richard*, shouting to the clouds,  
 "A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!"  
 And was it real? or a mimic scene?  
 Waits the buskin, with its pompous lie?  
 Or was it what I seemed to be—a King?  
 Or only Booth descended from Westminster,  
 Where now in Poet's Corner sleep my fathers!  
 Where Shakespeare twirls his small moustache and smiles,  
 When th' elder Booth, at midnight plays again,  
 To Sheridan and Burke, and rare old Ben—  
 Moving sometimes as Brutus on the stage,  
 And raising such a tempest in his wrath  
 That the Ghosts all tremble, and their great kings  
 Run back, like mice, into their crypts.  
 Ha! ha! how I would like to see them run—  
 Those blind old mice, the Kings of England! ha! ha!  
 No, no; I am not Booth—"Twas all a dream—  
 And yet it must be so—for never did *King Lear*  
 Eat oysters with Lieutenant Beall,  
 As I did often at Delmonico's—  
 Sometimes at Harvey's, on the Avenue.  
 And must he die so soon?—he, my best friend!  
 The lightning rushed to tell me of his fate!  
 And fainted—zig-zig marks upon her cheek.

## CONGER

He needs a doctor more than a detective,  
I'll try to find his brother Edwin.

(*Exit.*)

## BOOTH

God! and must he stand alone!  
His brave arms defiant, folded on his breast!  
No, he shall have an escort. Yes, brave Prince!  
*King Lear* is all deserted by his court;  
The tempest breaks and cracks upon his cheek—  
“Only fifty attendants for a King!”  
But thou shall have an escort. I will send  
The whole Cabinet; who took part against me  
Here to-night, with those ungrateful daughters—  
Lincoln and Johnson, Seward—all; I saw them.  
Laughing with those devils—black, and blue, and red—  
Base plebeians, tricked wi' power, to mock a King!  
Ha! ha! (*Picks up Richard's crown, puts it on.*)  
King Lear shall wear his power again,  
And his sceptre for the moment hidden thus (*Draws dagger.*)  
Shall spring upon them, like the venom'd snake,  
Whose hissing tongue and horny rattles shake  
Such notes of war, that all the world shall quake. (*Exit.*)

(*Enter John Brown and Devils, burning brimstone in a cauldron—all singing.*)

Stir the brimstone; stir it well—  
We brought it from the pits of Hell!  
Stir the brimstone, let him smell  
Stir the brimstone, stir the snake,  
The price of blood—the stink of Hell!  
We brought him from the Stygian lake.  
Stir his rattles, let him shake  
Such notes of war, that all the world shall quake!

BOOTH (*Behind scenes*)

Such notes of war, that all the world shall quake!

BROWN (*Last in procession*)

See him standing there,  
The picture of despair;  
How his eyeballs glare!  
Then, do your duty well.  
And drag him down to Hell—  
Drag him down, all red with blood,  
Then plunge him in the Stygian flood,  
And let not mercy shed a tear,  
For the blood-stained murderer!

(*Enter Edwin Booth.*)

E. BOOTH

Surely 'twas his voice! Wilkie, brother, speak!  
No, 'twas but the loud wind, too fondly echoed  
From a brother's heart, and coined into his accents.  
Weird, unearthly sounds, that seemed to mock him!

(*Enter Baker.*)

Hello, Baker! why, my brave boy,  
You play the fishmonger splendidly.  
But why do you detectives follow me?  
You know that I am loyal.

BAKER

Yes, that is so; we know that you are loyal,  
But your brother either plays fantastic tricks  
From madness, or from hatching deep designs.  
Come, Booth; can you account for his strange conduct?

## E. BOOTH

Well, 'tis no easy matter to explain,  
 But listen and you'll get, at least, a glimpse.  
 'Tis the sad fate of actors, when o'er wrought—  
 Especially in tragedy—that losing the helm,  
 And staggering on the deck, like sailors  
 When a ship goes down, they drink too deeply!  
 Poor fellow! he can't last long at this rate.  
 When finishing his part to-night—his eyes  
 Did glow like two great balls of fire.  
 Even his sister stood amazed,  
 And his best friends fled from him.

## BAKER

But does acting make a man disloyal?  
 Or does it put him on the scent of blood?

## E. BOOTH

Listen, and you may partly understand:  
 'Tis a lonely life that actors lead—  
 Too often from society excluded  
 Like birds of evil omen, by the sea,  
 They seem to meditate some tragic act;  
 Or more like gas-pipes, waiting for the darkness,  
 Their very nature takes a hue of sadness.  
 Their disappointments too, are manifold,  
 And like those other birds, that follow ships,  
 Players, upheld on agile wings of genius,  
 Diversions render to an idle crew,  
 For tossing them a few crumbs.  
 And yet in this my brother was most fortunate,  
 Clearing, in one year, twenty thousand dollars;  
 Then coining ten for one by speculation.

(*Enter Valco.*)

VALCO

I have been to his room—he had not yet returned.

E. BOOTH (*aside*)

Go quick, Valco—put him on his guard—  
 Detectives now are on his track—  
 Warn him of the danger—I will hold them here.

BAKER

Well, I must go—you can't explain him—eh?

E. BOOTH (*Taking his buttonhole, confidently*)

Stay for a moment; I can soon explain.  
 Yes, he acquired suddenly a large fortune;  
 And yet it is the saddest thing of all,  
 That actors, like humming birds on flowers feeding,  
 Subsist upon imagination's marrow,  
 Whose subtle essence so can change the brain,  
 That truth and falsehood, in its conformation,  
 Play, for awhile, bopeep—then bed together.  
 Conspiracies and lusts and stooping murder  
 Would thence be born, but for our pride and breeding—  
 Or to speak more properly, but for grace  
 Which Heaven supplies, to them who need it most.

BAKER (*Pulling away.*)

Well, all of that to me, Booth  
 Is just about as clear as mud.

E. BOOTH (*Clinging to his buttonhole.*)

Would you but listen, I could well explain him;  
 For th' imagination, like an angel,  
 Leaps from the sky all redolent of incense,  
 But our perversity of will doth taint it—



And low born Lust, upon his belly creeping,  
 Can dream of angels, and would coil them to his scales—  
 All crimes are cradled in th' imagination;  
 And hence the great actor plays a dangerous *rôle*.

BAKER

Damn'd if I don't believe you are all crazy.

E. BOOTH

To be above the common sort of men  
 Is after all but Midas played upon the stage;  
 The Gods might turn our very brains to gold,  
 But who would eat them? Do swine munch pearls?  
 Festus, or Agrippa—I forget which—  
 But one of them—called Paul a madman.  
 Now listen, for I'm coming to the point,  
 And will tell my brother's secret, if you'll keep it.

BAKER

Yes, I'll keep anything; but d——n it!  
 Tell me in plain language.

E. BOOTH

I will; but recall what I have just said—  
 That the great actor plays a dangerous *rôle*;  
 For acting, would it move the soul, must lose  
 Its own conception and become reality.  
 'Tis a transient madness—*mikra mania*,  
 The Greeks believed; and when it drops the mask.  
 Or seems to pass away, still in the brain  
 Its eggs lie buried, to hatch the *cocatrice*.  
 That dangerous rôle long hath my brother played;  
 Nor can you judge him as a common man,



For he was ever Fancy's star-born child,  
 With agile step, to climb her flying wheels,  
 To snatch, with easy hand, the silken reins,  
 And guide her coursers thro' th' sky!

BAKER (*Pulling away and escaping.*)

I must go. I can't understand you. (*Exit.*)

E. BOOTH (*Looking after him.*)

No; and as little will this huckstering world.  
 The waywardness of genius, to the end of time!  
 Its greatest crimes are often but misfortunes;  
 And its petty follies like spots upon the sun!  
 And so the little things about us judge,  
 As children, gazing at a firefly—  
 To them more splendid than a distant star—  
 The one, an insect—one, a glorious world—  
 Sometimes a world in ruins flying from its sphere  
 To the great mass of men a gilded rag—  
 Imposture finery, fading at a touch—  
 Or smiling sycophants lipped up to power,  
 Mere coin-struck images for head and tail,  
 Or glittering equipages for some preposterous fool,  
 More glorious than the majesty of mind! (*Exit.*)

SCENE II—*Street in Washington, near Madame Surratt's—Enter  
 W. Booth cloaked.*

W. BOOTH

Yon weary stars, now fading one by one,  
 Dying, salute their Cæsar in the sky.  
 So these proud States, though sovereign from their birth,

Must yield to one great Federal power.  
 The very brutes have joined our brutish foes,  
 And seem to triumph as the stars go down.  
 Yon clamorous cock, impatient of the dawn,  
 Rings his shrill clarion to the morning air—  
 A proclamation to the feathered tribes  
 That Federal power is armed with spurs,  
 And the loud clapping of his stormy wings  
 Shuts to the door of mercy on his kind,  
 Or like some Beecher-publican, he smites  
 His breast, to wake yon harem from its slumbers—  
 All covetous of light, that they may run once more  
 Attentive to his cluck, albeit he gobbles down  
 The luscious worm, indifferent to their presence.  
 But they can gaze upon his cockish neck,  
 Admire his feathers glittering in the sun,  
 And stoop, obedient to the sultan's will!  
 Alas! poor States—the harem of a President!  
 Down, down vile thoughts, that mix my country's glory  
 With dunghills, and the meanest of mankind.  
 For day is breaking, and his gray Confederate robe  
 Moves like a ghost about the Capitol.  
 Yon twittering birds, impatient of the chain  
 Which tyrant sleep had woven thro' the night,  
 Dart forth exulting from each parapet.  
 Yon revelers, returning, heel the pavements,  
 And Echo, far away, from Arlington replies:  
 O glorious Arlington—tomb of a nation!  
 Thou head-board at my country's grave!  
 Ye marble-hearted columns, hear my vow!  
 My venerated sires, Virginia's sons!  
 And all ye great and venerable memories attest!

*(Enter Lilly behind, and laying her hand upon him.)*

Why, Lilly, you have cut my vow off just  
Above its shoulders—how came you here, child?

## LILLY

Not for an instant have I slept all night,  
But prayed incessantly for my poor brother;  
And when I heard your voice—those silvery tones—  
Which I depend upon to plead with Lincoln,  
No longer could I keep my bed, but ran down  
To urge you forward—O my brave friend,  
Plead for his life, lose not a single moment—  
Lincoln has a good heart, and you can move it.

## BOOTH

Just as you came, I had built up a vow;  
The purport was, that should he not pardon him  
I'd strike this dagger to his heart!           (*Draws dagger.*)

## LILLY

O terrible! May God forgive such madness!  
The President is not a private citizen,  
And acting in th' affairs of State, is but  
A servant of the people; for his heart—  
As I have just urged—is tender, and no woman  
Has kinder heart than Mr. Lincoln's.  
Yet Stanton and the Cabinet must be consulted;  
One factor cannot cancel all, and I  
Would rather see my brother perish  
By the laws of war, than that his friend  
Should stoop to such a purpose!

## BOOTH

'Tis well for women to talk thus, but I know

All the necessities of this occasion;  
 And shall bear myself as Brutus, when he rose  
 "Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate";  
 But you have not answered me—how came you here?

## LILLY

Madame Surratt, my friend, and this her home.  
 She gives her hospitality to all Confederates,  
 And indeed to any mortal in distress;  
 For her charity is boundless—how came *you* here?

## BOOTH

Perplexed all night, I wandered thro' the streets,  
 Acting sometimes *King Lear*, and sometimes *Richard*;  
 But that is past, with much quite horrible;  
 The dawn returns me to myself once more—  
 To this too real world, and your brave brother's fate.  
 Let me away to Lincoln—I'll demand his pardon.  
 (*Flourishing a dagger—Going.*)

## LILLY

O my brave friend, use all your eloquence,  
 But do not harm, for my poor brother's sake.  
 Remember, he dies to-morrow!

## BOOTH

If he must die to-morrow, mark my words:  
 Like some great Prince, from foreign lands attended,  
 He shall enter the courts of the Celestial King,  
 Followed by dignitaries, clad in purple—  
 Aye, in *purple* shall they stand before him!  
 (*Flourishing dagger—Exit—Enter Madame Surratt.*)

## M. SURRETT

O my pretty Lilly, what can all this mean?  
 It seemed to be your voice, you pretty sinner!  
 And whose, dear, were those heavier silvery chords,  
 That made night so musical?  
 You must come into the house, child, come, come in;  
 'Twill never do; for e'en in virtuous love  
 Proprieties must be observed, or scandal,  
 Quick and keen as vultures on the scent,  
 Will pluck the pupils of your reputation.  
 For lilies, child, are peerless in their purity;  
 And though their cheeks may turn up to the stars,  
 They dare not trust their pearly bosoms  
 Even to the glances of the moon.  
 For this St. Joseph bears them thro' the world,  
 While at his side the Virgin-mother stands—  
 Then remember your name, child, come, come in,  
 And let me plant my Lilly in her bed.

## LILLY

This mystery first to be explained:  
 All night long had I been praying for my brother,  
 When Booth, his bosom friend, came wandering by,  
 With wild soliloquies, and lured me thither.  
 Gone to besiege the President, he turned  
 Yon corner as you came.

## M. SURRETT

O my pretty Lilly, 'tis too sad!  
 What can be done? I'll go myself to Lincoln;  
 For well he knows me, and many favors, too,  
 Hath granted me—a Rebel—for her Rebel friends.  
 The poor, good-natured man—Heaven's blessings on him!

Once wept like a child, when I plead the cause  
Of a deserter, whose mother was my guest.

LILLY

A Union soldier? His mother your guest?

M. SURRATT

Start not, my child, for tho' this humble roof  
Gives heartier welcome to Confederate friends,  
Yet Union people come to me as well.  
For in the deeper sorrows of the human heart,  
No party spirit ever yet could move me.  
These hands would help the meanest thing that breathes;  
My tears would always flow, perhaps too foolishly,  
And some have mocked me for my childish heart.  
But I would rather die the vilest death  
Than spurn the poorest creatures from my door.  
At any rate, I plead for this deserter.  
At first, when I would justify the boy,  
And tried some learned precedent of law,  
His excellence put on a solemn air,  
And told an anecdote, in ridicule.  
At this I took another turn, and asked him thus:  
Do you remember, Mr. President, your mother?  
"Yes," he said, "and when I used to go to mill,  
Or plowed among the daisies in the field,  
I never saw a pretty flower but what  
I thought of her; and when I came from school or work  
She always met me with her blessing, saying:  
'Ab'ram, you'll one day be President!'"  
I seized the cue, and, aiming quick, exclaimed:  
Suppose that mother, kneeling at your feet, should say:  
"Spare the poor boy; O spare him for his mother's sake!"

At this I paused. The magistrate seemed struggling  
 With his filial heart. The strong man trembled  
 And I added: "Could you spurn your mother  
 From your feet? I am a mother, too, and know  
 A mother's heart!" At this the tears rushed down  
 His rugged face, and rising hastily, he said,  
 Placing meanwhile his hand upon his heart:  
 "Go tell his mother, madam, that *my* mother  
 Pleads for the boy—that I have pardoned him."

LILLY—(*Clasping Madame Surratt.*)

O madam, we have a loving mother, too,  
 Go plead for her—for me—for all of us,  
 And save my brother if you can!

M. SURRETT

Hark! hark! 'tis the Angelus. Now angels sing,  
 And I have learned thro' life, that God most honors  
 Th' enterprise that early honors Him.  
 'Tis the Angelus of St. Dominic. That island  
 Once a den of thieves, has risen thro' this Saint,  
 And thro' the sweet lives of his hooded monks,  
 To eminence in all good works—see, see!  
 With misty caps upon their venerable heads  
 Yon hills of Maryland salute the morn;  
 Let us salute the real sun, of whom  
 Yon fiery orb is but a passing shade.  
 Perhaps the shadow of his crown—we'll first  
 Prefer our suit before the King of Kings!

LILLY

Stay, stay! my rosary yet in bed,  
 Keeps company with tears upon it shed,



Where all night long I counted, one by one,  
 Those bloody drops in mem'ry of God's Son,  
 And paid to every bead a tear—ah, me!  
 From Bethlehem to Calvary!  
 Then wait one moment till my rosary brings  
 Its mournful tribute to the King of Kings! (*Exit.*)

## M. SURRETT

O charming child, those beads, methinks, in Heaven  
 Will plead upon thy cheek, O thou Immaculate!  
 Then Lincoln cannot halt, for thou didst give  
 Thy precious tears to mingle in the font  
 Which brought him to the gate of Paradise—  
 That font was water, and that water blood—  
 Gushing for all mankind!  
 What tho' ambition shattered his pure faith,  
 Still from its crevices do flowers spring,  
 And o'er the desert waste an influence fling.  
 He loves his mother, and her God-like faith;  
 It must come back to him, thro' life and death,  
 Nor can he spurn us, when we plead for one,  
 Baptized with him—our Holy Mother's son!  
 (*Enter Annie Surratt, who runs to her mother and kisses her.*)

## ANNIE

Kiss me again, sweet mother dear, O mother,  
 Such a dream as I had last night!  
 'Twas but a dream, but O so terrible!  
 Methought some soldiers dragged you to a cell,  
 Where vermin crawl'd about your precious form,  
 And all the while they mocked you for your faith  
 And loaded you with chains, and then, O God!  
 A dismal scaffold rose up to my view,



To which you tottered with a crucifix,  
 Oft kissing it and bathing with your tears.  
 Good Father Walters, too, was at your side,  
 Sustained your tottering step and comfort gave;  
 I shrieked and woke—kiss me again, mother!

## MRS. SURRETT

Our stomachs, over-gorged, may nightmares breed  
 More numerous than the mares of Thessaly;  
 Yet dreams, my child, do sometimes come to pass.  
 Prophets and priest have often been forewarned  
 While dreams ran up and down on Jacob's ladder—  
 Warned by a dream, St. Joseph took the child  
 And fled with him to Egypt, that same land  
 Where Joseph plucked from Pharaoh's mystic dream  
 The coming corn, to stay the direful famine.

## ANNIE

Ah, yes; and in that very dream, to Joseph given  
 A gibbet rose to view, such as I saw.

## M. SURRETT

The very mornings of this world are sad,  
 And come to us each day, subdued by tears,  
 As a sweet mother gazing on her prodigals.  
 The very crosses on our foreheads, child,  
 Draw blood—and hence those ashes to remind us—  
 Traced by our mother church—Ash Wednesday.  
 What wonder then, if you and I should suffer?  
 Suffering must come, but dreams can never bring them.

## ANNIE

O mother, what I saw was real;  
 No language could express it—it was real.

## M. SURRATT

More dreams, my child, than moons have been fulfilled;  
 But prophets only—such as Joseph was—  
 Can pluck the beard of coming Time, ere yet  
 The morning wets it with her tears, or hold  
 Him to account, while in the bosom of his God,  
 Cheer up—forget it all—'twas but a dream—  
 Some fairy fancy tickling with a straw,  
 And playing on the tendrils of your heart!  
 Why do you weep—ha! ha! ha—you little goose?  
 Go, get your wrapping; we are late for Mass

ANNIE—(*Going returns.*)

One moment more; I had another dream;  
 I thought that Lilly, pale and sad,  
 Stood moaning by the sea with J. Wilkes Booth.  
 Some soldiers fired, and her brother fell.  
 Booth clasped her in his arms, and all was silent;  
 Silent as death—the very air stood still.  
 Then a ghost rose—her brother's ghost.  
 Ah, me! it was a horrid sight—most horrible! (*Exit*)

## M. SURRATT

How strange! 'Tis more than strange! 'Tis wonderful!  
 For Lilly's history—to her unknown—  
 Her brother's, too—it seems prophetic.  
 The very winds are full of prophecies,  
 And God asserts himself in every breeze  
 As well as in the thunder storm;  
 But most of all, doth He delight to dwell  
 In human hearts by suffering sanctified!  
 Then give me sufferings and make this heart  
 An humble palace for the Prince of Peace!

(*Enter John Surratt, excited.*)

JOHN SURRETT

Well, mother, I have the whole plot complete.

M. SURRETT

Plot?

JOHN SURRETT

Yes, plot; no plot in the grave-yard, mother;  
 No plot to burn the Capitol; no villainy;  
 But simply, (if you please to call it so,)  
 A purpose, and a good one, too—a plan  
 To seize the President and take him South.

M. SURRETT

Oh! oh! for Heaven's sake, my son, desist!  
 'Twould cost your life. O listen to your mother!

JOHN SURRETT

'Twas ever thus. "Oh!" "oh!" "aw!" "aw!" whenever  
 Fortune beckons me, and bids me move.  
 You interpose. "Aw!" "oh!" what splendid reasoning!  
 Then, not convincing me, you run to church,  
 And thwart me by your prayers—they always balk me,  
 Drive me back, and turn my hopes to ashes!

M. SURRETT

Well, son, your mother may be a great fool;  
 But fools can sometimes give advice  
 And if ever my prayers prevailed in Heaven,  
 To thwart your purpose, Heaven is foolish, too.

JOHN SURRETT

I don't mean that. Our plan is simply this:

To seize the President, but not to harm him;  
 To take him prisoner of war, and save the South.  
 All has been arranged, and I must do my part,  
 But promise you this, mother, to shed no blood.  
 To seize the President and keep him safe;  
 And this I will do, cost what it may. (*Exit.*)

## M. SURRETT

A woman's reasoning, fruitless as her tears!  
 But not so vain, a weeping mother's prayers—  
 They must prevail, for God hath wedded here,  
 (*Hand on her heart.*) Eternal sentiments of love and prayer.  
 A mother's love, a mother's prayers were given,  
 To plead like angels at the Gate of Heaven. (*Exit.*)  
(*Enter Annie, Lilly, following her from the stage.*)

SCENE III—*President's Mansion—Lincoln alone—Reading.*

## LINCOLN

I would rather split rails in Illinois  
 For fifty cents a day than run this Government;  
 For who can tell, in these great waves of state,  
 As brand-new questions press him to the chin,  
 Where the next step might sink him?  
 Now when I practiced law out West,  
 The judge and jury always took a part;  
 But here, as President, I stand alone;  
 For Cabinets and counsellors are nothing.  
 Great causes were entrusted to me then—  
 Partly because I knew some law; but more,  
 (*As country people often have expressed it,*)  
 Because "old Abe could never be bought off."

But there's one bribe, and only one, that tempts me—  
 That's when a poor mother pleads with her tears;  
 For when I read the wrinkles of her face,  
 That book of books, telling its mournful tale,  
 My own dear mother rises from the ground.  
 By Heavens! She always turns me to a baby.  
 I was her first and only child, and do believe  
 I'll be a baby to the last! My mother's booby!  
 A President should be made of better grit;  
 And I was never fit for such an office.      (*Enter Page.*)

PAGE

That fisherman, your Excellence, whom  
 You saw last evening.

LINCOLN

Bring him in.      (*Enter Baker.*)

BAKER

Our office, please your Excellence, is delicate,  
 And you have charged us never to arrest  
 In doubtful cases. Now, one of your friends—  
 Whom we have often seen in these apartments—  
 Is either crazy or your direst foe.  
 We found him in the streets last night; a dagger  
 Oft he brandished in the air, and cursed you bitterly.  
 'Twas Booth, the actor, coming now to see you,  
 And I hastened up to put you on your guard.

LINCOLN

O don't mind him. He was only acting tragedy.  
 True, he's a Rebel, for he tells me so;  
 But men who talk loudly are never dangerous.

Now, when a Rebel tries to lead a crowd,  
 I slap the law upon him quick as lightning;  
 And that's the way I snatched Vallandingham;  
 But men like Booth—mere talkers—do no harm.  
 My motto from the first has been,  
 “*Malice to none, but charity for all.*”

## BAKER

Well, your Excellence, I've nothing more to say. (*Exit.*)

## LINCOLN

Well, certain it is that I have done my best.  
 In cases of doubt, I lean to mercy's side,  
 That when I come to die mercy may lean to me;  
 But when I know the law, laid down in precedent,  
 Or growing up from roots of truth and justice,  
 I'll execute it certain as a gun! (*Reading.*)  
 Now here's a brand-new case—Lieutenant Beall's.  
 Captured with letters of marque and reprisal,  
 He claims that they protect him in our lines,  
 But whether such letters hold on the lakes—  
 (Even if our lakes are great inland seas.)  
 As well as on the ocean—“*that is the question.*”  
 If on the lakes, then on the rivers, too;  
 If on the rivers, then within our lines;  
 And so a spy—covered up by foolscap—  
 Might claim exemption and demand exchange.  
(*Enter Booth—Lincoln shakes hands.*)  
 Why, Booth, can you afford to play all night,  
 And then get up before the chickens?

## BOOTH

Thus early do I come, your Excellence,

To plead for justice and Lieutenant Beall.  
 Glow-worms are not so plentiful of late,  
 And he who hopes to find them must rise early,  
 Resplendent do they sparkle on the robes of night,  
 But hide their radiance from the garish day;  
 So justice shines, perhaps, in other lands;  
 But in this land of light 'tis rarely found.  
 Preachers are plentiful, and piety a drug;  
 But even-handed justice, where is she?  
 Scarcer than glow worms, muffling up their faces!  
 Or, since you speak of chickens—"scarcer than hens' teeth;"  
 And yet she sometimes springs forth like a serpent.  
(*Clutching his dagger.*)

Th' avenging Nemesis may be at hand.  
 Rome had a Brutus—England a Cromwell—  
 Mark my words.

#### LINCOLN

Well, Booth, that reminds me of a coon-hunt  
 That I once had in Illinois. Jim Douglas—  
 Cousin, you know, to Stephe Douglas—not Fred;  
 O no, not Fred, I never hunt with him—  
 He clomb a tree, where we had treed the coon,  
 And crawled out on a limb to catch him.  
 What did the coon do, but make a dash at Douglas.  
 Under the limb he went, and the coon passed—  
 As Jim would say when he played poker.  
 Now, cypress limbs, you know, are very slick,  
 And Jim could never get on top again.  
 He tried hard to chin it—full thirty feet  
 Above the ground, ha! ha! ha!—and giving up at last cried out:  
 "Hold the dogs, Abe, for God's sake hold the dogs!"  
 But could I hold some twenty dogs or more?

So down he fell, and the dogs piled on him, ha! ha! ha!  
 Now, Booth, if I should pardon everybody,  
 The dogs would pile on me. But there's no coon  
 That ever scared me yet. I'll keep on top o' the limb.

BOOTH

O the hard-hearted villain! One argument—(*Clutches dagger.*)  
 And one only can reach him;  
 But that must be the last! (*To Lincoln.*)

Letters of marque and reprisal should protect him,  
 And, in the name of justice, I demand his pardon!

LINCOLN

'Pon my word I'm sorry for the young man;  
 But, Booth, you don't know what I have to contend with,  
 Nor my responsibilities.

BOOTH—(*Clutching dagger.*)

Then I suppose he dies to-morrow.

LINCOLN

Yes; for in my heart—true to this great country,  
 I can find no place for pardon.

BOOTH—(*Aside.*)

I'll try once more.  
 What if you yourself were on the scaffold.  
 Condemned unjustly to a cruel death—  
 Suppose—

LINCOLN

The fact is, if the sentence was unjust—



And I could see it, in that light, I'd pardon him—  
But, as you say in Hamlet—“*that is the question.*”

## BOOTH

Hear me once more. When I was playing *Richelieu*,  
You swore that I had taught you statesmanship;  
And when I played Pescara the Apostate,  
You promised me whatever I might ask.  
Beall is my bosom friend, and has a sister,  
Weeping—praying—almost dying of her grief,  
He stands between us, hinged upon this breast,  
And like the lintel of some fair palace door,  
She meets him ever, and her kisses bring—

LINCOLN—(*Interrupting him.*)

That kind of talk, Booth, always reminds me  
Of a small ear of corn, in a big shuck;  
And if you expect my lip to hang down like it,  
Then you mistake the stalk.  
Old Davy Crockett was the man for me.  
His motto was:  
“*Be sure you're right, then go ahead.*”  
I'll tell you an anecdote about old Davy:  
'Twas said, you know that he could grin a coon down  
From the tallest tree in the wild cat bottom;  
So, another chap, he tried to cry one down,  
But he didn't. Now, I'm like those coons,  
As long as I do right, they can't cry me down,  
No, nor grin me down neither. They may make faces;  
Call me baboon; old fool, or what they please;  
But, as my old mother used to say:  
Abram, do *right*, and the whole world can't hurt you!  
But Booth, as I said before—if I knew  
The sentence to be unjust, I'd pardon him.

BOOTH—(*Scornfully.*)

If you knew the sentence to be unjust?  
 Rather say, if I did know it to be just,  
 Then would I summon every man-of-war,  
 And every monitor that rides the wave—  
 That they should thunder to the clouds  
 And shake this continent, or save him!  
*Scornfully*—“If you knew the sentence to be unjust!”  
 Then know another sentence to be just!

(*Advances towards him with dagger clutched.*)

And learn that nature, sovereign from her birth,  
 And all her children, sovereign from *their* birth,  
 Disdain and spit upon an unjust government—  
 With thunder hath she clad the patriot's arm,  
 And mine—(*Advancing. Enter little Tad, kissing his father.*)

TAD

O Papa, I had a dreadful dream last night!  
 'Twas awful, awful! O 'twas awful!

BOOTH—(*Aside.*)

Angels and saints do walk about this world,  
 And take ten thousand forms, to shape our lives!  
 Men are but children, children in disguise—  
 We need our nurses, till we reach the skies. (*Exit.*)  
 (*Enter Madame Surratt and Lilly.*)

M. SURRETT

Behold the sister of Lieutenant Beall,  
 Condemned, your Excellence, to die to-morrow,  
 His poor old mother, too, is on her knees,  
 Imploring Heaven to bless your Excellence,  
 And spare her boy.

LILLY—(*Kneeling.*)

O spare my brother, good, kind sir.  
O spare him for his mother's sake;  
For mine! O spare him! spare him!

LINCOLN—(*Aside.*)

The very name of mother makes a child of me  
(*Wiping his eyes.*)

And I hate to look like a fool.  
Ladies you must excuse me for a moment.  
I'll—eh!—I'll, eh!— (*Madame Surratt falls at his feet.*)

M. SURRATT

Behold in me, good sir, the poor boy's mother—  
Your mother, too, will bless you from the skies!

LILLY

Pray don't leave us—say, good sir;  
Say, will you pardon him!—do kind sir,  
For me—my mother's—your mother's sake!

LINCOLN

I will—I pardon him—go tell his mother.

LILLY

Thanks! thanks! ten thousand thanks! May  
Heaven bless your Excellence!

LINCOLN

Go child, and be a good girl, for women—  
Say what you will about their weaknesses,  
Do leave, in sending out great armies to the world,

A something, in the heart of every man,  
 To which, as boatmen say out West!  
 " 'Twill do to tie to!"—ha! ha! ha!  
 And they know d——d well how to fix the ropes, ha! ha! (*Aside*)

*To Ladies.*

Now go home, and use your power with discretion;  
 For power you have, although you may not know it,  
 Yes; every home is but a miniature of State,  
 And woman there, tho' dressed in homespun checks,  
 Is God's own Angel, sent to guard the gate.  
 Ah, yes; I know, and well remember one—  
 My mother—more than all the world to me—  
 And tho' her destiny was obscure,  
 Her grave forgot—without a stone to mark  
 That lowly bed—yet still she rules the State—  
 Great armies do her bidding; and her mercy  
 Falls to-day on you, my child!  
 But ladies you'll excuse me now;  
 For I must write the pardon.

(*Exeunt, except Lincoln—Writes pardon.*)

Yes; woman's mission is indeed sublime,  
 Tho' self-approving man may thumb his pits,  
 And ape the peacock, when he spreads his tail,  
 Yet woman, less obtrusive, guides his feet;  
 For woman, at the cradle, rocks the world,  
 And plants with every lullaby, some germ  
 To ripen for the future man—his plow  
 To guide, to rule the Senate by his tongue,  
 Or plant on flaming battlements his banner;  
 'Tis hers to teach, in every sphere—her tears  
 Have won great battles, and her frown subdued  
 The mightiest Kings—while more than these,

Her smile lights up the ruins of a fallen world;  
 Her prayers, more potent still, can burst  
 The gates of Heaven, and climb the throne of God!  
 Patient in grief—in fortitude sublime,  
 When man becomes the weaker vessel and despairs,  
 She hooks him, from the billow, with her faith,  
 Puts back his drowning locks, and points him to the stars!  
 (*Enter Seward.*)

Seward, I wish I was out of this business.  
 I'd rather plow, split rails, or keep a doggerly—  
 Anything, by Heaven! is better than President.  
 Jeff Davis and his crew keep up this fight,  
 But I'd make peace to-morrow if I could.

SEWARD

Would you allow secession, Mr. President?

LINCOLN

No; I don't mean that—I'd sink every ship  
 That floats our flag upon the waves—  
 Bury our last army with its banners,  
 And then go down into the gulf myself,  
 Or save this Union!

SEWARD

What then is the trouble?

LINCOLN

These women bother me—sisters and mothers,  
 By Heavens! Seward, I can't see a woman cry.  
 Your heart is cold as ice; but mine wilts  
 Whenever I see a mother in distress. (*Wipes his eyes.*)

They have all been pleading here for that young Beall,  
And I have pardoned him.

SEWARD

Impossible! You cannot—*must not* pardon him.

LINCOLN—(*Handing pardon.*)

Well, there 'tis—I have pardoned him already.

Give it to Stanton—he will send it forward.

I take the responsibility.

(*Exit.*)

SEWARD

I, too, will take responsibility.

Your woman's heart would rend this Union thus.

(*Tears up pardon. Enter Wilkes Booth.*)

BOOTH

I come to thank his Excellence and you  
For your gracious pardon of Lieutenant Beall.  
It brings me back, once more, to happier thoughts,  
And stifles in my heart a dreadful purpose;  
For this one act of justice to my friend,  
Presages justice to my native land.  
Upon my soul, I thank ye both most heartily!

SEWARD

The pardon is revoked—I would not have it—  
And the felon dies to-morrow.

BOOTH

Villain, you lie! He is no felon.

(*Seizes Seward—Shaking him violently.*)

But a soldier, every inch—thou the felon—  
Your own sons felons, to be dragged, ere long,  
Before their country's bar for peculation—  
That George your model thief, and Fred  
Spawned from the same serpent. O I would tear you  
Limb from limb, to save my suffering friend—  
A man—a soldier—born to be your master—  
Cold-hearted villain go!

*(Hurls him off. Exeunt.)*

## ACT IV

SCENE I—*Scene near the Fort on Governor's Island, New York.*  
*Night—Thunder and Lightning. Enter Booth.*

Mysterious powers! whose lightning spurs drive on  
 Th' unsaddled winds—whose plumes of light touch Heaven  
 But vanish ere our tongues can bid ye halt!  
 If ever ye to mortals in distress stoop down—  
 To shipwrecked mariner, or to hearts more wrecked,  
 To bring them Heaven's pitying love, or covenants  
 From Hell, to make a compact for their souls;  
 Behold in me your vassal, thro' all time,  
 For this one benison—to burst yon gates  
 And guide me to the dungeon of my friend.

*(Enter John Brown's ghost.)*

## BROWN

That's a bargain; give us your bone, old boy;  
 Don't try that gate, but come along with me.  
 I know a sentinel—a poor, soft fool—  
 In love with a girl down South; just talk your nonsense  
 For awhile to him, and he'll let you pass.  
 But Yanks, you know, mean business when they trade.  
 Then swear by every sacred thing in Heaven,  
 To ratify this bargain for your soul.

## BOOTH

Aye, Heaven and earth I barter—lead me on! *(Exeunt.)*

SCENE II—*Sentinel pacing at door of prison.*



## SENTINEL

Halt!

## BOOTH

Soldier, I have a friend imprisoned here;  
He dies to-morrow, and I come to bear  
His dying message to his home.

## SOLDIER

My orders are most positive—you cannot.

BOOTH—(*Giving pocketbook.*)

Then this is yours—'tis all I have on earth;  
Checks, well endorsed, and on your greatest banks.  
'Twill make you rich and bless your friends!

## SOLDIER

No; not for all the money in New York.

## BOOTH

Soldier, have you a mother, brother, child?  
Hast any friend or home, wife or betrothed,  
To whom your soul, in death, would turn?

## SOLDIER

Nor wife, nor children, scarce a friend on earth;  
Perhaps one heart, but only one, regards me.  
That far away, and in the ruined South.  
My poor mother pined away and died,  
When I was wounded at Manassas Junction,  
Or rather died embracing me when I returned;  
And never, while life lasts, can I forget

A Rebel enemy, who passed me through their lines,  
T' embrace that mother on the bed of death.

BOOTH

Behold in me a pilgrim from that land  
Whose generous son was thus your friend!  
Dying, you say, she pressed you to her heart!  
To that same breast on which your cheek reclined,  
Dimpled and painted by the life she gave.  
Soldier, suppose that you were doomed to die,  
And that a comrade came the night before,  
To bear your dying message to that mother;  
Take this with all—a fortune in your grasp!

SOLDIER

Take back your purse—I would not have it—pass.  
This very night the watchword is "*Manassas!*" (*Walks off.*)

BOOTH

O generous nature, thou didst urge my prayer;  
And rugged hearts, whose adamantine walls  
Had scorned the thunder from a thousand battlements,  
Grow weak as infancy at thy sweet voice! (*Exit.*)

SCENE III—*Beall's Prison—Beall sleeping—Enter Booth.*

O generous nature, here we meet again,  
For thou doth soothe and hold him to thy heart;  
Sweet mother of us all, keep horrid dreams  
And the dread to come, far from his lonely pillow;  
O nerve him for the conflict; and his soul,  
Cast in thy noblest and most generous mould,  
O gently lead it to the sacrifice!  
No flowers to deck the victim's brow; but fame  
Shall hang her golden locks about his temples,



## BOOTH

Your sword, brave boy, surrendered to the foe,  
 Now leaves you quite defenceless—take this dagger!  
*(Throws cloak over him.)*

## BEALL

Why, Booth! how came you here? *(Embracing him.)*

## BOOTH

I come to take your place—have won the guard.  
 The password is “Manassas”—take this dagger, fly—  
 For I would kiss the bony cheeks of death,  
 To give you back once more to life and liberty.

## BEALL

*Et tu Brute!* And has it come to this?  
 Am I so poor—so fallen in your esteem!  
 What, skulk from death, and leave my friend to die?

## BOOTH

Forgive me—no—’tis only for a moment—fly!  
 Go meet your sister, weeping in yon cove.  
 Close to the rock, and nearest to the wave.  
 Be quick, and go, for you can soon return;  
 Her lantern rocks on yonder dancing boat,  
 To guide your feet and beckons you to come.

## BEALL

Ten thousand thanks, my good, brave friend!  
 That will I do—keep ward till my return,  
 And prove yourself a soldier at my post,  
 Once more liberty—to the fresh air and skies,

To thee sweet Lilly, for one parting word!  
One message to my home, then all farewell!

## BOOTH

The last of Paradise for him on earth!  
'Twas a great folly so to wound his soul,  
And yet, to take his place and bid them fire,  
Had been ambition's loftiest pinnacle—  
My heart's supreme delight. But let it pass,  
The future still is mine, and they shall know it,  
For I will strike them in their lecherous beds,  
Or midst their revelries and pleasures smiling;  
With all their sins full cankered to the green;  
To start a wrinkle on the nose of Hell!

SCENE IV—*On seashore—Lilly with lantern by a shed, and great rocks—Boat anchored.*

## LILLY

O I do tremble so! Perhaps those signs  
In Heaven and earth, which fright the chirping birds  
And moaning beasts, just ere an earthquake's shock  
Are given to human souls, before calamity!  
But let it come, earthquake, tempest, I  
Have cast in Heaven the anchor of my bark—  
In Heaven shall find it opened to a cross,  
There twined wi' flowers, and brighter than the sun!  
Yet, O he was so brave and manly beautiful!  
So far above the common sort of men;  
That when he passed, all hearts did give him reverence!  
Such gentleness and power in concert joined,  
Such majesty in one exalted mind—  
He seemed an angel, stooping to mankind!  
Heavens! joy! joy!—but do I dream?—'tis he, 'tis he!

(*Enter Lieutenant Beall—Flies to his arms, weeping.*)  
 But how is this? Your pardon was revoked! (*Kisses him.*)

## BEALL

Alas! no pardon granted me. I came,  
 Paroled in honor, by a generous friend,  
 To send a parting message to our home,  
 And first to her, my mother, O my mother!  
 Kiss me again. Tell her that I died a soldier.  
 O tell her, for her bruised heart's consolation,  
 That with all my waywardness no mortal sin  
 Was left unshriven on my parting soul;  
 That never did I shed one drop of blood  
 But in the fair and open field of war.  
 To my superiors have obedient been,  
 And condescending to the poorest soldier;  
 To prisoners, in my power, was always kind—  
 More gentle to the fallen foe than friends;  
 Surrendered when no valor could avail,  
 And died, at last, as she would have me die!  
 (*Taking locket from his neck.*)  
 This give to her whose precious name it bears,  
 And say that I will wear her image in my soul.  
 (*Kisses her, parting.*)  
 Farewell forever, love. (*Lilly swoons.*)  
 Farewell! Farewell! (*Exit.*)

LILLY—(*Recovering.*)

Gone, gone; O never to return; gone, gone!  
 Ye Heavens, let your loudest thunders peal!  
 In thunders, O ye saints—thou queen of Heaven,  
 O plead with God, that He may strike them down—  
 Plead that yon sun may never rise again,

Too glorious signal for a deed so foul!  
 Let darkness swallow Heaven and earth;  
 While Calvary groans again, and angels weep!  
*(Kneels. Enter Booth.)*

BOOTH

Come Lilly, we must hasten from this place.

LILLY

In such an hour as this, I dare not stir.  
 Down! Down upon your knees!

BOOTH

Your brother sends, by me, his last request;  
 'Tis that you hasten from this place.

LILLY

O tell me his sweet words—speak them again.

BOOTH—*(Aside.)*

Should she remain and hear the signal gun,  
 'Twould drive her to madness. Let me try once more!  
*(To Lilly.)*

My life is now at stake, and we must fly;  
 The baited dogs are on my track—come, come!  
*(Seizes her hand, when she snatches away, and runs up the rocks.)*

LILLY

See, see, the sun is rising!  
*Covers her eyes—Dead March in the distance—Long silence—  
 Signal gun fires—Booth supports her—Beall's ghost in  
 Confederate uniform—blood on his face.)*

LILLY—(*as Ophelia.*)

I knew that you would come to me again.  
 You pretty bloodhound! Come, come, catch the fox!  
 Foxes have holes, and birds have nests—ha! ha! ha!  
 And we poor Southern birds—come, let's fly.  
 The mocking-birds await us, and magnolias throw  
 Their censers up to Heaven—ha! ha! ha!  
 Those grand old priests, in temples of the Sun!  
 Come, come, my love, go home! go home! go home!  
 (*Weeps—Kneels to Beall—Booth weeping.*)  
 Don't stay from mamma, boy; home! home! home!

SCENE V—*Confederate Camp—Moonlight—Enter Beall's Ghost.*

GHOST

Once more my spirit walks Virginia's hills,  
 Once more thy voices, O my native land—  
 More musical than waves and winds salute me!  
 Ye warblers of the night—sweet mocking-birds  
 Long had I lost your melodies, unknown  
 To yonder frozen clime; but now we meet again;  
 Ye whippoorwills—my childhood's wonder, hail!  
 Sing on, O sing a requiem to the past.  
 Hail, hail, Confederate camp! Ye heroes hail!  
 My tentless comrades, sleeping on the ground;  
 Undaunted Lee! a falling nation's pride!  
 Confederate arms, still gleaming unsubdued,  
 My native land—ye hills and mountains hail! (*Exit.*)  
 (*Enter lame Confederate sentinel.*)

SENTINEL

I'd rather fight all day than keep this watch;  
 What if I fall asleep, they could but shoot me.



No, by Jupiter, I'll be a soldier to the last;  
 But my wound pains me; let me ride this log.  
 Who goes there! Halt! Halt! *(Straddles a log.)*

VOICE

Hello, Johnny Reb, will you give me some tobacco for a drink?

SENTINEL

Yes, if you'll tote fair—come in. *(Enter Union scout.)*

SCOUT

Do you fellows get anything to eat down here?

SENTINEL

Yes, plenty of it—where's your whiskey?

SCOUT

Here. *(Gives canteen, and sentinel drinks.)*

SENTINEL

That's what old Stonewall used to take from Banks.  
 Here's your tobacco. *(Gives it, drinks again.)*  
 Now go.

SCOUT—*(Going.)*

And you go to sleep, you d——d old Reb.

SENTINEL

Hold on—what's your hurry?

SCOUT

I have to travel twenty miles before daylight.  
 Good-night, good-night.

SENTINEL—(*Drinks again.*)

By Jupiter, he's a good soldier;  
That's the kind of powder I like to smell. (*Smells.*)  
It makes me feel good all over—ha! ha! ha!

(*Drinks—Stretches out and sleeps. Enter ghost of Beall.*)

GHOST

O that this hollow tree of spirit life  
Could put once more its antlered branches on!  
Then would I make them knock at Heaven's gate  
To call sweet mercy down to my poor sister.  
How did she flutter like a bird upon the ground,  
Smit by the gun that told my doom.

(*Exit. Enter Captain Powel.*)

POWEL

What, soldier, sleeping at your post?

SENTINEL—(*Staggering.*)

Why, Captain Powel—Thornton Powel—yes.  
Well, Cap, you see how it is—my leg hurts me;  
I was wounded, you know, at Fredericksburg,  
And it got so stiff that I had to lie down.

POWELL

Your legs both seem limber enough now.

SENTINEL

Now, none of your game—now Cap—now Thornton—  
Thor—Thor—Thornton Powel, I'm your friend,  
And if you have me shot, ha! ha! ha!  
You'll disgrace our family. Ha! ha! ha!

## POWEL

You're too brave a soldier to be shot;  
Go, I'll not report you—go back to camp,  
And let me take your watch.

SENTINEL—(*Going.*)

That's all right, ha ha! ha! O you're the soldier for me. (*Exit.*)  
(*Staggers back.*)

Let me tell you, captain; either I saw  
Lieutenant Beall to-night, or dreamt it,  
He came up in Confederate gray, a rope  
Around his neck, and talked about his sister.  
Cap, I do believe he was drunk—ha! ha! ha!  
Dream, or reality—it makes me skittish—ha! ha! ha!  
(*Whistles—Looks down road—Exit.*)  
D——d if I'm afraid of ghosts. (*Whistles "Dixie."*)

## POWEL

Alas! it might be true, for he was captured,  
And the villains may have shot him,  
Hanged him for aught, we know—infernal thieves!  
But as the world goes nowadays, 'tis questioned  
Whether they who live, or they who die are happiest.  
(*Re-enter drunken soldier.*)  
Go, go to camp!

## SENTINEL

Well, Cap, I came back to tell you—now, Cap,  
I'm not so drunk, for down in yonder shade,  
In the white blossoms of a dog-wood tree,  
That same gray form appeared; and more than that—  
A Yankee scout was here to-night,

And I came back to put you on your guard,  
 The villain might be prowling for your scalp.  
 Good-night—O I am not afraid of ghosts!

*(Whistles and staggers off. Exit.)*

POWEL

The full round orb of yon descending moon,  
 Looks down upon the grave of Stonewall Jackson;  
 Perhaps the grave of these Confederate States—  
 Hark, the sad sweet poet of the lonely whippoorwill!  
 Like some sweet poet of the sunny South,  
 He flings himself despairing on the ground,  
 To sing my requiem. O my native land!  
 The very air seems heavy, and I sometimes think  
 That we mysterious mortals leap the wall,  
 Reared by a jealous future, 'gainst our noses.  
 For aught I know, the universe itself,  
 All peopled and piled up, looks down upon us,  
 As does the audience of a great theatre,  
 Which tears out one wall from every edifice,  
 To peep in on our most domestic scenes.  
 For aught I know, spirits might robe themselves,  
 When great events come trooping on the heels of time!  
 Who goes there! Halt! halt! 'Twas like a man,  
 Yet vanished in an instant; and by Heaven!  
 'Twas very like some one whom I have seen!  
 "In such a place, in such an hour as this,  
 Descending spirits have conversed with men,  
 And told the secrets of the dread unknown."  
 See! see! It comes again—halt, soldier, halt!  
 But one step more, and on thy peril—halt!

*(Ghost waves him back.)*

It halts, but seems to motion with its hand

As tho' 'twould bid me hold my fire—then speak!

(*Ghost advances.*)

Whate'er thou art—if sentinel or spy—

Whether messenger from heaven or hell—

Whate'er thy mission—spy or devil—halt! (*Fires.*)

Yet, there it stands—stone still—struck by my ball.

For blood comes oozing from its gray Confederate coat—

Blotches of blood on that familiar face!

Would God I had not fired—speak, soldier—speak!

#### GHOST

When nations fall, their crash wakes up the dead;

And I have left my grave for a short term,

To walk my native hills, and on the crumbling edge

Of these Confederate States—a crater vast—

Would point you to a gulf most horrible.

Ere yet yon moon proclaim the paschal feast,

And on the day that Christ was crucified,

The powers of Hell shall blacken all this land;

For dignitaries great shall roll in blood,

While Ruin drives her ebon car abroad.

Not womanhood nor helpless age,

Nor infancy can walk this world secure.

But ere that hour, I come to ask one boon—

The friendship of a soldier for a soldier's sister.

#### POWEL

Whate'er thou wilt; my life is in thy hand;

But tell me, thou impalpable, august—

And most mysterious thing; say, what thy name?

And what the great event you prophesy?

What dignitaries, they to roll in blood,

My friends or foes?

## GHOST

Both friends and foes, commingling in the storm  
 Shall fly like leaves of Autumn to yon gulf,  
 And leave both Federal and Confederate States  
 Beheaded, and their trunks, a gory mass  
 Thrown at the foot of Calvary on that day  
 Which saw the crucifix—ask no more.

## POWELL

But tell me, who art thou? and who thy sister?

## GHOST

I was thy comrade—once Lieutenant Beall;  
 But now this helpless ghost, without my sword;  
 Or I would strike and strike them to the last—  
 Disarmed, defenceless, prisoner of war,  
 Hanged in cold blood, in hearing of my sister,  
 Who by the signal gun was so afflicted  
 That reason tottered from its throne—her mind,  
 That fairest place of the world, fell down—  
 And now a maniac, lost and wretched in her woe,  
 She seeks my grave and often calls for you.  
 Go friend, console her if you can, and Heaven  
 May graciously restore the fairest flower,  
 That ever offered incense to the skies.  
 Farewell! farewell!

## POWELL

Stay, stay. Where shall I find her? Speak!

## GHOST

Go to the tomb of Washington. His grave  
She decks with flowers, and bids him make  
A little room for me. Farewell! farewell!

## POWEL

Then all is lost!  
My home—my love—my country gone!  
Heaven and earth farewell! (*Enter Sentinel.*)

## SENTINEL

What, soldier; no watchword?  
You're a pretty sentinel.

## POWEL

Stand to your watch, soldier—good-night—good-night!

## SENTINEL

But I heard a gun fire hereabouts.

## POWEL

'Twas I that fired—good-night—good-night!

## SENTINEL

But stay. What was it? Why did you fire?

## POWEL

'Twas very strange, a most prodigious thing—  
'Twas monstrous—most astonishing—good-night! (*Exit.*)

## SENTINEL

By Hoakie, he must have seen a ghost,  
 For soldiers have told me—men of good faith—  
 That they had often seen old Stonewall Jackson  
 Walking among these tents, straight as an arrow  
 And looking very sad; but his last words were—  
 “Let’s cross over the river and rest in the shade,”  
 So if the grand old Captain comes back now,  
 He must have changed his mind. (*Whistles “Dixie.”*)  
 I’m not afraid of ghosts—not I. (*Whistles.*)  
 There’s no such thing as ghosts, but what our fancies make.  
 I’d rather fight a regiment than meet one. (*Whistles.*)  
 What a cloud is rising—is it rain? (*Rain begins to fall.*)  
 Rain, rain by Jupiter! It hides the moon.  
 O! I’m not afraid—moonlight or dark.  
 Whoo-oo-oo- goes there? Halt! halt!  
 But, b-b-bt, what’s the password?

## VOICE

“By the waters of Babylon.”

## SENTINEL

Well, that’ll do—come in out of the rain—  
 But you are d——d slow getting it up. (*Enter General Lee.*)  
 What, General Lee? Why, General I catch my breath,  
 A moment more and you as Stonewall Jackson,  
 Would have fallen by your own soldier.

## GEN. LEE

Had it been so, perhaps it were as well.



## SENTINEL

What, General; no bad news, I trust!

## GEN. LEE

No; but I have walked about the camp all night,  
 And watched my tentless soldiers on the ground;  
 All worn and weary with incessant fight,  
 Tho' born to luxury, in beds of down;  
 Time hastens on, and with to-morrow's sun  
 The last battle shall be lost or won.  
 Keep to your watch—be ready for the fight,  
 Perhaps we'll meet no more—good-night! good-night! (*Exit.*)

SCENE VI—*Wood—Thunder and lightning—Near Mount Vernon*  
 —*Enter Payne—Storms and lightning.*

## PAYNE

No road—no path—no light but the storm's lightning.  
 Alas! how many, nursed in downy beds  
 In palaces and princely homes, now cry  
 "No road—no path—no light but the storm's lightning!"  
 No voice to cheer them, and no taper's ray,  
 With long and level beams, from home.  
 How many a boy with down upon his cheek.  
 Stands sentinel to-night, and braves this storm!  
 Would God that I could lay me down;  
 But I cannot—dare not—even now  
 This war of heaven may beat upon her head.  
 Mount Vernon must be hereabout. Halloo! halloo!  
 (*Enter Beall's ghost—Payne drawing sword.*)

## GHOST

Make haste to follow; for my time is short—

One hour remains for me to walk this earth,  
 And then the fires of yonder coiled Heaven  
 Shall spit upon me with their sulphurous storms  
 Till boyhood's follies, and my grosser sins  
 Shall all be purged away—one hour remains,  
 Then follow thou—till this Confederate gray  
 Dissolves in morning light.      (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE VII—*They go around the scenes—Mount Vernon opens and reveals Lilly scattering flowers and singing—Storm passed and moon going down—Tableaux to suit the song.*

LILLY—(*Singing.*)

I

Now an angel flies, from the field of blood  
 All glorious to yonder mound—  
 Mount Vernon groans—'tis the great and the good—  
 Old Virginia's heroes around—  
 Lee's father sheds a tear, while he smiles on his son,  
 And Stonewall is kneeling by a moss-covered gun,  
 And freedom lies pale on the ground.

II

Yon moon sinks down over land and wave,  
 And the fallen lie cold in her beams—  
 Not a funeral gun—no honors for the brave;  
 But each brow with glory gleams—  
 Nor the hooting of the owl over yonder hill,  
 Nor the melancholy song of the whip-poor-will,  
 Can disturb their glorious dreams.

Whip-poor-will, when sinks the day—  
 Whip-poor-will, in your twilight gray,  
 Whip-poor-will, when the hermits pray,  
 We'll pray for the souls far away! (*Enter Ghost and Powel.*)

## LILLY

O my pretty boy, come home! come home!  
 And you, my pretty Powel come home! come home!  
 (*As they approach, she eludes them, scattering flowers as before. . . .* *Exeunt.*)

SCENE VIII—*Madame Surratt's House—Parlor—Enter John Brown and Dr. Mary, and hide under curtains—Booth standing by a window.*

BOOTH—(*Standing at window.*)

'Tis now the gloaming hour, and all abroad,  
 Spirits of darkness beetle on the air,  
 Some to gay follies lead the thoughtless crowd,  
 And some go dancing down to dens of shame.  
 While other devils, older than the flood,  
 Sail out to dip their bat-like wings in blood.  
 Avaunt, ye devils! leave me all alone—  
 With whom? Myself! a murderer! God forbid!  
 More than ten thousand times have I relented,  
 And making up this cost, would fain have spared  
 That poor buffoon—worthiest of all his Cabinet;  
 For, like the thistle flower, true goodness wears  
 A regiment of spears, to cry "hold off;"  
 And but for this I would have slain him thrice.  
 "If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well

It were done quickly; if the assassination  
 Could trammel up the consequence, and catch  
 With his surcease, success—besides, this Duncan  
 Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been  
 So clear in his great office, that his virtues  
 Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, 'gainst  
 The deep damnation of his taking off;  
 And pity, like a naked new-born babe,  
 Striding the blast, or Heaven's cherubim, horsed  
 Upon the sightless couriers of the air,  
 Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye."

*(Enter John Brown's ghost.)*

JOHN BROWN

Beware! Beware!  
 Aye, had I but sworn as you have sworn,  
 Nor Heaven, nor earth, nor hell could hold me back,  
 Nor fright me from my purpose.  
 Had I but sworn to do 't.  
 I'd pluck my grey-haired sire from the gate of Heaven,  
 And drag him thro' the sulphurous fumes of hell—  
 Choking with brimstone firebrands the voice  
 That whilom called me son—still beating down  
 His withered hands, lest Heaven should heed his prayer.  
 You swore to me, amidst the lightning's glare,  
 And Hell's deep cavern echoed back your vow!  
 That bargain, for your soul, was clinched in hell;  
 And all the powers of heaven did ratify—  
 My will, now thine, my bidding thou shalt do;  
 Then go; prepare thee for thy sulphurous bed  
 Put shards upon thee like the beetle's mail;  
 Harden thy soul wi' crime; smear it wi' blood,  
 And so prepare thee for thy home of fire! *(Exit.)*

## BOOTH

Poor helpless mortals we! Once sunk to crime,  
 Down do we fall, with devils, in their slime  
 And then grow palsied—helpless for all time!  
 What, tho' we struggle back and cry "begone!"  
 They whisper to our souls, "march on, march on!"

*(Enter John Surratt, high top-boots, and spattered with mud,  
 riding whip, and in rollicking mood.)*

Welcome, Surratt—most welcome at this hour,  
 For I need your strong arm and desperate will.

## SURRETT

Well, Booth, I've found the very place to cage him—  
 Fit for a President, and secret as the grave.

## BOOTH

Well, what of it? Where? What then?

## SURRETT

Th' old Van Ness mansion, on the river bank  
 South of the White House, garnished for the bird.  
 Its deep wine cellars make a lovely cage,  
 And three strong men could drag him to its doors.  
 Once being captured, we could hold him there  
 Till Mosby and his men came up the river bank.  
 O th' old gorilla, ha! ha! ha! what a splendid specimen, ha! ha! ha!  
 How he himself would laugh at such a joke!  
 'Twould be a funny anecdote for him to tell  
 Jeff Davis when we get to Richmond—ha! ha! ha!

## BOOTH

What if we put him in a cellar six feet long!  
 A coffin for his cage, and worms for company!

## SURRETT

Great God! you're talking like a madman. Heavens!  
 Lincoln is not a bad man, though led by demagogues,  
 For he means well, and has a good, kind heart.

## BOOTH

Those purblind sisters, trundling at their wheel,  
 Have put the scissors to his navel cord.  
 You too must help them turn, for being in,  
 And now suspected, how could you escape?  
 Go, throw away your catechism, boy,  
 Come, take to tragedy and be a man.  
 There's something grand and beautiful in tragedy.  
 Think of it, John—just think—Good Friday, John;  
 Earth's greatest tragedy was acted on this day,  
 And the whole world repeats it to the sun,  
 On myriad altars rising to salute him!  
 O glorious tragedy, that cannot end,  
 'Til Heaven's lightnings set the stage on fire;  
 Angels and patriarchs and saints for auditors,  
 And the Lamb slain, stands up amid the falling stars,  
 King of all Kings, and brighter than the sun.  
 O that I, too, could act in such a play!

## SURRETT

In that play must we all act.

## BOOTH

Why, John, to kill a common man—a thing—  
 A President—that's a mere episode!  
 Go throw away your catechism, boy!

## SURRETT

I love the South; but love still more  
 The catechism which my mother taught me;  
 Nor less on this day—saddest of all days!  
 True, I would take him prisoner of war;  
 But further not a step will follow you.  
 Release me, then, and let me fly to Canada,  
 Not to betray you, for I scorn a traitor,  
 But t' escape your toils, and save my life!

## BOOTH

You prattle like a child—come, be a man;  
 Give up your faith and strike for liberty.

## SURRETT

My faith? Ah, little do you understand it!  
 That unpretending, simple, childlike faith!  
 It scatters blossoms even upon the grave,  
 And robes the very air with immortality!  
 Bad as I am, and foolish in my weaknesses,  
 To do ten thousand things, when suddenly assailed,  
 Which faith reproves, and memory weeps upon.  
 Yet wilfully I would not yield one precept  
 Of the grand old faith my mother taught me,  
 For yon Confederate States and all the world besides! (*Exit.*)

## BOOTH

There's a divinity in that boy's dream,  
 Which boastful reasons cannot emulate—  
 Inscrutable, mysterious, divine!  
 More splendid than the rainbow—tempest born;  
 Born of the sun, begot in falling tears—

In tears that fell about the gate of Paradise—  
 On Calvary—alas! wherever man sojourns!  
 The rainbow, but a symbol of that dream,  
 For aught I know, the shadow of that faith.  
 O that I could fling these knotted serpents  
 Up to the stars, or down to Hell!  
 Could I but see their fiery flakes  
 All trailing down the sky,  
 Then would I run to Calvary and cling  
 To God; but that is past, and all is lost! lost! lost!

*(Window curtains drop and conceal him—John Brown's ghost crosses the stage.)*

JOHN BROWN

Poor, struggling insect, now we part!  
 My web is woven round your heart;  
 My work well done, to Hell begone!  
 And tell them there John Brown is marching on.

*(Exit. Enter Herold and Atzerodt.)*

HEROLD

Come, Atzerodt, tell me what do  
 You think of this whole business?

ATZERODT

Vel, if de shentlemens will pay de  
 Monish, I can cut de wires, and den  
 Dey can all runs away.

HEROLD

But what if they should kill the whole  
 Cabinet, would that save the South?



## ATZERODT

Ef dey kills one, dot makes no good;  
 But if dey kills all, den I say ja.  
 For mit de killin', Europe stop de war, and  
 De South go free—dot's it, dot's it, my baby!  
 (*Slapping him on the shoulder.*)—ha! ha! ha!

## HEROLD

I could understand it much better if Booth would talk to us, and explain it. Sometimes I think he must be crazy. D——d if I do anything but hold his horse at the theatre. He intends I think to kill them all in the midst of the play; for this evening, at Spotswood's Hotel, he sent a note up to Johnson, and directly after told me to stand in the rear of the theatre, at nine o'clock, to hold his horse. I asked him a question, and he left me gaping like a fool.

## ATZERODT

Seward never goes to theatre.

## HEROLD

Then who kills him?

## ATZERODT

Vy, Payne, dat big vellow from de South;  
 He kill Seward, den, you see, I cuts all de wires mit de telegraph.

## HEROLD

Cut the wires? Why, you were to kill Johnson.

## ATZERODT

O ja, ja! (*Enter Payne.*)

PAYNE

What of Booth? He promised to be here.

HEROLD

Don't you think him crazy? What good  
Would come of it, even if his plans succeeded?

PAYNE

He has assurances from Canada—  
From men well-posted in the current of events,  
That intervention soon would follow,  
And the South be saved. His vengeance, too,  
With mine, cries out for blood. Our ruined homes,  
Our native land, and every sacred memory  
Shout to the patriot soul, "revenge! revenge!"

HEROLD

How could we justify such wholesale slaughter?

PAYNE

By precedent. Full thirty Kings in France;  
In Germany a score and in Great Britain, ten,  
Th' assassin's dagger punched down to Hell—  
From Brutus, of th' olden time, when Tarquin,  
Reeking with Lucretia's shame, fell headlong,  
To the younger Brutus, red with Cæsar's blood,  
From him to beastly Heliogabalus  
And all those Emperors, slain amidst their pleasures,  
Such was the last resort of Freedom.  
O'er-topping insolence, and hired minions drive  
The people to despair, then lightning leaps  
Upon the patriot's blade, and tyrants fall. (*Enter Booth.*)

BOOTH

They call this day Good Friday! Good! Most excellent!

Beware of treachery—beware! for soon  
 The Judas of our tribes may hear from me,  
 That curse of *Richard*—hear it now:  
 “When I was mortal—mine anointed body  
 By you was punched full of deadly holes;  
 Think on that hour, and me, despair, and die.”  
 Should one arm falter or one heart fail,  
 Not one of us would live to tell the tale.

(*Exit.*)

HEROLD

Now, what does all that mean? Don't  
 You see that the man's crazy?

PAYNE

By no means.  
 Warns you and Atzerodt—suspects your courage,  
 Knowing full well that, should our venture fail  
 Through craft or cowardice, or treachery,  
 The South must then be lost forever. (*Enter Lilly.*)

LILLY

Ah, ha! I thought to find you here,  
 And jumped over the moon from yon asylum.  
 All the stars ran after me and cried  
 “Come back, sweet Lilly, come and marry us!”  
 “No, no,” quoth I, “first come and fight  
 With Sisera, and slay mine enemies.  
 Then will I wed the stars, and all  
 Our children pretty little stars and flowers!”  
 Stay, stay, I'll sing to Stonewall Jackson.  
 There, there he goes!—poor Stonewall Jackson!  
 Yon moon sinks down over Stonewall's grave,  
 And the soldiers are sleeping around;  
 No tents are spread, no cover for the brave,

But they sleep on freedom's ground,  
 Nor the hooting of the owl over yonder hill,  
 Nor the melancholy song of the whippoorwill,  
 Can disturb their slumbers sound; (*Spoken.*)  
 But Lee could wake them, and his voice  
 Was like a trumpet on the morning air. (*Sings.*)  
 Rise, rise, brave boys once more for the fight,  
 'Tis the last to be lost or won.  
 Then arm brave boys, by the dawning of the light,  
 And charge to the foeman's gun!  
 Tho' few, and bleeding now, we must win for the right,  
 Or sleep upon the field with Stonewall to-night—  
 'Tis the last to be lost or won.  
 Once more, brave boys! tho' the shot fall fast  
 And your comrades are lying low—  
 Hark! hark! yon shout, and the trumpet blast,  
 'Tis Stonewall charging below.  
 He charges up the hill! See! see how they run!  
 He mounts upon the fort and captures every gun—  
 And now he turns them on the foe!  
 Once more, brave boys, and the battle shall be won,  
 Tho' the millions are pressing around;  
 Lo, Grant comes up at the setting of the sun  
 And a thousand thunders resound.  
 Ah! few and bleeding now—'tis done—'tis done!  
 The banner of the brave goes down with the sun,  
 And trails at last on the ground! (*Enter nurse from asylum.*)  
 O ye are my brave keepers. I am glad to see ye.  
 Have you come to my wedding with the stars?

DR. NICHOLS

Yes Lilly, the stars are all in waiting.  
 Come, we must go without delay.

## LILLY

But will they fight with Sisera, to slay mine enemies?  
And you, my Payne, my pretty Payne, will you fight, too?"

## DR. NICHOLS

Yes; all will fight—are waiting for the war.  
Come let us hence—haste! haste!

*(They drag her out. Payne in agony of grief.)*

## HEROLD

By Heavens, she was a splendid girl!  
But having placed her in th' Asylum,  
You have done the best you could—nay, all  
That could be done. Come, cheer up, Payne,  
Be a man. I know it's a hard case, cheer up!

*(Slaps him on shoulder.)*

O that the lagging hours would fly,  
And bring me to the tyrant's bed,  
To make another Robespierre, broken-jawed  
And cursing as he plunged into hell!  
His curses inarticulate—himself a hell!  
His guilty heart, the hell of hells! *(Enter Booth.)*

## BOOTH

Come, let's be going. Each one to his post,  
In this great drama, to be played with Tyrants.  
For when they fall, a universal strife  
Like nature fighting in the womb of Time,  
Shall heave volcanoes from a fiery sea,  
To blast us all, or make our country free! *(Exeunt. Dr. Mary skipping after them.)*

## DR. MARY

Ah, ha! I'll have his head, his heart, ha! ha! *(Exit.)*

## ACT V

SCENE I—*Street—Dr. Mary, Conger and Baker under lamp post in dumb show—three conspirators pass them.*

BAKER

Which one's Payne?

DR. MARY

That desperate-looking devil, with a slouched hat.

BAKER

And that one?

DR. MARY

That's Atzerodt.

BAKER

And that one?

DR. MARY

His name is Herold.

CONGER

Did you not say that Booth was with them?  
Your tale don't hang together.

DR. MARY

Hang together or not, I tell you truly  
As I have often urged before, these men  
Are bent on mischief; and this very night  
You'll find that I have told the truth.

Come, we have no time to lose. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II—*President's Mansion—President Alone—Room Darkened.*

PRESIDENT

We promised to attend the play to-night,  
 But this is Good Friday. Heavens! it looks badly;  
 A comedy to celebrate the Crucifixion!  
 Christ to be mocked and spit upon once more—  
 Buffoons to buffet him! Pontius Pilate,  
 Washing his hands, and whining, "*I am innocent*  
*Of the blood of this just person!*" yet the people,  
 Eager to swell the pæan of our victories,  
 Propose a grand ovation to the Cabinet;  
 O how their brave hands will clap!  
 No, no, 'twould never do to disappoint them;  
 But where now are the hands that clapped on Calvary?  
 There was one there, who could not clap his hands!  
 Great God! He made the thunder clap! (*Enter Booth, drawing*  
*pistol.*)

BOOTH

This is my chance. I find him all alone!  
 Most kind and humorous, dear, good natured man!  
 Alas! poor Yorick! with his quip and quids,  
 And merriment and anecdote. Alas! alas!  
 Great Cæsar, too, was merciful and kind;  
 But Casca held his gown, while Brutus punched;  
 For good is, as good doth. What hast thou done?  
 O perjured wretch—to promise him a pardon:  
 Yet break that promise on poor Lilly's heart;  
 Thou lying tongue. Shall I not pluck thee out  
 Thou heart of rottenness, to break her heart!  
 Shall I not pierce thee with requiting steel?

O brain accursed! Shall I not punch thee thro'?  
 O cursed fiend, to blast my land of flowers!  
 To slay her sons, and drive her daughters to despair!  
 Behold her fallen! Behold her fallen cross—  
 No longer flashing thro' the battle storm,  
 But flat upon the ground, her form outstretched  
 Upon it, mocked, despised and spit upon!  
 O time most fortunate! most opportune!  
 To find him all alone—alone with Death!  
 Revenge and hate come flapping on the air—  
 Their dragon wings make twilight; and the stage  
 Is aptly darkened for effect. (*Aims pistol and then lowers it.*)  
 But where my audience. Where th' unborn applause?  
(*Puts pistol down.*)

Bah! such a play would fall like vinted wine,  
 Insipid and without a beaded gallery  
 To clap the climax of a bloody gash.  
 Those other vultures, too, marked out for slaughter,  
 Would all fly away at the first smell of powder.  
 Oh, no; I'll first arm him, then, forewarned,  
 He too can join the cast with preparation. (*Puts up his pistol  
 and advances.*)

We'll meet again, at ten o'clock, your Excellence.  
 The public all expect you—now prepare;  
 For you must play your part in this great drama.  
 Ten o'clock, your Excellence! remember ten o'clock.

#### LINCOLN

Yes, tell them we shall keep our promise;  
 But Booth I thought it nine o'clock.

#### BOOTH

Aye, nine, and half-past nine; but ten o'clock



The climax of the play will punch thro' Heaven,  
 Like some volcano spouting to the sky,  
 And drawing to it every heart and eye!  
 Remember: ten o'clock!

## LINCOLN

Yes; I'll remember; we shall all be there. (*Exit Booth.*)  
 'Twas on this very day our Saviour died;  
 And something warns me—psha! presentiments  
 Are more absurd than dreams; and yet one dream  
 I never had but that some great event  
 Came fast upon 't. That dream I dreamt last night  
 A stately ship was sailing 'gainst the wind  
 And struck a rock—my wife cried out  
 And waking, vowed that she had dreamt the same.  
 Then going to the window, I beheld  
 On the heights of Arlington, a shooting star,  
 Red as the setting sun, and a huge owl,  
 As tho' some warning hand were laid upon me,  
 A something strange, that comes to press me down—  
 For aught I know, my mother might return,  
 To lay once more her hand upon my head;  
 For well do I remember those sweet hands,  
 And how they fell, like gentle dews from Heaven,  
 When on her patient lap my prayer was breathed.  
 This night, for aught I know, may be the last;  
 And she who loved me then, must love me still.  
 Wise fools may ridicule such thoughts,  
 But mysteries, never yet by them explored,  
 Do rock our cradle first—then dig our graves!  
 The whence we came! The why we linger here?  
 And whither when our spirits take eternal flight—  
 All this, and more than volumes could express

They know not; neither can they tell why dreams,  
 Like couriers, come upon the midnight air,  
 To bring us messages, then go their way.  
 One thing I know, that something makes me sad. (*Rings a bell—*  
*Enter servant.*)

Albert, bring in the children, Tad and Fred. (*Exit servant.*)  
 This very day some eighteen hundred years ago,  
 The sun grew dark and graves gave up their dead.  
 At such a time, I have no heart for comedy;  
 And yet, our promise must be kept.

(*Enter Major Lincoln and Tad.*)

Come, Taddy; tell me what is Easter day?

TAD

Our Saviour rose on Easter day. O Papa,  
 Won't you buy us some Easter eggs?  
 I'm going to the Capitol that day.  
 Say, Papa; will you buy us some Easter eggs?

LINCOLN

Yes; if you'll tell me why they call this *Good Friday*.

TAD

Because our Saviour died to-day; but Papa,  
 Did he die sure 'nough this very day?  
 But Mr. Beecher says he didn't.

LINCOLN

Yes, my son; our Saviour died on Friday. (*Enter Colfax.*)  
 Well, Colfax; they say that Grant has gone.

COLFAX

Gone, your Excellence—to Burlington, New Jersey,

Quite unexpectedly, for Mrs. Grant.  
 He begged me to excuse him to your Excellence;  
 Also to Laura Keene—for he had promised  
 To be present at her play to-night.

LINCOLN

I do wish we had not promised.

COLFAX

You are expected with your whole Cabinet—  
 At least the morning papers have it so,  
 And the whole city will be on tiptoe  
 To greet your Excellence.

LINCOLN

I wish I had not promised them. (*Enter Mrs. Lincoln.*)

MRS. LINCOLN

Shall we go to the theatre or not?  
 Come, Mr. Colfax; cheer him up;  
 He has the blues.

LINCOLN

Well, get ready; I'll go. (*Bands playing. Great shouting without—Lincoln and all go to the window. Lincoln: reading a dispatch to the people.*)

“Mobile, Ala., April 14, 1865.

Dick Taylor has surrendered. Our  
 Soldiers are in good spirits, and the  
 Rebels have abandoned every hope.

E. R. S. Canby.” (*Great shouting.*)

## LINCOLN

This was their last army. The South surrenders,  
 And the Union is restored! (*Shouting.*)  
 Let us remember to-night, my old motto:  
 “*Malice to none, but Charity for all!*”  
 Come, boys, play us *Dixie*, and then give us  
 The *Star Spangled Banner!* (*Band plays.*)

## MRS. LINCOLN

Well, it is nearly our time.

TAD—(*To Lincoln.*)

What does mother mean by “our time”?

## LINCOLN

O we promised to be there by nine o'clock—  
 That's what your mother means, my boy;  
 But there are times in all our lives  
 Of which you children know but little.  
 Our Saviour said to his disciples once:  
 “My hour is come;” and all day long those words  
 Keep ringing in my ear—'twas on the night  
 Before Good Friday, and about this hour.  
 Come, we must go—'tis nearly nine o'clock. (*Exit.*)

SCENE III—*Street near Guard House, Washington—Clock strikes ten—Sentinel pacing.*

## SENTINEL

Halt! Who goes there? (*Presents. Enter Conger.*)

## CONGER

Hold! hold!

SENTINEL

Why Conger, you should have given the  
Password—some other sentinel might  
Have shot you.

CONGER

I knew it was your watch; besides  
The password has been changed  
The last half-hour—for a strange  
Rumor is afloat.  
Take for your password now, "Conspiracy."  
Have you seen Baker?

SENTINEL

No, not to-night.

CONGER

Nor Dr. Mary Trotter?

SENTINEL

No.

CONGER

He was to meet me here; and she was with him.

SENTINEL

What was the rumor? and why have they  
Changed the password?

CONGER

O nothing! nothing; but Baker should  
Be here. I sent him to the theatre.

SENTINEL

For what?

CONGER

Hush! hush! sh! (*Drums beating—Shouts in the distance.*)  
 Hear those clattering horses—how they run!  
 The drums and shouting—what can all this mean? (*Enter Baker,*  
*running.*)

BAKER

I was just in time to be too late.  
 The President is shot!

CONGER

Great God! killed?

BAKER

Killed, and several others with him. I left in the confusion. It  
 verified the last report,  
 And all that Dr. Mary told us.  
 Wilkes Booth entered the President's box; was met by Major  
 Rathbone, who stabbed him with his sword. Booth, with a  
 dagger, struck him down, shot the President, wounded several  
 others and sprang from the box down to the stage, waving a  
 bloody knife, and shouting, "*Sic Semper Tyrannis, Virginia is*  
*Avenged!*" Then something about Lieutenant Beall. But  
 the shrieks of the women drowned his voice. In leaping from  
 the box to the stage he seemed to break his leg, for it gave way  
 every step, and his boot dragged after him.

CONGER

What course did he take?

BAKER

I followed close upon his track; saw  
 Him mount a horse behind the theatre.  
 I fired three times, and must have hit him.

CONGER

Strike the telegraph, set all the bells to ringing;  
 Call every man to arms! (*Bells ring. Enter Dr. Mary Trotter,  
 breathless.*)

DR. MARY

All hell to pay—I told you so—  
 Seward is killed—cut all to pieces.

CONGER

Heavens! was he there, too? Did Booth  
 Kill both? Was he at the theatre?

DR. MARY

'Twas at his house. A tall man  
 Cut his way into his chamber—killed  
 Fred Seward first. I saw the wound,  
 The dorsal muscle of his belly cut in twain—  
 A cut across the abdomen. The villain  
 Knocked down two other men, then sprang  
 On Seward like a tiger, stabbed him  
 Six times, broke his jawbone with  
 The butt of his pistol, as it failed to  
 Fire, cut his way out, mounted a  
 Horse—all quicker than I've been telling  
 You. They say that Johnson, too, and  
 Several others have been killed—  
 Hell let loose! (*Cries of fire—Enter number of Police and sol-  
 diers.*)

CONGER

'Tis a vast conspiracy. The rebels are upon us!

They've set the town on fire!  
 Every man to arms—  
 Kill every rebel dog you meet,  
 Whether at home or in the street! (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE IV—*Madame Surratt's House—Enter Conger, Dr. Mary, Soldiers, and Surratt.*

CONGER

Where is her chamber?

SERVANT

That, sir.

CONGER—(*Knocking.*)

Open the door.

MADAME SURRATT—(*Within.*)

Who's there?

BAKER

Open the door—surrender! (*Kicks it open.*)

MADAME SURRATT—(*Entering in nightgown.*)

In the name of Heaven, what can all this mean?  
 How dare you, man—not man, but brute—how dare you  
 Thus to insult a widow in her bed?

BAKER

You'll soon have a warmer bed than that!

CONGER

Hell's to good for the ——cut her down! (*Enter Annie Surratt.*)

ANNIE

O mother, mother! what can all this mean? (*To soldiers.*)



You mongrels, blackguards! out of this house!  
How dare you thus insult my mother?

CONGER

She's arrested for the murder of Mr. Lincoln.

BOTH—(*Annie and mother.*)

O Heavens! Heavens!! Heavens!!! (*Annie rushes to her arms.*)  
O mother! mother, dear! that fatal dream! that fatal dream!

MADAME SURRETT

Soft, soft, my child. God's will be done. (*Enter soldier.*)

SOLDIER

Seward is sinking rapidly. Frederick,  
His son, was cut across the belly,  
And two men servants wounded mortally.  
Here's a description of the murderer. (*Giving paper.*)

CONGER

Take this, Baker; take a squad of men;  
Scour the city; bring him in;  
By Heavens, we'll hang them high as Haman. (*Exit Baker.*)  
Come, madame, tell the truth;  
Reveal the plot, and I'll secure your pardon.

M. SURRETT

I knew no plot that looked to murder—none!  
(*Re-enter Baker with Powel covered with mud.*)

BAKER

We found this fellow knocking at the door;  
Alarmed at meeting us, and taken by surprise,  
He said that he had come to dig a ditch.

CONGER

For whom?

BAKER

For Madame Surratt.

CONGER—(*To Madame Surratt.*)

Do you know this man?

M. SURRETT

No, sir; I know nothing of him whatever;  
Never saw the man before. Cheer up, Annie;  
God sent these soldiers to protect us.  
What a Providence! The ruffian might have killed us both.

ANNIE (*Aside.*)

O mother, that is Powel!

M. SURRETT

What? Powel?

ANNIE

Yes, Thornton Powel—Payne.

M. SURRETT

'Pon my word, I do believe it is. (*Officers searching him.*)

CONGER—(*Reading note taken from Payne's pocket.*)

My dear Captain, we expect you by four o'clock;  
Have a message from my son John  
Be sure to come. M. Surratt.

DR. MARY

Do you remember the note from her  
 To Booth, found on his table? Ah! ha!  
 You said it was nothing. Now you see,  
 Th' occipital and——bones! aha!  
 I told you they would——Ha! ha! ha!

CONGER—(*To Madame Surratt.*)

And so you never saw this man before?

M. SURRETT

I did not know him in the dark;  
 That mud upon his face disguised him more;  
 'Pon the honor of a lady, I did not know him!

CONGER

O I guess not. Come, my pretty cut-throat,  
 How came your hands so soft?  
 Indeed, you are a dainty ditcher.

PAYNE

I am no ditcher—I told your bloodhounds  
 At the door, that I came to dig a ditch,  
 And I have dug it for my mortal foes!

CONGER

What do you know of this woman?  
 What's your name?

PAYNE

My name is what my father gave me—  
 A name well-known in patriotic song—

And you may call it, if so please you, Payne;  
 For this ordeal is a painful one—  
 Not for myself, but for this generous lady,  
 Whose hospitalities I once enjoyed,  
 And which, by accident, I now abuse.  
 My horse had thrown me, just across the bridge,  
 And I returned for shelter to her house;  
 But more, to get a pass hence to her farm,  
 On pretext of employment there, to reach our lines.

CONGER

What lines?

PAYNE

Confederate lines, of course.

*(Soldiers advancing with bayonets, threatening.)*

CONGER

Hold! hold! Await my orders!  
 This woman—is she one of your conspirators?

PAYNE

This lady is a most generous soul,  
 Thro' whom I hoped to get the pass;  
 But, as the babe unborn, is she most innocent.

CONGER

Innocent of what?

PAYNE

Of what? And do you think to trap me? Fool!  
*(Soldiers about to bayonet him.)*  
 Back, villains, if you wish to know what I have done!

## CONGER

Stand back, soldiers, and await my orders—  
He wishes to confess.

## PAYNE

But not from fear of death or hope of pardon,  
I scorn alike your menace and your mercy,  
To vindicate this lady, I proclaim,  
And hurl it on your pointed bayonets,  
That all without her knowledge or connivance,  
I slew the dog—your Seward—in his bed. (*Soldiers start at him.*)

## CONGER

Hold! hold! Let him confess.

## PAYNE

'Twas I, and I alone, that gave his blood  
To that great ocean, shed from better veins,  
Which he had poured upon the ground—  
Some men, grown fat wi' power, forget  
That they are mortal, and themselves secure,  
Send you soldiers like cattle to the shambles.  
Then if a patriot bares his arm to strike,  
All eyes wall up to Heaven, and fools shout murder!  
Hell shouts "murder," too, for millions they had slain;  
But Nemesis hath been abroad to-night!  
'Twas I, and I alone, that slew the tyrant.

## CONGER

Having escaped so far beyond the bridge,  
Wherefore return to seek this woman's house?

## PAYNE

For her sake, and hers alone, I deign to answer you;

Then hear the truth, and learn her innocence.  
 A Rebel, undisguised, she always gave  
 Her hospitality to true Confederates.  
 Well-knowing this, I came to ask employment,  
 Forsooth, upon her farm, to pass your lines,  
 Expecting to get the proper pass.

CONGER

And would she play into your hands?

PAYNE

Doubtless, to aid a soldier in distress.  
 But had she been a party to our plot  
 Would I, a sane man, have sought her house?  
 None but an idiot could have ventured so!  
 Her innocence my own destruction, for I came  
 To ask employment, as I told you,  
 Only a pretext to elude your guards;  
 But that fatality, which seems to follow blood,  
 Engaged her innocence to trap me thus.

CONGER

Then wherefore fly, or why disguise your face with mud?

PAYNE

You lie; I never fled; but as a soldier  
 Went to report me at the common rendezvous,  
 And when your watchful guards had intercepted me,  
 And when my horse, ere I had reached it, fell  
 And left me powerless to attain the spot,  
 Still rejoicing that the tyrants had been slain,  
 I placed my ear upon the muddy ground

To hear the shrieks of their infernal souls  
Landing in Hell. Then strike me, villains! strike!

(*Great confusion—Soldiers dash at him—Payne snatches a sword—Exeunt, fighting.*)

SCENE V.—*Mount Vernon—Moonlight—Enter Booth.*

BOOTH

All hail Mount Vernon! Freedom's holiest shrine!  
More than a Mecca thou to Earth's bowed millions!  
O sacred mound, and you ye skies that clasp it!  
Bend down ye Heavens that kiss my native land,  
Blue-domed and beautiful. Once more look down  
And clasp the ashes of my blasted heart!  
O look upon me with your soft blue eyes,  
And judge me kindly. Judge my cruel foes!  
As Hannibal who struck for Carthage, but in vain!  
As Brutus when in vain he struck th' ambitious Cæsar!  
As Cromwell when he slew the guilty Charles!  
As Henry when he roused Virginia's wrath!  
So I have struck the Tyrant; and would wake  
The land of Washington, to guard his dust!  
O sacred shade of him who trampled on a crown  
Offered by sycophants—arise and speak!  
If ever spirits in the dusky shades return,  
Or when the torn elements, in fiery combat,  
Shake Heaven and Earth—or when devoted nations  
Do tremble and dissolve—then hear my prayer.  
Amidst th' upheaving of these mighty States—  
Immortal Washington come forth! come forth!

(*Ghosts of Washington and other heroes as in Act 1st,  
Scene II.*)

## WASHINGTON

Infatuated and unhappy man!  
 Already Abel hath been here to tell the tale.  
 He brought his wounds for me to bind them up,  
 And piteously complaining thro' Eternity,  
 Reveals to trembling ghosts his agonizing grief—  
 Cut off by your abortive act, he sees  
 A host of northmen gathering up their strength,  
 Like Judas bent upon the scent of gold,  
 To make a war more dire than that surceased!  
 But for your tragic deed, Abel had brought  
 A sacrifice of corn and wine and oil  
 To stay the maddening flood and save your country!

## BOOTH

O "useless, useless" \*—worse than useless all my work!  
 Deceived by cowards and by traitors foiled—  
 My vast conspiracy now dwindles down  
 To one poor victim, while my foes survive!  
 To take off only one, and he the best—  
 Could bring no benedictions to my native land.  
 And yet, had I as many hands as wrongs,  
 As many hearts, and firm as this one proved,  
 The whole Cabinet had fallen at my feet,  
 While overhead the Southern cross had waved  
 My name immortal, and my country free!  
 (*Lincoln's Ghost enters, bloody. Booth hides his face.*)

## LINCOLN

Your deadly ball, shot through my skull  
 Went through the South as well, and pierced her heart.  
 Now driven to despair, she well might covet  
 This earthy smell of coffins and of bones,

\* Booth's last words.



Which I, shut out from day, am doomed to snuff.  
 Had you but left me still the scented flowers,  
 Your flowers in the South had bloomed afresh,  
 Savannahs would have yielded golden fruits—  
 And fiery blasts return to peaceful songs.  
 A happy people had rejoiced in Union.  
 Your statesmen, too, had then returned to Washington,  
 But not for punishment. My motto was—  
*“Malice to none; but Charity for all.”*  
 Then fly unhappy man—fly from yourself—  
 For vain your flight from them who loved me well—  
 Ten thousand swords are now upon your track;  
 And like a fiery tempest, sweep the world.  
 Repent, and be you washed in Jesus’ blood,  
 Or soon we’ll meet again in sulphurous flames,  
 To which your cruel deed consigns me—go!—  
 Go cry for mercy, ere it be too late.  
 Poor man, I pity you. Aye, and forgive you, too!

## BOOTH

Alas! poor soul, thy words, like sulphurous fires,  
 Consume the very marrow of my bones,  
 And burn into my heart—a new-born hell.  
 O pluck it out and cast it on your tomb,  
 A vain, but earnest sacrifice to liberty. (*Ghost going.*)  
 Stay, stay! and strike me if thou canst.  
 O stay! thou gory thing, or I will follow thee.  
 (*Ghost motions him back—Booth following.*)  
 Thou canst not fright me back—I fear thee not;  
 Tho’ Heaven should thunder “no,” and hell gape wide—  
 Still would I follow thee. O world, farewell!  
 Foul deeds will up—we follow them to hell! (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE VI—*A Road—Enter Conger and Baker and Soldiers.*

## BAKER

Here let us halt; for though we be upon his track,  
 Our men are weary, and the day far spent.  
 I doubt if we are on his track at all;  
 For Herold should be with him, and our guide  
 Declares this man to be alone.  
 Perhaps she might mistake some other man.

## CONGER

What, Dr. Mary not know Booth?  
 'Twas she who put us first upon his track,  
 Brought us his plans, an hour before th' assassination,  
 And ever since has hung upon his flight,  
 As vultures following up the wounded deer.  
 She swears she saw him on this very road,  
 And would have killed him but her gun missed fire.

## BAKER

Perhaps her heart missed fire, for once she loved  
 The villain; and these women change with every moon.  
 Her flood of hate might staunch its bloody course,  
 And even now may lure us from his track.

## CONGER

O never do you fret—I know 'twas he.  
 She swears she saw him limping up yon hill,  
 Pale from exhaustion, and his broken leg  
 Trailing behind, without a splint to brace it—  
 Doubtless from pain, he tore the splints away.  
 A hundred thousand dollars the reward!

## BAKER

Had Mary got it—heavens! the boys  
 Would now be crazy for her.

CONGER

Crazy for a bag of bones.

BAKER

Ten thousand men have scoured the Peninsula—  
But if we get him—the money will all be ours.  
By heavens, we must have it. Forward march! (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE VII—*Scene in a barn—Booth and Herold on the hay and fodder with a lantern.*

BOOTH

Go back, my faithful boy, to yonder house.  
Bring me some water, for I parch with thirst;  
My wound keeps up a fever, and my eyes  
Are almost bursting from their sockets.  
There, take that money, get some brandy, too.  
The people here are kind; but very poor;  
Force them to take the change, or leave it at their door.

HEROLD

I know that they are close upon us now.  
Can you not go further?

BOOTH

No, 'tis impossible—I must have rest.  
Go quickly and return. (*Exit Herold.*)  
Yon clamorous cock, impatient of the dawn  
Stretches his neck to pip the coming morrow;  
So they would have me stand a tip-toe too,  
To pip that mightier globe—Eternity!  
But I will disappoint them—not as Brutus—  
Thief-like, breaking into my mother's casket, no!

But like the tiger, followed to his den. (*Examines his carbine.*)  
 First let me shoot these loads off, to prepare  
 Fresh supper for my coming guests. (*Fires and lays it down.*)  
 Now sleep my last, best, only friend!  
 But when I call thee up, to meet them, speak!  
 And make such arguments, in curt replies,  
 As Randolph would have made their Shermans.  
 'Twas hereabouts that Patrick Henry's tongue,  
 Unconscious of his prophecy, proclaimed  
 The forging of our chains—the clash of arms  
 Upon the northern wind, and cried indignantly:  
 "I care not, sirs, what other men may choose,  
 But give me liberty; or give me death!"  
 Hark! hark! yon lonely whip-poor-will admonishes  
 That they who live without companionship  
 Must die, at last, on some deserted heather,  
 Forgotten e'en by those who listened to their songs.  
 O that I had his broad flapping wings for one short hour!  
 I'd waltz my broken leg thro' Southern skies,  
 And sing to-night a merrier song than his.  
 Alas! such thoughts comport not with his song;  
 For lifted to the skies he never sings,  
 But flat upon the ground, and in the darkness,  
 As I am now. For nature's last account  
 Must soon be audited, and struck against me.  
 These eyes no more shall gaze on Beauty's mould,  
 On the bright sun, nor on my native land;  
 This night shall close them with her sable fingers,  
 In that sleep which morning cannot drive away.  
 I know it—feel it—see it as reality—  
 Aye; hear it in that monitor, whose voice  
 Grows audible, as time and passion cease.  
 The bloodhounds could not miss me, if they would;

And the next sun shall rise upon my corse.  
 Let them come on: I will not budge; but fight—  
 And they shall perish with me. (*Enter Herold.*)

HEROLD

Can you not go further? I'm sure they'll find us.  
 A man just passed, who says that they are coming.

BOOTH

No, I cannot—my leg hurts worse and worse.  
 You go, but as for me, it matters not  
 Whether I die in battle, or on beds of down. (*Sleeps—Herold  
 snivels and prays.*)

SCENE VIII—*Road near barn—Enter Baker, Conger, Dr. Mary  
 and Soldiers.*

DR. MARY

The barn is just out there—look sharp!

CONGER—(*To Baker.*)

Surround it quickly. (*Exit Baker, with a squad of men. Booth's  
 voice in the distance.*)

List! list! I know the villain's voice.

BOOTH

“O coward conscience, how thou dost afflict me!  
 Give me another horse; bind up my wound.”

DR. MARY

Hush! hush! 'tis *Richard*, acted in his sleep!  
 Oft have I heard him thus upon the stage.  
 'Tis *Richard's* dream—that horrid dream again  
 O can we not spare him?—yes; spare his life?  
 For he was always generous and brave! (*Enter soldiers.*)

## CONGER

Forward march!

That way, soldiers—double quick. (*Going. Exeunt all but Dr. Mary.*)

## DR. MARY

Alas! poor woman's heart—its anger flies,  
And turns to pity, when the false one dies. (*Exit.*)

SCENE IX—*Scene in the barn—Booth and Herold sleeping.*

## BOOTH

Take down that banner—take it down, I say!  
Once did I love it, but its bloody stripes  
Are now like great red gashes in the sky.  
“O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!  
Give me another horse! bind up my wounds!  
It is now dread midnight—  
The lights burn blue—  
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.  
What do I fear? myself! there's none else here.  
Is there a murderer here? No; yes—I am.  
Then fly! What, from myself?  
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,  
And every tongue brings in a several tale.  
Murder! stern murder in the direst degree!  
Throng to the bar crying—guilty! guilty! (*Leaps up.*)  
Have mercy Jesus! Soft, soft; I did but dream.”  
Thank God, 'twas all a dream! a fearful dream!  
Or, rather, *Richard* played upon my sleep.  
I am no murderer, but the South's red arm  
Thrown up in anguish, as her great heart broke!  
Then let me perish with my native land,  
And as she fell on Patrick Henry's grave,  
So let me fall, to mingle with his dust,

Still gasping those immortal words:  
 "Give me liberty, or give me death!" (*Knocking and voice with-*  
*out.*)

VOICE

Open this door.  
 (*Booth and Herold listen—Booth examines carbine and pistol*  
*and dagger.*)

BOOTH

I should have loaded it before we slept. (*Loading.*)

BAKER—(*Without.*)

Surrender, or I'll set the barn on fire. (*Dead silence.*)  
 Open this door. Surrender or I'll set the  
 Barn on fire. Open, I say!

BOOTH

Who the devil are you? What do you wish?

BAKER

You are my prisoner; fifty men surround you;  
 There's no chance for escape; be quick, surrender!  
 (*Booth levels his carbine on Baker.*)

BOOTH

No, I'll spare his life, for that he comes obedient  
 To the same tyrant, whose heavy hand I feel.

BAKER

Come surrender instantly—here goes the match!  
 I'll set the barn on fire. Will you surrender?

BOOTH—(*Aside.*)

I have but one load in my carbine yet.  
O for a little time! (*Aloud.*)  
This is a hard case, Captain; give us a few moments  
For consultation. (*Loading pistol.*)

BAKER

I'll give you just three minutes.

BOOTH

That will be sufficient.

HEROLD

Let us give up; we have no chance!

BOOTH

And you desert me, too? Go! coward, go!  
Captain, a man here wishes to surrender. (*Herold bolts to the  
door crying and pleading.*)

BAKER

Go back, and bring your arms.

HEROLD

I had none, sir.

BAKER

Yes, you had, d——n you! You had a carbine!

BOOTH

On the honor of a gentleman, he had no arms;  
They are all mine;



Draw your men off, and fight me one by one!  
 For I am lame, Captain; give a lame man a chance—  
 Draw off your men but fifty yards.

BAKER

Your time is almost out.

BOOTH

Then, my brave boys, prepare a stretcher for me.  
 But Captain, as you came, I spared your life  
 And took my carbine down—give me a chance,  
 And fight me like a man—fight one by one;  
 For I am lame, and cannot—would not—run!

BAKER

We didn't come to fight; but to take a murderer;  
 The time is out—will you surrender?

BOOTH—(*Drawing himself up with desperation—carbine pointed.*) No—d——n you! no!

(*Barn blazes—Firing on all sides.*)

BOOTH—(*Having his carbine poised, and leaping from side to side, to see them.*)

I'll take you down to Hell, or up to Heaven;  
 Cowards! by darkness covered, you are safe;  
 Fire! for I am in the light, and you in the darkness.  
 Fire! for I just spared your life—take mine!  
 Fire! for I am lame and one to fifty—  
 'Twas thus you fought us from the first,  
 But from this wave of fire, with plunging shot,  
 I'll gut the maw of Hell! Infernal fiends!

(*Staggers back mortally wounded—Lincoln's Ghost rises and supports him.*)

## LINCOLN

The South is conquered, and the Union saved—  
 A mad but generous valor led them on,  
 And there was greatness in their fiery zeal.  
 Put out these flames, and let us all forgive!  
 My motto from the first hath been:  
 Malice to none, but Charity for all!

SCENE X—*Street in Washington—Enter Citizen.*

## FIRST CITIZEN

There they come with Wirz.

## SECOND CITIZEN

Hell! there's a rope around his neck.

## FIRST CITIZEN

Yes; d——n him; he starved our boys at Andersonville.

*(Enter Beau Hickman, a decayed Virginia gentleman, whose gracious manners always secured him friends and money.)*

## BEAU HICKMAN

What's to pay here? What's going on?

## SECOND CITIZEN

They are about to hang Wirz, but  
 It's a d——n shame to hang him!  
 And let Lee and Jeff Davis go.

## BEAU H.

No one should be hanged, for war means ruin;  
 And now that war is over peace means peace—  
 After such sufferings I would not harm a fly—

But more than that, three in the North,  
 For every captive in the South, have perished!  
 The North had everything to cherish life;  
 While the South was ruined and her sons starving.

## FIRST CITIZEN

Martyrs I suppose! Was Booth a martyr, too?  
 Shot in a barn and murdered like a dog!

## BEAU H.

Alas! poor man; I knew him long and well;  
 And many a favor has he granted me—  
 Was always kind, when other friends grew cold  
 And condescendingly would sometimes play  
 My subject, in that kingdom of my own,  
 Which levied contributions on mankind—  
 A *five* or *ten* or *twenty* he would pay  
 In lowly reverence to my Majesty.  
 By Heaven! he played 't so well, I thought myself a king!  
 Poor Lincoln's blood must ever soil his fame,  
 But still his dread misfortunes touch my heart—  
 And gratitude can palliate his crime.  
 No Christian man could justify the deed—  
 The fault of madness, rather than his own.  
 A cold and creeping horror thrills my heart!  
 And sane, his generous soul had shuddered too;  
 For he was cast in nature's finest mould—  
 True to his friendship; for a friend would die;  
 But scorn'd the faithless with a burning hate!  
 With love inordinate, he may have loved  
 The very mountains of his native land—  
 Once loved the Union and her rainbow flag—  
 He loved yon Capitol, his fathers built;

And 'gainst the tempest vainly struggled there;  
 A shattered rainbow, bending to its dome,  
 His spirit rose and vanished in the storm! (*Enter Policemen.*)

POLICEMAN

Stand back! stand back! the funeral is coming.

FIRST CITIZEN

It's not the funeral, boss; they are only  
 Moving the President's remains—  
 He's off for Springfield.

POLICEMAN

It's all the same—funeral or no funeral—  
 Clear the streets!

(*Enter soldiers, dragging Wirz, rope around his neck.  
 Funeral Procession—Exeunt.*)

SCENE XI—*President's Mansion—President Johnson and General Mussy drinking.*

JOHNSON

What of the murderers?

MUSSY

They've all been tried and convicted.

JOHNSON

What proof against Atzerodt?  
 What does he say of Madame Surratt?

MUSSY

That she is innocent.

JOHNSON

And Herold; what does he say of her?

MUSSY

Protests her innocence—so do they all;  
 Yet known to be a Rebel, and so linked  
 With many enterprises of disloyalty,  
 No power but your own could save her;  
 And I implore your Excellence, to interpose.

JOHNSON

Why, Mussy, should I pardon her, the mob  
 Would sweep us all away.  
 They thirst for blood; their vengeance must be slaked;  
 Let no petition come to me, for God's sake!  
 Keep the preachers all away, and the women.  
 But Payne—of course he'll swing.

MUSSY

True, he's guilty—but his frank confession  
 And defiant port—his fierce encounter, too,  
 With Seward's sons, and then his desperate fight—  
 Disputing every inch and courting death,  
 Excites the sympathy of all our soldiers.  
 I saw him pass the Market house, in chains—  
 Like Bryant's hero—even more sublime;  
 "Upon the market-place he stood,  
 A man of giant frame;  
 Amid the gathering multitude,  
 That shrank to hear his name;  
 All proud of step and firm of limb;  
 His dark eye on the ground,  
 And silently they gazed on him,  
 As on a lion bound."

## JOHNSON

That reminds me of some po'try I made  
 When pushing my tailor's goose, in Tennessee:  
 "If you want the gals to love you,  
 If you want 'em to love you true,  
 Come down to Andy's tailor shop,  
 And git a long-tail blue"—ha! ha! ha! (*Enter page.*)

## PAGE

A lady, please, your Excellence, at the door.  
 She weeps and trembles; wrings her hands, and moans  
 So piteously we could not keep her back.  
 Annie Surratt, your Excellence.

## JOHNSON

For God's sake, Mussy, keep them all away. (*Exit. Enter Annie Surratt.*)

## MUSSY

You cannot see his Excellence.

## ANNIE

O sir if you have mercy in your heart;  
 If e'er you had a mother, and remember  
 How she loved you more than life itself,  
 And how, when sickness perilous dire  
 Had laid her darling at the gate of death,  
 Forgetful of herself, she lingered there,  
 Supplied your wants and dried your parched tongue;  
 How by your couch, the livelong night, she watched,  
 And watered with her briny tears your pillow,  
 Oft lifting up her streaming eyes to Heaven,  
 To bring all Heaven down about her child;

O then be pitiful—be generous to me—  
 Implore the President, that I may fall  
 Upon his very feet, to plead for her,  
 For my poor mother, O so sweet and innocent!

MUSSY (*Aside.*)

This ordeal is most terrible,  
 And I can scarce go through 't.  
 Poor girl! already have I plead in vain.  
 It is impossible—you cannot see him. (*Sternly.*)

ANNIE

O my mother! mother! (*Exit, sobbing.*)

SCENE XII—*At Door of arsenal—Sentinels pacing to and fro—  
 Enter Soldiers and Preacher with Atzerodt—Heavy chains—  
 Also Herold—snivelling and sobbing.*

ATZERODT

O shentlemens! shentlemens!  
 Take ware! take ware! O pity me!

FIRST SOLDIER

I'll preach your funeral—keep a stiff  
 Upper lip, brother, you'll soon be in  
 Heaven! All you rascals go up happy!

ATZERODT

O mine Got! mine Got! dat is not  
 Vat I vants—O mine Got! (*They thrust him in prison door—  
 Thrust Herold in, sobbing.*)

FIRST SOLDIER

Go now, first to your blindfold warning—then to death;

No law's delay—no lawyers with their tricks,  
But martial law, to speed the felons' doom!

## SECOND SOLDIER

As high as Haman shall they swing.  
For all who enter that dark door, leave hope behind!

FIRST SOLDIER—(*Hammering within.*)

Hark! hark! Those scaffold-builders hammer down —  
The voice of lawyers and proclaim the law.  
O glorious martial law, that ere it mocks  
The culprit with a trial builds his jumping board!  
All other courts would pull the scaffold down,  
Or let it rot between the sluggish terms;  
But martial law delights in expedition—ha! ha! ha!

## SECOND SOLDIER

When did the court convene? Were all tried?

## FIRST SOLDIER

Tried in a horn, ha! ha! A drum-head for the judgment seat,  
A quick decision, and a winding sheet, ha! ha!

(*Enter Madame Surratt with soldiers—Father Walters at her side—She bears a crucifix.*)

## MADAME SURRETT

O I do tremble so, yet innocence should give  
My poor knees firmness and sustain my heart.  
Why, Father, should I tremble like some guilty thing?  
You know that I am innocent?

## FATHER WALTERS

Yes, child; yes, yes! Be calm, my child!  
Our Divine Lord fell beneath his cross. (*She staggers. Father Walters sustains her, and presents the crucifix—Madame Surratt kisses it.*)



## MADAME SURRETT

Yes! Thou canst strengthen me, for, all alone,  
 Thy precious feet did climb to Calvary,  
 And three times didst thou fall beneath thy cross.  
 What wonder then, that I should tremble so,  
 With all my sins to weigh me down!  
 O glorious honor, thus to follow Thee. (*Enter Annie Surratt,*  
*sobbing. Enter Payne with heavy chains.*)

## ANNIE

Mother! (*Soldiers holding her back—Weeping and sobbing of*  
*mother and child.*)

## PAYNE

God hath no thunder left in Heaven;  
 And Hell no power to gape her ebon jaws,  
 Or earth would open wide, for yonder dome,  
 With all this martial power to topple down,  
 And save this woman from her doom!

## MADAME SURRETT

Soft! soft! There is a judgment yet to come,  
 And God withholds his thunderbolts one by one till then;  
 Meanwhile, my murderers one by one shall fall,  
 Till suicide and misery engulf them all.  
 May Heaven forgive! They know not what they do.  
 Farewell, my friends! To all farewell—  
 And thou, my child, a last and long farewell!  
 Heaven's blessing on the child—farewell, farewell!  
 (*They thrust her in prison—Push Payne with bayonets—He*  
*sweeps them off with his chains.*)

## PAYNE

Stand back, villains! Let me walk to my tomb!  
 (*Curtain falls.*)

FINIS









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