

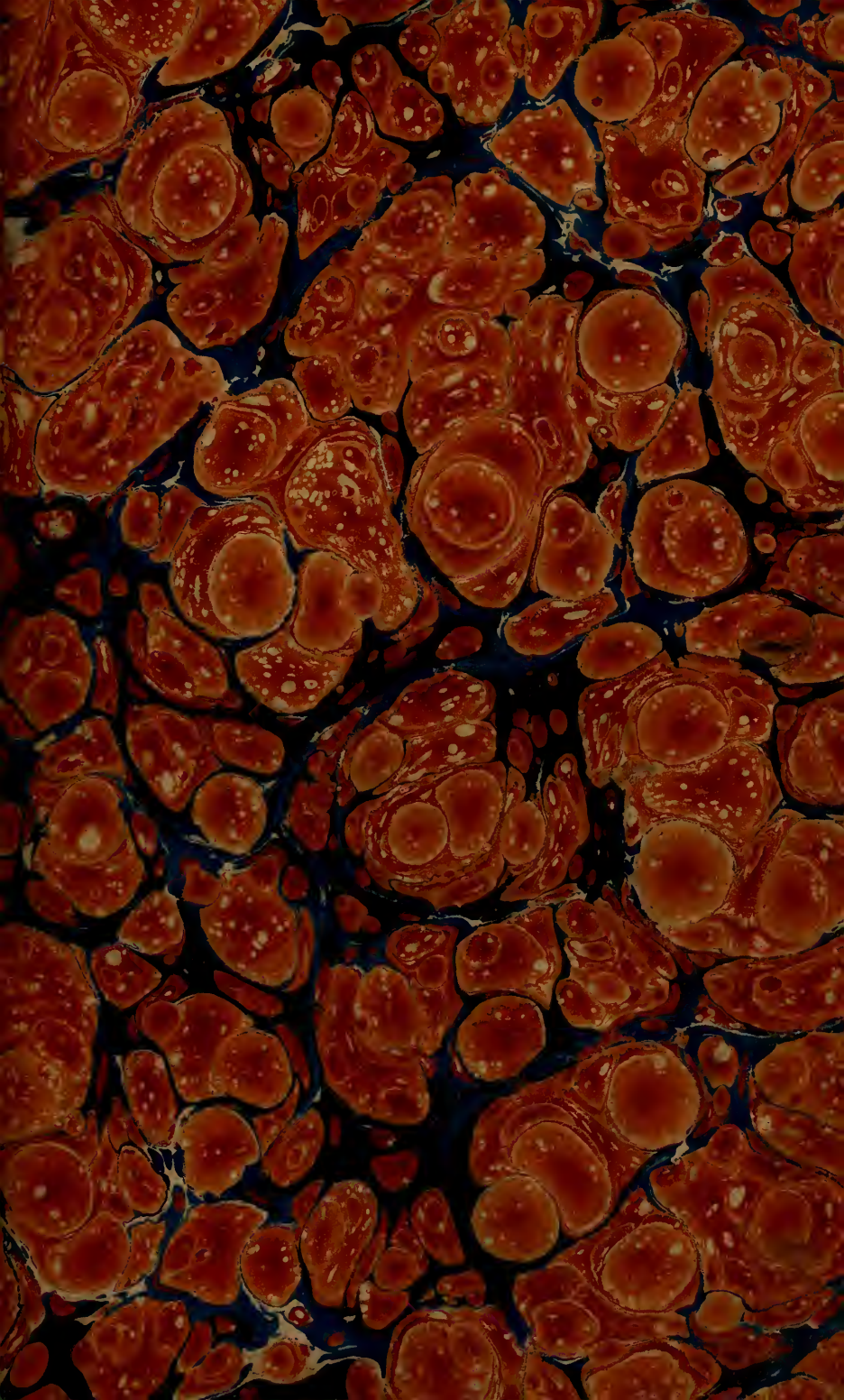
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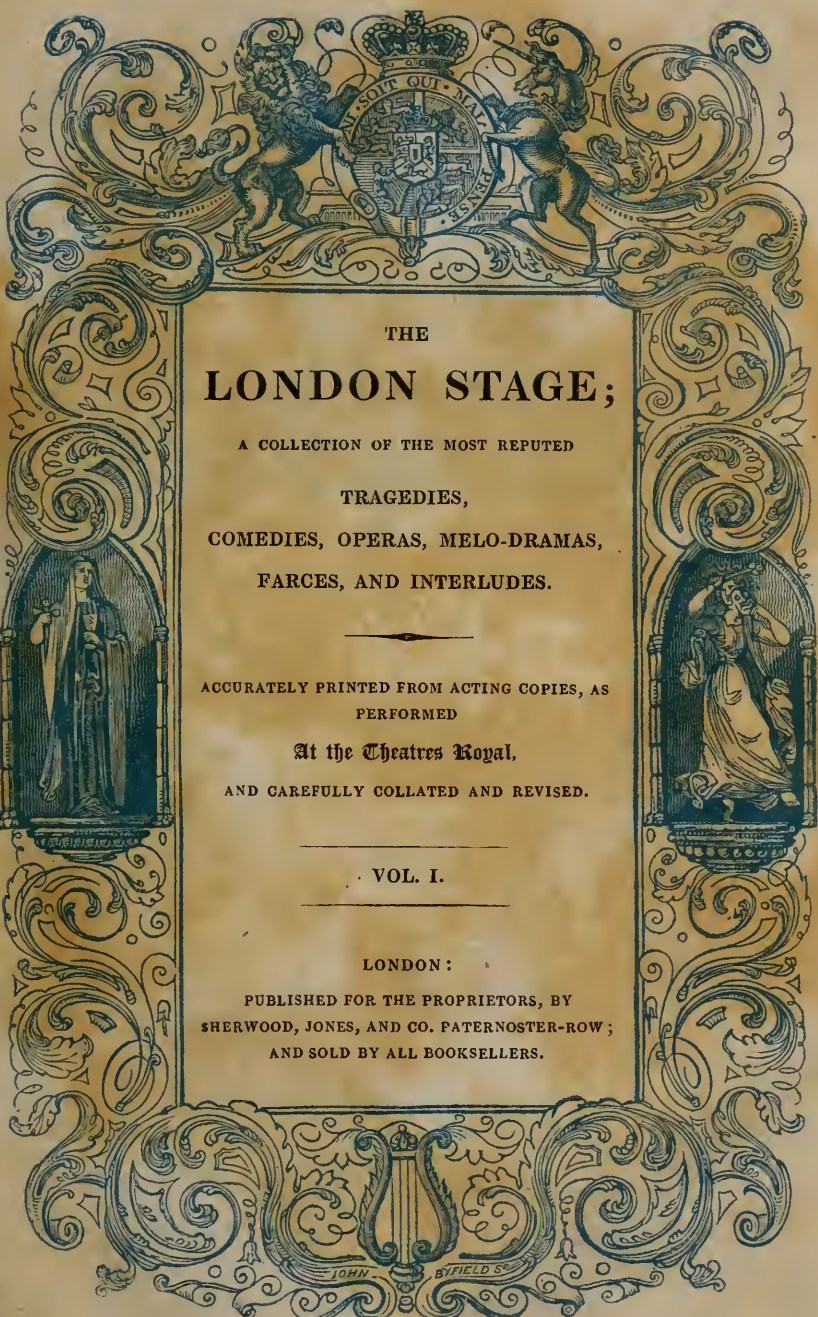


JONES.

THEATRICAL PORTRAITS.

Published Feb 14th 1835, for the Prop^r of the "London Stage" by Thomas, Jones & Co. Paternoster Row.

2010-235



THE
LONDON STAGE;

A COLLECTION OF THE MOST REPUTED
 TRAGEDIES,
 COMEDIES, OPERAS, MELO-DRAMAS,
 FARCES, AND INTERLUDES.

ACCURATELY PRINTED FROM ACTING COPIES, AS
 PERFORMED

At the Theatres Royal,
 AND CAREFULLY COLLATED AND REVISED.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
 PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY
 SHERWOOD, JONES, AND CO. PATERNOSTER-ROW;
 AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.



ALEXANDER THE GREAT;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY NATHANIEL LEE.



Act V.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

ALEXANDER
CLYTUS
CASSANDER
LYSIMACHUS

HEPHESTION
POLYPERCHON
THESSALUS
PERDICCAS

EUMENES
ARISTANDER
SLAVE
OFFICERS, &c.

ROXANA
STATIRA
PARISATIS
SYSIGANBIS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Alexander's Camp before Babylon.

Enter HEPHESTION and LYSIMACHUS, fighting; CLYTUS parting them.

Cly. What, are you madmen? This a time for quarrel!

Put up, I say, or by the gods that form'd me,
He who refuses, makes a foe of Clytus.

Lys. I have his sword.

Cly. But must not have his life.

Lys. Must not, old Clytus!

Cly. Hare-brain'd boy, you must not.

Heph. Lend me thy sword, thou father of the war,
Thou far-fam'd guard of Alexander's life.

Curse on this weak, unexecuting arm!

Lend it, old Clytus, to redeem my fame;

Lysimachus is brave, and else will scorn me.

Lys. There, take thy sword, and since thou'rt
bent on death,

Know, 'tis thy glory that thou dy'st by me.

Cly. Stay thee, Lysimachus; Hephestion, hold;
I bar you both, my body interpos'd;

Now let me see which of you dares to strike.

By Jove, you've stirr'd the old man!—that rash arm
That first advances moves against the gods,
And our great king, whose deputy I stand.

Lys. Some prop'r time must terminate our
quarrel. [bears.

Heph. And cure the bleeding wounds my honour
Cly. Some prop'r time! 'tis false—no hour
is proper;

No time should see a brave man do amiss.

Say, what's the noble cause of all this madness?

What vast ambition blows the dangerous fire?

Why, a vain, smiling, whiuing, coz'ning woman.
By all my triumphs! in the heat of youth,
When towns were sack'd, and beauties prostrate
lay,

When my blood boil'd, and nature work'd me high,
Clytus ne'er bow'd his body to such shame;
I knew 'em, and despis'd their cobweb arts:
The whole sex is not worth a soldier's thought.

Lys. Our cause of quarrel may to thee seem light;
But know, a less has set the world in arms.

Cly. Yes, Troy, they tell us, by a woman fell:
Curse on the sex, they are the bane of virtue!
Death! I'd rather this right arm were lost,
Than that the king should hear of your imprudence—
What! on a day thus set apart for triumph!

Lys. We were, indeed, to blame.

Cly. This memorable day!

When our hot master, whose impatient soul
Outrides the sun, and sighs for other worlds
To spread his conquests, and diffuse his glory;
Now bids the trumpet for awhile be silent,
And plays with monarchs, whom he us'd to drive;
Shall we, by broils, awake him into rage,
And rouse the lion, that has ceas'd to roar?

Lys. Clytus, thou'rt right—put up thy sword,
Hephestion:

Had passion not eclips'd the light of reason,
Untold, we might this consequence have seen.

Heph. Why has not reason power to conquer
Why are we thus enslav'd? [love?

Cly. Because unmann'd;

Because ye follow Alexander's steps.
Heav'ns! that a face should thus bewitch his soul,
And ruin all that's great and godlike in it.
Talk be my bane, yet the old man must talk;
Not so he lov'd, when he at Issus fought,

And join'd in mighty combat with Darius,
Whom, from his chariot, flaming all with gems,
He hurl'd to earth, and catch'd th' imperial crown.
'Twas not the shaft of love perform'd that feat;
He knew no Cupids then. Now mark the change:
A brace of rival queens embroil the court;
And, while each hand is thus employ'd in beauty,
Where has he room for glory?

Heph. In his heart.

Cly. Well said, young minion!—I, indeed, forgot
To whom I spoke—but Sysigambis comes:
Now is your time, for with her comes an idol,
That claims your homage.—I'll attend the king.

[Exit.

Enter SYSIGAMBIS, with a letter, and PARISATIS.

Sys. Why will you wound me with your fond complaints,

And urge a suit that I can never grant?
You know, my child, 'tis Alexander's will;
He demands you for his lov'd Hephestion.

To disobey him might inflame his wrath,
And plunge our house in ruins yet unknown.

Par. To sooth this god, and charm him into
Is there no victim; none but Parisatis? [temper,
Must I be doom'd to wretchedness and woe,
That others may enjoy the conqueror's smiles;
Oh! if you ever lov'd my royal father—

And sure you did, your gushing tears proclaim it—
If still his name be dear, have pity on me!
He would not thus have forc'd me to despair;
Indeed he would not. Had I beg'd him thus,
He would have heard me, ere my heart was broke.

Sys. When will my suff'rings end? O, when, ye
gods!

For sixty rolling years, my soul has stood
The dread vicissitudes of fate unmov'd:
I thought 'em your decrees, and therefore yielded.
But this last trial, as it springs from folly,
Exceeds my suff'rance, and I must complain.

Lys. When Sysigambis mourns, no common woe
Can be the cause—'tis misery, indeed.
Yet, pardon, mighty queen, a wretched prince,
Who thus presumes to plead the cause of love:
Beyond my life, beyond the world, (*knocking*) I prize
Fair Parisatis. Hear me, I conjure you!

As you have authoriz'd Hephestion's vows,
Reject not mine; grant me but equal leave
To serve the princess, and let love decide.

Heph. A blessing like the beauteous Parisatis,
Whole years of service, and the world's wide
empire,

With all the blood that circles in our veins,
Can never merit; therefore, in my favour,
I beg'd the king to interpose his int'rest;
Therefore, I beg'd your majesty's assistance;
Your word is pass'd, and all my hopes rest on't.

Lys. (*Rising.*) Perish such hopes! for love's
a generous passion,
Which seeks the happiness of her we love,
Beyond th' enjoyment of our own desires;
Nor kings, nor parents here have aught to do.
Love owns no influence, and disdains controul;
Let 'em stand neuter—'tis all I ask.

Heph. Such arrogance, did Alexander woo,
Would lose him all the conquests he has won.

Lys. To talk of conquests well becomes the man
Whose life and sword are but his rival's gift.

Sys. It grieves me, brave Lysimachus, to find
My power fall short of my desires to serve you;
You know Hephestion first declar'd his love,
And 'tis as true, I promis'd him my aid.
Your glorious king, his mighty advocate,
Became himself an humble suppliant for him.
Forget her, prince, and triumph o'er your passion:
A conquest worthy of a soul like thine.

Lys. Forget her, madam! sooner shall the sun
Forget to shine, and tumble from his sphere.
Farewell, great queen; my honour now demands

That Alexander should himself explain
That wond'rous merit which exalts his fav'rite,
And casts Lysimachus at such a distance. [Exit.

Sys. In this wild transport of ungovern'd passion
Too far, I fear, he will incense the king.

Is Alexander yet, my lord, arriv'd?

Heph. Madam, I know not, but Cassander comes;
He may, perhaps, inform us.

Sys. I would shun him.
Something there is, I know not why, that shocks me;
Something my nature shrinks at, when I see him.

[Exeunt.

Enter CASSANDER.

Cas. The face of day now blushes scarlet deep:
Now blackens into night. The low'ring sun,
As if the dreadful business he foreknew,
Drives heavily his sable chariot on.

All nature seems alarm'd for Alexander.—
Why, be it so. Her pangs proclaim my triumph.
A mad Chaldean, with a flaming torch
Came to my bed last night, and bellowing o'er me,
Well had it been, for Babylon, he cried,
If curst Cassander never had been born.

Enter THESSALUS, with a packet.

How now, dear Thessalus, what packet's that?

Thes. From Macedon, a trusty slave just
brought it.

Your father chides us for our cold delay;
He says, Craterus, by the king's appointment,
Comes, in his room, to govern Macedon,
Which nothing but the tyrant's death can hinder;
Therefore he bids us boldly strike at once,
Or quit our purpose, and confess our fears.

Cas. Is not his fate resolv'd?—this night he dies;
And thus my father but forestalls my purpose.
How am I slow then?—if I rode on thunder,
Wing'd as the light'ning, it would ask some mo-
ments,

Ere I could blast the growth of this Colossus.

Thes. Mark where the haughty Polyperchon
Some new affront by Alexander given, [comes!
Swells in his heart, and stings him into madness.

Cas. Now, now's our time; he must, he shall
be ours:

His haughty soul will kindle at his wrongs,
Blaze into rage, and glory in revenge.

Enter POLYPERCHON.

Poly. Still as I pass, fresh murmurs fill my ears;
All talk of wrongs, and mutter their complaints.
Poor soul-less reptiles!—their revenge expires
In idle threats—the fortitude of cowards!
Their province is to talk! 'tis mine to act,
And shew this tyrant, when he dar'd to wrong me,
He wrong'd a man whose attribute is vengeance.

Cas. All nations bow their heads with servile
homage,

And kiss the feet of this exalted man.
The name, the shout, the blast from ev'ry mouth
Is Alexander! Alexander stuns
The list'ning ear, and drowns the voice of heav'n.
The earth's commanders fawn like crouching spa-
And if this hunter of the barbarous world [niels;
But wind himself a god, all echo him,
With universal cry.

Poly. I fawn, or echo him!
Cassander, no! my soul disdains the thought!
Let eastern slaves, or prostituted Greeks
Crouch at his feet, or tremble if he frown.
When Polyperchon can descend so low,
False to that honour, which thro' fields of death,
I still have courted, where the fight was fiercest,
Be scorn my portion; infamy my lot.

Thes. The king may doom me to a thousand
tortures,

Ply me with fire, and rack me like Philotas,
Ere I shall stoop to idolize his pride.

Cas. Not Aristander, had he rais'd all hell,

Could more have shock'd my soul, than thou hast done,

By the bare mention of Philotas' murder.
O Polyperchon! how shall I describe it!
Did not your eyes rain blood to see the hero?
Did not your spirits burst with smother'd vengeance
To see thy noble fellow-warrior tortur'd? [ance
Yet, without groaning, or a tear endure
The torments of the damn'd? O death to think it!
We saw him bruis'd; we saw his bones laid bare!
His veins wide lanc'd, and the poor quiv'ring flesh
With fiery pincers from his bosom torn;
Till all beheld where the great heart lay panting.

Poly. Yet all like statutes stood!—cold, lifeless statutes!

As if the sight had froze us into marble:
When, with collected rage, we should have flown
To instant vengeance on the ruthless cause,
And plung'd a thousand daggers in his heart.

Cas. At our last banquet, when the bowl had gone

The giddy round, and wine inflam'd my spirits;
I saw Craterus and Hephestion enter
In Persian robes; to Alexander's health
They largely drank; and falling at his feet
With impious adoration thus address'd
Their idol god. Hail, son of thund'ring Jove!
Hail, first of kings! young Ammon, live for ever!
Then kiss'd the ground; on which I laugh'd aloud,
And scoffing, ask'd 'em, why they kiss'd no harder:
Whereon the tyrant, starting from his throne,
Spurn'd me to earth, and stamping on my neck,
Learn thou to kiss it, was his fierce reply;
While, with his foot, he press'd me to the earth,
Till I lay weltring in a foam of blood.

Poly. Thus when I mock'd the Persians that ador'd him,

He struck me on the face, swung me around,
And bid his guards chastise me like a slave.
But if he 'scape my vengeance, may he live,
Great as that god whose name he thus profanes,
And, like a slave, may I again be beaten,
Scoff'd as I pass, and branded for a coward,

Cas. There spoke the spirit of Calisthenes:
Remember, he's a man, his flesh as penetrable
As any girl's, and wounded too as soon;
To give him death no thunders are requir'd.
Struck by a stone, young Jupiter has fall'n,
A sword has pierc'd him, and the blood has follow'd;
Nay, we have seen an hundred common ailments
Bring this immortal to the gates of death.

Poly. O let us not delay the glorious business!
Our wrongs are great, and honour calls for vengeance.

Cas. This day, exulting Babylon receives
The mighty robber—with him comes Roxana,
Fierce, haughty fair! On his return from India,
Artful she met him in the height of triumph,
And by a thousand wiles at Susa kept him,
In all the luxury of eastern revels.

Poly. How hore Statira his revolted love?
For, if I err not, ere the king espous'd her,
She made him promise to renounce Roxana.

Thes. No words can paint the anguish it occasions!

E'en Sysgambis wept, while the wrong'd queen
Struck to the heart, fell lifeless on the ground.

Cas. When the first tumult of her grief was laid,
I sought to fire her into wild revenge;
And to that end, with all the art I could,
Describ'd his passion for the bright Roxana:
But tho' I could not to my wish inflame her,
Thus far, at least, her jealousy will help;
She'll give him troubles that perhaps may end him,
And set the court in universal updrar.
But see, she comes. Our plots begin to ripen.
Now every one disperse,
And, with a face of friendship, meet the king,

[*Exeunt.*

Enter SYSGAMBIS, STATIRA, and PARISATIS.

Sta. O for a dagger, a draught of poison, flames!
Swell heart, break, break, thou wretched stubborn thing.

Now, by the sacred fire, I'll not be held:
Pray give me leave to walk.

Sys. Is there no reverence to my person due?
Trust me, Statira, had thy father liv'd,
Darius wou'd have heard me.

Sta. O he's false.
This glorious man, this wonder of the world,
Is to his love, and every god foresworn.
O I have heard him breathe such ardent vows,
Out-weep the morning with his dewy eyes,
And sigh and swear the list'ning stars away.

Sys. Believe not rumour, 'tis impossible.
Thy Alexander is renown'd for truth;
Above deceit—

Sta. Away, and let me die.

Why, Alexander, why wou'dst thou deceive me!
Have I not kiss'd thy wounds with dying fondness,
Bath'd 'em in tears, and bound 'em with my hair!

Par. If man can thus renounce the solemn ties
Of sacred love, who would regard his vows?

Sta. Regard his vows, the monster, traitor! Oh!
I will forsake the haunts of men, converse
No more with aught that's human; dwell with
darkness;

For since the sight of him is now unwelcome,
What has the world to give Statira joy?
Yet I must tell thee, perjurd as he is,
Not the soft breeze of the genial spring,
The fragrant violet, or opening rose,
Are half so sweet as Alexander's breath:
Then he will talk—good gods, how he will talk!
He speaks the kindest words, and looks such things,
Vows with such passion, and swears with such a

grace,

That it is heav'n to be deluded by him.

Sys. Her sorrows must have way.

Sta. Roxana then enjoys my perjurd love;
Roxana clasps my monarch in her arms,
Doats on my conqu'ror, my dear lord, my king.
Oh 'tis too much! by heav'n I cannot bear it!
I'll die, or rid me of the burning torture.
Hear me, bright god of day, hear, ev'ry god.

Sys. Take heed, Statira; weigh it well, my child,
Ere desperate love enforces you to swear.

Sta. O fear not that, already have I weigh'd it;
And in the presence here of heav'n and you,
Renounce all converse with perfidious man.
Farewell, ye cozeners of our easy sex!
And thou the falsest of the faithless kind,
Farewell for ever! Oh, farewell! farewell!
If I but mention him, the tears will flow.
How cou'dst thou, cruel, wrong a heart like mine,
Thus fond, thus doting, ev'n to madness, on thee?

Sys. Clear up thy griefs, thy Alexander comes,
Triumphant in the spoils of conquer'd India;
This day the hero enters Babylon.

Sta. Why, let him come: all eyes will gaze with rapture.

All hearts will joy to see the victor pass,
All but the wretched, the forlorn Statira.

Sys. Wilt thou not see him then?

Sta. I swear, and heav'n be witness to my vow,
(*Kneels.*)

Never from this sad hour, never to see,
Nor speak, no, nor, if possible, to think
Of Alexander more: this is my vow,
And when I break it—

Sys. Do not ruin all!

Sta. May I again be perjur'd and deluded!

May furies rend my heart! may lightnings blast me!

Sys. Recal, my child, the dreadful imprecation.

Sta. No, I will publish it through all the court;
Then to the bow'rs of great Semiramis,
Retire for ever from the treacherous world.
There from man's sight will I conceal my woes,

And seek in solitude a calm repose :
Nor pray'rs nor tears, shall my resolves control,
Nor love itself, that tyrant of the soul. [Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A triumphal Arch at the entrance into Babylon.*

Enter ALEXANDER in a triumphal car; trophies and warlike ensigns in procession before him; CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, LYSIMACHUS, CASSANDER, POLYPERCHON, THESSALUS, EUMENES, chorus of Priests, Youths, and Virgins, Guards, and Attendants.

*See the cong'riny hero comes,
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;
Sports prepare, the laurel bring,
Songs of triumph to him sing.*

*See the godlike youth advance;
Breath the flute, and lead the dance;
Myrtles wreath, and roses twine,
To deck the hero's brow divine.*

Heph. Hail, son of Jove! great Alexander, hail!

Alex. Rise all; and thou, my second self, my friend!

Oh, my Hephestion! raise thee from the earth!
Come to my arms, and hide thee in my heart;
Nearer, yet nearer, else thou lov'st me not.

Heph. Not love my king! bear witness, all ye powers,

And let your thunder nail me to the centre,
If sacred friendship ever burn'd more brightly!
Immortal bosoms can alone admit

A flame more pure, more permanent than mine.

Alex. Thou dearer to me than my groves of laurel!

I know thou lov'st thy Alexander more,
Than Clytus does the king.

Lys. Now for my fate!

I see that death awaits me—yet I'll on.

Dread sir, I cast me at your royal feet.

Alex. Rise, my Lysimachus; thy veins and mine
From the same fountain have deriv'd their streams.
Rise to my arms, and let thy king embrace thee.
Is not that Clytus?

Cly. Your old faithful soldier.

Alex. Clytus, thy hand;—thy hand, Lysimachus;
Thus double-arm'd, methinks,

I stand tremendous as the Lybian god,
Who, while his priests and I quaff'd sacred blood,

Acknowledg'd me his son; my lightning thou,

And thou, my mighty thunder. I have seen

Thy glitt'ring sword out-fly celestial fire;

And, when I've cry'd, begone, and execute,

I've seen him run swifter than starting hinds,

Nor bent the tender grass beneath his feet.

Lys. When fame invites, and Alexander leads,

Dangers and toils but animate the brave.

Cly. Perish the soldier, inglorious and despis'd,
Who starts from either, when the king cries—on!

Alex. Oh, Clytus! Oh, my noble veteran!

'Twas, I remember, when I pass'd the Granicus,

Thy arm preserv'd me from unequal force;

When fierce Itanor and the bold Rhesaces,

Fell both upon me with two mighty blows,

And clove my temper'd helmet quite asunder;

Then, like a god, flew Clytus to my aid;

Thy thunder struck Rhesaces to the ground,

And turn'd with ready vengeance, on Itanor.

Cly. To your own deeds that victory you owe,

And sure your arms did never boast a nobler.

Alex. By heav'n, they never did: they never can;

And I am prouder to have pass'd that stream,

Than to have driven a million o'er the plain:

Can none remember?—Yes, I know all must—

When glory, like the dazzling eagle stood

Perch'd on my beaver in the Granic flood;

When fortune's self my standard trembling bore,
And the pale fates stood frighted on the shore;
When each immortal on the billows rode,
And I myself appear'd the leading god.

Enter ARISTANDER.

Aris. Haste, first of heroes, from this fatal place;
Far, far from Babylon, enjoy your triumph,
Or all the glories, which your youth has won,
Are blasted in their spring.

Alex. What mean thy fears?

And why that wild distraction on thy brow?

Aris. This morn, great king, I view'd the angry sky,

And frighted at the direful prodigies,

To Orosmales for instruction flew!

But, as I pray'd, deep-echoing groans I heard,

And shrieks, as of the damn'd that howl for sin.

Shock'd at the omen, while amaz'd I lay

In prostrate rev'rence on the trembling floor,

Thus spoke the god:

The brightest glory of imperial man,

The pride of nations, and the boast of fame,

Remorseless fate, in Babylon, has doom'd

To sudden and irrevocable ruin.

Alex. If heav'n ordains that Babylon must fall,

Can I prevent the immutable decree?

Enter PERDICCAS.

Per. Oh, horror! horror! Dreadful and portentous!
[climation?]

Alex. How now, Perdicas! Whence this ex-

Per. As Meleager and myself, this morn,

Led forth the Persian horse to exercise,

We heard a noise as of a rushing wind;

When suddenly a flight of baleful birds,

Like a thick cloud, obscur'd the face of heav'n;

On sounding wings from diff'rent parts they flew,

Encount'ring met, and battled in the air;

Their talons clash'd, their beaks gave mighty blows,

And show'rs of blood fell copious from their wounds.

Alex. Though all the curtains of the sky were drawn,

And the stars wink, young Ammon shall go on;

While my Statira shines, I cannot stray,

Love lifts his torch to light me on my way,

And her bright eyes create another day.

Lys. Vouchsafe, dread sir, to hear my humble suit,

A prince intreats it, and what's more, your kinsman.

Alex. A soldier asks it; that's the noblest claim.

Lys. For all the services my sword has done,

Humbly I beg the princess Parisatis.

Alex. Lysimachus, no more—it is not well—

My word, you know, is to Hephestion given:

How dare you then—but let me hear no more on't.

Lys. At your command, to scale th' embattled wall,

Or fetch the gore-dy'd standard from the foe,

When has Hephestion flown with warmer zeal?

When did he leave Lysimachus behind?

These I have done, for these were in my pow'r;

But when you charge me to renounce my love,

And from my thoughts to banish Parisatis,

Obedience there becomes impossible;

Nature revolts, and my whole soul rebels.

Alex. It does, brave sir!—now hear me, and be dumb!

When, by my order, curst Calisthenes

Was, as a traitor, doom'd to live in torments—

Your pity sped him in despite of me.

Think not I have forgot your insolence;

No; though I pardon'd it:—yet, if again

Thou dar'st to cross me with another crime,

The bolts of fury shall be doubled on thee.—

In the mean time—think not of Parisatis;

For if thou dost—by the immortal Ammon!

I'll not regard that blood of mine thou shar'st,

But use thee as the vilest Macedonian.

Lys. I knew you partial, ere I mov'd my suit ;
Yet, know, it shakes not my determin'd purpose ;
While I have life and strength to wield a sword,
I never will forego the glorious claim.

Alex. Against my life!—ha! traitor, was it so?
'Tis said, that I am rash, of hasty humour!

But I appeal to the immortal gods,
If ever petty, poor, provincial lord
Had temper like to mine? My slave, whom I
Could tread to clay, dares utter bloody threats.

Cly. Forgive dread sir, the frantic warmth of
love:

The noble prince,—I read it in his eyes,—
Would die a thousand deaths to serve his king,
And justify his loyalty and truth.

Lys. I meant his minion there should feel my arm,
Love claims his blood, nor shall he live to triumph
In that destruction that awaits his rival.

Alex. I pardon thee, for my old Clytus' sake ;
But if once more thou mention thy rash love,
Or dar'st attempt Hephestion's precious life,
I'll pour such storms of indignation on thee,
Philota's rack, Calisthenes' disgrace,
Shall be delights, to what thou shalt endure.

Cly. My lord, the aged queen, with Parisatis,
Comes to congratulate your safe arrival.

Enter SYSIGAMBEIS and PARISATIS.

Alex. Oh! thou, the best of women, Sysigambis,
Source of my joy, blest parent of my love!

Sys. In humble duty to the gods and you,
Permit us, sir, with gratitude to bow.
Through you the royal house of Persia shines,
Rais'd from the depth of wretchedness and ruin,
In all the splendour of imperial greatness.

Alex. To meet me thus, was generously done ;
But still there wants, to crown my happiness,
That treasure of my soul, my dear Statira:
Had she but come to meet her Alexander,
I had been blest indeed.

Cly. Now who shall dare
To tell him of the queen's vow?

Alex. How fares
My love?—Ha! neither answer me! all silent!
A sudden horror, like a bolt of ice,
Shoots to my heart, and numbs the seat of life.

Heph. I would relate it, but my courage fails me.

Alex. Why stand you all as you were rooted here?
What, will none answer? my Hephestion silent?
If thou hast any love for Alexander ;
If ever I obliged thee by my care ;
When through the field of death my eye has watch'd
thee,

Resolve my doubts, and rescue me from madness.

Heph. Your mourning queen has no disease but
grief,

Occasioned by the jealous pangs of love.
She heard, dread sir, (for what can 'scape a lover)
That you, regardless of your vows, at Susa,
Had to Roxana's charms resign'd your heart,
And revell'd in the joys you once forswore.

Alex. I own, the subtle sorceress, in my riot,
My reason gone, seduc'd me to her bed ;
But, when I wak'd, I shook the Circe off ;
Nor griev'd I less for that which I had done,
Than when at Thais' suit, enrag'd with wine,
I set the fam'd Persepolis on fire.

Heph. Your queen Statira, in the rage of grief,
And agony of desp'rate love, has sworn,
Never to see your majesty again.

Alex. Oh, madam, has she, has Statira sworn
Never to see her Alexander more?

Par. With sorrow, sir, I heard the solemn vow ;
My mother heard it, and in vain adjur'd her,
By every tender motive, to recall it.

Sys. But with that fierceness she resents her
wrongs,

Dwells on your fault, and heightens the offence,

That I could wish your majesty forget her.

Alex. Ha, could you wish me to forget Statira?
The star which brightens Alexander's life,
His guide by day, and goddess of his nights!
I feel her now ; she beats in every pulse,
Throbs at my heart, and circles with my blood.

Sys. Have patience, sir, and trust to heav'n and
me:

If my authority has any influence,
I will exert it, and she shall be yours.

Alex. Haste, madam, haste, if you would have
me live ;

Fly, ere for ever she abjure the world,
And stop the sad procession. [*Exit Sysigambis.*]
Parisatis,

Hang thou about her ; wash her feet with tears,
Nay, haste ; the breath of gods, and eloquence
Of angels, go along with you. [*Exit Parisatis.*]
Oh, my heart!

Lys. Now let your majesty, who feels the pangs
Of disappointed love, reflect on mine.

Alex. Ha!

Cly. What, are you mad? Is this a time to plead?

Lys. The prop' rest time ; he dares not now be
partial,

Least heav'n, in justice, should avenge my wrongs,
And double every pang which he feels now.

Alex. Why dost thou tempt me thus to thy un-
doing?

Death thou shouldst have, were it not courted so:
But, know, to thy confusion, that my word,
Like destiny, admits of no repeal:
Therefore, in chains, shalt thou behold the nuptials
Of my Hephestion. Guards, take him prisoner.

(*The Guards sieze Lysimachus.*)

Lys. Away, ye slaves, I'll not resign my sword,
Till first I've drench'd it in my rival's blood.

Alex. I charge you, kill him not ; take him alive:
The dignity of kings is now concern'd,
And I will find a way to tame this rebel.

Cly. Kneel—for I see rage lightning in his eyes.

Lys. I neither hope, nor will I sue for pardon:

Had I my sword and liberty again,
Again I would attempt his favourite's heart.

Alex. Hence, from my sight, and bear him to a
dungeon.

Perdiccas, give this lion to a lion.—

None speak for him : fly ; stop his mouth, away.

(*Exeunt Lysimachus, Perdiccas, and Guards.*)

Cly. This comes of woman—the result of love.
Yet were I heated now with wine, I doubt
I should be preaching in this fool's behalf.

Alex. Come hither, Clytus, and my friend He-
phestion ;

Lend me your arms ; for I am sick o' the sudden.

I fear, betwixt Statira's cruel vows,
And fond Roxana's arts, your king will fall.

Cly. Better the race of women were destroy'd,
And Persia sunk in everlasting ruin.

Heph. Look up, my lord, and bend not thus your
head,

As if you purpos'd to forsake the world,
Which you have greatly won.

Alex. Would I had not ;

There's no true joy in such unwieldy fortune.

Eternal gazers lasting troubles make ;

All find my spots, but few observe my brightness.
Stand from about me all, and give me air!

(*They retire.*)

Yes, I will shake this Cupid from my soul ;
I'll fright the feeble god with war's alarms,
Or drown his pow'r in floods of hostile blood.
Grant me, great Mars, once more in arms to shine,
And break, like light'ning, through the embattl'd
line ;

O'er fields of death to whirl the rapid car,
And blaze amidst the thunder of the war,
Resistless as the bolt that rends the grove ;—
Or greatly perish, like the son of Jove. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT. III.

SCENE I.—*A Square before the palace.*

Trumpets sounding a dead march. LYSIMACHUS led Prisoner, PARISATIS, EUMENES, PERDICCAS, and Guards.

Par. Stay, my Lysimachus! a moment stay! Oh, whither art thou going?—hold a moment! Unkind! thou know'st my life was wrapt in thine, Why would'st thou then to worse than death expose me?

Lys. Oh, may'st thou live in joys without alloy! Grant it, ye gods! a better fortune waits thee; Live and enjoy it—'tis my dying wish; While to the grave the lost Lysimachus Alone retires, and bids the world adieu.

Par. Even in that grave will Parisatis join thee; Yes, cruel man! not death itself shall part us; A mother's pow'r, a sister's soft'ning tears, With all the fury of a tyrant's frown, Shall not compel me to outlive thy loss.

Lys. Were I to live till nature's self decay'd, This wond'rons waste of unexempl'd love I never could repay—Oh, Parisatis! Thy charms might fire a coward into courage; How must they act, then, on a soul like mine? Defenceless, and unarm'd, I fight for thee, And may, perhaps, compel th' astonish'd world, And force the king to own that I deserve thee. Eumenes, take the princess to thy charge; Away, Perdiccas; all my soul's on fire.

[*Exeunt Parisatis and Perdiccas, Lysimachus and Guards.*]

SCENE II.—*A Pavilion,*

Enter ROXANA and CASSANDER.

Rox. Deserted! saidst thou? for a girl abandon'd!

A puny girl, made up of wat'ry elements! Shall she embrace the god of my desires, And triumph in the heart Roxana claims? If I forget it, may'st thou, Jove, deprive me Of vengeance, make me the most wretched thing On earth, while living, and when dead, the lowest And blackest of the fiends;

Cas. Oh, nobly said! Just is the vengeance which inflames your soul; Your wrongs demand it—but let reason govern; This wild rage, else, may disappoint your aims.

Rox. Away, away, and give a whirlwind room; Pride, indignation, fury, and contempt, War in my breast, and torture me to madness!

Cas. Oh, think not I would check your boldest flights;

No—I approve 'em, and will aid your vengeance. But, princess, let us choose the safest course, Or we may give our foes new cause of triumph, Should they discover, and prevent our purpose.

Rox. Fear not, Cassander, nothing shall prevent it;

Roxana dooms him, and her voice is fate. My soul, from childhood, has aspir'd to empire; In early non-age I was us'd to reign Among my she-companions: I despis'd The trifling arts, and little wiles of women, And taught 'em, with an Amazonian spirit, To wind the steed, to chase the foaming boar, And conquer man, the lawless, charter'd savage.

Cas. Her words, her looks; her every motion fires me!

Rox. But when I heard of Alexander's fame, How, with a handful, he had vanquish'd millions, Spoil'd all the East, and captive held our queens; While, like a god, unconquer'd by their charms, With heav'nly pity he assuag'd their woes, Dry'd up their tears, and sooth'd them into peace; I hung attentive on my father's lips, And wish'd him tell the wond'rous tale again. No longer pleasing were my former sports;

Love had its turn, and all the woman reign'd. Involuntary sighs heav'd in my breast, And glowing blushes crimson'd on my cheek; E'en in my slumbers I have often mourn'd In plaintive sounds, and murmur'd Alexander. *Cas.* Curse on his name!—she doats upon him still.

Rox. At length this conqueror to Zogdia came, And, cover'd o'er with laurels, storm'd the city: But, Oh, Cassander! where shall I find words To paint the ecstatic transports of my soul? When, midst a circle of unrival'd beauties, I saw myself distinguish'd by the hero! With artless rapture I receiv'd his vows, The warmest, sure, that ever lover breath'd, Of fervent love, and everlasting truth. [part?]

Cas. And need you then be told, those times are Statira now engrosses all his thoughts; The Persian queen, without a rival, reigns Sole mistress of his heart; nor can thy charms, The brightest, sure, that ever woman boasted, Nor all his vows of everlasting love, Secure Roxana from disdain and insult.

Rox. Oh, thou hast rous'd the lion in my soul! Ha! shall the daughter of Darius hold him? No, 'tis resolv'd; I will resume my sphere, Or, falling, spread a general ruin round me, Roxana and Statira; they are names That must for ever jar, like clashing clouds; When they encounter, thunders must ensue.

Cas. Behold, she comes, in all the pomp of sorrow, Determin'd to fulfil her solemn vow! (*They retire.*)

Rox. Away, and let us mark th' important scene.

Enter STATIRA and SYSIGAMBIS.

Sys. Oh, my Statira, how has passion chang'd thee! Think, in the rage of disappointed love, If treated thus, and hurried to extremes, What Alexander may denounce against us; Against the poor remains of lost Darius.

Sta. Oh, fear not that! I know he will be kind, For my sake kind, to you and Parisatis: Tell him, I rail'd not at his falsehood to me, But with my parting breath spoke kindly of him; Tell him I wept at our divided loves, And, sighing, sent a last forgiveness to him.

Sys. No, I can ne'er again presume to meet him, Never approach the much-wrong'd Alexander, If thou refuse to see him. Oh, Statira! Thy aged mother, and thy weeping country, Claim thy regard, and challenge thy compassion: Hear us, my child, and lift us from despair.

Sta. Thus low, I cast me at your royal feet, To bathe them with my tears; or, if you please, I'll let out life, and wash 'em with my blood. But I conjure you not to rack my soul, Nor hurry my wild thoughts to perfect madness: Should now Darius' awful ghost appear, And you, my mother, stand beseeching by, I would persist to death, and keep my vow.

Rox. This fortitude of soul compels my wonder. (*Aside.*)

Sys. Hence! from my sight! ungrateful wretch, begone! And hide thee where bright virtue never shone; For, in the sight of heaven, I here renounce, And cast thee off an alien to my blood!

[*Exeunt Sys. and Cas.*]

Rox. (*Advancing.*) Forgive, great queen, th' intrusion of a stranger; With grief Roxana sees Statira weep; I've heard, and much applaud your fix'd resolve, To quit the world for Alexander's sake; And yet I fear, so greatly he adores you, That he will rather choose to die of sorrow, Than live for the despis'd Roxana's charms.

Sta. Spare, madam, spare your counterfeit'd fears; You know your beauty, and have prov'd its pow'r; Tho' humbly born, have you not captive held,

In love's soft chains, the conq'ror of the world?
 Away to libertines, and boast thy conquest;
 A shameful conquest! In his hours of riot,
 When wine prevail'd, and virtue lost its influence,
 Then, only then, Roxana could surprise
 My Alexander's heart.

Rox. Affected girl,

To some romantic grove's sequester'd gloom
 Thy sickly virtue would, it seems, retire,
 To shun the triumphs of a favour'd rival. [thee;
 In vain thou fliest; for there, ev'n there I'll haunt
 Plague thee all day, and torture thee all night:
 There shalt thou learn, in what ecstatic joys
 Roxana revels with the first of men;
 And, as thou bear'st the rapt'rous scene recited,
 With frantic jealousy thou'lt madly curse
 Thy own weak charms, that could not fix the rover,

Sta. How weak is woman! at the storm she
 shrinks, [der;

Dreads the drawn sword, and trembles at the thun-
 der; Yet, when strong jealousy inflames her soul,
 The sword may glitter, and the tempest roar,
 She scorns the danger, and provokes her fate.
 Rival, I thank thee; thou hast hir'd my soul,
 And rais'd a storm beyond thy pow'r to lay;
 Soon shalt thou tremble at the dire effects,
 And curse, too late, the folly that undid thee.

Rox. Sure the disdain'd Statira dares not mean it.

Sta. By all my hopes of happiness I dare:
 And know, proud woman, what a mother's threats,
 A sister's sighs, and Alexander's tears;
 Could not effect, thy rival rage has done.
 I'll see the king, in spite of all I swore,
 Though curs'd, that thou may'st never see him more.

Enter ALEXANDER, HEPHESTION, CLYTUS, POLY-
 PERCHON, THESSALUS, and EUMENES.

Alex. Oh, my Statira! thou relentless fair!
 Turn thine eyes on me: I would talk to them.
 What shall I say to work upon thy soul? [ness?
 What words, what looks, can melt thee to forgive—

Sta. Talk of Roxana, and the conquer'd Indies,
 Thy great adventures, thy successful love,
 And I will listen to the rapt'rous tale:

But rather shun me, shun a desperate wretch,
 Resign'd to sorrow, and eternal woe. [thee;

Alex. Oh! I could die, with transport, die before
 Would'st thou but, as I lay convuls'd in death,
 Cast a kind look, or drop a tender tear.

Rox. Am I then fall'n so low in thy esteem,
 That for another thou would'st rather die,
 Than live for me? How am I alter'd, tell me,
 Since last at Susa, with repeated oaths,
 You swore the conquest of the world afforded
 Less joy, less glory, than Roxana's love?

Alex. Take, take that conquer'd world, dispose
 of crowns,

And canton out the empires of the globe;
 But leave me, madam, with repentant tears,
 And undismember'd sorrows, to atone
 The wrongs I've offer'd to this injur'd excellence.

Rox. Yes, I will go, ungrateful as thou art!
 Bane to my life, and murder'ry of my peace,
 I will be gone; this last disdain has cur'd me.
 But have a care; I warn you not to trust me;
 Or, by the gods, that witness to thy perjuries,
 I'll raise a fire that shall consume you both,
 Tho' I partake the ruin. [Exit.

Sta. Alexander! Oh, is it possible?

Immortal gods! can guilt appear so lovely?

Yet, yet I pardon, I forgive thee all.

Alex. Forgive me all! Oh, catch the heavenly
 sounds,

Catch 'em, ye winds, and, as you fly, disperse
 The rapt'rous tidings through the extended world,
 That all may share in Alexander's joy!

Sta. Yes, dear deceiver, I forgive thee all,
 But longer dare not hear thy charming tongue;
 For while I hear thee, my resolves give way:

Be therefore quick, and take thy last farewell;
 Farewell, my love—eternally farewell!

Alex. Go, then, inhuman, triumph in my pains,
 Feed on the pangs that rend this wretched heart;
 For now 'tis plain you never lov'd. Statira!
 Oh, I could sound that charming, cruel name,
 Till the tir'd echo faint with repetition.

Oh, stay, my Statira!

[Kneels.]

I swear, my queen, I'll not outlive our parting:
 My soul grows still as death. Say, wilt thou pardon?
 'Tis all I ask; wilt thou forgive the transports
 Of a deep wounded heart, and all is well? [tira!

Sta. Rise; and may heav'n forgive you, like Sta-

Alex. You are too gracious. Clytus, bear me
 hence.

When I am laid i' th' earth, yield her the world.
 There's something here, that heaves as cold as ice,
 That stops my breath. Farewell, farewell for ever!

Sta. Hold off, and let me run into his arms:

My life, my love, my lord, my Alexander!

If thy Statira's love can give thee joy,

Revive, and be immortal as the gods.

Alex. Oh, let me press thee in my eager arms,

And strain thee hard to my transported breast!

Sta. But shall Roxana—

Alex. Let her not be nam'd!

Oh! how shall I repay you for this goodness?

And you, my fellow warriors, who could grieve

For your lost king? But talk of griefs no more;

The banquet waits, and I invite you all:

My equals in the throne, as in the grave,

Without distinction come, and share my joys.

Cly. Excuse me, sir, if I for once am absent.

Alex. Excuse thee, Clytus! None shall be excus'd.

All revel out the day, 'tis my command;

Gay as the Persian god, ourself will stand,

With a crown'd goblet in our lifted hand;

Young Ammon and Statira shall go round,

While antic measures beat the burthen'd ground,

And to the vaulted skies our trumpet's clangors
 sound. [Flourish of trumpets, and exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Square before the palace.

Enter CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, and PERDICCAS.

Cly. Urge me no more; I hate the Persian dress:
 Nor should the king be angry at the rev'rence
 I owe my country: sacred are her customs,
 And honest Clytus will to death observe 'em.
 Oh! let me rot in Macedonian rags,
 Or, like Calisthenes, be cag'd for life,
 Rather than shine in fashions of the east.

Per. Let me, brave Clytus, as a friend entreat you.

Heph. What virtue is there that adorns a throne,
 Exalts the heart, and dignifies the man,
 Which shines not brightly in our royal master?
 And yet perversely you'll oppose his will,
 And thwart an innocent unhurtful humour.

Cly. Unhurtful! oh! 'tis monstrous affectation,
 Pregnant with venom, in its nature black,
 And not to be excus'd. Shall man, weak man,
 Exact the rev'rence which we pay to heaven,
 And bid his fellow-creatures kneel before him,
 And yet be innocent? Hephestion, no;
 The pride that lays a claim to adoration,
 Insults our reason, and provokes the gods.

Per. Yet what was Jove, the god whom we adore?
 Was he not once a man, and rais'd to heaven
 For gen'rous acts, and virtues more than human?

Heph. By all his thunder, and his sov'reign pow'r,
 I'll not believe the world yet ever felt
 An arm like Alexander's! Not that god
 You nam'd, though riding in a car of fire,
 Could in a shorter space do greater deeds;
 Or more effectually have taught mankind
 To bend submissive, and confess his sway.

Cly. I tell you, boy, that Clytus loves the king
 As well as you, or any soldier here,

Yet I disdain to sooth his growing pride;
The hero charms me, but the god offends.

Heph. Then go not to the banquet.

Cly. Why, I was bid,

Young minion, was I not, as well as you?
I'll go, my friends, in this old habit, thus,
And laugh, and drink the king's health heartily;
And while you, blushing, bow your heads to earth,
And hide them in the dust, I'll stand erect,
Straight as a spear, the pillar of my country,
And be by so much nearer to the gods.

Heph. But see, the king appears.

Enter ALEXANDER, STATIRA, THESSALUS, and Guards, PARISATIS and EUMENES.

Par. Oh, gracious monarch!

Spare him, oh, spare Lysimachus his life!
I know you will; the brave delight in mercy.

Alex. Shield me, Statira, shield me from her sorrows!

Par. Save him, oh, save him, ere it be too late!
Speak the kind word; let not your soldier perish
For one rash action, by despair occasion'd.
I'll follow thus for ever on my knees;
You shall not pass. Statira, oh, intreat him!

Alex. Oh, madam! take her, take her from about me;

Her streaming eyes assail my very soul,
And shake my best resolves.

Sta. Did I not break

Through all for you? Nay now, my lord, you must.
By all th' obedience I have paid you long,
By all your passion, sighs, and tender looks,
Oh, save a prince, whose only crime is love!
I had not join'd in this bold suit, my lord,
But that it adds new lustre to your honour. [it?

Alex. Honour! what's that? Has not Statira said
Fly, Clytus! snatch him from the jaws of death,
And to the royal banquet bring him straight;
Bring him in triumph, fit for loads of honour.

[*Exeunt Clytus, Hephestion, and Parisatis.*

Sta. Why are you thus beyond expression kind?
Oh, my lov'd lord! my fond, my raptur'd heart,
By gratitude and love at once inflam'd,
With wild emotion flutters in my breast;
Oh, teach it, then, instruct it how to thank you!

Alex. Excellent woman!

'Tis not in nature to support such joy. [quet;

Sta. Go, my best love; unbend you at the ban-
dunlge in joy, and laugh your cares away;
While, in the bowers of great Semiramis,
I dress your bed with all the sweets of nature,
And crown it, as the altar of our loves;
Where I will lay me down, and softly mourn,
But never close my eyes till you return. [Exit.

Alex. Is she not more than mortal can desire;
As Venus lovely, and as Dian chaste?
And yet, I know not why, our parting shocks me;
A ghastly paleness sat upon her brow;
Her voice, like dying echoes, fainter grew;
And, as I wrung her by the rosy fingers,
Methought the strings of my great heart were
crack'd,

What could it mean? Forward, Laomedon.

Enter ROXANA, CASSANDER, and POLYPERCHON.

Why, madam, gaze you thus?

Rox. For a last look,

And to imprint the memory of my wrongs;

Roxana's wrongs, on Alexander's mind.

Alex. On to the banquet.

[*Exeunt Alexander and his Train.*

Rox. Ha! with such disdain!
So unconcern'd! Oh, I could tear myself,
Him, you, and all the hateful world to atoms!

Cas. Still keep this spirit up, preserve it still,
And know us for your friends. We like your rage;
'Tis lovely in you, and your wrongs require it.
Here, in the sight of heaven, Cassander swears,

Unaw'd by death, to second your revenge,
Speak but the word, and, swift as thought can fly,
The tyrant falls a victim to your fury.

Rox. Shall he, then, die? Shall I consent to
kill him?

I, that have lov'd him with that eager fondness,
Shall I consent to have him basely murder'd,
And see him clasp'd in the cold arms of death?
Worlds should not tempt me to the deed of horror.

Poly. The weak fond scruples of your love
might pass,

Were not the empire of the world concern'd:
But, madam, think, when time shall teach his
tongue,

How will the glorious infant, which you bear,
Arraign his partial mother, for refusing
To fix him on the throne, which here we offer?

Cas. If Alexander lives, you cannot reign,
Nor will your child. Old Sysigambis plans
Your sure destruction. Boldly then prevent her;
Give but the word, and Alexander dies.

Poly. Not he alone; the Persian race shall bleed:
At your command, one universal ruin
Shall, like a deluge, whelm the eastern world,
Till gloriously we raise you to the throne.

Rox. But, till the mighty ruin be accomplish'd,
Where can Roxana fly th' avenging wrath
Of those who must succeed this godlike man?

Cas. Would you vouchsafe in these expanded
arms

To seek a refuge, what could hurt you here?
Here you might reign, with undiminish'd lustre,
Queen of the East, and empress of my soul.

Rox. Disgrac'd Roxana! whither art thou fallen?
Till this curs'd hour I never was unhappy;
There's not one mark of former majesty

To awe the slave that offers at mine honour.

Cas. Impute not, madam, my unbanded passion
To want of rev'rence—I have lov'd you long.

Rox. Peace, villain, peace, and let me hear no
more.

Think'st thou I'd leave the bosom of a god,
And stoop to thee, thou moving piece of earth?
Hence, from my sight, and never more presume
To meet my eyes; for, mark me, if thou dar'st,
To Alexander I'll unfold thy treason;
Whose life, in spite of all his wrongs to me,
Shall still be sacred, and above thy malice.

Cas. [*Kneels.*] By your own life, the greatest
oath, I swear,

Cassander's passion from this hour is dumb;
And, as the best atonement I can make,
Statira dies, the victim of your vengeance.

Rox. Cassander, rise; 'tis ample expiation.

Yes, rival, yes; this night shall be thy last;
This night, I know, is destin'd for thy triumph,
And gives my Alexander to thy arms.
Oh! murd'rous thought!

Poly. The how'rs of great Semiramis are made
The scene of love; Perdiccas holds the guard.

Cas. Now is your time, when Alexander reveals,
And the whole court re-echoes with his riot,
To end her, and with her to end your fears.
Give me but half the Zogdian slaves that wait you,
And deem her dead: nor shall a soul escape
That serves your rival, to disperse the news.

Rox. By me they die, Perdiccas and Statira;
Hence with thy aid, I neither ask nor want it;
But will myself conduct the slaves to battle.
Were she to fall by any arm but mine,
Well might she murmur, and arraign her stars.

Rival, rejoice, and, pleas'd, resign thy breath,
Roxana's vengeance grants thee noble death. [Exit.

Cas. All but her Jove, this Semele disdains.

We must be quick. She may, perhaps, betray
The great design, and frustrate our revenge.

Poly. Has Philip got instruction how to act?

Cas. He has, my friend; and, faithful to our cause,
Resolves to execute the fatal order.

Bear him this phial; it contains a poison
Of that exalted force, that deadly nature,
Should *Esculapius* drink it, in an hour,
For then it works, the god himself were mortal;
I drew it from *Nonacri's* horrid spring:
Mix'd with his wine, a single drop gives death,
And sends him howling to the shades below.

Poly. I know its power, for I have seen it try'd;
Pains of all sorts through every nerve and artery
At once it scatters; burns at once and freezes;
Till, by extremity of torture forc'd,
The soul consents to leave her joyless home,
And seek for ease in worlds unknown to this.

Cas. Now let us part: with *Thessalus* and *Philip*
Haste to the banquet; at his second call
Let this be given him, and it crowns our hopes.

[*Exit Polyperchon.*]

Now, *Alexander*, now we shall be quits;
Death for a blow is interest indeed. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—*The Palace.*

ALEXANDER, POLYPERCHON, CASSANDER, THES-
SALUS, EUMENES, Guards, &c. discovered at a
banquet. A flourish of trumpets, drums, &c.

Alex. To our immortal health, and our fair
queen's!—

All drink it deep; and, while the bowl goes round,
Mars and *Bellona* join to make us music;
A hundred bulls be offer'd to the sun,
White as his beams; speak the big voice of war;
Strike all our drums, and sound our silver trumpets;
Provoke the gods to follow our example
In bowls of nectar, and replying thunder.

(*Flourish of trumpets, drums, &c.*)

Enter CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, and LYSIMACHUS,
bloody.

Cly. Long live the king; long live great *Alexander*;
And conquest crown his arms with deathless laurels,
Propitious to his friends, and all he favours!

Alex. Did I not give command you should pre-
serve *Lysimachus*?

Heph. Dread sir, you did.

Alex. What then

Portend these bloody marks?

Heph. Ere we arriv'd,

Perdiccas had already plac'd the prince
In a lone court, all but his hands unarm'd.

Cly. On them were gauntlets; such was his desire,
In death to shew the difference betwixt
The blood of *Eacus*, and common men.

Forth issuing from his den, amaz'd we saw
The horrid savage, with whose hideous roar
The palace shook; his angry eye-balls glaring
With triple fury, menac'd death and ruin.

Heph. With unconcern, the gallant prince ad-
vanc'd;

Now, *Parisatis*, be the glory thine,
But mine the danger, were his only words;
For, as he spoke, the furious beast descried him,
And rush'd, outrageous, to devour his prey.

Cly. Agile and vigorous, he avoids the shock
With a slight wound; and, as the lion turn'd,
Thrust gauntlet, arm, and all, into his throat,
And, with *Herculean* strength, tears forth his tongue;
Foaming and bloody, the disabled savage
Sunken to the earth, and plough'd it with his teeth;
While, with an active bound, your conquer'ing
soldier

Leap'd on his back, and dash'd his scull in pieces.

Alex. By all my laurels, 'twas a godlike act;
And 'tis my glory, as it shall be thine,
That *Alexander* could not pardon thee.

Oh, my brave soldier, think not all the pray'rs
And tears of the lamenting queens could move me
Like what thou hast perform'd! Grow to my breast.

Lys. Thus, self-condemn'd, and conscious of
my guilt,

How shall I stand such unexampled goodness?

Oh, pardon, sir, the transports of despair,
The frantic outrage of un govern'd love!
E'en when I shew'd the greatest want of reverence,
I could have died with rapture in your service.

Alex. *Lysimachus*, we both have been transported;
But, from this hour, be certain of my heart.

A lion be the impress of thy shield;
And that gold armour we from *Porus* won,
Thy king presents thee. But thy wounds ask rest.

Lys. I have no wounds, dread sir; or, if I had,
Were they all mortal, they should stream unmind'd,
When *Alexander* was the glorious health.

Alex. Thy hand, *Hephestion*. Clasp him to thy
heart,

And wear him ever near thee. *Parisatis*
Shall now be his who serves me best in war.
Neither reply; but mark the charge I give—
Live, live as friends; you will, you must, you shall;

'Tis a god gives you life.

Cly. Oh, monstrous vanity!

Alex. Ha! what says *Clytus*? who am I?

Cly. The son

Of good king *Philip*.

Alex. By my kindred gods,

'Tis false: great *Ammon* gave me birth.

Cly. I've done.

Alex. *Clytus*, what means that dress? Give him
a robe there.

Take it, and wear it.

Cly. Sir, the wine, the weather

Has heated me; besides, you know my humour.

Alex. Oh! 'tis not well! I'd rather perish, burn,
Than be so singular and froward.

Cly. So would I—

Burn, hang, or drown: but in a better cause.

I'll drink, or fight, for sacred majesty
With any here. Fill me another bowl.

Will you excuse me?

Alex. You will be excus'd.

But let him have his humour; he is old.

Cly. So was your father, sir; this to his mem'ry!
Sound all the trumpets there.

Alex. They shall not sound

Till the king drinks. Sure, I was born to wage

Eternal war! All are my enemies,

Whom I could tame. But let the sports go on.

Lys. Nay, *Clytus*, you that could advise so well—

Alex. Let him persist, be positive, and proud,

Envious and sullen 'mongst the nobler souls,

Like an infernal spirit that hath stol'n

From hell, and mingled with the mirth of gods.

Cly. When gods grow hot, no difference I know
'Twixt them and devils. Fill me Greek wine: yet,
Yet fuller; I want spirits.

Alex. Let me have music.

Cly. Music for boys. *Clytus* would hear the groans
Of dying soldiers, and the neigh of steeds;
Or, if I must be pester'd with shrill sounds,
Give me the cries of matrons in sack'd towns.

Heph. Let us, *Lysimachus*, awake the king;

A heavy gloom is gathering on his brow.

Kneel all, with humblest adoration, kneel,

And let a health to *Jove's* great son go round.

Alex. Sound, sound, that all the universe may
hear, (*A loud flourish of trumpets.*)

Oh, for the voice of *Jove*! the world should know

The kindness of my people. Rise, Oh, rise!

My hands, my arms, my heart, are ever your's.

Cly. I did not kiss the earth, nor must your hand;
I am unworthy, sir.

Alex. Thou art, indeed!

Thou enviest the great honour of thy master—

Sit, all my friends. Now let us talk of war;

The noblest subject for a soldier's mouth;

And speak, speak freely, else you love me not;

Who, think you, was the greatest general

That ever led an army to the field?

Heph. A chief so great, so fortunately brave,
And justly so renown'd as *Alexander*,

The radiant sun, since first his beams gave light,
Never yet saw.

Lys. Such was not Cyrus, nor the fam'd Alcides,
Nor great Achilles, whose tempestuous sword
Laid Troy in ashes, though the warring gods
Oppos'd him.

Alex. Oh, you flatter me! you flatter me!

Cly. They do, indeed; and yet you love 'em for't,
But hate old Clytus for his hardy virtue.

Come, shall I speak a man, with equal bravery,
A better general, and an expert soldier?

Alex. Instruct me, sir; I should be glad to learn.

Cly. Your father, Philip. I have seen him march,
And fought beneath his dreadful banner, where
The boldest at this table would have trembled.
Nay, frown not, sir, you cannot look me dead.
When Greeks join'd Greeks, then was the tug of war,
The labour'd battle sweat, and conquest bled.
Why should I fear to speak a holder truth,
Than e'er the lying priests of Ammon told you?
Philip fought men, but Alexander, women.

Alex. Proud spite, and burning envy, by the gods!

Is then my glory come to this at last,
To conquer women! Nay, he said, the stoutest,
The stoutest here would tremble at his dangers.

In all the sickness, all the wounds, I bore,
When, from my reins, the javelin's head was cut,
Lysimachus, Hephestion, speak, Perdiccas,
Did I once tremble? Oh, the cursed falsehood!

Did I once shake or groan? or act beneath
The dauntless resolution of a king?

Lys. Wine has transported him.

Alex. No, 'tis mere malice—

I was a woman too, at Oxydrace,
When, planting on the walls a scaling ladder,
I mounted, spite of show'rs of stones, bars, arrows,
And all the lumber which they thunder'd down;
When you, beneath, eried out, and spread your arms,
That I should leap among you; did I so?

Lys. Dread sir, the old man knows not what
he says.

Alex. Was I a woman, when, like Mercury,
I leap'd the walls, and flew amidst the foe,
And, like a baited lion, dy'd myself
All over in the blood of those bold hunters;
Till, spent with toil, I battled on my knees,
Pluck'd forth the darts that made my shield a
forest,

And hur'd 'em back with most unconquer'd fury?

Then, shining in my arms, I sunn'd the field,
Mov'd, spoke, and fought, and was myself a war.

Cly. 'Twas all bravado; for, before you leap'd,
You saw that I had burst the gates asunder.

Alex. Oh, that thou wert but young again, and
vigorous,

That I might strike thee prostrate to the earth
For this audacious lie, thou feeble dotard!

Cly. I know the reason why you use me thus.

I sav'd you from the sword of bold Rhesaees,
Else had your godship slumber'd in the dust;
And most ungratefully you hate me for it.

Alex. Hence from the banquet! Thus far I
forgive thee.

Cly. First try, for none can want forgiveness more,
To have your own bold blasphemies forgiven,
The shameful riots of a vicious life,
Philotas' murder—

Alex. Ha! what said the traitor?

Heph. Clytus, withdraw; Eumenes, force him
hence.

Cly. No, let him send me, if I must be gone,
To Philip, Attalus, Calisthenes,
To great Parmenio, and his slaughter'd sons.

Alex. Give me a javelin.

Lys. Hold, mighty sir.

Alex. Sirrah! Off,

Let I at once strike through his heart and thine.
Begone to Philip, Attalus, Calisthenes; (*Stabs him.*)
And let bold subjects learn, by thy example,

Not to provoke the patience of their prince.

Cly. The rage of wine is drown'd in gushing blood.
(*Clytus falls.*)
Oh, Alexander! I have been to blame;
Hate me not after death; for I repent,
That I so far have urg'd your noble nature.

Alex. What's this I hear! Say on, my dying
soldier.

Cly. I should have kill'd myself, had I but liv'd
To be once sober; but now I fall with honour;
My own hands wou'd have brought foul death.

Oh, pardon. (*Dies.*)

Alex. Then I am lost! What has my vengeance
done!

Who is it thou hast slain? Clytus! what was he?
The faithfullest subject, worthiest counsellor,
The bravest soldier! He who sav'd thy life,
Fighting bare-headed at the river Granick;
For a rash word, spoke in the heat of wine,
The poor, the honest Clytus thou hast slain;
Clytus, thy friend, thy guardian, thy preserver!

Heph. Remove the body, it inflames his sorrow.

Alex. None dare touch him; we must never part.
Cruel Hephestion and Lysimachus,
That had the power, yet would not hold me! Oh!

Lys. Dear sir, we did.

Alex. I know ye did; ye held me
Like a wild beast, to let me go again
With greater violence. Oh, ye've undone me!
Excuse it not—you that could stop a lion, (*To Lys.*)
Cou'd not turn me? ye should have drawn your
swords,

And barr'd my rage with their advancing points;
Made reason glitter in my dazzled eyes,
Till I had seen the precipice before me:

That had been noble, that had shewn the friend.
Clytus would so have done to save your lives.

Lys. When men shall hear how highly you were
urg'd—

Alex. No; you have let me stain my rising glory,
Which else had ended brighter than the sun.

Oh, I am all a blot, which seas of tears,
And my heart's blood, can never wash away;
Yet 'tis but just I try, and on the point,
Still reeking, hurl my black polluted breast.

Heph. Oh, sacred sir—it shall not—must not be.

Lys. Forgive, dread sir, forgive my pious hands,
That dare, in duty, to disarm my master.

Alex. Yes, cruel men, ye now can shew your
strength;

Here's not a slave, but dares oppose my justice,
Yet none had courage to prevent this murder.

But I will render all endeavours vain,
That tend to save my life. Here will I lie,
Close to my murder'd soldier's bleeding side,
Thus clasping his cold body in my arms,
Till death has clos'd my eyes, like his, for ever.

(*Throws himself on the body of Clytus.*)

Enter PERDICCAS.

Per. Treason! foul treason! Hephestion, where's
the king?

Heph. There, by old Clytus' side, whom he hath
slain.

Per. Rise, sacred sir, and haste to save the
queen:

Roxana, fill'd with furious jealousy,
Came with a guard unmark'd: she gain'd the bow'r,
And broke upon me with such sudden fury,
That all have perish'd who oppos'd her rage.

Alex. What says Perdiccas? Is the queen in
danger?

Per. Haste, sir, to your Statira, or she dies.

Alex. Thus from the grave I rise to save her life.
All draw your swords, on wings of lightning move,
Young Ammon leads you, and the cause is love;
When I rush on, sure none will dare to stay;
'Tis beauty calls, and glory leads the way.

[*Flourish of trumpets, drums, &c. Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Gardens of Semiramis.

STATIRA discovered asleep.

Sta. Bless me, ye pow'rs above, and guard my virtue! [fled?

Where are ye fled, dear shades? Where are ye 'Twas but a dream; and yet I saw and heard My royal parents, who, while pious care Sat on their faded cheeks, pronounc'd with tears, Tears such as angels weep, this hour my last. But hence with fear—my Alexander comes, And fear and danger ever fled from him. My Alexander! Would that he were here! For Oh, I tremble, and a thousand terrors Rush in upon me, and alarm my heart.

(Distant flourish of trumpets.)

But hark, 'tis he, and all my fears are led: My life, my joy, my Alexander comes.

Rox. (Within.) Make fast the gate with all its massy bars; At length we've conquer'd this stupendous height, And reach'd the grove.

Sta. Ye guardian gods, defend me! Roxana's voice! Then all the vision's true, And die I must.

Enter ROXANA.

Rox. Secure the brazen gate. Where is my rival? 'tis Roxana calls.

Sta. And what is she, who, with such tow'ring pride,

Would awe a princess that is born above her?

Rox. Behold this dagger! 'Tis thy fate, Statira! Behold, and meet it as becomes a queen.

Fain would I find thee worthy of my vengeance; Here, take my weapon then; and, if thou dar'st—

Sta. How little know'st thou what Statira dares! Yes, cruel woman! yes, I dare meet death

With a resolve, at which thy coward heart Would shrink; for terror haunts the guilty mind;

While conscious innocence, that knows no fear, Can smiling pass, and scorn thy idle threats.

Rox. Return, fair insolent! return, I say. Dar'st thou, presumptuous, to invade my rights?

Restore him quickly to my longing arms, And with him give me back his broken vows,

For perjur'd as he is, he still is mine, Or I will rend him from thy bleeding heart.

Sta. Alas! Roxana, 'tis not in my power; I cannot if I would—And, oh, ye gods,

What were the world to Alexander's loss!

Rox. Oh, sorceress, to thy accursed charms I owe the frenzy that distracts my soul;

To them I owe my Alexander's loss. Too late thou tremblest at my just revenge,

My wrongs cry out, and vengeance will have way. (Holds up the dagger.)

Sta. Hold, hold, thy threat'ning hand advanc'd in air.

I read my sentence written in thy eyes: Yet, Oh, Roxana, on thy black revenge

One kindly ray of female pity beam, And give me death in Alexander's presence.

Rox. Not for the world's wide empire should'st thou see him.

Fool! but for him thou might'st unheeded live; For his sake only art thou doom'd to die.

The sole remaining joy that glads my soul, Is to deprive thee of the heart I've lost.

(Flourish of trumpets.)

Enter a Slave.

Slave. Madam, the king and all his guards are come;

With frantic rage they thunder at the gate, And must, ere this, have gain'd admittance.

Rox. Ha! [Exit Slave.

Too long I've trifled; let me then redeem

The time mispent, and make great vengeance sure.

Sta. Is Alexander, Oh, ye gods, so high, And can he not preserve me from her fury?

Rox. Nor he, nor heav'n, shall shield thee from my justice.

Die, sorc'ress, die, and all my wrongs die with thee. (Stabs her.)

Alex. (Without.) Away, ye slaves, stand off!— Quick let me fly

On lightning's wings;—nor heav'n nor earth, shall stop me.

Enter ALEXANDER, LYSIMACHUS, CASSANDER, PERDICCAS, THESSALUS, Officers and Guards.

Ha! Oh, my soul, my queen, my love, Statira! These wounds! are these my promis'd joys?

Sta. Alas! My only love, my best and dearest blessing,

Would I had died before you enter'd here; For thus delighted, while I gaze upon thee,

Death grows more horrid, and I'm loth to leave thee. [stars!

Alex. Thou shalt not leave me. Cruel, cruel Oh, where's the monster, where's the horrid fiend,

That struck at innocence, and murder'd thee?

Rox. Behold the wretch, who, desperate of thy love,

In jealous madness gave the fatal blow.

Alex. To dungeons, tortures, drag her from my sight.

Sta. My soul is on the wing. Spare Roxana's life. 'Twas love of you that caus'd

The death she gave me. And, Oh, sometimes think, Amidst your revels, think on your poor queen;

And, ere the cheerful bowl salute your lips, Enrich it with a tear, and I am happy. (Dies.)

Alex. Yet, ere thou tak'st thy flight—She's gone, she's gone!

All, all is hush'd; no music now is heard; The roses wither; and the fragrant breath

That wak'd their sweets, shall never wake 'em more.

Rox. Weep not, my lord! no sorrow can recall her.

Oh! turn your eyes, and in Roxana's arms, You'll find fond love and everlasting truth.

Alex. Hence, from my sight, and thank my dear Statira,

That yet thou art alive.

Rox. Yes, thus I'll fasten on your sacred robe; Thus, on my knees, for ever cling around you,

Till you forgive me, or till death divide us.

Alex. Hence, fury, hence: there's not a glance of thine,

But, like a basilisk, comes wing'd with death.

Rox. Oh, speak not thus, to one who kneels for mercy.

Think, for whose sake it was I madly plung'd into a crime abhorrent to my nature.

Alex. Off, murd'ress, off! for ever shun my sight! My eyes detest thee, for thy soul is ruin.

Rox. Barbarian! yes, I will for ever shun thee, Repeated injuries have steel'd my heart,

And I cou'd curse myself for being kind. If there is any majesty above,

That has revenge in store for perjur'd love, Send, heav'n, the swiftest ruin on his head!

Strike the destroyer! lay the victor dead; But what are curses? Curses will not kill,

Nor ease the tortures I am doom'd to feel. [Exit.

Alex. Oh, my fair star, I shall be shortly with thee!

What means this deadly dew upon my forehead? My heart too heaves!—

Cus. The poison works!

Enter EUMENES.

Eume. Pardon, dear sir, a fatal messenger. The royal Sysigambis is no more.

Struck with the horror of Statira's fate,
She soon expir'd, and, with her latest breath,
Left Parisatis to Lysimachus.
But what, I fear, most deeply will affect you,
Your lov'd Hephestion's—

Alex. Dead! then he is bless'd!
But here, here lies my fate. Hephestion! Clytus!
My victories all for ever folded up
In this dear body. Here my banner's lost,
My standard's triumphs gone.—Oh, when, Oh,
when,
Shall I be mad indeed?

[*Exeunt all but Cassander and Thessalus.*]

Cas. He's gone—but whither?—follow, Thessalus,
Attend his steps, and let me know what passes.
[*Exeunt Thessalus and Cassander.*]

SCENE II.—*An Antichamber in the Palace.*

Enter CASSANDER.

Cas. Vengeance, lie still, thy cravings shall be stated.

Death roams at large, the furies are unchain'd,
And murder plays her mighty master-piece.

Enter POLYPERCHON.

Saw you the king? He parted hence this moment.

Poly. Yes; with disorder'd wildness in his looks,
He rush'd along, till, with a casual glance,
He saw me where I stood; then stopping short,
Draw near, he cried; and grasp'd my hand in his,
Where more than fevers rag'd in ev'ry vein.
Oh, Polyperchon! I have lost my queen!
Statira's dead!—and, as he spoke, the tears
Gush'd from his eyes—I more than felt his pains.

Enter THESSALUS.

Thes. Hence, hence, away!

Cas. Where is he, Thessalus?

Thes. I left him circled by a crowd of princes,
The poison tears him with that height of horror,
E'en I could pity him; he call'd the chiefs;
Embrac'd 'em round—then, starting from amidst
'em [it.

Cried out, I come—'Twas Ammon's voice; I know
Father, I come; but, let me, ere I go,
Despatch the business of a kneeling world.

Poly. No more—I hear him—we must meet anon.

Cas. In Saturn's field, there give a loose to rapture,
Enjoy the tempest we ourselves have rais'd,
And triumph in the wreck which crowns our vengeance.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Palace.*

ALEXANDER, LYSIMACHUS, EUMENES, PERDIOCAS, Officers, Guards, and Attendants, discovered.

Alex. Search there; nay, probe me; search my wounded reins—
Poll, draw it out.

Lys. We have search'd, but find no hurt.

Alex. Oh, I am shot!—a forked, burning arrow
Sticks 'cross my shoulders; the sad venom flies,
Like lightning thro' my flesh, my blood, my marrow.

Lys. How fierce his fever!

Alex. Ha! what a change of torments I endure!
A bolt of ice runs hissing through my bowels;

'Tis, sure, the arm of death. Give me a chair;
Cover me, for I freeze, and my teeth chatter,
And my knees knock together.

Eume. Have mercy, heav'n!

Alex. Who talks of heav'n?

I burn, I burn again!—

The war grows wond'rous hot;—hey for the Tygris!
Bear me, Bucephalus, amongst the billows.
Oh, 'tis a noble beast; I would not change him
For the best horse the sun has in his stable;
For they are hot, their mangers full of coals;
Their manes are flakes of light'ning, curls of fire;
And their red tails, like meteors, whisk about.

Lys. Help, all! Eumenes, help.

Alex. Ha! ha! ha! I shall die with laughter.

Parmenio, Clytus, do you see yon fellow,
That ragged soldier, that poor tatter'd Greek?
See how he puts to flight the gaudy Persians,
With nothing but a rusty helmet on, through which
The grizly bristles of his pushing beard
Drive 'em like pikes—ha! ha! ha!

Per. How wild he talks!

Lys. Yet warring in his wildness.

Alex. Sound, sound! keep your ranks close;
ay, now they come.

Oh, the brave din, the noblest clank of arms!—
Charge, charge apace; and let the phalanx move;
Darius comes—ay, 'tis Darius:

I see, I know him by the sparkling plumes,
And his gold chariot, drawn by ten white horses:
But, like a tempest, thus I pour upon him—
He bleeds; with that last blow I brought him
down:

He tumbles, take him, snatch the imperial crown.
They fly, they fly; follow, follow: Victoria,
Victoria, Victoria—

[*Throws himself into the arms of the Soldiers.*]

Per. Let's bear him softly to his bed.

Alex. Hold; the least motion gives me sudden
death;

My vital spirits are quite parch'd, burnt up,
And all my smoky entrails turn'd to ashes.

Lys. When you, the brightest star that ever
shone,

Shall set, it must be night with us for ever.

Alex. Let me embrace you all, before I die.—

Weep not, my dear companions; the good gods
Shall send ye in my stead a nobler prince,
One that shall lead ye forth with matchless conduct.

Lys. Break not our hearts with such unkind expressions.
[*Mars.*]

Per. We will not part with you, nor change for

Alex. Perdiceas, take this ring,
And see me laid in the temple of Jupiter Ammon.

Lys. To whom does your dread majesty bequeath
The empire of the world?

Alex. To him that is most worthy.

Per. When will you, sacred sir, that we should
give

To your great memory, those divine honours
Which such exalted virtue does deserve?

Alex. When you are all most happy, and in peace.
Your hands—Oh, father, if I have discharg'd
The duty of a man to empire-born;
If, by unwearied toil, I have deserv'd
The vast renown of thy adopted son,
Accept this soul which thou didst first inspire,
And which this sigh thus gives thee back again.

[*Dies.*]

ALL FOR LOVE; OR, THE WORLD WELL LOST:

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY JOHN DRYDEN.



Act III.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

MARC ANTONY
VENTIDIUS
DOLABELLA
ALEXAS

SERAPION
MYRIS
ATTENDANTS
CHILDREN

CLEOPATRA
OCTAVIA
CHARMION
IRAS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Temple of Isis.*

SERAPION and MYRIS, *Priests of Isis, discovered.*

Ser. Portents and prodigies are grown so frequent

That they have lost their name. Our fruitful Nile
Flow'd, ere the wonted season, with a torrent
So unexpected and so wondrous fierce,
That the wild deluge overtook the haste
Ev'n of the hinds that watch'd it. Men and beasts
Were borne above the tops of trees that grew
On th' utmost margin of the water-mark:
Then with so swift an ebb the flood drove backward,
It slipp'd from underneath the scaly herd:
Here monstrous phocæ panting on the shore;
Forsaken dolphins there, with their broad tails
Lay lashing the departing waves; hard by 'em,
Sea-horses, floundring in the slimy mud,
Toss'd up their heads and dash'd the ooze about
'em.

Enter ALEXAS behind them.

Myr. Avert these omens, heav'n!

Ser. Last night, between the hours of twelve and one,

In a lone aisle o'the temple while I walk'd,
A whirlwind rose, that with a violent blast
Shook all the dome; the doors around me clapp'd;
The iron wicket, that defends the vault
Where the long race of Ptolemies is laid,
Burst open, and disclos'd the mighty dead:
From out each monument, in order plac'd,

An armed ghost starts up; the boy-king last
Rear'd his inglorious head: a peal of groans
Then follow'd, and a lamentable voice
Cry'd, "Egypt is no more!" My blood ran back,
My shaking knees against each other knock'd,
On the cold pavement down I fell entranc'd,
And so unfinish'd left the horrid scene!

Alex. And dreamt you this, or did invent the story
(Shewing himself.)

To frighten our Egyptian boys withal,
And train 'em up betimes in fear of priesthood?

Ser. My lord, I saw you not,
Nor meant my words should reach your ears; but what

I utter'd was most true.

Alex. A foolish dream,
Bred from the fumes of indigested feasts
And holy luxury.

Ser. I know my duty:

This goes no further.

Alex. 'Tis not fit it should;
Nor would the times now bear it were it true.
All southern from yon hills the Roman camp
Hangs o'er us black and threat'ning, like a storm
Just breaking on our heads.

Ser. 'Tis strange that Antony for some days past
Has not beheld the face of Cleopatra,
But here in Isis' temple lives retir'd;
And makes his heart a prey to black despair.

Alex. 'Tis true; and we much fear he hopes by
absence

To cure his mind of love.

Ser. How stands the queen affected?

Alex. Oh! she dotes,
She dotes, Serapion, on this vanquish'd man,
And winds herself about his mighty ruins;
Whom would she yet forsake, yet yield him up,
This hunted prey, to his pursuer's hands,
She might preserve us all: but 'tis in vain—
This changes my designs, this blasts my counsels,
And makes me use all means to keep him here
Whom I could wish divided from her arms
Far as the earth's deep centre. Well, you know
The state of things: no more of your ill omens
And black prognostics; labour to confirm
The people's hearts.

Enter VENTIDIUS, talking aside with a Gentleman of Marc Antony's.

Ser. These Romans will o'erhear us.
But who's that stranger? by his warlike port,
His fierce demeanour, and erected look,
He's of no vulgar note.

Alex. Oh! 'tis Ventidius,
Our emperor's great lieutenant in the east,
Who first shew'd Rome that Parthia could be conquer'd.

When Antony return'd from Syria last,
He left this man to guard the Roman frontiers.

Ser. You seem to know him well.

Alex. Too well. I saw him in Cilicia first,
When Cleopatra there met Antony;
A mortal foe he was to us and Egypt.
But let me witness to the worth I hate;
A braver Roman never drew a sword:
Firm to his price, but as a friend, not slave:
He ne'er was of his pleasures, but presides
O'er all his cooler hours and morning counsels:
In short, the plainness, fierceness, rugged virtue,
Of an old true stamp'd Roman lives in him.
His coming bodes I know not what of ill
To our affairs. Withdraw to mark him better,
And I'll acquaint you why I sought you here,
And what's our present work.

(They retire, and Ventidius with the other come forward.)

Ven. Not see him, say you?
I say, I must and will.

Gent. He has commanded,
On pain of death, none should approach his presence.

Ven. I bring him news will raise his drooping spirits,
Give him new life.

Gent. He sees not Cleopatra.

Ven. Would he had never seen her!

Gent. He eats not, drinks not, sleeps not, has no use

Of anything but thought; or if he talks,
'Tis to himself, and then 'tis perfect raving;
Then he defies the world, and bids it pass.
Sometimes he gnaws his lip, and curses loud
The boy Octavius; then he draws his mouth
Into a scornful smile, and cries, "Take all,
The world's not worth my care!"

Ven. Just, just his nature,
Virtue's his path, but sometimes 'tis too narrow
For his vast soul, and then he starts out wide,
And bounds into a vice that bears him far
From his first course, and plunges him in ills:
He must not thus be lost.

(Alexas and the Priests come forward.)

Alex. You have your full instructions; now advance;

Proclaim your orders loudly.

Ser. Romans! Egyptians! hear the queen's command.

Thus Cleopatra bids: let labour cease;
To pomp and triumphs give this happy day
That gave the world a lord; 'tis Antony's.
Live Antony, and Cleopatra live!
Be this the gen'ral voice sent up to heav'n,
And ev'ry public place repeat this echo.

Ven. Fine pageantry!

(Aside.)

Ser. Set out before your doors
The images of all your sleeping fathers,
With laurels crown'd; with laurels wreath your posts,

And strew with flow'rs the pavement; let the priest
Do present sacrifice, pour out the wine,
And call the gods to join with you in gladness.

Ven. Curse on the tongue that bids this gen'ral joy!

Can they be friends of Antony who revel
When Antony's in danger? Hide, for shame,
You Romans, your great grandsires' images,
For fear their souls should animate their marbles
To blush at their degenerate progeny.

Alex. A love which knows no bounds to Antony
Would mark the day with honours; when all heav'n
Labour'd for him, when each propitious star
Stood wakeful in his orb to watch that hour
And shed his better influence, her own birth-day
Our scene neglected, like a vulgar fate
That pass'd obscurely by.

Ven. Would it had slept,
Divided far from his, till some remote
And future age had call'd it out to ruin
Some other prince, not him.

Alex. Your emperor,
Though grown unkind, would be more gentle than
T' upraid my queen for loving him too well.

Ven. I tell thee, eunuch, she has quite unmann'd
him:

Can any Roman see and know him now,
Thus alter'd from the lord of half mankind;
Unbent, unsinew'd, made a woman's toy;
Shrunk from the vast extent of all his honours,
And cramp'd within a corner of the world?

Oh! Antony,
Thou bravest soldier and thou best of friends!
Bounteous as nature, next to nature's God!
Couldst thou but make new worlds, so wouldst
thou give 'em,

As bounty were thy being. Rough in battle
As the first Romans when they went to war,
Yet after victory more pitiful
Than all their praying virgins left at home.

Alex. Would you could add to those more shining
virtues

His truth to her who loves him.

Ven. Would I could not!
But wherefore waste I precious hours with thee?
Thou art her darling mischief, her chief engine,
Antony's other fate. Go, tell thy queen
Ventidius is arriv'd to end her charms.
Let your Egyptian timbrels play alone,
Nor mix effeminate sounds with Roman trumpets.
You dare not fight for Antony; go pray,
And keep your coward's holyday in temples.

[Exeunt Alexas and Priests.]

Enter another Gentleman of Marc Antony's.

2 Gent. The emperor approaches, and commands,
On pain of death, that none presume to stay.

1 Gent. I dare not disobey him.

[Exit with the other.]

Ven. Well, I dare;
But I'll observe him first unseen, and find
Which way his humour drives: the rest I'll venture.

(Retires.)

Enter MARC ANTONY, walking with a disturbed motion before he speaks.

Marc A. They tell me 'tis my birth-day, and I'll
keep it
With double pomp of sadness:
'Tis what the day deserves which gave me breath.
Why was I rais'd the meteor of the world,
Hung in the skies, and blazing as I travell'd,
Till all my fires were spent, and then cast downward
To be trod out by Cæsar?

Ven. (*Aside.*) On my soul,
'Tis mournful, wondrous mournful!

Marc A. Count thy gains
Now, Antony; wouldst thou be born for this?
Glutton of fortune, thy devouring youth
Has starv'd thy wanting age.

Ven. (*Aside.*) How sorrow shakes him!
So, now the tempest tears him up by the roots,
And on the ground extends the noble ruin.

Marc A. (*Having thrown himself down.*) Lie there,
thou shadow of an emperor;
The place thou pressest on thy mother earth
Is all thy empire now: now it contains thee;
Some few days hence, and then 'twill be too
large,

When thou'rt contracted in thy narrow urn,
Shrunk to a few cold ashes; then, Octavia,
(For Cleopatra will not live to see it,)
Octavia, then, will have thee all her own,
And bear thee in her widow'd hand to Cæsar:—
I'll think no more on't.

Give me some music; look that it be sad.
I'll sooth my melancholy till I swell,
And burst myself with sighing. (*Soft music.*)

'Tis somewhat to my humour. Stay, I fancy
I'm now turn'd wild, a commoner of nature;
Of all forsaken, and forsaking all;
Live in a shady forest's sylvan scene,
Stretch'd at my length beneath some blasted oak,
I lean my head upon the mossy bark,
And look just of apiece, as I grew from it:
My uncomb'd locks, matted like mistletoe,
Hang o'er my hoary face; a marm'ring brook
Runs at my feet— (*Soft music again.*)

Ven. I must disturb him: I can hold no longer.
(*Stands before him.*)

Marc A. (*Starting up.*) Art thou Ventidius?
Ven. Are you Antony?

I'm liker what I was, than you to him
I left you last.

Marc A. I would be private. Leave me.

Ven. Sir, I love you,
And, therefore, will not leave you.

Marc A. Will not leave me!
Where have you learnt that answer? Who am I?

Ven. My emperor; the man I love next heav'n:
If I said more, I think 'twere scarce a sin:
You're all that that's good and godlike.

Marc A. All that's wretched.

You will not leave me, then?

Ven. 'Twas too presuming
To say I would not; but I dare not leave you;
And 'tis unkind in you to chide me hence
So soon, when I so far have come to see you.

Marc A. Now thou hast seen me art thou satis-
fied?

For if a friend, thou hast beheld enough;
And if a foe, too much.

Ven. Look, emperor, this is no common dew:
(*Weeping.*)

I have not wept this forty years; but now
My mother comes afresh into my eyes;
I cannot help her softness.

Marc A. By heav'n, he weeps! poor, good, old
man, he weeps!

Sure, there's contagion in the tears of friends;
See, I have caught it, too. Believe me, 'tis not
For my own griefs, but thine. Nay, father—

Ven. Emperor.

Marc A. Emperor! why, that's the style of vic-
tory:

The conqu'ring soldier, red with unfelt wounds,
Salutes his gen'ral so; but never more
Shall that sound reach my ears.

Ven. I warrant you.

Marc A. Actium, Actium! Oh!

Ven. It sits too near you.

Marc A. Here, here it lies, a lump of lead by
day,

And in my short, distracted, nightly slumbers,
The hag that rides my dreams—

Ven. Out with it; give it vent.

Marc A. Urge not my shame—
I lost a battle.

Ven. So has Julius done.

Marc A. Thou favour'st me, and speak'st not
half thou think'st;

For Julius fought it out and lost it fairly;

But Antony—

Ven. Nay, stop not.

Marc A. Antony

(Well, thou wilt have it) like a coward fled;
Fled while his soldiers fought; fled first, Ventidius.
Thou long'st to curse me, and I give thee leave;
I'll help thee—I have been a man, Ventidius.

Ven. Yes, and a brave one; but—

Marc A. I know thy meaning.

But I have lost my reason, have disgrac'd
The name of soldier with inglorious ease.

Help me, soldier,

To curse this madman, this industrious fool,
Who labour'd to be wretched. Pr'ythee, curse me.

Ven. No.

Marc A. Why?

Ven. You are too sensible already
Of what you've done, too conscious of your failings;
And like a scorpion, whipp'd by others first
To fury, sting yourself in mad revenge.

I would bring balm, and pour it in your wounds,
Cure your distemper'd mind, and heal your fortunes.

Marc A. I know thou wouldst.

Ven. I will.

Marc A. Sure, thou dream'st, Ventidius.

Ven. No, 'tis you dream; you sleep away your
hours

In desp'rate sloth, miscall'd philosophy.

Up, up, for honour's sake! twelve legions wait you,
And long to call you chief: by painful journeys
I led 'em, patient of both heat and hunger,

Down from the Parthian marches to the Nile:
'Twill do you good to see their sun-burnt faces,
Their scar'd cheeks, and chapp'd hands: there's
virtue in 'em:

They'll sell those mangled limbs at dearer rates
Than you trim hands can buy.

Marc A. Where left you them?

Ven. I said in Lower Syria.

Marc A. Bring 'em hither;

There may be life in these.

Ven. They will not come.

Marc A. Why didst thou mock my hopes with
promis'd aids,

To double my despair? they're mutinous.

Ven. Most firm and loyal.

Marc A. I will not stir.

Why did they refuse to march?

Ven. They said they would not fight for Cleopatra.

Marc A. What was't they said?

Ven. They said they would not fight for Cleopatra.

Why should they fight, indeed, to make her conquer,
And make you more a slave? to gain you kingdoms,
Which, for a kiss at your next midnight feast,
You'll sell to her?

Marc A. Ventidius, I allow your tongue free li-
cense

On all my other faults, but on your life

No word of Cleopatra; she deserves

More worlds than I can lose.

Ven. Behold, you pow'r's!

To whom you have intrusted humankind;

See, Europe, Afric, Asia, put in balance,
And all weigh'd down by one light worthless wo-
man!

Marc A. You grow presumptuous.

Ven. I take the privilege of plain love to speak.

Marc A. Plain love! plain arrogance, plain in-
solence!

Thy men are cowards, thou an envious traitor,

Who, under seeming honesty, hath vented
The burden of thy rank o'erflowing gall.
Oh! that thou wert my equal, great in arms
As the first Cæsar was, that I might kill thee
Without stain to my honour!

Ven. You may kill me:

You have done more already, call'd me traitor.

Marc A. Art thou not one?

Ven. For shewing you yourself,
Which none else durst have done? But had I been
That name, which I disdain to speak again,
I need not have sought your abject fortunes,
Come to partake your fate, to die with you.
What hinder'd me t' have led my conqu'ring eagles
To fill Octavia's bands? I could have been
A traitor then, a glorious happy traitor,
And not have been so call'd.

Marc A. Forgive me, soldier;
I've been too passionate.

Ven. You thought me false,
Thought my old age betray'd you. Kill me, sir,
Pray, kill me: yet you need not; your unkindness
Has left your sword no work.

Marc A. I did not think so;
I said it in my rage: pr'ythee, forgive me.
Why didst thou tempt my anger by discov'ry
Of what I would not hear?

Ven. No prince but you
Could merit that sincerity I us'd,
Nor durst another man have ventur'd it.

Marc A. But Cleopatra—
Go on, for I can bear it now.

Ven. No more.

Marc A. Thou dar'st not trust my passion, but
thou may'st:

Thou only lov'st, the rest have flatter'd me.

Ven. Heav'n's blessing on your heart for that
kind word!

May I believe you love me? speak again.

Marc A. Indeed I do. Speak this, and this, and
this. *(Embracing him.)*

Thy praises were unjust; but I'll deserve 'em,
And yet mend all. Do with me what thou wilt:
Lead me to victory, thou know'st the way.

Ven. And will you leave this—

Marc A. Pr'ythee, do not curse her,
And I will leave her, though heav'n knows I love
Beyond life, conquest, empire, all but honour:
But I will leave her.

Ven. That's my royal master.

And shall we fight?

Marc A. I warrant thee, old soldier;
Thou shalt behold me once again in iron,
And, at the head of our old troops that beat
The Parthians, cry aloud, "Come, follow me!"

Ven. Oh! now I hear my emperor! In that
word

Octavius fell. Gods! let me see that day,
And if I have ten years behind, take all;
I'll thank you for th' exchange.

Marc A. Oh! thou hast fir'd me! my soul's up
in arms,

And man's each part about me. Once again
That noble eagerness of light has seiz'd me,
That eagerness with which I darted upward
To Cassius' camp: in vain the steepy hill
Oppos'd my way, in vain a war of spears
Sung round my head, and planted all my shield;
I won the trenches, while my foremost men
Lagg'd on the plain below.

Ven. Ye gods, ye gods,

For such another honour!

Marc A. Come on, my soldier;
Our hearts and arms are still the same: I long
Once more to meet our foes, that thou and I,
Like time and death, marching before our troops,
May taste fate to 'em, mow 'em out a passage,
And ent'ring where the foremost squadrons yield,
Begin the noble harvest of the field. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A grand Saloon.

Enter CLEOPATRA, IRAS, and ALEXAS.

Cleo. What shall I do, or whether shall I turn?
Ventidius has o'ercome, and he will go.

Alex. He goes to fight for you.

Cleo. Then he would see me ere he went to fight.
Flatter me not; if once he goes, he's lost.
And all my hopes destroy'd.

Alex. Does this weak passion
Become a mighty queen?

Cleo. I am no queen:

Is this to be a queen to be besieg'd
By you insulting Roman, and to wait
Each hour the victor's chain? These ills are small;
For Antony is lost, and I can mourn
For nothing else but him. Now come, Octavius;
I have no more to lose; prepare thy bands;
I'm fit to be a captive: Antony
Has taught my mind the fortune of a slave.

Iras. Call reason to assist you.

Cleo. I have none,
And none would have: my love's a noble madness,
Which shews the cause deserv'd it. Moderate sor-
row

Fits vulgar love, and for a vulgar man;
But I have lov'd with such transcendent passion,
I soar'd at first quite out of reason's view,
And now am all lost above it.

Enter CHARMION.

Now, what news, my Charmion?
Will he be kind? and will he not forsake me?
Am I to live or die?

Char. I found him, madam—

Cleo. A long speech preparing!

If thou bring'st comfort, haste and give it me,
For never was more need.

Iras. I know he loves you.

Cleo. Had he been kind, her eyes had told me so
Before her tongue could speak it: now she studies
To soften what he said: but give me death
Just as he sent it, Charmion, undisguis'd,
And in the words he spoke.

Char. I found him, then,

Encompass'd round, I think, with iron statues;
So mute, so motionless his soldiers stood,
While awfully he cast his eyes about,
And ev'ry leader's hopes and fears survey'd;
Methought he look'd resolv'd, and yet not pleas'd:
When he beheld me struggling in the crowd,
He blush'd, and had made way.

Alex. There's comfort yet.

Char. Ventidius fix'd his eyes upon my passage
Severely, as he meant to frown me back,
And sullenly gave place. I told my message
Just as you gave it, broken and disorder'd;
I number'd in it all your sighs and tears;
And while I mov'd your pitiful request,
That you but only begg'd a last farewell,
He fetch'd an inward groan, and ev'ry time
I nam'd you, sigh'd as if his heart were breaking,
But shunn'd my eyes, and guiltily look'd down.
He seem'd not now that awful Antony
Who shook an arm'd assembly with his nod,
But making shew as he would rub his eyes
Disguis'd, and blotted out a falling tear.

Cleo. Did he then weep? and was I worth a tear?
If what thou hast to say be not as pleasing
Tell me no more, but let me die contented.

Char. He bid me say he knew himself so well
He could deny you nothing if he saw you;
And, therefore—

Cleo. Thou wouldst say he would not see me.

Char. And, therefore, begg'd you not to use a
pow'r
Which he could ill resist; yet he should ever
Respect you as he ought.

Cleo. Is that a word
For Antony to use to Cleopatra?
Oh! that faint word respect! how I disdain it!
Disdain myself for loving after it!

Alex. You misjudge;
You see through love, and that deludes your sight,
But I, who bear my reason undisturb'd,
Can see this Antony, this dreaded man,
A fearful slave, who fain would run away,
And shun his master's eyes; if you pursue him,
My life on't, he still drags a chain along
That needs must clog his flight.

Cleo. Could I believe thee—
Alex. By ev'ry circumstance I know he loves.
True, he's hard press'd by int'rest and by honour;
Yet he but doubts and parleys, and casts out
Many a long look for succour.

Cleo. He sends word
He fears to see my face.

Alex. And would you more?
He shews his weakness who declines the combat;
And you must urge your fortune. Could he speak
More plainly? to my ears the message sounds,
"Come to my rescue, Cleopatra, come;
Come free me from Ventidius, from my tyrant;
See me, and give me a pretence to leave him!"

(*A march.*)
I hear his trumpets. This way he must pass.
Please you retire awhile; I'll work him first,
That he may bend more easy.

Cleo. You shall rule me,
But all, I fear, in vain. [*Exit with Char. and Iras.*]

Alex. I fear so, too,
Though I conceal'd my thoughts to make her bold;
But 'tis our utmost means, and fate befriend it.

(*Retires. A march till all are on.*)

*Enter Lictors with fasces, one bearing the eagle; then
enter MARC ANTONY and VENTIDIUS, followed by
other Commanders.*

Marc A. Octavius is the minion of blind chance,
But holds from virtue nothing.

Ven. Has he courage?

Marc A. But just enough to season him from
coward.

Oh! 'tis the coldest youth upon a charge,
The most deliberate fighter! if he ventures
(As in Ilyria once they say he did)
To storm a town, 'tis when he cannot choose,
When all the world have fix'd their eyes upon him;
And then he lives on that for seven years after:
But at a close revenge he never fails.

Ven. I heard you challeng'd him.

Marc A. I did, Ventidius:

What think'st thou was his answer? 'twas so
tame!

He said, he had more ways than one to die,
I had not.

Ven. Poor!

Marc A. He has more ways than one,
But he would choose 'em all before that one.

Ven. He first would choose an ague or a fever.

Marc A. No; it must be an ague, not a fever;
He has not warmth enough to die by that.

Ven. Or old age and a bed.

Marc A. Ay, there's his choice;
He would live like a lamp to the last wink,
And crawl upon the utmost verge of life.
Oh! Hercules, why should a man like this,
Who dares not trust his fate for one great action,
Be all the care of heav'n? why should he lord it
O'er fourscore thousand men of whom each one
Is braver than himself?

Ven. Sir, we lose time; the troops are mounted
all.

Marc A. Then give the word to march:
I long to leave this prison of a town
To join thy legions, and in open field
Once more to shew my face. Lead, my deliverer.

Enter ALEXAS.

Alex. Great emperor,
In mighty arms renown'd above mankind,
But, in soft pity to th' oppress'd, a god,
This message sends the mournful Cleopatra
To her departing lord.

Ven. (*Aside.*) Smooth sycophant!
Alex. A thousand wishes and ten thousand pray'rs,
Millions of blessings, wait you to the wars;
Millions of sighs and tears she sends you, too,
And would have sent
As many dear embraces to your arms,
As many parting kisses to your lips,
But those, she fears, have weary'd you already.

Ven. (*Aside.*) False crocodile!

Alex. And yet she begs not now you would not
leave her;

That were a wish too mighty for her hopes,
And too presuming, (for her low fortune and your
ebbing love,)

That were a wish for her most prosp'rous days,
Her blooming beauty and your growing kindness.

Marc A. (*Aside.*) Well, I must man it out.

What would the queen?

Alex. First, to these noble warriors who attend
Your daring courage in the chase of fame
(Too daring and too dang'rous for her quiet)
She humbly recommends all she holds dear,
All her own cares and fears, the care of you.

Ven. Yes, wituess Actium.

Marc A. Let him speak, Ventidius.

Alex. You, when his matchless valour bears him
forward

With ardour too heroic on his foes,
Fall down as she would do before his feet,
Lie in his way, and stop the paths of death;
Tell him this god is not invulnerable,
That absent Cleopatra bleeds in him;
And that you may remember her petition,
She begs you wear these trifles as a pawn,
Which, at your wish'd return, she will redeem
(*Gives jewels to the Commanders.*)

With all the wealth of Egypt.

This to the great Ventidius she presents,
Whom she can never count her enemy,
Because he loves her lord.

Ven. Tell her I'll none on't;
I'm not ashamed of honest poverty:
Not all the diamonds of the east can bribe
Ventidius from his faith. I hope to see
These and the rest of all her sparkling store
Where they shall more deservingly be plac'd.

Marc A. And who must wear 'em, then?

Ven. The wrong'd Octavia.

Marc A. You might have spar'd that word.

Ven. And she that bribe.

Marc A. But have I no remembrance?

Alex. Yes, a dear one;

You slave, the queen—

Marc A. My mistress.

Alex. Then your mistress.

Your mistress would, she says, have sent her soul,
But that you had long since: she humbly begs
This ruby bracelet, set with bleeding hearts,
(The emblems of her own,) may bind your arm.

(*Presenting a bracelet.*)
Ven. Now, my best lord, in honour's name I ask
you,

For manhood's sake, and for your own dear safety,
Touch not these poison'd gifts,
Infected by the sender; touch 'em not;
Myriads of bluest plagues lie underneath 'em,
And more than aconite has dipp'd the silk.

Marc A. Nay, now you grow too cynical, Ven-
tidius;

A lady's favours may be worn with honour.

What, to refuse her bracelet! on my soul,

When I lie pensive in my tent alone,

'Twill pass the wakeful hours of winter nights

To tell these pretty beads upon my arm,
To count for ev'ry one a soft embrace,
A melting kiss at such and such a time,
And now and then the fury of her love,
When—And what harm's in this?

Alex. None, none, my lord,

But what's to her, that now 'tis past for ever.

Marc A. (*Going to tie it.*) We soldiers are so awkward—help me to tie it.

Alex. In faith, my lord, we courtiers, too, are awkward

In these affairs; so are all men, indeed;

But shall I speak?

Marc A. Yes, freely.

Alex. Then, my lord, fair hands alone

Are fit to tie it; she who sent it can.

Ven. Hell! death! this enunch pander ruins you.

You will not see her?

[*Alexas whispers an Attendant, who goes out.*]

Marc A. But to take my leave.

Ven. Then I have wash'd an Ethiop. Y' are undone!

Y' are in the toils! y' are taken! y' are destroy'd!

Her eyes do Cæsar's work.

Marc A. You fear too soon:

I'm constant to myself: I know my strength;

And yet she shall not think me barb'rous neither,

Born in the deeps of Afric: I'm a Roman,

Bred to the rules of soft humanity.

A guest, and kindly us'd, should bid farewell.

Ven. You do not know

How weak you are to her, how much an infant;

You are not proof against a smile or glance;

A sigh will quite disarm you!

Marc A. See, she comes!

Now you shall find your error. Gods! I thank you;

I form'd the danger greater than it was,

And now 'tis near, 'tis lessen'd.

Ven. Mark the end, yet.

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, and IRAS.

Marc A. Well, madam, we are met.

Cleo. Is this a meeting?

Then we must part!

Marc A. We must.

Cleo. Who says we must?

Marc A. Our own hard fates.

Cleo. We make those fates ourselves.

Marc A. Yes, we have made 'em; we have lov'd each other

Into our mutual ruin.

Cleo. The gods have seen my joys with envious eyes;

And all the world

(As 'twere the bus'ness of mankind to part us)

Is arm'd against my love; ev'n you yourself

Join with the rest: you, you are arm'd against me.

Marc A. I will be justify'd in all I do

To late posterity, and, therefore, hear me.

If I mix a lie

With any truth, reproach me freely with it,

Else favour me with silence.

Cleo. You command me,

And I am dumb.

Ven. I like this well: he shews authority. (*Aside.*)

Marc A. That I derive my ruin

From you alone—

Cleo. Oh, heav'ns! I ruin you!

Marc A. You promis'd me your silence, and you break it

Ere I have scarce begun.

Cleo. Well, I obey you.

Marc A. When I beheld you first it was in Egypt,

Ere Cæsar saw your eyes: you gave me love,

And were too young to know it. That I settled

Your father in his throne was for your sake;

I left th' acknowledgment for time to ripen;

Cæsar stepp'd in, and with a greedy hand

Pluck'd the green fruit ere the first blush of red

Yet cleaving to the bough. He was my lord,
And was, beside, too great for me to rival:
But I deserv'd you first, though he enjoy'd you.
When after I beheld you in Cilicia,
An enemy to Rome, I pardon'd you.

Cleo. I clear'd myself—

Marc A. Again you break your promise.

I lov'd you still, and took your weak excuses,

Took you into my hosom stain'd by Cæsar,

And not half mine: I went to Egypt with you,

And hid me from the bus'ness of the world,

Shut out inquiring nations from my sight

To give whole years to you.

Ven. Yes, to your shame be't spoken. (*Aside.*)

Marc A. How I lov'd,

Witness ye days and nights, and all ye hours,

That danc'd away with down upon your feet,

As all your bus'ness were to count my passion.

One day past by and nothing saw but love;

Another came, and still 'twas only love:

The suns were weary'd out with looking on,

And I untir'd with loving.

I saw you ev'ry day, and all the day,

And ev'ry day was still but as the first,

So eager was I still to see you more.

Ven. 'Tis all too true.

Marc A. Fulvia, my wife, grew jealous,

(As she, indeed, had reason,) rais'd a war

In Italy to call me back.

Ven. But yet

You went not.

(*Aside.*)

Marc A. While within your arms I lay

The world fell mould'ring from my hands each hour,

And left me scarce a grasp: I thank your love

for't.

Ven. Well push'd: that last was home. (*Aside.*)

Cleo. Yet may I speak?

Marc A. If I have urg'd a falsehood, yes; else not.

Your silence says I have not. Fulvia died:

(Pardon, you gods! with my unkindness died.)

To set the world at peace, I took Octavia,

This Cæsar's sister. In her pride of youth

And flow'r of beauty did I wed that lady,

Whom blushing I must praise, although I left her.

You call'd; my love obey'd the fatal summons:

This rais'd the Roman arms; the cause was your's.

I would have fought by land, where I was stronger;

You hinder'd it; yet, when I fought at sea,

Forsook me fighting; and, oh! stain to honour!

Oh! lasting shame! I knew not that I fled,

But led to follow you.

Ven. What haste she made to hoist her purple

sails!

And to appear magnificent in flight,

Drew half our strength away.

Marc A. All this you caus'd:

And would you multiply more ruin on me?

'This honest man, my best, my only friend,

Has gather'd up the shipwreck of my fortunes:

Twelve legions I have left, my last recruits,

And you have watch'd the news, and bring your

eyes

To seize them, too. If you have aught to answer

Now speak, you have free leave.

Alex. She stands confounded:

Despair is in her eyes.

(*Aside.*)

Ven. Now lay a sigh i'th' way to stop his pas-

sage;

Prepare a tear, and bid it for his legions:

'Tis like they shall be sold.

Cleo. How shall I plead my cause, when you,

my judge,

Already have condemn'd me? Shall I bring

The love you bore me for my advocate?

That now is turn'd against me, that destroys me;

For love once past is, at the best, forgotten,

But oft'ner sours to hate. It will please my lord

To ruin me, and therefore I'll be guilty;

But could I once have thought it would have pleas'd
you,

That you would pry with narrow searching eyes
Into my faults, severe to my destruction,
And watching all advantages with care
That serve to make me wretched! Speak, my lord,
For I end here. Though I deserve this usage,
Was it like you to give it?

Marc A. Oh! you wrong me
To think I sought this parting, or desir'd
T' accuse you more than what will clear myself,
And justify this breach.

Cleo. Thus low I thank you;
And since my innocence will not offend,
I shall not blush to own it.

Ven. After this,
I think she'll blush at nothing. *(Aside.)*

Cleo. You seem griev'd
(And therein you are kind) that Cæsar first
Enjoy'd my love, though you deserv'd it better;
For had I first been your's it would have sav'd
My second choice; I never had been his,
And ne'er had been but your's. But Cæsar first,
You say, possess'd my love. Not so, my lord:
He first possess'd my person, you my love:
Cæsar lov'd me, but I lov'd Antony:

Ven. Oh! siren, siren!
Yet grant that all the love she boasts were true,
Has she not ruin'd you? I still urge that,
The fatal consequence.

Cleo. The consequence, indeed!
For I dare challenge him, my greatest foe,
To say it was design'd. It is true I lov'd you,
And kept you far from an uneasy wife;
Such Fulvia was.

Yes; but he'll say you left Octavia for me:
And can you blame me to receive that love
Which quitted such desert for worthless me?
How often have I wish'd some other Cæsar,
Great as the first, and as the second young,
Would court my love to be refus'd for you!

Ven. Words, words! but Actium, sir, remember
Actium!

Cleo. Ev'n there I dare his malice. True, I
counsel'd

To fight at sea; but I betray'd you not:
I fled, but not to the enemy. 'Twas fear:
Would I had been a man not to have fear'd!
For none would then have envy'd me your friend-
ship,
Who envy me your love.

Marc A. We're both unhappy:
If nothing else, yet our ill fortune parts us.
Speak! would you have me perish by my stay?

Cleo. If as a friend you ask my judgment, go;
If as a lover, stay. If you must perish—
'Tis a hard word: but stay.

Ven. See now th' effects of her so boasted love!
She strives to drag you down to ruin with her;
But could she 'scape without you, oh! how soon
Would she let go her hold, and haste to shore,
And never look behind!

Cleo. Then judge my love by this.
(Giving Marc A. a writing.)

Could I have borne
A life or death, a happiness or woe,
From your's divided, this had giv'n me means.

Marc A. By Hercules, the writing of Octavius!
See, see, Ventidius! here he offers Egypt,
And joins all Syria to it as a present,
So, in requital, she forsake my fortunes
And join her arms with his.

Cleo. And yet you leave me!
You leave me, Antony; and yet I love you!
Indeed I do! I have refus'd a kingdom,
That's a trifle;
For I could part with life, with anything,
But only you. Oh! let me die but with you!
Is that a hard request?

Marc A. Next living with you,
'Tis all that heav'n can give.

Alex. He melts; we conquer. *(Aside.)*

Cleo. No, you shall go; your int'rest calls you
hence:

Yes, your dear int'rest pulls too strong for these
Weak arms to hold you here. *(Takes his hand.)*
Go, leave me, soldier,
(For you're no more a lover,) leave me dying;
Push me all pale and panting from your bosom,
And when your march begins, let one run after,
Breathless almost for joy, and cry, "She's dead!"
The soldiers shout. You then, perhaps, may sigh,
And muster all your Roman gravity;
Ventidius chides, and straight your brow clears up,
As I had never been.

Marc A. Gods! 'tis too much! too much for
man to bear!

Cleo. What is't for me, then,
A weak, forsaken woman and a lover?
Here let me breathe my last; envy me not
This minute in your arms! I'll die,
And end your trouble.

Marc A. Die! rather let me perish, loosen'd na-
ture

Leap from its hinges, sink the props of heav'n,
And fall the skies to crush the nether world!
My eyes, my soul, my all! *(Embraces her.)*
"But could she 'scape without me, with what haste
Would she let slip her hold, and make to shore,
And never look behind!"

Down on thy knees, blasphemers as thou art,
And ask forgiveness of wrong'd innocence.

Ven. I'll rather die than take it. Will you go?

Marc A. Go! whither? go from all that's ex-
cellent!

Give to your boy, your Cæsar,
This rattle of a globe to play withal,
This gewgaw world, and put him clearly off;
I'll not be pleas'd with less than Cleopatra.

Cleo. She's wholly your's. My heart's so full
of joy,

That I shall do some wild extravagance
Of love in public; and the foolish world,
Which knows not tenderness, will think me mad.

Ven. Oh! women, women, women! all the gods
Have not such pow'r of doing good to man
As you of doing harm. *[Exit.]*

Marc A. Our men are arm'd;
Unbar the gate that looks to Cæsar's camp;
I would revenge the treachery he meant me,
And long security makes conquest easy.
I'm eager to return before I go;
For all the pleasures I have known beat thick
On my remembrance. How I long for night!
That both the sweets of mutual love may try,
And triumph once o'er Cæsar ere we die. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Enter* CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, IRAS,
ALEXAS, and a train of Egyptians; MARC AN-
TONY and Romans. Cleopatra crowns Marc An-
tony.

Marc A. My brighter Venus!

Cleo. Oh! my greater Mars!

Marc A. Thou join'st us well, my love.
There's no satiety of love in thee;
Enjoy'd, thou still art new; perpetual spring
Is in thy arms; the ripen'd fruit but falls
And blossoms rise to fill its empty place,
And I grow rich by giving.

Enter VENTIDIUS, and stands apart.

Alex. Oh! now the danger's past your gen'ral
comes;

He joins not in your joys, nor minds your triumphs;
But with contracted brows looks frowning on,
As envying your success.

Marc A. Now on my soul he loves me, truly loves me;

He never flatter'd me in any vice,
But awes me with his virtue; ev'n this minute,
Metbinks, he has a right of cluding me.
Lead to the temple; I'll avoid his presence;
It checks too strong upon me.

(*As Marc A. is going with the rest, Ventidius pulls him by the robe.*)

Ven. Emperor!

Marc A. (*Looking back.*) 'Tis the old argument;
I pry'thee, spare me.

Ven. But this one hearing, emperor.

Marc A. Let go

My robe, or by the father Hercules—

Ven. By Hercules' father! that's yet greater;
I bring you somewhat you would wish to know.

Marc A. Thou seest we are observ'd; attend me here,

And I'll return.

[*Exit.*]

Ven. I'm waning in his favour, yet I love him;

I love this man who runs to meet his ruin;

And sure the gods, like me, are fond of him:

His virtues lie so mingled with his crimes,

As would confound their choice to punish one

And not reward the other.

Re-enter MARC ANTONY.

Marc A. We can conquer,

You see, without your aid:

We have dislodg'd their troops.

Five thousand Romans, with their faces upward,

Lie breathless on the plain.

Ven. 'Tis well; and he

Who lost 'em could have spar'd ten thousand more:

Yet, if by this advantage you could gain

An easier peace, while Cæsar doubts the chance

Of arms—

Marc A. Oh! think not on't, Ventidius!

The boy pursues my ruin; he'll no peace!

Ven. Have you no friend,

In all his army, who has pow'r to move him?

Mecenas or Agrippa might do much.

Pray, think again.

Marc A. Why dost thou drive me from myself to search

For foreign aid, to hunt my memory,

And range all o'er a wide and barren place,

To find a friend? The wretched have no friends!

Yet I have one, the bravest youth of Rome,

Whom Cæsar loves beyond the love of women.

Ven. Him would I see, that man of all the world!

Just such an one we want.

Marc A. He lov'd me, too;

I was his soul; he liv'd not but in me:

We were so clos'd within each other's breasts,

The rivets were not found that join'd us first.

After this,

I need not tell his name: 'twas Dolabella.

Ven. He's now in Cæsar's camp.

Marc A. No matter where,

Since he's no longer mine. He took unkindly

That I forbade him Cleopatra's sight,

Because I fear'd he lov'd her.

Would he were here!

Ven. Would you believe he lov'd you?

I read your answer in your eyes—you would.

Not to conceal it longer, he has sent

A messenger from Cæsar's camp with letters.

Marc A. Let him appear.

Ven. I'll bring him instantly.

[*Exit.*]

Re-enter VENTIDIUS, with DOLABELLA.

Marc A. 'Tis he himself, himself! by holy friendship!
(*Hunts to embrace him.*)

Art thou return'd at last, my better half?

Dol. I must be silent, for my soul is busy

About a nobler work. She's new come home,

Like a long absent man, and wanders o'er

Each room, a stranger to her own, to look
If all be safe.

Marc A. Thou hast what's left of me;

But, oh! my Dolabella,

Thou hast beheld me other than I am.

Hast thou not seen my morning chambers fill'd

With sceptred slaves, who waited to salute me?

With eastern monarchs, who forgot the sun

To worship my uprising? Menial kings

Ran coursing up and down my palace-yard,

Stood silenc'd in my presence, watch'd my eyes,

And at my least command, all started out

Like racers to the goal.

Dol. Slaves to your fortune.

Marc A. Fortune is Cæsar's now, and what am I?

Ven. What you have made yourself: I will not

flatter.

Marc A. Is this friendly done?

Dol. Yes, when his end is so. I must join with

him,

Indeed I must, and yet you must not chide:

Why am I else your friend?

Marc A. Take heed, young man,

How thou upbraid'st my love! the queen has eyes,

And thou, too, hast a soul! Canst thou remember

When, swell'd with hatred, thou beheld'st her first

As necessary to thy brother's death?

Dol. Spare my remembrance! 'twas a guilty

day,

And still the blush hangs here.

Marc A. To clear herself

For sending him no aid, she came from Egypt:

Her galley down the silver Cydnus row'd;

The tackling silk, the streamers wav'd with gold,

The gentle winds were lodg'd in purple sails,

Her nymphs like Nereids round her couch were

plac'd,

Where she another sea-born Venus lay.

Dol. No more! I would not hear it!

Marc A. Oh! you must.

She lay, and leant her cheek upon her hand,

And cast a look so languishingly sweet,

As if secure of all beholders' hearts,

Neglecting she could take 'em. Boys, like Cupids,

Stood fanning, with their painted wings, the winds

That play'd about her face; but if she smil'd,

A darting glory seem'd to blaze abroad,

That men's desiring eyes were never weary'd,

But hung upon the object! To soft flutes

The silver oars kept time; and, while they play'd,

The hearing gave new pleasure to the sight,

And both to thought. 'Twas heav'n, or somewhat

more!

For she so charm'd all hearts, that gazing crowds

Stood panting on the shore, and wanted breath

To give their welcome voice.

Then, Dolabella, where was then thy soul?

Was not thy fury quite disarm'd with wonder?

Didst thou not shrink behind me from those eyes,

And whisper in my ear, "Oh! tell her not

That I accus'd her of my brother's death."

Dol. And should my weakness be a plea for your's?

Mine was an age when love might be excus'd;

Your's—

Ven. Speak boldly:

Your's, he would say, in your declining age;

In you (I would not use so harsh a word)

'Tis but plain dotage.

Marc A. Ha!

Dol. 'Twas urg'd too home.

But yet the loss was private that I made;

'Twas but myself I lost: I lost no legions;

I had no world to lose, no peoples' love.

Marc A. This from a friend!

Dol. Yes, Antony, a true one;

A friend so tender, that each word I speak

Stabs my own heart before it reach your ear.

Oh! judge me not less kind because I chide.

To Cæsar I excuse you.

Marc A. Oh! ye gods,
Have I, then, liv'd to be excus'd to Cæsar?

Dol. As to your equal.

Marc A. Well, he's but my equal:
While I hear this he never shall be more.

Dol. I bring conditions from him.

Marc A. Are they noble?

Methinks thou shouldst not bring 'em else; yet he
Is full of deep dissembling, knows no honour
Divided from his int'rest.

He's fit, indeed, to buy, not conquer kingdoms.

Ven. Then, granting this,

What power was theirs who wrought so hard a
temper

To honourable terms?

Marc A. It was my Dolabella or Agrippa.

Dol. Not I, nor yet Mecænas, nor Agrippa;
They were your enemies, and I a friend
Too weak alone; yet 'twas a Roman deed.

Marc A. 'Twas like a Roman done. Shew me that
man

Who has preserv'd my life, my love, my honour;
Let me but see his face.

Ven. That task is mine,

And, heav'n! thou know'st how pleasing. [Exit.

Dol. You'll remember

To whom you stand oblig'd?

Marc A. When I forget it,
Be thou unkind, and that's my greatest curse.
My queen shall thank him, too.

Dol. I fear she will not.

Marc A. But she shall do't. The queen, my Do-
labella!

Hast thou not still some grudgings of thy fever?

Dol. I would not see her last.

Marc A. When I forsake her,
Leave me, my better stars; for she has truth
Beyond her beauty. Cæsar tempted her
At no less price than kingdoms to betray me;
But she resisted all: and yet thou chid'st me
For loving her too well. Could I do so?

Dol. Yes; there's my reason.

Re-enter VENTIDIUS with OCTAVIA, leading Marc
Antony's two little Daughters.

Marc A. Where—Octavia there? (Starting.)

Ven. What! is she poison to you? a disease?
Look on her, view her well, and those she brings:
Are they all strangers to your eyes? has nature
No secret call, no whisper, they are your's?

Dol. For shame, my lord! if not for love, re-
ceive 'em

With kinder eyes. If you confess a man,
Meet 'em, embrace 'em, bid 'em welcome to you.

Marc A. I stood amaz'd to think how they came
hither.

Ven. I sent for 'em; I brought them in unknown
To Cleopatra's guards.

Dol. Yet are you cold?

Oct. Thus long I have attended for my welcome,
Which, as a stranger, sure I might expect.
Who am I?

Marc A. Cæsar's sister.

Oct. That's unkind!

Had I been nothing more than Cæsar's sister,
Know, I had still remain'd in Cæsar's camp;
But your Octavia, your much injur'd wife,
Though banish'd from your bed, driv'n from your
house,

In spite of Cæsar's sister, still is your's.
'Tis true, I have a heart disdains your coldness,
And prompts me not to seek what you should
offer;

But a wife's virtue still surmounts that pride:

I come to claim you as my own, to shew
My duty first, to ask, nay, beg your kindness.
Your hand, my lord; 'tis mine, and I will have it.

(Taking his hand.)

Ven. Do take it, thou deserv'st it.

Dol. On my soul,
And so she does.

Marc A. I fear, Octavia, you have begg'd my life.

Oct. Begg'd it, my lord?

Marc A. Yes, begg'd it, my ambassadress;
Poorly and basely begg'd it of your brother.

Oct. Poorly and basely I could never beg,
Nor could my brother grant.

Marc A. Shall I, who to my kneeling slave could
say,

“Rise up, and be a king!” shall I fall down
And cry, “Forgive me, Cæsar?” No; that word
Forgive would cloke me up,
And die upon my tongue.

Dol. You shall not need it.

Marc A. I will not need it. Come, you've all
betray'd me:

My wife has bought me with her pray'rs and tears,
And now I must become her branded slave:

In ev'ry peevish mood she will upbraid
The life she gave: if I but look awry,
She'll cry, “I'll tell my brother!”

Oct. My hard fortune
Subjects me still to your unkind mistakes;
But the conditions I have brought, are such
You need not blush to take. I love your honour,
Because 'tis mine. It never shall be said,
Octavia's husband was her brother's slave.

Sir, you are free, free ev'n from her you loathe;
For though my brother bargains for your love,
Makes me the price and cement of your peace,
I have a soul like your's; I cannot take
Your love as alms, nor beg what I deserve.

I'll tell my brother we are reconcil'd;
He shall draw back his troops, and you shall march
To rule the east. I may be dropp'd at Athens;
No matter where; I never will complain,
But only keep the barren name of wife,
And rid you of the trouble.

Ven. Was ever such a strife of sullen honour!
Both scorn to be oblig'd. (Apart.)

Dol. Oh! she has touch'd him in the tend'rest part:
See how he reddens with despite and shame
To be outdone in generosity! (Apart.)

Marc A. Octavia, I have heard you, and must
praise

The greatness of your soul,
But cannot yield to what you have propos'd;
For I can ne'er be conquer'd but by love,
And you do all for duty. You would free me,
And would be dropp'd at Athens; was't not so?

Oct. It was, my lord.

Marc A. Then I must be oblig'd
To one who loves me not, who to herself
May call me thankless and ungrateful man.
I'll not endure it; no.

Ven. I'm glad it pinches there. (Apart.)

Oct. Would you triumph o'er poor Octavia's
virtue!

That pride was all I had to bear me up,
That you might think you ow'd me for your life,
And ow'd it to my duty, not my love.

Marc A. Therefore, you love me not.

Oct. Therefore, my lord,

I should not love you.

Marc A. Therefore, you would leave me.

Oct. And, therefore, I should leave you—if I
could.

Dol. Her soul's too great, after such injuries,
To say she loves, and yet she lets you see it.
Her modesty and silence plead her cause.

Marc A. Oh! Dolabella, which way shall I turn?
I find a secret yielding in my soul;
But Cleopatra, who would die with me,
Must she be left? Pity pleads for Octavia,
But does it not plead more for Cleopatra?

Ven. Justice and pity plead for Octavia,
For Cleopatra neither.

One would be ruin'd with you, but she first

Had ruin'd you; the other you have ruin'd,
And yet she would preserve you.

In ev'rything their merits are unequal.

Marc A. Oh! my distracted soul!

Oct. Sweet heav'n! compose it.

Come, come; my lord, if I can pardon you,
Methinks you should accept it. Look on these;
Are they not your's? or stand they thus neglected
As they are mine? Go to him, children; go
Kneel to him; take him by the hand; speak to him:
You, Agrippina, bang upon his arms;
And you, Antonia, clasp about his waist:
If he will shake you off, if he will dash you
Against the pavement, you must bear it, children;
For you are mine, and I was born to suffer.

(*The Children go to him.*)

Ven. Was ever sight so moving! Emperor!

Dol. Friend!

Oct. Husband!

Children. Father!

Marc A. I am vanquish'd: take me,
Octavia; take me, children; share me all.

(*Embracing them.*)

I've been a thriftless debtor to your loves,
And run out much in riot from your stock;
But all shall be amended.

Oct. Oh! bless'd hour!

Dol. Oh! happy change!

Ven. My joy stops at my tongue!

Marc A. (*To Octavia.*) This is thy triumph:
lead me where thou wilt,
Ev'n to thy brother's camp.

Oct. All there are your's.

Enter ALEXAS, hastily.

Alex. The queen, my mistress, sir, and your's—

Marc A. 'Tis past. Octavia, you shall stay this
night;

To-morrow, Cæsar and we are one. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Saloon.

Enter MARC ANTONY AND DOLABELLA.

Dol. Why would you shift it from yourself on
me?

Can you not tell her you must part?

Marc A. I cannot;

I could pull out an eye and bid it go,
And t'other should not weep. Oh! Dolabella,
How many deaths are in this word depart!
I dare not trust my tongue to tell her so:
One look of hers would thaw me into tears,
And I should melt till I were lost again.

Dol. Then let Ventidius;

He's rough by nature.

Marc A. Oh! he'll speak too harshly;
He'll kill her with the news: thou, only thou.

Dol. Nature has cast me in so soft a mould
That I should speak

So faintly, with such fear to grieve her heart,
She'd not believe it earnest.

Marc A. Therefore, therefore,
Thou, only thou, art fit. Think thyself me,
And when thou speak'st (but let it first be long)
Take off the edge from ev'ry sharper sound,
And let our parting be as gently made
As other loves begin. Wilt thou do this?

Dol. What you have said so sinks into my soul,
That if I must speak, I shall speak just so.

Marc A. I leave you then to your sad task. Fare-
well!

I sent her word to meet you.

(*Goes to the door and comes back.*)

I forgot:

Let her be told I'll make her peace with mine:
Her crown and dignity shall be preserv'd,
If I have pow'r with Cæsar.—Oh! be sure
To think on that.

Dol. Fear not, I will remember.

(*Marc A. goes again to the door and comes back.*)

Marc A. And tell her, too, how much I was
constrain'd;

I did not this but with extremest force.

Desire her not to hate my memory,

For I still cherish hers—insist on that.

Dol. Trust me I'll not forget it.

Marc A. Then that's all.

(*Goes out and returns again.*)

Wilt thou forgive my fondness this once more?

Tell her, though we shall never meet again,

If I should hear she took another love,

The news would break my heart.—Now I must go,

For ev'ry time I have return'd, I feel

My soul more tender, and my next command

Would be to bid her stay and ruin both. [*Exit.*]

Dol. Men are but children of a larger growth;

Our appetites as apt to change as theirs,

And full as craving, too, and full as vain;

And yet the soul, shut up in her dark room,

Viewing so clear abroad, at home sees nothing;

But, like a mole in earth, busy and blind,

Works all her folly up, and casts it outward

To the world's open view. Thus I discover'd,

And blam'd the love of ruin'd Antony,

Yet wish that I were he to be so ruin'd.

Enter VENTIDIUS, behind.

Ven. Alone, and talking to himself! Concern'd,
too!

Perhaps my guess is right: he lov'd her once,
And may pursue it still. (*Aside.*)

Dol. Oh! friendship, friendship!

Ill canst thou answer this, and reason worse:

Unfaithful in th' attempt, hopeless to win,

And if I win, undone. Mere madness all.

And yet th' occasion fair. What injury

To him, to wear the robe which he throws by?

Ven. None, none at all. This happens as I wish,
To ruin her yet more with Antony. (*Aside.*)

*Enter CLEOPATRA, talking with ALEXAS, CHAR-
MION, and IRAS.*

Dol. She comes! what charms have sorrow on
that face!

Sorrow seems pleas'd to dwell with so much
sweetness;

Yet now and then a melancholy smile

Breaks loose, like lightning in a winter's night,

And shews a moment's day.

Ven. If she should love him, too! Draw, draw
nearer,

Sweet devil! that I may hear. (*Aside.*)

Alex. Believe me; try—

(*Dolabella goes over to Charmion and Iras.*)

To make him jealous; jealousy is like
A polish'd glass held to the lips when life's in doubt:

If there be breath, 'twill catch the damp and shew it.

Cleo. I grant you jealousy's a proof of love,

But 'tis a weak and unavailing medicine.

Alex. 'Tis your last remedy, and strongest, too:

And then this Dolabella, who so fit

To practise on? He's handsome, valiant, young,

And looks as he were laid for Nature's bait

To catch weak women's eyes.

He stands already more than half suspected

Of loving you: the least kind word or glance

You give this youth will kindle him with love;

Then, like a burning vessel set adrift,

You'll send him down again before the wind,

To fire the heart of jealous Antony.

Cleo. Can I do this? ah! no; my love's so true,

That I can neither hide it where it is,

Nor shew it where it is not,

Alex. Force yourself:

Th' event will be, your lover will return

Doubly desirous to possess the good

Which once he fear'd to lose.

Cleo. I must attempt it;
 But, oh! with what regret. *[Exit Alexas.]*
Ven. So, now the scene draws near; they're in
 my reach. *(Aside.)*
Cleo. *(To Dol.)* Discoursing with my women!
 Might not I
 Share in your entertainment?
Char. You have been
 The subject of it, madam.
Cleo. How? and how?
Iras. Such praises of your beauty!
Cleo. Mere poetry:
 Your Roman wits, your Gallus and Tibullus,
 Have taught you this from Cytheris and Delia.
Dol. Those Roman wits have never been in Egypt,
 Cytheris and Delia else had been unsung:
 I who have seen—had I been born a poet,
 Should choose a nobler name.
Cleo. You flatter me;
 But 'tis your nation's vice: all of your country
 Are flatterers, and all false. Your friend's like you:
 I'm sure he sent you not to speak these words.
Dol. No, madam; yet he sent me—
Cleo. Well, he sent you—
Dol. Of a less pleasing errand.
Cleo. How less pleasing?
 Less to yourself or me?
Dol. Madam, to both;
 For you must mourn, and I must grieve to cause it.
Cleo. You Charmion, and your fellow, stand at
 distance.
 Hold up my spirits! *(Aside.)*—Well, now your
 mournful matter;
 For I'm prepar'd, perhaps can guess it, too.
Dol. I wish you would, for 'tis a thankless office
 To tell ill news; and I of all your sex
 Most fear displeasing you.
Cleo. Of all your sex
 I soonest could forgive you, if you should.
Ven. Most delicate advances! Woman! woman!
 Dear, d—d, unconstant sex! *(Aside.)*
Cleo. In the first place,
 I am to be forsaken; is't not so?
Dol. I wish I could not answer to that question.
Cleo. Then pass it o'er because it troubles you:
 I should have been more griev'd another time.
 Next, I'm to lose my kingdom—Farewell, Egypt!
 Yet is there any more?
Dol. Madam, I fear
 Your too deep sense of grief has turn'd your reason.
Cleo. No, no, I'm not run mad; I can bear fortune;
 And love may be expell'd by other love,
 As poisons are by poisons.
Dol. You o'erjoy me, madam,
 To find your griefs so moderately borne.
 You've heard the worst: all are not false like him.
Cleo. No, heav'n forbid they should!
Dol. Some men are constant.
Cleo. And constancy deserves reward, that's
 certain.
Dol. Deserves it not, but give it leave to hope.
Ven. I'll swear thou hast my leave. I have
 enough. *[Aside, and exit.]*
Dol. I come prepar'd
 To tell you heavy news, news which I thought
 Would fright the blood from your pale cheeks
 to hear;
 But you have met it with a cheerfulness
 That makes my task more easy; and my tongue,
 Which on another's message was employ'd,
 Would gladly speak its own.
Cleo. Hold, Dolabella.
 First tell me, were you chosen by my lord,
 Or sought you this employment?
Dol. He pick'd me out; and, as his bosom-friend,
 He charg'd me with his words.
Cleo. The message, then,
 I know was tender, and each accent smooth,
 To mollify that rugged word depart.

Dol. Oh! you mistake: he chose the harshest
 words:
 He coin'd his face in the severest stamp,
 And fury shook his fabric like an earthquake:
 He heav'd for vent, and burst like bellowing Ætna,
 In sounds scarce human.
*(All the time of this speech, Cleopatra seems
 more and more concerned, till she sinks
 quite down.)*
Cleo. Oh! I can bear no more. *(Faints.)*
Dol. Help, help! Oh, wretch! oh! cursed, cursed
 wretch!
 What have I done?
Char. Heav'n be prais'd,
 She comes again!
Cleo. Why have you brought me back to this
 loath'd being,
 Th' abode of falsehood, violated vows,
 And injur'd love? For pity let me go;
 For if there be a place of long repose,
 I'm sure I want it. Unkind, unkind!
Dol. Believe me 'tis against myself I speak;
(Kneeling.)
 That, sure, deserves belief. I injur'd him;
 My friend ne'er spoke those words. Oh! had you
 seen
 How often he came back, and ev'ry time
 With something more obliging and more kind,
 To add to what he said; what dear farewells,
 How almost vanquish'd by his love he parted,
 And lean'd to what unwillingly he left:
 I, traitor as I was, for love of you,
(But what can you not do who made me false?)
 I forg'd that lie, for whose forgiveness kneels
 This self-accus'd, self-punish'd criminal.
Cleo. With how much ease believe we what we
 wish!
 Rise, Dolabella; if you have been guilty,
 I have contributed, and too much love
 Has made me guilty, too.
 Th' advance of kindness which I made was feign'd,
 To call back fleeting love by jealousy;
 But 'twould not last. Oh! rather let me lose,
 Than so ignobly trifle with his heart.
Dol. I find your breast fenc'd round from human
 reach,
 Transparent as a rock of solid crystal,
 Seen through, but never pierc'd.
Cleo. Could you not beg
 An hour's admittance to his private ear,
 Before we part; for I have far to go,
 If death be far, and never must return?

Re-enter VENTIDIUS with OCTAVIO, behind.
Ven. From whence you may discover—Oh,
 sweet, sweet!
 Would you indeed! the pretty hand in earnest!
(Aside.)
Dol. I will for this reward: *(Takes her hand.)*
 Draw it not back;
 'Tis all I e'er will beg.
Ven. *(Apart.)* They turn upon us.
 Seen not to have observ'd 'em, and go on.
(Comes forward with Octavio.)
Dol. Saw you the emperor, Ventidius?
Ven. No;
 I sought him, but I heard that he was private;
 None with him but Hipparchus, his freed man.
Dol. Know you his bus'ness?
Ven. Giving him instructions
 And letters to his brother Cæsar.
Dol. Well,
 He must be found. *[Exit with Cleopatra.]*
Oct. Most glorious impudence!
Ven. She look'd me, methought,
 As she would say, "Take your old man, Octavia;
 Thank you, I'm better here."
 Well, but what use
 Make we of this discovery?

Oct. Let it die.

Ven. I pity Dolabella! but she's dang'rous;
And Antony
Must needs have some remains of passion still,
Which may ferment into a worse relapse
If now not fully cur'd.—But, see he comes.

Enter MARC ANTONY.

Marc A. Octavia, I was looking you, my love.
What, are your letters ready? I have giv'n
My last instructions.

Oct. Mine, my lord, are written.

Marc A. Ventidius! (Drawing him aside.)

Ven. My lord?

Marc A. A word in private.

When saw you Dolabella?

Ven. Now, my lord;

He parted hence, and Cleopatra with him.

Marc A. Speak softly; 'twas by my command
he went

To bear my last farewell.

Ven. It look'd, indeed, (Aloud.)
Like your farewell.

Marc A. More softly.—My farewell!

What secret meaning have you in those words
Of my farewell? He did it by my order.

Ven. Then he obey'd your order, I suppose.

(Aloud.)

You bid him do it with all gentleness,
All kindness, and all—love.

Marc A. How she mourn'd!

The poor forsaken creature!

Ven. She took it as she ought; she bore your
parting

As she did Cæsar's, as she would another's,
Were a new love to come.

Marc A. Thou dost belie her; (Aloud.)

Most basely and maliciously belie her.

Ven. I thought not to displease you: I have
done.

Oct. You seem disturb'd, my lord. (Coming up.)

Marc A. A very trifle.

Retire, my love.

Ven. It was indeed a trifle.

He sent—

Marc A. No more. Look how thou disobey'st me;
Thy life shall answer it. (Angrily.)

Oct. Then 'tis no trifle.

Ven. (To Oct.) 'Tis less; a very nothing: you,
too, saw it

As well as I; and, therefore, 'tis no secret.

Marc A. She saw it!

Ven. Yes; she saw young Dolabella—

Marc A. Young Dolabella!

Ven. Young! I think him young,

And handsome, too; and so do others think him.

But what of that? He went by your command,

Indeed, 'tis probable, with some kind message,

For she receiv'd it graciously: she smil'd;

And then he grew familiar with her hand,

Squeez'd it, and worry'd it with rav'nous kisses;

She blush'd, and sigh'd, and smil'd, and blush'd
again;

At last, she took occasion to talk softly,

And then she cried aloud, "That constancy
Should be rewarded!"—This I saw and heard.

Marc A. What woman was it who you heard
and saw

So playful with my friend?

Not Cleopatra?

Ven. Ev'n she, my lord!

Marc A. My Cleopatra?

Ven. Your Cleopatra,

Dolabella's Cleopatra,

Ev'ry man's Cleopatra.

Marc A. 'Tis false.

I know 'tis false, and see the plot betwixt you.

Ven. What, has my age deserv'd that you should
think

I would abuse your ears with perjury?

If heav'n be true, she's false.

Marc A. Though heav'n and earth
Should witness it, I'll not believe her tainted.

Ven. I'll bring you, then, a witness

From hell to prove her so. Nay, go not back;
(Seeing ALEXAS just entering and starting back.)

For stay you must, and shall.

Alex. What means my lord?

Ven. To make you do what most you hate, speak
truth.

Alex. My noble lord.

Ven. My most illustrious pander!

No fine set speech, no cadence, no turn'd periods,

But a plain homespun truth, is what I ask:

I did myself o'erhear your queen make love

To Dolabella: speak, for I will know,

By your confession, what more past betwixt 'em,

How near the bus'ness draws to your employment,

And when the happy hour.

Marc A. Speak truth, Alexas; whether it offend

Or please Ventidius, care not. Justify

Thy injur'd queen from malace: dare his worst.

Alex. As far as love may plead for woman's
frailty,

Urg'd by desert and greatness of the lover,

So far (divine Octavia!) may my queen

Stand ev'n excus'd to you for loving him

Who is your lord; so far from brave Ventidius.

May her past actions hope a fair report.

Marc A. 'Tis well, and truly spoken. Mark,
Ventidius.

Alex. To you, most noble emperor, her strong
passion

Stands not excus'd, but wholly justify'd.

Her beauty's charms alone, without her crown,

From Ind and Meroc drew the distant vows

Of sighing kings, and at her feet were laid

The sceptres of the earth, expos'd on heaps,

To choose where she would reign;

She thought a Roman only could deserve her,

And of all Romans only Antony;

And, to be less than wife to you, disdain'd

Their lawful passion.

Marc A. 'Tis but truth.

Alex. And yet though love and your unmatch'd
desert

Have drawn her from the due regard of honour;

At last, heav'n open'd her unwilling eyes

To see the wrongs she offer'd fair Octavia,

Whose holy bed she lawlessly usurp'd:

The sad effects of this improsp'rous war

Confirm'd those pious thoughts.

Ven. (Aside.) Oh! wheel you there?

Observe him now; the man begins to mend,

And talk substantial reason. Fear not, thou,

The emperor has giv'n thee leave to speak.

Alex. Else had I never dar'd t' offend his ears

With what the last necessity has urg'd

On my forsaken mistress; yet I must not

Presume to say her heart is wholly alter'd.

Marc A. No; dare not for thy life, I charge thee,
dare not

Pronounce that fatal word.

Oct. Must I bear this? Good heav'n! afford me
patience! (Aside.)

Ven. My dear half man! proceed.

Alex. Yet Dolabella

Has lov'd her long; he next, my godlike lord,

Deserves her best; and should she meet his passion,

Rejected as she is by him she lov'd—

Marc A. Hence from my sight, for I can bear no
more!

Let furies drag the quick to hell! each torturing hand

Do thou employ till Cleopatra comes,

Then join thou too, and help to torture her.

[Exit Alexas, thrust out by Marc Antony.]

Oct. 'Tis not well!

Indeed, my lord, 'tis much unkind to me.

To shew this passion, this extreme concernment,
For an abandon'd, faithless prostitute.

Marc A. Octavia, leave me! I am much disorder'd!

Leave me, I say!

Oct. My lord—

Marc A. I hid you leave me.

Oct. My lord, my lord! love will not always last,
When urg'd with long unkindness and disdain.

Take her again whom you prefer to me;

She stays but to be call'd. Poor, cozen'd man!

Let a feign'd parting give her back your heart,

Which a feign'd love first got; for injur'd me,

Though my just sense of wrongs forbid my stay,

My duty shall be your's.

To the dear pledges of our former love

My tenderness and care shall be transferr'd,

And they shall cheer by turns my widow'd nights.

So, take my last farewell! for I despair

To have you whole, and scorn to take you half. *[Exit.*

Ven. I combat heav'n, which blasts my best designs!

My last attempt must be to win her back;

But, oh! I fear in vain. *[Exit.*

Marc A. Why was I fram'd with this plain honest heart,

Which knows not to disguise its griefs and weakness,

But bears its workings outward to the world?

I should have kept the mighty anguish in,

And forc'd a smile at Cleopatra's falsehood;

Octavia had believ'd it, and had staid.

But I am made a shallow-forded stream,

Seen to the bottom, all my clearness scorn'd,

And all my faults expos'd.—See where he comes

Enter DOLABELLA.

Who has profan'd the sacred name of friend,

And worn it into villainess!

With how secure a brow and specious form

He gilds the secret villain! Sure, that face

Was meant for honesty, but heav'n mismatch'd it,

And furnish'd treason out with nature's pomp,

To make its work more easy.—

Well, Dolabella, you perform'd my message?

Dol. I did, unwillingly!

Marc A. Unwillingly!

Was it so hard for you to bear our parting?

You should have wish'd it.

Dol. Why?

Marc A. Because you love me:

And she receiv'd my message with as true,

With as unfeign'd a sorrow as you brought it?

Dol. She loves you ev'n to madness.

Marc A. Oh! I know it.

You, Dolabella, do not better know

How much she loves me. And should I

Forsake this beauty, this all perfect creature?

Dol. I could not, were she mine.

Marc A. And yet you first

Persuaded me. How come you alter'd since?

Dol. I said at first I was not fit to go:

I could not hear her sighs and see her tears,

But pity must prevail; and so, perhaps,

It may again with you; for I have promis'd

That she should take her last farewell; and see

She comes to claim my word.

Enter CLEOPATRA.

Marc A. False Dolabella!

Dol. What's false, my lord?

Marc A. Why, Dolabella's false,

And Cleopatra's false; both false and faithless.

Draw near, you well-join'd wickedness, you serpents

Who I have in my kindly bosom warm'd,

Till I am stung to death.

Dol. My lord, have I

Deserv'd to be thus us'd?

Cleo. Can heav'n prepare

A newer torment? can it find a curse

Beyond our separation?

Marc A. Yes, if fate

Be just, much greater. Two, two such!

Oh! there's no farther name; two such—to me,

To me, who lock'd my soul within your breasts,

Had no desires, no joys, no life, but you;

A friend and mistress

Was what the world could give. Oh! Cleopatra;

Oh! Dolabella; how could you betray

This tender heart, which, with an infant fondness,

Lay lull'd betwixt your bosoms, and there slept

Secure of injur'd faith?

Dol. If she has wrong'd you,

Heav'n, hell, and you, revenge it.

Marc A. If she has wrong'd me!

Ventidius heard it,

Octavia saw it.

Cleo. They are enemies.

Marc A. Alexas is not so; he, he confess'd it;

He, who next hell best knew it, he avow'd it.

Why do I seek a proof beyond yourself? *(To Dol.)*

You who I sent to bear my last farewell,

Return'd to plead her stay.

Dol. What shall I answer?

If to have lov'd be guilt, then I have sinn'd;

But if to have repented of that love

Can wash away my crime, I have repented;

Yet if I have offended past forgiveness,

Let her not suffer: she is innocent.

Marc A. Thin cobweb arts of falsehood,

Seen and broke through at first.

Dol. Forgive your mistress.

Cleo. Forgive your friend.

Marc A. I can forgive

A foe, but not a mistress and a friend:

Treason is there in its most horrid shape

Where trust is greatest—I'll hear no more:

Hence from my sight from ever.

Cleo. How! for ever?

I cannot go one moment from your sight,

And must I go for ever?

My joys, my only joys, are centred here:

What place have I to go to? my own kingdom?

That I have lost for you; or to the Romans?

They hate me for your sake: or must I wander

The wide world o'er, a helpless banish'd woman,

Banish'd for love of you, banish'd from you;

Ay, there's the banishment? Oh! hear me, hear me,

With strictest justice, for I beg no favour;

And if I have offended you, then kill me,

But do not banish me.

Marc A. I must not hear you;

I have a fool within me takes your part,

But honour stops my ears.

Cleo. For pity hear me!

Marc A. *(To Cleo.)* Your Alexas! your's!

I am not to be mov'd.

Cleo. Then must we part? farewell, my cruel

lord.

Th' appearance is against me; and I go

Unjustif'd for ever from your sight.

How I have lov'd you know; how yet I love,

My only comfort is I know myself:

I love you more, ev'n now you are unkind,

Than when you lov'd me most; so well, so truly,

I'll never strive against it, but die pleas'd

To think you once were mine.

Marc A. Good heav'n! they weep at parting:

Must I weep, too? that calls 'em innocent.

I must not weep; and yet I must, to think

That I must not forgive—

Live, but live wretched; 'tis but just you should

Who made me so: live from each other's sight;

Let me not hear you meet. Set all the earth

And all the seas betwixt your sunder'd loves;

View nothing common but the sun and skies.

Now all take several ways,

And each your own sad fate with mine deplore,

That you were false, and I could trust no more.

[Exeunt.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Temple.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, and IRAS.

Cleo. I could tear out these eyes that gain'd his heart,
And had not pow'r to keep it. Oh! the curse
Of doting on, ev'n when I find it dotage!
Bear witness, gods! you heard him bid me go;
You whom he mock'd with imprecating vows
Of promis'd faith—I'll die, I will not bear it.

Enter ALEXAS.

Art thou there, traitor!—Oh!
Oh! for a little breath to vent my rage!
Alex. Yes, I deserve it for my ill-tim'd truth.

Cleo. I would reason
More calmly with you. Did you not o'errule
And force my plain, direct, and open love
Into these crooked paths of jealousy?
Now, what's th' event? Octavia is remov'd,
But Cleopatra banish'd

Alex. Believe me, madam, Antony is your's:
His heart was never lost, but started off
To jealousy, love's last retreat and covert;
Where it lies hid in shades, watchful in silence,
And list'ning for the sound that calls it back.
Some other, any man, 'tis so advanc'd,
May perfect this unfinish'd work, which I
(Unhappy only to myself) have left
So easy to his hand.

Cleo. Look well thou do't, else—

Alex. Else what your silence threatens. Antony
Is mounted up the Pharos, from whose turret
He stands surveying our Egyptian galleys
Engag'd with Cæsar's fleet: now death or conquest;
If the first happen, fate acquits my promise;
If we o'ercome, the conqueror is your's.

(*A distant shout within.*)

Char. Have comfort, madam: did you mark that shout?
(*Second shout, nearer.*)

Irás. Hark! they redouble it.

Alex. 'Tis from the port;
The loudness shews it near. Good news, kind
heav'n's!

Enter SERAPION.

Ser. Where, where's the queen?
Oh! horror, horror!
Egypt has been; the latest hour is come.
The queen of nations from her ancient seat
Is sunk for ever in the dark abyss:
Time has unroll'd her glories to the last,
And now clos'd up the volume.

Cleo. Be more plain:

Say whence thou cam'st; though fate is in thy face;
Which, from thy haggard eyes, looks wildly out,
And threatens ere thou speak'st.

Ser. I came from Pharos,
From viewing (spare me, and imagine it)
Our land's last hope, your navy—

Cleo. Vanquish'd?

Ser. No;

They fought not.

Cleo. Then they fled.

Ser. Nor that: I saw
With Antony, your well appointed fleet,
Row out, and thrice he wav'd his hand on high,
And thrice with cheerful cries they shouted back:
The well-tim'd oars
Now dipp'd from ev'ry bark, now smoothly run
To meet the foe; and soon indeed they met,
But not as foes. In few, we saw their caps
On either side thrown up: th' Egyptian galleys,
Receiv'd like friends, past through, and fell behind
The Roman rear; and now they all come forward,
And ride within the port.

Cleo. Enough, Serapion;
I've heard my doom! This needed not, you gods!
When I lost Antony, your work was done.

'Tis but superfluous malice. Where's my lord?
How bears he this last blow?

Ser. His fury cannot be express'd by words:
Thrice he attempted headlong to have fall'n
Full on his foes, and aim'd at Cæsar's galley:
Withheld, he raves on you, cries he's betray'd.
Should he now find you—

Alex. Shun him, seek your safety,
Till you can clear your innocence.

Cleo. I'll stay.

Alex. You must not; haste to the monument,
While I make speed to Cæsar.

Cleo. Cæsar! no;
I have no bus'ness with him.

Alex. I can work him

To spare your life, and let this madman perish.

Cleo. Base, fawning wretch! wouldst thou betray
him, too?

Hence from my sight, I will not hear a traitor:
'Twas thy design brought all this ruin on us.

Serapion, thou art honest; counsel me:
But haste, each moment's precious.

Ser. Retire; you must not yet see Antony.

He who began this mischief
'Tis just he tempt the danger: let him clear you;
And since he offer'd you his servile tongue
To gain a poor precarious life from Cæsar,
Let him expose that fawning eloquence,
And speak to Antony.

Alex. Oh, heav'n's! I dare not:
I meet my certain death.

Cleo. Slave, thou deserv'st it.

Not that I fear my lord, will I avoid him;
I know him noble: when he banish'd me,
And thought me false, he scorn'd to take my life:
But I'll be justify'd, and then die with him.

Alex. Oh! pity me, and let me follow you.

Cleo. To death, if thou stir hence. Speak, if thou
canst,

Now for thy life, which basely thou wouldst save,
While mine I prize at this. Come, good Serapion.
[*Exit with Serapion, Charmion, and Irás.*]

Alex. Oh! that I less could fear to lose this being,
Which, like a snowball in my coward hand,
The more 'tis grasp'd the faster melts away.
Poor reason! what a wretched aid art thou!

For still, in spite of thee,
These two long lovers, soul and body, dread
Their final separation. Let me think;
What can I say to save myself from death?
No matter what becomes of Cleopatra.

Marc A. (*Within.*) Which way? where?

Ven. (*Within.*) This leads to the monument.

Alex. Ah, me! I hear him: yet I'm unprepar'd:
My gift of lying's gone;
And this court-devil, which I so oft have rais'd,
Forsakes me at my need. I dare not stay,
Yet cannot go far hence. [Exit.]

Enter MARC ANTONY and VENTIDIOUS.

Marc A. Oh! happy Cæsar! thou hast men to
lead.

Think not 'tis thou hast conquer'd Antony,
But Rome has conquer'd Egypt. I'm betray'd.

Ven. The nation is

One universal traitor, and their queen
The very spirit and extract of 'em all.

Marc A. Is there yet left

A possibility of aid and valour?
Is there one god unsworn to my destruction?
For if there be,

Methinks I cannot fall beneath the fate
Of such a boy as Cæsar.

Ven. There yet remain

Three legions in the town; the last assault
Lopp'd off the rest. If death be your design,
As I must wish it now, these are sufficient
To make a heap about us of dead foes,
An honest pile for burial.

Marc A. They're enough.
We'll not divide our stars, but side by side
Fight emulous, and with malicious eyes
Survey each other's acts.

Ven. Now you shall see I love you. Not a word
Of chiding more. By my few hours of life,
I am so pleas'd with this brave Roman fate
That I would not be Cæsar to outlive you!
When we put off this flesh, and mount together,
I shall be shewn to th' ethereal crowd;
"Lo! this is he who dy'd with Antony."

Marc A. Who knows but we may pierce through
all their troops,
And reach my veterans yet? 'Tis worth the tempting.

Enter ALEXAS, trembling.

Ven. See, see that villain! See
How he has set his count'nance for deceit,
And promises to lie before he speaks!
Let me despatch him first. *(Drawing.)*

Marc A. Hold; he's not worth your killing. On
thy life,

*(Which thou may'st keep, because I scorn to take it,)
No syllable to justify thy queen;
Save thy base tongue its office.*

Alex. Sir, she's gone
Where she shall never be molested more
By love or you.

Marc A. Fled to her Dolabella!
Die, traitor; I revoke my promise; die!
(Going to kill him.)

Alex. Oh! hold; she is not fled.

Marc A. She is; my eyes
Are open to her falsehood. My whole life
Has been a golden dream of love and friendship;
But now I wake, I'm like a merchant rous'd
From soft repose to see his vessel sinking,
And all his wealth cast o'er. Ungrateful woman!
Who follow'd me but as the swallow summer,
Hatching her young ones in my kindly beams,
Singing her flatt'ries to my morning wake;
But now my winter comes, she spreads her wings,
And seeks the spring of Cæsar.

Alex. Think not so;
Her fortunes have in all things mix'd with your's:
Had she betray'd her naval force to Rome,
How easily might she have gone to Cæsar,
Secure by such a bribe!

Ven. She sent it first,
To be more welcome after.

Marc A. 'Tis too plain,
Else would she have appear'd to clear herself.

Alex. She could not bear
To be accus'd by you, but shut herself
Within her monument, look'd down and sigh'd,
While from her unchang'd face the silent tears
Dropp'd as they had not leave, but stole their
parting.

Some undistinguish'd words she inly murmur'd;
At last, she rais'd her eyes, and with such looks
As dying Lucrece cast—

Marc A. My heart forbodes—

Ven. Go on.

Alex. She snatch'd her poniard,
And ere we could prevent the fatal blow,
Plang'd it within her breast; then turn'd to me;
"Go, bear my lord, (said she,) my last farewell,
And ask him if he yet suspect my faith."
More she was saying, but death rush'd betwixt.
She half pronounc'd your name with her last breath,
And bury'd half within her.

Ven. Heav'n be prais'd!

Marc A. Then art thou innocent, my poor dear
love?

And art thou dead?

Oh! those two words; their sounds should be di-
vided:

Hadst thou been false and died, or hadst thou liv'd,
And hadst been true—But innocence and death!

This shews not well above. Then what am I?
The murderer of this truth, this innocence!
Thoughts cannot form themselves in words so horrid
As can express my guilt!

Ven. Is't come to this? The gods have been too
gracious,

And thus you thank 'em for't.

Marc A. *(To ALEXAS.)* Why stay'st thou here?
Thou art not worthy to behold what now
Becomes a Roman emp'r to perform. *[Exit Alex.]*

Ven. Would she had died a little sooner, though,
Before Octavio went! you might have treated;
Now 'twill look tame, and would not be receiv'd.
Come, rouse yourself, and let's die warm together.

Marc A. Why, let him enter. Oh! Ventidius,
What should I fight for now? my queen is dead:
I was but great for her: my pow'r, my empire,
Were but my merchandize to buy her love,
And conquer'd kings my factors. Now she's dead,
Let Cæsar take the world—

Ven. Would you be taken?

Marc A. Yes, I would be taken;
But, as a Roman ought—dead, my Ventidius!

Ven. Choose your death;
For I have seen him in such various shapes,
I care not which I take: I'm only troubled
The life I bear is worn to such a rag,
'Tis scarce worth giving. I could wish, indeed,
We threw it from us with a better grace,
That, like two lions taken in the toils,
We might, at least, thrust out our paws, and wound
The hunters that enclose us.

Marc A. Thou hast lov'd me,
And fain I would reward thee. I must die;
Kill me, and take the merit of my death
To make thee friends with Cæsar.

Ven. Thank your kindness!
You said I lov'd you; and, in recompense,
You bid me turn a traitor! Did I think
You would have us'd me thus? that I should die
With a hard thought of you!

Marc A. Forgive me, Roman.
Since I have heard of Cleopatra's death,
My reason bears no rule upon my tongue,
But lets my thoughts break all at random out.
I've thought better; do not deny me twice.

Ven. By heav'n! I will not:

Let it not be t' outlive you.

Marc A. Kill me first,
And then die thou; for 'tis but just thou serve
Thy friend before thyself.

Ven. Give me your hand;
We soon shall meet again. Now farewell, empe-
ror! *(Embrace.)*

Methinks, that word's too cold to be my last:
Since death sweeps all distinctions, farewell, friend!
That's all:

I will not make a bus'ness of a trifle;
And yet I cannot look on you and kill you:
Pray turn your face.

Marc A. I do: strike home; be sure.

Ven. Home as my sword will reach.

(Kills himself.)

Marc A. Oh! thou mistak'st!
That would was none of thine; give it me back:
Thou robb'st me of my death.

Ven. I do, indeed;
But think 'tis the first time I e'er deceiv'd you,
If that may plead my pardon. And you, gods!
Forgive me if you will; for I die perjurd,
Rather than kill my friend. *(Dies.)*

Marc A. Farewell! ever my leader, ev'n in
death!

My queen and thou have got the start of me,
And I'm the lag of honour.—Gone so soon!
Is death no more! 'Tis not worth
My further thought; for death, for aught I know,
Is but to think no more. Here's to be satisfy'd.

(Falls on his sword.)

I've miss'd my heart! oh! unperforming hand!
Thou never couldst have err'd in a worse time.

(*Trampling within.*)

Some, perhaps, from Cæsar! I'll mend
My work ere they can reach me.

(*Rises upon his knees.*)

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, and IRAS.

Cleo. Where is my lord? where is he?
My fears were prophets! I am come too late!
Oh! that accurs'd Alexas. (*Runs to him.*)

Marc A. Art thou living?
Or am I dead before I knew, and thou
The first kind ghost that meets me?

Cleo. How is it with you?

Marc A. 'Tis as with a man
Removing in a hurry; all pack'd up
But one dear jewel that his haste forgot,
And he for that returns upon the spur;
So I come back for thee.

Cleo. Too long, ye heav'n's! you have been cruel
to me;

Oh! now be kind, and give me back
His fleeting life.

Marc A. It will not be, my love!
I keep my soul by force.

Say but thou art not false.

Cleo. 'Tis now too late
To say I'm true; I'll prove it, and die with you.
Unknown to me, Alexas feign'd my death;
Which, when I knew, I hastid to prevent
This fatal consequence. My fleet betray'd
Both you and I.

Marc A. And Dolabella—

Cleo. Scarce esteem'd before he lov'd, but hated
now.

Marc A. Enough! my life's not long enough for
more.

Thou say'st thou wilt come after: I believe thee;
For I can now believe whate'er thou say'st,
That we may part more kindly.

Cleo. I will come;
Doubt not, my life! I'll come, and quickly, too!
Cæsar shall triumph o'er no part of thee.

Marc A. But grieve not while thou stay'st
My last disastrous times!

Think we have had a clear and glorious day,
And heav'n did kindly to delay the storm
Just till our close of ev'ning. Ten years' love,
And not a moment lost, but all improv'd
To th' utmost joys! What ages have we liv'd!
And now to die each other's! and so dying,
While hand in hand we walk in groves below,
Whole troops of lovers' ghosts shall flock about
us,

And all the train be ours.

Cleo. Your words are like the notes of dying
swans,

Too sweet to last. Were there so many hours
For your unkindness, and not one for love?

Marc A. No, not a minute—this one kiss—more
worth

Than all I leave to Cæsar. (*Dies.*)

Cleo. Oh! tell me so again!
My lord, my lord! speak, if you yet have being:

Sigh to me if you cannot speak; or cast
One look: do anything that shews you live!

Irás. He's gone too far to hear you.

Char. Remember, madam,
He charg'd you not to grieve.

Cleo. And I'll obey him.

I have not lov'd a Roman not to know
What should become his wife—his wife, my Char-
mion!

For 'tis to that high title I aspire;
And now I'll not die less.

Irás. Will you, then, die?

Cleo. Why shouldst thou make that question?
Fly both, and bring the cure of all our ills.

Irás. The aspics, madam?

Cleo. Must I bid you twice?

[*Exit Char. and Irás.*]

'Tis sweet to die when they would force life on me,
To rush into the dark abode of death
And meet my love. Oh! welcome, welcome!

Re-enter CHARMION and IRAS, with the aspics, &c.
Welcome, thou kind deceiver!

(*Putting aside the leaves.*)

Thou best of thieves! who with an easy key
Dost open life, and unperceiv'd by us,
Ev'n steals us from ourselves.

Ser. (*Within.*) The queen, where is she?

The town is yielded, Cæsar's at the gates.
Cleo. He comes too late t' invade the rights of
death.

Haste, haste, my friend, and rouse the serpent's
fury. (*Holds out her arm, and draws it back.*)
Coward flesh!

Wouldst thou best conspire with Cæsar to betray me,
As thou wert none of mine? I'll force thee to't,
And not be sent by him,

But bring myself, my soul, to Antony.

(*Turns aside, and then shews her arm bloody.*)

Take hence; the work is done!
Ser. (*Within.*) Break ope the door,
And guard the traitor well.

(*Charmion and Irás apply the aspics.*)

Cleo. Already, death, I feel thee in my veins;
I go with such a will to find my lord
That we shall quickly meet.

A heavy numbness creeps through ev'ry limb,
And now 'tis at my head: my eyelids fall,
And my dear love is vanish'd in a mist.

Cæsar, thy worst! Now part us if thou canst.

(*Dies. Irás sinks down at her feet, and
dies; Charmion stands behind her chair,
as dressing her head.*)

*Enter SERAPION, two Priests, ALEXAS bound, and
Egyptians.*

2 *Priest.* Behold, Serapion, what havoc death
has made!

Ser. 'Twas what I fear'd.
See how the lovers lie in state together,
As they were giving laws to half mankind!
Th' impression of a smile left in her face
Shews she died pleas'd with him for whom she liv'd,
And went to charm him in another world.
Cæsar's just enring; grief has now no leisure.
Secure that villain, as our pledge of safety,
To grace th' imperial triumph. Sleep, blest pair!
Secure from human chance, long ages out,
While all the storms of fate fly o'er your tomb;
And Fame to late posterity shall tell,
No lovers liv'd so great, or died so well. [*Exeunt.*]

ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM;

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY GEORGE LILLO.



Act IV.—Scene 3.

CHARACTERS.

LORD CHEYNEY
MAYOR OF FEVERSHAM
ARDEN
FRANKLIN
MICHAEL

GREEN
MOSBY
BRADSHAW
BLACK WILL
SHAKEBAG

ADAM FOWL
OFFICERS
SERVANT
ALICIA
MARIA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Street before Arden's door.*

MOSBY discovered.

Mosby. The morning's dark and horrid as my purpose.

Thrice have my snares been laid for Arden's life,
And thrice hath he escap'd. I am not safe:
The living may revenge. Oh! could I win
Alicia to conspire her husband's fall,
Then might I say, security, thou'rt mine,
And laugh at all to come. For other instruments,
There's Green: he bears him hard about this suit
For th' abbey-lands, to which the hot youth pleads
Some fancied right. Michael, the trencher fav'rite;
A bastard, bred of Arden's charity;
He has been privy to our secret joys,
And, on that trust presuming, loves my sister;
Winks at adultery, and may at murder.
Maria is his price. I've plac'd her here,
Companion of my sweet Alicia's hours,
To spread her charms for ever in his eye:
To her are all my visits. But Alicia—
She must, she shall comply: when to my arms
Her honour she resign'd, her foud reluctance
whisper'd

She could deny me nothing. This to try.
[Exit into Arden's house.]

SCENE II.—*A Chamber.*

ARDEN in his night-gown.

Arden. Unhappy Arden, whither canst thou wander

To lay thy heavy load of sorrows down?
Will change of place relieve th' afflicted mind,
Or does all nature yield a balm to cure
The pangs of slighted love and broken faith?
Ungrateful, false Alicia! false with Mosby,
The vile dependant of my foe profess'd;
Lord Clifford's full-fed flatt'rer! Oh! damn'd—
Come, Franklin, come: Arden, thy friend, invites
thee;
And let me pour my griefs into thy bosom,
And find in friendship what I've lost in love.

Enter ALICIA.

Alicia. Why, Arden, do you leave your bed thus early?

Have cold and darkness greater charms than I?
There was a time when winter-nights were short,
And Arden chid the morn that call'd him from me.

Arden. This deep dissembling, this hypocrisy,
(The last worst state of a degenerate mind,)
Speaks her in vice determin'd and mature.

(*Aside.*)

Alicia. What maid, that knows man's variable nature,

Would sell her free estate for marriage bonds?
From vows and oaths, and every servile tie,
The tyrant man at pleasure is set free:
The holy nuptial bond leaves him at large;
Yet vests him with a power that makes us slaves.
'Tis heavenly this—

Arden. To stop my just reproach,
Art thou the first to tax the marriage state?

Alicia. Are you not jealous? Do you not give ear

To vain surmises and malicious tongues,
That hourly wound my yet untainted fame?

Arden. And would'st thou make me author of the shame

Thy guilt has brought on us? I'll bear no longer.
The traitor, Mosby, curs'd, detested Mosby,
Shall render an account for both your crimes.

Alicia. What do I hear? (*Aside.*)

Arden. That base mechanic slave
Shall answer with his blood.

Alicia. Oh! hear me speak.

Arden. No, I am deaf; as thou hast ever been
To fame, to virtue, and my just complaints.

Alicia. Thus, on my knees—

Arden. Adult'ress! dost thou kneel
And weep, and pray, and bend thy stubborn heart

(Stubborn to me) to sue for him? Away!

Away this instant, lest I kill thee, too.

(*Recovering himself.*)

No; not the hell thou'st kindled in this bosom

Shall make me shed thy blood.

Alicia. I do not hope it.

Arden. For me be as immortal as thy shame.

Alicia. I see your cruel purpose: I must live,

To see your hand and honour stain'd with blood;

Your ample fortune seiz'd on by the state;

Your life a forfeit to the cruel laws.

Oh! Arden, blend compassion with your rage,

And kindly kill me first.

Arden. Not for my sake

Are all thy tears; then had you felt them sooner:

Plead not the ruin you have made; but say

Why have you driven me to these extremes?

Why sacrificed my peace, and your own fame,

By corresponding with a menial slave?

Alicia. Thou canst not think that I have wrong'd thy bed?

Arden. Would I could not!

Alicia. By heaven!—

Arden. No perjuries.

But now, as you lay slumb'ring by my side,

I still awake, anxious and full of thought,

(For thou hast banish'd sleep from these sad eyes.)

With gentle accents thrilling with desire,

You call'd on Mosby; love made me doubt my ears,

And question if the dark and silent night

Conspir'd not with my fancy to deceive me:

But soon I lost the painful, pleasing hope;

Again you call'd upon your minion Mosby.

Confirm'd, I strove to fly your tainted bed,

But, wanting strength, sunk lifeless on my pillow.

You threw your eager arms about my neck,

You press'd my bloodless cheeks with your warm lips,

Which glow'd, adult'ress, with infernal heat!

And call'd a third time on the villain Mosby.

Alicia. A dream, indeed, if I e'er call'd on him.

Arden. Thy guilty dreams betray thy waking thoughts.

Alicia. I know I'm simple, thoughtless, and un-

guarded;

And what is carelessness, you construe guilt.

Yet were I weak as those fantastic visions,

Sure, I could ne'er have condemn'd you, Arden,

On circumstances and an idle dream.

Arden. But such a dream!

Alicia. Yet were it but a dream,
Which, tho' I not remember, I abhor;
And mourn with tears, because it gives you pain.
Arden. you do not wish me innocent,
Or on suspicions could you doom me guilty?

Arden. Not wish thee innocent! Do sinking mariners,

When struggling with the raging seas for life,
Wish the assistance of some friendly plank?

'Tis that, and that alone, can bring me comfort.

Alicia. Oh! jealousy, thou fierce, remorseless fiend,

Dege'n'rate, most unnatural child of love;
How shall I chase thee from my Arden's bosom?

Arden. There is a way, an easy way, *Alicia.*

Alicia. Oh! name it—speak.

Arden. What's past may be forgotten.

Your future conduct—

Alicia. You distract me, Arden.

Say, how shall I convince you of my truth?

Arden. I ask but this: never see Mosby more.

By heaven, she's dumb! (*He starts.*)

Alicia. Oh! how shall I conceal
My own confusion, and elude his rage? (*Aside.*)

Arden. Thou'rt lost, *Alicia!* lost to me and heav'n.

Alicia. Indeed I'm lost, if you unkindly doubt me.

Arden. Wilt thou, then, ne'er converse with Mosby more.

Alicia. If e'er I do, may heav'n and you forsake me!

Arden. You'll keep your word, *Alicia?* Pr'ythee, say.

Alicia. You'll break my heart.

Arden. I'd rather break my own.

Then thou art innocent, and lov'st me still.

Alicia. And ever will.

Arden. Give me thy hand—thy heart,

Oh! give me that.

Alicia. That always was your own.

Arden. Thou flatterer! then whence this cruel strife?

Still art thou cold: nor warm as thy embraces,

Nor sparkle in thine eyes the fires of love:

Cold, cold, and comfortless.

Alicia. Indeed you fright me.

Arden. 'Tis possible—

Alicia. What?

Arden. That thou may'st yet deceive me.

Alicia. Oh! I am wretched.

Arden. Both, perhaps, are so.

But if thou ever lov'd, thou'lt not despise me,

And wilt forgive me, if, indeed, I've wrong'd thee,

As I've forgiven thee. Pity, I'm sure, I need.

[*Exit.*]

Alicia. Thou hast it, Arden, ev'n from her that wrongs thee.

All, all, shall pity thee, and curse *Alicia.*

Can I feel this, and further tempt the stream

Of guilty love? Oh! whither am I fallen?

Enter MARIA.

Maria. A happy day, *Alicia;* and may each morn

Of coming life be usher'd with like joy.

Franklin, from court return'd, has brought the grant

Of the abbey-lands, confirm'd by the young king,

To Arden for his life: nor will deliver

But to himself the deed.

Alicia. A worthy friend!

The grant is not more welcome to my husband,

Than Franklin's company.

Maria. He's flown to meet him.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. (To Maria.) Madam, your brother Mosby—

Alicia. Where is Mosby?

Serv. He waits below.

Alicia. Oh! haste, and lead me to him.

Serv. Madam, he but desires to see his sister.

Alicia. His sister! What, did he not ask for me?

Maria. Perhaps—

Alicia. Pray, give me leave—looks he in health?

Serv. He seems in health.

Alicia. Here, and not ask for me!

Seems he or angry, then, or melancholy?

Answer me, stock, stone!

Serv. Truly, I can't say.

Alicia. Thou canst say nothing. Get thee from my sight.

Yet, stay—no matter. I'll myself go seek him.

[*Exeunt Alicia and Serv.*]

Maria. Where reason is, can passion thus prevail?

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*A Parlour in Arden's house.*

Enter ALICIA meeting MOSBY.

Alicia. Mosby, that brow befits our wayward fate.

The evil hour, long fear'd, is fall'n upon us,

And we shall sink beneath it. Do not frown;

If you're unkind, to whom shall I complain?

Mosby. Madam, it was my sister I expected—

Alicia. Am I forgotten, then? Ungrateful man!

This only could have added to my woes.

Did you but know what I have borne for you,

You would not thus, unmov'd, behold my tears.

Mosby. Madam, you make me vain.

Alicia. Insult not, Mosby.

You were the first dear object of my love,

And could my heart have made a second choice,

I had not been the object of your scorn:

But duty, gratitude, the love of fame,

And pride of virtue, were too weak t' erase

The deep impression of your early vows.

Mosby. Therefore, you kindly chose to wed another.

Alicia. Reproach me not with what I deem'd my duty.

Oh! had I thought I could assume the name,

And never know th' affection of a wife,

I would have died ere giv'n my hand to Arden.

Mosby. You gave him all.

Alicia. No, no; I gave him nothing:

Words without truth; a hand without a heart.

But he has found the fraud; the slumb'ring lion,

At length, hath rous'd himself—

Mosby. And I must fall

The victim—

Alicia. No, he knows not yet his wrongs.

Mosby. But quickly will.

Alicia. That, that's my greatest fear.

Mosby. Then, branded with a strumpet's hated name,

The cause abhorr'd of shame, of blood, and ruin,

Thou'lt be expos'd and hooted thro' the world.

Alicia. Oh! hide the dreadful image from my view.

Chaste matrons, modest maids, and virtuous wives,

Scorning a weakness, which they never knew,

Shall blush with indignation at my name.

Mosby. My death—but that, tho' certain—

Alicia. Labour not

To drive me to despair. Fain would I hope—

Mosby. You may—and be deceiv'd. For me, I know

My fate's resolv'd: and thee the instrument;

The willing instrument of Mosby's ruin.

Inconstant, false Alicia!

Alicia. False indeed;

But not to thee, cruel, injurious Mosby.

Mosby. Injurious! false one, might not all these dangers

That threaten to involve us both in ruin,

Ere this have been prevented?

Alicia. Ha! Say on.

Mosby. And not preventing, art not thou the cause?

Alicia. Ah! whither, Mosby, whither would'st thou drive me?

Mosby. Nay, didst thou love, or would'st secure thy fame,

Preserve my life, and bind me your's for ever,

'Tis yet within your power.

Alicia. By Arden's death!

Mean'st thou not so? speak out, and be a devil.

Mosby. Yes, 'tis for thee I am so. But your looks

Declare, my death would please you better, madam.

Alicia. Exaggerating fiend! be dumb for ever.

His death! I must not cast a glance that way.

Mosby. Is there another way? Oh! think, Alicia.

Alicia. I will, for that will make me mad: and madness

Were some excusc. Come, kind distraction! come,

And Arden dies: my husband dies for Mosby.

[*Shrieks and runs to Mosby.*]

Enter ARDEN and FRANKLIN.

He's here! Oh, save me! tell me, did he hear?

Arden. (*Starting.*) Franklin, support your friend.

I shake with horror.

Frank. What moves you thus?

Arden. See, Mosby with my wife!

Mosby. But, madam, I shall spare your farther trouble:

In happy time behold my neighbour here.

[*As taking leave of Alicia.*]

Alicia. Mischief and wild confusion have begun, And desolation waits to close the scene. [*Exit.*]

Mosby. Sir, I would gladly know, whether your grant

Of the rich abbey-lands of Feversham

Be yet confirm'd or not?

Arden. What, if I tar

Her faithless heart, ev'n in the traitor's sight,

Who taught it falsehood?

[*Aside.*]

Frank. He is lost in thought.

But I can answer that: it is confirm'd.

I brought the deed, with the great seal annex'd,

Sign'd by our pious Edward and his council.

Mosby. I'm satisfied.

Arden. So am not I. By hell,

There's justice in the thought. I'm strangely tempted.

[*Aside.*]

Mosby. My friend seems wrapt in thought: I came to advise him,

That Green, by virtue of a former grant

His father long enjoy'd—

Arden. For my estate,

The law and this good seal is my security;

To them I leave Green and his groundless claim.

But my just right to false Alicia's heart,

(So dearly purchas'd with a husband's name,

And sacred honour of a gentleman,)

I shall assert myself, and thus secure

From further violation.

[*Draws.*]

Mosby. Her known virtue

Renders the injury your fancy forms,

A thing of air.

Frank. Impossible to thought.

Whence, Arden, comes this sudden madness on thee,

That your Alicia, ever dear esteem'd,

And deeply lov'd—

Arden. Out on the vile adult'ress!

But thou demure, insinuating slave, (*To Mosby.*)
Shalt taste my vengeance first. Defend thyself.

Mosby. I scorn to take advantage of your rage.

Arden. A coward, too. Oh! my consummate shame.

Mosby. This I can bear from you.

Arden. Or any man.

Why hangs that useless weapon by your side,
Thou shame to manhood? Draw. Will nothing
move thee? (*Strikes Mosby.*)

Frank. Hold! Whither would your mad re-
venge transport you?

Arden. Shall shameful cowardice protect a vil-
lain!

Mosby. You choose a proper place to shew your
courage.

Arden. Go on. I'll follow to the ocean's brink,
Or to the edge of some dread precipice,
Where terror and despair shall stop thy flight,
And force thy trembling hand to guard thy life.

Mosby. What I endure to save a lady's honour!
(*To Franklin.*)

Frank. Your longer stay will but incense him
more:

Pray, quit the house.

Mosby. Sir, I shall take your counsel. [*Exit.*]

Arden. He hath escap'd me, then. But, for my
wife—

Frank. What has she done?

Arden. Done! Must I tell my shame?

Away, begone; lest, from my prey withheld,

I turn, and tear th' officious hand that holds me.

Soft! art thou Franklin? Pardou me, sweet
friend:

My spirits fail—I shake—I must retire.

Frank. To your Alicia?

Arden. To my lonely couch;

For I must learn to live without her, Franklin.

Frank. Pray heaven forbid!

Arden. To hate her, to forget her, if I can:

No easy task for one who doats like me.

From what a height I'm fallen! Once smiling
love

Of all its horrors robb'd the blackest night,

And gilt with gladness ev'ry ray of light,

Now tyrant-like his conquest he maintains,

And o'er his groaning slave with rods of iron
reigns. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter GREEN and MOSBY.

Green. You pity me, and know not my estate.
I'm ruin'd, Mosby, thoughtless and ill-advis'd;
My riotous youth will leave my age a beggar.
These abbey-lands were all the hopes I'd left:
My whole support.

Mosby. Base and ungen'rous Arden!
To force a man, born equal to himself,
To beg or starve.

Green. By heaven! I will do neither:
I'll let the proud oppressor know—

Mosby. How blind is rage!
Who threatens his enemy, lends him a sword
To guard himself.

Green. Robb'd of the means of life,
What's life itself? an useless load, a curse:
Which yet I'll dearly sell to my revenge.

Mosby. You mean to kill him, then?

Green. I do, by heaven!

Mosby. Suppose you fail.

Green. I can, but lose my life.

Mosby. Then where is your revenge, when he,
secure,

Riots unbounded in his ill-got wealth?

Green. What can I do?

Mosby. 'Tis plain you wish him dead.

Green. Each moment of his life is to my soul

A tedious age of pain; for while he lives,

Cootempt, and all the ills a lazar knows,

Must be my wretched lot, and lengthen out

The miserable hours. What grovelling wretch

Would wish to hold his life on such conditions?

Mosby. But change the scene: suppose but
Arden dead,

Your land restor'd, and fortune in your pow'r;

Honour, respect, and all the dear delights

That wait on wealth, shall wing the joyful hours,

And life contracted seem one happy day.

I hate this Arden, and have stronger motives

Than any you can urge to wish his death;

He has accus'd, insulted, struck me;

Nay, his fair, virtuous wife, on my account—

Green. If fame speaks true, you're to be envied
there.

Mosby. The world will talk—But be that as it
may,

I want not cause, nor will, nor means, nor friends.
Green. Nor opportunity shall long be wanting.

Mosby. Enough: his fate is fix'd. See, Brad-
shaw's here.

Enter BRADSHAW.

Brad. Save, save you, gentlemen.

Mosby. We thank you, neighbour.

But whither in such haste?

Brad. To the isle of Sheppey,

To wait on good Lord Cheyne. As he holds

In high esteem our worthy townsmen Arden,

I shall first call on him. 'Tis well I met you,

For yonder two were but bad road-companions.

Green. They seem of desperate fortunes.

Mosby. Have they names?

Brad. One I know not; but judge him from his
comrade.

The foremost of the two I knew at Boulogne,

Where, in the late king's reign, I serv'd myself.

He was a corporal then, but such a villain!

Beneath a soldier's name: a common cut-throat,

That preys on all mankind, and knows no party.

Mosby. A horrid character you give him, Brad-
shaw.

Brad. No worse than he deserves.

Mosby. (*Aside.*) An useful hint:

He shall not want employment. What's his
name?

Brad. Black Will. His family-name I never
heard.

Mosby. (*To Green.*) A word—write you a letter
to Alicia:

Disguise your hand. This honest fool may bear
it.

Hint at these men. In case her courage fail,

She will be glad to shift the deed on them.

Green. I am instructed.

Enter BLACK WILL and SHAKBAG.

B. Will. What, comrade Bradshaw. How fare
you, man? 'Sblood! dost not remember honest
Black Will. Why, thou'rt grown purse-proud,
sure.

Brad. Why, you are not easily forgotten,
Will. But, pr'ythee, what brings thee to Fever-
sham?

B. Will. A soldier, you know, is at home, where-
e'er he comes. *Omne solum forti patri.* There's
Latin. Give's a tester.

Brad. In time of peace we should apply to some

honest, creditable business, and not turn the name of soldier into vagabond.

B. Will. Yes, as you have done. I'm told, you keep a goldsmith's shop here in Feversham; and, like a mechanical rogue, live by cheating. I have more honour.

Brad. Would thou hadst honesty!

B. Will. Where do our honesties differ? I take a purse behind a hedge, and you behind a counter.

Brad. Insolent slave!

B. Will. You cent. per cent. rascal! I may find a time to teach you better manners.

Brad. Go, mend thy own.

B. Will. Thou wert always a sneaking fellow, Bradshaw, and could'st never swear, nor get drunk. Come, shall I and my comrade Shakebag taste your ale?

Brad. My house entertains no such guests. Farewell, gentlemen.

Mosby. Along with Bradshaw, and leave the management of these to me.

(*Aside to Green.*)

Green. It shall be done. Bradshaw, a word with thee.

Brad. Your pardon, gentlemen.

[*Exeunt Green and Brad.*]

B. Will. He was a cadet in the last French war, like other soldiers, then; but now he has got a nest and feathered it a little, he pretends to reputation. 'Sblood! had this been a fit place, he had not escap'd me so. You have surveyed us well. (*To Mosby.*) How do you like us?

Mosby. Methinks I read truth, prudence, secrecy, and courage, writ upon your manly brows.

B. Will. What hellish villany has this fellow in hand, that makes him fawn upon us? (*Aside.*)

Mosby. I fear the world's a stranger to your merit.

If this may recommend me to your friendship—

(*Gives a purse.*)

B. Will. Of what damn'd deed is this to be the wages?

Shake. Hast ever an elder brother's throat to cut?

B. Will. Or an old peevish father to be buried?

Mosby. Neither of these.

Shake. A rival then, mayhap.

Mosby. There you come nearer to me.

Shake. Then speak out.

We're honest, sir.

B. Will. Trusty, and very poor.

Mosby. Metal too fit for me. (*Aside.*) Then, hear me, sir.

But you must both, ere I disclose my purpose, Promise, and bind that promise by your oaths, Never—(*They both laugh.*)—Why this unseasonable mirth?

B. Will. You'd have us swear?

Mosby. Else why did I propose it?

B. Will. There's the jest. Are men who act in despite of all law, honour, and conscience; who live by blood; (as it is plain you think we do;) are we free-thinkers, like silly wenches and canting priests, to be confined by oaths?

Shake. Would you bind us, let the price equal the purchase, and we'll go to hell for you with pleasure.

Mosby. Horrid! they shock ev'n me who would employ 'em. (*Aside.*)

I apprehend: the business, then, is this: In Feversham, there lives a man, call'd Arden, In general esteem, and ample means; And has a wife the very pride of nature. I have been happy long in her affections; And, he once dead, might with her share his fortunes.

He's jealous, too, of late, and threatens me. Love, int'rest, self-defence, all ask his death.

B. Will. This man you'd have despatch'd?

Mosby. I would.

B. Will. Rich, you say?

Mosby. Immensely so.

B. Will. And much belov'd?

Mosby. By all degrees of men.

B. Will. George, this will be a dangerous piece of work.

Shake. D—n'd dangerous. A man so known; and of reputation, too.

B. Will. And then, the power and number of his friends must be considered.

Mosby. What, does your courage shrink already, sirs?

Shake. No.

B. Will. This is ever the curse of your men of true valour; to be the tools of crafty, cowardly knaves, who have not the heart to execute what their heads have projected. It is a d—d, ungrateful world. What money have you more about you?

Mosby. Ten pieces.

B. Will. I've had as much for stealing a dog.

Mosby. I give you that as a retaining-fee:

When the deed's done, each shall have twice that sum, And a good horse to further his escape.

B. Will. Sir, will you have him murdered in a church?

Shake. Or on the altar? say the word, and it shall be done.

Mosby. Some safer place; the street, highway, or fields,

Will serve my turn as well.

Shake. Just as you please.

Mosby. Where may I find you, gentlemen?

B. Will. At Adam Fowl's, the Flower-de-luce.

Mosby. I have confederates in this design; When we've contriv'd the manner of his death, I'll send you word.

B. Will. You'll find us always ready.

Mosby. And determined?

B. Will. Ay, fear it not. Farewell.

[*Exeunt several ways.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room in Arden's house.*

Enter ALICIA, with a letter.

Alicia. He doubts me; yet he dares not tell me so;

But thus, by Green, whets my unsettled mind.

(*Reads.*)

“Strike home, or not at all. In case you fail, We have found instruments by means of Bradshaw.”

He shall not find me undetermined now. Hark! Michael's on the watch. If Arden sleeps, (For so he seems dispos'd,) he'll bring me word: That's the safest time. This promis'd marriage With Mosby's sister has remov'd his qualms.

Enter MICHAEL.

Why dost thou break upon me unawares?

What of your master?

Mich. He's scarce sunk to rest,

But full of meditated rage 'gainst Mosby.

Alicia. He'll sleep in peace ere long.

Mich. Think not on that.

Oh! did Maria bless me with her smiles,

As you do Mosby, had I twenty lives,

I'd risk 'em all to win her to my arms.

Alicia. I pray thee, leave me, Michael. [*Exit*

Mich.] What is nature?

There is a pow'r in love, subdues to itself

All other passions in the human mind.
 This wretch, more fearful than the lonely murderer,
 Who with inquiring eyes some stranger views,
 Would meet the king of terrors undismay'd,
 For her he loves, and dare him to the combat.
 And shall not I preserve my Mosby's life,
 And shall not I—a husband! What's a husband?
 I have a soul above th' unnatural tie,
 That tells me, I'm his right, and only his,
 Who won my virgin heart. Ye tender parents,
 Whose cruel kindness made your child thus wretched,
 Turn not your eyes towards earth to view this scene;
 'Twill make you sad in heav'n. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—Another Room.

ARDEN *sleeping on a couch.* Enter ALICIA, with a dagger in her hand.

Alicia. See! Jealousy o'erwatch'd is sunk to rest,
 While fearful guilt knows no security,
 But in repeated crimes. My weary eyes,
 Each moment apprehensive of his vengeance,
 Must seek for rest in vain till his are clos'd.
 Then for our mutual peace, and Mosby's love.
 (*Approaching to stab him, starts.*)
 He wakes! Defend me from his just revenge!
 And yet, he sees me not, nor moves a finger
 To save his threaten'd life. Then, whence that voice,
 That pierc'd my ears, and cried, Alicia, hold!
 Can mimic fancy cheat the outward sense,
 And form such sounds? If these heart-racking thoughts
 Precede the horrid act, what must ensue?
 Worse plague I cannot fear from Arden's death;
 But from his life, the death of him I love.
 Perish the hated husband! Wherefore hated?
 Is he not all that my vain sex could wish?
 My eyes, while they survey his graceful form,
 Condemn my heart, and wonder how it stray'd.
 He sighs—he starts—he groans. His body sleeps,
 But restless grief denies his mind repose.
 Perhaps he dreams of me; perhaps he sees me.
 Thus, like a fury, broke from deepest hell,
 Lust in my heart, and murder in my hand—
 (*Alicia drops the dagger. Arden starts up.*)
 Arden. Her dagger, Michael! seize it, and I'm safe.
 How strong she is! Oh! what a fearful dream!
 Before me still! speak, vision, art thou Alicia,
 Or but the coinage of my troubled brain?
 Alicia. Oh, Arden! husband—lord—
 Arden. Art thou my wife?
 Thou'rt substance—I'm wrapp'd in wonder!
 Hence!
 Hast lost all sense of fear as well as shame,
 That thou durst haunt me thus, asleep and waking,
 Thou idol and thou torment of my soul?
 Alicia. My bleeding heart—
 Arden. Away, begone and leave me:
 Lest, in the transports of unbounded rage,
 I rush upon thee, and deface those charms,
 That first enslav'd my soul; mangle that face
 Where, spite of falsehood, beauty triumphs still;
 Mar that fair frame, and crush thee into atoms.
 Avoid me, and be safe. Nay, now you drive me hence,
 (*Alicia kneels, he turns away.*)
 Cruel and false as thou hast been to me,
 I cannot see thee wring thy suppliant hands,
 And weep, and kneel in vain. [Exit.]
 Alicia. This, this is he
 I came prepar'd to murder. Curst Alicia!
 (*Takes up the dagger.*)

In thy own bosom plunge the fatal steel,
 Or his who robb'd thee of thy fame and virtue.
 It will not be: fear holds my dastard hand.
 Those chaster pow'rs that guard the nuptial bed
 From foul pollution, and the hand from blood,
 Have left their charge, and I am lost for ever. [Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Road near Feversham.

Enter BLACK WILL and SHAKEBAG.

Shake. D—n! posted as you were, to let him 'scape!
 B. Will. I pray thee, peace.
 Shake. Green and I beheld him pass carelessly
 by within reach of your dagger. If you had held
 it but naked in your hand, he would have stabbed
 himself as he walked.
 B. Will. I had not power to do it: a sudden
 damp came over me; I never felt so in my life. A
 kind of palsy seized me.
 Shake. Palsy! when you're upon your duty!
 Go, go, and sleep, or drink away your fears. You
 tremble still.
 B. Will. I tremble! my courage was never yet
 called in question, villain. When I fought at Bon-
 logne under the late king, both armies knew and
 feared me.
 Shake. That might be, because they did not
 know you. Dog, I'll shake you off to your old
 trade of filching in a throug. Murder's too genteel
 a business for your capacity. Sirrah, I have taken
 more gold at noon-day, than ever you filched copper
 by candle-light.
 B. Will. Cowardly slave, you lie!
 Shake. A coward! 'Sblood! that shall be proved.
 Come on.
 B. Will. To thy heart's blood.
 Shake. To thine. (*They fight.*)
 Enter GREEN.
 Green. What, are you mad? For shame, put up
 your swords.
 Shake. Not till I've had his life.
 B. Will. Fool, guard thy own.
 Green. Pray, hear me, gentlemen.
 B. Will. Stand farther off.
 Shake. Away.
 Green. This broil will ruin all.
 Shake. He begun it.
 B. Will. Ay, and will end it too.
 Green. Arden, you know, returns, and will you
 let him
 Escape a second time?
 Shake. Who did the first?
 Green. No matter, that may be repair'd.
 B. Will. Brand me with cowardice!
 Green. Come, come, you're both to blame.
 Speak, will you lay aside this senseless broil?
 B. Will. Nay, let him speak.
 Shake. Why, rather than lose this opportunity—
 (*Puts up his sword.*)
 B. Will. Ay, we'll defer it till Arden's dead;
 I'm for doing business first, and then for play.
 Shake. Challenge me when thou darest.
 Green. The night draws on. Are you resolv'd?
 Shake. We are.
 Green. Enough. See where he comes. I must
 withdraw;
 But when you've done the deed, and sent his
 soul—
 No matter where—I'll come to you again. [Exit.]
 B. Will. Something rises in my throat; I can
 scarcely breathe: I'd rather poison half-a-dozen

cardinals, than kill this honest man; but I'll do't for my reputation.

Shake. He comes. Retire a little. Let him advance, then bury your dagger in his heart. If you fail, I'll second you.

B. Will. Stand further off, I shall not need your aid.

Shake. Now strike.

Enter ARDEN first, and then LORD CHEYNEY, attended.

B. Will. Again prevented! Ten thousand devils take them all!

Lord C. Arden, well met. You're to the isle of Sheppey

Grown quite a stranger. Shall we see you there?

Arden. I purpos'd soon t' have waited on your lordship.

Lord C. Well, will you sup with me to-night at Shorlow?

Arden. Franklin, 'my lord, who is my guest at present,

Expects me at my house.

Lord C. Then will you dine with me to-morrow?

Arden. I'll not fail your lordship.

Lord C. Believe me, worthy friend, I'm glad to see you.

Walk you towards Feversham?

Arden. So please your lordship.

[*Exeunt Lord C. and Arden.*]

B. Will. Just as I had taken aim, too! 'Sblood! I could kill myself for vexation.

Enter GREEN.

Green. Well, Arden is at last despatch'd?

Shake. Yes, safe to Feversham.

Green. Safe, say you? his good fortune mocks us all.

These strange escapes have almost stagger'd me; But, thinking of my wrongs, I'm more confirm'd.

B. Will. Well said, my man of resolution. A gentleman commits a murder with double the satisfaction for such a heart. We must lay our snares more cunning for the future.

Green. We should consult with Michael, Arden's man.

The pigmy-hearted wretch, though long ago He swore his master dead, acts with reluctance.

Shake. The coward must be spurred. He does it, or he dies.

Enter MICHAEL.

Mich. I saw my master and Lord Cheyney pass, And my heart leap'd for joy. (*Apart.*)

B. Will. What says the villain?

Mich. Would I were gone! (*Aside.*) Sir, if I give offence— (*Going.*)

Green. Michael, come back; you must not leave us so.

Mich. What is your pleasure?

Green. Why, we understand

You are in love with Mosby's beauteous sister.

Mich. Suppose I am.

B. Will. You deal too mildly with the peasant. You swore to kill your master, villain. Be an honest man of your word, and do't then, white liver!

Mich. Sir, I repented.

B. Will. Repented! What's that? Dog! know your rank, and act as we command, or your heart's blood—

Mich. What must I do? (*Frightened.*)

B. Will. Do! You must shew us the house, appoint the time and place, and lure your master thither. We'll take care of him without your trouble.

Green. So shall you purchase noble Mosby's friendship;

And, by his friendship, gain his sister's love.

Mich. They'll murder me too, should I not comply. (*Aside.*)

Green. Think on your love, your interest.

B. Will. Or your death.

Mich. To-night, soon as the abbey-clock strikes ten, (*Trembling.*)

Come to his house, I'll leave the doors unbarr'd:

The left-hand stairs lead to my master's chamber: There take him, and dispose him as you please.

Green. This cannot fail.

Shake. Unless this love-sick coward thinks to deceive us.

Mich. I will not, by heaven!

B. Will. I believe thee; for, by hell! thou dar'st not. [*Exeunt Green, B. Will. and Shake.*]

Mich. Master, thy constant love and daily bounty

Deserve more grateful offices from Michael.

[*Exit, weeping.*]

SCENE II.—A Room in Arden's house.

ALICIA discovered.

Alicia. When vice has spread her poison thro' the soul,

How lifeless, slow, confus'd, and insincere,

Are our resolves in the pursuits of virtue!

What wonder, then, heav'n should refuse its aid

To thoughts, that only blossom for a time;

Look blooming to the eye, but yield no fruit.

Enter MOSBY.

Mosby. I come, Alicia, to partake thy griefs; For fire divided burns with lesser force.

Alicia. I know thee: thou art come to fan the flame

Thy breath hath kindled here, till it consume us.

But tears and sighs shall stifle in my heart

The guilty passion.

Mosby. Is heroic love,

That form'd the bright examples of thy sex,

Made their lives glorious, and their fame immortal,

A crime in thee? Art thou not mine by oaths,

By mutual sufferings, by contract mine?

Alicia. Why do you urge a rash, a fatal promise,

I had no right to make or you to ask?

Why did you practise on my easy heart?

Why did I ever listen to your vows?

In me 'twas foolish guilt and disobedience;

In you 'twas avarice, insolence, and pride.

Mosby. 'Twas love in me, and gratitude in you.

Alicia. 'Twas insolence in you, meanness in me,

And madness in us both. My careful parents,

In scorn of your presumption and my weakness,

Gave me in marriage to a worthy gentleman,

Of birth and fortune equal to my own.

Three years I liv'd with him without reproach,

And made him in that time the happy father

Of two most lovely children. I, too, was happy;

At least, I liv'd in hopes I might be so:

For time, and gratitude, and Arden's love,

I hop'd might quench my guilty flame for you,

And make my heart a present worthy him.

Mosby. And dost thou glory in thy perjuries?

In love, inconstancy alone's a crime.

Think on the ardour of our youthful passion, Think how we play'd with love; nor thought it

guilt,

Till thy first falsehood, (call it not obedience,)

Thy marriage with this Arden made me desperate;

Think on the transports of our love renew'd,

And—

Alicia. Hide the rest, lest list'ning winds should hear,

And publish to the world our shameful tale.
Here let remembrance of our follies die.

Mosby. Shall our loves wither in their early bloom?

Alicia. Their harvest, else, will be to both our shames.

Hast thou not made a monster of me, Mosby?

You should abhor me, I abhor myself.
When unperceiv'd I stole on Arden's sleep,
(Hell steel'd my heart, and death was in my hand,)
Pale anguish brooded on his ashy cheek,
And chilly sweats stood shivering on his brow.
Relentless murder, at a sight so sad,
Gave place to pity; and, as he wak'd, I stood
Irresolute, and drown'd in tears.

Mosby. She's lost.

And I in vain have stain'd my soul with blood.

(*Aside.*)

Alicia. Give o'er in time: in vain are your attempts

Upon my Arden's life; for heav'n, that wrested
The fatal weapon from my trembling hand,
Still has him in charge.

Mosby. Little she thinks (*Aside.*)

That Arden's dead ere now. It must be so;
I've but that game to play, ere it be known.

Alicia. I know our dang'rous state; I hesitate;
I tremble for your life; I dread reproach.

But we've offended, and must learn to suffer.

Mosby. Then Arden live in his *Alicia* blest,
And *Mosby* wretched. Yet should chance or nature

Lay Arden gently in a peaceful grave,
Might I presume to hope? *Alicia*, speak.

Alicia. How shall I look into my secret thoughts,
And answer what I fear to ask myself?

(*A long pause.*)

Mosby. Silence speaks best for me. His death
once known,

I must forswear the fact, and give these tools
To public justice; and not live in fear. (*Aside.*)
Thy heart is mine. I ask but for my own.
Truth, gratitude, and honour, bind you to me,
Or else you never lov'd.

Alicia. Then why this struggle?

Not lov'd! Oh! had my love been justly plac'd,
As sure it was exalted and sincere,
I should have gloried in it, and been happy.
But I'll no longer live the abject slave
Of loose desire: I disclaim the thought.

Mosby. I'll ask no more what honour should deny;

By heav'n, I never will.

Alicia. Well, then, remember,
On that condition only, I renew
My vows. If time and the event of things

(*Giving her hand.*)

Should ever make it lawful, I'll be your's.

Mosby. Oh! my full joys—

Alicia. Suppress thy frantic transports;
My heart recoils, I am betray'd; oh! give me back
My promis'd faith.

Mosby. First, let the world dissolve.

Alicia. There is no joy nor peace for you or me:

All our engagements cannot but be fatal.

Mosby. The time may come when you'll have
other thoughts;

Till then, farewell. (*Aside.*) Now, Fortune, do thy
worst. [*Exit.*]

Alicia. *Mosby*, return. He's gone, and I am
wretched,

I should have banish'd him my sight for ever.

You happy fair ones, whose untainted fame

Has never yet been blasted with reproach,

Fly from th' appearance of dishonour far.

Virtue is arbitrary, nor admits debate:

To doubt is treason in her rigid court;
But if ye parley with the foe, you're lost. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*Another Room in Arden's house.*

ARDEN and FRANKLIN sitting together on a couch;
Arden thoughtful.

Frank. Nay, wonder not. Tho' ev'ry circumstance

Thus strangely met to prove the lady false,
And justify the husband's horrid vengeance,
Yet it appears to ev'ry honest eye,
(Too late for the poor lady,) she was wrong'd.

Arden. Is't possible?

Frank. Ay, very possible:

He lives that proves it so. Conceal'd from justice,
He pines with ceaseless sorrow for his guilt,
And each hour bends him lower towards his grave.

Arden. I know thy friendship, and perceive its drift.

I'll bear my wrongs—for, sure, I have been
wrong'd.

Do I but think so, then? What fools are men
Whom love and hatred, anger, hope, and fear,
And all the various passions, rule by turns,
And in their several turns alike deceive!

Frank. To cast away, and on suspicion only,
A jewel, like *Alicia*, were to her
Unjust, and cruel to yourself. (*Clock strikes ten.*)
Good night,

The clock has stricken ten.

Arden. I thought it more.

Frank. I thought it not so much.

Arden. Why, thus it is:

Our happy hours are few, and fly so swift,
That they are past ere we begin to count 'em:
But when with pain and misery oppress'd,
Anticipating time's unvarying pace,
We think each heavy moment is an age.

Frank. Come, let's to rest. Impartial as the
grave,

Sleep robs the cruel tyrant of his pow'r,
Gives rest and freedom to the o'erwrought slave,
And steals the wretched beggar from his want.

Droop not, my friend, sleep will suspend thy
cares,

And time will end them.

Arden. True; for time brings death,

The only certain end of human woes.
Sleep interrupts, but waking we're restor'd
To all our griefs again. Watching and rest,
Alternately succeeding one another,
Are all the idle business of dull life.

What shall we call this undetermin'd state;
This narrow isthmus 'twixt two boundless oceans;
That whence we came, and that to which we
tend?

Is it life chequer'd with the sleep of death?
Or death enliven'd by our waking dreams?
But we'll to bed. Here, Michael, bring the
lights.

Enter MICHAEL, with lights.

Heav'n send you good repose.

(*Gives Franklin a light.*)

Frank. The like to you.

Mich. Shall I attend you, sir?

Frank. No, no; I choose to be alone. Good
night.

[*Exit Franklin. Michael attends his master,
and returns.*]

Mich. I, who should take my weapon in my
hand

And guard his life with hazard of my own,
With frandful smiles have led him, unsuspecting,

Quite to the jaws of death: but I've an oath;
Mosby has bound me with a horrid vow,
Which, if I break, these dogs have sworn my
death.

I've left the doors unbarr'd. Hark! 'twas the
latch.

They come—I hear their oaths, and see their
daggers

Insulting o'er my master's mangled body,
While he for mercy pleads. Good master, live:
I'll bar the doors again. But should I meet
'em—

What's that? I heard 'em cry, "Where is this
coward?"

Arden once dead, they'll murder me for sport.
Help! call the neighbours! Master! Franklin!
help!

Enter ARDEN and FRANKLIN, undressed.

Arden. What dismal outcry's this?

Frank. What frights thee, Michael?

Mich. My master, Franklin!

Arden. Why dost tremble so?

Mich. I dream'd the house was full of thieves
and murderers. *(Trembling.)*

Arden. Dream'd! what, awake? Are all the
doors made fast?

Mich. I think they are.

Arden. I'll go and see myself. *[Exit.*

Frank. You made a fearful noise.

Mich. Did I?

Arden. *(Within.)* Why, Michael!

Frank. You tremble still. Has any one been
here?

Mich. No, I hope not. My master will be
angry.

Re-enter ARDEN.

Arden. This negligence not half contents me,
sir;

The doors were all left open.

Mich. Sir—

Arden. To bed,

And, as you prize my favour, be more careful.

[Exit Michael.]

Frank. 'Tis very cold. Once more, my friend—

Arden. Good night. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE IV.—*The Street before Arden's door; the
door shut.*

Enter BLACK WILL and SHAKEBAG.

B. Will. Zounds! Michael has betray'd us;
The doors are fast. Away, away! Disperse!

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Flower-de-Luce.*

Enter MOSBY and MICHAEL.

Mich. Though I with oaths appeal'd to conscious
heav'n,
That Arden rose and shut the doors himself,
Yet, but for Green, these bloody rogues had kill'd
me.

We must desist: Franklin and sweet Maria
Have promis'd, at Alicia's own request,
To interfere—

Mosby. Such ever be the employ
Of him I hate.

Mich. The mourning fair, all chang'd,
By me conjures you, (and with tears she spoke
it,)

Not to involve yourself and her in ruin,
By seeking to renew a correspondence
She has renounc'd for ever.

Mosby. How! confusion!

Mich. And hopes, as heav'n, in answer to her
pray'rs,

Hath reconcil'd her duty and affection,

You will approve her resolution—

Mosby. Doubtless.

Mich. And learn, by her example, to subdue
Your guilty passion.

Mosby. Ha, ha, ha! exquisite woman.

So, rather than not change, she'll love her hus-
band!

But she will not persevere.

Mich. Yes, sure, she will.

Mosby. Have I then slighted her whole sighing
sex,

Bid opportunity and fortune wait;
And all to be forsaken for a husband!
By heav'n, I am glad he has so oft escap'd,
That I may have him murder'd in her sight.

Enter GREEN.

Green. How strange a Providence attends this
man!

'Tis vain to strive with heav'n; let's give it o'er.

Mosby. No; when I do, may I be curst for
ever,

Hopeless to love, and hate without revenge:

May I ne'er know an end of disappointment,

But press'd with hard necessity, like thee,

Live the contempt of my insulting foe.

Green. I scorn the abject thought; had he a
life

Hung on each hair, he dies. If we succeed,

(To Michael.)

This very night Maria shall be thine.

Mich. I am a man again.

Mosby. I've thought a way

That may be easy under friendship's mask,

Which, to a foe suspected, may be hard.

Green. Friendship! impossible—

Mosby. You know him not.

You, with your ruffians, in the street shall seek
him.

I follow at some distance. They begin

(No matter how) a quarrel, and at once

Assault him with their swords. Straight I ap-
pear,

Forget all wrongs, and draw in his defence;

Mark me, be sure, with some slight wound; then
fly,

And leave the rest to me.

Mich. I know his temper.

This seeming benefit will cancel all

His former doubts, and gain his easy heart.

Green. Perhaps so; yet—

Mosby. Further debates are needless. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—*A Room in Arden's house.*

Enter FRANKLIN and MARIA.

Frank. Well, in what temper did you find
Alicia?

Maria. Never was anguish, never grief like
her's:

She eats nor sleeps. Her lovely, downcast eyes,

That us'd to gladden each beholder's heart,

Now wash the flinty bosom of the earth.

Her troubled breast heaves with incessant sighs,

Which drink the purple streams of life, and
blast

Her bloom, as storms the blossoms of the spring.

But, sure, her pray'rs must quickly reach high
heav'n,

Relenting Arden, kindly sooth her sorrows,
And her lost peace restore.

Frank. Their mutual peace, Maria!
For his can ne'er be found but in Alicia.
Asham'd to view the face of man or day,
As Mosby's name was written on his brow,
He cheerless wanders; seeks the darkest gloom
To hide his drooping head, and grieve alone.
With a full heart, swoln eyes, and falt'ring
tongue,
He sometimes, seeking to beguile his grief,
Begins a mournful tale: but straight a thought
Of his imagin'd wrongs crossing his memory,
Ends his sad story ere the half be told.
Oh! may our pains with wish'd success be crown'd.

Enter ARDEN.

Arden. No, Franklin, no; your friendly cares
are vain:

Were I but certain she had wrong'd my bed,
I then might hate her, and shake off my woes;
But thus perplex'd, can never taste of comfort.

Frank. O jealousy! thou bane of social joys!
Oh! she's a monster, made of contradictions!
Let truth in all her native charms appear,
And, with the voice of harmony itself,
Plead the just cause of innocence traduc'd;
Deaf as the adder, blind as upstart greatness,
She sees nor hears. And yet let slander whisper,
Or evil-ey'd suspicion look oblique,
Rumour has fewer tongues than she has ears;
And Argus' hundred eyes are dim and slow,
To piercing jealousy's.

Arden. No more, no more;
I know its plagues, but where's the remedy?

Maria. In your Alicia.

Frank. She shall heal these wounds.

Arden. She's my disease, and can she be my
cure?

My friends should rather teach me to abhor her,
To tear her image from my bleeding heart.

Maria. We leave that hateful office to the
fiends.

Frank. If you e'er lov'd, you'll not refuse to
see her:

You promis'd that.

Arden. Did I?

Frank. Indeed you did.

Arden. Well, then, some other time.

Frank. No; see her now.

Arden. Franklin, I know my heart, and dare
not see her.

I have a husband's honour to maintain,
I fear the lover's weakness may betray.
Let me not do what honour must condemn,
And friendship blush to hear.

Frank. That Arden never will.

Maria. Did you but know her grief—

Arden. Am I the cause?

Have I, just heav'n, have I ever injur'd her?
Yet I'm the coward. O prepost'rous fear!
See where she comes, arm'd with my num'rous
wrongs,

I'll meet, with honourable confidence,
Th' offending wife, and look the honest husband.

Frank. Maria, we'll withdraw; even friendship
here

Would seem impertinence.

[*Exeunt Franklin and Maria.*]

Arden. Be still my heart!

Enter ALICIA, not seeing Arden.

Alicia. How shall I bear my Arden's just re-
proaches?

Or can a reconciliation long continue,
That's founded on deceit? can I avow

My secret guilt? No; at so mean a thought
Abandon'd infamy herself would blush.

Nay, could I live with public loss of honour,
Arden would die to see Alicia scorn'd.
He's here! earth open—hide me from his sight.

Arden. Guilt chains her tongue. Lo! silent,
self-condemn'd,

With tearful eyes and trembling limbs she stands.

Alicia. Fain would I kiss his footsteps; but
that look,

Where indignation seems to strive with grief,
Forbids me to approach him.

Arden. Who would think

That anguish were not real?

Alicia. I'm rooted here.

Arden. Those tears, methinks, ev'n if her guilt
were certain,

Might wash away her pains.

Alicia. Support me, heav'n!

Arden. Curse on the abject thought. I shall
relapse

To simple dotage. She steals on my heart,
She conquers with her eyes. If I but hear her
voice,

Nor earth nor heav'n can save me from her
snares.

Oh! let me fly, if I have yet the pow'r.

Alicia. Oh! Arden, do not, do not leave me
thus. (*Kneels, and holds him.*)

Arden. I pray thee, loose thy hold.

Alicia. Oh! never, never.

Arden. Why should I stay to tell thee of my
wrongs,

To aggravate thy guilt, and wound thy soul?

Thyself, if all these agonizing struggles

Of tears, of sighs, of groans, of speechless sor-
row,

Be but sincere, thyself will do it better.

One thing I'll tell thee; (for perhaps 'twill please
thee;)

Thou'st broke my heart, Alicia.

Alicia. Oh! (*She falls to the ground.*)

Arden. And canst thou,

Can woman pity whom she hath undone?

Why dost thou grasp my knees? what would'st
thou say,

If thou could'st find thy speech?

Alicia. Oh! mercy, mercy!

Arden. Thou hast had none on me: let go my
hand;

Why dost thou press it to thy throbbing heart,

That beats—but not for me.

Alicia. Then may it ne'er beat more.

Arden. At least, I'm sure it did not always so.

Alicia. For that my soul is pierc'd with deep
remorse;

For that I bow me to the dust before thee,

And die to be forgiven. Oh! Arden, Arden!

Arden. Presumptuous fool! what business hast
thou here!

Did I not know my weakness, and her pow'r!

Rise, rise, Alicia.

Alicia. No; here let me lie

On the bare bosom of this conscious earth,
Till Arden speak the words of peace and com-
fort,

Or my heart break before him.

Arden. Oh! Alicia,

Thou inconsistent spring of grief and joy,
Whence sweet and bitter streams, alternate flow,
Come to my arms, and in this too fond bosom
Disburden all the fulness of thy soul.

Alicia. Let me approach with awe that sacred
temple,

Resume my seat, and dwell for ever there.

Arden. There ever reign, as on thy native
throne,

Thou lovely wanderer!

Alicia. Am I at last,
In error's fatal mazes long bewilder'd,
Permitted here to find my peace and safety?

Arden. Dry up thy tears; and tell me, truly tell me,

Has my long suffering love at length prevail'd,
And art thou mine indeed?

Alicia. Heav'n's my witness,
I love thee, Arden; and esteem thy love
Above all earthly good. Thy kind forgiveness
Speaks to my soul that peaceful calm confirm'd
Which reason and reflection had begun.

Arden. Thou'rt cheaply purchas'd with unnum-
ber'd sighs,

With many a bitter tear, and years of patience,
Thou treasure of more worth than mines of gold.
I will not doubt my happiness. Thou art,
Thou wilt be mine, ever, and only mine.

Alicia. I am, I will. I ne'er knew joy till
now.

Arden. This is our truest, happiest nuptial day.
To-night, thou knowest, according to my cus-
tom,

Our yearly fair returning with St. Valentine,
I treat my friends. I go to countenance
Their honest mirth, and cheer them with my
bounty.

Till happy night farewell. My best Alicia,
How will our friends rejoice, our foes repine,
To see us thus?

Alicia. Thus ever may they see us!
The wand'ring fires that have so long misled me,
Are now extinguish'd, and my heart is Arden's.
The flow'ry path of innocence and peace
Shines bright before, and I shall stray no longer.
Whence, then, these sighs, and why these floods
of tears?

Sighs are the language of a broken heart,
And tears the tribute each enlighten'd eye
Pays, and must pay, for vice and folly past.
And yet the painful'st virtue hath its pleasure:
Tho' dangers rise, yet peace restor'd within,
My soul collected shall undaunted meet them.
Tho' trouble, grief, and death, the lot of all,
On good and bad without distinction fall;
The soul which conscious innocence sustains,
Supports with ease these temporary pains;
But, stung with guilt, and loaded by despair,
Becomes itself a burden none can bear. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*The Street. People at a distance as
at a fair.*

*Enter ARDEN on one side, and BLACK WILL
and SHAKEBAG on the other; GREEN direct-
ing them.*

B. Will. Shakebag, you'll second me. 'Sblood!
give the way. (*Pushes Arden.*)

Shake. May we not pass the streets?

Arden. I saw you not.

B. Will. Your sight, perhaps, is bad; your feel-
ing may be better. (*Strikes him.*)

Arden. Insolent villains! (*Draws.*)

B. Will. Come, we'll teach you manners.

Arden. Both at once! barb'rous cowards!

Enter MOSBY.

Mosby. O bloody dogs! attempt a life so pre-
cious!

B. Will. This is a fury, George.

Shake. I've pink'd him tho'.

[*Black Will and Shakebag beaten off.*
Arden. Villains come back, and finish your de-
sign.

Mosby. Shall I pursue them, sir?

Arden. Not for the world.
Mosby! amazing generosity!

Mosby. I hope you are not hurt.

Arden. Pierc'd to the heart—

Mosby. Forbid it, heaven! quick, let me fly for
help.

Arden. With sharp reflection: Mosby, I can't
bear

To be so far oblig'd to one I've wrong'd.

Mosby. Who would not venture life to save a
friend!

Arden. From you I've not deserv'd that tender
name.

Mosby. No more of that; would I were worthy
of it.

Arden. I own my heart, by boiling passions
torn,

Forgets its gentleness; yet is ever open
To melting gratitude. Oh! say what price
Can buy your friendship?

Mosby. Only think me your's.

Arden. Easy indeed. I am too much oblig'd.
Why reek'd not your good sword its justice on
me,

When mad with jealous rage, in my own house,
I urg'd you to my ruin!

Mosby. I lov'd you then

With the same warmth as now.

Arden. What's here! you bleed.

Let me bind up your wound.

Mosby. A trifle, sir.

Arden. Your friendship makes it so. See,
Franklin, see

Enter FRANKLIN.

The man I treated as a coward, bleeding,
(Wretch that I am!) for his defence of me.
Look to your wound. And, Mosby, let us hope
You'll sup with me. There will be honest Brad-
shaw,

And Franklin here, and—

Mosby. Sir, I will not fail.

Frank. I shall not come.

Arden. Nay, Franklin, that's unkind.

Pr'ythee—

Frank. Nay, urge me not. I have my rea-
sons.

Mosby. Avoids my company! So much the bet-
ter.

His may not be so proper. (*Aside.*) An hour
hence,

If you are not engag'd, we'll meet at Fowl's.

Arden. I will be there.

Mosby. Till then I take my leave. [*Exit.*

Arden. How have I been mistaken in this
man?

Frank. How are you sure you're not mistaken
now?

Arden. No doubt he loves me; and I blush to
think

How I've suspected him, and wrong'd Alicia.

Frank. May you be ever happy in your wife:

But—

Arden. Speak—But what? Let's have no rid-
dles here.

Can she be innocent, and Mosby guilty?

Frank. To speak my thoughts, this new officious
fondness

Makes me suspect: I like him worse than ever.

Arden. Because I like him better. What a
churl.

Frank. You're cred'lous, and treat my serious
doubts

With too much levity. You vex me, Arden. [*Exit.*

Arden. Believe me, friend, you'll laugh at this
hereafter. [*Exit.*

MOSBY, *having watched Franklin out, re-enters with GREEN.*

Mosby. The surly friend has left him, as I wish'd.

You see how eagerly the foolish wofl Flies headlong to our snare: now to inclose him. At eight, the guests are bidden to his banquet, And only Michael, of his numerous train, Keeps home with his Alicia. He'll secure The keys of all the doors, and let you in With my two trusty blood-hounds. Alicia seems Averse at present.

Green. She'll not dare betray us.

Mosby. Not when the deed is done. We know too much.

She'll be our prisoner, and shall be observ'd. Towards evening, then, upon a slight pretence, To pass an hour at draughts, (a game he loves,) I'll draw this husband home. You'll be prepar'd In th' inner room, (Michael will shew it you,) Till at a signal given, you all rush forth, And strangle him.

Green. Good; 'tis a death that leaves No bloody character to mark the place.

Mosby. Howe'er, come all provided with your daggers.

Do you seek Michael, I'll instruct the rest.

Green. What shall the signal be?

Mosby. These words in th' game: "I take you now."

Green. Arden! thou'rt taken now, indeed.

Mosby. His body, thrown behind the abbey-wall,

Shall be descried by th' early passenger Returning from the fair. My friend, thy hand: Shakes it! Be firm, and our united strength, With ease, shall cast dead Arden to the earth.

Green. Thanks to his foolish tenderness of son!

Mosby. True; he who trusts an old invet'rate foe,

Bares his own breast, and courts the fatal blow. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT V

SCENE I.—Arden's House.

Enter ALICIA.

Alicia. What have I heard! Is this the house of Arden?

Oh! that the pow'r which has so oft'n sav'd him, Would send his guardian angel to him now, To whisper in his ear his present danger! Fly, Arden, fly! avoid this fatal roof, Where murder lurks, and certain death awaits thee.

Wander, no matter where, turn but from hence, Thou canst not miss thy way. The house is theirs.

I am suspected; Michael guards the door, And ev'n Maria's absent. Bloody Mosby, These are the fruits of thy detested lust. But hark! the fiends approach. Green had humanity,

Enter GREEN, BLACK WILL, SHAKEBAG, and MICHAEL.

Could I prevail on him! Oh, sir— *(Talks apart with Green.)*

B. Will. What a fair house! rich furniture; what piles of massy plate; and then yon iron chest. Good plunder, comrade.

Shake. And Madam Arden there, a prize worth them all to me.

B. Will. And shall that fawning, white-liver'd coward, Mosby, enjoy all these?

Shake. No doubt he would, were we the fools he thinks us.

Green. Had he as many lives as drops of blood, I'd have them all. *(To Alicia.)*

Alicia. But for one single night—

Green. I'd not defer his fate a single hour, Tho' I were sure myself to die the next. So, peace, irresolute woman, and be thankful For thy own life.

Alicia. Oh! mercy, mercy—

Green. Yes,

Such mercy as the nursing lioness, When drain'd of moisture by her eager young, Shews to the prey that first encounters her.

B. Will. Who talks of mercy, when I am here!

Green. She would prevent us; but our steady courage Laughs at her coward arts. *(Knocking gently at the gate.)*

Why, Michael.

Mich. Sir!

Green. Thou bloodless coward, what dost tremble at?

Dost thou not hear a knocking at the gate? *[Exit Michael.]*

Mosby, no doubt. How like a sly adulterer, Who steals at midnight, and with caution gives Th' appointed signal to his neighbour's wife.

B. Will. Which is the place where we're to be conceal'd?

Green. This inner room.

B. Will. 'Tis well. The word is "Now I take you." *(Knocking, louder than before.)*

Green. Ay, there's authority. That speaks the master.

He seems in haste. 'Twere pity he should wait, Now we're so well prepar'd for his reception.

[Green, B. Will, and Shakebag, go into the inner room.]

Alicia. Now whether are they gone? the door's unbarr'd;

I hear the sound of feet. Should it be Arden, And Mosby with him—I can't bear the doubt, Nor would I be resolv'd. Be hush'd my fears, 'Tis Mosby, and alone.

Enter MOSBY.

Sir! hear me, Mosby.

Mosby. Is this a time—

Alicia. I will be heard, And mark me, when I swear, never hereafter, By look, word, act—

Mosby. Be d—d—your husband—

Alicia. Ha! *(She screams.)*

Enter ARDEN and MICHAEL.

Arden. Am I a monster, that I fright thee thus? *(To Alicia.)*

Say, what has happen'd since I left the house? Thou look'st, Alicia, as if wild amazement Had chang'd thee to the image of herself.

Alicia. Is Franklin with you?

Arden. No.

Alicia. Nor Fowl, nor Bradshaw?

Arden. Neither, but both expected.

Alicia. Merciful heav'n!

Arden. I meant to dedicate this happy night To mirth and joy, and thy returning love. *(She sighs.)*

Make me not sad, Alicia; for my sake; Let discontent be banish'd from your brow, And welcome Arden's friends with laughing eyes. Amongst the first let Mosby be enroll'd.

Alicia. The villain! *(Aside.)*

Arden. Nay, I am too well convinc'd
Of Mosby's friendship, and Alicia's love,
Ever to wrong them more by weak suspicious.
I've been, indeed, to blame; but I will make
thee

A large amends, Alicia. Look upon him,
As on the man that gave your husband's life.

Alicia. Would that my husband's life! I'll tell
him all,

And cast this load of horror from my soul:
Yet, 'tis a dreadful hazard. Both must die.

A fearful thought! Franklin may come, or Brad-
shaw;

Oh! let me not precipitate his fate! (*Aside.*)

Mosby. I see my presence is offensive here.

(*Going.*)

Arden. Alicia! No; she has no will but mine.

Mosby. It is not fit she should; and yet, per-
haps,

'Twere better, sir. Permit me to retire.

Arden. No more. Our friendship publicly
avow'd

Will clear her injur'd virtue to the world.

Mosby. Something there is in that—

Arden. It is a debt

I owe to both your fames, and pay it freely.

Mosby. For her sake, then, not for my own.

Alicia. (*Aside.*) O d—d dissembler.

Arden. Come, take your seat; this shall not
save your money.

Bring us the tables, Michael. (*They sit and play.*)

Alicia. (*Aside.*) Oh! just heaven,

Wilt thou not interpose? How dread this pause!

Ten thousand terrors crowd the narrow space.

Arden. Your thoughts are absent, Mosby.

B. Will. Blood! why don't Mosby give the
word?

Mich. Give back, the game's against him.

Alicia. Fly, Franklin, fly! to save thy Arden's
life.

Murder herself, that chases him in view,

Beholding me, starts back, and for a moment

Suspends her thirst for blood. (*Apart.*)

Arden. Come, give it up; I told you I should
win. (*Rises.*)

Mosby. No; I see an advantage; move again.

Arden. There.

Mosby. Now I take you.

(*Black Will throws a scarf over Arden's head,*

in order to strangle him; but Arden disen-

gages himself, wrests a dagger from Shake-

bag, and stands on the defence, till Mosby

getting behind and seizing his arm, the rest

assassinate him.)

Alicia. Oh! power omnipotent! make strong his
arm,

Give him to conquer. Ha! my pray'rs are
curses,

And draw down vengeance where they meant a
blessing.

Arden. Inhospitable villain!

Alicia. Oh! he dies.

Arden. Oh! hold your bloody—Mosby, too!

Nay, then, (*Falling.*)

I yield me to my fate. Is this, Alicia,

This the return for my unequal love?

Alicia. Or death, or madness, would be mercies
now,

Therefore, beyond my hopes.

Arden. Oh! Mosby, Michael, Green,

Why have you drawn my blood upon your souls?

Mosby. Behold her there, to whom I was be-
troth'd,

And ask no further.

Green. Think on thy abbey-lands

From injur'd Green.

Arden. You now are your own judges,

But we shall meet again where right and truth—

Who, who are these? But I forgive you all.
Thy hand, Alicia.

Alicia. I'll not give it thee.

Arden. O wretched woman! have they kill'd
thee, too;

A deadly paleness, agony, and horror,
On thy sad visage sit. My soul hangs on thee,

And though departing, just departing, loves thee:
Is loth to leave, unreconcil'd to thee,

This useless mangled tenement of clay.
Dismiss her pleas'd, and say thou'rt innocent.

Alicia. All hell contains not such a guilty
wretch.

Arden. Then welcome death! tho' in the shape
of murder.

How have I doated to idolatry!
Vain, foolish wretch, and thoughtless of here-
after;

Nor hop'd, nor wish'd a heav'n beyond her love.
Now, unprepar'd, I perish by her hate.

Alicia. Though blacker, and more guilty than
the fiends,

My soul is white from this accursed deed.
Oh! Arden, hear me—

Arden. Full of doubts I come,
Oh! thou Supreme, to seek thy awful presence.

My soul is on the wing. I own thy justice.
Prevent me with thy mercy— (*Dies.*)

Alicia. Turn not from me:
Behold me, pity me, survey my sorrows.

I who despis'd the duty of a wife,
Will be thy slave. Spit on me, spurn me, sir,

I'll love thee still. Oh! could'st thou court my
scorn,

And now abhor me, when I love thee more,
If possible, than e'er thou lov'd Alicia.

Mosby. Mad fool, he's dead, and hears thee
not.

Alicia. 'Tis false!

He smiles upon me and applauds my vengeance.

(*Snatches a dagger, and strikes at Mosby. A*

knocking at the gate.)

Mosby. D——n!

B. Will. 'Sdeath! we shall leave our work un-
finish'd, and be betray'd at last. Let's hide the
body.

Mosby. Force her away.

Alicia. Inhuman bloody villain!
(*She swoons as she is forced from the body.*)

Enter MARIA.

Maria. Mosby here?
My sliding feet, as they move trembling forwards,

Are drench'd in blood. Oh! may I only fancy
That Arden there lies murder'd.

Mosby. How fares Alicia?

Alicia. As the howling damn'd; and thou my
hell.

Maria. Unhappy brother!
If thou hast done this deed, hope not to 'scape:

Mercy herself, who only seeks for crimes,
That she may pardon and reform the guilty,

Would change her nature at a sight like this.

Enter MICHAEL.

Mich. The guests are come; the servants all re-
turn'd.

Mosby. Alicia, be thyself; and mask thy heart
(*Mosby lifts up Alicia.*)

From every prying eye, with courteous smiles.

Alicia. Thou canst not think me mean enough to
live.

Mosby. You would not choose an ignominious
death?

Alicia. That's all I dread. Might but the silent
grave,

When it receives me to its dark abode,
Hide, with my dust, my shame! Oh! might that
be,

And Arden's death reveng'd. 'Tis my sole prayer.
If not, may awful justice have her course. [Exit.]

Mosby. Sister, our lives are thine—

Maria. Though Mosby has shook off humanity,
I can't be his accuser. [Exit.]

Mosby. Follow them, Green, and watch Alicia's
conduct.

Green. I will, but cannot answer for my own.

Oh! Arden, Arden! could we change conditions—
[Exit.]

B. Will. Why, what a crew of cowards!

In the same moment murdering and repenting.

Mosby. Give me the ring that is on Arden's
finger.

Shake. There. Will you have his purse, too?

Mosby. No, keep that.

B. Will. Thanks for our own; we should have
kept the ring,

Were it not too remarkable.

But how must we dispose of the body?

Mosby. Convey it thro' the garden, to the field
Behind the abbey-wall: Michael will shew the
way.

The night is dark and cloudy; yet take heed,
The house is full of company.

B. Will. Sir, if you doubt our conduct, do't
yourself.

Mosby. Nay, gentlemen—

Shake. Pretend to direct us!

Mosby. For your own sakes—Arden will soon
be miss'd.

Shake. We know our business, sir.

Mosby. I doubt it not.

There's your reward. The horses are both sad-
dled,

And ready for your flight.

B. Will. Use them yourself:

I hope we're as safe as you.

Mosby. Why, gentlemen—Arden I us'd thee
worse. (Aside.)

B. Will. We shall take care, however, for our
own sakes.

Mosby. 'Tis very well; I hope we all are
friends,

So, softly, Michael! not that door.

(Michael going out at the wrong door.)

So, make what speed you can; I'll wait you there.
[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Hall in Arden's house.

MOSBY discovered.

Mosby. They must pass undescried: gardens
and fields

Are dreary deserts now. Night-fowls and beasts
of prey

Avoid the pinching rigour of the season,
Nor leave their shelter at a time like this.

And yet this night, this ling'ring winter night,
Hung with a weight of clouds that stops her
course,

Contracts new horrors, and a deeper black,
From this d—d deed. Mosby, thou hast thy
wish.

Arden is dead; now count thy gains at leisure.

Dangers without, on every side suspicion;

Within, my starting conscience mark such wounds,
As hell can equal, only murderers feel. (A pause.)

This, tis the end of all my flatt'ring hopes!

Oh! happiest was I in my humble state;

Though I lay down in want, I slept in peace:

My daily toil begat my night's repose,

My night's repose made day-light pleasing to me.

But now I've climb'd the top-bough of the tree,

And sought to build my nest among the clouds:
The gentlest gales of summer shake my bed,
And dreams of murder harrow up my soul.
But hark! not yet: 'tis dreadful being alone.
This awful silence, that unbroken reigns
Through earth and air, awakes attention more,
Than thunder bursting from ten thousand clouds:
'Sdeath! 'tis but Michael. Say—

Enter MICHAEL.

Mich. Dead Arden lies

Behind the abbey; 'tis a dismal sight!

It snow'd apace while we dispos'd the body.

Mosby. And not as you return'd?

Mich. No, sir.

Mosby. That's much—

Should you be question'd as to Arden's death,

You'll not confess?

Mich. No, so Maria's mine.

Mosby. She's thine, if all a brother can—

Mich. What's if?

I bought her dear, at hazard of my soul,

And force shall make her mine.

Mosby. Why, how now, coward!

Enter MARIA.

Maria. The guests refuse to take their seats
without you.

Alicia's grief, too, borders on distraction.

Thy presence may appease—

Mosby. Increase it rather.

Maria. Michael, your absence too has been ob-
serv'd.

Mosby. Say we are coming. [Exit Maria.]

Mich. One thing I'd forgot:

Soon as the company have left the house,

The ruffians will return.

Mosby. What would the villains?

Mich. They murther'd threats and curses,

And seem'd not satisfy'd with their reward. [Exit.]

Mosby. Let them take all. Ambition, av'rice,
lust,

That drove me on to murder, now forsake me.

Oh! Arden, if thy discontented ghost

Still hovers here to see thy blood reveng'd,

View, view the anguish of this guilty breast,

And be appeas'd [Exit.]

SCENE III.—A Room in Arden's house. A table spread for supper.

GREEN, BRADSHAW, ADAM FOWL, ALICIA,
MARIA, &c. discovered.

Brad. Madam, be comforted.

A. Fowl. Some accident, or business unforeseen,
detains him thus.

Brad. I doubt not of his safety.

Alicia. I thank you, gentlemen; I know you
lov'd

My Arden well, and kindly speak your wishes.

Enter MOSBY.

Mosby. I am asham'd I've made you wait: be
seated.

Green. Madam, first take your place.

Alicia. (Aside.) Make me not mad:

To me, henceforth, all places are alike. (Sits.)

Mosby. Come, since we want the master of the
house,

I'll take his seat for once.

Alicia. Dares he do this?

Mosby. I'm much afflicted that he stays so late;
The times are perilous.

Green. And he has enemies,
Though no man, sure, did e'er deserve them less.
Mosby. This day he was assaulted in the street.
Green. You sav'd him, then.
Mosby. Would I were with him now!
Maria. She starts, her looks are wild. (*Aside.*)
How fare you, madam?
Alicia. I'm lost in admiration of your brother.
Maria. I fear h'er more than ever. (*Aside.*)
Madam, be merry.
Mosby. Michael, some wine. Health and long
 life to Arden. (*Drinks.*)
Alicia. The good you wish, and have procur'd
 for Arden, (*Rising.*)

Light on thyself.
Maria. For heaven's sake!—
Alicia. Give me way. (*Comes forward.*)
Let them despatch, and send me to my husband:
 (*All rise.*)

I've liv'd too long with falsehood and deceit.
 (*Knocking at the gate.*)
A. Fowl. What noise is that? [*Exit Michael.*]
Brad. Pray heaven, that all be right.
Mosby. Bar all the doors.

Enter MICHAEL.

Mich. We are discover'd, sir. (*To Mosby.*)
The mayor, with officers and men in arms.

Enter Mayor, with Officers.

Mayor. Go you with these, and do as I directed.
 [*Exeunt Officers and others.*]
I'm sorry that the duty of my office
Demands a visit so unseasonable.

Mosby. Your worship, doubtless, were a welcome guest
At any hour; but wherefore thus attended?
Mayor. I have received a warrant from the council
To apprehend two most notorious ruffians;
And information being made on oath,
That they were seen to enter here to-night,
I'm come to search.

Green. I'm glad it is no worse. (*Aside.*)
Mosby. And can you think that Arden entertains
Villains like those you speak of? Were he here,
You'd not be thank'd for this officiousness.

Mayor. I know my duty, sir, and that respect,
So justly due to our good neighbour's worth.
But where is Arden?

Alicia. Heavens! where indeed!
Maria. Alicia, for my sake— (*Aside.*)
Alicia. If I were silent,
Each precious drop of murder'd Arden's blood
Would find a tongue, and cry to heaven for vengeance.

Mayor. What says the lady?
Mosby. Oh! sir, heed her not:
Her husband has not been at home to-night,
And her misboding sorrow for his absence,
Has almost made her frantic.

Mayor. Scarce an hour
Since I beheld him enter here with you.
Mosby. The darkness of the night deceiv'd you,
 sir:

It was a stranger, since departed hence.
Mayor. That's most surprising. No man knows
 him better.

Frank. (*Without.*) Within there! ho! bar up
 your gates with care,
And set a watch. Let not a man go by;

Enter FRANKLIN and others, with lights.

And ev'ry tongue, that gave not its consent

To Arden's death, join mine and cry aloud
To heaven and earth for justice. Honest Arden,
My friend, is murder'd.

Mayor. Murder'd!
Green. How?
Mosby. By whom?
Frank. How shall I utter what my eyes have
 seen!

Horrid, with many a gaping wound, he lies
Behind the abbey, a sad spectacle!
O vengeance! vengeance!
Mayor. Justly art thou mov'd.
Passion is reason in a cause like this.
Frank. Eternal Providence, to whose bright
 eye

Darkness itself is as the noon-day blaze,
Who brings the midnight murd'rer and his deeds
To light and shame, has, in their own security,
Found these.

Mayor. Here seize them all—this instant:
 (*Alicia faints.*)

Look to the lady. This may be but feign'd.
Your charge but goes along with my suspicions.
Brad. And mine.

A. Fowl. And mine.
Frank. First hear me, and then judge,
Whether on slight presumptions I accuse them.
These honest men, (neighbours and townsmen
 all,)

Conducted me, drooping with grief and fear,
To where the body lay; with them I took these
 notes,

Not to be trusted to the faithless memory:
"Huge clots of blood and some of Arden's hair
May still be seen upon the garden-wall;
Many such rushes as these floors are strew'd
 with,

Stick to his shoes and garments: and the prints
Of several feet may in the snow be trac'd,
From the stark body to the very door."
These are presumptions he was murder'd here,
And that th' assassins having borne his corpse
Into the fields, hither return'd again.

Mosby. Are these your proofs?
Green. These are but circumstances,
And only prove thy malice.

Frank. And this scarf,
Known to be Arden's, in the court was found,
All blood.

Mayor. Search 'em.
Mich. I thought I'd thrown it down the well.
 (*Aside.*)

Mayor. (*To an Officer.*) Enter that room, and
 search the lady there;
We may, perhaps, discover more.

(*Officer goes out and re-enters; in the meantime, another Officer searches Mosby and Green.*)

1 Officer. On Arden's wife I found this letter.
2 Officer. And I this ring on Mosby.
Mayor. Righteous heaven!
Well may'st thou hang thy head, detested villain:
This very day did Arden wear this ring;
I saw it on his hand.

Mosby. I freely yield me to my fate.

Enter another Officer.

Officer. We've seiz'd two men behind some
 stacks of wood.
Mayor. Well, bring 'em in.

BLACK WILL and SHAKEBAG brought in.

They answer the description;
But let them wait till I have done with these.
Heav'n's! what a scene of villany is here.
 (*Having read the letter.*)

B. Will. Since we're sure to die, though I could wish it were in better company, (for I hate that fawning rascal, Mosby,) I'll tell the truth for once. He has been long engaged in an affair with Arden's wife there; but fearing a discovery, and hoping to get into his estate, hired us to hide him. That's all.

Mayor. And you the horrid deed perform'd?

Shake. We did, with his assistance, and Green's and Michael's.

Mayor. This letter proves Alicia, from the first, was made acquainted with your black design.

B. Will. I know nothing of that; but if she was, she repented of it afterwards. So, I think, you call that a change of mind.

Mayor. That may avail her at the bar of heav'n, But is no plea at our's.

Enter ALICIA, with Officers.

Bear them to prison;
Load them with irons, make them to feel their
guilt,
And groan away their miserable hours,
Till sentence of the law shall call them forth
To public execution.

Alicia. I adore
Th' unerring hand of justice; and with silence
Had yielded to my fate; but for this maid,

Who, as my soul dreads justice on her crimes,
Knew not, or e'er consented to this deed.

Mayor. But did she not consent to keep it
secret?

Mosby. To save a brother and most wretched
friend.

Mayor. She has undone herself; behold how in-
nocence

May suffer in bad fellowship. And Bradshaw,
My honest neighbour, Bradshaw, too: I read it
With grief and wonder.

Brad. Madam, I appeal
To you, as you are shortly to appear
Before a judge that sees our secret thoughts,
Say, had I knowledge, or—

Alicia. You brought the letter,
But well I hope, you knew not the contents.

Mayor. Hence with them all, till time and fur-
ther light
Shall clear these mysteries.

A. Fowl. If I'm condemn'd,
My blood be on his head that gives the sentence.
I'm not accus'd, and only ask for justice.

Frank. You shall all have justice, rig'rous jus-
tice.

So shall the growth of such enormous crimes,
By their dread fate be check'd in future times:
Of av'rice, Mosby a dread instance prove,
And poor Alicia of unlawful love. [Exeunt.]

BARBAROSSA;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY JOHN BROWN.



Act IV. Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

ACHMET
BARBAROSSA
OTHMAN
SADI

ALADIN
YUSEF
HASSAN
OFFICERS

ZAPHIRA
IRENE
SEMIRA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in the Palace.

Enter OTHMAN and a Slave.

Oth. A stranger, say'st thou, that enquires of Othman?

Slave. He does, and waits admittance.

Oth. Did he tell

His name and quality?

Slave. That he declin'd:

Bnt call'd himself thy friend.

Oth. Where didst thou see him?

Slave. Ev'n now, while twilight clos'd the day,
I spied him

Musing amid the ruins of yon tower
That overhangs the flood.

Oth. What can this mean?

Conduct the stranger to me.

Perhaps some worthy citizen return'd

From voluntary exile to Algiers,

Once known in happier days.

Enter SADI.

Ah, Sadi here!

My honour'd friend!

Sadi. Stand off; pollute me not:

These honest arms, tho' worn with want, disdain
Thy gorgeous trappings, earn'd by foul dishonour.

Oth. Forbear thy rash reproaches: for beneath

This habit, which to thy mistaken eye

Confirms my guilt, I wear a heart as true

As Sadi's to my king.

Sadi. Why then beneath

This cursed roof, this black usurper's palace,

Dar'st thou to draw infected air, and live

The slave of insolence?

O shame! to dwell

With murder, lust, and rapine! did he not
Come from the depths of Barca's solitude,
With fair pretence of faith and firm alliance?
Did not our grateful king, with open arms,
Receive him as his guest? O fatal hour!
Did he not then with hot, adult'rous eye,
Gaze on the Queen Zaphira? yes, 'twas lust,
Lust gave th' infernal whisper to his soul,
And bade him murder, if he would enjoy!
Yet thou, pernicious traitor, unabash'd
Canst wear the murd'rer's badge.

Oth. Mistaken man!

Yet still I love thee:

Still approvok'd by thy intemperate zeal,
Could passion prompt me to licentious speech,
Bethink thee; might I not reproach thy flight
With the foul names of fear and perfidy?
Didst thou not fly when Barbarossa's sword
Reek'd with the blood of thy brave countrymen?
What then did I? Beneath this hated roof,
In pity to my widow'd queen—

Sadi. In pity?

Oth. Yes, Sadi; heav'n is witness, pity sway'd [me.

With honest guile I did inroll my name

In the black list of Barbarossa's friends:

In hope that some propitious hour might rise,
When heav'n would dash the murd'rer from his
throne,

And give young Selim to his orphan'd people.

Sadi. Indeed! canst thou be true?

Oth. By heav'n, I am.

Sadi. Why then dissemble thus?

Oth. Have I not told thee?

I held it vain, to stem the tyrant's pow'r,
By the weak efforts of an ill-tim'd rage.
Sadi. I find thee honest: and with pride
Will join thy counsels.
Can aught, my friend, be done?
Can aught be dar'd?

Oth. We groan beneath the scourge.
This very morn, on false pretence of vengeance
For the foul murder of our honour'd king,
Five guiltless wretches perish'd on the rack.

Sadi. O my devoted country! [her.]
But say, the widow'd queen; my heart bleeds for

Oth. If pain be life, she lives: but in such woe,
As want and slavery might view with pity,
And bless their happier lot.

Hemm'd round by terrors,
Within this cruel palace, once the seat
Of ev'ry joy, thro' seven long tedious years,
She mourns her murder'd lord, her exil'd son,
Her people fall'n: the murd'rer of her lord,
Returning now from conquest o'er the Moors,
Tempts her to marriage; but, with noble firmness,
Surpassing female, she rejects his vows,
Scorning the horrid union. Meantime, he,
With ceaseless hate, pursues her exil'd son;
Ere this, perhaps, he bleeds. A murd'ring ruffian
Is sent to watch his steps, and plunge the dagger
Into his guiltless breast.

Sadi. Is this thy faith?
Tame to witness to such deeds of horror!
Give me thy poignard; lead me to the tyrant.
What tho' surrounding guards—

Oth. Repress thy rage.
Thou wilt alarm the palace, wilt involve
Thyself, thy friend, in ruin. Haste thee hence;
Haste to the remnant of our loyal friends,
And let maturer councils rule thy zeal.

Sadi. Yet let us ne'er forget our prince's wrongs.
Remember, Othman, (and let vengeance rise)
How in the pangs of death, and in his gore
Welf'ring, we found our prince!
His royal blood,
The life-blood of his people, o'er the bath
Ran purple! Oh, remember! and revenge!

Oth. Doubt not my zeal. But haste, and seek
our friends.

Near to the western port Almanzor dwells,
Yet uneduc'd by Barbarossa's power.
He will disclose to thee, if aught be heard
Of Selim's safety, or (what more I dread)
Of Selim's death. Thence best may our resolves
Be drawn hereafter.

Sadi. I obey thee.
Near to the western port, thou say'st?

Oth. Ev'n there.
Close by the blasted palm-tree, where the mosque
O'erlooks the city. Haste thee hence, my friend.
I would not have thee found within these walls.

(*Flourish.*)
And hark—these warlike sounds proclaim th' ap-
proach

Of the proud Barbarossa, with his train.
Begone.

Sadi. May dire disease and pestilence
Hang o'er his steps! Farewell. Remember, Oth-
man,
Thy queen's, thy prince's, and thy country's wrong.
[*Exit Sadi.*]

Oth. When I forget them, be contempt my lot!
Yet for the love I bear them, I must wrap
My deep resentments in the specious guise
Of smiles, and fair deportment.

Enter BARBAROSSA, Guards, &c.

Bar. Valiant Othman,
Are those vile slaves impal'd?

Oth. My lord, they are.

Bar. Did not the rack extort confession from
them?

Oth. They died obdurate: while the melting
Wept at their groans and anguish. [crowd]

Bar. Curse on their womanish hearts!
But why sits that sadness on thy brow,
While joy for my return,
My sword victorious, and the Moors o'erthrown,
Resounds through all my palace?

Oth. Mighty warrior!
The soul, intent on offences of love,
Will oft neglect or scorn the weaker proof
Which smiles or speech can give.

Bar. Well: Be it so.
To guard Algiers from anarchy's misrule
I sway the regal sceptre.

But 'tis strange
That, when with open arms, I would receive
Young Selim, would restore the crown which death
Reft from his father's head, he scorns my bounty,
And proudly kindles war in foreign climes
Against my power, who sav'd his bleeding country.

Enter ALADIN.

Aladin. Brave prince, I bring thee tidings
Of high concernment to Algiers and thee.
Young Selim is no more.

Oth. Selim no more!
Bar. Why that astonishment?
He was our bitterest foe.

Oth. So perish all thy causeless enemies!
Bar. How died the prince, and where?

Aladin. The rumour tells,
That, flying to Oran, he there begg'd succours
From Ferdinand of Spain, t'invade Algiers.

Bar. From Christian dogs!
Oth. How! league with infidels!
Aladin. And there held council with the haughty
Spaniard,

To conquer and dethrone thee; but in vain:
For in a dark encounter with two slaves,
Wherein the one fell by his youthful arm,
Selim at length was slain.

Bar. Ungrateful boy!
Oft have I courted him to meet my kindness,
But still in vain; he shunn'd me like a pestilence:
Nor could I e'er behold him, since the down
Cover'd his manly cheek. How many years
Number'd he?

Oth. I think, scarce thirteen when his father died,
And now some twenty.

Bar. Othman, now for proof
Of undissembled service. Well I know,
Thy long experienc'd faith hath plac'd thee high
In the queen's confidence:

Othman, she must be won.
Plead thou my cause of love:
Make her but mine,
And such reward shall crown thy zeal,
As shall outsoar thy wishes.

Oth. Mighty king,
Where duty bids, I go.

Bar. Then haste thee, Othman,
Ere yet the rumour of her son's decease
Hath reach'd her ear;
Tell her, I come, borne on the wings of love!
Haste, fly, I follow thee. [*Exit Othman.*]

Now Aladin,
Now fortune bears us to the wish'd-for port.
This was the rock I dreaded. Dost not think
Th' attempt was greatly daring?

Aladin. Bold as needful.
What boot'd it to cut the old serpent off,
While the young adder nested in his place?

Bar. True: Algiers is mine
Without a rival.
Yet I wonder much,
Omar returns not: Omar, whom I sent
On this high trust. I fear, 'tis he hath fall'n.
Didst thou not say two slaves encounter'd Selim?
Aladin. Ay, two; 'tis rumour'd so.

Bar. And that one fell?

Aladin. By Selim's hand; while his companion
Planted his happier steel in Selim's heart.

Bar. Omar, I fear, is fall'n. From my right
hand

I gave my signet to the trusty slave;
And bade him send it, as the certain pledge
Of Selim's death, if sickness or captivity
Or wayward fate, should thwart his quick return.

Aladin. The rumour yet is young; perhaps
foreruns

The trusty slave's approach.

Bar. We'll wait th' event.

Meantime give out, that now the widow'd queen
Hath dried her tears, prepar'd to crown my love
By marriage rites; spread wide the flatt'ring tale:
For if persuasion win not her consent,
Pow'r shall compel.

This night my will devotes to feast and joy,
For conquest o'er the Moor. Hence, Aladin;
And see the night-watch close the palace round.

[*Exit Aladin.*]

Now to the queen. My heart expands with hope.
Let high ambition flourish; in Selim's blood
Its root is struck: from this, the rising stem
Proudly shall branch o'er Afric's continent,
And stretch from shore to shore.

Enter IRENE.

My wayward daughter; still will thy folly thwart
Each purpose of my soul? When pleasures spring
Beneath our feet, thou spurn'st the proffer'd boon
To dwell with sorrow. Why these sullen tears?

Irene. Let not these tears offend my father's eye;
They are the tears of pity. From the queen
I come, thy suppliant.

Bar. What would'st thou urge?

Irene. Thy dread return from war,
And proffer'd love, have open'd ev'ry wound
The soft and lenient hand of time had clos'd.

If ever gentle pity touch'd thy heart,
Urge not thy command

To see her; her distracted soul is bent

To mourn in solitude. She asks no more.

Bar. She mocks my love. How many tedious
years

Have I endur'd her coyness! Had not war,
And great ambition, call'd me from Algiers
Ere this my pow'r had reach'd what she denies.
But there's a cause which touches on my peace,
And bids me brook no more her false delays.

Irene. Oh, frown not thus!

But look more kindly on me,
Let thy consenting pity mix with mine,
And heal the woes of weeping majesty.
Unhappy queen!

Bar. What means that gushing tear?

Irene. Oh never shall Irene taste of peace,
While poor Zaphira mourns.

Bar. Is this my child?

Perverse and stubborn! as thou lov'st thy peace,
Dry up thy tears. What! damp the general
triumph, [pierce

That echoes through Algiers! which now shall
The vaulted heav'n, as soon as fame shall spread
Young Selim's death, my empire's bitt' rest foe.

Irene. O generous Selim! (*Weeps.*)

Bar. Ah! there's more in this.

Tell me, Irene, on thy duty tell me,
Why, at this detested name of Selim,
Afresh thy sorrow streams?

Irene. Yes, I will tell thee,

For he is gone, and dreads thy hate no more;
My father knows, that scarce five moons are past
Since the Moors seiz'd, and sold me at Oran,
A hopeless captive in a foreign clime.

Bar. Too well I know, and rue the fatal day.
But what of this?

Irene. Oft have I told thee,

How, midst the throng, a youth appear'd: his eye
Bright as the morning star.

Bar. And was it Selim?

Did he redeem thee?

Irene. With unsparing hand

He paid th' allotted ransom; at his feet I wept,
Dissolv'd in tears of gratitude and joy.

But when I told my quality and birth,

He started at the name of Barbarossa;

Yet with recovery mild,

"Go to Algiers," he cried; "protect my mother,
And be to her what Selim is to thee."

Ev'n such, my father, was the gen'rous youth,

Who, by the hands of bloody, bloody men,

Lies number'd with the dead.

Bar. Amazement chills me!

Was this thy unknown friend conceal'd from me?

False, faithless child!

Irene. Could gratitude do less?

He said thy wrath pursu'd him; thence conjur'd me
Not to reveal his name.

Bar. Thou treacherous maid!

To stoop to freedom from thy father's foe!

Irene. Alas! my father,

He never was thy foe.

Bar. What! plead for Selim!

O, coward! trait'ress to thy father's glory!

Thou should'st have liv'd a slave, been sold to shame,

Been banish'd to the depths of howling deserts,

Been aught but what thou art, rather than blot

A father's honour by a deed so vile.

Hence from my sight! hence, thou unthankful child!

Beware thee; shun the queen: nor taint her ear

With Selim's fate. Yes, she shall crown my love;

Or, by our prophet! she shall dread my pow'r.

[*Exit.*]

Irene. Unhappy queen!

To what new scenes of horror art thou doom'd!

She but entreats to die

In her dear father's tent; thither, good queen,

My care shall speed thee, while suspicious sleeps.

What tho' my frowning father pour his rage

On my defenceless head; yet innocence

Shall yield her firm support, and conscious virtue

Gild all my days. Could I but save Zaphira,

Let the storm beat; I'll weep and pray till she,

And heav'n, forget my father e'er was cruel. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Another Apartment.*

ZAPHIRA discovered.

Zaph. When shall I be at peace? O, righteous
heav'n,

Strengthen my fainting soul, which fain would rise

To confidence in thee! but woes on woes

O'erwhelm me! first my husband, now my son!

Both dead! both slaughter'd by the bloody hand

Of Barbarossa! what infernal power

Unchain'd thee from thy native depth of hell

To stalk the earth with thy destructive train,

Murder and lust, to wake domestic peace

And every heart-felt joy!

Enter OTHMAN.

O faithful Othman!

Our fears were true;—my Selim is no more!

Oth. Has then the fatal secret reach'd thine ear?

Inhuman tyrant!

Zaph. Strike him, heav'n, with thunder!

Nor let Zaphira doubt thy providence. [high wail,

Oth. 'Twas what we fear'd. Oppose not heav'n's

Nor struggle with the ten-fold chain of fate

That links thee to thy woes. Oh, rather yield,

And wait the happier hour, when innocence

Shall weep no more. Rest in that pleasing hope,

And yield thyself to heaven, my honour'd queen.

The king—

Zaph. Whom styl'st thou king?

Oth. 'Tis Barbarossa.

Zaph. Does he assume the name of king?

Oth. He does.

Zaph. O title vilely purchas'd! by the blood
Of innocence! by treachery and murder! [him;
May heav'n, incens'd, pour down its vengeance on
Blast all his joys, and turn them into horror,
Till phrensy rise, and bid him curse the hour
That gave his crimes their birth! My faithful Oth-

man,
My sole surviving prop! can'st thou devise
No secret means, by which I may escape
This hated palace? With undaunted step
I'd roam the waste, to reach my father's vales
Of dear Mutija. Can no means be found
To fly these black'ning horrors that surround me?

Oth. That hope is vain; the tyrant knows thy
hate.

Hence, day and night, his guards environ thee.

Rouse not then his anger;

Let soft persuasion and mild eloquence

Redeem that liberty, which stern rebuke

Would rob thee of for ever.

Zaph. An injur'd queen

To kneel for liberty! and, oh! to whom?

Ev'n to the murd'rer of her lord and son!

O, perish first, Zaphira! yes, I'll die;

For what is life to me? my dear, dear, lord!

My hapless child!—yes, I will follow you.

Oth. Wilt thou not see him, then?

Zaph. I will not, Othman;

Or if I do, with better imprecation,

More keen than poison shot from serpents' tongues

I'll pour my curses on him!

Oth. Will Zaphira

Thus meanly sink in woman's fruitless rage,

When she should wake revenge?

Zaph. Revenge?—O tell me—

Tell me but how? what can a helpless woman?

Oth. Gain but the tyrant's leave, and reach thy
father:

Pour thy complaints before him: let thy wrongs

Kindle his indignation, to pursue

This vile usurper, till ceasing war

Blast his ill-gotten pow'r.

Zaph. Ah! say'st thou, Othman?

Thy words have shot like lightning thro' my frame;

And all my soul's on fire!—Thou faithful friend!

Yes, with more gentle speech I'll soothe his pride;

Regain my freedom; reach my father's tents;

There paint my countless woes. His kindling rage

Shall wake the vallies into honest vengeance:

The sudden storm shall pour on Barbarossa,

And ev'ry glowing warrior steep his shaft

In deadlier poison, to revenge my wrongs.

Oth. There spoke the queen. But as thou lov'st
thy freedom,

Touch not on Selim's death. Thy soul will kindle,
And passion mount in flames that will consume thee.

Zaph. My murdered son!—Yes, to revenge thy
death,

I'll speak a language which my heart disdains.

Oth. Peace, peace! the tyrant comes: Now, in-
jur'd queen,

Plead for thy freedom, hope for just revenge,
And check each rising passion. [Exit.

Enter BARBAROSSA.

Bar. Hail, sovereign fair! in whom

Beauty and majesty conspire to charm!

Behold the conqu'ror.

Zaph. O Barbarossa!

No more the pride of conquest e'er can charm

My widow'd heart! With my departed lord

My love lies bury'd!

Then turn thee to some happier fair, whose heart

May crown thy growing love with love sincere;

For I have none to give.

Bar. Love ne'er should die:

'Tis the soul's cordial; 'tis the fount of life;

Therefore should spring eternal in the breast:

One object lost, another should succeed,

And all our life be love. [equal hope

Zaph. Urge me no more:—Thou might'st with

Woo the cold marble, weeping o'er a tomb,

To meet thy wishes! But if gen'rous love

Dwell in thy breast, vouchsafe me proof sincere:

Give me safe convoy to the native vales

Of dear Mutija, where my father reigns.

Bar. Oh, blind to proffer'd bliss! what, fondly quit

This pomp

Of empire, for an Arab's wand'ring tent!

Where the mock chieftain leads his vagrant tribes

From plain to plain, and faintly shadows out

The majesty of kings!—Far other joys

Here shall attend thy call.

Submissive realms

Shall bow the neck; and swarthy kings and queens,

From the far distant Niger and the Nile,

Drawn captive at my conqu'ring chariot wheels,

Shall kneel before thee.

Zaph. Pomp and pow'r are toys,

Which ev'n the mind at ease may well disdain;

But, ah! what mockery is the tinsel pride

Of splendor, when the mind

Lies desolate within!—Such, such, is mine!

O'erwhelm'd with ills, and dead to every joy:

Envy me not this last request, to die

In my dear father's tents!

Bar. Thy suit is vain—

Zaph. Thus kneeling at thy feet,—

Bar. Thou thankless fair!

Thus to repay the labours of my love,

Had I not seiz'd the throne when Selim died,

Ere this, thy foes had laid Algiers in ruin:

I check'd the warring pow'rs, and gave you peace.

Make thee but mine,

I will descend the throne, and call thy son

From banishment to empire.

Zaph. Oh, my heart!

Can I hear this?—

Inhuman tyrant! Curses on thy head!

May dire remorse and anguish haunt thy throne,

And gender in thy bosom fell despair!

Despair as deep as mine!

Bar. What means Zaphira?

What means this burst of grief?

Zaph. Thou fell destroyer!

Had not guilt steel'd thy heart, awak'ning conscience

Would flash conviction on thee, and each look,

Shot from these eyes, be arm'd with serpent horrors,

To turn thee into stones!—Relentless man!

Who did the bloody deed? Oh, tremble, guilt,

Where'er thou art!—Look on me; tell me, tyrant!

Who slew my blameless son?

Bar. What envious tongue

Hath dar'd to taint my name with slander?

Thy Selim lives: Nay, more, he soon shall reign,

If thou consent to bless me.

Zaph. Never! Oh, never—Sooner would I roam

An unknown exile through the torrid climes

Of Africk, sooner dwell with wolves and tigers,

Than mount with thee my murder'd Selim's throne!

Bar. Rash queen, forbear! think on thy captive
state;

Remember, that within these palace walls

I am omnipotent:—Yield thee then:

Avert the gath'ring horrors that surround thee,

And dread my pow'r incens'd. [ear

Zaph. Dares thy licentious tongue pollute mine

With that foul menace!—Tyrant! Dread'st thou not

Th' all seeing eye of heav'n, its lifted thunder,

And all the redd'ning vengeance which it stores

For crimes like thine?—Yet know, Zaphira scorns

thee.

Tho' robb'd by thee of every dear support,

No tyrant's threat can awe the free born soul,

That greatly dares to die. [Exit.

Bar. Where should she learn the tale of Selim's death?
 Could Othman dare to tell it? If he did,
 My rage shall sweep him, swifter than the whirlwind,
 To instant death!

Enter ALADIN.

O Aladin!
 Timely thou com'st, to ease my lab'ring thought,
 That swells with indignation and despair.
 This stubborn woman—

Aladin. What, unconquer'd still?

Bar. The news of Selim's fate hath reach'd her ear.
 Whence could this come?

Aladin. I can resolve the doubt.

A female slave, attendant on Zaphira,
 O'erheard the messenger who brought the tale,
 And gave it to her ear.

Bar. Perdition seize her!

Nor threats can move, nor promise now allure
 Her haughty soul: Nay, she defies my pow'r;
 And talks of death, as if her female form
 Inshrin'd some hero's spirit.

Aladin. Let her rage foam.

I bring thee tidings that will ease thy pain.

Bar. Say'st thou?—Speak on. O give me quick relief!

Aladin. The gallant youth is come, who slew her

Bar. Who, Omar?

Aladin. No; unhappy Omar fell

By Selim's hand. But Achmet, whom he join'd
 His brave associate, so the youth bids tell thee,
 Reveng'd his death by Selim's.

Bar. Gallant youth:

Bears he the signet?

Aladin. Ay.

Bar. That speaks him true. Conduct him, Aladin.

[*Exit Aladin.*]

This is beyond my hope. The secret pledge
 Restor'd, prevents suspicion of the deed,
 While it confirms it done.

Enter SELIM disguised as Achmet, and ALADIN.

Selim. Hail, mighty Barbarossa! As the pledge

[*Kneels.*]

Of Selim's death, behold thy ring restor'd:—
 That pledge will speak the rest.

Bar. Rise, valiant youth;

But first, no more a slave—I give thee freedom.
 Thou art the youth, whom Omar (now no more)
 Join'd his companion in this brave attempt?

Selim. I am.

Bar. Then tell me how you sped. Where found ye
 That insolent?

Selim. We found him at Oran,

Plotting deep mischief to thy throne and people.

Bar. Well ye repaid the traitor.

Selim. As we ought.

While night drew on, we leapt upon our prey.
 In his heart brave Omar aim'd the poignard,
 Which Selim shunning, wrench'd it from his hand,
 Then plung'd it in his breast. I basted on,
 Too late to save, yet I reveng'd my friend:
 My thirsty dagger with repeated blows
 Search'd every artery: They fell together,
 Gasping in folds of mortal enmity:

And thus in frowns expired.

Bar. Well hast thou sped:

The dagger did its office, faithful Achmet!

And high reward shall wait thee.—One thing more—
 Be the thought fortunate! Go, seek the queen.
 For know, the rumour of her Selim's death
 Hath reach'd her ear: Hence dark suspicions rise,
 Glancing at me. Go, tell her, that thou saw'st
 Her son expire: that with his dying breath,
 He did conjure her to receive my vows,
 And give her country peace.

Enter OTHMAN.

Most welcome Othman,

Behold this gallant stranger. He hath done
 The state good service. Let some high reward
 Await him, such as may o'erpay his zeal.
 Conduct him to the queen; for he hath news,
 Worthy her ear, from her departed son,
 Such as may win her love. Come, Aladin;
 The banquet waits our presence; festal joy
 Laughs in the mantling goblet; and the night,
 Illumin'd by the taper's dazzling beam,
 Rivals departed day.

[*Exeunt Barbarossa and Aladin.*]

Selim. What anxious thought
 Rolls in thine eye, and heaves thy lab'ring breast?
 Why join'st thou not the loud excess of joy
 That riots thro' the palace?

Oth. Dar'st thou tell me

On what dark errand thou art here?

Selim. I dare.

Dost thou not perceive the savage lines of blood
 Deform my visage? Read'st not in my eye
 Remorseless fury?—I am Selim's murd'rer.

Oth. Selim's murd'rer!

Selim. Start not from me.

My dagger thirsts not but for regal blood—

Why this amazement? [be.]

Oth. Amazement! No; 'tis well: 'tis as it should
 He was indeed a foe to Barbarossa.

Selim. And therefore to Algiers!—Was it not so?
 Why dost thou pause: What passion shakes thy
 frame? [semble.]

Oth. Fate, do thy worst! I can no more dis-
 Can I unmov'd behold the murd'ring ruffian,
 Smear'd with my prince's blood! Go, tell the tyrant,
 Othman defies his pow'r; that, tir'd with life,
 He dares his bloody hand, and pleads to die.

Selim. What, didst thou love this Selim?

Oth. All men lov'd him.

He was of such unmix'd and blameless quality,
 That envy, at his praise stood mute, nor dar'd
 To sully his fair name. Remorseless tyrant!

Selim. I do commend thy faith. And since thou
 lov'st him,

I'll whisper to thee, that with honest guile
 I have deceiv'd this tyrant Barbarossa.

Selim is yet alive.

Oth. Alive!

Selim. Nay, more—

Selim is in Algiers.

Oth. Impossible! [straight.]

Selim. Nay, if thou doubt'st, I'll bring him hither,

Oth. Not for an empire!

Thou might'st as well bring the devoted lamb
 Into the tiger's den.

Selim. But I'll bring him

Hid in such deep disguise, as shall deride
 Suspicion, tho' she wear the lynx's eyes.
 Not even thyself could'st know him.

Oth. Yes, sure: too sure to hazard such an
 awful trial.

Selim. Yet seven revolving years, worn out
 In tedious exile, may have wrought such change
 Of voice and feature, in the state of youth,
 As might elude thine eye.

Oth. No time can blot

The mem'ry of his sweet majestic mien,
 The lustre of his eye! besides, he wears
 A mark indelible, a beauteous scar,
 Made on his forehead by a furious pard,
 Which, rushing on his mother, Selim slew.

Selim. A scar!

Oth. Ay, on his forehead.

Selim. What, like this? (*Lifting his turban.*)

Oth. Whom do I see? am I awake? my prince

[*Kneels.*]

My honour'd, honour'd king.

Selim. Rise, faithful Othman:

Thus let me thank thy truth! (*Embraces him.*)

Oth. O happy hour!

Selim. Why dost thou tremble thus? Why grasp my hand?

And why that ardent gaze? Thou can'st not doubt me?

Oth. Ah, no! I see thy sire in ev'ry line.

How did my prince escape the murd'rer's hand?

Selim. I wrench'd the dagger from him; and gave back

That death he meant to bring. The ruffian wore The tyrant's signet: "Take this ring," he cried, "The sole return my dying hand can make thee For its accurst attempt; this pledge restor'd, Will prove thee slain: Safe may'st thou see

Algiers,

Unknown to all." This said, th' assassin died.

Oth. But how to gain admittance, thus unknown?

Selim. Disguis'd as Selim's murderer I come: Th' accomplishment of the deed: the ring restor'd, Gain'd credence to my words.

Oth. Yet ere thou cam'st, thy death was rumour'd here.

Selim. I spread the flatt'ring tale, and sent it hitting; That babbling rumour, like a lying dream, Might make belief more easy. Tell me, Othman, And yet I tremble to approach the theme, How fares my mother? does she still retain Her native greatness?

Oth. Still:—in vain the tyrant Tempts her to marriage, tho' with impious threats Of death or violation.

Selim. May kind heav'n Strengthen her virtue, and by me reward it! When shall I see her, Othman?

Oth. Yet, my prince, I tremble for thy presence.

Selim. Let not fear Sully thy virtue: 'tis the lot of guilt To tremble. What hath innocence to do with fear?

Oth. Still my heart Forebodes some dire event: O, quit these walls! *Selim.* Not till a deed be done, which ev'ry tyrant Shall tremble when he hears.

Oth. What means my prince? *Selim.* To take just vengeance for a father's blood, A mother's sufferings, and a people's groans.

Oth. Alas, my prince! thy single arm is weak To combat multitudes.

Selim. Therefore, I come, Clad in this murd'rer's guise—Ere morning shines, This, Othman, this! shall drink the tyrant's blood. *(Shows a dagger.)*

Oth. Heav'n shield thy life! Let caution rule Thy zeal!

Selim. Nay, think not that I come Blindly impell'd by fury or despair; For I have seen our friends, and parted now From Sadi and Almanzor.

Oth. Say, what hope? My soul is all attention.

Selim. Mark me, then; A chosen band of citizens this night Will storm the palace: while the glutted troops Lie drench'd in surfeit, the confed'rate city, Bold thro' despair, have sworn to break their chain By one wide slaughter. I, meantime, have gain'd The palace, and will wait th' appointed hour, To guard Zaphira from the tyrant's rage Amid the deathful uproar.

Oth. Heav'n protect thee! 'Tis dreadful! What's the hour?

Selim. I left our friends In secret council. Ere the dead of night, Brave Sadi will report their last resolves. Now lead me to the queen.

Oth. Brave prince, beware! Her joy's or fear's excess would sure betray thee. Thou shalt not see her till the tyrant perish.

Selim. I must, I feel some secret impulse urge me.

Who knows that 'tis not the last parting interview We ever shall obtain?

Oth. Then, on thy life, Do not reveal thyself. Assume the name Of Selim's friend; sent to confirm her virtue, And warn her that he lives.

Selim. It shall be so. I yield me to thy will.

Oth. Thou greatly daring youth! May angels watch, And guard thy upright purpose! That Algiers May reap the blessings of a virtuous reign, And all thy godlike father shine in thee!

Selim. Oh! thou hast rous'd a thought, on which revenge Mounts with redoubled fire! Yes, here, even here, Beneath this very roof, my honour'd father Shed round his blessings, till accursed treach'ry Stole on his peaceful hour. O, blessed shade! *(Kneels.)*

If yet thou hover'st o'er thy once lov'd clime, Now aid me to redress thy bleeding wrongs! Infuse thy mighty spirit into my breast, Thy firm and dauntless fortitude, unaw'd By peril, pain, or death! that, undismay'd, I may pursue the just intent, and dare Or bravely to revenge, or bravely die. *(Exeunt.)*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Palace.

Enter IRENE.

Irene. Can air-drawn visions mock the waking Sure, 'twas his image! *(eye?)*

This way, sure he mov'd! But, oh! how chang'd! he wears no gentle smiles, But terror in his frown. He comes! 'tis he; For Othman points him thither, and departs. Disguis'd, he seeks the queen; secure, perhaps, And heedless of the ruin that surrounds him. O, generous Selim! can I see thee thus; And not forewarn such virtue of its fate? Forbid it gratitude!

Enter SELIM.

Selim. Be still, ye sighs! Ye straggling tears of filial love, be still. Down, down, fond heart!

Irene. Why, stranger, dost thou wander here? *Selim.* Oh, ruin! *(Shunning her.)* *Irene.* Bless'd is Irene! blest if Selim lives!

Selim. Am I betray'd? *Irene.* Betray'd to whom? to her *(thee!)* Whose grateful heart would rush on death to save *Selim.* It was my hope That time had veil'd all semblance of my youth. Am I then known?

Irene. To none, but love and me. To me, who late beheld thee at Oran; Who saw thee here, beset with unseen peril, And flew to save the guardian of my honour.

Selim. Thou sum of ev'ry worth! thou heav'n of sweetness!

How could I pour forth all my soul before thee, In vows of endless truth! it must not be: This is my destin'd goal! the mansion drear, Where grief and anguish dwell; where bitter tears, And sighs and lamentations choke the voice, And quench the flame of love.

Irene. Yet, virtuous prince, Though love be silent, gratitude may speak. Hear, then, her voice, which warns thee from these walls.

Mine be the grateful task, to tell the queen, Her Selim lives. Ruin and death inclose thee. O, speed thee hence, while yet destruction sleeps.

Selim. Would it were possible! *Irene.* What can prevent it? *Selim.* Justice; fate, and justice: A murder'd father's wrongs! *Irene.* Justice, said'st thou?

That word hath struck me, like a peal of thunder!
Thine eye, which wont to melt with gentle love,
Now glares with terror; thy approach by night,
Thy dark disguise, thy looks and fierce demeanour,
Yes, all conspire to tell me, I am lost.
Ah! prince, take heed! I have a father too!
Think, Selim, what Irene must endure,
Should she be guilty of a father's blood!

Selim. Come on, then. Lead me to him. Glut
thine eye
With Selim's blood.

Irene. Was e'er distress like mine?
O, Selim! can I see my father perish?
Heav'n will ordain some gentler, happier means,
To heal thy woes. Thy dark attempt is big
With horror and destruction. Generous prince!
Resign thy dreadful purpose, and depart.

Selim. May not I see Zaphira, ere I go?
Thy gentle pity will not, sure, deny us
The mournful pleasure of a parting tear? [walls,
Irene. Go, then, and give her peace. But fly these
As soon as morning shines: else, though despair
Drives me to madness; yet, to save a father—
O, Selim! spare my tongue the horrid sentence.
Fly, ere destruction seize thee! [Exit.

Selim. Death and ruin!
Must I then fly? What! coward-like, betray
My father, mother, friends? Vain terrors, hence!
Danger looks big to fear's deluded eye:
But, courage, on the heights and steeps of fate,
Dares snatch her glorious purpose from the edge
Of peril. Now to the queen.
How shall I dare to meet her thus unknown?
How stifle the warm transports of my heart,
That pants at her approach? Who waits the queen?
Who waits Zaphira?

Enter SEMIRA.

Selim. Tell the queen, I come
On message from her dear, departed son;
And bring his last request. [Exit *Semira.*
O, ill-dissembling heart! my ev'ry limb
Trembles with grateful terror.
Some look, or starting tear,
Will sure betray me. Honest guile, assist
My falt'ring tongue!

Enter ZAPHIRA.

Zaph. Where is this pious stranger?
Say, generous youth, whose pity leads thee thus
To seek the weeping mansions of distress,
Didst thou behold in death my hapless son?
Did he remember me?

Selim. Most honour'd queen!
Thy son—forgive these gushing tears that flow
To see distress like thine.

Zaph. I thank thy pity.
'Tis generous thus to feel for others' woe.
What of my son? say, didst thou see him die?
Selim. By Barbarossa's dread command I come,
To tell thee that these eyes alone beheld
Thy son expire.

Zaph. Relentless fate! that I should be denied
The mournful privilege to see him die!
To clasp him in the agony of death,
And catch his parting soul. Oh! tell me all,
All that he said and look'd; deep in my heart,
That I may treasure ev'ry parting word,
Each dying whisper of my dear, dear son!

Selim. Let not my words offend. What if he said,
Go, tell my hapless mother, that her tears
Have stream'd too long; then bid her weep no more:
Bid her forget the husband and the son,
In Barbarossa's arms?

Zaph. O basely false!
Thou art some creeping slave to Barbarossa,
Sent to surprise my unsuspecting heart!
Vile slave, begone! my son betray me thus!
Could he have e'er conceiv'd so base a purpose,

My griefs for him should end in great disdain.
But he was brave, and scorn'd a thought so vile.
Wretched Zaphira! how art thou become
The sport of slaves! [woes

Selim. Yet hope for peace, unhappy queen! thy
May yet have end.

Zaph. Why weep'st thou, crocodile?

Thy treacherous tears are vain.

Selim. My tears are honest.

I am not what thou think'st.

Zaph. What art thou then?

[*Selim's*
Selim. Oh, my full heart! I am thy friend, and
I come not to insult, but heal thy woes: [thee,
Now check thy heart's wild tumult, while I tell
Perhaps, thy son yet lives.

Zaph. Lives! Oh, gracious heaven!

Do I not dream? Say, stranger, didst thou tell me,
Perhaps my Selim lives? What do I ask?

Wild, wild and fruitless hope! What mortal pow'r
Can e'er reanimate his mangled corpse,

Shoot life into the cold and silent tomb,
Or bid the ruthless grave give up its dead?

Selim. O, pow'rful nature! thou wilt sure betray
me! [Aside.]

Thy Selim lives: for since his rumour'd death,

I saw him at Oran.

Zaph. O, generous youth! who art thou?

Selim. A friendless youth, self-banish'd with thy
son;

Long his companion in distress and danger:

One who rever'd thy worth in prosperous days,

And more reveres thy virtue in distress.

Zaph. O, gentle stranger! mock not my woes,

But tell me truly, does my Selim live?

Selim. He does, by heav'n! [pay'st

Zaph. O, generous heav'n! thou, at length, o'er-
My bitterest pangs, if my dear Selim lives.

And does he still remember

His father's wrongs, and mine?

Selim. He bade me tell thee,
That in his heart indelibly are stamp'd
His father's wrongs, and thine: that he but waits
Till awful justice may unsheath her sword.

That, till the arrival of that happy hour,

Deep in his soul the hidden fire shall glow,

And his breast labour with the great revenge.

Zaph. Eternal blessings crown my virtuous son!

Selim. Much honour'd queen, farewell!

Zaph. Not yet, not yet; indulge a mother's love.

In thee, the kind companion of his griefs,

Methinks I see my Selim stand before me.

Depart not yet. A thousand fond requests

Crowd on my mind. Wishes, and pray'rs, and tears,

Are all I have to give. O, bear him these!

Selim. Take comfort then; for, know, thy son,
o'erjoy'd

To rescue thee, would bleed at ev'ry vein.

"Bid her," he said, "yet hope we may be bless'd.

Bid her remember that the ways of heav'n,

Though dark, are just: that oft some generous pow'r

Attends, unseen, to save the innocent.

But if high heaven decrees our fall, oh! bid her

Firmly to wait the stroke, prepar'd alike

To live or die." And then he wept as I do.

Zaph. O, righteous heaven!

Protect his tender years!

Be thou his guide through dangers and distress;

Softens the rigours of his cruel exile,

And lead him to his throne! [Exit.

Selim. Now, swelling heart,

Indulge the luxury of grief; flow tears;

And rain down transports in the shape of sorrow.

Yes, I have sooth'd her woes; have found her noble;

And, to have giv'n this respite to her pangs,

O'erpays all pain and peril. Pow'rful virtue!

How infinite thy joys, when even thy griefs

Are pleasing! thou, superior to the frowns

Of fate, canst pour thy sunshine o'er the soul,

And brighten woe to rapture.

Enter OTHMAN and SADI.

Honour'd friends!

How goes the night?

Sadi. 'Tis well nigh midnight.

Oth. What! in tears, my prince?

Selim. But tears of joy: for I have seen Zaphira, And pour'd the balm of peace into her breast: Think not these tears unnerve me, valiant friends; They have but harmoniz'd my soul; and wak'd All that is man within me, to disdain

Peril or death. What tidings from the city?

Sadi. All, all is ready. Our confed'rate friends Burn with impatience till the hour arrive.

Selim. What is the signal of th' appointed hour?

Sadi. The midnight watch gives signal of our meeting:

And when the second watch of night is rung, The work of death begins.

Selim. Speed, speed, ye minutes!

Now let the rising whirlwind shake Algiers, And justice guide the storm.

Let your zeal hasten on the great event:

The tyrant's daughter found, and knew me here, And half suspects the cause.

Oth. Too daring prince, Retire with us; her fears will sure betray thee.

Selim. What! leave my helpless mother here a prey To cruelty and lust? I'll perish first!

This very night the tyrant threatens violence; I'll watch his steps; I'll haunt him through the palace;

And, should he meditate a deed so vile, I'll hover o'er him like an unseen pestilence, And blast him in his guilt!

Sadi. Intrepid prince!

Worthy of empire! Yet accept my life, My worthless life; do thou retire with Othman; I will protect Zaphira.

Selim. Think'st thou, Sadi,

That when the trying hour of peril comes, Selim will shrink into a common man?

Worthless were he to rule who dares not claim Pre-eminence in danger. Urge no more:

Here shall my station be; and if I fall, O, friends, let me have vengeance! Tell me now, Where is the tyrant?

Oth. Revelling at the banquet.

Selim. 'Tis good. Now tell me how our pow'rs are destin'd?

Sadi. Near ev'ry port a secret band is posted; By these the watchful centinels must perish; The rest is easy; for the glutted troops Lie drown'd in sleep; the dagger's cheapest prey. Almanzor with his friends, will circle round The avenues of the palace. Othman and I Will join our brave confederates (all sworn To conquer or to die,) and burst the gates Of this foul den. Then tremble, Barbarossa.

Selim. Oh! how the approach of this great hour Fires all my soul; but, valiant friends, I charge you, Reserve the murderer to my just revenge; My poignard claims his blood.

Oth. Forgive me, prince;

Forgive my doubts; think, should the fair Irene—
Selim. Thy doubts are vain. I would not spare the tyrant,

Though the sweet maid lay weeping at my feet; Nay, should he fall by any hand but mine, By heav'n! I'd think my honour'd father's blood Scarce half reveng'd: my love, indeed, is strong; But love shall yield to justice.

Sadi. Gallant prince!

Bravely resolv'd.

Selim. But is the city quiet?

Sadi. All, all is hush'd. [streets, Throughout the empty Nor voice, nor sound; as if the inhabitants, Like the presaging herds, that seek the covert Ere the loud thunder rolls, had inly felt And shunn'd th' impending uproar.

Oth. There is a solemn horror in the night, too, That pleases me; a general pause through nature; The winds are hush'd—

Sadi. And as I pass'd the beach, The lazy billow scarce could lash the shore; No star peeps through the firmament of heav'n—

Selim. And, lo! where eastward, o'er the sullen wave,

The waning moon, depriv'd of half her orb, Rises in blood; her beam, well nigh extinct Faintly contends with darkness— (Bell tolls.)

Hark!—what meant

That tolling bell?

Oth. It sounds the midnight watch.

Sadi. This was the signal—

Come, Othman, we are call'd; the passing minutes Chide our delay; brave Othman, let us hence.

Selim. One last embrace!—nor doubt, but crown'd with glory,

We soon shall meet again. But, oh, remember— Amid the tumult's rage, remember mercy; Stain not a righteous cause with guiltless blood; Warn our brave friends, that we unsheath the sword,

Not to destroy, but save—nor let blind zeal, Or wanton cruelty, e'er turn its edge

On age or innocence; or bid us strike Where the most pitying angel in the skies, That now looks on us from his bless'd abode, Would wish that we should spare.

Oth. So may we prosper, As mercy shall direct us!

Selim. Farewell, friends!

Sadi. Intrepid prince, farewell!

[*Exeunt Othman and Sadi.*

Selim. Now sleep and silence

Broad o'er the city.—The devoted centinel Now takes his lonely stand, and idly dreams Of that to-morrow he shall never see.

In this dread interval, O busy thought, From outward things descend into thyself— Search deep my heart; bring with thee awful con-

science, And firm resolve; that, in th' approaching hour Of blood and horror, I may stand unmov'd; Nor fear to strike where justice calls, nor dare To strike where she forbids.

Witness, ye pow'rs of heav'n, That not from you, but from the murderer's eye, I wrap myself in night.—To you I stand Reveal'd in noon-tide day.—Oh, could I arm My hand with power! then, like to you, array'd In storm and fire, my swift-avenging thunder Should blast this tyrant. But since fate denies That privilege, I'll seize on what it gives; Like the deep-cavern'd earthquake, burst beneath him,

And whelm his throne, his empire, and himself, In one prodigious ruin. [Exit.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in the palace.

Enter IRENE and ALADIN.

Irene. But didst thou tell him, Aladin, my fears Brook no delay.

Aladin. I did.

Irene. Why comes he not?

Oh, what a dreadful dream!—'tis surely more Than troubled fancy; never was my soul Shook with such hideous phantoms. Still he lingers! Return, return; and tell him, that his daughter Dies, till she warn him of his threat'ning ruin.

Aladin. Behold, he comes. [Exit.

Enter BARBAROSSA and Guards.

Bar. Thou bane of all my joys! Some gloomy planet surely rul'd thy birth. Ev'n now thy ill-tim'd fear suspends the banquet, And damps the festal hour.

Irene. Forgive my fear. [thy brain?

Bar. What fear, what phantom hath possess'd

Irene. Oh, guard thee from the terrors of this
For terrors lurk unseen. [night;

Bar. What terror? speak.

Say what thou dread'st, and why! I have a soul
To meet the blackest dangers undismay'd.

Irene. Let not my father check, with stern re-
buke,

The warning voice of nature. For ev'n now,
Retir'd to rest, soon as I clos'd mine eyes,
A horrid vision rose—methought I saw
Young Selim rising from the silent tomb:
Dreadful he shook a dagger in his hand.
By some mysterious power he rose in air;
When, lo! at his command, this yawning roof
Was cleft in twain, and gave the phantom entrance.
Swift he descended with terrific brow,
Rush'd on my guardless father at the banquet,
And plung'd his furious dagger in thy breast.

Bar. Wouldst thou appal me by a brain-sick
Get thee to rest. [vision?

Irene. Yet hear me, dearest father.

Bar. Provoke me not.

Irene. Merciful heav'n, instruct me what to do!

Enter ALADIN.

Bar. What means thy looks? why dost thou
gaze so wildly?

Aladin. I hastened to inform thee, that ev'n now,
Rounding the watch, I met the brave Abdalla,
Breathless with tidings of a rumour dark,
That young Selim is yet alive.

Bar. May plagues consume the tongue
That broach'd the falsehood! 'tis not possible—
What did he tell thee further?

Aladin. More he said not:

Save only, that the spreading rumour wak'd
A spirit of revolt.

Irene. O gracious father! [fears

Bar. The rumour's false, and yet, your coward
Infect me—what! shall I be terrified
By midnight visions? I'll not believe it.

Aladin. But this gathering rumour—
Think but on that, my lord.

Bar. Infernal darkness

Swallow the slave that rais'd it!—hark thee, Aladin
See that the watch be doubled;
Find out this stranger, Achmet; and forthwith
Let him be brought before me. [Exit two Guards.

Irene. O my father!

I do conjure thee, as thou lov'st thy life,
Retire, and trust thee to thy faithful guards—
See not this Achmet. [fore me;

Bar. Not see him! Forthwith bring the slave be-
fore me, if he prove false, if hated Selim live,
I'll heap such vengeance on him—

Irene. Mercy! mercy!

Bar. Mercy! to whom?

Irene. To me; and to thyself;

To him—to all.—Thou think'st I rave; yet true
My visions are, as ever prophet utter'd
When heaven inspires his tongue. [with dreams

Bar. Ne'er did the moon-struck madman rave
More wild than thine. Get thee to rest; ere yet
Thy folly wakes my rage. Call Achmet hither.

Irene. Thus prostrate on my knees:—O see him
not,

Selim is dead: indeed the rumour's false,
There is no danger near; Or, if there be,
Achmet is innocent.

Bar. Off, frantic wretch!

This idiot dream hath torn'd her brain to madness.
Hence to thy chamber, till returning morning
Hath calm'd this tempest—on thy duty, hence!

Irene. Yet hear the voice of caution. Cruel fate!
What have I done! heav'n shield my dearest father!
Heaven shield the innocent undone Irene!
Whate'er the event, thy doom is misery. [Exit.

Bar. Her words are wrapt in darkness. Aladin,
Forthwith send Achmet hither. Then with speed,
Double the centinels. [Exit Aladin.

Infernal guilt!
How dost thou rise in ev'ry hideous shape,
Of rage and doubt, suspicion and despair,
To rend my soul. Why did I not
Repent, while yet my crimes were delible;
Ere they had struck their colours thro' my soul,
As black as night or hell, 'tis now too late.
Take me all,
Unfeeling guilt! oh, banish, if thou canst,
This fell remorse, and ev'ry fruitless fear.

Enter SELIM and two Guards.

Come hither, slave;
Hear me, and tremble. Art thou what thou seem'st?
Selim. Ha! [founded.

Bar. Dost thou pause? by hell, the slave's con-
Selim. That Barbarossa should suspect my truth.

Bar. Take heed! for by the hov'ring pow'rs of
vengeance,

If I do find thee treach'rous, I will doom thee
To death and torment, such as human thought
Ne'er yet conceiv'd. Thou com'st beneath the
guise

Of Selim's murderer. Now tell me: is not

That Selim yet alive?

Selim. Selim alive!

Bar. Perdition on thee! dost thou echo me?
Answer me quick, or die! (Draws his dagger.)

Selim. Yes, freely strike;
Already hast thou given the fatal wound,
And pierc'd my heart with thy unkind suspicion;

Oh, could my dagger find a tongue to tell
How deep it drank his blood! but since thy doubt

Thus wrongs my zeal, behold my breast, strike
here,

For hold is innocence.

Bar. I scorn the task, (Puts up his dagger.)
Time shall decide thy doom:—guards, mark me

well.

See that ye watch the motions of this slave;
And if he meditates 'scape your eye,
Let your good sabres cleave him to the chine.

Selim. I yield me to thy will, and when thou
know'st

That Selim lives, or see'st his hated face,
Then wreak thy vengeance on me.

Bar. Bear him hence.
Yet, on your lives, await me within call.

[Exit Selim and Guards.

Call Zaphira. [Exit a Slave.

If Selim lives, then what is Barbarossa?
My throne's a bubble, that but floats in air,
Till marriage rites declare Zaphira mine.

I will not brook delay. By love and vengeance,
This hour decides her fate.

Enter ZAPHIRA.

Well, haughty fair!
Hath reason yet subdu'd thee? Wilt thou hear
The voice of love?

Zaph. Why dost thou vainly urge me?
Thou know'st my fix'd resolve.

Bar. Can aught but phrensy
Rush on perdition?

Zaph. Therefore shall no pow'r
E'er make me thine.

Bar. Nay, sport not with my rage:
Know, that thy final hour of choice is come.

Zaph. I have no choice. Think'st thou I e'er
will wed

The murderer of my lord?
Bar. Take heed, rash queen!

Tell me thy last resolve.
Zaph. Then hear me, heav'n!

Hear, all ye pow'rs, that watch o'er innocence!
Angels of light! And thou dear honour'd shade

Of my departed lord: attend, while here
I ratify with vows my last resolve.
If e'er I wed this tyrant murderer,
If I pollute me with this horrid union,
May ye, the ministers of heav'n, depart,
Nor shed your influence on the guilty scene!
May horror blacken all our days and nights!
May discord light the nuptial torch! and rising
 fiends in triumph howl
Around th' accursed bed!

Bar. Begone, remorse!

Guards do your office: Drag her to the altar,
Heed not her tears or cries.

(*Guards go to seize Zaphira.*)

Zaph. O spare me! Heav'n protect me! O
 my son,

Wert thou but here, to save thy helpless mother!
What shall I do? Undone, undone Zaphira!

Enter SELIM, and Guards.

Selim. Who call'd on Achmet? Did not Barba-
 rossa

Require me here?

Bar. Officious slave, retire!

I call'd thee not.

Zaph. O kind and gen'rous stranger, lend thy aid!
O rescue me from these impending horrors!
Heav'n will reward thy pity!

Selim. Pity her woes, O mighty Barbarossa!

Bar. Rouse not my vengeance, slave!

Selim. O hear me, hear me! (*Kneels.*)

Bar. Curse on thy forward zeal!

Selim. Yet, yet have mercy.

(*Lays hold of Barbarossa's garment.*)

Bar. Presuming slave, begone! (*Strikes Selim.*)

Selim. Nay, then,—die, tyrant!

(*Rises and aims to stab Barbarossa, who wrests
 his dagger from him.*)

Bar. Ah, traitor! have I caught thee?

Hold—forbear. (*To the Slaves, who offer to kill
 Selim.*)

Kill him not yet—I will have greater vengeance.
Perfidious wretch, who art thou?—Bring the rack:
Let that extort the secrets of his heart.

Selim. Thy impious threats are lost! I know,
 that death

And torments are my doom. Yet, ere I die,
I'll strike thy soul with horror. Off, vile habit!
If thou dar'st, [*voice*]
Now view me! Hear me, tyrant! while, with
More terrible than thunder, I proclaim,
That he, who aim'd the dagger at thy heart,
Is Selim!

Zaph. O heav'n! my son! my son! (*Faints.*)

Selim. Unhappy mother! (*Runs to embrace her.*)

Bar. Tear them asunder. (*Guards separate them.*)

Selim. Barb'rous, barb'rous ruffians!

Bar. Slaves, seize the traitor.

(*They offer to seize him.*)

Selim. Off, ye vile slaves! I am your king! Re-
 tire,

And tremble at my frowns! That is the traitor—
That is the murd'rer—tyrant ravisher! Seize him,
And do your country right.

Bar. Ah, coward dogs!

Start ye at words?—or seize him, or by hell,
This dagger sends you all— (*They seize him.*)

Selim. Dost thou revive, unhappy queen!

Now arm my soul with patience.

Zaph. My dear son!

Do I then live, once more to see my Selim.

But oh—to see thee thus!

Selim. Canst thou behold

Her speechless agonies, and not relent?

Bar. At length revenge is mine! slaves, force
 her hence! [*quer'd!*]

Selim. Lo, Barbarossa! thou at length hast con-
Behold a hapless prince, o'erwhelm'd with woes,
 (*Kneels.*)

Prostrate before thy feet! not for myself
I plead. Yes, plunge the dagger in my breast!
Tear, tear me piecemeal! But, oh, spare Zaphira!
Yet—yet relent! force not her matron honour!
Reproach not heav'n.

Bar. Have I then bent thy pride?

Why, this is conquest ev'n beyond my hope!—

Lie there, thou slave! lie till Zaphira's cries

Arouse thee from thy posture! [*wretch!*]

Selim. Dost thou insult my griefs? unmanly

Curse on the fear, that could betray my limbs,
 (*Rising.*)

My coward limbs, to this dishonest posture.

Long have I scorn'd, I now defy, thy pow'r.

Bar. I'll put thy boasted virtue to the trial.

Slaves, bear him to the rack.

Zaph. O spare my son!

Sure filial virtue never was a crime.

Save but my son! I yield me to thy wish.

What do I say? The marriage vow—O horror!

This hour shall make me thine!

Selim. What! doom thyself

The guilty partner of a murd'rer's bed,
Whose hands yet reek with thy dear husband's
 blood!

To be the mother of destructive tyrants—

The curses of mankind! by heav'n, I swear,

The guilty hour, that gives thee to the arms

Of that detested murderer, shall end

This hated life!

Bar. Or yield thee, or he dies! [*greatness;*]

Zaph. The conflict's past. I will resume my
We'll bravely die, as we have liv'd,—with honour!
 (*Embracing.*)

Selim. Now, tyrant, pour thy fiercest fury on us.
Now see, despairing guilt, that virtue still

Shall conquer, tho' in ruin.

Bar. Drag them hence:

Her to the altar:—Selim to his fate.

(*Guards seize them.*)

Selim. One last embrace!

Farewell, farewell for ever!

(*Guards struggle with them.*)

Zaph. One moment yet!—Pity a mother's pangs!

O Selim!

Selim. O my mother!

(*Exeunt Selim, Zaphira, and Guards.*)

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Palace.

Enter BARBAROSSA, ALADIN, and Guards.

Bar. Is the watch doubled? Are the gates secur'd
Against surprize?

Aladin. They are, and mock th' attempt

Of force or treachery.

Bar. This whisper'd rumour

Of dark conspiracy

Seems but a false alarm. Our spies, sent out,

Affirm, that sleep

Has wrapp'd the city.

Aladin. But while Selim lives,

Destruction lurks within the palace walls.

Bar. Right, Aladin. His hour of fate approaches.

How goes the night?

Aladin. The second watch is near.

Bar. 'Tis well: when'er it rings, the traitor dies;

So bath my will ordain'd. I'll seize the occasion

While I may fairly plead my life's defence.

Yet first the rack shall rend

Each secret from his heart.

Haste, seek out Othman:

Go, tell him, that destruction and the sword

Hang o'er young Selim's head, if swift compliance

Plead not his pardon. [*Exit Aladin.*]

Stubborn fortitude!

Had he not interposed, success had crown'd

My love, now hopeless. Then let vengeance seize
 him.

Enter IRENE.

Irene. O, night of horror! Hear me, honour'd
If e'er Irene's peace was dear to thee, [father!]
Now hear me!

Bar. Impious! dar'st thou disobey?
Did not my sacred will ordain thee hence?
Get thee to rest; for death is stirring here.

Irene. O fatal words! By ev'ry sacred tie,
Recal the dire decree.

Bar. What would'st thou say?
Whom plead for?

Irene. For a brave unhappy prince,
Sentenc'd to die.

Bar. And justly. But this hour
The traitor half fulfill'd thy dream, and aim'd
His dagger at my heart. [fortitude]

Irene. Wouldst thou not love the child, whose
Should hazard life for thee? Oh, think on that!
The noble mind hates not a virtuous foe:
His gen'rous purpose was to save a mother.

Bar. Damm'd was his purpose; and accurst art
thou,
Whose perfidy would save the dark assassin,
Who sought thy father's life. Hence! from my
sight.

Irene. Oh, never, till thy mercy spare my Selim!
Bar. Thy Selim? Thine?

Irene. Thou know'st, by gratitude [me,
He's mine. Had not his generous hand redeem'd
What, then, had been Irene? Oh! but spare the
gen'rous youth,
Who sav'd me from dishonour.

Bar. By the pow'r's
Of great revenge, thy fond entreaties seal
His instant death. In him I'll punish thee.
Away! [fears]

Irene. O Selim! gen'rous youth! how have my
Betray'd thee to destruction!
Inhuman father! Gen'rous, injur'd prince!
Methinks I see thee stretch'd upon the rack,
Hear thy expiring groans: O, horror! horror!
What shall I do to save him? Vain, alas!
Vain are my tears and pray'rs: At least, I'll die.
Death shall unite us yet. [Exit Irene.]

Bar. O torment! torment!
Ev'n in the midst of pow'r! the vilest slave
More happy far than I: the very child,
Whom my love cherish'd from her infant years,
Conspires to blast my peace. O, false ambition!
Whether hast thou lur'd me?
Ev'n to this giddy height; where now I stand,
Forsaken, comfortless, with not a friend,
In whom my soul can trust.

Enter ALADIN.

Now, Aladin,
Hast thou seen Othman?
He will not, sure, conspire against my peace.
Aladin. He's fled, my lord. I dread some lurk-
ing ruin.

The centinel on watch says, that he pass'd
The gate, since midnight, with an unknown friend:
And, as they pass'd, Othman in whisper said,
Now farewell, bloody tyrant!

Bar. Slave, thou liest.
He did not dare to say it; or, if he did,
Why dost thou wound my ear
By the foul repetition?
What's to be done? Some mischief lurks nnsen.

Aladin. Prevent it then.
Bar. By Selim's instant death.
Is the rack prepar'd?

Aladin. 'Tis ready.
Along the ground he lies, o'erwhelm'd with chains;
The ministers of death stand round, and wait
Thy last command.

Bar. Once more I'll try to bend
His stubborn soul: Conduct me forthwith to him;
And, if he now refuse my proffer'd kindness,
Destruction swallows him. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*A Prison in the palace.*

SELIM discovered in Chains, Executioners, Officers,
&c. and rack.

Selim. I pray you, friends,
When I am dead, let not indignity
Insult these poor remains; see them interr'd
Close by my father's tomb. I ask no more.

Offi. They shall.

Selim. How goes the night?

Offi. Thy hour of fate,
The second watch, is near.

Selim. Let it come on:

I am prepar'd.

Enter BARBAROSSA.

Bar. So; raise him from the ground.

(*They raise him.*)

Perfidious boy! behold the just rewards
Of guilt and treachery. Didst thou not give
Thy forfeit life, whene'er I should behold
Selim's detested face?

Selim. Then take it, tyrant.

Bar. Didst thou not aim a dagger at my heart?

Selim. I did.

Bar. Yet heav'n defeated thy intent;
And sav'd me from the dagger.

Selim. 'Tis not ours

To question heav'n. Th' intent, and not the deed
Is in our pow'r; and, therefore, who dares greatly,
Does greatly.

Bar. Yet bethink thee, stubborn boy,
What horrors now surround thee.

Selim. Think'st thou, tyrant,
I came so ill prepar'd?

He who can bravely dare, can bravely suffer.

Bar. Yet, lo, I come, by pity led, to spare thee.
Relent, and save Zaphira; for the hell

Ev'n now expects the centinel to toll
The signal of thy death.

Selim. Let guilt like thine
Tremble at death: I scorn its darkest frown.
Hence, tyrant! nor profane my dying hour.

Bar. Then take thy wish, (Bell tolls.)
There goes the fatal knell.

Thy fate is seal'd. Not all thy mother's tears,
Nor pray'rs, nor eloquence of grief, shall save thee
From instant death.

Yet, ere the assassin die,
Let torment wring each secret from his heart.

The traitor, Othman, is fled: conspiracy
Lurks in the womb of night, and threatens ruin.

Spare not the rack, nor cease, till it extort
The lurking treason. [Exit Barbarossa.]

Selim. Come on, then. (They bind him.)
Begin the work of death. What! bound with cords,

Like a vile criminal? O, valiant friends,
When will ye give me vengeance?

Enter IRENE.

Irene. Stop! O, stop!
Hold your accursed hands! on me, on me,
Pour all your torments. How shall I approach thee?

Selim. These are thy father's gifts; yet thou art
guiltless:

Then let me take thee to my heart, thou best,
Most amiable of women!

Irene. Rather curse me,
As the betrayer of thy virtue.

Selim. Ah!

Irene. 'Twas I; my fears, my frantic fears, be-
tray'd thee.

Thus, falling at thy feet, may I but hope
For pardon ere I die!

Selim. Hence! to thy father!

Irene. Never! O, never! Crawling in the dust,
I'll clasp thy feet, and bathe them with my tears;
Tread me to earth: I never will complain;
But my last breath shall bless thee.

Selim. Lov'd Irene!
What hath my fury done?
Irene. Canst thou, then,
Forgive and pity me?

Selim. I do, I do.

Irene. On my knees
Thus let me thank thee, generous, injur'd prince!
O, earth and heaven! that such unequal'd worth
Should meet so hard a fate! that I—that I,
Whom his love rescu'd from the depth of woe,
Should be th' accurst destroyer! strike, in pity,
And end this hated life.

Selim. Cease, dear Irene.
Submit to heaven's high will. I charge thee, live;
And, to thy utmost pow'r, protect from wrong
My helpless, friendless mother.

Irene. With my life
I'll shield her from each wrong. That hope alone
Can tempt me to prolong a life of woe.

Selim. O, my ungenero'd rage! to frown on thee!
Thus let me expiate the eruel wrong. (*Embracing.*)
And mingle rapture with the pains of death.

Offi. No more: prepare the rack.

Irene. Stand off, ye fiends! here will I cling.
No pow'r on earth shall part us,
Till I have sav'd my *Selim.*

(*A shout. Clashing of swords.*)

Offi. Hark! What noise
Strikes on mine ear! (*Shouts.*)
Selim. Again!

Aladin. (*Without.*) Arm, arm! Treach'ry and
murder! (*Executioners go to seize Selim.*)
Selim. Off, slaves! or I will turn my chains to
And dash you piece-meal. [*arms,*

Enter ALADIN.

Aladin. Where is the king?
The foe pours in.

Offi. Death and ruin!
Follow me, slaves, and save him.

(*Exeunt Aladin, Officer, and Guards.*)

Selim. Now, bloody tyrant! Now, thy hour is
come!

Irene. Whom dost thou mean? my father?
Selim. Yes: thy father,
Who murder'd mine.

Irene. Is there no room for mercy?
Must he, then, die?
Let me but see my father ere he perish:
Let me but pay my parting duty to him.

(*Clash of swords.*)

Hark! 'twas the clash of swords: heav'n save my
father!

O, cruel, cruel *Selim!* [*Exit Irene.*
Selim. Curse on this servile chain, that binds me
In pow'rless ignominy; while my sword [*fast*
Should haunt its prey, and cleave the tyrant down.

Oth. (*Without.*) Where is the prince?

Selim. Here, Othman, bound to earth:
Set me but free. O, cursed, curs'd chain!

Enter OTHMAN and Party, who free Selim.

Oth. O, my brave prince! heav'n favours our
design. (*Embraces him.*)
Take that: I need not bid thee use it nobly.

(*Giving him a sword.*)

Selim. Now, Barbarossa, let my arm meet thine:
'Tis all I ask of heav'n. [*Exit Selim.*

Oth. Guard ye the prince: [*Part go out.*
Pursue his steps. Now this way let us turn,
And seek the tyrant. [*Exeunt Othman, &c.*

SCENE III.—*A Court in the palace.*

Enter BARBAROSSA.

Bar. Empire is lost, and life: yet brave revenge
Shall close my life in glory.

Enter OTHMAN.

Have I found thee,
Dissembling traitor? Die! (*They fight, Barb. falls.*)

Enter SELIM and SADI.

Selim. The foe gives way: sure this way went
the storm.

Where is the tiger fled? What do I see?

Sadi. Algiers is free.

Oth. This sabre did the deed.

Selim. I envy thee the blow: yet valour scorns
To wound the fallen. But if life remain,
I will speak daggers to his guilty soul.
Ho! Barbarossa! tyrant! murderer!

'Tis *Selim*, *Selim* calls thee!

Bar. Off, ye fiends!

Torment me not. O, *Selim*, art thou there?

Swallow me, earth!

Oh, that I ne'er had wrong'd thee!

Selim. Dost thou, then,
Repent thee of thy crimes? He does, he does!

He grasps my hand: see, the repentant tear

Starts from his eye. Dost thou indeed repent?

Why, then, I do forgive thee: from my soul

I freely do forgive thee: and if crimes,

Abhor'd as thine, dare plead to heav'n for mercy,

May heav'n have mercy on thee.

Bar. Generous *Selim!*

Too good. I have a daughter: oh, protect her!

Let not my crimes— (*Dies.*)

Oth. There fled the guilty soul! [*ter.*

Selim. Haste to the city; stop the rage of slaugh-

Tell my brave people, that Algiers is free;

And tyranny no more. [*Exeunt Guards.*

Enter ZAPHIRA.

Zaph. What mean these horrors? wheresoe'er I
turn

My trembling steps, I find some dying wretch,

Welt'ring in gore. And dost thou live, my *Selim!*

Selim. Lo, there he lies!

Zaph. The tyrant slain! O, righteous heaven!

Selim. Behold thy valiant friends,

Whose faith and courage have o'erwhelm'd the pow'r

Of Barbarossa. Here, once more, thy virtues

Shall dignify the throne, and bless thy people.

Zaph. Just are thy ways, O, heav'n! vain ter-

rors, hence!

Once more *Zaphira's* bless'd: my virtuous son,

How shall I e'er repay thy boundless love?

Thus let me snatch thee to my longing arms,

And on thy bosom weep my griefs away.

Selim. O, happy hope! happy, beyond the flight,

Ev'n of my ardent hour! look down, blest shade,

From the bright realms of bliss! behold thy queen

Unspotted, uneduc'd, unmov'd in virtue.

Behold the tyrant prostrate at my feet!

And to the mem'ry of thy bleeding wrongs,

Accept this sacrifice.

Zaph. My generous *Selim!*

Selim. Where is Irene? [*mien,*

Sadi. With looks of wildness, and distracted

She sought her father where the tumult rag'd.

She pass'd me, while the coward *Aladin*

Fled from my sword; and as I cleft him down,

She fainted at the sight.

Oth. But soon recover'd;

Zamor, our trusty friend, at my command,

Convey'd the weeping fair one to her chamber.

Selim. Thanks to thy generous care: come, let

Th' afflicted maid. [*us seek*

Zaph. Her virtues might atone

For all her father's guilt! Thy throne be her's:

She merits all thy love.

Selim. Then haste and find her. O'er her fa-

ther's crimes

Pity shall draw her veil; nay, half absolve them,

When she beholds the virtues of his child.

Now let us thank th' eternal pow'r, convinc'd,

That heaven but tries our virtues by affliction;

That oft the cloud, which wraps the present hour,

Serves but to brighten all our future days!

[*Exeunt.*

BRAGANZA;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY ROBERT JEPHSON.



Act III.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

DUKE OF BRAGANZA
VELASQUEZ
ALMADA
RIBIRO
MENDOZA
ANTONIO

MELLO
RODERIC
FERDINAND
LEMON
COREA
PIZARRO

RAMIREZ
CITIZENS
OFFICER
ATTENDANTS
DUTCHESS OF BRAGANZA
INES

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Piazza.

Enter RIBIRO meeting a Spanish Officer, conducting two Citizens, bound. LEMOS and COREA following Ribiro at a little distance.

Ribiro. Hold, officer! What means this spectacle?

Why lead you thus in fetters thro' the streets
These aged citizens?

Officer. Behold this order. *(Shows a paper.)*
Ribiro. I know the character. 'Tis signed Velasquez.

1 Citizen. We have not mines of unexhausted gold

To feed rapacious Spain and stern Velasquez:
And wrong by hard exactions for the state—

Officer. No more; I must not suffer it.

Ribiro. *(Pointing to the prisoners.)* Pray, sir,
See these white hairs, these shackles: misery
May sure complain. You are a soldier, sir,
Your men bespeaks a brave one—

Officer. I will walk by.

Detain them not too long. 'Tis a harsh sentence.
(Withdraws.)

2 Citizen. Oh! good Ribiro, what have we deserv'd,

That these rude chains should gall us?

Ribiro. What deserv'd!

1 Citizen. The little all our industry had earn'd,
To smooth the bed of sickness, nurse old age,
And give a decent grave to our cold ashes,
Spain's hungry millions have already seiz'd.

Ribiro. I know the rest. Dry up these scalding tears:

The hour of your deliv'rance is at hand:

An arm more strong than shuts your prison doors,

Shall burst them soon, and give you ample vengeance.

Citizens. May we, indeed, expect—

Ribiro. Most sure: bnt, hush!

Resume the semblance of this transient shame,
And hide your hope in sadness. Brave Castilian,
Thanks for this courtesy.

(To the Officer, who returns.)

Citizens. Lead on. Farewell!

[Exeunt Guard and Citizens. Lemos and Corea come forward to Ribiro.]

Ribiro. Was that a sight for Lisbon?

Lemos. Oh! shame, shame!

What crime could they commit? Old, helpless,
plunder'd—

Rihiro. Even thoughts are crimes in this distemper'd state.

They once had wealth as you have: Spain thought meet

To seize it: they (rash men!) have dar'd to murmur.

Velasquez here, our scourge, king Philip's idol,
Whom Portugal must bow to, mildly dooms them
But to perpetual bondage for this treason.

Lemos. We must be patient: 'tis a cureless evil.

Rihiro. Is patience, then, the only virtue left us?

Come, come, there is a remedy more manly.

Corea. Would it were in our reach!

Rihiro. Look here, I grasp it.

(*Laying his hand on his sword.*)

What, turn'd to statues! Hence, enfranchisement,

If the quick fire that lately warm'd your breasts,

Already wastes to embers! Am I rash?

We touch'd this theme before: you felt it then.

Would I could put a tongue in every ingot

That now lies pil'd within your massy stores!

Your gold, perhaps, might move you. Spain will seize it;

Then bid you mourn the loss in the next dungeon,

Or dig her mines for more. Is't not enough?

Instruct me, *Lemos*; you, good *Corea*, teach me

This meekness so convenient to our foes,

Or pierce this swelling bosom.

Lemos. Who can teach it!

'Tis not in art, *Rihiro*. Know us better.

The canker discontent consumes within,

And mocks our smooth exterior.

Corea. Hear me for both:

For all th' indignant hearts in Portugal:

If curses sped like plagues and pestilence,

Thus would I strike them at the towers of Spain.

May her sworn pride burst like an empty bubble?

Distraction rend her councils! rout and shame

Pursue her flying squadrons! Tempests scatter

And whirlpools swallow up her full mann'd navies!

Bold insurrection spread through all her states,

Shaking like pent-up winds their loose allegiance!

All Europe arm, and every frowning king,

Point at one foe, and let that foe be Spain!

Rihiro. Oh! be that curse prophetic! Here 'tis

dangerous,

Nor will the time allow to tell you all;

But thus far rest assur'd—I speak not rashly—

A project is on foot, and now just rip'ning,

Will give our indignation nobler scope

Than tears or curses. (Priests and women's weapons!)

All that secures the event of great designs,

Sage heads, firm hearts, and executing arms,

In formidable union league with us,

And chain capricious fortune to our standard.

Lemos. Say, can our aid promote this glorious cause?

Rihiro. All private virtue is the public fund;

As that abounds, the state decays or thrives:

Each should contribute to the general stock,

And who lends most, is most his country's friend.

Lemos. Oh! would Braganza meet the people's wish!

Rihiro. He is not yet resolv'd, but may be won.

Could I assure him men like you but wish'd it,

(For well he knows and loves you,) trust me,

Lemos,

It would do more to knit him to this cause

Than legions of our hot nobility.

Corea. We love his virtue, will support his rights—

Rihiro. Then shew it by your deeds. Your

artizans

Are prompt, bold, hardy, fond of violence.

Alarm their slumb'ring courage, rouse their rage,

Wake their dull'd senses to the shame and scorn

That hisses in the ears of willing bondmen;
If they will hazard one bold stroke for freedom,
A leader shall be found, a brave—a just one.

Anon expect me where the ivy'd arch
Rears the bold image of our late Braganza,
(In sullen discontent he seems to frown,
As if still hostile to the foes of Lisbon.)

There we'll discourse at large. *Almada* comes.

Lemos. Is he a friend?

Rihiro. A firm one. No dishonour
E'er bow'd that rev'rend head. That mighty spirit,
When first the oppressor, like a flood, o'erwhelm'd

us,
Rear'd high his country's standard and defied
him.

He comes to seek me. Lose no time: remember.

[*Exeunt Lemos and Corea.*]

I should detest my zeal, could it be stirr'd

Against the wholesome rigour of restraint

Licentiousness made needful. But, good heaven!

Foul murders unprovok'd, delib'rate cruelty!

The God within us must rise up against it.

Enter ALMADA.

Almada. Well met, *Rihiro*: what new prose-lytes?

Thy ardour every hour or finds or makes them.

Rihiro. No; thank the Spaniards for our pro-se-lytes:

Scarce half an hour ago, two citizens,

(My blood still boils,) by fell *Velasquez*' order,

Were dragg'd to prison—

Almada. Spare my soul, *Rihiro*,

Superfluous detestation of that villain.

Rihiro. Knowing this way they were to pass, I brought

Lemos and *Corea*, (whom last night I sounded,)

That their own eyes might see the outrages,

Men of their order must expect to meet

From power that knows no bounds, and owns no

law,

Almada. 'Twas wisely done; for minds of coarse alloy

But bluntly feel the touch of others' wrongs,

Tho' deep the impression of their own.

Rihiro. By heav'n, their fury bore a nobler stamp;

Their honest rage glow'd on their kindling cheeks,

Broke through the cold restraints of coward caution,

And swell'd even to an eloquence of anger.

Almada. 'Tis well. But are they yet inform'd how near

Th' approaching hour, decisive of our fate,

That gives us death or freedom—that the dawn—

Rihiro. Not yet. They still believe the Duke, at noon,

But visits Lisbon to command the march

Of our new levies to the Spanish bounds;

Himself to follow straight. Ere then I mean

Again to see them, and still more to whet

The keeness of their hate against our tyrants.

At least a thousand follow where they lead.

Almada. Their boldness, well directed, may do much.

Rihiro. That care be mine: I've studied, and I know them;

Inconstant, sanguine, easily inflam'd,

But, like the nitrous powder uncompress'd,

Consuming by the blaze nought but itself.

'Tis ours to charge the mine with deadly skill,

And bury usurpation in the ruin.

Almada. I think we cannot fail; our friends are firm:

Honour will bind the noble, hope the weak,

And common interest all. The insulting Spaniard

Broods over embryo mischiefs, nor suspects

The wretched worm conceals a mortal sting
To pierce the haughty heel that tramples him.

Ribiro. How great will be our triumph, Spain's disgrace,

When ev'ry mischief that perfidious court
Has fram'd against Braganza's precious life
Recoils on the contriver!

Almada. Urge that home;
Urge how the Duke's affection to his country,
His right unquestionable to her crown,
First mark'd him for the victim of false Spain;
That his commission as high admiral,
His general's staff, and all the lofty pomp
Of his high-sounding titles, were but meant
As gilded snares to invite him to his death.

Ribiro. These truths, shameful to Philip, must
be told;

They will endear Don Juan to the people,
Will keep them waking, restless, and dispos'd
To aid the glorious tumult of to-morrow.

Almada. My heart expands, and, with a prophet's
fire,

Seizes the bright reversion of our hopes.
I see the genius of our realm restor'd,
And smiling lead him to his rightful throne.
No wild ambition, like a pamper'd steed,
O'erleaps the boundaries of law and reason,
And tramples every seed of social virtue;
But o'er the temp'rate current of his blood
The gentlest passions brush their breezy wings,
To animate, but not disturb the stream.
Such is his temper: for the approaching hour
Demands, perhaps, a sterner.

Ribiro. Heaven, still kind,
Has in his consort's breast struck deep the root
Of each aspiring virtue, Bright Louisa,
To all the softness of her tender sex,
Unites the noblest qualities of man;
A genius to embrace the amplest scheme
That ever swell'd the labouring statesman's breast;
Judgment most sound, persuasive eloquence
To charm the froward and convince the wise;
Pure piety without religion's dross,
And fortitude that shrinks at no disaster.

Almada. She is, indeed, a wonder. Oh! *Ribiro,*
That woman was the spring that mov'd us all.
She canvass'd all our strength, urg'd all our
wrongs,

Combin'd our force, and methodiz'd our ven-
geance;

Taught us that ends which seem impossible
Are lost, or compass'd only by the means;
That fortune is a false divinity,
But folly worships what the wise man makes.
She turn'd our cold dejection to device,
And rous'd dependency to active valour.
My age delights to dwell on her perfections—

Ribiro. And I could ever hear them. Virtue's
praise

To honest ears is music. But no more:—
A noise comes this way, and that hurrying throng
Proclaims the upstart minister's approach.
This is the hour, with saucy pageantry,
Thro' our thinn'd streets he takes his wonted
round;

Like the dire clapping of the harpy's wing,
To choke the frugal meal with bitter tears,
And scare content from every humble board.
I will avoid him. But I go, proud man,
When next we meet to make my presence dread-
fal. [Exit.

Almada. Honest *Ribiro!* To this hour my soul
Has kept her purpose; my firm foot has ne'er
Swerv'd from its path in Lisbon, nor shall now
Give way to insolence. Your country's dregs!
(Looking towards the train of Velasquez.)

Ye supple sycophants! ay, cringe and beg
That he will tread upon your prostrate necks,

Or ride you like his mules. Authority!
Thy worshipp'd symbols round a villain's trunk
Provoke men's mockery, not their reverence.

Enter Officer.

Officer. Make way, there; room, room for the
minister.

Know you the lord Velasquez comes this way?
Pray, sir, give place.

Almada. Officious varlet, off!
Let not thy servile touch pollute my robe.
Can hirelings frown?

Enter VELASQUEZ and PIZARRO. The magistrates
of Lisbon with their insignia, Guards and Attendants
preceding.

Velasq. How! am I, then, despised?
(Looking sternly at Almada.)

A tumult in my presence? Good, my lord,
It better would become your gravity
To set the fair example of obedience
To trust and office, than instruct the rabble
In what they are the most prone to, feuds and
faction.

Almada. Most reverend admonition! Hold, my
spleen!

Ye golden coronets and ermin'd robes,
Bend from your stools, behold this wond'rous
man,

This Lusitanian censor, this sage Cato,
This consul, with his lictors, rods, and axes,
Reprove the boy, Almada, for his lightness!

Pizarro. Regard not his wild words, he's old and
choleric.

Velasq. (To his train.) Attend me at the citadel:
move on. [Exeunt Attendants.]

I know not whether to accuse my fortune,
Or blame my own demerits, brave Almada,
That ever when we meet, thy angry brow
Rebukes me with its frown, or keen reproach
Darts from thy tongue, and checks the forward
wish

That fain would court thy friendship and esteem.

Almada. Friendship with thee! Is it so slight a
boon?

If such deserve the name, go seek for friends
Amidst the desp'rate crew, whose only bond
Is the black conscience of confederate crimes;
Nor in prepost'rous union think to join
Integrity with guilt, and shame with honour.
Know me for what I am—thy foe profess'd.
Fall on thy knee, solicit heaven for mercy,
And tell that seat of pride, thy obdurate heart,
Its last, its only virtue, is remorse. [Exit.

Velasq. Go, hoary fool, preach to the whistling
winds;

I scorn thy council, and defy thy hate.
'Tis time enough for lagging penitence,
When age, like thine, has quench'd ambition's
flame;

Now nobler thoughts possess my active soul.
This haughty province first shall feel my weight,
And since it scorns my love, through fear obey
me.

Pizarro. Already all the power of Spain is thine,
The vice-queen, Marg'ret, though of Austrian
blood,

Discreet, firm, virtuous, complains in vain,
You leave her but a regent's empty title,
While power is only your's; and happier still,
Braganza summon'd to attend the king,
Will soon cut off his country's only hope,
And leave no rival to obscure thy lustre.
'Bate but the shew and name of royalty,
Thou art already king.

Velasq. The shew, the name,

All that gives grace and awe to majesty
Shall soon be mine, Pizarro. Olivarez,
Whose counsels rule the Escorial, to my hand
Has long resign'd the reins of Portugal,
And dreams not (unuspicious of my faith)
The delegate, the creature of his breath,
Anon will bid defiance to his power,
And rank himself with monarchs.

Pizarro. Oh! take heed;
Consider, sir, that power still awes the world—

Velasq. My towering fortune rises on a rock,
And firm as Atlas will defy the storm.
The purple cement of a prince's blood
Shall strengthen its foundation.

Pizarro. Ha!

Velasq. Braganza's.

The precious mischief swells my exulting breast,
And soon shall burst its prison.

Pizarro. Can it be?

I know thy dauntless temper mocks at fear,
And prudence guides thy daring; but a prince
Follow'd by faithful guards, encompass'd round
With troops of gallant friends, the people's idol—

Velasq. Is mortal, like the meanest of his
train,
And dies before to-morrow. Cease to wonder;
But when this mighty ruin shakes the realm,
Prepare like me, with well-dissembled grief,
To hide our real joy, and blind suspicion.

(*Flourish of trumpets.*)

These trumpets speak his entrance; never more
Such sprightly notes, nor shout of joyful friends,
Pæan or choral song shall usher him;
But sad solemnity of funeral pomp,
Mute sorrow, mournful dirges, ghastly rites,
Marshall'd by death, in comfortable array,
Wait his cold relics to their sepulchre. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Antichamber in the Duke of Braganza's Palace.*

RIBIRO and MENDOZA discovered.

Ribiro. A moment's pause, Mendoza: here appointed

By promise to the Duke at noon to wait him,
I could not mingle with his followers,
So saw it but in part.

Mendoza. The air still rings
With loudest acclamations.

Ribiro. Yes, Mendoza;
With joy I heard them; heard the vaulted sky
Echo Braganza. 'Twas no hireling noise,
No faction's roar of mercenary joy,
Sound without transport, but the heartfelt cry
Of a whole nation's welcome. Hear it, Spain!
Proud usurpation, hear it!

Mendoza. The whole way
Was cover'd thick with panting multitudes,
That scarce left passage for their chariot-wheels;
The trees were bent with people; ev'ry roof,
Dome, temple, portico, so closely fill'd,
The gazers made the wonder. Here and there
A discontented Spaniard stalk'd along,
Should'ring the crowd; and, with indignant scorn,
Turn'd up his sallow cheek in mockery.

Ribiro. We shall retort their scorn. Mark'd you
the Duke?

His mind is ever letter'd in his face.

Mendoza. Pleasure was mingled with anxiety,
Both visible at once. But, oh! what words
Can paint the angel form that grac'd his side,
His bright Louisa! Like th' Olympian queen,
When o'er her fragrant bosom Venus bound

Th' enchanting cestus, from her lucid eyes
Stream'd the pure beams of soft benevolence,
And glories more than mortal shone around her.
Harmonious sounds of dulcet instruments
Swell'd by the breath, or swept from tuneful wire,
Floated in air, while yellow Tagus burn'd
With prows of flaming gold; their painted flags,
In gaudy frolic fluttering to the breeze.
On to their palace thus the triumph came:
Alighted at the gate, the princely pair
Express'd their thanks in silent dignity
Of gesture, far more eloquent than words;
Then turn'd them from the throng—

Ribiro. Why this looks well.
The Duke will sure be rous'd to resolution
By this bright presage of his coming glory.

Mendoza. With grief I learn he still is undeter-
min'd.

His fears prevail against the public wish;
And thus the ill-pois'd scale of our fair hopes,
Mounts light and unsubstantial.

Ribiro. Oh! you wrong him.
I know his noble nature: Juan's heart
Pants not with selfish fear. His wife, his friends,
An infant family, a kingdom's fate,
More than his own, besiege his struggling soul;
He must be more than man, who will not hear
Such powerful calls, and less, who can despise
them.

Mendoza. Indeed, I cannot wonder he's dis-
turb'd;

But doubts are treason in a cause like this.

Ribiro. Dismiss these fears; Louisa's gentle
sway

Will fix him to our purpose. Night's chaste orb
Rules not the heavings of the restless tide
More sure than she with mild ascendancy
Can govern all his ebbs and flows of passion.
But come, by this time the fond multitude
Have gaz'd away their longing, and retire.
Our greeting will be seasonable now. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A magnificent Chamber in the Duke of Braganza's palace.*

DUKE OF BRAGANZA discovered, speaking to LEMOS
and COREA; other Citizens at a little distance.

Duke. No more, kind countrymen; this goodness
melts me.

What can I render back for all these honours?
This wondrous prodigality of praise?

What but my life, when'er your welfare asks it.

Lemos. Heav'n guard that precious life for Por-
tugal!

To you, as to a tutelary god,
This sinking country lifts her suppliant hands,
And certain of your strength, implores your arm
To raise her prostrate genius from the dust.

Duke. A private man, a subject, like your-
selves,

Bankrupt of power, though rich in gratitude,
The seuse of what you suffer wrings my soul,
Nor makes your sorrows less.

Enter DUTCHESS OF BRAGANZA.

Dutchess. Much injur'd men,
Whom love not fear should govern, from this
hour,

Know, we espouse your cause. We have not
hearts

Of aliens, to behold with passing glance
And cold indifference the ruthless spoiler
Smile o'er the ravage of your fertile plains.
We feel the fetters that disgrace your limbs;

We mourn the vigour of your minds depress'd;
With horror we behold your gen'rous blood
Drain'd by the insatiate thirst of ravening wolves.
If we have nature, we must feel your wrongs,
If we have power, redress them.

Corea. Matchless lady!

There spoke our rightful queen, our better angel!
In us behold your servants, subjects, soldiers;
Though yet unpractis'd in the trade of war,
Our swords will find an edge at your command.

Duke. We neither doubt your courage nor your love,

And both, perhaps, ere long may meet the trial:
I would detain you, but our conference
Might now be dangerous. Rank me with your friends,

And know I have a heart for Portugal.

[*Exeunt Lemos, Corea, &c.*]

Dutchess. Why wears my Juan's brow that thoughtful cloud?

Why thus with downcast look and folded arm,
When ev'ry other bosom swells with hope?
When expectation, like a fiery steed,
Anticipates the course, and pants to hear
The sprightly signal start him for the goal.
Think that the people from their leader's eye
Catch the sure omens of their future fate;
With his their courage falls, their spirits rise;
For confidence is conquest's harbinger.

Duke. Light of thy Juan's life! my soul's best joy!

Swifter than meteors glide, or wings of wind,
My nimble thoughts shoot through their whirling round:

A thousand cares distract this anxious breast.
To recompense the dark uncertainty
Of this dread interval, 'twixt now and morn,
Would ask whole years of happiness to come.
Now thou art mine, these faithful arms enfold thee;

But oh! to-morrow may behold thee torn
By barbarous ruffians from their fond embrace;
The flowing honours of that beauteous head,
May sweep a scaffold's dust, and iron death
Close in eternal sleep those radiant eyes
That beam with love and joy unutterable.

Dutchess. Oh! make me not your curse, as sure

I must be,

The stain, the blot of your immortal fame,
If one soft passion, like a languid spell,
Dissolve thy manly fortitude of soul,
And melt the prince and patriot in the husband.

Duke. That tender union is the healing balm,
The cordial of my soul; our destinies
Are twin'd together. Were my single life
The only forfeit of this perilous chance,
I'd throw it, like a heedless prodigal,
And wanton with my fortune; but, alas!
More than the wealth of worlds is now at stake.
And can I hazard this dear precious pledge.
Venture my all of bliss on one hold cast,
Nor feel the conflict that now rends my heart?

Dutchess. Why do you tremble? These cold struggling drops—

Duke. They fall for thee, Louisa; my quell'd spirit

Avows its weakness there.

Dutchess. 'Tis cruel fondness;

It wounds me deeply Joan.

Duke. Witness, honour,

Thy martial call ne'er found Braganza's ear
Cold till this bitter moment. I have met,
Nay, courted death, in the steel'd files of war,
When squadrons wither'd as the giant trod;
Nor shrunk ev'n when the hardest in the field
Have prais'd upon the danger. Here, I own,
My agonizing nerves degrade the soldier,
Ev'n to a coward's frailty: should the sword

Which black destruction soon may wave o'er all,
(Avert it, heav'n!) strike at thy precious life,
Should but one drop, forc'd by rude violence,
Stain that dear bosom, I were so accur'd,
The outstretch'd arm of mercy could not save me.

Dutchess. I have a woman's form, a woman's fears;

I shrink from pain and start at dissolution;
To shun them is great Nature's prime command;
Yet summon'd as we are, your honour pledg'd,
Your own just rights engag'd, your country's fate,
Let threat'ning death assume his direst form,
Let dangers multiply, still would I on,
Still urge, exhort, confirm thy constancy,
And though we perish'd in the bold attempt,
With my last breath I'd bless the glorious cause,
And think it happiness to die so nobly.

Duke. Oh! thou hast rous'd me. From this hour I banish

Each fond solicitude that hover'd round thee:
Thy voice, thy looks, thy soul are heav'n's own fire.

'Twere unnecessary but to doubt that pow'r ordain'd thee

To guide me to this glorious enterprize.

Dutchess. Thou shalt be chronicled to latest time,

Heaven's chosen instrument to punish tyrants,
The great restorer of a nation's freedom!
Thou shalt complete what Brutus but attempted.
Nor withering age, nor cold oblivion's shade,
Nor envy's cankerous tooth shall blast thy wreaths:
But every friend to virtue shall inscribe
To Juan's name eternal monuments.

But, see, our friends approach; awhile I leave thee:

Remember still, thou must be king or nothing.

[*Exit.*]

Duke. I will suppress th' emotions of my heart;
Quite to subdue them is impossible.

Enter RIBIRO and MENDOZA.

Welcome, ye wakeful guardians of your country!
Had we in all the people's mighty mass
But twenty spirits match'd with you in virtue,
How might we bid defiance to proud Spain!
How scorn the close disguise of secret councils,
And challenge their full force in open combat!

Ribiro. Led by Don Juan, can we doubt th' event?

All things conspire: antipathy to Spain
Is here hereditary; 'tis nature's instinct;
'Tis principle, religion, vital heat;
Old men to list'ning sons with their last breath
Bequeath it as a dying legacy;
Infants imbibe it at the mother's breast;
It circles with their blood, spreads with their frame,

Its fountain is the heart, and till that fails

The stream it fed can never cease to flow.

Mendoza. That furious impulse gives the spleen of fiends

To softest tempers, the unpractis'd arm
Sinews with lion's strength, and drives us on
Resistless as the sweeping whirlwind's force.

Duke. All is propitious; every post is fill'd
With officers devoted to our service:
Already in their hearts they own my title,
And wait but for our orders to proclaim it.

Enter ALMADA.

Come to my breast, my sage admonisher!
The tutor and example of my arms!
The proud Iberian soon shall feel their force;
And learn from Juan's sword to venerate
The fame of brave Almada.

Almada. Thus, my prince,
Thus did I hope to find thee. Hence no more
Shall hard exactions grind the prostrate people;
Our gentry, to their provinces confin'd,
Languish no more in shameful circumscription;
No more our ancient noblemen be stripp'd
Of all but empty titles, tinsel names,
Like tarnish'd gold on rags to mock the wearer;
Our posts of eminence no more be filled
With upstart strangers, or the sordid lees
Of base plebeian natives.

Duke. My impatient breast,
Fall of the expected joy, like a young bride-
groom,

Upbraids the lazy hours that lag between
My wishes and enjoyment. The onset is—

Almada. When St. Lazar beats five; at that
hour

We'll welcome the sun's rising with an offering
More glorious than the Persian hetacomb.

Ribiro. At night your friends assemble with
Almada

In dreadful secrecy: then with rais'd arm
We rush to cancel our long debt to vengeance,
And glut our thirsty blades with Spanish gore.

Almada. If we suspend the blow beyond to-
morrow

All may be lost. Three thousand veterans
Lie canton'd on the river's southern side;
Should our design be known, they will be call'd
To reinforce the posts, and guard the city.
Adieu, then, to our dream of liberty!
We rivet closer chains on Portugal,
And drag the doom of traitors on ourselves.

Enter DUTCHESS OF BRAGANZA.

Dutchess. Suspend your consultations for a
moment;

Within the minister of Spain attends:
Forgive th' officious love of your Louisa—
No stranger to his arts, she warns her Juan—

Duke. I know he comes, in solemn mockery,
To make a hollow tender of his service
With most obsequious falsehood.

Dutchess. My best lord,
Hold strictest watch on all your words and mo-
tions;

Guard every look, with that discerning villain;
Subtle, insidious, false, and plausible;
He can, with ease, assume all outward forms;
Seem the most honest, plain, sincere, good man,
And keep his own designs lock'd close within,
While with the lynx's beam he penetrates
The deep reserve of every other breast.

Duke. I, too, will wear my vizor in the scene,
And play the dupe I am not. Friend, farewell!
Perhaps ere morning we may meet again.
The hour is fix'd, Louisa; all prepar'd.

Dutchess. Then this is our last night of sla-
very;

A brighter era rises with the dawn. [*Exit Duke.*]
If we may dare, without impiety,
To challenge heavenly aid, and swell the breast
With confidence of more than mortal vigour,
Can heaven stand neuter in a cause like this?
Or favour fraud, oppression, cruelty?
Now, gentle friends, I am a suitress to you.

Almada. You are our sovereign, madam; 'tis
your right

Not to solicit but command our duty.

Dutchess. Think me not light, capricious, vari-
able,

If I, who urg'd ye to this bold attempt,
And ever when your anger seem'd to cool,
Pour'd oil to wake the flame and feed its blaze,
Now supplicate with milder earnestness
And strive to allay its fury.

Almada. Speak your pleasure;
The obedience of our hearts will follow it.

Dutchess. I know the measure of your wrongs
would license,

Nay, justify the wild excess of vengeance;
Yet in the headlong rage of execution,
Think rather what your mercy may permit
Than what their crimes deserve who feel your
justice.

Oh! follow not the example we abhor,
Nor let those weapons justice consecrates
Be dy'd with drops drawn from the bleeding
breast

Of reverend age, or helpless innocence.
Wilt thou take heed, Almada?

Almada. Fear not, madam;
All mercy not injurious to our cause,
Ev'n Spaniards, as they are men, from men may
challenge.

For Indus' wealth I would not stain this sword,
Sacred to honour, in the guiltless blood
Of unoffending wretches: rest secure;
A prostrate and defenceless enemy
Has stronger guards against a brave man's wrath,
Than tenfold brass, or shields of adamant,

Dutchess. Generous Almada! well dost thou
instruct;

Soft pity is not more akin to love
Than to true fortitude. Thy soft youth, Men-
doza,

Need not be tutor'd to humanity.

Mendoza. Heav'n and my conscious soul bear
witness for me,

That not to satiate any private malice,
But for the general good, I stand engag'd
In this great compact. 'Twere a coward's ven-
geance

To turn a sacrifice to massacre,
And practice while I punish cruelty.

Ribiro. Till fortune give one victim to my
rage,

Compassion and this bosom must be strangers;
No sanctuary, nor interceding prayers,
Nor wings of angels stretch'd to cover him,
Shall save that monster from the doom he merits.

Dutchess. You mean the minister of Spain,
Velasquez?

Ribiro. I mean the minister of hell, Velasquez,
That cool, deliberate executioner;
If he escape, may this good arm rot off,
All worthy thoughts forsake, and scorn pursue
me:

Write boaster on my forehead; let my name
Blister the tongue that speaks it. Infamy
Be here my portion, endless pains hereafter.

Dutchess. Oh! would that sacrifice might ex-
piate!

Ribiro. Pardon the rash effusion of my zeal;
It deals too much in words.

Dutchess. Not so, Ribiro;
Thy anger has a license; and thy zeal,
We know, is generous, not sanguinary.

Almada. Madam, we take our leave: good angels
guard you!

We go to prove our duty in your service.
The homage of our hearts has long been your's,
And soon you shall receive it from our knees.

Dutchess. Believe me, friends, your loves are
written here,

In characters no time can e'er efface.

[*Exeunt Almada, Ribiro, and Mendoza.*]
And may the mighty spirits of past times
Rais'd by desert to bright immortal thrones,
Suspend awhile their task of heav'nly praise
In ministry unseen to hover round them!
Protect aspiring virtue like their own,
And in their bosoms breathe resistless ardour!

[*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Apartments of Velasquez, in the palace of the Vice-Queen.*

VELASQUEZ and PIZARRO discovered.

Pizarro. You seem disturb'd.

Velasq. With reason. Dull Braganza Must have been tutor'd: at our interview I practis'd every supple artifice That glides into man's bosom; the return Was blank reserve, ambiguous compliment, And hatred thinly veil'd by ceremony.

Pizarro. Might I presume—

Velasq. Pizarro, I am stung: His father Theodosius, that proud prince, Who durst avow his enmity to Philip, And menac'd thunders at my destin'd head, With all his empty turbulence of rage Could never move me like the calm disdain Of this cold-blooded Juan.

Pizarro. Then, my lord, Your purpose holds?

Velasq. It does: I will dispatch This tow'ring Duke, who keeps the cheek of Spain

Pale with perpetual danger.

Pizarro. For what end?

Unconscious of his fate, he blindly speeds To find a grave in Spain. Why, then, resolve To spill that blood, which elsewhere will be shed Without your crime or peril?

Velasq. That's the question.

Were I assur'd they meant his death, 'twere needless:

But when they draw him once from Portugal, Where only he is dangerous, then, perhaps, Their fears or lenity may let him live; And while he lives, my fiery course is check'd, My sun climbs slowly, never can ascend To its meridian brightness.

Pizarro. Still, my lord,

My short lin'd wisdom cannot sound your depth.

Velasq. I mean to tell thee all, for thou may'st aid me,

And thy tried faith deserves my confidence.

Pizarro. I am your own for ever; your kind hand,

Bounteous beyond my merit, planted here Favours innumerable.

Velasq. Think them little:

An earnest, not the acquittal of my love. The enormous wealth of Juan's royal house, His large domains, extended influence, His numerous vassals so have swell'd his state, That were his means but push'd to one great end, How easy might he wrest this realm from Spain, And brave King Philip's rage!

Pizarro. Good, careless prince!

Mild and uxorious! No ambitious dream Disturbs his tranquil slumber.

Velasq. Just his nature:

On household wing he flutters round the roof, That with the princely eagle might have soar'd And met the dazzling sun. Now, by his death, (My engine cannot fail, this night he meets it,) His wealth, his mightiness, his followers, Become Louisa's dower. What think'st thou now?

Could I but win her to accept my hand, (And much my art will move, and more my power,)

Might not our union, like the impetuous course Of blending torrents, break all feeble mounds Spain could oppose to bar me from the crown? That once obtain'd, let Olivarez rail,

Let his inglorious master call me traitor, I'll scorn their idle fury.

Pizarro. Still I fear

Louisa's heart, cold and impenetrable, To all but Juan's love, will own no second, Tho' big ambition swells her female breast Beyond the sex's softness.

Velasq. My hope rests

Even on that favourite passion: grief, at first, Will drive her far from love; a second flame Perhaps may ne'er rekindle in her heart; Yet, give her momentary frenzy scope, It wastes itself; ambition then regains Its wonted force, and winds her to my lure.

But come, I must not lose these precious moments;

The fates are busy now: what's yet untold, There place thyself and learn. Take heed you move not. (*Pizarro retires.*) Without there! ho!

Enter an Officer.

Officer. What is your lordship's pleasure?

Velasq. Attends the monk, Ramirez?

Officer. He does, my lord.

Velasq. Conduct him in and leave us.

[*Exit Officer.*]

Enter RAMIREZ.

You are welcome,

Most welcome, reverend father! Pray, draw near:

We have a business for your privacy, Of an especial nature; the circling air Should not partake it, nor the babbling winds, Lest their invisible wings disperse one breath Of that main secret, which thy faithful bosom Is only fit to treasure.

Ramirez. Good my lord,

I am no common talker.

Velasq. Well I know it,

And therefore chose thee from the brotherhood, Not one of whom but would lay by all thoughts Of earth and heaven, and fly to execute What I, the voice of Spain, commission'd him.

Ramirez. Vouchsafe directly to unfold your will,

My deeds, and not my words, must prove my duty.

Velasq. Nay, trust me, could they but divine my purpose,

The holiest he, that wastes the midnight lamp In prayers and penance, would prevent my tongue

And hear me thank the deed, but not persuade it. Therefore, good friend, 'tis not necessity, That sometimes forces any present means, And chequers chance with wisdom, but free will, The election of my judgment and my love, That gives thy aptness this pre-eminence.

Ramirez. The state, I know, has store of instruments,

Like well-rang'd arms in ready order plac'd, Each for its several use.

Velasq. Observe me well;

Think not I mean to snatch a thankless office; Who serves the state, while I direct her helm, Commands my friendship, and his own reward. Say, can you be content in these poor weeds, To know no earthly hopes beyond a cloister? But stretch'd on musty mats in noisome caves, To rouse at midnight bells, and mutter prayers For souls beyond their reach, to senseless saints? To wage perpetual war with nature's bounty? To blacken sick men's chambers, and be number'd

With the loath'd leavings of mortality,

The watch-light, hour-glass, and the nauseous phial!

Are these the ends of life? Was this fine frame,
Nerves exquisitely textur'd, soft desires,
Aspiring thoughts, this comprehensive soul,
With all her train of god-like faculties,
Given to be sunk in this vile drudgery?

Ramirez. These are the hard conditions of our state.

We sow our humble seeds with toil on earth,
To reap the harvest of our hopes in heaven.

Velasq. Yet wiser they who trust no future chance,

But make this earth a heaven. Raise thy eyes
Up to the temporal splendours of our church;
Behold our priors, prelates, cardinals;
Survey their large revenues, princely state,
Their palaces of marble, beds of down,
Their statues, pictures, baths, luxurious tables,
That shame the fabled banquets of the gods.
See how they weary art, and ransack nature,
To leave no taste, no wish ungratified.
Now, if thy spirit shrink not, I can raise thee
To all this pomp and greatness. Pledge thy
faith,

Swear thou wilt do this thing, what'er I urge,
And Lisbon's envied crozier shall be thine.

Ramirez. This goodness, so transcending all my hopes,

Confounds my astonish'd sense. What'er it be
Within the compass of man's power to act,
I here devote me to the execution.

Velasq. I must not hear of conscience and nice scruples,

Tares that abound in none but meagre soils,
To choke the aspiring seeds of manly daring:
Those puny instincts which, in feeble minds,
Unfit for great exploits, are miscall'd virtue.

Ramirez. Still am I lost in dark uncertainty;
And must for ever wander, till thy breath
Deign to dispel the impenetrable mist,
Fooling my sight that strives in vain to pierce it.

Velasq. You are the Duke of Braganza's confessor,

And fame reports him an exact observer
Of all our church's holy ceremonies.

He still is wont, whene'er he visits Lisbon,
Ere grateful slumber seal his pious lids,
With all due reverence, from some priestly hand
To take the mystic symbol of our faith.

Ramirez. It ever was his custom, and this night
I am commanded to attend his leisure
With preparation for the solemn act.

Velasq. I know it. Take thou this: (*gives him a box*) it holds a wafer

Of sovereign virtue to enfranchise souls,
Too righteous for this world, from mortal cares.
A monk of Milan mix'd the deadly drug,
Drawn from the quintessence of noxious plants,
Minerals and poisonous creatures, whose dull
bane

Arrests the nimble current of life's tide,
And kills without a pang.

Ramirez. I knew him well,
The Carmelite Castruccio, was it not?

Velasq. The same; he first approv'd it on a wretch

Condemn'd for murder to the ling'ring wheel,
This night commit it to Braganza's lips.

Had he a heart of iron, giant strength,
The antidotes of Pontus, all were vain,
To struggle with the venom's potency.

Ramirez. This night, my lord?

Velasq. This very night; nay, shrink not,
Unless thou mean'st to take the lead in death,
And pull thy own destruction on thy head.

Ramirez. Give me a moment's pause. A deed like this—

Velasq. Should be at once resolv'd and executed.

Think'st thou I am a raw, unpractis'd novice,
To make thy breast a partner to the trust,
And not thy hand accomplice of the crime?
Why, 'tis the bond for my security.

Look not amaz'd, but mark me heedfully:
Thou hast thy choice—dispatch mine enemy,
(The means are in thy hand,) be safe and great;
Or instantly prepare thee for a death
Which nothing but compliance can avert.

Ramirez. Numbers, I know, even thus have tasted death,

But, sure, imagination scarce can form
A way so horrid, impious!

Velasq. How's this, how's this?

Hear me, pale miscreant, my rage once rous'd,
That hell thou dread'st this moment shall receive thee.

Look here and tremble!

(*Draws a dagger and seizes him.*)

Ramirez. My lord, be not so rash;
Your fury's deaf. Will you not hear me speak?
By ev'ry hope that cheers, all vows that bind,
Whatever horror waits upon the act,
Your will shall make it justice: I'm resolv'd.

Velasq. No trifling, monk; take heed, for should'st thou fail—

Ramirez. Then be my life the forfeit. My obedience

Not only follows from your high command,
But that my bosom swells against this Duke
With the full sense of my own injuries.

Velasq. Enough; I thank thee. Let me know hetimes

How we have prosper'd. Hence, retire with caution;

Deserve my favour, and then meet me boldly.

[*Exit Ramirez.*]

'Tis done! His doom is seal'd. Come forth,
Pizarro. (*Pizarro comes forward.*)

Is't not a subtle mischief?

Pizarro. Past all praise;

The holy tool had qualms.

Velasq. But this dispell'd them,
(*Pointing to his dagger.*)

And fortified the coward by his fears.
His work perform'd, I mean to end him, too.

Say, is my barge prepar'd as I commanded?

Pizarro. All is prepar'd, my lord.

Velasq. The friends of Juan,
(I'll tell thee as we pass) they shall not long
Survive to lift their crests so high in Lisbon.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—The Castle of Almada.

Enter ALMADA and an Attendant.

Almada. Good Perez, see that none to-night
have entrance

But such whose names are written in that roll,
And bid your fellows from the northern tower,
Choose each a faultchion, and prepare to follow
Where I at dawn will lead.

Attendant. I will, my lord.

Almada. Wait near the gate thyself, nor stir
from thence

Without my summons.

Attendant. Trust my vigilance. [*Exit.*]

Almada. Now rayless midnight flings her sable
pall

Athwart the horizon, and with pond'rous mace,
In dead repose weighs down o'er-labour'd nature;
While we, the busy instruments of fate,
Unmindful of her season, wake like ghosts,
To add new horrors to the shadowy scene.

Enter ANTONIO.

Antonio. Health to Almada!

Almada. Thus to meet, Antonio,
Is the best health, the soundness of the mind.
Better at this dark hour to embrace in arms
This girl for manly execution, friend,
Than in the mazes of the wanton dance,
Or revelling o'er bowls in frantic mirth,
To keep inglorious vigils.

Antonio. True, my lord.

Enter RIBIRO with LEMOS and COREA.

Almada. Oh! soul of honour! ever, ever constant!

(To Ribiro.)

These are the worthy citizens, our friends—

Ribiro. And such as laurell'd Rome might well have own'd

(Presenting Lemos and Corea.)

Worthy to fill her magisterial chairs,
When reverence bow'd to virtue tho' untitled.

Almada. As such I take their hands; nay, more, as such

Their grateful country will rejoice to own them.
Are we all met?

Antonio. Mendoza is not here,
Nor Roderic; and Mello, too, is absent.

Almada. They were not wont to be thus waited for.

Ribiro. Anon they will be here; meantime proceed.

They know their place already.

Almada. Why we meet,
Is not to canvass our opprobrious wrongs,
But to redress them. Yet as trumpets sound
To rouse the soldier's ardour, so the breath
Of our calamities will wake our fires,
And fan them to spread wide the flame of vengeance.

'Tis not my gift to play the orator,
But in plain words to lay our state before you.
Our tyrant's grandsire, whose ambition claim'd,
And first usurp'd Braganza's royal rights,
By blood establish'd his detested sway.
Old Tagus blush'd with many a crimson tide,
Sluic'd from the noblest veins of Portugal.
The exterminating sword knew no distinction.
Princes and prelates, venerable age,
Matrons, and helpless virgins fell together,
Till cloy'd and sick of slaughter, the tir'd soldier,
With grim content, flung down his reeking steel,
And glutted rage gave truce to massacre.

Ribiro. Nor pass'd the iron rod to milder hands
Through two succeeding reigns. With cruel zeal

The barbarous offspring emulate their sire,
And track his bloody footsteps in our ruin.

Almada. Now mark how happily the time conspires

To give our great achievement permanence;
Spain is not what she was when Europe bow'd
To the fifth Charles, and his degenerate son;
When, like a torrent swell'd by mountain floods,
She swept the neighbouring nations with her arms;

And threaten'd those remote; contracted now
Within a humble bed, the thrifty urn
Of her exhausted greatness scarce can pour
A lazy tide through her own mould'ring states.

Ribiro. Yes, the Colossus totters, every blast
Shakes the stupendous mass and threatens its downfall.

Enter MENDOZA.

Mendoza. Break off, break off; the fatal snare is spread,
And death's pale hand assists to close the toil.

Almada. Whence this dread greeting? Ha! thy alter'd cheek

Wears not the ensign of this glowing hour.

Mendoza. The scream of night-owls, or the raven's croak

Would better suit the baleful news I bring
Than the known accents of a friendly voice.

We are undone, betray'd?

Almada. Say'st thou, betray'd?

Mendoza. Our tower is sapp'd; the high rais'd fabric falls

To crush us with the ruin. What avails

The full maturity of all our hopes?

This glorious league? the justice of our cause?

High heaven might idly thunder on our side,

If traitors to ourselves—

Almada. Ourselves! Oh, shame!

I'll not believe it. What perfidious slaves—

Mendoza. Two whom we thought the sinews of our strength,

Don Roderic and Mello.

Ribiro. Lightnings blast them!

May infamy record their dastard names,

And vulgar villains shun their fellowship!

These hot, loud brawlers—

Mendoza. Are the slaves of Spain,

And bargain for the price of perfidy.

On to the wharf, with quick, impatient step,

I saw Velasquez press, and in his train

These lurking traitors. Now, even now, they

cross

The ebbing Tagus in the tyrant's barge,

And hasten to the fort. The troops of Spain,

Even while we speak, are summon'd to the

charge,

And mark us for their prey.

Almada. Nay, then, 'tis past.

Malignant fortune, when the cup was rais'd

Close to our lips, has dash'd it to the ground.

Ribiro. This unexpected bolt strikes flat our hopes,

And leaves one dreary desolation round us.

I see their hangmen muster; wolf-ey'd cruelty,

Grimly sedate, glares o'er her iron board

Of racks, wheels, engines, feels her axe's edge,

Licks her fell jaws, and with a monster's thirst,

Already drinks her blood.

Mendoza. There's not a pang

That rends the fibres of man's feeling frame,

No vile disgrace, that even in thought o'erspreads

The cheek with burning crimson, but her hate,

Ingenious to devise, and sure to inflict,

In keenest agony will make us suffer.

Almada. Would that were all! Our dismal scene must close;

Nature o'erpower'd, at length will leave her load,

And baffle persecution: but, oh! Portugal,

Alas! unhappy country, where's the bourn

Can mark the extent of thy calamities.

Like winter's icy hand our luckless end

Will freeze the source of future enterprise:

Oppression, then, o'er the devoted realm,

Erect and bold, will stalk with tenfold ravage.

There, there alone, this breast is vulnerable;

These are the wheels that wrenoh, the racks that tear me.

Antonio. But are there left no means to elude the danger?

Why do we linger here? Why not resolve

To save ourselves by flight?

Mendoza. Impossible!

The guards, no doubt, are set; the port is barr'd.

Almada. Fly, Lemos, to the people, and restrain

Their generous ardour. It would now break forth
Useless to us, and fatal to themselves.

[Exit Lemos.]

You to the Duke, Ribiro. In our names,

(Perhaps our last request,) by our lost fortunes,
By all our former friendship, oh! conjure him
To save our richest treasure from the wreck,
Nor hazard, in a desperate enterprize,
His country's last, best hope, his valu'd life.

Ribiro. Support him, heaven, and arm his piety

To bear this sad vicissitude with patience. [*Exit.*

Almada. And yet we will not meet in vain, brave friends;

We came with better hopes, resolv'd like men
To struggle for our freedom. What remains?

A greater power than mortals can arraign,
Has otherwise decreed it. Speak, my brothers,

Now doubly dear in stern adversity;
Say, shall we glut the spoiler with our blood,

Submit to the vile insults of their law,
To have our honest dust by ruffian hands

Given to the winds? Is this the doom that waits us?

Mendoza. Alas! what better doom? To ask for mercy

Were ignominious, to expect it bootless.

Almada. To ask for mercy! Could Spain stretch my life

To years beyond the telling, for one tear,
One word, in sign of sorrow, I'd disdain it.

Death still is in our pow'r, and we'll die nobly,
As soldiers should do, red with well-earn'd

wounds,
And stretch'd on heaps of slaughter'd enemies.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in the Duke of Braganza's Palace.*

DUTCHESS OF BRAGANZA discovered.

Dutchess. Oh! thou Supreme Disposer of the world!

If from my childhood to this awful now,
I've bent with meek submission to thy will,
Send to this feeling bosom one bless'd beam
Of that bright emanation, which inspires
True confidence in thee, to calm the throbs
That leave this bosom for my husband's safety,
And with immortal spirit to exalt
Above all partial ties our country's love.

Enter RIBIRO, hastily.

Ribiro. Where is the Duke? Oh! pardon, gracious madam.

Dutchess. What means this haste and these distracted looks?

Ribiro. Detain me not; but lead me to my lord:

His life, perhaps—nay your—

Dutchess. His life! Oh, heavens!

Tell me, *Ribiro*—speak.

Ribiro. Too soon, alas!

You'll hear it. Ask not now, dear lady,
What I've scarce breath to utter.—Where's the Duke?

Dutchess. This moment, with his confessor retir'd,

I left him in his closet.

Ribiro. 'Tis no time

All must give place to this dire urgency.

Even while we speak—A moment's precious now—

He must be interrupted—Guide me to him.

Dutchess. Suspense is ling'ring death. Come on, I'll lead you. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter RAMIREZ.

Ramirez. Oh! welcome interruption. Pitying heaven,

While at least, arrests the murd'rous deed,

And gives a moment's respite from damnation.

Is there a hell beyond this war of conscience?

My blood runs backward, and my tottering knees

Refuse to bear their sacrilegious load.

Methought the statues of his ancestors,

As I pass'd by them, shook their marble heads;

His father's picture seem'd to frown in wrath;

And its eye pierce me, while I trembling stood

Assassin-like before it.—Hush! I'm summon'd.

Re-enter DUTCHESS OF BRAGANZA.

Dutchess. Get you to rest, good father. Fare you well!

Some unexpected business of the state

Demands my lord's attention. For this night

Your holy function must be unperform'd

Till more convenient season.

Ramirez. Holy function! (*Aside.*)

I humbly take my leave, and will not fail

To recommend you in my prayers to heaven.

[*Exit.*]

Dutchess. The heavens, I fear, are sbnt, and will not hear them.

Now gush my tears; now break at once my heart!

While in my Juan's presence, I suppress'd

The bursting grief; but here give nature way!

Is there a hope? Oh, no! All horrible.

My children, too—their little lives—My husband—

I conquer'd his reluctance; I persuaded

By every power his boundless passion gave me:

I thought it virtue, too. Mysterious heaven!

Then I, and only I, have work'd his ruin.

Enter DUKE OF BRAGANZA.

Duke. Alas! my love, why must thy Juan seek thee?

Why dost thou shun me at this awful moment?

The few sad hours our destiny permits,

Should sure be spent together.

Dutchess. Must we part, then?

Duke. I fear we must for ever in this world,

Till that great power who fashion'd us in life,

Unites us once again no more to sever;

In those bless'd regions of eternal peace,

Where sorrow never enters; where thy truth,

Thy unexampled fortitude and sweetness,

Will meet their full reward.

Dutchess. Where is the friend

Who rung our dismal knell?

Duke. Good, generous man!

Assur'd of death, yet careless of his life,

And anxious but for us, he is return'd,

To know what our brave leaders will determine:

Yet what can they determine but to die?

Our numbers poorly arm'd, undisciplin'd,

May fight and fall with desperate obstinacy,

For valour can no more; but, oh! Louisa,

Friends, country, life itself, seem little:

One sharp, devouring grief consumes the rest,

And makes thee all its object.

Dutchess. My dear husband!

These soft endearments, this excess of fondness,

Strike deeper to my soul, than all the pangs

The subtlest vengeance could contrive to wound

me.

Oh! fly me, hate me, call me murderer!

'Tis I have driven thee to this precipice;

I urge the ruffian hand of law to seize thee;

I drag thee to the block; I lift the axe,

(Oh, agony!) Louisa dooms thee dead!

Duke. 'Tis anguish insupportable to hear thee
Add self-upbraidings to our misery.
Thou my destroyer! No, my best Louisa;
Thou art my guardian angel. At this hour,
This dreadful hour, 'tis safety to be near thee.
Those dastards who betray'd our brave design,
(That baseness which no caution could prevent,
Nor wisdom could foresee,) 'twas that undid us.
I will not curse them: yet I swear by honour,
Thus hunted to the utmost verge of fate,
Without one ray of hope to cheer the danger,
I would not barter this dire certainty,
For that ignoble life those bad men purchase
By perfidy and villainess.

Dutchess. Oh! two such—
But indignation wants a tongue to name them.
How was their fury thunder'd on our side!
Their youthful veins fall of Patrician blood
Insulted by Velasquez; stripp'd by Spain
Of all the ancient honours of their house;
Sworn at the altar to assert this cause
By holiest adjurations: yet these two
To turn apostates. Can this fleeting breath,
This transitory, frail, uncertain being,
Be worth so vast a ransom?

Duke. Yes; to towards,
Such ever be the proselytes of Spain:
Leave them to scorn. Fain would I turn my
thoughts
From this bad world; shake off the clogs of
earth,
And for that great tribunal arm my soul,
Where heaven, not Spain, must judge me.—But in
vain;
My soften'd mind still hangs on those bless'd
days;

Those years of sweet tranquility and peace,
When smiling morn but wak'd us to new joys,
And love at night shed blessings on our pillow.

Dutchess. These hours are fled, and never can
return:

'Tis heaven's high will, and be that will obeyed:
The retrospect of past felicity
Plucks not the barbed arrow from the wound,
But makes it rankle deeper. Come, my Juan,
Here bid adieu to this infectious grief;
Let's knit our constancy to meet the trial.
Shall we be bold in words, mere moral talkers?
Declaim with pedant tongue in virtue's praise,
Yet find no comfort, no support within,
From her bright energy? It comes, it comes!
I feel my breast dilate. The phantom, death,
Shrinks at the radiant vision; bright ey'd hope
Bids us aspire, and points the shining throne.
Spain, I defy thee!

Duke. Oh! would she hew the elm,
And spare the tender vine, this stubborn trunk
Should brave her fury. Here is royal blood,
And blood long thirsted for. They cannot dare,
Insatiate as they are, remorseless, savage,
With sacrilegious hands to violate
This beauteous sanctuary. Let me not think.
Distraction! horror! Oh! it splits my brain,
Rends every vital string, and tears my heart.
Mercy can grant no more, nor I petition,
Than to fall dead this instant, and forget it.
I look towards heaven in vain. Gape wide, oh!
earth,

And bury, bury deep this load of anguish.

Dutchess. Be not so lost. Hear, oh! hear me,
Juan,

My lord, my life, my love! Wilt thou not speak?
He heeds me not. What shall I say to move
him?

For pity's sake look up! Oh! think, Braganza,
Could Spain behold thee thus—

Duke. Oh! no, Louisa;
No eye shall see me melt. I will be calm,

Still, silent, motionless! Oh! tough, tough heart,
Would I could weep to ease thee!

Dutchess. Here, weep here;
Pour the warm stream into this faithful breast;
Thy sorrows here shall find a kindred source,
Which flows for every tear with drops of blood.
Now summon all thy soul. Behold, he comes
To thunder our irrevocable doom.

Enter RIBIRO.

Ribiro. Oh! for an angel's organ to proclaim
Such gratulations as no tongue can speak,
Nor mortal breast conceive—joy, boundless joy!

Duke. Am I awake? Thou canst not mean to
mock me.

Ribiro. I shall go wild with transport. On my
knee,
I beg you to forgive the cruel shock
This tongue (heaven knows with what severe
reluctance!)

So lately gave to all your dearest hopes.

Duke. No; let me take that posture: for I
swear,

Though yet I know not why, my lighten'd heart
Beats freer, and seems eas'd of half its burthen.
Forgive my strong impatience—quickly tell me.

Ribiro. Still ignorant of our intended vengeance,
Velasquez is return'd. Our gallant friends
Were wrong'd by rash suspicion.

Duke. Hear I right?
Or is't illusion all? (*Embracing him.*) Thus let me
thank thee.

Louisa, then, is safe. Fountain of mercy!
These late despairing arms again enfold her,—
My queen, my love, my wife!

Dutchess. Flow, flow my tears;
Take, bounteous lord of all! this melting tribute;
My heart can give no more for all thy goodness.

Duke. And now disclose this wonder.

Ribiro. Thus, my lord,
When, at the appointed time, our two brave
friends

Were hast'ning to Almada, near the square,
Velasquez and his followers cross'd their steps,
Their course seem'd towards the river; struck
with fear,

And ignorant what cause, at that late hour,
Could draw him from the palace, straight they
chang'd

Their first intent of joining our assembly,
And, unobserv'd, pursu'd the attending train.
Think what these brave men suffer'd when they
saw

The tyrant climb his barge, and push from shore.
Their swords were half unsheath'd, both half re-
solv'd

To rush at once, and pierce him to the heart;
But prudence, or our fortune, check'd their hands.

Duke. It had been certain ruin. But go on.

Ribiro. An instant pass'd in thought, they seiz'd
a boat,

And, following, anxious hung on all his motions:
Mendoza saw them thus; then hurrying back,

Fill'd us with consternation at the tidings.

Dutchess. Nor was it strange; it wore a dread-
ful aspect;

But fear interprets all things to its danger.

Ribiro. He cross'd the river where Tago's fort
Commands the narrowing stream. The governor
Attended at the gate; a while there pass'd
In short but earnest converse; they took leave;
With basty strides Velasquez re embark'd;
The vessel, to the shore she left, return'd,
And her proud master sought again the palace.

Dutchess. Could not our valiant friends discover
aught

That might reveal his purpose?

Ribiro. Madam, no.
To have inquir'd too near were dangerous ;
Besides, their haste to reassure our hopes,
Press'd their return. But thus we may resolve :
He apprehends some danger imminent.
He sees above his head the gathering cloud,
But knows not when 'twill burst in thunder on him.

Duke. Thanks, gentle friend. Alas ! I tremble still :

As just escap'd from shipwreck, I look round ;
And, tho' I tread on earth,—firm, solid earth,—
See with broad eye the threat'ning surge far off :
Scarce can I credit my conflicting sense,
Or trust our preservation.

Dutchess. Thy glad tale
Has rais'd me from the gulph of black despair,
Even to the topmost pinnacle of joy.
Yes, we shall conquer ! All these dangers past
Will serve but to enrich the future story :
Our children's children shall recount each fear,
And, from the mingled texture of our lives,
Learn to revere that sacred Providence,
That guides the strife of virtue.

Duke. Oh ! Louisa,
I thought I knew the extent of all my fondness ;
That long acquaintance with thy wondrous virtue
Had given thee such dominion o'er my soul,
Time could not add to my transcendent passion :
But when the danger came, it wak'd new fires ;
Presented thee in softer loveliness,
And twin'd thee closer here.

Ribiro. My lord, ere this,
Our friends expect me.

Duke. Let us fly to meet them :
I long to pour into their generous breasts
My cordial greeting.

Dutchess. Go, my dearest Juan ;
To them and all commend me. Such rare zeal
Merits more recompense than our poor thanks
Can, at the best, requite : for souls like theirs,
I'll brook the indignity of foul surmise ;
And virtue wrong'd demands a double homage.

[*Exit.*
Duke. If the good augury of my breast deceive not,

No more such terrors will appal our souls ;
But guilt alone shall tremble. Come, Ribiro.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Castle of Almada.*

ALMADA and several Conspirators, as before, with
MELLO and RODERIC.

Almada. Again our hopes revive : the unloaded
stem
Shakes the wet tempest from its vigorous head,
And rears the swelling harvest to our sight.

Mendoza. After the chillings of this aguish fear,
Methinks I breathe more free ; the vital stream,
In sprightlier tides, flows through its wonted
course,
Warms my whole frame, and doubly mans my
heart.

Almada. And may the generous ardour spread
to all.

Observe me, friends : our numbers must divide
Into four equal bands, all to attack,
At the bell's signal, the four palace gates.
So, every passage barr'd, the foe in vain
May strive to unite, and overwhelm our force.
Myself, with the brave few who have sworn to
follow,

Will rush impetuous on the German guard,
Who, at the northern entrance, hold their station.
The fort be Roderic and Mello's care,

With Ferdinand, Henriquez, and Antonio.
Mendoza, Carlos, and their gallant troop,
Must seize the regent Margaret, and secure
The counsellors of Spain as hostages
For the surrender of the citadel.

Mendoza. Letters to every province are dispers'd
Importing this great change, and all are ready
To shake to earth the intolerable yoke.
Nay, distant India, in her sultry mines,
Shall hear the cheerful sound of liberty ;
Again fair commerce, welcom'd to our shore,
Shall loose her swelling canvas to the winds,
And golden Tagus heave once more to meet her.
But see, the Duke.

Enter DUKE OF BRAGANZA.

Almada. Your unexpected presence,
Like a propitious omen, cheers the night,
And gives a royal sanction to this meeting.

Duke. My wish surpass'd my speed. A call like
this

Might imp the tardiness of feeble age.
The general perseverance in our cause
Transcends all gratitude ; but these wrong'd vir-
tues— (To Mello and Roderic.)

Mello. Pray, forbear ;
The painful error brought its punishment.
Ribiro bore our duties to your grace ?

Duke. He did, and soon will join us. On our
way,

He left me with design once more to view
The posture of the guards ; for still we fear
Some dark, impending mischief from Velasquez.

Almada. Whatever fortune waits upon our
swords,
Your highness must not share the common ha-
zard ;

Lest, in the tumult, some inglorious chance
Deprive your country of its last best bulwark.

Duke. And should I merit to be call'd her bul-
wark,

Or rank with men like you, could I submit
To hear, and not partake the glorious danger ?

Almada. Pray, be advis'd ; in this I must com-
mand.

Duke. Then be it so : but yet should aught be-
tide

To claim the interest of thy prince's arm,
I cannot wrong our friendship to suspect
You will forbear my summons to the field.

Almada. Trust your Almada. Lo ! the night
wears fast ;
Nor are our scatter'd numbers yet return'd.

Enter RIBIRO.

Duke. Welcome, Ribiro ! What intelligence ?

Ribiro. The worst, if we delay. Oh ! had your
eyes

Beheld the sight that blasted mine—

Duke. What sight ?

Ribiro. Lemos is seiz'd this moment ; and Pi-
zarro,

The ready tool of fell Velasquez' crimes,
Leads him to prison.

Duke. Soon we'll wrench the gates,
And from their gloomy caverns draw to light
All that remains of those unhappy men,
Whom, unarraign'd, unheard, the tyrant's nod
Consign'd to horrors nature shakes to think of.

Almada. His triumph will be short. The subtle
fiend

May league with hell to thwart us ; but in vain :
His fate or ours will quickly be decided.

Ribiro. Even now it seems his demon whispers
him

His audit is at hand, and scares his soul.

Anxious at this late hour, he walks his chamber,
Nor seeks the season's rest; and, still more
strange,
The palace guards, stretch'd by their glimmering
fires,
Their arms cast by, lie wrapp'd in thoughtless
sleep.

Duke. Anon, we'll rouse them with so loud a
peal,

That death's dull ear shall hear it.

Almada. *Corea!*

Soon as our work begins, your hardy tribes
Must thro' the streets proclaim Don Juan king.
Press towards the palace; should our friends give
ground,

Sustain their fainting strength.

Corea. We will not fail.

Almada. The general suffrage to thy sword, *Ri-
biro,*

Commits our master work; a deed so envied

That ev'ry trenchant steel of Portugal

(Did not thy gallant zeal demand it first)

Would strike to share the glory.

Ribiro. This shall thank you;

(*Pointing to his sword.*)

And if it reek not with his hated blood,

Exchange it for a distaff.

Almada. Friends, I mean not,

By gloomy presage, to allay your ardour.

We must not look to fortune in this cause;

But on ourselves rely for sure success:

The least disorder in our bold approach,

The least repulse, may drive our engine back.

One brave man's rashness, or one coward's fear,

Turns all our fairest hopes to shame and ruin.

Duke. Now to our stations. Yet, ere we de-
part,

This honest pledge, the soldier's short embrace:

The sweet remembrance, if we fall for freedom,

Will more than soften half the pains of dying;

But if we meet, in stronger clasps renew'd,

Will double all the joys of victory. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Apartments of Velasquez in the
royal palace.*

VELASQUEZ discovered.

Velasq. Why am I hunted by these phantom
fears?

It cannot be my fate. 'Tis nature's weakness.

The spirits rais'd too high, like billows puff'd

By sudden storms, lift up our little bark,

Then slipping from their burthen, sink as fast,

And leave it wreck'd and found'ring.

Enter PIZARRO.

Have you, as I commanded, question'd Lemos?

Pizarro. Just now I left him.

Velasq. Has the slave confess'd?

Pizarro. With sullen calmness he defies your
power,

Or answers but with scorn.

Velasq. We'll find the means

To make him speak more plainly; to bring down

This daring spirit. He is dangerous;

And, under the fair mask of public virtue,

Combines with proud *Almada* and the rest

In dark confed'rac'ry against my state.

Pizarro. He is, my lord, the master-spring that
moves

The factious populace.

Velasq. I know it well;

But I have ta'en such oare, as shall unbinge
Their ill-contriv'd designs. Ere noon, to-morrow,
Don Garcia, with the Spanish veterans
From *Saint Jago's* fortress, shall pour in,
And bend those stubborn necks to due obedience.
How will their disappointed fury rave,
To find their royal demagogue, *Braganza*,
(The idol their vain worship rais'd so high!)
Low levell'd with the earth.—I wonder much
Ramirez not returns: night's latest watch
Will soon be told.

Pizarro. Perhaps he but delays
(For better welcome) to behold the effect
Of the dire venom, and to glad your ears
By telling how your enemy expir'd.

Velasq. It may be so, I cannot doubt the ef-
fect:

Poison administer'd will do its work,
And that most speedily: 'tis swift perdition.

Yet, tho' this hour cuts off my greatest foe,

If my firm soul were capable of fear,

I might distrust the promise of my fortunes.

Pizarro. Wherefore, my lord?

Velasq. I almost blush to tell it:—

Tir'd with the travail of this anxious night,

I threw me on my couch, and try'd to rest;

I try'd in vain; my vex'd lids scarcely clos'd;

Or when a momentary slumber seal'd them,

Strange visions swam before their twilight sense.

But why retrace the hideous phantasy?

Yet still it hovers round me, still remains

A fearful reverence of the past illusion.

Pizarro. Such reverence but degrades a noble
mind,

And sinks its vigour to an infant's weakness.

Beldams and priests infuse these idle fears,

And turn the milk of nature to its bane.

(*Noise at a distance.*)

Velasq. Heard you that noise! Didst thou not
mark, *Pizarro!*

The monk has kept his word—'tis *Juan's* knell:

His followers, who shouted him at noon,

Now wail his death. My genius now has room;

Their sorrows are my triumph, and proclaim

Assur'd success to my aspiring soul.

Pizarro. Sure, 'tis the din of clashing arms—
Again!—

It comes this way.

Enter an Officer, with his sword drawn.

Velasq. Ha! bleeding! Speak:

Know you the cause? Speak; instant speak.

Officer. Too well.

The raging multitude have for'd their way;

Their cry is, "Where's the tyrant? where's *Ve-
lasquez?*"

Don Juan's at their head, and guides the storm.

Velasq. *Juan* alive! Eternal silence seize thee!

Impossible!

Officer. These eyes, my lord, beheld him;

Saw his rais'd arm—

Velasq. Ha! am I then betray'd!

Perdition catch *Ramirez!* You, *Pizarro,*

Collect my scatter'd train—I'll forth, and meet

The rebel's sword.

Pizarro. Be not so rash,

Nor venture singly.

[*Exit Velasquez.*]

Officer. He rushes on his death.

Two of my soldiers are already slain,

Striving to bar the outward palace gates;

Where, like a tide, the frantic people press,

Bearing down all before them.

Pizarro. Hence; begone!

The uproar's louder—Wake the sleeping grooms;

Bid them bring arms—Alarm the magistrates—

Send to the guard, and draw them to the square.

[*Exit Officer.*]

Re-enter VELASQUEZ.

Velasq. Ruin'd! and one! all's lost! The streets
are throng'd

With raging citizens. A furious band
Of armed Portuguese just now are mounting.
Fate's bloody book is open'd, and I read
My dreadful doom. Yet, I'll not tamely yield;
But grapple to the last with destiny.

Pizarro. All is not lost; perhaps some means
are left.

Velasq. Just at the gate, I met the dastard monk
Struggling for entrance: scarce his breath suffic'd
To tell me that our purpose had miscarried,
And Juan lives, I stabb'd him to the heart;
The best reward for unperforming fear.

Pizarro. Think not of him; but save yourself
by flight.

Velasq. Where can I fly? I am beset, de-
voted—

Our foes, like famish'd blood-hounds, are abroad,
And have us in the wind.

Pizarro. Resolve at once.

The postern's yet unforc'd; that way escape:
Disguise yourself, and fly to Juan's palace;
'Tis but the terrace length; implore his mercy:
It is the foolish weakness of his nature
To spare where he may punish.

Velasq. Ask my life!

No, rather let me perish. Hold! his wife—
Perhaps alone, unguarded. If I fall,
I'll leave a scorpion in the traitor's breast,
Shall make him curse the hour he rous'd my fury.
[*Exit.*]

Pizarro. Now let the tempest rise. Oh! fickle
fortune,

This moment mounted to thy giddy top,
Now whirl'd to earth, and grov'ling—Hark! they
come.

Enter RIBIRO, with other Conspirators.

Ribiro. Search all the chambers. If the villain
'scape,

Our work's but half accomplish'd.

Pizarro. Pass no further.

Ribiro. This is the tyrant's counsellor.

Where is thy master, Spaniard?

Pizarro. Safe, I hope,

From lawless rage like thine; and still will live
To punish this outrageous violence.

Ribiro. Insolent slave! and yet I like thy cou-
rage.

'Tis vain to strive, deliver up thy sword.

I will not force thee to betray thy master,

Perfidious as he is: even in a foe,

I can discern a virtue, and esteem it.

Gonzalez, guard him safe; and rest disperse,
And leave no place unsearch'd. He must be
found;

But by your loves, I charge you kill him not:

Rob not my sword, but leave that stroke for me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Duke of Braganza's Palace.*

*Enter DUTCHESS OF BRAGANZA; an Attendant
following.*

Dutchess. No, Ines, no; I love my husband
much,

But more his honour. Could I press his stay

In tame inaction here to wait the event,

While almost in his sight, his crown and glory

Hang on the doubtful fate of others' swords?

Would he have heard me? No, I knew him better.

Soon as Almada's danger reach'd his ear,

Who twice repuls'd could scarce renew the charge,

Swift as a jav'lin cuts the whistling air,

He snatch'd his sword, and breaking from my
arms,

Rush'd to the fight, and join'd the warring throng.

Ines. That favouring power, which has so oft
preserv'd,

Will not forsake him now.

Dutchess. Oh! grant it, heaven!

Go, Ines, to the terrace, and observe

If any friend (for, sure, I may expect it)

Bring tidings from my husband. [*Exit Ines.*]

Would this arm,

This feeble arm, had strength to second him!

The conflict here is worse. My restless heart,

Swell'd with eventful expectation, throbs

And feels its bounds too narrow. Fear on fear,

Like light reflected from the dancing wave,

Visits all places, but can rest in none.

The distant shouts that break the morning sky,

Lift up awhile my mounting thoughts to heaven,

Then, sinking, leave them to fall down as low,

In boding apprehension.—Welcome, welcome!

Enter MENDOZA.

What of my lord?

Mendoza. He bade me fly to greet you;

Himself awhile detain'd to stop the rage

Of cruelty and carnage.

Dutchess. He returns,

Unhurt, victorious to these happy arms?

Mendoza. All, all your fondest wish could form
he brings—

Crown, conquest, all. Oppression is no more;

Pierc'd by a thousand wounds the giant dies;

While free-born men, with fearless gaze, walk
round,

And view the monster's bulk.

Dutchess. I would know more:

Was it a dear-bought triumph? Must we mourn

The fall of many friends?

Mendoza. Scarce one of note

But lives to share our joy. The regent seiz'd,

Gave orders for the citadel's surrender,

To save the threaten'd lives of the whole council,

Whom sleeping we secur'd. Poorly content

To obey her mandate, though he knew it forc'd,

The dastard governor resign'd his charge,

And struck the Austrian banner. Such the power

Of Juan's royal name, and conquering arm.

The rest himself will tell. I must return.

Abroad, the wild commotion rages still:

The king may want my service. Angels guard
you. [*Exit.*]

Dutchess. Oh! fly, begone! lose not a thought
on me.

Now to thy rest, my soul, thy pray'rs are heard.

From this white hour, the bright, revolving sun,

With kinder beams, shall view this smiling land:

A grateful people, by my Juan's arm,

Rescu'd from shameful bonds, shall bless his name,

And own him their preserver.

Enter INES.

From my lord?

Ines. Madam, not yet. A stranger at the gate,

Disguis'd, and almost breathless with his fears,

With earnest importunity, entreats

He may have leave to cast him at your feet.

His accents mov'd me much; he seems afflicted.

Dutchess. Some wretch escap'd from the pur-
suer's rage,

And flies for shelter here. Yes, let him come.

[*Exit Ines.*]

Would I could save them all! My woman's soul,

Forc'd from her place in this tumultuous scene,

But ill supports the assum'd severity,

And finds her native seat in soft compassion.

Enter VELASQUEZ, disguised.

Whoe'er thou art, be safe. The greedy sword

Will have enough of death, and well may spare
 One fugitive, who shuns its cruel edge
 To wait the stroke of nature. Trust thy safety.
 Why do thy doubtful eyes so oft look round?
 Here are no enemies. My word is pass'd,
 Inviolable as recorded oaths.
 Methinks I have seen that face. Say, art thou
 not—

Velasq. The man you most should fear, most
 hate.

Dutchess. Velasquez?

Velasq. Yes, that devoted wretch, the lost Ve-
 lasquez!

From the high top of proud prosperity,
 Sunk to this ignominy.

Dutchess. Presumptuous man!

If mercy could know bounds, thy monstrous crimes
 Almost exceed them. Speak, then, what could urge thee

To seek the shelter of this hostile roof,
 And trust a virtue to thy soul a stranger?

Velasq. Fate left no second choice. Close at
 my heels,

Revenge and death insatiably pursu'd;
 Fear lent me speed, and this way wing'd my flight.
 Why flash those eyes with anger? Royal lady,
 Fortune has stripp'd me of the power to injure:
 A stingsless serpent, a poor fang-drawn lion,
 Fitter for scorn than terror.

Dutchess. Thou art fallen!

Yet, let me not insult thy alter'd state,
 By pitying or upbraiding. If thy life
 Be worth the acceptance, take it; and, hereafter,
 Wash out the foulness of thy former deeds,
 By penitence and better purposes.

(*Shouts within.*)

Those joyful sounds proclaim my Juan near.

Retire awhile, till I prepare my lord
 (*To 'Velasquez.*)

To shield thee from the angry nobles' rage.

All were combin'd to take thy forfeit life.

Duke. (*Without.*) Throw wide the palace gates;
 let all have entrance.

Dutchess. His well-known voice. 'Tis he, 'tis
 he himself!

Duke. (*Without.*) Where is my queen?

Dutchess. Quick let me fly to meet him!

Fly to my hero's breast!

(*Velasquez seizes her, and draws a dagger.*)

Velasq. Hold, madam, hold!

Thus I arrest your transports.

Dutchess. Barbarian! monster!

Enter DUKE OF BRAGANZA.

Duke. What sounds are these? Horror! Inhu-
 man slave!

Torn thy fell poniard here.

Velasq. Approach not, stir not;

Or, by the blackest furies hell e'er loos'd,
 This dagger drinks her blood.

Duke. See, I obey;

I breathe not, stir not, I am rooted here:
 Here will I grow for ages.

Dutchess. Oh, my Juan!

Duke. Oh, horrible! Does Juan live for this?

Curs'd be the fatal fire that led my steps

To follow false ambition, while I left

To lurking robbers an unguarded prize;

This gem more worth than crowns or worlds can
 ransom.

Velasq. Take back a name more foul, thou dark
 usurper!

Was it for this, thy unsuspecting prince,

With lavish bounty, to thy faithless hand

Trusted his royal functions? Thus to arm

'Gainst his own breast, thy black ingratitude.

Duke. Must I endure it?

Dutchess. Out, false hypocrite!

Thy tyrant's snares were found; his flimsy nets,
 To catch that precious life, long since unravell'd:
 Thy conscious cheek avows it.

Velasq. Be it so.

Dutchess. Coward! perfidious coward! is it
 thus,

Thus you require—

Velasq. Thy foolish pity—thus—

Hear me, thou rebel, is this woman dear?

Duke. Oh, heavens!

Velasq. Thy straining eyes, thy agonizing heart,
 Thy life's inglorious dotage all proclaim it.

Dutchess. Peace, devil, peace, nor wound his
 generous soul

By taunts that fiends might blush at.

Duke. Speak thy purpose.

Velasq. Then briefly thus: call off thy traitorous
 guards,

The fruits of thy foul treason, every post,
 Seiz'd by thy midnight plots, thy rebel arms
 Restore again to Spain; back to the palace
 Give me safe conduct—to thy oaths I trust not,
 It must be done this instant—leave my power
 To intercede with Spain for thy full pardon,
 And grace to all, whom thy ill-star'd ambition
 Led to this base revolt; else, by my rage,
 The boiling rage that works my soul to frenzy,
 Thou shalt behold this beautiful bosom gor'd,
 All over gash'd and mangled.

Dutchess. Strike this instant.

Duke. Hold, ruffian, hold!

Dutchess. Give me a thousand deaths;

Here let me fall a glorious sacrifice,

Rather than buy my life by such dishonour.

If thy fond love accept these shameful terms,

(*To the Duke.*)

That moment is my last; these hands shall end me.
 Blood-thirsty tyger, glut thy fury here.

(*To Velasquez.*)

Velasq. Her courage blasts my purpose. (*Aside.*)

Dost thou brave me?

Dutchess. Defy thee; yes; feel, do I shrink or
 tremble?

Serene, undaunted will I meet the blow;
 But ev'ry drop that stains thy reeking hands,
 In thy last pangs shall cry for vengeance on thee.
 Furies shall seize thee, shake their scorpion
 whips,

And in thy deafen'd ears still holloa murder!

Velasq. No more! Resolve; (*to the Duke*) not
 heaven itself can save her—

Enter RAMIREZ, wounded.

Ha! darkness cover me! he still alive!

Fate, thou hast caught me. Every hope is lost.

Enter ALMADA, RIBIRO, MENDOZA, and others.

(*The Duke and Dutchess run to each other's arms.*

Velasquez is seized.)

Duke. I have thee once again, my heart's best
 treasure,

Sav'd from the vulture's talons. Oh! dire fiend!

Velasq. Unhand me. No; though earth and hell
 conspire—

Dutchess. Blasphemer, down, and own a power
 above thee.

Ribiro. Secure this monster. Read this paper,
 madam.

Returning from the charge we found that wretch
 Stretch'd in our way and welt'ring in his blood;
 Earnest he begg'd we should commit to note
 These few short words, and bear them to the
 Duke:

That done, he dragg'd his bleeding body on,

And came to die before him.

Duke. Oh! Ramirez,

Ev'n in this day of joy my heart runs o'er
With sorrow for thy fate. What cruel hand—

Ramirez. A villain's hand, yet heaven directed
it.

I have not strength to publish all my shame,
That roll contains it. This wide gaping wound,
My deep remorse, may expiate my crime;
But, oh! that tempter—

Duke. Ha! he faints; support him.

Thy crime! what crime?

Ramirez. Thy happier star prevail'd,
Else hadst thou died even by the pious act
That seals our peace above.

Duke. Merciful powers!

Ramirez. Yet ere I sink, speak comfort to my
soul,

And bless me with forgiveness.

Duke. Take it freely.

Ramirez. Enough; I die contented.

[*He is led off.*]

Dutchess. Oh! my Juan,
Peruse that tale and wonder. Impious wretch,
Well might my heart stand still, my blood run
cold,

And struggling nature murmur strong reluctance
Against my foolish pity, while I meant
To step between thee and the braudish'd bolt,
To rescue from the stroke of righteous justice
The foul sncborner of my husband's murder.

Velasq. Curse on the coward's fears prevented
it!

Wither these sinews that relax'd their hold,
And left thy feeble wing to soar above me.

Duke. Hence with that villain; drag him from
my sight.

Till awful justice doom his forfeit life,
Let heaviest chains secure him. Hence, begone!

Velasq. Yes, in your gloomiest dungeons plunge
me down.

Welcome, congenial darkness! horrors hail!
No more these loathing eyes shall view that sun,
Whose irksome beams light up thy pageant
triumph. [*Led off by Ribiro and others.*]

Duke. Thou ever present, all protecting power!
Through what dark clouds of thick involving
danger

Thy watchful providence has led my steps!
The imagin'd woes that sunk me in despair,
Thou mad'st the wondrous instruments to save
me.

Dutchess. I feel, I own the high supremacy;
Yet have I much to ask—thy victory—

Duke. For that our thanks to this brave man are
due.

He chose the post of danger, and expos'd
His dauntless breast against the stubborn force
Of steady northern courage.

Almada. Twice was I down,
And twice my prince's valour rescu'd me.

Duke. For ever hallow'd be the well pois'd
blade

That sav'd that reverend head.

Dutchess. Fortune was kind, Almada, to com-
mit

Your safety to the arm you taught to conquer.

Almada. Henceforth I more shall prize that
trifle life,

Since now I owe it to my sovereign's valour.

Enter RIBIRO.

Ribiro. Vengeance, thy debt is paid. The ty-
rant's dead.

Duke. Say'st thou? Velasquez?

Ribiro. Ay; what was Velasquez,
Dispers'd and mangled by the people's rage,
In bloody fragments stains a thousand hands;
Like ravenous wolves by eager famine pinch'd,
With worrying fangs they dragg'd him from my
grasp,

And in my sight tore out his reeking entrails.

Duke. His blood be on his head; and may his
end,

Provok'd by crimes beyond the reach of pardon,
Strike terror to the souls of impious men,

Who own no God, but from his pow'r to punish.
[*Exeunt.*]

THE CARMELITE;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND.



Act V.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

SAINT VALORI
LORD HILDEBRAND
LORD DE COURCI

MONTGOMERI
GYFFORD
FITZ-ALLAN

RAYMOND
MATILDA
ATTENDANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A rocky Shore, with a view of the sea, at break of day.

Enter FITZ-ALLAN and RAYMOND, meeting.

Raym. Well met, Fitz-Allan; what's the time of day?

Fitz-A. Broad morning by the hour.

Raym. Sleeps the sun yet?

Or has the stormy south, that howls so loud,
Blown out his untrimm'd lamp, and left us here
To be witch-riden by this hag of night,
Out of time's natural course?

Fitz-A. Methinks, the winds,
Which peal'd like thunder thro' Glendarlock's
towers,

Have lower'd their note a pitch; the flecker'd
Lifting their misty curtain in the east,
Unmask the weeping day.

Enter MONTGOMERI, hastily.

Mont. Oh! are you men?

Have you less mercy than the winds and waves,
That you stand here aloof?

Fitz-A. Why, what has chanc'd?

Mont. A noble vessel breaks upon the rocks,
That jut from old Dunnose's rugged base;
And, as the floating fragments drive ashore,
Our plund'ring islanders (convert their hearts,
Holy St. Michael!) dash the drowning wretches
From the poor wreck they cling to, and engulf
them [me!]

Quick in the boiling waves: by heav'n that made
I could forswear my nature, when I see
Man so degenerate!

Raym. Lo! we are ready:

Lead to the beach.

Mont. Alas! 'tis now too late:

I had not left it but that all was lost:
The element had mercy, man had none.

Two I have sav'd; the one a Carmelite,
Noble the other in his mien and habit;
I left them in the outskirts of the grove;
Let us go forth, my friends, and bring them in:
You to that quarter, I to this. Away. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter LORD HILDEBRAND and SAINT VALORI.

Saint V. Bear up, Lord Hildebrand; there's hope
in view.

Seest thou yon turrets, that o'er top the wood?
There we may shelter from the storm, and men
More merciless than rocks and winds, that wreck'd our
Our strong-ribb'd galley in the foaming surge.

Lord H. I see the towers you point at, but I fear
My limbs will fail their burden ere we reach them.
Let me lie down beneath these oaks, and die.

Saint V. If thus you shake with the soul's ague,
fear,

Back to the sea, and seek the death you fled from;
Make not a coward's grave on English ground;
Your life is stak'd, your gauntlet is exchang'd,
Each drop of blood about you is in pledge
To meet the champion of Saint Valori,

A lady's champion, in King Henry's lists:
There fight; or if you needs must die, die there;
Fall as a Norman knight should fall, in arms.

Lord H. Father, your words accord not with
your needs.

Saint V. Our ancestors were holy men, and they
Ordain'd the combat, as the test of truth;
Let them who made the law defend the law,
Our part is to obey it. Hark! who comes?
The islanders will be upon us. Staud!

Re-enter FITZ-ALLAN and RAYMOND.

Fitz-A. What, ho! Montgomeri! the men are
found.

Saint V. Inhuman Englishmen! Will you destroy
Your brethren? We are Normans.

Re-enter MONTGOMERI.

Mont. Ye are men,
Let that suffice; we are no savages.

Saint V. 'Tis the brave youth who sav'd us.

Mont. Heav'n hath sav'd you, [death:
To heav'n give thanks, oh! men redeem'd from
All else have perish'd. 'Tis a barbarous coast.

Saint V. How is your island nam'd?

Mont. The Isle of Wight. [fatal!

Saint V. Alas! that isle so fair should prove so
And you our benefactor, by what name
Shall we record you in our prayers?

Mont. I am call'd
Montgomery.

Saint V. 'Twill be our grateful office,
Generous Montgomery, to make suit to heaven
To bless, reward, and from distress like ours
Protect you ever.

Mont. Now declare thyself, [dumb,
And this thy mournful friend, whom grief makes
Say who he is.

Lord H. A wretch without a name.

Saint V. A gentleman of Normandy he is,
One who has seen good days. 'Tis now no time
To tell you further: he has wounds about him,
And bruises dealt him on the craggy beach,
That cry for charity. Whose is that castle?

Mont. A lady's, whom we serve, of Norman
birth. [Normans;

Saint V. Then lead us to her gates, for we are
Poor, helpless men, fainting with want of food
And over-watching: tedious nights and days
We struggled with the storm: the greedy deep
Has swallow'd up our ship, our friends, our all,
And left us to your mercy. Sure, your lady,
Who owns so fair a mansion, owns withal
A heart to give us welcome. You are silent.

Fitz-A. To save you, and supply your pressing
wants

With food and raiment, and what else you need,
We promise, nothing doubting: more than this
Stands not within our privilege: no stranger
Enters her castle.

Saint V. Wherefore this exclusion?
What can she fear from us?

Fitz-A. Ask not a reason;
We question not her orders, but obey them.

Saint V. Then lay us down before her castle-
gates,

And let us die: inhospitable gates!
Your roofs shall echo with our famish'd shrieks.
A Norman she! impossible: our wolves
Have hearts more pitiful.

Mont. Your saints in bliss,
Your calendar of martyrs does not own
A soul more pure, a virtue more sublime:
Her very name will strike defamers dumb.

Saint V. Speak it.

Mont. Saint Valori.

Saint V. Uphold me, heaven!
The ways of Providence are full of wonder,
And all its works are mercy. How now, sir!
Will you betray yourself? what shakes you thus?

Lord H. I sicken at the heart: let me go hence,
And make myself a grave.

Saint V. Be patient: stay!
And has your lady here consum'd her youth
In pensive solitude? Twenty long years,
And still a widow?

Mont. Still a mournful widow. [yet

Saint V. Has she such sorrows of her own, and
No heart to pity ours? It cannot be:
I'll not believe but she will take us in,
And comfort her poor countrymen.

Mont. Forbid it, heav'n,
That misery thus should plead, and no friend found
To speak in its behalf! I'll move her for you.

Saint V. The mother of our Lord reward you
'Twill be a Christian deed. [for it!

Fitz-A. Montgomery, turn:

Have you your senses? the attempt is madness.

Raym. Where is the man, native or foreigner,
(Inmates excepted,) ever pass'd her doors?
Who dares to ask it?

Mont. I; Montgomery.

Raym. So dare not I.

Fitz-A. Nor I: success attend you!
But share the attempt I dare not; so, farewell!

[Exit with Raymond.

Mont. Farewell to both! Strangers, be not dis-
may'd,

I'll soon return; the place will be your safeguard.
[Exit.

Saint V. Lord Hildebrand, stand not aghast:
you see

The youth is confident: look up and live!

Lord H. By my soul's penitence, I'd rather die
Unpitied, starv'd, and to her castle dogs
Bequeath my untomb'd carcass, than receive
Life from her hands; the widow of Saint Valori!
That brave, heroic champion of the cross,
Who, from the holy wars returning home,
Within the rugged Pyrenaean pass—

Saint V. No more of that: I have your full con-
fession;

You slew Saint Valori, and now his widow
Provokes you by her champion to defend
The rights you seiz'd, the title you inherit,
And hold by bloody charter. What's your fear?
Saint Valori's dead; he cannot rise again,
And heard you in the lists.

Lord H. Oh! that he could;
So I were not a murderer.

Saint V. Grant you slew him, [wound
Twenty long years have stanch'd the bleeding
Of him you slew, and laid his angry ghost.
Have you not rear'd his stately tomb, endow'd
The abbey of Saint Valori, and purchas'd
Perpetual masses to reclaim his soul
From purgatory's bondage? Have you faith
In absolution's power, and do you doubt
If yet atonement's made?

Lord H. I do perceive
The hand of heav'n hangs o'er me and my house:
Why am I childless else? seven sons swept off
To their untimely graves; their wretched mother
By her own hand in raging frenzy died;
And last behold me here, forlorn, abandon'd,
At life's last hour, before her surly gate,
Deaf to my hungry cries: and shall we rank
Such judgments in the casual course of things?
To me 'tis palpable that heav'nly justice
Puts nature by, and to the swelling sum
Of my uncancell'd crimes adds all the lives
Of them who sunk this morning.

Saint V. What know'st thou,
Blind or obdurate man? Shall we despond,
On whom the light of this deliverance shines?
No, let us boldly follow: there's a voice
Augurs within me wondrous things, and new,
Now on the moment's point: for, of a certain,
I know this lady shall set wide her gates
To give us joyful welcome: sable weeds
Shall turn to bridal robes, and joy shall ring
Thro' all her festive mansion, where of late
Deep groans and doleful lamentations howl'd.
Therefore no more: from my prophetic lips
Receive heaven's mandate—and behold 'tis here!

Enter MONTGOMERI.

Mont. Health to your hopes, that were but now
so sick!

Ye sons of sadness, cast off your despair;
Heav'n has vouchsaf'd deliverance, and sends
Its angel messenger in person to you.

Saint V. Then let me kneel, and hail the heav'nly
vision! (Kneels.)

Enter MATILDA.

To Him, to Him alone, who, by the hand,

Leads his unseeing creatures thro' the vale
Of sorrow, to the day-spring of their hope,
Be praise and adoration! A poor monk, (*Rising*)
Who has trod many a weary league, as far
As there was Christian ground to carry him,
Asks for himself, and for this mournful man,
Newly escap'd from shipwreck, food and rest,
Warmth, and the shelter of your peaceful roof.

Mat. Are ye of Normandy?

Saint V. We are of Normandy:

But were we not your countrymen, distress
Like ours would make us so. Two of your servants
Spoke harshly, and had thrust us from your gates,
But for this charitable youth.

Mat. Alas!

I am a helpless solitary woman,
A widow, who have lost—Oh, God! oh, God!
'Twill turn my brain to speak of what I've lost:
It is amongst the lightest of my griefs
That I have lost myself.

Saint V. Thyself?

Mat. My senses:

At best they are but half my own, sometimes
I am bereft of all. Therefore, I lead
On this lone coast a melancholy life,
And shut my gate, but not my charity,
Against the stranger.

Saint V. Oh! support me, heav'n!

'Tis she, 'tis she! that woe-tun'd voice is hers;
Those eyes, that cast their pale and waning fires
With such a melting languor thro' my soul,
Those eyes are her's and sorrow's. Heart, be still!
She speaks again. (*Aside*.)

Mat. You shall have food and clothing;

I'll bring you medicines for your bruised wounds.
What else you need, declare.

Saint V. If I speak now,

She cannot bear it, it will turn her brain. [men—
What shall I say? (*Aside*).—We are your country-
Oh! my full heart! Oh! anguish to dissemble!

Mat. Nay, if you weep—

Saint V. Let us but touch your altar:

We are the sole sad relics of the wreck.
Let us but kneel and offer up one prayer
For our soul's peace, then turn us forth to die.

Mat. Mercy forbid it! Oh! approach and enter.

If you can weep, we will converse whole days,
And speak no other language; we will sit,
Like fountain statues, face to face oppos'd,
And each to other tell our griefs in tears,
Yet neither utter word. Pray you, pass on;
I had not been thus strict, but that I hear
Lord Hildebrand is on the seas: I hope
You are not of his friends.

Lord H. Death to my heart!

Oh! father Carmelite, I must have leave—

Saint V. On your salvation, peace!

Mat. What would he say? [away;

Saint V. His brain begins to turn: take him
I pray you, lead him hence.

[*Montgomeri leads off Hildebrand.*

Mat. Alas! I pity him.

Why dost thou stay behind? Whence that emotion?
What wouldst thou more?

Saint V. I would invoke a blessing,

But that each sainted spirit in the skies
Will be thy better advocate.

Mat. Remember,

When you converse with heav'n, there is a wretch
Who will be glad of any good man's prayers.
Farewell.

Saint V. Oh! tell me, have you, then, endur'd

Twenty long years of mournful widowhood?

Mat. They say 'tis twenty years ago he died:

I cannot speak of time; it may be so;

Yet I should think 'twas yesterday.

Saint V. I saw you—

Mat. You saw me! When?

Saint V. When you did wed your lord.

The paragon of all this world you was.
Grief has gone o'er you like a wintry cloud.
You've heard this voice before.

Mat. I think I have:

It gives a painful sense of former days:
I've heard such voices in my dreams; sometimes
Convers'd with them all night; but then, they told
me

My senses wander'd. Pray you, do not harm me:
Leave me, good monk; indeed I know you not.

Saint V. I wore no monkish cowl in that gay hour
When you wore bridal white. On Pagan ground,
Beneath the banner of the Christian cross,
Faithful I fought; I was God's soldier, then,
Tho' now his peaceful servant.

Mat. You have fought

Under the Christian cross? You shake my brain.

Saint V. Peace to your thoughts! I will no farther
move you:

Shall I not lead you hence?

Mat. Stand off; stand off!

The murderer of Saint Valori is abroad;
The bloody Hildebrand is on the seas.
Rise, rise, ye waves! blow from all points, ye winds,
And whelm th' accur'd plank that wafts him over
In fathomless perdition! Let him sink,
He and his hateful crew! let none escape,
Not one; or if one, let him only breathe
To tell his tale, and die! Away, begone!
You've made me mad.

Saint V. I was Saint Valori's friend:

He never yet bled with the battle's wound,
But I shed drop for drop: when o'er the sands
Of sultry Palestine with panting heart
He march'd, my panting heart with his kept time,
And number'd thro' for thro'.

Mat. Where are my people?

What, ho! Montgomeri! Lead, lead me hence.

Re-enter MONTGOMERI, hastily, with GYFFORD.

Give me thine arm; support me. Oh! 'tis well.
To horse, to horse! I have a champion now,
Whose hand, heart, soul, are mine, and mine are his;
One who has valour to assert my cause,
And worth to wear the honours he defends.

Mont. What hast thou done, old man?

Gyf. Stay not to question;

Look to the lady: leave the monk with me.

Mat. Come, let us hence; I do not live without
thee. [*Exit with Mont.*

Saint V. Amazement! Speak, what kindred, what
affection,

What passion binds her to that youth? Resolve me,
Who and what is he?

Gyf. You are curious, father.

Who he may be I know not; what he was
I well remember.

Saint V. What was he?

Gyf. Her page;

A menial thing, no better than myself.

Saint V. Heavens! can it be? Will she so far
descend

From her great name, to wanton with her page?
Saw you the look she gave him?

Gyf. I did see it. [them,

Saint V. It seem'd as tho' his eyes had magic in
That charm'd away her madness. Ha! you sigh:
What means that pensive movement of your head?
Answer.

Gyf. Good father, question me no more.

Fortune can level all things in this world,
Pull down the mighty and exalt the mean:

But you and I, methinks, have outdiv'd wonders.

Now to the castle: shut both ears and eyes:
Hear without noting; see, but not observe. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Matilda's castle.*

Enter SAINT VALORI and GYFFORD.

Gyf. With awful wonder I survey and hear you,
Whilst thro' the veil of that disguiseful habit,

Thro' all the changes time and toil have wrought
In that once noble visage, I scarce trace
The lineaments of my most honour'd lord.

Saint V. Awake from this surprise, and hear me,
Gyfford.

I am no spectre, but thy living master:
Wounded and breathless, on the ground I lay
Well ring in blood: th' assassins fled and left me;
There I had soon expir'd, but that a company
Of merchants, journeying from Venice, found me,
And charitably stanch'd my bleeding wounds.
To their own homes they bore me: heal'd, restor'd,
In a Venetian galley I embark'd,
And sail'd for Genoa; but ere we reach'd
Our destin'd port, a Saracen assail'd
And master'd our weak crew. To tell the tale
Of my captivity, escape, return,
Would ask more leisure, and a mind at ease.

Gyf. But why does brave Saitot Valori appear
A bearded Carmelite?

Saint V. This holy habit,
Thro' a long course of dangerous pilgrimage,
Has been my saving passport: thus attir'd,
I reach'd my native castle, found it lorded
By the usurper Hildebraod; with zeal
I burn'd to call my faithful people round me,
And throw off my disguise; this I had done,
But straight arriv'd a herald from King Henry
To warn him to the lists against the champion
Of my supposed widow: the pale coward
Shrunk, yet obey'd the summons. The thought
struck me

To join his train, and in my sovereign's presence,
At the last trumpet's signal, to come forth
Before the king, the lords, and armed knights,
And strike confusion to the cattif's soul.
The rest needs no relation.

Gyf. 'Tis resolv'd
To-morrow for Southampton we depart;
There Henry keeps his court.

Saint V. Why, then, to-morrow
Truth and the morning-sun shall rise together,
And this black night of doubt shall be dispell'd:
Till, then, lock fast my secret in thy heart,
And know me for none other than I seem.
Lo! where they come. Yet, yet I will be patient;
Time will bring all things forth. Gyfford, withdraw.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter MATILDA and MONTGOMERI.

Mat. I think he said he was my husband's friend;
If so, I've been too harsh: reason forsook me,
For he did speak of things that rent my heart:
But let that pass. Dost thou observe, Montgomeri?

Mont. With fix'd attention and devoted heart
I hear, and note your pleasure.

Mat. I am calm,
Thou seest I am, and not about to speak,
As sometimes, when my thoughts obey no order:
Therefore, I pray thee mark: thou must have noted
With what a tenderness I've train'd thee up
From helpless infancy to blooming manhood:
Hast thou not noted this?

Mont. I were most vile
Did I forget it.

Mat. I am sure thou dost not;
For from the moment of thy birth till now
I've nurs'd thy opening virtues, mark'd their growth,
And gloried in the fruit of my adoption:
I've register'd each movement of thy soul,
And find it tun'd to honour's loftiest pitch,
To soft affection modell'd, and to love,
The harmony of nature: my best hopes
Are satisfied, and thou art all I pray'd for.

Mont. What thou hast made me, that I truly am,
And will be ever: hands, head, heart, are your's.

Mat. The day is coming on, the wish'd-for day
(After a night of twice ten tedious years)
At length is coming on: justice is granted:
I go to Henry's court; Lord Hildebrand

Is summon'd to the lists: and where's the man
To avenge the widow's cause?

Mont. Where is the man!
And can you want a champion? Have I liv'd
The creature of your care, the orphan child
Of your adopting charity, the thing
Your plastic bounty fashion'd from the dust
Of abject misery; and does my heart
Utter one drop of blood that is not your's?
One artery that does not beat for you?

Mat. Know, then, I have a champion, noble,
brave,

Heir of the great Saint Valori, my son. [liv'd,
Mont. What do I hear? thy son! Where has he
That I have never seen him? never known
There was a living hero of the name?
Oh! tell me where he is, that I may fly
To do him faithful service, on my knee
Brace on his glittering armour, bear his shield,
The glorious badge of his nobility,
And shout with triumph, when his conqu'ring sword
Cleaves the assassin's crest. Oh! send me hence,
To hail his victory, or share his fall.

Mat. Thou art my son.

Mont. Merciful God! thy son!

Mat. Thou art my son; for thee alone I've liv'd,
For thee I have surviv'd a murder'd husband;
For thee—but it would break thy filial heart
To hear what I have suffer'd; madness seiz'd me,
And many a time, (sweet Jesus intercede,
For I was not myself!) yes, many a time
In my soul's anguish, with my desperate hand
Rais'd for the stroke of death, a thought, a glance
Of thee, my child, has smote my shatter'd brain,
And stopp'd th' impending blow.

Mont. Oh! spare thyself,
Spare me the dread description.

Mat. Thou hast been
Thy mother's guardian angel: furious once,
In the mind's fever, to Glendarlock's roof
Madd'ning I rush'd; there, from the giddy edge
Of the projecting battlements, below,
Measuring the fearful leap, I cast my eye:
Thy cherub form arrested it; my child
Upon the pavement underneath my feet
Sported with infant playfulness; my blood
Drove back upon my heart; suspended, pois'd,
High hung in air, with outstretch'd arms I stood,
Pondering the dreadful deed; thy fate prevail'd,
Nature flew up, and push'd me from the brink:
I shrunk, recoil'd, and started into reason. [ror.

Mont. Oh! terrible to thought. Oh! pictur'd hor-
It pierces to my brain; there's madness in it.

Mat. Yes, sorrow had o'ertur'd thy mother's
brain:

I have been mad, my son; and oftentimes
I find, alas! all is not yet compos'd,
Sound, and at peace: it takes a world of time
To heal the wounds of reason; even now,
When I would fain relate my life's sad story,
I cannot range my scatter'd thoughts in order
To tell it as I should. I pray thee, pardon me;
I'll do my best to recollect myself,
If thou'lt be patient.

Mont. Patient! Oh! thou sufferer!
Oh! thou maternal softness! hear thy son,
Thus kneeling, bathing with his tears thy feet,
Swear to cast off each fond, alluring thought,
The world, its honours, pleasures, and ambition;
Here in this solitude to live with thee,
To thee alone devoted.

Mat. No, my son:
Thou' in this solitude I have conceal'd thee,
Ev'n from thyself conceal'd thee, to evade
A fell usurper's search, and stemm'd the tide
Of nature, gushing to a mother's heart;
Still I have done it in the sacred hope
Of some auspicious hour, when I might shew thee
Bright as thy father's fame.

Mont. I own the cause,
And know how watchfully this hungry vulture
Has hover'd o'er thee on his felon wings.
Now I can solve this solitude around us,
Why thou hast built thine aerie in this crag,
And with a mother's care conceal'd thy young.

Mat. Another day; and then—meanwhile be secret;

Discovery now would but disturb the house
From its sobriety, and mar the time
Of awful preparation. Pass to-morrow!
(Oh! all ye saints and angels, make it happy!)
'Then, if thou com'st a living conqueror home,
This roof, that still has echoed to my groans,
Shall ring with triumphs to Saint Valori's name:
But if—

Mont. Avert the sad, ill-omen'd word!
Thou shalt not name it: my great father's spirit
Swells in my bosom. When my falchion gleams,
When the red cross darts terror from my shield,
The coward's heart shall quail, and heaven's own
arm,

Ere mine can strike, shall lay the murderer low.

Mat. Thy father stirs within thee: hark! methinks

I hear the shrieks of his unburied ghost, [me!
Screaming for vengeance. Oh! support, defend
See where he gleams, he bursts upon my sight!
'Tis he, 'tis he! I clasp him to my heart;
My hero! my Saint Valori! my husband!

(Embraces him.)

Re-enter GYFFORD, unseen.

Gyf. Husband! oh, fatal word! undone for ever!
Mat. I will array thee in a sacred suit,
The very armour my Saint Valori wore,
When in the single combat he unhors'd
And slew the Lord Fitz-Osborn. On that helm
High-plum'd victory again shall stand,
And clap her wings exulting; from that shield
Vengeance with gorgon terrors shall look forth,
Awfully frowning. Ha! what man art thou?

(Discovering Gyfford.)

Gyfford, what wouldst thou? wherefore this intrusion?

Gyf. A noble messenger from Henry's court
Is landed on the isle.

Mat. From the king, say'st thou?

Gyf. A runner of his train, whose utmost speed
Scarce distanc'd him an hour, is now arriv'd,
And gives this warning.

Mat. Did you not inquire
His master's name and title?

Gyf. Lord De Courci.

Mat. A generous and right noble lord he is:
Our Normandy boasts not a worthier baron,
Nor one affianc'd to our house more kindly:
Prepare to give him welcome. Follow me.

[Exit with Montgomeri.

Gyf. Yes, to destruction; for that way thou lead'st.

Husband! her husband! her Saint Valori!
It cannot be. Without the church's rite,
Wed him she could not; to conceal those rites,
And wed by stealth, is here impossible.
What must I think? That he is yet her husband
In meditation only, not in form.
Embracing, too! Oh! mortal stab to honour!
Oh! shame, shame, shame! that I should live to
see it.

Enter SAINT VALORI, hastily.

Saint V. What hast thou seen? My mind is on
the rack;

Thou'st been in conference with thy lady; speak!
If thou hast aught discover'd that affects
My honour, tell it.

Gyf. Hard task you enjoin;
Would rather I were in my grave, than living
To utter what I've seen.

Saint V. Nay, no evasion.

Gyf. For the world's worth I would not with
my knowledge

Add or diminish of the truth one tittle. [truth
Saint V. Gyfford, as thou shalt render up the
To the great Judge of hearts, say what thou know'st
Of my unhappy wife; nor more nor less,
Give me the proof unvarnish'd.

Gyf. I surpris'd

Her and Montgomeri heart to heart embracing—
Saint V. Death! Heart to heart embracing!
Woman, woman! [lay;

Gyf. Fond and entranc'd within his arms she
Then with uplifted, rapturous eyes exclaim'd,
"My hero! my saint Valori! my husband!"

Saint V. Husband! reflect. Art sure she call'd
him husband?

Gyf. If there be faith in man, I've spoke the
truth. [past:

Saint V. Why, then, the truth is out, and all is
I have no more to ask.

Gyf. Hear me with favour;
I'll not abuse the license of old age
And faithful service with too many words.

Saint V. What canst thou tell me? I have one
within

That is my monitor: not unprepar'd
I meet this fatal stroke, nor with revilings
Or impious curses (be my witness, Gyfford!)
Do I profane heav'n's ear, tho' hard and painful
This bitter visitation of its wrath.

Saint V. Tho' to the sure conviction of my senses
I saw and heard what I have now reported,
Yet, circumstances weigh'd, I must believe
As yet, she is not wedded.

Saint V. Ha! not wedded?

Perish the man who dares to breathe a doubt
Of her unspotted chastity. Not wedded!
Yet heart to heart embracing! dreadful thought!
Death in his direst shape approach me rather
Than that dishonest thought!

Gyf. Would I had died

Ere I had seen this day!

Saint V. Wretch that I am,

Why was I snatch'd from slaughter? why deliver'd
From barbarous infidels? why, when o'erwhelm'd
And sinking in th' oblivious deep, preserv'd,
Wash'd like a floating fragment to the shore,
Sav'd, nourish'd, ransom'd by the very hand
That cuts my heart asunder; set in view
Of all my soul held dear; and now, ev'n now,
As I reach forth my hand to seize the goal,
The resting-place and haven of my hope,
Dash'd in a moment back, and lost for ever?

Gyf. Such is the will of heaven! For me, thus
old,

And blighted with misfortune, I've no strength,
No root to bear against this second storm;
There, where I fall, I'll make myself a grave.

Saint V. No more of this: you've heard my last
complaint;

For I must soon put off these monkish weeds,
And what a consecrated knight should do,
Fitting the cross he wears, that must be done.
How stands your preparation for to-morrow?
Will she depart?

Gyf. I think she will; for now
The Lord De Courci, from King Henry sent,
Bears courtly salutation to your lady,
With formal summons to her challenger.

Saint V. If it be that De Courci who was once
My youth's companion, and my bosom friend,
A more accomplish'd knight ne'er carried arms:
His coming is most timely. Tell me, Gyfford,
Rememberest thou the armour which I wore
When in the lists I combatted Fitz-Osborn?
I gave it to my wife.

Gyf. I well remember.

Saint V. And hath she kept it, think'st thou?

Gyf. She hath kept it.

Saint V. 'Tis well; for that's the suit, the very
Which I must wear to-morrow. [suit,

Gyf. Ah! my lord,
She hath bestow'd that armour on her champion;
And young Montgomeri, with to-morrow's dawn,
Starts, like another Phæton, array'd
In substituted splendour: on his arm
He bears the shield of great Saint Valori,
A golden branch of palm, with this device,
"Another, and the same!" 'Twill be a pageant
Glittering as vanity and love can make it. [take?

Saint V. Mournful as death. My armour will she
My shield, my banners, to array her champion?
Let them beware how they divide the spoil
Before the lion's kill'd. Oh! fall of virtue.
Oh! all ye matron powers of modesty;
How time's revolving wheel wears down the edge
Of sharp affliction! Widows' sable weeds
Soon turn to grey; drop a few tears upon them,
And dusky grey is blanch'd to bridal white;
Then comes the sun, shines thro' the drizzling show'r.
And the gay rainbow glows in all its colours. [Exeunt.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in the Castle.

Enter LORD HILDEBRAND and SAINT VALORI.

Lord H. Ah! father Carmelite, where hast thou
been?

Was it well done to leave thy wretched friend
To be devour'd by heart-consuming anguish?

Saint V. I left you to repose.

Lord H. I know it not:

Sleep is my horror; then the furies rise;
Then pale Saint Valori appears before me:
Trembling I wake, cold damps bedew my limbs,
And my couch floats with tears. Is this repose?

Saint V. No; yet it moves my wonder why your
conscience,

Mute for so many years, should on the sudden
Break into voice, and cry so loud against you.
I found you lull'd in a luxurious calm,
Feasting upon the spoils of him you stabb'd;
Your castle flow'd with revelry and wine,
And you the loudest of the sons of riot:
Where was your conscience then?

Lord H. With you it came;

You are the father of my soul's repentance:
Your fascinating eye pervades my breast;
Conscious, abash'd, uncover'd to the heart,
I stand before you; to your ear confide
Things unreveal'd to man. Now, as I see you,
Tho' in religion's peaceful garment cloth'd,
Saint Valori, methinks, appears before me,
Dreadful in arms, and braves me to the lists.

Saint V. Take food and rest, recruit your body's
And you'll forget these fears. [strength,

Lord H. I'll die with famine

Before I'll eat the charitable bread
Of her I made a widow; and for sleep,
I tell thee once again, sleep is my horror.
Methought but now by shipwreck I was plung'd
Into the foaming ocean; on the shore
Your figure stood with beck'ning hand outstretch'd
To snatch me from the waves; cheer'd with the
sight,

Thro' the white surf I struggled; with strong arm
You rais'd me from the gulf; joyful I ran
T' embrace my kind preserver, when at once
Off fell your habit, bright in arms you stood,
And with a voice of thunder cried aloud,
"Villain, avant! I am Saint Valori!"
Then push'd me from the cliff: down, down I fell,
Fathoms on fathoms deep, and sunk for ever.

Saint V. This was your dream.

Lord H. Now hear my waking terrors.

Rous'd by this dream I started; to the wall
Furious I rush'd, to dash my desperate brains:
Burst with the force, a secret door flew open,
Where full in view a lighted altar flew
With holy tapers bright; around it hung

The funeral trophies of Saint Valori;
Red gleam'd the banner of the bloody cross,
And on a tablet underneath was written,
"Pray for the peace of his departed soul!"
Upon my knees I dropp'd, and would have pray'd,
When soon, behold, the lady widow enter'd,
Led by the generous youth who sav'd our lives:
I rose, made low obeisance, and retir'd.

Saint V. You left them there. Did all this pass
in silence?

Lord H. All; and not a word was spoken.

Saint V. Did you note

Her look, her action? How did she dismiss you?
Abruptly, eagerly?

Lord H. With matron grace,
Her hand thus gently waving, she dismiss'd me;
The other hand most lovingly was lock'd
In his on whom she lean'd.

Saint V. No more of this.

Hark! you are summon'd: rouse from this despair;
Shake off your lethargy. (Trumpets.)

Lord H. What trumpet's that?

Saint V. To you, or to your challenger, the last;
Death sounds the knell, and justice seals the doom.

Lord H. My soul sinks down abash'd: I cannot
fight; [murder.

What would you more? I have confess'd the
Saint V. You have confess'd you know not what:
retire!

Go to your chamber; I will quickly follow,
And bring you comfort. [Exeunt.

Enter MATILDA and her Domestic, LORD DE COURCI and his train.

Mat. My noble lord, thrice welcome! you are
come [scene

To glad the mourner's heart, and with your pre-
Make her poor cottage rich.

Lord De C. Most noble lady,
Henry of Normandy, the kingly heir
Of England's mighty conqueror, of his grace
And princely courtesy, by me his servant,
As a most loving father, kindly greets you;
Which salutation past, I am to move you
Upon the matter of your suit afresh,
Its weight and circumstance; how many years
It hath been let to sleep; what forfeiture
And high default you stand in, should it fail:
Conjuring you, as fits a Christian king,
By the lov'd memory of your honour'd lord
Who now hath tenanted the silent grave
These twenty years and more, not to proceed
In this high matter on surmise, or charge
Of doubtful circumstance; the crime alledg'd
Being so heinous, the appeal so bloody,
And he whom you attain so brave and noble.

Mat. I know, my lord, in property the law
Can plead prescription and the time's delay;
But justice, in an inquisition made for blood,
With retrospective eye thro' ages past,
Moves her own pace, nor hears the law's demur.
Why I have let this murder sleep thus long,
Necessity, and not my will, must answer.
The conqueror William, and his furious son,
With iron hand upheld th' oppressor's power,
And stopp'd their ears against the widow's cries.
In painful silence brooding o'er my grief,
On this lone rock, upon the ocean's brink,
Year after year I languish'd, in my dreams
Conversing oft with shadowy shapes and horrors,
That scar'd me into madness. Oh! my lord,
Bear with my weakness: pray, regard me not;
I have a remedy at hand—my tears. (Weeps.)

Lord De C. Sad relict of the bravest, best of men,
Tell not thy griefs to me, nor let my words
(Which by commission, not of choice, I speak)
Shake thy firm purpose; for on England's throne
No tyrant sits, deaf to the widow's cause,
But heav'n's vicegerent, merciful and just,
If stedfast thou art fix'd in thy appeal,

Stedfast in justice is thy sovereign, too.
Bring forth thy knight appelland, for the lists
Expect him, and may heav'n defend the right!

Mat. Thanks to thy royal sender! on my knee
I offer prayers to heaven for length of days,
And blessings shower'd on his anointed head.
Now, gallant lord, you shall behold my champion,
My shepherd boy, who, like the son of Jesse,
Unskill'd in arms, must combat this Philistine.
Montgomeri, come forth!

Enter MONTGOMERI.

Lord De C. Is this your knight? [strength]

Mat. This is my knight. I trust not in the
Of mortal man; heaven will uphold my cause,
And to a murderer's heart will guide the blow,
Tho' from an infant's hand.

Lord De C. Of what degree
Must I report him? In the royal lists,
Against so proud a name as Hildebrand,
The warlike forms of knighthood will demand
That noble shall to noble be oppos'd.

Mat. Not unprepar'd I shall attend the lists;
And, at my sovereign's feet, prefer the proofs
Which honour's forms demand.

Lord De C. You know the peril,
If you fall short.

Mat. I take it on my head.

Lord De C. Where have you serv'd? what bat-
tles have you seen?

Mont. Few and unfortunate have been the fields,
Where I have fought. I serv'd a sinking cause;
Robert of Normandy was my liege lord,
For I am Norman born.

Lord De C. Have you been train'd
In tournaments?

Mont. I never broke a lance,
Nor shall I, as I hope, but in his heart
Who stabb'd Saint Valori.

Lord De C. Noble lady,
I would impart something of nearest import
To your more private ear.

Mat. Let all withdraw. (They withdraw.)

Leave us. And now, my lord and honour'd guest,
Impart your noble thoughts; for sure I am
None others can be native of a soul,
Where courtesy and valour are enshrind,
As in a holy altar, under guard
Of consecrated keepers; therefore, speak.

Lord De C. Let infamy fix on me, when I wrong
A confidence so generous. Heav'n bestow'd
One friend, the pride and blessing of my life;
Heav'n, when you lost a husband, from me also
Took that one friend away, and in his grave
Buried my heart beside him.

Mat. Yes, my lord,
We both have cause to mourn him: I remember
The day he parted for the holy wars,
His manly bosom struggling to repress
Its bursting passion, in those racking moments,
When stern religion rent him from my arms,
Then, even then, in his capacious soul
Friendship had part—you shar'd it with Matilda.
Need I proceed? Ah! no, for you was present,
You took him from me, on your neck he fell;
I parted, sunk, and never saw him more.

Lord De C. 'Twas in those parting moments he
committed

A sacred charge, the very test of friendship,
Your soft, unshelter'd beauty, to my care.
I serv'd, consol'd you, lov'd you as a brother;
But soon Saint Valori call'd me from my charge,
For war and sickness had consum'd our host,
And Palestine was drench'd with Christian blood.
We fought, we conquer'd, and from Pagan hands
Rescued the captive cross: and now command
My zealous heart, you are its mistress still.

Mat. There needs not this, my lord; for I can read
Your zeal without a preface: freely then,
As a friend should, and plainly speak your thoughts.

Lord De C. When rumour of this combat reach'd
Without delay, I sent a trusty page, [my ears,
Offering myself as your devoted knight:
He brought for answer, that you had a champion;
You thank'd me for my offer; cold repulse
Temper'd in courteous phrase! still I submitted
In silence, as became me, to your pleasure,
Musing who this might be—

Mat. And now you find him
A stripling youth unknown, in arms a novice,
And you condemn my choice; these are your
thoughts.

Lord De C. I do confess it. Oh! reflect in time;
Think not, because nature hath cast a form
In fair proportion, strung his youthful joints
With nerves that bear him bounding to the chace,
Or hurl the wrestler in the shouting ring,
That you have train'd a champion to encounter
A combatant so practis'd in the lists,
So valorous in fight as Hildebrand. [my lord,

Mat. What I have done, I've done. Your zeal,
May start new terrors for my hero's danger,
Shake me with new alarms, but change it cannot.

Lord De C. Turn not away, but still with pa-
tience hear me.

Think what you are, great in yourself, yet greater
As brave Saint Valori's widow: oh! preserve
That name untainted; hear what honour consels;
Truth makes me bold, your danger is my warrant.

Mat. You was my husband's friend; I own your
Lo! I am turn'd to hear. Proceed. [plea.

Lord De C. I was his friend,
I am your's also; and as such, I warn you
Against a deed so fatal, that the steel
Of Hildebrand gave not a stab more mortal
To life than this to fame.

Mat. My lord, my lord!
You rise too fast upon me, and advance
Too strongly on so weak a disputant,
So much to seek for reason as I am.

Lord De C. May I not then demand, what is
this boy,

Whom you thus dignify? this page, this lacquey,
The very topmost pitch of whose promotion
Had been to touch the stirrup of Saint Valori?

Mat. What is he!—but you question me too
harshly;

I'll answer to the King; but to a friend
Who treats me with suspicion, I am silent.
You bid me call to memory what I am:
I hope, when thus you school me, you yourself
In your own precepts need no monitor.

I think I am as humble as I should be
Under such hard correction. I acknowledge
Two powerful duties: to my husband one,
The first and strongest; to yourself the next,
As my much-honour'd guest; but I oppose
The tyranny of friendship, which would stamp
Dishonour on the worthy, and forbid
My free affections to direct their choice
Where nature warrants, and my soul approves.

Lord De C. Why, then, there's no perfection in
the sex, [Exit.

Or I had found it here. Farewell to grief;
So much for tears! though twenty years they flow
They wear no channels in a widow's cheeks;
And still the ambush'd smile lurks underneath
The watry surface, ready to start up
At the next lover's summons; now to greet
A hero's passion, now to wed a page.

Enter SAINT VALORI.

Saint V. My Lord De Courci, doth your memory
To recollect a certain pledge of love, [serve
A jewel, which the lady of this house
Gave to her husband by your hands?

Lord De C. A bracelet;
She took it from her arm when they did part:
I well remember it.

Saint V. Was it like this?

[Valori]

Lord De C. The very same; I gave it to Saint
When he embark'd for Palestine.

Saint V. You did:

I had it then; your memory is perfect. [of this?]

Lord De C. You had it then! What must I think

Saint V. Can you this little token keep in mind,
And not remember him you gave it to?

Lord De C. Explain yourself; you speak in
mysteries. [surprise]

Saint V. Be temperate, then; let not your loud
Betray me to the house: I'm here unknown.

Lord De C. Impossible! though the dead rose
Yet this cannot be he. [again,

Saint V. My friend! my friend!

Come to my arms! let this embrace convince you.

Lord De C. Oh, earth and heaven! he lives.

Saint V. He lives, indeed,

To a new life of misery. Be still!

Forbear to question me: another time
Thou shalt hear all, but let this hour be sacred

To friendship's pressing call. My wife! my wife!

Lord De C. Oh! my prophetic fears.

Saint V. Unhappy woman!

For why should I accuse her? twenty years

A mournful widow, and at last to start

So wide from all propriety; and now,

After so brave a struggle, now to sink

Her honour, which still bore so proud a sail

Through the rough tide of time. Oh! bitter

Oh! aggravating shame! [thought!]

Lord De C. Alas! my friend,

How shall I comfort you? I see you point

At young Montgomeri: in friendship's right

I ask'd her private ear, and boldly urg'd

The peril of her fame.

Saint V. And what reply? [I touch'd]

Lord De C. Patient at first she heard; but when

The master-string, and set to view how base

The choice of such a minion, such a page,

Then—but 'twere painful to describe the scene,

Vain to conceal: she loves him to distraction.

Saint V. Can it be doubted? She has married

Lord De C. Indeed! [him.

Saint V. I have a trusty servant here,

Who saw her clasp him in her wanton arms,

Twine, like pale ivy round the polish'd bark

Of the smooth beech, whilst rapturous she exclaim'd,

"My hero! my Saint Valori! my husband!"—

Oh! she is lost, beyond redemption lost.

Lord De C. Who now shall dream of constancy
in woman? [bat.

What's to be done? Your life dissolves the com-

Saint V. That shame I've sav'd her from: Lord

Is dying in this house. [Hildebrand

Lord De C. Lord Hildebrand!

How many strange events are here combin'd

Of sorrow and surprise; so thick they crowd,

So swift they change, I know not where to turn,

Nor what to counsel.

Saint V. What can counsel give?

Can words revoke, can wisdom reconcile,

Th' indissoluble web which fate has wove?

And shall I stay and harbour here with shame?

Walk, like a discontented moping ghost,

To haunt and hover round their nuptial bed,

When I can die, as I have liv'd, in arms?—

Off, holy counterfeit! begone, disguise!

Lord De C. Stop, I conjure you; rush not on
despair. [so long

Saint V. Despair! And have I worn the cross

But as the mask and mockery of religion?

No, 'tis the armour of a Christian knight,

And with this gauntlet I defy despair.

Lord De C. Then by that sacred symbol, by our
friendship

And faithful brotherhood in God's holy service,

I do beseech thee to persist in doubt:

For whilst one circumstance of doubt remains,

One, though the slightest fragment is afloat,
That fond credulity e'er clung to, still,
Still will I keep some happy chance in view
To save thy lady's honour.

Saint V. Gallant friend,

Thy counsel shall prevail; I will persist;

And as misfortune is the world's best school

For true philosophy, I will extract

The cordial patience from the bitter root

Of this implanted pain. Come, brave De Courci!

Pleasure's gay scene, and hope's delusive dream,

Are vanish'd, lost; love's fairy palace sinks

In the false fleeting sand on which 'twas built;

Whilst thy immortal constancy alone

Stands in the waste, a solitary column,

To tell life's mournful traveller where once

Joy revell'd, and a stately fabric rose. [Exeunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in the castle.

Enter MATILDA and LORD HILDEBRAND.

Mat. Stop, stranger! wherefore have you left
your chamber?

Will you go forth with all your wounds about you?

Return, nor rashly counteract our care,

That labours to preserve you.

Lord H. Shall I make

Your house a grave? The wounds you see are no-

thing, [ments;

Their pain may be assuag'd by drugs and oint-

Nature abounds in simples, that can heal

These tumours of the body.

Mat. If the cure

Be, as you say, so easy, why oppose it?

Is pain your choice, that you resist our medicines,

And thus expose your rankling wounds undress'd

To the raw, fest'ring air?

Lord H. Ah! generous lady,

'Tis but a superficial flattering art

To heal the skin, and make the surface whole,

When an unsearchable and mortal sting

Has pierc'd the nobler part.

Mat. That sting is grief:

You mourn a wife, perhaps, or some dear friend,

In your late shipwreck lost: if it be so,

I'll not arraign your sorrow; yet remember,

Though short of their allotted time they fell,

'Twas heav'n that struck them short, they were

not murder'd,

As my Saint Valori, by vile treach'rous man.

Lord H. Oh, horror! horror!

Mat. Have I touch'd the cause?

Was there a friend? a wife?

Lord H. Nor wife, nor friend;

And yet—

Mat. What yet? Your heart perhaps was fix'd

Upon your freighted treasures, hoarded up

By carking care, and a long life of thrift;

Now, without interest or redemption, swallow'd

By the devouring bankrupt waves for ever:

What then? your cares have perish'd with your

fortune. [wail

Lord H. The wreck of friends and fortune I be-

As things heav'n gives and takes away at pleasure;

Conditional enjoyments, transient loans,

Bliss that accumulates a debt of pain:

Swift their sucesion, sudden their reverse.

To-day the setting sun descends in tears,

To-morrow's dawn breaks forth, and all is joy:

But guilt involves me in perpetual night;

No morning star, no glimmering ray of hope;

Eternal tossings on a bed of thorns,

Conscience, that raven, knelling in my ear,

And vulture furies plucking at my heart!

Mat. Then I conjectur'd right, and 'tis remorse

Which tortures you; I read it in your eyes:

Did that descending virtue come on earth,

To set at large the captive or the free?

'Twas to redeem the captive: turn to him,

Turn then, and seek your saving hope, repentance;

Go to your Carmelite, confess to him,
Fly to your soul's physician for a cure;
Whether with soft emollients he assuage,
Or with corrosive penances consume
The cankerous gangrene that now gnaws your heart.

Lord H. I have confess'd to him, he knows my guilt;

But what can he, alas! there lives but one
Under heav'n's canopy, who can absolve.
Hither th' immediate hand of heav'n has led me,
Hopeless of pardon, to expire before you,
And cast your husband's murderer at your feet.

Mat. Ah! scorpion! is it thou? I shake with horror.

Thou have I pitied? thee have I preserv'd?
Monster, avaunt! Go to the rocks for food,
Call to the winds for pity! lay thee down
Beneath some blighted yew, whose pois'nous leaf
Kills as it falls; there howl thyself to death!
Hangs the roof o'er us yet? I am astonish'd.
Art not asham'd, oh! earth, to bear him yet?
Oh! sea, to cast him up again? Begone!

Lord H. I do not wait for pardon, but for death;
Call to your servants; whelm me with their swords.
Heav'n throws me on your mercy; you receiv'd
And gave me shelter; hospitably tender'd
Food and restoring medicines; I refus'd them:
My thirst is unallay'd, my wounds undress'd,
No particle of food has past my lips,
For I disdain a fraud upon your pity;
And, where I can't have pardon, scorn support.
The only mercy I implore is death.

Mat. Mercy! and dare thy tongue pronounce the name?

Mercy! thou man of blood, thou hast destroy'd it,
It came from heaven to save Saint Valori:

You saw the cherub messenger alight
From its descent; with outspread wings it sate,
Covering his breast; you drew your cursed steel,
And through the pleading angel pierc'd his heart.
Then, then the moon, by whose pale light you
struck,

Turn'd fiery red, and from her angry orb
Darted contagious sickness on the earth;
The planets in their courses shriek'd for horror;
Heav'n dropt maternal tears. Oh! art thou come?

Enter MONTGOMERI.

Mont. Why dost thou tremble? Why this ghastly terror?

Mat. Save me, support me! In thy arms I fall:
I mov'd not till thou cam'st, lest I had sunk
Upon the floor, and catching at the hand
That stabb'd Saint Valori, his touch had kill'd me.

Mont. That stabb'd Saint Valori! Is this the wretch?

Is this Hildebrand before me? Draw, thou traitor!
Stand to defence, or die!

Lord H. Behold my heart!

Strike! I expect no mercy.

Mat. Stop thine hand:

Black though he be, as infamy can make him,
He is defenceless, wounded, and expiring.

Lord H. Wilt thou not add, repentant? I am vanquish'd,

Body and soul laid prostrate by despair.

I do confess my crime; what can I more?

Castle, demesne, and treasure, all the spoils

Of my accused avarice, I resign:

Take my life too; dismiss me from a world

Where I have none to mourn me, no kind hand

To close my eyes; of children, wife, and friends,

(Save only this poor Carmelite) bereft;

Be merciful to him, he is not guilty.

If I dare ask a little earth to cover me

For Christian decency, I would—but that,

That were too much—my tears will sink a grave.

Mont. He's deeply penitent: you'll not refuse

What he petitions for: 'twere most unchristian

To let him die without the church's rites.

Mat. Forbear!

Mont. He's dying—see, he faints—he falls.

(*Hildebrand sinks on the ground.*)

'Twill give him comfort in the hour of death;
And that I'd give ev'n to a murderer.

Mat. You never knew your father, and in you
Pity is natural; in me 'tis treason
To breathe the air which his pollution taints;
A crime to look upon his eyes and live.

Mont. I feel, I feel your cause; there let him
Die where he lists, but give his corpse a grave.
And see, the Carmelite approaches.

Mat. Ha!

The Lord De Courci, too! Stand by the body;
And if the wretch has breath to speak again,
Call them to witness his confession. Mark!
In heav'n's own presence, mark this awful scene,
And write it on thy heart. Farewell! Be constant!
[*Exit.*]

Enter SAINT VALORI AND DE COURCI.

Mont. Noble De Courci, and thou, reverend father,

From whom the penitent in life's last hour
Draws holy comfort, look upon that wretch,
Visit his soul with peace at its departure,
And take confession from his dying lips.

Saint V. Withdraw, and stand apart then, out of hearing.
[*They withdraw.*]

Lord Hildebrand, if thou hast sense and motion,
Reach forth thine hand. So! If thou canst, look
I am the Carmelite.
[*up!*]

Lord H. Oh! save me, save me!

I am a sinful man.

Saint V. But not a murderer:

He who speaks to you is Saint Valori.

Lord H. God of my hope! is it some blessed
Or living man that speaks?
[*spirit,*]

Saint V. A living man,

Saint Valori himself; no spirit. Mark!

I grasp your hand in token of forgiveness:

Dost thou perceive it?

Lord H. At my heart I feel it.

Can you forgive me? May I die in peace?

Saint V. Lo! thus with friendly hand I close
thine eyes:

Sleep, sleep! and be at rest from thy afflictions;

Would mine were laid beside thee in the grave!

Lord H. Oh! balmy comfort! oh! how sweet
to die!

Farewell for ever: do not quit my hand;

Let it not go, till I am dead. Farewell! (*Dies.*)

Saint V. He's dead; his soul forsook him with
that sigh.

Now, sirs, return—'tis past; I have beheld

Religion's triumph, a repentant death.

Re-enter DE COURCI AND MONTGOMERI.

Call to your servants, and remove the body.

Mont. There is a charitable house hard by,

Where, on the ocean's edge, a few poor monks,

A slender brotherhood of Mercy dwell;

For human misery a small asylum;

There often from the foundering bark escap'd,

The houseless wretch finds shelter, and his wounds

With balsams by the fathers cull'd, are dress'd:

There we'll entomb the body.

Saint V. Be it so.

[*wreck:*]

Mont. You now alone survive the morning's

You by peculiar providence are sav'd

From a devoted vessel, which the sins

Of its dire owner sunk; still I must wonder

How God's own servant with a demon leagu'd,

And piety with murder could embark.
[*care*]

Saint V. You think he was a murderer; have a

How you incline too rashly to such tales.

Let not your vassals triumph and rejoice

Too much o'th' sudden; let your castle keep

Some remnant of its old propriety:

And you, the champion, hang not up your lance

In token of a bloodless victory;

But keep it sharpen'd for a fresh encounter ;
And stick your valour to the test, young knight,
Lest haply some new questioner should come,
And dash your feast with horror.

Mont. Reverend stranger,
It will become your order to desist [ing,
From threats, which cover some mysterious mean-
And speak without disguise. You boast yourself
Noble Saint Valori's friend, yet plead the cause
Of Hildebrand, defend him from the crime
Of murder, and with gloomy menace bid me
Expect some new appellation. Lo ! I'm ready.

Saint V. Away, vain boy, away !
Mont. Vain let me be,
Not of myself, but of the cause I stand for :
The lady of Saint Valori accounts me
Worthy to be her champion, by that title
I do impeach the memory of Lord Hildebrand ;
And in the presence of this lord, whose person
Stands for the king, arraign him as a murderer :
If any love his memory so well
As to adopt his cause, let him stand forth,
I pledge myself to answer.

Saint V. Lord De Courci,
Shall I reveal myself ? I'm strongly tempted ?
(*Aside.*)

Lord De C. I do protest against it ; and conjure
Whilst he is thus in train, leave it to me [you,
To draw confession up.

Saint V. I am content.
Lord De C. Montgomeri, in virtue of my charge
I've noted your defiance : should there come
A knight of known degree to challenge it,
Say, by what stile and title wilt thou answer ?

Mont. Ask that of her in whose defence I stand.
Lord De C. We know thee' for her champion ;
but declare,

Hadst thou no nearer name, no closer tie ?
Saint V. Answer to that. 'Tis palpable, 'tis gross :
Your silence is confession.

Mont. Ah ! good father,
Have you so us'd confession as an engine
To twist and torture silence to your purpose,
And stain the truth with colouring not its own ?
Saint V. The man who flies to silence for evasion,
When plainly questioned, aims at a deception
Which candour's self will construe to condemn him.

Mont. Thyself a stranger, dark, inscrutable,
With Hildebrand associate, thou to question me !
First answer for thyself.

Saint V. For myself then—
Lord De C. Stop, re-collect your thoughts.
Saint V. Thanks, noble lord !

For myself, then, I own I am your debtor
For no less gift than life ; and though that life
Makes what you gave a gift of misery,
Yet is the gift uncancell'd.

Mont. Set it down
For nothing but the mutual debt of nature,
Common from man to man. To-morrow's sun,
With favouring winds to aid us, shall transport
This castle's noble mistress and myself
Across the straight that severs this fair isle
From its maternal shore ; there to renew
At Henry's feet, against this bloody man
Newly-deceas'd, our criminal appeal,
Arraigning him for murder.

Saint V. Ha ! beware !
Mont. Who shall oppose it ?
Saint V. I ; this noble witness ;
Truth, and the living evidence of sight.

Mont. To you, my Lord De Courci, not to him,
Who is a son of peace, to you, a knight
Seal'd with the cross, and militant for truth,
Thus I appeal. What say you to our charge ?

Lord De C. False, false ; I pledge my life upon
the proof. [dare

Mont. Ha ! by my father's soul, if thou shalt
To whisper that to-morrow—

Lord De C. If I dare
To whisper it ! My herald shall proclaim it ;
I'll cry it in the lists. There is my gauntlet.
(*Throws it down.*)

Saint V. Hold ! I forbid it.
(*Takes up Lord De Courci's gauntlet.*)
Brother of the cross,
Upon your knightly honour I conjure you,
Put up your gauntlet : I revoke the combat.
Hear me, young sir, you tread upon your grave ;
Fate waves the sword of vengeance o'er your head ;
I've pass'd it by, and paid you life for life.
Lo ! I provoke you to a gentler combat ;
Behold my peaceful gauntlet ! Take this jewel ;
(*Gives the bracelet.*)

And an hour hence, when I am on my way,
Shew it to her (what shall I call your lady ?)
To her that own'd it once.

Mont. I will obey you.
What more have you in mind ?
Saint V. Tell her the monk,
Through all his pilgrimage from Holy Land
Preserv'd it sacred ; journeying night and day,
By sea, by land, in shipwreck, in the waves,
Still guarded it with reverence more devout
Than holy relics of departed martyrs.
Now 'tis no longer worth : 'tis her's, 'tis your's,
'Tis the next favourite's prize, a transient bauble,
The fleeting emblem of a woman's love.
No more : farewell ! Come, gallant lord, to horse.
(*Exit with Lord De Courci.*)

Mont. To horse ! why so a warrior would have
call'd ;

With such a step a warrior would have trod :
A monk !—Mysterious man ! I'll not believe it.
This jewel may unfold the labyrinth—
What then ? Shall I commit the clue
To sorrow's trembling hand, or firmly hold it
Till more shall be discover'd ? Time direct me !

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Chapel with an altar decorated with
the funeral trophies of Saint Valori. MATILDA
is discovered kneeling at the altar. MONTGOMERI
enters, and after a pause, speaks.*

Mont. Still at the altar ! Ever on her knees !
Nothing but peace ! peace to her husband's soul !
Perpetual requiems. If, as we believe,
Th' uncircumscribed spirit of a man
Walks after death, till it can find a grave,
Or holy church, with soul-compelling hymns,
Shall chant it to repose, I am amaz'd
My father's ghost, whilst unappeas'd by prayer,
Ne'er took its shadowy journey to this spot.
Why, when De Courci and the monk outfac'd me,
Did he not then arise with all his wounds,
And scare them to confession ? I am lost,
Bewilder'd, and perplex'd. But see ! she moves.
(*Matilda arises, and comes down from the altar.*)

Mat. My son ! my joy ! my blessing !
Mont. Whence is this ?

What sudden transformation ? By my hopes,
— There is a joyful emanation round thee,
That strikes a gleam of rapture to my heart.
What angel of good tidings hath been with thee ?
Who hath exorcis'd thy despair, and breath'd
This beam of placid pleasure in thine eyes ?

Mat. Thy father hath been with me.
Mont. Heav'n's ! my father ? [with him
Mat. I've seen him in my vision ; commun'd
Before the altar : soft his accents fell,
Like voices of departed friends heard in our dreams,
Or music in the air, when the night-spirits
Warble their magic minstrelsy.

Mont. Indeed !
Would I had seen him, too !
Mat. Would heav'n in thou hadst.

Mont. What was his form ?
Mat. Majestically sweet ;
He smil'd upon me ; straight through all my veins

Methought I felt a thrilling virtue run,
Healing, where'er it cours'd, both heart and brain.

Mont. Saw you no wounds about him?

Mat. None, no wounds;

Nor was he in his youth, or when he died,
But grey with years, and much transform'd by
time:

At first I knew him not, and as he spoke,
So chang'd methought he was, with pain I trac'd
The faded record.

Mont. Spoke he of his murder?

Mat. Oh! not a word; but as it ne'er had been,
And he were living now, so look'd and spoke.

Mont. 'Tis strange—one question more. Say,
did this form

Ne'er visit you before?

Mat. Never, till now.

Mont. Nor this, nor any other shape?

Mat. Oh! never, never.

Mont. Then, I own my confidence is shaken;
And fit it is no longer to conceal

What I have newly heard so boldly vouch'd,
That my faith reels.

Mat. Speak, I conjure thee, speak!

Mont. I came this instant from the Carmelite
And Lord De Courci: on the floor was stretch'd
The breathless corpse of Hildebrand; the monk
In his last moments had been private with him:
I urg'd the murder, to his own confession
Appealing in my accusation's proof;
When, strange to tell, his confessor the monk
Boldly denied that he had kill'd Saint Valori.
Rous'd at this daring insult, and indignant,
I turn'd upon De Courci, and demanded
If he would vouch the falsehood; he, more hot
And no less confident than t'other, hurl'd
Defiance in my teeth, and to the ground
Threw down his gauntlet, pledging to the truth
Of what the monk affirm'd.

Mat. I am amaz'd;

There is a trembling expectation in me,
That by some secret impulse draws me on
To the great revelation of my fate:
Therefore proceed!

Mont. Before I could reply,
The Carmelite had seiz'd De Courci's pledge,
And with a tone and gesture more beseeching
A haughty warrior than a son of peace,
Sternly forbade the challenge to proceed:
Then with a mournful action turning tow'ards me,
And sighing, drew from forth his bosom this,
This pearly chain. *(Produces the bracelet.)*

Mat. Ah! Do my eyes betray me?

Help, help! uphold me, whilst I look upon it.
The same, the same! I gave it to my husband;
My last, fond, parting pledge: guide, guide my
hands,

My trembling hands, to touch it. Sacred relic!
Enthusiastic as the pilgrim's kiss,
Thus to my lips I press thee. Hail, thrice hail!
To thee, oh! altar, with these banners deck'd,
Hallow'd with daily incense, and besieg'd
With never-ceasing requiems for his soul,
I dedicate this trophy of my love!

Lead me, my son!

Mont. Oh! dost thou love thy son?

Mat. Love thee! Oh! heaven!

(Falls on his neck, weeping.)

Mont. By that, then, I conjure thee
Come to thy couch. Now, as thy cheek turns pale,
Convulsion shakes thy lip, and the full stream
Bursts from thine eyes, return not to the altar:
Let me conduct thee forth.

Mat. Where, where's the monk?

Shall I not see him?

Mont. Yes, thou suffering saint!

Be patient for a while, and thou shalt see him.

Mat. Come, then; dispose of me as to thy love
And piety seems best: I will obey.

Let me have this; thou wilt not take this from me?

(Holding the bracelet.)

Mont. Not for the worth of all this world.

Mat. I thank thee.

[Exeunt.]

*Enter SAINT VALORI, LORD DE COURCI, and
GYFFORD.*

Saint V. Suffer this last one weakness. Ha!
she's gone;

The chapel is deserted: I had hop'd
Once more to have look'd upon her ere we parted.

Lord De C. 'Tis better as it is.

Saint V. It may be so;

And yet 'twere stern philosophy, methinks,
That could refuse the sight one short indulgence,
Ere the heart breaks with sorrow.

Lord De C. I am pain'd

To see this tender sorrow swell so fast.

Saint V. Oh! call to mind how I have lov'd
this woman!

Gyfford, thou know'st it; say, thou faithful servant,
What was my passion; how did absence feed it?
But how canst thou compute my sum of sorrows?
Years upon years have roll'd since thou wast with
me:

Time hath been wearied with my groans, my tears
Have damp'd his wings, till he scarce crept along;
The unpitying sun ne'er wink'd upon my toils;
All day I dragg'd my slavery's chain, all night
Howl'd at his clanking on my bed of straw;
And yet these pains were recreation now,
To those I feel, whilst I resign Matilda.

Gyff. Stay, then, my noble master, here abide,
And to this awful place convoke your lady.

Saint V. This awful place! she'll visit it no
more;

Or, if she does, 'twill be to strip these trappings;
These mockeries shall come down, they've had
their day,

They've serv'd the uses of hypocrisy,
And festive garlands now shall fill their place
Around this nuptial altar.

Lord De C. No, my friend,

I am a witness to her unfeign'd sorrows;
And were I left to judge of them unbiass'd,
By what I saw besides, I should believe
She were the very mirror of her sex
For matchless constancy.

Saint V. You rend my heart.

[wash'd]

Gyff. Thrice on her knees this morning hath she
This altar's feet with tears, and with her pray'rs
Sent up a mingled cry of sighs and groans.

Saint V. Why, then, old man, didst thou dis-
tract my soul

With gossip tales to slander her fair fame,
And murder my repose? If thou art conscious
Of having wrong'd her, get thee hence, begone!
Fall at her feet for pardon, howl for pity,
And hide thyself where light may never find thee.

Gyff. With grief, but not with shame, I will retire
From thee and light. I have not wrong'd the truth.

Saint V. Stay, Gyfford, stay, thou loyal, good
old man!

Pity thy master, and forgive my frenzy.

Lo! I am calm again: the pledge I've given

To young Montgomeri shall be the test.

Yes, with that chain I'll draw her to the proof;
Link'd and entwin'd about her heart I'll hold it,
And tent her nature to its inmost feelings.
See, the young favorite comes.

Enter MONTGOMERI.

Mont. Oh! timely found,
Well are you thus encounter'd, holy sir!
The lady of Saint Valori demands you;
And lo! where she advances.

Enter MATILDA.

Mat. Ha! 'tis well.

In presence of this altar we are met:
And may the sacred genius of the place
Prosper our interview.

Saint V. Amen! amen! [the chapel

Mat. Good friends, withdraw! let none approach
Whilst we are private. Now, be firm, my heart.

(*They go out—she pauses some time, and then addresses herself to Saint Valori.*)

Father, I thank you! I've receiv'd your pledge,
The small, but prizeless relic you have brought me.
The bracelet, given by Lord De Courci's hands
In times long past (fie, fie upon these tears,
They will have way) to a departed friend.
Perhaps he priz'd this trifle—but, alas!

'Tis fated, like the arm from which 'twas taken,

Never to clasp him more.

Saint V. Alas! I fear it.

Mat. I hope De Courci gave it to my lord.

Saint V. He did; I saw him give it.

Mat. Ha! you saw him! [told you

Saint V. When he embark'd for Palestine; I've

Never march'd apart. I wore the cross

In those fame-seeking days.

Mat. I do remember.

And this poor favour, did my hero wear it?

Saint V. Devoutly, at his heart.

Mat. Then, then, indeed [come!

Thou hast bestow'd a treasure. Welcome, wel-

(*As she is pressing it to her heart, Saint Valori observing her agitation, runs to her assistance.*)

Saint V. He wore it like an amulet; with this

Before his heart, first through the yawning breach

Thy sacred walls, Jerusalem, he storm'd;

Tore down the moony standard, where it hung

In impious triumph; thrice their Pagan swords

Shiver'd his mailed crest, as many times

That sacred amulet was dy'd in blood

Nearest his heart.

Mat. Stop there! I charge thee stop!

Tell me no more: oh! follow him no further,

For see, th' accursed Pyrenæans rise,

Streaming with blood; there hellish murder howls;

There madness rages, and with haggard eyes

Glares in the craggy pass. She'll spring upon me,

If I advance. Oh! shield me from the sight.

Saint V. Be calm, collect thyself: it was not

there,

It was not there Saint Valori met his death.

'Twas not the sword of Hildebrand that slew him;

Though pierc'd with wounds, that ambush he sur-

viv'd. [altar:

Mat. What do I hear? Oh! look upon this

Think where you stand, and do not wrong the truth.

Saint V. He who is truth itself be witness for me!

Deep was the stroke that dire assassin gave,

Yet short of life it stopp'd; and unhors'd and fall'n,

Welt'ring in blood, your wounded husband lay,

Till haply found by charitable strangers

Journeying to Venice, he was heal'd, restor'd;

And, thence embarking, by a barbarous rover

Was captur'd. Start not; but repress your terrors.

Mat. Admire not that I tremble; marvel rather

That I hear this and live. Saint Valori captur'd!

The bravest captain of the cross enslav'd

By barbarous Pagans!

Saint V. Tedious years he suffer'd

Of hard captivity—

Mat. Oh! where, ye heavens,

Where was your justice then? And died he there?

Saint V. 'Twas not his lot to find a distant grave.

Mat. Where, where? oh! speak; release me from

Where did my hero fall? [the rack!]

Saint V. Where did he fall!

Nor Pagan swords, nor slavery's galling chain,

Nor murderers' daggers, Afric's burning clime,

Toils, storms, nor shipwreck, kill'd him—here he

fell!

Grief burst his heart—here in this spot he fell!

(*He falls to the ground.*)

Mat. Ah! horror, horror! Help, for mercy,

help!

My son, my son! your father lies before you.

MONTGOMERI runs in, followed by LORD DE
COURCI and GYFFORD.

Mont. My father! heav'n and earth! Oh! save
him; save him!

Where shall I turn? See, see! she faints, she
falls! (*Supports her in his arms.*)

Lord De C. He is her son. Awake, look up,
my friend!

Live, live! De Courci bids Saint Valori live.
Your rival is your son.

Saint V. (*Raising himself on his knee, unsheaths
his dagger.*)

Off! give me way:

I'll kill him in her arms.

Lord De C. He is your son;

Hear me, thou frantic father! I, De Courci,
I speak to you. Would you destroy your son?

Saint V. Bind up his wounds. Oh! if I've slain

Perdition will not own me! [my son,

Mont. He revives.

Nature awakens reason. Hush! be still.

She stirs. Withhold him from her arms awhile;

Let all be silence, whilst disposing heaven,

That showers this joy, shall fit them to receive it.

Mat. How could you say my husband is alive?

Which of you keeps him from me? Oh! 'tis cruel!

Saint V. Uncease me of my weeds: tear of my

cowl!

Now, she'll know me; now I am Saint Valori.

(*Throws off his habit, and appears in armour.*)

Mat. Stand off! Oh! blessed light of heaven,

shine forth!

Visit my aching eyes, ye solar beams,

And let me see my hero! Ha! the cross—

He gleams—he glimmers;—like a mist he rises.

He lives! he lives! I clasp him in my arms.

My lost Saint Valori! my long-lost husband!

(*Runs into his arms.*)

Saint V. Oh! my heart's joy! do I again em-

brace thee?

Soul of all honour, constancy, and truth!

Mat. This transport is too quick, it melts my

brain;

The sky runs round; the earth is all in motion;

Nay, now it whirls too fast.

Saint V. Ye saints in bliss!

Heroic matrons! ye angelic virtues,

Protect your fair resemblance! Ha! she weeps!

Kind tears, I thank you! Nature's soft relief,

Waters, that from the soul's full fount run o'er,

To joy or grief welcome alike ye flow,

Assist our patience, and assuage our pain.

Mat. Alas! alas! that I should know thee not.

What ravages have time and sorrow made

In heav'n's most perfect work, the fairest temple

Nature e'er rear'd in majesty and grace!

Saint V. What dire calamity have we escap'd!

Now 'tis dispers'd, the mists of doubt are fled,

Truth, like the sun, breaks forth, and all is joy.

My son, my son! oh! throw my arms about him,

And let me cling for ever to his neck.

Mont. Oh! sympathetic energy of nature.

This morn a nameless orphan, now the son

Of living parents: he for virtue fam'd,

For dignity of soul, and matchless courage;

She for affection, constancy renown'd,

Inspir'd with truth, with every grace adorn'd,

A woman's fondness and an angel's faith.

Mat. Heaven hear my praises! echo them, oh!

earth:

Cherubs, that come with healing on your wings,

Waft my thanksgiving back! Bright beam of mercy,

Visit the inmost chambers of my heart;

And where grief rear'd a husband's monument

Fix now his living image: there, as time

Shook not the faithful witness from my soul,

When grief assail'd it, so in joy support me,

And guard my constancy in both extremes.

[*Exeunt.*]

CATO;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY JOSEPH ADDISON.



Act IV.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

CATO
LUCIUS
PORCIUS

MARCUS
DECIUS
JUBA

SEMPRONIUS
SYPHAX
JUNIUS

TITUS
MARCIA
LUCIA

ACT. I.

SCENE I.—A Hall in the palace.

Enter PORCIUS and MARCUS.

Por. The dawn is overcast, the morning lowers,
And heavily in clouds brings on the day,
The great, the important day, big with the fate
Of Cato and of Rome. Our father's death
Would fill up all the guilt of civil war,
And close the scene of blood. Already Cæsar
Has ravag'd more than half the globe, and sees
Mankind grown thin by his destructive sword:
Should he go further, numbers would be wanting
To form new battles, and support his crimes.
Ye gods, what havoc does ambition make
Among your works!

Mar. Thy steady temper, Porcius,
Can look on guilt, rebellion, fraud, and Cæsar,
In the calm lights of mild philosophy:
I'm tortur'd, even to madness, when I think
On the proud victor: every time he's nam'd,
Pharsalia rises to my view; I see
The insulting tyrant prancing o'er the field
Strew'd with Rome's citizens, and drench'd in
slaughter.

O Porcius, is there not some chosen curse,
Some hidden thunder in the stores of heaven,
Red with uncommon wrath, to blast the man
Who owes his greatness to his country's ruin?

Por. Believe me, Marcus, 'tis an impious great-
ness,
And mix'd with too much horror to be envied.
How does the lustre of our father's actions,
Through the dark cloud of ills that cover him,
Break out, and burn with more triumphant bright-
ness!

His suff' rings shine, and spread a glory round him:
Greatly unfortunate, he fights the cause
Of honour, virtue, liberty, and Rome.

Mar. Who knows not this? But what can Cato do
Against a world, a base, degenerate world,
That courts the yoke, and bows the neck to Cæsar?
Pent up in Utica, he vainly forms
A poor epitome of Roman greatness,
And cover'd with Numidian guards, directs
A feeble army and an empty senate,
Remnants of mighty battles fought in vain.
By heavens! such virtues, join'd with such success,
Distract my very soul: our father's fortune
Would almost tempt us to renounce his precepts.

Por. Remember what our father oft has told us:
The ways of heaven are dark and intricate;
Our understanding traces them in vain;
Lost and bewild'rd in the fruitless search,
Nor sees with how much art the windings run,
Nor where the regular confusion ends.

Mar. These are suggestions of a mind at ease:
O Porcius, didst thou taste but half the griefs
That wring my soul, thou couldst not talk thus
Passion unpitied and successful love [calmly.
Plant daggers in my heart, and aggravate
My other griefs. Were but my Lucia kind,—

Por. (*Aside.*) Thou seest not that thy brother
is thy rival:

But I must hide it; for I know thy temper.—
Now, Marcus, now thy virtue's on the proof:
Put forth thy utmost strength, work every nerve,
And call up all thy father in thy soul:
To quell the tyrant love, and guard thy heart
On this weak side, where most our nature fails,
Would be a conquest worthy Cato's son.

Mar. Alas! the counsel which I cannot take,
Instead of healing, but upbraids my weakness.
Love is not to be reason'd down, or lost
In high ambition, and a thirst of greatness;
'Tis second life, that grows into the soul,
Warms every vein, and beats in every pulse:
I feel it here: my resolution melts—

Por. Behold young Juba, the Numidian prince :
He loves our sister Marcia, greatly loves her ;
But still the smother'd fondness burns within him :
The sense of honour and desire of fame
Drive the big passion back into his heart.
What! shall an African, shall Juba's heir,
Reproach great Cato's son, and shew the world
A virtue wanting in a Roman soul?

Mar. No more, no more! your words leave
stings behind 'em.

Whene'er did Juba, or did Porcius, shew
A virtue that has cast me at a distance,
And thrown me out in the pursuits of honour?

Por. O Marcus! did I know the way to ease
Thy troubled heart, and mitigate thy pains,
Believe me, I could freely die to do it. [friends!]

Mar. Thou best of brothers, and thou best of
Pardon a weak, distemper'd soul that swells
With sudden gusts, and sinks as soon in calms,
The sport of passions.—But, Sempronius comes:
He must not find this softness hanging on me,
[Exit.]

Enter SEMPRONIUS.

Sem. Conspiracies no sooner should be form'd
Than executed. (*Aside.*) What means Porcius
here?

I like not that cold youth. I must dissemble,
And speak a language foreign to my heart.
Good morrow, Porcius! Let us once embrace,
Once more embrace, whilst yet we both are free:
To-morrow, should we thus express our friend-
ship,

Each might receive a slave into his arms.
This sun, perhaps, this morning's sun's the last
That e'er shall rise on Roman liberty.

Por. My father has this morning call'd together
His little Roman senate,—
The leavings of Pharsalia,—to consult
If yet he can oppose the mighty torrent
That bears down Rome and all her gods before it;
Or must, at length, give up the world to Cæsar.

Sem. Not all the pomp and majesty of Rome
Can raise her senate more than Cato's presence:
His virtues render her assembly awful,
They strike with something like religious fear,
And make even Cæsar tremble at the head
Of armies flush'd with conquest. O my Porcius!
Could I but call that wonderous man my father,
Would but thy sister Marcia be propitious
To thy friend's vows, I might be bless'd indeed.

Por. Alas! Sempronius, would'st thou talk of
love

To Marcia, whilst her father's life's in danger?
Thou might'st as well court the pale trembling
vestal,

When she beholds the holy flame expiring.

Sem. The more I see the wonders of thy race,
The more I'm charm'd. Thou must take heed,
my Porcius;

The world has all its eyes on Cato's son:
Thy father's merit sets thee up to view,
And shews thee in the fairest point of light,
To make thy virtues, or thy faults conspicuous.

Por. Well dost thou seem to check my linger-
ing here

On this important hour. I'll straight away,
To animate the soldiers' drooping courage
With love of freedom, and contempt of life,
And try to rouse up all that's Roman in 'em.

'Tis not in mortals to command success;
But we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it.
[Exit.]

Sem. Curse on the stripling! How he apes his
sire:

Ambitiously sententious!—But I wonder,
Old Syphax comes not; his Numidian genius
Is well dispos'd to mischief.

Cato has us'd me ill: he has refus'd
His daughter Marcia to my ardent vows:

Besides, his baffled arms and ruin'd cause
Are bars to my ambition. Cæsar's favour,
That showers down greatness on his friends, will
raise me
To Rome's first honours. If I give up Cato,
I claim in my reward his captive daughter.—
Syphax comes.

Enter SYPHAX.

Syph. Sempronius, all is ready;
I've sounded my Numidians, man by man,
And find them ripe for a revolt: they all
Complain aloud of Cato's discipline,
And wait but the command to change their master.

Sem. Believe me, Syphax, there's no time to
waste;

Even whilst we speak, our conqueror comes on,
And gathers ground upon us every moment.
But tell me, hast thou yet drawn o'er young Juba?
That still would recommend thee more to Cæsar,
And challenge better terms.

Syph. Alas! he's lost,
He's lost, Sempronius; all his thoughts are full
Of Cato's virtues. But I'll try once more,
For every instant I expect him here,
If yet I can subdue those stubborn principles
Of faith, of honour, and I know not what,
That have corrupted his Numidian temper,
And struck the infection into all his soul.

Sem. Be sure to press upon him every motive:
Juba's surrender, since his father's death,
Would give up Afric into Cæsar's hands,
And make him lord of half the burning zone.

Syph. But is it true, Sempronius, that your
senate

Is call'd together? Gods! thou must be cautious:
Cato has piercing eyes, and will discern
Our frauds, unless they're covered thick with art.

Sem. Let me alone, good Syphax: I'll conceal
My thoughts in passion: 'tis the surest way:
I'll bellow out for Rome and for my country,
And mouth at Cæsar, till I shake the senate.
Your cold hypocrisy's a stale device,
A worn-out trick: would'st thou be thought in
earnest,

Clothe thy feign'd zeal in rage, in fire, in fury.

Syph. In troth, thou'rt able to instruct grey
And teach the wily African deceit. [hairs]

Sem. Once more, be sure to try thy skill on
Juba.

Meanwhile, I'll hasten to my Roman soldiers,
Inflame the mutiny, and, underhand,
Blow up their discontents, till they break out,
Unlook'd for, and discharge themselves on Cato.
Remember, Syphax, we must work in haste.
O think, what anxious moments pass between
The birth of plots, and their last fatal periods;
It is a dreadful interval of time,
Fill'd up with horror all, and big with death;
Destruction hangs on every word we speak,
On every thought, till the concluding stroke
Determines all, and closes our design. [Exit.]

Syph. I'll try if yet I can reduce to reason
This headstrong youth, and make him spurn at
Cato.

The time is short; Cæsar comes rushing on us;—
But hold!—young Juba sees me, and approaches.

Enter JUBA.

Juba. Syphax, I joy to meet thee thus alone.
I have observ'd of late thy looks are fallen,
O'crest with gloomy cares and discontent:
Then tell me, Syphax, I conjure thee, tell me,
What are the thoughts that knit thy brow in frowns,
And turn thine eye thus coldly on thy prince?

Syph. 'Tis not my talent to conceal my thoughts,
Nor carry smiles and sunshine in my face,
When discontent sits heavy at my heart;
I have not yet so much the Roman in me.

Juba. Why dost thou cast out such ungenerous terms

Against these wonderous sovereigns of the world?
Dost thou not see mankind fall down before 'em,
And own the force of their superior virtue?

Syph. Gods! where's the worth that sets this people up

Above your own Numidia's tawny sons?
Do they with tougher sinews bend the bow?
Or flies the javelin swifter to its mark,
Launch'd from the vigour of a Roman arm?
Who, like our active African, instructs
The fiery steed, and trains him to his hand?
Or guides in troops the embattled elephant,
Loaden with war? These, these are arts, my prince,
In which your Zama does not stoop to Rome.

Juba. These all are virtues of a meaner rank,
Perfections that are plac'd in bones and nerves:
A Roman soul is bent on higher views.
To make man mild and sociable to man,
To cultivate the wild, licentious savage
With wisdom, discipline, and liberal arts,
The embellishments of life; virtues like these
Make human nature shine, reform the soul,
And break our fierce barbarians into men.

Syph. Patience, kind heavens! Excuse an old man's warmth:—

What are these wonderous civilizing arts,
This Roman polish, and this smooth behaviour,
That render man thus tractable and tame?
Are they not only to disguise our passions,
To set our looks at variance with our thoughts?
In short, to change us into other creatures
Than what our nature and the gods design'd us?

Juba. To strike thee dumb, turn up thy eyes to Cato!

There may'st thou see to what a godlike height
The Roman virtues lift up mortal man:
Renouncing sleep, and rest, and food, and ease,
He strives with thirst and hunger, toil and heat;
And, when his fortune sets before him all
The pomps and pleasures that our souls can wish,
His rigid virtue will accept of none.

Syph. Believe me, prince, there's not an African
That traverses our vast Numidian deserts
In quest of prey, and lives upon his bow,
But better practises these boasted virtues:
Coarse are his meals, the fortune of the chase;
Amidst the running stream he slakes his thirst,
Toils all the day, and, at the approach of night,
On the first friendly bank he throws him down,
Or rests his head upon a rock till morn;
Then rises fresh, pursues his wonted game,
And if, the following day, he chance to find
A new repast, or an untasted spring,
Blesses his stars, and thinks it luxury.

Juba. Thy prejudices, Syphax, won't discern
What virtues grow from ignorance, and choice;
Nor how the hero differs from the brute.
But, grant that others could with equal glory,
Look down on pleasures and the baits of sense,
Where shall we find the man that bears affliction,
Great and majestic in his griefs, like Cato?
How does he rise against a load of woes,
And thank the gods that throw the weight upon him?

Syph. 'Tis pride, rank pride, and haughtiness of soul;

I think, the Romans call it stoicism.
Had not your royal father thought so highly
Of Roman virtue, and of Cato's cause,
He had not fallen, by a slave's hand, inglorious;
Nor would his slaughter'd army now have lain
On Afric's sands, disfigur'd with their wounds,
To gorge the wolves and vultures of Numidia.

Juba. Why dost thou call my sorrows up afresh?
My father's name brings tears into my eyes.

Syph. Oh, that you'd profit by your father's ills!

Juba. What wouldst thou have me do?

Syph. Abandon Cato.

Juba. Never: I should be more than twice an
By such a loss. [orphan

Syph. Ay, there's the tie that binds you;
You long to call him father: Marcia's charms
Work in your heart unseen, and plead for Cato;
No wonder, you are deaf to all I say. [nate.

Juba. No more; your zeal becomes importu-
I've hitherto permitted it to rave,
And talk at large: but learn to keep it in,
Lest it should take more freedom than I'll give it.

Syph. Yet hear me, prince, tho' hard to conquer
love,

'Tis easy to divert and break its force:
Absence might cure it, or a second mistress
Light up another flame, and put out this.
The glowing dames of Zama's royal court
Have faces flush'd with more exalted charms;
The sun that rolls his chariot o'er their heads,
Works up more fire and colour in their cheeks:
Were you with these, my prince, you'd soon forget
The pale, unripen'd beauties of the north.

Juba. 'Tis not a set of features, nor complexion,
The tincture of a skin, that I admire:
Beauty soon grows familiar to the lover,
Fades in his eye, and palls upon the sense.
The virtuous Marcia towers above her sex:
True, she is fair,—O how divinely fair!
But still the lovely maid improves her charms
With inward greatness, unaffected wisdom,
And sanctity of manners. Cato's soul
Shines out in every thing she acts or speaks,
While winning mildness and attractive smiles
Dwell in her looks, and, with becoming grace,
Softens the rigour of her father's virtues.

Syph. How does your tongue grow wanton in her
praise!

But, on my knees, I beg you would consider—
Juba. Ha! is't not she? It is:—she moves this
way:

And with her Lucia, Lncius' fair daughter.
My heart beats thick. I pry'these, Syphax, leave me.

Syph. Ten thousand curses fasten on them both!
Now will this woman, with a single glance,
Undo what I've been labouring all this while. [Exit.

Enter MARCIA and LUCIA.

Juba. Hail, charming maid! How does thy
beauty smooth

The face of war, and make even horror smile!
At sight of thee my heart shakes off its sorrows;
I feel a dawn of joy break in upon me;
And, for a while, forget the approach of Cæsar.

Mar. I should be griev'd, young prince, to think
my presence

Unbent your thoughts, and slacken'd them to arms,
While, warm with slaughter, our victorious foe
Threatens aloud, and calls you to the field.

Juba. O Marcia! let me hope thy kind concerns
And gentle wishes follow me to battle:
The thought will give new vigour to my arm,
Add strength and weight to my descending sword,
And drive it in a tempest on the foe.

Mar. My prayers and wishes always shall attend
The friends of Rome, the glorious cause of virtue,
And men approv'd of by the gods and Cato.

Juba. That Juba may deserve thy pious cares,
I'll gaze for ever on thy godlike father;
Transplanting, one by one, into my life
His bright perfections, till I shine like him.

Mar. My father never at a time like this
Would lay out his great soul in words, and waste
Such precious moments.

Juba. Thy reproofs are just,
Thou virtuous maid! I'll hasten to my troops,
And fire their languid souls with Cato's virtue.
If'er I lead them to the field, when all
The war shall stand rang'd in its just array
And dreadful pomp, then will I think on thee,—
O lovely maid!—then will I think on thee;

And, in the shock of charging hosts, remember
What glorious deeds should grace the man who hopes
For Marcia's love. [Exit.]

Luc. Marcia, you're too severe.
How could you chide, and drive so sternly from you,
A prince that loves and dotes on you to death?

Mar. How, Lucia! would'st thou have me sink
away

In pleasing dreams, and lose myself in love,
When every moment Cato's life's at stake?

Luc. Why have not I this constancy of mind,
Who have so many griefs to try its force?
Pity and love, by turns, oppress my heart.

Mar. Lucia, disburthen all thy cares on me,
And let me share thy most retir'd distress:
Tell me, who raises up this conflict in thee?

Luc. I need not blush to name them, when I say,
They're Marcia's brothers, and the sons of Cato.

Mar. But tell me, whose address thou favour'st
most:

I long to know, and yet I dread to hear it.

Luc. Suppose 'twere Porcius, could you blame
my choice?

O Porcius, thou hast stolen away my soul!
Marcus is furious, wild, in his complaints;
I hear him with a secret kind of dread,
And tremble at his vehemence of temper.

Mar. Alas, poor youth! And canst thou throw
him from thee?

How will thy coldness raise
Tempests and storms in his afflicted bosom!
I dread the consequence.

Luc. You seem to plead
Against your brother Porcius.

Mar. Lucia, no:
Had Porcius been the unsuccessful lover,
The same compassion would have fallen on him.

Luc. Porcius himself oft falls in tears before me,
As if he mourn'd his rival's ill success;
Then bids me hide the motions of my heart,
Nor shew which way it turns: so much he fears
The sad effects that it would have on Marcus.

Mar. Let us not, Lucia, aggravate our sorrows;
But to the gods submit the event of things:
Our lives, discolour'd with our present woes,
May still grow bright, and smile with happier hours:
So the pure limpid stream, when foul with stains
Of rushing torrents and descending rains,
Works itself clear, and, as it runs, refines,
Till, by degrees, the floating mirror shines,
Reflects each flower that on the border grows,
And a new heaven in its fair bosom shews. [Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Senate House.

SEMPRONIUS, LUCIUS, and Senators discovered.

Sem. Rome still survives in this assembled senate.
Let us remember we are Cato's friends,
And act like men who claim that glorious title.

Luci. Cato will soon be here, and open to us
The occasion of our meeting. (Trumpets.)
Hark! he comes.
May all the guardian-gods of Rome direct him!

Enter CATO, PORCIUS, and MARCUS.

Cato. Fathers, we once again are met in council:
Cæsar's approach has summon'd us together,
And Rome attends her fate from our resolves.
How shall we treat this bold, aspiring man?
Success still follows him, and backs his crimes:
Pharsalia gave him Rome; Egypt has since
Receiv'd his yoke, and the whole Nile is Cæsar's.
Why should I mention Junba's overthrow,
And Scipio's death? Numidia's burning sands
Still smoke with blood. 'Tis time we should decree
What course to take. Our foe advances on us,
And envies us even Libya's sultry deserts.
Fathers, pronounce your thoughts:—are they still
To hold it out, and fight it to the last? [fix'd

Or are your hearts subdu'd at length, and wrought
By time and ill success to a submission?
Sempronius, speak.

Sem. My voice is still for war.
Gods! can a Roman senate long debate
Which of the two to choose,—slavery or death?
No; let us rise at once, gird on our swords,
And, at the head of our remaining troops,
Attack the foe, break through the thick array
Of his throng'd legions, and charge home upon him.
Perhaps, some arm, more lucky than the rest,
May reach his heart, and free the world from bondage.
Rise, fathers, rise! 'tis Rome demands your help!
Rise, and revenge her slaughter'd citizens:
Rouse up for shame! our brothers of Pharsalia
Point at their wounds, and cry aloud,—To battle:
Great Pompey's shade complains that we are slow,
And Scipio's ghost walks unreveng'd amongst us.

Cato. Let not a torrent of impetuous zeal
Transport thee thus beyond the bounds of reason.
True fortitude is seen in great exploits
That justice warrants, and that wisdom guides:
All else is towering frenzy and distraction.
Are not the lives of those who draw the sword
In Rome's defence intrusted to our care?
Should we thus lead them to a field of slaughter,
Might not the impartial world too justly say,
We lavish'd at our death the blood of thousands,
To grace our fall, and make our ruin glorious?
Lucius, we next would know what's your opinion.

Luci. My thoughts, I must confess, are turn'd on
peace.

We took up arms, not to revenge ourselves,
But free the commonwealth: when this end fails,
Arms have no further use: our country's cause,
That drew our swords, now wrests them from our
hands,

And bids us not delight in Roman blood
Unprofitably shed. What men could do
Is done already: heaven and earth will witness,
If Rome must fall, that we are innocent. (Sits.)

Cato. Let us appear nor rash, nor diffident:
Immoderate valour swells into a fault;
And fear, admitted into public counsels,
Betrays like treason: let us shun them both.
Fathers, I cannot see that our affairs [us;
Are grown thus desperate: we have bulwarks round
Within our walls are troops inur'd to toil
In Afric's heats, and season'd to the sun;
Numidia's spacious kingdom lies behind us,
Ready to rise at its young prince's call.
While there is hope, do not distrust the gods;
But wait, at least, till Cæsar's near approach
Force us to yield. 'Twill never be too late
To sue for chains, and own a conqueror.
Why should Rome fall a moment ere her time?
No; let us draw her term of freedom out
In its full length, and spin it to the last;
So shall we gain still one day's liberty:
And let me perish, but, in Cato's judgment,
A day, an hour, of virtuous liberty
Is worth a whole eternity in bondage.

Enter JUNIUS.

Jun. Fathers, even now a herald is arriv'd
From Cæsar's camp; and with him comes old Decius,
The Roman knight: he carries in his looks
Impatience, and demands to speak with Cato.

Cato. By your permission, fathers. Bid him enter. [Exit Junius.
Decius was once my friend: but other prospects
Have loos'd those ties, and bound him fast to Cæsar.
His message may determine our resolves.

Enter DECIUS, JUNIUS, and TITUS.

Dec. Cæsar sends health to Cato.

Cato. Could he send it
To Cato's slaughter'd friends, it would be welcome.
Are not your orders to address the senate?

Dec. My business is with Cato. Cæsar sees

The straits to which you're driven; and as he knows Cato's high worth, is anxious for your life.

Cato. My life is grafted on the fate of Rome. Would he save Cato? Bid him spare his country. Tell your dictator this: and tell him, Cato disdains a life which he has power to offer.

Dec. Rome and her senators submit to Cæsar: Her generals and her consuls are no more, Who check'd his conquests, and denied his triumphs.

Why will not Cato be this Cæsar's friend? [it. *Cato.* Those very reasons thou hast urg'd, forbid

Dec. Cæsar is well acquainted with your virtues, And therefore sets this value on your life: Let him but know the price of Cato's friendship, And name your terms.

Cato. Bid him disband his legions; Restore the commonwealth to liberty; Submit his actions to the public censure, And stand the judgment of a Roman senate: Bid him do this, and Cato is his friend.

Dec. Cato, the world talks loudly of your wisdom.

Cato. Nay, more; though Cato's voice was ne'er employ'd

To clear the guilty, and to varnish crimes,— Myself will mount the rostrum in his favour, And strive to gain his pardon from the people.

Dec. A style like this becomes a conqueror.

Cato. Decius, a style like this becomes a Roman.

Dec. What is a Roman that is Cæsar's foe?

Cato. Greater than Cæsar; he's a friend to virtue.

Dec. Consider, Cato, you're in Utica, And at the head of your own little senate; You don't now thunder in the capitol, With all the mouths of Rome to second you.

Cato. Let him consider that who drives us hither: 'Tis Cæsar's sword has made Rome's senate little, And thinn'd its ranks. Alas! thy dazzled eye Beholds this man in a false glaring light, Which conquest and success have thrown upon him! Didst thou but view him right, thou'dst see him black With murder, treason, sacrilege, and crimes That strike my soul with horror but to name 'em. I know thou look'st on me, as on a wretch Beset with ills, and cover'd with misfortunes; But, by the gods I swear! millions of worlds Should never buy me to be like that Cæsar.

Dec. Does Cato send this answer back to Cæsar, For all his generous cares and proffer'd friendship?

Cato. His cares for me are insolent and vain: Presumptuous man! the gods take care of Cato. Would Cæsar shew the greatness of his soul, Bid him employ his care for these my friends, And make good use of his ill-gotten power, By sheltering men much better than himself. [get

Dec. Your high unconquer'd heart makes you for You are a man. You rush on your destruction. But I have done. When I relate hereafter

The tale of this unhappy embassy, All Rome will be in tears. [Exit, with Jun. and Titus.

Sem. Cato, we thank thee:

Cæsar will shrink to hear the words thou utter'st, And shudder in the midst of all his conquests.

Luci. The senate owns its gratitude to Cato; Who with so great a soul consults its safety, And guards our lives, while he neglects his own.

Sem. Sempronius gives no thanks on this account.

Lucius seems fond of life: but what is life?

'Tis not to draw fresh air from time to time;

'Tis, to be free. When liberty is gone,

Life grows insipid, and has lost its relish.

Oh! could my dying hand but lodge a sword In Cæsar's bosom and revenge my country, By heavens, I could enjoy the pangs of death, And smile in agony!

Luci. Others, perhaps, May serve their country with as warm a zeal, Though 'tis not kindled into so much rage.

Sem. This sober conduct is a mighty virtue In lukewarm patriots.

Cato. Come, no more, Sempronius.

All here are friends to Rome, and to each other: Let us not weaken still the weaker side By our divisions.

Sem. Cato, my resentments Are sacrific'd to Rome. I stand reprov'd.

Cato. Fathers, 'tis time you come to a resolve.

Luci. Cato, we all go in to your opinion:

Cæsar's behaviour has convinc'd the senate

We ought to hold it out, till terms arrive.

Sem. We ought to hold it out till death. But, Cato, My private voice is drown'd amid the senate's.

Cato. Then let us rise, my friends, and strive to This little interval, this pause of life, [fill

While yet our liberty and fates are doubtful, With resolution, friendship, Roman bravery,

And all the virtues we can crowd into it;

That heaven may say, it ought to be prolong'd.

Fathers, farewell! The young Numidian prince Comes forward, and expects to know our counsels.

[Exeunt all but Cato.]

Enter JUBA.

Cato. Juba, the Roman senate has resolv'd, Till time give better prospects, still to keep The sword unsheath'd, and turn its edge on Cæsar.

Juba. The resolution fits a Roman senate.

But, Cato, lend me for a while thy patience,

And condescend to hear a young man speak.

My father, when, some days before his death,

He order'd me to march for Utica,

(Alas, I thought not then his death so near!)

Wept o'er me, press'd me in his aged arms,

And, as his griefs gave way, "My son," he said,

"However fortune may dispose of me,

Be Cato's friend: he'll train thee up to great

And virtuous deeds: do but observe him well,

Thou'lt shun misfortunes, or thou'lt learn to bear 'em."

Cato. Thy sire, good Juba, was a worthy prince, And merited, alas! a better fate:

But heaven thought otherwise.

Juba. His cruel fate,

In spite of all the fortune that shines

Before my face in Cato's great example,

Subdues my soul, and fills my eyes with tears.

Cato. It is an honest sorrow, and becomes thee.

Juba. His virtues drew respect from foreign climes:

The kings of Afric sought him for their friend;

Kings far remote, that rule, as fame reports,

Behind the hidden sources of the Nile;

Oft have their black ambassadors appear'd,

Loaden with gifts, and fill'd the courts of Zama.

Cato. I am no stranger to thy father's greatness.

Juba. I do not mean to boast his power and great-

But point out new alliances to Cato. [ness,

Had we not better leave this Utica,

To arm Numidia in our cause, and court

The assistance of my father's numerous friends?

Did they know Cato, our remotest kings

Would pour embattled multitudes about him;

Their swarthy hosts would darken all our plains,

Doubling the native horror of the war,

And making death more grim.

Cato. And canst thou think,

Cato will fly before the sword of Cæsar,

Reduc'd, like Hannibal, to seek relief

From court to court, and wander up and down

A vagabond in Afric?

Juba. Cato, perhaps,

I'm too officious; but my forward cares

Would fain preserve a life of so much value.

My heart is wounded, when I see such virtue

Afflicted by the weight of such misfortunes.

Cato. Thy nobleness of soul obliges me.

But know, young prince, that valour soars above

What the world calls misfortune and affliction.

These are not ills; else would they never fall
On heaven's first favourites, and the best of men:
The gods, in bounty, work up storms about us,
That give mankind occasion to exert
Their hidden strength, and throw out into practice
Virtues, which lie conceal'd
In the smooth seasons and the calms of life.

Juba. I'm charm'd whene'er thou talk'st: I pant
for virtue,
And all my soul endeavours at perfection.

Cato. Dost thou love watchings, abstinence, and
toil?—

Laborious virtues all;—learn them from Cato!
Success and fortune must thou learn from Cæsar.

Juba. The best good fortune that can fall on Juba,
The whole success at which my heart aspires,
Depends on Cato.

Cato. What does Juba say?
Tell me thy wishes, prince.

Juba. O, they're extravagant!
Still let me hide them.

Cato. Speak: what canst thou ask
That Cato will refuse?

Juba. I fear to name it:
Marcia inherits all her father's virtues—

Cato. Adieu, young prince: I would not hear a
word

Might lessen thee in my esteem. Remember,
The hand of fate is over us, and heaven
Exact severity from all our thoughts:
It is not now a time to talk of aught
But chains or conquest, liberty or death. [Exit.

Enter SYPHAX.

Syph. How's this, my prince? What! cover'd
with confusion?

You look, as if you stern philosopher
Had just now chid you.

Juba. Syphax, I'm undone.
Syph. I know it well.

Juba. Cato thinks meanly of me.

Syph. And so will all mankind.

Juba. I've open'd to him

The weakness of my soul, my love for Marcia.

Syph. Cato's a proper person to intrust
A love-tale with!

Juba. O, I could pierce my heart,
My foolish heart! Was ever wretch like Juba?

Syph. Alas, my prince, how are you chang'd of
late!

I've known young Juba rise before the sun,
To beat the thicket where the tiger slept,
Or seek the lion in his dreadful haunts:
How did the colour mount into your cheeks,
When first you rous'd him to the chase! I've seen
you,

Even in the Libyan dog-days, hunt him down;
Then charge him close, provoke him to the rage
Of fangs and claws, and, stooping from your horse,
Rivet the panting savage to the ground.

Juba. Pr'ythee, no more.

Syph. How would the old king smile
To see you weigh the paws, when tipp'd with gold,
And throw the shaggy spoils about your shoulders!

Juba. Syphax, this old man's talk, though honey
flow'd

In every word, would now lose all its sweetness.

Cato's displeas'd, and Marcia's lost for ever!

Syph. Young prince, I yet could give you good
Marcia might still be yours. [advice:

Juba. What say'st thou, Syphax?

By heavens, thou turn'st me all into attention!

Syph. Marcia might still be yours.

Juba. As how, dear Syphax?

Syph. Juba commands Numidia's hardy troops,

Mounted on steeds unus'd to the restraint
Of curbs and bits, and fleetier than the wind:
Give but the word, we'll snatch this damsel up,
And bear her off.

Juba. Can such dishonest thoughts
Rise up in man? Would'st thou seduce my youth
To do an act, that would destroy my honour?

Syph. Gods, I could tear my beard to hear you talk!
Honour's a fine imaginary notion,
That draws in raw and inexperienced men
To real mischiefs, while they hunt a shadow.

Juba. Wouldst thou degrade thy prince into a
ruffian?

Syph. The boasted ancestors of these great men
Whose virtues you admire, were all such ruffians:
This dread of nations, this almighty Rome,
That comprehends in her wide empire's bounds
All under heaven, was founded on a rape:

Your Scipios, Cæsars, Pompeys, and your Catos,—
These gods on earth,—are all the spurious brood
Of violated maids, of ravish'd Sabines.

Juba. Syphax, I fear, that hoary head of thine
Abounds too much in our Numidian wiles.

Syph. My prince, you want to know the world:
You have not read mankind; your youth admires
The throes and swellings of a Roman soul,
Cato's bold flights, the extravagance of virtue.

Juba. If knowledge of the world makes men per-
fidious,

May Juba ever live in ignorance!

Syph. Go, go, you're young.

Juba. Gods! must I tamely bear
This arrogance unanswer'd? Thou'rt a traitor,
A false old traitor!

Syph. (Aside.) I have gone too far.

Juba. Cato shall know the baseness of thy soul.

Syph. (Aside.) I must appease this storm, or
perish in it. [white

Young prince, behold these locks that are grown
Beneath a helmet in your father's battles.

Juba. Those locks shall ne'er protect thy insolence.

Syph. Must one rash word, the infirmity of age,
Throw down the merit of my better years?
This the reward of a whole life of service?

Curse on the boy! how steadily he hears me!

(Aside.)

Juba. Is it, because the throne of my forefathers
Still stands unfill'd, and that Numidia's crown
Hangs doubtful yet whose head it shall inclose,
Thou thus presum'st to treat thy prince with scorn?

Syph. Why will you rive my heart with such
expressions?

Does not old Syphax follow you to war?

What are his aims? What is it he aspires to?

Is it not this? To shed the slow remains,

His last poor ebb of blood, in your defence?

Juba. Syphax, no more: I would not hear you
talk. [to Juba,

Syph. Not hear me talk? What! when my faith
My royal master's son, is call'd in question?

My prince may strike me dead, and I'll be dumb:

But, whilst I live, I must not hold my tongue,

And languish out old age in his displeasure.

Juba. Thou know'st the way too well into my
I do believe thee loyal to thy prince. [heart:

Syph. What greater instance can I give? I've

To do an action which my soul abhors, [offer'd

And gain you whom you love, at any price:

And 'tis for this my prince has call'd me traitor.

Juba. Sure thou mistak'st: I did not call thee so.

Syph. You did, indeed, my prince; you call'd me
traitor:

Nay, farther, threaten'd you'd complain to Cato.

Of what, my prince, would you complain to Cato;

That Syphax loves you, and would sacrifice

His life, nay more, his honour, in your service?

Juba. Syphax, I know thou lov'st me: but thy

To serve thy master, carried thee too far. [zeal

Honour's a sacred tie, the law of kings,

The noble mind's distinguishing perfection,

That aids and strengthens virtue where it meets her,

And imitates her actions, where she is not:

It ought not to be sported with.

Syph. Believe me, prince, you make old Syphax weep,
To hear you talk; but 'tis with tears of joy.
If e'er your father's crown adorn your brows,
Numidia will be blest by Cato's lectures.

Juba. Give me thy hand: we'll mutually forget
The warmth of youth, and forwardness of age.
Thy prince esteems thy worth, and lovesthy person:
If e'er the sceptre comes into my hand,
Syphax shall stand the second in my kingdom.

Syph. Why will you overwhelm my age with kindness?

My joy grows burthensome: I sha'n't support it.

Juba. My friend, farewell. I'll hence, and try to
Some best occasion that may set me right [find
In Cato's thoughts. I'd rather have that man
Approve my deeds, than worlds for my admirers.

Syph. Young men soon give, and soon forget
affronts;

Old age is slow in both. A false old traitor!
Those words, rash boy, may chance to cost thee dear.
My heart had still some foolish fondness for thee:
But hence! 'tis gone: I give it to the winds.
Cæsar, I'm wholly thine.

Enter SEMPRONIUS.

All hail, Sempronius!

Well, Cato's senate is resolv'd to wait
The fury of a siege, before it yields.

Sem. Syphax, we both were on the verge of fate:
Lucius declar'd for peace, and terms were offer'd
To Cato by a messenger from Cæsar.

Syph. Who is this messenger?

Sem. I've practis'd with him;
And found a means to let the victor know
That Syphax and Sempronius are his friends.
Is Juba fix'd?

Syph. Yes; but it is to Cato.

I've tried the force of every reason on him;
Laid safety, life, and interest, in his sight;
But all are vain; he scorns them all for Cato.

Sem. Well, 'tis no matter; we shall do without him.
My friend, I now may hope thou hast forsook
Thy Juba's cause, and wishest Marcia mine.

Syph. May she be thine as fast as thou would'st
have her!

But are thy troops prepar'd for a revolt?
Does the sedition catch from man to man,
And run among their ranks?

Sem. All, all is ready;
The factious leaders are our friends, and spread
Murmurs and discontents among the soldiers:
Within an hour, they'll storm the senate-house.

Syph. Meanwhile, I'll draw up my Numidian
troops

Within the square, to exercise their arms,
And, as I see occasion, favour thee.
I laugh to think how your unshaken Cato
Will look aglath, while unforeseen destruction
Pours in upon him thus from every side.
So, where our wide Numidian wastes extend,
Sudden th' impetuous hurricanes descend,
Wheel through the air, in circling eddies play,
Tear up the sands, and sweep whole plains away,
The helpless traveller, with wild surprise,
Sees the dry desert all around him rise,
And, smother'd in the dusty whirlwind, dies.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Portico of the palace.

Enter MARCUS, and PORCIUS.

Mar. Thanks to my stars, I have not rang'd about
The wilds of life, ere I could find a friend;
Nature first pointed out my Porcius to me,
And early taught me, by her secret force,
To love thy person, ere I knew thy merit;
Till what was instinct, grew up into friendship.

Por. The friendships of the world are oft, my
brother,

Confed'racies in vice, or leagues of pleasure;
Ours has severest virtue for its basis,
And such a friendship ends not but with life.

Mar. Porcius, thou know'st my soul in all its
weakness;

Then, pr'ythee, spare me on its tender side;
Indulge me but in love, my other passions
Shall rise and fall by virtue's nicest rules. [love:

Por. When love's well tim'd, 'tis not a fault to
The strong, the brave, the virtuous, and the wise
Sink in the soft captivity together.

I would not urge thee to dismiss thy passion,
I know 'twere vain, but to suppress its force,
Till better times may make it look more graceful.

Mar. Alas! thou talk'st like one who never felt
The impatient throbs and longings of a soul
That pants and reaches after distant good.

A lover does not live by vulgar time:
In every moment of my Lucia's absence
Life hangs upon me, and becomes a burthen;
And yet, when I behold the charming maid,
I'm ten times more undone; while hope, and fear,
And grief, and rage, and love, rise up at once,
And with variety of pain distract me.

Por. What can I say, or do, to give thee help?

Mar. Porcius, thou oft enjoy'st the fair one's
presence:

Then undertake my cause, and plead it to her
With all the strength and heat of eloquence,
Fraternal love and friendship can inspire.

Tell her, thy brother languishes to death,
And fades away, and withers in his bloom;
That he forgets his sleep, and loathes his food,
That youth, and health, and war, are joyless to him:
Describe his anxious days, and restless nights,
And all the torments that thou see'st me suffer.

Por. I do entreat thee, give me not an office
That suits with me so ill: thou know'st my temper.

Mar. Canst thou behold me sinking in my woes,
And wilt thou not reach out a friendly arm,
To raise me from amidst this plunge of sorrows?
O, Porcius, Porcius! from my soul I wish
Thou didst but know thyself what 'tis to love:
Then would'st thou pity and assist thy brother.

(*Retires, in great agitation.*)

Por. (*Aside.*) What should I do? If I disclose
my passion,
Our friendship's at an end: if I conceal it,
The world will call me false to friend and brother.

Mar. But see where Lucia, at her wonted hour,
Amid the cool of yon high marble arch,
Enjoys the noon-day breeze! Behold her! Porcius,
That face, that shape, those eyes, that heaven of
beauty!

Observe her well, and blame me if thou canst.

Por. She sees us, and advances.

Mar. I'll withdraw,

And leave you for a while. Remember, Porcius,
Thy brother's life depends upon thy tongue. [*Exit.*

Enter LUCIA.

Luc. Did I not see your brother Marcus here?
Why did he fly the place, and shun my presence?

Por. O, Lucia! language is too faint to shew

His rage of love; it preys upon his life;

He pines, he sickens, he despairs, he dies.

My heart bleeds for him:

Even now, while thus I stand blest in thy presence,
A secret damp of grief comes o'er my thoughts,
And I'm unhappy, though thou smil'st upon me.

Luc. How wilt thou guard thy honour in the shock
Of love and friendship? Think betimes, my Porcius,
Think how the nuptial tie, that might ensure
Our mutual bliss, would raise to such a height
Thy brother's griefs, as might, perhaps, destroy
him. [*my Lucia?*

Por. Alas, poor youth! What dost thou think,

His generous, open, undesigning heart
Has begg'd his rival to solicit for him:
Then do not strike him dead with a denial;
But hold him up in life, and cheer his soul
With the faint glimmering of a doubtful hope:
Perhaps, when we have pass'd these gloomy hours,
And weather'd out the storm that beats upon us,—

Luc. No, Porcius, no: I see thy sister's tears,
Thy father's anguish, and thy brother's death,
In the pursuit of our ill-fated loves:
And, Porcius, here I swear, to heaven I swear,
To heaven, and all the powers that judge mankind,
Never to join my plighted hand with thine,
While such a cloud of mischief hangs about us;
But to forget our loves, and drive thee out
From all my thoughts, as far as I am able.

Por. What hast thou said? Recall those hasty
Or I am lost for ever. [words,

Luc. Think, Porcius; think thou see'st thy dying
brother

Stabb'd at his heart, and all besmear'd with blood,
Storming at heaven and thee. Thy awful sire
Sternly demands the cause, the accursed cause
That robs him of his son. Farewell, my Porcius!
Farewell, though death is in the word, for ever!

Por. Thou must not go; my soul still hovers o'er
And can't get loose. [thee,

Luc. If the firm Porcius shake
To hear of parting, think what Lucia suffers.
But see, thy brother Marcus bends this way:
I sicken at the sight. Once more, farewell!
Farewell! and know, thow wrong'st me, if thou
think'st

Ever was love, or ever grief, like mine. [Exit.

Enter MARCUS.

Mar. Porcius, what hopes? How stands she?
Am I doom'd
To life or death?

Por. What would't thou have me say?
Mar. Thy downcast looks, and thy disorder'd
thoughts,

Tell me my fate; I ask not the success
My cause has found.

Por. I'm griev'd I undertook it.

Mar. What! does the barbarous maid insult my
And triumph in my pains? [heart,

Por. Away! you're too suspicious in your griefs:
Lucia, though sworn never to think of love,
Compassionates your pains, and pities you.

Mar. Compassionates my pains, and pities me!
What is compassion, when 'tis void of love?
Fool that I was, to choose so cold a friend
To urge my cause! Compassionates my pains!

To one that asks the warm returns of love,
Compassion's cruelty: 'tis scorn—'tis death.

Por. Marcus, no more! Have I deserv'd this
treatment? [me!

Mar. What have I said? O Porcius! O forgive
A soul exasperated in ills, falls out
With every thing, its friends, itself.

[Trumpets sound.]

But, ah!

What means that sound, big with the threat of war?
What new alarm? [Trumpets sound.]

Por. A second, louder yet,
Swells in the wind, and comes more full upon us.

Mar. Oh, for some glorious cause to fall in battle!
Lucia, thou hast undone me: thy disdain
Has broke my heart: 'tis death must give me ease.

Por. Quick, let us hence: who knows if Cato's life
Stands sure? O Marcus, I am on fire! my heart
Leaps at the trumpet's voice, and burns for glory.
[Exeunt.

SCENE II.—A Square before the palace.

Enter SEMPRONIUS, JUNIUS, TITUS, and other
Mutineers.

Sem. At length the winds are rais'd, the storm
blows high;

Be it your care, my friends to keep it up
In its full fury, and direct it right,
Till it has spent itself on Cato's head.
Meanwhile, I'll herd among his friends, and seem
One of the number; that, whate'er arrive,
My friends and fellow-soldiers may be safe. [Exit.
Jun. We are all safe; Sempronius is our friend.
[Trumpets sound.]

Hark! Cato enters. Bear up boldly to him;
This day will end our toils, and give us rest.—
Fear nothing; for Sempronius is our friend.
[Trumpets sound.]

Enter CATO, PORCIUS, MARCUS, LUCIUS, SEM-
PRONIUS, Senators, &c.

Cato. Where are these bold, intrepid sons of war,
That greatly turn their backs upon the foe,
And to their general send a brave defiance?

Sem. (Aside.) Curse on their dastard souls, they
stand astonish'd! [honour

Cato. Perfidious men!—and will you thus dis-
Your past exploits, and sully all your wars?
Do you confess, 'twas not a zeal for Rome,
Nor love of liberty,

Drew you thus far, but hopes to share the spoil
Of conquer'd towns, and plunder'd provinces?
Fir'd with such motives, you do well to join
With Cato's foes, and follow Cæsar's banners.

Behold, ungrateful men!—
Behold my bosom naked to your swords,
And let the man that's injur'd strike the blow.

Which of you all suspects that he is wrong'd,
Or thinks he suffers greater ills than Cato?
Am I distinguish'd from you but by toils?
Superior toils, and heavier weight of cares?
Painful pre-eminence!

Sem. (Aside.) By heavens they droop:—
Confusion to the villains!—all is lost.

Cato. Hence, worthless men!—hence, and complain
to Cæsar,

You could not undergo the toils of war,
Nor bear the hardships that your general bore.

Luci. See, Cato, see,—the unhappy men!—they
weep:

Fear, and remorse, and sorrow for their crime
Appear in every look, and plead for mercy.

Cato. Learn to be honest men; give up your
leaders,

And pardon shall descend on all the rest.

Sem. Cato, commit these wretches to my care:
First, let them each be broken on the rack,—
Then, with what life remains, impal'd, and left
To writhe at leisure round the bloody stake;

There let them hang, and taint the southern wind:
The partners of their crime will learn obedience,
When they look up, and see their fellow-traitors
Stuck on a fork, and blackening in the sun.

Cato. Forbear, Sempronius:—see they suffer
death;

But, in their deaths, remember they are men.—
[The Mutineers retire.—The four Senators
advance into their places.]

Lucius, the base, degenerate age requires
Severity and justice in its rigour;
This curbs an impious, bold, offending world,
Commands obedience, and gives force to laws.
When by just vengeance guilty mortals perish,
The gods behold their punishment with pleasure,
And lay the uplifted thunderbolt aside.

Sem. Cato, I gladly execute thy will.

Cato. Meanwhile, we'll sacrifice to liberty.
Remember, O my friends, the laws, the rights,
The generous plan of power deliver'd down,
From age to age, by your renown'd forefathers,
So dearly bought, the price of so much blood:
O let it never perish in your hands,
But piously transmit it to your children!
Do thou, great Liberty, inspire our souls,
And make our lives in thy possession happy,

Or our deaths glorious in thy just defence!

[*Flourish.—Exeunt Cato, Porcius, Marcus, Lucius, Senators, &c.*]

Jun. Sempronius, you have acted like yourself:

One would have thought, you had been half in earnest.

Sem. Villain, stand off!—Base, groveling, worthless wretches!

Mongrels in faction! poor faint-hearted traitors!

Tit. Nay, now you carry it too far, Sempronius:

Throw off the mask; there are none here but friends.

Sem. Know, villains, when such paltry slaves presume

To mix in treason, if the plot succeeds,
They're thrown neglected by: but, if it fails,
They're sure to die like dogs, as you shall do.—
Guards!—

Enter Guards.

Here, take these factious monsters, drag them forth
To sudden death.

Jun. Nay; since it comes to this,—

Sem. Despatch them quick;—but first, pluck out
their tongues;

Lest with their dying breath they sow sedition.

[*Exeunt Guards, with the Mutineers.*]

Enter SYPHAX.

Syph. Our first design, my friend, has prov'd
abortive;

Still there remains an after-game to play.

My troops are mounted; their Numidian steeds

Snuff up the wind, and long to scour the desert:

Let but Sempronius head us in our flight,

We'll force the gate where Marcus keeps his guard,

And hew down all that would oppose our passage.

A day will bring us into Cæsar's camp.

Sem. Confusion! I have fail'd of half my purpose:

Marcia, the charming Marcia's left behind!

Syph. How! will Sempronius turn a woman's

slave?

Sem. Think not that I can ever feel the soft

Unmanly warmth and tenderness of love.

Syphax, I long to clasp that haughty maid,

And bend her stubborn virtue to my passion:

When I have gone thus far, I'd cast her off.

Syph. What hinders then, but that thou find her

And hurry her away by manly force. [out,

Sem. But how to gain admission? for access

Is given to none but Juba and her brothers.

Syph. Thou shalt have Juba's dress and Juba's

guards:

The doors will open when Numidia's prince

Seems to appear before the slaves that watch them.

Sem. I thank thy friendly zeal:—Marcia's my

own!

How will my bosom swell with anxious joy,

When I behold her struggling in my arms,

With glowing beauty and disorder'd charms;

While fear and anger, with alternate grace,

Pant in her breast, and vary in her face!

So Pluto, seiz'd of Proserpine, convey'd

To hell's tremendous gloom the affrighted maid;

There grimly smil'd, pleas'd with the beauteous

prize,

Nor envied Jove his sunshine and his skies. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Portico of the palace.

Enter MARCIA and LUCIA.

Luc. Now tell me, Marcia, tell me from thy soul,

If thou believ'st 'tis possible for woman

To suffer greater ills than Lucia suffers?

Mar. O Lucia, Lucia, might my big-swoln heart

Vent all its griefs, and give a loose to sorrow,

Marcia could answer thee in sighs, keep pace

With all thy woes, and count out tear for tear.

Luc. I know, thou'rt doom'd alike to be belov'd

By Juba, and thy father's friend Sempronius:

But which of these has power to charm like Porcius?

Mar. Still must I beg thee not to name Sempronius?

Lucia, I like not that loud boisterous man:

Juba, to all the bravery of a hero

Adds softest love and sweetness: he, I own,

Might make indeed the proudest woman happy.

Luc. But, should your father give you to Sem-

pronius?—

Mar. I dare not think he will: but, if he should,—

I bear the sound of feet:—they march this way.—

Let us retire, and try if we can drown

Each softer thought in sense of present danger.

When love once pleads admission to our hearts,

In spite of all the virtue we can boast,
The woman that deliberates is lost. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter SEMPRONIUS, dressed like Juba, with Numidian Guards.

Sem. The deer is lodg'd: I've track'd her to her
covert:

Be sure you mind the word; and, when I give it,

Rush in at once, and seize upon your prey:

Let not her cries or tears have force to move you.—

How will the young Numidian rave, to see

His mistress lost! If aught could glad my soul

Beyond the enjoyment of so bright a prize,

'Twould be to torture that young gay barbarian.—

But hark, what noise? Death to my hopes! 'tis he,

'Tis Juba's self, There is but one way left;

He must be murder'd, and a passage cut

Through those his guards. Ha! dastards, do you

tremble?

Or act like men, or, by yon azure heaven,—

Enter JUBA, with Guards.

Juba. What do I see? Who's this, that dares
usurp

The guards and habit of Numidia's prince?
Sem. One that was born to scourge thy arrogance,
Presumptuous youth.

Juba. What can this mean? Sempronius!

Sem. My sword shall answer thee:—have at thy
heart.

Juba. Nay, then beware thy own, proud barba-
rous man.

[*They fight. Sempronius falls. His Guards
surrender to Juba's.*]

Sem. Curse on my stars! Am I then doom'd to
fall

By a boy's hand, and for a worthless woman?

This my close of life?—

Oh, for a peal of thunder, that would make

Earth, sea, and air, and heaven, and Cato tremble!

Juba. With what a spring his furious soul broke
loose,

And left the limbs still quivering on the ground!

The face lies muffled up with those slaves to Cato,

That we may there at length unravel all

This dark design, this mystery of fate.

[*Exit, with Guards and Prisoners.*]

Enter MARCIA and LUCIA.

Luc. Sure, 'twas the clash of swords: my
troubled heart

Is so cast down and sunk amidst its sorrows,

It throbs with fear, and aches at every sound.

O Marcia, should thy brothers, for my sake—

I die away with horror at the thought.

Mar. See, Lucia, see! here's blood!

What! a Numidian! Heavens preserve the prince!

The face lies muffled up within the garment,—

But hah!—death to my sight!—a diadem?—

O gods! 'tis he! Juba lies dead before us.

Luc. Now, Marcia, now call up to thy assistance

Thy wonted strength and constancy of mind.

Mar. Lucia, look there, and wonder at my pa-
tience:

Have I not cause to rave, and beat my breast,
To rend my heart with grief, and run distracted?

Luc. What can I think or say to give thee comfort?

Enter JUBA, with Guards.

Mar. Talk not of comfort, 'tis for lighter ills.
Behold a sight that strikes all comfort dead.
I will indulge my sorrows;

That man, that best of men, deserv'd it from me.

Juba. What do I hear? and was the false Sempronius

That best of men? O, had I fall'n like him,
And could have thus been mourn'd, I had been happy.

Mar. O Juba! Juba! Juba!

He's dead, and never knew how much I lov'd him.
Lucia, who knows but his poor bleeding heart,
Amidst thy agonies, remember'd Marcia,
And the last words he utter'd call'd me cruel?
Alas! he knew not, hapless youth! he knew not
Marcia's whole soul was full of love and Juba.

Juba. Do I live? or am, indeed,
What Marcia thinks? All is Elysium round me.

Mar. Ye dear remains of the most lov'd of men
Nor modesty, nor virtue, here forbids
A last embrace, while thus—

Juba. (*Comes forward.*) See, Marcia; see,
The happy Juba lives! he lives to catch
That dear embrace, and to return it, too,
With mutual warmth and eagerness of love.

Mar. With pleasure and amaze I stand transported.

If thou art Juba, who lies there?

Juba. A wretch,
Disguis'd like Juba, on a curs'd design.

(*Signs to his guards, to carry off the body.*)

The tale is long, nor have I heard it out;
Thy father knows it all. I could not bear
To leave thee in the neighbourhood of death,
But flew, in all the haste of love, to find thee:
I found thee weeping; and confess, this once,
Am rapt with joy, to see my Marcia's tears.

Mar. I've been surpris'd in an unguarded hour,
But must not now go back: the love that lay
Half smother'd in my breast, has broke through all
Its weak restraints, and burns in its full lustre;
I cannot, if I would, conceal it from thee.

Juba. My joy! my best lov'd! my only wish!
How shall I speak the transport of my soul?

Mar. Lucia, thy arm: O, let me rest upon it!—
The vital blood that had forsook my heart,
Returns again in such tumultuous tides,
It quite o'ercomes me. Lead to my apartment.—
O prince! I blush, to think what I have said;
But fate has wrested the confession from me.
Go on, and prosper in the paths of honour:
Thy virtue will excuse my passion for thee,
And make the gods propitious to our love.

[*Exit with Lucia.*]

Juba. I am so bless'd, I fear 'tis all a dream.

Fortune, thou now hast made amends for all
Thy past unkindness: I absolve my stars.
What, though Numidia add her conquer'd towns
And provinces, to swell the victor's triumph?
Juba will never at his fate repine:
Let Cæsar have the world, if Marcia's mine. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A Square before the palace.*

Enter LUCIUS, CATO, Freedmen, &c.

Luci. I stand astonish'd. What! the bold Sempronius,
That still broke foremost through the crowd of pa-
And, virtuous even to madness.

Cato. Trust me, my friend,
Our civil discords have produc'd such crimes,
Such monstrous crimes, I am surpris'd at nothing.
O Lucius! I am sick of this bad world:
The daylight and the sun grow painful to me.

Enter PORCIUS.

But see where Porcius comes. What means this haste?

Por. My heart is griev'd;
I bring such news as will afflict my father.
Cato. Has Cæsar shed more Roman blood?

Por. Not so:
The traitor Syphax, as within the square
He exercis'd his troops, the signal given,
Flew off at once with his Numidian horse
To the south gate, where Marcus holds the watch:
I saw, and call'd to stop him; but in vain:
He toss'd his arm aloft, and proudly told me,
He would not stay and perish like Sempronius.

Cato. Perfidious man! But haste, my son, and see
Thy brother Marcus acts a Roman's part.

[*Exit Porcius with the Freedmen.*]

Lucius, the torrent bears too hard upon me:
Justice gives way to force; the conquer'd world
Is Cæsar's: Cato has no business in it.

Luci. While pride, oppression, and injustice reign,
The world will still demand her Cato's presence.
In pity to mankind, submit to Cæsar,
And reconcile thy mighty soul to life.

Cato. Would Lucius have me live, to swell the
Of Cæsar's slaves? or, by a base submission,
Give up the cause of Rome, and own a tyrant?

Luc. The victor never will impose on Cato
Ungenerous terms:—his enemies confess,
The virtues of humanity are Cæsar's.

Cato. Curse on his virtues! they've undone his
Such popular humanity is treason.
But Juba comes: the ingenuous prince appears
Full of the guilt of his perfidious subjects.

Enter JUBA.

Juba. I blush, and am confounded, to appear
Before thy presence, Cato.

Cato. What's thy crime?

Juba. I'm a Numidian.
Cato. And a brave one too:
Thou hast a Roman soul.

Juba. Hast thou not heard
Of my false countrymen?

Cato. Alas! good youth,
Falsehood and fraud shoot up in every soil,
The product of all climes; Rome has its Cæsars.

Juba. 'Tis generous, thus to comfort the dis-
tress'd.

Cato. 'Tis just, to give applause where 'tis de-
Thy virtue, prince, has stood the test of fortune,
Like purest gold, that, tortur'd in the furnace,
Comes out more bright, and brings forth all its
weight.

Enter PORCIUS.

Por. Misfortune on misfortune! grief on grief!
My brother Marcus—

Cato. Ha! what has he done?
Has he forsook his post? Has he given way?
Did he look tamely on, and let them pass?

Por. Scarce had I left my father, but I met him,
Borne on the shields of his surviving soldiers,
Breathless and pale, and cover'd o'er with wounds.
Long, at the head of his few faithful friends,
He stood the shock of a whole host of foes,—
Till, obstinately brave, and bent on death,
Oppress'd, with multitudes, he greatly fell,

Cato. I'm satisfied.
Por. Nor did he fall, before
His sword had pierc'd thro' the false heart of
I saw the hoary traitor
Grin in the pangs of death, and bite the ground.

Cato. Thanks to the gods! my boy has done his
duty.

Porcius, when I am dead, be sure you place
His urn near mine.

Por. Long may they keep asunder!

Luci. O Cato, arm thy soul with all its patience!
See where the corpse of thy dead son approaches;
The citizens and senators, alarm'd,
Have gather'd round it, and attend it weeping.

(*A dead march sounds.*)

Enter Lictors, Senators, Soldiers bearing the body of Marcus on a bier, Freedmen, with his helmet, shield, sword, and spear; eagle and other ensigns; and guards with their arms reversed.

Cato. Welcome, my son! Here set him down,
my friends,

Full in my sight; that I may view at leisure
The bloody corpse, and count those glorious wounds.
How beautiful is death, when earn'd by virtue!
Who would not be that youth? What pity is it
That we can die but once, to serve our country!
Why sits this sadness on your brows, my friends?
I should have blush'd, if Cato's house had stood
Secure, and flourish'd in a civil war.

Porcius, behold thy brother; and remember,
Thy life is not thy own, when Rome demands it.
When Rome demands? But Rome is now no more;
The Roman empire's fall'n,—O curs'd ambition!
Fall'n into Cæsar's hands:—our great forefathers
Had left him nought to conquer, but his country.

Juba. Behold that generous man! Rome fills
his eyes

With tears, that flow'd not o'er his own dead son.

Por. While Cato lives, Cæsar will blush to see
Mankind enslav'd, and be asham'd of empire.

Cato. Cæsar asham'd! Has he not seen Pharsalia?

Luci. Cato, 'tis time, thou save thyself and us.

Cato. Lose not a thought on me; I'm out of
danger;

Cæsar shall never say, "I've conquer'd Cato."

But, O my friends, your safety fills my heart
With anxious thoughts. How shall I save my friends?
'Tis now, O Cæsar, I begin to fear thee.

Luci. Cæsar has mercy, if we ask it of him.

Cato. Then ask it, I conjure you: let him know,
Whate'er was done against him, Cato did it:

Add, if you please, that I request it of him,

That I myself, with tears, request it of him,

The virtue of my friends may pass unpunish'd.

Juba, my heart is troubled for thy sake:

Should I advise thee to regain Numidia,

Or seek the conqueror?

Juba. If I forsake thee

Whilst I have life, may Heaven abandon Juba!

Cato. Thy virtues, prince, if I foresee aright,
Will one day make thee great. At Rome, hereafter,
'Twill be no crime to have been Cato's friend.

Porcius, come hither to me. Ah! my son,

Despairing of success,

Let me advise thee to withdraw betimes

To our paternal seat, the Sabine field,

Where the great censor toil'd with his own hands,

And all our frugal ancestors were bless'd

In humble virtues, and a rural life:

There live retir'd:

Content thyself to be obscurely good:

When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway,

The post of honour is a private station.

Por. I hope, my father does not recommend
A life to Porcius, that he scorns himself. [you

Cato. Farewell, my friends! If there be any of

Who dare not trust the victor's clemency,

Know, there are ships prepar'd by my command,

Their sails already opening to the winds,

That shall convey you to the wish'd-for port.

Is there aught else, my friends, I can do for you?

The conqueror draws near. Once more, farewell!

If e'er we meet hereafter, we shall meet

In happier climes, and on a safer shore,

Where Cæsar never shall approach us more.

(*Pointing to his dead son.*)

There the brave youth, with love of virtue fir'd,

Who greatly in his country's cause expir'd,

Shall know he conquer'd.

[*Exeunt Lucius and Senators.*

The firm patriot there,
Who made the welfare of mankind his care,
Though still by faction, vice, and fortune cross'd,
Shall find the generous labour was not lost.

[*A dead march. Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Chamber in the Palace.

CATO discovered, sitting in a thoughtful posture. In his hand Plato's book on the Immortality of the Soul: a drawn sword on the table by him,

Cato. It must be so; Plato, thou reasonest well;
Else when this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?

Or whence this secret dread and inward horror

Of falling into nought? Why shrinks the soul

Back on herself and startles at destruction?

'Tis the Divinity that stirs within us;

'Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter,

And intimates eternity to man.

Eternity! Thou pleasing, dreadful thought!

Through what variety of untried being,

Through what new scenes and changes must we pass!

The wide, the unbounded prospect lies before me,

But shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it.

Here will I hold: If there's a Power above us,

(And that there is, all nature cries aloud

Through all her works, he must delight in virtue;

And that which he delights in, must be happy.)

But when? or where? This world was made for

Cæsar.

I'm weary of conjectures: This must end 'em.

(*Laying his hand on his sword.*)

Thus am I doubly arm'd: my death and life,

My bane and antidote, are both before me:

This in a moment brings me to an end;

But this informs me, I shall never die.

The soul, secur'd in her existence, smiles

At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.

The stars shall fade away, the sun himself

Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years;

But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,

Unhurt amidst the war of elements,

The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.

What means this heaviness that hangs upon me?

Nature oppress'd, and harass'd out with care,

Sinks down to rest. This once I'll favour her,

That my awaken'd soul may take her flight,

Renew'd in all her strength, and fresh with life,

An offering fit for heaven. Let guilt or fear

Disturb man's rest: Cato knows neither of 'em,

Indifferent in his choice to sleep or die.

Enter PORCIUS.

But ha! how's this? My son! Why this intrusion?

Were not my orders that I would be private?

Why am I disobey'd?

Por. Alas, my father!

What means this sword? this instrument of death?

Let me convey it hence. (*Takes up the sword.*)

Cato. Rash youth, forbear! [friends,

Por. O, let the prayers, the entreaties of your

Their tears, their common danger, wrest it from

you.

Cato. Would'st thou betray me? would'st thou

give me up,

A slave, a captive, into Cæsar's hands?

Retire: and learn obedience to a father;

Or know, young man,—

Por. Look not thus sternly on me:

(*Lays down the sword.*)

You know I'd rather die than disobey you.

Cato. 'Tis well: again I'm master of myself.

Now, Cæsar, let thy troops beset our gates,

And bar each avenue; thy gathering fleets

O'erspread the sea, and stop up every port;

Cato shall open to himself a passage,
And mock thy hopes.

Por. (Kneels.) O, sir, forgive your son,
Whose grief hangs heavy on him! O my father,—
How am I sure it is not the last time
I e'er shall call you so?—he not displeas'd,
O be not angry with me, whilst I weep,
And, in the anguish of my heart, beseech you
To quit the dreadful purpose of your soul.

Cato. Thou hast been ever good and dutiful.
(Raises and embraces him.)

Weep not, my son; all will be well again:
The righteous gods, whom I have sought to please,
Will succour Cato, and protect his children.

Por. Your words give comfort to my drooping
heart.

Cato. Porcius, thou may'st rely upon my con-
Cato will never act what misbecomes him.

But go, my son; take care that ought be wanting
Among thy father's friends; see them embark'd;
And tell me if the winds and seas befriend 'em.
My soul is quite weigh'd down with care, and asks
The soft refreshment of a moment's sleep.

Por. My thoughts are more at ease; my heart
revives.

Enter MARCIA.

O Marcia, O my sister, still there's hope:
Our father will not cast away a life
So needful to us all, and to his country.
He is retir'd to rest, and seems to cherish
Thoughts full of peace. He has despatch'd me hence
With orders that bespeak a mind compos'd,
And studious for the safety of his friends.
Marcia, take care that none disturb his slumbers.

Mar. O ye immortal powers, that guard the just,
Watch round his couch, and soften his repose!
Banish his sorrows, and becalm his soul
With easy dreams! Remember all his virtues,
And shew mankind that goodness is your care!

Enter LUCIA.

Luc. Where is your father, Marcia? Where is
Cato?

Mar. Lucia, speak low:—he is retir'd to rest.
My friend, I feel a gentle dawning hope
Rise in my soul: we may be happy still.

Luc. Alas! I tremble when I think on Cato;
In every view, in every thought, I tremble.
Cato is stern, and awful as a god:
He knows not how to wink at human frailty,
Or pardon weakness that he never felt.

Mar. Though stern and awful to the foes of Rome,
He is all goodness, Lucia, always mild,
Compassionate and gentle, to his friends:
Fill'd with domestic tenderness,—the best,
The kindest father. I have ever found him
Easy, and good, and bounteous to my wishes.

Luc. 'Tis his consent alone can make us happy.
But who knows Cato's thoughts?
Who knows how yet he may dispose of Porcius?
Or, how he has determin'd of thyself?

Mar. Let him but live, commit the rest to heaven.

Enter LUCIUS.

Luci. Sweet are the slumbers of the virtuous man.
O Marcia, I have seen thy godlike father:
Some power invisible supports his soul,
And bears it up in all its wonted greatness.
A kind refreshing sleep has fallen upon him:
I saw him stretch'd at ease, his fancy lost
In pleasing dreams: as I drew near his couch,
He smil'd, and cried, "Caesar, thou canst not hurt
me."

Mar. His mind still labours with some dreadful

Enter JUBA.

Juba. Lucius, the horsemen are return'd from
viewing

The number, strength, and posture of our foes,
Who now encamp within a short hour's march.
On the high point of yon bright western tower
We ken them from afar; the setting sun
Plays on their shining arms and burish'd helmets,
And covers all the field with gleams of fire.

Luci. Marcia, 'tis time, we should awake thy father.
Caesar is still dispos'd to give us terms;
And waits at distance, till he hears from Cato.

Enter PORCIUS.

Porcius, thy looks speak somewhat of importance.
What tidings dost thou bring? Methinks, I see
Unusual gladness sparkling in thy eyes.

Por. As I was hastening to the port, where now
My father's friends, impatient for a passage,
Accuse the lingering winds, a sail arriv'd
From Pompey's son, who through the realms of
Spain

Calls out for vengeance on his father's death,
And rouses the whole nation up to arms.
Were Cato at their head, once more might Rome
Assert her rights, and claim her liberty.

(Cato's groans are heard.)
But hark! what means that groan? O, give me way,
And let me fly into my father's presence. *[Exit.]*

Luci. Cato, amidst his slumbers, thinks on Rome,
And in the wild disorder of his soul
Mourns o'er his country. *(Cato groans again.)*
Ha! a second groan!—Heaven guard us all!

Mar. Alas! 'tis not the voice
Of one who sleeps: 'tis agonizing pain,
'Tis death is in that sound.

Enter PORCIUS.

Por. O, sight of woe!
O Marcia, what we fear'd is come to pass!
Cato is fallen upon his sword.

Luci. O Porcius,
Hide all the horrors of thy mournful tale,
And let us guess the rest.

Por. I've rais'd him up,
And plac'd him in his chair, where, pale and faint,
He gasps for breath, and, as his life flows from him,
Demands to see his friends. His servants weeping,
Obsequious to his orders, bear him hither.

Mar. O heaven, assist me in this dreadful hour
To pay the last sad duties to my father!

Enter CATO, with two Freedmen.

Juba. These are thy triumphs, thy exploits, O
Caesar!

Luci. Now is Rome fallen indeed!

Cato. Here set me down.

Porcius, come near me:—are my friends embark'd?
Can any thing be thought of for their service?
Whilst yet I live, let me not live in vain.

O Lucius, art thou here? Thou art too good!
Let this our friendship live between our children;
Make Porcius happy in thy daughter Lucia,
Alas, poor man he weeps! Marcia, my daughter,
O bend me forward! Juba loves thee, Marcia.

A senator of Rome, while Rome surviv'd,
Would not have match'd his daughter with a king;
But Caesar's arms have thrown down all distinction:
Whoe'er is brave and virtuous, is a Roman.

I'm sick to death. O, when shall I get loose
From this vain world, the abode of guilt and sorrow!
And yet, methinks, a beam of light breaks in
On my departing soul. Alas! I fear,
I've been too hasty. O ye powers, that search
The heart of man, and weigh his inmost thoughts,
If I have done amiss, impute it not!

The best may err; but you are good; and—oh!
(Dies.)

COUNT OF NARBONNE;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY ROBERT JEPHSON.



Act IV.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

COUNT OF NARBONNE
AUSTIN

THEODORE
FABIAN

RENCHILD
COUNTESS

ADELAIDE
JAQUELINE

ACT I.—SCENE I.—A Hall.

Enter the COUNT of NARBONNE, speaking to an Officer; followed by FABIAN.

Count. Not to be found! Is this your faithful service?

How could she pass unseen? By hell, 'tis false! Thou hast betray'd me.

Off. Noble sir, my duty— [ply not.

Count. Your fraud, your negligence—away! re-Find her within this hour; else, by my life, The gates of Narbonne shall be clos'd against thee. Then make the world thy country. [Exit Officer. Fabian, stay!

Misfortunes fall so thick upon my head, They will not give me time to think—to breathe.

Fab. Heav'n knows, I wish your peace; but am to learn

What grief more fresh than my young lord's decease, A sorrow but of three days past, can move you.

Count. Oh! bitter memory! gone, gone for ever! The pillar of my house, my only son!

Fab. 'Twas terrible, indeed!

Count. Ay, was it not?

And then, the manner of it! think on that. Disease, that robb'd me of two infant sons, Approaching slow, bade me prepare to lose them; I saw my lilies drooping; and, accusom'd To see them dying, bore to see them dead:

But, oh! my Edmund!—Thou remember'st, Fabian, How blithe he went to seek the forest's sport?

Fab. 'Would I could not remember!

Count. That curs'd barb

(My fatal gift) that dash'd him down the cliff, [gled, Seem'd proud of his gay burden. Breathless, man-They bore him back to me. Fond man! I hop'd This day his happy match with Isabel

Had made our line perpetual; and, this day, The unfruitful grave receives him. Yes, 'tis fate! That dreadful denunciation 'gainst my house,

No prudence can avert, nor pray'rs can soften.

Fab. Think not on that; some visionary's dream. What house, what family could e'er know peace,

If such enthusiasts' ravings were believ'd, And frenzy deem'd an insight of the future?

But may I dare to ask, is it of moment To stir your anger thus, that Isabel Has left the castle?

Count. Of the deepest moment: My best hope hangs on her; some future time I may instruct thee why.—These cares unbinge me: Just now, a herald from her angry father Left me this dire election—to resign

My titles, and this ample seigniory, (Worthy a monarch's envy,) or to meet him, And try my right by arms. But, pr'ythee, tell (Nor let a fear to wound thy master's pride Restrain thy licens'd speech,) hast thou e'er heard My father Raymond—(cast not down thine eye)— By any indirect or bloody means, Procur'd that instrument, Alphonso's will, That made him heir to Narbonne?

Fab. My best lord, At all times would I fain withhold from you Intelligence unwelcome, but most now.

At seasons such as this, a friendly tongue Should utter words like balm; but what you ask—

Count. I ask to be inform'd of. Hast thou known From childhood up to man, and canst thou fear [me I am so weak of soul, like a thin reed,

To bend and stagger at each puny blast? No; when the tempest rages round my head, I give my branches wider to the air,

And strike my root more deeply. To thy tale: Away with palliatives and compliments! Speak plainly.

Fab. Plainly, then, my lord, I have heard What, for the little breath I have to draw, I would not, to the black extent of rumour, Give credit to. But you command me speak.—

Count. Thy pauses torture me. Can I hear worse Than this black scroll contains? this challenge here, From Isabella's father, haughty Godfrey?

In broad and unambiguous words he tells me, My father was a murderer, and forg'd Alphonso's testament.

Fab. From Palestine That tale crept hither; where, foul slander says, The good Alphonso, not, as we believe,

Died of a fever, but a venom'd draught,
Your father, his companion of the cross,
Did with his own hand mingle; his hand, too,
Assisted by some cunning practisers,
Model'd that deed, which, barring Godfrey's right,
And other claims from kindred, nam'd Count Ray-
Lord of these fair possessions. [mond

Count. Ah! I have it;
'Tis Godfrey's calumny; he has coin'd this lie;
And his late visit to the Holy Land,
No doubt, has furnish'd likelihood of proof,
To give his fiction colour.

Fab. Sure, 'tis so!

Count. He, too, has forg'd this idle prophecy,
(To shake me with false terrors,) this prediction,
Which, but to think of, us'd to freeze my veins;
"That no descendant from my father's loins,
Should live to see a grandson; nor heaven's wrath
Cease to afflict us, till Alphonso's heir
Succeeded to his just inheritance."
Hence, superstition mines my tottering state,
Loosens my vassals' faith, and turns their tears,
Which else would fall for my calamities,
To gloomy pause, and gaping reverence:
While all my woes, to their perverted sense,
Seem but the marvellous accomplishment
Of revelation, out of nature's course.

Fab. Reason must so interpret. Good, my lord,
What answer was return'd to Godfrey's challenge?

Count. Defiance.

Fab. Heaven defend you!

Count. Heaven defend me!

I hope it will, and this right arm to boot.
But, hark! I hear a noise. Perhaps my people
Have found the fugitive. Haste! bid them enter.

[Exit Fabian.]

She ey'd me with abhorrence; at the sound
Of love, of marriage, fled indignant from me.
Yet must I win her: should she meet my wish,
Godfrey would prop the right he strives to shake;
Securing thus to his fair daughter's issue,
All that now hangs on the sword's doubtful point.

Re-enter an Officer.

Now, what tidings?

Where is the lady?

Offi. We have search'd in vain
The castle round; left not an aisle or vault
Unvisited.

Count. Damnation!

Offi. Near the cloister,
From whence, by the flat door's descent, a passage
Beneath the ground leads onward to the convent,
We heard the echo of a falling weight,
And sought it by the sound.

Count. Well, and what then?

Offi. The unsettled dust left us no room to doubt
The door had just been rais'd.

Count. She has escap'd,
And by confed'racy: to force that bar,
Without more aid, had baffled twice her strength.
Go on.

Offi. We enter'd; with resistance bold

Enter FABIAN and ATTENDANTS, with THEODORE.

This peasant push'd us backward from the spot.
My arm was rais'd to smite him, but respect
For something in his aspect check'd the blow.
He, chiding, parleying by turns, gave time
For whosoever had descended there
(The lady doubtless) to elude our search:
The rest himself will tell.

Count. (To Theodore.) Ah! what art thou?

Theo. It seems, thy prisoner: disengage me first
From their rude grasp, and I may tell thee more.

Count. Unhand him. I should know thee; I have seen
Features like thine. Answer me, wert thou found
As these men say?

Theo. I was.

Count. And what thy purpose?

Theo. Chance brought me there.

Count. And did chance lead thee, too,
To aid a fugitive?

Theo. They saw not that.

Count. They saw it not! How! could her delicate
Weak, soft, and yielding, to the gentlest touch,
Sustain that poud'rous mass? No; those tough arms,
Thy force, assisted; else, thou young dissembler—

Theo. She had been seiz'd, and by compulsion
Where I stand now. [brought

Count. Thou dost avow it, then;

Boast it even to my face, audacious strippling!
Such insolence, and these coarse rustic weeds,
Are contradictions. Answer me, who art thou?

Theo. Less than I should be; more than what I

Count. Hence with this saucy ambiguity. [seem.
What is thy name, thy country? That mean habit,
Which should teach humbleness, speaks thy con-
dition.

Theo. My name is Theodore; my country, France;
My habit little suited to my mind,
Less to my birth, yet fit for my condition.

Count. Oh! thou art, then, some young adventurer,
Some roving knight, a hero in disguise,
Who, scorning forms of vulgar ceremony,
No leave obtain'd, waiting no invitation,
Enters our castles, wanders o'er our halls,
To succour dames distress'd, or pilfer gold.

Theo. There is a source of reverence for thee here,
Forbids me, though provok'd, retort thy taunts.

Count. If I endure this more, I shall grow vile
Even to my hands.

Theo. Hold! let me stop thy wrath.

I see thy quivering lip, thy fiery eye,
Fore-run a storm of passion. To prevent thee
From terms too harsh, perhaps, for thee to offer,
Or me to bear (poor as I seem) with honour,
I will cut short thy interrogatories,
And on this theme give thee the full extent
Of all I know, or thou canst wish to learn.

Count. Do it.

Theo. Without a view to thwart thy purpose,
(Be what it might,) was I within thy walls.
In a dim passage of the castle aisles,
Musing alone, I heard a hasty tread,
And breath drawn short, like one in fear of peril.

A lady enter'd; fair she seem'd, and young,
Guiding her timorous footsteps by a lamp;
"The lord, the tyrant of this place," she cried,
"For a detested purpose follows me;
Aid me, good youth!" then, pointing to the ground,
"That door," she added, "leads to sanctuary."
I seiz'd an iron hold, and, while I tugg'd
To heave the unwilling weight, I learn'd her title.

Count. The lady Isabel?

Theo. The same. A gleam,
Shot from their torches who pursued her track,
Prevented more; she hasten'd to the cave,
And vanish'd from my sight.

Count. And did no awe,
No fear of him she call'd this castle's lord,
Its tyrant, chill thee?

Theo. Awe, no fear, I know not,

And trust shall never; for I know not guilt. [I;

Count. Then, thou, it seems, art master here, not
Thou canst control my projects, blast my schemes,
And turn to empty air my power in Narbonne.
Nay, should my daughter choose to fly my castle,
Against my bidding, bars and bolts were vain:
This frize-clad champion, gallant Theodore!
Would lend his ready arm, and mock my caution.

Theo. Thy daughter! Oh! I were, indeed, too
Could I but live to render her a service! [bless'd,

Count. My daughter would, I hope, disdain thy
service. [done,

Theo. Wherefore am I to blame? What I have
Were it to do again, again I'd do it.
And may this arm drop palsied by my side,
When its cold sinews shrink to aid affliction!

Count. Indeed!

Theo. Indeed. Frown on! Ask thy own heart,
Did innocence and beauty bend before thee,
Hunted and trembling, wouldst thou tamely pause,
Scanning pale counsel from deliberate fear,

And weigh each possibility of danger?
No; the instinctive nobleness of blood
Would start beyond the reach of such cold scruples,
And instant gratify its generous ardour. [look,

Count. I must know more of this. His phrase, his
His steady countenance, raise something here,
Bids me beware of him. (*Aside.*) I have no time
To bandy idle words with slaves like thee.
I doubt not thy intent was mischievous;
Booty, perhaps, or blood. Till more inquiry
Clear, or condemn him, hold him in your guard.
Give none admittance. Take him from my sight.

Theo. Secure in her integrity, my soul
Casts back thy mean suspicions, and forgives thee.

Count. Away with him! [*Theodore is led out.*
What means this heaviness?

My heart, that like a well-trimm'd gallant bark,
Was wont to mount the waves, and dash them off
In intellectual foam, now seems to crack,
And let in each assailing tide to sink me.
I must not yield to this dull lethargy.

Good Fabian, hie thee to St. Nicholas';
Bid holy Austin straight repair to me. [*Exit Fabian.*
His sanctity, and reverend character,

His pious eloquence, made engines for me,
Might save a world of anguish to my soul,
And smooth my unwelcome purpose to Hortensia.

But how prevail with him? Ambition! No;
The world is dead in him, and gold is trash
To one who neither needs nor values it.

Interest and love shall wear the guise of conscience;
I must pretend nice scruples, which I feel not,
And make him mediate for me with the church.

Yet he reveres the Countess; and, I fear,
Will spy more sin, in doubts that wound her quiet,
Than in my stifling them. But see, she comes,
With downcast eye, and sad dejected mien.

I will not yet disclose it. [*Enter the COUNTESS.*
Where's my child,

My all of comfort now, my Adelaide?

Countess. Dear as she is, I would not have her all;
For I should then be nothing. Time has been,
When, after three long days of absence from you,
You would have question'd me a thousand times,
And bid me tell each trifle of myself;

Then, satisfied at last that all were well,
At last, unwilling turn to meaner cares.

Count. This is the nature still of womankind;
If fondness be their mood, we must cast off
All grave-complexion'd thought, and turn our souls
Quite from their tenour to wild levity;

Vary with all their humours, take their hues,
As unsubstantial Iris from the sun:
Our bosoms are their passive instruments;
Vibrate their strain, or all our notes are discord.

Countess. Oh! why this new unkindness? From
Never till now fell such ungentle words, [thy lips
Nor ever less was I prepar'd to meet them.

Count. Never till now was I so urg'd, beset,
Hemm'd round with perils.

Countess. Ay, but not by me.
Count. By thee, and all the world. But yesterday,
With uncontrollable and absolute sway,
I rul'd this province, was the unquestion'd lord
Of this strong castle, and its wide domains,
Stretch'd beyond sight around me; and but now,
The axe, perhaps, is sharp'ning, may hew down
My perish'd trunk, and give the soil I sprung from,
To cherish my proud kinsman Godfrey's roots.

Countess. Heaven guard thy life! His dreadful
summons reach'd me.

This urg'd me hither. On my knees I beg,
(And I have mighty reasons for my prayer,)
Oh! do not meet him on this argument:

By gentler means strive to divert his claim;
Fly this detested place, this house of horror,
And leave its gloomy grandeur to your kinsman.

Count. Rise, fearful woman! What! renounce
my birthright?

Go forth, like a poor, friendless, banish'd man,
To gnaw my heart in cold obscurity?

Thou weak adviser! Should I take thy counsel,
Thy tongue would first upbraid—thy spirit scorn
me. [world?

Countess. No, on my soul! Is Narbonne all the
My country is where thou art; place is little:
The sun will shine, the earth produce its fruits,
Cheerful and plenteously, where'er we wander.
In humbler walks, bless'd with my child and thee,
I'd think it Eden in some lonely vale,
Nor heave one sigh for these proud battlements.

Count. Such flowery softness suits not matron lips;
But thou hast mighty reasons for thy prayer:
They should be mighty reasons, to persuade
Thy rightful lord to leave his large possessions.

A soldier challeng'd, to decline the combat! [sons?
Countess. And are not prodigies, then, mighty rea-

The owl mistakes his season, in broad day
Screaming his hideous omens; spectres glide,
Gibbering and pointing as we pass along;

While the deep earth's unorganized caves
Send forth wild sounds, and clamours terrible: [air
These towers shakeround us, though the untroubled
Stagnates to lethargy: our children perish,
And new disasters blacken every hour.

Blood shed unrighteously, blood unappeas'd,
(Though we are guiltless,) cries, I fear, for ven-

geance. [blood?
Count. Blood shed unrighteously! have I shed
No; nature's common frailties set aside,
I'll meet my audit boldly.

Countess. Mighty Lord!
Oh! not on us, with justice too severe,
Visit the sin not ours.

Count. What can this mean?
Something thou would reveal that's terrible. [heart;
Countess. Too long, alas! it has weigh'd upon my
A thousand times I have thought to tell thee all;
But my tongue falter'd, and refus'd to wound thee.

Count. Distract me not, but speak.
Countess. I must. Your father
Was wise, brave, politic; but mad ambition,
(Heaven pardon him!) it prompts to desperate
deeds,— [and ease me.

Count. I scarce can breathe. Pr'ythee, be quick,
Countess. Your absence on the Italian embassy
Left him, you know, alone to my fond care.
Long had some hidden grief, like a slow fire,
Wasted his vitals; on the bed of death,
One object seem'd to harrow up his soul,
The picture of Alphonso in the chamber:
On that his eye was set. Methinks I see him;
His ashy hue, his grisled, bristling hair,
His palms wide spread. For ever would he cry,
"That awful form—how terrible he frowns!
See how he bares his livid, leprous breast,
And points the deadly chalice!"

Count. Ah! even so! [grasp them close,
Countess. Sometimes he'd seize my hands, and
And strain them to his hollow, burning eyes;
Then falter out, "I am, I am a villain!
Mild angel, pray for me;—sir not, my child;
It comes again;—oh! do not leave my side."
At last, quite spent with mortal agonies,
His soul went forth—and heaven have mercy on him!

Count. Enough! Thy tale has almost icy'd my blood.
Let me not think. Hortensia, on thy duty,
Suffer no breath like this to pass thy lips:
I will not taint my noble father's honour,
By vile suspicions suck'd from nature's dregs,
And the loose ravings of distemper'd fancy.

Countess. Yet, oh! decline this challenge!
Count. That hereafter.

Meantime, prepare my daughter to receive
A husband of my choice. Should Godfrey come,
(Strife might be so prevented,) bid her try
Her beauty's power. Stand thou but neuter, fate!
Courage and art shall arm me for mankind. [*Exit.*

ACT II.—SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter FABIAN and JAQUELINE.

Fab. No, no, it cannot be. My lord's commands
Were absolute, that none should visit him.

Jaq. What need he know it?

Fab. But perchance he should?

The study of my life has been his pleasure;
Nor will I risk his favour, to indulge
Such unavailing curiosity.

Jaq. Call it not so; I have kind counsel for him;
Which, if he follow it, may serve to speed
The hour of his deliverance, and appease
The unjustly anger'd Count.

Fab. Pray be content;

I dare not do it. Have this castle's walls
Hoos'd thee nine years, and art thou yet to learn
The temper of the Count? Serv'd and obey'd,
There lives not one more gracious, liberal;
Offend him, and his rage is terrible;
I'd rather play with serpents. But, fair Jaqueline,
Setting aside the comeliness and grace
Of this young rustic, which, I own, are rare,
And baits to catch all women, pr'ythee, tell,
Why are you thus solicitous to see him?

Jaq. In me, 'twere base to be indifferent:
He was my life's preserver, nay, preserv'd
A life more precious: yes, my dear young mistress!
But for his aid, the eternal sleep of death
Had clos'd the sweetest eyes that ever beam'd.
Aloof, and frighted, stood her coward train,
And saw a furious band of desperate slaves,
Inur'd to blood and rapine, hear her off.

Fab. What! when the gang of outlaw'd Thierry
Rush'd on her chariot near the wood of Zart,
Was he the unknown youth who succour'd her?
All good betide him for it.

Jaq. Yes, 'twas he. [sword,
From one tame wretch he snatch'd a half-drawn
And dealt swift vengeance on the ruffian crew.
Two at his feet stretch'd dead, the rest, amaz'd,
Fled, muttering curses, while he bore her back,
Unhurt but by her fears.

Fab. He should be worshipp'd,
Have statues rais'd to him; for, by my life,
I think there does not breathe another like her.
It makes me young to see her lovely eyes:
Such charity! such sweet benevolence!
So fair, and yet so humble! prais'd for ever,
Nay, wonder'd at, for nature's rarest gifts,
Yet lowlier than the lowest.

Jaq. Is it strange,
Fair Adelaide and I, thus bound to him,
Are anxious for his safety? What offence
(And, sure, 'twas unintended) could provoke
The rigorous Count thus to imprison him?

Fab. My lord was ever proud and choleric;
The youth, perhaps, unus'd to menaces,
Brook'd them but ill, and darted frown for frown:
This stir'd the Count to fury. But fear nothing;
All will be well; I'll wait the meetest season,
And be his advocate.

Jaq. Meantime, repair to him;
Bid him be patient; let him want no comfort,
Kind care can minister. My lady comes.
May I assure her of your favour to him?

Fab. Assure her that the man who sav'd her life,
Is dear to Fabian as his vital blood. [Exit.

Enter ADELAIDE.

Adel. I sent thee to his prison. Quickly tell me,
What says he? does he know my sorrow for him?
Does he confound me with the unfeeling crew,
Who act my father's bidding? Can his love
Pity my grief, and bear this wrong with patience?

Jaq. I strove in vain to enter. Fabian holds him,
By the Count's charge, in strictest custody;
And, fearful to awake his master's wrath,
Though much unwilling, bars me from his presence.

Adel. Unkind old man! I would myself entreat him,
But fear my earnest look, these starting tears,
Might to the experience of his prying age
Reveal a secret, which in vain I strive
To hide from my own breast.

Jaq. Alas! dear lady,
Did not your tongue reveal it, your chang'd mien,
Once lighter than the airy wood-nymph's shade,

Now turn'd to pensive thought and melancholy—
Involuntary sighs—your cheek, unlike
Its wonted bloom, as is the red-vein'd rose
To the dim sweetness of the violet—
These had too soon betray'd you. But, take heed!
The colour of our fate too oft is ting'd,
Mournful or bright, but from our first affections.

Adel. Foul disproportion draws down shame on
But where's the crime in fair equality? [love;
Mean birth presumes a mind uncultivate,
Left to the coarseness of its native soil,
To grow like weeds, and die like them, neglected;
But he was born my equal; lineag'd high,
And titled as our great ones.

Jaq. How easy is our faith to what we wish!
His story may be feign'd.

Adel. I'll not mistrust him. [me,
Since the bless'd hour that brought him first to save
How often have I listen'd to the tale!
Gallant, generous youth!
Thy sport, misfortune, from his infant years!
Wilt thou pursue him still?

Jaq. Indeed, 'tis hard. [walls
Adel. But, oh! the pang, that these ungrateful
Should be his prison! Here, if I were aught,
His presence should have made it festival; [trauce,
These gates, untouch'd, had leap'd to give him en-
And songs of joy made glad the way before him.
Instead of this, think what has been his welcome!
Dragg'd by rude hands before a furious judge,
Insulted, menac'd, like the vilest slave,
And doom'd, unheard, to ignominious bondage.

Jaq. Your father knew not of his service to you?
Adel. No; his indignant soul disdain'd to tell it.
Great spirits, conscious of their inborn worth,
Scorn by demand to force the praise they merit;
They feel a flame beyond their brightest deeds,
And leave the weak to note them, and to wonder.

Jaq. Suppress these strong emotions: the Count's
Is quick to find offence. Should he suspect [eye
This unpermitted passion, 'twould draw down
More speedy vengeance on the helpless youth,
Turning your fatal fondness to his ruin. [me!

Adel. Indeed, I want thy counsel. Yet, oh! leave
Find if my gold, my gems, can ransom him.
Had I the world, it should be his as freely. [you;

Jaq. Trust to my care. The Countess comes to seek
Her eye is this way bent. Conceal this grief;
All may be lost if you betray such weakness. [Exit.
Adel. Oh, love! thy sway makes me unnatural.
The tears, which should bedew the grave, yet green,
Of a dear brother, turning from their source,
Forget his death, and fall for Theodore.

Enter the COUNTESS.

Countess. Come near, my love! When thou art
from my side,
Methinks I wander like some gloomy ghost,
Who, doom'd to tread alone a dreary round,
Remembers the lost things that made life precious,
Yet sees no end of cheerless solitude.

Adel. We have known too much of sorrow; yet,
'twere wise [wish'd,
To turn our thoughts from what mischance has ra-
And rest on what it leaves. My father's love—

Countess. Was mine, but is no more. 'Tis past,
'tis gone.

That ray, at least, I hop'd would never set, [shades:
My guide, my light, through fortune's blackest
It was my dear reserve, my secret treasure;
I stor'd it up, as misers hoard their gold,
Sure counterpoise for life's severest ills:
Vain was my hope; for love's soft sympathy,
He pays me back harsh words, unkind reproof,
And looks that stab with coldness.

Adel. Oh! most cruel!
And, were he not my father, I could rail;
Call him unworthy of thy wondrous virtues;
Blind, and unthankful for the greatest blessing [him
Heaven's ever-bounteous hand could shower upon
Countess. No, Adelaide; we must subdue such
Obedience is thy duty, patience mine. [thoughts:

Just now, with stern and peremptory briefness,
He bade me seek my daughter, and dispose her
To wed, by his direction.

Adel. The saints forbid!

To wed by his direction! Wed with whom?

Countess. I know not whom. He counsels with

Adel. I hope he cannot mean it. [himself.

Countess. 'Twas his order.

Adel. Oh! madam, on my knees—

Countess. What would my child? [eyes?

Why are thy hands thus rais'd? Why stream thine
Why flutters thus thy bosom? Adelaide,
Speak to me! tell me, wherefore art thou thus?

Adel. Surprise and grief—I cannot, cannot speak.

Countess. If 'tis a pain to speak, I would not urge
But can my *Adelaide* fear aught from me? [thee.
Am I so harsh?

Adel. Oh, no! the kindest, best!

But would you save me from the stroke of death,
If you would not behold your daughter, stretch'd
A poor pale corpse, and breathless at your feet,
Oh! step between me and this cruel mandate! [step.

Countess. But this is strange! I hear your father's
He must not see you thus: retire this moment.
I'll come to you anon.

Adel. Yet, ere I go,

Oh! make the interest of my heart your own;
Nor, like a senseless, undiscerning thing,
Incapable of choice, nor worth the question,
Suffer this hasty transfer of your child:
Plead for me strongly, kneel, pray, weep for me;
And angels lend your tongue the power to move
him! [Exit.

Countess. What can this mean, this ecstasy of pas-
Can such reluctance, such emotions, spring [sion?
From the mere nicety of maiden fear?

The source is in her heart; I dread to trace it.
Must, then, a parent's mild authority
Be turn'd a cruel engine, to inflict
Wounds on the gentle bosom of my child?
And am I doom'd to register each day
But by some new distraction? Edmund! Edmund!
In apprehending worse even than thy loss,
My sense, confus'd, rests on no single grief;
For that were ease to this eternal pulse, [low.
Which, throbbing here, says blacker fates must fol-
Enter the COUNT OF NARBONNE and AUSTIN, meeting

Count. Welcome, thrice welcome! By our holy
mother,

My house seems hallow'd, when thou enter'st it.
Tranquillity and peace dwell ever round thee;
That robe of innocent white is thy soul's emblem,
Made visible in unstain'd purity.
Once more thy hand.

Aust. My daily task has been,
So to subdue the frailties we inherit,
That my fair estimation might go forth,
Nothing for pride, but to an end more righteous:
For not the solemn trappings of our state,
Tiaras, mitres, nor the pontiff's robe,
Can give such grave authority to priesthood,
As one good deed of grace and charity. [rand.

Count. We deem none worthier. But to thy er-

Aust. I come commission'd from fair Isabel.

Count. To me, or to the Countess?

Aust. Thus, to both:
For your fair courtesy and entertainment,
She rests your thankful debtor. You, dear lady,
And her sweet friend, the gentle *Adelaide*,
Have such a holy place in all her thoughts,
That 'twere irreverence to waste her sense
In wordy compliment.

Countess. Alas! where is she?
Till now I scarce had power to think of her;
But 'tis the mournful privilege of grief,
To stand excus'd from kind observances,
Which else, neglected, might be deem'd offence.

Aust. She dwells in sanctuary at St. Nicholas'.
Why she took refuge there—

Count. Retire, Hortensia.

I would have private conference with Austin;

No second ear must witness.

Countess. May I not,

By this good man, solicit her return?

Count. Another time; it suits not now. Retire.
[Exit Countess.

You come commission'd from fair Isabel?

Aust. I come commission'd from a greater power,
The Judge of thee, and Isabel, and all.
The offer of your hand in marriage to her,
With your propos'd divorce from that good lady,
That honour'd, injur'd lady you sent hence,
She has disclos'd to me.

Count. Which you approve not:
So speaks the frowning prelude of your brow.

Aust. Approve not! Did I not protest against it,
With the bold fervour of enkindled zeal,
I were the pander of a love like incest,
Betrayed of my trust, my function's shame,
And thy eternal soul's worst enemy. [son;

Count. Yet let not zeal, good man, devour thy rea-
Hear first, and then determine. Well you know,
My hope of heirs has perish'd with my son;
Since now full sev'nteen years, th' unfruitful curse
Has fall'n upon Hortensia. Are these signs,
(Tremendous signs, that startle nature's order!)
Graves casting up their sleepers, earth convuls'd,
Meteors that glare, my children's timeless deaths,
Obscure to thee alone? I have found the cause.

There is no crime our holy church abhors,
Not one high heav'n more strongly interdicts,
Than that commixture, by the marriage rite,
Of blood too near, as mine is to Hortensia.

Aust. Too near of blood! Oh! specious mockery!
Where have these doubts been buried twenty years?
Why wake they now? And am I closetted
To sanction them? Take back your hasty words,
That call'd me wise or virtuous; while you offer
Such shallow fictions to insult my sense,
And strive to win me to a villain's office. [wives,

Count. The virtue of our churchmen, like our
Should be obedient meekness. Proud resistance,
Banding high looks, a port erect and bold,
Are from the canon of your order, priest.
Learn this: (for here I will be teacher, Austin:)
Our temporal blood must not be stirr'd thus rudely:
A front that taunts, a scanning, scornful brow,
Are silent menaces, and blows unstruck.

Aust. Not so, my lord; mine is no priestly pride:
When I put off the habit of the world,
I had lost all that made it dear to me,
And shook off, to my best, its heat and passions.
But can I hold in horror this ill deed,
And dress my brow in false, approving smiles?
No: could I carry lightning in my eye,
Or roll a voice like thunder in your ears,
So should I suit my utterance to my thoughts,
And act as fits my sacred ministry.

Count. Oh! father, did you know the conflict here,
How love and conscience are at war within me,
Most sure you would not treat my grief thus harshly.
I call the saints to witness, were I master,
To wive the perfect model of my wish,
For virtue and all female loveliness,
I would not rove to an ideal form,
But beg of heav'n another like Hortensia.
Yet we must part.

Aust. And think you to excuse
A meditated wrong to excellence,
By giving it acknowledgment and praise?
Rather pretend insensibility;
Feign that thou dost not see like other men;
So may abhorrence be exchang'd for wonder,
Or men from cursing fall to pity thee. [shake me.

Count. You strive in vain; no pow'r on earth can
I grant my present purpose seems severe;
Yet are there means to smooth severity,
Which you, and only you, can best apply. [side:

Aust. Oh, no! the means hang there, there by your
Enwring your fingers in her flowing hair,
And with that weapon drink her heart's best blood;

So shall you kill her, but not cruelly,
Compar'd to this delib'rate, ling'ring murder. [her;
Count. Away with this perverseness! Get thee to
Tell her my heart is her's; here, deep engrav'd,
In characters indelible, shall rest
The sense of her perfections. Why I leave her
Is not from cloy'd or fickle appetite,
(For infinite is still her pow'r to charm,)
But heav'n will have it so.

Aust. Oh! name not heav'n!
'Tis too profane abuse.

Count. Win her consent,
(I know thy sway is boundless o'er her will,)
Then join my hand to blooming Isabel.
Thus will you do to all most worthy service;
The curse, averted thus, shall pass from Narbonne;
My house again may flourish; and proud Godfrey,
Who now disputes, will ratify my title,
Pleas'd with the rich succession to his heirs.

Aust. Has passion drown'd all sense, all memory?
She was affianc'd to your son, young Edmund.

Count. She never lov'd my son. Our importunity
Won her consent, but not her heart, to Edmund.

Aust. Did not that speak her soul pre-occupied?
Count. Ah! thou hast roas'd a thought: this Theo-
Some undivulg'd and deep-felt preference? [dore!
(Dull that I was not to perceive it sooner!)
He is her paramour! by heav'n, she loves him!
Her coldness to my son, her few tears for him,
Her flight, this peasant's aiding her; all, all,
Make it unquestionable:—but he dies.

Aust. Astonishment! What does thy frenzy mean?
Count. I thank thee, priest! thou serv'st me
'gainst thy will.

That slave is in my pow'r. Come, follow me.
Thou shalt behold the minion's heart torn out;
Then to his mistress bear the trembling present.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.—SCENE I.—*A Hall.*

Enter ADELAIDE, followed by JAQUELINE.
Jaq. Where do you fly? Heav'n! have you lost
all sense? [feel;
Adel. Oh! would I had; for then I should not
But I have sense enough to know I'm wretched,
To see the full extent of misery,
Yet not enough to teach me how to bear it.

Jaq. I did not think your gentleness of nature
Could rise to such extremes.

Adel. Am I not tame?
What are these tears, this wild, dishevell'd hair?
Are these fit signs for such despair as mine?
Women will weep for trifles, baubles, nothing;
For very frowardness will weep as I do:
A spirit rightly touch'd would pierce the air,
Call down invisible legions to his aid,
Kindle the elements. But all is calm;
No thunder rolls, no warning voice is heard;
To tell my frantic father this black deed,
Will sink him down to infinite perdition.

Jaq. Rest satisfied, he cannot be so cruel
(Rash as he is) to shed the innocent blood
Of a defenceless, unoffending youth.

Adel. He cannot be so cruel? Earth and heav'n!
Did I not see the dreadful preparations?
The slaves, who tremble at my father's nod,
Pale and confounded, dress the fatal block?
But I will fly, fall prostrate at his feet;
If nature is not quite extinguish'd in him, [him,
My pray'rs, my tears, my anguish, sure, will move

Jaq. Move him, indeed! but to redoubled fury:
He dooms him dead for loving Isabel;
Think, will it quench the fever of his rage,
To find he durst aspire to charm his daughter?

Adel. Did I hear right? for loving Isabel?
I knew not that before. Does he then love her?

Jaq. Nothing I heard distinctly; wild confusion
Runs through the castle: ev'ry busy fool,
All ignorant alike, tells diff'rent tales.

Adel. Away, it cannot be. I know his truth.
Oh! I despise myself, that for a moment
(Pardon me, love!) could suffer mean suspicion

Usurp the seat of gen'rous confidence.
Think all alike unjust, my Theodore,
When ev'n thy Adelaide could join to wrong thee!
Jaq. Yet he advis'd—
Adel. Oh! leave me to my grief.
To whom shall I complain? He but preserv'd
My life a little space, to make me feel
Th' extremes of joy and sorrow. Ere we met
My heart was calm as the unconscious babe.

Enter FABIAN. [mauds
Fab. Madam, my lord comes this way, and com-
To clear these chambers; what he meditates
'Tis fit indeed were private. My old age
Has liv'd too long, to see my master's shame.

Adel. His shame, eternal shame! Oh! more than
cruel!
How shall I smother it? Fabian, what means he?
My father—him I speak of—this young stranger—
Fab. My heart is rent in pieces! Deaf to reason,
He hears no counsel but from cruelty.
Good Austin intercedes and weeps in vain.

Jaq. There's comfort yet, if he is by his side.
Look up, dear lady! Ha! that dying paleness—
Adel. It is too much! Oh, Jaqueline!
Jaq. She faints;
Her gentle spirits could endure no more.
Ha! paler still! Fabian, thy arm; support her.
She stirs not yet.

Fab. Soft! bear her gently in. [Exit.]

SCENE II.
Enter the COUNT of NARBONNE, followed by AUSTIN.
Aust. I do believe thee very barbarous;
Nay, fear thy reason touch'd; for such wild thoughts,
Such bloody purposes, could ne'er proceed
From any sober judgment; yet thy heart
Will sure recoil at this.

Count. Why, think so still;
Think me both ruffian-like and lunatic;
One proof, at least, I'll give of temperate reason—
Not to be baited from my fix'd design
By a monk's ban or whining intercession.

Aust. Thou canst not mean to do it?
Count. Trust thine eyes.

Thybat! bring forth the pris'ner; bid my marshal
Prepare an axe. The ceremony's short;
One stroke, and all is past. Before he die,
He shall have leave to thank your godliness
For speeding him so soon from this bad world.

Aust. Where is the right, the law, by which you
Count. My will's the law. [doom him?
Aust. A venerable law!
The law by which the tiger tears the lamb,
And kites devour the dove. A lord of France,
Dress'd in a little delegated sway,
Strikes at his sovereign's face, while he profanes
His function's trusted for the gen'ral good.

Count. I answer not to thee.
Aust. Answer to heav'n:
When call'd to audit in that sacred court,
Will that supremacy accept thy plea,
"I did commit foul murder, for I might?" [earth,
Count. Soar not too high; talk of the things of
I'll give thee ear. Has not thy penitent,
Young Isabel, disclos'd her passion to thee?
Aust. Never.

Count. Just now, her coldness to my son,
You said, bespoke her heart pre-occupied.
The frail and fair make you their oracles;
Pent in your close confessionals, you sit,
Bending your rev'rend ears to am'rous secrets.

Aust. Scoffer, no more! stop thy licentious tongue!
Turn inward to thy bosom, and reflect—
Count. That is, be fool'd. Yet will I grant his life
On one condition.
Aust. Name it.
Count. Join my hand
To Isabel.

Aust. Not for the world.
Count. He dies.

Enter THEODORE, guarded. [first,
Come near, thou wretch! When call'd before me

With most unwonted patience I endur'd
Thy bold avowal of the wrong thou didst me;
A wrong so great, that, but for foolish pity,
Thy life that instant should have made atonement;
But now, convicted of a greater crime,
Mercy is quench'd: therefore, prepare to die.

Theo. I was a captive long 'mongst infidels,
Whom falsely I deem'd savage, since I find
Ev'n Tunis and Algiers, those nests of ruffians,
Might teach civility to polish'd France,
If life depends but on a tyrant's frown. [not;

Count. Out with thy holy trumpery, priest! delay
Or, if he trusts in Mahomet, and scorns thee,
Away with him this instant.

Aust. Hold, I charge you!

Theo. The turban'd misbeliever makes some shew
Of justice in his deadly processes;
Nor drinks the sabre blood thus wantonly,
Where men are valued less than nobler beasts.
Of what am I accus'd?

Count. Of insolence;

Of bold, presumptuous love, that dares aspire
To mix the vilest of thy sordid lees
With the rich current of a baron's blood. [youth,

Aust. My heart is touch'd for him. Much-injur'd
Suppress awhile this swelling indignation;
Plead for thy life.

Theo. I will not meanly plead;
Nor, were my neck bow'd to his bloody block,
If love's my crime, would I disown my love.

Count. Then, by my soul, thou diest!

Theo. And let me die:

With my last breath I'll bless her. My spirit, free
From earth's encumb'ring clogs, shall soar above
Anxious, as once in life, I'll hover round her, [thee.
Teach her new courage to sustain this blow,
And guard her, tyrant! from thy cruelty,

Count. Ah! give me way!

Aust. Why, this is madaess, youth:

You bot inflame the rage you should appease. [so:
Theo. He thinks me vile. 'Tis true, indeed, I seem
But though these humble weeds obscure my outside,
I have a soul disdains his contumely;

A guiltless spirit that provokes no wrong,
Nor from a monarch would endure it, offer'd:
Uninjur'd, lamb-like; but a lion, rous'd.
Know, too, injurious lord, here stands before thee
The equal of thy birth.

Count. Away, base clod!

Obeys slaves. What, all amaz'd with lies? [face
Aust. Yet hear him, Narbonne: that ingenuous
Looks not a lie. Thou saidst thou wert a captive—
Turn not away; we are not all like him.

Theo. My story's brief. My mother and myself,
(I then an infant, in my father's absence,
Were on our frontiers seiz'd by Saracens.

Count. A likely tale! a well-devis'd imposture!
Who will believe thee?

Aust. Go on, say all.

Theo. To the fierce bashaw, Hamet,
That scourge and terror of the Christian coasts,
Were we made slaves at Tunis.

Aust. Ha! at Tunis?

Seiz'd with thy mother? Lives she, gentle youth?
Theo. Ah! no, dear saint; fate ended soon her
In pity ended! 'On her dying couch, [woes,
She pray'd for blessings on me.

Aust. Be thou blessed!

Oh! fail not, nature, but support this conflict!

'Tis not delusion sure. It must be he.
But one thing more; did she not tell thee, too,
Thy wretched father's name?

Theo. The lord of Clarinsal.

Why dost thou look so eagerly upon me?
If yet he lives, and thou know'st Clarinsal,
Tell him my tale.

Aust. Mysterious Providence!

Count. What's this? the old man trembles and
turns pale. (Aside.)

Theo. He will not let his offspring's timeless
Walk unappeas'd; but on this cruel head [ghost

Exact full vengeance for his slaughter'd son.

Aust. Oh! Giver of all good! Eternal Lord,
Am I so bless'd, at last, to see my son?

Theo. Let me be deaf for ever, if my ears

Deceive me now! Did he not say his son? [thee,
Aust. I did, I did! I did! let this, and this, convince
I am that Clarinsal, I am thy father. [eyes?

Count. Why works this foolish moisture to my
Down, nature! what hast thou to do with ven-
geance? (Aside.)

Theo. Oh, sir! thus bending, let me clasp your
Now, in this precious moment, pay at once knees;
The long, long debt of a lost son's affection. [hold

Count. Destruction seize them both! Must I be-
Their transports, ne'er perhaps again to know
A son's obedience, or a father's fondness? (Aside.)

Aust. Dear boy! what miracle preserv'd thee
To give thee back to France? [thus,

Theo. No miracle,
But common chance. A warlike bark of Spain
Bore down, and seiz'd our vessel, as we rov'd
Intent on spoil (for many times, alas!

Was I compell'd to join their hated league,
And strike with infidels). My country known,

The courteous captain sent me to the shore;
Where vain were my fond hopes to find my father;
'Twas desolation all; a few poor swains

Told me, the rumour ran he had renounc'd
A hated world, and here, in Languedoc,
Devoted his remains of life to heav'n. [my pray'rs,

Aust. They told thee truth; and heav'n shall have
My soul pour'd out in endless gratitude,
For this unhop'd, immeasurable blessing. [tale;

Count. Thus far, fond man! I have listen'd to the
And think it, as it is, a gross contrivance,
A trick, devis'd to cheat my credulous reason,
And thaw me to a woman's milkiness. [guage,

Aust. And art thou so unskill'd in nature's lan-
Still to mistrust us? Could our tongues deceive,
Credit, what ne'er was feign'd, the genuine heart:
Believe these pangs, these tears of joy and anguish.

Count. Or true, or false, to me it matters not.
I see thou hast an iot' rest in his life, [him

And by that link I hold thee. Wouldst thou save
(Thou know'st already what my soul is set on,)
Teach thy proud heart compliance with my will:

If not—but now no more. Hear all, and mark me,
Keep special guard that none, but by my order,
Pass from the castle. By my hopes of heav'n,

His head goes off who dares to disobey me!
Farewell! if he be dear to thee, remember. [Exit.

Aust. If he be dear to me! my vital blood!
Image of her my soul delighted in,
Again she lives in thee! Yes, 'twas that voice,
That kindred look, rais'd such strong instinct here,
And kindled all my bosom at thy danger.

Theo. But must we bear to be thus tamely coop'd
By such insulting, petty despotism?
I look to my unguarded side in vain;
Had I a sword—

Aust. Think not of vengeance now;
A mightier arm than thine prepares it for him.
Pass but a little space, we shall behold him

The object of our pity, not our anger.
Yes, he must suffer; my rapt soul foresees it;
Empires shall sink, the poud'rous globe of earth
Crumble to dust, the sun and stars be quench'd!

But oh! Eternal Father, of thy will,
To the last letter, all shall be accomplish'd.

Theo. So let it be! but if his pride must fall,
Ye saints, who watch o'er loveliness and virtue,
Confound not with his crimes her innocence!

Make him alone the victim; but with blessings,
Bright and distinguish'd, crown his beauteous
daughter,

The charming Adelaide, my heart's first passion!

Aust. Oh! most disastrous love. My son, my son,
Thy words are poniards here. Alas! I thought
(So thought the tyrant, and for that he rag'd,)

The vows exchang'd 'tween Isabel and thee,
Thwarted the issue of his wild designs.

Theo. I knew not Isabel, beyond a moment
Pass'd in surprise and haste. [him,

Aust. Oh! had malignant fortune toil'd to blast
Thus had she snar'd him in this fatal passion!

And does young Adelaide return thy love?

Theo. Bless'd pow'rs, she does! How can you
frown and hear it?

Her gen'rous soul, first touch'd by gratitude,
Soon own'd a kinder, warmer sympathy.

Soft as the fanning of a turtle's plumes,
The sweet confession met my enraptur'd ears.

Aust. What can I do? Come near, my Theo-
Dost thou believe my affection? [dore;

Theo. Can I doubt it?

Aust. Think what my bosom suffers, when I tell
It must not, cannot be. [thee,

Theo. My love for Adelaide!

Aust. Deem it delicious poison; dash it from
Thy bane is in the cup. [thee:

Theo. Oh! bid me rather
Tear out my throbbing heart; I'd think it mercy,
To this unjust, this cruel interdiction.

That proud, unfeeling Narbonne, from his lips
Well might such words have fallen; but thou, my
father—

Aust. And fond, as ever own'd that tender name.
Not I, my son, not I prevent this union,

To me 'tis bitterness to cross thy wish;
But nature, fate, and heav'n, all, all forbid it.

We must withdraw where heav'n alone can hear us:
Then must thou stretch thy soul's best faculties,

Call ev'ry manly principle to steel thee,
And, to confirm thy name, secure thy honour,

Make one great sacrifice of love to justice. [Exeunt.

ACT IV.—SCENE I.—A Chamber.

ADELAIDE discovered.

Adel. Woe treads on woe. Thy life, my Theo-
dore, [stroke,

Thy threaten'd life, snatch'd from th' impending
Just gave a moment's respite to my heart;

And now a mother's grief, with pangs more keen,
Wakes ev'ry throbbing sense, and quite o'erwhelms
Her soul wrapp'd up in his, to talk thus to her! [me.

Divorce her, leave her, wed with Isabel,
And call on heav'n to sanctify the outrage!

How could my father's bosom meditate

What savage tongues would falter ev'n to speak?

But see, he comes—

Enter AUSTIN and JAQUELINE.

Oh! let me bend to thank you;
In this extreme distress, from you alone [fort.

(For my poor heart is in vain) can she hope com-
Aust. How heard she the ill tidings? I had hopes
His cooler reason would subdue the thought;

And heav'n, in pity to her gentle virtues, [them.

Might spare her knowing how he meant to wrong
Jaq. The rumour of the castle reach'd her first;

But his own lips confirm'd the barb'rous secret.
Sternly but now he enter'd her apartment, [sence!

And, stamping, frown'd her women from her pre-
After a little while they had pass'd together,
His visage flush'd with rage and mingled shame,
He burst into the chamber where we waited,
Bade us return, and give our lady aid;

Then, covering his face with both his hands,
Went forth like one half-craz'd.

Adel. Oh! good, kind father,

There is a charm in holy eloquence,

(If words can medicine a pang like this,)

Perhaps may sooth her. Sighs and trickling tears,
Are all my love can give. As I kneel by her,
She gazes on me, clasps me to her bosom,
Cries out, "My child, my child!" then, rising quick,
Severely lifts her streaming eyes to heav'n,
Laughs wildly, and half sounds my father's name;
Till, quite o'erpower'd, she sinks from my embrace,
While, like the grasp of death, convulsions shake
her. [her heart,

Aust. Remorseless man! this would wound reach
And when she falls, his last, best prop falls with her.

And see, the beauteous mourner moves this way:

Time has but little injur'd that fair fabric;
But cruelty's hard stroke, more fell than time,
Works at the base, and shakes it to the centre.

Enter the COUNTESS.

Countess. Will, then, these dreadful sounds ne'er
leave my ears? [liv'd

"Our marriage was accurs'd; too long we have
In bonds forbid; think me no more thy husband;

Th' avenging bolt, for that incestuous name,
Falls on my house, and spreads the ruin wide."
These were his words.

Adel. Oh! ponder them no more!

Lo! where the blessed minister of peace,
He whose mild counsels wont to charm your care,
Is kindly come to cheer your drooping soul.

And see, the good man weeps.

Countess. What! weep for me? [core,

Aust. Ay, tears of blood from my heart's inmost
And count them drops of water from my eyes,
Could they but wash out from your memory
The deep affliction you now labour with.

Countess. Then still there is some pity left in man:
I judg'd you all by him, and so I wrong'd you.

I would have told my story to the sea,
When it roar'd wildest; bid the lioness,
Robb'd of her young, look with compassion on me;

Rather than hop'd, in any form of man,
To find one drop of human gentleness.

Aust. Most honour'd lady—

Countess. Pray you come not near me,
I'm contagion all! some wicked sin,
Prodigious, unrepented sin, has stain'd me.

Father, 'twould blast thee but to hear the crimes,
This woman, who was once the wife of Raymond,
This curs'd, forsaken woman, here has acted.

Aust. What sland'rous tongue dare thus profane
your virtue?

Madam, I know you well; and, by my order,
Each day, each hour, of your unspotted life
Might give as fair a lesson to the world,
As churchmen's tongues can preach, or saints could
practise. [Hortensia!

Countess. He charges me with all. Thou, poor
What guilt, prepost'rous guilt, is thine to answer!

Adel. In mercy, wound not thus your daughter's
Aust. A villain or a madman might say this. [soul.

Countess. What shall I call him? He, who was
my husband;

My child, thy father; he'll disclaim thee, too.
But let him cast off all the ties of nature,
Abandon us to grief and misery,
Still will I wander with thee o'er the world:
I will not wish my reason may forsake me,
Nor sweet oblivious dullness steep my sense,
While thy soft age may want a mother's care,
A mother's tenderness, to wake and guard thee.

Adel. And if the love of your dear Adelaide,
Her rev'rence, duty, endless gratitude
For all your angel goodness, now can move you,
Oh! for my sake, (lest quite you break my heart,)

Wear but a little outside shew of comfort;
Awhile pretend it, though you feel it not,
And I will bless you for deceiving me. [thus:]

Countess. I know 'tis weakness, folly, to be mov'd
And these, I hope, are my last tears for him.

Alas! I little knew, deluded wretch!
His riotous fancy glow'd with Isabel;
That not a thought of me possess'd his mind,
But coldness and aversinn; how to shun me,
And turn me forth a friendless wanderer.

Aust. Lady, for your peace,
Think conscience is the deepest source of anguish:
A bosom free, like your's, has life's best sunshine;
'Tis the warm blaze in the poor herdsmen's hut,
That, when the storm howls o'er his humble thatch,
Brightens his clay-built walls, and cheers his soul.

Countess. Oh! father, reason is for mod'rate
sorrows, [fresh,

For wounds which time has balm'd; but mine are
All bleeding fresh, and pain beyond my patience.

Ungrateful! cruel! how have I deserv'd it?

Thou tough, tough heart, break for my ease at once!

Aust. I scarce, methinks, can weigh him with him—
Vexations strange have fall'n on him of late, [self;
And his distemper'd fancy drives him on
To rash designs, where disappointment mads him.

Countess. Ah, no! his wit is settled and most sub-
Pride and wild blood are his distemper, father. [tle;
But here I bid farewell to grief and fondness:
Let him go kneel, and sigh to Isabel:
And may he as obdurate find her heart,
As his as been to me.

Aust. Why, that's well said;
'Tis better thus, than with consuming sorrow
To feed on your own life. Give anger scope:
Time, then, at length, will blunt this killing sense;
And peace, he ne'er must know again, be your's.

Countess. I was a woman full of tenderness;
I am a woman stung by injuries.

Narbonne was once my husband—my protector;
He was—what was he not?—He is my tyrant;
The unnatural tyrant of a heart that lov'd him,
With cool, delib'rate baseness, he forsakes me;
With scorn as stedfast shall my soul repay it.

Aust. You know the imminent danger threatens
From Godfrey's fearful claim? [him,

Countess. Too well I know it;
A fearful claim indeed!

Aust. To-morrow's sun
Will see him at these gates; but trust my faith,
No violence shall reach you. The rash Count
(Lost to himself) by force detains me here.

Vain is his force: our holy sanctuary,
Whate'er betide, shall give your virtue shelter;
And peace, and piety alone, approach you.

Countess. Oh! that the friendly bosom of the
Would close on me for ever! [earth

Aust. These ill thoughts
Must not be cherish'd. That all-righteous Pow'r,
Whose hand inflicts, knows to reward our patience:
Farewell! command me ever as your servant,
And take the poor man's all, my pray'rs and bless-
ing. [Exit.

Adel. Will you not strive to rest? Alas! 'tis long,
Since you have slept. I'll lead you to your couch;
And gently touch my lute, to wake some strain,
May aid your slumbers.

Countess. My sweet comforter!
I feel not quite-forlorn, when thou art near me.

Adel. Lead on my arm.

Countess. No, I will in alone,
My sense is now unapt for harmony.
But go thou to Alphonso's holy shrine;
There, with thy innocent hands devoutly rais'd,
Implore his sainted spirit to receive
Thy humble supplications, and to avert
From thy dear head the still impending wrath,
For one black deed, that threatens all thy race. [Exit.

Adel. For thee my pray'rs shall rise, not for my-
And ev'ry kindred saint will bend to hear me. [self,
But oh! my flutt'ring breast!—'Tis Theodore!
How sad and earnestly he views that paper!

It turns him pale. Beshrew the envious paper!
Why should it steal the colour from that cheek,
Which danger ne'er could blanch? He sees me not.
I'll wait; and should sad thoughts disturb his quiet,
If love has pow'r, with love's soft breath dispel
them. [Exit.

Enter THEODORE, with a paper.

Theo. My inportunity at last has conquer'd:
Weeping, my father gave, and bade me read it.
" 'Tis there," he cried, "the myst'ry of thy birth;
There view thy long divorce from Adelaide."
Why should I read it? Why, with rav'nous haste,
Gorge down my bane? The worst is yet conceal'd;
Then wherefore eager for my own destruction?
Inquire a secret, which, when known, must sink me?

My eye starts back from it; my heart stands still;
And ev'ry pulse and motion of my blood,
With prohibition strong as sense can utter,
Cries out "Beware!"—But does my sight deceive?
Is it not she? Up, up, your black contents:

A brighter object meets my ravish'd eyes.
Now let the present moment, love, be thine!
For ill, come when it may, must come untimely.

Re-enter ADELAÏDE.

Adel. Am I not here unwish'd for?

Theo. My best angel!

Were seas between us, thou art still where I am.
I bear thy precious image ever round me,
As pious men the relics they adore.
Scarce durst I hope to be so blest to see thee,
But could not wish a joy beyond thy presence. [tune

Adel. Oh! Theodore, what wondrous turns of for-
Have giv'n thee back to a dear parent's arms?
And spite of all the horrors which surround me,
And worse, each black, eventful moment threatens,
My bosom glows with rapture at the thought
Thou wilt at last be bless'd!

Theo. But one way only
Can I be bless'd. On thee depends my fate.
Lord Raymond, harsh and haughty as he is,
And adverse to my father's rigid virtue,
When he shall hear our pure unspotted vows,
Will yield thee to my wishes; but, curs'd stars!
How shall I speak it?

Adel. What?

Theo. That holy man,
That Clarinsal, whom I am bound to honour,
Perversely bids me think of thee no more.

Adel. Alas! in what have I offended him? [them;

Theo. Not so; he owns thy virtues, and admires
But with a solemn earnestness that kills me,
He urges some mysterious, dreadful cause,
Must under us for ever.

Adel. Oh! then fly me,
I am not worth his frown. Begone this moment;
Leave me to weep my mournful destiny,
And find some fairer, happier maid, to bless thee.

Theo. Fairer than thee! Oh! heav'n's, the deli-
cate hand

Of nature, in her daintiest mood, ne'er fashion'd
Beauty so rare. Love's roseate deity, [mould
Fresh from his mother's kiss, breath'd o'er thy
That soft, ambrosial hue. Fairer than thee!

'Twere blasphemy in any tongue but thine,
So to disparage thy unmatched perfections.

Adel. No, Theodore, I dare not bear thee longer;
Perhaps, indeed, there is some fatal cause.

Theo. There is not, cannot be. 'Tis but his pride,
Stung by resentment, 'gainst thy furious father.

Adel. Ah! no; he is too gen'rous, just, and good,
To hate me for th' offences of my father.

But find the cause. At good Alphonso's tomb
I go to offer up my orisons;
There bring me comfort, and dispel my fears;
Or teach me (oh! hard thought!) to bear our part-
ing. [Exit.

Theo. She's gone; and now, firm fortitude, support
For here I read my sentence, life or death. [me!

(*Takes out the paper and reads.*)

*Thou art the grandson of the good Alphonso,
And Narbonne's rightful lord.—Ha! is it so?*

Then has this boist'rous Raymond dar'd insult me,
Where I alone should rule: yet not by that
Am I condemn'd to lose her. Thon damn'd scroll!
I fear thou hast worse poison for my eyes.

*Long were the champions, bound for Palestine,
(Thy grandsire thou their chief,) by adverse winds
Detain'd in Naples; where he saw and lov'd,
And wedded, secretly, Vicenza's daughter;*

*For, till the holy warfare should be clos'd,
They deem'd it wise to keep the rite conceal'd.*

*The issue of that marriage was thy mother;
But the same hour that gave her to the world,
For ever clos'd the fair one's eyes who bare her.*

*Foul treason next cut short thy grandsire's thread;
Poison'd he fell—*

(*Theodore pauses; re-enter AUSTIN from behind.*)

Aust. By Raymond's felon father;
Who, adding fraud to murder, forg'd a will,
Devising to himself and his descendants,
Thy rights, thy titles, thy inheritance.

Theo. Then I am lost.

Aust. Now think, unkind young man,
Was it for nought I warn'd thee to take heed,
And smother in its birth this dang'rous passion?
Th' Almighty arm, red for thy grandsire's murder,
Year after year has terribly been stretch'd
O'er all the land, but most this guilty race.

Theo. The murderer was guilty, not his race.

Aust. Great crimes, like this, have lengthen'd
punishments.

Why speak the fates by signs and prodigies?
Why one by one falls this devoted line,
Accomplishing the dreadful prophecy,
That none should live t' enjoy the fruits of blood?
But waver this argument. Thou wilt be call'd
To prove thy right,
By combat with the Count.

Theo. In arms I'll meet him;
To-morrow, now—

Aust. Aud, reeking with his blood,
Offer the hand which shed it to his daughter?

Theo. Ha! [dore,

Aust. Does it shake thee?—Come, my Theo-
Let not a gust of love-sick inclination
Root, like a sweeping whirlwind, from thy soul
All the fair growth of noble thoughts and virtue,
Thy mother planted in thy early youth;
Oh! rashly tread not down the promis'd harvest,
They toil'd to rear to the full height of honour!

Theo. Would I had liv'd obscure in penury,
Rather than thus!—Distraction!—Adelaide!

Re-enter ADELAÏDE.

Adel. Oh! whither shall I fly?

Theo. What means my love?
Why thus disturb'd?

Adel. The castle is beset;
The superstitious, fierce, inconstant people,
Madder than storms, with weapons caught in haste,
Menace my father's life; rage, and revile him;
Call him the heir of murd'rous usurpation;
And swear they'll own no rightful lord but God-
frey. [power

Aust. Blind wretches! I will hence, and try my
To allay the tumult. Follow me, my son! [*Exit.*

Adel. Go not defenceless thus; think on thy safety:
See yonder porch opes to the armoury;
There coats of mailed proof, falchions, and casques,
And all the glittering implements of war,
Stand terribly arrang'd.

Theo. Heavens! 'twas what I wish'd.
Yes, Adelaide, I go to fight for him:
Thy father shall not fall ingloriously;
But, when he sees this arm strike at his foes,
Shall own, thy Theodore deserv'd his daughter. [*Exit.*

ACT V.—SCENE I.—*A Hall.*

Enter the COUNT OF NARBONNE, FABIAN, AUSTIN,
and Attendants, with Prisoners.

Count. Hence to a dungeon with those mutinous
slaves;

There let them prate of prophecies and visions;
And when coarse fare and stripes bring back their
Perhaps I may relent, and turn them loose [senses,
To new offences, and fresh chastisement.

[*Exit Officers, &c.*

Fab. You bleed, my lord!

Count. A scratch—death! to be bay'd [fangs,
By mongrels! curs! They yelp'd, and shew'd their
Growl'd, too, as they would bite. But was't not poor,
Unlike the generous strain of Godfrey's lineage,
To stir the rabble up in nobles' quarrels,
And bribe my hind and vassals to assault me.

Aust. They were not stirr'd by Godfrey.

Count. Who, then, stirr'd them?
Thyself, perhaps. Was't thou? And yet I wrong
thee; [and shrunk,
Thou didst preach peace; and straight they crouch'd
More tam'd by the persuasion of thy tongue,
Than losing the hot drops my steel drew from them.

Aust. I might, perhaps, have look'd for better
thanks,

Than taunts to pay my service—but no matter.
My son, too, serv'd thee nobly; he bestrode thee,
And drove those peasants back, whose staves and
But for his aid, had shiver'd that stout frame: [clubs,
But both, too well accustomed to thy transports,
Nor ask, nor hope thy courtesy.

Count. Your pardon!

I knew my life was sav'd, but not by whom;
I wish'd it not, yet thank him. I was down, [ber,
Stunn'd in the inglorious broil; and nought remem-
More than the shame of such a paltry danger.
Where is he?

Aust. Here. [*Theodore advances.*]

Count. [*Starting.*] Ha! angels shelter me!

Theo. Why starts he thus?

Count. Are miracles new'd?

Art thou not risen from the mould'ring grave?

And in the awful majesty of death,
'Gainst nature, and the course of mortal thought,
Assum'st the likeness of a living form,
To blast my soul with horror?

Theo. Does he rave?

Or means he thus to mock me?

Count. Answer me!

Speak, some of you, who have the power to speak;
Is it not he?

Fab. Who, good my lord?

Count. Alphonso.

His form, his arms, his air, his very frown.

Lord of these confines, speak—declare thy plea-
Theo. Dost thou not know me, then? [sure.

Count. Ha! Theodore?

This sameness, not resemblance, is past faith.

All statues, pictures, or the likeness kept
By memory, of the good Alphonso living,
Are faint and shadowy traces to this image!

Fab. Hear me, my lord, so shall the wonder cease.
The very arms he wears, were once Alphonso's.

He found them in the stores, and brac'd them on,
To assist you in your danger.

Count. 'Tis most strange.

I strive, but cannot conquer this amazement:

I try to take them off; yet still my eyes

Again are drawn, as if by magic, on him.

Aust. Hear you, my son? [*Apert to Theo.*]

Theo. Yes, and it wakes within me

Sensations new till now.

Aust. To-morrow's light [pleas'd you

Will shew him wonders greater. [*Apert.*] Sir, it
[Wherefore you best can tell,] to make us here

Your prisoners; but the alarm of danger

Threw wide your gates, and freed us. We return'd
To give you safeguard. May we now depart?

Count. Ay, to the confines of the furthest earth;
For here thy sight unhinges Raymond's soul.

Be hid, where air or light may never find thee;

And bury, too, that phantom. [*Exit, with Attend.*

Theo. Insolence!

Too proud to think our kindness! yet, what horror
Shook all his frame, when thus I stood before him!

Aust. The statue of thy grandsire
(The very figure as thou stood'st before him,
Arm'd just as thou art), seem'd to move and live;
That breathing marble, which the people's love
Rear'd near his tomb, within our convent's walls.
Anon I'll lead thee to it.

Theo. Let me hence,

To shake these trappings off.

Aust. Wear them, and mark me.

Ere night, thy kinsman, Godfrey, will be master
Of all thy story:—

He is brave and just, [reason

And will support thy claim. Should proof and

Fail with the usurper, thou must try thy sword
(And heaven will strike for thee) in combat with him.

The conscious flash of this thy grandsire's mail,

Worse than the horrors of the fabled Gorgon,

That curdl'd blood to stone, will shrink his sinews,

And cast the wither'd boaster at thy feet. [blood:

Theo. Grant it, ye powers! but not to shed his

The father of my Adelaide, that name—

Aust. Is dearer far than mine; my words are air; My counsels pass unmark'd. But come, my son! To-night my cell must house thee. Let me shew The humble mansion of thy lonely father, [thee Proud once, and prosperous; where I've wept, and And lost in cold oblivion of the world, [pray'd, Twice nine long years; thy mother and thyself, And God, were all my thoughts.

Theo. Ay, to the convent!
For there my love, my Adelaide, expects me.

[*Aside. Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Apartment in the Castle.*

Enter the COUNT of NARBONNE, and FABIAN.

Count. By hell, this legend of Alphonso's death Hourly gains ground.

Fab. They talk of nought besides; And their craz'd notions are so full of wonder, There's scarce a common passage of the times, But straight their folly makes it ominous. [source,

Count. Fame, that, like water, widens from its Thus often swells, and spreads a shallow falsehood. At first a twilight tale of village terror, The hair of horrors and heldams bristled at it; (Such bloodless fancies wake to nought but fear :) Then, heard with grave derision by the wise, And, from contempt, unsearch'd and unrefuted, It pass'd upon the laziness of faith, Like many a lie, gross, and impossible.

Fab. A lie believ'd, may, in the end, my lord, Prove fatal as a written gospel truth.

Therefore—

Count. Take heed; and ere the lightning strike, Fly from the sulphurous clouds. I am not dull; For, bright as ruddy meteors through the sky, The thought flames here, shall light me to my safety. Fabian, away! Send hither to me straight, Renchild and Thybalt. [*Exit Fabian.*] They are young and fearless.

Thy flight, ungrateful Isabel, compels me [ness; To this rude course. I would have all with kind-Nor stain the snow-white flower of my true-love With spots of violence. But it must be so. This lordly priest, this Clarinsal, or Austin, Like a true churchman, by his calling tainted, Prates conscience; and in craft abets Earl Godfrey, That Isabel may wed his upstart son. Let Rome dart all her lightnings at my head, Till her grey pontiff singe in his own fires: Spite of their rage, I'll force the sanctuary, And bear her off this night beyond their power; My bride, if she consents; if not, my hostage.

Enter two Officers.

Come hither, sirs. Take twenty of your fellows; Post ten at the great gate of Nicholas; The rest, by two's, guard every avenue Leads from the convent to the plain or castle. Charge them (and as their lives shall answer it,) That none but of my train pass out, or enter.

1 Off. We will, my lord, about it instantly.

Count. Temper your zeal, and know your orders Take care they spill no blood: no violence, [first. More than resisting who would force a passage: The holy drones may buzz, but have no stings. I mean to take a banble from the church, A reverend thief stole from me. Near the altar (That place commands the centre of the aisle,) Keep you your watch. If you espy a woman, (There can be only she,) speed to me straight; You'll find my station near Alphonso's porch. Be swift as winds, and meet me presently. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Inside of a Convent.*

ADELAIDE veiled, rising from before the statue of Alphonso.

Adel. Alas! 'tis mockery to pray as I do. [wings, Thoughts fit for heaven, should rise on seraph's Unclogg'd with aught of earth; but mine hang here; Beginning, ending all in Theodore. Why comes he not? 'Tis torture for th' unblest'd, To suffer such suspense as my heart aches with.

What can it be—this secret, dreadful cause, This shaft unseen, that's wing'd against our love? Perhaps—I know not what. At yonder shrine Bending, I'll seal my irrevocable vow: Hear, and record it, choirs of saints and angels! If I am doom'd to sigh for him in vain, No second flame shall ever enter here; But, faithful to thy fond, thy first impression, Turn thou, my breast, to every sense of joy, Cold as the pale-ey'd marbles which surround me. [*She withdraws.*]

Enter AUSTIN and THEODORE.

Aust. Look round, my son! This consecrated place Contains the untimely ashes of thy grandsire. With all the impious mockery of grief, [him. Here were they laid by the dire hand which sped There stands his statue; were a glass before thee, So would it give thee back thy outward self.

Theo. And may the power which fashion'd thus my outside,

With all his nobler ornaments of virtue Sustain my soul! till generous emulation Raise me, by deeds, to equal his renown, And—

Aust. To avenge him. Not by treachery, But, casting off all thoughts of idle love, Of love ill-match'd, unhappy, ominous— To keep the memory of his wrongs; do justice To his great name, and prove the blood you spring from.

Theo. Oh! were the bold possessor of my rights A legion arm'd, the terrors of his sword Resistless as the flash that strikes from heaven, Undaunted would I meet him. His proud crest Should feel the dint of no unpractis'd edge.

But, while my arm assails her father's life, The unnatural wound returns to my own breast, And conquest loses Adelaide for ever. [lost her.

Aust. The barbarous deed of Raymond's father

Theo. Pierce not my soul thus. Can you love And coldly tell me, [your son, Without one tear unmov'd thus, I must lose her? But where, where is she? [*Looking out.*] Heaven-ly innocence!

See, the dear saint kneels at the altars' foot; See, her white hands with fervent clasps are rais'd; Perhaps for me. Have you a heart, my father, And bid me bear to lose her? Hold me not— I come, I fly, my life, my all! to join thee. [*Exit.*]

Aust. Return, return, rash boy!—Pernicious chance!

One glance from her will quite destroy my work, And leave me but my sorrow for my labour. [*Exit.*]

Enter the COUNT of NARBONNE.

Count. Am I turn'd coward, that my tottering knees

Knock as I tread the pavement? 'Tis the place; The sombrous horror of these long-drawn aisles. My footsteps are beat back by nought but echo, Struck from the caverns of the vaulted dead; Yet now it seem'd as if a host pursued me, [like. The breath that makes my words, sounds thunder-Sure 'twas a deep-fetch'd groan. No—hark, again! Then 'tis the language of the tombs; and see!—

[*Pointing to the statue of Alphonso.*]
Like their great monarch, he stands rais'd above Who's there? [them.

Enter two Officers.

1 Off. My lord, where are you?

Count. Here—speak, man! [cheeks Why do you shake thus? Death! your bloodless Send fear into me. You, sir, what's the matter?

2 Off. We have found the lady.

Count. My good fellows, where?

1 Off. Here, from this spot, you may yourself Her face is towards the altar. [behold her;

Count. [*Looking out.*] Blasts upon me! Wither my eyes for ever!—Ay, 'tis she; Austin with Theodore; he joins their hands:—

Destruction seize them! Oh! dull, tardy fool!
 My love and my ambition both defeated!
 A marriage in my sight! Come forth, come forth!

(Draws a dagger.)

Arise, grim vengeance, and wash out my shame!
 Ill-fated girl! a bloody Hynen waits thee! [Exit.

1 Offi. His face is black with rage—his eyes flash
 I do not like this service. [fire;

2 Offi. No, nor I.

1 Offi. Heard you that shriek?—It thunders. By
 my soul,

I feel as if my blood were froze within me.

Speak to me. See, he comes. (Officers retire.)

Re-enter the COUNT of NARBONNE, with a bloody
 dagger.

Count. The deed is done.
 Hark! the deep thunder rolls. I hail the sign;
 It tells me, in loud greetings, I'm reveng'd.

Re-enter THEODORE, with his sword drawn.

Theo. Where, where's the assassin?

Count. Boy, the avenger's here.

Behold, this dagger smokes with her heart's blood!
 That thou stand'st there to brave me, thank that
 mail,

Or, traitor, thou hadst felt me. But 'tis done.

Theo. Oh! monstrous, monstrous!

Count. Triumph now o'er Narbonne;

Boast, how a stripling and a monk deceiv'd

The easy Count; but, if thou lov'st thy bride,

Take that, and use it nobly. (Drops the dagger.)

Theo. 'Gainst thy heart,

Barbarian, would I use it: but look there;

There are ten thousand daggers.

Aust. (Without.) Ring out the alarm;

Fly all; bring aid, if possible, to save her.

Re-enter ADELAIDE, wounded, and supported by
 AUSTIN. Some of the Count's Attendants enter
 with lighted torches.

Count. Ha! lightning shiver me!

Adel. My lord! my father!

Oh! bear me to his feet.

Aust. Thou man of blood,

Past utterance lost, see what thy rage has done!

Count. Ruin! despair! my child! my Adelaide!

Art thou the innocent victim of my fury?

Adel. I am, indeed. I know not my offence;

Yet sure 'twas great, when my life answers it.

Will you forgive me now?

Count. Oh! misery;

Had I unnumber'd lives, I'd give them all,

To lengthen thine an hour. What frenzy seiz'd me?

That veil, the glimmering light, my rage, deceiv'd

Unnatural wound! detested parricide! [me.

Good youth, in pity strike this monster dead!

Adel. Listen not to his ravings. (To Theo.)

Alas! my Theodore,

I struggle for a little gasp of breath;

Draw it with pain; and sure, in this last moment,

You will observe me.

Live, I charge you:

Forget me not, but love my memory.

If I was ever dear to thee, my father,

(Those tears declare I was,) will you not hear me,

And grant one wish to your expiring child?

Count. Speak, tell me quickly, thou dear suffer-
 ing angel!

Adel. Be gentle to my mother; her kind nature

Has suffer'd much; she will need all your care:

Forsake her not; and may the All-merciful

Look down with pity on this fatal error;

Bless you—and—oh!— (Dies.)

Count. She dies in prayer for me;

Prays for me, while her life streams from my stroke.

What prayers can rise for such a wretch as I am?

Seize me, ye fiends! rouse all your stings and tor-
 ments!

See, hell grows darker as I stalk before them.

Theo. (After looking at Adelaide's body.) 'Tis my
 black destiny has murder'd thee.

Stand off. (They hold him.) I will not live.

This load of being is intolerable;

And, in a happier world my soul shall join her.

[Rushes out.

Aust. Observe, and keep him from all means of
 death.

Enter the COUNTESS, FABIAN, and other Attendants.

Countess. Whence were those cries? what meant
 that fearful bell?

Who shall withhold me? I will not return.

Is there a horror I am stranger to? [tience,

Aust. There is; and so beyond all mortal pa-

I can but wish you stripp'd of sense and thought,

That it may pass without destroying you.

Countess. What is it! speak.

Aust. (Looking towards the body.) Turn not your
 For there, alas— [eyes that way,

Countess. Oh! Lord of earth and heaven!

Is it not she? my daughter, pale and bleeding!

She's cold, stark cold: can you not speak to me?

Which of you have done this?

Count. 'Twas ease till now;

Fall, fall, thick darkness, hide me from that face!

Aust. Rise, madam, 'tis in vain. Heaven com-
 fort her! [breast?

Countess. Shall I not strive to warm her in my

She is my all; I have nothing left but her.

You cannot force me from her. Adelaide!

My child, my lovely child! thy mother calls thee.

She hears men ot—she's dead!—Oh! God, I know
 thee—

Tell me, while I have sense, for my brain burns;

Tell me—yet what avails it? I'll not curse—

There is a power to punish.

Count. Look on me!

Thou hadst much cause to think my nature cruel;

I wrong'd thee sore, and this was my last deed.

Countess. Was thine? thy deed? Oh! execrable
 monster!

Oh! greatly worthy of blood-stain'd sire!

A murderer he, and thou a parricide!

Why did thy barbarous hand refrain from me?

I was the hated bar to thy ambition!

A stab like this had set thee free for ever;

Sav'd thee from shame, upbraiding, perjuries;

But she—this innocent—what had she done?

Count. I thank thee. I was fool enough, or

To think of life one moment, to atone [coward,

By deep repentance, for the wrongs I did thee.

But, hateful to myself, hated by thee,

By heaven abandon'd, and the plague of earth,

This, this remains, and all are satisfied.

(Stabs himself.)

Forgive me, if 'tis possible—but—oh!— (Dies.)

Countess. (After looking distractedly.) Where am
 I? Ruin and pale death surround me.

I was a wife; there, gasping, lies my husband!

A mother, too; there breathless lies my child!

Look down, oh! heaven, look down with pity on
 I know this place; [them.

I'll kneel once more. Hear me, great God of
 Nature!

For this one boon let me not beg in vain;

Oh! do not mock me with the hopes of death;

These pangs, these struggles, let them be my last;

Release thy poor, afflicted, suffering creature;

Take me from misery too sharp to bear,
 And join me to my child!

(Falls on the body of Adelaide.)

Aust. Heaven comfort thee!

Hard was your lot, you lovely innocents;

But palms, eternal palms, above shall crown you.

For this rash man—yet mercy's infuiste.

You stand amaz'd. Know, this disastrous scene,
 Ending the fatal race, concludes your sorrows.

To-morrow meet me round this sacred shrine;

Then shall you hear, at full, a tale of wonder;

The rightful lord of Narbonne shall be own'd;

And heaven, in all its ways, be justified. [Exit.

THE DISTREST MOTHER;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY AMBROSE PHILIPS.



Act I.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

PYRRHUS ORESTES	PHŒNIX PYLADES	ANDROMACHE HERMIONE	CEPHISA CLEONE
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ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A great Hall in the court of Pyrrhus.*
Enter ORESTES, PYLADES, and Attendants.

Ores. Oh! Pylades, what's life without a friend?
At sight of thee my gloomy soul cheers up,
My hopes revive, and gladness dawns within me.
After an absence of six tedious moons,
How could I hope to find my Pylades,
My joy, my comfort, on this fatal shore?
Even in the court of Pyrrhus? in these realms,
These hated realms, so cross to all my wishes.
Oh! my brave friend, may no blind stroke of fate
Divide us inore, and tear me from myself.

Pyl. Oh, Prince! oh, my Orestes! oh, my friend!
Thus let me speak the welcome of my heart.
(Embraces.)

Since I have gain'd this unexpected meeting,
Bless'd be the powers that barr'd my way to Greece,
And kept me here! e'er since the unhappy day
When warring winds (Epirus full in view)
Sunder'd our harks on the loud stormy main.

Ores. It was, indeed, a morning full of horror!
Pyl. A thousand boding cares have rack'd my soul
In your behalf. Often, with tears, I mourn'd
The fatal ills, to which your life's involv'd;
And grudg'd you dangers which I could not share.
I fear'd to what extremities the black despair
That prey'd upon your mind might have betray'd
And lest the gods, in pity to your woes, [you,
Should hear your pray'rs, and take the life you
loath'd.

But now with joy I see you. The retinue,
And numerous followers that surround you here,
Speak better fortunes, and a mind dispos'd
To relish life.

Ores. Alas! my friend, who knows
The destiny to which I stand reserv'd?
I come in search of an inhuman fair;
And live or die, as she decrees my fate. [cur'd

Pyl. You much surprise me, prince; I thought you

Of your unnpity'd, unsuccessful passion.
Why, in Epirus, should you hope to find
Hermione less cruel, than at Sparta?
I thought her pride, and the disdainful manner
In which she treated all your constant sufferings,
Had broke your fetters, and assur'd your freedom:
Asham'd of your repulse, and slighted vows,
You hated her; you talk'd of her no more:
Prince, you deceiv'd me!

Ores. I deceiv'd myself.
Do not upbraid the unhappy man that loves thee.
Thou know'st I never hid my passion from thee;
Thou saw'st it, in its birth, and in its progress;
And when, at last, the hoary king, her father,
Great Menelaus, gave away his daughter,
His lovely daughter, to the happy Pyrrhus,
Th' avenger of his wrongs, thou saw'st my grief,
My torture, my despair; and how I dragg'd,
From sea to sea, a heavy chain of woes.
Oh! Pylades, my heart has bled within me,
To see thee, press'd with sorrows not thy own,
Still wand'ring with me like a banish'd man,
Watchful, and anxious for thy wretched friend,
To temper the wild transports of my mind,
And save me from myself.

Pyl. Why thus unkind?
Why will you envy me the pleasing task
Of generous love, and sympathising friendship?

Ores. Thou miracle of truth! But hear me on.
When in the midst of my disastrous fate,
I thought how the divine Hermione,
Deaf to the vows, regardless of my plaints,
Gave up herself, and all her charms, to Pyrrhus;
Thou may'st remember, I abhor'd her name,
Strove to forget her, and repay her scorn.
I made my friends, and even myself, believe
My soul was freed. Alas! I did not see,
That all the malice of my heart was love.
Triumphing thus, and yet a captive still,
In Greece I landed; and in Greece I found

The assembled princes all alarm'd with fears,
In which their common safety seem'd concern'd.
I join'd them: for I hop'd that war and glory
Might fill my mind, and take up all my thoughts;
And that my shatter'd soul, impair'd with grief,
Once more would reassume its wonted vigour,
And every idle passion quit my breast.

Pyl. The thought was worthy Agamemnon's son.

Ores. But see the strange perverseness of my stars,
Which throws me on the rock I strove to shun!
The jealous chiefs, and all the states of Greece,
With one united voice, complain of Pyrrhus;
That now, forgetful of the promise giv'n,
And mindless of his godlike father's fate,
Astyanax he nurses in his court;

Astyanax, the young, surviving hope
Of ruin'd Troy; Astyanax, descended
From a long race of kings—great Hector's son.

Pyl. A name still dreadful in the ears of Greece!

But, Prince, you'll cease to wonder why the child
Lives thus protected in the court of Pyrrhus,
When you shall hear the bright Andromache,
His lovely captive, charms him from his purpose:
The mother's beauty guards the helpless son.

Ores. Your tale confirms what I have heard; and
hence

Spring all my hopes. Since my proud rival woos
Another partner to his throne and bed,
Hermione may still be mine. Her father,
The injur'd Menelaus, thinks already
His daughter slighted, and th' intended nuptials
Too long delay'd. I heard his loud complaints
With secret pleasure; and was glad to find
Th' ungrateful maid neglected in her turn,
And all my wrongs aveng'd in her disgrace.

Pyl. Oh! may you keep your just resentments
warm! [found

Ores. Resentments! Oh! my friend, too soon I
They grew not out of hatred. I am betray'd:

I practise on myself, and fondly plot
My own undoing. Goaded on by love,
I canvass'd all the suffrages of Greece;
And here I come, their sworn ambassador,
To speak their jealousies, and claim this boy.

Pyl. Pyrrhus will treat your embassy with scorn.
Full of Achilles, his redoubt'd sire,
Pyrrhus is proud, impetuous, headstrong, fierce;
Made up of passions: will he, then, be sway'd,
And give to death the son of her he loves?

Ores. Oh! would he render up Hermione,
And keep Astyanax, I should be bless'd!
He must; he shall! Hermione is my life,
My soul, my rapture! I'll no longer curb
The strong desire that hurries me to madness:
I'll give a loose to love; I'll bear her hence;
I'll tear her from his arms; I'll—Oh, ye gods!
Give me Hermione, or let me die!

But tell me, Pylades, how stand my hopes?
Is Pyrrhus still enamour'd with her charms?
Or dost thou think he'll yield me up the prize,
The dear, dear prize, which he has ravish'd from me?

Pyl. I dare not flatter your fond hopes so far;
The king, indeed, cold to the Spartan princess,
Turns all his passion to Andromache,
Hector's afflicted widow. But in vain,
With interwoven love and rage, he sues
The charming captive, obstinately cruel.
Oft he alarms her for her child, confin'd
Apart; and when her tears begin to flow,
As soon he stops them, and recalls his threats.
Hermione a thousand times has seen
His ill-requited vows return to her;
And takes his indignation all for love.

What can be gather'd from a man so various?
He may, in the disorder of his soul,
Wed her he hates, and punish her he loves.

Ores. But tell me how the wrong'd Hermione
Brooks her slow nuptials, and dishonour'd charms?

Pyl. Hermione would fain be thought to scorn
Her wavering lover, and disdain his falsehood;

But, spite of all her pride and conscious beauty,
She mourns in secret her neglected charms,
And oft has made me privy to her tears;
Still threatens to be gone, yet still she stays,
And sometimes sighs, and wishes for Orestes.

Ores. Ah! were those wishes from her heart, my
friend,

I'd fly in transport— (Flourish within.)

Pyl. Hear! the king approaches
To give you audience. Speak your embassy
Without reserve: urge the demands of Greece;
And, in the name of all her kings, require
That Hector's son be giv'n into your hands.
Pyrrhus, instead of granting what they ask,
To speed his love, and win the Trojan dame,
Will make it merit to preserve her son.
But, see: he comes!

Ores. Meanwhile, my Pylades,
Go, and dispose Hermione to see
Her lover, who is come thus far, to throw
Himself, in all his sorrows, at her feet. [Exit *Pyl.*

Enter PYRRHUS, PHENIX, and Attendants.

Before I speak the message of the Greeks,
Permit me, sir, to glory in the title
Of their ambassador; since I behold
Troy's vanquisher, and great Achilles' son;
Nor does the son rise short of such a father:
If Hector fell by him, Troy fell by you.
But what your father never would have done,
You do. You cherish the remains of Troy;
And, by an ill-tim'd pity, keep alive
The dying embers of a ten years' war.
Have you so soon forgot the mighty Hector?
The Greeks remember his high brandish'd sword,
That fill'd their state with widows and with or-
phans;

For which they call for vengeance on his son.

Who knows what he may one day prove? Who
knows

But he may brave us in our ports, and fill'd
With Hector's fury, set our fleets on blaze?
You may, yourself, live to repent your mercy.
Comply, then, with the Grecians' just demands;
Sate their vengeance, and preserve yourself.

Pyr. The Greeks are for my safety more con-
cern'd

Than I desire. I thought your kings were met
On more important counsel. When I heard
The name of their ambassador, I hop'd
Some glorious enterprise was taking birth.
Is Agamemnon's son despatch'd for this?
And do the Grecian chiefs, renown'd in war,
A race of heroes, join in close debate,
To plot an infant's death? What right has Greece
To ask his life? Must I, must I alone,
Of all her scepter'd warriors, be deny'd
To treat my captive as I please? Know, Prince,
When Troy lay smoking on the ground, and each
Proud victor shar'd the harvest of the war,
Andromache, and this her son, were mine;
Were mine by lot. And who shall wrest them from
Ulysses bore away old Priam's queen; [me?
Cassandra was your own great father's prize.
Did I concern myself in what they won?
Did I send embassies to claim their captives?

Ores. But, sir, we fear for you and for ourselves.
Troy may again revive, and a new Hector
Rise in Astyanax. Then think betimes—

Pyr. Let dastard souls be timorously wise:
But tell them, Pyrrhus knows not how to form
Far fancied ills, and dangers out of sight. [Troy;

Ores. Sir, call to mind the unrivall'd strength of
Her walls, her bulwarks, and her gates of brass;
Her kings, her heroes, and embattled armies.

Pyr. I call them all to mind; and see them all
Confus'd in dust; all mix'd in one wide ruin!
All but a child, and he in bondage held.

What vengeance can we fear from such a Troy?
If they have sworn to extinguish Hector's race,
Why was their vow for twelve long months deferr'd?

Why was he not in Priam's bosom slain?
He should have fall'n among the slaughter'd heaps,
Whelm'd under Troy. His death had then been just.
My fury then was without bounds; but now,
My wrath appeas'd, must I be cruel still?
And, deaf to all the tender calls of pity,
Like a cool murderer, bathe my hands in blood?
An infant's blood? No, Prince; go bid the Greeks
Mark out some other victim; my revenge
Has had its fill. What has escap'd from Troy
Shall not be sav'd to perish in Epirus.

Ores. I need not tell you, sir, Astyanax
Was doom'd to death in Troy; nor mention how
The crafty mother sav'd her darling son.
The Greeks do now but urge their former sentence:
Nor is't the boy, but Hector they pursue;
The father draws their vengeance on the son:
The father, who so oft in Grecian blood
Has drench'd his sword; the father, whom the
Greeks

May seek e'en here. Prevent them, sir, in time.

Pyr. No: let them come; since I was born to wage
Eternal wars. Let them now turn their arms
On him who conquer'd for them. Let them come;
And in Epirus seek another Troy.

'Twas thus they recompens'd my godlike sire;
Thus was Achilles thank'd. But, Prince, remember,
Their black ingratitude then cost them dear.

Ores. Shall Greece, then, find a rebel son in
Pyrrhus? [Greece?

Pyr. Have I, then, conquer'd to depend on
Ores. Hermione will sway your soul to peace,
And mediate 'twixt her father and yourself.
Her beauty will enforce my embassy.

Pyr. Hermione may have her charms, and I
May love her still, though not her father's slave.
I may, in time, give proofs that I'm a lover;
But never must forget that I'm a king.
Meanwhile, sir, you may see fair Helen's daughter:
I know how near in blood you stand ally'd.
That done, you have my answer, Prince. The
Greeks,

No doubt, expect your quick return.

[Exit Orestes and Attendants.

Phœ. Sir, do you send your rival to the Princes?

Pyr. I am told that he has lov'd her long.

Phœ. If so,

Have you not cause to fear the smother'd flame
May kindle at her sight, and blaze anew;
And she be wrought to listen to his passion? [fill:

Pyr. Ay, let them, Phœnix; let them love their
Let them go hence; let them depart together;
Together let them sail for Sparta; all my ports
Are open to them both. From what constraint,
What irksome thoughts, should I then be reliev'd!

Phœ. But, sir—

Pyr. I shall, another time, good Phœnix,
Unbosom to thee all my thoughts: for see,
Andromache appears. [Exit Phœnix.

Enter ANDROMACHE and CEPHISA.

May I, madam,

Flatter my hopes so far as to believe

You come to seek me here?

Andro. This way, sir, leads

To those apartments where you guard my son.

Since you permit me, once a day, to visit

All I have left of Hector and of Troy,

I go to weep a few sad moments with him.

I have not yet to-day embrac'd my child;

I have not held him in my widow'd arms.

Pyr. Ah! madam, should the threats of Greece
prevail,

You'll have occasion for your tears, indeed.

Andro. Alas! what threats? What can alarm the
There are no Trojans left. [Greeks?

Pyr. Their hate to Hector

Can never die: the terror of his name [son.

Still shakes their souls, and makes them dread his

Andro. A mighty honour for victorious Greece,

To fear an infant, a poor, friendless child!

Who smiles in bondage, nor yet knows himself
The son of Hector, and the slave of Pyrrhus.

Pyr. Weak as he is, the Greeks demand his life,
And send no less than Agamemnon's son
To fetch him hence.

Andro. And, sir, do you comply
With such demands? This blow is aim'd at me.
How should the child avenge his slaughter'd sire?
But, cruel men! they will not have him live
To cheer my heavy heart, and ease my bonds.

I promis'd to myself in him a son,
In him a friend, a husband, and a father.
But I must suffer sorrow heap'd on sorrow,
And still the fatal stroke must come from you.

Pyr. Dry up those tears; I must not see you weep;
And know, I have rejected their demands.

The Greeks already threaten me with war;
But, should they arm, as once they did for Helen,
And hide the Adriatic with their fleets;
Should they prepare a second ten years' siege,
And lay my towers and palaces in dust;
I am determin'd to defend your son,
And rather die myself than give him up.

But, madam, in the midst of all these dangers,
Will you refuse me a propitious smile?
Hated of Greece, and press'd on every side,
Let me not, madam, while I fight your cause,
Let me not combat with your cruelties,
And count Andromache amongst my foes.

Andro. Consider, sir, how this will sound in
Greece!

How can so great a soul betray such weakness?
Let not men say, so generous a design
Was but the transport of a heart in love.

Pyr. Your charms will justify me to the world.

Andro. How can Andromache, a captive queen,
O'erwhelm'd with grief, a burden to herself,
Harbour a thought of love? Alas! what charms
Have these unhappy eyes, by you condemn'd
To weep for ever! Talk of it no more.

To reverence the misfortunes of a foe;
To succour the distress'd; to give the son
To an afflicted mother; to repel
Confederate nations, leagu'd against his life;

Unbrib'd by love, unterrify'd by threats,
To pity, to protect him: these are cares,
These are exploits worthy Achilles' son. [ever!

Pyr. Will your resentments, then, endure for
Must Pyrrhus never be forgiven? 'Tis true,
My sword has often reek'd in Phrygian blood,
And carried havoc through your royal kindred;
But you, fair Princess, amply have aveng'd
Old Priam's vanquish'd house; and all the woes
I brought on them, fall short of what I suffer.
We both have suffer'd in our turn; and now
Our common foes shall teach us to unite.

Andro. Where does the captive not behold a foe?

Pyr. Forget the term of hatred, and behold

A friend in Pyrrhus. Give me but to hope,

I'll free your son, I'll be a father to him:

Myself will teach him to avenge the Trojans.

I'll go in person to chastise the Greeks,

Both for your wrongs and mine. Inspir'd by you,

What would I not achieve? Again shall Troy

Rise from its ashes: this right arm shall fix

Her seat of empire, and your son shall reign.

Andro. Such dreams of greatness suit not my

condition:

His hopes of empire perish'd with his father.

No; thou imperial city, ancient Troy,

Thou pride of Asia, founded by the gods!

Never, oh! never, must we hope to see

Those bulwarks rise, which Hector could not guard!

Sir, all I wish for is some quiet exile,

Where far from Greece remov'd, and far from you,

I may conceal my son, and mourn my husband.

Your love creates me envy. Oh! return,

Return to your betroth'd Hermione. [cannot.

Pyr. Why do you mock me thus? you know, I

You know my heart is your's; my soul hangs on you;

You take up every wish: my waking thoughts,
And nightly dreams, are all employ'd on you.
'Tis true, Hermione was sent to share
My throne and bed; and would, with transport, hear
The vows which you neglect.

Andro. She has no Troy,
No Hector to lament: she has not lost
A husband by your conquests. Such a husband!
(Tormenting thought!) whose death alone has made
Your sire immortal. Pyrrhus and Achilles
Are both grown great by my calamities.

Pyr. Madam, 'tis well; 'tis very well; I find
Your will must be obey'd; imperious captive,
It shall! Henceforth, I blot you from my mind;
You teach me to forget your charms; to hate you:
For know, inhuman beauty, I have lov'd
Too well to treat you with indifference.

Think well upon it; my disorder'd soul
Wavers between th' extremes of love and rage.
I have been too tame; I will awake to vengeance!
The son shall answer for the mother's scorn.
The Greeks demand him; nor will I endanger
My realms, to pleasure an ungrateful woman.

Andro. Then he must die! alas! my son must die!
He has no friend, no succour left, beside
His mother's tears, and his own innocence.

Pyr. Go, madam, visit this unhappy son;
The sight of him may bend your stubborn heart,
And turn to softness your unjust disdain.
I shall once more expect your answer. Go;
And think, while you embrace the captive boy,
Think, that his life depends on your resolves.

[*Exit with Attendants.*]
Andro. I'll go, and in the anguish of my heart,
Weep o'er my child; if he must die, my life
Is wrapp'd in his; I shall not long survive.

'Tis for his sake that I have suffer'd life,
Groan'd in captivity, and out-liv'd Hector.
Yes, my Astyanax, we'll go together.

Together to the realms of night we'll go;
There to thy ravish'd eyes thy sire I'll show,
And point him out among the shades below. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.—SCENE I.

Enter HERMIONE and CLEONE.

Her. Well, I'll be rul'd, Cleone; I will see him:
I have told Pylades that he may bring him;
But trust me, were I left to my own thoughts,
I should forbid him yet.

Cle. And why forbid him?
Is he not, madam, still the same Orestes?
Orestes, whose return you oft have wish'd?
The man whose sufferings you so late lamented,
And often prais'd his constancy and love?

Her. That love, that constancy, so ill requited,
Upbraids me to myself. I blush to think
How I have us'd him, and would shun his presence.
What will be my confusion when he sees me,
Neglected and forsaken, like himself?
Will he not say, "Is this the scornful maid,
The proud Hermione, that tyranniz'd
In Sparta's court, and triumph'd in her charms?
Her insolence, at last, is well repaid!"
I cannot bear the thought.

Cle. You wrong yourself
With unbecoming fears. He knows too well
Your beauty and your worth. Your lover comes not
To offer insults, but to repeat his vows,
And breathe his ardent passion at your feet.
But, madam, what's your royal father's will?
What orders do your letters bring from Sparta?

Her. His orders are, if Pyrrhus still delay
The nuptials, and refuse to sacrifice
This Trojan boy, I should with speed embark,
And with their embassy return to Greece. [time

Cle. What would you more? Orestes comes in
To save your honour. Pyrrhus cools apace:
Prevent his falsehood, and forsake him first.
I know you hate him; you have told me so.

Her. Hate him! My injur'd honour bids me hate
him.

The ungrateful man, to whom I fondly gave
My virgin heart; the man I lov'd so dearly;
The man I doated on! Oh! my Cleone,
How is it possible I should not hate him?

Cle. Then give him over, madam. Quit his court,
And with Orestes—

Her. No: I must have time
To work up all my rage; to meditate
A parting full of horror! My revenge
Will be but too much quicken'd by the traitor.

Cle. Do you, then, wait new insults, new affronts?
To draw you from your father; then to leave you;
In his own court to leave you, for a captive!
If Pyrrhus can provoke you, he has done it.

Her. Why dost thou heighten my distress? I fear
To search out my own thoughts, and sound my heart.
Be blind to what thou seest; believe me cur'd;
Flatter my weakness; tell me I have conquer'd;
Think that my injur'd soul is set against him;
And do thy best to make me think so, too.

Cle. Why would you loiter here, then?

Her. Let us fly!
Let us be gone; I leave him to his captive.
Let him go kneel, and supplicate his slave.
Let us begone! But what if he repent?
What if the perjurd prince again submit,
And sue for pardon? What, if he renew
His former vows? But, oh! the faithless man!
He slights me; drives me to extremities. However,
I'll stay, Cleone, to perplex their loves:

I'll stay, till by an open breach of contract,
I make him hateful to the Greeks. Already
Their vengeance have I drawn upon the son;
The second embassy shall claim the mother;
I will redouble all my griefs upon her.

Cle. Ah! madam, whither does your rage trans-
port you?

Andromache, alas! is innocent.
A woman plung'd in sorrow, dead to love;
And when she thinks on Pyrrhus, 'tis with horror.

Her. Would I had done so, too! he had not then
Betray'd my easy faith. But I, alas!
Discover'd all the fondness of my soul;
I made no secret of my passion to him,
Nor thought it dangerous to be sincere.
My eyes, my tongue, my actions spoke my heart.

Cle. Well might you speak without reserve, to one
Engag'd to you by solemn oaths and treaties.

Her. His ardour, too, was an excuse to mine:
With other eyes he saw me then. Cleone,
Thou may'st remember, everything conspir'd
To favour him: my father's wrongs aveng'd;
The Greeks triumphant; fleets of Trojan spoils;
His mighty sire's, his own immortal fame;
His eager love; all, all conspir'd against me.
But I have done; I'll think no more of Pyrrhus:
Orestes wants not merit, and he loves me.

My gratitude, my honour, both plead for him;
And if I've power o'er my own heart, 'tis his.

Cle. Madam, he comes—

Her. Alas! I did not think
He was so near. I wish I might not see him.

Enter ORESTES.

How am I to interpret, sir, this visit?
Is it a compliment of form, or love? [fate

Ores. Madam, you know my weakness. 'Tis my
To love unply'd; to desire to see you;
And still to swear each time shall be the last.

My passion breaks through my repeated oaths,
And every time I visit you I'm perjurd.
Even now I find my wounds all bleed afresh;
I blush to own it, but I know no cure.
I call the gods to witness, I have tried
Whatever man could do (but tried in vain)
To wear you from my mind. Through stormy seas,
And savage climes, in a whole year of absence,
I courted dangers, and I long'd for death. [fate

Her. Why will you, Prince, indulge this mournful
It ill becomes the ambassador of Greece
To talk of dying and of love. Remember

The kings you represent: shall their revenge
Be disappointed by your ill-tim'd passion?
Discharge your embassy. 'Tis not Orestes
The Greeks desire should die.

Ores. My embassy
Is at an end; by Pyrrhus has refus'd
To give up Hector's son. Some hidden power
Protects the boy.

Her. Faithless, ungrateful man! (*Aside.*)

Ores. I now prepare for Greece; but ere I go,
Would hear my final doom pronounced by you.

What do I say? I do already hear it!
My doom is fixed: I read it in your eyes.

Her. Will you then still despair? be still suspi-
cious?

What have I done? wherein have I been cruel?
'Tis true, you find me in the court of Pyrrhus;
But 'twas my royal father sent me hither.
And who can tell but I have shar'd your griefs?
Have I ne'er wept in secret? never wish'd
To see Orestes?

Ores. Wish'd to see Orestes!
O joy! O ecstasy! My soul's entranc'd!
O charming princess! O transcendent maid!
My utmost wish!—Thus, thus let me express
My boundless thanks!—I never was unhappy.
Am I Orestes?

Her. You are Orestes:
The same, unalter'd, generous, faithful lover;
The prince whom I esteem, whom I lament,
And whom I fain would teach my heart to love.

Ores. Ay, there it is!—I have but your esteem,
While Pyrrhus has your heart.

Her. Believe me, prince,
Were you as Pyrrhus, I should hate you.

Ores. No.
I should be blest, I should be lov'd as he is!
Yet all this while I die by your disdain,
While he neglects your charms, and courts another.
Her. And who has told you, Prince, that I'm
neglected?

Has Pyrrhus said—(Oh! I shall go distracted!)
Has Pyrrhus told you so? or is it you
Who think thus meanly of me?—Sir, perhaps,
All do not judge like you.

Ores. Madam, go on;
Insult me still; I'm us'd to bear your scorn.
Her. Why am I told how Pyrrhus loves or hates?
Go, Prince, and arm the Greeks against the rebel;
Let them lay waste his country, rase his towns,
Destroy his fleets, his palaces—himself!

Go, Prince, and tell me then how much I love him.

Ores. To hasten his destruction, come yourself;
And work your royal father to his ruin.

Her. Meanwhile he weds Andromache.

Ores. Ah! Princess;
What is't I hear?

Her. What infamy for Greece,
If he should wed a Phrygian, and a captive!

Ores. Is this your hatred, madam?—'Tis in vain
To hide your passion; every thing betrays it:
Your looks, your speech, your anger, nay, your
silence;

Your love appears in all; your secret flame
Breaks out the more, the more you would con-
ceal it.

Her. Your jealousy perverts my meaning still,
And wrests each circumstance to your disquiet:
My very hate is construed into fondness.

Ores. Impute my fears, if groundless, to my
love.

Her. Then hear me, Prince. Obedience to a
father

First brought me hither; and the same obedience
Detains me here, till Pyrrhus drive me hence,
Or my offended father shall recal me.

Tell this proud King, that Menalaus scorns
To match his daughter with a foe of Greece:
Bid him resign Astyanax or me.

If he persists to guard the hostile boy,
Hermione embarks with you for Sparta.

[*Exeunt Hermione and Cleone.*
Ores. Then is Orestes blest! My griefs are
fled!

Fled like a dream!—Methinks I tread in air?
Pyrrhus, enamour'd of his captive queen,
Will thank me, if I take her rival hence.
He looks not on the Princess with my eyes.
Surprising happiness! unlook'd for joy!
Never let love despair. The prize is mine!
Be smooth, ye seas, and ye propitious winds,
Breathe from Epirus to the Spartan coasts!
I long to view the sails unfurl'd!—But see!
Pyrrhus approaches in a happy hour.

[*Enter PYRRHUS and PHŒNIX.*
Pyr. I was in pain to find you, Prince. My
warm,

Ungovern'd temper would not let me weigh
The importance of your embassy, and hear
You argue for my good. I was to blame.
I since have pois'd your reasons: and I thank
My good allies: their care deserves my thanks.
You have convinc'd me that the weal of Greece,
My father's honour, and my own repose,
Demand that Hector's race should be destroy'd.
I shall deliver up Astyanax,
And you yourself shall bear the victim hence.

Ores. If you approve it, sir, and are content
To spill the blood of a defenceless child,
The offended Greeks, no doubt, will be appeas'd.

Pyr. Closer to strain the knot of our alliance,
I have determined to espouse Hermione.
You come in time to grace our nuptial rights:
In you the Kings of Greece will all be present,
And you have right to personate her father,
As his ambassador and brother's son.
Go, Prince, renew your visit; tell Hermione,
To-morrow I receive her from your hands.

Ores. Oh! change of fortune! Oh! undone
Orestes!

[*Aside, and exit.*
Pyr. Well, Phœnix, am I still a slave to love?
What think'st thou now? Am I myself again?

Phœ. 'Tis as it should be; this discovers Pyr-
rhus;

Shows all the hero: now you are yourself—
The son, the rival of the great Achilles!
Greece will applaud you, and the world confess
Pyrrhus has conquer'd Troy a second time!

Pyr. Nay, Phœnix, now I but begiu to triumph;
I never was a conqueror till now.

Believe me, a whole host, a war of foes,
May sooner be subdu'd than love. Oh! Phœnix;

What ruin have I shunn'd! The Greeks, eurag'd,
Hung o'er me like a gathering storm, and soon
Had burst in thunder on my head; while I
Abandon'd duty, empire, honour, all,
To please a thankless woman!—One kind look
Had quite undone me!

Phœ. Oh! my royal master!
The gods, in favour to you, made her cruel.

Pyr. Thou saw'st with how much scorn she
treated me!

When I permitted her to see her son,
I hop'd it might have work'd her to my wishes;
I went to see the mournful interview,
And found her bath'd in tears, and lost in passion.
Wild with distress, a thousand times she call'd
On Hector's name: and when I spoke in comfort,
And promised my protection to her son,
She kiss'd the boy, and call'd again on Hector.
Does she, then, think that I preserve the boy,
To soothe and keep alive her flame for Hector?

Phœ. No doubt she does, and thinks you favour'd
in it;

But let her go, for an ungrateful woman.

Pyr. I know the thoughts of her proud stubborn
heart:

Vain of her charms, and insolent in beauty,

She mocks my rage; and when it threatens loudest,

Expects would soon be humbled into love.
But we shall change our parts, and she shall find
I can be deaf, like her, and steel my heart.
She's Hector's widow; I, Achilles' son!
Pyrrhus is born to hate Andromache.

Phæ. My royal master, talk of her no more;
I do not like this anger. Your Hermione
Should now engross your thoughts. 'Tis time to
see her;

'Tis time you should prepare the nuptial rites,
And not rely upon a rival's care:
It may be dangerous.

Pyr. But tell me, Phœnix,
Dost thou not think the proud Andromache
Will be enrag'd, when I shall wed the princess?

Phæ. Why does Andromache still haunt your
thoughts?

What is't to you, be she enrag'd or pleas'd?
Let her name perish—think of her no more.

Pyr. No, Phœnix, I have been too gentle with
her;

I have check'd my wrath, and stifled my resent-
ment:

She knows not yet to what degree I hate her.
Thou shalt see, Phœnix, how I'll break her pride.

Phæ. Oh! go not, sir. There's ruin in her
eyes!

You do not know your strength. You'll fall before
her,

Adore her beauty, and revive her scorn.

Por. That were, indeed, a most unmanly weak-
ness!

Thou dost not know me, Phœnix.

Phæ. Ah! my prince;
You are still struggling in the toils of love.

Pyr. Canst thou, then, think I love this woman
still?

One who repays my passion with disdain!
A stranger, captive, friendless and forlorn;
She, and her darling son, within my power;
Her life a forfeit to the Greeks: yet I
Preserve her son, would take her to my throne,
Would fight her battles, and avenge her wrongs;
And all this while she treats me as her foe!

Phæ. You have it in your power to be reveng'd.

Pyr. Yes, and I'll shew my power! I'll give
her cause

To hate me! her Astyanax shall die,
What tears will then be shed! How will she then,
In bitterness of heart, reproach my name!

Then, to complete her woes, will I espouse
Hermione—'twill stab her to the heart!

Phæ. Alas! you threaten like a lover still.

Pyr. Phœnix, excuse this struggle of my soul;
'Tis the last effort of expiring love.

Phæ. Then hasten, sir, to see the Spartan prin-
cess,

And turn the bent of your desires on her.

Pyr. Oh! 'tis a heavy task to conquer love,
And wean the soul from her accustom'd fondness.
But come—a long farewell to Hector's widow.

'Tis with a secret pleasure I look back,
And see the many dangers I have pass'd.
The merchant thus, in dreadful tempests tost,
Thrown by the waves on some unlook'd for coast,
Oft turns, and sees, with a delightful eye,
Midst rocks and shelves the broken billows fly!
And while the outrageous winds the deep deform,
Smiles on the tumult, and enjoys the storm.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Enter* PYLADES and ORESTES.

Pyl. For heaven's sake, sir, compose your ruffl'd
mind,

And moderate your rage!

Ores. No, Pylades,

This is no time for counsel. I am deaf.
Talk not of reason. I have been too patient.
Life is not worth my care. My soul grows des-
perate.

I'll bear her off, or perish in th' attempt.

I'll force her from his arms—by heaven! I will.

Pyl. Well, 'tis agreed, my friend, we'll force her
hence:

But still consider we are in Epirus.

The court, the guards, Hermione herself,
The very air we breathe, belongs to Pyrrhus.
Good gods! what tempted you to seek her here?

Ores. Lost to myself, I knew not what I did;

My purposes were wild. Perhaps I came
To menace Pyrrhus, and upbraid the woman.

Pyl. This violence of temper may prove fatal.

Ores. It must be more than man to bear these
shocks,

These outrages of fate, with temper.

He tells me that he weds Hermione.

And will, to-morrow, take her from my hand!

My hand shall sooner tear the tyrant's heart.

Pyl. Your passion blinds you, sir; he's not to
blame.

Could you but look into the soul of Pyrrhus,

Perhaps you'd find it tortur'd like your own.

Ores. No, Pylades! 'tis all design. His pride,

To triumph over me, has chang'd his love.

The fair Hermione, before I came,

In all her bloom of beauty, was neglected.

Ah! cruel gods! I thought her all my own!

She was consenting to return to Sparta:

Her heart, divided betwixt rage and love,

Was on the wing to take its leave of Pyrrhus.

She heard my sighs, she pitied my complaints,

She prais'd my constancy. The least indifference

From this proud king, had made Orestes happy!

Pyl. So your fond heart believes.

Think not to force her hence;

But fly yourself from her destructive charms.

Ores. Talk no more!

I cannot bear the thought! She must be mine!

Did Pyrrhus carry thunder in his hand,

I'd stand the bolt, and challenge all his fury,

Ere I resign Hermione! By force

I'll snatch her hence, and bear her to my ships.

Have we forgot her mother Helen's rape?

Pyl. Will, then, Orestes turn a ravisher,

And blot his embassy?

Ores. Oh! Pylades,

My grief weighs heavy on me—'twill distract me!

The gods have set me as their mark, to empty

Their quivers on me. Leave me to myself.

Mine be the danger, mine the enterprise.

All I request of thee, is to return,

And in my place convey Astyanax

(As Pyrrhus has consented) into Greece,

Go, Pylades—

Pyl. Lead on, my friend, lead on!

Let us bear off Hermione! No toil,

No danger can deter a friend. Lead on!

Draw up the Greeks; summon your numerous

train;

The ships are ready, and the wind sets fair:

There eastward lies the sea; the rolling waves

Break on those palace-stairs. I know each pass,

Each avenue, and outlet of the court.

This very night we'll carry her on board.

Ores. Thou art too good! I trespass on thy

friendship:

But, oh! excuse a wretch, whom no man pities,

Except thyself: one, just about to lose

The treasure of his soul: whom all mankind

Conspire to hate, and one who hates himself.

When will my friendship be of use to thee?

Pyl. The question is unkind. But now, re-
member,

To keep your counsels close, and hide your
thoughts;

Let not Hermione suspect. No more—
I see her coming, sir.

Ores. Away, my friend;
I am advis'd; my all depends upon it.

[Exit Pylades.]

Enter HERMIONE and CLEONE.

Madam, your orders are obeyed; I have seen
Pyrrhus, my rival; and have gain'd him for you.
The king resolves to wed you.

Her. So I am told;
And, further, I am inform'd, that you, Orestes,
Are to dispose me for the intended marriage.

Ores. And are you, madam, willing to comply?

Her. What can I do? alas! my faith is promis'd;

Can I refuse what is not mine to give?
A princess is not at her choice to love;
All we have left us is a blind obedience:
And yet you see how far I had comply'd,
And made my duty yield to your entreaties.

Ores. Ah! cruel maid! you knew—but I have done.

All have a right to please themselves in love.
I blam'd you not. 'Tis true, I hop'd—but you
Are mistress of your heart, and I'm content.
'Tis fortune is my enemy, not you.

But, madam, I shall spare you further pain
On this uneasy theme, and take my leave. [Exit.]

Her. Cleone, couldst thou think he'd be so calm?

Cle. Madam, his silent grief sits heavy on him.
He is to be pitied. His too eager love
Has made him busy to his own destruction.
His threats have wrought this change of mind in
Pyrrhus.

Her. Dost thou think Pyrrhus capable of fear?
Whom should the intrepid Pyrrhus fear? The
Greeks?

Did he not lead their harass'd troops to conquest,
When they despair'd, when they retir'd from
Troy,

And sought for shelter in their burning fleets?
Did he not then supply his father's place?

No, my Cleone, he is above constraint;
He acts unforc'd; and where he weds, he loves.

Cle. Oh! that Orestes had remain'd in Greece!
I fear to-morrow will prove fatal to him.

Her. Wilt thou discourse of nothing but
Orestes?

Pyrrhus is mine again! Is mine for ever!
Oh! my Cleone, I am wild with joy!
Pyrrhus! the bold, the brave, the godlike Pyrrhus!
Oh! I could tell the numberless exploits,
And tire thee with his battles. Oh! Cleone—

Cle. Madam, conceal your joy; I see Andromache;

She weeps, and comes to speak her sorrows to you.

Her. I would indulge the gladness of my heart:
Let us retire; her grief is out of season.

Enter ANDROMACHE and CEPHISA.

Andro. Ah! madam, whither, whither would
you fly?

Where can your eyes behold a sight more pleasing
Than Hector's widow, suppliant, and in tears?
I come not an alarm'd, a jealous foe,
To envy you the heart your charms have won;
The only man I sought to please, is gone;
Kill'd in my sight, by an inhuman hand.

Hector first taught me love; which my fond heart
Shall ever cherish, till we meet in death.

But, oh! I have a son! And you, one day,
Will be no stranger to a mother's fondness:

But heaven forbid that you should ever know
A mother's sorrow for an only son.

Her joy, her bliss, her last surviving comfort!
When every hour she trembles for his life!

Your power o'er Pyrrhus may relieve my fears.
Alas! what danger is there in a child,

Sav'd from the wreck of a whole ruin'd empire?

Let me go hide him in some desert isle:

You may rely upon my tender care

To keep him far from perils of ambition:

All he can learn of me will be to weep!

Her. Madam, 'tis easy to conceive your grief;

But it would ill become me to solicit

In contradiction to my father's will:

'Tis he who urges to destroy your son.

Madam, if Pyrrhus must be wrought to pity,

No woman does it better than yourself.

If you gain him, I shall comply of course.

[Exit with Cleone.]

Andro. Didst thou not mind with what disdain
she spoke?

Youth and prosperity have made her vain;

She has not seen the fickle turns of life.

Ceph. Madam, were I as you, I'd take her
counsel;

I'd speak my own distress: one look from you

Will vanquish Pyrrhus, and confound the Greeks.

See, where he comes. Lay hold on this occasion.

Enter PYRRHUS and PHENIX.

Pyr. Where is the Princess? Did you not inform
me

Hermione was here? (To Phoenix.)

Phæ. I thought so, sir.

Andro. Thou seest what mighty power my eyes
have on him! (To Cephisa.)

Pyr. What says she, Phoenix?

Andro. I have no hope left!

Phæ. Let us be gone; Hermione expects you.

Ceph. For heaven's sake, madam, break this
sullen silence.

Andro. My child's already promis'd. (Apart.)

Ceph. But not given. (Apart.)

Andro. No, no: my tears are vain! His doom
is fix'd! (Apart.)

Pyr. See if she deigns to cast one look upon
us.

Proud woman!

Andro. I provoke him by my presence.

Let us retire.

Pyr. Come, let us satisfy

The Greeks, and give them up this Phrygian boy.

Andro. Ah! sir, recal those words! What have
you said?

If you give up my son, oh! give up me.

You, who, so many times, have sworn me friend-
ship:

Oh! heavens, will you not look with pity on me?

Is there no hope? Is there no room for pardon?

Pyr. Phoenix will answer you; my word is
pass'd.

Andro. You, who would brave so many dangers
for me.

Pyr. I was your lover then, I now am free.

To favour you, I might have spar'd his life;

But you would ne'er vouchsafe to ask it of me.

Now 'tis too late.

Andro. Oh! sir, excuse

The pride of royal blood, that checks my soul,

And knows not how to be importunate.

You know, alas! I was not born to kneel,

To sue for pity, and to own a master.

Pyr. No; in your heart you curse me! you
disdain

My gen'rous flame, and scorn to be oblig'd.

But I shall leave you to your great resentments.

Let us go, Phoenix, and appease the Greeks.

Andro. Then let me die, and let me go to
Hector.

Ceph. But, madam—

Andro. What can I do more? The tyrant
Sees my distraction, and insults my tears.

(To Cephisa.)

Behold, how low you have reduc'd a queen!

These eyes have seen my country laid in ashes,

My kindred fall in war, my father slain,

My husband dragg'd in his own blood, my son
 Condemn'd to bondage, and myself a slave ;
 Yet, in the midst of these unheard-of woes,
 'Twas some relief to find myself your captive ;
 And that my son, deriv'd from ancient kings,
 Since he must serve, had Pyrrhus for his master.
 When Priam kneel'd, the great Achilles wept :
 I hop'd I should not find his son less noble.
 I thought the brave were still the more compas-
 sionate.

Oh! do not, sir, divide me from my child !
 If he must die—

Pyrrhus. Phoenix, withdraw awhile. [*Exit Phoenix*.]
 Rise, madam. Yet you may preserve your son.
 I find, whenever I provoke your tears,
 I furnish you with arms against myself.
 I thought my hatred fix'd before I saw you.
 Oh! turn your eyes upon me while I speak,
 And see if you discover in my looks
 An angry judge, or an obdurate foe.
 Why will you force me to desert your cause ?
 In your son's name I beg we may be friends !
 Think, oh! think,
 ('Tis the last time,) you both may yet be happy !
 I know the ties I break, the foes I arm ;
 I wrong Hermione ; I send her hence ;
 And with her diadem I bind your brows.
 Consider well ; for 'tis of moment to you.
 Choose to be wretched, madam, or a queen.
 I leave you to your thoughts. When I return,
 We'll to the temple. There you'll find your son ;
 And there be crown'd, or give him up for ever.

[*Exit*.]
Ceph. I told you, madam, that in spite of
 Greece,

You would o'errule the malice of your fortune.
Andro. Alas ! Cephisa, what have I obtain'd ?
 Only a poor short respite for my son.

Ceph. You have enough approv'd your faith to
 Hector ;

To be reluctant still would be a crime.
 He would himself persuade you to comply.

Andro. How! wouldst thou give me Pyrrhus for
 a husband ?

Ceph. Think you 'twill please the ghost of your
 dead husband,

That you should sacrifice his son ? Consider
 Pyrrhus once more invites you to a throne ;
 Turns all his power against the foes of Troy,
 Remembers not Achilles was his father,
 Retracts his conquests, and forgets his hatred.

Andro. But how can I forget it ? how can I
 Forget my Hector, treated with dishonour,
 Depriv'd of funeral rites, and vilely dragg'd,
 A bloody corse, about the walls of Troy ?
 Can I forget the good old king, his father,
 Slain in my presence ; at the altar slain ;
 Which vainly for protection he embrac'd ?
 Hast thou forgot that dreadful night, Cephisa,
 When a whole people fell ? Methinks I see
 Pyrrhus, enrag'd, and breathing vengeance, enter
 Amidst the glare of burning palaces :
 I see him hew his passage through my brothers,
 And, bath'd in blood, lay all my kindred waste.
 Think, in this scene of horror, what I suffer'd !
 This is the courtship I receiv'd from Pyrrhus ;
 And this the husband thou wouldst give me : No !
 We both will perish first ! I'll ne'er consent.

Ceph. Since you resolve Astyanax shall die,
 Haste to the temple ; bid your son farewell.—
 Why do you tremble, madam ?

Andro. Oh ! Cephisa !
 Thou hast awaken'd all the mother in me.
 How can I bid farewell to the dear child,
 The pledge, the image of my much-lov'd lord !
 But, oh ! while I deliberate, he dies.
 No, no ; thou must not die, while I can save thee :
 Oh ! let me find out Pyrrhus. Oh ! Cephisa,
 Do you go find him.

Ceph. What must I say to him ?

Andro. Tell him I love my son to such excess—
 But dost thou think he means the child shall die ?
 Can love rejected turn to so much rage ?

Ceph. Madam, he'll soon be here. Resolve on
 something.

Andro. Well, then, assure him—

Ceph. Madam, of your love ?

Andro. Alas ! thou know'st that is not in my
 power.

Oh ! my dear lord ! Oh ! Priam's royal house !
 Oh ! my Astyanax ! at what a price
 Thy mother buys thee !—Let us go.

Ceph. But whither ?

And what does your unsettled heart resolve ?

Andro. Come, my Cephisa, let us go together
 To the sad monument which I have rais'd

To Hector's shade ; where, in their sacred urn,
 The ashes of my hero lie enclos'd,
 The dear remains which I have sav'd from Troy ;
 There let me weep, there summon to my aid,
 With pious rites, my Hector's awful shade ;
 Let him be witness to my doubts, my fears ;
 My agonizing heart, my flowing tears :
 Oh ! may he rise in pity from his tomb,
 And fix his wretched son's uncertain doom.

[*Exeunt*.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Enter HERMIONE and CLEONE.*

Cle. This unexpected silence, this reserve,
 This outward calm, this settled frame of mind,
 After such wrongs and insults, much surprise me ;
 You, who before could but command your rage,
 When Pyrrhus look'd but kindly on his captive ;
 How can you bear unmov'd, that he should wed
 her,

And seat her on a throne which you should fill ?
 'Twere better, madam—

Her. Have you call'd Orestes ?

Cle. Madam, I have ; his love is too impatient
 Not to obey, with speed, the welcome summons.
 His love-sick heart o'erlooks his unkind usage :
 His ardour's still the same.—Madam, he's here.

Enter ORESTES.

Ores. Ah ! madam, is it true ? does then Orestes
 At length attend you by your own commands ?
 What can I do ?

Her. Orestes, do you love me ?

Ores. What means that question, Princess ? Do
 I love you ?

My oaths, my perjuries, my hopes, my fears,
 My farewell, my return—all speak my love.

Her. Avenge my wrongs, and I'll believe them
 all.

Ores. It shall be done. My soul has caught th'
 alarm.

We'll spirit up the Greeks ; I'll lead them on :
 Your cause shall animate our fleets and armies.
 Let us return ; let us not lose a moment,
 But urge the fate of this devoted land :
 Let us depart.

Her. No, Prince, let us stay here !

I will have vengeance here ; I will not carry
 This load of infamy to Greece, nor trust
 The chance of war to vindicate my wrongs.
 Ere I depart, I'll make Epirus mourn.

If you avenge me, let it be this instant ;
 My rage brooks no delay ; haste to the temple,
 Haste, Prince, and sacrifice him.

Ores. Whom ?

Her. Why, Pyrrhus.

Ores. Pyrrhus ! Did you say Pyrrhus ?

Her. You demur.

Oh ! fly ! begone ! give me not time to think.
 Talk not of laws—he tramples on all laws.
 Let me not hear him justified—away !

Ores. You cannot think I'll justify my rival.
 Madam, your love has made him criminal.

You shall have vengeance; I'll have vengeance,
too:

But let our hatred be profess'd and open:
Let us alarm all Greece, denounce a war;
Let us attack him in his strength, and hunt him
down

By conquest. Should I turn base assassin,
'Twould sully all the kings I represent.

Her. Have not I been dishonour'd, set at
nought,

Expos'd to public scorn?—And will you suffer
The tyrant, who dares use me thus, to live?
Know, prince, I hate him more than once I lov'd
him.

The gods alone can tell how once I lov'd him!
Yes, the false, perjur'd man, I once did love him;
And, spite of all his crimes and broken vows,
If he should live, I may relapse—who knows
But I, to-morrow, may forgive his wrongs?

Ores. First, let me tear him piecemeal. He
shall die.

But, madam, give me leisure to contrive
The place, the time, the manner of his death:
Yet I'm a stranger in the court of Pyrrhus;
Scarce have I set my foot within Epirus,
When you enjoin me to destroy the Prince.
It shall be done this very night.

Her. But now,
This very hour, he weds Andromache;
The temple shines with pomp, the golden throne
Is now prepar'd, the joyful rites begin;
My shame is public.—Oh! be speedy, prince;
My wrath's impatient—Pyrrhus lives too long!

Intent on love, and heedless of his person,
He covers, with his guards, the Trojan boy.
Now is the time; assemble all your Greeks;
Mine shall assist them; let their fury loose:
Already they regard him as a foe.

Begone, Orestes! kill the faithless tyrant:
My love shall recompense the glorious deed.

Ores. Consider, madam—

Her. You but mock my rage!
I was contriving how to make you happy.
Think you to merit by your idle sighs,
And not attest your love by one brave action?
Go, with your boasted constancy, and leave
Hermione to execute her own revenge.
I blush to think how my too easy faith
Has twice been baffled in one shameful hour!

Ores. Hear me but speak! You know I'll die to
serve you!

Her. I'll go myself; I'll stab him at the altar;
Then drive the poniard, reeking with his blood,
Through my own heart. In death we shall unite.
Better to die with him, than live with you!

Ores. That were to make him bless'd, and me
more wretched.

Madam, he dies by me! Have you a foe,
And shall I let him live? My rival, too!
Ere yon meridian sun declines, he dies;
And you shall say that I deserve your love.

Her. Go, prince; strike home! and leave the
rest to me.

Let all your ships stand ready for our flight.

[*Exit Orestes.*]

Cle. Madam, you'll perish in this bold attempt.

Her. Give me my vengeance, I'm content to per-
ish.

I was to blame to trust it with another:
In my own hands it had been more secure.
Orestes hates not Pyrrhus as I hate him.
Oh! would Orestes, when he gives the blow,
Tell him he dies my victim! Haste, Cleone,
Charge him to say, Hermione's resentments,
Not those of Greece, have sentenc'd him to death.
Haste, my Cleone! My revenge is lost,
If Pyrrhus know not that he dies by me!

Cle. I shall obey your orders.—But I see
The king approach. Who could expect him here?

Her. Oh! fly, Cleone, fly! and bid Orestes
Not to proceed a step before I see him.

[*Exit Cleone.*]

Enter PYRRHUS.

Pyrr. Madam, I ought to shun an injur'd princess.
Your distant looks reproach me; and I come
Not to defend, but to avow my guilt.

Pyrrhus will ne'er approve his own injustice,
Nor form excuses while his heart condemns him.
Discharge your anger on this perjur'd man!
For I abhor my crime, and should be pleas'd
To hear you speak your wrongs aloud: no terms,
No bitterness of wrath, nor keen reproach,
Will equal half the upbraidsings of my heart.

Her. I find, sir, you can be sincere: you scorn
To act your crimes with fear, like other men.
A hero should be bold, above all laws;
Be bravely false, and laugh at solemn ties.
To be perfidious shews a daring mind!

And you have nobly triumph'd o'er a maid!
To court me—to reject me—to return—
Then to forsake me for a Phrygian slave—
To lay proud Troy in ashes; then to raise
The son of Hector, and renounce the Greeks,
Are actions worthy the great soul of Pyrrhus!

Pyrr. Madam, go on! Give your resentment birth,
And pour forth all your indignation on me.

Her. 'Twould please your queen, should I up-
braid your falsehood;

Call you perfidious, traitor, all the names
That injur'd virgins lavish on your sex;
I should o'erflow with tears, and die with grief,
And furnish out a tale to sooth her pride;
But, sir, I would not overcharge her joys.
If you would charm Andromache, recount
Your bloody battles, your exploits, your slaughters,
Your great achievements in her father's palace.
She needs must love the man who fought so
bravely,

And in her sight slew half her royal kindred!

Pyrr. With horror I look back on my past deeds!
I punish'd Helen's wrongs too far; I shed
Too much of blood: but, madam, Helen's daughter
Should not object those ills the mother caus'd.

However, I'm pleas'd to find you hate me;
I was too forward to accuse myself;
The man who ne'er was lov'd, can ne'er be false.
Obedience to a father brought you hither;
And I stood bound by promise to receive you:
But our desires were different ways inclin'd;
And you, I own, were not oblig'd to love me.

Her. Have I not lov'd you, then? Perfidious
man!

For you I slighted all the Grecian princes;
Forsook my father's house; conceal'd my wrongs,
When most provok'd; would not return to Sparta,
In hopes that time might fix your wavering heart.
I lov'd you when inconstant; and even now,
Inhuman king! that you pronounce my death,
My heart still doubts if I should love or hate you.
But, oh! since you resolve to wed another,
Defer your cruel purpose till to-morrow,
That I may not be here to grace your triumph!
This is the last request I e'er shall make you.

See, if the barbarous prince vouchsafes an answer!
Go, then, to the lov'd Phrygian; hence! begone!
And bear to her those vows that once were mine:
Go, in defiance to the avenging gods!
Begone! the priest expects you at the altar;
But, tyrant, have a care I come not thither! [*Exit.*]

Enter PHENIX.

Phœ. Sir, did you mind her threats? your life's
in danger:

There is no trilling with a woman's rage.
The Greeks that swarm about the court, all hate
you;

Will treat you as their country's enemy,
And join in her revenge: besides, Orestes
Still loves her to distraction. Sir, I beg—

Pyrr. How, Phœnix, should I fear a woman's threats?

A nobler passion takes up all my thoughts: I must prepare to meet Andromache.

Do thou place all my guards about her son:

If he be safe, Pyrrhus is free from fear. [*Exit.*]

Phœ. Oh! Pyrrhus, oh! what pity 'tis, the gods,

Who fill'd thy soul with every kingly virtue,
Form'd thee for empire and consummate greatness,
Should leave thee so expos'd to wild desires,
That hurry thee beyond the bounds of reason!

(*Flourish.*)

But, see, the queen,
Magnificent in royal pride, appears.

I must obey, and guard her son from danger. [*Exit.*]

Enter ANDROMACHE and CEPHISA.

Ceph. Madam, once more you look and move a queen.

Your sorrows are dispers'd, your charms revive,
And every faded beauty blooms anew.

Andro. Yet all is not as I could wish, Cephisa.

Ceph. You see the king is watchful o'er your son;

Decks him with princely robes, with guards surrounds him.

Astyanax begins to reign already.

Andro. Pyrrhus is nobly minded; and I fain
Would live to thank him for Astyanax:

'Tis a vain thought. However, since my child
Has such a friend, I ought not to repine.

Ceph. These dark unfoldings of your soul perplex me.

For heaven's sake, madam, let me know your grieFs!

If you distrust my faith—

Andro. That were to wrong thee.
Oh! my Cephisa, this gay, borrow'd air,
This blaze of jewels, and this bridal dress,
Are but mock trappings to conceal my woe:
My heart still mourns; I still am Hector's widow.

Ceph. Will you, then, break the promise giv'n
to Pyrrhus;

Blow up his rage again, and blast your hopes?

Andro. I thought, Cephisa, thou hadst known
thy mistress.

Couldst thou believe I would be false to Hector?

Fall off from such a husband? break his rest,

And call him to this hated light again,

To see Andromache in Pyrrhus' arms?

Would Hector, were he living, and I dead,

Forget Andromache, and wed her foe?

Ceph. I cannot guess what drift your thoughts
pursue;

But, oh! I fear there's something dreadful in it:

Must, then, Astyanax be doom'd to die,

And you to linger out a life in bondage?

Andro. Know, then, the secret purpose of my
soul:

Andromache will not be false to Pyrrhus,

Nor violate her sacred love to Hector.

This hour I'll meet the king; the holy priest

Shall join us, and confirm our mutual vows.

This will secure a father to my child:

That done, I have no further use for life:

This pointed dagger, this determin'd hand,

Shall save my virtue, and conclude my woes.

Cephisa, thou

Wilt lend a hand to close thy mistress' eyes.

Ceph. Oh! never think that I will stay behind
you.

Andro. No, my Cephisa, I must have thee live.

I must commit into thy faithful hands

All that is dear and precious to my soul.

Live, and supply my absence to my child;

All that remains of Troy; a future progeny

Of heroes, and a distant line of kings,

In him, is all intrusted to thy care.

Tell him my soul repos'd itself on him,
When I resign'd my son to his protection.

Ceph. Oh! for a spirit to support my grief!

Is there aught more, before you go for ever?

Andro. Oh! my Cephisa, my swoln heart is full!

I have a thousand farewells to my son—

But tears break in; grief interrupts my speech!

My soul o'erflows in fondness! Let him know

I died to save him, and would die again.

Season his mind with early hints of glory;

Make him acquainted with his ancestors;

Trace out their shining story in his thoughts;

Dwell on the exploits of his immortal father;

And sometimes let him hear his mother's name.

He must be taught to stifle his resentments,

And sacrifice his vengeance to his safety.

Should he prove headstrong, rash, or unadvis'd,

He then will frustrate all his mother's virtue,

Provoke his fate, and I shall die in vain.

Ceph. Alas! I fear I never shall outlive you!

Andro. No more; thy tears, Cephisa, will be-
tray me.

Assume a cheerful look. But still remember—

(*Flourish within.*)

Hark how the trumpet, with its sprightly notes,

Proclaims th' appointed hour, and calls us hence!

Hector, I come once more a queen, to join thee!

Thus the gay victim, with fresh garlands crown'd,

Pleas'd with the sacred fire's enlivening sound,

Through gazing crowds, in solemn state proceeds,

And dress'd in fatal pomp, magnificently bleeds.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Enter HERMIONE.*

Her. What have I done? Where am I? Where
is Pyrrhus?

Ye gods! what mean these horrors? I'm undone!

My soul is on the rack! I cannot bear it!

Why do I wander like some guilty ghost?

What brought me to this place? What keeps me
here?

The court of Pyrrhus has no room for me!

Do I still doubt if I should love or hate him?

Hard-hearted man! how unconcern'd he left me!

Did he once sigh? bestow one pitying look?

Once shed a tear? or speak one soft, kind word?

Did he so much as feign one moment's sorrow,

To calm my grief, and mitigate his falsehood?

Why am I still thus anxious for his life?

Why do I start at his impending fate?

Shall he, then, live? Shall the base traitor live

To laugh at my distress? No, let him perish!

Be quick, Orestes! Execute my orders!

Alas! my orders! Oh! preposterous guilt!

Can I decree the death of him I love?

Was it for this my soul delighted in him?

Was it for this I left my father's court?

Have I, then, cross'd so many realms and seas

To murder Pyrrhus?

Enter CLEONE.

Oh! Cleone, help me!

What have I done? Is Pyrrhus yet alive?

What say'st thou? Answer me. Where is the
king?

Cle. Madam, I saw the cruel prince set forward,

Triumphant in his looks, and full of joy.

Still as he walk'd, his ravish'd eyes were fix'd

On the fair captive, while through shouting crowds

She pass'd along with a dejected air,

And seem'd to mourn her Hector to the last.

Her. Insulting tyrant! I shall burst with rage!

But say, Cleone, didst thou mark him well?

Was his brow smooth? Say, did there not appear

Some shade of grief? some little cloud of sorrow?

Did he not stop? Did he not once look back?

Didst thou approach him? Was he not confounded?

Did he not—Oh! be quick, and tell me all!

Cle. Madam, the tumult of his joy admits

No thought but love. Unguarded, he march'd on,
'Midst a promiscuous throng of friends and foes;
His cares all turn upon Astyanax,
Whom he has lodg'd within the citadel,
Defended by the strength of all his guards.
Her. Enough! he dies! the traitor! Where's
Orestes?

Cle. He's in the temple, with his whole retinue.

Her. Is he still resolute? Is he still determin'd?

Cle. Madam, I fear—

Her. How? Is Orestes false?

Does he betray me, too?

Cle. A thousand doubts

Perplex his soul, and wound him with remorse;

His virtue and his love prevail by turns.

He told me Pyrrhus should not fall ignobly;

Pyrrhus, the warlike son of great Achilles.

He dreads the censure of the Grecian states,

Of all mankind, and fears to stain his honour.

Her. Poor tim'rous wretch! 'tis false! he basely
fears

To cope with dangers, and encounter death!

'Tis that he fears. Am I bright Helen's daughter?

To vindicate her wrongs all Greece conspir'd;

For her confederate nations frown, and kings were
slain;

Troy was o'erthrown, and a whole empire fell.

My eyes want force to raise a lover's arm

Against a tyrant that has dar'd to wrong me!

Cle. Madam, like Helen, trust your cause to
Greece.

Her. No; I'll avenge myself; I'll to the temple;

I'll overturn the altar, stab the priest;

I'll hurl destruction, like a whirlwind, round me!

They must not wed! they must not live! they
shall not!

Let me begone; I have no time to lose!

Stand off! hold me not! I am all distraction!

Oh, Pyrrhus! tyrant! traitor! thou shalt bleed.

Enter ORESTES.

Ores. Madam, 'tis done; your orders are obey'd;

The tyrant lies expiring at the altar.

Her. Is Pyrrhus slain?

Ores. Even now he gasps in death.

Our Greeks, all undistinguish'd in the crowd,

Flock'd to the temple, and dispers'd themselves

On every side the altar. I was there:

Pyrrhus observ'd me with a haughty eye,

And, proud to triumph over Greece in me,

From his own brows he took the diadem,

And bound it on the temples of his captive.

"Receive," said he, "my crown; receive my
faith;

Mine and my people's sovereign reign for ever.

From this bless'd hour, a father to your son;

I'll scourge his foes. Henceforward, be he styl'd

The Trojan king: I swear it at the altar,

And call the gods to ratify my vows."

His subjects with loud acclamations shook

The spacious dome; our Greeks, enrag'd, cried
out,

"Revenge! revenge!" broke through the throng-
ing press,

And rush'd, tumultuous, on the unguarded king.

Pyrrhus, awhile, oppos'd their clashing swords,

And dealt his fatal blows on every side

With manly fierceness; till oppress'd by numbers,

Streaming with blood, all over gash'd with wounds,

He reel'd, he groan'd, and at the altar fell.

Haste, madam; let us fly! haste to our ships!

They lie unmoor'd; our friends attend us there.

Her. What have they done?

Ores. Madam, forgive their rage.

I own your vengeance had been more complete

Had Pyrrhus fall'n by me; and had he known

Hermione chastis'd him by my arm.

Her. Peace, monster, peace! Go tell thy horrid
tale

To savages, and howl it out in deserts.

Wouldst thou impute to me thy barbarous guilt?
Me wouldst thou make th' accomplice of thy
crimes?

Hence to thy Greeks, and boast thy foul exploits!
My soul abhors them! I disclaim the deed.

Begone! I know thee not, thou fell barbarian!

What had he done? What could provoke thy mad-
ness

To assassinate so great, so brave a man?

Who set thee on?

Ores. Oh! grant me patience, heaven!

With your own lips did you not curse the tyrant,

Pronounce his death, and urge me to destroy him?

Her. What if transported by my boundless pas-
sion,

I could not bear to see him wed another,

Were you t' obey a jealous woman's frenzy?

You should have divid'd into my inmost thoughts:

My heart, though full of rage, was free from ma-
lice;

And all my anger was excess of love.

Why did you take me at my word? You saw

The struggles of my soul; you heard me rave;

You should have question'd me a thousand times,

Yet still have doubted, and have question'd on,

Before you ventur'd on a life so precious.

Ores. Hear me but speak. Heaven knows,
against my will—

Her. Why did you not return? Why not consul
me

A second time? and, undetermin'd still,

Again return, and still find new delays?

What had your rash, officious Greeks, dire blood-
hounds!

To do with my revenge? What drew you hither?

To bring on me the vengeful foes that haunt you?

Are these the fruits of your detested love?

Your fatal embassy, your hateful presence,

Drove Pyrrhus to my rival, and destroys

Both him and me. He might have lov'd me still,

Had you ne'er interpos'd. Avaunt! begone!

And leave me in Epirus. I renounce

My friends, my country, Greece, and all man-
kind;

But chiefly I renounce thee, monster, thee!

[Exit.

Ores. Am I awake? where am I? Soft, my soul;

Be not too rash. Was that Hermione?

Why should her anger thunder against me?

Was not this blood shed all by her command?

I am, indeed, a most outrageous monster!

A ruffian, murderer, a base assassin!

And all to please a false, ungrateful woman.

Henceforward, let the laws of nature cease;

And let the pale that severs right and wrong,

Things sacred and profane, be broken down:

Gods in their temples, kings upon their thrones,

Are not in safety while Orestes lives.

Oh! never more shall my torn mind be heal'd,

Nor taste the gentle comforts of repose!

A dreadful band of gloomy cares surround me,

And lays strong siege to my distracted soul.

Enter PYLADES, attended by Greeks.

Pyl. Haste, prince; let us be gone: 'tis death
to stay.

Andromache reigns queen: she gives the alarm,

And vows revenge upon the foes of Pyrrhus.

The people arm, and muster in the streets.

Our Greeks will not be able long to guard

The palace gates, and to secure our flight.

We must be speedy, sir.

Ores. You may depart,
My friends: Hermione and I remain.

Her cruelty has quite undone me. Go!

Pyl. Alas! unhappy princess! she's no more.

Ores. Hermione no more! Oh! all ye powers!

Pyl. Full of disorder, wildness in her looks,

With hands expanded, and disbevell'd hair,
Breathless and pale with shrieks, she sought the
temple;

In the midway, she met the corpse of Pyrrhus:
She startled at the sight; then, stiff with horror,
Gaz'd frightful! Waken'd from the dire amaze,
She rais'd her eyes to heaven with such a look
As spoke her sorrows, and reproach'd the gods;
Then plung'd a poniard deep within her breast,
And fell on Pyrrhus, grasping him in death.

Ores. I thank you, gods! I never could expect
To be so wretched! You have been industrious
To finish your decrees; to make Orestes
A dreadful instance of your power to punish.
I'm singled out to bear the wrath of heaven.

Pyl. You hazard your retreat by these delays.
The guards will soon beset us. Your complaints
Are vain, and may be fatal.

Ores. True, my friend;
And, therefore, 'twas I thank'd the bounteous
gods.

My fate's accomplish'd; I shall die content.
Oh! bear me hence. Blow winds!

Pyl. Let us be gone.

Ores. The murder'd lovers wait me. Hark! they
call.

Nay, if your blood still reek, I'll mingle mine:
One tomb will hold us all.

Pyl. Alas! I fear

His raving will return with his misfortunes.

Ores. I am dizzy! Clouds! Quite lost in utter
darkness!

Guide me, some friendly pilot, through the storm!
I shiver! oh! I freeze! So—light returns;
'Tis the grey dawn. See, Pylades! behold
I am encompass'd with a sea of blood!

The crimson billows! Oh! my brain's on fire!

Pyl. How is it, sir? Repose yourself on me.

Ores. Pyrrhus, what wouldst thou? How he
glares!

What envious hand has clos'd thy wounds? Have
at thee!

It is Hermione that strikes. Confusion!

She catches Pyrrhus in her arms. Oh! save
me!

How terrible she looks! She knits her brow!

She frowns me dead! she frights me into mad-
ness!

Where am I? Who are you?

Pyl. Alas! poor prince!

Help to support him! How he pants for breath!

Ores. This is most kind, my Palades. Oh!
why,

Why was I born to give thee endless trouble?

Pyl. All will go well: he settles into reason.

Ores. Who talks of reason? Better to have
none,

Than not enough. Run, some one, tell my Greeks
I will not have them touch the king. Now, now!
I blaze again! See there—look where they come—
A shoal of furies! How they swarm about me?
My terror—hide me—Oh! their snaky locks—
Hark, how they hiss—see, see their flaming
brands!

Now they let drive at me! How they grin,
And shake their iron whips! My ears—what
yelling—

And see Hermione she sets them on.

Thrust not your scorpions thus into my bosom!

Oh! I am stung to death! Despatch me soon!

There—take my heart, Hermione! tear it out!

Disjoin me! kill me! Oh! my tortur'd soul!

Pyl. Kind heaven, restore him to his wonted
calm!

Oh! have I seen him rave, but never thus.

Quite spent! Assist me, friends, to bear him off.
Our time is short. Should his strong rage return,
'Twould be beyond our power to force him hence.
Away, my friends! I hear the portal open.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter PHENIX, attended by Guards.

Phœ. All, all are fled! Orestes is not here!
Triumphant villains! The base, giddy rabble,
Whose hands should all have been employ'd with
fire,

To waste the fleet, flock'd round the dying prin-
cess:

And, while they stand agaze, the Greeks embark.
Oh! 'tis too plain; this sacrileg'ous murder
Was authoriz'd. The ambassador's escape
Declares his guilt. Most bloody embassy!
Most noexampl'd deeds! Where, where, ye
gods!

Is majesty secure, if in your temples

You give it no protection?—See, the queen.

*A flourish of trumpets. Enter ANDROMACHE and
CEPHISA, with Attendants.*

Andro. Yes, ye inhuman Greeks! the time will
come

When you shall dearly pay your bloody deeds!
How should the Trojans hope for mercy from you,
When thus you turn your impious rage on Pyr-
rhus?

Pyrrhus, the bravest man in all your league;
The man, whose single valour made you triumph.

(*A dead march behind.*)

Is my child there?

Ceph. It is the corpse of Pyrrhus;
The weeping soldiers bear him on their shields.

Andro. Ill-fated prince! too negligent of life,
And too unwary of the faithless Greeks!

Cut off in the fresh rip'ning prime of manhood,
'E'en in the prime of life! thy triumphs new,
And all thy glories in full blossom round thee!
The very Trojans would bewail thy fate.

Ceph. Alas! then will your sorrows never end?

Andro. Oh! never, never! While I live, my
tears

Will never cease; for I was born to grieve.

Give present orders for the funeral pomp.

(*To Phenix.*)

Let him be rob'd in all his regal state;

Place round him every shining mark of honour:

And let the pile that consecrates his ashes,
Rise like his fame, and blaze above the clouds.

[*Exit Phenix. A flourish of trumpets.*]

Ceph. The sound proclaims th' arrival of the
Prince:

The guards conduct him from the citadel.

Andro. With open arms I'll meet him! Oh! Ce-
phisa,

A springing joy, mix'd with a soft concern,
A pleasure which no language can express,
An ecstasy that only mothers feel,
Plays round my heart, and brightens up my sorrow,
Like gleams of sunshine in a low'ring sky.
Though plung'd in ills, and exercis'd in care,
Yet never let the noble mind despair.
When press'd by dangers, and beset with foes,
The gods their timely succour interpose;
And when our virtue sinks, o'erwhelm'd with
grief,
By unforeseen expedients bring relief. [*Exeunt.*]

DOUGLAS;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY JOHN HOME,



Act V.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

LORD RANDOLPH
GLENALVON

YOUNG NORVAL
OLD NORVAL

LADY RANDOLPH
ANNA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Court of a castle, surrounded with woods.*

Enter LADY RANDOLPH through the castle-gates.

Lady R. Ye woods and wilds, whose melancholy gloom

Accords with my soul's sadness, and draws forth
The voice of sorrow from my bursting heart,
Farewell awhile: I will not leave you long;
For in your shades I deem some spirit dwells,
Who from the chiding stream, or groaning oak,
Still hears, and answers to Matilda's moan.
O Douglas! Douglas! if departed ghosts
Are e'er permitted to review this world,
Within the circle of that wood thou art,
And with the passion of immortals bear'st
My lamentation: hear'st thy wretched wife
Weep for her husband slain, her infant lost.
My brother's timeless death I seem to mourn:
Who perish'd with thee on this fatal day.
O disregard me not; though I am call'd
Another's now, my heart is wholly thine.
Incapable of change, affection lies
Buried, my Douglas, in thy bloody grave.
But Randolph comes, whom fate has made my lord,
To chide my anguish, and defraud the dead.

Enter LORD RANDOLPH.

Lord R. Again these weeds of woe! say, dost thou well,

To feed a passion which consumes thy life?
The living claim some duty; vainly thou
Bestow'st thy cares upon the silent dead.

Lady R. Silent, alas! is he for whom I mourn:
Childless, without memorial of his name,
He only now in my remembrance lives.

Lord R. Time, that wears out the trace of deep-
est anguish,

Has past o'er thee in vain.

Sure, thou art not the daughter of Sir Malcolm:
Strong was his rage, eternal his resentment:
For when thy brother fell, he smil'd to hear
That Douglas' son in the same field was slain.

Lady R. Oh! rake not up the ashes of my fathers:
Implacable resentment was their crime.
And grievous has the expiation been.

Lord R. Thy grief wrests to its purposes my words.

I never ask'd of thee that ardent love,
Which in the breasts of Fancy's children burns.
Decent affection, and complacent kindness
Were all I wish'd for; but I wish'd in vain.
Hence, with the less regret my eyes behold
The storm of war that gathers o'er this land:
If I should perish by the Danish sword,
Matilda would not shed one tear the more.

Lady R. Thou dost not think so: woeful as I am,
I love thy merit, and esteem thy virtues.
But whither goest thou now?

Lord R. Straight to the camp,
Where every warrior on the tip-toe stands
Of expectation, and impatient asks
Each who arrives, if he is come to tell
The Danes are landed.

Lady R. O, may adverse winds,
Far from the coast of Scotland drive their fleet!
And every soldier of both hosts return
In peace and safety to his pleasant home!

Lord R. Thou speak'st a woman's; hear a war-
rior's wish:

Right from their native land, the stormy north,
May the wind blow, till every keel is fix'd
Immoveable in Caledonia's strand!
Then shall our foes repent their bold invasion,

And roving armies shun the fatal shore.
Lady, farewell : I leave thee not alone ;
Yonder comes one whose love makes duty light.

[Exit.]

Enter ANNA.

Anna. Forgive the rashness of your Anna's love :
Urg'd by affection, I have thus presum'd
To interrupt your solitary thoughts :
And warn you of the hours that you neglect,
And lose in sadness.

Lady R. So to lose my hours
Is all the use I wish to make of time. [state :

Anna. To blame thee, lady, suits not with my
But sure I am, since death first prey'd on man,
Never did sister thus a brother mourn.
What had your sorrows been if you had lost,
In early youth, the husband of your heart ?

Lady R. Oh !

Anna. Have I distress'd you with officious love,
And ill-tim'd mention of your brother's fate ?
Forgive me, lady ; humble tho' I am,
The mind I bear partakes not of my fortune :
So fervently I love you, that to dry
These piteous tears, I'd throw my life away.

Lady R. What pow'r directed thy unconscious
tongue

To speak as thou hast done ? to name—

Anna. I know not :

[ble,

But since my words have made my mistress trem-
I'll speak so no more ; but silent mix
My tears with her's.

Lady R. No, thou shalt not be silent.
I'll trust thy faithful love, and thou shalt be
Henceforth th' instructed partner of my woes.
But what avails it ; can thy feeble pity
Roll back the flood of never-ebbing time ?
Compel the earth and ocean to give up
Their dead alive ?

Anna. What means my noble mistress ?

Lady R. Didst thou not ask what had my sor-
rows been,—

If I in early youth had lost a husband ?—
In the cold hosom of the earth is lodg'd,
Mangled with wounds, the husband of my youth ;
And in some cavern of the ocean lies
My child and his.

Anna. O ! lady, most rever'd !
The tale wrapt up in your amazing words
Deign to unfold.

Lady R. Alas ! an ancient feud,
Hereditary evil, was the source
Of my misfortunes. Ruling fate decreed,
That my brave brother should in battle save
The life of Douglas' son, our house's foe :
The youthful warriors vow'd eternal friendship.
To see the vaunted sister of his friend,
Impatient Douglas to Balaro came,
Under a borrow'd name.—My heart he gain'd ;
Nor did I long refuse the hand he begg'd ;
My brother's presence authoriz'd our marriage.
Three weeks, three little weeks, with wings of down,
Had o'er us flown, when my lov'd lord was call'd
To fight his father's battles : and with him,
In spite of all my tears, did Malcolm go.
Scarce were they gone, when my stern sire was told
That the false stranger was Lord Douglas' son.
Frantic with rage, the baron drew his sword
And question'd me. Alone, forsaken, faint,
Kneeling beneath his sword, fault'ring I took
An oath equivocal, that I ne'er would
Wed one of Douglas' name. Sincerity !
Thou first of virtues, let no mortal leave
Thy onward path ! altho' the earth should gape,
And from the gulf of hell destruction cry
To take dissimulation's winding way.

Anna. Alas ! how few of woman's fearful kind
Durst own a truth so hardy !

Lady R. The first truth
Is easiest to avow. This moral learn,

This precious moral from my tragic tale.—
In a few days, the dreadful tidings came
That Douglas and my brother both were slain.

Anna. My dearest lady ! many a tale of tears
I've listened to ; but never did I hear
A tale so sad as this.

Lady R. In the first days
Of my distracting grief, I found myself
As women wish to be who love their lords.
But who durst tell my father ? The good priest
Who join'd our hands, my brother's ancient tutor,
With his lov'd Malcolm, in the battle fell :
They two alone were privy to the marriage.
On silence and concealment I resolv'd,
Till time should make my father's fortune mine.
That very night on which my son was born,
My nurse, the only confidant I had,
Set out with him to reach her sister's house :
But nurse, nor infant, have I ever seen,
Or heard of, Anna, since that fatal hour.

Anna. Not seen, nor heard of ! then perhaps he
lives.

Lady R. No. It was dark December : wind and
Had beat all night. Across the Carron lay [rain
The destin'd road ; and in its swelling flood
My faithful servant perish'd with my child.

Anna. Ah ! Lady, see Glenalvon comes :
I saw him bend on you his thoughtful eyes,
And hitherwards he slowly stalks his way.

Lady R. I will avoid him. An ungracious person
Is doubly irksome in an hour like this. [heir ?

Anna. Why speaks my Lady thus of Randolph's
Lady R. Because he's not the heir of Randolph's
virtues.

Subtle and shrewd, he offers to mankind
An artificial image of himself :
And he with ease can vary to the taste
Of different men its features.

Why I describe him thus, I'll tell hereafter :
Stay, and detain him till I reach the castle. [Exit.]

Anna. O happiness ! where art thou to be found ?
I see thou dwellest not with birth and beauty,
Tho' grac'd with grandeur, and in wealth array'd :
Nor dost thou, it would seem, with virtue dwell ;
Else had this gentle lady, miss'd thee not.

Enter GLENALVON.

Glen. What dost thou muse on, meditating maid ?
Like some entranc'd and visionary seer,
On earth thou stand'st, thy thoughts ascend to
heaven.

Anna. Would that I were, e'en as thou say'st, a
To have my doubts by heavenly vision clear'd !

Glen. What dost thou doubt of ? what hast thou
to do

With subjects intricate ? Thy youth, thy beauty,
Cannot be question'd : think of these good gifts,
And then thy contemplations will be pleasing.

Anna. Let woman view yon monument of woe,
Then boast of beauty : who so fair as she ?
But I must follow : this revolving day
Awakes the memory of her ancient woes. [Exit.]

Glen. So !—Lady Randolph shuns me ; by and by,
I'll woo her as the lion woos his bride.
The deed's a doing now, that makes me lord
Of these rich vallies, and a chief of pow'r.
The season is most apt ; my sounding steps
Will not be heard amidst the din of arms.
Randolph has liv'd too long : his better fate
Had the ascendant once, and kept me down :
When I had seiz'd the dame, by chance he came,
Rescu'd, and had the lady for his labour ;
I 'scap'd unknown : a slender consolation !
Heav'n is my witness that I do not love
To sow in peril, and let others reap
The jocund harvest. Yet, I am not safe ;
By love, or something like it, stung, inflam'd,
Madly I blabb'd my passion to his wife,

And she has threaten'd to acquaint him of it.
The way of woman's will I do not know :
But well I know the baron's wrath is deadly.
I will not live in fear : the man I dread
Is as a Dane to me : ay, and the man
Who stands betwixt me and my chief desire.
No bar but he : she has no kinsman near ;
No brother in his sister's quarrel bold :
And for the righteous cause, a stranger's cause,
I know no chief that will defy Glenalvon. [Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Court, &c.

Don. (Without.) Bring him along.

Str. (Without.) Help! help!

Don. (Entering.) Along, I say.

Enter DONALD and a Stranger, and LADY RANDOLPH and ANNA through the castle-gate.

Lady R. What means this clamour? Stranger, speak secure; [sum'd

Hast thou been wrong'd? Have these ruden pre-
To vex the weary traveller on his way?

Don. By us no stranger ever suffer'd wrong :
This man with outcry wild has call'd us forth ;
So sore afraid he cannot speak his fears.

Enter Four Attendants, LORD RANDOLPH, and NORVAL, with their swords drawn and bloody.

Lady R. Not vain the stranger's fears ! how fares my lord ? [youth,

Lord R. That it fares well, thanks to this gallant
Whose valour sav'd me from a wretched death !
As down the winding dale I walk'd alone,
At the cross way, four armed men attack'd me :
Rovers, I judge, from the licentious camp,
Who would have quickly laid Lord Randolph low,
Had not this brave and generous stranger come,
Like my good angel in the hour of fate,
And, mocking danger, made my foes his own.
They turn'd upon him : but his active arm
Struck to the ground, from whence they rose no
more,

The fiercest two ; the others fled amain,
And left him master of the bloody field.
Speak, Lady Randolph : upon beauty's tongue
Dwell accents pleasing to the brave and bold.
Speak, noble dame, and thank him for thy lord.

Lady R. My lord, I cannot speak what now I feel.
My heart o'erflows with gratitude to heav'n
And to this noble youth. [thank ?

Have you yet learn'd of him whom we should
Whom call the saviour of Lord Randolph's life?

Lord R. I ask'd that question, and he answer'd
not :

But I must know who my deliverer is. (To Norval.)

Norv. A low born man of parentage obscure,
Who nought can boast but his desire to be
A soldier, and to gain a name in arms.

Lord R. Whoe'er thou art, thy spirit is ennobled
By the great King of kings ! thou art ordain'd
And stamp'd a hero by the sovereign hand
Of nature ! blush not, flower of modesty
As well as valour, to declare thy birth.

Norv. My name is Norval : on the Grampian hills
My father feeds his flocks ; a frugal swain,
Whose constant cares were to increase his store,
And keep his only son, myself, at home.

For I had heard of battles, and I long'd
To follow to the field some warlike lord ;
And heav'n soon granted what my sire deny'd.
This moon which rose last night, round as my shield,
Had not yet fill'd her horns, when, by her light,
A band of fierce barbarians from the hills,
Rush'd like a torrent down upon the vale,
Sweeping our flocks and herds. The shepherds fled
For safety and for succour. I alone,

With bended bow, and quiver full of arrows,
Hover'd about the enemy, and mark'd
The road he took, then hasted to my friends ;
Whom with a troop of fifty chosen men,
I met advancing. The pursuit I led,
Till we o'ertook the spoil-encumber'd foe.
We fought and conquer'd. Ere a sword was drawn,
An arrow from my bow had pierc'd their chief,
Who wore that day the arms which now I wear.
Returning home in triumph, I disdain'd
The shepherd's slothful life ; and having heard
That our good king had summon'd his bold peers
To lead their warriors to the Carron side,
I left my father's house, and took with me
A chosen servant to conduct my steps ;—
Yon trembling coward who forsook his master.
Journeying with this intent, I pass'd these towers,
And heaven-directed, came this day to do
The happy deed that gilds my humble name.

Lord R. He is as wise as brave. Was ever tale
With such a gallant modesty rehears'd ?
My brave deliverer ! thou shalt enter now
A nobler list, and in a monarch's sight
Contend with princes for the prize of fame.
I will present thee to our Scottish king,
Whose valiant spirit ever valour lov'd.
Ha ! my Matilda ! wherefore starts that tear ?

Lady R. I cannot say : for various affections,
And strangely mingled, in my bosom swell ;
Yet each of them may well command a tear.
I joy that thou art safe, and I admire
Him and his fortunes who hath wrought thy safety.
Obscure and friendless, he the army sought,
Bent upon peril, in the range of death
Resolv'd to hunt for fame, and, with his sword,
To gain distinction which his birth deny'd.
In this attempt, unknown he might have perish'd,
And gain'd, with all his valour, but oblivion.
Now grac'd by thee, his virtue serves no more
Beneath despair. The soldier now of hope
He stands conspicuous ; fame and great renown
Are brought within the compass of his sword.
On this my mind reflected, whilst you spoke,
And bless'd the wonder-working hand of heaven.

Lord R. Pious and grateful ever are thy thoughts !
My deeds shall follow where thou point'st the way.
Next to myself, and equal to Glenalvon,
In honour and command shall Norval be.

Norv. I know not how to thank you. Rude I am,
In speech and manners ; never till this hour
Stood I in such a presence ; yet, my lord,
There's something in my breast which makes me
bold,

To say, that Norval ne'er will shame thy favour.

Lady R. (To Norval.) I will be sworn thou wilt
not. Thou shalt be

My knight ; and ever, as thou didst to-day,
With happy valour guard the life of Randolph.

Lord R. Well hast thou spoke. Let me forbid
reply. (To Norval.)

We are thy debtors still ; thy high desert
O'ertops our gratitude. I must proceed,
As was at first intended, to the camp.
Some of my train I see are speeding hither,
Impatient, doubtless, of their lord's delay.
Go with me, Norval, and thine eyes shall see
The chosen warriors of thy native land,
Who languish for the fight, and beat the air
With brandish'd swords.

Nor. Let us be gone, my lord.

Lord R. (To Lady R.) About the time that the
declining sun
Shall his broad orbit o'er yon hills suspend,
Expect us to return. This night once more
Within these walls I rest ; my tent I pitch
To-morrow in the field. Prepare the feast.
Free is his heart who for his country fights :
He in the eve of battle may resign
Himself to social pleasure ; sweetest, then,

When danger to a soldier's soul endears
The human joy that never may return.

[*Exeunt all but Lady R. and Anna.*]

Lady R. Wretch that I am! Alas! why am I so?
At every happy parent I repine!
How blest the mother of yon gallant Norval!
She for a living husband bore her pains,
And heard him bless her when a man was born.
Whilst I to a dead husband bore a son,
And to the roaring waters gave my child.

Anna. Alas! alas! why will you thus resume
Your grief afresh? I thought that gallant youth
Would for a while have won you from your woe.
On him intent you gazed, with a look
Much more delighted, than your pensive eye
Has deign'd on other objects to bestow.

Lady R. Delighted, say'st thou? Oh! even there
mine eye

Found fuel for my life-consuming sorrow;
I thought, that had the son of Douglas liv'd,
He might have been like this young gallant stranger.
While thus I mus'd, a spark from fancy fell
On my sad heart, and kindled up a fondness
For this young stranger, wand'ring from his home,
And like an orphan cast upon my care.
I will protect thee, (said I to myself)

With all my power, and grace with all my favour.

Anna. Sure heav'n will bless so gen'rous a resolve.

You must, my noble dame, exert your power:

You must awake: devices will be fram'd,
And arrows pointed at the breast of Norval.

Lady R. Glenalvon's false and crafty head will
work

Against a rival in his kinsman's love,

If I deter him not: I only can.

Bold as he is, Glenalvon will beware

How he pulls down the fabric that I raise.

I'll be the artist of young Norval's fortune.

Enter GLENALVON.

Glen. Where is my dearest kinsman, noble Ran-
dolph? [base—

Lady R. Have you not heard, Glenalvon, of the

Glen. I have: and that the villains may not 'scape,

With a strong band I have begirt the wood.

If they lurk there, alive they shall be taken,

And torture force from them th' important secret,

Whether some foe of Randolph hir'd their swords,
Or if—

Lady R. That care becomes a kinsman's love,

I have a counsel for Glenalvon's ear. [*Exit Anna.*]

Glen. To him your counsels always are commands.

Lady R. I have not found so: thou art known

Glen. Known! [to me.

Lady R. Ay, known!

And most certain is my cause of knowledge.

Glen. What do you know? By heaven

You much amaze me. No created being,

Yourself except, durst thus accost Glenalvon.

Lady R. Is guilt so bold? and dost thou make a
merit

Of thy pretended meekness? This to me

Who, with a gentleness which duty blames,

Have hitherto conceal'd what, if divulg'd,

Would make thee nothing; or, what's worse than

An outcast beggar, and unpitied too: [that,

For mortals shudder at a crime like thine.

Glen. Thy virtue awes me. First of womankind!

Permit me yet to say, that the fond man

Whom love transports beyond strict virtue's bounds,

If he is brought by love to misery,

In fortune ruin'd, as in mind forlorn,

Unpitied cannot be. Pity's the alms

Which on such beggars freely is bestow'd:

For mortals know that love is still their lord,

And o'er their vain resolves advances still:

As fire, when kindled by our shepherds, moves

Thro' the dry heath before the fanning wind.

Lady R. Reserve these accents for some other
To love's apology I listen not. [ear.

Mark thou my words; for it is meet thou should'st.

His brave deliverer Randolph here retains.

Perhaps his presence may not please thee well:

But, at thy peril, practise aught against him:

Let not thy jealousy attempt to shake

And loosen the good root he has in Randolph;

Whose favourites I know thou hast supplanted.

Thou lookst at me as if thou fain wouldst pry

Into my heart. 'Tis open as my speech.

I give this early caution, and put on

The curb, before thy temper breaks away.

The friendless stranger my protection claims:

His friend I am, and be not thou his foe. [*Exit.*

Glen. Child that I was, to start at my own shadow,

And be the shallow fool of coward conscience!

I am not what I have been; what I should be.

The darts of destiny have almost pierc'd

My marble heart. Had I one grain of faith

In holy legends, and religious tales,

I should conclude there was an arm above

That fought against me, and malignant turn'd,

To catch myself, the subtle snare I set.

Why, rape and murder are not simple means!

Th' imperfect rape to Randolph gave a spouse;

And the intended murder introduc'd

A favourite to hide the sun from me;

And worst of all, a rival. Burning hell!

This were thy centre, if I thought she lov'd him!

'Tis certain she contemns me; nay, commands me,

And waves the flag of her displeasure o'er me,

In his behalf. And shall I thus be brav'd?

Curb'd, as she calls it, by dame Chastity?

Infernal fiends, if any fiends there are

More fierce than love, ambition, and revenge,

Rise up and fill my bosom with your fires.

Darkly a project peers upon my mind,

Like the red moon when rising in the east,

Cross'd and divided by strange-colour'd clouds.

I'll seek the slave who came with Norval hither,

And for his cowardice was spurn'd from him.

I've known such follower's rankled bosom breed

Venom most fatal to his heedless lord. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Court, &c. as before.*

Enter DONALD and ANNA through the castle-gates.

Don. One of the vile assassins is secur'd,

That struck this morning at Lord Randolph's life.

We found the villain lurking in the wood:

With dreadful imprecations he denies

All knowledge of the crime. But this is not

His first essay: these jewels were conceal'd

In the most secret places of his garment;

Belike the spoils of some that he has murder'd.

Anna. Let me look on them. Ha! here is a heart,

The chosen crest of Douglas' valiant name!

These are no vulgar jewels. Guard the wretch.

[*Exit.*

Enter Servants with a Prisoner.

Pris. I know no more than does the child unborn
Of what you charge me with.

Don. You say so, sir!

But torture soon shall make you speak the truth.

Behold the Lady of Lord Randolph comes:

Prepare yourself to meet her just revenge.

Enter LADY RANDOLPH and ANNA.

Anna. (*Aside to Lady R.*) Summon your utmost
fortitude before

You speak with him. Your dignity, your fame,

Are now at stake. Think of the fatal secret,

Which, in a moment, from your lips may fly.

Lady R. Thou shalt behold me, with a despe-
rate heart,

Hear how my infant perish'd. See, he kneels.

(*Aside to Anna.*)

Pris. Heav'n bless that countenance so sweet and mild!

A judge like thee makes innocence more bold.
O save me, lady! from these cruel men,
Who have attack'd and seiz'd me; who accuse
Me of intended murder. As I hope
For mercy at the judgment seat of heaven,
The tender lamb, that never nipt the grass,
Is not more innocent than I of murder.

Lady R. Of this man's guilt what proof can ye produce?

Don. We found him lurking in the hollow glen.
When view'd and call'd upon, amaz'd he fled.
We overtook him, and inquir'd from whence,
And what he was: he said he came from far,
And was upon his journey to the camp.
Not satisfy'd with this, we search'd his clothes,
And found these jewels; whose rich value pleads
Most powerfully against him. Hard he seems
And old in villainy. Permit us try
His stubbornness against the torture's force.

Pris. O gentle lady! by your lord's dear life!
Which these weak hands, I swear did ne'er assail!
And by your children's welfare, spare my age!
Let not the iron tear my ancient joints,
And my grey hairs bring to the grave with pain.

Lady R. Account for these: thine own they cannot be;

For these, I say: be stedfast to the truth;
Detected falsehood is most certain death.

(*Anna signs to Donald and Attendants, and they retire.*)

Pris. Alas! I'm sore beset! let never man,
For sake of lucre, sin against his soul!
Eternal justice is in this most just!
I, guiltless now, must former guilt reveal.

Lady R. O! Anna hear! (*Aside to Anna.*) once more I charge thee speak

The truth direct: for these to me foretell
And certify a part of thy narration:
With which if the remainder tallies not,
An instant and a dreadful death abides thee.

Pris. Then, thus adjur'd, I'll speak to you as just
As if you were the minister of heaven,
Sent down to search the secret sins of men.
Some eighteen years ago, I rented land
Of brave Sir Malcolm, then Balarma's lord;
But falling to decay, his servants seiz'd
All that I had, and then turn'd me and mine,
(Four helpless infants and their weeping mother,)
Out to the mercy of the winter winds.
A little hovel by the river's side
Receiv'd us: there hard labour, and the skill
In fishing, which was formerly my sport,
Supported life. Whilst thus we poorly liv'd,
One stormy night, as I remember well,
The wind and rain beat hard upon our roof:
Red came the river down, and loud and oft
The angry spirit of the water shriek'd.
At the dead hour of night was heard the cry
Of one in jeopardy. I rose, and ran
To where the circling eddy of a pool,
Beneath the ford, us'd oft to bring within
My reach whatever floating thing the stream
Had caught. The voice was ceas'd; the person lost:
But looking sad and earnest on the waters,
By the moon's light, I saw, whirl'd round and round,
A basket; soon I drew it to the bank,
And nestl'd curious there an infant lay.

Lady R. Was he alive?

Pris. He was.

Lady R. Inhuman that thou art!

How couldst thou kill what waves and tempest
Pris. I am not so inhuman. [spar'd?

Lady R. Didst thou not?

Pris. The needy man, who has known better days,
One whom distress has spited at the word,

Is he whom tempting fiends would pitch upon
To do such deeds, as makes the prosperous men
Lift up their hands and wonder who could do them.
And such a man was I; a man declin'd,
Who saw no end of black adversity:
Yet, for the wealth of kingdoms, I would not
Have touch'd that infant with a hand of harm.

Lady R. Ha! dost thou say so? Then perhaps he lives!

Pris. Not many days ago he was alive.

Lady R. O! God of heav'n! Did he then die so lately?

Pris. I did not say he died; I hope he lives.
Not many days ago these eyes beheld
Him flourishing in youth, and health, and beauty.

Lady R. Where is he now?

Pris. Alas! I know not where.

Lady R. Oh fate! I fear thee still. Thou riddler, speak

Direct and clear; else I will search thy soul.

Pris. Fear not my faith, tho' I must speak my shame;

Within the cradle where the infant lay,
Was stow'd a mighty store of gold and jewels;
Tempted by which we did resolve to hide,
From all the world, this wonderful event,
And like a peasant breed the noble child.
That none might mark the change of our estate,
We left the country, travell'd to the north.
Bought flocks and herds, and gradually brought
forth

Our secret wealth. But heaven's all-seeing eye
Beheld our avarice, and smote us sore.

For one by one all our own children died,
And he, the stranger, sole remain'd the heir
Of what indeed was his. Fain then would I,
Who with a father's fondness lov'd the boy,
Have trusted him, now in the dawn of youth,
With his own secret; but my anxious wife,
Foreboding evil, never would consent.

Meanwhile the stripling grew in years and beauty;
And, as we oft observ'd, he bore himself,
Not as the offspring of our cottage blood;
For nature will break out: mild with the mild,
But with the froward he was fierce as fire,
And night and day he talk'd of war and arms.
I set myself against his warlike bent;
But all in vain: for when a desperate band

Of robbers from the savage mountains came—
Lady R. Eternal Providence! What is thy name?

Pris. My name is Norval; and my name he bears.

Lady R. 'Tis he; 'tis he himself! It is my son!
O sovereign mercy! 'Twas my child I saw!

Pris. If I, amidst astonishment and fear,
Have of your words and gestures rightly judg'd,
Thou art the daughter of my ancient master:
The child I rescu'd from the flood is thine.

Lady R. With thee dissimulation now were vain.
I am indeed the daughter of Sir Malcolm;
The child thou rescu'd from the flood is mine.

Pris. (*Kneels.*) Blest be the hour that made me
a poor man!

My poverty hath sav'd my master's house!

Lady R. (*Raising Old Norval.*) Thy words surprise me: sure thou dost not feign:
The tear stands in thine eye: such love from thee
Sir Malcolm's house deserv'd not; if aught
Thou told'st the story of thy own distress.

Pris. Sir Malcolm of our barons was the flower;
The fastest friend, the best and kindest master.
But ah! he knew not of my sad estate.
After that battle, where his gallant son,
Your own brave brother, fell, the good old lord
Grew desperate and reckless of the world;
And never, as he erst was wont, went forth
To overlook the conduct of his servants.
By them I was thrust out, and them I blame:
May heav'n so judge me as I judg'd my master!
And God so love me as I love his race!

Lady R. His race shall yet reward thee. On thy faith

Depends the fate of thy lov'd master's house.
Remember'st thou a little lonely hut,
That like a holy hermitage appears
Among the cliffs of Carron?

Pris. I remember
The cottage of the cliffs.

Lady R. 'Tis that I mean:
There dwells a man of venerable age,
Who in my father's service spent his youth:
Tell him I sent thee, and with him remain,
'Till I shall call upon thee to declare,
Before the king and nobles, what thou now
To me hast told. No more but this, and thou
Shalt live in honour all thy future days;
Thy son so long shall call thee father still,
And all the land shall bless the man, who sav'd
The son of Douglas, and Sir Malcolm's heir.
Remember well my words: if thou shouldst meet
Him whom thou call'st thy son, still call him so;
And mention nothing of his nobler father.

Pris. Fear not that I shall mar so fair an harvest,
By putting in my sickle ere tis ripe.
Why did I leave my home and ancient dame?
To find the youth, to tell him all I knew,
And make him wear these jewels in his arms;
Which might, I thought, be challeng'd, and so bring
To light the secret of his noble birth.

(*Anna beckons to Donald and Servants, and they re-enter.*)

Lady R. This man is not th' assassin you suspected,
Tho' chance combin'd some likelihoods against him.
He is the faithful bearer of the jewels
To their right owner, whom in haste he seeks.
'Tis meet that you should put him on his way,
Since your mistaken zeal hath dragg'd him hither.

[*Exeunt Prisoner and Servants.*]

My faithful Anna! dost thou share my joy?
I know thou dost. Unparallel'd event!
Reaching from heaven to earth, Jehovah's arm
Snatch'd from the waves, and brings to me my son!
Judge of the widow, and the orphan's father!
Accept a widow's and a mother's thanks
For such a gift! What does my Anna think
Of the young eagle of a valiant nest?
How soon he gaz'd on bright and burning arms,
Spurn'd the low dunghill where his fate had thrown
And tower'd up to the region of his sire? [him]

Anna. How fondly did your eyes devour the boy!
Mysterious nature, with the unseen chord
Of powerful instinct, drew you to your own.

Lady R. The ready story of his birth believ'd,
Suppress my fancy quite; nor did he owe
To any likeness my so sudden favour:
But now I long to see his face again,
Examine every feature, and find out
The lineaments of Douglas, and my own.
But most of all, I long to let him know
Who his true parents are, to clasp his neck,
And tell him all the story of his father.

Anna. With wary caution you must hear yourself
In public, lest your tenderness break forth,
And in observers stir conjectures strange.
'To-day the baron started at your tears.

Lady R. He did so, Anna! well thy mistress
knows,

If the least circumstance, mote of offence,
Should touch the baron's eye, his sight would be
With jealousy disorder'd. But the more
It does behove me instant to declare
The birth of Douglas, and assert his rights.
This night I purpose with my son to meet,
Reveal the secret and consult with him:
For wise he is, or my fond judgment errs.
As he does now, so look'd his noble father,
Array'd in nature's ease: his mien, his speech,
Were sweetly simple, and full oft deceiv'd

Those trivial mortals who seem always wise.
But, when the matter match'd his mighty mind,
Up rose the hero: on his piercing eye
Sat observation; on each glance of thought
Decision follow'd, as the thunder-bolt
Pursues the flash.

Anna. That demon haunts you still:
Behold Glenalvon.

Lady R. Now I shun him not.
This day I brav'd him in behalf of Norval:
Perhaps too far: at least my nicer fears
For Douglas thus interpret. [Exit Anna.]

Enter GLENALVON.

Glen. Noble dame!
The hov'ring Dane at last his men hath landed:
No band of pirates; but a mighty host,
That come to settle where their valour conquers:
To win a country, or to lose themselves.

Lady R. How many mothers shall bewail their
sons!

How many widows weep their husbands slain!
Ye dames of Denmark! ev'n for you I feel,
Who, sadly sitting on the sea-beat shore,
Long look for lords that never shall return.

Glen. Oft has th' unconquer'd Caledonian sword
Widow'd the north. The children of the slain
Come, as I hope, to meet their fathers' fate.
The monster war, with her infernal brood,
Loud yelling fury, and life-ending pain,
Are objects suited to Glenalvon's soul.
Scorn is more grievous than the pains of death;
Reproach, more piercing than the pointed sword.

Lady R. I scorn thee not, but when I ought to
scorn:

Nor e'er reproach, but when insulted virtue
Against audacious vice asserts herself.

I own thy worth, Glenalvon; none more apt
Than I to praise thy eminence in arms,
And be the echo of thy martial fame.
No longer vainly feed a guilty passion:
Go and pursue a lawful mistress, glory.
Upon the Danish crests redeem thy fault,
And let thy valour be the shield of Randolph.

Glen. One instant stay, and hear an alter'd man.
When beauty pleads for virtue, vice abash'd
Flies its own colours, and goes o'er to virtue.
I am your convert; time will shew how truly:
Yet one immediate proof I mean to give.
That youth for whom your ardent zeal to-day,
Somewhat too haughtily, defy'd your slave,
Amidst the shock of armies I'll defend,
And turn death from him, with a guardian arm.

Lady R. Act thus, Glenalvon, and I am thy friend:
But that's thy last reward. Believe me, sir,
The truly generous is the truly wise;
And he who loves not others, lives unblest.

[Exit.]
Glen. Amen! and virtue is its own reward!—

I think that I have hit the very tone
In which she loves to speak. Honey'd assent,
How pleasing art thou to the taste of man,
And woman also! flattery direct
Rarely disgusts. They little know mankind
Who doubt its operation; 'tis my key,
And opens the wicket of the human heart.
How far I have succeeded now, I know not.
Yet I incline to think her stormy virtue
Is lull'd awhile: 'tis her alone I fear:
Whilst she and Randolph live, and live in faith
And amity, uncertain is my tenure.
That slave of Norval's I have found most apt:
I shew'd him gold, and he has pawn'd his soul
To say and swear whatever I suggest.
Norval, I'm told, has that alluring look,
'Twixt man and woman, which I have observ'd
To charm the nicer and fantastic dames,
Who are, like Lady Randolph, full of virtue.
In raising Randolph's jealousy I may

But point him to the truth. He seldom errs,
Who thinks the worst he can of womankind. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Court.

Enter LORD RANDOLPH, attended, through the castle-gates.

Lord R. Summon an hundred horse, by break of day,
To wait our pleasure at the castle-gate.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

Enter LADY RANDOLPH.

Lady R. Alas! my lord! I've heard unwelcome
The Danes are landed. [news]

Lord R. Ay, no inroad this
Of the Northumbrian bent to take a spoil:
No sportive war, no tournament essay,
Of some young knight resolv'd to break a spear,
And stain with hostile blood his maiden arms.
The Danes are landed; we must beat them back,
Or live the slaves of Denmark.

Lady R. Dreadful times!
Lord R. The fenceless villages are all forsaken;
The trembling mothers and their children lodg'd
In well-girt towers and castles; whilst the men
Retire indignant. Yet like broken waves,
They but retire more awful to return.

Lady R. Immense, as fame reports, the Danish
host!

Lord R. Were it as numerous as loud fame reports,
An army knit like our's would pierce it thro':
Brothers, that shrink not from each other's side,
And fond companions, fill our warlike files:
For his dear offspring, and the wife he loves,
The husband, and the fearless father arm.
In vulgar breasts heroic ardour burns,
And the poor peasant mates his daring lord.

Lady R. Men's minds are temper'd, like their
swords, for war;

Hence early graves; hence the lone widow's life;
And the sad mother's grief-embitter'd age.
Where is our gallant guest?

Lord R. Down in the vale
I left him, managing a fiery steed,
Whose stubbornness had foil'd the strength and skill
Of every rider. But behold he comes,
In earnest conversation with Glenalvon.

Enter GLENALVON and NORVAL.

Glenalvon! with the lark arise; go forth,
And lead my troops that lie in yonder vale:
Private I travel to the royal camp:
Norval, thou go'st with me. But say, young man!
Where didst thou learn so to discourse of war,
And in such terms, as I o'erheard to-day?
War is no village science, nor its phrase
A language taught amongst the shepherd swains.

Norv. Small is the skill my lord delights to praise
In him he favours.—Hear from whence it came.
Beneath a mountain's brow, the most remote
And inaccessible by shepherds trod,
In a deep cave, dug by no mortal hand,
A hermit liv'd; a melancholy man,
Who was the wonder of our wand'ring swains.
Austere and lonely, cruel to himself,
Did they report him; the cold earth his bed,
Water his drink, his food the shepherd's alms.
I went to see him, and my heart was touch'd
With reverence and pity. Mild he spake,
And, ent'ring on discourse, such stories told
As made me oft revisit his sad cell.
For he had been a soldier in his youth;
And fought in famous battles, when the peers
Of Europe by the bold Godfredo led,
Against th' usurping Infidel display'd

The blessed cross, and won the Holy Land.
Pleas'd with my admiration, and the fire
His speech struck from me, the old man would shake
His years away, and act his young encounters:
Then, having shew'd his wounds, he'd sit him down,
And all the live-long day discourse of war.
To help my fancy, in the smooth green turf
He cut the figures of the marshall'd hosts;
Describ'd the motions, and explain'd the use
Of the deep column, and the lengthen'd line,
The square, the crescent, and the phalanx firm.
For all that Saracen or Christian knew
Of war's vast art, was to this hermit known.

(*Trumpet sounds.*)

Lord R. From whence those sounds?

Enter DONALD.

Don. My lord, the trumpets of the troops of Lorn:
Their valiant leader hails the noble Randolph.

Lord R. Mine ancient guest! does he the war-
riors lead?

Has Denmark rous'd the brave old knight to arms?

Don. No; worn with warfare, he resigns the
sword.

His eldest hope, the valiant John of Lorn,
Now leads his kindred bands.

Lord R. Glenalvon, go,
With hospitality's most strong request
Entreat the chief. [*Exit Glen.*]

Don. My lord, requests are vain.

He urges on, impatient of delay,
Stung with the tidings of the foe's approach.

Lord R. May victory sit on the warrior's plume!
Bravest of men! his flocks and herds are safe;

Remote from war's alarms his pastures lie,
By mountains inaccessible secur'd:

Yet foremost he into the plain descends,
Eager to bleed in battles not his own.

Such were the heroes of the ancient world:

Countemners they of indolence and gain;

But still for love of glory and of arms,

Prono to encounter peril, and to lift

Against each strong antagonist the spear.

I'll go and press the hero to my breast.

[*Exeunt Lord R. and Don.*]

Lady R. The soldier's loftiness, the pride and
pomp,

Investing awful war, Norval, I see,
Transport thy youthful mind.

Norv. Ah! should they not?

Blest be the hour I left my father's house!

I might have been a shepherd all my days,

And stole obscurely to a peasant's grave.

Now, if I live, with mighty chiefs I stand;

And, if I fall, with noble dust I lie.

Lady R. There is a gen'rous spirit in thy breast,
That could have well sustain'd a prouder fortune.

Since lucky chance has left us here alone

Unseen, unheard, by human eye or ear,

I will amaze thee with a wond'rous tale.

Norv. Let there be danger, lady, with the secret,

That I may hug it to my grateful heart,

And prove my faith. Command my sword, my life:

These are the sole possessions of poor Norval.

Lady R. Know'st thou these gems?

(*Shows the Jewels.*)

Norv. Durst I believe mine eyes

I'd say I knew them, and they were my father's.

Lady R. Thy father's say'st thou? ah! they

were thy father's!

Norv. I saw them once, and curiously inquir'd

Of both my parents, whence such splendour came?

But I was check'd, and more could never learn.

Lady R. Then learn of me, thou art not Norval's

son.

Norv. Not Norval's son!

Lady R. Nor of a shepherd sprung.

Norv. Lady, who am I then?

Lady R. Noble thou art;
For noble was thy sire!

Norv. I will believe—

O! tell me further! Say, who was my father?

Lady R. Douglas!

Norv. Lord Douglas, whom to-day I saw?

Lady R. His younger brother.

Norv. And in yonder camp?

Lady R. Alas!

Norv. You make me tremble—Sighs and tears!
Lives my brave father?

Lady R. Ah! too brave indeed!

He fell in battle ere thyself was born.

Norv. Ah me unbappy! ere I saw the light?

But does my mother live? I may conclude,
From my own fate, her portion has been sorrow.

Lady R. She lives; but wastes her life in constant woe,

Weeping her husband slain, her infant lost.

Norv. You that are skill'd so well in the sad story
Of my unbappy parents, and with tears
Bewail their destiny, now have compassion
Upon the offspring of the friends you lov'd.

O! tell me who, and where my mother is!
Oppress'd by a base world, perhaps she bends
Beneath the weight of other ills than grief;
And, desolate, implores of heaven, the aid
Her son should give. It is, it must be so—
Your countenance confesses that she's wretched.

O! tell me her condition! Can the sword—

Who shall resist me in a parent's cause?

Lady R. Thy virtue ends her woe?—My son!
my son!

Norv. Art thou my mother?

Lady R. I am thy mother, and the wife of Dou- [glas!
Norv. Ever let me kneel!

Lady R. Image of Douglas! Fruit of fatal love!
All that I owe thy sire I pay to thee.

Norv. Respect and admiration still possess me,
Checking the love and fondness of a son.

Yet I was filial to my humble parents.

But did my sire surpass the rest of men,

As thou excelst all of womankind?

Lady R. Arise, my son! In me thou dost behold
The poor remains of beauty once admir'd:

Yet in my prime I equal'd not thy father:

His eyes were like the eagle's, yet sometimes

Liker the dove's: and, as he pleas'd, he won

All hearts with softness, or with spirit aw'd.

Norv. How did he fall? Sure 'twas a bloody field
When Douglas died. O, I have much to ask!

Lady R. Hereafter thou shalt hear the lengthen'd
tale

Of all thy father's and thy mother's woes.

At present this:—thou art the rightful heir

Of yonder castle, and the wide domains

Which now Lord Randolph, as my husband, holds.

But thou shalt not be wrong'd; I have the power

To right thee still: before the king I'll kneel,

And call Lord Douglas to protect his blood.

Norv. The blood of Douglas will protect itself.

Lady R. But we shall need both friends and fa-
vour, hoy,

To wrest thy lands and lordship from the gripe
Of Randolph and his kinsman. Yet I think

My tale will move each gentle heart to pity,

My life incline the virtuous to believe.

Norv. To be the son of Douglas is to me

Inheritance enough. Declare my birth,

And in the field I'll seek for fame and fortune.

Lady R. Thou dost not know what perils and
injustice

Await the poor man's valour. O! my son!

The noblest blood in all the land's abash'd,

Having no lacquey but pale poverty.

But how I purpose to redress thy wrongs

Must be hereafter told. Prudence directs

That we should part before you chiefs return.

Retire, and from thy rustic follower's hand

Receive a billet, which thy mother's care,

Anxious to see thee, dictated before

This casual opportunity arose

Of private conference. Its purport mark:

For as I there appoint, we meet again.

Leave me, my son! and frame thy manners still

To Norval's, not to noble Douglas' state.

Norv. I will remember. Where is Norval now?

That good old man.

Lady R. At hand conceal'd he lies,

An useful witness. But beware, my son,

Of yon Glenalvon; in his guilty breast

Resides a villain's shrewdness, ever prone

To false conjecture. He hath griev'd my heart.

Norv. Has he, indeed? Then let yon false Glen-
alvon

Beware of me

[*Exit.*

Lady R. There burst the smother'd flame!

O! thou all righteous and eternal King!

Who Father of the fatherless art call'd,

Protect my son!—Thy inspiration, Lord!

Hath fill'd his bosom with that sacred fire,

Which in the breast of his forefathers burn'd;

Set him on high like them that he may shiue

The star and glory of his native land!

Then let the minister of death descend,

And bear my willing spirit to its place.

Yonder they come. How do bad women find

Unchanging aspects to conceal their guilt?

When I by reason, and by justice urg'd,

Full hardly can dissemble with these men

In nature's pious cause.

Enter LORD RANDOLPH and GLENALVON.

Lord R. You gallant chief,

Of arms enamour'd, all repose disclaims.

Lady R. Be not, my lord, by his example sway'd;

Arrange the business of to-morrow now,

And, when you enter, speak of war no more. [*Exit.*

Lord R. 'Tis so, by heav'n! her mien, her voice,

her eye,

And her impatience to be gone, confirm it.

Glen. He parted from her now: behind the mount,

Amongst the trees, I saw him glide along.

Lord R. For sad sequester'd virtue she's re-
nown'd!

Glen. Most true, my lord.

Lord R. Yet this distinguish'd dame

Invites a youth, th' acquaintance of a day,

Alone to meet her at the midnight hour.

This assignation, (*shows a letter*) the assassin

freed,

Her manifest affection for the youth,

Might breed suspicion in a husband's brain,

Whose gentle consort all for love had wedded:

Much more in mine. Matilda never lov'd me.

Let no man, after me, a woman wed,

Whose heart he knows he has not: tho' she brings

A mine of gold, a kingdom for her dowry.

For let her seem, like the night's shadowy queen,

Cold and contemplative—he cannot trust her;

She may, she will bring shame and sorrow on him;

The worst of sorrow, and the worst of shame!

Glen. Yield not, my lord, to such afflictive

thoughts;

But let the spirit of an husband sleep,

'Till your own senses make a sure conclusion.

This billet must to blooming Norval go:

At the next turn awaits my trusty spy;

I'll give it him refitted for his master.

In the close thicket take your secret stand;

The moon shines bright, and your own eyes may

judge

Of their behaviour.

Lord R. Thou dost counsel well.

Glen. Permit me now to make one slight essay.

Of all the trophies which vain mortals boast,

By wit, by valour, or by wisdom won,

The first and fairest, in a young man's eye,
Is woman's captive heart. Successful love
With glorious fumes intoxicates the mind;
And the proud conqueror in triumph moves,
Air-borne, exalted above vulgar men.

Lord R. And what avails this maxim?

Glen. Much, my lord!

Withdraw a little: I'll accost young Norval,
And with ironical, derisive counsel
Explore his spirit. If he is no more
Than humble Norval, by thy favour rais'd,
Brave as he is, he'll shrink astonish'd from me:
But if he be the favourite of the fair,
Lov'd by the first of Caledonia's dames,
He'll turn upon me, as the lion turns
Upon the hunter's spear.

Lord R. 'Tis shrewdly thought.

Glen. When we grow loud, draw near. But let
my lord

His rising wrath restrain. [Exit Randolph.
'Tis strange, by heav'n!
That she should run full tilt her fond career,
To one so little known. She, too, that seem'd
Pure as the winter stream, when ice, emboss'd,
Whitens its course. Even I did think her chaste,
Whose charity exceeds not. Precious sex!
Whose deeds lascivious pass Glenalvon's thoughts!

Enters DOUGLAS.

His port I love; he's in a proper mood
To chide the thunder, if at him it roar'd. (*Aside.*)
Has Norval seen the troops?

Doug. The setting sun,

With yellow radiance, lighten'd all the vale,
And as the warriors mov'd, each polish'd helm,
Corslet, or spear, glanc'd back his gilded beams.
The hill they climb'd, and halting at its top,
Of more than mortal size, tow'ring, they seem'd
An host angelic, clad in burning arms.

Glen. Thou talk'st it well: no leader of our host
In sounds more lofty speaks of glorious war.

Doug. If I shall e'er acquire a leader's name,
My speech will be less ardent. Novelty
Now prompts my tongue, and youthful admiration
Vents itself freely; since no part is mine
Of praise, pertaining to the great in arms.

Glen. You wrong yourself, brave sir; your martial
deeds
Have rank'd you with the great: but mark me,
Norval;

Lord Randolph's favour now exalts your youth
Above his veterans of famous service.
Let me, who know these soldiers, counsel you.
Give them all honour; seem not to command;
Else they will scarcely brook your late sprung
power,
Which nor alliance props, nor birth adorns.

Doug. Sir, I have been accusom'd all my
days

To hear and speak the plain and simple truth:
And though I have been told that there are men
Who borrow friendship's tongue to speak their
scorn,

Yet, in such language, I am little skill'd.
Therefore, I thank Glenalvon for his counsel,
Although it sounded harshly. Why remind
Me of my birth obscure? Why slur my power
With such contemptuous terms?

Glen. I did not mean

To gall your pride, which now I see is great.

Doug. My pride!

Glen. Suppress it, as you wish to prosper;
Your pride's excessive. Yet, for Randolph's
sake,

I will not leave you to its rash direction.
If thus you swell, and frown at high-born men,
Will high-born men endure a shepherd's scorn?

Doug. A shepherd's scorn!

Glen. Yes; if you presume
To bend on soldiers these disdainful eyes,
As if you took the measure of their minds,
And said, in secret, you're no match for me;
What will become of you?

Doug. If this were told!— (*Aside.*)
Hast thou no fears for thy presumptuous self?

Glen. Ha! dost thou threaten me?

Doug. Didst thou not hear?

Glen. Unwillingly, I did; a nobler foe
Had not been question'd thus. But, such as thee—

Doug. Whom dost thou think me?

Glen. Norval.

Doug. So I am;

And who is Norval in Glenalvon's eyes?

Glen. A peasant's son; a wandering beggar-boy:
At best, no more; even if he speaks the truth.

Doug. False, as thou art, dost thou suspect my
truth? [hell,

Glen. Thy truth! thou'rt all a lie; and false as
Is the vain-glorious tale thou told'st to Randolph.

Doug. If I were chain'd, unarm'd, and bed-rid old,
Perhaps I should revile; but, as I am,
I have no tongue to rail. The humble Norval
Is of a race, who strive not but with deeds.

Did I not fear to freeze thy shallow valour,
And make thee sink too soon beneath my sword,
I'd tell thee—what thou art. I know thee well.

Glen. Dost thou not know Glenalvon, born to
command

Ten thousand slaves like thee?

Doug. Villain, no more;

Draw, and defend thy life. I did design

To have defied thee in another cause;

But heav'n accelerates its vengeance on thee.
Now, for my own, and Lady Randolph's wrongs.

Enter LORD RANDOLPH.

Lord R. Hold! I command you both.

The man that stirs,

Makes me his foe.

Doug. Another voice than thine,

That threat had vainly sounded, noble Randolph.

Glen. Hear him, my lord; he's wond'rous con-
descending!

Mark the humility of shepherd Norval!

Doug. Now you may scoff in safety.

(*Sheaths his sword.*)

Lord R. Speak not thus,

Taunting each other; but unfold to me

The cause of quarrel, then I judge betwixt you.

Doug. Nay, my good lord, though I revere you
much,

My cause I plead not, nor demand your judgment.
I blush to speak; I will not, cannot speak
Th' opprobrious words that I from him have borne.

To the liege lord of my dear native land
I owe a subject's homage; but, ev'n him,
And his high arbitration, I'd reject.

Within my bosom reigns another lord;

Honour, sole judge, and umpire of itself.

If my free speech offend you, noble Randolph,

Revoke your favours; and let Norval go

Hence, as he came; alone, but not dishonour'd.

Lord R. Thus far I'll mediate with impartial
voice:

The ancient foe of Caledonia's land

Now waves his banners o'er her frighted fields.

Suspend your purpose, 'till your country's arms

Repel the bold invader; then decide

The private quarrel.

Glen. I agree to this.

Doug. And I.

Enter DONALD.

Don. The banquet awaits.

Lord R. We come.

[Exit Lord Randolph with Donald.]

Glen. Norval,
 Let not our variance mar the social hour,
 Nor wrong the hospitality of Randolph.
 Nor frowning anger, nor yet wrinkled hate,
 Shall stain my countenance. Smooth thou thy
 brow;
 Nor let our strife disturb the gentle dame.
Doug. Think not so lightly, sir, of my resentment;
 When we contend again, our strife is mortal.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Wood.**Enter DOUGLAS.*

Doug. This is the place, the centre of the
 grove;
 Here stands the oak, the monarch of the wood.
 How sweet and solemn is this midnight sceue!
 The silver moon, unclouded, holds her way
 Thro' skies, where I could count each little star.
 The fanning west wind scarcely stirs the leaves;
 The river, rushing o'er its pebbled bed,
 Imposes silence with a stilly sound.
 In such a place as this, at such an hour,
 If ancestry can be in aught believ'd,
 Descending spirits have convers'd with man,
 And told the secrets of the world unknown.

Enter OLD NORVAL.

Old N. 'Tis he: but what if he should chide me
 hence?
 His just reproach I fear.

(Douglas turns and sees him.)

Forgive, forgive;
 Canst thou forgive the man, the selfish man,
 Who bred Sir Malcolm's heir a shepherd's son?
Doug. Welcome to me; thoud art my father still:
 Thy wish'd-for presence now completes my joy.
 Welcome to me; my fortunes thou shalt share,
 And, ever honoured, with thy Douglas live.

Old N. And dost thou call me father? O, my son!
 I think that I could die, to make amends
 For the great wrong I did thee. 'Twas my crime,
 Which, in the wilderness, so long conceal'd
 The blossom of thy youth.

Doug. Not worse the fruit,
 That in the wilderness the blossom blow'd.
 Among the shepherds, in the humble cot,
 I learn'd some lessons, which I'll not forget
 When I inhabit yonder lofty towers.
 I, who was once a swain, will ever prove
 The poor man's friend; and, when my vassals
 bow,

Norval shall smooth the crested pride of Douglas.
Old N. Let me but live to see thine exaltation!
 Yet grievous are my fears. O, leave this place,
 And those unfriendly towers.

Doug. Why should I leave them? [life.]
Old N. Lord Randolph and his kinsman seek your
Doug. How know'st thou that?
Old N. I will inform you how.

When evening came, I left the secret place
 Appointed for me by your mother's care,
 And fondly trod in each accustom'd path
 That to the castle leads. Whilst thus I rang'd,
 I was alarm'd with unexpected sounds
 Of earnest voices. On the persons came:
 Unseen, I lurk'd, and overheard them name
 Each other as they talk'd; Lord Randolph this,
 And that Glenalvon: still of you they spoke,
 And of the lady; threat'ning was their speech,
 Tho' but imperfectly my ear could hear it.
 'Twas strange, they said; a wonderful discov'ry;
 And, ever and anon, they vow'd revenge.

Doug. Revenge! for what?

Old N. For being what you are;
 Sir Malcolm's heir: how else have you offended?
 When they were gone, I hid me to my cottage,
 And there sat musing how I best might find
 Means to inform you of their wicked purpose.
 But I could think of none; at last, perplex'd,
 I issu'd forth, encompassing the tower
 With many a weary step and wishful look.
 Now Providence hath brought you to my sight,
 Let not your too courageous spirit scorn
 The caution which I give.

Doug. I scorn it not.

My mother warn'd me of Glenalvon's baseness;
 But I will not suspect the noble Randolph.
 In our encounter with the vile assassins,
 I mark'd his brave demeanour; him I'll trust.

Old N. I fear you will, too far.

Doug. Here, in this place,
 I wait my mother's coming; she shall know
 What thou hast told; her counsel I will follow;
 And cautious ever are a mother's counsels.
 You must depart; your presence may prevent
 Our interview.

Old N. My blessing rest upon thee!
 O, may heav'n's hand, which sav'd thee from the
 wave,
 And from the sword of foes, be near thee still;
 Turning mischance, if aught hangs o'er thy head,
 All upon mine! [Exit.]

Doug. He loves me like a parent:
 And must not, shall not, lose the son he loves;
 Altho' his son has found a noble father.
 Eventful day! how hast thou chang'd my state!
 Once on the cold and winter shaded side
 Of a bleak hill, mischance had rosted me,
 Never to thrive, child of another soil;
 Transplanted now to the gay sunny vale,
 Like the green thorn of May my fortune flow'rs.
 Ye glorious stars! high heav'n's resplendent host;
 To whom I oft have of my lot complain'd,
 Hear and record my soul's unalter'd wish;
 Living, or dead, let me but be renown'd!
 May heav'n inspire some fierce gigantic Dane,
 To give a bold defiance to our host!
 Before he speaks it out, I will accept;
 Like Douglas conquer, or like Douglas die.

*Enter LADY RANDOLPH.**Lady R.* My son! I heard a voice—*Doug.* The voice was mine. [ear,]

Lady R. Didst thou complain aloud to nature's
 That thus in dusky shades, at midnight hours,
 By stealth, the mother and the son should meet?
(Embracing him.)

Doug. No; on this happy day, this better birth-
 day,

My thoughts and words are all of hope and joy.

Lady R. Sad fear and melancholy still divide
 The empire of my breast with hope and joy.
 Now, hear what I advise.

Doug. First, let me tell
 What may the tenor of your counsel change.

Lady R. My heart forebodes some evil!

Doug. 'Tis not good.—
 At eve, unseen by Randolph and Glenalvon,
 The good old Norval, in the grove, o'erheard
 Their conversation: oft they mention'd me
 With dreadful threat'nings; you, they sometimes
 nam'd.

'Twas strange, they said, a wonderful discov'ry;
 And, ever and anon, they vow'd revenge.

Lady R. Gracious heav'n! we are betray'd:
 They have found out the secret of thy birth;
 It must be so. That is the great discovery.
 Sir Malcolm's heir is come to claim his own;
 And they will be reveng'd. Perhaps, e'en now,
 Arm'd and prepar'd for murder, they but wait
 A darker and more silent hour, to break

Into the chamber where they think thou sleep'st.
This moment; this, heav'n hath ordain'd to save
Fly to the camp, my son! [thee!

Doug. And leave you here?

No; to the castle let us go together,
Call up the ancient servants of your house,
Who, in their youth, did eat your father's bread:
Then tell them, loudly, that I am your son.
If, in the breasts of men, one spark remains
Of sacred love, fidelity, or pity,
Some in your cause will arm. I ask but few
To drive those spoilers from my father's house.

Lady R. O nature, nature! what can check thy
force?

Thou genuine offspring of the daring Douglas!
But rush not on destruction; save thyself,
And I am safe. To me they mean no harm.
Thy stay but risks thy precious life in vain.
That winding path conducts thee to the river.
Cross where thou seest a broad and beaten way;
Which, running eastward, leads thee to the
camp.

Instant demand admittance to Lord Douglas;
Shew him these jewels, which his brother wore.
Thy look, thy voice, will make him feel the truth;
Which I, by certain proof, will soon confirm.

Doug. I yield me, and obey; but yet, my heart
Bleeds at this parting. Something bids me stay,
And guard a mother's life. Oft have I read
Of wondrous deeds by one bold arm achiev'd.
Our foes are two; no more: let me go forth,
And see if any shield can guard Glenalvon.

Lady R. If thou regard'st thy mother, or rever'st
Thy father's memory, think of this no more.

One thing I have to say before we part:
Long wert thou lost; and thou art found, my child,
In a most fearful season. Oh, my long lost hope!

If thou to giddy valour giv'st the rein,
To-morrow I may lose my son for ever.
The love of thee, before thou saw'st the light,
Sustain'd my life when thy brave father fell.
If thou shalt fall, I have nor love nor hope
In this waste world! my son, remember me!

Doug. What shall I say? how can I give you
comfort?

The god of battles of my life dispose,
As may be best for you! for whose dear sake
I will not bear myself, as I resolv'd.
But yet consider, as no vulgar name,
That which I boast, sounds amongst martial men,
How will inglorious caution suit my claim?
The post of fate, unshrinking, I maintain.
My country's foes must witness who I am.
On the invaders' heads I'll prove my birth,
Till friends and foes confess the genuine strain.
If, in this strife, I fall, blame not your son;
Who, if he lives not honour'd, must not live.

Lady R. I will not utter what my bosom feels;
Too well I love that valour which I warn.
Farewell, my son! my counsels are but vain:
And, as high heav'n hath will'd it, all must be.

Lady R. Gaze not on me, thou wilt mistake the
path;
I'll point it out again. [Exeunt *Doug.* and *Lady R.*

Enter LORD RANDOLPH and GLENALVON.

Lord R. Not in her presence.

Now—

Glen. I'm prepar'd.

Lord R. No; I command thee, stay.

I go alone; it never shall be said

That I took odds to combat mortal man.

The noblest vengeance is the most complete. [Exit.

Glen. Demons of death, come settle on my
sword;

And to a double slaughter guide it home:

The lover and the husband both must die.

Lord R. (Behind.) Draw, villain! draw.

Doug. (Behind.) Assail me not, Lord Randolph;
Not as thou lov'st thyself. (Clashing of swords.)
Glen. Now is the time. [Exit.

Enter LADY RANDOLPH.

Lady R. Lord Randolph, hear me; all shall be
thine own:
But spare! Oh, spare my son!

Enter DOUGLAS, with a sword in each hand.

Doug. My mother's voice!

I can protect thee still.

Lady R. He lives, he lives!

For this; for this, to heaven eternal praise!

But sure, I saw thee fall.

Doug. It was Glenalvon.

Just as my arm had master'd Randolph's sword,
The villain came behind me; but I slew him.

Lady R. Behind thee! Ah! thou'rt wounded!

O, my child,

How pale thou look'st! and shall I lose thee
now?

Doug. Do not despair: I feel a little faintness;
I hope it will not last. (Leans upon his sword.)

Lady R. There is no hope!

And we must part; the hand of death is on thee;

O, my beloved child! O Douglas, Douglas!

(Douglas growing more and more faint.)

Doug. Too soon we part; I have not long been
Douglas.

O, destiny! hardly thou deal'st with me;

Clouded and hid, a stranger to myself,

In low and poor obscurity I liv'd.

Lady R. Has heav'n preserv'd thee for an end
like this?

Doug. O, had I fall'u as my brave fathers fell;

Turning, with fatal arm, the tide of battle!

Like them, I should have smil'd and welcom'd
death;

But thus to perish by a villain's hand!

Cut off from nature's and from glory's course,
Which never mortal was so fond to run.

Lady R. Hear justice! hear! are these the fruits
of virtue? (Douglas falls.)

Doug. Unknown, I die; no tongue shall speak of
me.—

Some noble spirits, judging by themselves,

May yet conjecture what I might have prov'd,

And think life only wanting to my fame;

But who shall comfort thee?

Lady R. Despair! despair! [live

Doug. O, had it pleas'd high heaven, to let me

A little while!—My eyes, that gaze on thee,

Grow dim apace. My mother! (Dies.)

Enter LORD RANDOLPH and ANNA.

Lord R. Thy words, the words of truth, have
pierc'd my heart.

I am the stain of knighthood and of arms.

Oh! if my brave deliverer survives

The traitor's sword—

Anna. Alas! look there, my lord.

Lord R. The mother and her son! How curst
I am!

Was I the cause? No; I was not the cause.

Yon matchless villain did seduce my soul

To frantic jealousy.

Anna. My lady lives.

Lord R. But my deliverer's dead!

Lady R. (Recovering.) Where am I now? Still
in this wretched world!

Grief cannot break a heart so hard as mine.

Lord R. O misery!

Amidst thy raging grief I must proclaim

My innocence.

Lady R. Thy innocence!

Lord R. My guilt
Is innocence, compar'd with what thou think'st it.

Lady R. Of thee I think not: what have I to do
With thee, or anything? My son! my son!
My beautiful! my brave! how proud was I
Of thee and of thy valour! My fond heart
O'erflow'd this day with transport, when I thought
Of growing old amidst a race of thine.
A little while

Was I a wife! a mother not so long!
What am I now?—I know. But I shall be
That only whilst I please: for such a son
And such a husband make a woman hold.

(*Rushes out.*)

Lord R. Follow her, Anna: I myself would
follow,
But in this rage she must abhor my presence.

[*Exit Anna.*]

Lord R. Curst, curst Glensalvon, he escap'd too
well,
Tho' slain and baffled by the hand he hated.
Foaming with rage and fury to the last,
Cursing his conqueror, the felon died.

Enter ANNA.

Anna. My lord! my lord!

Lord R. Speak: I can hear of horror.

Anna. Horror indeed!

Lord R. Matilda?

Anna. Is no more:

She ran, she flew like lightning up the hill,
Nor halted till the precipice she gain'd,
Then lifting up her head
And her white hands to heaven, seeming to say—
Why am I fore'd to this? She plung'd herself
Into the empty air.

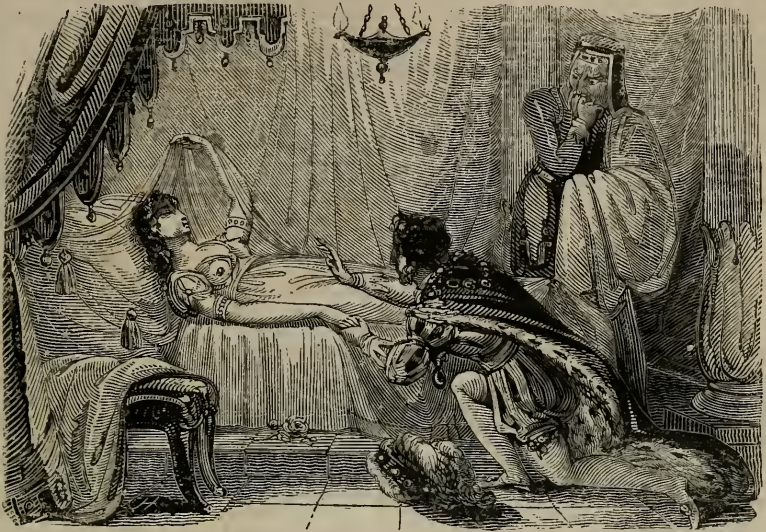
Lord R. I will not vent,
In vain complaints, the passion of my soul.
I'll go straight to the battle, where the man that
makes

Me turn aside must threaten worse than death.
Thou, faithful to thy mistress, take this ring,
Full warrant of my power. Let every rite
With cost and pomp upon their funerals wait:
For Randolph hopes he never shall return.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE DUKE OF MILAN;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY PHILIP MASSINGER.



Act V.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

THE EMPEROR CHARLES
LUDOVICO SFORZA
PESCARA
FRANCISCO
TIBERIO

STEPHANO
GRACCHO
HERNANDO
JULIO
GIOVANNI

MEDINA
MÁRCELIA
ISABELLA
MARIANA
EUGENIA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An outer Room in the castle.

Enter GRACCHO, JULIO, and GIOVANNI, with flagons.

Grac. Take every man his flagon; give the oath To all you meet. I am this day the state drunkard, I am sure, against my will; and if you find A man, at ten, that's sober, he's a traitor; And, in my name, arrest him.

Julio. Very good, sir:

But say he be a sexton?

Grac. If the bells Ring out of tune, as if the streets were burning, And he cry, " 'Tis rare music!" bid him sleep; 'Tis a sign he has ta'en his liquor: and if you meet An officer preaching of sobriety, Unless he read it in Geneva spirit, Lay him by the heels.

Julio. But think you 'tis a fault To be found sober?

Grac. It is capital treason; Or, if you mitigate it, let such pay Forty crowns to the poor; but give a pension To all the magistrates you find singing catches, And their wives dancing; for the courtiers reeling, Or the duke himself, I dare not say distemper'd, But kind, and in his tottering chair carousing, They do the country service.

And so, dear friends, co-partners in my travails, Drink hard; and let the health run through the city,

Until it reel again, and with me cry, " Long live the dutchess!"

Enter TIBERIO and STEPHANO.

Julio. Here are two lords; what think you? Shall we give the oath to them?

Grac. Fie! no; I know them: You need not swear them: your lord, by his patent, Stands bound to take his rouse. Long live the dutchess!

[*Exeunt Graccho, Julio, and Giovanni.*]

Steph. The cause of this? But yesterday, the court

Wore the sad livery of distrust and fear; No smile, not in a buffoon, to be seen, Or common jester: the great duke himself Had sorrow in his face; which, waited on By his mother, sister, and his fairest dutchess, Dispers'd a silent mourning through all Milan; As if some great blow had been given the state, Or were, at least, expected.

Tib. Stephano, I know, as you are noble, you are honest, And capable of secrets of more weight Than now I shall deliver. If that Sforza, The present duke, (though his whole life hath been But one continual pilgrimage through dangers,

Affrights, and horrors, which his fortune, guided
By his strong judgment, still hath overcome,)
Appears now shaken, it deserves no wonder :
All that his youth hath labour'd for, the harvest
Sown by his industry, ready to be reap'd too,
Being now at stake; and all his hopes confirm'd
Or lost for ever.

Steph. I know no such hazard :
His guards are strong and sure ; and, though war
rages

In most parts of our western world, there is
No enemy near us.

Tib. Dangers that we see
To threaten ruin, are with ease prevented ;
But those strike deadly that come unexpected.
The wars so long continued between
The emperor Charles and Francis, the French
king,

Have interested, in either's cause, the most
Of the Italian princes; among which, Sforza,
As one of the greatest power, was sought by both ;
But with assurance, having one his friend,
The other liv'd his enemy.

Steph. 'Tis true ;
And 'twas a doubtful choice.

Tib. But he, well knowing
And hating, too, it seems, the Spanish pride,
Lent his assistance to the king of France ;
Which hath so far incens'd the emperor,
That all his hopes and honours are embark'd
With his great patron's fortune.

Steph. Which stands fair,
For aught I yet can hear.

Tib. But should it change,
The duke's undone. They have drawn to the field
Two royal armies, full of fiery youth,
Of equal spirit to dare, and power to do ;
So near intrench'd, that 'tis beyond all hope
Of human counsel they ever can be sever'd,
Until it be determin'd by the sword
Who hath the better cause ; for the success
Concludes the victor innocent, and the vanquish'd
Most miserably guilty.

Steph. But why, then,
In such a time, when every knee should bend
For the success and safety of his person,
Are these loud triumphs ? in my weak opinion,
They are unseasonable.

Tib. I judge so, too ;
But only in the cause to be excus'd.
It is the dutchess's birth-day, once a-year
Solemniz'd with all pomp and ceremony ;
In which the duke is not his own, but her's :
Nay, every day, indeed, he is her creature ;
For never man so doted.

Steph. She knows it,
And how to prize it.

Tib. She bears herself with such a majesty,
That Sforza's mother, that would lose no part
Of what was once her own, nor his fair sister,
Will brook it well.

Come, let us to the court ;
We there shall see all bravery and cost
That art can boast of.

Steph. I'll bear you company. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—Another Room in the same.

Enter FRANCISCO, ISABELLA, and MARIANA.

Mari. I will not go ; I scorn to be a spot
In her proud train.

Isa. Shall I, that am his mother,
Be so indulgent as to wait on her
That owes me duty ?

Fran. 'Tis done to the duke,
And not to her : and, my sweet wife, remember,
And, madam, if you please, receive my counsel,
As Sforza is your son, you may command him ;

And, as a sister, you may challenge from him
A brother's love and favour : but this granted,
Consider he's the prince, and you his subjects,
And not to question or contend with her
Whom he is pleas'd to honour. Private men
Prefer their wives ; and shall he, being a prince,
And best with one that is the paradise
Of sweetness and of beauty,
Not use her like herself ?

Isa. You are ever forward
To sing her praises.

Mari. Others are as fair ;
I am sure as noble.

Fran. I detract from none
In giving her what's due. Were she deform'd,
Yet, being the dutchess, I stand bound to serve
her ;

But as she is, to admire her. Never wife
Met with a purer heat her husband's fervour :
A happy pair, one in the other blest !
She confideth in herself he's wholly her's,
And cannot seek for change ; and he secure
That 'tis not in the power of man to tempt her :
And, therefore, to contest with her, that is
The stronger and the better part of him,
Is more than folly : you know him of a nature
Not to be play'd with ; and, should you forget
To obey him as your prince, he'll not remember
The duty that he owes you.

Mari. I shall do
What may become the sister of a prince ;
But will not stoop beneath it.

Fran. Yet, be wise ;
Soar not too high, to fall ; but stoop, to rise.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—A state Room in the same. A magnificent banquet.

Flourish. Enter TIBERIO, STEPHANO, FRANCISCO,
LUDOVICO SFORZA, MARCELIA, ISABELLA,
MARIANA, and Attendants.

Sfor. You are the mistress of the feast ; sit here.
(To Marcelia.)

Oh ! my soul's comfort,
Let me glory in
My happiness, and mighty kings look pale
With envy, while I triumph in mine own.
Oh ! mother, look on her ! sister, admire her !
For sure this present age yields not a woman
Worthy to be her second.

Fran. Your excellency,
Though I confess you give her but her own,
Forces her modesty to the defence
Of a sweet blush.

Sfor. It need not, my Marcelia ;
When most I strive to praise thee, I appear
A poor detractor : for thou art, indeed,
So absolute in body and in mind,
That, but to speak the least part to the height,
Would ask an angel's tongue, and yet then end
In silent admiration !

Isa. You still court her
As if she were a mistress, not your wife.

Sfor. A mistress, mother ! she is more to me,
And every day deserves more to be sued to.

Marc. My worthiest lord !
My pride, my glory, in a word, my all !
Bear witness, heaven, that I esteem myself
In nothing worthy of the meanest praise
You can bestow, unless it be in this,—
That in my heart I love you ; and desire,
When you are sated with all earthly glories,
And age and honours make you fit for heaven,
That one grave may receive us.

Sfor. 'Tis believ'd—
Believ'd, my blest one.

Mari. How she winds herself
Into his soul !

(Aside.)

Sfor. Sit all. Let others feed
On those gross cates, while Sforza banquets with
Immortal viands ta'en in at his eyes.
I could live ever thus.

Enter a Courier.

From whence?

Cour. From Pavia, my dread lord.

Sfor. Speak, is all lost!

Cour. *(Delivers a letter.)* The letter will inform
you. [Exit.]

Fran. How his hand shakes,
As he receives it!

(Aside.)

Mari. This is some allay

To his hot passion.

(Aside.)

Sfor. Though it bring death, I'll read it. *(Reads.)*

"May it please your excellency to understand,
that the very hour I wrote this, I heard a bold de-
fiance delivered by a herald from the emperor, which
was cheerfully received by the king of France. The
battles being ready to join, and the van guard com-
mitted to my charge, enforces me to end abruptly.
Your highness's humble servant, GASPERO."

Ready to join! By this, then, I am nothing,
Or my estate secure.

(Aside.)

Marc. My lord!

Sfor. To doubt,

Is worse than to have lost; and to despair,
Is but to antedate those miseries
That must fall on us.

The cause consider'd,

Why should I fear? The French are bold and
strong,

Their numbers full, and in their councils wise;

But, then, the laughty Spaniard is all fire,

Hot in his executions, fortunate

In his attempts, married to victory.

Ay, there it is that shakes me. [Aside.]

Marc. Speak to him, Francisco. [Apart.]

Fran. Excellent lady,

One gale of your sweet breath will easily
Disperse these clouds; and, but yourself, there's
none

That dare speak to him. [Apart.]

Marc. I will run the hazard. [Apart.]

My lord!

Sfor. Ha! pardon me, Marcellia, I am troubled;

And stand uncertain, whether I am master

Of aught that's worth the owning.

Marc. I am your's, sir;

And I have heard you swear, I being safe,

There were no loss could move you. This day, sir,

Is, by your gift, made mine. Can you revoke

A grant made to Marcellia? your Marcellia?

For whose love, nay, whose honour, gentle sir,

All deep designs, and state affairs deferr'd,

Be, as you purpos'd, merry.

Sfor. Out of my sight! *(Throws away the letter.)*
And all thoughts that may strangle mirth, forsake
me.

Fall what can fall, I dare the worst of fate:

Though the foundation of the earth should shrink,

The glorious eye of heaven lose his splendour,

Supported thus, I'll stand upon the ruins,

And seek for new life here. Why are you sad?

Some music there! By heaven, he's not my friend,

That wears one furrow in his face.

Come, make me happy once again. I am rapt—

'Tis not to-day, to-morrow, or the next,

But all my days and years shall be employ'd

To do thee honour. [A trumpet without.]

Another post! hang him—

I will not interrupt my present pleasures,

Although his message should import my head.

Marc. Nay, good sir, I am pleas'd

To grant a little intermission to you:

Who knows but he brings news we wish to hear,

To heighten our delights.

Sfor. As wise as fair!

Enter another Courier.

From Gaspero?

Cour. That was, my lord.

Sfor. How! dead?

Cour. *(Delivers a letter.)* With the delivery of
this, and prayers,
To guard your excellency from certain dangers,
He ceas'd to be a man. [Exit.]

Sfor. All that my fears

Could fashion to me, or my enemies wish,
Is fall'n upon me. Silence that harsh music;

'Tis now unseasonable: a tolling bell,

As a sad harbinger to tell me that

This pamp'er'd lump of flesh must feast the worms,

Is fitter for me: I am sick.

Marc. My lord!

Sfor. Sick to the death, Marcellia. Remove
These signs of mirth; they were ominous, and but
usher'd

Sorrow and ruin.

Marc. Bless us, heaven!

Isa. My son.

Marc. What sudden change is this?

Sfor. All leave the room;

I'll bear alone the burden of my grief,

And must admit no partner. I am yet

Your prince, where's your obedience?

[Exit Tiberio, Stephano, Francisco, Isa-
bella, Mariana, and Attendants.]

Stay, Marcellia;

I cannot be so greedy of a sorrow,

In which you must not share.

Marc. And cheerfully

I will sustain my part. Why look you pale?

Where is that wonted constancy and courage,

That dar'd the worst of fortune? where is Sforza,

To whom all dangers that fright common men,

Appear'd but panic terrors? why do you eye me

With such fix'd looks? Love, counsel, duty, ser-
vice,

May flow from me, not danger.

Sfor. Oh! Marcellia,

It is for thee I fear; for thee, thy Sforza

Shakes like a coward: for myself, unmov'd

I could have heard my troops were cut in pieces;

My general slain; and he, on whom my hopes

Of rule, of state, of life, had their dependance,

The king of France, my greatest friend, made pri-
soner

To so proud enemies.

Marc. Then you have just cause

To shew you are a man.

Sfor. All this were nothing;

Though I add to it, that I am assured,

For giving aid to this unfortunate king,

The emperor, incens'd, lays his command

On his victorious army, flesh'd with spoil,

Aid bold of conquest, to march up against me,

And seize on my estates: suppose that done, too,

The city ta'en, the kennels running blood,

Myself bound fast in chains, to grace their triumph,

I would be Sforza still. But when I think

That my Marcellia, (to whom all these

Are but as atoms to the greatest hill,)

Must suffer in my cause, and for me suffer!

All earthly torments, nay, even those the damn'd

Howl for in hell, are gentle strokes, compar'd

To what I feel, Marcellia.

Marc. Good sir, have patience:

I can as well partake your adverse fortune,

As I thus long have had an ample share

In your prosperity. 'Tis not in the power

Of fate to alter me; for while I am,

In spite of it, I'm your's.

Sfor. But should that will

To be so—forced, Marcellia; and I live

To see those eyes, I prize above my own,

Dart favours, though compell'd, upon another;

Or those sweet lips, yielding immortal nectar,
Be gently touch'd by any but myself;
Think, think, Marcellia, what a cursed thing
I were, beyond expression!

Marc. Do not feed
Those jealous thoughts; the only blessing that
Heav'n hath bestow'd on us, more than on beasts,
Is, that 'tis in our pleasure when to die.
Besides, were I now in another's power,
I would not live for one short minute bis:
I was born only your's, and I will die so.

Sfor. Angels reward the goodness of this woman!

Re-enter FRANCISCO.

All I can pay is nothing. Why, uncall'd for?

Fran. It is of weight, sir, that makes me thus press

Upon your privacies. Your constant friend,
The marquis of Pescara, tir'd with haste,
Hath business that concerns your life and fortunes,
And with speed to impart.

Sfor. Wait on him hither. [*Exit Francisco.*]
And, dearest, to thy closet. Let thy prayers
Assist my councils.

Marc. To spare imprecations
Against myself, without you I am nothing. [*Exit.*]

Sfor. The marquis of Pescara! a great soldier;
And though he serv'd upon the adverse party,
Ever my constant friend.

Re-enter FRANCISCO, with PESCARA.

Fran. Yonder he walks,
Full of sad thoughts. (*Apart.*)

Pes. Blame him not, good Francisco,
He hath much cause to grieve; would I might
end so, (*Apart.*)

And not add this to his fear!
Sfor. My dear Pescara;
A miracle in these times! a friend, and happy,
Cleaves to a fallen fortune!

Pes. If it were
As well in my weak power, in act, to raise it,
As 'tis to bear a part of sorrow with you,
You then should have just cause to say, Pescara
Look'd not upon your state, but on your virtues,
When he made suit to be writ in the list
Of those you favour'd. But my haste forbids
All compliment; thus, then, sir, to the purpose:
The cause that, unattended, brought me hither,
Was not to tell you of your loss or danger,
(For fame hath many wings to bring ill tidings,
And I presume you've heard it,) but to give you
Such friendly counsel, as, perhaps, may make
Your sad disaster less.

Sfor. You are all goodness;
And I give up myself to be dispos'd of,
As in your wisdom you think fit.

Pes. Thus, then, sir;
To hope you can hold out against the emperor,
Were flattery in yourself, to your undoing;
Therefore, the safest course that you can take,
Is, to give up yourself to his discretion,
Before you be compell'd; for, rest assur'd,
A voluntary yielding may find grace,
And will admit defence, at least, excuse:
But should you linger doubtful, till his powers
Have seiz'd your person and estates perforce,
You must expect extremes.

Sfor. I understand you;
And I will put your counsel into act,
And speedily. I only will take order
For some domestical affairs, that do
Concern me nearly, and with the next sun
Ride with you: in the meantime, my best friend,
Pray take your rest.

Pes. Indeed, I have travell'd hard;
And will embrace your counsel. [*Exit.*]

Sfor. With all care
Attend my noble friend. Stay you, Francisco.
You see how things stand with me.

Fran. To my grief:
And if the loss of my poor life could be
A sacrifice to restore them as they were,
I willingly would lay it down.

Sfor. I think so;
For I have ever found you true and thankful,
Which makes me love the building I have rais'd
In your advancement; and repent no grace
I have conferr'd upon you. And, believe me,
(Though now I should repeat my favours to you,)
The titles I have given you, and the means
Suitable to your honours; that I thought you
Worthy my sister and my family,
And in my dukedom made you next myself:
It is not to upbraid you, but to tell you
I find you are worthy of them, in your love
And service to me.

Fran. Sir, I am your creature;
And any shape that you would have me wear,
I gladly will put on.

Sfor. Thus, then, Francisco:
I now am to deliver to your trust
A weighty secret, of so strange a nature,
And 'twill, I know, appear so monstrous to you,
That you will tremble in the execution,
As much as I am tortur'd to command it:
For 'tis a deed so horrid, that, but to hear it,
Would strike into a ruffian flesh'd in murders,
Or an obdurate hangman, soft compassion;
And yet, Francisco, of all men the dearest,
And from me most deserving, such my state
And strange condition is, that thou alone
Must know the fatal service, and perform it.

Fran. These preparations, sir, to work a
stranger,
Or to one unacquainted with your honnies,
Might appear useful; but to me they are
Needless impertinences; for I dare do
Whate'er you dare command.

Sfor. But you must swear it;
And put into the oath all joys or torments
That fright the wicked, or confirm the good;
Not to conceal it only, that is nothing;
But, whensoe'er my will shall speak, "Strike
now!"

To fall upon't like thunder.

Fran. Minister
The oath in any way or form you please,
I stand resolv'd to take it.

Sfor. Thou must do, then,
What no malevolent star will dare to look on,
It is so wicked: for which men will curse thee
For being the instrument; and the blest angels
Forsake me at my need, for being the author:
For 'tis a deed of night, of night, Francisco!
In which the memory of all good actions
We can pretend to, shall be buried quick:
Or, if we be remember'd, it shall be
To fright posterity by our example,
That have outgone all precedents of villains
That were before us; and such as succeed,
Though taught in hell's black school, shall ne'er
come near us.

Art thou not shaken yet?

Fran. I grant you move me:
But to a man confirm'd—

Sfor. I'll try your temper:
What think you of my wife?

Fran. As a thing sacred;
To whose fair name and memory I pay gladly
These signs of duty.

Sfor. Is she not the abstract
Of all that's rare, or to be wish'd in woman?

Fran. It were a kind of blasphemy to dispute it.
But to the purpose, sir.

Sfor. Add, too, her goodness,
Her tenderness of me, her care to please me,
Her unsuspected chastity, ne'er equall'd;
Her innocence, her honour—Oh, I am lost
In the ocean of her virtues and her graces,
When I think of them.

Fran. Now I find the end
Of all your conjurations: there's some service
To be done for this sweet lady. If she have ene-
mies,

That she would have remov'd—

Sfor. Alas! Francisco,
Her greatest enemy is her greatest lover;
Yet, in that hatred, her idolater.
One smile of her's would make a savage tame;
One accent of that tongue would calm the seas,
Though all the winds at once strove there for em-
pire.

Yet I, for whom she thinks all this too little,
(Should I miscarry in this present journey,
From whence it is all number to a cipher,
I ne'er return with honour,) by thy hand
Must have her murder'd.

Fran. Murder'd!—She that loves so,
And so deserves to be belov'd again!
And I, who sometimes you were pleas'd to favour,
Pick'd out the instrument!

Sfor. Do not fly off.

What is decreed can never be recall'd.
'Tis more than love to her, that marks her out
A wish'd companion to me in both fortunes:
And strong assurance of thy zealous faith,
That gives up to thy trust a secret, that
Racks should not have forc'd from me. Oh! Fran-
cisco,

There is no heaven without her, nor a hell
Where she resides. I ask from her but justice,
And what I would have paid to her, had sickness,
Or any other accident, divorc'd
Her purer soul from her unspotted body.
Express a ready purpose to perform
What I command; or, by Marcellia's soul,
This is thy latest minute.

Fran. 'Tis not fear

Of death, but love to you, makes me embrace it:
But for mine own security, when 'tis done,
What warrant have I? If you please to sign one,
I shall, though with unwillingness and horror,
Perform your dreadful charge.

Sfor. I will, Francisco:

But still remember that a prince's secrets
Are balm, conceal'd; but poison, if discover'd.
I may come back; then this is but a trial
To purchase thee, if it were possible,
A nearer place in my affection: but
I know thee honest.

Fran. 'Tis a character
I will not part with.

Sfor. I may live to reward it. [Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The same. An open Space before the
Castle.*

Enter TIBERIO and STEPHANO.

Steph. How! left the court?
You never heard the motives that induc'd him
To this strange course?

Tib. No; those are cabinet councils,
And not to be communicated, but
To such as are his own, and sure. Alas!
We fill up empty places; and, in public,
Are taught to give our suffrages to that
Which was before determin'd; and are safe so.
Seignior Francisco (upon whom alone
His absolute power is, with all strength conferr'd,
During his absence) can with ease resolve you.

Steph. But, my good lord Tiberio, this Fran-
cisco
Is on the sudden strangely rais'd.

Tib. Oh! sir,
He took the thriving course: he had a sister,
A fair one, too, with whom, as it is rumour'd,
The duke was too familiar; but she, cast off,
Upon the sight of this, forsook the court,
And since was never seen.

Steph. But how is
His absence borne by the dutchess?

Tib. Sadly, it seems;
For since he left the court,
For the most part, she hath kept her private cham-
ber,
No visitants admitted. But, on the other side,
The darling of his mother, Mariana,
As there were an antipathy between
Her and the dutchess' passions; and as
She'd no dependence on her brother's fortune,
She ne'er appear'd so full of mirth.

Steph. 'Tis strange. (They retire.)

Enter GRACCHO, with Musicians.

But see! her favourite, and accompanied,
To your report.

Grac. You shall play, and I will sing
A scurvy ditty to a scurvy tune,
Repine who dares.

Mus. But if we should offend,
The dutchess having silenc'd us, and these lords
Stand by to hear us.

Grac. They in name are lords,
But I am one in power; and, for the dutchess,
But yesterday, we were merry for her pleasure;
We'll now be for my lady's.

(Tiberio and Stephano come forward.)

Tib. Seignior Graccho.

Grac. A poor man, sir, a servant to the princess;
But you, great lords and counsellors of state,
Whom I stand bound to reverence.

Tib. Come, we know
You are a man in grace.

Grac. Fie! no: I grant
I bear my fortunes patiently; serve the princess,
And have access, at all times, to her closet;
Such is my impudence! when your grave lordships
Are masters of the modesty to attend
Three hours, nay, sometimes four; and then bid
wait

Upon her the next morning.

Steph. He derides us. (Apart.)

Tib. Pray you, what news is stirring? You
know all.

Grac. Who, I? alas! I've no intelligence
At home nor abroad; I only sometimes guess
The change of the times: I should ask of your
lordships

Who are to keep their honours, who to lose them;
Who the dutchess smil'd on last, or on whom
frown'd;

You only can resolve me; and could you tell me
What point of state 'tis that I am commanded
To muster up this music, on mine honesty,
You should much befriend me.

Steph. Sirrah, you grow saucy.
Tib. And would be laid by the heels.

Grac. Not by your lordships,
Without a special warrant. Look to your own
stakes;
Were I committed, here come those would bail
me:
Perhaps we might change places, too.

*Enter ISABELLA and MARIANA. Graccho whispers
the latter.*

Tib. The princess!
We must be patient. (Apart.)

Steph. There is no contending. (Apart.)

Tib. See the informing rogue! (Apart.)

Steph. That we should stoop
To such a mushroom! (Apart.)

Mari. Thou dost mistake; they durst not
Use the least word of scorn, although provok'd,
To anything of m.n.e. Go, get you home;
And to your servants, friends, and flatt'ers, num-
ber

How many descents you're noble.
(*Exeunt Tiberio and Stephano.*)

Grac. Your excellency hath the best gift to des-
patch
These arras pictures of nobility,
I ever read of.

Isa. But the purpose, daughter,
That brings us hither? Is it to bestow
A visit on this woman?

Mari. If to vex her
May be interpreted to do her honour,
She shall have many of them.
My brother, being not by now to protect her,
I am her equal.
Play anything
That's light and loud enough but to torment her.

(*Music.*)
Enter MARCELIA.

Isa. She frowns, as if
Her looks could fright us. (Apart.)

Mari. May it please your greatness, one smile, I
pray you,
On your poor servants.

Isa. She's made of courtesy. (Apart.)

Mari. Mistress of all hearts! (Apart.)

Isa. 'Tis wormwood, and it works. (Apart.)

Mari. If dotage age could let you bnt remember,
You have a son; or frontless impudence,
You are a sister; and, in making answer
To what was most unfit for you to speak,
Or me to hear, borrow of my just anger;
You durst not then, on any hire or hope,
Rememb'ring what I am, and whose I am,
Put on the desp'rate boldness to disturb
The least of my retirements.

Mari. Note her now. (Apart.)

Marc. For both shall understand, though the one
presume

Upon the privilege due to a mother;
The duke stands now on his own legs, and needs
No nurse to lead him.

Isa. How, a nurse!

Marc. But I am merciful,
And dotage signs your pardon.

Isa. I defy thee:
Thee and thy pardons, proud one!

Marc. For you,
From this hour learn to serve me, or you'll feel
I must make use of my authority;
And, as a princess, punish it.

Isa. A princess!

Mari. I had rather be a slave unto a Moor,
Than know thee for my equal.

Enter FRANCISCO and Guards.

Fran. What wind hath rais'd this tempest?
A tumult in the court! What's the cause?
Speak, Mariana.

Mari. Do you hear, sir?
Right me on this monster, or ne'er look to have
A quiet hour with me.

Isa. If my son were here,
And wou'd endure this, may a mother's curse
Pursue and overtake him!

Fran. Oh! forbear:
In me he's present, both in power and will;
And madam, I much grieve that, in his absence,
There should arise the least distaste to move you:
It being his principal, nay, only charge,

To have you, in his absence, serv'd and honour'd,
As when himself perform'd the willing office.

Grac. I would I were well off! (Aside.)

Fran. And, therefore, I beseech you, gentle
madam,
Name those that have offended you.

Isa. I am one.

Mari. And I will justify it.

Fran. Remember she's the dutchess.

Marc. But us'd with more contempt than if I
were

A peasant's daughter.

Fran. Think not, then, I speak,
(For I stand bound to honour and to serve you,)
But that the duke, that lives in this great lady,
For the contempt of him in her, commands you
To be close prisoners.

Isa. and Mari. Prisoners!

Fran. Bear them hence.

Marc. I am not cruel,
But pleas'd they may have liberty.

Isa. Pleas'd, with a mischief!

Mari. I'll rather live in any loathsome dungeon,
Than in a paradise at her entreaty.
And for you, upstart—

Off. What shall become of these?

Fran. See them well whipp'd,
As you will answer it.

Grac. I preach patience,
And must endure my fortune.

[*Exeunt all but Fran. and Marc.*]

Fran. Let them first know themselves, and how
you are

To be serv'd and honour'd; which, when they
confess,

You may again receive them to your favour;
And, then, it will shew nobly.

Marc. With my thanks,
The duke shall pay you his, if he return
To bless us with his presence.

Fran. Any service done to so much sweetness,
In your favour finds

A wish'd and glorious end.

Marc. From you I take this
As loyal duty; but, in any other,
It would appear gross flattery.

Fran. Flattery, madam!

You are so rare and excellent in all things,
And rais'd so high upon a rock of goodness,
As that vice cannot reach you: who but looks on
This temple, built by nature to perfection,
But must bow to it; and, out of that zeal,
Not only learn to adore it, but to love it?

Marc. Whither will this fellow? (Aside.)

Fran. Pardon, therefore, madam,
If an excess in me of humble duty,
Teach me to hope my piety and love
May find reward.

Marc. You have it in my thanks;
And, on my hand, I am pleas'd that you shall take
A full possession of it: but take heed
That you fix here, and feed no hope beyond it;
If you do, it will prove fatal.

Fran. Be it death,
And death with torments tyrants ne'er found out,
Yet I must say I love you.

Marc. As a subject,
And 'twill become you.

Fran. Farewell, circumstance!
And since you are not pleas'd to understand me,
But by a plain and usual form of speech,
All superstitious reverence laid by,
I love you as a man. Why do you start?
I am no monster, and you but a woman;
A woman made to yield, and, by example,
Told it is lawful.

Marc. Keep off! Oh! you powers,
Are all the princely bounties, favours, honours,

Which, with some prejudice to his own wisdom,
Thy lord and raiser hath conferr'd upon thee,
In three days' absence, buried? And is this,
This impudent attempt to taint mine honour,
The fair return of both our ventur'd favours?

Fran. Hear my excuse.

Marc. Read my life,
And find one act of mine so loosely carried,
That could invite a most self-loving fool,
Set off with all that fortune could throw on him,
To the least hope to find way to my favour.

Fran. And while the duke did prize you to your
value,

I well might envy him; but durst not hope
To stop you in your full career of goodness:

But now I find that he's fall'n from his fortune,
And, howsoever he would appear doting,
Grown cold in his affection; I presume,
From his most barbarous neglect of you,
To offer my true service: nor stand I bound
To look back on the courtesies of him,
That, of all living men, is most unthankful.

Marc. Unheard-of arrogance!

Fran. You'll say I'm modest
When I have told the story.
You think he loves you
With unexampl'd fervour; nay, dotes on you,
As there were something in you more than woman;
When, on my knowledge, he long since hath
wish'd

You were among the dead.

Marc. Bless me, good angels,
Or I am blasted! Lies so false and wicked,
And fashion'd to so damnable a purpose,
Cannot be spoken by a human tongue.
My husband hate me! give thyself the lie,
False and accurs'd! Thy soul, if thou hast any,
Can witness, never lady stood so bound
To the nefseign'd affections of her lord,
As I do to my Sforza. If thou wouldst work
Upon my weak credulity, tell me, rather,
There's peace between the lion and the lamb;
Or, that the ravenous eagle and the dove
Keep in one aerie, and bring up their young;
Or anything that is averse to nature;
And I will sooner credit it, than that
My lord can think of me but as a jewel
He loves more than himself, and all the world.

Fran. Oh! innocence abus'd! simplicity cozen'd!
It were a sin, for which we have no name,
To keep you longer in this wilful error.
Read his affections here; (*gives her a paper*) and
then observe

How dear he holds you! 'Tis his character,
Which cunning yet could never counterfeit.

Marc. 'Tis his hand, I'm resolv'd of it: I'll try
What the inscription is.

Fran. Pray you, do so.

Marc. (*Reads.*) "*You know my pleasure, and the
hour of Marcellia's death; which fail not to execute,
as you will answer the contrary, not with your head
alone, but with the ruin of your whole family. And this,
written with my own hand, and signed with my
privy signet, shall be your sufficient warrant.*"

LUDOVICO SFORZA."

I do obey it: every word's a poniard,
And reaches to my heart.

Fran. What have I done?

Madam! for heaven's sake, madam!
Dear lady!

She stirs. For the duke's sake! for Sforza's sake—

Marc. Sforza's! stand off! though dead, I will
be his;

And even my ashes shall abhor the touch
Of any other. Oh! unkind and cruel!
Learn, women, learn to trust in one another;
There is no faith in man: Sforza is false,
False to Marcellia!

Fran. But I am true,
And live to make you happy.

Marc. I prefer the hate
Of Sforza, though it mark me for the grave,
Before thy base affection. I am yet
Pure and unspotted in my true love to him;
Nor shall it be corrupted, though he's tainted;
Nor will I part with innocence, because
He is found guilty. For thyself, thou art
A thing, that, equal with the devil himself,
I do detest and scorn.

Fran. Thou, then, art nothing:
Thy life is in my power, disdainful woman!
Think on't, and tremble.

Marc. No; with my curses
Of horror to thy conscience in this life,
And pains in hell hereafter, I defy thee. [*Exit.*]

Fran. I am lost
In the discovery of this fatal secret.
Curs'd hope, that flatter'd me, that wrongs could
make her

A stranger to her goodness! All my plots
Turn back upon myself; but I am in,
And must go on; and since I have put off
From the shore of innocence, guilt be now my pilot. [*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The imperial Camp before Pavia.*

Enter MEDINA, HERNANDO, and ALPHONSO.

Med. The spoil, the spoil! 'tis that the soldier
fights for.

Our victory, as yet, affords us nothing
But wounds and empty honour.

Her. Hell put it in
The enemy's mind to be desperate, and hold out!
Yieldings and compositions will undo us;
And what is that way given, for the most part,
Comes to the emperor: the poor soldier left
To starve, or fill up hospitals.

Alph. But when
We enter towns by force, and carve ourselves,
Pleasure with pillage—

Med. I long to be at it.

Her. My main hope is,
To begin the sport at Milan: there's enough,
And of all kinds of pleasure we can wish for,
To satisfy the most covetous.

Alph. Every day

We look for a remove.

Med. For Lodowick Sforza,
The duke of Milan, I, on mine own knowledge,
Can say thus much: he is too much a soldier;
Too confident of his own worth: too rich too;
And understands, too well, the emperor hates him,
To hope for composition.

Alph. On my life,
We need not fear his coming in.

Her. On my life,
I do not wish it: I had rather that,
To shew his valour, he'd put us to the trouble
To fetch him in by the ears.

Med. The emperor!

Flourish. *Enter* THE EMPEROR CHARLES, PESCARA,
and Attendants.

Emp. C. You make me wonder: nay, it is no
counsel:

You may partake it, gentlemen. Who'd have
thought

That he, that scorn'd our proffer'd amity,
When he was sued to, should, ere he be summon'd,
First kneel for mercy?

Med. When your majesty
Shall please to instruct us who it is, we may
Admire it with you.

Emp. C. Who, but the duke of Milan,

The right hand of the French! Of all that stand
In our displeasure, whom necessity
Compels to seek our favour, I would have sworn
Sforza had been the last.

Her. And should be writ so
In the list of those you pardon. Would his city
Had rather held us out a siege, like Troy,
Than, by a feign'd submission, he should cheat
you

Of a just revenge, or us of those fair glories
We have sweat blood to purchase!

Alph. The sack alone of Milan
Will pay the army.

Emp. C. I am not so weak,
To be wrought on as you fear; nor ignorant
That money is the sinew of the war:
Yet, for our glory, and to shew him that
We've brought him on his knees, it is resolv'd
To hear him as a suppliant. Bring him in;
But let him see the effects of our just anger,
In the guard that you make for him. [*Exit Pescara.*]

Her. I am now
Familiar with the issue: all plagues on it!
He will appear in some dejected habit,
His countenance suitable, and, for his order,
A rope about his neck; then kneel, and tell
Old stories—what more worthy thing it is
To have power than to use it;
To make a king than kill one: which apply'd
To the emperor and himself, a pardon's granted
To him, an enemy; and we, his servants,
Condemn'd to beggary. (*Apart to Medina.*)

Med. Yonder he comes;
But not as you expected.

*Re-enter PESCARA, with LUDOVICO SFORZA,
strongly guarded.*

Alph. He looks as if
He would outface his dangers. (*Apart.*)

Her. I am cozen'd:
A sutor, in the devil's name! (*Apart.*)

Med. Hear him speak. (*Apart.*)

Sfor. I come not, emperor, to invade thy mercy,
By fawning on thy fortune; nor bring with me
Excuses or denials. I profess,
And with a good man's confidence, even this in-
stant

That I am in thy power, I was thine enemy;
Thy deadly and vow'd enemy; one that wish'd
Confusion to thy person and estates;
And with my utmost powers, and deepest counsels,
Had they been truly follow'd, further'd it.
Nor will I now, although my neck were under
The hangman's axe, with one poor syllable
Confess, but that I honour'd the French king
More than thyself, and all men.

Med. By saint Jaques!
This is no flattery. (*Aside.*)

Sfor. Now give me leave,
My hate against thyself, and love to him
Freely acknowledged, to give up the reasons
That made me so affected: in my wants
I ever found him faithful; had supplies
Of men and money from him; and my hopes
Quite sunk, were, by his grace, buoy'd up again;
I dare to speak his praise now, in as high
And loud a key, as when he was thy equal.
The benefits he sow'd in me met not
Unthankful ground, but yielded him his own
With fair increase, and I still glory in it:
And though my fortunes
Are in thy fury burnt, let it be mention'd,
They serv'd but as small tapers to attend
The solemn flame at this great funeral;
And with them I will gladly waste myself,
Rather than undergo the imputation
Of being base, or unthankful.

Alph. Nobly spoken! (*Apart.*)

Her. I do begin, I know not why, to hate him
Less than I did. (*Apart.*)

Sfor. If that, then, to be grateful
For courtesies receiv'd, or not to leave
A friend in his necessities, be a crime
Amongst you Spaniards, Sforza brings his head
To pay the forfeit. Nor come I as a slave,
Pinion'd and fetter'd, in a squalid weed,
Falling before thy feet, kneeling and howling
For a forestall'd remission: I ne'er fear'd to die,
More than I wish'd to live. When I had reach'd
My ends in being a duke, I wore these robes,
This crown upon my head, and to my side
This sword was girt; and witness, truth, that now
'Tis in another's power, when I shall part
With them and life together, I'm the same:
My veins then did not swell with pride; nor now
Shrink they for fear. Know, sir, that Sforza
stands

Prepar'd for either fortune.

Her. As I live,
I do begin strangely to love this fellow. (*Apart.*)

Sfor. But, if example
Of my fidelity to the French,
Has power to invite you to make him a friend,
That hath given evident proof he knows to love,
And to be thankful, this, my crown, now your's,
You may restore to me.

Alph. By this light,
'Tis a brave gentleman. (*Apart.*)

Emp. C. Thou hast so far
Outgone my expectation, noble Sforza,
For such I hold thee, and true constancy,
Rais'd on a brave foundation, bears such palm
And privilege with it, that where we behold it,
Though in an enemy, it does command us
To love and honour it. By my future hopes,
I am glad, for thy sake, that, in seeking favour,
Thou didst not borrow of vice her indirect,
Crooked, and abject means: and so far
I am from robbing thee of the least honour,
That, with my hands, to make it sit the faster,
I set thy crown once more upon thy head;
And do not only style thee duke of Milan,
But vow to keep thee so. Yet, not to take
From others to give only to myself,
I will not hinder your magnificence
To my commanders, neither will I urge it;
But in that, as in all things else, I leave you
To be your own disposer.

Sfor. May I live
To seal my loyalty, though with loss of life.
[*Flourish. Exit Emperor Charles, Medina,
Hernando, and Alphonso.*]

Pes. So, sir, this tempest is well overblown,
And all things fall out to our wishes; but,
In my opinion, this quick return,
Before you've made a party in this court
Among the great ones, (for these needy captains
Have little power in peace,) may beget danger,
At least suspicion.

Sfor. Where true honour lives,
Doubt hath no being; I desire no pawn,
Beyond an emperor's word, for my assurance.
Besides, Pescara, to thyself, of all men,
I will confess my weakness: though my state
And crown's restor'd me, though I am in grace,
And that a little stay might be a step
To greater honours, I must hence. Alas!
I live not here; my wife, my wife, Pescara,
Being absent, I am dead. Pr'ythee, excuse,
And do not chide, for friendship's sake, my fond-
ness;
But ride along with me: I'll give you reasons,
And strong ones, to plead for me.

Pes. Use your own pleasure;
I'll hear you company.

Sfor. Farewell, grief! I am stor'd with

Two blessings most desired in human life,—
A constant friend, an unsuspected wife. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Milan. A Room in the castle.*

Enter GRACCHO.

Grac. Whipt like a rogue! no lighter punishment serve

To balance with a little mirth! 'Tis well:
My credit sunk for ever, I am now
Fit company only for pages and for footboys.

Enter JULIO and GIOVANNI.

Gio. See, Julio,
Yonder the proud slave is. How he looks now,
After his castigation! (*Apart.*)

Julio. Let's be merry with him. (*Apart.*)

Grac. How they stare at me! Am I turn'd to an owl?

The wonder, gentlemen?

Julio. I read this morning,
Strange stories of the passive fortitude
Of men in former ages, which I thought
Impossible, and not to be believ'd;
But now I look on you, my wonder ceases.

Grac. The reason, sir?

Julio. Why, sir, you have been whipt;
Whipt, seignior Graccho; and the whip, I take it,
Is, to a gentleman, the greatest trial
That may be of his patience.

Grac. Sir, I'll call you
To a strict account for this.

Gio. I'll not deal with you,
Unless I have a beadle for my second;
And then I'll answer you.

Julio. Farewell, poor Graccho!

[*Exeunt Julio and Gio.*]

Grac. Better and better still. If ever wrongs
Could teach a wretch to find the way to vengeance,

Enter FRANCISCO and a Servant.

Hell now inspire me! How, the lord protector!
Whither thus in private?
I will not see him. (*Stands aside.*)

Fran. If I am sought for,
Say I am indispos'd, and will not hear
Or suits or suitors.

Serv. But, sir, if the princess
Inquire, what shall I answer?

Fran. Say I am rid
Abroad to take the air; but by no means
Let her know I'm in court.

Serv. So I shall tell her.

[*Exit.*]

Fran. Within there!

Enter a Gentlewoman.

Gentlew. My good lord, your pleasure?

Fran. Pr'ythee, let me beg thy favour for access
To the dutchess.

Gentlew. In good sooth, my lord, I dare not;
She's very private.

Fran. Come, there's gold.
Where is thy lady?

Gentlew. She's walking in the gallery.

Fran. Bring me to her.

[*Exeunt Francisco and Gentlewoman.*]

Grac. A brave discovery beyond my hope,
A plot even offer'd to my hand to work on!
If I am dull now, may I live and die
The scorn of worms and slaves! Let me consider:

My lady and her mother first committed,
In the favour of the dutchess; and I whipt!
And all his brib'd approaches to the dutchess
To be conceal'd! good, good. This to my lady
Deliver'd as I'll order it, runs her mad. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*Another Room in the same.*

Enter MARCELIA and FRANCISCO.

Marc. Believe thy tears or oaths! can it be
hop'd,

After a practice so abhor'd and horrid,
Repentance e'er can find thee?

Fran. Dearest lady,

I do confess, humbly confess my fault,
To be beyond all pity; my attempt
So barbarously rude, that it would turn
A saint-like patience into savage fury.

Marc. Is't possible

This can be cunning? (*Aside.*)

Fran. But, if no submission,
Nor prayers can appease you, that you may know
'Tis not the fear of death that makes me sue
thus,

I will not wait the sentence of the duke;
But I myself will do a fearful justice on myself,
No witness by but you.

Yet, before I do it,
For I perceive in you no signs of mercy,
I will disclose a secret, which, dying with me,
May prove your ruin.

Marc. Speak it; it will take from
The burden of thy conscience.

Fran. Thus, then, madam:
The warrant, by my lord sign'd for your death,
Was but conditional; but you must swear,
By your unspotted truth, not to reveal it,
Or I end here abruptly.

Marc. By my hopes

Of joys hereafter. On.

Fran. Nor was it hate

That forc'd him to it, but excess of love.
"And if I ne'er return, (so said great Sforza,)

No living man deserving to enjoy
My best Marcelia, with the first news
That I am dead, (for no man after me
Must e'er enjoy her,) fail not to kill her.
But till certain proof

Assure thee I am lost, (these were his words,)
Observe and honour her, as if the soul
Of woman's goodness only dwelt in her's."
This trust I have abus'd, and basely wrong'd;
And if the excelling pity of your mind
Cannot forgive it, as I dare not hope it,
Rather than look on my offended lord,
I stand resolv'd to punish it. (*Draws his sword.*)

Marc. Hold! 'tis forgiven,
And by me freely pardon'd. In thy fair life,
Hereafter, study to deserve this bounty:

But that my lord, my Sforza, should esteem
My life fit only as a page, to wait on
The various course of his uncertain fortunes;
Or cherish in himself that sensual hope,
In death to know me as a wife, afflicts me.
I will slack the ardour that I had to see him
Return in safety.

Fran. But if your entertainment
Should give the least ground to his jealousy,
To raise up an opinion I am false,
You then destroy your mercy. Therefore, vouch-
safe,

In company, to do me those fair graces
And favours, which your innocence and honour
May safely warrant: it would to the duke,
I being to your best self alone known guilty,
Make me appear most innocent.

Marc. Have your wishes;

And something I may do to try his temper,
At least, to make him know a constant wife
Is not so slav'd to her husband's doting humours,
Her fate appointing it.

Fran. It is enough,
Nay, all I could desire; and will make way
To my revenge, which shall disperse itself

On him, on her, and all.

[*Aside, and exit. Shout, and flourish.*]

Marc. What noise is that?

Enter TIBERIO and STEPHANO.

Tib. All happiness to the dutchess, that may flow
From the duke's new and wish'd return!

Marc. He's welcome.

Steph. How coldly she receives it! (*Apart.*)

Tib. Observe the encounter. (*Apart.*)

*Flourish. Enter LUDOVICO SFORZA, PESCARA,
and Attendants.*

Sfor. I have stood

Silent thus long, Marcellia, expecting
When, with more than a greedy haste, thou wouldst
Have flown into my arms, and on my lips
Have printed a deep welcome. My desires
To glass myself in these fair eyes, have borne me
With more than human speed: nor durst I stay
In any temple, or to any saint,
To pay my vows and thanks for my return,
Till I had seen thee.

Marc. Sir, I am most happy
To look upon you safe; and would express
My love and duty in a modest fashion,
Such as might suit with the behaviour
Of one that knows herself a wife, and how
To temper her desires; nor can it wrong me
To love discreetly.

Sfor. How! why, can there be
A mean in your affections to Sforza?
My passions to you are in extremes,
And know no bounds. Come, kiss me.

Marc. I obey you.

Sfor. By all the joys of love, she does salute me
As if I were her father! What witch,
With cursed spells, hath quench'd the amorous heat
That liv'd upon these lips? Tell me, Marcellia,
And truly tell me, is't a fault of mine
That hath begot this coldness, or neglect
Of others in my absence?

Marc. Neither, sir:

I stand indebted to your substitute,
Noble and good Francisco, for his care,
And fair observance of me.

Sfor. How!

Steph. How the duke stands! (*Apart.*)

Tib. As he were rooted there,
And had no motion. (*Apart.*)

Pes. My lord, from whence
Grows this amazement?

Sfor. It is more, dear my friend;
For I am doubtful whether I've a being;
But certain that my life's a burden to me.
Take me back, good Pescara, shew me to Cæsar,
In all his rage and fury; I disclaim
His mercy: to live now, which is his gift,
Is worse than death, and with all studied torments.
Marcellia is unkind, nay, worse, grown cold
In her affection; my excess of fervour,
Which yet was never equal'd, grown distasteful.
But have thy wishes, woman; thou shalt know
That I can be myself, and thus shake off
The fetters of fond dotage. From my sight,
Without reply; for I am apt to do
Something I may repent. [*Exit Marcellia.*]

Oh! who would place
His happiness in most accursed woman;
In whom obsequiousness engend'rs pride,
And harshness, deadly hatred? From this hour,
I'll labour to forget there are such creatures:
True friends, be now my mistresses. Clear your
brows;

And, though my heart-strings crack for't, I will be
To all a free example of delight.
We will have sports of all kinds, and propound
Rewards to such as can produce us new:

Unsatisfied, though we surfeit in their store;
And never think of curs'd Marcellia more. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The same. An Apartment in the castle.*

Enter FRANCISCO and GRACCHIO.

Fran. And is it possible thou shouldst forget
A wrong of such a nature, and then study
My safety and content?

Grac. Sir, but allow me
Not the abstruse and hidden arts to thrive there;
And you may please to grant me so much know-
ledge,

That injuries from one in grace, like you,
Are noble favours.

Fran. But to the purpose;
And, then, that service done, make thine own for-
tunes.

My wife, thou say'st, is jealous I am too
Familiar with the dutchess?

Grac. And incens'd
For her commitment in her brother's absence;
And, by her mother's anger, is spurr'd on
To make discovery of it.

Fran. I thank thy care, and will deserve this
secret,

In making thee acquainted with a greater,
And of more moment. I delight in change
And sweet variety: that's my heaven on earth,
For which I love life only. I confess,
My wife pleas'd me a day; the dutchess, two;
(And, yet, I must not say I have enjoy'd her;)
But now I care for neither: therefore, Graccho,
So far I am from stopping Mariana
In making her complaint, that I desire thee
To urge her to it.

Grac. That may prove your ruin:
The duke already being, as 'tis reported,
Doubtful she hath play'd false.

Fran. There thou art cozen'd;
His dotage, like an ague, keeps his course,
And now 'tis strongly on him. But I lose time;
And, therefore, know, whether thou wilt or no,
Thou art to be my instrument; and in spite
Of the old saw, that says, "It is not safe,
On any terms, to trust a man that's wrong'd,"
I dare thee to be false.

Grac. This is a language,
My lord, I understand not.

Fran. You thought, sirrah,
To put a trick on me, for the relation
Of what I knew before; and, having won
Some weighty secret from me, in revenge
To play the traitor. Know, thou wretched thing!
By my command thou wert whipt; and every day
I'll have thee freshly tortur'd, if thou miss
In the least charge that I impose upon thee.
Though what I speak, for the most part, is true;
Nay, grant thou hadst a thousand witnesses
To be depos'd they heard it, 'tis in me,
With one word, such is Sforza's confidence
Of my fidelity, not to be shaken,
To make all void, and ruin my accusers.
Therefore, look to't; bring my wife hotly on
To accuse me to the duke—I have an end in't—
Or think what 'tis makes man most miserable,
And that shall fall on thee. Thou wert a fool
To hope, by being acquainted with my courses,
To curb and awe me; or that I should live
Thy slave, as thou didst saucily divine:
For prying in my counsels, still live mine. [*Exit.*]

Grac. I am caught on both sides. This 'tis for a
puisse
In policy's roguish school, to try conclusions
With one that hath commenc'd, and gone outdoctor.
If I discover what but now he brag'd of,

I shall not be believ'd: if I fall off
From him, his threats and actions go together,
And there's no hope of safety. Till I get
A plummet that may sound his deepest counsels,
I must obey and serve him. Want of skill
Now makes me play the rogue against my will.
[Exit.]

SCENE II.—*Another Apartment in the castle.*

Enter MARCELIA, TIBERIO, STEPHANO, and Gentlewoman.

Marc. Command me from his sight, and with such scorn

As he would rate his slave!

Tib. 'Twas in his fury.

Steph. And he repents it, madam.

Marc. Was I born

To observe his humours? or, because he dotes,
Must I run mad?

Tib. He hath paid the forfeit

Of his offence, I'm sure, with such a sorrow,
As if it had been greater, would deserve
A full remission.

Marc. Why, perhaps, he hath it;
And I stand more afflicted for his absence,
Than he can be for mine: so, pray you, tell him.

But till I have digested some sad thoughts,
And reconcil'd passions that are at war

Within myself, I purpose to be private:

And have you care, unless it be Francisco,
That no man be admitted. [Exit Gentlewoman.]

Tib. How! Francisco?

Enter FRANCISCO.

Steph. Here he comes.

Is this her privacy?

This may go to the duke. [Exit Tib. and Steph.]

Marc. Your face is full
Of fears and doubts: the reason?

Fran. Oh! best madam,
They are not counterfeit. The duke, the duke,
I more than fear, hath found that I am guilty.

Marc. By my unspotted honour, not from me;
Nor have I with him chang'd one syllable,
Since his return, but what you heard.

Fran. Yet malice
Is eagle-ey'd, and would see that which is not;
And jealousy's too apt to build upon
Unsure foundations.

Marc. Jealousy!

Fran. It takes. (Aside.)

Marc. Who dares but only think I can be tainted?
But for him, though almost on certain proof,
To give it hearing, not belief, deserves
My hate for ever.

Fran. Whether grounded on
Your noble, yet chaste favours, shewn unto me;
Or her imprisonment, for her contempt
To you, by my command, my frantic wife
Hath put it in his head.

Marc. Have I then liv'd
So long, now to be doubted? Are my favours
The themes of her discourse? or what I do,
That never trod in a suspected path,
Subject to base construction? Be undaunted;
For now, as of a creature that is mine,
I rise up your protectress; all the grace
I hitherto have done you, was bestow'd
With a shut hand; it shall be now more free,
Open, and liberal. But let it not,
Though counterfeited to the life, teach you
To nourish saucy hopes.

Fran. May I be accurs'd,
When I prove such a monster!

Marc. I will stand, then,
Between you and all danger. He shall know,
Suspicion overturns what confidence builds;

And he that dares but doubt when there's no ground,
Is neither to himself nor others sound. [Exit.]

Fran. So, let it work! Her goodness, that denied
My service, branded with the name of lust,
Shall now destroy itself; and she shall find,
When he's a suitor, that brings cunning arm'd
With power to be his advocates, the denial
Is a disease as killing as the plague,
And chastity a clue that leads to death.
Hold but thy nature, duke, and be but rash
And violent enough, and, then, at leisure
Repent; I care not.

And let my plots produce this long'd-for birth,
In my revenge I have my heaven on earth. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—*Another Room in the same.*

Enter LUDOVICO SFORZA, PESCARA, JULIO, and GIOVANNI.

Pes. You promis'd to be merry.

Julio. There are pleasures
And of all kinds, to entertain the time.

Gio. Your excellency vouchsafing to make choice
Of that which best affects you.

Sfor. Hold your prating!
Learn manners, too; you are rude.

Pes. I must borrow
The privilege of a friend, and will; or else
I am, like these, a servant; or, what's worse,
A parasite to the sorrow Sforza worships,
In spite of reason.

Sfor. Pray you, use your freedom;
And so far, if you please, allow me mine,
To hear you only; not to be compell'd
To take your moral potions. I am a man;
And, though philosophy, your mistress, rage for't,
Now I have cause to grieve, I must be sad;
And I dare shew it.

Pes. Would it were bestow'd
Upon a worthier subject!

Sfor. Take heed, friend.
You rub a sore, whose pain will make me mad;
And I shall, then, forget myself and you.
Lance it no further.

Pes. Have you stood the shock
Of thousand enemies, and outfac'd the anger
Of a great emperor, that vow'd your ruin,
Though by a desperate, a glorious way,
That had no precedent?

Have you given proof, to this hour of your life,
Prosperity, that searches the best temper,
Could never puff you up, nor adverse fate
Deject your valour? Shall, I say, these virtues,
So many and so various trials of
Your constant mind, be buried in the frown
(To please you, I will say so,) of a fair woman?
Yet I have seen her equals.

Sfor. Good Pescara,
This language in another were profane;
In you it is unmannerly. Her equal!
I tell you as a friend, and tell you plainly,
(To all men else my sword should make reply,)
Her goodness does disdain comparison,
And, but herself, admits no parallel.

Pes. Well, sir, I'll not cross you,
Nor labour to diminish your esteem,
Hereafter, of her.

Enter TIBERIO and STEPHANO.

Sfor. Oh! you are well return'd;
Say, am I blest? bath she vouchsaf'd to hear you?
Is there hope left that she may be appeas'd?

Tib. She, sir, yet is froward,
And desires respite, and some privacy.

Steph. She was harsh at first; but, ere we parted,
seem'd not

Implacable.

Sfor. There's comfort yet: I'll ply her

Each hour with new ambassadors of more honours,
Titles, and eminence: my second self,
Francisco, shall solicit her.

Steph. That a wise man,
And what is more, a prince that may command,
Should sue thus poorly; and treat with his wife,
As she were a victorious enemy.

Sfor. What is that you mutter?
I'll have thy thoughts.

Steph. You shall. You are too fond,
And feed a pride that's swolln too big already,
And surfeits with observance.

Sfor. Oh! my patience!
My vassal speak thus?

Steph. Let my head answer it,
If I offend. She, that you think a saint,
I fear, may play the devil.

Pes. Well said, old fellow. *(Aside.)*
Steph. And he that hath so long engross'd your
favours,

Though to be nam'd with rev'rence, lord Francisco,
Who, as you purpose, shall solicit for you,
I think's too near her.

(Sforza lays his hand on his sword.)

Pes. Hold, sir! this is madness.
Steph. It may be they confer of joining lordships;
I'm sure he's private with her.

Sfor. Let me go,
I scorn to touch him; he deserves my pity,
And not my anger. Dotard! and to be one
Is thy protection, else thou durst not think
That love to my Marcelia hath left room
In my full heart for any jealous thought:
I could smile to think, what wretched things they
are,

That dare be jealous.

Tib. This is a confidence
Beyond example.

Enter ISABELLA and MARIANA.

Sfor. If you come
To bring me comfort, say that you have made
My peace with my Marcelia.

Isa. I had rather
Wait on you to your funeral.

Sfor. You are my mother;
Or, by her life, you were dead else.

Mari. Would you were,
To your dishonour! Here your mother was
Committed by your servant, (for I scorn
To call him husband,) and myself, your sister,
If that you dare remember such a name,
Mew'd up, to make the way open and free
For the adultery; I am unwilling
To say, a part of Sforza.

Sfor. She hath blasphem'd, and by our law must
die.

Isa. Blasphem'd! for giving a false woman her
true name.

Sfor. Oh, hell! what do I suffer?

Mari. Or is it treason

For me, that am a subject, to endeavour
To save the honour of the duke, and that
He should not be a wittol on record?

Sfor. Some proof, vile creature!

Or thou hast spoke thy last.

Mari. The public fame,
Their hourly private meetings; and, e'en now,
When, under a pretence of grief or anger,
You are denied the joys due to a husband,
And made a stranger to her, at all times,
The door stands open to him.

Sfor. Oh! the malice
And envy of base women! Wretches! you have
rais'd

A monumental trophy to her. I'm so far
From giving credit to you, this would teach me
More to admire and serve her. You are not worthy

To fall as sacrifices to appease her;
And, therefore, live till your own envy burst you.

Isa. All is in vain; he is not to be mov'd.

Mari. She has bewitch'd him.

Pes. 'Tis so, past belief;

To me it shews a fable.

Enter FRANCISCO, speaking to a Servant within.

Fran. On thy life,
Provide my horses, and without the port,
With care, attend me.

Serv. (Within.) I shall, my lord,

Fran. Great sir,
I would impart,
Please you to lend your ear, a weighty secret,
I am in labour to deliver to you.

Sfor. All leave the room. *[Exeunt Isa. and Mari.]*

Excuse me, good Pescara,
Ere long, I will wait on you.

Pes. You speak, sir,
The language I should use. *[Exit.]*

Sfor. Be within call,

Perhaps we may have use of you.

Tib. We shall, sir. *[Exeunt Tib. and Steph.]*

Sfor. Say on, my comfort!

Frau. Comfort! no, your torment;
For so my fate appoints me. I could curse
The hour that gave me being.

Sfor. What new monsters
Of misery stand ready to devour me?

Let them at once despatch me.

Frau. Draw your sword, then,
And, as you wish your own peace, quickly kill me;
Consider not, but do it.

Sfor. Art thou mad?

Frau. Would from my youth a loathsome leprosy
Had run upon this face, or that my breath
Had been infectious, and so made me shunn'd
Of all societies! Curs'd be he that taught me
Discourse or manners, or lent any grace
That makes the owner pleasing in the eye
Of wanton women!

Sfor. I am on the rack!
Dissolve this doubtful riddle.

Frank. That I alone,
Of all mankind, that stand most bound to love
you,

And study your content, should be appointed,
Not by my will, but forc'd by cruel fate,
To be your greatest enemy! Not to hold you
In this amazement longer, in a word,
Your dutchless loves me.

Sfor. Loves thee!

Fran. Is mad for me;

Pursues me hourly.

Sfor. Oh!

Fran. And from hence grew
Her late neglect of you.

Sfor. Oh! women, women!

Fran. I labour'd to divert her by persuasion,
Then urg'd your much love to her, and the danger;
Denied her, and with scorn.

Sfor. 'Twas like thyself.

Fran. But when I saw her smile, then heard her
say,

Your love and extreme dotage, as a cloak,
Should cover our embraces, and your power
Fright others from suspicion; and all favours
That should preserve her in her innocence,
By just inverted to be us'd as bawds;
I could not but in duty (though I know
That the relation kills in you all hope
Of peace hereafter, and in me 'twill shew
Both paise and poor to rise up her accuser)
Freely discover it.

Sfor. Eternal plagues

Pursue and overtake her! But, like a village nurse,
Stand I now cursing and considering, when

The tamest fool would do. Within there! Stephano,
Tiberio, and the rest! I will be sudden,
And she shall know and feel, love, in extremes,
Abus'd, knows no degree in hate.

Re-enter TIBERIO and STEPHANO.

Tib. My lord?

Sfor. Go to the chamber of that wicked woman—

Steph. What wicked woman, sir?

Sfor. The devil, my wife.

Force a rude entry; drag her hither;
And know no pity: any gentle usage
To her will call on cruelty from me,
To such as shew it. Stand you staring! Go;
Put my will in act. [*Exeunt Tib. and Steph.*]
Since she dares damnation,
I'll be a fury to her.

Fran. Yet, great sir,

Exceed not in your fury; she's yet guilty
Only in her intent.

Sfor. Intent, Francisco!

It does include all fact; and I might sooner
Be won to pardon treason to my crown,
Or one that kill'd my father.

Fran. You are wise,

And know what's best to do; yet, if you please,
To prove her temper to the height, say only
That I am dead, and then observe how far
She'll be transported. I'll remove a little,
But be within your call. Now to the upshot!
Howe'er, I'll shift for one. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Re-enter TIBERIO, STEPHANO, and Guard, with MARCELIA.

Marc. Where is this monster,

This walking tree of jealousy? Are you here?
Is it by your commandment or allowance,
I am thus basely us'd? Which of my virtues,
My labours, services, and cares, to please you,
Invites this barbarous course? Dare you look on
me

Without a seal of shame?

Sfor. Impudence!

How ugly thou appearest now! Thy intent
To be a wanton, leaves thee not blood enough
To make an honest blush: what had the act done?

Marc. Return'd thee the dishonour thou deserv'st.

Sfor. Your chosen favourite, your woo'd Francisco,

Has dearly paid for't; for, wretch! know, he's dead,
And by my hand.

Marc. Thou hast kill'd, then,

A man I do profess I lov'd; a man
For whom a thousand queens might well be rivals.
But he, I speak it to thy teeth, that dares be
A jealous fool, dares be a murderer,
And knows no end in mischief.

Sfor. I begin now

In this my justice. (*Stabs her.*)

Marc. Oh! I have fool'd myself

Into my grave, and only grieve for that
Which, when you know you've slain an innocent,
You needs must suffer.

Sfor. An innocent! Let one

Call in Francisco; for he lives, vile creature,
[*Exit Stephano.*]

To justify thy falsehood.

With wanton flatteries thou hast tempted him.

Re-enter STEPHANO.

Steph. Seignior Francisco, sir, but even now
Took horse without the ports.

Marc. We are both abus'd,

And both by him undone. Stay, death a little,
Till I have clear'd me to my lord, and then
I willingly obey thee. Oh! my Sforza,
Francisco was not tempted, but the tempter;

And, as he thought to win me, shew'd the warrant
That you sign'd for my death. But, being contemn'd,
Upon his knees with tears he did beseech me,
Not to reveal it: I, soft-hearted fool!

Judging his penitence true, was won unto it:
Indeed, the unkindness to be sentenc'd by you,
Before that I was guilty in a thought,
Made me put on a seeming anger towards you,
And now, behold the issue! As I do,
May heaven forgive you! (*Dies.*)

Sfor. Then I believe thee;
Believe thee innocent, too.

Tib. Her sweet soul has left
Her beauteous prison.

Steph. Look to the duke; he stands
As if he wanted motion.

Tib. Grief hath stopp'd

The organ of his speech.

Sfor. Oh! my heart-strings! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Milanese. A Room in Eugenia's house.*

Enter FRANCISCO and EUGENIA.

Fran. Why, couldst thou think, Eugenia, that
rewards,
Graces, or favours, though strew'd thick upon me,
Could ever bribe me to forget mine honour?
Or, that I tamely would set down before
I had dried these eyes, still wet with showers of
tears

By the fire of my revenge? Look up, my dearest!
For that proud fair, that thief-like, stepp'd between
Thy promis'd hopes, and robb'd thee of a fortune
Almost in thy possession, hath found,
With horrid proof, his love she thought her glory,
But hasten'd her sad ruin.

Eug. Do not flatter
A grief that is beneath it; for, however
The credulous duke to me prov'd false and cruel,
It is impossible he could be wrought on
So to serve her.

Fran. Such, indeed, I grant,
The stream of his affection was, and ran
A constant course, till I, with cunning malice,
(And yet I wrong my act, for it was justice,)
Made it turn backward; and hate, in extremes,
(Love banish'd from his heart,) to fill the room:
In a word, know the fair Marcellia's dead.

Eug. Dead!

Fran. And by Sforza's hand. Does it not move
you?

How coldly you receive it! I expected
The mere relation of so great a blessing,
Borne proudly on the wings of sweet revenge,
Would have call'd on a sacrifice of thanks.
You entertain it with a look, as if
You wish'd it were undone.

Eug. Indeed I do:
For if my sorrows could receive addition,
Her sad fate would increase, not lessen them.
She never injur'd me.

Fran. Have you, then, no gall,
Anger, or spleen, familiar to your sex?
Or is it possible that you could see
Another to possess what was your due,
And not grow pale with envy?

Eug. Yes, of him
That did deceive me. There's no passion, that
A maid so injur'd ever could partake of,
But I have dearly suffer'd. These three years,
In my desire and labour of revenge,
Trusted to you, I have endur'd the throes
Of teeming women; and will hazard all
Fate can inflict on me, but I will reach
Thy heart, false Sforza!

Fran. Still mine own, and dearer!
 And yet, in this you but pour oil on fire,
 And offer your assistance where it needs not:
 And that you may perceive I lay not fallow,
 But had your wrongs stamp'd deeply on my heart,
 I did begin his tragedy in her death,
 To which it serv'd as prologue, and will make
 A memorable story of your fortunes
 In my assur'd revenge: only, best sister,
 Let us not lose ourselves in the performance,
 By your rash undertaking: we will be
 As sudden as you could wish.
Eug. Upon those terms
 I yield myself and cause, to be dispos'd of
 As you think fit.

Enter a Servant.

Fran. Thy purpose?
Serv. There's one Graccho,
 That follow'd you, it seems, upon the track,
 Since you left Milan, that's importunate
 To have access, and will not be denied;
 His haste, he says, concerns you.
Frau. Bring him to me. [*Exit Serv.*]
 Though he hath laid an ambush for my life,
 Or apprehension, yet I will prevent him,
 And work mine own ends out.

Enter GRACCHO.

Grac. Now for my whipping!
 And if I now outstrip him not, and catch him,
 I'll swear there are worms in my brains. (*Aside.*)
Frau. Now, my good Graccho!
 We meet as 'twere by miracle.
 Be brief; what brought thee hither?

Grac. Love and duty,
 And vigilance in me for my lord's safety.
 You are a condemn'd man, pursu'd and sought for;
 And your head rated at ten thousand ducats
 To him that brings it.

Frau. Very good.
Grac. All passengers
 Are intercepted, and your picture sent
 To every state confederate with Milan:
 It is impossible you should escape
 Their curious search.

Eug. Why, let us, then, turn Romans,
 And, falling by our own hands, mock their threats.

Frau. 'Twould shew nobly;
 But that the honour of our fall revenge
 Were lost in the rash action. No, Eugenia;
 Graccho is wise; my friend, too, not my servant;
 And I dare trust him with my latest secret.
 We would, and thou must help us to perform it,
 First kill the duke; then, fall what can upon us!
 For injuries are writ in brass, kind Graccho,
 And not to be forgotten.

Grac. He instructs me
 What I should do. (*Aside.*)

Frau. What's that?
Grac. I labour with
 A strong desire to assist you with my service;
 And now I am deliver'd of it.

Frau. I told you:
 Speak, my oraculous Graccho.
Grac. I have heard, sir,
 Of men in debt, that laid for by their creditors,
 In all such places where it could be thought
 They would take shelter, chose for sanctuary
 Their lodgings underneath their creditors' noses;
 Confident that there they never should be sought for.

Frau. But what infer you from it?
Grac. This, my lord;
 That since all ways of your escape are stopp'd,
 In Milan only, or, what's more, in the court,
 Whither, it is presum'd, you dare not come,
 Conceal'd in some disguise, you may live safe.
Frau. And not to be discover'd?

Grac. But by myself.
Frau. By thee? Alas! I know thee honest,
 Graccho,
 And I will put thy counsel into act,
 And suddenly. Yet, not to be ungrateful
 For all thy loving travail to preserve me,
 What bloody end so'er my stars appoint,
 Thou shalt be safe, good Graccho. Who's within
 there?

Grac. In the devil's name, what means he?
 (*Aside.*)

Enter Servants.

Frau. Take my friend
 Into your custody, and bind him fast:
 I would not part with him.

Grac. My good lord!
Frau. Despatch:
 'Tis for your good; to keep you honest, Graccho:
 I would not have ten thousand ducats tempt you
 To play the traitor. Why, thou fool!
 I can look through and through thee: thy intents
 Appear to me as written in thy forehead,
 In plain and easy characters: and, but that
 I scorn a slave's base blood should rust that sword
 That from a prince expects a scarlet die,
 Thou now wert dead. Away with him!
 I will not hear a syllable.

[*Exeunt Servants with Graccho.*]

We must trust
 Ourselves, Eugenia; and though we make use of
 The counsel of our servants, that oil spent,
 Like snuff's to do offend, we tread them out.
 But now to our last scene, which we'll so carry,
 That few shall understand how 'twas begun,
 Till all, with half an eye, may see 'tis done. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Milan. A Room in the castle.

Enter PESCARA, TIBERIO, and STEPHANO.

Pes. The like was never read of.
Steph. But that melancholy should work
 So far upon a man, as to compel him
 To court a thing that has nor sense nor being,
 Is unto me a miracle.

Pes. Troth, I'll tell you,
 And briefly as I can, by what degrees
 He fell into this madness. When, by the care
 Of his physicians, he was brought to life,
 He call'd for fair Marcella, and being told
 That she was dead, he broke forth in extremes;
 (I would not say blasphem'd;) then it came
 Into his fancy that she was accus'd
 By his mother and sister; thrice he curs'd them,
 And thrice his desperate hand was on his sword
 'T have kill'd them both: but they restrain'd him;
 When, wisely, his physicians, looking on
 The dutchess' wound, to stay his ready hand,
 Cried out, it was not mortal.

Tib. 'Twas well thought on.
Pes. He, easily believing what he wish'd,
 Fell prostrate at the doctors' feet, and swore,
 Provided they recover'd her, he would live
 A private man, and they should share his dukedom.

Sfor. (*Within.*) Support her gently.
Pes. Now be your own witnesses;
 I am prevented.

*Enter LUDOVICO SFORZA, ISABELLA, MARIANA,
 Doctors, and Servants, with the body of Marcella.*

Sfor. Carefully, I beseech you.
 How pale and wan she looks! Oh! pardon me,
 That I presume, died o'er with bloody guilt,
 To touch this snow-white hand. How cold it is!
 This once was Cupid's fire-brand, and still
 'Tis so to me. How slow her pulses beat, too!
 Yet, in this temper, she is all perfection.

Mari. Is not this strange?
Isa. Oh! cross him not, dear daughter.

Enter a Servant, and whispers Pescara.

Pes. With me? What is he? (*Apart.*)

Serv. He has a strange aspect;
A Jew by birth, and a physician
By his profession, as he says; who, hearing
Of the duke's frenzy, on the forfeit of
His life, will undertake to render him
Perfect in every part. (*Apart.*)

Pes. Bring me to him.
As I find cause, I'll do.

[*Apart. Exeunt Pescara and Servants.*]

Sfor. How sound she sleeps!
Heaven keep her from a lethargy! How long
(But answer me with comfort, I beseech you,) does
Your judgment tell you that her sleep will
last?

1 Doc. We have given her, sir,
A sleepy potion, that will hold her long;
That she may be less sensible of the torment
The searching of her wound will put her to.

Sfor. I am patient.
You see I do not rage, but wait your pleasure.
What do you think she dreams of now? for
sure.

Altho' her body's organs are bound fast,
Her fancy cannot slumber.

1 Doc. That, sir, looks on
Your sorrow for your late rash act, and prepares
To meet the free confession of your guilt
With a glad pardon.

Sfor. She was ever kind.
Let her behold me, in a pleasing dream, (*Kneels.*)
Thus, on my knees before her; yet that duty
In me is not sufficient: let her see me
Compel my mother, from whom I took life,
And this, my sister, partner of my being,
To bow thus low unto her:

Bite your tongues, vile creatures,
And let your inward horror fright your souls,
For having belied that pureness.
And for that dog, Francisco, that seduc'd me,
I'll follow him to hell, but I will find him,
And there live a fourth fury to torment him.
Then, for this cursed hand and arm, that guided
The wicked steel, I'll have 'em, joint by joint,
With burning irons, sear'd off, which I will eat,
I being a vulture fit to taste such carrion.

Lastly—
1 Doc. You are too loud, sir; you disturb
Her sweet repose.

Sfor. I am hush'd.

1 Doc. He's past hope: we can no longer cover
the imposture.

*Re-enter PESCARA, with FRANCISCO, as a Jew
doctor, and EUGENIA, disguised.*

Fran. I am no god, sir,
To give a new life to her; yet, I'll hazard
My head, I'll work the senseless trunk t'appear
To him as it had got a second being.

Pes. Do but this,
Till we use means to win upon his passions,
T'endure to bear she's dead, with some small pa-
tience,
And make thy own reward.

Fran. The art I use
Admits no looker on: I only ask
The fourth part of an hour, to perfect that
I boldly undertake. Therefore, command,
That instantly my pupil and myself
Have leave to make a trial of our skill
Alone and undisturb'd.

Pes. About it straight. [*Exit Eugenia.*]

Sfor. What stranger's this?

Pes. Look up, sir, cheerfully;
Comfort in him flows strongly to you.

Sfor. Comfort! from whence came that sound?

Pes. He is a man that can do wonders.

[*Beckons Fran. Exit Fran.*]

Do not hinder
The dutchess' wish'd recovery, to inquire
Or what he is, or to give thanks; but leave him
To work this miracle.

Sfor. Sure, 'tis my good angel.
I do obey in all things. Be it death
For any to disturb him, or come near,
Till he be pleas'd to call us. Oh! be prosperous,
And make a duke thy bondman. [*Exeunt.*]

*Re-enter FRANCISCO, leading in EUGENIA, clothed
as the body of Marcellia.*

Fran. 'Tis my purpose.
I'll make the door fast: so—

Eng. Alas! I tremble:
Thus to tyrannize upon, and mock the dead,
Is most inhuman.

Fran. Come we for revenge,
And can we think on pity? If to enjoy
The wish'd-for sacrifice to thy lost honour,
Be in thy wavering thought a benefit,
Now art thou blest.

Eng. Ah me! what follows now?

Fran. What, but a full conclusion of our wishes!
Look on this flow'r, Eugenia; such a thing
As yonder corpse, whose fatal robe you wear,
Must the pale wretch be summon'd to appear
In the grim court of death, whose senses taste
The poisonous powder scatter'd o'er its leaves.
Now mark, that when with rapturous lust,
Thinking the dead Marcellia reviv'd,
The duke shall fix his lips upon thy hand,
Hold fast the poison'd herb, till the foud fool
Has drunk his death-draught from thy hand be
spurr'd.

Eng. I yield up myself and cause, to be dispos'd
As thou think'st fit. [*Sits down, veiled.*]

Fran. Now to the upshot;
And, as it proves, applaud it. My lord the duke!
Enter with joy, and see the sudden change,
Your servant's hand hath wrought.

Re-enter LUDOVICO SFORZA and the rest.

Sfor. I live again
In my full confidence that Marcellia may
Pronounce my pardon. Can she speak yet?

Fran. No:
You must not look for all your joys at once;
That will ask longer time.

Sfor. By all the dues of love I have had from her,
This hand seems as it was when first I kiss'd it.
(*Kisses her hand.*)

Pes. 'Tis wondrous strange!
Sfor. This act will bind e'en heaven your debtor:
The saints will smile and look on't.
Oh! I could ever feed upon this native
Sweetness.

(*Kisses her hand again. Eugenia throws
away the flower, and sobb.*)
She wakes, she lives! and I am blest again.
(*She lifts up her veil.*)

Oh, horror! shield me from that face.
Eng. I can no more—thou'rt mark'd for death.

Pes. Treason, treason!

Tib. Call up the guard!

Fran. Then we are lost.

Sfor. Speak.

Eng. This is—

Enter Guard.

Fran. Francisco.

Pes. Monster of men!

Fran. Give me all attributes
Of all you can imagine, yet I glory
To be the thing I was born. I am Francisco;
Francisco, that was rais'd by you, and made

The minion of the time; the same Francisco,
That would have us'd thy wife, while she had life,
And after, breath'd a jealousy upon thee,
As killing as those damps that belch out plagues
When the foundation of the earth is shaken:
I made thee do a deed heaven will not pardon,
Which was, to kill an innocent.

Sfor. Call forth the tortures
For all that flesh can feel.

Fran. I dare the worst!
Only, to yield up reason to the world
Why I pursu'd this course—look on this face,
Made old by thy base falsehood: 'tis Eugenia.

Sfor. Eugenia!
Fran. Does it start you, sir? my sister,
Seduc'd and fool'd by thee; but thou must pay
The forfeit of thy falsehood. Does it not work
yet?

Whate'er becomes of me, which I esteem not,
Thou art mark'd for the grave: I've given the
poison

In this cup—now observe me—which, thy lust
Carousing deeply of, made thee forget
Thy vow'd faith to Eugenia.

Pes. Oh! damn'd villain!
How do you, sir?

(*To Sforza.*)

Sfor. Like one
That learns to know in death what punishment
Waits on the breach of faith. Oh! now I feel
An Ætna in my entrails. I have liv'd
A prince, and my last breath shall be command.
I burn, I burn! yet, ere life be consum'd,
Let me pronounce upon this wretch all torture
That witty cruelty can invent.

Pes. Away with him!

Tib. In all things we will serve you.

Fran. Farewell, sister!
Now I have kept my word, torments I scorn;
I leave the world with glory. They are men,
And leave behind them name and memory,
That, wrong'd, do right themselves before they die.

[*Exeunt Guard with Francisco.*]

Steph. A desperate wretch!

Sfor. I come: death, I obey thee.
Yet I will not die raging; for, alas!
My whole life was a frenzy. Good Eugenia,
In death forgive me. As you love me, bear her
To some religious house, there let her spend
The remnant of her life: when I am ashes,
Perhaps she'll be appeas'd, and spare a prayer
For my poor soul. Bury me with Marcelia,
And let our epitaph be—

[*Dies. Exeunt.*]

THE EARL OF ESSEX;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY HENRY JONES.



Act III.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

EARL OF ESSEX
EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON
LORD BURLEIGH

SIR WALTER RALEIGH
LIEUTENANT OF THE TOWER
ATTENDANTS

QUEEN ELIZABETH
COUNTESS OF NOTTINGHAM
COUNTESS OF RUTLAND

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Antichamber in the Palace.*

Enter LORD BURLEIGH and SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

Lord B. The bill, at length, has pass'd opposing numbers,
Whilst crowds seditious clamour'd round the senate,
And headlong faction urg'd its force within.

Sir W. It has, my lord. The wish'd-for day is come,

When this proud idol of the people's hearts
Shall now no more be worshipp'd.—Essex falls.

My lord, the minute's near that shall unravel
The mystic schemes of this aspiring man.

Now fortune, with officious hand, invites us
To her, and opens wide the gates of greatness,
The way to power. My heart exults; I see,

I see, my lord, our utmost wish accomplish'd.
I see great Cecil shine without a rival,
And England bless him as her guardian saint.

Such potent instruments I have prepar'd,
As shall, with speed, o'erturn this hated man,
And dash him down, by proof invincible.

Lord B. His day of glory now is set in night,
And all my anxious hopes, at last, are crown'd.

Those proofs against him, Raleigh—
Sir W. All arrived.

Lord B. Arrived! how? when?
Sir W. This very hour, my lord:

Nay, more; a person comes, of high distinction,
To prove some secret treaties made by Essex,
With Scotland's monarch and the proud Tyrone.

Lord B. How say'st' to prove 'em?
Sir W. Ay, my lord, and back'd
With circumstances of a stronger nature.

It now appears, his secretary, Cuff,
With Blunt and Lee, were deep concern'd in this
Destructive scheme, contriv'd to raise this lord,
And ruin Cecil. Oh! it is a subtle,
A deep laid mischief, by the Earl contriv'd,
In hour malignant, to o'erturn the state,
And (horror to conceive!) dethrone the Queen.

Lord B. These gladsome tidings fly beyond my hopes!

The Queen will listen now, will now believe,
And trust the counsel of her faithful Burleigh.

Dispose 'em well, till kind occasion calls
Their office forth, lest prying craft, meanwhile,
May tamper with their thoughts, and change their

minds:
Let them, like batteries conceal'd, appear
At once, both to surprise and to destroy.

Sir W. This sudden shock, my lord, this weighty stroke,

Must press him headlong down to deep destruction:
Indignant fate marks out this dreaded man,
And fortune now has left him.

Lord B. Thank the changeling;
His servile faction soon will stand agast,
And sink, at distance, from his threat'ning fall.

Sir W. His headstrong friend, the bold South-
ampton, too,

Now finds his rash endeavours all defeated;
And storms at thee and the impeaching commons.

Lord B. Let him rave on, and rage. The lion in
The toils entangled, wastes his strength, and roars
In vain; his efforts but amuse me now.

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. My lord, the Lady Nottingham desires,
With much impatience, to attend your lordship.

Lord B. What may the purport of her bus'ness be?

Her tender wishes are to Essex tied
In love's soft fetters, and endearing bands.

[*Exit Gentleman.*]

And you, my Raleigh, watch Southampton's steps;
With care observe each movement of his friends;
That no advantage on that side be lost.

[*Exit Sir W.*]

Enter COUNTESS OF NOTTINGHAM.

Countess N. Thrice hail to rescu'd England's
guiding genius!

His country's guardian, and his queen's defence.
Great Burleigh, thou whose patriot bosom beats
With Albion's glory and Eliza's fame;
Who shield'st her person, and support'st her
throne;

For thee, what fervent thanks, what offer'd vows,
Do prostrate millions pay!

Lord B. Bright excellence,
This fair applause too highly over-rates,
Too much extols, the low deserts of Cecil.

Countess N. What praises are too high for pa-
triot-worth;

Or what applause exceeds the price of virtne?
My lord, conviction has, at last, subdu'd me,
And I am honour's proselyte:—too long
My erring heart pursu'd the ways of faction;
I own myself t' have been your bitt' rest foe,
And join'd with Essex in each foul attempt
To blast your honour, and traduce your fame.

Lord B. Though ne'er my wishing heart could
call you friend,

Yet honour and esteem I always bore you;
And never meant but with respect to serve you.

Countess N. It is enough, my lord, I know it
well,

And feel rekindling virtue warm my breast;
Honour and gratitude their force resume
Within my heart, and every wish is your's.
Oh! Cecil, Cecil, what a foe hast thou,
A deadly foe, whilst hated Essex lives!

Lord B. I know it well, but can assign no cause.

Countess N. Ambition's restless hand has wound
his thoughts

Too high for England's welfare; nay, the Queen
Scarce sits in safety on her throne, while he,
Th' audacious Essex, freely treads at large,
And breathes the common air. Ambition is
The only god he serves, to whom he'd sacrifice
His honour, country, friends, and every tie
Of truth, and bond of nature; nay, his love.

Lord B. The man that in his public duty fails,
On private virtue will disdainful tread,
As steps to raise him to some higher purpose:
In vain each softer wish would plead with him,
No tender movement in his soul prevails,
And mighty love, who rules all nature else,
Must follow here in proud ambition's train.

Countess N. Pronounce it not, my soul abhors
the sound,

Like death. Oh! Cecil, will you kindly lend
Some pity to a wretch like me?

Lord B. Command,

Madam; my power and will are your's.

Countess N. Will Cecil's friendly ear vouchsafe
to bend

Its great attention to a woman's wrongs,
Whose pride and shame, resentment and despair,
Rise up in raging anarchy at once,
To tear with ceaseless pangs my tortur'd soul?
Words are unequal to the woes I feel,
And language lessens what my heart endures.
Passion, repuls'd with scorn and proud disdain,
Recoils indignant on my shrinking soul,
Beats back my vital spring, and crushes life.

Lord B. Madam, your wrongs, I must confess,
are great;

Yet still, I fear, you know not half his falsehood.

Who but the false, perfidious Essex could
Prefer to Nottingham a Rutland's charms?
Start not: by heav'n, I tell you nought but truth,
What I can prove, past doubt; that he receiv'd
The Lady Rutland's hand in sacred wedlock,
The very night before his setting out
For Ireland.

Countess N. Oh! may quick destruction seize
em!

May furies blast, and hell destroy their peace!
May all their nights—

Lord B. I pray, have patience, madam;
Restrain awhile your rage; curses are vain.
But there's a surer method to destroy him;
And if you'll join with me, 'tis done:—he falls.

Countess N. Ha! say'st thou, Burleigh? Speak,
my genius, speak;

Be quick as vengeance' self to tell me how.

Lord B. You must have heard the commons have
impeach'd him,

And we have proofs sufficient for his ruin.
But the Queen—you know how fair he stands
In her esteem; and Rutland, too, his wife,

Hath full possession of the royal ear.
What, then, avail impeachments, or the law's
Severest condemnation, while the Queen

May snatch him from the uplifted hand of justice?
Here, then, my Nottingham, begins thy task:

Try every art t' incense the Queen against him,
Then step between her and the Lady Rutland;

Observe Southampton, too, with jealous eye;
Prevent, as much as possible, his suit:

For well I know he will not fail to try
His eloquence on behalf of Essex.

Countess N. It shall be done; his doom is fix'd;
he dies.

Oh! 'twas a precious thought! I never knew
Such heart-felt satisfaction! Essex dies;

And Rutland, in her turn, shall learn to weep.
The time is precious; I'll about it straight.

Come, vengeance, come, assist me now to breathe
Thy venom'd spirit in the royal ear. [*Exit.*]

Lord B. There spoke the very genius of the sex.
A disappointed woman sets no bounds

To her revenge. Her temper's form'd to serve me.

Enter SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

Sir W. The Lord Southampton, with a govern'd
rage,

Resents aloud his disappointed measures.

I met him in the outward court; he seeks
In haste your lordship; and, forgetting forms,

Pursues me hither, and demands to see you.

Lord B. Raleigh, 'tis well: withdraw; attend the
Queen.

Leave me to deal with this o'erbearing man.

[*Exit Sir W.*]

Enter EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON.

Earl S. Where is the man that virtue calls her
friend?

I give you joy, my lord! your quenchless fury
At length prevails, and now your malice triumphs.

You've hunted honour to the toil of faction,
And view his struggles with malicious joy.

Lord B. What means my lord?

Earl S. Oh! fraud, shall valiant Essex

Be made a sacrifice to your ambition!

Oh! it smells foul, indeed, of rankest malice,
And the vile statesman's craft. You dare not, sure,

Thus bid defiance to each shew of worth,
Each claim of honour: dare not injure thus

Your sull'ring country in her bravest son?

Lord B. But why should stern reproach her
angry brow

Let fall on me? Am I alone the cause
That gives this working humour strength? Do I

Instruct the public voice to warp his actions?
Justice, untaught, shall poison th' impartial scales,

And every curious eye may mark the beam.

Earl S. The specious shield, which private malice bears,
Is ever blazon'd with some public good;
Behind that artful fence, skulk low, conceal'd
The bloody purpose and the poison'd shaft;
Ambition there, and envy nestle close;
From thence they take their fatal aim unseen;
And honest merit is the destin'd mark.

Lord B. My country's welfare, and my Queen's command,
Have ever been my guiding stars through life,
My sure direction still. To these I now
Appeal; from these, no doubt, this lord's misconduct

Hath widely stray'd; and reason, not reviling,
Must now befriend his cause.

Earl S. How ill had Providence
Dispos'd the suff'ring world's oppress'd affairs,
Had sacred right's eternal rule been left
To crafty politicians' partial sway!
Then power and pride would stretch th' enormous grasp,

And call their arbitrary portion justice:
Ambition's arm, by av'rice urg'd, would pluck
The core of honesty from virtue's heart,
And plant deceit and rancour in its stead:
Falseness would trample, then, on truth and honour,
And envy poison sweet benevolence.
Oh! 'tis a goodly group of attributes,
And well befits some statesman's righteous rule!
Out, out upon such base and bloody doings!
The term of being is not worth the sin;
No human bosom can endure its dart.
Then put this cruel purpose from thee far,
Nor let the blood of Essex whelm thy soul

Lord B. 'Tis well, my lord! your words no comment need;

Yet mark me well, my lord, the clinging ivy
With th' oak may rise, but with it, too, must fall.

Earl S. Thy empty threats, ambitious man, hurt not

The breast of truth. Fair innocence and faith,
Those strangers to thy practis'd heart, shall shield
My honour, and preserve my friend. In vain,
Thy malice, with unequal arm, shall strive
To tear th' applauded wreath from Essex' brow;
His honest laurel, held aloft by fame,
Shall bloom immortal to the latest times;
Whilst thou, amidst thy tangling snares involv'd,
Shall sink confounded, and unpitied fall.

Lord B. Rail on, proud lord, and give thy choleric vent:

It wastes itself in vain; the Queen shall judge
Between us in this warm debate. To her
I now repair; and, in her royal presence,
You may approve your innocence and faith.
Perhaps you'll meet me there. Till then, farewell!

Earl S. Confusion wait thy steps, thou cruel monster!

My noble and illustrious friend betray'd,
By crafty faction and tyrannic power,
His sinking trophies, and his falling fame,
Oppress my very soul. I'll to the Queen,
Lay all their envy open to her view,
Confront their malice, and preserve my friend.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

QUEEN ELIZABETH discovered, sitting on her throne.
SIR WALTER RALEIGH, Lords, and Attendants.

Queen. Without consulting me! presumptuous man!

Who governs here? What! am not I your queen?
You dar'd not, were he present, take this step.

Sir W. Dread sov'reign, your ever-faithful commons

Have, in their gratitude and love for you,
Preferr'd this salutary bill against him.

Enter LORD BURLEIGH.

Queen. You, my Lord Burleigh, must have known of this.

The commons here impeach the Earl of Essex
Of practising against the state and me.
Methinks, I might be trusted with the secret.
Speak, for I know it well, 'twas thy contrivance.
Ha! was it not? You dare not say it was not.

Lord B. I own my judgment did concur with theirs.

His crimes, I fear, will justify the charge,
And vindicate their loyalty and mine.

Queen. I tell not me your smooth, deceitful story!

I know your projects and your close cabals.
You'd turn my favour into party feuds,
And use my sceptre as the rod of faction:
But Henry's daughter claims a nobler soul.
I'll nurse no party, but will reign o'er all;
And my sole rule shall be to bless my people:
Who serves them best has still my highest favour:
This Essex ever did.

Enter EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON.

Behold, Southampton,
What a base portrait's here! The faithful Essex
Here drawn at large associating with rebels,
To spoil his country and dethrone his Queen.

Earl S. It is not like. By heav'n, the hand of envy

Drew these false lines, distorted far from truth
And honour, and unlike my noble friend
As light to shade, or hell to highest heav'n!
Then suffer not, thou best of queens, this lord,
This valiant lord, to fall a sacrifice
To treachery and base designs; who now
Engages death in all her horrid shapes,
Amidst a hardy race, inur'd to danger;
But let him face to face this charge encounter,
And every falsehood, like his foes, shall fly.

Queen. To me you seem to recommend strict justice,

In all her pomp of power. But are you sure
No subtle vice conceal'd assumes her garb?
Take heed, that malice does not wear the mask,
Nor envy deck her in her borrow'd guise.
Impeach the very man to whom I owe
My brightest rays of glory! Look to it, lords;
Take care, be cautious on what ground you tread;
Let honest means alone secure your footing.
Raleigh and you withdraw, and wait our leisure.

[*Exeunt Sir W. and Earl S.*
Lord Burleigh, stay; we must with you have farther

Conf'rence. I see this base contrivance plain.
Your jealousy and pride, your envy of
His shining merit, brought this bill to light.
But mark me, as you prize our high regard
And favour, I command you to suppress it:
Let not our name and power be embarrass'd
In your perplexing schemes. 'Twas you began,
And, therefore, you must end it.

Lord B. I obey.
Yet humbly would entreat you to consider
How new, unpopular, this step must be,
To stand between your parliament's inquiry
And this offending lord. We have such proofs—

Queen. Reserve your proofs to a more proper season,

And let them then appear. But once again
We charge you, on your duty and allegiance,
To stop this vile proceeding; and to wait
Till Essex can defend himself in person.
If, then, your accusations are of force,
The laws and my consent, no doubt, are open.
He has my strict command, with menace mix'd,
To end effectually this hated war,
Ere he presume to quit the Irish coast.

Lord B. Madam, my duty now compels me to—

Queen. No more! see that my orders be obey'd.
[Exit Lord B.]

Essex a traitor! it can never be!
His grateful and his honest soul disdains it.
I know him hot, ambitious, rash, impatient;
But then he's firmly anchor'd in his duty;
Though stormy passions toss him to and fro.
Can he prove false? so high advanc'd, so honour'd,
So near my favour—and, I fear, so near
My heart! Impossible! This Burleigh bates him;
And, as his rival, therefore, would destroy him;
But he shall find his narrow schemes defeated.
In vain their fraudful efforts shall combine
To shake my settled soul, my firm design;
Resolv'd to lift bright virtue's palm on high,
Support her grandeur, and her foes defy. [Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter LORD BURLEIGH.

Lord B. Essex arriv'd! Confusion to my hopes!
His presence will destroy me with the Queen.
I much suspect he had some private notice;
Perhaps, a punctual order to return.
He lurks too near her heart. What's to be done?
Now is th' important crisis—
Keep up thy usual strength; my better genius,
Direct my steps to crush my mortal foe.

Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH and SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

Queen. It cannot be! Return'd without my leave!
Against my strict command! Impossible!
Sir W. Madam, the Earl is now at court, and begs

An audience of your majesty.

Queen. Amazing!

What, break his trust! desert his high command!
Forsake his post, and disobey his Queen!
'Tis false—invented all. You wish it so!

Lord B. Madam, I wish some rumours false:
Reports, I fear, of great concern to you.

Queen. What rumours! what reports? Your frown would much

Denote: your preface seems important. Speak.

Lord B. Some new commotions are, of late, sprung up

In Ireland, where the west is all in arms,
And moves with hasty march to join Tyrone,
And all his northern clans. A dreadful power!
Nay, more; we have advices from the borders
Of sudden risings near the banks of Tweed!
'Tis thought, to favour an attempt from Scotland.
Meanwhile, Tyrone embarks six thousand men
To land at Milford, and march where Essex
Shall join them with his friends.

Queen. In league with James!

And plotting with Tyrone! It cannot be.

His very pride disdains such perfidy.

But is not Essex here without my leave?

Against my strict command? that, that's rebellion.

The rest, if true, or false, it matters not.

What's to be done? admit him to my presence?

No, no; my dignity, my pride forbid it.

Ungrateful man, approach me not; rise, rise,

Resentment, and support my soul! disdain,

Do thou assist me! Yes, it shall be so.

Lord B. I see she muses deep; her mind works upwards,

And paints its struggling efforts in her face.

Tyrone's invasion wakes her fear and anger,
And all her soul is one continued storm. (Aside.)

Queen. For once my pride shall stoop; and I will see

This rash, audacious, this once-favour'd man;

But treat him as his daring crimes deserve.

Enter EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON.

Earl S. Permit me, madam, to approach you thus; (Kneeling.)

Thus lowly to present the humble suit
Of the much injur'd, faithful Earl of Essex,
Who dares not, unpermitted, meet your presence.
He begs, most gracious Queen, to fall before
Your royal feet, to clear him to his sovereign,
Whom, next to heav'n, he wishes most to please.
Let faction load him with her labouring band,
His innocence shall rise against the weight,
If but his gracious mistress deign to smile.

Queen. Let him appear. [Exit Earl S.]

Now to thy trying task,
My soul! Put forth, exert thy utmost strength,
Nor let an injur'd Queen be tame. Lie still,
My heart, I cannot listen to thee now.

Enter EARL OF ESSEX and EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON.

Earl E. Forgive, thou injur'd majesty, thou best
Of queens, this seeming disobedience. See,
I bend submissive in your royal presence,
With soul as penitent, as if before
Th' all-searching eye of heav'n. But, oh! that frown!

My Queen's resentment wounds my inmost spirit,
Strikes me like death, and pierces through my heart.

Queen. You have obey'd, my lord; you've serv'd me well;

My deadly foes are quell'd: and you come home
A conqueror. Your country bids you welcome;
And I, your Queen, applaud! Triumphant man!
What! is it thus that Essex gains his laurels?
What! is it thus you've borne my high commis-

sion?
How durst you disregard your trusted duty,
Desert your province, and betray your Queen?

Earl E. I came to clear my injur'd name from guilt,

Imputed guilt, and slanderous accusations.
My shame was wafted in each passing gale,
Each swelling tide came loaded with my wrongs;
And echo sounded forth, from faction's voice,
The traitor Essex! Was't not hard, my Queen,
That while I stood in danger's dreadful front,
Encount'ring death in ev'ry shape of terror,
And bleeding for my country—was't not hard,
My mortal enemies at home, like cowards,
Should, in my absence, basely blast my fame?

Queen. It is the god-like attribute of kings
To raise the virtuous and protect the brave.

I was the guardian of your reputation;
What malice, or what faction, then, could reach you?

My honour was expos'd, engag'd for your's:
But you found reason to dislike my care,
And to yourself assum'd the wrested office.

Earl E. If aught disloyal in this bosom dwells,
If aught of treason lodges in this heart,
May I to guilt and lasting shame be wedded,
The sport of faction, and the mark of scorn,
The world's derision, and my Queen's abhorrence.
Stand forth the villain, whose envenom'd tongue
Would taint my honour and traduce my name,
Or stamp my conduct with a rebel's brand!
Lives there a monster in the haunts of men,
Dares tear my trophies from their pillar'd base,
Eclipse my glory, and disgrace my deeds?

Queen. This ardent language and this glow of soul,

Were nobly graceful in a better cause;
Where virtue warrants, and where truth inspires:
But injur'd truth, with brow invincible,
Frowns stern reproof upon the false assertion,
And contradicts it with the force of facts.
From me you have appeal'd, ungrateful man;
The laws, not I, must listen to your plea.

Go, stand the test severe, abide the trial,
And mourn, too late, the bounty you've abus'd.

[*Exeunt Queen, Earl S. &c.*
Earl E. Is this the just requital, then, of all
My patriot toils and oft-encounter'd perils,
Amidst the inclemencies of camps and climes?
Then be it so. Unmov'd and dauntless, let me
This shock of adverse fortune firmly stand.
But yet, methinks, 'tis somewhat sudden, too!
My greatness now depriv'd of each support,
Which bore so long its envy'd weight aloft,
Must quick to ruin fall, and crush my hopes.

Enter EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON.

Earl S. Alas! my lord, the Queen's displeasure
kindles
With warmth increasing; whilst Lord Burleigh
labours
To inflame her wrath, and make it still burn
fiercer.

Earl E. I scorn the blaze of courts, the pomp of
kings;
I give them to the winds and lighter vanity;
Too long they've robb'd me of substantial bliss,
Of solid happiness, and true enjoyments.
But lead me to my mourning love; alas!
She sinks beneath oppressing ills; she fades,
She dies for my afflicting pangs, and seeks
Me sorrowing in the walks of woe. Distraction!
Oh! lead me to her, to my soul's desire.

Earl S. Let caution guide you in this dangerous
step.
Consider well, my lord, the consequence—
For should the Queen (forbid it heav'n!) discover
Your private loves, your plighted hands, no power
On earth could step between you and destruction.

Enter LORD BURLEIGH.

Lord B. My Lord of Essex, 'tis the Queen's com-
mand,
That you forthwith resign your staff of office;
And, further, she confines you to your palace.

Earl E. Welcome, my fate. Let fortune do her
utmost;
I know the worst, and will confront her malice,
And bravely bear the unexpected blow.

Lord B. The Queen, my lord, demands your
quick compliance.

Earl E. Go, then, thou gladsome messenger of
ill,

And, joyful, feast thy fierce, rapacious soul
With Essex' sudden and accomplish'd fall.
The trampled corse of all his envy'd greatness
Lies prostrate now beneath thy savage feet;
But still th' exalted spirit mounts above thee.
Go tell the Queen thy own detested story:
Full in her sight disclose the sauky labyrinths
And lurking snares you plant in virtue's path,
To catch integrity's unguarded step.

Lord B. How ill repaid are public toils and
cares!

Your country has impeach'd, your Queen accus'd
you;

To those address your best defence, and clear
Your question'd conduct from disloyal guilt.
What answer to the Queen shall I return?

Earl E. My staff of office I from her receive'd,
And will to her, and her alone, resign it.

Lord B. This bold refusal will incense the
Queen.
This arrogance will make your guilt the stronger.

[*Exit.*
Earl S. Sustain, my noble friend, thy wonted
greatness;
Collect thy fortitude, and summon all
Thy soul, to bear with strength this crushing
weight,
Which falls severe upon thee; whilst my friendship
Shall lend a helping band, and share the burthen.
I'll hence with speed, and to the Queen repair,

And all the power of warmest words employ,
To gain you yet one audience more, and bring
Her majesty to milder thoughts. Farewell! [*Exit.*

Earl E. As newly wak'd from all my dreams of
glory,
Those gilded visions of deceitful joys,
I stand confounded at the unlook'd-for change,
And scarcely feel this thunderbolt of fate.
The painted clouds, which bore my hopes aloft,
Alas! are now vanish'd to yielding air,
And I am fall'n, indeed!
How weak is reason, when affection pleads!
How hard to turn the fond, deluded heart
From flatt'ring toys, which sooth'd its vanity!
The laurell'd trophy, and the loud applause,
The victor's triumph, and the people's gaze,
The high hung banner, and recording gold,
Subdue me still, still cling around my heart,
And pull my reason down.

Enter COUNTESS OF RUTLAND.

Countess R. Oh! let me fly
To clasp, embrace the lord of my desires,
My soul's delight, my utmost joy, my husband!
I feel once more his panting bosom beat;
Once more I hold him in my eager arms,
Behold his face, and lose my soul in rapture.

Earl E. Transporting bliss! my richest, dearest
treasure!

My mourning turtle, my long absent peace,
Oh! come yet nearer, nearer to my heart!
My raptur'd soul springs forward to receive thee:
Thou heav'n on earth! thou balm of all my woe!

Countess R. Oh! shall I credit, then, each ra-
vish'd sense?

Has pitying heaven consented to my prayer?
It has, it has; my Essex is return'd!
But language poorly speaks the joys I feel;
Let passion paint, and looks express the soul.

Earl E. With thee, my sweetest comfort, I'll
retire

From splendid palaces and glitt'ring throngs,
To live embosom'd in the shades of joy,
Where sweet content extends her friendly arms,
And gives increasing love a lasting welcome.
With thee I'll timely fly from proud oppression,
Forget our sorrows, and be bless'd for ever.

Countess R. Oh! let us hence, beyond the reach
of power;

Where fortune's hand shall never part us more.
In this calm state of innocence and joy,
I'll press thee to my throbbing bosom close:
Ambition's voice shall call in vain; the world,
The thankless world, shall never claim thee more,
And all thy business shall be love and me.

Earl E. The Queen, incens'd at my return, aban-
dons me

To Cecil's malice, and the rage of faction.
I'm now no more the fav'rite child of fortune:
My enemies have caught me in the toil,
And life has nothing worth my wish, but thee.

Countess R. Delusive dream of fancied happi-
ness!

And has my fatal fondness then destroy'd thee?
Oh! I have lur'd thee to the deadly snare
Thy cruel foes have laid.

I dreaded Cecil's malice, and my heart,
Longing to see thee, with impatience listen'd
To its own alarms; and prudence sunk beneath
The force of love.

Earl E. Forbear, my only comfort;
Oh! tell me not of danger, death, and Burleigh;
Let every star shed down its mortal bane
On my unshelter'd head: whilst thus I fold
Thee in my raptur'd arms, I'll brave 'em all,
Defy my fate, and meet its utmost rigour.

Countess R. Alas! my lord, consider where we
are.

Oh! 'tis the Queen's apartment; death is here.

Each precious moment is by fate beset,
And time stands trembling whilst we thus confer.

Earl E. Then let us hence from this detested place;

My rescu'd soul disdains the house of greatness,
Where bumble honesty can find no shelter.
From hence we'll fly where love and virtue call,
Where happiness invites—that wish of all:
With sweet content enjoy each blissful hour,
Beyond the smiles of fraud, or frowns of power.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter LORD BURLEIGH and COUNTESS OF NOTTINGHAM.

Countess N. My lord, I've sought you out with much impatience.

You've had an audience of the Queen: what follow'd?

Lord B. Soon as I told her Essex had refus'd
To yield his dignities and staff of office,
She seem'd depriv'd of reason for a moment;
Her working mind betray'd contending passions,
Which, in her alter'd face, appear'd by turns.
She paus'd, like thunder in some kindling cloud,
The instant burst with dreadful fury forth:
"Let him to the Tow'r!" I instantly withdrew,
But soon was countermanded, and desir'd
To bring the Earl of Essex to her presence.
I like it not, and much I fear she'll stand
Between this high offender and the laws.

Countess N. Is Essex, then, secur'd?

Lord B. Madam, he is;

And now comes guarded to the court.

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. Madam, the Queen

Is in her closet, and desires to see you. [*Exit.*]

Countess N. I attend her.

Lord B. She wants, no doubt, to be advis'd by you.

Improve this fair occasion, urge it home.

Countess N. I know her foible. Essex long has had

An interest in her heart, which nothing can O'erturn, except his own ungovern'd spirit.

It is, indeed, the instrument by which

We work, and cannot fail, if rightly us'd.

Lord B. Madam, the Queen expects you instantly.

I must withdraw, and wait the Earl's arrival.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

QUEEN ELIZABETH discovered.

Queen. Ill-fated, wretched man! perverse and obstinate!

He counterworks my grace, and courts destruction.

He gives his deadly foes the dagger to Destroy him, and defeats my friendly purpose,
Which would, by seeming to abandon, save him.
Nor will he keep the mask of prudence on
A moment's space. What! must I bear this scorn?

No; let me all the monarch reassume;
Exert my power and be myself again—
Oh! ill-performing, disobedient heart!

Why shrink'st thou, fearful, from thy own resolve?

Enter COUNTESS OF NOTTINGHAM.

Thou com'st in time; I'm much disturb'd, abus'd,
My Nottingham, and would complain to thee
Of insolence, neglect, and high contempt.
Essex presum'd to dictate laws within
My palace-gates. How say'st thou, Nottingham?

Countess N. Surely, my gracious Queen, it cannot be!

His heat and passion never could impel him
To take so bold a step to such rash guilt:
Methinks, his very honour should prevent it.

Queen. Thy open, honest mind untutor'd seems
In life's ungrateful and degenerate school;
Where stubborn vice in every form appears,
Mocking correction's ineffectual rod.

It is, indeed, an evil hard to bear;
This haughty man has wanton'd with my grace,
Abus'd my bounty, and despis'd my favours.
Resentment, then, shall in her turn prevail;
To angry laws I'll give this victim up.

Countess N. His conduct has, I fear, been too unguarded:

His hasty temper knows not where to stop.
Ambition is the spur of all his actions,
Which often drives him o'er his duty's limits;

(At least his enemies would have it so;)
But malice, madam, seldom judges right.

Queen. Oh! Nottingham, his pride is past enduring;

This insolent, audacious man forgets
His honour and allegiance; and refus'd
To render up his staff of office here,
Beneath my very eye.

Countess N. Presumptuous man!
Your faithful subjects will resent this pride,
This insolence, this treason to their Queen:
They must, my gracious sovereign. 'Tis not safe
To shield him longer from their just resentment:
Then give him up to justice and the laws.

Queen. You seem well-pleas'd to urge severity:
Offended majesty but seldom wants
Such sharp advisers. Yet no attribute
So well befits the exalted seat supreme,
And power's disposing hand, as clemency.

Each crime must from its quality be judg'd;
And pity there should interpose, where malice
Is not th' aggressor. Hence! I'll hear no more.

Countess N. Madam, my sentiments were well intended;

Justice, not malice, mov'd my honest zeal.
My words were echoes of the public voice,
Which daily rises, with repeated cries
Of high complaint, against this haughty lord.
I pity, from my heart, his rash attempts,
And much esteem the man.

Queen. Go, Nottingham—

My mind's disturb'd—and send me Rutland hither.

[*Exit Countess N.*]

Oh! vain distinction of exalted state!

No rank ascends above the reach of care,
Nor dignity can shield a queen from woe.
Despotic nature's stronger sceptre rules,
And pain and passion in her right prevail.

Oh! the unpiy'd lot, severe condition,
Of solitary, sad, dejected grandeur!

Alone condemn'd to bear th' unsocial throb
Of heart-felt anguish, and corroding grief;
Depriv'd of what, within his homely shed,
The poorest peasant in affliction finds,
The kind, condoling comfort of a dear
Partaking friend—

Enter COUNTESS OF RUTLAND.

Rutland, I want thy timely
Counsel. I'm importun'd and urg'd to punish;
But justice, sometimes, has a cruel sound.

Essex has,
No doubt, provok'd my anger, and the laws;
His haughty conduct calls for sharp reproof,
And just correction. Yet I think him guiltless
Of studied treason, or design'd rebellion.
Then tell me, Rutland, what the world reports,
What censure says of his unruly deeds.

Countess R. The world with envy's eye beholds
his merit:

Madam, 'tis malice all, and false report.
I know his noble heart, 'tis fill'd with honour:

No trait'rous taint has touch'd his gen'rous soul;
His grateful mind still glows with pure affection;
And all his thoughts are loyalty and you.

Queen. I grant you, Rutland, all you say, and think

The Earl possess'd of many splendid virtues.
What pity 'tis he should afford his foes
Such frequent, sad occasions to undo him!

Countess R. What human heart can, unafflicted, bear

Such manly merit in distress; such worth
Betray'd; such valour in the toil, beset
By cruel foes and faction's savage cry?
My good, my gracious mistress, stretch, betimes,
Your saving arm, and snatch him from destruction,
From deadly malice, treachery, and Cecil.
Oh! let him live to clear his conduct up.

My gracious Queen, he'll nobly earn your bounty;
And, with his dearest blood, deserve your mercy.

Queen. Her words betray a warm, unusual fervour;
Mere friendship never could inspire this transport.

(Aside.)
I never doubted but the Earl was brave;
His life and valiant actions all declare it:
I think him honest, too, but rash and headstrong.
I gladly would preserve him from his foes;
And, therefore, am resolv'd once more to see him.

Countess R. Oh! 'tis a godlike thought, and heav'n itself

Inspires it! Sure, some angel moves your heart,
Your royal heart, to pity and forgiveness.
This gracious deed shall shine in future story,
And deck your annals with the brightest virtue;
Posterity shall praise the princely act,
And ages yet to come record your goodness.

Queen. I'll hear no more. Must I, then, learn from you

To know my province, and be taught to move
As each designing mind directs? Leave me.

Countess R. Her frowns are dreadful, and her eye looks terror.

I tremble for my Essex. Save him, heav'n!

Queen. Her warmth has touch'd my home. My jealous heart,
My fearful and suspicious soul's alarm'd.

Enter LORD BURLEIGH, SIR WALTER RALEIGH, and others.

Lord B. The Earl of Essex waits your royal will.
Queen. Let him approach. And now, once more support

Thy dignity, my soul; nor yield thy greatness
To strong, usurping passion. But, he comes.

Enter EARL OF ESSEX, EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON, and Guards.

Earl E. Permitted thus to bend, with prostrate heart,
(Kneels.)

Before your sacred majesty, I come
With every grateful sense of royal favour
Deeply engrav'd within my conscious soul.

Queen. I sent my orders for your staff of office.

Earl E. Madam, my envy'd dignities and honours

I first from your own royal hand receiv'd;
And, therefore, justly held it far beneath me
To yield my trophies and exalted power,
So dearly purchas'd in the field of glory,
To hands unworthy. No, my gracious Queen,
I meant to lay them at your royal feet,
Where life itself a willing victim falls,
If you command.

Queen. High swelling words, my lord, but ill supply

The place of deeds, and duty's just demand.
In danger's onset, and the day of trial,
Conviction still on acting worth attends;
Whilst mere professions are by doubts encumber'd.

Earl E. My deeds have oft declar'd, in danger's front,

How far my duty and my valour lead me.
Allegiance still my thirst of glory fir'd,
And all my bravely gather'd, envy'd laurels,
Were purchas'd only to adorn my Queen.

Queen. Your guilty scorn of my intrusted power,
When with my mortal foes you tamely dally'd,
By hardy rebels brav'd, you poorly sought
A servile pause, and begg'd a shameful truce.
Should Essex thus so meanly compromise,
And lose the harvest of a piteous glory,
In idle treaties and suspicious parley!

Earl E. Oh! deadly stroke! My life's the destin'd mark.

The poison'd shaft has sunk my spirits deep!
Is't come to this? Conspire with rebels! Ha!
I've serv'd you, madam, with the utmost peril,
And ever gloried in th' illustrious danger;

Where famine fac'd me with her meagre mien,
And pestilence and death brought up her train.
I've fought your battles, in despite of nature,
Where seasons sicken'd, and the elime was fate.

My power to parley, or to fight, I had
From you; the time and circumstance did call
Aloud for mutual treaty and condition;
For that I stand a guarded felon here—a traitor,
Hemm'd in by villains, and by slaves surrounded.

Queen. Shall added insolence, with crest audacious,

Her front uplift against the face of power?

Think not that injur'd majesty will bear
Such arrogance uncheck'd, or unchastis'd.
No public trust becomes the man who treads,
With scornful steps, in honour's sacred path,
And stands at bold defiance with his duty.

Earl E. Away with dignities and hated trust,
With flatt'ring honours, and deceitful pow'r!
Invert th' eternal rules of right and justice;
Let villains thrive, and outcast virtue perish;
Let slaves be rais'd, and cowards have command.
Take, take your gaudy trifles back, those baits
Of vice, and virtue's bane.—'Tis clear, my Queen,
My royal mistress, casts me off; nay, joins
With Cecil to destroy my life and fame.

Queen. Presuming wretch! audacious traitor!

Earl E. Traitor!

Queen. Hence from my sight, ungrateful slave,
and learn

At distance to revere your Queen.

Earl E. Yes; let

Me fly beyond the limits of the world,
And nature's verge, from proud oppression far,
From malice, tyranny, from courts, from you.

Queen. Traitor! villain! *(Strikes him.)*

Earl E. Confusion! what, a blow!

Restrain good heav'n! down, down, thou rebel passion,

And judgment take the reins. Madam, 'tis well—

Your soldier falls degraded,
His glory's tarnish'd, and his fame undone.
Oh! bounteous recompense from royal hands!

But you, ye implements, beware, beware,
What honour wrong'd, and honest wrath can act.

Queen. What would th' imperious traitor do?
My life

Beyond thy wretched purpose stands secure.
Go, learn at leisure what your deeds deserve,
And tremble at the vengeance you provoke.

[Exeunt all but Earl E. and Earl S.]

Earl E. Disgrac'd and struck! Damnation!
Death were glorious.

Revenge! revenge!

Earl S. Alas! my friend, what would
Thy rage attempt? Consider well the great
Advantage now your rash, ungovern'd temper
Affords your foes. The Queen, incens'd, will let
Their fury loose.—I dread the dire event.

Earl E. Has honest pride no just resentment left?

Nor injur'd honour feeling? Not revenge!

High heaven shall bear and earth regret my wrongs.
Hot indignation burns within my soul.
I'll do some dreadful thing—I know not what;
Some deed, as horrid as the shame I feel,
Shall startle nature, and alarm the world.
Then hence, like light'ning, let me furious fly,
To hurl destruction on my foes on high;
Pull down oppression from its tyrant seat,
Redeem my glory, or embrace my fate. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT IV.

Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH and COUNTESS OF NOTTINGHAM.

Queen. Not taken yet!

Countess N. No, madam; for the Earl of Essex, leagu'd with desp'rate friends, made strong

And obstinate resistance; till, at length, O'erpower'd by numbers, and increasing force, He fled from shelter to a small retreat, A summer-house upon the Thames; and resolv'd To perish, rather than submit to power.

Queen. Oh! where shall majesty bestow its favours,

Since Essex has a traitor prov'd to me,— Whose arm has rais'd him up to power and greatness;

Whose heart has shar'd in all its splendid triumphs, And feels, ev'n now, his trait'rous deeds with pity? But hence, with pity and the woman's pangs: Resentment governs, and the Queen shall punish.

Enter LORD BURLEIGH.

Lord B. Illustrious Queen, the traitors are all seiz'd.

Th' intelligence was true. Their black debates Were held at Drury-house. The dire result Was this: that Essex should alarm the citizens To open mutiny and hold rebellion. Their purpose was to seize your royal palace, And sacred person; but your faithful people, As by one mind inform'd, one zeal inspir'd, Rose up at once, and with their virtue quell'd them.

Queen. Thanks to their honest, to their loyal hearts.

But say, were any persons else concern'd, Of high distinction, or of noted rank?

Lord B. Yes, madam, many more, seduc'd of late, 'Mong whom the bold Southampton foremost stands.

They're now our pris'ners, and are safe secur'd; But Essex, with Southampton and the rest Of greater note, I would not dare dispose of Without your royal mandate; and they now Attend without, to know your final pleasure.

Queen. Is this the just return of all my care; My anxious toilsome days, and watchful nights? Have I sent forth a wish that went not freighted With all my people's good? Or, have I life, Or length of days desir'd, but for their sake? The public good is all my private care. Then could I think this grateful isle Contain'd one traitor's heart? But, least of all, That Essex' breast should lodge it? Call the monster,

And let me meet this rebel face to face. Do you withdraw, and wait within our call.

[Exeunt Lord B. and Countess N.]

Enter EARL OF ESSEX.

You see we dare abide your dangerous presence, Though treason sits within your heart enthron'd, And on that brow rebellion lours, where once Such boasted loyalty was said to flourish. How low the traitor can degrade the soldier! Guilt glares in conscious die upon thy cheek, And inward horror trembles in thine eye. How mean is fraud! how base ingratitude!

Earl E. Forbear reproach, thou injur'd majesty, Nor wound with piercing looks, a heart already With anguish torn and bleeding with remorse. Your awful looks, alone, are arm'd with death, And justice gives them terror.

Queen. Hapless man!

What cause could prompt, what fiend could urge thee on

To this detested deed? Could I from thee Expect to meet this base retreat? from thee, To whom I ought to fly with all the confidence That giving bounty ever could inspire, Or seeming gratitude and worth could promise?

Earl E. Alas! I own my crimes, and feel my treasons;

They press me down beneath the reach of pity. Despair alone can shield me from myself.

Oh! let the little space I live be curs'd With countless woes; let death, unpitied, come; If all my life can feel, or fame can suffer, Can serve to mitigate my Queen's displeasure.

Queen. My pride forbids me to reproach thee more;

My pity, rather, would relieve thy sorrow. The people's clamours, and my special safety, Call loud for justice, and demand your life. But if forgiveness from an injur'd Queen Can make the few short hours you live more easy, I give it freely from my pitying heart; And wish my willing power could grant thee more.

Earl E. Oh! sounds angelic! goodness undeserv'd!

My swelling heart can keep no bounds, my soul Flows o'er.—And will my gracious Queen forgive me?

Oh! let me prostrate thus before you fall, My better angel, and my guardian genius! Permit me, royal mistress, to announce My faithful sentiments, my soul's true dictates; Vouchsafe your Essex but this one request, This only boon, he'll thank you with his last, His dying breath, and bless you in his passage.

Queen. Rise, my lord.

If aught you have to offer can allay Your woes, and reconcile you to your fate, Proceed, and I with patient ear will listen.

Earl E. My real errors, and my seeming crimes, Would weary mercy, and make goodness poor: And yet the source of all my greatest faults Was loyalty misled, and duty in extreme.

So jealous was my sanguine heart, so warm Affection's zeal, I could not bear the least Suspicion of my duty to my Queen. This drove me from my high command in Ireland; This, too, impell'd me to that rude behaviour Which justly urg'd the shameful blow I felt; And this (oh, fatal rashness!) made me think My Queen had given her Essex up, a victim To statesmen's schemes and wicked policy. Stung by that piercing thought, my madness flew Beyond all bounds; and now, alas! has brought me

To this most shameful fall; and, what's still worse, My own reproaches, and my Queen's displeasure.

Queen. Unhappy man! My yielding soul's it touch'd,

And pity pleads thy cause within my breast.

Earl E. Say but, my gracious sovereign, ere I go

For ever from your presence, that you think me Guiltless of all attempts against your throne And sacred life. Your faithful Essex ne'er Could harbour in his breast so foul a thought. Believe it not, my Queen. By heav'n, I swear, When in my highest pitch of glory rais'd, The splendid noon of fortune's brightest sunshine, Not ages of renown could yield me half The joy, nor make my life so greatly bless'd, As saving your's, though for a single hour.

Queen. My lord, I think you honest. Nay, I own,
Whatever coldness I put on, was meant
To save you from the malice of your foes.
I judg'd your crimes, what you yourself pronounc'd 'em,
The rash effect of an intemp'rate zeal.

Earl E. Was ever wretch like Essex thus undone

By goodness in excess, and lavish'd grace!
Oh! I could tear my erring heart with these
Revening hands!—What blessings have I lost!
What clemency abus'd!—Now could I wish
For lengthen'd life—indeed, for endless years.
A whole eternity's too short, to shew
My pious sorrows, and atone my folly.

Queen. My lord, I would convince you that I still

Regard your life, and labour to preserve it;
But cannot screen you from a public trial.
With prudence make your best defence: but should

Severity her iron jurisdiction
Extend too far, and give thee up condemn'd
To angry laws, thy Queen will not forget thee.
Yet, lest you then should want a faithful friend,
(For friends will fly you in the time of need,)
Here, from my finger, take this ring, a pledge
Of mercy; having this, you ne'er shall need
An advocate with me; for whensoever
You give, or send it back, by heav'n, I swear,
As I do hope for mercy on my soul,
That I will grant whatever boon you ask.

Earl E. Oh! grace surprising! most amazing goodness!

Words cannot paint the transports of my soul!
Let me receive it on my grateful knees,
At once to thank and bless the hand that gives it.

Queen. Depend, my lord, on this; 'twixt you and I

This ring shall be a private mark of faith
(*Gives the ring.*)

Inviolate. Be confident, cheer up,
Dispel each melancholy fear, and trust
Your sovereign's promise; she will ne'er forsake you.

Earl E. Let Providence dispose my lot as 'twill,

May watchful angels ever guard my Queen;
May healing wisdom in her counsels reign,
And firm fidelity surround her throne;
May victory her dreaded banners bear,
And joyful conquests crown her soldier's brow;
Let ev'ry bliss be mingl'd in her cup,
And heaven, at last, become her great reward!
[*Exit.*]

Queen. 'Tis done;
And yet foreboding tremors shake my heart.
Something sits heavy here, and presses down
My spirits with its weight. What can it mean?
Suppose he is condemn'd; my royal word
Is plighted for his life; his enemies,
No doubt, will censure much.—No matter; let 'em;
I know him honest, and despise their malice.

Enter COUNTESS OF RUTLAND.

Countess R. Where is the Queen? I'll fall before her feet

Prostrate, implore, besiege her royal heart,
And force her to forgive.

Queen. What means this frenzy?

Countess R. Oh! gracious Queen, if ever pity touch'd

Your gen'rous breast, let not the cruel axe
Destroy his precious life; preserve my Essex,
My life, my hope, my joy, my husband!

Queen. Husband!—What sudden, deadly blow is this!

Hold up, my soul, nor sink beneath this wound.
You beg a traitor's life!

Countess R. Oh! gracious Queen,
He ever lov'd—was ever faithful, brave—
If nature dwells about your heart, oh! spurn
Me not! My lord! my love! my husband bleeds!
Queen. Take her away.

Countess R. Here on this spot I'll fix,
Here lose all sense. Still let me stretch these arms,

Inexorable Queen! he yet may live.
Oh! give him to my poor afflicted heart!

One pitying look, to save me from destruction.

Queen. I'll hear no more. I'm tortur'd—take her hence.

Countess R. Nay, force me not away.—Inhuman wretches!

Oh! mercy, mercy!—Then to thee, good heav'n,
(My Queen, my cruel Queen, denies to hear me,)
To thee I call, to thee for mercy bend.

Melt down her bosom's frozen sense to feel
Some portion of my deadly grief, my fell
Distraction.—Turn, oh! turn, and see a wife,
A tortur'd wife—

Queen. Why am I not obey'd?

Countess R. Nay, do not thus
Abandon me to fell despair. Just heaven,
That sees my sorrows, will avenge the wrong,
This cruel wrong, this barbarous tyranny.

Queen. Wedded to Rutland! Most unhappy pair!

And, oh! ill-fated Queen! Never till now
Did sorrow settle in my heart its throne.
Now black despair its cloudy curtain draws
Around thy setting peace, where joy, alas!
No more shall dawn, nor smiling hope return.
Recall my pledge of safety from his hands,
And give him up to death!—But life or death
To me is equal now.

Unhappy state, where peace shall never come!

One fatal moment has confirm'd my doom,
Turn'd all my comfort to intestine strife,
And fill'd with mortal pangs my future life. [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter SIR WALTER RALEIGH and Lieutenant of the Tower.

Sir W. Their peers, with much indulgence heard their plea,

And gave them ample scope for their defence;
But nought avail'd, their crimes were too notorious.

They bore their sentence with becoming spirit;
And here's the royal mandate for their deaths.
The Lady Nottingham!—What brings her hither?

Enter COUNTESS OF NOTTINGHAM.

Countess N. Lieutenant, lead me to the Earl of Essex,

I bring a message to him from the Queen.

Lieut. He's with his friend, the brave Southampton, madam,

Preparing now for his expected fate.

But I'll acquaint his lordship with your pleasure. [*Exit.*]

Sir W. What means this message? Does the Queen relent?

Countess N. I fear she does:
Go you to court, for Cecil there expects you.
I've promis'd to acquaint him with what passes
'T'wixt me and Essex, ere I see the Queen.

Sir W. Madam, I go. [*Exit.*]

Countess N. Now, vengeance, steel my heart!

Offended woman, whilst her pride remains,
To malice only and revenge will bow,
And ev'ry virtue at that altar sacrifice.
But see, he comes, with manly sorrow clad.
There was a time that presence could subdue

My pride, and melt my heart to gentle pity.
I then could find no joy but in his smiles;
And thought him lovely as the summer's bloom;
But all his beauties are now hateful grown.

Enter EARL OF ESSEX.

Earl E. Whether you bring me death or life I know not.

But if strict friendship and remembrance past
May aught presage to my afflicted heart,
Sure mercy only from those lips should flow,
And grace be utter'd from that friendly tongue.

Countess N. My lord, I'm glad you think me still your friend.

I come not to upbraid, but serve you now;
And pleas'd I am to be the messenger
Of such glad tidings in the day of trouble,
As now I bring you. When the Queen had heard
That by the lords you were condemn'd to die,
She sent me, in her mercy, here to know
If you had aught to offer that might move
Her royal clemency to spare your life.

Earl E. Could any circumstance new lustre add
To my dread sov'reign's goodness, 'tis the making
The kind, the gen'rous Nottingham its messenger.
Oh! madam, could my glowing heart express
Its grateful sentiments, 'twould speak such language
As angels utter when they praise their Maker.

Countess N. 'Tis well, my lord; but there's no time to spare,

The Queen impatient waits for my return.

Earl E. My heart was wishing for some faithful friend,

And bounteous heav'n hath sent thee to my hopes.
Know then, kind Nottingham, for now I'll trust
Thee with the dearest secret of my life;
'Tis not long since the Queen (who well foresaw
To what the malice of my foes would drive me)
Gave me this ring, this sacred pledge of mercy;
And with it made a solemn vow to heav'n,
That, whensoever I should give or send
It back again, she'd freely grant whate'er
Request I then should make.

Countess N. Give, give it me,
My lord, and let me fly on friendship's wings,
To bear it to the Queen, and to it add
My pray'rs and influence to preserve thy life.

Earl E. Oh! take it, then—it is the pledge of life,

The precious spring that drives my vital stream
Around, and keeps my heart still warm:
Oh! it is my dear Southampton's
Last, last remaining stay, his thread of being,
Which more than words I prize.—Oh! take it then,

Take it, thou guardian angel of my life,
And offer up the incense of my pray'r!
Oh! beg, entreat, implore her majesty,
From public shame, and ignominious death,
And from th' obdurate axe, to save my friend.

Countess N. My lord, with all the powers that nature gave,

And friendship can inspire, I'll urge the Queen
To grant you your request.

Earl E. Kind Nottingham,
Your pious offices shall ever be
My fervent theme; and if my doubtful span
Relenting heav'n should stretch to years remote,
Each passing hour shall still remind my thoughts,
And tell me that I owe my all to thee:
My friend shall thank you, too, for lengthen'd life.
And now I fly with comfort to his arms,
To let him know the mercy that you bring.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Court.*

Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH and LORD BURLEIGH.

Queen. Ha! is not Nottingham return'd?

Lord B. No, madam.

Queen. Despatch a speedy messenger to haste her.
My agitated heart can find no rest.

So near the brink of fate—unhappy man!

Enter COUNTESS OF NOTTINGHAM.

How now, my Nottingham, what news from Essex?

What says the Earl?

Countess N. I wish, with all my soul,
Th' ungrateful task had been another's lot.
I dread to tell it—lost, ill-fated man!

Queen. What means this mystery, this strange behaviour?

Pronounce—declare at once; what said the Earl?

Countess N. Alas! my Queen, I fear to say; his mind

Is in the strangest mood, that ever pride
On blackest thoughts begot. He scarce would speak,

And when he did, it was with sullenness,
With hasty tone, and downcast look.

Queen. Amazing!

Nor feel the terrors of approaching death!
Nor yet the joyful dawn of promis'd life!

Countess N. He rather seem'd insensible to both,
And with a cold indifference heard you offer;
Till warming up by slow degrees, resentment
Began to swell his restless, haughty mind;
And proud disdain, provok'd him to exclaim
Aloud, against the partial power of fortune,
And faction's rage. I begg'd him to consider
His sad condition, nor repulse with scorn
The only hand that could preserve him.

Queen. Ha!

What! said he nothing of a private import?
No circumstance—no pledge—no ring?

Countess N. None, madam;
But with contemptuous front disclaim'd at once
Your proffer'd grace; and scorn'd, he said, a life
Upon such terms bestow'd.

Queen. Impossible!

Could Essex treat me thus? You basely wrong him,
And wrest his meaning from the purpos'd point.
Recall betimes the horrid words you've utter'd;
Confess, and own the whole you've said was false.

Countess N. Madam, by truth and duty both
compell'd,

Against the pleadings of my pitying soul,
I must declare (heav'n knows with what reluctance!)

That never pride insulted mercy more.
He ran o'er all the dangers he had pass'd;
His mighty deeds, his service to the state;
Accus'd your majesty of partial leaning
To favourite lords, to whom he falls a sacrifice;
Appeals to justice and to future times,
How much he feels from proud oppression's arm:
Nay, something, too, he darkly hinted at,
Of jealous disappointment and revenge.

Queen. Eternal silence seal thy venom'd lips!

What hast thou utter'd, wretch, to rouse at once
A whirlwind in my soul, which roots up pity
And destroys my peace?

Let him this instant to the block be led.

[*Exit Countess N.*]

Upbraid me with my fatal fondness for him!
Ungrateful, barbarous ruffian! Oh! Elizabeth,
Remember now thy long establish'd fame,
Thy envy'd glory, and thy father's spirit.
Accuse me of injustice, too, and cruelty!
Yes, I'll this instant to the Tower, forget
My regal state, and to his face confront him:
Confound th' audacious villain with my presence.
And add new terrors to th' uplifted axe. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*The Tower.*

EARL OF ESSEX and EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON
discover'd.

Earl E. Oh! name it not! my friend shall live,
he shall;

I know her royal mercy, and her goodness
Will give you back to life, to length of days,
And me to honour, loyalty, and truth.
Death is still distant far.

Earl S. In life's first spring,
Our green affections grew apace and prosper'd;
The genial summer swell'd our joyful hearts,
To meet and mix each growing fruitful wish.
We're now embark'd upon that stormy flood
Where all the wise and brave are gone before us,
E'er since the birth of time, to meet eternity.
And what is death, did we consider right?
Shall we who sought him in the paths of terror,
And fac'd him in the dreadful walks of war,
Shall we astonish'd shrink, like frighted infants,
And start at scaffolds and their gloomy trappings?

Earl E. Yet, still I trust long years remain of
friendship.

Let smiling hope drive doubt and fear away,
And death be banish'd far; where creeping age,
Disease, and care, invite him to their dwelling.
I feel assurance rise within my breast,
That all will yet be well.

Earl S. Count not on hope:
We never can take leave, my friend, of life
On nobler terms. Life! what is life? A shadow!
Its date is but the immediate breath we draw;
Nor have we surety for a second gale;
Ten thousand accidents in ambush lie
For the embody'd dream.

A frail and fickle tenement it is,
Which, like the brittle glass that measures time,
Is often broke, ere half its sands are run.

Earl E. Such cold philosophy the heart dis-
dains,

And friendship shudders at the moral tale.
My friend, the fearful precipice is past,
And danger dare not meet us more. Fly swift,
Ye better angels, wait the welcome tidings
Of pardon to my friend:—of life and joy.

Enter Lieutenant of the Tower.

Lieut. I grieve to be the messenger of woe,
But must, my lords, entreat you to prepare
For instant death. Here is the royal mandate
That orders your immediate execution.

Earl E. Immediate execution!—What, so sud-
den!

No message from the Queen or Nottingham?

Lieut. None, sir.

Earl E. Deluded hopes! Oh! worse than death!
Perfidious Queen, to make a mock of life!
My friend, my friend destroy'd! Oh! piercing
thought!

Oh! dismal chance!—In my destruction ruin'd!
In my sad fall undone! Why could not mine,
My life atone for both—my blood appease?
Can you, my friend, forgive me?

Earl S. Yes, oh! yes,
My bosom's better half, I can.—With thee
I'll gladly seek the coast unknown, and leave
The lessening mark of irksome life behind.
With thee, my friend, 'tis joy to die! 'tis glory!
For who would wait the tardy stroke of time,
Or cling like reptiles to the verge of being,
When we can bravely leap from life at once,
And spring triumphant in a friend's embrace?

Enter SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

Sir W. To you, my Lord Southampton, from
the Queen

A pardon comes: your life her mercy spares. [*Exit.*]

Earl E. For ever bless'd be that indulgent
power

Which saves my friend! This weight ta'en off, my
soul

Shall upward spring, and mingle with the bless'd.

Earl S. All-ruling heavens, can this, can this be
just?

Support me; hold, ye straining heart-strings,
hold,

And keep my sinking frame from dissolution.
Oh! 'tis too much for mortal strength to bear,
Or thought to suffer! No, I'll die with thee.
They shall not part us, Essex.

Earl E. Live, oh! live,
Thou noblest, bravest, best of men and friends,
Whilst life is worth thy wish, till time and thou
Agree to part, and nature send thee to me;
Thou gen'rous soul, farewell!—live and be happy;
And, oh! may life make largely up to thee
Whatever blessing fate has thus cut off
From thy departing friend!

Lieut. My lord, my warrant
Strictly forbids to grant a moment's time.

Earl S. Oh! must we part for ever?—Cruel
fortune!

Wilt thou, then, tear him hence?—Severe divorce!
Let me cling round thy sacred person still,
Still clasp thee to my bosom close, and keep
Stern fate at distance.

Earl E. Oh! my friend, we'll meet
Again where virtue finds a just reward,
Where factious malice never more can reach us.
Recall thy reason, be thyself once more.—
I fear it not.—This hideous monster death,
When seen at distance, shocks weak nature's
eye;

But reason, as it draws more near, defies it.
I thank thy sorrows, but could spare 'em now.

I need not bid thee guard thy fame from wrongs:

And, oh! a dearer treasure to thy care
I trust, than either life or fame—my wife!
Her bitter sorrows pierce my soul; for her
My heart drops blood!—Oh! she will want a
friend!

Then take her to thy care; do thou pour balm
On her deep-wounded spirit, and let her find
My tender helps in thee.—I must begone,
My ever faithful and my gallant friend.—

Pr'y' thee, leave this woman's work.—Farewell!—
Take this last, dear embrace.—Farewell for ever!

Earl S. My bursting breast!—I fain would speak,
but words

Are poor—Farewell!—

But we shall meet again, embrac'd in one
Eternal band, which never shall be loos'd. [*Exit.*]

Earl E. To death's concluding stroke, lead on,
Lieutenant.

My wife!—Now reason, fortitude, support me;
For now, indeed, comes on my sorest trial.

Enter COUNTESS OF RUTLAND.

Oh! thou last, dear reserve of fortune's malice!
For fate can add no more—oh! com'st thou, then,
In this dread hour, when all my straining thoughts
Are struggling in the tend'rest ties of nature!
Oh! com'st thou now to arrest my parting soul,
And force it back to life!

Countess R. Thou sole delight,
Thou only joy which life could ever give,
Or death deprive me of—my wedded lord!
I come, with thee determin'd to endure
The utmost rigour of our angry stars;
To join thee, fearless, in the grasp of death,
And seek some dwelling in a world beyond it.

Earl E. Too much, thou partner of this dismal
hour,

Thy gen'rous soul would prompt thee to endure;
Nor can thy tender, trembling heart sustain it.
Long years of bliss remain in store for thee;
And smiling time his treasures shall unfold
To bribe thy stay!

Countess R. Thou cruel comforter!
Alas! what's life, what's hated life to me?
Alas! this universe, this goodly frame,
Shall all as one continued curse appear,
And every object blast, when thou art gone.

Earl E. Oh! strain not thus the little strength
I've left,

The weak support that holds up life to bear,
A few short moments more, its weight of woe,
Its loss of thee. Oh! turn away those eyes,
Nor with that look melt down my fix'd resolve;—
And yet a little longer let me gaze
On that lov'd form. Alas! I feel my sight
Grows dim, and reason from her throne retires;
For pity's sake, let go my breaking heart,
And leave me to my fate.

Countess R. Why wilt thou still
Of parting talk, since life its thousand gates
Unbars to let us through together?
Oh! that the friendly hand of heav'n would snatch
Us both at once, above the distant stars,
Where fortune's venom'd shafts can never pierce,
Nor cruel queens destroy!—Nay, look not so.

Earl E. The awful Searcher, whose impartial
eye
Explores the secrets of each human heart,
And every thought surveys, can witness for me,
How close thy image clings around my soul:
Retards each rising wish, and draws me back
To life, entangled by that lov'd idea.
When fell necessity those ties shall break—
For quickly break they must—when I from earth
On faith's white angel wings to heaven shall soar,
Thy lasting form shall still my mind possess,
Where bliss supreme each faculty o'erwhelms,
And raptur'd angels glow.

Lieut. My lord,
It now grows late.

Earl E. Lead on.
Countess R. Stay, stay, my love! my dearest,
dying lord!
Ah! whether wouldst thou go? Ah! do not leave
me!

Alas! I'll hasten to attend your flight;
And nature gives consent we should not part.
I feel each faculty for fate prepare,
And my quick soul would fain set out before you.

Earl E. Thou sinking excellence! thou match-
less woman!
Shall fortune rob me of thy dear embrace,
Or earth's whole power, or death divide us now?
Stay, stay, thou spotless, injur'd saint, and take—
Lieut. My lord, already you have been indulg'd
Beyond what I can warrant by my orders.

Earl E. Oh! let me on her dying bosom fall,
Embrace her spotless form!—One moment more
Afford me to my sorrows—Oh! look there!
Could bitter anguish pierce your heart, like mine,
You'd pity now the mortal pangs I feel,
The throbs that tear my vital strings away,
And rend my agonizing soul.

Lieut. My lord—
Earl E. But one short moment, and I will
attend.

Ye sacred ministers that virtue guard,
And shield the righteous in the paths of peril,
Restore her back to life and lengthen'd years
Of joy; dry up her bleeding sorrows all!
Oh! cancel from her thoughts this dismal hour,
And blot my image from her sad remembrance!
'Tis done.—

And now, ye trembling cords of life, give way:
Nature and time, let go your hold; eternity
Demands me. *[Exit with Lieut.]*

Countess R. Where has my lost, benighted soul
been wand'ring?

What means this mist that hangs about my mind,
Through which reflection's painful eye discerns
Imperfect forms, and horrid shapes of woe?
The cloud dispels, the shades withdraw, and all
My dreadful fate appears.—Oh! where's my lord!

My life! my Essex! oh! whither have they ta'en
him?

Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH *and Attendants.*

Queen. To execution! Fly with lightning's wing,
And save him. *[Exit one of the Attendants.]*

Countess R. Thou saving angel, sent from heav'n!
my Queen,
My gracious Queen! oh! snatch him from the
blow!

Preserve my husband!

Queen. Be calm, he shall not die. Rise up. I
came

To save his life.

Countess E. 'Tis mercy's voice that speaks.
My Essex shall again be mine. My Queen,
My bounteous, gracious Queen, has said the word.
May troops of angels guard thy sacred life,
And, in thy latest moments, waft thy soul
To meet that mercy, in the realms of joy,
Which now thy royal goodness grants to me!

Enter LORD BURLEIGH.

Lord B. Madam, your orders came, alas! too
late.

Ere they arriv'd, the axe had fall'n on Essex.

Countess R. Ha! dead! What hell is this that
opens round me?

What fiend art thou that draws the horrid scene?
Ah, Burleigh! bloody murd'rer, where's my hus-
band?

Destruction seize and madness rend my brain!

See, see, they bend him to the fatal block;

Now, now the horrid axe is lifted high,—

It falls, it falls! he bleeds, he bleeds! he dies!

Queen. Alas! her sorrows pierce my suffer-
ing heart.

Countess R. Eternal discord tear the social world!
Arise, despair, possess me all!

Bear, bear me to my murder'd lord, to clasp

His bleeding body in my dying arms,

And in the tomb embrace his dear remains,

And mingle with his dust for ever. *[Exit.]*

Queen. Hapless woman!
She shall henceforth be partner of my sorrows;
And we'll contend who most shall weep for Essex.
Oh! quick to kill, and ready to destroy.

(To Lord B.)
Could no pretext be found, no cause appear,
To lengthen mercy out a moment more,
And stretch the span of grace? Oh! cruel Burleigh!
This, this was thy dark work, unpitying man!

Lord B. My gracious mistress, blame not thus
my duty,

My firm obedience to your high command.

The laws condemn'd him first to die; nor think

I stood between your mercy and his life.

It was the Lady Nottingham, not I.

Herself confess'd it all in wild despair,

That from your majesty to Essex sent,

With terms of proffer'd grace, she then receiv'd

From his own hand a fatal ring, a pledge

It seems of much importance, which the Earl,

With earnest suit and warm entreaty, begg'd her,

As she would prize his life, to give your majesty.

In this she fail'd—in this she murd'rd Essex.

Queen. Oh! barbarous woman!

Surrounded still by treachery and fraud!

My fame is soil'd to all succeeding times:

But heav'n alone can view my breaking heart;

Then let its will be done.—

From hence, let proud, resisting mortals know

The arm parental, and the indulgent blow.

To heaven's corrective rod submissive bend;

Adore its wisdom, on its power depend;

Whilst ruling justice guides eternal sway,

Let nature tremble, and let man obey. *[Exeunt.]*

THE EARL OF WARWICK;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY DR. THOMAS FRANKLIN.



Act IV.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

KING EDWARD
EARL OF WARWICK

EARL OF PEMBROKE
EARL OF SUFFOLK

MARGARET OF ANJOU
LADY ELIZABETH GREY

LADY CLIFFORD
OFFICERS

ACT I.—SCENE I.

Enter MARGARET OF ANJOU and LADY CLIFFORD.

Lady C. Thanks, gracious heav'n! my royal mistress smiles,
Unusual gladness sparkles in her eye,
And bids me welcome in the stranger, joy,
To his new mansion.

Mar. Yes, my faithful Clifford,
Fortune is weary of oppressing me:
Through my dark cloud of grief, a cheerful ray
Of light breaks forth, and gilds the whole horizon.

Lady C. Henry in chains, and Edward on the
Of Lancaster; thyself a pris'ner here; [throne
Thy captive son torn from his mother's arms,
And in the tyrant's power; a kingdom lost!
Amidst so many sorrows, what new hope
Hath wrought this wondrous change?

Mar. That which alone,
In sorrow's bitt' rest hour, can minister
Sweet comfort to the daughters of affliction,
And bids misfortune smile, the hope of vengeance:
Vengeance, benignant patron of distress,
Thee I have oft invoc'd; propitious now
Thou smil'st upon me; if I do not grasp
The glorious opportunity, henceforth
Indignant frown, and leave me to my fate.

Lady C. Unhappy princess! that deceive, hope,
Hath often flatter'd, and as oft betray'd thee:
What hast thou gain'd by all its promises?
What's the reward of all thy toils?

Mar. Experience.
Yes, Clifford, I have read the instructive volume
Of human nature; there long since have learn'd
The way to conquer men is by their passions;
Catch but the ruling foible of their hearts,
And all their boasted virtues shrink before you.
Edward and Warwick, those detested names,
Too well thou know'st, united to destroy me.

Lady C. That was, indeed, a fatal league.
Mar. But mark me;
If we could break this adamant chain,
We might again be free: this mighty warrior,

This dread of kings, the unconquerable Warwick,
Is plighted to the fair Elizabeth. [ous widow,

Lady C. The Lady Grey, you mean, the beauty—
Whose husband fell in arms for Lancaster.

Mar. The same, my Clifford; Warwick long has
Lady C. And means to wed her. [lov'd—

Mar. But if I have art,
Or she ambition, that shall never be.

Lady C. Canst thou prevent it?
Mar. Yes, my Clifford, Warwick
Were a mean choice for such transcendent beauty;
I shall provide her with a fitter husband,
A nobler far, and worthier of her charms,—
Young Edward.

Lady C. Ha! the king! impossible!
Warwick, ev'n now, commission'd by the state
To treat with Lewis, offers England's throne
To France's daughter; and ere this, perhaps,
Hath sign'd the solemn contract.

Mar. Solemn trifles!
Mere cobweb ties. Love's a despotic tyrant,
And laughs, like other kings, at public faith,
When it opposes private happiness:
Edward is youthful, gay, and amorous;
His soul is ever open to the lure
Of beauty, and Elizabeth hath charms
Might shake a hermit's virtue.

Lady C. Hath he seen
This peerless fair one?

Mar. Yes; by my contrivance,
When last he hunted in the forest, some,
Whom I had planted there, as if by chance
Alone directed, led him across the lawn
To Grafton: there, ev'n as my soul had wish'd,
The dazzling lustre of her charms surpris'd
His unsuspecting heart.

Lady C. What follow'd?

Mar. Oh!
He gaz'd and wonder'd; for awhile his pride
Indignant rose, and struggled with his passion;
But love was soon victorious: and, last night,
The Earl of Suffolk, (so my trusty spies

Inform me,) was despatch'd, on wings of love,
To plead his master's cause, and offer her
The throne of England.

Lady C. What if she refuse
The golden bribe?

Mar. No matter; all I wish
Is but to make them foes: the gen'rous Warwick
Is fiery, and impatient of reproof;
He will not brook a rival in his love,
Though seated on a throne; besides, thou know'st,
The haughty Earl looks down with scorn on Edward,
As the mere work of his all-pow'rful hand,
The baby monarch of his own creation. [veres

Lady C. Believe me, madam, Edward still re-
And loves him; still, as conscious of the debt,
Pays him with trust and confidence: their souls
Are link'd together in the strictest bonds
Of sacred friendship.

Mar. That but serves my cause:
Where ties are close, and interests united,
The slightest injuries are severely felt;
Offended friendship never can forgive.

Lady C. Now the full prospect opens to my view,
I see thy distant aim, and trace the paths
Of vengeance: England soon will be a scene
Of blood and horror; discord's fatal torch
Once lit up in this devoted land,
What pow'r shall e'er extinguish it? alas!
I tremble at the consequence.

Mar. And I
Enjoy it. Oh! 'twill be a noble contest [sion;
Of pride 'gainst pride, oppression 'gainst oppres-
Rise but the storm, and let the waves beat high,
The wreck may be our own: in the warm struggle,
Who knows but one or both of them may fall,
And Marg'ret rise triumphant on their ruin!
It must be so; and see the king approaches:
This way he passes from the council. Mark
His downcast eye: he is a stricken deer,
The arrow's in his side, he cannot 'scape:
We'll meet and speak to him.

Lady C. What mean you, madam?

Mar. To ask him what I know he will refuse;
That gives me fair pretext to break with him,
And join the man I hate, vindictive Warwick:
But, soft, he comes.

Enter KING EDWARD and an Officer.

K. Edw. Is Suffolk yet return'd?

Off. No, my good liege.

K. Edw. Go, wait and bring him to me; [Exit Off.
I'll to my closet. Pardon me, fair lady,
I saw you not.

Mar. Perhaps it is beneath
A conqueror to look down upon his slave;
But I've a boon to ask.

K. Edw. What'er it is,
Within the limits of fair courtesy,
Which honour can bestow, I'll not refuse thee.

Mar. There was time when Margaret of Anjou
Would not have deign'd to ask of Edward aught;
Nor was there aught which Edward dar'd refuse her;
But that is past, great Warwick's arm prevail'd,
And I am now your pris'ner.

K. Edw. Since the hour
When fortune smil'd propitious on the cause
Of justice, and gave vict'ry to our arms,
You have been treated with all due respect,
All your condition, or your sex could claim;
Serv'd like a queen, and lodg'd within our palace:
Is there aught more you can in reason ask,
Or I in prudence grant you?

Mar. Give me back
The liberty I lost, restore my son!
And I may then, perhaps, be reconcil'd
To an usurper; may withhold my vengeance,
And let thee sit unpunish'd on my throne.

K. Edw. You talk too proudly, madam; but to
I cannot fear, you have your liberty. [shew you
Letters this morning I receiv'd from France,
Have offer'd noble ransom for your person;
Without that ransom, (for the soul of Edward

Is far above the sordid lust of gold,)
I grant it: from this moment you are free;
But for your son, I cannot part with him.

Mar. I scorn your bounties, scorn your proffer'd
What's liberty to me without my child? [freedom:
But fate will place us soon above thy reach;
Thy short-liv'd tyranny is almost past;
The storm is gathering round thee, and will burst
With tenfold vengeance on thy guilty head.

K. Edw. I am not to be talk'd into submission,
Nor dread the menace of a clam'rous woman.

Mar. Thou may'st have cause to dread a woman's
pow'r.

The time may come (mark my prophetic word!)
When wayward beauty shall repay with scorn
Thy fruitless vows, and vindicate my wrongs:
The friend thou lean'st on, like a broken reed,
Shall pierce thy side, and fill thy soul with anguish,
Keen as the pangs I feel: York's perjurd house
Shall sink to rise no more; and Lancaster,
With added lustre, reassume the throne.
Hear this and tremble. Give me back my son,
Or dread the vengeance of a desp'rate mother.

[Exit Margaret and Lady Clifford.]

K. Edw. Imperious woman! but the voice of
Is ever clam'rous: 'tis the privilege, [woe
The charter of affliction to complain.

This tardy Suffolk! how I long to know,
Yet dread to hear my fate! Elizabeth,

On thee the colour of my future life
Depends; for thou alone canst make me bless'd
Or curs'd for ever. Oh! this cruel doubt
Is worse than all my tortures: but he comes,
Th' ambassador of love.

Enter the EARL OF SUFFOLK.

What news, my Suffolk?

Shall I be happy? Oh! I'm on the rack
Of expectation. Didst thou tell my tale
As if it were thy own? And may I hope—

Suf. My royal liege—

K. Edw. Good Suffolk, lay aside
The forms of dull respect, be brief, and tell me;
Speak, hast thou seen her, will she be my queen?
Quick, tell me ev'ry circumstance, each word,
Each look, each gesture; didst thou mark them,
Suffolk?

Suf. I did, and will recount it all; last night,
By your command, in secret I repair'd
To Grafton's tufted bow'r, the happy seat
Of innocence and beauty; there I found
Thy soul's best hope, the fair Elizabeth.
Ne'er did these eyes behold such sweet perfection:
I found her busy'd in the pious office
Of filial duty, tending her sick father.

K. Edw. That was a lucky moment to prefer
My humble suit: touch but the tender string
Of soft compassion in the heart, and love
Will quickly vibrate to its kindred passion.
You urg'd our royal purpose, then?

Suf. I did,

With all the warmth of friendship; dwelt with plea-
On ev'ry pincely virtue that adorns [sure
Your heart: she listen'd with attention,
And echo'd back your praises.

K. Edw. Was not that
A kind of propitious omen?

Suf. Such indeed,

Hoping to find it, I call'd in the pow'r's
Of flattery to my aid, and gaz'd upon her,
As if confounded by her dazzling beauties.
Conscious she smil'd; but when, at length, I spake
Of England's monarch sighing at her feet,
The blush of virgin modesty o'erspread
Her cheek, and gave new lustre to her charms:
She turn'd aside, and as she silent bow'd
Her doubtful thanks, I mark'd the pearly tear
Steal down its secret track, and from her breast
Heard a deep sigh, she struggled to conceal;
If I have any judgment, or can trace
The hidden feelings of a woman's heart,
Her's is already fix'd: I fear, my liege,

With all that England, all that thou couldst give,
The crown would sit but heavy on her brow.

K. Edw. Not heavier, Suffolk, than it sits on mine:
My throne is irksome to me: who would wish
To be a sov'reign when Elizabeth
Prefers a subject? Then, th' impetuous Warwick,
His awful virtue will chastise my weakness.
I dread his censure, dread his keen reproaches,
And dread them more because they will be just.
I've promis'd Lewis to espouse his daughter,
To strengthen our alliance: would to heav'n
I had not! If I seek this coy refuser,
And break with France, Warwick will take th' alarm;
If once offended, he's inexorable.

Suf. I know him well. Believe me, the high
And haughty spirit, when it meets rebuke,
Is easiest check'd, and sinks into submission.
Let him, my liege, who ventures to arraign
His master's conduct, look into his own:
There ever is a corner in the heart
Open to folly; Warwick is not free
From human frailties.

K. Edw. No: ambition fires
His noble breast, love triumphs over mine:
But well thou know'st, our eyes are ever open
To others' faults, and shut against our own.
We seldom pity woes we ne'er experienc'd,
Or pardon weakness which we do not feel:
He is a hero.

Suf. Heroes are but men;
I have some cause to think so; but of that
We'll talk another time: meanwhile, my liege,
I think Lord Warwick is an useful friend.

K. Edw. Ay, and a dangerous foe; the people
To adoration love him: if he falls [love,
From his allegiance, crowds will follow him.
England has long been rent by civil broils,
And fain would rest her in the arms of peace:
Her wounds scarce clos'd, shall Edward open them,
And bid them bleed afresh? believe me, Suffolk,
I would not be the cause of new divisions
Amongst my people, for a thousand kingdoms.

Suf. 'Tis nobly said, and may thy grateful sub-
Revere thy virtues, and reward thy love. [jects

K. Edw. Oh! Suffolk, did they know but half
the cares

That wait on royalty, they would not grudge
Their wretched master a few private hours
Of social happiness. If France consents,
I am undone; and Warwick hath ere this
Enslav'd me: curse on this state policy,
That binds us thus to love at second hand!
Who knows but he may link me to a wretch;
Wed me to folly, ignorance, and pride,
Ill-nature, sickness, or deformity!

And when I'm chain'd to mis'ry, coldly tell me,
To soothe my griefs, 'twas for the public good.

Suf. How far you have commission'd him, I
know not;

But were I worthy to advise, my liege,
I would not be the dupe of his ambition,
But follow nature's dictates, and be happy.
England has charms besides Elizabeth's,
And beauties that—

K. Edw. No more; my heart is fix'd
On her alone: find out this pow'rful rival,
I charge thee, Suffolk: yet why wish to find,
What, found, will make me wretched? Were he
bound

In cords of tend'rest friendship round my heart,
Dearer than Warwick, dearer than thyself,
Forgive me, but I fear I should abhor him.
Oh! think on something that may yet be done
To win her to my heart ere Warwick comes.

Suf. I hear he is expected every hour.

K. Edw. Grant, heav'n, some friendly storm may
I dread his presence here. [yet retard him!

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My liege, the Earl
Of Warwick is arriv'd.

K. Edw. Ha! when? how? where?

Would he were buried in the rapid waves
That brought him hither! Comes he here to-knight?

Mess. My liege, ere now he might have reach'd
the palace;

But that the shouting multitudes press hard
On ev'ry side, and seem to worship him. [Exit.

Suf. Such adoration
But ill hurts the idol that receives it. [see him

K. Edw. What's to be done? I cannot, must not
Till all is fix'd: once more, my best-lov'd Suffolk,
Try the soft arts of thy persuasive tongue:
What method canst thou think on, to evade
This promis'd marriage with ambitious France?

Suf. Summon your council, lay your thoughts
before them;

Meet Warwick there, and urge a sov'reign's right
To please himself in that which should concern
Himself alone: firm Buckingham and I
Will plead your cause against the haughty Warwick,
Whom I would treat with cold civility
And distant state, which ever angers more
Resentful spirits, than the warmth of passion.

K. Edw. 'Tis well advis'd: meantime, if possible,
I will compose my troubled thoughts to rest:
Suffolk, adieu; if Warwick ask for me,
I am not well; I'm hunting in the forest;
I'm busy—Stay, remember what I told you
Touching the earldom which I mean to give
Her father; that may bring her to the court:
You understand me, Suffolk; fare thee well.

[Exit Suffolk.

Why should I dread to see the man I love;
The man I rev'rence? Warwick is not chang'd,
But Edward is. Suffolk, I know, abhors him.
A fav'rite must be hated: if he urges
This dreadful contract, I shall hate him too:
I cannot live without Elizabeth.

I'll think no more: if I must sacrifice
My friendship or my love, the choice is made. [Exit.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

Enter WARWICK, speaking to an Officer.

War. 'Tis well: I shall attend his highness' plea-
sure. (Comes forward.)

Meet me i'th' council! Warwick might have claim'd
A private audience. After all my toils,
My perils in his service, 'tis a cold,
Unkind reception: some base whisperer,
Some needy sycophant, perhaps, hath poison'd
My royal master's ear; or, do I judge
Too rashly? As my embassy concerns
The public welfare, he would honour me
With public thanks. Elizabeth will chide me
For this unkind delay; but honour calls,
And duty to my king: that task perform'd,
I haste, my love, to happiness and thee. [Exit.

SCENE II.—The Council-chamber.

KING EDWARD, DUKES OF CLARENCE AND BUCK-
INGHAM, EARLS OF SUFFOLK, PEMBROKE, &c.
discovered.

K. Edw. Good Buckingham, I thank thee for
thy counsel,

Nor blame thy honest warmth; I love this freedom;
'Tis the birthright of an Englishman,
And doth become thee: what says noble Suffolk?

Suf. I would not cross my royal master's will;
But, on my soul, I think, this nuptial league
With France prepost'rous and impolitic.
It cannot last; we are by nature foes,
And nought but mutual poverty and weakness
Can ever make us friends; she wants our aid
Against the pow'rful Burgundy; and, therefore,
Throws out this lure of beauty to ensnare you;
That purpose gain'd, she turns her arms against us.

Pem. Why, let her: if she comes with hostile arm,
England, thank heav'n! is ready to receive her:
I love my country, and revere my king,
As much, perhaps, as honest Buckingham,
Or my good fearful Lord of Suffolk here,
Who knows so well, or would be thought to know,
What France will do hereafter: yet, I think,
The faith of nations is a thing so sacred,

It ought not to be trifled with. I hate,
As much as you, th' unnatural forc'd alliance;
And yet, my lords, if Warwick is empow'r'd,
For so I hear he is, to treat with Lewis,
I know not how in honour you can swerve
From his conditions. *(Shouting.)*

Hark! the hero comes:
Those shouts proclaim him near: the joyful people
Will usher in their great deliverer
As he deserves.

Enter the EARL OF WARWICK.

K. Edw. Thrice welcome, noble Warwick,
Welcome to all! *(To Clarence, Pembroke, &c.)*

Suf. You've had, my lord, I fear,
An arduous task, which few could execute;
But Warwick, in the council and the field,
Alike distinguish'd, and alike successful.

K. Edw. What says our cousin France?

War. By me, my liege,
He greets you well, and hopes in closer ties
United soon to wear a dearer name.
At length, thank heav'n! the iron gates of war
Are clos'd, and peace displays her silken banners
O'er the contending nations; ev'ry doubt
Is now remov'd, and confidence establish'd,
I hope, to last for ages.

K. Edw. Peace, my lord,
Is ever welcome; 'tis the gift of heav'n,
The nurse of science, art's fair patroness,
And merit's best protector; but if France
Would chain us down to ignominious terms,
Cramp our free commerce, and infringe the rights
Of our liege subjects, England may repent
Too late her rash credulity, and peace
With all her blessings may be bought too dear.

War. The shame would then be his who made the
If any doubt my faith, my honest zeal *[purchase*
For thee and for my country, let him speak,
And I will answer: punish me, just heav'n!
If in the task I have consult'd aught
But England's honour, and my sov'reign's glory!

K. Edw. Mistake me not, good Warwick; well
I know

Thy spotless truth, thy honour, and thy love;
But glory has no further charms for me:
Rais'd by thy pow'rful aid to England's throne,
I ask no more: already I am great
As fame and fortune with their smiles can make me,
And all I wish for now is to be happy. *[care:*

War. That, too, my liege, has been thy Warwick's
Happy thou shalt be if the fairest form
That ever caught a gazing lover's eye,
Join'd to the sweetest, most engaging virtues
Can make thee so. Bona accepts with joy
Thy proffer'd hand: she is, indeed, a gem
Fit to adorn the brightest crown; to see
Is to admire her; trust me, England's self,
The seat of beauty, and the throne of love,
Boasts not a fairer.

K. Edw. Beauty, good my lord,
Is all ideal; 'tis the wayward child
Of fancy, shifting with the changeful wind
Of fond opinion; what to you appears
The model of perfection, may disgust
My strange, capricious taste.

War. Such charms would fix
Inconstancy itself; her winning virtues,
Ev'n if her beauty fail'd, would soon subdue
The rebel heart, and you would learn to love her.

K. Edw. Is passion to be learn'd, then? wouldst
A science of affection; guide the heart, *[thou make*
And teach it where to fix? impossible!
'Tis strange philosophy! *(Rises and comes forward.)*

My lord of Warwick,
Your zeal in England's and in Edward's cause,
Merits our thanks; but for th' intended marriage
With France's daughter, it may never be.

War. Not be! it must: your sacred word is pass'd,
And cannot be recall'd: but three days since
I sign'd the contract, and my honour's pledg'd
For the performance. Heav'ns! whilst fickle France

Is branded 'midst the nations of the earth,
For breach of public faith, shall we, my liege,
Præcise ourselves the vices we condemn;
Pass o'er a rival nation's ev'ry virtue,
And imitate their perfidy alone? *[part*

K. Edw. You'll pardon me, my lord; I thought it
Of a king's pow'r to have a will, to see
With his own eyes, and in life's little feast,
To cater for himself; but 'tis, it seems,
A privilege his servants can refuse him. *[conquer*
War. And so they ought: the king who cannot
His private interest for the public welfare,
Knows not his duty.

K. Edw. Kings, my lord, are born
With passions, feelings, hearts, like other men;
Nor see I yet, why Edward's happiness
Must fall a sacrifice to Warwick's honour. *[own:*

War. My honour, sir, is your's; my cause your
Who sent me, and whose image did I bear?
The image of a great and glorious king,
Or of a weak and wav'ring boy? Henceforth,
Choose from the herd of fawning sycophants,
Some needy slave for your mock embassies,
To do your work, and stain the name of England
With soul reproach. Edward, I blush for thee
And for my country; from this hour, expect
From injur'd France contempt, with deep resentment
For broken faith, and enmity eternal.

K. Edw. Eternal be it, then; for, as I prize
My inward peace, beyond the pomp of state,
And all the tinsel glare of fond ambition,
I will not wed her. Gracious heav'n! what am I?
The meanest peasant in my realm may choose
His rustic bride, and share with her the sweets
Of mutual friendship and domestic bliss;
Why should my happier subjects, then, deny me
The common rights, the privilege of nature,
And, in a land of freedom, thus conspire
To make their king the only slave amongst 'em?

War. The worst of slaves is he whom passion rules,
Uncheck'd by reason and the pow'rful voice
Of friendship, which, I fear, is heard no more
By thoughtless Edward: 'tis the curse of kings
To be surrounded by a venal herd
Of flatterers, that sooth his darling vices,
And rob their master of his subjects' love.
Nay, frown not, sirs, supported as ye are,
I fear you not: which of this noble train,
These well-beloved counsellors and friends,
Assembled here to witness my disgrace,
Have urged to this base, unmanly falsehood?
Shame on you all! to stain the spotless mind
Of uncorrupted youth, undo the work
Of Warwick's friendly hand, and give him back
A sov'reign so unlike the noble Edward. *[tion,*

Suf. My lord, we thank you for the kind sugges-
Howe'er ill-founded; and when next we meet
To give our voice in aught that may concern
The public weal, no doubt shall ask your leave
Ere we proceed.

Pem. My Lord of Suffolk, speak
But for yourself; Warwick hath too much cause
To be offended; in my poor opinion,
Whate'er you courtiers think, the best support
Of England's throne are equity and truth:
Nor will I hold that man my sov'reign's friend
Who shall exhort him to forsake his word,
And play the hypocrite: what tie shall bind
The subject to obedience, when his king,
Bankrupt in honour, gives the royal sanction
To perfdy and falsehood?

Buck. It becomes
But ill the Earl of Pembroke—

K. Edw. Good my lords,
Let us have no dissensions here; we meet
For other purposes: some few days hence
We shall expect your counsel in affairs
Of moment; for the present, urge no further
This matter: fare ye well. *(The Council break up.)*

K. Edw. Lord Warwick, keep
In narrower bounds, that proud, impetuous temper;

It may be fatal: there are private reasons;
When time befits we shall impart them to you.
Meanwhile, if you have friendship, love, or duty,
No more of Bona. I'm determin'd. [Exit.

War. So:
'Tis well; 'tis very well; I have deserv'd it;
I've borne this callow eagle on my wing,
And now he spurns me from him: 'tis a change
I little look'd for, and sits heavy on me:
Alas! how doubly painful is the wound,
When 'tis inflicted by the hand we love!
Cruel, ungrateful Edward!

Ha! who's here?
The captive queen! If she has aught to ask
Of me, she comes in luckless hour, for I
Am pow'rless now.

Enter MARGARET OF ANJOU.

Will Margaret of Anjou
Thus deign to visit her acknowledg'd foe?
Mar. Alas! my lord, inur'd to wretchedness
As I am, and familiar with misfortune,
I harbour no resentment; have long since
Forgot that ever Warwick was my foe,
And only wish to prove myself his friend.

War. Talk not of friendship, 'tis an empty name,
And lives but in idea; once, indeed,
I thought I had a friend.

Mar. Whose name was—Edward;
Read I a right, my lord? and am I not
A shrewd diviner? yes; that downcast eye
And gloomy aspect say I am: you look
As if the idol, made by your own hands,
Had fallen upon and crushed you: is't not so?

War. Amazement! nought escapes thy piercing
And penetrating judgment: 'tis too true, [eye
I am a poor dishonour'd slave,
Not worth thy seeking; leave me, for the tide
Of court preferment flows another way. [not

Mar. The feast, perhaps, you have provided, suits
With Edward's nicer palate; he disdains,
How sweet soe'er, to taste a foreign banquet,
And relishes no dainties but his own:
Am I again mistaken?

War. Sure thou deal'st
With some all-knowing spirit, who imparts
Each secret purpose to thee, else how knew'st thou
That Edward refus'd to wed the princess?

Mar. Oh! it requires no supernatural aid
To trace his actions, nor has Marg'ret trod
The paths of life with unobserving eye:
I could have told you this long since; for, know,
The choice is made, the nuptial rites prepar'd,
Which, but for your return, (as unexpected
As undesired,) had been, e'er this, complete;
And, as in duty bound, you then had paid
Your due obedience to our English queen.

War. Determin'd, say'st thou? gracious heaven!
I am return'd. ['tis well

Mar. Indeed, my lord, you came
A little out of season; 'twas unkind
To interrupt your master's happiness,
To blast so fair a passion in its bloom,
And check the rising harvest of his love.

War. Marg'ret, I thank thee; yes, it must be so:
His blushes, his confusion, all confirm it;
And yet I am amaz'd, astonish'd.

Mar. Wherefore?
Is it so strange a youthful prince should love?
Is it so strange a mind, unfrught with wisdom,
And lifted high with proud prosperity,
Should follow pleasure through the crooked paths
Of falsehood, should forsake an useless friend,
For the warm joys of animating beauty?

War. No: but 'tis strange, that he who knows
how much

He ow'd to Warwick, he, who ev'ry hour
Tastes the rich stream of bounty, should forget
The fountain whence it flow'd.

Mar. Alas! my lord,
Had you been chasteu'd in affliction's school

As I have been, and taught, by sad experience,
To know mankind, you had not fall'n a prey
To such delusion.

War. Was it like a friend,
Was it like Edward to conceal his love?
Some base, insinuating, artful woman,
With borrow'd charms, perhaps—

Mar. Hold, hold! my lord,
Be not too rash: who fights in darkness oft
May wound a bosom friend: perhaps you wrong
The best and most accomplish'd of her sex.

War. Know you the lady?
Mar. But as fame reports,
Of peerless beauty and transcendent charms;
But of her virtues, I must ask—you.

War. Of me? what virtues? whose?
Mar. Elizabeth's.

War. Amazement! no; it must not, it cannot be:
Elizabeth! he could not, dare not do it!
Confusion! I shall soon discover all. (Aside.)
But what have I to do with Edward's choice,
Whoe'er she be, if he refuses mine?

Mar. Dissimulation sits but ill, my lord,
On minds like your's: I am a poor weak woman,
And so, it seems, you think me. But suppose
That same all-knowing spirit which you rais'd,
Who condescends so kindly to instruct me,
Should whisper (Warwick knows the power of love
As well as Edward) that Elizabeth
Was his first wish, the idol of his soul;
What say you? might I venture to believe it?

War. Marg'ret, you might; for 'tis in vain to hide
A thought from thee; it might have told you, too,
If it be so, there is not such a wretch
On earth as Suffolk: give me but the proof.

Mar. Lord Suffolk was last night despatch'd to
Grafton,
To offer her a share in Edward's throne.

War. Which she refus'd: did she not, Marg'ret?
She did. [say,

Mar. I know not that, my lord; but crowns
Are dazzling meteors in a woman's eye;
Such strong temptations, few of us, I fear,
Have virtue to resist.

War. Elizabeth
Has every virtue; I'll not doubt her faith.
Mar. Edward is young and handsome.

War. Curses on him!
Think'st thou he knew my fond attachment there?
Mar. Oh! passing well, my lord; and when 'twas
urg'd,

How deeply 'twould affect you, swore by heav'n,
Imperious Warwick ne'er should be the master
Of charms like her's; 'twas happiness, he said,
Beyond a subject's merit to deserve,
Beyond his hope to wish for or aspire to. [been

War. But for that Warwick, Edward's self had
A subject still; and may be so, hereafter.
Thou smil'st at my misfortunes.

Mar. I must smile
When I behold a subtle statesman kind
Dup'd and deluded by a shallow boy;
Sent on a fruitless errand to expose
His country and himself; it was, indeed,

A master stroke of policy, beyond, [green
One should have thought, the reach of years so
As Edward's, to despatch the weeping lover,
And seize the glorious opportunity
Of tampering with his mistress here at home.

War. Did Neville, Rutland, Clifford, bleed for
this?

Mar. For this doth Henry languish in a dungeon,
And wretched Marg'ret live a life of woe:
For this you gave the crown to pious Edward,
And thus he thanks you for his kingdom.

War. Crowns
Are baubles, fit for children like himself
To play with; I have scatter'd many of them:
But thus to cross me in my dearest hope,
The sweet reward of all my toils for him

And for his country; if I suffer it,
If I forgive him, may I live the scorn
Of men, a branded coward, and old age
Without or love or reverence be my portion!
Henceforth, good Marg'ret, know me for thy friend:
We will have noble vengeance. Are there not
Still left amongst the lazy sons of peace,
Some busy spirits who wish well to thee
And to thy cause?

Mar. There are: resentment sleeps,
But is not dead; beneath the hollow cover
Of loyalty, the slumbering ashes lie
Unheeded; Warwick's animating breath
Will quickly light them into flames again. [thee:]

War. Then, Edward, from this moment I abjure
Oh! I will make thee ample recompense
For all the wrongs that I have done the house
Of Lancaster: go, summon all thy friends;
Be quick, good Marg'ret; haste ere I repent,
And yield my soul to perjurd York again.
The king, I think, gives you free liberty
To range abroad.

Mar. He doth, and I will use it
As I would ever use the gift of foes,
To his destruction.

War. That arch-pander, Suffolk,
That minister of vice—But time is precious;
To-morrow, Marg'ret, we will meet in private,
And have some further conference; meantime,
Devise, consult, use ev'ry means against
Our common foe: remember, from this hour,
Warwick's thy friend: be secret and be happy. [Exit.]

Mar. What easy fools these cunning statesmen
With all their policy, when once they fall [are,
Into a woman's pow'r! This gallant leader,
This blnst'ring Warwick, how the hero shrunk
And lessen'd to my sight! Elizabeth,
I thank thee for thy wonder-working charms;
The time, perhaps, may come, when I shall stand
Indebted to them for—the throne of England.
Proud York beware, for Lancaster's great name
Shall rise superior in the lists of fame:
Fortune that long had frown'd, shall smile at last,
And make amends for all my sorrows past. [Exit.]

ACT III.—SCENE I.

Enter MARGARET OF ANJOU, LADY CLIFFORD,
and Attendants.

Mar. (To a Gentleman.) Despatch these letters
straight to Scotland; this
To the French envoy; these to the Earl of Pem-
broke. (Turning to Lady Clifford.)

Thus far, my friend, hath fortune favour'd us
Beyond our hopes: the soul of haughty Warwick
Is all on fire, and puling Edward loves
With most romantic ardour. Oh! my Clifford,
You would have smil'd to see how artfully
I play'd upon him: flatter'd, sooth'd, provok'd,
And wrought him to my purpose: we are liok'd
In firmest bonds of amity and love.

Lady C. Hath Warwick, then, so soon forgot
his Edward?

Think'st thou that the frantic Earl will e'er exert
His ill-directed powers to pull down
The royal structure which himself had rais'd?
Never.

Mar. What is there disappointed love
And unrestrain'd ambition will not do?
I tell thee, we are sworn and cordial friends.

Lady C. Thou know'st he hates the house of Lan-
caster.

Mar. No matter; he has marvellous good skill
In making kings, and I have business for him.

Lady C. And canst thou, then, forget the cruel
wrongs,

The deep-felt injuries of oppressive Warwick,
To join the hand that forg'd thy husband's chains,
And robb'd thee of a crown?

Mar. But what, my Clifford,
If the same hand that ravish'd, should restore it?
'Tis a court friendship, and may last as long

As int'rest shall direct: I've not forgot,
No, nor forgiv'n; I hate, abhor, detest him;
But I will use him as my instrument,
My necessary tool; I'll make him draw
His trait'rous sword, to sheath it in the breast
Of him he loves, then point it to his own:
Yes, Clifford, I have twin'd me round his heart;
Like the fell serpent, crept into his bosom,
That I might sting more surely: he shall perish;
I keep him for the last dear precious morsel,
To crown the glorious banquet of revenge.

Lady C. 'Tis what he merits from us; yet th' at-
tempt

Were dang'rous, he is still the people's idol.

Mar. And so, perhaps, shall Marg'ret be; ap-
Waits on success; the fickle multitude [plause
(Like the light straw that floats along the stream)
Glide with the current still, and follow fortune.
Our prospect brightens every hour: the people
Are ripe for a revolt: by civil wars,
Long time inur'd to savage scenes of plunder
And desolation, they delight in war: [ter,
These English heroes, when once flesh'd with slaugh-
Like the keen mastiff, lose not soon the track
Of vengeance, nor forget the taste of blood.

Lady C. What further succours have we to de-
Beside Earl Warwick's? [peud on,

Mar. Oh! his name alone
Will be an army to us.

Lady C. If we have it:
Resentment is a short-liv'd passion. What
If Warwick should relent, and turn again
To Edward?

Mar. Then I have a bosom friend
That shall be ready to reward him for it;
But I have better hopes: without his aid,
We are not friendless: Scotland's hardy sons,
Who smile at danger, and defy the storm,
Will leave their barren mountains to defend
That liberty they love: add, too, the aid
Of gallant Pembroke, and the pow'rs which France
Will send to vindicate her injur'd honour:
E'er Edward can collect his force and take
The field, we shall be thirty thousand strong.

Lady C. But what becomes of the young prince?

Mar. Ay; there

I am, indeed, unhappy. Oh! my child,
How shall I set him free? Hear, nature, hear
A mother's pray'r! oh! guide me with thy counsel,
And teach me how to save my darling boy.
Ay, now I have it: monitress divine,
I thank thee: yes; I wait but for the means
Of his escape, then fly this hated palace,
Nor will return till I can call it mine. [Exeunt.]

Enter KING EDWARD and the EARL OF SUFFOLK.

K. Edw. I fear we've gone too far: th' indignant
Warwick [folk,

Ill brook'd our steady purpose; mark'd you, Suffolk—
With what an eye of scorn he turn'd him from us,
And low'r'd defiance: that prophetic woman!
Half of her curse already is fulfill'd,
And I have lost my friend.

Suf. Some friends, perhaps,
Are better lost: you'll pardon me, my liege;
But, were it fitting, I could tell a tale
Would soon convince you Warwick is as weak—

K. Edw. As Edward, thou wouldst say.

Suf. But 'twill distress
Thy noble heart too much; I dare not, sir;
Yet one day you must know it.

K. Edw. Then, by thee
Let it be told me, Suffolk; thy kind hand
Will best administer the bitter draught:
Go on, my Suffolk; speak, I charge thee, speak.

Suf. That rival whom thou wish'd me to dis-
cover— [thou found

K. Edw. Ay, what of him? quick, tell me, hast
The happy traitor? give me but to know,
That I may wreak my speedy vengeance on him.

Suf. Suppose that rival were the man whom
most

You lov'd, the man, perhaps, whom most you fear'd;
Suppose 'twere—Warwick.

K. Edw. Ha! it cannot be:

I would not think it for a thousand worlds.

Warwick in love with her, impossible!

Now, Suffolk, do I fear thou speak'st from envy

And jealous hatred of the noble Warwick,

Not from the love of justice or of Edward:

Where didst thou learn this falsehood?

Suf. From the lips

Of truth, from one whose honour and whose word
You will not question; from—Elizabeth. [so.

K. Edw. From her! nay, then, I fear it must be

Suf. When last I saw her, for again I went

By your command, though hopeless of success,

With all the little eloquence that I

Was master of, I urg'd your ardent passion;

Told her how much, how tenderly you lov'd her,

And press'd with eagerness to know the cause

Of her unkind refusal; till at length,

Reluctantly, with blushes she confess'd [ness,

There was a cause; she thank'd you for your good-

'Twas more she said, much more than she deserv'd,

She ever should revere her king: and if

She had a heart to give, it should be—Edward's.

K. Edw. So kind, and yet so cruel: well, go on.

Suf. Then told me all the story of her love,

That Warwick long had woo'd her; that her hand

Was promis'd; soon as he return'd from France,

Though once her father cruelly oppos'd it,

They were, by his consent, to be united.

K. Edw. Oh! never, Suffolk, may I live to see

That dreadful hour! Designing hypocrite!

Are these his arts, is this the friend I lov'd?

By heav'n! she shall be mine; I will assert

A sov'reign's right, and tear her from him. What

If he rebel—another civil war!

'Tis terrible. Oh! that I could shake off

This cumbrous garb of majesty that clings

So close around me, meet him man to man,

And try who best deserves her: but when kings

Grow mad, their guiltless subjects pay the forfeit.

Horrible thought! Good Suffolk, for a while

I would be private; therefore, wait without;

Let me have no intruders; above all,

Keep-Warwick from my sight. [Exit Suffolk.

Enter the EARL OF WARWICK.

War. Behold him here;

No welcome guest, it seems, unless I ask

My Lord of Suffolk's leave: there was a time

When Warwick wanted not his aid to gain

Admission here.

K. Edw. There was a time, perhaps, [it.

When Warwick more desir'd and more deserv'd

War. Never; I've been a foolish faithful slave;

All my best years, the morning of my life,

Hath been devoted to your service: what

Are now the fruits? disgrace and infamy;

My spotless name, which never yet the breath

Of calumny had tainted, made the mock

For foreign fools to carp at: but 'tis fit

Who trust in princes, should be thus rewarded.

K. Edw. I thought, my lord, I had full well repaid

Your services with honours, wealth, and pow'r

Unlimited: thy all-directing hand

Guided in secret ev'ry latent wheel

Of government, and mov'd the whole machine:

Warwick was all in all, and pow'rless Edward

Stood like a cipher in the great account. [thee

War. Who gave that cipher worth, and seated

On England's throne? thy undistinguish'd name

Had rotted in the dust from whence it sprung,

And moulder'd in oblivion, had not Warwick

Dug from its sordid mine the useless ore,

And stamp'd it with a diadem. Thou know'st,

This wretched country, doom'd, perhaps, like

To fall by its own self-destroying hand, [Rome,

Tost for so many years in the rough sea

Of civil discord, but for me had perish'd.

In that distressful hour I seiz'd the helm,

Bade the rough waves subside in peace, and steer'd

Your shatter'd vessel safe into the harbour.

You may despise, perhaps, that useless aid

Which you no longer want; but know, proud youth,

He who forgets a friend, deserves a foe.

K. Edw. Know, too, reproach for benefits re-

Pays ev'ry debt, and cancels obligation. [ceiv'd,

War. Why, that, indeed, is frugal honesty,

A thrifty saving knowledge, when the debt

Grows burthensome, and cannot be discharg'd.

A sponge will wipe out all, and cost you nothing.

K. Edw. When you have counted o'er the nu-

merous train

Of mighty gifts your bonny lavish'd on me,

You may remember next the inj'ries

Which I have done you; let me know 'em all,

And I will make you ample satisfaction.

War. Thou canst not; thou hast robb'd me of a

It is not in thy pow'r to restore: [jewel

I was the first, shall future annals say,

That broke the sacred bond of public trust

And mutual confidence; ambassadors,

In after times, mere instruments, perhaps,

Of venal statesmen, shall recall my name

To witness, that they want not an example,

And plead my guilt, to sanctify their own.

Amidst the herd of mercenary slaves [Warwick

That haunt your court, could none be found but

To be the shameless herald of a lie? [on me?

K. Edw. And wouldst thou turn the vile reproach

If I have broke my faith, and stain'd the name

Of England, thank thy own pernicious counsels

That urg'd me to it, and extorted from me

A cold consent to what my heart abhorr'd.

War. I've been abus'd, insulted, and betray'd;

My injur'd honour cries aloud for vengeance;

Her wounds will never close!

K. Edw. These gusts of passion

Will but inflame them; if I have been right

Inform'd, my lord, besides these dang'rous scars

Of bleeding honour, you have other wounds

As deep, though not so fatal; such, perhaps,

As none but fair Elizabeth can cure.

War. Elizabeth!

K. Edw. Nay, start not, I have cause

To wonder most: I little thought, indeed,

When Warwick told me I might learn to love,

He was, himself, so able to instruct me:

But I've discover'd all.

War. And so have I;

Too well I know thy breach of friendship there;

Thy fruitless, base endeavours to supplant me.

K. Edw. I scorn it, sir; Elizabeth hath charms,

And I have equal right with you to admire them:

Nor see I aught so godlike in the form,

So all-commanding in the name of Warwick,

That he alone should revel in the charms

Of beauty, and monopolize perfection.

I knew not of your love.

War. By heav'n! 'tis false;

You knew it all, and meanly took occasion,

Whilst I was busy'd in the noble office

Your grace thought fit to honour me withal,

To tamper with a weak, unguarded woman,

To bribe her passions high, and basely steal

A treasure which your kingdom could not purchase.

K. Edw. How know you that? But be it as it may,

I had a right, nor will I tamely yield

My claim to happiness, the privilege

To choose the partner of my throne and bed:

It is a branch of my prerogative. [rants:

War. Prerogative! what's that? the boast of ty-

A borrow'd jewel, glitt'ring in the crown

With specious lustre, lent but to betray:

You had it, sir, and hold it from the people.

K. Edw. And therefore do I prize it; I would guard

Their liberties, and they shall strengthen mine:

But when proud faction and her rebel crew

Insult their sov'reign, trample on his laws,

And bid defiance to his pow'r, the people,

In justice to themselves, will then defend

His cause, and vindicate the rights they gave.

War. Go to your darling people, then; for soon,
If I mistake not, 'twill be needful; try
Their boasted zeal, and see if one of them
Will dare to lift his arm up in your cause,
If I forbid them.

K. Edw. Is it so, my lord?
Then mark my words: I've been your slave too long,
And you have rul'd me with a rod of iron;
But, henceforth, know, proud peer, I am thy master,
And will be so: the king who delegates
His pow'r to others' hands, but ill deserves
The crown he wears.

War. Look well, then, to your own;
It sits but loosely on your head; for know,
The man who injur'd Warwick never pass'd
Unpunish'd yet.

K. Edw. Nor he who threaten'd Edward:
You may repent it, sir. My guards, there; seize
This traitor and convey him to the Tow'r!
There let him learn obedience.

Enter Guards, who seize Warwick.

War. Slaves, stand off:
If I must yield my sword, I'll give it him
Whom it so long has serv'd; there's not a part
In this old faithful steel, that is not stain'd
With English blood in grateful Edward's cause.
Give me my chains, they are the bands of friendship,
Of a king's friendship; for his sake, awhile,
I'll wear them.

K. Edw. Hence: away with him.

War. 'Tis well:
Exert your pow'r, it may not last you long;
For know, though Edward may forget his friend,
That England will not. Now, sir, I attend you.

[Exeunt Warwick and Guards.]

K. Edw. Presumptuous rebel! Ah! who's there?

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My liege,
Queen Marg'ret with the prince her son are fled;
In a few hours she hopes (for so we learn
From those who have pursu'd her) to be join'd
By th' Earl of Warwick; in his name, it seems,
She has already rais'd three thousand men.

K. Edw. Warwick in league with her? Oh,
heav'n! 'tis well

We've crush'd the serpent ere his poison spread
Throughout our kingdom: guard the palace gates,
Keep double watch; summon my troops together.
Where is my brother Clarence, Buckingham,
And Pembroke? We must check this foul rebellion.

[Exit Messenger.]

Enter the EARL OF SUFFOLK.

Suf. My liege, the Duke of Clarence—

K. Edw. What of him? [him]

Suf. Hath left the court; this moment I beheld
In conf'rence deep with Pembroke, who, it seems,
Is Marg'ret's firmest friend: 'tis whisper'd, both
Will join the Queen.

K. Edw. Well; 'tis no matter: I
Have deeper cause for grief; he cannot feel
A brother's falsehood who has lost a friend,
A friend like Warwick. Suffolk, thou behold'st me
Betray'd, deserted by the man I lov'd;
Treated with indifference by her
Whom I ador'd, forsaken by my brother,
And threaten'd by the subjects I protect;
Oppress'd on every side: but thou shalt see
I have a soul superior to misfortunes.
Though rebel Clarence wrings my tortur'd heart,
And faithless Warwick braves me, we will yet
Maintain our right. Come on, my friend, thou know'st
Without his boasted aid I could have gain'd
The crown, without him now I will preserve it.

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Tower.

Enter the EARL OF WARWICK.

War. Mistaken mortals plan delusive schemes
Of bliss, and call futurity their own,
Yet are not masters of a moment. This
Was the appointed time, the very day

Which should have join'd me to Elizabeth
In nuptial bonds: Oh! cruel memory,
Do not torment me. If there be a crime
Of deeper die than all the guilty train
Of human vices, 'tis—ingratitude.

'Tis now two years since Henry lost the crown,
And here he is, ev'n in this very prison
A fellow captive now: disgraceful thought!
How will he smile to meet his conqueror here!
Oh! for that stoic apathy which lulls
The drowsy soul to sweet forgetfulness!
But 'twill not be: Elizabeth, where art thou?
Perhaps with Edward—Oh! that thought distracts
It is, I fear, as Marg'ret said; she's false. [me:]
But when I look on these, can I expect
To find one virtue left in human kind?
My Pembroke too! am I so soon forgotten?
Oh! no; he comes—

Enter the EARL OF PEMBROKE.

Pem. My friend!

War. My Pembroke, welcome:
Thee I have ever found most just and kind;
But, in the darkness of adversity,
The jewel friendship shines with double lustre.

Pem. I am not of the insect train that bask
In fortune's sunshine, and when ev'ning damps
Arise, are seen no more: no, Warwick; what
I speak, I mean: you have been hardly treated.

War. Oh! Pembroke, didst thou know but half
the wrongs

That I have suffer'd, thou wouldst pity me.

Pem. I would do more, much more, my Warwick:
Who only pities, but insults the wretched: [he]
I come with nobler views; I come to tell thee,
That I have felt thy inj'ries as my own,
And will revenge them too.

War. How kind thou art
To feel for Warwick!

Pem. Ev'ry honest breast
Must feel the inj'ries that a good man suffers:
Thine is the common cause of all: adieu
To English freedom, when our liberty
Shall be dependent on a sov'reign's nod,
When years of honest service shall be paid
With infamy and chains.

War. I've not deserv'd them. [hast great]
Pem. Nor shalt thou wear them long: for thou
And pow'rful friends—the noble Duke of Clarence—
Behold his signet: this, my Warwick, gain'd me
Admission here. We must be secret.

War. Then I am not forsaken: Clarence!—Ha!
Pem. Yes;

The gallant youth, with honest zeal, declar'd
He lov'd his brother much, but justice more.

War. Then, Edward, I defy thee: gen'rous Clarence!

Thou know'st the man who thus could treat a friend,
Would soon forget a brother. But say, Pembroke,
How stands the Duke of Buckingham?

Pem. Fast bound
To Edward; he and that smooth courtier, Suffolk,
Are the two rotten pillars that support
His tott'ring throne: but Marg'ret—

War. Ay; how fares
My new ally? has she escap'd the tyrant?

Pem. She has; and by some wondrous means con-
To free her captive son. [triv'd]

War. Though I abhor,
I must admire that enterprising woman:
Her active mind is ever on the wing
In search of fresh expedients, to recover
The crown she lost.

Pem. Aready she has rais'd
A pow'rful army; all the secret foes
Of York's ambitious line rush forth in crowds,
And join her standard: ere to-morrow's sun
Shall dawn upon us, she will set thee free.

War. Oh! Pembroke, nothing wounds the gen'rous
So deep as obligations to a foe. [mind]
Is there no way to liberty, my friend,
But through the bloody paths of civil war?

Pem. I fear there is not.

War. Then it must be so :

I could have wish'd—but freedom and revenge,
On any terms, are welcome.

Pem. Here, then, join we
Our hands—

War. Our hearts.

Pem. Now, Warwick, be thou firm
In thy resolves ; let no unmanly fears,
No foolish, fond remembrance of past friendship
Unnerve thy arm, or shake thy steady purpose.

War. No ; by my wrongs it shall not : once, thou
know'st,

I lov'd him but too well, and these vile chains
Are my reward. Oh ! give me but the use
Of this once-pow'rful arm, and thou shalt see
How it shall punish falsehood. Are thy forces
Prepar'd !

Pem. They are, and wait but for my orders ;
Clarence will join us soon : our first great end
Is to secure thy liberty ; that done,
We haste to seize the palace, and redeem
The fair Elizabeth.

War. Redeem her, ha !

Is she a captive, too ?

Pem. A willing slave ;

A gay state pris'ner, left to roam at large
O'er the young monarch's palace.

War. Ay, my Pembroke,

That's more inviting than a prison. Oh !
She's false, she's false. Who sent her there ?

Pem. She came,

It seems, to thank him for his royal bounties
To her good father, the new Earl of Rivers,
Who will, no doubt, persuade her to accept—

War. Of Edward's hand. Distraction ! fly, my
friend,

Haste thee to Marg'ret, tell her if she hopes
For Warwick's aid, she must release him now,
Ere Edward's ill-tim'd mercy shall prevent her.

Pem. I go ; my friend, adieu ! when next we meet,
I hope to bring thee liberty. [Exit.

War. Farewell.

She's lost ! she's gone ! that base seducer, Edward,
Hath wrought on her weak mind ; it must be so.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My lord, the Lady Elizabeth.

War. Amazement ! sure,

It cannot be ! admit her, sir. Why, what [Exit *Mess.*
Could bring her here ? Edward has sent her hither
To see if I will crone to him for pardon :
Be still, my jealous heart.

Enter LADY ELIZABETH GREY.

Eliz. My Warwick !

War. 'Tis a grace I look'd not for,
That a fair fav'rite, who so late had tasted
The pleasures of a court, should condescend
To visit thus a poor abandon'd captive.

Eliz. I come to take my portion of misfortune,
To pour the balm of comfort in, and heal,
If possible, the wounds which I had made.
Too well I know, I was the fatal cause
Of all thy sorrows ; but the noble Edward,
For so, indeed, he is—

War. And art thou come

To plead the cause of him who sent me hither ?

Eliz. I came to be the messenger of peace,
To calm thy troubled soul, and give thee rest ;
To teach my Warwick to forget his wrongs.

War. Forget my wrongs ! was that thy errand
To teach me low submission to a tyrant ? [Here,
To ask forgiveness, kneel, and deprecate
The wrath of blust'ring Edward ? If thou com'st
On terms like these to bring me freedom, know
It will not be accepted : now I see
Through all your arts ; by heav'n ! I'd rather lose
A thousand lives, than owe one to his bounty.

Eliz. Either my Warwick is much chang'd, and
I fear he is, or he would never talk [so
Thus coldly to me ; never would despise
A life so precious, if he knew how much

Elizabeth had suffer'd to preserve it.

The gallant Edward, won by my entreaties—

War. Entreaties ! didst thou then descend so low
As to entreat him for me ?

Eliz. Hadst thou seen,
When I implor'd him to forgive my Warwick,
How kind he look'd, how his repenting heart,
Heav'd with the pangs of agonizing friendship,
Thou wouldst have pity'd him.

War. Deceitful woman,
I see thy falsehood now ; I am betray'd,
And thou art leagu'd with Edward to destroy me.
Go to your royal lover, and unite

Those only fit companions for each other,
A broken friendship, and a perjurd love :
Give up discarded Warwick, and to make
The compact firm, cement it with my blood.

Eliz. I thought the soul of Warwick far above
Such mean suspicions. Shall the man, whose truth,
Whose constancy, and love, have been so long
My bright example, shall he stoop so low
As thus to listen to an idle tale
Told by some prating courtier ? If, indeed,
Thou couldst believe it, I should pity thee.

War. Where is your father, the new Earl of Rivers ?
Why sends he not his forces to our aid ?

Eliz. He cannot : honour, gratitude, forbid
That he should lift up his rebellious arm
Against his benefactor ! well thou know'st,
Of late, when civil discord reign'd amongst us,
He fought with Henry, and with Henry fell :
When injur'd Edward generously forgave,
Restor'd his forfeit lands, and late advanc'd him
To rank and title.

War. Infamy and shame !

The common nets which fearful knav'ry spreads
To catch ambition's fools : mean, sordid bribes !
We know the treasure they were meant to purchase.

Eliz. Unkind suggestion ! how have I deserv'd it ?
Have I for this refus'd a youthful monarch,
And spurn'd his offer'd sceptre at my feet,
To be reproach'd at last by cruel Warwick ?
Had I once listen'd to him, had these eyes
Been dazzled with the splendour of a court,
I need not thus have chang'd it for a dungeon.
But since I am suspected, witness heav'n,
And witness Warwick, to my vows ! henceforth,
Dear as thou art, I cast thee from my love ;
Elizabeth will never wed a traitor.

War. Am I awake ? and did Elizabeth
Say she would never wed her faithful Warwick ?
Then bear me witness too, all-judging heav'n !
Here yield I up all visionary dreams
Of future bliss, of liberty, or life ;
Ev'n the sweet hope of vengeance, that alone
Sustain'd my spirit, loses all its charms ;
I wish'd for freedom but to purchase thee ;
For life, but to enjoy it with my love,
And she disclaims me.

Eliz. Heav'n forbid ! Oh ! Warwick,
Let not the tide of passion thus overwhelm
Thy reason.

War. Canst thou pardon me ? Thou know'st
Th' unguarded warmth, the weakness of my nature.
I would not wrong thee, but I've been so oft,
So cruelly deceiv'd.

Eliz. I know thou hast ;

But never by Elizabeth.

War. Oh ! no ;

It is impossible that perfidy
Should wear a form like thine. (Looking at her.)
I wonder not

That Edward lov'd ; no, when I look on thee,
All beautiful, all enchanting as thou art,
By heav'n ! I think I could almost forgive him.

Eliz. Then wherefore not be reconcil'd ?

War. To whom ?

The author of my wrongs ? It cannot be :

Know, I have promis'd Marg'ret to destroy him.

Eliz. Destroy thy friend ! ungen'rous, cruel War-
wick !

Is't not enough that thou hast triumph'd here?
 Already we have pierc'd his noble heart
 With the keen pangs of disappointed love: [rows?
 And wouldst thou wound his breast with added sor-
 Wouldst thou involve a nation in his ruin?

War. Elizabeth, no more: alas! too well
 Thou know'st, there is a pow'ful advocate
 In Warwick's breast, that pleads for perjurd Ed-
 ward.

Eliz. Cherish the soft emotion: Oh! my War-
 War. That angel form can never plead in vain;
 But, then, my friends, where is the solemn vow
 To Marg'ret and to Pembroke? there's the tie;
 My honour's dearer to me—

Eliz. Than thy love;
 Dearer, much dearer, than Elizabeth!
 But I have done: farewell, my lord, I see
 Thy deep resentment is not to be mov'd
 By my weak influence o'er thee. (Going.)

War. Stay, I charge thee. [idol
 Eliz. What is this phantom, honour? this proud
 That tramples thus on ev'ry humble virtue!
 This cruel, bloody Moloch, that delights
 In human sacrifice? Oh! would to heav'n
 I were its only victim! but with me,
 You offer up your country and your king.

War. Think on my vow, think on my promise
 giv'n.

Eliz. Thy league with Marg'ret must be fatal:
 We should succeed, and Lancaster once more
 Assume the throne, how dear the victory
 That's purchas'd with our fellow subjects' blood!
 Alas! such triumphs make the conqueror weep.
 But, if we fail—

War. Impossible!
 Eliz. Oh! think,

Betimes, what dreadful punishments await
 The vanquish'd rebel: thou, perhaps, my love,
 Shalt then be doom'd on th' ignominious block
 To fall inglorious; and, when thou'rt gone,
 Who shall defend thy poor Elizabeth? [pose,

War. Alarming thought! it staggers my firm pur-
 And makes me half a villain.

Enter an Officer.

Offi. Madam, the king demands your presence, I
 Have orders to convey you to the palace.

War. And wilt thou leave me?
 Eliz. This, my Warwick, this

Is the decisive moment; now determine;
 Accept of mercy, ere it be too late;
 Ere hasty Edward—Shall I say thou wilt
 Return to thy obedience, and receive
 Thy pardon? shall I? speak, my love.

War. Perhaps
 I may accept it, if 'tis brought by thee.

Eliz. Then we shall meet in happiness.
 War. Farewell! [Exeunt Eliz. and Officer.

Now to those worst companions in affliction,
 My own sad thoughts again; they're gloomy all,
 And, like my habitation, full of horror.
 I like not Edward's message: if he hears
 My league with Margaret, he still has pow'r
 To make me feel his rage: I have deserv'd it.

(A trampling heard without.)

Methought I heard a noise: this way they come.
 Perhaps it is the messenger of death.

Re-enter the EARL OF PEMBROKE.

Pem. The messenger of vengeance; see her sword:
 Accept it, and be free. (Offers the sword.)

War. First, let me know
 To whom I am indebted for't.

Pem. To me.

Soon as the rumour of thy foul disgrace
 Had reach'd the public ear, th' impatient people,
 Uncertain of thy fate, tumultuous throng'd
 Around the palace, and demanded thee;
 Give us our Warwick, give us back, they cry'd,
 Our hero, our deliverer: I stepp'd forth,
 And bade them, instant, if they wish'd to save
 The best of men from infamy and death,
 To follow me: transported they obey'd:

I led them hither; forc'd the prison-gates,
 And brought thee this: direct it as thou wilt.

(Gives the sword.)

War. Welcome once more, thou dearest gift of
 heav'n,

Immortal liberty! my friend, I thank thee.
 Oh! Pembroke, would thou hadst been here! my
 My dear Elizabeth is true. [love,

Pem. At least
 You think so.

War. She has told me such sweet truths;
 Edward repents him sorely, he is griev'd
 At his ingratitude.

Pem. And well he may;
 I fear thou art betray'd: alas! my Warwick,
 Thy open, gen'rous, unsuspecting virtue
 Thinks ev'ry heart as honest as thy own.
 Thou know'st not Edward nor Elizabeth.

The kingdom is in arms, and ev'ry hour
 It is expected France will join the queen:
 England will want its great protector's aid.
 Edward and Rivers have conspir'd to cheat
 Thy credulous ear, and who so fit to spread
 The flimsy web as thy Elizabeth,
 Their fair ambassador? I see thou'rt caught.

War. By heav'n! it may be so: I am the sport
 Of fortune and of fraud.

Pem. Away, my friend:
 It is not now a time to think of her:

Marg'ret, supported by thy pow'ful name,
 And join'd by Clarence, wait us at the head
 Of fifteen thousand men; who, eager all
 To crush a tyrant, and pull down oppression,
 Attend thy wish'd-for presence; not a soldier
 Will act or move till Warwick shall direct them.
 Edward and England's fate depend on thee.

War. Away, my friend, I'll follow thee.

[Exit Pembroke.

Yet, stop
 A moment; let not passion hurry me
 To base dishonour: if my country calls
 For Warwick's aid, shall I not hear her voice,
 And save her? Pembroke may have private views,
 And subtle Marg'ret, too. Elizabeth!
 I must not lose thee. Oh! direct me, heav'n! [Exit.

ACT V.—SCENE I.

Enter LADY ELIZABETH GREY

Eliz. The royal pardon came too late, and Pem-
 Already has releas'd him: he is gone! [broke
 Elizabeth may never see him more!
 A thousand terrors haunt me; a fond father,
 A guiltless sov'reign, a distracted lover;
 Fame, fortune, friends, and country, all depend
 On one eventful moment: hark! the sound
 Of distant groans: perhaps the king—perhaps
 My Warwick bleeds. Oh! agonizing thought!
 Great God of armies, whose all-guiding hand
 Directs the fate of nations, oh! look down
 On thy own image; let not cruel discord
 Divide their kindred souls! in pity hear!
 Pour thy benignant spirit o'er their hearts,
 And once more knit them in the bonds of peace!

Enter the EARL OF SUFFOLK.

Suf. The pray'r of innocence is always heard.
 Eliz. Ha! Suffolk, whither hast'st thou? art thou
 come—

Suf. I come to heal thy sorrows, lovely fair one,
 To tell thee, Edward, and thy much-lov'd Warwick,
 Once more are friends.

Eliz. Indeed! Oh, welcome news!
 My joy's too great for ut'trance: tell me, Suffolk,
 How was it? speak, is Warwick safe? Oh, heav'n!
 Suf. A moment's patience, and I'll tell thee all.
 Marg'ret, thou know'st, had rais'd a pow'ful force,
 That doubled Edward's troops: elate with pride,
 And almost sure of victory, she urg'd
 The tardy spearmen; on they rush'd as if
 Secure of conquest: the unhappy king
 Stood nobly firm, and seem'd to brave his fate,
 When Warwick, like a guardian god, appear'd:
 His noble mien and all-commanding look

Struck deep attention; ev'ry eye was bent
Upon him, and an awful silence reign'd
O'er either host; he rais'd his voice on high,
And, "Stop," he cry'd, "your sacrilegious hands,
Nor touch my friend: who pierces Edward's breast,
Must pass through mine. I rais'd him to the throne,
And will support him there: to you I gave,
From you, my fellow-soldiers, I expect him:
Howe'er his cruel wrongs have wounded me,
He never injur'd you, and I forgive him."
He spake, and instant through the gazing crowd
A murmur ran; down dropp'd their nerveless arms,
As if enchanted by some magic pow'r, [ward!]
And with one voice they cry'd, "Long live King Ed-

Eliz. How pow'rful is the tongue of eloquence,
When in the cause of virtue! Well, what follow'd?

Suf. Encourag'd by the shouting soldiers, Edward
On like a modest virgin wishing came,
Yet fearful; Warwick, with a bridegroom's speed,
To meet him flew; into each other's arms
They ran with speechless joy: the tender scene
Affected ev'ry heart, and the rough soldier,
Unns'd to melting sympathy, forgot
His ruthless nature, and dissolv'd in tears.

Eliz. Sweet reconciliation! then, Elizabeth,
Thou didst not plead in vain. But, say, how brook'd
The haughty Queen this unexpected change?

Suf. Abash'd, confounded, for awhile she strove
To stem the torrent, but in vain; then fled
Precipitate.

Eliz. But where, oh! where's my Warwick?

Suf. With a few chosen squadrons he pursues
The disappointed Marg'ret.

Eliz. Oh, my fears!

I know not why, but at that hateful name
I tremble ever; my foreboding heart
Presages something dreadful.

Suf. Do not vex

Thy tender mind with visionary dangers. [here,
Eliz. Oh! would to heav'n that he were shelter'd
And safe within these arms!

Suf. Be not alarm'd:

He is the care of heav'n: all good men love,
All bad ones fear him.

Eliz. Such superior merit

Must have a thousand foes, the constant mark
Of envy's poison'd darts.

Suf. There Suffolk feels

The keen reproach; with blushes I confess
There was a time, when, urg'd by fond ambition,
I look'd on Warwick with a jealous eye:
But this last noble deed hath won my heart,
And I am now a convert to his virtues:
But, see, the king approaches.

Enter KING EDWARD.

K. Edw. Health and peace,
And happiness to fair Elizabeth!
Thou art no stranger to the joyful news;
The lastre of those speaking eyes declares it.

Eliz. Suffolk, ev'n now, hath bless'd me with the
tidings.

K. Edw. Oh! 'tis amazement all. Elizabeth,
When last we met, thou wert the suppliant, now
'Tis I must ask forgiveness, I who injur'd
The dearest, best of men. Oh! thou hast sav'd
Edward from shame, and England from destruction.

Eliz. Did I not say my Warwick would be just?

K. Edw. Thou didst, and on those beauteous lips
fair truth

And soft persuasion dwell. Long time he stood
Inflexible, and deaf to friendship's voice,
Listen'd to nought but all-subduing love.
In after times, thy name shall be enroll'd
Amongst the great deliv'ers of their country.

Eliz. I have no title to the lavish praise
Thy gen'rous heart bestows; I only said
What duty-prompted, and what love inspir'd;
Indulgent heav'n has crown'd it with success.

K. Edw. Thou hast done all: I am indebted to
For more, much more than I can e'er repay. [thrice
Long time, with shame I own, hath Warwick soar'd

Above me, but I will not be outdone
For ever by this proud, aspiring rival:
Poor as I am, there yet is one way left
To pay the debt of gratitude I owe him,
One great reward for such exalted virtues,
Thyself, Elizabeth.

Eliz. What means my lord,
My royal master?

K. Edw. Yes; when next we meet
I will bestow it on him, will resign
All my fond claim to happiness and thee;
Though thy dear image ne'er can be effac'd
From Edward's breast, though still I dote upon thee,
Though I could hang for ever on thy beauties,
Yet will I yield them to their rightful lord:
Warwick has earn'd, Warwick alone deserves them.

Eliz. Would he were here to thank thee for thy
goodness!

Know, gen'rous prince, Elizabeth has long
Admir'd thy virtues; and could love admit
Of a divided heart, the noble Edward
Would share it with his friend.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My royal liege,
The rebels are dispers'd; Queen Marg'ret's son
Was slain in the pursuit, and she—

K. Edw. I hope,
Secur'd.

Mess. Is taken pris'ner, and will soon
Be here.

K. Edw. But where's Lord Warwick?

Mess. Sir, the Queen—

Enter MARGARET OF ANJOU, prisoner.

Mar. Once more I am your pris'ner.

K. Edw. 'Twill be prudent
Henceforth to keep you so.

Mar. You dare not.

Thou think'st, perhaps, that I shall sue to thee
For mercy: no; in Marg'ret of Anjou,
Thou seest the wife, and daughter of a king;
A spirit not to be subdu'd; though fall'n,
Triumphant still, and though a pris'ner, free.
For know, I bear a mind above the reach
Of fortune or of Edward. I have lost
All I could wish to live for in my child;
And gain'd what most I wish'd to gain, revenge!
Or life or death are now indiff'rent to me.

K. Edw. For thy unbounded goodness, Pow'r
Accept our praise! [supreme,

Eliz. (Kneeling.) Accept our humble pray'r!

Mar. Insulting piety! the common trick
Of hypocrites and slaves: when ye shall know
What Marg'ret knows, ye may not be so thankful.
Methinks, 'tis pity Warwick is not here
To join in your devotion.

Eliz. Would to heav'n
He were!

Mar. That monster! that perfidious slave!
Who broke his faith to Marg'ret and to thee;
Thy coward soul, unable to defend
The treasure thou hadst stol'n, could meanly stoop
To court the traitor whom thou dar'st not punish.
Not so the injur'd Marg'ret: she repell'd
The wrongs she felt, and the deceiver met
The fate he merited.

K. Edw. What fate? Ev'n now,
Crown'd with immortal wreaths, the hero comes
To bless his friends, and punish guilt like thine.

Mar. Proud and deluded wretches! I look down
With pity on you: captive as I am,
'Tis mine to judge and punish; be it your's
To hear and tremble.

K. Edw. Ah!

Eliz. What can this mean?

Mar. If I mistake not, Warwick is your friend,
Your lover, too, I think.

Eliz. My lord, my husband. [Warwick,

Mar. Know, then, that friend, that lover, perjurd
Hath not an hour to live.

K. Edw. What murd'rous hand—

Mar. Mine, tyrant, mine! Think not I mean to hide

The noble deed; it is my happiness,
It is my glory: thou wilt call me base,
Blood-thirsty, cruel, savage, and revengeful;
But here I stand acquitted to myself,
And ev'ry feeling heart that knows my wrongs.
To late posterity dethroned queens
And weeping mothers shall applaud my justice.

K. Edw. Justice! on whom?

Mar. Can Edward ask me? Who
Imprison'd Henry, robb'd me of a crown,
And plac'd it on a proud usurper's head?
Who gave his sacred promise to a queen,
And broke it? Who, for which indignant heav'n
Chastis'd him, basely murder'd my sweet boy?
Bereft of honour, fortune, husband, child;
Depriv'd of ev'ry comfort, what remain'd
For me but vengeance? what for him but death?

K. Edw. What hast thou done? when? where?
speak, murd'ress, speak! [made

Mar. Press'd by surrounding multitudes, and
A slave, they dragg'd me to the conqueror's tent,
There the first horrid object I beheld,
Was the pale corpse of my poor bleeding child:
There—as th' insulting Warwick stood, and seem'd
To triumph o'er him—from my breast I drew
A poniard forth, and plung'd it in his heart.
Th' astonish'd soldiers throng'd around him, seiz'd
And brought me here! Now to your pray'rs again.

(*Elizabeth faints.*)

K. Edw. She faints, good Suffolk; help, there!
help, support, [Exit *Suf. and Edw.*

If it be true,
As much I fear it is, a thousand deaths
Were punishment too little for thy guilt:
Thou shalt be tortur'd.

Mar. Tyrant, I defy thee;
Thy threats appal not me: prepare your tortures;
Let them be sharp and cruel as thyself,
All that ingenious malice can suggest,
Or pow'r inflict, 'twill be my comfort still,
They cannot be so great as those you feel.

K. Edw. Guards, take the monster hence; let her
be chain'd
In some deep dungeon, dark as her own thoughts,
There let her perish: hence, away with her.

Mar. Despair and horror visit thee! farewell!
He comes; my triumph is complete: look there!

[*Exeunt Margaret and Guards.*

Enter the EARL OF WARWICK, leaning on Soldiers.
War. Where is he? Lead me to my king.

K. Edw. My Warwick! my preserver! she shall
For this in ev'ry vein. [beheld

War. Think not of her,
She has no pow'r to hurt thee; and, with guilt
Like her's, 'tis punishment enough to live:
This is no time for vengeance; death comes on
With hasty strides; 'tis but a little while,
A few short moments, and we part for ever.
My friend—

K. Edw. I am not worthy of the name,
For I disgrac'd, dishonour'd, murder'd thee;
Edward's unkindness was the cause of all:
Canst thou forgive me?

War. Oh! may Warwick's crimes
Ne'er meet forgiveness from offended heav'n,
If, from my soul, I do not pardon, love,
And honour thee!

K. Edw. Away, let me support him;
'Tis the last office I shall e'er perform
For thee, my Warwick. Wilt thou lean upon me,
And seal my pardon with one kind embrace?

War. We never hated.

K. Edw. But my love was blind.

War. And blinder my resentment.

K. Edw. I forgot

thy services.

War. And I remember'd not
Thou wert my king. My sweet Elizabeth,
Where is she? Edward, do not keep her from me;
We are no rivals now.

K. Edw. Shuck'd at the news
Of thy untimely fate, she sunk beneath it,
And fainted in these arms; I seiz'd th' occasion,
And bade her weeping maidens bear her hence:
This would have been a dreadful sight, indeed.

Eliz. (*Without.*) I can, I will support it.

War. Ha! that voice—

Sure, 'tis Elizabeth's!

Enter LADY ELIZABETH GREY.

Eliz. Oh! give me way,

For I must see him. Oh! my Warwick!

War. Oh!

This is too much; the bitterness of death
Is to be sever'd thus from those we love.

K. Edw. Why would you bring her here?

(*To the Attendants.*)

War. Elizabeth,
Be comforted.

Eliz. Oh! no, it is my doom

Never to taste of joy or comfort more:
No; from this hateful world will I retire,
And mourn my Warwick's fate; imploring heav'n
That I may soon wear out my little store
Of hopeful days, and join thee in the tomb. [wrong,

War. That must not be: I've done my friend a
And only thou canst make atonement for it.
Thy hand, Elizabeth,—if e'er thou lov'd'st,—
Observe me now—thine, Edward—for my sake
Cherish this beautiful mourner, take her from me,
As the last present of a dying friend. [more dear,

K. Edw. If aught could make the precious gift
It would be, Warwick, that it came from thee.

Oh! I will guard her with a parent's care,
From every ill, watch over and protect her;
And when the memory of thee shall awake,
As oft it will, her poignant griefs, repel
The rising sigh, wipe off the flowing tear,
And strive to charm her to forgetfulness.

War. Wilt thou, indeed? then I shall die in

Eliz. Yet thou may'st live. [peace.

War. Impossible: I feel

The hand of death press cold upon my heart,
And all will soon be o'er: I've liv'd to save
My falling country, to repent my crimes,
Redeem my honour, and restore my king.

K. Edw. Alas! my friend, the memory of thee
Will poison every bliss.

War. All-healing time,
That closes ev'ry wound, shall pour its balm
O'er thine; meanwhile, remember Warwick's fate.
I gave my word to Margaret, and broke it:
Heav'n is not to be mock'd, it soon o'ertakes us,
And in our crime we meet our punishment.

Oh! Edward, if thou hop'st that length of days
And fair prosperity shall crown thy wishes,
Beware of passion and resentment; make
Thy people's good and happiness thy own;
Discourage faction, banish flatt'ers, keep
Thy faith inviolate, and reign in peace.
I can no more—my love. Have mercy, heav'n! (*Dies*)

K. Edw. He's gone!

Eliz. And with him all my hopes of bliss.

K. Edw. Let ev'ry honour to a soldier due,
Attend the hero to his tomb; meanwhile,
Deep in the living tablet of my heart,
Will I engrave thy words, illustrious shade!
Living, thou wert my counsellor and friend,
And dead, I will remember and obey thee. [thee.

Eliz. Warwick, farewell; I shall not long survive

K. Edw. I hope thou wilt. Elizabeth, remember
His dying charge, think on thy promise giv'n.
Thou shalt remain with me, with me lament
Our common benefactor; we will sit
And talk together of my Warwick's virtues;
For I will try to emulate them all,
And learn, by copying him, to merit thee.

His great example shall inspire my breast
With patriot zeal, shall teach me to subdue
The pow'r of faction, vanquish party rage,
And make me, what alone I wish to be,
The happy king of an united people. [Exit.

EDWARD, THE BLACK PRINCE;

OR, THE BATTLE OF POICTIERS:

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY WILLIAM SHIRLEY.



Act V.—Scene 5.

CHARACTERS.

EDWARD, PRINCE OF WALES	LORD CHANDOS	CARDINAL PERIGORT	LORD RIBEMONT
EARL OF WARWICK	ARNOLD	ARCHBISHOP OF SENS	LORD CHARNEY
EARL OF SALISBURY	JOHN, KING OF FRANCE	DUKE OF TOURAIN	MARIANA
LORD AUDLEY	DAUPHIN	DUKE OF ATHENS	LOUISA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Prince of Wales's Tent.*

PRINCE EDWARD *discovered, seated*; EARL OF WARWICK, EARL OF SALISBURY, LORD AUDLEY, LORD CHANDOS, *and others, standing.*

P. Edw. My lords, I summon'd ye in haste to Intelligence is brought me that our foes [council. Have levied, to oppose us, such a strength As almost staggers credibility.

What's to be done? To tarry longer here, And brave their fury in the heart of France, Would be a rashness that may hazard all. Consider, therefore, well, my fellow-warriors, And aid my judgment with your good advice; Speak, Warwick, your opinion.

War. Royal sir, It is for marching back, with speed, to Bourdeaux. Our little army, harass'd with fatigue, And heavy-laden with the spoils of war, Should, like the careful bees, ere storm o'ertake us, Secure our treasures, and prepare for rest. Havock has wanton'd in our hard campaign, And manly daring won increase of glory: Then let not now presumption madly risk Reprisals from such force. Be timely prudent: The voice of wisdom urges our retreat, Obey it and be happy.

Aud. Shameful thought! What, spirit dastards, by inglorious flight? No; never let it, mighty prince, be said, That we who, two succeeding summers, ohas'd

From shore to shore of their extensive realm Collected armies, doubling each our own, Should here, at length, discover abject fear, And skulk for coward safety. What are numbers? Let all their kingdom's millions arm at once, And crowding, clust'ring, cram the field of fight! Such timid throngs, with multiply'd dismay, Would make confusion do the task of valour, And work out their destruction.

Sal. Audley's thoughts Accord with mine: while Salisbury has breath, His tongue shall hurl defiance at their force. Remember, princely Edward, Cressy's field: Remember ev'ry battle we have fought, How much out-counted, yet how greatly victors! Loud were the calls that broke our sleep of peace, And bade us rouse and buckle on our arms: A throne usurp'd, your royal father's right; A violated truce, a vile attempt To filch away the fruits of painful conquest, By basely bribing servants from their duty. Assaults so infamous, such rank dishonour, At last awoke our monarch's high resentment; Oh! give it glorious scope. Unhinge, destroy Their very pow'r of doing future wrongs: So shall the rescu'd world pour forth its blessings, And kings and kingdoms thank our arm for safety.

Chan. If Chandos gives his voice for our retreat, 'Tis not from coward motives: all can witness I have met danger with as firm a spirit As any in our host. But as success Hath crown'd our arms with ample spoils and glory,

Why, when the season is so far advanc'd,
 (Hopeless of profit,) should we longer stay,
 By soothing pride, to brave adversity?
 Consider, gracious prince, and you, my lords,
 What difficulties clog a winter march
 In hostile countries; parties harassing,
 And want of all convenience and supplies.
 I do confess, the wrongs that urg'd us hither
 Were such as merited severe revenge:
 Aud vengeance we have had. Their burning towns
 Have lighted us on many a midnight march,
 While shrieks and groans, and yellings echo'd round.
 Fear and confusion were our harbingers,
 And death and desolation our attendants. [paings,
 Such have their suff'rings been through two cam-
 And that a third may rise with added horrors,
 And carry indignation to his goal,
 Now homeward let us look; and wisely there
 Recruit, in time, our vigour and our numbers;
 Thence, with the cheerful spring, to issue forth,
 Again to labour in the field of fame. [tongue,

P. Edw. True wisdom, Chandos, dictates to your
 And modest, many eloquence adorns it.
 My lords of Salisbury and Audley, you,
 Who cherish truth and candour in your minds,
 Must yield to arguments so clear and strong.
 Believe me, friends and brothers of the war,
 A momentary ruin may involve us:
 Such mighty hosts are rais'd, and now in motion,
 As well will task our utmost skill to 'scape.
 Upon the plains of Poitiers are encamp'd,
 Th' extensive plains that our retreat must skirt,
 An army double ours.

Aud. And shall we pass?
 Go tamely by? And give 'em cause for vaunting,
 That Englishmen avoided once a battle?
 No; never let us merit such a stain;
 But boldly seek 'em, dare their double numbers,
 And drive 'em, if a combat they decline,
 To skip and wanton at a safer distance.

Sal. Give us, my prince, the pleasure but to spring
 This gaudy flight of prating popinjays,
 And we'll retire contented.

Chan. Their my voice
 Shall join ye, lords: to force them from their home
 At such a juncture will be doubly glorious!
 Or should they venture battle, their discomfit
 Will render our retreat to Bourdeaux safe,
 And end our labours with a noble triumph.

P. Edw. Then be it so: for Poitiers we'll pre-
 pare. (Rising.)

Give instant orders, good my lords, for marching:
 To-morrow's sun shall see us face our foes.
 There, if they wait our coming, we once more
 Will dress contention in her Gorgon horrors:
 Drive fear and slaughter through their shudd'ring
 ranks,

Stalk o'er their mangled heaps, and bath'd in blood,
 Seize with red hands the wreath of victory.
 Here break we off; go each where duty calls.

[*Exeunt Lords.*
 Now for an office is most grateful to me.
 Who waits? Let Arnold know that I expect him.

(*A Gentleman appears and retires again.*)
 How poor the pomps and trophies of the field,
 The blaze of splendour, or that hubble praise,
 Compar'd with what the sympathizing heart
 Feels from a gen'rous action!

Enter ARNOLD.

Welcome, Arnold.
 I ne'er behold thy face, but pleasure springs
 With the remembrance of those sprightly days,
 Which led through early youth our happy friendship.
 Thou wert my brother then; familiar ease
 Season'd our sports, and doubled each delight.
 Thither my soul, from ceremonious pomp,
 And all the heavy toils of high command,
 Oft backward looks, with wishes to renew

Those lively transports, unallay'd by care,
 Our boundless happiness, our bursts of joy.

Arn. So honour'd, gracious prince, as I have been,
 From humble fortune rais'd to envy'd greatness,
 And still with ev'ry grace each gift made precious,
 Oh! what are wrnds in payment of such blessings?
 What, ev'n my life? were life itself laid down
 In gratitude for such transcendent goodness.

P. Edw. If there's a transport tow'ring to divine;
 If, in atonement for its load of cares,
 One vast enjoyment is the gift of greatness,
 'Tis that we can bestow where merit claims,
 And with our favours cheer or charm the soul.
 Thine is the vacant military post,
 By Mountford's death reverted to my gift;
 And keep thy office in my household still:
 I must not lose the servant in the soldier.
 Be henceforth both, and what is more, my friend.

Arn. How shall I praise—
P. Edw. Arnold, I merit none.
 If thou hast kindness done thee, I have pleasure:
 There is no joy a gen'rous mind can know,
 Like that of giving virtue its reward;
 Nor ought such payment be esteem'd a bounty;
 For to deserve and give is equal favour.
 But let me ask thee of thy beauteous charge:
 How has the noble Mariana borne
 Captive calamity?

Arn. With resignation
 Worthy her birth and dignity of spirit.
 Forgetting her misfortunes, all her talk
 Turns on the topic of your kind protection.

P. Edw. Let it extend to all that can relieve
 The mind from harsh reflections on her state.
 We're now preparing for the plains of Poitiers:
 Accommodate her on the wearying way
 With thy best care. Remember, I request it. [*Exit.*

Arn. Rely, my royal master, on my duty.
 Needless injunction: Mariana's charms
 Have given her here such absolute command,
 My very soul, my ev'ry pow'r, is hers.
 But the cold maid, whene'er I plead my passion,
 Chills me with sighs, and stifles all my flame
 Of love with streaming tears. Benignant heav'n!
 Bless'd as I am with royal Edward's favour,
 And Mariana's charms: and all beyond
 Let mad ambition grapple for and gain. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The French Camp.*

*Enter LORD CHARNEY and the ARCHBISHOP OF
 SENS.*

Char. My lord of Sens, I gladly give your grace
 A joyful welcome to the plains of Poitiers.
 You come the happy harbinger of comfort,
 Returning to old Charney's woe-worn mind.
 The king's approach revives my drooping spirits,
 It feeds the dying lamp of life with hope
 That I shall live to riot in revenge.
 Those English laousts, who devour our wealth,
 Who spoil and slaughter with so wild a fury—
 Grant, ye good pow'rs! these eyes may see de-
 And I shall die contented. [*stroy'd,*

Sens. Ev'ry tongue
 Joins that petition: your misfortunes, lord,
 Most nearly touch the king.

Char. Oh! they are great:
 The pride of ancient lineage treasur'd up,
 Trophies of war and ornaments of pomp,
 These won by valour, those with honour worn;
 Favours of monarchs, and the gifts of heaven;
 The relics of a glorious ancestry,
 Are, with the mansion of my great forefathers,
 A heap of ashes now; a wide-spread ruin.
 My age's blessing, too, an only daughter,
 Torn from her home to hard captivity,
 The prey, the victim of a fell revenge.
 Oh, matchless misery! Oh, Mariana!

Sens. Your sorrows have been wept by ev'ry
 eye:

And all have wonder'd what should mark you out
For such peculiar vengeance.

Char. Nothing but

The service done our master, when I brib'd
Their governor to give up Calais to us:
Who, like a villain, broke his plighted faith,
And sacrific'd the gallant troops I led
To Edward's fury: slaughter'd all or taken,
I was amongst the train who grac'd his triumph.
There the proud king insulted me with taunts;
He call'd our undertaking vile and base:
With low'ring brow and bitterness of speech,
Adding, he hop'd the fortune of his arms
Would give him to reward my treachery.
The father's wishes hath the son accomplish'd:
For which, may all the rage of ev'ry curse,
Flames, famines, pestilences, slaughters, join
To root from nature the detested race.

Sens. Grant it, good heav'n! But see, the Duke
of Athens.

Enter DUKE OF ATHENS.

Char. Lord constable, most welcome to my arms.

Ath. I thank you, noble Calaneo.

Char. Are the train

Of royal warriors, sir, arriv'd?

Ath. They are.

Char. Oh! joyful tidings! Sir, another hour
Shall speak, at large, my pleasure to behold you:
The present claims my duty to the king. *[Exit.*

Ath. My lord of Sens, these secret marches made
From different parts by our divided host,
May steal us on our unprepared foes,
And give our arms, at length, an ample vengeance.

Sens. I greatly hope it. As I think, to-morrow,
Or I mistook the king, they'll all be here?

Ath. With early day, the instant we arriv'd,
A numerous party, led by Ribemont,
Came up and join'd us. Those the dauphin brings,
Our last division, are to march by night;
We may expect them with to-morrow's dawn.

Sens. See, Ribemont is here.

Enter LORD RIBEMONT.

Rib. Why, this looks well!

Here's bustle, expedition! Once again
We shine in arms, and wear a face of war.

Sens. Oh! may they never be again laid down
Till England is repaid with all the plagues
Her sons have brought on France. My eager soul,
As does the fever'd lip for moisture, longs
To see destruction overwhelm that people.

Rib. Indulge no guilty hatred, rev'rend lord;
For fair report, and, let me add, experience,
Picture them lovely to impartial judgment.
The world allows they're valiant, gen'rous, wise;
Endow'd with all that dignifies our nature:
While for their monarch, we'll appeal to facts,
And, sure, they speak him wonderful indeed!
Did not Germania's ermin'd princes meet,
And, as the most renown'd, the first of men,
Elect great Edward to imperial sway?

While he, sublime in ever-conscious glory,
Disdaining rule but on his native throne,
Saw sovereigns offer vassalage in vain.
Then, to his court, from ev'ry peopled realm,
Ev'n from our own, did not the fam'd in arms,
The harness'd knights repair to fill his lists?
To take his judgment in all martial strife?
Submitting int'rest, honour, all was precious,
And ev'n beyond appeal: owning his voice,
Like that of heav'n, incapable of error.

Sens. It grates my soul to hear a Frenchman talk
Of greater glories than he finds at home.
Is not this monarch you would make a god,
Our master's enemy, our country's foe?

Rib. A foe he is, but he's a noble foe.

I know his worth, and therefore will I speak it.
At our attack of Calais, 'twas my fortune
To meet in fight this third king Edward's sword.
I found him all that heathens held their gods,

Artful and mighty; (pardon the proud vaunt)
Too much for me to conquer. Long we stood
Buckler to buckler, clashing steel to steel,
Till by superior soldiership o'ercome,
I yielded to a monarch; but so well,
With hardy vigour, I sustain'd the combat,
That freedom, ransomless, was my reward.

The royal victor, when he bade me go,
Took from his brow this string of orient wealth,
Around my temples twin'd the glittering wreath,
And cry'd, "Shine there, my token of applause."
Oh! if his valour wing'd amazement high,
Where was its flight, when his heroic soul,
Forgetting that my sword had aim'd his slaughter,
O'erlook'd all low regards, all partial ties,
And gave a vanquish'd enemy renown.

Sens. Detested boast! Ambition's taint, my lord,
So warps, so biasses the soldier's judgment—

Rib. Ah! biasses! I tell thee, priest, ambition—
When was it wanting in a churchman's soul?
More odious there, and more pernicious far,
Than when it fires the warrior's breast to glory.
But, down my rage: your office should be peaceful;
Your habit's sacred—let your speech be suited.

Sens. Reproving sir, you think you rail secure,
And so secure remain—how'er your cause
Might bring ev'n your allegiance into question.

Rib. Said'st thou allegiance? what a vile resort!
And would thy jaundic'd malice stain my fame?
But loyalty, long prov'd, dares bid defiance
To all the base perversion of thy tongue.
I praise my foes, because they merit praise:
I'll praise them to the king—and after fight 'em.
My soul disdains such narrow-hearted spleen,
As owns no excellence beyond a tribe,
Or hates, from envy, all superior merit.

Ath. Forbear, my lord, consider you're enrag'd
With one whose function does forbid revenge.

Rib. Why does the meddling priest provoke
resentment?

Let him obey that function: preach repentance
To money-scraping misers, sordid slaves,
The cringing minions of corrupted courts,
The dregs of stews and tyrants of the gown.
There let his zeal be vehement and loud,
But not come here to sap the soldier's honour,
And teach inglorious lessons in a camp. *[Exit.*

Ath. Forgive him, good my lord; brave Ribemont
Is all the warrior, bold above restraint, *[mont*
Of nature noble, but unpolish'd manners. *[mont*

Sens. I do forgive him. Yet a time may come—
(Aside.)

Ath. Sir, go we to the presence?

Sens. I attend you. *[procure*

Ath. There grant, ye pow'rs! our counsels may
The kingdom's safety, and its peace ensure:
In one brave action may our arms succeed,
And in their turn the daring English bleed. *[Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The English Camp.

Enter EARL OF SALISBURY and LORD CHANDOS,
meeting.

Chan. Good-morrow, Salisbury; yon rising sun,
As was your wish, beholds us here encamp'd
Upon the plains of Poitiers.

Sal. Noble Chandos,
It was my wish; a wish for England's honour.
To Frenchmen, whom so much we've aw'd and
humbled,
Methinks I would not give the least pretence
For arrogance and boasting.

Enter EARL OF WARWICK.

War. Valiant lords,
Wild consternation reigns! Our scouts have brought
Intelligence the enemy surrounds us.
By sudden, secret marches, they have drawn

Their troops from ev'ry fertile province hither,
And cut off our retreat.

Sal. Why, then, we'll fight them.

War. Most fatal was our yesterday's advice;
But 'tis his highness' will we straight to council:
Haste, good my lords, for on a single hour,
Perhaps a minute, now our fate depends. [us,

Sal. I'll not believe the French will dare attack
How great soe'er their numbers. But with words
We will not waste the time that may be precious;
Then to the prince's tent, my lords, away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A private Tent.*

Enter ARNOLD, leading MARIANA.

Arn. Now, lovely captive, wilt thou doubly
triumph:

The happier cause of France at length prevails,
And we are all undone.

Mar. What mean you, Arnold?

Arn. Encircled here by thy whole country's force,
Unable to sustain their fierce assault,
And all retreat cut off, we have no prospect
But that of total slaughter.

Mar. Hear me, heav'n,
Who oft hast witness'd to the silent tears,
Stream'd down in gratitude for gen'rous treatment.
Now this (despite of all my country suffers)
That these descend in pity for my foes.

Arn. The fatal accident again restores thee
To liberty, and safety, while from me
It cuts away all hopes of happiness.
I wish not to outlive the bloody hour
Must give thee to thy father, whose abhorrence
Of all that's English, soon will interpose,
And plunge my soul for ever in despair.
Let then thy fancy image what I feel!
Grief chokes the very passages of vent,
And I want utterance for—

Mar. There is no need.

I know thy heart, know all its tender feelings,
Know what sad tumults doubts and fears create,
Whose mingling agonies, in wounded minds,
Sharpen a torture poignant ev'n to madness.
If to thy eloquence of words and looks,
My virgin modesty and captive state
Have hitherto forbid my tongue to answer,
Yet sure my eyes have told my heart was thine.
But now, away with fears and forms; distress
Bears me above restraint, and I will own
To heav'n, to earth, to thee, my father, country,
That Arnold is most dear, most precious to me.

Arn. Hold, my transported heart! Thou heav'nly
maid!

What raptures rush at that enchanting sound!
Happy as I am now, destruction, come,
O'erwhelm me in this moment of my bliss;
Ne'er let me pine in hopeless anguish more,
But die thus clasp'd in Mariana's arms.

Mar. And will our fate—will cruel fate divide
us?

Arn. Oh! do not name it: with the very thought
Frenzy assaults me. No, we must not, cannot,
Will not be parted. No—

Mar. Alas! I fear

The choice will not be ours. A father's pow'r,
If France prevails, for ever tears thee from me.
And must they conquer? Oh! I find, I feel
I've lost already all regard for France:
England's my country; any country's mine,
That gives me but my safety and my love.
Inform me, tell me, is there no escaping? [rest,

Arn. Thou wilt need none. For me and for the
We have, alas! no prospect but of—

Mar. Stop!

Nor dare inflame a wild imagination,
Lest madness follow: 'midst relentless foes,
Methinks I see thee fall! Behold 'em strike!
I hear thy groans! I see thy gushing blood!
Thy writhing body trampled in the dust!

Oh! save me from the horror. Let us fly;
Let us away this moment: Let us—

Arn. Whither?

Where can we fly? All hope of flight is lost;
There is no possibility—

Mar. There is.

Let us, while yet occasion will permit,
Fly to my father.

Arn. Father!

Mar. He'll protect us.

Arn. Protect us! Dire protection! at the thought
My blood runs chill, and horror quite unmans me.

Mar. Think on the dangers that you brave by
staying. [merit

Arn. Think, rather, on the hell that I should
By such desertion—dire and damning guilt!
How dreadfully it shakes me!

Mar. Dost thou tremble?

Then what should I, a helpless woman, do?
Imagine that, and if thou art a man,
Feel for what I may suffer.

Arn. Suffer! Thou?

Mar. Yes, Arnold, I! The woes that I may suffer.
Amongst the deadly dealings of the field,
Some well-aim'd weapon, through a bleeding wound,
May set thy soul at liberty for ever.

While I, (of mortals though the most undone)
Wanting all means of honourable death,
Must suffer woes beyond description dreadful.
What are my friends, my father, or my country?
Cold are the comforts that they all can give,
When thou, dear darling of my heart, art lost.
Pleasure, and hope, and peace will perish with thee,
And this forlorn, this joyless bosom, then
Become the dreary mansion of despair.

Shall not I rave, blasphemous, and rend my locks?
Devote the hour that gave me birth! and curse
The sun and time, the world, myself, and thee?
Till frenzy prompting, 'gainst some dungeon wall
I dash my burning brains to finish torture.

Arn. Do not awake, thou lovely pleader, do not,
Such tumult-working thoughts within a mind
On madness verging.

Mar. Let us, then, away. [me to it.

Arn. Oh! not for worlds! Not worlds should bribe

Mar. And wilt thou urge thou lov'st me?

Arn. More than life!

Mar. By heav'n, 'tis false! The spirit that's within
Is not of worth to hazard aught so noble.

Arn. Will daring ev'n to die convince thee?

Mar. No:

Death is a coward's refuge. Dare to live;
Dare wretchedness, reproach—

Arn. No more, no more;

Temp't me no more in vain.

Mar. Art thou so fix'd?

Arn. As fate.

Mar. I've done.

Arn. Then why that angry look?

Mar. It is a curse entail'd upon the sex
To have our counsel scorn'd, our love despis'd.
Go to thy ruin; to my ruin go:

I give thee up—and all my hopes for ever. [dew?

Arn. Why will thou blast me with that baleful
Each tender tear that falls in sorrow from thee
(Like melted ore fast dropping on my heart)
Drives life before it with excess of pain.
Come, friendly slaughter, now my only hope,
Free me from sufferings not to be endur'd.

Mar. What, in the hour of trial wouldst thou
shrink?

Steal to the shelter of a timeless grave,
And leave me on the rack of dire despair?

Is this a proof of that superior spirit
Asserted by the lordly boaster, man?

Oh! shame upon thee!

Arn. Hear me—

Mar. Not the winds,
That bang the curling billows in the clouds,

Are more impetuous than the rage of scorn
That rises in my bosom.

Arn. Let but reason

Weigh the dire consequence of such a flight.

Mar. The consequence! Why, what do you for-
But certain slaughter? [sake]

Arn. Horrid, damning thought!

Mar. I hop'd my risking wretchedness for love
Would have provok'd some emulation—

Arn. Oh!

Mar. But thou art poor, the hero of pretence;
And, therefore, thus, for ever—

Arn. Take me, lead—

No, stop! it surely was some syren's voice
Would lure me to destruction. Off! stand off!
Thou, thou art she that would ensnare my soul,
Ruin my peace, and sacrifice my fame.
But timely be advis'd: forbear to urge
A deed that all the earth would scorn me for,
All hell want plagues to punish.

Mar. Be undone—

Arn. Undone I am, whatever course I take.
Dreadful alternative! despair, or death,
Or everlasting shame.

Mar. I did not pause;

I chose for Arnold's love to hazard all:
To suffer, if misfortune were our lot,
And never once reproach him or repine.
But he rejects such truth, such tenderness.

Arn. Oh! hear me, help me, save me, sacred
Mar. Deserts a woman in adversity! [powers!
And seeks, in death, a rescue from the woes
Her fortitude encounters!

Arn. 'Tis too much—

It tears my brain—my bosom! oh!

Mar. Thou'rt pale!

Arn. Dizzy and sick—the objects swim before
Reach out thy hand to save me ere I sink:
Oh! what a deprivation of all pow'rs!
Lead me to my tent, I beg thee lead.

Mar. I will.

Lean fearless on my arm, it can sustain thee.

Arn. Oh! boasted manhood, how I feel thy
weakness! [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*A magnificent Pavilion, in which KING
JOHN appears seated in state. On stools, below
him, sit the DAUPHIN, DUKES OF BERRY, AN-
JOU, TOURAIN, ORLEANS, and ATHENS, ARCH-
BISHOP OF SENS, LORDS RIBEMONT, and
CHARNEY, Attendants and Guards all standing.*

K. John. At length, we've caught these lions in
our toils,

These English spoilers, who through all our realm
Have mark'd their way with rapine, flames, and
slaughter:

Now, by my sacred liadem, I swear,
Beyond a conqueror's joy my pleasure swells,
For that my foes have wrought their own confusion,
And found misfortunes where they meant to deal 'em.
What say you, lords, must soft'n'ing pity sway?
Or shall we glut our vengeance with their blood?

Char. Heaven gives them up the victims of your
wrath;

Indulge it, then, to their destruction. Mercy
Would mark your majesty the foe of France.
Your bleeding country cries for retribution:
I join it, with a voice by woes enfeebled;
Hear, feel, and strike in such a moving cause,
The cause of wrongs, of wounds, of weeping age.
The widow'd bride, the childless father calls:
The helpless, parentless, unshelter'd babe!
Matrons, bewailing their whole race cut off;
And virgins panting from the recent rape!
Oh! hear, redress, revenge us, royal sir,
For vengeance now is in your pow'r to grant.

Rib. Anger and hatred are disgraceful motives;
Calm dignity should ever counsel kings,
And govern all their actions. When they strike,

It ne'er should be to gratify resentment,
But, like the arm omnipotent of heav'n,
To further justice; to create an awe
May terrify from evil; better minds,
And benefit society.

Ath. The nuncio,
Who follow'd fast your majesty to Poitiers,
Hath sent to claim an audience in behalf
Of your endanger'd English.

Sens. Do not hear him. [we not?

K. John. Say, lord archbishop, wherefore should

Sens. Knowing your godlike and forgiving nature,
I fear 'twill rob you of much martial glory:
Else might your fame in arms, for this day's action,
Rival the boasts of Macedon or Rome.
And sure your valiant soldiers will repine,
To have the laurels, now so near their grasp,
Snatch'd from their hopes for ever.

Rib. Abject minion!
How shameful to that habit are such flatteries.

[*Aside.*]

K. John. Yes, I well know my soldiers pant, im-
patient

To seize this feeble quarry. But our foes,
I must remind you, are so close beset,
That famine soon will throw 'em on our mercy.
Princes and lords, what cause have we to fight?
Why should we waste a drop of Gallic blood,
When conquest may be ours on cheaper terms?

Dauph. But will it suit the glory of your arms
To wait their inclination to surrender?

Or ev'n to grant such parley, as might plume
Their saucy pride t' expect capitulation?
Oh! no, my royal father, rush at once,
O'erwhelm 'em, crush 'em, finish them by slaughter.

Rib. Think not, prince Dauphin, they'll e'er stoop
for terms:

Believe me, we have rather cause to expect
A fierce attack, to cut their passage through,
Or perish in the attempt. I know them well,
In many a field have try'd their stubborn spirit;
Have won some honour, by their king, though van-
quish'd;

And when I ponder their intrepid courage,
How much they dare to suffer and attempt,
I'm lost in wonder; and no Cressy need
To make me tremble to provoke their fury.

Dauph. Your tongue, the herald of your vanity,
Methinks, is loud in what were better lost
To all remembrance—a disgraceful tale.

To boast of honours from a victor's bounty,
Is stooping low; is taking abject fame.

If you have valour, give it manly sway,
Busy your sword, but let your tongue be silent.

Rib. My talent never 'twas to idly vaunt—

K. John. No more of this, presumptuous Ribe-
mont,

My lords, we will determine yet on nothing.

I've sent a spy, of known abilities,
To find out the condition of our foes;
From whose report, in council, we'll resolve
On measures that may promise most success.

Meantime, do you inform the nuncio, Athens,
His audience shall be granted. Lords, lead on:
We'll make our morning's progress through the
camp. [Exeunt all but Athens and Rib.]

Rib. What boasts made I?

I told the truth, and wherefore, then, this taunt?
Shame on such modesty! The king, just now,
Nice as he seems in breeding and in forms,
With patience heard a supple, fawning priest
Strip all the shrines of fam'd antiquity,
Ev'n make great Cæsar and the son of Philip
Resign their laurels to his nobler claim:
Nay, thought him sparing, doubtless, that he left
Great Hercules and Jove unspoil'd to grace him.
By my good sword, an oath with soldiers sacred,
I swear 'twould make an honest stomach heave
To see a throat, so squeamish for another,

Open and gulp a potion down, enough
To poison half mankind.

Ath. Brave Ribemont,

The king's distaste was that you prais'd his foes.
To talk of Cressy and of Edward's feats,
Was to remind him of our crown's disgrace:
'Twas to proclaim what we should wish forgotten,
Our slaughter'd armies, and our monarch's flight.

Rib. What, are our ears too delicate for truth?
If English valour has disgrac'd our arms,
Instead of mean forgetting, we should stamp
The hated image stronger on our minds;
For ever murmur and for ever rage,
Till thence eras'd by nobler feats of arms.
Such are my thoughts, and such my resolution:
I share our country's scandal, and would join
My sword, my blood, to purge away the stain.

Ath. Here, then, occasion meets that patriot-
wish;

Here you may help to blanch our sully'd glory.

Rib. I differ, Athens, widely in opinion;
The harvest is too thin, the field too bare,
To yield the reapers honour. On my soul,
I pity the brave handful we encircle,
And almost wish myself an Englishman
To share a fate so noble.

Ath. Gallant spirit!

Rib. Would our exulting king acquire renown,
Let him reduce his numbers down to theirs.
Then sword to sword, and shield to shield, oppose,
In equal strife, these wondrous sons of war.
There conquest would be glorious! but, as now,
With all our thousands and ten thousands join'd,
By heav'n! 'tis most infamous to fight.

Ath. I must away; my duty calls me hence.

I must applaud this generous regard
For a brave people that have done you honour;
Convinc'd, whene'er you face these fearless foes,
You'll fight 'em warmly as you've prais'd.

Rib. Farewell. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—*The English Camp.*

Enter LORD AUDLEY and LORD CHANDOS, meeting.

Aud. You're well encounter'd, Chandos; where's
the prince?

Chan. Directing the entrenchments: ev'ry duty
His active ardour leads him to engross.
Such heav'nly fortitude inflames his soul,
That all beholders catch new courage from it,
And stifle with astonishment their fears.
From cool unruffled thoughts his orders issue,
While with the meanest soldier he partakes
In ev'ry toil; inspiring, by example,
A glorious zeal and spirit through the camp.

Aud. Yet feels he, as the father of our host,
For ev'ry man's misfortune, but his own.
Thrice have I seen him in successive rounds,
Kindle new courage in each drooping heart,
And drive all fear, all diffidence away.
Yet on the task would tenderness intrude,
As dangers stole and imag'd on his mind:
When, pausing, he would turn his head aside,
Heave a sad sigh, and drop a tender tear.

Enter EARL OF SALISEURY.

Chan. Well, what says Salisbury?

Sal. Why, 'faith! but little:

It is yon Frenchmen's place to talk at present.

Aud. How stand the troops?

Sal. Believe me, not so firm,
But our light-footed enemies, if dext'rous,
May trip up all their heels.

Chan. True to his humour:

My good Lord Salisbury will have his gibe,
Howe'er affliction wrings.

Sal. And wherefore not?

Will burial faces buy us our escape?
I wish they would: then no Hibernian hag,
Whose trade is sorrow, should out-sadden me.
But, as the business stands, to weep or laugh,

Alike is bootless; here is our dependance.

[Touching his sword.]

Aud. What are their numbers?

Chan. Full a hundred thousand. [no matter;
Sal. Ours but some eight: great odds, my friends:
The more will be our glory when we've beat them.

Aud. What swells their host so mightily 's (I'm
told)

The Earls of Neydo, Saltsburg, and Nassau,
Have join'd their troops. The Earl of Douglas, too,
Assist them with three thousand hardy Scots,
Their old and sure allies.

Chan. I hear the same.

[our pris'ner.

Sal. What! Scotchmen here? whose monarch is
Aud. Ta'en by a priest and woman; at the head
Of such raw numbers as their haste could gather,
When all our vet'ran warriors, with their king,
Were winning laurels on the fields of France.

Chan. And hither now, perhaps, his subjects come
To fight for captives to exchange against him. [get,
Sal. For captives! This poor carcass they may
When 'tis fit booty for their kites and crows:
But while this tongue can speak, I'd root it out
Ere Scot or Frenchman it should own my master.

Chan. The prince approaches, lords.

Enter PRINCE EDWARD, EARL OF WARWICK,
and Attendants.

P. Edw. Ah! saidst thou, Warwick,
Arnold gone over to the foe?

War. He is.

A trusty spy brought the intelligence,
Who saw him enter in the adverse camp,
Leading his captive charge.

P. Edw. Impossible;

[there

War. I've search'd his quarters since myself, and
Nor he or Mariana can be found. [hid

P. Edw. What has a prince that can attract or
The faith of friends, the gratitude of servants?
Blush, greatness, blush! Thy pow'r is all but poor,
Too impotent to bind one bosom to thee!
A blow like this I was not arm'd to meet;
It pierces to my soul.

Sal. All-righteous heav'n,
Reward the villain's guilt! Believe not, prince,
Throughout our host, another can be found.
That worlds would buy to such a base revolt.

P. Edw. I hope it, will believe it, Salisbury;
Yet must lament that one has prov'd so worthless.
I lov'd him too: but since he has forgot
The ties of duty, gratitude, and honour,
Let us forget an Englishman could break 'em,
And, losing his remembrance, lose the shame.
My lords, I have despatches in my hand,
Advising that the nuncio cardinal,
Good Perigot, is now arriv'd at Poitiers,
And means to interpose in our behalf.

Aud. His interposing is a gen'rous office,
And I applaud it; but, believe me, prince,
Our foes will rate their mercy much too high.
I'd hope as soon a tiger, tasting blood,
Can feel compassion, and release his prey,
As that a Frenchman will forego advantage.

P. Edw. I've by the messenger that brought my
letters,

Sent him the terms on which I warrant treating.
The sum is, my consent to render back
The castles, towns, and plunder we have taken,
Since marching out of Bourdeaux; and to plight
My faith, that I, for sev'n succeeding years,
Will wield no hostile sword against their crown.

Sal. It is too much, my prince, it is too much.
Give o'er such traffic for inglorious safety.
Or let us die or conquer.

P. Edw. Salisbury,

Rely upon a prince and soldier's promise,
That caution sha'n't betray us into meanness.
Heav'n knows, for me, I value life so little,
That I would spend it as an idle breath,

To serve my king, my country, nay, my friend.
To calls like these our honour bids us answer,
Where ev'ry hazard challenges renown.
But sure the voice of heav'n, and cry of nature,
Are loud against the sacrifice of thousands
To giddy rashness. Oh! reflect, my friends,
I have a double delegated trust,
And must account to heaven and to my father,
For lives ignobly sav'd, or madly lost.
Till Perigort shall, therefore, bring their terms,
Suspend we all resolves; but those receiv'd,
Determination must be expeditious:
For, know, our stock of stores will barely reach
To furnish out the present day's subsistence.

Aud. If so, necessity, the last sad guide
Of all misfortune's children, will command.

Chan. We must submit to what wise heav'n
decrees.

P. Edu. Let that great duty but direct the mind,
And men will all be happily resign'd:
Accept whate'er th' Almighty deigns to give,
And die contented, or contented live:
Embrace the lot his Providence ordains,
If deck'd with laurels, or depress'd with chains,
Inur'd to labour, or indulg'd with rest,
And think each movement he decrees the best.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The French Camp.*

Enter DUKE OF ATHENS and LORD RIBEMONT.

Rib. Lord constable, I was not in the presence
When Perigort had audience with the king:
Inform me, for I wish to know, does peace
Her olive-garland weave? or must the sword
Be kept unsheath'd, and blood-fed vengeance live?

Ath. The king expecting me, I cannot tarry
To let your lordship know particulars;
But the good father, who ev'n now set forward,
Carries such terms as, from my soul, I wish
Young Edward may accept: for 'tis resolv'd,
If they're rejected, instant to attack 'em.
Yonder's the fugitive, I see, advancing,
Who left their camp this morning. If we fight,
And you have there a friend you wish to save,
This man may point you to his post. Farewell.

[*Exit.*]

Rib. This man—by heav'n, there's treason in his
aspect!

That cheerless gloom, those eyes that pore on earth,
That bended body, and those folded arms,
Are indications of a tortur'd mind,
And blazon equal villany and shame.
In what a dire condition is the wretch,
Who, in the mirror of reflexion, sees
The hideous stains of a polluted soul!
To corners, then, as does the loathsome toad,
He crawls in silence: there sequester'd chews
The foamy ferment of his pois'nous gall,
Hating himself, and fearing fellowship.

Enter ARNOLD, musing.

Arn. What have I done? And where is my reward?
Charney withholds his daughter from my arms,
My flatter'd recompense for—Hold, my brain!
Thought that, by timely coming, might have sav'd
Is now too late, when all its office serves [me,
But to awaken horror. (*Aside.*)

Rib. I'll accost him.

Are you an Englishman?

Arn. I had that name,

(Oh! killing question!) but have lost it now.

Rib. Lost it, indeed!

Arn. Illustrious Ribemont!

(For your person less rever'd and known
By ev'ry son of Britain, on your brow
That splendid token of renown you wear,
Would be your herald,) pity, if you can,
A wretch, the most undone of all mankind.

Rib. I much mistake your visage, or I've seen
In near attendance on the Prince of Wales. [you

Arn. I was, indeed; (oh! scandal to confess it!)
I was his follower, was his humble friend;
He favour'd, cherish'd, lov'd me—heav'nly pow'rs!
How shall I give my guilty story utterance?
Level your fiery bolts, transfix me here,
Or hurl me howling to the hell I merit.

Rib. Invoke no pow'r; a conscience such as thine
Is hell enough for mortal to endure.

But let me ask thee, for my wonder prompts me,
What bait affords the world, that could induce thee
To wrong so godlike and so good a master?

Arn. True, he is all, is godlike, and is good.

Edward, my royal master, is, indeed,
A prince beyond example. Yet your heart,
If it has ever felt the power of beauty,
Must mitigate the crime of raging love. [a fire

Rib. Love! Thon lost wretch! And could so frail
Consume whate'er was great and manly in thee?
Blot virtue out, and root each nobler passion
Forth from thy mind? The thirst of bright renown?
A patriot fond affection for thy country?
Zeal for thy monarch's glory? And the tie
Of sacred friendship, by thy prince ennobled?
Begone, and hide thy ignominious head,
Where human eye may never penetrate;
Avoid society, for all mankind
Will fly the fellowship of one like thee.

Arn. Heav'n! wherefore saidst thou that we must
And yet made woman? [not err,

Rib. Why accuse you heav'n?
Curse your inglorious heart for wanting fire,
The fire that animates the nobly brave!
The fire that has renown'd the English name,
And made it such as ev'ry age to come
Shall strive to emulate, but never reach.
There thou wert mingled in a blaze of glory,
Great—to amazement great! But now how fall'n!
Ev'n to the vilest of all vassal villaindom,
The despicable state of female thralldom.

Arn. From letter'd story single out a man,
However great in council or in fight,
Who ne'er was vanquish'd by a woman's charms.

Rib. Let none stand forth, there is no cause that
Beauty's a blessing to reward the brave; [should:
We take its transports in relief from toil,
Allow its hour, and languish in its bonds:
But that once ended, dignity asserts
Its right in manhood, and our reason reigns.

Arn. Untouch'd by passion, all may talk it well;
In speculation who was e'er unwise?
But appetites assault like furious storms,
O'erbearing all that should resist their rage,
Till vigour is worn down; and then succeeds
A gloomy calm, in which reflexion arms
Her scorpion brood—remorse, despair, and horror!

Rib. But could contrition ever yet restore
To radiant lustre a polluted fame?

Or man, however merciful, forget
That justice brands offenders for his scorn?
Truth, the great touchstone of all human actions,
The fair foundation of applause or blame,
Has ting'd thy honour with too foul a stain,
For all repentant tears to wash away.
All eyes 'twill urge to dart their keen reproaches,
Each tongue to hiss, and ev'ry heart to heave
With indignation at thee.

Arn. All the pride,
That here should kindle into high resentment,
I find is gone. My spirit's sunk, debas'd;
My guilt unmans me, and I'm grown a coward.

[*Aside.*]

Rib. The trumpets may awake, the clarions swell,
That noble ardour thou no more canst feel,
Disgrac'd from soldier to a renegade.
Anon, while o'er the dreadful field we drive,
Or dealing deaths, or daring slaught'ring swords,
Do thou at distance, like the dastard hare,

All trembling, seek thy safety. Thence away,
As fortune, or thy genius may direct,
Thy conscience thy companion. But be sure,
Whatever land you burden with your weight,
Whatever people you hereafter join,
Tell but your tale, and they will all, like me,
Pronounce you abject, infamous, and hateful. [Exit.]
Arn. Abject and hateful! Infamous! I'm all!
The world has not another monster like me:
Nor hell, in all its store of horrid evils,
Beyond what I deserve. Already here
I feel the shafts, they rankle in my bosom;
And active thought anticipates damnation.

Enter MARIANA and LOUISA.

Mar. He's here! I've found my heart's companion
Rejoice, my Arnold, for my father softens; [out.
He half forgets his hatred to thy country,
And hears with temper while I praise thy virtues:
We soon shall conquer. Ah! what mean those tears?
Why art thou thus?

Arn. And canst thou ask that question?
Thou soft seducer, thou enchanting mischief,
Thou blaster of my virtue. But, begone!
By heav'n, the poison looks so tempting yet,
I fear to gaze myself in love with ruin.
Away, away! enjoy thy ill-got freedom.
And leave a wretch devoted to destruction.

Mar. Destruction! how the image strikes my soul,
As would the shaft of death, with chilling horror!
Hear me—but hear me! 'tis the cause of love!
Your Mariana pleads. For Arnold's peace,
For mine, for both—nay, do not turn away,
And with unkindness dash the rising hope,
That strives for birth, and struggles with despair.

Arn. Oh! yes, despair; it is most fit you should,
As I must ever do.

Mar. Wherefore? Why?
How are you alter'd, or myself how chang'd,
That all our blessings are transform'd to curses?
Have you not sworn (you did, and I believ'd you)
My flatter'd beauties and my faithful love,
Were all that Arnold wish'd to make him happy?

Arn. Curs'd be your love, and blasted all your
beauties,

For they have robb'd me of my peace and honour.
Looks not my form as hideous as my soul,
Beyrim'd like hell, and blacken'd to a fiend?
Go, get thee hence, thou blaster of my fame,
Bear thy bewitching eyes where I no more
May gaze my—but I've nothing now to lose,
Nought but a hated life, which any hand
Would be most merciful to rid me of.

Mar. If I am guilty, 'tis the guilt of love,
And love should pardon what himself inspir'd.
Oh! smooth the horrors of that anguish'd brow,
Thy tortur'd visage fills me with affright.
Look on me kindly, look as you were wont;
Or ease my bursting heart, or strike me dead.

Arn. Give me again my innocence of soul,
Give me my forfeit honour blanch'd anew,
Cancel my treasons to my royal master,
Restore me to my country's lost esteem,
To the sweet hope of mercy from above,
And the calm comforts of a virtuous heart.

Mar. Sure kindness should not construe into guilt
My fond endeavours to preserve thee mine:
Life, love, and freedom are before you all,
Embrace the blessings, and we yet are happy.

Arn. What! with a conscience sore and gall'd
like mine?

To stand the glance of scorn from ev'ry eye?
From ev'ry finger the indignant point?
In ev'ry whisper hear my spreading shame?
And groan and grovel, a detested outcast?
A taunting Frenchman, with opprobrious tongue,
Pronounc'd me abject, infamous, and hateful,
And yet I live! And you yet counsel life.
The damn'd beneath might find or fancy ease,

And fear to lose existence soon as I!
No, die I must—I will—but how—how—how—
Nay, loose my arm, you strive in vain to hold me.

Mar. Upon my knees—see, see these speaking
tears—

Arn. Be yet advis'd, nor urge me to an outrage:
Thy pow'r is lost; unband me! then, 'tis thus,
Thus I renounce thy beauties; thus thy guilt;
Life, love, and treason I renounce for ever. [Exit.]

Mar. Then welcome death, distraction, ev'ry
curse! [ders!]

Blast me, ye lightning! strike me, roaring thun-
Or let me tear, with my outrageous hands,
The peaceful bosom of the earth, and find
A refuge from my woes and life together.

(Flinging herself on the ground.)

Stand off! away! I will not be withheld;
I will indulge my frenzy. Loss of reason
Is now but loss of torment. Cruel Arnold!

Enter LORD CHARNEY.

Char. Whence is this voice of woe? This frantic
Why is my child, my Mariana thus? [posture?

Mar. Thy flinty heart can best resolve the ques-
tion: (Rising.)

Thou that relentless saw'st my tears descend,
And, urg'd by stubborn haughtiness and hatred,
Hast given me up to endless agonies.
The man that merited thy best regard,
The man I lov'd, thy cruelty has made
Alike implacable. He's gone, he's lost.
Arnold is lost, and my repose for ever. [ruins,

Char. Why, let him go, and may th' impending
The hor'ring mischiefs that await their arms,
Him, them, and all of their detested race,
Involve in one destruction.

Mar. No, let ruin

O'ertake the proud, severe, and unforgiving;
Crimes that are strangers to an English nature.
They are all gentle. He was mild as mercy,
Soft as the smiles that mark a mother's joy,
Clasping her new-born infant. Shield him, heav'n!
Protect him, comfort him. Thou cruel father,
Thou cause of all my sufferings, all my woes;
Give him me back, restore him to my arms,
My life, my lord, my Arnold! Give him to me,
Or I will curse my country, thee, myself,
And die the victim of despairing love. [Exit.]

Char. Follow her, watch her, guard her from
her fury. [Exit Louisa.]

Oh! dire misfortune! this unhappy stroke
Surpasses all the sorrows I have felt,
And makes me wretched to the last extreme. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—The PRINCE OF WALES discovered,
seated in state in his tent; at the entrance to which
his standard stands displayed: the device, three
ostrich feathers, with the motto of "Ich Dien:"
EARLS OF WARWICK and SALISBURY, LORDS
AUDLEY and CHANDOS, Nobles, Officers, and
Guards standing.

P. Edw. I've sent my Lords of Oxford, Suffolk,
Cobham,

To meet the nuncio, and conduct him hither:
From whom we may expect to hear the terms
On which the French will deign to give us safety.
(Trumpets.)

Chan. Those trumpets speak the cardinal's ar-
rival:

And see, the lords conduct him to your presence.
(Trumpets.)

Enter three English Lords, preceding CARDINAL
PERTIGORT and his retinue. On the Nuncio's
bowing, the Prince advances from his seat and
embraces him.

P. Edw. Lord cardinal, most welcome to my arms:
I greet you thus, as England's kindest friend,
Misfortune's refuge, and affliction's hope.
It is an office worthy of your goodness,

To step betwix our danger and destruction,
Striving to ward from threatened thousands here
The blow of fate.

Per. Grant, gracious heaven, I may!
For from my soul, great prince, I wish you rescue;
And have conditions from your foes to offer,
Which, if accepted, save ye.

P. Edw. We attend. *(Takes his seat.)*

Per. No art for mild persuasion in your cause
Have I omitted: but imperious France,
Too fond of vengeance, and too vain of numbers,
Insists on terms, which only could be hop'd
From such a scanty unprovided host;
And prudence will direct, from many evils
To choose the lightest. Their conditions are,
"That, to the castles, towns, and plunder taken,
And offer'd now by you to be restor'd,
Your royal person, with an hundred knights,
Are to be added pris'ners at discretion."

P. Edw. Ah! pris'ners!

Aud. Oh! insolent, detested terms!

Sal. An hundred thousand first of Frenchmen fall,
And carrion taint the air! I cannot hold. *(Aside.)*

P. Edw. *(After a pause.)* My good lord cardinal,
what act of mine

Could ever usher to their minds a thought,
That I would so submit?

Per. Could I prescribe,
You should yourself be umpire of the terms;
For well I know your noble nature such,
That int'rest would be made the slave of honour.
But to whate'er I urg'd, the king reply'd,
Remember Cressy's fight! to us as fatal,
As that of Cannæ to the Roman state.

There fell two mighty kings, three sovereign princes,
Full thirty thousand valiant men of arms,
With all the flower of French nobility,
And of their firm allies; for which (he cried)
What can redeem the glory of my crown,
But to behold those victors in our chains?

It is a bitter potion; but reflect,
That royal John is noble, and will treat
Such foes with dignity; while fortune pays
Less than the stock of fame his father lost.

P. Edw. Yes, Philip lost the battle with the odds
Of three to one. In this, if they obtain it,
They have our numbers more than twelve times told,
If we can trust report. And yet, my lord,
We'll face these numbers, fight 'em, bravely fall,
Ere stoop to linger loathsome life away
In infamy and bondage. Sir, I thank you—
I thank you from my soul, for these, for me,
That we have met your wish to do us kindness:
But for the terms our foes demand, we scorn
Such vile conditions, and defy their swords.
Tell 'em, my lord, their hope's too proudly plum'd;
We will be conquer'd ere they call us captives.

Per. Famine or slaughter—

P. Edw. Let them both advance
In all their horrid, most tremendous forms; [die,
They'll meet, in us, with men who'll starve, bleed,
Ere wrong their country, or their own renown.
Sound there to arms! My pious friend, farewell.
Disperse, my lords, and spirit up the troops;
Divide the last remains of our provision,
We shall require no more; for who survives
The fury of this day will either find
Enough from booty or a slave's allowance.

Per. How much at once I'm melted and amaz'd!
Stop, my lords, and give a soul of meekness scope,
In minutes of such peril. By the host
That circles heav'n's high throne, my bleeding heart
Is touch'd with so much tenderness and pity,
I cannot yield ye to the dire decision.
Let me, once more, with ev'ry moving art,
Each soft persuasion, try the Gallic king:
Perhaps he may relent. Permit the trial:
I would preserve such worth, heav'n knows I would,
If hazard, labour, life, could buy your safety.

P. Edw. Lord cardinal, your kindness quite un-
mans me,

My mind was arm'd for ev'ry rough encounter;
But such compassion saps my fortitude,
And forces tears. They flow not for myself,
But these endanger'd followers of my fortunes:
Whom I behold as fathers, brothers, friends,
Here link'd together by the graceful bonds
Of amity and honour: all to me
For ever faithful, and for ever dear.
The worth that rooted while my fortune smil'd,
You see not ev'n adversity can shake:
Think it not weakness, then, that I lament them.

Per. It is the loveliest mark of royal virtue,
'Tis what demands our most exalted praise,
Is worthy of yourself, and must endear
The best of princes to the best of people.
Till my return be hope your comforter:
If 'tis within the scope of human means,
I'll ward the blow.

P. Edw. Good heav'n repay you, sir: [them
Though acts of kindness bear such blessings with
As are their full reward. My lord, farewell.

[Exit Perigort, attended as he came in.

Aud. Well, sir, how fare you now?

P. Edw. Oh! never better:

If I have frailty in me, heav'n can tell,
It is not for myself, but for my friends.
I've run no mean inglorious race, and now,
If it must end, 'tis no unlucky time.
As you great planet, through its radiant course,
Shoots, at his parting, the most pleasing rays;
So to high characters a gallant death
Lends the best lustre, and ennobles all.

Aud. Why, there, my prince, you reach even
virtue's summit:

For this I love you with a sonder flame,
Than proud prosperity could e'er inspire.
'Tis triumph, this, o'er death.

P. Edw. And what is death,
That dreadful evil to a guilty mind,
And awe of coward natures? 'Tis but rest:
Rest that should follow every arduous toil;
Relieve the valiant, and reward the good:
Nor find we aught in life to wish it longer,
When fame is once establish'd.

War. That secure,
Our foes, who wait its loss, can ne'er recover
The glory ravish'd from 'em.

P. Edw. Who can tell?
Has fortune been so hadly entertain'd,
That she should leave us? No, my noble friends;
Her smiles and favours never were abus'd:
Then what we merit we may yet maintain.

Chan. An hundred of us, with your royal person,
Deliver'd up their pris'ners at discretion!
The French have surely lost all modesty,
Or the remembrance of themselves and us.

Aud. But here, in my mind's tablet, there remains
A memorandum, that might make 'em start
In this career of their presumptuous hope.
Nine times the seasons scarce have danc'd their
rounds,

Since the vain father of their present king,
Philip, who styl'd himself his country's fortune,
Gandy and garnish'd, with a numerous host,
Met our great Edward in the field of fight.
I was one knight in that illustrious service,
And urge I may (for 'tis a modest truth)
We made the Frenchmen tremble to behold us:
Their king himself turn'd pale at our appearance,
And thought his own trim troops, compar'd with ours,
Effeminate cowards. Such they prov'd;
And since that day, what change in them or us
Can ground security on wondrous odds?
The same undaunted spirits dare the combat;
The same tough sinews and well-temper'd blades,
Again shall mow them down, like autumn corn,
Another harvest of renown and glory.

Cham. There the brave monarch of Bohemia
In vain, to kindle valour in their hearts: [strove,
He fought, he fell; when our victorious prince
Seiz'd his gay banner with yon boast, "I serve."
(*Pointing to the Prince's standard.*)

Which now more suited to his princely charge,
Triumphantly, as conqueror, he wears;
And in his honour England's eldest hope
Shall ever wear it, to the end of time.

Sal. Now as I live, I wish we were at work,
And almost fear the nuncio may succeed.
Methinks we should not lose the blest occasion,
Or for surpassing ev'ry former conquest,
Or gaining glorious death, immortal fame.

P. Edw. Then set we here ill fortune at defiance,
Secure, at least, of never-fading honour.

(*They all embrace.*)

Oh! my brave leaders, in this warm embrace,
Let us infuse that fortitude of soul,
To all but England's daring sons unknown;
Firm as the stately oak, our island's boast,
Which fiercest hurricanes assault in vain,
We'll stand the driving tempest of their fury.
And who shall shake our martial glories from us?
You puny Gauls! They ne'er have done it yet,
Nor shall they now. Oh! never will we wrong
So far ourselves, and our renown'd forefathers.
Here part we, lords; attend your sev'ral duties.
Audley, distribute through the camp provisions;
Keep ev'ry soldier's spirits in a glow,
Till from the French this final message comes:
Then if their pride denies us terms of honour,
We'll rush outrageous on their vaunting numbers;
And teach them that with souls resolv'd, like ours,
Ev'n desperation points the way to conquest.
When (in defiance of superior might)
Plung'd in the dreadful storm of bloody fight,
Shall ev'ry Briton do his country right. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The French Camp.*

Enter LORD RIBEMONT.

Rib. The troops array'd, stand ready to advance.
And this short pause, this silent interval,
With awful horror strikes upon my soul;
I know not whence it comes, but till this moment,
Ne'er did I feel such heaviness of heart.
Fear! thou art still a stranger here; and death
Have I not seen in ev'ry form he wears?
Defy'd him, fac'd him, never fled him yet:
Nor has my conscience since contracted guilt,
The parent of dismay: then whence is this?
Perhaps 'tis pity for yon hopeless host.
Pity! for what? the brave despise our pity;
For death, encounter'd in a noble cause,
Comes, like the gracious lord of toiling hinds,
To end all labours and bestow reward.
Then let me shake this lethargy away.
By heav'n, it wo' not off! The sweat of death
Is on me! a cold tremor shakes my joints!
My feet seem riveted! my blood congeals!
Almighty pow'rs! Thou ever awful form!
Why art thou present? Wherefore—what, a sigh!
Oh! smile of sweet relief! if aught from heav'n
A mortal ear be worthy to—again
That piteous action, that dejected air!
Speak out the cause; I beg thee speak—'tis gone!
Yet would I gaze, by such enchantment bound—
Thou pleasing, dreadful vision! Oh! return,
Unfold thy errand, though I die with hearing.

Enter DUKE OF ATHENS.

Ath. You're well encounter'd, Ribemont; the
Ere this, has Edward's answer; as I past [king,
The boundaries of our camp on yonder side,
In this my progress to equip the field,
I saw the nuncio posting like the wind;
He and his train, on horses white with foam,
Their course directed to our monarch' tent.

What means this, Ribemont? thou'rt lost in
thought.

Rib. Athens, I am unsoldier'd, I'm unmann'd!
Wonder you may, my noble friend, for see,
I shake, I tremble.

Ath. Say, at what?

Rib. Why, nothing.

Ath. Should the vast host that here are rang'd for
(Warm with impatience, eager for the fray,)
Behold that Ribemont alone has fear,

What wonder would it cause! for thou, of all,
Art sure deservingly the most renown'd.
Come, be thyself—for shame!

Rib. Believe me, Athens,
I am not stricken with a coward's feeling:
Not all yon army to this sword oppos'd,
Should damp my vigour, or depress my heart:
'Tis not the soldier trembles, but the son.

Just now a melancholy seiz'd my soul,
A sinking, whence I knew not, till, at length,
My father's image to my sight appear'd,
And struck me motionless.

Ath. 'Twas only fancy.

Rib. Oh! no, my Athens, plainly I beheld
My father in the habit that he wore,
When, with paternal smiles, he hung this weapon
Upon my youthful thigh, bidding me use it
With honour—only in my country's cause.
Within my mind I treasur'd up the charge,
And sacred to the soldier's public call
Have worn it ever. Wherefore, then, this visit?
Why in that garb in which he fix'd my fortune,
And charg'd me to repay his care with glory?

It 'tis an omen of impending guilt,
Oh! soul of him I honour, once again
Come from thy heav'n, and tell me what it is,
Lest erring ignorance undo my frame. [*brain.*]

Ath. Nought but a waking dream—a vapour'd

Rib. Once his pale visage seem'd to wear a smile,
A look of approbation, not reproof,
But the next moment, with uplifted hands
And heaving bosom, sadly on the earth
He turn'd his eyes, and sorely seem'd to weep:
I heard, or fancy'd that I heard a groan,
As from the ground his look was rais'd to me;
Then, shaking with a mournful glance his head,
He melted into air.

Ath. Pr'ythee, no more;

You talk'd of melancholy, that was all;
Some sickness of the mind: occasion'd, oft,
Ev'n by the fumes of indigested meals.
To-morrow we will laugh at this delusion.

Rib. To-morrow! Oh! that mention of to-mor-
row—

There are opinions, Athens, that our friends
Can pass the boundaries of nature back,
To warn us when the hour of death is nigh.
If that thy business was, thou awful shade,
I thank thee, and this interval of life,
However short, which heaven vouchsafes me yet,
I will endeavour as I ought to spend.

Ath. See, through yon clouds of dust, with how
much speed

The nuncio hastens to the English camp!
Perhaps the terms for safety are agreed,
Then where's a meaning for thy fancy'd vision?

Rib. No matter where, my spirits are grown light:
Returning vigour braces up again
My nerves and sinews to their wonted tone.
My heart beats freely, and, in nimble rounds,
The streams of life pursue their ready course:
Lead on; our duty calls us to the king. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Prince of Wales's Tent.*

*Enter PRINCE EDWARD, LORD CHANDOS, and
Attendants, meeting LORD AUDLEY.*

P. Edw. Well, Audley, are the soldiers all re-
fre-h'd? [*meals,*]

Aud. All: and although, perchance, their last of

It seem'd so cheerful as surpass'd my hope;
Still joining hands, as off they drain'd the bowl,
Success to England's arms was all the cry.
At length a hoary vet'ran rais'd his voice, [thers !
And thus address'd his fellows: "Courage, bro-
The French have never beat us, nor shall now.
Our great third Edward's fortune waits our arms;
And his brave son, whose formidable helmet
Nods terror to our foes, directs the fight;
In his black armour, we will soon behold him
Piercing their throng'd battalions. Shall not we,
At humble distance, emulate his ardour,
And gather laurels to adorn his triumph?"
Then did they smile again, shake hands, and shout,
While, quite transported at the pleasing sight,
I wept, insensibly, with love and joy. [there,
P. Edw. I too could weep! Oh! Audley, Chandos,
There rest I all my hope. My honest soldiers,
I know, will do their duty.

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. Royal sir,
A person muffled in a close disguise,
Arriv'd, this instant, from the adverse camp,
As he reports, solicits to receive
An audience of your highness, and alone.

P. Edw. Retire, my lord. Conduct him straight-
way in. [Exit Gentleman.

Chan. Your highness will not trust yourself
unguarded:

It may be dangerous. Consider, sir. [scorn:

P. Edw. Caution is now my slave, and fear I
This is no hour for idle apprehensions.

[Exit Lords, &c.

Enter ARNOLD in a disguise, which he throws off.
Your business, sir, with—Arnold! Get thee hence.

Arn. Behold a wretch laid prostrate at your feet,
His guilty neck ev'n humbled to the earth;
Tread on it, sir; it is most fit you should.

I am unworthy life, nor hope compassion,
But could not die till here I stream'd my tears
In token of contrition, pain, and shame. [move,

P. Edw. Up, and this instant from my sight re-
ere indignation urges me to pay
Thy horrid treasons with a traitor's fate. [ther;

Arn. Death if I'd fear'd, I had not ventur'd hi-
Conscious I merit all you can inflict:
But doom'd to torture, as by guilt I am,
I hop'd some ease in begging here to die;
That I might manifest, where most I ought,
My own abhorrence of my hated crime.

Thus, on my knees, lay I my life before you;
Nor ask remission of the heavy sentence,
Your justice must pronounce. Yet, royal sir,
One little favour let me humbly hope:

(And may the blessings of high heav'n repay it:)
'Tis, when you shall report my crime and suffering,
Only to add, he gave himself to death,
The voluntary victim of remorse.

P. Edw. I shall disgrace my soldiership, and melt
To woman's weakness, at a villain's sorrow.
Oh! justice, with thy fillet seal my eyes;
Shut out at once, his tears, and hide my own. (A side.)

Arn. Am I rejected in my low petition
For such a boon? Nor can I yet complain;
Your royal favours follow approbation,
And I of all mankind have least pretence
To hope the bounty of a word to ease me.

P. Edw. Rise, Arnold. Thou wert long my chosen
servant;

An infant-fondness was our early tie:
But with our years (companions as we liv'd)
Affection rooted, and esteem grew love.
Nor was my soul a niggard to thy wishes:
There set no sun but saw my bounty flow,
No hour scarce pass'd unmark'd by favour from me.
The prince and master yet I set apart,
And singly here arraign thee in the friend.
Was it for thee, in fortune's first assault,

Amidst these thousands, all by far less favour'd,
To be the first, the only to forsake me?
Was it for thee, for thee to seek my foe,
And take thy safety from the means that sunk
The man of all the world that lov'd thee most?
In spite of me my eyes will overflow,
And I must weep the wrongs I should revenge.

Arn. Tears for such guilt as mine! Oh! blast-
ing sight!
Cover me, mountains! hide me and my shame!
A traitor's fate would here be kind relief
From the excessive anguish I endure.

P. Edw. Having thus fairly stated our account,
How great's the balance that appears against thee!
And what remains? I will not more reproach thee.
Love thee I must not, and 'twere guilt to pity.
All that with honour I can grant is this:
Live—but remove for ever from my sight.
If I escape the dangers that surround me,
I must forget that Arnold e'er had being:
I must forget, in pity to mankind
(Lest it should freeze affection in my heart,
That e'er such friendship met with such return.
Arn. Oh! mercy more afflicting than ev'n rage!
That I could answer to with tears and pray'rs;
But conscious shame, with kindness, strikes me
mute.

Great sir, (forgive intrusion on your goodness,)
My boon you have mistaken, life I ask'd not;
'Twas but to witness to the deep remorse,
That with a harpy's talons tears my bosom.
Love, the pernicious pois'n'er of my honour,
In poor atonement's sacrific'd already;
And life, devoted as the all I've left,
I'm ready now and resolute to pay.
But as my miseries have touch'd your soul,
And gain'd remission of a traitor's fate,
Oh! add one favour, and complete my wishes.
To the dear country that must scorn my name,
(Though I still love it as I honour you,)
Permit my sword to lend its little aid,
To pay a dying tribute. Grant but that,
And I will weep my gratitude with blood. [thee,
P. Edw. Stain'd and polluted as my eyes behold
Honour no longer can endure thy sight.
If 'tis in valour to accomplish it,
Redeem thy reputation; but if not,
To fall in fight will be thy happiest hope.
Away, nor more reply.

Arn. Exalted goodness! [Exit.
P. Edw. If passions conquer'd are our noblest
Misruling anger, ever mad revenge, [boasts,
And thou, too partial biasser, affection;
Confess I once have acted as I ought. (Trumpets.)
Ah! by those trumpets, sure, the nuncio's come!
[A Gentleman appears and retires.
Who's there? Acquaint the lords I wish to see 'em.
Now does the medley war begin to work:
A thousand hopes and fears all crowd upon me!

*Enter EARLS OF WARWICK and SALISBURY,
LORDS AUDLEY, CHANDOS, and other, and
Attendants.*
Oh! welcome, friends! But see, the cardinal.
(Trumpets.)
Enter CARDINAL PERIGORT, attended.
Well, gen'rous advocate, we wait our doom.
Per. Prepare, prepare, for an immediate battle:
Inflexible is France in her demands,
And all my pray'rs and tears have prov'd in vain.
P. Edw. Lord Cardinal, may righteous heav'n
reward
The pious charity of soul you've shewn.
If France insists so high, it shall be try'd;
The desp'rate chance of battle shall be try'd.
The fates attend, the balance is prepar'd;
And whosoe'er shall have the lot to mount,
May heav'n stretch wide its everlasting doors,
And give them happy entrance all.

Per. Amen!

Illustrious prince, and you his noble followers,
Remains there aught that I can do to serve ye?
My function suits not with a field of slaughter;
In Poitiers, therefore, must I seek my safety.
There, while the battle rages, round and round
My beads shall drop to pray'rs, that ev'ry saint
Will succour and support the English arms.
But should the fortune of your foes prevail,
And leave ye victims to immortal honour,
The pious offices I'll make my own,
O'er ev'ry grave to breathe a thousand blessings,
And water all your ashes with my tears.

P. Edw. My gentle friend, such goodness will
renown you.

Per. Take from my hand, my heart, my very soul,
My amplest benediction to you all. *(They bow.)*
I now can stifle in my tears no longer—
Oh! gallant prince, farewell. Farewell to all.

Heav'n guard your lives, and give your arms success!
*[Exit with his Attendants. On the Cardinal's
going out, the Prince and Lords continue for
some time fixed and mute.]*

Aud. You loiter, sir; our enemies advance,
And we're in no array.

P. Edw. Away, despatch;
Marshal the army by the plan I gave;
Then march it straight to yonder eminence;
Whence I'll endeavour to inflame their zeal,
And fit them for the toils this day demands.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*Another part of the English Camp.*

Enter MARIANA and LOUISA.

Lou. Thus, madam, has obedience prov'd my
The hurry and confusion of the field *[duty:]*
Giving us opportunity to 'scape,
We've reach'd the English camp. But whither now?
Where would you bend your course? Behold,
around,

How the arm'd soldiers, as they form in ranks,
Dart from impasson'd looks ten thousand terrors!
The scene is dreadful!

Mar. Then it suits my mind,
The seat of horrors terrible to bear.
On—let us find him.

Lou. Dearest lady, think;
Nor follow one that rudely spurn'd you from him.

Mar. It was not Arnold spurn'd me, 'twas his
guilt,

The guilt I plang'd him in. Louisa, thou
Hast ne'er experienc'd passions in extremes,
Or thou wouldst know that love, and hate, and scorn,
All opposites together meet, and blend
In the wild whirl of a distracted soul.

Lou. Behold, he comes!

Mar. Support me, gracious pow'rs!

Enter ARNOLD.

Arn. Ah! Mariana! When will torture end?
(Aside.)

Mar. How shall I stand the shock of his re-
proaches? *(Aside.)*

Arn. Why art thou here? Oh! why, unhappy
maid? *[ruin.]*

Mar. Since my too fatal rashness wrought thy
'Tis fit, at least, that I should share it with thee.
Therefore, my friends, my father, and my country,
I have forsook for ever; and am come
To claim a portion here in all you suffer.

Arn. Return again, I beg thee; I conjure thee,
By all the wondrous love that fir'd our hearts,
And wrought—but let not that be more remember'd.
If thou hast wish for happiness or peace,
Go to thy father back, and think no more
Of a lost wretch who hastens to oblivion.

Mar. Request it not; I never will forsake thee:
One fortune shall conduct, one fate involve us:
I'll shew the world that my unhappy crime
Was neither child of treachery or fear,

But love, love only! and the guilt it caus'd,
As I inspir'd, I'll share its punishment.

Arn. You cannot, nay, you must not think of it:
You broke no faith; I only was to blame:
And, to engage thee to secure thy safety,
Know the dire state of my determin'd soul:—
Heav'n and my prince permitting, I have sworn
To brave all dangers in the coming fight;
And when my sword has done its best for England,
To lay my load of misery and shame,
Together down for ever; death I'll hunt
So very closely that he sha'n't escape me.
Be timely, then, in thy retreat; and heav'n
And all good angels guard thee! On thy lips
I'll seal my fervent pray'rs for blessings on thee.

(Kisses her.)

Oh! what a treasure does my soul give up
A sacrifice to honour! *(Going.)*

Mar. Stop a moment:
One single moment, Arnold: let me gather
A little strength to bear this dreadful parting.
And must it be—hold, hold, my heart—for ever?
Oh! bitter potion! kind physician, pour
One drop of hope to sweeten it a little. *[give.]*

Arn. Hope ev'ry thing: hope all that earth can
Or heav'n bestow on virtues such as thine.
(Trumpet.)

That trumpet summons me: I must away!
Oh! measure by thy own the pangs I feel. *[Exit.]*

Mar. Then they are mighty; not to be express'd,
Not to be borne, nor ever to be cur'd.
My head runs round! my bursting brain divides!
Oh! for an ocean to ingulph me quick;
Or flames capacious as all hell's extent!
That I might plunge, and stifle torture there.

Lou. Hence, my dear lady; for your peace, go
hence. *[eyes.]*

Mar. I'll dig these eyes out; these pernicious
Enslaving Arnold, have undone him.—Ah!

(Trumpet.)

That raven trumpet sounds the knell of death!
Behold, the dreadful, bloody work begins!
What ghastly wounds! what piteous, piercing
Oh! stop that fatal falcion! if it fall, *[shrieks!]*
It kills my Arnold!—Save him, save him, save—
Exit, running; Louisa follows.

SCENE IV.—*A rural Eminence, with the distant
prospect of a camp.*

Enter PRINCE EDWARD.

P. Edw. The hour advances, the decisive hour,
That lifts me to the summit of renown,
Or leaves me on the earth a lifeless corpse.
The buzz and bustle of the field before me,
The twang of bow-strings, and the clash of spears,
With ev'ry circumstance of preparation,
Strike a tremendous awe!—Hark! Shouts are
echo'd

To drown dismay, and blow up resolution
Ev'n to its utmost swell! From hearts so firm,
Whom dangers fortify, and toils inspire,
What has a leader not to hope! And yet
The weight of apprehension weighs me down.
Oh! Soul of nature! great eternal Cause! *(Kneels.)*
Who gave and govern'st all that's here below;
'Tis by the aid of thy Almighty arm
The weak exist, the virtuous are secure.
If to your sacred laws obedient ever,
My sword, my soul, have own'd no other guide;
Oh! if your honour, if the rights of men,
My country's happiness, my king's renown,
Were motives worthy of a warrior's zeal;
Crown your poor servant with success this day,
And be the praise and glory all thy own. *(Rises.)*

Enter LORD AUDLEY.

Aud. Now, royal Edward, is the hour at hand,
That shall, beyond the boast of ancient story,
Ennoble English arms; forgive, my hero,

That I presume so far, but I have sworn
To rise your rival in the common fight.
We'll start together for the goal of glory,
And work such wonders that our fear-struck foes
Shall call us more than mortals! As of old,
Where matchless vigour mark'd victorious chiefs!
The baffl'd host, to cover their disgrace,
Cry'd out the gods assum'd commanders' forms,
And partial heav'n had fought the field against
them!

P. Edw. Audley, thy soul is noble: then toge-
(Safe from the prying eye of observation) [ther
Let us unmask our hearts. Alas! my friend,
To such a dreadful precipice we're got,
It giddies to look down. No hold, no hope,
But in the succour of Almighty Pow'r!
For nothing but a miracle can save us.

Aud. I still apprehensions as they rise,
Nor e'er allow myself to weigh our danger.

P. Edw. 'Tis wisely done: and we'll at least en-
deavour

(Like the brave handful at Thermopylæ)
To make such gallant sacrifice of life
As shall confound our enemies. Oh! think
On the great glory of devoted heroes,
And let us emulate the godlike flame,
That dignify'd the chiefs of Greece and Rome!
Souls greatly rais'd, above all partial bonds,
Who knew no tie, no happiness distinct,
But made the general weal their only care:
That was their aim, their hope, their pride; the end
For which they labour'd, suffer'd, conquer'd, bled!

Aud. Exalted, great incitement!

P. Edw. What may happen,
Since none can say, prepare we for the worst.
Then as a man whom I have lov'd and honour'd,
Come to my arms, and take a kind farewell:
(*They embrace.*)

If we survive, we will again embrace,
And greet each other's everlasting fame;
If not, with him whose justice never errs,
Remains our fit reward.

Aud. You melt me, sir!

I thought my nature was above such weakness;
But tears will out.

P. Edw. They're no reproach to manhood:
But we've not leisure now for their indulgence.

Aud. True, glorious leader; to more active duties
The sev'ral functions of our souls are summon'd.
Safety and honour, liberty, renown!
Hope's precious prospect, and possession's bliss!
All that are great and lovely; urg'd together,
The arm of valour in their dear defence.

P. Edw. And valour well shall answer the de-
mand;

Our foes, to wear the trophies of the day, [tell
Must wade through blood to win 'em. Heav'n can
How many souls may pay the fatal price,
Or whose may be the lot: if mine be one,
Say, Audley, to my father, to my country,—
Living, they had my service; at my death,
My pray'rs and wishes for eternal welfare.

Aud. Request not that which, if the day be lost,
I ne'er shall execute.—I have to ask
A favour, which I hope you'll not refuse.

P. Edw. Nothing that suits my Audley to solicit.

Aud. It is that I may be the first to charge:
I think I can rely upon my courage

To set a good example.

P. Edw. Be it thine.—
And see, the troops approach! (*Trumpets.*)

Aud. Each upright form
Darting defiance, as they move, to France!
Where is the pow'r can cope with souls like these?
Resolv'd on conquest or a glorious fate!
Unmoveable as rocks, they'll stand the torrent
Of rushing fury, and disdain to shrink;
But let you panting wasps discharge their stings,
And then in clusters crush 'em. (*Trumpets.*)

*Enter EARLS OF WARWICK and SALISBURY,
LORD CHANDOS, and other Commanders. Parties
of Soldiers appear between all the side scenes, with
Officers leading them, so seeming as if the whole of
the army was drawn up.*

P. Edw. Countrymen,
We're here assembled for the toughest fight
That ever strain'd the force of English arms.
See you wide field with glittering numbers gay,
Vain of their strength, they challenge us for slaves,
And bid us yield their pris'ners at discretion.
If there's an Englishman amongst ye all,
Whose soul can basely truckle to such bondage;
Let him depart. For me, I swear by heav'n,
By my great father's soul, and by my fame,
My country ne'er shall pay a ransom for me,
Nor will I stoop to drag out life in bondage,
And take my pittance from a Frenchman's hands:
This I resolve, and hope, brave countrymen,
Ye all resolve the same.

Soldiers. All, all resolve it.

Sal. Conquest or death is ev'ry Briton's choice.

P. Edw. Oh! glorious choice! And know, my
gallant soldiers,

That valour is superior far to numbers,
There are no odds against the truly brave:
Let us resolve on conquest, and 'tis ours.
But should the worst that can befall us—death,
't will be a fate to envy more than pity.
And we have fathers, brothers, sons, or friends,
That will revenge our slaughter.

Soldiers. On, lead on.

P. Edw. I see the gen'rous indignation rise,
That soon will shake the boasted pow'r of France:
Their monarch trembles midst his gaudy train,
To think the troops he now prepares to meet,
Are such as never faint'd yet with toil.
They're such as yet no pow'r on earth could awe,
No army baffle, and no town withstand.

Heav'n's! with what pleasure, with what love I gaze,
In ev'ry face to view his father's greatness!
Those fathers, those undaunted fathers, who
In Gallic blood have dy'd their swords.

Those fathers who in Cyprus wrought such feats,
Who taught the Syracusians to submit,
T' am'd the Calabrians, the fierce Saracens,
And have subdu'd, in many a stubborn fight
The Palestinean warriors. Scotland's fields,
That have so oft been drench'd with native gore,
Bear noble record; and the fertile isle,
Of fair Hibernia, by their swords subjected,
An ample tribute and obedience pays.

On her high mountains Wales receiv'd their laws,
And the whole world has witness'd to their glory.

Aud. Lead us to action, and each Briton here
Will prove himself the son of those brave fathers.

P. Edw. View all yon glitt'ring grandeur as your
spoils,

The sure reward of this day's victory.
Strain ev'ry faculty, and let your minds,
Your hopes, your ardours, reach their utmost
bounds.

Follow your standards with a fearless spirit;
Follow the great examples of your sires;
Follow the noble genius that inspires ye;
Follow this train of wise and valiant leaders,
Follow, in me, your brother, prince, and friend.
Draw, fellow-soldiers; catch th' inspiring name!
We fight for England, liberty, and fame!

[*They draw their swords and go out. Trumpets
sounding.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*An extensive Plain, with the distant view
of a Town.*

*Enter PRINCE EDWARD, EARL OF WARWICK,
LORD CHANDOS, and Attendants.*

P. Edw. Haste to my Lord of Oxford, and re-
He ply his archers with redoubled vigour: [quest
[*An Attendant bows, and goes out.*"]

I see already they've confus'd the foe;
Their ranks are broken, and they seem to doubt
If they should stand or fly!

Chan. Then now's the time
To press 'em with the weight of all our force;
For Frenchmen, if they're once dismay'd, are lost.
War. Excess of fury marks the battle yonder!
Lord Salisbury there sustains a heavy charge.
P. Edw. Warwick, away and reinforce his party,
Or numbers may o'erbear him. Fly this instant.

[*Exit Warwick.*]

Oh! for an arm of iron, but to answer
The mighty ardour that inflames my soul! [*Exeunt.*]

Enter ARNOLD, bleeding.

Arn. Yet more of Gallic blood, I must have
To wash my stains of infamy away. [more,
What, are the multitudes o'erthrown already?
Greater must down to gratify my rage,
And in my country's vengeance crown my own.
Ah! what! retreating!—Cowards—Follow me—
[*He joins an English Party who were giving
way, and they beat the French off.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Part of the Field.*

*Enter KING JOHN, DUKE OF TOURAIN, DUKE OF
ATHENS, and Attendants.*

K. John. By heav'n! a panic seizes all my troops.
Inform me, Athens, what's the cause of this?

Ath. Some parties that the Prince of Wales de-
tach'd

Round yonder mountain, have attack'd our rear;
And the division which the Dauphin led,
Dispersing in confusion; they have pierc'd
With fury to the centre of our host! [mand

K. John. Fly, Athens, to my son, with my com-
that he collect again his scatter'd men,
And lead them to our succour. Shameful sight!

[*Exit Athens.*]

That such a handful should confound us thus.

Enter ARCHBISHOP OF SENS, with a drawn sword.

Sens. Confusion seize! but there's no need to
Too much it rages in our host already. [wish it,
I got this weapon from a feather'd wretch,
Who cast it down, and skipp'd like any deer!
I wish the villain had it in his heart.

Howe'er, I took the keen incumbrance up,
And us'd it better than his master could;
For with this arm, unpractic'd in the office,
I clove a brawny Briton to the chine!

Tour. Heav'n's! how we're press'd. No party
but gives way!

K. John. Perdition seize the cowards!—Come,
We'll do our duty, tho' they all desert us. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Enter ARNOLD.*

Arn. My arm begins to weary with the fight;
Death, I have cramm'd thy rav'nous jaws with offal;
Now, turn, my friend, and give me timely rescue.

Enter RIBEMONT.

Rib. Thou double traitor! must I stain my sword
With the foul streams that circle in thy veins,
Who art so base, so brauded? Infamous!
By heav'n, it almost is a guilt to fight thee!

Arn. Here I can answer, for my cause is good:
It is my country's! And thou, haughty lord,
Think not thou e'er again shalt awe my soul,
Or, unchastis'd, reproach me with a crime
I loathe, and here am come to expiate.
The earth I've crimson'd with thy country's blood:
And if the pow'rs, to what is shed already,
Will add but Ribemont's, I ask no more:
The foe I next may meet to mine is welcome.

Rib. Can aught in valour purge thy Æthiopian soul,
Expunge thy blots, and rank thee with the brave?
Darest thou assert the cause thou hast betray'd?
Or hope a second guilt atones the first?

No; the joint vengeance of wrong'd France and
England [thy due;

I send in this! [*Arnold falls.*] There's something of
To infamy, and hell, I leave the rest. [*Exit.*]

Arn. Death I have caught—his shaft is in my
heart—

It tugs with nature—When shall I get free?

*Enter PRINCE EDWARD, LORD CHANDOS, and
Attendants.*

P. Edw. Slaughter hath wanton'd here! What
stream of blood!

What heaps of mangled bodies strew the ground!
Death hath had able ministers at work;
A pompous tribute they have paid, indeed!
Arnold, hast thou done this?

Arn. Offended prince,
You find my fluttering soul upon the wing:
All a poor, despair'd, and despairing wretch
Could do, this arm has wrought.

P. Edw. Trice have I mark'd

Thy valour wonderful!

Arn. All worthless quite:

That I could pay a hundred thousand lives
In gratitude to you, and love for England;
But feeble nature fail'd my better wish,
So here I render up a loathsome life—

P. Edw. As heav'n may pardon me, thy crime's
forgot.

Arn. Then I am happy. Hear it, sacred pow'rs!
And give him glory great, as is his goodness.

I go. Methinks the gloomy way before me
Is stripp'd of half its horrors. Friendly death,
Receive a parting—pity'd—pardon'd—Oh! [*Dies.*]

Chan. He dies!—Is gone!

P. Edw. Proving, my noble friend,
His soul was genuine English; and could tow'r
O'er all calamities but conscious guilt.

Chan. Heav'n's pardon greet him! Mighty
prince, behold

Where gallant Audley, like a tempest, pours
Destruction through the thickest ranks of foes!

P. Edw. Oh! Chandos, with astonishment, my eye
Hath mark'd his valiant wonder-working sword!
Come, let us kindle at the great example,
And emulate the ardour we admire! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Enter KING JOHN, DUKE OF TOU-
RAIN, and Attendants.*

K. John. (*Turning back.*) Rally our men, my
valiant lord of Ewe,

Or we are all undone. Oh! gracious heav'n,
How has a kingdom crumbled from my grasp!

Tour. Let us preserve ourselves by timely flight,
Our broken army is dispersing. See!—
Behold the dastards how they ran in thousands,
Oh, shame! almost before a single foe.

K. John. My dear Tourain, to what have I re-
duc'd thee?

A ruin now of pomp! A royal wretch!
For thee I could weep blood; for thee I fear
To lose a life no longer worth my care,
Stripp'd as I am of dignity and fame. [tune:

Tour. I ask of heav'n but to partake your for-
not wasting on myself a single ear,
I send out all attendant on my king.

K. John. Tears will have way. Oh! majesty,
give place,

For nature governs now. Almighty Pow'rs!
Must children and must kingdoms suffer thus?
Because my pride to reason shut my ears,
When dazzled with the gilded phantom, glory?
I scorn'd the terms that might have bless'd us all!
Too late—It is the curse of giddy mortals
To see their errors, and repent too late.

Enter ARCHBISHOP OF SENS.

Sens. The Dauphin, Dukes of Anjou, Berry,
Orleans,
Have led the way in flight! Earl Douglas follows,

Fainting with many wounds, and all his Scots
Have, like our French and the auxiliar troops,
Forsook their posts. For safety, sir, away.

K. John. Dare not to urge it! I disdain the thought.

Go, like my coward sons and brother, go!
Though all desert me, singly will I stand
And face my foes, till, cover'd o'er with wounds,
I gain a fate becoming of a king.

Enter LORD CHARNEY, *bleeding and faint.*

Char. Embrace this moment as your last for flight:

The field is lost! I have not breath for more.
This honest wound came timely to my rescue,
Or I'd been curs'd to wail the dregs of life
Away in anguish. Parent earth, receive me.

(*Lies down.*)

This is the goal to which all nature runs,
And I rejoice to reach it. All is lost!
My country, monarch, daughter, life, and—oh!—

(*Dies.*)

K. John. Thou, Charney, hast escap'd—(*A shout*)

What noise is that? [no retreating,
Tour. The sound of triumph. Now there is
For, see! they have beset us all around.

K. John. Come, then, thou darling of thy father's soul,

We'll link our wretched fortunes here together.

And if a king's example can inspire

The few yet faithful in my lost condition,

Cast fear behind, and daringly come on,
Determin'd still to conquer or to die. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*A full Prospect of the field.*

Enter LORD RIBEMONT.

Rib. Ill-fated Athens, thou hast breath'd thy last—

But wherefore call'd I thee ill-fated? since
Death but prevented thee the curse of seeing
Our arms dishonour'd, and our country lost.

Now, sacred soul of him who gave me life,

The purpose of thy visit is explain'd.

No private evil, not a fate like mine—

That were a trivial call for thee to earth:

It was to warn me of a heavier loss—

Our diadem and fame. Ah!—I'm alone

Amidst a field of foes. Let me collect

A decent vigour, like the hunted lion,

With an assault to dignify my fall,

And not shrink, tamely, to a vulgar fate.

Enter LORD AUDLEY.

Aud. For England?

Rib. France—By heav'n! the gallant Audley.

Now, fortune, I forgive thy partial dealing:

For, next to victory, my wish has been

To fall by so renown'd an arm as Audley's.

Aud. Brave Ribemont, I will return thy praise,

And own thee noblest of my country's foes.

Had we been natives of one happy land,

The gen'rous semblance of our souls had link'd us

In friendship's dearest bonds.

Rib. But here we stand,

Determin'd champions in opposing lists,

Each in his country's cause, the other's foe.

Come, for I long to try this season'd blade

Upon true metal. If I conquer thee,

I take no portion of the foul disgrace

Which heav'n this day has thrown upon our arms.

But should my fortune, (as perhaps it may,) .

Like my poor country's, bow the head to England,

Then, Audley, wilt thou add to thy renown,

By doing what thy king has only done—

Baffle the warrior he pronounc'd a brave one!

Now for determination.

Aud. Hold a moment:

Look on the field, brave Ribemont; behold

Thou hast no passage for escape left open!

Me shouldst thou vanquish, from the thousands

Captivity or death must be thy lot. [*round thee,*

Then make not havoc of great qualities,
Nor to thy kingdom lose, through desperation,
The bravest arm and noblest heart it boasts.

Give my fond wish the power but to protect thee:
Resign thy sword; I'll prove no conqueror,
But clasp thee with a warmth of gen'rous friend-
ship.

Rib. Audley, I thank thee; but my hour is come.

You bid me look upon the field; look thou,

And see the glory of my country blasted!

To lose a day like this, and to survive it,

Would be a wretchedness I'll ne'er endure.

No; in a nation's fate be mine involv'd:

To fall with France is now the only means

To satisfy my soul, and save my fame.

Aud. Oh! yet—

Rib. I'm fix'd!

Aud. Why, then, for England this.

Rib. And this for France. (*They fight.*)

Aud. What! neither get the better?

'Tis a tough task. Again. (*They fight again.*)

Rib. Why, valiant lord,

The balance still nods doubtful; as the pow'rs

Were undetermin'd which must yield the day.

Are our fates grown of such high consequence,

That heav'n should pause upon the great decision?

Let us no longer worry one another,

Where can the vulnerable spot be found?

Aud. Why there.

(*They fight. Ribemont falls, and Audley*

is wounded.)

Rib. No, there.

Aud. We are companions still. [*fast;*

Rib. Inward I bleed: the streams of life run

And all that did invigorate deserts me.

Audley, the palm of victory is thine:

I yield, I die—but glory in my fall:

It is beneath the noblest English arm,

And that secures my fame: thy bosom now

May harbour him that is thy foe no more.

(*Audley kneels, and takes him in his arms.*)

Why, this is kind! thus lock'd in thy embrace,

To let a rival warrior breathe his last.

Report me truly as thy sword has found—

I know thou wilt—and, in the long hereafter,

If we can meet—I'll thank thee for't.—Farewell!

(*Dies.*)

Aud. Farewell, brave Ribemont; thou fearless

soldier!

Peace to thy ashes, to thy soul reward,

And honour crown thy name! A foe could weep;

But pity would disgrace a death like thine.

(*Trumpets.*)

Enter PRINCE EDWARD, LORD CHANDOS, and

Attendants.

P. Edw. (*Turning back.*) Give instant orders to

recall our parties;

I will not hazard, by a rash pursuit,

So vast a victory! And let my standard

Be hoisted on the highest neighb'ring tree,

To guide our troops returning from the chase.

England, my Chandos, triumphs! For our arms

Have won the noblest field that e'er was fought!

Ah! Audley bleeding! then must conquest mourn,

And I lament, amidst my spoils and trophies,

The best of nobles, warriors, and of friends.

Aud. Faint with the loss of blood, I hope no

more. [*reach*

P. Edw. Summon assistance; all that wealth can

To him who gives me but his life's assurance.

[*Exit an Attendant.*

Advance that banner o'er us. Long, oh! long

May'st thou survive to wear this well-won honour.

(*He kneels and embraces Audley.*)

My bravest knight, my most belov'd of men,

Lead him away; repose him in his tent.

Soon as the hurry of the field is o'er,

I'll come in person and attend his cure.

Aud. There lifeless lies the arm that gave the
A braver soldier never press'd the earth. [wound:
On his remains let due distinction wait,
To dignify the dust that once was noble.

[*He is led off.*
P. Edw. The valiant Ribemont! Take hence
his corpse,

And see that every solemn rite be paid:
With honours suited to his high renown,
Conduct the body to its peaceful grave.

[*Ribemont is carried off.*
Chan. The field is thinn'd! And now, far off re-
The dying voice of tumult faintly sounds, [mov'd,
Like the hoarse thunder in a distant sky;
Or hollow roarings of subsiding waves,
After their conflict with a furious storm. [us,

P. Edw. An awful horror! The sad scene before
Pompous with desolation! as declines
The glow and ardour of our martial flame,
Softens the mind to mournful meditation.
How many souls have ta'en eternal flight,
Who, but this very morning, on the wing
Of expectation, look'd through years to come!
So have the bubbles of their hopes been broke;
So may it fare with us—And such is life!

[*Enter LOUISA, and falls on her knees.*

Lou. Oh! mighty prince, whose matchless virtues
charm

The many realms your victories have aw'd,
Lend your compassion, your protection lend,
To wretched, bleeding, dying penitence.

P. Edw. What wouldst thou say?

Lou. Unhappy Mariana,
At once the victim of distressful love,
And deep remorse for treachery—

P. Edw. Go on.

Lou. Frantic and weeping, ran o'er all the field,
Till chance directed her to Arnold's corpse,
That weltring lay in blood. She kiss'd it oft,
Bath'd it with tears, tore her dishevell'd locks,
Smote her poor bosom, sobb'd, and sadly groan'd,
Till snatching from his clay-cold hand his sword,
She plung'd it sudden in her side! sunk down,
And call'd on death to lock their last embrace:
I (but too late to save her) interpos'd,
And cry'd for help—alas! in vain. But now,
Pluck'd by some passing soldiers from the body,
They force her, raving and reluctant, hither.

P. Edw. Oh! Chandos, what a moving sight is
here!

[*Enter Soldiers, forcing in MARIANA, distracted and
bleeding.*

Mar. Off, let me go! I will not be torn from him:
Relentless monsters! Let us mingle blood,
And die together. What do I behold!
Oh! hide me, friendly earth! for ever hide me
From that offended face. [*Sinks down.*]

P. Edw. Look up, fair mourner,
[*Kneeling by her.*]

And gather comfort from my friendly tears.

Mar. Comfort from thee? Thou injur'd godlike
hero,

Load me with curses! Stab me with reproaches—
Thy sweetness cannot! but the hand of heav'n,
That strikes for injur'd virtue, heavy falls,
And crushes me beneath it.

P. Edw. Weep not thus. [this?]

Mar. What art thou made of, heart, to bear all
That grov'ling in the dust—abandon'd—

P. Edw. Nay,
Do not be so wilful—And—

Mar. Indeed, great prince,
The dear, departed Arnold was ensnar'd,
Seduc'd, betray'd by me. But heav'n can witness,
My only motive was his preservation.
Danger, despair, provok'd the guilty deed,
Which horror, death, and infamy reward.
Forgive the breathless soldier that rever'd,
And servant that ador'd you, sir! On no

Heap all your indignation; scorn, detest,
Despise, and hate my memory for ever.

P. Edw. No; both have my compassion, my for-
giveness. [sound!]

Mar. Forgiveness, said you? Oh! celestial
Catch it, ye angels, hov'ring on the wing,
To waft me to the bar of heav'n's high justice!

Offended virtue pities and forgives!
Chant it aloud, and cheer with this foretaste
Of goodness infinite—my drooping—Oh!— [*Dies.*]

Chan. She's breathless!

P. Edw. Heav'n, I hope, will think their crime
Enough was punish'd by affliction here.
Lay them together.—Well, my Lord of Warwick—

[*Enter EARL OF WARWICK.*

War. I've view'd the adverse camp, as you com-
manded;

Where all the wealth of France was sure collected,
To grace the ruin of that wretched people:

Each tent profuse! like those of Pompey's host,
When on Pharsalia's plain he fought great Cæsar,
And lost the world, his life, and Rome her freedom.

P. Edw. All-righteous heav'n! thy hand is here
conspicuous:

Pride and presumption finish thus their shame.
[*Shout.*]

Chan. 'Tis a train of pris'ners; bring hither.
[*Enter EARL OF SALISBURY, with Officers and Sol-
diers, conducting KING JOHN, the DUKE OF TOU-
RAIN, ARCHBISHOP OF SENS, and several French
Noblemen, prisoners.*

P. Edw. Brave Salisbury, you're welcome to my
The field is ours! [arms.]

Sal. And nobly was it fought! [ted
Behold, my noble prince, how well we have acquit-
The claims our adversaries made on us.

Your veteran swordsman, Sir John Pelham, sends
This royal trophy to adorn your triumph.

P. Edw. Most wise and valiant of all Christian
kings,

Rever'd for virtues, and renown'd in arms!

That I behold you thus, dissolves my heart

With tender feeling; while I bend the knee

In humble praise of that good Providence,

Which gives so great a victory to England!

For you, great monarch! let your godlike soul

Strive with adversity, and still preserve,

As well you may, your royal mind unconquer'd.

Fortune is partial in her distributions:

Could merit always challenge its reward,

In other lights we might this hour have stood,

Perhaps the victor you, and I the captive:

But fear no wrong, the good should never fear it.

This land, from whence my ancestors have sprung,

By me shall not be injur'd: for yourself,

And this illustrious train of noble pris'ners,

My care shall be to treat you as I ought. [sin,

K. John. My gracious conqueror, and kindest cou-
This goodness more than victory renowns you!

That I'm unfortunate is no reproach,

I brav'd all dangers as became a king,

Till by my coward subjects left and lost. [riv'd,

P. Edw. Lead to my tent; when we are there ar-
Prepare a banquet with all princely pomp,

At which I'll wait, and serve my royal guests.

My noble lords, and brave companions all,

I leave your praise for the wide world to sound:

Nor can the voice of fame, however loud,

Out-speak the merit of your matchless deeds.

Oh! may Britannia's sons, through every age,

As they shall read of this so great achievement,

Feel the recorded victory inspire

An emulation of our martial fire,

When future wrongs their ardour shall exoite,

And future princes lead them forth to fight;

Till, by repeated conquests, they obtain

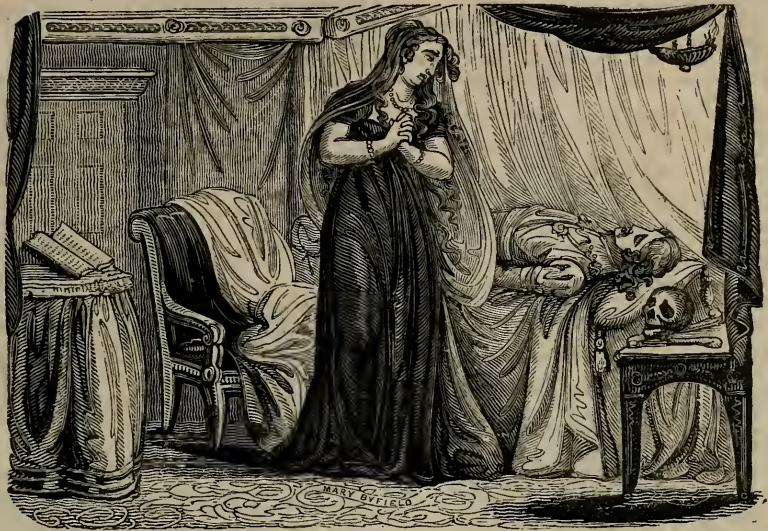
A power to awe the earth, and rule the main;

Each tyrant fetter gloriously unbind,

And give their liberty to all mankind. [*Exeunt.*]

THE FAIR PENITENT;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY NICHOLAS ROWE.



Act V. Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

SCIOLTO
ALTAMONT
HORATIO

LOTHARIO
ROSSANO
SERVANTS

CALISTA
LAVINIA
LUCILLA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Garden belonging to Sciolto's Palace.

Enter ALTAMONT and HORATIO.

Alt. Let this auspicious day be ever sacred;
No mourning, no misfortunes happen on it:
Let it be mark'd for triumphs and rejoicings;
Let happy lovers ever make it holy,
Choose it to bless their hopes, and crown their
wishes;

This happy day, that gives me my Calista.

Hor. Yes, Altamont; to-day thy better stars
Are join'd to shed their kindest influence on thee;
Sciolto's noble hand, that rais'd thee first,
Half dead and drooping o'er thy father's grave,
Completes its bounty, and restores thy name
To that high rank and lustre which it boasted,
Before ungrateful Genoa had forgot
The merit of thy god-like father's arms;
Before that country, which he long had serv'd
In watchful councils and in winter camps,
Had cast off his white age to want and wretched-
ness,
And made their court to factions by his ruin.

Alt. Oh, great Sciolto! Oh, my more than
father!

Let me not live, but at thy very name
My eager heart springs up, and leaps with joy.
When I forget the vast, vast debt I owe thee,—
(Forget!—but 'tis impossible) then let me
Forget the use and privilege of reason;
Be driven from the commerce of mankind,
To wander in the desert among brutes,
To be the scorn of earth, and curse of heaven!

Hor. So open, so unbounded was his goodness,

It reach'd even me, because I was thy friend.
When that great man I lov'd, thy noble father,
Bequeath'd thy gentle sister to my arms,
His last dear pledge and legacy of friendship,
That happy tie made me Sciolto's son;
He call'd us his, and, with a parent's fondness,
Indulg'd us in his wealth, bless'd us with plenty,
Heal'd all our cares, and sweeten'd love itself.

Alt. By heaven, he found my fortunes so aban-
don'd,

That nothing but a miracle could raise 'em:
My father's bounty, and the state's ingratitude,
Had stripp'd him bare, nor left him e'en a grave.
Undone myself, and sinking in his ruin,
I had no wealth to bring, nothing to succour him,
But fruitless tears.

Hor. Yet what thou couldst thou didst,
And didst it like a son; when his hard creditors,
Urg'd and assisted by Lothario's father,
(Foe to thy house, and rival of their greatness,)
By sentence of the cruel law forbade
His venerable corpse to rest in earth,
Thou gav'st thyself a ransom for his bones;
Heav'n, who beheld the pious act, approv'd it,
And bade Sciolto's bounty be its proxy,
To bless thy filial virtue with abundance.

Alt. But see, he comes, the author of my happi-
ness,

The man who sav'd my life from deadly sorrow,
Who bids my days be blest with peace and plenty,
And satisfies my soul with love and beauty.

Enter SCIOLTO; he runs to Altamont, and embraces
him.

Sci. Joy to thee, Altamont! Joy to myself!

Joy to this happy morn, that makes thee mine ;
That kindly grants what nature had denied me,
And makes me father of a son like thee.

Alt. My father! Oh, let me unlade my breast,
Pour out the fulness of my soul before you ;
Shew ev'ry tender, ev'ry grateful thought,
This wondrous goodness stirs. But 'tis impossible,
And utterance all is vile ; since I can only
Swear you reign here, but never tell how much.

Sci. O, noble youth! I swear, since first I knew
thee,

Ev'n from that day of sorrow when I saw thee
Adorn'd and lovely in thy filial tears,
The mourner and redeemer of thy father,
I set thee down and seal'd thee for my own :
Thou art my son, ev'n near me as Calista.
Horatio and Lavinia, too, are mine ; (*Embraces Hor.*)
All are my children, and shall share my heart.
But wherefore waste we thus this happy day ?
The laughing minutes summon thee to joy,
And with new pleasures court thee as they pass ;
Thy waiting bride e'en chides thee for delaying,
And swears thou com'st not with a bridegroom's
haste.

Alt. Oh! could I hope there was one thought of
Altamont,

One kind remembrance in Calista's breast,
The winds, with all their wings, would be too slow
To bear me to her feet. For, oh, my father!
Amidst the stream of joy that bears me on,
Blest as I am, and honour'd in your friendship,
There is one pain that hangs upon my heart.

Sci. What means my son?

Alt. When, at your intercession,
Last night, Calista yielded to my happiness,
Just ere we parted, as I seal'd my vows
With rapture on her lips, I found her cold
As a dead lover's statue on his tomb ;
A rising storm of passion shook her breast,
Her eyes a piteous show'r of tears let fall,
And then she sigh'd as if her heart were breaking.
With all the tend'rest eloquence of love
I begg'd to be a sharer in her grief ;
But she, with looks averse, and eyes that froze me,
Sadly reply'd, her sorrows were her own,
Nor in a father's power to dispose of.

Sci. Away! it is the coz'nage of their sex ;
One of the common arts they practise on us :
To sigh and weep then when their hearts beat high
With expectation of the coming joy.
Thou hast in camps and fighting fields been bred,
Unknowing in the subtleties of women ;
The virgin bride, who swoons with deadly fear,
To see the end of all her wishes near,
When, blushing, from the light and public eyes,
To the kind covert of the night she flies,
With equal fires to meet the bridegroom moves,
Melts in his arms, and with a loose she loves.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter LOTHARIO and ROSSANO.

Loth. The father, and the husband!

Ros. Let them pass.

They saw us not.

Loth. I care not if they did ;

Ere long I mean to meet 'em face to face,
And gall 'em with my triumph o'er Calista.

Ros. You lov'd her once.

Loth. I lik'd her, would have marry'd her,
But that it pleas'd her father to refuse me,
To make this honourable fool her husband ;
For which, if I forget him, may the shame
I mean to brand his name with, stick on mine.

Ros. She, gentle soul, was kinder than her father.

Loth. She was, and oft in private gave me hearing ;
Till, by long list'ning to the snoothing tale,
At length her easy heart was wholly mine.

Ros. I've heard you oft describe her haughty, in-
solent,

And fierce with high disdain : it moves my wonder,
That virtue thus defended, should be yielded
A prey to loose desires.

Loth. Hear, then, I'll tell thee :

Once, in a lone and secret hour of night,
When ev'ry eye was clos'd, and the pale moon
And stars alone shone conscious of the theft,
Hot with the Tuscan grape, and high in blood,
Haply I stole, unheeded, to her chamber.

Ros. That minute sure was lucky.

Loth. Oh, 'twas great!

I found the fond, believing, love-sick maid,
Loose, unattir'd, warm, tender, full of wishes ;
Fierceness and pride, the guardians of her honour
Were charm'd to rest, and love alone was waking.

Within her rising bosom all was calm,
As peaceful seas that know no storms, and only
Are gently lifted up and down by tides.

I snatch'd the glorious, golden opportunity,
And with prevailing, youthful ardour, press'd her ;
Till, with short sighs, and murmuring reluctance,
The yielding fair one gave me perfect happiness.

Ev'n all the live-long night we pass'd in bliss,
In ecstasies too fierce to last for ever ;
At length the morn, and cold indifference, came ;
When, fully sated with the luscious banquet,
I hastily took leave, and left the nymph
To think on what was past, and sigh alone.

Ros. You saw her soon again?

Loth. Too soon I saw her :

For, oh! that meeting was not like the former :
I found my heart no more beat high with transport,
No more I sigh'd and languish'd for enjoyment ;
'Twas past, and reason took her turn to reign,
While ev'ry weakness fell before her throne.

Ros. What of the lady?

Loth. With uneasy fondness

She hung upon me, wept, and sigh'd, and swore
She was undone ; talk'd of a priest and marriage ;
Of flying with me from her father's power ;
Call'd ev'ry saint and blessed angel down,
To witness for her that she was my wife.

I started at that name.

Ros. What answer made you?

Loth. None ; but, pretending sudden pain and
illness,

Escap'd the persecution. Two nights since,
By message urg'd, and frequent importunity.
Again I saw her. Straight, with tears and sighs,
With swelling breasts, with swooning and distraction,

With all the subtleties, and pow'ful arts
Of wilful woman lab'ring for her purpose,
Again she told the same dull, nauseous tale.
Unmov'd, I begg'd her spare th' ungrateful subject,
Since I resolv'd, that love and peace of mind
Might flourish long inviolate betwixt us,
Never to load it with the marriage chain :
That I would still retain her in my heart,
My ever, gentle mistress, and my friend ;
But for those other names, of wife and husband,
They only meant ill nature, cares, and quarrels.

Ros. How bore she this reply?

Loth. At first her rage was dumb, and wanted
words ;

But, when the storm found way, 'twas wild and
loud :

Mad as the priestess of the Delphic god,
Enthusiastic passion swell'd her breast,
Enlarg'd her voice, and ruffled all her form.
Proud, and disdainful of the love I proffer'd,
She call'd me villain! monster! base betrayer!

At last, in very bitterness of soul,
With deadly imprecations on herself,
She vow'd severely ne'er to see me more ;
Then bade me fly that minute : I obey'd,
And, bowing, left her to grow cool at leisure.

Ros. She has relented since, else why this mes-
sage,

To meet the keeper of her secrets here,
This morning?

Loth. See the person whom you nam'd.

Enter LUCILLA.

Well, my ambassadress, what must we treat of?
Come you to menace war and proud defiance,
Or does the peaceful olive grace your message?
Is your fair mistress calmer? Does she soften?
And must we love again? Perhaps she means
To treat in juncture with her new ally,
And make her husband party to th' agreement.

Luc. Is this well done, my lord? Have you put
off

All sense of human nature? Keep a little,
A little pity, to distinguish manhood,
Lest other men, though cruel, should disclaim you,
And judge you to be number'd with the brutes.

Loth. I see thou'st learnt to rail.

Luc. I've learn'd to weep:

That lesson my sad mistress often gives me:
By day she seeks some melancholy shade,
To hide her sorrows from the prying world;
At night she watches all the long, long hours,
And listens to the winds and beating rain,
With sighs as loud, and tears that fall as fast;
Then ever and anon she wrings her hands,
And cries, false, false Lothario!

Loth. Oh, no more!

I swear thou'lt spoil thy pretty face with crying,
And thou hast beauty that may make thy fortune:
Some keeping cardinal shall dote upon thee,
And barter his church treasure for thy freshness.

Luc. What! shall I sell my innocence and youth,
For wealth or titles, to perfidions man?
To man, who makes his mirth of our undoing!
The base, profess'd betrayer of our sex!
Let me grow old in all misfortunes else,
Rather than know the sorrows of Calista!

Loth. Does she send thee to chide in her be-
half?

I swear thou dost it with so good a grace,
That I could almost love thee for thy frowning.

Luc. Read there, my lord, there in her own sad
lines, *(Giving a letter.)*

Which best can tell the story of her woes,
That grief of heart which your unkindness gives
her.

Loth. *(Reads.)* "Your cruelty—Obedience to my
father—give my hand to Altamont."

By heav'n, 'tis well! such ever be the gifts
(Aside.)

With which I greet the man whom my soul hates.
But to go on—"wish—heart—honour—too faithless
—weakness—to-morrow—last trouble—lost Calista."

Women, I see, can change, as well as men.
She writes me here, forsaken as I am,
That I should bind my brows with mournful willow,
For she has given her hand to Altamont:
Yet tell the fair inconstant—

Luc. How, my lord!

Loth. Nay, no more angry words: say to Calista,
The humblest of her slaves shall wait her plea-
sure;

If she can leave her happy husband's arms,
To think upon so lost a thing as I am.

Luc. Alas! for pity, come with gentler looks:
Would not her heart with this unmanly triumph;
And though you love her not, yet swear you do;
So shall dissembling once be virtuous in you.

Loth. Ha! who comes here?

Luc. The bridegroom's friend, Horatio.

He must not see us here. To-morrow, early,
Be at the garden gate.

Loth. Bear to my love

My kindest thoughts, and swear I will not fail her.

*(Lothario putting up the letter hastily, drops
it as he goes out. Exit Lothario and
Rossano one way, Lucilla another.)*

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Sure 'tis the very error of my eyes;
Waking, I dream, or I beheld Lothario;
He seem'd conferring with Calista's woman:
At my approach they started and retir'd.
What business could he have here, and with her?
I know he bears the noble Altamont
Profess'd and deadly hate. What paper's this?

(Taking up the letter.)
Ha! To Lothario! 'Sdeath! Calista's name!
(Opens it and reads.)

"Your cruelty has at length determined me; and
I have resolved this morning to yield a perfect obe-
dience to my father, and to give my hand to Altamont,
in spite of my weakness for the false Lothario. I could
almost wish I had that heart and that honour to be-
stow with it, which you have robbed me of."—D—n!
to the rest—"But, oh! I fear, could I relieve 'em, I
should again be undone by the too faithless, yet too
lovely Lothario. This is the last weakness of my pen,
and to-morrow shall be the last in which I will indulge
my eyes. Lucilla shall conduct you, if you are kind
enough to let me see you; it shall be the last trouble
you shall meet with from the lost CALISTA."

The lost, indeed! for thou art gone as far
As there can be perdition. Fire and sulphur!
Hell is the sole avenger of such crimes.
Oh, that the ruin were but all thy own!
Thou wilt even make thy father curse his age:
At sight of this black scroll, the gentle Altamont
(For, oh! I know his heart is set upon thee)
Shall droop and hang his discontented head,
Like merit scorn'd by insolent authority,
And never grace the public with his virtues.
What if I give this paper to her father?
It follows that his justice dooms her dead,
And breaks his heart with sorrow; hard return
For all the good his hand has heap'd on us!
Hold, let me take a moment's thought.

Enter LAVINIA.

Lav. My lord!

Trust me, it joys my heart that I have found you.
Inquiring wherefore you had left the company,
Before my brother's nuptial rites were ended,
They told me you had felt some sudden illness.

Hor. It were unjust. No, let me spare my friend,
Lock up the fatal secret in my breast,
Nor tell him that which will undo his quiet.

Lav. What means my lord?

Hor. Ha! said'st thou, my Lavinia?

Lav. Alas! you know not what you make me
suffer.

Whence is that sigh? And wherefore are your
eyes

Severely rais'd to heav'n! The sick man thus,
Acknowledging the summons of his fate,
Lifts up his feeble hands and eyes for mercy,
And with confusion thinks upon his audit.

Hor. Oh, no! thou hast mistook my sickness
quite;

These pangs are of the soul. Would I had met
Sharpest convulsions, spotted pestilence,
Or any other deadly foe to life,
Rather than heave beneath this load of thought!

Lav. Alas! what is it? Wherefore turn you from
me!

Why did you falsely call me your Lavinia,
And swear I was Horatio's better half,
Since now you mourn unkindly by yourself,
And rob me of my partnership of sadness?

Hor. Seek not to know what I would hide from
all,

But most from thee. I never knew a pleasure,
Aught that was joyful, fortunate, or good,
But straight I ran to bless thee with the tidings,
And laid up all my happiness with thee:
But wherefore, wherefore should I give thee pain?
Then spare me, I conjure thee; ask no further;

Allow my melancholy thoughts this privilege,
And let 'em brood in secret o'er their sorrows.

Lav. It is enough; chide not, and all is well!
Forgive me if I saw you sad, Horatio,
And ask'd to weep out part of your misfortunes:
I wo'not press to know what you forbid me.
Yet, my lov'd lord, yet you must grant me this,
Forget your cares for this one happy day,
Devote this day to mirth, and to your Altamont;
For his dear sake, let peace be in your looks.
Ev'n now the jocund bridegroom waits your wishes,
He thinks the priest has but half bless'd his marriage,

Till his friend hails him with the sound of joy.

Hor. Oh, never, never, never! Thou art innocent:

Simplicity from ill, pure native truth,
And candour of the mind, adorn thee ever;
But there are such, such false ones, in the world,
'Twould fill thy gentle soul with wild amazement
To hear their story told.

Lav. False ones, my lord?

Hor. Fatally fair they are, and in their smiles
The graces, little loves, and young desires inhabit;
But all that gaze upon 'em are undone;
For they are false, luxurious in their appetites,
And all the heaven they hope for is variety:
One lover to another still succeeds,
Another, and another after that,
And the last fool is welcome as the former;
Till having lov'd his hour out, he gives place,
And mingles with the herd that went before him.

Lav. Can there be such, and have they peace of mind?

Have they, in all the series of their changing,
One happy hour? If women are such things,
How was I form'd so diff'rent from my sex?
My little heart is satisfy'd with you;
You take up all her room, as in a cottage
Which harbours some beighted princely stranger,
Where the good man, prond of his hospitality,
Yields all his homely dwelling to his guest,
And hardly keeps a corner for himself.

Hor. Oh, were they all like thee, men would adore 'em,

And all the business of their lives be loving;
The nuptial band should be the pledge of peace,
And all domestic cares and quarrels cease!
The world should learn to love by virtuous rules,
And marriage be no more the jest of fools.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Hall.

Enter CALISTA and LUCILLA.

Cal. Be dumb for ever, silent as the grave,
Nor let thy fond, officious love disturb
My solemn sadness with the sound of joy.
If thou wilt sooth me, tell some dismal tale
Of pining discontent, and black despair;
For, oh! I've gone around through all my thoughts,
But all are indignation, love, or shame,
And my dear peace of mind is lost for ever.

Luc. Why do you follow still that wand'ring fire,
That has misled your weary steps, and leaves you
Beighted in a wilderness of woe,
That false Lothario? Turn from the deceiver;
Turn, and behold where gentle Altamont,
Sighs at your feet, and woos you to be happy.

Cal. Away! I think not of him. My sad soul
Has form'd a dismal, melancholy scene,
Such a retreat as I would wish to find;
An unfrequented vale, o'ergrown with trees
Mossy and old, within whose lonesome shade
Ravens and birds ill-omen'd only dwell:
No sound to break the silence, but a brook
That bubbling winds among the weeds: no mark
Of any human shape that had been there,

Unless a skeleton of some poor wretch,
Who had long since, like me, by love undone,
Sought that sad place out to despair and die in.

Luc. Alas, for pity!

Cal. There I fain would hide me
From the base world, from malice, and from shame;
For 'tis the solemn counsel of my soul
Never to live with public loss of honour:
'Tis fix'd to die, rather than bear the insolence
Of each affected she that tells my story,
And blesses her good stars that she is virtuous.
To be a tale for fools! Scorn'd by the women,
And pity'd by the men! Oh, insupportable!

Luc. Oh, hear me, hear your ever faithful creature!

By all the good I wish you, by all the ill
My trembling heart forebodes, let me entreat you
Never to see this faithless man again;—
Let me forbid his coming.

Cal. On thy life,
I charge thee no: my genias drives me on;
I must, I will behold him once again:
Perhaps it is the crisis of my fate,
And this one interview shall end my cares.
My lab'ring heart, that swells with indignation,
Heaves to discharge the burden; that once done,
The busy thing shall rest within its cell,
And never beat again.

Luc. Trust not to that:
Rage is the shortest passion of our souls:
Like narrow brooks that rise with sudden show'rs,
It swells in haste, and falls again as soon;
Still as it ebbs the softer thoughts flow in,
And the deceiver, love, supplies its place.

Cal. I have been wrong'd enough to arm my temper

Against the smooth delusion; but, alas!
(Chide not my weakness, gentle maid, but pity me.)

A woman's softness hangs about me still;
Then let me blush, and tell thee all my folly.
I swear I could not see the dear betrayer
Kneel at my feet and sigh to be forgiv'n,
But my relenting heart would pardon all,
And quite forget 'twas he that had undone me.

[*Exit Lucilla.*]

Ha! Altamont! Calista, now be wary,
And guard thy soul's excesses with dissembling:
Nor let this hostile husband's eyes explore
The warring passions and tumultuous thoughts
That rage within thee, and deform thy reason.

Enter ALTAMONT.

Alt. Be gone my cares, I give you to the winds,
Far to be borne, far from the happy Altamont;
Calista is the mistress of the year;
She crowns the seasons with auspicious beauty,
And bids ev'n all my hours be good and joyful.

Cal. If I were ever mistress of such happiness,
Oh! wherefore did I play th' unthrifty fool,
And, wasting all on others, leave myself
Without one thought of joy to give me comfort?

Alt. Oh, mighty love! Shall that fair face profane

This thy great festival with frowns and sadness?
I swear it sha'not be, for I will woo thee
With sighs so moving, with so warm a transport,
That thou shalt catch the gentle flame from me,
And kindle into joy.

Cal. I tell thee, Altamont,
Such hearts as ours were never pair'd above:
Ill-suited to each other,—join'd, not match'd;
Some sullen influence, a foe to both,
Has wrought this fatal marriage to undo us.
Mark but the frame and temper of our minds,
How very much we differ. Ev'n this day,
That fills thee with such ecstasy and transport,
To me brings nothing that should make me bless it,
Or think it better than the day before,

Or any other in the course of time,
That duly took its turn, and was forgotten.

Alt. If to behold thee as my pledge of happiness,
To know none fair, none excellent, but thee;
If still to love thee with unwearied constancy,
Through wrinkled age, through sickness and mis-
fortune,

Through ev'ry season, ev'ry change of life,
Be worth the least return of grateful love,
Oh, then let my Calista bless this day,
And set it down for happy.

Cal. 'Tis the day
In which my father gave my hand to Altamont;
As such, I will remember it for ever.

Enter SCIOLTO, HORATIO, and LAVINIA.

Sci. Let mirth go on, let pleasure know no
pause,

But fill up ev'ry minute of this day.
'Tis yours, my children, sacred to your loves;
The glorious sun himself for you looks gay;
He shines for Altamont and for Calista.
Let there be music, let the master touch
The sprightly string and softly-breathing flute,
Till harmony rouse ev'ry gentle passion,
Teach the cold maid to lose her fears in love,
And the fierce youth to languish at her feet.
Begin: ev'n age itself is cheer'd with music;
It wakes a glad remembrance of our youth,
Calls back past joys, and warms us into transport.

(Music.)

Take care my gates be open, bid all welcome;
All who rejoice with me to-day are friends:
Let each indulge his genius, each be glad,
Jocund, and free, and swell the feast with mirth;
The sprightly bowl shall cheerfully go round,
None shall be grave, nor too severely wise;
Losses and disappointments, cares and poverty,
The rich man's insolence, and great man's scorn,
In wine shall be forgotten all. To-morrow
Will be too soon to think and to be wretched.
Oh grant, ye pow'rs, that I may see these happy.

(Pointing to Altamont and Calista.)

Completely blest, and I have life enough!
And leave the rest indifferently to fate. [*Exeunt.*
Hor. What if, while all are here intent on re-
velling,

I privately went forth, and sought Lothario?
This letter may be forg'd, perhaps the wantonness
Of his vain youth, to stain a lady's fame;
Perhaps his malice to disturb my friend.—
Oh, no! my heart forebodes it must be true.

Methought, ev'n now, I mark'd the starts of guilt
That shook her soul; though damn'd dissimulation
Screen'd her dark thoughts, and set to public view
A specious face of innocence and beauty.

With such smooth looks and many a gentle word,
The first fair she beguild here easy lord;
Too blind with love and beauty, to beware,
He fell unthinking in the fatal snare;
Nor could believe that such a heavenly face
Had bargain'd with the devil, to damn her wretched
race. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Garden of Sciolto's Palace.*

Enter LOTHARIO and ROSSANO.

Loth. To tell thee then the purport of my
thoughts;

The loss of this foud paper would not give me
A moment of disquiet, were it not
My instrument of vengeance on this Altamont;
Therefore I mean to wait some opportunity
Of speaking with the maid we saw this morning.

Ros. I wish you, sir, to think upon the danger
Of being seen; to-day their friends are round 'em;
And any eye that lights by chance on you,
Shall put your life and safety to the hazard. [*Exeunt.*

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Still I must doubt some mystery of mischief,

Some artifice beneath. Lothario's father!
I knew him well; he was sagacious, cunning,
Fluent in words, and bold in peaceful counsels,
But of a cold, unactive hand in war;
Yet, with these coward's virtues, he undid
My unsuspecting, valiant, honest friend.
This son, if fame mistakes not, is more hot,
More open and unartful—

Re-enter LOTHARIO and ROSSANO.

Ha! he's here! *(Seeing him.)*

Loth. Damnation! He again! This second time
To-day, he has cross'd me like my evil genius.

Hor. I sought you, sir.

Loth. 'Tis well then I am found.

Hor. 'Tis well you are. The man who wrongs
my friend

To the earth's utmost verge I would pursue;
No place, though e'er so holy, should protect him;
No shape that artful fear e'er form'd, should hide
him,

Till he fair answer made, and did me justice.

Loth. Ha! dost thou know me? that I am Lo-
thario?

As great a name as this proud city boasts of.
Who is this mighty man, then, this Horatio,
That I should basely hide me from his anger,
Lest he should chide me for his friend's displeasure?

Hor. The brave, 'tis true, do never shun the
light;

Just are their thoughts, and open are their tempers,
Still are they found in the fair face of day,
And heav'n and men are judges of their actions.

Loth. Such let 'em be of mine; there's not a
purpose

Which my soul e'er fram'd, or my hand acted,
But I could well have bid the world look on,
And what I once durst do, have dar'd to justify.

Hor. Where was this open boldness, this free
spirit,

When but this very morning I surpris'd thee,
In base, dishonest privacy, consulting
And bribing a poor mercenary wretch,
To sell her lady's secrets, stain her honour,
And, with a forg'd contrivance, blast her virtue?—
At sight of me thou fled'st.

Loth. Ha! fled from thee?

Hor. Thou fled'st, and guilt was on thee like a
thief,

A pilferer descry'd in some dark corner,
Who there had lodg'd, with mischievous intent,
To rob and ravage at the hoar of rest,
And do a midnight murder on the sleepers.

Loth. Slave! villain!

(Offers to draw; Rossano holds him.)

Ros. Hold, my lord! think where you are,
Think how unsafe and hurtful to your honour,
It were to urge a quarrel in this place,
And shock the peaceful city with a broil.

Loth. Then, since thou dost provoke my ven-
geance, know

I would not, for this city's wealth, for all
Which the sea wafts to our Ligurian shore,
But that the joys I reap'd with that fond wanton,
The wife of Altamont, should be as public
As is the noon-day sun, air, earth, or water,
Or any common benefit of nature.
Think'st thou I meant the shame should be con-
ceal'd?

Oh, no! by hell and vengeance, all I wanted
Was some fit messenger to bear the news
To the dull doating husband: now I have found
him,

And thou art he.

Hor. I hold thee base enough
To break through law, and spurn at sacred order,
And do a brutal injury like this.

Yet mark me well, young lord; I think Calista
Too nice, too noble, and too great of soul,

To be the prey of such a thing as thou art.

'Twas base and poor, unworthy of a man,
To forge a scroll so villainous and loose,
And mark it with a noble lady's name:
These are the mean dishonest arts of cowards,
Who, bred at home in idleness and riot,
Ransack for mistresses th' unwholesome stews,
And never know the worth of virtuous love.

Loth. Think'st thou I forg'd the letter? Think so still,

Till the broad shame come staring in thy face,
And boys shall hoot the cuckold as he passes.

Hor. Away! no woman could descend so low:
A skipping, dancing, worthless tribe you are;
Fit only for yourselves, you herd together;
And when the circling glass warms your vain hearts,
You talk of beauties that you never saw,
And fancy raptures that you never knew.

Loth. But that I do not hold it worth my leisure,
I could produce such damning proof—

Hor. 'Tis false!
You blast the fair with lies, because they scorn you,
Hate you like age, like ugliness and impotence:
Rather than make you blest, they would die virgins,
And stop the propagation of mankind.

Loth. It is the curse of fools to be secure,
And that be thine and Altamont's. Dream on;
Nor think upon my vengeance till thou feel'st it.

(*Going.*)

Hor. Hold, sir; another word, and then farewell.

Though I think greatly of Calista's virtue,
And hold it far beyond thy power to hurt;
Yet, as she shares the honour of my Altamont,
That treasure of a soldier, bought with blood,
And kept at life's expense, I must not have
(Mark me, young sir) her very name profan'd.
Learn to restrain the licence of your speech;
'Tis held you are too lavish. When you are met
Among your set of fools, talk of your dress,
Of dice, of whores, of horses, and yourselves;
'Tis safer, and becomes your understandings.

Loth. What if we pass beyond this solemn order,
And, in defiance of the stern Horatio,
Indulge our gayer thoughts, let laughter loose,
And use his sacred friendship for our mirth?

Hor. 'Tis well, sir, you are pleasant—

Loth. By the joys
Which my soul yet has uncontrol'd pursu'd,
I would not turn aside from my least pleasure,
Though all thy force were arm'd to bar my way;
But like the birds, great nature's happy commoners,
That haunt in woods, in meads, and flow'ry gardens,
Rifle the sweets, and taste the choicest fruits,
Yet scorn to ask the lordly owner's leave.

Hor. What liberty has vain presumptuous youth,
That thou shouldst dare provoke me unchastis'd?
But henceforth, boy, I warn thee, shun my walks.
If, in the bounds of this forbidden place
Again thou'rt found, expect a punishment,
Such as great souls, impatient of an injury,
Exact from those who wrong 'em much, ev'n death;
Or something worse: an injur'd husband's vengeance

Shall print a thousand wounds, tear thy fine form,
And scatter thee to all the winds of heav'n.

Loth. Is then my way in Genoa prescrib'd
By a dependant on the wretched Altamont,
A talking sir, that brawls for him in taverns,
And vouches for his valour's reputation?

Hor. Away! thy speech is fouler than thy manners.

Loth. Or, if there be a name more vile, his parasite;

A beggar's parasite!

Hor. Now learn humanity,
(*Offers to strike him: Rossano interposes.*)
Since brutes and boys are only taught with blows.

Loth. Damnation! (*They draw.*)

Ros. Hold, this goes no further here.

Loth. Oh, Rossano!

Or give me way, or thou'rt no more my friend.

Ros. Sciolto's servants, sir, have ta'en th' alarm;
You'll be oppress'd by numbers. Be advis'd,
Or I must force you hence.

Loth. This wo't brook delay;
West of the town a mile, among the rocks,
Two hours ere noon, to-morrow, I expect thee,
Thy single hand to mine.

Hor. I'll meet thee there.

Loth. To-morrow, oh, my better stars! to-morrow

Exert your influence; shine strongly for me;
'Tis not a common conquest I would gain,
Since love as well as arms must grace my triumph.

[*Exeunt Lothario and Rossano.*]

Hor. Two hours ere noon to-morrow! ha! ere that

He sees Calista! Oh, unthinking fool!
What if I urg'd her with the crime and danger?
If any spark from heav'n remain unquench'd
Within her breast, my breath perhaps may wake it.
Could I but prosper there, I should not doubt
My combat with that loud, vain-glorious boaster.
Were you, ye fair, but cautious whom ye trust,
Did you but think how seldom fools are just,
So many of your sex would not in vain
Of broken vows, and faithless men complain:
Of all the various wretches love has made,
How few have been by men of sense betray'd!
Convinc'd by reason, they your pow'r confess,
Pleas'd to be happy, as you're pleas'd to bless,
And, conscious of your worth, can never love
you less. [*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Sciolto's Palace.*

Enter SCIOLTO and CALISTA.

Sci. Now, by my life, my honour, 'tis too much!
Have I not mark'd thee, wayward as thou art,
Perverse and sullen all this day of joy?
When every heart was cheer'd, and mirth went
round,
Sorrow, displeasure, and repining anguish
Sat on thy brow.

Cal. Is, then, the task of duty half perform'd?
Has not your daughter given herself to Altamont,
Yielded the native freedom of her will
To an imperious husband's lordly rule,
To gratify a father's stern command?

Sci. Dost thou complain?

Cal. For pity, do not wrong, then,
If, in despite of all my vow'd obedience,
A sigh breaks out, or a tear falls by chance:
For, oh! that sorrow which has drawn your anger,
Is the sad native of Calista's breast.

Sci. Now by the sacred dust of that dear saint
That was thy mother; by her wondrous goodness,
Her soft, her tender, most complying sweetness,
I swear, some sullen thought that shuns the light,
Lurks underneath that sadness in thy visage.
But mark me well; though, by yon heaven! I love
thee

As much, I think, as a fond parent can;
Yet shouldst thou (which the pow'rs above forbid!)
E'er stain the honour of thy name with infamy,
I'll cast thee off, as one whose impious hands
Had rent asunder nature's nearest ties,
Which, once divided, never join again.
To-day I've made a noble youth thy husband;
Consider well his worth; reward his love;
Be willing to be happy, and thou art so. [*Exit.*]

Cal. How hard is the condition of our sex,
Through ev'ry state of life the slaves of man!
In all the dear delightful days of youth
A rigid father dictates to our wills,
And deals out pleasure with a scanty hand.

To his, the tyrant husband's reign succeeds ;
Proud with opinion of superior reason,
He holds domestic bus'ness and devotion
All we are capable to know ; and shuts us,
Like cloister'd idiots, from the world's acquaint-
ance,

And all the joys of freedom. Wherefore are we
Born with high souls, but to assert ourselves,
Shake off this vile obedience they exact,
And claim an equal empire o'er the world ?

(*She sits down.*)

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. She's here ! yet, oh ! my tongue is at a loss.
Teach me, some pow'r, that happy art of speech,
To dress my purpose up in gracious words ;
Such as may softly steal upon her soul,
And never waken the tempestuous passions.
By heav'n, she weeps ! Forgive me, fair Calista,

(*She starts up.*)

If I presume on privilege of friendship,
To join my grief to your's, and mourn the evils
That hurt your peace, and quench those eyes in
tears.

Cal. To steal nlook'd for on my private sorrow,
Speaks not the man of honour, nor the friend,
But rather means the spy.

Hor. Unkindly said !

For, oh ! as sure as you accuse me falsely,
I come to prove myself Calista's friend.

Cal. You are my husband's friend, the friend of
Altamont !

Hor. Are you not one ? Are you not join'd by
heav'n ?

Each interwoven with the other's fate ?
Then who can give his friendship but to one ?
Who can be Altamont's and not Calista's ?

Cal. Force, and the wills of our imperious rulers,
May bind two bodies in one wretched chain ;
But minds will still look back to their own choice.

Hor. When souls that should agree to will the
same,

To have one common object for their wishes,
Look different ways, regardless of each other,
Think what a train of wretchedness ensues :
Love shall be banish'd from the genial bed,
The night shall all be lonely and unquiet,
And every day shall be a day of cares.

Cal. Then all the boasted office of thy friendship,
Was but to tell Calista what a wretch she is.
Alas ! what needeth that ?

Hor. Oh ! rather say,

I came to tell her how she might be happy ;
To sooth the secret anguish of her soul ;
To comfort that fair mourner, that forlorn one,
And teach her steps to know the paths of peace.

Cal. Say, thou, to whom this paradise is known,
Where lies the blissful region ? Mark my way to it ;
For, oh ! 'tis sure, I long to be at rest.

Hor. Then—to be good is to be happy. Angels
Are happier than mankind, because they're better.
Guilt is the source of sorrow ; 'tis the fiend,
Th' avenging fiend, that follows us behind .

With whips and stings. The blest know none of this,
But rest in everlasting peace of mind,
And find the height of all their heav'n is goodness.

Cal. And what bold parasite's officious tongue
Shall dare to tax Calista's name with guilt ?

Hor. None should ; but 'tis a busy, talking world,
That with licentious breath blows like the wind,
As freely on the palace as the cottage.

Cal. What mystic riddle lurks beneath thy words,
Which thou wouldst seem unwilling to express,
As if it meant dishonour to my virtue ?

Away with this ambiguous shuffling phrase,
And let thy oracle be understood.

Hor. Lothario !

Cal. Ha ! what wouldst thou mean by him ?

Hor. Lothario and Calista ! Thus they join

Two names, which heaven decreed should never
meet.

Hence have the talkers of this poplous city
A shameful tale to tell, for public sport,
Of an unhappy beauty, a false fair one,
Who plighted to a noble youth her faith,
When she had giv'n her honour to a wretch.

Cal. Death and confusion ! Have I liv'd to this ?
Thus to be treated with unmanly insolence !
To be the sport of a loose ruffian's tongue !
Thus to be us'd ! thus ! like the vilest creature,
That ever was a slave to vice and infamy !

Hor. By honour and fair truth, you wrong me
much ;

For, on my soul, nothing but strong necessity
Could urge my tongue to this ungrateful office.
I came with strong reluctance, as if death
Had stood across my way, to save your honour,
Your's and Sciolto's ; your's and Altamont's ;
Like one who ventures through a burning pile,
To save his tender wife, with all her brood
Of little fondlings, from the dreadful ruin.

Cal. Is this the famous friend of Altamont,
For noble worth, and deeds of arms renown'd ?
Is this,—this the tale-bearing officious fellow,
That watches for intelligence from eyes ;
This wretched Argus of a jealous husband,
That fills his easy ears with monstrous tales,
And makes him toss, and rave, and wreak at length
Bloody revenge on his defenceless wife,
Who guiltless dies, because her fool ran mad ?

Hor. Alas ! this rage is vain ; for if your fame
Or peace be worth your care, you must be calm,
And listen to the means are left to save 'em.
'Tis now the lucky minute of your fate.

By me your genius speaks, by me it warns you,
Never to see that curs'd Lothario more ;
Unless you mean to be despis'd, be shunn'd
By all our virtuous maids and noble matrons ;
Unless you have devoted this rare beauty
To infamy, diseases, prostitution—

Cal. Dishonour blast thee, base, unmanner'd
slave !

That dar'st forget my birth, and sacred sex,
And shock me with the rude, unhallow'd sound !

Hor. Here kneel, and in the awful face of heav'n,
Breathe out a solemn vow, never to see,
Nor think, if possible, on him that ruin'd thee ;
Or, by my Altamont's dear life, I swear,
This paper,—nay, you must not fly,—this paper,

(*Holding her.*)

This guilty paper shall divulge your shame.

Cal. What mean'st thou by that paper ? What
contrivance

Hast thou been forging to deceive my father ;
To turn his heart against his wretched daughter ;
That Altamont and thou may share his wealth ?
A wrong like this will make me ev'n forget
The weakness of my sex. Oh ! for a sword,
To urge my vengeance on the villain's head
That forg'd the scroll !

Hor. Behold ! Can this be forg'd ?
See where Calista's name—

Cal. To atoms thus, (*Shewing the letter near.*)
(*Snatches and tears it.*)
Thus let me tear the vile, detested falsehood,
The wicked, lying vidence of shame.

Hor. Confusion !

Cal. Henceforth, thou officious fool,
Meddle no more, nor dare, ev'n on thy life,
To breathe an accent that may touch my virtue.
I am myself the guardian of my honour,
And will not bear so insolent a monitor.

Enter ALTAMONT.

Alt. Where is my life, my love, my charming
bride,
Joy of my heart, and pleasure of my eyes ?—
Disorder'd ! and in tears ! Horatio too

My friend is in amaze. What can it mean?
Tell me, Calista, who has done thee wrong,
That my swift sword may find out the offender,
And do thee ample justice.

Cal. Turn to him.

Alt. Horatio!

Cal. To that insolent.

Alt. My friend!

Could he do this? Have I not found him just,
Honest as truth itself? and could he break
The sanctity of friendship? Could he wound
The heart of Altamont in his Calista?

Cal. I thought what justice I should find from thee!

Go fawn upon him, listen to his tale;
Applaud his malice that would blast my fame,
And treat me like a common prostitute.
Thou art, perhaps, confederate in his mischief,
And wilt believe the legend, if he tells it.

Alt. Oh, impious! what presumptuous wretch shall dare

To offer at an injury like that?
Priesthood, nor age, nor cowardice itself,
Shall save him from the fury of my vengeance.

Cal. The man who dar'd to do it was Horatio;
Thy darling friend; 'twas Altamont's Horatio.
But mark me well: while thy divided heart,
Dotes on a villain that has wrong'd me thus,
No force shall drag me to thy hated bed.
Nor can my cruel father's pow'r do more
Than shut me in a cloister: there, well pleas'd,
Religious hardships will I learn to bear;
To fast and freeze at midnight hours of pray'r:
Nor think it hard, within a lonely cell,
With melancholy, speechless saints to dwell;
But bless the day I to that refuge ran,
Free from the marriage-chain, and from that tyrant,
man.

Alt. She's gone; and, as she went, ten thousand fires

Shot from her angry eyes; as if she meant
Too well to keep the cruel vow she made.
Now, as thou art a man, Horatio, tell me,
What means this wild confusion in thy looks;
As if thou wert at variance with thyself,
Madness and reason combating with thee,
And thou wert doubtful which should get the better?

Hor. I would be dumb for ever; but thy fate
Has otherwise decreed it. Thou hast seen
That idol of thy soul, that fair Calista;
Thou has beheld her tears.

Alt. I have seen her weep;
I have seen that lovely one, that dear Calista,
Complaining, in the bitterness of sorrow,
That thou, my friend Horatio, thou hast wrong'd
her.

Hor. That I have wrong'd her! Had her eyes
From that rich stream which warms her heart, and
number'd

For every falling tear a drop of blood,
It had not been too much; for she has ruin'd thee,
Ev'n thee, my Altamont. She has undone thee.

Alt. Dost thou join ruin with Calista's name?
What is so fair, so exquisitely good?
Is she not more than painting can express,
Or youthful poets fancy when they love?

Does she not come, like wisdom, or good fortune,
Replete with blessings, giving wealth and honour?
Hor. It had been better thou hadst liv'd a beggar,
And fed on scraps at great men's surly doors,
Than to have match'd with one so false, so fatal.

Alt. It is too much for friendship to allow thee.
Because I tamely bore the wrong thou didst her,
Thou dost avow the barb'rous, brutal part,
And urge the injury ev'n to my face.

Hor. I see she got possession of thy heart,
She has charm'd thee, like a siren, to her bed,
With looks of love, and with enchanting sounds:
Too late the rocks and quicksands will appear,

When thou art wreck'd upon the faithless shore,
Then vainly wish thou hadst not left thy friend,
To follow her delusion.

Alt. If thy friendship

Does churlishly deny my love a room,
It is not worth my keeping; I disclaim it.

Hor. Canst thou so soon forget what I've been
to thee?

I shar'd the task of nature with thy father,
And form'd with care thy unexperienc'd youth
To virtue and to arms.

Thy noble father, oh, thou light young man!
Would he have us'd me thus? One fortune fed us;
For his was ever mine, mine his, and both
Together flourish'd, and together fell.
He call'd me friend, like thee: would he have left
me

Thus for a woman, and a vile one, too?

Alt. Thou canst not, dar'st not mean it! Speak
again;

Say, who is vile; but dare not name Calista.

Hor. I had not spoke at first, unless compell'd,
And forc'd to clear myself; but since thus urg'd,
I must avow, I do not know a viler.

Alt. Thou wert my father's friend; he lov'd thee
well;

A kind of venerable mark of him
Hangs round thee, and protects thee from my ven-
geance.

I cannot, dare not lift my sword against thee,
But henceforth never let me see thee more.

(*Going out.*)

Hor. I love thee still, ungrateful as thou art,
And must and will preserve thee from dishonour,
Ev'n in despite of thee.

(*Holds him.*)

Alt. Let go my arm.

Hor. If honour be thy care, if thou wouldst live
Without the name of credulous, wittol husband,
Avoid thy bride, shun her detested bed,
The joys it yields are dash'd with poison.

Alt. Off!

To urge me but a minute more is fatal.

Hor. She is polluted, stain'd—

Alt. Madness and raging!

But, hence—

Hor. Dishonour'd by the man you hate.

Alt. I pr'ythee, loose me yet, for thy own sake,
If life be worth thy keeping.

Hor. By Lothario.

Alt. Perdition take thee, villain, for the false-
hood!

(*Strikes him.*)

Now, nothing but thy life can make atonement.

Hor. A blow! thou hast us'd me well. (*Draws.*)

Alt. This to thy heart!

Hor. Yet, hold! By heav'n, his father's in his
face!

Spite of my wrongs, my heart ruins o'er with ten-
derness,

And I could rather die myself than hurt him.

Alt. Defend thyself; for by my much-wrong'd
love,

I swear, the poor evasion shall not save thee.

Hor. Yet, hold! thou know'st I dare.

(*They fight.*)

Enter LAVINIA, who runs between their swords.

Lav. My brother! my Horatio! Is it possible?
Oh! turn your cruel swords upon Lavinia.

If you must quench your impious rage in blood,
Behold my heart shall give you all her store,
To save those dearer streams that flow from your's.

Alt. 'Tis well thou hast found a safeguard; none
but this,

No pow'r on earth, could save thee from my fury.
Hor. Safety from thee!

Away, vain boy! Hast thou forgot the rev'rence
Due to my arm; thy first, thy great example;
Which pointed out thy way to noble daring,
And shew'd thee what it was to be a man!

Lav. What busy, meddling fiend, what foe to goodness,
Could kindle such a discord?

Hor. Ask'st thou what made us foes? 'Twas base ingratitude,
'Twas such a sin to friendship, as heaven's mercy,
That strives with man's untoward, monstrous wickedness,

Unwearied with forgiving, scarce could pardon.
He who was all to me, child, brother, friend,
With barb'rous bloody malice, sought my life.

Alt. Thou art my sister, and I would not make thee

The lonely mourner of a widow'd bed;
Therefore, thy husband's life is safe: but warn him,
No more to know this hospitable roof.
He has but ill repaid Sciolto's bounty.

We must not meet; 'tis dangerous. Farewell!
(*He is going, Lavinia holds him.*)

Lav. Stay, Altamont; my brother, stay.

Alt. It cannot, sha' not be; you must not hold me.

Lav. Look kindly, then.

Alt. Each minute that I stay,

Is a new injury to fair Calista.

From thy false friendship, to her arms I'll fly:

Then own, the joys which on her charms attend,

Have more than paid me for my faithless friend.

[*Breaks from Lavinia, and exit.*]

Hor. Oh! raise thee, my Lavinia, from the earth.

It is too much; this tide of flowing grief,

This wond'rous waste of tears, too much to give

To an ungrateful friend, and cruel brother.

Lav. Is there not cause for weeping? Oh,

Horatio!

A brother and a husband were my treasure;

'Twas all the little wealth that poor Lavinia

Sav'd from the shipwreck of her father's fortunes.

One half is lost already. If thou leav'st me,

If thou shouldst prove unkind to me, as Altamont,

Whom shall I find to pity my distress;

To have compassion on a helpless wanderer,

And give her where to lay her wretched head?

Hor. Why dost thou wound me with thy soft

complaining?

Though Altamont be false, and use me hardly,

Yet think not I impute his crimes to thee.

Talk not of being forsaken; for I'll keep thee

Next to my heart, my certain pledge of happiness.

Lav. Then you will love me still, cherish me ever,

And hide me from misfortune in your bosom?

Hor. But for the love I owe the good Sciolto,

From Genoa, from falsehood, and inconstancy,

To some more honest, distant clime I'd go.

Nor would I be beholden to my country,

For aught but thee, the partner of my flight.

Lav. And I would follow thee: forsake, for

thee,

My country, brother, friends, ev'n all I have.

Though mine's a little all, yet were it more,

And better far, it should be left for thee,

And all that I would keep should be Horatio.

So, when a merchant sees his vessel lost,

Though richly freighted from a foreign coast,

Gladly, for life, the treasure he would give,

And only wishes to escape, and live:

Gold, and his gains, no more employ his mind;

But, driving o'er the billows with the wind,

Cleaves to one faithful plank, and leaves the rest

behind. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Garden.

LOTHARIO and CALISTA discovered.

Loth. Weep not, my fair; but let the god of love

Laugh in thy eyes, and revel in thy heart,

Kindle again his torch, and hold it high,

To light us to new joys. Nor let a thought

Of discord, or disquiet past, molest thee;

But to a long oblivion give thy cares,
And let us melt the present hour in bliss.

Cal. Seek not to sooth me with thy false endearments,

To charm me with thy softness: 'tis in vain:

Thou canst no more betray, nor I be ruin'd.

The hours of folly and of fond delight,

Are wasted all, and fled; those that remain

Are doom'd to weeping, anguish, and repentance.

I come to charge thee with a long account

Of all the sorrows I have known already,

And all I have to come; thou hast undone me.

Loth. Unjust Calista! dost thou call it ruin,

To love as we have done; to melt, to languish,

To wish for somewhat exquisitely happy,

And then be blest ev'n to that wish's height?

To die with joy, and straight to live again;

Speechless to gaze, and with tumultuous trans-

port—

Cal. Oh! let me hear no more; I cannot bear it;

'Tis deadly to remembrance. Let that night,

That guilty night, be blotted from the year;

For 'twas that night that gave me up to shame,

To sorrow, to the false Lothario.

Loth. Hear this, ye pow'rs! mark, how the fair

deceiver

Sadly complains of violated truth;

She calls me false, ev'n she, the faithless she,

Whom day and night, whom heav'n and earth,

have heard

Sighing to vow, and tenderly protest,

Ten thousand times, she would be only mine;

And yet, behold, she has giv'n herself away;

Fled from my arms, and wedded to another,

Ev'n to the man whom most I hate on earth.

Cal. Art thou so base to upbraid me with a crime,

Which nothing but thy cruelty could cause?

If indignation raging in my soul,

For thy unmanly insolence and scorn,

Urg'd me to do a deed of desperation,

And wound myself to be reveng'd on thee,

Think whom I should devote to death and hell,

Whom curse as my undoer, but Lothario?

Hadst thou been just, not all Sciolto's pow'r,

Not all the vows and prayers of sighing Altamont,

Could have prevail'd, or won me to forsake thee.

Loth. How have I fail'd in justice, or in love?

Burns not my flame as brightly as at first?

Ev'n now my heart beats high, I languish for thee,

My transports are as fierce, as strong my wishes,

As if thou ne'er hadst bless'd me with thy beauty.

Cal. How didst thou dare to think that I would

live

A slave to base desires and brutal pleasures,

To be a wretched wanton for thy leisure,

To toy and waste an hour of idle time with?

My soul disdains thee for so mean a thought.

Loth. The driving storm of passion will have

way,

And I must yield before it. Wert thou calm,

Love, the poor criminal whom thou hast doom'd,

Has yet a thousand tender things to plead,

To charm thy rage, and mitigate his fate.

Enter ALTAMONT behind.

Alt. Ha! Do I live and wake? (*Aside.*)

Cal. Hadst thou been true, how happy had I been!

Not Altamont, but thou, hadst been my lord.

But wherefore nam'd I happiness with thee?

It is for thee, for thee, that I am curs'd;

For thee my secret soul each hour arraigns me,

Calls me to answer for my virtue stain'd;

My honour lost to thee: for thee it haunts me

With stern Sciolto vowing vengeance on me,

With Altamont complaining for his wrongs—

Alt. Behold him here! (*Coming forward.*)

Cal. Ah! (*Starting.*)

Alt. The wretch! whom thou has made.

Curses and sorrows hast thou heap'd upon him,
And vengeance is the only good that's left.

(Drawing.)

Loth. Thou hast ta'en me somewhat unawares,
'tis true:

But love and war take turns, like day and night,
And little preparation serves my turn,
Equal to both, and arm'd for either field.
We've long been foes; this moment ends our
quarrel;

Earth, heav'n, and fair Calista, judge the combat!

(They fight: Lothario falls.)

Oh, Altamont! thy genius is the stronger!
Thou hast prevail'd! My fierce, ambitious soul
Declining droops, and all her fires grow pale;
Yet let not this advantage swell thy pride;
I conquer'd in my turn, in love I triumph'd.
Those joys are lodg'd beyond the reach of fate;
That sweet revenge comes smiling to my thoughts,
Adorns my fall, and cheers my heart in dying.

(Dies.)

Cal. And what remains for me, beset with shame,
Encompass'd round with wretchedness? There is
But this one way to break the toil, and 'scape.

(She catches up Lothario's sword, and offers to
kill herself; Altamont runs to her, and wrests
it from her.)

Alt. What means thy frantic rage?

Cal. Off! let me go.

Alt. Oh! thou hast more than murder'd me; yet
still,

Still art thou here! and my soul starts with horror,
At thought of any danger that may reach thee.

Cal. Think'st thou I mean to live? to be forgiven?
Oh, thou hast known but little of Calista!

If thou hadst never heard my shame, if only
The midnight moon and silent stars had seen it,
I would not bear to be reproach'd by them,
But dig down deep to find a grave beneath,
And hide me from their beams.

Sci. (Within.) What, ho! my son!

Cal. Is it the voice of thunder, or my father?

Madness! Confusion! let the storm come on,

Let the tumultuous roar drive all upon me;

Dash my devoted bark, ye surges, break it!

'Tis for my ruin that the tempest rises.

When I am lost, sunk to the bottom low,

Peace shall return, and all be calm again.

Enter SCIOLTO.

Sci. Ev'n now Rossano leap'd the garden wall.
Ha! death has been among you—Oh, my fears!
Last night thou hadst a difference with thy friend,
The cause thou gav'st me for it was a damn'd one.
Didst thou not wrong the man who told thee truth?
Answer me quick—

Alt. Oh! press me not to speak;
Ev'n now my heart is breaking, and the mention
Will lay me dead before you. See that body,
And guess my shame! my ruin! Oh, Calista!

Sci. It is enough! but I am slow to execute,
And justice lingers in my lazy hand;
Thus let me wipe dishonour from my name,
And cut thee from the earth, thou stain to good-
ness—

(Offers to kill Calista; Altamont holds him.)

Alt. Stay thee, Sciolto, thou rash father, stay,
Or turn the point on me, and through my breast
Cut out the bloody passage to Calista;
So shall my love be perfect, while for her
I die, for whom alone I wish'd to live.

Cal. No, Altamont; my heart, that scorn'd thy
love,

Shall never be indebted to thy pity.
Thus torn, defac'd, and wretched as I seem,
Still I have something of Sciolto's virtue.
Yes, yes, my father, I applaud thy justice;
Strike home, and I will bless thee for the blow;
Be merciful, and free me from my pain;

'Tis sharp, 'tis terrible, and I could curse
The cheerful day, men, earth, and heav'n, and thee,
Ev'n thee, thou venerable, good, old man,
For being author of a wretch like me.

Sci. Thy pious care has giv'n me time to think,
And sav'd me from a crime; then rest, my sword;
To honour have I kept thee ever sacred,
Nor will I stain thee with a rash revenge.
But, mark me well, I will have justice done;
Hope not to bear away thy crimes unpunish'd:
I will see justice executed on thee,
Ev'n to a Roman strictness; and thou, nature,
Or whatsoever thou art that plead'st within me,
Be still; thy tender strugglings are in vain.

Cal. Then am I doom'd to live, and bear your
triumph?

To groan beneath your scorn and fierce upbraiding?
Daily to be reproach'd, and have my misery
At morn, at noon, at night, told over to me?

Is this, is this the mercy of a father?

I only beg to die, and he denies me.

Sci. Hence from my sight! thy father cannot
bear thee;

Fly with thy infamy to some dark cell,
Where, on the confines of eternal night,
Mourning, misfortune, cares, and anguish dwell;
Where ugly shame hides her opprobrious head,
And death and hell detested rule maintain;
There howl out the remainder of thy life,
And wish thy name may be no more remember'd.

Cal. Yes, I will fly to some such dismal place,
And be more curs'd than you can wish I were;
This fatal form, that drew on my undoing,
Fasting, and tears, and hardships, shall destroy;
Nor light, nor food, nor comfort will I know,
Nor aught that may continue hated life.
Then when you see me meagre, wan, and chang'd,
Stretch'd at my length, and dying in my cave,
On that cold earth I mean shall be my grave,
Perhaps you may relent, and sighing say,
At length her tears have wash'd her stains away;
At length 'tis time her punishment should cease;
Die, thou poor suff'ring wretch, and be at peace.

[Exit.]

Sci. Who of my servants wait there?

Enter two or three Servants.

Raise that body, and bear it in. On your lives
Take care my doors be guarded well, that none
Pass out, or enter, but by my appointment.

[Exit Servants, with Lothario's body.]

Alt. There is a fatal fury in your visage,
It blazes fierce, and menaces destruction.
I tremble at the vengeance which you meditate
On the poor, faithless, lovely, dear Calista.

Sci. Hast thou not read what brave Virginius
did?

With his own hand he slew his only daughter,
To save her from the fierce Decemvir's lust.
He slew her, yet unspotted, to prevent
The shame which she might know. Then what
should I do?

But thou hast tied my hand. I won't kill her;
Yet, by the ruin she has brought upon us,
The common infamy that brands us both,
She sha'n't escape.

Alt. You mean that she shall die then?

Sci. Ask me not what, nor how I have resolv'd,
For all within is anarchy and uproar.
Oh, Altamont! what a vast scheme of joy
Has this one day destroy'd? Well did I hope
This daughter would have bless'd my latter days;
That I should live to see you the world's wonder,
So happy, great, and good, that none were like
you.

While I, from busy life and care set free,
Had spent the evening of my age at home,
Among a little prattling race of yours;
There, like an old man, talk'd awhile, and then

Laid down and slept in peace. Instead of this,
Sorrow and shame must bring me to my grave—
Oh, damn her! damn-her!

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Arm yourself, my lord;
Rossano, but now escap'd the garden,
Has gather'd in the street a band of rioters,
Who threaten you and all your friends with ruin,
Unless Lothario be return'd in safety. *[Exit.*

Sci. By heav'n, their fury rises to my wish,
Nor shall misfortune know my house alone;
But thou, Lothario, and thy race, shall pay me
For all the sorrows which my age is curs'd with.
I think my name as great, my friends as potent,
As any in the state; all shall be summon'd;
I know that all will join their hands to ours,
And vindicate thy vengeance. When our force
Is full and arm'd, we shall expect thy sword
To join with us, and sacrifice to justice. *[Exit.*

Alt. There is a heavy weight upon my senses;
A dismal, sullen stillness, that succeeds
The storm of rage and grief, like silent death,
After the tumult and the noise of life.
Would it were death, as sure 'tis wondrous like it,
For I am sick of living; my soul's pall'd,
She kindles not with anger or revenge;
Love was th'informing, active fire within:
Now that is quench'd, the mass forgets to move,
And longs to mingle with its kindred earth. *[Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Room hung with black; on one side
Lothario's body on a bier; on the other a table,
with a skull and other bones, a book and a lamp
on it.*

CALISTA is discovered on a couch, in black; her hair
hanging loose and disordered. After soft music,
she rises and comes forward.

Cal. 'Tis well! these solemn sounds, this pomp
of horror,
Are fit to feed the frenzy in my soul.
Here's room for meditation ev'n to madness,
Till the mind burst with thinking. This dull flame
Sleeps in the socket. Sure the book was left
To tell me something; for instruction then—
He teaches holy sorrow and contrition,
And penitence.—Is it become an art then?
A trick that lazy, dull, luxurious gownmen
Can teach us to do over? I'll no more on't;
(Throwing away the book.)

I have more real anguish in my heart,
Than all their pedant discipline e'er knew.
What charnel has been rifled for these bones?
Fie! this is pageantry; they look uncouthly.
But what of that, if he or she that own'd 'em
Safe from disquiet sit, and smile to see
The farce their miserable relics play?
But here's a sight is terrible indeed!
Is this that haughty, gallant, gay Lothario,
That dear, perfidious—Ah!—how pale he looks!
And those dead eyes!—How grim with clotted
blood!—

Ascend, ye ghosts, fantastic forms of night,
In all your diff'rent dreadful shapes ascend,
And match the present horror, if you can.

Enter SCIOLO.

Sci. This dead of night, this silent hour of dark-
ness,
Nature for rest ordain'd, and soft repose;
And yet distraction and tumultuous jars,
Keep all our frighted citizens awake:
Amidst the gen'ral wreck, see where she stands,
(Pointing to Calista.)

Like Helen, in the night when Troy was sack'd,
Spectatress of the mischief which she made.

Cal. It is Sciolto! Be thyself, my son,
Be strong to bear his fatal indignation,

That he might see thou art not lost so far,
But somewhat still of his great spirit lives
In the forlorn Calista.

Sci. Thou wert once
My daughter.

Cal. Happy were it I had died,
And never lost that name.

Sci. That's something yet;
Thou wert the very darling of my age:
I thought the day too short to gaze upon thee,
That all the blessings I could gather for thee,
By cares on earth, and by my pray'rs to heav'n,
Were little for my fondness to bestow;
Why didst thou turn to folly then, and curse me?

Cal. Because my soul was rudely drawn from
yours,
A poor, imperfect copy of my father;
It was because I lov'd, and was a woman.

Sci. Hadst thou been honest, thou hadst been a
cherubim;

But of that joy, as of a gem long lost,
Beyond redemption gone, think we no more.
Hast thou e'er dar'd to meditate on death?

Cal. I have, as on the end of shame and sorrow.
Sci. Ha! answer me! Say, hast thou coolly
thought?

'Tis not the stoic's lessons got by rote,
The pomp of words, and pedant dissertations,
That can sustain thee in that hour of terror;
Books have taught cowards to talk nobly of it,
But when the trial comes they stand aghast;
Hast thou consider'd what may happen after it?
How thy account may stand, and what to answer?

Cal. I've turn'd my eyes inward upon myself,
Where foul offence and shame have laid all waste;
Therefore my soul abhors the wretched dwelling,
And longs to find some better place of rest.

Sci. 'Tis justly thought, and worthy of that spirit
That dwelt in ancient Latian breasts, when Rome
Was mistress of the world. I would go on,
And tell thee all my purpose; but it sticks
Here at my heart, and cannot find a way.

Cal. Then spare the telling, if it be a pain,
And write the meaning with your poniard here.

Sci. Oh! truly guess'd; seest thou this trembling
hand? *(Holding up a dagger.)*
Thrice justice urg'd—and thrice the slackening
sinews

Forgot their office, and confess'd the father.
At length the stubborn virtue has prevail'd;
It must, it must be so—Oh! take it then,

And know the rest untaught. *(Giving the dagger.)*

Cal. I understand you.

It is but thus, and both are satisfied.

*(She offers to kill herself; Sciolto catches
hold of her arm.)*

Sci. A moment, give me yet a moment's space.
The stern, the rigid judge has been obey'd;
Now nature, and the father, claim their turns.
I've held the balance with an iron hand,
And put off every tender human thought,
To doom my child to death; but spare my eyes
The most unnat'ral sight, lest their strings crack,
My old brain split, and I grow mad with horror.

Cal. Ha! is it possible? and is there yet
Some little, dear remain of love and tenderness
For poor, undone Calista, in your heart?

Sci. Oh! when I think what pleasure I took in
thee,

What joys thou gav'st me in thy prattling infancy,
Thy sprightly wit, and early blooming beauty;
How have I stood and fed my eyes upon thee,
Then, lifting up my hands and wond'ring bless'd
thee;

By my strong grief, my heart ev'n melts within me;
I could curse nature, and that tyrant, honour,
For making me thy father and thy judge;
Thou art my daughter still.

Cal. For that kind word,
Thus let me fall, thus humbly to the earth,
Weep on your feet, and bless you for this goodness.
Oh! 'tis too much for this offending wretch,
This parricide, that murders with her crimes,
Shortens her father's age, and cuts him off,
Ere little more than half his years be number'd.

Sci. Would it were otherwise! but thou must die.

Cal. That I must die, it is my only comfort;
Death is the privilege of human nature,
And life without it were not worth our taking:
Come then,

Thou meagre shade: here let me breathe my last,
Charm'd with my father's pity and forgiveness,
More than if angels tun'd thy golden viols,
And sung a requiem to my parting soul.

Sci. I'm summon'd hence; ere this my friends expect me.

There is I know not what of sad presage,
That tells me I shall never see thee more;
If it be so, this is our last farewell,
And these the parting pangs, which nature feels,
When anguish rends the heart-strings.—Oh, my daughter! *[Exit.]*

Cal. Now think, thou curs'd Calista, now behold
The desolation, horror, blood, and ruin,
Thy crimes and fatal folly spread around,
That loudly cry for vengeance on thy head;
Yet heav'n, who knows our weak imperfect natures,
How blind with passions, and how prone to evil,
Makes not too strict inquiry for offences,
But is aton'd by penitence and pray'r:
Cheap recompense! here 'twould not be receiv'd;
Nothing but blood can make the expiation,
And cleanse the soul from inbred deep pollution.
And see, another injur'd wretch appears,
To call for justice from my tardy hand.

Enter ALTAMONT.

Alt. Hail to you, horrors! hail, thou house of death!

And thou, the lovely mistress of these shades,
Whose beauty gilds the more than midnight darkness,

And makes it grateful as the dawn of day.
Oh, take me in, a fellow mourner with thee,
I'll number groan for groan, and tear for tear;
And when the fountain of thy eyes are dry,
Mine shall supply the stream, and weep for both.

Cal. I know thee well, thou art the injur'd Altamont;

Thou com'st to urge me with the wrongs I've done thee;

But know I stand upon the brink of life,
And in a moment mean to set me free
From shame and thy upbraiding.

Alt. Falsely, falsely
Dost thou accuse me! O, forbid me not
To mourn thy loss,
To wish some better fate had rul'd our loves,
And that Calista had been mine, and true.

Cal. Oh, Altamont! 'tis hard for souls like mine,
Haughty and fierce, to yield they've done amiss.
But, oh, behold! my proud, disdainful heart
Bends to thy gentler virtue. Yes, I own,
Such is thy truth, thy tenderness, and love,
That, were I not abandon'd to destruction,
With thee I might have liv'd for ages bless'd,
And died in peace within thy faithful arms.

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Now mourn indeed, ye miserable pair!
For now the measure of your woes is full.
The great, the good Sciolto dies this moment.

Cal. My father!

Alt. That's a deadly stroke indeed.

Hor. Not long ago, he privately went forth,
Attended but by few, and those unbidden.
I heard which way he took, and straight pursu'd him;

But found him compass'd by Lothario's faction,
Almost alone, amidst a crowd of foes.
Too late we brought him aid, and drove them back;
Ere that, his frantic valour had provok'd
The death he seem'd to wish for from their swords.

Cal. And dost thou hear me yet, thou patient earth?

Dost thou not labour with thy murd'rous weight?
And you, ye glitt'ring, heav'nly host of stars,
Hide your fair heads in clouds, or I shall blast you;
For I am all contagion, death, and ruin,
And nature sickens at me. Rest, thou world,
This parricide shall be thy plague no more;
Thus, thus I set thee free. *(Stabs herself.)*

Hor. Oh, fatal rashness!

Enter SCIOLTO, pale and bloody, supported by Servants.

Cal. Oh, my heart!

Well may'st thou fail; for see, the spring that fed
Thy vital stream is wasted, and runs low.
My father! will you now, at last, forgive me,
If, after all my crimes, and all your sufferings,
I call you once again by that dear name?
Will you forget my shame, and those wide wounds?
Lift up your hand and bless me, ere I go
Down to my dark abode!

Sci. Alas, my daughter!

Thou hast rashly ventur'd in a stormy sea,
Where life, fame, virtue, all were wreck'd and lost.
But sure thou hast borne thy part in all the anguish,
And smarted with the pain. Then rest in peace:
Let silence and oblivion hide thy name,
And save thee from the malice of posterity;
And may'st thou find with heav'n the same forgive-ness,

As with thy father here.—Die, and be happy.

Cal. Celestial sounds! Peace dawns upon my soul,

And ev'ry pain grows less—Oh, gentle Altamont!
Think not too hardly of me when I'm gone;
But pity me. Had I but early known
Thy wond'rous worth, thou excellent young man,
We had been happier both; now 'tis too late;
And yet my eyes take pleasure to behold thee;
Thou art their last dear object. Mercy, heav'n!
(Dies.)

Sci. Oh, turn thee from that fatal object, Altamont!

Come near, and let me bless thee ere I die.
To thee and brave Horatio I bequeath
My fortunes.—Lay me by thy noble father,
And love my memory as thou hast his;
For thou hast been my son.—Oh, gracious heav'n!
Thou that hast been endless blessings still in store
For virtue and for filial piety,
Let grief, disgrace, and want be far away;
But multiply thy mercies on his head.
Let honour, greatness, goodness, still be with him,
And peace in all his ways. *(Dies.)*

Hor. The storm of grief bears hard upon his youth,

And bends him, like a drooping flow'r to earth.
By such examples are we taught to prove
The sorrows that attend unlawful love.
Death, or some worse misfortune, soon divide
The injur'd bridegroom from his guilty bride.
If you would have the nuptial union last,
Let virtue be the bond that ties it fast. *[Exeunt.]*

FATAL CURIOSITY;

A TRAGEDY, IN THREE ACTS.—BY GEORGE LILLO.



Act II.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

OLD WILMOT
YOUNG WILMOT

EUSTACE
RANDAL

AGNES
CHARLOTTE

MARIA
SERVANT

ACT I.—SCENE I.—*Wilmot's House.*

OLD WILMOT discovered.

Old W. The day is far advanc'd. The cheerful Pursues with vigour his repeated course: [sun No labour lessens, nor no time decays His strength or splendour: evermore the same, From age to age his influence sustains Dependent worlds, bestows both life and motion On the dull mass, that forms their dusky orbs, Cheers them with heat, and gilds them with his brightness.

Yet man, of jarring elements compos'd, Who posts from change to change, from the first Of his frail being to his dissolution, [hour Enjoys the sad prerogative above him, To think, and to be wretched! What is life To him that's born to die? Or, what the wisdom, whose perfection ends In knowing we know nothing? Mere contradiction all! A tragic farce, Tedious, though short; elaborate without art; Ridiculously sad—

Enter RANDAL.

Where hast been, Randal?

Rand. Not out of Penryn, sir; but to the strand, To hear what news from Falmouth, since the storm Of wind last night.

Old W. It was a dreadful one.

Rand. Some found it so. A noble ship from India, Ent'ring the harbour, run upon a rock, And there was lost.

Old W. What came of those on board her?

Rand. Some few are sav'd; but much the greater 'Tis thought, are perish'd. [part,

Old W. They are past the fear

Of future tempests, or a wreck on shore:

Those who escap'd, are still expos'd to both.

Where's your mistress?

Rand. I saw her pass the High-street, t'wards the [Minster.

Old W. She's gone to visit Charlotte. She doth In the soft bosom of that gentle maid, [well!

There dwells more goodness than the rigid race Of moral pedants e'er believ'd, or taught. With what amazing constancy and truth, Doth she sustain the absence of our son, Whom more than life she loves! How shun for him, Whom we shall ne'er see more, the rich and great, Who own her charms, and sigh to make her happy! Since our misfortunes we have found no friend, None who regarded our distress, but her; And she, by what I have observ'd of late, Is wearied, or exhausted. Curs'd condition! To live a burden to one only friend, And blast her youth with our prodigious woe! Who, that had reason, soul, or sense, would bear it A moment longer? Then, this honest wretch! I must dismiss him. Why should I detain A grateful, gen'rous youth, to perish with me? His service may procure him bread elsewhere, Though I have none to give him. Pr'ythee, Randal, How long hast thou been with me?

Rand. Fifteen years.

I was a very child when first ye took me To wait upon your son, my dear young master. I oft have wish'd I'd gone to India with him, Though you, desponding, give him o'er for lost.

(*Old Wilmot wipes his eyes.*)

I am to blame: this talk revives your sorrow For his long absence.

Old W. That cannot be reviv'd Which never died.

Rand. The whole of my intent

Was to confess your bounty, that supplied

The loss of both my parents: I was long

The object of your charitable care. [longer since

Old W. No more of that: thou'st serv'd me

Without reward; so that account is balanced,

Or, rather, I'm the debtor. I remember,

When poverty began to shew her face

Within these walls, and all my other servants,

Like pamper'd vermin from a falling house,

Retreated with the plunder they had gain'd,

And left me, too indulgent and remiss
For such ungrateful wretches, to be crush'd
Beneath the ruin they had help'd to make,
That you, more good than wise, refus'd to leave me.

Rand. May I beseech you, sir—

Old W. With my mistress,
In perfect contradiction to the world,
Thy love, respect, and diligence, increas'd.
Now, all the recompense within my power,
Is to discharge thee, Randal, from my hard
Unprofitable service.

Rand. Heaven forbid!

Shall I forsake you in your worst necessity?
Believe me, sir, my honest soul abhors
The barb'rous thought!

Old W. What! canst thou feed on air?
I have not left wherewith to purchase food
For one meal more!

Rand. Rather than leave you thus,
I'll beg my bread, and live on others' bounty,
While I serve you.

Old W. Down, down, my swelling heart,
Or burst in silence! 'Tis thy cruel fate
Insults thee by his kindness. He is innocent
Of all the pain it gives thee. Go thy ways:
I will no more suppress thy youthful hopes
Of rising in the world.

Rand. 'Tis true, I'm young,
And never try'd my fortune, or my genius,
Which may, perhaps, find out some happy means,
As yet unthought of, to supply your wants.

Old W. Thou tortur'st me! I hate all obligations
Which I can ne'er return. And who art thou,
That I should stoop to take 'em from thy hand?
Care for thyself, but take no thought for me!
I will not want thee: trouble me no more!

Rand. Be not offended, sir, and I will go.
I ne'er repin'd at your commands before;
But heaven's my witness, I obey you now,
With strong reluctance, and a heavy heart!
Farewell, my worthy master! *(Going.)*

Old W. Farewell! Stay;
As thou art yet a stranger to the world,
Of which, alas! I've had too much experience;
I should, methinks, before we part, bestow
A little counsel on thee. Dry thy eyes:
If thou weep'st thus, I shall proceed no farther.
Dost thou aspire to greatness or to wealth?
Quit books, and the unprofitable search
Of wisdom there, and study humankind:

No science will avail thee without that;
But that obtain'd, thou need'st not any other.
This will instruct thee to conceal thy views,
And wear the face of probity and honour,
Till thou hast gain'd thy end: which must be ever
Thy own advantage, at that man's expense
Who shall be weak enough to think thee honest.

Rand. You mock me, sure!

Old W. I never was more serious.

Rand. Why should you counsel, what you scorn'd
to practise? *[ruin.]*

Old W. Because that foolish scorn has been my
I've been an idiot, but would have thee wiser,
And treat mankind as they would treat thee, Randal,
As they deserve, and I've been treated by them:
Thou'st seen by me, and those who now despise me,
How men of fortune fall, and beggars rise;
Shun my example; treasure up my precepts;
The world's before thee—be a knave, and prosper.
What, art thou dumb?

Rand. Amazement ties my tongue!
Where are your former principles!

Old W. No matter;

Suppose I have renounc'd them: I have passions,
And love thee still; therefore, would have thee think
The world is all a scene of deep deceit:
And he, who deals with mankind on the square,
Is his own bubble, and undoes himself.
Farewell; and mark my counsel, boy. *[Exit.]*

Rand. Amazement!

Is this the man I thought so wise and just?
What, teach and counsel me to be a villain?
Sure, grief has made him frantic, or some fiend
Assum'd his shape. I shall suspect my senses.
High-minded he was ever, and improvident,
But pitiful and generous, to a fault.
Pleasure he lov'd, but honour was his idol.
Oh! fatal change! Oh! horrid transformation!
So a majestic temple, sunk to ruin,
Becomes the loathsome shelter and abode
Of lurking serpents, toads, and beasts of prey;
And scaly dragons hiss, and lions roar,
Where wisdom taught, and music charm'd before. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—*Charlotte's house.*

Enter CHARLOTTE and MARIA.

Char. What terror and amazement must they feel
Who die by shipwreck!

Mar. 'Tis a dreadful thought!

Char. Ay, is it not, Maria? To descend,
Living, and conscious, to the watry tomb!

Alas! had we no sorrows of our own,
The frequent instances of others' woe,
Must give a gen'rous mind a world of pain.
But you forget you promis'd me to sing.
Though cheerfulness and I have long been strangers,
Harmonious sounds are still delightful to me.
There's, sure, no passion in the human soul,
But finds its food in music. I would hear
The song, compos'd by that unhappy maid,
Whose faithful lover, 'scap'd a thousand perils
From rocks and sands, and the devouring deep;
And after all, being arriv'd at home,
Passing a narrow brook, was drowned there,
And perish'd in her sight.

SONG.—*MARIA.*

Cease, cease, heart-easing tears!

Adieu, you flatt'ring fears!

Which seven long, tedious years

Taught me to bear.

Tears are for lighter woes;

Fear no such danger knows

As fate remorseless shews,

Endless despair!

Dear cause of all my pain,

On the wide stormy main,

Thou wast preserv'd in vain,

Though still ador'd.

Hadst thou died there unseen,

My wounded eyes had been

Sav'd from the direst scene

Maid e'er deplor'd.

Char. *(Finds a letter.)* What's this? A letter sup-
perserib'd to me!

None could convey it here, but you, Maria.

Ungen'rous, cruel maid! to use me thus!

To join with flatt'ring men to break my peace,

And persecute me to the last retreat? *[the sighs]*

Mar. Why should it break your peace to hear

Of honourable love? This letter is—

Char. No matter whence: return it back unopen'd:

I have no love, no charms, but for my Wilmot,

Nor would have any.

Mar. Alas! Wilmot's dead!

Or, living, dead to you. *[hope;]*

Char. I'll not despair: patience shall cherish

Nor wrong his honour by unjust suspicion.

I know his truth, and will preserve my own.

But, to prevent all future importunity,

Know, thou incessant foe to my repose,

Whether he sleeps secure from mortal cares,

In the deep bosom of the boist'rous main,

Or, toss'd with tempest, still endures its rage,

No second choice shall violate my vows; *[jur'd,*

High heaven, which heard them, and abhors the per-
cannet witness, they were made without reserve:

Never to be retracted, ne'er dissolv'd

By accident or absence, time or death.

Mar. And did your vows oblige you to support

His haughty parents, to your utter ruin!
Well may you weep to think on what you've done.

Char. I weep to think that I can do no more
For their support. What will become of them?
The hoary, helpless, miserable pair!

Mar. What I can't praise, you force me to admire,
And mourn for you, as you lament for them.
Your patience, constancy, and resignation,
Merit a better fate.

Char. So pride would tell me,
And vain self-love, but I believe them not:
And if, by wanting pleasure, I have gain'd
Humility, I'm richer for my loss.

Mar. You have the heavenly art still to improve
Your mind by all events. But here comes one,
Whose pride seems to increase with her misfortunes.
Her faded dress, unfashionably fine,
As ill conceals her poverty, as that
Strain'd complaisance, her haughty, swelling heart.
Though perishing with want, so far from asking,
She ne'er receives a favour uncompell'd;
And, while she ruins, scorns to be oblig'd:
Let me depart, I know she loves me not. [Exit.

Enter AGNES.

Char. This visit's kind.

Agnes. Few else would think it so:
Those who would once have thought themselves
much honour'd

By the least favour, though 'twere but a look,
I could have shewn them, now refuse to see me.
'Tis misery enough to be reduc'd
To the low level of the common herd,
Who, born to beggary, envy all above them:
But 'tis the curse of curses to endure
The insolent contempt of those we scorn.

Char. By scorning, we provoke them to contempt,
And thus offend, and suffer in our turns:
We must have patience.

Agnes. No, I scorn them yet;
But there's no end of suffer'ing: who can say
Their sorrows are complete? My wretched husband,
Tir'd with our woes, and hopeless of relief,
Grows sick of life;
And, urg'd by indignation and despair,
Would plunge into eternity at once,
By foul self-murder.

Char. Gracious heaven support him!

Agnes. His fixed love for me,
Whom he would fain persuade to share his fate,
And take the same uncertain, dreadful course,
Alone withholds his hand.

Char. And may it ever! [of life;

Agnes. I've known with him the two extremes
The highest happiness, and deepest woe,
With all the sharp and bitter aggravations
Of such a vast transition. Such a fall
In the decline of life! I have as quick,
As exquisite a sense of pain as he,
And would do anything, but die, to end it;
But there my courage fails. Death is the worst
That fate can bring, and cuts off ev'ry hope. [lot

Char. We must not choose, but strive to bear our
Without reproach or guilt. By one rash act
Of desperation, we may overthrow
The merit we've been raising all our days,
And lose our whole reward. And now, methinks,
Now, more than ever, we have cause to fear,
And be upon our guard. The hand of heaven
Spreads clouds on clonds o'er our benighted heads,
And wrapp'd in darkness, doubles our distress.
I had, the night last past, repeated twice,
A strange and awful dream: I would not yield
'To fearful superstition, nor despise
The admonition of a friendly power,
That wish'd my good.

Agnes. I have certain plagues enough,
Without the help of dreams, to make me wretched.

Char. I would not stake my happiness or duty
On their uncertain credit, nor on aught
But reason, and the known decrees of heaven;

Yet dreams have sometimes shewn events to come,
And may excite to vigilance and care.
My vision may be such, and sent to warn us,
(Now we are tried by multiply'd afflictions,)
To mark each motion of our swelling hearts,
Lest we attempt to extricate ourselves,
And seek deliv'rance by forbidden ways;
To keep our hopes and innocence entire,
Till we're dismiss'd to join the happy dead,
Or heaven relieves us here.

Agnes. Well, to your dream.

Char. Methought, I sat, in a dark winter's night,
On the wide summit of a barren mountain; [frame,
The sharp, bleak winds pierc'd through my shiv'ring
And storms of hail, and sleet, and driving rains,
Beat with impetuous fury on my head, [round me,
Drench'd my chill'd limbs, and pour'd a deluge
On one hand, ever-gentle Patience sat,
On whose calm bosom I reclin'd my head;
And, on the other, silent Contemplation.
At length, to my unclose'd and watchful eyes,
That long had roll'd in darkness, dawn appear'd;
And I beheld a man, an utter stranger,
But of graceful and exalted mien,
Who press'd with eager transport to embrace me.
I shunn'd his arms: but at some words he spoke,
Which I have now forgot, I turn'd again;
But he was gone—and, oh! transporting sight!
Your son, my dearest Wilmot, fill'd his place!

Agnes. If I regarded dreams, I should expect
Some fair event from your's.

Char. But what's to come,
Though more obscure, is terrible, indeed!
Methought we parted soon, and when I sought him,
You and his father (yes, you both were there),
Strove to conceal him from me. I pursu'd you
Both with my cries, and call'd on heaven and earth
To judge my wrongs, and force you to reveal
Where you had hid my love, my life, my Wilmot!

Agnes. Unless you mean t'offend me, spare the
'Tis just as likely Wilmot should return [rest.
As we become your foes.

Char. Far be such thought
From Charlotte's breast! but when I heard you name
Self-murder, it reviv'd the frightful image
Of such a dreadful scene!

Agnes. You will persist—

Char. Excuse me: I have done. Being a dream,
I thought, at least, it could not give offence.

Agnes. You could not think so, had you thought
at all.

But I take nothing ill from thee. Adieu!
I've tarried longer than I first intended,
And my poor husband mourns the while alone. [Exit.

Char. She's gone abruptly, and, I fear, displeas'd.
The least appearance of advice or caution,
Sets her impatient temper in a flame. [pride,
When grief, that well might humble, swells our
And pride, increasing, aggravates our grief,
The tempest must prevail till we are lost.
Heaven grant a fairer issue to her sorrows! [Exit.

SCENE III.—The Town and Port of Penryn.

*Enter YOUNG WILMOT and EUSTACE, in Indian
habits.*

Young W. Welcome, my friend, to Penryn! Here
we're safe. [sea,

Eust. Then we're deliver'd twice: first from the
And then from men, who, more remorseless, prey
On shipwreck'd wretches, and who spoil and murder
Those whom fell tempests, and devouring waves,
In all their fury, spar'd.

Young W. It is a scandal,
(Though malice must acquit the better sort,)
The rude unpolish'd people here, in Cornwall,
Have long lain under, and with too much justice:
For 'tis an evil, grown almost invet'rate,
And asks a bold and skilful hand to cure.

Eust. Your treasure's safe, I hope?
Young W. 'Tis here, thank heaven!

Being in jewels, when I saw our danger,
I hid it in my bosom.

Eust. I observed you,
And wonder how you could command your thoughts
In such a time of terror and confusion.

Young W. My thoughts were then at home. Oh!
England, England!

Thou seat of plenty, liberty, and health,
With transport I behold thy verdant fields,
Thy lofty mountains rich with useful ore,
Thy num'rous herds, thy flocks, and winding streams.
After a long and tedious absence, Eustace,
With what delight we breathe our native air,
And tread the genial soil that bore us first!
'Tis said, the world is ev'ry wise man's country;
Yet, after having view'd its various nations,
I'm weak enough still to prefer my own
To all I've seen beside. You smile, my friend!
And think, perhaps, 'tis instinct more than reason.
Why, be it so: instinct preceded reason
Ev'n in the wisest men, and may sometimes
Be much the better guide. But, be it either,
I must confess, that even death itself
Appear'd to me with twice its native horrors,
When apprehended in a foreign land.
Death is, no doubt, in ev'ry place the same;
Yet nature casts a look towards home, and most
Who have it in their power, choose to expire
Where they first drew their breath.

Eust. Believe me, Wilmot,
Your grave reflections were not what I smil'd at;
I own the truth. That we're return'd to England,
Affords me all the pleasure you can feel.
Yet I must think a warmer passion moves you;
Thinking of that, I smil'd.

Young W. Oh! Eustace, Eustace!
Thou know'st, for I've confess'd to thee, I love;
But having never seen the charming maid,
Thou canst not know the fierceness of my flame.
My hopes and fears, like the tempestuous seas
That we have pass'd, now mount me to the skies,
Now hurl me down from that stupendous height,
And drive me to the centre. Did you know
How much depends on this important hour,
You would not be surpris'd to see me thus.
The sinking fortune of our ancient house,
Compell'd me, young, to leave my native country,
My weeping parents, and my lovely Charlotte,
Who rul'd, and must for ever rule, my fate.
Oh! should my Charlotte, doubtful of my truth,
Or, in despair ever to see me more,
Have given herself to some more happy lover!
Distraction's in the thought! Or, should my parents,
Griev'd for my absence, and oppress'd with want,
Have sunk beneath their burden and expir'd,
While I, too late, was flying to relieve them;
The end of all my long and weary travels,
The hope that made success itself a blessing,
Being defeated, and for ever lost;
What were the riches of the world to me?

Eust. The wretch who fears all that is possible,
Must suffer more than he, who feels the worst
A man can feel, yet lives exempt from fear.
A woman may be false, and friends are mortal;
And yet your aged parents may be living,
And your fair mistress constant.

Young W. True, they may;
I doubt, but I despair not. No, my friend!
My hopes are strong, and lively as my fears;
They tell me, Charlotte is as true as fair;
That we shall meet, never to part again;
That I shall see my parents, kiss the tears
From their pale hollow cheeks, cheer their sad hearts,
And drive that gaping phantom, meagre want,
For ever from their board; their days to come
Crown all with peace, with pleasure, and abundance;
Receive their fond embraces and their blessings,
And be a blessing to them.

Eust. 'Tis our weakness:
Blind to events, we reason in the dark,

And fondly apprehend, what none e'er found,
Or ever shall, pleasure and pain unmix'd;
And flatter, and torment ourselves by turns,
With what shall never be.

Young W. I'll go this instant
To seek my Charlotte, and explore my fate.

Eust. What, in that foreign habit?

Young W. That's a trifle,
Not worth my thoughts.

Eust. The hardships you've endur'd,
And your long stay beneath the burning zone,
Where one eternal sultry summer reigns,
Have marr'd the native hue of your complexion:
Methinks you look more like a sun-burnt Indian,
Than a Briton.

Young W. Well; 'tis no matter, Eustace!
I hope my mind's not alter'd for the worse,
And for my outside—But inform me, friend,
When I may hope to see you.

Eust. When you please:

You'll find me at the inn. [me there,

Young W. When I have learn'd my doom, expect
Till then, farewell!

Eust. Farewell! Success attend you! [Exeunt.

ACT II.—SCENE I.—Charlotte's house.

Enter CHARLOTTE followed by a Servant.

Serv. Madam, a stranger, in a foreign habit, de-
Char. In a foreign habit! [sires to see you.
'Tis strange, and unexpected. But admit him.

[Exit Servant.

Who can this stranger be? I know no foreigner,

Enter YOUNG WILMOT.

Nor any man like this.

Young W. Ten thousand joys!

(Going to embrace her.)

Char. Sir, you are too bold. Forbear, and let me
know

What business brought you here, or leave the place.

Young W. Perfidious maid! Am I forgot, or
scorn'd?

Char. Can I forget a man I never knew? [heart:
Young W. My fears are true; some other has her
She's lost: my fatal absence has undone me? (Aside.)
Oh! could thy Wilmot have forgot thee, Charlotte.

Char. Ha! Wilmot! say, what do your words im-
Oh! gentle stranger, ease my swelling heart! [port?
What dost thou know of Wilmot?

Young W. This I know:

When all the winds of heaven seem'd to conspire
Against the stormy main, and dreadful peals
Of rattling thunder deafen'd ev'ry ear,
And drown'd th' affrighted mariners' loud cries;
When vivid lightning spread its sulphurous flames
Through all the dark horizon, and disclos'd
The raging seas incens'd to his destruction;
When the good ship, in which he was embark'd,
Broke, and o'erwhelm'd by the impetuous surge,
Sunk to the oozy bottom of the deep,
And left him struggling with the warring waves;
In that dread moment, in the jaws of death,
When his strength fail'd, and ev'ry hope forsook him,
And his last breath press'd towards his trembling lips,
The neighbouring rocks, that echo'd to his moan,
Return'd no sound articulate but—Charlotte.

Char. The fatal tempest, whose description strikes
The hearer with astonishment, is ceas'd;
And Wilmot is at rest. The fiercer storm
Of swelling passions, that o'erwhelms the soul,
And rages worse than the mad foaming seas
In which he perish'd, ne'er shall vex him more.

Young W. Thou seem'st to think he's dead; en-
joy that thought;

Persuade yourself, that what you wish is true,
And triumph in your falsehood. Yes, he's dead!
You were his fate. The cruel winds and waves,
That cast him pale and breathless on the shore,
Spar'd him for greater woes; to know his Charlotte,
Forgetting all her vows to him and heaven,
Had cast him from her thoughts. Then, then he died;
But never can have rest. Ev'n now he wanders,

A sad, repining, discontented ghost;
The unsubstantial shadow of himself;
And pours his plaintive groans in thy deaf ears,
And stalks, unseen, before thee.

Char. 'Tis enough:
Detested falsehood now has done its worst. [not!
And art thou dead? And wouldst thou die, my Wil-
For one thou thought unjust? Thou soul of truth!
What must be done? Which way shall I express
Unutterable woe? Or how convince
Thy dear departed spirit of the love,
Th' eternal love, and never-failing faith
Of thy much-injur'd, lost, despairing Charlotte?

Young W. Be still, my flutt'ring heart; hope not
too soon!

Perhaps I dream, and this is all illusion. (*Aside.*)

Char. If, as some teach, the spirit after death,
Free from the bounds and ties of sordid earth,
Can trace us to our most conceal'd retreat,
See all we act, and read our very thoughts;
To thee, oh! Wilmot, kneeling, I appeal.
If e'er I swerv'd in action, word, or thought,
Or ever wish'd to taste a joy on earth
That center'd not in thee, since last we parted,
May we ne'er meet again; but thy loud wrongs
So close the ear of mercy to my cries,
That I may never see those bright abodes
Where truth and virtue only have admission,
And thou inhabit'st now!

Young W. Assist me, heaven!
Preserve my reason, memory, and sense!
Oh! moderate my fierce tumultuous joys,
Or their excess will drive me to distraction.
Oh! Charlotte, Charlotte! lovely, virtuous maid!
Can thy firm mind, in spite of time and absence,
Remain unshaken, and support its truth;
And yet thy frailer memory retain
No image, no idea of thy lover?

Why dost thou gaze so wildly? Look on me;
Turn thy dear eyes this way; observe me well.
Have scorching climates, time, and this strange habit,
So chang'd, and so disguis'd thy faithful Wilmot,
That nothing in my voice, my face, or mien,
Remains to tell my Charlotte I am he?

(*Gives him her hand.*)

Why dost thou weep? Why dost thou tremble thus?
Why doth thy panting heart, and cautious touch,
Speak thee but half convinc'd? Whence are thy fears?
Why art thou silent? Canst thou doubt me still?

Char. No, Wilmot! no; I'm blind with too much
light:

O'ercome with wonder, and oppress'd with joy.
This vast profusion of extreme delight,
Rising at once, and bursting from despair,
Defies the aid of words, and mocks description.
But, for one sorrow, one sad scene of anguish,
That checks the swelling torrent of my joys,
I could not bear the transport.

Young W. Let me know it:
Give me my portion of thy sorrow, Charlotte!
Let me partake thy grief, or hear it for thee.

Char. Alas, my Wilmot! these sad tears are thine;
They flow for thy misfortunes. I am pierc'd
With all the agonies of strong compassion,
With all the bitter anguish you must feel,
When you shall hear your parents—

Young W. Are no more.

Char. You apprehend me wrong.

Young W. Perhaps I do,

Perhaps you mean to say, the greedy grave
Was satisfy'd with one, and one is left
To bless my longing eyes. But which, my Charlotte?

Char. Afflict yourself no more with groundless
fears:

Your parents both are living. Their distress—
The poverty to which they are reduc'd,
In spite of my weak aid, was what I mourn'd:
That poverty, in age, to them whose youth
Was crown'd with full prosperity, I fear,
Is worse much worse, than death.

Young W. My joy's complete!

My parents living, and possess'd of thee!
From this blest hour, the happiest of my life,
I'll date my rest. My anxious hopes and fears,
My weary travels, and my dangers past,
Are now rewarded all: now I rejoice
In my success, and count my riches gain.
For know, my soul's best treasure! I have wealth
Enough to glut e'en avarice itself:
No more shall cruel want, or proud contempt,
Oppress the sinking spirits, or insult
The hoary heads of those who gave me being.

Char. 'Tis now, oh! riches, I conceive your worth:
You are not base, nor can you be superfluous,
But when misplac'd in base and sordid hands.
Fly, fly! my Wilmot! leave thy happy Charlotte!
Thy filial piety, the sighs and tears
Of thy lamenting parents, call thee hence.

Young W. I have a friend, the partner of my voyage,
Who, in the storm last night, was shipwreck'd with
me.

Char. Shipwreck'd last night! Oh! you immortal
What have you suffer'd! How were you preserv'd?

Young W. Let that, and all my other strange es-
And perilous adventures, be the theme [capcs,
Of many a happy winter night to come.
My present purpose was t'interreat my angel,
To know this friend, this other better Wilmot,
And come with him this evening to my father's:
I'll send him to thee.

Char. I consent with pleasure. [bear my joy!

Young W. Heavens! what a night! How shall I
My parents, yours, my friends, all will be mine.
If such the early hopes, the vernal bloom,
The distant prospect of my future bliss,
Then, what the ruddy autumn? What the fruit,
The full possession of thy heavenly charms? [*Exeunt.*
SCENE II.—*A Street in Penryn.*

Enter RANDAL.

Rand. Poor, poor! and friendless! whither shall
I wander?

And to what point direct my views and hopes?
A menial servant! No. What, shall I live
Here in this land of freedom, live distinguish'd,
And mark'd the willing slave of some proud subject!
To swell his useless train for broken fragments,
The cold remains of his superfluous board?
I would aspire to something more and better.
Turn thy eyes, then, to the prolific ocean,
Whose spacious bosom opens to thy view:
There deathless honour, and unenvy'd wealth,
Have often crown'd the brave adventurer's toils.
This is the native uncontested right,
The fair inheritance of ev'ry Briton,
That dares put in his claim. My choice is made:
A long farewell to Cornwall, and to England!
If I return—But stay, what stranger's this,
Who, as he views me, seems to mend his pace?

Enter YOUNG WILMOT.

Young W. Randal! the dear companion of my
Sure, lavish fortune means to give me all [youth!
I could desire, or ask, for this blest day,
And leave me nothing to expect hereafter!

Rand. Your pardon, sir! I know but one on earth
Could properly salute me by the title
You're pleas'd to give me; and I would not think
That you are he—that you are Wilmot!

Young W. Why? [ment,

Rand. Because I could not bear the disappoint-
If I should be deceiv'd.

Young W. I am pleas'd to hear it:
Thy friendly fears better express thy thoughts
Than words could do.

Rand. Oh, Wilmot! Oh, my master!

Are you return'd!

Young W. I have not yet embrac'd
My parents; I shall see you at my father's.

Rand. No; I am discharg'd from thee; oh!
sir, such ruin— [them:

Young W. I've heard it all, and hasten to relieve

Sure, heaven hath bless'd me to that very end:
I've wealth enough; nor shalt thou want a part.

Rand. I have a part already; I am blest
In your success, and share in all your joys.

Young W. I doubt it not; but tell me, dost thou
My parents not suspecting my return, [think,
That I may visit them, and not be known?

Rand. 'Tis hard for me to judge. You are, al-
Grown so familiar to me, that I wonder [ready,
I knew you not at first: yet it may be;
For you're much alter'd, and they think you dead.

Young W. This is certain; Charlotte beheld me
long,

And heard my loud reproaches and complaints,
Without rememb'ring she had ever seen me.
My mind, at ease, grows wanton: I would fain
Refine on happiness. Why may I not
Indulge my curiosity, and try
If it be possible, by seeing first
My parents as a stranger, to improve
Their pleasure by surprise?

Rand. It may, indeed,
Enhance your own, to see from what despair
Your timely coming, and unhop'd success,
Have given you power to raise them.

Young W. I remember,
E'er since we learn'd together, you excell'd
In writing fairly, and could imitate
Whatever hand you saw, with great exactness.
I therefore beg you'll write, in Charlotte's name
And character, a letter to my father;
And recommend me, as a friend of her's,
To his acquaintance.

Rand. Sir, if you desire it—
And yet—

Young W. Nay, no objections! 'Twill save time,
Most precious with me now. For the deception,
If doing what my Charlotte will approve,
'Cause done for me, and with a good intent,
Deserves the name, I'll answer it myself.
If this succeeds, I purpose to defer
Discovering who I am till Charlotte comes,
And thou, and all who love me. Ev'ry friend
Who witnesses my happiness to-night,
Will, by partaking, multiply my joys.

Rand. You grow luxurious in imagination.
Could I deny you aught, I would not write
This letter. To say true, I ever thought
Your boundless curiosity a weakness.

Young W. What canst thou blame in this?

Rand. Your pardon, sir!
Perhaps I spoke too freely;
I'm ready t' obey your orders.

Young W. I am much thy debtor,
But I shall find a time to quit thy kindness.
Oh! Randal, but imagine to thyself
The floods of transport, the sincere delight,
That all my friends will feel, when I disclose
To my astonish'd parents my return.
And then confess, that I have well contriv'd,
By giving others joy t' exalt my own. [Exit.

SCENE III.—*Old Wilmot's house.*

OLD WILMOT and AGNES discovered.

Old W. Here, take this Seneca; this haughty pe-
Who, governing the master of mankind, [dant,
And awing power imperial, prates of patience;
And praises poverty, possess'd of millions:
Sell him, and buy us bread. The scantiest meal
The vilest copy of his book e'er purchas'd,
Will give us more relief in this distress,
Than all his boasted precepts. Nay, no tears;
Keep them to move compassion when you beg.

Agnes. My heart may break, but never stoop to that.

Old W. Nor would I live to see it. But des-
patch. [Exit Agnes.

Where must I charge this length of misery,
That gathers force each moment as it rolls,
And must at last o'erwhelm me, but on hope:
Vain, flattering, delusive, groundless hope,
That has for years deceiv'd me? Had I thought,

As I do now, as wise men ever think,
When first this bell of poverty o'ertook me,
That power to die implies a right to do it,
And should be us'd when life becomes a pain,
What plagues had I prevented! True, my wife
Is still a slave to prejudice and fear—
I would not leave my better part, the dear (*Weeps.*)
Faithful companion of my happier days,
To bear the weight of age and want alone.
I'll try once more.

Re-enter AGNES, and after her, YOUNG WILMOT.
Return'd, my life, so soon—

Agnes. The unexpected coming of this stranger
Prevents my going yet.

Young W. You are, I presume,
The gentleman to whom this is directed.
What wild neglect, the token of despair,
What indigence, what misery appears
In this once happy house! What discontent,
What anguish and confusion, fill the faces
Of its dejected owners! (*Aside.*) [come

Old W. (*Having read the letter.*) Sir, such wel-
As this poor house affords, you may command.
Our ever friendly neighbour, once we hop'd
T' have call'd fair Charlotte by a dearer name;
But we have done with hope—I pray excuse
This incoherence. We had once a son. (*Weeps.*)
Agnes. That you are come from that dear virtuous
Revives in us the mem'ry of a loss, [maid,
Which, though long since, we have not learn'd to
bear. [pain

Young W. The joy to see them, and the bitter
It is to see them thus, touches my soul
With tenderness and grief, that will o'erflow.
They know me not, and yet I shall, I fear,
Defeat my purpose, and betray myself. (*Aside.*)

Old W. The lady calls you, here, her valu'd
friend;

Enough, though nothing more should be imply'd,
To recommend you to our best esteem,
A worthless acquisition! May she find
Some means that better may express her kindness!
But she, perhaps, has purpos'd to enrich
You with herself, and end her fruitless sorrow
For one, whom death alone can justify
For leaving her so long. If it be so,
May you repair his loss, and be to Charlotte
A second, happier Wilmot! Partial nature,
Who only favours youth; as feeble age
Were not her offspring, or below her care,
Has seal'd our doom: no second hope shall spring
To dry our tears, and dissipate despair.

Agnes. The last, and most abandon'd of our kind!
By heaven and earth neglected or despis'd!

The loathsome grave, that robb'd us of our son,
And all our joys in him must be our refuge. [fiends,
Young W. Let ghosts unparдон'd, or devoted
Fear without hope, and wail in such sad strains;
But grace defend the living from despair!

The darkest hours precede the rising sun,
And mercy may appear when least expected. [ed,
Old W. This I have heard a thousand times repeat-
And have, believing, been as oft deceiv'd.

Young W. Behold in me an instance of its truth.
At sea twice shipwreck'd, and as oft the prey
Of lawless pirates; by the Arabs thrice
Surpris'd, and robb'd on shore; and once reduc'd
To worse than these, the sum of all distress
That the most wretched feel on this side hell—
Even slavery itself: but here I stand,
Except one trouble that will quickly end,
The happiest of mankind.

Old W. A rare example
Of fortune's changes; apter to surprise
Or entertain, than comfort or instruct.
If you would reason from events, be just,
And count, when you escap'd, how many perish'd,
And draw your inference thence.

Agnes. Alas! who knows,
But we were render'd childless by some storm,

In which you, though preserv'd, might bear a part?

Young W. How has my curiosity betray'd me
Into superfluous pain! I faint with fondness;
And shall, if I stay longer, rush upon them;
Proclaim myself their son; kiss, and embrace them;
Till, with the excess of pleasure and surprise,
Their souls transported, their frail manions quit,
And leave them breathless in my longing arms.
By circumstances, then, and slow degrees,
They must be let into a happiness
Too great for them to bear at once, and live:
That Charlotte will perform. I need not feign
To ask an hour for rest. (*Aside.*) Sir, I entreat
The favour to retire; where, for awhile,
I may repose myself. You will excuse
This freedom, and the trouble that I give you:
'Tis long since I have slept, and nature calls.

Old W. I pray, no more: believe we're only
troubled,
That you should think any excuse were needful.

Young W. The weight of this, to me is some in-
cumbrance. (*Gives a casket to his mother.*)
And its contents of value: if you please
To take the charge of it till I awake,
I shall not rest the worse. If I should sleep
Till I am ask'd for, as perhaps I may,
I beg that you would wake me.

Agnes. Doubt it not!
Distracted as I am with various woes,
I shall remember that. [*Exit with Old W.*]

Young W. Merciless grief!
What ravage has it made! how has it chang'd
Her lovely form and mind! I feel her anguish,
And dread, I know not what, from her despair.
My father, too—Oh! grant them patience, heaven,
A little longer, a few short hours more,
And all their cares, and mine, shall end for ever.

ACT III. [*Exit.*]

SCENE I.—*A Room in Old Wilmot's house.*

Enter AGNES, with the casket in her hand.

Agnes. Who should this stranger be? And then
this casket;

He says it is of value, and yet trusts it,
As if a trifle, to a stranger's hand.
His confidence amazes me; perhaps
It is not what he says; I'm strongly tempted
To open it, and see. No, let it rest!
Why should I pry into the cares of others,
Who have so many sorrows of my own? [*prising!*]
With how much ease the spring gives way!—Sur-
My eyes are dazzled, and my ravish'd heart
Leaps at the glorious sight. How bright's the lustre,
And how immense the worth of these fair jewels!
Ay, such a treasure would expel for ever
Base poverty, and all its abject train;
Famine, the cold neglect of friends, the scorn,
Or more provoking pity of the world.
Plenty, content, and power, might take their turn,
And lofty pride bare its aspiring head
At our approach, and once more bend before us.
A pleasing dream! 'Tis past; and now I wake:
For sure it was a happiness to think,
Though, but a moment, such a treasure mine.
Nay, it was more than thought—I saw, and touch'd
The bright temptation; and I see it yet.
'Tis here—'tis mine—I have it in possession.
Must I resign it? Must I give it back?
Am I in love with misery and want?
To rob myself, and court so vast a loss?
Retain it then—But how? There is a way—
Why sinks my heart? Why does my blood run cold?
Why am I thrill'd with horror? 'Tis not choice,
But dire necessity suggests the thought.

Enter OLD WILMOT.

Old W. The mind contented, with how little pains
The wand'ring senses yield to soft repose!
He's fallen asleep already—Happy man!
What dost thou think, my Agnes, of our guest?
He seems to me a youth of great humanity:
Just ere he clos'd his eyes, that swam in tears,

He wrung my hand, and press'd it to his lips;
And with a look, that pierc'd me to the soul,
Begg'd me to comfort thee: and—dost thou hear
What art thou gazing on? Fie, 'tis not well. [*me?*]
This casket was delivered to you clos'd:
Why have you open'd it? Should this be known,
How mean must we appear!

Agnes. And who shall know it?

Old W. There is a kind of pride, a decent dignity,
Due to ourselves; which, spite of our misfortunes,
May be maintain'd and cherish'd to the last.
To live without reproach, and without leave
To quit the world, shews sovereign contempt,
And noble scorn of its relentless malice. [*sense!*]

Agnes. Shews sovereign madness, and a scorn of
Pursue no farther this detested theme:
I will not die; I will not leave the world,
For all that you can urge, until compell'd.

Old W. To chase a shadow, when the setting sun
Is darting his last rays, were just as wise
As your anxiety for fleeting life,
Now the last means for its support are failing:
Were famine not as mortal as the sword,
Your warmth might be excus'd; but take thy choice:
Die how you will, you shall not die alone.

Agnes. Nor live, I hope.

Old W. There is no fear of that.

Agnes. Then, we'll live both.

Old W. Strange folly! where the means?

Agnes. There, those jewels!

Old W. Ah! Take heed!

Perhaps thou dost but try me—yet take heed!
There's nought so monstrous, but the mind of man,
In some conditions, may be brought t'approve:
Theft, sacrilege, treason, and parricide,
When flatt'ring opportunity entic'd,
And desperation drove, have been committed
By those who once would start to hear them nam'd.

Agnes. And add to these, detested suicide,
Which, by a crime much less, we may avoid.

Old W. How couldst thou form a thought so
very damning?

So advantageous, so secure, and easy;
And yet so cruel, and so full of horror!

Agnes. 'Tis less impiety, less against nature,
To take another's life, than end our own. [*crime:*]

Old W. No matter which, the less or greater
How'er we may deceive ourselves or others,
We act from inclination, not by rule,
Or none could act amiss: and that all err,
None but the conscious hypocrite denies.

Oh! what is man, his excellence and strength,
When, in an hour of trial and desertion,
Reason, his noblest power, may be suborn'd
To plead the cause of vile assassination!

Agnes. You're too severe: Reason may justly
For our own preservation. [*plead*]

Old W. Rest contented:
Whate'er resistance I may seem to make,
I am betray'd within: my will's seduc'd,
And my whole soul's infected. The desire
Of life returns, and brings with it a train
Of appetites, that rage to be supply'd;
Whoever stands to parley with temptation,
Parleys to be o'ercome.

Agnes. Then nought remains,
But the swift execution of a deed
That is not to be thought on, or delay'd.

Old W. Gen'rous, unhappy man! Oh! what
could move thee

To put thy life and fortune in the hands
Of wretches mad with anguish!

Agnes. By what means
Shall we effect his death?

Old W. Why, what a fiend!
How cruel, how remorseless and impatient
Have pride and poverty made thee!

Agnes. Barbarous man!
Whose wasteful riots ruin'd our estate,
And drove our son, ere the first down had spread

His rosy cheeks, spite of my sad presages,
Earnest entreaties, agonies, and tears,
To seek his bread 'mongst strangers, and to perish
In some remote, inhospitable land—
The loveliest youth, in person and in mind,
That ever crown'd a groaning mother's pains!
Where was thy pity, where thy patience then!
Thou cruel husband! thou unnat'ral father!
Thou most remorseless, most ungrateful man!
To waste my fortune, rob me of my son,
To drive me to despair, and then reproach me
For being what thou'st made me!

Old W. Dry thy tears:
I ought not to reproach thee. I confess
That thou hast suffer'd much: so have we both.
But chide no more; I'm wrought up to thy purpose.
The poor, ill-fated, unsuspecting victim,
Ere he reclin'd him on the fatal couch,
From which he's ne'er to rise, took off the sash
And costly dagger, that thou saw'st him wear,
And thus, unthinking, furnish'd us with arms
Against himself. Steal to the door,
And bring me word, if he be still asleep. [*Exit Agnes.*]
Or I'm deceiv'd, or he pronounc'd himself
The happiest of mankind. Deluded wretch:
Thy thoughts are perishing, thy youthful joys,
Touch'd by the icy hand of grisly death,
Are with'ring in their bloom. But, thought ex-
He'll never know the loss, [tinguish'd,
Nor feel the bitter pangs of disappointment—
Then I was wrong in counting him a wretch:
To die well pleas'd
Is all the happiest of mankind can hope for.
To be a wretch is to survive the loss
Of every joy, and even hope itself,
As I have done. Why do I mourn him then?
For, by the anguish of my tortur'd soul,
He's to be envy'd, if compar'd with me! [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room, with YOUNG WILMOT asleep upon a bed in the distance.*

Enter OLD WILMOT and AGNES.

Agnes. The stranger sleeps at present; but so rest-
His slumbers seem, they can't continue long. [less
Here, I've secur'd his dagger.

Old W. Oh! Agnes, Agnes! if there be a hell,
'Tis just we should expect it.

Agnes. Shake off this panic, and be more your-
self. [determin'd?

Old W. What's to be done? On what had we
Agnes. You're quite dismay'd. (*Takes the dagger.*)

Old W. Give me the fatal steel.

'Tis but a single murder,
Necessity, impatience, and despair,
The three wide mouths of that true Cerberus,
Grim poverty, demand: they shall be stopp'd.
Ambition, persecution, and revenge,
Devour their millions daily: and shall I—
But follow me, and see how little cause
You had to think there was the least remain
Of manhood, pity, mercy, or remorse,
Left in this savage breast. (*Going the wrong way.*)

Agnes. Where do you go?
The street is that way.

Old W. True; I had forgot.
Agnes. Quite, quite confounded!

Old W. Well, I recover. I shall find the way.

Agnes. Oh! softly, softly! The least noise un-
What are we doing? Misery and want [does us.
Are lighter ills than this. I cannot bear it!
Stop! hold thy hand!—Inconstant, wretched wo-
man! [mot!

What! doth my heart recoil? Oh! Wilmot, Wil-
What pow'r shall I invoke to aid thee, Wilmot?

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Another Room.*

Enter CHARLOTTE, EUSTACE, and RANDAL.

Char. What strange neglect? The doors are all
And not a living creature to be seen. [unbar'd,

Enter OLD WILMOT and AGNES.
Sir, we are come to give and receive

A thousand greetings.—Ha! what can this mean!
Why do you look with such amazement on us?
Are these your transports for your son's return?
Where is my Wilmot? Has he not been here?
Would he defer your happiness so long,
Or could a habit so disguise your son,
That you refus'd to own him?

Agnes. Heard you that?
What prodigy of horror is disclosing,
To render murder venial!

Old W. Pr'ythee, peace:
The miserable damn'd suspend their howling,
And the swift orbs are fix'd in deep attention.

Rand. What mean these dreadful words and
frantic air!

That is the dagger my young master wore.
Eust. My mind misgives me. Do not stand to gaze
On these dumb phantoms of despair and horror!
Let us search further, Randal, shew the way.

[*Exeunt Randal, Eustace, and Charlotte.*]

Agnes. Let life forsake the earth, and light the
And death and darkness bury in oblivion [sun,
Mankind and all their deeds, that no posterity
May ever rise to hear our horrid tale,
Or view the grave of such detested parricides!

Old W. Curses and deprecations are in vain:
The sun will shine, and all things have their course,
When we, the curse and burden of the earth,
Shall be absorb'd, and mingled with its dust.

Our guilt and desolation must be told,
From age to age, to teach desponding mortals,
How far beyond the reach of human thought
Heaven, when incens'd, can punish—Die thou first.
I durst not trust thy weakness. (*Stabs Agnes.*)

Agnes. Ever kind,
But most in this.

Old W. I will not long survive thee. [mot,

Agnes. Do not accuse thy erring mother, Wil-
With too much rigour, when we meet above.
To give thee life for life, and blood for blood,
Is not enough. Had I ten thousand lives,
I'd give them all to speak my penitence,
Deep, and sincere, and equal to my crime.

Oh, Wilmot! oh, my son, my son! (*Dies.*)

Enter RANDAL and EUSTACE.

Eust. Oh! Wilmot, Wilmot!
Are these the fruits of all thy anxious cares

For thy ungrateful parents? Cruel fiends! [usurp
Old W. What whining fool art thou, who wouldst
My sovereign right of grief! Was he thy son?

Say, canst thou shew thy hands, reeking with blood,
That flow'd, through purer channels, from thy loins?
Compute the sands that bound the spacious ocean,
And swell their numbers with a single grain;
Increase the noise of thunder with thy voice;
Or, when the raging wind lays nature waste,
Assist the tempest with thy feeble breath;
But name not thy faint sorrow with the anguish
Of a curs'd wretch, who only hopes from this

(*Stabbing himself.*)

To change the scene, but not relieve the pain.
Rand. A dreadful instance of the last remorse!

May all your woes end here!

Old W. Oh! would they end
A thousand ages hence, I then should suffer
Much less than I deserve. Yet let me say,
You'll do but justice to inform the world,
This horrid deed, that punishes itself,
Was not intended, thinking him our son;
For that we knew not, till it was too late.
Proud and impatient under our afflictions,
While heaven was labouring to make us happy,
We brought this dreadful ruin on ourselves.
Mankind may learn—but—oh!— (*Dies.*)

Rand. Heaven grant they may!
And may thy penitence atone thy crime!
'Tend well the hapless Charlotte, and bear hence
These bleeding victims of despair and pride;
Toll the death-bell! and follow to the grave
The wretched parents and ill-fated son. [*Exeunt.*]

THE GAMESTER;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY EDWARD MOORE.



Act V.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

BEVERLEY
LEWSON
STUKELY

JARVIS
DAWSON
GENTLEMAN, &c.

MRS. BEVERLEY
CHARLOTTE
LUCY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Beverley's Lodgings.

MRS. BEVERLEY and CHARLOTTE discovered, seated.

Mrs. B. Be comforted, my dear; all may be well yet. And now, methinks, the lodgings begin to look with another face. O sister, sister! if these were all my hardships; if all I had to complain of were no more than quitting my house, servants, equipage, and show, your pity would be weakness.

Char. Is poverty nothing, then?

Mrs. B. Nothing in the world, if it affected only me. While we had a fortune, I was the happiest of the rich: and now, 'tis gone, give me but a bare subsistence, and my husband's smiles, and I'll be the happiest of the poor. Why do you look at me?

Char. That I may hate my brother.

Mrs. B. Do not talk so, Charlotte.

Char. Has he not undone you?—O! this pernicious vice of gaming!—(Rises.) But, methinks, his usual hours of four or five in the morning might have contented him; it was misery enough to wake for him till then; need he have staid out all night? I shall learn to detest him.

Mrs. B. Not for the first fault. He never slept from me before.

Char. Slept from you! No, no, his nights have nothing to do with sleep. How has this one vice driven him from every virtue! Nay, from his affections, too! The time was, sister—

Mrs. B. And is. I have no fear of his affections. 'Would I knew that he were safe. (Rises.)

Char. From ruin and his companions—but that's impossible. His poor little boy, too! What must become of him?

Mrs. B. Why, want shall teach him industry. From his father's mistakes he shall learn prudence, and from his mother's resignation, patience. Poverty has no such terrors in it as you imagine. There's no condition of life, sickness and pain excepted, where happiness is excluded. The husbandman, who rises early to his labour, enjoys more welcome rest at night for it: his home happier; his family dearer; his enjoyments surer. The sun that rouses him in the morning, sets in the evening to release him. All situations have their comforts, if sweet contentment dwell in the heart. But my poor Beverley has none. The thought of having ruined those he loves, is misery for ever to him. 'Would I could ease his mind of that!

Char. If he alone were ruined, it were just he should be punished. He is my brother, it is true; but, when I think of what he has done, of the fortune you brought him, of his own large estate, too, squandered away upon this vilest of passions, and among the vilest of wretches,—O! I have no patience. My own little fortune is untouched, he says. 'Would I were sure on't!

Mrs. B. And so you may—'twould be a sin to doubt it.

Char. I will be sure on't—'twas madness in me to give it to his management. But I'll demand it from him this morning. I have a melancholy occasion for it.

Mrs. B. What occasion?

Char. To support a sister.

Mrs. B. No; I have no need on't. Take it, and reward a lover with it. The generous Lewson deserves much more. Why won't you make him happy?

Char. Because my sister is miserable.

Mrs. B. You must not think so. I have my jewels left yet; and when all is gone, these hands shall toil for our support. The poor should be industrious.—Why those tears, Charlotte?

Char. They flow in pity for you.

Mrs. B. All may be well yet. When he has nothing to lose, I shall fetter him in these arms again; and then, what is it to be poor?

Char. Cure him but of this destructive passion, and my uncle's death may retrieve all yet.

Mrs. B. Ay, Charlotte, could we cure him; but the disease of play admits no cure but poverty; and the loss of another fortune would but increase his shame and his affliction. Will Mr. Lewson call this morning?

Char. He said so last night. He gave me hints too, that he had suspicions of our friend Stukely.

Mrs. B. Not of treachery to my husband? That he loves play, I know; but surely he is honest.

Char. He labours to be thought so; yet itself, I doubt him. Honesty needs no pains to set itself off.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Your old steward, madam. I had not the heart to deny him admittance, the good old man begged so hard for it. *[Exit.]*

Enter JARVIS.

Mrs. B. Is this well, Jarvis? I desired you to avoid me.

Jar. Did you, madam? I am an old man, and had forgot. Perhaps, too, you forbid my tears; but I am old, madam, and age will be forgetful.

Mrs. B. The faithful creature!

Jar. I have forgot these apartments, too. I remember none such in my young master's house; and yet I have lived in it these five-and-twenty years. His good father would not have dismissed me.

Mrs. B. He had no reason, Jarvis.

Jar. I was faithful to him while he lived, and when he died, he bequeathed me to his son. I have been faithful to him too.

Mrs. B. I know it, I know it, Jarvis.

Jar. I am an old man, madam, and have not a long time to live. I asked but to have died with him, and he dismissed me.

Mrs. B. 'Prythee, no more of this! 'Twas his poverty that dismissed you.

Jar. Is he indeed so poor, then? O, he was the joy of my old heart!—But must his creditors have all? And have they sold his house too? His father built it when he was but a prating boy. The times that I have carried him in these arms! And, Jarvis, says he, when a beggar has asked charity of me, why should people be poor? You sha'n't be poor, Jarvis; if I was a king, nobody should be poor; yet, he is poor. And then he was so brave!—O, he was a brave little boy! and yet so merciful, he'd not have killed the knat that stung him.

Mrs. B. Speak to him, Charlotte; for I cannot.

Jar. I have a little money, madam: it might have been more, but I have loved the poor. All that I have is your's.

Mrs. B. No, Jarvis; we have enough yet; I thank you, though, and will deserve your goodness.

Jar. But shall I see my master? And will he let me attend him in his distresses? I'll be no expense to him; and it will kill me to be refused. Where is he, madam?

Mrs. B. Not at home, Jarvis. You shall see him another time.

Char. To-morrow, or the next day.—O, Jarvis! What a change is here!

Jar. A change, indeed, madam! My old heart aches at it. And yet, methinks,—But here's something coming.

Enter LUCY, with STUKELY.

Lucy. Mr. Stukely, madam. *[Exit.]*

Stuk. Good morning to you, ladies. Mr. Jarvis, your servant. Where's my friend, madam?

(To Mrs. Beverley.)

Mrs. B. I should have asked that question of you. Have you seen him to-day?

Stuk. No, madam.

Char. Nor last night?

Stuk. Last night! Did he not come home, then?

Mrs. B. No. Were you not together?

Stuk. At the beginning of the evening; but not since. Where can he have staid?

Char. You call yourself his friend, sir; why do you encourage him in this madness of gaming?

Stuk. You have asked me that question before, madam; and I told you, my concern was that I could not save him; Mr. Beverley is a man, madam; and, if the most friendly entreaties have no effect upon him, I have no other means. My purse has been his, even to the injury of my fortune. If that has been encouragement, I deserve censure; but I meant it to retrieve him.

Mrs. B. I do not doubt it, sir; and I thank you. But where did you leave him last night?

Stuk. At Wilson's, madam, if I ought to tell; in company I did not like. Possibly, he may be there still. Mr. Jarvis knows the house, I believe.

Jar. Shall I go, madam?

Mrs. B. No; he may take it ill.

Char. He may go, as from himself.

Stuk. And, if he pleases, madam, without naming me: I am faulty myself, and should conceal the errors of a friend: but I can refuse nothing here.

Jar. I would fain see him, methinks.

Mrs. B. *(To Jarvis.)* Do so, then. But take care how you upbraid him. I have never upbraided him.

Jar. 'Would I could bring him comfort! *[Exit.]*

Stuk. Do not be too much alarmed, madam. All men have their errors, and their times of seeing them. Perhaps, my friend's time is not come yet. But he has an uncle, and old men do not live for ever. You should look forward, madam; we are taught how to value a second fortune by the loss of a first. *(Knocking at the door.)*

Mrs. B. Hark!—No—that knocking was too rude for Mr. Beverley. Pray heaven he be well!

Stuk. Never doubt it, madam. You shall be well, too; everything shall be well. *(Knocking again.)*

Mrs. B. The knocking is a little loud, though.—Who waits there? Will none of you answer? None of you, did I say? Alas! what was I thinking of?—I had forgot myself. *(Takes a chair.)*

Char. I'll go, sister.—But do not be alarmed so. *[Exit.]*

Stuk. What extraordinary accident have you to fear, madam?

Mrs. B. I beg your pardon; but it is ever thus with me, in Mr. Beverley's absence. No one knocks at the door, but I fancy it is a messenger of ill news.

Stuk. You are too fearful, madam; it was but one night of absence; and, if ill thoughts intrude, as love is always doubtful, think of your worth and beauty, and drive them from your breast.

Mrs. B. What thoughts? I have no thoughts that wrong my husband.

Stuk. Such thoughts indeed would wrong him. The world is full of slander; and every wretch that

knows himself unjust, charges his neighbour with like passions; and by the general frailty, hides his own:—if you are wise, and would be happy, turn a deaf ear to such reports. 'Tis ruin to believe them.

Mrs. B. Ay, worse than ruin. 'Twould be, to sin against conviction. Why was it mentioned?

Stuk. To guard you against rumour. The sport of half mankind is mischief; and, for a single error, they make men devils. If their tales reach you, disbelieve them.

Mrs. B. What tales? By whom? Why told? I have heard nothing:—or if I had, with all his errors, my Beverley's firm faith admits no doubt—it is my safety, my seat of rest and joy, while the storm threatens round me. I'll not forsake it.—(*Stukely sighs, and looks down.*) Why turn you, sir, away? and why that sigh?

Stuk. I was attentive, madam; and sighs will come, we know not why. Perhaps, I have been too busy; if it should seem so, impute my zeal to friendship, that meant to guard you against evil tongues. Your Beverley is wronged, slandered most vilely:—my life upon his truth.

Mrs. B. And mine too. Who is it that doubts it? But no matter: I am prepared, sir. Yet, why this caution? You are my husband's friend; I think you mine too; the common friend of both. (*Pauses.*)—I had been unconcerned else.

Stuk. For heaven's sake, madam, be so still! I meant to guard you against suspicion, not to alarm it.

Mrs. B. Nor have you, sir. Who told you of suspicion? I have a heart it cannot reach.

Stuk. Then I am happy: I would say more; but am prevented.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. What a heart has that Jarvis!—A creditor, sister. But the good old man has taken him away.—“Do not distress his wife! Do not distress his sister!” I could hear him say. “'Tis cruel to distress the afflicted.”—And when he saw me at the door, he begged pardon that his friend had knocked so loud.

Stuk. I wish I had known of this. Was it a large demand, madam?

Char. I heard not that; but visits such as these, we must expect often.—Why so distressed, sister? This is no new affliction.

Mrs. B. No, Charlotte; but I am faint with watching—quite sunk and spiritless.—Will you excuse me, sir? I'll to my chamber, and try to rest a little.

Stuk. Good thoughts go with you, madam! [*Exit Mrs. B.*]—(*Aside.*) My bait is taken, then. Poor Mrs. Beverley! how my heart grieves to see her thus.

Char. Cure her, and be a friend, then.

Stuk. How cure her, madam?

Char. Reclaim my brother.

Stuk. Ay, give him a new creation; or breathe another soul into him. I'll think on't, madam. Advice, I see, is thankless.

Char. Useless, I am sure, it is; if, through mistaken friendship, or other motives, you feed his passion with your purse, and soothe it by example. Physicians to cure fevers, keep from the patient's thirsty lip the cup that would enflame him: you give it to his hands. (*A knocking.*) Hark, sir!—These are my brother's desperate symptoms.—Another creditor.

Stuk. (*Aside.*) One not so easily got rid of: 'tis Williams.—What, Lewson!

Enter LEWSON.

Lew. Madam, your servant.—Your's, sir.—I was enquiring for you at your lodgings.

Stuk. This morning? You had business, then?

Lew. You'll call it by another name, perhaps. Where's Mr. Beverley, madam?

Char. We have sent to enquire for him.

Lew. Is he abroad, then? He did not use to go out so early.

Char. No, nor stay out so late.

Lew. Is that the case? I am sorry for it. But Mr. Stukely, perhaps, may direct you to him.

Stuk. I have already, sir.—But what was your business with me?

Lew. To congratulate you upon your late successes at play. Poor Beverley!—but you are his friend; and there is a comfort in having successful friends.

Stuk. And what am I to understand by this?

Lew. That Beverley is a poor man with a rich friend; that's all.

Stuk. Your words would mean something, I suppose. Another time, sir, I shall desire an explanation.

Lew. And why not now? I am no dealer in long sentences. A minute or two will do for me.

Stuk. But not for me, sir. I am slow of apprehension, and must have time and privacy. A lady's presence engages my attention. Another morning I may be found at home.

Lew. Another morning, then, I'll wait upon you.

Stuk. I shall expect you, sir.—Madam, your servant. [*Exit.*]

Char. What mean you by this?

Lew. To hint to him that I know him.

Char. How know him? Mere doubt and supposition.

Lew. I shall have proof soon.

Char. And what then? Would you risk your life to be his punisher?

Lew. My life, madam? Don't be afraid; but let it content you, that I know this Stukely:—'twould be as easy to make him honest as brave.

Char. And what do you intend to do?

Lew. Nothing, till I have proof. But, methinks, madam, I am acting here without authority. Could I have leave to call Mr. Beverley brother, his concerns would be my own. Why will you make my services appear officious?

Char. You know my reasons, and should not press me. But I am cold, you say; and cold I will be, while a poor sister's destitute. But let us change the subject. Your business here this morning is with my sister: misfortunes press too hard upon her; yet, till this day, she has borne them nobly.

Lew. Where is she?

Char. Gone to her chamber: her spirits failed her.

Lew. I hear her coming:—let what has passed with Stukely be a secret: she has already too much to trouble her.

Enter MRS. BEVERLEY.

Mrs. B. Good morning, sir. I heard your voice; and, as I thought, enquiring for me.—Where's Mr. Stukely, Charlotte?

Char. This moment gone. You have been in tears, sister; but here's a friend shall comfort you.

Lew. Or, if I add to your distresses, I beg your pardon, madam. The sale of your house and furniture was finished yesterday.

Mrs. B. I know it, sir. I know, too, your generous reason for putting me in mind of it: but you have obliged me too much already.

Lew. There are trifles, madam, which I know you have set a value on; those I have purchased, and will deliver. I have a friend, too, that esteems you: he has bought largely; and will call nothing his, till he has seen you. If a visit to him would not be painful, he has begged it may be this morning.

Mrs. B. Not painful in the least. My pain is from the kindness of my friends. Why am I to be obliged beyond the power of return?

Lew. You shall repay us at your own time. I have a coach waiting at the door:—shall we have your company, madam?

Char. No:—my brother may return soon; I'll stay and receive him.

Mrs. B. He may want a comforter, perhaps. But don't upbraid him, Charlotte. We sha'n't be absent long.—Come, sir, since I must be so obliged.

Lew. 'Tis I that am obliged. An hour, or less, will be sufficient for us.—We shall find you at home, madam?

Char. Certainly.

[*Exeunt Lewson, Mrs. Beverley, and Charlotte.*]

SCENE II.—*Stukely's Lodgings.*

Enter STUKELY.

Stuk. That Lewson suspects me, 'tis too plain.—Yet, why should he suspect me?—I appear the friend of Beverley, as much as he.—But I am rich, it seems; and so I am: thanks to another's folly and my own wisdom. To what use is wisdom, but to take advantage of the weak? This Beverley's my fool: I cheat him, and he calls me friend.—But more business must be done yet. His wife's jewels are unsold; so is the reversion of his uncle's estate. I must have these too. And then, there's a treasure above all—I love his wife. Before she knew this Beverley, I loved her; but, like a cringing fool, bowed at a distance, while he stepped in and won her. Never, never will I forgive him for it.—I must have vengeance!—Those hints this morning were well thrown in; already they have fastened on her. If jealousy should weaken her affections, want may corrupt her virtue.—My heart rejoices in the hope!—These jewels may do much: he shall demand them of her; which, when mine, shall be converted to special purposes.—What now, Bates?

Enter BATES.

Bates. Is it a wonder, then, to see me? The forces are all in readiness, and only wait for orders. Where's Beverley?

Stuk. At last night's rendezvous, waiting for me. Is Dawson with you?

Bates. Dressed like a nobleman, with money in his pocket, and a set of dice that shall deceive the devil.

Stuk. That fellow has a head to undo a nation; but, for the rest, they are such low-mannered, ill-looking dogs, I wonder Beverley has not suspected them.

Bates. No matter for manners and looks: do you supply them with money, and they are gentlemen by profession. The passion of gaming casts such a mist before the eyes, that the nobleman shall be surrounded with sharpers, and imagine himself in the best company.

Stuk. There's that Williams, too: it was he, I suppose, that called at Beverley's with the note this morning. What directions did you give him?

Bates. To knock loud, and be clamorous. Did not you see him?

Stuk. No; the fool sneaked off with Jarvis. Had he appeared within doors, as I directed, I should have discharged the note myself. I waited near on purpose. I want the women to think well of me; for Lewson is grown suspicious—he told me so himself.

Bates. What answer did you make him?

Stuk. A short one; that I would see him soon, for further explanation.

Bates. We must take care of him. But what have we to do with Beverley? Dawson and the rest are wondering at you.

Stuk. Why, let them wonder. I have designs above their narrow reach. They see me lend him money, and they stare at me; but they are fools. I want him to believe me beggared by him.

Bates. And what then?

Stuk. Ay, there's the question: but no matter. At night you may know more. He waits for me at Wilson's. I told the women where to find him.

Bates. To what purpose?

Stuk. To save suspicion. It looked friendly; and they thanked me. Old Jarvis was despatched to him.

Bates. And may entreat him home.

Stuk. No: he expects money from me: but I'll have none. His wife's jewels must go. Women are easy creatures, and refuse nothing where they love. Follow to Wilson's; but, be sure he sees you not: you are a man of character, you know; of prudence and discretion. You will wait for me at Wilson's in an outer room; I shall presently have employment for you. Come, sir.

Let drudging fools by honesty grow great;
The shorter road to riches is deceit. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Gaming-house, with two tables, six chairs, box, dice, &c. cards thrown about, candles nearly burnt out.*

BEVERLEY is discovered seated.

Bev. Why, what a world is this! The slave that digs for gold, receives his daily pittance, and sleeps contented; while those for whom he labours, convert their good to mischief, making abundance the means of want. O shame! shame! Had fortune given me but a little, that little had been still my own. What had I to do with play? I wanted nothing: my wishes and my means were equal: the poor followed me with blessings; love scattered roses on my pillow, and morning waked me to delight. Oh, bitter thought! that leads to what I was, by what I am! I would forget both. Who's there?

Enter WAITER.

Waiter. A gentleman, sir, enquires for you.

Bev. He might have used less ceremony. Stukely, I suppose?

Waiter. No, sir, a stranger.

Bev. Well, shew him in.—(*Exit Waiter.*)—A messenger from Stukely, then, from him that has undone me!—Yet all in friendship; and now he lends me from his little, to bring back fortune to me.

Enter JARVIS.

Jarvis! Why this intrusion? Your absence had been kinder.

Jar. I came in duty, sir; if it be troublesome—

Bev. It is. I would be private; hid, even from myself. Who sent you hither?

Jar. One that would persuade you home again. My mistress is not well; her tears told me so.

Bev. Go with thy duty there, then. I have no business for thee.

Jar. Yes, sir; to lead you from this place. I am your servant still. Your prosperous fortune blessed my old age. If that has left you, I must not leave you.

Bev. Not leave me? Recall past times, then; or, through this sea of storms and darkness, shew me a star to guide me. But what can'st thou?

Jar. The little that I can, I will. You have been generous to me; I would not offend you, sir,—but—

Bev. No. Thinkest thou, I'd ruin thee too? I have enough of shame already. My wife! my

wife! Wouldst thou believe it, Jarvis, I have not seen her all this long night! I, who have loved her so, that every hour of absence seemed as a gap in life. But other bonds have held me. Oh, I have played the boy; dropping my counters in the stream, and, reaching to redeem them, lost myself!

Jar. For pity's sake, sir! I have no heart to see this change.

Bev. Nor I to bear it. How speaks the world of me, Jarvis?

Jar. As of a good man, dead: of one who, waking in a dream, fell down a precipice. The world is sorry for you.

Bev. Ay, and pities me. Says it not so? But I was born to infamy. I'll tell thee what it says: it calls me villain; a treacherous husband; a cruel father; a false brother; one lost to nature and her charities; or, to say all in one short word, it calls me—gamester. Go to thy mistress: I'll see her presently.

Jar. And why not now? Rude people press upon her; loud, bawling creditors; wretches, who know no pity. I met one at the door; he would have seen my mistress. I wanted means of present payment, so promised it to-morrow. But others may be pressing; and she has grief enough already. Your absence hangs too heavy on her.

Bev. Tell her I'll come then. I have a moment's business. But what hast thou to do with my distresses? Thy honesty has left thee poor. Keep what thou hast, lest, between thee and the grave, misery steal in. I have a friend shall counsel me: this is that friend.

Enter STUKELY.

Stuk. How fares it, Beverley? Honest Mr. Jarvis, well met. That viper, Williams! was it not he that troubled you this morning?

Jar. My mistress heard him then! I am sorry that she heard him.

Bev. And Jarvis promised payment.

Stuk. That must not be. Tell him I'll satisfy him.

Jar. Will you, sir? Heaven will reward you for it.

Bev. Generous Stukely! Friendship, like yours, might almost balance the wrongs of fortune.

Stuk. You think too kindly of me. Make haste to Williams; his clamours may be rude else.

Jar. And my master will go home again? Alas, sir, we know of hearts there breaking for his absence. *[Exit.]*

Bev. Would I were dead!

Stuk. Ha, ha, ha! Pr'ythee be a man, and leave dying to disease and old age. Fortune may be ours again; at least we'll try for it.

Bev. No; it has fooled us on too far.

Stuk. Ay, ruined us; and therefore we'll sit down contented. These are the despondings of men without money; but, let the shining ore chink in the pocket, and folly turns to wisdom. We are Fortune's children: true, she's a fickle mother: but, shall we droop, because she's peevish? No; she has smiles in store; and these, her frowns, are meant to brighten them.

Bev. Is this a time for levity? But you are single in the ruin, and therefore may talk lightly of it: with me it is complicated misery.

Stuk. You censure me unjustly: I but assumed these spirits to cheer my friend. Heaven knows, he wants a comforter!

Bev. What new misfortune?

Stuk. I would have brought you money; but lenders want securities. What's to be done? All, that was mine, is yours already.

Bev. And there's the double weight that sinks me. I have undone my friend too; one who, to save a drowning wretch, reached out his hand, and perished with him.

Stuk. Have better thoughts.

Bev. Whence are they to proceed? I have nothing left.

Stuk. Then we are indeed undone. What, nothing? No moveables, nor useless trinkets? Baubles locked up in caskets, to starve their owners? I have ventured deeply for you.

Bev. Therefore this heart-ache; for I am lost beyond all hope.

Stuk. No; means may be found to save us. Jarvis is rich. Who made him so? This is no time for ceremony.

Bev. And 'is it for dishonesty? The good old man! Shall I rob him too? My friend would grieve for it. No; let the little that he has, buy food and clothing for him.

Stuk. Good morning, then. *(Going.)*

Bev. So hasty! Why, then, good morning.

Stuk. And, when we meet again, upbraid me: say, it was I that tempted you: tell Lewson so; and tell him, I have wronged you. He has suspicions of me, and will thank you.

Bev. No; we have been companions in a rash voyage, and the same storm has wrecked us both: mine shall be self-upbraidings.

Stuk. And will they feed us? You deal unkindly by me. I have sold and borrowed for you, while land or credit lasted; and now, when fortune should be tried, and my heart whispers me success, I am deserted—turned loose to beggary; while you have hoards.

Bev. What hoards? Name them, and take them.

Stuk. Jewels.

Bev. And shall this thriftless hand seize them too? My poor, poor wife! must she lose all? I would not wound her so.

Stuk. Nor I, but from necessity. One effort more, and fortune may grow kind. I have unusual hopes.

Bev. Think of some other means, then.

Stuk. I have; and you rejected them.

Bev. Pr'ythee, let me be a man.

Stuk. Ay, and your friend a poor one. But I have done. And for these trinkets of a woman, why, let her keep them to deck out pride with, and shew a laughing world she has finery to starve in.

Bev. No; she shall yield up all: my friend demands it. But needs he have talked lightly of her? The jewels that she values are truth and innocence; those will adorn her ever: for the rest, she wore them for a husband's pride, and to his wants will give them. You know her not. Where shall we meet?

Stuk. No matter. I have changed my mind. Leave me to a prison; 'tis the reward of friendship.

Bev. Perish mankind first! Leave you to a prison? No; fallen as you see me, I am not that wretch: nor would I change this heart, o'ercharged as it is with folly and misfortune, for one most prudent and most happy, if callous to a friend's distresses.

Stuk. You are too warm.

Bev. In such a cause, not to be warm is to be frozen. Farewell. I'll meet you at your lodgings.

Stuk. Reflect a little: the jewels may be lost: better not hazard them. I was too pressing.

Bev. And I ungrateful. Reflection takes up time: I have no leisure for it. Within an hour expect me. *[Exit.]*

Stuk. The thoughtless, shallow prodigal! We shall have sport at night, then. But hold;—the jewels are not ours yet; the lady may refuse them; the husband may relent too; 'tis more than probable. I'll write a note to Beverley, and the contents shall spur him to demand them. Bates and the rest think me too rogue through avarice. No; I have warmer motives—love and revenge. Ruin the husband, and the wife's virtue may be bid for,

Enter BATES.

Look to your men, Bates; there's money stirring. We meet to-night upon this spot. Hasten, and tell them so. Beverley calls upon me at my lodgings, and we return together. Hasten, I say; the rogues will scatter else.

Bates. Not till their leader bids them.

Stuk. Give them the word, and follow me; I must advise with you. This is a day of business.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Beverley's Lodgings.—Tables and chairs.*

Enter BEVERLEY and CHARLOTTE.

Char. Your looks are changed too; there's wildness in them. My wretched sister! How will it grieve her to see you thus!

Bev. No, no; a little rest will ease me. And for your Lewson's kindness to her, it has my thanks; I have no more to give him.

Char. Yes; a sister and her fortune. I trifle with him, and he complains. My looks, he says, are cold upon him. He thinks too—

Bev. That I have lost your fortune! He dares not think so.

Char. Nor does he. You are too quick at guessing. He cares not if you had: that care is mine. I lent it you to husband; and now I claim it.

Bev. You have suspicions, then!

Char. Cure them, and give it me.

Bev. To stop a sister's chiding?

Char. To vindicate her brother.

Bev. How, if he need no vindication?

Char. I fain would hope so.

Bev. Ay, would, and cannot. Leave it to time, then; it will satisfy all doubts.

Char. Mine are already satisfied.

Bev. It is well. And when the subject is renewed, speak to me like a sister, and I will answer like a brother.

Char. To tell me I am a beggar: why, tell it now. I that can bear the ruin of those dearer to me, the ruin of a sister and her infant, can bear that too.

Bev. No more of this; you wring my heart!

Char. 'Would that the misery were all your own! But innocence must suffer. Unthinking rioter!—whose home was heaven to him: an angel dwelt there, and a little cherub, that crowned his days with blessings! how he has lost this heaven to league with devils!

Bev. Forbear, I say: reproaches come too late; they search, but cure not. And, for the fortune you demand, we'll talk to-morrow on it; our tempers may be milder.

Char. Or, if 'tis gone, why, farewell all! But I'll upbraid no more. What heaven permits, perhaps, it may ordain; and sorrow then is sinful. Yet that the husband, father, brother, should be its instruments of vengeance! 'tis grievous to know that.

Bev. If you are my sister, spare the remembrance; it wounds too deeply. To-morrow shall clear all; and, when the worst is known, it may be better than your fears. Comfort my wife; and for the pains of absence I'll make atonement. (*A knocking at the door.*)

Char. Hark! she comes! Look cheerfully upon her. Affections, such as hers, are prying, and lend those eyes, that read the soul.

Enter MRS. BEVERLEY and LEWSON.

Mrs. B. My life!

Bev. My love! How fares it? I have been a truant husband.

Mrs. B. But we meet now, and that heals all. Doubts and alarms I have had; but, in this dear

embrace, I bury and forget them. My friend here has been, indeed, a friend. Charlotte, 'tis you must thank him: your brother's thanks and mine are of too little value.

Bev. Yet, what we have, we'll pay. I thank you, sir, and am obliged. I would say more, but that your goodness to the wife upbraids the husband's follies. Had I been wise, she had not trespassed on your bounty.

Lew. Nor has she trespassed. The little I have done, acceptance overpays.

Char. So friendship thinks—

Mrs. B. And doubles obligations, by striving to conceal them. We'll talk another time on't. You are too thoughtful, love.

Bev. No; I have reason for these thoughts.

Char. And hatred for the cause?—Would you had that too!

Bev. I have: the cause was avarice.

Char. And who the tempter?

Bev. A ruined friend—ruined by too much kindness.

Lew. Ay, worse than ruined; stabbed in his fame, mortally stabbed; riches cannot cure him.

Bev. Or if they could, those I have drained him of. Something of this he hinted in the morning,—that Lewson had. Why these suspicions?

Lew. At school we knew this Stukely. A cunning, plodding boy he was, sordid and cruel. Slow at his task, but quick at shifts and tricking. He schemed out mischief, that others might be punished; and would tell his tale with so much art, that, for the lash he merited, rewards and praise were given him. Shew me a boy with such a mind, and time, that ripens manhood in him, shall ripen vice too. I'll prove him, and lay him open to you; till then, be warned: I know him, and therefore shun him.

Bev. As I would, those that wrong him. You are too busy, sir.

Mrs. B. No, not too busy;—mistaken, perhaps; that had been milder.

Lew. No matter, madam; I can bear this, and praise the heart that prompts it. Pity such friendship should be so misplaced!

Bev. Again, sir? But I'll bear too. You wrong him, Lewson, and will be sorry for it.

Char. Ay, when 'tis proved he wrongs him. The world is full of hypocrites.

Bev. And Stukely one! so you'd infer, I think: I'll hear no more of this: My heart aches for him: I have undone him.

Lew. The world says otherwise.

Bev. The world is false, then! I have business with you, love. We'll leave them to their rancour. (*Going.*)

Char. No; we shall find room enough within for it. This way, sir.

Lew. Another time my friend will thank me:—that time is hastening too.

[*Exeunt Charlotte and Lewson.*]

Bev. They hurt me beyond bearing. Is Stukely false? then honesty has left us. 'Twere sinning against heaven to think so.

Mrs. B. I never doubted him.

Bev. No; you are charity. Meekness and ever-during patience live in that heart, and love, that knows no change. Why did I ruin you?

Mrs. B. You have not ruined me. I have no wants when you are present, nor wishes in your absence, but to be blest with your return. Be but resigned to what has happened, and I am rich beyond the dreams of avarice.

Bev. My generous girl! But memory will be busy; still crowding on my thoughts, to sour the present by the past. I have another pang too.

Mrs. B. Tell it, and let me cure it.

Bev. That friend, that generous friend, whose

fame they have traduced; I have undone him too. While he had means, he lent me largely; and now, a prison must be his portion.

Mrs. B. No; I hope otherwise.

Bev. To hope must be to act; the charitable wish feeds not the hungry. Something must be done.

Mrs. B. What?

Bev. In bitterness of heart he told me, just now he told me I had undone him! Could I hear that, and think of happiness? No! I have disclaimed it, while he is miserable.

Mrs. B. The world may mend with us, and then we may be grateful; there's comfort in that hope.

Bev. Ay; 'tis the sick man's cordial, his promised cure: while, in preparing it, the patient dies.

Enter LUCY.

What now?

Lucy. A letter, sir. [Exit.

Bev. The hand is Stukely's. (*Opens, and reads it to himself.*)

Mrs. B. And brings good news; at least, I'll hope so. What says he, love?

Bev. Why this, too much for patience: yet he directs me to conceal it from you. (*Reads.*)

"Let your haste to see me be the only proof of your esteem for me. I have determined, since we parted, to bid adieu to England, chusing rather to forsake my country, than to owe my freedom in it to the means we talked of. Keep this a secret at home, and hasten to the ruined
R. STUKELY."

Ruined by friendship! I must relieve or follow him.

Mrs. B. Follow him, did you say? Then I am lost indeed!

Bev. O, this infernal vice! how has it sunk me! A vice, whose highest joy was poor to my domestic happiness. Yet, how have I pursued it! turned all my comforts to the bitterest pangs, and all thy smiles to tears.—D—d! d—d infatuation!

Mrs. B. Be cool, my life. What are the means the letter talks of? Have you—have I those means? Tell me, and ease me. I have no life, while you are wretched.

Bev. No, no; it must not be. 'Tis I alone have sinned; 'tis I alone must suffer. You shall reserve those means to keep my child and his wronged mother from want and wretchedness.

Mrs. B. What means?

Bev. I came to rob you of them, but cannot—dare not: those jewels are your sole support: I should be more than monster to request them.

Mrs. B. My jewels! Trifles, not worth the speaking of, if weighed against a husband's peace: but let them purchase that, and the world's wealth is of less value.

Bev. How little do I seem before such virtues!

Mrs. B. No more, my love. I kept them, till occasion called to use them: now is the occasion, and I'll resign them cheerfully.

Bev. Why, we'll be rich in love, then.

Mrs. B. Come to my closet. But let him manage wisely: we have no more to give him.

Bev. Where learnt my love this excellence? 'Tis heaven's own teaching: that heaven, which to an angel's form has given a mind more lovely. I am unworthy of you, but will deserve you better.

Henceforth my follies and neglects shall cease, and all to come be penitence and peace:

Vice shall no more attract me with her charms, Nor pleasure reach me, but in these dear arms.

[Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Stukely's Lodgings.*

Enter STUKELY and BATES.

Stuk. So runs the world, Bates. Fools are the natural prey of knaves; nature designed them so,

when she made lambs for wolves. The laws that fear and policy have framed, nature disclaims: she knows but two; and those are force and cunning. The nobler law is force; but then there is danger in it; while cunning, like a skilful miner, works safely and unseen.

Bates. And therefore wisely. Force must have nerves and sinews; cunning wants neither. The dwarf that has it shall trip the giant's heels up.

Stuk. And bind him to the ground. Why we will erect a shrine for nature, and be her oracles. Conscience is weakness; fear made it, and fear maintains it. The dread of shame, inward reproaches, and fictitious burnings, swell out the phantom. Nature knows none of this: her laws are freedom.

Bates. Sound doctrine, and well delivered.

Stuk. We are sincere too, and practise what we teach. Let the grave pedant say as much.—But now to business. The jewels are disposed of; and Beverley again worth money. He waits to count his gold out, and then comes hither. If my design succeed, this night we finish with him. Go to your lodgings, and be busy. You understand conveyances, and can make ruin sure.

Bates. Better stop here. The sale of this reversion may be talked of: there is danger in it.

Stuk. No, it is the mark I aim at. We will thrive and laugh. You are the purchaser, and there is the payment—(*Giving a pocket-book.*)—He thinks you rich; and so you shall be. Enquire for titles, and deal hardly: it will look like honesty.

Bates. How if he suspect us?

Stuk. Leave it to me: I study hearts, and when to work upon them. Go to your lodgings; and, if we come, be busy over papers. Talk of a thoughtless age, of gaming, and extravagance: you have a face for it.

Bates. (*Aside.*) A feeling too, that would avoid it. We push too far.—But I have cautioned you: if it end ill, you will think of me: and so, adieu.

[Exit.

Stuk. This fellow sins by halves; his fears are conscience to him: I'll turn these fears to use. Rogues that dread shame, will still be greater rogues, to hide their guilt. This shall be thought of. Lewson grows troublesome: we must get rid of him: he knows too much. I have a tale for Beverley; part of it truth too; he shall call Lewson to account. If it succeed, it is well; if not, we must try other means.—(*Knocking at the door.*)—But here he comes:—I must dissemble.

Enter BEVERLEY.

Look to the door there!—(*In a seeming fright.*)—My friend?—I thought of other visitors.

Bev. No; these shall guard you from them:—(*Offering him notes.*)—take them, and use them cautiously. The world deals hardly by us.

Stuk. And shall I leave you destitute? No: your wants are the greatest. Another climate may treat me kinder. The shelter of to-night takes me from this.

Bev. Let these be your support then. Yet is there need of parting? I may again have means; we will share them, and live wisely.

Stuk. No. I should tempt you on. Habit is nature in me; ruin cannot cure it. Even now I would be gaming: taught by experience as I am, and knowing this poor sum is all that is left us, I am for venturing still. And say, I am to blame: yet will this little supply our wants? No, we must put it out to usury. Whether it is madness in me, or some resistless impulse of good fortune, I yet am ignorant; but—

Bev. Take it, and succeed then: I will try no more.

Stuk. It is surely impulse; it pleads so strongly. But you are cold. We will even part here then.—And for this last reserve, keep it for better uses; I will have none of it. I thank you though, and will seek fortune singly. One thing I had forgot—

Bev. What is it?

Stuk. Perhaps it were best forgotten. But I am open in my nature, and zealous for the honour of my friend. Lewson speaks freely of you.

Bev. Of you, I know he does.

Stuk. I can forgive him for it: but for my friend, I am angry.

Bev. What says he of me?

Stuk. That Charlotte's fortune is embezzled: he talks of it loudly.

Bev. He shall be silenced then. How heard you of it?

Stuk. From many: he questioned Bates about it: you must account with him, he says.

Bev. Or he with me;—and soon, too.

Stuk. Speak mildly to him. Cautions are best.

Bev. I'll think on't.—But whither go you?

Stuk. From poverty and prisons:—no matter whither. If fortune change, you may hear from me.

Bev. May these be prosperous, then.—(Offering the notes, which Stukely refuses.)—Nay, they are yours:—I have sworn it, and will have nothing:—take them, and use them.

Stuk. Singly, I will not. My cares are for my friend; for his lost fortune, and ruined family: all separate interests I disclaim. Together we have fallen; together we must rise. My heart, my honour, and affections, all will have it so.

Bev. I am weary of being fooled.

Stuk. And so am I.—Here let us part then: these bodings of good fortune shall all be stifled; I'll call them folly, and forget them. This one embrace, and then farewell. (Going to embrace Beverley.)

Bev. No; stay a moment. I have these bodings too; but, whether caught from you, or prompted by my good or evil genius, I know not: the trial shall determine. And yet, my wife!

Stuk. Ay, ay, she will chide.

Bev. No; my chidings are all here.

Stuk. I will not persuade you.

Bev. I am persuaded; by reason, too,—the strongest reason—necessity. O! could I but regain the height I have fallen from, heaven should forsake me in my latest hour, if I again mixed in these scenes, or sacrificed the husband's peace, his joy and best affections, to avarice and infamy.

Stuk. I have resolved like you; and, since our motives are so honest, why should we fear success?

Bev. Come on then. Where shall we meet?

Stuk. At Wilson's. Yet, if it hurt you, leave me: I have misled you often.

Bev. We have misled each other. But come! Fortune is fickle, and may be tired with plaguing us;—there let us rest our hopes.

Stuk. Yet think a little.

Bev. I cannot; thinking but distracts me. When desperation leads, all thoughts are vain; Reason would lose, what rashness may obtain.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Beverley's Lodgings.*

Enter CHARLOTTE and MRS. BEVERLEY.

Char. It was all a scheme, a mean one; unworthy of my brother.

Mrs. B. No, I am sure it was not. Stukely is honest too; I know he is. This madness has undone them both.

Char. My brother irrecoverably.—You are too spiritless a wife: a mournful tale, mixed with a

few kind words, will steal away your soul. The world is too subtle for such goodness. Had I been by, he should have asked your life sooner than those jewels.

Mrs. B. He should have had it then. I live but to oblige him. She who can love, and is beloved like me, will do as much. Men have done more for mistresses, and women for a base deluder. And shall a wife do less? Your chidings hurt me; Charlotte.

Char. And come too late; they might have saved you else. How could he use you so?

Mrs. B. It was friendship did it. His heart was breaking for a friend.

Char. The friend that has betrayed him.

Mrs. B. 'Pr'ythee, do not think so.

Char. To-morrow he accounts with me.

Mrs. B. And fairly: I will not doubt it.

Char. Unless a friend has wanted.—I have no patience.—Sister! sister! we are bound to curse this friend.

Mrs. B. My Beverley speaks nobly of him.

Char. And Lewson truly.—But I displease you with this talk. To-morrow will instruct us.

Mrs. B. Stay till it comes then. I would not think so hardly.

Char. Nor I, but from conviction. Yet we have hope of better days. My uncle is infirm, and of an age that threatens hourly:—or if he live, you never have offended him; and for distresses so unmerited he will have pity.

Mrs. B. I know it, and am cheerful.

Char. My Lewson will be kind too. While he and I have life and means, you shall divide with us.—And see, he is here.

Enter LEWSON.

Mrs. B. We were just speaking of you.

Lew. It is best to interrupt you then. Few characters will bear a scrutiny; and, where the bad outweighs the good, he is safest that is least talked of. What say you, madam?

Char. That I hate scandal, though a woman; therefore talk seldom of you.

Mrs. B. Or, with more truth, that, though a woman, she loves to praise; therefore talks always of you.—I'll leave you to decide it. [*Exit.*]

Lew. I come, to talk in private with you, of matters that concern you.

Char. What matters?

Lew. First, answer me sincerely to what I ask.

Char. Propose your question.

Lew. It is now a tedious twelve-month, since, with an open and kind heart you said, you loved me: and when, in consequence of such sweet words, I pressed for marriage, you gave a voluntary promise that you would live for me.

Char. You think me changed then?

Lew. I did not say so. This is my question; and with such plainness as I ask it, I shall entreat an answer;—Have you repented of this promise?

Char. Why am I doubted?

Lew. My doubts are of myself. I have faults, and you have observation. If, from my temper, my words or actions, you have conceived a thought against me, or even a wish for separation, all that has passed is nothing.

Char. Why, now I'll answer you; your doubts are prophecies, I am really changed.

Lew. Indeed!

Char. I could torment you now, as you have me; but it is not in my nature. That I am changed, I own: for what at first was inclination, is now grown reason in me; and from that reason, had I the world—nay, were I poorer than the poorest, and you too wanting bread—I would be yours, and happy.

Lew. My kindest Charlotte!—(*Takes her hand.*)—Thanks are too poor for this; and words too weak!—But if we love so, why should our union any longer be delayed?

Char. For happier times: the present are too wretched.

Lew. I may have reasons that press it now.

Char. What reasons?

Lew. The strongest reasons; unanswerable ones.

Char. Be quick, and name them.

Lew. First, promise that to-morrow, or the next day, you will be mine for ever.

Char. I do, though misery should succeed.

Lew. Thus, then I seize you! and with you every joy on this side heaven!

Char. Now, sir, your secret?

Lew. Your fortune is lost.

Char. My fortune lost!—Where learnt you this sad news?

Lew. From Bates, Stukely's prime agent: I have obliged him, and he is grateful: he told it me in friendship, to warn me from my Charlotte.

Char. It was honest in him, and I'll esteem him for it.

Lew. This is the time I am to meet him again.—He knows much more than he has told.

Char. For me it is enough; and, for your generous love, I thank you from my soul.

Lew. To-morrow, then, you fix my happiness.

Char. All that I can, I will.

Lew. It must be so; we live but for each other.—Keep what you know a secret; and, when we meet to-morrow, more may be known.—Till then, farewell!

[*Exeunt Lewson and Charlotte.*]

SCENE III.—*A Gaming House.*

Enter STUKELY, BEVERLEY, and six Gentlemen, through door in centre.

Bev. Whither would you lead me?

Stuk. Where we may vent our curses.

Bev. Ay, on yourself, and those d—d counsels that have destroyed me. Ten thousand fiends were in that bosom, and all let loose to tempt me,—I had resisted else.

Stuk. Go on, sir:—I have deserved this from you.

Bev. And curses everlasting:—time is too scanty for them.

Stuk. What have I done?

Bev. What the arch-fiend of old did,—soothed with false hopes, for certain ruin.

Stuk. Myself unhurt; nay, pleased at your destruction:—so your words mean. Why, tell it to the world: I am too poor to find a friend in it.

Bev. A friend! What is he? I had a friend.

Stuk. And have one still.

Bev. Ay; I'll tell you of this friend. He found me happiest of the happy; fortune and honour crowned me; and love and peace lived in my heart: one spark of folly lurked there: that too he found; and by deceitful breath blew it to flames that have consumed me. This friend were you to me.

Stuk. A little more perhaps:—the friend who gave his all to save you; and not succeeding, chose ruin with you: but no matter.—I have undone you, and am a villain.

Bev. No; I think not:—the villains are within.

Stuk. What villains?

Bev. Dawson, and the rest.—We have been dupes to sharpers.

Stuk. How know you this? I have had doubts as well as you; yet still, as fortune changed, I blushed at my own thoughts:—but you have proofs, perhaps.

Bev. Ay, d—d ones;—repeated losses,—night after night,—and no reverse:—chance has no hand in this.

Stuk. I think more charitably; yet I am peevish in my nature, and apt to doubt.—The world speaks fairly of this Dawson; so does it of the rest: we have watched them closely too.—But it is a right usurped by losers, to think the winners knaves.—We'll have more manhood in us.

Bev. I know not what to think. This night has stung me to the quick:—blasted my reputation too: I have bound my honour to these vipers; played meanly upon credit, until I tired them; and now they shun me, to rifle one another. What is to be done?

Stuk. Nothing: my counsels have been fatal.

Bev. By heaven, I'll not survive this shame.—Traitor! it is you have brought it on me.—(*Seizing him.*)—Shew me the means to save me; or I'll commit a murder here, and next upon myself.

Stuk. Why do it then, and rid me of ingratitude.

Bev. 'Pr'ythee forgive this language:—I speak I know not what.—Rage and despair are in my heart, and hurry me to madness. My home is horror to me—I'll not return to it. Speak quickly; tell me if in this wreck of fortune one hope remains? Name it, and be my oracle.

Stuk. To vent your curses on: you have bestowed them liberally.—Take your own counsel: and, should a desperate hope present itself, it will suit your deperate fortune. I'll not advise you.

Bev. What hope? By heaven, I'll catch at it, however desperate. I am so sunk in misery, it cannot lay me lower.

Stuk. You have an uncle.

Bev. Ay, what of him?

Stuk. Old men live long by temperance; while their heirs starve on expectation.

Bev. What mean you?

Stuk. That the reversion of his estate is yours; and will bring money to pay debts with:—nay more, it may retrieve what is past.

Bev. Or leave my child a beggar.

Stuk. And what is his father? A dishonourable one; engaged for sums he cannot pay.—That should be thought of.

Bev. It is my shame, the poison that inflames me. Where shall we go? To whom? I am impatient, till all's lost.

Stuk. All may be yours again.—Your man is Bates:—he has large funds at his command, and will deal justly by you.

Bev. I am resolved.—Tell them within, we'll meet them presently; and with full purses too.—Come, follow me.

Stuk. No. I'll have no hand in this; nor do I counsel it.—Use your discretion, and act from that.—You'll find me at my lodgings.

Bev. Succeed what will, this night I'll dare the worst:

'Tis loss of fear, to be completely ours'd. [*Exit.*]

Stuk. Why, lose it then for ever. Fear is the mind's worst evil; and 'tis a friendly office to drive it from the bosom.—Thus far has fortune crowned me.—Yet Beverley is rich; rich in his wife's best treasure, her honour and affections: I would supplant him there too.—A tale of art may do much.—Charlotte is sometimes absent. The seeds of jealousy are sown already. If I mistake not, they have taken root too. Now is the time to ripen them, and reap the harvest. The softest of her sex, if wronged in love, or thinking that she's wronged, becomes a tigress in revenge.—I'll instantly to Beverley's.—No matter for the danger.—When beauty leads us on, 'tis indiscretion to reflect, and cowardice to doubt. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*Beverley's Lodgings.*

Enter MRS. BEVERLEY and LUCY.

Mrs. B. Did Charlotte tell you anything?

Lucy. No, madam.

Mrs. B. She looked confus'd, methought; said, she had business with her Lewson; which, when I pressed to know, tears only were her answer.

Lucy. She seem'd in haste too:—yet her return may bring you comfort.

Mrs. B. No, my good girl; I was not born for it.—But why do I distress thee? Thy kind heart bleeds for the ills of others.—What pity that thy mistress can't reward thee! But there's a power above, that sees, and will remember all.—*(Knocking at the door.)*—Hark! there's some one entering.

Lucy. Perhaps, my master, madam. *[Exit.]*

Mrs. B. Let him be well too, and I am satisfied.—*(Goes to the door, and listens.)*—No; 'tis another's voice.

Enter LUCY and STUKELY.

Lucy. Mr. Stukely, madam. *[Exit.]*

Stuk. To meet you thus alone, madam, was what I wished. Unseasonable visits, when friendship warrants them needs no excuse:—therefore I make none.

Mrs. B. What mean you, sir? And where's your friend?

Stuk. Men may have secrets, madam, which their best friends are not admitted to. We parted in the morning, not soon to meet again.

Mrs. B. You mean to leave us, then?—to leave your country too? I am no stranger to your reasons, and pity your misfortunes.

Stuk. Your pity has undone you. Could Beverley do this? That letter was a forged one; a mean contrivance to rob you of your jewels:—I wrote it not.

Mrs. B. Impossible!—Whence came it then?

Stuk. Wronged as I am, madam, I must speak plainly,—

Mrs. B. Do so, and ease me. Your hints have troubled me. Reports, you say, are stirring.—Reports of whom? You wished me not to credit them. What, sir, are these reports?

Stuk. I thought 'em slander, madam; and cautioned you in friendship; lest from officious tongues the tale had reached you with double aggravation.

Mrs. B. Proceed, sir.

Stuk. It is a debt due to my fame, due to an injured wife too: We both are injured.

Mrs. B. How injured! and who has injured us?

Stuk. My friend, your husband.

Mrs. B. You would resent for both, then? But know, sir, my injuries are my own, and do not need a champion.

Stuk. Be not too hasty, madam. I come not in resentment, madam, but for acquittance. You thought me poor; and to the feigned distresses of a friend, gave up your jewels.

Mrs. B. I gave them to a husband.

Stuk. Who gave them to a—

Mrs. B. What? Whom did he give them to?

Stuk. A mistress.

Mrs. B. No; on my life, he did not.

Stuk. Himself confessed it, with curses on her avarice.

Mrs. B. I'll not believe it. He has no mistress; or, if he has, why is it told to me?

Stuk. To guard you against insults. He told me that, to move you to compliance, he forged that letter, pretending I was ruined, ruined by him too. The fraud succeeded; and what a trusting wife bestowed in pity, was lavished on a wanton.

Mrs. B. Then I am lost indeed, and my afflictions are too powerful for me. His follies I have borne without upbraiding, and saw the approach of poverty without a tear. My affection, my strong affection, supported me through every trial.

Stuk. Be patient, madam.

Mrs. B. Patient! The barbarous, ungrateful man!

And does he think that the tenderness of my heart is his best security for wounding it? But he shall find that injuries such as these can arm my weakness for vengeance and redress.

Stuk. (Aside.) Ha! then I may succeed. Redress is in your power.

Mrs. B. What redress?

Stuk. Forgive me, madam, if, in my zeal to serve you, I hazard your displeasure. Think of your wretched state: already want surrounds you. Is it in patience to bear that? To see your helpless little one robbed of his birth-right? A sister, too, with unavailing tears, lamenting her lost fortune? No comfort left you, but ineffectual pity from the few, outweighed by insults from the many.

Mrs. B. Am I so lost a creature? Well, sir, my redress?

Stuk. To be resolved is to secure it. The marriage vow, once violated, is in the sight of heaven dissolved. Start not, but hear me. 'Tis now the summer of your youth: time has not cropt the roses from your cheek, though sorrow long has washed them: then use your beauty wisely; and, freed by injuries, fly from the cruellest of men for shelter with the kindest.

Mrs. B. And who is he?

Stuk. A friend to the unfortunate; a bold one, too; who, while the storm is bursting on your brow, and lightning flashing from your eyes, dares tell you that he loves you!

Mrs. B. Would that these eyes had Heaven's own lightning, that, with a look, thus I might blast thee! Oh, villain! villain! but now I know thee, and thank thee for the knowledge.

Stuk. If you are wise, you shall have cause to thank me.

Mrs. B. An injured husband, too, shall thank thee.

Stuk. Yet know, proud woman, I have a heart as stubborn as your own; as haughty and imperious; and, as it loves, so can it hate.

Mrs. B. Mean, despicable villain! I scorn thee and thy threats. Was it for this that Beverley was false, that his too credulous wife should, in despair and vengeance, give up her honour to a wretch? But he shall know it, and vengeance shall be his!

Stuk. Why, send him for defiance, then. Tell him I love his wife; but, that a worthless husband forbids the union. I'll make a widow of you, and court you honourably.

Mrs. B. O, coward! coward! thy soul will shrink at him! Yet, in the thought of what may happen, I feel a woman's fears. Keep thy own secret, and begone. *(Rings a bell.)*

Enter LUCY.

Your absence, sir, would please me.

Stuk. I'll not offend you, madam.

[Exit Stukely and Lucy.]

Mrs. B. Why opens not the earth to swallow such a monster? Be conscience, then, his punisher, till Heaven in mercy give him penitence, or doom him in its justice. *[Exit.]*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Stukely's Lodgings.*

Enter STUKELY and BATES.

Bates. Your men have done their business, and Beverley is beggared of his last resource. Where have you been?

Stuk. Fooling my time away; playing my tricks, like a tame monkey, to entertain a woman: no matter where. But tell me more of Beverley. How bore he the loss of his last stake?

Bates. Like one, so Dawson says, whose senses had been numbed with misery. When all was lost, he fixed his eyes upon the ground, and stood some

time, with folded arms, stupid and motionless. Then, snatching his sword that hung against the wainscot, he sat him down again by the gaming-table; and, with a look of fixed attention, drew figures on the floor: at last he started up, looked wild, and trembled; then, like a woman seized with her sex's fits, laughed out aloud, while the tears trickled down his face: so left the room.

Stuk. Why, this was madness!

Bates. The madness of despair.

Stuk. We must confine him, then. A prison would do well. (*A knocking at the door.*) Hark! that knocking may be his. Go that way down. [*Exit Bates.*] Who's there?—

Enter LEWSON.

Lew. An enemy; an open and avowed one.

Stuk. Why am I thus broke in upon? This house is mine, sir; and should protect me from insult and ill-manners.

Lew. Guilt has no place of sanctuary; wherever found, 'tis virtue's lawful game. The fox's hold, and tiger's den, are no security against the hunter.

Stuk. Your business, sir?

Lew. To tell you that I know you. Why this confusion; that look of guilt and terror? Is Beverley awake? Or has his wife told tales? The man that dares like you, should have a soul to justify his deeds, and courage to confront accusers; not, with a coward's fear, thus shrink beneath reproof.

Stuk. Who waits there?

Lew. (*Shuts the door.*) He dies, that interrupts us. You should have weighed your strength, sir; and then, instead of climbing to high fortune, the world had marked you for what you are, a little paltry villain.

Stuk. You think, I fear you.

Lew. I know you fear me. This is to prove it. (*Pulls him by the sleeve.*) You wanted privacy: a lady's presence took up your attention. Now we are alone, sir. Why, what a wretch! (*Flings him from him.*) The vilest insect in creation will turn, when trampled on. Yet has this thing undone a man; by cunning and mean arts, undone him. But we have found you, sir; traced you through all your labyrinths. If you would save yourself, fall to confession: no mercy will be shown else.

Stuk. First, prove me what you think me: Till then, your threatenings are in vain. And for this insult, vengeance may yet be mine.

Lew. Infamous coward! why take it now then. (*Draws, and Stukely retires.*) Alas! I pity thee. Yet that a wretch like this should overcome a Beverley! it fills me with astonishment! A wretch, so mean of soul, that even desperation cannot animate him to look upon an enemy. You should not thus have towered, sir; unless, like others of your black profession, you had a sword to keep the fools in awe, your villainy has ruined.

Stuk. Villainy! 'Twere best to curb this licence of your tongue; for know, sir, while there are laws, this outrage on my reputation will not be borne with.

Lew. Laws! dar'st thou seek shelter from the laws; those laws, which thou and thy infernal crew live in the constant violation of? Talkest thou of reputation too—when, under friendship's sacred name, thou hast betrayed, robbed, and destroyed?

Stuk. Ay, rail at gaming; 'tis a rich topic, and affords noble declamation. Go, preach against it in the city; you'll find a congregation in every tavern: if they should laugh at you, fly to my lord, and sermonise it there; he'll thank you, and reform.

Lew. And will example sanctify a vice? No, wretch; the custom of my lord, or of the cit that apes him, cannot excuse a breach of law, or make the gamester's calling reputable.

Stuk. Rail on, I say. But, is this zeal for beggared Beverley? Is it for him that I am treated thus? No; he and his wife might both have groaned in prison, had but the sister's fortune escaped the wreck, to have rewarded the disinterested love of honest Mr. Lewson.

Lew. How I detest thee for the thought! But thou art lost to every human feeling. Yet let me tell thee; and may it wring thy heart! that, though my friend is ruined by thy snares, thou hast unknowingly been kind to me.

Stuk. Have I? It was, indeed, unknowingly.

Lew. Thou hast assisted me in love; given me the merit that I wanted; since, but for thee, my Charlotte had not known it was her dear self I sighed for, and not her fortune.

Stuk. Thank me, and take her then.

Lew. And, as a brother to poor Beverley, I will pursue the robber that has stript him, and snatch him from his gripe.

Stuk. Then know, imprudent man, he is within my gripe; and, should my friendship for him be slandered once again, the hand that has supplied him, shall fall and crush him.

Lew. Why, now there's a spirit in thee! This is indeed to be a villain! But I shall reach thee yet: fly where thou wilt, my vengeance shall pursue thee: and Beverley shall yet be saved, be saved from thee, thou monster; nor owe his rescue to his wife's dishonour. [*Exit.*]

Stuk. (*Pausing.*) Then ruin has enclosed me! Curse on my coward heart! I would be bravely villainous; but it is my nature to shrink at danger, and he has found me. Yet fear brings caution, and that, security. More mischief must be done, to hide the past. Look to yourself, officious Lewson; there may be danger stirring. How now, Bates?

Enter BATES.

Bates. What is the matter? It was Lewson, and not Beverley, that left you. I heard him loud. You seem alarmed too.

Stuk. Ay, and with reason: we are discovered.

Bates. I feared as much, and therefore cautioned you: but you were peremptory.

Stuk. Thus fools talk ever; spending their idle breath on what is past, and trembling at the future. We must be active. Beverley, at worst, is but suspicious; but Lewson's genius, and his hate to me, will lay all open. Means must be found to stop him.

Bates. What means?

Stuk. Despatch him. Nay, start not: desperate occasions call for desperate deeds. We live but by his death.

Bates. You cannot mean it.

Stuk. I do, by heaven!

Bates. Good night, then.

Stuk. Stay, I must be heard—then answered. Perhaps, the motion was too sudden: and human weakness starts at murder, though strong necessity compels it. I have thought long of this, and my first feelings were like yours; a foolish conscience awed me, which soon I conquered. The man that would undo me, nature cries out, undo. Brutes know their foes by instinct; and, where superior force is given, they use it for destruction. Shall man do less? Lewson pursues us to our ruin; and shall we, with the means to crush him, fly from our hunter?—or turn and tear him? 'Tis folly even to hesitate.

Bates. He has obliged me, and I dare not.

Stuk. Why, live to shame, then—to beggary and punishment. You would be privy to the deed, yet want the soul to act it. Nay, more; had my designs been levelled at his fortune, you had stepped in the foremost. And what is life without its comforts? those you would rob him of; and, by a lin-

gering death, add cruelty to murder. Henceforth, adieu to half-made villains—there is danger in them. What you have got is your's ; keep it, and hide with it : I will deal my future bounty to those that merit it.

Bates. What is the reward ?

Stuk. Equal division of our gains. I swear it, and will be just.

Bates. Think of the means, then.

Stuk. He is gone to Beverley's. Wait for him in the street : it is a dark night, and fit for mischief :—a dagger would be useful.

Bates. He sleeps no more.

Stuk. Consider the reward. When the deed is done, I have further business with you. Send Dawson to me.

Bates. Think it already done ; and so farewell.

Stuk. Why, farewell, Lewson, then ; and farewell to my fears : this night secures me. I will wait the event within.

SCENE II.—*A Street. Stage darkened.*

Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. How like an outcast do I wander ! loaded with every curse that drives the soul to desperation ! Whither am I going ? My home lies there ; all that is dear on earth it holds too ; yet are the gates of death more welcome to me : I'll enter it no more. Who passes here ? 'Tis Lewson. He meets me in a gloomy hour ; and memory tells me he has been meddling with my fame.

Enter LEWSON.

Lew. Beverley ! Well met. I have been busy in your affairs.

Bev. So I have heard, sir ; and now must thank you as I ought.

Lew. To-morrow I may deserve your thanks. Late as it is, I go to Bates. Discoveries are making that an arch villain trembles at.

Bev. Discoveries are made, sir, that you shall tremble at. Where is this boasted spirit, this high demeanour, that was to call me to account ? You say I have wronged my sister ; now say as much : but first, be ready for defence, as I am for resentment. (*Draws.*)

Lew. What mean you ? I understand you not.

Bev. The coward's stale acquittance ; who, when he spreads foul calumny abroad, and dreads just vengeance on him, cries out,—What mean you ? I understand you not.

Lew. Coward and calumny ! Whence are those words ? But I forgive, and pity you.

Bev. Your pity had been kinder to my fame : but you have traduced it ;—told a vile story to the public ear, that I had wronged my sister.

Lew. 'Tis false ! Shew me the man that dares accuse me.

Bev. I thought you brave, and of a soul superior to low malice ; but I have found you, and will have vengeance. This is no place for argument.

Lew. Nor shall it be for violence. Imprudent man ! who, in revenge for fancied injuries, would pierce the heart that loves him. But honest friendship acts from itself, unmoved by slander or ingratitude. The life you thirst for, shall be employed to serve you. You know me not.

Bev. Yes—for the slanderer of my fame ; who, under shew of friendship, arraigns me of injustice, buzzing in every ear foul breach of trust, and family dishonour.

Lew. Have I done this ? Who told you so ?

Bev. The world : 'tis talked of everywhere : it pleased you to add threats, too. You were to call

me to account : why, do it now, then ; I shall be proud of such an arbiter.

Lew. Put up your sword, and know me better. I never injured you : the base suggestion comes from Stukely : I see him and his aims.

Bev. What aims ? I'll not conceal it ;—'twas Stukely that accused you.

Lew. To rid him of an enemy—perhaps, of two. He fears discovery, and frames a tale of falsehood, to ground revenge and murder on.

Bev. I must have proof of this.

Lew. Wait till to-morrow, then.

Bev. I will.

Lew. Good night : I go to serve you. Forget what is past, as I do ; and cheer your family with smiles. Oh, that to-morrow may confirm them, and make all happy !

[*Exit.*

Bev. (*Pausing.*) How vile, and how absurd is man ! His boasted honour is but another name for pride ; which easier bears the consciousness of guilt, than the world's just reproofs. But, 'tis the fashion of the times ; and, in defence of falsehood and false honour, men die martyrs. I knew not that my nature was so bad. (*Stands musing.*)

Enter JARVIS and BATES.

Jar. This way the noise was ; and yonder is my poor master.

Bates. I heard him at high words with Lewson.

Jar. I heard him too. Misfortunes vex him.

Bates. Go to him, and lead him home : I'll not be seen by him.

[*Exit.*

Bev. What fellow's that ? Art thou a murderer, friend ? Come, lead the way : I have a hand as mischievous as thine ; a heart as desperate, too.—Jarvis ! to bed, old man ; the cold will chill thee.

Jar. Why are you wandering at this late hour ?—Your sword drawn, too !—For heaven's sake, sheathe it, sir ! The sight distracts me !

Bev. Whose voice was that ?

Jar. 'Twas mine, sir. Let me entreat you to give the sword to me.

Bev. Ay, take it, quickly, take it. Perhaps I am not so cursed, but heaven may have sent thee at this moment to snatch me from perdition.

Jar. Then I am blessed.

Bev. Continue so, and leave me ; my sorrows are contagious : no one is blessed that's near me.

Jar. I came to seek you, sir.

Bev. And, now thou hast found me, leave me : my thoughts are wild, and will not be disturbed.

Jar. Such thoughts are best disturbed.

Bev. I tell thee that they will not. Who sent thee hither ?

Jar. My weeping mistress. Forget your griefs, and let me lead you to her : the streets are dangerous.

Bev. Be wise, and leave me, then. The night's black horrors are suited to my thoughts. These stones shall be my resting-place : (*lies down :*) here shall my soul brood o'er its miseries ; till, with the fiends of hell, and guilty of the earth, I start and tremble at the morning's light.

Jar. For pity's sake, sir ! Upon my knees, I beg you to quit this place, and these sad thoughts ! let patience, not despair, possess you ! Rise, I beseech you ! There's not a moment of your absence, that my poor mistress does not groan for.

Bev. Have I undone her, and is she still so kind ? (*starting up*) It is too much, my brain cannot hold ! O, Jarvis ! how desperate is that wretch's state, whom only death or madness can relieve !

Jar. Appease his mind, good heaven, and give him resignation ! Alas, sir ! if beings in the other world perceive the events of this, how will your parents' blessed spirits grieve for you, even in heaven ! Let me conjure you, by their honoured

memories; by the sweet innocence of your yet helpless child, and by the ceaseless sorrows of my poor mistress, to rouse your manhood, and struggle with these griefs!

Bev. Thou virtuous, good old man! thy tears and thy entreaties have reached my heart, through all its miseries.

Jar. Be but resigned, sir, and happiness may yet be yours. Hark! I hear voices! Come: this way we may reach home unnoticed.

Bev. Well; lead me, then. Unnoticed, didst thou say? Alas! I dread no looks, but of those wretches I have made at home! O, had I listened to thy honest warnings, no earthly blessing had been wanting to me! I was so happy, that even a wish for more than I possessed, was arrogant presumption: but I have warred against the power that blessed me, and now am sentenced to the hell I merit. [*Exeant.*

SCENE III.—*Stukely's Lodgings.*

Enter STUKELY; *meets* DAWSON.

Stuk. Come hither, Dawson. My limbs are on the rack, and my soul shivers in me, till this night's business be complete. Tell me thy thoughts, is Bates determined, or does he waver?

Daw. At first, he seemed irresolute; wished the employment had been mine; and muttered curses on his coward hand, that trembled at the deed.

Stuk. And did he leave you so?

Daw. No; we walked together; and, sheltered by the darkness, saw Beverley and Lewson in warm debate; but soon they cooled, and then I left them, to hasten hither; but not 'till it was resolved Lewson should die.

Stuk. Thy words have given me life. That quarrel too, was fortunate; for, if my hopes deceive me not, it promises a grave to Beverley.

Daw. You misconceive me; Lewson and he were friends.

Stuk. But my prolific brain shall make them enemies. If Lewson fall, he falls by Beverley; an upright jury shall decree it; ask me no question, but do as I direct. This writ (*takes out a pocket-book*) for some days past, I have treasured here, till a convenient time called for its use: that time is come. Take it, and give it to an officer; it must be served this instant.

Daw. On Beverley?

Stuk. Look at it: 'tis for the sums that I have lent him.

Daw. Must he to prison, then?

Stuk. I ask obedience; not replies. This night, a jail must be his lodging. 'Tis probable he's not gone home yet; wait at his door and see it executed.

Daw. Upon a beggar? He has no means of payment.

Stuk. Dull and insensible! If Lewson dies, who was it killed him? Why, that he was seen quarrelling with him; and I, that knew of Beverley's intents, arrested him in friendship,—a little late, perhaps; but 'twas a virtuous act, and men will thank me for it. Now, sir, you understand me?

Daw. Most perfectly; and will about it.

Stuk. Haste then, and, when 'tis done, come back and tell me.

Daw. Till then, farewell. [*Exit.*

Stuk. Now tell thy tale, fond wife. And Lewson, if again thou canst insult me, I'll kneel and own thee for my master.

Not avarice now, but vengeance fires my breast,
And one short hour must make me curs'd or blest. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE *continues.*

Enter STUKELY, BATES, and DAWSON.

Bates. Poor Lewson! but I told you enough last night. The thought of him is dreadful to me.

Stuk. In the street, did you say? And no one near him?

Bates. By his own door: he was leading me to his house; I pretended business with him, and stabbed him to the heart, while he was reaching at the bell.

Stuk. And did he fall so suddenly?

Bates. The repetition pleases you, I see. I told you, he fell without a groan.

Stuk. What heard you of him this morning?

Bates. That the watch found him, and alarmed the servants. I mingled with the crowd just now, and saw him dead in his own house: the sight terrified me.

Stuk. Away with terrors, till his ghost rise and accuse us. We have no living enemy to fear; unless 'tis Beverley; and him we have lodged safe in prison.

Bates. Must he be murdered too?

Stuk. No; I have a scheme to make the law his murderer. At what hour did Lewson fall?

Bates. The clock struck twelve, as I turned to leave him. 'Twas a melancholy bell, I thought tolling for his death.

Stuk. The time was lucky for us. Beverley was arrested at one, you say?

Daw. Exactly.

Stuk. Good: We'll talk of this presently. The women were with him, I think?

Daw. And old Jarvis. I would have told you of them last night, but your thoughts were too busy. 'Tis well you have a heart of stone, the tale would melt it else.

Stuk. Out with it then.

Daw. I traced him to his lodgings; and, pretending pity for his misfortunes, kept the door open, while the officers seized him. 'Twas a damned deed; but no matter, I followed my instructions.

Stuk. And what said he?

Daw. He upbraided me with treachery; called you a villain; acknowledged the sums you had lent him, and submitted to his fortune.

Stuk. And the women?

Daw. For a few minutes, astonishment kept them silent; they looked wildly at one another, while the tears streamed down their cheeks. But rage and fury soon gave them words; and then, in the very bitterness of despair, they cursed me, and the monster that had employed me.

Stuk. And you bore it with philosophy?

Daw. 'Till the scene changed, and then I melted. I ordered the officers to take away their prisoner. The women shrieked, and would have followed him, but we forbade them. 'Twas then they fell upon their knees, with all the eloquence of misery endeavouring to soften us. I never felt compassion till that moment; and, had the officers been moved like me, we had left the business undone, and fled with curses on ourselves; but their hearts were steeled by custom, they tore him from their arms, and lodged him in prison, with only Jarvis to comfort him.

Stuk. There let him lie, till we have further business with him. You saw him quarrelling with Lewson in the street last night?

Bates. I did; his steward, Jarvis, saw him too.

Stuk. And shall attest it. Here's matter to work upon; an unwilling evidence carries weight with him. Something of my design I have hinted to you before. Beverley must be the author of

this murder; and we the parties to convict him. But how to proceed, will require time and thought. Come along with me. But no compassion, sir. (To Dawson.) We want leisure for it. This way. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*Beverley's Lodgings. Table and two chairs.*

MRS. BEVERLEY and CHARLOTTE discovered.

Mrs. B. No news of Lewson yet?

Char. None; he went out early, and knows not what has happened. (Clock strikes eight.)

Mrs. B. The clock strikes eight; I'll wait no longer. O, what a night was last night! I would not pass another such, to purchase worlds by it. My poor Beverley too; what must he have felt! the very thought distracts me. To have him torn at midnight from me; a loathsome prison his habitation!—a cold damp room his lodging!—the bleak winds, perhaps, blowing upon his pillow!—no fond wife to lull him to his rest!—and no reflections but to wound and tear him!—'Tis too horrible. I wanted love for him, or they had not forced him from me; they should have parted soul and body first. I was too tame.

Char. You must not talk so. All that we could, we did; and Jarvis did the rest: the faithful creature will give him comfort. See where he comes; his looks are cheerful too.

Enter JARVIS.

Mrs. B. Are tears then cheerful? Alas, he weeps! Speak to him, Charlotte: I have no tongue to ask him questions.

Char. How does your master, Jarvis?

Jar. I am old and foolish, madam; and tears will come before my words; but don't you weep; (To Mrs. B.) I have a tale of joy for you.

Mrs. B. Say but he's well, and I have joy enough.

Jar. His mind too shall be well; all shall be well: I have news for him that shall make his poor heart bound again. Fie upon old age! how childish it makes me! I have a tale of joy for you, and my tears drown it.

Mrs. B. What is it, Jarvis?

Jar. Yet why should I rejoice, when a good man dies? Your uncle, madam, died yesterday.

Mrs. B. My uncle! O heavens!

Char. How heard you of his death?

Jar. His steward came express, madam: I met him in the street, enquiring for your lodgings. I should not rejoice, perhaps, but he was old, and my poor master a prisoner. Now he shall live again. O, 'tis a brave fortune! and it was death to me, to see him a prisoner.

Char. How did he pass the night, Jarvis?

Jar. Why now, madam, I can tell you. Like a man dreaming of death and horrors. When they led him to his cell,—for it was a poor apartment for my master, he flung himself upon a wretched bed, and lay speechless till day-break; then he started from the bed, and, looking wildly at me, asked who I was. I told him, and bade him be of comfort. "Begone, old wretch," says he, "I have sworn, never to know comfort.—My wife! my child! my sister! I have undone them all, and will know no comfort." Then falling upon his knees, he imprecates curses upon himself.

Mrs. B. This is too horrible! But we have staid too long. Let us haste to comfort him, or die with him. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*A Prison. Chair, table, lamp and book on it.*

BEVERLEY discovered, seated. After a short pause, he starts up.

Bev. Why, there's an end then. I have judged

deliberately, and the result is death. How the self-murderer's account may stand, I know not: but this I know, the load of hateful life oppresses me too much. The horrors of my soul are more than I can bear. (Offers to kneel.) Father of Mercy! I cannot pray; despair has laid his iron hand upon me, and sealed me for perdition. Conscience! conscience! thy clamours are too loud: here's that shall silence thee. (Takes a phial of poison out of his pocket.) Thou art most friendly to the miserable. Come, then, thou cordial for sick minds, come to my heart. (Drinks it.) Oh, that the grave would bury memory as well body! For, if the soul sees and feels the sufferings of those dear ones it leaves behind, the Everlasting has no vengeance to torment it deeper. I'll think no more on it;—reflection comes too late; once there was a time for it, but now 'tis past. Who's there?

Enter JARVIS.

Jar. One that hoped to see you with better looks. Why do you turn so from me? I have brought comfort with me; and see who comes to give it welcome.

Bev. My wife and sister! Why, 'tis but one pang more then, and farewell, world.

Enter MRS. BEVERLEY and CHARLOTTE.

Mrs. B. Where is he? (Runs and embraces him.) O, I have him! I have him! And now they shall never part us more. I have news, love, to make you happy for ever. Alas! he hears us not. Speak to me, love; I have no heart to see you thus.

Bev. This is a sad place.

Mrs. B. We came to take you from it; to tell you, the world goes well again; that Providence has seen our sorrows, and sent the means to help them; your uncle died yesterday.

Bev. My uncle? No, do not say so. O! I am sick at heart!

Mrs. B. Indeed, I meant to bring you comfort.

Bev. Tell me he lives then; if you would bring me comfort, tell me he lives.

Mrs. B. And if I did, I have no power to raise the dead. He died yesterday.

Bev. And I am heir to him?

Jar. To his whole estate, sir. But bear it patiently, pray bear it patiently.

Bev. Well, well. (Pausing.) Why fame says, I am rich then?

Mrs. B. And truly so. Why do you look so wildly?

Bev. Do I? The news was unexpected. But, has he left me all?

Jar. All, all, sir; he could not leave it from you.

Bev. I am sorry for it.

Mrs. B. Why are you disturbed so?

Bev. Has death no terrors in it?

Mrs. B. Not an old man's death; yet, if it trouble you, I wish him living.

Bev. And I, with all my heart; for I have a tale to tell, shall turn you into stone; or if the power of speech remain, you shall kneel down and curse me.

Mrs. B. Alas! Why are we to curse you? I'll bless you ever.

Bev. No, I have deserved no blessings. All this large fortune, this second bounty of heaven, that might have healed our sorrows, and satisfied our utmost hopes, in a cursed hour I sold last night.

Mrs. B. Impossible!

Bev. That devil Stukely, with all hell to aid him, tempted me to the deed. To pay false debts of honour, and to redeem past errors, I sold the re-

version, sold it for a scanty sum, and lost it among villains.

Char. Why, farewell all then.

Bev. Liberty and life. Come, kneel and curse me.

Mrs. B. Then hear me, heaven. (*Kneels.*) Look down with mercy on his sorrows! Give softness to his looks, and quiet to his heart! On me, on me, if misery must be the lot of either, multiply misfortunes! I'll bear them patiently, so he be happy! These hands shall toil for his support; these eyes be lifted up for hourly blessings on him; and every duty of a fond and faithful wife be doubly done, to cheer and comfort him. So hear me! so reward me! (*Rises.*)

Bev. I would kneel too, but that offended heaven would turn my prayers into curses; for I have done a deed, to make life horrible to you.

Mrs. B. What deed?

Jar. Ask him no questions, madam; this last misfortune has hurt his brain. A little time will give him patience.

Enter STUKELY.

Bev. Why is this villain here?

Stuk. To give you liberty and safety. There, madam, is his discharge. (*Gives a paper to Charlotte.*) The arrest last night was meant in friendship, but came too late.

Char. What mean you, sir?

Stuk. The arrest was too late, I say; I would have kept his hands from blood; but was too late.

Mrs. B. His hands from blood! Whose blood?

Stuk. From Lewson's blood.

Char. No, villain! Yet what of Lewson; speak quickly.

Stuk. You are ignorant then; I thought I heard the murderer at confession.

Char. What murderer? And who is murdered? Not Lewson? Say, he lives, and I will kneel and worship you.

Stuk. And so I would; but that the tongues of all cry murder. I came in pity, not in malice; to save the brother, not kill the sister. Your Lewson's dead.

Char. O horrible!

Bev. Silence, I charge you. Proceed, sir.

Stuk. No; justice may stop the tale; and here's an evidence.

Enter BATES.

Bates. The news, I see, has reached you. But take comfort, madam. (*To Charlotte.*) There's one without, enquiring for you; go to him, and lose no time.

Char. O misery! misery! [*Exit.*]

Mrs. B. Follow her, Jarvis; if it be true that Lewson's dead, her grief may kill her.

Bates. Jarvis must stay here, madam; I have some questions for him.

Stuk. Rather let him fly; his evidence may crush his master.

Bev. Why, ay, this looks like management.

Bates. He found you, quarrelling with Lewson in the street last night. (*To Beverley.*)

Mrs. B. No; I am sure, he did not.

Jar. Or, if I did,—

Mrs. B. 'Tis false, old man; they had no quarrel, there was no cause for quarrel.

Bev. Let him proceed, I say. O! I am sick! sick! Reach a chair. (*Jarvis brings it, he sits down.*)

Mrs. B. You droop and tremble, love. Yet you are innocent. If Lewson's dead, you killed him not.

Enter DAWSON.

Stuk. Who sent for Dawson

Bates. 'Twas I. We have a witness too, you little think of. Without, there!

Stuk. What witness?

Bates. A right one. Look at him.

Enter CHARLOTTE and LEWSON.

(*Mrs. B. on perceiving Lewson, goes into an hysterical laugh and sinks on Jarvis.*)

Stuk. Lewson! O villains! villains! (*To Bates and Dawson.*)

Mrs. B. Risen from the dead! Why this is unexpected happiness!

Char. Or is it his ghost? (*To Stukely.*) That sight would please you, sir.

Jar. What riddle is this?

Bev. Be quick, and tell it, my minutes are but few.

Mrs. B. Alas! why so? You shall live long and happily.

Lew. While shame and punishment shall rack that viper. (*Points at Stukely.*) The tale is short; I was too busy in his secrets, and therefore doomed to die. Bates, to prevent the murder, undertook it; I kept aloof to give it credit.

Char. And give me pangs unutterable.

Lew. I felt them all, and would have told you; but vengeance wanted ripening. The villain's scheme was but half executed; the arrest by Dawson followed the supposed murder, and now, depending on his once wicked associates, he comes to fix the guilt on Beverley.

Bates. Dawson and I are witnesses of this.

Lew. And of a thousand frauds; his fortune ruined by sharpers and false dice; and Stukely sole contriver and possessor of all.

Daw. Had he but stopped on this side murder, we had been villains still.

Lew. (*To Beverley.*) How does my friend?

Bev. Why, well. Who's he that asks me?

Mrs. B. 'Tis Lewson, love. Why do you look so at him?

Bev. (*Wildly.*) They told me he was murdered!

Mrs. B. Ay; but he lives to save us.

Bev. Lend me your hand; the room turns round.

Lew. This villain here disturbs him. Remove him from his sight; and, on your lives, see that you guard him. (*Stukely is taken off by Dawson and Bates.*) How is it, sir?

Bev. 'Tis here, and here. (*Pointing to his head and heart.*) And now it tears me!

Mrs. B. You feel convulsed, too. What is it disturbs you?

Bev. A furnace rages in this heart. (*Laying his hand upon his heart.*) Down, restless flames! down to your native hell, there you shall rack me! Oh, for a pause from pain. Where is my wife? Can you forgive me, love?

Mrs. B. Alas, for what!

Bev. For meanly dying.

Mrs. B. No; do not say it.

Bev. As truly as my soul must answer it. Had Jarvis staid this morning, all had been well; but, pressed by shame, pent in a prison, and tormented with my pangs for you, driven to despair and madness, I took the advantage of his absence, corrupted the poor wretch he left to guard me, and swallowed poison.

Lew. O, fatal deed!

Bev. Ay, most accursed. And now I go to my account. Bend me, and let me kneel. (*They lift him from his chair, and support him on his knees.*) I'll pray for you too. Thou Power that madest me, hear me. If, for a life of frailty, and this too hasty deed of death, thy justice doom me, here I acquit the sentence; but if, enthroned in mercy where thou sitt'st, thy pity has beheld me, send me a gleam of hope, that in these last and bitter mo-

ments my soul may taste of comfort! And for these mourners here, Oh, let their lives be peaceful, and their deaths happy.

Mrs. B. Restore him, heaven! O, save him, save him, or let me die too!

Bev. No; live, I charge you. We have a little one; though I have left him, you will not leave him. To Lewson's kindness I bequeath him. Is not this Charlotte? We have lived in love, though I have wronged you. Can you forgive me, Charlotte?

Char. Forgive you! O, my poor brother!

Bev. Lend me your hand, love. So; raise me—no; it will not be, my life is finished. O, for a few short moments, to tell you how my heart bleeds

for you, that even now, thus dying as I am, dubious and fearful of an hereafter, my bosom pang is for your miseries. Support her, heaven! And now I go. O, mercy! mercy! (*Dies.*)

Lew. How is it, madam? My poor Charlotte, too!

Char. Her grief is speechless.

Lew. Jarvis, remove her from this sight. (*Jarvis and Charlotte lead Mrs. Beverley aside.*) Some ministering angel bring her peace. And thou, poor breathless corpse, may thy departed soul have found the rest it prayed for. Save but one error, and this last fatal deed, thy life was lovely. Let frailer minds take warning; and, from example, learn that want of prudence is want of virtue.

[*Exeunt.*]

GEORGE BARNWELL;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY GEORGE LILLO.



Act IV.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

THOROWGOOD
UNCLE
GEORGE BARNWELL

TRUEMAN
BLUNT
JAILOR

MILLWOOD
LUCY
MARIA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room in Thorowgood's house.

Enter THOROWGOOD and TRUEMAN.

True. Sir, the packet from Genoa is arrived. (Gives letters.)

Thor. Heaven be praised, the storm that threatened our royal mistress, pure religion, liberty, and laws, is for a time diverted; by which means, time is gained to make such preparations on our part as may, heaven concurring, prevent his malice, or turn the meditated mischief on himself.

True. He must be insensible indeed, who is not affected when the safety of his country is concerned. Sir, may I know by what means—if I am too bold—

Thor. Your curiosity is laudable; and at some future period I shall gratify it with the greater pleasure, because from thence you may learn how honest merchants, as such, may sometimes contribute to the safety of their country, as they do at all times to its happiness; that if hereafter you should be tempted to any action that has the appearance of vice or meanness in it, upon reflecting on the dignity of our profession, you may with honest scorn reject whatever is unworthy of it.

True. Should Barnwell or I, who have the benefit of your example, by our ill conduct bring any imputation on that honourable name, we must be left without excuse.

Thor. You compliment, young man. (*Trueman bows respectfully.*) Nay, I am not offended. As the name of merchant never degrades the gentleman, so by no means does it exclude him; only take heed not to purchase the character of complaisance at the expense of your sincerity.

True. Well, sir, have you any commands for me at this time?

Thor. Only to look carefully over the files, to see whether there are any tradesmen's bills unpaid; and if there are, to send and discharge them. We must not let artificers lose their time, so useful to the public and their families, in unnecessary attendance. [*Exit Trueman.*]

Enter MARIA.

Thor. Well, Maria, have you given orders for the entertainment? I would have it in some measure worthy the guests. Let there be plenty, and of the best; that the courtiers, though they should deny us citizens politeness, may at least commend our hospitality.

Maria. Sir, I have endeavoured not to wrong your well-known generosity by an ill-timed parsimony.

Thor. Nay, it was a needless caution; I have no cause to doubt your prudence.

Maria. Sir, I find myself unfit for conversation at present: I should but increase the number of the company, without adding to their satisfaction.

Thor. Nay, my child, this melancholy must not be indulged.

Maria. Company will but increase it. I wish you would dispense with my absence; solitude best suits my present temper.

Thor. You are not insensible that it is chiefly on your account these noble lords do me the honour so frequently to grace my board; should you be absent, the disappointment may make them repent their condescension, and think their labour lost.

Maria. He that shall think his time or honour lost in visiting you, can set no real value on your daughter's company, whose only merit is that she is your's. The man of quality, who chooses to converse with a gentleman and merchant of your worth and character, may confer honour by so doing, but he loses none.

Thor. Come, come, *Maria*, I need not tell you that a young gentleman may prefer your conversation to mine, yet intend me no disrespect at all; for though he may lose no honour in my company, it is very natural for him to expect more pleasure in your's. I remember the time when the company of the greatest and wisest man in the kingdom would have been insipid and tiresome to me, if it had deprived me of an opportunity of enjoying your mother's.

Maria. Your's, no doubt, was as agreeable to her; for generous minds know no pleasure in society but where it is mutual.

Thor. Thou knowest I have no heir, no child but thee; the fruits of many years successful industry must all be thine; now it would give me pleasure great as my love, to see on whom you would bestow it. I am daily solicited by men of the greatest rank and merit for leave to address you; but I have hitherto declined it, in hopes that by observation I should learn which way your inclination tends; for as I know love to be essential to happiness in the married state, I had rather my approbation should confirm your choice than direct it.

Maria. What can I say? how shall I answer as I ought this tenderness, so uncommon, even in the best of parents? But you are without example; yet, had you been less indulgent, I had been most wretched. That I look on the crowd of courtiers that visit here with equal esteem, but equal indifference, you have observed, and I must needs confess; yet, had you asserted your authority, and insisted on a parent's right to be obeyed, I had submitted, and to my duty sacrificed my peace.

Thor. From your perfect obedience in every other instance, I feared as much, and therefore would leave you without a bias in an affair wherein your happiness is so immediately concerned.

Maria. Whether from a want of that just ambition that would become your daughter, or from some other cause, I know not; but I find high birth and titles do not recommend the man who owns them to my affections.

Thor. I would not that they should, unless his merit recommends him more. A noble birth and fortune, though they make not a bad man good, yet they are a real advantage to a worthy one, and place his virtues in the fairest light.

Maria. I cannot answer for my inclinations, but they shall ever be submitted to your wisdom and authority; and as you will not compel me to marry where I cannot love, so love shall never make me act contrary to my duty. Sir, have I your permission to retire?

Thor. I'll see you to your chamber. [Exeunt.]

SCENE. II.—A Room in Millwood's house.

MILLWOOD discovered; LUCY waiting.

Mill. How do I look to-day, Lucy?

Lucy. O, killingly, madam! A little more red, and you'll be irresistible! But why this more than ordinary care of your dress and complexion? What new conquest are you aiming at?

Mill. A conquest would be new indeed!

Lucy. Not to you, who make them every day,—but to me. Well, it is what I'm never to expect, unfortunate as I am: but your wit and beauty—

Mill. First made me a wretch, and still continue me so. Men, however generous or sincere to one another, are all selfish hypocrites in their affairs with us. We are no otherwise esteemed or regarded by them, but as we contribute to

their satisfaction. It is a general maxim among the knowing part of mankind, that a woman without virtue, like a man without honour or honesty, is capable of any action, though never so vile: and yet what pains will they not take, what arts not use, to seduce us from our innocence, and make us contemptible and wicked, even in their own opinions? Then is it not just, the villains, to their cost, should find us so? But guilt makes them suspicious, and keeps them on their guard; therefore, we can take advantage only of the young and innocent part of the sex, who, having never injured women, apprehend no injury from them.

Lucy. Ay, they must be young indeed.

Mill. Such a one, I think, I have found. As I've passed through the city, I have often observed him receiving and paying considerable sums of money; from thence I conclude he is employed in affairs of consequence.

Lucy. Is he handsome?

Mill. Ay, ay, the stripling is well made.

Lucy. About—

Mill. Eighteen.

Lucy. Innocent, handsome, and about eighteen! you will be vastly happy. Why, if you manage well, you may keep him to yourself these two or three years.

Mill. If I manage well, I shall have done with him much sooner. Having long had a design on him, and meeting him yesterday, I made a full stop, and gazing wistfully on his face, asked him his name: he blushed, and bowing very low, answered, George Barnwell. I begged his pardon for the freedom I had taken, and told him that he was the person I had long wished to see, and to whom I had an affair of importance to communicate, at a proper time and place. He named a tavern; I talked of honour and reputation, and invited him to my house: he swallowed the bait, promised to come, and this is the time I expect him. (Knocking at the door.) Somebody knocks: d'ye hear? I'm at home to nobody to-day but him. [Exit *Lucy*.] Less affairs must give way to those of more consequence; and I am strangely mistaken if this does not prove of great importance to me and him, too, before I have done with him. Now, after what manner shall I receive him? Let me consider—what manner of person am I to receive? He is young, innocent, and bashful; therefore I must take care not to put him out of countenance at first. But, then, if I have any skill in physiognomy, he is amorous: and with a little assistance, will soon get the better of his modesty. I will trust to nature, who does wonders in these matters. If to seem what one is not, in order to be the better liked for what one really is; if to speak one thing, and mean the direct contrary, be art in woman, then I know nothing of nature.

Enter BARNWELL, bowing very low; LUCY at a distance.

Mill. Sir! the surprise and joy—

Barn. Madam!

Mill. This is such a favour,—(Advancing.)

Barn. Pardon me, madam,—

Mill. So unhop'd for,—(Still advances: Barnwell salutes her, and retires in confusion.) To see you here—excuse the confusion—

Barn. I fear I am too bold.

Mill. Alas! sir, all my apprehensions proceed from the fear of your thinking me so. Please, sir, to sit. I am as much at a loss how to receive this honour as I ought, as I am surprised at your goodness in conferring it.

Barn. I thought you had expected me; I promised to come.

Mill. This is the more surprising; few men are such religious observers of their word.

Barn. All who are honest are.

Mill. To one another; but we silly women are seldom thought of consequence enough to gain a place in your remembrance. (*Laying her hand on his, as if by accident.*)

Barn. Her disorder is so great, she don't perceive she has laid her hand on mine. Heaven, how she trembles! What can this mean! (*Aside.*)

Mill. The interest I have in all that relates to you, (the reason of which you shall know hereafter,) excites my curiosity; and, were I sure you would pardon my presumption, I should desire to know your real sentiments on a very particular affair.

Barn. Madam, you may command my poor thoughts on any subject: I have none that I would conceal.

Mill. You'll think me bold?

Barn. No, indeed.

Mill. What, then, are your thoughts of love?

Barn. If you mean the love of woman, I have not thought of it at all. My youth and circumstances make such thoughts improper in me yet; but, if you mean the general love we owe mankind, I think no one has more of it in his temper than myself. I do not know that person in the world whose happiness I do not wish, and would not promote, were it in my power. In an especial manner, I love my uncle and my masler; but above all, my friend.

Mill. You have a friend, then, whom you love?

Barn. As he does me, sincerely.

Mill. He is, no doubt, often blessed with your company and conversation?

Barn. We live in one house together, and both serve the same worthy merchant.

Mill. Happy, happy youth! whoe'er thou art, I envy thee, and so must all, who see and know this youth. (*Aside.*) What have I lost, by being formed a woman! I hate my sex, myself. Had I been a man, I might, perhaps, have been as happy in your friendship as he who now enjoys it; but as it is—Oh!—

Barn. I never observed women before, or this is, sure, the most beautiful of her sex. (*Aside.*) You seem disordered, madam; may I know the cause?

Mill. Do not ask me; I can never speak it, whatever is the cause; I wish for things impossible. I would be a servant, bound to the same master as you are, to live in one house with you.

Barn. How strange, and yet how kind, her words and actions are; and the effect they have on me is as strange! I feel desires I never knew before: I must be gone, while I have power to go. (*Aside.*) Madam, I humbly take my leave.

Mill. You will not, sure, leave me so soon!

Barn. Indeed I must.

Mill. You cannot be so cruel! I have prepared a poor supper, at which I promised myself your company.

Barn. I am sorry I must refuse the honour that you designed me; but my duty to my master calls me hence. I never yet neglected his service; he is so gentle, and so good a master, that should I wrong him, though he might forgive me, I never should forgive myself.

Mill. Am I refused, by the first man, the second favour I ever stooped to ask? Go, then, thou proud, hard-hearted youth! But know, you are the only man that could be found, who would let me sue twice for greater favours.

Barn. What shall I do!—How, shall I go or stay! (*Aside.*)

Mill. Yet do not, do not leave me! I wish my sex's pride would meet your scorn; but, when I look upon you, when I behold those eyes—O, spare my tongue, and let my blushes speak! This flood of tears to that will force their way, and declare what woman's modesty should hide.

Barn. O, heavens! she loves me, worthless as I am; her looks, her words, her flowing tears, confess it: and can I leave her, then? Oh, never, never! Madam, dry up those tears. You shall command me always: I will stay here for ever if you'd have me.

Lucy. So! she has wheedled him out of his virtue of obedience already, and will strip him of all the rest one after another, till she has left him as few as her ladyship, or myself. (*Aside.*)

Mill. Now you are kind, indeed; but I mean not to detain you always: I would have you shake off all slavish obedience to your master, but you may serve him still.

Lucy. Serve him still! ay, or he'll have no opportunity of fingering his cash; and then he'll not serve your end, I'll be sworn. (*Aside.*)

Enter BLUNT.

Blunt. Madam, supper's on the table.

Mill. Come, sir; you'll excuse all defects: my thoughts were too much employed on my guest to observe the entertainment.

[*Exeunt Millwood and Barnwell.*]

Blunt. What! is all this preparation, this elegant supper, variety of wines, and music, for the entertainment of that young fellow?

Lucy. So it seems.

Blunt. What! is our mistress turned fool at last? she's in love with him, I suppose!

Lucy. I suppose not; but she designs to make him in love with her, if she can.

Blunt. What will she get by that? He seems under age, and can't be supposed to have much money.

Lucy. But his master has; and that's the same thing, as she'll manage it.

Blunt. I don't like this fooling with a handsome young fellow: while she's endeavouring to ensnare him, she may be caught herself.

Lucy. Nay, were she like me, that would certainly be the consequence; for, I confess, there is something in youth and innocence that moves me mightily.

Blunt. Yes; so does the smoothness and plumpness of a partridge move a mighty desire in the hawk to be the destruction of it.

Lucy. Why, birds are their prey, as men are ours; though, as you observed, we are sometimes caught ourselves: but that, I dare say, will never be the case with our mistress.

Blunt. I wish it may prove so; for you know we all depend upon her: should she trifle away her time with a young fellow that there is nothing to be got by, we must all starve.

Lucy. There's no danger of that, for I am sure she has no view in this affair but interest.

Blunt. Well, and what hopes are there of success in that?

Lucy. The most promising that can be. 'Tis true, the youth has his scruples; but she'll soon teach him to answer them, by stifling his conscience. O! the lad is in a hopeful way, depend upon it! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Thorowgood's house.*

Enter BARNWELL.

Barn. How strange are all things round me! Like some thief, who treads forbidden ground, fearful I enter each apartment of this well-known house. To guilty love, as if that were too little, already have I added breach of trust. A thief! Can I know myself that wretched thing, and look my honest friend and injured master in the face? Though hypocrisy may awhile conceal my guilt, at length, it will be known, and public shame and ruin

must ensue. In the meantime, what must be my life? ever to speak a language foreign to my heart; hourly to add to the number of my crimes, in order to conceal them. Sure, such was the condition of the grand apostate, when first he lost his purity; like me, disconsolate, he wandered, and, while yet in heaven, bore all his future hell upon him.

Enter TRUEMAN.

True. Barnwell! O, how I rejoice to see you safe! so will our master, and his gentle daughter, who, during your absence, often inquired after you.

Barn. Would he were gone! his officious love will pry into the secrets of my soul. (*Aside.*)

True. Unless you knew the pain the whole family has felt on your account, you cannot conceive how much you are beloved. But why thus cold and silent? When my heart is full of joy for your return, why do you turn away? Why thus avoid me? What have I done? How am I altered, since you saw me last? or, rather, what have you done? and why are you thus changed? for I am still the same.

Barn. What have I done, indeed! (*Aside.*)

True. Not speak, nor look upon me!

Barn. By my face he will discover all I would conceal: methinks, already, I begin to hate him. (*Aside.*)

True. I cannot bear this usage from a friend, one whom, till now, I ever found so loving, whom yet I love; though this unkindness strikes at the root of friendship, and might destroy it in any breast but mine.

Barn. I am not well. Sleep has been a stranger to these eyes, since you beheld them last.

True. Heavy they look, indeed, and swoln with tears; now, they overflow: rightly did my sympathizing heart forebode last night, when thou wast absent, something fatal to our peace.

Barn. Your friendship engages you too far. My troubles, whatever they are, are mine alone; you have no interest in them, nor ought your concern for me give you a moment's pain.

True. You speak as if you knew of friendship nothing but the name. Before I saw your grief, I felt it: even now, though ignorant of the cause, your sorrow wounds me to the heart.

Barn. It will not be always thus: friendship and all engagements cease, as circumstances and occasions vary; and, since you once may hate me, perhaps it might be better for us both, that now you loved me less.

True. Sure, I but dream! without a cause, would Barnwell use me thus? Ungenerous, and ungrateful youth, farewell! I shall endeavour to follow your advice. (*Going.*) Yet, stay; perhaps I am too rash: pry'thee, forgive me, Barnwell. Try to compose your ruffled mind, and let me know the cause that thus transports you from yourself; my friendly counsel may restore your peace.

Barn. All that is possible for man to do for man, your generous friendship may effect; but here, even that's in vain.

True. Something dreadful is labouring in your breast; O, give it vent, and let me share your grief! it will ease your pain, should it admit no cure; and make it lighter by the part I bear.

Barn. Vain supposition! My woes increase, by being observed; should the cause be known, they would exceed all bounds.

True. So well I know thy honest heart guilt cannot harbour there.

Barn. O torture insupportable! (*Aside.*)

True. Then why am I excluded? Have I a thought I would conceal from you?

Barn. If still you urge me on this hated subject, I'll never enter more beneath this roof, nor see your face again.

True. It is strange; but I have done: say but you hate me not.

Barn. Hate you! I am not that monster yet.

True. Shall our friendship still continue?

Barn. It is a blessing I never was worthy of, yet now must stand on terms, and, but upon conditions, can confirm it.

True. What are they?

Barn. Never, hereafter, though you should wonder at my conduct, desire to know more than I am willing to reveal.

True. 'Tis hard; but, upon any conditions, I must be your friend.

Barn. Then, as much as one, lost to himself, can be another's, I am your's. (*Embracing.*)

True. Be ever so; and may heaven restore your peace. But business requires our attendance:—business, the youth's best preservative from ill, as idleness his worst of snares. Will you go with me?

Barn. I'll take a little time to reflect on what has past, and follow you. [*Exit Trueman.*] I might have trusted Trueman to have applied to my uncle to have repaired the wrong I have done my master; but what of Millwood? Shall I leave her—for ever leave her, and not let her know the cause? She, who loves me with such a boundless passion? Can cruelty be duty? I judge of what she then must feel, by what I now endure. How, then, can I determine?

Enter THOROWGOOD.

Thor. Without a cause assigned, or notice given, to absent yourself last night was a fault, young man, and I came to chide you for it; but hope I am prevented; that modest blush, the confusion so visible in your face, speak grief and shame: when we have offended heaven, it requires no more; and shall man, who needs himself to be forgiven, be harder to appease? If my pardon or love, be of moment to your peace, look up secure of both.

Barn. This goodness has overcome me. (*Aside.*) O sir! you know not the nature and extent of my offence; and I should abuse your mistaken bounty to receive them. Though I had rather die, than speak my shame; though racks could not have forced the guilty secret from my breast, your kindness has.

Thor. Enough, enough; whatever it be, this concern shows you are convinced, and I am satisfied. How painful is the sense of guilt to an ingenious mind! some youthful folly, which it were prudent not to inquire into.

Barn. It will be known, and you recall your pardon and abhor me.

Thor. I never will; so heaven confirm to me the pardon of my offences. Yet be upon your guard in this gay, thoughtless, season of your life; when vice becomes habitual, the very power of leaving it is lost.

Barn. Hear me, then, on my knees, confess.

Thor. I will not hear a syllable more upon this subject; it were not mercy, but cruelty to hear what must give you such torment to reveal.

Barn. This generosity amazes and distracts me.

Thor. This remorse makes thee dearer to me than if thou hadst never offended: whatever is your fault, of this I am certain, it was harder for you to offend, than me to pardon. [*Exit.*]

Barn. Villain! villain! villain! busely to wrong so excellent a man! should I again return to folly—detested thought! but what of Millwood, then? why, I renounce her;—I give her up: the struggle is over, and virtue has prevailed. Reason may convince, but gratitude compels. This unlooked-for generosity has saved me from destruction. (*Going.*)

Enter to him a Footman.

Foot. Sir, two ladies, from your uncle in the country, desire to see you.

Barn. Who should they be? (*Aside.*) Tell them I'll wait upon them. [*Exit Footman.*] Methinks

I dread to see them. Guilt! what a coward hast thou made me! Now, every thing alarms me.

[Exit.

SCENE II.—Another Room in Thorowgood's house.

Enter MILLWOOD and LUCY, and to them a Footman.

Foot. Ladies, he'll wait upon you immediately.

Mill. 'Tis very well. I thank you.

[Exit Footman.

Enter BARNWELL.

Barn. Confusion! Millwood!

Mill. That angry look tells me that here I am an unwelcome guest; I feared as much; the unhappy are so, every where.

Barn. Will nothing but my utter ruin content you?

Mill. Unkind and cruel! Lost myself, your happiness is now my only care.

Barn. How did you gain admission?

Mill. Saying, we were desired by your uncle to visit and deliver a message to you, we were received by the family without suspicion; and, with much respect, directed here.

Barn. Why did you come at all?

Mill. I never shall trouble you more; I am come to take my leave for ever. Such is the malice of my fate. I go hopeless, despairing ever to return. This hour is all I have left me. One short hour is all I have to bestow on love and you, for whom I thought the longest life too short.

Barn. Then we are to part for ever?

Mill. It must be so; yet think not that time or absence shall ever put a period to my grief, or make me love you less: though I must leave you, yet condemn me not.

Barn. Condemn you? No; I approve your resolution, and rejoice to hear it; it is just, it is necessary; I have well weighed, and found it so.

Lucy. I am afraid the young man has more sense than she thought he had. (Aside.)

Barn. Before you came, I had determined never to see you more.

Mill. Confusion! (Aside.)

Lucy. Ay; we are all out; this is a turn so unexpected, that I shall make nothing of my part; they must even play the scene betwixt themselves. (Aside.)

Mill. It was some relief to think, though absent, you would love me still; but, to find you had resolved to cast me off! this as I never could expect, I have not learnt to bear.

Barn. I am sorry to hear that you blame in me, a resolution that so well becomes us both.

Mill. I have reason for what I do, but you have none.

Barn. Can we want a reason for parting, who had so many to wish we never had met.

Mill. Look on me, Barnwell; nay, look again: am I not she, whom, yesterday, you thought the fairest and the kindest of her sex?

Barn. No more; let me repent my former follies, if possible, without remembering what they were.

Mill. Why?

Barn. Such is my frailty, that it is dangerous.

Mill. Where is the danger, since we are to part?

Barn. The thought of that already is too painful.

Mill. If it be painful to part, then I may hope at least you do not hate me?

Barn. No, no; I never said I did. O my heart!

Mill. Perhaps, you pity me?

Barn. I do, I do; indeed, I do.

Mill. You will think upon me?

Barn. Doubt it not, while I can think at all.

Mill. You may judge an embrace at parting too great a favour, though it would be the last! (He draws back.) A look shall then suffice; farewell for ever.

[Exit with Lucy.

Barn. If to resolve to suffer, be to conquer, I have conquered. Painful victory!

Re-enter MILLWOOD and LUCY.

Mill. One thing I had forgot: I never must return to my own house again. This I thought proper to let you know, lest your mind should change, and you should seek in vain to find me there. Forgive me this second intrusion; I only came to give you this caution, and that, perhaps, was needless.

Barn. I hope it was; yet it is kind, and I must thank you for it.

Mill. My friend, your arm. (To Lucy.) Now I am gone for ever. (Going.)

Barn. One thing more; sure there's no danger in my knowing where you go? If you think otherwise—

Mill. Alas! (Weeping.)

Lucy. We are right, I find, that's my cue. (Aside.) Ah! dear sir, she's going she knows not whither; but go she must.

Barn. Humanity obliges me to wish you well; why will you expose yourself to needless troubles?

Lucy. Nay, there's no help for it: she must quit the town immediately, and the kingdom as soon as possible; it was no small matter, you may be sure, that could make her resolve to leave you.

Mill. No more, my friend; since he for whose dear sake alone I suffer, and am content to suffer, is kind, and pities me. Wherever I wander through wilds and deserts, benighted and forlorn, that thought shall give me comfort.

Barn. For my sake! O tell me how; which way am I so cursed as to bring such ruin on thee?

Mill. To know it will but increase your troubles.

Barn. My troubles cannot be greater than they are.

Lucy. Well, well, sir, if she won't satisfy you, I will.

Barn. I am bound to you beyond expression.

Mill. Remember, sir, that I desired you not to hear it.

Barn. Begin, and ease my racking expectation.

Lucy. Why, you must know, my lady here was an only child; but her parents dying while she was young, left her and her fortune, (no inconsiderable one, I assure you,) to the care of a gentleman who has a good estate of his own.

Mill. Ay, ay, the barbarous man is rich enough; but what are riches when compared to love?

Lucy. For a while he performed the office of a faithful guardian, settled her in a house, hired her servants; but you have seen in what manner she lived, so I need say no more of that.

Mill. How I shall live hereafter, heaven knows!

Lucy. All things went on as one could wish, till, some time ago, his wife dying, he fell violently in love with his charge, and would fain have married her: now the man is neither old nor ugly, but a good personable sort of a man, but I don't know how it was, she could never endure him; in short, her ill usage so provoked him, that he brought in an account of his executorship, wherein he makes her debtor to him—

Mill. A trifle in itself, but more than enough to ruin me, whom, by this unjust account, he had stripped of all before.

Lucy. Now she having neither money, nor friend, except me, who am as unfortunate as herself, he compelled her to pass his account, and give bond for the sum he demanded; but still provided handsomely for her, and continued his courtship, till being informed by his spies (truly I suspect some in her own family) that you were entertained at her house, and stayed with her all night, he came this morning, raving and storming like a madman; talks no more of marriage, so there's no hopes of making up matters that way, but vows her ruin,

unless she'll allow him the same favour that he supposes she granted you.

Barn. Must she be ruined, or find a refuge in another's arms?

Mill. He gave me but an hour to resolve in, that's happily spent with you; and now I go.

Barn. To be exposed to all the rigours of the various seasons; the summer's parching heat, and winter's cold; unhoused, to wander friendless through the inhospitable world, in misery and want; attended with fear and danger, and pursued by malice and revenge; wouldst thou endure all this for me, and can I do nothing, nothing to prevent it?

Lucy. 'Tis really a pity there can be no way found out.

Barn. O, where are all my resolutions now!

Lucy. Now I advised her, sir, to comply with the gentleman.

Barn. Tormenting fiend, away! I had rather perish, nay, see her perish, than have her saved by him; I will myself prevent her ruin, though with my own. A moment's patience; I'll return immediately. *[Exit.]*

Lucy. It was well you came; or, by what I can perceive, you had lost him.

Mill. Hush!—he's here.

Enter BARNWELL, with a bag of money.

Barn. What am I about to do! Now you, who boast your reason all sufficient, suppose yourselves in my condition, and determine for me; whether it's right to let her suffer for my faults, or, by this small addition to my guilt, prevent the ill effects of what is past. Here, take this, and with it purchase your deliverance; return to your house, and live in peace and safety.

Mill. So I may hope to see you there again.

Barn. Answer me not, but fly; lest, in the agonies of my remorse, I take again what is not mine to give, and abandon thee to want and misery.

Mill. Say but you will come.

Barn. You are my fate, my heaven, or my hell!

[Exeunt Millwood and Lucy.]

What have I done? Were my resolutions founded on reason, and sincerely made, why then has heaven suffered me to fall? I sought not the occasion; and, if my heart deceives me not, compassion and generosity were my motives. But why should I attempt to reason? All is confusion, horror, and remorse; I find I am lost, cast down from all my late erected hopes, and plunged again in guilt, yet scarce know how or why—

*Such undistinguish'd horrors make my brain,
Like hell, the seat of darkness and of pain.*

[Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Thorowgood's house.*

THOROWGOOD and TRUEMAN sitting at a table, with account books.

Thor. Well! I have examined your accounts: they are not only just, as I have always found them, but regularly kept, and fairly entered. I commend your diligence. Method in business is the surest guide. Are Barnwell's accounts ready for my inspection? he does not use to be the last on these occasions.

True. Upon receiving your orders he retired, I thought, in some confusion. If you please, I'll go and hasten him.

Thor. I'm now going to the exchange; let him know, at my return, I expect to find him ready.

[Exeunt Thor. and True.]

Enter MARIA, with a book, who sits and reads.

Maria. How forcible is truth! The weakest mind, inspired with love of that, fixed and collected

in itself, with indifference beholds the united force of earth and hell opposing: such souls are raised above the sense of pain, or so supported, that they regard it not. The martyr cheaply purchases his heaven; small are his sufferings, great is his reward. Not so the wretch, who combats love with duty; when the mind, weakened and dissolved by the soft passion, feeble and hopeless opposes its own desires. What is an hour, a day, a year of pain, to a whole life of tortures, such as these?

Enter TRUEMAN.

True. O, Barnwell! O, my friend, how art thou fallen!

Maria. Ha! Barnwell! What of him? Speak, say what of Barnwell.

True. 'Tis not to be concealed. I've news to tell of him that will afflict your generous father, yourself, and all who knew him.

Maria. Defend us heaven!

True. I cannot speak it. See there. *(Gives a letter.)*

Maria. *(Reads.)* "Trueman,—I know my absence will surprise my honoured master and yourself; and the more, when you shall understand that the reason of my withdrawing, is my having embezzled part of the cash with which I was entrusted. After this, 'tis needless to inform you that I intend never to return again: though this might have been known, by examining my accounts, yet, to prevent that unnecessary trouble, and to cut off all fruitless expectations of my return, I have left this from the lost

GEORGE BARNWELL."

True. Lost indeed! Yet how he should be guilty of what he there charges himself withal, raises my wonder equal to my grief. Never had youth a higher sense of virtue; justly he thought, and as he thought he practised; never was life more regular than his; an understanding uncommon at his years; an open, generous, manliness of temper; his manners easy, unaffected, and engaging.

Maria. This and much more you might have said with truth. He was the delight of every eye, and joy of every heart that knew him.

True. Since such he was, and was my friend, can I support his loss? See the fairest and happiest maid this wealthy city boasts, kindly condescends to weep for thy unhappy fate, poor ruined Barnwell!

Maria. Trueman, do you think a soul so delicate as his, so sensible of shame, can ever submit to live a slave to vice?

True. Never, never. So well I know him, I'm sure this act of his, so contrary to his nature, must have been caused by some unavoidable necessity.

Maria. Is there no means yet to preserve him?

True. O! that there were! But few men recover reputation lost. A merchant never. Nor would he, I fear, though I should find him, ever be brought to look his injured master in the face.

Maria. I fear as much, and therefore would never have my father know it.

True. That's impossible!

Maria. What's the sum?

True. 'Tis considerable. I've marked it here, to shew it, with the letter, to your father, at his return.

Maria. If I should supply the money, could you so dispose of that and the account, as to conceal this unhappy mismanagement from my father?

True. Nothing more easy: but can you intend it? Will you save a helpless wretch from ruin? Oh! 'twere an act worthy such exalted virtue as Maria's. Sure heaven, in mercy to my friend, inspired the generous thought.

Maria. Doubt not but I would purchase so great a happiness at a much dearer price. But how shall he be found?

True. Trust to my diligence for that. In the meantime, I'll conceal his absence from your fa-

ther, or find such excuses for it, that the real cause shall never be suspected.

Maria. In attempting to save from shame, one whom we hope may yet return to virtue, to heaven, and you, the judges of this action, I appeal, whether I have done anything misbecoming my sex and character.

True. Earth must approve the deed, and heaven, I doubt not, will reward it!

Maria. If heaven succeed it, I am well rewarded. A virgin's fame is sullied by suspicion's slightest breath; and, therefore, as this must be a secret from my father, and the world, for Barnwell's sake, for mine, let it be so to him. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*Millwood's House.*

Enter LUCY and BLUNT.

Lucy. Well! what do you think of Millwood's conduct now?

Blunt. I own it is surprising; I don't know which to admire most, her feigned or his real passion; though I have sometimes been afraid that her avarice would discover her; but his youth and want of experience make it the easier to impose on him.

Lucy. No; it is his love. To do him justice, notwithstanding his youth, he don't want understanding; but you men are much easier imposed on, in these affairs, than your vanity will allow you to believe. Let me see the wisest of you all, as much in love with me, as Barnwell is with Millwood, and I'll engage to make as great a fool of him.

Blunt. And, all circumstances considered, to make as much money of him too.

Lucy. I can't answer for that. Her artifice in making him rob his master at first, and the various stratagems, by which she has obliged him to continue in that course, astonish even me, who know her so well.

Blunt. But, then, you are to consider that the money was his master's.

Lucy. There was the difficulty of it; had it been his own, it had been nothing; were the world his, she might have it for a smile. But those golden days are done; he's ruined, and Millwood's hopes of farther profit there, are at an end.

Blunt. That's no more than we all expected.

Lucy. Being called, by his master, to make up his accounts, he was forced to quit his house and service, and wisely flies to Millwood for relief and entertainment.

Blunt. How did she receive him?

Lucy. As you would expect. She wondered what he meant—was astonished at his impudence: and, with an air of modesty peculiar to herself, swore so heartily, that she never saw him before, that she put me out of countenance.

Blunt. That's much, indeed! But how did Barnwell behave?

Lucy. He grieved; and at length, enraged at this barbarous treatment, was preparing to be gone; and, making toward the door, shewed a bag of money, which he had stolen from his master; the last he's ever like to have from thence.

Blunt. But, then, Millwood?

Lucy. Ay; she, with her usual address, returned to her old arts of lying, swearing, and dissembling: hung on his neck, and wept, and swore 'twas meant in jest; till the easy fool, melted into tears, threw the money into her lap, and swore he had rather die, than think her false.

Blunt. Strange infatuation!

Lucy. But what followed was stranger still. As doubts and fears, followed by reconciliation, ever increase love, where the passion is sincere; so in him, it caused so wild a transport of excessive fondness,—such joy, such grief, such pleasure, and such anguish, that nature in him seemed sinking with the weight, and the charmed soul disposed to

quilt his breast for her's: just then, when every passion with lawless anarchy prevailed, and reason was in the raging tempest lost, the cruel, artful, Millwood, prevailed upon the wretched youth to promise, what I tremble but to think on.

Blunt. I am amazed! what can it be?

Lucy. You will be more so, to hear it is to attempt the life of his nearest relation, and best benefactor.

Blunt. His uncle! whom we have often heard him speak of as a gentleman of a large estate and fair character in the country, where he lives.

Lucy. The same. She was no sooner possessed of the last dear purchase of his ruin, but her avarice, insatiate as the grave, demands this horrid sacrifice.

Blunt. 'Tis time the world was rid of such a monster. There is something so horrid in murder, that all other crimes seem nothing when compared to that. I would not be involved in the guilt of that for all the world.

Lucy. Nor I, heaven knows! therefore, let us clear ourselves by doing all that is in our power to prevent it. I have just thought of a way, that to me seems probable. Will you join with me to detect this cursed design?

Blunt. With all my heart. How else shall I clear myself? He who knows of a murder intended to be committed, and does not discover it, in the eye of the law and reason, is a murderer.

Lucy. Let us lose no time; I'll acquaint you with the particulars as we go. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*A Walk at some distance from a country-seat.*

Enter BARNWELL.

Barn. A dismal gloom obscures the face of day; either the sun has slipped behind a cloud, or journeys down the west of heaven, with more than common speed, to avoid the sight of what I'm doomed to act. Since I set forth on this accursed design, wherever I tread, methinks the solid earth trembles beneath my feet. Murder my uncle! My father's only brother! who since his death has been to me a father; who took me up an infant and an orphan; reared me with tenderest care, and still indulged me with most paternal fondness; yet here I stand avowed his destined murderer: I stiffen with horror at my own impiety! 'Tis yet unperformed. What if I quit my bloody purpose; and fly the place! (*Going, then stops.*) But whither, O whither shall I fly! My master's once friendly doors are ever shut against me; and without money, Millwood will never see me more, and life is not to be endured without her: she's got such firm possession of my heart, and governs there with such despotic sway; ay, there's the cause of all my sin and sorrow: 'tis more than love; 'tis the fever of the soul, and madness of desire. In vain does nature, reason, conscience, all oppose it; the impetuous passion bears down all before it, and drives me on to lust, to theft, and murder. Oh, conscience! feeble guide to virtue, who only shews us, when we go astray, but wants the power to stop us in our course. Ha! in yonder shady walk I see my uncle. He's alone. Now for my disguise. (*Plucks out a visor.*) This is his hour of private meditation. Thus daily he prepares his soul for heaven, whilst I—But what have I to do with heaven! Ha! No struggles, conscience—

Hence! hence remorse, and every thought that's good;

The storm that lust began, must end in blood.

[Puts on the visor, draws a pistol, and exit.]

SCENE IV.—*A Cut Wood.*

Enter Uncle.

Uncle. If I were superstitious, I should fear some

danger lurked unseen, or death were nigh: a heavy melancholy clouds my spirits; my imagination is filled with ghastly forms of dreary graves, and bodies changed by death.

Enter BARNWELL at a distance.

O death, thou strange mysterious power, seen every day, yet never understood, but by the incommunicative dead, what art thou? The extensive mind of man, that with a thought circles the earth's vast globe, sinks to the centre, or ascends above the stars; that worlds exotic finds, or thinks it finds, thy thick clouds attempt to pass in vain, lost and bewildered in the horrid gloom; defeated she returns more doubtful than before; of nothing certain, but of labour lost. (*During this speech, Barnwell sometimes presents the pistol, and draws it back again; at last he drops it, at which his uncle starts, and draws his sword.*)

Barn. Oh! 'tis impossible.

Uncle. A man so near me, armed and masked!

Barn. Nay, then there's no retreat. (*Plucks a poniard from his bosom, and stabs him.*)

Uncle. Oh! I am slain! All gracious heaven, regard the prayer of thy dying servant. Bless, with thy choicest blessings, my dearest nephew; forgive my murderer, and take my fleeting soul to endless mercy. (*Barnwell throws off his mask, runs to him, and kneeling by him, raises and chafes him.*)

Barn. Expiring saint! Oh! murdered, martyred uncle! Lift up your dying eyes, and view your nephew in your murderer. O do not look so tenderly upon me. Let indignation lighten from your eyes, and blast me ere you die. By heaven, he weeps in pity of my woes. Tears, tears, for blood. The murdered, in the agonies of death, weeps for his murderer. O, speak your pious purpose; pronounce my pardon then, and take me with you. He would, but cannot. O why, with such fond affection do you press my murdering hand! What! will you kiss me? (*Kisses his hand. Uncle groans and dies.*) Life that hovered on his lips but till he had sealed my pardon, in that sigh expired. He's gone for ever, and oh! I follow. (*Swoons away upon his uncle's dead body.*) Do I still live to press the suffering bosom of the earth? Do I still breathe, and taint with my infectious breath the wholesome air! Let heaven, from its high throne, in justice or in mercy, now look down on that dear murdered saint, and me the murderer. And, if his vengeance spares, let pity strike and end my wretched being. Murder, the worst of crimes, and paricide the worst of murders, and this the worst of paricides.

O, may it ever stand alone, accurs'd,

The last of murders, as it is the worst. [Exit.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Thorowgood's house.*

Enter MARIA and TRUEMAN.

Maria. What news of Barnwell?

True. None. I have sought him with the greatest diligence, but all in vain.

Maria. Doth my father yet suspect the cause of his absenting himself?

True. All appeared so just and fair to him, it is not possible he ever should; but his absence will no longer be concealed. Your father's wise; and though he seems to hearken to the friendly excuses, I would make for Barnwell, yet I'm afraid he regards them only as such, without suffering them to influence his judgment.

Maria. How does the unhappy youth defeat all our designs to serve him! yet I can never repent what we have done. Should he return, it will make his reconciliation with my father easier, and preserve him from future reproach from a malicious, unforgiving world.

Enter THOROWGOOD and LUCY.

Thor. This woman here has given me a sad, (and bating some circumstances) too probable account of Barnwell's defection.

Lucy. I am sorry, sir, that my frank confession of my former unhappy course of life should cause you to suspect my truth on this occasion.

Thor. It is not that; your confession has in it all the appearance of truth. (*To them.*) Among many other particulars, she informs me that Barnwell has been influenced to break his trust, and wrong me at several times, of considerable sums of money; now, as I know this to be false, I would fain doubt the whole of her relation: too dreadful to be willingly believed.

Maria. Sir, your pardon; I find myself on a sudden so indisposed, that I must retire. Poor ruined Barnwell! Wretched, lost Maria!

[*Aside.*—Exit.]

Thor. How am I distressed on every side? Pity for that unhappy youth, fear for the life of a much valued friend; and then my child, the only joy and hope of my declining life. Her melancholy increases hourly, and gives me painful apprehensions of her loss. O Trueman! this person informs me, that your friend, at the instigation of an impious woman, is gone to rob and murder his venerable uncle.

True. O execrable deed! I am blasted with the horror of the thought.

Lucy. This delay may ruin all.

Thor. What to do or think I know not; that he ever wronged me, I know is false, the rest may be so too, there is all my hope.

True. Trust not to that, rather suppose all true than lose a moment's time; even now the horrid deed may be a doing; dreadful imagination! or it may be done, and we are vainly debating on the means to prevent what is already past.

Thor. This his earnestness convinces me that he knows more than he has yet discovered. What ho! without there! who waits?

Enter a Servant.

Order the groom to saddle the swiftest horse, and prepare himself to set out with speed. An affair of life and death demands his diligence. [*Exit Servant.*] For you, whose behaviour on this occasion, I have no time to commend as it deserves, I must engage your farther assistance. Return and observe this Millwood till I come. I have your directions, and will follow you as soon as possible. [*Exit Lucy.*] Trueman, you I am sure would not be idle on this occasion. [*Exit.*]

True. He only who is a friend can judge of my distress. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Millwood's house.*

Enter MILLWOOD.

Mill. I wish I knew the event of this design; the attempt without success would ruin him. Well! what have I to apprehend from that? I fear too much. The mischief being only intended, his friends, in pity of his youth, turn all their rage on me. I should have thought of that before. Suppose the deed done, then, and then only I shall be secure; or what if he returns without attempting at all? But he is here, and I have done him wrong; his bloody hands shew he has done the deed, but shew he wants the prudence to conceal it.

Enter BARNWELL, bloody.

Barn. Where shall I hide me? Whither shall I fly to avoid the swift unerring hand of justice?

Mill. Dismiss those fears; though thousands had pursued you to the door, yet being entered here, you are safe as innocence; I have such a cavern, by art so cunningly contrived, that the piercing eyes

of jealousy and revenge may search in vain, nor find the entrance to the safe retreat. There will I hide you if any danger's near.

Barn. O hide me from myself if it be possible; for while I bear my conscience in my bosom, though I were hid where man's eye never saw, nor light ever dawned, it were all in vain. For that inmate, that impartial judge, will try, convict, and sentence me for murder; and execute me with never ending torments. Behold these hands all crimsoned over with my dear uncle's blood! Here's a sight to make a statue start with horror, or turn a living man into a statue.

Mill. Ridiculous! Then it seems you are afraid of your own shadow; or what's less than a shadow, your conscience.

Barn. Though to man unknown I did the accused act, what can we hide from heaven's omniscient eye?

Mill. No more of this stuff. What advantage have you made of his death? or what advantage may yet be made of it? Did you secure the keys of his treasure? those no doubt were about him. What gold, what jewels, or what else of value have you brought me?

Barn. Think you I added sacrilege to murder? Oh! had you seen him as his life flowed from him in a crimson flood, and heard him praying for me by the double name, of nephew and of murderer; alas, alas! he knew not then that his nephew was his murderer; how would you have wished as I did, though you had a thousand years of life to come, to have given them all to have lengthened his one hour. But, being dead, I fled the sight of what my hands had done, nor could I, to have gained the empire of the world, have violated by theft his sacred corpse.

Mill. Whining, preposterous, canting villain! to murder your uncle, rob him of life, nature's first, last, dear prerogative, after which there's no injury, then fear to take what he no longer wanted; and bring to me your penury and guilt. Do you think I'll hazard my reputation; nay, my life, to entertain you?

Barn. Oh! Millwood! this from thee? But I have done. If you hate me, if you wish me dead; then are you happy, for oh! 'tis sure my grief will quickly end me.

Mill. In his madness he will discover all, and involve me in his ruin; we are on a precipice from whence there's no retreat for both. Then to preserve myself. (*Pauses.*) There is no other way, it is dreadful, but reflection comes too late when danger's pressing, and there's no room for choice. It must be done. (*Rings.*)

Enter a Servant.

Fetch me an officer and seize this villain; he has confessed himself a murderer; should I let him escape, I justly might be thought as bad as he.

[*Exit Servant.*]

Barn. O Millwood! sure thou dost not, cannot mean it. Stop the messenger, upon my knees I beg you, call him back. (*Kneels.*) 'Tis fit it die indeed, but not by you. I will this instant deliver myself into the hands of justice, indeed I will, for death is all I wish. But thy ingratitude so tears my wounded soul, 'tis worse ten thousand times than death with torture.

Mill. Call it what you will, I am willing to live: and live secure: which nothing but your death can warrant. (*Barnwell rises.*)

Barn. If there be a pitch of wickedness that seats the author beyond the reach of vengeance, you must be secure. But what remains for me, but a dismal dungeon, hard-galling fetters, an awful trial, and ignominious death, justly to fall unpitied and abhorred? After death to be suspended between heaven and earth, a dreadful spectacle,

the warning and horror of a gaping crowd. This I could bear, nay wish not to avoid, had it but come from any hand but thine.

Enter BLUNT, Officer and Attendants.

Mill. Heaven defend me! Conceal a murderer! here, sir, take this youth into your custody, I accuse him of murder, and will appear to make good my charge. (*They seize him.*)

Barn. To whom, of what, or how shall I complain? I'll not accuse her, the hand of heaven is in it, and this the punishment of lust and parricide.

*Be warn'd, ye youths, who see my sad despair,
Avoid lewd women, false as they are fair,
By reason guided, honest joys pursue.*

*The fair to honour, and to virtue true,
Just to herself, will ne'er be false to you.*

*By my example learn to shun my fate,
(How wretched is the man, who's wise too late!)*

*Ere innocence and fame, and life be lost,
Here purchase wisdom cheaply, at my cost.*

[*Exit, with Officers.*]

Mill. Where's Lucy? why is she absent at such a time?

Blunt. Would I had been so, too! Lucy will soon be here, and I hope to thy confusion, thou devil!

Mill. Insolent! this to me!

Blunt. The worst that we know of the devil is, that he first seduces to sin, and then betrays to punishment. [*Exit.*]

Mill. They disapprove of my conduct: my ruin is resolved; I see my danger, but scorn it and them. I was not born to fall by such weak instruments. (*Going.*)

Enter THOROWGOOD.

Thor. Where is this scandal of her own sex, and curse of our's?

Mill. What means this insolence? Who do you seek?

Thor. Millwood.

Mill. Well, you have found her, then. I am Millwood.

Thor. Then you are the most impious wretch that ever the sun beheld.

Mill. From your appearance, I should have expected wisdom and moderation; but your manners belie your aspect. What is your business here? I know you not.

Thor. Hereafter you may know me better; I am Barnwell's master.

Mill. Then you are master to a villain; which I think is not much to your credit.

Thor. Had he been as much above thy arts, as my credit is superior to thy malice, I need not have blushed to own him.

Mill. My arts! I do not understand you, sir! If he has done amiss, what's that to me? Was he my servant, or your's? You should have taught him better.

Thor. Why should I wonder to find such uncommon impudence in one arrived to such a height of wickedness? Know, sorceress, I am not ignorant of any of your arts, by which you first deceived the unwary youth; I know how, step by step, you have led him on, reluctant and unwilling, from crime to crime, to this last horrid act, which you contrived, and, by your cursed wiles, even forced him to commit, and then betrayed him.

Mill. Ha! Lucy has got the advantage of me, and accused me first; unless I can turn the accusation, and fix it upon her and Blunt, I am lost. (*Aside.*)

Thor. Had I known your cruel design sooner, it had been prevented. To see you punished as the law directs, is all that now remains. Poor satisfac-

tion! for he, innocent as he is, compared to you, must suffer too.

Mill. I find, sir, we are both unhappy in our servants. I was surprised at such ill treatment, from a gentleman of your appearance, without cause, and therefore, too hastily returned it; for which I ask your pardon. I now perceive you have been so far imposed on, as to think me engaged in a former correspondence with your servant; and, some way or other, accessory to his undoing.

Thor. I charge you as the cause, the sole cause of all his guilt and all his suffering; of all he now endures, and must endure, till a violent and shameful death shall put a dreadful period to his life and miseries together.

Mill. 'Tis very strange! but who's secure from scandal and detraction? So far from contributing to his ruin, I never spoke to him till since that fatal accident, which I lament as much as you: 'tis true, I have a servant, on whose account he has of late frequented my house; if she has abused my good opinion of her, am I to blame? Has not Barnwell done the same by you?

Thor. I hear you; pray go on.

Mill. I have been informed he had a violent passion for her, and she for him; but I always thought it innocent; I knew her poor, and given to expensive pleasures. Now who can tell but she may have influenced the amorous youth to commit this murder, to supply her extravagancies?—It must be so, I now recollect a thousand circumstances that confirm it: I'll have her and a man servant, that I suspect as an accomplice, secured immediately. I hope, sir, you will lay aside your ill-grounded suspicions of me, and join to punish the real contrivers of this bloody deed. (*Offers to go.*)

Thor. Madam, you pass not this way: I see your design, but shall protect them from your malice.

Mill. I hope you will not use your influence, and the credit of your name, to screen such guilty wretches. Consider, sir, the wickedness of persuading a thoughtless youth to such a crime.

Thor. I do, and of betraying him when it was done.

Mill. That which you call betraying him, may convince you of my innocence. She who loves him, though she contrived the murder, would never have delivered him into the hands of justice, as I, struck with the horror of his crimes, have done.

Thor. Those whom subtly you would accuse, you know are your accusers; and what proves unanswerably their innocence and your guilt, they accused you before the deed was done, and did all that was in their power to have prevented it.

Mill. Sir, you are very hard to be convinced; but I have such a proof, which, when produced, will silence all objections. [Exit.]

Enter LUCY, TRUEMAN, BLUNT, Officers, &c.

Lucy. Gentlemen, pray place yourselves, some on one side of that door, and some on the other; watch her entrance, and act as your prudence shall direct you. This way. (*To Thorowgood.*) She's driven to the last extremity, and is forming some desperate resolution. I guess at her design.

Enter MILLWOOD with a pistol. Trueman secures her.

True. Here thy power of doing mischief ends; deceitful, cruel, bloody woman!

Mill. Fool, hypocrite, villain,—man! thou canst not call me that.

True. To call thee woman, were to wrong the sex, thou devil!

Mill. That imaginary being is an emblem of thy cursed sex collected. A mirror, wherein each particular man may see his own likeness, and that of all mankind.

True. Think not by aggravating the fault of others to extenuate thy own, of which the abuse of such uncommon perfections of mind and body is not the least.

Mill. If such I had, well may I curse your barbarous sex, who robbed me of them, ere I knew their worth; then left me, too late, to count their value by their loss. Another and another spoiler came, and all my gain was poverty and reproach. My soul disdained, and yet disdains, dependence and contempt. Riches, no matter by what means obtained, I saw secured the worst of men from both: I found it therefore necessary to be rich; and, to that end, I summoned all my arts. You call them wicked; be it so; they were such as my conversation with your sex had furnished me withal.

Thor. Sure none but the worst of men conversed with thee.

Mill. Men of all degrees and all professions I have known, yet found no difference, but in their several capacities; all were alike wicked to the utmost of their power. In pride, contention, avarice, cruelty, and revenge, the reverend priesthood were my nursing guides. From suburb magistrates, who live by ruined reputations, as the unhospitable natives of Cornwall do by shipwrecks, I learned that to charge my innocent neighbours with my crimes, was to merit their protection; for to screen the guilty, is the less scandalous, when many are suspected, and detraction, like darkness and death, blackens all objects, and levels all distinction. Such are your venal magistrates, who favour none but such as, by their office, they are sworn to punish: with them not to be guilty, is the worst of crimes; and large fees privately paid, are every needful virtue.

Thor. Your practice has sufficiently discovered your contempt of laws, both human and divine; no wonder then that you should hate the officers of both.

Mill. I hate you all; I know you, and expect no mercy; nay, I ask for none; I have done nothing that I am sorry for; I followed my inclinations, and that the best of you does every day. All actions are alike natural and indifferent to man and beast, who devour, or are devoured, as they meet with others weaker or stronger than themselves.

Thor. What pity it is, a mind so comprehensive, daring and inquisitive, should be a stranger to religion's sweet, but powerful charms.

Mill. I am not fool enough to be an atheist, though I have known enough of men's hypocrisy to make a thousand simple women so. Whatever religion is in itself, as practised by mankind it has caused the evil you say it was designed to cure. War, plague, and famine has not destroyed so many of the human race, as this pretended piety has done; and with such barbarous cruelty, as if the only way to honour heaven, were to turn the present world into hell.

Thor. Truth is truth, though from an enemy, and spoke in malice. You bloody, blind, and superstitious bigots, how will you answer this?

Mill. What are your laws, of which you make your boast, but the fool's wisdom, and the coward's valour; the instrument and skreen of all your villainies, by which you punish in others what you act yourselves, or would have acted, had you been in their circumstances? The judge who condemns the poor man for being a thief, had been a thief himself had he been poor. Thus you go on deceiving, and being deceived, harrassing, and plauging, and destroying one another; but women are your universal prey.

Women, by whom you are, the source of joy,

With cruel arts you labour to destroy:

A thousand ways our ruin you pursue,

Yet blame in us those arts, first taught by you.

O may, from hence, each violated maid,
By flattering, faithless, barb'rous man betray'd;
When robb'd of innocence, and virgin fame,
From your destruction raise a nobler name;
To right, their sex's wrongs devote their mind,
And future Millwood's prove to plague mankind.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Dungeon, a table and lamp.*BARNWELL *reading.**Enter THOROWGOOD.*

Thor. See there the bitter fruits of passion's detested reign, and sensual appetite indulged. Severe reflections, penitence, and tears.

Barn. My honoured, injured master, forgive this last unwilling disrespect,—indeed I saw you not.

Thor. 'Tis well; I hope you were better employed in viewing of yourself; I sent a reverend divine to teach you to improve it, and should be glad to hear of his success.

Barn. The word of truth, which he recommended for my constant companion in this my sad retirement, has at length removed the doubts I laboured under. From thence I have learnt the infinite extent of heavenly mercy; that my offences, though great, are not unpardonable; and that it is not my interest only, but my duty to believe, and to rejoice in that hope; so shall heaven receive the glory, and future penitents the profit of my example.

Thor. Go on. How happy am I, who live to see this!

Barn. 'Tis wonderful,—that words should charm despair, speak peace and pardon to a murderer's conscience; but truth and mercy flow in every sentence, attended with force and energy divine. How shall I describe my present state of mind? I hope in doubt—and trembling I rejoice. I feel my grief increase, even as my fears give way. Joy and gratitude now supply more tears, than the horror and anguish of despair before.

Thor. These are the genuine signs of true repentance—the only preparatory—certain way to everlasting peace.

Barn. What do I owe for all your generous kindness? but though I cannot, heaven can and will reward you.

Thor. To see thee thus, is joy too great for words. Farewell! Heaven strengthen thee. Farewell!

Barn. O! sir, there's something I could say, if my sad swelling heart would give me leave.

Thor. Give it vent awhile, and try.

Barn. I had a friend,—'tis true I am unworthy, yet methinks your generous example might persuade; could I not see him once before I go from whence there's no return.

Thor. He's coming,—and as much thy friend as ever; but I'll not anticipate his sorrow, too soon he'll see the sad effect of this contagious ruin. I must retire to indulge a weakness I find impossible to overcome. (*Aside.*) Much loved, and much lamented youth, Farewell. Heaven strengthen thee—eternally farewell.

Barn. The best of masters and of men—Farewell;—while I live let me not want your prayers.

Thor. Thou shalt not; thy peace being made with heaven, death is already vanquished; bear a little longer the pains that attend this transitory life, and cease from pain for ever. [*Exit.*]

Barn. I find a power within that bears my soul above the fears of death, and spite of conscious shame and guilt, gives me a taste of pleasure more than mortal.

Enter TRUEMAN.

Barn. Trueman,—my friend, whom I so wished to see, yet now he's here I dare not look upon him. (*Weeps.*)

True. O Barnwell! Barnwell!

Barn. Mercy! Mercy! gracious heaven! for death, but not for this, was I prepared.

True. What have I suffered since I saw you last? What pain has absence given me? But oh! to see thee thus!

Barn. I know it is dreadful! I feel the anguish of thy generous soul; but I was born to murder all who love me. (*Both weep.*)

True. I came not to reproach you; I thought to bring you comfort. O had you trusted me when first the fair seducer tempted you, all might have been prevented.

Barn. Alas! thou knowest not what a wretch I have been! breach of friendship was my first and least offence. So far was I lost to goodness; so devoted to the author of my ruin; that had she insisted on my murdering thee, I think I should have done it.

True. Pr'ythee aggravate thy faults no more.

Barn. I think I should! thus good and generous as you are, I should have murdered you!

True. We have not yet embraced, and may be interrupted. Come to my arms.

Barn. Never, never will I taste such joys on earth; never will I so soothe my just remorse. Are those honest arms, and faithful bosom, fit to embrace and to support a murderer. These iron fetters only shall clasp, and flinty pavement bear me; even these too good for such a bloody monster.

True. Shall fortune sever those whom friendship joined? Thy miseries cannot lay thee so low, but love will find thee. Upon this rugged couch then let us lie, for well it suits our most deplorable condition. Here will we offer to stern calamity, this earth the altar, and ourselves the sacrifice. Our mutual groans shall echo to each other through the dreary vault. Our sighs shall number the moments as they pass, and mingling tears communicate such anguish, as words were never made to express.

Barn. Since you propose an intercourse of woe, pour all your griefs into my breast, and in exchange take mine. (*Embracing.*) Where's now the anguish that you promised? You have taken mine, and make me no return. Sure peace and comfort dwell within these arms, and sorrow cannot reproach me while I am here! This, too, is the work of heaven; who, having before spoke peace and pardon to me, now sends thee to confirm it. O take, take some of the joy that overflows my breast.

Enter Keeper.

Keeper. Sir.

True. I come.

[*Exit Keeper.*]

Barn. Must you leave me! Death would soon have parted us for ever.

True. O my Barnwell, there is yet another task behind: again your heart must bleed for others' woes.

Barn. To meet and part with you, I thought was all I had to do on earth! What is there more for me to do or suffer?

True. I dread to tell thee, yet it must be known! Maria—

Barn. Our master's fair and virtuous daughter!

True. The same.

Barn. No misfortune, I hope, has reached that lovely maid! Preserve her, heaven, from every ill, to shew mankind that goodness is your care.

True. Whatever you and I have felt, and more, if more be possible, she feels for you.

Barn. This is, indeed, the bitterness of death! (*Aside.*)

True. You must remember, for we all observed it, for some time past, a heavy melancholy weighed her down. Disconsolate she seemed, and pined and languished from a cause unknown; till hearing of your dreadful fate, the long stifled flame blazed

out, and in the transport of her grief, discovered her own lost state, while she lamented your's.

Barn. (*Weeping.*) Why didn't you let me die and never know it?

True. It was impossible; she makes no secret of her passion for you, and is determined to see you ere you die; she waits for me to introduce her.

[*Exit.*]
Barn. Vain busy thoughts be still! What avails it to think on what I might have been?—I now am,—what I have made myself.

Enter TRUEMAN *and* MARIA.

True. Madam, reluctant I lead you to this dismal scene: this is the seat of misery and guilt. Here awful justice reserves her public victims. This is the entrance to shameful death.

Maria. To this sad place then no improper guest, the abandoned, lost Maria brings despair; and see the subject and the cause of all this world of woe. Silent and motionless he stands, as if his soul had quitted her abode, and the lifeless form alone was left behind.

Barn. Just heaven, I am your own; do with me what you please.

Maria. Why are your streaming eyes still fixed below? as though thou wouldst give the greedy earth thy sorrows, and rob me of my due? Were happiness within your power, you should bestow it where you please; but, in your misery, I must and will partake.

Barn. Oh! say not so, but fly, abhor, and leave me to my fate. Consider what you are: so shall I quickly be to you as though I had never been.

Maria. When I forget you, I must be so indeed. Reason, choice, virtue, all forbid it. Let women, like Millwood, if there be more such women, smile in prosperity, and in adversity forsake. Be it the pride of virtue to repair, or to partake, the ruin such have made.

True. Lovely, ill-fated maid!

Maria. Yes, fruitless is my love, and unavailing all my sighs and tears. Can they save thee from

approaching death? From such a death? O, sorrow insupportable.

Barn. Preserve her, heaven, and restore her peace, nor let her death be added to my crimes. (*Bell tolls.*) I am summoned to my fate.

Enter Keeper.

Keep. The officers attend you, sir. Millwood is already summoned. [*Exit.*]

Barn. Tell them I am ready. And now, my friend, farewell. (*Embracing.*) Support and comfort the best you can this mourning fair. No more. Forget not to pray for me; would you, bright excellence, permit me the honour of a chaste embrace, the last happiness this world could give were mine. (*They embrace.*) Exalted goodness! O turn your eyes from earth and me, to heaven, where virtue, like your's, is ever heard. Pray for the peace of my departing soul. Early my race of wickedness began, and soon has reached the summit. Ere nature has finished her work, and stamped me man, just at the time that others begin to stray, my course is finished; though short my span of life, and few my days, yet count my crimes for years, and I have lived whole ages. Justice and mercy are in heaven the same; its utmost severity is mercy to the whole, thereby to cure man's folly and presumption, which else would render even infinite mercy vain and ineffectual. Thus justice, in compassion to mankind, cuts off a wretch like me, by one such example to secure thousands from future ruin.

*If any youth, like you, in future times,
Shall mourn my fate, though he abhor my crimes;
Or tender maid, like you, my tale shall hear,
And to my sorrows give a pitying tear:
To each such melting eye, and throbbing heart,
Would gracious heaven this benefit impart,
Never to know my guilt, nor feel my pain,
Then must you own you ought not to complain;
Since you nor weep, nor shall I die in vain.*

[*Exeunt.*]

THE GRECIAN DAUGHTER;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY ARTHUR MURPHY.



Act V.—Scene 3.

CHARACTERS.

DIONYSIUS
EVANDER
PHILOTAS
MELANTHON

PHOCION
ARCAS
CALIPPUS
HERALD

GREEK SOLDIER
OFFICER
EUPHRASIA
ERIXENE

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter MELANTHON and PHILOTAS.

Mel. Yet, a moment; hear, Philotas, hear me.

Phil. No more; it must not be.

Mel. Ohdurate man!

Thus wilt thou spurn me, when a king distress'd,
A good, a virtuous, venerable king,
The father of his people, from a throne,
Which long with ev'ry virtue he adorn'd,
Torn by a ruffian, by a tyrant's hand,
Groans in captivity? In his own palace
Lives a sequester'd pris'ner? Oh! Philotas,
If thou hast not renounc'd humanity,
Let me behold my sovereign; once again
Admit me to his presence; let me see
My royal master.

Phil. Urge thy suit no further;
Thy words are fruitless; Dionysius' orders
Forbid access; he is our sov'reign now;
'Tis his to give the law, mine to obey.

Mel. Thou canst not mean it: his to give the law!
Detested spoiler!—his! a vile usurper!
Have we forgot the elder Dionysius,
Surnam'd the Tyrant? To Sicilia's throne
The monster waded through whole seas of blood.
Sore groan'd the land beneath his iron rod,
Till rous'd, at length, Evander came from Greece,
(Like freedom's genius came,) and sent the tyrant,
Stripp'd of the crown, and to his humble rank
Once more reduc'd to roam, for vile subsistence,
A wand'ring sophist through the realms of Greece.

Phil. Whate'er his right, to him in Syracuse

All bend the knee; his the supreme dominion,
And death and torment wait his sovereign nod.

Mel. But soon that pow'r shall cease; behold
his walls

Now close encircled by the Grecian bands;
Timoleon leads them on; indignant Corinth
Sends her avenger forth, array'd in terror,
To hurl ambition from a throne usurp'd,
And bids all Sicily resume her rights.

Phil. Thou wert a statesman once, Melanthon;
now,

Grown dim with age, thy eye pervades no more
The deep-laid schemes which Dionysius plans.
Know, then, a fleet from Carthage even now
Stems the rough billow: and, ere yonder sun,
(That now declining seeks the western wave,)
Shall to the shades of night resign the world,
Thou'lt see the Punic sails in yonder bay,
Whose waters wash the walls of Syracuse.

Mel. Art thou a stranger to Timoleon's name?

Intent to plan, and circumspect to see
All possible events, he rushes on
Resistless in his course! Your boasted master
Scarce stands at bay; each hour the strong blockade
Hems him in closer; and, ere long, thou'lt view
Oppression's iron rod to fragments shiver'd!
The good Evander then—

Phil. Alas! Evander

Will ne'er behold the golden time you look for!

Mel. How! not behold it! Say, Philotas, speak;
Has the fell tyrant, have his felon murd'ers—

Phil. As yet, my friend, Evander lives.

Mel. And yet

Thy dark, half-binted purpose—lead me to him;
If thou hast murder'd him—

Phil. By heav'n, he lives!

Mel. Then bless me with one tender interview. Thrice has the sun gone down since last these eyes Have seen the good old king; say, why is this? Wherefore debarr'd his presence? Thee, Philotas, The troops obey, that guard the royal pris'ner; Each avenue to thee is open; thou Canst grant admittance; let me, let me see him.

Phil. Entreat no more; the soul of Dionysius Is ever wakeful; rent with all the pangs That wait on conscious guilt.

Mel. But when dunn night—

Phil. Alas! it cannot be. But mark my words: Let Greece urge on her general assault. Despatch some friend, who may o'erleap the walls, And tell Timoleon, the good old Evander Has liv'd three days, by Dionysius' order, Lock'd up from ev'ry sustenance of nature, And life, now wearied out, almost expires.

Mel. If any spark of virtue dwell within thee, Lead me, Philotas, lead me to his prison.

Phil. The tyrant's jealous care hath mov'd him thence.

Mel. Ha! mov'd him, say'st thou?

Phil. At the midnight hour, Silent convey'd him up the steep ascent To where the elder Dionysius form'd, On the sharp summit of the pointed rock, Which overhangs the deep, a dungeon drear: Cell within cell, a labyrinth of horror, Deep cavern'd in the cliff, where many a wretch, Unseen by mortal eye, has groan'd in anguish, And died obscure, unpitied, and unknown.

Mel. Clandestine murderer! Yes, there's the scene

Of horrid massacre. Full oft I've walk'd, When all things lay in sleep and darkness hush'd; Yes, oft I've walk'd the lonely sullen beach, And heard the mournful sound of many a coarse Plung'd from the rock into the wave beneath, That murmurs on the shore. And means he thus To end a monarch's life? Oh! grant my pray'r; My timely succour may protect his days: The guard is your's—

Phil. Forbear; thou plead'st in vain; And though I feel soft pity throbbing here, Though each emotion prompts the gen'rous deed, I must not yield; it were assur'd destruction. Farewell! despatch a message to the Greeks; I'll to my station: now thou know'st the worst.

[Exit.]

Mel. Oh! lost Evander! Lost Euphrasia, too! How will her gentle nature bear the shock Of a dear father, thus in ling'ring pangs A prey to famine, like the veriest wretch Who the hard hand of misery bath grip'd? In vain she'll rave with impotence of sorrow; Perhaps, provoke her fate: Greece arms in vain; All's lost; Evander dies!

Enter CALIPPUS.

Cal. Where is the king? Our troops, that sallied to attack the foe, Retire disorder'd; to the eastern gate The Greeks pursue; Timoleon rides in blood! Arm, arm, and meet their fury.

Mel. To the citadel Direct thy footsteps; Dionysius there Marshals a chosen band.

Cal. Do thou call forth Thy hardy veterans; haste, or all is lost!

[Exit. Warlike music.]

Mel. Now, ye just gods, now look propitious down; Now give the Grecian sabre tenfold edge, And save a virtuous king! (Warlike music.)

Enter EUPHRASIA.

Euph. War on, ye heroes,

Ye great assertors of a monarch's cause! Let the wild tempest rage. Melanthon, ha! Didst thou not hear the vast tremendous roar? Down tumbling from its base, the eastern tow'r Burst on the tyrant's ranks, and on the plain Lies an extended ruin.

Mel. Still new horrors

Increase each hour, and gather round our heads.

Euph. The glorious tumult lifts my tow'ring soul. Once more, Melanthon, once again, my father Shall mount Sicilia's throne.

Mel. Alas! that hour

Would come with joy to every honest heart; But no such hour in all the round of time, I fear, the fates averse will e'er lead on.

Euph. And still, Melanthon, still does pale despair

Depress thy spirit? Lo! Timoleon comes, Arm'd with the pow'r of Greece; the brave, the just, God-like Timoleon! ardent to redress, He guides the war, and gains upon his prey. A little interval shall set the victor Within our gates triumphant.

Mel. Still my fears

Forebode for thee. Would thou hadst left this place, When hence your husband, the brave Phocion fled, Fled with your infant son!

Euph. In duty fix'd,

Here I remain'd, while my brave, gen'rous Phocion Fled with my child, and from his mother's arms Bore my sweet little one. Full well thou know'st The pangs I suffer'd in that trying moment. Did I not weep? Did I not rave and shriek, And by the roots tear my dishevell'd hair? Did I not follow to the sea-beat shore, Resolv'd with him, and with my blooming boy, To trust the winds and waves?

Mel. The pious act, whate'er the fates intend, Shall merit heart-felt praise.

Euph. Yes, Phocion, go,

Go with my child, torn from this matron breast, This breast that still should yield its nurture to him, Fly with my infant to some happier shore! If he be safe, Euphrasia dies content. Till that sad close of all, the task be mine To tend a father with delighted care; To smooth the pillow of declining age; See him sink gradual into mere decay; On the last verge of life watch every look; Explore each fond unutterable wish, Catch his last breath, and close his eyes in peace.

Mel. I would not add to thy afflictions; yet My heart misgives; Evander's fatal period—

Euph. Still is far off: the gods have sent relief, And once again I shall behold him king.

Mel. Alas! those glitt'ring hopes but lend a ray To gild the clouds, that hover o'er your head, Soon to rain sorrow down, and plunge you deeper In black despair.

Euph. The spirit-stirring virtue That glows within me, ne'er shall know despair. No, I will trust the gods. Desponding man! Hast thou not heard with what resistless ardour Timoleon drives the tumult of the war? Hast thou not heard him thund'ring at our gates? The tyrant's pent up in his last retreat; Anon, thou'lt see his hatlements in dust, His walls, his ramparts, and his tow'rs in ruin; Destruction pouring in on ev'ry side, Pride and oppression at their utmost need, And nought to save him in his hopeless hour.

(A Flourish of trumpets.)

Mel. Ha! the fell tyrant comes. Beguile his rage, And o'er your sorrows cast a dawn of gladness.

Enter DIONYSIUS, CALIPPUS, Officers, &c.

Dion. The vain, presumptuous Greek! his hopes of conquest, Like a gay dream, are vanish'd into air.

Proudly elate, and flush'd with easy triumph
O'er vulgar warriors, to the gates of Syracuse
He urg'd the war, till Dionysius' arm
Let slaughter loose, and taught his dastard train
To seek their safety by inglorious flight.

Euph. Oh! Dionysius, if distracting fears
Alarm this throbbing bosom, you will pardon
A frail and tender sex. Till the fury
Of war subside, the wild, the horrid interval
In safety let me sooth to dear delight
In a lov'd father's presence: from his sight,
For three long days, with specious feign'd excuse
Your guards debarr'd me. Oh! while yet he lives,
Indulge a daughter's love; worn out with age
Soon must he seal his eyes in endless night,
And with his converse charm my ear no more.

Dion. Afflicted fair,
Thy couch invites thee. When the tumult's o'er,
Thon't see Evander with redoubled joy.
Though now unequal to the cares of empire,
His age sequester him, yet honours high
Shall gild the ev'ning of his various day.
Perdiccas, ere the morn's revolving light
Unveil the face of things, do thou despatch
A well-ear'd galley to Hamilcar's fleet;
At the north point of yonder promontory,
Let some selected officer instruct him
To moor his ships, and issue on the land.
Then may Timoleon tremble: vengeance, then,
Shall overwhelm his camp, pursue his bands
With fatal havoc to the ocean's margin,
And cast their limbs to glut the vulture's famine
In mangled heaps upon the naked shore. [*Exit.*]

Euph. What do I hear? Melanthon, can it be?
If Carthage come, if her perfidious sons
List in his cause, the dawn of freedom's gone.

Mel. Woe, bitt' rest woe impends; thou wouldst
not think—

Euph. How? Speak! unfold.

Mel. My tongue denies its office.

Euph. How is my father? Say, Melanthon—

Mel. He,—

I fear to shock thee with the tale of horror!
Perhaps he dies this moment. Since Timoleon
First form'd his lines round this beleaguerr'd city,
No nutriment has touch'd Evander's lips.
In the deep caverns of the rock imprison'd,
He pines in bitt' rest want.

Euph. Well, my heart,
Well do your vital drops forget to flow!

Mel. Despair, alas! is all the sad resource
Our fate allows us now.

Euph. Yet why despair?

Is that the tribute to a father due?

Blood is his due.

Melanthon, come; my wrongs will lend me force;
The weakness of my sex is gone; this arm
Feels tenfold strength; this arm shall do a deed
For heav'n and earth, for men and gods to wonder
at:

This arm shall vindicate a father's cause. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A wild, romantic Scene, amidst over-
hanging rocks; a cavern on one side.*

Enter ARCAS, with a spear in his hand.

Arc. The gloom of night sits heavy on the world;
And o'er the solemn scene such stillness reigns,
As 'twere a pause of nature; on the beach
No murmur'ring billow breaks; the Grecian tents
Lie sunk in sleep; no gleaming fires are seen;
All Syracuse is hush'd: no stir abroad,
Save ever and anon the dashing oar
That beats the sullen wave. And, hark! Was that
The groan of anguish from Evander's cell,
Piercing the midnight gloom? It is the sound
Of bustling prow, that cleave the briny deep.

Perhaps, at this dead hour, Hamilcar's fleet
Rides in the bay.

Enter PHILOTAS from the cavern.

Phil. What, ho! brave Arcas! ho!

Arc. Why thus desert thy couch?

Phil. Methought the sound
Of distant uproar chas'd affrighted sleep.

Arc. At intervals, the oar's resounding stroke
Comes echoing from the main. Save that report,
A death-like silence through the wide expanse
Broods o'er the dreary coast.

Phil. Do thou retire,
And seek repose; the duty of thy watch
Is now perform'd; I'll take thy post.

Arc. How fares
Your royal pris'ner?

Phil. Arcas, shall I own
A secret weakness? My heart inward melts
To see that suffering virtue. On the earth,
The cold, damp earth, the royal victim lies;
And while pale famine drinks his vital spirit,
He welcomes death, and smiles himself to rest.
Oh! would I could relieve him! Thou withdraw;
Thy wearied nature claims repose; and now
The watch is mine.

Arc. May no alarm disturb thee! [*Exit.*]

Phil. Some dread event is lab'ring into birth.
At close of day the sullen sky held forth
Unerring signals. With disastrous glare
The moon's full orb rose crimson'd o'er with blood;
And, lo! athwart the gloom, a falling star
Trails a long tract of fire! What daring step
Sounds on the flinty rock? Stand, there! what, ho!
Speak, ere thou dar'st advance. Unfold thy pur-
pose:

Who and what art thou?

Euph. (*Without.*) Thou need'st not fear,
It is a friend approaches.

Phil. Ha! what mean

Those plaintive notes?

Euph. (*Without.*) Here is no ambush'd Greek,
No warrior to surprise thee on the watch.
An humble suppliant comes. Alas! my strength
Exhausted quite forsakes this weary frame.

Phil. What voice thus piercing through the gleam
of night—

What art thou? what thy errand? quickly say
What wretch, with what intent, at this dread hour—
Wherefore alarm'st thou thus our peaceful watch?
[*Exit.*]

Re-enter PHILOTAS, with EUPHRASIA.

Euphrasia!

Why, princess, thus anticipate the dawn?

Still sleep and silence wrap the weary world;

The stars in mid career usurp the pole;

The Grecian bands, the winds, the waves are hush'd;

All things are mute around us; all but you
Rest in oblivious slumber from their cares.

Euph. Yes, all; all rest: the very murd'rer sleeps;
Goilt is at rest: I only wake to misery.

Phil. How didst thou gain the summit of the rock?

Euph. Give me my father; here you hold him fet-
ter'd;

Oh! give him to me:—if ever

The touch of nature throbb'd within your breast,

Admit me to Evander; in these caves

I know he pines in want; let me convey

Some charitable succour to a father.

Phil. Alas! Euphrasia, would I dare comply.

Euph. It will be virtue in thee. Thou, like me,
Wert born in Greece. Oh! by our common parent—
Nay, stay; thou shalt not fly; Philotas, stay;
You have a father, too; think, were his lot
Hard as Evander's; if, by felon hands,
Chain'd to the earth, with slow consuming pangs
He felt sharp want, and, with an asking eye
Implor'd relief, yet cruel men deny'd it,
Wouldst thou not burst through adamant gates,

Through walls and rocks to save him? Think,
Philotas,
Of thy own aged sire, and pity mine.
Think of the agonies a daughter feels,
When thus a parent wants the common food,
The bounteous hand of nature meant for all.

Phil. 'Twere best withdraw thee, princess; thy assistance

Evander wants not; it is fruitless all;
Thy tears, thy wild entreaties, are in vain.

Euph. Ha! thou hast murder'd him; he is no more;—

I understand thee;—butchers, you have shed
The precious drops of life: yet, e'en in death,
Let me behold him; let a daughter close
With duteous hand a father's beamless eyes;
Print her last kisses on his honour'd hand,
And lay him decent in the shroud of death.

Phil. Alas! this frantic grief can nought avail.
Retire, and seek the couch of balmy sleep,
In this dead hour, this season of repose.

Euph. And dost thou, then, (inhuman that thou art,)

Advise a wretch like me to know repose?
This is my last abode: these caves, these rocks,
Shall ring for ever with Euphrasia's wrongs;
All Sicily shall hear me; yonder deep
Shall echo back an injur'd daughter's cause;
Here will I dwell, and rave, and shriek, and give
These scatter'd locks to all the passing winds;
Call on Evander lost; and, pouring curses,
And cruel gods and cruel stars invoking,
Stand on the cliff in madness and despair.

Phil. Yet calm this violence; reflect, Euphrasia,
With what severe enforcement Dionysius
Exact obedience to his dread command.
If here thou'rt found—

Euph. Here is Euphrasia's mansion.
(*Falls on the ground.*)

Her fix'd eternal home: inhuman savages,
Here stretch me with a father's murder'd corse.

Phil. By heaven,
My heart in pity bleeds.
Her vehemence of grief o'erpow'rs me quite.
My honest heart condemns the barb'rous deed,
And if I dare—

Euph. And if you dare! Is that
The voice of manhood? Honest, if you dare!
'Tis the slave's virtue! 'tis the utmost limit
Of the base coward's honour. Not a wretch,
There's not a villain, not a tool of pow'r,
But, silence interest, extinguish fear,
And he will prove benevolent to man.
The gen'rous heart does more: will dare do all
That honour prompts. How dost thou dare to
murder?

Respect the gods, and know no other fear.
Phil. No other fear assails this warlike breast.

I pity your misfortunes; yes, by heav'n,
My heart bleeds for you. Gods! you've touch'd
my soul!

The gen'rous impulse is not giv'n in vain.
I feel thee, nature, and I dare obey.
Oh! thou hast conquer'd. Go, Euphrasia, go,
Behold thy father.

Yet mark my words; if aught of nourishment
Thou wouldst convey, my partners of the watch
Will ne'er consent.

Euph. I will observe your orders:
On any terms, oh! let me, let me see him.

Phil. Yon lamp will guide thee through the cavern'd way.

Euph. My heart runs o'er in thanks; the pious act

Timoleon shall reward; the bounteous gods,
And thy own virtue, shall reward the deed.

(*Goes into the cave.*)
Phil. Prevailing, powerful virtue! thou subduest
The stubborn heart, and moulds it to thy purpose.

Would I could save them! But though not for me
The glorious pow'r to shelter innocence,
Yet for a moment to assuage its woes,
Is the best sympathy, the purest joy
Nature intended for the heart of man,
When thus she gave the social, gen'rous tear. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*The Inside of the Cavern.*

Enter ARCAS and EUPHRASIA.

Arc. No; on my life, I dare not.

Euph. But a small,
A wretched pittance; one poor cordial drop
To renovate exhausted drooping age.
I ask no more.

Arc. Not the smallest store
Of scanty nourishment must pass these walls.
Our lives were forfeit else: a moment's parley
Is all I grant: in yonder cave he lies.

Evan. (*Within the cell.*) Oh! struggling nature,
let thy conflict end!

Oh! give me, give me rest.
Euph. My father's voice!

It pierces here! it cleaves my very heart.
I shall expire, and never see him more.

Arc. Repose thee, princess, here; (*draws a couch*) here rest thy limbs,
Till the returning blood shall lend thee firmness.

Euph. The caves, the rocks, re-echo to his groans!
And is there no relief?

Arc. All I can grant
You shall command. I will unbar the dungeon,
Unloose the chain that binds him to the rock,
And leave your interview without restraint.

(*Opens a cell in the back scene.*)
Euph. Hold, hold, my heart! Oh! how shall I
sustain

The agonizing scene? (*Rises.*) I must behold him;
Nature that drives me on, will lend me force.

Is that my father?
Arc. Take your last farewell.

His vigour seems not yet exhausted quite.
You must be brief, or ruin will ensue. [*Exit.*]

Evan. (*Raising himself.*) Oh! when shall I get
free? These ling'ring pangs—

Despatch me, pitying gods, and save my child!
I burn, I burn; alas! no place of rest:
(*Rises and comes out.*)

A little air; once more a breath of air;
Alas! I faint; I die.

Euph. Heart-piercing sight!
Let me support you, sir.

Evan. Oh! lend your arm.
Who'er thou art, I thank thee; that kind breeze
Comes gently o'er my senses—lead me forward:
And is there left one charitable hand
To reach its succours to a wretch like me?

Euph. Well may'st thou ask it. Oh! my break-
ing heart!

The hand of death is on him. (*Aside.*)

Evan. Still a little,
A little onward to the air conduct me.
'Tis well: I thank thee; thou art kind and good,
And much I wonder at this gen'rous pity.

Euph. Do you not know me, sir?
Evan. Methinks I know

That voice: art thou—alas! my eyes are dim;
Each object swims before me. No, in truth,
I do not know thee.

Euph. Not your own Euphrasia?
Evan. Art thou my daughter?

Euph. Oh! my honour'd sire!
Evan. My daughter, my Euphrasia! come to close
A father's eyes! Giv'n to my last embrace!

Gods! do I hold her once again? Your mercies
Are without number. (*Falls on the couch.*)

I would pour my praise;
But, oh! your goodness overcomes me quite!
You read my heart; you see what passes there.

Euph. Alas! he faints; the gushing tide of transport
Bears down each feeble sense: restore him, heav'n!

Evan. All, my Euphrasia, all will soon be well.
Pass but a moment, and this busy globe,
Its thrones, its empires, and its bustling millions,
Will seem a speck in the great void of space.
Yet while I stay, thou darling of my age!
Nay, dry those tears.

Euph. I will, my father.

Evan. Where,
I fear to ask it, where is virtuous Phocion?

Euph. Fled from the tyrant's pow'r.

Evan. And left thee here
Expos'd and helpless? -

Euph. He is all truth and honour:
He fled to save my child.

Evan. My young Evander!
Your boy is safe, Euphrasia! Oh, my heart!
Alas! quite gone; worn out with misery;
Oh! weak, decay'd old man!

Euph. Inhuman wretches!
Will none relieve his want? A drop of water
Might save his life; and ev'n that's deny'd him.

Evan. These strong emotions—Oh! that eager
air—

It is too much—assist me; bear me hence;
And lay me down in peace.

Euph. His eyes are fix'd!
And those pale, quiv'ring lips! He clasps my hand:
What, no assistance! Monsters, will you thus
Let him expire in these weak, feeble arms?

Enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. Those wild, those piercing shrieks will give
th' alarm.

Euph. Support him; bear him hence; 'tis all I
ask.

Evan. (*As he is carried off.*) Oh, death! where
art thou? Death, thou dread of guilt,
Thou wish of innocence, affliction's friend,
Tir'd nature calls thee; come, in mercy come,
And lay me pillow'd in eternal rest.
My child where art thou? give me; reach thy hand.
Why dost thou weep? My eyes are dry—Alas!
Quite parch'd my lips—quite parch'd, they cleave
together. [*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter ARCUS.

Arc. The grey of morn breaks through yon eastern
clouds.

'Twere time this interview should end: the hour
Now warns Euphrasia hence: what man could dare,
I have indulg'd—Philotas!—ha! the cell
Left void!—Evander gone!—What may this mean?
Philotas, speak!

Re-entér PHILOTAS.

Phil. Oh! vile, detested lot,
Here to obey the savage tyrant's will,
And murder virtue, that can thus behold
Its executioner, and smile upon him.
That piteous sight!

Arc. She must withdraw, Philotas;
Delay undoes us both. The restless main
Glows with the blush of day. The time requires,
Without her further pause, or vain excuse,
That she depart this moment.

Phil. Arcas, yes;
My voice shall warn her of th' approaching danger.
[*Exit.*]

Arc. Would she had ne'er adventur'd to our
guard!

I dread th' event; and hark! the wind conveys
In clearer sound the uproar of the main.
The fates prepare new havoc; on th' event,
Depends the fate of empire. Wherefore thus
Delays Euphrasia? Ha! what means, Philotas,
That sudden haste, that pale, disorder'd look?

Re-enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. Oh! I can hold no more; at such a sight
Ev'n the hard heart of tyranny would melt
To infant softness. Arcas, go, behold
The pious fraud of charity and love;
Behold that unexampled goodness;
See the expedient sharp necessity has taught her;
Thy heart will burn, will melt, will yearn to view
A child like her.

Arc. Ha! Say, what mystery
Wakes these emotions!

Phil. Wonder-working virtue!
The father foster'd at his daughter's breast!
Oh! filial piety! The milk design'd
For her own offspring, on the parent's lip
Allays the parching fever. All her laws
Inverted quite, great nature triumphs still.

Arc. The tale unmans my soul.

Phil. Ye tyrants hear it,
And learn, that while your cruelty prepares
Unheard-of torture, virtue can keep pace
With your worst efforts, and can try new modes
To bid men grow enamour'd of her charms.

Arc. Philotas, for Euphrasia, in her cause
I now can hazard all. Let us preserve
Her father for her.

Phil. Oh! her lovely daring
Transcends all praise. By heav'n, he shall not die!

Arc. And yet we must be wary; I'll go forth,
And first explore each avenue around
Lest the fix'd sentinel obstruct your purpose. [*Exit.*]

Phil. I thank thee, Arcas; we will act like men
Who feel for others' woes. She leads him forth,
And tremblingly supports his drooping age.

Re-enter EUPHRASIA and EVANDER.

Evan. Euphrasia, oh! my child, returning life
Glows here about my heart. Conduct me forward;
At the last gasp preserv'd! Ha! dawning light!
Let me behold; in faith, I see thee now;
I do, indeed: the father sees his child.

Euph. I have reliev'd him! Oh! the joy's too
great;

'Tis speechless rapture!

Evan. Blessings, blessings on thee!

Euph. My father still shall live. Alas! Philotas,
Could I abandon that white, hoary head,
That venerable form? Abandon him
To perish here in misery and famine?

Phil. Thy tears, thou miracle of goodness!

Have triumph'd o'er me. Take him, take your fa-
ther;

Convey him hence; I do release him to you.

Evan. What said Philotas? Do I fondly dream?
Indeed my senses are imperfect; yet
Methought I heard him! Did he say, release me?

Phil. Thou art my king, and now no more my
pris'ner:

Go with your daughter, with that wondrous pattern
Of filial piety to after times.

Yes, princess, lead him forth; I'll point the path,
Whose soft declivity will guide your steps
To the deep vale, which these o'erhanging rocks
Encompass round. You may convey him thence
To some safe shelter. Yet a moment's pause;
I must conceal your flight from ev'ry eye.

Yes, I will save, or perish in their cause. [*Exit.*]

Evan. Whither, oh! whither, shall Evander go?
I'm at the goal of life; if in the race
Honour has smil'd with no ling'ring step,
But there sits smiling with her laurel'd wreath
To crown my brow, there would I fain make halt,
And not inglorious lay me down to rest.

Euph. And will you, then, refuse when thus the
gods

Afford a refuge to thee?

Evan. Oh! my child,
There is no refuge for me.

Euph. Pardon, sir;

Euphrasia's care has form'd a safe retreat;
There may'st thou dwell; it will not long be wanted.
Soon shalt Timoleon, with resistless force,
Burst yon devoted walls.

Evan. Timoleon!

Euph. Yes,

The brave Timoleon, with the pow'r of Greece;
Another day shall make the city his.

Evan. Timoleon come to vindicate my rights!
Oh! thou shalt reign in Sicily, my child
Shall grace her father's throne. Indulgent heav'n!
Pour down your blessings on this best of daughters;
To her and Phocion give Evander's crown;
Let them, oh! let them both in virtue wear it,
And, in due time, transmit it to their boy!

Re-enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. All things are apt; the drowsy sentinel
Lies hush'd in sleep; I'll marshal thee the way
Down the steep rock.

Euph. Oh! let us quickly hence.

Evan. The blood but loiters in these frozen veins.
Do you, whose youthful spirit glows with life,
Do you go forth, and leave this mould'ring corpse.
To me had heav'n decreed a longer date,
It ne'er had suffer'd a fell monster's reign,
Nor let me see the carnage of my people.
Farewell, Euphrasia! in one lov'd embrace
To these remains pay the last obsequies,
And leave me here to sink to silent dust.

Euph. And will you, then, on self-destruction
-beant,

Reject my pray'r, nor trust your fate with me?

Evan. Trust thee, Euphrasia? Trust in thee,
my child?

Though life's a burden I could well lay down,
Yet I will prize it, since bestow'd by thee.
Oh! thou art good; thy virtue soars a flight
For the wide world to wonder at; in thee,
Hear it, all nature, future ages hear it,
The father finds a parent in his child. [Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Rampart near the harbour.*

Enter DIONYSIUS and Officers.

Dion. Base deserters!
Curse on their Punic faith! Did they once dare
To grapple with the Greek? Ere yet the main
Was ting'd with blood, they turn'd their ships
averse.

May storms and tempests follow in their rear,
And dash their fleet upon the Libyan shore!

Enter CALIPPUS.

Cal. My liege, Timoleon, where the harbour
opens,

Has storm'd the forts, and ev'n now his fleet
Pursues its course, and steers athwart the bay.
Through ev'ry street

Despair and terror fly. A panic spreads
From man to man, and superstition sees
Jove arm'd with thunder, and the gods against us.

Dion. With sacred rites their wrath must be appeas'd.

Let instant victims at the altar bleed;
Let incense roll its fragrant clouds to heav'n,
And pious matrons, and the virgin train,
In slow procession to the temple bear
The image of their gods.

The solemn sacrifice, the virgin throng,
Will gain the popular belief, and kindle
In the fierce soldiery religious rage.

Away, my friends, prepare the sacred rites.

[Exit Calippus.]

Enter PHILOTAS.

Philotas, how fares your prisoner?
Has he yet breath'd his last?

Phil. Life ebbs apace;

To-morrow's sun sees him a breathless corse.

Dion. Curse on hisling'ring pangs! Sicilia's crown
No more shall deck his brow; and if the sand
Still loiter in the glass, thy hand, my friend,
May shake it thence.

Phil. It shall, dread sir; that task
Leave to thy faithful servant.

Dion. Oh! Philotas,
Thou little know'st the cares, the pangs of empire.
The ermin'd pride, the purple that adorns
A conqueror's breast, but serves, my friend, to hide
A heart that's torn, that's mangled with remorse:
Ev'n victory itself plants anguish here,
And round my laurels the fell serpent twines.

Phil. Would Dionysius abdicate his crown,
And sue for terms of peace?

Dion. Detested thought!

No, though ambition teem with countless ills,
It still has charms of pow'r to fire the soul.
Though horrors multiply around my head,
I will oppose them all. The pomp of sacrifice,
But now ordain'd, is mockery to heav'n.

'Tis vain, 'tis fruitless; then let daring guilt
Be my inspirer, and consummate all.

Where are those Greeks, the captives of my sword,
Whose desp'rate valour rush'd within our walls,
Fought near our person, and the pointed lance
Aim'd at my breast?

Phil. In chains they wait their doom.

Dion. Give me to see 'em; bring the slaves be-
fore me.

Phil. What, ho! Melanthon, this way lead your
prisoners.

*Enter MELANTHON, with Greek Soldiers, and
PHOCION.*

Dion. Assassins, and not warriors! do ye come,
When the wide range of battle claims your sword,
Thus do you come against a single life
To wage the war? Did not our buckler ring
With all your darts in one collected volley
Shower'd on my head? Did not your swords, at once,
Point at my breast and thirst for regal blood?

Greek Off. We sought thy life. I am by birth a
Greek.

An open foe in arms, I meant to slay
The foe of humankind. With rival ardour
We took the field; one voice, one mind, one heart;
All leagu'd, all covenanted: in yon camp
Spirits there are who aim, like us, at glory.
Whene'er you sally forth, whene'er the Greeks
Shall scale your walls, prepare thee to encounter
A like assault. By me the youth of Greece
Thus notify the war they mean to wage.

Dion. Thus, then, I warn them of my great re-
venge.

Whoe'er in battle shall become our pris'ner,
In torments meet his doom.

Greek Off. Then wilt thou see
How vile the body to a mind that pants
For genuine glory. Twice three hundred Greeks
Have sworn, like us, to hant thee through the ranks:
Ours the first lot; we've fail'd; on yonder plain
Appear in arms, the faithful band will meet thee.

Dion. Vile slave, no more. Melanthon, drag 'em
hence

To die in misery. Impal'd alive,
The winds shall parch them on the craggy cliff.
Selected from the rest, let one depart
A messenger to Greece, to tell the fate
Her chosen sons, her first advent'urers met. [Exit.]

Mel. Unhappy men! how shall my care protect
Your forfeit lives? Philotas, thou conduct them
To the deep dungeon's gloom. In that recess,
'Midst the wild tumult of eventful war,
We may ward off the blow. My friends, farewell!
That officer will guide your steps.

[Exit all but Melanthon and Phocion.]

Pho. Disguis'd
Thus in a soldier's garb he knows me not. (*Aside.*)
Melanthon!

Mel. Ha! Those accents! Phocion here?

Pho. Yes, Phocion's here! Speak, quickly tell me, say

How fares Euphrasia?

Mel. Euphrasia lives, and fills the anxious moments

With ev'ry virtue. Wherefore venture hither?
Why with rash valour penetrate our gates?

Pho. Could I refrain? Oh! could I tamely wait
Th' event of ling'ring war? With patience count
The lazy-pacing hours, while here in Syracuse
The tyrant keeps all that my heart holds dear?
For her dear sake all danger sinks before me;
For her I burst the barriers of the gate,
Where the deep cavern'd rock affords a passage.
A hundred chosen Greeks pursu'd my steps;
We forc'd an entrance; the devoted guard
Fell victims to our rage; but in that moment,
Down from the walls superior numbers came.
The tyrant led them on. We rush'd upon him,
If we could reach his heart, to end the war.
But heav'n thought otherwise. Melanthon, say,
I fear to ask it, lives Evander still?

Mel. Alas! he lives imprison'd in the rock.
Thou must withdraw thee hence; regain once more
Timoleon's camp; alarm his slumber'ing rage;
Assail the walls; thou with thy phalanx seek
The subterraneous path; that way, at night,
The Greeks may enter, and let in destruction
On the astonish'd foe.

Pho. Wouldst thou have me
Basely retreat, while my Euphrasia trembles
Here on the ridge of peril?

Mel. Yet hear the voice
Of sober age. Should Dionysius' spies
Detect thee here, ruin involves us all:
Thy voice may rouse Timoleon to th' assault,
And bid him storm the works.

Pho. By heav'n, I will!
My breath shall wake his rage; this very night
When sleep sits heavy on the slumber'ing city,
Then Greece unsheathes her sword, and great re-
venge

Shall stalk with death and horror o'er the ranks
Of slaughter'd troops, a sacrifice to freedom!
But, first, let me behold Euphrasia.

Mel. Hush
Thy pent-up valour: to a secret haunt
I'll guide thy steps: there dwell; and, in apt time,
I'll bring Euphrasia to thy longing arms.

Pho. Oh! lead me to her; that exalted virtue
With firmer nerve shall bid me grasp the jav'lin,
Shall bid my sword with more than lightning's
swiftness

Blaze in the front of war, and glut its rage
With blows repeated in the tyrant's veins. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Temple, with a monument in the middle.*

Enter EUPHRASIA, ERIXENE and other female Attendants.

Euph. This way, my virgins, this way bend your steps.

Lo! the sad sepulchre, where, hears'd in death,
The pale remains of my dear mother lie.
There, while the victims at yon altar bleed,
And with your pray'rs the vaulted roof resounds,
There let me pay the tribute of a tear,
A weeping pilgrim o'er Eudocia's ashes.

Erix. Forbear, Euphrasia, to renew your sorrows.

Euph. My tears have dry'd their source; then let me here

Pay this sad visit to the honour'd clay,
That moulders in the tomb. These sacred viands

I'll burn an offering to a parent's shade,
And sprinkle with this wine the hallow'd mould.
That duty paid, I will return, my virgins.

(*Goes into the tomb.*)

Erix. Look down, propitious pow'rs! behold that virtue,
And heal the pangs that desolate her soul.

Enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. Mourn, mourn, ye virgins; rend your scatter'd garments;
Some dread calamity hangs o'er our heads.
In vain the tyrant would appease with sacrifice
Th' impending wrath of ill-requited heav'n.
Ill omens hover over us: at the altar
The victim dropp'd, ere the diviner seer
Had gor'd his knife. The brazen statutes tremble,
And, from the marble, drops of blood distil.

Erix. Now, ye just gods, if vengeance you prepare,
Now find the guilty head.

Re-enter EUPHRASIA from the tomb.

Euph. Virgins, I thank you! Oh! more lightly now

My heart expands; the pious act is done,
And I have paid my tribute to a parent.
Ah! wherefore does the tyrant bend this way?

Phil. He flies the altar; leaves th' unfinished rites.

No god there smiles propitious on his cause.
Fate lifts the awful balance; weighs his life,
The lives of numbers, in the trembling scale.

Euph. Despair and horror mark his haggard looks,
His wild, disorder'd step. Do you retire:

[*To her Attendants, who go off.*]

Retire, Philotas; let me here remain,
And give the moments of suspended fate
To pious worship and to filial love.

Phil. Alas! I fear to yield: awhile I'll leave thee,
And at the temple's entrance wait thy coming. [*Exit.*]

Euph. Now, then, Euphrasia, now thou may'st indulge

The purest ecstasy of soul. Come forth,
Thou man of woe, thou man of every virtue.

Enter EVANDER from the monument.

Evan. And does the grave thus cast me up again
With a fond father's love to view thee? Thus
To mingle rapture in a daughter's arms?

Euph. How fares my father now?

Evan. Thy aid, Euphrasia,
Has giv'n new life. Thou from this vital stream
Deriv'st thy being; with unheard-of duty
Thou hast repaid it to thy native source

Euph. Sprung from Evander, if a little portion
Of all his goodness dwell within my heart,
Thou wilt not wonder. Oh! my father,
How didst thou bear thy long, long sufferings? How
Endure their barb'rous rage?

Evan. My foes but did
To this old frame, what nature's hand must do.

I was but going hence by mere decay
To that futurity which Plato taught,
But thou recall'st me; thou!

Euph. Timoleon, too,
Invites thee back to life.

Evan. And does he still
Urge on the siege?

Euph. His active genius comes
To scourge a guilty race. The Punic fleet,
Half lost, is swallow'd by the roaring sea.
The shatter'd refuse seek the Libyan shore,
To hear the news of their defeat to Carthage.

Evan. These are thy wonders, heav'n! Abroad,
thy spirit

Moves o'er the deep, and mighty fleets are vanish'd.
Euph. Ha! hark! what noise is that? It comes
this way.

Some busy footsteps beats the hallow'd pavement.
Oh! sir, retire—Ye pow'rs! Philotas! ha!

Enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. For thee, Euphrasia, Dionysius calls.
Some new suspicion goads him. At yon gate
I stopp'd Calippus, as with eager haste
He bent this way to seek thee. Oh! my sovereign,
My king, my injur'd master, will you pardon
The wrongs I've done thee? (*Kneels to Evander.*)

Evan. Virtue such as thine,
From the fierce trial of tyrannic pow'r,
Shines forth with added lustre.

Phil. Oh! forgive
My ardent zeal; there is no time to waste.
You must withdraw; trust to your faithful friends.
Pass but another day, and Dionysius
Falls from a throne usurp'd.

Evan. But, ere he pays
The forfeit of his crimes, what streams of blood
Shall flow in torrents round! Methinks, I might
Prevent this waste of nature: I'll go forth,
And to my people shew their rightful king.

Euph. Banish that thought! forbear! the rash
attempt

Were fatal to our hopes; oppress'd, dismay'd,
The people look aghast, and, wan with fear,
None will espouse your cause.

Evan. Yes, all will dare
To act like men; their king, I gave myself
To a whole people. I made no reserve;
My life was theirs; each drop about my heart
Pledg'd to the public cause; devoted to it;
That was my compact; is the subject's less?
If they are all debas'd, and willing slaves,
The young but breathing to grow grey in bondage,
And the old sinking to ignoble graves,
Of such a race no matter who is king.
And yet I will not think it; no, my people
Are brave and gen'rous; I will trust their valour.

Euph. Yet stay; yet be advis'd.

Phil. As yet, my liege,
No plan is fix'd, and no concerted measure.
Trust to my truth and honour. Witness, gods,
Here in the temple of Olympian Jove,
Philotas swears—

Evan. Forbear! the man like thee,
Who feels the best emotions of the heart,
Truth, reason, justice, honour's fine excitements,
Acts by those laws, and wants no other sanction.

Euph. Again, th' alarm approaches; sure destruction

To thee, to all will follow:—hark! a sound
Comes hollow murmur through the vaulted aisle.
It gains upon the ear. Withdraw, my father;
All's lost if thou art seen.

Phil. And, lo! Calippus
Darts with the lightning's speed across the aisle.

Evan. Thou at the senate-house convene my
friends.

Melanthon, Dion, and their brave associates,
Will shew that liberty has leaders still.
Anon, I'll meet 'em there. [*Exit Phil.*] My child,
farewell;

Thou shalt direct me now. [*Exit into the tomb.*]

Euph. How my distracted heart throbs wild with
fear!

What brings Calippus? wherefore? Save me,
heav'n!

Enter CALIPPUS.

Cal. This sullen musing in these drear abodes
Alarms suspicion: the king knows thy plottings,
Thy rooted hatred to the state and him.
His sov'reign will commands thee to repair
This moment to his presence.

Euph. Ha! what means
The tyrant? I obey. [*Exit Cal.*] And, oh! ye
pow'rs,

Ye ministers of heav'n! defend my father;
Support his drooping age; and when, anon,
Avenge justice shakes her crimson steel,
Oh! be the grave at least a place of rest;
That from his covert in the hour of peace,
Thou he may come to bless a willing people,
And be your own just image here on earth. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Citadel.*

Enter DIONYSIUS, CALIPPUS, and others.

Dion. And means the Greek to treat of terms of
peace?

By heav'n, this panting bosom hop'd to meet
His hoasted phalanx on th' embattled plain.
And doth he now, on peaceful councils bent,
Despatch his herald? Let the slave approach.

Enter a Herald.

Now speak thy purpose? what doth Greece impart?

Her. Timoleon, sir, whose great renown in arms
Is equal'd only by the softer virtues
Of mild humanity that sway his heart,
Sends me, his delegate, to offer terms,
On which ev'n foes may well accord; on which
The fiercest nature, though it spurn at justice,
May sympathize with his.

Dion. Unfold thy mystery;
Thou shalt be heard.

Her. The gen'rous leader sees,
With pity sees, the wild, destructive havoc
Of ruthless war; he has survey'd around
The heaps of slain that cover yonder field,
And, touch'd with gen'rous sense of human woe,
Weeps o'er his victories.

Dion. Your leader weeps!
Then let the author of those ills thou speak'st of,
Let th' ambitious factor of destruction,
Timely retreat, and close the scene of blood.
Why doth affrighted peace behold his standard
Uprear'd in Sicily? and wherefore here
The iron ranks of war, from which the shepherd
Retires appall'd, and leaves the blasted hopes
Of half the year, while closer to her breast
The mother clasps her infant?

Her. 'Tis not mine
To plead Timoleon's cause; not mine the office
To justify the strong, the righteous motives
That urge him to the war: the only scope
My deputation aims at, is to fix
An interval of peace, a pause of horror,
That they, whose bodies on the naked shore
Lie well'ring in their blood, from either host,
May meet the last sad rites to nature due,
And decent lie in honourable graves.

Dion. Go tell your leader his pretexs are vain.
Let him, with those that live, embark for Greece,
And leave our peaceful plains; the mangled limbs
Of those he murder'd, from my tender care,
Shall meet due obsequies.

Her. The hero, sir,
Wages no war with those who bravely die.
'Tis for the dead I supplicate; for them
We sue for peace; and to the living, too,
Timoleon would extend it; but the groans
Of a whole people have unslight'd his sword.
A single day will pay the funeral rites.
To-morrow's sun may see both armies meet
Without hostility, and all in honour;
You to inter the troops who bravely fell;
We, on our part, to give an humble sod
To those who guin'd a footing on the isle,
And by their death have conquer'd.

Dion. Be it so;
I grant thy suit: soon as to-morrow's dawn
Illumine the world, the rage of wasting war
In vain shall thirst for blood: and now, farewell!
Some careful officer conduct him forth. [*Exit Her.*]

By heav'n, the Greek hath offer'd to my sword
An easy prey; a sacrifice to glut
My great revenge. Away, my friends, disperse.
Philotas, wait Euphrasia as we order'd?

Phil. She's here at hand.

Dion. Admit her to our presence.

Rage and despair, a thousand warring passions,
All rise by turns, and piecemeal rend my heart;
Yet ev'ry means, all measures must be tried,
To sweep the Grecian spoiler from the land,
And fix the crown unshaken on my brow.

Enter EUPHRASIA.

Euph. What sudden cause requires Euphrasia's presence!

Dion. Approach, fair mourner, and dispel thy fears:

Thy grief, thy tender duty to thy father,
Has touch'd me nearly. In his lone retreat,
Respect, attendance, ev'ry lenient care
To sooth affliction, and extend his life,
Evander has commanded.

Euph. Vile dissembler!

Detested homicide! (*Aside.*) And has thy heart
Felt for the wretched?

Dion. Urgencies of state
Abridg'd his liberty; but to his person
All honour hath been paid.

Euph. The righteous gods
Have mark'd thy ways, and will, in time, repay
Just retribution.

Dion. If to see your father,
If here to meet him in a fond embrace,
Will calm thy breast, and dry those beauteous tears,
A moment more shall bring him to your presence.

Euph. Ha! lead him hither! Sir, to move him
now,
Aged, infirm, worn out with toil and years—
No, let me seek him rather. If soft pity
Has touch'd your heart, oh! send me, send me to
him.

Dion. Control this wild alarm; with prudent
care

Philotas shall conduct him; here I grant
The tender interview.

Euph. Disastrous fate!

Ruin impends! This will discover all;
I'll perish first; provoke his utmost rage. (*Aside.*)
Though much I languish to behold my father,
Yet now it were not fit—the sun goes down;
Night falls apace; soon as returning day—

Dion. This night, this very hour, you both must
meet.

Together you may serve the state and me.
Thou seest the havoc of wide-wasting war;
And more, full well you know, are still to bleed.
Thou may'st prevent their fate.

Euph. Oh! give the means,
And I will bless thee for it.

Dion. From a Greek

Torments have wrung the truth. Thy husband,
Phocion—

Euph. Oh! say, speak of my Phocien.

Dion. He—'tis he

Hath kindled up this war; with treach'rous arts
Inflam'd the states of Greece, and now the traitor
Comes with a foreign aid to wrest my crown.

Euph. And does my Phocion share Timoleon's
glory?

Dion. With him invests our walls, and bids re-
bellion

Erect her standard here.

Euph. Oh! bless him, gods!

Where'er my hero treads the paths of war,
List on his side! against the hostile jav'lin
Uprear his mighty buckler; to his sword
Lend the fierce whirlwind's rage, that he may come
With wreaths of triumph, and with conquests
crown'd,

And a whole nation's voice
Applaud my hero with a love like mine!

Dion. Ungrateful fair! Has not our sov'reign
will

On thy descendants fix'd Sicilia's crown?

Have not I vow'd protection to your boy?

Euph. From thee the crown! From thee! Eu-
phrasia's children

Shall on a nobler basis found their rights,—
On their own virtue, and a people's choice.

Dion. Misguided woman!

Euph. Ask of thee protection!

The father's valour shall protect his boy.

Dion. Rush not on sure destruction; ere too late,
Accept our proffer'd grace. The terms are these:
Instant send forth a message to your husband;
Bid him draw off his Greeks, unmoor his fleet,
And measure back his way. Full well he knows
You and your father are my hostages;
And for his treason both may answer.

Euph. Think'st thou, then,
So meanly of my Phocion? Dost thou deem him
Poorly wound up to a mere fit of valour,
To melt away in a weak woman's tear?
Oh! thou dost little know him; know'st but little
Of his exalted soul. With gen'rous ardour
Still will he urge the great, the glorious plan,
And gain the ever honour'd, bright reward
Which fame entwines around the patriot's brow,
And bids for ever flourish on his tomb,
For nations freed and tyrants laid in dust.

Dion. By heav'n, this night Evander breathes
his last.

Euph. Better for him to sink at once to rest,
Than linger thus beneath the gripe of famine,
In a vile dungeon, scoop'd with barb'rous skill,
Deep in the flinty rock; a monument
Of that fell malice, and that black suspicioin
That mark'd your father's reign.

Dion. Obdurate woman! obstinate in ill!
Here ends all parley. Now your father's doom
Is fix'd, irrevocably fix'd.

Euph. Thy doom, perliaps,
May first be fix'd: the doom that ever waits
The fell oppressor, from a throne usurp'd
Hurl'd headlong down. Think of thy father's fate
At Corinth, Dionysius!

Dion. Ha! this night
Evander dies; and thou, detested fair!
Thou shalt behold him, while inventive cruelty
Pursues his wearied life through ev'ry nerve.
I scorn all dull delay. This very night
Shall sate my great revenge. [*Exit.*]

Euph. This night, perhaps,
Shall whelm thee down, no more to blast creation.
My father, who inhabit'st with the dead,
Now let me seek thee in the lonely tomb,
And tremble there with anxious hope and fear. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*The Inside of the Temple.*

Enter PHOCION and MELANTHON.

Mel. Summon all
Thy wonted firmness; in that dreary vault
A living king is number'd with the dead.
I'll take my post, near where the pillar'd aisle
Supports the central dome, that no alarm
Surprise you in the pious act. [*Exit.*]

Pho. If here

They both are found; if in Evander's arms
Euphrasia meets my search, the fates atone
For all my sufferings, all afflictions past.
Yes, I will seek them—ha! the gaping tomb
Invites my steps: now be propitious, heaven!
[*Enters the tomb.*]

Enter EUPHRASIA.

Euph. All hail, ye caves of horror! In this gloom
Divine content can dwell, the heartfelt tear,

Which, as it falls, a father's trembling hand
Will catch, and wipe the sorrows from my eye.
Who's there? Evander? Answer—tell me—speak!

Re-enter PHOCION from the tomb.

Pho. What voice is that? Melanthon!

Euph. Ha! those sounds—

Speak of Evander; tell me that he lives,
Or lost Euphrasia dies.

Pho. Heart-swelling transport!

Art thou Euphrasia? 'tis thy Phocion, love;
Thy husband comes.

Euph. Support me; reach thy hand.

Pho. Once more I clasp her in this fond embrace!

Euph. What miracle has brought thee to me!

Pho. Love

Inspir'd my heart, and guided all my ways.

Euph. Oh! thou dear wand'rer! But wherefore
here?

Why in this place of woe? My tender little one,

Say, is he safe? oh! satisfy a mother;

Speak of my child, or I grow wild at once;

Tell me his fate, and tell me all thy own.

Pho. Your boy is safe, Euphrasia; lives to reign
In Sicily; Timoleon's gen'rous care

Protects him in his camp: dispel thy fears;

The gods once more will give him to thy arms.

Euph. My father lives; sepulchred, ere his time,
Here in Eudocia's tomb. Let me conduct thee.

Pho. I came this moment thence.

Euph. And saw Evander?

Pho. Alas! I found him not.

Euph. Not found him there?

And have they, then—have the fell murd'ers—Oh!
(*Faints.*)

Pho. I've been too rash; revive, my love, revive!
Thy Phocion calls; the gods will guard Evander,
And save him to reward thy matchless virtue.

Re-enter MELANTHON, with EVANDER.

Evan. Lead me, Melanthon, guide my aged steps;
Where is he? Let me see him?

Pho. My Euphrasia,

Thy father lives;—thou venerable man!

Behold—I cannot fly to thy embrace.

Evan. Euphrasia! Phocion, too! Yes, both are
here;

Oh! let me thus, thus strain you to my heart.

Euph. Why, my father,

Why thus adventure forth? The strong alarm
O'erwhelm'd my spirits.

Evan. I went forth, my child,

When all was dark and awful silence round,

To throw me prostrate at the altar's foot,

And crave the care of heav'n for thee and thine.

Melanthon there—

Enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. Inevitable ruin hovers o'er you:

The tyrant's fury mounts into a blaze;

Unsated yet with blood, he calls aloud

For thee, Evander; thee his rage hath order'd

This moment to his presence.

Evan. Lead me to him:

His presence hath no terror for Evander.

Euph. Horror! it must not be.

Phil. No; never, never;

I'll perish rather. His policy has granted

A day's suspense from arms; yet even now

His troops prepare, in the dead midnight hour,

With base surprise, to storm Timoleon's camp.

Evan. And doth he grant a false, insidious truce,
To turn the hour of peace to blood and horror?

Euph. I know the monster well: when specious
seeming

Becalm his looks, the rankling heart within

Teems with destruction.

Mountains hurl'd up in air, and moulten rocks,

And all the land with desolation cover'd.

Melan. Now, Phocion, now on thee our hope
depends.

Fly to Timoleon; I can grant a passport:
Rouse him to vengeance; on the tyrant turn
His own insidious arts, or all is lost.

Pho. Evander, thou, and thou, my best Euphrasia,
Both shall attend my flight.

Melan. It were in vain:

Th' attempt would hazard all.

Euph. Together here

We will remain, safe in the cave of death;
And wait our freedom from thy conqu'ring arm.

Evan. Oh! would the gods roll back the stream
of time,

And give this arm the sinew that it boasted
At Tauromenium, when its force resistless
Mow'd down the ranks of war; I then might
guide

The battle's rage, and, ere Evander die,

Add still another laurel to my brow.

Euph. Enough of laurel'd victory your sword
Hath reap'd in earlier days.

Evan. And shall my sword,

When the great cause of liberty invites,

Remain inactive, unperforming quite?

Youth, second youth rekindles in my veins:

Though worn with age, this arm will know its
office;

Will shew that victory has not forgot

Acquaintance with this hand. And yet—oh, shame!

It will not be: the momentary blaze

Sinks and expires: I have surviv'd it all:

Surviv'd my reign, my people, and myself.

Euph. Fly, Phocion, fly: Melanthon will con-
duct thee.

Melan. And when th' assault begins, my faithful
cohorts

Shall form their ranks around this sacred dome.

Pho. And my poor captive friends, my brave
companions,

Taken in battle, wilt thou guard their lives?

Phil. Trust to my care: no danger shall assail
them.

Pho. By heaven, the glorious expectation swells
This panting bosom! Yes, Euphrasia, yes;

Awhile I leave you to the care of heaven.

Fell Dionysius tremble; ere the dawn,

Timoleon thunders at your gates; the rage,

The pent-up rage of twenty thousand Greeks,

Shall burst at once; and the tumultuous roar

Alarm th' astonish'd world.

Evan. Yet, ere thou go'st, young man,

Attend my words: though guilt may oft provoke,

As now it does, just vengeance on its head,

In mercy punish it. The rage of slaughter

Can add no trophy to the victor's triumph;

Conquest is proud, inexorable, fierce;

It is humanity ennobles all.

Pho. Farewell! the midnight hour shall give you
freedom. [*Exit with Mel. and Phil.*]

Euph. Ye guardian deities, watch all his ways!

Evan. Come, my Euphrasia,

Together we will pour

Our hearts in praise, in tears of adoration,

For all the wondrous goodness lavish'd on us.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter DIONYSIUS and CALIPPUS.

Dion. Ere the day clos'd, while yet the busy eye
Might view their camp, their station, and their
guards,

Their preparations for approaching night,

Didst thou then mark the motions of the Greeks?

Cal. From the watch-tow'r I saw them: all things
spoke

A foe secure, and discipline relax'd.

Dion. Their folly gives them to my sword.—Are all

My orders issued?

Cal. All.

Dion. The troops retir'd

To gain recruited vigour from repose?

Cal. The city round lies hush'd in sleep.

Dion. Anon,

Let each brave officer, of chosen valour,

Meet at the citadel. An hour at furthest

Before the dawn, 'tis fix'd to storm their camp;

Haste, Calippus,

Fly to thy post, and bid Euphrasia enter.

[*Exit Calippus.*]

Evander dies this night: Euphrasia, too,
Shall be dispos'd of. Curse on Phocion's frand,
That from my pow'r withdrew their infant boy:
In him the seed of future kings were crush'd,
And the whole hated line at once extinguish'd.

Enter EUPHRASIA.

Dion. Once more approach, and hear me: 'tis not now

A time to waste in the vain war of words.

A crisis big with horror is at hand.

I meant to spare the stream of blood, that soon

Shall deluge yonder plains. My fair proposals,

Thy haughty spirit has with scorn rejected:

And now, by heav'n, here, in thy very sight,

Evander breathes his last.

Euph. If yet there's wanting

A crime to fill the measure of thy guilt,

Add that black murder to the dreadful list;

With that complete the horrors of thy reign.

Dion. Woman, beware: Philotas is at hand,

And to our presence leads Evander. All

Thy dark complottings, and thy treach'rous arts,

Have prov'd abortive.

Euph. Ha! What new event?

And is Philotas false? Has he betray'd him? (*Aside.*)

Dion. What, ho! Philotas.

Enter PHILOTAS.

Euph. How my heart sinks within me! (*Aside.*)

Dion. Where's your pris'ner?

Phil. Evander is no more.

Dion. Ha! Death has robb'd me

Of half my great revenge.

Phil. Worn out with anguish,

I saw life ebb apace. With studied art,

We gave each cordial drop, alas! in vain;

He heav'd a sigh; invok'd his daughter's name,

Smil'd, and expir'd.

Dion. Bring me his hoary head.

Phil. You'll pardon, sir, my over-hasty zeal:

I gave the body to the foaming surge,

Down the steep rock, despis'd.

Dion. Now, then, thou feel'st my vengeance.

Euph. Glory in it:

Exult and triumph. Thy worst shaft is sped.

Yet still the unconquer'd mind with scorn can view

thee;

With the calm sunshine of the breast, can see

Thy pow'r unequal to subdue the soul

Which virtue form'd, and which the gods protect.

Dion. Philotas, bear her hence; she shall not

live;

This moment bear her hence; you know the rest;

Go, see our will obey'd: that done, with all

A warrior's speed, attend me at the citadel;

There meet the heroes whom this night shall lead

To freedom, victory, to glorious havoc,

And the destruction of the Grecian name. [*Exit.*]

Euph. Accept my thanks, Philotas; generous

man!

These tears attest th' emotions of my heart.

But, oh! should Greece defer—

Phil. Dispel thy fears;

Phocion will bring relief; or should the tyrant

Assault their camp, he'll meet a marshall'd foe.
Let me conduct thee to the silent tomb.

Euph. Ah! there Evander, naked and disarm'd,
Defenceless quite, may meet some ruffian stroke.

Phil. Lo! here a weapon; bear this dagger to him.

In the dear monument, should hostile steps

Dare to approach him, they must enter singly;

This guards the passage; man by man they die.

There may'st thou dwell amidst the wild commotion.

Euph. Ye pitying gods, protect my father there!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Citadel.*

Enter DIONYSIUS, CALIPPUS, and several Officers.

Dion. Ye brave associates, who so oft have shar'd

Our toil and danger in the field of glory,

My fellow-warriors, what no god could promise,

Fortune has giv'n us. In his dark embrace,

Lo! sleep envelops the whole Grecian camp.

Against a foe, the outcasts of their country,

Freebooters, roving in pursuit of prey,

Success by war, or covert stratagem,

Alike is glorious. Then, my gallant friends,

What need of words? The gen'rous call of freedom,

Your wives, your children, your invaded rights,

All that can steel the patriot breast with valour,

Expands and rouses in the swelling heart.

Follow the impulsive ardour; follow me,

Your king, your leader: in the friendly gloom

Of night, assault their camp: your country's love

And fame eternal shall attend the men

Who march'd through blood and horror, to redeem,

From the invader's pow'r, their native land.

Cal. Lead to the onset: Greece shall find we bear

Hearts prodigal of blood, when honour calls;

Resolv'd to conquer, or to die in freedom.

Dion. Thus I've resolv'd: when the declining

moon

Hath veil'd her orb, our silent march begins.

The order thus: Calippus, thou lead forth

Iberia's sons with the Numidian bands,

And line the shore. Perdiccas, be it thine

To march thy cohorts to the mountain's foot,

Where the wood skirts the valley; there make halt,

Till brave Amyntor stretch along the vale.

Ourselves, with the embodied cavalry,

Clad in their mail'd cuirass, will circle round

To where their camp extends its furthest line;

Unnumber'd torches there shall blaze at once,

The signal of the charge; then, oh! my friends,

On every side let the wild uproar loose,

Bid massacre and carnage stalk around,

Unsparring, unrelenting; drench your swords

In hostile blood, and riot in destruction.

Enter an Officer.

Ha! speak; unfold thy purpose.

Off. Instant arm;

To arms, my liege; the foe breaks in upon us;

The subterraneous path is theirs; that way

Their band invades the city sunk in sleep.

Dion. Treason's at work; detested, treach'rous

villains!

Is this their promis'd trace? Away, my friends!

Rouse all the war; fly to your sev'ral posts,

And instant bring all Syracuse in arms.

[*Exeunt. Warlike music.*]

SCENE III.—*The Inside of the Temple; a monument in the middle.*

Enter EUPHRASIA, ERIXENE, and female Attendants.

Euph. Which way, Erixene, which way, my virgins,

Shall we direct our steps? What sacred altar

Clasp on our knees?

Erix. Alas! the horrid tumult

Spreads the destruction wide. On ev'ry side

The victor's shouts, the groans of murder'd wretches,

In wild confusion rise. Once more descend Eudocia's tomb; there thou may'st find a shelter.

Euph. Anon, Erixene, I mean to visit, Perhaps for the last time, a mother's urn. This dagger here, this instrument of death, Should fortune prosper the fell tyrant's arms; This dagger, then, may free me from his pow'r, And that drear vault entomb us all in peace.

Erix. Hark!

Euph. The din

Of arms with clearer sound advances. Hark! That sudden burst! Again! They rush upon us! The portal opens; lo! see there; behold! War, horrid war, invades the sacred fane; No altar gives a sanctuary now. (*Warlike music.*)

Enter DIONYSIUS and CALIPPUS, with several Soldiers.

Dion. Here will I mock their siege; here stand at bay,

And brave 'em to the last.

Euphrasia here! Detested, treach'rous woman! For my revenge preserv'd! By heav'n 'tis well; Vengeance awaits thy guilt, and this good sword Thus sends thee to atone the bleeding victims This night has massacred.

Cal. (*Holding Dionysius's arm.*) My liege, forbear;

Her life preserv'd, may plead your cause with Greece,

And mitigate your fate.

Dion. Presumptuous slave!

My rage is up in arms; by heav'n she dies.

Enter EVANDER from the tomb.

Evan. Horror! forbear! Thou murd'rer, hold thy hand!

The gods behold thee, horrible assassin! Restrain the blow; it were a stab to heav'n; All nature shudders at it! Will no friend Arm in a cause like this a father's hand? Strike at his bosom rather. Lo! Evander, Prostrate and grovelling on the earth before thee; He begs to die; exhaust the scanty drops That lag about his heart; but spare my child.

Dion. Evander! Do my eyes once more behold him?

May the fiends seize Philotas! Treach'rous slave! 'Tis well thou liv'st; thy death were poor revenge, From any hand but mine. (*Offers to strike.*)

Euph. No, tyrant, no;

(*Rushing before Evander.*)

I have provok'd your vengeance; through this bosom

Open a passage; first on me, on me Exhaust your fury; ev'ry power above Commands thee to respect that aged head; His wither'd frame wants blood to glut thy rage; Strike here; these veins are full; here's blood enough;

The purple tide will gush to glad thy sight.

(*Flourish of trumpets.*)

Dion. Ha! the fierce tide of war, This way comes rushing on. [*Exit, with Officers.*]

Euph. (*Embracing Evander.*) Oh! thus, my father,

We'll perish thus together.

Dion. (*Without.*) Bar the gates;

Close every passage, and repel their force.

Evan. And must I see thee bleed? Oh! for a sword!

Bring, bring me daggers!

Euph. Ha!

Re-enter DIONYSIUS.

Dion. Guards, seize the slave, And give him to my rage.

Evan. (*Seized by the Guards.*) Oh! spare her, spare her,

Inhuman villains!

Euph. Now, one glorious effort! (*Aside.*)

Dion. Let me despatch; thou traitor, thus my arm—

Euph. A daughter's arm, fell monster, strikes the blow. (*Stabs him. He falls and dies.*)

Behold, all Sicily behold! The point Glows with the tyrant's blood. Ye slaves, (*to the Guards*) look there;

Kneel to your rightful king: the blow for freedom Gives you the rights of men. And, oh! my father, My ever honour'd sire, it gives thee life.

Evan. My child! my daughter! sav'd again by thee! (*Embraces her.*)

A flourish of trumpets. Enter PHOCION, MELANTHON, PHILOTAS, &c.

Pho. Now let the monster yield. My best Euphrasia!

Euph. My lord! my Phocion! welcome to my heart.

Lo! there the wonders of Euphrasia's arm!

Pho. And is the proud one fallen! The dawn shall see him

A spectacle for public view. Euphrasia!

Evander, too! Thus to behold you both—

Evan. To her direct thy looks; there fix thy praise,

And gaze with wonder there. The life I gave her, Oh! she has us'd it for the noblest ends!

To fill each duty; make her father feel

The purest joy, the heart-dissolving bliss,

To have a grateful child. But has the rage

Of slaughter ceas'd?

Pho. It has.

Evan. Where is Timoleon?

Pho. He guards the citadel; there gives his orders

To calm the uproar, and recall, from carnage, His conqu'ring troops.

Euph. Oh! once again, my father, Thy sway shall bless the land. Not for himself Timoleon conquers; to redress the wrongs Of bleeding Sicily, the hero comes.

Thee, good Melanthon, thee, thou gen'rous man,

His justice shall reward. Thee, too, Philotas,

Whose sympathizing heart could feel the touch

Of soft humanity, the hero's bounty,

His brightest honours, shall be lavish'd on thee.

Evander, too, will place thee near his throne;

And shew mankind, ev'n on this shore of being,

That virtue still shall meet its sure reward.

Phil. I am rewarded: feelings such as mine

Are worth all dignities: my heart repays me.

Evan. Come, let us seek Timoleon; to his care

I will commend ye both: for now, alas!

Thrones and dominions now no more for me.

To thee I give my crown: yes, thou, Euphrasia,

Shall reign in Sicily. And, oh! ye pow'rs,

In that bright eminence of care and peril,

Watch over all her ways; conduct and guide

The goodness you inspir'd; that she may prove

(If e'er distress like mine invade the land)

A parent to her people; stretch the ray

Of lily piety to times unborn,

That man may hear her unexampled virtue,

And learn to emulate the Grecian Daughter.

[*Exeunt.*]

GUSTAVUS VASA;

OR, THE DELIVERER OF HIS COUNTRY:

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY HENRY BROOKE.



Act IV.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

GUSTAVUS VASA	LAERTES	MESSENGER	CHRISTINA
CHRISTIERN	ANDERSON	OFFICER	AUGUSTA
ARVIDA	SIVARD	SOLDIERS	GUSTAVA
PETERSON	ARNOLDUS	PEASANTS	MARIANA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Inside of the Copper Mines in Dalecarlia. GUSTAVUS VASA lying down in the distance.*

Enter ANDERSON and ARNOLDUS.

And. You tell me wonders.

Arn. Soft! behold my lord! (*Points to Gust.*) Behold him stretch'd, where reigns eternal night; The flint his pillow, and cold damp his cov'ring; Yet, bold of spirit, and robust of limb, He throws inclemency aside, nor feels The lot of human frailty.

And. What horrors hang around! the savage race Ne'er bold their den but where some glimm'ring ray May bring the cheer of morn. What, then, is he! His dwelling marks a secret in his soul, And whispers somewhat more than man about him.

Arn. Draw but the veil of his apparent wretchedness, And you shall find his form is but assum'd, To hoard some wond'rous treasure lodg'd within.

And. Let him bear up to what thy praises speak And I will win him, spite of his reserve, Bind him with sacred friendship to my soul, And make him half myself.

Arn. 'Tis nobly promis'd; For worth is rare, and wants a friend in Sweden; And yet, I tell thee, in her age of heroes, When, nurs'd by freedom, all her sons grew great, And ev'ry peasant was a prince in virtue: I greatly err, or this abandon'd stranger Had stepp'd the first for fame; though now he seeks To veil his name, and cloud his shine of virtues; For there is danger in them.

And. True, Arnoldus.

Were there a prince throughout the scepter'd globe, Who search'd out merit for its due preferment, With half that care our tyrant seeks it out For ruin, happy, happy were that state, Beyond the golden fable of those pure And earliest ages—

When came this stranger hither? [night, *Arn.* Six moons have chang'd upon the face of Since here he first arriv'd, in servile weeds, But yet of mien majestic. I observ'd him; And ever as I gaz'd, some nameless charm, A wondrous greatness, not to be conceal'd, Broke through his form, and aw'd my soul before Amid these mines he earns the hireling's portion; His hands out-toil the hind, while on his brow Sits patience, bath'd in the laborious drop Of painful industry. I oft have sought, With friendly tender of some worthier service, To win him from his temper; but he shuns All offers, yet declin'd with graceful act, Engaging beyond utt'rance; and, at eve, When all retire to some domestic solace, He only stays, and, as you see, the earth Receives him to her dark and cheerless bosom.

And. Has no unwary moment e'er betray'd The labours of his soul, some fav'rite grief, Whereon to raise conjecture?

Arn. I saw, as some bold peasants late deplor'd Their country's bondage, sudden passion seiz'd, And bore him from his seeming ease; straight his Was turn'd to terror; ruin fill'd his eye, And his proud step appear'd to awe the world: But sadness soon usurp'd upon his brow, And the big tear roll'd graceful down his visage.

And. Forbear! he rises. Heavens, what majesty!
(*Gustavus comes forward.*)

Your pardon, stranger, if the voice of virtue,
If cordial amity from man to man,
And somewhat that should whisper to the soul
To seek and cheer the sufferer, led me hither,
Impatient to salute thee. Be it thine
Alone to point the path of friendship out;
And my best power shall wait upon thy fortunes.

Gust. There is a wondrous test,
The truest, worthiest, noblest cause of friendship;
Dearer than life, than interest, or alliance,
And equal to your virtues.

And. Say—unfold!

Gust. Art thou a soldier, a chief lord in Sweden,
And yet a stranger to thy country's voice,
That loudly calls the hidden patriot forth?
But what's a soldier? What's a lord in Sweden?
All worth is fled or fall'n; nor has a life
Been spar'd, but for dishonour; spar'd to breed
More slaves for Denmark, to heget a race
Of new-born virgins for the unsated lust
Of our new masters. Sweden! thou'rt no more!
Queen of the north! thy land of liberty,
Thy house of heroes, and thy seat of virtues,
Is now the tomb, where thy brave sons lie speech-
And. Oh! 'tis true. [less!]

But, wherefore? To what purpose?

Gust. Think of Stockholm!

When Christiern seiz'd upon the hour of peace,
And dreich'd the hospitable floor with blood,
Then fell the flower of Sweden, mighty names!
Her hoary senators, and gasping patriots!
The tyrant spoke, and his licentious band
Of blood-train'd ministry were loos'd to ruin.
Husbands, sons, and sires,
With dying ears, drunk in the loud despair
Of shrieking chastity. Is there a cause for this?
For sin without temptation, calm, cool villany,
Deliberate mischief, unimpassion'd lust,
And smiling murder? Lie thou there, my soul!
Sleep, sleep upon it; image not the form
Of any dream but this, till time grows pregnant,
And thou canst wake to vengeance.

And. Thou'st greatly mov'd me. Ah! thy tears
start forth! [them:]

Yes, let them flow; our country's fate demands
But wherefore talk of vengeance? 'tis a word
Should be engraven on the new fall'n snow,
Where the first beam may melt it from observance.
Vengeance on Christiern! Norway and the Dane,
The sons of Sweden, all the peopled north
Bend at his nod: my humbler boast of power
Meant not to cope with crowns.

Gust. Then what remains

Is briefly this: your friendship has my thanks,
But must not my acceptance. No!
First sink, thou baleful mansion, to the centre!
And be thy darkness doubled round my head,
Ere I forsake thee for the bliss of paradise,
'To be enjoy'd beneath a tyrant's sceptre!

And. Nor I, while I can hold it; but, alas!
That is not in our choice. [are of force]

Gust. Why? where's that power, whose engines
To bend the brave and virtuous man to slavery?
He has debauch'd the genius of our country,
And rides triumphant, while her captive sons
Await his nod, the silken slaves of pleasure!
Or fetter'd in their fears.

And. No doubt, a base submission to our wrongs
May well be term'd a voluntary bondage:
But, think, the heavy hand of power is on us;
Of power, from whose imprisonment and chains
Not all our free-born virtue can protect us.

Gust. 'Tis there you err, for I have felt their force;
And had I yielded to enlarge these limbs,
Or share the tyrant's empire, on the terms
Which he propos'd—I were a slave, indeed!
No; in the deep and poisonous damp of dungeons,

The soul can rear her sceptre, smile in anguish,
And triumph o'er oppression.

And. Oh! glorious spirit! think not I am slack
To relish what thy noble scope intends:
But, then, the means, the peril, and the consequence!
Great are the odds, and who shall dare the trial?

Gust. I dare!

Oh! wert thou still that gallant chief,
Whom once I knew, I could unfold a purpose
Would make the greatness of thy heart to swell,
And burst in the conception.

And. Give it utterance. You say you know me:
But give a tongue to such a cause as this,
And if you hold me tardy in the call,
You know me not: but thee I've surely known;
For there is somewhat in that voice and form
Which has alarm'd my soul to recollection;
But 'tis as in a dream, and mocks my reach.

Gust. Then name the man whom it is death to
know,
Or, knowing, to conceal—and I am he. [self!]

And. Gustavus! Heav'n's! 'tis he! 'tis he, him-
Enter ARVIDA, speaking to a Servant.

Arv. I thank you, friend, he's here; you may re-
tire. [Exit Servant.]

And. Good morning to my noble guest; you're
early! (*Gustavus walks apart.*)

Arv. I come to take a short and hasty leave:
'Tis said, that from the mountain's neigh'ring brow
The canvas of a thousand tents appears,
Whitening the vale. Suppose the tyrant there;
You know my safety lies not in the interview—
Ha! What is he, who, in the shreds of slavery,
Supports a step superior to the state
And insolence of ermine?

Gust. Sure, that voice
Was once the voice of friendship and Arvida!

Arv. Ah! yes—'tis he! Yepow'rs! it is Gustavus!

Gust. Thou brother of adoption! In the bond
Of ev'ry virtue wedded to my soul,
Enter my heart: is it thy property.

Arv. I'm lost in joy and wondrous circumstance!

Gust. Yet, wherefore, my Arvida, wherefore is it,
That in a place, and at a time like this, [cruelty?
We should thus meet! Can Christiern cease from
Say, whence is this, my brother? How escap'd you?
Did I not leave thee in the Danish dungeon?

Arv. Of that hereafter. Let me view thee first.
How graceful is the garb of wretchedness
When worn by virtue! Fashions turn to folly;
Their colours tarnish, and their pomps grow poor
To her magnificence.

Gust. Yes, my Arvida,
Beyond the sweeping of the proudest train
That shades a monarch's heel, I prize this humble
dress;

For it is sacred to my country's freedom.
A mighty enterprize has been conceiv'd,
And thou art come auspicious to the birth,
As sent to fix the seal of heav'n upon it.

Arv. Point but thy purpose: let it be to bleed—

Gust. Your hands, my friends!

All. Our hearts!

Gust. I know they're brave:

Of such the time has need; of hearts like your's,
Faithful and firm, of hands inur'd and strong;
For we must ride upon the neck of danger,
And plunge into a purpose big with death.

And. Here let us kneel, and bind us to thy side.

Gust. No; hold! if we want oaths to join us,
Swift let us part, from pole to pole asunder.

A cause like ours, is its own sacrament;
Truth, justice, reason, love, and liberty,
Th' eternal links that clasp the world are in it;
And he who breaks their sanction, breaks all law
And infinite connexion.

Arv. True, my lord.

And. And such the force I feel.

Arv. And I.

Arn. And all.

Gust. Know, then, that ere our royal Stenon fell,
While this my valiant cousin and myself,
By chains and treach'ry lay detain'd in Denmark,
Upon a dark and unsuspected hour,
The bloody Christiern sought to take my head.
I escap'd,

Led by a gen'rous arm, and some time lay
Conceal'd in Denmark. For my forfeit head
Became the price of crowns; each port and path
Was shut against my passage, till I heard
That Stenon, valiant Stenon fell in battle,
And freedom was no more. Oh! then, what bounds
Had pow'r to hem the desp'rate? I o'erpass'd them,
Travers'd all Sweden, thro' ten thousand foes,
Impending perils, and surrounding tongues,
That from himself inquir'd Gustavus out.
Witness, my country, how I toil'd to wake
Thy sons to liberty! In vain—for fear,
Cold fear had seiz'd on all. Here last I came,
And shut me from the sun, whose hateful beams
Serv'd but to shew the ruins of my country.

When here, my friends, 'twas here, at length, I found
What I had left to look for, gallant spirits,
In the rough form of untaught peasants. [*carlians*]

And. Indeed, they once were brave; our Dale-
Have oft been known to curb despotic sway;
And, as their only wealth has been their liberty,
From all th' unmeasur'd graspings of ambition
They've held that gem untouch'd: tho' now, 'tis
fear'd—

Gust. It is not fear'd! I say, they still shall hold
I've search'd these men, and find them like the soil,
Barren without, and to the eye unlovely,
But they've their minds within; and this the day
In which I mean to prove them.

Arn. Oh, Gustavus!
Most aptly hast thou caught the passing hour
Upon whose critical and fated hinge
The state of Sweden turns.

Gust. And to this hour
I've therefore held me in this darksome womb,
That sends me forth as to a second birth
Of freedom, or thro' death to reach eternity.
This day, return'd with ev'ry circling year,
In thousands pours the mountain peasants forth,
Each with his batter'd arms and rusty helm;
In sportive discipline well train'd, and prompt
Against the day of peril. Thus disguis'd,
Already have I stirr'd their latent sparks
Of slumb'ring virtue, apt as I could wish
To warm before the lightest breath of liberty.

Arn. How will they kindle, when, confess'd to
view,

Once more their lov'd Gustavus stands before them!

Arn. It cannot fail.

And. It has a glorious aspect.

Arn. Now, Sweden, rise, and re-assert thy rights,
Or be for ever fall'n!

And. Then be it so.

Arn. Lead on, thro' our arm of war,
To death or victory.

Gust. Why, thus, my friends, thus join'd in such
Are we not equal to a host of slaves!

You say, the foe's at hand; why, let them come;

Steep are our hills, nor easy of access,

And few the hours we ask for their reception:

For I will take these rustic sons of liberty

In the first warmth and hurry of their souls;

And should the tyrant then attempt our heights,

He comes upon his fate. Arise, thou son!

Haste, haste to rouse thee to the call of liberty,

That shall once more salute thy morning beam,

And hail thee to thy setting.

Arn. Were it not worth the hazard of a life

To know if Christiern leads his pow'rs in person,

And what his scope intends? Be mine that task.

Ev'n to the tyrant's tents I'll win my way,

And mingle with his councils.

Gust. Go, my friend!

Dear as thou art, whene'er our country calls, [up,
Friends, sons, and sires, should yield their treasure
Nor own a sense beyond the public safety.

But tell me, my Arvida, ere thou goest,
Tell me what hand has made thy friend its debtor.

And giv'n thee up to freedom and Gustavus?

Arn. Ah! let me think of that; 'tis sure she loves
him. (*Aside.*)

Away, thro' skance and jaundic'd eye of jealousy,
That tempts my soul to sicken at perfection!

Aw! I will unfold it. To thyself

Arvida owes his freedom.

Gust. How, my friend? [*dungeon,*]

Arn. Some month are pass'd since, in the Danish

With care emaciate, and unwholesome damps,

Sick'ning I lay, chain'd to my flinty bed,

And call'd on death to ease me—straight a light

Shone round, as when the ministry of heav'n

Descends to kneeling saints. But, oh! the form

That pour'd upon my sight. Ye angels, speak!

For ye alone are like her; or present

Such visions pictur'd to the mighty eye

Of fancy tranc'd in bliss. She, then, approach'd,

The softest pattern of embodied meekness;

For pity had divinely touch'd her eye,

And harmoniz'd her motions. "Ah!" she cry'd,

"Unhappy stranger, art not thou the man

Whose virtues have endear'd thee to Gustavus?"

Gust. Gustavus did she say?

Arn. Yes.

Loos'd from my bonds, I rose at her command;

When, scarce recover'ing speech, I would have

kneel'd,

But, "haste thee, haste thee for thy life!" she cry'd;

"And, oh! if e'er thy envied eyes behold

Thy lov'd Gustavus, say, a gentle foe

Has giv'n thee to his friendship." [*secret?*]

Gust. You've much amaz'd me! Is her name a

Arn. To me it is; but you, perhaps, may guess.

Gust. No, on my word.

Arn. You, too, had your deliv'rer. [*friends,*]

Gust. A kind, but not a fair one. Well, my

Our cause is ripe, and calls us forth to action.

Tread ye not lighter? Swells not ev'ry breast

With ampler scope to take your country in,

And breathe the cause of virtue? Rise, ye Swedes!

Rise greatly equal to this hour's importance!

On us the eyes of future ages wait,

And this day's close decides our country's fate.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Camp.*

Enter CHRISTIERN, Attendants, &c. *PETERSON*
meets Christiern.

Christ. What from Dalecarlia?

Peter. Late last night,

I sent a trusty slave,

And hourly wait some tidings.

Christ. Sure,

The wretches will not dare such quick perdition.

I cannot think it. [*them;*]

Peter. I think they will not. Tho' of old I know

All born to broils, the very sons of tumult;

Waste is their wealth, and mutiny their birthright,

And this the yearly fever of their blood,

Their holyday of war; a day apart,

Torn out from peace, and sacred to rebellion.

Oft has their battle hung upon the brow

Of yon wild steep, a living cloud of mischiefs,

Pregnant with plagues, and empty'd on the heads

Of many a monarch.

Enter ARVIDA, guarded, and a Gentleman.

Arn. Now, fate, I'm caught, and what remains is

Gen't. A prisoner, good my lord. [*obvious.*]

Christ. When taken?

Gen't. Now, ev'n here, before your tent:

I mark'd his careless action, but his eye

Of studied observation; then, his port
And base attire ill suiting—I inquir'd,
But found he was a stranger.

Christ. A sullen scorn
Knits up his brow, and frowns upon our presence.
What—ay, thou wouldst be thought a mystery,
Some greatness in eclipse. Whence art thou, slave?
Silent! Nay, then, bring forth the torture!
A smile! damnation! How the wretch assumes
The wreck of state, the suff'ring soul of majesty!
What, have we no pre-eminence, no claim?
Dost thou not know thy life is in our pow'r?

Arv. 'Tis therefore I despise it.

Christ. Matchless insolence!

What art thou? speak!

Arv. Be sure, no friend to thee;

For I'm a foe to tyrants.

Christ. Friends and fire!

A whirlwind tear thee, most audacious traitor!

Arv. Do rage and chafe, thy wrath's beneath me,
Christiern.

How poor thy pow'r! how empty is thy happiness!
When such a wretch, as I appear to be,
Can ride thy temper, harrow up thy form,
And stretch thy soul upon the rack of passion!

Christ. I will know thee! Bear him hence!

Why, what are kings, if slaves can brave us thus?
Go, Peterson, hold him to the rack. Tear, search
Sting him deep!

[*him*,
Exit Peterson with Arvida, guarded.

Enter a Messenger.

What wouldst thou, fellow?

Mess. Oh! my sovereign lord,
I come fast and far, from ev'n till morn;
Five times I've cross'd the shade of sleepless night,
Impatient of thy presence.

Christ. Whence?

Mess. From Denmark.

Commended from the consort of thy throne
To speed and privacy.

Christ. Your words would taste of terror—

Mess. A secret malady, my gracious liege;
Some factious vapour, rising from off the skirts
Of southmost Norway, has diffus'd its bane,
And rages now within the heart of Denmark.

Christ. It must not, cannot; 'tis impossible!
What, my own Danes?

*Re-enter PETERSON, who kneels, and gives a letter to
Christiern, who reads it.*

Gustavus!

So near us, and in arms!

What's to be done? Now, Peterson, now's the time;

Waken all the wondrous statesman in thee.

This curs'd Gustavus

Invades my shrinking spirits, awes my heart,

And sits upon my slumbers. All in vain

Has he been daring, and have I been vigilant:

He still evades the hunter;

And if there's pow'r in heav'n or hell, it guards him.

His name's a host, a terror to my legions.

And by my triple crown I swear, Gustavus,

I'd rather meet all Europe for my foe

Than see thy face in arms!

Peter. Be calm, my liege,

And listen to a secret big with consequence,

That gives thee back the second man on earth,

Whose valour could plant fears around thy throne:

Thy pris'n'—

Christ. What of him?

Peter. The Prince Arvida.

Christ. How!

Peter. The same.

Christ. My royal fugitive?

Peter. Most certain.

Christ. Now, then, 'tis plain who sent him hither.

Peter. Yes. [*across me—*

Pray, give me leave, my lord—a thought comes

If so, he must be ours. (*Pauses.*)

Your pardon for a question: has Arvida
E'er seen your beautiful daughter, your Christina?

Christ. Never—yes; possibly he might, that day
When the proud pair, Gustavus and Arvida,
Thro' Copenhagen drew a length of chain,
And grac'd my chariot-wheels. But why the ques-
tion? [*before us.*

Peter. I'll tell you. While e'en now he stood
I mark'd his high demeanour, and my eye
Claim'd some remembrance of him, tho' in clouds
Doubtful and distant; but a nearer view
Renew'd the characters effac'd by absence.

Yet, lest he might presume upon a friendship
Of ancient league between us, I dissembled,
Nor seem'd to know him. On he proudly strode,
As who should say, "Back, fortune, know thy dis-
tance!"

Thus steadily he pass'd, and mock'd his fate.
When, lo! the princess, to her morning walk,
Came forth attended. Quick amazement seiz'd
Arvida at the sight; his steps took root;
A tremor shook him; and his alter'd cheek,
Now sudden flush'd, then fled its wonted colour;
While with an eager and intemp'rate look,
He bent his form, and hung upon her beauties.

Christ. Ah! did our daughter note him?

Peter. No, my lord; [*him*,
She pass'd regardless. Straight his pride fell from
And at her name he started;

Then heav'd a sigh, and cast a look to heav'n,
Of such a mute, yet eloquent emotion,
As seem'd to say, "Now, fate, thou hast prevail'd,
And found one way to triumph o'er Arvida!"

Christ. But whither would this lead?

Peter. To this, my lord:
While thus his soul's unseated, shook by passion,
Could we engage him to betray Gustavus—

Christ. Oh! empty hope! impossible!

Do I not know him and the curs'd Gustavus?

Both fix'd in resolution deep as hell.

Peter. Ah! my liege,

No mortal footing treads so firm in virtue,

As always to abide the slipp'ry path,

Nor deviate with the bias. Some have few,

But each man has his failing, some defect,

Wherein to slide temptation. Leave him to me.

Christ. If thou canst bend this proud one to our
purpose,

And make the lion crouch, 'tis well; if not,

Away at once, and sweep him from remembrance.

Peter. Then I must promise deep.

Christ. Ay, anything; outbid ambition.

Peter. Love? [*bribe him:*

Christ. Ah! Yes; our daughter, too, if she can
But then, to win him to betray his friend!

Peter. Oh! doubt it not, my lord: for if he loves,

As sure he greatly does, I have a stratagem

That holds the certainty of fate within it.

Love is a passion whose effects are various;

It ever brings some change upon the soul,

Some virtue, or some vice, till then unknown,

Degrades the hero, and makes cowards valiant.

Christ. True; when it pours upon a youthful tem-
per

Open and apt to take the torrent in, [*per,*

It owns no limits, no restraint it knows,

But sweeps all down, tho' heav'n and hell oppose.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A Prison.
ARVIDA discovered in chains; Guards preparing
instruments of death and torture.

Arv. Off, off, vain cumbrance, ye conflicting
thoughts!

Leave me to heav'n. Oh, peace! It will not be—

Just when I rose above mortality,

To pour her wondrous weight of charms upon me!

At such a time, it was—it was too much!

For ev'ry pang these tortur'd limbs shall feel,

Descend in tenfold blessings on Gustavus! [*joy,*

Yes, bless him, bless him! Crown his hours with

His head with glory, and his arms with conquest;
Set his firm foot upon the neck of tyrants,
And be his name the balm of every lip,
That breathes thro' Sweden! Worthiest to be styl'd
Their friend, their chief, their father, and their king!

Enter PETERSON.

Peter. Unbind your prisoner.

Arv. How!

Peter. You have your liberty,
And may depart unquestion'd.

Arv. Do not mock me.

It is not to be thought, while power remains,
That Christiern wants a reason to be cruel.
But let him know, I would not be oblig'd.
He, who accepts the favours of a tyrant,
Shares in his guilt; they leave a stain behind them.

Peter. You wrong the native temper of his soul;
Cruel of force, but never of election:

Prudence compell'd him to a shew of tyranny;
Howe'er, those politics are now no more,
And mercy in her turn shall shine on Sweden.

Arv. Indeed! it were a strange, a bless'd reverse,
Devoutly to be wish'd; but, then, the cause,
The cause, my lord, must surely be uncommon.
May I presume—
Perhaps a secret?

Peter. No; or, if it were,
The boldness of thy spirit claims respect,
And should be answer'd. Know, the only man
In whom our monarch ever knew repulse,
Is now our friend; that terror of the field,
Th' invincible Gustavus.

Arv. Ah! friend to Christiern? Guard thyself,
my heart! *(Aside.)*

Nor seem to take alarm. Why, good my lord,
What terror is there in a wretch proscrib'd,
Naked of means, and distant as Gustavus?

Peter. There you mistake; nor knew we till this
hour,

The danger was so near. From yonder hill,
He sends proposals, back'd with all the pow'rs
Of Dalecarlia, those licentious resolute;
Who, having nought to hazard in the wreck,
Are ever foremost to foment a storm.

Arv. I were too bold to question on the terms.

Peter. No; trust me, valiant man, howe'er thou
I would do much to win a worth like thine, [art,
By any act of service or of confidence.

The terms Gustavus claims, indeed, are haughty:
The freedom of his mother and his sister;
His forfeit province, Gothland, and the isles
Submitted to his sceptre. But the league,
The bond of amity, and lasting friendship,
Is, that he claims Christina for his bride.

You start, and seem surpris'd.

Arv. A sudden pain
Just struck athwart my breast. But, say, my lord,
I thought you nam'd Christina.

Peter. Yes.

Arv. Oh, torture! *(Aside.)*
What of her, my good lord?

Peter. I said, Gustavus claim'd her for his bride.

Arv. His bride! his wife!
You did not mean his wife? Do fiends feel this?
(Aside.)

Down, heart, nor tell thy anguish! Pray, excuse
Did you not say, the princess was his wife? [me,
Whose wife, my lord?

Peter. I did not say what was, but what must be.

Arv. Touching Gustavus, was it not?

Peter. The same.

Arv. His bride? [tina!

Peter. I say his bride, his wife; his lov'd Chris-
Christina, fancied in the very prime
And youthful smile of nature; form'd for joys
Unknown to mortals. You seem indispos'd.

Arv. The crime of constitution—Oh! Gustavus,
(Aside.)

This is too much! And think you, then, my lord—

What, will the royal Christiern e'er consent
To match his daughter with his deadliest foe?

Peter. What should he do? War, else, must be
eternal.

Besides, some rumours from his Danish realms
Make peace essential here.

Arv. Yes, peace has sweets,
That Hybla never knew; it sleeps on down,
Cull'd gently from beneath the cherub's wings;
No bed for mortals. Man is warfare; all
A hurricane within; yet friendship stoops,
And gilds the gloom with falsehood. Undone, un-
done, Arvida! [vida!

Peter. Is't possible, my lord! The Prince Arv-
My friend! *(Embraces him.)*

Arv. Confusion to the name! *(Aside.)*

Peter. Why this, good heav'n? And wherefore
thus disguis'd? [tavus,

Arv. Yes; that accomplish'd traitor, that Gus-
While he sat planning private scenes of happiness,
Oh! well dissembled! he, sent me hither;
My friendly, unsuspecting heart a sacrifice,
To make death sure, and rid him of a rival.

Peter. A rival! Do you, then, love Christiern's
daughter? [be mine:

Arv. Name her not, Peterson, since she can't
Gustavus! how, ah! how hast thou deceiv'd me.
Who could have look'd for falsehood from thy
brow,

Whose heav'nly arch was as the throne of virtue?
Thy eye appear'd a sun to cheer the world,
Thy bosom truth's fair palace, and thy arms,
Benevolent, the harbour for mankind. [Prince,

Peter. What's to be done? Believe me, valiant
I know not which most sways me to thy int'rests,
My love to thee, or hatred to Gustavus.

Arv. Would you, then, save me? Think, con-
trive it quickly! [geance,

Lend me your troops—by all the pow'rs of ven-
Myself will face this terror of the north,
This son of fame, this—Oh! Gustavus—What?
Where had I wander'd? Stab my bleeding coun-
Save, shield me from that thought. [try!

Peter. Retire, my lord;
For, see, the Princess comes.

Arv. Where, where?
Ha! Yes, she comes, indeed! her beauties drive
Time, place, and truth, and circumstance, before
them.

Perdition pleases there—pull—tear me from her!
Yet must I gaze—but one—but one look more,
And I were lost for ever. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—An Apartment in Christiern's Palace.
Enter CHRISTINA and MARIANA.

Christina. Forbid it, shame! Forbid it virgin
modesty!

No, no, my friend; Gustavus ne'er shall know it.
Oh! I am overpaid with conscious pleasure;
The sense but to have sav'd that wondrous man,
Is still a smiling cherub in my breast,
And whispers peace within. [consequence,

Mar. 'Tis strange, a man, of his high note and
Should so evade the busy search of thousands;
That six long months have shut him from inquiry,
And not an eye can trace him to his covert.

Christina. Once 'twas not so; each infant lisp'd,
Gustavus!

It was the fav'rite name of ev'ry language;
His slightest motions fill'd the world with tidings;
Wak'd he, or slept, fame watch'd th' important
And nations told it round. [hour,

Mar. Madam, I've heard, that when
Gustavus lay detain'd in Denmark,
Your royal father sought the hero's friendship,
And offer'd ample terms of peace and amity.

Christina. He did; he offer'd that, my Mariana,
For which contending monarchs su'd in vain;
He offer'd me, his darling, his Christina;

But I was slighted, slighted by a captive,
Tho' kingdoms swell'd my dowry.

Mar. Amazement fix me!

Rejected by Gustavus?

Christina. Yes, Mariana; but rejected nobly.

Not worlds could win him to betray his country!
Had he consented, I had then despis'd him.

What's all the gaudy glitter of a crown?

What, but the glaring meteor of ambition,

That leads a wretch benighted in his errors,
Points to the gulf, and shines upon destruction.

Mar. You wrong your charms, whose pow'r
might reconcile

Things opposite in nature. Had he seen you?

Christina. I'll tell thee: yet while inexpert of
years,

I heard of bloody spoils, the waste of war,

And dire conflicting man; Gustavus' name

Superior rose, still dreadful in the tale:

Then first he seiz'd my infancy of soul,

As somewhat fabled of gigantic fierceness,

Too huge for any form; he scar'd my sleep,

And fill'd my young idea. Not the boast

Of all his virtues (graces only known

To him, and heav'nly natures!) could erase

The strong impression, till that wondrous day

In which he met my eyes.

What, then, was my amazement? he was chain'd,

Was chain'd! Like the robes

Of coronation, worn by youthful kings,

He drew his shackles. The Herculean nerve

Brac'd his young arm; and soften'd in his cheek

Liv'd more than woman's sweetness! Then his eye!

His mien! his native dignity! He look'd,

As tho' he led captivity in chains,

And we were slaves around.

Mar. Did he observe you? [and sigh'd,

Christina. He did; for, as I trembled, look'd,

His eyes met mine; he fix'd their glories on me.

Confusion thrill'd me, then; and secret joy,

Fast throbbing, stole its treasures from my heart,

And, mantling upward, turn'd my face to crimson.

I wish'd—but did not dare to look—he gaz'd;

When sudden, as by force, he turn'd away,

And would no more behold me.

Enter LAERTES.

Laer. Ah! bright, imperial maid, my royal mis-
tress!

Christina. What wouldst thou say? Thy looks

Speak terror to me.

Laer. Oh! you are ruin'd, sacrific'd, undone!

I heard it all; your cruel, cruel father,

Has sold you, giv'n you up a spoil to treason,

The purchase of the noblest blood on earth—

Gustavus! [he?

Christina. Ah! What of him? Where, where is

Laer. In Dalecarlia, on some great design,

Doom'd in an hour to fall by faithless hands:

His friend, the brave, the false, deceiv'd Arvida,

Ev'n now prepares to lead a band of ruffians,

Beneath the winding covert of the hill,

And seize Gustavus, obvious to the snares

Of friendship's fair dissemblance. And your father

Has vow'd your beauties to Arvida's arms,

The purchase of his falsehood.

Christina. Shield me, heav'n!

Is there no left, no means of quick prevention?

Laer. Behold my life, still chain'd to thy direc-
tion!

My will shall have a wing for ev'ry word,

That breathes thy mandate.

Christina. Will you, good Laertes?

Alas! I fear to overtask thy friendship.

Say, will you save me, then. Oh! go, haste, fly!

Acquaint Gustavus. If, if he must fall,

Let hosts that hem this single lion in,

Let nations hunt him down; let him fall nobly.

Laer. I go, and heav'n direct me to him! [Exit.

Christina. Ye pow'rs! if deaf to all the vows I
make,

Yet shield Gustavus, for Gustavus' sake;

Protect his virtues from a faithless foe,

And save your only image left below. [Exeunt.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Mountains of Dalecarlia.

*Enter GUSTAVUS as a peasant; SIVARD and Dale-
carlians following.*

Gust. Ye men of Sweden, wherefore are ye come?

See ye not, yonder, how the locusts swarm

To drink the fountains of your honour up,

And leave your hills a desert. Wretched men!

Why came ye forth? Is this a time for sport?

Or are ye met with song and jovial feast, [ants?

To welcome your new guests, your Danish visit-

To stretch your supple necks beneath their feet,

And, fawning, lick the dust? Go, go, my coun-
trymen,

Each to your several mansions; trim them out,

Cull all the tedious earnings of your toil,

To purchase bondage; bid your blooming daugh-
ters, [softness;

And your chaste wives, to spread their beds with

Then go ye forth, and, with your proper hands,

Conduct your masters in; conduct the sons

Of lust and violation. Oh! Swedes! Swedes!

Heav'ns! are ye men, and will ye suffer this?

There was a time, my friends, a glorious time,

When, had a single man of your forefathers

Upon the frontier met a host in arms,

His courage scarce had turn'd; himself had stood,

Alone, had stood the bulwark of his country.

Come, come ye on, then: Here I take my stand!

Here on the brink, the very verge of liberty;

Although contention rise upon the clouds,

Mix heav'n with earth, and roll the ruin onward;

Here will I fix, and breast me to the shock,

Till I, or Denmark fall.

Siv. And who art thou,

That thus wouldst swallow all the glory up,

That should redeem the times? Behold this breast,

The sword has till'd it; and the stripes of slaves

Shall ne'er trace honour here; shall never blot

The fair inscription! Never shall the cords

Of Danish insolence bind down these arms,

That bore my royal master from the field.

Gust. Ha! Say you, brother? Were you there—

Oh, grief!

Where liberty and Stenon fell together?

Siv. Yes, I was there. A bloody field it was,

Where conquest gasp'd, and wanted breath to tell

Its o'er-toil'd triumph. There our bleeding king,

There Stenon on this bosom made his bed;

And rolling back his dying eyes upon me,

"Soldier, (he cry'd,) if e'er it be thy lot

To see my valiant cousin, great Gustavus,

Tell him—for once, that I have fought like him,

And would, like him, have—

Conquer'd."

Gust. Oh! Danes, Danes! [brother?

You shall weep blood for this. Shall they not,

Yes, we will deal our might with thrifty vengeance,

A life for ev'ry blow; and, when we fall,

There shall be weight in't; like the tott'ring tow'rs,

That draw contiguous ruin.

Siv. Brave, brave man!

My soul admires thee. By my father's spirit,

I would not barter such a death as this

For immortality! Nor we alone—

Here be the trusty gleanings of that field,

Where last we fought for freedom; here's rich

poverty,

Tho' wrapp'd in rags, my fifty brave companions;

Who, thro' the force of fifteen thousand foes,

Bore off their king, and sav'd his great remains.

Gust. Why, captain,

We could but die alone; with these we'll conquer.

My fellow lab' rers, too—What say ye, friends?
Shall we not strike for't?

Siv. Death! Victory or death!

All. No bonds, no bonds! [*carlia,*

Gust. Spoke like yourselves. Ye men of Dale-
Brave men and bold! whom ev'ry future age
Shall mark for wondrous deeds, achievements won
From honour's dangerous summit, warriors all!
Say, might ye choose a chief,
Speak, name the man,
Who then should meet your wish?

Siv. Forbear the theme.

Why wouldst thou seek to sink us with the weight
Of grievous recollection? Oh! Gustavus,
Could the dead wake, thou wert the man!

Gust. Didst thou know Gustavus?

Siv. Know him! Oh, heav'n! what else, who
else was worth

The knowledge of a soldier? That great day,
When Christiern, in his third attempt on Sweden,
Had summ'd his pow'rs, and weigh'd the scale of
fight:

On the bold brink, the very push of conquest,
Gustavus rush'd, and bore the battle down;
In his full sway of prowess, (like Leviathan
That scoops his foaming progress on the main,
And drives the shoals along,) forward I sprung,
All emulous, and lab'ring to attend him;
Fear fled before, heliud him rot grew loud,
And distant wonder gaz'd. At length he turn'd,
And having ey'd me with a wondrous look
Of sweetness mix'd with glory—grace inestimable!
He pluck'd this bracelet from his conqu'ring arm,
And bound it here. My wrist seem'd trebly nerv'd;
My heart spoke to him, and I did such deeds
As best might thank him. But from that bless'd
I never saw him more; yet still to this, [*day,*

I bow, as to the relics of my saint:
Each morn I drop a tear on ev'ry bead,
Count all the glories of Gustavus o'er,
And think I still behold him,

Gust. Rightly thought;

For so thou dost, my soldier.

Behold your general,
Gustavus! come once more to lead you on
To laurell'd victory, to fame, to freedom!

Siv. Strike me, ye pow'rs! It is illusion all!
It cannot—it is, it is!

(*Falls and embraces his knees.*)

Gust. Oh! speechless eloquence!
Rise to my arms, my friend.

Siv. Friend! said you friend?

Oh! my heart's lord! my conqueror! my—
Gust. Approach, my fellow soldiers; your Gus-
Claims no precedence here. [*tavus*

Haste, brave men!

Collect your friends to join us on the instant;
Summon our brethren to their share of conquest,
And let loud echo, from her circling hills,
Sound freedom, till the undulation shake
The bounds of utmost Sweden,

(*Exeunt Dalecarlians, shouting.*)

Enter LAERTES.

Laer. Thy presence nobly speaks the man I wish,
Gustavus.

Gust. Thou hast a hostile garb:
Ha! say—art thou Laertes? If I err not,
There is a friendly semblance in that face,
Which answers to a fond impression here,
And tells me I'm thy debtor. [*vices;*

Laer. No, valiant prince; you over-rate my ser-
There is a worthier object of your gratitude,
Whom yet you know not. Oh! I have to tell—
But then, to gain your credit, must unfold
What haply should be secret. Be it so;
You are all honour.

Gust. Let me to thy mind,
For thou hast wak'd my soul into a thought
That holds me all attention.

Laer. Mightiest man!

To me alone you held yourself oblig'd
For life and liberty. Had it been so,
I were most bless'd with retribution just
To pay thee for my own; for on the day
When, by your arm, the mighty Thraeces fell,
Fate threw me to your sword. You spar'd my youth;
And, in the very whirl and rage of fight,
Your eye was taught compassion. From that hour,
I vow'd my life the slave of your rememb'rance;
And often, as Christina, heav'nly maid!
The mistress of my service, question'd me
Of wars and vent'rous deeds, my tidings came
Still freighted with thy name, until the day
In which yourself appear'd, to make praise speech-
Christina saw you then, and on your fate [*less.*
Dropp'd a kind tear; and when your noble scorn
Of proffer'd terms provok'd her father's rage
To take the deadly forfeit—she, she only,
Whose virtues watch'd the precious hour of mercy,
All trembling, sent my secret hand to save you;
Where, through a pass unknown to all your keepers,
I led you forth, and gave you to your liberty.

Gust. Oh! I am sunk, o'erwhelm'd with won-
drous goodness;

But were I rich and free as open mines,
That teem their golden wealth upon the world,
Still I were poor, unequal to her bounty.
Nor can I longer doubt whose gen'rous arm,
In my Arvida, in my friend's deliverance,
Gave double life, and freedom to Gustavus.

Laer. A fatal present! Ah! you know him not;
Arvida is misled, undone by passion;
False to your friendship, to your trust unfaithful.

Gust. Ha! hold!

Laer. I must unfold it.

Gust. Yet forbear:
This way—I hear some footing—pray you, soft!
If thou hast aught to urge against Arvida,
The man of virtue, tell it not the wind;
Lest slander catch the sound, and guilt should
triumph. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Mountains of Dalecarlia.*

Enter ARVIDA, speaking to a Messenger.

Arv. He's here! bear back my orders to your
That not a man, on peril of his life, [*fellows,*
Advance in sight till call'd.

Mess. My lord, I will. [*Exit.*

Arv. Have I not vow'd it, faithless as he is,
Have I not vow'd his fall? Yet, good heav'n!
Why start these sudden tears? On, on I must,
For I am half way down the dizzy steep,
Where my brain turns. A draught of Lethe now—
Oh! that the world would sleep—to wake no more!
Or that the name of friendship bore no charm
To make my nerve unsteady, and this steel
Fly backward from its task! It shall be done.
Empire! Christina! tho' th' affrighted sun
Start back with horror of the direful stroke,
It shall be done. Ha! he comes!

How steadily he looks, as heav'n's own book,
The leaf of truth, were open'd on his aspect!
Up, up, dark minister! his fate calls out

(*Puts up the dagger.*)

To nobler execution; for he comes
In opposition, singly, man to man,
As tho' he brav'd my wish.

Enter GUSTAVUS.—(*They look for some time on each
other; Arvida lays his hand on his sword, and
withdraws it by turns; then advances irresolutely.*)

Gust. Is it then so?

Arv. Defend thyself!

Gust. No; strike!

I would unfold my bosom to thy sword,
But that I know, the wound you give this breast
Would doubly pierce thy own.

Arv. I know thee not:

It is the time's eclipse, and what should be
In nature, now is nameless.

Gust. Ah! my brother.

Arv. What wouldst thou?

Gust. Is it thus we two should meet?

Arv. Art thou not false? Deep else, oh! deep,
Were my damnation. [indeed,

Gust. Dear, unhappy man!

My heart bleeds for thee. False I'd surely been,
Had I like thee been tempted.

Arv. Ha! Speak, speak!

Didst thou not send to treat with Christiern?

Gust. Never.

I know thy error, but I know the arts,
The frauds, the wiles, that practis'd on thy virtue;
Firm how you stood, and tow'rd above mortality;
Till in the fond, unguarded hour of love,
The wily undermining tempter came,
And won thee from thyself—a moment won thee;
For still thou art Arvida, still the man
On whom thy country calls for her deliv'rance.
Already are her bravest sons in arms; (*Shout.*)
Mark how they shout, impatient of our presence,
To lead them on to a new life of liberty,
To name, to conquest. Ha! heav'n guard my brother.

Thy cheek turns pale, thy eye looks wild upon me:
Wilt thou not answer me?

Arv. Gustavus!

Gust. Speak.

Arv. Have I not dream'd?

Gust. No other I esteem it.

Where lives the man, whose reason slumbers not?
Still pure, still blameless, if, at wonted dawn,
Again he wakes to virtue.

Arv. Oh! my dawn

Must soon be dark. Confusion dissipates
To leave me worse confounded.

Gust. Think no more on't.

Come to my arms, thou dearest of mankind.

Arv. Stand off! Pollution dwells within my
touch,

And horror hangs around me. Cruel man!
Oh! thou hast doubly damn'd me with this good-
For resolution held the deed as done, [ness;
That now must sink me. Hark! I'm summon'd
My audit opens! Poise me! for I stand [hence,
Upon a spire, against whose sightless base
Hell breaks his wave beneath. Down, down I
dare not,

And up I cannot look, for justice fronts me.
Thou shalt have vengeance, tho' my purpling blood
Were nectar for heav'n's bowl, as warm and rich,
As now 'tis base, it thus should pour for pardon.

(*Gustavus catches his arm, and in the struggle,
the dagger falls.*)

Gust. Ha! hold, Arvida! No, I will not lose
thee.

Forbid it, heav'n! thou shalt not rob me so;
No, I will struggle with thee to the last,
And save thee from thyself. Oh! answer me:
Wilt thou forsake me? Answer me, my brother.

Arv. Expose me, cage me, brand me for the tool
Of crafty villains, for the veriest slave,
On whom the bend of each contemptuous brow
Shall look with loathing! Ah! my turpitude
Shall be the vile comparative of knaves
To boast and whiten by.

Gust. Not so, not so!

He, who knows no fault, knows no perfection.
The rectitude, that heav'n appoints to man,
Leads on through error; and the kindly sense
Of having stray'd, endears the road to bliss;
It makes heav'n's way more pleasing. Oh! my
'Tis hence a thousand cordial charities [brother,
Derive their growth, their vigour, and their sweet-
This short lapse [ness.
Shall to thy future foot give cautious treading,
Erect and firm in virtue.

Arv. Give me leave.

Gust. You shall not pass.

Arv. I must.

Gust. Whither?

Arv. I know not. Oh! Gustavus!

Gust. Speak.

Arv. You can't forgive me.

Gust. Not forgive thee!

Arv. No.

Look there. (*Points to the dagger.*)

And yet, when I resolv'd to kill thee,

I could have died, indeed I could, for thee!

I could have died, Gustavus!

Gust. Oh! I know it.

A gen'rous mind, though sway'd awhile by passion,
Is like the steely vigour of the bow,
Still holds its native rectitude, and bends
But to recoil more forceful. Come, forget it.

Enter SIVARD.

Siv. My lord, as now I pass'd the mountain's
brow,

I spy'd some men, whose arms and strange attire,
Give cause for circumspection.

Gust. Danes, perhaps;

Haste, intercept their passage to the camp.

[*Exit Sivard.*

Arv. Those are the Danes, that witness to my
shame. [vida!

Gust. Perish th' opprobrious term! Not so, Ar-
Myself will be the guardian of thy fame;
Trust me, I will. But, see, our friends approach.

Oh! clear,

While I attend them, clear that cloud, my brother,
That sits upon the morning of thy youth.

Enter ANDERSON, ARNOLDUS, SIVARD, Officers, &c.

And. Let us all see him! [hearts,

Gust. Amazement, I perceive, hath fill'd your
And joy for that your lost Gustavus, 'scap'd
Through wounds, imprisonments, and chains, and
deaths,

Thus sudden, thus unlook'd for, stands before ye.

As one escap'd from cruel hands I come,
From hearts that ne'er knew pity,
And know no music but the groans of Sweden.

Yet, not for that my sister's early innocence,

And mother's age now grid beneath captivity;

Nor that one bloody, one remorseless hour

Swept my great sire, and kindred from my side;

For them Gustavus weeps not;

But, oh! great parent, when I think on thee!

Thy numberless, thy nameless, shameful infamies,

My widow'd country! Sweden! when I think

Upon thy desolation, spite of rage— [flow

And vengeance that would choke them—tears will,

And. Oh! they are villains, ev'ry Dane of them,

Practis'd to stab and smile; to stab the babe

That smiles upon them.

Arv. What accursed hours

Roll o'er those wretches, who, to fiends like these,

In their dear liberty have barter'd more

Than worlds will rate for?

Gust. Oh! liberty, heav'n's choice prerogative!

True bond of law, thou social soul of property,

Thou breath of reason, life of life itself!

For thee the valiant bleed. Oh! sacred liberty!

Wing'd from the summer's snare, from flatt'ring

ruin,

Like the bold stork, you seek the wintry shore,

Leave courts, and pomps, and palaces, to slaves,

Cleave to the cold, and rest upon the storm.

Uphorn by thee, my soul disdains the terms

Of empire. Are ye not at the hands of tyrants?

Are ye not mark'd, ye men of Dalecarlia?

Are ye not mark'd by all the circling world

As the last stake? What but liberty,

Through the fam'd course of thirteen hundred years,

Aloof hath held invasion from your hills,

And sanctify'd their shade? And will ye, will ye

Shrink from the hopes of the expecting world ;
Bid your high honours stoop to foreign insult,
And in one hour give up to infamy
The harvest of a thousand years of glory?

And. Die all first!

Gust. Yes, die by piecemeal!

Leave not a limb o'er which a Dane may triumph!
Now from my soul I joy, I joy, my friends,
To see ye fear'd; to see, that ev'n your foes
Do justice to your valours! There they be,
The pow'rs of kingdoms, summ'd in yonder host,
Yet kept aloof, yet trembling to assail ye.
And, oh! when I look round and see you here,
Of number short, but prevalent in virtue,
My heart swells high, and burns for the encounter.
True courage but from opposition grows;
And what are fifty, what a thousand slaves,
Match'd to the sinew of a single arm
That strikes for liberty? that strikes to save
His fields from fire, his infants from the sword,
His couch from lust, his daughters from pollution,
And his large honours from eternal infamy?
What doubt we, then? Shall we, shall we stand
Let us on! [here?]

Oh! yes, I read your lovely fierce impatience!
You shall not be withheld; we will rush on them.
This is, indeed, to triumph.

And. On, lead us on, Gustavus; one word more
Is but delay of conquest.

Gust. Take your wish.

He, who wants arms, may grapple with the foe,
And so he furnish'd. You, most noble Anderson!
Divide our pow'rs, and with the fam'd Olaus
Take the left route. You, Eric, great in arms!
With the renown'd Nederbi, hold the right,
And skirt the forest down; then wheel at once,
Confess'd to view, and close upon the vale:
Myself, and my most valiant cousin here
Th' invincible Arvida, gallant Sivard,
Arnoldus, and these hundred hardy vet'rans,
Will pour directly on, and lead the onset.
Bold are our hearts, and nervous are our hands!
With us, truth, justice, fame and freedom close,
Each, singly, equal to an host of foes.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Palace.

Enter CHRISTIERN, CHRISTINA, MARIANA, and
PETERSON.

Christina. I heard it was your royal pleasure,
I should attend your highness. [sir,

Christ. Yes, Christina;
But business interferes. [*Exeunt Christina and Mar.*

Enter an Officer.

Offi. My sovereign liege!

Wide o'er the western shelving of yon hill,
We think, though indistinctly, we can spy,
Like men in motion must'ring on the heath;
And there is one, who saith he can discern
A few of martial gesture, and bright arms,
Who this way bend their action.

Christ. Friends, perhaps;
For foes it were too daring. Haste thee, Peterson,
Detach a thousand of our Danish horse
To rule their motions; we will out ourself,
And hold our pow'rs in readiness. Lead on. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Another Apartment in the palace.

Enter CHRISTINA and MARIANA.

Mar. Ha! did you mark, my princess, did you
mark?

Should some reverse, some wondrous whirl of fate
Once more return Gustavus to the battle, [quest;
New nerve his arm, and wreath his brow with con-
Say, would you not repent that e'er you sav'd
This dreadful man, the foe of your great race;
Who pours impetuous in his country's cause
To spoil you of a kingdom?

Christina. No, my friend;
Had I to death, or bondage, sold my sire,

Or had Gustavus on our native realms
Made hostile inroad; then, my Mariana,
Had I then sav'd him from the stroke of justice,
I should not cease my suit to heav'n for pardon.
But if, though in a foe, to reverence virtue,
Withstand oppression, rescue injur'd innocence,
Step boldly in betwixt my sire and guilt,
And save my king, my father, from dishonour;
If this he shew, I have shook hands with penitence.
First perish crowns, dominion, all the shiue
And transience of this world, ere guilt shall serve
To buy the vain incumbrance!
Blasted be that royalty, [rious!
Which murder must make sure, and crimes inglo-
The bulk of kingdoms, nay, the world is light,
When guilt weighs opposite. Oh! would to heav'n
The loss of empire would restore his innocence,
Restore the fortunes, and the precious lives
Of thousands fall'n the victims of ambition!

Enter LAERTES.

Does he live?

Laer. He does;

But death, ere night, must fill a long account;
The camp, the country's in confusion: war,
And changes ride upon the hour that hastes
To intercept my tongue, I else could tell
Of virtues hitherto beyond my ken;
Courage to which the lion stoops his crest,
Yet grafted upon qualities as soft
As a rock'd infant's meekness; such as tempts
Against my faith, my country, and allegiance,
To wish thee speed, Gustavus!

Christina. Then you found him? [death

Laer. I did: and war'd him, but in vain; for
To him appear'd more grateful than to find
His friend's dishonour.

Christina. Give me the manner! quick! Soft, good

Enter CHRISTIERN, PETERSON, Danes, &c.

Christ. Damn'd! double traitor! Oh! curs'd, false
Guard well the Swedish pris'ners, [Arvida!
Stand to your arms! Bring forth the captives there!

Enter AUGUSTA and GUSTAVA, guarded.

Pet. My liege—

Christ. Away!

Fortune! we will not trust the changeling more;
But wear her girt upon our armed loins,
Or pointed in our grasp.

Enter an Officer.

Offi. The foe's at hand!

With gallant shew your thousand Danes rode forth,
But shall return no more! I mark'd the action,
A band of desperate resolute rush'd on them,
Scarce num'ring to a tenth, and, in midway,
They clos'd; the shock was dreadful, nor your Danes
Could bear the madding charge: awhile they stood;
Then shrunk, and broke, and turn'd. When, lo!
behind,

Fast wheeling from the right and left, there pour'd,
Who intercepted their return, and caught
Within the toil they perish'd.

Christ. 'Tis Gustavus!

No mortal else, not Ammon's boasted son,
Not Cæsar would have dar'd it. Tell me, say
What numbers in the whole they may amount to.

Offi. About five thousand.

Christ. And no more?

Offi. No more,

That yet appear.

Christ. We count six times their sum.

Haste, soldier! take a trumpet, tell Gustavus
We have of terms to offer, and would treat
Touching his mother's ransom; say, her death,
Suspended by our grace, but waits his answer.

[*Exit Officer.*

Madam, it should well suit with your authority
(*To Augusta.*)

To check this frenzy in your son. Look to it,
Or, by the saints, this hour's your last of life!

Aug. Come, my Gustava, come, my little captive,
We shall be free;
And I will give thee to thy father's fondness,
And to the arms of all thy royal race
In heav'n; who sit on thrones, with loves and joys.

Christ. Is this my answer?
Come forth, ye ministers of death, come forth!

Enter Ruffians, who seize Augusta and Gustava.
Pluck them asunder! We shall prove you, lady!
Christina. Ah! I can hold no longer. Royal sir,
Thus on my knees, and lower, lower still—

Christ. My child! what mean you?
Christina. Oh! my gracious father!
Kill, kill me rather; let me perish first;
But do not stain the sanctity of kings
With the sweet blood of helpless innocence.

Aug. Ha! who art thou,
That look'st so like the 'habitants of heav'n,
Like mercy sent upon the morning's blush,
To glad the heart, and cheer a gloomy world
With light till now unknown?

Christ. Away! they come.
I'll hear no more of your ill-tim'd petitions.

Christina. Oh! yet for pity!
Christ. I will none ont: leave me.
Pity! it is the infant fool of nature:
Tear off her hold, and bear her to her tent.
[*Exeunt Christina, Mariana, Laertes, and Attend.*

Enter an Officer.

Off. My liege, Gustavus, though with much reluctance,
Consents to one hour's truce. His soldiers rest
Upon their arms; and, follow'd by a few,
He comes to know your terms.

Christ. I see.
Be ready, slaves; and, on the word,
Plunge deep your daggers in their bosoms.
(*Points to Augusta.*)

*Enter GUSTAVUS, ARVIDA, ANDERSON, ARNOLDUS,
SIVARD, &c.*

Hold!
Gust. Ha! 'tis, it is my mother!

Christ. Tell me, Gustavus, tell me why is this,
That, as a stream diverted from the banks
Of smooth obedience, thou hast drawn those men
Upon a dry unchannell'd enterprize,
To turn their inundation? Are the lives
Of my misguided people held so light,
That thus thou'd'st push them on the keen rebuke
Of guarded majesty?
Look round, unruly boy, thy battle comes
Like raw, disjointed must'ring; feeble wrath!
A war of waters borne against the rock
Of our firm continent, to fume, and chafe,
And shiver in the toil.

Gust. Mistaken man!
I come empower'd, and strengthen'd in thy weakness;
For tho' the structure of a tyrant's throne
Rise on the necks of half the suff'ring world,
Fear trembles in the cement! [grace,

Christ. Gustavus, wouldst thou yet return to
And hold thy motions in the sphere of duty,
Acceptance might be found.

Gust. Imperial spoiler!
Give me my father, give me back my kindred,
Give me the fathers of ten thousand orphans,
Give me the sons, in whom thy ruthless sword
Has left our widows childless: mine they were,
Both mine, and ev'ry Swede's, whose patriot breast
Bleeds in his country's woundings! Oh! thou can-
Give me, then, [not!
My all that's left, my gentle mother there,
And spare you little trembler!

Christ. Yes, on terms
Of compact and submission.

Gust. Ha! with thee?
Compact with thee! and mean'st thou for my country?
For Sweden? No; so hold my heart but firm,

Altho' it wring for't; tho' blood drop for tears,
And at the sight my straining eyes start forth,
They both shall perish first.

Christ. Slaves, do your office.
Gust. Hold yet! Thou canst not be so damn'd!

My mother!
I dare not ask thy blessing. Where's Arvida?
Where art thou? Come, my friend, thou'st known
temptation;

And, therefore, best canst pity, or support me.
Arv. Alas! I shall but serve to weigh thee down-
ward,

To pull thee from the dazzling, sightless height,
At which thy virtue soars. For, oh! Gustavus,
My soul is dark, disconsolate and dark,
Sick to the world, and hateful to myself:
I have no country now; I've nought but thee,
And should yield up the int'rest of mankind
Where thine's in question.

Aug. See, my son relents;
Behold, oh, king! yet spare us but a moment,
His little sister shall embrace his knees,
And these foud arms, around his duteous neck,
Shall join to bend him to us.

Christ. Could I trust ye?
Arv. I'll be your hostage!

Christ. Granted.
Gust. Hold! my friend.
(*Here Arvida breaks from Gustavus, and passes to
Christiern's party, while Augusta and Gustava go
over to Gustavus.*)

Aug. Is it then giv'n, yet giv'n me, ere I die,
To see thy face, Gustavus? thus to gaze,
To touch, to fold thee thus? My son, my son!
And have I liv'd to this? It is enough.
All arm'd, and, in my country's precious cause,
Terribly beauteous, to behold thee thus!
Why, 'twas my only, hourly, suit to heav'n,
And now 'tis granted. Oh! my glorious child,
Bless'd were the throes I felt for thee, Gustavus!
For from the breast, from out your swathing bands
You stepp'd the child of honour.

Gust. Oh, my mother! [eye?

Aug. Why stands that water trembling in thy
Why heaves thy bosom? Turn not thus away;
'Tis the last time that we must meet, my child,
And I will have thee whole. Why, why, Gustavus,
Why is this form of heaviness? For me
I trust it is not meant; you cannot think
So poorly of me: I grow old, my son,
And to the utmost period of mortality
I ne'er should find a death's hour like to this
Whereby to do thee honour.

Gust. Roman patriots!
Ye Decii, self-devoted to your country!
You gave no mothers up! Will annals yield
No precedent for this, no elder boast
Whereby to match my trial?

Aug. No, Gustavus;
For heav'n still squares our trial to our strength,
And thine is of the foremost. Noble youth!

Ev'n I, thy parent, with a conscious pride,
Have often bow'd to thy superior virtues.
Oh! there is but one bitterness in death,
One only sting—

Gust. Speak, speak!

Aug. 'Tis felt for thee.
Too well I know thy gentleness of soul,
Melting as babes; ev'n now the pressure's on thee,
And bends thy loveliness to earth. Oh, child!
The dear but sad foretaste of thy affliction
Already kills thy mother. But behold,
Behold thy valiant followers, who to thee,
And to the faith of thy protecting arm
Have giv'n ten thousand mothers, daughters too;
Who in thy virtue yet may learn to bear
Millions of freeborn sons to bless thy name,
And pray for their deliverer! Oh, farewell!
This, and but this, the very last adieu!

Heav'n sit victorious on thy arm, my son!

And give thee to thy merits!

Christ. Ah! thou trait'ress!

Aug. See, Gustavus,
My little captive waits for one embrace.

Gust. Come, to my arms, thou lamb-like sacrifice;
Oh! that they were of force to fold thee ever,
To let thee to my heart! there lock thee close,
But 'twill not be!

Arn. Hear me, thou most dear Gustavus!

Thus low I bend my pray'r, reject me not:

If once, if ever thou didst love Arvida,
Oh! leave me here to answer to the wrath
Of this fell tyrant. Save thy honour'd mother,
And that sweet lamb from slaughter!

Gust. Cruel friendship!

Christ. And, by my life, I'd take thee at thy word,
But that I know 'twould please thee. [be

Aug. No, gen'rous prince, thy blood shall never
The price of our dishonour. Come, my child;
Weep not, sweet babe, there shall no harm come
nigh thee. [I see.

Christ. 'Tis well, proud dame; you are return'd,
Each to his charge. Here break we off, Gustavus;
For to the very teeth of thy rebellion
We dash defiance back.

Gust. Alas, my mother!

Grief chokes up utt'rance, else I have to say
What never tongue unfolded. Yet return,
Come back, and I will give up all to save thee;
Thou fountain of my life!

Dearer than mercy is to kneeling penitence,

My early blessing, first and latest joy;

Return, return, and save thy lost Gustavus!

Christ. No more, thou trisler!

Aug. Oh! farewell for ever!

[*Exeunt Christ. and his party. Gust. and
his party remain.*

Gust. Then she's gone: Arvida! Anderson!

For ever gone! Arnoldus, friends, where are ye?

Help here! heave, heave this mountain from me!

Oh!

Heav'n keep my senses! So! We will to battle;

But let no banners wave. Be still, thou trump!

And ev'ry martial sound, that gives the war

To pomp or levity; for vengeance now

Is clad with heavy arms, sedately stern,

Resolv'd, but silent as the slaughter'd heaps

O'er which my soul is brooding.

Arn. Oh, Gustavus!

Is there a Swede of us whose sword and soul

Grapples not to thee, as to all they hold

Of earthly estimation? Said I more,

It were but half my thought.

And. On thee we gaze,

As one unknown till this important hour,

Pre-eminent of men!

Siv. Accurs'd be he,

Who, in thy leading, will not fight, and strive,

And bleed, and gasp with pleasure!

And. We are thine.

Arn. Tho', to yield us up,

Had scarce been less than virtue.

Gust. Oh, my friends!

I see, 'tis not for man to boast his strength

Before the trial comes. This very hour,

Had I a thousand parents, all seem'd light,

When weigh'd against my country; and but now,

One mother seem'd of weight to poise the world;

Tho' conscious truth and reason were against her.

For, oh! howe'er the partial passions sway,

High heav'n assigns but one unbiass'd way;

Direct thro' every opposition leads,

Where shelves decline, and many a steep impedes.

Here hold we on! tho' thwarting fiends alarm,

Here hold we on! tho' devious syrens charm;

In heav'n's disposing pow'r events unite,

Nor aught can happen wrong to him who acts aright.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Royal Tent, near the field of battle.*

Enter CHRISTINA and MARIANA.

Christina. Hark! Mariana, list! No; all is silent!
It was not fancy, sure; didst thou not hear?

Mar. Too plain, the voice of terror seiz'd my ear,
And my heart sinks within me.

Christina. Oh! I fear

The war is now at work. As winds, methought,
Long borne thro' hollow vaults, the sound approach'd;
One sound, yet laden with a thousand notes
Of fearful variation; then it swell'd
To distant shouts, now coming on the gale;
Again borne backward with a parting groan,
All sunk to horrid stillness.

Enter LAERTES.

Laer. Christina, fly! thou royal virgin,
This morn beheld thee mistress of the north,
Bright heir of Scandinavia; and this hour
Has left thee not, throughout thy wide dominions,
Whereon to rest thy foot.

Christina. Now, praise to heav'n!

Say but my father lives!

Laer. At your command

I went; and, from a neighb'ring summit, view'd
Where either host stood adverse, sternly wedg'd;
Reflecting on each other's gloomy front,
Fell hate and fix'd defiance: when, at once,

The foe mov'd on, attendant to the steps
Of thy Gustavus. He, with mournful pace,
Came slow and silent; till two hapless Danes

Prick'd forth, and on his helm discharg'd their fury:

Then rous'd the lion! To my wond'ring sight

His stature grew twofold; before his eye

All force seem'd wither'd, and his horrid plume

Shook wild dismay around! as heav'n's dread bolt

He shot, he pierc'd our legions; in his strength

His shouting squadrons gloried, rushing on

Where'er he led their battle. Full five times,

Hemm'd by our mightier host, the foe seem'd lost,

And swallow'd from my sight; five times again,

Like flame they issued to the light: and thrice

These eyes beheld him, they beheld Gustavus

Unhors'd, and by a host girl singly in;

And thrice he broke thro' all!

Christina. My blood runs chill. [slict,

Laer. With such strenuous, such a labour'd con-

Sure never field was fought! until Gustavus

Aloud cry'd Victory! and on his spear

High rear'd th' imperial diadem of Denmark;

Then slack'd the battle; and then recoil'd our host;

His echo'd Victory! And now would know

No bounds: rout follow'd, and the face of flight—

She heeds me not.

Christina. Oh! ill-starr'd royalty!

My father! cruel, dear, unhappy father!

Summon'd so sudden! fearful, fearful thought!

Enter CHRISTIEN, flying without his helmet, in

disorder, his sword broken, and his garments bloody;

he throws away his sword.

Christ. Give us new arms of proof! fresh horses!

quick!

A watch without there! Set a standard up

To guide our scatter'd powers! Haste, my friends,

haste!

We must begone! Oh! for some cooling stream

To slake a monarch's thirst!

Laer. A post, my liege,

A second post from Denmark, says—

Christ. All's lost.

Is it not so? Begone,

Give me a moment's solitude. Thought, thought,

Where wouldst thou lead?

Christina. He sees me not. Alas, alas, my father!

Oh! what a war there lives within his eye!

Where greatness struggles to survive itself.

I tremble to approach him; yet I fain

Would bring peace to him. Don't you know me, sir?

Christ. My child!

Christina. I am.

[and earth,

Christ. Curse me, then! curse me! join with heav'n
And hell to curse!

Christina. Patience and peace

Possess thy mind! Not all thy pride of empire
E'er gave such bless'd sensation as one hour
Of penitence, tho' painful. Let us hence—
Far from the blood and bustle of ambition.
Be it my task to watch thy rising wish,
To smooth thy brow, find comfort for thy cares,
And for thy will, obedience; still to cheer
The day with smiles, and lay the night down
Beneath thy slumbers.

Christ. Oh! thou all that's left me!

Ev'n in the riot, in the rage of fight,
Thy guardian virtues watch'd around my head,
When else no arm could aid; for thro' my ranks,
My circling troops, the fell Gustavus rush'd;
Vengeance! he cry'd, and with one eager hand
Grip'd fast my diadem; his other arm,
High rear'd the deathful steel; suspended yet;
For in his eye, and thro' his varying face,
Conflicting passions fought—he look'd—he stood,
In wrath reluctant; then, with gentler voice,
Christina, thou hast conquer'd! Go, he cry'd,
I yield thee to her virtues. [Exeunt.

Enter GUSTAVUS, ANDERSON, ARNOLDUS, SIVARD,
&c. in triumph.

Gust. That we have conquer'd, first we bend to
And. And next to thee! [heav'n!

All. To thee, to thee, Gustavus!

Gust. No, matchless men! my brothers of the
Be it my greatest glory to have mix'd [war!
My arms with your's, and to have fought for once
Like to a Dalecarlian; like to you,
The sires of honour, of a new-born fame,
To be transmitted, from your great memorial,
To climes unknown, to age succeeding age,
Till time shall verge upon eternity,
And patriots be no more.

And. Behold, my lord!

The Danish pris'ners, and the traitor, Peterson,
Attend their fate.

Gust. Send home the Danes with honour,
And let them better learn, from our example,
To treat whom next they conquer with humanity.

And. But, then, for Peterson?

Gust. His crimes are great;
A single death were a reward for treason;
Let him still languish. Let him be exil'd,
No more to see the land of liberty,
The hills of Sweden, nor the native fields
Of known, endear'd Idea.

And. Royal sir,

This is to pardon, to encourage villains;
And hourly to expose that sacred life,
Where all our safety centres.

Gust. Fear them not.

The fence of virtue is a chief's best caution;
And the firm surety of my people's hearts
Is all the guard, that e'er shall wait Gustavus.
I am a soldier from my youth;
Trust me, my friend,

Except in such a cause as this day's quarrel,
I would not shed a single wretch's blood,
For the world's empire!

Arn. Oh! exalted Sweden!

Bless'd people! Heaven! wherein have we deserv'd
A man like this to rule us?

Enter ARVIDA, leading in CHRISTINA; he runs to
Gustavus.

Gust. My Arvida!

Arv. My king! Oh, hail! Thus let me pay my
homage. [Kneels.

Christina. Renown'd Gustavus! Mightiest among
If such a wretch, the captive of thy arms, [men!

Trembling and aw'd in thy superior presence,
May find the grace that ev'ry other finds,
(For thou art said to be of wondrous goodness!)
Then hear, and oh! excuse a foe's presumption.
While low, thus low, you see a suppliant child
Now pleading for a father; for a dear,
Much lov'd, if cruel, yet unhappy father.
If he with circling nations could not stand
Against thee singly; singly, what can he
When thou art fenc'd with nations!

Gust. Ha! that posture!

Oh! rise—surpris'd, my eye perceiv'd it not.
I've much to say, but that my tongue, my thoughts
Are troubled; warr'd on by unusual passions.
'Twas hence thou hadst it in thy power to ask
Ere I could offer. Come, my friend, assist,
Instruct me to be grateful. Oh, *Christina!*
I fought for freedom, not for crowns, thou fair one;
They shall sit brighter on that beauteous head,
Whose eye might awe the monarchs of the earth,
And light the world to virtue. My *Arvida!*

Arv. I read thy soul, I see the gen'rous conflict,
And come to fix, not trouble, thy repose.
Could you but know with what an eager haste
I sprung to execute thy late commands;
To shield this lovely object of thy cares,
And give her thus, all beauteous to thy eyes!
For I've no bliss but thine, have lost the form
Of ev'ry wish that's foreign to thy happiness.

Gust. Alas! your cheek is pale; you bleed, my

Arv. I do indeed—to death [brother!

Gust. You have undone me:

Rash, headstrong man! Oh! was this well, *Arvida!*
(Turns from him.)

Arv. Pardon, Gustavus! mine's the common lot,
The fate of thousands fall'n this day in battle.
I had resolv'd on life, to see you bless'd;
To see my king and his *Christina* happy.
Turn, thou belov'd, thou honour'd next to heav'n,
And to thy arms receive a penitent,
Who never more shall wrong thee.

Gust. Oh, *Arvida!*

Friend! Friend! (Embraces him.)

Arv. Thy heart beats comfort to me! in this breast
Let thy *Arvida*, let thy friend, survive.
Oh! strip his once lov'd image of its frailties,
And strip it too of ev'ry fonder thought,
That may give thee affliction. Do, Gustavus;
It is my last request; for heav'n and thou
Art all the care, and business—of *Arvida.* (Dies.)

Gust. Wouldst thou too leave me?

Not if the heart, the arms of thy Gustavus,
Have force to hold thee.

Christina. Oh, delightful notes!

That I do love thee, yes, 'tis true, my lord.
The bond of virtue, friendship's sacred tie,
The lover's pains, and all the sister's fondness!
But I have a father,
If cruel, yet a father:
Abandon'd now by ev'ry supple wretch,
That fed his ears with flattery. I am all
That's left to calm, to sooth his troubled soul
To penitence, to virtue. [Exit.

(Gustavus looks after *Christina*, then turns
and looks on *Arvida.*)

Gust. Come, come, my brothers all! Yes, I will
To be the sum of every title to ye, [strive
And you shall be my sire, my friend reviv'd,
My sister, mother, all that's kind and dear;
For so Gustavus holds ye. Oh! I will
Of private passions all my soul divest,
And take my dearer country to my breast.
To public good transfer each fond desire,
And clasp my Sweden, with a lover's fire.
Well pleas'd, the weight of all her burdens bear;
Dispense all pleasure, but engross all care.
Still quick to find, to feel, my people's woes,
And wake, that millions may enjoy repose.

[Exeunt.]

ISABELLA;
OR, THE FATAL MARRIAGE:
A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY THOMAS SOUTHERN.



Act IV. Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

COUNT BALDWIN
BIRON
BIRON'S SON
CARLOS

VILLEROY
SAMPSON
MAURICE
EGMONT

BELFORD
SANCHO
JUAN
BRAVOS

OFFICERS
ISABELLA
LADIES
NURSE

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter VILLEROY and CARLOS.

Car. This constancy of your's will establish an immortal reputation among the women.

Vil. If it would establish me with Isabella—

Car. Follow her, follow her: Troy town was wou at last.

Vil. I have followed her these seven years, and now but live in hopes.

Car. But live in hopes! Why, hope is the ready road, the lover's baiting-place; and, for aught you know, but one stage short of the possession of your mistress.

Vil. But my hopes, I fear, are more of my own making than her's; and proceed rather from my wishes, than any encouragement she has given me.

Car. That I can't tell: the sex is very various; there are no certain measures to be prescribed or followed, in making our approaches to the women. All that we have to do, I think, is to attempt them in the weakest part. Press them but hard, and they will all fall under the necessity of a surrender at last. That favour comes at once; and, sometimes, when we least expect it.

Vil. I shall be glad to find it so. I'm going to visit her.

Car. What interest a brother-in-law can have with her, depend upon.

Vil. I know your interest, and I thank you.

Car. You are prevented; see, the mourner comes: She weeps, as seven years were seven hours;

So fresh, unfading is the memory
Of my poor brother's, Biron's, death;
I leave you to your opportunity. *[Exit Vil.*
Though I have taken care to root her from our house,
I would transplant her into Villeroy's.
There is an evil fate that waits upon her,
To which I wish him wedded—only him:
His upstart family, with haughty brow,
(Though Villeroy and myself are seeming friends)
Looks down upon our house; his sister too,
Whose hand I ask'd, and was with scorn refus'd,
Lives in my breast, and fires me to revenge.
They bend this way.
Perhaps, at last, she seeks my father's doors;
They shall be shut, and he prepared to give
The beggar and her brat a cold reception.
That boy's an adder in my path:—they come;
I'll stand apart, and watch their motions. *[Exit.*

Enter VILLEROY and ISABELLA, with her Child.

Isa. Why do you follow me? you know I am
A bankrupt every way; too far engaged
Ever to make return: I own you have been
More than a brother to me, my friend:
And, at a time when friends are found no more,
A friend to my misfortunes.

Vil. I must be
Always your friend.

Isa. I have known, and found you
Truly my friend: and would I could be your's;
But the unfortunate cannot be friends:
Pray begone,
Take warning, and be happy.

Vil. Happiness!

There's none for me without you.
What serve the goods of fortune for? To raise
My hopes, that you, at last, will share them with me.

Isa. I must not hear you.

Vil. Thus, at this awful distance, I have served
A seven years' bondage. Do I call it bondage,
When I can never wish to be redeem'd?
No, let me rather linger out a life
Of expectation, that you may be mine,
Than be restored to the indifference
Of seeing you, without this pleasing pain:
I've lost myself, and never would be found,
But in these arms.

Isa. Oh, I have heard all this!—
But must no more—the charmer is no more:
My buried husband rises in the face
Of my dear boy, and chides me for my stay:
Canst thou forgive me, child?

Vil. What can I say?

The arguments that make against my hopes
Prevail upon my heart, and fix me more;
When yet a virgin, free, and undispos'd,
I loved, but saw you only with mine eyes;
I could not reach the beauties of your soul:
I have since lived in contemplation,
And long experience of your growing goodness:
What then was passion, is my judgment now,
Through all the several changes of your life,
Confirm'd and settled in adoring you.

Isa. Nay then I must begone. If you are my
friend,

If you regard my little interest,
No more of this.

I'm going to my father; he needs not an excuse.
To use me ill: pray leave me to the trial.

Vil. I'm only born to be what you would have me,
The creature of your power, and must obey,
In every thing obey you. I am going;
But all good fortune go along with you.

Isa. I shall need all your wishes. (*Knocks.*)
Lock'd! and fast!

Where is the charity that used to stand
In our forefathers' hospitable days
At great men's doors,
Like the good angel of the family,
With open arms taking the needy in,
To feed and clothe, to comfort and relieve them?
Now even their gates are shut against their poor.
(*She knocks again.*)

Enter SAMPSON.

Samp. Well, what's to do now, I trow? You
knock as loud as if you were invited; and that's
more than I heard of; but I can tell you, you may
look twice about for a welcome in a great man's
family, before you find it, unless you bring it along
with you.

Isa. I hope I bring my welcome along with me:
Is your lord at home?

Samp. My lord at home!

Isa. Count Baldwin lives here still?

Samp. Ay, ay; Count Baldwin does live here;
and I am his porter; but what's that to the purpose,
good woman, of my lord's being at home?

Isa. Why, don't you know me, friend?

Samp. Not I, not I, mistress; I may have seen
you before, or so; but men of employment must
forget their acquaintance; especially such as we
are never to be the better for. (*Going to shut the
door.*)

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Handsomer words would become you,
and mend your manners, Sampson: do you know
who you prate to?

Isa. I am glad you know me, nurse.

Nurse. Marry, heav'n forbid! madam, that I
hould ever forget you, or my little jewel: pray

go in. (*Isabella goes in with her child.*) Now, my
blessing go along with you, wherever you go, or
whatever you are about. Fie! Sampson, how could'st
thou be such a Saracen? A Turk would have been
a better Christian, than to have done so barbarously
by so good a lady.

Samp. Why, look you, nurse, I know you of old:
by your good will, you would have a finger and
everybody's pie; but mark the end on't! if I am
called to account about it, I know what I have to
say.

Nurse. Marry come up here! say your pleasure,
and spare not. Refuse his eldest son's widow and
poor child the comfort of seeing him? She does not
trouble him so often.

Samp. Not that I am against it, nurse, but we are
but servants, you know; we must have no likings,
but our lord's, and must do as we are ordered. But
what is the business, nurse? You have been in the
family before I came into the world: what's the
reason, pray, that this daughter-in-law, who has so
good a report in everybody's mouth, is so little set
by by my lord?

Nurse. Why, I tell you, Sampson, more or less;
I'll tell the truth, that's my way, you know, with-
out adding or diminishing.

Samp. Ay, marry, nurse!

Nurse. My lord's eldest son, Biron by name,
the son of his bosom, and the son that he would
have loved best, if he had as many as king Pyramus
of Troy: this Biron, as I was saying, was a lovely
sweet gentleman; and, indeed, nobody could blame
his father for loving him; he was a son for the king
of Spain, heaven bless him! for I was his nurse.
But now I come to the point, Sampson; this Biron,
without asking the advice of his friends, hand over
head, as young men will have their vagaries, not
having the fear of his father before his eyes, as I
may say, willfully marries this Isabella.

Samp. How, willfully! he should have had her
consent, methinks.

Nurse. No, willfully marries her; and, which was
worse, after she had settled all her fortune upon a
nunnery, which she broke out of to run away with
him. They say they had the church's forgiveness,
but I had rather it had been his father's.

Samp. Why, in good truth, I think our young
master was not in the wrong, but in marrying with-
out a portion.

Nurse. That was the quarrel, I believe, Sampson:
upon this, my old lord would never see him; dis-
inherited him; took his younger brother, Carlos,
into favour, whom he never cared for before; and,
at last, forced Biron to go to the siege of Candy,
where he was killed.

Samp. Alack-a-day, poor gentleman!

Nurse. For which my old lord hates her, as if
she had been the cause of his going there.

Samp. Alas, poor lady! she has suffered for it;
she has lived a great while a widow.

Nurse. A great while, indeed, for a young woman,
Sampson.

Samp. Gad so! here they come; I won't venture
to be seen. (*They retire.*)

Enter COUNT BALDWIN, followed by ISABELLA and
her Child.

C. Bald. Whoever of your friends directed you,
Misguided and abused you—there's your way:
What could you expect from me?

Isa. Oh! I have nothing to expect on earth!

But misery is very apt to talk:
I thought I might be heard.

C. Bald. What can you say?

Is there in eloquence, can there be in words
A recompensing pow'r, a remedy,
A reparation of the injuries,
The great calamities, that you have brought
On me and mine? You have destroyed those hopes

I fondly raised, through my declining life,
To rest my age upon; and most undone me.

Isa. I have undone myself too.

C. Bald. Speak it again;

Say still you are undone; and I will hear you,
With pleasure hear you.

Isa. Would my ruin please you?

C. Bald. Beyond all other pleasures.

Isa. Then you are pleased, for I am most undone.

C. Bald. I pray'd but for revenge, and heav'n has heard,

And sent it to my wishes: these grey hairs
Would have gone down in sorrow to the grave,
Which you have dug for me, without the thought,
The thought of leaving you more wretched here.

Isa. Indeed I am most wretched.

I lost with Biron all the joys of life:

But now its last supporting means are gone.

All the kind helps that heav'n in pity raised,

In charitable pity to our wants,

At last have left us: now bereft of all,

But this last trial of a cruel father,

To save us both from sinking. Oh, my child!

Kneel with me, knock at nature in his heart:

Let the resemblance of a once-loved son

Speak in this little one, who never wrong'd you,

And plead the fatherless and widow's cause.

Oh! if you ever hope to be forgiven,

As you will need to be forgiven too,

Forget our faults, that heaven may pardon your's.

C. Bald. How dare you mention heav'n? Call to mind

Your perjured vows; your plighted, broken faith

To heav'n, and all things holy; were you not

Devoted, wedded to a life recluse,

The sacred habit on, profess'd and sworn,

A votary for ever? Can you think

The sacrilegious wretch, that robs the shrine,

Is thunder-proof?

Isa. There, there, began my woes.

Oh! had I never seen my Biron's face,

Had he not tempted me, I had not fall'n,

But still continued innocent and free

Of a bad world, which only he had pow'r

To reconcile, and make me try again.

C. Bald. Your own inconstancy

Reconciled you to the world:

He had no hand to bring you back again,

But what you gave him. Circe, you prevail'd

Upon his honest mind; and what he did

Was first inspired by you.

Isa. Not for myself, for I am past the hopes

Of being heard, but for this innocent;

And then I never will disturb you more.

C. Bald. I almost pity the unhappy child:

But being your's—

Isa. Look on him as your son's;

And let his part in him answer for mine.

Oh! save, defend him, save him from the wrongs

That fall upon the poor!

C. Bald. It touches me,

And I will save him. But to keep him safe,

Never come near him more.

Isa. What! take him from me?

No, we must never part; 'tis the last hold

Of comfort I have left; and when he fails

All goes along with him: Oh! could you be

The tyrant to divorce life from my life?

I live but in my child.

No, let me pray in vain, and beg my bread

From door to door, to feed his daily wants,

Rather than always lose him.

C. Bald. Then have your child, and feed him
with your prayers. Away!

Isa. Then heaven have mercy on me!

[*Exit, with Child.*]

C. Bald. You rascal slave, what do I keep you
for? How came this woman in?

Samp. Why, indeed, my lord, I did as good as
tell her before, my thoughts upon the matter.

C. Bald. Did you so, sir? Now, then, tell her
mine; tell her I sent you to her. There's one more
to provide for. Begone, go all together. Take any
road but this to beg or starve in, but never, never
see me more. [*He drives them off before him.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter VILLEROY and CARLOS, meeting.

Vil. My friend, I fear to ask—but Isabella—
The lovely widow's tears, her orphan's cries,
Thy father must feel for them? No; I read,
I read their cold reception in thine eyes.
Thou pitiest them, though Baldwin—but I spare him
For Carlos' sake; thou art no son of his.
There needs not this to endear thee more to me.

[*Embrace.*]

Car. My Villeroy, the fatherless, the widow,
Are terms not understood within these gates.
You must forgive him; sir, he thinks this woman
Is Biron's fate, that hurried him to death:
I must not think on't, lest my friendship stagger.
My friend's, my sister's mutual advantage,
Have reconciled my bosom to its task.

Vil. Advantage! think not I intend to raise
An interest from Isabella's wrongs.

Your father may have interested ends

In her undoing; but my heart has none;

Her happiness must be my interest,

And that I would restore.

Car. Why, so I mean.

These hardships, that my father lays upon her,

I'm sorry for, and wish I could prevent;

But he will have his way. Since there's no hope

From her prosperity, her change of fortune

May alter the condition of her thoughts,

And make for you.

Vil. She is above her fortune.

Car. Try her again. Women commonly love
According to the circumstances they are in.

Vil. Common women may.

No, though I live but in the hopes of her,

And languish for th' enjoyment of those hopes;

I'd rather pine in a consuming want

Of what I wish, than have the blessing mine,

From any reason but consenting love.

Oh! let me never have it to remember,

I could betray her coldly to comply:

When a clear generous choice bestows her on me,

I know to value the unequal'd gift:

I would not have it, but to value it.

Car. Take your own way; remember, what I
offer'd

Came from a friend.

Vil. I understand it so.

I'll serve her for herself, without the thought

Of a reward.

[*Exit.*]

Car. Agree that point between you.

If you marry her any way, you do my business.

I know him: what his generous soul intends

Ripens my plots. I'll first to Isabella.

I must keep up appearances with her too. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A House.*

ISABELLA and Nurse discovered. *Isabella's Son*
at play.

Isa. Sooner or later, all things pass away,
And are no more. The beggar and the king,
With equal steps, tread forward to their end;
The reconciling grave

Swallows distinction first, that made us foes;

Then all alike lie down in peace together.

When will that hour of peace arrive for me?

In heav'n I shall find it. Not in heaven,

If my old tyrant father can dispose

Of things above. But there his interest
May be as poor as mine, and want a friend
As much as I do here. (Weeping.)

Nurse. Good madam, be comforted.

Isa. Do I deserve to be this outcast wretch,
Abandon'd thus, and lost? But 'tis my lot,
The will of heav'n, and I must not complain:
I will not for myself: let me bear all
The violence of your wrath; but spare my child;
Let not my sins be visited on him.
They are; they must; a general ruin falls
On every thing about me: thou art lost,
Poor nurse, by being near me.

Nurse. I can work, or beg, to do you service.

Isa. Could I forget

What I have been, I might the better bear
What I am destined to. Wild, hurrying thoughts
Start every way from my distracted soul,
To find out hope, and only meet despair.
What answer have I?

Enter SAMPSON.

Samp. Why, truly, very little to the purpose:
like a Jew as he is, he says you have had more
already than the jewels are worth; he wishes you
would rather think of redeeming them, than expect
any more money upon them. [Exit.]

Isa. So: poverty at home, and debts abroad!

My present fortune bad; my hopes yet worse!
What will become of me?

This ring is all I have left of value now;
'Twas given me by my husband; his first gift
Upon our marriage: I've always kept it
With my best care, the treasure next my life:
And now but part with it to support life,
Which only can be dearer. Take it, nurse,
'Twill stop the cries of hunger for a time;
Take care of it;

Manage it as the last remaining friend
That would relieve us. [Exit Nurse.] Heav'n can
only tell

Where we shall find another. My dear boy!
The labour of his birth was lighter to me
Than of my fondness now; my fears for him
Are more, than in that hour of hovering death,
They could be for myself. He minds me not;
His little sports have taken up his thoughts.
Oh, may they never feel the pangs of mine!
Thinking will make me mad; why must I think,
When no thought brings me comfort?

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Oh, madam! you are utterly ruined and
 undone; your creditors of all kinds are come in
upon you; they have mustered up a regiment of
rogues, that are come to plunder your house, and
seize upon all you have in the world; they are
below. What will you do, madam?

Isa. Do! nothing! no, for I am born to suffer.

Enter CARLOS.

Car. Oh, sister! can I call you by that name,
And be the son of this inhuman man,
Inveterate to your ruin?
Do not think I am akin to his barbarity.
I must abhor my father's usage of you.
Can you think

Of any way that I may serve you in?
But what enrages most my sense of grief,
My sorrow for your wrongs, is, that my father,
Foreknowing well the storm that was to fall,
Has order'd me not to appear for you.

Isa. I thank your pity; my poor husband fell
For disobeying him; do not you stay
To venture his displeasure too for me.

Car. You must resolve on something. [Exit.]

Isa. Let my fate

Determine for me; I shall be prepared:
The worst that can befall me is to die.

Hark, they are coming: let the torrent roar:
It can but overwhelm me in its fall;
And life and death are now alike to me.

[Exeunt, the Nurse leading the Child.]

SCENE III.—*Anti-chamber in Isabella's house.*

CARLOS and VILLEROY, with Officers.

Vil. No farther violence—

The debt in all is but four thousand crowns;
Were it ten times the sum, I think you know
My fortune very well can answer it.

You have my word for this: I'll see you paid.

Offi. That's as much as we can desire; so we
have the money, no matter whence it comes.

Vil. To-morrow you shall have it.

Car. Thus far all's well.

And now my sister comes to crown the work.

Isa. (Within.) Where are those rav'ning blood-
hounds, that pursue
In a full cry, gaping to swallow me? (Aside.)

Enter ISABELLA, Nurse and Child.

I meet your rage, and come to be devour'd;
Say, which way are you to dispose of me;
To dungeons, darkness, death?

Car. Have patience.

Isa. Patience!

Offi. You'll excuse us, we are but in our office.
Debts must be paid.

Isa. My death will pay you all. (Distractedly.)
Offi. While there is law to be had, people will
have their own.

Vil. 'Tis very fit they should; but pray be
gone.

To-morrow certainly— [Exeunt Officers.]

Isa. What of to-morrow?

Must I be reserved for fresh afflictions?

Vil. For long happiness of life, I hope.

Isa. There is no hope for me.

The load grows light when we resolve to bear:
I'm ready for my trial.

Car. Pray, be calm,

And know your friends.

Isa. My friends? Have I a friend?

Car. A faithful friend; in your extremest need,
Villeroiy came in to save you.

Isa. Save me! How?

Car. By satisfying all your creditors.

Isa. Which way? for what?

Vil. Let me be understood,

And then condemn me: you have given me leave

To be your friend; and in that only name

I now appear before you. I could wish

There had been no occasion of a friend,

Because I know you hate to be obliged;

And still more loath to be obliged by me.

Isa. 'Twas that I would avoid. (Aside.)

Vil. I'm most unhappy that my services

Can be suspected to design upon you;

I have no further ends than to redeem you

From fortune's wrongs; to shew myself, at last,

What I have long profess'd to be, your friend:

Allow me that; and to convince you more,

That I intend only your interest,

Forgive what I have done, and in amends

(If that can make you any, that can please you)

I'll tear myself for ever from my hopes,

Stille this flaming passion in my soul,

And mention my unlucky love no more.

Isa. This generosity will ruin me. (Aside.)

Vil. Nay, if the blessing of my looking on you

Disturbs your peace, I will do all I can

To keep away, and never see you more. (Going.)

Car. You must not go.

Vil. Could Isabella speak

Those few short words, I should be rooted here,

And never move but upon her commands.

Car. Speak to him, sister; do not throw away
A fortune that invites you to be happy.
In your extremity he begs your love;
And has deserved it nobly. Think upon
Your lost condition, helpless and alone.
Though now you have a friend, the time must
come

That you will want one; him you may secure
To be a friend, a father, husband to you.

Isa. A husband!

Car. You have discharged your duty to the
dead,

And to the living: 'tis a wilfulness
Not to give way to your necessities,
That force you to this marriage.

Nurse. What must become of this poor innocence?
(*To the Child.*)

Car. He wants a father to protect his youth,
And rear him up to virtue: you must bear
The future blame, and answer to the world,
When you refuse the easy, honest means
Of taking care of him.

Isa. Do not think I need
Your reasons, to confirm my gratitude.—
I have a soul that's truly sensible
Of your great worth, and busy to contrive,
If possible, to make you a return. (*To Villeroy.*)
Vil. Oh, easily possible!

Isa. It cannot be your way: my pleasures are
Buried, and cold in my dead husband's grave;
And I should wrong the truth, myself, and you,
To say that I can ever love again.
I owe this declaration to myself:
But as a proof that I owe all to you,
If, after what I have said, you can resolve
To think me worth your love—Where am I
going?

You cannot think it; 'tis impossible.

Vil. Impossible!

Isa. You should not ask me now, nor should I
grant;

I am so much obliged, that to consent
Would want a name to recommend the gift:
'Twould shew me poor, indebted, and compell'd,
Designing, mercenary: and I know
You would not wish to think I could be bought.

Vil. Be bought! where is the price that can
pretend

To bargain for you? Not in fortune's power.
The joys of heaven, and love, must be bestow'd;
They are not to be sold, and cannot be deserv'd.

Isa. Some other time I'll hear you on this sub-
ject.

Vil. Nay, then there is no time so fit for me.

(*Following her.*)

Since you consent to hear me, hear me now;
That you may grant: you are above

(*Takes her hand.*)

The little forms which circumscribe your sex;
We differ but in time, let that be mine.

Isa. You think fit

To get the better of me, and you shall;
Since you will have it so—I will be yours.

Vil. I take you at your word.

Isa. I give you all,
My hand: and would I had a heart to give:
But if it ever can return again,
'Tis wholly yours.

Vil. Oh ecstasy of joy!
Leave that to me. If all my services,
If all that man can fondly say or do,
Can beget love, love shall be born again.
Oh, Carlos! now my friend, and brother too:
And, nurse, I have eternal thanks for thee.

(*Exeunt Nurse and Child.*)

This night you must be mine,
Let me command in this, and all my life
Shall be devoted to you.

Isa. On your word,
Never to press me to put off these weeds,
Which best become my melancholy thoughts,
You shall command me.

Vil. Witness, heaven and earth,
Against my soul, when I do any thing
To give you a disquiet.

Car. I long to wish you joy.

Vil. You'll be a witness of my happiness?

Car. For once I'll be my sister's father,
And give her to you.

Vil. Next my Isabella,
Be near my heart: I am for ever yours. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Count Baldwin's House.

Enter COUNT BALDWIN and CARLOS.

C. Bald. Married to Villeroy, say'st thou?

Car. Yes, my lord.

Last night the priest perform'd his holy office,
And made them one.

C. Bald. Misfortune join them!
And may her violated vows pull down
A lasting curse, a constancy of sorrow
On both their heads,

Car. Soon he'll hate her;
Though warm and violent in his raptures now,
When full enjoyment palls his sicken'd sense,
And reason with satiety returns,
Her cold constrain'd acceptance of his hand
Will gall his pride, which (though of late o'er-

power'd
By stronger passions) will, as they grow weak,
Rise in full force, and pour its vengeance on her.

C. Bald. Now, Carlos, take example to thy aid;
Let Biron's disobedience, and the curse
He took into his bosom, prove a warning,
A monitor to thee, to keep thy duty
Firm and unshaken.

Car. May those rankling wounds,
Which Biron's disobedience gave my father,
Be heal'd by me!

C. Bald. With tears I thank thee, Carlos;
And may'st thou ever feel those inward joys,
Thy duty gives thy father; but, my son,
We must not let resentment choke our justice;
'Tis fit that Villeroy know he has no claim
From me, in right of Isabella, Biron,
(Whose name brings tears) when wedded to this
woman,

By me abandon'd, sunk the little fortune
His uncle left, in vanity and fondness:
I am possess'd of those your brother's papers,
Which now are Villeroy's, and, should aught re-

main,
In justice it is his; from me to him
You shall convey them—follow me, and take them.
[*Exit Count Baldwin.*]

Car. Yes, I will take them; but ere I part with
them,

I will be sure my interest will not suffer
By these his high, refined, fantastic notions
Of equity and right. What a paradox
Is man! My father here, who boasts his honour,
And even but now was warm in praise of justice,
Can steel his heart against the widow's tears,
And infant's wants: the widow and the infant
Of Biron; of his son, his fav'rite son.
'Tis ever thus, weak minds, who court opinion,
And dead to virtuous feeling, hide their wants
In pompous affectation. Now to Villeroy—
Ere this his friends, for he is much belov'd,
Crowd to his house, and with their nuptial songs
Awake the wedded pair: I'll join the throng,
And in my face, at least, bear joy and friendship.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A Ball Room in Villeroy's House. A Band of Music, with MAURICE, and other friends of Villeroy.*

Enter a Servant,

Maur. Where's your master, my good friend?

Serv. Within, sir,

Preparing for the welcome of his friends,

Maur. Acquaint him we are here: vet stay,
[*Exit Servant.*]

The voice of music gently shall surprise him,
And breathe our salutations to his ear.
Strike up a strain to Villeroy's happiness,
To Isabella's—But he's here already.

Enter VILLEROY.

Vil. My friends,

Welcome all.

What means this preparation? (*Seeing the Music.*)

Maur. A slight token

Of our best wishes for your growing happiness.

You must permit our friendships—

Vil. You oblige me—

Maur. But your lovely bride,
That wonder of her sex, she must appear,
And add new brightness to this happy morning.

Vil. She is not yet prepared; and let her will,
My worthiest friend, determine her behaviour;
To win, and not to force her disposition,
Has been my seven years' task. She will anon
Speak welcome to you all. The music stays.

(*Villeroy and his friends seat themselves.*)

EPITHALAMIUM.

Woman. Let all, let all be gay,
Begin the rapturous lay,
Let mirth, let mirth and joy,
Each happy hour employ
Of this fair bridal day.

Man. Ye love-wing'd hours, your flight,
Your downy flight prepare,
Bring every soft delight
To sooth the brave and fair.
Hail, happy pair, thus in each other bless'd;
Be ever free from care, of ev'ry joy possessor'd!

Vil. I thank you for this proof of your affection:
I am so much transported with the thoughts
Of what I am, I know not what I do.
My Isabella!—but, possessing her,
Who would not lose himself?
Where's Carlos now?
Methinks I am but half myself without him.
Maur. This is wonderful! married, and yet in raptures.

Vil. Oh, when you all get wives, and such as mine,

(If such another woman can be found)
You will rave too, dote on the dear content,
And prattle in their praise out of all bounds.
I cannot speak my bliss! 'Tis in my head,
'Tis in my heart, and takes up all my soul;
The labour of my fancy.

Enter ISABELLA and Child.

My Isabella! Oh, the joy of my heart,
That I have leave at last to call you mine;
But let me look upon you, view you well.
This is a welcome gallantry indeed!
I durst not ask, but it was kind to grant,
Just at this time: Dispensing with your dress
Upon this second day to greet our friends.

Isa. Black might be ominous;
I would not bring ill luck along with me.
Vil. Oh! if your melancholy thoughts could change

With shifting of your dress—Time has done cures
Incredible this way, and may again.

Isa. I could have wish'd, if you had thought it fit
Our marriage had not been so public.

Vil. Do not you grudge me my excess of love;
That was a cause it could not be conceal'd:
Besides, 'twould injure the opinion
I have of my good fortune, having you;
And lessen it in other people's thoughts.

Enter CARLOS.

My Carlos too, who came in to the support
Of our bad fortune, has an honest right,
In better times, to share the good with us.

Car. I come to claim that right, to share your
joy;
To wish you joy; and find it in myself;
For a friend's happiness reflects a warmth,
A kindly comfort, into every heart
That is not envious.

Vil. He must be a friend indeed,
Who is not envious of a happiness
So absolute as mine: there's the cause;
Thank her for what I am, and what must be:

(*Music flourish.*)

I see you mean a second entertainment.
My dearest Isabella, you must hear
The raptures of my friends; from thee they spring;
Thy virtues have diffused themselves around,
And made them all as happy as myself.

Isa. I feel their favours with a grateful heart,
And willingly comply.

DUETT.

Take the gifts the gods intend ye;
Grateful meet the proffer'd joy;
Truth and honour shall attend ye;
Charms that ne'er can change or cloy.

Oh, the raptures of possessing,
Taking beauty to thy arms!
Oh, the joy, the lasting blessing,
When with virtue beauty charms!
Purer flames shall gently warm ye;
Love and honour both shall charm thee.

Car. You'll take my advice another time, sister.
Vil. What have you done? A rising smile
Stole from her thoughts, just redd'ning on her
cheek,
And you have dash'd it.

Car. I'm sorry for't.

Vil. My friends, you will forgive me, when I
own,

I must prefer her peace to all the world?
Come, Isabella, let us lead the way;
Within we'll speak our welcome to our friends,
And crown the happy festival with joy. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A Room.*

Enter SAMPSON and Nurse.

Samp. Ay, marry, nurse, here's a master, indeed! He'll double our wages for us. If he comes on as fast with my lady, as he does with his servants, we are all in the way to be well pleased.

Nurse. He's in a rare humour; if she be in as good a one—

Samp. If she be? marry, we may e'en say, they have begot it upon one another.

Nurse. Well; why don't you go back again to your old Count? You thought your throat cut, I warrant you, to be turned out of a nobleman's service.

Samp. For the future, I will never serve in a house where the master or mistress of it lie single; they are out of humour with every body when they are not pleased themselves. Now, this matrimony makes every thing go well. There's mirth and money stirring about when those matters go as they should do.

Nurse. Indeed, this matrimony, Sampson—

Samp. Ah, nurse! this matrimony is a very good thing; but what, now my lady is married, I hope we shall have company come to the house: there's something always coming from one gentleman or other upon those occasions, if my lady loves company. This feasting looks well, nurse.

Nurse. Odso, my master! we must not be seen.
[*Exeunt.*]

Enter VILLEROY, with a letter, and ISABELLA.

Vil. I must away this moment—see his letter, Sign'd by himself. Alas! he could no more; My brother's desperate, and cannot die in peace, but in my arms.

Isa. So suddenly!

Vil. Suddenly taken, on the road to Brussels, To do us honour, love; unfortunate! Thus to be torn from thee, and all those charms, Though cold to me and dead.

Isa. I'm sorry for the cause.

Vil. Oh! could I think,

Could I persuade myself, that your concern For me, or for my absence, were the spring, The fountain of these melancholy thoughts, My heart would dance, spite of the sad occasion, And be a gay companion in my journey;
But—

Enter CARLOS.

My good Carlos, why have you left my friends?

Car. They are departed home. They saw some sudden melancholy news Had stolen the lively colour from your cheek— You had withdrawn, the bride, alarm'd, had follow'd;

Mere ceremony had been constraint; and this Good-natured rudeness—

Vil. Was the more obliging. There, Carlos, is the cause. (*Gives the letter.*)

Car. Unlucky accident! Th' archbishop of Malines, your worthy brother— With him to-night! Sister, will you permit it?

Vil. It must be so.

Isa. You hear it must be so.

Vil. Oh, that it must.

Car. To leave your bride so soon!
Vil. But having the possession of my love, I am the better able to support My absence in the hopes of my return.

Car. Your stay will be but short?

Vil. It will seem long. The longer that my Isabella sighs: I shall be jealous of this rival grief, It takes so full possession of thy heart, There is not room enough for mighty love.

Enter Servant, bows, and exit.

My horses wait; farewell, my love! You, Carlos, Will act a brother's part, till I return, And be the guardian here. All, all I have That's dear to me, I give up to your care.

Car. And I receive her as a friend and brother.

Vil. Nay, stir not, love, for the night air is cold, And the dews fall.—Here be our end of parting; Carlos will see me to my horse. [*Exit with Carlos.*]

Isa. Oh, may thy brother better all thy hopes. Adieu!

A sudden melancholy bakes my blood!
Forgive me, Villeroy; I do not find That cheerful gratitude thy service asks; Yet, if I know my heart, and sure I do, 'Tis not averse from honest obligation. I'll to my chamber, and to bed; my mind, My harass'd mind is weary. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter BIRON and BELFORD.

Bir. The longest day will have an end; we are got home at last.

Bel. We have got our legs at liberty; and liberty is home, where'er we go; though mine lies most in England.

Bir. Pray, let me call this yours; for what I can command in Brussels, you shall find your own. I have a father here, who, perhaps, after seven years' absence, and costing him nothing in my travels, may be glad to see me. You know my story; how does my disguise become me?

Bel. Just as you would have it; 'tis natural, and will conceal you.

Bir. To-morrow you shall be sure to find me here, as early as you please. This is the house; you have observed the street.

Bel. I warrant you; your directions will carry me to my lodgings. [*Exit.*]

Bir. Good night, my friend. The long-expected moment is arrived; And if all here is well, my past sorrows Will only heighten my excess of joy; And nothing will remain to wish or hope for.

Enter SAMPSON.

Sam. Who's there? What would you have?

Bir. Is your lady at home, friend?

Samp. Why, truly, friend, it is my employment to answer impertinent questions; but for my lady's being at home, or no, that's just as my lady pleases.

Bir. But how shall I know whether it pleases her or no?

Samp. Why, if you'll take my word for it, you may carry your errand back again; she never pleases to see anybody at this time of night, that she does not know; and by your dress and appearance I am sure you must be a stranger to her.

Bir. But I have business; and you don't know how that may please her.

Samp. Nay, if you have business, she is the best judge whether your business will please her or no; therefore I will proceed in my office, and know of my lady whether or no, she is pleased to be at home, or no. (*Going.*)

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Who's that you are so busy withal? Methinks you might have found an answer in fewer words; but, Sampson, you love to hear yourself prate sometimes, as well as your betters, that I must say for you. Let me come to him. Who would you speak with, stranger?

Bir. With you, mistress, if you could help me to speak to your lady.

Nurse. Yes, sir, I can help you in a civil way; but can nobody do your business but my lady?

Bir. Not so well; but if you carry her this ring, she'll know my business better.

Nurse. There's no love-letter in it, I hope; you look like a civil gentleman. In an honest way, I may bring you an answer. [*Exit.*]

Bir. My old nurse, only a little older; they say the tongue grows always; mercy on me! then her's is seven years longer since I left her. Yet there is something in these servants' folly pleases me; the cautious conduct of the family appears, and speaks in their impertinence. Well, mistress,

Re-enter Nurse.

Nurse. I have deliver'd your ring, sir. Pray heaven, you bring no bad news along with you.

Bir. Quite contrary, I hope.

Nurse. Nay, I hope so too; but my lady was very much surprised when I gave it her. Sir, I am but a servant, as a body may say; but if you'll walk in, that I may shut the doors, (for we keep very orderly hours;) I can shew you into the parlour, and help you to an answer, perhaps as soon as those that are wiser. [*Exit.*]

Bir. I'll follow you.
Now all my spirits hurry to my heart,
And every sense has taken the alarm
At this approaching interview!
Heavens! how I tremble!

[Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Chamber.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. I've heard of witches, magic spells, and charms,
That have made nature start from her old course;
The sun has been eclipsed, the moon drawn down
From her career, still paler, and subdued
To the abuses of this under world.
Now I believe all possible. This ring,
This little ring, with necromantic force,
Has rais'd the ghost of pleasure to my fears;
Conjur'd the sense of honour, and of love,
Into such shapes, they fright me from myself!
I dare not think of them.

*Enter Nurse.**Nurse.* Madam, the gentleman's below.

Isa. I had forgot, pray let me speak with him;
[Exit Nurse.]

This ring was the first present of my love
To Biron, my first husband; I must blush
To think I have a second. Biron died
(Still to my loss) at Candy; there's my hope.
Oh, do I live to hope that he died there?
It must be so; he's dead, and this ring left,
By his last breath, to some known faithful friend,
To bring me back again;
That's all I have to trust to.

Enter BIRON. (Isabella looking at him.)

My fears were woman's—I have view'd him all;
And let me, let me say it to myself,
I live again, and rise but from his tomb.

Bir. Have you forgot me quite?*Isa.* Forgot you!*Bir.* Then farewell my disguise, and my misfortunes!

My Isabella!

*(He goes to her, she shrieks, and faints.)**Isa.* Ha!*Bir.* Oh! come again;

Thy Biron summons thee to life and love;

Thy once-loved, ever-loving husband calls—

Thy Biron speaks to thee.

Excess of love and joy, for my return,
Has overpower'd her. I was to blame
To take thy sex's softness unprepared;
But sinking thus, thus dying in my arms,
This ecstasy has made my welcome more
Than words could say. Words may be counter-
feit,

False coin'd, and current only from the tongue,
Without the mind; but passion's in the soul,
And always speaks the heart.

Isa. Where have I been? Why do you keep him from me?

I know his voice; my life, upon the wing,
Hears the soft lure that brings me back again;
'Tis he himself, my Biron.

Do I hold you fast,

Never to part again?

If I must fall, death's welcome in these arms.

Bir. Live ever in these arms.*Isa.* But pardon me,

Excuse the wild disorder of my soul;

The joy, the strange surprising joy of seeing you,
Of seeing you again, distracted me.*Bir.* Thou everlasting goodness!*Isa.* Answer me:What hand of Providence has brought you back
To your own home again?

O, tell me all,

For every thought confounds me.

Bir. My best life! at leisure, all.

Isa. We thought you dead; kill'd at the siege
of Candy.

Bir. There I fell among the dead;
But hopes of life reviving from my wounds,
I was preserved but to be made a slave.
I often writ to my hard father, but never had
An answer; I writ to thee too.

Isa. What a world of woe

Had been prevented but in hearing from you!

Bir. Alas! thou could'st not help me.*Isa.* You do not know how much I could have
done;

At least, I'm sure I could have suffer'd all;

I would have sold myself to slavery,
Without redemption; giv'n up my child,
The dearest part of me, to basest wants.

Bir. My little boy!

Isa. My life, but to have heard
You were alive.

Bir. No more, my love; complaining of the past,
We lose the present joy. 'Tis over price,
Of all my pains, that thus we meet again!
I have a thousand things to say to thee.

Isa. 'Would I were past the hearing. (*Aside.*)

Bir. How does my child, my boy, my father, too?
I hear he's living still.

Isa. Well, both, both well;
And may he prove a father to your hopes,
Though we have found him none.

Bir. Come, no more tears.*Isa.* Seven long years of sorrow for your loss,
Have mourn'd with me.

Bir. And all my days to come
Shall be employ'd in a kind recompense
For thy afflictions. Can't I see my boy?

Isa. He's gone to bed; I'll have him brought to
you.*Bir.* To-morrow I shall see him; I want rest
Myself, after this weary pilgrimage.*Isa.* Alas! what shall I get for you?*Bir.* Nothing but rest, my love! To-night I
would not

Be known, if possible, to your family:

I see my nurse is with you; her welcome
Would be tedious at this time;
To-morrow will do better.

Isa. I'll dispose of her, and order every thing
As you would have it. [Exit.]*Bir.* Grant me but life, good Heav'n, and give
the means

To make this wond'rous goodness some amends;

And let me then forget her, if I can.

O! she deserves of me much more than I
Can lose for her, though I again could venture
A father, and his fortune, for her love!

You wretched fathers, blind as fortune all!
Not to perceive, that such a woman's worth
Weighs down the portions you provide your sons.
What is your trash, what all your heaps of gold,
Compared to this, my heartfelt happiness?
What has she, in my absence, undergone!
I must not think of that; it drives me back
Upon myself, the fatal cause of all.

*Enter ISABELLA.**Isa.* I have obey'd your pleasure;
Every thing is ready for you.

Bir. I can want nothing here; possessing thee,
All my desires are carry'd to their aim
Of happiness; there's no room for a wish,
But to continue still this blessing to me:
I know the way, my love. I shall sleep sound.

Isa. Shall I attend you?*Bir.* By no means;

I've been so long a slave to others' pride,
To learn, at least, to wait upon myself;
You'll make haste after?

Isa. I'll but say my prayers, and follow you.

[Exit BIRON.]

My prayers! no, I must never pray again.
Prayers have their blessings, to reward our hopes,
But I have nothing left to hope for more.
What Heav'n could give I have enjoy'd; but now
The baneful planet rises on my fate,
And what's to come is a long life of woe;
Yet I may shorten it—
I promised him to follow—him!
Is he without a name? Biron, my husband—
My husband! Ha! What then is Villeroy?
Oh, Biron, hadst thou come but one day sooner!

(Weeping.)

What's to be done? for something must be done.
Two husbands! married to both,
And yet a wife to neither. Hold, my brain—
Ha! a lucky thought
Works the right way to rid me of them all;
All the reproaches, infamies, and scorns,
That every tongue and finger will find for me.
Let the just horror of my apprehensions
But keep me warm; no matter what can come.
'Tis but a blow, yet I will see him first,
Have a last look, to heighten my despair,
And then to rest for ever.

Re-enter BIRON, meeting her.

Bir. Despair, and rest for ever? Isabella!
These words are far from thy condition;
And be they ever so. I heard thy voice,
And could not bear thy absence; come, my love!
You have stay'd long: there's nothing, nothing sure
Now to despair of in succeeding fate.

Isa. I am contented to be miserable,
But not this way: I've been too long abused,
Let me sleep on, to be deceived no more.

Bir. Look up, my love, I never did deceive thee,
Nor ever can; believe thyself, thy eyes
That first inflamed, and light me to my love,
Those stars, that still must guide me to my joys.

Isa. And me to my undoing: I look round,
And find no path, but leading to the grave.

Bir. I cannot understand thee.

Isa. If marriages
Are made in heav'n, they should be happier:
Why was I made this wretch!

Bir. Has marriage made thee wretched?

Isa. Miserable, beyond the reach of comfort.

Bir. Do I live to hear thee say so?

Isa. Why, what did I say?

Bir. That I have made thee miserable.

Isa. No; you are my only earthly happiness:
And my false tongue belied my honest heart,
If it said otherwise.

Bir. And yet you said,
Your marriage made you miserable.

Isa. I know not what I said;

I've said too much, unless I could speak all.

Bir. Thy words are wild; my eyes, my ears, my
heart,

Were all so full of thee, so much employ'd
In wonder of thy charms, I could not find it;
Now I perceive it plain—

Isa. You'll tell nobody—

Bir. Thou art not well.

Isa. Indeed I am not; I knew that before;
But where's the remedy?

Bir. Rest will relieve thy cares; come, come,
no more;

I'll banish sorrow from thee.

Isa. Banish first the cause.

Bir. Heaven knows how willingly.

Isa. You are the only cause.

Bir. Am I the cause? the cause of thy misfor-
tunes?

Isa. The fatal innocent cause of all my woes.

Bir. Is this my welcome home? This the reward
Of all my miseries, long labours, pains,
And pining wants of wretched slavery,
Which I've outlived, only in hopes of thee?

Am I thus paid at last for deathless love,
And call'd the cause of thy misfortunes now?

Isa. Inquire no more; 'twill be explain'd too
soon. (Going off.)

Bir. What! canst thou leave me too?

Isa. Pray let me go:

For both our sakes, permit me.

Bir. Rack me not with imaginations

Of things impossible. Thou canst not mean

What thou hast said. Yet something she must
mean.

'Twas madness all; compose thyself, my love!

The fit is past; it may be well again:

Let us to bed.

Isa. To bed! You've raised the storm

Will sever us for ever.

Bir. Nothing shall ever part us.

Isa. Oh! there's a fatal story to be told;

Be deaf to that, as heaven has been to me!

When thou shalt hear how much thou hast been
wrong'd,

How wilt thou curse thy fond believing heart,

Tear me from the warm bosom of thy love,

And throw me like a poisonous weed away!

All things have their end.

When I am dead, forgive and pity me. [Exit.

Bir. Stay, my Isabella!

What can she mean? These doubtings will dis-
tract me;

Some hidden mischief soon will burst to light;

I cannot bear it—I must be satisfied—

'Tis she, my wife, must clear this darkness to me.

She shall, if the sad tale at last must come,

She is my fate, and best can speak my doom.

[Exit.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter BIRON and Nurse.

Bir. I know enough: th' important question
Of life or death, fearful to be resolv'd,

Is clear'd to me; I see where it must end,

And need enquire no more. Pray, let me have

Pen, ink, and paper; I must write a while,

And then I'll try to rest—to rest for ever!

[Exit Nurse.

Poor Isabella! now I know the cause,

The cause of thy distress, and cannot wonder

That it has turn'd thy brain. If I look back

Upon thy loss, it will distract me too.

Oh, any curse but this might be remov'd!

But 'twas the rancorous malignity

Of all ill stars combin'd, of heav'n and fate—

Hold, hold my impious tongue. Alas! I rave:

Why do I tax the stars, or heav'n, or fate?

My father and my brother are my fates,

That drive me to my ruin. They knew well

I was alive. Too well they knew how dear

My Isabella—Oh! my wife no more!

How dear her love was to me; yet they stood,

With a malicious silent joy, stoed by,

And saw her give up all my happiness,

The treasure of her beauty to another;

Stood by, and saw her married to another.

Oh, cruel father, and unnatural brother!

I have but to accuse you of my wrongs,

And then to fall forgotten. Sleep or death

Sits heavy on me, and benumbs my pains:

Either is welcome; but the hand of death

Works always sure, and best can close my eyes.

[Exit.

Enter Nurse and SAMPSON.

Nurse. Here's strange things towards, Sampson:
what will be the end of 'em, do you think?

Samp. Nay, marry, nurse, I can't see so far; but
the law, I believe, is on Biron, the first husband's
side.

Nurse. Yes; no question, he has the law on his
side.

Samp. For I have heard, the law says, a woman must be a widow, all out seven years, before she can marry again, according to law.

Nurse. Ay, so it does; and our lady has not been a widow altogether seven years.

Samp. Why, then, nurse, mark my words, and say I told you so: the man must have his wife again, and all will do well.

Nurse. But if our master, Villeroy, comes back again—

Samp. Why, if he does, he is not the first man that has had his wife taken from him.

Nurse. For fear of the worst, will you go to the old Count, and desire him to come as soon as he can; there may be mischief, and he is able to prevent it.

Samp. Now you say something; now I take you, nurse; that will do well, indeed; mischief should be prevented; a little thing will make a quarrel, when there's a woman in the way. I'll about it instantly. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*A Chamber. BIRON asleep on a couch.*

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Asleep so soon? Oh, happy, happy thou, Who thus can sleep! I never shall sleep more. If then to sleep he to be happy, he, Who sleeps the longest, is the happiest; Death is the longest sleep. Oh! have a care; Mischief will thrive apace. Never wake more;

(To BIRON.)

If thou didst ever love thy Isabella;
To-morrow must be doomsday to thy peace.
The sight of him disarms ev'n death itself,
And pleasure grows again
With looking on him. Let me look my last;
But is a look enough for parting love?
Sure I may take a kiss. Where am I going?
Help, help me, Villeroy! Mountains and seas
Divide your love, never to meet my shame.
Hark!

What noise was that? a knocking at the gate!
It may be Villeroy. No matter who.

Bir. Come, Isabella, come.

Isa. Hark! I'm call'd.

Bir. You stay too long from me. [there?]

Isa. A man's voice! in my bed! How came he
Nothing but villany in this bad world.

Here's physic for your fever,

(Draws a dagger, and goes backward to the couch.)

If husbands go to heaven,

Where do they go that send them? This to try—

(Going to stab him, he rises, she shrieks.)

What do I see!

Bir. Isabella, arm'd!

Isa. Against my husband's life!

Bir. Thou didst not think it? [hell,]

Isa. Madness has brought me to the gates of
And there has left me.

Bir. Why dost thou fly me so?

Isa. I cannot bear his sight; distraction, come,
Possess me all.

Shake off my chains, and hasten to my aid!

Thou art my only cure. (Running out.)

Bir. Poor Isabella! she's not in a condition

To give me any comfort, if she could;

Lost to herself, as quickly I shall be

To all the world; Horrors come fast around me;

My mind is overcast; the gathering clouds

Darken the prospect; I approach the brink,

And soon must leap the precipice. Oh! heav'n!

(Kneels.)

While yet my senses are my own, thus kneeling,

Let me implore thy mercies on my wife:

Release her from her pangs; and if my reason,

O'erwhelm'd with miseries, sink before the tem-

pest,

Pardon those crimes despair may bring upon me.

(Rises.)

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Sir, there's somebody at the door must needs speak with you; he won't tell his name.

Bir. I come to him. [Exit Nurse.]

'Tis Belford, I suppose; he little knows
Of what has happen'd here; I wanted him,
Must employ his friendship, and then— [Exit.]

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

Enter CARLOS, PEDRO, and three Ruffians.

Car. A younger brother; I was one too long
Not to prevent my being so again.

We must be sudden. Younger brothers are
But lawful bastards of another name,
Thrust out of their nobility of birth
And family, and tainted into trades.

Shall I be one of them? bow, and retire,
To make more room for the unwieldy here
To play the fool in? No;

But how shall I prevent it? Biron comes
To take possession of my father's love:
'Would that were all! there's a birthright, too,
That he will seize. Besides, if Biron lives,
He will unfold some practices, which I
Cannot well answer, therefore he shall die;
This night must be disposed of: I have means
That will not fail my purpose. Here he comes.

Enter BIRON.

Bir. Ha! am I beset? I live but to revenge me.
(They surround him, fighting; Villeroy enters with two Servants; they rescue him; Carlos and his party fly.)

Vil. How are you, sir? Mortally hurt, I fear.
Take care, and lead him in. [tis]

Bir. I thank you for this goodness, sir: though
Bestow'd upon a very wretch; and death,
Though from a villain's hand, had been to me
An act of kindness, and the height of mercy;
But I thank you, sir.

Vil. Take care, and lead him in. (He is led in.)

SCENE IV.—*A Chamber.*

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Murder my husband! Oh! I must not dare
To think of living on; my desperate hand,
In a mad rage, may offer it again;
Stab me any where but there. Here's room enough
In my own breast to act the fury in,
The proper scene of mischief.

(Going to stab herself, Villeroy runs in and prevents her, by taking the dagger from her.)

Vil. Angels defend and save thee!

Attempt thy precious life!

Lay violent hands upon thy innocent self!

Isa. Swear I am innocent, and I'll believe you.

What would you have with me? Pray let me go.

Are you there, sir? You are the very man—

Have done all this. You would have made

Me believe you married me; but the fool

Was wiser.

Vil. Dost thou not know me, love?

'Tis Villeroy, thy husband.

Isa. I have none; no husband; (Weeping.)

Never had but one, and he died at Candy.

Speak, did he not die there?

Vil. He did, my life.

Isa. But swear it, quickly swear,

Enter BIRON, bloody, leaning upon his sword.

Before that streaming evidence appears,

In bloody proof against me.

(She seeing Biron, swoons; Villeroy helps her.)

Vil. Help there! (Sees BIRON.)

Biron alive?

Bir. The only wretch on earth that must not live.

Vil. Biron, or Villeroy, must not, that's decreed.

Bir. You've saved me from the hands of mur-

derers:

'Would you had not, for life's my greatest plague!

And then, of all the world, you are the man
I would not be obliged to. Isabella!
I came to fall before thee: I had died
Happy, not to have found your Villeroy here.
A long farewell, and a last parting kiss.

(Kisses her.)

Vil. A kiss! confusion! it must be your last.

Bir. I know it must. Here I give up that death
You but delay'd: since what is past has been
The work of fate, thus we must finish it.
Thrust home; be sure.

(Falls.)

Vil. Alas! he faints! some help there!

'Tis all in vain; my sorrows soon will end.
Oh, Villeroy! let a dying wretch entreat you
To take this letter to my father. My Isabella!
Couldst thou but hear me, my last words should
bless thee.

I cannot, though in death, bequeath her to thee.

(To Villeroy.)

But could I hope my boy, my little one,
Might find a father in thee—Oh! I faint;
I can no more. Hear me, heav'n! Oh! support
My wife, my Isabella! Bless my child!
And take a poor unhappy—

(Dies.)

Vil. He's gone!

My care of her is lost in wild amaze.

Who waits there?

(Exit.)

Isa. (Recovering.) Where have I been? Me-
thinks, I stand upon

The brink of life, ready to shoot the gulph
That lies between me and the realms of rest,
But still detain'd, I cannot pass the strait;
Deny'd to live, and yet I must not die;
Doom'd to come back, like a complaining ghost,
To my unbury'd body. Here it lies:

(Throws herself by Biron's body.)

My body, soul, and life! A little dust,
To cover our cold limbs in the dark grave;
There, there we shall sleep safe and sound together.

Enter VILLEROY, with Servants.

Vil. Poor wretch! upon the ground! She's not
herself:

Remove her from the body.

(Servants going to raise her.)

Isa. Never, never!
You have divorced us once, but shall no more.
Help! help me, Biron! Ha! bloody, and dead!
Oh, murder! murder! you have done this deed.
Vengeance and murder! Bury us together:
Do any thing but part us.

Vil. Gently, gently raise her.
She must be forced away.

(They carry her off.)

Isa. Oh! they tear me! Cut off my hands!
Let me leave something with him.

They'll clasp him fast.
Oh, cruel, cruel men!

This you must answer one day. (Nurse follows her.)

Vil. Send for all helps: all, all that I am worth,
Shall cheaply buy her peace of mind again.

(To a Servant.)

Enter COUNT BALDWIN, CARLOS, BELFORD,
MAURICE, EGMONT, with Servants.

C. Bald. O! do I live to this unhappy day?
Where is my wretched son?

Car. Where is my brother?
(They see him, and gather about the body.)

Vil. I hope, in heav'n,
Car. Can'st thou pity him?

Wish him in heav'n, when thou hast done a deed,
That must for ever cut thee from the hopes
Of ever coming there?

Vil. I do not blame you;
You have a brother's right to be concern'd
For his untimely death.

Car. Untimely death, indeed!
Vil. But yet you must not say I was the cause.

Car. Not you the cause! Why, who should mur-
der him?

We do not ask you to accuse yourself;
But I must say, that you have murder'd him;
And will say nothing else, till justice draws
Upon our side, at the loud call of blood,
To execute so foul a murderer.

Bel. Poor Biron! is this thy welcome home?
Maur. Rise, sir; there is a comfort in revenge,
Which is left you.

(To C. Baldwin.)

Car. Take the body hence. (Biron carried off.)
C. Bald. What could provoke you?

Vil. Nothing could provoke me
To a base murder, which, I find, you think
Me guilty of. I know my innocence;
My servants, too, can witness, that I drew
My sword in his defence, to rescue him.

Bel. Let the servants be call'd.
Egm. Let's hear what they can say.

Car. What they can say! Why, what should
servants say?

They are his accomplices, his instruments,
And will not charge themselves. If they could do
A murder for his service, they can lie,
Lie nimbly, and swear hard to bring him off.

You say you drew your sword in his defence:
Who were his enemies? Did he need defence?

Hath he wrong'd any one? Could he have cause
To apprehend a danger, but from you?

And yet you rescued him!
No, no; he came

Unseasonably, (that was all his crime)
Unluckily, to interrupt your sport:

You were new marry'd, marry'd to his wife;
And therefore you, and she, and all of you,

(For all of you I must believe concern'd)
Combined to murder him out of the way.

Bel. If it be so—
Car. It can be only so.

C. Bald. The law will do me justice; send for
the magistrate.

Car. I'll go myself for him. [Exit.]

Vil. These strong presumptions, I must own, in-
deed,

Are violent against me; but I have
A witness, and on this side heav'n, too.
Open that door.

(Door opens, and PEDRO is brought for-
ward by Villeroy's Servants.)

Here's one can tell you all.
Ped. All, all; save me but from the rack, I'll
confess all.

Vil. You and your accomplices design'd
To murder Biron? Speak.

Ped. We did.
Vil. Did you engage upon your private wrongs,
Or were employ'd?

Ped. He never did us wrong.
Vil. You were set on, then.

Ped. We were set on.
Vil. What do you know of me?

Ped. Nothing, nothing:
You saved his life, and have discover'd me.

Vil. He has acquitted me.
If you would be resolv'd of any thing,
He stands upon his answer.

Bel. Who set you on to act this horrid deed?
C. Bald. I'll know the villain; give me quick
his name,

Or I will tear it from thy bleeding heart.
Ped. I will confess.

C. Bald. Do, then.
Ped. It was my master; Carlos, your own son.

C. Bald. Oh, monstrous! monstrous! most un-
natural!

Bel. Did he employ you to murder his own bro-
ther?

[done.]
Ped. He did; and he was with us when 'twas
C. Bald. If this be true, this horrid, horrid tale,
It is but just upon me; Biron's wrongs
Must be revenged; and I the cause of all!

Maur. What will you do with him?

C. Bald. Take him apart;

I know too much. [*Exit Pedro, guarded.*]

Vil. I had forgot. Your wretched, dying son,

Gave me this letter for you, (*Gives it to C. Baldwin.*)

I dare deliver it. It speaks of me,

I pray to have it read.

C. Bald. You know the hand?

Bel. I know 'tis Biron's hand.

C. Bald. Pray read it. (*Belford reads the letter.*)

Sir,—I find I am come only to lay my death at your door. I am now going out of the world, but cannot forgive you, nor my brother Carlos, for not hindering my poor wife, Isabella, from marrying with Villeroy; when you both knew, from so many letters, that I was alive. BIRON.

Vil. How! did you know it, then?

C. Bald. Amazement all!

Enter CARLOS, with Officers.

Oh, Carlos! are you come? Your brother here, Here, in a wretched letter, lays his death To you and me. Have you done any thing To hasten his sad end?

Car. Bless me, sir! I do any thing? who, I?

C. Bald. He talks of letters that were sent to us.

I never heard of any. Did you know

He was alive?

Car. Alive! Heaven knows, not I.

C. Bald. Had you no news of him, from a report, Or letter, never?

Car. Never, never, I.

Bel. That's strange, indeed: I know he often writ

To lay before you the condition (*To C. Baldwin.*)

Of his hard slavery: and more I know,

That he had several answers to his letters.

He said they came from you: you are his brother?

Car. Never from me.

Bel. That will appear.

The letters, I believe, are still about him;

For some of them I saw but yesterday.

C. Bald. What did those answers say?

Bel. I cannot speak to the particulars;

But I remember well, the sum of them

Was much the same, and all agreed.

That there was nothing to be hoped from you:

That 'twas your barbarous resolution

To let him perish there.

C. Bald. Oh, Carlos! Carlos! hadst thou been a brother,—

Car. This is a plot upon me. I never knew

He was in slavery, or was alive,

Or heard of him, before this fatal hour.

Bel. There, sir, I must confront you.

He sent you a letter, to my knowledge, last night;

And you sent him word you would come to him.

I fear you came too soon.

C. Bald. 'Tis all too plain.

Bring out that wretch before him.

(*Pedro produced.*)

Car. Ha! Pedro there! Then I am caught, indeed.

Bel. You start at sight of him;

He has confess'd the bloody deed.

Car. Well then, he has confess'd,

And I must answer it.

Bel. Is there no more?

Car. Why? what would you have more? I know the worst,

And I expect it.

C. Bald. Why hast thou done all this?

Car. Why, that which damns most men has ruin'd me;

The making of my fortune. Biron stood

Between me and your favour; while he lived,

I had not that; hardly was thought a son,

And not at all akin to your estate.

I could not bear a younger brother's lot,
To live depending upon courtesy.

Had you provided for me like a father,

I had been still a brother.

C. Bald. 'Tis too true;

I never loved thee as I should have done:

It was my sin, and I am punish'd for't.

Oh, never may distinction rise again

In families! let parents be the same

To all their children; common in their care,

And in their love of them. I am unhappy,

For loving one too well.

Vil. You knew your brother lived; why did you take

Such pains to marry me to Isabella?

Car. I had my reasons for't.

Vil. More than I thought you had.

Car. But one was this:

I knew my brother loved his wife so well,

That, if he ever should come home again,

He could not long outlive the loss of her.

Bel. If you rely'd on that, why did you kill him?

Car. To make all sure. Now you are answer'd all.

Where must I go? I am tired of your questions.

C. Bald. I leave the judge to tell thee what thou art;

A father cannot find a name for thee.

Take him away. (*Carlos led off.*)

Grant me, sweet heav'n! the patience to go through

The torment of my cure. Here, here begins

The operation. Alas! she's mad.

Enter ISABELLA, distracted; and her Child running from her.

Vil. My Isabella, poor unhappy wretch!

What can I say to her?

Isa. Nothing, nothing; 'tis a babbling world;

I'll hear no more on't. When does the court sit?

I have a cause to try.

Will you not hear it? Then I must appeal

To the bright throne.—Call down the heav'nly powers

To witness how you use me.

C. Bald. Pray, give her way, She'll hurt nobody.

Isa. What have you done with him? He was here but now;

I saw him here. Oh, Biron, Biron! where,

Where have they hid thee from me? He is gone.

But here's a little flaming cherubim—

Will nothing do? I did not hope to find

Justice on earth; 'tis not in heav'n neither.

Biron has watch'd his opportunity—

Softly; he steals it from the sleeping gods,

And sends it thus—Ha, ha, ha! (*Stabs herself.*)

Now—now I laugh at you; I defy you all,

You tyrant murderers!

C. Bald. Oh, thou most injured innocence! Yet live,

Live but to witness for me to the world,

How much I do repent me of the wrongs,

The unnatural wrongs, which I have heap'd on thee,

And have pull'd down this judgment on us all.

Vil. Oh, speak! speak but a word of comfort to me!

C. Bald. If the most tender father's care and love

Of thee, and thy poor child, can make amends,

Oh, yet look up and live!

Isa. Where is that little wretch?

(*They raise her.*)

I die in peace, to leave him to your care.

I have a wretched mother's legacy,

A dying kiss: pray let me give it him,

My blessing; that, that's all I have to leave thee.

Oh, may thy father's virtues live in thee!

And all his wrongs be buried in my grave. (*Dies.*)

JANE SHORE;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY NICHOLAS ROWE.



Act V.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

DUKE OF GLOSTER
LORD HASTINGS
BELMOUR

SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE
SIR WILLIAM CATESBY
SHORE

LORDS OF THE COUNCIL.
JANE SHORE
ALICIA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Tower.

Enter the DUKE OF GLOSTER, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE, and CATESBY.

Glos. Thus far success attends upon our councils, And each event has answer'd to my wish; The queen and all her upstart race are quell'd; Dorset is banish'd, and her brother Rivers, Ere this, lies shorter by the head at Pomfret. The nobles have, with joint concurrence, nam'd me Protector of the realm; my brother's children, Young Edward and the little York, are lodg'd Here, safe within the Tower. How say you, sirs, Does not this business wear a lucky face? The sceptre and the golden wreath of royalty Seem hung within my reach.

Sir R. Then take 'em to you, And wear them long and worthily: you are The last remaining male of princely York; (For Edward's boys, the state esteems not of 'em,) And therefore on your sov' reignty and rule The commonweal does her dependence make, And leans upon your highness' able hand.

Cates. And yet, to-morrow, does the council meet To fix a day for Edward's coronation. Who can expound this riddle?

Glos. That can I. Those lords are each one my approv'd good friends, Of special trust and nearness to my bosom; And howsoever busy they may seem, And diligent to bustle in the state, Their zeal goes on no further than we lead, And at our bidding stays.

Cates. Yet there is one, And he amongst the foremost in his power, Of whom I wish your highness were assur'd. For me, perhaps it is my nature's fault, I own I doubt of his inclining much.

Glos. I guess the man at whom your words would point:

Hastings.

Cates. The same.

Glos. He bears me great good will.

Cates. 'Tis true, to you, as to the lord protector, And Gloster's duke, he bows with lowly service; But were he bid to cry, God save king Richard! Then tell me in what terms he would reply. Believe me, I have prov'd the man, and found him: I know he bears a most religious reverence To his dead master Edward's royal memory, And whither that may lead him, is most plain. Yet more—One of that stubborn sort he is, Who, if they once grow fond of an opinion, They call it honour, honesty, and faith; And sooner part with life than let it go.

Glos. And yet this tough, impracticable heart, Is govern'd by a dainty-finger'd girl; Such flaws are found in the most worthy natures; A laughing, toying, wheedling, whimpering she, Shall make him amble on a gossip's message, And take the distaff with a hand as patient As e'er did Hercules.

Sir R. The fair Alicia, Of noble birth and exquisite of feature, Has held him long a vassal to her beauty.

Cates. I fear he fails in his allegiance there; Or my intelligence is false, or else The dame has been too lavish of her feast, And fed him till he loathes.

Glos. No more: he comes.

Enter LORD HASTINGS.

Has. Health, and the happiness of many days, Attend upon your grace.

Glos. My good lord chamberlain, We're much beholden to your gentle friendship.

Has. My lord, I come an humble suitor to you.

Glos. In right good time. Speak out your pleasure freely.

Has. I am to move your highness in behalf Of Shore's unhappy wife.

Glos. Say you of Shore? [high:

Has. Once a bright star, that held her place on The first and fairest of our English dames, While Royal Edward held the sov' reign rule. Now sunk in grief, and pining with despair, Her waning form no longer shall incite Envy in woman, or desire in man. She never sees the sun but through her tears, And wakes to sigh the live-long night away.

Glos. Marry! the times are badly chang'd with her, From Edward's days to these. Then all was jollity, Feasting and mirth, light wantonness and laughter, Piping and playing, minstrelsy and masking; Till life fled from us like an idle dream, A show of mummerly without a meaning. My brother, (rest and pardon to his soul,) Is gone to his account; for this his minion, The revel-rout is done.—But you were speaking Concerning her; I have been told, that you Are frequent in your visitation to her.

Has. No further, my good lord, than friendly pity, And tender-hearted charity allow.

Glos. Go to: I did not mean to chide you for it. For, sooth to say, I hold it noble in you To cherish the distress'd.—On with your tale.

Has. Thus it is, gracious sir: that certain officers, Using the warrant of your mighty name, With insolence unjust, and lawless power, Have seiz'd upon the lands, which late she held By grant, from her great master Edward's bounty.

Glos. Somewhat of this but slightly have I heard; And though some counsellors of forward zeal, Some of most ceremonious sanctity, And bearded wisdom, often have provok'd The hand of justice to fall heavy on her; Yet still, in kind compassion of her weakness, And tender memory of Edward's love, I have withheld the merciless stern law From doing outrage on her helpless beauty.

Has. Good heav'n, who renders mercy back for mercy,

With open-handed bounty shall repay you: This gentle deed shall fairly be set foremost, To screen the wild escapes of lawless passion, And the long train of frailties flesh is heir to.

Glos. Thus far, the voice of pity pleaded only: Our further and more full extent of grace Is given to your request. Let her attend, And to myself deliver up her griefs. She shall be heard with patience, and each wrong At full redress'd. But I have other news, Which much import us both; for still my fortunes Go hand in hand with your's: our common foes, The queen's relations, our new-fangled gentry, Have fall'n their haughty crests:—that for your privacy. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—An Apartment in Jane Shore's house.

Enter BELMOUR and DUMONT.

Bel. How she has lived you have heard my tale already;

The rest, your own attendance in her family, Where I have found the means this day to place you, And nearer observation, best will tell you: See with what sad and sober cheer she comes!

Enter JANE SHORE.

Sure, or I read her visage much amiss, Or grief besets her hard. Save you, fair lady, The blessings of the cheerful morn be on you, And greet your beauty with its opening sweets.

Jane S. My gentle neighbour! your good wishes still

Pursue my hapless fortunes; ah! good Belmour! How few, like thee, inquire the wretched out,

And court the offices of soft humanity!

Like thee, reserve their raiment for the naked, Reach out their bread to feed the crying orphan, Or mix their pitying tears with those that weep! Thy praise deserves a better tongue than mine, To speak and bless thy name. Is this the gentleman, Whose friendly service you commended to me?

Bel. Madam, it is.

Jane S. A venerable aspect! (Aside.)

Age sits with decent grace upon his visage, And worthily becomes his silver locks; He wears the marks of many years well spent, Of virtue, truth well try'd, and wise experience; A friend like this would suit my sorrows well. Fortune, I fear me, sir, has meant you ill, (To Dum.) Who pays your merit with that scanty pittance, Which my poor hand and humble roof can give. But to supply those golden 'vantages, Which elsewhere you might find, expect to meet A just regard and value for your worth, The welcome of a friend, and the free partnership Of all that little good the world allows me, [swear

Dum. You over-rate me much; and all my am— Must be my future truth; let that speak for me, And make up my deserving.

Jane S. Are you of England? [birth:

Dum. No, gracious lady; Flanders claims my At Antwerp has my constant biding been. [days Where sometimes I have known more plenteous Than these which now my failing age affords.

Jane S. Alas! at Antwerp! O forgive my tears!

(Weeping.)

They fall for my offences; and must fall Long, long ere they shall wash my stains away. You knew, perhaps—O grief! O shame!—my husband! [anguish.

Dum. I knew him well; but stay this flood of The senseless grave feels not your pious sorrows: Three years and more are past, since I was bid, With many of our common friends, to wait him To his last peaceful mansion. I attended, Sprinkled his clay-cold corpse with holy drops, According to our church's rev'rend rite, And saw him laid, in hallow'd ground, to rest.

Jane S. Oh, that my soul had known no joy but That I had liv'd within his guiltless arms, [him! And dying slept in innocence beside him! But now his honest dust abhors the fellowship, And scorns to mix with mine.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. The lady Alicia Attends your leisure.

Jane S. Say I wish to see her. [Exit Servant. Please, gentle sir, one moment to retire; I'll wait you on the instant, and inform you Of each unhappy circumstance, in which Your friendly aid and counsel much may stead me. [Exeunt Bel. and Dum.]

Enter ALICIA. [thus?

Alic. Still, my fair friend, still shall I find you Still shall these sighs heave after one another, These trickling drops chase one another still, As if the posting messengers of grief Could overtake the hours fled far away, And make old time come back?

Jane S. No, my Alicia; Heaven and his saints be witness to my thoughts, There is no hour of all my life o'er past, That I could wish should take its turn again.

Alic. And yet some of those days my friend has known,

Some of those years, might pass for golden ones, At least if womankind can judge of happiness. What could we wish, we who delight in empire, Whose beauty is our sov'reign good, and gives us Our reasons to rebel, and pow'r to reign,— What could we more than to behold a monarch, Lovely, renown'd, a conqueror, and young,

Bound in our chains, and sighing at our feet?

Jane S. 'Tis true, the royal Edward was a wonder,
The goodly pride of all our English youth;
He was the very joy of all that saw him.
Form'd to delight, to love, and to persuade.
But what had I to do with kings and courts?
My humble lot had cast me far beneath him;
And that he was the first of all mankind,
The bravest, and most lovely, was my curse.

Alic. Sure something more than fortune join'd
your loves:

Nor could his greatness, and his gracious form,
Be elsewhere match'd so well, as to the sweetness
And beauty of my friend.

Jane S. Name him no more:
He was the bane and ruin of my peace.
This anguish, and these tears, these are the legacies
His fatal love has left me. Thou wilt see me,—
Believe me, my Alicia, thou wilt see me,—
Ere yet a few short days pass o'er my head,
Abandon'd to the very utmost wretchedness.
The hand of pow'r has seiz'd almost the whole
Of what was left for needy life's support;
Shortly thou wilt behold me poor, and kneeling
Before thy charitable door for bread.

Alic. Joy of my life, my dearest Shore, forbear
To wound my heart with thy foreboding sorrows:
Raise thy sad soul to better hopes than these,
Lift up thy eyes, and let them shine once more,
Bright as the morning sun above the mist.
Exert thy charms, seek out the stern protector,
And sooth his savage temper with thy beauty;
Spite of his deadly, unrelenting nature,
He shall be mov'd to pity, and redress thee.

Jane S. My form, alas! has long forgot to please!
The scene of beauty and delight is chang'd;
No roses bloom upon my fading cheek,
Nor laughing graces wanton in my eyes;
But haggard grief, lean-looking, sallow care,
And pining discontent, a rueful train,
Dwell on my brow, all hideous and forlorn;
One only shadow of a hope is left me;
The noble-minded Hastings, of his goodness,
Has kindly underta'en to be my advocate,
And move my humble suit to angry Gloster.

Alic. Does Hastings undertake to plead your
cause?

But wherefore should he not? Hastings has eyes:
The gentle lord has a right tender heart,
Melting and easy, yielding to impression,
And catching the soft flame from each new beauty;
But your's shall charm him long.

Jane S. Away, you flatterer!
Nor charge his gen'rous meaning with a weakness,
Which his great soul and virtue must disdain.
Too much of love thy hapless friend has prov'd,
Too many giddy, foolish hours are gone,
And in fantastic measures danc'd away:
May the remaining few know only friendship,
So thou, my dearest, truest, best Alicia,
Vouchsafe to lodge me in thy gentle heart,
A partner there; I will give up mankind,
Forget the transports of increasing passion,
And all the pangs we feel for its decay.

Alic. Live! live and reign for ever in my bosom;
(*Embracing.*)

Safe and unrivall'd there possess thy own;
And you, the brightest of the stars above,
Ye saints that once were women here below,
Be witness of the truth, the holy friendship,
Which here to this my other self I vow.

If I not hold her nearer to my soul,
Than every other joy the world can give,
Let poverty, deformity, and shame,
Distraction and despair seize me on earth;
Let not my faithless ghost have peace hereafter,
Nor taste the bliss of your celestial fellowship.

Jane S. Yes, thou art true, and only thou art true:
Therefore these jewels, once the lavish bounty

Of royal Edward's love, I trust to thee;

(*Giving a casket.*)

Receive this, all that I can oall my own,
And let it rest unknown, and safe with thee:
That if the state's injustice should oppress me,
Strip me of all, and turn me out a wanderer,
My wretchedness may find relief from thee,
And shelter from the storm.

Alic. My all is thine;
One common hazard shall attend us both,
And both be fortunate, or both be wretched.
But let thy fearful doubting heart be still;
The saints and angels have thee in their charge,
And all things shall be well. Think not, the good,
The gentle deeds of mercy thou hast done,
Shall die forgotten all; the poor, the pris'ner,
The fatherless, the friendless, and the widow,
Who daily own the bounty of thy hand,
Shall cry to heav'n, and pull a blessing on thee.
Ev'n man, the merciless insulter, man;
Man, who rejoices in our sex's weakness,
Shall pity thee, and with unwonted goodness,
Forget thy failings, and record thy praise. [me,

Jane S. Why should I think that man will do for
What yet he never did for wretches like me?
Mark by what partial justice we are judg'd;
Such is the fate unhappy women find,
And such the curse entail'd upon our kind,
That man, the lawless libertine, may rove,
Free and unquestion'd through the wilds of love;
While woman, sense and nature's easy fool,
If poor, weak woman swerve from virtue's rule;
If, strongly charm'd, she leave the thorny way,
And in the softer paths of pleasure stray,
Ruin ensues, reproach and endless shame,
And one false step entirely damns her fame:
In vain with tears the loss she may deplore,
In vain look back on what she was before;
She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Jane Shore's house.*

Enter ALICIA.

Alic. The drowsy night grows on the world,
and now

The busy craftsmen and the o'er-labour'd hind
Forget the travail of the day in sleep:
Care only wakes, and moping Pensiveness;
With meagre discontented looks they sit,
And watch the wasting of the midnight taper.
Such vigils must I keep, so wakes my soul,
Restless and self-tormented! O false Hastings!
Thou hast destroy'd my peace. (*Knocking without.*)
What noise is that?
What visitor is this, who, with bold freedom,
Breaks in upon the peaceful night and rest,
With such a rude approach?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. One from the court,
Lord Hastings, (as I think) demands my lady.

[*Exit.*]

Alic. Hastings! Be still, my heart, and try to
meet him,

With his own arts! with falsehood—But he comes.
*Enter LORD HASTINGS, speaking to a Servant as
entering.*

Has. Dismiss my train, and wait alone without.
Alicia here! Unfortunate encounter!
But be it as it may.

Alic. When humbly, thus,
The great descend to visit the afflicted;
When thus, unmindful of their rest, they come
To soothe the sorrows of the midnight mourner,
Comfort comes with them; like the golden sun,
Dispels the sullen shades with her sweet influence,
And cheers the melancholy house of care.

Has. 'Tis true I would not over-rate a courtesy,

Nor let the coldness of delay hang on it,
To nip and blast its favour, like a frost;
But rather chose, at this late hour, to come,
That your fair friend may know I have prevail'd;
The lord protector has receiv'd her suit,
And means to shew her grace.

Alic. My friend! my lord. [ample]

Has. Yes, lady, your's; none has a right more
To task my pow'r than you.

Alic. I want the words,
To pay you back a compliment so courtly;
But my heart guesses at the friendly meaning,
And wouldn't die your debtor.

Has. 'Tis well, madam;
But I would see your friend.

Alic. O thou false lord!
I would be mistress of my leaving heart,
Stifle this rising rage, and learn from thee
To dress my face in easy, dull indiff'rence;
But 'twouldn't be; my wrongs will tear their way,
And rush at once upon thee.

Has. Are you wise?
Have you the use of reason? Do you wake?
What means this raving, this transporting passion?

Alic. O, thou cool traitor! thou insulting tyrant!
Dost thou behold my poor, distracted heart,
Thus rent with agonizing love and rage,
And ask me what it means? Art thou not false?
Am I not scorn'd, forsaken, and abandon'd;
Left, like a common wretch, to shame and infamy;
Giv'n up to be the sport of villains' tongues,
Of laughing parasites, and lewd buffoons?
And all because my soul has deoted on thee
With love, with truth, and tenderness unutterable!

Has. Are these the proofs of tenderness and love?
These endless quarrels, discontents, and jealousies,
These never-ceasing wailings and complainings,
These furious starts, these whirlwinds of the soul,
Which every other moment rise to madness?

Alic. What proof, alas! have I not giv'n of love?
What have I not abandon'd to thy arms?
Have I not set at nought my noble birth,
A spotless fame, and an unblemish'd race,
The peace of innocence, and pride of virtue?
My prodigality has giv'n thee all;
And now, I've nothing left me to bestow,
You hate the wretched bankrupt you have made.

Has. Why am I thus pursu'd from place to place,
Kept in the view, and cross'd at ev'ry turn?
In vain I fly, and, like a hunted deer,
Scud o'er the lawns, and hasten to the covert;
Ere I can reach my safety, you o'ertake me
With the swift malice of some keen reproach,
And drive the winged shaft deep in my heart.

Alic. Hither you fly, and here you seek repose.
Spite of the poor deceit, your arts are known,
Your pious, charitable, midnight visits. [mind,

Has. If you are wise, and prize your peace of
Yet take the friendly counsel of my love;
Believe me true, nor listen to your jealousy.
Let not that devil, which undoes your sex,
That cursed curiosity, seduce you,
To hunt for needless secrets, which, neglected,
Shall never hurt your quiet; but once known,
Shall sit upon your heart, pinch it with pain,
And banish the sweet sleep for ever from you.
Go to—be yet advis'd—

Alic. Dost thou in scorn
Preach patience to my rage, and bid me tamely
Sit, like a poor, contented idiot, down,
Nor dare to think thou'st wrong'd me? Ruin seize
thee,

And swift perdition overtake thy treachery.
Have I the least remaining cause to doubt?
Hast thou endeavour'd once to hide thy falsehood?
To hide it might have spoke some little tenderness,
And shown thee half unwilling to undo me:
But thou disdain'st the weakness of humanity.
Thy words, and all thy actions, have confess'd it;

Ev'n now thy eyes avow it, now they speak,
And insolently own the glorious villainy.

Has. Well then, I own my heart has broke your
chains.

Patient I bore the painful bondage long,
At length my gen'rous love disdains your tyranny;
The bitterness and stings of taunting jealousy,
Vexatious days, and jarring, joyless nights,
Have driv'n him forth to seek some safer shelter,
Where he may rest his weary wings in peace.

Alic. You triumph! do; and with gigantic pride
Defy impending vengeance. Heav'n shall wink;
No more his arm shall roll the dreadful thunder,
Nor send his lightnings forth: no more his justice
Shall visit the presuming sons of men,
But perjury, like thine, shall dwell in safety.

Has. What'er my fate decrees for me hereafter,
Be present to me now, my better angel!
Preserve me from the storm that threatens now,
And if I have beyond atonement sinn'd,
Let any other kind of plague o'ertake me,
So I escape the fury of that tongue.

Alic. Thy prayer is heard—I go; but know,
proud lord,

Howe'er thou scorn'st the weakness of my sex,
This feeble hand may find the means to reach thee,
Howe'er sublime in pow'r and greatness plac'd,
With royal favour guarded round and grac'd;
On eagle's wings my rage shall urge her flight,
And hurl thee headlong from thy topmost height;
Then, like thy fate, superior will I sit,
And view thee fall'n, and grov'ling at my feet;
See thy last breath with indignation go,
And tread thee sinking to the shades below. [Exit.

Has. How fierce a fiend is passion! With what
wildness,

What tyranny untam'd it reigns in woman!
Unhappy sex! whose easy, yielding temper
Gives way to ev'ry appetite alike:
And love in their weak bosoms is a rage
As terrible as hate, and as destructive.
But soft ye now—for here comes one, disclaims
Strife and her wrangling train: of equal elements,
Without one jarring atom, was she form'd;
And gentleness and joy make up her being.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Forgive me, fair one, if officious friendship
Intrudes on your repose, and comes thus late
To greet you with the tidings of success.
The princely Gloster has vouchsaf'd your hearing:
To-morrow he expects you at the court;
There plead your cause, with never-failing beauty,
Speak all your griefs, and find a full redress.

Jane S. Thus humbly let your lowly servant
bend [kneeling];

Thus let me bow my grateful knee to earth,
And bless your noble nature for this goodness.

Has. Rise, gentle dame, you wrong my meaning
Think me not guilty of a thought so vain, [much,
To sell my courtesy for thanks like these.

Jane S. 'Tis true your bounty is beyond my
speaking: [you]

But though my mouth be dumb, my heart shall thank
And when it melts before the throne of mercy,
Mourning and bleeding for my past offences,
My fervent soul shall breathe one pray'r for you,
That heav'n will pay you back, when most you need,
The grace and goodness you have shown to me,

Has. If there be aught of merit in my service,
Impute it there, where most 'tis due—to love;
Be kind, my gentle mistress, to my wishes,
And satisfy my panting heart with beauty.

Jane S. Alas! my lord—

Has. Why bend thy eyes to earth?
Wherefore these looks of heaviness and sorrow?
Why breathes that sigh, my love? and wherefore falls
This trickling show'r of tears, to stain thy sweet-
ness?

Jane S. If pity dwells within your noble breast (As sure it does), oh, speak not to me thus.

Has. Can I behold thee, and not speak of love? Ev'n now, thus sadly as thou stand'st before me, Thus desolate, dejected, and forlorn, Thy softness steals upon my yielding senses, Till my soul faints, and sickens with desire. How canst thou give this motion to my heart, And bid my tongue be still?

Jane S. Cast round your eyes Upon the high-born beauties of the court; Behold, like opening roses where they bloom, Sweet to the sense, unsullied all, and spotless; There choose some worthy partner of your heart, To fill your arms, and bless your virtuous bed; Nor turn your eyes this way. [change?

Has. What means this peevish, this fantastic Where is thy wonted pleasantness of face, Thy wonted graces, and thy dimpled smiles? Where hast thou lost thy wit and sportive mirth? That cheerful heart, which us'd to dance for ever, And cast a day of gladness all around thee?

Jane S. Yes, I will own I merit the reproach; And for those foolish days of wanton pride, My soul is justly humbled to the dust: All tongues, like your's, are licens'd to upbraid me, Still to repeat my guilt, to urge my infamy, And treat me like that abject thing I have been.

Has. No more of this dull stuff. 'Tis time enough To whine and mortify thyself with penance; The present moment claims more gen'rous use: Thy beauty, night and solitude reproach me, For having talk'd thus long:—come, let me press thee. (*Laying hold on her.*) [die,

Jane S. Forbear, my lord!—here let me rather And end my sorrows and my shame for ever.

Has. Away with this perverseness; 'tis too much. Nay, if you strive,—'tis monstrous affectation! (*Striving.*)

Jane S. Retire! I beg you leave me—
Has. Thus to coy it!—
With one who knows you too.

Jane S. For mercy's sake—
Has. Ungrateful woman! Is it thus you pay My services?—

Jane S. Abandon me to ruin,—
Rather than urge me—
Has. This way to your chamber; (*pulling her.*)
There, if you struggle—

Jane S. Help, O gracious heaven!
Help! Saye me! Help! [*Rushes out.*

Enter DUMONT; he interposes.

Dum. My lord! for honour's sake—
Has. Ha! What art thou?—Begone!

Dum. My duty calls me
To my attendance on my mistress here.
Has. Avaunt! base groom:—
At distance wait, and know thy office better.

Dum. No, my lord—
The common ties of manhood call me now,
And bid me thus stand up in the defence
Of an oppress'd, unhappy, helpless woman.

Has. And dost thou know me, slave?
Dum. Yes, thou proud lord!
I know thee well; know thee with each advantage
Which wealth, or pow'r, or noble birth can give thee.

I know thee too for one who stains those honours,
And blots a long illustrious line of ancestry,
By poorly daring thus to wrong a woman. [dame,

Has. 'Tis wondrous well; I see, my saint-like
You stand provided of your braves and ruffians,
To man your cause, and bluster in your brothel.

Dum. Take back the foul reproach, unmanner'd
railer!

Nor urge my rage too far, lest thou shouldst find
I have as daring spirits in my blood,
As thou or any of thy race e'er boasted;

And though no gaudy titles grac'd my birth,
Yet heav'n, that made me honest, made me more
Than ever king did, when he made a lord.

Has. Insolent villain! henceforth let this teach
thee (*draws, and strikes him*)
The distance 'twixt a peasant and a prince.

Dum. Nay then, my lord, (*drawing*) learn you
by this, how well

An arm resolv'd can guard its master's life. (*They
fight; Dumont disarms Hastings.*)

Has. Confusion! baffled by a base-born hind!
Dum. Now, haughty sir, where is our difference
now?

Your life is in my hand, and did not honour,
The gentleness of blood, and inborn virtue
(Howe'er unworthy I may seem to you,)
Plead in my bosom, I should take the forfeit.
But wear your sword again; and know, a lord
Oppos'd against a man, is but a man. [tune

Has. Curse on my failing hand! your better for-
Has giv'n you vantage o'er me; but perhaps
Your triumph may be bought with dear repentance. [*Exit.*

Re-enter JANE SHORE.

Jane S. Alas! what have you done? Know ye the
pow'r,

The mightiness that waits upon this lord?
Dum. Fear not, my worthiest mistress; 'tis a cause
In which heaven's guards shall wait you, O pursue,
Pursue the sacred counsels of your soul,
Which urge you on to virtue;
Assisting angels shall conduct your steps,
Bring you to bliss, and crown your days with peace.

Jane S. O that my head were laid, my sad eyes
clos'd,

And my cold corse wound in my shroud to rest!
My painful heart will never cease to beat,
Will never know a moment's peace till then.

Dum. Would you be happy, leave this fatal place;
Fly from the court's pernicious neighbourhood;
Where innocence is sham'd, and blushing modesty
Is made the scorner's jest; where hate, deceit,
And deadly ruin, wear the masks of beauty,
And draw deluded fools with shows of pleasure.

Jane S. Where should I fly, thus helpless and
forlorn,
Of friends, and all the means of life bereft?

Dum. Belmour, whose friendly care still wakes
to serve you,

Has found you out a little peaceful refuge,
Far from the court and the tumultuous city.

Within an ancient forest's ample verge,
There stands a lonely but a healthful dwelling,
Built for convenience and the use of life:

Around, it fallows, meads, and pastures fair,
A little garden, and a limpid brook,
By nature's own contrivance seem dispos'd;

No neighbours, but a few poor simple clowns,
Honest and true, with a well meaning priest:
No faction, or domestic fury's rage,
Did e'er disturb the quiet of that place,

When the contending nobles shook the land
With York and Lancaster's disputed sway.

Your virtue there may find a safe retreat
From the insulting pow'rs of wicked greatness.

Jane S. Can there be so much happiness in store?
A cell like that is all my hopes aspire to.

Haste then, and thither let us take our flight,
Ere the clouds gather, and the wintry sky
Descends in storms to intercept our passage.

Dum. Will you then go? You glad my very soul.
Banish your fears, cast all your cares on me;
Plenty and ease, and peace of mind shall wait you,
And make your latter days of life most happy.

O lady! but I must not, cannot tell you,
How anxious I have been for all your dangers,
And how my heart rejoices at your safety.

So when the spring renews the flow'ry field,
And warns the pregnant nightingale to build

*

She seeks the safest shelter of the wood,
Where she may trust her little tuneful brood;
Where no rude swains her shady cell may know,
No serpents climb, nor blasting winds may blow;
Fond of the chosen place, she views it o'er,
Sits there, and wanders through the grove no more;
Warbling she charms it each returning night,
And loves it with a mother's dear delight. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Court.*

Enter ALICIA, with a paper.

Alic. This paper to the great protector's hand
With care and secrecy must be convey'd:
His hold ambition now avows its aim,
To pluck the crown from Edward's infant brow,
And fix it on his own. I know he holds
My faithless Hastings adverse to his hopes,
And much devoted to the orphan king:
On that I build; this paper meets his doubts,
And marks my hated rival as the cause
Of Hastings' zeal for his dead master's sons.
Oh, jealousy! thou bane of pleasing friendship,
How does thy rancour poison all our softness,
And turn our gentle natures into bitterness!
See, where she comes! once my heart's dearest
blessing,

Now my chang'd eyes are blasted with her beauty,
Loath that known face, and sicken to behold her.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Jane S. O, my Alicia!

Alic. What new grief is this?
What unforeseen misfortune has surpris'd thee,
That racks thy tender heart thus?

Jane S. O, Dumont!

Alic. Say, what of him?

Jane S. That friendly, honest man,
Whom Belmour brought of late to my assistance,
On whose kind care, whose diligence and faith,
My surest trust was built, this very morn'
Was seiz'd on by the cruel hand of power,
Forc'd from my house, and borne away to prison.

Alic. To prison, said you? Can you guess the
cause?

Jane S. Too well, I fear, his bold defence of me
Has drawn the vengeance of lord Hastings on him.

Alic. Lord Hastings! ha!

Jane S. Some fitter time must tell thee
The tale of my hard hap. Upon the present
Hang all my poor, my last remaining hopes.
Within this paper is my suit contain'd;
Here as the princely Gloster passes forth,
I wait to give it on my humble knees,
And move him for redress.

(*She gives the paper to Alicia, who opens and
seems to read it: Jane Shore retires.*)

Alic. Now for a while,
To sting my thoughtless rival to the heart;
To blast her fatal beauties, and divide her
For ever from my perjurd Hastings' eyes:
Their fashions are the same, it cannot fail.

(*Aside.—Pulling out the other Paper.*)

Jane S. (*Advancing.*) But see, the great protector
comes this way.

Give me the paper, friend.

Alic. For love and vengeance!

(*Aside.—She gives her the other Paper.*)

Enter the DUKE of GLOSTER, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFF, CATESBY, Courtiers, and other Attendants.

Jane S. (*Kneeling.*) O noble Gloster, turn thy
gracious eye,

Incline thy pitying ear to my complaint;
A poor, undone, forsaken, helpless woman,
Entreats a little bread for charity,
To feed her wants, and save her life from perishing.

Glos. Arise, fair dame, and dry your wat'ry eyes.

(*Receiving the paper, and raising her.*)

Beshrew me, but 'twere pity of his heart

That could refuse a boon to such a suttress.
You've got a noble friend to be your advocate;
A worthy and right gentle lord he is,
And to his trust most true. This present now
Some matters of the state detain our leisure;
Those once despatch'd, we'll call for you anon,
And give your griefs redress. Go to!—be comforted.

Jane S. Good heavens repay your highness for
this pity,

And show'r down blessings on your princely head!
Come, my Alicia, reach thy friendly arm,
And help me to support this feeble frame,
That nodding, totters with oppressive woe,
And sinks beneath its load.

(*Exeunt Jane S. and Alic.*)

Glos. Now, by my holiday!
Heavy of heart she seems, and sore afflicted.
But thus it is when rude calamity
Lays its strong gripe upon these mincing minions;
The dainty gew-gaw forms dissolve at once,
And shiver at the shock. What says this paper?

(*Perusing it.*)

Ha! What is this? Comenearer, Ratcliffe! Catesby!
Mark the contents, and then divine the meaning.

(*He reads.*)

*Wonder not, Princely Gloster, at the notice
This paper brings you from a friend unknown;
Lord Hastings is inclin'd to call you master,
And kneel to Richard as to England's king;
But Shore's bewitching wife misleads his heart,
And draws his service to king Edward's sons:
Drive her away, you break the charm that holds him,
And he, and all his powers, attend on you.*

Sir R. 'Tis wonderful!

Cates. The means by which it came

Yet stranger too.

Glos. You saw it giv'n, but now.

Sir R. She could not know the purport.

Glos. No, 'tis plain

She knows it not, it levels at her life;
Should she presume to prate of such high matters,
The meddling harlot, dear she should abide it.

Cates. What hand so'er it comes from, be as-
It means your highness well. [*sur'd*]

Glos. Upon the instant,

Lord Hastings will be here; this morn' I mean
To prove him to the quick; then, if he flinch,
No more but this,—away with him at once:
He must be mine or nothing.—But he comes!
Draw nearer this way, and observe me well.

(*They whisper.*)

Enter LORD HASTINGS.

Has. This foolish woman hangs about my heart,
Lingers and wanders in my fancy still;
This coyness is put on, 'tis art and cunning,
And worn to urge desire;—I must possess her.
The groom, who lift his saucy hand against me,
Ere this, is humbled, and repents his daring.
Perhaps, ev'n she may profit by th' example,
And teach her beauty not to scorn my pow'r.

Glos. This do, and wait me e'er the council sits.
(*Exeunt Ratcliffe and Catesby.*)

My lord, you're well encounter'd; here has been
A fair petitioner this morning with us;
Believe me, she has won me much to pity her:
Alas! her gentle nature was not made
To buffet with adversity. I told her
How worthily her cause you had befriended;
How much for your good sake we meant to do,
That you had spoke, and all things should be well.

Has. Your highness binds me ever to your
service. [*with us.*]

Glos. You know your friendship is most potent
And shares our power. But of this enough,
For we have other matters for your ear;
The state is out of tune: distracting fears,
And jealous doubts, jar in our public councils;
Amidst the wealthy city, murmurs rise,

Lewd railings, and reproach on those that rule,
With open scorn of government; hence credit,
And public trust 'twixt man and man, are broke;
The golden streams of commerce are withheld,
Which fed the wants of needy hinds and artizans,
Who, therefore, curse the great, and threat rebellion.

Has. The resty knaves are over-run with ease,
As plenty ever is the nurse of faction;
If in good days, like these, the headstrong herd
Grow madly wanton and repine, it is
Because the reins of power are held too slack,
And reverend authority, of late,
Has worn a face of mercy more than justice.

Glos. Beshrew my heart! but you have well
divin'd

The source of these disorders. Who can wonder
If riot and misrule o'erturn the realm,
When the crown sits upon a baby brow?
Plainly to speak, hence comes the gen'ral cry,
And sum of all complaint: 'twill ne'er be well
With England (thus they talk,) while children
govern. [that?

Has. 'Tis true, the king is young: but what of
We feel no want of Edward's riper years,
While Gloster's valour, and most princely wisdom
So well support our infant sov'reign's place,
His youth's support, and guardian to his throne.

Glos. The council (much I'm bound to thank 'em
for't,)

Have plac'd a pageant sceptre in my hand,
Barren of pow'r, and subject to controul;
Scorn'd by my foes, and useless to my friends.
Oh, worthy lord! were mine the rule indeed,
I think I should not suffer rank offence
At large to lord it in the commonweal;
Nor would the realm be rent by discord thus,
Thus fear and doubt, betwixt disputed titles.

Has. Of this I am to learn; as not supposing
A doubt like this.

Glos. Ay, marry, but there is—
And that of much concern. Have you not heard
How, on a late occasion, doctor Shaw
Has mov'd the people much about the lawfulness
Of Edward's issue? By right grave authority
Of learning and religion, plainly proving,
A bastard scion never should be grafted
Upon a royal stock; from thence at full
Discoursing on my brother's former contract
To lady Elizabeth Lucy, long before
His jolly match with that same buxom widow,
The queen he left behind him—

Has. Ill befall
Such meddling priests, who kindle up confusion,
And vex the quiet world with their vain scruples!
By heav'n, 'tis done in perfect spite to peace.
Did not the king,
Our royal master, Edward, in concurrence
With his estates assembled, well determine
What course the sov'reign rule should take hence-
forward?

When shall the deadly hate of faction cease?
When shall our long-divided land have rest,
If every peevish, moody malcontent,
Shall set the senseless rabble in an uproar?
Fright them with dangers, and perplex their brains,
Each day with some fantastic giddy change?

Glos. What if some patriot, for the public good,
Should vary from your scheme, new-mould the state?

Has. Curse on the innovating hand attempts it!
Remember him, the villain, righteous heaven,
In thy great day of vengeance! blast the traitor
And his pernicious counsels; who, for wealth,
For pow'r, the pride of greatness, or revenge,
Would plunge his native land in civil wars!

Glos. You go too far, my lord.

Has. Your highness' pardon.—
Have we so soon forgot those days of ruin,
When York and Lancaster drew forth their battles;
When, like a matron butcher'd by her sons,

Our groaning country bled at every vein:
When murders, rapes, and massacres prevail'd;
When churches, palaces, and cities blaz'd;
When insolence and barbarism triumph'd,
And swept away distinction: peasants trod
Upon the necks of nobles: low were laid
The reverend crosier and the holy mitre,
And desolation covered all the land?
Who can remember this, and not, like me,
Here vow to sheath a dagger in his heart,
Whose damn'd ambition would renew those horrors,
And set once more that scene of blood before us?

Glos. How now? so hot!

Has. So brave, and so resolv'd.

Glos. Is then our friendship of so little moment,
That you could arm your hand against my life?

Has. I hope your highness does not think I mean it;
No, heaven forbid that e'er your princely person
Should come within the scope of my resentment.

Glos. O noble Hastings! Nay, I must embrace
you; (Embraces him.)

By holy Paul, you're a right honest man!
The time is full of danger and distrust,
And warns us to be wary. Hold me not
Too apt for jealousy and light surmise,
If, when I meant to lodge you next my heart,
I put your truth to trial: Keep your loyalty,
And live your king and country's best support:
For me, I ask no more than honour gives,
To think me your's, and rank me with your friends.

[Exit.

Has. I am not read,
Nor skill'd and practis'd in the arts of greatness,
To kindle thus, and give a scope to passion.
The duke is surely noble; but he touch'd me
Ev'n on the tend'rest point; the master-string
That makes most harmony or discord to me.

I own the glorious subject fires my breast,
And my soul's darling passion stands confess'd;
Beyond or love's or friendship's sacred band,
Beyond myself, I prize my native land:
On this foundation would I build my fame,
And emulate the Greek and Roman name; [blood,
Think England's peace bought cheaply with my
And die with pleasure for my country's good. [Exit.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The same.

Enter DUKE OF GLOSTER, RATCLIFFE, and CATESBY.

Glos. This was the sum of all: that he would brook
No alteration in the present state.

Marry, at last, the testy gentleman
Was almost mov'd to bid us bold defiance:
But there I dropp'd the argument, and changing
The first design and purport of my speech,
I prais'd his good affection to young Edward,
And left him to believe my thoughts like his.
Proceed we then in this fore-mentioned matter,
As nothing bound or trusting to his friendship.

Sir R. Ill does it thus befall. I could have wish'd
This lord had stood with us.

His name had been of vantage to your highness,
And stood our present purpose much in stead.

Glos. This wayward and perverse decliving from
Has warranted at full the friendly notice, [us,
Which we this morn receiv'd. I hold it certain,
This puling, whining harlot rules his reason,
And prompts his zeal for Edward's bastard brood.

Cates. If she have such dominion o'er his heart,
And turn it at her will, you rule her fate;
And should, by inference and apt deduction,
Be arbiter of his. Is not her bread,
The very means immediate to her being,
The bounty of your hand? Why does she live,
If not to yield obedience to your pleasure,
To speak, to act, to think as you command?

Sir R. Let her instruct her tongue to bear your
message;

Teach every grace to smile in your behalf,

And her deluded eyes to gloat for you ;
His ductile reason will be wound about,
Be led and turn'd again, say and unsay,
Receive the yoke, and yield exact obedience.

Glos. Your counsel likes me well ; it shall be fol-
She waits without, attending on her suit : [low'd ;
Go, call her in, and leave us here alone.

[*Exeunt Ratcliffe and Catesby.*

How poor a thing is he, how worthy scorn,
Who leaves the guidance of imperial manhood
To such a paltry piece of stuff as this is !
A moppet made of prettiness and pride ;
That oftener does her giddy fancies change,
Than glittering dew-drops in the sun do colours.
Now, shame upon it ! was our reason given
For such a use ? To be thus puff'd about. [them,
Sure there is something more than witchcraft in
That masters e'en the wisest of us all.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Oh ! you are come most fitly. We have ponder'd
On this your grievance : and though some there are,
Nay, and those great ones too, who would enforce
The rigour of our power to afflict you,
And bear a heavy hand ; yet fear not you :
We've ta'en you to our favour ; our protection
Shall stand between, and shield you from mishap.

Jane S. The blessings of a heart, with anguish
broken,

And rescu'd from despair, attend your highness.
Alas ! my gracious lord, what have I done
To kindle such relentless wrath against me ?

Glos. Marry, there are, though I believe them not,
Who say you meddle in affairs of state :
That you presume to prattle like a busy-body,
Give your advice, and teach the lords o' the council
What fits the order of the commonweal.

Jane S. Oh, that the busy world, at least in this,
Would take example from a wretch like me !
None then would waste their hours in foreign
thoughts,

Forget themselves, and what concerns their peace,
To search, with prying eyes, for faults abroad,
If all, like me, consider'd their own hearts,
And wept their sorrows which they found at home.

Glos. Go to ; I know your pow'r ; and though I
trust not

To ev'ry breath of fame, I'm not to learn
That Hastings is profess'd your loving vassal.
But fair befall your beauty : use it wisely,
And it may stand your fortunes much in stead,
Give back your forfeit land with large increase,
And place you high in safety and in honour.
Nay, I could point a way, the which pursuing,
You shall not only bring yourself advantage,
But give the realm much worthy cause to thank you.

Jane S. Oh ! where or how can my unworthy
Become an instrument of good to any ? [hand
Instruct your lowly slave ; and let me fly
To yield obedience to your dread command.

Glos. Why, that's well said ;—Thus then,—ob-
serve me well.

The state, for many high and potent reasons,
Deeming my brother Edward's sons unfit
For the imperial weight of England's crown—

Jane S. Alas, for pity !

Glos. Therefore have resolv'd
To set aside their unavailing infancy,
And vest the sov'reign rule in abler hands.
This, though of great importance to the public,
Hastings, for very peevishness and spleen,
Does stubbornly oppose.

Jane S. Does he ? Does Hastings ?

Glos. Ay, Hastings. [heav'n's :
Jane S. Reward him for the noble deed, just
For this one action guard him and distinguish him
With signal mercies, and with great deliverance ;
Save him from wrong, adversity, and shame ;
Let never fading honours flourish round him,
And consecrate his name, ev'n to time's end.

Glos. How now !

Jane S. The poor, forsaken, royal little ones !
Shall they be left a prey to savage power ?
Can they lift up their harmless hands in vain,
Or cry to heaven for help, and not be heard ?
Impossible ! O gallant, generous Hastings,
Go on, pursue, assert the sacred cause !
Stand forth, thou proxy of all-ruling Providence,
And save the friendless infants from oppression.
Saints shall assist thee with prevailing prayers,
And warring angels combat on thy side. [speech,

Glos. You're passing rich in this same heav'nly
And spend it at your pleasure. Nay, but mark me !
My favour is not bought with words like these.
Go to :—You'll teach your tongue another tale. [me,

Jane S. No, though the royal Edward has undone
He was my king, my gracious master still ;
He lov'd me too, though 'twas a guilty flame ;
And can I—(O my heart abhors the thought !)
Stand by and see his children robb'd of right ?

Glos. Dare not, ev'n for thy soul, to thwart me
further !

None of your arts, your feigning, and your foolery ;
Your dainty squeamish coying it to me ;
Go—to your lord, your paramour, be gone !
Lisp in his ear, hang wanton on his neck,
And play your monkey gambols o'er to him.

You know my purpose, look that you pursue it,
And make him yield obedience to my will,
Do it,—or woe upon the harlot's head. [speech,

Jane S. Oh that my tongue had every grace of
Great and commanding, as the breath of kings ;—
That I had heart and eloquence divine,
To pay my duty to my master's ashes,
And plead, till death, the cause of injur'd innocence.

Glos. Ha ! Dost thou brave me, minion ? Dost
thou know [thee ?

How vile, how very a wretch, my pow'r can make
That I can place thee in such abject state,
As help shall never find thee ; where, repining,
Thou shalt sit down and gnaw the earth for anguish ;
Groan to the pitiless winds without return :
Howl, like the midnight wolf amidst the desert,
And curse thy life, in bitterness and misery !

Jane S. Let me be branded for the public scorn,
Turn'd forth and driv'n to wander like a vagabond,
Be friendless and forsaken, seek my bread
Upon the barren wild and desolate waste,
Feed on my sighs, and drink my falling tears,
Ere I consent to teach my lips injustice,
Or wrong the orphan, who has none to save him.

Glos. 'Tis well :—we'll try the temper of your
What, ho ! Who waits without ? [heart.

Enter RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, and Attendants.

Glos. Go, some of you, and turn this strumpet
forth !

Spurn her into the street ; there let her perish,
And rot upon a dunghill. Through the city
See it proclaim'd, that none, on pain of death,
Presume to give her comfort, food, or harbour ;
Who ministers the smallest comfort, dies.
Her house, her costly furniture and wealth,
We seize on, for the profit of the state.
Away ! Be gone !

Jane S. Oh, thou most righteous Judge—
Humbly, behold, I bow myself to thee, (kneels.)
And own thy justice in this hard decree :
No longer, then, my ripe offences spare,
But what I merit, let me learn to bear.
Yet, since 'tis all my wretchedness can give,
For my past crimes my forfeit life receive ;

(*They raise her.*)
No pity for my sufferings here I crave,
And only hope forgiveness in the grave.

[*Exit Jane Shore, guarded by Catesby.*

Glos. So much for this. Your project's at an end.
(*To Sir Richard.*)
This idle toy, this hilding, scorns my power,

And sets us all at nought. See that a guard
Be ready at my call.

Sir R. The council waits
Upon your highness' leisure.

Glos. I'll attend them.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Council Chamber.*

The Duke of BUCKINGHAM, EARL OF DERBY, BISHOP of ELY, LORD HASTINGS, and others, discovered in Council. The Duke of GLOSTER enters, and takes his place at the upper end.

Der. In happy times we are assembled here,
T' appoint the day, and fix the solemn pomp
For placing England's crown, with all due rites,
Upon our sovereign Edward's youthful brow.

Lord H. Some busy, meddling knaves, 'tis said
there are,

As such will still be prating, who presume
To carp and cavil at his royal right;
Therefore, I hold it fitting, with the soonest,
T' appoint the order of the coronation:
So to approve our duty to the king,
And stay the babbling of such vain gainsayers.

Der. We all attend to know your highness'
pleasure. (To *Gloster.*)

Glos. My lords, a set of worthy men you are,
Prudent and just, and careful for the state;
Therefore, to your most grave determination
I yield myself in all things; and demand
What punishment your wisdom shall think meet
T' inflict upon those damnable contrivers, [drugs,
Who shall with potions, charms, and witching
Practise against our person and our life! [debtor,

Has. So much I hold the king your highness'
So precious are you to the commonweal,
That I presume, not only for myself,
But in behalf of these my noble brothers,
To say, whoe'er they be, they merit death.

Glos. Then judge, yourselves, convince your
eyes of truth:

Behold my arm, thus blasted, dry, and wither'd,
(*Pulling up his sleeve.*)

Shrunk like a foul abortion, and decay'd,
Like some untimely product of the seasons,
Robb'd of its properties of strength and office!

This is the sorcery of Edward's wife,
Who, in conjunction with that harlot Shore,
And other like confederate midnight hags,
By force of potent spells, of bloody characters,
And conjurations horrible to hear,
Call fiends and spectres from the yawning deep,
And set the ministers of hell at work,
To torture and despoil me of my life.

Has. If they have done this deed—

Glos. If they have done it!

Talk'st thou to me of ifs, audacious traitor!
Thou art that strumpet witch's chief abettor,
The patron and comploter of her mischiefs,
And join'd in this contrivance for my death.
Nay, start not, lords.—What ho! a guard there, sirs!

Enter Guards.

Lord Hastings, I arrest thee of high treason;
Seize him, and bear him instantly away.
He sha' not live an hour. By holy Paul,
I will not dine before his head be brought me.
Ratcliffe, stay you, and see that it be done:
The rest that love me, rise and follow me.

[*Exeunt Gloster, the Lords following.*]

Manet LORD HASTINGS, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE, and Guards.

Has. What! and no more but this!—How! to
the scaffold!

O gentle *Ratcliffe!* tell me, do I hold thee?
Or if I dream, what shall I do to wake,
To break, to struggle through this dread confusion?
For surely death itself is not so painful
As is this sudden horror and surprise. [absolute.

Sir R. You heard the duke's commands to me were

Therefore, my lord, address you to your shrift,
With all good speed you may. Summon your
courage,

And be yourself; for you must die this instant.

Has. Yes, *Ratcliffe,* I will take thy friendly counsel.
And die as a man should; 'tis somewhat hard,
To call my scatter'd spirits home at once:
But since what must be, must be;—let necessity
Supply the place of time and preparation,
And arm me for the blow. 'Tis but to die,
'Tis but to venture on the common hazard,
Which many a time in battle I have run;
'Tis but to close my eyes and shut out day-light,
To view no more the wicked ways of men;
No longer to behold the tyrant *Gloster,*
And be a weeping witness of the woes,
The desolation, slaughter, and calamities,
Which he shall bring on this unhappy land.

Enter ALICIA.

Alic. Stand off, and let me pass: I will, I must
Catch him once more in these despairing arms,
And hold him to my heart. O *Hastings!* *Hastings!*!

Has. Alas! why com'st thou at this dreadful mo-
To fill me with new terrors, new distractions; [ment,
To turn me wild with thy distemper'd rage,
And shock the peace of my departing soul?
Away! I pr'ythee, leave me!

Alic. Stop a minute—

Till my full griefs find passage: O the tyrant!
Perdition fall on *Gloster's* head and mine!

Has. What means thy frantic grief?

Alic. I cannot speak—

But I have murder'd thee;—Oh, I could tell thee—

Has. Speak, and give ease to thy conflicting pas-
Be quick, nor keep me longer in suspense; [sion!
Time presses, and a thousand crowding thoughts
Break in at once;—this way and that they snatch,
They tear my hurried soul: all claim attention,
And yet not one is heard. Oh! speak, and leave me,
For I have business would employ an age,
And but a minute's time to get it done in. [on,

Alic. That—that's my grief: 'tis I that urge thee
Thus hunt thee to the toil, sweep thee from earth,
And drive thee down this precipice of fate. [hand

Has. Thy reason is grown wild. Could thy weak
Bring on this mighty ruin? If it could,
What have I done so grievous to thy soul,
So deadly, so beyond the reach of pardon,
That nothing but my life can make atonement?

Alic. Thy cruel scorn hath stung me to the heart,
And set my burning bosom all in flames:
Raving and mad I flew to my revenge,
And writ I knew not what;—told the protector,
That *Shore's* detested wife, by wiles, had won thee
To plot against his greatness. He believ'd it,
(Oh, dire event of my pernicious counsel!)
And, while I meant destruction on her head,
He has turn'd it all on thine.

Has. O thou inhuman! turn thine eyes away,
And blast me not with their destructive beams:
Why should I curse thee with my dying breath?
Be gone! and let me die in peace.

Alic. Canst thou, O cruel *Hastings,* leave me thus?
Hear me, I beg thee!—I conjure thee, hear me!
While, with an agonizing heart, I swear,
By all the pangs I feel, by all the sorrows,
The terrors and despair thy loss shall give me,
My hate was on my rival bent alone.

Oh! had I once divin'd, false as thou art,
A danger to thy life, I would have died—
I would have met it for thee. [award:

Has. Now mark! and tremble at heav'n's just
While thy insatiate wrath and fell revenge,
Pursu'd the innocence which never wrong'd thee,
Behold the mischief falls on thee and me:
Remorse and heaviness of heart shall wait thee,
And everlasting anguish be thy portion:
For me, the snares of death are wound about me,

And now, in one poor moment, I am gone.
Oh! if thou hast one tender thought remaining,
Fly to thy closet, fall upon thy knees,
And recommend my parting soul to mercy.

Alic. Oh! yet before I go for ever from thee,
Turn thee in gentleness and pity to me, (*Kneeling.*)
And, in compassion of my strong affliction,
Say, is it possible you can forgive
The fatal rashness of ungovern'd love?
For, oh! 'tis certain, if I had not lov'd thee
Beyond my peace, my reason, fame, and life,
This day of horror never would have known us.

Hast. Oh, rise, and let me hush thy stormy
sorrows. (*Raising her.*)

Assuage thy tears, for I will chide no more,
No more upbraid thee, thou unhappy fair one.
I see the hand of heav'n is arm'd against me;
And, in mysterious providence, decrees
To punish me by thy mistaken hand.
Most righteous doom! for, oh, while I behold thee,
Thy wrongs rise up in terrible array,
And charge thy ruin on me; thy fair fame,
Thy spotless beauty, innocence, and youth,
Dishonour'd, blasted, and betray'd by me.

Alic. And does thy heart relent for my undoing?
Oh! that inhuman Gloster could be mov'd,
But half so easily as I can pardon.

(*Catesby enters, and whispers Ratcliffe.*)

Has. Here, then, exchange we mutual forgive-
So may the guilt of all my broken vows, [ness:
My perjuries to thee, be all forgotten,
As here my soul acquits thee of my death,
As here I part without one angry thought,
As here I leave thee with the softest tenderness,
Mourning the chance of our disastrous loves,
And begging heav'n to bless and to support thee.

Sir R. My lord, despatch; the duke has sent to
For loitering in my duty— [chide me,

Has. I obey.

Alic. Insatiate, savage monster! Is a moment
So tedious to thy malice? Oh, repay him,
Thou great Avenger! Give him blood for blood:
Guilt haunt him! fiends pursue him! lightnings
That he may know how terrible it is [blast him!
To want that moment he denies thee now.

Has. This rage is all in vain, that tears thy bosom:
Retire, I beg thee;
To see thee thus, thou know'st not how it wounds
Thy agonies are added to my own, [me;
And make the burden more than I can bear.
Farewell:—good angels visit thy afflictions,
And bring thee peace and comfort from above. [*Exit.*

Alic. Oh! stab me to the heart, some pitying
Now strike me dead. [hand,

Re-enter LORD HASTINGS.

Has. One thing I had forgot;—
I charge thee, by our present common miseries;
By our past loves, if they have yet a name;
By all thy hopes of peace here and hereafter,
Let not the rancour of thy hate pursue
The innocence of thy unhappy friend; [wrong her,
Thou know'st who 'tis I mean: Oh! shouldst thou
Just heav'n shall double all thy woes upon thee,
And make 'em know no end;—remember this,
As the last warning of a dying man.
Farewell, for ever! (*The Guards carry Hastings off.*)

Alic. For ever! Oh, for ever!
Oh, who can bear to be a wretch for ever?
My rival, too! His last thoughts hung on her,
And, as he parted, left a blessing for her;
Shall she be blest, and I be curst, for ever;
No; since her fatal beauty was the cause
Of all my suff'rings, let her share my pains;
Let her, like me, of ev'ry joy forlorn,
Devote the hour when such a wretch was born;
Cast ev'ry good, and ev'ry hope behind;
Detest the works of nature, loathe mankind:
Like me, with cries distracted, fill the air,

Tear her poor bosom, rend her frantic hair,
And prove the torments of the last despair. [*Exit.*

ACT V.—SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter BELMOUR and DUMONT.

Dum. You saw her, then?

Bel. I met her, as returning,
In solemn penance from the public cross.
Before her, certain rascal officers,
Slaves in authority, the knaves of justice,
Proclaim'd the tyrant Gloster's cruel orders.
Around her, numberless, the rabble flow'd,
Should'ring each other, crowding for a view,
Gaping and gazing, taunting and reviling;
Some pitying,—but those, alas! how few!
The most, such iron hearts we are, and such
The base barbarity of human kind,
With insolence and lewd reproach pursu'd her,
Hooting and railing, and with villainous hands
Gath'ring the filth from out the common ways,
To hurl upon her head.

Dum. Inhuman dogs!
How did she bear it?

Bel. With the gentlest patience;
Submissive, sad, and lowly was her look;
A burning taper in her hand she bore,
And on her shoulders, carelessly confus'd,
With loose neglect, her lovely tresses hung;
Upon her cheek a faintish blush was spread;
Feeble she seem'd, and sorely smit with pain;
While barefoot as she trod the flinty pavement,
Her footsteps all along were mark'd with blood.
Yet, silent still she pass'd, and unreining;
Her streaming eyes bent ever on the earth,
Except when in some bitter pang of sorrow,
To heav'n she seem'd in fervent zeal to raise,
And beg that mercy man deny'd her here.

Dum. When was this piteous sight?

Bel. These last two days,
You know my care was wholly bent on you,
To find the happy means of your deliverance,
Which, but for Hastings' death, I had not gain'd.
During that time, although I have not seen her,
Yet divers trusty messengers I've sent,
To wait about, and watch a fit convenience
To give her some relief, but all in vain;
A churlish guard attends upon her steps, [fort,
Who menace those with death, that bring her com-
And drive all succour from her.

Dum. Let 'em threaten;
Let proud oppression prove its fiercest malice;
So heav'n befriend my soul, as here I vow
To give her help, and share one fortune with her.

Bel. Mean you to see her thus, in your own form?
Dum. I do.

Bel. And have you thought upon the consequence?
Dum. What is there I should fear?

Bel. Have you examin'd
Into your inmost heart, and try'd at leisure
The sev'ral secret springs that move the passions?
Has mercy fix'd her empire there so sure,
That wrath and vengeance never may return?
Can you resume a husband's name, and bid
That wakeful dragon, fierce resentment, sleep?

Dum. O thou hast set my busy brain at work,
And now she musters up a train of images,
Which, to preserve my peace, I had cast aside,
And sunk in deep oblivion.—Oh, that form!
That angel face on which my dotage hung!
How I have gaz'd upon her, till my soul
With very eagerness went forth towards her,
And issn'd at my eyes.—Was there a gem
Which the sun ripens in the Indian mine,
Or the rich bosom of the ocean yields? [hay,
What was there art could make, or wealth could
Which I have left unsought to deck her beauty?
What could her king do more?—And yet she fled.

Bel. Away with that sad fancy.

Dum. Oh, that day!

The thought of it must live for ever with me.
I met her, Belmour, when the royal spoiler
Bore here in triumph from my widow'd home!
Within his chariot, by his side she sat,
And listen'd to his talk with downward looks,
'Till sudden as she chanc'd aside to glance,
Her eyes encounter'd mine:—Oh! then, my friend!
Oh! who can paint my grief, and her amazement?
As at the stroke of death, twice turn'd she pale;
And twice a burning crimson blush'd all o'er her;
Then, with a sbrick heart-wounding, loud she cry'd,
While down her cheeks two gusling torrents ran
Fast falling on her hands, which thus she wrung:—
Mov'd at her grief, the tyrant ravisher,
With courteous action woo'd her off to turn;
Earnest he seem'd to plead, but all in vain;
Ev'n to the last she bent her sight towards me,
And follow'd me,—till I had lost myself.

Bel. Alas, for pity! Oh! those speaking tears!
Could they be false? Did she not suffer with you?
For though the king by force possess'd her person,
Her unconsenting heart dwelt still with you.
If all her former woes were not enough,
Look on her now; behold her where she wanders,
Hunted to death, distress'd on every side,
With no one hand to help; and tell me then,
If ever misery were known like her's? [*frame*]

Dum. And can she bear it? Can that delicate
Endure the beating of a storm so rude?
Can she, for whom the various seasons chang'd
To court her appetite and crown her board,
For whom the foreign vintages were press'd,
For whom the merchant spread his silken stores,
Can she—

Entreat for bread, and want the needful raiment
To wrap her shiv'ring bosom from the weather?
When she was mine, no care came ever nigh her;
I thought the gentle breeze that wakes the spring,
Too rough to breathe upon her; cheerfulness
Danc'd all the day before her, and at night
Soft slumbers waited on her downy pillow:—
Now, sad and shelterless, perhaps she lies,
When piercing winds blow sharp, and the chill rain
Drops from some pent-house on her wretched head,
Drenches her locks, and kills her with the cold.
It is too much:—hence with her past offences,
They are aton'd at full.—Why stay we then?
Oh! let us haste, my friend, and find her out.

Bel. Somewhere about this quarter of the town,
I hear the poor abandon'd creature lingers:
Her guard, though set with strictest watch to keep
All food and friendship from her, yet permit her
To wander in the streets, there choose her bed,
And rest her head on what cold stone she pleases.

Dum. Here then let us divide; each in his round
To search her sorrows out; whose hap it is
First to behold her, this way let him lead
Her fainting steps, and meet we here together. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Street.

*Enter JANE SHORE, her hair hanging loose on her
shoulders, and bare-footed.*

Jane S. Yet, yet endure, nor murmur, O my soul!
For are not thy transgressions great and number'd
Do they not cover thee like rising floods, [*less?*]
And press thee like a weight of waters down?
Wait then with patience, till the circling hours
Shall bring the time of thy appointed rest,
And lay thee down in death.

And hark! methinks the roar that late pursu'd me,
Sinks like the murmurs of a falling wind,
And softens into silence. Does revenge
And malice then grow weary, and forsake me?
My guard, too, that observ'd me still so close,
Tire in the task of their inhuman office,
And loiter far behind. Alas! I faint,
My spirits fail at once.—This is the door
Of my Alicia;—blessed opportunity!

I'll steal a little succour from her goodness,
Now, while no eye observes me. (*She knocks.*)

Enter Servant.

Is your lady,
My gentle friend, at home! Oh! bring me to her. (*Going in.*)

Serv. Hold, mistress, whither would you?
(*Throwing her back.*)

Jane S. Do you not know me?
Serv. I know you well, and know my orders too:
You must not enter here.

Jane S. Tell my Alicia, 'tis I would see her.
Serv. She is ill at ease, and will admit no visitor.

Jane S. But tell her
'Tis I, her friend, the partner of her heart,
Wait at the door and beg—

Serv. 'Tis all in vain:—
Go hence, and howl to those that will regard you.
(*Shuts the door.*)

Jane S. It was not always thus: the time has
been,
When this unfriendly door, that bars my passage,
Flew wide, and almost leap'd from off its hinges,
To give me entrance here: when this good house
Has pour'd forth all its dwellers to receive me;
When my approaches made a little holiday,
And every face was dress'd in smiles to meet me:
But now 'tis otherwise; and those who bless'd me,
Now curse me to my face. Why should I wander,
Stray further on, for I can die ev'n here!

(*She sits down.*)
Enter ALICIA, in disorder. [*baseness*]

Alic. What wretch art thou, whose misery and
Hangs on my door: whose hateful whine of woe
Breaks in upon my sorrows, and distracts
My jarring senses with thy beggar's cry?

Jane S. A very beggar, and a wretch, indeed;
One driv'n by strong calamity to seek
For succours here: one perishing for want,
Whose hunger has not tasted food these three days;
And humbly asks, for charity's dear sake,
A draught of water and a little bread.

Alic. And dost thou come to me, to me for bread?
I know thee not.—Go; hunt for it abroad, [*it,*]
Where wanton hands upon the earth have scatter'd
Or cast it on the waters.—Mark the eagle,
And hungry vulture, where they wind the prey;
Watch where the ravens of the valley feed,
And seek thy food with them:—I know thee not.

Jane S. (*Rises.*) And yet, there was a time,
when my Alicia
Has thought unhappy Shore her dearest blessing,
And mourn'd the live-long day she pass'd without
Inclining fondly to me she has sworn, [*me;*]
She lov'd me more than all the world besides.

Alic. Ha! say'st thou?—Let me look upon thee
well;—

'Tis true;—I know thee now;—a mischief on thee!
Thou art that fatal fair, that cursed she, [*me;*]
That set my brain a madd'ning. Thou has robb'd
Thou hast undone me.—Murder! O, my Hastings!
See his pale bloody head shoots glaring by me!
Avant! and come not near me.—

Jane S. To thy hand
I trusted all; gave my whole store to thee:
Nor do I ask it back; allow me but
The smallest pittance, give me but to eat,
Lest I fall down and perish here before thee.

Alic. Nay, tell not me! Where is thy king, thy
And all the cringing train of courtiers, [*Edward,*]
That bent the knee before thee?

Jane S. Oh! for mercy!
Alic. Mercy! I know it not!—for I am miserable.
I'll give thee Misery, for here she dwells;
This is her house, where the sun never dawns;
The bird of night sits screaming o'er the roof,
Grim spectres sweep along the horrid gloom,
And no light is heard but wailings and lamentings.
Hark! something cracks above! it shakes! it totters,

And see the nodding ruin falls to crush me!
 'Tis fall'n, 'tis here! I felt it on my brain!
 Let her take my counsel: [heart,
 Why shouldst thou be a wretch? Stab, tear thy
 And rid thyself of this detested being;
 I wo' not linger long behind thee here.
 A waving flood of bluish fire swells o'er me;
 And now 'tis out, and I am drown'd in blood.
 Ha! what art thou! thou horrid headless trunk?
 It is my Hastings! see, he wafts me on!
 Away! I go! I fly! I follow thee. (*Rushes off.*)
Jane S. Alas! she raves! her brain I fear is turn'd,
 In mercy look upon her, gracious heav'n,
 Nor visit her for any wrong to me!
 Sure I am near upon my journey's end:
 My head runs round, my eyes begin to fail,
 And dancing shadows swim before my sight,
 I can no more; (*lies down,*) receive me, thou cold
 earth,
 Thou common parent, take me to thy bosom,
 And let me rest with thee.

Enter BELMOUR.

Bel. Upon the ground!
 Thy miseries can never lay thee lower.
 Look up, thou poor afflicted one! thou mourner,
 Whom none has comforted! Where are thy friends,
 The dear companions of thy joyful days,
 Whose hearts thy warm prosperity made glad,
 Whose arms were taught to grow like ivy round thee,
 And bind thee to their bosoms?—Thus with thee,
 Thus let us live, and let us die, they said.
 Now where are they? [*aloof,*

Jane S. Ah, Belmour! where, indeed? they stand
 And view my desolation from afar!
 And yet thy goodness turns aside to pity me.
 Alas! there may be danger: get thee gone,
 Let me not pull a ruin on thy head,
 Leave me to die alone, for I am fall'n,
 Never to rise, and all relief is vain.

Bel. Yet raise thy drooping head; for I am come
 To chase away despair. Behold! where yonder
 That honest man, that faithful, brave Dumont,
 Is hastening to thy aid—

Jane S. Dumont! Ha! Where?

(*Raising herself, and looking about.*)
 Then heav'n has heard my prayer; his very name
 Renews the springs of life, and cheers my soul.
 Has he then 'scap'd the snare?

Bel. He has; but see—

He comes unlike the Dumont you knew,
 For now he wears your better angel's form,
 And comes to visit you with peace and pardon.

Enter SHORE.

Jane S. Speak, tell me! Which is he? and, oh!
 what would

This dreadful vision? See, it comes upon me—
 It is my husband—Ah! (*She swoons.*)

Shore. She faints: support her!

[*prise.*
Bel. Her weakness could not bear the strong sur-
 But see, she stirs! and the returning blood
 Faintly begins to blush again, and kindle
 Upon her ashy cheek:—

Shore. So,—gently raise her,— (*Raising her up.*)

Jane S. Ha! What art thou? Belmour.

Bel. How fare you, lady?

Jane S. My heart is thrill'd with horror.

Bel. Be of courage;—

Your husband lives! 'tis he, my worthiest friend.

Jane S. Still art thou there? still dost thou
 hover round me?

Oh, save me Belmour, from his angry shade!

Bel. 'Tis he himself! he lives! look up:—

Jane S. I dare not.

Oh! that my eyes could shut him out for ever.

Shore. Am I so hateful, then, so deadly to thee,
 To blast thy eyes with horror? Since I'm grown
 A burden to the world, myself, and thee,
 Would I had ne'er surviv'd to see thee more.

Jane S. Oh! thou most injur'd—dost thou live,
 indeed?

Fall then, ye mountains, on my guilty head:
 Hide me, ye rocks, within your secret caverns;
 Cast thy black veil upon my shame, O night!
 And shield me with thy sable wing for ever. [*thus?*

Shore. Why dost thou turn away?—Why tremble
 Why thus indulge thy fears, and in despair,
 Abandon thy distracted soul to horror?

Cast every black and guilty thought behind thee,
 And let 'em never vex thy quiet more.

My arms, my heart, are open to receive thee,
 To bring thee back to thy forsaken home,
 With tender joy, with fond forgiving love.—
 Let us haste.—

Now while occasion seems to smile upon us,
 Forsake this place of shame, and find a shelter.

Jane S. What shall I say to you? But I obey.

Shore. Lean on my arm.

Jane S. Alas! I'm wondrous faint: [*days.*
 But that's not strange, I have not eat these three

Shore. Oh, merciless!

Jane S. Oh! I am sick at heart!

Shore. Thou murd'rous sorrow!

Wo't thou still drink her blood, pursue her still?

Must she then die? O my poor penitent!

Speak peace to thy sad heart: she hears me not:

Grief masters ev'ry sense—

Enter CATESBY, with a Guard.

Cates. Seize on 'em both, as traitors to the

Bel. What means this violence? state!—

(*Guards lay hold on Shore and Belmour.*)

Cates. Have we not found you,

In scorn of the protector's strict command,

Assisting this base woman, and abetting

Her infamy?

Shore. Infamy on thy head!

Thou tool of power, thou pander to authority!

I tell thee knave, thou know'st of none so virtuous,

And she that bore thee was an Ethiop to her. [*em.*

Cates. You'll answer this at full:—away with

Shore. Is charity grown treason to your court?

What honest man would live beneath such rulers?

I am content that we should die together.

Cates. Convey the men to prison; but for her,—

Leave her to hunt her fortune as she may.

Jane S. I will not part with him:—for me!—

for me!—

Oh! must he die for me?

(*Following him as he is carried off—she falls.*)

Shore. Inhuman villains!

(*Breaks from the Guards.*)

Stand off! the agonies of death are on her!

She pulls, she gripes me hard with her cold hand.

Jane S. Was this blow wanting to complete my

Oh! let me go, ye ministers of terror. [*ruin?*

He shall offend no more, for I will die,

And yield obedience to your cruel master.

Tarry a little, but a little longer,

And take my last breath with you.

Shore. Oh, my love!

Why dost thou fix thy dying eyes upon me,

With such an earnest, such a piteous look,

As if thy heart were full of some sad meaning

Thou couldst not speak?—

Jane S. Forgive me!—but forgive me!

Shore. Be witness for me, ye celestial host,

Such mercy and such pardon as my soul

Accords to thee, and begs of heav'n to show thee;

May such befall me at my latest hour,

And make my portion blest or curst for ever.

Jane S. Then all is well, and I shall sleep in

peace;—

'Tis very dark, and I have lost you now:— [*you?*

Was there not something I would have bequeath'd

But I have nothing left me to bestow,

Nothing but one sad sigh. Oh! mercy, heav'n!

(*Dies.*)

LADY JANE GREY;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY NICHOLAS ROWE.



Act V.—Scene 2,

CHARACTERS.

DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND
DUKE OF SUFFOLK
BISHOP GARDINER
EARL OF PEMBROKE

EARL OF SUSSEX
LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY
SIR JOHN GATES
LIEUTENANT OF THE TOWER

LORDS OF THE COUNCIL
ATTENDANTS
DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK
LADY JANE GREY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Court.

Enter DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND, DUKE OF SUFFOLK, and SIR JOHN GATES.

Nor. 'Tis all in vain; heav'n has requir'd its pledge, And he must die.

Suff. Is there an honest heart, That loves our England, does not mourn for Edward?

The genius of our isle is shook with sorrow, Religion melts in ev'ry holy eye.

Nor. Ay, there, my lord, you touch our heaviest loss;

With him our holy faith is doom'd to suffer;
With him our church shall veil her sacred front,
Pride, ignorance, and rapine, shall return;
Blind bloody zeal and cruel priestly pow'r
Shall scourge the land for ten dark ages more.

Sir J. Is there no help in all the healing art,
No potent juice or drug, to save a life
So precious, and prevent a nation's fate?

Nor. What has been left untry'd that art could do?

His youthful sinews are unstrung, cold sweats
And deadly paleness sit upon his visage,
And ev'ry gasp we look shall be his last,

Sir J. Doubt not, your graces, but the popish faction

Will at this juncture urge their utmost force:
All on the princess Mary turn their eyes,
Well hoping she shall build again their altars,
And bring their idol worship back in triumph.

Nor. And shall we tamely yield ourselves to bondage,

Bow down before these holy purple tyrants,
And bid 'em tread upon our slavish necks?
No; let this faithful freeborn English hand
First dig my grave in liberty and honour;
And though I found but one more thus resolv'd,
That honest man and I would die together.

Suf. Doubt not there are ten thousand and ten thousand,
To own a cause so just.

Sir J. The list I gave
Into your grace's hand last night declares
My pow'r and friends at fall. (*To Northumberland.*)

Nor. Be it your care,
Good Sir John Gates, to see your friends appointed,

And ready for th' occasion: haste this instant;
Lose not a moment's time.

Sir J. I go, my lord. [*Exit.*]

Nor. Your grace's princely daughter, Lady Jane,

Is she yet come to court?

Suf. Not yet arriv'd,
But with the soonest I expect her here:

I know her duty to the dying king,
Join'd with my strict commands to hasten hither,
Will bring her on the wing.

Nor. Beseech your grace
To speed another messenger to press her;
For on her happy presence all our counsels
Depend and take their fate.

Suf. Upon the instant
Your grace shall be obey'd: I go to summon her. [*Exit.*]

Nor. What trivial influences hold dominion
O'er wise men's counsels and the fate of empire!
She must be here, and lodg'd in Guilford's arms,
Ere Edward dies, or all we've done is marr'd.

Ha! Pembroke! that's a bar which thwarts my way!

His fiery temper brooks not opposition,
And must be met with soft and supple arts,
Such as assuage the fierce and bend the strong.

Enter EARL OF PEMBROKE.

Good-morrow, noble Pembroke! we have staid
The meeting of the council for your presence.

Pem. For mine, my lord! you mock your servant sure

To say that I am wanted, where your self,
The great Alcides of our state, is present.
Whatever dangers menace prince or people,
Our great Northumberland is arm'd to meet 'em:
The ablest head and firmest heart you bear,
Nor need a second in the glorious task,
Equal yourself to all the toils of empire.

Nor. No; as I honour virtue, I have try'd
And know my strength too well; nor can the voice

Of friendly flattery, like yours, deceive me.

I know my temper liable to passions,
And all the frailties common to our nature;
Much therefore have I need of some good man,
Some wise and honest heart, whose friendly aid
Might guide my treading through our present dangers;

And by the honour of my name I swear,
I know not one of all our English peers
Whom I would choose for that best friend like
Pembroke!

Pem. Were not your grace too generous of soul,

To speak a language differing from your heart,
How might I think you could not mean this goodness

To one whom his ill fortune has ordain'd
The rival of your son?

Nor. No more; I scorn a thought
So much below the dignity of virtue.
'Tis true I look on Guilford like a father,
Lean to his side, and see but half his failings;
But on a point like this, when equal merit
Stands forth to make its bold appeal to honour,
And calls to have the balance held in justice,
Away with all the fondnesses of nature!
I judge of Pembroke and my son alike.

Pem. I ask no more to bind me to your service.

Nor. The realm is now at hazard, and bold fac-
tions

Threaten, change, tumult, and disastrous days.
These fears drive out the gentler thoughts of joy,
Of courtship, and of love. Grant, heav'n! the state

To fix in peace and safety once again,
Then speak your passion to the princely maid,
And fair success attend you. For myself,
My voice shall go as far for you, my lord,
As for my son, and beauty be the umpire.
But now a heavier matter calls upon us;
The king with life just lab'ring, and I fear
The council grow impatient at our stay.

Pem. One moment's pause and I attend your
grace. [*Exit Northumberland.*]

Old Winchester cries to me oft "Beware
Of proud Northumberland." The testy prelate,
Froward with age, with disappointed hopes,
And zealous for old Rome, rails on the duke,
Suspecting him to favour the new teachers;
Yet ev'n in that, if I judge right, he errs:
But were it so, what are these monkish quarrels,
These wordy wars of proud ill-manner'd school-
men,

To us and our lay interest? Let 'em rail
And worry one another at their pleasure.
This duke of late by many worthy offices
Has sought my friendship; and, yet more, his
son,

The noblest youth our England has to boast of,
The gentlest nature and the bravest spirit,
Has made me long the partner of his breast:
And see! he comes.

Enter LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY.

Oh, Guilford! just as thou wert ent'ring here,
My thought was running all thy virtues over,
And wond'ring how thy soul could choose a partner
So much unlike itself.

Guil. How could my tongue
Take pleasure and be lavish in thy praise!
How could I speak thy nobleness of nature,
Thy open manly heart, thy courage, constancy,
And inborn truth, unknowing to dissemble!
'Thou art the man in whom my snul delights,
In whom, next heav'n, I trust.

Pem. Oh, gen'rous youth!
What can a heart, stubborn and fierce like mine,
Return to all thy sweetness?—Yet I would,
I would be grateful—Oh, my cruel fortune!
Would I had never seen her, never cast
Mine eyes on Suffolk's daughter!

Guil. So would I!
Since 'twas my fate to see and love her first.

Pem. Oh! why should she, that universal good-
ness,

Like light, a common blessing to the world,
Rise like a comet fatal to our friendship,
And threaten it with ruin?

Guil. Heav'n forbid!
But tell me, Pembroke, is it not in virtue
To arm against this proud imperious passion?
If blind mistaken chance and partial beauty
Should join to favour Guilford?

Pem. Name it not;
My fiery spirits kindle at the thought,
And hurry me to rage.

Guil. And yet I think
I should not murmur were thy lot to prosper,
And mine to be refus'd; though sure the loss
Would wound me to the heart.

Pem. Ha! couldst thou bear it?
And yet perhaps thou might'st: thy gentle temper
Is form'd with passions mix'd in due proportion,
Where no one overbears nor plays the tyrant;
While mine, disdainng reason and her laws,
Like all thou must imagine wild and furious,
Now drives me headlong on, now whirls me back,
And hurls my unstable sitting soul
To ev'ry mad extreme. Then pity me,
And let my weakness stand—

Enter SIR JOHN GATES.

Sir J. The lords of council
Wait with impatience—

Pem. I attend their pleasure:
This only, and no more then. Whatsoever
Fortune decrees, still let us call to mind
Our friendship and our honour: and since love
Condemns us to be rivals for our prize,
Let us contend, as friends and brave men ought,
With openness and justice to each other,
That he who wins the fair one to his arms
May take her as the crown of great desert;
And if the wretched loser does repine,
His own heart and the world may all condemn him.

Guil. How cross the ways of life lie! While we
think

We travel on direct in one high road,
And have our journey's end oppos'd in view,
A thousand thwarting paths break in upon us
To puzzle and perplex our wand'ring steps:
Love, friendship, hatred, in their turns mislead us;
And ev'ry passion has its separate int'rest.
Where is that piercing foresight can unfold
Where all this mazy error will have end,
And tell the doom reserv'd for me and Pembroke?

'Tis in vain
This blind divining; let me think no more on't.
And see, the mistress of our fate appears!

Enter LADY JANE GREY, and Attendants.

Hail, princely maid! who with auspicious beauty
Cheer'st ev'ry drooping heart in this sad place,
Who, like the silver regent of the night,
Lift'st up thy sacred beams upon the land,
To bid the gloom look gay, dispel our horrors,
And make us less lament the setting sun.

Lady J. Yes, Guilford, well dost thou compare
my presence

To the faint comfort of the waning moon;
Like her cold orb a cheerless gleam I bring.
But say, how fares the king?

Guil. He lives as yet,
But ev'ry moment cuts away a hope,
Adds to our fears, and gives the infant saint
Great prospect of his op'ning heav'n.

Lady J. Oh, Guilford! what remains for wretched
England,

When he, our guardian angel, shall forsake us?

Guil. I own my heart bleeds inward at the
thought,

And yet forgive me, thou my native country,
Thou land of liberty, thou nurse of heroes,
Forgive me, if in spite of all thy dangers,
New springs of pleasure flow within thy bosom,
When thus 'tis giv'n me to behold those eyes,
Thus gaze, and wonder.

Lady J. Oh, vain flattery!
Lead me to pay my duty to the king,
To wet his pale cold hand with these last tears,
And share the blessings of his parting breath.

Guil. Were I like dying Edward, sure a touch
Of this dear hand would kindle life anew.
But I obey, I dread that gath'ring frown;
And oh! when'er my bosom swells with passion,
And my full heart is pain'd with ardent love,
Allow me but to look on you and sigh;
'Tis all the humble joy that Guilford asks.

Lady J. Still wilt thou frame thy speech to this
vain purpose,

When universal ruin gathers round,
And no escape is left us? Are we not
Like wretches in a storm, whom ev'ry moment
The greedy deep is gaping to devour?
The hope of life has ev'ry heart forsook,
And horror sits on each distracted look;
Trembling they dread just heav'n's avenging pow'r,
Mourn their past lives, and wait the fatal hour.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

*Enter DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND and DUKE OF
SUFFOLK.*

Nor. Yet then be cheer'd, my heart, amidst thy
mourning:

Though never day of grief was known like this,
Let me rejoice, and bless the hallow'd light,
Whose beams auspicious shine upon our union,
And bid me call the noble Suffolk brother.

Suf. I know not what my secret soul presages,
But something seems to whisper me within
That we have been too hasty.

Nor. Doubt not anything,
Nor hold the hour unlucky that good heav'n
Has giv'n to-day a blessing in our children,
To wipe away our tears for dying Edward.

Suf. In that I trust. Good angels be our guard,
And make my fears prove vain! But see! my
wife!

With her your son, the gen'rous Guilford, comes:
She has inform'd him of our present purpose.

Enter DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK AND LORD GUILFORD.

Guil. How shall I speak the fulness of my heart?

What shall I say to bless you for this goodness?

Oh, gracious princess! but my life is yours,
And all the bus'ness of my years to come
Is to attend with humblest duty on you,
And pay my vow'd obedience at your feet.

Duch. Yes, noble youth! I share in all thy joys.
But haste! inform thy daughter of our pleasure.

Nor. All desolate and drown'd in flowing tears,
By Edward's bed the pious princess sits,
And ev'ry sigh is wing'd with pray'rs so potent,
As strive with heav'n to save her dying lord.

Duch. From the first early days of infant life
A gentle band of friendship grew between 'em,
And, while our royal uncle Henry reign'd,
As brother and as sister bred together,
Beneath one common parent's care they liv'd.

Nor. A wondrous sympathy of soul conspir'd
To form the sacred union.

Enter LADY JANE GREY, weeping.

Lady J. Wo't thou not break, my heart?—

Suf. Alas! what mean'st thou?

Guil. Oh, speak!

Duch. How fares the king?

Nor. Say, is he dead?

Lady J. The saints and angels have him.

Duch. When I left him,

He seem'd a little cheer'd.

Lady J. As I approach'd to kneel and pay my
duty,

He rais'd his feeble eyes, and faintly smiling,
"Are you then come?" he cry'd; "I only liv'd
To bid farewell to thee my gentle cousin,"
With that he press'd my hand, and oh!—he said,
"When I am gone, do thou be good to England,
Keep to that faith in which we both were bred,
And to the end be constant. More I would,
But cannot"—There his falt'ring spirits fail'd,
Then sinking on his pillow, with a sigh
He breath'd his innocent and faithful soul
Into His hands who gave it.

Nor. Our grief be on his grave. Our present
duty

Enjoins to see his last commands obey'd.
I hold it fit his death be not made known
To any but our friends. To-morrow early
The council shall assemble at the Tower:
Meanwhile I beg your grace would straight inform
(*To the Duchess of Suffolk.*)

Your princely daughter of our resolution:

Our common int'rest in that happy tie
Demands our swiftest care to see it finish'd.

Duch. My lord, you have determin'd well.

Lord Guilford,

Be it your task to speak at large our purpose.
Daughter, receive this lord as one whom I,
Your father and his own, ordain your husband:
What more concerns our will and your obedience
We leave you to receive from him at leisure.

[*Exeunt Duke and Duchess of Suffolk, and Duke
of Northumberland.*

Guil. Wo't thou not spare a moment from thy
sorrows,

One little pause, while humbly I unfold
The happiest tale my tongue was ever bless'd
with?

Lady J. My heart is cold within me; ev'ry
sense

Is dead to joy: but I will hear thee, Guilford.

Yet oh! forgive me, if to all the story,
Though eloquence divine attend thy speaking,
Forgive me if I cannot better answer

Than weeping—thus, and thus—

Guil. If I offend thee,

Let me be dumb for ever!

No; though our noble parents had decreed,
And urg'd high reasons which import the state,
This night to give thee to my faithful arms,
My fairest bride, my only earthly bliss—

Lady J. How? Guilford! on this night?

Guil. This happy night;

Yet, if thou art resolv'd to cross my fate,
If this my utmost wish shall give thee pain,
Now rather let the stroke of death fall on me,
And stretch me out a lifeless corse before thee.

Lady J. Alas! I have too much of death already,
And want not thine to furnish out new horror.

Guil. Let me but call thee mine, confirm that hope,

To charm the doubts which vex my anxious soul,
For all the rest do thou allot it for me,
And at thy pleasure portion out my blessings.

Lady J. Trust our fate.

Permit me now to leave thee and retire;
I'll summon all my reason and my duty
To sooth this storm within, and frame my heart
To yield obedience to my noble parents.

Guil. Good angels minister their comforts to
And oh! [thee!

I beg thee, I conjure thee, drive away
Those murd'rous thoughts of grief that kill thy quiet,

Restore thy gentle bosom's native peace,
Lift up the light of gladness in thy eyes,
And cheer my heaviness with one dear smile.

Lady J. Yes, Guilford, I will study to forget
All that the royal Edward has been to me,
My private loss no longer will I mourn,
But ev'ry tender thought to thee shall turn;
With patience I'll submit to heav'n's decree,
And what I lost in Edward find in thee.
But oh! when I revolve what ruins wait
Our sinking altars and the falling state,
Now sorrow to my lab'ring breast succeeds,
And my whole heart for wretched England bleeds.

[Exit.

Guil. My heart sinks in me at her soft explaining,

And ev'ry moving accent that she breathes
Resolves my courage, slackens my tough nerves,
And melts me down to infancy and tears.

Enter EARL OF PEMBROKE.

Pem. Edward is dead; so said the great Northumberland,

As now he shot along by me in haste:
He press'd my hand, and in a whisper begg'd me
To guard the secret carefully as life
Till some few hours should pass, for much hung on it,

Much may indeed hang on it. (*Aside.*) See, my Guilford!

My friend! (*Speaking to him.*)

Guil. Ha! Pembroke! (*Starting.*)

Pem. Wherefore dost start?
Why sits that wild disorder on thy visage,
Somewhat that looks like passions strange to thee,
The paleness of surprise and ghastly fear?
Since I have known thee first, and call'd thee friend,

I never saw thee so unlike thyself,
So chang'd upon a sudden.

Guil. How! so chang'd!

Pem. So to my eye thou seem'st.

Guil. The king is dead.

Pem. I learn'd it from thy father
Just as I enter'd here. But say, could that,
A fate which ev'ry moment we expected,
Distract thy thought or shock thy temper thus?

Guil. Oh, Pembroke! 'tis in vain to hide from thee,

For thou hast look'd into my artless bosom,
And seen at once the hurry of my soul.
'Tis true thy coming struck me with surprise.
I have a thought—but wherefore said I one?
I have a thousand thoughts all up in arms.

Pem. Then sure our better angels call'd me hither!

For this is friendship's hour and friendship's office,
To come when counsel and when help is wanting,
To share the pain of ev'ry gnawing care,
To speak of comfort in the time of trouble,
To reach a hand and save thee from adversity.

Guil. And wo't thou be a friend to me indeed?
And while I lay my bosom bare before thee,
Wo't thou with patience hear, and judge with temper?

And if perchance thou meet with something harsh,
Somewhat to rouse thy rage and grate thy soul,
Wo't thou be master of thyself and bear it?

Pem. Away with all this needless preparation!
Thou know'st thou art so dear, so sacred to me,
That I can never think thee an offender.
If it were so that I indeed must judge thee,
I should take part with thee against myself.

Guil. But suppose
The thought were somewhat that concern'd our love.

Pem. No more; thou know'st we spoke of that to-day,

And on what terms we left it, 'Tis a subject,
Of which, if possible, I would not think;
I beg that we may mention it no more.

Guil. Can we not speak of it with temper?

Pem. No,
Thou know'st I cannot; therefore pr'ythee spare it.

Guil. Oh! could the secret I could tell thee sleep.

And the world never know it, my fond tongue
Should cease from speaking ere I would unfold it,
Or vex thy peace with an officious tale;
But since, howe'er ungrateful to thy ear,
It must be told thee once, hear it from me.

Pem. Speak then, and ease the doubts that shock my soul.

Guil. Suppose thy Guilford's better stars prevail,
And crown his love—

Pem. Say not suppose; 'tis done:
Seek not for vain excuse or soft'ning words:
Thou hast prevaricated with thy friend,

By underhand contrivances undone me;
And while my open nature trusted in thee,
Thou hast stepp'd in between me and my hopes,
And ravish'd from me all my soul held dear:
Thou hast betray'd me—

Guil. How! betray'd thee, Pembroke!

Pem. Yes, falsely, like a traitor.

Guil. Have a care.

Pem. But think not I will bear the foul play from thee;

There was but this which I could ne'er forgive.

My soul is up in arms; my injur'd honour,
Impatient of the wrong, calls for revenge;
And though I love thee—fondly—

Guil. Hear me yet,
And Pembroke shall acquit me to himself;
Hear while I tell how fortune dealt between us,
And gave the yielding beauty to my arms—

Pem. What, hear it! stand and listen to thy triumph!

Thou think'st me tame indeed. No, hold, I charge thee,

Lest I forget that ever we were friends,
Lest, in the rage of disappointed love,
I rush at once and tear thee for thy falsehood.

Guil. Thou warn'st me well; and I were rash as thou art

To trust the secret sum of all my happiness
With one not master of himself. Farewell. (*Going.*)

Pem. Ha! art thou going? think not thus to part,

Nor leave me on the rack of this uncertainty.

Guil. What wouldst thou further?

Pem. Tell it to me all;

Say thou art marry'd, say thou hast possess'd her,

And rioted in vast excess of bliss,
That I may curse myself, and thee, and her.
Come, tell me how thou didst supplant thy friend;
How didst thou look with that betraying face,
And smiling plot my ruin?

Guil. Give me way:

When thou art better temper'd I may tell thee,
And vindicate at full my love and friendship.

Pem. And dost thou hope to shun me, then, thou traitor?

No; I will have it now, this moment, from thee,
(*Laying his hand upon his sword.*)
Or stab the lurking treason in thy heart.

Guil. Ha! stay thee there, nor let thy frantic hand
(*Stopping him.*)

Unsheathe thy weapon. If the sword be drawn,
If once we meet on terms like those, farewell
To ev'ry thought of friendship; one must fall.

Pem. Curse on thy friendship! I would break the band.

Guil. That as you please—Beside, this place is sacred,

And wo' not be profan'd with brawls and outrage.
You know I dare be found on any summons.

Pem. 'Tis well. My vengeance shall not loiter long:

Henceforward let the thoughts of our past lives
Be torn'd to deadly and remorseless hate.

Here I give up the empty name of friend,
Renounce all gentleness all commerce with thee,
To death defy thee as my mortal foe;

And when we meet again, may swift destruction
Rid me of thee, or rid me of myself. [*Exit.*]

Guil. The fate I ever fear'd is fall'n upon me,
And long ago my boding heart divin'd

A breach like this from his un govern'd rage.
Oh! Pembroke, thou hast done me much injustice,
For I have borne thee true unfeign'd affection:

'Tis past, and thou art lost to me for ever. [*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Tower.*

Enter EARL OF PEMROKE and BISHOP GARDINER.

Gar. Nay, by the rood, my lord, you were to blame

To let a hair-brain'd passion be your guide,
And hurry you into such mad extremes.

Marry, you might have made much worthy profit
By patient hearing; the unthinking lord

Had brought forth ev'ry secret of his soul;
Then, when you were the master of his bosom,

That was the time to use him with contempt,
And turn his friendship back upon his hands.

Pem. Thou talk'st as if a madman could be wise.
Oh! Winchester, thy hoary frozen age

Can never guess my pain, can never know
The burning transports of untam'd desire.

Gar. Have you not heard of what has happen'd since?

Pem. I have not had a minute's peace of mind,
A moment's peace, to rest from rage, or think.

Gar. Learn it from me then; but, ere I speak,
I warn you to be master of yourself.

Though, as you know, they have confin'd me long,
Gra'mercy to their goodness! pris'ner here;

Yet as I am allow'd to walk at large
Within the Tower, and hold free speech with any,

I have not dreamt away my thoughtless hours:
To prove this true, this morn a trusty spy

Has brought me word that yester ev'ning late,
In spite of all the grief for Edward's death,

Your friends were marry'd.

Pem. Marry'd! who?—Damnation!

Gar. Lord Guilford Dudley and the Lady Jane.

Pem. Curse on my stars!

Gar. Nay, in the name of grace,
Restrain this sinful passion: all's not lost
In this one single woman.

Pem. I have lost

More than the female world can give me back:

I had beheld ev'n her own sex unmov'd,
Look'd o'er 'em like a bed of gaudy flow'rs
That lift their painted heads and live a day,
Then shed their trifling glories unregard'd;
My heart disdain'd their beauties, till she came,
With ev'ry grace that nature's hand could give,
And with a mind so great it spoke its essence
Immortal and divine.

Gar. She was a wonder;
Detraction must allow that.

Pem. A wonder, Winchester!

Thou know'st not what she was, nor can I speak
her,

More than to say she was that only blessing
My soul was set upon, and I have lost her.

Gar. Your state is not so bad as you would
make it,

Nor need you thus abandon ev'ry hope.

Pem. Ha! Wo't thou save me, snatch me from
despair,

And bid me live again?

Gar. She may be yours.

Suppose her husband die.

Pem. Oh! vain, vain hope!

Gar. Marry, I do not hold that hope so vain.

These gossellers have had their golden days,
And lorded it at will, with proud despite
Have trodden down our holy Roman faith,
Ransack'd our shrines, and driv'n her saints to
exile;

But if my divination fail me not,
Their haughty hearts shall be abas'd ere long,
And feel the vengeance of our Mary's reign.

Pem. And wouldst thou have my fierce impati-
ence stay?

Bid me lie bound upon a rack, and wait

For distant joys, whole ages yet behind?

Can love attend on politicians' schemes,

Expect the slow events of cautious counsels,
Could unresolving heads and creeping time?

Gar. To-day, or I am ill-inform'd, Northumber-
land,

With easy Suffolk, Guilford, and the rest,

Meet here in council on some deep design,

Some traitorous contrivance, to protect

Their upstart faith from near approaching ruin:

But there are punishments—halters and axes

For traitors, and consuming flames for heretics:

The happy bridegroom may be yet cut short

Ev'n in his highest hope—But go not you,

Howe'er the fawning sire, old Dudley, court you;

No, by the holy rood I charge you, mix not

With their pernicious counsels—Mischief waits

'em,

Sure, certain, unavoidable destruction.

Pem. Ha! join with them the cursed Dudley's

race,

Who, while they held me in their arms betray'd me,

Scorn'd me for not suspecting they were villains,

And made a mock'ry of my easy friendship!

No, when I do, dishonour be my portion.

Gar. I would not have you.—Hie you to the

city,

And join with those that love our ancient faith.

Gather your friends about you, and be ready

T' assert our zealous Mary's royal title,

And doubt not but her grateful hand shall give you

To see your soul's desire upon your enemies:

The church shall pour her ample treasures forth

too,

And pay you with ten thousand years of pardon.

Pem. No: keep your blessings back, and give

me vengeance:

Give me to tell that soft deceiver Guilford,

Thus, traitor, hast thou done, thus hast thou

wrong'd me,

And thus thy treason finds a just reward.

Gar. But soft! no more! the lords o'the council come;

Hal by the mass, the bride and bridegroom too!
Retire with me, my lord: we must not meet 'em.

Pen. 'Tis they themselves, the cursed, happy pair!

Haste, Winchester, haste! let us fly for ever,
And drive her from my very thoughts if possible.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY and LADY JANE GREY.

Guil. What shall I say to thee? what pow'r divine

Will teach my tongue to tell thee what I feel,
To pour the transports of my bosom forth,
And make thee partner of the joy dwells there?
Oh, my fair one!

Thy Edward shines amongst the brightest stars,
And yet thy sorrows seek him in the grave.

Lady J. Alas! my dearest lord, a thousand griefs

Beset my anxious heart; and yet, as if
The burthen were too little, I have added
The weight of all thy cares, and, like the miser,
Increase of wealth has made me but more wretched,
I tremble, and my anxious heart is pain'd
Lest aught but good should happen to my Guilford.

Guil. Nothing but good can happen to thy Guilford,

While thou art by his side, his better angel,
His blessing and his guard.

Lady J. Why came we hither?

Guil. To thee, my princess,
Whose royal veins are rich in Henry's blood,
With one consent the noblest heads are bow'd;
From thee they ask a sanction to their counsels,
And from thy healing hand expect a cure
For England's loss in Edward.

Lady J. How! from me! [*ine?*]

Alas! my lord—But sure thou mean'st to mock
Guil. No, by the love my faithful heart is full of!
But see, thy mother, gracious Suffolk, comes
To intercept my story: she shall tell thee,
For in her look I read the lab'ring thought,
What vast event thy fate is now disclosing.

Enter DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK.

Duch. No more complain, indulge thy tears no more,

Thy pious grief has giv'n the grave its due;
Make room to entertain the coming glory!
For majesty and purple greatness court thee,
Honour and low subjection wait: a crown,
A crown, my daughter, England's crown, attends
To bind thy brows with its imperial wreath.

Lady J. Amazement chills my veins! What says my mother?

Duch. 'Tis heav'n's decree; for our expiring Edward,

When now just struggling to his native skies,
Ev'n on the verge of heav'n, in sight of angels
That hover'd round to waft him to the stars,
Ev'n then declar'd my Jane for his successor.

Lady J. Could Edward do this? could the dying saint

Bequeath his crown to me? Oh! fatal bounty,
To me! but 'tis impossible!

Duch. But see, thy father
Northumberland, with all the council come
To pay their vow'd allegiance at thy feet,
To kneel and call thee queen.

Lady J. Support me, Guilford;
Give me thy aid; stay thou my fainting soul,
And help me to repress this growing danger.

Enter DUKE OF SUFFOLK, DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND, Lords and others of the Privy Council.

Nor. Hail, sacred princess! sprung from ancient kings,

Our England's dearest hope, undoubted offspring
Of York and Lancaster's united line,
Hail, royal Jane! behold we bend our knees,
(*They kneel.*)

The pledge of homage and thy land's obedience;
With humblest duty thus we kneel, and own thee
Our liege, our sovereign lady, and our queen.

Lady J. Oh! rise,
My father, rise! (*To Suffolk.*)
And you my father too! (*To Northumberland.*)
Rise all, nor cover me with this confusion.

(*They rise.*)
What means this mock, this masking shew of greatness?

Why do ye hang these pageant glories on me,
And dress me up in honours not my own?

Nor. The daughters of our late great master,
Henry,

Stand both by law excluded from succession.
To make all firm,

And fix a pow'r unquestion'd in your hand,
Edward by will bequeath'd his crown to you,
And the concurring lords in council met
Have ratified the gift.

Lady J. Are crowns and empire,
Trifles of such light moment, to be left
Like some rich toy,
The pledge of parting friends! Can kings do thus,
And give away a people for a legacy?

Nor. Forgive me, princely lady, if my wonder
Seizes each sense, each faculty of mind,
To see the utmost wish the great can form,
A crown, thus coldly met; a crown, which, slighted
And left in scorn by you, shall soon be sought,
And find a joyful wearer, one perhaps
Of blood unkindred to your royal house,
And fix its glories in another line.

Lady J. Where art thou now, thou partner of my cares? (*Turning to Guilford.*)

Guil. See, by thy side thy faithful Guilford stands,

Prepar'd to keep distress and danger from thee,
To wear thy sacred cause upon his sword,
And war against the world in thy defence.

Nor. Oh!

Methinks I see you seated on the throne,
Assembled senates wait with awful dread
To firm your high commands and make 'em fate.

Lady J. You turn to view the painted side of royalty,

And cover all the cares that lurk beneath.
Is it to be a queen, to sit aloft

In solemn dull uncomfortable state,
The flatter'd idol of a servile court?

Is it to draw a pompous train along,
A pageant for the wond'ring crowd to gaze at?
Alas, Northumberland!—my father!—is it not
To live a life of care, and when I die,
Have more to answer for before my Judge
Than any of my subjects?

Suf. Behold, we stand upon the brink of ruin,
And only thou canst save us. Persecution,
The fiend of Rome and hell, prepares her tortures;

See where she comes in Mary's priestly train!
Still wo't thou doubt, till thou behold her stalk
Red with the blood of martyrs, and wide wasting
O'er England's bosom?

Guil. Amidst that ruin,
Think thou behold'st thy Guilford's head laid low,
Bloody and pale—

Lady J. Oh! spare the dreadful image!

Guil. Oh! would the misery be bounded there,
My life were little; but the rage of Rome
Demands whole hecatombs, a land of victims.
Mary shall by her kindred Spain be taught
To bend our necks beneath a brazen yoke,
And rule o'er wretches with an iron sceptre.

Lady J. Avert that judgment, heav'n!

Whate'er thy Providence allots for me,
In mercy spare my country.

Guil. Oh, my queen!

Does not thy great, thy gen'rous heart relent
To think this land, for liberty so fam'd,
Shall have her tow'ring front at once laid low,
And robb'd of all its glory!

Lady J. Yes, my lov'd lord, my soul is mov'd
like thine,

At ev'ry danger which invades our England;
My cold heart kindles at the great occasion,
And could be more than man in her defence:
But where is my commission to redress?
Or whence my pow'r to save? Can Edward's will,
Or twenty met in council, make a queen?

Can you, my lords, give me the pow'r to canvass
A doubtful title with King Henry's daughters?
Where are the rev'rend sages of the law
To guide me with their wisdoms, and point out
The paths which right and justice bid me tread?

Nor. The judges all attend, and will, at leisure,
Resolve you ev'ry scruple.

Lady J. They exclaim;

But where are those, my lord, that make the law?
Where are the ancient honours of the realm,
The nobles with the mitred fathers join'd?
The wealthy commons solemnly assembled?
Where is that voice of a consenting people
To pledge the universal faith with mine,
And call me justly queen?

Guil. Our foes, already
High in their hopes, devote us all to death:
Haste, then, and save us, while 'tis giv'n to save
Your country, your religion.

Nor. Save your friends!

Suf. Your father!

Duch. Mother!

Guil. Husband!

Lady J. Take me, crown me,
Invest me with this royal wretchedness;
Let me not know one happy minute more;
Let all my sleepless nights be spent in care,
My days be vex'd with tumults and alarms;
If only I can save you, if my fate
Has mark'd me out to be the public victim,
I take the lot with joy. Yes, I will die
For that eternal truth my faith is fix'd on,
And that dear native land which gave me birth.

Guil. Wake ev'ry tuneful instrument to tell it,
And let the trumpet's sprightly note proclaim
My Jane is England's queen!
Thy name shall echo through the rescu'd isle,
And reach applauding heav'n!

Lady J. Oh! Guilford, what do we give up for
glory?

For glory! that's a toy I would not purchase;
An idle, empty bubble: but, for England!
What must we lose for that! Since, then, my fate
Has forc'd this hard exchange upon my will,
Let gracious heav'n allow me one request:
For that best peace in which I once did dwell,
All that I ask is, though my fortune frown,
And bury me beneath this fatal crown,
Let that one good be added to my doom,
To save this land from tyranny and Rome.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Tower.*

Enter EARL OF PEMBROKE and BISHOP
GARDINER.

Gar. In an unlucky and accursed hour
Set forth that traitor duke, that proud Northum-
berland.

Do thou, oh! holy Becket, the protector,
The champion, and the martyr of our church,
Appear, and once more own the cause of Rome;
Beat down his lance, break thou his sword in battle,
And cover foul rebellion with confusion.

Pem. I saw him marching at his army's head;
I mark'd him issuing through the city-gate
In harness all appointed as he pass'd,
And (for he wore his heaver up) could read
Upon his visage horror and dismay.
No voice of cheerful salutation cheer'd him,
None wish'd his arms might thrive, or bad God
speed him;

But through a staring ghastly-looking crowd,
Unhail'd, unbles'd, with heavy heart he went,
As if his traitor father's laggard ghost,
And Somerset fresh bleeding from the axe,
On either hand, had usher'd him to ruin.

Gar. Nor shall the holy vengeance loiter long.
At Farmingham, in Suffolk, lies the queen,
Mary, our pious mistress, where each day
The nobles of the land and swarming populace
Gather, and list beneath her royal ensigns.
The fleet commanded by Sir Thomas Jerningham,
Set out in warlike manner to oppose her,
With one consent have join'd to own her cause;
The valiant Sussex, and Sir Edward Hastings,
With many more of note, are up in arms,
And all declare for her.

Enter an Officer, with a guard.

Offi. Seize on 'em both.

(*Guards seize Pem. and Gar.*)

My lord, you are a pris'ner to the state.

Pem. Ha! by whose order?

Offi. By the queen's command,
Sign'd and deliver'd by Lord Guilford Dudley.

Pem. Curse on his traitor's heart!

Gar. Rest you contented;
You have loiter'd here too long; but use your pa-
tience;

These bonds shall not be lasting.

Offi. As for you, sir, (To Gardiner.)

'Tis the queen's pleasure you be close confin'd;
You've us'd that fair permission was allow'd you
To walk at large within the tower unworthily:
You're noted for an over-busy meddler,
A secret practiser against the state,
For which henceforth your limits shall be straiter.
Hence, to your chamber.

Gar. Farewell, gentle Pembroke,
I trust that we shall meet on blither terms;
Till then amongst my beads I will remember you,
And give you to the keeping of the saints.

[*Exeunt part of the Guards with Gardiner.*]

Pem. Now whither must I go?

Offi. This way, my lord. (Going off.)

Enter LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY.

Guil. Hold, captain! ere you go, I have a word
or two

For this your noble pris'ner.

Offi. At your pleasure:
I know my duty, and attend your lordship.

(*Retires with the Guards.*)

Guil. Is all the gentleness that was betwixt us
So lost, so swept away from thy remembrance,
Thou canst not look upon me?

Pem. Ha! not look!

What terrors are there in the Dudley's race
That Pembroke dares not look upon and scorn?
And yet, 'tis true, I would not look upon thee:
Our eyes avoid to look on what we hate,
As well as what we fear.

Guil. You hate me, then?

Pem. I do; and wish perdition may o'ertake
Thy father, thy false self, and thy whole name.

Guil. And yet, as sure as rage disturbs thy
reason,

And masters all the noble nature in thee,
As sure as thou hast wrong'd me, I am come
In tenderness of friendship to preserve thee,
To plant ev'n all the pow'r I have before thee,
And fence thee from destruction with my life.

Pem. Friendship from thee! but my just soul
disdains thee.

Hence! take the prostituted hauble back,
But thou art come, perhaps, to vaunt thy greatness,
And set thy purple pomp to view before me,
To let me know that Guilford is a king,
That he can speak the word and give me freedom.
Oh! short liv'd pageant! hadst thou all the pow'r
Which thy vain soul would grasp at, I would die,
Rot in a dungeon, ere receive a grace,
The least, the meanest courtesy, from thee.

Guil. Oh! Pembroke, but I have not time to
talk,

For danger presses; danger unforeseen,
And secret as the shaft that flies by night,
Is aiming at thy life. Captain, a word:

(*To the Officer.*)

I take your pris'ner to my proper charge;
Draw off your guard, and leave his sword with me.

[*The Officer delivers the sword to Lord
Guilford, and goes out with his Guard.
Guilford offers the sword to Pembroke.*]

Receive this gift ev'n from a rival's hand;
And if thy rage will suffer thee to hear
The counsel of a man once call'd thy friend,
Fly from this fatal place and seek thy safety.

Pem. How now! what shew, what mockery is
this?

Guil. Oh! take thy sword, and let thy valiant
hand

Be ready arm'd to guard thy noble life:
The time, the danger, and the wild impatience,
Forbid me all to enter into speech with thee,
Or I could tell thee—

Pem. No; it needs not, traitor!
For all thy poor, thy little arts are known.
Thou fear'st my vengeance, and art come to fawn,
To make a merit of that proffer'd freedom,
Which, in despite of thee, a day shall give me.
Nor can my fate depend on thee, false Guilford;
For know, to thy confusion, ere the sun
Twice gild the east, our royal Mary comes
To end thy pageant reign and set me free.

Guil. Ungrateful and unjust! hast thou, then,
known me

So little to accuse my heart of fear?
Hast thou forgotten Musselborough's field?
Did I then fear, when by thy side I fought,
And dy'd my maiden sword in Scottish blood?
But this is madness all.

Pem. Give me my sword. (*Takes his sword.*)
Perhaps, indeed, I wrong thee: thou hast thought,
And conscious of the injury thou hast done me,
Art come to proffer me a soldier's justice,
And meet my arm in single opposition:
Lead, then, and let me follow to the field.

Guil. Yes, Pembroke, thou shalt satisfy thy
vengeance,

And write thy bloody purpose on my bosom:
But let death wait to-day. By our past friendship,
In honour's name, by ev'ry sacred tie,
I beg thee ask no more, but haste from hence.

Pem. What mystic meaning lurks beneath thy
words?

What fear is this which thou wouldst awe my soul
with?

Is there a danger Pembroke dares not meet?

Guil. Oh! spare my tongue a tale of guilt and
horror!

Trust me this once, believe me when I tell thee,
Thy safety and thy life is all I wish.
Away!

Pem. Curse on this shuffling, dark, ambiguous
phrase!

If thou wouldst have me think thou mean'st me
fairly,

Speak with that plainness honesty delights in,
And let thy double tongue for once be true.

Guil. Forgive me, filial piety and nature,

If thus compell'd, I break your sacred laws,
Reveal my father's crime, and blot with infamy
The hoary head of him who gave me being,
To save the man whom my soul loves from death.
(*Gives a paper.*)

Read there the fatal purpose of thy foe.

Since he parted,

Thy ways have all been watch'd, thy steps been
mark'd,

Thy secret treaties with the malcontents
That harbour in the city, thy conferring
With Gard'ner here in the tower, all is known,
And, in pursuance of that bloody mandate,
A set of chosen ruffians wait to end thee:
There was but one way left me to preserve thee;
I took it, and this morning sent my warrant
To seize upon thy person.—But, begone!

Pem. 'Tis so; 'tis truth; I see his honest heart.

(*Aside.*)

Guil. I have a friend of well try'd faith and
courage,

Who, with a fit disguise and arms conceal'd,
Attends without to guard thee hence with safety.

Pem. What is Northumberland? and what art
thou?

Guil. Waste not the time; away!

Pem. Here let me fix,

And gaze with everlasting wonder on thee.
What is there good or excellent in man
That is not found in thee? Thy virtues flash,
They break at once on my astonish'd soul.
Think I know thee honest.

Guil. For ever I could hear thee; but thy life—
Oh! Pembroke, linger not.

Pem. And can I leave thee,
Ere I have clasp'd thee in my eager arms,
And giv'n thee back my sad repenting heart?
Believe me, Guilford, like the patriarch's dove,
(*Embracing.*)

It wander'd forth, but found no resting place
Till it came home again to lodge with thee.

Guil. What is there that my soul can more
desire

Than these dear marks of thy returning friendship?
The danger comes: if you stay longer here,
You die, my Pembroke.

Pem. Let me stay and die;
For if I go, I go to work thy ruin.
Thou know'st not what a foe thou send'st me forth,
That I have sworn destruction to the queen,
And pledg'd my faith to Mary and her cause:
My honour is at stake.

Guil. I know 'tis given:
But go—the stronger thy engagements there
The more's thy danger here. Fly, begone!

Pem. Yes, I will go; for, see, behold she comes!
Oh! Guilford, hide me, shield me from her sight;
Ev'ry mad passion kindles up again,
Love, rage, despair—and yet I will be master—
I will remember thee—Oh! my torn heart!
I have a thousand thousand things to say,
But cannot, dare not stay to look on her. [*Exit.*]

Enter LADY JANE GREY, *reading.*

Guil. What read'st thou there, my queen?

Lady J. 'Tis Plato's Phædon;
Where dying Socrates takes leave of life
With such an easy, careless, calm, indifference,
As if the trifle were of no account,
Mean in itself, and only to be worn
In honour of the giver.

Guil. Shall thy soul
Still scorn the world, still fly the joys that court?
Still shall she soar on contemplation's wing,
And mix with nothing meaner than the stars?

Lady J. The faithless counsellors
Are fled from hence to join the princess Mary.
The servile herd of courtiers, who so late
In low obedience bent the knee before me;

They who with zealous tongues and hands uplifted,
Besought me to defend their laws and faith,
Vent their lewd execrations on my name,
Proclaim me trait'ess now, and to the scaffold
Doom my devoted head.

Guil. The changeling villains!
That pray for slavery, fight for their bonds,
And slurr the blessing, liberty, like ruin.
But wherefore do I loiter tamely here?
Give me my arms: I will preserve my country
Ev'n in her own despite. Some friends I have
Who will or die or conquer in thy cause,
Thine and religion's, thine and England's cause.

Lady J. Art thou not all my treasure, all my
guard?

And wo't thou take from me the only joy,
The last defence, is left me here below?
Think not thy arm can stem the driving torrent,
Or save a people who, with blinded rage,
Urge their own fate, and strive to be undone.
Northumberland, thy father, is in arms,
And if it be in valour to defend us,
His sword, that long has known the way to con-
quest,
Shall be our surest safety.

Enter DUKE OF SUFFOLK.

Suf. Oh! my children!

Lady J. Alas! what means my father?

Suf. Oh! my son,

Thy father, great Northumberland; on whom
Our dearest hopes were built—

Guil. Ha! what of him?

Suf. Is lost, betray'd!

His army, onward as he march'd, shrunk from him,
Moulder'd away, and melted by his side;
With some few followers he arriv'd at Cambridge,
But there ev'n they forsook him, and himself
Was forc'd, with heavy heart and wat'ry eye,
To cast his cap up with dissembled cheer,
And cry "God save Queen Mary!" But, alas!
Little avail'd the semblance of that loyalty;
For soon, thereafter, by the Earl of Arundel
With treason he was charg'd, and there arrested,
And now he brings him pris'n'er up to London.

Lady J. Then there's an end of greatness, the
vain dream

Of empire and a crown that danc'd before me,
Is vanish'd all at once—Why, fare it well!

Guil. And canst thou bear this sudden turn of
fate

With such unshaken temper?

Lady J. For myself,

If I could form a wish for heaven to grant,
It should have been to rid me of this crown.
And thou, o'er-ruling, great, all-knowing Pow'r!
Thou who discern'st our thoughts, who seest 'em
rising

And forming in the soul, oh! judge me, thou,
If e'er ambition's guilty fires have warm'd me,
If e'er my heart inclin'd to pride, to pow'r,
Or join'd in being a queen. I took the sceptre
To save his land, thy people, and thy altars:
And now behold, I bend my grateful knee

(*Kneeling.*)

In humble adoration of that mercy
Which quits me of the vast unequal task.

Enter DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK.

Duch. Nay, keep that posture still, and let us
join,

Fix all our knees by thine, lift up our hands,
And seek for help and pity from above;
For earth and faithless man will give us none.

Lady J. What is the worst our cruel fate or-
dains us?

Duch. Curs'd be my fatal counsels! curs'd my
tongue,
That pleaded for thy ruin, and persuaded

Thy guiltless feet to tread the paths of greatness!
My child, I have undone thee.

Lady J. Oh! my mother,
Should I not bear a portion in your sorrows?

Duch. Alas! thou hast thy own, a double portion.
Mary is come, and the revolting Londoners,
Who beat the heav'ns with thy applauded name,
Now crowd to meet and hail her as their queen.
Sussex is enter'd here, commands the tow'r,
Has plac'd his guards around, and this sad place,
So late thy palace, is become our prison.

I saw him bend his knee to cruel Gard'ner,
Who, freed from his confinement, ran to meet him,
Embrac'd and bless'd him with a hand of blood;
Each hast'ning moment I expect 'em here,
To seize and pass the doom of death upon us.

Guil. Ha! seiz'd! shalt thou be seiz'd, and shall
I stand

And tamely see thee borne away to death?
Thee blasted be my coward name for ever.
No, I will set myself to guard this spot,
To which our narrow empire now is shrunk:
Here I will grow the bulwark of my queen,
Nor shall the band of violence profane thee
Until my breast have borne a thousand wounds,
Till this torn, mangled body sink at once
A heap of purple ruin at thy feet.

Lady J. And could thy rash, distracted rage do
thins?

Draw thy vain sword against an armed multitude?
Oh! call thy better, nobler courage to thee,
And let us meet this adverse fate with patience.
Be thyself,
For see, the trial comes!

*Enter EARL OF SUSSEX, BISHOP GARDINER,
Officers, and Soldiers.*

Suf. Guards, execute your orders; seize the
traitors;

Here my commission ends. To you, my lord,
(*To Gardiner.*)

So our great mistress, royal Mary, bids,
I leave the full disposal of these pris'ners:
To your wise care the pious queen commends
Her sacred self, her crown, and what's yet more,
The holy Roman church, for whose dear safety
She wills your utmost diligence be shewn
To bring rebellion to the bar of justice.
Yet farther, to proclaim how much she trusts
In Winchester's deep thought and well tried faith,
The seal attends to grace those rev'rend hands;
And when I next salute you, I must call you
Chief minister and chancellor of England.

Gar. Unnumber'd blessings fall upon her head!
My ever gracious lady! to remember
With such full bounty her old humble beadsman!
For these her foes, leave me to deal with them.

Sus. The queen is on her entrance, and expects
me.

My lord, farewell.

Gar. Farewell, right noble Sussex;
Commend me to the queen's grace; say, her bid-
ding

Shall be observ'd by her most lowly creature.

[*Exit Sussex.*]

Lieutenant of the Tow'r, take hence your pris'ners:
Be it your care to see 'em kept apart,
That they may hold no commerce with each other.

Guil. Wilt thou part us?

Gar. I hold no speech with heretics and traitors.
Lieutenant, see my orders are obey'd. [*Exit.*]

Guil. Inhuman, monstrous, unexampled cruelty!
Oh, tyrant! but the task becomes thee well;
Thy savage temper joys to do death's office,
To tear the sacred bands of love asunder,
And part those hands which heav'n itself hath
join'd.

Duch. To let us waste the little rest of life
Together had been merciful!

Suf. Then it had not
Been done like Winchester.

Guil. Thou stand'st namov'd,
Calm temper sits upon thy beauteous brow,
Thy eyes, that flow'd so fast for Edward's loss,
Gaze unconcern'd upon the ruin round thee,
As if thou hadst resolv'd to brave thy fate,
And triumph in the midst of desolation.

Lady J. And dost thou think, my Guilford, I can
see

My father, mother, and ev'n thee, my husband,
Torn from my side, without a pang of sorrow?
How art thou thus unknowing in my heart!
Words cannot tell thee what I feel: there is
An agonizing softness busy here
That tugs the strings, that struggles to get loose,
And pour my soul in wallings out before thee.

Guil. Give way, and let the gushing torrent
come;

Behold the tears we bring to swell the deluge
Till the flood rise upon the guilty world,
And make the ruin common.

Lady J. Guilford! no;
The time for tender thoughts and soft endearments
Is fled away and gone; joy has forsaken us;
Our hearts have now another part to play;
They must be steel'd with some uncommon forti-
tude,

That fearless we may tread the paths of horror,
And, in despite of fortune and our foes,
Ev'n in the hour of death be more than conquerors.

Guil. Oh! teach me; say, what energy divine
Inspires thy softer sex and tender years
With such unshaken courage?

Lady J. Truth and innocence;
A conscious knowledge rooted in my heart,
That to have sav'd my country was my duty.
Yes, England; yes, my country! I would save
thee;

But heav'n forbids, heav'n disallows my weakness,
And to some dear selected hero's hand
Reserves the glory of thy great deliverance.

Lieut. My lords, my orders—

Guil. See, we must—must part.

Lady J. Yet, surely, we shall meet again.

Guil. Fain would I cheer my heart with hopes
like these,

But my sad thoughts turn ever to the grave,
To that last dwelling whither now we haste,
Where the black shade shall interpose betwixt us,
And veil thee from these longing eyes for ever.

Lady J. 'Tis true, by those dark paths our jour-
ney leads,

And through the vale of death we pass to life:
But what is there in death to blast our hopes?
Behold the universal works of nature,
Where life still springs from death.

Mark with what hopes upon the furrow'd plain,
The careful ploughman casts the pregnant grain;
There hid, as in a grave, awhile it lies,
Till the revolving season bids it rise,
Then large increase the buried treasures yield,
And with full harvest crown the plenteous field.

[*Exeunt with Guards.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

*Enter BISHOP GARDINER, as Lord Chancellor, and
the Lieutenant of the Tower. Servants with lights
before them.*

Lieut. Good morning to your lordship: you rise
early.

Gar. Nay, by the rood, there are too many
sleepers;

Some must stir early, or the state shall suffer.
Did you, as yesterday our mandate bade,
Inform your pris'ners, Lady Jane and Guilford,
They were to die this day?

Lieut. My lord, I did.

Gar. 'Tis well. But say, how did your message
like 'em?

Lieut. My lord, they met the summons with a
temper

That slew'd a solemn, serious sense of death,
Mix'd with a noble scorn of all its terrors:
In short, they heard me with the self-same patience
With which they still have borne them in their
prison.

In one request they both concurr'd; each begg'd
To die before the other.

Gar. That dispose

As you think fitting.

Lieut. The Lord Guilford only
Implor'd another boon, and urg'd it warmly;
That, ere he suffer'd, he might see his wife,
And take a last farewell.

Gar. That's not much;

That grace may be allow'd him: see you to it.
How goes the morning?

Lieut. Not yet four, my lord.

Gar. By ten they meet their fate. Yet one thing
more:

You know 'twas order'd that the Lady Jane
Should suffer here within the Tow'r. Take care
No crowds may be let in, no maudlin gazers,
To wet their handkerchiefs, and make report
How like a saint she ended. Some fit number,
And those, too, of our friends, were most conve-
nient:

But above all, see that good guard be kept:
You know the queen is lodg'd at present here;
Take care that no disturbance reach her highness.
And so, good morning, good master lieutenant.

[*Exit Lieutenant.*]

How now! what light comes here!

Serv. So please your lordship,

If I mistake not, 'tis the Earl of Pembroke.

Gar. Pembroke! 'tis he; what calls him forth
thus early?

Somewhat he seems to bring of high import.

*Enter EARL OF PEMBROKE, and a Page with a
light before him.*

Good morrow, noble Pembroke! what importunate
And strong necessity breaks on your slumbers,
And rears your youthful head from off your pillow
At this unwholesome hour?

Pem. Oh! rev'rend Winchester! my beating
heart

Exults and labours with the joy it bears;

The news I bring shall bless the breaking morn.

Gar. What happiness is this?

Pem. 'Tis mercy! mercy,

That makes dominion light; mercy, that saves.

Mary, our royal ever-gracious mistress,

Has to my services and humblest pray'rs

Granted the lives of Guilford and his wife;

Full and free pardon!

Gar. Ha! what said you? Pardon!

But, sure, you cannot mean it; could not urge

The queen to such a rash and ill-tim'd grace!

What! save the lives of those who wore her
crown!

My lord, 'tis most unweigh'd, pernicious counsel,
And must not be complied with.

Pem. Not complied with!

And who shall dare to bar her sacred pleasure,

And stop the stream of mercy?

Gar. That will I,

Who wo' not see her gracious disposition

Drawn to destroy herself.

Pem. Thy narrow soul

Knows not the godlike glory of forgiving,

Nor can thy cold, thy ruthless heart conceive

How large the pow'r, how fix'd the empire is,

Which benefits confer on generous minds.

Gar. These are romantic, light, vain-glorious
dreams.

Have you consider'd well upon the danger?
How dear to the fond many, and how popular,
These are whom you would spare? Have you
forgot

When at the bar, before the seat of judgment,
This Lady Jane, this beauteous trait'ess, stood,
With what command she charm'd the whole as-
sembly!

With silent grief the mournful audience sat,
Fix'd on her face, and list'ning to her pleading:
Her very judges wrung their hands for pity;
Their old hearts melted in 'em as she spoke,
And tears ran down upon their silver beards.
Ev'n I myself was mov'd, and, for a moment,
Felt wrath suspended in my doubtful breast,
And question'd if the voice I heard was mortal.
But when her tale was done, what loud applause,
Like bursts of thunder, shook the spacious hall!
At last, when sore constrain'd, th' unwilling lords
Pronounc'd the fatal sentence on her life;
A peal of groans ran through the crowded court
As ev'ry heart were broken, and the doom,
Like that which waits the world, were universal.

Pem. And can that sacred form, that angel's
voice,
Which mov'd the hearts of a rude, ruthless crowd,
Nay, mov'd even thine, now sue in vain for pity?

Gar. Alas! you look on her with lovers' eyes:
I hear and see through reasonable organs,
Where passion has no part. Come, come, my lord,
You have too little of the statesman in you.

Pem. And you, my lord, too little of the church-
man.

Is not the sacred purpose of our faith
Peace and good-will to man? The hallow'd hand
Ordain'd to bless, should know no stain of blood.
'Tis true I am not practis'd in your politics;
'Twas your pernicious counsel led the queen
To break her promise with the men of Suffolk,
To violate, what in a prince should be
Sacred above the rest, her royal word.

Gar. Yes, and I dare avow it: I advis'd her
To break through all engagements made with
heretics,
And keep no faith with such a miscreant crew.

Pem. Where shall we look for truth, when ev'n
religion,

The priestly robe and mitred head, disclaim it?
I tell thee, Winchester, doctrines like thine
Have stain'd our holy church with greater infamy
Than all your eloquence can wipe away:
Hence 'tis that those who differ from our faith
Brand us with breach of oaths, with persecution,
With tyranny o'er conscience, and proclaim
Our scarlet prelates men who thirst for blood,
And Christian Rome more cruel than the Pagan.

Gar. Nay, if you rail, farewell. The queen must
be

Better advis'd than thus to cherish vipers,
Whose mortal stings are arm'd against her life:
But while I hold the seal, no pardon passes
For heretics and traitors. *[Exit.]*

Pem. 'Twas unlucky
To meet and cross upon this froward priest:
But let me lose the thought on't; let me haste,
Pour my glad tidings forth in Guilford's bosom,
And pay him back the life his friendship sav'd. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.

LADY JANE GREY discovered kneeling at her devo-
tion; a light and a book placed on a table before
her. Enter Lieutenant of the Tower, LORD
GUILFORD DUDLEY, and one of Lady Jane Grey's
women.

Lieut. Let me not press upon your lordship
further,

But wait your leisure in the antichamber.
Guil. I will not hold you long. *[Exit Lieut.]*
Wom. Softly, my lord,

For yet behold she kneels.
But she has ended, and comes forward.

(Lady J. rises and comes forward.)

Lady J. Ha!
Art thou my Guilford? wherefore dost thou come
To break the settled quiet of my soul?
I mean to part without another pang,
And lay my weary head down full of peace.

Guil. Forgive the fondness of my longing soul,
That melts with tenderness, and leans towards thee,
Though the imperious dreadful voice of fate
Summon her hence, and warn her from the world.
But if to see thy Guilford give thee pain,
Would I had died, and never more beheld thee,
Though my lamenting, discontented ghost
Had wander'd forth unblest'd by those dear eyes,
And wail'd thy loss in death's eternal shades.

Lady J. My heart had ended ev'ry earthly care,
Had offer'd up its pray'rs for thee and England,
And fix'd its hopes upon a rock unfailling;
While all the little bus'ness that remain'd
Was but to pass the forms of death and constancy,
And leave a life become indiff'rent to me:
But thou hast waken'd other thoughts within me;
Thy sight, my dearest husband and my lord!
Strikes on the tender strings of love and nature;
My vanquish'd passions rise again, and tell me
'Tis more, far more than death to part with thee.

Enter EARL OF PEMBROKE.

Pem. Oh! let me fly; bear me, thou swift impa-
tience,
And lodge me in my faithful Guilford's arms!
(Embracing.)

That I may snatch thee from the greedy grave,
That I may warm his gentle heart with joy,
And talk to him of life, of life and pardon.

Guil. What means my dearest Pembroke?

Pem. Oh! my speech
Is chok'd with words that crowd to tell the tidings!
But I have sav'd thee; and—oh! joy unutterable!
The queen, my gracious, my forgiving mistress,
Has giv'n not only thee to my request,
But she, she too, in whom alone thou liv'st,
The partner of thy heart, thy love is safe.

Guil. Millions of blessings wait her! Has she—
tell me,
Oh! has she spar'd my wife?

Pem. Both, both are pardon'd.
But haste, and do thou lead me to thy saint,
That I may cast myself beneath her feet,
And beg her to accept this poor amends
For all I've done against her. Thou fair excellence!
(Kneeling.)

Canst thou forgive the hostile hand that arm'd
Against thy cause, and robb'd thee of a crown?

Lady J. Oh! rise, my lord, and let me take your
posture;
Life and the world are hardly worth my care,
But you have reconcil'd me to 'em both;
Then let me pay my gratitude, and for
This free, this noble, unexpected mercy,
Thus low I bow to heav'n, the queen, and you.

Pem. To me! forbid it, goodness! if I live,
Somewhat I will do shall deserve your thanks.
Hear me, you saints, and aid my pious purpose:
These that deserve so much, this wondrous pair,
Let these be happy, ev'ry joy attend 'em;
A fruitful bed, a chain of love unbroken,
A holy death, and everlasting memory.

Enter Lieutenant of the Tower.

Lieut. The lord chancellor
Is come with orders from the queen.

Enter BISHOP GARDINER and Attendants.

Pem. Ha! Winchester!
Gar. The queen, whose days be many,
By me confirm her first accorded grace;

But, as the pious princess means her mercy
Should reach ev'n to the soul as well as body,
By me she signifies her royal pleasure
That thou, Lord Guilford, and the Lady Jane,
Do instantly renounce, abjure your heresy,
And yield obedience to the see of Rome.

Lady J. What! turn apostate?

Guil. Ha! forego my faith?

Gar. This one condition only seals your pardon;
But if, through pride of heart and stubborn obsti-
nacy,

With wilful hands you push the blessing from you,
Know ye your former sentence stands confirm'd,
And you must die to-day.

Pem. 'Tis false as hell;
The mercy of the queen was free and full.
Think'st thou that princes merchandise their grace
As Roman priests their pardons?

Gar. My lord, this language ill beseems your
nobleness,

Nor come I here to bandy words with madmen.
Behold the royal signet of the queen,
Which amply speaks her meaning. You, the
prisoners,

Have heard at large its purport, and must instantly
Resolve upon the choice of life or death.

Pem. Curse on—But wherefore do I loiter here?
I'll to the queen this moment, and there know
What 'tis this mischief-making priest intends.

[*Exit.*]

Gar. Your wisdom points you out a proper
course.

A word with you, lieutenant.
(*Talks with the Lieutenant aside.*)

Guil. Must we part, then?
What are those hopes that flatter'd us but now,
Those joys that like the spring with all its flow'rs
Pour'd out their pleasures ev'ry where around us?
In one our minute gone!

Lady J. Such is this foolish world, and such the
certainty

Of all the boasted blessings it bestows:
Then, Guilford, let us have no more to do with it;
Think only how to leave it as we ought.

Guil. Yes, I will copy thy divine example;
By thee instructed, to the fatal block
I bend my head with joy, and think it happiness
To give my life a ransom for my faith.

Lady J. Oh! gloriously resolv'd!
Gar. The day wears fast; Lord Guilford, have
you thought?

Will you lay hold on life?
Guil. What are the terms?

Gar. Death or the mass attend you.

Guil. 'Tis determin'd:
Lead to the scaffold.

Gar. Bear him to his fate.
Guil. Oh! let me fold thee once more in my arms,
Thou dearest treasure of my heart, and print
A dying husband's kiss upon thy lip!

Shall we not live again ev'n in those forms?
Shall I not gaze upon thee with these eyes?

Lady J. Oh! wherefore dost thou soothe me with
thy softness?

Why dost thou wind thyself about my heart,
And make this separation painful to us?

Guil. My sight hangs on thee. Oh! support me,
heav'n,

In this last pang, and let us meet in bliss!
[*Led off by the Guards.*]

Lady J. Can nature bear this stroke?
Wom. Alas! she faints. (*Supporting her.*)

Lady J. Wo't thou fail now? The killing stroke
is past,

And all the bitterness of death is o'er.
Gar. Here let the dreadful band of vengeance
stay.

Have pity on your youth and blooming beauty;
Cast not away the good which heav'n bestows;

Time may have many years in store for you,
All crown'd with fair prosperity. Your husband
Has perish'd in perverseness.

Lady J. Cease, thou raven!
Nor violate with thy profaner malice
My bleeding Guilford's ghost: 'tis gone, 'tis flown,
But lingers on the wing and waits for me.

(*The scene draws, and discovers a scaffold hung
with black, Executioner and Guards.*)

And see, my journey's end.
1 *Wom.* My dearest lady! (*Weeping.*)
2 *Wom.* Oh, misery!

Lady J. Forbear, my gentle maids!
Nor wound my peace with fruitless lamentations;
The good and gracious hand of Providence
Shall raise you better friends than I have been.

1 *Wom.* Oh! never, never!
Lady J. Help to disarray

And fit me for the block: do this last service,
And do it cheerfully. Now you will see
Your poor, unhappy mistress sleep in peace,
And cease from all her sorrows. These few trifles,
The pledges of a dying mistress' love,
Receive and share among you.

Gar. Will you yet
Repent, be wise, and save your precious life?

Lady J. Oh! Winchester, has learning taught
thee that,

To barter truth for life?
Gar. Mistaken folly!

You toil and travel for your own perdition,
And die for damned errors.

Lady J. Who judge rightly,
And who persists in error, will be known
Then when we meet again. Once more, farewell!

(*To her Women.*)
Goodness be ever with you!

Gar. Wo't thou, then, die?
Thy blood be on thy head.

Lady J. My blood be where it falls; let the
earth hide it;

And may it never rise or call for vengeance.
Oh! that it were the last shall fall a victim
To zeal's inhuman wrath! Thou gracious heav'n!
Hear and defend, at length, thy suff'ring people;
Raise up a monarch of the royal blood,
Brave, pious, equitable, wise, and good;
And deal out justice with a righteous hand;
And when he fails, oh! may he leave a son
With equal virtues to adorn his throne,
To latest times the blessing to convey,
And guard that faith for which I die to-day.

[*Goes up to the scaffold. The scene closes.*]

Enter EARL OF PEMBROKE.

Pem. Horror on horror! blasted be the hand
That struck my Guilford! Oh! his bleeding trunk
Shall live in these distracted eyes for ever!
Curse on thy fatal arts, thy cruel counsels!

(*To Gardiner.*)
The queen is deaf and pitiless as thou art.

Gar. The just reward of heresy and treason
Is fall'n upon 'em both for their vain obstinacy;
Untimely death, with infamy on earth,
And everlasting punishment hereafter.

Pem. And canst thou tell? who gave thee to ex-
plore

The secret purposes of heav'n, or taught thee
To set a bound to mercy unconfind?

But know, thou proud, perversely judging Win-
chester,

How'er your hard, imperious censures doom,
And portion out our lots in worlds to come,
Those who with honest hearts pursue the right,
And follow faithfully truth's sacred light,
Though suff'ring here shall from their sorrows
cease,
Rest with the saints and dwell in endless peace.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE LAW OF LOMBARDY;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY ROBERT JEPHSON.



Act V.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

THE KING
BIRENO
PALADORE
RINALDO

ASCANIO
LUCIO
SENATOR
ESQUIRE

SHEPHERD
FORESTERS
PRINCESS
ALINDA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in the Palace.*

Enter BIRENO and ALINDA.

Alinda. I wonder not you should suspect me slow

In this strange office: had you but enjoin'd me,
Shut out the sun ten times his annual rounds,
Feed all my life on pulse, or with coarse weeds
Obscure the little grace which nature's hand
Has lent my outside, then, without a wherefore,
(From the meek humbleness of love I bear you,)
My obedience would have follow'd.

Bireno. Sweet impatience,
Smooth that contracted brow—

Alinda. But to commend
To any other woman those fond vows
I hop'd to own unpartner'd, is it less
Than to expect my tongue suborn'd, should plead
Against the dearest interest of my life,
And make me earnest for my own undoing?

Bireno. Must I again call down the saints to
witness,
That for convenience only, not from love,
I seek to wed the princess? My ambition
Aims at the crown, her dower; were that bright
gem
Heir'd by a pigmy, the meer mock of sight,

By idiot drawing, and a shrew's perverseness,
No less should I desire it. If I prosper,
My heart, as ever, shall be thine; and hers,
The dull legitimate languor of the husband.

Alinda. But when to royal state Sophia joins
Such rare endowments, as make doubtful strife
'Twixt nature's gifts and fortune's; can I hope
More than some grateful note from memory,
How much Alinda lov'd you?

Bireno. Trust me, fair one,
Beauty's degrees are in the lover's fancy,
Not in a scal'd perfection. Varying nature
Has lineaments for every appetite:
Not her arch'd brow, nor stature Juno-like,
Her crisped tresses spun from finest gold,
Nor the intelligent lustre of her eye,
To me have half such charms as thy soft mien,
The pure carnation of thy dimpling cheek,
And unassuming sweet simplicity.
But hast thou urg'd my suit?

Alinda. Spite of ourselves,
The tongue interprets from the abundant heart.
Bireno's image filling all my thought,
Could I be silent on a theme so lov'd?

Bireno. And how does she receive the gentle
tale?

Alinda. Sometimes she chides, and sometimes
smiling tells me,
But that she knows me wise, such lavish praise
Might hint a heart touch'd deeply, and ill suits

The sober preference of an humble maid,
Who cannot hope to call you hers in honour.
Then with discreetest lessons will she school me,
To guard my breast 'gainst love; forgetting still
How much she wants the counsel she bestows.

Bireno. Does she then love?

Alinda. She never told me so;
But signs far more significant than speech
Reveal it hourly.

Bireno. Let me know my rival,
Though my foreboding heart already whispers
It must be Paladore.

Alinda. Oh! rightly guess'd:
Her love for him makes her unjust to you.

Bireno. Curses o'ertake him! Near his brighter
fires

My star shines dimly; I was wonder'd at,
Till this new meteor shot across men's eyes,
And drew all gaze to follow. At our tournaments
He foils me like a novice; in grave council
I prate unmark'd, while hoary heads bow down
In reverence to his weighty utterance;
And thus the upstart heresy of opinion
Runs on this smooth impostor. By what signs
Take you this note of her affection towards him?

Alinda. By such we women deem infallible.
If unexpectedly she hear him nam'd,
Sweet discomposure seizes all her frame;
Suffusion, softer than Aurora's blush,
Spreads o'er her beauteous cheek. If she expect
His presence at the court, studious to please,
Beyond her wonted elegance of dress,
With nicer care she counsels at her glass,
To make the daintiest workmanship of nature
By ornament more winning.

Bireno. Indications

That speak, and shrewdly; yet their vanity
To catch the flattery of the fool they scorn,
Will bait such hooks as these. Have you no proof
More unequivocal?

Alinda. What would you more?

We reason from ourselves; looking within,
We find in our own breasts the according springs
Of motions similar: when first I lov'd,
So did I wish to please, so doubt my power.
Yet more than this; her eye still follows him,
And when the unwelcome hour of parting comes,
The cheerful flame that lighted up her countenance
Expires; sighs heave, and a soft silent tear
Steals down her cheek.

Bireno. Enough, I'm satisfied
She loves him, and the frost of my reception
Conspires in proof. Now, then, my best Alinda,
You must assist me; on this single push
Hang all my fortunes. If my rival wed her,
Farewell my hopes, my country—

Alinda. How! your country?

A voluntary exile for the loss
Of one you swear you love not?

Bireno. My possessions,
The means of pleasure to my thriftless youth,
Moulder in confiscation; thus my dukedom,
My royal ancestry, and rank in the state,
So scantily supported, will but mock me.
A marriage with the princess would heal all.
But if I fail, I will not stay to see
Upstarts made rich by my inheritance;
Nor the proud finger of the slave I scorn
Point at the princely beggar.

Alinda. Oh! good heaven!
Devise, command—Can my best industry
Prevent this ruin? Tell me but the means,
And bid me fly.

Bireno. No more of jealousy;
But with appliance dext'rous call her thoughts
To me, and my deservings; speak with slight
(Yet not as by suggestion) of my rival.
I've known more way made in a woman's grace

By such confederate arts, than could be won
By a long siege of amorous enginery,
Soft flatteries, sighs, protesting infinite,
And all the fervour of impatient love.

Alinda. But should this fail?

Bireno. I'll spread a finer snare,
Subtle as fabled Vulcan forg'd in Lemnos,
To enmesh them: thy soft hand, my dear Alinda,
Must help to hold the toils.

Alinda. But see, she comes;
The king, too, and her lover.

Bireno. I'll retire,
And seek thee presently: rivet thine ear
Meantime to what they utter: thy report
Shall somewhat shape my course. High-flighted
fool!

Check thy bold soaring, else my hot revenge
Shall melt thy waxen plumes, and hurl thee down
To a devouring sea that roars beneath thee.

[Exit. *Alinda* retires.]

Enter the KING, PRINCESS, PALADORE, and
Attendants.

King. You shall no more, Sophia, to the
chase;

This morning's danger makes my blood run cold.
Had not thy well-spiced lance, brave Paladore,
Pierc'd the huge boar that gor'd her foaming
horse,

These eyes, now rais'd in thanks to heaven and
thee,

Had wept her lifeless.

Paladore. Ever prais'd be fortune,
That plac'd me near her! Since a common feat
That daily dyes our weapons, thus ennobled
By bless'd conjunction with her precious safety,
I would not change for the best garland won
By Cæsar's conquering sword.

Princess. We are not nice
In dangers imminent to choose the means
Of our deliverance; yet, believe me, sir,
More than for life preserv'd, I thank the chance
That made you my preserver. Th' unwelcome
hand

Rendering us service, like sharp frost in sunshine,
Chills the fresh blossom of our gratitude,
Which else uncheck'd would put forth all its
sweetness.

King. I have much serious matter for your ear;
(*To Paladore.*)

Our helms must be lac'd close, our swords new
edg'd

'Gainst fiercer foes than these rude foresters,
That make us sport with peril.

Paladore. By my life,
My cruel heart beats high to give it welcome;
For virtue's test is action.

King. Thus my paper:
(Brief its contents, but fearful) Burgundy,
Stung by refusal of my daughter's love,
Stirs up commotion 'gainst our kingdom's peace;
And soon the golden grain of Lombardy
Shall be trod down beneath the furious heel
Of peasants cas'd in iron.

Princess. Heaven avert it!
For, sure, 'twere better I had ne'er been born,
Than live the fatal cause why war's rude blast
Disturb'd the quiet of my father's age,
Which soft repose should foster. The griev'd
people

Will chide your gentleness, that did not bend
My heart to this obedience; and your virtue,
Seen through th' unwelcome colour of the event,
For reverence find upbraiding.

King. No, Sophia,
I would not violate the meanest right
Of my least subject, for the fear or promise

Of any issue. Is my child, my daughter,
(Sweet, dutious, amiable, born free and royal,)
Less charter'd from oppression than a stranger?
A self-invited wooer here he sojourn'd,
To thrive as your approving gave him license:
I fed him not with promise, you with hope,
Nor shall audacious menace ere extort
What courtesy denied him.

Paladore. To his teeth
Hurl your defiance, King; 'tis proud to threaten,
But baseness to be aw'd by it. From my breast
I'd tear these hallow'd symbols, give this steel
To be a baby's play-thing, could my heart,
Distrustful of the event, forbode one fear,
To cast black presage on a cause so noble.

King. Thou gem of Britain! Dear in my esteem

As wert thou native here, be Pavia's shield,
Her pride, her pillar; yes, our hardy files,
Led on by thee, shall drive the boaster back,
To mourn at home his baffled preparations.

Paladore. Oh! would the fortune of this glorious strife

Hung on my arm alone!

King. Our daughter's hand
Is destin'd for a prince who draws his blood
From the same source as mine, our kingdom's
heir,

(Did not this sweet prevention stand between,)

To bless Bireno with two matchless gifts,
Her beauty and a royal diadem.

Princess. Bireno, sir!

King. Even he, I know his worth—
But is there poison in my kinsman's name?
It pales the healthful vermeil of your cheek,
Dims your bright eye, and veils your wonted
smiles.

Princess. Alas! I cannot speak.

King. Why, then, hereafter
Will better suit this subject. Sir, farewell!
We shall expect your aid to counsel with us,
What present mounds our wisdom best may raise
'Gainst this loud torrent that at distance roars,
Ere it rush down to spread its ruin round us.

[*Exit.*

Princess. Oh! stay, and hear me now. Alas!
he's gone

Who smiles on me, and kills me; bids my heart
Be traitor to itself, yet with soft words
Fetters my tongue, which, free, would boldly
answer:

Such kindness but destroys me.

Paladore. My soul's idol,
I was, indeed, presumptuous to believe
These humble arms were destin'd to enfold
So vast a treasure, yet aspiring love
Hopes things impossible.

Princess. Bireno! He!
I'd rather waste my life in singleness;
Like the pale votarist, pour faint orisons
At the cold shrines of senseless marble saints,
And wear the eternal pavement with my knees,
Than at the sacred altar load my soul
With holy perjuries, to love the man,
At whose approach my heart alarm'd shrinks
back,

While thought confirms instinctive nature's hate.

Paladore. See, like a haughty conqueror he
comes;

Pleasure and pride on his exulting brow
At distance speak his triumph.

Princess. Arm me, disdain,
To meet the bold intruder. Gentle Paladore,
'Tis thus thy rival woos me. Courtship's season
Is the short date of woman's sovereignty.
For liberty, we have but in exchange
The little tribute of a lover's sighs,
His humble seeming, and soft courtesy;

Yet these, he thinks too rich a sacrifice,
And owns no advocate but pride in love.

Enter BIRENO.

Bireno. Confirm'd, fair princess, by the king's
command

You see me here a joyful visitant.

'Tis not unknown why warlike Burgundy,
Spreading his hostile banners to the wind,
Makes sword and fire his dreadful harbingers.

Princess. The cause I have heard: but on.

Paladore. Down, swelling heart! (*Aside.*)

Bireno. Your yet unlighted hand gives to this
war

Its edge and colour; to remove that prize
Beyond the invader's reach, my sovereign's wisdom
Deems the best means to blunt his hostile sword;
Therefore, on me be deigns—

Princess. I understand;

But have no present ear for such a theme.
My father's goodness left my choice unforc'd
Of one unwelcome suitor; the same justice
Secures me from compulsion in a second.

Bireno. And must I bear this answer to the
King?

Princess. Myself will be my own interpreter,
And save your trouble. Once more, sir, I thank
you. [*To Paladore. Exit.*

Bireno. Well, go thy ways; woman's epitome!
Beauteous enigma! Who would solve you rightly,
Must thus interpret: make your outward sem-
blance

An index pointing to its contrary.

When your smooth polish'd vizors beam in smiles,
Displeasure's at your hearts; the moody brow
Tells inward sun-shine; tears are joy, not sorrow;
You soothe where you approve not, and look gall
When sweet content honies your appetites.

Paladore. These common railings 'gainst that
gentle sex,

Denote his humour more who utters them,
Than their defect, or any deep conception.
But you have chosen a season for bard thoughts,
Rebukes, and censure; still the chamber's air
Winnows her balmy breathing; from our eyes
Scarce glides her beauteous form, when your dark
spleen,

As venom'd things suck poison from sweet flowers,
Find matter for distemper's nourishment,
And food for calumny in excellence.

Bireno. Her form, indeed, is fair.

Paladore. Ay, and her mind
(If more can be) more fair, more amiable.
The never-render'd snow-cold Apennine,
Is not so free from taint, as from offence
Her spotless bosom; yet has she a tear,
Healing as balm for others' frailties,
That makes remission heavenly; sweet persuasion
Hangs on her words with power oracular,
To shame the cynic's chiding. Spirit of truth!
She is thy visible divinity,
And 'tis thy reverence to pay homage to her.

Bireno. 'Tis to my wish. (*Aside.*) I grant her
well endow'd.

And in fair seeming most pre-eminent;
But for these other virtues you have nam'd,
They are of different climes, and earlier ages;
Our Pavia's ladies, cast in earthly moulds,
They make the most of nature's liberal gifts,
Put pleasure out to usury, and love
As ease, convenience, or the moment sways them.

Paladore. You're pleasant, lord.

Bireno. No, soberly thy friend.

Shall I be plain?

Paladore. What call you your past measure?
Was it a courtier's strain?

Bireno. You love the Princess?

Paladore. And heaven may be belov'd—

Bireno. Ay, and hop'd, too;
For heaven has many mansions, and receives,
Too large for limitation, all deservers;
But in a lady's heart, there's but one place,
Though many may contend for't: therefore, friend,
Waste not your precious sighs, which might en-
kindle.

Bright sparks of equal love in some soft breast
Destin'd to mate your fondness, in hopeless
wooing.

Search not the cause; believe me, on my truth,
'Tis past all reckoning hopeless.

Paladore. Nothing's hopeless,
Though deeds, untried, oft seem impossible;
And craven sloth molting his sleekless plumes
With drowsy wonder views the advent'rous wing
That soars the shining azure o'er his head.
What will not yield to daring? Victory
Sits on the helm whose crest is confidence;
And boldness wins success in love's soft strife,
As in the dangerous din of rattling war.

Bireno. How could I make me sport were I
light-minded,

Were I malignant! mischief from this mood,
That runs so contrary to all sober sense!
But here I rest in kindness: be advis'd,
Push not a desperate purpose; by my life,
The Princess loves you not.

Paladore. I'll bear no more.
Matchless audacity! Let me take thee in
From crown to toe; walk round thee, and survey
thee

Like a prodigious thing; for such thou shouldst
be,

To put my course of love in circumscription,
And school me, like a boy, with unsought precept.

Bireno. Lovers are sick with fevers of the
brain;

Diseas'd by airy hope, high-flighted fancy,
Imaginations bred from self-conceit.
An arch deluder, which presents the Juno
Their frenzy grasps at, with a zone unbound;
While, like Ixion's mistress, the coy queen
Slumbers on golden beds in high Olympus.

Paladore. Hear me, proud duke! had I no other
spur

But thy forbidding; were there no incitement
From her transcendant beauty; did no beam
Shoot from her eye to light eternal love
At passion's altar; were she swart, and froward,
(Oh! blasphemy to think it!) in despite,
I would assume an unfelt ecstasy;
Invoke her name, till echo should grow faint
With the perpetual burthen, and devise
All means of contradiction, to proclaim
Scorn of thy counsel, and defiance to thee.

Bireno. Then hear, to dash thy pride, since thus
you urge me:

My experience of her lightness, well she knows,
Would freeze me as her husband, and her hand
(Which, but to save appearances, I ask)
I would reject, if offer'd; so her craft
Soothes you with feign'd endearments. As a mis-
tress,

I find her worth my holding; but a wife,
Fit for a prince, must come with better gifts
Than amorous blood, and beauty. Nay, but mark
me.

Paladore. Trust not too far the reverence of this
place.

Away! thou yet art safe; my sword once drawn—

Bireno. Am I so lost in your esteem, you hold
me

(Your friend profess'd) in malice capable,
Or falsehood, thus to wound you?

Paladore. Both, by heaven!

Bireno. And will maintain this thinking?

Paladore. With my life.

Bireno. 'Tis a deep venture. Mine upon my
truth.

When fall-orb'd Phœbe wheels her fleecy car
To silver you blue concave, 'midst the pines
That wave their green tops o'er the battlement
Of her night-chamber, in the garden meet me
Alone: when we encounter in that place,
You there shall listen to conditions meet
For both our honours. So, till then, farewell.

Paladore. I'll meet thee, be assur'd I will.
Gird on thy keenest edge: if thou hast aght
Unsettled in this world, despatch it quickly;
We stand upon the utmost verge of fate,
And one, or both of us, must plunge for ever.

[Exit.

Bireno. The wise should watch the event on
fortune's wheel,

That for a moment circles at the top,
And, seiz'd not, vanishes. I must about it;
My all's at stake. Ye ministers of vengeance!
That hide your gory locks in mist-hung caves,
And roll your deadly eyeballs o'er the edge
Of your insatiate daggers, shaking ever
Dews of oblivious sleep from your stung brows,
Receive me of your band! ne'er to know peace
Till this keen writhing vulture quit my heart,
And with blunt beak, and flagging wings out-
stretch'd,

Drowse o'er the mangled victims of my rage.

[Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

The PRINCESS discovered.

Princess. Oh! blessed, most blessed are the in-
sensible!

In the mild zone of calm indifference:
No hatred chills them, and no passion burns;
'To feed, and sleep, and do observance due
To the stale ritual of quaint ceremony,
Fills up the humble measure of their hope;
Smooth and unruffled glides their temperate stream,
And one day rounds their whole life's history.
Oh! had my heart been such! but nature pois'd
In distribution, when she gives the touch
Alive to ecstasy, in like extreme
Subjects the sense to anguish: the same soul,
That in the hope of wedding Paladore,
Enjoy'd its som of bliss, with equal pain
Averts me from his rival: thus entranc'd
'Twixt love and fear, I feel the pangs of both,
And the sharp conflict rends me. Ha! my father!
Now comes the trial.

Enter the KING.

King. How! in tears, Sophia?
Come, 'tis not well: I fear, I guess the cause.
This morn I did but hint a purpose to you,
Of import, dear to your own happiness,
And your chang'd brow, reproving my intent,
Cut short my free discourse.

Princess. Oh! good my lord,
I am not practis'd to conceal my thoughts
(And least from you) by calling o'er my looks
The unalter'd vizard of tranquillity,
When perturbation, like a sleepless guest,
Forbids my bosom's quiet.

King. I have lov'd thee
With fondness so un'bat'd, that 'twere needless,
For confirmation, to attest by words
What all my thoughts, my life's whole carriage
towards thee,
Have set beyond the question.

Princess. Oh! to me,
Your love has been like those perpetual springs,
That ever flow, and waste not; my least wish

Scarce had its birth ere its accomplishment
In your preventive kindness.

King. Since 'tis so,
If chance the current of my present will
To your's runs contrary, you must not deem
That merely to enforce authority,
Or wake controlment, which might sleep to death,
In its disuse, I now expect the course
Of your desires should lose themselves in mine,
Or flow by my direction.

Princess. As my father,
The giver of my life, I reverence you;
Next, as your subject, my obedience stands
Bound by the general tie; but since your power
Has still been temper'd so with lenity,
That even the stranger's cause, with patient
hearing,
Is weigh'd ere you determine; I, your daughter,
May hope, at least, an equal privilege,
With favour in my audience.

King. I were else
Unnatural, withholding from my child
What aliens claim by justice. Give me hearing:
The Duke Bireno loves you, has my promise
That like a well-grac'd advocate, my tongue
Should win your gentle favour to his suit,
Urging such commendations of his love,
As modesty, though conscious of desert,
May wish you hear, yet cannot speak itself.

Princess. Ah! sir, forbear; he knows my heart
already;

Already he has heard, from my own lips,
I cannot love him; poorly he engages
Your honour'd combination, in a league
That (whatso'er its issue) must conspire
To wound your daughter's peace.

King. By heaven, you wrong him.
To wound your peace! He seeks your happiness,
And so am I his second.

Princess. But these means
Are adverse to the end; for if I wed him,
(This is no raving of rash ecstasy.)
On death, that only can dissolve my chain,
Will hang my future hope: as eagerly
As the poor, weary, sea-beat mariner
Pants for the shore, so shall my outstretch'd
arms

Embrace the welcome terror. My refusal
To you, the gentlest, kindest, best of fathers;
Must seem repugnance harsh, and o'er my duty,
Before untainted, casts the sickly hue
Of pale suspicion; thus begins his love,
Fearful to me in each alternative.

King. Why, this is infant rhet'ric, to protest
The impulse of a strong antipathy,
Which never causeless sways the human breast,
Yet give no reason why.

Princess. Alas! to feel it,
O'ermasters every reason. Need we search
To ground aversion on weigh'd argument,
When instinct cuts the tedious process short,
And makes the heart our umpire?

King. Hear me calmly:
My days are almost number'd; this white head
Bears not in vain its reverend monitors;
Time puts a tongue in every hoary hair,
To warn the wise man of mortality:
When I am gone, behold thy single state
Unhusbanded, unfather'd, stands expos'd,
Ev'n as the tender solitary shrub
On the bleak mountain's summit. Every blast
May bend or break thy sweetness: this strong
fence,

This union, would enroot its shelter round,
And, like a forest, shield thee.

Princess. Let me hope
A stronger fence in a whole people's love:
Their grateful memory of my father's virtue,

And loyalty hereditarily mine,
Descending, like the sceptre, to your issue.

King. Think'st thou, my aspiring kinsman, whose
ambition,

Impatient, waits till my declining beam
Give place to his meridian; who already
Wins from my side a moiety of my court,
By his succession's hope, will tamely view
That sceptre wielded by a woman's hand,
Nor wrest it from thy grasp? No, my fair kingdom!
I see the meeting torrents of contention
Deluge thy peaceful vales, while her weak sex,
Unable to direct, or stem the tide,
Will be borne down, and swept to ruin with it.

Princess. These evils, but in possibility,
May never come: but, oh! 'tis certain sorrow
To promise love, obedience, duty, honour,
When the heart's record vouches 'gainst the
tongue:

It changes order's course; the holy tie
Of well-proportion'd marriage still supposes
These bonds have gone before; nor is there power
Creative in the simple ceremony,
The seed unsown, to give that harvest growth.

King. Here break we off. To sue, and sue in
vain,

But ill becomes a father: may my augury
Be more in fear than wisdom. Hold; to-morrow
The council meets to scan this threaten'd war:
The people call it thine: then be thou present
To thank and animate their zeal to serve us. [*Exit.*]

Princess. I shall attend your order. This cold
parting,

Speaks his displeasure; and my heart accusom'd
To the kind sunshine of approving smiles,
Droops at the chilling change. Ye gentle breasts,
Strangers as yet to love, be warn'd by me.
Soft as the printless step of midnight sleep,
The subtle tyrant steals into the soul:
Once seated there, securely he controls
The idle strife of unimpassion'd ties,
And laughs to scorn their sober impotence,
As feeble vassals lift their arms in vain,
In the unequal conflict soon o'erthrown,
They prove their weakness, and his power supreme. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Garden.

RINALDO discovered.

Rinaldo. He must pass this way: through the
postern-gate
That leads here only, with distemper'd pace
I saw him hasten. Since the evening banquet
His wild demeanour has put on more change
Than yonder fickle planet in her orb.
Just now he seiz'd his sword, look'd at, and pois'd
it,

Then girt it round him, while his bloodshot eye,
And heaving bosom, spoke the big conception
Of some dire purpose. There is mischief towards;
I may perhaps prevent it: these tall shrubs
Will hide me from his view. Soft, soft, 'tis he.
(Retires.)

Enter PALADORE.

Paladore. Why do I shake thus? If, indeed,
she's false,
I should rejoice to have the spell unbound
That chains me to delusion. He swears deeply:
But bad men's oaths are breath, and their base
lies

With holiest adjurations stronger vouch'd
Than native truth, which, center'd in itself,
Rests in its simpleness; then this bold carriage
Urging the proof by test infallible,
The witness of my sight. Why, these combin'd,
(Spite of my steady seeming,) viper-tooth'd,
Gnaw at my constancy, and inward spread

Suggestions, which unmaster'd, soon would change
The ruddy heart to blackness. But, oh, shame!
These doubts are slander's liegers. Sweetest inno-
cence!

That now, perhaps, lapp'd in Elysian sleep,
Seest heaven in vision, let not these base sounds
Creep on thy slumber, lest they startle rest,
And change thy trance to horror. Lo! he comes:
Your light that glimmers 'twixt the quivering
leaves
(Like a small star) directs his footsteps hither.

Enter BIRENO, with a lanthorn.

Bireno. Your pardon, sir; I fear I've made you
wait.

But here, beneath the window of his mistress,
A lover favour'd, and assur'd like you,
Must have a thousand pleasant phantasies
To entertain his musing.

Paladore. Sir, my fancy
Has various meditations; no one thought
Mix'd with disloyalty of her whose honour
Your boldness would attain.

Bireno. Then you hold firm,
I am a boaster?

Paladore. 'Tis my present creed.

Bireno. 'Twere kind, perhaps, to leave you in
that error.

The wretch who dreams of bliss, while his sleep
lasts,

Is happy as in waking certainty;
But if he's rons'd, and rons'd to misery,
He sure must curse the hand that shook his
curtain.

Paladore. I have no time for maxims, and your
mirth

Is most unseasonable. Thus far to endure,
Perhaps is too much tameness. To the purpose.

Bireno. With all convenient speed. You're not
to learn,

We have a law peculiar to this realm,
That subjects to a mortal penalty
All women nobly born (be their estate
Single or husbanded) who to the shame
Of chastity, o'erleap its thorny bounds,
To wanton in the flowery path of pleasure.
Nor is the proper issue of the king
By royalty exempted.

Paladore. So I have heard.

But wherefore urge you this?

Bireno. Not without reason.

I draw my sword in peace. Now place your lips
Here on this sacred cross. By this deep oath,
Most binding to our order, you must swear,
Whate'er you see, or whatsoe'er your wrath
From what you see, that never shall your tongue
Reveal it to the danger of the Princess.

Paladore. A most superfluous bond! But on; I
swear.

Bireno. Hold yet a little. Now, sir, once again
Let this be touch'd. Your enmity to me,
If by the process it should be provok'd,
Must in your breast be smother'd, not break out
In tilting at my life, nor your gage thrown
For any after quarrel. The cause weigh'd,
I might expect your love: but 'tis the stuff,
And proper quality of hoodwink'd rage,
To wrest offence from kindness.

Paladore. Should your prof
Keep pace with your assurance, scorn, not rage,
Will here be paramount, and my sword sleep,
From my indifference to a worthless toy,
Valued but in my untried ignorance.

Bireno. So you determine wisely. I must bind
you

To one condition more. If I make palpable
Her preference in my favour, you must turn

Your back on Lombardy, and never more
Seek her encounter.

Paladore. By a soldier's faith,
Should it be so, I would not breathe your air
A moment longer, for the sov'reignty
Of all the soil wash'd by your wand'ring Po.

Bireno. Summon your patience now, for sure
you'll need it.

Paladore. You have tried it to the last: dally no
more;

I shiver in expectation. Come, your proofs.

Bireno. Well, you will have them. Know you
first this writing? (*Gives a paper.*)

Paladore. It is the character of fair Sophia.

Bireno. I think so, and as such receiv'd it from
her;

Convey'd with such sweet action to my hand,
As wak'd the nimble spirit of my blood,
Whispering how kind were the contents within.
This light will aid the moon, though now she shines
In her full splendour. At your leisure read it.

Paladore. Kind words, indeed! I fear, I fear too
common. (*Reading.*)

Bireno. It works as I could wish. How his
cheek whitens!

His fiery eye darts through each tender word
As it would burn the paper.

Paladore. "Ever constant"— (*Reading.*)
Let me look once again. Is my sight false?

Oh! would it were! Fain would I cast the blame,
To save her crime, on my imperfect sense.
But did she give you this?

Bireno. Look to the address.

Paladore. Oh! darkness on my eyes! I've seen
too much.

There's not a letter but, like necromancy,
Withers my corporal functions. Shame confound
her!

Bireno. As you before were tardy of belief,
You now are rash. Behold these little shadows.
These you have seen before.

(*Producing two pictures.*)

Paladore. What's this, what's this?
My picture as I live, I gave the false one,
And her's she promis'd me. Oh! woman's faith!
I was your champion once, deceitful sex;
Thought your fair minds—But, hold! I may be
rash:

This letter, and these pictures, might be your's
By the king's power, compelling her reluctant
To write and send them; therefore, let me see
All you have promis'd. You expect her summons
At von Miranda—

Bireno. Yes, the time draws near;
She ever is most punctual. This small light
Our wonted signal: stand without its ray;
For should she spy more than myself beneath,
Fearing discovery, she'll retire again
Into her chamber. When her beauteous form
Breaks like the moon, as fair, though not so cold,
From yonder window.

Paladore. Ha! by hell, it opens!

Bireno. Stand you apart a moment. While I
climb,

You orb, now braz'd to this accustom'd scene,
Will shew you who invites me. I'll detain her,
To give you ample leisure for such note
As counterfeits abide not. (*Retires.*)

Paladore. Death! 'tis she!
There's not a silken braid that binds her hair,
One little shred of all that known attire
That wantons in the wind, but to my heart
Has sent such sweet disturbance, that it beats
Instinctive of her coming, ere my sight
Enjoy'd the beauteous wonder. Soft! What now!
See she lets down the cordage of her shame,
To hoist him to her arms. I'll look no more.
Distraction! Devil! How she welcomes him!

That's well, that's well! Again: grow to her lips—
Poison and aspics rot them! Now she woos him,
Points to her chamber, and invites him inward.
May adders hiss around their guilty couch!
And ghosts of injur'd lovers rise to scare them!
Ay, get you gone. Oh! for a griffin's wing,
To hear me through the casement! Deeds like
this

Should startle every spirit of the grove,
And wake enchantment from her spell-hung grot,
To shake the conscious roof about their heads,
And bare them to the scoff of modest eyes
Twin'd in the wanton fold. Oh! wretch accurs'd!
See there the blasted promise of thy joys,
Thy best hopes bankrupt. Do I linger still?
Here find a grave, and let thy mangled corse,
When her lascivious eye peers o'er the lawn,
Satiates the harlot's gaze.

(*Going to fall on his sword, Rinaldo rushes forward and prevents him.*)

Rinaldo. What frenzy's this?
Arm'd 'gainst your life! In pity turn the point
On your old faithful servant, whose heart heaves
Almost to bursting to behold you thus.

Paladore. Hast seen it then?

Rinaldo. I have seen your wild despair;
And bless'd be the kind monitor within
That led me here to save you.

Paladore. Rather, curs'd
Be thy officious fondness, since it dooms me
To lingering misery. Give me back my sword.
Is't come to this? Oh! I could tear my hair;
Rip up this credulous breast. Blind dotard! fool!
Did wit or malice ere devise a legend
To parallel this vile reality?

Rinaldo. Disgrace not the best gift of manly
nature,
Your reason, in this wild extravagance.

Paladore. And think'st thou I am mad without a
cause?
I'll tell thee—'Sdeath! it chokes me—Lead me
hence.

I will walk boldly on the billowy deep,
Or blindfold tread the sharp and perilous ridge
Of icy Caucasus, nor fear my footing;
Play with a fasting lion's fangs unarm'd,
And stroke his rage to tameness. But hereafter,
When men would try impossibilities,
Let them seek faith in woman. Furies seize them!
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Hall.

Enter BIRENO.

Bireno. Her death must be the means. If these
be crimes,

Thou bright ambition, whose rare alchymy,
Like Midas' palm, turns all it grasps to gold,
Give them thy glorious splendour! What a coil
Does puny conscience make in little minds,
Ere they o'erleap obstruction! Fear, not virtue,
Keeps mankind honest. Each inordinate wish
Is guilt unacted, and the canon points
More 'gainst the coward heart that would and dare
not,

Than the bold deed that braves the penalty.

Enter ASCANIO.

Welcome, Ascanio! Thanks for this kind speed
To meet my summons. I have business for thee,
Worthy thy subtle genius; thou shalt aid me
To spread a banquet forth, where two sharp guests,
Ambition and revenge, shall both be feasted,
Even to satiety.

Ascanio. I will not pall
Performance by protesting. Is there aught

In which a pliant tongue and ready hand
(No despicable engines) may do service?
To their best canning use them; your poor bond-
man

Will think himself much honour'd in obedience.

Bireno. I have profess'd myself thy friend,
Ascanio;

And when the golden autumn of my hopes
(Whose rich maturity I now would hasten)
Is ripe for bearing, thou shalt taste the fruit
That bends my swelling branches.

Ascanio. I have liv'd

The creature of your bounty; and my life
I would cast from me, like a useless load,
When to your gracious ends unprofitable.

Bireno. My means have hitherto been poor and
scanty,

My power confin'd; but I shall be, Ascanio,
Like a great river, whose large urns dispense
Abundance to the subject rills around him,
Till they o'erpeer their banks.

Ascanio. Oh! my good lord.

Bireno. I'll trust thee, as I know thee—for a
villain. [*Aside.*]

Place thyself near me when the council meets,
(I shall make matter for them they foresee not,)
Whate'er I urge, or whomso'er I charge,
Be ready thou with the grave mockery
Of uplift eyes, thy hand thus on thy breast,
And heaven-attesting oaths, to second me.

Ascanio. Prime in the catalogue of mortal sins
I hold unthankfulness, and a friend's need
Makes fiction virtue when its end is kindness.

Bireno. To give more ready credence to the im-
posture,

Put on reluctant seeming; earnestly
Entreat they urge you not; sadden thy brow,
And cry, "Alas! compel me not to speak;
I know not what I saw." Mumble some cant,
Of frailty, and compassion, sins of youth,
The danger of the law, if it were urg'd
'Gainst all transgressions: thus shall thy declining
Be eked out to a stubborn certainty
In each suspended hearer.

Ascanio. Nay, my lord,
Disparage not the good gifts were born with me,
To think I can want schooling for this office.

Bireno. I pray you pardon me. Oh! nature,
nature! [*Aside.*]

There is a pride even in stark villainy
Which flattery's heat must soften, ere the metal
Bend to our purposes. Come this way with me,
The hall will soon be throng'd; what more remains
I will impart within. No ceremony. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter LUCIO and an Officer.

Officer. See where they pass; what bodes that
conference?

Lucio. Danger, my life on't. That smooth knave,
Ascanio,

Is the Duke's crucible, his breast receives
The mass of his crude projects, and his brain
A subtle fire, refines the drossy ore,
To bear the ready stamp for present mischief.

Officer. The Duke of late grows past his custom
courteous,

Joins hands with us, and calls us by our names,
Gives praise, and largess to the soldiery,
Whom he was wont to style state caterpillars,
Burthens of peace, and but endur'd in war
As necessary evils.

Lucio. It denotes
(Or I lack charity) trouble to the state.
I know him proud, subtle, and pitiless;
Nor will his nature change these elements,
However for a season he puts on
A smoother guise, and fashion suitable
To the end he aims at.

Officer. Best conceal these thoughts,
For one day he may rule us.

Lucio. Ay, that may,
If I mistake not, he will snatch from chance,
And make a certainty. But see, the king.
The providence of heaven be ever round him!

Enter the KING, Counsellors, Knights, and Attendants.

Health to your majesty!

King. Thanks, gentle friends!
But why this faintness in your salutations?
Why wear your brows that ominous livery?
I trust our gallant spirits will not palter,
Because a rash invader threatens us.
When I was young as you, to hear of war
Made my blood dance: but these good days are
past,
This sapless trunk shrinks from its mailed bark;
Yet age has still its use, count me your steward,
Holding the honours of the state in trust
For all deservers. She shall better thank you;

Enter the PRINCESS, and Attendants.

More retribution dwells in beauty's smile
Than in whole volumes of an old man's praise.
Approach, my child! Come, grace thy father's
side:

These are thy champions; give your women
tasks,

Bid all the looms of Pavia ply their labours,
A scarf for every warrior, they'll deserve them.

Princess. They will not want my thanks, nor
such poor tokens

How much I prize their worth; their high-touch'd
virtue

Finds in itself the source and end of action;
Secures its right to praise, but scorns to take it.

Enter BIRENO and ASCANIO.

King. Welcome, my cousin! Doubt not of my
zeal;

Though ill has the success kept pace with it,
To speed your amorous suit; still let us hope,
Time, and your fair pretensions, will have weight
To win her to our wishes.

Bireno. Let it pass;
I must take comfort: women's appetites
Will be their own purveyors. Are we met?
The ball, methinks, seems full.

King. Where's Paladore?
He had our summons, yet I see him not:
His skill in war, and wisdom to advise,
Have been most tutelary to our realm,
And well deserve the waiting.

Bireno. Take your place;
He cannot now be present; when we are seated,
I will declare the reason.

Princess. Ha! not present! (*Aside.*)
What fatal bar prevents him? Oh! my heart!
Is Paladore the fountain of thy life,
That thy stream scarce can flow when sever'd from
him?

(*They take their places; the Princess on the
King's right hand, a little beneath him.
Bireno and Ascanio in the front of the
stage, some seated, others standing.*)

Bireno. The danger of our frontiers, you, sage
lords,

Calls this assembly; but, as wise physicians,
The heart being touch'd, neglect the extremities,
Giving their first care to the seat of life,
So now the wounded vitals of our honour
Demand our prior tendance.

King. Speak, good cousin,
Do dark conspiracy and home-bred treason

(Unmatural leaguers with a foreign foe)
Bid the sharp sword of vengeance turn its edge
'Gainst our own children?

Bireno. Yes; though nature bleeds,
Justice will take her course; I see before me
The prime of the kingdom; and from some among
you,

Since they, in whose authority abides
The executive of power, best can tell,
I now would hear, why do our registers
Contain that rigorous ordinance, which respects
The chastity of women?

I Sen. To that question,
The law's preamble answers. 'Tis rehears'd,
That the wild licence of our country women
O'erleap'd all modest bounds. Sweet prudency
(That ruby of the sex) had been cast by
For casual wantonness, till our name abroad
Became a by-word, and confusion strange
Disturb'd domestic peace. A spurious issue,
The slips of chance and wildness, were engrafted
In rich inheritances, while the sire
Caress'd the child not his, and left to fortune
The true heirs of his fondness: these abuses
Required an iron curb; so pass'd the law,
Making transgression death, with no remittance
To high rank or degree in the offender,
But in its bloody gripe comprising all.

Bireno. And is this so allow'd?

I Sen. 'Tis so allow'd:
Nor is there a decretal in our rolls
Of less ambiguous import, or more know'n.

King. This is beyond divining: I have mark'd
His changing feature; some strong passion shakes
him. (*Apart to the Princess.*)

Princess. He plays emotion well, most masterly,
Even to the life of feigning.

Bireno. May I on?
Or must I, like a novice to your forms,
First prove my right of audience?

King. Be not anger'd;
We questioned not your right: all counsellors
Speak what they list with freedom; you, our
cousin,
Have with your right pre-audience.

Princess. Pray, proceed.

Bireno. Most learned lord, now please you to
recite

The dangerous predicament of those
Who do awake this statute?

I Sen. Willingly.

'Tis there provided that, the accus'd being cited
In the king's presence, he who brings the charge,
Should state each circumstance; that done, the
herald

Thrice in six hours, first, in the market-place,
Next, in the hippodrome, last, in the porch
Of the great temple, must invite all knights
(Whether impell'd by pity, love, or justice)
To appear her champions in the marshal'd lists:
There, if the accuser falls, she is held free,
And her fair fame restor'd; but, if he conquers,
The event confirms her guilt, and the sharp axe
Severs the wanton's life.

Bireno. Then in this peril
Stand I at present. Bid your trumpets sound,
And call forth every bold adventurer,
To try what desperate valour may achieve
'Gainst truth and my keen sword.

King. But whither wouldst thou?
Suspense and horror sit on every brow;
Like the red comet, thy denouncing eye
Forebodes disaster.

Bireno. Oh! relentless justice!
If these be drops of weakness, let them fall;
'Tis the last tribute of a human sorrow,
And now I am wholly thine.

King. Pr'ythee, go on.

Bireno. 'Twere vain to waste your patience in persuasion;
I would not wantonly play with the fangs
Of such a lion law, whose terrible roar
Must be appeas'd with blood. So rests my truth.
A lover's fondness, last night, prompted me,
Attended by this gentleman—

(*Pointing to Ascanio.*)

Ascanio. Curs'd chance!
Oh! would the darkness of the delving mole
Had been my portion; then I had not seen—
What have I said? Nay, do not call on me.
Was it for this I was commanded hither?
I'll close my lips for ever.

1 Sen. We have ways
To force a necessary truth. My lord,
Please you, proceed—The rack shall make him
answer:

Have eye upon him—He was your companion?

Bireno. He was, he was, when love or destiny
Led me a wanderer, in the palace garden,
To gaze upon the window of the Princess;
When, oh! sad object for a lover's eyes!
The casement open'd, and the full-orb'd moon,
Bright as the radiance of meridian day,
Shew'd me a lusty rival in her arms,
Embracing, and embrac'd.

(*All rise.*)

King. Shame! Death! Confusion!

My daughter! Oh! my daughter!

Princess. Host of heaven!
Does no deep thunder roll, no lightning flash?
Can the tremendous couriers of your wrath
Sleep o'er this perjury?

Bireno. My gage is thrown;
And here I stand to answer with my life,
If I have charg'd her falsely.

Ascanio. On my knees,
If ever pity touch'd your noble breast,
I beg you speak no more.

(*Kneeling.*)

Princess. Thou vile confederate (To *Ascanio.*)
Of his blood-thirsty malice! Have I liv'd
To hear a wretch suborn'd, his sycophant,
Mock me with intercession? I behold thee,

(To *Bireno.*)

And scorn so struggles with astonishment,
That my full heart and intercepted tongue
Almost refuse their active offices,
Till passion's chok'd in silence.

King. Pow'rs of mercy!
Am I reserv'd for this? My only child,
The pride, the joy, the treasure of my soul,
My age's cordial, and my life's best prop,
In the sweet spring and blossom of her youth,
Thus blasted in my sight! But, oh! dark fiend!

(To *Bireno.*)

Whom hell lets loose to spread destruction round
thee,

Why does thy vengeance fasten upon me?
Have I deserv'd this from thee? Well thou
know'st,
I strove to make her thine; I would have given
thee

My crown and daughter. Thou requit'st my love
By daggers steep'd in poison to my heart.

Bireno. I thank thy kindness, and forgive thy
rage;

The father shall have license. Honour, witness!
Nor malice nor ambition loos'd my tongue,
To this heart-rending office. Reverend lords,
Let your unclouded wisdom judge between us.

Princess. Can I be patient? Most abandon'd
ruffian!

Thou scoffest at all ties! with the same breath
That violates a virgin's sanctity,
(Holy and pure beyond thy gross conceiving.)
Thus conscious of thy lie, dar'st thou invoke
Honour to witness for thee? Wherefore call
On these to judge between us? See, barbarian,

Amaz'd, and struck with horror, they have heard
thee;

Too well thou know'st they must pronounce me
guilty;

Thy oath must be their law: but there is One,
An unseen Judge, an all-discerning Eye:
Now, if thou dar'st, look up, poor shivering
wretch!

He views the dark recesses of thy soul:
Tremble at him thy judge.

Bireno. I were a slave,
Fit for absences, could I tamely bear
To see the rich reversion of my blood
Seiz'd by a base and spurious progeny;
An alien Briton, in his sport of lust,
Stamping a brood of illegitimate kings,
To bend our necks to bastard tyranny.

King. An alien Briton!

Bireno. Bid her answer thee;
Call for her paramour, her Paladore.
Say, why is he not present?

Princess. Why, indeed!

Hast thou not practis'd on his precious life?
And to commatmate this day's guilt and horror,
Crown'd perjury with murder?

King. Paladore!

Search, find him out; put pinions to your speed,
And bear him to our presence.

Bireno. Spare your labour:
Fear will outstrip their haste. The dastard's gone;
He had my challenge for this injury,
And answer'd it by flight.

King. Confusion! Fleed!

Am I, then, doubly wretched? Must she die?
And die dishonour'd, too?

Princess. All-seeing heaven! (Kneeling.)

If e'er thy interposing providence
Dash'd the audacious councils of the wicked;
If innocence, ensnar'd, may raise its eye,
In humble hope, to thy eternal throne,
Look down, and succour me! I kneel before thee,
Distress'd, forlorn, abandon'd to despair,
By all deserted, and my life beset;
The man my soul adores, traduc'd and wrong'd:
Yet, oh! there is a pang surpassing all!
While the envenom'd rancour of this fiend
Casts its contagion on my spotless fame,
And, unrebuk'd, persists to blast my virtue.

Bireno. Hear, she avows her love.

Princess. Yes, glory in it.

King. Ha! have a care, rash girl! nor turn my
grief

To curses on thy head. Dar'st thou confirm
Thy doubtful infamy?

Princess. A love so pure,
What bosom might not feel, what tongue not own?
It was a fault to hide the secret from you:
But are such sighs as vestal breasts might heave,
Such spotless vows as angels might record,
Pollution worthy death? These are my crimes;
And if I labour with a guilt more black,
May the full malice of that villain reach me.

King. What can I think? His absence—yet thy
truth,

Thy nature's modesty, plead strongly for thee.
Away with doubt. Oh! thou odourate heart!

Bireno. We trifle time. The lists must be pre-
par'd;

The herald sounds defiance—

Princess. Hold a moment!

I'll tell thee how to arm thee for the combat:
Steep thy keen sword in poison, that no balm
May heal the wounds it gives, but each be mortal;
Let a staunch blood-hound, with devouring fangs,
And eye-balls fiery red, couch o'er thy helm;
The deadly sable of thy mail besmear'd
With scaffold, wheels, and engines, virgin's heads
Fresh bleeding from the axe's severing stroke:

Scorn thou the mean device of vulgar knights,
Who fight for what they reverence,—truth and
nour;

But be profess'd their champion whom thou serv'st,
And write in bloody letters, hell and falsehood.

Bireno. This passion, lady, ill becomes your
state:

Shame is wash'd out by sorrow, not by anger.

King. Hence, from my sight, detested parricide!

Assassin! butcher! lest these feeble hands,
Brac'd by my wrongs to more than mortal strength,
Fix on thy throat, and bare thy treacherous
heart.

Bireno. Old man, I go. Compassion for thy
grief

Forbids me retort these outrages.

Let frenzy take its course. When next we meet,
Sammon thy fortitude; and learn, meantime,
Crown not save the wearer from affliction;
But kings, like meaner men, were born to suffer.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter the KING and the PRINCESS.

King. Morality from thee! He braves high
heaven,

And well may scorn my anger. Oh! my child,
This little hour, while I can call thee mine,
Close let me strain thee to my bursting heart:
Alas! thy aged father can no more
Than thus to fold thee; pour these scalding tears,
And drench thy tender bosom with his sorrows.

Princess. By my best hopes of happiness here-
after,

To see that reverend frame thus torn with an-
guish;

To hear those heart-fetch'd groans, is greater mi-
sery,

Than all the horrors of the doom that waits me.

I could put on a Roman constancy,
And go to death like sleep, did no soft sorrow
Hang on the mourning of surviving friends,
And wake a keener pang for their affliction.

Enter LUCIO.

Lucio. Forgive the obedience of reluctant duty:
I have the council's order to commit
The Princess to a guard's close custody.

King. Thou art my subject, Lucio, and my sol-
dier;

Do thy unhappy master one last service—
Draw forth thy sword, and strike it through my
heart.

Princess. No; let our grief be sacred. If we
weep,

Let them not see and triumph in our tears.

Martyrs have died in voluntary flames,
And heroes rush'd on death inevitable,
By faith inspir'd or glory. Thou, Sophia,
Sustain'd alone by peace and innocence,
Meet fate as firmly, and transcend their daring.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Forest.

Enter PALADORE; RINALDO following.

Paladore. Am I the slave of sense, that know
her fickle,

Ungrateful, perjur'd, yet still doat thus fondly?
Faith, prudence, honour, govern'd appetites,
(Whose everlasting bonds make passion wise,)
In her were only seeming; or, like ornament
Thrown by, or worn at pleasure: then this sorrow
Hangs on her outside only; that's unchang'd;
For falsehood did not dim her radiant eyes:
Her cheek was damask'd with as pure a rose;

Her breath as odorous, when she most deceiv'd,
As when her virtue, like her specious form,
Seem'd spotless and unparagon'd.

Rinaldo. My lord,
Court not this solitude. Speak out your grief;
Mine is no flinty breast. This dangerous spleen,
That makes your bane its nurture, then shews
worst,

When nothing spent in loudness and complaint;
Like a deep stream, it rolls its noiseless way,
Mining the banks in silence.

Paladore. Would the pain
Vanish with the exposure of the cause,
I should make blunt the patience of your ear
By endless iteration. But why tell thee?
Think'st thou there is a charm in soothing words
To pluck the sting from anguish? Good Rinaldo,
Thou hadst a son, and lost him.

Rinaldo. True, I had so.

Paladore. See there, his very name provokes
thy tears.

Say, can wise counsel stop them? Shall I tell
thee

The lot of mortals is mortality?

That fate will take its course; 'twas heaven's high
will;

And man is born to sorrow? This is wise;
The sum of consolation. Strains like these
Flow smoothly from the tongues of moralists;
Patient as sleep in others' sufferings,
But vex'd as wasps and hornets in their own.

Rinaldo. From these imperfect starts I cannot
answer;

They speak but passion. If my guess deceive
not,

A woman, sure, has wrong'd you.

Paladore. A true woman,—
I thought her angel once,—most basely wrong'd
me:

Yet if revenge kept measure with her shame,
I could wash out in her polluted blood
This stain to modesty. Yes, fair falsehood!
Should I appeal thee of the incontinence
My blasted eyes have witness'd, the stern law
Would give me ample vengeance.

Rinaldo. Your great spirit
(Whoe'er she be that thus has injur'd you)
Would scorn your reparation from that law,
The shame even of justice.

Paladore. Fear not. Still she twines
Here round my heart-strings. No; let late re-
morse

(For, sure, it will o'ertake) punish her sin.—
But hie thee back to Pavia presently;
Dismiss my attendants; (useless pageantry
To my now alter'd state;) send hither to me
My arms and horses; these may hasten death
Fitting a soldier; then return and seek me.
A little longer will I hold in life;
Till, in requital of her father's kindness,
I render some brave service. 'Midst these oaks,
Till you return, I'll keep my lonely haunt.

Rinaldo. There stands an humble hamlet in your
glade,

Ow'n'd by some simple peasants, who supply
The western suburbs with such homely fare
As their few fields afford; thither bestow you,
And take some nourishment. I will return
With my best diligence.

Paladore. Go, get thee gone.
Sorrow's my food; I'll drink my falling tears.
Ye savage denizens of this wild wood,
Gaunt wolves, and tusky boars! no more my
hounds
Shall dash the spangled dew-drops from your
brakes!

No more with echoing cries, or mellow horn,
I'll rouse your dreadful slumber! Sleep securely:

With disposition deadly as your own,
I go to mingle with you. [Exeunt.

Enter two Foresters.

1 For. This place will suit our purpose; 'twere
lost time

To lead her further: so we but despatch her,
No matter for the spot. The deed once done,
The Duke will not be nice, but pay us nobly.

2 For. Half of our hire's to come. How shall
we do it—

Stab her, or strangle?

1 For. Make this cord her necklace:
Blood may beget suspicion. When she's dead,
We'll drag her body to yon hazel copse,
And leave the maws of wolves to bury it.
There's scarce a bush in this green labyrinth
But is familiar to me. Many a traveller,
When I was master of as stout a gang
As e'er defy'd the law, here has paid down
His life in conflict for the gold I wanted,
And never more was heard of.

2 For. Sound your horn.

I told her, we'd a little on before
To give our horses forage, and directed
Her way to follow: should she miss the path,
Her ear will be her guide.—See, Carlo, see!
The pretty innocent, caught by her eye,
Stops for awhile to pluck the velvet bells
That blow beneath her feet, then forward bounds,
Light as the roe, till some fresh floweret
Lures her again.

1 For. Ay, like the lamb that plays,
And crops his pasture, in the butcher's eye,
Even while the knife's a whetting.—Hush! She's
here.

Enter ALINDA.

Alinda. Beneath a rugged thorn I found this
flower,

Blushing, unmark'd, its odorous life away:
I'll wear it in my breast, and all who see
Will praise its beauty, modest worth's sweet em-
blem,

That first must be conspicuous ere 'tis priz'd.
Oh! are you there? I'm ready, my good guides.
Where is our equipage? The way's but short;
We shall be there ere moonshine.

1 For. Pretty lady,

You have a longer journey than you wot of,
And a dark, dreary road to travel through.

Alinda. Why, then, the Duke deceiv'd me; for
he said

The way was pleasant, and the distance nothing.

2 For. We have help'd many forward the same
way,

And all were much averse to travel it.

Alinda. They had no lover to obey like me;
For I am light, and were it ten times further,
To please my lord, I'd go it blithesomely.
Come, come, to horse!

1 For. Are you prepar'd to die?

Alinda. Mercy defend me! How? Prepar'd to
die?

'Tis a strange question.

1 For. But most seasonable:

As fit as if your couch were spread at midnight,
To ask if you were weary. With our will
We do it not; for we were gently bred,
And hous'd with gallants once: but this rough
trade

Necessity enforces. Come, prepare.

Alinda. What do you search for? And why turn
you pale?

You make me shake to see your stedfast eye.
Does this become the servants of the Duke,
To frighten whom they should protect from fear?

2 For. We are, indeed, the servants of the
Duke;

For we receive his hire: then for your fears,
We mean to rid you of them by your death.
Alinda. Can this be sport? Alas! what have I
done,

That such detested thoughts should rise in you?

1 For. You are troublesome. Our business is
to kill you.

If you have a ready prayer, and brief, kneel
there,

And say it presently. We run great hazard
To let you live so long.

Alinda. I'll kneel to you,
Make you my saint, if you'll have mercy on me.
I never injur'd you, nay, could not injure;
For till this hour that I was made your charge,
I never saw you. Do not turn away.

Think how you'll answer this to him whose love
Trusted me to your care. He will require
A strict account.

2 For. Pr'ythee, let go my arm.

Alinda. May I not know why you do wish to
kill me?

If for these sparkling baubles, take them freely:
Rob me of all, but do not murder me.
I am not fit to die.

1 For. We need not thank you
For what you can't withhold. Fall to your
prayers.

Alinda. But are you not the servants of the
Duke?

Think how you swore to tend me faithfully;
How he enjoin'd you, as you priz'd his favour,
Ev'n in your looks he'll read this cruelty,
And find how you have abus'd him. Think on
that.

1 For. 'Twere pity she should die in ignorance.
Caught in the falcon's pounce, the dove as well
Might gurgle to the kite to stoop, and save her,
As you cry to Bireno. Know, 'tis he
Who laid this snare, and pays us for your blood.

Alinda. The Duke Bireno!

2 For. Yes, the Duke Bireno.

You have been privy to some passages
Require concealment. Being wise, he thinks
They are safest when you are dumb; so, gives us
gold

To stop your blabbing. If you doubt our word,
Peruse that paper. Are you satisfied?

(Shows a paper.)

Alinda. Yes, if 'tis satisfaction to be torn
With worse than death, ere death, I'm satisfied.
But yet you will not kill me.

1 For. There's no end:

She'll prate us from our purpose. Bind her arms.
All strife is vain.

Alinda. Oh, sir!—yet hold a moment;
You murder more than one. An innocent pledge
Of my disastrous love leaps at my side,
And joins his speechless prayer.

2 For. And not his wife!

Why, then, your head's a forfeit to the law;
And we but take before, what sport or malice
Might make you render at the bloody block,
With process more afflicting.

Alinda. Barbarous villains!

Is there no help? Oh! spare me. With my cries,
I'll wake the dead.

2 For. Despatch her with your dagger.

Be quick!

1 For. 'Tis done! (Stabs her.)

Enter PALADORE.

Paladore. Sure, 'twas the scream of woe!
A woman struggling! Villains, loose your hold!
Dogs! hell-hounds!

[He drives them out, and returns.]

Alinda. Oh! (Fainting.)
Paladore. Guilt has the wings of wind,

My sight can scarce o'ertake them. On the ground!

I came too late to save her. Hearts of stone
Might feel compunction, sure, to mar a form
So soft and fair as this. Thou beauteous marble,
Forgive my tardy succour! Here's a mould
So delicate, 'twere worth a miracle
To give it second life. I've seen this face!
Ha! As I live, 'tis she! the beauteous girl
That waited on the Princess. Soft! the blood
Steals to her cheek again; the azure lids
Begin to open.

Alinda. Oh!

Paladore. Look up, sweet maid!

Alinda. Bless me, where am I?

Paladore. Safe from violence,
Nor in a stranger's arms.

Alinda. Your voice is gentle.

But will you save me from these barbarous men,
Should they again return? I tremble still;
Still feel their ruffian gripe; nor can believe
I yet am safe, tho' I no more behold them.

Paladore. They are fled far.—But, ah! thy side
is pierc'd;

Nor does this houseless solitude afford
The chance of timely succour.

Alinda. Heaven is just,

(For now I know you,) since it bids me die,
Weeping for pardon at your injur'd knees;
For I have basely wrong'd you.

Paladore. Wrong'd me! How?

All who have ever serv'd or lov'd that false one,
As they bring back her irksome memory,
I should avoid in wisdom. So confu'd,
It is not in thy sphere to wake a thought,
More than compassion for thy helpless sex,
And aid my order binds to.

Alinda. Have but patience,

Nor waste the few short moments fate allows me
To doubt my truth: the seal of death is on it.
You left the court on much supposed proof
Of her incontinence—

Paladore. Supposed proof!

By heav'n! I saw her in the fulsome twine
Of riotous dalliance with one she swore,
That very noon, (a budding perjury!)
Excited but her loathing.

Alinda. At her window,

I know you think you saw her.

Paladore. Think I saw her!

Is there for visible objects better sense
Than sight to hold by?

Alinda. Oh! most injur'd lady!

My sullied lips would but profane thy virtue,
To say I know it spotless.

Paladore. Do not mock me

With hopes impossible. I see her still:
Her snowy veil and sparkling coronet,
Peculiar in their form—

Alinda. By me were worn,

While she and harmless thoughts slept sound toge-
ther.

Bireno's was the fraud; my boundless love
Made me his instrument.

Paladore. Oh! hold my brain!

But one thing more:—How came he by that
letter?

Her picture, mine?

Alinda. These, too, I found, and gave him,
By her for you intended. 'Midst her notes,
I found his title writ, and trac'd the address
Stroke after stroke agreeing.

Paladore. Wretch! fond wretch!

Have I for this with viperous calumny
Traduc'd her virgin fame? With desperate hand,
Rais'd this sharp sword against my tortur'd breast?
But I will turn an usurer in revenge,
And take such bloody interest for my wrongs—

Alinda. Let heaven be my avenger.—How I
lov'd him!

Oh! savage, merciless! To snare my life,
From mere suspicion my unwary tongue
Might publish his contrivance—

Paladore. How! thy life!

Inhuman dog! Were these his ruffians, then,
I found thee struggling with?

Alinda. I thought they led me,

By his especial care, far from the city,
Where he ordain'd I should remain secure
To hide this swelling witness of my shame,
My fatal passion bears him.

Paladore. Heaven defend me!

Alinda. There lies the bloody contract. Oh!
forgive me!

I have struggled hard to make this last confes-
sion:

The icy grasp of death chills my shrunk heart.

Paladore. Would I could save thee!

Alinda. Say but you forgive me,

Paladore. As I would be forgiven.

Alinda. And will you plead

My pardon with my ever-gracious mistress,
When she shall know?—'Tis dark—Let this atone.

(Dies.)

Paladore. Peace to thy hapless shade! Thou
hast wash'd out

Thy offences in thy blood. Unnatural slave!
Hell should invent new torments for thy crimes,
And howling fiends avoid thee. I have heard,
Have read, bold fables of enormity,
Devis'd to make men wonder, and confirm
The abhorrence of our nature; but this hardness
Transcends all fiction. Mover of the world!
Send not thy sulphurous lightning forth to strike,
Nor cleave the ground to gape and swallow him;
But, oh! reserve him for the sharper pangs
My vengeance meditates. Poor blasted flower!
Which way shall I bestow thee? It were cruel
To leave thee thus to insult. Hold! you peasant
May help to bear her hence. Shepherd, approach.

Enter a Shepherd.

Hast thou a habitation near this place?

Shep. Fair sir, I have. There eastward turn
your eyes;

The curling smoke above yon tufted trees
Mounts from my cottage fire.

Paladore. Then call for aid,
And bear this body thither.

Shep. Mercy guard us!

This is a piteous sight. What could provoke
A youth of such a sweet and comely outside,
To act so sad a deed?

Paladore. You wrong me, shepherd;
She fell by ruffians. Pr'ythee, call thy hinds,
And, for thy soul's sake, do this courtesy.

Shep. Good sir, detain me not. I'll haste to the
city,

Where all our villagers flock to behold
A most strange sight, and sad as it is strange.
With their best speed, my old limbs will be
late:

The sun goes down apace.

Paladore. What'er the sight,
Respite thy curiosity for gold.

Take this, and give a covering to that corse.

(Gives a purse.)

I must away. You shall hear further from me.

[Exit.]

Enter RINALDO.

Shep. He had a hard heart, lady, struck thee
down.

I would not for the herds that graze these hills
Beyond my eyes,—not?—no, nor for the wealth
Of all who throng the city, I or mine

Should answer for a sin like this at doom's-day.
Oh! if thy father live, what bitter tears
Will this misdeed wring from his watery eyes!
Thou shalt not want what I can do for thee.
I'll make thy bed with leaves, and strew thee
o'er

With herbs and flowers, wild thyme and lavender,
White lilies, and the prime of all our fields:
And, for thy soul's peace, till thy knell is toll'd,
I'll number many an ave. Come, for help.

Rinaldo. Oh! cursed chance! Vain is my search
to find him!

Yet all his life to come, from one lost moment,
May take its mournful colour. Doom'd to die!
And he alike accus'd, leave her to perish?
Most horrible! Kind shepherd, answer quickly:
Saw'st thou a youth, clad in a shining robe,
Of noble port, wand'ring these tangled woods?

Shep. Even such an one as you describe, but
now,

(Him of your question doubtless,) went from
hence,
And left with me in charge—

Rinaldo. No matter what!
Know you the path he took, which way his
course?

Shep. I follow'd him a little with my eye,
And saw him wind round yonder shrubby hill,
Then pass the row of olives.

Rinaldo. Leads it not
straight to the city?

Shep. As the falcon flies.

Rinaldo. Oh! fortune, guide his steps once more
to Pavia;

Else, never-ending misery awaits him. [Exeunt.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Hall.

LUCIO and an Officer discovered.

Officer. Think on the danger.

Lucio. Who sees only that,

Will ne'er surmount it. More than life I owe
her!

Adversity's hard hand had crush'd my hopes,
Doom'd my sweet wife and infant family
To shameful beggary. My affliction reach'd her.
Can I forget her all-dispensing bounty,
That rais'd my soul from comfortless despair;
That bade my cheerful house again receive me;
Bless'd us with plenty? If I fall, and save her,
'Tis well; I ask no nobler epitaph.

Officer. There's virtue in your motive, and your
purpose.

But how effect her rescue?

Lucio. Will you join us?

Officer. Or why these questions?

Lucio. I dare trust your honour,

The bond of soldiers. Know, then, I command
(And sought it with this hope) her prison guard:
I have sound'd them; they hate the cruel ser-
vice.

A little, ere the fatal hour's approach,
We mean to pass their unresisting force,
Throw wide the iron gates, and bear her safe
Beyond the danger of this bloody edict.

Officer. It looks success; may fortune second
it!

The throngs assembled to behold the sight,
Will count for idle gazers, and conceal
Your bold design, till 'tis too late to thwart it.
How brooks she her sad plight?

Lucio. With fortitude

So sweet, so even-temper'd, that her death

Seems but a phantom, dress'd by fancy's trick,
To frighten children. All her soul's employ'd
In minist'ring, with softest piety,
To her distracted father.

Officer. There's a spectacle;
Indeed, heart-rending! Cast on the cold ground,
He strews his head with ashes; by the roots
Tears out his silver hair; beats his poor breast;
While the significant dumbness of his gesture,
Beggars all power of words.

Lucio. Thou blind mischance,
Stand nenter! we shall cheer him presently.
I'll to my station. Keep thy sword conceal'd,
Nor sheathe it drawn but in the villain's breast,
That dare oppose us. Be but firm, and fear not.

[Exeunt.]

Enter BIRENO.

Bireno. By their description, it was Paladore;
The place, the glittering robe, his courage too,
In so assailing them. If their keen daggers
Left her enough of breath to tell the tale,
She has, no doubt, told all, and wing'd him back,
To wreak his vengeance on me; this way only,
Can I be safe; firm as he is, and fearless,
My ambush cuts him off; and, by his death,
The full tide of my prosperous fortune flows,
Never to ebb.

Enter ASCANIO.

Well, the great period comes!
No champion meets my challenge?

Ascanio. No, not one.

Fear puts the livery of conscience on:
They cannot think one of your nobleness,
Would charge a lady falsely to the death;
And few are the examples of success
Against conviction: true, 'tis pitiful,
That one so fair, so young, of royal birth,
For the mere frailty of impulsive nature,
Should meet so sad a doom: the law's to blame,
That bloodily enrolls a venial trespass,
With those o'ergrown and huge enormities,
That shake society; but they can no more
Than drop a tear or two, and let her die.

Bireno. True; she must die; and the heart-
wounded king,

Whose age already totters o'er the grave,
Like a crush'd serpent, but a little longer
Will drag his painful being. Yet one fear
Sits like a boding raven o'er my breast,
And flaps its heavy wing to damp my joy.

Ascanio. What fear can reach you now? From
Paladore?

Bireno. Perdition seize him! yes. But, my good
ruffians,

Ere this, I trust, have sent to his account
That ill-starred Briton. Doubly-arm'd they wait
him:

Close by a brambled cavern he must pass,
Returning hither. Yet, should he escape—
It cannot be. Heart, reassume thy seat.

But, come, the time draws on. Bear to the
lists

My martial ensigns; I must seem prepar'd
To oppose a danger that will never meet me.

Enter a Servant, who delivers a paper.

The hand of Bernardine, my trusty spy. (*Reads.*)
Confusion! Rescue her! Come back, Ascanio!
Fly to St. Mark's, collect the cohort there;
Go, place them instantly around the prison!
Bid them disarm the guard that holds that place;
And, on their lives, drive back the populace.
I'll to Honorias. These stout veterans
Will sweep the rabble like vile chaff before
them.

Away! A moment may be fatal to us. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Prison.

The PRINCESS, attended by Women, discovered.

Princess. Nay, dry these tears: the awful eve of death

Is but profan'd by shews of common sorrow.
I have a triple armour round my heart,
'Gainst all the shapes of terror; yet it owns
The soft contagion of affection's drops,
And melts at kindness. Come, this must not be.
You, Laura, must be near me at the block,
And help to disarray me. What, more tears?
Stop them, for shame! I must have strangers

else,
For this last office. When the axe has fallen,
They have no further power. Save from dis-
grace

My poor remains; and, on your loves I charge
you,

When I am dead, see that they touch me not.
I have not been unmindful of your service.
It is not much: there were too many poor,
Too many comfortless, to leave me rich.
But you will find a father in the king;
And, for my sake, he will be bounteous to you.
Retire, and weep; I dare not look upon you.

(Takes a picture from her bosom.)

Thou dear, dumb image of a form belov'd!
Soul of my soul, and precious even in death,
Awake be sensible! receive this sigh,
And take my last farewell. When thou shalt
know

My trials and sufferings, let not the sad tale
Blast the fair promise of thy noble youth;
But, with a sweet, a sacred melancholy,
Embrace the soft remembrance of my love.
My father! oh! angelic host support me,
To bear this parting, and death's pang is past!

Enter the KING.

I am indeed subdu'd to see thee thus!

King. They would not let me die—

Princess. These few short hours,
Alas! how have they chang'd thee. Murderous
sorrow!

Thy furrows sink more deep than age or time.
Your cheek is ashy pale, your eyes quite sunk.
Will you not look upon me?

King. Oh! no, no;

I came to give thee comfort, to sustain thee;
But, looking on thee, I shall weep again,
And add my load of misery to thine.
Yet teach me to be patient.

Princess. View me well;

Nor think these tears fall for my own distress;
The throbbings of my heart are for my father.
'Tis apprehension makes death terrible.
Cowards, from weakness, tremble; guilt, from
conscience;

But the firm bosom, innocence invests,
Knows it a fix'd, inevitable end,
Meets the pale guest, nor startles at the encoun-
ter.

King. Thou wert my all: a mote that vex'd thy
eye,

A thorn that raz'd thy finger, snatch'd my
thoughts
From ev'ry care but thee. And thus to lose thee!

Princess. Oh! were our being circumscrib'd by
earth,

This end, indeed, might shake my constancy.
But, faith apart, think what bright evidence
Shines here within of immortality.
Who has not felt the heavenly overflow
Of thought congenial to the eternal mind?
Why are there tears of virtuous sympathy?
Whence that celestial fluid of the eye,

That sheds such full, such satisfied delight?
But that the God of all benevolence
Thus gives a glimpse of blessedness to come,
In joys refin'd from sense, and far transcending?
King. What has old age to lose? Is the poor
remnant

Of life, worn threadbare, precious for itself?
Can we be fond of pain and feebleness?
No; but our second spring, our soul's renew'd
In our dear children; there we cling to life.
Mortality! thy last, thy heaviest curse,
Bids us remain the mournful monument,
The living tomb of all our comforts buried,
Telling no more in our sepulchral sorrow,
Than that they were, and are not.

Princess. You must live
(For sure the hour will come) to see this cloud
Pass from my memory; and the shame he merits,
Fall on my base accuser.

King. Hear me, heaven!
On the devoted murderer of my child,
With tenfold visitation pour my sorrow!
Let fear, mistrust, and horror ever haunt him;
Slumber forsake his couch, and joy his table!
If he must reign, oh! line his crown with thorns;
Turn reverence to contempt; the friend he trusts,
Meet him for smiles with daggers; war abroad,
Treason at home, pursue and harass him;
And may the steam that mounts from innocent
blood,

Make heavier the dire thunderbolt,
Lanc'd from thy red right arm, at last, to crush
him!

Princess. Spirit of peace, on his distemper'd
rage,

Oh! shed thy healing balm!—*(A noise without.)*—
What mean these shouts?

This wild tumultuous noise?

Enter an Attendant.

Attend. Our prayers are heard.
The guard gives way, the massy bars are forc'd;
And, like delivering angels, the rous'd people,
Burst in to lead you from this den of horror.

King. Oh! joy unhop'd! Millions of blessings
crown them!

Attend. Led by the gallant Lucio, they ad-
vance.

King. The tiger, then, may seek his prey in
vain,

My brave, my generous people!—Hark! they come.
(More noise.)

Princess. Ah! sir, retire. Your heart must
thank their purpose:

Yet, sure, 'twere most unmeet for royalty,
Whose sway and throne are hallow'd in obedi-
ence,

To countenance this outrage. Pray, retire.

King. Yes, I will go; but, oh! be swift, my
child;

Nor dally with this blessed chance to save thee.
[Exit.]

Enter LUCIO, with his sword drawn.

Princess. Your purpose, quickly? *(Advancing.)*
Lucio. Your deliverance, lady! *(Kneeling.)*

I owe a debt of boundless gratitude,
And thus in part would pay it. Madam, fly!
The people all are yours; a chosen band,
Faithful and brave, wait to conduct you hence:
This smiling moment seiz'd, may place you safe,
Beyond the dreadful fate that threatens you.

Princess. But not beyond the reach of foul dis-
grace,
The noble mind's worst fate. I know thee, Lu-
cio,
And thank thy kind intention. Could my flight
Restore my name to its original whiteness;

Make palpable his lie who slanders me;
I'd think thee thus commission'd from above,
And welcome life with transport.

Lucio. Do I wake!

When your good angel thus by me invites you,
Is this a time to doubt? Cao you devote
That rosy youth, that all commanding beauty,
To voluntary death?

Princess. Were it a pain,
Worse than the fear of cowards can conceive,
I would abide it. Have I not endur'd
A greater horror,—heard myself proclaim'd
The thing I scorn to utter? Shall I live
To bear about a disputable fame,
Scattering the eternal seeds of strife and war
Over my country, for the privilege
To draw a little transitory breath,
And be consign'd to infamy or honour,
But as the sword of conquest arbitrates?

Lucio. These are suggestions of your generous
anger,

And not your reason. Oh! most honour'd lady,
Again behold me prostrate at your feet!
Thus, thus, by me the people supplicate.

(*Kneels.*)

We have but one short moment left to save you;
Seize it, and live, live to be still rever'd
Your country's pride, her boast, her ornament.

Princess. I am not to be chang'd. But, oh! my
father!—

The good, old king, he wants a friend like thee.

Ascanio. (*Without.*) Force down the bridge;
kill all who dare oppose!

They fly! Stand fast—

Princess. He cuts my purpose short.

Enter ASCANIO, with Soldiers.

Lucio. Oh! death to all our hopes! 'tis now too
late.

I cast thee from my hand, vile instrument!
Since she disdains thy service.

(*Throws down his sword.*)

Ascanio. Seize that traitor!
Quick, bear him hence! Madam, I grieve to
speak it,

The herald, to the temple porch, has issued
For final proclamation.

Princess. Spare your sorrow:
A shameful world, disgrac'd by souls like thine,
Turns grief to joy, when noble natures leave it.

[*Exit Princess, guarded.*]

Enter BIRENO.

Bireno. Oh! let me clasp thee. This was wor-
thy service.

But for thy zeal, the high-raisd edifice,
So near complete, had tumbled to the earth,
And crush'd me in its fall.

Ascanio. Haste to the lists.

A moment more consummates our design,
And fate itself may strive in vain to shake us.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A Scaffold; Guards and Executioner
in attendance.*

*Enter the Spectators, Officers, and Senators, fol-
lowed by the PRINCESS, supported by Women.
BIRENO with ASCANIO, who bears his shield and
sword. Heralds, with trumpets.*

Officer. Make room; fall back. Let the proces-
sion pass.

Bireno. 'Tis known why I stand here; yet, once
again,

And for the last time, herald, sound my challenge.

(*Bireno's trumpet sounds.*)

Princess. I would have it so.

You, generous people, who behold with horror

These gloomy preparations, do not deem me
Cold and unthankful for my offer'd safety,
Tho' I prefer'd this dire alternative.

Before the tongue of slander struck my fame,
The rude hand of affliction never touch'd me;
Life had a thousand bonds to tie me to it:
Young spirits, royal birth, fortune, and great-
ness:

But honour was the prop, round which, like
stalks

Tender and weak, these accessories twin'd:
When calumny's sharp edge cut down that trunk,
Then these poor tendrils lost their hue, and wi-
ther'd.

With that great ruin fell my happiness!
I now stand on eternity's dark verge;
Nor dare I to the God and Judge of Truth,
Bring lips with falsehood sullied. Of the offence
Cast on me by vile malice, I am free,
Even to abhorrence; this to heaven is known,
My own heart, and my accuser; therefore, boldly,
And for your sakes, will I arraign the law,
Which thus has pass'd upon me.

1 Sen. Gracious lady,
If in this censure we too stand accus'd,
Think we pronounc'd but did not make the law:
And let my bleeding heart bear witness for me,
I would lay down the dearest thing I own,
To save you from the forfeit.

Princess. Good, my lord,
All forms of justice have been well observ'd;
My blame lights on the law, not on your office,
Which you with truth and mercy minister.
But let these mute spectators mark my counsel:
Fall at the king's feet, clasp at the senate's
knees,

And pray them, they wipe out clear from their
rolls,

This more than cruel edict; else, be sure
From every roof there hangs a dangerous sword,
(Hangs by a thread) which each dark hand may
drop

To pierce and sever nature's dearest ties.
She who profanes her honour's sanctity,
Upbraided by her heart, by her own sex
Shunn'd or neglected, nay, held cheap and vile,
Even to the loathing of the lover's sense,
Who wrought her easy nature to transgress;
These are sharp penalties; but added death,
Turns the clear stream of justice into blood,
And makes such law more curs'd than anarchy.
Forget not my example; let me perish;
But if you pluck your safety from my ruin,
I shall not die in vain. Farewell! Lead on.

(*Goes towards the scaffold. A trumpet sounds.*)

1 Sen. Hold, on your lives!

Bireno. What means that trumpet's voice?
It sounds a shrill alarm.

Enter an Esquire.

Esquire. Arrest your sentence!

I come in the name of one who hears with horror
This barbarous process, to proclaim the accuser
Of that most innocent and royal lady,
A slanderer and villain; who accepts
Her just defence, and by the law of arms
Throws down this gage, and claims the combat for
her.

Bireno. Take it, Ascanio. Bid your knight ap-
pear,

(If such his order) for to none beneath
Am I thus bound to answer. Speak his titles.

Esquire. He will not I reveal him: but suf-
fice it,

He has a name in arms that will not shame
The noble cause he fights for.

Bireno. Bid him enter.

My shield and sword. Say, I am deek'd to meet
him. [Exit the Esquire.
Some rash adventurer, prodigal of life,
Brib'd by her father's gold to grace her fall,
And add an easy trophy to my banners.—
Confusion! Paladore!

Enter PALADORE.

Princess. 'Tis he, 'tis he!
Then, life, thou art welcome!

(A loud murmur among the People.)

Bireno. Marshal, do your office!
Furies and hell!—Keep order in the lists!—
Silence that uproar!—

Paladore. Yes, behold me, villain!
I have thee in the toils; thou canst not 'scape
me.—

But, oh! most wrong'd and heavenly excellence!
(To the Princess.)

How shall I plead for pardon? Can the abuse
Of his deep craft and devilish artifice,
Fooling my nature's plainness, blanch my cheek
From the deep shame that my too easy faith
Combin'd with hell against thee?

Princess. Rise, my soldier!
Though yet I know not by what subtle practice
Thy nobleness was wrought on, nor the means
That since reveal'd his fraud,—praise be to hea-
ven!—

Thy presence plucks my honour from the grave:
Thou liv'st, thou know'st my truth, thou wilt
avenge me.

Paladore. Avenge thee! yes. Did his right
hand grasp thunder;
Did yelling furies combat on his side,
(Pal'd in with circling fires,) I would assail him;
Nor cast a look to fortune for the event.

Bireno. Presumptuous Briton! think not that
bold mien,
A wanton's favour, or thy threats, have power
To shrink the sinews of a soldier's arm.

Paladore. A soldier's arm! Thou double mur-
derer!

Assassin in thy intention and in act.
But, ere my falchion cleave thy treacherous
breast,

I will divulge thee.—Bring that ruffian forth.

One of the Murderers of Alinda brought in.

Two hell-hounds, such as this, he set upon me:
One fell beneath my sword; that wretch I spar'd,
Kneeling for mercy. Let your justice doom him.

Look you amaz'd! Peruse that paper, lords:
His compact for the blood of a fair minion
He taught to sin, and made her wages death.
Ha! Does it shake thee? See Alinda's form,
Thy panting image mangled in her side,
Stalks from her sanguine bed, and ghastly smiles,
To aid the prowess of this dauntless soldier.

Bireno. Destruction! All's reveal'd!
Ascanio. What, turn'd to stone? (To Bireno.)
Droop not, for shame! Be quick, retort the
charge!

Bireno. All false as hell! And thou—Defend
thyself;

Nor blast me thus with thy detested presence.—
This to thy heart. (They fight. Bireno falls.)

Paladore. Oh! impotence of guilt!
An infant's lath hath fell'd him. Villain, die!
And know thy shame, and the deep wound that
writches thee,

Are but a feeble earnest of the pangs
Reserv'd beneath for giant crimes like thine.

Princess. Haste to the King, proclaim this bless'd
event!

Bireno. Perfidious chance! Caught in my own
device!

Accurs'd!—Ha! they drag me, tear me!—Oh!—
(Dies.)

Princess. I have a thousand things to ask, to
hear:

But, oh! the joy to see thee thus again;
To owe my life, my honour, to thy love—
These tears, these rapturous tears, let them speak
for me.

Paladore. I could endure the malice of my fate;
But this full tide of such excessive bliss,
Sne're, 'tis allusion all! It quite transports me.
When I have borne thee from this scene of horror,
Perhaps I may grow calm, and talk with reason.

Enter the KING, LUCIO, and Attendants.

King. Where is she? Let me strain her to my
heart.

They cannot part us now, my joy, my comfort!
Thou generous youth, how can my overflowing
soul

Find words to thank thee? Words! poor recom-
pense!

Here I invest thee with the forfeit lands,
The wealth and honours of that prostrate traitor.
This, too, is little—then receive her hand,
Due to thy love, thy courage, and thy virtue;
And joys unutterable crown your union. [Exeunt.]

MAHOMET,

THE IMPOSTOR;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY THE REV. MR. MILLER.



Act IV.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

MAHOMET
ALCANOR
ZAPHNA

MIRVAN
HERCIDES
ALI

AMMON
PHARON
PALMIRA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in the Temple of Mecca.

Enter ALCANOR and PHARON.

Alc. Pharon, no more! Shall I
Fall prostrate to an arrogant impostor;
Homage, in Mecca, one I banish'd thence,
And incense the delusions of a rebel?
No! blast Alcanor, righteous heaven, if e'er
This hand, yet free and uncontaminate,
Shall league with fraud, or adulate a tyrant!

Pha. August and sacred chief of Ishmael's senate,

This zeal of thine, paternal as it is,
Is fatal now; our impotent resistance
Controls not Mahomet's unbounded progress,
But, without weak'ning, irritates the tyrant.
When once a citizen, you well condemn'd him
As an obscure seditious innovator;
But now he is a conq'r'er, prince, and pontiff,
Whilst nations, numberless, embrace his laws,
And pay him adoration; even in Mecca,
He boasts his proselytes.

Alc. Such proselytes
Are worthy of him; low, untutor'd reptiles,
Most credulous still
Of what is most incredible.

Pha. Be such
Disdain'd, my lord! But mayn't the pest spread up-
wards,
And seize the head? Say, is the senate sound?
I fear some members of that rev'rend class
Are mark'd with the contagion; who, from views

Of higher power and rank,
Worship this rising sun, and give a sanction
To his invasions.

Alc. If, ye powers divine!
Ye mark the movements of this nether world,
And bring them to account, crush, crush those
vipers,

Who, singled out by a community
To guard their rights, shall, for a grasp of ore
Or paltry office, sell them to the foe!

Pha. Each honest citizen, I grant, is thine,
And, grateful for thy boundless blessings on them,
Would serve thee with their lives; but the ap-
proach

Of this usurper to their very walls,
Strikes them with such a dread, that even these
Implore thee to accept his proffer'd peace.

Alc. Oh! people lost to wisdom, as to glory!
Go, bring in pomp, and serve upon your knees
This idol, that will crush you with its weight.
Mark! I abjure him; by his savage hand
My wife and children perish'd, whilst in vengeance
I carried carnage to his very tent;
Transfix'd to earth his only son, and wore
His trappings, as a trophy of my conquest.
This torch of enmity, thus lighted 'twixt us,
The hand of time itself can ne'er extinguish.

Pha. Extinguish not, but smother for awhile
Its fatal flame, and greatly sacrifice
Thy private suff'rings to the public welfare.

Alc. My wife and children lost, my country's
now
My family.

Pha. Then let not that be lost.

Alc. Pharon, desist.

Pha. My noble lord, I cannot,
Must not desist, will not, since you're possess'd
Of means to bring this insolent invader
To any terms you'll claim.

Alc. What means?

Pha. Palmira,

That blooming fair, the flow'r of all his camp,
By thee borne off in our last skirmish with him,
Seems the divine ambassadress of peace,
Sent to procure our safety. Mahomet
Has, by his heralds, thrice propos'd her ransom,
And bade us fix the price.

Alc. I know it, Pharon:

And wouldst thou then restore this noble treasure
To that barbarian,
And render beauty the reward of rapine?
Nay, smile not, friend.

Pha. My lord—

Alc. This heart, by age and grief congeal'd,
Is no more sensible to love's endearments,
Than are our barren rocks to morn's sweet dew,
That, balmy, trickles down their rugged cheeks.

Pha. My noble chief, each master-piece of nature
Commands involuntary homage from us.

Alc. I own, a tenderness unfehl before,
A sympathetic grief, with ardent wishes
To make her happy, fill'd my widow'd bosom:
I dread her being in that monster's power,
And burn to have her hate him, like myself.
'Twas on this hour, I, at her modest suit,
Promis'd her audience in my own pavilion.

Pharon, go thou, meanwhile, and see the senate
Assembled straight; I'll sound them as I ought.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room of state.*

PALMIRA discovered.

Pal. What means this boding terror, that usurps,
In spite of me, dominion o'er my heart?
Oh! holy prophet,
Shall I ne'er more attend thy sacred lessons?
Oh, Zaphna! much-lov'd youth; I feel for thee
As for myself—But hold! my final audit
Is now at hand: I tremble for th' event!
Here comes my judge. Now liberty, or bondage!

Enter ALCANOR.

Alc. Palmira, whence those tears? trust me,
fair maid,

Thou art not fall'n into barbarians' hands;
What Mecca can afford of pomp or pleasure,
To call attention from misfortune's lap,
Demand, and share it.

Pal. No, my generous victor!

My suit's for nothing Mecca can afford;
Pris'ner these two long months beneath your roof,
I've tasted such benignity and candour,
That oft I've call'd my tears ingratitude.

Alc. If aught remains, that's in my pow'r to
smooth

The rigour of your fate, and crown your wishes,
Why, 'twould fill
The furrows in my cheeks, and make old age
Put on its summer's garb.

Pal. Thus, low I bless thee. (*Kneels.*)

It is on you, on you alone, Alcanor,
My whole of future happiness depends;
Have pity, then;

Pity, Alcanor, one who's torn from all
That's dear or venerable to her soul;
Restore me, then, restore me to my country;
Restore me to my father, prince, and prophet.

Alc. Is slav'ry dear, then? is fraud venerable?

What country? a tumultuous wand'ring camp!

Pal. My country, sir, is not a single spot
Of such a mould, or fix'd to such a clime;
No, 'tis the social circle of my friends,

The lov'd community in which I'm link'd,
And in whose welfare all my wishes centre.

Alc. Excellent maid! Then Mecca be thy country.

Robb'd of my children, would Palmira deign
To let me call her child, the toil I took,
To make her destiny propitious to her,
Would lighten the rough burden of my own:
But no; you scorn my country and my laws.

Pal. Can I be yours, when not my own? Your
bounties

Claim and share my gratitude; but Mahomet
Claims right o'er me of parent, prince, and prophet.

Alc. Of parent, prince, and prophet! Heavens!
that robber

Who, a scap'd felon, emulates a throne,
And, scoffer at all faiths, proclaims a new one!

Pal. Oh, cease, my lord! this blasphemous
abuse

On one, whom millions, with myself, adore,
Does violence to my ear! such black profaneness
'Gainst heaven's interpreter, blots out remem-
brance

Of favours past, and nought succeeds but horror!

Alc. Oh! superstition, thy pernicious rigours,
Inflexible to reason, truth, and nature,
Banish humanity the gentlest breast!
Palmira, I lament to see thee plung'd
So deep in error.

Pal. Do you then reject

My just petition? can Alcanor's goodness
Be deaf to suff'ring virtue?
Name but the ransom,
And Mahomet will treble what you ask.

Alc. There is no ransom Mahomet can offer,
Proportion'd to the prize.

Enter PHARON.

What wouldst thou, Pharon?

Pha. From yon western gate,

Which opens on Moradia's fertile plains,
Mahomet's general, Mirvan, hastes to greet thee.

Alc. Mirvan, that vile apostate!

Pha. In one hand

He holds a scymitar, the other bears
An olive branch, which to our chiefs he waves,
An emblem of his suit—a martial youth,
Zaphna by name, attends him for our hostage.

Pal. Zaphna! mysterious heaven! (*Aside.*)

Pha. Mirvan advances

This way, my lord, to render you his charge.

Alc. Palmira, thou retire—Pharon, be present.
[*Exit Palmira.*]

Enter MIRVAN.

After six years of infamous rebellion
Against thy native country, dost thou, Mirvan,
Again profane, with thy detested presence,
These sacred walls, which once thy hands de-
fended,

But thy bad heart has vilely since betray'd?

Thou poor deserter of thy country's gods!

Thou base invader of thy country's rights!

What wouldst thou have with me?

Mir. I'd pardon thee.

Out of compassion to thy age and suff'rings,
And high regard for thy experienc'd valour,
Heaven's great apostle offers thee, in friendship,
A hand could crush thee; and I come commis-
sion'd

To name the terms of peace he deigns to tender.

Alc. He deigns to tender! insolent impostor!

Dost thou not, Mirvan, blush

To serve this wretch, this base of soul, as birth?

Mir. Mahomet's grandeur's in himself; he shines
not

With borrow'd lustre.

Plung'd in the night of prejudice, and bound

In fetters of hereditary faith,

My judgment slept; but when I found him born

To mould anew the prostrate universe,
I started from my dream, join'd his career,
And shar'd his arduous and immortal labours.
Come, embrace our faith, reign with Mahomet,
And cloth'd in terrors, make the vulgar tremble.

Alc. 'Tis Mahomet, and tyrants like to Mahomet,

'Tis Mirvan, and apostates like to Mirvan,
I only would make tremble! Is it, say'st thou,
Religion that's the parent of this rapine,
This virulence, and rage? No; true religion
Is always mild, propitious, and humane;
Plays not the tyrant, plants no faith in blood;
But stoops to polish, succour, and redress,
And builds her grandeur on the public good.

Mir. If clemency delights thee, learn it here.

Though banish'd by thy voice his native city,
Though by thy hand robb'd of his only son,
Mahomet pardons thee; nay, further, begs
The hatred burning 'twixt you be extinguish'd,
With reconciliation's gen'rous tear.

Alc. I know thy master's arts; his gen'rous tears,

Like the refreshing breeze that previous fall
To the wild outrage of o'erwhelming earthquakes,
Only forerun destruction.

Pha. Leagues he will make too—

Alc. Like other grasping tyrants, till he eyes
A lucky juncture to enlarge his bounds;
Then he'll deride them, leap o'er ev'ry tie
Of sacred guarantee, or sworn protection;
And when th' oppress'd ally implores assistance,
Beneath that mask, invade the wish'd-for realms,
And, from pure friendship, take them to himself.

Mir. Mahomet fights heav'n's battles, bends the bow

To spread heaven's laws, and to subject to faith
The iron neck of error.

Alc. Lust and ambition, Mirvan, are the springs
Of all his actions; whilst, without one virtue,
Dissimulation, like a flattering painter,
Bedecks him with the colouring of them all:
This is thy master's portrait—But no more,
My soul's inexorable, and my hate
Immortal as the cause from whence it sprang.

Mir. What cause?

Alc. The difference between good and evil.

Mir. Thou talk'st to me, Alcanor, with an air
Of a stern judge, that from his dread tribunal
Intimidates the criminal beneath him:
Resume thy temper, act the minister,
And treat with me as with th' ambassador
Of heaven's apostle, and Arabia's king.

Alc. Arabia's king! what king? who crown'd him?

Mir. Conquest.

Whilst to the style of conq'rour and of monarch,
Patron of peace he'd add. Name, then, the price
Of peace, and of Palmira. Boundless treasures,
The spoils of vanquish'd monarchs, and the stores
Of rifled provinces, are thrown before thee.
Our troops with matchless ardour hasten hither,
To lay in ruin this rebellious city;
Stem, then, the rushing torrent; Mahomet,
In person, comes to claim a conference with thee
For this good purpose.

Alc. Who? Mahomet?

Mir. Yes, he conjures thou'lt grant it.

Alc. Traitor! were I sole ruler here, in Mecca,
I'd answer thee with chastisement!

Mir. Hot man!

I pity thy false virtue—But, farewell!
And since the senate share thy pow'r in Mecca,
To thy serener wisdom I'll appeal. [Exit.

Alc. I'll meet thee there. Ye sacred pow'rs,
My country's gods, that for three thousand years
Have reign'd protectors of the tribe of Ishmael!
Oh! support my spirit

In that firm purpose it has always held,—

To combat violence, fraud, and usurpation;
To pluck the spoil from the oppressor's jaws,
And keep my country as I found it—free! [Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Palmira's Apartment.

Enter PALMIRA.

Pal. Cease, cease, ye streaming instruments of woe,

From your ignoble toil! Take warmth, my heart!
Collect thy scatter'd pow'rs, and brave misfortune.
In vain the storm-tost mariner repines;
Impatience only throws
Discredit on mischance, and adds a shame
To our affliction.

Enter ZAPHNA.

Ha! all-gracious heaven!
Thou, Zaphna! is it thou? what pitying angel
Guided thy steps to these abodes of bondage?

Zaph. Thou sov'reign of my soul, and all its pow'rs,

Object of every fear, and ev'ry wish,
Friend, sister, love, companion, all that's dear!
Do I once more behold thee, my Palmira?
Oh! I will set it down the whitest hour
That Zaphna e'er was bless'd with!

Pal. Say, my hero,

Are my ills ended, then? They are, they are!
Now Zaphna's here, I am no more a captive,
Except to him—Oh! bless'd captivity!

Zaph. Those smiles are dearer to my raptur'd breast,

Sweeter those accents to my list'ning heart,
Than all Arabia's spices to my sense!

Pal. No wonder that my soul was so elate,
No wonder that the cloud of grief gave way,
When thou, my sun of comfort, wert so nigh.

Zaph. Since that dire hour, when on Sabaria's strand

The barb'rous foe depriv'd me of Palmira,
In what a gulf of horror and despair
Have thy imagin'd perils plung'd my soul!
Stretch'd on expiring corse, for awhile,
To the deaf stream I pour'd out my complaint,
And begg'd I might be number'd with the dead
That strew'd its banks; then, starting from despair,

With rage I flew to Mahomet for vengeance.
He, for some high mysterious purpose, known
To heaven and him alone, at length despatch'd
The valiant Mirvan to demand a truce:
Instant, on wings of lightning, I pursu'd him,
And enter'd as his hostage; fix'd, Palmira,
Or to redeem, or die a captive with thee.

Pal. Heroic youth!

Zaph. But how have these barbarians
Treated my fair?

Pal. With high humanity.

I in my victor found a friend: Alcanor
Has made me feel captivity in nothing
But absence from my Zaphna and my friends.

Zaph. I grieve, a soul so gen'rous is our foe:
But now, presented as a hostage to him,
His noble bearing and humanity
Made captive of my heart: I felt, methought,
A new affection lighted in my breast,
And wonder'd whence the infant ardour sprang.

Pal. Yet gen'rous as he is, not all my pray'rs,
Not all the tears I lavish at his feet,
Can move him to restore me.

Zaph. But he shall;

Let the barbarian know he shall, Palmira.
The god of Mahomet, our divine protector,
Whose still triumphant standard I have borne
O'er piles of vanquish'd infidels; that pow'r
Which brought unnumber'd battlements to earth,
Will humble Mecca, too.

Enter MIRVAN.

Well, noble Mirvan,

Do my Palmira's chains sit loose upon her?
Say, is it freedom? This presumptuous seuate—
Mir. Has granted all we ask'd, all we could wish.

The truce obtain'd, the gates to Mahomet
Flew open.

Zaph. Mahomet in Mecca, say'st thou?

Once more in Mecca?

Pal. Transport! bid him welcome.

Zaph. Thy suff'rings then are o'er, the ebb is
past,

And a full tide of hope flows in upon us.

Pal. But where's the prophet?

Mir. Reclin'd in yonder grove, that joins the temple,

Attended by his chiefs.

Zaph. There let us haste,

With duteous step, and bow ourselves before him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A spacious Grotto.*

MAHOMET discovered with the Alcoran before him.

Mah. Glorious hypocrisy! what fools are they,
Who, fraught with lustful or ambitious views,
Wear not thy specious mask: thou, alcoran!
Hast won more battles, ta'en more cities for me,
Than thrice my feeble numbers had achiev'd,
Without the succour of thy sacred impulse.

Enter HERCIDES, AMMON, and ALI.

Invincible supporters of our grandeur!

My faithful chiefs, Hercides, Ammon, Ali!

Go, and instruct this people in my name;

That faith may dawn, and, like a morning star,

Be herald to my rising.—Lo! Palmira,

[*Exeunt Hercides, Ammon, and Ali.*]

Her angel-face, with unfeign'd blushes spread,

Proclaims the purity that dwells within.

Enter MIRVAN, ZAPHNA, and PALMIRA.

The hand of war was ne'er before so barbarous,

Never bore from me half so rich a spoil,

As thee, my fair. (To Palmira.)

Pal. Joy to my heavenly guardian!

Joy to the world, that Mahomet's in Mecca!

Mah. My child, let me embrace thee. How's
this? Zaphna!

Thou here?

Zaph. (*Kneels.*) My father, chief, and holy
pou-tiff!

The god, that thou'rt inspir'd by, march'd before
me.

Ready, for thee, to wade through seas of danger,

Or cope with death itself, I hither hasten'd

To yield myself an hostage, and with zeal

Prevent thy order.

Mah. 'Twas not well, rash boy!

He that does more than I command him, errs

As much as he who falters in his duty.

I obey

My god—implicitly obey thou me.

Pal. Pardon, my gracious lord, his well-meant
ardour.

Brought up from tender infancy, beneath

The shelter of thy sacred patronage,

Zaphna and I've been animated still

By the same sentiments.

Mah. Palmira, 'tis enough; I read thy heart—

Be not alarm'd; though burden'd with the cares

Of thrones and altars, still my guardian eye

Will watch o'er thee, as o'er the universe.

Follow my gen'ral's, Zaphna. Fair Palmira,

Retire, and pay your pow'rful vows to heav'n,

And dread no wrongs, but from Alcanor.

[*Exeunt Zaphna and Palmira.*]

Mirvan,

Attend thou here. 'Tis time, my trusty soldier,

My long-tried friend, to lay unfolded to thee

The close resolves and councils of my heart.

Prepossession, friend,

Reigus monarch of the million; Mecca's crowd

Gaze at my rapid victories, and think
Some awful pow'r directs my arm to conquest;
But whilst our friends once more renew their ef-
forts

To win the wav'ring people to our interest,
What think'st thou, say, of Zaphna and Palmira?

Mir. As of thy most resign'd and faithful vas-
sals.

Mah. Oh! Mirvan, they're the deadliest of my
foes!

Mir. How?

Mah. Yes, they love each other.

Mir. Well, what crime?

Mah. What crime, dost say? learn all my frailty,
then—

My life's a combat: keen austerity

Subjects my nature to abstemious bearings:

Or on the burning sands, or desert rocks,

With thee I bear the inclemency of climates,

Freeze at the pole, or scorch beneath the line.

For all these toils love only can retaliate,

The only consolation or reward,

Fruit of my labours, idol of my incense,

And sole divinity that I adore;

Know, then, that I prefer this young Palmira,

To all the ripen'd beauties that attend me,

Dwell on her accents, dote upon her smiles,

And am not mine but hers. Now judge, my
friend,

How vast the jealous transports of thy master,

When, at his feet, he daily bears this charmer

Avow a foreign love, and, insolent,

Give Mahomet a rival!

Mir. How! and Mahomet

Not instantly revenge—

Mah. Ah! should he not?

But, better to detest him, know him better:

Learn, then, that both my rival and my love,

Sprung from the loins of this audacious tyrant.

Mir. Alcanor!

Mah. Is their father; old Hercides,

To whose sage institution I commit

My captive infants, late reveal'd it to me.

Perdition! I myself lit up their flame,

And fed it till I set myself on fire.

Well, means must be employ'd: but see, the
father;

He comes this way, and launches from his eye

Malignant sparks of enmity and rage.

Mirvan, see all ta'en care of; let Hercides,

With his escort, beset yon gate; bid Ali

Make proper disposition round the temple;

This done, return and render me account

Of what success we meet with 'mongst the people:

Or bridle in our vengeance as it suits.

[*Exit Mirvan.*]

Enter ALCANOR.

Why dost thou start, Alcanor? whence that hor-
ror?

Approach, old man, without a blush. since heav'n,
For some high end, decrees our future union.

Alc. I blush not for myself, but thee, thou ty-
rant!

For thee, bad man! who com'st, with serpent guile,

To sow dissention in the realms of peace.

Thy very name sets families at variance,

'Twixt son and father bursts the bonds of nature,

And scares endearment from the nuptial pillow!

And is it, insolent dissembler! thus

Thou com'st to give the sons of Mecca peace,

And me an unknown god?

Mah. Were I to answer any but Alcanor,

That known god should speak in thunder for me;

But here with thee I'd parley as a man.

Alc. What canst thou say? what urge in thy

defence?

What right hast thou receiv'd to plant new faiths,

Or lay a claim to royalty and priesthood!

Mah. The right that a resolv'd and tow'ring spirit

Has o'er the grovelling instinct of the vulgar—
Alc. Patience, good heav'ns! Have I not known thee, Mahomet,

When void of wealth, inheritance, or fame,
Rank'd with the lowest of the low at Mecca?

Mah. Dost thou not know, thou haughty, feeble man,

That the low insect, lurking in the grass,
And the imperial eagle, which aloft
Ploughs the ethereal plain, are both alike
In the eternal eye?

Alc. What sacred truth! from what polluted lips!

Mah. Hear me: thy Mecca trembles at my name;

If, therefore, thou wouldst save thyself or city,
Embrace my proffer'd friendship. What to-day
I thus solicit, I'll command to-morrow.

Alc. Contract with thee a friendship! frontless man!

Know'st thou a god can work that miracle?

Mah. I do—necessity—thy interest.

Alc. Interest is thy god, equity is mine.

Propose the tie of this unnatural union;
Say, is't the loss of thy ill-fated son,
Who in the field fell victim to my rage;
Or the dear blood of my poor captive children,
Shed by thy butchering hands?

Mah. Ay, 'tis thy children.

Mark me, then, well, and learn the important secret,

Which I'm sole master of:—thy children live.

Alc. Live!

Mah. Yes; both live.

Alc. What say'st thou? Both?

Mah. Ay, both.

Alc. And dost thou not beguile me?

Mah. No, old man.

Alc. Propitious heav'ns! Say, Mahomet, for now,

Methinks, I could hold endless converse with thee,
Say what's their portion, liberty or bondage?

Mah. Bred in my camp, and tutor'd in my law,
I hold the balance of their destinies,
And now 'tis on the turn—their lives or deaths—
'Tis thine to say which shall preponderate.

Alc. Mine! can I save them? name the mighty ransom:

If I must bear their chains, double the weight,
And I will kiss the band that puts them on;
Or, if streaming blood must be the purchase,
Drain every slyce and channel of my body;
My swelling veins will burst to give it passage!

Mah. I'll tell thee, then:—renounce thy pagan faith,

Abolish thy vain gods, and—

Alc. Ha!

Mah. Nay, more:

Surrender Mecca to me, quit this temple,
Assist me to impose upon the world,
Thunder my koran to the gazing crowd,
Proclaim me for their prophet and their king,
And be a glorious pattern of credulity
To Korah's stubborn tribe. These terms perform'd,

Thy son shall be restor'd, and Mahomet's self
Will deign to wed thy daughter.

Alc. Hear me, Mahomet:

I am a father, and this bosom boasts
A heart as tender as e'er parent bore.
After fifteen years of anguish for them,
Once more to view my children, clasp them to me,

And die in their embraces—Melting thought!
But were I doom'd or to enslave my country,
And help to spread black error o'er the earth,

Or to behold these blood-embued hands
Deprive me of them both, know me, then, Mahomet,

I'd not admit a doubt to cloud my choice.

(Looks earnestly at Mahomet for some time before he speaks.)

Farewell!

Mah. Why, fare thee well, then, churlish do-tard!

Inexorable fool! Now, by my arms,
I will have great revenge: I'll meet thy soon
With treble retribution!

Re-enter MIRVAN.

Well, my Mirvan,
What say'st thou to it now?

Mir. Why, that Alcanor,
Or we, must fall.

Mah. Fall, then, the obdurate rebel!

Mir. The truce expires to-morrow; when Alcanor

Again is Mecca's master, and has vow'd
Destruction on thy head: the senate, too,
Have pass'd thy doom.

Mah. Those heart-chill'd, paltry babblers,
Plac'd on the bench of sloth, with ease can nod,
And vote a man to death. Why don't the cowards
Stand me in yonder plain? With half their num-bers,

I drove them headlong to their walls for shelter.
Perish Alcanor!

He marbled up, the pliant populace,
Those dupes of novelty, will bend before us,
Like osiers to a hurricane.

Mir. No time

Is to be lost.

Mah. But for a proper arm—

Mir. What think'st thou, then, of Zaphna?

Mah. Of Zaphna, say'st thou?

Mir. Yes, Alcanor's hostage.

He can in private do thee vengeance on him:
He's a slave

To thy despotic faith; and, urg'd by thee,
However mild his nature may appear,
How'er humane and noble is his spirit,
Or strong his reason, where allow'd to reason,
He would, for heaven's sake, martyr half man-kind.

Mah. The brother of Palmira?

Mir. Yes, that brother,

The only son of thy outrageous foe,
And the incestuous rival of thy love.

Mah. I hate the stripling, loathe his very name;
The manes of my son, too, cry for vengeance
On the curs'd sire; but, then, thou know'st my love;

Know'st from whose blood she sprang: this stag-gers, Mirvan;

And yet I'm here surrounded with a gulf
Ready to swallow me; come, too, in quest
Of altars and a throne! What must be done?

My warring passions, like contending clouds,
When fraught with thunder's fatal fuel, burst
Upon themselves, and rend me with the shock.
Mirvan, sound this youth.

Touch not at once, upon the startling purpose,
But make due preparation.

Mir. I'll attack him

With all the forces of enthusiasm.

There lies our strength.

Mah. First, then, a solemn vow
To act whatever heaven by me enjoins him;
Next, omens, dreams, and visions, may be pleaded;
Hints, too, of black desigs by this Alcanor
Upon Palmira's virtue and his life.

But to the proof. Be now propitious, fortune;
Then love, ambition, vengeance, jointly triumph.

[Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A grand Apartment.**Enter ZAPHNA and PALMIRA.**Zaph.* Alcanor claims a private conference with us.

What has he to unfold?

Pal. I tremble, *Zaphna*.*Zaph.* Time press'd too, did he say?*Pal.* He did; then cast

A look so piercing on me, it o'erwhelm'd

My face with deep confusion: this he mark'd;

Then, starting, left me.

Zaph. Ha! this gives me fearThat *Mirvan's* jealousies are too well grounded;

But I must not distract her tender bosom

With visionary terrors. (*Aside.*) Both in private?*Pal.* In private both.*Zaph.* Her virtue, and my life!

It cannot be; so reverend a form

Could ne'er be pander to such black devices.

*(Aside.)**Pal.* But let us shun it, *Zaphna*; much I fear

Alcanor has deceiv'd us: dread the treachery

Of this blood-thirsty senate. Trust me, *Zaphna*,

They have sworn the extirpation of our faith,

Nor care by what vile means—

Zaph. My soul's best treasure,

For whose security my every thought

Is up in arms, regardless of my own,

Shun thou Alcanor's presence. This hour, *Palmira*,*Mirvan*, by order of our royal pontiff,

Prepares to solemnize some act of worship,

Of a more hallow'd and mysterious kind

Than will admit of vulgar eye; myself

Alone am honour'd to assist.

Pal. Alone!*Zaph.* Yes, to devote myself by solemn vow,

For some great act, of which my fair's the prize.

Pal. What act?*Zaph.* No matter, since my lov'd *Palmira*

Shall be the glorious recompense.

Pal. Oh! *Zaphna*,

Methinks I do not like this secret vow.

Why must not I be present? Were I with thee,

I should not be so anxious;

For trust me, *Zaphna*, my affection for thee

Is of that pure, disinterested nature,

So free from passion's taint, I have no one wish

To have thee more than thus, have thee my friend,

Share thy lov'd converse, wait upon thy welfare,

And view thee with a sister's spotless eye.

Zaph. Angelic excellence!*Pal.* And let me tell thee,This *Mirvan*, this fierce *Mirvan*, gives me terrors.

So far from tend'ring consolation to me,

His theme is blood and slaughter. As I met him,

His eyes flam'd fury, whilst in dubious phrase

He thus bespoke me: "The destroying angel

Must be let loose. *Palmira*, heav'n ordains

Some glorious deed for thee yet hid in darkness;

Learn an implicit rev'rence for its will;

And above all, I warn thee, fear for *Zaphna*."*Zaph.* What could he mean? Can I believe,*Alcanor*,

Thy fair deportment but a treach'rous mask?

Yet, spite of all the rage that ought to fire me

Against this rebel to our faith and prophet,

I have held me happy in his friendship,

And bondage wore the livery of choice.

Pal. How has heaven fraught our love-link'dhearts, my *Zaphna*,

With the same thoughts, aversions, and desires.

But for thy safety and our dread religion,

That thunders hatred to all infidels,

With great remorse I should accuse Alcanor.

Zaph. Let us shake off this vain remorse, *Pal-**mira*,

Resign ourselves to heaven, and act its pleasure.

The hour is come that I must pledge my vow:
Doah't not but the Supreme, who claims this ser-
vice,Will prove propitious to our chaste endearments.
Farewell, my love; I fly to gain the summit
Of earth's felicity—to gain *Palmira*. [*Exit.*]*Pal.* Where'er I turn, 'tis all suspicion.
Like one benighted midst a place of tombs,
I gaze around me, start at every motion,
And seem hemm'd in by visionary spectres.
All-righteous power, whom trembling I adore,
And blindly follow, oh! deliver me
From these heart-rending terrors! Ha! who's here?*Enter MAHOMET.*'Tis he! 'tis Mahomet himself! kind heaven
Has sent him to my aid. My gracious lord!
Protect the dear, dear idol of my soul;
Save *Zaphna*; guard him from—*Mah.* From what? wily *Zaphna*?

Whence this vain terror? Is he not with us?

Pal. Oh! sir, you double now my apprehensions:

Those broken accents, and that eager look,

Shew you have anguish smothering at the heart,

And prove for once that Mahomet's a mortal.

Mah. Ha! shall I turn a traitor to myself?*(Aside.)*

Oh! woman, woman! Hear me: ought I not

To be enrag'd at thy profane attachment?

How could thy breast, without the keenest sting,

Harbour one thought not dictated by me?

Is that young mind, I took such toil to form,

Turn'd an ingrate and infidel at once?

Away, rebellious maid!

Pal. What dost thou say,

My royal lord? Thus, prostrate at your feet,

Let me implore forgiveness, if in aught

I have offended: talk-not to me thus;

A frown from thee, my father and my king,

Is death to poor *Palmira*. Say, then, Mahomet,

Didst thou not, in this very place, permit him

To render me his vows?

Mah. How the soft traitress racks me! (*Aside.*)Rise, *Palmira*—Down, rebel love! I must be calm. (*Aside.*) Come

hither:

Beware, rash maid, of such imprudent steps:

They lead to guilt. What wild, pernicious errors

Mayo't the heart lead to, if not greatly watch'd!

Pal. In loving *Zaphna*, sure it cannot err.*Mah.* *Zaphna* again! Furies! I shall release,And make her witness of my weakness! (*Aside.*)*Pal.* Sir!

What sudden start of passion arms that eye?

Mah. Oh! nothing: pray, retire awhile: take

courage:

I'm not at all displeas'd: 'twas but to sound

The depth of thy young heart. I praise thy choice:

Trust, then, thy dearest int'rest to my bosom;

But know, your fate depends on your obedience.

If I have been a guardian to your youth,

If all my lavish bounties past weigh aught,

Deserve the future blessings which await you.

Howe'er the voice of heaven dispose of *Zaphna*,

Confirm him in the path where duty leads,

That he may keep his vow, and merit thee.

Pal. Distrust him not, my sovereign; noble*Zaphna*

Disdains to lag in love or glory's course.

Mah. Enough of words—*Pal.* As boldly I've avow'd

The love I bear that hero at your feet,

I'll now to him, and fire his gen'rous breast,

To prove the duty he has sworn to thee. [*Exit.*]*Mah.* What could I say! Such sweet simplicity

Lur'd down my rage, and innocently wing'd

The arrow through my heart. And shall I bear

this?

Be made the sport of curs'd Alcanor's house?

Check'd in my rapid progress by the sire,

Supplanted in my love by this rash boy,
And made a gentle pander to the daughter?
Perdition on the whole detested race!

Enter MIRVAN.

Mir. Now, Mahomet, is the time to seize on Mecca;

Crush this Alcanor, and enjoy Palmira.
This night the old enthusiast offers incense
To his vain gods, in sacred Caaba:
Zaphna, who flames with zeal for heaven and thee,
May be won o'er to seize that lucky moment.

Mah. He shall; it must be so; he's born to act
The glorious crime; and let him be at once
The instrument and victim of the murder.
My law, my love, my vengeance, my own safety,
Have doom'd it so. But, Mirvan, dost thou think
His youthful courage, nurs'd in superstition,
Can e'er be work'd—

Mir. I tell thee, Mahomet,
He's tutor'd to accomplish thy design.
Palmira, too, who thinks thy will is heaven's,
Will nerve his arm to execute thy pleasure.

Mah. Didst thou engage him by a solemn vow?
Mir. I did, with all th' enthusiastic pomp
Thy law enjoins; then gave him, as from thee,
A consecrated sword, to act thy will.
Oh! he is burning with religious fury!

Mah. But, hold! he comes. *[Exit Mirvan.]*

Enter ZAPHNA.

Child of that awful and tremendous power,
Whose laws I publish, whose behests proclaim,
Listen whilst I unfold his sacred will:
'Tis thine to vindicate his way to man,
'Tis thine his injur'd worship to avenge.

Zaph. Thou lord of nations, delegate of heaven,
Sent to shed day o'er the benighted world,
Oh! say in what can Zaphna prove his duty.

Instruct me how a frail earth-prison'd mortal
Can avenge or vindicate a god.

Mah. By thy weak arm he deigns to prove his
cause,

And launch his vengeance on blaspheming rebels.

Zaph. What glorious action, what illustrious
dancer

Does that Supreme, whose image thou, demand?
Place me, oh! place me in the front of battle,
'Gainst odds innumerable! try me there;
Or, if a single combat claim my might,
The stoutest Arab may step forth, and see
If Zaphna fail to greet him as he ought.

Mah. Oh! greatly said, my son; 'tis inspiration!
But heed me: 'tis not by a glaring act
Of human valour heaven has will'd to prove thee;
This infidels themselves may boast, when led
By ostentation, rage, or brute-like rashness.
To do what'er heaven gives in sacred charge,
Nor dare to sound its faithless decrees,
This, and this only's meritorious zeal.
Attend, adore, obey; thou shalt be arm'd
By death's remorseless angel, which awaits me.

Zaph. Speak out, pronounce! what victim must
I offer?

What tyrant sacrifice? whose blood requir'st thou?

Mah. The blood of a detested infidel;
A murderer, a foe to heaven and me;
A wretch who slew my child, blasphemes my god,
And, like a huge Colossus, bears a world
Of impious opposition to my faith:
The blood of cursed Alcanor!

Zaph. I! Alcanor!

Mah. What! dost thou hesitate? Rash youth,
beware!

He that deliberates, is sacrilegious.
Far, far from me, be those audacious mortals,
Who for themselves would impiously judge,
Or see with their own eyes; who dares to think,
Was never born a proselyte for me.
Know who I am; know, on this very spot,

I've charg'd thee with the just decree of heaven.
And when that heaven requires of thee no more
Than the bare off'ring of its deadliest foe,
Nay, thy foe, too, and mine, why dost thou balance
As thy own father were the victim claim'd?
Go, vile idolator! false Mussulman!
Go, seek another master, a new faith!

Zaph. Oh, Mahomet!

Mah. Just when the prize is ready,
When fair Palmira's destin'd to thy arms—
But what's Palmira? or what's heaven to thee,
Thou poor weak rebel to thy faith and love?
Go, serve and cringe to our detested foe.

Zaph. Oh! pardon, Mahomet; methinks I hear
The oracle of heaven. It shall be done.

Mah. Obey, then, strike! and, for his impious
blood,

Palmira's charms and paradise be thine. *[Exit.]*

Zaph. Soft, let me think—This duty wears the
face

Of something more than monstrous. Pardon,
heaven!

To sacrifice an innocent old man,
Weigh'd down with age, unsuccess'd, and unarm'd!
When I am hostage for his safety, too!

No matter—heaven has chose me for the duty;
My vow is past, and must be straight fulfill'd.

Ye stern, relentless ministers of wrath,
Spirits of vengeance! by whose ruthless hands

The haughty tyrants of the earth have bled,
Come to my succour, to my flaming zeal

Join your determined courage!

And thou, angel

Of Mahomet, exterminating angel!

That mow'st down nations to prepare his passage,

Support my falt'ring will, harden my heart,

Lest nature pity, plead Alcanor's cause,

And wrest the dagger from me.

Ha! who comes here?

Enter ALCANOR.

Alc. Whence, Zaphna, that deep gloom,
That, like a blasting mildew on the ear

Of promis'd harvest, blackens o'er thy visage?

Grieve not that here, through form, thou art confin'd;

I hold thee not as hostage, but as friend,

And make thy safety partner with my own.

Zaph. And make my safety partner with thy
own! *(Aside.)*

Alc. The bloody carnage, by this trace sus-
pended

For a few moments, like a torrent, check'd

In its full flow, will with redoubled strength

Bear all before it.

In this impending scene of public horror,

Be then, dear youth, these mansions thy asylum;

I'll be thy hostage now, and, with my life,

Will answer that no mischief shall befall thee.

I know not why, but thou art precious to me.

Zaph. Heaven! duty! gratitude! humanity!

(Aside.)

What dost thou say, Alcanor? Didst thou say
That thy own roof should shield me from the

tempest?

That thy own life stood hostage for my safety?

Alc. Why thus amaz'd at my compassion for
thee?

I am a man myself, and that's enough

To make me feel the woes of other men,

And labour to redress them.

Zaph. What melody these accents make!

(Aside.)

Can, then, a foe to Mahomet's sacred law
Be virtue's friend?

Alc. Thou know'st but little, Zaphna,

If thou dost think true virtue is confin'd

To climes or systems; no, it flows spontaneous,

Like life's warm stream, throughout the whole
creation,

And beats the pulse of every healthful heart.
How canst thou, Zaphna, worship for thy god
A being claiming cruelty and murders
From his adorers? Such is thy master's god.

Zaph. Oh! my relenting soul! thou'rt almost
thaw'd
From thy resolve. (*Aside.*) I pray you, sir, no
more.

Peace, reason, peace!

Alc. The more I view him, talk with him, ob-
serve

His understanding towering 'bove his age,
The more my breast takes int'rest in his welfare.
(*Aside.*)

Zaphna, come near: I oft have thought to ask thee
To whom thou ow'st thy birth, whose gen'rous
blood

Swells thy young veins, and mandles at thy heart?

Zaph. That dwells in darkness; no one friendly
beam

E'er gave me glimpse from whom I am descended.
The camp of godlike Mahomet has been
My cradle and my country; whilst, of all
His captive infants, no one more has shar'd
The sunshine of his clemency and care.

Alc. I do not blame thy gratitude, young man:
But why was Mahomet thy benefactor?
Why was not I? I envy him that glory.
Why, then, this impious man has been a father
Alike to thee and to the fair Palmira.

Zaph. Oh!

Alc. What's the cause, my Zaphna, of that sigh,
And all that language of a smother'd anguish?
Why didst thou snatch away thy cordial eye,
That shone on me before?

Zaph. Oh! my torn heart!

Palmira's name revives the racking thought
Of my near-blunted purpose. (*Aside.*)

Alc. Come, my friend,
The flood-gates of destruction soon thrown ope,
Will pour in ruin on that curse of nations.
If I can save but thee and fair Palmira,
From this o'erflowing tide, let all the rest
Of his abandon'd minions be the victims
For your deliverance. I must save your blood.

Zaph. Just heaven! and is't not I must shed his
blood? (*Aside.*)

Alc. Nay, tremble if thou dar'st to hesitate.
Follow me straight.

Enter PHARON.

Pha. Alcanor, read that letter,
Put in my hands this moment by an Arab,
With utmost stealth, and air bespeaking somewhat
Of high importance.

Alc. (*Reads.*) Whence is this? Hercides!
Cautious, my eyes! be sure you're not mistaken
In what you here insinuate. Gracious heaven!
Will then thy providence, at length o'errule
My wayward fate, and by one matchless blessing,
Sweeten the suff'rings of a threescore years?

(*Looks for some time earnestly at Zaphna.*)
Follow me.

Zaph. Thee! But Mahomet—

Alc. Thy life,
And all its future bliss, dwells on this moment.
Follow, I say. [*Exit with Pharon.*]

*Re-enter MIRVAN, with his Attendants, hastily, on
the other side of the stage.*

Mir. Traitor, turn back: what means
This conf'rence with the foe? To Mahomet
Away this instant; he commands thy presence.

(*To Zaphna.*)
Zaph. Where am I? Heavens! how shall I now
resolve?

How act? A precipice on every side
Awaits me, and the first least step's perdition.
(*Aside.*)

Mir. Young man, our prophet brooks not such
delay;

Go, stop the bolt that's ready to be launch'd
On thy rebellious head.

Zaph. Yes, and renounce
This horrid vow that's poison to my soul. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Temple.*

Enter ZAPHNA, with a drawn sword in his hand.

Zaph. Well, then, it must be so; I must dis-
charge
This cruel duty: Mahomet enjoins it,
And heaven, through him, demands it of my hands.
Horrid, though sacred act! my soul shrinks back,
And won't admit conviction.
Oh! dire obedience!
Why, duty, art thou thus at war with nature?

Enter PALMIRA.

Thou here, Palmira? Oh! what fatal transport
Leads thee to this sad place, these dark abodes,
Sacred to death? Thou hast no business here.

Pal. Oh! Zaphna, fear and love have been my
guides.

What horrid sacrifice is this enjoin'd thee?
What victim does the god of Mahomet
Claim from thy tender hand?

Zaph. Oh! my guardian angel,
Speak, resolve me;
How can assassination be a virtue?
How can the gracious Parent of mankind
Delight in mankind's suff'rings? Mayn't this pro-
phet,

This great announcer of his heavenly will,
Mistake it once?

Pal. Oh! tremble to examine.
He sees our hearts. To doubt is to blaspheme.

Zaph. Be steady, then, my soul, firm to thy pur-
pose.

Come forth, thou foe to Mahomet and heaven,
And meet the doom thy rebel faith deserves:
Come forth, Alcanor.

Pal. Who? Alcanor?

Zaph. Yes.

Pal. The good Alcanor?

Zaph. Curse on his pagan virtues! he must die;
So Mahomet commands: and yet, methinks,
Some other deity arrests my arm,
And whispers to my heart—"Zaphna, forbear!"
Pal. Distracting state!

Zaph. Alas! my dear Palmira,
I'm weak, and shudder at this bloody business.
Help me, oh! help, Palmira; I am torn,
Distracted, with this conflict.

Zeal, horror, love, and pity, seize my breast,
And drag it different ways. Alas! Palmira,
You see me tossing on a sea of passions;
'Tis thine, my angel, to appease this tempest,
Fix my distracted will, and teach me—

Pal. What?

What can I teach thee in this strife of passions?
Oh! Zaphna, I revere our holy prophet,
Think all his laws are register'd in heaven,
And every mandate minted in the skies.

Zaph. But then to break through hospitality,
And murder him by whom we are protected!

Pal. Oh! poor Alcanor! gen'rous, good Alcanor!
My heart bleeds for thee.

Zaph. Know, then, unless I act this horrid scene,
Unless I plunge this dagger in the breast
Of that old man, I must—I must—

Pal. What?

Zaph. Must, Palmira—
(Oh! agonizing thought!) lose thee for ever!

Pal. Am I the price of good Alcanor's blood?

Zaph. So Mahomet ordains.

Pal. Horrible dowry!

Zaph. Thou know'st the curse our prophet has denounc'd,
Of endless tortures on the disobedent;
Thou know'st with what an oath I've bound myself
To vindicate his laws, extirpate all
That dare oppose his progress. Say, then, fair one,
Thou tutorest divine, instruct me how,
How to obey my chief, perform my oath,
Yet list to mercy's call.

Pal. This rends my heart.

Zaph. How to avoid being banish'd thee for ever.

Pal. Oh! save me from that thought! must that e'er be?

Zaph. It must not: thou hast now pronounc'd his doom.

Pal. What doom? Have I?

Zaph. Yes, thou hast seal'd his death.

Pal. I seal his death? Did I?

Zaph. 'Twas heaven spoke by thee; thou'rt its oracle;

And I'll fulfil its laws. This is the hour
In which he pays, at the adjoining altar,
Black rites to his imaginary gods.

Follow me not, Palmira.

Pal. I must follow;

I will not, dare not, leave thee.

Zaph. Gentle maid,

I beg thee fly these walls; thou canst not bear

This horrid scene. Oh! these are dreadful moments!

Begone! quick—this way—

Pal. No, I follow thee,

Retread thy every footstep, though they lead
To the dark gulf of death.

Zaph. Thou matchless maid! to the dire trial,
then. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*The inner part of the Temple, with a pagan altar and images.*

ALCANOR discovered, addressing himself to the idols.

Alc. Eternal powers! that deign to bless these mansions,

Protectors of the sons of Ishmael,
Crush, crush this blasphemous invader's force,
And turn him back with shame. If power be your's,
Oh! shield your injur'd votaries, and lay
Oppression bleeding at your altar's foot.

Enter ZAPHNA and PALMIRA.

Pal. Act not this bloody deed: oh! save him,
save him! (*Apert to Zaphna.*)

Zaph. Save him, and lose both paradise and thee!
(*Apert.*)

Pal. Ha! yon he stands. Oh! Zaphna, all my
blood

Is frozen at the sight. (*Apert.*)

Alc. 'Tis in your own behalf that I implore

The terrors of your might; swift, swiftly
Pour vengeance on this vile apostate's head.

Zaph. Hear how the wretch blasphemes! So,
now— (*Apert.*)

Pal. Hold, Zaphna! (*Apert.*)

Zaph. Let me go. (*Apert.*)

Pal. I cannot—cannot. (*Apert.*)

Alc. But if, for reasons which dim-sighted mortals

Can't look into, you'll crown this daring rebel
With royalty and priesthood, take my life:

And if, ye gracious powers! you've aught of bliss
In store for me, at my last hour permit me

To see my children, pour my blessing on them,
Expire in their dear arms, and let them close

These eyes, which then would wish no after sight.
Pal. His children, did he say? (*Apert.*)

Zaph. I think he did. (*Apert.*)

Alc. For this I'll at your altar pay my vows,
And make it smoke with incense.

(*Retires behind the altar.*)

Zaph. (*Draws his sword.*) Now let me strike!

Pal. Stay but one moment, Zaphna.

Zaph. It must not be—unhand me.

Pal. What to do?

Zaph. To serve my god and king, and merit thee.

(*Breaks from Palmira, and going towards the altar, he starts, and stops short.*)

Ha! what are ye, ye terrifying shades!

What means this lake of blood that lies before me?

Pal. Oh! Zaphna! let us fly these horrid roofs.

Zaph. No, no. Go on, ye ministers of death;

Lead me the way; I'll follow ye.

Pal. Stay, Zaphna;

Heap no more horrors on me; I'm expiring

Beneath the load.

Zaph. Be hush'd—the altar trembles!

What means that omen? does it spur to murder,

Or would it rein me back? No, 'tis the voice

Of heaven itself, that chides my ling'ring hand.

Now send up thither all thy vows, Palmira,

Whilst I obey its will, and give the stroke.

(*Goes behind the altar, after Alcanor.*)

Pal. What vows? Will heaven receive a murderer's vows?

For, sure, I'm such, whilst I prevent not murder.

Why beats my heart thus? what soft voice is this

That's waken'd in my soul, and preaches mercy?

If heaven demands his life, dare I oppose?

Is it my place to judge? Ha! that dire groan

Proclaims the bloody business is about.

Zaphna! oh, *Zaphna!*

Re-enter ZAPHNA from behind the altar.

Zaph. Ha! where am I?

Who calls me? Where's Palmira? She's not here.

What fiend has snatch'd her from me?

Pal. Heavens! he raves!

Dost thou not know me, *Zaphna?* her, who lives

For thee alone? Why dost thou gaze thus on me?

Zaph. Where are we?

Pal. Hast thou then discharg'd

The horrid duty?

Zaph. What dost thou say?

Pal. Alcanor—

Zaph. Alcanor! what Alcanor?

Pal. Gracious heaven,

Look down upon him!

Let's be gone, my *Zaphna*;

Let's fly this place.

Zaph. Oh! whither fly? to whom?

D'ye see these hands? who will receive these hands?

Pal. Oh! come, and let me wash them with my tears.

Zaph. Who art thou? let me lean on thee: I find

My powers returning. Is it thou, *Palmira*?

Where have I been? what have I done?

Pal. I know not.

Think on't no more.

Zaph. But I must think, and talk on't, too, *Palmira.*

I seiz'd the victim by his hoary locks—

(*Thou, heaven, didst will it!*)

Then, shuddering with horror, buried straight

The poniard in his breast. I had redoubled

The bloody plunge—

But that the venerable sire pour'd forth

So piteous a groan!—look'd so, *Palmira*—

And with a feeble voice cried—“Is it *Zaphna*?”

I could no more. Oh! hadst thou seen, my love,

The fell, fell dagger in his bosom—view'd

His dying face, where sat such dignity,

Cloth'd with compassion to'wards his base assassin—

(*Throws himself on the ground.*)

The dire remembrance weighs me to the earth:
Here let me die.

Pal. Rise, my lov'd *Zaphna*, rise,

And let us fly to Mahomet for protection:
If we are found in these abodes of slaughter,
Tortures and death attend us: let us fly.

Zaph. (Starting up.) I did fly at that blasting sight, Palmira,
When, drawing out the fatal steel, he oast
Such tender looks! I fled—the fatal steel,
The voice, the tender looks, the bleeding victim,
Blessing his murderer—I could not fly:
No, they clung to me, riv'd my throbbing heart,
And set my brain on fire! What have we done?
Pal. Hark! what's that noise? I tremble for thy life!

Oh! in the name of love, by all the ties,
Those sacred ties, that bind thee mine for ever,
I do conjure thee, follow me.

Re-enter ALCANOR from behind the altar, leaning against it, with the bloody sword in his hand.

Zaph. Ha! look, Palmira! see, what object's that,

Which bears upon my tortured sight? Is't he,
Or is't his bloody manes come to haunt us?

Pal. 'Tis he himself, poor wretch! struggling with death,

And feebly crawling tow'rd's us. Let me fly,
And yield what help I can: let me support thee,
Thou much-lamented, injur'd, good, old man!

Zaph. Why don't I move? my feet are rooted here,

And all my frame is struck and wither'd up
As with a lightning's blast.

Alc. My gentle maid,
Wilt thou support me?

Weep not, my Palmira.

Pal. I could weep tears of blood, if that would serve thee.

Alc. (Sitting down.) Zaphna, come hither; thou hast ta'en my life,

For what offence, or what one thought towards thee,

That anger or malevolence gave birth,
Heaven knows I am unconscious. Do not look so.
I see thou dost relent.

Enter PHARON, hastily.

Pha. (Starting back.) Ha! 'tis too late, then!
Alc. Would I could see Hercules! Pharon, lo!

Thy martyr'd friend, by his distemper'd hand,
Is now expiring.

Pha. Dire, unnatural crime!

Oh! wretched parricide! Behold thy father!

(Pointing to Alcanor.)

Zaph. My father!

Pal. Father! ha!

Alc. Mysterious heaven!

Pha. Hercules, dying by the hand of Mirvan,
Who slew him lest he should betray the secret,
Saw me approach, and in the pangs of death,
Cried, "Fly, and save Alcanor; wrest the sword
From Zaphna's hands, if 'tis not yet too late,
That's destin'd for his death; then let him know
That Zaphna and Palmira are his children."

Pal. Dost hear that, Zaphna?

Zaph. 'Tis enough, my fate!

Canst thou aught more?

Alc. Oh, nature! oh, my children!

By what vile instigations wert thou driv'n,
Unhappy Zaphna, to this bloody action?

Zaph. (Falling at his father's feet.) Oh! I cannot speak:

Restore me, sir, restore that damned weapon,
That I, for once, may make it, as I ought,
An instrument of justice.

Pal. (Kneels.) Oh! my father,
Strike here; the crime was mine: 'twas I, alone,
That work'd his will to this unnatural deed!

Zaph. Strike your assassins—

Alc. I embrace my children,
And joy to see them, though my life's the forfeit.
Rise, children, rise and live! live to revenge
Your father's death. But in the name of nature,
By the remains of this paternal blood,

That's oozing from my wound, raise not your hands
'Gainst your own being. Zaphna, wouldst thou do
me

A second deadlier mischief?

Self-slaughter can't atone for parricide.

Thy undetermin'd arm ha'n't quite fulfill'd

Its bigot purpose; I hope to live, to animate

Our friends 'gainst this impostor; lead them,
Zaphna,

To root out a rapacious, baneful crew,

Whose zeal is frenzy, whose religion, murder!

Zaph. Swift, swift, ye hours, and light me to
revenge!

Come, thou infernal weapon,

(Snatches the bloody sword.)

I'll wash off thy foul stain with the heart's blood
Of that malignant sanctified assassin.

Enter MIRVAN and his Followers.

Mir. Seize Zaphna!

Help you the good Alcanor. Hapless man!

Our prophet, in a vision, learn'd to-night,

The mournful tale of thy untimely end,

And sent me straight to seize the vile assassin,

That he might wreak severest justice on him:

Mahomet comes to vindicate the laws,

Not suffer with impunity their breach.

Alc. Heav'n's! what accumulated crimes are
here!

Zaph. Where is the monster? bear me instant
to him,

That I may blast him with my eye!—may curse
him,

With my last hesitating voice!

Pal. Thou traitor!

Did not thy own death-doing tongue enjoin

This horrid deed?

Mir. Off with him, *(To the Soldiers.)*

And see him well secur'd!

Pal. Let me go with him; I will share thy fate,
Unhappy Zaphna, for I share thy guilt!

Mir. No more—you must to Mahomet:

Our great prophet

Will take you under his divine protection.

Pal. Oh, death! deliver me from such protection!
(Aside.)

Mir. Away! *(To the Soldiers who hold Zaphna.)*
You, this way. *(To Palmira.)*

Zaph. Pardon!

Pal. Oh! pardon!

[They are led off by degrees, looking alternately at their Father and each other.]

Alc. Oh! insupportable!

Both from me torn, then when I wanted most

Their consolation! *(A shout.)*

Pha. Hark!

The citizens are rons'd, and all in arms

Rush on to your defence.

Alc. Pharon support me

Some moments longer. Help, conduct me tow'rd's
them;

Bare this wound to them; let that speak the cause,

The treach'rous cause; for words begin to fail me;

Then, if in death I can but serve my country,

Save my poor children from this tyrant's gripe!

What patriot, or parent, but would wish,
In so divine a cause to fall a martyr! *[Exeunt.]*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter MAHOMET and MIRVAN.

Mah. Wrong will be ever nurs'd and fed with
blood—

So this boy bigot held his pious purpose?

Mir. Devoutly.

Mah. What a reasonless machine
Can superstition make the reasoner, man!
Alcanor lies there, on his bed of earth?

Mir. This moment he expir'd; and Mecca's
youth

In vain lament their chief.
The silent and desponding crowd,
Broke out in murmurs, plaints, and last, in shouts;
And each mechanic grew a Mussulman.

Mah. But, say, is not our army at their gates?

Mir. Omar commands

Their nightly march, through unsuspected paths,
And with the morn appears.

Mah. At sight of them,

The weak remaining billows of this storm
Will lash themselves to peace—But where is
Zaphna?

Mir. Safe in a dungeon, where he dies apace,
Unconscious of his fate; for well thou know'st,
Ere at the altar's foot he slew his sire,
In his own veins he bore his guilt's reward,
A deadly draught of poison.

Mah. I would be kind, and let him die deceiv'd,
Nor know that parent blood defiles his soul.

Mir. He cannot know it: if the grave be silent,
I'm sure Hercules is—

Mah. Unhappy Zaphna!

Something like pity checks me for thy death.
My safety claim'd his life,
And all the heaven of fair Palmira's charms
Shall be my great reward.

Mir. My noble lord,

Palmira is at hand, and waits your pleasure.

Mah. At hand! how, Mirvan, couldst thou let
me talk

On themes of guilt, when that pure angel's near?

Mir. The weeping fair, led on by flatt'ring
hope

Of Zaphna's life, attends your sacred will:
A silent pale dejection shrouds her cheeks,
And, like the lily in a morning show'r,
She droops her head, and locks up all her sweets.

Mah. Say Mahomet awaits, and then

Assemble all our chiefs, and on this platform
Let them attend me straight. [Exit Mirvan.

Enter PALMIRA.

Pal. Where have they led me?

Methinks, each step I take, the mangled corpse
Of my dear father, by poor Zaphna mangled,
Lies in my way, and all I see is blood. (Starts.)
'Tis the impostor's self!—Burst, heart, in silence!
(Aside.)

Mah. Maid, lay aside this dread. Palmira's fate,
And that of Mecca, by my will is fix'd.
This great event, that fills thy soul with horror,
Is myst'ry to all, but heaven and Mahomet.

Pal. Oh! ever righteous heaven, canst thou
suffer

This sacrilegious hypocrite, this spoiler,
To steal thy terrors and blaspheme thy name,
Nor doom him instant dead? (Aside.)

Mah. Child of my care,

At length from galling chains I've set thee free,
And made thee triumph in a just revenge:
Think then thou'rt dear to me, and Mahomet
Regards thee with a more than father's eye;
Then know, if thou'lt deserve the mighty boon,
A higher name, a nobler fate awaits thee.

Pal. What would the tyrant?

Mah. Raise thy thoughts to glory;
And sweep this Zaphna from thy memory,
With all that's past: let that mean flame expire
Before the blaze of empire's radiant sun.
Thy grateful heart must answer to my bounties,
Follow my laws, and share in all my conquests.

Pal. What laws, what bounties, and what con-
quests, tyrant?

Fraud is thy law, the tomb thy only bounty;
Thy conquests, fatal as infected air,
Dispeopling half the globe!—See here, good hea-
ven!

The venerable prophet I rever'd,
The king I serv'd, the god that I ador'd!

Mah. (Approaches her.) Whence this unwouled
language, this wild frenzy?

Pal. Where is the spirit of my martyr'd father?
Where Zaphna's? where Palmira's innocence?
Blasted by thee—by thee, infernal monster!
Thou found'st us angels, and hast made us fiends!
Give, give us back our lives, our fame, our virtue!
Thou canst not, tyrant!—yet thou seek'st my love;
Seek'st with Alcaonor's blood, his daughter's love!

Mah. Horror and death! the fatal secret's known!
(Aside.)

Re-enter MIRVAN.

Mir. Oh, Mahomet! all's lost, thy glory tar-
nish'd,

And the insatiate tomb ripe to devour us!
Hercides' parting breath divulg'd the secret.
The prison's forc'd, the city all in arms:
See, where they bear aloft their murder'd chief,
Fell Zaphna in their front, death in his looks,
Rage all his strength. Spite of the deadly draught,
He holds in life, but to make sure of vengeance.

Mah. What dost thou here, then? Instant with
our guards,

Attempt to stem their progress, till the arrival
Of Omar with the troops

Mir. I haste, my lord.

[Exit.

Pal. Now, now, my hour's at hand!
Hear'st thou those shouts that rend the ambient
air?

See'st thou those glancing fires that add new horrors
To the night's gloom?—Fresh from thy murd'ring
pouiard,

My father's spirit leads the vengeful shades
Of all the wretches whom thy sword has butcher'd!

Mah. What terror's this that hangs upon her
accents?

I feel her virtue, though I know her weakness.
(Aside.)

Pal. Thou ask'st my love; go, seek it in the
grave

Of good Alcaonor—Talk'st of grateful minds;
Bid Zaphna plead for thee, and I may hear thee:
Till then thou art my scorn—May'st thou, like me,
Behold thy dearest blood spilt at thy feet.
Mecca, Medina, all our Asian world,
Join, join to drive the impostor from the earth,
Blush at his chains, and shake them off in ven-
geance!

Mah. Be still, my soul, nor let a woman's rage
Ruffle thy wonted calm. (Aside.) Spite of thy hate,
Thou'rt lovely still, and charming even in madness.
(A shout, and noise of fighting.)

My fair, retire—nor let thy gentle soul
Shake with alarms; thou'rt my peculiar care:
I go to quell this trait'rous insurrection,
And will attend thee straight.

Pal. No, tyrant, no!

I'll join my brother, help to head our friends,
And urge them on. (A shout.)

Roll, roll your thunders, heaven, and aid the storm!
Now, hurl your lightning on the guilty head,
And huddle the cause of injur'd innocence! [Exit.

Enter ALI.

Mah. Whence, Ali, that surprise?

Ali. My royal chief,

The foe prevails: thy troops, led on by Mirvan,
Are all cut off, and valiant Mirvan's self,
By Zaphna slain, lies welt'ring in his blood:
The guard, that to our arms should ope the gates,
Struck with the common phrenzy, vow thy ruin;
And death and vengeance is the gen'ral cry.

Mah. Can Ali fear? Then, Mahomet be thyself?

Ali. See, thy few friends, whom wild despair
hath arm'd,

But arm'd in vain, are come to die beside thee.

Mah. Ye heartless traitors! Mahomet alone
Shall be his own defender, and your guard
Against the crowds of Mecca—Follow me!

Re-enter PALMIRA, with ZAPHNA, PHARON, Citizens,
and the body of ALCANOR, on a bier.
Ha!

Zaph. See, my friends, where the impostor
stands,

With head erect, as if he knew not guilt;
As if no tongue spake from Alcanor's wound,
Nor call'd for vengeance on him!

Mah. Impious man!
Is't not enough to have spilt thy parent's blood,
But with atrocious and blaspheming lips,
Dar'st thou arraign the substitute of heaven?

Zaph. The substitute of heaven! is the sword,
The pestilence, the famine—such art thou!

Such are the blessings heaven has sent to man,
By thee its delegate!

How couldst thou damn us thus?

Mah. Babbler, avaunt!

Zaph. Well thou upbraid'st me, for to parley
with thee,

Half brands me coward. Oh! revenge me, friends,
Revenge Alcanor's massacre! revenge
Palmira's wrongs, and crush the rancorous monster!

Mah. Hear me, ye slaves! born to obey my
will—

Pal. Ah! hear him not—fraud dwells upon his
tongue!

Zaph. Have at thee, fiend!—Ha! heaven!
(*Advances, reels, and reclines on his sword.*)

What cloud is this

That thwarts upon my sight? My head grows dizzy,
My joints unloose—sure, 'tis the stroke of fate!

Mah. The poison works: then triumph, Mahomet!
(*Aside.*)

Zaph. Off, off, base lethargy!

Pal. Brother, dismay'd!

Hasst thou no power but in a guilty cause,
And only strength to be a parricide?

Zaph. Spare that reproach. Come on—It will
not be.

(*Hangs down his sword, and reclines on Pharon.*)
Some cruel power unnerves my willing arm,
Blasts my resolves, and weighs me down to earth.

Mah. Such be the fate of all who brave our law!
Nature and death have heard my voice, and now
Let heaven be judge 'twixt Zaphna and myself,
And instant blast the guilty of the two.

Pal. Brother! Oh, Zaphna!

Zaph. Zaphna, now no more.
(*Sinks down by Alcanor's body, and leans
on the bier; Pharon kneels down with
him, and supports him.*)

Down, down, good Pharon! Thou, poor injur'd
course,

May I embrace thee? Won't thy pallid wound
Purple anew at the unnatural touch,
And ooze fresh calls for vengeance?

Pal. Oh! my brother!

Zaph. In vain's the guiltless meaning of my
heart;

High heaven detests th' involuntary crime,
And dooms for parricide. Then tremble, tyrant!

If the Supreme can punish error thus,

What new-invented torturea must await

Thy soul, grown leprous with such foul offences!

But soft—now fate and nature are at strife—

Sister, farewell! with transport should I quit

This toilsome, perilous, delusive stage,

But that I leave thee on't—leave thee, Palmira,

Expos'd to what is worse than fear cao igne—

That tyrant's mercy. Look on her, heaven!
Guide her, and—Oh!—
(*Dies.*)

Pal. Think not, ye men of Mecca,
This death inflicted by the hand of heaven;
'Tis he—that viper!

Mah. Know, ye faithless wretches!
'Tis mine to deal the bolts of angry heaven.
Behold them there; and let the wretch who doubts,
Tremble at Zaphna's fate, and know that Mahomet
Can read his thoughts, and doom him with a look.
Go then, and thank your pontiff and your prince,
For each day's sun he grants you to behold.
Hence, to your temples, and appease my rage!

[*The people go off.*]
Pal. Ah! stay: my brother's murder'd by this
tyrant!

Mah. 'Tis done. Thus ever be our law receiv'd!
(*Aside.*)

Now, fair Palmira—

Pal. Monster! is it thū's
Thou mak'st thyself a god, by added crimes,
And murders, justify'd by sacrilege?

Mah. Think, exquisite Palmira, for thy sake—

Pal. Thou'st been the murderer of all my race.
See where Alcanor, see where Zaphna lies!
Do they not call for me, too, at thy hands?
Oh! that they did! But I can read thy thoughts;
Palmira sav'd for something worse than death;
This to prevent—Zaphna, I follow thee.

(*Stabs herself with Zaphna's sword.*)

Mah. What hast thou done?

Pal. A deed of glory, tyrant!
Thou'st left no object worth Palmira's eye,
And when I shut out light, I shut out thee. (*Dies.*)

Mah. Farewell, dear victim of my boundless
passion!

Oh! justice, justice!

In vain are glory, worship, and dominion!
All conq'rors as I am, I am a slave,
And, by the world ador'd, dwell with the damn'd!
My crimes have planted scorpions in my breast:
Here, here I feel them! 'Tis in vain to brave
The host of terrors that invade my soul—
I might deceive the world, myself I cannot.

Ali. Be calm awhile, my lord; think what you
are.

Mah. Ha! what am I? (*Turns to the bodies.*)
Ye breathless family!

Let your loud-orying wounds say what I am!
Oh! snatch me from that sight: quick, quick, trans-
port me

To nature's loneliest mansion, where the sun
Ne'er enter'd: where the sound of human tread
Was never heard. But wherefore? still, I there,
There still shall find myself. Ay, that's the hell!
I'll none on't. (*Draws his sword.*)

Ali. Heavens! help, hold him!
(*Ali and others disarm him.*)

Mah. Paltry dastards!
You fled the foe, but can disarm your master.
Angel of death, whose power I've long proclaim'd,
Now aid me, if thou canst: now, if thou canst,
Draw the kind curtain of eternal night,
And shroud me from the horrors that beset me!

[*Exit.*]
Pha. Oh! what a curse is life, when self-con-
viction

Flings our offences hourly in our face,
And turns existence torturer to itself!

Here let the mad enthusiast turn his eyes,
And see, from bigotry, what horrors rise.

Here, in the blackest colours, let him read,
That zeal, by craft misled, may act a deed,

By which both innocence and virtue bleed.
[*Exeunt.*]

THE MOURNING BRIDE;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY WILLIAM CONGREVE,



Act IV.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

THE KING
OSMYN
GONSALEZ
GARCIA.

ALONZO
PEREZ
HELI
SELIM

ALMERIA
ZARA
LEONORA
ATTENDANTS

ACT I.

SCENE 1.—A Room of state.

The curtain rises slowly to soft music. ALMERIA in mourning, and LEONORA, discovered. Almeria rises and comes forward.

Almeria. Music has charms to sooth a savage breast,

To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak.
I've read that things inanimate have mov'd,
And, as with living souls, have been inform'd
By magic numbers and persuasive sound.
What then am I? Am I more senseless grown
Than trees or flint? Oh! force of constant woe!
'Tis not in harmony to calm my griefs.
Anselmo sleeps, and is at peace: last night,
The silent tomb receiv'd the good old king;
He and his sorrows now are safely lodg'd
Within its cold, but hospitable bosom.
Why am not I at peace?

Leonora. Dear madam, cease,

Or moderate your grief. There is no cause—

Almeria. No cause! Peace, peace! there is eternal cause,

And misery eternal will succeed.

Thou canst not tell; thou hast, indeed, no cause.

Leonora. Believe me, madam, I lament Anselmo,

And always did compassionate his fortune;
Have often wept, to see how cruelly
Your father kept in chains his fellow king:
And oft at night, when all have been retir'd,
Have stol'n from bed, and to his prison crept,
Where, while his gaoler slept, I, through the grate,

Have softly whisper'd, and inquir'd his health;
Sent in my sighs and pray'rs for his deliv'rance;
For sighs and pray'rs were all that I could offer.

Almeria. Indeed, thou hast a soft and gentle nature,

That thus could melt to see a stranger's wrongs.
Oh! Leonora, hadst thou known Anselmo,
How would thy heart have bled to see his suff'rings!

Thou hadst no cause but general compassion.

Leonora. Love of my royal mistress gave me cause;

My love of you begot my grief for him;
For I had heard, that when the chance of war

Had bless'd Anselmo's arms with victory,
And the rich spoil of all the field, and you,
The glory of the whole, were made the prey
Of his success,

He did endeavor himself to your affection,
By all the worthy and indulgent ways
His most industrious goodness could invent;
Proposing, by a match between Alphonso,
His son, the brave Valencian prince, and you,

To end the long dissension, and unite
The jarring crowns.

Almeria. Why was I carried to Anselmo's
court?

Or there, why was I us'd so tenderly?

Why not ill-treated like an enemy?

For, so my father would have us'd his child.

Oh! Alphonso, Alphonso!

Devouring seas have wash'd thee from my sight;

No time shall rase thee from my memory:

No, I will live to be thy monument:

The cruel ocean is no more thy tomb;

But, in my heart thou art interr'd; there,
there,

Thy dear resemblance is for ever fix'd;

My love, my lord, my husband still, though
lost!

Leonora. Husband! Oh, heav'n's!

Almeria. Alas! what have I said?

My grief has hurried me beyond all thought:

I would have kept that secret; though I know

Thy love and faith to me deserve all confi-
dence.

Leonora. Witness these tears!

The memory of that brave prince stands fair
In all report;

And I have heard, imperfectly, his loss;

But, fearful to renew your troubles past,

I never did presume to ask the story.

Almeria. If for my swelling heart I can, I'll tell
thee:—

I was a welcome captive in Valencia,
Ev'n on the day when Manuel, my father,
Led on his conqu'ring troops, high as the gates
Of king Anselmo's palace; which, in rage,
And heat of war, and dire revenge, he fir'd.

The good king, flying to avoid the flames,

Started amidst his foes, and made captivity

His fatal refuge. Would that I had fall'n

Amidst those flames! but, 'twas not so decreed.

Alphonso, who foresaw my father's cruelty,

Had borne the queen and me on board a ship

Ready to sail; and, when this news was brought,

We put to sea; but, being betray'd by some

Who knew our flight, we closely were pursu'd,

And almost taken; when a sudden storm

Drove us, and those that follow'd, on the coast

Of Afric; there our vessel struck the shore,

And, bulging 'gainst a rock, was dash'd in pieces!

But, heav'n spar'd me for yet much more afflic-
tion!

Conducting them who follow'd us, to shun

The shoal, and save me floating on the waves,

While the good queen and my Alphonso per-
ish'd.

Leonora. Alas! Were you, then, wedded to Al-
phonso?

Almeria. That day, that fatal day, our hands were
join'd!

For, when my lord beheld the ship pursuing,

And saw her rate so far exceeding ours,

He came to me, and begg'd me, by my love,

I would consent the priest should make us one;

That, whether death or victory ensu'd,

I might be his, beyond the pow'r of fate:

The queen, too, did assist his suit; I granted;

And, in one day, was wedded and a widow.

Leonora. Indeed, 'twas mournful.

Almeria. 'Twas as I have told thee;

For which I mourn, and will for ever mourn;

Nor will I change these black and dismal robes,

Or ever dry these swoln and wat'ry eyes;

Or ever taste content, or peace of heart,

While I have life and thought of my Alphonso.

(*Loud shouts.*)

Leonora. Hark!

The distant shouts proclaim your father's tri-
umph.

(*Shouts at a distance.*)

Oh! cease—for heav'n's sake, assuage a little
This torrent of your grief; for, much I fear,
'Twill urge his wrath to see you drown'd in
tears,

When joy appears in ev'ry other face.

Almeria. And joy he brings to ev'ry other
heart,

But double, double weight of woe to mine;

For, with him Garcia comes; Garcia, to whom

I must be sacrific'd, and all the vows

I gave my dear Alphonso basely broken.

No, it shall never be; for I will die

First,—die ten thousand deaths! Look down,
look down,

Alphonso, hear the sacred vow I make;

(*Kneels.*)

And thou, Anselmo, if yet thou art arriv'd,

Through all impediments of purging fire,

To that bright heav'n where my Alphonso reigns,

Behold thou also, and attest my vow:—

If ever I do yield, or give consent,

By any action, word, or thought, to wed

Another lord,—may, then, just heav'n show'r
down

Unheard-of curses on me, greater far

(If such there be in angry heav'n's vengeance)

Than any I have yet endur'd.—And now (*Rises.*)

My heart has some relief; having so well

Discharg'd this debt, incumbent on my love.

Yet, one thing more I would engage from thee.

Leonora. My heart, my life, and will, are only
yours.

Almeria. I thank thee. 'Tis but this:—aun,
when all

Are wrapp'd and busied in the general joy,

Thou wilt withdraw, and privately with me

Steal forth to visit good Anselmo's tomb.

Leonora. Alas! I fear some fatal resolution.

Almeria. No, on my life, my faith, I mean no
ill,

Nor violence! I feel myself more light,

And more at large, since I made have this vow.

Perhaps I would repeat it there more solemnly.

'Tis that, or some much melancholy thought;

Upon my word, no more.

Leonora. I will attend you.

Enter ALONZO.

Alonzo. The lord Gonsalez comes to tell your
highness

The king is just arriv'd.

Almeria. Conduct him in. [*Exit Alonzo.*]

That's his pretence: his errand is, I know,

To fill my ears with Gareia's valiant deeds,

And gild and magnify his son's exploits.

But I am arm'd with ice around my heart,

Not to be warm'd with words or idle eloquence.

Enter GONSALEZ.

Gonsalez. Be ev'ry day of your long life like
this!

The sun, bright conquest, and your brighter
eyes,

Have all conspir'd to blaze promiscuous light,

And bless this day with most unequal lustre.

Your royal father, my victorious lord,

Laden with spoils, and ever-living laurel,

Is ent'ring now, in martial pomp, the palace.

Five hundred mules precede his solemn march,

Which groan beneath the weight of Moorish
wealth;

Chariots of war, adorn'd with glitt'ring gems,

Succeed; and next, a hundred neighing steeds,

White as the fleecy rain on Alpine hills,

That bound and foam, and champ the golden bit,

As they disdain'd the victory they grace.

Prisoners of war, in shining fetters, follow;
 And captains of the noblest blood of Afric
 Sweat by his chariot-wheels;
 The swarming populace spread every wall;
 While you alone retire, and shun this sight;
 This sight, which is indeed not seen (though
 twice
 The multitude should gaze) in absence of your
 eyes.

Almeria. My lord, mine eyes ungratefully behold

The gilded trophies of exterior honours;
 Nor will my ears be charm'd with sounding
 words,

Or pompous phrase,—the pageantry of souls;
 But, that my father is return'd in safety,
 I hie to heav'n with thanks.

Gonsalez. Excellent princess!

But, 'tis a task unfit for my weak age,
 With dying words to offer at your praise:
Garcia, my son, your beauty's lowest slave,
 Has better done, in proving with his sword
 The force and influence of your matchless charms.

Almeria. I doubt not of the worth of *Garcia's*
 deeds,
 Which had been brave, though I had ne'er been
 born.

Leonora. Madam, the king.

Symphony of warlike music. Enter the KING, attended by GARCIA and several Officers. Files of Prisoners in chains, and Guards. Almeria meets the King, and kneels; afterwards, Gonsalez kneels and kisses the King's hand, while Garcia does the same to Almeria.

King. *Almeria*, rise; my best *Gonsalez*, rise.—
 What, tears, my good old friend!

Gonsalez. But, tears of joy.
 Believe me, sir, to see you thus, has fill'd
 Mine eyes with more delight than they can hold.

King. By heav'n, thou lov'st me! and I am
 pleas'd thou dost.

Take it for thanks, old man, that I rejoice
 To see thee weep on this occasion: some
 Here are, who seem to mourn at our success.
 Why is't, *Almeria*, that you meet our eyes,
 Upon this solemn day, in these sad weeds?

In opposition to my brightness, you
 And yours are all like daughters of affliction.

Almeria. Forgive me, sir, if I in this offend:
 The year, which I have vow'd to pay to heav'n,
 In mourning and strict life, for my deliverance
 From wreck and death, wants yet to be ex-
 pir'd.

King. Your zeal to heav'n is great, so is your
 debt;

Yet, something, too, is due to me who gave
 That life which heav'n preserv'd. A day be-
 stow'd

In filial duty, had aton'd and given
 A dispensation to your vow. No more;
 'Twas weak and wilful, and a woman's error:
 Yet, upon thought, it doubly wounds my sight,
 To see that sable worn upon the day
 Succeeding that in which our deadliest foe,
 Hated *Anselmo!* was interr'd. By heav'n!
 It looks as thou didst mourn for him. Just so
 Thy senseless vow appear'd to bear its date,
 Not from that hour wherein thou wert preserv'd,
 But that wherein the curs'd *Alphonso* perish'd.
 Ha! What, thou dost not weep to think of
 that?

Gonsalez. Have patience, royal sir; the princess
 weeps
 To have offended you. If fate decreed,
 One pointed hour should be *Alphonso's* loss
 And her deliverance, is she to blame?

King. I tell thee she's to blame, not to have
 feasted

When my first foe was laid in earth; such en-
 mity,

Such detestation bears my blood to his.
 My daughter should have revell'd at his death;
 She should have made these palace walls to shake,
 And all this high and ample roof to ring
 With her rejoicings. What, to mourn and
 weep!

Then, then to weep, and pray, and grieve! By
 heav'n,

There's not a slave, a shackled slave of mine,
 But should have smil'd that hour, through all his
 care,
 And shook his chains in transport and rude har-
 mony!

Gonsalez. What she has done was in excess of
 goodness;

Betray'd by too much piety, to seem
 As if she had offended. Sure, no more.

King. To seem is to commit, at this conjunc-
 ture.

I wo' not have a seeming sorrow seen
 To-day. Retire, divest yourself with speed
 Of that offensive black; on me be all
 The violation of your vow; for you,
 It shall be your excuse that I command it.

Garcia. (*Kneeling.*) Your pardon, sir, if I pre-
 sume so far,
 As to remind you of your gracious promise.

King. Rise, *Garcia*; I forgot. Yet stay, *Al-
 meria.*

Almeria. My boding heart!—What is your plea-
 sure, sir?

King. Draw near, and give your hand; and,
Garcia, yours:

Receive this lord, as one whom I have found
 Worthy to be your husband and my son.

Garcia. Thus let me kneel to take—oh! not to
 take—

But to devote and yield myself for ever
 The slave and creature of my royal mistress.

Gonsalez. Oh! let me, prostrate, pay my worth-
 less thanks—

King. No more: my promise long since pass'd,
 thy services,

And *Garcia's* well-try'd valour, all oblige me.

This day we triumph: but, to-morrow's sun,
Garcia, shall shine to grace thy nuptials.

Almeria. Oh! (*Faints.*)

Garcia. She faints! help to support her.

Gonsalez. She recovers.

King. A fit of bridal fear. How is't, *Alme-
 ria?*

Almeria. A sudden chillness seizes on my
 spirits.

Your leave, sir, to retire.

King. *Garcia*, conduct her.

[*Garcia leads Almeria to the door, and
 returns.*]

This idle vow hangs on her woman's fears.

I'll have a priest shall preach her from her faith,
 And make it sin not to renounce that vow
 Which I'd have broken. Now, what would
 Alonzo?

Enter ALONZO and Attendants.

Alonzo. Your beauteous captive, *Zara*, is ar-
 riv'd,

And with a train as if she still were wife
 To *Albucacim*, and the Moor had conquer'd.

King. It is our will she should be so attended.
 Bear hence these prisoners. *Garcia*, which is
 he,

Of whose mute valour you relate such wonders?
 (*Prisoners led off.*)

Garcia. Osmyn, who led the Moorish horse; but he,

Great sir, at her request, attends on Zara.

King. He is your prisoner; as you please, dispose him.

Garcia. I would oblige him, but he shuns my kindness;

And, with a haught mien, and stern civility,
Dumbly declines all offers: if he speak,
'Tis scarce above a word; as he were born
Alone to do, and did disdain to talk;
At least to talk where he must not command.

King. Such sullenness, and in a man so brave,
Must have some other cause than his captivity.
Did Zara, then, request he might attend her?

Garcia. My lord, she did.

King. That, join'd with his behaviour,
Begets a doubt. I'd have 'em watch'd; perhaps,
Her chains hang heavier on him than his own.

Enter ZARA and OSMYN, in chains, conducted by PEREZ and a Guard, attended by SELIM and several Mutes.

King. What welcome and what honours, beautiful Zara,

A king and conqueror can give, are yours:
A conqueror, indeed, where you are won;
Who with such lustre strike admiring eyes,
That had our pomp been with your presence
grac'd,
Th' expecting crowd had been deceiv'd; and
seen

The monarch enter, not triumphant, but
In pleasing triumph led, your beauty's slave.

Zara. If I on any terms could condescend
To like captivity, or think those honours,
Which conquerors, in courtesy, bestow,
Of equal value with unborrow'd rule
And native right, to arbitrary sway,
I might be pleas'd, when I behold this train
With usual homage wait: but, when I feel
These bonds, I look with loathing on myself;
And scorn vile slavery, though doubly hid
Beneath mock praises and dissembled state.

King. Those bonds! 'Twas my command you should be free.

How durst you, Perez, disobey?

Perez. Great sir,
Your order was she should not wait your triumph;

But, at some distance follow, thus attended.

King. 'Tis false! 'twas more! I bid she should be free;

If not in words, I bid it by my eyes.
Her eyes did more than bid. Free her and hers
With speed—Yet, stay! my hands alone can
make

Fit restitution here. Thus I release you,
And, by releasing you, enslave myself.

Zara. Such favours, so conferr'd, though when
unsought,

Deserve acknowledgment from noble minds.
Such thanks, as one hating to be oblig'd,
Yet, hating more ingratitude, can pay,
I offer.

King. Born to excel and to command!
As, by transcendent beauty to attract
All eyes, so by pre-eminence of soul
To rule all hearts.

Garcia, what's he, who, with contracted brow
(Beholding Osmyn, as they unbind him.)

And sullen port, glooms downwards with his
eyes;

At once regardless of his chains or liberty?

Garcia. That, sir, is he of whom I spoke; that's
Osmyn.

King. He answers well the character you gave him.

Whence comes it, valiant Osmyn, that a man
So great in arms as thou art said to be,
So hardly can endure captivity,
The common chance of war?

Osmyn. Because captivity
Has robb'd me of a dear and just revenge.

King. I understand not that.

Osmyn. I would not have you.

Zara. That gallant Moor in battle lost a friend,
Whom more than life he lov'd; and the regret
Of not revenging on his foes that loss,
Has caus'd this melancholy and despair.

King. She does excuse him: 'tis as I suspected.
(*Apart to Gonzalez.*)

Gonzalez. That friend may be herself. Seem not
to heed
His arrogant reply. She looks concern'd.
(*Apart to the King.*)

King. I'll have inquiry made: perhaps his
friend

Yet lives, and is a prisoner. His name?

Zara. Heli.

King. Garcia, that search shall be your care:

It shall be mine to pay devotion here;
At this fair shrine to lay my laurels down,
And raise love's altar on the spoils of war.

Conquest and triumph now are mine no more,
Nor will I victory in camps adore:

Fickle in fields, unsteadily she flies,
But rules with settled sway in Zara's eyes.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Aisle of a Temple.*

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Almeria. It was a fancied noise, for all is
hush'd.

Leonora. It bore the accent of a human voice.

Almeria. It was thy fear, or else some transient
wind

Whistling through hollows of this vaulted aisle.
We'll listen.

Leonora. Hark!

Almeria. No; all is hush'd, and still as death.
'Tis dreadful!

How rev'rend is the face of this tall pile,
Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads,
To bear aloft its arch and pond'rous roof,
By its own weight made steadfast and immove-
able,

Looking tranquillity. It strikes an awe
And terror on my aching sight: the tombs
And monumental caves of death look cold,
And shoot a chillness to my trembling heart.
Give me thy hand, and let me hear thy voice;

Nay, quickly speak to me, and let me hear
Thy voice; my own affrights me with its echoes.

Leonora. Let us return: the horror of this
place,

And silence, will increase your melancholy.

Almeria. It may my fears, but cannot add to
that.

No, I will on. Shew me Anselmo's tomb;
Lead me o'er bones and skulls, and mouldering
earth

Of human bodies, for I'll mix with them;
Or, wind me in the shroud of some pale corpse
Yet green in earth, rather than be the bride
Of Garcia's more detested bed: that thought
Exerts my spirit; and my present fears
Are lost in dread of greater ill. Then shew me,
Lead me, for I'm bolder grown: lead on

Where I may kneel, and pay my vows again
To him, to heav'n, and my Alphonso's soul.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A place of Tombs. A monument
fronting the view.*

Enter HELI.

Heli. I wander through this maze of monu-
ments,
Yet cannot find him. Hark! sure, 'tis the voice
Of one complaining. There it sounds; I'll follow
it. [*Exit.*]

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Leonora. Behold the sacred vault, within whose
tomb
The poor remains of good Anselmo rest,
Yet fresh and unconsum'd by time or worms.
What do I see? Oh, heav'n! either my eyes
Are false, or still the marble door remains
Unclos'd; the iron gates, that lead to death
Beneath, are still wide-stretch'd upon their hinge,
And staring on us with unfolded leaves.

Almeria. Sure, 'tis the friendly yawn of death
for me;

And that dumb mouth, significant in shew,
Invites me to the bed, where I alone
Shall rest; shows me the grave, where nature,
weary

And long oppress'd with woes and bending cares,
May lay the burden down, and sink in slumbers
Of peace eternal. My father, then,
Will cease his tyranny; and Garcia, too,
Will fly my pale deformity with loathing.
My soul, enlarg'd from its vile bonds, will mount,
And range the starry orbs and milky ways
To my Alphonso's soul. Oh! joy too great!
Oh! ecstasy of thought! Help me, Anselmo!
Help me, Alphonso! take me, reach thy hand;
To thee, to thee I call, to thee, Alphonso!
Oh, Alphonso!

Enter OSMYN from the tomb.

Osmyn. Who calls that wretched thing that was
Alphonso?

Almeria. Angels, and all the host of heaven, sup-
port me!

Osmyn. Whence is that voice, whose shrillness
from the grave,

And growing to his father's shroud, roots up
Alphonso?

Almeria. Mercy! Providence! Oh! speak,
Speak to it quickly, quickly! speak to me,
Comfort me, help me, hold me, hide me, hide
me,

Leonora, in thy bosom, from the light,
And from my eyes.

Osmyn. Amazement and illusion!
Rivet and nail me where I stand, ye pow'rs!
(*Coming forward.*)

That motionless I may be still deceiv'd:
Let me not stir or breathe, lest I dissolve
That tender, lovely form of painted air,
So like Almeria. Ha! it sinks, it falls!
I'll catch it ere it goes, and grasp her shade.
'Tis life! 'tis warm! 'tis she! 'tis she herself!
Nor dead, nor shade, but breathing and alive!
It is Almeria, 'tis, it is my wife!

Re-enter HELI.

Leonora. Alas! she stirs not yet, nor lifts her
eyes!

He, too, is fainting. Help me, help me, stranger,
Whoe'er thou art, and lend thy hand to raise
These bodies.

Heli. Ha! 'tis he, and with Almeria!

Oh! miracle of happiness! oh! joy
Unhop'd for! Does Almeria live?

Osmyn. Where is she?
Let me behold and touch her, and be sure
'Tis she.

Look up, Almeria, bless me with thy eyes;
Look on thy love, thy lover, and thy husband.

Almeria. I've sworn I'll not wed Garcia: why
d'ye force me?

Is this a father?

Osmyn. Look on thy Alphonso.

Thy father is not here, my love, nor Garcia:
Nor am I what I seem, but thy Alphonso.

Am I so alter'd, or art thou so chang'd,
That seeing my disguise, thou seest not me?

Almeria. It is, it is Alphonso! 'tis his face,
His voice; I know him now, I know him all.

Oh! how hast thou return'd? how hast thou
charm'd

The wildness of the waves and rocks to this;
That, thus relenting, they have giv'n thee back
To earth, to light and life, to love and me?

Osmyn. Oh! I'll not ask, nor answer how, or
why,

We both have backward trod the paths of fate
To meet again in life; to know I have thee,

Is knowing more than any circumstance
Or means by which I have thee.

To fold thee thus, to press thy balmy lips,
And gaze upon thy eyes, is so much joy,

I have no leisure to reflect or know,
Or trifle time in thinking.

Almeria. Stay awhile.

Let me look on thee yet a little more.

Osmyn. And why? what dost thou mean? why
dost thou gaze so?

Almeria. I know not; 'tis to see thy face, I
think—

It is too much; too much to bear, and live!

To see him thus again is such profusion

Of joy, of bliss—I cannot bear—I must

Be mad; I cannot be transported thus!

Osmyn. Thou excellence, thou joy, thou heav'n
of love!

Almeria. Where hast thou been? and how art
thou alive?

Sure, from thy father's tomb thou didst arise!

Osmyn. I did; and thou, my love, didst call me;
thou!

Almeria. True. But, how cam'st thou there?
wert thou alone?

Osmyn. I was, and lying on my father's lead,
When broken echoes of a distant voice

Disturb'd the sacred silence of the vault,

In murmurs round my head. I rose, and listen'd;

And thought I heard thy spirit call Alphonso;

I thought I saw thee too; but, oh! I thought

not

That I, indeed, should be so bless'd to see

thee—

Almeria. But, still how cam'st thou hither? how

thus?—Ha!

What's he who, like thyself, is started here,

Ere seen?

Osmyn. Where? Ha! what do I see? An-
tonio!

I'm fortunate, indeed,—my friend, too, safe!

Heli. Most happily in finding you thus bless'd.

Almeria. More miracles! Antonio, too, es-
cap'd!

Osmyn. And twice escap'd, both from the rage
of seas

And war; for, in the fight I saw him fall.

Heli. But fall unhurt, a pris'ner as yourself,
And as yourself made free. Hither I came

Impatiently to seek you, where I knew
Your grief would lead you to lament Anselmo.

Osmyn. What means the bounty of all-gracious heav'n,

That, persevering still, with open hand
It scatters good, as in a waste of mercy?
Where will this end? But, heav'n is infinite
In all, and can continue to bestow,
When scanty number shall be spent in telling.

Leonora. Or I'm deceiv'd, or I beheld the glimpse
Of two in shining habits, cross the aisle;
Who, by their pointing, seem'd to mark this place.

Almeria. Sure, I have dreamt, if we must part so soon.

Osmyn. I wish, at least, our parting were a dream,

Or we could sleep till we again were met.

Heli. Zara with Selim, sir; I saw and know 'em:

You must be quick, for love will lend her wings.

Almeria. What love? who is she? why are you alarm'd?

Osmyn. She's the reverse of thee; she's my unhappiness.

Harbour no thought that may disturb thy peace;
I'll think how we may meet

To part no more. My friend will tell thee all;

How I escap'd, how I am here, and thus;

How I'm not call'd Alphonso now, but Osmyn,

And he Heli. All, all he will unfold,

Ere next we meet.

Almeria. Sure, we shall meet again.

Osmyn. We shall; we part not but to meet again.

Gladness and warmth of ever-kindling love
Dwell with thee, and revive thy heart in absence.

[*Exeunt all but Osmyn.*]

Yet I behold her—yet—and now no more.

Turn your light inwards, eyes, and view my thought,

So shall you still behold her.

Enter ZARA and SELIM.

Zara. See where he stands, folded and fix'd to earth,

Stiff'ning in thought, a statue among statues!

Why, cruel Osmyn, dost thou fly me thus?

Am I more loathsome to thee than the grave,
That thou dost seek to shield thee there, and shun

My love? But, to the grave I'll follow thee.

He looks not, miuds not, hears not! Barb'rous mau,

Am I neglected thus? am I despis'd?

Not heard! ungrateful Osmyn!

Osmyn. Ha! 'tis Zara!

Zara. Yes, traitor! Zara, lost, abandon'd Zara,

Is a regardless suppliant now to Osmyn.

The slave, the wretch that she redeem'd from death,

Disdains to listen now, or look on Zara.

Osmyn. Far be the guilt of such reproaches from me;

Lost in myself, and blinded by my thoughts,

I saw you not till now.

Zara. Now, then, you see me:

But, with such dumb and thankless eyes you look,

Better I was unseen, than seen thus coldly.

Osmyn. What would you from a wretch who came to mourn,

And only for his sorrows chose this solitude?

Look round, joy is not here, nor cheerfulness.

You have pursu'd misfortune to its dwelling,

Yet look for gaiety and gladness there.

Zara. Inhuman! why, why dost thou rack me thus,

And, with perverseness, from the purpose answer?

What is't to me this house of misery?

What joy do I require? If thou dost mourn,
I come to mourn with thee; to share thy griefs,
And give thee for 'em, in exchange, my love.

Osmyn. Oh! that's the greatest grief; I am so poor,

I have not wherewithal to give again.

Zara. Thou hast a heart, though 'tis a savage one:

Give it me as it is; I ask no more

For all I've done, and all I have endur'd:

For saving thee, when I beheld thee first,

Driven by the tide upon my country's coast,

Pale and expiring, drench'd in briny waves,

Thou and thy friend, till my compassion found thee.

Compassion! scarce will own that name; so soon,

So quickly was it love; for thou wert godlike

Ev'n then. Kneeling on earth, I loos'd my hair,

And with it dried those wat'ry cheeks, then chaf'd

Thy temples, till reviving blood arose,

And, like the morn, vermilion'd o'er thy face.

Oh, heaven! how did my heart rejoice and ache,

When I beheld the day-break of thy eyes,

And felt the balm of thy respiring lips!

Oh! why do I relate what I have done?

What did I not? Was't not for you this war

Commenc'd? Not knowing who you were, nor why

You hated Manuel, I urg'd my husband

To this invasion, where he late was lost,

Where all is lost, and I am made a slave.

Look on me now, from empire fall'n to slavery;

Think on my suff'rings first, then look on me;

Think on the cause of all, then view thyself:

Reflect on Osmyn, and then look on Zara,

The fall'n, the lost, and now the captive Zara;

And now abandon'd—say, what then is Osmyn!

Osmyn. A fatal wretch—a huge stupendous ruin,

That, tumbling on its prop, crush'd all beneath,

And bore contiguous palaces to earth.

Zara. Yet thus, thus fall'n, thus levell'd with the vilest,

If I have gain'd thy love, 'tis glorious ruin;

Ruin! 'tis still to reign, and to be more

A queen; for what are riches, empire, pow'r,

But larger means to gratify the will?

The steps on which we tread, to rise and reach

Our wish; and that obtain'd, down with the scaffolding

Of sceptres, crowns, and thrones; they have serv'd their end,

And are, like lumber, to be left and scorn'd.

Osmyn. Why was I made the iastrument to throw

In bonds the frame of this exalted mind?

Zara. We may be free: the conqueror is mine!

In chains, unseen, I hold him by the heart,

And can unwind and strain him as I please.

Give me thy love, I'll give thee liberty.

Osmyn. In vain you offer, and in vain require

What neither can bestow. Set free yourself,

And leave a slave the wretch that would be so.

Zara. Thou canst not mean so poorly as thou talk'st.

Osmyn. Alas you know me not.

Zara. Not who thou art:

But what this last ingratitude declares,

This grov'ling baseness. Thou say'st true, I know

Thee not, for what thou art yet wants a name:

But something so unworthy and so vile,

That to have lov'd thee makes me yet more lost,

Than all the malice of my other fate.

Traitor, monster, cold and perfidious slave!

A slave, not daring to be free! nor dares
To love above him, for 'tis dangerous:
There, there's the dreadful sound, the king's thy
rival!

Selim. Madam, the king is here, and ent'ring
now.

Zara. As I could wish; by heav'n I'll be re-
venge'd.

Enter the KING, PEREZ, and Attendants.

King. Why does the fairest of her kind with-
draw

Her shining from the day, to gild this scene
Of death and night? Ha! what disorder's this?
Somewhat I heard of king and rival mention'd.
What's he that dares be rival to the king,
Or lift his eyes to like where I adore?

Zara. There! he, your pris'ner, and that was my
slave.

King. How! better than my hopes! does she
accuse him? *(Aside.)*

Zara. Am I become so low by my captivity,
And do your arms so lessen what they conquer,
That Zara must be made the sport of slaves?
And shall the wretch, whom yester sun beheld
Waiting my nod, the creature of my pow'r,
Presume to-day to plead audacious love,
And build bold hopes on my dejected fate?

King. Better for him to tempt the rage of
heav'n,
And wrench the bolt, red-hissing from the hand
Of him that thunders, than but think that in-
solence.

'Tis daring for a god. Hence to the wheel
With that Ixion, who aspires to hold
Divinity embrac'd; to whips and prisons
Drag him with speed, and rid me of his face.

(Guards seize Osmyn.)

Zara. Compassion led me to hemoan his state,
Whose former faith had merited much more:
And through my hopes in you, I undertook
He should be set at large: thence sprung his
insolence;

And what was charity he constru'd love.

King. Enough: his punishment be what 'you
please.

But let me lead you from this place of sorrow,
To one where young delights attend;
Where ev'ry hour shall roll in circling joys,
And love shall wing the tedious-wasting day.
Life without love is load, and time stands still:
What we refuse to him, to death we give;
And then, then only, when we love, we live.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Prison.

OSMYN discovered alone, with a paper.

Osmyn. But now, and I was closed within the
tomb

That holds my father's ashes; and but now
Where he was pris'ner, I am too imprison'd.
Sure 'tis the hand of heav'n that leads me thus,
And for some purpose points out these remem-
brances.

In a dark corner of my cell I found
This paper; what it is this light will shew.

(Reads.) "If my Alphonso"—Ha!

"If my Alphonso live, restore him, heav'n!
Give me more weight, crush my declining years
With bolts, with chains, imprisonment and want;
But bless my son! visit not him for me!"

(It is his hand! this was his pray'r;—yet more):

"Let ev'ry hair, which sorrow by the roots
Tears from my hoary and devoted head,
Be doubled in thy mercies to my son!
Not for myself, but him, hear me, all-gracious"—
'Tis wanting what should follow—Heav'n should
follow,

But 'tis torn off! Why should that word alone
Be torn from this petition? 'Twas to heav'n,
But heav'n was deaf; heav'n heard him not: but
thus,

Thus as the name of heav'n from this is torn,
So did it tear the ears of mercy from
His voice, shutting the gates of pray'r against
him!

If piety be thus debarr'd access
On high, and of good men the very best
Is singled out to bleed, and bear the scourge,
What is reward? or what is punishment?
But who shall dare to tax eternal Justice?
Yet I may think—I may, I must: for thought
Precedes the will to think, and error lives
Ere reason can be born.

What noise! Who's there? My friend! how cam'st
thou hither?

Enter HELI.

Heli. The time's too precious to be spent in
telling.

The captain, influenc'd by Almeria's pow'r,
Gave order to the guards for my admittance.

Osmyn. How does Almeria? But I know
she is

As I am. Tell me, may I hope to see her?

Heli. You may: anon, at midnight, when the
king

Is gone to rest, and Garcia is retir'd
(Who takes the privilege to visit late,
Presuming on a bridegroom's right), she'll come.

Osmyn. She'll come! 'tis what I wish, yet what
I fear.

She'll come; but whither, and to whom? Oh,
heav'n!

To a vile prison, and a captive wretch;
To one, whom had she never known, she had
Been happy. Why, why was that heav'nly crea-
ture

Abandon'd o'er to love what heav'n forsakes?

Why does she follow, with unwearied steps,
One who has tir'd misfortune with pursuing?

Heli. Have hopes, and hear the voice of better
fate.

I've learn'd there are disorders ripe for mutiny
Among the troops, who thought to share the
plunder,

Which Manuel to his own use and avarice
Converts. The news has reach'd Valencia's fron-
tiers;

Where many of your subjects, long oppress'd
With tyranny and grievous impositions,
Are ris'n in arms, and call for chiefs to head
And lead them to regain their rights and liberty.

Osmyn. By heav'n, thou'st rous'd me from my
lethargy.

The spirit, which was deaf to my own wrongs,
And the loud cries of my dead father's blood—
Oh, my Antonio, I am all on fire!
My soul is up in arms, ready to charge
And bear amidst the foe with conq'ring troops.
I hear 'em call to lead 'em on to liberty,
To victory; their shouts and clamours rend
My ears, and reach the heav'n's! Where is the
king?

Where is Alphonso? Ha! where, where indeed!
Oh! I could tear and burst the strings of life,
To break these chains! Off! off! ye stains of
royalty!

Off, slavery! Oh, curse! that I alone

Can beat and flutter in my cage, when I
Would soar, and stoop at victory beneath.

Heli. Zara, the cause of your restraint, may be
The means of liberty restor'd. That gain'd,
Occasion will not fail to point out ways
For your escape: meantime, I've thought already
With speed and safety to convey myself,
Where not far off some malcontents hold council
Nightly, who hate this tyrant; some, who love
Anselmo's memory, and will, for certain,
When they shall know who live, assist your
cause.

Osmyn. My friend and counsellor, as thou
think'st fit,

So do. I will with patience wait my fortune.

Heli. When Zara comes, abate of your aversion.
Osmyn. I hate her not, nor can dissemble
love:

But as I may, I'll do. Farewell,
My friend, the good thou dost deserve attend thee.

[*Exit Heli.*]

I've been to blame, and question'd with impiety
The care of heav'n. Not so my father bore
More anxious grief. This should have better
taught me;

This his last legacy to me; which here
I'll treasure as more worth than diadems,
Or all extended rule of regal pow'r.

Enter ZARA, veiled.

What brightness breaks upon me thus through
shades,

And promises a day to this dark dwelling?
Is it my love?—

Zara. Oh! that thy heart had taught
(*Lifting her veil.*)

Thy tongue that saying!

Osmyn. Zara! I am betray'd by my surprise!
(*Aside.*)

Zara. What, does my face displease thee?
That having seen it thou dost turn thy eyes
Away, as from deformity and horror!
If so, this sable curtain shall again
Be drawn, and I will stand before thee, seeing
And unseen. 'Is it my love?' Ask again
That question; speak again in that soft voice;
And look again with wishes in thy eyes.
Oh, no, thou canst not; for thou seest me now,
As she whose savage breast hath been the cause
Of these thy wrongs; as she whose barb'rous
rage

Has loaded thee with chains and galling irons.

Osmyn. You wrong me, beauteous Zara, to
believe

I bear my fortunes with so low a mind.
But destiny and inauspicious stars
Have cast me down to this low being: or
Granting you had, from you I have deserv'd it,

Zara. Canst thou forgive me, then? wilt thou
believe

So kindly of my fault, to call it madness?
Oh, give that madness yet a milder name,
And call it passion; then be still more kind,
And call that passion love.

Osmyn. Give it a name,
Or being as you please, such I will think it.

Zara. Oh, thou dost wound me more with this
thy goodness,

Than e'er thou couldst with bitterest reproaches;
Thy anger could not pierce thus to my heart.

Osmyn. Yet I could wish—

Zara. Haste me to know it: what?

Osmyn. That at this time I had not been this
thing.

Zara. What thing?

Osmyn. This slave.

Zara. Oh, heaven! my fears interpret

This thy silence; somewhat of high concern,
Long fashioning within thy lab'ring mind,
And now just ripe for birth, my rage has ruin'd.
Have I done this? Tell me, am I so curs'd?

Osmyn. Time may have still one fated hour
to come,

Which, wing'd with liberty, might overtake
Occasions past.

Zara. Swift as occasion, I
Myself will fly; and earlier than the morn
Wake thee to freedom.

Osmyn. I have not merited this grace;
Nor, should my secret purpose take effect,
Can I repay, as you require, such benefits.

Zara. Thou canst not owe me more, nor have I
more

To give than I've already lost. But now,
So does the form of our engagements rest,
Thou hast the wrong till I redeem thee hence;
That done, I leave thy justice to return
My love. Adieu! [*Exit.*]

Osmyn. This woman has a soul
Of godlike mould, intrepid and commanding,
And challenges, in spite of me, my best
Esteem.

But she has passions which outstrip the wind,
And tear her virtues up, as tempests root
The sea. I fear, when she shall know the truth,
Some swift and dire event of her blind rage
Will make all fatal. But behold she comes,
For whom I fear, to shield me from my fears,
The cause and comfort of my boding heart.

Enter ALMERIA.

My life, my health, my liberty, my all!
How shall I welcome thee to this sad place?
How speak to thee the words of joy and trans-
port?

How run into thy arms, withheld by fetters?
Or take thee into mine, while I am thus man-
naced

And pinion'd like a thief or murderer?
Shall I not hurt or bruise thy tender body,
And stain thy bosom with the rust of these
Rude irons? Must I meet thee, thus, Almeria?

Almeria. Thus, thus; we parted, thus to meet
again.

Thou told'st me thou would'st think how we
might meet

To part no more—now we will part no more;
For these thy chains, or death, shall join us
ever.

Osmyn. Oh! Oh—

Almeria. Give me that sigh.
Why dost thou heave, and stifle in thy griefs?
Thy heart will burst, thy eyes look red and
start;

Give thy soul way, and tell me thy dark thought.
Osmyn. For this world's rule, I would not
wound thy breast

With such a dagger as then struck my heart.
Almeria. Why? why? To know it, cannot wound
me more,

Than knowing thou hast felt it. Tell it me—

Thou giv'st me pain with too much tenderness.

Osmyn. And thy excessive love distracts my
sense.

Oh! wouldst thou be less killing, soft, or kind,
Grief could not double thus his darts against me.

Almeria. Thou dost me wrong, and grief too
robs my heart,

If there he shoot not ev'ry other shaft:
Thy second self should feel each other wound,
And woe should be in equal portions dealt.

I am thy wife—

Osmyn. Oh! thou hast searched too deep!
There, there I bleed; there pull the cruel cords,

That strain my cracking nerves; engines and wheels,
That piecemeal grind, are beds of down and balm

To that soul-racking thought.

Almeria. Then I am curs'd
Indeed, if that be so; if I'm thy torment,
Kill me, then kill me, dash me with thy chains,
Tread on me:

Am I, am I of all thy woes the worst?

Osmyn. My all of bliss, my everlasting life,
Soul of my soul, and end of all my wishes,
Why dost thou thus unman me with thy words,
And melt me down to mingle with thy weep-ings?

Why dost thou ask? Why dost thou talk thus piercingly?

Thy sorrows have disturb'd thy peace of mind,
And thou dost speak of miseries impossible.

Almeria. Didst not thou say that racks and wheels were balm,

And beds of ease, to thinking me thy wife?

Osmyn. No, no; nor should the subtlest pains that hell,

Or hell-born malice can invent, extort
A wish or thought from me to have thee other.
But wilt thou know what harrows up my heart?

Thou art my wife—nay, thou art yet my bride;
The sacred union of connubial love
Yet unaccomplish'd.

Is this dark cell a temple for that god?

Or this vile earth an altar for such off'rings?

This den for slaves, this dungeon damp'd with woes;

Is this to call thee mine? Oh! hold my heart!

To call thee mine! Yes; thus, e'en thus to call

These mine, were comfort, joy, extremest ecstacy.

But, oh! thou art not mine, not e'en in misery;

And 'tis deny'd to me to be so bless'd,

And to be wretched with thee.

Almeria. No, not that

Th' extremest malice of our fate can hinder:

That still is left us, and on that we'll feed,

As on the leavings of calamity.

There we will feast and smile on past distress,

And bug, in scorn of it, our mutual ruin.

Osmyn. Oh! thou dost talk, my love, as one resolv'd,

Because not knowing danger. But look forward;

Think of to-morrow, when thou shalt be torn

From these weak, struggling, unextended arms:

Think how my heart will heave, and eyes will strain,

To grasp and reach what is deny'd my hands:

Think how I am, when thou shalt wed with Garcia!

Then will I smear these walls with blood, disfigure

And dash my face, and rive my clotted hair;

Break on this flinty floor my throbbing breast,

And grovel with gash'd hands to scratch a grave,

And bury me alive.

Almeria. Heart-breaking horror!

Osmyn. Then Garcia shall lie panting on thy bosom,

Luxurious, revelling amidst thy charms—

Hell, hell! have I not cause to rage and rave?

What are all racks, and wheels, and whips to this?

Oh, my Almeria!

What do the damn'd endure, but to despair;

But knowing heav'n, to know it lost for ever?

Almeria. Oh! I am struck; thy words are bolts of ice,

Which, shot into my breast, now melt and chill me.

Enter ZARA, PEREZ, and SELIM.

Zara. Somewhat of weight to me requires his freedom.

Dare you dispute the king's command? Behold
The royal signet. (*Aside to Perez.*)

Perez. I obey; yet beg
Your majesty one moment to defer
Your ent'ring, till the princess is return'd
From visiting the noble prisoner. (*Aside to Zara.*)

Zara. Ha!
What say'st thou? (*Aside to Perez.*)

Osmyn. We are lost, undone, discover'd!
Speak of compassion, let her hear you speak
Of interceding for me with the king;
Say something quickly to conceal our loves,
If possible. (*Aside to Almeria.*)

Almeria. I cannot speak. (*Aside to Osmyn.*)

Osmyn. Let me
Conduct you forth, as not perceiving her,
But till she's gone; then bless me thus again.

Zara. Trembling and weeping as he leads her forth!

Confusion in his face, and grief in hers!
'Tis plain I've been abus'd.

Perdition catch 'em both, and ruin part 'em!
(*Aside.*)

Osmyn. This charity to one unknown, and thus
(*Aloud to Almeria, as she is going.*)

Distress'd, heav'n will repay: all thanks are poor.
[*Exit Almeria.*]

Zara. Damn'd, damn'd dissembler! Yet I will
be calm,

Choke in my rage, and know the utmost depth
Of this deceiver. (*Aside.*) You seem much surpris'd.

Osmyn. At your return so soon and unexpected!

Zara. And so unwish'd, unwanted, too, it seems.

Confusion!—Yet I will contain myself.
You're grown a favourite since last we parted:

Perhaps I'm saucy and intruding.

Osmyn. Madam!

Zara. I did not know the princess' favourite:

Your pardon, sir—mistake me not; you think
I'm angry; you're deceiv'd, I came to set

You free; but shall return much better pleas'd
To find you have an interest superior.

Osmyn. You do not come to mock my miseries?

Zara. I do.

Osmyn. I could at this time spare your mirth.

Zara. I know thou couldst; but I'm not often pleas'd,

And will indulge it now. What miseries?
Who would not be thus happily confin'd
To be the care of weeping majesty?

To have contending queens, at dead of night,
Forsake their down, to wake with wat'ry eyes,
And watch, like tapers, o'er your hour of rest?

Oh, curse!—I cannot hold.

Osmyn. Come, 'tis too much.

Zara. Villain!

Osmyn. How, madam?

Zara. Thou shalt die.

Osmyn. I thank you.

Zara. Thou liest, for now I know for whom thou'dst live.

Osmyn. Then you may know for whom I'd die.

Zara. Hell, hell!
Yet I'll be calm—Dark and unknown betrayer!
But now the dawn begins, and the slow hand
Of fate is stretch'd to draw the veil, and leave
Thee bare, the naked mark of public view.

Osmyn. You may be still deceiv'd; 'tis in my power,

Chain'd as I am, to fly from all my wrongs,
And free myself at once from misery,
And you of me.

Zara. Ha! say'st thou? But I'll prevent it.
Who waits there? As you will answer it, look this
slave (To the Guard.)

Attempt no means to make himself away.
I've been deceiv'd. The public safety now
Requires he should be more confin'd, and none,
No, not the princess, suffer'd or to see
Or speak with him: I'll quit you to the king.
Vile and ingrate! too late thou shalt repent
The base injustice thou hast done my love;
Yes, thou shalt know, spite of thy past distress,
And all those ills, which thou so long hast
mourn'd,
Heav'n has no rage like love to hatred turn'd,
Nor hell a fury like a woman scorn'd. [Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room of State.

Enter ZARA and SELIM.

Zara. Thou hast already rack'd me with thy
stay;

Therefore, require me not to ask thee twice:
Reply at once to all. What is concluded?

Selim. Your accusation highly has incens'd
The king, and were alone enough to urge
The fate of Osmyn; hut to that, fresh news
Has since arriv'd, of more revolted troops.
'Tis certain Heli, too, is fled, and with him
(Which breeds amazement and distraction) some
Who bore high offices of weight and trust,
Both in the state and army. This confirms
The king in full belief of all you told him
Concerning Osmyn, and his correspondence
With them who first began the mutiny.
Wherefore, a warrant for his death is sign'd;
And order given for public execution.

Zara. Ha! haste thee; fly, prevent his fate and
mine;

Find out the king, tell him I have of weight
More than his crown t' impart, ere Osmyn die.

Selim. It needs not, for the king will straight be
here;

And as to your revenge, not his own int'rest,
Pretend to sacrifice the life of Osmyn.

Zara. What shall I say? Invent, contrive,
advise

Somewhat to blind the king, and save his life
In whom I live. Devise the means to slun it,
Quick; or, by heav'n, this dagger drinks thy
blood.

Selim. My life is your's, nor wish I to preserve
it,

But to serve you. I have already thought.

Zara. Forgive my rage; I know thy love and
truth.

But say, what's to be done? or when, or how
Shall I prevent or stop the approaching danger?

Selim. You must still seem most resolute and
fix'd

On Osmyn's death; too quick a change of mercy
Might breed suspicion of the cause. Advise
That execution may be done in private.

Zara. On what pretence?

Selim. Your own request's enough.
However, for a colour, tell him you
Have cause to fear his guards may be corrupted,
And some of them bought off to Osmyn's inter-
est,

Who, at the place of execution, will
Attempt to force his way for an escape:

The state of things will countenance all suspi-
cions.

Then offer to the king to have him strangled
In secret by your mutes: and get an order,
That none but mutes may have admittance to
him.

I can no more, the king is here. Obtain
This grant, and I'll acquaint you with the rest.
[Exit.]

Enter KING, GONZALEZ, and PEREZ.

King. Bear to the dungeon those rebellious
slaves:

But for their leaders, Sancho and Ramirez,
Let 'em be led away to present death.

Perez, see it perform'd.

Gonzalez. Might I presume,
Their execution better were deferr'd,
Till Osmyn die. Meantime, we may learn more
Of this conspiracy.

King. Then be it so.

Stay, soldier; they shall suffer with the Moor.
Are none return'd of those that follow'd Heli?

Gonzalez. None, sir. Some papers have been
since discover'd

In Roderigo's house, who fled with him,
Which seem to intimate as if Alphonso
Were still alive, and arming in Valencia:
Which wears, indeed, this colour of a truth,
They who have fled have that way bent their
course.

Of the same nature divers notes have been
Dispers'd t' amuse the people; whereupon
Some ready of belief, have rais'd this rumour:

That being sav'd upon the coast of Afric,
He there disclos'd himself to Albucazim,
And by a secret compact made with him,
Open'd and urg'd the way to this invasion;
While he himself, returning to Valencia
In private, undertook to raise this tumult.

Zara. Ha! hear'st thou that? Is Osmyn, then,
Alphonso?

Oh! certain death for him, as sure despair
For me, if it be known. If not, what hope
Have I? Yet 'twere the lowest baseness, now
To yield him up. No, I will still conceal him,
And try the force of yet more obligations.

(Aside.)

Gonzalez. 'Tis not impossible. Yet it may
be

That some impostor has usurp'd his name.
Your beauteous captive, Zara, can inform
If such an one, so 'scaping, was receiv'd
At any time in Albucazim's court.

King. Pardon, fair excellence, this long neg-
lect:

An unforeseen, unwelcome hour of business,
Has thrust between us and our while of love;
But wearing now apace with ebbing sand,
Will quickly waste and give again the day.

Zara. You're too secure: the danger is more im-
minent

Than your high courage suffers you to see:
While Osmyn lives, you are not safe.

King. His doom

Is pass'd: if you revoke it not, he dies.

Zara. 'Tis well. By what I heard upon your
entrance,

I find I can unfold what yet concerns
You more. One who did call himself Alphonso
Was cast upon my coast, as is reported,
And oft had private conference with the king;
To what effect I knew not then: but he,
Alphonso, secretly departed, just
About the time our arms embark'd for Spain.
What I know more is, that a triple league
Of strictest friendship was profess'd between
Alphonso, Heli, and the traitor Osmyn.

King. Public report is ratified in this.

Zara. And Osmyn's death requir'd of strong necessity.

King. Give order straight that all the pris'ners die.

Zara. Forbear a moment, somewhat more I have

Worthy your private ear, and this your minister.

King. Let all, except Gonsalez, leave the room.

[*Exeunt Perez, &c.*]

Zara. I am your captive, and you've us'd me nobly;

And in return of that, though otherwise

Your enemy,

I think it fit to tell you, that your guards

Are tainted: some among 'em have resolv'd

To rescue Osmyn at the place of death.

King. Is treason, then, so near us as our guards?

Zara. Most certain; though my knowledge is not yet

So ripe, to point at the particular men.

King. What's to be done?

Zara. That, too, I will advise.

I have remaining in my train some mutes,

A present once from the sultana queen,

In the grand signior's court. These from their infancy

Are practis'd in the trade of death; and shall,

(As there the custom is,) in private, strangle Osmyn.

Gonsalez. My lord, the queen advises well.

King. What offering, or what recompense remains

In me, that can be worthy so great services? To cast beneath your feet the crown you've sav'd,

Though on the head that wears it, were too little.

Zara. Of that hereafter; but, meantime, 'tis fit

You give strict charge that none may be admitted

To see the pris'ner, but such mutes as I

Shall send.

King. Who waits there?

Enter PEREZ.

On your life take heed

That only Zara's mutes, or such who bring

Her warrant, have admittance to the Moor.

Zara. They and no other, not the princess' self.

Perez. Your majesty shall be obey'd.

King. Retire. [*Exit Perez.*]

Gonsalez. That interdiction so particular, Pronounc'd with vehemence against the princess,

Should have more meaning than appears bare-fac'd.

The king is blinded by his love, and heeds

It not. (*Aside.*) Your majesty, sure, might have spar'd

The last restraint; you hardly can suspect

The princess is confederate with the Moor.

Zara. I've heard her charity did once extend

So far to visit him, at his request.

Gonsalez. Ha!

King. How? She visit Osmyn! What, my daughter?

Selim. Madam, take heed; or you have ruin'd all.

(*Aside to Zara.*)

Zara. And after did solicit you on his behalf.

King. Never. You have been misinform'd.

Zara. Indeed! Then 'twas a whisper spread by some

Who wish'd it so; a common art in courts.

I will retire, and instantly prepare Instruction for my ministers of death.

[*Exit with Selim.*]

Gonsalez. There's somewhat yet of mystery in this:

Her words and actions are obscure and double, Sometimes concur and sometimes disagree: I like it not. (*Aside.*)

King. What dost thou think, Gonsalez; Are we not much indebted to this fair one?

Gonsalez. I am a little slow of credit, sir, In the sincerity of women's actions.

Methinks this lady's hatred to the Moor Disquiets her too much; which makes it seem

As if she'd rather that she did not hate him. I wish her mutes are meant to be employ'd

As she pretends—I doubt it now—Your guards Corrupted! how? by whom? who told her so?

I' th' evening, Osmyn was to die; at midnight, She begg'd the royal signet to release him;

I' th' morning, he must die again; ere noon, Her mutes alone must strangle him, or he'll

Escape. This put together suits not well.

King. Yet, that there's truth in what she has discover'd,

Is manifest from every circumstance. This tumult, and the lords who fled with Heli,

Are confirmation; that Alphonso lives, Agrees expressly, too, with her report.

Gonsalez. I grant it, sir; and doubt not, but in rage

Of jealousy, she has discover'd what She now repents. It may be I'm deceiv'd:

But why that needless caution of the princess? What if she had seen Osmyn? though 'twere

strange; But if she had, what was't to her? unless She fear'd her stronger charms might cause the

Moor's Affection to revolt.

King. I thank thee, friend; There's reason in thy doubt, and I am warn'd.

But think'st thou that my daughter saw this Moor?

Gonsalez. If Osmyn be, as Zara has related, Alphonso's friend, 'tis not impossible

But she might wish on his account to see him.

King. Say'st thou? By heaven, thou hast rous'd a thought,

That like a sudden earthquake shakes my frame. Confusion! then my daughter's an accomplice,

And plots in private with this hellish Moor.

Gonsalez. That were too hard a thought: but, see, she comes.

'Twere not amiss to question her a little, And try, howe'er, if I've divin'd aright.

If what I fear be true, she'll be concern'd For Osmyn's death, as he's Alphonso's friend:

Urge that, to try if she'll solicit for him.

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

King. Your coming has prevented me, Almeria;

I had determin'd to have sent for you. Let your attendant be dismiss'd; I have

To talk with you. Come near; why dost thou shake? [*Leonora retires.*]

What mean those swoln and red-fleck'd eyes, that look

As they had wept in blood, and worn the night In waking anguish? Why this, on the day

Which was design'd to celebrate thy nuptials; But that the beams of light are to be stain'd

With reeking gore from traitors on the rack? Wherefore I have deferr'd the marriage-rites;

Nor shall the guilty horrors of this day Profane that jubilee.

Almeria. All days to me
Henceforth are equal: this the day of death,
To-morrow, and the next; and each that follows,
Will undistinguish'd roll, and but prolong
One hated line of more extended woe.

King. Whence is thy grief? Give me to know
the cause,
And look thou answer me with truth; for,
know,

I am not unacquainted with thy falsehood.
Why art thou mute? base and degenerate maid!

Gonsalez. Dear madam, speak, or you'll incense
the king.

Almeria. What is't to speak? or wherefore should
I speak?

What mean these tears, but grief unutterable?

King. They are the dumb confessions of thy
mind:

They mean thy guilt; and say thou wert con-
fessed:

With damn'd conspirators to take my life.

Oh! impious parricide! now canst thou speak?

Almeria. Oh! earth, behold I kneel upon thy
bosom,

And bend my flowing eyes, to stream upon
Thy face, imploring thee that thou wilt yield;

Open thy bowels of compassion, take
Into thy womb the last and most forlorn

Of all thy race. Hear me, thou common parent!—
I have no parent else—be thou a mother,

And step between me and the curse of him
Who was—who was, but is no more a father;

But brands my innocence with horrid crimes,
And for the tender names of child and daughter,

Now calls me murderer and parricide.

King. Rise, I command thee; and, if thou
wouldst

Acquit thyself of those detested names,
Swear thou hast never seen that foreign dog,

Now doom'd to die, that most accursed Osmyn.

Almeria. Never, but as with innocence I might,
And free of all bad purposes: so heav'n's
My witness.

King. Vile, equivocating wretch!
With innocence! Oh! patience, hear: she owns
it!

Confesses it! By heav'n, I'll have him rack'd,
Torn, mangl'd, flay'd, impal'd; all pains and tor-
tures

That wit of man and dire revenge can think,
Shall he, accumulated, under-bear.

Almeria. Oh! I am lost; there fate begins to
wound.

King. Hear me; then, if thou canst, reply:
know, traitress,

I'm not to learn that curs'd Alphonso lives;

Nor am I ignorant what Osmyn is.

Almeria. Then all is ended, and we both must
die.

Since thou'rt reveal'd, alone thou shalt not die:

And yet alone would I have died, heav'n knows,
Repeated deaths, rather than have reveal'd thee.

King. Hell, hell! do I hear this, and yet en-
dure?

What, dar'st thou to my face avow thy guilt?

Hence, ere I curse; fly my just rage with
speed;

Lest I forget us both and spurn thee from me.

Almeria. And yet a father! think, I am your
child.

Turn not your eyes away: look on me kneeling;

Now curse me if you can; now spurn me off.

Did ever father curse his kneeling child?

Never; for always blessings crown that posture.

Oh! hear me, then, thus crawling on the earth—

King. Be thou advis'd, and let me go, while
yet

The light impression thou hast made remains.

Almeria. No, never will I rise, nor loose this
hold,

Till you are mov'd, and grant that he may live.

King. Ha! who may live? take heed, no more
of that;

For on my soul he dies, though thou and I

And all should follow to partake his doom.

Away, off, let me go. Call her attendants.

Re-enter LEONORA and Women.

Almeria. Drag me, harrow the earth with my
bare bosom,

I'll not let go till you have spar'd my husband.

King. Ha! husband! Which? who?

Almeria. He, he is my husband.

King. Who?

Almeria. O— (Faints.)

Let me go, let me fall, sink deep—I'll dig,

I'll dig a grave, and tear up death; I will;

Yes, I will strip off life, and we will change:

I will be death; then, though you kill my hus-
band,

He shall be mine still, and for ever mine.

King. What husband? whom dost thou mean?

Gonsalez. She raves!

Almeria. Oh! that I did! Osmyn, he is my
husband.

King. Osmyn!

Almeria. Not Osmyn, but Alphonso is my
dear

And wedded husband. Heav'n, and air, and
seas,

Ye winds and waves, I call ye all to witness!

King. Wilder than winds or waves, thyself dost
rave.

Should I hear more, I, too, should catch thy mad-
ness.

Watch her returning sense, and bring me word:
And look that she attempt not on her life.

[Exit.
Almeria. Oh! stay, yet stay; hear me, I am not
mad.

I would to heaven I were!—he's gone.

Gonsalez. Have comfort.

Almeria. Curs'd be that rogue that bids me be
of comfort!

Curs'd my own tongue, that could not move his
pity!

Curs'd these weak hands, that could not hold him
here!

For he is gone to doom Alphonso's death.

Gonsalez. Your too excessive grief works on
your fancy,

And deludes your sense. Alphonso, if living,

Is far from hence, beyond your father's power.

Almeria. Hence, thou detested, ill-tim'd flat-
terer!

Source of my woes! thou and thy race be
curs'd!

But doubly thou, who couldst alone have policy
And fraud to find the fatal secret out,

And know that Osmyn was Alphonso!

Gonsalez. Ha!

Almeria. Why dost thou start? what dost thou
see or hear?

Is it the doleful bell, tolling for death?

Or dying groans from my Alphonso's breast?

See, see; look yonder, where a grizzled, pale,
And ghastly head glares by, all smear'd with
blood,

Gasping as it would speak; and after, see,
Behold a damp dead hand has dropp'd a dagger:

I'll catch it—Hark! a voice cries murder! ah!

My father's voice! hollow it sounds, and calls

Me from the tomb—I'll follow it; for there

I shall again behold my dear Alphonso.

[Exit with Leonora.]

Gonsalez. She's greatly griev'd: nor am I less surpris'd.

Osmyn Alphonso! no; she over-rates
My policy: I ne'er suspected it:
Nor now had known it, but from her mistake.
Her husband, too! Ha! where is Garcia, then?
And where the crown that should descend on
him,

To grace the line of my posterity?
Hold, let me think: if I should tell the king—
Things come to this extremity; his daughter
Wedded already—what if he should yield?
Knowing no remedy for what is past;
And urg'd by nature pleading for his child,
With which he seems to be already shaken.
And though I know he hates, beyond the grave,
Anselmo's race; yet, if—that it concludes me,
To doubt, when I may be assur'd, is folly.
But how prevent the captive queen, who means
To set him free? Ay, now 'tis plain: oh! well
Invented tale! He was Alphonso's friend.
This subtle woman will amuse the king,
If I delay—'twill do—or better so.
One to my wish. Alonzo, thou art welcome.

Enter ALONZO.

Alonzo. The king expects your lordship.

Gonsalez. 'Tis no matter;

I'm not i' th' way at present, good Alonzo.

Alonzo. If't please your lordship, I'll return and
say

I have not seen you.

Gonsalez. Do, my best Alonzo.

Yet stay; I would—but go; anon will serve—

Yet I have that requires thy speedy help.

I think thou wouldst not stop to do me service.

Alonzo. I am your creature.

Gonsalez. Say thou art my friend.

I've seen thy sword do noble execution.

Alonzo. All that it can your lordship shall com-
mand.

Gonsalez. Thanks; and I take thee at thy word.
Thou'st seen,

Among the foll'wers of the captive queen,
Dumb men, who make their meaning known by
signs.

Alonzo. I have, my lord.

Gonsalez. Couldst thou procure, with speed

And privacy, the wearing garb of one

Of those, though purchas'd by his death, I'd
give

These such reward as should exceed thy wish.

Alonzo. Conclude it done. Where shall I wait
your lordship?

Gonsalez. At my apartment. Use thy utmost
diligence;

And say I've not been seen: haste, good Alonzo.

[*Exit Alonzo.*]

So, this can hardly fail. Alphonso slain,
The greatest obstacle is then remov'd.
Almeria widow'd, yet again may wed;
And I yet fix the crown on Garcia's head. [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Room of State.

Enter KING, PEREZ, and ALONZO.

King. Not to be found? In an ill hour he's
absent.

None, say you? none? what, not the fav'rite
eunuch?

Nor she herself, nor any of her mutes,
Have yet requir'd admittance?

Perez. None, my lord.

King. Is Osmyn so dispos'd as I commanded?

Perez. Fast bound in double chains, and at full
length

He lies supine on earth: with as much ease

She might remove the centre of this earth,

As loose the rivets of his bonds.

King. 'Tis well.

[*A Mute appears, and seeing the King retires.*]

Ha! stop and seize that mute; Alonzo, follow
him.

Ent'ring he met my eyes, and started back

Frighted, and fumbling one hand in his bosom,

As to conceal th' importance of his errand.

[*Alonzo follows him, and returns with a paper.*]

Alonzo. A bloody proof of obstinate fidelity!

King. What dost thou mean?

Alonzo. Soon as I seiz'd the man,

He snatch'd from out his bosom this; and
strove

With rash and greedy haste at once to cram

The morsel down his throat. I caught his arm,

And hardly wrench'd his hand to wring it from
him;

Which done, he drew a poniard from his side,
And on the instant plung'd it in his breast.

King. Remove the body thence, ere Zara see
it.

Alonzo. I'll be so bold to borrow his attire;

'Twill quit me from my promise to *Gonsalez.*

[*A side and exit.*]

King. How's this? my mortal foe beneath my
roof! [*Having read the letter.*]

Oh! give me patience, all ye pow'rs! no, rather

Give me new rage, implacable revenge,

And trebled fury—Ha! who's there?

Perez. My lord?

King. Hence, slave! how dar'st thou hide, to
watch and pry

Into how poor a thing a king descends;

How like thyself, when passion treads him down!

Ha! stir not, on thy life! for thou wert fix'd

And planted here to see me gorge this bait,

And lash against the hook. By heav'n, you're
all

Rank traitors; thou art with the rest combin'd:

Thou knew'st that Osmyn was Alphonso, knew'st

My daughter privately with him conferr'd,

And wert the spy and pander to their meeting.

Perez. By all that's holy, I'm amaz'd—

King. Thou ly'st.

Thou art accomplice, too, with Zara: here,

Where she sets down—(*Reads.*) "Still will I set
thee free"—

That somewhere is repeated. (*Reads.*) "I have

pow'r

O'er them that are thy guards." Mark that, thou
traitor.

Perez. It was your majesty's command, I
should

Obeys her order.

King. (*Reads.*) "And still will I set
Thee free, Alphonso." Hell! curs'd, curs'd Al-
phonso!

False and perfidious Zara! Strumpet daughter!

Away, begone, thou feeble boy, fond love,

All nature, softness, pity, and compassion;

This hour I throw ye off, and entertain

Fell hate within my breast, revenge, and gall.

By heav'n, I'll meet and counterwork this trea-
chery.

Hark thee, villain, traitor! answer me, slave!

Perez. My service has not merited those titles.

King. Dar'st thou reply? Take that. Thy ser-
vice! thine! [*Strikes him.*]

What's thy whole life, thy soul, thy all, to my

One moment's ease? Hear my command; and
look

That thou obey, or horror on thy head:
Drench me thy dagger in Alphonso's heart.
Why dost thou start? Resolve, or—
Perez. Sir, I will.

King. 'Tis well: that when she comes to set him free,
His teeth may grin and mock at her remorse.

(Perez going.)
Stay thee—I've further thought—I'll add to this,
And give her eyes yet greater disappointment:
When thou hast ended him, bring me his robe;
And let the cell where she'll expect to see him
Be darken'd, so as to amuse the sight.
I'll be conducted thither—mark me well—
There with his turban, and his robe array'd,
And laid along, as he now lies, supine,
I shall convict her, to her face, of falsehood.
When for Alphonso's she shall take my hand,
And breathe her sighs upon my lips for his;
Sudden I'll start, and dash her with her guilt.
But see, she comes! I'll shun th' encounter:
Follow me, and give heed to my direction.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter ZARA and SELIM.

Zara. Ha! 'twas the king!
The king that passed hence! frowning he went:
Dost thouk he saw me?

Selim. Yes; but then, as if he thought
His eyes had err'd, he hastily recall'd
Th' imperfect look, and sternly turn'd away.

Zara. Shun me when seen! I fear thou hast un-
done me.

Selim. Avert it, heav'n! that you should ever
suffer

For my defect; or that the means which I
Devis'd to serve, should ruin your design!
Prescience is heav'n's alone, not giv'n to man.
If I have fail'd in what, as being man
I needs must fail, impute not as a crime
My nature's want, but punish nature in me;
I plead not for a pardon and to live,
But to be punish'd and forgiv'n. Here, strike;
I bare my breast to meet your just revenge.

Zara. I have not leisure now to take so poor
A forfeit as thy life: somewhat of high
And more important fate requires my thought.
Regard me well, and dare not to reply
To what I give in charge; for I'm resolv'd.
Give order that the two remaining mutes
Attend me instantly, with each a bowl
Of such ingredients mix'd, as will with speed
Benumb the living faculties, and give
Most easy and inevitable death.

Yes, Osmyn, yes; be Osmyn or Alphonso,
I'll give thee freedom, if thou dar'st be free:
Such liberty as I embrace myself,
Thou shalt partake. Since fates no more afford,
I can but die with thee to keep my word.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Prison.*

*Enter GONSALEZ, disguised like a Mute, with a
dagger.*

Gonsalez. Nor sentinel, nor guard! the doors
unbarr'd!

And all as still as at the noon of night!
Sure, death already has been busy here.
There lies my way; that door, too, unlock'd!

(Looks in.)

Ha! sure, he sleeps; all's dark within, save what
A lamp, that feebly lifts a sickly flame,
By fits reveals—his face seems turn'd to favour
Th' attempt; I'll steal and do it unperceiv'd.
What noise? somebody coming? hist! Alonzo!
Nobody. Sure, he'll wait without. I would

'Twere done! I'll crawl and sting him to the
heart;
Then cast my skin, and leave it there to answer it.
[Goes in.]

Enter GARCIA and ALONZO.

Garcia. Where, where, Alonzo, where's my
father? where
The king? Confusion! all is on the rout!
All's lost; all ruin'd by surprise and treachery!
Where, where is he? Why dost thou mislead
me?

Alonzo. My lord, he enter'd but a moment
since,
And could not pass me unperceiv'd—What, ho!
My lord, my lord! what, ho! my lord Gonsalez.

Re-enter GONSALEZ, bloody.

Gonsalez. Perdition choke your clamours! whence
this rudeness?

Garcia!
Garcia. Perdition, slavery, and death,
Are eut'ring now our doors! Where is the
king?

What means this blood? and why this face of
horror?

Gonsalez. No matter: give me first to know the
cause
Of these your rash and ill-tim'd exclamations.

Garcia. The eastern gate is to the foe be-
tray'd,

Who, but for heaps of slain that choke the pas-
sage,

Had enter'd long ere now, and borne down all
Before 'em to the palace walls. Unless

The king in person animate our men,
Granada's lost; and to confirm this fear,
The traitor Herez, and the captive Moor
Are through a postern fled, and join the foe.

Gonsalez. Would all were false as that! for whom
you call

The Moor is dead. That Osmyn was Alphonso;
In whose heart's blood this poniard yet is warm.

Garcia. Impossible! for Osmyn was, while
flying,
Pronounc'd aloud by Perez for Alphonso.

Gonsalez. Enter that chamber, and convince your
eyes,
How much report has wrong'd your easy faith.

Alonzo. My lord, for certain truth Perez is
fled;
And has declar'd the cause of his revolt

Was to revenge a blow the king had giv'n him.

Re-enter GARCIA.

Garcia. Ruin and horror! Oh! heart-wounding
sight!

Gonsalez. What says my son? what ruin! ha!
what horror?

Garcia. Blasted be my eyes, and speechless be
my tongue,

Rather than to see, or to relate
This deed! Oh! dire mistake! Oh! fatal blow!

The king—
Gonsalez and Alonzo. The king!

Garcia. Dead, wett'ring, drown'd in blood!
See, see, attir'd like Osmyn, where he lies.

(They look in.)

Oh! whence, or how, or wherefore was this
done?

But what imports the manner or the cause?
Nothing remains to do, or to require,
But that we all should turn our swords against
Ourselves, and expiate, with our own, his blood.

Gonsalez. Oh, wretch! oh! curs'd and rash de-
luded fool!

On me, on me turn your avenging swords!
I, who have spilt my royal master's blood,
Should make atonement by a death as horrid,
And fall beneath the hand of my own son.

Garcia. Ha! what! atone this murder with a greater!

The horror of that thought has damp'd my rage.

Gonsalez. Oh, my son! from the blind dotage
Of a father's fondness these ills arose:
For thee I've been ambitious, base, and bloody;
For thee I've plung'd into this sea of sin;
Stemming the tide with only one weak hand,
While t'other bore the crown (to wreathe thy brow,)

Whose weight has sunk me ere I reach'd the shore.

Garcia. Fatal ambition! Hark! the foe is enter'd!

The shrillness of that shout speaks 'em at hand.

Alonzo. My lord, I've thought how to conceal the body: *(Shout.)*

Require me not to tell the means, till done,
Lest you forbid what then you may approve.

Gonsalez. They shout again! Whate'er he means to do, *[Goes in.]*

'Twere fit the soldiers were amus'd with hopes;
And in the meantime fed with expectation
To see the king in person at their head.

Garcia. Were it a truth, I fear 'tis now too late:

But I'll omit no care nor haste; and try
Or to repel their force, or bravely die. *[Exit.]*

Re-enter ALONZO.

Gonsalez. What hast thou done, Alonzo?

Alonzo. Such a deed,
As but an hour ago I'd not have done,
Though for the crown of universal empire.
But what are kings reduc'd to common clay?
Or who can wound the dead? I've from the body

Sever'd the head, and in an obscure corner
Dispos'd it, muffled in the mute's attire,
Leaving to view of them who enter next,
Alone the undistinguishable trunk;
Which may be still mistaken by the guards
For Osmyn, if in seeking for the king
They chance to find it.

Gonsalez. 'Twas an act of horror,
And of a piece with this day's dire misdeeds,
But 'tis no time to ponder or repent.
Haste thee, Alonzo, haste thee hence with speed

To save my son. I'll follow with the last
Reserve, to reinforce his arms; at least
I shall make good and shelter his retreat.

[Exeunt.]
Enter ZARA, followed by SELIM, and two Mutes bearing the bowls.

Zara. Silence and solitude are everywhere!
Through all the gloomy ways and iron doors
That hither lead, nor human face nor voice
Is seen or heard.

Let 'em set down the bowls, and warn Alphonso
That I am here—so. *[Mutes go in.]* You return,
and find

The king; tell him what he requir'd I've done,
And wait his coming to approve the deed.

Re-enter Mutes.

What have you seen? Ha! wherefore stare you thus

With haggard eyes? Why are your arms across?
Your heavy and desponding heads hung down?

Why is't you more than speak in these sad signs?

Give me more ample knowledge of this mourning.
(They go to the scene, which opening, she perceives the body.)

Ha! prostrate! bloody! headless! Oh! I'm lost!
Oh, Osmyn! Oh, Alphonso! Cruel fate!
Cruel, cruel, oh! more than killing object!
I have prepar'd to die, and see thee die!
Nay, came prepar'd myself to give thee death—
But cannot bear to find thee thus, my Osmyn.
Oh! this accurs'd, this base, this treach'rous king!

Re-enter SELIM.

Selim. I've sought in vain; for no where can the king

Be found—
Zara. Get thee to hell, and seek him there! *(Stabs him.)*

His hellish rage had wanted means to act,
But for thy fatal and pernicious counsel.

Selim. You thought it better then—but I'm rewarded.

The mute you sent, by some mischance was seen,

And forc'd to yield your letter with his life:
I found the dead and bloody body stripp'd—
My tongue falters, and my voice fails—I sink—
Drink not the poison—for Alphonso is— *(Dies.)*

Zara. As thou art now—and I shall quickly be.

'Tis not that he is dead; for 'twas decreed
We both should die. Nor is't that I survive;
I have a certain remedy for that.

But, oh! he died unknowing in my heart.
He knew I lov'd, but knew not to what height;
Nor that I meant to fall before his eyes,
A martyr and a victim to my vows;
Insensible of this last proof he's gone:

Then wherefore do I pause? Give me the bowl.

(A Mute kneels and gives one of the bowls.)
Hover a moment yet, thou gentle spirit,
Soul of my soul, and I will wait thy flight.

This to our mutual bliss, when join'd above, *(Drinks.)*

Oh! friendly draught! already in my heart.
Cold, cold! my veins are icicles and frost.
I'll creep into his bosom, lay me there;
Cover us close—or I shall chill his breast,
And fright him from my arms. See, see! he slides

Still further from me; look, he hides his face!
I cannot feel it—quite beyond my reach.

Oh! now he's gone, and all is dark—
(Dies. Mutes kneel and mourn over her.)

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Almeria. Oh! let me seek him in this horrid cell;

For in the tomb, or prison, I alone
Must hope to find him.

Leonora. Heav'ns! what dismal scene
Of death is this?

Almeria. Shew me, for I am come in search of death,

But want a guide, for tears have dimm'd my sight.

Leonora. Alas! a little further, and behold
Zara all pale and dead; two frightful men,
Who seem the murderers, kneel weeping by;
Feeling remorse too late for what they've done.

But oh! forbear—lift up your eyes no more,
But haste away, fly from this fatal place,
Where miseries are multiply'd; return,
Return, and look not on, for there's a dagger
Ready to stab the sight, and make your eyes
Rain blood—

Almeria. Oh! I foreknow, foresee that object.
Is it at last then so? Is he then dead?
I do not weep; the springs of tears are dry'd,
And of a sudden I am calm, as if
All things were well; and yet my husband's murder'd!

Yes, yes, I know to mouru! I'll slice this heart,
The source of woe, and let the torrent loose.
Those men have left to weep; they look on me!

I hope they murder all on whom they look,
Behold me well; your bloody hands have err'd,
And wrongfully have slain those innocents:
I am the sacrifice design'd to bleed,
And come prepar'd to yield my throat. They bow
Their heads, in sign of grief and innocence,

(They point at the bowl on the ground.)

And point—what mean they? Ha! a cup! oh! well
I understand what medicine has been here.
Oh! noble thirst! yet greedy, to drink all—
Oh! for another draught of death!

(They point to the other cup.)

Thanks to the lib'ral hand that fill'd thee thus;
I'll drink my glad acknowledgment—

Leonora. Oh! hold

For mercy's sake; upon my knee I beg—

Almeria. With thee the kneeling world should
beg in vain.

Seest thou not there? Behold who prostrate lies,
And pleads against thee; who shall then prevail?

Yet I will take a cold and parting leave,
From his pale lips; I'll kiss him ere I drink,
Lest the rank juice should blister on my mouth,
And stain the colour of my last adieu.

Horror! a headless trunk! nor lips nor face,

*(Coming near the body, starts and lets fall
the cup.)*

But spouting veins and mangled flesh! Oh, oh!

*Enter ALPHONSO, HELI, PEREZ, Guards, and
Attendants; with GARCIA, prisoner.*

Alphonso. Away, stand off! where is she? let
me fly,

Save her from death, and snatch her to my heart.

Almeria. Oh!

Alphonso. Forbear! my arms alone shall hold
her up,

Warm her to life, and wake her into gladness.

Give a new birth to thy long-shaded eyes,

Then double on the day reflected light.

Almeria. Where am I? Heav'n! what does this
dream intend?

Alphonso. Oh! mayst thou never dream of less
delight,

Nor ever wake to less substantial joys!

Almeria. Giv'n me again from death! Oh! all ye
pow'rs,

Confirm this miracle! Can I believe
My sight?

This is my lord, my life, my only husband:

I have him now, and we no more will part.

My father, too, shall have compassion—

Alphonso. Oh! my heart's comfort! 'tis not
giv'n to this

Frail life to be entirely bless'd. E'en now,

In this extremest joy my soul can taste,

Yet I am dash'd to think that thou must weep:

Thy father fell, where he design'd my death.

Gonzalez and Alonzo, both of wounds

Expiring, have with their last breath confess'd

The just decrees of heav'n, which on themselves

Has turn'd their own most bloody purposes.

Nay, I must grant, 'tis fit you should be thus—

(She weeps.)

Ill-fated Zara! Ha! a cup! alas!

Thy error, then, is plain; but I were flint

Not to o'erflow in tribute to thy memory.

Oh, Garcia!

Whose virtue has renounc'd thy father's crimes,

Seest thou how just the hand of heav'n has been?

Let us, who through our innocence survive,

Still in the paths of honour persevere,

And not from past or present ills despair:

For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,

And though a late, a sure reward succeeds.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE MYSTERIOUS HUSBAND;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND.



Act V.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

LORD DAVENANT
SIR EDMUND TRAVERS
SIR HARRY HARLOW

CAPTAIN DORMER
CHARLES DAVENANT
PAGET

LADY DAVENANT
MARIANNE
WAITING WOMAN

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Lord Davenant's house.*

Enter LORD DAVENANT.

Lord D. Did ever man mistake his happiness as I have done! Am I by nature fitted for a husband? am I by temper qualified to be a gamester? and yet, (a plague upon my folly!) I am both. In both I've doubled stakes, and played the losing game: married a wife for money, and a wife for love; and now, nor love nor money will get rid of either: upon my right hand and my left, a plague; over-head, ruin impends; under-foot, lurks discovery. A situation that admits no choice, but choice of miseries. As to my Lady Davenant here, if ever man were punished in a faultless wife, it is my fate to be that man; with beauty to attract, affections to assist temptation, still she stands upon a rock of virtue; nor can I, by the narrowest search, explore a crack or cranny, where the slightest levity might enter, to throw down her barriers, and make way for my escape. When a wife's indiscretion will not save me, well may I rail at fortune; 'tis hard to lose upon a cast, where every chance was in my favour. [*Enter PAGET.*—Now, Paget, before I talk to you, shut the door. (*Paget shuts the door.*) What have you discovered in Lady Davenant since we last conferred?

Paget. Nothing.

Lord D. No doubt you have watched her—

Paget. Closely.

Lord D. Where has she been? whom has she seen? what has she done?

Paget. The journal of one day is the journal of her life: if I had the eyes of a hawk, (and mine are none of the dullest,) I could not spy a flaw in Lady Davenant.

Lord D. Incredible! Are not you an attorney, and is not she a woman? have not I set you as a spy upon her person; cased the body of a lawyer in the livery of a servant; and, after three months past and more, will you persuade me, that you have discovered, what the world never knew—a wife without a flaw? I'll not believe it.

Paget. Why, then, my lord, you must even strip my livery off my back, and dismiss me to my parchments.

Lord D. You will find flaws enough in them. Of this I'm sure, if anything can outwit a lawyer, it must be the devil; therefore, Paget, I conclude against her ladyship's sanctity. What do you tell me? has this great city lost its temptations, or reformed its morals? There are a hundred fine men of the town, who say she is the finest woman in it.

Paget. Yes; and swear it, too: but she won't believe them.

Lord D. She was credulous enough, when I told her so.

Paget. 'Twas a great weakness; but she is wiser than she was.

Lord D. Does Sir Harry Harlow make no way? He is a fashionable man, and came on with all the gallantry of a Frenchman.

Paget. Yes, and went off like a Frenchman; he'll not rally any more; we have orders never to admit him. She is in frequent conversation with your son.

Lord D. I have remarked it, and shall stop their interviews.

Paget. She has been collecting a sum—

Lord D. What is that for?

Paget. That's more than I can tell: I sold some trinkets for her of her uncle's giving, and exchanged some money into notes this morning.

Lord D. I paid her quarter's pin-money but yesterday: this must be looked into.

Paget. Yes, we may look; but it is seeking for day-light with a dark lantern: malice cannot spy a fault in her; mischief cannot make one; and, if I might offer my advice, it should be to desist from any further pains in the attempt: 'tis merely loss of labour, take my word for it.

Lord D. To say the truth, I begin to be of your opinion; but, till a better plan can be struck out, we must persist in this: you know my reasons, *Paget*; you alone, of all mankind, are in the secret of that fatal step, which trains me on in infamy and error. If *Lady Davenant* were in fact, as she is in law, my only wife, I would not act as now; but whilst that second marriage, in Flanders, with *Miss Dormer*, draws off my heart, and keeps me under terror of discovery, if I can't find occasion for a divorce, I must make one.

Paget. 'Tis plain your passion for *Miss Dormer* still subsists, else her persuasion of your death, her ignorance of your name and station, and the precautions we have taken to prevent discovery, make these measures needless.

Lord D. I wish I saw it in that light; but what security have I against *Miss Dormer's* coming over? what against her marrying again, believing, as she does, that I am dead? that were a stroke that I should doubly feel. Another danger threatens me; her brother, *Dormer*, may return from sea: his former passion for my *Lady Davenant*, and gratitude for my services in getting him a ship, will expose me to his visits; and I would sooner meet the devil than the man I've wronged so deeply.

Paget. 'Twould not be pleasant, I confess: but, surely, 'twas reported he was killed in action with an enemy's ship in the East Indies.

Lord D. Wounded, not killed. But, hark! my lady's coming. Vanish! [*Exit Paget.*—*Enter LADY DAVENANT.*] Good morning to you, *Lady Davenant*! Dressed so early!

Lady D. 'Tis my uncle's day for visiting, and I made myself ready to receive him.

Lord D. Come, come; that studied elegance of dress can never be put on to receive an uncle; you had some better object in your eye than old *Sir Edmund Travers*.

Lady D. Perhaps I had.

Lord D. Why, that's sincere; I know you do not set yourself in such array for family visitors.

Lady D. I own it; but a stranger, and a favourite, too—when such an one is in the case—

Lord D. Ay, then you arm at every point for conquest: but this stranger, tell me, who is he?

Lady D. Who is a greater stranger than your lordship? If I'm armed for conquest, here's the heart I aim at.

Lord D. Psha! this is trifling; these are words in course. If man and wife keep forms, 'tis all that is required; but to pretend a passion, and talk of love to a husband—'tis an affectation that lowers your understanding, but cannot impose upon mine. In the name of reason, *Lady Davenant*, make yourself an agreeable wife; but do not sink into that most insipid of all characters, a good sort of woman.

Lady D. And what is your description of a good sort of woman?

Lord D. She is one that keeps the commandments, hears sermons, talks a little innocent scandal, and scolds the servants.

Lady D. Now tell me your receipt for an agreeable wife.

Lord D. An agreeable wife to a man of the world is a woman of the world; one who follows her own pursuits, and does not cross those of her husband. Let me speak to you with sincerity: we married for convenience; there is a disparity in our ages; I was a widower, with a son as old as yourself; you an orphan girl of fortune, a slave to the humours of

your uncle: you purchased liberty by the sacrifice of inclination.

Lady D. How does that appear, my lord?

Lord D. Beyond a doubt; you know your heart was never mine; you know you was in love with *Dormer*, would have married him; was thwarted in your first affection, and took me upon duty—I might have said upon compulsion, for I was your uncle's choice, not your's.

Lady D. Hold there, whilst I declare to you, in truth of heart, if *Dormer* had not given me up—unkindly given me up—it were not duty, no, nor yet compulsion, should have forced me to renounce him.

Lord D. I give you credit for a fair confession, and I draw this natural conclusion from it: the woman who has loved will love again. I am content. Let me speak plainly to you: you are young, handsome, sensible, susceptible: I am declining from the prime of life; a lover of my ease; and, I confess to you, not over uxorious. Why should we restrain each other? Why should marriage, that strikes off other women's fetters, put on your's? Live as women of your rank live; let your life be neither that of a town libertine, nor this, which you now lead, of a matrimonial mope.

Lady D. I understand you, my lord; but if I am better pleased to submit to the chagrin of your neglect, than to the reproaches of my own conscience, you will suffer me to pursue a dull choice, and be the object of your contempt rather than of my own. I'll not disguise from you that my heart is made for love; soft and subject to temptation; therefore, I avoid it: it once belonged to *Dormer*; he returned it wounded, bleeding to its owner; 'twas healed, made whole, and offered to *Lord Davenant*; if you will not receive it, you may send it back to me, as *Dormer* did; but you shall never make it common property, assure yourself.

Lord D. Well, let that pass. I have a question, to which I beg your answer, without evasion or reserve.

Lady D. Propose it.

Lord D. What has passed of late between your ladyship and my son? You have been closetted more than once: what have you conferred upon?

Lady D. Am I bound to tell that?

Lord D. Indispensably; I charge you on your duty; if you will put yourself on your defence, defend yourself. I have remarked a sullenness in *Captain Davenant* that does not please me; a darkness and reserve not proper: and I suspect your ladyship of being party in the occasion.

Lady D. No, no; if ever I am forced to make my sorrows known, it will not be to your son I shall speak unfavourably of his father.

Lord D. No matter; tell me what has passed.

Lady D. Read, then, and satisfy your doubts. (*Gives him a letter.*)

Lord D. (*Reads.*) "Dear Charles.—As it may be inconvenient to your father to furnish you with the purchase-money for your majority, accept this trifle in aid from your ever affectionate, *LOUISA DAVENANT.*"

Confusion! Let me see: five hundred pounds! your ladyship is very bountiful to *Captain Davenant*; and very considerate, as you would have it appear, of his father's pocket. If you had studied the necessities of that, madam, why might not your bounty pass through my hands? How know you I approve of this? how can you tell but other calls may be more urgent with me than this of a commission for my son? What if I have duns of honour now at my door! what if I have play-debts, that cannot be put aside! will you unstring your purse; empty your hoard of pin-money for me? I do not find you will.

Lady D. 'Tis in your hands; dispose of it as you see fit.

Lord D. And I do see fit to dispose of mine and my son's concerns without your ladyship's advice

or interference: I shall also expect, and strictly require, that you do not talk and cabal with my son upon anything that now passes, ever did pass, or ever shall pass, between you and me upon the subject.

Enter Servant, introducing SIR EDMUND TRAVERS.

Serv. Sir Edmund Travers. *[Exit.]*

Sir E. Lord Davenant, I kiss your hands. Why, this is as it should be; and this is as it used to be in days of yore, when man and wife fulfilled the saying, and were one flesh. I protest to you, I have been let into the houses of three married couple this morning, and found but one and a half at home.

Lord D. Perhaps the hen-birds were on the perch, Sir Edmund; 'tis rather early.

Sir E. Very good, very good; but that was not the case. Lady Turtle, for instance, was on the wing; that dove had left the ark: knowing Sir Philander to be so fond a mate, I asked him of my lady;—she was not in the house. How did she do?—he could not tell. Where was she gone?—he did not care. I stared at this; he, observing my surprise, said, he supposed I had not heard of his misfortune, else I should never have mentioned that vile hussy in his bearing. A plague upon all family affairs! thought I; 'twas not a week ago, this fellow held me by the ear with a detail as tedious as the courtship of Jacob and Rebecca; but I have always said, Lord Davenant and my niece are the only instance of conjugal felicity,—in upper life, at least.

Lady D. If you think us so happy, uncle, why don't you take an agreeable companion to cheer the evening of your days?

Sir E. To hang myself in the evening of my days! how could you name so horrible a thing to me as an agreeable companion?

Lady D. I've observed, that they who rail most against matrimony, are the first to marry.

Sir E. And I've remarked, that they who marry, are the first to rail: lack-a-day! if I did not find you and my lord here together in a family way, as they call it, always civil and courteous to each other, with a smile of complacency on your countenances, what should I think? If I did not see these things with my own eyes, what should I say, when so many busy, tattling fools are whispering it about that you are the most unhappy couple in London?

Lord D. Whispering, Sir Edmund! they'll whisper anything; but who dare say it?

Sir E. That was just my answer; my answer to a tittle: "A plague upon you all!" said I, t'other night, to a knot of old fograms at the Mount, who were caballing over their coffee, not perceiving me snug in a corner box:—"A plague upon you all!" said I—

Lord D. Tedious old blockhead! I'll escape in time. *(Aside, and going.)*

Sir E. My lord, my lord, hear out my story; it is told in three words.

Lord D. I beg your pardon, but I've indispensable business, and have outstaid my engagement. *[Exit.]*

Sir E. Why, look you there, now! 'tis surprising how unwilling people are to hear my stories; not a man in our club will sit them out, except the smokers. 'Twas just the same when I was in parliament, nothing but coughing, hemming, and shuffling of feet; no attention, no desire of information; all their brains a-gadding. And your lord has a piece of that, let me tell you; but a good man in the main, an excellent man in the main, an incomparable husband!

Lady D. I make no complaint.

Sir E. To be sure you don't: complaint, indeed! no, if you had the least cause for that, trust me for finding it out; nothing of that sort could escape me, you know it could not.

Lady D. I should be sorry you had any cause to regret a match so entirely of your own making.

Sir E. Right, child, you are right; 'twas a match of my own making; you owe all your happiness to your uncle; and you now perceive a grey head was a little wiser than a green one: you was once of another opinion, but that's past and over: I don't reproach you, Louisa; indeed, I may charge that error of your life to my own indulgence. I humoured you to a fault in your education; turned my house into a school, to make you happy; let you have as many masters as you pleased; doctors and apothecaries, you might choose amongst them all; but in the important article of a husband, there, indeed, I stepped in; there I had my choice, as was natural I should; and now you see the consequence; now, Louisa, I say, you see the consequence.

Lady D. I do indeed, sir.

Sir E. Why, that's fair; you are perfectly happy, and you own it, that's sincere: and what did I do to make you so? thwarted your inclinations, that were leading you astray. I chose my Lord Davenant here, a man of a certain age, a widower, d'ye see? not only fit to husband you, Louisa, but to father you; whereas, you know, and, if you are honest, you will confess, that if I had indulged you in your choice—

Lady D. I should have chosen otherwise.

Sir E. You would have married young Dormer.

Lady D. I confess it.

Sir E. Oh! the many anxious thoughts I had to prevent it! How did I puzzle my poor brain to make you happy, and break off your connexion with that young fellow!

Lady D. Was there a contrivance in that business?

Sir E. Was there a contrivance, child! to be sure there was; there's a contrivance in everything I do; and I must do Lord Davenant the justice to say, he took some pains in that affair as well as myself: witness Captain Dormer's letter to you.

Lady D. What of that, I beseech you? Let me know all my obligations to Lord Davenant.

Sir E. And 'tis fit you should; every man's good deeds should be known: he wrote every word of that letter himself; not a syllable was Captain Dormer's.

Lady D. Not a syllable!

Sir E. Not a tittle. And my lord never told you this?

Lady D. Never.

Sir E. That's extraordinary; but, indeed, he bound me to secrecy; so you must say nothing of the matter. Oh! he was at uncommon pains for your sake; for he thought you would be a monstrous fortune; and so, to be sure, you will, at my death; but there I outwitted him, too, for I came down with only ten thousand, and saddled him with a humming jointure, and four hundred a-year pin-money. Ah! my dear Louisa, I consulted your happiness in every tittle of your settlement.

Lady D. Since you have been so considerate of me in the bargain you have made with Lord Davenant, let me hope you will now assist him in a family difficulty. His son is treating for the purchase of a majority, and wants a sum of money to complete it; he is an excellent young man, and you would do me a most acceptable kindness, if you would enable me to supply him with five hundred pounds.

Sir E. Ah! Louisa, Louisa, I'm afraid the stories I've heard of your husband's gaining are too true.

Lady D. About as true as what you've heard of our unhappiness; but I thought you treated all such reports with contempt.

Sir E. And so I do: but time flies; 'tis visiting day with me, and I must leave you. Good morning.

Lady D. But you have given me no answer about the money.

Sir E. Answer, child! what signifies answering you, when the thing is impossible? [Exit.]

Lady D. So, then, it seems, I have been duped by base contrivances. Dormer is clear, and I am sacrificed. Lord Davenant's conduct is complete; begins with treachery, and ends in tyranny. Most miserable of women, to whom shall I complain? It is too much; I can't support my agony. (Throws herself on a couch, and weeps.)

Re-enter SIR EDMUND TRAVERS.

Sir E. Ay, now she's crying, because I refused her the money. What a fond fool it is! I warrant now, she'd pledge her diamonds to redeem her husband—

Lady D. Who's there?

Sir E. 'Tis I, 'tis uncle Edmund. Nay, Louisa, if you cry, 'tis all over with me; take the money—give me a kiss; I am a foolish, fond, old fellow, and cannot bear to see you unhappy. If 'twere as much again, you should have it; but don't ask me for any more, I pray you, don't. 'Tis all in notes; they would have been navy-bills before night; but I'm a foolish, fond, old fellow, that's the truth of it.

Lady D. I thank you, sir, I thank you!

Sir E. Apropos! here is the very gentleman you were speaking of. Come in, Captain Davenant, come in, without ceremony; my lady has got something for you; but I tell no tales, I betray no secrets: so, so! I leave you together. Good b'ye! I leave you together. [Exit.]

Enter CHARLES DAVENANT.

Charles. What is this secret that Sir Edmund has broached? What commands has your ladyship for me?

Lady D. After what my uncle has said, 'tis in vain to deny that I have a request to make, which I beg you not to refuse me.

Charles. If the request shall be, as I suspect it is, to receive fresh favours from you, 'tis the only difficulty you can put me to in obeying you.

Lady D. If you knew what pleasure I receive by tendering to you this trifle towards the purchase of your rank, you would take it for my sake without further scruple: if you have any regard for me, accept it at my hands.

Charles. What shall I say to you, most generous of women?

Lady D. Nothing: neither is it convenient we should converse together: I am obliged to request of you not to mention what has passed.

Charles. Oh! Lady Davenant, Lady Davenant! my heart bleeds for you.

Lady D. Hush! not a word of that—Now, sir?

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir Harry Harlow to wait upon your ladyship.

Lady D. Did not I tell you to deny me? I am not at home to Sir Harry Harlow. [Exit.]

Serv. What would your honour please to have me do? he is coming up stairs.

Charles. Rascal, begone! [Exit Servant.]

Enter SIR HARRY HARLOW.

Sir H. How now, Charles! rating the footman? it is indeed, an untowardly whelp: her ladyship is not very select in the choice of her lacqueys; he would have persuaded me I was not to be let in. But won't your fair mother-in-law make her appearance?

Charles. No.

Sir H. No, man! Is that all the answer you can afford me? The yard-dog would say as much.

Charles. Take your answer from him, then, when you make your next inquiries.

Enter LORD DAVENANT.

Lord D. How now, gentlemen both, at sharps with each other?

Sir H. Captain Davenant seems to guard your lordship's doors, as if it were a crime to enter them; if so, I must confess, it is a crime I am not disposed to repent of, at least, till you tell me I ought to do so. (Charles walks aside.)

Lord D. Poo! 'tis his manner; 'tis the fashion of the times: the young men, now-a-days, and the young women, too, talk no other language to their dearest friends. Hark'ye! Charles, have the kindness to step into the library; I want a few words in private with you. [Exit Charles.] This young man has ruffled you; and, to say truth, his manners are much altered; whether he mistakes in thinking a fierce military air becomes him, or that some secret matter really disconcerts him, I can't pretend to say, for he communicates with me but little: I beg you will think no more of what is past, for my sake.

Sir H. Assure yourself, my lord, 'tis as if it had never been.

Lord D. Here, Harry, I have a play-debt to settle with you; take these notes.

Sir H. As you will for that; choose your own time.

Lord D. Nay, but take them: 'twas a cursed crash I got last night. (Gives him the notes.)

Sir H. Deuce take me, my lord, if it does not go to my heart to win your money. I have a thousand times resolved never to play with you again.

Lord D. Why so, in the name of wonder?

Sir H. Because I cannot bear to wear in my pocket what might so much better be employed elsewhere.

Lord D. What is the man moralizing about?

Sir H. Well, I protest and vow, were I the husband of my Lady Davenant—

Lord D. You would be as tired of her as I am.

Sir H. For shame, for shame! what woman can be more engaging?

Lord D. Every woman that is not my wife.

Sir H. That ever matrimony should bring a man to this! As heaven shall be my judge, I'd give one half of my estate to share the other with the woman you are so indifferent about.

Lord D. And I would give this arm from off this body to be quit of her; so there's the difference between you and me: but let us talk no more of the subject—Is your chariot in waiting?

Sir H. It is.

Lord D. Are you going to any distance?

Sir H. Only to a visit in the next street, and then home.

Lord D. If that's all, I should be glad you would take my chair, and lend me your carriage; I have a little business at t'other end of the town.

Sir H. Take it where you please; 'tis at your service: I perceive I shall not have the honour of making my bow to Lady Davenant this morning.

Lord D. To say the truth, I suspect you will not: it does not appear to me, Harry, that you are in train to make your way to her ladyship's good graces; and it requires a very moderate share of resolution to resist temptation, when there is no inclination for the tempter. [Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in Lord Davenant's house.

Enter LADY DAVENANT and CHARLES DAVENANT.

Charles. I must speak to you; you must give me a few minutes' hearing.

Lady D. Promise, then, you will not name your father.

Charles. 'Tis upon another business quite; and, because you are the friend I best love on earth, you shall be the first to whom I communicate my joy.

Lady D. You have obtained your commission?

Charles. I have, indeed, but not the commission, my dear lady, you are thinking of; not a promotion to rank, but to happiness—I am married.

Lady D. Heaven and earth! To whom?

Charles. An angel: one, who in mind and person is your sister; and, if evil fate had not forbade, might have been such in fact.

Lady D. What do you mean? explain yourself.

Charles. The sister of your Dormer.

Lady D. My Dormer! What is it you tell me? Does your father know of this?

Charles. It is not fit he should: how could he be reconciled to my choice, when he neglects his own?

Lady D. Remember your promise, and no more of this. Where did you meet Miss Dormer? I thought she was resident in Flanders.

Charles. 'Twas there I met her, on my late journey to Spa. How I became acquainted with her; why I concealed from you my passion; with each circumstance of her affecting story, will demand relation more at large: but she is not, as you call her, Miss Dormer.

Lady D. That I can readily conceive, since you have married her.

Charles. But she was not Miss Dormer when I married her: she was the widow of an English gentleman, of the name of Brooke, who lived with her about three months; went to Paris, and there died: there is something mysterious in the conduct of this man; but that, with other matters, I must now defer. We are just returned from a church in the city; but as friendship has its claim upon my heart as well as love, I snatch an hour from my enchanting bride to seek her counterpart; and, as I fear you have few blessings you can call your own, I beg you to accept a share in mine. Farewell!

Lady D. May happiness attend you both! [*Exit Charles.*] Married to Dormer's sister! How that name strikes on my heart! And I the confidante of a clandestine marriage! A dangerous secret for my peace; the transport of the moment never suffered him to think of that. Well, let the danger come! There was a time I should have been more scrupulous, but the base conduct of Lord Davenant makes him loathsome in my eyes; and were my injured hero now to come—Oh, heaven! I will not think of it. Watch over him, ye guardians of the good and brave! waft him, ye winds, to glory! may the ship that bears him, and the star by which he sails, be ever prosperous! and, as he walks the deck by night, amidst the waste of waters, should a thought of my unkindness smite his manly heart with sadness, may some pitying spirit turn aside the thought, and strike out my unhappy name from his remembrance!

Enter Servant.

Serv. Please your ladyship, there is a sea-officer below, inquires for my lord: I told him he was from home, but he says he will wait his return.

Lady D. Where is my lord?

Serv. Gone out in Sir Harry Harlow's chariot. I hope his lordship will not be angry at my letting the gentleman in.

Lady D. I hope not; you should make him give his name, however.

Serv. That I did at first, madam; 'tis our general order.

Lady D. And what is his name?

Serv. He has wrote it down on a card. (*Gives the card.*) Bless me! my lady, something's the matter; shall I run for your ladyship's woman?

Lady D. No, no, be quiet; it will go off. What have I done with the card?

Serv. Here it is. Pray, my lady, forgive my boldness, and let me call your servant.

Lady D. There's no occasion: I charge you not to mention to a soul that I was ill. Shew the gentleman into the eating-parlour; and remember to tell nobody of this trifling disorder.

Serv. Not for the world. The blessing on her! what a sweet lady it is! [*Exit.*]

Lady D. Dormer returned, and in the house!

All-ruling Providence, receive a helpless creature into thy protection! succour my fainting spirits in this dangerous moment, and support my resolution, struggling in a tide of passion, from whose overwhelming force no hand but thine can save me! I obey: it is thy voice that warns me to avoid him; and though to justify myself to Dormer were the dearest object of my life, I will not do it: no, let me suffer as I may, I will not meet him; I will never see him more.

Enter Waiting-woman.

Wait. Oh! madam, oh! my lady, such a thing is come to pass! Captain Dormer's in the house; I have seen him with my own eyes.

Lady D. Well, if he is, what's that to me? Was it well done of you, to expose me by your idle curiosity?

Wait. Indeed and indeed, my lady, I was innocently going into the eating-parlour for your ladyship's netting-box, not thinking anybody was there, when I saw a sea-officer, in his uniform, looking earnestly at your ladyship's portrait, over the chimney; his back was towards me, so I did not know who it was; and on I went, thinking no offence, when suddenly he turned upon me; and then, to be sure, I gave a loud shriek, discovering him to be Captain Dormer.

Lady D. Does he know I am in this house?

Wait. Know, madam! to be sure he knows your ladyship is married to my lord; for he asked me if the portrait was not drawn for you, which, you know, I could not deny; and then he asked me how it came in this house, and so I told him you was married to my lord, which is nothing but the truth; and then, mercy on me, how he started! so I thought I would say no more; but as I was going, madam, he took me by the hand and held me, and then he asked me half a hundred questions, all in a breath, so that I knew not what to answer; but telling him that your ladyship wanted me up stairs, away I run; and if I have done anything amiss, I heartily ask your ladyship's pardon.

Lady D. Amiss! I know not what you've done. Did he ask to see me?

Wait. Oh! most earnestly; but I was afraid to tell your ladyship of that; indeed, he begged very hard to see you.

Lady D. Impossible! It must not be. How does he look? [*him.*]

Wait. Lovely! you would be charmed to see

Lady D. Pooh! I mean is he in health?

Wait. In perfect health.

Lady D. Thank heaven for that!

Wait. Madam?

Lady D. Restrain your curiosity, if you please, and say nothing of what has passed. Go down to Captain Dormer, and tell him—tell him I am rejoiced—no, that won't do—cruel necessity!—tell him I must never see him more.

Wait. Lack-a-day! my lady, I shall never have the heart to tell him that. Oh, the mischief! here's my lord. [*Exit.*]

Enter LORD DAVENANT.

Lord D. So, your Captain Dormer is come home, and you have admitted him into my house.

Lady D. No, my lord, I have not admitted him.

Lord D. But your ambassadress there has been in treaty; messages have passed; I know they have.

Lady D. My conduct, my lord, is open; I have no secrets; and, if it is any satisfaction to you to know it, I can assure you it is my fixed resolution never to see Captain Dormer any more.

Lord D. A woman's resolution! and you'll keep it accordingly.

Lady D. I hope I shall keep it for your lordship's sake as well as my own.

Lord D. For my sake!

Lady D. Yes, I have the strongest reasons on your account. Captain Dormer is an injured man; interviews might draw on explanations, and these might lead to consequences of an unpleasant nature.

Lord D. You deal in riddles, madam; your tone is raised, too, now your champion's in the house.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Captain Dormer's compliments, and begs to know if your lordship will be pleased to see him.

Lord D. Tell him I'll wait upon him presently.

[*Exit Servant.*] What can she mean by explanations? her confidence alarms me—if Paget has betrayed me—if she has heard of my affair with Dormer's sister, all is lost. I'll prove her further. (*Aside.*) You say that Dormer is an injured man; who tells you so? what is his injury, and who has done it?

Lady D. If letters have been fabricated which he never wrote; and if it may be called an injury to impress with false opinions hearts that were once devoted to each other, then am I warranted in what I say. My uncle is my author.

Lord D. So, your wise uncle has told you this: this is the mighty mystery!—for my share of the artifice, it is amongst the crimes I have repented of most cordially. You cannot execrate the luckless hour that made us one more bitterly than I do.

Lady D. Since it is so, my lord, I shall not aggravate that bitterness by exposing you to the reproaches of Captain Dormer.

Lord D. If you have no other reason for avoiding him but this, you are free to justify yourself at my expense; if you have nothing else to charge me with to Captain Dormer, this I can face, and instantly. Who waits?—Nay, I'll prevent you; own to what I've done, and stand by consequences, be they what they may. Stay, you yourself shall hear me.

Lady D. I beg to be excused: I must insist upon permission to withdraw. [*Exit.*]

Enter Servant.

Lord D. Tell Captain Dormer I am ready to receive him. [*Exit Servant.*] For if the time must come when he that does the wrong, and he that suffers it, shall face to face bring their accounts to issue, better that the audit pass in this life than another. Why, then, this sudden tremor! Conscience, conscience, is this fair dealing? slow to admonish, when you might have saved me; loud in reproach, when admonition is too late. What if I told this young man all the wrong I've done him? what if I avowed the horrid injury that's yet unknown; that worn that gnaws my heart; that canker, which the incision of his sword can only cure? I know the awful consummation is at hand; I feel the coming on of things; but when, and in what manner they shall pass, I cannot tell. The hand that rules my fate must fashion it.

Re-enter Servant with CAPTAIN DORMER.

Serv. Captain Dormer. [*Exit.*]

Lord D. You are welcome to England, sir: I am sorry I was not ready to receive you, and that you have been put to the trouble of waiting for me.

Capt. The apology is due for my importunity, but I consider this as a visit of duty; and as I owe my command to your lordship's recommendation, I was determined that the first door I entered in London should be your's.

Lord D. You are just arrived?

Capt. Within this hour.

Lord D. You do me honour; and I hear, with much content, you've done yourself great honour, and the service.

Capt. Such men and officers as I have served with must ensure success; I must have been the sole defaulter in my ship, if we had flinched our duty.

Lord D. If there is anything I can further obey you in, you will be pleased to command me.

Capt. I humbly thank you; and can only say, though I have been long at sea, I don't wish to be idle on shore. There is a business, however, that I have at heart to settle before I go out again; and as your lordship's favour has enabled me to make a fortune, the same friendship, perhaps, will assist me in the disposal of it.

Lord D. Explain yourself, if you please; you know I have been always at your service.

Capt. I have a sister—

Lord D. (*Starting.*) Sir!

Capt. My lord! I hope you have heard nothing to the contrary.

Lord D. No, on my honour! Please to proceed.

Capt. I hope she is yet living; 'tis a long time since I heard from her: she is the only relation I have left; an orphan girl, my lord; and if she is still at Antwerp, where I left her, I can scarce hope to see her before I am ordered out again. To her I have bequeathed the earnings of my service, and in the meantime, made suitable provision for her support: if you, who are the founder of my fortune, will kindly undertake this friendly trust, and suffer me to deposit in your care an orphan charge, you will put me under everlasting obligation.

Lord D. By heaven, this is too much! (*Aside.*)

Sir—Mr. Dormer, I am sensible of the honour you do me; but, you must think, I am a man not used to business of this sort: the commission is a very delicate commission: the charge of a young lady—

Capt. Is a very sacred charge. I feel it such; and, therefore, ardently would wish to rest it with a man of honour. I am sensible of my presumption; I know I am imposing trouble, where I ought only to be paying gratitude; but, my Lord Davenant, I have no friends except in my own profession; they cannot serve me on this occasion. You are my only hope; and, as you have once taken me by the hand, I pray you, do not let it go; I am bold to hope I shall not bring discredit on your protection, and I shall be through life devoted to you for the favour.

Lord D. I am distressed; and if I do not answer you to your wish, it is because I'm sensible I do not merit the good opinion you repose in me: you will allow me some time to reflect on what you desire.

Capt. By all means: I would not take your friendship by surprise. One thing I should naturally have stated to you before; but since I entered your lordship's house, I have been informed of a circumstance, that makes the mention of it a matter of some embarrassment.

Lord D. What may that circumstance be?

Capt. I understand you have the happiness to call a lady your's whom I had once the audacity to aspire to: Miss Travers, I am told, is Lady Davenant.

Lord D. How is she interested in this business?

Capt. Your lordship having been privy to my passion for your most amiable lady, I may be allowed to say to you, that it was my first passion and will be my last. Her uncle's opposition, and her better destiny, traversed my too ambitious hopes, and reserved her to a worthier choice. Though there was something harder than I could have expected in her manner of dismissing me, still, upon reflection, I cannot condemn the lady, who had prudence to reject an insolent pretender with the scorn he merited: nay, I am vain enough to flatter myself her uncle dictated expressions that did not originate with her: be that as it may, I have bequeathed my fortune to her upon failure of my sister and her heirs.

Lord D. Astonishing! When did you take this resolution?

Capt. When I was far enough from thinking I should ever see her more; after the action, when I

was despaired of from my wounds: and though I do not wish your lordship to report this to Lady Davenant, I hope it will be a motive with you for undertaking the trust, when so dear a part of you has an eventual interest in it.

Lord D. So dear a part of me! 'Tis plain that she is such to you; and that her refusal has not yet extinguished your affection.

Capt. No, my lord; her honour and her happiness are still as dear to me as my own; no other object can ever interpose to draw off my attachment: having once had the honour of being regarded by her, I can never descend to think of any other woman; and I hope I have already convinced your lordship, that, so far from bearing enmity to the happy man who possesses her, I rejoice to find that the object of her love, and the friend of my life, is one and the same person. I, therefore, once again entreat you to take my sister also into your protection; and you will then have in charge everything I hold valuable upon earth.

Lord D. This is really so extraordinary, that I must wonder on what grounds you rest a confidence in me so full and so implicit.

Capt. To say the truth, I follow Lady Davenant's choice; I persuaded I may trust my interests where she reposes her's.

Lord D. But suppose, for a moment, that compulsion, and not choice, determined Lady Davenant to ally herself to me.

Capt. Impossible! I'll not suppose it for a moment.

Lord D. Nay, let me put a stronger case: suppose this idol of your soul should raise no ecstasies in mine. What if this angel of perfection should to me appear the most indifferent of women? In plainer words, what would you say if Lady Davenant was the object of my fixed aversion?

Capt. What would I say!—but I forbear; and understand such suppositions as a civil intimation that 'tis time I took my leave.

Lord D. Oh! by no means: I have much to say to you.

Capt. Some other time: I've troubled you too long already. [Exit.]

Lord D. Cursed be the hour in which I wronged this man! What a clear spirit! what a lofty soul! There is a stateliness and grace in virtue, which guilty pride can never imitate. 'Sdeath! how I loath myself! D——n! what a wretch I am! If I had worlds, I'd give them to be free. Vain lamentation! vain remorse! Let no man think to take one step in infamy, and then retract. Impossible! The precipice has no degrees; down, down, he falls at once, plunges into the fathomless abyss, and sinks for ever! [Exit.]

SCENE II.—*The Apartment of Marianne.*

Enter MARIANNE, hastily.

Mar. Where shall I hide myself? He's in the house. What shall I say? How shall I bear to see him? Wretched, wretched woman! (Weeps.)

Enter CHARLES DAVENANT.

Charles. Joy to my Marianne! my wife, my—Heaven defend me! what's the matter? why are you in tears? My life, my soul! what ails thee? Answer me, or I shall sink with apprehension.

Mar. Alas! my dearest friend, no more my husband—

Charles. What do you mean? I am in agonies.

Mar. My husband is alive; I have seen him.

Charles. What, then, am I?

Mar. Ruined, disgraced, betrayed; and I the cause.

Charles. Oh! insupportable and killing stroke! Can there be misery more deep than this? By heaven! I'll not resign you. Villain, deceiver as he is, he cannot claim what he has faithlessly aban-

doned; and, if he does, my sword shall strike him dead. Blast him, eternal justice! burst underneath his feet, and swallow him, thou violated earth!

Mar. By this our last embrace, I do beseech you moderate your rage; it frightens me; your looks are wild: have patience, and collect yourself to bear this cruel stroke.

Charles. If what extinguishes my happiness, deprives me of my reason, can I help it? If you have seen him, know him, and conversed with him, direct me where he is, and I'll assert my right; for if he were my father, by the Power that made me—

Mar. Pray, no more: hear me, if possible, with some composure.

Charles. Where did this meeting pass? you have not left the house.

Mar. I saw him from my window in his chariot: there was a noise and uproar in the street; some fray between his servants and the driver of a hackney-carriage: he had let down the glass, and stopped his chariot.

Charles. But are you sure 'twas he?

Mar. Too sure: no sooner did my eye glance on his person than, terror-struck, and scarce myself, I ran down to the door, went out, and called to him to stop, for now the carriages were disengaged—

Charles. What did he, then?

Mar. He stopped, looked out, discovered me, and calling eagerly to his coachman, drove furiously away.

Charles. Infamous wretch! abuser of your unprotected innocence! hypocrite, that, counterfeiting piety, stole into the sanctuary of virtue, and robbed the altar of its holiest relic! I never liked his story; always thought his sanctified approaches, under cloak of mock benevolence and pity, were suspicious; then, his pretended death, and the insupportable darkness succeeding it, were proofs demonstrative of fraud. My life upon't, he is some titled profligate. Have you no marks to trace him by? the equipage, arms, liveries? did you not note them?—through the earth I will pursue him to detection.

Mar. I was incapable of such remarks: I have sent my servant amongst the neighbours; his equipage was gay and splendid, and 'tis possible it may be known—but what ensues when it is known?—distraction, death! Oh! leave me, Charles; renounce me, banish my misfortunes from your thoughts, and may some happier woman—

Charles. Madness is in the thought! never will I forsake thee; never, by all that's sacred, whilst I live, will I acknowledge any other wife: in thy embrace is centered all my happiness; here, here, my lovely Marianne, I will both live and die.

Mar. Alas! my dearest Charles, although my soul doats on you, can I, for your sake, suffer it? ought I for my own?

Charles. Are you not, then, my wife? who shall oppose it? Have you any other husband? Let the world's laws interpret as they may, by right of heaven's decree you are mine: let him that forged the lie, fall by the lie. What if the records of his death were false? you thought them true; and in persuasion of their truth, you married; therefore, he's dead to you, though he survives to villainy;—the husband is extinct, though the impostor lives.

Mar. For me, who am the child of sorrow, friendless and obscure, the world's opinions are no rule of right; heaven and my conscience give the law to me; but, oh! to sink your fame and fortune, bury all your splendid hopes, your active talents—it is not to be thought of. No; your friends, your family, your country claims you: misfortune is my birth-right; I am encompassed with a sphere of wretchedness, and every one is blighted that approaches me: an orphan in the cradle; one brave youth, one dear beloved brother, was the cordial of my life—of him, perhaps, I am bereft.

Charles. No, Providence restores him to you: this sad accident so filled my thoughts, or I had sooner told you the good tidings of your brother. Dormer's arrived.

Mar. Is he arrived?

Charles. He is arrived, and crowned with glory, crowned with fortune. You are the sister of a hero, who will stand recorded in his country's brightest annals: interest might solicit your alliance; pride might boast of it; even misers now might court the sister of the wealthy Dormer.

Mar. Then I will not despair: amidst the clouds and darkness of my fate, heaven yet shall visit me with one bright gleam of hope.

Charles. Yes, we shall still be happy; I feel my spirits lighten: my love to you is not a brutal heat; 'tis founded on the graces of your mind; brightened, but not blinded, by the charms of your person. I have no part to act; to Dormer, to my father, to the world I will avow my claim; I'll seek your brother, join him in dragging forth to light this dark, mysterious husband. To this I pledge my word; till this be done, however painful the suspense, however dear the sacrifice, I am your friend, not husband. Come, come, then, thou soft affliction, quiet thy distracted thoughts; all things will yet be well. [Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in Lord Davenant's house.

Enter LORD DAVENANT and PAGET.

Lord D. I tell you, 'tis impossible. I am beset, embayed; broad, full-faced infamy now stares upon me. If all the demons that are leagued in mischief sat in council for my rescue, hell and its advocates have no resource to ward off my detection.

Paget. I would have had you thought of this before.

Lord D. Pr'ythee, forbear reproach; my own heart is sufficient for that office. Where is my lady?

Paget. In her chamber.

Lord D. Alone?

Paget. I think so.

Lord D. Would she were in her grave! I'll think of that. The sight of Marianne, the glimpse I snatched this morning of her beauties, fatal although it be, has stirred the flame afresh; it burns within me; horror cannot quench it; Dormer's return, his presence, his reproaches can't extinguish it; not even his sword, though it transfix my heart. But I forget to ask you what intelligence you've gathered. Am I discovered? is my name out in the affair?

Paget. I do not find it is; and if you wish it should not, you must take instant measures with Sir Harry Harlow and his servants; his equipage is known by many, and will lead discovery to you.

Lord D. To him, you mean—and that's to me. Can I set him in front, and skulk behind his friendship like a coward? Will he permit it, think you? No. Can I? There's no evasion left. Now, what's your business?

Enter Servant.

Serv. My lord, Sir Edmund Travers is below.

Lord D. Admit him. [Exit Servant.] Doating blockhead! blind fool! that cannot see the sun at noon; for that is not more glaring in its full meridian, than the apparent misery that he is author of. Begone! [Exit Paget.]

Enter SIR EDMUND TRAVERS.

Sir E. My lord, I've news for you.

Lord D. Dormer's arrived.

Sir E. How your wit jumps!

Lord D. I've news for you. A secret; but you'll keep it?

Sir E. Oh! upon honour!

Lord D. Nay, as you will, for this it is: we are two sorry knaves.

Sir E. Who? you and I?

Lord D. Exactly so! a pair as perfect as iniquity ever matched. We tricked this marriage neatly; did we not? Fine cheats, to pass these letters off upon your niece and Dormer; neat forgeries they were; and precious gulls the lovers, to be trapped so readily. But you are secret, now; true to the gang; you did not blab this to Lady Davenant?

Sir E. What do you mean? I blab it! I to Lady Davenant!

Lord D. You. If you dare, deny it.

Sir E. Deny it! No, I cannot absolutely deny it; but who could think she would be fool enough to broach it?

Lord D. The first that broached it was the fool. You've set the mischief running; now drain the bitter cup of your affliction to its lowest and its foulest dregs. Dormer shall know the plot, which hand in-hand we've practised to deceive him. The passion which was dead in him shall rise again; I'll urge them on, enflame them to renewed desires; and, when their stimulated hearts rush to forbidden transports, then, in that guilty moment, you and I, like brother villains, will steal in with silent steps, and feast upon the ruin we have made.

Sir E. Oh, horrible! you'll not do this.

Lord D. Why not? such true-bred sons of wickedness as we are have a luxury in mischief. What do you care? you hate your niece; I execrate my wife.

Sir E. Why, you are mad, sure; stark mad and raving. I hate my niece! you execrate your wife! I thought you were the fondest pair on earth; and for my niece—

Lord D. You stole her from an honest man, and sold her to a lord. Now get you home: weigh these things well in your discerning mind; put truth in one scale, titles in the other; and, when you've struck the balance, come and compare accounts with me, and we'll divide the gains. [Exit.]

Sir E. 'Tis as I said: the man's beside himself; out of all line and compass of right reason: I saw it in his eyes: the moon's in the mad quarter. 'Tis jealousy of Dormer; sheer, downright jealousy, and nothing else: 'foregad! and that will do it as soon as anything. He said he'd tell the plot to Dormer, make them both desperately in love afresh, and put them together—a proof of jealousy; he said he execrated his wife—a proof he loves her; and what are love and jealousy but madness? How his poor brains are tumbled topsy-turvy! I pity him at my heart. I must look sharp, and watch this Dormer closely; if I discover them at their old tricks, I shall make bold to read this niece of mine a good round lecture. When so many heads are gone astray, 'tis lucky for the world that some folks have their wits about them. [Exit.]

Re-enter LORD DAVENANT.

Lord D. I will not live in torment; nor shall the preaching of pedantic churchmen fetter this free spirit in this body, when it is weary of its prison. What know they of an hereafter more than we, who never proved it? all is speculation in futurity; and he that travels on in misery, in the hope or fear of what shall meet him at his journey's end, gives up his reason for a dream, and follows a blind guide he knows not whither, and he knows not why.

Enter LADY DAVENANT.

Lady D. I interrupt your meditations.

Lord D. You shall partake of them. Come, I shall probe your spirit; I shall bring you to confession ere we part. Is it not a miserable life we have passed together? is it not a cursed one?

Lady D. It might have been more happy.

Lord D. How? what can make harmony of discord? how can two hearts be brought together, that so widely point asunder? will the weak bands of

marriage draw them nearer? No; we were made by heaven so adverse and unlike in our original construction, that we may safely set the rubric at defiance, and without more process, part.

Lady D. Part!

Lord D. For ever.

Lady D. On what plea?

Lord D. The best and fairest—mutual aversion.

Lady D. Of what can you accuse me?

Lord D. Of hypocrisy, if you persist to live with me: who harbours with the thing he hates? what creature mates with its opposite? Nature protests against it. You hate me: come, I know you do, and you have cause.

Lady D. Remove that cause; break off from those bad courses that degrade a mind not naturally degenerate: 'twill be a worthier separation, a more laudable divorce than from an offending wife.

Lord D. What if I did? you cannot love me.

Lord D. Try; there is virtue in the experiment, at least.

Lord D. You love young Dormer; in your soul you love him: what your foolish uncle has betrayed, endears him to you more than ever; what I now shall tell you, will augment that augmentation, and inflame affection into phrenzy.

Lady D. Stop, then, in time. By every sacred name I charge you to forbear: let me be miserable, but do not make me guilty.

Lord D. I mean to save you both from misery and guilt. I have conversed with Dormer; he adores you; defeated in his hopes, dismissed, and, by our artifices, used most hardly, still he persists to love you. Nay, the deluded generous youth, because I am your husband, even on me devolves his friendship and affection; tenders to me the execution of his will; solicits me (oh! wondrous test of confidence!) to take the guardianship of Marianne.

Lady D. Astonishing!

Lord D. Yes, 'twere astonishing, if you knew all. (*Aside.*) Nay, there is more: he has bequeathed you his whole fortune at his sister's death. Now, what think you of this man? now, Lady Davenant, how do you feel your heart affected by these proofs of unabating love?

Lady D. Deeply, most deeply; yet, not otherwise, I hope, than as becomes your wife.

Lord D. Hence with the name! hence with that idle ceremony, to which our hearts were never pledged! which nature cancels, reason disavows, and we both execrate religiously! Go where your heart invites you; go to Dormer; with him you will be blest; with me, each day, each hour will aggravate your wretchedness.

Lady D. Can you be serious?

Lord D. As death. The bitter moments you have passed are sweet to those that must inevitably follow.

Lady D. My lord, my lord, you put too much upon me, when you urge me to a deed of such disgrace. Your cruelty will shortly bring me to my grave, then you'll be free; but if the process be too slow for your impatience, draw forth your sword; I'll sooner meet its point, than be the guilty thing you would make me.

Lord D. Cursed be these peevish scruples! By the Power that made me, if you will not accord to my proposal, I will render life your torment! And for that bubble, reputation, which you prize so much above its worth, I'll blast it through the world: I'll fasten shame upon you; it shall haunt you like your shadow: ridicule shall dog you at the heels; abuse and slander bark at you like hounds, and tear that virtue, which is but a cloak, to nakedness and rags; and when I've rendered you thus loathsome to behold, I'll take you at your word; bury my sword in your relentless breast, and after plunge it in my own.

Lady D. Alas! my lord, I pity you, and feel

more terror for your desperation, than my own danger. There must be something horrid in your mind, more than you have yet disclosed.

Lord D. Perhaps there is; and it is in pity that I call upon you, now, thus earnestly, thus, for the last time, to save yourself. 'Tis not by nature I am cruel; one dishonourable deed, the impulse of a guilty passion, has distorted all my actions. I would confide it to you, for I hold you worthy every sacred trust, but—[*Enter PAGET.*—Ah! he is come! Bid Captain Dormer enter.] [*Exit Paget.*]

Lady D. Dormer again! then let me go.

Lord D. No; you must stay: by all that's sacred, you shall not depart.

Lady D. Support me, heaven! and witness for me, that I did not seek this interview. 'Tis he!

Enter CAPTAIN DORMER. (Seeing Lady Davenant, he starts.)

Lord D. Stand not amazed, but enter. She whom you seek is here: the faded form, that once you thought so fair, is present Approach!

Capt. Yes, if my limbs will bear me. Oh! to each sense most dear!—Thou best of women!

Lord D. Add, too, unhappiest!

Lady D. Save me; support me, or I faint. (*Capt. D. supports her in his arms.*)

Capt. Help, help, my lord, she faints.

Lord D. Alas! my touch will murder. Be it your task; your right is preferable; for you she loved, me she only married.

Capt. Can you look on unmoved?

Lord D. How should you know what moves and passes here? I am the author of this interview: it is the tribute of atonement. I am the man who counterfeited that letter that dismissed you from your hopes: the ship my interest procured for you, my jealousy provided. Now, if you wish destruction to your sister, give her in charge to me.

Capt. To infamy as soon. Return, and meet your death. (*Lord D. is going.*)

Lord D. Before you take my life, recover her's; when you've done that, I shall be found: meantime, I leave with you my pledge. [*Exit.*]

Lady D. What's that? where am I? Ah! (*Shrieks.*) Oh! Dormer, Dormer!

Capt. Speak to me; unload your burthened heart; be candid to a friend, whose very soul is your's.

Lady D. I had determined never to have seen you more.

Capt. Oh! exemplary woman! even that I could have borne, had you been happy; but that monster shall not live.

Lady D. Hold, hold! you must not draw your sword upon Lord Davenant.

Capt. Not draw my sword! my wrongs and your redress will sanctify revenge: 'twere criminal to let him live.

Lady D. What! shall I be a party in the assassination of my husband? I tell you, Dormer, if you ever draw your sword upon him, from that moment I renounce you; never will I see you, speak of you, or in meditation call you to remembrance, but with horror.

Capt. Not when he dares me to it.

Lady D. Never in any case, by any call or provocation, if you have love or pity for me.

Capt. If I have love! Oh! if the awful presence of your virtue did not check my tongue, I should have told you at your feet my uncontrolled affection. If I have love, Louisa! notwithstanding your supposed unkindness, spite of all the artifices practised to estrange you from me, my unaltered heart has still been your's. To the world's utmost limits I have carried your beloved image, the companion of each day, and the vision of each night: to the very gates of death it has attended me; it has cheered me in sickness, covered me in battle, and been the guiding star, by which I shaped my course.

Lady D. Oh! Dormer, was it light affliction to a heart like mine to be deprived of all it held most dear? In the moment of my disappointment, when you, as I believed, renounced me, and departed without explanation; in that agony and conflict of my mind did they assail me, urge, compel me to a marriage with Lord Davenant. Why should I accuse him of unkindness? What could such a match produce but misery? The efforts that I made to please him, (though they cost me dear,) could not impose on his sagacity; the laboured tasks of duty, poorly counterfeited the genuine glow of love.

Capt. Now, then, Louisa, since your tyrant must escape unpunished, what do you resolve on? When he has left you to the world, where will you seek a shelter?

Lady D. Where can I shelter, but in my former asylum?

Capt. Go to the wretch that sacrificed you! No: what is this rigid arbiter, propriety, by whose decrees you are thus blindly governed? What is this worldly idol, to whose bloody altars we must offer up our lives?

Lady D. What would you have me do? where would you have a wretched wife resort?

Capt. Is there no friend whose faithful heart is your's? What have I done, that I must be a second time excluded? I have a sister; may not she receive you? My fortune now is ample—oh! reflect upon my sufferings, give me what honour can bestow: I ask no more.

Lady D. What shall I say?

Capt. Do you still love me?

Lady D. Oh! Dormer, do not press me.

Capt. Nay, but resolve me; leave me not in doubt: my life is on your lips. Silence will be my doom: I die, if you forbid it not.

Lady D. Heaven and its blessed angels guard your life!

Capt. Do you still love me?

Lady D. Dearer than life itself.

Capt. Give me a noble proof.

Lady D. What would you have me do?

Capt. Thus, thus for ever let me clasp you to my heart! here let me hold you! This be your asylum! Destined for each other; wedded in our souls; heaven, that has re-united us, now sanctifies our privileged embrace. Spoiled of my heart's best treasure, thus, my Louisa, by that dear loved name, thus, thus I claim thee: now no tyrant husband, no base sordid uncle shall divide us more.

Enter SIR EDMUND TRAVERS.

Sir E. Say you so, sir? I'll try that point with you, however. Oh! scandal to your family! Is this a situation for a wife to be found in?

Lady D. No, I confess it; your reproof is just.

Sir E. Well, sir; and this is honourable conduct, I suppose. (*To Dormer.*)

Capt. Sir Edmund Travers, I would recommend it to you to keep your own temper, and not practise upon mine too far. And let me tell you, sir, there is a mean and tricking quality in all you do. When hearts like ours are rent asunder by device and cunning; when forgery's base artifice is called in aid to separate affections, they will meet again, in spite of hell itself: and if you have stolen by surprise upon that tender moment, when the most rigid virtue softens to endearment, beware of false conclusions; nor from the foulness of your own imagination, judge of ours.

Sir E. Fine talking! but as I have not outlived my senses; am in possession of my eyes and ears; and have unluckily some interest in the reputation of my own niece, I shall take the liberty of appealing to Lord Davenant against such proceedings.

Capt. Madam, I do beseech you, undeceive your uncle; I suspect he does not know the treatment

you receive; he could not else thus obstinately persist to ruin you.

Lady D. Leave us together, then, and I will speak: retire into that room; nay, I request you will. [*Exit Capt. D.*] Now give me patient hearing:—'tis not from the consciousness of guilt, nor to avoid a fair discussion of my sentiments for Captain Dormer, I would wish you to desist; but from a knowledge, which you have not, of Lord Davenant's disposition. You think him a kind husband; because I've troubled you with no complaints, you think I've none to make: you are in error; and so long as error caused content, I left you in it; now that it would lead to misery, I warn you of its danger. My lord and I are on the point to part. Hitherto, he has no shadow of complaint against me; if you resolve to give him one, give this, report this indiscretion, swell it into criminality: perhaps he'll thank you for the office; but the time will come, when you'll reproach yourself.

Sir E. And this you think will blind me: you mistake, I see your drift; I know you are unhappy with your lord, but I also know it is your attachment to Dormer, and his return, that make you so; Lord Davenant told me so himself. The fault is all your own; you have driven him mad. Now, therefore, if you will solemnly engage your word to me never to see Dormer again, I'll stifle what is past; I'll still acknowledge you, protect you, and if Lord Davenant then abandons you, I'll receive you in my house. Now what do you say? I put you to the proof.

Lady D. 'Tis fairly offered; but if every earthly comfort were in your disposal, and they could only be obtained by my renouncing, absolutely and for ever, all future friendly intercourse with that much injured man, I would reject them on such terms: when I've said this, I must implore you not to pass unfair constructions on my resolution; for if you still suspect me, I will pledge my honour to you never to receive his visits, but in your's or other company: will that content you?

Sir E. No, no, my lady; nor cajole me neither; you'll not put out my eyes with dust. Nothing but absolute renunciation of that villain will serve me.

Lady D. Villain! do you call him villain?

Sir E. You'll find him such to you, incorrigible! nay, I can now persuade myself you have.

Lady D. To my lord, then, with what despatch you please. Here comes your judge: prefer your charge against me; I'll abide it.

Enter LORD DAVENANT.

Sir E. 'Tis well you are come, my lord: I hope you will now give me a patient hearing.

Lord D. With such attention as a man, not over-stored with patience, can command, I am prepared to hear you. When last we met, you took me in a hasty moment; if I have offended you, impute it to infirmity, and now proceed.

Sir E. So, so! he's quiet now; his phrenzy comes by fits. (*Aside.*) When I bestowed this lady's hand in marriage to your lordship, I had hope I gave you what would make your life a happy one; had it proved otherwise, I trusted that the fault would not be her's; for she was born of worthy parents, carefully brought up, and educated in the habits of obedience.

Lord D. So much by the way of preface; now to the point.

Sir E. Though she is under the dominion of a husband, still, as her uncle and her guardian, I am interested in her conduct; and when I meet her on the road to ruin—when I surprise her locked in the embraces of a lover—I hold it as a point of honour thus to bring her face to face, and put you on your guard.

Lord D. Locked in the embraces of a lover! Of what lover?

Sir E. Dormer.

Lord D. Do you call him a lover?

Sir E. Can you make that a question? Was he not ever such? you know he was. She'll not deny it; question her yourself.

Lord D. I will not trouble you, madam, with many interrogatories: be pleased to answer plainly. It is objected to you, by your uncle, that you love young Dormer.

Lady D. I have cause.

Sir E. Astonishing assurance! Have not I forbade you?

Lord D. Be patient, if you please. You loved him before you married me.

Lady D. I own it.

Lord D. You was trepanned into a marriage; not only forgery was employed, but force. Had you been left to choose, you would have chosen Dormer, preferably to all mankind?

Lady D. I should.

Lord D. And were I now to die?—

Lady D. I beg you not to put that question.

Lord D. I shall forbear: it does not need an answer. Why, what a criminal you make yourself, Sir Edmund! You an uncle! you a guardian! you to conspire and league against a ward, whose happiness you had in charge! For my share in the fraud, I do repent it from my soul; but I have some excuse: her beauty and fortune were temptations in my way; ambition, avarice, desire, might urge me on. Mine was an interested baseness, yours a natural depravity!

Sir E. Heyday! the fit's returned; you are mad again: one and all mad. 'Tis the distemper of the times: it runs through the nation: hellebore can't stop it.

Lord D. Fly, then, before the infection catches you; keep the small wits you have at home, nor thrust yourself into the sphere of our insanity. When did you ever hear that interference between man and wife was thankfully received, or profitably answered any useful purpose?

Sir E. A word with you, madam, before we part: whatever happens, don't come near my doors; look not for your asylum there. [Exit.]

Lord D. Ridiculous old dotard! Suffer me to lead you to your chamber: your exhausted spirits must demand repose. Give me your hand.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Lord Davenant's house.*

CHARLES DAVENANT and CAPTAIN DORMER
discovered.

Charles. I have now, Captain Dormer, told you, without reserve, the whole, as it has passed between your sister and myself, to the minutest circumstance: and I wait your answer, without foreseeing what that may be; for, hitherto, your silence has been such as gives no light to guess at your opinion.

Capt. I have heard your story with the deepest attention; for it involves the fortune of an orphan sister, in whose happiness I am closely interested, and of whose reputation I am the rightful protector.

Charles. If you find any cause for discontent in my proceeding, tell it me.

Capt. I find no cause whatever for complaint; but many, many proofs I find of generous manly honesty; and thus with open arms I take you to my heart, and lodge you there till it shall cease to beat. When I've said this, I must confess to you there are some painful incidents in your relation. My sister's marriage in Flanders I must consider as precipitate and rash; the evidence of Brooke's decease at Paris was too readily admitted; and the now distressful state of your engagement might have been avoided by those obvious precautions which your interest pointed out. Your marriage also is clandestine; such are rarely happy; and

though Lord Davenant's consent would be no commendation of it to me, methinks, it should have been an indispensable preliminary to you.

Charles. I feel the force of all you say. The vehemence of my affection may have out-stepped prudence, and my want of confidence in my father may have violated duty; but towards your lovely sister, I should hope I stand without reproach.

Capt. I cannot doubt your honour; and you'll suffer me to add, there does not live a man on earth I should be so proud to call my brother. Here we must pause: till we have traced the villain out who has abused her confidence, and by a feigned decease, plunged her and you in this distress and doubt, no self-indulging passion must be suffered to complete the yet suspended marriage: this promise you will make?

Charles. And keep religiously. As for discovery, his equipage I hope will lead to that.

Capt. Perhaps it will; if that should be the case, remember, Captain Davenant, it is to me he must account. Now I'll go to my sister.

Charles. Do so. I am sure I need not warn you to speak tenderly to Marianne: commend me to her, cheer her gentle spirits, and assuage, if possible, her anxious thoughts in this uneasy crisis.

Capt. I'll do my best; but still my heart is heavy. Fare you well! [Exit.]

Enter LADY DAVENANT.

Lady D. Was not that Dormer?

Charles. It was.

Lady D. You have told him of your marriage?

Charles. I have.

Lady D. Well, and how passed it? I'm impatient to be told that you at least are happy.

Charles. Happy! alas—

Lady D. What ails you? what has disconcerted you? You have no misunderstanding surely with Dormer?

Charles. With Dormer none.

Lady D. Your father, then?

Charles. I have not seen him. This it is:—I told you Marianne had made a former marriage in Flanders; that her husband, after three months, left her; went to Paris, and there died. She thought herself a widow, till this morning: after I had left you, and with transport flew to embrace my bride, I found her bathed in tears and agonized with grief. The impostor had deceived her; he was living: she had seen her husband.

Lady D. Oh, horrible! her husband living! How have you supported it? what is become of her—of Dormer? Where will this affliction end?

Charles. I know not; I am now in search of the betrayer.

Lady D. Have you no clue to trace him by?

Charles. I think we have; and from a circumstance that I omitted to relate—How now! What news?

A Servant enters, and speaks aside to Charles D.

Lady D. Poor Davenant! how I pity thee! Surely, I had sufficient weight of affliction. How shall a sorrow-broken heart support such overwhelming grief?

Charles. (To the Servant.) Go to your lady; tell her all is well. You'll find her brother with her, Captain Dormer; take him aside, and tell him to repair to me without a moment's loss: your diligence shall be rewarded. Go; make haste. [Exit Servant.] Now the discovery's out. I told you Marianne had seen her husband. His chariot, passing her window, was stopped by accident in the street; the mob and clamour, usual on such occasions, attracted her notice and that of the neighbours: my servant now informs me 'twas the equipage of Sir Harry Harlow.

Lady D. What do you say? Sir Harry Harlow's! No; it must not be. Revoke that word.

Charles. Revoke it! Why should I revoke it? No; I'll drag him to detection.

Lady D. When did this pass, do you say? was it this morning, after you saw me?

Charles. It was: I told you that before:—what interests you so deeply for Sir Harry Harlow?

Lady D. What interests me! what! Oh! Charles, forbear to question me: it stabs my heart. I do beseech you leave me to myself: it turns my brain. Give me a minute's recollection. (*Walks aside*)

Charles. Now, by my soul, 'tis very strange; it staggers me! Suspicions force upon me. Nothing is more evident than her disorder: it smote her like a stroke of death; nay, 'tis most palpable: her eyes are staring wild with horror. Ah! 'tis so; she loves him. Curse upon him! he has prevailed with her, too. Heavens! what a character is overthrown! (*Aside.*)

Lady D. Charles, Charles, you must be patient in this business. Do not trust your information too implicitly; nor hurry on an explanation that you may repent of.

Charles. Must I be patient, madam? must I permit the direst villain to survive? and do you plead for him? No; if my honour was not pledged to Dormer not to take up this affair without him, by my soul, a moment should not pass before my sword should make its passage to the traitor's heart.

Lady D. What traitor's heart? you must not call him traitor.

Charles. Amazement! Lady Davenant, you confound me: 'tis too flagrant. Have I not proof certain?

Lady D. No, no; I tell you, wretched man, you have no proof; and when you have—

Charles. What then? why, then, I'd drag him from the altar; stab him, though your fond arms protected him!

Lady D. You don't know what you say.

Charles. 'Tis you that say you know not what; 'tis you, alas! whom this confusion painfully betrays; you, whom a fatal weakness forces to protect the blackest of mankind. By heaven that gave me life, I thought you late a miracle of truth and goodness: I approached you with a reverence that bordered on idolatry. I leave you, now, with mournful pity and regret; I go, because I can no longer bear to be spectator of the fall of such exalted virtue. [*Exit.*]

Lady D. Lost, lost, for ever lost! Go, miserable youth! enjoy the respite of a short mistake. The moment that clears up my innocence, lets fall despair on thee: what a tremendous scene will that unfold! a father husband to thy wife! It must be so: a multitude of circumstances now confirm it. This, this it is that solves the mystery of his unnatural conduct; this is the latent dagger of his mind; this is his horror: this the injury so unattonable to Dormer. The very hour in which he took Sir Harry's equipage; his journey to the continent; his stay abroad, and his long silence whilst in absence from me; rise in horrible array, a host of witnesses, deposing to the dreadful truth. Inextricable distress! What can be done? I see no light. Fate labours as with a mother's pangs; and the fell babe of horror, hell-begotten, presses to the birth. Father of mercies, give me thy support!—Without there! Who attends?

Enter a Servant.

Is your lord still at home?

Serv. My lord is in the library with Sir Harry Harlow.

Lady D. Has Captain Davenant been there?

Serv. No, madam; he has this moment left the house.

Lady D. Run to my lord, tell him to give nobody admittance till I have seen him; and desire Sir Harry Harlow to come hither immediately.— [*Exit Servant.*—] I am not in the fault: I have not driven him to this desperate act! Be witness for me, truth, I have not wilfully occasioned his disgust; but studied, to my utmost, to obey and please him. If by Sir Harry's means I can hold off this fatal explanation, till Lord Davenant takes his measures, an interview, perhaps, may be avoided, that is horrible to think of.—I sent to you, Sir Harry.

Enter SIR HARRY HARLOW.

Sir H. I flew with ardour at your summons; and I await your pleasure, with a heart that throbs to serve you; with a heart, dear lady, that can only cease to love, when it shall cease to beat.

Lady D. 'Tis well; I mean to put your friendship to the proof.

Sir H. Friendship, indeed!—But call it by what name you will; my life is your's; command it to what purpose you see fit.

Lady D. Pray don't mistake yourself or me.—You lent your chariot to my lord, this morning?

Sir H. Madam!

Lady D. Come, come; I know you did: I saw it at my door: I saw him enter it.

Sir H. Then I must not dispute the point with you: to any other questioner, I yield no answer.

Lady D. 'Twill be a service most essential to my happiness, if you will consent to screen Lord Davenant for awhile: I would not put this on you, but for most pressing reasons; nor do I mean that any risk or imputation, thence arising, should ultimately fall on you; therefore, I do beseech you, for an hour or so, that you will be invisible to all inquirers; but, above all, to Captain Dormer and Charles Davenant. Return not to my lord, but quit this house immediately; and if I might prevail, you should not enter your own for some time: they'll seek you there; and if their fury shall compel you to an explanation, I must tremble for the consequences.

Sir H. Most amiable of women! I perceive your drift. You act too nobly by an undeserving husband: but I make no appeal; implicitly I shall obey, because 'tis your command; and, though my life were made the sacrifice, what were more glorious than to die for you? One word, one kind approving look, can overpay the purchase; grant that before we part, and, at your feet, I dedicate for ever to your service my devoted heart.

Enter CHARLES DAVENANT, hastily, followed by CAPTAIN DORMER.

Charles. Villain! stand up, and answer me. Now, Dormer, now will you believe me? Have we found you, sir!

Capt. Draw, wretch! for I am Dormer.

Lady D. You are mad! or sheathe your sword, or pass its murderous point through me.

Capt. Oh! shame, shame, shame! And have I lived to see it? Oh! mortal blow to modesty! Let there be no fidelity in woman; no faith henceforth in man! Come forth, thou sheltered coward! answer with thy life! It is not for thine own enormities alone; it is for her's also thou must now account.

Sir H. I'll answer nothing; but to every tittle of your charge to say, 'tis grossly false. Settle your own precedencies: I am ready.

Lady D. Will you hear reason? Dormer, Charles, I do conjure you both, forbear!

Sir H. Give their rage way! They choose a notable occasion, in a lady's presence, to display their valour.

Capt. Our wrongs are such as will not bear delay; nor will we trust to one who can change

names, shift persons, counterfeit even death itself, to ruin innocence and mock avenging justice.

Sir H. I don't know what you say; but such assassin-like attacks deserve no answer, nor admit of any explanation. You, Mr. Davenant, know me well; you know I may and will be found. Appoint your place; I'll meet you.

Charles. Follow us, then.

Lady D. Help, help! You shall not stir. This is too much.—You are deceived; he's innocent.—Help, help! (*Runs to the door, and meets LORD DAVENANT.*)

Lord D. What is this uproar? Who has frightened you?—Ha! Dormer here? (*Aside*)—Sir Harry, what has passed?

Sir H. Passed, my lord! nothing; all is mystery to me.

Lord D. Why did she scream out?—A word with you. (*Takes Sir H. aside.*)

Charles. (*To Capt. D.*) Dormer, contain yourself; there's something here that's dark and terrifying. Say nothing to my father: let us withdraw, and wait below; there can be no escape. Nay, follow me, I do conjure you.

Capt. Oh! Lady Davenant, reconcile my mind to this mysterious conduct, or break my heart at once. [*Exit with Charles.*]

Lady D. What, then, becomes of mine? it bursts distracted with overwhelming grief!

Sir H. Look to my Lady!

Lord D. No, no; regard not me; I shall not fail: heaven sends me strength for my appointed task.—Let me be private with you. (*To Lord D.*)

Lord D. Not for the world! My thoughts are terrible; I am possessed by fiends. Stay, and be witness to my shame, whilst I confess the black account which I must pass with Dormer. I have betrayed his sister; ruined her by forgeries and falsehoods, as I did you, Louisa: married her!

Sir H. Infamous deed!

Lord D. Yes, sir; there is rebellion in my blood; his sword must let it out: therefore, no more; but let me pass. (*As he is going, Lady D. stops him.*)

Lady D. Hold, hold! you must not stir.

Lord D. What is it you mean? Why do you cross me thus? [*than death.*]

Lady D. To save you from a meeting worse

Lord D. To save your lover from a meeting that may lead to death! Oh! whilst you live, speak truth. 'Tis love of Dormer raises this alarm. Have I not found the cause?

Lady D. No; you have not found the cause: would that you never could!

Sir H. Be cautioned by your lady, and impute to her concern no other than the purest motive: my life upon it, you will find it such. Alas! unhappy man, what treasure have you cast away? Hear her, console her, be advised by her! recover, if you can, her forfeited esteem. She is a miracle of goodness.

Lord D. Dost think me so far sunk in honour as to shrink from this discussion? Dormer's entitled to an honourable satisfaction, and I shall give it him immediately. Before we part, however, Lady Davenant, let me own that I am penetrated with remorse for my conduct to you. Though I ask nothing for myself, I am not out of hope that you will cast an eye of pity and protection on that guiltless sufferer; who, if I fall, will be the partner of your widowhood: she is young and beautiful; and, if your influence over Dormer is exerted in her favour, she may retrieve the unhappy error into which I led her. Farewell!

Lady D. Yet, yet prevent him! Stay! she has a husband! [*word again.*]

Lord D. What do you tell me? Speak that

Lady D. She has a husband! and that husband—How shall I pronounce it?

Lord D. Go on: I'll have it, though it breathes destruction.

Lady D. That husband is your son.

Lord D. Death to my soul! my son!

Lady D. Your son this morning married Dormer's sister.

Lord D. Why do I live a moment? (*Lays his hand on his sword.*)

Sir H. Stop your rash hand! What phrenzy seizes you?

Lord D. Why does the earth not yawn, and whelm me to the centre? Oh! what a day of dreadful retribution!—Why was this marriage secret? which of you were privy to it?

Lady D. I knew it not, nor had suspicion of it: few hours are past since he disclosed it to me.

Lord D. Fatal concealment! horrible event! Oh, God! oh, God! into what misery have I plunged my son! Does he know what I have done?

Sir H. Nor he nor Dormer know it. Take this comfort also to your heart; it is as yet a marriage but in form: the day is not yet passed, in which their hands were joined. Heaven, in its vengeance, has remembered mercy!

Lord D. Call my son here directly.

Lady D. There let me interpose again. Take a short time for serious meditation: we will assist your thoughts. Your friend here has already struck one spark of light amidst your dark despair: patient reflection may bring more in view. Perhaps this meeting with your son, which you, in your mind's present agitation, are for hastening, prudence may postpone.

Lord D. Speak on; for there is something in your voice like comfort; something that falls upon my ear, like music in the dead of night, after distressful dreams.

Lady D. Oh! if a few calm words can lull your ear, think how repentance may assuage your soul: for so much of your offence as falls on me alone, I thank heaven's mercy for its aid, I can forgive it; nay, my lord, I have forgiven it.

Lord D. Nay, but you must abhor me; darkness must be less opposite to light, than I to innocence: so loathsome am I to myself, I should despise the person that could pity me.

Sir H. Come to your chamber: follow your guardian angel where she leads you. If I can serve you in this melancholy hour, command me; if I am in your way, dismiss me.

Lord D. I pray you, leave me not: I have a thing to tell you. It is not known to man, nor can your heart conceive, how dire a deed I've had in meditation: there was a thought struck on my mind too terrible for utterance: but it is past; this stroke, that cuts up all resource of hope, cuts up the bloody purpose that I had in hand. And now I feel, as it were, two natures: my good and evil genius seem at strife within me; this touches me with human kindness and remorse; that tears me with despair and horror. How it will end I know not; for all command is lost, and my mind drives like a wreck before the tempest.—Go with my Lady Davenant; stay by her, I beseech you. I will retire to my chamber. Farewell! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Lord Davenant's house.*

CAPTAIN DORMER discovered.

Capt. 'Tis nearly an hour I have waited here, and still this man appears not. I should suspect he had escaped me, if Davenant had not positively said, there was no other way for him to pass but through this room. No solitude can be more silent than the house. They are in conference still. My mind is on the rack; I am tortured with uncertainty. He comes.—My Lady Davenant!

I have sat in council with my reason, ransacked all the resources of my soul, and questioned every rising thought, if it could shew me hope: in all my composition, there is not one trace; night and despair possess me, and there is nothing like a ray of light, save only what the mortal drug administers, that now is sapping the strong-hold of life.

Lady D. Poison! Oh! let me fly, and bring you instant help.

Lord D. Hold, I command you! Assistance is too late; nor would I suffer it, if it came. 'Sdeath! I were a beast without a soul. I, that have kept my station with the highest, now to sink where infamy won't own me; the outcast of society, the pointing stock of scorn, and feed on offal scraps of pity, thrown by charitable fools, to comfort me! it is not to be borne! Despair seized me, and I took poison.

Lady D. Be not extreme with him in judgment, merciful Disposer! He comes, but not in confidence: despair compels him.

Lord D. I thank you! Oh! Louisa, best of women! if I had confidence to pray, it should be for such blessings on your future days, as might redeem and recompense your sufferings past. And yet, I'll strive—oh, horrible! it must not be. My soul is rent with agony. Methought, as I looked up, I saw a thousand threatening faces, that forbade my prayer. Oh! hide me in your arms! Stand off again, lest I infect and stain your purity with my unholy touch. Blest may you be! thrice blest in Dormer's arms! May heaven shower down upon your united hearts perpetual harmony and love! And for the hateful barrier of my life, thus, thus I burst it. (*Stabs himself, and she catches his arm.*)

Lady D. Ah!

Lord D. Let go my arm! my soul is in a loathsome prison, and this stroke delivers it. (*Stabs himself again.*)

Lady D. Help! for the love of heaven, some help!—[*Enter CHARLES DAVENANT and Servants.*]
—Oh! Charles, your father has destroyed himself.

Charles. Merciful God! he is dying.

Lady D. The agonies of death are upon him. Assist me to take him off: I can't support him: he will die upon the floor.

Lord D. Yes, yes, 'tis over. Tell not my son the cause till I am dead. This was the only kindness I could shew him. I am sorry to present a spectacle so bloody to you both; but poison worked too sluggishly, nor could I bear its agonies. Oh! keep her from the sight of me! She comes!

Enter MARIANNE, followed by CAPTAIN DORMER.

Mar. What have we here? Oh, horrible! what dying man is this?

Lord D. Oh! hide me! cover me with clouds! I sink, I die—have pity for me, heaven!—'tis past. (*Dies.*)

Mar. Let me come to him: let me see his face. 'Tis he! avenging heaven! it is my husband.

Capt. Lord Davenant your husband! complicated misery!

Charles. Her husband, and my father!

Lady D. The horrid mystery is solved.

Mar. Then, let me die; let my heart burst at once, and bury me for ever in oblivion.

Lady D. No; whilst my arms, my friendship can uphold you, you shall never fall. Come from the body, Charles: cease to contemplate that bloody object.

Charles. Nay, but be silent—it is done—he's dead. I will be dumb, henceforth; but have some care of me; for if my reason fails, and not remembering he was my father, I should shock nature's hearing with a curse, 'twill be the brain's depravity, and not the heart's.

Lady D. Alas! unhappy friends, my spirits will not serve to give you consolation; but let us patiently await, and it will come from heaven: the same dispensing hand, that to the blameless bosom deals the wound, will, in its own good time, administer the cure. [*Exeunt.*]

OROONOKO;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY THOMAS SOUTHERN.



Act V.—Scene 4.

CHARACTERS.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
CAPTAIN DRIVER
OROONOKO
BLANDFORD
ABOAN

HOTMAN
STANMORE
JACK STANMORE
DANIEL
PLANTERS

WIDOW LACKITT
CHARLOTTE WELDON
LUCY WELDON
IMOINDA
SLAVES

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter CHARLOTTE WELDON, in man's clothes,
following LUCY.

Lucy. What will this come to? what can it end in? You have persuaded me to leave dear England, and dearer London, the place of the world most worthy living in, to follow you, a husband-hunting, into America: I thought husbands grew in these plantations.

Char. Why, so they do, as thick as oranges ripening one under another. Week after week they drop into some woman's mouth. 'Tis but a little patience, spreading your apron in expectation, and one of them will fall into your lap at last.

Lucy. Ay, say you so, indeed?

Char. But you have left dear London, you say; pray, what have you left in London that was very dear to you, that had not left you before?

Lucy. Speak for yourself, sister.

Char. Nay, I'll keep you in countenance. The young fellows, you know, the dearest part of the town, and without whom London had been a wilderness to you and me, had forsaken us a great while. [had us.

Lucy. Forsaken us! I don't know that ever they

Char. Forsaken us the worst way, child; that is, did not think us worth having: they neglected us, no longer designed upon us, they were tired of us. Women in London are like the rich silks, they are out of fashion a great while before they wear out.

Lucy. The devil take the fashion, I say.

Char. You may tumble them over and over at their first coming up, and never disparage their price; but they fall upon wearing immediately, lower and lower in their value, till they come to the

broker at last. To prevent which, with what youth and beauty were left, some experience, and the small remainder of fifteen hundred pounds a piece, which amounted to bare two hundred between us both, I persuaded you to bring your person for a venture to the Indies. Everything has succeeded in our voyage: I pass for your brother; one of the richest planters here happening to die just as we landed, I have claimed kindred with him; so without making his will, he has left us the credit of his relation to trade upon: we pass for his cousins, coming here to Surinam chiefly upon his invitation: we live in reputation; have the best acquaintance in the place; and we shall see our account in't, I warrant you.

Lucy. I must rely upon you.

Enter WIDOW LACKITT.

Widow L. Mr. Weldon, your servant. Your servant, Mrs. Lucy: I am an ill visitor, but 'tis not too late, I hope, to bid you welcome to this side of the world. (*Salutes Lucy.*)

Char. 'Gadso! I beg your pardon, widow, I should have done the civilities of my house before; but, as you say, 'tis not too late, I hope. (*Going to kiss her.*)

Widow L. What, you think now this was a civil way of begging a kiss; and by my troth, if it were, I see no harm in't: 'tis a pitiful favour indeed that is not worth asking for; though I have known a woman speak plainer before now, and not understood neither.

Char. Not under my roof. Have at you widow.

Widow L. Why, that's well said; spoke like a younger brother, that deserves to have a widow. (*Char. kisses her.*) You're a younger brother, I know by your kissing.

Char. How so, pray?

Widow L. Why, you kiss as if you expected to be paid for't. You stick so close, there's no getting rid of you.

Char. I am akin to a younger brother.

Widow L. So much the better: we widows are commonly the better for younger brothers.

Lucy. Better or worse, most of you. But you won't be much the better for him, I can tell you. (*Aside.*)

Char. I was a younger brother; but an uncle of my mother's has maliciously left me an estate, and I'm afraid, spoiled my fortune.

Widow L. No, no; an estate will never spoil your fortune; I have a good estate myself, thank heaven and a kind husband that left it behind him.

Char. Thank heaven that took him away from it, widow, and left you behind him.

Widow L. Nay, heaven's will must be done; he's in a better place.

Char. A better place for you, no doubt on't. Now you may look about you; choose for yourself, Mrs. Lackitt, that's your business; for I know you design to marry again.

Widow L. Nay, I'll do nothing rashly; I'll resolve against nothing. The devil, they say, is very busy upon these occasions, especially with the widows. But, if I am to be tempted, it must be with a young man, I promise you. Mrs. Lucy, your brother is a very pleasant gentleman; I came about business to him, but he turns everything into merriment.

Char. Business, Mrs. Lackitt? Then I know you would have me to yourself. Pray, leave us together, sister. [*Exit Lucy.*] What am I drawing upon myself here? (*Aside.*)

Widow L. You have taken a very pretty house here; everything so neat about you already. I hear you are laying out for a plantation.

Char. Why, yes, truly, I like the country, and would buy a plantation, if I could reasonably.

Widow L. Oh! by all means, reasonably.

Char. If I could have one to my mind, I would think of settling among you.

Widow L. Oh! you can't do better. Indeed, we can't pretend to have so good company for you as you had in England; but we shall make very much of you. For my own part, I assure you, I shall think myself very happy to be more particularly known to you.

Char. Dear Mrs. Lackitt, you do me too much honour.

Widow L. Then as to a plantation, Mr. Weldon, you know I have several to dispose of. Mr. Lackitt, I thank him, has left, though I say it, the richest widow upon the place; therefore, I may afford to use you better than other people can. You shall have one upon any reasonable terms, Mr. Weldon. Well, I like that name of your's exceedingly, Mr. Weldon.

Char. My name?

Widow L. Oh, exceedingly! If anything could persuade me to alter my own name, I verily believe nothing in the world would do it so soon as to be called Mrs. Weldon.

Char. I'm glad you like my name.

Widow L. Of all things. But then there's the misfortune, one cannot change one's name without changing one's condition.

Char. You hardly think it worth that, I believe.

Widow L. Think it worth what, sir? changing my condition? indeed, sir, I think it worth everything. But, alas! Mr. Weldon, I have buried my poor dear husband but six weeks; poor dear creature! I loved him sincerely: 'tis too soon to think of changing one's condition yet; indeed it is: pray don't desire it of me; not but that you may persuade me to anything sooner than any person in the world—

Char. Who, I, Mrs. Lackitt?

Widow L. Indeed you may, Mr. Weldon, sooner than any man living. Lord! there's a great deal in

saving a decency; I never minded it before. Well, I am glad you spoke first, to excuse my modesty. Now I will own to you (but I won't confess neither,) I have had a great respect for you a great while. I beg your pardon, sir; and I must declare to you, indeed I must, if you desire to dispose of all I have in the world, in an honourable way, my fortune and person, (if you won't understand me without telling you so), are both at your service. 'Gadso! another time—

Enter STANMORE.

Stan. So, Mrs. Lackitt, your widowhood's weaning apace; I see which way 'tis going. Weldon, you're a happy mau. The women and their favours come home to you.

Widow L. A fiddle of favour, Mr. Stanmore; I am a lone woman, you know it, left in a great deal of business, and business must be followed or lost. I have several stocks and plantations upon my hands, and other things to dispose of, which Mr. Weldon may have occasion for.

Char. We were just upon the brink of a bargain as you came in.

Stan. Let me drive it on for you.

Char. So you must, I believe, you or somebody for me.

Stan. I'll stand by you: I understand more of this business than you can pretend to.

Char. I don't pretend to it; 'tis quite out of my way, indeed.

Stan. If the widow gets you to herself, she will certainly be too hard for you: I know her of old; she has no conscience in a corner; a very Jew in a bargain.

Char. Is this true, widow?

Widow L. Speak as you find, Mr. Weldon; I have offered you very fair; think upon't, and let me hear of you; the sooner the better, Mr. Weldon.

[*Exit.*]

Stan. I assure you, my friend, she'll cheat you if she can.

Char. I don't know that, but I can cheat her if I will.

Stan. Cheat her! How?

Char. I can marry her; and then I am sure I have it in my power to cheat her.

Stan. Can you marry her?

Char. Yes, faith! so she says: her pretty person and fortune (which, one with the other, you know, are not contemptible,) are both at my service.

Stan. Contemptible! very considerable, egad! very desirable; why, she's worth twenty thousand pounds, man; a clear estate; no charge upon't, but a boobily son. He, indeed, was to have half; but his father begot him, and she breeds him up not to know or have more than she has a mind to.

Char. There's a great deal to be made of this. (*Musing.*)

Stan. A handsome fortune may be made on't; and I advise you to't by all means.

Char. To marry her! an old wanton witch! I hate her.

Stan. No matter for that; let her go to the devil for you. She'll cheat her son of a good estate for you: that's a perquisite of a widow's portion always.

Char. I have a design, and will follow her at least, till I have a pennyworth of the plantation.

Stan. I speak as a friend when I advise you to marry her, for 'tis directly against the interest of my own family. My cousin Jack has belaboured her a good while that way.

Char. What! honest Jack? I'll not hinder him. I'll give over the thoughts of her.

Stan. He'll make nothing on't; she does not care for him. I'm glad you have her in your power.

Char. I may be able to serve him.

Stan. Here's a ship come into the river; I was in hopes it had been from England.

Char. From England?

Stan. No; I was disappointed; I long to see this

handsome cousin of your's: the picture you gave me of her has charmed me.

Char. You'll see whether it has flattered her or no, in a little time. If she be recovered of that illness that was the reason of her staying behind us, I know she will come with the first opportunity. We shall see her, or hear of her death.

Stan. We'll hope the best. The ships from England are expected every day.

Char. What ship is this?

Stan. A rover, a buccaneer, a trader in slaves: that's the commodity we deal in, you know. If you have a curiosity to see our manner of marketing, I'll wait upon you.

Char. We'll take my sister with us. [Exit.

SCENE II.—An open Place.

Enter LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR and BLANDFORD.

Lieut. There's no resisting your fortune, Blandford; you draw all the prizes.

Bland. I draw for our lord governor; you know his fortune favours me.

Lieut. I grudge him nothing this time; but if fortune had favoured me in the last sale, the fair slave had been mine; Clemene had been mine.

Bland. Are you still in love with her?

Lieut. Every day more in love with her.

Enter CAPTAIN DRIVER, teased and pulled about by WIDOW LACKITT and several Planters, at one door; at another, CHARLOTTE WELDON, dressed in man's clothes, LUCY, STANMORE, and JACK STANMORE.

Widow L. Here have I six slaves in my lot, and not a man among them; all women and children; what can I do with 'em, Captain?

1 Plan. I have all men in mine. Pray, Captain, let the men and women be mingled together, for the good of the plantation.

2 Plan. Ay, ay; a man and a woman, Captain, for the good of the plantation.

Capt. D. Let them mingle together, and be d—d; what care I. Would you have me a pimp for the good of the plantation?

1 Plan. I am a constant customer, Captain.

Widow L. I am always ready money to you, Captain.

1 Plan. For that matter, mistress, my money is as ready as your's.

Widow L. Pray hear me, Captain.

Capt. D. Look you, I have done my part by you; I have brought the number of slaves I bargained for; if your lots have not pleased you, you must draw again among yourselves.

3 Plan. I am contented with my lot.

4 Plan. I am very well satisfied.

3 Plan. We'll have no drawing again.

Widow L. Ay, but—

Capt. D. Do you hear, mistress? you may hold your tongue; for my part, I expect my money.

Widow L. Captain, nobody questions or scruples the payment; but I won't hold my tongue; 'tis too much to pray and pay too; one may speak for one's own, I hope.

Capt. D. Well, what would you say?

Widow L. I say no more than I can make out.

Capt. D. Out with it then.

Widow L. I say things have not been so fair carried as they might have been. How do I know but you have juggled together in my absence? You drew the lots before I came, I'm sure.

Capt. D. That's your own fault, mistress; you might have come sooner.

Widow L. Then here's a prince, as they say, among the slaves, and you set him down to go as a common man.

Capt. D. I'll warrant you.

Widow L. Sir, you're a scurvy fellow, to talk at this rate to me. If my husband were alive, gads-bodikins! you would not use me so. Marry come

up here, who are you, I trow? You begin to think yourself a captain, forsooth, because we call you so. You forget yourself as fast as you can; but I remember you; I know you for a pitiful, paltry fellow as you are, an upstart to prosperity; one that is but just come acquainted with cleanliness, and that never saw five shillings of your own without deserving to be hanged for them.

Lieut. She has given you a broadside, Captain; you'll stand up to her.

Capt. D. Hang her! I'll come no nearer.

Widow L. By this good light, it would make a woman do a thing she never designed; marry again, though she were sure to repent it, and be revenged of such a— [serve you?

Jack S. What's the matter, Mrs. Lackitt? can I

Widow L. No, no; you can't serve me: you are for serving yourself, I'm sure. Pray go about your business. Lord! how can you be so troublesome; nay, so unconscionable, to think that every rich widow must throw herself away upon a young fellow that has nothing?

Stan. Jack, you are answered, I suppose.

Jack S. I'll have another pluck at her.

Widow L. Mr. Weldon, I am a little disconcerted; but pray bring your sister to dine with me. 'Gad's my life! I'm out of all patience with that pitiful fellow. My flesh rises at him; I can't stay in the place where he is. [Exit.

Bland. Captain, you have used the widow very familiarly.

Capt. D. This is my way; I have no design, and therefore am not over civil. If she had ever a handsome daughter to wheedle her out of, or if I could make anything of her booby son—

Char. I may improve that hint, and make something of him. (Aside.)

Lieut. She's very rich.

Capt. D. I'm rich myself. She has nothing that I want; I have no leaks to stop. Old women are fortune-menders. I have made a good voyage, and would reap the fruits of my labour. We plough the deep, my masters; but our harvest is on shore. I am for a young woman.

Stan. Look about, Captain; there's one ripe, and ready for the sickle.

Capt. D. A woman, indeed: I will be acquainted with her. Who is she?

Char. My sister, sir.

Capt. D. Would I were akin to her: if she were my sister, she should never go out of the family. What say you, mistress? You expect I should marry you, I suppose?

Lucy. I shan't be disappointed, if you don't. (Turns away.)

Char. She won't break her heart, sir.

Capt. D. But I mean—(Follows Lucy.)

Char. And I mean—(goes between Capt. D. and Lucy) that you must not think of her without marrying.

Capt. D. I mean so, too.

Char. Why, then, your meaning's out.

Capt. D. You're very short.

Char. I will grow, and be taller for you.

Capt. D. I shall grow angry and swear.

Char. You'll catch no fish, then.

Capt. D. I don't well know whether he designs to affront me or no.

Stan. No, no; he's a little familiar; 'tis his way.

Capt. D. Say you so? I can be as familiar as he, if that be it. Well, sir, look upon me full. How do you like me for a brother-in-law?

Char. Why yes, you'll do my business, (turning him about) if we can agree about my sister's.

Capt. D. I don't know whether your sister will like me or not: I can't say much to her; but I have money enough; and if you are her brother, as you seem to be akin to her, I know that will recommend me to you.

Char. This is your market for slaves; my sister

is a free woman, and must not be disposed of in public. You shall be welcome to my house, if you please; and, upon better acquaintance, if my sister likes you, and I like your offers—

Capt. D. Very well, sir, I'll come and see her.

Lieut. Where are the slaves, Captain? they are long a-coming.

Bland. And who is this prince that's fallen to my lot for the lord-governor? Let me know something of him, that I may treat him accordingly.—Who is he?

Capt. D. He's the devil of a fellow, I can tell you; a prince every inch of him: you have paid dear enough for him for all the good he'll do you: I was forced to clap him in irons, and did not think the ship safe neither. You are in hostility with the Indians, they say; they threaten you daily: you had best have an eye upon him.

Bland. But who is he?

Lieut. And how do you know him to be a prince?

Capt. D. He is son and heir to the great king of Angola, a mischievous monarch in those parts; who, by his good will, would never let any of his neighbours be in quiet. This son was his general, a plaguy fighting fellow. I have formerly had dealings with him for slaves, which he took prisoners, and have got pretty roundly by him. But the wars being at an end, and nothing more to be got by the trade of that country, I made bold to bring the prince along with me.

Lieut. How could you do that?

Bland. What! steal a prince out of his own country? Impossible!

Capt. D. 'Twas hard indeed; but I did it. You must know this Oroonoko—

Bland. Is that is name?

Capt. D. Ay, Oroonoko.

Lieut. Oroonoko.

Capt. D. Is naturally inquisitive about the men and manners of the white nations. Because I could give him some account of the other parts of the world, I grew very much into his favour: in return of so great an honour, you know, I could do no less, upon my coming away, than invite him on board me. Never having been in a ship, he appointed his time, and I prepared my entertainment. He came the next evening, as private as he could, with about some twenty along with him. The punch went round; and as many of his attendants as would be dangerous, I sent dead drunk on shore; the rest we secured; and so you have the Prince Oroonoko.

Bland. Unheard of villany!

Stan. Barbarous treachery!

Lieut. But, Captain, methinks you have taken a great deal of pains for this Prince Oroonoko; why did you part with him at the common rate of slaves?

Capt. D. Why, Lieutenant-Governor, I'll tell you: I did design to carry him to England, to have shewed him there; but I found him troublesome upon my hands, and I'm glad I'm rid of him. Oh, oh! hark! they come.

Enter black Slaves, Men, Women, and Children; ABOAN and others of Oroonoko's attendants, and OROONOKO in chains.

Lucy. Are all these wretches slaves?

Stan. All sold, they and their posterity, all slaves.

Lucy. O miserable fortune!

Bland. Most of them know no better; they were born so, and only change their masters. But a prince, born only to command, betrayed and sold, my heart drops blood for him.

Capt. D. Now, governor, here he comes; pray observe him.

Oroo. So, sir, you have kept your word with me. *(To Capt. D.)*

Capt. D. I am a better Christian, I thank you, than to keep it with a heathen.

Oroo. You are a Christian; be a Christian still. If you have any god that teaches you To break your word, I need not curse you more: Let him cheat you, as you are false to me. You faithful followers of my better fortune, We have been fellow-soldiers in the field;

(Embracing his Friends.)

Now we are fellow-slaves. This last farewell.

Be sure of one thing that will comfort us, Whatever world we are next thrown upon Cannot be worse than this.

[All the Slaves go off but Oroonoko.]

Capt. D. You see what a horrible Pagan he is, governor; but I took care that none of his followers should be in the same lot with him, for fear they should undertake some desperate action, to the danger of the colony.

Oroo. Live still in fear; it is the villain's curse, And will revenge my chains; fear even me, Who have no power to hurt thee. Nature abhors, And drives thee out from the society And commerce of mankind, for breach of faith.

Men live and prosper but in mutual trust.

A confidence of one another's truth;

That thou hast violated. I have done;

I know my fortune, and submit to it.

Lieut. Sir, I am sorry for your fortune, and would help it if I could.

Bland. Take off his chains. You know your condition; but you are fallen into honourable hands: you are the lord-governor's slave, who will use you nobly; in his absence, it shall be my care to serve you. *(Blandford applying to him.)*

Oroo. I hear you, but I can believe no more.

Lieut. Captain, I'm afraid the world won't speak so honourably of this action of your's, as you would have them.

Capt. D. I have the money; let the world speak and be d—d; I care not.

Oroo. I would forget myself. Be satisfied.

(To Bland.)

I am above the rank of common slaves:

Let that content you. The Christian here that knows me,

For his own sake will not discover more.

Capt. D. I have other matters to mind. You have him, and much good may do you with your prince. *[Exit.]*

(The Planters pulling and staring at Oroonoko.)

Bland. What would you have there? You stare as if you never saw a man before. Stand further off. *(Turns them away.)*

Oroo. Let them stare on.

I am unfortunate, but not asham'd

Of being so. No, let the guilty blush:

The white man that betray'd me. Honest black

Disdains to change its colour. I am ready;

Where must I go? Dispose me as you please.

I am not well acquainted with my fortune,

But must learn to know it better: so, I know, you say,

Degrees make all things easy.

Bland. All things shall be easy.

Oroo. Tear off this pomp, and let me know myself;

The slavish habit best becomes me now.

Hard fate, and whips, and chains may overpower

The frailer flesh, and bow my body down:

But there's another, nobler part of me,

Out of your reach, which you can never tame.

Bland. You shall find nothing of this wretchedness

You apprehend. We are not monsters all.

You seem unwilling to disclose yourself;

Therefore, for fear the mentioning your name

Should give you new disquiets, I presume

To call you Cæsar.

Oroo. I am myself; but call me what you please.

Stan. A very good name Cæsar.

Lieut. And very fit for his character.

Oroo. Was Cæsar then a slave?
Lieut. I think he was; to pirates too. He was a great conqueror, but unfortunate in his friends—

Oroo. His friends were Christians?

Bland. No.

Oroo. No! that's strange.

Lieut. And murder'd by them.

Oroo. I would be Cæsar then. Yet I will live.

Bland. Live to be happier.

Oroo. Do what you will with me.

Bland. I will wait upon you, attend, and serve you.

[*Exit with Oroonoko.*]

Lucy. Well, if the Captain had brought this prince's country along with him, and would make me queen of it, I would not have him, after doing so base a thing.

Char. He's a man to thrive in the world, sister; he'll make you the better jointure.

Lucy. Hang him, nothing can prosper with him.

Stan. Inquire into the great estates, and you'll find most of them depend upon the same title of honesty: the men who raise them first are much of the Captain's principles.

Char. Ay, ay, as you say, let him be damned for the good of his family. Come, sister, we are invited to dinner.

Lieut. Stanmore, you dine with me. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Widow Lackitt's House.*

Enter WIDOW LACKITT, and CHARLOTTE WELDON, in man's clothes.

Char. This is so great a favour, I don't know how to receive it.

Widow L. O, dear sir! you know how to receive and how to return a favour as well as anybody, I don't doubt it; 'tis not the first you have had from our sex, I suppose.

Char. But this is so unexpected.

Widow L. Lord, how can you say so, Mr. Weldon? I won't believe you. Don't I know you handsome gentlemen expect everything a woman can do for you? and by my troth, you're in the right on't. I think one can't do too much for a handsome gentleman; and so you shall find it.

Char. I shall never have such an offer again, that's certain. What shall I do? I am mightily divided. [*Pretending a concern.*]

Widow L. Divided! O dear, I hope not so, sir. If I marry, truly, I expect to have you to myself.

Char. There's no danger of that, Mrs. Lackitt: I am divided in my thoughts; my father upon his death-bed obliged me to see my sister disposed of, before I married myself. 'Tis that sticks upon me.

Widow L. Is that all?

Char. All in all to me. The commands of a dying father, you know, ought to be obeyed.

Widow L. And so they may.

Char. Impossible, to do me any good.

Widow L. They sha'n't be your hindrance. You would have a husband for your sister, you say: he must be very well to pass too in the world, I suppose.

Char. I would not throw her away.

Widow L. Then marry her out of hand to the sea-captain you were speaking of.

Char. I was thinking of him, but 'tis to no purpose; she hates him.

Widow L. Does she hate him? nay, 'tis no matter, an impudent rascal as he is; I would not advise her to marry him.

Char. Can you think of nobody else?

Widow L. Let me see. Well, if I thought you would like of it, I have a husband for her. What do you think of my son?

Char. You don't think of it yourself.

Widow L. I protest but I do: I am in earnest, if you are: he shall marry her within this half hour, if you'll give your consent to it.

Char. I give my consent! I'll answer for my sister, she shall have him; you may be sure I shall be glad to get over the difficulty.

Widow L. No more to be said then, that difficulty is over; but I vow and swear you frightened me, Mr. Weldon. If I had not had a son now for your sister, what must I have done, do you think? Were not you an ill-natured thing to boggle at a promise? I could break twenty for you.

Char. I am the more obliged to you; but this son will save all.

Widow L. He's in the house; I'll go and bring him myself. [*Going.*] You would do well to break the business to your sister. She's within, I'll send her to you. [*Going, returns.*]

Char. Pray do.

Widow L. But, d'you hear? perhaps she may stand upon her maidenly behaviour, and blush, and play the fool, and delay; but don't be answered so. What! she is not a girl at these years. Shew your authority, and tell her roundly, she must be married immediately. I'll manage my son, I warrant you.

[*Exit hastily.*]

Char. The widow's in haste, I see; I thought I had laid a rub in the road, about my sister; but she has stepp'd over that. She's making way for herself as fast as she can; but little thinks where she is going. I could tell her she is going to play the fool; but people don't love to hear of their faults; besides that is not my business at present.

Enter LUCY.

So, sister, I have a husband for you.

Lucy. With all my heart. I don't know what confinement marriage may be to the men, but I'm sure the women have no liberty without it. I'm for anything that will deliver me from the care of a reputation, which I begin to find impossible to preserve.

Char. I'll ease you of that care. You must be married immediately.

Lucy. The sooner the better; for I'm quite tired of setting up for a husband. The widow's foolish son is the man, I suppose?

Char. I considered your constitution, sister; and, finding you would have occasion for a fool, I have provided accordingly.

Lucy. I don't know what occasion I may have for a fool when I'm married; but I find none but fools have occasion to marry.

Char. Since he is to be a fool, then, I thought it better for you to have one of his mother's making than your own; 'twill save you the trouble.

Lucy. I thank you; you take a great deal of pains for me; but pray tell me what you are doing for yourself all this while?

Char. You are never true to your own secrets, and therefore I won't trust you with mine. Only remember this, I am your eldest sister, and consequently, laying my breeches aside, have as much occasion for a husband as you can have. I have a man in my eye, be satisfied.

Enter WIDOW LACKITT, with her Son DANIEL.

Widow L. Come, Daniel, hold up thy head, child; look like a man; you must not take it as you have done. 'Gads my life! there's nothing to be done with twirling your hat, man.

Dan. Why, mother, what's to be done then?

Widow L. Why, look me in the face, and mind what I say to you.

Dan. Marry, who's the fool then? What shall I get by minding what you say to me?

Widow L. Mrs. Lucy, the boy is bashful, don't discourage him: pray come a little forward, and let him salute you. [*Going between Lucy and Daniel.*]

Lucy. A fine husband I am to have, truly. [*To Char.*]

Widow L. Come, Daniel, you must be acquainted with this gentleman.

Dan. Nay, I'm not proud, that is not my fault: I am presently acquainted when I know the company; but this gentlewoman is a stranger to me.

Widow L. She is your mistress: I have spoke a good word for you; make her a bow, and go and kiss her.

Dan. Kiss her! have a care what you say; I warrant she scorns your words. Such fine folks are not used to be slopp'd and kiss'd. Do you think I don't know that, mother?

Widow L. Try her, try her, man. (*Daniel bows, she thrusts him forward.*) Why that's well done; go nearer to her.

Dan. Is the devil in the woman? Why, so I can go nearer her, if you would let a body alone. (*To his Mother.*) Cry your mercy, forsooth; my mother is always shaming one before company; she would have me as unmannerly as herself, and offer to kiss you. (*To Lucy.*)

Char. Why won't you kiss her?

Dan. Why, pray may I?

Char. Kiss her, kiss her, man.

Dan. Marry, and I will. (*Kisses her.*) Gad-zooks, she kisses rarely! An' please you, mistress, and seeing my mother will have it so, I don't much care if I kiss you again, forsooth. (*Kisses her again.*)

Lucy. Well, how do you like me now?

Dan. Like you? marry, I don't know; you have bewitched me, I think: I was never so in my born days before.

Widow L. You must marry this fine woman, Daniel.

Dan. Heyday! marry her! I was never married in all my life. What must I do with her then, mother!

Widow L. You must live with her, eat and drink with her, and sleep with her.

Dan. Nay marry, I shall never sleep, that's certain; she'll break of my rest, quite and clean, I tell you before-hand. As for eating and drinking with her, why I have a good stomach, and can play my part in any company. But how do you think I can go to bed to a woman I don't know?

Char. You shall know her better.

Dan. Say you so, sir?

Char. Kiss her again. (*Kisses her again.*)

Dan. Nay, kissing I find will make us presently acquainted. We'll steal into a corner to practice a little, and then I shall be able to do anything.

Char. The young man mends apace.

Dan. Mother, mother, if you'll stay in the room by me, and promise not to leave me, I don't care for once if I venture to go to bed with her.

Widow L. There's a good child, go in and put on thy best clothes; pluck up a spirit; I'll stay in the room by thee. She won't hurt thee, I warrant thee.

Dan. Nay, as to that matter, I am not afraid of her. I'll give her as good as she brings. I have a Rowland for her Oliver, and so thou may tell her. [*Exit.*]

Widow L. Mrs. Lucy, we sha'n't stay for you; you are in readiness I suppose?

Char. She is always ready to do what I would have her, I must say that for my sister.

Widow L. 'Twill be her own another day, Mr. Weldon; we'll marry 'em out of hand, and then—

Char. And then, Mrs. Lackitt, look to yourself. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter OROONOKO and BLANDFORD.

Oroo. You know my story, and you say you are a friend to my misfortunes: that's a name will teach you what you owe yourself and me.

Bland. I'll study to deserve to be your friend.

When once our noble governor arrives, With him you will not need my interest: He is too generous not to feel your wrongs. But be assur'd I will employ my pow'r, And find the means to send you home again.

Oroo. I thank you, sir. My honest, wretched friends! (*Sighing.*)

Their chains are heavy; they have hardly found So kind a master. May I ask you, sir, What is become of them? Perhaps I should not. You will forgive a stranger.

Bland. I'll inquire;

And use my best endeavours, where they are, To have 'em gently us'd.

Oroo. Once more I thank you.

You offer every cordial that can keep My hopes alive, to wait a better day. What friendly care can do, you have apply'd: But oh! I have a grief admits no cure.

Bland. You do not know, sir—

Oroo. Can you raise the dead?

Pursue and overtake the wings of time? And bring about again the hours, the days, The years that made me happy?

Bland. That is not to be done

Oroo. No, there is nothing to be done for me.

(*Kneels and kisses the earth.*)

Thou God ador'd! thou ever-glorious sun!

If she be yet on earth, send me a beam

Of thy all-seeing pow'r to light me to her:

Or, if thy sister goddess has preferr'd

Her beauty to the skies, to be a star,

O, tell me where she shines, that I may stand

Whole nights, and gaze upon her.

Bland. I am rude, and interrupt you.

Oroo. I am troublesome:

But pray give me your pardon. My swoln heart

Bursts out its passage, and I must complain,

(O! can you think of nothing dearer to me;

Dearer than liberty, my country, friends,

Much dearer than my life?) that I have lost

The tend'rest, best belov'd, and loving wife.

Bland. Alas! I pity you.

Oroo. Do pity me:

Pity's akin to love; and every thought,

Of that soft kind, is welcome to my soul.

I would be pity'd here.

Bland. I dare not ask

More than you please to tell me: but if you

Think it convenient to let me know

Your story, I dare promise you to bear

A part in your distress, if not assist you.

Oroo. Thou honest-hearted man! I wanted such,

Just such a friend as thou art, that would sit,

Still as the night, and let me talk whole days

Of my Imoinda. O! I'll tell thee all,

From first to last; and pray observe me well.

Bland. I will most heedfully.

Oroo. There was a stranger in my father's court,

Valu'd and honour'd much: he was a white,

The first I ever saw of your complexion.

He chang'd his god for ours, and so grew great;

Of many virtues, and so fam'd in arms,

He still command'd all my father's wars:

I was bred under him. One fatal day,

The armies joining, he before me stepp'd,

Receiving in his breast a poison'd dart

Levell'd at me: he dy'd within my arms.

I've tir'd you already.

Bland. Pray go on.

Oroo. He left an only daughter, whom he brought

An infant to Angola. When I came

Back to the court, a happy conqueror,

Humanity oblig'd me to condole

With this sad virgin for a father's loss,

Lost for my safety. I presented her

With all the slaves of battle, to atone

Her father's ghost. But, when I saw her face,

And heard her speak, I offer'd up myself

To be the sacrifice. She bow'd and blush'd;

I wonder'd and ador'd. The sacred pow'r,

That hath subdu'd me, then inspir'd my tongue,

Inclin'd her heart, and all our talk was love.

Bland. Then you were happy.

Oroo. Oh! I was too happy.

I marry'd her: and, though my country's custom
 Indulg'd the privilege of many wives,
 I swore myself never to know but her.
 O, my Imoinda! But it could not last.
 Her fatal beauty reach'd my father's ears:
 He sent for her to court, where, curs'd court!
 No woman comes but for his amorous use.
 He raging to possess her, she was forc'd
 To own herself my wife. The furious king
 Started at incest; but, grown desperate,
 Not daring to enjoy what he desir'd,
 In mad revenge (which I could never learn)
 He poison'd her, or sent her far, far off,
 Far from my hopes ever to see her more.
Bland. Most barbarous of fathers! the sad tale
 Has struck me dumb with wonder.
Oroo. I have doue.
 I'll trouble you no further: now and then,
 A sigh will have its way: that shall be all.

Enter STANMORE.

Stan. Blandford, the Lieutenant-governor is gone
 to your plantation. He desires you would bring
 the royal slave with you. The sight of his fair mis-
 tress, he says, is an entertainment for a prince. He
 would have his opinion of her.

Oroo. Is he a lover?

Bland. So he says himself. He flatters a beau-
 tiful slave that I have, and calls her mistress.

Oroo. Must he then flatter her to call her mis-
 tress?

I pity the proud man, who thinks himself
 Above being in love. What, though she be a slave,
 She may deserve him.

Bland. You shall judge of that when you see
 her, sir.

Oroo. I go with you. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—*A Plantation.*

*Enter IMOINDA, followed by the LIEUTENANT-
 GOVERNOR.*

Lieut. I have disturb'd you. I confess my faults,
 My fair Clemene; but begin again,
 And I will listen to your mournful song,
 Sweet as the soft complaining nightingale's.
 Sing, sing again,

And let me wonder at the many ways
 You have to ravish me.

Imo. Oh! I can weep
 Enough for you and me, if that will please you.

Lieut. You must not weep: I come to dry your
 tears,

And raise you from your sorrow. I may take
 This pretty hand: I know your modesty
 Would draw it back; but you would take it ill
 If I should let it go.

*(She struggles, and gets her hand from him;
 then he offers to kiss her.)*

Nay, if you struggle with me, I must take—

Imo. You may my life, that I can part with freely.
[Exit.]

Enter BLANDFORD, STANMORE, and OROONOKO.

Bland. So, governor, we don't disturb you, I
 hope!

Your mistress has left you. You were making love:
 She's thankful for the honour, I suppose.

Lieut. Quite insensible to all I say and do.

When I speak to her, she sighs, or weeps,
 But never answers me as I would have her.

Stan. There's something nearer than her slavery,
 that touches her.

Bland. What do her fellow-slaves say of her?
 Can't they find out the cause?

Lieut. Some of them, who pretend to be wiser
 than the rest, and hate her, I suppose, for being
 used better than they are, will needs have it that
 she is with child.

Bland. Poor wretch! if it be so, I pity her.

She has lost a husband, that perhaps was dear
 To her, and then you cannot blame her.

Oroo. If it be so, indeed you cannot blame her.
(Sighing.)

Lieut. No, no; it is not so. If it be so,
 I must still love her; and, desiring still,
 I must enjoy her.

Bland. Try what you can do with fair means, and
 welcome.

Lieut. I'll give you ten slaves for her.

Bland. You know she is our lord governor's:
 but, if I could dispose of her, I would not now,
 especially to you.

Lieut. Why not to me?

Bland. I mean against her will. You are in love
 with her;

And we all know what your desires would have.
 Love stops at nothing but possession.

Where she within your power, you do not know
 How soon you would be tempted to forget
 The nature of the deed; and, may be, act
 A violence you after would repent.

Oroo. 'Tis godlike in you to protect the weak.

Lieut. Fie, fie! I would not force her. Though
 she be

A slave, her mind is free, and should consent.

Oroo. Such honour will engage her to consent:
 And then, if you're in love, she's worth the having.
 Shall we not see the wonder?

Lieut. Have a care;

You have a heart, and she has conqu'ring eyes.

Oroo. I have a heart; but, if it could be false
 To my first vows, ever to love again,

These honest hands should tear it from my breast,
 And throw the traitor from me. O, Imoinda!

Living or dead, I can be only thine. *[Exit.]*

Bland. Imoinda was his wife: she's either dead,
 Or living, dead to him; forc'd from his arms
 By an inhuman father. Another time
 I'll tell you all. *[To Lieut. and Stan. Exeunt.]*

SCENE III.—*Slaves, Men, Women, and Children,
 discovered upon the ground; some rise and dance.*

*During the entertainment, enter the LIEUTENANT-
 GOVERNOR, BLANDFORD, STANMORE, and
 OROONOKO, as spectators; that ended, enter
 CAPTAIN DRIVER, JACK STANMORE, and several
 Planters, with their swords drawn. Drum beats.*

Capt. D. Where are you, governor? Make what
 haste you can

To save yourself and the whole colony.
 I bid 'em ring the bell.

Lieut. What's the matter?

Jack S. The Indians are come down upon us;
 they have plundered some of the plantations already,
 and are marching this way as fast as they can.

Lieut. What can we do against them?

Bland. We shall be able to make a stand till
 more planters come in to us.

Jack S. There are a great many more without,
 if you would shew yourself, and put us in order.

Lieut. There's no danger of the white slaves,
 they'll not stir. Blandford and Stanmore, come
 you along with me. Some of you stay here to look
 after the black slaves.

*[All go out but the Captain and six Planters,
 who all at once seize Oroonoko.]*

1 Plan. Ay, ay, let us alone.

Capt. D. In the first place, we secure you, sir,
 as an enemy to the government.

Oroo. Are you there, sir? You are my constant
 friend.

1 Plan. You will be able to do a great deal of
 mischief.

Capt. D. But we shall prevent you: bring the
 irons hither. He has the malice of a slave in him,
 and would be glad to be cutting his masters' throats.
 I know him. Chain his hands and feet, that he may
 not ruu over to 'em. If they have him, they'll carry
 him on their backs, that I can tell 'em.

As they are chaining him, re-enter BLANDFORD, who runs to them.

Bland. What are you doing there?

Capt. D. Securing the main chance: this is a bosom enemy.

Bland. Away, you brutes! I'll answer with my life for his behaviour; so tell the governor.

Capt. D. & Plan. Well, sir, so we will.

[*Exeunt Capt. D. and Planters.*]

Oroo. Give me a sword, and I'll deserve your trust.

A party of Indians enter, hurrying IMOINDA among the slaves; another party of Indians sustains them retreating, followed at a distance by the LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR, with the Planters: Blandford and Oroonoko join them.

Bland. Hell and the devil! they drive away our slaves before our faces. Governor, can you stand tamely by, and suffer this? Clemene, sir, your mistress, is among 'em.

Lieut. We throw ourselves away in the attempt to rescue them.

Oroo. A lover cannot fall more glorious, Than in the cause of love. He that deserves His mistress' favour, wo' not stay behind: I'll lead you on; be bold, and follow me.

[*Oroonoko at the head of the Planters, falls upon the Indians with a great shout, and beats them off.*]

Enter IMOINDA.

Imo. I'm tost about by my tempestuous fate, And no where must have rest. Indians or English: Whoever has me, I am still a slave.

No matter whose I am, since I'm no more My royal master's; since I'm his no more.

O, I was happy! nay, I will be happy In the dear thought that I am still his wife, Though far divided from him. (*Retires.*)

Re-enter LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR, OROONOKO, BLANDFORD, STANMORE, and Planters.

Lieut. Thou glorious man! thou something greater sure

Than Cæsar ever was! that single arm Has sav'd us all: accept our gen'ral thanks.

(*All bow to Oroonoko.*)

And what we can do more to recompense Such noble services, you shall command.

Clemene, too, shall thank you—she is safe— Look up, and bless your brave deliverer.

(*Brings Imoinda forward, looking downwards.*)

Oroo. Bless me indeed!

Bland. You start!

Oroo. O, all you gods,

Who govern this great world, and bring about Things strange and unexpected! Can it be!

Lieut. What is't you stare at so?

Oroo. Answer me some of you, you who have pow'r,

And have your senses free: or are you all Struck through with wonder too?

(*Looking still fixedly on Imoinda.*)

Bland. What would you know?

Oroo. My soul steals from my body through my eyes;

All that is left of life I'll gaze away, And die upon the pleasure.

Lieut. This is strange!

Oroo. If you but mock me with her image here:

If she be not Imoinda—

(*She looks upon him and falls into a swoon; he runs to her.*)

Ha! She faints!

Nay, then, it must be she: it is Imoinda!

My heart confesses her, and leaps for joy, To welcome her to her own empire here.

(*Kisses her.*)

Imoinda! Oh! thy Oroonoko calls.

Imo. (*Recovering.*) My Oroonoko! Oh! I can't believe

What any man can say. But if I am To be deceiv'd, there's something in that name, That voice, that face— (*Stares at him.*) Oh! if I know myself, I cannot be mistaken. (*Embraces him.*)

Oroo. Never here:

You cannot be mistaken: I am your's, Your Oroonoko, all that you would have, Your tender, loving husband.

Imo. All, indeed,

That I would have: my husband! then I am Alive, and waking to the joys I feel: They were so great, I could not think 'em true; But I believe all that you say to me: For truth itself, and everlasting love, Grows in this breast, and pleasure in these arms.

Oroo. Take, take me all: inquire into my heart, (*You know the way to ev'ry secret there,*)

My heart, the sacred treasury of love: And if, in absence, I have misemploy'd A mite from the rich store; if I have spent A wish, a sigh, but what I sent to you; May I be curs'd to wish and sigh in vain, And you not pity me.

Imo. Oh! I believe,

And know you by myself. If these sad eyes, Since last we parted, have beheld the face Of any comfort, or once wish'd to see The light of any other heav'n but you, May I be struck this moment blind, and lose Your blessed sight, never to find you more.

Oroo. Imoinda! Oh! this separation

Has made you dearer, if it can be so, Than you were ever to me. You appear Like a kind star to my benighted steps, To guide me on my way to happiness: I cannot miss it now. Governor, friend, You think me mad: but let me bless you all, Who any ways have been the instruments Of finding her again. Imoinda's found! And ev'ry thing that I would have in her.

(*Embraces her.*)

Stan. Where's your mistress now, governor?

Lieut. Why, where most men's mistresses are forced to be sometimes—with her husband, it seems. But I won't lose her so. (*Aside.*)

Stan. He has fought lustily for her, and deserves her; I'll say that for him.

Bland. Sir, we congratulate your happiness; I do most heartily.

Lieut. And all of us: but how it comes to pass—

Oroo. That will require

More precious time than I can spare you now.

I have a thousand things to ask of her,

And she as many more to know of me.

But you have made me happier, I confess,

Acknowledge it, much happier than I

Have words or pow'r to tell you. Captain, you,

Ev'n you, who most have wrong'd me, I forgive.

I wo' not say you have betray'd me now:

I'll think you but the minister of fate,

To bring me to my lov'd Imoinda here.

Imo. How, how shall I receive you? how be

worthy

Of such endearments, all this tenderness?

These are the transports of prosperity,

When fortune smiles upon us.

Oroo. Let the fools

Who follow fortune, live upon her smiles;

All our prosperity is plac'd in love,

We have enough of that to make us happy.

This little spot of earth you stand upon,

Is more to me than the extended plains

Of my great father's kingdom. Here I reign

In full delights, in joys to pow'r unknown;

Your love my empire, and your heart my throne.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter ABOAN, with several Slaves, and HOTMAN.

Hot. What! to be slaves to cowards! slaves to rogues, who can't defend themselves!

Aboan. Who is this fellow? He talks as if he were acquainted with our design: is he one of us? (*Aside to his own gang.*)

1 Slave. Not yet; but he will be glad to make one, I believe.

Aboan. He makes a mighty noise.

Hot. Go, sneak in corners, whisper out your griefs,

For fear your masters hear you; cringe and crouch Under the bloody whip, like heaten curs, That lick their wounds, and know no other cure.

All, wretches all! you feel their cruelty, As much as I can feel, but dare not groan.

For my part, while I have a life and tongue, I'll curse the authors of my slavery.

Aboan. Have you been long a slave?

Hot. Yes, many years.

Aboan. And do you only curse?

Hot. Curse! only curse! I cannot conjure,

To raise the spirits up of other men;

I am but one. Oh! for a soul of fire,

To warm and animate our common cause,

And make a body of us; then I would

Do something more than curse.

Aboan. That body set on foot, you would be one, A limb, to lend it motion?

Hot. I would be

The heart of it; the head, the hand, the heart:

Would I could see the day!

Aboan. You will do all yourself.

Hot. I would do more

Than I shall speak; but I may find a time—

Aboan. The time may come to you; be ready for't.

Methinks he talks too much; I'll know him more Before I trust him further. (*Aside.*)

1 Slave. If he dares

Half what he says, he'll be of use to us.

Enter BLANDFORD.

Bland. If there be any one among you here That did belong to Oronoko, speak; I come to him.

Aboan. I did belong to him; Aboan my name.

Bland. You are the man I want; pray come with me. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter OROONOKO and IMOINDA.

Oroo. I do not blame my father for his love;

But when I think on his barbarity,

That could expose you to so many wrongs;

Driving you out to wretched slavery,

Only for being mine; then I confess,

I wish I could forget the name of son,

That I might curse the tyrant.

Imo. I will bless him,

For I have found you here: heaven only knows

What is reserv'd for us; but if we guess

The future by the past, our fortune must

Be wonderful; it must be in extremes;

Extremely happy, or extremely wretched.

Oroo. 'Tis in our power to make it happy now.

Imo. But not to keep it so.

Re-enter BLANDFORD with ABOAN.

Bland. My royal lord,

I have a present for you.

Oroo. Aboan!

Aboan. Your lowest slave.

Oroo. My tried and valued friend! (*To Bland.*)

This worthy man always prevents my wants:

I only wish'd, and he has brought thee to me.

Thou art surpris'd; carry thy duty there,

(*Aboan goes to Imoinda, and falls at her feet.*)

While I acknowledge mine. How shall I thank

you? (*To Blandford.*)

Bland. Believe me honest to your interest, And I am more than paid. I have secur'd That all your foll'wers shall be gently us'd, Shall wait upon your person, while you stay Among us.

Oroo. I owe everything to you.

Bland. You must not think you are in slavery.

Oroo. I do not find I am.

Bland. Kind heaven has miraculously sent Those comforts, that may teach you to expect Its further care, in your deliverance.

Oroo. I sometimes think myself heav'n is concern'd

For my deliverance.

Bland. It will be soon;

You may expect it. Pray, in the mean time,

Appear as cheerful as you can among us.

You have some enemies, that represent

You dangerous, and would be glad to find

A reason, in your discontent, to fear.

They watch your looks. But there are honest men

Who are your friends; you are secur'd in them.

Oroo. I thank you for your caution.

Bland. I will leave you;

And be assur'd, I wish your liberty. [*Exit.*]

Aboan. He speaks you very fair.

Oroo. He means me fair.

Aboan. If he should not, my lord?

Oroo. If he should not?

I'll not suspect his truth; but if I did,

What shall I get by doubting?

Aboan. You secure

Not to be disappointed: but, besides,

There's this advantage in suspecting him:

When you put off the hopes of other men,

You will rely upon your godlike self;

And then you may be sure of liberty.

Oroo. Be sure of liberty? what dost thou mean,

Advising to rely upon myself?

I think I may be sure on't: we must wait;

'Tis worth a little patience. (*Turning to Imoinda.*)

Aboan. Oh, my lord!

Oroo. What dost thou drive at?

Aboan. Sir, another time

You would have found it sooner; but I see

Love has your heart, and takes up all your thoughts.

Oroo. And canst thou blame me?

Aboan. Sir, I must not blame you.

But, as our fortune stands, there is a passion

(Your pardon, royal mistress, I must speak)

That would become you better than your love:

A brave resentment; which, inspir'd by you,

Might kindle and diffuse a gen'rous rage

Among the slaves, to rouse and shake our chains,

And struggle to be free.

Oroo. How can we help ourselves?

Aboan. I knew you when you would have found a way.

How help ourselves? the very Indians teach us.

We need but to attempt our liberty,

And we carry it. We have hands sufficient,

Double the number of our masters' force,

Ready to be employ'd. We want but you,

To head our enterprise, and bid us strike.

Oroo. What would you do?

Aboan. Cut our oppressors' throats.

Oroo. And you would have me join in your design Of murder?

Aboan. It deserves a better name:

But be it what it will, 'tis justifi'd

By self-defence, and natural liberty.

Oroo. I'll hear no more on't.

Aboan. I'm sorry for't.

Oroo. Nor shall you think of it.

Aboan. Not think of it?

Oroo. No, I command you not.

Aboan. Remember, sir,

You are a slave yourself, and to command

Is now another's right. Not think of it?

Since the first moment they put on my chains,

I've thought of nothing but the weight of 'em,
And how to throw 'em off. Can your's sit easy?

Oroo. I have a sense of my condition,
As painful and as quick as your's can be.
I feel for my Imoinda and myself;
Imoinda! much the tend'rest part of me.
But though I languish for my liberty,
I would not buy it at the Christian price
Of black ingratitude; they sha' not say
That we deserv'd our fortune by our crimes.
Murder the innocent!

Aban. The innocent!

Oroo. These men are so, whom you would rise
against.

If we are slaves, they did not make us slaves;
But bought us in an honest way of trade;
As we have done before 'em, bought and sold
Many a wretch, and never thought it wrong.
They paid our price for us, and we are now
Their property, a part of their estate,
To manage as they please. Mistake me not,
I do not tamely say that we should bear
All they could lay upon us; but we find
The load so light, so little to be felt
(Considering they have us in their pow'r,
And may inflict what grievances they please,)
We ought not to complain.

Aban. My royal lord,

You do not know the heavy grievances,
The toils, the labours, weary drudgeries,
Which they impose; burdens more fit for beasts,
For senseless beasts to bear, than thinking men.
Then if you saw the bloody cruelties
They execute on ev'ry slight offence;
Nay, sometimes in their proud, insulting sport,
How worse than dogs they lash their fellow crea-
tures,

Your heart would bleed for 'em. Oh! could you
How many wretches lift their hands and eyes
To you for their relief!

Oroo. I pity 'em,

And wish I could with honesty do more.

Aban. You must do more, and may, with honesty.
O, royal sir, remember who you are,
A prince, born for the good of other men;
Whose godlike office is to draw the sword
Against oppression, and set free mankind:
And this I'm sure you think oppression now.
What though you have not felt these miseries,
Never believe you are oblig'd to them;
They have their selfish reasons, may be, now,
For using of you well; but there will come
A time, when you must have your share of 'em.

Oroo. You see how little cause I have to think so:
Favour'd in my own person, in my friends;
Indulg'd in all that can concern my care,
In my Imoinda's soft society. (Embraces her.)

Aban. And, therefore, would you lie contented
down

In the forgetfulness and arms of love,
To get young princes for 'em?

Oroo. Say'st thou? ha!

Aban. Princes, the heirs of empire, and the last
Of your illustrious lineage, to be born
To pamper up their pride, and be their slaves?

Oroo. Imoinda! save me, save me from that
thought.

Aban. I know you are persuaded to believe
The governor's arrival will prevent
These mischiefs, and bestow your liberty;
But who is sure of that? I rather fear
More mischiefs from his coming. He is young,
Luxurious, passionate, and amorous.
Such a complexion, and made bold by pow'r,
To countenance all he is prone to do,
Will know no bounds, no law against his lusts.
If, in a fit of his intemperance,
With a strong hand he shall resolve to seize,
And force my royal mistress from your arms,
How can you help yourself?

Oroo. Ha! thou hast rous'd

The lion in his den; he stalks abroad,
And the wide forest trembles at his roar.
I find the danger now. My spirits start
At the alarm, and from all quarters come
To man my heart, the citadel of love.
Is there a pow'r on earth to force you from me,
And shall I not resist it, nor strike first,
To keep, to save you, to prevent that curse?
This is your cause; and shall it not prevail?
Oh! you were born always to conquer me.
Now I am fashion'd to thy purpose; speak,
What combination, what conspiracy,
Wouldst thou engage me in? I'll undertake
All thou wouldst have me now for liberty,
For the great cause of love and liberty.

Aban. Now, my great master, you appear your-
self;

And, since we have you join'd in our design,
It cannot fail us. I have muster'd up
The choicest slaves, men who are sensible
Of their condition, and seem most resolv'd:
They have their several parties.

Oroo. Summon 'em,
Assemble 'em; I will come forth and shew
Myself among 'em: if they are resolv'd,
I'll lead their foremost resolutions.

Aban. I have provided those will follow you.

Oroo. With this reserve in our proceedings still,
The means that lead us to our liberty
Must not be bloody.

Aban. You command in all.

We shall expect you, sir.

Oroo. You sha' not long.

[Exeunt Oroonoko, Imoinda, and Aban.]

Enter CHARLOTTE WELDON, dressed in man's
clothes, followed by WIDOW LACKITT.

Widow L. These unmannerly Indians were some-
thing unreasonable to disturb us just in the nick,
Mr. Weldon; but I have the parson within call still,
to do us the good turn.

Char. We had best stay a little, I think, to see
things settled again, had not we? Marriage is a
serious thing, you know.

Widow L. What do you talk of a serious thing,
Mr. Weldon? I think you have found me sufficiently
serious: I have married my son to your sister, to
pleasure you; and now I come to claim your prom-
ise to me, you tell me marriage is a serious thing.

Char. Why, is it not?

Widow L. Fiddle faddle, I know what it is: 'tis
not the first time I have been married, I hope; but
I shall begin to think you don't design to do fairly
by me, so I shall.

Char. Why, indeed, Mrs. Lackitt, I'm afraid I
can't do so fairly as I would by you. 'Tis what
you must know first or last; and I should be the
worst man in the world to conceal it any longer;
therefore I must own to you that I am married
already.

Widow L. Married! You don't say so, I hope?
How have you the conscience to tell me such a
thing to my face? I would have you to know I
understand better things than to ruin my son with-
out a valuable consideration. If I can't have you,
I can keep my money. Your sister sha'n't have the
catch of him she expected: I won't part with a
shilling to 'em.

Char. You made the match yourself, you know;
you can't blame me.

Widow L. Yes, yes, I can, and do blame you:
you might have told me before, you were married.

Char. I would not have told you now, but you
followed me so close, I was forced to it: indeed, I
am married in England; but 'tis as if I were not;
for I have been parted from my wife a great while;
and, to do reason on both sides, we hate one ano-
ther heartily. Now I did design, and will marry
you still, if you'll have a little patience.

Widow L. A likely business, truly.

Char. I have a friend in England that I will write to, to poison my wife, and then I can marry you with a good conscience.

Widow L. And will he do it, do you think?

Char. At the first word, or he is not the man I take him to be.

Widow L. Well, you are a dear devil, Mr. Weldon: and would you poison your wife for me?

Char. I would do anything for you.

Widow L. Well, I am mightily obliged to you. But 'twill be a great while before you can have an answer of your letter.

Char. 'Twill be a great while, indeed.

Widow L. In the meantime, Mr. Weldon—

Char. Why, in the meantime—here's company. We'll settle that within; I'll follow you.

[Exit Widow Lackitt.]

Enter STANMORE.

Stan. So, sir, you carry on your business swimmingly: you have stolen a wedding, I hear.

Char. Ay, my sister is married; and I am very near being run away with myself.

Stan. The widow will have you then?

Char. You come very seasonably to my rescue. Jack Stanmore is to be had, I hope?

Stan. At half an hour's warning.

Char. I must advise with you.

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter WIDOW LACKITT, and CHARLOTTE WELDON, dressed in man's clothes.

Char. Now, Mrs. Lackitt.

Widow L. Well, well; Lackitt, or what you will now; now I am married to you; I am very well pleased with what I have done, I assure you. Mr. Weldon, what must I call you? I must have some pretty fond name or other for you; it looks negligent, and is the fashion, you know.

Char. To be negligent of their husbands, it is indeed.

Widow L. Nay, then, I won't be in the fashion; for I can never be negligent of dear Mr. Weldon; and, to convince you, here's something to encourage you not to be negligent of me. (Gives a purse and a little casket.) Five hundred pounds in gold in this; and jewels to the value of five hundred pounds more in this.

Char. (Opens the casket.) Ay, marry, this will encourage me, indeed.

Widow L. There are comforts in marrying an elderly woman, Mr. Weldon. Now a young woman would have fancied she had paid you with her person, or had done you the favour.

Char. What do you talk of young women? you are as young as any of 'em, in everything but their folly and ignorance.

Widow L. And do you think me so? But I have reason to suspect you. Was not I seen at your house this morning, do you think?

Char. You may venture again: you'll come at night, I suppose?

Widow L. O dear! at night! so soon?

Char. Nay, if you think it too soon—

Widow L. Oh, no! 'tis not for that, Mr. Weldon; but—I will come to please you.

Char. To please yourself; own it.

Widow L. Well, well, to please myself, then. You're the strangest man in the world, nothing can escape you.

Enter DANIEL, followed by LUCY.

Dan. What would you have? What do you follow me for?

Lucy. Why, mayn't I follow you? I must follow you now all the world over.

Dan. Hold you, hold you, there; not so far by a mile or two; I have enough of your company already, by'r lady, and something to spare: you

may go home to your brother, and you will; I have no further to do with you.

Widow L. Why, Daniel, child, thou art not out of thy wits, sure, art thou?

Dan. Nay, marry, I don't know; but I am very near, I believe: I am altered for the worse mightily since you saw me; and she has been the cause of it there.

Widow L. How so, child?

Dan. I told you before what would come on't of putting me to bed to a strange woman; but you would not be said nay.

Widow L. She is your wife now, child; you must love her.

Dan. Why, so I did at first.

Widow L. But you must love her always.

Dan. Always! I loved her as I could, mother, and as long as loving was good, I believe; for I find now I don't care a fig for her.

Lucy. Why, you lubberly, slovenly blockhead—I see all good nature is thrown away upon you—

Widow L. It was so with his father before him. He takes after him.

Lucy. And therefore I will use you as you deserve, you tony.

Widow L. Indeed he deserves bad enough; but don't call him out of his name: his name is Daniel, you know.

Dan. Lether call me what she pleases, mother, 'tis not her tongue that I'm afraid of.

Lucy. I will make such a beast of thee!

Widow L. O, pray no, I hope; do nothing rashly, Mrs. Lucy.

Dan. I had rather be a beast than what you would make of me in a week, I'm sure; I have no more manhood left in me already, than there is in one of my mother's old under-petticoats.

Widow L. Sirrah, sirrah, meddle with your wife's petticoats, and let your mother's alone, you ungracious bird, you. (Beats him.)

Dan. Why, is the devil in the woman? What have I said now? Do you know if you were ask'd, I trow? But you are all of a bundle; e'en hang together: he that unties you, makes a rod for himself; and so he will find it that has anything to do with you.

Widow L. Ay, rogue enough, you shall find it; I have a rod for you still.

Dan. No wife, and I care not.

Widow L. I'll swinge you into better manners, you booby. [Beats him off, and exit.]

Char. You have consummated our project upon him.

Lucy. Nay, if I have a limb of the fortune, I care not who has the whole body of the fool.

Char. That you shall, and a large one, I promise you.

Lucy. Have you heard the news? They talk of an English ship in the river.

Char. I have heard on't, and am preparing to receive it as fast as I can.

Lucy. There's something the matter too with the slaves, some disturbance or other; I don't know what it is.

Char. So much the better still; we fish in troubled waters; we shall have fewer eyes upon us. Pray go you home, and be ready to assist me in your part of the design.

Lucy. I can't fail in mine. [Exit.]

Char. The widow has furnish'd me, I thank her, to carry it on. Now I have got a wife, 'tis high time to think of getting a husband. I carry my fortune about me—a thousand pounds in gold and jewels. Let me see, 'twill be a considerable trust; and I think I shall lay it out to advantage.

Enter STANMORE.

Stan. So, Weldon, Jack has told me his success; and his hopes of marrying the widow by your means.

Char. I have strained a point, Stanmore, upon your account, to be serviceable to your family.

Stan. I take it upon my account; and am very much obliged to you. But here we are all in an uproar.

Char. So they say. What's the matter?

Stan. A mutiny among the slaves. Oroonoko is at the head of 'em. Our governor is gone out with his rascally militia against them. What it may come to nobody knows.

Char. For my part, I shall do as well as the rest; but I'm concerned for my sister and cousin, whom I expect in the ship from England.

Stan. There's no danger of them.

Char. I have a thousand pounds here, in gold and jewels, for my cousin's use, that I would more particularly take care of; 'tis too great a sum to venture at home; and I would not have her wrong'd of it; therefore, to secure it, I think my best way will be to put it into your own keeping.

Stan. You have a very good opinion of my honesty. *(Takes the purse and casket.)*

Char. I have indeed. If anything should happen to me in this bustle, as nobody is secure of accidents, I know you will take my cousin into your protection and care. Pray see her married as soon as you can.

Stan. If she be as handsome as her picture, I can promise her a husband.

Char. If you like her when you see her, I wish nothing so much as to have you marry her yourself; for I always thought you worth making a friend.

Stan. You sha' n't find your good opinion thrown away upon me: I am in your debt, and shall think so as long as I live. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—*The Country.*

Enter OROONOKO, ABOAN, and Slaves; IMOINDA with a bow and quiver; the Women, some leading, others carrying their Children upon their backs.

Oroo. The women with their children fall behind. Imoinda, you must not expose yourself. Retire, my love; I almost fear for you.

Imo. I fear no danger; life or death I will enjoy with you.

Oroo. My person is your guard.

Aboan. Now, sir, blame yourself; if you had not prevented my cutting his throat, that coward there had not discovered us. He comes now to upbraid you.

Enter LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR, talking to HOTMAN, with his Rabble.

Lieut. This is the very thing I would have wish'd. Your honest service to the government *(To Hotman.)*

Shall be rewarded with your liberty.

Aboan. His honest service! call it what it is, His villany, the service of his fear. If he pretends to honest services, Let him stand out, and meet me like a man. *(Advances.)*

Oroo. Hold, you! and you who come against us, hold!

I charge you in a general good to all; And wish I could command you, to prevent The bloody havoc of the murdering sword. I would not urge destruction uncompe'll'd: But if you follow fate, you find it here. The bounds are set, the limits of our lives; Between us lies the gaping gulf of death, To swallow all. Who first advances dies.

Enter CAPTAIN DRIVER, with his Crew.

Capt. D. Here, here, here they are, governor. What, seize upon my ship! Come, boys, fall on—

(Advancing first, Oroonoko kills him.)

Oroo. Thou art fall'n indeed; Thy own blood be upon thee.

Lieut. Rest it there;

He did deserve his death. Take him away.

(The body is removed.)

You see, sir, you and those mistaken men Must be our witnesses, we do not come As enemies, and thirsting for your blood.

If we desir'd your ruin, the revenge Of our companion's death had push'd it on. But that we overlook, in a regard

To common safety and the public good.

Oroo. Regard that public good; draw off your men,

And leave us to our fortune;—we're resolv'd.

Lieut. Resolv'd! on what? your resolutions Are broken, overturn'd, prevented, lost:

You see our numbers could with ease compel

What we request; and what do we request?

Only to save yourselves.

(The Women with their Children gather about the Men.)

Oroo. I'll hear no more.

Lieut. To those poor wretches, who have been seduc'd

And led away; to all, and ev'ry one,

We offer a full pardon—

Oroo. Then fall on. *(Preparing to engage.)*

Lieut. Lay hold upon't, before it be too late:

Pardon and mercy.

(The Women clinging about the Men, they leave Oroonoko, and fall upon their faces, crying out for pardon.)

Slaves. Pardon, mercy, pardon.

Oroo. Let them go all. Now, governor, I see, I own the folly of my enterprise,

The rashness of this action, and must blush,

Quite through this veil of night, a whitely shame,

To think I could design to make those free,

Who were by nature slaves; wretches design'd

To be their masters' dogs, and lick their feet.

I would not live on the same earth with creatures,

That only have the faces of their kind.

Why should they look like men, who are not so,

When they put off their noble natures, for

The grov'ling qualities of downcast beasts?

We were too few before for victory;

We're still enow to die. *(To Imoinda and Aboan.)*

Enter BLANDFORD.

Lieut. Live, royal sir:

Live, and be happy long on your own terms;

Only consent to yield, and you shall have

What terms you can propose for you and your's.

Oroo. Consent to yield! shall I betray myself? *(Blandford comes forward.)*

Bland. I'm glad you have proceeded by fair means. *(To Lieutenant-Governor.)*

I came to be a mediator.

Lieut. Try what you can to work upon him.

Oroo. Are you come against me too?

Bland. Is this to come against you?

(Offering his sword to Oroonoko.)

Unarm'd to put myself into your hands?

I come, I hope, to serve you.

Oroo. You have serv'd me;

I thank you for't; and I am pleas'd to think

You were my friend while I had need of one:

But now 'tis past; this farewell, and be gone. *(Embraces him.)*

Bland. It is not past, and I must serve you still.

Oroo. I know what I have done, and I should be

A child to think they ever can forgive.

Forgive! were there but that, I would not live

To be forgiven: is there a power on earth,

That I can ever need forgiveness from?

Bland. You sha' not need it.

Oroo. No, I wo' not need it.

Bland. You see he offers you your own conditions,

For you and your's.

Oroo. Must I capitulate?

Precariously compound, on stinted terms,

To save my life?

Bland. Sir, he imposes none.

You make 'em for your own security.

Lieut. He will rely on what you say to him.

(*To Bland.*)

Offer him what you can; I will confirm
And make all good. Be you my pledge of trust.

Bland. I'll answer with my life for all he says.

Lieut. Ay, do, and pay the forfeit if you please.

(*Aside.*)

Bland. Consider, sir, can you consent to throw
That blessing from you, you so hardly found,
And so much valued once?

Oroo. Imoinda! oh!

'Tis she that holds me on this argument
Of tedious life! I could resolve it soon,
Were this curs'd being only in debate.
But my Imoinda struggles in my soul;
She makes a coward of me, I confess;
I am afraid to part with her in death;
And more afraid of life to lose her here.

Bland. This way you must lose her. Think upon
The weakness of her sex, made yet more weak
With her condition, requiring rest,
And soft indulging ease, to nurse your hope,
And make you a glad father.

Oroo. There I feel

A father's fondness, and a husband's love.
They seize upon my heart, strain all its strings,
To pull me to 'em from my stern resolve.
Husband and father! all the melting art
Of eloquence lives in those soft'n'ing names.
Methinks I see the babe, with infant hands,
Pleading for life, and begging to be born.
Shall I forbid its birth, deny him light,
The heav'nly comforts of all-cheering light,
And make the womb the dungeon of his death,
His bleeding mother his sad monument?

These are the calls of nature, that call loud;
They will be heard, and conquer in their cause:
He must not be a man who can resist 'em.
No, my Imoinda! I will venture all
To save thee and that little innocent.
The world may be a better friend to him
Than I have found it. Now I yield myself:

(*Gives up his sword.*)

The conflict's past, and we are in your hands.

(*Several Men get about Oroonoko and Aboan,
and seize them.*)

Lieut. So you shall find you are. Dispose of
them as I commanded you.

Bland. Good heav'n forbid! you cannot mean—

Lieut. This is not your concern.

(*To Blandford, who goes to Oroonoko.*)

I must take care of you. (*To Imoinda.*)

Imo. I'm at the end

Of all my care: here will I die with him.

(*Holding Oroonoko.*)

Oroo. You shall not force her from me.

(*Holds her.*)

Lieut. Then I must (*They force her from him.*)
Try other means, and conquer force by force:

Break, cut off his hold, bring her away.

Imo. I do not ask to live, kill me but here.

Oroo. O, bloody dogs! inhuman murderers!

[*Imoinda is forced out at one door by the Lieuten-
nant-Governor and others; Oroonoko and Aboan
hurried out another. Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.

*Enter STANMORE, CHARLOTTE WELDON, and
LUCY.*

Char. If I should consent to the fine things you
can say to me, how would you look at last, to find
them thrown away on an old acquaintance?

Stan. An old acquaintance!

Char. Lord, how easily are you men to be im-
posed upon! I am no cousin newly arrived from
England, not I; but the very Weldon you wot of.

Stan. Weldon!

Char. Not murdered, nor made away, as my
sister would have you believe; but am, in very
good health, your old friend in breeches that was,
and now your humble servant in petticoats.

Stan. I am glad we have you again. But what
service can you do me in petticoats, pray?

Char. Can't you tell what?

Stan. Not I, by my troth. I have found my
mistress, it seems; which I did not expect from
your petticoats.

Char. Come, come, you have had a friend of
your mistress long enough; 'tis high time now to
have a mistress of your friend.

Stan. What do you say?

Char. I am a woman, sir.

Stan. A woman?

Char. As arrant a woman as you would have had
me but now, I assure you.

Stan. And at my service?

Char. If you have any for me in petticoats.

Stan. Yes, yes, I shall find you employment.

Char. I need not tell you I made that little plot,
and carried it on only for this opportunity. I was
resolved to see whether you liked me as a woman,
or not; if I had found you indifferent, I would
have endeavoured to have been so too; but you
say you like me, and therefore I have ventured to
discover the truth.

Stan. Like you! I like you so well, that I am
afraid you won't think marriage a proof on't: shall
I give you any other?

Char. No, no, I'm inclined to believe you, and
that shall convince me. At more leisure, I'll sa-
tisfy you how I came to be in man's clothes; for
no ill, I assure you, though I have happened to
play the rogue in them. They have assisted me in
marrying my sister, and have gone a great way in
befriending your cousin Jack with the widow. Can
you forgive me for pimping for your family?

Enter JACK STANMORE.

Stan. So, Jack, what news with you?

Jack S. I am the forepart of the widow you
know; she's coming after with the body of the
family, the young squire in her hand, my son-in-
law that is to be, with the help of Mr. Weldon.

Char. Say you so, sir? (*To Jack S.*)

Enter WIDOW LACKITT and her Son DANIEL.

Widow L. So, Mrs. Lucy, I have brought him
about again; I have chastised him. Will you
ever rebel again? will you, sirrah? But come,
come, down on your marrow-bones, and ask her
forgiveness. (*Daniel kneels.*) Say after me, Pray
forsooth, wife.

Dan. Pray forsooth, wife.

Lucy. Well, this is a day of good nature,
and so I take you into favour; but first take the
oath of allegiance. (*He kisses her hand, and rises.*)
If ever you do so again— [on't.]

Dan. Nay, marry if I do, I shall have the worst

Lucy. Here's a stranger, forsooth, would be glad
to be known to you, a sister of mine; pray salute
her. (*Starts at Charlotte.*)

Widow L. Your sister, Mrs. Lucy! What do
you mean? This is your brother, Mr. Weldon.
Do you think I do not know Mr. Weldon?

Lucy. Have a care what you say; this gentle-
man's about marrying her: you may spoil all.

Widow L. Fiddle-faddle; what! you would put
a trick upon me.

Char. No, faith, widow, the trick is over; it
has taken sufficiently; and now I will teach you
the trick, to prevent your being cheated another
time.

Widow L. How! cheated, Mr. Weldon?

Char. Why ay, you will always take things by
the wrong handle; I see you will have me Mr.
Weldon; I grant you I was Mr. Weldon a little
while, to please you or so; but Mr. Stanmore
here has persuaded me into a woman again.

Widow L. A woman! pray let me speak with you. (*Draws her aside.*) You are not in earnest, I hope, a woman?

Char. Really a woman.

Widow L. Gads my life! I could not be cheated in everything. I know a man from a woman at these years, or the devil is in't. Pray did not you marry me?

Char. You would have it so.

Widow L. And did not I give you a thousand pounds this morning?

Char. Yes, indeed, 'twas more than I deserved; but you had your pennyworth for your penny, I suppose; you seemed to be pleased with your bargain.

Widow L. A rare bargain I have made on't, truly. I have laid out my money to a fine purpose upon a woman.

Char. You would have a husband, and I provided for you as well as I could.

Widow L. Yes, yes, you have provided for me.

Char. And you have paid me very well for't; I thank you.

Widow L. 'Tis very well: I may be with child too, for aught I know, and may go look for the father.

Char. Nay, if you think so, 'tis time to look about you, indeed. For my part, Mrs. Lackitt, your thousand pounds will engage me not to laugh at you. Then my sister is married to your son; he is to have half your estate, I know; and indeed they may live upon it very comfortably to themselves, and very creditably to you.

Widow L. Nay, I can blame nobody but myself.

Char. You have enough for a husband still, and that you may bestow upon honest Jack Stanmore.

Widow L. Is he the man, then?

Char. He is the man you are obliged to.

Jack S. Yes, faith, widow, I am the man.

Widow L. Well, well, I see you will have me; even marry me, and make an end of the business.

Stan. Why, that's well said; now we are all agreed, and all well provided for.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. (To Stanmore.) Sir, Mr. Blandford desires you to come to him, and bring as many of your friends as you can with you.

Stan. I come to him. You shall all go along with me. Come, young gentleman, marriage is the fashion, you see; you must like it now.

Dan. If I dont, how shall I help myself?

Lucy. Nay, you may hang yourself in the noose, if you please, but you'll never get out on't with struggling.

Dan. Come, then, let's e'en jog on in the old road.

Cuckold, or worse, I must now be contented; I'm not the first has married and repented.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR, BLANDFORD, and Planters.

Bland. Have you no reverence for future fame?

No awe upon your actions, from the tongues, The cens'ring tongues of men, that will befree?

Re-enter STANMORE, JACK STANMORE, CHARLOTTE WELDON, LUCY, WIDOW LACKITT, and DANIEL.

So, Stanmore, you, I know, the women too, Will join with me: 'tis Oroonoko's cause, A lover's cause, a wretched woman's cause, That will become your intercession.

(*To the Women.*)

Stan. So far from further wrong, that 'tis a shame

He should be where he is. Good governor, Order his liberty; he yielded up Himself, his all, at your discretion.

Bland. Discretion! no; he yielded on your word; And I am made the cautionary pledge,

The gage and hostage of your keeping it. Remember, sir, he yielded on your word; Your word; which honest men will think should be The last resort of truth and trust on earth: There's no appeal beyond it but to heaven.

Stan. He's out of all power of doing any harm, now, if he were disposed to it.

Char. But he is not disposed to it.

[*soon*]

Bland. To keep him where he is, will make him Find out some desprate way to liberty: He'll hang himself, or dash out his mad brains.

Char. Pray try him by gentle means; we'll all be sureties for him.

Ommes. All, all.

Lucy. We will all answer for him now.

Lieut. Well, you will have it so; do what you please, just what you will with him; I give you leave.

[*Exit.*]

Bland. We thank you, sir; this way, pray come with me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Discovers OROONOKO upon his back, his legs and arms stretched out, and chained to the ground.*

Enter BLANDFORD, STANMORE, &c.

Bland. O miserable sight! help, ev'ry one, Assist me all to free him from his chains.

(*They help him up, and bring him forward.*)

Most injured prince! how shall we clear ourselves?

Oroo. If you would have me think you are not Confederates, all accessory to

[*all*]

The base injustice of your governor;

If you would have me live, as you appear

Concern'd for me; if you would have me live

To thank and bless you, there is yet a way

To tie me ever to your honest love;

Bring my Imoinda to me; give me her,

To charm my sorrows, and, if possible,

I'll sit down with my wrongs, never to rise

Against my fate, or think of vengeance more.

Bland. Be satisfy'd, you may depend on us;

We'll bring her safe to you, and suddenly.

Char. We will not leave you in so good a work.

Widow L. No, no, we'll go with you.

Bland. In the meantime,

Endeavour to forget, sir, and forgive;

And hope a better fortune.

[*Exeunt all but Oroonoko.*]

Oroo. Forget! forgive! I must indeed forget

When I forgive; but while I am a man,

In flesh, that bears the living marks of shame,

The print of his dishonourable chains,

My memory still rousing up my wrongs,

I never can forgive this governor,

This villain; the disgrace of trust and place,

And just contempt of delegated pow'r.

What shall I do? If I declare myself,

I know him, he will sneak behind his guard

Of followers, and brave me in his fears;

Else, lion-like, with my devouring rage.

I would rush on him, fasten on his throat,

Tear a wide passage to his treach'rous heart,

And that way lay him open to the world. (*Pauses.*)

If I should turn his Christian arts on him,

Promise him, speak him fair, flatter, and creep

With fawning steps, to get within his faith,

I could betray him then, as he has me.

But am I sure by that to right myself?

Lying's a certain mark of cowardice:

And, when the tongue forgets its honesty,

The heart and hand may drop their functions too,

And nothing worthy be resolv'd or done.

Let me but find out

An honest remedy, I have the hand,

A minist'ring hand, that will apply it home. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*The Lieutenant-Governor's House.*

Enter LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR.

Lieut. I would not have her tell me she consents; In favour of the sex's modesty—

Enter BLANDFORD, STANMORE, JACK STANMORE, DANIEL, CHARLOTTE WELDON, and LUCY.

What's the matter?

Char. Nay, nothing extraordinary. But one good action draws on another. You have given the prince his freedom: now we come a begging for his wife: you won't refuse us.

Lieut. Refuse you? No, no, what have I to do to refuse you? I send her to him! You do very well; 'tis kindly done of you; even carry her to him, with all my heart.

Lucy. You must tell us where she is.

Lieut. I tell you! why, don't you know?

Bland. Your servant says she's in the house.

Lieut. No, no; I brought her home at first indeed; but I thought it would not look well to keep her here; I removed her in the hurry only to take care of her. What! she belongs to you; I have nothing to do with her.

Char. But where is she now, sir?

Lieut. Why, faith, I can't say, certainly; you'll hear of her at Parham-house, I suppose; there or thereabouts; I think I sent her there.

Bland. I'll have an eye on him. (*Aside.*)

[*Exeunt all but Lieutenant-Governor.*]

Lieut. I have lied myself into a little time, and must employ it; they'll be here again; but I must be before 'em.

(*Going out, he meets IMOINDA, and seizes her.*)

Are you come?

I'll court no longer for a happiness

That is in my own keeping; you may still

Refuse to grant, so I have power to take.

The man that asks deserves to be deny'd.

(*She disengages one hand, and draws his sword from his side upon him; Governor starts and retires.*)

Imo. He does indeed, that asks unworthily.

Bland. You bear her, sir—that asks unworthily.

Lieut. You are no judge.

Bland. I am of my own slave.

Lieut. Be gone, and leave us.

Bland. When you let her go.

Lieut. To fasten upon you.

Bland. I must defend myself.

(*Imoinda retreats towards the door, favoured by Blandford; when they are closed, she throws down the sword and runs out. Governor takes up his sword, they fight, close, and fall. Servants enter and part them.*)

Lieut. She sha'n't escape me so; I've gone too far,

Not to go further. Curse on my delay;

But yet she is, and shall be in my power.

Bland. Nay, then it is the war of honesty;

I know you, and will save you from yourself.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

Enter OROONOKO.

Oroo. To honour bound! and yet a slave to love!

I am distracted by their rival powers,

And both will be obey'd. O great revenge!

Thou raiser and restorer of fall'n fame!

Let me not be unworthy of thy aid,

For stopping in thy course. I still am thine;

But can't forget I am Imoinda's too.

She calls me from my wrongs to rescue her.

No man condemn me, who has never felt

A woman's power, or try'd the force of love;

To run his glorious race of light anew,

And carry on the world. Love, love will be

My first ambition, and my fame the next.

Enter ABOAN, bleeding.

My eyes are turn'd against me, and combine

With my sworn enemies, to represent

This spectacle of horror. Aboan!

Aboan. I have no name

That can distinguish me from the vile earth,

To which I'm going: a poor abject worm,

That crawl'd awhile upon the bustling world,
And now am trampled to my dust again.

Oroo. I see thee gash'd and mangled!

Aboan. Spare my shame,

To tell how they have us'd me; but believe

The hangman's hand would have been merciful.

Do not you scorn me, sir, to think I can

Intend to live under this infamy!

I do not come for pity, to complain.

I've spent an honourable life with you;

The earliest servant of your rising fame;

And would attend it with my latest care:

My life was your's, and so shall be my death.

You must not live,

Bending and sinking; I have dragg'd my steps

Thus far, to tell you that you cannot live:

To waru you of those ignominious wrongs,

Whips, rods, and all the instruments of death

Which I have felt, and are prepared for you.

This was the duty that I had to pay.

'Tis done, and now I beg to be discharg'd.

Oroo. What shall I do for thee?

Aboan. My body tines,

And wo' not bear me off to liberty:

I shall again be taken, made a slave,

A sword, a dagger, yet would rescue me.

I have not strength to go and find out death,

You must direct him to me.

Oroo. Here he is, (*Gives him a dagger.*)

The only present I can make thee now:

And, next the honourable means of life,

I would bestow the honest means of death.

Aboan. I cannot stay to thank you. If there is

A being after this, I shall be your's.

In the next world, your faithful slave again.

This is to try. (*Stabs himself.*) I had a living sense

Of all your royal favours, but this last

Strikes through my heart. I wo' not say farewell,

For you must follow me. (*Dies.*)

Oroo. In life and death,

The guardian of my honour. Follow thee!

I should have gone before thee: then, perhaps,

Thy fate had been prevented. All his care

Was to preserve me from the barbarous rage

That worry'd him, only for being mine.

Why, why, ye gods! why am I so accurs'd,

That it must be a reason of your wrath,

A guilt, a crime sufficient to the fate

Of any one, but to belong to me?

My friend has found it out, and my wife will soon:

My wife! the very fear's too much for life.

I can't support it. Where's Imoinda! Oh!

(*Going out, he meets IMOINDA, who runs into his arms.*)

Thou bosom softness! Down of all my cares!

I could recline my thoughts upon this breast

To a forgetfulness of all my griefs,

And yet be happy; but it wo't not be.

Thou art disorder'd, pale, and out of breath!

If fate pursues thee, find a shelter here.

What is it thou wouldst tell me?

Imo. 'Tis in vain to call him villain.

Oroo. Call him governor; is it not so?

Imo. There's not another, sure.

Oroo. Villain's the common name of mankind

here,

But his most properly. What? what of him?

I fear to be resolv'd, and must inquire.

He had thee in his power.

Imo. I blush to think it.

Oroo. Blush! to think what?

Imo. That I was in his power.

Oroo. He could not use it?

Imo. What can't such men do?

Oroo. But did he? durst he?

Imo. What he could he dar'd.

Oroo. His own gods damn him, then! For ours

have none,

No punishment for such unheard of crime.

Imo. This monster, cunning in his flatteries,

When he had weary'd all his useless arts,
Leap'd out, fierce as a beast of prey, to seize me.
I trembled, fear'd.

Oroo. I fear and tremble now.

What could preserve thee? What deliver thee?

Imo. That worthy man, you us'd to call your friend—

Oroo. Blandford?

Imo. Came in, and sav'd me from his rage.

Oroo. He was a friend, indeed, to rescue thee!
And, for his sake, I'll think it possible
A Christian may be yet an honest man.

Imo. O did you know what I have struggled through,

To save me your's, sure you would promise me
Never to see me forc'd from you again.

Oroo. To promise thee! O! do I need to promise?

But there is now no further use of words.

Death is security for all our fears.

(Shews Aboan's body on the floor.)

And yet I cannot trust him.

Imo. Aboan!

Oroo. Mangled and torn, resolv'd to give me time
To fit myself out for what I must expect,
Groan'd out a warning to me, and expir'd.

Imo. For what you must expect?

Oroo. Would that were all!

Imo. What, to be butcher'd thus—

Oroo. Just as thou seest.

Imo. By barb'rous hands, to fall at last their prey?

Oroo. I have run the race with honour, shall I
now

Lag, and be overtaken at the goal?

Imo. No.

Oroo. I must look back to thee. (Tenderly.)

Imo. You sha' not need.

I am always present to your purpose; say,

Which way would you dispose me? (Gives it him.)

Oroo. Ha! this dagger!

Like fate, it points me to the horrid deed.

Imo. Strike, strike it home, and bravely save
us both.

There is no other safety.

Oroo. It must be—

But first a dying kiss— (Kisses her.)
This last embrace— (Embraces her.)

And now—

Imo. I'm ready.

Oroo. O, where shall I strike?

Is there the smallest grain of that lov'd body

That is not dearer to me than my eyes,

My bosom'd heart, and all the life blood there?

Bid me cut off these limbs, hew off these hands,

Dig out these eyes, though I would keep them last

To gaze upon thee; but to murder thee!

The joy, and charm of ev'ry ravish'd sense,

My wife! forbid it, nature.

Imo. 'Tis your wife,

Who on her knees conjures you. O! in time,

Prevent those mischiefs that are falling on us.

You may be hurry'd to a shameful death,

And I too dragg'd to the vile governor;

Then I may cry aloud. When you are gone,

Where shall I find a friend again to save me?

Oroo. It will be so. Thou unexempl'd virtue!

Thy resolution has recover'd mine:

And now prepare thee.

Imo. Thus, with open arms,

I welcome you and death.

(He drops the dagger as he looks on her, and
throws himself on the ground.)

Oroo. I cannot bear it.

O let me dash against the rock of fate,

Dig up this earth, and tear her bowels out,

To make a grave, deep as the centre down,

To swallow wide and bury us together!

It wo't be. O! then some pitying god

(If there be one a friend to innocence)

Find yet a way to lay her beauties down
Gently in death, and save me from her blood.

Imo. O rise, 'tis more than death to see you
thus.

I'll ease your love, and do the deed myself—

(She takes up the dagger; he rises in haste to take
it from her.)

Oroo. O! hold, I charge thee, hold!

Imo. Though I must own

It would be nobler for us both from you.

Oroo. O! for a whirlwind's wing to hurry us

To yonder cliff, which frowns upon the flood;

That in' embraces lock'd we might plunge in,
And perish thus in one another's arms. (Shouts.)

Imo. Alas! what shout is that?

Oroo. I see 'em coming.

They shall not overtake us. This last kiss,

And now farewell.

Imo. Farewell, farewell for ever.

Oroo. I'll turn my face away, and do it so.

Now, are you ready?

Imo. Now. But do not grudge me

The pleasure, in my death, of a last look;

Pray look upon me.—Now I'm satisfied.

Oroo. So fate must be by this.

(Going to stab her, he stops short; she lays her
hand on his, in order to give the blow.)

Imo. Nay, then, I must assist you.

And, since it is the common cause of both,

'Tis just that both should be employ'd in it.

Thus, thus 'tis finish'd, and I bless my fate,

(Stabs herself.)

That, where I liv'd, I die in these lov'd arms. (Dies.)

Oroo. She's gone. And now all's at an end with
me.

Soft, lay her down: O we will part no more.

(Throws himself by her.)

But let me pay the tribute of my grief,

A few sad tears to thy lov'd memory,

And then I follow— (Weeps over her. Shouts.)

But I stay too long. (A noise again.)

The noise comes nearer. Hold! before I go,

There's something would be done. It shall be so,

And then, Imoinda, I'll come all to thee. (Rises.)

ENTER BLANDFORD and his party, and the LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR and his party. Swords drawn.

Lieut. You strive in vain to save him, he shall
die. [lives.]

Bland. Not while we can defend him with our
Lieut. Where is he?

Oroo. Here is the wretch whom you would have.

Put up your swords, and let not civil broils

Engage you in the curs'd cause of one

Who cannot live, and now retreats to die.

This object will convince you.

Bland. 'Tis his wife. (They gather about the body.)

Alas! there was no other remedy.

Lieut. Who did the bloody deed?

Oroo. The deed was mine:

Bloody I know it is, and I expect

Your laws should tell me so. Thus, self-con-

denn'd,

I do resign myself into your hands,

The hands of justice—But I hold the sword

For you—and for myself.

(Stabs the Governor and himself, then throws
himself by Imoinda's body.)

'Tis as it should be now, I have sent his ghost

To be a witness of that happiness

In the next world, which he deny'd us here.

(Dies.)

Bland. I hope there is a place of happiness

In the next world for such exalted virtue.

Pagan or unbeliever, yet he liv'd

To all he knew: and, if he went astray,

There's mercy still above to set him right.

But Christians, guided by the heav'nly ray,

Have no excuse if they mistake their way.

[Exeunt.]

THE ORPHAN OF CHINA;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY ARTHUR MURPHY.



Act III.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

ETAN
TIMURKAN
ZAMTI
HAMET

MORAT
OCTAR
MIRVAN
ORASNING

ZIMVENTI
MESSENGER
GUARDS
MANDANE

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter ETAN, meeting SELIM.

Etan. Selim, from whence? What station? From what post?

How stands the fate of China? Whence that tumult,
That mingled burst of horror and despair,
That rose to heav'n, as if the sound imported
The wreck of nature?

Selim. With too sure presage,
It speaks the fall of China: all who rush'd
With eager hope, this morning, to yon plains,
To learn the earliest tidings of their fate,
Now back recoil; they pour into the city;
Dismay and horror wild in ev'ry face!
Soon as they reach'd the gates, a peal of groans
Burst forth at once! then silence, deep and vast,
Ensued; and sorrow, without tongue or utterance,
Roams through each street; matrons and hoary sires,
All to their sev'ral habitations press,
Embrace their young ones, and, in pensive mood,
Await their final doom.

Etan. Then Timurkan
Has conquer'd; and that burst, that rent the skies,
Was the last gasp of freedom and of laws,
A dying nation's groan! This dead repose
Deepens the horror of the dreadful scene.
Where, Selim, is my father? Where is Zamti?

Selim. On the high rampart near the eastern gate,
But now I left him: from that post he views
The gen'ral panic; there beholds the ruin,
Th' inevitable ruin that surrounds us.
Amazement for awhile suppress'd his voice;
With folded arms he stood; then, with a sigh
His lab'ring bosom heav'd; at length, he cried,
The Tartar has prevail'd, and resignation
Is now the only virtue fate has left us.

Etan. To bow the neck to the fell Tartar's
yoke,

Is that the resignation heav'n demands?
No; let us summon all that's left of valour,
Oppose the Tartar's entry, man the works,
And arm each hand for freedom. Timurkan
Will shrink and look dismay'd, when he beholds
That we have spirits here, who still can mock
His utmost rage, and, on the brink of ruin,
Snatch the still wav'ring, the unsettled victory
Ev'n from the conqueror's sword.

Selim. My friend, forbear;
This tow'ring spirit, this impetuous ardour,
Can nought avail; can only heap destruction
On thee, on Zamti, and that best of women,
Your wretched mother, the forlorn Mandane;
Whose ev'ry sentiment, whose ev'ry passion,
Big with the image of a much-lov'd son,
Still turns to thee; ev'n from her country's cause,
And our long line of kings, to thee she turns
With the strong ardour of maternal love.

Etan. Yes, Selim, yes; her tenderness of soul,
Ever awake, alarm'd, and prone to melt
For others' good, regardless of herself,
Starts and turns pale at every cloud that low'rs;
Sees fancied ills, and each sad moment proves
The strong vicissitude of hope and fear.
Be it thy care, my friend, to see Mandane;
Assuage her troubled spirit: in this hour,
This crisis of our fate, let her remain
Safe in her lone retreat: I'll round the walls,
And seek my father's presence; in his soul
My voice shall wake the patriot flame, and rouse
All that is hero in him. Selim, yes;
We'll dare for liberty, or bravely die. [Exit.]

Selim. Go, gen'rous youth; go, seek thy father's
presence:
From him thou'lt learn how vain this swelling tide

Of desp'rate valour. Ha! Mandane comes,
And her looks speak the horror of the time.

Enter MANDANE and MIRVAN.

Man. No, never, Mirvan, never: urge no more;
'Tis vain, 'tis ineffectual. Gracious heav'n!
Will not this palace drench'd in gore, the crown
Of China's kings fix'd on the Tartar's brow;
Will not a tract of twenty years in bondage;
Ah! will not these suffice, without fresh cause
Of bitter anguish in Mandane's breast?

Mir. The measure of our woes has long been full.
Our kings dethron'd, our country laid in ruin;
Nought else is worth a pang.

Man. Yes, all; ye all
Must feel the kindred touch: each day the cries
Of widows, orphans, father, son, and brother,
In vain are sent to heav'n; the ruthless fury
Of these barbarians, these accurs'd invaders,
Burns with increasing fire; the thunder still
Roll's o'er our heads, engend'ring in its course
New flame, new vengeance, with collected wrath,
To burst at once, and bury us in ruin.

Mir. And quickly fall it must: the hand of heav'n
Weights this great empire down.

Man. No; tax not heav'n!
Almighty justice never bares its arm
'Gainst innocence and truth: 'tis Timurkan,
That fell barbarian, that insatiate waster.
May curses blast the Tartar! He—'tis he
Has bore down all; and still his reeking sword,
In yonder field of death, where Corea's troops
Made their last stand for liberty and China,
Crimsons the land with blood. This battle lost!
And is there, then, no hope? The Tartar comes—
In triumph, said'st thou? From what quarter?
how?

Whence came the tidings?

Selim. From yon lofty tow'r,
As my eye straining toward the distant plain
Sent forth an anxious look, through clouds of dust
The savage bands appear'd; the western sun
Gleam'd on their burnish'd helms; and soon a shout
From their glad multitude proclaim'd th' approach
Of Timurkan: once more inflam'd with conquest
The tyrant comes; and soon, within our walls,
Uprears his conqu'ring banner.

Man. Selim, go;
Again look out; gather the flying news,
And let me know each circumstance of ruin.

[*Exit Selim.*]

Mir. Better suppress those unavailing tears;
That fruitless flood of grief.

Man. It will not be;
Ev'n midst the horrors of this dismal hour,
When fate has all transferr'd from lost Cathai,
To vile barbarian hands; yes, even now,
In these black moments of despair and ruin,
This heart revolting from the public cause,
Bleeds from a private source; bleeds for the woes
That hang o'er Zamti's house.

Mir. Each sun that rises
Brings some new grief; and where our fate will stop,
Heav'n only knows.

Man. Ay, there—there lies the thought
At which imagination starts appall'd
With horror, at the scene her busy workings
Have colour'd to my sight; there lies the thought
That wakens all a mother's fears. Protect,
Ye pow'rs, protect my son!

Mir. Your son, Mandane!
Have you not check'd his ardour? with your tears,
Your soft authority, restrain'd the hero
From the alarms of war?

Man. Unconscious man!
Thou little know'st his danger; but that truth
Must never pass these lips.

Mir. I hope Mandane
Doubts not my honest zeal. Full well you know,
I bear this tyrant deep and mortal hate;

That under him I list, and wear this garb,
In hopes that some occasion may arrive
When I may strike the unexpected blow,
And do my country right.

Man. Thy loyalty,
Thy truth and honour, have been ever spotless.
Besides the wrongs, the countless wrongs, the
wounds

He gave you injur'd family and name—
Mir. Alas! those wounds must still lie bleeding
here,

Untented by the hand of time. Not all
His lenient arts, his favours heap'd upon me,
Shall cool the burning anguish of my soul.
What he, who slew my father! dragg'd my sister,
Blooming in years, to his detested bed?
Yes, tyrant, yes; thy unextinguish'd foe
Dwells in this bosom: surely, then, to me
Mandane may reveal her griefs.

Man. No more.
My woes must rest conceal'd; yet, should the Tartar
Learn from the captives of yon vanquish'd host,
That China's orphan breathes the vital air,
And to himself unknown, within his breast,
Unconscious, bears the gen'rous glowing flame
Of all the virtues of his ancient line;
Oh! should they know that the dear youth survives,
Their fury, then, would kindle to a blaze;
Might spread destruction round; and, in the ruin,
My blameless son must perish.

Mir. Seek not thus
To multiply the ills that hover round you,
Nor from the stores of busy fancy add
New shafts to fortune's quiver. Zamti's care
Averts impending danger from his friends;
And o'er the mandarin his manners pure,
And sacred function, have diffus'd an air
Of venerable awe, which ev'n can teach
These northern foes to soften into men.

Man. Yes, Mirvan, yes; religion wears a mien
In Zamti's person so severely mild,
That the fierce Scythian rests upon his spear,
And wonders what he feels: such is the charm
Of heartfelt virtue; such is nature's force
That speaks abroad, and in rude, northern hearts
Can stamp the image of an awful God!
From that source springs some hope. Wretch that
I am!

Hope idly flutters on my trembling tongue,
While melancholy, brooding o'er her wrongs,
Lays waste the mind with anguish and despair.
What noise is that?

Mir. Compose this storm of grief;
In every sound your fancy hears the Tartar.
'Tis Zamti this way bends.

Man. Celestial powers!
What lab'ring sighs heave in his breast! what
horror

Rolls in the patriot's eye! Thou, Mirvan, leave me,
Leave me in those lov'd arms to meet our fate.

[*Exit Mirvan.*]

Enter ZAMTI.

Zamti!

Zanti. Mandane!

Man. Ah! what hast thou seen?
What heard? Say, quickly tell—has fate decreed
The doom of China?

Zanti. China is no more;
The eastern world is lost; the glorious fabric,
For ages that has stood the seat of empire,
Falls with the universe beneath the stroke
Of savage power; falls from its towering hopes,
For ever, ever fall'n!

Man. Yet why, ye powers,
Why should a tyrant, train'd to lust and murder,
A lawless ravager from barren wilds,
Where cheerful day ne'er dawns, but low'ring
heav'n

For ever rolls a turbulence of clouds;

Why should a monster thus usurp the world,
And trample fair integrity and truth
Beneath his ruffian feet?

Zanti. Far hence, Mandane,
Those happy days, alas! are fled, when peace
Here nurs'd her blooming olives, and shed round
Her fostering influence: in vain the plau
Of sacred laws, by hoary elders taught;
Laws, founded on the base of public weal,
Gave lessons to the world: in vain Confucius
Unlock'd his radiant stores of moral truth;
In vain fair science, and each tender muse,
Beam'd every elegance on polish'd life:
Barbarian power prevails. What'er the wise,
What'er the sons of genius could inspire,
All that bright art could give, must fade away,
And every virtue wither at the blast
Of northern domination.

Man. Fatal hour!
More fatal ev'n than that which first beheld
This race accurst within these palace walls;
Since hope, that balm of wretched minds, is now
Irrevocably lost.

Zanti. Name not the day
Which saw this city sack'd: fresh stream my eyes,
Fresh bleeds my heart, when'er the sad idea
Comes o'er my tortur'd mind. Why, cruel powers,
Why, in that moment, could not Zanti fall?

Man. Thy office, and the symbol of thy god,
Made ev'n the conqueror suspend his blow,
And murmur soft humanity. High heaven
Protected thee for its own great designs.

Zanti. Yes, my Mandane, in that hour of carnage,
For purposes yet in the womb of time,
I was reserv'd; I was ordain'd to save
The royal child, the dear, the precious babe,
The last of all my kings. Full twenty years
I've hid him from the world, and from himself;
And now I swear—kneel we together here,
While in this dreadful pause our souls renew
Their solemn purpose. (*They kneel.*) Thou, all-
gracious Being!

Whose tutelary care hath watch'd the fate
Of China's orphan, who hast taught his steps
The paths of safety, still envelop him
In sevenfold night, till your own hour is come,
Till your slow justice see the dread occasion
To rouse his soul, and bid him walk abroad
Vicegerent of your power; and if thy servant,
Or this his soft associate e'er defeat,
By any word or deed, the great design,
Then straight may all your horrible displeasure
Be launch'd upon us from your red right arm.
And in one ruin dash us both together,
The blasted monuments of wrath.

Man. That here,
Mandane vows ne'er to betray his cause,
Be it enroll'd in the records of heaven. (*They rise.*)

Zanti. And now my heart more lightly beats;
methinks,
With strength redoubled I can meet the shock
Of adverse fate.

Man. And, lo! the trial comes.
Etan, why sadden thus—

Re-enter ETAN.

Etan. My honour'd father,
And you, my helpless mother, ah! where now,
Illustrious, wretched pair, where will you fly?
Where shall your miseries now find a shelter?

Zanti. In virtue. I and this dear, faithful woman,
We ask no more.

Man. Oh! say, what new event
Brings on the work of fate?

Zanti. Say, does the Tartar
Return, unglutt'd yet with blood?

Etan. He does.
Ev'n now his triumph moves within our gates,
In dread barbaric pomp: the iron swarms

Of Hyperboreans troop along the streets,
Reeking from slaughter; while, from gazing crowds
Of their dire countrymen, an uproar wild,
Of joy ferocious, through th' astonish'd air
Howls like a northern tempest. O'er the ranks,
Proud in superior eminence of guilt,
The tyrant rides sublime; behind his car,
The refuse of his sword, a captive train
Display their honest scars, and gnash their teeth
With rage and desperation.

Man. Cruel fate!

Etan. With these a youth, distinguish'd from the
rest,
Proceeds in sullen march: heroic fire
Glows in his cheek, and from his ardent eye
Beams amiable horror.

Man. What of this youth?

Zanti. Be not alarm'd, Mandane. What of him?

Etan. On him all eyes are fix'd with eager
gaze,
As if their spirits, struggling to come forth,
Would strain each visual nerve; while through the
crowd

A busy murmur ran—"If fame say right,
Beneath that habit lurks a prince, the last
Of China's race." The murmur spreads abroad
From man to man, and all with one acclaim,
Pronounce their vengeance on him.

Man. Why on him?

Why on that youth?

Zanti. Ye groundless terrors, hence! (*Aside.*)

Etan. And yet, my father, this heroic youth—

Oh! should he be the prince—

Zanti. Forbear, young man,
Nor yield to vain surmise: withdraw thee hence
To the religious grove, where oft I walk
In pensive solitude: I there will meet thee.

[*Exit Etan.*]
Heavens! how each black'ning hour, in deeper
horror,

Comes charg'd with woe!

Man. Can Hamet be their pris'ner?
Those eyes upturn'd to heav'n, alas! in vain,
Declare your inward conflict.

Zanti. Lov'd Mandane!
Heed not the workings of a sickly fancy,
Wrought on by every popular report.
Thou know'st, with Morat, I convey'd our son
Far as the eastern point of Corea's realm;
There, where no human trace is seen, no sound
Assails the ear, save when the foaming surge
Breaks on the shelving beach, that there your boy
Might mock their busy search; while here the
prince,

Train'd as your own, eludes suspicion's eye.

Re-enter ETAN.

What wouldst thou, Etan?

Etan. Eagerly without,
A rev'rend stranger craves access to Zanti.

Zanti. Give him admittance. [*Exit Etan.*] My
Mandane, leave me;

Retire, my love, awhile; I'll come anon,
And fortify thy soul with firm resolve,
Becoming Zanti's wife.

Man. Yes, Zanti's wife
Shall never act unworthy of her lord.
Then hence I'll go, and satisfy each doubt
This youthful captive raises in my heart,
Quick panting with its fears. And, oh! ye powers!
Protect my king, my husband, and my son. [*Exit.*]

Zanti. My spirits rush tumultuous to my heart.
What may this mean?

Enter MORAT.

Morat. Zanti!
Zanti. Ha! through the veil
Of age—that mien, those features—Morat!

Morat. Yes;
Let me once more embrace thee.

Zanti. Good old man!
But wherefore art thou here? What of my boy?
Morat. Ah! what, indeed! Ev'n from the ocean's
margin,
Parch'd with the sun, and chill'd with midnight
damps,
O'er hills, and rocks, and dreary continents,
In vain I follow'd.
Zanti. Why didst let him forth?
Morat. Think not thy *Morat* urg'd him to the
deed,

His valour was the cause; and soon as fame
Proclaim'd the prince alive, the mighty din
Of preparation through all Corea's realm
Alarm'd his breast; indignant of control,
He burst his covert; and, now, hapless youth!
Alas! ev'n now, he drags the conqueror's chain.

Zanti. Mandane, then, may still embrace her son.
My boy survives, and still may live in freedom.

Morat. Alas! the measure of your woes is full.
Unconscious of our frauds, the tyrant thinks
The prince his pris'n'er.

Zanti. Ah! what say'st thou, *Morat*?

Morat. Wild through the streets the foe calls out
on *Zanti*.

Then they pronounce the author of the fraud;
And on your *Hamet* threaten instant vengeance.

Zanti. There was but this, but this last stab to
nature,

And here it pierces. Was it not enough
To tear my child from his fond mother's arms,
Doom'd for his prince to wander o'er the world?

Alas! what needed more? Fond, foolish eyes,
Stop your unbidden gush: I will not yield.

Oh! what a sacrifice must now be made!

Morat. But when the truth is known—

Zanti. Too cruel task!

To conquer nature while the heart-strings break.

Morat. Why heave those sighs? and why that
burst of grief?

Zanti. My son—his guiltless blood—I cannot
speak.

Morat. Ha! wilt thou shed his blood?

Zanti. Thou wretched father!

Morat. Oh! had you known the virtues of your
son,

His truth, his courage, his enlighten'd mind—

Zanti. I pry'thee, urge no more: here nature's
voice

Speaks in such pleadings, such reproaches, *Morat*;
Here in my very heart; gives woundings here,
Thou canst not know, and only parents feel.

Morat. And wilt thou, cruel in thy tears—

Zanti. Forbear!

In pity to a father—Oh, forbear!

Think of *Zaphimri*.

Morat. Ah! how fares the prince?

Zanti. He fares, my *Morat*, like a god on earth,
Unknowing his celestial origin;

Yet quick, intense, and bursting into action;

His great heart lab'ring with he knows not what

Prodigious deeds; deeds which, ere long, shall
rouse,

Astonish, and alarm the world.

Morat. What means

Those mystic sounds?

Zanti. Revenge, conquest, and freedom!

The midnight hour shall call a chosen band

Of hidden patriots forth; who, when the foe

Sinks down in drunken revelry, shall pour

The gather'd rage of twenty years upon him;

And, at one blow, redeem the eastern world.

Morat. By heaven! the glorious news—

Zanti. And canst thou think,

To save one vulgar life, that *Zanti* now

Will mar the vast design? No, let him bleed;

Let my boy bleed! In such a cause as ours,

I can resign my son; with tears of joy

Resign him; and one complicated pang

Shall wrench him from my heart.

(*Warlike music heard.*)

The conqueror comes!

This is no hour for parleying. *Morat*, hence,
And leave me to my fix'd resolve.

Morat. Yet think,

Think of some means to save your son.

Zanti. No more;

It cannot be: the soul of *Timurkan*

Is bold and stirring: when occasion calls,

He springs aloft like an expanding fire,

And marks his way with ruin. Should I try

By any virtuous fraud to save my son,

The tyrant claims *Zaphimri*; since he knows

The prince surviv'd, the thought will make him
daring

Beyond his former crimes; for joy and riot,

Which this day's triumph brings, remorseless rage

And massacre succeed; and all our hopes

Are blasted for an unimportant boy.

(*Music heard again.*)

Morat. That nearer sound proclaims his dread
approach.

Yet once more, *Zanti*, think—

Zanti. Farewell! I'll send

Those shall conduct thee where *Orasming* lives:

There dwell unseen of all. But, *Morat*, first

Seek my *Mandane*. How shall I support

Her strong impetuosity of grief,

When she shall know my fatal purpose? Thou

Prepare her tender spirit; sooth her mind;

And save, oh! save me from the dreadful conflict.

(*Exeunt.*)

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter MANDANE and MORAT.

Man. Oh! tell me, *Morat*, tell me of my son.

Is he return'd? Does he revisit thus

His native clime? And does the Tartar deem him

Of royal race descended? Whence on him

Could that suspicion glance?

Morat. This very morn,

Ere yet the battle join'd, a faithful messenger,

Who through the friendly gloom of night had held

His darkling way, and pass'd the Tartar's camp,

Brought me advices from the Corean chief,

That soon as *Hamet* reach'd the tented field,

His story he explain'd; the gallant leader

With open arms receiv'd him, knew him for your

son,

Train'd him to arms, and granted his request

To join the martial train.

Man. Oh! love of glory,

Thou fatal foe to a fond mother's peace!

Source of heroic deeds! how bright thy flame

Shines in my boy!

Morat. Pleas'd with his youthful ardour,

The cautious chieftain knew the son of *Zanti*,

In secret knew him, nor reveal'd he aught

That touch'd his birth; but still the busy voice

Of fame, increasing as she goes, through all the

ranks

Babbled abroad each circumstance; from thee

How he was privately convey'd; sent forth

A tender infant to be rear'd in solitude,

A stranger to himself. The soldier saw

With what a graceful port he mov'd in arms,

An early hero! deem'd him far above

The common lot of life; deem'd him *Zaphimri*;

And all with loyalty, with love beheld him.

Man. Oh! I must see him; midst the tyrant's

ranks

I'll seek my son: from all his father's virtues

He could not derogate; his bosom fraught

With gen'rous instinct, with each fine incentive

That prompts the manly deed, he could not loiter

His days inglorious. Yes, I will behold him,

See him with indignation clank his chains,

Perhaps provoke his fate; and, in that moment,
His mother shall protect him; in these arms
Infold him close, and shelter him from death.

Morat. Yet think, Mandane, with a mother's
fondness,

If you too rashly thus proclaim your son,
Who shall protect the prince? Zaphimri, then,
By thee is mark'd the victim that must bleed.

Man. My son shall live. To save Zaphimri's life,
Is it of course that I must yield my child?

Thou didst not mean it: give my son a victim?

Thou art a stranger to a mother's love;

Know'st not how Zamti dotes upon his boy;

His heart will ne'er consent. Come, let us seek him;
He will instruct thee how a father feels. [Exit.]

Morat. Yet, stay, Mandane—hark! the Tartar
comes: (Warlike music heard.)

I dread the wildness of those glowing passions,
That violence of virtue: strong affection
Has touch'd her soul, and will not know restraint.
[Exit.]

Two large folding doors in the back scene are thrown
open by the Tartars; then enter TIMURKAN, with
his Train.

Tim. Hail to this regal dome, this gorgeous pa-
lace!

Where this inventive race have lavish'd all
Their elegance: ye gay apartments, hail!
Beneath your storied roof, where mimic life
Glows to the eye, and at the painter's touch,
A new creation lives along the walls,
Once more receive a conqueror, arriv'd
From rougher scenes, where stern rebellion dar'd
Draw forth his phalanx, till this warlike arm
Hurl'd desolation on his falling ranks;
And now the monster, in yon field of death,
Lies overwhelm'd in ruin.

Octar. From this day,
Beneath the victor's feet, the eastern world
Lies bound in adamant chains.

Tim. Henceforth
Shall Timurkan display his conqu'ring banners
From oriental climes to where the Tanais
Devolves his icy tribute to the sea.

Octar. But first, this captive prince—

Tim. Yes, Octar, first
Zaphimri gluts my rage—bring him before us:
For Zamti—he, that false, insidious slave,
Shall dearly pay the forfeit of his crimes.

Octar. His guilt 'twere best to pardon: vers'd
in wiles

Of sly hypocrisy, he wins the love
Of the deluded multitude: 'twould seem,
Should we inflict the death his frauds deserve,
As if we meant destruction to their faith;
And when the minds of a whole people burn
For their religious rites, the fury kindles
With rage more dreadful, as the source is holy.

Tim. Thy policy is just: henceforth, my art,
To make this stubborn race receive the yoke,
Shall be by yielding to their softer manners,
Their vesture, laws, and customs; thus to blend,
And make the whole one undistinguish'd people.
Lo! where the boy comes forth. What sullen
passions
Swell in his breast in vain!

Enter HAMET, in chains.

Thou art the youth
Who flesh'd your sword in many a slaughter'd
Tartar,

And this day mow'd our battle down.

Hamet. I am.

Tim. Too well I mark'd thy steps, and saw thee
open

A wasteful passage through th' embattled plain.

Hamet. Then be thou witness for me, in that hour
I never shunn'd your thickest war: and if
In yonder field, where my poor countrymen

In mangled heaps lie many a rood extended,
Kind fate had doom'd me to a noble fall,
With this right arm I earn'd it.

Tim. Say, what motive
Unsheath'd thy rebel blade, and bade thee seek
These wars?

Hamet. The love of honourable deeds,
The groans of bleeding China, and the hate
Of tyrants.

Tim. Ha! take heed, rash youth! I see
This lesson has been taught thee. Octar, haste,
Summon the mandarin. Now tremble, slave;
[Exit Octar.]

Thy motive to these wars is fully known:

Thou art Zaphimri.

Hamet. I, Zaphimri?

Tim. Yes;

Thou art Zaphimri! Thou, whose treacherous
guile

Stole from my rage, and sent to distant wilds,
Till years and horrid counsel should mature thee
For war and wild commotion.

Hamet. I, the prince?
The last of China's race? nay, mock not majesty;
Nor with the borrow'd robes of sacred kings
Dress up a wretch like me. Were I Zaphimri,
Thinkest thou thy trembling eye could bear the
shock

Of a much injur'd king? couldst thou sustain it!
Say, couldst thou bear to view a royal orphan,
Whose father, mother, brothers, sisters, all,
Thy murd'rous arm hath long since laid in dust?
Whose native crown on thy ignoble brow
Thou dar'st dishonour! whose wide wasted country
Thy desolating sword hath made a wilderness?

Tim. Thou hast been tutor'd in thy lone retreat
By some sententious pedant; soon these vain,
These turgid maxims, shall be all subdued
By thy approaching death.

Hamet. Let death come on;
Guilt, guilt alone, shrinks back appall'd; the brave
And honest still defy his dart; the wise
Calmly can eye his frown; and misery
Invokes his friendly aid to end her woes.

Tim. Thy woes, presumptuous boy, with all my
fears,
Shall soon lie buried.

Enter ZAMTI and OCTAR.

Pious false one, say,
For well thou know'st, who is that stubborn youth?
Zanti. His air, his features, and his honest mien,
Proclaim all fair within; but, mighty sir,
I know him not.

Tim. Reflect, old man, nor dare,
As thou dost dread my pow'r, to practise guile
Beneath a mask of sacerdotal perfidy.
Priestcraft, I think, calls it a pious fraud.

Zanti. Priestcraft and sacerdotal perfidy
To me are yet unknown: religion's garb
Here never serves to consecrate a crime;
We have not yet, thank heav'n, so far imbib'd
The vices of the north.

Tim. Thou vile impostor!
Know, that the slaves, whom this day saw impal'd,
Have own'd the horrid truth; have own'd they
fought

To seat Zaphimri on the throne of China.
Thou, strippling, mark my words: dar'st thou be
honest,
And answer who thou art?

Hamet. Dare I be honest?
I dare. A mind grown up in native honour
Dares not be otherwise. If, then, thy troops
Ask from the lightning of whose blade they fled,
Tell 'em 'twas Hamet's.

Zanti. 'Tis; it is my son—

My boy—my Hamet!

Tim. Where was thy abode?

(Aside.)

Hamet. Far hence remote, in Corea's happy realm,
Where the first beams of day with orient blushes
Tinge the salt wave; there, on the sea-beat shore,
A cavern'd rock yielded a lone retreat
To virtuous Morat.

Zanti. Oh! ill-fated youth! *(Aside.)*

Hamet. The pious hermit, in that moss-grown dwelling,

Found an asylum from heart-piercing woes,
From slavery, and that restless din of arms,
With which thy fell ambition shook the world;
There, too, the sage nurtur'd my greener years.
With him, and contemplation, have I walk'd
The paths of wisdom; what the great Confucius
Of moral beauty taught; what'er the wise,
Still wooing knowledge in her secret haunts,
Disclos'd of nature to the sons of men,
My wond'ring mind has heard; but, above all,
The hermit taught me the most useful science,
The noble science to be brave and good.

Zanti. Hear him, immortal pow'rs! His ev'ry word

Pierces my heart. *(Aside.)*

Tim. Who said he was your father?

Hamet. My birth, the pious sage, I know not why,

Still wrapp'd in silence; and when urg'd to speak,
He only answer'd, that a time might come
When Hamet should not blush to know his father.

Tim. Now, then, declare, hast thou ne'er heard of Zanti?

Hamet. Of Zanti! Oft enraptur'd with his name,
My heart has glow'd within me, as I heard
The praises of that venerable man.

Tim. Thou slave! each circumstance arraigns thy guilt. *(To Zanti.)*

Hamet. Can that be Zanti?

Tim. Lo! Behold the traitor!

Hamet. Oh! let me thus adore that rev'rend form,
Thus, on my knees, adore.

Tim. Pernicious slave!

Confusion has o'erta'en thy subtle frauds,
Thy guilt is manifest. Now own your king;
Or, to make vengeance sure, through all the east
Each youth shall die, and carnage thin mankind;
Till, in the gen'ral wreck, your boasted orphan
Shall undistinguish'd fall. When treason lurks,
Each moment's big with danger. O'act, thou
Attend my words, and see our will obey'd.

(Talks apart with Octar.)

Zanti. Now, virtuous cruelty, repress my tears.
Cease your fond conflict, nature! Hear me, Tartar,
That youth—his air—his look unmans me quite.

Tim. This moment, vile dissembler! speak.

Zanti. That youth—

I've dealt by him as ev'ry king would wish,
In a like case, his faithful subjects would.

Tim. Dost thou avow it? triumph, Timurkan,
And in Zaphimri's grave lie hush'd my fears.

O'act, this moment lend the victim forth
To yonder sacred temple: at the tomb,
Where the long-boasted line of China's kings
Lies hears'd in death, this very hour shall see
The victim offer'd to our living Lama,
For this day's conquest. Thence, a golden train
Of radiant years shall mark my future sway. *[Exit.]*

Zanti. Flow, flow my tears, and ease my bursting heart.

Hamet. Nay, do not weep for me, thou good old man.

If it will close the wounds of bleeding China,
That a poor wretch like me must yield his life,
I give it freely. If I am a king,
Though, sure, it cannot be, what greater blessing
Can a young prince enjoy, than to diffuse
By one great act that happiness on millions,
For which his life should be a round of care?
Come, lead me to my fate. *[Exit, with Octar, &c.]*

Zanti. Mandane's air!

His mother's dear resemblance rives my soul.
Yet let him die: yes, Tartar, wreak thy fury
Upon an helpless, an inglorious boy.
If, from his death, this groaning empire rise
Once more itself, resplendent, rich in arts
That humanize the world, he pays a debt
Due to his king, his country, and his God.

Enter ETAN.

Etan. May I approach my father? Even now
I met the captive youth; the gen'ral voice,
With one consent, proclaim him China's orphan;
And you, sir, you have own'd th' important truth.

Zanti. Come nearer, Etan: thou perceiv'st the toils

That now encircle me.

Etan. But, wherefore, sir,
Why thus acknowledge him? why own the prince,
And yield him thus to death?

Zanti. Dream not, young man,
To stand secure, yet blooming into life,
While dangers hover round your father's head.
The stock once fallen, each scion must decay.

Etan. Then let me perish: witness for me, heaven,
Could Etan's fall appease the tyrant's wrath,
A willing victim he would yield his life,
And ask no greater boon of heav'n.

Zanti. This zeal,
So fervid in a stranger's cause—

Etan. A stranger!
My king a stranger! Sir, you never meant it.
Perhaps you would explore the fiery seeds
Of Etan's temper, ever prompt to blaze

At honour's sacred name! Perish the man,
Who, when his country calls him to defend
The rights of humankind, or bravely die,
Who, then, to glory dead, can shrink aghast,
And hold a council with his abject fears.

Zanti. These tow'rings of the soul, alas! are vain.

I know the Tartar well: we must resign.

Etan. Oh! sir, at your command each honest hand

Will grasp a sword, and midst encircling guards,
Reach the usurper's heart; or, should we fail,
Should overwhelming bands obstruct the deed,
We'll greatly dare to die; better to die
With falling liberty, than basely lead
An ignominious life. Zaphimri lost,
Ne'er shall fair order dawn; but through the land
Slav'ry shall clank her chains, and violation,
Rapine, and murder, riot at the will
Of lust and lawless pow'r.

Zanti. Thou brave young man!
Come to this fond embrace. To ease at once
Thy gen'rous fears—the prince Zaphimri's safe,
Safe in my guardian care.

Etan. This pris'ner, sir,
He is not, then, the prince?

Zanti. Obscure by birth,
He is no public loss.

Etan. And yet his youth,
And his untimely fate, plead strongly for him.
And then, methinks, (perhaps, 'tis fancy's error,)
Methinks he bears a semblance of Mandane.

Zanti. His words transfix my heart. *(Aside.)*

Etan. And where, meantime,
Where is the royal heir? If right I judge,
He will not tamely see a blameless youth
A victim in his cause.

Zanti. Seek not too soon
To know the prince: now I'll disclose the work,
The work of vengeance, which my lab'ring soul
Has long been fashioning. This very hour,
Stupendous ruin hovers o'er the heads
Of this accursed race.

Etan. Run!

Zanti. I'll tell thee:

When Timurkan led forth his savage bands,
Unpeopling this great city, I then seiz'd
The hour to tamper with a chosen few;
Who have resolv'd when the barbarians lie
Buried in sleep and wine, and hotly dream
Their havoc o'er again; then, then, my son,
In one collected blow to burst upon 'em,
Like their own northern clouds, whose midnight
horror,

Impending o'er the world, at length breaks forth
In the vault lightning's blaze, in storms and thunder,
Through all the red'ning air, till frighted nature
Start from her couch, and waken to a scene
Of uproar and destruction.

Etan. Oh! my father,
The glorious enterprise—

Zamti. Mark me, young man.
Seek thou my friends, Orasming and Zimventi.
In the dim cloister of yon temple
Thou'lt find them musing; bid them ne'er abate
Their high, heroic ardour; let them know
Whate'er shall fall on this old mould'ring clay,
The tyrant never shall subdue my mind.

Man. (*Within.*) Oh! let me fly, and find the
barb'rous man.

Where, where is Zamti?

Zamti. Ha! Mandane's voice!

Go, leave me, Etan, and observe my orders.

[*Exit Etan.*]

Wild as the winds, the mother all alive
In ev'ry heartstring, the forlorn one comes
To claim her boy.

Re-enter MANDANE.

Man. And can it, then, be true?
Is human nature exil'd from thy breast?
Art thou, indeed, so barb'rous?

Zamti. Lov'd Mandane,
Fix not your scorpions here: a bearded shaft
Already drinks my spirits up.

Man. I've seen
Thy trusty Morat—I have heard it all.

Zamti. I cannot speak to thee.

Man. Think'st thou those tears,
Those false, those cruel tears, will choke the voice
Of a fond mother's love, now stung to madness?
Oh! I will rend the air with lamentations,
Root up this hair, and beat this throbbing breast;
Turn all connubial joys to bitterness,
To fell despair, to anguish and remorse,
Unless my son—

Zamti. Thou ever faithful woman,
Oh! leave me to my woes.

Man. Give me my child;
Thou worse than Tartar, give me back my son.
Oh! give him to a mother's eager arms,
And let me strain him to my heart.

Zamti. Heav'n knows
How dear my boy is here: but our first duty
Now claims observance: to our country's love
All other tender fondnesses must yield.
I was a subject, ere I was a father.

Man. You were a savage, bred in Scythian wilds,
And humanizing pity never reach'd
Your heart. Was it for this, oh! thou unkind one!
Was it for this, oh! thou inhuman father!
For this you woo'd me to your nuptial bed?
For this I clasp'd thee in these circling arms,
And made this breast your pillow? Cruel, say,
Are these your vows? are these your fond endear-
ments?

Nay, look upon me; if this wasted form,
These faded eyes, have turn'd your heart against
me,

With grief for you I wither'd in my bloom.

Zamti. Why thus transfix my heart?

Man. Alas! my son,
Did I then fold thee in these matron arms
To see thee bleed? Thus dost thou, then, return?
This could your mother hope, when first she sent

Her infant exile to a distant clime?

Ah! could I think thy early love of fame
Would urge thee to this peril; thus to fall
By a stern father's will? By thee to die!
From thee, inhuman, to receive his doom!
Murder'd by thee! Yet, hear me, Zamti, hear me;
Thus, on my knees—I threaten now no more—
'Tis nature's voice that pleads; nature alarm'd,
Quick, trembling, wild, touch'd to her inmost
feeling,

When force would tear her tender young ones
from her.

Zamti. Oh! seek not with enfeebling, fond ideas
To swell the flood of grief. It is in vain;
He must submit to fate.

Man. (*Rising.*) Barbarian, no;
He shall not die: rather—I pr'ythee, Zamti,
Urge not a grief-distracted woman; tremble
At the wild fury of a mother's love.

Zamti. I tremble rather at a breach of oaths.
But thou break thine; bathe your perfidious hands.
In this life-blood; betray the righteous cause
Of all our sacred kings.

Man. Our sacred kings!

What are the scepter'd rulers of the world?
Form'd of one common clay, are they not all
Doom'd with each subject, with the meanest slave,
To drink the cup of human woe? alike
All levell'd by affliction? Sacred kings!
'Tis human policy sets up their claim:
Mine is a mother's cause; yes, mine the cause
Of husband, wife, and child, those first of ties,
Superior to your right divine of kings.

Zamti. Then go, Mandane, thou once faithful
woman,

Dear to this heart in vain. Forget at once
Those virtuous lessons which I oft have taught
thee,

In fond credulity, while on each word
You hung enamour'd: go; to Timurkan
Reveal the awful truth; be thou spectatress
Of murder'd majesty; embrace your son,
And let him lead, in shame and servitude,
A life ignobly bought. Then let those eyes,
Those faded eyes, which grief for me hath dimm'd,
With guilty joy reanimate their lustre,
To brighten slavery, and beam their fires
On the fell Scythian murderer.

Man. And is it thus,
Thus is Mandane known? Come, lead me hence,
Where I may lay down life to save my king,
But save my Hamet too; then, then you'll find
A heart beats here as warm and great as thine.

Zamti. Then make with me one ever-glorious
effort,

And rank with those, who, from the first of time,
In fame's eternal archives stand rever'd,
For conqu'ring all the dearest ties of nature,
To serve the gen'ral weal.

Man. That savage virtue
Loses with me its horrid charms. I've sworn
To save my king; but should a mother turn
A dire assassin? Madness, at the thought,
Shoots through my brain. And, look, they seize my
child;

They lead him forth; they fix him on the rack;
His father—see—fobear—his father strikes—
Hold, Zamti, hold—ah! see—he dies—he dies!
(*Faints in his arms.*)

Zamti. She faints, she faints! th' impetuous storm
of passion,
Shakes her weak frame.

Enter an Attendant.

Quickly, Arsace, help,
Support her; lend your aid. Soft! wand'ring life
Rekindles in her cheek. Conduct her hence.

[*Exeunt Mandane and Attendant.*]

Propitious heaven! behold a father's sufferings;
Support our frailty; kindly in our souls

A ray of your divine enthusiasm,
Such as inflames the patriot's breast, and lifts
Th' impassion'd mind to that sublime of virtue,
That even on the rack it feels the good,
Which, in a single hour, it works for millions,
And leaves the legacy to times unborn. [Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Temple. A tomb in the middle.

Enter MORAT.

Morat. This is the place, these the long-winding
isles,

The solemn arches, whose religious awe
Attunes the mind to melancholy musing,
Such as befits freemen reduc'd to bondage.
Here Zamti meets his friends; amid these tombs,
Where lie the sacred manes of our kings,
They pour their orisons; hold converse here
With the illustrious shades of murder'd heroes,
And meditate a great revenge. A groan!
The burst of sorrow from some care-worn wretch,
That sorrows o'er his country. Ha! 'tis Zamti.

Enter ZAMTI from the tomb.

Zamti. Who's he that seeks these mansions of
the dead?

Morat. The friend of Zamti and of China!

Zamti. Morat!

Come to my arms, thou brave, thou gen'rous man!
I have been weeping o'er the sacred relics
Of a dear murder'd king. Where are our friends?
Hast seen Orasming?

Morat. Through these vaults of death
Lonely he wanders, plung'd in deep despair.

Zamti. Hast thou inform'd him? Hast thou aught
reveal'd

Touching Zaphimri?

Morat. There I wait thy will.

Zamti. Oh! thou art ever faithful: on thy lips
Sits pensive silence, with her hallow'd finger,
Guarding the pure recesses of the mind.
But, lo! they come.

Enter ORASMING, ZIMVENTI, and others.

Droop ye, my gallant friends?

Oras. Oh! Zamti, all is lost; our dreams of
liberty

Are vanish'd into air. Ev'n heaven, combined
With lawless might, abandons us and virtue.

Zamti. Can your great souls thus shrink within
ye? thus

From heroes will you dwindle into slaves?

Zim. Oh! could you give us back the royal
orphan;

Danger would smile, and death lose all its terror.

Zamti. What, would his presence fire you?

Oras. Yes, by heav'n!

This night should free us from the Tartar's yoke.

Zamti. Then mark the care of the all-ruling mind.
This youthful captive, whom in chains they hold,
Is not Zaphimri.

Oras. and Zim. Not Zaphimri?

Zamti. No;

Unconscious of himself, and to the world unknown,
He walks at large among us.

Oras. Heavenly powers!

Zamti. This night, my friend, this very night to
rise

Refulgent from the blow that frees us all,

From the usurper's fate, the first of men,

Deliv'rer of his country.

Oras. Mighty gods!

Can this be possible?

Zamti. It is most true.

This very hour shall give you China's heir.

What, ho! (looks at the tomb) come forth: 'tis
Zamti's voice that calls.

You seem transfix'd with wonder! Oh! my friends,
Watch all the motions of your rising spirit,
Direct your ardour, when anon you hear

What fate, long pregnant with the vast event,
Is lab'ring into birth.

Enter ETAN from the tomb.

Etan. Each step I move,
A deeper horror sits on all the tombs;
The shrines look pale around; each altar shakes,
Conscious of some important crisis.

Zamti. Yes,
A crisis, great indeed, is now at hand.
Heaven holds its golden balance forth, and weighs
Zaphimri's and the Tartar's destiny,
While bo'ring angels tremble round the beam.
Hast thou beheld that picture?

Etan. Fix'd attention
Hath gaz'd on every part; yet still to me
It shadows forth the forms of things unknown,
All imag'ry obscure, and wrapt in darkness.

Zamti. That darkness my informing breath shall
clear,

As morn dispels the night. Lo! here display'd
This mighty kingdom's fall. Behold that child,
That royal infant, the last sacred relic
Of China's kings: see where a mandarin
Conveys the babe to his wife's fost'ring breast,
There to be nourish'd in an humble state;
While their own son is sent to climes remote,
That, should the fell usurper e'er suspect
The prince alive, he for his king might bleed,
And mock the murderers rage.

Etan. Amazement thrills
Through all my frame; and my mind, big with
wonder,

Feels every power suspended.

Zamti. Rather say,
That strong imagination burns within thee.

Dost thou not feel a more than common ardour?

Etan. By heav'n! some impulse never felt
before,

Some strange inspir'd emotion stirs within me;
A thousand images all rise at once,
And o'er-inform my soul. Oh! that the hour
Of fate were come. This very night I'll sheathe
My dagger's point deep in the tyrant's heart.

Zamti. Wilt thou?

Etan. By ev'ry pow'r that now beholds me;
By all the mighty dead that round us lie;
By all, who this day groan in chains, I will!

Zamti. And when thou dost, tell the devoted
tyrant,

It is the prince that strikes.

Etan. The prince's wrongs
Shall nerve my arm, and urge the blow for freedom
With tenfold vengeance.

Zamti. Tell the groaning Tartar,
It is Zaphimri: 'tis the prince himself.

Etan. What says my father?

Zamti. Thou art China's orphan;

The last of all our kings; no longer Etan,

But now Zaphimri.

Zaph. Ha!

Oras. Mysterious hand

Of wonder-working heav'n!

Zaph. Can this be true?

A busy crowd of circumstances rise;
Thy frequent hints obscure, thy pious care
To train my youth to greatness, lend your aid
To my astonish'd powers, that feebly bear
This unexpected shock of royalty.

Zamti. Thou art, thou art my sov'reign. Oh!
my friends,

Morat will tell you all; each circumstance;
Meantime, lo! there, behold—there is your king.

Morat. Oras. and Zim. Long live the father of the
eastern world! (All kneel.)

Zamti. Sole governor of earth!

Zaph. All ruling pow'rs!

Is then a great revenge for all the wrongs
Of bleeding China; are the fame and fate

Of all posterity included here
Within my bosom?

Zanti. All; yes, all; the shades
Of your great ancestors now rise before thee,
Heroes and demi-gods! aloud they call
For the fell Tartar's blood.

Zaph. Oh! *Zanti*, all
That can alarm the pow'rs of man, now stirs
In this expanding breast.

Zanti. Anon, to burst
With hideous ruin on the foe. My gallant heroes,
Are our friends station'd at their posts?

Oras. They are.
Zanti. Each gate secur'd?

Oras. All safe.
Zanti. The signal fix'd?
Oras. It is. Will *Mirvan* join us?

Zanti. Doubt him not;
He pants for vengeance: when the assault begins,
He'll turn his arms upon th' astonish'd foe,
And add new horrors to the wild commotion.

Zaph. Now, bloody spoiler, now thy hour draws
nigh;
And, ere the dawn, thy guilty reign shall end.

Zanti. How my heart burns within me! Oh!
my friends,

Call now to mind the scene of desolation,
Which *Timurkan*, in one accursed hour,
Heap'd on this groaning land. Ev'n now I see
The savage bands, o'er purple heaps of slain,
Forcing their rapid way: I see them urge,
With rage unhallow'd, to the sacred temple,
Where good *Osmingti*, with his queen and children,
Fatigu'd the gods averse. See where *Orphisa*,
Rending the air with agonizing shrieks,
Tears her dishevell'd hair; then, with a look
Fix'd on her babes, grief chokes its passage up,
And all the feelings of a mother's breast
Throbbing in one mix'd pang, breathless she faints
Within her monarch's arms; adown his cheek,
In copious streams, fast flow'd the manly sorrow;
While clust'ring round his knees, his little offspring,
In tears all-eloquent, with arms outstretch'd,
Sue for parental aid.

Zaph. Go on; the tale
Will fit me for a scene of horror.

Zanti. Oh! my prince,
The charge which your great father gave me, still
Sounds in my ear. Ere yet the foe burst in,
"Zanti," said he, "preserve my cradled infant;
Save him from rufians; train his youth to virtue;
Virtue will rouse him to a great revenge;
Or failing, virtue still will make him happy."
He could no more; the cruel spoiler seiz'd him,
And dragg'd my king, my ever honour'd king,
The father of his people; basely dragg'd him,
By his white rev'rend locks, from yonder altar,
Here on the blood-stain'd pavement; while the
queen

And her dear fondlings, in one mangled heap,
Died in each other's arms.

Zaph. Revenge!
With more than lion's rage I'll spring upon him;
And, at one blow, relieve the groaning world.
Let us, this moment, carry sword and fire
To you devoted walls, and whelm him down
In ruin and dismay.

Zanti. *Zaphimiri*, no;
By rashness you may mar a noble cause.
To you, my friends, I render up my charge;
To you I give your king! Farewell, my sov'reign.

Zaph. *Zanti*, thou gen'rous man! a thousand
feelings

Of warmest friendship, all the tendencies
Of heart-felt gratitude are struggling here,
And fain would speak to thee, my more than father.
Farewell! sure we shall meet again!

Zanti. We shall. [now
Zaph. Thou best of friends, farewell. *Orasming*,

The noblest duty calls; let us remember,
We are the men, whom from all humankind
Our fate hath now selected, to stand forth
Assertors of the public weal; to drench our swords
In the oppressor's heart; to do a deed,
Which heav'n, intent on its own holy work,
Shall pause with pleasure to behold.

[*Exit, with Conspirators.*]

Zanti. May the most high
Pour down his blessings on him; and, anon,
In the dead waste of night, when awful justice
Walks with her crimson steel o'er slaughter'd heaps
Of groaning Tartars, may he then direct
His youthful footsteps through the paths of peril;
Oh! may he guide the horrors of the storm,
An angel of your wrath, to point your vengeance
On ev'ry guilty head. There let him stop.
When you have broken the oppressor's rod,
Your reign will then be manifest; mankind will see
That truth and virtue still deserve your care.

(*A dead march is heard.*)

What mean those deathful sounds? Again they lead
My boy to slaughter. Fond, parental feelings!
Tear, tear me piecemeal! still you plead in vain.
Ye host of heav'n, look down; behold me here
Beleagu'r'd thus with ills: I now must prove
Perjur'd to you, or cease to be a father.
In your own cause support me; lend me strength
To triumph o'er that nature which you gave.

A dead march. Enter *OCTAR*, *HAMET*, *Guards*, &c.

Octar. Here let the victim fall, and with his
blood

Wash his forefather's tomb. The hated race
Shall here lie crush'd; and, from this glorious
era,

The eastern world, through all her wide domain,
Shall bend submissive to the Scythian yoke.

Hamet. (*Standing near the tomb.*) Where is the
tyrant? I would have him see,

With envy, see the unconquer'd pow'r of virtue;
How it can calmly bleed, smile on the rack,
And with strong pinion soar above his pow'r,
To regions of perennial day.

Octar. The conqueror
Shall mark thee well, when, at to-morrow's dawn,
Shall be display'd, through the wide city's round,
Thy breathless corse, a spectacle of horror.
It now befits thee to prepare for death.

Hamet. I am prepar'd: I have no lust or rapine,
No murders to repent of; undismay'd,
I can behold all-judging heav'n, whose hand
Still compassing its wondrous ends, by means
Inextricable to all mortal clue,
Hath now enclos'd me in its awful maze.
Since 'tis by your decree, that thus beset,
Th' inexorable angel hovers o'er me,
Be your great bidding done.

Octar. The sabre's edge
Thirsts for his blood: despatch and end his being.

Enter *MANDANE.*

Man. Off, set me free! I must, I will have way.
Me, me, on me convert your rage: strike here!
Plunge in this bosom your abhorred steel,
And spare his precious life.

Octar. Hence, quickly bear
This wild, this frantic woman—

Man. Never, never!
You shall not force me hence: here will I cling
Fast to the earth, and rivet here my hands
In all the fury of the last despair.

He is my son! Oh! spare him! spare my child!

Octar. How, woman! your's? your son?
Man. Yes, *Octar*, mine;
My boy, my *Hamet*. Let my eager love
Fly all unbounded to him, clasp him thus,
Thus in his mother's arms—My child, my child!

Octar. Suspend the stroke, ye ministers of death,
Till *Timurkan* hear of this new event. [Exit.]

Man. Why didst thou dare return? Oh! rather why
Didst thou so long defer with ev'ry grace,
And every growing virtue, thus to raise
Your mother's dear delight to rapture?

Hamet. Lost

In the deep mists of darkling ignorance,
To me my birth's unknown. But sure that look,
Those tears, those shrieks, that animated grief,
Defying danger, all declare th' effect
Of nature's workings in a parent's heart.
Then let me pay my filial duty here,
Kneel to her native dignity, and pour
In tears of joy, the transport of a son

[face;

Man. Thou art, thou art my son; thy father's
His ev'ry feature blooming in his boy.
Oh! tell me, tell me all; how hast thou liv'd
With virtuous Morat? how did he support,
In dreary solitude, thy tender years?
How train thy growing virtue? quickly tell me;
Oh! tell me all, and charm me with thy tongue.

Hamet. Mysterious pow'rs! have I then liv'd to
this?

Thus on the brink of death to find a parent,
In virtue firm, majestic in distress,
At length to feel unutterable bliss
In her dear circling arms?

Re-enter OCTAR, with TIMURKAN and MIRVAN.

Tim. Where is this wild,
This frantic woman, who, with headlong grief,
Suspends my dread command? Tear them asunder;
Send her to some dark cell to rave and shriek,
And dwell with madness; and let instant death
Leave that rash youth a headless trunk before me.

Man. Now, by the ever-burning lamps that light
Our holy shrines, by great Confucius' altar,
By the prime source of life, and light, and being,
This is my child, the blossom of my joys.
Send for his cruel father; he, 'tis he
Intends a fraud; he, for a stranger's life,
Would give his offspring to the cruel axe,
And rend a wretched mother's brain with madness.

Re-enter ZAMTI.

Zamti. Sure the sad accents of Mandane's voice
Struck on my frightened sense.

Tim. Once more, thou traitor!
Who is that stubborn youth?

Zamti. Alas! what needs
This iteration of my griefs?

Man. Forbear,
Thou marble-hearted father! 'tis your son.
And wouldst thou see him bleed?

Zamti. On him, on him
Let fall your rage.

Man. Oh! my devoted child! (*Faints.*)
Hamet. Support her, heaven! support her tender
frame.

Now, tyrant, now I beg to live; lo! here
I plead for life; not for the wretched boon
To breathe the air, which thy ambition taints,
But, oh! to ease a mother's woes; for her,
For that dear object, let me live for her.

Tim. Spite of their frauds, the truth begins to
dawn:

In her wild vehemence of grief, I hear
The genuine voice of nature.

Man. (*Recovers.*) Where's my child?
Oh! let me strain him to my heart; thy hard,
Thy cruel father shall not tear thee from me.

Tim. Hear me, thou frantic mourner! dry those
tears;

Perhaps you still may save your darling son.

Man. Oh! quickly give the means.

Tim. Resign your king,
Your phantom of a king, and save your child.

Hamet. No, my much-honour'd mother, never
hear

The base, the dire proposal; let me rather

Exhaust my life-blood at each gushing vein!
Mandane, then—then you may well rejoice
To find your child; then you may truly know
The best delight a mother's heart can prove,
When her son dies with glory.

Tim. Curses blast

The stripping's pride! (*Talks apart with Octar.*)

Zamti. Ye powers, enthron'd above!

You never meant entirely to destroy
This groaning land, when your benignant care
Lends us a youth like him. Let me enfold
That lovely ardour in his father's arms.
My brave, my gen'rous boy!

Tim. Dost thou at length

Confess it, traitor?

Zamti. Yes, I boast it, tyrant;
Boast it to thee, to earth, and heaven, I boast
This, this is Zamti's son.

Hamet. At length the hour,
The glorious hour is come, by Morat promis'd,
"When Hamet shall not blush to know his father."

Zamti. Oh! thou intrepid youth, what bright
reward

Can your glad sire bestow on such desert?
The righteous gods, and your own inward feelings,
Shall give the sweetest retribution. Now,
Mandane, now my soul forgives thee all,
Since I have made acquaintance with my boy;
But, oh! I charg'd thee, by a husband's right—

Tim. A husband's right! a traitor has no rights;
Society disclaims him. Woman, bear,
And mark my words: abjure the mandarin,
Renounce all hymeneal vows, reveal
This mystery, and still your son may live,
While justice whirls that traitor to his fate.

Man. Thou vile adviser! what, betray my lord,
My honour'd husband; turn a Scythian wife;
Forget the many years of fond delight,
In which my heart ne'er knew decreasing love,
Charm'd with his noble, all-accomplish'd miud?
No, tyrant, no; with him I'll dare to die;
With him in ruin more supremely blest,
Than guilt upon a throne triumphant.

Zamti. Now,

Inhuman Tartar, I defy thy power.
Lo! here, the father, mother, and the son!
Try all your tortures on us: here we stand,
Resolv'd to leave a track of bright renown
To mark our being; resolv'd all to die,
The votaries of honour!

Tim. Then, by heaven!

Your doom is fix'd. This moment seize the slaves;
Deep in some baleful dungeon's midnight gloom
Let each apart be plung'd; and Etan, too—
Let him forthwith be found; he, too, shall share
His father's fate.

Mir. Be it my task, dread sir,
To make the rack ingenious in new pains;
Till even cruelty almost relent
At their keen, agonizing groans.

Tim. Be that,

Mirvan, thy care. By the immortal Lama,
I'll wrest the secret from them, or once more
My rage is up in arms: 'gainst Corea's chief
I will unfurl my banners; his proud cities
Shall dread my thunder at their gates, and mourn
Their smoking ramparts; o'er his verdant plains
And peaceful vales I'll drive my rapid car,
And ne'er know rest, ne'er sheathe th' avenging
sword,

Till their king fall, and treason is no more. [*Exit.*
Octar. Mirvan, bear hence those miscreants to
their fate;

Thou, Zamti, art my chargé.

Zamti. Willing I come.

My son, thy father doubts not of thy fortitude.
Mandane, summon all thy strength; the gods,
Who try thy virtue, may reward it still.

[*Exit, with Octar.*]

Man. Hamet! restor'd and lost again!
(*Struggles with the Guards.*)

Hamet. Alas!
No means to rescue thee! Inhuman villains!
And will you tear me from her? [*He is dragged off.*]

Man. Oh! my child!
Now, then, barbarians, you have seiz'd on all
My soul holds dear. What have I now to dread?
I gave him being; in the hour of peril
I flew to rescue him; I could no more.
If he must fall, I'll emulate his virtues;
True to the solemn vow I've breath'd to heaven,
True to my sovereign still! in honour's cause
The mother from her son shall learn to die.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Prison.* HAMET lies stretched on the ground, in chains.

Enter ZAPHIMRI, in a Tartar dress, and MIRVAN.

Mir. There, stretch'd at length on the dank ground, he lies

Scouring his fate: your meeting must be short.

Zaph. It shall.

Mir. And yet I tremble for th' event.

Zaph. Mirvan, no more: I will hold converse with him,

Though death were arm'd against the interview.

[*Exit Mirvan.*]

Hamet. What wouldst thou, Tartar?

Zaph. Rise, thou gen'rous youth!
No vulgar errand mine.

Hamet. (*Rises.*) Now speak thy purpose.

Zaph. To these lone walls, where oft the Scythian stabber,

With murd'rous stride hath come; these walls that oft

Have seen the assassin's deeds, I bring a mind

Firm, virtuous, upright. Under this vile garb,
Lo! here a son of China.

Hamet. Yes, thy garb

Denotes a son of China, and those eyes

Roll with no black intent. Say on.

Zaph. Inflam'd
With admiration of heroic deeds,
I come to seek acquaintance with the youth,
Who, for his king, would die.

Hamet. And does thy heart

Applaud the deed?

Zaph. It does, by heaven, it does.

Yes, virtuous envy rises in my soul.

Thy ardour charms, and even now I pant

To change conditions with thee.

Hamet. Then my heart
Accepts thy proffer'd friendship. In a base,
A prone, degen'rate age, when foreign force
And foreign manners have o'erwhelm'd us all,
And sunk our native genius, thou retain'st
A sense of ancient worth. But wherefore here?
To this sad mansion, this abode of sorrow,
Com'st thou to know a wretch that soon must die?

Zaph. Oh! no; thou shalt not die. By me the king,

By me Zaphimri says—

Hamet. Zaphimri says!
Kind heaven! where is the king?

Zaph. His steps are safe,
Unseen as is the arrow's path. By me he says,
He knows, he loves, he wonders at thy virtue;
By me he swears, rather than thou shouldst fall,
He will emerge from dark obscurity,
And greatly brave his fate.

Hamet. Ha! die for me!
For me ignoble in the scale of being,
An unimportant wretch! Who'er thou art,
I pr'y thee, stranger, bear my answer back.
Oh! tell my sovereign, that here dwells a heart
Above all pain and peril. When I fall,
A worm, an insect dies; but in his life

Are wrapp'd the glories of our ancient line,
The liberties of China; then let him
Live for his people, be it mine to die.

Zaph. Can I hear this, just gods! and not dissolve

In tears of gratitude and love? (*Aside.*)

Hamet. Why streams
That flood of grief? and why that stifled groan?
Through the dark mist his sorrow casts around him,
He seems no common man. Say, gen'rous youth,
Who and what art thou?

Zaph. Who and what am I?
The veriest wretch that ever groan'd in anguish.

One lost, abandon'd, plung'd in woe,
Beyond redemption's aid! to tell thee all
In one dire word, big with the last distress,
In one accumulated term of horror,
Zaphimri!

Hamet. Ha! my king!

Zaph. That fatal wretch,
Exalted into misery supreme!
Oh! I was happy while good Zamti's son;
I walk'd the common tracts of life, and strove
Humbly to copy my imagin'd sire.

But now—
Hamet. Yes now—if thou art he—as sure
'Tis wondrous like—rais'd to a state, in which
A nation's happiness on thee depends.

Zaph. A nation's happiness! there, there I bleed;
There are my pangs. For me this war began;
For me hath purple slaughter drench'd yon plains;
I am the cause of all: I forg'd those chains—
For Zamti and Mandane, too! by me they fall;
Them have I thrown into a dungeon's gloom:
These are the horrors of Zaphimri's reign!

I am the tyrant; I ascend the throne,
By base ingratitude, by the vile means
Of selfish cowardice, that can behold
Thee, and thy father, mother, all in chains,
All lost, all murder'd, that I thus may rise
Inglorious to a throne.

Hamet. Alas! thy spirit,
Thy wild disorder'd fancy, pictures forth
Ills that are not, or being ill, not worth
A moment's pause.

Zaph. Not ill! thou canst not mean it;
The angry fates, amidst their hoards of malice,
Had nought but this; they meant to render me
Peculiarly distress'd. Tell me, thou gallant youth,
(A soul like thine knows every fine emotion,
Is there a nerve in which the heart of man
Can prove such torture, as when thus it meets
Unequal'd friendship, honour, truth, and love,
And no return can make?)

Hamet. That pow'r will come.

Zaph. But when? when thou art lost!

When Zamti and Mandane are no more!
Oh! for a dagger's point to plunge it deep,
Deep in this—ha! deep in the tyrant's heart.

Hamet. There your revenge should point.—Alas!
my sov'reign,

Why didst thou venture to this place of danger?

Zaph. And canst thou deem me, then, so base of soul,

To dwell secure in ignominious safety;
With cold insensibility to wait
The ling'ring hours, with coward patience wait them,

Deliberating on myself, while ruin
Nods over Zamti's house? No, gen'rous youth,
I'll not think meanly of thee; no, that thought
Is foreign to thy heart.

Hamet. Withdraw thee hence;
Nor lightly hazard thus so dear a life:
Think of thy ancestors.

Zaph. My ancestors!
What is to me a long descended line,
A race of worthies, legislators, heroes,
Unless I bring their virtues, too? No more!

This very night I'll burst those guilty walls,
Rend those vile manacles, and give thee freedom.

Re-enter MIRVAN.

Mir. The time forbids delay: whilst thou art here,

Thy fate's suspended on each dreadful moment.

Zaph. This garb will cloak me from each jealous eye;

Thou need'st not fear detection.

(*Flourish of trumpets.*)

Hamet. Ha! what means

That sudden and wild harmony?

Mir. Ev'n now

The conqueror and his fell barbaric rout,

For this day's victory, indulge thy joy.

Zaph. Joy soon to end in groans; for all conspires

To forward our design: a band of heroes

Ev'n now are ready; honourably leagu'd

To vindicate their rights. Thy father's care

Plann'd and inspir'd the whole. And, lo! the lights

That whilom blaz'd to heav'n, now rarely seen,

Shed a pale glimmer, and the foe secure,

Sinks down in deep debauch; while, all awake,

The genius of the land broods o'er the work

Of justice and revenge.

Mir. The gallant chiefs,

At their appointed station, are conven'd;

In silent terror all intent they stand,

And wait the signal in each gale that blows.

Hamet. Dream on, deluded Tartar, yes, dream

Still unsuspecting plunge in guilty joy, [on;

And bury thee in riot.

Zaph. Ne'er again

To wake from that vile trance; for ere the dawn,

Detested spoiler, thy hot blood shall smoke

On the stain'd marble, and thy limbs abhor'd

I'll scatter to the dogs of China.

Mir. Ha!

Break off your conference: Octar this way comes;
Beware, my prince.

Enter OCTAR.

Well, Octar, there's your prisoner.

(*Points to Hamet.*)

Octar. Convey him hence to where Mandane's
grief

Rings through the vaulted roof.

Hamet. Yes, lead me hence

To soften anguish in a parent's breast.

[*Exit, with Mirvan.*

Zaph. What may this mean? I dread some lurking mischief. [Exit.

Octar. When the boy clings around his mother's heart,

Then, in that tender moment, tear him from her;

And, in her impotence of grief, the truth

Will burst its way.

Enter TIMURKAN.

Why from the genial banquet

Thus will my sov'reign seek a dungeon's gloom?

Tin. A more than midnight gloom involves my soul.

What boots the conqu'ring sword, the plume of victory,

If still this coward boy in secret lives;

If serpent-like, amidst the flow'ry garlands,

He wreaths his folds, to dash my promis'd joy,

And poison my delight?

Octar. Then, at once,

To end your fears, give Zamti to the sword,

His wife, and all who aid him in his guilt.

'Twill crush the seeds of dark conspiracy.

Tin. No; Zamti's death but multiplies my fears.

With him the truth lies buried in the tomb.

Hast thou beheld the stubborn mandarin?

Octar. Unconquer'd, yet by words he stands unmov'd,

Smiling contempt, as if some inward joy,

Like the sun lab'ring in a night of clouds,
Shot forth, at intervals, a gladsome ray,
Bright'ning the face of woe.

Tin. He must not die:

The slave shall linger out his days in torment.

Octar. Might I advise, Mandane may be won.

She still, sir, may be your's: a conqueror's sighs

Shall waft a thousand wishes to her heart,

Till female vanity aspire to reach

The eastern throne.

Tin. No, Octar; 'tis not mine

To melt in languishing desire, and try

The hopes, the fears, and the caprice of love.

Inur'd to rougher scenes, for other arts

My mind's employ'd: to sling the well-stor'd quiver

Over this manly arm, and wing the dart

At the fleet rein-deer sweeping down the vale,

Or up the mountain straining ev'ry nerve;

To vault the neighing steed, and urge his course,

Swifter than whirlwinds, through the ranks of war,

Reeking with gore to drive my chariot wheels;

These are my passions, this my only science.

Rais'd from a soldier to imperial sway,

I still will reign in terror. Bring that traitor,

The hoary priest, before me. [*Exit Octar.*

Now, by heav'n!

Their stubborn fortitude erects a fence

To shield 'em from my wrath, more pow'rful far

Than their high boasted wall, which long hath stood

The shock of time, of war, of storms, and thunder,

The wonder of the world. What art thou, virtue,

That giv'st these joys, my heart hath never known?

Enter ZANTI, in chains.

Thy hated sight once more I brook, to try

If yet the sense of deeds abhor'd as thine

Has touch'd your soul: while yet the hour permits,

Repeat thee of thy crimes.

Zanti. The crime would be

To yield to thy unjust commands. But know,

A louder voice than thine forbids the deed,

The voice of all my kings; forth from their tombs,

Ev'n now, they send a peal of groans to heav'n,

Where all thy murders are long since gone up,

And stand in dread array against thee.

Tin. Murders!

Ungrateful mandarin! say, did not I,

When civil discord lighted up her brand,

And scatter'd wide her flames; when fierce contention,

'Twixt Zorohanti and Zaphimri's father,

Sorely convuls'd the realm; did not I then

Lead forth my Tartars from their northern frontier,

And bid fair order rise?

Zanti. Bid order rise!

Hast thou not smote us with a band of wrath?

By thee each art has died, and ev'ry science

Gone out at thy fell blast. Art thou not come

To sack our cities, to subvert our temples,

The temples of our gods, and with the worship,

The monstrous worship of your living Lama,

Profane our holy shrines?

Tin. Resolve my doubts,

Nor think with groundless, with ill-tim'd reproach,

To talk me from my purpose.

Zanti. Tyrant, yes;

Yes, thou hast smote us with a hand of wrath,

Full twenty years hast smote us; but at length

Will come the hour of heav'n's just visitation,

When thou shalt rue—hear me, thou man of blood!

Yes, thou shalt rue the day, the day that saw thee

Imhrue those hands accurst in royal blood.

Now, tyrant, now—yes, tremble at my words,

The arm of the most high is bar'd against thee;

And, lo! the hand of fate describes thy doom

In glaring letters on yon rubied wall!

Each gleam of light is perish'd out of heav'n,

And darkness rushes o'er the face of earth.

Tim. And think'st thou, slave, with visionary fears

I'er can shrink appall'd? thou moonstruck seer!
No more I'll bear this mockery of words.
What, Octar, ho!

Re-enter OCTAR.

Lead forth that frantic woman.
Ruin involves ye all; this very hour
Shall see your son impal'd; yes, both your sons.
Bring Etan, too, before us.

Octar. Etan, sir,
Is fled for safety.

Tim. Thou pernicious slave! (To *Zamti.*)

Zamti. The righteous gods protect him from thy rage. [Exit *Octar.*]

Tim. Him, too, thou wouldst withdraw from justice! him

Thy perfidy would send to Corea's realm,
To brood in secret o'er some work of treason.

Re-enter OCTAR, Guards, &c. with HAMET and MANDANE.

Now, then, deluded fair, if fix'd in error
You still persist, the rack shall have its prey.

Man. I tell thee, homicide, my soul is bound
By solemn vows; and wouldst thou have me break
What angels wafed on their wings to heav'n?

Tim. This moment saves your child, or dooms him dead.

Man. Goddess of vengeance, from your realms above,

Where near the throne of the most high thou sitt'st,
Inspir'd in darkness, amidst hoards of thunder,
Serenely dreadful, till dire human crimes
Provoke thee down, now, on the whirlwind's wing,
Descend, and with your flaming sword, your bolts,
Red with almighty wrath, let loose your rage,
And blast this vile seducer in his guilt.

Tim. Then seize her son, and give him to the rack.

Man. No; by the pow'rs above, by ev'ry tie
Of humanizing pity, seize me first:
Despatch his mother; end this wretched being.

Enter Guards, with ZAPHIMRI.

Zaph. (Rushing from the Guards.) Hold! murderers, hold! I charge you, slaves, forbear!

Zamti. Ha! China totters on the brink of ruin. (Aside.)

Tim. Etan! thou art welcome to my great revenge!

Zaph. I come on matters of importance deep
Unto thy throne and life.

Zamti. Heed not an idle boy.

Tim. Proceed, and tell thy purpose.

Zaph. Even now

Thy death is plotting.

Tim. Ha! by whom?

Zaph. Zaphimri!

Zamti. What means my son?

Tim. Resign him to my vengeance,
And then our mercy shall to thee extend.

Zaph. Think not I come to save this worthless life.

Pity Mandane; save her tender frame.

Pity that youth; (kneels) oh! save that godlike man.

Zamti. Wilt thou dishonour me, degrade thyself,
Thy native dignity, by basely kneeling?
Quit that vile posture.

Tim. To appease our wrath,
Bring me Zaphimri's head.

Zaph. Will that suffice?

Tim. His blood atones for all.

Zaph. (Rises.) Then take it, tyrant;
I am Zaphimri; I your mortal foe.

Zamti. Angels of light, quick on your rapid wing

Dart from your thrones above, and hover round him.

Man. Alas! all's ruin'd; China is no more.

Zaph. Behold me, Tartar; hear the voice of truth;

Thus, on his knees, Zaphimri begs to die.

Tim. Thou early traitor! by thy guilty father
Train'd up in fraud, wouldst thou deceive me, too?

Hamet. He would: all would deceive you; all conspire

Against my claim; all wrest my title from me:

The father's art, the mother's fond ambition,

Upon my ruins to exalt their name,

And raise their son to empire.

Zaph. Ha! forbear,

Rash youth, forbear; nor thus insult your king.

Mine is the crown; its miseries are mine:

Mine the worst malice fortune hath in store:

I claim it all, and will not bear a rival.

Hamet. Horror! believe him not; for me the troops

From Corea's realm dar'd to approach your walls:

I led them on; I came from climes remote;

The captives of your sword have own'd they fought

To see me seated on the throne of China.

Zaph. By heav'n, he's innocent; the guilt is mine.

Misguided boy! I charge thee dare no more

Usurp a monarch's right; resign at once

My lawful claim, the honours of my birth;

Give back my name; I ask it but to die.

Tim. Their wondrous conflict but involves me deeper

In doubt, mistrust, perplexity, and fear.

Misguided fair one, say which is your king?

Man. Behold their virtue, and respect them both.

Tim. Perdition seize her! *Zamti*, mark my words;

This moment catch each doubt, or keenest pangs
Shall hunt the secret through each trembling nerve.

Zamti. I have already yielded up my son;

I gave him to your sword; and after that,

After that conflict, think'st thou there is aught

Zamti has left to fear?

Tim. Yes; learn to fear

My will, my sov'reign will, which here is law,

And treads upon the neck of slaves.

Zamti. Thy will

The law in China? ill-instructed man!

Now learn an awful truth. Though ruffian pow'r

May, for awhile, suppress all sacred order,

And trample on the rights of man, the soul

Which gave our legislation life and vigour

Shall still subsist, above the tyrant's reach.

The spirit of the laws can never die.

Tim. Here, then, all parley ends: thy doom is fix'd:
This very moment drag 'em from my sight.

(Guards seize *Zamti.*)

Man. Yes, lead me with him: in his arms to die,
Mandane goes resign'd. But, tyrant, know

The great important truth is treasur'd here.

Thy pow'r can ne'er extort it. Yes, live on,

In the worst agony of doubt and fear.

With us the secret dies: that joy is ours;

With that we triumph still; with that we bid thee

Fear while we live, and tremble in our fall.

[Exit, with *Zamti* and *Guards.*]

Hamet. No, spare 'em, yet forbear; here point thy sword;

Unsluce these veins, but spare their matchless lives! [He is carried off.]

Zaph. I am your victim, by the gods, I am.

(Kneels, and holds *Timurkan.*)

Tim. Away, vile slave! go, see them bleed; behold

How they will writhe in pangs; pangs doom'd for thee,

And all who deal in treachery like thine. [Exit. *Zaph.* (On the ground.) Yet hear me; yet a moment! barb'rous Scythians!

Wilt thou not open, earth, and take me down,

Down to thy caverns of eternal darkness?
And sleeps almighty justice? will it not
Awaken all its terrors? arm yon band
Of secret heroes with avenging thunder?
By heav'n, (rises) that thought lifts up my kindling
soul

With renovated fire. My glorious friends,
Who now, convene big with your country's fate,
When I am dead, oh! give me just revenge;
Let me not die inglorious; make my fall,
By some great act of yet unheard-of vengeance,
Resound throughout the world; that furthest
Scythia

May stand appall'd at the huge distant roar
Of one vast ruin tumbling on the heads
Of this fell tyrant, and his hatred race. [Exit.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Palace.

Enter ZAMTI and MANDANE, followed by OCTAR.

Zamti. Why dost thou lead us to this hated mansion?

Must we again behold the tyrant's frown?
Thou know'st our hearts are fix'd.

Octar. The war of words
We scorn again to wage. Beneath this roof
The rack is now prepar'd, and Timurkan,
Anon, shall view your pangs, and count each groan
Ev'n to the fullest luxury of vengeance.
Guard well that passage; (to the Guards within)
see the traitors find

No means of flight, while to the conqueror
I hasten to receive his last commands. [Exit.

Zamti. Thou ever faithful woman!

Man. Canst thou, Zamti,
Still call me faithful? by that honour'd name
Wilt thou call her, whose wild maternal love
Hath buried all in ruin?

Zamti. Yes, thou art,
Thou art my wife, whose virtue, ev'n in bondage,
Hath cheer'd my soul; and now thy ev'ry charm,
Endear'd by danger, kindled by distress
To higher lustre, all my passions beat
Unutterable gratitude and love.

And must—oh! cruel!—must I see thee bleed?

Man. For me death wears no terror on his brow.
Full twenty years hath this afflicted breast
Been smote with these sad hands; these haggard
eyes

Have seen my country's ruin; seen my husband,
My son, my king, all in the Tartar's hands.
What, then, remains for me? death, only death.

Zamti. Ah! can thy tenderness endure the pangs
Inventive cruelty ev'n now prepares?
Must this lov'd form, this soft perfection bleed?
Thy decent limbs be strain'd with cruel cords,
To glut a ruffian's rage?

Man. Alas! this frame,
This feeble texture, never can sustain it.
But this, this I can bear! (Shows a dagger.)

Zamti. Ha!

Man. Yes; this dagger!
Do thou but lodge it in this faithful breast,
My heart shall spring to meet thee.

Zamti. Oh!

Man. Do thou,
My honour'd lord, who taught'st me ev'ry virtue,
Afford the friendly, the last human office,
And teach me now to die.

Zamti. It must not be.

Hence let me bear this instrument of death.
(Takes the dagger.)

Shall we usurp the dread prerogative
Of life and death, and measure out the thread
Of our own being? 'Tis the cowards act,
Who dares not to encounter pain and peril.
Be that the practice of th' untutor'd savage;
Be it the practice of the gloomy north. [nod,

Man. Must we, then, wait the haughty tyrant's

The vassals of his will? no; let us rather
Nobly break through the barriers of this life,
And join the beings of some other world,
Who'll throng around our greatly daring souls,
And hail our flight with wonder and applause.

Zamti. Distress too exquisite! ye holy powers,
If aught below can supersede your law,
And plead for wretches, who dare, self-impell'd,
Rush to your awful presence; 'tis not, then,
When the distemper'd passions rage, when pride
Is stung to madness, when ambition falls
From her high scaffolding—oh! no; if aught
Can justify the blow, it is when virtue
No more can stand at bay, when liberty
No longer breathes at large; 'tis with the groans
Of our lov'd country, when we dare to die.

Man. Then here at once direct the friendly steel.

Zamti. Now, then, prepare thee. Ah! does this
become

Thy husband's love? thus, with uplifted blade
Can I approach that bosom-bliss, where oft
With other looks than these, oh! my Mandane,
I've hush'd my cares within thy shelt'ring arms?

Man. Alas! the loves that bless'd our happy days,
Have spread their pinions never to return,
And the pale fates surround us. Zamti, come,
Here lay me down in honourable rest;
Come as thou art, all hero, to my arms,
And free a virtuous wife.

Zamti. It must be so:
Now, then, prepare thee. My arm flags and droops,
Conscious of thee in every trembling nerve.

(Throws down the dagger.)
By heaven, once more I would not raise the point
Against that hoard of sweets, for endless years
Of universal empire.

Man. Ha! they come;
The ministers of vengeance come; and yet
They shall not long insult us in our woes;
Myself will still preserve the means of death.

(Takes up the dagger.)

Re-enter OCTAR, with TIMURKAN and Guards.

Tim. Now, then, detested pair, your hour is
come.

I hate this dull delay. Seize Zamti first;
Let studied art, with slow-consuming pangs,
Explore the truth; nor let him know relief,
In his worst agonies, till every secret
Burst forth in groans, and end my doubts and fears.

Zamti. Begin your tortures, end this wretched
being;

I care not now how soon. (The Guards seize him.)

Man. Stay, Zamti, stay!

And will you force him thus? [He is forced off.]

Inhuman villains!
Oh! Timurkan, behold me humbled here,
Thus lowly on my knees, thus prone to earth,
And grov'ling at your feet. I ask to die;
Grant my request; it will not stain thy name
With weak humanity; deal still in blood.

Oh! let me perish in my husband's arms!
It will be mercy to indulge my prayer,
And murder shall for once be virtue in thee.

Tim. Behold him first, behold the hoary traitor
Gasping in death, and well'ring in his gore.

Thy turn will follow. By thy treach'rous arts,
The hated orphan lives.

Man. (Rises.) And if he lives,
May heaven protect him, till the awful truth,
In some dread hour of horror and revenge,
Shall burst like thunder on thee. If by me
Zaphimri lives, then, tyrant, know thy duty;
Descend at once from a throne gain'd by murder,
And yield the crown, resign it to your master.

Tim. Pernicious traitress!

Enter MIRVAN.

Ha! what wouldst thou, Mirvan?

Mir. Near to the eastern gate, a slave reports,

As at his watch he stood, the gleam of arms
Cast a dim lustre through the night, and straight
The steps of men thick sounded in his ear.
In close array they march'd.

Tim. Ha! lurking treason!

What ho! my arms! Ourselves will sally forth.

Mir. My liege, their scanty and rash-levied numbers

Want not a monarch's sword. With eager zeal,
Upon the instant, I drew off the guards
That round the palace walls. Let Octar, sir,
Who oft has led them to renown in arms,
Let him but head the ranks, his valour soon
Shall bring the traitors bound in chains before you.

Tim. Well, he it so. Octar, do thou go forth,
And give the rebels to the sabre's edge.

[*Exit Octar.*

Man. Why must I linger thus? Lo! Mirvan, too,
Leagu'd with the foe, a traitor to his king! [*Aside.*]

Mir. With sure conviction, we have further
learo'd

The long-contended truth. Etan's their king.
The traitor, Zamti, counted but one son,
And him he sent—Maudane knows it all—
Far hence to Corea's realm.

Tim. At length thy guilt [*To Maudane.*]
Glares to the sight. This hour Zaphimri dies.

Mir. To Morat's care th' insidious mandarin,
With that complotter in his dark designs,
Gave up their boy; while, unsuspected here,
They fix'd a safe asylum for their prince

Man. [*Looks at Mirvan.*] When shall I quit a
world where men like thee
Are only fit to dwell?

Tim. Let Morat straight
Attend our presence; bring the slave before us.

Mir. This hour approves my loyalty and truth.
[*Exit.*

Tim. Thanks to great Lama, treason is no more,
And their boy-king is found. Yes, traitress, now
Thou shalt behold the stripling's forfeit head.
Soon as the dawn shall purple yonder east,
Aloft in air all China shall behold it,
Parch'd by the sun, and weltring to the wind.

Re-enter MIRVAN.

Tim. Well, Mirvan, hast thou brought the
treach'rous slave?

Mir. My liege, he comes, obedient to your will.

Enter ZAPHIMRI, with a sabre in his hand.

Zaph. Now, bloody Tartar, now, then, know
Zaphimri.

Tim. Accursed treason! To behold thee thus
In arms before me, blasts my aching sight;
My blood forgets to move; each power dies in me.

Man. Yes, monster, yes, thy fated hour is come.
Descend, thou tyrant, from a throne usurp'd,
And yield the crown, now yield it to thy master.

Zaph. Well may'st thou tremble, well may
guilt like thine

Shrink back dismay'd; for thus avenging heaven
In me sends forth his minister of wrath,
To deal destruction on thee.

Tim. Coward slave!
A midnight ruffian, in th' unguarded hour,
Secure thou com'st, thus to assault a warrior
Thy heart would never dare to meet in arms.

Zaph. Not meet thee, Tartar! ha! in me thou
seest [*heav'd,*

One, on whose head unnumber'd wrongs thou'st
Else could I scorn thee thus defenceless; yes,
My great revenge could bid thee try each shape,
Assume each horrid form, come forth array'd
In all the terrors of destructive guilt.

But now a dear, a murder'd father calls;
He beckons to the spot, the sacred altar
Which thy fell hand imbrued with royal blood.
Go, seek the temple; at that dread tribunal
Receive thy doom, and expiate thy crimes.

Tim. By heaven, I'll dare thee still; resign it,
slave!

Resign the blade to nobler hands.

[*Seizes Mirvan's sabre.*]

Man. Oh! horror!

Bring instant help; let not the fate of China
Hang on the issue of a doubtful combat.

Zaph. Now, lawless ravager, Zaphimri comes
To wreak his justice on thee.

[*They fight; Zaphimri drives Timurkan off.*

Man. Now, just gods,
Sinew his arm, and guide the blow for freedom.

Mir. See there! behold, he darts upon his prey!

Zaph. [*Within.*] Die, bloodhond, die!

Mir. The Tartar drops his point.

Man. He falls, the victim falls.

Zaph. [*Within.*] My father strikes;
He gives the blow; and this, thou fell destroyer,
This for a nation's groans.

Enter HAMET.

Hamet. Where is Zaphimri?

Direct me to him.

Man. Hamet! Oh! my son,
Once more I clasp thee in thy mother's arms!

Lo! where the monster quivers on the ground!

Let me seek Zamti with the glorious tidings,
And call him back to liberty and joy.

[*Exit, with Mirvan.*

Re-enter ZAPHIMRI.

Zaph. This reeking blade hath drunk the tyrant's
blood.

Hamet. China again is free. There lies the
corse

That breath'd destruction to the world.

Zaph. Yes, there,
Tyrannic guilt, behold thy fatal end,
The wages of thy sins.

Enter MORAT.

Hamet. Oh! Morat, welcome;

Welcome to conquest, freedom, and revenge.

Morat. Revenge now stalks abroad: our valiant
leaders,

True to the destin'd hour, at once broke forth
From every quarter on th' astonish'd foe.

Zaph. Lo! Timurkan lies levell'd with the dust.

Morat. Oppression's iron rod at length is broke.
My king! my sovereign! [*Kneels to Zaph.*]

Zaph. Rise; the time demands
Far other cares. Where are my gallant friends?

Is the wild tumult o'er, and have they conquer'd?

Morat. The gates, the ramparts, and the citadel,
Each pass is ours; the unsuspecting foe,
Hemm'd in on every side, resists in vain.

Octar is fall'n: all cover'd o'er with wounds,
He met his fate; and still the slaughter'ing sword
Invades the city, sunk in sleep and wine.

Zaph. Send forth, and let Orasming straight
proclaim

Zaphimri king, my subjects' rights restor'd.

[*Exit Morat.*

Now, where is Zamti? where my more than father?
Where is Maudane? Lead me, lead me to them.

Re-enter MIRVAN.

What means that pale despair?

Mir. Oh! dire mischance!

While here I trembled for the great event,
The unrelenting slaves, whose trade is death,
Began their work; nor piety nor age,
Could touch their felon-hearts: they seiz'd on
Zamti,

And bound him on the wheel; a prey to villains

We found the good, the venerable man

Smiling in pangs; all frantic at the sight,
Maudane plung'd a poniard in her breast:

"With him I liv'd," she cried, "with him will
die!"

Hamet. Oh! heaven! my mother! Summon ev'ry aid

To call her back to life.

Mir. In th' arms of death

Ev'n now she struggles.

Zaph. Fatal rashness. Say,

Is Zamti, too, destroy'd?

Mir. Life ebbs apace.

Releas'd from anguish, with what strength remain'd,

He reach'd the couch where lost Mandane now lies;

There threw his mangled limbs, there clinging to her,

He pours his sad lamentings in a strain

Might call each pitying angel from the sky

To sympathize with human woe.

(The back scene opens.)

Zaph. And see,

See on that mournful bier he clasps her still;

Still hangs upon each faded feature; still

To her deaf ear complains in bitter anguish.

(Zamti and Mandane brought forward on a couch.)

Zamti. Yet live, Mandane; thou may'st still be happy;

Thou hast not merited an end like this.

Man. The hand of death ev'n now is heavy on me.

Zaph. Are these our triumphs? these our promis'd joys?

Zamti. The music of that voice recalls my soul.

(Rises, and runs to embrace Zaphimiri; his strength fails, and he falls at his feet.)

My prince! my king!

Zaph. Support him; bear him up.

Man. Where is my child, my Hamet? lives he still?

Hamet. He lives; but, oh! to see my mother thus—

Man. Oh! let me fold thee. *(Rises.)* Ha! it is too much:

I thank you, heaven; these are a mother's joys;

And these you give to cheer me in my passage.

Soft, lay me, lay me down.

Hamet. Her eyes are fix'd;

A death-like paleness spreads o'er ev'ry feature.

Zaph. *(Raises Zamti.)* How fares it, Zamti, now?

Zamti. Oh! blest event!

I could not hope such tidings; thee, my king,

And Hamet, too; I thought you both destroy'd.

My slow remains of life cannot endure

These strong vicissitudes of grief and joy.

And there, there lies Mandane, lead me to her.

Mandane, look upon me; once again

Let me behold the day-light of thy eyes.

Man. Alas! those eyes no more must gaze upon thee;

That dear delight is fled; thee, too, my son,

No more I now must see thee; snatch'd from death,

This day restor'd, after whole years of absence.

I leave thee now, I leave my child for ever.

The heart-string breaks.—Oh! that thought tears; it cleaves;

It drowns me in my tears.

Zamti. I pray ye, lead me,

Conduct me to her, nearer still, that hath—

Alas! I faint—support me. *(Faints.)*

Hamet. Once again

Mandane speak, and let me hear thy voice.

Man. Hamet, thy hand; forgive, forgive my rashness.

Could I survive your father? No; with him

The scene was clos'd; but—is the tyrant dead?

Hamet. His debt is paid.

Man. Alas! I follow him,

I follow thither, where eternal justice

Exalts the just, and humbles the oppressor.

And thee, my son, I leave thee here in freedom.

That joy is mine. Copy your father's actions,
You need no more: mankind will bless thee for it.

Remember all his precepts: his example

Will guide thy steps, and marshal thee to glory.

I die resign'd; and yet, and yet 'tis hard,

When freedom dawns, and after all my sufferings,

It's hard, my child, your mother now should leave thee.

Zamti! where is he?

Zamti. *(Revives.)* Bend me, bend me forward.

Man. Alas! that sight—Oh! Zamti—Hamet—
Oh! *(Dies.)*

Zamti. She's gone, for ever, ever gone. Mandane!
(Sinks down by her.)

Thus do I see thee? cold, alas! death-cold.

Cold is that breast, where virtue from above

Fix'd her delighted mansion; and those lips

That utter'd heav'nly truth, pale, pale! dead, dead!

Pray ye entomb me with her.

Zaph. Take, ye powers,

Your throne, your crown; take all your conquests
back;

Zaphimiri never can survive—

Zamti. I charge thee, live.

A base desertion of the public weal

Will ill become a king. Alas! my son,

By that dear tender name, if once again

Zamti may call thee, this is now the last,

The only interview we e'er shall have.

Zaph. And will ye, then, inexorable gods,

Will ye, then, tear him from my aching heart?

Zamti. The moral duties of the private man

Are grafted in thy soul: but, oh! remember,

The mean immutable of happiness;

Or in the vale of life, or on a throne,

Is virtue: each bad action of a king

Extends beyond his life, and oft renews

Its tyranny o'er ages yet unborn.

To error mild, severe to guilt, protect

The helpless innocent: be truth thy passion;

Spurn the base flatterer, and learn to feel

The best delight of serving humankind.

Hamet. He dies, he dies! the agony is on him.

Zamti. Life harass'd out, pursued with barb'rous art

Through ev'ry trembling joint, now fails at once.

Zaphimiri—oh! farewell, I shall not see

The glories of thy reign. My son, my Hamet,

Thou good young man, farewell. Mandane, yes,

My soul with pleasure wings her flight, that thus,

Faithful in death, I leave these cold remains

Near thy dear honour'd clay. *(Dies.)*

Zaph. And art thou dead,

Thou best of men? then must Zaphimiri pine

In ever-during grief, since thou art lost;

Since that firm patriot, whose parental care

Should raise, should guide, should animate my virtues,
Lies there a breathless corse.

Hamet. My liege, forbear;

Live for your people; madness and despair

Belong to woes like mine.

Zaph. Thy woes, indeed,

Are great, thou pious youth; yes, I will live

To soften thy afflictions; to assuage

A nation's grief when such a pair expires.

Come to my heart; in thee another Zamti

Shall bless the realm. Now let me hence to hail

My people with the sound of peace; that done,

To these a grateful monument shall rise,

With all sepulchral honour; frequent there

We'll offer incense; there each weeping muse

Shall grave the tributary verse; with tears

Emball their memories; and teach mankind,

How'er oppression stalk the groaning earth,

Yet heav'n, in its own hour, can bring relief;

Can blast the tyrant in his guilty pride,

And prove the orphan's guardian to the last.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE ORPHAN; OR, THE UNHAPPY MARRIAGE:

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY THOMAS OTWAY.



Act II.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

ACASTO
CASTALIO
POLYDORE

CHAMONT
ERNESTO
CHAPLAIN

MONIMIA
SERINA
FLORELLA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Garden.

Enter CASTALIO, POLYDORE, and Page.

Castalio. Polydore, our sport
Has been, to-day, much better for the danger:
When on the brink the foaming hoar I met,
And in his side thought to have lodg'd my spear,
The desperate savage rush'd within my force,
And bore me headlong with him down the rock.

Polydore. Bat, then—

Castalio. Ay, then, my brother, my friend,
Polydore,

Like Perseus mounted on his winged steed,
Came on, and down the dang'rous precipice
leap'd

To save Castalio. 'Twas a godlike act!

Polydore. But when I came, I found you conqueror.

Oh! my heart danc'd to see your danger past!
The heat and fury of the chase was cold,
And I had nothing in my mind but joy.

Castalio. So, Polydore, methinks, we might in
war

Rush on together; thou shouldst be my guard,
And I be thine. What is't could hurt us then?
Now half the youth of Europe are in arms,
How fulsome must it be to stay behind,
And die of rank diseases here at home!

Polydore. No; let me purchase in my youth
renown,

To make me lov'd and valu'd when I'm old;
I would be busy in the world, and learn;
Not like a coarse and useless dughill weed,
Fix'd to one spot, and rot just as I grow.

Castalio. Our father

Has ta'en himself a surfeit of the world,
And cries, it is not safe that we should taste it.
I own, I have duty very pow'ful in me:
And though I'd hazard all to raise my name,
Yet he's so tender, and so good a father,
I could not do a thing to cross his will.

Polydore. Castalio, I have doubts within my
heart,

Which you, and only you, can satisfy.
Will you be free and candid to your friend?

Castalio. Have I a thought my Polydore should
not know?

What can this mean?

Polydore. Nay, I'll conjure you, too,
By all the strictest bonds of faithful friendship,
To shew your heart as naked in this point,
As you would purge you of your sins to heav'n.
And should I chance to touch it near, bear it
With all the suff'rance of a tender friend.

Castalio. As calmly as the wounded patient bears
The artist's hand, that ministers his cure.

Polydore. That's kindly said. You know our fa-
ther's ward,

The fair Monimia:—is your heart at peace?
Is it so guarded, that you could not love her?

Castalio. Suppose I should?

Polydore. Suppose you should not, brother?

Castalio. You'd say, I must not.

Polydore. That would sound too roughly
Twixt friends and brothers, as we two are.

Castalio. Is love a fault?

Polydore. In one of us it may be.

What, if I love her?

Castalio. Then I must inform you
I lov'd her first, and cannot quit the claim;
But will preserve the birthright of my passion.

Polydore. You will?

Castalio. I will.

Polydore. No more; I've done.

Castalio. Why not?

Polydore. I told you I had done.

But you, *Castalio*, would dispute it.

Castalio. No;

Not with my *Polydore*: though I must own
My nature obstinate, and void of suff'rance;
I could not bear a rival in my friendship,
I am so much in love, and fond of thee.

Polydore. Yet you will break this friendship!

Castalio. Not for crowns.

Polydore. But for a toy you would, a woman's toy.
Unjust *Castalio*!

Castalio. Pr'ythee, where's my fault?

Polydore. You love *Monimia*.

Castalio. Yes.

Polydore. And you would kill me,
If I'm your rival?

Castalio. No; sure, we're such friends,
So much one man, that our affections, too,
Must be united, and the same as we are.

Polydore. I dote upon *Monimia*.

Castalio. Love her still;

Win, and enjoy her.

Polydore. Both of us cannot.

Castalio. No matter

Whose chance it prove; but let's not quarrel
for't.

Polydore. You would not wed *Monimia*, would
you?

Castalio. Wed her!

No; were she all desire could wish, as fair
As would the vainest of her sex be thought,
With wealth beyond what woman's pride could
waste,

She should not cheat me of my freedom. Marry!
When I am old and weary of the world,

I may grow desperate,

And take a wife to mortify withal.

Polydore. It is an elder brother's duty so
To propagate his family and name.

You would not have your's die, and buried with
you?

Castalio. Mere vanity, and silly dotage, all:
No; let me live at large, and when I die—

Polydore. Who shall possess th' estate you
leave?

Castalio. My friend,

If he survive me; if not, my king,
Who may bestow't again on some brave man,
Whose honesty and services deserve one.

Polydore. 'Tis kindly offer'd.

Castalio. By you heaven, I love

My *Polydore* beyond all worldly joys;
And would not shock his quiet, to be bless'd
With greater happiness than man e'er tasted.

Polydore. And, by that heaven, eternally I
swear,

To keep the kind *Castalio* in my heart.

Whose shall *Monimia* be?

Castalio. No matter whose.

Polydore. Were you not with her privately last
night?

Castalio. I was; and should have met her here
again.

The opportunity shall now be thine;
But have a care, by friendship I conjure thee,
That no false play be offer'd to thy brother.
Urge all thy powers to make thy passion prosper;
But wrong not mine.

Polydore. By heaven, I will not.

Castalio. If't prove thy fortune, *Polydore*, to
conquer,
(For thou hast all the arts of soft persuasion,)
Trust me, and let me know thy love's success,
That I may ever after stifle mine.

Polydore. Though she be dearer to my soul than
rest
To weary pilgrims, or to misers gold,
To great men pow'r, or wealthy cities pride;
Rather than wrong *Castalio*, I'd forget her.

[Exit with *Castalio*.]

Enter *MONIMIA*.

Monimia. Pass'd not *Castalio* and *Polydore* this
way?

Page. Madam, just now.

Monimia. Sure, some ill fate's upon me:
Distrust and heaviness sit round my heart,
And apprehension shocks my tim'rous soul.
Why were not I laid in my peaceful grave
With my poor parents, and at rest as they are?
Instead of that, I'm wand'ring into cares.
Castalio! Oh, *Castalio*! thou hast caught
My foolish heart; and, like a tender child,
That trusts his plaything to another hand,
I fear its harm, and fain would have it back.
Come near, *Cordelio*; I must chide you, sir.

Page. Why, madam, have I done you any
wrong?

Monimia. I never see you now; you have been
kinder;
Perhaps I've been ungrateful. Here's money for
you.

Page. Madam, I'd serve you with my soul.

Monimia. Tell me, *Cordelio*, (for thou oft hast
heard

Their friendly converse, and their bosom secrets,)
Sometimes, at least, have they not talk'd of me?

Page. Oh! madam, very wickedly they've
talk'd:

But I am afraid to name it; for, they say,
Boys must be whipp'd, that tell their masters'
secrets.

Monimia. Fear not, *Cordelio*; it shall ne'er be
known;

For I'll preserve the secret as 'twere mine.
Polydore cannot be so kind as I.

I'll furnish thee with all thy harmless sports,
With pretty toys, and thou shalt be my page.

Page. And truly, madam, I had rather be so.
Methinks you love me better than my lord;
For he was never half so kind as you are.

What must I do?

Monimia. Inform me how thou'st heard
Castalio and his brother use my name.

Page. With all the tenderness of love,
You were the subject of their last discourse.

At first I thought it would have fatal prov'd;
But, as the one grew hot, the other cool'd,
And yielded to the frailty of his friend;

At last, after much struggling, 'twas resolv'd—

Monimia. What, good *Cordelio*?

Page. Not to quarrel for you.

Monimia. I would not have 'em, by my dearest
hopes;

I would not be the argument of strife.
But, surely, my *Castalio* won't forsake me,
And make a mock'ry of my easy love.

Went they together?

Page. Yes, to seek you, madam.

Castalio promis'd Polydore to bring him,
Where he alone might meet you,
And fairly try the fortune of his wishes.

Monimia. Am I, then, grown so cheap, just to
be made

A common stake, a prize for love in jest?
Was not Castalio very loth to yield it?
Or was it Polydore's unruly passion,
That heighten'd the debate?

Page. The fault was Polydore's.
Castalio play'd with love, and, smiling, shew'd
The pleasure, not the pangs of his desire.
He said, no woman's smiles should buy his free-
dom:

And marriage is a mortifying thing. [Exit.]

Monimia. Then I am ruin'd! if Castalio's false,
Where is there faith and honour to be found?
Ye gods, that guard the innocent, and guide
The weak, protect and take me to your care.
Oh! but I love him. There's the rock will wreck
me!

Why was I made with all my sex's fondness,
Yet want the cunning to conceal its follies?
I'll see Castalio, tax him with his falsehoods,
Be a true woman, rail, protest my wrongs;
Resolve to hate him, and yet love him still.

Re-enter CASTALIO and POLYDORE.

He comes.

Castalio. Madam, my brother begs he may have
leave

To tell you something that concerns you nearly.
I leave you, as becomes me, and withdraw.

Monimia. My lord Castalio!

Castalio. Madam?

Monimia. Have you purpos'd
To abuse me palpably? What means this usage?
Why am I left with Polydore alone?

Castalio. He best can tell you. Business of im-
portance

Calls me away: I must attend my father.

Monimia. Will you, then, leave me thus?

Castalio. But for a moment.

Monimia. It has been otherwise: the time has
been,
When business might have stay'd, and I been
heard.

Castalio. I could for ever hear thee; but this time
Matters of such odd circumstances press me,
That I must go. [Exit.]

Monimia. Then go, and, if't be possible, for ever.
Well, my lord Polydore, I guess your business,
And read th' ill-natur'd purpose in your eyes.

Polydore. If to desire you more than misers
wealth,

Or dying men an hour of added life;
If softest wishes, and a heart more true
Than ever suffer'd yet for love disdain'd,
Speak an ill nature, you accuse me justly.

Monimia. Talk not of love, my lord, I must not
hear it.

Polydore. Who can behold such beauty, and be
silent?

Desire first taught us words. Man, when created,
At first alone long wander'd up and down
Forlorn, and silent as his vassal beasts:
But when a heav'n-born maid, like you, ap-
pear'd,

Strange pleasure fill'd his eyes, and fir'd his heart,
Unloos'd his tongue, and his first talk was love.

Monimia. The first created pair, indeed, were
bless'd;

They were the only objects of each other,
Therefore, he courted her, and her alone;
But in this peopled world of beauty, where
There's roving room, where you may court, and
ruin

A thousand more, why need you talk to me?

Polydore. Oh! I could talk to thee for ever.

Thus

Eternally admiring, fix and gaze
On those dear eyes; for every glance they send
Darts through my soul.

Monimia. How can you labour thus for my
undoing?

I must confess, indeed, I owe you more
Than ever I can hope, or think, to pay.
There always was a friendship 'twixt our families;
And, therefore, when my tender parents dy'd,
Whose ruin'd fortunes, too, expir'd with them,
Your father's pity and his bounty took me,
A poor and helpless orphan, to his care.

Polydore. 'Twas heav'n ordain'd it so, to make
me happy.

Hence with this peevish virtue, 'tis a cheat;
And those who taught it first were hypocrites.
Come; these soft, tender limbs were made for
yielding.

Monimia. Here on my knees, by heav'n's blest
pow'r I swear, (Kneels.)

If you persist, I ne'er henceforth will see you,
But rather wander through the world a beggar,
And live on sordid scraps at proud men's doors;
For though to fortune lost, I'll still inherit
My mother's virtues, and my father's honour.

Polydore. Intolerable vanity! your sex
Was never in the right! y'are always false,
Or silly; ev'n your dresses are not more
Fantastic than your appetites; you think
Of nothing twice; opinion you have none.
To-day y'are nice, to-morrow not so free;
Now smile, then frown; now sorrowful, then
glad;

Now pleas'd, now not: and all, you know not
why!

Monimia. Indeed, my lord,
I own my sex's follies; I have 'em all;
And, to avoid its fault, must fly from you.
Therefore, believe me, could you raise me high
As most fantastic woman's wish could reach,
And lay all nature's riches at my feet;
I'd rather run a savage in the woods,
Amongst brute beasts, grow wrinkled and de-
form'd,

So I might still enjoy my honour safe,
From the destroying wiles of faithless men.

Polydore. Who'd be that sordid thing call'd
man? [Exit.]

I'll yet possess my love; it shall be so. [Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Saloon.

*Enter ACASO, CASTALIO, POLYDORE, and
Attendants.*

Acaso. To-day has been a day of glorious
sport:

When you, Castalio, and your brother left me,
Forth from the thickets rush'd another boar,
So large, he seem'd the tyrant of the woods,
With all his dreadful bristles rais'd up high,
They seem'd a grove of spears upon his back;
Foaming he came at me, where I was posted
Best to observe which way he'd lead the chase,
Whetting his huge large tusks, and gaping wide,
As if he already had me for his prey:
Till brandishing my well-pois'd javelin high,
With this bold executing arm I struck
The ugly bradded monster to the heart.

Castalio. The actions of your life were always
wondrous.

Acaso. No flattery, boy; an honest man can't
live by't;

It is a little sneaking art, which knaves
Use to cajole and soften fools withal.

If thou hast flattery in thy nature, out with't,
Or send it to a court, for there 'twill thrive.

Castalio. Your lordship's wrongs have been
So great, that you with justice may complain;
But suffer us, whose younger minds ne'er felt
Fortune's deceits, to court her, as she's fair:
Were she a common mistress, kind to all,
Her worth would cease, and half the world grow
idle.

Methinks, I would be busy.

Polydore. So would I;
Not loiter out my life at home, and know
No further than one prospect gives me leave.

Acasto. Busy your minds, then; study arts and
men;

Learn how to value merit, though in rags,
And scorn a proud, ill-manner'd knave in office.

Enter SERINA.

Serina. My lord, my father!

Acasto. Blessings on my child!

My little cherub, what hast thou to ask me?

Serina. I bring you, sir, most glad and welcome
news;

The young Chamont, who you've so often wish'd
for,

Is just arriv'd, and entering.

Acasto. By my soul,
And all my honours, he's most dearly welcome;
Let me receive him like his father's friend.

Enter CHAMONT.

Welcome, thou relict of the best lov'd man!
Welcome from all the turmoils and the hazards
Of certain danger, and uncertain fortune!
Welcome as happy tidings after fears!

Chamont. Words would but wrong the gratitude
I owe you;

Should I begin to speak, my soul's so full,
That I should talk of nothing else all day.

Enter MONIMIA.

Monimia. My brother!

Chamont. Oh! my sister! let me hold thee
Long in my arms. I've not beheld thy face
These many days; by night I've often seen thee
In gentle dreams, and satisfy'd my soul
With fancy'd joys, till morning cares awak'd me.
Another sister! sure, it must be so;
Though I remember well I had but one:
But I feel something in my heart that prompts,
And tells me, she has claim and interest there.

Acasto. Young soldier, you've not only studied
war;

Courtship, I see, has been your practice, too,
And may not prove unwelcome to my daughter.

Chamont. Is she your daughter? then my heart
told true,

And I'm, at least, her brother by adoption;
For you have made yourself to me a father,
And by that patent I have leave to love her.

Serina. Monimia, thou hast told me men are
false,

Will flatter, feign, and make an art of love:
Is Chamont so? no, sure, he's more than man;
Something that's near divine, and truth dwells in
him.

Acasto. Thus happy, who would envy pompous
pow'r,

The luxury of courts, or wealth of cities?
Let there be joy through all the house this day!
In ev'ry room let plenty flow at large!
It is the birth-day of my royal master.
You have not visited the court, Chamont,
Since your return?

Chamont. I have no bus'ness there;
I have not slavish temperance enough
T' attend a favourite's heels, and watch his smiles,

Bear an ill office done me to my face,
And thank the lord that wrong'd me for his fa-
vour.

Acasto. This you could do. (*To his Sons.*)

Castalio. I'd serve my prince.

Acasto. Who'd serve him?

Castalio. I would, my lord.

Polydore. And I; both would.

Acasto. Away!

He needs not any servants such as you.
Serve him! he merits more than man can do!
He is so good, praise cannot speak his worth;
So merciful, sure, he ne'er slept in wrath!
So just, that were he but a private man,
He could not do a wrong! How would you serve
him?

Castalio. I'd serve him with my fortune here at
home,

And serve him with my person in his wars:
Watch for him, fight for him, bleed for him.

Polydore. Die for him,

As ev'ry true-born, loyal subject ought.

Acasto. Let me embrace ye both: now, by the
souls

Of my brave ancestors, I'm truly happy!
For this, be ever bless'd my marriage day!
Bless'd be your mother's memory that bore you;
And doubly bless'd be that auspicious hour
That gave ye birth!

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My lord, th' expected guests are just
arriv'd. [*Exit.*]

Acasto. Go you, and give 'em welcome and re-
ception.

[*Exeunt Serina, Castalio and Polydore.*]

Chamont. My lord, I stand in need of your as-
sistance,

In something that concerns my peace and honour.

Acasto. Spoke like the son of that brave man I
lov'd!

So freely, friendly, we convers'd together.
Whate'er it be, with confidence impart it;
Thou shalt command my fortune and my sword.

Chamont. I dare not doubt your friendship, nor
your justice;

Your bounty shewn to what I hold most dear,
My orphan sister, must not be forgotten!

Acasto. Pr'ythee, no more of that, it grates my
nature.

Chamont. When our dear parents dy'd, they
dy'd together;

One fate surpris'd 'em, and one grave receiv'd 'em;
My father, with his dying breath, bequeath'd
Her to my love; my mother, as she lay
Languishing by him, call'd me to her side,
Took me in her fainting arms, wept, and embrac'd
me;

Then press'd me close, and, as she observ'd my
tears,

Kiss'd them away; said she, "Chamont, my son,
By this, and all the love I ever shew'd thee,
Be careful of Monimia: watch her youth;
Let not her wants betray her to dishonour;
Perhaps kind heaven may raise some friend." Then
sigh'd,

Kiss'd me again; so bless'd us, and expir'd.
Pardon my grief.

Acasto. It speaks an honest nature.

Chamont. The friend heav'n rais'd was you; you
took her up,

An infant, to the desert world expos'd,
And prov'd another parent.

Acasto. I've not wrong'd her.

Chamont. Far be it from my fears.
Acasto. Then why this argument?

Chamont. My lord, my nature's jealous, and
you'll bear it.

Acasto. Go on.

Chamont. Great spirits bear misfortune hardly;
Good offices claim gratitude; and pride,
Where pow'r is wanting, will usurp a little,
And make us (rather than be thought behind
hand)
Pay over price.

Acasto. I cannot guess your drift;
Distrust you me?

Chamont. No; but I fear her weakness
May make her pay her debt at any rate:
And, to deal freely with your lordship's goodness,
I've heard a story lately much disturbs me.

Acasto. Then first charge her; and if th' offence
be found
Within my reach, though it should touch my nature,

In my own offspring, by the dear remembrance
Of thy brave father, whom my heart rejoic'd in,
I'd prosecute it with severest vengeance. [*Exit.*]

Chamont. I thank you, from my soul.

Monimia. Alas! my brother. What have I
done?

My heart quakes in me; in your settled face,
And clouded brow, methinks I see my fate.
You will not kill me?

Chamont. Pr'ythee, why dost thou talk so?

Monimia. Look kindly on me, then; I cannot
bear

Severity; it daunts, and does amaze me;
My heart's so tender, should you charge me rough,
I should but weep, and answer you with sobbing;
But use me gently, like a loving brother,
And search through all the secrets of my soul.

Chamont. Fear nothing, I will shew myself a
brother,

A tender, honest, and a loving brother.
You've not forgot our father?

Monimia. I never shall.

Chamont. Then you'll remember, too, he was a
man

That liv'd up to the standard of his honour,
And priz'd that jewel more than mines of wealth:
He'd not have done a shameful thing but once;
Though kept in darkness from the world, and
bidden,

He could not have forgiv'n it to himself.
This was the only portion that he left us;
And I more glory in't than if possess'd
Of all that ever fortune threw on fools.
'Twas a large trust, and must be manag'd nicely;
Now if, by any chance, *Monimia*,
You have soil'd this gem, and taken from its
value,

How will you account with me?

Monimia. I challenge envy,
Malice, and all the practices of hell,
To censure all the actions of my past
Unhappy life, and taint me if they can.

Chamont. I'll tell thee, then: three nights ago,
as I

Lay musing in my bed, all darkness round me,
A sudden damp struck to my heart, cold sweat
Dew'd all my face, and trembling seiz'd my
limbs;

My bed shook under me, the curtains started,
And to my tortur'd fancy there appear'd
The form of thee, thus beauteous as thou art;
Thy garments flowing loose, and in each hand
A wanton lover, who by turns caress'd thee
With all the freedom of unbounded pleasure.
I snatch'd my sword, and, in the very moment,
Darted it at the phantom; straight it left me;
Then rose, and call'd for lights, when, (oh! dire
omen!)

I found my weapon had the arras pierc'd,
Just where that famous tale was interwoven,
How the unhappy Theban slew his father.

Monimia. And for this cause my virtue is sus-
pected!

Because in dreams your fancy has been ridden,
I must be tortur'd waking!

Chamont. Have a care;
Labour not to be justify'd too fast:
Hear all, and then let justice hold the scale.
What follow'd was the riddle that confounds me:
Through a close lane, as I pursu'd my journey,
And meditating on the last night's vision,
I spy'd a wrinkled hag, with age grown double,
Picking dry sticks, and mumbling to herself;
Her eyes, with scalding rheum, were gall'd and
red:

Cold palsy shook her head, her hands seem'd
withler'd,

And on her crooked shoulders had she wrapp'd
The tatter'd remnant of an old strip'd hanging,
Which serv'd to keep her carcass from the cold;
So there was nothing of a piece about her.
Her lower weeds were all o'er coarsely patch'd
With different colour'd rags, black, red, white,
yellow,

And seem'd to speak variety of wretchedness.

I ask'd her of my way, which she inform'd me;
Then crav'd my charity, and bade me hasten
To save a sister! At that word I started.

Monimia. The common cheat of beggars; every
day

They flock about our doors, pretend to gifts
Of prophecy, and telling fools their fortune.

Chamont. Oh! but she told me such a tale,
Monimia,

As in it bore great circumstance of truth;
Castalio and *Polydore*, my sister.

Monimia. Ha!

Chamont. What, alter'd? Does your courage
fail you?

Now, by my father's soul, the witch was honest!
Answer me, if thou hast not lost to them
Thy honour at a sordid game?

Monimia. I will,

I must, so hardly my misfortune loads me,
That both have offer'd me their love's most true.

Chamont. And 'tis as true, too, they have both
undone thee.

Monimia. Though they both with earnest vows
Have press'd my heart, if e'er in thought I
yielded

To any but *Castalio*—

Chamont. But *Castalio*!

Monimia. Still will you cross the line of my dis-
course.

Yes, I confess that he has won my soul

By gen'rous love and honourable vows,

Which he this day appointed to complete,

And make himself by holy marriage mine.

Chamont. Art thou then spotless? hast thou still
preserv'd

Thy virtue white, without a blot; untainted?

Monimia. When I'm unchaste, may heaven re-
ject my prayers;

Or more, to make me wretched, may you know
it.

Chamont. Oh! then, *Monimia*, thou art dearer
to me

Than all the comforts ever yet bless'd man.

But let not marriage bait thee to thy ruin.

Trust not a man; we are by nature false,

Dissembling, subtle, cruel, and inconstant:

When a man talks of love, with caution trust him;

But if he swears, he'll certainly deceive thee.

I charge thee, let *Castalio* no more sooth thee;

Avoid it, as thou wouldst preserve the peace

Of a poor brother, to whose soul thou'rt precious.

Monimia. I will.

Chamont. Appear us cold, when next you meet,
as great ones,

When merit begs; then shalt thou see how soon
His heart will cool, and all his pains grow easy.

[Exit.

Monimia. Yes, I will try him, torture him severely;

For, oh! Castalio, thou too much hast wrong'd me,

In leaving me to Polydore's ill usage.

He comes! and now, for once, oh, love! stand nenter.

Whilst a hard part's perform'd; for I must 'tempt,
Wound his soft nature, though my heart aches for't.

Re-enter CASTALIO.

Castalio. Monimia, my angel! 'twas not kind
To leave me here alone.

Re-enter POLYDORE, with Page.

Polydore. Here place yourself, and watch my brother thoroughly;

Pass not one circumstance without remark.

[Apart to Page, and exit.

Castalio. When thou art from me, every place is desert,

And I, methinks, am savage and forlorn:

Thy presence only 'tis can make me bless'd,

Heal my unquiet mind, and tune my soul.

Monimia. Oh! the bewitching tongues of faithless men!

'Tis thus the false hyena makes her moan,

To draw the pitying traveller to her den:

Your sex are so, such false dissemblers all;

With sighs and plaints y' entice poor women's hearts,

And all that pity you are made your prey.

Castalio. What means my love? Oh! how have I deserv'd

This language from the sovereign of my joys?

Stop, stop these tears, Monimia, for they fall

Like baneful dew from a distemper'd sky:

I feel 'em chill me to my very heart.

Monimia. Oh! you are false, Castalio, most forsorn!

Attempt no further to delude my faith;

My heart is fix'd, and you shall shak't no more.

Castalio. Who told you so? What hell-bred villain durst

Profane the sacred business of my love?

Monimia. Your brother, knowing on what terms I'm here,

Th' unhappy object of your father's charity,

Licentiously discours'd to me of love,

And durst affront me with his brutal passion.

Castalio. 'Tis I have been to blame, and only I;

False to my brother, and unjust to thee.

For, oh! he loves thee too, and this day own'd it,

Tax'd me with mine, and claim'd a right above me.

Monimia. And was your love so very tame to shrink?

Or, rather than lose him, abandon me?

Castalio. I, knowing him precipitate and rash,

Seem'd to comply with his unruly will;

Lest he in rage might have our loves betray'd,

And I for ever had Monimia lost.

Monimia. Could you, then, did you, can you own it, too?

'Twas poorly done, unworthy of yourself!

And I can never think you meant me fair.

Castalio. Is this Monimia? Surely, no! till now

I ever thought her dove-like, soft, and kind.

Who trusts his heart with woman's surely lost:

You were made fair on purpose to undo us,

While greedily we snatch th' alluring bait,

And ne'er distrust the poison that it hides.

Monimia. When love ill-plac'd, would find a means to break—

Castalio. It never wants pretences or excuse.

Monimia. Man, therefore, was a lordlike creature made,

Rough as the winds, and as inconstant too:

A lofty aspect given him for command;

Easily soften'd when he would betray;

Like conquering tyrants, you our breasts invade;

But soon you find new conquests out, and leave

The ravag'd province ruinate and waste.

If so, Castalio, you have serv'd my heart,

I find that desolation's settled there,

And I shall ne'er recover peace again.

Castalio. Who can hear this and bear an equal mind?

Since you will drive me from you, I must go:

But, oh! Monimia, when thou bast banish'd me,

No creeping slave, though tractable and dull

As artful woman for her ends would choose,

Shall ever dote as I have done.

Monimia. Castalio, stay: we must not part. I find

My rage ebbs out, and love flows in apace.

These little quarrels love must needs forgive.

Oh! charm me with the music of thy tongue,

I'm ne'er so bless'd as when I hear thy vows,

And listen to the language of thy heart.

Castalio. Where am I? Surely, Paradise is round me!

Sweets planted by the hand of heaven grow here,

And every sense is full of thy perfection.

Sure, framing thee, heaven took unusual care;

As its own beauty it design'd thee fair,

And form'd thee by the best lov'd angel there. } [Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Garden.

Enter POLYDORE and Page.

Polydore. Were they so kind? Express it to me all

In words; 'twill make me think I saw it, too.

Page. At first I thought they had been mortal foes:

Monimia rag'd, Castalio grew disturb'd:

Each thought the other wrong'd; yet both so haughty,

They scorn'd submission, though love all the while

The rebel play'd, and scarce could be contain'd.

Polydore. But what succeeded?

Page. Oh! 'twas wondrous pretty!

For of a sudden all the storm was past:

A gentle calm of love succeeded it:

Monimia sigh'd and blush'd; Castalio swore;

As you, my lord, I well remember, did

To my young sister, in the orange grove,

When I was first preferr'd to be your page.

Polydore. Boy, go to your chamber, and prepare your lute. [Exit Page.

Happy Castalio! now, by my great soul,

My ambitious soul, that languishes to glory,

I'll have her yet; by my best hopes, I will;

She shall be mine, in spite of all her arts.

But for Castalio why was I refus'd?

Has he supplanted me by some foul play?

Traduc'd my honour? Death! he durst not do't.

It must be so: we parted, and he met her,

Half to compliance brought by me; surpris'd

Her sinking virtue, till she yielded quite.

So poachers pick up tired game,

While the fair hunter's cheated of his prey.

Boy!

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Oh! the unhappiest tidings tongue e'er told!

Polydore. The matter?

Serv. Oh! your father, my good master, As with his guests he sat, in mirth rais'd high,

And chas'd the goblet round the joyful board,
A sudden trembling seiz'd on all his limbs;
His eyes distorted grew, his visage pale,
His speech forsook him, life itself seem'd fled,
And all his friends are waiting now about him.

Enter ACASTO, Chaplain, and Attendants.

Acasto. Support me, give me air, I'll yet recover.

'Twas but a slip decaying nature made;
For she grows weary near her journey's end.
Where are my sons? Come near, my Polydore!
Your brother—where's Castalio?

Serv. My lord,
I've search'd, as you commanded, all the house:
He and Monimia are not to be found.

Acasto. Not to be found? then, where are all my friends?

'Tis well!
I hope they'll pardon an unhappy fault
My unmannerly infirmity has made.
Death could not come in a more welcome hour;
For I'm prepar'd to meet him; and, methinks,
Would live and die with all my friends about me.

Enter-CASTALIO.

Castalio. Angels preserve my dearest father's life!

Oh! may he live till time itself decay,
Till good men wish him dead, or I offend him!

Acasto. Thank you, Castalio! give me both your hands.

So now, methinks,
I appear as great as Hercules himself,
Supported by the pillars he had rais'd.

Enter SERINA.

Serina. My father!

Acasto. My heart's darling!

Serina. Let my knees

Fix to the earth, ne'er let my eyes have rest,
But wake and weep, till heaven restore my father.

Acasto. Rise to my arms, and thy kind pray'rs
are answer'd.

For thou'rt a wondrous extract of all goodness;
Born for my joy, and no pain's felt when near thee.

Chamont!

Enter CHAMONT.

Chamont. My lord, may't prove not an unlucky omen!

Many I see are waiting round about you,
And I am come to ask a blessing, too.

Acasto. May'st thou be happy!

Chamont. Where?

Acasto. In all thy wishes.

Chamont. Confirm me so, and make this fair one mine:

I am unpractis'd in the trade of courtship,
And know not how to deal love out with art:
Onsets in love seem best like those in war,
Fierce, resolute, and done with all the force;
So I would open my whole heart at once,
And pour out the abundance of my soul.

Acasto. What says Serina? Canst thou love a soldier?

One born to honour, and to honour bred?
One that has learn'd to treat e'en foes with kindness,

To wrong no good man's fame, nor praise himself?
Serina. Oh! name not love, for that's ally'd to joy;

And joy must be a stranger to my heart,
When you're in danger. May Chamont's good fortune

Render him lovely to some happier maid!
Whilst I, at friendly distance, see him bless'd,
Praise the kind gods, and wonder at his virtues.

Acasto. Chamont, pursue her, conquer, and possess her;

And, as my son, a third of all my fortune
Shall be thy lot.

Chamont, you told me of some doubts that press'd you:

Are you yet satisfy'd that I'm your friend?

Chamont. My lord, I would not lose that satisfaction,

For any blessing I could wish for:
As to my fears, already I have lost them:
They ne'er shall vex me more, nor trouble you.

Acasto. I thank you.

My friends, 'tis late:
Now my disorder seems all past and over,
And I, methinks, begin to feel new health.

Castalio. Would you but rest, it might restore you quite.

Acasto. Yes, I'll to bed; old men must humour weakness.

Good night, my friends! Heav'n guard you all!
Good night!

To-morrow early we'll salute the day,
Find out new pleasures, and redeem lost time.

[*Exeunt all but Chamont and Chaplain.*]

Chamont. If you're at leisure, sir, we'll waste an hour:

'Tis yet too soon to sleep, and 'twill be charity
To lend your conversation to a stranger.

Chaplain. Sir, you're a soldier?

Chamont. Yes.

Chaplain. I love a soldier;
And had been one myself, but that my parents
Would make me what you see me.

Chamont. Have you had long dependance on this family?

Chaplain. I have not thought it so, because my time's
Spent pleasantly. My lord's not haughty nor im-

perious,

Nor I gravely whimsical: he has good nature.

His sons, too, are civil to me, because

I do not pretend to be wiser than they are;

I meddle with no man's business but my own;

So meet with respect, and am not the jest of the family.

Chamont. I'm glad you are so happy.
A pleasant fellow this, and may be useful. (*Aside.*)

Knew you my father, the old Chamont?

Chaplain. I did; and was most sorry when we lost him.

Chamont. Why, didst thou love him?

Chaplain. Ev'rybody lov'd him; besides, he was my patron's friend.

Chamont. I could embrace thee for that very notion:

If thou didst love my father, I could think

Thou wouldst not be an enemy to me.

Chaplain. I can be no man's foe.

Chamont. Then, pr'ythee, tell me;

Think'st thou the lord Castalio loves my sister?

Chaplain. Love your sister?

Chamont. Ay, love her.

Chaplain. Either he loves her, or he much has wrong'd her.

Chamont. How wrong'd her? have a care; for this may lay

A scene of mischief to undo us all.

But tell me, wrong'd her, saidst thou?

Chaplain. Ay, sir, wrong'd her.

Chamont. This is a secret worth a monarch's fortune:

What shall I give thee for't? thou dear physician

Of sickly souls, unfold this riddle to me,

And comfort mine.

Chaplain. I would hide nothing from you willingly.

Chamont. By the reverenc'd soul

Of that great honest man that gave me being,
Tell me but what thou know'st concerns my ho-
nour,

And, if I e'er reveal it to thy wrong,
May this good sword ne'er do me right in battle!
May I ne'er know that blessed peace of mind,
That dwells in good and pious men like thee!

Chaplain. I see your temper's mov'd, and I will
trust you.

Chamont. Willt thou?

Chaplain. I will; but if it ever 'scape you—

Chamont. It never shall.

Chaplain. Then this good day, when all the house
was busy,

When mirth and kind rejoicing fill'd each room,
As I was walking in the grove I met them.

Chamont. What, met them in the grove to-
gether?

Chaplain. I, by their own appointment, met them
there,
Receiv'd their marriage vows, and join'd their
hands.

Chamont. How! married?

Chaplain. Yes, sir.

Chamont. Then my soul's at peace:

But why would you so long delay to give it?

Chaplain. Not knowing what reception it may
find

With old Acasto; may be, I was too cautious
To trust the secret from me.

Chamont. What's the cause

I cannot guess, though 'tis my sister's honour,
I do not like this marriage,

Huddled i'th' dark, and done at too much ven-
ture;

The business looks with an unlucky face.

Keep still the secret; for it ne'er shall 'scape me,
Not ev'n to them, the new match'd pair. Fare-
well!

Believe my truth, and know me for thy friend.

[*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter CASTALIO, with MONIMIA.

Castalio. Young Chamont and the Chaplain! sure,
'tis they!

No matter what's contriv'd, or who consulted,
Since my Monimia's mine; though this sad look
Seems no good bodi'g omen to our bliss;
Else, pry'thee, tell me why that look cast down,
Why that sad sigh, as if thy heart were breaking?

Monimia. Castalio, I am thinking what we've
done:

The heavenly powers were sure displeas'd to-
day;

For, at the ceremony as we stood,
And as your hand was kindly join'd with mine,
As the good priest pronounc'd the sacred words,
Passion grew big, and I could not forbear,
Tears drown'd my eyes, and trembling seiz'd my
soul.

What should that mean?

Castalio. Oh! thou art tender all!
Gentle and kind as sympathizing nature!

Re-enter POLYDORÉ, unobserved.

But wherefore do I dally with my bliss?
The night's far spent, and day draws on apace;
To bed, my love, and wake till I come thither.

Monimia. 'Twill be impossible:
You know your father's chamber's next to mine,
And the least noise will certainly alarm him.

Castalio. No more, my blessing!
What shall be the sign?
When shall I come? for to my joys I'll steal,
As if I ne'er had paid my freedom for them.

Monimia. Just three soft strokes upon the cham-
ber-door;

And at that signal you shall gain admittance:

But speak not the least word; for, if you should,
'Tis surely heard, and all will be betray'd.

Castalio. Oh! doubt it not, Monimia; our joys
Shall be as silent as the ecstatic bliss
Of souls, that by intelligence converse.
Away, my love! first take this kiss. Now haste:
I long for that to come, yet grudge each minute
past.

[*Exit Monimia.*]

My brother wand'ring, too, so late this way!

Polydore. Castalio!

Castalio. My Polydore, how dost thou?
How does our father? Is he well recover'd?

Polydore. I left him happily repos'd to rest:
He's still as gay as if his life were young.
But how does fair Monimia?

Castalio. Doubtless well:

A cruel beauty, with her conquest pleas'd,
Is always joyful, and her mind in health.

Polydore. Is she the same Monimia still she
was?

May we not hope she's made of mortal mould?

Castalio. She's not woman else:

Though I'm grown weary of this tedious hoping;
We've in a barren desert stray'd too long.

Polydore. Yet may relief be unexpected found,
And love's sweet manna cover all the field.
Met ye to-day?

Castalio. No; she has still avoided me:

I wish I'd never meddled with the matter;
And would enjoin thee, Polydore—

Polydore. To what?

Castalio. To leave this peevish beauty to her-
self.

Polydore. What, quit my love? as soon I'd quit
my post

In fight, and like a coward run away.

No, by my stars, I'll chase her till she yields

To me, or meet her rescue in another.

Castalio. But I have wondrous reasons on my
side,

That would persuade thee, were they known.

Polydore. Then speak 'em:

What are they? Came ye to her window here

To learn 'em now? Castalio, have a care;

Use honest dealing with a friend and brother.

Believe me, I'm not with love so blinded,

But can discern your purpose to abuse me:

Quit your pretences to her.

You say you've reasons: why are they conceal'd?

Castalio. To-morrow I may tell you.

Polydore. Why not now?

Castalio. It is a matter of such consequence,

As I must well consult ere I reveal.

But, pry'thee, cease to think I would abuse thee.

Till more be known.

Polydore. When you, Castalio, cease

To meet Monimia unknown to me,

And then deny it slavishly, I'll cease

To think Castalio faithless to his friend.

Did I not see you part this very moment?

Castalio. It seems you watch'd me, then?

Polydore. I scorn the office.

Castalio. Pry'thee, avoid a thing thou may'st
repent.

Polydore. That is, henceforward making leagues
with you.

Castalio. Nay, if ye're angry, Polydore, good
night.

[*Exit.*]

Polydore. Good night, Castalio, if ye're in such
haste.

He little thinks I've overheard th' appointment:

But to his chamber's gone to wait awhile,

Then come and take possession of my love.

This is the utmost point of all my hopes;

Or now she must, or never can be mine.

Oh! for a means now how to counterplot,

And disappoint this happy, elder brother!

In everything we do or undertake,

He soars above me, mount what height I can,
And keeps the start he got of me in birth.
Cordelio!

Re-enter Page.

Page. My lord?

Polydore. Come hither, boy!
Thou hast a pretty, forward, lying face,
And may'st, in time, expect preferment. Canst
thou

Pretend to secrecy, cajole and flatter
Thy master's follies, and assist his pleasures?

Page. My lord, I could do anything for you,
And ever he a very faithful boy.
Command, whate'er's your pleasure I'll observe;
Be it to run, to watch, or to convey
A letter to a beauteous lady's bosom;
At least, I am not dull, and soon should learn.

Polydore. 'Tis pity, then, thou shouldst not be
employ'd.

Go to my brother, he's in his chamber now,
Undressing, and preparing for his rest;
Find out some means to keep him up awhile:
Tell him a pretty story, that may please
His ear; invent a tale, no matter what:
If he should ask of me, tell him I'm gone
To bed, and sent you there to know his pleasure,
Whether he'll hunt to-morrow.
But do not leave him till he's in his bed;
Or if he chance to walk again this way,
Follow, and do not quit him, but seem fond
To do him little offices of service.
Perhaps, at last, it may offend him; then
Retire, and wait till I come in. Away:
Succeed in this, and he employ'd again.

Page. Doubt not, my lord: he has been always
kind

To me; would often set me on his knee,
Then give me sweetmeats, call me pretty boy,
And ask me what the maids talk'd of at nights.

Polydore. Run quickly, then, and prosperous be
thy wishes! *[Exit Page.]*

Here I'm alone, and fit for mischief.
I heard the sign she order'd him to give:
"Just three soft strokes against the chamber-
door;

But speak not the least word, for if you should,
It's surely heard, and we are both betray'd."
Bless'd heavens, assist me but in this drear hour,
And my kind stars be but propitious now,
Dispose of me hereafter as you please!
Monimia, Monimia! *(Gives the sign.)*

Florella. *(At the window.)* Who's there?

Polydore. 'Tis I.

Florella. My lord Castalio?

Polydore. The same.

How does my love, my dear Monimia?

Florella. Oh!

She wonders much at your unkind delay;
You've staid so long, that at each little noise
The wind but makes, she asks if you are coming.
Polydore. Tell her I'm here, and let the door be
open'd. *[Florella withdraws.]*

Now boast, Castalio, triumph now, and tell
Thyself strange stories of a promis'd bliss!
[Exit into the house.]

Re-enter CASTALIO and Page.

Page. Indeed, my lord, 'twill be a lovely
morning:
Pray, let us hunt.

Castalio. Go, you're an idle prattler:
I'll stay at home to-morrow; if your lord
Think fit, he may command my hounds. Go, leave
me;

I must to bed.

Page. I'll wait upon your lordship,
If you think fit, and sing you to repose.

Castalio. No, my kind boy.

Good night: commend me to my brother.

Page. Oh!

You never heard the last new song I learn'd;
It is the finest, prettiest song, indeed,
Of my lord and my lady, you know who, that were
caught together, you know where. My lord, in-
deed it is.

Castalio. You must be whipp'd, youngster, if
you get such songs as those are.

What means this boy's impertinence to-night?
(Aside.)

Page. Why, what must I sing, pray, my dear
lord?

Castalio. Psalms, child, psalms.

Page. Oh dear me! boys that go to school learn
psalms;

But pages, that are better bred, sing lampoons.

Castalio. Well, leave me; I'm weary.

Page. Indeed, my lord, I can't abide to leave
you.

Castalio. Why, wert thou instructed to attend
me?

Page. No, no; indeed, my lord, I was not.

But I know what I know.

Castalio. What dost thou know? 'Sdeath! what
can all this mean? *(Aside.)*

Page. Oh! I know who loves somebody.

Castalio. What's that to me, boy?

Page. Nay, I know who loves you, too.

Castalio. That's a wonder! pr'ythee, tell it me.

Page. 'Tis,—'tis—I know who—but will
You give me the horse, then?

Castalio. I will, my child.

Page. It is my lady Monimia, look you; but
don't you tell her I told you: she'll give me no
more playthings then. I heard her say so, as she
lay abed, man.

Castalio. Talk'd she of me when in her bed,
Cordelio?

Page. Yes; and I sung her the song you made,
too; and she did so sigh, and look with her eyes!

Castalio. Hark! what's that noise?

Take this; begone, and leave me.
You knave, you little flatterer, get you gone.
[Exit Page.]

Surely, it was a noise!—only fancy;
For all is hush'd, as nature were retir'd.

'Tis now, that guided by my love, I go

To take possession of Monimia's arms.

Sure, Polydore's by this time gone to bed.

(Knocks.)

She hears me not; sure, she already sleeps!

Her wishes could not brook so long delay,

And her poor heart has beat itself to rest.

(Knocks.)

Once more—

Florella. *(At the window.)* Who's there,
That comes thus rudely to disturb our rest?

Castalio. 'Tis I.

Florella. Who are you? what's your name?

Castalio. Suppose the lord Castalio.

Florella. I know you not.

The lord Castalio has no business here.

Castalio. Ha! have a care! What can this
mean?

Who'er thou art, I charge thee, to Monimia fly:
Tell her I'm here, and wait upon my doom.

Florella. Who'er you are, you may repent this
outrage:

My lady must not be disturb'd. Good night!

Castalio. She must; tell her she shall: go, I'm
in haste,

And bring her tidings from the state of love.

Florella. Sure, the man's mad!

Castalio. Or this will make me so.

Obey me, or, by all the wrongs I suffer,
I'll scale the window, and come in by force,

Let the sad consequence be what it will!
This creature's trifling folly makes me mad!

Florella. My lady's answer is, you may depart.
She says she knows you: you are Polydore,
Sent by Castalio, as you were to-day,
T' affront and do her violence again.

Castalio. I'll not believe't.

Florella. You may, sir.

Castalio. Curses blast thee!

Florella. Well, 'tis a fine cool ev'ning; and, I
hope,
May cure the raging fever in your blood!
Good night! *[Exit from the window.]*

Castalio. And farewell all that's just in woman!
This is contriv'd, a study'd trick, to abuse
My easy nature, and torment my mind.
'Tis impudence to think my soul will bear it!
Let but to-morrow, but to-morrow come,
And try if all thy arts appease my wrong;
Till when, be this detested place my bed;

(Lies down.)

Where I will ruminate on woman's ills,
Laugh at myself, and curse th' inconstant sex.
Faithless Monimia! Oh, Monimia!

Enter ERNESTO.

Ernesto. Either

My sense has been deluded, or this way
I heard the sound of sorrow; 'tis late night,
And none, whose mind's at peace, would wander
now.

Castalio. Who's there?

Ernesto. Castalio! My lord, why in this posture,
Stretch'd on the ground? your honest, true, old
servant,

Your poor Ernesto, cannot see you thus.
Rise, I beseech you.

Castalio. Oh! leave me to my folly.

Ernesto. I can't leave you,
And not the reason know of your disorders.
Remember how, when young, I in my arms
Have often borne you, pleas'd you in your pleasures,

And sought an early share in your affection.
Do not discard me now, but let me serve you.

Castalio. Thou canst not serve me.

Ernesto. Why?

Castalio. Because my thoughts
Are full of woman; thou, poor wretch, art past
them.

Ernesto. I hate the sex.

Castalio. Then I'm thy friend, Ernesto! *(Rises.)*
I'd leave the world for him that hates a woman.
Woman, the fountain of all human frailty!
What mighty ills have not been done by woman?
Who was't betray'd the capitol? A woman!
Who lost Mark Antony the world? A woman!
Who was the cause of a long ten years' war,
And laid, at last, old Troy in ashes? Woman!
Destructive, damnable, deceitful woman!
Woman, to man first as a blessing given;
When innocence and love were in their prime,
Happy awhile in Paradise they lay;
But quickly woman long'd to go astray:
Some foolish, new adventure needs must prove,
And the first devil she saw, she chang'd her love:
To his temptations lewdly she inclin'd
Her soul, and for an apple damn'd mankind.

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter CASTALIO.

Castalio. Wish'd morning's come: and now upon
the plains,
And distant mountains, where they feed their
locks,

The happy shepherds leave their homely huts,
And with their pipes proclaim the new-born day.
'There's no condition, sure, so ours'd as mine!
Monimia! Oh, Monimia!

Enter MONIMIA and FLORELLA.

Monimia. I come!

I fly to my ador'd Castalio's arms,
My wishes' lord. May every morn begin
Like this: and, with our days, our loves renew!

Castalio. Oh!

Monimia. Art thou not well, Castalio? Come,
lean

Upon my breast, and tell me where's thy pain.

Castalio. 'Tis here! 'tis in my head—'tis in my
heart—

'Tis everywhere: it rages like a madness,
And I must wonder how my reason holds.
No more, Monimia, of your sex's arts:
They're useless all; I'm not that pliant tool;
I know my charter better. I am man,
Obstinate man, and will not be enslav'd!

Monimia. You shall not fear't; indeed, my na-
ture's easy:

I'll ever live your most obedient wife!
Nor ever any privilege pretend
Beyond your will; for that shall be my law;
Indeed, I will not.

Castalio. Nay, you shall not, madam;
By yon bright heaven, you shall not: all the day
I'll play the tyrant, and at night forsake thee;
Nay, if I've any, too, thou shalt be made
Subservient to all my looser pleasures;
For thou hast wrong'd Castalio.

Monimia. Oh! kill me here, or tell me my
offence!

I'll never quit you else; but on these knees,
Thus follow you all day, till they're worn bare,
And hang upon you like a drowning creature.
Castalio!

Castalio. Away! Last night, last night!

Monimia. It was our wedding-night.

Castalio. No more! Forget it!

Monimia. Why, do you, then, repent?

Castalio. I do.

Monimia. Oh, heaven!

And will you leave me thus? Help, help, Florella!

*[Castalio drags her to the door, breaks
from her, and exit.]*

Help me to hold this yet lov'd, cruel man!

Castalio! Oh! how often has he sworn,
Nature should change, the sun and stars grow
dark,

Ere he would falsify his vows to me!
Make haste, confusion, then! Sun, lose thy light!
And stars drop dead with sorrow to the earth,
For my Castalio's false!
False as the wind, the waters, or the weather!
Cruel as tigers o'er their trembling prey!
I feel him in my breast; he tears my heart,
And at each sigh he drinks the gushing blood!
Must I be long in pain?

Enter CHAMONT.

Chamont. In tears, Monimia?

Monimia. Whoe'er thou art,
Leave me alone to my belov'd despair,
Chamont. Lift up thy eyes, and see who comes
to cheer thee:

Tell me the story of thy wrongs, and then
See if my soul has rest, till thou hast justice.

Monimia. My brother!

Chamont. Yes, Monimia, if thou think'st
That I deserve the name, I am thy brother.

Monimia. Oh, Castalio!

Chamont. Ha!

Name me that name again; my soul's on fire
Till I know all. There's meaning in that name:

I know he is thy husband; therefore, trust me
With all the following truth,

Monimia. Indeed, Chamont,
There's nothing in it but the fault of nature:
I'm often thus seiz'd suddenly with grief,
I know not why.

Chamont. You use me ill, *Monimia*;
And I might think, with justice, most severely
Of this unfaithful dealing with your brother.

Monimia. Truly, I'm not to blame. Suppose I'm
fond,

And grieve for what as much may please another?
Should I upbraid the dearest friend on earth
For the first fault? You would not do so, would
you?

Chamont. Not if I'd cause to think it was a friend.
Monimia. Why do you, then, call this unfaithful
dealing?

I ne'er conceal'd my soul from you before:
Bear with me now, and search my wounds no
further;

For every probing pains me to the heart.

Chamont. 'Tis sign there's danger in't, and must
be prov'd.

Where's your new husband? Still that thought
disturbs you:

What! only answer me with tears? *Castalio*!

Nay, now they stream:

Cruel, unkind *Castalio*! Is't not so?

Monimia. I cannot speak; grief flows so fast
upon me,

It chokes, and will not let me tell the cause.
Oh!

Chamont. My *Monimia*! to my soul thou'rt dear
As honour to my name!

Why wilt thou not repose within my breast
The anguish that torments thee?

Monimia. Oh! I dare not.

Chamont. I have no friend but thee. We must
confide

In one another. Two unhappy orphans,
Alas! we are; and when I see thee grieve,
Methinks it is a part of me that suffers.

Monimia. Could you be secret?

Chamont. Secret as the grave.

Monimia. But when I've told you, will you keep
your fury

Within its bounds? Will you not do some rash
And horrid mischief? For, indeed, *Chamont*,
You would not think how hardly I've been us'd
From a dear friend; from one that has my soul
A slave, and, therefore, treats it like a tyrant.

Chamont. I will be calm. But has *Castalio*
wrong'd thee?

Has he already wasted all his love?

What has he done? quickly! for I'm all trem-
bling.

With expectation of a horrid tale!

Monimia. Oh! could you think it?

Chamont. What!

Monimia. I fear he'll kill me.

Chamont. Ha!

Monimia. Indeed, I do: he's strangely cruel to
me;

Which, if it last, I'm sure must break my heart.

Chamont. What has he done?

Monimia. Most barbarously us'd me.

Just as we met, and I, with open arms,
Ran to embrace the lord of all my wishes,
Oh! then—

Chamont. Go on.

Monimia. He threw me from his breast,
Like a detested sin.

Chamont. How!

Monimia. As I hung, too,
Upon his knees, and begg'd to know the cause,
He dragg'd me, like a slave, upon the earth,
And had no pity on my cries.

Chamont. How! did he

Dash thee disdainfully away, with scorn!

Monimia. He did.

Chamont. What! throw thee from him?

Monimia. Yes, indeed he did!

Chamont. So may this arm

Throw him to th' earth, like a dead dog despis'd.
Lameness and leprosy, blindness and lunacy,
Poverty, shame, pride, and the name of villain,
Light on me, if, *Castalio*, I forgive thee!

Monimia. Nay, now, *Chamont*, art thou unkind
as he is!

Didst thou not promise me thou wouldst be calm?
Keep my disgrace conceal'd?

Alas! I love him still; and though I ne'er
Clasp him again within these longing arms,
Yet, bless him, bless him, gods, where'er he goes!

Enter ACASTO.

Acasto. Sure, some ill fate is tow'rd's me; in my
house

I only meet with oddness and disorder.

Just at this very moment

I met *Castalio*, too—

Chamont. Then you met a villain.

Acasto. Ha!

Chamont. Yes, a villain!

Acasto. Have a care, young soldier,

How thou'rt too busy with *Acasto's* fame.

I have a sword, my arm's good old acquaintance:
Villain to thee!

Chamont. Curse on thy scandalous age,
Which hinders me to rush upon thy throat,
And tear the root up of that cursed bramble!

Acasto. Ungrateful ruffian! sure, my good old
friend

Was ne'er thy father! Nothing of him's in thee!

What have I done, in my unhappy age,

To be thus us'd? I scorn to upbraid, thee, boy?

But I could put thee in remembrance—

Chamont. Do.

Acasto. I scorn it.

Chamont. No; I'll calmly hear the story;

For I would fain know all, to see which scale

Weights most!—Ha! is not that good old *Acasto*?

What have I done? Can you forgive this folly?

Acasto. Why dost thou ask it?

Chamont. 'Twas the rude o'erflowing
Of too much passion. Pray, my lord, forgive me.

(Kneels.)

Acasto. Mock me not, youth! I can revenge a
wrong.

Chamont. I know it well: but for this thought
of mine,

Pity a madman's frenzy, and forget it.

Acasto. I will; but henceforth, pr'ythee, be more
kind. *(Raises him.)*

Whence came the cause?

Chamont. Indeed I've been to blame:

For you've been my father;

You've been her father, too.

(Takes Monimia by the hand.)

Acasto. Forbear the prologue,

And let me know the substance of thy tale.

Chamont. You took her up, a little tender
flower,

Just sprouted on a bank, which the next frost

Had nipp'd: and, with a careful, loving hand,

Transplanted her into your own fair garden,

Where the sun always shines: there long she

flourish'd;

Grew sweet to sense, and lovely to the eye;

Till, at the last, a cruel spoiler came,

Cropp'd this fair rose, and rifled all its sweet-
ness,

Then cast it like a loathsome weed away.

Acasto. You talk to me in parables, *Chamont*:
You may have known that I'm no wordy man.

Fine speeches are the instruments of knaves,
Or fools; that use them when they want good
sense:

But honesty
Needs no disguise or ornament. Be plain.

Chamont. Your son—

Acasto. I've two; and both, I hope, have honour.

Chamont. I hope so, too; but—

Acasto. Speak!

Chamont. I must inform you,

Once more, Castalio—

Acasto. Still Castalio!

Chamont. Yes;

Your son Castalio has wrong'd Monimia!

Acasto. Ha! wrong'd her!

Chamont. Marry'd her.

Acasto. I'm sorry for't.

Chamont. Why sorry?

By yon bless'd heaven, there's not a lord
But might be proud to take her to his heart.

Acasto. I'll not deny't.

Chamont. You dare not; by the gods,
You dare not! All your family combin'd
In one damn'd falsehood, to outdo Castalio,
Dare not deny't.

Acasto. How has Castalio wrong'd her?

Chamont. Ask that of him. I say my sister's
wrong'd:

Monimia, my sister, born as high
And noble as Castalio. Do her justice;
Or, by the gods! I'll lay a scene of blood
Shall make this dwelling horrible to nature.
I'll do't. Harkye! my lord, your son Castalio,
Take him to your closet, and there teach him man-
ners.

Acasto. You shall have justice.

Chamont. Nay, I will have justice!

Who'll sleep in safety that has done me wrong?

My lord, I'll not disturb you to repeat

The cause of this; I beg you (to preserve

Your house's honour) ask it of Castalio. [Exit.]

Acasto. Farewell, proud boy.—

Monimia!

Monimia. My lord?

Acasto. You are my daughter.

Monimia. I am, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe to
own me.

Acasto. When you'll complain to me, I'll prove
a father. [Exit.]

Monimia. Now I'm undone for ever! Who on
earth

Is there so wretched as Monimia?
First by Castalio cruelly forsaken;
I've lost Acasto now; his parting frowns
May well instruct me rage is in his heart.
I shall be next abandon'd to my fortune,
Thrust out a naked wand'rer to the world,
And branded for the mischievous Monimia!
What will become of me? My cruel brother
Is framing mischiefs, too, for aught I know,
That may produce bloodshed and horrid mur-
der!

I would not be the cause of one man's death,
To reign the empress of the earth; nay, more,
I'd rather lose for ever my Castalio,
My dear, unkind Castalio. (Sits down.)

Enter POLYDORE.

Polydore. Monimia weeping!

I come, my love, to kiss all sorrow from thee.
What mean these sighs, and why thus beats thy
heart?

Monimia. Let me alone to sorrow; 'tis a cause
None e'er shall know; but it shall with me die.

Polydore. Happy, Monimia, he to whom these
sighs,

These tears, and all those languishings are paid!

I know your heart was never meant for me;
That jewel's for an elder brother's price.

Monimia. My lord!

Polydore. Nay, wonder not; last night I heard
His oaths, your vows, and to my torment saw
Your wild embraces; heard the appointment
made;

I did, Monimia, and I curs'd the sound.
Wilt thou be sworn, my love? wilt thou be ne'er
Unkind again?

Monimia. Banish such fruitless hopes!

Have you sworn constancy to my undoing?

Will you be ne'er my friend again?

Polydore. What means my love?

Monimia. Away! what meant my lord
Last night?

Polydore. Is that a question now to be de-
manded?

Monimia. Was it well done
T' assault my lodging at the dead of night,
And threaten me if I deny'd admittance.—
You said you were Castalio.

Polydore. By those eyes,

It was the same: I spent my time much better.

Monimia. Ha! have a care!

Polydore. Where is the danger near me?

Monimia. I fear you're on a rock will wreck
your quiet,

And drown your soul in wretchedness for ever.
A thousand horrid thoughts crowd on my me-
mory.

Will you be kind, and answer me one question?

Polydore. I'd trust thee with my life; on that
soft bosom

Breathe out the choicest secrets of my heart,
Till I had nothing in it left but love.

Monimia. Nay, I'll conjure you, by the gods and
angels,

By the honour of your name, that's most con-
cern'd,

To tell me, Polydore, and tell me truly,

Where did you rest last night?

Polydore. Within thy arms.

Monimia. 'Tis done.

(Faints.)

Polydore. She faints! no help! Who waits?—A
curse

Upon my vanity, that could not keep

The secret of my happiness in silence!

Confusion! we shall be surpris'd anon;

And, consequently, all must be betray'd.

Monimia!—She breathes!—Monimia!

Monimia. Well,

Let mischiefs multiply! let every hour
Of my loath'd life yield me increase of horror!

Oh! let the sun, to these unhappy eyes,

Ne'er shine again, but be eclips'd for ever!

May every thing I look on seem a prodigy,

To fill my soul with terrors, till I quite

Forget I ever had humanity,

And grow a curser of the works of nature!

Polydore. What means all this?

Monimia. Oh! Polydore, if all

The friendship e'er you vow'd to good Castalio

Be not a falsehood; if you ever lov'd

Your brother, you've undone yourself and me.

Polydore. Which way can ruin reach the man
that's rich,

As I am, in possession of thy sweetness?

Monimia. Oh! I'm his wife!

Polydore. What says Monimia?

Monimia. I am Castalio's wife!

Polydore. His marry'd, wedded wife?

Monimia. Yesterday's sun

Saw it perform'd.

Polydore. My brother's wife?

Monimia. As surely as we both

Must taste of misery, that guilt is thine.

Polydore. Oh! thou may'st yet be happy!

Monimia. Couldst thou be
Happy with such a weight upon thy soul?
Polydore. It may yet be a secret. I'll go try
To reconcile and bring Castalio to thee;
Whilst from the world I take myself away,
And waste my life in penance for my sin.

Monimia. Then thou wouldst more undo me:
Heap a load
Of added sins upon my wretched head!
Wouldst thou again have me betray thy brother,
And bring pollution to his arms? Curs'd thought!
Oh! when shall I be mad indeed! [Exit.]

Polydore. Then thus I'll go,
Full of my guilt, distracted where to roam:
I'll find some place where adds nest in winter,
Loathsoms and venomous; where poisons hang
Like gums against the walls; there I'll inhabit,
And live up to the height of desperation.
Desire shall languish like a with'ring flower,
Horror shall fright me from those pleasing harms,
And I'll no more be caught with beauty's charms. [Exit.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Garden.

CASTALIO discovered lying on the ground. Soft music.

Castalio. See where the deer trot after one another;
No discontent they know; but in delightful
Wildness and freedom, pleasant springs, fresh
herbage,
Calm arbours, lusty health, and innocence,
Enjoy their portion. If they see a man,
How they will turn together all, and gaze
Upon the monster!
Once in a season, too; they taste of love:
Only the beast of reason is its slave,
And in that folly drudges all the year.

Enter ACASTO.

Acasto. Castalio! Castalio!
Castalio. Who's there
So wretched but to name Castalio?
Acasto. I hope my message may succeed.
Castalio. My father,
'Tis joy to see you, though where sorrow's nourish'd.

Acasto. Castalio, you must go along with me,
And see Monimia.

Castalio. Sure, my lord but mocks me:
Go see Monimia?

Acasto. I say, no more dispute.
Complaints are made to me that you have wrong'd her.

Castalio. Who has complain'd?
Acasto. Her brother to my face proclaim'd her wrong'd,
And in such terms they've warm'd me.

Castalio. What terms? Her brother! Heaven!
Where learn'd he that?

What, does she send her hero with defiance?
He durst not, sure, affront you?

Acasto. No, not much;

But—
Castalio. Speak, what said he?

Acasto. That thou wert a villain:
Methinks I would not have thee thought a villain.

Castalio. Shame on the ill-manner'd brute!
Your age secur'd him, he dar'd not else have said.

Acasto. By my sword,
I would not see thee wrong'd, and bear it vilely:
Though I have pass'd my word she shall have justice.

Castalio. Justice! to give her justice would undo her.

Think you this solitude I now have chosen,
Wish'd to have grown one piece
With this cold clay, and all without a cause!

Enter CHAMONT.

Chamont. Where is the hero, famous and renown'd
For wronging innocence, and breaking vows;
Whose mighty spirit, and whose stubborn heart,
No woman can appease, nor man provoke?

Acasto. I guess, Chamont, you come to seek
Castalio?

Chamont. I come to seek the husband of Monimia.

Castalio. The slave is here.

Chamont. I thought, ere now, to have found you

Atoning for the ills you've done Chamont:
For you have wrong'd the dearest part of him.
Monimia, young lord, weeps in this hour;
And all the tears thy injuries have drawn
From her poor eyes, are drops of blood from hence.

Castalio. Then you are Chamont?

Chamont. Yes; and I hope no stranger
To great Castalio.

Castalio. I've heard of such a man,
That has been very busy with my honour.
I own I'm much indebted to you, sir,
And here return the villain back again
You sent me by my father.

Chamont. Thus I'll thank you. (*Draws.*)

Acasto. By this good sword, who first presumes
to violence,
Makes me his foe. (*Draws and interposes.*)

Castalio. Sir, in my younger years, with care
you taught me,

That brave revenge was due to injur'd honour:
Oppose not, then, the justice of my sword,
Lest you should make me jealous of your love.

Chamont. Into thy father's arms thou fly'st for safety,

Because thou know'st that place is sanctify'd
With the remembrance of an ancient friendship.

Castalio. I am a villain, if I will not seek thee,
Till I may be reveng'd for all the wrongs
Done me by that ungrateful fair thou plead'st
for.

Chamont. She wrong'd thee? By the fury in my
heart,

Thy father's honour's not above Monimia's;
Nor was thy mother's truth and virtue fairer.

Acasto. Boy, don't disturb the ashes of the
dead

With thy capricious follies; the remembrance
Of the lov'd creature that once fill'd these arms—

Chamont. Has not been wrong'd.

Castalio. It shall not.

Chamont. No; nor shall

Monimia, though an helpless orphan, destitute
Of friends and fortune; though th' unhappy sister
Of poor Chamont, whose sword is all his portion,
B' oppress'd by thee, thou proud, imperious traitor!

Castalio. Ha! set me free.

Chamont. Come both.

Castalio. Sir, if you'd have me think you did
not take

This opportunity to shew your vanity,
Let's meet some other time, when by ourselves
We fairly may dispute our wrongs together.

Chamont. Till, then, I am Castalio's friend. [Exit.]

Acasto. Would I'd been absent when this boisterous
brave

Came to disturb thee thus. I'm griev'd I hinder'd

Thy just resentment—But, Monimia—

Castalio. Damn her!
Acasto. Don't curse her.
Castalio. Did I?
Acasto. Yes.
Castalio. I'm sorry for't.
Acasto. Methinks, if, as I guess, the fault's but small,
 It might be pardon'd.
Castalio. No.
Acasto. What has she done?
Castalio. That she's my wife, may heaven and you forgive me!
Acasto. Be reconcil'd, then.
Castalio. No.
Acasto. For my sake,
 Castalio, and the quiet of my age.
Castalio. Why will you urge a thing my nature starts at?
Acasto. Pr'ythee, forgive her.
Castalio. Lightnings first shall blast me!
 I tell you, were she prostrate at my feet,
 Full of her sex's best dissembled sorrows,
 And all that wondrous beauty of her own,
 My heart might break, but it should never soften.
Acasto. Did you but know the agonies she feels—
 She flies with fury over all the house;
 Through every room of each apartment, crying,—
 "Where's my Castalio? Give me my Castalio!"
 Except she sees you, sure, she'll grow distracted!
Castalio. Ha! will she? Does she name Castalio?
 And with such tenderness? Conduct me quickly
 To the poor, lovely mourner.
Acasto. Then wilt thou go? Blessings attend thy purpose!
Castalio. I cannot hear Monimia's soul's in sadness,
 And be a man: my heart will not forget her.
Acasto. Delay not, then; but haste and cheer thy love.
Castalio. Oh! I will throw my impatient arms about her;
 In her soft bosom sigh my soul to peace;
 Till through the panting breast she finds the way
 To mould my heart, and make it what she will.
 Monimia! Oh!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Chamber.

Enter MONIMIA.

Monimia. Stand off, and give me room!
 I will not rest till I have found Castalio,
 My wish's lord, comely as the rising day:
 I cannot die in peace till I have seen him.

Enter CASTALIO.

Castalio. Who talks of dying, with a voice so sweet
 That life's in love with it?
Monimia. Hark! 'tis he that answers.
 Where art thou?
Castalio. Here, my love.
Monimia. No, nearer, lest I vanish.
Castalio. Have I been in a dream, then, all this while?
 And art thou but the shadow of Monimia?
 Why dost thou fly me thus?
Monimia. Oh! were it possible that we could
 down,
 In dark oblivion, but a few past hours,
 We might be happy.
Castalio. Is't, then, so hard, Monimia, to forgive
 A fault, where humble love, like mine, implores
 thee?
 For I must love thee, though it prove my ruin.
 I'll kneel to thee, and weep a flood before thee.

Yet, pr'ythee, tyrant, break not quite my heart;
 But, when my task of penitence is done,
 Heal it again, and comfort me with love.

Monimia. If I am dumb, Castalio, and want words

To pay thee back this mighty tenderness,
 It is because I look on thee with horror,
 And cannot see the man I have so wrong'd.

Castalio. Thou hast not wrong'd me.

Monimia. Ah! alas! thou talk'st
 Just as thy poor heart thinks. Have not I wrong'd thee?

Castalio. No.

Monimia. Still thou wander'st in the dark, Castalio;

But wilt, ere long, stumble on horrid danger.

Castalio. My better angel, then do thou inform me

What danger threatens me, and where it lies.

Why wert thou, (pr'ythee, smile, and tell me why.)

When I stood waiting underneath the window,
 Deaf to my cries, and senseless of my pains?

Monimia. Did I not beg thee to forbear inquiry?

Read'st thou not something in my face which speaks

Wonderful change, and horror from within me?

Castalio. If, lab'ring in the pangs of death,

Thou wouldst do anything to give me ease,

Unfold this riddle ere my thoughts grow wild,
 And let in fears of ugly form upon me.

Monimia. My heart won't let me speak it; but, remember,

Monimia, poor Monimia, tells you this:

We ne'er must meet again!

Castalio. Ne'er meet again?

Monimia. No, never.

Castalio. Where's the power,
 On earth, that dares not look like thee, and say so?

Thou art my heart's inheritance; I serv'd
 A long and faithful slavery for thee;
 And who shall rob me of the dear-bought blessing?

Monimia. Time will clear all; but now let this content you:

Heaven has decreed, and therefore I've resolv'd

(With torment I must tell it thee, Castalio,)

Ever to be a stranger to thy love;

In some far distant country waste my life,

And from this day to see thy face no more.

Castalio. Why turn'st thou from me; I'm alone already.

Methinks I stand upon a naked beach,
 Sighing to winds, and to the seas complaining,
 Whilst afar off the vessel sails away,
 Where all the treasure of my soul's embark'd:
 Wilt thou not turn? Oh! could those eyes but speak,

I should know all, for love is pregnant in 'em;
 They swell, they press their beams upon me still:
 Wilt thou not speak? If we must part for ever,
 Give me but one kind word to think upon,
 And please myself withal, whilst my heart's breaking.

Monimia. Ah! poor Castalio!

[*Exit.*]

Castalio. What means all this? Why all this stir to plague

A single wretch? If but your word can shake
 This world to atoms, why so much ado
 With me? think me but dead, and lay me so.

Enter POLYDORE.

Polydore. To live, and live a torment to myself,

What dog would bear't, that knew but his condition?

We've little knowledge, and that makes us cowards,

Because it cannot tell us what's to come.

Castalio. Who's there?

Polydore. Why, what art thou?

Castalio. My brother Polydore?

Polydore. My name is Polydore.

Castalio. Canst thou inform me—

Polydore. Of what?

Castalio. Of my Monimia?

Polydore. No. Good day.

Castalio. In haste!

Methinks my Polydore appears in sadness.

Polydore. Indeed! and so to me does my Castalio.

Castalio. Do I?

Polydore. Thou dost.

Castalio. Alas! I've wondrous reason.

I'm strangely alter'd, brother, since I saw thee.

Polydore. Why?

Castalio. I'll tell thee, Polydore; I would repose

Within thy friendly bosom all my follies;

For thou wilt pardon 'em, because they're mine.

Polydore. Be not too credulous; consider, first, Friends may be false. Is there no friendship false?

Castalio. Why dost thou ask me that? Does this appear

Like a false friendship, when, with open arms

And streaming eyes, I run upon thy breast?

Oh! 'tis in thee alone I must have comfort!

Polydore. I fear, Castalio, I have none to give thee.

Castalio. Dost thou not love me, then?

Polydore. Oh! more than life;

I never had a thought of my Castalio,

Might wrong the friendship we had vow'd together.

Hast thou dealt so by me?

Castalio. I hope I have.

Polydore. Then tell me why this morning, this disorder?

Castalio. Oh! Polydore, I know not how to tell thee;

Shame rises in my face, and interrupts

The story of my tongue.

Polydore. I grieve, my friend

Knows anything which he's ashamed to tell me.

Castalio. Oh! much too oft. Our destiny contriv'd

To plague us both with one unhappy love!

Thou, like a friend, a constant, generous friend,

In its first pangs, didst trust me with thy passion,

Whilst I still smooth'd my pain with smiles before thee,

And made a contract I ne'er meant to keep.

Polydore. How!

Castalio. Still new ways I studied to abuse thee,

And kept thee as a stranger to my passion,

Till yesterday I wedded with Monimia.

Polydore. Ah! Castalio, was that well done?

Castalio. No; to conceal't from thee was much a fault.

Polydore. A fault! when thou hast heard

The tale I'll tell, what wilt thou call it then?

Castalio. How my heart throbs!

Polydore. First, for thy friendship, traitor,

I cancel't thus: after this day, I'll ne'er

Hold trust or converse with the false Castalio!

This witness, heaven!

Castalio. What will my fate do with me?

I've lost all happiness, and know not why!

What means this, brother?

Polydore. Perjur'd, treach'rous wretch,

Farewell!

Castalio. I'll be thy slave, and thou shalt use me

Just as thou wilt, do but forgive me.

Polydore. Never.

Castalio. Oh! think a little what thy heart is doing:

How, from our infancy, we, hand-in-hand,

Have trod the path of life in love together.

One bed has held us, and the same desires,

The same aversions, still employ'd our thoughts.

Whene'er had I a friend that was not Polydore's,

Or Polydore a foe that was not mine?

E'en in the womb we embrac'd; and wilt thou now,

For the first fault, abandon and forsake me?

Leave me, amidst afflictions, to myself,

Plung'd in the gulf of grief, and none to help me?

Polydore. Go to Monimia; in her arms thou'll find

Repose: she has the art of healing sorrows.

Castalio. What arts?

Polydore. Blind wretch! thou husband? there's a question!

Is she not a—

Castalio. What?

Polydore. Whore? I think that word needs no explaining.

Castalio. Alas! I can forgive e'en this to thee;

But let me tell, thee, Polydore, I'm griev'd

To find thee guilty of such low revenge,

To wrong that virtue which thou couldst not ruin.

Polydore. It seems I lie, then!

Castalio. Should the bravest man

That e'er wore conq'ring sword, but dare to whisper

What thou proclaim'st, he were the worst of liars;

My friend may be mistake.

Polydore. Damn the evasion!

Thou mean'st the worst! and he's a base-born villain

That said I lied!

Castalio. A base-born villain!

Polydore. Yes; thou never cam'st

From old Acasto's loins: the midwife put

A cheat upon my mother; and, instead

Of a true brother, in the cradle by me

Plac'd some coarse, peasant's cub, and thou art he!

Castalio. Thou art my brother still.

Polydore. Thou liest!

Castalio. Nay, then—

(*Draws.*)

Yet I am calm.

Polydore. A coward's always so.

Castalio. Ah! ah! that stings home! Coward!

Polydore. Ay, base-born coward! villain!

Castalio. This to thy heart, then, though my mother bore thee!

(*They fight; Polydore drops his sword, and runs on Castalio's.*)

Polydore. Now my Castalio is again my friend.

Castalio. What have I done? my sword is in thy breast.

Polydore. So would I have it be, thou best of men,

Thou kindest brother, and thou truest friend!

Castalio. Ye gods! we're taught that all your works are justice:

Ye're painted merciful, and friends to innocence:

If so, then why these plagues upon my head?

Polydore. Blame not the heav'ns, 'tis Polydore has wrong'd thee;

I've stain'd thy bed; thy spotless, marriage joys

Have been polluted by thy brother's lust.

Castalio. By thee?

Polydore. By me, last night, the horrid deed

Was done, when all things slept but rage and incest.

Castalio. Now, where's Monimia? Oh!

Enter MONIMIA.

Monimia. I'm here! who calls me?
Methought I heard a voice
Sweet as the shepherd's pipe upon the mountains,
When all his little flock's at feed before him.
But what means this? here's blood!

Castalio. Ay, brother's blood!
Art thou prepar'd for everlasting pains?

Polydore. Oh! let me charge thee, by th' eternal justice,
Hurt not her tender life!

Castalio. Not kill her?

Monimia. That task myself have finish'd: I shall die

Before we part: I've drunk an healing draught
For all my cares, and never more shall wrong thee.

Polydore. Oh! she's innocent.

Castalio. Tell me that story,
And thou wilt make a wretch of me indeed.

Polydore. Hadst thou, *Castalio*, us'd me like a friend,

This ne'er had happen'd; hadst thou let me know
Thy marriage, we had all now met in joy:

But, ignorant of that,
Hearing th' appointment made, enrag'd to think
Thou hadst undone me in successful love,
I, in the dark, went and supply'd thy place;
Whilst all the night, midst our triumphant joys,
The trembling, tender, kind, deceiv'd *Monimia*,
Embrac'd, caress'd, and call'd me her *Castalio*.

(*Dies.*)

Monimia. Now, my *Castalio*, the most dear of men,

Wilt thou receive pollution to thy bosom,
And close the eyes of one that has betray'd thee?

Castalio. Oh! I'm the unhappy wretch, whose
cursed fate

Has weigh'd thee down into destruction with him:
Why, then, thus kind to me!

Monimia. When I'm laid low i'th' grave, and
quite forgotten,

May'st thou be happy in a fairer bride!

But none can ever love thee like *Monimia*.

When I am dead, as presently I shall be,
(For the grim tyrant grasps my heart already,)

Speak well of me; and if thou find ill tongues

Too busy with my fame, don't hear me wrong'd:

'Twill be a noble justice to the memory

Of a poor wretch, once honour'd with thy love.

(*Dies.*)

Enter CHAMONT and ACASTO.

Chamont. Gape, earth, and swallow me to quick
destruction,

If I forgive your house!

You've overpower'd me now!

But, hear me, heav'n!—Ah! here's a scene of
death!

My sister, my *Monimia*, breathless!—Now,
Ye pow'rs above, if ye have justice, strike!

Strike bolts through me, and through the curs'd
Castalio!

Castalio. Stand off, thou hot-brain'd, boisterous,
noisy ruffian!

And leave me to my sorrows.

Chamont. By the love

I bore her living, I will ne'er forsake her;

But here remain till my heart burst with sob-
bing.

Castalio. Vanish, I charge thee! or—

(*Draws a dagger.*)

Chamont. Thou canst not kill me!

That would be kindness, and against thy nature!

Acasto. What means, *Castalio*? Sure, thou wilt
not pull

More sorrows on thy aged father's head!

Tell me, I beg you, tell me the sad cause

Of all this ruin.

Castalio. Thon, unkind *Chamont*,

Unjustly hast pursu'd me with thy hate,

And sought the life of him that never wrong'd
thee:

Now, if thou wilt embrace a noble vengeance,

Come join with me, and curse—

Chamont. What?

Acasto. Have patience.

Castalio. Patience! preach it to the winds,

To roaring seas, or raging fires! for ours'd

As I am now, 'tis this must give me patience:

Thus I find rest, and shall complain no more.

(*Stabs himself.*)

Chamont, to thee my birthright I bequeath:

Comfort my mourning father; heal his griefs;

(*Acasto faints in the arms of a Servant.*)

For I perceive they fall with weight upon him;

And, for *Monimia*'s sake, (who thou wilt find

I never wrong'd,) be kind to poor *Serina*.

Now all I beg is, lay me in one grave

Thus with my love.—Farewell! I now—am no-
thing.

(*Dies.*)

Chamont. Take care of good *Acasto*, whilst I go
To search the means by which the fates have
plagu'd us.

'Tis thus that heav'n its empire does maintain:

It may afflict; but man must not complain.

[*Exeunt.*]

PIZARRO;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS:

ALTERED FROM THE GERMAN OF KOTZEBUE.—BY R. B. SHERIDAN.



Act V.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

ATALIBA	ALMAGRO	VALVERDE	A BOY
ROLLA	GONZALO	LAS-CASAS	CORA
ALONZO	DAVILLA	OROZEMBO	ELVIRA
PIZARRO	GOMEZ	AN OLD BLIND MAN	SOLDIERS, PRIESTS, &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A magnificent Pavilion near Pizarro's tent.

ELVIRA discovered sleeping under a canopy. VALVERDE enters, gazes on ELVIRA, and attempts to kiss her hand; ELVIRA awakened, rises, and looks at him with indignation.

Elv. Audacious! Whence is thy privilege to interrupt the few moments of repose my harassed mind can snatch amid the tumults of this noisy camp? Shall I inform your master of this presumptuous treachery?

Val. I am his servant, it is true—trusted by him—and I know him well; and therefore 'tis I ask, by what magic could Pizarro gain your heart, by what fatality still holds he your affections?

Elv. Hold! thou trusty secretary!

Val. Ignobly born, in mind and manners rude, ferocious, and unpolished, though cool and crafty if occasion need; in youth audacious; ill his first manhood; a licensed pirate, treating men as brutes, the world as booty; yet now the Spanish hero is he styled—the first of Spanish conquerors! and for a warrior so accomplished, 'tis fit Elvira should leave her noble family, her fame, her home, to share the dangers, humours, and the crimes of such a lover as Pizarro!

Elv. What! Valverde moralizing! But grant I am in error, what is my incentive! Passion, infatuation, call it as you will; but what attaches thee to this despised, unworthy leader? Base lucre

is thy object, mean fraud thy means. Could you gain me, you only hope to win a higher interest in Pizarro. I know you.

Val. On my soul, you wrong me; what else my faults, I have none towards you: but indulge the scorn and levity of your nature; do it while yet the time permits; the gloomy hour, I fear, too soon approaches.

Elv. Valverde a prophet too!

Val. Hear me, Elvira; shame from his late defeat, and burning wishes for revenge, again have brought Pizarro to Peru; but trust me, he overrates his strength, nor measures well the foe. Encamped in a strange country, where terror cannot force, nor corruption buy a single friend, what have we to hope? The army murmuring at increasing hardships, while Pizarro decorates with gaudy spoil the gay pavilion of his luxury, each day diminishes our force.

Elv. But are you not the heirs of those that fall?

Val. Are gain and plunder then our only purpose? Is this Elvira's heroism?

Elv. No, so save me heaven! I abhor the motive, means, and end of your pursuits; but I will trust none of you. In your whole army there is not one of you that has a heart, or speaks ingenuously; aged Las-Casas, and he alone, excepted.

Val. He! an enthusiast in the opposite and worse extreme.

Elv. Oh! had I earlier known that virtuous man, how different might my lot have been!

Val. I will grant Pizarro could not then so easily have duped you; forgive me, but at that event I still must wonder.

Elv. Hear me, Valverde. When first my virgin fancy waked to love, Pizarro was my country's idol. Self-taught, self-raised, and self-supported, he became her's, and I was formed to be won by glory and renown. 'Tis known that when he left Panama in a slight vessel, his force was not an hundred men. Arrived in the island of Gallo, with his sword he drew a line upon the sands, and said, "Pass those who fear to die or conquer with their leader." Thirteen alone remained, and at the head of these the warrior stood his ground. Even at the moment when my ears first caught this tale, my heart exclaimed, "Pizarro is its lord!" What since I have perceived, or thought, or felt, you must have more worth to win the knowledge of.

Val. I press no further; still assured, that while Alonzo de Molina, our general's former friend and pupil, leads the enemy, Pizarro never more will be a conqueror. (*Trumpets without.*)

Elv. Silence! I hear him coming; look not perplexed.—How mystery and fraud confound the countenance! Quick, put on an honest face, if thou canst.

Pizarro. (*Speaking without.*) Chain and secure him; I will examine him myself.

Enter PIZARRO. (*Valverde bows; Elvira laughs.*)

Piz. Why dost thou smile, Elvira?

Elv. To laugh or weep without a reason, is one of the few privileges poor women have.

Piz. Elvira, I will know the cause, I am resolved.

Elv. I am glad that, because I love resolution, and am resolved not to tell you. Now my resolution, I take it, is the better of the two, because it depends upon myself, and your's does not.

Piz. Psha! triller!

Val. Elvira was laughing at my apprehensions that—

Piz. Apprehensions!

Val. Yes—that Alonzo's skill and genius should so have disciplined and informed the enemy, as to—

Piz. Alonzo! the traitor! How I once loved that man! His noble mother entrusted him, a boy, to my protection. At my table did he feast; in my tent did he repose. I had marked his early genius, and the valorous spirit that grew with it. Often I had talked to him of our first adventures; what storms we struggled with; what perils we surmounted! When landed with a slender host upon an unknown land; then, when I told how famine and fatigue, discord and toil, day by day, did thin our ranks; amid close-pressing enemies, how still undaunted I endured and dared; maintained my purpose and my power, in despite of growling mutiny or bold revolt, till with my faithful few remaining, I became at last victorious;—when, I say, of these things I spoke, the youth Alonzo, with tears of wonder and delight, would throw him on my neck, and swear, his soul's ambition owned no other leader.

Val. What could subdue attachment so begun?

Piz. Las-Casas. He it was, with fascinating craft and canting precepts of humanity, raised in Alonzo's mind a new enthusiasm, which forced him, as the stripling termed it, to forego his country's claims for those of human nature.

Val. Yes, the traitor left you, joined the Peruvians, and became thy enemy and Spain's.

Piz. But first with weariless remonstrance he sued to win me from my purpose, and untwine the sword from my determined grasp. Much he spoke of right, of justice; and humanity; calling the Peruvians our innocent and unoffending brethren.

Val. They! Obdurate heathens! They our brethren!

Piz. But when he found, that the soft folly of the pleading tears he dropt upon my bosom, fell on marble, he flew and joined the foe: then profiting by the lessons he had gained in wronged Pizarro's school, the youth so disciplined and led his new allies, that soon he forced me—(Ha! I burn with shame and fury while I own it!)—in base retreat and foul discomfiture to quit the shore.

Val. But the hour of revenge is come.

Piz. It is. I am returned; my force is strengthened, and the audacious boy shall soon know that Pizarro lives, and has—a grateful recollection of the thanks he owes him.

Val. 'Tis doubted whether still Alonzo lives.

Piz. 'Tis certain that he does; one of his armour-bearers is just made prisoner: twelve thousand is their force, as he reports, led by Alonzo and Peruvian Rolla. This day they make a solemn sacrifice on their ungodly altars. We must profit by their security, and attack them unprepared. The sacrificers shall become the victims;

Elv. Wretched innocents! And their own blood shall bedew their altars!

Piz. Right! (*Trumpets without.*) Elvira, retire!

Elv. Why should I retire?

Piz. Because men are to meet here, and on manly business.

Elv. O men! men! ungrateful and perverse! O woman! still affectionate though wronged! The beings to whose eyes you turn for animation, hope, and rapture, through the days of mirth and revelry; and on whose bosoms in the hour of sore calamity, you seek for rest and consolation, *them*, when the pompous follies of your mean ambition are the question, you treat as playthings or as slaves!—I shall not retire.

Piz. Remain then; and, if thou can'st, be silent.

Elv. They only babble who practise not reflection. I shall think; and thought is silence.

Piz. Ha!—there's somewhat in her manner lately—(*Looks sterily and suspiciously at Elvira, who meets his glance with an undaunted eye.*)

Enter LAS-CASAS, ALMAGRO, GONZALO, DAVILLA, Officers and Soldiers. (*Trumpets without.*)

Las-C. Pizarro, we attend your summons.

Piz. Welcome venerable father! My friends, most welcome. Friends and fellow-soldiers! at length the hour is arrived, which to Pizarro's hopes presents the full reward of our undaunted enterprise, and long-enduring toils. Confident in security, this day the foe devotes to solemn sacrifice: if with bold surprise we strike on their solemnity—trust to your leader's word—we shall not fail.

Alm. Too long inactive have we been mouldering on the coast; our stores exhausted, and our soldiers murmuring. Battle! battle!—then death to the armed, and chains for the defenceless.

Dav. Death to the whole Peruvian race!

Las-C. Merciful heaven!

Alm. Yes, general, the attack, and instantly! Then shall Alonzo, basking at his ease, soon cease to scoff our suffering, and scorn our force.

Las-C. Alonzo! Scorn and presumption are not in his nature.

Alm. 'Tis fit Las-Casas should defend his pupil.

Piz. Speak not of the traitor; or hear his name but as the bloody summons to assault and vengeance. It appears we are agreed!

Alm. and Dav. We are.

Gon. All!—Battle! Battle!

Las-C. Is then the dreadful measure of your cruelty not yet complete? Battle! Gracious heaven! Against whom? Against a king, in whose mild bosom your atrocious injuries even yet have not excited hate; but who, insulted or victorious, still

sues for peace. Against a people, who never wronged the living being their Creator formed: a people, who, children of innocence! received you as cherished guests, with eager hospitality and confiding kindness. Generously and freely did they share with you their comforts, their treasures, and their homes: you repaid them by fraud, oppression, and dishonour. These eyes have witnessed all I speak. As gods you were received; as fiends have you acted.

Piz. Las-Casas!

Las-C. Pizarro, hear me!—Hear me, chieftains!—And thou, All-powerful! whose thunders can shiver into sand the adamantine rock; whose lightnings can pierce to the core of the rived and quaking earth: oh! let thy power give effect to thy servant's words, as thy spirit gives courage to his will! Do not, I implore you, chieftains, countrymen—do not, I implore you, renew the foul barbarities which your insatiate avarice has inflicted on this wretched, unoffending race! But hush, my sighs; fall not, drops of useless sorrow; heart-breaking anguish, choke not my utterance. All I entreat is, send me once more to those you call your enemies. Oh! let me be the messenger of penitence from you; I shall return with blessings and with peace from them. Elvira, you weep! Alas! and does this dreadful crisis move no heart but thine?

Alm. Because there are no women here but she and thou.

Piz. Close this idle war of words; time flies, and our opportunity will be lost. Chieftains, are ye for instant battle?

Alm. We are.

Las-C. Oh, men of blood! (*Kneels.*) God! thou hast anointed me thy servant; not to curse, but to bless my countrymen: yet now my blessing on their force were blasphemy against thy goodness. (*Rises.*) No! I curse your purpose, homicides! I curse the bond of blood by which you are united. May fell division, infamy, and rout, defeat your projects, and rebuke your hopes! On you and on your children be the peril of the innocent blood which shall be shed this day! I leave you, and for ever. No longer shall these aged eyes be seared by the horrors they have witnessed. In caves, in forests, will I hide myself; with tigers and with savage beasts will I commune; and when at length we meet again before the blessed tribunal of that Deity, whose mild doctrines and whose mercies ye have this day renounced, then shall you feel the agony and grief of soul which tear the bosom of your accuser now! (*Going.*)

Elv. Oh! take me with thee, Las-Casas.

Las-C. Stay! lost, abused lady! I alone am useless here. Perhaps thy loveliness may persuade to pity, where reason and religion plead in vain. Oh! save thy innocent fellow-creatures, if thou canst: then shall thy frailty be redeemed, and thou wilt share the mercy thou bestowest. [*Exit.*]

Piz. How, Elvira! wouldst thou leave me?

Elv. I am bewildered, grown terrified! Your inhumanity—and that good old man—oh! he appeared to me just now something more than heavenly! And you! ye all looked worse than earthly.

Piz. Compassion sometimes becomes a beauty.
Elv. Humanity always becomes a conqueror.

Piz. Now to prepare our muster and our march. At mid-day is the hour of the sacrifice. Consulting with our guides, the route of your divisions shall be given to each commander. If we surprise, we conquer; and if we conquer, the gates of Quito will be opened to us.

Alm. And Pizarro then be monarch of Peru.

Piz. Not so fast. Ambition for a time must take counsel from discretion. Ataliba still must hold the shadow of a sceptre in his hand; Pizarro

still appear dependant upon Spain: while the pledge of future peace, his daughter's hand, secures the proud succession to the crown I seek.

Alm. This is best. In Pizarro's plans observe the statesman's wisdom guides the warrior's valour.

Val. (*To Elvira.*) You mark, Elvira!

Elv. O yes; this is best; this is excellent.

Piz. You seem offended. Elvira still retains my heart. Think—a sceptre waves me on.

Elv. Offended? No! Thou knowest thy glory is my idol; and this will be most glorious, most just and honourable. (*Satirically.*)

Piz. What mean you?

Elv. Oh! nothing—mere woman's prattle—a jealous whim, perhaps: but let it not impede the royal hero's course. (*Trumpets without.*) The call of arms invites you. Away! away! you, his brave, his worthy fellow-warriors.

Piz. And go you not with me?

Elv. Undoubtedly! I needs must be the first to hail the future monarch of Peru.

Enter GOMEZ.

Alm. How, Gomez! what bringest thou?

Gom. On yonder hill, among the palm-trees, we have surprised an old cacique; escape by flight he could not, and we seized him and his attendant unresisting; yet his lips breathed nought but bitterness and scorn.

Piz. Drag him before us.

(*Gomez leaves the tent, and returns, conducting Orozemo and attendant in chains, guarded.*)

What art thou, stranger?

Oro. First tell me which among you is the captain of this band of robbers.

Piz. Ha!

Alm. Madman! Tear out his tongue, or else—

Oro. Thou'lt hear some truth.

Dav. (*Shewing his poniard.*) Shall I not plunge this into his heart?

Oro. (*To Pizarro.*) Does your army boast many such heroes as this?

Piz. Audacious! This insolence has sealed thy doom. Die thou shalt, grey-headed ruffian. But first confess what thou knowest.

Oro. I know that which thou hast just assured me of—that I shall die.

Piz. Less audacity, perhaps, might have preserved thy life.

Oro. My life is as a withered tree; it is not worth preserving.

Piz. Hear me, old man. Even now we march against the Peruvian army. We know there is a secret path that leads to your strong hold among the rocks: guide us to that, and name thy reward. If wealth be thy wish—

Oro. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Piz. Dost thou despise my offer?

Oro. Thee and thy offer. Wealth! I have the wealth of two dear gallant sons; I have stored in heaven the riches which repay good actions here; and still my chiefest treasure do I bear about me.

Piz. What is that? Inform me.

Oro. I will; for it never can be thine,—the treasure of a pure, unswilled conscience.

Piz. I believe there is no other Peruvian who dares speak as thou dost.

Oro. Would I could believe there is no other Spaniard who dares act as thou dost!

Gon. Obdurate Pagan! How numerous is your army?

Oro. Count the leaves of yonder forest.

Alm. Which is the weakest part of your camp?

Oro. It has no weak part; on every side 'tis fortified by justice.

Piz. Where have you concealed your wives and your children?

Oro. In the hearts of their husbands and their fathers.

Piz. Knowest thou Alonzo?

Oro. Know him? Alonzo? Know him? Our nation's benefactor! The guardian angel of Peru!

Piz. By what has he merited that title?

Oro. By not resembling thee.

Aln. Who is this Rolla, joined with Alonzo in command?

Oro. I will answer that; for I love to hear and to repeat the hero's name. Rolla, the kinsman of the king, is the idol of our army; in war a tiger, chafed by the hunter's spear; in peace, more gentle than the unweaned lamb. Cora was once betrothed to him; but finding she preferred Alonzo, he resigned his claim, and, I fear, his peace, to friendship and to Cora's happiness; yet still he loves her with a pure and holy fire.

Piz. Romantic savage! I shall meet this Rolla soon.

Oro. Thou hadst better not. The terrors of his noble eye would strike thee dead.

Dav. Silence, or tremble!

Oro. Beardless robber! I never yet have trembled before God: why should I tremble before man? Why before thee, thou less than man!

Dav. Another word, audacious heathen, and I strike.

Oro. Strike, Christian! Then boast among thy fellows—I too have murdered a Peruvian!

Dav. Hell and vengeance seize thee! (*Stabs him.*)

Piz. Hold!

Dav. Couldst thou longer have endured his insults?

Piz. And therefore should he die untortured?

Oro. True! Observe, young man, your unthinking rashness has saved me from the rack; and you yourself have lost the opportunity of an useful lesson; you might have seen with what cruelty vengeance would have inflicted torments—and with what patience virtue would have borne them.

Elv. (*Supporting Orozembo's head upon her bosom.*) Oh! ye are monsters all. Look up, thou martyred innocent. Look up once more, and bless me, ere thou diest. God! how I pity thee!

Oro. Pity me! Me! so near my happiness! Bless thee, lady! Spaniards: heaven turn your hearts, and pardon you as I do. (*Orozembo is borne off, dying.*)

Piz. Away!—Davilla! if thus rash a second time—

Dav. Forgive the hasty indignation, which—

Piz. No more. Unbind that trembling wretch: let him depart; 'tis well he should report the mercy which we show to insolent defiance. Hark! our troops are moving.

Attendant. (*On passing Elvira.*) If, through your gentle means, my master's poor remains might be preserved from insult—

Elv. I understand thee.

Att. His sons may yet thank your charity, if not avenge their father's fate. [*Exit.*]

Piz. What says the slave?

Elv. A parting word, to thank you for your mercy.

Piz. Our guard and guides approach. (*Soldiers march through the tents.*) Follow me, friends! Each shall have his post assigned, and ere Peru's god shall sink beneath the main, the Spanish banner, bathed in blood, shall float above the walls of vanquished Quito.

[*Exeunt all but Elvira and Valverde.*]
Val. Is it now presumption that my hopes gain strength with the increasing horrors which I see appal Elvira's soul?

Elv. I am mad with terror and remorse. Would I could fly these dreadful scenes!

Val. Might not Valverde's true attachment be thy refuge?

Elv. What wouldst thou do to save or to avenge me?

Val. I dare do all thy injuries may demand. A word, and he lies bleeding at your feet.

Elv. Perhaps we will speak again of this. Now leave me. [*Exit Valverde.*] No! not this revenge. No! not this instrument. Fie! Elvira; even for a moment to counsel with this unworthy traitor! Can a wretch, false to a confiding master, be true to any pledge of love or honour? Pizarro will abandon me; yes, me—who, for his sake, have sacrificed—Oh, God!—What have I not sacrificed for him! Yet, curbing the avenging pride that swells this bosom, I still will further try him. Oh, men! ye who, wearied by the fond fidelity of virtuous love, seek in the wanton's flattery a new delight, oh! ye may insult and leave the hearts to which your faith was pledged, and, stifling self-reproach, may fear no other peril; because such hearts, however you injure and desert them, have yet the proud retreat of an unspotted fame—of an unreproaching conscience. But beware the desperate libertine, who forsakes the creature whom his arts have first deprived of all natural protection—of all self-consolation! What has he left her? Despair and vengeance! [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Bank surrounded by a wild wood and rocks.—CORA sitting on the root of a tree, is playing with her Child, and ALONZO hangs over them with delight.*

Cora. Now confess, does he resemble thee, or not?

Al. Indeed, he is liker thee: thy rosy softness, thy smiling gentleness.

Cora. But his auburn hair, the colour of his eyes, Alonzo. O! my lord's image, and my heart's adored! (*Pressing the child to her bosom.*)

Al. The little daringurchin robs me, I doubt, of some portion of thy love, my Cora. At least, he shares caresses, which, till his birth, were only mine.

Cora. O no, Alonzo! A mother's love for her sweet babe is not a stealth from the dear father's store; it is a new delight, that turns with quickened gratitude to him, the author of her augmented bliss.

Al. Could Cora think me serious?

Cora. I am sure he will speak soon: then will be the last of the three holidays allowed by nature's sanction to the fond anxious mother's heart.

Al. What are those three?

Cora. The ecstasy of his birth I pass; that in part is selfish: but when first the white blossoms of his teeth appear, breaking the crimson buds that did incase them; that is a day of joy: next, when from his father's arms he runs without support, and clings, laughing and delighted, to his mother's knee; that is the mother's heart's next holiday; and sweeter still the third, whenever his little stammering tongue shall utter the grateful sound of "father, mother!" O! that is the dearest joy of all!

Al. Beloved Cora!

Cora. Oh! my Alonzo! Daily, hourly, do I pour thanks to heaven for the dear blessing I possess in him and thee.

Al. To heaven and Rolla.

Cora. Yes, to heaven and Rolla: and art thou not grateful to them too, Alonzo? Art thou not happy?

Al. Can Cora ask that question?

Cora. Why then of late so restless on thy couch! Why to my waking, watching ear, so often does the stillness of the night betray thy struggling sighs?

Al. Must not I fight against my country, against my brethren?

Cora. Do they not seek our destruction? and are not all men brethren?

Al. Should they prove victorious—

Cora. I will fly, and meet thee in the mountains.

Al. Fly with thy infant, Cora?

Cora. What! think you a mother, when she runs from danger, can feel the weight of her child?

Al. Cora, my beloved, do you wish to set my heart at rest?

Cora. Oh, yes! yes! yes!

Al. Hasten then to the concealment in the mountain; where all our matrons and virgins, and our warriors' offspring, are allotted to await the issue of the war. Cora will not alone resist her husband's, her sister's, and her monarch's wish.

Cora. Alonzo, I cannot leave you. Oh! how in every moment's absence would my fancy paint you, wounded, alone, abandoned! No, no; I cannot leave you!

Al. Rolla will be with me.

Cora. Yes, while the battle rages, and where it rages most, brave Rolla will be found. He may revenge, but cannot save thee. To follow danger, he will leave even thee. But I have sworn never to forsake thee but with life. Dear, dear, Alonzo! can you wish that I should break my vow?

Al. Then be it so. Oh! excellence in all that's great and lovely, in courage, gentleness, and truth; my pride, my content, my all! Can there on this earth be fools who seek for happiness, and pass by love in the pursuit?

Cora. Alonzo, I cannot thank you. Silence is the gratitude of true affection: who seeks to follow it by sound, will miss the track. (*Shouts without.*) Does the king approach?

Al. No; 'tis the general placing the guard that will surround the temple, during the sacrifice. 'Tis Rolla comes, the first and best of heroes. (*Trumpets*)

ROLLA, (*speaking as he enters.*)

Then place them on the hill fronting the Spanish camp. (*Enters.*)

Cora. Rolla! my friend, my brother!

Al. Rolla! my friend, my benefactor! how can our lives repay the obligations which we owe you?

Rol. Pass them in peace and bliss. Let Rolla witness it; he is overpaid.

Cora. Look on this child; he is the life-blood of my heart; but if ever he love or revere thee less than his own father, his mother's hate fall on him.

Rol. Oh, no more! What sacrifice have I made to merit gratitude? The object of my love was Cora's happiness. I see her happy. Is not my object gained? and am I not rewarded? Now, Cora, listen to a friend's advice. You must away; you must seek the sacred caverns, the unprofan'd recess, whither, after this day's sacrifice, our matrons, and e'en the virgins of the sun, retire.

Cora. Not secure with Alonzo and with thee, Rolla?

Rol. We have heard Pizarro's plan is to surprise us. Thy presence, Cora, cannot aid, but may impede our efforts.

Cora. Impede!

Rol. Yes, yes. Thou know'st how tenderly we love thee; we, thy husband and thy friend. Art thou near us? Our thoughts, our valour—vengeance will not be our own. No advantage will be pursued, that leads us from the spot where thou art placed; no succour will be given but for thy protection. The faithful lover dares not be all himself amid the war, until he knows that the beloved of his soul is absent from the peril of the fight.

Al. Thanks to my friend; 'tis this I would have urged.

Cora. This timid excess of love, producing fear instead of valour, flatters, but does not convince me; the wife's incredulous.

Rol. And is the mother unbelieving too?

Cora. No more. Do with me as you please. My friend, my husband! place me where you will.

Al. My adored! we thank you both. (*March without.*) Hark! the king approaches to the sacrifice. You, Rolla, spoke of rumours of surprise. A servant of mine, I hear, is missing; whether surprised or treacherous I know not.

Rol. It matters not; we are everywhere prepared. Come, Cora; upon the altar 'mid the rocks thou'lt implore a blessing on our cause. The pious supplication of the trembling wife and mother's heart, rises to the throne of mercy, the most resistless prayer of human homage. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Temple of the Sun. A solemn march.*

The warriors and King enter on one side of the temple; ROLLA, ALONZO, and CORA, on the other.

Ata. Welcome, Alonzo! (*To Rolla.*) Kinsman, thy hand. (*To Cora.*) Blessed be the object of the happy mother's love.

Cora. May the sun bless the father of his people!

Ata. In the welfare of his children lives the happiness of their king. Friends, what is the temper of our soldiers?

Rol. Such as becomes the cause which they support; their cry is, victory or death! our king! our country! and our god!

Ata. Thou, Rolla, in the hour of peril, hast been wont to animate the spirit of their leaders, ere we proceed to consecrate the banners which thy valour knows so well to guard.

Rol. Yet never was the hour of peril near, when to inspire them words were so little needed.

My brave associates! partners of my toil, my feelings, and my fame! Can Rolla's words add vigour to the virtuous energies which inspire your hearts? No! you have judged as I have, the foulness of the crafty plea by which these bold invaders would delude you. Your generous spirit has compared, as mine has, the motives which, in a war like this, can animate *their* minds, and *ours*.

They, by a strange frenzy driven, fight for power, for plunder, and extended rule—*We*, for our country, our altars, and our homes. *They* follow an adventurer whom they fear, and obey a power which they hate. *We* serve a monarch whom we love—a God whom we adore! Whene'er they move in anger, desolation tracks their progress;

where'er they pause in amity, affliction mourns their friendship. *They* boast, they come but to improve our state, enlarge our thoughts, and free us from the yoke of error! Yes; *they* will give enlightened freedom to *our* minds, who are themselves the slaves of passion, avarice, and pride. *They* offer us their protection: yes, such protection as vultures give to lambs,—covering and devouring them! *They* call on us to barter all of good we have inherited and proved, for the desperate chance of something better which they promise. Be our plain answer this: The throne we honour is the *people's* choice; the laws we reverence are our brave fathers' legacy; the faith we follow teaches us to live in bonds of charity with all mankind, and die with hopes of bliss beyond the grave. Tell your invaders this, and tell them too, we seek no change; and, least of all, such change as they would bring us. (*Loud shouts of the soldiery.*)

Ata. (*Embracing Rolla.*) Now, holy friends, ever mindful of these sacred truths, begin the sacrifice.

A solemn procession commences. The priests and virgins arrange themselves on either side of the altar, which the high priest approaches, and the solemnity begins.

CHORUS of priests and virgins.

Oh Pow'r supreme! In mercy smile
With favour on thy servants toil!
Our hearts from guileful passions free,
Which here we render unto thee!
Thou Parent Light! but deign to hear
The voices of our feeble choir;
And this our sacrifice of fear.

Consume with thine own hallow'd fire!
(*Fire from above lights upon the altar.*)

Give praise! give praise! the God has heard;
Our God, most awfully rever'd!
The altar his own flames enwreath'd,
Then be the conquering sword unsheath'd,
And victory set on Rolla's brow,
His foes to crush—to overthrow!

Ata. Our offering is accepted. (*Exit Chorus, &c.*)
Now to arms, my friends, prepare for battle!

Enter ORANO.

Ora. The enemy!

Ata. How near?

Ora. From the hill's brow, e'en now as I o'er-looked their force, suddenly I perceived the whole in motion; with eager haste they march towards our deserted camp, as if apprised of this most solemn sacrifice.

Rol. They must be met before they reach it.

Ata. And you, my daughters, with your dear children, away to the appointed place of safety.

Cora. Oh, Alonzo! (*Embracing him.*)

Al. We shall meet again.

Cora. Bless us more, ere thou leave us.

Al. Heaven protect and bless thee, my beloved; and thee, my innocent!

Ata. Haste! haste!—each moment is precious.

Cora. Farewell; Alonzo! Remember, thy life is mine.

Rol. Not one farewell to Rolla?

Cora. (*Giving him her hand.*) Farewell! The God of war be with you; but bring me back Alonzo.

[*Exit with the Child.*]

Ata. (*Draws his sword.*) Now, my brethren, my sons, my friends; I know your valour. Should ill success assail us, be despair the last feeling of your hearts. If successful, let mercy be the first. Alonzo, to you I give to defend the narrow passage of the mountains. On the right of the wood be Rolla's station. For me, straightforwards will I march to meet them, and fight until I see my people saved, or they behold their monarch fall. Be the word of battle—"God! and our native land!"

[*A march and exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A Wood.*

Enter ROLLA and ALONZO.

Rol. Here, my friend, we separate; soon, I trust, to meet again in triumph.

Al. Or perhaps we part, to meet no more. Rolla, a moment's pause. We are yet before our army's strength; one earnest word at parting.

Rol. There is in language now no word but battle.

Al. Yes, one word more—Cora!

Rol. Cora! Speak!

Al. The next hour brings us—

Rol. Death or victory!

Al. It may be victory to one—death to the other.

Rol. Or both may fall,

Al. If so, my wife and child I bequeath to the protection of heaven and my king. But should I only fall, Rolla, be thou my heir.

Rol. How?

Al. Be Cora thy wife: be thou a father to my child.

Rol. Rouse thee, Alonzo! Banish these timid fancies.

Al. Rolla! I have tried in vain, and cannot fly from the foreboding which oppresses me: thou knowest it will not shake me in the fight; but give me the promise I exact.

Rol. If it be Cora's will—Yes—I promise. (*Gives his hand.*)

Al. Tell her it was my last wish; and bear to her and to my son my last blessing.

Rol. I will. Now then to our posts, and let our swords speak for us. (*They draw their swords.*)

Al. For the king and Cora!

Rol. For Cora and the king! [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE IV.—*A view of the Peruvian camp.*

Enter an Old blind Man and a Boy.

O. Man. Have none returned to the camp?

Boy. One messenger alone. From the temple they all marched to meet the foe.

O. Man. Hark! I hear the din of battle. O! had I still retained my sight, I might now have grasped a sword, and died a soldier's death. Are we quite alone?

Boy. Yes. I hope my father will be safe.

O. Man. He will do his duty. I am more anxious for thee, my child.

Boy. I can stay with you, dear grandfather.

O. Man. But should the enemy come, they will drag thee from me, my boy.

Boy. Impossible, grandfather; for they will see at once that you are old and blind, and cannot do without me.

O. Man. Poor child! you little know the hearts of these inhuman men. (*Discharge of cannon heard.*) Hark! the noise is near: I hear the dreadful roaring of the fiery engines of these cruel strangers. (*Shouts at a distance.*) At every shout, with involuntary haste I clench my hand, and fancy still it grasps a sword. Alas! I can only serve my country by my prayers. Heaven preserve the Inca, and his gallant soldiers!

Boy. O father! there are soldiers running.

O. Man. Spaniards, boy?

Boy. No; Peruvians.

O. Man. How! and flying from the field! It cannot be.

Enter Two Peruvian Soldiers.

O speak to them, boy! Whence come you? How goes the battle?

Sol. We may not stop: we are sent for the reserve behind the hill. The day's against us.

[*Exeunt Soldiers.*]

O. Man. Quick, then, quick!

Boy. I see the points of lances glittering in the light.

O. Man. Those are Peruvians. Do they bend this way?

Enter a Peruvian Soldier.

Boy. Soldier, speak to my blind father.

Sol. I'm sent to tell the helpless father to retreat among the rocks: all will be lost, I fear. The king is wounded.

O. Man. Quick, boy! Lead me to the hill where thou mayest view the plain. (*Alarms.*)

Enter ATALIBA, wounded, with ORANO, Officers and Soldiers.

Ata. My wound is bound; believe me, the hurt is nothing: I may return to the fight.

Ora. Pardon your servant; but the allotted priest who attends the sacred banner has pronounced, that the Inca's blood once shed, no blessing can await the day, until he leave the field.

Ata. Hard restraint! O! my poor brave soldiers! Hard, that I may no longer be a witness of their valour. But haste you; return to your comrades: I will not keep one soldier from his post. Go, and avenge your fallen brethren. (*Exeunt Orano, &c.*) I will not repine: my own fate is the last anxiety of my heart. It is for you, my people, that I feel and fear.

Old Man and Boy advance.

O. Man. Did I not hear the voice of an unfortunate? Who is it complains thus?

Ata. One, almost by hope forsaken.

O. Man. Is the king alive?

Ata. The king still lives.

O. Man. Then thou art not forsaken! Ataliba protects the meaneast of his subjects.

Ata. And who shall protect Ataliba?

O. Man. The immortal powers that protect the just. The virtues of our monarch alike secure to him the affection of his people, and the benign regard of heaven.

Ata. How impious, had I murmured! How wondrous, thou supreme Disposer, are thy acts! Even in this moment, which I had thought the bitterest trial of mortal suffering, thou hast infused the sweetest sensation of my life: it is the assurance of my people's love.

Boy. (*Turning forward.*) O father!—Stranger!—see those hideous men that rush upon us yonder!

Ata. Ha! Spaniards! and I, Ataliba—ill-fated fugitive! without a sword, even to try the ransom of a monarch's life.

Enter DAVILLA, ALMAGRO, and Spanish Soldiers.

Dav. 'Tis lie; our hopes are answered. I know him well: it is the king!

Alm. Away! follow with your prize. Avoid those Peruvians, though in flight. This way we may regain our line.

(*Exeunt Davilla, Almagro, &c. with Ataliba.*)

O. Man. The king! Wretched old man, that could not see his gracious form! Boy, would thou hadst led me to the reach of those ruffians' swords!

Boy. Father! all our countrymen are flying here for refuge.

O. Man. No, to the rescue of their king. They never will desert him. (*Alarms without.*)

Enter Peruvian Officers and Soldiers, flying across the stage; ORANO following.

Ora. Hold, I charge you! Rolla calls you.

Offi. We cannot combat with their dreadful engines.

Enter ROLLA.

Rol. Hold, recreants! cowards! What! fear ye death, and fear not shame? By my soul's fury, I cleave to the earth the first of you that stirs; or plunge your dastard swords into your leader's heart, that he no more may witness your disgrace. Where is the king?

Ora. From this old man and boy I learn, that the detachment of the enemy, which you observed so suddenly to quit the field, have succeeded in surprising him; they are yet in sight.

Rol. And bear the Inca off a prisoner! Hear this, ye base, disloyal rout! Look there! the dust you see hangs on the bloody Spaniard's track, dragging, with ruffian taunts, your king, your father—Ataliba, in bondage! Now fly and seek your own vile safety, if you can!

O. Man. Bless the voice of Rolla!—and bless the stroke I once lamented, but which now spares these extinguished eyes the shame of seeing the pale trembling wretches who dare not follow Rolla, though to save their king!

Rol. Shrink ye from the thunder of the foe, and fall ye not at this rebuke? Oh! had ye each but one drop of the loyal blood which gushes to waste through the brave heart of this sightless veteran! Eternal shame pursue you, if you desert me now! But do.—Alone I go—alone—to die with glory by my monarch's side!

Soldiers. Rolla! we'll follow thee!

(*Rolla rushes out, followed by Orano, Officers, and Soldiers.*)

O. Man. O godlike Rolla! And thou, sun, send from thy clouds avenging lightning to his aid! Haste, my boy! ascend some height, and tell to my impatient terror, what thou seest.

Boy. I can climb this rock, and the tree above. (*Ascends a rock, and from thence into the tree.*)

O, now I see them—now—yes—and the Spaniards turning by the steep.

O. Man. Rolla follows them?

Boy. He does—he does—he moves like an arrow! Now he waves his arm to our soldiers. (*Report of cannon heard.*) Now there is fire and smoke.

O. Man. Yes, fire is the weapon of those fiends.

Boy. The wind blows off the smoke: they are all mixed together.

O. Man. Seest thou the king?

Boy. Yes, Rolla is near him. His sword sheds fire as he strikes.

O. Man. Bless thee, Rolla! Spare not the monsters.

Boy. Father! father! the Spaniards fly! O, now I see the king embracing Rolla. (*Shouts of victory, flourish of trumpets, &c.*)

O. Man. (*Falls on his knees.*) Fountain of life! how can my exhausted breath bear to thee thanks for this one moment of my life! My boy, come down and let me kiss thee. My strength is gone. (*The Boy descends.*)

Boy. Let me help you, father—you tremble so.

O. Man. 'Tis with transport, boy!

(*Boy leads him off. Shouts, flourish, &c.*)

Enter ATALIBA, ROLLA, and Peruvians.

Ata. In the name of my people, the saviour of whose sovereign you have this day been, accept this emblem of his gratitude. (*Giving Rolla his sun of diamonds.*) The tear that falls upon it may for a moment dim its lustre, yet does it not impair the value of the gift.

Rol. It was the hand of heaven, not mine, that saved my king.

Enter Peruvian Officer and Soldiers.

Rol. Now, soldier, from Alonzo!

Offi. Alonzo's genius soon repaired the panic which early broke our ranks; but I fear we have to mourn Alonzo's loss; his eager spirit urged him too far in the pursuit.

Ata. How! Alonzo slain!

1 *Sol.* I saw him fall.

2 *Sol.* Trust me, I beheld him up again and fighting; he was then surrounded and disarmed.

Ata. O! victory, dearly purchased!

Rol. O, Cora! who shall tell thee this?

Ata. Rolla, our friend is lost—our native country saved! Our private sorrows must yield to the public claim for triumph. Now go we to fulfil the first, the most sacred duty which belongs to victory,—to dry the widowed and the orphaned tear of those whose brave protectors have perished in their country's cause.

[*Triumphant march, and exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A wild Retreat among stupendous rocks. CORA and her Child, with other wives and children of the Peruvian warriors discovered.*

GLEE.—*Women.*

Fly away, time, nor be the anxious hour delay'd,
Fly away, time, that soothes the heart by grief dis-
may'd;
Should ghastly death appear in view,
We can dare it;
With friends we love, so brave, so true,
We will share it.
Fly away, time, &c.

(*A triumphant march of the army is heard at a distance.*)

Wom. Hush! hush! don't you hear?
A distant march assails the ear;—
Hark! louder still from yonder hill,
Increasing sounds with terror fill.

Enter Warriors, singing.

(*Cora, as they pass, runs through the ranks with her child in her arms searching for Alonzo.*)

War. Victory now has made us free;
We haste, we haste, our friends to see!

Enter ATALIBA, ROLLA, Peruvians, &c.

Ata. Thanks, thanks, my children! I am well;
believe it; the blood once stopped, my wound was
nothing. (*Cora at length approaches Rolla, who ap-
pears to have been mournfully avoiding her.*)

Cora. Where is Alonzo? (*Rolla turns away in
silence. Cora falls at the king's feet.*) Give me
my husband; give this child his father!

Ata. I grieve that Alonzo is not here.

Cora. Hoped you to find him?

Ata. Most anxiously.

Cora. Ataliba! is he not dead?

Ata. No! the gods will have heard our prayers.

Cora. Is he not dead, Ataliba?

Ata. He lives—in my heart.

Cora. Oh king! torture me not thus! Speak out,
is this child fatherless?

Ata. Dearest Cora! do not thus dash aside the
little hope that still remains.

Cora. The little hope! Yet still there is hope!
Speak to me, Rolla, you are the friend of truth.

Rolla. Alonzo has not been found.

Cora. Not found? What mean you? Will not
you, Rolla, tell me true? Oh! let me not hear the
thunder rolling at a distance; let the bolt fall and
crush my brain at once. Say not that he is not
found; say at once that he is dead.

Rolla. Then should I say false.

Cora. False! Blessings on thee for that word!
But snatch me from this terrible suspense. Lift
up thy little hands, my child; perhaps thy igno-
rance may plead better than thy mother's agony.

Rolla. Alonzo is taken prisoner.

Cora. Prisoner! and by the Spaniards! Pizarro's
prisoner! Then is he dead.

Ata. Hope better. The richest ransom which
our realm can yield, a herald shall this instant
bear.

Per. Wom. Oh! for Alonzo's ransom—our gold,
our gems!—all! all!—Here, dear Cora!—here!
here! (*The Peruvian women eagerly tear off all their
ornaments, and offer them to Cora.*)

Ata. Yes, for Alonzo's ransom they would give
all! I thank thee, Father, who hast given me such
hearts to rule over!

Cora. Now one boon more, beloved monarch.
Let me go with the herald.

Ata. Remember, Cora, thou art not a wife only,
but a mother too: hazard not your own honour,
and the safety of your infant. Among these bar-
barians, the sight of thy youth, thy loveliness, and
innocence, would but rivet faster thy Alonzo's
chains, and rack his heart with added fears for
thee. Wait, Cora, the return of the herald.

Cora. Teach me how to live till then.

Ata. Now we go to offer to the gods thanks for
our victory, and prayers for Alonzo's safety.

[*March and procession. Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Wood. Enter CORA and Child.*

Cora. Mild innocence! what will become of
thee!

Enter ROLLA.

Rolla. Cora, I attend thy summons at the ap-
pointed spot.

Cora. Oh my child, my boy!—hast thou still a
father?

Rolla. Cora, can thy child be fatherless, while
Rolla lives?

Cora. Will he not soon want a mother too? For
canst thou think I will survive Alonzo's loss?

Rolla. Yes; for his child's sake. Yes, as thou
didst love Alonzo, Cora, listen to Alonzo's friend.

Cora. You bid me listen to the world. Who
was not Alonzo's friend?

Rolla. His parting words—

Cora. His parting words! (*Wildly.*) Oh, speak.
Rolla. Consigned to me two precious trusts—his
blessing to his son and a last request to thee.

Cora. His last request! his last!—Oh, name it!

Rolla. If I fall, said he, (and sad forebodings
shook him while he spoke) promise to take my
Cora for thy wife; be thou a father to my child.
I pledged my word to him, and we parted. Observe
me, Cora, I repeat this only as my faith to do so
was given to Alonzo; for myself, I neither cherish
claim nor hope.

Cora. Ha! does my reason fail me, or what is
this horrid light that presses on my brain? Oh,
Alonzo! it may be thou hast fallen a victim to thy
own guileless heart. Hadst thou been silent, hadst
thou not made a fatal legacy of these wretched
charms—

Rolla. Cora! what hateful suspicion has possessed
thy mind?

Cora. Yes, yes, 'tis clear. His spirit was en-
snared; he was led to the fatal spot, where mortal
valour could not front a host of murderers: he fell.
In vain did he exclaim for help to Rolla. At a
distance you looked on and smiled. You could
have saved him; could, but did not.

Rolla. Oh, glorious sun! can I have deserved
this? Cora, rather bid me strike this sword into
my heart.

Cora. No! live! live for love! for that love
thou seekest: whose blossoms are to shoot from
the bleeding grave of thy betrayed and slaughtered
friend! But thou hast borne to me the last words
of my Alonzo. Now hear mine. Sooner shall this
boy draw poison from this tortured breast; sooner
would I link me to the pallid corpse of the meanest
wretch that perished with Alonzo, than he call
Rolla father, than I call Rolla husband!

Rolla. Yet call me what I am,—thy friend, thy
protector!

Cora. (*Distraughtly.*) Away! I have no pro-
tector but my God! With this child in my arms
will I hasten to the field of slaughter; there,
with these hands will I turn up to the light every
mangled body; seeking, howe'er by death dis-
figured, the sweet smile of my Alonzo. With
fearful cries I will shriek out his name 'till my
veins snap! If the smallest spark of life remain,
he will know the voice of his Cora, open for a

moment his unshrouded eyes, and bless me with a last look. But if we find him not—oh! then, my boy, we will to the Spanish camp. That look of thine will win me passage through a thousand swords. They too are men. Is there a heart that could drive back the wife that seeks her bleeding husband; or the innocent babe that cries for his imprisoned father? No, no, my child; everywhere we shall be safe. A wretched mother, bearing a poor orphan in her arms, has nature's passport through the world. Yes, yes, my son, we'll go and seek thy father. *[Exit with the Child.]*

Rol. (After a pause of agitation.) Could I have merited one breath of thy reproaches, Cora, I should be the wretch, I think I was not formed to be. Her safety must be my present purpose, then to convince her she has wronged me. *[Exit.]*

SCENE III. *Pizarro's Tent.* PIZARRO traversing the scene in gloomy and furious agitation.

Piz. Well, capricious idol, fortune; be my ruin thy work and boast. To myself I will still be true. Yet, ere I fall, grant me thy smile to prosper in one act of vengeance, and be that smile Alonzo's death.

Enter ELVIRA.

Who's there? who dares intrude? Why does my guard neglect their duty?

Elv. Your guard did what they could; but they knew their duty better than to enforce authority when I refused obedience.

Piz. And what is it you desire?

Elv. To see how a hero hears misfortune. Thou, Pizarro, art not now collected—not thyself.

Piz. Would'st thou I should rejoice that the spears of the enemy, led by accursed Alonzo, have pierced the bravest hearts of my followers?

Elv. No! I would have thee cold and dark as the night that follows the departed storm; still and sullen as the awful pause that precedes nature's convulsion: yet I would have thee feel assured, that a new morning shall arise, when the warrior's spirit shall stalk forth: nor fear the future, nor lament the past.

Piz. Woman! Elvira! why had not all my men hearts like thine?

Elv. Then would thy brows have this day worn the crown of Quito.

Piz. Oh! hope fails me while that scourge of my life and fame, Alonzo, leads the enemy.

Elv. Pizarro, I am come to probe the hero farther: not now his courage, but his magnanimity. Alonzo is your prisoner.

Piz. How!

Elv. 'Tis certain. Valverde saw him even now dragged in chains within your camp. I chose to bring you the intelligence myself.

Piz. Bless thee, Elvira, for the news! Alonzo in my power! Then I am the conqueror; the victory is mine!

Elv. Pizarro, this is savage and unmanly triumph. Believe me, you raise impatience in my mind to see the man, whose valour and whose genius awe Pizarro; whose misfortune's are Pizarro's triumph, whose bondage is Pizarro's safety.

Piz. Guard! (Enter Guard.) Drag here the Spanish prisoner, Alonzo! Quick, bring the traitor here. *[Exit Guard.]*

Elv. What shall be his fate?

Piz. Death! death, in lingering torments! protracted to the last stretch that burning vengeance can devise, and fainting life sustain.

Elv. Shame on thee! Wilt thou have it said, that the Peruvians found Pizarro could not conquer till Alonzo felt that he could murder?

Piz. Be it said. I care not! His fate is sealed.

Elv. Follow then thy will: but mark me; if

basely thou dost shed the blood of this brave youth, Elvira's lost to thee for ever!

Piz. Why this interest for a stranger? What is Alonzo's fate to thee?

Elv. His fate? Nothing! Thy glory, everything! Think'st thou I could love thee, stript of fame, of honour, and a just renown? Know me better.

Piz. Thou should'st have known me better. Thou should'st have known that, once provoked to hate, I am for ever fixed in vengeance. (Alonzo is brought in, in chains, guarded.) Welcome, welcome, Don Alonzo de Molina; 'tis long since we have met: thy mended looks should speak a life of rural indolence. How is it, that, amid the toils and cares of war, thou dost preserve the healthful bloom of careless ease? Tell me thy secret.

Al. Thou wilt not profit by it. Whate'er the toils or cares of war, peace still is here. (Putting his hand to his heart.)

Piz. Sarcastic boy!

Elv. Thou art answered rightly. Why sport with the unfortunate?

Piz. And thou art wedded too, I hear; ay, and the father of a lovely boy—the heir, no doubt, of all his father's loyalty; of all his mother's faith.

Al. The heir, I trust, of all his father's scorn of fraud, oppression, and hypocrisy: the heir, I hope, of all his mother's virtue, gentleness, and truth: the heir, I'm sure, to all Pizarro's hate.

Piz. Really! Now, do I feel for this poor orphan; for fatherless-to-morrow's sun shall see that child. Alonzo, thy hours are numbered.

Elv. Pizarro, no!

Piz. Hence! or dread my anger.

Elv. I will not hence; nor do I dread thy anger.

Al. Generous loveliness! Spare thy unavailing pity. Seek not to thwart the tiger, with his prey beneath his fangs.

Piz. Audacious rebel! Thou, a renegade from thy monarch and thy God!

Al. 'Tis false!

Piz. Art thou not—tell me—a deserter from thy country's legions? And with vile heathens leagued, hast thou not warred against thy native land?

Al. No! deserter, I am none. I was not born among robbers! pirates! murderers! When those legions, lured by the abhorred lust of gold, and by thy foul ambition urged, forgot the honour of Castilians, and forsook the duties of humanity, they deserted me. I have not warred against my native land, but against those who have usurped its power. The banners of my country, when first I followed arms beneath them, were justice, faith, and mercy. If these are beaten down, and trampled under foot, I have no country, nor exists the power entitled to reproach me with revolt.

Piz. The power to judge and punish thee at least exists.

Al. Where are my judges?

Piz. Thou would'st appeal to the war council?

Al. If the good Las-Casas have yet a seat there, yes; if not, I appeal to heaven!

Piz. And to impose upon the folly of Las-Casas, what would be the excuses of thy treason?

Elv. The folly of Las-Casas! Such, doubtless his mild precepts seem to thy hard-hearted wisdom! O! would I might have lived as I will die, a sharer in the follies of Las-Casas!

Al. To him I should not need to urge the foul barbarities which drove me from your side; but I would gently lead him by the hand, through all the lovely fields of Quito: there, in many a spot, where late was barrenness and waste, I would shew him how now the opening blossom, blade, or perfumed bud, sweet bashful pledges of delicious harvest, wafting their increase to the ripening sun,

give cheerful promise to the hope of industry. This, I would say, is *my work!* I would shew him many an eye, and many a hand, by gentleness from error won, raised in pure devotion to the true and only God! This too, I could tell him, is *Alonzo's work!* Then would Las-Casas clasp me in his aged arms; from his uplifted eyes a tear of gracious thankfulness would fall upon my head; and that one blessed drop would be to me at once *this world's best proof*, that I had acted rightly *here*, and surest hope of my Creator's mercy and reward *hereafter*.

Elv. Happy, virtuous Alonzo! And thou, Pizarro, would'st appal with fear of death a man who thinks and acts as he does!

Piz. Daring, obstinate enthusiast! But know, the pious blessing of thy preceptor's tears does not await thee here; he has fled, like thee; like thee, no doubt, to join the foes of Spain. The perilous trial of the next reward you hope, is nearer than perhaps you've thought; for, by my country's wrongs, and by mine own, to-morrow's sun shall see thy death!

Elv. Hold, Pizarro, hear me! if not always justly, at least act always *greatly*. Name not thy country's wrongs; 'tis plain they have no share in thy resentment. Thy fury 'gainst this youth is private hate, and deadly personal revenge; if this be so—and even now thy detected conscience in that look avows it—profane not the name of justice or thy country's cause, but let him arm, and bid him to the field on equal terms.

Piz. Officious advocate for treason—peace!—Bear him hence! he knows his sentence.

Al. Thy revenge is eager, and I'm thankful for it;—to me thy haste is mercy. For thee, sweet pleader in misfortune's cause, accept my parting thanks. This camp is not thy proper sphere. Wert thou among *yon savages*, as they are called, thou'dst find companions more congenial to thy heart.

Piz. Yes; she shall bear the tidings of thy death to Cora.

Al. Inhuman man! that pang at least might have been spared me; but thy malice shall not shake my constancy. I go to death; many shall bless, and none will curse my memory. Thou still wilt live, and still wilt be—Pizarro. [*Exit, guarded.*]

Elv. Now, by the indignant scorn that burns upon my cheek, my soul is shamed and sickened at the meanness of thy vengeance.

Piz. What has thy romantic folly aimed at? He is mine enemy, and in my power.

Elv. He is in your power, and therefore is no more an enemy. Pizarro, I demand not of thee virtue; I ask not from thee nobleness of mind; I require only just dealing to the fame thou hast acquired. Be not the assassin of thine own renown. Do not an act, which, how'er thy present power may gloss it to the world, will make thee hateful to all future ages—accursed and scorned by posterity.

Piz. And, should posterity applaud my deeds, think'st thou my mouldering bones would rattle then with transport in my tomb? This is renown for visionary boys to dream of: I understand it not. The fame I value shall uplift my living estimation, o'erbear with popular support the envy of my foes, advance my purposes, and aid my power.

Elv. Pizarro, you no longer love me.

Piz. It is not so, Elvira. But what might I not suspect? This wondrous interest for a stranger! Take back thy reproach.

Elv. No, Pizarro; as yet I am not lost to you—one string still remains and binds me to your fate. Do not, I conjure you—do not, for thine own sake, tear it asunder. Shed not Alonzo's blood.

Piz. My resolution is fixed.

Elv. Even though that moment lost you Elvira for ever?

Piz. Even so.

Elv. Pizarro, if not to honour, if not to humanity, yet listen to affection; bear some memory of the sacrifices I have made for thy sake. Have I not for thee quitted my parents, my friends, my fame, my native land? When escaping, did I not risk, in rushing to thy arms, to bury myself in the bosom of the deep? Have I not shared all thy perils, heavy storms at sea, and frightful 'scapes on shore? Even on this dreadful day, amid the rout of battle, who remained firm and constant at Pizarro's side? Who presented her bosom as his shield to the assailing foe?

Piz. 'Tis truly spoken all. In love, thou art thy sex's miracle; in war, the soldier's pattern; and therefore my whole heart and half my acquisitions are thy right.

Elv. Convince me I possess the first,—I exchange all title to the latter, for—mercy to Alonzo.

Piz. No more! Had I intended to prolong his doom, each word thou utterest now would hasten on his fate.

Elv. Alonzo then at morn will die?

Piz. Think'st thou yon sun will set? As surely at his rising shall Alonzo die.

Elv. Then be it done. The string is crack'd—sunder'd for ever. But mark me! Thou hast heretofore had cause, 'tis true, to doubt my resolution, how'er offended. But mark me now: the lips which, cold and jeering, barbing revenge with rancorous mockery, can insult a fallen enemy, shall never more receive the pledge of love: the arm which, unshaken by its bloody purpose, shall assign to needless torture the victim who avows his heart, never more shall press the hand of faith! Pizarro, scorn not my words: beware you slight them not! I feel how noble are the motives which now animate my thoughts. Who could not feel as I do, I condemn:—who, feeling so, yet would not act as I shall, I despise.

Piz. I have heard thee, Elvira, and know well the noble motives which inspire thee, fit advocate in virtue's cause! Believe me, I pity thy tender feelings for the youth Alonzo! He dies at sun-rise! [*Exit.*]

Elv. 'Tis well! 'Tis just I should be humbled. I had forgotten myself, and in the cause of innocence assumed the tone of virtue. 'Twas fit I should be rebuked; and by Pizarro. Fall—fall, ye few reluctant drops of weakness! the last these eyes shall ever shed. How a woman can love, Pizarro, thou hast known too well; how she can hate, thou hast yet to learn. Yes, thou undaunted! Thou, whom yet no mortal hazard has appalled! Thou, who on Panama's brow didst make alliance with the raving elements, that tore the silence of that horrid night, when thou didst follow, as thy pioneer, the crashing thunder's drift, and stalking o'er the trembling earth, didst plant thy banner by the red volcano's mouth! Thou, who when battling on the sea, and thy brave ship was blown to splinters, wast seen, as thou didst bestride a fragment of the smoking wreck, to wave thy glittering sword above thy head; as thou would'st defy the world in that extremity! Come, fearless man, now meet the last and fellest peril of thy life—meet! and survive an injured woman's fury, if thou canst. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Dungeon. ALONZO in chains. A Sentinel walking near.

Al. For the last time, I have beheld the shadowed ocean close upon the light. For the last time, through my cleft dungeon's roof, I now

behold the quivering lustre of the stars. For the last time, oh, sun! (and soon the hour) I shall behold thy rising, and thy level beams melting the pale mists of morn to glittering dew-drops. Then comes my death; and in the morning of my day, I fall, which—no, Alonzo, date not the life which thou hast run, by the mean reckoning of the hours and days which thou hast breathed:—a life spent worthily should be measured by a nobler line; by deeds, not years. Then wouldst thou murmur not, but bless the providence, which, in so short a span, made thee the instrument of wide and spreading blessings, to the helpless and oppressed! Though sinking in decrepit age, he prematurely falls, whose memory records no benefit conferred by him on man. They only have lived long, who have lived virtuously.

Enter a Soldier—shows a passport to the Centinel, who withdraws.

Al. What bear you there?

Sol. These refreshments I was ordered to leave in thy dungeon.

Al. By whom ordered?

Sol. By the lady Elvira. She will be here herself before the dawn.

Al. Bear back to her my humblest thanks; and take thou the refreshments, friend. I need them not.

Sol. I have served under you, Don Alonzo. Pardon my saying, that my heart pities you. [*Exit.*]

Al. In Pizarro's camp, to pity the unfortunate, no doubt, requires forgiveness. (*Looking out.*) Surely, even now, thin streaks of glimmering light, steal on the darkness of the east. If so, my life is but one hour more. I will not watch the coming dawn; but in the darkness of my cell, my last prayer to thee, power supreme! shall be for my wife and child! Grant them to dwell in innocence and peace; grant health and purity of mind—all else is worthless. (*Enters the cavern.*)

Gen. Who's there? answer quickly! who's there?

Rolla. (*Within.*) A friar come to visit your prisoner. (*Enters, disguised as a monk.*) Inform me, friend, is not Alonzo, the Spanish prisoner, confined in this dungeon?

Gen. He is.

Rol. I must speak with him.

Gen. You must not.

Rol. He is my friend.

Gen. Not if he were your brother.

Rol. What is to be his fate?

Gen. He dies at sun-rise.

Rol. Ha! then I am come in time.

Gen. Just—to witness his death.

Rol. Soldier, I must speak with him.

Gen. Back! back! it is impossible.

Rol. I do entreat you, but for one moment.

Gen. You entreat in vain. My orders are most strict.

Rol. Even now, I saw a messenger go hence.

Gen. He brought a pass, which we are all accustomed to obey.

Rol. Look on this wedge of massive gold: look on these precious gems. In thy own land they will be wealth for thee and thine, beyond thy hope or wish. Take them; they are thine.—Let me but pass one minute with Alonzo.

Gen. Away! Would'st thou corrupt me? me! an old Castilian! I know my duty better.

Rol. Soldier! hast thou a wife?

Gen. I have.

Rol. Hast thou children?

Gen. Four: honest, lively boys.

Rol. Where didst thou leave them?

Gen. In my native village; even in the cot where myself was born.

Rol. Dost thou love thy children and thy wife?

Gen. Do I love them! God knows my heart, I do.

Rol. Soldier! imagine thou wert doomed to die a cruel death in this strange land: what would be thy last request?

Gen. That some of my comrades should carry my dying blessing to my wife and children.

Rol. Oh! but if that comrade were at thy prison gate, and should there be told—thy fellow-soldier dies at sun-rise, yet thou shalt not for a moment see him, nor shalt thou bear his dying blessing to his poor children or his wretched wife, what wouldst thou think of him, who thus could drive thy comrade from the door?

Gen. How!

Rol. Alonzo has a wife and child. I am come but to receive for her, and for her babe, the last blessing of my friend.

Gen. Go in. (*Retires.*)

Rol. Oh, holy Nature! thou dost never plead in vain. There is not, of our earth, a creature bearing form and life, human or savage; native of the forest wild, or giddy air; around whose parent bosom, thou hast not a cord entwined of power to tie them to their offspring's claims, and at thy will to draw them back to thee. On iron pinions borne, the blood-stained vulture cleaves the storm, yet is the plumage closest to her breast soft as the cygnet's down; and o'er her unshelled brood the murmuring ring-dove sits not more gently! Yes, now he is beyond the porch, barring the outer gate. Alonzo! Alonzo! my friend! Ha! in gentle sleep! Alonzo—rise!

Al. How! is my hour elapsed? Well, (*returning from the recess.*) I am ready.

Rol. Alonzo! know me.

Al. What voice is that?

Rol. 'Tis Rolla's.

Al. Rolla! my friend! (*Embraces him.*) Heavens!—how couldst thou pass the guard? Did this habit—

Rol. There is not a moment to be lost in words. This disguise I tore from the dead body of a friar, as I passed our field of battle; it has gained me entrance to thy dungeon; now take it thou, and fly.

Al. And Rolla—

Rol. Will remain here in thy place.

Al. And die for me? No; rather eternal tortures rack me.

Rol. I shall not die, Alonzo. It is thy life Pizarro seeks, not Rolla's; and from my prison soon will thy arm deliver me; or, should it be otherwise, I am as a blighted plantain, standing alone amid the sandy desert. Nothing seeks or lives beneath my shelter. Thou art—a husband and a father; the being of a lovely wife and helpless infant hangs upon thy life. Go, go, Alonzo! Go, to save, not thyself, but Cora and thy child!

Al. Urge me not thus, my friend. I had prepared to die in peace.

Rol. To die in peace! devoting her you've sworn to live for, to madness, misery, and death! For be assured, the state I left her in, forbids all hope, but from thy quick return.

Al. Oh God!

Rol. If thou art yet irresolute, Alonzo, now heed me well. I think thou hast not known that Rolla ever pledged his word, and shrunk from its fulfilment. And by the heart of truth I swear, if thou art proudly obstinate to deny thy friend the transport of preserving Cora's life in thee, no power that sways the will of man shall stir me hence; and thou'lt but have the desperate triumph of seeing Rolla perish by thy side, with the assured conviction, that Cora and thy child are lost for ever!

Al. Oh, Rolla! you distract me!

Rol. A moment's further pause, and all is lost. The dawn approaches. Fear not for me. I will treat with Pizarro as for surrender and submission. I shall gain time, doubt not, while thou, with a chosen band, passing the secret way, may'st at night return, release thy friend, and bear him back in triumph. Yes, hasten, dear Alonzo. Even now I hear the frantic Cora call thee. Haste! haste! haste!

Al. Rolla, I fear your friendship drives me from honour, and from right.

Rol. Did Rolla ever counsel dishonour to his friend?

Al. Oh, my preserver! (*Embracing him.*)

Rol. I feel thy warm tears dropping on my cheek. Go; I am rewarded. (*Throws the friar's garment over Alonzo.*) There, conceal thy face; and that they may not clank, hold fast thy chains. Now, God be with thee!

Al. At night we meet again. Then, so aid me heaven! I return to save, or perish with thee!

[*Exit.*]

Rol. He has passed the outer porch—he is safe! He will soon embrace his wife and child! Now, Cora, didst thou not wrong me? This is the first time, throughout my life, I ever deceived man. Forgive me, God of truth! if I am wrong. Alonzo flatters himself that we shall meet again! Yes, there! (*lifting his hands to heaven*) assuredly we shall meet again; there possess in peace, the joys of everlasting love and friendship; on earth, imperfect and embittered. I will retire, lest the guard return before Alonzo may have passed their lines. (*Retires into the recess.*)

Enter ELVIRA.

Elv. No, not Pizarro's brutal taunts, nor the glowing admiration which I feel for this noble youth, shall raise an interest in my harassed bosom, which honour would not sanction. If he reject the vengeance my heart has sworn against the tyrant, whose death alone can save this land; yet shall the delight be mine, to restore him to his Cora's arms, to his dear child, and to the unoffending people, whom his virtues guide, and valour guards. Alonzo, come forth!

Enter ROLLA.

Ha! who art thou? Where is Alonzo?

Rol. Alonzo's fled.

Elv. Fled!

Rol. Yes; and he must not be pursued. Pardon this roughness, (*seizing her hand,*) but a moment's precious to Alonzo's flight.

Elv. What if I call the guard?

Rol. Do so; Alonzo still gains time.

Elv. What if thus I free myself? (*Shows a dagger.*)

Rol. Strike it to my heart! Still with the convulsive grasp of death, I'll hold thee fast.

Elv. Release me! I give my faith, I neither will alarm the guard nor cause pursuit.

Rol. At once, I trust thy word. A feeling boldness in those eyes assures me that thy soul is noble.

Elv. What is thy name? Speak freely; by my order the guard is removed beyond the outer porch.

Rol. My name is Rolla.

Elv. The Peruvian leader?

Rol. I was so yesterday; to-day, the Spaniard's captive.

Elv. And friendship for Alonzo moved thee to this act?

Rol. Alonzo is my friend. I am prepared to die for him. Yet is the cause a motive stronger far than friendship.

Elv. One only passion else could urge such generous rashness.

Rol. And that is—

Elv. Love?

Rol. True.

Elv. Gallant, ingenuous Rolla! Know that my purpose here was thine; and were I to save thy friend—

Rol. How! a woman blessed with gentleness and courage, and yet not Cora?

Elv. Does Rolla think so meanly of all female hearts?

Rol. Not so. You are worse and better than we are.

Elv. Were I to save thee, Rolla, from the tyrant's vengeance; restore thee to thy native land, and thy native land to peace, would'st thou not rank Elvira with the good?

Rol. To judge the action, I must know the means.

Elv. Take this dagger.

Rol. How to be used?

Elv. I will conduct thee to the tent where fell Pizarro sleeps; the scourge of innocence, the terror of thy race, the fiend that desolates thy afflicted country.

Rol. Have you not been injured by Pizarro?

Elv. Deeply as scorn and insult can infuse their deadly venom.

Rol. And you ask that I shall murder him in his sleep!

Elv. Would he not have murdered Alonzo in his chains? He that sleeps, and he that's bound, are equally defenceless. Hear me, Rolla; so may I prosper in this perilous act, as searching my full heart, I have put by all rancorous motive of private vengeance there, and feel that I advance to my dread purpose in the cause of human nature, and at the call of sacred justice.

Rol. The God of Justice sanctifies no evil as a step towards good. Great actions cannot be achieved by wicked means.

Elv. Then, Peruvian, since thou dost feel so coldly for thy country's wrongs, this hand, though it revolt my soul, shall strike the blow.

Rol. Then is thy destruction certain, and for Peru thou perishest! Give me the dagger!

Elv. Now follow me; but first—and dreadful is the hard necessity—you must strike down the guard.

Rol. The soldier who is on duty here?

Elv. Yes, him; else, seeing thee, the alarm will be instant.

Rol. And I must stab that soldier as I pass?—Take back thy dagger.

Elv. Rolla!

Rol. That soldier, mark me, is a man! All are not men that bear the human form. He refused my prayers—refused my gold—denying to admit me—till his own feelings bribed him. For my nation's safety, I would not harm that man!

Elv. Then he must with us. I will answer for his safety.

Rol. Be that plainly understood between us; for, what'er betide our enterprise, I will not risk a hair of that man's head, to save my heartstrings from consuming fire. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Inside of Pizarro's Tent. Pizarro on a couch.*

Piz. (*In his sleep.*) No mercy, traitor. Now at his heart! Stand off there, you—Let me see him bleed! Ha! ha! ha! Let me hear that groan again.

Enter ROLLA and ELVIRA.

Elv. There!—Now lose not a moment.

Rol. You must leave me now. This scene of blood fits not a woman's presence.

Elv. But a moment's pause may—

Rol. Go! Retire to your own tent, and return not here. I will come to you. Be thou not known in this business, I implore you.

Elv. I will withdraw the guard that waits.

[*Exit Elvira.*]

Rol. Now have I in my power the accursed destroyer of my country's peace: yet tranquilly he rests. God! can this man sleep?

Piz. (*In his sleep.*) Away! away! Hideous fiends! Tear not my bosom thus!

Rol. No: I was in error. The balm of sweet repose he never more can know. Look here, ambition's fools! Ye, by whose inhuman pride, the bleeding sacrifice of nations is held as nothing; behold the rest of the guilty! He is at my mercy; and one blow—No! my heart and hand refuse the act: Rolla cannot be an assassin!—Yet *Elvira* must be saved! (*Approaches the couch.*) *Pizarro!* awake!

Piz. (*Starts up.*) Who?—Guard!—

Rol. Speak not. Another word is thy death. Call not for aid! This arm will be swifter than thy guard.

Piz. Who art thou? and what is thy will?

Rol. I am thine enemy! Peruvian Rolla! Thy death is not my will, or I could have slain thee, sleeping.

Piz. Speak; what else?

Rol. Now thou art at my mercy, answer me. Did a Peruvian ever yet wrong or injure thee, or any of thy nation? Didst thou, or any of thy nation, ever yet shew mercy to a Peruvian in your power? Now shalt thou feel, and if thou hast a heart, thou'lt feel it keenly!—a Peruvian's vengeance!—(*Drops the dagger at his feet.*) There!

Piz. Is it possible!

Rol. Can *Pizarro* be surprised at this? I thought forgiveness of injuries had been the Christian's precept. Thou see'st, at least, it is the Peruvian's practice.

Piz. Rolla, thou hast indeed surprised—subdued me.

Re-enter ELVIRA, not seeing Pizarro.

Elv. Is it done? Is he dead? (*Sees Pizarro.*) How! still living! Then I am lost! And for you, wretched Peruvians! mercy is no more! Oh, Rolla! treacherous, or cowardly!—

Piz. How! Can it be that—

Rol. Away! *Elvira* speaks she knows not what!—Leave me, (*to Elvira.*) I conjure you, with *Pizarro*.

Elv. How! Rolla, dost thou think I shall retract? Or that I meanly will deny, that in thy hand I placed a poniard to be plunged into that tyrant's heart? No! my sole regret is, that I trusted to thy weakness, and did not strike the blow myself. Too soon thou'lt learn that mercy to that man is direct cruelty to all thy race!

Piz. Guard! quick! a guard! to seize this frantic woman.

Elv. Yes, a guard! I call them too! And soon I know they'll lead me to my death. But think not, *Pizarro*, the fury of thy flashing eyes shall awe me for a moment! Nor think that woman's anger, or the feelings of an injured heart, prompted me to this design. No! had I been only influenced so, thus failing, shame and remorse would weigh me down. But, though defeated and destroyed, as now I am, such is the greatness of the cause that urged me, I shall perish, glorying in the attempt, and my last breath of life shall speak the proud avowal of my purpose—to have rescued millions of innocents from the blood-thirsty tyranny of one—by ridding the insulted world of thee!

Rol. Had the act been noble as the motive, Rolla would not have shrunk from its performance.

Enter Guards.

Piz. Seize this discovered fiend, who sought to kill your leader.

Elv. Touch me not, at the peril of your souls! I am your prisoner, and will follow you. But thou, their triumphant leader, shalt hear me. Yet, first, for thee, Rolla, accept my forgiveness. Even had I been the victim of thy nobleness of heart, I should have admired thee for it; but 'twas myself provoked my doom. Thou wouldst have shielded me. Let not thy contempt follow me to the grave. Didst thou but know the spell-like arts by which this hypocrite first undermined the virtue of a guileless heart! how, even in the pious sanctuary wherein I dwelt, by corruption and by fraud he practised upon those in whom I most confided—till my distempered fancy led me, step by step, into the abyss of guilt—

Piz. Why am I not obeyed? Tear her hence.

Elv. 'Tis past—but didst thou know my story, Rolla, thou wouldst pity me.

Rol. From my soul I do pity thee.

Piz. Villains! drag her to the dungeon—prepare the torture instantly.

Elv. Soldiers—but a moment more. 'Tis to applaud your general; it is to tell the astonished world, that, for once, *Pizarro's* sentence is an act of justice. Yes, rack me with the sharpest tortures that ever agonized the human frame; it will be justice. Yes, bid the minions of thy fury wrench forth the sinews of those arms that have caressed, and—even have defended thee! Bid them pour burning metal into the bleeding cases of these eyes, that so oft, oh, God! have hung with love and homage on thy looks; then approach me, bound on the abhorred wheel; there glut thy savage eyes with the convulsive spasms of that dishonoured bosom, which was once thy pillow! Yet, will I bear it all; for it will be justice, all! And when thou shalt bid them tear me to my death, hoping that thy unshrinking ears may at last be feasted with the music of my cries, I will not utter one shriek or groan; but, to the last gasp, my body's patience shall deride thy vengeance, as my soul defies thy power.

Piz. Hear'st thou the wretch, whose hands were even now prepared for murder?

Rol. Yes! And if her accusation's false, thou wilt not shrink from hearing her: if true, thy barbarity cannot make her suffer the pangs thy conscience will inflict on thee.

Elv. And now, farewell, world! Rolla, farewell! Farewell, thou condemned of heaven! (*To Pizarro.*) For repentance and remorse, I know, will never touch thy heart. We shall meet again. Ha! be it thy horror here, to know that we shall meet hereafter! And when thy parting hour approaches, hark to the knell, whose dreadful beat will strike to thy despairing soul. Then will vibrate on thy ear the curses of the cloistered saint from whom you stole me. Then the last shrieks which burst from my mother's breaking heart, as she died, appealing to her God against the seducer of her child! Then the blood-stifled groan of my murdered brother, murdered by thee, fell monster!—seeking atonement for his sister's ruined honour. I hear them now! To me the recollection's madness! At such an hour—what will it be to thee?

Piz. A moment's more delay, and at the peril of your lives—

Elv. I have spoken, and the last mortal frailty of my heart is past. And now, with an undaunted spirit, and unshaken firmness, I go to meet my destiny. That I could not live nobly, has been *Pizarro's* act. That I will die nobly, shall be my own.

[*Exit, guarded.*]

Piz. Rolla, I would not thou, a warrior, valiant and renowned, shouldst credit the vile tales of this frantic woman. The cause of all this fury—O! a wanton passion for the rebel youth, Alonzo, now my prisoner.

Rol. Alonzo is not now thy prisoner.

Piz. How!

Rol. I came to rescue him,—to deceive his guard. I have succeeded; I remain thy prisoner.

Piz. Alonzo fled! Is then the vengeance dearest to my heart never to be gratified?

Rol. Dismiss such passions from thy heart; then thou'lt consult its peace.

Piz. I can face all enemies that dare confront me—I cannot war against my nature.

Rol. Then, Pizarro, ask not to be deemed a hero. To triumph o'er ourselves is the only conquest, where fortune makes no claim. In battle, chance may snatch the laurel from thee, or chance may place it on thy brow; but in a contest with thyself, be resolute, and the virtuous impulse must be the victor.

Piz. Peruvian! thou shalt not find me to thee ungrateful or ungenerous. Return to thy countrymen—thou art at liberty.

Rol. Thou dost act in this, as honour, and as duty bid thee.

Piz. I cannot but admire thee, Rolla; I would we might be friends.

Rol. Farewell! Pity Elvira! Become the friend of virtue, and thou wilt be mine. [Exit.]

Piz. Ambition! tell me what is the phantom I have followed? where is the one delight which it has made my own? My fame is the mark of envy; my love, the dupe of treachery; my glory eclipsed by the boy I taught; my revenge defeated and rebuked by the rude honour of a savage foe, before whose native dignity of soul I have sunk, confounded and subdued! I would I could retrace my steps—I cannot. Would I could evade my own reflections! No! thought and memory are my hell. [Exit.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A thick Forest. In the back ground, a hut. A dreadful storm. CORA has covered her child on a bed of leaves and moss.*

Cora. O Nature! thou hast not the strength of love. My anxious spirit is untired in its march; my wearied, shivering frame sinks under it. And for thee, my boy, when faint beneath thy lovely burden, could I refuse to give thy slumbers that poor bed of rest? O my child! were I assured thy father breathes no more, how quickly would I lay me down by thy dear side—but down—down for ever. (*Thunder and lightning.*) I ask thee not, unpitying storm! to abate thy rage, in mercy to poor Cora's misery; nor while thy thunders spare his slumbers, will I disturb my sleeping cherub; though heaven knows I wish to hear the voice of life, and feel that life is near me. But I will endure all, while what I have of reason holds. (*Thunder and lightning.*) Still, still, implacable!—unfeeling elements! Yet still dost thou sleep, my smiling innocent! O death! when wilt thou grant to this babe's mother such repose?—Sure I may shield thee better from the storm; my veil may—

Alonzo. (*Within.*) Cora!

Cora. Ha!

Al. Cora!

Cora. O, my heart! Sweet heaven deceive me not! Is it not Alonzo's voice?

Al. (*Nearer.*) Cora!

Cora. It is—it is Alonzo!

Al. (*Nearer still.*) Cora! my beloved!

Cora. Alonzo! Here!—here!—Alonzo!

[*Runs out.*]

Enter Two Spanish Soldiers.

1st. Sol. I tell you we are near our outposts, and the word we heard just now was the countersign.

2d. Sol. Well, in our escape from the enemy, to have discovered their secret passage through the rocks, will prove a lucky chance to us. Pizarro will reward us.

1st. Sol. This way; the sun, though clouded, is on our left. (*Perceives the child.*) What have we here? A child! as I'm a soldier.

2d. Sol. 'Tis a sweet little babe. Now would it be a great charity to take this infant from his pagan mother's power.

1st. Sol. It would so. I have one at home shall play with it. Come along. [*Takes the Child. Exeunt.*]

Re-enter CORA and ALONZO.

Cora. This way, dear Alonzo. Now am I right?—there—there—under that tree. Was it possible the instinct of a mother's heart could mistake the spot. Now will you look at him as he sleeps, or shall I bring him waking with his full blue laughing eyes to welcome you at once? Yes—yes. Stand thou there; I'll snatch him from his rosy slumber, blushing like the perfumed morn. (*She runs up to the spot, and finding only the mantle and veil, which she tears from the ground, and the child gone, she shrieks.*)

Al. (*Running to her.*) Cora! my heart's beloved!

Cora. He is gone!

Al. Eternal God!

Cora. He is gone! My child! my child!

Al. Where did you leave him?

Cora. (*Dashes herself on the spot.*) Here!

Al. Be calm, beloved Cora. He has awaked and crept to a little distance. We shall find him. Are you assured this was the spot you left him in?

Cora. Did not these hands make that bed, and shelter for him? And is not this the veil that covered him?

Al. Here is a hut yet unobserved.

Cora. Ha! yes, yes; there lives the savage that has robbed me of my child. (*Beats at the door, exclaiming.*) Give me back my child—restore to me my boy!

Enter LAS-CASAS from the hut.

Las-C. Who calls me from my wretched solitude?

Cora. Give me back my child! (*Goes into the hut, and calls.*) Fernando!

Al. Almighty Powers! do my eyes deceive me? Las-Casas!

Las-C. Alonzo! my beloved young friend!

Al. My revered instructor! (*Embracing.*)

Cora. (*Returned.*) Will you embrace this man before he restores my boy?

Al. Alas, my friend! in what a moment of misery do we meet!

Cora. Yet his look is goodness and humanity. Good old man, have compassion on a wretched mother, and I will be your servant while I live. But do not, for pity's sake, do not say, you have him not; do not say you have not seen him. (*Runs into the wood.*)

Las-C. What can this mean?

Al. She is my wife. Just rescued from the Spaniards' prison, I learned she had fled to this wild forest. Hearing my voice, she left the child, and flew to meet me: he was left sleeping under yonder tree.

Las-C. How! Did you leave him? (*Cora returns.*)

Cora. O, you are right!—right! Unnatural mother that I was, I left my child—I forsook my innocent—but I will fly to the earth's brink, but I will find him. (*Runs out.*)

Al. Forgive me, Las-Casas; I must follow her; for at night I attempt brave Rolla's rescue.

Las C. I will not leave thee, Alonzo! You must try to lead her to the right: that way lies thy camp. Wait not my infirm steps. I will follow thee, my friend. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The outpost of the Spanish camp. In the back ground, a foaming torrent, over which is a rude bridge, formed by a felled tree. (Trumpets sound without.)*

ALMAGRO. (*Within.*)

Bear him along—his story must be false. (*Entering*)

ROLLA in chains, brought in by Soldiers.

Rol. False! Rolla utter falsehood! I would I had thee in a desert with thy troop around thee; and I but with my sword in this unshackled hand! (*Trumpets without.*)

Alm. Is it to be credited that Rolla, the renowned Peruvian hero, should be detected like a spy, skulking through our camp?

Rol. Skulking!

Alm. But answer to the general. He is here.

Enter PIZARRO.

Piz. What do I see? Rolla!

Rol. Oh! to thy surprise, no doubt.

Piz. And bound, too!

Rol. So fast, thou need'st not fear approaching me.

Alm. The guards surprised him, passing our outpost.

Piz. Release him, instantly. Believe me, I regret this insult.

Rol. You feel then as you ought.

Piz. Nor can I brook to see a warrior of Rolla's fame disarmed. Accept this, though it has been thy enemy's. (*Gives a sword.*) The Spaniards know the courtesy that's due to valour.

Rol. And the Peruvian how to forget offence.

Piz. May not Rolla and Pizarro cease to be foes?

Rol. When the sea divides us, yes! May I now depart?

Piz. Freely.

Alm. And shall I not again be intercepted?

Piz. No! Let the word be given, that Rolla pass freely.

Enter DAVILLA and Soldiers, with the Child.

Dav. Here are two soldiers, captured yesterday, who have escaped from the Peruvian hold, and by the secret way we have so long endeavoured to discover.

Piz. Silence! imprudent! Seest thou not—? (*Pointing to Rolla.*)

Dav. In their way, they found a Peruvian child, who seems—

Piz. What is the imp to me? Bid them toss it into the sea.

Rol. Gracious heavens! It is Alonzo's child! Give it to me.

Piz. Ha! Alonzo's child! Welcome, thou pretty hostage. Now Alonzo is again my prisoner!

Rol. Thou wilt not keep the infant from its mother?

Piz. Will I not? What, when I shall meet Alonzo in the heat of the victorious fight, think'st thou I shall not have a check upon the valour of his heart, when he is reminded, that a word of mine is this child's death?

Rol. I do not understand you.

Piz. My vengeance has a long arrear of hate to settle with Alonzo; and this pledge may help to balance the account.

Rol. Man! Man! Art thou a man? Could'st thou hurt that innocent? By heaven! it's smiling in thy face.

Piz. Tell me, does it resemble Cora?

Rol. Pizarro! thou has set my heart on fire. If thou dost harm that child, think not his blood will sink into the barren sand. No! faithful to the eager hope that now trembles in this indignant

heart, 'twill rise to the common God of nature and humanity, and cry aloud for vengeance on his accursed destroyer's head.

Piz. Be that peril mine.

Rol. (*Throwing himself at his feet.*) Behold me at thy feet. Me, Rolla!—Me, the preserver of thy life!—Me, that have never yet bent or bowed before created man!—In humble agony I sue to you—prostrate, I implore you—but spare that child, and I will be your slave.

Piz. Rolla! still art thou free to go: this boy remains with me.

Rol. Then was this sword heaven's gift, not thine! (*Seizes the Child.*) Who moves one step to follow me, dies upon the spot.

[*Exit, with the Child.*]

Piz. Pursue him instantly; but spare his life. (*Exeunt Almagro and Soldiers.*) With what fury he defends himself! Ha! he fells them to the ground—and now—

Enter ALMAGRO.

Alm. Three of your brave soldiers are already victims to your command to spare this madman's life; and if he once gain the thicket—

Piz. Spare him no longer. (*Exit Almagro.*) Their guns must reach him. He'll yet escape! Holloa to those horse. The Peruvian sees them; and now he turns among the rocks; then is his retreat cut off. (*Rolla crosses the wooden bridge over the cataract, pursued by the soldiers; they fire at him; a shot strikes him.*) Now! Quick! quick! seize the child!—(*Rolla tears from the rock the tree which supports the bridge, and retreats by the back ground, bearing off the child.*)

Re-enter ALMAGRO.

Alm. By hell! he has escaped; and with the child unhurt.

Dav. No; he bears his death with him. Believe me, I saw him struck upon the side.

Piz. But the child is saved!—Alonzo's child! Oh! the furies of disappointed vengeance!

Alm. Away with the revenge of words! Let us to deeds. Forget not we have acquired the knowledge of the secret pass, which, through the rocky cavern's gloom, brings you at once to the strong hold, where are lodged their women and their treasures.

Piz. Right, Almagro! Swift as thy thought draw forth a daring and a chosen band. I will not wait for numbers. Stay, Almagro! Valverde is informed Elvira dies to-day?

Alm. He is; and one request alone she—

Piz. I'll hear of none.

Alm. The boon is small: 'tis but for the novice habit which you first beheld her in. She wishes not to suffer in the gaudy trappings which remind her of her shame.

Piz. Well, do as thou wilt: but tell Valverde, at our return, as his life shall answer it, to let me hear that she is dead. [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE III.—*Ataliba's Tent.*

Enter ATALIBA, followed by CORA and ALONZO.

Cora. Oh! avoid me not, Ataliba! To whom but to her king, is the wretched mother to address her griefs? The Gods refuse to hear my prayers. Did not my Alonzo fight for you? And will not my sweet boy, if thou'lt but restore him to me, one day fight thy battles too?

Al. Oh! my suffering love—my poor heart-broken Cora!—you but wound our sovereign's feeling soul, and not relieve your own.

Cora. Is he our sovereign, and has he not the power to give me back my child?

Ata. When I reward desert, or can relieve my people, I feel what is the real glory of a king; when I hear them suffer, and cannot aid them, I mourn the impotence of all mortal power.

(*Voices behind.*) Rolla! Rolla! Rolla!

Enter ROLLA, *bleeding, with the Child, followed by Peruvians.*

Rol. Thy child! (*Gives the Child into Cora's arms, and falls.*)

Cora. Oh God! there's blood upon him!

Rol. 'Tis my blood, Cora.

Al. Rolla, thou diest!

Rol. For thee and Cora! (*Dies.*)

Enter ORANO.

Ora. Treachery has revealed our asylum in the rocks. Even now the foe assails the peaceful band retired for protection there.

Al. Lose not a moment! Swords, be quick! Your wives and children cry to you. Bear our loved hero's body in the van; 'twill raise the fury of our men to madness. Now, fell Pizarro! the death of one of us is near! Away! Be the word of assault, Revenge and Rolla! [*Exeunt. Charge.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Recess among the rocks.*

Enter PIZARRO, ALMAGRO, VALVERDE, and Spanish Soldiers.

Piz. Well! if surrounded, we must perish in the centre of them. Where do Rolla and Alonzo hide their heads?

Enter ALONZO, ORANO, and Peruvians.

Al. Alonzo answers thee, and Alonzo's sword shall speak for Rolla.

Piz. Thou know'st the advantage of thy numbers. Thou dar'st not singly face Pizarro.

Al. Peruvians, stir not a man! Be this contest only our's.

Piz. Spaniards! observe ye the same. (*Charge. They fight. Alonzo's shield is broken, and he is beat down.*) Now, traitor, to thy heart!

(*At this moment, Elvira enters, habited as when Pizarro first beheld her. Pizarro, appalled, staggers back. Alonzo renews the fight, and slays him.*)

ATALIBA enters, and embraces ALONZO.

Ata. My brave Alonzo!

Aln. Alonzo, we submit. Spare us: we will embark, and leave the coast.

Val. Elvira will confess I saved her life; she has saved thine.

Al. Fear not. You are safe. (*Spaniards lay down their arms.*)

Elv. Valverde speaks the truth; nor could he think to meet me here. An awful impulse, which my soul could not resist, impelled me hither.

Al. Noble Elvira! my preserver! How can I speak, what I, Ataliba, and his rescued country, owe to thee! If amid this grateful nation thou would'st remain—

Elv. Alonzo, no! The destination of my future life is fixed. Humbled in penitence, I will endeavour to atone the guilty errors, which, however masked by shallow cheerfulness, have long consumed my secret heart. When, by my sufferings purified, and penitence sincere, my soul shall dare address the throne of mercy in behalf of others, for thee, Alonzo, for thy Cora, and thy child; for thee, thou virtuous monarch, and the innocent race thou reignest over, shall Elvira's prayers address the God of Nature. Valverde, you have preserved my life. Cherish humanity, avoid the foul examples thou has viewed. Spaniards, returning to your native home, assure your rulers they mistake the road to glory, or to power. Tell them, that the pursuits of avarice, conquest, and ambition, never yet made a people happy, or a nation great. (*Casts a last look of agony at the dead body of Pizarro as she passes, and exits. Flourish of trumpets. Valverde, Almagro, and Spanish Soldiers exeunt, bearing off Pizarro's body.*)

Al. Ataliba, think not I wish to check the voice of triumph, when I entreat we first pay the tribute due to our lov'd Rolla's memory.

A solemn march. Procession of Peruvian Soldiers, bearing Rolla's body on a bier, surrounded by military trophies. The Priests and Priestesses attending, chaunt a dirge over the bier. Alonzo and Cora kneel on either side of it, and kiss Rolla's hands in silent agony. In the looks of the King, and of all present, the triumph of the day is lost in mourning for the fallen hero. The curtain slowly descends.

DIRGE.—*Priests and Priestesses.*

Let tears of gratitude and woe,

For the brave Rolla ever flow.

THE REVENGE;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY EDWARD YOUNG.



Act V. Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

DON ALONZO
DON CARLOS
DON ALVAREZ

DON MANUEL
ZANGA
ATTENDANTS

LEONORA
ISABELLA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Battlements, with a Sea Prospect. A storm, with thunder and lightning.*

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. Whether first nature, or long want of peace,
Has wrought my mind to this, I cannot tell;
But horrors now are not displeasing to me: *(Thunder)*
I like this rocking of the battlements.

Enter ISABELLA.

Rage on, ye winds; burst, clouds; and waters, roar!
You bear a just resemblance of my fortune,
And suit the gloomy habit of my soul.
Who's there? my love!

Isa. Why have you left my bed?
Your absence more affrights me than the storm.

(Thunder.)

Zan. The dead alone in such a night can rest,
And I indulge my meditation here.
Woman, away! I choose to be alone. *[you;]*

Isa. I know you do, and therefore will not leave
Excuse me, Zanga, therefore dare not leave you.

(Thunder.)

Is this a night for walks of contemplation?
Something unusual hangs upon your heart,
And I will know it; by our loves I will.

To you I sacrific'd my virgin fame;
Ask I too much to share in your distress?

Zan. In tears? Thou fool! then hear me, and be
In hell's abyss, if ever it escape thee. *[plung'd]*

To strike thee with astonishment at once,
I hate Alonzo. First recover that,
And then thou shalt hear farther.

Isa. Hate Alonzo!
I own, I thought Alonzo most your friend,
And that he lost the master in that name.

Zan. Hear, then. 'Tis twice three years since
that great man

(Great let me call him, for he conquer'd me)
Made me the captive of his arm in fight.

He slew my father, and threw chains o'er me,
While I, with pious rage, pursued revenge.

I then was young; he placed me near his person,

And thought me not dishonour'd by his service.
One day, *(may that returning day be night,*
The stain, the curse, of each succeeding year!)
For something, or for nothing, in his pride
He struck me. *(While I tell it, do I live?)*
He smote me on the cheek.—I did not stab him,
For that were poor revenge.—E'er since, his folly
Has strove to bury it beneath a heap
Of kindnesses, and thinks it is forgot.

Insolent thought! and like a second blow!
Affronts are innocent, where men are worthless;
And such alone can wisely drop revenge.

Isa. But with more temper, Zanga, tell your story;
To see your strong emotion startles me.

Zan. Yes, woman, with the temper that befits it.
Has the dark adder venom? So have I, *[me!]*
When trod upon. Proud Spaniard, thou shalt feel
For from that day, that day of my dishonour,
I from that day have curs'd the rising sun,
Which never fail'd to tell me of my shame.
I from that day have bless'd the coming night,
Which promis'd to conceal it! but in vain;
The blow return'd for ever in my dream.

Yet on I toil'd, and groan'd for an occasion
Of ample vengeance; none is yet arriv'd.
How'er, at present, I conceive warm hopes
Of what may wound him sore in his ambition,
Life of his life, and dearer than his soul.
By nightly march he purpos'd to surprise
The Moorish camp; but I have taken care
They shall be ready to receive his favour.
Failing in this, a cast of utmost moment,
Would darken all the conquests he has won.

Isa. Just as I enter'd, an express arriv'd.

Zan. To whom?

Isa. His friend, Don Carlos.

Zan. Be propitious,

O, Mahomet, on this important hour,
And give at length my famish'd soul revenge!
What is revenge, but courage to call in
Our honour's debts, and wisdom to convert
Others' self-love into our own protection?

But see, the morning ray breaks in upon us ;
I'll seek Don Carlos, and inquire my fate. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Palace.*

Enter DON CARLOS and DON MANUEL.

Man. My lord Don Carlos, what brings your express?

Car. Alonzo's glory, and the Moor's defeat.
The field is strew'd with twice ten thousand slain,
Though he suspects his measures were betray'd.
He'll soon arrive. Oh, how I long to embrace
The first of heroes, and the best of friends!
I lov'd fair Leonora long before
The chance of battle gave me to the Moors;
And while I groan'd in bondage, I deputed
This great Alonzo, whom her father honours,
To be my gentle advocate in love.

Man. And what success?

Car. Alas! the cruel maid—

Indeed, her father, who, though high at court,
And powerful with the king, has wealth at heart
To heal his devastation from the Moors;
Knowing I'm richly freighted from the east,
My fleet now sailing in the sight of Spain,
(Heav'n guard it safe through such a dreadful
Caresse me, and urges her to wed. [*storm!*])

Man. Her aged father, see,
Leads her this way.

Car. She looks like radiant Truth,
Brought forward by the hand of hoary Time.
You to the port with speed; 'tis possible [it bring
Some vessel is arriv'd. [*Exit Man.*] Heav'n grant
Tidings which Carlos may receive with joy!

Enter DON ALVAREZ and LEONORA.

Alv. Don Carlos, I am labouring in your favour
With all a parent's soft authority,
And earnest counsel.

Car. Angels second you!

For all my bliss or misery hangs on it.
Alv. Daughter, the happiness of life depends
On our discretion, and a prudent choice;
Don Carlos is of ancient, noble blood,
And then his wealth might mend a prince's fortune.
For him the sun is labouring in the mines,
A faithful slave, and turning earth to gold.
His keels are freighted with that sacred power
By which even kings and emperors are made.
Sir, you have my good wishes, and I hope (*To Car.*)
My daughter is not indispos'd to hear you. [*Exit.*]

Car. Oh, Leonora! why art thou in tears?
Because I am less wretched than I was?
Before your father gave me leave to woo you,
Hush'd was your hosom, and your eye serene.

Leon. Think you my father too indulgent to me,
That he claims no dominion o'er my tears?
A daughter, sure, may be right dutiful,
Whose tears alone are free from a restraint.

Car. Ah! my torn heart!

Leon. Regard not me, my lord;
I shall obey my father.

Car. Disobey him,

Rather than come thus coldly, than come thus
With absent eyes and alienated mien,
Suff'ring address, the victim of my love.
Love calls for love. Not all the pride of beauty,
Those eyes, that tell us what the sun is made of,
Those lips, whose touch is to be bought with life,
Those hills of driven snow, which seen art felt;
All these possess'd, are nought, but as they are
The proof, the substance of an inward passion,
And the rich plunder of a taken heart.

Leon. I pray, my lord, no more. [*thus :*

Car. Must I despair, then? Do not shake me
Heav'n! what a proof I gave, but two nights past,
Of matchless love! To sling me at thy feet,
I slighted friendship, and I slew from fame;
Nor heard the summons of the next day's battle:
But, darting headlong to thy arms, I left
The promis'd fight; I left Alonzo, too,
To stand the war, and quell a world alone.

(*Drums and trumpets.*)

Leon. The victor comes. My lord, I must with-
Car. And must you go? [*draw.*]

Leon. Why should you wish me stay?
Your friend's arrival will bring comfort to you,
My presence none; it pains you and myself;
For both our sakes, permit me to withdraw. [*Exit.*]

Enter DON ALONZO, with Attendants.

Car. Alonzo!

Alon. Carlos!—I am whole again;
Clasp'd in thy arms, it makes my heart entire.

Car. Whom dare I thus embrace? The conqueror
Of Afric?

Alon. Yes, much more; Don Carlos' friend.
The conquest of the world would cost me dear,
Should it beget one thought of distance in thee.
I rise in virtues to come nearer thee.

'Twas Carlos conquer'd, 'twas his cruel chains
Inflam'd me to a rage unknown till then,
And threw my former actions far behind.

Car. I love fair Leonora. How I love her!
Yet still I find (I know not how it is)

Another heart, another soul for thee.
Thy friendship warms, it raises, it transports;
Like music, pure the joy, without alloy,
Whose very rapture is tranquillity:
But love, like wine, gives a tumultuous bliss,
Heighten'd indeed beyond all mortal pleasures;
But mingles pangs and madness in the bowl.

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. Manuel, my lord, returning from the port
On business both of moment and of haste,
Humbly begs leave to speak in private with you.

Car. In private! Ha! Alonzo, I'll return;
No business can detain me long from thee. [*Exit.*]

Zan. My lord Alonzo, I obey'd your orders.

Alon. Will the fair Leonora pass this way?

Zan. She will, my lord, and soon.

Alon. Come near me, Zanga;

For I dare open all my heart to thee.
Never was such a day of triumph known!
There's not a wounded captive in my train,
That slowly follow'd my proud chariot wheels,
With half a life, and beggary, and chains,
But is a god to me: I am most wretched.
In his captivity, thou know'st, Don Carlos,
My friend, (and never was a friend more dear)
Deputed me his advocate in love;
What did I do?—I lov'd myself. Indeed,
One thing there is might lessen my offence,
(If such offence admits of being lessen'd)
I thought him dead; for (by what fate I know not)
His letters never reach'd me.

Zan. Thanks to Zanga, (*Aside.*)
Who thence contriv'd that evil which has happen'd.

Alon. Yes, curs'd of heaven! I lov'd myself; and
In a late action, rescu'd from the Moors, [now,
I have brought home my rival in my friend.

Zan. We hear, my lord, that in that action, too,
Your interposing arm preserv'd his life.

Alon. It did; with more than the expense of mine;
For, O! this day is mention'd for their nuptials.

Zan. My lord, she comes.

Alon. I'll take my leave, and die. [*Exit.*]

Zan. Hadst thou a thousand lives, thy death would
Unhappy fate! My country overcome! [please me.
My six years' hope of vengeance quite expir'd!
Would nature were—I will not fall alone:
But others' groans shall tell the world my death.

[*Aside, and exit.*]

Enter LEONORA and ALONZO.

Alon. When nature ends with anguish like to this,
Sinners shall take their last leave of the sun,
And bid his light adieu. (*Weeps.*)

Leon. The mighty conqueror

Dismay'd! I thought you gave the foe your sorrows.

Alon. O, cruel insult! are those tears your sport,
Which nothing but a love for you could draw?
Afric I quell'd, in hope by that to purchase
Your leave to sigh unscorn'd; but I complain not;
'Twas but a world, and you are—Leonora.

Leon. That passion which you boast of is your
A treason to your friend. [guilt,

For wretched Carlos; 'tis but human in you.
But when arriv'd your dismal news?

Alon. O, Leonora!
What could I do? In duty to my friend,
I saw you: and to see is to admire.
For Carlos did I plead, and most sincerely;
You know I did. I sought but your esteem;
If that is guilt, an angel had been guilty. [self,

Man. This hour.
Zan. What, not a vessel sav'd? And is Alvarez
Determin'd to deny his daughter to him?
That treasure was on shore; must that, too, join
The common wreck?

Leon. If, from your guilt, none suffer'd but your-
It might be so. Farewell. (Going.)

Man. Alvarez pleads, indeed,
That Leonora's heart is disinclin'd,
And pleads that only; so it was this morning,
When he concurr'd: the tempest broke the match,
And sunk his favour, when it sunk the gold.
The love of gold is double in his heart,
The vice of age and of Alvarez too.

Alon. Who suffers with me? (Takes her hand.)
Leon. Enjoy your ignorance, and let me go.

Zan. How does Don Carlos bear it?

Alon. What mean these tears?
Leon. I weep by chance; nor have my tears a
But, O! when first I saw Alonzo's tears, [meaning.
I knew their meaning well.

Man. Like a man,
Whose heart feels most a human heart can feel,
And reasons best a human heart can reason.

Alon. Heavens! what is this?
Alonzo, pardon me the injury
Of loving you. I struggled with my passion,
And struggled long; let that be some excuse.
You well may wonder at such words as these;
I start at them myself, they fright my nature.
Great is my fault; but blame me not alone;
Give him a little blame, who took such pains
To make me guilty. [blessing

Zan. But is he, then, in absolute despair?

Alon. Blame you! you know I think your love a
Beyond all human blessings! 'tis the price
Of sighs and groans, and a whole year of dying:
But, O, the curse of curses!—O, my friend!—

Man. Never to see his Leonora more:
And, quite to quench all future hope, Alvarez
Urges Alonzo to espouse his daughter
This very day; for he has learnt their loves.
Zan. Ha! was not that receiv'd with ecstasy
By Don Alonzo?

Leon. Alas!
Alon. What says my love? Speak, Leonora.

Man. Yes, at first; but soon
A damp came o'er him,—it would kill his friend.

Leon. Was it for you, my lord, to be so quick
In finding out objections to our love?
Think you so strong my love, or weak my virtue,
It was unsafe to leave that part to me?

Zan. Not if his friend consented; and since now
He can't himself espouse her—

Alon. Is not the day then fix'd for your espous-
sals? [way;

Man. Yet, to ask it,
Has something shocking to a generous mind;
At least, Alonzo's spirit startles at it.

Leon. Indeed, my father once had thought that
But marking how the marriage pain'd my heart,
Long he stood doubtful; but at last resolv'd,
Your counsel, which determines him in all,
Should finish the debate.

But I must leave you. Carlos wants support
In his severe affliction. [Exit.

Alon. O, agony!
Must I not only lose her, but be made
Myself the instrument? Not only die,
But plunge the dagger in my heart myself? [mine?

Zan. Ha, it dawns!—
It rises to me like a new-found world
To mariners long time distress'd at sea,
Sore from a storm, and all their viands spent.
Ho, Isabella!

Leon. What, do you tremble lest you should be
For what else can you tremble? Not for that
My father places in your power to alter. [friend!
Alon. What's in my power? O, yes; to stab my
Leon. To stab your friend were barbarous indeed:
Spare him; and murder me.

Isa. Enter ISABELLA.
I thought of dying; better things come forward;
Vengeance is still alive: from her dark covert,
With all her snakes erect upon her crest,
She stalks in view, and fires me with her charms.
When, Isabella, arriv'd Don Carlos here?

Alon. First perish all!
No, Leonora, I am thine for ever;
The groans of friendship shall be heard no more.
For whatsoever crime I can commit,
I've felt the pangs already.

Isa. Two nights ago.
Zan. That was the very night
Before the battle—Memory, set down that;
It has the essence of the crocodile,
Though yet but in the shell—I'll give it birth—
What time did he return?

Alon. Hold, Alonzo!
And hear a maid, whom doubly thou hast conquer'd.
I love thy virtue as I love thy person,
And I adore thee for the pains it gave me;
But, as I felt the pains, I'll reap the fruit;
I'll shine out in my turn, and shew the world
Thy great example was not lost upon me.

Isa. At midnight.
Zan. So—
Say, did he see that night his Leonora?
Isa. No, my good lord.
Zan. No matter—
Go and fetch my tablets hither. [Exit Isabella,
Two nights ago my father's sacred shade
Thrice stalk'd around my bed, and smil'd upon me;
He smil'd a joy then little understood.
It must be so; and if so, it is vengeance
Worth waking of the dead for.

Thus, then, I tear me from thy hopes for ever.
Shall I contribute to Alonzo's crimes?
No, though the life-blood gushes from my heart,
You shall not be asham'd of Leonora;
Nay, never shrink: take back the bright example
You lately lent; O, take it while you may;
While I can give it you, and be immortal! [Exit.

Isa. Enter ISABELLA with the tablets, Zanga writes.
Thus it stands—
The father's fix'd—Don Carlos cannot wed—
Alonzo may—but that will hurt his friend—
Nor can he ask his leave—or, if he did,
He might not gain it. It is hard to give
Our own consent to ills, though we must bear them.
Were it not, then, a masterpiece, worth all
The wisdom I can boast, first to persuade
Alonzo to request it of his friend;
His friend to grant; then, from that very grant,
The strongest proof of friendship man can give,
To work out a cause
Of jealousy, to rack Alonzo's peace!—
I have turn'd o'er the catalogue of woes,
Which sting the heart of man, and find none equal.
It is the hydra of calamities,
The seven-fold death; the jealous are the damn'd.

Alon. She's gone, and I shall see that face no
But pine in absence, and till death adore. [more;
When with cold dew my fainting brow is hung,
And my eyes darken, from my fault'ring tongue
Her name will tremble with a feeble moan,
And love with fate divide my dying groan. [Exit.

ACT II.—SCENE I.—The Palace.
Enter DON MANUEL and ZANGA.

Zan. If this be true, I cannot blame your pain

Isa. Alonzo comes this way.

Zan. Most opportunely. [which reside
Withdraw. *[Exit Isabella.]* Ye subtle demons,
In courts, and do your work with bows and smiles,
That little enginery, more mischievous
Than fleets and armies, and the cannon's murder,
Teach me to look a lie; give me your maze
Of gloomy thought and intricate design,
To catch the man I hate, and then devour.

Enter DON ALONZO.

My lord, I give you joy.

Alon. Of what, good Zanga?

Zan. Is not the lovely Leonora your's?

Alon. What will become of Carlos?

Zan. He's your friend;

And since he can't espouse the fair himself,
Will take some comfort from Alonzo's fortune.

Alon. Alas! thou little know'st the force of love!

Love reigns a sultan with unrivall'd sway;
Puts all relations, friendship's self, to death,
If once he's jealous of it. I love Carlos;
Yet well I know what pangs I felt this morning
At his intended nuptials. For myself
I then felt pangs, which now for him I feel.

Zan. You will not wed her, then?

Alon. Not instantly.

Insult his broken heart the very moment!

Zan. I understand you: but you'll wed hereafter,
When your friend's gone, and his first pain assuag'd.

Alon. Am I to blame in that?

Zan. My lord, I love

Your very errors; they are born from virtue.

Your friendship (and what nobler passion claims

The heart?) does lead you blindfold to your ruin.

Consider, wherefore did Alvarez break

Don Carlos' match, and wherefore urge Alonzo's?

'Twas the same cause, the love of wealth. To-mor-

May see Alonzo in Don Carlos' fortune; [row

A higher bidder is a better friend,

And there are princes sigh for Leonora. [cause

When your friend's gone you'll wed; why, then the

Which gives you Leonora now will cease.

Carlos has lost her; should you lose her, too,

Why, then, you heap new torments on your friend,

By that respect which labour'd to relieve him.

'Tis well; he is disturb'd; it makes him pause. *(Aside)*

Alon. Think'st thou, my Zanga, should I ask

Don Carlos,

His goodness would consent that I should wed her?

Zan. I know it would.

Alon. But then the cruelty

To ask it; and for me to ask it of him!

Zan. Methinks you are severe upon your friend.

Who was it gave him liberty and life?

Alon. That is the very reason which forbids it.

Were I a stranger, I could freely speak;

In me it so resembles a demand,

Exactng of a debt, it shocks my nature.

Zan. My lord, you know the sad alternative.

Is Leonora worth one pang or not?

Warmly as you I wish Don Carlos well;

But I am likewise Don Alonzo's friend;

There all the difference lies between us two.

In me, my lord, you hear another self;

And, give me leave to add, a better too, [virtue,

Clear'd from those errors, which, though caus'd by

Are such as may hereafter give you pain.

Don Lopez of Castile would not demur thus.

Alon. Perish the name! What, sacrifice the fair

To age and ugliness, because set in gold?

I'll to Don Carlos, if my heart will let me.

I have not seen him since his sore affliction;

But shunn'd it, as too terrible to bear.

How shall I bear it now? I am struck already. *[Exit.*

Zan. Half of my work is done. I must secure

Don Carlos, ere Alonzo speak with him.

[He gives a message to Manuel, who enters;

and exit Manuel.

Proud, hated Spain, oft drench'd in Moorish blood!

Dost thou not feel a deadly foe within thee?

Shake not thy towers where'er I pass along,

Conscious of ruin, and their great destroyer?

Shake to the centre, if Alonzo's dear.

Look down, O holy prophet; see me torture

This Christian dog, this infidel, which dares

To smite thy votaries, and spurn thy law;

And yet hopes pleasure from two radiant eyes,

Which look as they were lighted up for thee!

Shall he enjoy thy paradise below? [charms!

Blast the bold thought, and curse him with her

But see, the melancholy lover comes.

Enter DON CARLOS.

Car. Hope, thou hast told me lies from day to day,

For more than twenty years; vile promiser!

None here are happy but the very fool,

Or very wise; and I wasn't fool enough

To smile in vanities, and hug a shadow;

Nor have I wisdom to elaborate

An artificial happiness from pains:

Even joys are pains, because they cannot last.

How many lift the head, look gay, and smile

Against their consciences? And this we know,

Yet knowing, disbelieve, and try again

What we have tried, and struggle with conviction.

Each new experience gives the former credit;

And reverend grey threescore is but a voucher,

That thirty told us true.

Zan. My noble lord,

I mourn your fate: but are no hopes surviving?

Car. No hopes. Alvarez has a heart of steel;

'Tis fix'd—'tis past—'tis absolute despair! [der,

Zan. You wanted not to have your heart made ten-

By your own pains, to feel a friend's distress.

Car. I understand you well. Alonzo loves;

I pity him.

Zan. I dare be sworn you do;

Yet he has other thoughts.

Car. What can'st thou mean?

Zan. Indeed he has; and fears to ask a favour

A stranger from a stranger might request;

What costs you nothing, yet is all to him:

Nay, what, indeed, will to your glory add,

For nothing more than wishing your friend well.

Car. I pray be plain; his happiness is mine.

Zan. He loves to death; but so reveres his friend,

He can't persuade his heart to wed the maid

Without your leave, and that he fears to ask.

In perfect tenderness I urg'd him to it.

Knowing the deadly sickness of his heart,

Your overflowing goodness to your friend,

Your wisdom, and despair yourself to wed her,

I wrung a promise from him he would try;

And now I come, a mutual friend to both,

Without his privacy, to let you know it,

And to prepare you kindly to receive him.

Car. Ha! if he weds, I am undone indeed;

Not Don Alvarez' self can then relieve me.

Zan. Alas! my lord, you know his heart is steel;

'Tis fix'd, 'tis past, 'tis absolute despair.

Car. O cruel heaven! and is it not enough

That I must never, never see her more?

Ask my consent! Must I then give her to him?

Lead to his nuptial sheets the blushing maid?

Oh! Leonora! never, never, never!

Zan. A storm of plagues upon him! he refuses.

(Aside.)

Car. What, wed her?—and to-day?

Zan. To-day, or never.

To-morrow may some wealthier lover bring,

And then Alonzo is thrown out like you;

Then whom shall he condemn for his misfortune?

Carlos is an Alvarez to his love.

Car. O torment! whither shall I turn?

Zan. To peace.

Car. Which is the way?

Zan. His happiness is your's—

I dare not disbelieve you.

Car. Kill my friend!

Or worse—Alas! and can there be a worse?

A worse there is: nor can my nature bear it.

Zan. You have convinc'd me 'tis a dreadful task.
I find Alonzo's quitting her this morning
For Carlos' sake, in tenderness to you,
Betray'd me to believe it less severe
Than I perceive it is.

Car. Thou dost upbraid me. [comply,

Zan. No, my good lord, but since you can't
'Tis my misfortune that I mention'd it;
For had I not, Alonzo would indeed
Have died as now, but not by your decree.

Car. By my decree! Do I decree his death?
I do. Shall I then lead her to his arms?
O, which side shall I take? Be stabb'd, or—stab?
'Tis equal death! a choice of agonies!
Go, Zanga, go, defer the dreadful trial, [happen
Though but a day; something, perchance, may
To soften all to friendship and to love.
Go, stop my friend, let me not see him now;
But save us from an interview of death.

Zan. My lord, I'm bound in duty to obey you—
If I not bring him, may Alonzo prosper!

[Aside, and exit.

Car. What is this world? Thy school, O mi-
O'er only lesson is to learn to suffer; [sery!
And he who knows not that, was born for nothing.
Though deep my pangs, and heavy at my heart,
My comfort is, each moment takes away
A grain, at least, from the dead load that's on me,
And gives a nearer prospect of the grave.
But put it most severely—should I live—
Live long—Alas! there is no length in time!
Not in thy time, O man!—What's fourscore years?
Nay, what, indeed, the age of time itself,
Since cut from out eternity's wide round?
Yet, Leonora—she can make time long,
Its nature alter, as she alter'd mine.
While in the lustre of her charms I lay,
Whole summer suns roll'd unperceiv'd away;
I years for days, and days for moments told,
And was surpris'd to hear that I grew old.
Now fate does rigidly its dues regain,
And every moment is an age of pain.

Enter ZANGA and DON ALONZO.

Zan. (Stops Don Carlos.) Is this Don Carlos?
this the boasted friend?

How can you turn your back upon his sadness?
Look on him, and then leave him if you can.
Whose sorrows thus depress him? Not his own:
This moment he could weep without your leave.

Car. I cannot yield: nor can I bear his griefs.
Alonzo! (Going to him, and taking his hand.)

Alon. O, Carlos!
Car. Pray, forbear.

Alon. Art thou undone, and shall Alonzo smile?
Alonzo, who, perhaps, in some degree
Contributed to cause thy dreadful fate?
I was deputed guardian of thy love;
But, O, I lov'd, myself! Pour down afflictions
On this devoted head; make me your mark;
And be the world, by my example, taught
How sacred it should hold the name of friend.

Car. You charge yourself unjustly;
The crime was mine,
Who plac'd thee there, where only thou couldst fail.

Alon. You cast in shades the failure of a friend,
And soften all; but think not you deceive me;
I know my guilt, and I implore your pardon,
As the sole glimpse I can obtain of peace.

Car. Pardon for him who but this morning threw
Fair Leonora from his heart, all bath'd
In ceaseless tears, and blushing for her love!
Yes, 'twas in thee, through fondness for thy friend,
To shut thy bosom against ecstasies;
For which, while this pulse beats, it beats to thee;
While this blood flows, it flows for my Alonzo,
And every wish is levell'd at thy joy.

Zan. (To Alonzo.) My lord, my lord, this is
your time to speak.

Alon. (To Zanga.) Because he's kind? It there-
fore is the worst;

Do I not see him quite possess'd with anguish,
And shall I pour in new? No, fond desire!
No, love! one pang at parting, and farewell.

I have no other love but Carlos now. (Runs to Car.)
Car. Alas! my friend, why with such eager grasp
Dost press my hand?

Alon. If, after death, our forms
Shall be transparent, naked every thought, [hearts,
And friends meet friends, and read each other's
Thou'lt know one day, that thou wast held most dear.
Farewell!

Car. Alonzo, stay—he cannot speak, (holds him)
Lest it should grieve me. Shall I be outdone,
And lose in glory, as I lose in love? (Aside.)
I take it much unkindly, my Alonzo,
You think so meanly of me, not to speak,
When well I know your heart is near to bursting.
Have you forgot how you have bound me to you?
Your smallest friendship's liberty and life.

Alon. There, there it is, my friend; it cuts me
How dreadful is it to a generous mind [there.
To ask, when sure he cannot be denied!

Car. How greatly thought! In all he towers above
me. (Aside.)

Then you confess you would ask something of me?

Alon. No, on my soul.

Zan. (To Alonzo.) Then lose her.

Car. Glorious spirit!

Why, what a pang has he run through for this!
By heaven! I envy him his agonies.
Why was not mine the most illustrious lot,
Of starting at one action from below,
And flaming up into consummate greatness?
Ha! angels strengthen me!—It shall be so.
My Alonzo!

Since thy great soul disdains to make request,
Receive with favour that I make to thee.

Alon. What means my Carlos?

Car. Pray, observe me well.

Fate and Alvarez tore her from my heart,
And, plucking up my love, they had well nigh
Pluck'd my life too; for they were twin'd together.
Of that no more: What now does reason bid?
I cannot wed—Farewell, my happiness!

But, O my soul, with care provide for her's!
In life how weak, how helpless, sure, is woman!
So properly the object of affliction,
That heaven is pleas'd to make distress become her,
And dresses her most amiably in tears.

Take, then, my heart in dowry with the fair,
Be thou her guardian and thou must be mine;
Shut out the thousand pressing ills of life
With thy surrounding arms: do this, and then
Set down the liberty and life thou gav'st me,
As little things, as essays of thy goodness,
And rudiments of friendship so divine.

Alon. There is a grandeur in thy goodness to me,
Which, with thy foes, would render thee ador'd.
And canst thou, canst thou part with Leonora?

Car. I do not part with her; I give her thee.

Alon. Carlos!—
But think not words were ever made
For such occasions. Silence, tears, embraces,
Are languid eloquence: I'll seek relief
In absence, from the pain of so much goodness,
There thank the blest above, thy sole superiors,
Adore, and raise my thoughts of them by thee. [Exit.

Zan. Thus far success has crown'd my boldest
My next care is to hasten these new nuptials, [hope.
And then my master-works begin to play.

[Aside, and exit.

Car. Too soon thou praisest me. He's gone, and
I must unslake my overburden'd heart, [now
And let it flow. I would not grieve my friend
With tears; nor interrupt my great design;
Great, sure, as ever human breast durst think of.
But now my sorrows, long with pain suppress'd,
Burst their confinement with impetuous sway,
O'erswell all bounds, and bear e'en life away:
So, till the day was won, the Greek renown'd,

With anguish wore the arrow in his wound,
Then drew the shaft from out his tortur'd side,
Let gush the torrent of his blood, and died. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Another Apartment in the Palace.**Enter ZANGA and ISABELLA.*

Zan. O joy, thou welcome stranger! twice three
I have not felt thy vital beam; but now [years
It warms my veins, and plays around my heart.
My Isabella!

Isa. What commands my Moor?

Zan. My fair ally, my lovely minister!
'Twas well Alvarez, by my arts impell'd,
(To plunge Don Carlos in the last despair,
And so prevent all future molestation.)
Finish'd the nuptials soon as he resolv'd them;
This conduct ripen'd all for me, and ruin.
Scarce had the priest the holy rite perform'd,
When I, by sacred inspiration forg'd
That letter, which I trusted to thy hand;
That letter, which in glowing terms conveys,
From happy Carlos to fair Leonora,
The most profound acknowledgment of heart,
For wondrous transports, which he never knew.
This is a good, subservient artifice,
To aid the nobler workings of my brain.

Isa. I quickly dropp'd it in the bride's apartment,
As you commanded.

Zan. With a lucky hand;
For soon Alonzo found it; I observ'd him
From out my secret stand. He took it up;
But scarce was it unfolded to his sight,
When he, as if an arrow pierc'd his eye,
Start'd, and trembling dropp'd it on the ground.
Pale and aghast awhile my victim stood,
Disguis'd a sigh or two, and puff'd them from him;
Then rabb'd his brow, and took it up again.
At first he look'd as if he meant to read it;
But, check'd by rising fears, he crush'd it thus,
And thrust it, like an adder, in his bosom.

Isa. But if he read it not, it cannot sting him;
At least not mortally.

Zan. At first I thought so;
But farther thought informs me otherwise,
And turns this disappointment to account.
He more shall credit it, because unseen,
(If 'tis unseen,) as thou anon may'st find. [skill.]

Isa. That would indeed commend my Zanga's
Zan. This, Isabella, is Don Carlos' picture;
Take it, and so dispose of it, that, found,
It may rise up a witness of her love;
Under her pillow, in her cabinet,
Or elsewhere, as shall best promote our end.

Isa. I'll weigh it as its consequence requires,
Then do my utmost to deserve your smile. [*Exit.*]

Zan. Is that Alonzo prostrate on the ground?
Now he starts up like flame from sleeping embers,
And wild distraction glares from either eye.
If thus a slight surmise can work his soul,
How will the fullness of the tempest tear him!

Enter DON ALONZO.

Alon. And yet it cannot be—I am deceiv'd—
I injure her: she wears the face of heaven.

Zan. He doubts. [*Aside.*]

Alon. I dare not look on this again.
If the first glance, which gave suspicion only,
Had such effect, so smote my heart and brain,
The certainty would dash me all in pieces.

It cannot—Ha! it must, it must be true. [*Starts.*]

Zan. Hold there, and we succeed. He has des-
cried me.

I'll seem to go, to make my stay more sure. [*Aside.*]

Alon. Hold, Zanga, turn.

Zan. My lord!

Alon. Shut close the doors,

That not a spirit find an entrance here.

Zan. My lord's obey'd.

Alon. I see that thou art frightened.

If thou dost love me, I shall fill thy heart
With scorpions' stings.

Zan. If I do love, my lord?

Alon. Come near me, let me rest upon thy bosom
(What pillow like the bosom of a friend?)

For I am sick at heart.

Zan. Speak, sir; O speak,

And take me from the rack.

Alon. I am most happy: mine is victory,
Mine the king's favour, mine the nation's shout,
And great men make their fortunes of my smiles.
O curse of curses! in the lap of blessing
To be most curst!—My Leonora's false!

Zan. Save me, my lord!

Alon. My Leonora's false! [*Gives him the letter.*]

Zan. Then heaven has lost its image here on earth.

Alon. Good-natured man! he makes my pains

I durst not read it; but I read it now [his own.

In thy concern.

Zan. Did you not read it, then? [no more.

Alon. Mine eye just touch'd it, and could bear

Zan. Thus perish all that gives Alonzo pain!

[*Tears the letter.*]

Alon. Why didst thou tear it?

Zan. Think of it no more.

'Twas your mistake, and groundless are your fears.

Alon. And didst thou tremble, then, for my
mistake?

Or give the whole contents; or, by the pangs
That feed upon my heart, thy life's in danger.

Zan. Is this Alonzo's language to his Zanga?

Draw forth your sword, and find the secret here.

For whose sake is it, think you, I conceal it?

Wherefore this rage? Because I seek your peace.

I have no interest in suppressing it,

But what good-natured tenderness for you

Obliges me to have. Not mine the heart

That will be rent in two. Not mine the fame

That will be damnd, though all the world should
know it. [past.

Alon. Then my worst fears are true, and life is

Zan. What has the rashness of my passion utter'd?

I know not what—but grant I did confess,

What is a letter? letters may be forg'd.

For heaven's sweet sake, my lord, lift up your heart.

Some foe to your repose—

Alon. So heaven look on me,

As I can't find the man I have offended. [shield:

Zan. Indeed! [*Aside.*] Our innocence is not our

They take offence, who have not been offended;

They seek our ruin, too, who speak us fair,

And death is often ambush'd in their smiles.

We know not whom we have to fear. 'Tis certain

A letter may be forg'd; and, in a point

Of such a dreadful consequence as this;

One would rely on nought that might be false.

Think, have you any other cause to doubt her?

Away, you can find none. Resume your spirit:

All's well again.

Alon. O that it were!

Zan. It is:

For who would credit that, which credited,

Makes hell superfluous by superior pains,

Without such proofs as cannot be withstood?

Has she not ever been to virtue train'd?

Is not her fame as spotless as the sun,

Her sex's envy, and the boast of Spain?

Alon. O, Zanga! it is that confounds me most,

That full in opposition to appearance—

Zan. No more, my lord, for you condemn your-

What is absurdity, but to believe [self.

Against appearance? You can't yet, I find,

Subdue your passion to your better sense;

And, truth to tell, it does not much displease me.

'Tis fit our indiscretions should be check'd

With some degree of pain.

Alon. What indiscretion? [from me.

Zan. Come, you must bear to hear your faults

Had you not sent Don Carlos to the court

The night before the battle, that foul slave,

Who forg'd the senseless scroll which gives you pain,

Had wanted footing for his villainy.

Alon. I sent him not.

Zan. Not send him!—Ha!—That strikes me. I thought he came on message to the king.

Is there another cause could justify His shunning danger, and the promisd fight? But I, perhaps, may think too rigidly;

So long in absence, and impatient leave—

Alon. In my confusion, that had quite escap'd me. 'Tis clear as day—for Carlos is so brave, He lives not but on fame, he hunts for danger, And is enamour'd of the face of death.

How then could he decline the next day's battle, But for the transports—Oh, it must be so!

Inhuman! by the loss of his own honour, To buy the ruin of his friend!

Zan. You wrong him; He knew not of your love.

Alon. Ha!—

Zan. That stings home. (*Aside.*) [love;

Alon. Indeed, he knew not of my treacherous Proofs rise on proofs, and still the last the strongest. Th' eternal law of things declares it true,

Which calls for judgment on distinguish'd guilt, And loves to make our crime our punishment.

Love is my torture, love was first my crime; For she was his, my friends, and he (O, horror!) Confided all in me. O, sacred faith!

How dearly I abide thy violation!

Zan. Were, then, their loves far gone?

Alon. The father's will

There bore a total sway; and he, as soon As news arriv'd that Carlos' fleet was seen From off our coast, fir'd with the love of gold, Determin'd that the very sun which saw Carlos' return, should see his daughter wed.

Zan. Indeed, my lord? then you must pardon me, If I presume to mitigate the crime.

Consider, strong allurements soften guilt; Long was his absence, ardent was his love, At midnight his return, the next day destin'd For his espousals—'twas a strong temptation.

Alon. Temptation!

Zan. 'Twas but gaining of one night!

Alon. One night!

Zan. That crime could ne'er return again.

Alon. Again! by heaven thou dost insult thy lord. Temptation! One night gain'd! O stings and death! And am I then undone? Alas! my Zanga!

And dost thou own it too? Deny it still, And rescue me one moment from distraction.

Zan. My lord, I hope the best.

Alon. False, foolish hope,

And insolent to me! thou know'st it false;

It is as glaring as the noontide sun.

Devil!—This morning, after three years' coldness, To rush at once into a passion for me!

'Twas time to feign, 'twas time to get another, When her first fool was sated with her beauties.

Zan. What says my lord? Did Leonora then, Never before disclose her passion for you?

Alon. Never.

Zan. Throughout the whole three years?

Alon. O, never! never!

Why, Zanga, shouldst thou strive? 'Tis all in vain: Though thy soul labours, it can find no reed For hope to catch at. Ah! I'm plunging down Ten thousand thousand fathoms in despair.

Zan. Hold, sir, I'll break your fall—Waive ev'ry And be a man again—Had he enjoy'd her, [fear, Be most assur'd, he had resign'd her to you With less reluctance.

Alon. Ha! Resign her to me!—

Resign her!—Who resign'd her?—Double death! How could I doubt so long? My heart is broke. First love her to distraction! then resign her!

Zan. But was it not with utmost agony? [enough.

Alon. Grant that; he still resign'd her; that's Would he pluck out his eye to give it me?

Tear out his heart! She was his heart no more; Nor was it with reluctance he resign'd her:

By heaven! he ask'd, he courted me to wed.

I thought it strange; 'tis now no longer so.

Zan. Was 't his request? Are you right sure of I fear the letter was not all a tale. [that?

Alon. A tale! There's proof equivalent to sight.

Zan. I should distrust my sight on this occasion.

Alon. And so should I; by heaven! I think I What! Leonora, the divine, by whom [should. We guess'd at angels! Oh! I'm all confusion!

Zan. You now are too much ruffled to think clearly.

Since bliss and horror, life and death hang on it, Go to your chamber, there maturely weigh Each circumstance; consider, above all, That it is jealousy's peculiar nature To swell small things to great; nay, out of nought To conjure much, and then to lose its reason Amid the hideous phantoms it has form'd.

Alon. Had I ten thousand lives, I'd give them all To be deceiv'd. I fear 'tis doomsday with me.

And yet she seem'd so pure, that I thought heaven Borrow'd her form for Virtue's self to wear,

To gain her lovers with the sons of men.

O Leonora! Leonora!

[*Exit.*

Enter ISABELLA.

Zan. Thus far it works auspiciously. My patient Thrives underneath my hand in misery.

He's gone to think; that is, to be distracted.

Isa. I overheard your conference, and saw you, To my amazement, tear the letter.

Zan. There,

There, Isabella, I outdid myself.

For, tearing it, I not secure it only

In its first force, but superadd a new.

For after tearing it, as loth to shew

The foul contents, if I should swear it now

A forgery, my lord would disbelieve me;

Nay, more, would disbelieve the more I swore.

But is the picture happily dispos'd of?

Isa. It is.

Zan. That's well! [*Exit Isabella.*] Ah! what is well? O pang to think!

O dire necessity! is this my province?

Whither, my soul! ah! whither art thou sunk

Beneath thy sphere?

Does this become a soldier? This become

Whom armies follow'd, and a people lov'd?

My martial glory withers at the thought.

But great my end; and since there are no other,

These means are just, they shine with borrow'd light,

Illustrious from the purpose they pursue.

And greater, sure, my merit, who, to gain

A point sublime, can such a task sustain:

To wade through ways obscene, my honour bend,

And shock my nature, to attain my end.

Late time shall wonder; that my joys will raise,

For wonder is involuntary praise. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Another Apartment in the Palace.*

Enter DON ALONZO and ZANGA.

Alon. Oh! what a pain to think, when every Perplexing thought, in intricacies runs, [thought, And reason knits th' inextricable toil,

In which herself is taken!

No more I'll bear this battle of the mind,

This inward anarchy; but find my wife,

And to her trembling heart presenting death,

Force all the secret from her.

Zan. O, forbear!

You totter on the very brink of ruin.

Alon. What dost thou mean?

Zan. That will discover all,

And kill my hopes. What can I think or do? (*Aside*)

Alon. What dost thou murmur?

Zan. Force the secret from her?

What's perjury to such a crime as this?

Will she confess it, then? O, groundless hope!

But rest assur'd, she'll make this accusation,

Or false or true, your ruin with the king;

Such is her father's power.

Alon. No more, I care not;
Rather than groan beneath this load, I'll die. [load?]

Zan. But for what better will you change this
Groat you should know it, would not that be worse?

Alon. No; it would cure me of my mortal pangs:
By hatred and contempt I should despise her,
And all my love-bred agonies would vanish.

Zan. Ah! were I sure of that, my lord—

Alon. What then? [secret.
Zan. You should not hazard life to gain the
Alon. What dost thou mean? Thou know'st I'm
on the rack.

I'll not be play'd with: speak, if thou hast aught,
Or I this instant fly to Leonora.

Zan. That is, to death. My lord, I am not yet
Quite so far gone in guilt, to suffer it,
Tho' gone too far, heaven knows. 'Tis I am guilty—
I have ta'en pains, as you, I know, observ'd,
To hinder you from diving in the secret,
And turn'd aside your thoughts from the detection.

Alon. Thou dost confound me.

Zan. I confound myself,
And frankly own it, though to my shame I own it:
Nought but your life in danger could have torn
The secret out, and made me own my crime.

Alon. Speak quickly; Zanga, speak.

Zan. Not yet, dread sir:
First, I must be convinc'd, that, if you find
The fair one guilty, scorn, as you assur'd me,
Shall conquer love and rage, and heal your soul.

Alon. O 'twill, by heaven!

Zan. Alas! I fear it much,
And scarce can hope so far; but I of this
Exact your solemn oath, that you'll abstain
From all self-violence, and save my lord.

Alon. I tremble swear.

Zan. You'll bear it like a man?

Alon. A god. [confess it,
Zan. Such have you been to me; these tears
And pour'd forth miracles of kindness on me:

And what amends is now within my power,
But to confess, expose myself to justice,
And, as a blessing, claim my punishment?

Know, then, Don Carlos—

Alon. Oh!

Zan. You cannot bear it. [kind;

Alon. Go on, I'll have it, though it blast man-
I'll have it all, and instantly. Go on.

Zan. Don Carlos did return at dead of night—

Enter LEONORA.

Leon. My lord Alonzo, you are absent from us,
And quite undo our joy.

Alon. I'll come, my love:
Be not our friends deserted by us both;
I'll follow you this moment.

Leon. My good lord,
I do observe severity of thought

Upon your brow. Aught hear you from the Moors?

Alon. No, my delight.

Leon. What then employ'd your mind?

Alon. Thou, love, and only thou; so heaven be-
friend me!

As other thought can find no entrance here.

Leon. How good in you, my lord, whom nations'
Solicit, and a world in arms obeys, [cares
To drop one thought on me!

Alon. Know, then, to thy comfort,
Thou hast me all, my throbbing heart is full
With thee alone; I've thought of nothing else;
Nor shall, I from my soul believe, till death.
My life, our friends expect thee.

Leon. I obey.

Alon. Is that the face of curs'd hypocrisy? [Exit.
If she is guilty, stars are made of darkness,
And beauty shall no more belong to heaven.—
Don Carlos did return at dead of night—

Proceed, good Zanga; so thy tale began.

Zan. Don Carlos did return at dead of night;
That night, by chance (ill chance for me) did I
Command the watch that guards the palace-gate.

He told me he had letters for the king,
Despatch'd from you.

Alon. The villain lied!

Zan. My lord,

I pray, forbear. Transported at his sight,
After so long a bondage, and your friend,
(Who could suspect him of an artifice?)
No farther I inquir'd, but let him pass,
False to my trust, at least imprudent in it.
Our watch reliev'd, I went into the garden,
As is my custom when the night's serene,
And took a moon-light walk; when soon I heard
A rustling in an arbour that was near me.
I saw two lovers in each other's arms,
Embracing and embrac'd. Anon the man
Arose, and, falling back some paces from her,
Gaz'd ardently awhile, then rush'd at once,
And throwing all himself into her bosom,
There softly sigh'd, "O, night of ecstasy!
When shall we meet again?"—Don Carlos then
Led Leonora forth.

Alon. Oh! Oh! my heart! (He sinks into a chair.)

Zan. Groan on, and with the sound refresh my
soul! (Aside.)

'Tis through his brain; his eyeballs roll in anguish.
My lord, my lord, why will you rack me thus?
Speak to me, let me know that you still live.

I'm your own Zanga,
So lov'd so cherish'd, and so faithful to you.—
Rise, sir, for honour's sake. Why should the Moors,
Why should the vanquish'd triumph?

Alon. Oh, she was all!—

My fame, my friendship, and my love of arms,
All stoop'd to her; my blood was her possession.
Deep in the secret foldings of my heart
She liv'd with life, and far the dearer she.
To think on't is the torment of the damn'd;
And not to think on't is impossible.

How fair the cheek, that first alarm'd my soul!
How bright the eye that set it in a flame!
How soft the breast, on which I laid my peace
For years to slumber, unawak'd by care!
How fierce the transport! how sublime the bliss!
How deep, how black, the horror and despair!

Zan. You said you'd bear it like a man.

Alon. I do.

Am I not most distracted?

Zan. Pray, be calm.

Alon. As hurricanes:—be thou assur'd of that.

Zan. Is this the wise Alonzo?

Alon. Villain, no!

He died in the arbour; he was murder'd there!

I am his demon though—My wife! my wife!

Zan. He weeps—he weeps! (Aside.)

Alon. O villain, villain, most accurs'd!

If thou didst know it, why didst let me wed?

Zan. Hear me, my lord, your anger will abate.

I knew it not:—I saw them in the garden;
But saw no more than you might well expect
To see in lovers destin'd for each other.

Who could suspect fair Leonora's virtue,
Till after proofs conspired to blacken it?
Sad proofs, which came too late, which broke not
(Eternal curses on Alvarez' haste!) [out,

Till holy rites had made the wanton your's;
And then, I own, I labour'd to conceal it,
In duty and compassion to your peace.

Alon. Live now, be damn'd hereafter—for I want
"O, night of ecstasy!"—Ha! was't not so? [thee.
I will enjoy this murder. Let me think—
The jasmine bower—'tis secret and remote;
Go wait me there, and take thy dagger with thee.

[Exit Zanga.

How the sweet sound still sings within my ear!
"When shall we meet again?"—To-night, in hell.

Enter LEONORA.

Ha! I'm surpris'd! I stagger at her charms!

Leon. My lord, excuse me; see, a second time
I come in embassy from all your friends,
Whose joys are languid, uninspir'd by you.

Alon. This moment, Leonora, I was coming
To thee, and all—but sure, or I mistake,
Or thou canst well inspire my friends with joy. Oh!

Leon. Why sighs my lord?

Alon. I sigh'd not, Leonora.

Leon. I thought you did; your sighs are mine,
And I shall feel them all. [my lord,

Alon. Dost flatter me?

Leon. If my regards for you are flattery,
Full far, indeed, I stretch'd the compliment
In this day's solemn rite.

Alon. What rite?

Leon. You sport me.

Alon. Indeed I do; my heart is full of mirth.

Leon. And so is mine—I look on cheerfulness,
As on the health of virtue.

Alon. Virtue! Damn—

Leon. What says my lord?

Alon. Thou art exceeding fair.

Leon. Beauty alone is but of little worth;
But when the soul and body of a piece
Both shine alike, then they obtain a price,
And are a fit reward for gallant actions,
Heaven's pay on earth for such great souls as
If fair and innocent, I am your due. [your's;

Alon. Innocent! (*Aside.*)

Leon. How—my lord, I interrupt you.

Alon. No, my best life, I must not part with thee;
This hand is mine—O, what a hand is here!
So soft, souls sink into it, and are lost!

Leon. In tears, my lord?

Alon. What less can speak my joy!

Why, I could gaze upon thy looks for ever,
And drink in all my being from thine eyes:
And I could snatch a flaming thunderbolt,
And hurl destruction—

Leon. My lord, you fright me.

Is this the fondness of your nuptial hour?
Why, when I woo your hand, is it denied me?
Your very eyes, why are they taught to shun me?

Acquaint me with the secret of your heart,
That heart which I have purchas'd with my own!
Lay it before me, then, it is my due.

Unkind Alonzo! though I might demand it,
Behold I kneel! See, Leonora kneels!

The bride foregoes the homage of her day,
And deigns to be a beggar for her own!

Speak, then, I charge you speak, or I expire.

And load you with my death. My lord—my lord!

Alon. Ha, ha, ha! [ceiv'd?

Leon. Are these the joys which fondly I con-
And is it thus a wedded life begins?

What did I part with, when I gave my heart?

The maid, that loves,

Goes out to sea upon a shatter'd plank,

And puts her trust in miracles for safety.

Where shall I sigh?—where pour out my com-
plaints? [dress;

He shat should hear, should succour, should re-
He is the source of all.

Alon. Go to thy chamber;

I soon will follow; that, which now disturbs thee,
Shall be clear'd up, and thou shalt not condemn me.

[Exit Leon.

O, how like innocence she looks!—What, stab her!
And rush into her blood!—I never can!

Mine is the guilt—mine—to supplant my friend.
How then? Why thus—no more; it is determin'd.

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. I fear his heart has fail'd him. She must die.
Can I not rouse the snake that's in his bosom,
To sting our human nature, and effect it? (*Aside.*)

Alon. This vast and solid earth, that blazing sun,
Those skies through which it rolls, must all have end.
What then is man? the smallest part of nothing.

Day buries day, month month, and year the year,
Our life is but a chain of many deaths;

Can then death's self be fear'd? our life much rather.
Life is the desert, life the solitude,

Death joins us to the great majority:

'Tis to be borne to Platos, and to Cæsars;

'Tis to be great for ever;

'Tis pleasure, 'tis ambition then to die.

Zan. I think, my lord, you talk'd of death.

Alon. I did.

Zan. I give you joy, then Leonora's dead.

Alon. No, Zanga, the greatest guilt is mine,
Who might have mark'd his tameness to resign her,
Who might have mark'd her sudden turn of love;
These, and a thousand tokens more; and yet—
For which the saints absolve my soul—did wed!

Zan. Whither tends this?

Alon. To shed a woman's blood [rious;

Would stain my sword, and make my wars inglo-
But just resentment to myself, bears in it
A stamp of greatness above vulgar minds.
He, who, superior to the checks of nature,
Dares make his life the victim of his reason,
Does in some sort that reason deify,
And take a flight at heaven.

Zan. Alas! my lord,

'Tis not your reason, but her beauty finds
Those arguments, and throws you on your sword.

You cannot close an eye, that is so bright,
You cannot strike a breast, that is so soft,
That has ten thousand ecstasies in store

For Carlos—No, my lord, I mean for you.

Alon. O, through my heart and marrow! Pr'y-
thee spare me:

Nor more upbraid the weakness of thy lord.

I own, I tried, I quarrell'd with my heart,

And push'd it on, and bid it give her death;

But, oh! her eyes struck first, and murder'd me.

Zan. I know not what to answer to my lord.

Men are but men.

Farewell, then, my best lord, since you must die!

Oh, that I were to share your monument,

And in eternal darkness close these eyes,
Against those scenes which I am doom'd to suffer!

Alon. What dost thou mean?

Zan. And is it then unknown?

Oh, grief of heart, to think that you should ask it!

Sure you distrust that ardent love I bear you,

Else could you doubt, when you are laid in dust—

But it will cut my poor heart through and through,
To see those revel on your sacred tomb,

Who brought you thither by their lawless loves.

For there they'll revel, and exult to find

Him sleep so fast, who else might mar their joys.

Alon. Destruction!—But, Don Carlos, well thou

know'st,

Is sheath'd in steel, and bent on other thoughts.

Zan. Yes, till the fever of his blood returns,

While her last kiss still glows upon his cheek.

But when he finds Alonzo is no more,

How will he rush like lightning to her arms!

There sigh, there languish, there pour out his soul;

But not in grief—sad obsequies to thee!

But thou wilt be at peace, nor see, nor hear

The burning kiss, the sigh of ecstasy.

Their throbbing hearts that jostle one another:

Thank heaven, these torments will be all my own.

Alon. I'll ease thee of that pain. Let Carlos die,

O'ertake him on the road, and see it done.

'Tis my command. (*Gives his signet.*)

Zan. I dare not disobey.

Alon. My Zanga, now I have thy leave to die.

Zan. Ah, sir! think, think again. Are all men

buried

In Carlos' grave? You know not womankind.

When once the throbbing of the heart has broke

The modest zone, with which it was first tied,

Each man she meets will be a Carlos to her.

Alon. That thought has more of hell than had the

Another, and another, and another! [former;

And each shall cast a smile upon my tomb.

I am convinc'd; I must not, will not die.

Zan. You cannot die; nor can you murder her.

What then remains? In nature no third way,

But to forget, and so to love again.

Alon. Oh!

Zan. If you forgive, the world will call you good;
If you forget, the world will call you wise;
If you receive her to your grace again,
The world will call you very very kind.

Alon. Zanga, I understand thee well. She dies;
Though my arm trembles at the stroke, she dies.

Zan. That's truly great. What think you 'twas
set up

The Greek and Roman name in such a lustre,
But doing right, in stern despite to Nature,
Shutting their ears to all her little cries,
When great, august, and godlike justice call'd?
At Aulis, one pour'd out a daughter's life,
And gain'd more glory than by all his wars;
Another slew a sister in just rage;
A third, the theme of all succeeding times,
Gave to the cruel axe a darling son.
Nay more, for justice some devote themselves,
As he at Carthage, an immortal name!
Yet there is one step left above them all,
Above their history, above their fable,
A wife, bride, mistress, unenjoy'd—do that,
And tread upon the Greek and Roman glory.

Alon. 'Tis done!—Again new transports fire my
I had forgot it, 'tis my bridal night. [brain:
Friend, give me joy, we must be gay together;
See that the festival be duly honour'd.
And when with garlands the full bowl is crown'd,
And music gives the elevating sound,
And golden carpets spread the sacred floor,
And a new day the blazing tapers pour,
Thou, Zanga, thou my solemn friends invite,
From the dark realms of everlasting night;
Call vengeance, call the Furies, call Despair,
And Death, our chief-invited guest, he there;
He, with pale hand, shall lead the bride, and spread
Eternal curtains round her nuptial bed. [Exeunt.

ACT V.—

SCENE I.—Another Apartment in the palace.

Enter ZANGA and ALONZO.

Alon. Is Carlos murder'd?

Zan. I obey'd your order.

Six ruffians overtook him on the road;
He fought as he was wont, and four he slew.
Then sunk beneath an hundred wounds to death.
His last breath blest Alonzo, and desir'd
His bones might rest near your's.

Alon. O Zanga, Zanga!

But I'll not think:

It is a day of darkness,
Of contradictions, and of many deaths.
Where's Leonora, then? Quick, answer me:
I'm deep in horrors, I'll be deeper still.
I find thy artifice did take effect,
And she forgives my late department to her.

Zan. I told her, from your childhood you were
On any great surprise, but chiefly then, [wont,
When cause of sorrow bore it company.
To have your passion shake the seat of reason;
A momentary ill, which soon blew o'er.
Then did I tell her of Don Carlos' death,
(Wisely suppressing by what means he fell)
And laid the blame on that. At first she doubted;
But such the honest artifice I used,
That she, at length, was fully satisfied.

But what design you, sir, and how?

Alon. I'll tell thee.

Thus I've ordain'd it. In the jasmine bower,
The place which she dishonour'd with her guilt,
There will I meet her; the appointment's made;
And calmly spread (for I can do it now)
The blackness of her crime before her sight,
And then with all the cool solemnity
Of public justice, give her to the grave. [Exit.

Zan. Why, get thee gone! horror and night go
Sisters of Acheron, go hand in hand; [with thee.
Go dance around the bower, and close them in;
And tell them, that I sent you to salute them.
Profane the ground, and for the ambrosial rose,

And breath of jasmine, let hemlock blacken,
And deadly nightshade poison all the air.
For the sweet nightingale may ravens croak,
Toads pant, and adders rustle through the leaves;
May serpents, winding up the trees, let fall
Their hissing necks upon them from above,
And mingle kisses—such as I should give them!

[Exit.

SCENE II.—The Bower. Leonora sleeping.

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. Ye amarantus! ye roses, like the morn!
Sweet myrtles, and ye golden orange groves!
Are ye not blasted as I enter in;
Joy-giving, love-inspiring, holy bower!
Know, in thy fragrant bosom thou receivest
A murderer!—(He advances) Ha! she sleeps—
The day's uncommon heat has overcome her.
Then take, my lunging eyes, your last full gaze.
Oh, what a sight is here! how dreadful fair!
Who would not think that being innocent?
Oh, my distracted heart!—Oh, cruel Heaven!
To give such charms as these, and then call man,
Mere man, to be your executioner!
But see, she smiles! I never shall smile more.
It strongly tempts me to a parting kiss.

(Going, he starts back.)

Ha! smile again? She dreams of him she loves.
Curse on her charms! I'll stab her through them all.

(As he is going to strike, she wakes.)

Leon. My lord, your stay was long, and yonder
Of falling waters tempted me to rest, [Inll
Dispirited with noon's excessive heat. [the day!

Alon. Ye powers! with what an eye she meets
While they were clos'd I should have given the
blow. [Aside.)

Leon. What says my lord?

Alon. Why, this Alonzo says;

If love were endless, men were gods; 'tis that
Does counterbalance travel, danger, pain—
'Tis heaven's expedient to make mortals bear
The light, and cheat them of the peaceful grave.

Leon. Alas, my lord! why talk you of the grave?
Your friend is dead: in friendship you sustain
A mighty loss; repair it with my love.

Alon. Thy love, thou piece of witchcraft! I
would say,

Thou brightest angel! I could gaze for ever.
Where hadst thou this? enchantress, tell me where,
Which with a touch works miracles, boils up
My blood to tumults, and turns round my brain?
But, oh, those eyes! those murderers! Oh, whence,
Whence didst thou steal their burning orbs? From
heaven?

Thou didst: and 'tis religion to adore them.

Leon. My best Alonzo, moderate your thoughts.
Extremes still fright me, though of love itself.

Alon. Extremes indeed! it hurried me away;
But I come home again—and now for justice—
And now for death—It is impossible—

(Draws his dagger.)

I leave her to just heaven.

[Drops the dagger, and exit.]

Leon. Ha! a dagger!

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. Wither his hand, that held the steel in vain!
That dagger found will cause her to enquire.—
What can be done? That's something still. If not,
'Tis all I can; it shall be so. [Aside.)

Leon. O, Zanga, I am sinking in my fears!
Alonzo dropp'd this dagger as he left me,
And left me in a strange disorder, too.

What can this mean? Angels preserve his life!

Zan. Your's, madam, your's.

Leon. What, Zanga, dost thou say?

Zan. Carry your goodness, then, to such ex-
So blinded to the faults of him you love, [tremes,
That you perceive not he is jealous!

Leon. Heav'n's!

And yet a thousand things recur that swear it.
Jealous! it sickens at my heart. Unkind,

Ungen'rous, groundless, weak, and insolent!
Why? wherefore? on what shadow of occasion?
O how the great man lessens to my thought!
How could so mean a vice as jealousy
Live in a throng of such exalted virtues?
I scorn, and hate; yet love him, and adore.
I cannot, will not, dare not, think it true,
Till from himself I know it. [Exit.]

Zan. This succeeds

Just to my wish. Now she with violence
Upbraids him; he, not doubting she is guilty,
Rages no less; and if, on either side,
The waves run high, there still lives hope of ruin.

Enter ALONZO.

My lord—

Alon. O, Zanga, hold thy peace! I am no coward,
But heaven itself did hold my hand; I felt it,
By the well-being of my soul, I did.
I'll think of vengeance at another season.

Zan. My lord, her guilt—

Alon. Perdition on thee, Moor,
For that one word!
I love-her to distraction.
If 'tis my shame, why, be it so—I love her;
Nor can I help it; 'tis impos'd upon me
By some superior and resistless power.
I could not hurt her to be lord of earth;
It shocks my nature like a stroke from heaven.
But see, my Leonora comes. Begone. [Exit Zan.]

Enter LEONORA.

O, seen for ever, yet for ever new!
The conquer'd thou dost conquer o'er again,
Inflicting wound on wound.

Leon. Alas! my lord!

What need of this to me?

Alon. Ha! dost thou weep?

Leon. Have I no cause?

Alon. If love is thy concern,
Thou hast no cause; none ever lov'd like me.
Oh, that this one embrace would last for ever!
Leon. These tears declare how much I taste the
Of being folded in your arms and heart; [joy
My universe does lie within that space.
This dagger bore false witness.

Alon. Ha! my dagger!

It rouses horrid images. Away,
Away with it; and let us talk of love.

Leon. It touches you.

Alon. Let's talk of love.

Leon. Of death!

Alon. As thou lovest happiness—

Leon. Of murder!

Alon. Then must I fly for thy sake and my own.

Leon. Nay, by my injuries, you first must
hear me.

Alon. Yet, yet dismiss me; I am all in flames.

Leon. Who has most cause, you or myself? What
Of my whole life encourag'd you to this? [act
Or of your own, what guilt has drawn it on you?
You find me kind, and think me kind to all;
The weak, ungenerous error of your sex.
He, that can stoop to harbour such a thought,
Deserves to find it true.

Alon. Oh, sex, sex, sex!

The language of you all. Ill-fated woman!
Why wilt thou force me back into the gulf
Of agonies I had block'd up from thought?
But since thou hast replung'd me in thy torture,
I will be satisfy'd. Confess, confess,—
Where did I find this picture?

Leon. Ha, Don Carlos!

By my best hopes, more welcome than thy own.
Alon. I know it; but is vice so very rank,
That thou shouldst dare to dash it in my face?
Nature is sick of thee, abandon'd woman!

Leon. Repent.

Alon. Is that for me?

Leon. Fall; ask my pardon.

Alon. Astonishment!

Leon. Darest thou persist to think I am dishonest?

Alon. I know thee so.

Leon. This blow, then, to thy heart.

(She stabs herself, he endeavouring to prevent her.)

Alon. Ho, Zanga! Isabella! ho! she bleeds!
Descend, ye blessed angels, to assist her!

Leon. This the only way I would wound thee,
Though most unjust. Now think me guilty still.

Enter ISABELLA.

Alon. Bear her to instant help. The world to
save her!

Leon. Unhappy man! well may'st thou gaze and
tremble:

But fix thy terror and amazement right;
Not on my blood, but on thy own distraction.
What hast thou done? Whom censur'd? Leonora!
When thou hadst censur'd, thou wouldst save her
life:

O, inconsistent! Should I live in shame;
Or stoop to any other means but this
To assert my virtue? No; she, who disputes,
Admits it possible she might be guilty.
While aught but truth could be my inducement to it,
While it might look like an excuse to thee,
I scorn'd to vindicate my innocence;
But now, I let thy rashness know, the wound,
Which least I feel, is that my dagger made.

(Isabella leads out Leonora.)

Alon. Ha! was this woman guilty? And if not—
How my thoughts darken that way! Grant, kind
heaven,

That she prove guilty; or my being end.

Is that my hope, then?

Is it in man the sore distress to bear,

When hope itself is blacken'd to despair;

When all the bliss I pant for, is to gain

In hell, a refuge from severer pain! [Exit.]

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. How stands the great account 'twixt me and
vengeance?

Though much is paid, yet still it owes me much,

And I will not abate a single groan.

Ha! that were well—but that were fatal, too—

Why, be it so. Revenge, so truly great,

Would come too cheap, if bought with less than life.

Come, death; come, hell; then! 'tis resolv'd, 'tis
done.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Ah, Zanga, see me tremble! Has not yet
Thy cruel heart its fill? Poor Leonora—

Zan. Welters in blood, and gasps for her last
breath.

What then? We all must die.

Isa. Alonzo raves;

And, in the tempest of his grief, has thrice
Attempted on his life. At length disarm'd,
He calls his friends that save him, his worst foes,
And importunes the skies for swift perdition.

After a pause,

He started up, and call'd aloud for Zanga,

For Zanga rav'd; and see, he seeks you here,

To learn that truth, which most he dreads to know.

Zan. Begone. Now, now, my soul, consummate
all. [Exit Isabella.]

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. Oh, Zanga!

Zan. Do not tremble so, but speak.

Alon. I dare not.

(Falls on him.)

Zan. You will drown me with your tears.

Alon. Have I not cause?

Zan. As yet you have no cause.

Alon. Dost thou, too, rave?

Zan. Your anguish is to come:

You much have been abus'd.

Alon. Abus'd! by whom?

Zan. To know, were little comfort.

Alon. O, 'twere much!

Zan. Indeed!

Alon. By heaven! Oh, give him to my fury!

Zan. Born for your use, I live but to oblige you.

Know, then, 'twas—I.

Alon. Am I awake?

Zan. For ever.

Thy wife is guiltless—that's one transport to me;

And I, I let thee know it—that's another.

I urg'd Don Carlos to resign his mistress;

I forg'd the letter; I dispos'd the picture;—

I hated, I despis'd, and I destroy.

Alon. Oh! *(Swoons.)*

Zan. Why, this is well—why, this is blow for blow!

Where are you? Crown me, shadow me with laurels,

Ye spirits, which delight in just revenge!

Let Europe and her pallid sons go weep;

Let Afric and her hundred thrones rejoice:

O, my dear countrymen, look down, and see

How I bestride your prostrate conqueror!

I tread on haughty Spain, and all her kings.

But this is mercy, this is my indulgence;

'Tis peace, 'tis refuge from my indignation.

I must awake him into horrors. Ho!

Alonzo, ho! the Moor is at the gate!

Awake, invincible, omnipotent!

Thou, who dost all subdue.

Alon. Inhuman slave!

Zan. Fall'n Christian, thou mistak'st my character.

Look on me. Who am I? I know, thou say'st,

The Moor, a slave, an abject, beaten slave:

(Eternal woes to him that made me so!)

But look again. Has six years' cruel bondage

Extinguish'd majesty so far, that nought

Shines here to give an awe of one above thee?

When the great Moorish king, Abdallah, fell;

Fell by thy hand accurs'd, I fought fast by him,

His son; though, through his fondness, in disguise,

Less to expose me to th' ambitious foe.—

Ha! does it wake thee?—O'er my father's corse

I stood astride, till I had clove thy crest;

And then was made the captive of a squadron,

And sunk into thy servant—But, oh! what, What were my wages! Hear, nor heaven nor earth!

My wages were a blow! by heaven, a blow!

And from a mortal hand!

Alon. Oh, villain, villain!

Zan. All strife is vain. *(Shewing a dagger.)*

Alon. Is thus my love return'd?

Is this my recompense? Make friends of tigers

Lay not your young, O, mothers, on the breast,

For fear they turn to serpents as they lie,

And pay you for their nourishment with death.

Carlos is dead, and Leonora dying!

Both innocent, both murder'd, both by me.

Oh, shame! Oh, guilt! Oh, horror! Oh, remorse!

Oh, punishment! Had Satan never fall'n,

Hell had been here for me.—Oh, Leonora! Leonora! Leonora!

Zan. Must I despise thee, too, as well as hate thee?

Complain of grief! complain thou art a man.

Priam from fortune's lofty summit fell;

Great Alexander 'midst his conquests mourn'd;

Heroes and demigods have known their sorrows;

Cæsars have wept; and I have had my blow:

But 'tis reveng'd, and now my work is done.

Yet, ere I fall, be it one part of vengeance

To make ev'n thee confess that I am just.

Thou seest a prince, whose father thou hast slain,

Whose native country thou hast laid in blood,

Whose sacred person, oh! thou hast profan'd!

Whose reign extinguish'd: What was left to me,

So highly born? No kingdom, but revenge;

No treasure, but thy tortures and thy groans.

If cold white mortals censure this great deed,

Warn them, they judge not of superior beings,

Souls made of fire, and children of the sun,

With whom revenge is virtue. Fare thee well—

Now, fully satisfy'd, I should take leave;

But one thing grieves me, since thy death is near,

I leave thee my example how to die.

As he is going to stab himself, Alonzo rushes upon him, and prevents him. Enter DON ALVAREZ, with Attendants. They seize Zanga. Alonzo puts the dagger in his bosom.

Alon. No, monster, thou shalt not escape by death. My father!

Alv. O, Alonzo—Isabella,

Touch'd with remorse to see her mistress' pangs,

Told all the dreadful tale.

Alon. What groan was that?

Zan. As I have been a vulture to thy heart,

So will I be a raven to thine ear.

Enter MANUEL, who whispers Alvarez.

And true as ever snuff'd the scent of blood,

As ever flapp'd its heavy wing against

The window of the sick, and croak'd despair.

Thy wife is dead.

Alv. The dreadful news is true.

Alon. Prepare the rack; invent new tortures for him.

Zan. This, too, is well. The fix'd and noble mind

Turns all occurrence to its own advantage;

And I'll make vengeance of calamity.

Were I not thus reduced, thou wouldst not know

That, thus reduced, I dare defy thee still.

Torture thou may'st, but thou shalt ne'er de-

spise me.

The blood will follow where the knife is driven,

The flesh will quiver where the pincers tear,

And sighs and cries by nature grow on pain.

But these are foreign to the soul: not mine

The groans that issue, or the tears that fall;

They disobey me: on the rack I scorn thee,

As when my faulchion clove thy helm in battle.

Alv. Peace, villain!

Zan. While I live, old man, I'll speak:

And well I know thou dar'st not kill me yet;

For that would rob thy bloodhounds of their prey.

Alon. Who call'd Alonzo?

Again! 'Tis Carlos' voice, and I obey.

Oh, how I laugh at all that this can do!

(Stabs himself.)

The wounds that pain'd, the wounds that murder'd me,

Were given before; I was already dead;

This only marks my body for the grave.

Afric, thou art reveng'd—O, Leonora! *(Dies.)*

Zan. Good ruffians, give me leave; my blood is your's,

The wheel's prepar'd, and you shall have it all;

Let me but look one moment on the dead,

And pay yourselves with gazing on my pangs.

(He goes to Alonzo's body.)

Is this Alonzo? Where's the haughty mien?

Is that the hand which smote me? Heavens, how pale!

And art thou dead? So is my enmity.

I war not with the dust. The great, the proud,

The conqueror of Afric was my foe.

A lion preys not upon carcases.

This was thy only method to subdue me.

Terror and doubt fall on me: all thy good

Now blazes, all thy guilt is in the grave.

Never had man such funeral applause;

If I lament thee, sure thy worth was great.

O vengeance, I have followed thee too far,

And to receive me, hell blows all her fires. *[Exeunt.]*

THE ROMAN FATHER;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY WILLIAM WHITEHEAD.



Act V.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

TULLUS HOSTILIUS
HORATIUS
VALERIUS

PUBLIUS
VOLSCINIUS
CITIZENS

SOLDIERS
VALERIA
HORATIA

SCENE I.—*A Room in Horatius's house.*

VOLSCINIUS crosses the stage, HORATIA following.

Horatia. Stay, soldier. As you parted from my father,

Something I overheard of near concern,
But all imperfectly. Said you not, Alba
Was on the brink of fate, and Rome determin'd
This day to crush her haughty rival's power,
Or perish in 't attempt?

Vol. 'Twas so resolved,
This morning, lady, ere I left the camp.
Our heroes are tired out with ling'ring war,
And half-unmeaning fight.

Horatia. Then this day
Is fix'd for death or conquest? (*He bows.*) To me
death,

Whoever conquers! (*Aside.*) I detain you, sir.
Commend me to my brothers; say, I wish—
But wherefore should I wish? The gods will crown
Their virtues with the just success they merit—
Yet let me ask you, sir—

Vol. My duty, lady,
Commands me hence. Ere this, they have engag'd;
And conquest's self would lose its charms to me,
Should I not share the danger.

(*As Volscinius goes out, enter VALERIA,
who looks first on him, and then on
Horatia.*)

Valeria. My dear Horatia, wherefore wilt thou
court

The means to be unhappy? Still inquiring,
Still more to be undone. I heard it too;
And flew to find thee, ere the fatal news

Had hurt thy quiet, that thou might'st have learnt it
From a friend's tongue, and dress'd in gentler
terms.

Horatia. Oh, I am lost, Valeria! lost to virtue.
Ev'n while my country's fate, the fate of Rome,
Hangs on the conqueror's sword, this breast can
feel

A softer passion, and divide its cares.
Alba to me is Rome. Wouldst thou believe it?
I would have sent by him, thou saw'st departing,
Kind wishes to my brothers; but my tongue
Denied its office, and this rebel heart
Ev'n dreaded their success. Oh! Curiatius,
Why art thou there, or why an enemy?

Valeria. Forbear this self-reproach; he is thy
husband,
And who can blame thy fears? If fortune make
him

Awhile thy country's foe, she cannot cancel
Vows register'd above. What, though the priest
Had not confirm'd it at the sacred altar,
Yet were your hearts united, and that union
Approv'd by each consenting parent's choice.
Your brothers lov'd him as a friend, a brother;
And all the ties of kindred pleaded for him,
And still must plead, whate'er our heroes teach us,
Of patriot strength. Our country may demand
We should be wretched, and we most obey;
But never can require us not to feel
That we are miserable: nature there
Will give the lie to virtue.

Horatia. True; yet sure
A Roman virgin should be more than woman.
Are we not early taught to mock at pain,

And look on danger with undaunted eyes?
But what are dangers, what the ghastliest form
Of death itself?—Oh! were I only bid
To rush into the Tiber's foaming wave,
Or from the height
Of yon Tarpeian rock, whose giddy steep
Has turn'd me pale with horror at the sight,
I'd think the task were nothing! but to bear
These strange vicissitudes of torturing pain,
To fear, to doubt, and to despair as I do—

Valeria. And why despair? Have we so idly
learn'd

The noblest lessons of our infant days,
Our trust above? Does there not still remain
The wretch's last retreat, the gods, Horatia?
'Tis from their awful wills our evils spring,
And at their altars may we find relief.
Say, shall we thither?—Look not thus dejected,
But answer me. A confidence in them,
Ev'n in this crisis of our fate, will calm
Thy troubled soul, and fill thy breast with hope.

Horatia. Talk not of hope! What should I hope!
That Alba conquer?—Cursed be every thought
Which looks that way!

Valeria. Forbear, forbear, Horatia;
Nor fright me with the thought. Rome cannot fall.
Think on the glorious battles she has fought;
Has she once fail'd, though oft exposed to danger?
And has not her immortal founder promis'd
That she should rise the mistress of the world?

Horatia. And if Rome conquers, then Horatia
dies.

Valeria. Why wilt thou form vain images of
horror,

Industrious to be wretched? Is it then
Become impossible that Rome should triumph,
And Curatius live? He must, he shall;
Protecting gods shall spread their shields around
him,

And love shall combat in Horatia's cause.

Horatia. Think'st thou so meanly of him?—No,
Valeria;

His soul's too great to give me such a trial;
Or could it ever come, I think, myself,
Thus lost in love, thus abject as I am,
I should despise the slave, who dar'd survive
His country's ruin. Ye immortal powers!
I love his fame too well, his spotless honour,
At least I hope I do, to wish him mine
On any terms which he must blush to own.

(*Shout.*)

What means that shout?—Might we not ask,
Valeria?

Didst thou not wish me to the temple!—Come,
I will attend thee thither; the kind gods
Perhaps may ease this throbbing heart, and spread
At least a temporary calm within.

Valeria. Alas, Horatia! 'tis not to the temple
That thou wouldst fly; the shout alone alarms
thee.

But do not thus anticipate thy fate;
Why shouldst thou learn each chance of varying
war?

Stay but an hour, perhaps, and thou shalt know
The whole at once. I'll send—I'll fly myself
To ease thy doubts, and bring thee news of joy.

Horatius. (*Without.*) What lo! Vindicium.

Valeria. Hark! 'tis thy father's voice, he comes
to cheer thee.

Enter HORATIUS and VALERIUS.

Horatius. (*Entering.*) News from the camp, my
child!—

Save you, sweet maid! (*Seeing Valeria.*)
Your brother brings the tidings, for, alas!
I am no warrior now; my useless age,
Far from the paths of honour, loiters here
In sluggish inactivity at home.
Yet I remember—

Horatia. You'll forgive us, sir,
If with impatience we expect the tidings.

Horatius. I had forgot; the thoughts of what I
was

Engross'd my whole attention. Pray, young soldier,
Relate it for me; you beheld the scene,
And can report it justly.

Valerius. Gentle lady,
The scene was piteous, though its end be peace.

Horatia. Peace! O, my fluttering heart! by
what kind means?

Valerius. 'Twere tedious, lady, and unnecessary
To paint the disposition of the field;
Suffice it, we were arm'd, and front to front
The adverse legions heard the trumpet's sound:
But vain was the alarm, for motionless,
And wrapt in thought, they stopp'd; the kindred
ranks

Had caught each other's eyes, nor dar'd to lift
The faltering spear against the breast they lov'd.
Again the alarm was given, and now they seem'd
Preparing to engage, when once again
They hung their drooping heads, and inward
mourn'd;

'Then nearer drew, and at the third alarm,
Casting their swords and useless shields aside,
Rush'd to each other's arms.

Horatius. 'T was so, just so,
(Though I was then a child, yet I have heard
My mother, weeping, oft relate the story)
Soft pity touch'd the breast of mighty chiefs,
Romans and Sabines, when the matrons rush'd
Between their meeting armies, and oppos'd
Their helpless infants, and their heaving breasts,
To their advancing swords, and bade them there
Sheathe all their vengeance. But I interrupt you—
Proceed, Valerius; they would hear the event.

And yet, methinks, the Albans—pray go on.
Valerius. Our king Hostilius from a rising
mound

Beheld the tender interview, and join'd
His friendly tears with theirs; then swift advanc'd,
Ev'n to the thickest press, and cried, My friends,
If thus we love, why are we enemies?
Shall stern ambition, rivalry of power,
Subdue the soft humanity within us?
Are we not join'd by every tie of kindred?
And can we find no method to compose
These jars of honour, these nice principles
Of virtue, which infest the noblest mind?

Horatius. There spoke his country's father! this
transcends

The flight of earth-born kings, whose low ambition
But tends to lay the face of nature waste,
And blast creation!—How was it receiv'd?

Valerius. As he himself could wish, with eager
transport.

In short, the Roman and the Alban chiefs
In council have determin'd, that since glory
Must have her victims, and each rival state,
Aspiring to dominion, scorns to yield,
From either army shall be chose three champions,
To fight the cause alone, and whate'er state
Shall prove superior, their acknowledged power
Shall fix the imperial seat, and both unite
Beneath one common head.

Horatia. Kind heaven, I thank thee!

Bless'd be the friendly grief, that touch'd their
souls!

And bless'd the tongue,
Which brings the gentle tidings!

Valeria. Now, Horatia,

Your idle fears are o'er.

Horatia. Yet one remains.

Who are the champions? are they yet elected?
Has Rome—

Valerius. The Roman chiefs now meet in council,
And ask the presence of the sage Horatius.

Horatius. (After a pause.) But still, methinks,
I like not this, to trust
The Roman cause to such a slender hazard—
Three combatants!—'tis dangerous—
Horatia. (In a fright.) My father!
Horatius. I might, perhaps, prevent it—
Horatia. Do not, sir,
Oppose the kind decree.
Valerius. Rest satisfied,
Sweet lady, 'tis so solemnly agreed to,
Not even *Horatius's* advice can shake it.
Horatius. And yet, 'twere well to end these civil
broils:
The neighb'ring states might take advantage of
them.
'Would I were young again! how glorious
Were death in such a cause!—And yet, who
knows,
Some of my boys may be selected for it—
Perhaps may conquer—Grant me that, kind gods,
And close my eyes in transport!—Come, *Valerius*,
I'll but despatch some necessary orders,
And straight attend thee. Daughter, if thou lov'st
Thy brothers, let thy prayers be pour'd to heav'n,
That one at least may share the glorious task. [*Exit.*]
Valerius. Rome cannot trust her cause to wor-
thier hands.
They bade me greet you, lady. (To *Horatia.*)
Horatia. (With some hesitation.) My brothers,
gentle sir, you said were well.
Saw you their noble friends, the *Curiatii*?
The truce, perhaps, permitted it.
Valerius. Yes, lady,
I left them jocund in your brothers' tent,
Like friends, whom envious storms awhile had
parted,
Joying to meet again.
Horatia. Sent they no message?
Valerius. None, fair one, but such general salu-
tation
As friends would bring unbid.
Horatia. Said *Caius* nothing?
Valerius. *Caius*?
Horatia. Ay, *Caius*: did he mention me?
Valerius. 'Twas slightly, if he did, and 'scapes
me now—
O yes, I do remember, when your brother
Ask'd, him, in jest, if he had aught to send,
To sooth a love-sick maid (your pardon, lady)
He smil'd, and cried, *Glory's* the soldier's mistress.
Horatia. Sir, you'll excuse me—something of
importance—
My father may have business—Oh, *Valeria*!
(Aside to *Valeria.*)
Talk to thy brother, know the fatal truth
I dread to hear, and let me learn to die,
If *Curiatius* has indeed forgot me.
Valerius. She seems disorder'd?
Valeria. Has she not cause?
Can you administer the baneful potion,
And wonder at the effect?
Valerius. You talk in riddles!
Valeria. They're riddles, brother, which your
heart unfolds,
Though you affect surprise. Was *Curiatius*
Indeed so cold? Poor shallow artifice,
The trick of hopeless love! I saw it plainly.
Yet what could you propose? An hour's uneasiness
To poor *Horatia*; for be sure by that time
She sees him, and your deep-wrought schemes are
air.
Valerius. What could I do? this peace has
ruin'd me;
While war continued, I had gleams of hope,
Some lucky chance might rid me of my rival,
And time efface his image in her breast.
But now—
Valeria. Yes, now you must resolve to follow

The advice I gave you first, and root this passion
Entirely from your heart; for know, she dotes,
Ev'n to distraction dotes on *Curiatius*;
And every fear she felt, while danger threaten'd,
Will now endear him more.
Valerius. Cruel *Valeria*,
You triumph in my pain!
Valeria. By heaven, I do not!
I only would extirpate every thought
Which gives you pain, nor leave one foolish wish
For hope to dally with.
Valerius. Yet once more assist me—
Nay, turn not from me, by my soul I meant not
To interrupt their loves.—Yet, should some acci-
dent,
'Tis not impossible, divide their hearts,
I might, perhaps, have hope: therefore, till mar-
riage
Cuts off all commerce, and confirms me wretched,
Be it thy task, my sister, with fond stories,
Such as our ties of blood may countenance,
To paint thy brother's worth, his power in arms,
His favour with the king; then mention many a
fair,
No matter whom, that sighs to call you sister.
Valeria. Well, well, away—Yet tell me, ere
you go,
How did this lover talk of his *Horatia*?
Valerius. Why will you mention that ungrateful
subject?
Think what you've heard me breathe a thousand
times,
When my whole soul dissolv'd in tenderness;
'Twas rapture all; what lovers only feel,
Or can express when felt. He had been here,
But sudden orders from the camp detain'd him.
Farewell; *Horatius* waits me—but remember,
My life, nay, more than life, depends on you. [*Exit.*]
Valeria. Poor youth! he knows not how I feel
his anguish,
Yet dare not seem to pity what I feel.
How shall I act betwixt this friend and brother!
Should she suspect his passion, she may doubt
My friendship too; and yet to tell it her
Were to betray his cause. No, let my heart
With the same blameless caution still proceed;
To each inclining most as most distrust:
Be just to both, and leave to heav'n the rest! [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in the house of *Horatius*.*Enter HORATIA and VALERIA.*

Horatia, Valeria,
This seeming negligence of *Curiatius*
Betrays a secret coldness at the heart.
May not long absence, or the charms of war,
Have damp'd, at least, if not effac'd, his passion?
I know not what to think.
Valeria. Think, my *Horatia*,
That you're a lover, and have learn'd the art
To raise vain scruples, and torment yourself
With every distant hint of fancied ill.
Your *Curiatius* still remains the same.
My brother idly trifled with your passion,
Or might, perhaps, unheedingly relate
What you too nearly feel. But see, your father!
Horatia. He seems transported! sure some
happy news
Has brought him back thus early. Oh, my heart!
I long, yet dread, to ask him. Speak, *Valeria*!

Enter HORATIUS.

Valeria. You're soon return'd, my lord.
Horatius. Return'd, *Valeria*!
My life, my youth's return'd: I read in air!
I cannot speak; my joy's too great for utterance.

Oh, I could weep!—my sons, my sons are chosen
Their country's combatants; not one, but all!

Horatia. My brothers, said you, sir?

Horatius. All three, my child,

All three are champions in the cause of Rome.

Oh, happy state of fathers! thus to feel

New warmth revive, and springing life renew'd

Even on the margin of the grave!

Valeria. The time

Of combat, is it fix'd?

Horatius. This day, this hour

Perhaps, decides our doom.

Valeria. And is it known

With whom they must engage?

Horatius. Not yet, Valeria;

But with impatience we expect each moment

The resolutions of the Alban senate.

And soon may they arrive, that ere we quit

Yon hostile field, the chiefs who dar'd oppose

Rome's rising glories, may with shame confess

The gods protect the empire they have rais'd.—

Where are thy smiles, Horatia? Whence proceeds

This sullen silence, when my thronging joys

Want words to speak them? Pr'ythee, talk of

empire,

Talk of those darlings of my soul, thy brothers.

Call them what'er wild fancy can suggest,

Their country's pride, the boast of future times,

The dear defence, the guardian gods of Rome!—

By heav'n, thou stand'st unmov'd, nor feels thy

breast

The charms of glory, the extatic warmth

Which beams new life, and lifts us nearer heaven!

Horatia. My gracious father, with surprise and
transport

I heard the tidings, as becomes your daughter.

And like your daughter, were our sex allow'd

The noble privilege which man usurps,

Could die with pleasure in my country's cause.

But yet, permit a sister's weakness, sir,

To feel the pangs of nature, and to dread

The fate of those she loves, however glorious.

And sure they cannot all survive a conflict

So desperate as this.

Horatius. Survive! By heaven,

I could not hope that they should all survive.

No; let them fall. If from their glorious deaths

Rome's freedom spring, I shall be nobly paid

For every sharpest pang the parent feels.

Had I a thousand sons, in such a cause

I could behold them bleeding at my feet,

And thank the gods with tears!

Enter PUBLIUS HORATIUS.

Pub. My father! (*Offering to kneel.*)

Horatius. Hence!

Kneel not to me—stand off; and let me view

At distance, and with reverential awe,

The champion of my country! Oh, my boy!

That I should live to this—my soul's too full;

Let this, and this speak for me—Bless thee, bless
thee! (*Embracing him.*)

But wherefore art thou absent from the camp?

Where are thy brothers? Has the Alban state

Determin'd? Is the time of combat fix'd?

Pub. Think not, my lord, that filial reverence,

However due, had draw me from the field,

Where nobler duty calls; a patriot's soul

Can feel no humbler ties, nor knows the voice

Of kindred, when his country claims his aid.

It was the king's command I should attend you,

Else had I stay'd till wreaths immortal graced

My brows, and made thee proud indeed to see

Beneath thy roof, and bending for thy blessing

Not thine, Horatius, but the son of Rome!

Horatius. Oh, virtuous pride!—'tis bliss too ex-

quisite

For human sense!—thus let me answer thee.

(*Embracing him again.*)

Where are my other boys?

Pub. They only wait

Till Alba's loit'ring chiefs declare her champions,

Our future victims, sir, and with the news

Will greet their father's ear.

Horatius. It shall not need.

Myself will to the field. Come, let us haste,

My old blood boils, and my tumultuous spirits

Pant for the onset. Oh! for one short hour

Of vigorous youth, that I might share the toil

Now with my boys, and be the next my last!

Horatia. My brother!

Pub. My Horatia! ere the dews

Of evening fall, thou shalt with transport own me;

Shalt own thy country's saviour in thy arms,

Or bathe his honest bier with tears of joy.

Thy lover greets thee, and complains of absence

With many a sigh, and many a longing look

Sent tow'rd the towers of Rome.

Horatia. Methinks, a lover

Might take th' advantage of the truce, and bear

His kind complaints himself, not trust his vows

To other tongues, or be obliged to tell

The passing winds his passion.

Pub. Dearest sister,

He with impatience waits the lucky moment

That may with honour bear him to your arms.

Didst thou but hear how tenderly he talks,

How blames the dull delay of Alban councils,

And chides the ling'ring minutes as they pass,

Till fate determines, and the tedious chiefs

Permit his absence, thou wouldst pity him.

But soon, my sister, soon shall every bar

Which thwarts thy happiness be far away.

We are no longer enemies to Alba,

This day unites us, and to-morrow's sun

May hear thy vows, and make my friend, my bro-

ther.

Horatius. (*Having talked apart with Valeria.*)

'Tis truly Roman! Here's a maid, Horatia,

Laments her brother lost the glorious proof

Of dying for his country. Come, my son,

Her softness will infect thee; pr'ythee, leave her.

Horatia. (*Looking first to her father, and then*

tenderly on her brother.)

Not till my soul has pour'd its wishes for him.

Hear me, dread god of war, protect and save him!

(*Kneeling.*)

For thee, and thy immortal Rome, he lights!

Dash the proud spear from every hostile hand

That dares oppose him; may each Alban chief

Fly from his presence, or his vengeance feel!

And when in triumph he returns to Rome, (*Rising.*)

Hail him, ye maids, with grateful songs of praise,

And scatter all the blooming spring before him;

Curs'd be the envious brow that smiles not then,

Curs'd be the wretch that wears one mark of

sorrow,

Or flies not thus with open arms to greet him!

Enter TULLUS HOSTILIUS, VALERIUS, and

Guards.

Valerius. The king, my lord, approaches.

Horatius. Gracious sir,

Whence comes this condescension?

Could I have found a nobler messenger,

I would have spar'd myself th' ungrateful task

Of this day's embassy, for much I fear

My news will want a welcome.

Horatius. Mighty king!

Forgive an old man's warmth—they have not sure

Made choice of other combatants! My sons,

Must they not fight for Rome?

Tullus. Too sure they must.

Horatius. Then I am blest.

Tullus. But that they must engage

Will hurt thee most, when thou shalt know with whom.

Horatius. I care not whom.

Tullus. Suppose your nearest friends, The Curiatii, were the Alban choice, Could you bear that? Could you, young man, support
A conflict there?

Pub. I could perform my duty,
Great sir; though even a brother should oppose me.

Tullus. Thou art a Roman! Let thy king embrace thee.

Horatius. And let thy father catch thee from his arms!

Tullus. Know then, that trial must be thine. The Alban

With envy saw one family produce
Three chiefs to whom their country dar'd entrust
The Roman cause, and scorn'd to be undone.

Horatia. Then I am lost indeed! (*Swoons.*)

Pub. My sister!

Valeria. My Horatia!

Horatius. Oh, foolish girl, to shame thy father thus!

Here, bear her in.

(*Horatia is carried in, Valerius and Valeria follow.*)

I am concern'd, my sovereign,
That even the meanest part of me should blast
With impious grief a cause of so much glory.
But let the virtue of my boy excuse it.

Tullus. It does most amply. She has cause for sorrow.

The shock was sudden, and might well alarm
A firmer bosom.

We leave her to her tears. For you, young soldier,
You must prepare for combat. Some few hours
Are all that are allow'd you. But I charge you
Try well your heart, and strengthen every thought
Of patriot in you. Think how dreadful 'tis
To plant a dagger in the breast you love;
To spurn the ties of nature, and forget
In one short hour whole years of virtuous friendship.

Think well on that.

Pub. I do, my gracious sovereign;
And think, the more I dare subdue affection,
The more my glory.

Tullus. True; but yet consider,
Is it an easy task to change affections?
In the dread onset can your meeting eyes
Forget their usual intercourse, and wear
At once the frown of war, and stern defiance?
Will not each look recall the fond remembrance
Of childhood past, when the whole open soul
Breath'd cordial love, and plighted many a vow
Of tend'ring import! Think on that, young soldier,

And tell me if thy breast be still unmov'd?

Pub. Think not, oh king! how'er resolv'd on combat,

I sit so loosely to the bonds of nature,
As not to feel their force. I feel it strongly.
I love the Curiatii, and would serve them
At life's expense: but here a nobler cause
Demands my sword: for all connexions else,
All private duties are subordinate
To what we owe the public. Partial ties,
Of son and father, husband, friend, or brother,
Owe their enjoyments to the public safety,
And without that were vain. Nor need we, sir,
Cast off humanity, and to be heroes
Cease to be men. As in our earliest days,
While yet we learn'd the exercise of war,
We strove together, not as enemies,
Yet conscious each of his peculiar worth,
And scorning each to yield; so will we now

Engage with ardent, not with hostile minds,
Not fir'd with rage, but emulous of fame.

Tullus. Now I dare trust thee; go and teach thy brothers

To think like thee, and conquest is your own.
This is true courage, not the brutal force
Of vulgar heroes, but the firm resolve
Of virtue and of reason. Come, Horatius,
Thy other sons shall meet thee at the camp;
For now I do bethink me, 'tis not fit
They should behold their sister thus alarm'd.
Haste, soldier, and detain them.

(*To one of the Guards.*)

Horatius. Gracious sir,
We'll follow on the instant.

Tullus. Then farewell.

When next we meet, 'tis Rome and liberty!

(*Exit with Guards.*)

Horatius. Come, let me arm thee for the glorious toil.

I have a sword, whose lightning oft has blaz'd
Dreadfully fatal to my country's foes;
This shalt thou bear; myself will gird it on,
And lead thee forth to death or victory. (*Going.*)
And yet, my Publius, shall I own my weakness?
Though I detest the cause from whence they spring,
I feel thy sister's sorrows like a father.
She was my soul's delight.

Pub. And may remain so.

This sudden shock has but alarm'd her virtue,
Not quite subdued its force. At least, my father,
Time's lenient hand will teach her to endure
The ills of chance, and reason conquer love.

Horatius. Should we not see her?

Pub. By no means, my lord;

You heard the king's commands about my brothers,
And we have hearts as tender sure as they.
Might I advise, you should confine her closely,
Lest she infect the matrons with her grief,
And bring a stain we should not wish to fix
On the Horatian name.

Horatius. It shall be so.

We'll think no more of her. 'Tis glory calls,
And humbler passions beat alarms in vain. (*Exit.*)

As Horatius goes off, HORATIA enters at another door.

Horatia. Where is my brother? Oh! my dearest
Publius,

If e'er you loved Horatia, ever felt
That tenderness which you have seem'd to feel,
Oh, hear her now!

Pub. What wouldst thou, my Horatia?

Horatia. I know not what I would—I'm on the rack,

Despair and madness tear my lab'ring soul.
And yet, my brother, sure you might relieve me.
Pub. How? by what means? By heaven, I'll die to do it.

Horatia. You might decline the combat.

Pub. Ha!

Horatia. I do not

Expect it from thee. Pr'ythee, look more kindly,
And yet, is the request so very hard?
I only ask thee not to plunge thy sword
Into the breast thou lovest, not kill thy friend;
Is that so hard? I might have said thy brother.

Pub. What canst thou mean? Beware, beware,
Horatia;

Thou know'st I dearly love thee, nay, thou know'st
I love the man with whom I must engage;
Yet hast thou faintly read thy brother's soul,
If thou canst think entreaties have the power,
Though urg'd with all the tenderness of tears,
To shake his settled purpose: they may make
My task more hard, and my soul bleed within me,
But cannot touch my virtue.

Horatia. 'Tis not virtue

Which contradicts our nature, 'tis the rage
Of over-weening pride. Has Rome no champions
She could oppose but you? Are there not thou-
sands

As warm for glory, and as tried in arms,
Who might without a crime aspire to conquest,
Or die with honest fame?

Pub. Away, away!

Talk to thy lover thus. But 'tis not Caius
Thou wouldst have infamous.

Horatia. Oh! kill me not

With such unkind reproaches. Yes, I owe
I love him, more—

Pub. Than a chaste Roman maid
Should dare confess.

Horatia. Should dare! What means my brother?
I had my father's sanction on my love,
And duty taught me first to feel its power.
Should dare confess! Is that the dreadful crime!
Alas! but spare him, spare thy friend, Horatius,
And I will cast him from my breast for ever.
Will that oblige thee? Only let him die
By other hands, and I will learn to hate him.

Pub. Why wilt thou talk thus madly? Love him
still!

And if we fall the victims of our country,
(Which heav'n avert!) wed, and enjoy him freely.

Horatia. Oh, never, never. What, my country's
bane!

The murderer of my brother! may the gods
First tear me, blast me, scatter me on winds,
And pour out each unheard-of vengeance on me!

Pub. Do not torment thyself thus idly—Go,
Compose thyself, and be again my sister.

Enter HORATIUS with the sword.

Horatius. This sword in Veii's field—What dost
thou here?

Leave him, I charge thee, girl—Come, come, my
Publius,

Let's haste where duty calls.

Horatia. What! to the field?

He must not, shall not go;

Oh, if you have not quite cast off affection!

If you detest not your distracted sister—

Horatius. Shame of thy race, why dost thou hang
upon him?

Wouldst thou entail eternal infamy
On him, on me, and all?

Horatia. Indeed I would not:

I know I ask impossibilities;

Yet pity me, my father!

Pub. Pity thee!

Begone, fond wretch, nor urge my temper thus.

By heaven, I love thee as a brother ought.

Then hear my last resolve; if Fate, averse

To Rome and us, determine my destruction,

I charge thee wed thy lover; he will then

Deserve thee nobly. Or, if kinder gods

Propitious hear the prayers of suppliant Rome,

And he should fall by me, I then expect

No weak upbraiding for a lover's death,

But such returns as shall become thy birth,

A sister's thanks for having sav'd her country.
[Exit.]

Horatia. Yet stay—yet hear me, Publius—

Horatius. Forbear, rash girl, thou'lt tempt thy
father

To do an outrage might perhaps distract him.

Horatia. Alas! forgive me, sir, I'm very wretched,

Indeed I am—yet I will strive to stop

This swelling grief, and bear it like your daughter.

Do but forgive me, sir.

Horatius. I do, I do—

Go in, my child, the gods may find a way

To make thee happy yet. But on thy duty,

Whate'er reports may reach, or fears alarm thee,

I charge thee come not to the field.

Horatia. I will not,
If you command it, sir. But will you then,
As far as cruel honour may permit,
Remember that your poor Horatia's life
Hangs on this dreadful contest! [Exit.]

Horatius. (Looking after her.) Spite of my
boasted strength, her grief unmans me.
But let her from my thoughts! The patriot's
breast

No hopes, no fears, but for his country knows,
And in her danger loses private woes. [Exit.]

VALERIUS and VALERIA meeting.

Valerius. Now, my Valeria, where's the charm-
ing she

That calls me to her? with a lover's haste
I fly to execute the dear command.

Valeria. 'Tis not the lover, but the friend she
wants.

If thou dar'st own that name.

Valerius. The friend, my sister!
There's more than friendship in a lover's breast,
More warm, more tender is the flame he feels—

Valeria. Alas! these raptures suit not her
distress:

She seeks th' indulgent friend, whose sober sense,
Free from the mists of passion, might direct
Her jarring thoughts, and plead her doubtful cause.

Valerius. Am I that friend? Oh! did she turn
her thought

On me for that kind office?

Valeria. Yes, Valerius.

She chose you out to be her advocate

To Curiatius; 'tis the only hope

She now dares cherish; her relentless brother

With scorn rejects her tears, her father flies her,

And only you remain to sooth her cares,

And save her ere she sinks.

Valerius. Her advocate

To Curiatius!

Valeria. 'Tis to him she sends you,

To urge her suit, and win him from the field.

But come, her sorrows will more strongly plead

Than all my grief can utter.

Valerius. To my rival!

To Curiatius plead her cause, and teach

My tongue a lesson which my heart abhors!

Impossible! Valeria, pr'ythee, say

Thou saw'st me not; the business of the camp

Confined me there. Farewell. (Going.)

Valeria. What means my brother!

You cannot leave her now; for shame, turn back,

Is this the virtue of a Roman youth?

Oh, by these tears!—

Valerius. They flow in vain, Valeria;
Nay, and thou know'st they do. Oh, earth and
heav'n!

This combat was the means my happier stars

Found out to save me from the brink of ruin;

And can I plead against it, turn assassin

On my own life?

Valeria. Yet thou canst murder her

Thou dost pretend to love; away, deceiver!

I'll seek some worthier messenger to plead

In beauty's cause; but first inform Horatia,

How much Valerius is the friend she thought him.
(Going.)

Valerius. Oh, heavens! stay, sister; 'tis an ar-
duous task.

Valeria. I know the task is hard, and thought I
knew

Thy virtue, too.

Valerius. I must, I will obey thee.

Lead on—yet, pr'ythee, for a moment leave me,

Till I can recollect my scatter'd thoughts,

And dare to be unhappy.

Valeria. My Valerius!

I fly to tell her you but wait her pleasure. [Exit.]

Valerius. Yes, I will undertake this hateful office;
It never can succeed. Yet, at this instant,
It may be dang'rous, while the people melt
With fond compassion. No, it cannot be:
His resolution's fix'd, and virtuous pride
Forbids an alteration. To attempt it
Makes her my friend, and may afford hereafter
A thousand tender hours to move my suit.
That hope determines all. [Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter HORATIA and VALERIA. *Horatia with a scarf in her hand.*

Horatia. Where is thy brother? Wherefore stays he thus?

Did you conjure him? did he say he'd come?
I have no brothers now, and fly to him
As my last refuge. Did he seem averse
To thy entreaties? Are all brothers so?

Valeria. Dear maid,
Restrain your sorrows; I've already told you
My brother will, with transport, execute
Whatever you command.

Horatia. Oh! wherefore, then,
Is he away? Each moment now is precious;
If lost, 'tis lost for ever, and if gain'd,
Long scenes of lasting peace, and smiling years
Of happiness unhop'd-for wait upon it.

Valeria. He will anon be here; pray, be calm;
Success is thine if it depends on him. [Exit.]

Horatia. Success! alas, perhaps, even now too late

I labour to protect him; the dread arm
Of vengeance is already stretch'd against him,
And he must fall. Yet, let me strive to save him.
Yes, thou dear pledge, design'd for happier hours,
(*To the scarf.*)

The gift of nuptial love, thou shalt, at least,
Essay thy power.
Oft as I framed thy web,
He sat beside me, and would say, in sport,
This present, which thy love designs for me,
Shall be the future bond of peace betwixt us:
By this we'll swear a lasting love; by this,
Through the sweet round of all our days to come,
Ask what thou wilt, and Curiatius grants it.
Oh! I shall try thee nearly now, dear youth!
Glory and I are rivals for thy heart,
And one must conquer.

Enter VALERIUS.

Valerius. Save you, gracious lady!
On the first message which my sister sent me
I had been here, but was oblig'd by office,
Ere to their champions each resign'd her charge,
To ratify the league 'twixt Rome and Alba.

Horatia. Are they engaged, then?
Valerius. No, not yet engaged;
Soft pity for awhile suspends the onset;
The sight of near relations, arm'd in fight
Against each other, touch'd the gazers' hearts;
And senators on each side have proposed
To change the combatants.

Horatia. My blessings on them!
Think you they will succeed?

Valerius. The chiefs themselves
Are resolute to fight.

Horatia. Insatiate virtue!
I must not to the field; I am confin'd
A prisoner here: or, sure, these tears would move
Their flinty breasts. Oh! sir, forgive a maid,
Who dares, in spite of modesty, confess
Too soft a passion. Will you pardon me,
If I entreat you to the field again,

An humble suitor from the veriest wretch
That ever knew distress!

Valerius. Dear lady, speak!

What would you I should do?

Horatia. Oh! bear this to him.

Valerius. To whom?

Horatia. To Curiatius bear this scarf:
And tell him, if he ever truly lov'd,
If all the vows he breath'd were not false lures
To catch th' unwary mind, (and, sure, they were
not!)

Oh! tell him how he may with honour cease
To urge his cruel right; the senators
Of Rome and Alba will approve such mildness.
Tell him his wife, if he will own that name,
Entreats him from the field; his lost Horatia
Begs on her trembling knees he would not tempt
A certain fate, and murder her he loves.

Tell him, if he consents, she fondly swears,
By every god the varying world adores,
To know no brother and no sire but him;
With him, if honour's harsh commands require it,
She'll wander forth, and seek some distant home,
Nor ever think of Rome or Alba more.

Valerius. Could I, sweet lady,
But paint your grief with half the force I feel it,
I need but tell it him, and he must yield.

Horatia. It may be so. Stay, stay; be sure you
tell him,

If he rejects my suit, no power on earth
Shall force me to his arms.

Valeria. Away, my brother!

But, oh! for pity, do your office justly.

(*Aside to Valerius.*)

Let not your passion blind your reason now;
But urge your cause with ardour.

Valerius. By my soul,
I will, Valeria. Her distress alarms me;
And I have now no interest but her's. [Exit.]

Horatia. He's gone. I had a thousand things—
And, yet, I'm glad he's gone. Think you, Valeria,
Your brother will delay? They may engage
Before he reaches them.

Valeria. The field's so near,
That a few minutes brings him to the place.
My dear Horatia, success is your's already.

Horatia. And yet, should I succeed, the hard-
gain'd strife

May chance to rob me of my future peace.
He may not always with the eyes of love
Look on that fondness which has stabb'd his fame.
He may regret too late the sacrifice
He made to love, and a fond woman's weakness;
And think the milder joys of social life
But ill repay him for the mighty loss
Of patriot reputation.

Valeria. Pray, forbear;
And search not thus into eventful time
For ills to come.
Like some distemper'd wretch, your wayward
mind

Rejects all nourishment, or turns to gall
The very balm that should relieve its anguish.
He will admire thy love, which could persuade him
To give up glory, for the milder triumph,
Of heartfelt ease, and soft humanity.

Horatia. I fain would hope so. Yet we hear not
of him.

Your brother, much I fear, has sued in vain.
Could we not send to urge this slow express?
This dread uncertainty! I long to know
My life or death at once.

Valeria. Shall I to the walls?

I may from thence with ease survey the field,
And can despatch a messenger each moment,
To tell thee all goes well.

Horatia. My best Valeria!

Fly, then;

Thou art a Roman maid; and, though thy friend-
ship
Detains thee here with one who scarce deserves
That sacred name, art anxious for thy country.
But yet, for charity, think kindly of me;
For thou shalt find by the event, Valeria,
I am a Roman, too, however wretched.

[Exit Valeria.]

Am I a Roman, then? Ye powers! I dare not
Resolve the fatal question I propose.
If dying would suffice, I were a Roman:
But to stand up against this storm of passions,
Transcends a woman's weakness. Hark! what
noise?

'Tis news from Curiatius! Love, I thank thee!

Enter VOLSCINIUS.

Well, does he yield? Distract me not with silence.
Say, in one word—

Vol. Your father—

Horatia. What of him?

Would he not let him yield? Oh! cruel father!

Vol. Madam, he's here—

Horatia. Who?

Vol. Borne by his attendants.

Horatia. What mean'st thou?

Enter HORATIUS, led in by his Servants.

Horatius. Lead me yet a little onward;
I shall recover straight.

Horatia. My gracious sire!

Horatius. Lend me thy arm, Horatia. So, my
child,

Be not surpris'd; an old man must expect
These little shocks of nature; they are hints
To ward us of our end.

Horatia. How are you, sir?

Horatius. Better, much better. My frail body
could not
Support the swelling tumult of my soul.

Horatia. No accident, I hope, alarm'd you, sir.
My brothers—

Horatius. Here, go to the field again,
You, Cautus and Vindicius, and observe
Each circumstance. I shall be glad to hear
The manner of the fight.

Horatia. Are they engag'd?

Horatius. They are, Horatia. But, first, let me
thank thee

For staying from the field. I would have seen
The fight myself, but this unlucky illness
Has forced me to retire? Where is thy friend?

Enter a Servant, who gives a paper to Horatia, and
retires.

What paper's that? Why dost thou tremble so?
Here, let me open it. (Takes the paper, and reads
it.) From Curiatius!

Horatia. Oh! keep me not in this suspense, my
father!

Relieve me from the rack.

Horatius. He tells thee here,
He dares not do an action that would make him
Unworthy of thy love; and, therefore—

Horatia. Dies!

Well, I am satisfied.

Horatius. I see by this
Thou hast endeavour'd to persuade thy lover
To quit the combat. Couldst thou think, Horatia,
He'd sacrifice his country to a woman?

Horatia. I know not what I thought. He proves
too plainly,
Whate'er it was, I was deceiv'd in him
Whom I applied to.

Horatius. Do not think so, daughter:
Could he with honour have declin'd the fight,
I should myself have join'd in thy request,

And forc'd him from the field. But think, my
child,

Had he consented, and had Alba's cause,
Supported by another arm, been baffled,
What, then, couldst thou expect? Would he not
curse

His foolish love, and hate thee for thy fondness?
Nay, think, perhaps, 'twas artifice in thee
To aggrandize thy race, and lift their fame
Triumphant o'er his ruin and his country's.
Think well on that, and reason must convince
thee.

Horatia. (Wildly.) Alas! had reason ever yet
the power

To talk down grief, or bid the tortur'd wretch
Not feel his anguish? 'Tis impossible.
Could reason govern, I should now rejoice
They were engaged, and count the tedious mo-
ments

Till conquest smiled, and Rome again was free.
Could reason govern, I should beg of heaven
To guide my brother's sword, and plunge it deep
Ev'n in the bosom of the man I love;
I should forget he ever won my soul,
Forget 'twas your command that bade me love
him,

Nay, fly, perhaps, to yon detested field,
And spurn with scorn his mangled body from me.

Horatius. Why, wilt thou talk thus? Pr'ythee,
be more calm.

I can forgive thy tears; they flow from nature;
And could have gladly wish'd the Alba's state
Had found as other enemies to vanquish.
But heaven has will'd it, and heaven's will be
done!

The glorious expectation of success
Buoy's up my soul, nor lets a thought intrude
To dash my promis'd joys. What steady valour
Beam'd from their eyes! just so, if fancy's power
May form conjecture from his after-age,
Rome's founder must have look'd, when, warm in
youth

And flush'd with future conquest, forth he march'd
Against proud Acron, with whose bleeding spoils
He graced the altar of Feretrian Jove.
Methinks I feel recover'd: I might venture
Forth to the field again. What, ho! Volscinius!
Attend me to the camp.

Horatia. My dearest father,
Let me entreat you stay; the tumult there
Will discompose you, and a quick release
May prove most dangerous. I'll restrain my tears,
If they offend you.

Horatius. Well, I'll be advis'd.
'Twere now too late; ere this they must have con-
quer'd.

And here's the happy messenger of glory.

Enter VALERIA.

Valeria. All's lost, all's ruin'd! freedom is no
more!

Horatius. What dost thou say?

Valeria. That Rome's subdued by Alba.

Horatius. It cannot be. Where are my sons?
All dead?

Valeria. Publius is still alive; the other two
Have paid the fatal debt they ow'd their country.
Horatius. Publius alive! You must mistake,
Valeria.

He knows his duty better.

He must be dead, or Rome victorious.

Valeria. Thousands as well as I beheld the
combat.

After his brother's death he stood alone,
And acted wonders against three assailants;
Till forced, at last, to save himself by flight—

Horatius. By flight! And did the soldiers let
him pass?

Oh! I am ill again! The coward villain!
(*Throwing himself into his chair.*)

Horatia. Alas! my brothers!

Horatius. Weep not for them, girl.

They've died a death which kings themselves might
envy;

And whilst they lived, they saw their country free.

Oh! had I perish'd with them! But for him

Whose impious flight dishonours all his race,

Tears a fond father's heart, and tamely barbers

For poor precarious life his country's glory,

Weep, weep for him, and let me join my tears!

Valeria. What could he do, my lord, when three

opposed him?

Horatius. He might have died.

Oh! villain, villain, villain!

And he shall die; this arm shall sacrifice

The life he dared preserve with infamy.

(*Endeavouring to rise.*)

What means this weakness? 'Tis untimely now,

When I should punish an ungrateful boy.

Was this his boasted virtue, which could charm

His cheated sovereign, and brought tears of joy

To my old eyes? So young a hypocrite!

Oh! shame, shame, shame!

Valeria. Have patience, sir; all Rome

Beheld his valour, and approv'd his flight,

Against such opposition.

Horatius. Tell not me!

What's Rome to me? Rome may excuse her

traitor;

But I'm the guardian of my house's honour,

And I will punish. Pray ye, lead me forth;

I would have air. But grant me strength, kind

gods,

To do this act of justice, and I'll own,

Whate'er 'gainst Rome your awful wills decree,

You still are just and merciful to me. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room in Horatius's house.

Enter HORATIUS, VALERIA following.

Horatius. Away, away! I feel my strength re-

new'd,

And I will hunt the villain through the world;

No deserts shall conceal, nor darkness hide him.

He is well skill'd in flight; but he shall find

'Tis not so easy to elude the vengeance

Of a wrong'd father's arm, as to escape

His adversary's sword.

Valeria. Restrain your rage

But for a moment, sir. When you shall hear

The whole unravell'd, you will find he's innocent.

Horatius. It cannot be.

Valeria. And see, my brother comes!

He may, perhaps, relate—

Horatius. I will not hear him;

I will not listen to my shame again.

Enter VALERIUS.

Valerius. I come with kind condolence from the

king,

To sooth a father's grief, and to express—

Horatius. I've heard it all; I pray you, spare

my blushes.

I want not consolation; 'tis enough

They've perish'd for their country. But the third—

Valerius. True; he, indeed, may well supply

your loss,

And calls for all your fondness.

Horatius. All my vengeance:

And he shall have it, sir.

Valerius. My lord, what fault has he committed?

Horatius. Why will you double my confusion

thus?

Is flight no fault?

Valerius. In such a cause as his

'Twas glorious.

Horatius. Glorious! Oh! rare sophistry!

To find a way through infamy to glory!

Valerius. Infamy!

What, was it infamous to save his country?

Is art a crime? Is it the name of flight

We can't forgive, though its ador'd effect

Restor'd us all to freedom, fame, and empire?

Horatius. What fame, what freedom? Who has

sav'd his country?

Valerius. Your son, my lord, has done it.

Horatius. How—when—where?

Valerius. Is't possible! Did not you say you

knew?

Horatius. I care not what I knew. Oh! tell me

all!

Is Rome still free? Has Alba—has my son—

Tell me—

Valerius. Your son, my lord, has slain her cham-

pions.

Horatius. What, Publius?

Valerius. He.

Horatius. Were there not three remaining?

Valerius. True, there were,

But wounded all.

Horatius. Your sister here had told us

That Rome was vanquish'd, that my son was fled—

Valerius. And he did fly; but 'twas that flight

preserv'd us.

All Rome, as well as she, has been deceiv'd.

Horatius. Come, relate it.

Did I not say, Valeria, that my boy

Must needs be dead, or Rome victorious?

I long to hear the manner—Well, Valerius—

Valerius. Your other sons, my lord, had paid

the debt

They ow'd to Rome, and he alone remain'd

'Gainst three opponents, whose united strength,

Though wounded each, and robb'd of half their

force,

Was still too great for his. Awhile he stood

Their fierce assaults, and then, pretended flight

Only to tire his wounded adversaries.

Horatius. Pretended flight, and this succeeded,

ha?

Oh! glorious boy!

Valerius. 'Twas better still, my lord;

For all pursued, but not with equal speed.

Each, eager for the conquest, press'd to reach

him;

Nor did the first, till 'twas too late, perceive

His fainter brothers panting far behind.

Horatius. He took them singly, then? An easy

conquest;

'Twas boy's play only!

Valerius. Never did I see

Such universal joy, as when the last

Sunk on the ground beneath Horatius' sword;

Who seem'd awhile to parley as a friend,

And would have given him life, but Caius scorn'd

it.

Valeria. Caius! Oh! poor Horatia!

Horatius. Peace, I charge thee!

Go, dress thy face in smiles, and bid thy friend

Wake to new transports. Let ambition fire her.

What is a lover lost? There's not a youth

In Rome but will adore her. Kings will seek

For her alliance now, and mightiest chiefs

Be honour'd by her smiles. Will they not, youth?

[*Exit Valeria.*]

Valerius. Most sure, my lord, this day has added

worth

To her whose merit was before unequal'd.

Horatius. How could I doubt his virtue? Mighty

gods!

This is true glory, to preserve his country,

And bid, by one brave act, th' Horatian name

In fame's eternal volumes be enroll'd,
Gracious heaven!

Where is he? Let me fly, and, at his feet,
Forget the father, and implore a pardon
For such injustice.

Valerius. The king, ere this,
Has from the field despatched him;
But, hark! that shout
Which sounds from far, and seems the mingled
voice

Of thousands, speaks him onward on his way.

Horatius. How my heart dances! Yet I blush
to meet him.

But I will on. Come, come, Horatia; leave
Thy sorrow far behind, and let us fly
With open arms to greet our common glory.

[*Exit.*

Enter HORATIA and VALERIA.

Horatia. Yes, I will go; this father's hard com-
mand

Shall be obey'd; and I will meet the conqueror:
But not in smiles.

Valerius. Oh! go not, gentle lady!
Might I advise—

Valeria. Your griefs are yet too fresh,
And may offend him. Do not, my Horatia.

Valerius. Indeed 'twere better to avoid his pre-
sence;

It will revive your sorrows, and recall—

Horatia. Sir, when I saw you last, I was a
woman,

The fool of nature, a fond prey to grief,
Made up of sighs and tears. But now, my soul
Disdains the very thought of what I was;

'Tis grown too callous to be mov'd with toys.
Observe me well: am I not nobly chang'd?
Stream my sad eyes, or heaves my breast one
groan?

No: for I doubt no longer. 'Tis not grief;
'Tis resolution now, and fix'd despair.

Valeria. My dear Horatia, you strike terrors
through me;

What dreadful purpose hast thou form'd? Oh!
speak!

Valerius. Hear me yet, sweet lady.

You must not go; whatever you resolve,
There is a sight, will pierce you to the soul.

Horatia. What sight?

Valerius. Alas! I should be glad to hide it;

But it is—

Horatia. What?

Valerius. Your brother wears in triumph
The very scarf I bore to Curiatius.

Horatia. (Wildly.) Ye gods, I thank ye! 'tis
with joy I hear it.

If I should falter now, that sight would rouse
My drooping rage, and swell the tempest louder.
But, soft! they may prevent me; my wild passion
Betrays my purpose. I'll dissemble with them.

(*Sits down.*)

Valeria. How do you, my Horatia?

Horatia. Alas! my friend, 'tis madness which I
utter.

Since you persuade me, then, I will not go.
But leave me to myself; I would sit here;
Alone in silent sadness pour my tears,
And meditate on my unheard-of woes.

Valerius. (To *Valeria.*) 'Twere well to humour
this. But may she not,

If left alone, do outrage on herself?

Valeria. I have prevented that; she has not near
her

One instrument of death.

Valerius. Retire we, then.

[*Exit with Valeria. After a short silence,*
Horatia rises and comes forward.

Horatia. Yes, they are gone; and now, be firm
my soul!

This way I can elude their search. The heart,
Which dotes like mine, must break to be at ease.
Just now I thought, had Curiatius lived,
I could have driven him from my breast for ever.
But death has cancell'd all my wrongs at once.
They were not wrongs; 'twas virtue which undid
us,

And virtue shall unite us in the grave.
I heard them say, as they departed hence,
That they had robb'd me of all means of death.
Vain thought! they knew not half Horatia's pur-
pose.

Be resolute, my brother; let not weak
Unnarily fondness mingle with thy virtue,
And I will touch thee nearly. Oh! come on,
'Tis thou alone canst give Horatia peace. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Street in Rome.

*Chorus of Youths and Virgins, singing, and scatter-
ing branches of oak, flowers, &c.*

*Enter HORATIUS, leaning on the arm of PUBLIUS
HORATIUS.*

Chorus. Thus, for freedom nobly won,
Rome her hasty tribute pours;
And on one victorious son
Half exhausts her blooming stores.

A Youth. Scatter here the laurel crown,
Emblem of immortal praise.
Wondrous youth! to thy renown
Future times shall altars raise.

A Virgin. Scatter here the myrtle wreath,
Though the bloodless victor's due;
Grateful thousands sav'd from death
Shall devote that wreath to you.

A Youth. Scatter here the oaken bough;
E'en for one averted fate;
We that civic meed bestow:
He saved all who sav'd the state.

Chorus. Thus for freedom, &c.

Horatius. Thou dost forgive me, then; my dear-
est boy,
I cannot tell thee half my ecstasy.
The day which gave thee first to my glad hopes
Was misery to this. I'm mad with transport!
Why are ye silent here? Again renew
Your songs of praise, and, in a louder strain,
Pour forth your joy, and tell the list'ning spheres,
That Rome is freed by my Horatius' hand.

Pub. No more, my friends. You must permit
me, sir,

To contradict you here. Not but my soul,
Like your's, is open to the charms of praise:
There is no joy beyond it, when the mind
Of him who hears it can, with honest pride,
Confess it just, and listen to its music.
But now the toils I have sustain'd require
The interval of rest, and every sense
Is deaf to pleasure. Let me leave you, friends;
We're near our home, and would be private now:
To-morrow we'll expect your kind attendance
To share our joys, and wait our thanks to heaven.

As they are going off, HORATIA rushes in.

Horatia. Where is this mighty chief?
Horatius. My daughter's voice!
I bade her come; she has forgot her sorrows,
And is again my child.

Horatia. Is this the hero,
That tramples nature's ties, and nobly soars
Above the dictates of humanity?
Let me observe him well.

Pub. What means my sister?

Horatia. Thy sister! I disclaim the impious title;

Base and inhuman! Give me back my husband,
My life, my soul, my murder'd Curiatius!

Pub. He perish'd for his country.

Horatia. Gracious gods!

Was't not enough that thou hadst murder'd him,
But thou must triumph in thy guilt, and wear
His bleeding spoils? Oh! let me tear them from
thee;

Drink the dear drops that issued from his wounds,
More dear to me than the whole tide that swells,
With impious pride, a hostile brother's heart.

Horatius. Am I awake, or is it all illusion?

Pub. Horatia, hear me:

Yet I am calm, and can forgive thy folly;
Would I could call it by no harsher name.
But do not tempt me farther. Go, my sister,
Go hide thee from the world, nor let a Roman
Know with what insolence thou dar'st avow
Thy infamy, or what is more, my shame,
How tamely I forgave it. Go, Horatia.

Horatia. I will not go. What, have I touch'd
thee, then?

And canst thou feel? Oh! think not thou shalt lose
Thy share of anguish. I'll pursue thee still,
I'll be the fury, that shall haunt thy dreams;
Wake thee with shrieks, and place before thy
sight

Thy mangled friends in all their pomp of horror.

Pub. Away with her! 'tis womanish complain-
ing.

Think'st thou such trifles can alarm the man,
Whose noblest passion is his country's love?

Horatia. Curse on my country's love! the trick
ye teach us

To make us slaves beneath the mask of virtue;

To rob us of each soft endearing sense,
And violate the first great law within us.

I scorn the impious passion.

Pub. Have a care;

Thou'st touch'd a string which may awake my
vengeance.

Horatia. (*Aside.*) Then it shall.

Pub. Oh! if thou dar'st prophane

That sacred tie which winds about my heart,
By heaven I swear, by the great gods, who rule
The fate of empires, 'tis not this fond weakness
Which hangs upon me, and retards my justice
Nor even thy sex, which shall protect thee from
me. (*Clapping his hand on his sword.*)

Horatius. Drag her away: thou'lt make me curse
thee, girl.

Indeed, she's mad. (*To Publius.*)

Horatia. Stand off! I am not mad.

Nay, draw thy sword; I do defy thee, murderer,
Barbarian, Roman! Mad! The name of Rome
Makes madmen of you all; my curses on it!
Rise, rise, ye states, (oh! that my voice could fire
Your tardy wrath!) confound its selfish greatness,
Raise its proud walls, and lay its towers in ashes!

Pub. I'll bear no more— (*Drawing his sword.*)

Horatius. Distraction! Force her off!

Horatia. (*Struggling.*) Could I but prove the
Helen to destroy

This curs'd unsocial state, I'd die with transport:
Gaze on the spreading fires, till the lost pile
Sank in the blaze, then mingle with its ruins.

Pub. Thou shalt not live to that. [*Exit.*]

Thus perish all the enemies of Rome. (*Without.*)

Valerius. (*Within.*) Oh! horror, horror! exe-
crable act!

By Rome, and all its gods, thou shalt not 'scape!

Enter PUBLIUS.

Pub. My whole soul's moved,
And Rome's immortal genius stirs within me.

Yes, ye dread powers, whose everlasting fires
Blaze on our altars, and whose sacred shields,
From heav'n descending, guard imperial Rome,
I feel, I feel your wrongs; for you I bear the sword.

Enter HORATIA, wounded.

Horatia. Now thou'st indeed been kind, and I
forgive you
The death of Curiatius; this last blow
Has cancell'd all, and thou'rt again my brother.

Horatius. Heavens! what a sight!
A daughter bleeding by a brother's hand!
My child, my child!

Horatia. What means this tenderness? I thought
to see you

Inflam'd with rage against a worthless wretch,
Who has dishonour'd your illustrious race,
And stain'd its brightest fame: in pity look not
Thus kindly on me, for I have injur'd you.

Horatius. Thou hast not, girl;
I said 'twas madness, but he would not hear me.

Horatia. Alas! my father,
All but my love was false; what that inspir'd
I utter'd freely.

But for the rest, the curses which I pour'd
On heaven-defended Rome, were merely lures
To tempt his rage, and perfect my destruction.
Heaven! with what transport I beheld him mov'd!
How my heart leap'd to meet the welcome point,
Stain'd with the life-blood of my Curiatius,
Cementing thus our union ev'n in death.

Pub. My sister, live! I charge thee live, Horatia!
Oh! thou hast planted daggers here!

Horatia. My brother!
Can you forgive me, too? then I am happy.
I dared not hope for that. Ye gentle ghosts,
That rove Elysium, hear the sacred sound!

My father and my brother both forgive me!
I have again their sanction on my love.

Oh! let me hasten to those happier climes,
Where, unmolested, we may share our joys,
Nor Rome, nor Alba, shall disturb us more.

(*She dies.*)

Horatius. 'Tis gone, the prop, the comfort of my
age.

Let me reflect: this morn I had three children,
No happier father hail'd the sun's uprising:
Now I have none; for, Publius, thou must die:
Blood calls for blood; to expiate one parricide,
Justice demands another. Art thou ready?

Pub. Strike! 'tis the consummation of my wishes
To die, and by your hand.

Horatius. Oh! blind old man!
Wouldst thou lift up thy sacrilegious hand
Against the chief, the god that sav'd thy country?
There's something in that face that awes my soul
Like a divinity. Hence, thou vile weapon,
Disgrace my hand no more.

(*A cry without, Justice, justice!*)

What noise is that?

Enter VOLSCINIUS.

Vol. All Rome, my lord, has taken the alarm,
and crowds

Of citizens enraged, are posting hither,
To call for justice on the head of Publius.

Horatius. Ungrateful men! how are they? Let
them come.

Enter TULLUS, VALERIUS, and Citizens.

Valerius. See, fellow-citizens, see where she
lies,

The bleeding victim.

Tullus. Stop, unmanner'd youth!
Think'st thou we know not wherefore we are here?
Seest thou yon drooping sire?

Horatius. Permit them, sir.

Tullus. What would you, Romans?

Valerius. We are come, dread sir,
In the behalf of murder'd innocence;
Murder'd by him, the man—

Horatius. Whose conquering arm
Has sav'd you all from ruin. Oh! shame, shame!
Has Rome no gratitude? Do ye not blush
To think whom your insatiate rage pursues?
Down, down, and worship him.

1 Citizen. Does he plead for him?
Does he forgive his daughter's death?

Horatius. He does,
And glories in it; glories in the thought
That there's one Roman left who dares be grateful.
If you are wrong'd, then what am I? Must I
Be taught my duty by the affected tears
Of strangers to my blood? Had I been wrong'd,
I know a father's right, and had not ask'd
This ready-talking sir, to bellow for me,
And mouth my wrongs in Rome.

Valerius. Friends, countrymen, regard not what
he says;

Stop, stop your ears, nor hear a frantic father
Thus plead against his child.

Horatius. He does belie me.

What child have I? Alas! I have but one,
And him you would tear from me.

1 Citizen. Hear him, hear him!

Pub. No: let me speak. Think'st thou, un-
grateful youth,
To hurt my quiet? I am hurt beyond
Thy power to harm me. Death's extremest tor-
tures

Were happiness to what I feel. Yet know,
My injur'd honour bids me live; nay, more,
It bids me even descend to plead for life.
But wherefore waste I words? 'Tis not to him,
But you, my countrymen, to you, I speak;
He lov'd the maid.

1 Citizen. How? lov'd her!

Pub. Fondly lov'd her;
And, under shew of public justice, screens
A private passion, and a mean revenge.

Think you I lov'd her not? High heav'n's my
witness

How tenderly I lov'd her; and the pangs
I feel this moment, could you see my heart,
Would prove too plainly I am still her brother.

1 Citizen. He shall be sav'd.

Valerius has misled us.

Save him, save him!

Tullus. If yet a doubt remains,
Behold that virtuous father, who could boast,
This very morn, a numerous progeny,
The dear supports of his declining age;
Then read the sad reverse with pitying eyes,
And tell your conscious hearts they fell for you.

Horatius. I am o'erpaid by that, nor claim I
aught

On their accounts; by high heaven I swear,
I'd rather see him added to the heap,
Than Rome enslav'd.

1 Citizen. Oh! excellent *Horatius!*

Save him, save him!

Tullus. Then I pronounce him free. And now,
Horatius,

The evening of thy stormy day at last
Shall close in peace. Here, take him to thy breast.

Horatius. My son, my conqueror! 'twas a fatal
stroke,

But shall not wound our peace. This kind embrace
Shall spread a sweet oblivion o'er our sorrows;
Or, if in after times, though 'tis not long
That I shall trouble you, some sad remembrance
Should steal a sigh, and peevish age forget
Its revolution, only boldly say
Thou sav'd the state, and I'll entreat forgive-
ness.

Learn hence, ye Romans, on how sure a base
The patriot builds his happiness.
Grief may to grief in endless round succeed,
And nature suffer when our children bleed;
But still superior must that hero prove,
Whose first, best passion is his country's love.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE SIEGE OF DAMASCUS;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY JOHN HUGHES.



Act V.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

EUMENES
HERBIS
PHOCYAS
ARTAMON
SERGIUS

CALED
ABUDAH
DARAM
SERJABIL
RAPHAN

OFFICERS
SOLDIERS
CITIZENS
ATTENDANTS
EUDOCIA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The City.

Enter EUMENES, followed by a crowd of People.

Eum. I'll hear no more. Begone!
Or stop your clam'rous mouths, that still are open
To hawl sedition and consume our corn.
If you will follow me, send home your women,
And follow to the walls; there earn your safety,
As brave men should. Pity your wives and children!

Yes, I do pity them, heav'n knows I do,
E'en more than you; nor will I yield them up,
Though at your own request, a prey to ruffians.
Herbis, what news?

Enter HERBIS.

Her. News!—we're betray'd, deserted;
The works are but half mann'd; the Saracens
Perceive it, and pour on such crowds, they blunt
Our weapons, and have drain'd our stores of death.
What will you next?

Eum. I've sent a fresh recruit.
The valiant Phocyas leads them on; whose deeds,
In early youth, assert his noble race;
A more than common ardour seems to warm
His breast, as if he lov'd and courted danger.

Her. I fear 'twill be too late.

Eum. I fear it too:

And though I brav'd it to the trembling crowd,
I've caught th' infection, and I dread th' event.
Would I had treated!—but 'tis now too late.—

(Aside.)
Come, *Herbis*.
[*Exeunt.*]

(A great shout.) Re-enter *HERBIS*.

Her. So—the tide turns; Phocyas has driv'n it
back.
The gate once more is ours.

(Flourish.) Re-enter *EUMENES*, with *PHOCYAS*,
ARTAMON, &c.

Eum. Brave Phocyas, thanks! mine and the
people's thanks.
Yet, that we may not lose this breathing space,
Hang out the flag of truce. You, *Artamon*,
Haste with a trumpet to th' Arabian chiefs,
And let them know, that, hostages chang'd,
I'd meet them now upon the eastern plain.

[*Exit Artamon.*]

Pho. What means *Eumenes*?
Eum. Phocyas, I would try,
By friendly treaty, if on terms of peace
They'll yet withdraw their pow'rs.

Pho. On terms of peace!
What peace can you expect from bands of robbers?
What terms from slaves but slavery? You know
These wretches fight not at the call of honour,

That sets the princes of the world in arms.
Base-born, and starv'd, amidst their stony deserts,
Long have they view'd from far, with wishing eyes,
Our fruitful vales, and all the verdant wealth
That crowns fair Lebanon's aspiring brows.
Here have the locusts pitch'd, nor will they leave
These tasted sweets, these blooming fields of
plenty,

For barren sands and native poverty,
Till driv'n away by force.

Eum. What can we do?

Our people in despair; our soldiers harass'd
With daily toil and constant nightly watch;
Our hopes of succour from the emperor
Uncertain; Eutyches not yet return'd,
That went to ask them; one brave army beaten;
Th' Arabians num'rous, cruel, flush'd with con-
quest.

Her. Besides, you know what frenzy fires their
minds,
Of their new faith, and drives them on to danger.

Eum. True: they pretend the gates of Paradise
Stand ever open to receive the souls
Of all that die in fighting for their cause.

Pho. Then would I send their souls to Paradise,
And give their bodies to our Syrian eagles.
Our ebb of fortune is not yet so low,
To leave us desperate. Aids may soon arrive;
Meantime, in spite of their late bold attack,
The city still is ours; their force repell'd,
And therefore weaker: proud of this success,
Our soldiers, too, have gain'd redoubled courage,
And long to meet them on the open plain.
What hinders then but we repay this outrage,
And sally on their camp?

Eum. No; let us first
Believe the occasion fair, by this advantage,
To purchase their retreat on easy terms:
That failing, we the better stand acquitted
To our own citizens. However, brave Phocyas,
Cherish this ardour in the soldiery,
And in our absence form what force thou canst;
Then, if these hungry bloodhounds of the war
Should still be deaf to peace, at our return,
Our widen'd gates shall pour a sudden flood
Of vengeance on them, and chastise their scorn.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Plain before the city. A prospect of
tents at a distance.*

Enter CALED, ABUDAH, and DARAN.

Daran. To treat, my chiefs!—What! are we
merchants, then,

That only come to traffic with those Syrians,
And poorly cheapen conquest on conditions?
No: we were sent to fight the caliph's battles,
Till every iron neck bend to obedience.
Another storm makes this proud city ours;
What need we treat? I'm for war and plunder.

Caled. Why, so am I; and but to save the lives
Of Mussulmen, not Christians, I would treat.
I hate these Christian dogs; and 'tis our task,
As thou observ'st, to fight; our law enjoins it:
Heaven, too, is promis'd only to the valiant.
Oft has our prophet said, the happy plains
Above lie stretch'd beneath the blaze of swords.

Abu. Yet Daran's loath to trust that heaven for
pay;

This earth, it seems, has gifts that please him more.
Caled. Check not his zeal, Abudah.

Abu. No; I praise it.

Yet I could wish that zeal had better motives.
Has victory no fruits but blood and plunder?
That we were sent to fight, 'tis true; but where-
fore?

For conquest, not destruction. That obtain'd,
The more we spare, the caliph has more subjects,

And heaven is better serv'd. But see, they come!
(*Trumpets.*)

Enter EUMENES, HERBIS, and ARTAMON.

Caled. Well, Christians, we are met; and war,
awhile,

At your request, has still'd his angry voice,
To hear what you will propose.

Eum. We come to know,

After so many troops you've lost in vain,
If you'll draw off in peace, and save the rest?

Her. Or rather to know first—for yet we know
not—

Why on your heads you call our pointed arrows,
In our own just defence? What means this visit?
And why see we so many thousand tents
Rise in the air, and whiten all our fields?

Caled. Is that a question now? you had our
summons,

When first we march'd against you, to surrender.
Two moons have wast'd since, and now the third
Is in its wane. 'Tis true, drawn off awhile,
At Aiznadin we met and fought the powers
Sent by your emperor to raise our siege.

Vainly you thought us gone; we gain'd a conquest.
You see we are return'd; our hearts, our cause,
Our swords the same.

Her. But why those swords were drawn,
And what's the cause, inform us?

Eum. Speak your wrongs,

If wrongs you have receiv'd, and by what means
They may be now repair'd.

Abu. Then, Christians, hear,
And heaven inspire you to embrace its truth!
Not wrongs t' avenge, but to establish right,
Our swords were drawn: for such is heaven's
command

Immutable. By us great Mahomet,
And his successor, holy Abubeker,
Invite you to the faith.

Eum. Now, in the name of heaven, what faith is
this,

That stalks gigantic forth thus arm'd with terrors,
As if it meant to ruin, not to save;
That leads embattled legions to the field,
And marks its progress out with blood and
slaughter?

Her. Bold, frontless men! that impudently dare
To blend religion with the worst of crimes!
And sacrilegiously usurp that name,
And cover fraud, and justify oppression!

Eum. Where are your priests? What doctors
of your law

Have you e'er sent t' instruct us in its precepts,
To solve our doubts, and satisfy our reason,
And kindly lead us through the wilds of error,
To these new tracts of truth?—This would be
friendship,

And well might claim our thanks.

Caled. Friendship like this

With scorn had been receiv'd: your numerous
vices,

Your clashing sects, your mutual rage and strife,
Have driven religion, and her angel guards,
Like outcasts from among you. In her stead,
Usurping superstition bears the sway,
And reigns in mimic state, midst idol shews,
And pageantry of power. Who does not mark
Your lives, rebellious to your own great prophet,
Who mildly taught you?—Therefore, Mahomet
Has brought the sword, to govern you by force.

Eum. Oh! solemn truths! though from an impi-
ous tongue! (*Aside.*)

That we're unworthy of our holy faith,
To heaven, with grief and conscious shame, we
own.

But what are you that thus arraign our vices,
And consecrate your own?

Are you not sons of rapine, foes to peace,

Base robbers, murderers?

Caled. Christians, no.

Eum. Then say,

Why have you ravag'd all our peaceful borders?
Plunder'd our towns? and by what claim, e'en
now,

You tread this ground?

Her. What claim, but that of hunger?

The claim of ravenous wolves, that leave their
dens

To prowl at midnight round some sleeping village,
Or watch the shepherd's folded flock for prey?

Caled. Blasphemer, know, your fields and towns
are ours;

Our prophet has bestow'd them on the faithful,
And heaven itself has ratified the grant.

Eum. Oh! now indeed you boast a noble title!

What could your prophet grant? a hireling slave!

Not e'en the mules and camels which he drove,

Were his to give; and yet the bold impostor

Has canton'd out the kingdoms of the earth,

In frantic fits of visionary power,

To soothe his pride, and bribe his fellow madmen!

Caled. Was it for this you sent to ask a parley,

T' affront our faith, and to traduce our prophet?

Well might we answer you with quick revenge

For such indignities. Yet hear, once more,

Hear this, our last demand; and, this accepted,

We yet withdraw our war. Be Christians still;

But swear to live with us in firm alliance,

To yield us aid, and pay us annual tribute.

Eum. No; should we grant you aid, we must be

rebels;

And tribute is the slavish badge of conquest.

Yet since, on just and honourable terms,

We ask but for our own—Ten silken vests,

Weighty with pearls and gems, we'll send you
caliph;

Two, Caled, shall be thine; two thine, Abudah.

To each inferior captain we decree

A turban spun from our Damascus flax,

White as the snow of heaven; to every soldier

A scymitar. This, and of solid gold

Ten ingots, be the price to buy your absence.

Caled. This, and much more, even all your shin-
ing wealth,

Will soon be ours. Behold our march

O'er half your land, like flame through fields of
harvest;

And, last, view Aiznadin, that vale of blood!

There seek the souls of forty thousand Greeks,

That, fresh from life, yet hover o'er their bodies,

Then think, and then resolve.

Her. Presumptuous men!

What, though you yet can boast successful guilt,

Is conquest only yours? Or dare you hope

That you shall still pour on the swelling tide,

Like some proud river that has left its banks,

Nor ever know repulse?

Eum. Have you forgot!

Not twice seven years are past, since e'en your
prophet,

Bold as he was, and boasting aid divine,

Was by the tribe of Corish forc'd to fly,

Poorly to fly, to save his wretched life,

From Mecca to Medina?

Abu. No—forgot!

We well remember how Medina screen'd

That holy head, preserv'd for better days,

And ripening years of glory.

Daran. Why, my chiefs,

Will you waste time, in offering terms despis'd,

To these idolaters?—Words are but air,

Blows would plead better.

Caled. Daran, thou say'st true.

Christians, here end our truce. Behold, once
more

The sword of heaven is drawn! nor shall be
sheath'd,

But in the bowels of Damascus.

Eum. That,

Or speedy vengeance and destruction, due

To the proud menacers, as heaven sees fit!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—A Garden.

Enter EUDOCIA.

Eud. All's lush'd around!—No more the shout
of soldiers,

And clash of arms, tumultuous, fill the air.

Metinks this interval of terror seems

Like that, when the loud thunder just has roll'd

O'er our affrighted heads, and, in the heavens,

A momentary silence but prepares

A second and a louder clap to follow.

Enter PHOCYAS.

Oh! no—my hero comes with better omens,

And every gloomy thought is now no more.

Pho. Where is the treasure of my soul?—

Eudocia,

Behold me here impatient, like the miser,

That often steals in secret to his gold,

And counts, with trembling joy and jealous trans-
port,

The shining heaps which he still fears to lose.

Eud. Welcome, thou brave, thou best deserving
lover!

How do I doubly share the common safety,

Since 'tis a debt to thee!—But tell me, Phocyas,

Dost thou bring peace? Thou dost, and I am
happy!

Pho. Not yet, Eudocia: 'tis decreed by heaven,
I must do more to merit thy esteem.

Peace, like a frighted dove, has wing'd her flight

To distant hills, beyond these hostile tents;

And through them we must thither force our way,

If we would call the lovely wanderer back

To her forsaken home.

Eud. False, flattering hope!

Vanish'd so soon!—alas! my faithful fears

Return and tell me we must still be wretched!

Pho. Not so, my fair; if thou but gently smile,

Inspiring valour, and presaging conquest,

These barbarous foes to peace and love shall soon

Be chas'd, like fiends, before the morning light,

And all be calm again.

Eud. Is the truce ended?

Must war, alas! renew thy bloody rage,

And Phocyas ever be expos'd to danger?

Pho. Think for whose sake danger itself has
charms.

Dismiss thy fears: the lucky hour comes on,

Full fraught with joys, when my big soul no more

Shall labour with this secret of my passion,

To hide it from thy jealous father's eyes.

Just now, by signals from the plain, I've learn'd

That the proud foe refuse us terms of honour;

A sally is resolv'd; the citizens

And soldiers, kindled into sudden fury,

Press all in crowds, and beg I'll lead them on.

Oh, my Eudocia! if I now succeed—

Did I say, if—I must, I will; the cause

Is love, 'tis liberty, it is Eudocia!—

What then shall hinder,

But I may boldly ask thee of Eumenes,

Nor fear a rival's more prevailing claim?

Eud. May blessings still attend thy arms!—

Metinks

I've caught the flame of thy heroic ardour;

And now I see thee crown'd with palm and olive;

The soldiers bring thee back, with songs of

triumph,

And loud applauding shouts; thy rescu'd country

Resounds thy praise; our emperor, Heraclius,

Deeds thee honours for a city sav'd;
And pillars rise of monumental brass;
Inscrib'd—"To Phocyas, the deliverer."

Pho. The honours and rewards, which thou hast nam'd,

Are bribes too little for my vast ambition.
My soul is full of thee!—Thou art my all,
Of fame, of triumph, and of future fortune.
'Twas love of thee first sent me forth in arms;
My service is all thine, to thee devoted;
And thou alone canst make e'en conquest pleasing.

Eud. Oh! do not wrong thy merit, nor restrain it

To narrow bounds; but know, I best am pleas'd
To share thee with thy country. Oh, my Phocyas!
With conscious blushes oft I've heard thy vows,
And strove to hide, yet more reveal'd my heart;
But 'tis thy virtue justifies my choice,
And what at first was weakness, now is glory.

Pho. Forgive me, thou fair pattern of all goodness,

If, in the transport of unbounded passion,
I still am lost to every thought but thee.
Yet sure to love thee thus is every virtue;
Nor need I more perfection.—Hark! I'm call'd.

Eud. Then go—and heaven, with all its angels guard thee.
(*Trumpet sounds.*)

Pho. Farewell!—for thee once more I draw the sword.

Now to the field, to gain the glorious prize;
'Tis victory—the word—Eudocia's eyes! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Governor's Palace.*

Enter EUMENES and HERBIS.

Her. Still I must say 'twas wrong, 'twas wrong,
Eumenes;
And mark th' event!

Eum. What could I less? You saw
'Twas vain t' oppose it, whilst his eager valour,
Impatient of restraint—

Her. His eager valour!
His rashness, his hot youth, his valour's fever!
Must we, whose business 'tis to keep our walls,
And manage warily our little strength;
Must we at once lavish away our blood,
Because his pulse beats high, and his mad courage
Wants to be breath'd in some new enterprize?—
You should not have consented.

Eum. You forget.
'Twas not my voice alone: you saw the people
(And sure such sudden instincts are from heaven!)
Rose all at once to follow him, as if
Our soul inspir'd them, and that soul was Phocyas'.

Her. I had indeed forgot, and ask your pardon.
I took you for Eumenes, and I thought
That, in Damascus, you had chief command.

Eum. What dost thou mean?

Her. Nay, who's forgetful now?
You say, the people—yes, that very people,
That coward tribe that press'd you to surrender!
Well may they spurn at lost authority;
Whom they like better, better they'll obey.

Eum. Oh! I could curse the giddy changeful slaves,

But that the thought of this hour's great event
Possesses all my soul. If we are beaten!—

Her. The poison works; 'tis well—I'll give him more.
(*Aside.*)

True, if we're beaten, who shall answer that?
Shall you, or I? Are you the governor?
Or say we conquer, whose is then the praise?

Eum. I know thy friendly fears; that thou and I
Must stoop beneath a beardless, rising hero!
And in Heraclius' court it shall be said,

Damascus, nay, perhaps the empire too,
Ow'd its deliverance to a boy. Why, be it:
So that he now return with victory;
'Tis honour greatly won, and let him wear it,
Yet I could wish I needed less his service.
Were Eutyches returned—

Her. That, that's my torture. (*Aside.*)

I sent my son to the emperor's court, in hopes
His merit, at this time, might raise his fortunes;
But Phocyas—curse upon his froward virtues!—
Is reaping all this field of fame alone,
Or leaves him scarce the gleanings of a harvest.

Eum. See Artamon, with hasty strides returning.
He comes alone! Oh! friend, thy fears were just.
What are we now, and what is lost Damascus?

Enter ARTAMON.

Art. Joy to Eumenes!

Eum. Joy!—is't possible?
Dost thou bring news of victory?

Art. The sun
Is set in blood, and from the western skies
Has seen three thousand slaughter'd Arabs fall.

Her. Is Phocyas safe?

Art. He is, and crown'd with triumph.

Her. My fears indeed were just.

(*Aside.—Shout. Flourish.*)

Eum. What noise is that?

Her. The people worshipping their new divinity:
Shortly, they'll build him temples.

Eum. Tell us, soldier,
Since thou hast shar'd the glory of this action,
Tell us how it began.

Art. At first the foe
Seem'd much surpris'd; but taking soon the alarm,
Gather'd some hasty troops, and march'd to meet us.

The captain of these bands look'd wild and fierce,
His head unarm'd, as if in scorn of danger,
And naked to the waist; as he drew near,
He rais'd his arm, and shook a pond'rous lance:
When all at once, as at a signal given,
We heard the tecbir, so these Arabs call
Their shouts of onset, when with loud appeal
They challenge heaven, as if demanding conquest.
The battle join'd, and through the barbarous host
"Fight, fight, and paradise!" was all the cry.
At last our leaders met; and gallant Phocyas—
But what are words, to tell the mighty wonders
We saw him then perform? Their chief unhors'd,
The Saracens soon broke their ranks, and fled;
And had not a thick evening fog arose,
The slaughter had been double. But, behold,
The hero comes!

Enter PHOCYAS, Eumenes meeting him.

Eum. Joy to brave Phocyas!
Eumenes gives him back the joy he sent.
The welcome news has reach'd this place before thee.

How shall thy country pay the debt she owes thee?

Pho. By taking this as earnest of a debt
Which I owe her, and fain would better pay.

Her. In spite of envy I must praise him too.
(*Aside.*)

Phocyas, thou hast done bravely, and 'tis fit
Successful virtue take a time to rest.
Fortune is fickle, and may change: besides,
What shall we gain, if from a mighty ocean
By sluices we draw off some little streams?
If thousands fall, ten thousands more remain.
Nor ought we hazard worth so great as thine,
Against such odds. Suffice what's done already:
And let us now, in hopes of better days,
Keep wary watch, and wait th' expected suc-
cess.

Pho. What!—to be coop'd whole months within our walls?

To rust at home, and sicken with inaction?
The courage of our men will droop and die,
If not kept up by daily exercise.
Again the beaten foe may force our gates;
And victory, if slighted thus, take wing,
And fly where she may find a better welcome.

Eum. Urge him no more:—
I'll think of thy late warning;
And thou shalt see I'll yet be governor.

(*Aside to Her.*)

Enter a Messenger, with a letter.

Pho. (*Looking on it.*) 'Tis to Eumenes.

Eum. Ha! from Eutyches.

(*Reads.*) *The emperor, awaken'd with the danger
That threatens his dominions, and the loss
At Ainzadin, has drain'd his garrisons
To raise a second army. In a few hours,
We will begin our march. Sergius brings this,
And will inform you further.—*

Her. Heaven, I thank thee!
'Twas even beyond my hopes. (*Aside.*)

Eum. But where is Sergius?
Mes. The letter, fasten'd to an arrow's head,
Was shot into the town.

Eum. I fear he's taken.
Oh! Phocyas, Herbis, Artamon! my friends!
You all are sharers in this news; the storm
Is blowing o'er, that hung like night upon us,
And threaten'd deadly ruin. Haste, proclaim
The welcome tidings loud through all the city.
Let sparkling lights be seen from ev'ry turret,
To tell your joy, and spread their blaze to heaven.
Prepare for feasts; danger shall wait at distance,
And fear be now no more. The jolly soldier
And citizen shall meet o'er their full bowls,
Forget their toils, and laugh their cares away,
And mirth and triumphs close this happy day.

[*Exeunt Herbis and Artamon.*]

Pho. And may succeeding days prove yet more
happy!

Well dost thou bid the voice of triumph sound
Through all our streets; our city calls thee father:
And say, Eumenes, dost thou not perceive
A father's transport rise within thy breast,
Whilst in this act thou art the hand of heaven,
To deal forth blessings, and distribute joy?

Eum. The blessings heaven bestows are freely
sent,

And should be freely shar'd.
Pho. True: generous minds
Redoubled feel the pleasure they impart.
For me, if I've deserv'd by arms or counsels,
By hazards, gladly sought and greatly prosper'd,
Whate'er I've added to the public stock,
With joy I see it in Eumenes' hands,
And wish but to receive my share from thee.

Eum. I cannot, if I would, withhold thy share.
What thou hast done is thine, the fame thy own:
And virtuous actions will reward themselves.

Pho. Fame! What is that, if courted for her-
self?

Less than a vision; a mere sound, an echo,
That calls, with mimic voice, through woods and
labyrinths,

Her cheated lovers; lost and heard by fits,
But never fix'd: a seeming nymph, yet nothing.
Virtue indeed is substantial good,
A real beauty; yet with weary steps,
Through rugged ways, by long, laborious service,
When we have trac'd, and woo'd, and won the
dame,

May we not then expect the dower she brings?

Eum. Well—ask that dowry; say, can Damas-
cus pay it?

Her riches shall be tax'd; name but the sum,

Her merchants with some costly gems shall grace
thee;

Nor can Heraclius fail to grant the honours,
Proportion'd to thy birth and thy desert.

Pho. And can Eumenes think I would be brib'd
By trash, by sordid gold, to venal virtue?
What! serve my country for the same mean hire,
That can corrupt each villain to betray her?
Why is she sav'd from these Arabian spoilers,
If to be stripp'd by her own sons? Forgive me
If the thought glows on my cheeks! I know
'Twas mention'd but to prove how much I scorn
it.

Yes, Eumenes,
I love ambition—yet the vast reward
That swells my hopes, and equals all my wishes,
Is in thy gift alone—It is Eudocia.

Eum. Eudocia! Phocyas, I am yet thy friend,
And therefore will not hold thee long in doubt:
Thou must not think of her.

Pho. Not think of her!
Impossible. She's ever present to me!
My life, my soul! She animates my being,
And kindles up my thoughts to worthy actions.
And why, Eumenes, why not think of her?
Is not my rank—

Eum. Forbear—What need a herald,
To tell me who thou art? Yet once again—
Since thou wilt force me to a repetition,
I say, thou must not think of her.
My choice has destin'd her to Eutyches!

Pho. And has she then consented to that choice!

Eum. Has she consented? What is her con-
sent?

Is she not mine?

Pho. She is—and in that title,
Ev'n kings with envy may behold thy wealth,
And think their kingdoms poor! And yet, Eu-
menes,
Shall she, by being thine, be barr'd a privilege
Which ev'n the meanest of her sex may claim?
Thou wilt not force her?

Eum. Who has told thee so?

I'd force her to be happy.

Pho. That thou canst not.
What happiness subsists in loss of freedom?

Eum. 'Tis well, young man—Why then I'll learn
from thee

To be a very tame, obedient father.
Thou hast already taught my child her duty.
I find the source of all her disobedience,
Her hate of me, her scorn of Eutyches.

Was this the spring of thy romantic bravery,
Thy boastful merit, thy officious services?

Pho. It was—with pride I own it—'twas Eu-
docia.

I have serv'd thee in serving her; thou know'st it.
Why wilt thou force me thus to be a braggart,
And tell thee that which thou shouldst tell thyself?
It grates my soul—I am not wont to talk thus.
But I recall my words—I have done nothing,
And would disclaim all merit, but my love.

Eum. Oh! no—say on, that thou hast sav'd Da-
mascus;

Is it not so? Look o'er her battlements,
See if the flying foe have left their camp!
Why are our gates yet clos'd, if thou hast freed
us?

Had Eutyches been present—

Pho. Eutyches!
Why wilt thou urge my temper with that trifler?
Oh, let him come! that in yon spacious plain
We may together charge the thickest ranks,
Rush on to battle, wounds, and glorious death,
And prove who 'twas that best deserv'd Eudocia.

Eum. That will be seen ere long. But since I
find

Thou arrogantly wouldst usurp dominion,

Believ'st thyself the guardian genius here,
And that our fortunes hang upon thy sword;
Be that first try'd—for know, that from this mo-
ment,

Thou here hast no command. Farewell! So stay,
Or hence and join the foe; thou hast thy choice.

[Exit.

Pho. Spurn'd and degraded! Proud, ungrate-
ful man!

Am I a bubble then, blown up by thee,
And toss'd into the air, to make thee sport?
Hence to the foe! 'Tis well—Eudocia,—
Oh! I will see thee, thou wrong'd excellence!
But how to speak thy wrongs, or my disgrace—
Impossible! Oh! rather let me walk,
Like a dumb ghost, and burst my heart in silence.

[Exit.

SCENE II.—The Garden.

Enter EUDOCIA.

Eud. Why must we meet by stealth, like guilty
lovers?

But 'twill not long be so. What joy 'twill be
To own my hero in his ripen'd honours,
And hear applauding crowds pronounce me bless'd!
Sure he'll be here. See, the fair rising moon,
Ere day's remaining twilight scarce is spent,
Hangs up her ready lamp, and with mild lustre
Drives back the hov'ring shade! Come Phocyas,
come;

This gentle season is a friend to love;
And now methinks I could with equal passion,
Meet thine, and tell thee all my secret soul.

Enter PHOCYAS.

He hears me. Oh, my Phocyas! What, not
answer!

Art thou not he? or art some shadow? Speak.

Pho. I am indeed a shadow—I am nothing.

Eud. What dost thou mean? For now I know
thee, Phocyas.

Pho. And never can be thine!

It will have vent—Oh, barb'rous, curs'd—but
hold—

I had forgot—it was Eudocia's father!

Oh! could I too forget how he has us'd me!

Eud. I fear to ask thee.

Pho. Dost thou fear? Alas!

Then thou wilt pity me. Oh, gen'rous maid!
Thou hast charm'd down the rage that swell'd my
heart,

And chok'd my voice; now I can speak to thee.
And yet 'tis worse than death what I have suf-
fer'd;

It is the death of honour! Yet that's little;

'Tis more, Eudocia—'tis the loss of thee!

Eud. Hast thou not conquer'd? What are all
these shouts,

This voice of gen'ral joy, heard far around?

What are these fires, that cast their glimm'ring
light

Against the sky? Are not all these thy triumphs?

Pho. Oh! name not triumph! Talk no more of
conquest!

It is indeed a night of gen'ral joy;

But not to me! Eudocia, I am come

To take a last farewell of thee for ever.

Eud. A last farewell!

Pho. Yes. How wilt thou hereafter

Look on a wretch despis'd, cashier'd,

Stripp'd of command, like a base, beaten ooward?

Thy cruel father—I have told too much;

I should not but for this have felt the wounds

I got in fight for him—now, now they bleed!

But I have done—and now thou hast my story,

Is there a creature so accur'd as Phocyas?

Eud. And can it be? Is this then thy reward?

Oh, Phocyas! never wouldst thou tell me yet

That thou hadst wounds; now I must feel them
too.

For is it not for me thou hast borne this?
What else could be thy crime? Wert thou a
traitor,

Hadst thou betray'd us, sold us to the foe—

Pho. Would I be yet a traitor, I have leave;

Nay, I am dar'd to do it, with mocking scorn.

My crime indeed was asking thee; that only

Has cancell'd all, if I had any merit!

The city now is safe, my service slighted,

And I discard'd like an useless thing;

Nay, bid begone—and if I like that better,

Seek out new friends, and join yon barb'rous host!

Eud. Hold—let me think awhile. (*Walks aside.*)

Though my heart bleed,

I would not have him see these dropping tears.

And wilt thou go, then, Phocyas?

Pho. To my grave;

Where can I bury else this foul disgrace?

Eud. Art thou sure

Thou hast been us'd thus? Art thou quite undone?

Pho. Yes, very sure. What dost thou mean?

Eud. That then it is a time for me—Oh, heav'n!

that I

Alone am grateful to this wondrous man!

To own thee, Phocyas, thus—(*Gives her hand.*)

nay, glory in thee,

And shew, without a blush, how much I love.

We must not part!

Pho. Then I am rich again! (*Embraces her.*)

Oh no, we will not part! Confirm it, heav'n!

Now thou shalt see how I will bend my spirit,

With what soft patience I will bear my wrongs,

Till I have weary'd out thy father's scorn:

Yet I have worse to tell thee—Eutyches—

Eud. Why wilt thou name him?

Pho. Now, ev'n now he's coming!

Just hov'ring o'er thee, like a bird of prey:

Thy father vows—for I must tell thee all—

'Twas this that wrung my heart, and rack'd my
brain,

Ev'n to distraction!—vows thee to his bed;

Nay, threaten'd force, if thou refuse obedience.

Eud. Force! threaten'd force! my father—
where is nature?

Is that too banish'd from his heart? Oh, then

I have no father—How have I deserv'd this?
(*Weeps.*)

No home, but am henceforth an outcast orphan;

For I will wander to earth's utmost bounds,

Ere give my hand to that detested contract.

Oh! save me, Phocyas! thou hast sav'd my father.

Must I yet call him so, this cruel father.

How wilt thou now deliver poor Eudocia?

Pho. See how we're join'd in exile! How our
fate

Conspires to warn us both to leave this city!

Thou know'st the emperor is now at Antioch;

I have an uncle there, who, when the Persiau,

As now the Saracen, had nigh o'errun

The ravag'd empire, did him signal service,

And nobly was rewarded. There, Eudocia,

Thou might'st be safe, and I may meet with justice.

Eud. There—any where, so we may fly this
place.

See, Phocyas, what thy wrongs and mine have
wrought

In a weak woman's flame! for I have courage

To share thy exile now through ev'ry danger.

Danger is only here, and dwells with guilt,

With base ingratitude, and hard oppression.

Pho. Then let us lose no time, but hence this
night.

The gates I can command, and will provide
The means of our escape. Some five hours hence,

'Twill then be turn'd of midnight, we may meet

In the piazza of Honoria's convent.

Eud. I know it well; the place is most secure,
And near adjoining to this garden wall.
There thou shalt find me. Oh, protect us, heav'n!
Pho. Fear not; thy innocence will be our guard;
Some pitying angel will attend thy steps,
Guide thee unseen, and charm the sleeping foe,
Till thou art safe! Oh! I have suffer'd nothing,
Thus gaining thee, and this great gen'rous proof,
How bless'd I am in my Eudocia's love!
My only joy, farewell!

Eud. Farewell, my Phocyas!
I have no friend but thee—yet thee I'll call
Friend, father, lover, guardian!—Thou art all!
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Caled's Tent.*

Enter CALED and Attendants. SERGIUS held by two Guards, bound with cords.

Ser. Oh, mercy, mercy!

Caled. Mercy! what's that?—Look yonder on the field

Of our late fight! Go, talk of mercy there.
Will the dead hear thy voice!

Ser. Oh! spare me yet.

Caled. Thou wretch! Spare thee? to what? To live in torture?

Are not thy limbs all bruise'd, thy bones disjointed,
To force thee to confess? And wouldst thou drag,
Like a crush'd serpent, a vile, mangled being?
My eyes abhor a coward—Hence, and die!

Ser. Oh! I have told thee all—When first pursu'd,

I fix'd my letters on an arrow's point,
And shot them o'er the walls.

Caled. Hast thou told all?

Well, then thou shalt have mercy to requite thee:

Behold I'll send thee forward on thy errand,
Strike off his head; then cast it o'er the gates!
Then let thy tongue tell o'er its tale again!

Ser. Oh, bloody Saracens!

[*Exit Sergius, dragged away by the Guards.*]

Enter ABUDAH.

Caled. Abudah, welcome!

Abu. Oh! Caled, what an evening was the last!

Caled. Name it no more; remembrance sickens with it.

And therefore sleep is banish'd from this night;
Nor shall to-morrow's sun open his eye
Upon our shame, ere doubly we've redeem'd it.
Have all the captains notice?

Abu. I have walk'd

The rounds to-night, ere the last hour of pray'r,
From tent to tent, and warn'd them to be ready.
What must be done?

Caled. Thou know'st th' important news

Which we have intercepted by this slave,
Of a new army's march. The time now calls,
While these soft Syrians are dissolv'd in riot,
Fool'd with success, and not suspecting danger,
To form a new attack ere break of day;
So, like the wounded leopard, shall we rush
From out our covers on these drowsy hunters,
And seize them, unprepar'd to 'scape our vengeance.

Abu. Great captain of the armies of the faithful!
I know thy mighty and unconquer'd spirit;
Yet hear me, Caled, hear and weigh my doubts,
Our angry prophet frowns upon our vices,
And visits us in blood. Why else did terror,
Unknown before, seize all our stoutest bands?
The angel of destruction was abroad;
The archers of the tribe of Thaal fled,
So long renown'd, or spent their shafts in vain;

The feather'd flights err'd through the boundless air,

Or the death turn'd on him that drew the bow!
What can this bode? Let me speak plainer yet;
Is it to propagate th' unspotted law

We fight? 'Tis well; it is a noble cause.

But much I fear infection is among us;
A boundless lust of rapine guides our troops.

We learn the Christian vices we chastise,
And, tempted with the pleasures of the soil,
More than with distant hopes of paradise,
I fear may soon—but, oh! avert it, heav'n!

Fall ev'n a prey to our own spoils and conquests.

Caled. No—thou mistak'st; thy pious zeal deceives thee.

Our prophet only chides our sluggard valour.

Thou saw'st how in the vale of Honan once
The troops, as now defeated, fled confus'd

Ev'n to the gates of Mecca's holy city;
Till Mahomet himself there stopp'd their entrance,

A jav'lin in his hand, and turn'd them back
Upon the foe; they fought again and conquer'd.

Behold how we may best appease his wrath!

His own example points us out the way.

Abu. Well—be it then resolv'd. Th' indulgent hour

Of better fortune is, I hope, at hand.

And yet, since Phocyas has appear'd its champion,
How has this city rais'd its drooping head!

As if some charm prevail'd where'er he fought;

Our strength seems wither'd, and our feeble weapons

Forget their wonted triumph—were he absent—

Caled. I would have sought him out in the last action,

To single fight, and put that charm to proof,

Had not a foul and sudden mist arose

Ere I arriv'd, to have restor'd the combat.

But let it be—'tis past. We yet may meet,
And 'twill be known whose arm is then the stronger.

Enter DARAN.

Daran. Health to the race of Ismael! and days
More prosperous than the last—a Christian captive

Is fall'n within my watch, and waits his doom.

Caled. Bring forth the slave. Oh! thou keen
culture, death!

Do we, then, feed thee only thus by morsels!

Whole armies never can suffice thy anger.

[*Exit Daran.*]

Re-enter DARAN, with PHOCYAS.

Whence, and what art thou? Of Damascus?—
Daran,

Where didst thou find this dull and sullen thing,
That seems to lower defiance on our anger?

Daran. Marching in circuit, with the horse thou
gav'st me,

T' observe the city gates, I saw from far

Two persons issue forth; the one advanc'd,

And, ere he could retreat, my horsemen seiz'd
him;

The other was a woman, and had fled,

Upon a signal giv'n at our approach,

And got within the gates. Wouldst thou know
more,

Himself, if he will speak, can best inform thee.

Caled. Have I not seen thy face?

Abu. He bears thee not;

His eyes are fix'd on earth; some deep distress

Is at his heart. This is no common captive.

[*Apart to Caled.*]

Caled. A lion in the toils! We soon shall tame
him.

Still art thou dumb?—Nay, 'tis in vain to cast

Thy gloomy looks so oft around this place,
Or frown upon thy bonds: thou canst not 'scape.

Pho. Then be it so: the worst is past already,
And life is now not worth a moment's pause.
Do you not know me yet? Think of the man
You have most cause to curse, and I am he.

Caled. Ha! Phocyas?

Abu. Phocyas! Mahomet, we thank thee!
Now dost thou smile again.

Caled. This is, indeed, a prize! (*Aside.*)
Is it because thou know'st what slaughter'd heaps
There yet unbury'd lie without the camp,
Whose ghosts have all this night, passing the
Zorat,

Call'd from the bridge of death to thee to follow,
That now thou'rt here to answer to their cry?
How'er it be, thou know'st thy welcome.

Pho. Yes,

Thou proud, blood-thirsty Arab! well I know
What to expect from thee: I know ye all.
How should the author of distress and ruin
Be mov'd to pity? That's a human passion.
No; in your hungry eyes, that look revenge,
I read my doom. Where are your racks, your tor-
tures?

I'm ready; lead me to them: I can bear
The worst of ills from you. You're not my friends,
My countrymen: yet were you men, I could
Unfold a story—But no more. Eumenes,
Thou hast thy wish, and I am now—a worm!

Abu. Leader of armies, hear him! for my mind
Presages good accruing to our cause
By this event. (*Apart to Caled.*)

Caled. I tell thee, then, thou wrong'st us,
To think our hearts thus steel'd, or our ears deaf
To all that thou may'st utter. Speak, disclose
The secret woes that throb within thy breast.
Now, by the silent hours of night, we'll hear thee,
And mute attention shall await thy words.

Pho. This is not, then, the palace in Damascus!
If you will hear, then I indeed have wrong'd you.
How can this be, when he, for whom I've fought,
Fought against you, has yet refus'd to hear me?
You seem surpris'd. It was ingratitude
That drove me out an exile, not a foe.

Abu. Is it possible?

Are these thy Christian friends?

Caled. This well: we thank them:
They help us to subdue themselves.—But who
Was the companion of thy flight?—A woman,
So Daran said.

Pho. 'Tis there I am most wretched.
Oh! I am torn from all my soul held dear,
And my life's blood flows out upon the wound!
That woman—'twas for her—How shall I speak
it?—

Eudocia, oh! farewell.—I'll tell you, then,
As fast as these heart-rending sighs will let
me:—

I lov'd the daughter of the proud Eumenes,
And long in secret woo'd her: not unwelcome
To her my visits; but I fear'd her father;
Who oft had press'd her to detested nuptials,
And therefore durst not, till this night of joy,
Avow to him my courtship. Now I thought her
Mine, by a double claim, of mutual vows
And service yielded at his greatest need:
When, as I mov'd my suit, with sour disdain,
He mock'd my service and forbade my love,
Degraded me from the command I bore,
And with defiance bade me seek the foe.
How has his curse prevail'd! The gen'rous maid
Was won by my mistress to leave the city,
And cruel fortune made me thus your prey.

Abu. My soul is mov'd.—Thou wert a man, oh,
prophet!

Forgive, if 'tis a crime, a human sorrow
For injur'd worth, though in an enemy! (*Aside.*)

Pho. Now, since you've heard my story, set me
free,

That I may save her yet, dearer than life,
From a tyrannic father's threaten'd force;
Gold, gems, and purple vests, shall pay my ran-
som;

Nor shall my peaceful sword henceforth be drawn
In fight, nor break its truce with you for ever.

Caled. No; there's one way, a better, and but
one,

To save thyself, and make some reparation
For all the numbers thy bold hand has slain.

Pho. Oh! name it quickly, and my soul will
bless thee!

Caled. Embrace our faith, and share with us our
fortunes.

Pho. Then I am lost again!

Caled. What! when we offer,
Not freedom only, but to raise thee high,
To greatness, conquest, glory, heav'nly bliss?

Pho. To sink me down to infamy, perdition,
Here and hereafter! Make my name a curse
To present times; and to ev'ry future age
A proverb and a scorn! Take back thy mercy,
And know I now disdain it.

Caled. As thou wilt.

The time's too precious to be wasted longer
In words with thee. Thou know'st thy doom:—
farewell.

Abu. Hear me, *Caled*: grant him some short
space;

Perhaps he will at length accept thy bounty.
Try him, at least. (*Apart to Caled.*)

Caled. Well, be it so, then. *Daran*,
Guard well thy charge. Thou hast an hour to live:
If thou art wise, thou may'st prolong that term;
If not—why—Fare thee well, and think of death.

[*Exeunt Caled and Abudah. Daran waits at
a distance.*]

Pho. "Farewell, and think of death!"—Was it
not so?

Do murderers then preach morality?
But how to think of what the living know not,
And the dead cannot, or else may not tell!
What art thou, oh! thou great mysterious terror?
The way to thee we know! disease, famine,
Sword, fire, and all thy ever open gates,
That day and night stand ready to receive us.
But what's beyond them?—Who will draw that
veil?

Yet death's not there!—No; 'tis a point of time,
The verge 'twixt mortal and immortal beings.
It mocks our thoughts. On this side all is life;
And when we've reach'd it, in that very instant,
'Tis past the thinking of. Oh! if it be
The pangs, the throes, the agonizing struggles
When soul and body part, sure I have felt it,
And there's no more to fear.

Daran. Suppose I now
Despatch him?—Right. What need to stay for
orders?

I wish I durst!—yet what I dare, I'll do. (*Aside.*)
Your jewels, Christian: you'll not need these trif-
les. (*Searches him.*)

Pho. I pray thee, slave, stand off! My soul's too
busy
To lose a thought on thee.

Re-enter ABUDAH.

Abu. What's this?—Forbear!
Who gave thee leave to use this violence?
(*Takes the jewels from Daran, and lays
them on a table.*)

Daran. Deny'd my booty! curses on his head!
Was not the founder of our law a robber?
Why, 'twas for that I left my country's gods,
Menaph and Uzza. Better still be Pagan,
Than starve with a new faith. (*Aside.*)

Abu. What dost thou mutter?
Daraa, withdraw, and better learn thy duty.
[Exit Daraa.]
Phocyas, perhaps thou know'st me not?
Pho. I know
 Thy name, *Abudah*, and thy office here,
 The second in command. What more thou art,
 Indeed I cannot tell.
Abu. True; for thou yet
 Know'st not I am thy friend.
Pho. Is't possible?
 Thou speak'st me fair.
Abu. What dost thou think of life?
Pho. I think not of it; death was in my thoughts.
 On hard conditions, life were but a load,
 And I will lay it down.
Abu. Art thou resolv'd?
Pho. I am, unless thou bring'st me better terms
 Than those I have rejected.
Abu. Think again.
Caled by me once more renews that offer.
Pho. Thou say'st thou art my friend: why dost
 thou try
 To shake the settled temper of my breast?
 My soul has just discharg'd her cumb'rous train
 Of hopes and fears, prepar'd to take her voyage
 To other seats, where she may rest in peace;
 And now thou call'st me back, to beat again
 The painful road of life. Tempt me no more
 To be a wretch, for I despise the offer.
Abu. The gen'ral knows thee brave, and 'tis for
 that
 He seeks alliance with thy noble virtues.
Pho. He knows me brave! Why does he, then,
 thus treat me?
 No, he believes I am so poor of soul,
 That, barely for the privilege to live,
 I would be bought his slave. But go, tell him
 The little space of life, his scorn bequeath'd me,
 Was lent in vain, and he may take the forfeit.
Abu. Why wilt thou wed thyself to misery,
 When our faith courts thee to eternal blessings?
 When truth itself is, like a seraph, come
 To loose thy bands? The light divine, whose
 beams
 Pierc'd through the gloom of *Hera's* sacred cave,
 And there illumin'd the great *Mahomet*,
Arabia's morning star, now shines on thee.
 Arise, salute with joy the guest from heav'n,
 Follow her steps, and be no more a captive.
Pho. But whither must I follow? Answer that.
 Is she a guest from heav'n? What marks divine,
 What signs, what wonders, vouch her boasted
 mission?
Abu. What wonders? Turn thy eye to *Mecca!*
 mark
 How far from *Caaba* first, that hallow'd temple,
 Her glory dawn'd! then look how swift its course,
 As when the sun-beams, shooting through a cloud,
 Drive o'er the meadow's face the flying shades!
 Have not the nations bent before our swords,
 Like ripen'd corn before the reaper's steel?
 Why is all this? Why does success still wait
 Upon our laws, if not to shew that heav'n
 First sent it forth, and owns it still by conquest?
Pho. Dost thou ask why is this? Oh! why, indeed!
 Where is the man can read heav'n's secret counsels?
 Why did I conquer in another cause,
 Yet now am here?
Abu. I'll tell thee: thy good angel
 Has seiz'd thy hand unseen, and snatch'd thee out
 From swift destruction: know, ere day shall dawn,
 Damascus will in blood lament its fall!
 We've heard what army is design'd to march
 Too late to save her. Now, e'en now, our force
 Is just preparing for a fresh assault.

Now, too, thou might'st revenge thy wrongs; so
Caled
 Charg'd me to say, and more, that he invites thee;
 Thou know'st the terms—to share with him the
 conquest.
Pho. Conquest! revenge! Hold, let me think—
 Oh! horror!
 Revenge! Oh! what revenge? Bleed on my
 wounds!
 For thus to be reveng'd, were it not worse
 Than all that I can suffer? But, *Eudocia*—
 Where will she then? Shield her, ye pitying
 pow'rs,
 And let me die in peace!
Abu. Hear me once more,
 'Tis all I have to offer; mark me now!
Caled has sworn *Eudocia* shall be safe.
Pho. Ah! safe! but how? A wretched captive,
 too?
Abu. He swears she shall be free, she shall be
 thine.
Pho. Then I am lost, indeed.
Abu. The time draws near, and I must quickly
 leave thee;
 But first, reflect, that in this fatal night
 Slaughter and rapine may be loos'd abroad;
 And while they roam with unextinguish'd rage,
 Should she thou lov'st—(well may'st thou start)—
 be made,
 Perhaps unknown, some barb'rous soldier's prey;
 Should she then fall a sacrifice to lust,
 Or brutal fury—
Pho. Oh! this pulls my heart-strings! (*Falls.*)
 Earth open—save me, save me from that thought!
Abu. Nay, do not plunge thyself in black de-
 spair;
 Look up, poor wretch! thou art not shipwreck'd
 yet;
 Behold an anchor; am not I thy friend?
Pho. (*Rises.*) Ha! Who, what art thou?
 (*Raves.*)
 My friend? that's well: but, hold! are all friends
 honest?
 What's to be done? Hush, hark! what voice is
 that?
Abu. There is no voice; 'tis yet the dead of
 night;
 The guards without keep silent watch around us.
Pho. Again it calls—'tis she! Oh! lead me to
 her!
Abu. Thy passion mocks thee with imagin'd
 sounds.
Pho. Sure 'twas *Eudocia's* voice cry'd out
 "Forbear!"
 What shall I do? Oh, heav'n!
Abu. Heav'n shews thee what,
 Nay, now it is too late; see *Caled* comes,
 With anger on his brow. Quickly withdraw
 To the next tent, and there—
Pho. (*Rises.*) What do I see?
 Damascus! conquest, ruin, rapes, and murder!
 Villains! Is there no more? Oh! save her, save
 her! [*Exit with Abudah.*]
Re-enter CALED and DARAN.
Daran. Behold, on thy approach, they shift their
 ground.
Caled. 'Tis as thou say'st; he trifles with my
 mercy.
Daran. Speak, shall I fetch his head?
Caled. No, stay you here,
 I cannot spare thee yet. *Raphan*, go thou—
 (*To an Officer.*)
 But, hold! I've thought again—he shall not die.
 Go, tell him I shall live till he has seen
 Damascus sink in flames; till he behold
 That slave, that woman idol he adores,
 Or giv'n a prize to some brave Mussulman,

Or slain before his face; then if he sue
For death, as for a boon, perhaps we'll grant it.

[Exit Raphan.]

Daran. The captains wait thy orders.

Caled. Are the troops
Ready to march?

Daran. They are.

Caled. Monrn, thou haughty city!
The bow is bent, nor canst thou 'scape thy doom.
Who turns his back henceforth, our prophet curse
him!

Daran. But who commands the trusty bands of
Mecca?

Thou know'st their leader fell in the last fight.

Caled. 'Tis true; thou, *Daran*, well deserv'st
that charge;

I've mark'd what a keen hatred, like my own,
Dwells in thy breast against these Christian dogs.

Daran. Thou dost me right.

Caled. And therefore I'll reward it.
Be that command now thine. And here, this sabre,
Bless'd in the field by Mahomet himself,
At Caahar's prosperous fight, shall aid thy arm.

Daran. Thanks, my good chief; with this I'll
better thank thee. (*Takes the scymetar.*)

Caled. Myself will lead the troops of the black
standard,

And at the eastern gate begin the storm.

Daran. But why do we not move? 'twill soon be
day.

Methinks I'm cold, and would grow warm with
action.

Caled. Then haste and tell *Abudah*—Oh! thou'rt
welcome!

Re-enter ABUDAH.

Thy charge awaits thee. Where's the stubborn
captive?

Abu. Indeed he's brave. I left him for a moment

In the next tent. He's scarcely yet himself.

Caled. But is he ours?

Abu. The threats of death are nothing;
Though thy last message shook his soul, as winds
On the bleaks hills bend down some lofty pine;
Yet still he held his root, till I found means,
Abating somewhat of thy first demand,
If not to make him wholly ours, at least
To gain sufficient to our end.

Caled. Say how?

Abu. Oft he inclin'd, oft started back; at last,
When just consenting, for awhile he paus'd,
Stood fix'd in thought, and lift his eyes to heaven;

Then, as with fresh recover'd force, cry'd out,
"Renounce my faith! Never!" I answer'd, "No,
That now he should not do it."

Caled. How?

Abu. Yet hear;

For since I saw him now so lost in passion,
That must be left to his more temp'rate thoughts.
Meantime I urg'd, conjur'd, at last constrain'd
him,

By all he held most dear, nay, by the voice
Of Providence, that call'd him now to save,
With her he lov'd, perhaps the lives of thou-
sands,

No longer to resist his better fate,
But join his arms in present action with us,
And swear he would be faithful.

Caled. What, no more?

Then he's a Christian still?

Abu. Have patience yet;

For, if, by him, we can surprise the city—

Caled. Say'st thou?

Abu. Hear what's agreed; but on the terms
That ev'ry unresisting life be spar'd.
I shall command some chosen, faithful bands;

Phocyas will guide us to the gate, from whence
He late escap'd; nor do we doubt but there
With ease to gain admittance.

Caled. This is something.

And yet I do not like this half ally.

Is he not still a Christian? But no matter—

Meantime, I will attack the eastern gate:
Who first succeeds gives entrance to the rest.
Hear all! Prepare ye now for boldest deeds,
And know, the prophet will reward your valour.
Think that we all to certain triumph move;
Who falls in fight yet meets the prize above.

There in the gardens of eternal spring,
While birds of Paradise around you sing,
Each, with his blooming beauty by his side,
Shall drink rich wines, that in full rivers glide;
Breathe fragrant gales o'er fields of spice that
blow,

And gather fruits immortal as they grow;
Ecstatic bliss shall your whole pow'rs employ,
And ev'ry sense be lost in ev'ry joy. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A great Square in the City before the
governor's palace.*

*Enter ABUDAH, Saracen Captains and Soldiers;
with EUMENES, HERBIS, and other Christians,
disarmed.*

Eum. It must be so! farewell, devoted walls!
To be surprised thus! Hell, and all ye fiends!
How did ye watch this minute for destruction!

Her. We've been betray'd by riot and debauch.
Curse on the traitor guard!

Eum. The guard above,
Did that sleep, too?

Abu. Christians, complain no more;
What you have ask'd is granted. Are ye men,
And dare ye question thus, with bold impatience,
Eternal justice? Know, the doom from heaven
Falls on your towers, resistless as the bolt
That fires the cedars on your mountain tops.
Be meek, and learn with humble awe to bear
The mitigated ruin. Worse had follow'd,
Had ye oppos'd our numbers. Now you're safe;
Quarter and liberty are giv'n to all;
And little do ye think how much ye owe
To one brave enemy, whom yet ye know not.

Enter ARTAMON, hastily.

Art. All's lost! Ha! Who are these?

Eum. All's lost, indeed!

Yield up thy sword, if thou wouldst share our
safety.

Thou com'st too late to bring us news.

Art. Oh, no!

The news I bring is from the eastern guard.

Caled. has forc'd the gate, and—but he's here.

(*A cry without,* "Fly, fly, they follow—
Quarter, mercy, quarter!")

Caled. (*Without.*) No quarter! Kill, I say. Are
they not Christians?

More blood! our prophet asks it.

Enter CALED and DARAN.

What, *Abudah*!

Well met! But wherefore are the looks of peace?

Why sleeps thy sword?

Abu. Caled our task is over.

Behold the chiefs! they have resign'd the palace.

Caled. And sworn t'obey our law?

Abu. No.

Caled. Then fall on.

Abu. Hold yet, and hear me! Heaven by me
has spar'd

The sword its cruel task. On easy terms
We've gain'd a bloodless conquest.

Caled. I renounce it.
Curse on those terms! The city's mine by storm.
Fall on, I say.

Abu. Nay, then, I swear ye shall not.

Caled. Ah! Who am I?
Abu. The general: and I know
What reverence is your due.

(*Caled gives signs to his men to fall on.*)

Nay, he who stirs,
First makes his way through me. My honour's
pledg'd;
Rob me of that who dares. (*They stop.*) I know
thee, *Caled*,
Chief in command; bold, valiant, wise, and faith-
ful;

But yet remember I'm a Mussulman;
Nay, more, thou know'st, companion of the pro-
phet;

And what we vow is sacred.
Caled. Thou'rt a Christian,
I swear thou art, and hast betray'd the faith.
Curse on thy new allies!

Abu. No more! this strife
But ill becomes the servants of the caliph,
And casts reproach—Christians, withdraw awhile:
I pledge my life to answer the conditions.

[*Exeunt Eumenes, Herbis, &c.*
Why, *Caled*, do we thus expose ourselves
A scorn to nations that despise our law?
Thou call'st me Christian! What, is it because
I prize my plighted faith, that I'm a Christian?
Come, 'tis not well, and if—

Caled. What terms are yielded?
Abu. Leave to depart to all that will; an oath
First given no more to aid the war against us,
An unmolested march. Each citizen
To take his goods, not more than a mule's burden;
The chiefs six mules, and ten the governor;
Besides some few slight arms for their defence
Against the mountain robbers.

Caled. Now, by Mahomet,
Thou hast equip'd an army!

Abu. Canst thou doubt
The greatest part by far will choose to stay,
Receive our law, or pay th' accustomed tribute?
What fear we then from a few wretched bands
Of scatter'd fugitives? Besides, thou know'st
What towns of strength remain yet unsubdu'd.
Let us appear this once like generous victors,
So future conquests shall repay this bounty,
And willing provinces ev'n court subjection.

Caled. Well, be it on thy head, if worse befall!
This once I yield; but see it thus proclaim'd
Through all Damascus, that who will depart,
Must leave the place this instant. Pass, move on.

[*Exeunt.*
SCENE II.—*The Outside of a Nunnery.*

Enter EUDOCIA.
Eud. Darkness is fled; and yet the morning light
Gives me more fears than did night's deadly gloom.
Within, without, all all are foes! Oh! *Phocyas*!
Thou art, perhaps, at rest. Would I were, too!
(*After a pause.*)

This place has holy charms; rapine and murder
Dare not approach it, but are aw'd to distance.
I've heard that even these infidels have spar'd
Walls sacred to devotion. World, farewell!
Here will I hide me, till the friendly grave
Opens its arms, and shelters me for ever! [*Exit.*

Enter PHOCYAS.
Pho. Did not I hear the murmurs of a voice
This way? A woman's, too! and seem'd com-
plaining!
Hark! No. Oh, torture! Whither shall I turn
me?

'Twas here last night we met. Dear, dear *Eudocia*!
Might I once more— (*Going out, he meets her.*)

Eud. Who calls the lost *Eudocia*?

Sure, 'tis a friendly voice!

Pho. 'Tis she! Oh, rapture!

Eud. Is't possible? my *Phocyas*!

Pho. My *Eudocia*!

Do I yet call thee mine?

Eud. Do I yet see thee?

Yet hear thee speak? Oh! how hast thou escap'd
From barbarous swords, and men that know not
mercy?

Pho. I've borne a thousand deaths since our last
parting.

But wherefore do I talk of death? for now,
Methinks, I'm rais'd to life immortal,
And feel I'm blest beyond the power of change;
For thee have triumph'd o'er the fiercest foes,
And turn'd them friends.

Eud. Amazement! Friends!

Oh! all ye guardian powers! Say on—Oh! lead
me,

Lead me through this dark maze of providence,
Which thou hast trod, that I may trace thy steps
With silent awe, and worship as I pass.

Pho. Inquire no more: thou shalt know all
hereafter.

Let me conduct thee hence.

Eud. Oh! whither next?

To what far distant bome? But 'tis enough,
That, favour'd thus of heaven, thou art my guide;
And as we journey on the painful way,
Say, wilt thou then beguile the passing hours,
And open all the wonders of thy story?

Where is my father?

Pho. Thou heavenly maid!

Know, I've once more, wrong'd as I am, even
sav'd

Thy father's threaten'd life: nay, sav'd Damascus
From blood and slaughter, and from total ruin.

Oh! didst thou know to what deadly gulfs
Of horror and despair I have been driven
This night, ere my perplex'd, bewilder'd soul
Could find its way! Thou saidst that thou wouldst
chide?

I fear thou wilt: indeed, I have done that,
I could have wish'd t'avoid—but for a cause
So lovely, so below'd—

Eud. What dost thou mean?

I'll not indulge a thought that thou couldst do
One act unworthy of thyself, thy honour,
And that firm zeal against these foes of heaven:
Thou couldst not save thy life by means inglorious.

Pho. Alas! thou know'st me not. I'm man,
frail man,

To error born; and who, that's man, is perfect?

To save my life! Oh, no! well was it risk'd

For thee! had it been lost, 'twere not too much.
And art thou safe? Oh! what wouldst thou have
said,

If I had risk'd my soul to save *Eudocia*?

Eud. Ah! speak—Oh! no, be dumb! it cannot
be!

And yet thy looks are chang'd, thy lips grow pale.
Why dost thou shake? Alas! I tremble, too!
Thou couldst not, hast not sworn to Mahomet?

Pho. No: I should first have died, nay, giv'n
up thee.

Eud. Oh! *Phocyas*, was it well to try me thus?

And yet another deadly fear succeeds!
How came these wretches hither? Who reviv'd
Their fainting arms to unexpected triumph?
For while thou fought'st, and fought'st the Chris-
tian cause

These batter'd walls were rocks impregnable,

Their towers of adamant. But, oh! I fear,

Some act of thine—

Pho. No more! I'll tell thee all;

I found the wakeful foe in midnight council,
Resolv'd ere day to make a fresh attack,
Keen for revenge, and hungry after slaughter—
Could my rack'd soul bear that, and think of thee?
Nay, think of thee expos'd a helpless prey
To some fierce ruffian's violating arms?
Oh! had the world been mine, in that extreme,
I should have given whole provinces away;
Nay, all, and thought it little for my ransom.

Eud. For this, then—Oh! thou hast betray'd the city!

Distrustful of the righteous pow'rs above,
That still protect the chaste and innocent:
And to avert a feign'd, uncertain danger,
Thou hast brought certain ruin on thy country!

Pho. No; the sword,
Which threaten'd to have fill'd the streets with
blood,

I sheath'd in peace; thy father, thou, and all
The citizens are safe, uncaptiv'd, free.

Eud. Safe! free! Oh, no! life, freedom, every
good,

Turns to a curse, if sought by wicked means.
Yet, sure, it cannot be! are these the terms
On which we meet? No, we can never meet
On terms like these; the hand of death itself
Could not have torn us from each other's arms,
Like this dire act!

But, alas!

'Tis thou hast blasted all my joys for ever,
And cut down hope, like a poor, short-liv'd flower,
Never to grow again!

Pho. Cruel Eudocia!

If in my heart's dear anguish I've been forc'd
Awhile from what I was, dost thou reject me?
Think of the cause—

Eud. The cause! there is no cause:

Not universal nature could afford
A cause for this. What were dominion, pomp,
The wealth of nations, nay of all the world,
If weigh'd with faith unspotted, heavenly truth,
Thoughts free from guilt, the empire of the mind,
And all the triumph of a godlike breast,
Firm and unmov'd in the great cause of virtue?

Pho. No more! Thou waken'st in my tortur'd
heart

The cruel, conscious worm, that stings to madness!
Oh! I'm undone! I know it, and can bear
To be undone for thee, but not to lose thee.

Eud. Poor wretch! I pity thee! but art thou
Phocyas,

The man I lov'd? I could have died with thee
Ere thou didst this: then we had gone together,
A glorious pair, and soar'd above the stars:
But never, never

Will I be made the curs'd reward of treason,
To seal thy doom, to bind a bellish league,
And to ensure thy everlasting woe.

Pho. What league? 'tis ended—I renounce it
thus— (Kneels.)

I bend to heaven and thee—Oh! thou divine,
Thou matchless image of all perfect goodness!
Do thou but pity yet the wretched Phocyas,
Heaven will relent, and all may yet be well.

Eud. No: we must part.

They do not think

Thy loss in me is worth one drooping tear:
But if thou wouldst be reconcil'd to heaven,
First sacrifice to heaven that fatal passion
Which caus'd thy fall; forget the lost Eudocia.
Canst thou forget her? Oh! the killing torture,
To think 'twas love, excess of love, divorc'd us!
Farewell for—still I cannot speak that word,
These tears speak for me—Oh, farewell! [Exit.]

Pho. (Raving.) For ever!

Return, return and speak it; say, for ever!
She's gone! and now she joins the fugitives.
Oh! hear, all-gracious heaven! wilt thou at once

Forgive; and, oh! inspire me to some act
This day, that may, in part, redeem what's past.
Prosper this day, or let it be my last. [Exit.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—An Open Place in the City.

Enter CALED and DARAN, meeting.

Caled. Soldier, what news? thou look'st as thou
wert angry.

Daran. And, durst I say it so, my chief, I am;
I've spoke—if it offends, my head is thine;
Take it, and I am silent.

Caled. No; say on.

I know thee honest, and, perhaps, I guess
What knits thy brows in frowns.

Daran. Is this my leader,

A conquer'd city? View yon vale of palms:
Behold the vanquish'd Christian triumph still,
Rich in his flight, and mocks thy barren war.

Caled. The vale of palms?

Daran. Beyond those hills, the place
Where they agreed this day to meet and halt,
To gather all their forces; there, disguis'd,
Just now I've view'd their camp. Oh! could I
curse

My eyes for what they've seen.

Caled. What hast thou seen?

Daran. Why, all Damascus! All its souls, its
life,

Its heart blood, all its treasure, piles of plate,
Crosses enrich'd with gems, arras and silks,
And vests of gold, unfolded to the sun,
That rival all his lustre!

Caled. How?

Daran. 'Tis true.

The bees are wisely bearing off their honey,
And soon the empty hive will be our own.

Caled. So forward, too! curse on this foolish
treaty!

Daran. Forward! it looks as if they had been
forewarn'd.

By Mahomet! The land wears not the face
Of war, but trade! and thou wouldst swear its
merchants

Were sending forth their loaded caravans
To all the neighb'ring countries.

Caled. Dogs! infidels! 'tis more than was
allow'd!

Daran. And shall we not pursue them? Rob-
bers, thieves!

That steal away themselves, and all they're worth,
And wrong the valiant soldier of his due!

Caled. The caliph shall know this—he shall;
Abudah,

This is thy coward bargain: I renounce it.
(Aside.)

Daran. we'll stop their march, and search.

Daran. And strip—

Caled. And kill.

Daran. That's well. And yet, I fear
Abudah's Christian friend.

Caled. If possible,

He should not know of this. No, nor Abudah;
By the seven heavens! his soul's a Christian's too.
And 'tis by kindred instinct he thus saves
Their curs'd lives, and taints our cause with
mercy.

Daran. I knew my general would not suffer this,
Therefore, I've troops prepar'd without the gate;
Just mounted for pursuit. Our Arab horse
Will, in a few minutes reach the place; yet still
I must repeat my doubts—that devil, Phocyas,
Will know it soon; I met him near the gate:
My nature sickens at him, and forebodes
I know not what of ill.

Caled. No more; away

With thy cold fears! we'll march this very instant,
And quickly make this thriftless conquest good:
The sword, too, has been wrong'd, and thirsts for
blood. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*A Valley full of tents; baggage and harness lying up and down amongst them. The prospect terminating with palm-trees and hills at a distance.*

Enter EUMENES, with Officers and Attendants.

Eum. Sleep on, and angels be thy guard! soft
slumber
Has gently stol'n her from her griefs awhile;
Let none approach the tent. Are out-guards plac'd
On yonder hills? (To an Officer.)

Offi. They are.
Eum. (Striking his breast.) Damascus! Oh!
Still art thou here! Let me entreat you, friends,
To keep strict order; I have no command,
And can but now advise you.

Offi. You are still
Our head and leader
We're all prepar'd to follow you.

Eum. I thank you.
The sun will soon go down upon our sorrows,
And, till to-morrow's dawn, this is our home:
Meanwhile, each, as he can, forget his loss,
And bear the present lot.

Offi. Sir, I have mark'd
The camp's extent: 'tis stretch'd quite through the
valley.

I think that more than half the city's here.

Eum. The prospect gives me much relief. I'm
pleas'd,

My honest countrymen, t' observe your numbers:
And yet, it fills my eyes with tears. 'Tis said,
The mighty Persian wept, when he survey'd
His numerous army, but to think them mortal;
Yet he then flourish'd in prosperity.
Alas! what's that? Prosperity! a harlot,
That smiles but to betray!

Hear me, all-gracious heaven,
Let me wear out my small remains of life,
Obscure, content with humble poverty,
Or, in affliction's hard but wholesome school,
If it must be: I'll learn to know myself,
And that's more worth than empire. But, oh!
heaven!

Curse me no more with proud prosperity!
It has undone me.

Enter HERBIS.

Herbis! where, my friend,
Hast thou been this long hour?

Her. On yonder summit,
To take a farewell prospect of Damascus.

Eum. And is it worth a look?

Her. No; I've forgot it.

All our possessions are a grasp of air:
We're cheated, whilst we think we hold them fast:
And when they're gone, we know that they were
nothing:

But I've a deeper wound.

Eum. Poor, good old man!
'Tis true—thy son—there thou'rt indeed unhappy.

Enter ARTAMON.

What, Artamon! art thou here, too?

Art. Yes, sir.

I never boasted much,
Yet I've some honour, and a soldier's pride;
I like not these new lords.

Eum. Thou'rt brave and honest.
Nay, we'll not yet despair. A time may come,
When from these brute barbarians we may wrest
Once more our pleasant seats. Alas! how soon
The flatterer, hope, is ready with his song,
To charm us to forgetfulness! No more.

Let that be left to heaven. See, Herbis, see,
Methinks we've here a goodly city yet.
Was it not thus our great forefathers liv'd,
In better times; in humble fields and tents,
With all their flocks and herds, their moving
wealth?

See, too, where our own Pharphar winds his
stream

Through the long vale, as if to follow us;—
And kindly offers his cool wholesome draughts,
To ease us in our march! Why, this is plenty.

Enter EUDOCIA.

My daughter! wherefore hast thou left thy tent?
What breaks so soon thy rest?

Eud. Rest is not there,
Or I have sought in vain, and cannot find it.
Oh, no! we're wanderers; it is our doom;
There is no rest for us.

Eum. Thou art not well.

Eud. I would, if possible, avoid myself.

I'm better now, near you.

Eum. Near me! Alas!

The tender vine so wreathes its folded arms
Around some falling elm! It wounds my heart
To think thou follow'st but to share my ruin.
I have lost all but thee.

Eud. Oh! say not so!

You have lost nothing; no, you have preserv'd
Immortal wealth, your faith inviolate
To heaven and to your country.

Ruin is yonder, in Damascus, now
The seat abhor'd of cursed infidels.
Infernal error, like a plague, has spread
Contagion through its guilty palaces,
And we are fled from death.

Eum. Heroic maid!

Thy words are balsam to my griefs. Eudocia,
I never knew thee till this day; I knew not
How many virtues I had wrong'd in thee.

Eud. If you talk thus, you have not yet forgiven
me.

Eum. Forgiven thee! Why, for thee it is, thee
only,

I think, heaven yet may look with pity on us;
Yes, we must all forgive each other now.

Poor Herbis, too! we both have been to blame.

Oh, Phocyas!—but it cannot be recall'd.

Yet, were he here, we'd ask his pardon, too.

My child! I meant not to provoke thy tears.

Eud. Oh! why is he not here? Why do I see
Thousands of happy wretches, that but seem
Undone, yet still are bless'd in innocence,
And why was he not one? (Aside.)

Enter an Officer.

Offi. Where is Eumenes?

Eum. What means thy breathless haste?

Offi. I fear there's danger:

For, as I kept my watch, I spy'd afar
Thicks clouds of dust, and, on a nearer view,
Perceiv'd a body of Arabian horse
Moving this way. I saw them wind the hill,
And then lost sight of them.

Her. I saw them, too,

Where the roads meet on t'other side these hills,
But took them for some band of Christian Arabs,
Crossing the country. This way did they move?

Offi. With utmost speed.

Eum. If they are Christian Arabs,
They come as friends; if other, we're secure
By the late terms. Retire awhile, Eudocia,
Till I return. [Exit Eudocia.]

I'll to the guard myself.
Soldier, lead on the way.

Enter another Officer.

2 *Offi.* Arm, arm! we're ruin'd!
The foe is in the camp.

Eum. So soon!

2 Off. They've quitted

Their horses, and with sword in hand have forc'd
Our guard: they say they come for plunder.

Eum. Villains!

Sure, Caled knows not of this treachery!

Come on, we can fight still. We'll make them
know

What 'tis to urge the wretched to despair.

Enter DARAN.

Daran. Let the fools fight at distance. Here's
the harvest.

Reap, reap, my countrymen! Ay, there; first
clear

Those further tents— (*Looking between the tents.*)

What's here? a woman! fair

She seems, and well attir'd! It shall be so.

She's my first prize, and then— [*Exit.*]

Re-enter DARAN, with EUDOCIA.

Eud. (*Struggling.*) Mercy! Oh! spare me, spare
me!

Heaven, hear my cries!

Daran. Woman, thy cries are vain:

No help is near.

Enter PHOCYAS.

Pho. Villain, thou liest! take that

To loose thy hold.

(*Pushing at Daran with his spear, who falls.*)
Eudocia!

Eud. Phocyas! Oh, astonishment!

Then is it thus that heaven has heard my prayers?

I tremble still, and scarce have power to ask thee

How thou art here, or whence this sudden outrage?

Pho. Sure every angel watches o'er thy safety!

Thou seest 'tis death 't approach thee without awe,

And barbarism itself cannot profane thee.

Eud. Whence are these alarms?

Pho. Some stores remov'd, and not allow'd by

treaty,

Have drawn the Saracens to make a search.

Perhaps 'twill quickly be agreed—But, oh!

Thou know'st, *Eudocia*, I'm a banish'd man,

And 'tis a crime I'm here once more before thee;

Else, might I speak, 'twere better for the present,

If thou wouldst leave this place.

Eud. No: I have a father,

(And shall I leave him?) whom we both have

wrong'd:

And yet, alas!

For this last act how would I thank thee, *Phocyas*!

I've nothing now but prayers and tears to give,

Cold, fruitless thanks! But 'tis some comfort yet,

That fate allows this short reprieve, that thus

We may behold each other, and once more

May mourn our woes, ere yet again we part—

Pho. For ever!

'Tis then resolv'd. It was thy cruel sentence,

And I am here to execute that doom.

Eud. What dost thou mean?

Pho. (*Kneeling.*) Thus at thy feet—

Eud. Oh! rise.

Pho. Never! No, here I'll lay my burden down;

I've tried its weight, nor can support it longer.

Take thy last look; if yet thy eyes can bear

To look upon a wretch accurs'd, cast off

By heaven and thee.

Eud. Forbear,

Oh! cruel man! Why wilt thou rack me thus?

Didst thou not mark?—thou didst, when last we

parted.

The pangs, the strugglings of my suff'ring soul;

That nothing but the hand of heaven itself

Could ever drive me from thee! Dost thou now

Reproach me thus? or canst thou have a thought

That I can e'er forget thee?

Pho. (*Rises.*) Have a care!

I'll not be tortur'd more with thy false pity!

No, I renounce it. See, I am prepar'd.

(*Shevs a dagger.*)

Thy cruelty is mercy now. Farewell!

And death is now but a release from torment!

Eud. Hold! stay thee yet. Oh! madness of
despair!

And wouldst thou die? Think, ere thou leap'st the
gulf,

When thou hast trod that dark, that unknown
way,

Canst thou return? What if the change prove
worse?

Oh! think, if then—

Pho. No: thought's my deadliest foe;

And, therefore, to the grave I'd fly to shun it.

Eud. Oh! fatal error! Like a restless ghost,

It will pursue and haunt thee still; even there,

Perhaps, in forms more frightful.

How wilt thou curse thy rashness, then! How

start,

And shudder, and shrink back! yet how avoid

To put on thy new being?

Pho. I thank thee;

For now I'm quite undone. I gave up all

For thee before; but this, this bosom friend,

My last reserve—There! (*Throws away the dagger.*)

Tell me now, *Eudocia*,

Cut off from hope, denied the food of life,

And yet forbid to die, what am I now?

Or what will fate do with me?

Eud. Oh! (*Turns away, weeping.*)

Pho. Thou weep'st!

Canst thou shed tears, and yet not melt to mercy?

Oh! say, ere yet returning madness seize me,

Is there in all futurity no prospect,

No distant comfort?

(*They both continue silent for some time.*)

Still art thou silent?

Hear then this last,

This only pray'r! Heav'n will consent to this.

Let me but follow thee, where'er thou go'st,

But see thee, hear thy voice; be thou my angel,

To guide and govern my returning steps,

Till long contrition, and unweary'd duty,

Shall expiate my guilt.

Eud. No more! This shakes

My firmest thoughts, and if— (*A cry is heard.*)

What shrieks of death!

I fear a treach'rous foe have now

Begun a fatal harvest! Haste,

Prevent—Oh! wouldst thou see me more with

comfort,

Fly, save them, save the threaten'd lives of Chris-

tians,

My father and his friends! I dare not stay.

Heav'n be my guide, to shun this gath'ring ruin!

[*Exit.*]

Enter CALED.

Caled. So, slaughter, do thy work! These hands

look well. (*Looks on his hands.*)

Phocyas! Thou'rt met—but whether thou art here

(*Comes forward.*)

A friend or foe, I know not; if a friend,

Which is *Eumenes'* tent?

Pho. Hold! pass no further.

Caled. Say'st thou, not pass?

Pho. No; on thy life, no further.

Caled. What, dost thou frown, too? Sure, thou

know'st me not!

Pho. Not know thee? Yes, too well I know

thee now,

Oh! murd'rous fiend! Why all this waste of blood?

Didst thou not promise—

Caled. Promise! Insolence!

'Tis well, 'tis well; for now I know thee, too.

Perfidious, mongrel slave! Thou double traitor!

False to thy first and to thy latter vows!
Villain!

Pho. That's well! go on; I swear I thank thee.
Speak it again, and strike it through my ear!
A villain! Yes, thou mad'st me so, thou devil!
And mind'st me now what to demand from thee.
Give, give me back my former self; my honour,
My country's fair esteem, my friends, my all!
Thou canst not! Oh! thou robber! Give me, then,
Revenge or death! The last I well deserve,
That yielded up my soul's best wealth to thee,
For which, accurs'd be thou, and curs'd thy pro-
phet!

Caled. Hear'st thou this, Mahomet! Blas-
pheming mouth!

For this thou soon shalt chew the bitter fruit
Of Zacon's tree, the food of fiends below.
Go, speed thee thither!

(*Pushes at him with his lance, which Phocyas
puts by, and kills him.*)

Pho. Go thou first thyself.

Caled. (*Falls.*) Oh, dog! thou guaw'st my
heart!

False Mahomet!

Is this, then, my reward? Oh! (*Dies.*)

Pho. Thanks to the gods, I have reveng'd my
country! [*Exit.*]

*Several Parties of Christians and Saracens pass over
the further end of the stage, fighting. The former
are beaten. At last EUMENES rallies them, and
makes a stand; then enter ABUDAH, attended.*

Abu. Forbear, forbear, and sheathe the bloody
sword.

Eum. Abudah! is this well?

Abu. No: I must own

Yours cause. Oh! Mussulmen, look here! be-
hold

Where, like a broken spear, your arm of war
Is thrown to earth!

Eum. Ha! Caled?

Abu. Dumb and breathless.

Then thus has heaven chastis'd us in thy fall,
And thee for violated faith! Farewell!

Thou great, but cruel man!

Eum. This thirst of blood

In his own blood is quench'd.

Abu. Bear hence his clay

Back to Damascus. Cast a mantle first
O'er this sad sight: so should we hide his faults.

Now hear, ye servants of the prophet, hear!

A greater death than this demands your tears,

For know, your lord, the caliph, is no more!

Good Abubeker has breath'd out his spirit

To him that gave it. Yet your caliph lives,

Lives now in Omar. See, behold his signet,

Appointing me, such is his will, to lead

His faithful armies warring here in Syria.

Alas! foreknowledge, sure, of this event

Guided his choice! Obey me, then, your chief.

For you, oh! Christians, know, with speed I came,

On the first notice of this foul design,

Or to prevent it, or repair your wrongs.

Your goods shall be untouched, your persons safe,

Nor shall our troops henceforth, on pain of death,

Molest your march. If more you ask, 'tis granted.

Eum. Still just and brave! thy virtues would

adorn

A purer faith! Thou, better than thy sect,

That dar'st decline from that to acts of mercy!

Pardon, Abudah, if thy honest heart

Makes us ev'n wish thee onrs.

Abu. Oh, Power Supreme!

That mad'st my heart, and know'st its inmost

frame,

If yet I err, oh! lead me into truth,

Or pardon unknown error! Now, Eumenes,

Friends, as we may be, let us part in peace. [*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter ARTAMON and EUDOCIA.

Eud. Alas! but is my father safe?

Art. Heaven knows!

I left him just preparing to engage:

When, doubtful of th' event, he bade me haste

To warn his dearest daughter of the danger,

And aid your speedy flight.

Eud. My flight! but whither?

Oh, no! if he is lost—

Art. I hope not so.

The noise is ceas'd? Perhaps, they're beaten off.

We soon shall know; here's one that can inform
us.

Re-enter first Officer.

Soldier, thy looks speak well: what says thy
tongue?

1 Off. The foe's withdrawn. Abudah has been
here,

And has renew'd the terms. Caled is kill'd—

Art. Hold! first, thank heaven for that!

Eud. Where is Eumenes?

1 Off. I left him well; by his command I came

To search you out: and let you know this news.

I've more; but that—

Art. Is bad, perhaps, so says

This sudden pause. Well, be it so; let's know it;

'Tis but life's chequer'd lot.

1 Off. Eumenes mourns

A friend's unhappy fall: Herbis is slain.

A settled gloom seem'd to hang heavy on him;

Th' effect of grief, 'tis thought, for his lost son.

When on the first attack, like one that sought

The welcome means of death, with desp'rate

valour

He press'd the foe, and met the fate he wish'd.

Art. See where Eumenes comes! What's this?

He seems

To lead some wounded friend. Alas! 'tis—

(*They retire.*)

*Re-enter EUMENES, leading in PHOCYAS, with an
arrow in his breast.*

Eum. Give me thy wound! Oh! I could bear it
for thee!

This goodness melts my heart. What, in a mo-
ment

Forgetting all thy wrongs, in kind embraces

T' exchange forgiveness thus!

Pho. Moments are few,

And must not now be wasted. Oh! Eumenes,

Lend me thy helping hand a little further;

Oh! where, where is she? (*They advance.*)

Eum. Look, look here, Eudocia!

Behold a sight that calls for all our tears!

Eud. Phocyas, and wounded! Oh! what cruel

hand—

Pho. No, 'twas a kind one. Spare thy tears,

Eudocia!

For mine are tears of joy.

Eud. Is't possible?

Pho. 'Tis done: the powers supreme have heard

my prayer,

And prosper'd me with some fair deed this day:

I've fought once more, and for my friends, my

country.

By me the treach'rous chiefs are slain; awhile

I stopp'd the foe, 'till, warn'd by me before,

Of this their sudden march, Abudah came.

But first this random shaft had reach'd my breast.

Life's mingled scene is o'er! 'tis thus that heaven

At once chastises, and, I hope, accepts me.

Eud. What shall I say to thee, to give thee

comfort?

Pho. Say only thou forgiv'st me. Oh! Eudocia,

No longer now my dazzled eyes behold thee

Through passion's mists; my soul now gazes on

thee,

And sees thee lovelier in unfading charms!
Bright as the shining angel host that stood—
Whilst I—but there it smarts.

Eud. Look down, look down,
Ye pitying powers! and help his pious sorrow!

Eum. 'Tis not too late, we hope, to give thee help.

See, yonder is my tent: we'll lead thee thither;
Come, enter there, and let thy wound be dress'd;
Perhaps it is not mortal.

Pho. No! not mortal?
No flatt'ry now. By all my hopes hereafter,
For all the world's empire I'd not lose this death.
Alas! I but keep in my fleeting breath
A few short moments, till I have conjur'd you,
That to the world you witness my remorse
For my past errors, and defend my fame.
For know, soon as this pointed steel's drawn out,
Life follows through the wound.

Eud. What dost thou say?
Oh! touch not yet the broken springs of life!
A thousand tender thoughts rise in my soul:
How shall I give them words? Oh! till this hour
I scarce have tasted woe! this is, indeed,
To part—but, oh!—

Pho. No more! death is now painful.
But say, my friends, whilst I have breath to ask
(For still, methinks, all your concerns are mine,)
Whither have you design'd to bend your journey?

Eum. Constantinople is my last retreat,
If heav'n indulge my wish; there I've resolv'd
To wear out the dark winter of my life,
An old man's stock of days—I hope not many.

Eud. There will I dedicate myself to heaven.
Oh! Phocyas, for thy sake, no rival else
Shall e'er possess my heart. My father, too,
Consents to this my vow. My vital flame
There, like a taper on the holy altar,
Shall waste away; till heav'n, relenting, hears
Incessant prayers for thee and for myself,
And wing my soul to meet with thine in bliss.
For in that thought I find a sudden hope,
As if inspir'd, springs in my breast, and tells me
That my repenting frailty is forgiv'n,
And we shall meet again, to part no more.

Pho. (*Plucks out the arrow.*) Then all is done—
'twas the last pang—at length—
I've given up thee, and the world now is—nothing.
(*Dies.*)

Eum. Oh! Phocyas, Phocyas!
Alas! he hears not now, nor sees my sorrows!
Yet will I mourn for thee, thou gallant youth!
As for a son—so let me call thee now.
A much-wrong'd friend, and an unhappy hero!
A fruitless zeal, yet all I now can shew;
Tears vainly flow for errors learn'd too late,
When timely caution should prevent our fate.
(*Exeunt.*)

TAMERLANE;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY NICHOLAS ROWE.



Act I.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

PRINCE OF TANAIS
TAMERLANE
BAJAZET
AXALLA
MONESES

STRATOCLES
OMAR
MIRVAN
ZAMA
HALY

DERVISE
GUARDS
ATTENDANTS
SELIMA
ARPASIA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Before Tamerlane's Tent.

The PRINCE of TANAIS, ZAMA, and MIRVAN, discovered.

Prince. Hail to the son! from whose returning light

The cheerful soldier's arms new lustre take,
To deck the pomp of battle. Oh! my friends,
Was ever such a glorious face of war?
See, from this height, how all Galatia's plains
With nations numberless are cover'd o'er!
Who, like a deluge, hide the face of earth,
And leave no object in the vast horizon,
But glitt'ring arms and skies.

Zama. Our Asian world
From this important day expects a lord;
This day they hope an end of all their woes,
Of tyranny, of bondage, and oppression,
From our victorious emp'ror, Tamerlane.

Mir. Hear you of Bajazet?

Prince. Late in the evening,
A slave of near attendance on his person
'Scap'd to our camp. From him we learn'd the
tyrant,

With rage redoubled, for the fight prepares:
Some accidental passion fires his breast,
(Love, as 'tis thought, for a fair Grecian captive,)
And adds new horror to his native fury.

But see his fate! The mighty Tamerlane
Comes, like the proxy of inquiring heav'n,
To judge, and to redress. (*Flourish of trumpets.*)

Enter TAMERLANE.

Tam. Yet, yet a little, and destructive slaughter
Shall rage around, and mar this beauteous prospect.

Pass but an hour, which stands betwixt the lives
Of thousands and eternity, what change
Shall hasty death make in yon glitt'ring plain?
Oh! thou fell monster, war! that in a moment
Lay'st waste the noblest part of the creation,
The boast and master-piece of the great Maker,
That wears in vain th' impression of his image,
Unprivleg'd from thee.

Health to our friends, and to our arms success!
(*To the Prince, Zama, and Mirvan.*)
Such as the cause for which we fight deserves.

Prince. Nor can we ask beyond what heaven
bestows,
Preventing still our wishes. See, great sir,
The universal joy your soldiers wear,
Omen of prosperous battle.
Impatient of the tedious night, in arms
Watchful they stood, expecting op'ning day;
And now are hardly by their leaders held
From darting on the foe.

Tam. Yes, prince, I mean to give a loose to war.
This morn Axalla, with my Parthian horse,
Arrives to join me. He who, like a storm,

Swept with his flying squadrons all the plain
Between Angoria's walls and yon tall mountains,
That seem to reach the clouds; and now he comes,
Loaden with spoils and conquest, to my aid.

(*Flourish of trumpets.*)

Zama. These trumpets speak his presence.

Enter AXALLA, who kneels to Tamerlane.

Tam. Welcome! thou worthy partner of my laurels!

Thou brother of my choice! a band more sacred
Than nature's brittle tie. By holy friendship,
Glory and fame stood still for thy arrival;
My soul seem'd wanting in its better half,
And languish'd for thy absence.

Axal. My emperor! My ever royal master!

To whom my secret soul more lowly bends,
Than forms of outward worship can express;
How poorly does your soldier pay this goodness,
Who wears his every hour of life out for you!
Yet, 'tis his all, and what he has he offers;
Nor now disdain t'accept the gift he brings.

Enter SELIMA, MONESES, STRATOCLES, prisoners;
Guards, Mutes, &c.

This earnest of your fortune. See, my lord,
The noblest prize that ever grac'd my arms!
Approach, my fair!

Tam. This is, indeed, to conquer,
And well to be rewarded for thy conquest;
The bloom of op'ning flow'rs, unsullied beauty,
Softness, and sweetest innocence she wears,
And looks like nature in the world's first spring.
But say, Axalla—

Sel. Most renown'd in war, (*Kneeling to Tam.*)

Look with compassion on a captive maid,
Though born of hostile blood; nor let my birth,
Deriv'd from Bajazet, prevent that mercy
Which every subject of your fortune finds.
War is the province of ambitious man,
Who tears the miserable world for empire;
Whilst our weak sex, incapable of wrong,
On either side claims privilege of safety.

Tam. (*Raising her.*) Rise, royal maid! the pride
of haughty pow'r

Pays homage, not receives it, from the fair.
Thy angry father fiercely calls me forth,
And urges me unwillingly to arms.
Yet though our frowning battles menace death
And mortal conflict, think not that we hold
Thy innocence and virtue as our foe.
Here, till the fate of Asia is decided,
In safety stay. To-morrow is your own.
Nor grieve for who may conquer, or who lose;
Fortune on either side shall wait thy wishes.

Sel. Where shall my wonder and my praise
begin?

From the successful labours of thy arms;
Or from a theme more soft and full of peace,
Thy mercy and thy gentleness? Oh! Tamerlane,
What can I pay thee for this noble usage,
But grateful praise? So heav'n itself is paid.
Give peace, ye pow'rs above, peace to mankind;
Nor let my father wage unequal war
Against the force of such united virtues.

Tam. Heav'n hear thy pious wish! But since
our prospect

Looks darkly on futurity, till fate
Determine for us, let thy beauty's safety
Be my Axalla's care; in whose glad eyes
I read what joy the pleasing service gives him.
Is there amongst thy other pris'ners aught
Worthy our knowledge? (*To Axalla.*)

Axal. That brave man, my lord,
(*Points to Moneses.*)

With long resistance, held the combat doubtful.
His party, press'd with numbers, soon grew faint,
And would have left their charge an easy prey;

Whilst he alone, undaunted at the odds,
Though hopeless to escape, fought well and firmly;
Nor yielded till, o'ermatch'd by many hands,
He seem'd to shame our conquest, while he own'd
it.

Tam. Thou speak'st him as a soldier should a
soldier,

Just to the worth he finds. I would not war
(*To Moneses.*)

With aught that wears thy virtuous stamp of
greatness.

Thy habit speaks thee Christian; nay, yet more,
My soul seems pleas'd to take acquaintance with
thee,

As if ally'd to thine: perhaps, 'tis sympathy
Of honest minds; like strings wound up in music,
Where, by one touch, both utter the same har-
mony.

Why art thou, then, a friend to Bajazet?
And why my enemy?

Mon. If human wisdom

Could point out ev'ry action of our lives,
And say, "Let it be thus, in spite of fate
Or partial fortune," then I had not been
The wretch I am.

Tam. The brave meet ev'ry accident
With equal minds. Think nobler of thy foes,
Than to account thy chance in war an evil.

Mon. Far, far from that: I rather hold it
grievous

That I was forc'd ev'n but to seem your enemy;
Nor think the baseness of a vanquish'd slave
Moves me to flatter for precarious life,
Or ill-bought freedom, when I swear by heav'n,
Were I to choose from all mankind a master,
It should be Tamerlane.

Tam. A noble freedom

Dwells with the brave, unknown to fawning syco-
phants,
And claims a privilege of being believ'd.

I take thy praise as earnest of thy friendship.

Mon. Still you prevent the homage I should
offer.

Oh! royal sir, let my misfortunes plead,
And wipe away the hostile mark I wore.
I was, when not long since my fortune hail'd me,
Bless'd to my wish; I was the prince Moneses,
Born and bred up to greatness: witness the blood,
Which, through successive heroes' veins, ally'd
To our Greek emperors, roll'd down to me;
Feeds the bright flame of glory in my heart.

Tam. Ev'n that, that princely tie, should bind
thee to me,

If virtue were not more than all alliance.

Mon. I have a sister, (oh! severe remembrance!)

Our noble house's, nay, her sex's pride;
Nor think my tongue too lavish, if I speak her
Fair as the fame of virtue, and yet chaste
As its cold precepts; wise beyond her sex
And blooming youth; soft as forgiving mercy,
Yet greatly brave and jealous for her honour:
Such as she was, to say, I barely lov'd her,
Is poor to my soul's meaning. From our infancy
There grew a mutual tenderness between us,
Till not long since her vows were kindly plighted
To a young lord, the equal of her birth.

The happy day was fix'd, and now approaching,
When faithless Bajazet (upon whose honour,
In solemn treaty giv'n, the Greeks depended)
With sudden war broke in upon the country,
Secure of peace, and for defence unready.

Tam. Let majesty no more be held divine,
Since kings, who are call'd gods, profane them-
selves.

Mon. Among the wretches, whom that deluge
swept

Away to slavery, myself and sister,
Then passing near the frontiers to the court,

(Which waited for her nuptials,) were surpris'd,
And made the captives of the tyrant's pow'r.
Soon as we reach'd his court, we found our usage,
Beyond what we expected, fair and noble;
'Twas then the storm of your victorious arms
Look'd black, and seem'd to threaten, when he
press'd me

(By oft repeating instances) to draw
My sword for him: but when he found my soul
Disdain'd his purpose, he more fiercely told me,
That my Arpasia, my lov'd sister's fate,
Depended on my courage shewn for him.
I had long learn'd to hold myself at nothing;
But for her sake, to ward the blow from her,
I bound my service to the man I hated.
Six days are pass'd since, by the sultan's order,
I left the pledge of my return behind,
And went to guard this princess to his camp:
The rest the brave Axalla's fortune tells you.

Tam. Wisely the tyrant strove to prop his cause,
By leagu'ing with thy virtue; but just heav'n
Has torn thee from his side, and left him naked
To the avenging bolt that drives upon him.
Forget the name of captive, (*gives him his sword*)
and I wish

I could as well restore that fair one's freedom,
Whose loss hangs heavy on thee: yet, ere night,
Perhaps, we may deserve thy friendship nobler;
Th' approaching storm may cast thy shipwreck'd
wealth

Back to thy arms: till that be past, since war
(Though in the justest cause) is ever doubtful,
I will not ask thy sword to aid my victory,
Least it should hurt that hostage of thy valour
Our common foe detains.

Mon. Let Bajazet
Bend to his yoke repining slaves by force;
You, sir, have found a nobler way to empire,
Lord of the willing world.

Tam. Haste, my Axalla, to dispose with safety
The beauteous charge, and on the foe revenge
The pain which absence gives; thy other care,
Honour and arms, now summon thy attendance.
Now do thy office well, my soul! Remember
Thy cause, the cause of heav'n and injur'd earth.
Oh, thou Supreme! if thy great spirit warms
My glowing breast, and fires my soul to arms,
Grant that my sword, assisted by thy pow'r,
This day may peace and happiness restore,
That war and lawless rage may vex the world no
more.

[*Flourish of trumpets. Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Tamerlane's Camp.*

Enter MONESES.

Mon. The dreadful business of the war is o'er;
And slaughter, that from yesternorn till ev'n,
With giant steps, pass'd striding o'er the field,
Besmear'd and horrid with the blood of nations,
Now weary sits among the mangled heaps,
And slumbers o'er her prey; while from this camp
The cheerful sounds of victory and Tamerlane
Beat the high arch of heav'n.

Enter STRATOCLES.

My Stratocles!
Most happily return'd; might I believe
Thou bring'st me any joy?

Stra. With my best diligence,
This night, I have inquir'd of what concerns you.
Scarce was the sun, who shone upon the horror
Of the past day, sunk to the western ocean,
When, by permission from the prince Axalla,
I mix'd among the tumult of the warriors
Returning from the battle: here a troop

Of hardy Parthians, red with honest wounds,
Confess'd the conquest they had well deserv'd:
There a dejected crew of wretched captives
Follow'd sadly after
The laughty victor's heels. But that which fully
Crown'd the success of Tamerlane, was Bajazet,
Fall'n, like the proud archangel, from the height
Where once (ev'n next to majesty divine)
Enthron'd he sat, down to the vile descent
And lowness of a slave: but, oh! to speak
The rage, the fierceness, and the indignation,
It bars all words, and cuts description short.

Mon. Then he is fall'n! that comet, which on
high

Portended ruin; he has spent his blaze,
And shall distract the world with fears no more.
But say, my friend, what hear'st thou of Arpasia?
For there my thoughts, my ev'ry care is center'd.

Stra. Though on that purpose still I bent my
search,

Yet nothing certain could I gain, but this:
That in the pillage of the sultan's tent
Some women were made pris'ners, who this morn-
ing

Were to be offer'd to the emp'r's view.
Their names and qualities, though oft inquiring,
I could not learn.

Mon. Then must my soul still labour
Beneath uncertainty and anxious doubt.

Stra. 'Twas said, not far from hence,
The captives were to wait the emp'r's passage.

Mon. Haste we to find the place. Oh! my Ar-
pasia,

Shall we then meet?

When thy lov'd sight shall bless my eyes again,
Then I will own I ought not to complain,
Since that sweet hour is worth whole years of
pain. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Inside of a magnificent Tent.*

Flourish. TAMERLANE, AXALLA, PRINCE of
TANAIS, ZAMA, MIRVAN, Soldiers, and Attend-
ants, discovered.

Axal. From this auspicious day the Parthian
name

Shall date its birth of empire, and extend,
Ev'n from the dawning east to utmost Thule,
The limits of its sway.

Prince. Nations unknown,
Where yet the Roman eagles never flew,
Shall pay their homage to victorious Tamerlane;
Bend to his valour and superior virtue,
And own that conquest is not giv'n by chance,
But, bound by fatal and resistless merit,
Waits on his arms.

Tam. It is too much: you dress me,
Like an usurper, in the borrow'd attributes
Of injur'd heav'n. Can we call conquest ours?
Shall man, this pigmy, with a giant's pride,
Vaunt of himself, and say, "Thus have I done
this?"

Oh! vain pretence to greatness! Like the moon,
We borrow all the brightness which we boast;
Dark in ourselves and useless. If that hand
That rules the fate of battles, strike for us,
Crown us with fame, and gild our clay with ho-
nour,

'Twere most ungrateful to disown the benefit,
And arrogate a praise which is not ours.

Axal. With such unshaken temper of the soul
To bear the swelling tide of prosperous fortune,
Is to deserve that fortune: in adversity,
The mind grows tough by buffeting the tempest,
Which, in success dissolving, sinks to ease,
And loses all her firmness.

Tam. Oh! Axalla,
Could I forget I am a man, as thou art,

Would not the winter's cold, or summer's heat,
Sickness, or thirst and hunger, all the train
Of nature's clam'rous appetites, asserting
An equal right in kings and common men,
Reprove me daily? No: if I boast of aught,
Be it to have been heav'n's happy instrument,
The means of good to all my fellow-creatures:
This is a king's best praise.

Enter OMAR.

Omar. Honour and fame (*Bows to Tamerlane.*)
For ever wait the emp'ror! May our prophet
Give him ten thousand days of life,
And ev'ry day like this! The captive sultan,
Fierce in his bonds, and at his fate repining,
Attends your sacred will.

Tam. Let him approach.

Flourish of trumpets. Enter BAJAZET, Guards, and Soldiers.

When I survey the ruins of this field,
The wild destruction which thy fierce ambition
Has dealt among mankind, (so many widows
And helpless orphans has thy battle made,
That half our eastern world this day are mourners,)
Well may I, in behalf of heav'n and earth,
Demand from thee atonement for this wrong.

Baj. Make thy demand to those that own thy
pow'r;

Know I am still beyond it; and though fortune
(Curse on that changeling deity of fools!)
Has stripp'd me of the train and pomp of greatness,
That outside of a king, yet still my soul,
Fix'd high, and of itself alone dependant,
Is ever free and royal, and ev'n now,
As at the head of battle, does defy thee.
I know what pow'r the chance of war has giv'n,
And dare thee to the use on't. This vile speech-
ing,

This after-game of words, is what most irks me;
Spare that, and for the rest 'tis equal all:
Be it as it may.

Tam. Well was it for the world,
When on their borders neighbouring princes met,
Frequent in friendly parle, by cool debates
Preventing wasteful war; such should our meeting
Have been, hadst thou but held in just regard
The sanctity of leagues so often sworn to.
Canst thou believe thy prophet, or, what's more,
That pow'r supreme which made thee and thy pro-
phet,

Will, with impunity, let pass that breach
Of sacred faith giv'n to the royal Greek?

Baj. Thou pedant talker! ah! art thou a king,
Possess'd of sacred pow'r, heav'n's darling attri-
bute,
And dost thou prate of leagues, and oaths, and
prophets?

I hate the Greek (perdition on his name!)
As I do thee, and would have met you both,
As death does human nature, for destruction.

Tam. Causeless to hate is not of humankind:
The savage brute that haunts in woods remote
And desert wilds, tears not the fearful traveller,
If hunger, or some injury, provoke not.

Baj. Can a king want a cause, when empire bids
Go on? What is he born for but ambition?
It is his hunger, 'tis his call of nature,
The noble appetite which will be satisfy'd,
And, like the food of gods, make him immortal.

Tam. Henceforth I will not wonder we were
foes,
Since souls that differ so by nature hate,
And strong antipathy forbids their union.

Baj. The noble fire that warms me does, indeed,
Transcend thy coldness. I am pleas'd we differ,
Nor think alike.

Tam. No; for I think like man,

Thou like a monster, from whose baleful presence
Nature starts back; and though she fix'd her
stamp

On thy rough mass, and mark'd thee for a man,
Now, conscious of her error, she disclaims thee,
As form'd for her destruction.

'Tis true, I am a king, as thou hast been:
Honour and glory too have been my aim;
But though I dare face death, and all the dangers
Which furious war wears in its bloody front,
Yet would I choose to fix my name by peace,
By justice, and by mercy; and to raise
My trophies on the blessings of mankind:
Nor would I buy the empire of the world
With ruin of the people whom I sway,
On forfeit of my honour.

Baj. Prophet, I thank thee!
Damnation! Couldst thou rob me of my glory,
To dress up this tame king, this preaching dervise?
Unfit for war, thou shouldst have liv'd secure
In lazy peace, and with debating senates
Shar'd a precarious sceptre, sat tamely still,
And let bold factions canton out thy pow'r,
And wrangle for the spoils they robb'd thee of;
Whilst I (curse on the pow'r that stops my ar-
dour!)

Would, like a tempest, rush amidst the nations,
Be greatly terrible, and deal, like Alba,
My angry thunder on the frighted world.

Tam. The world! 'twould be too little for thy
pride:

Thou wouldst scale heav'n!

Baj. I would. Away! my soul
Disdains thy conference.

Tam. Thou vain, rash thing,
That, with gigantic insolence, hast dar'd
To lift thy wretched self above the stars,
And mate with pow'r almighty, thou art fall'n!

Baj. 'Tis false! I am not fall'n from aught I have
been:

At least my soul resolves to keep her state,
And scorns to take acquaintance with ill fortune.

Tam. Almost beneath my pity art thou fall'n;
Since, while th' avenging hand of heav'n is on
thee,

And presses to the dust thy swelling soul,
Fool-hardy, with the stronger thou contendest.
To what vast heights had thy tumultuous temper
Been hurry'd, if success had crown'd thy wishes?
Say, what had I to expect, if thou hadst con-
quer'd?

Baj. Oh! glorious thought! by heav'n, I will
enjoy it,

Though but in fancy! imagination shall
Make room to entertain the vast idea.
Oh! had I been the master but of yesterday,
The world, the world had felt me; and for thee,
I had us'd thee as thou art to me—a dog,
The object of my scorn and mortal hatred:
I would have taught thy neck to know my weight,
And mounted from that footstool to my saddle:
Then, when thy daily servile task was done,
I would have cap'd thee, for the scorn of slaves,
Till thou hadst begg'd to die; and ev'n that mercy
I had deny'd thee. Now thou know'st my mind;
And question me no further.

Tam. Well dost thou teach me
What justice should exact from thee. Mankind,
With one consent, cry out for vengeance on thee;
Loudly they call to cut off this league-breaker,
This wild destroyer from the face of earth.

Baj. Do it, and rid thy shaking soul at once
Of its worst fear.

Tam. Why slept the thunder
That should have arm'd the idol deity,
And giv'n thee pow'r, ere yester sun was set,
To shake the soul of Tamerlane. Hadst thou an
arm

To make thee fear'd, thou shouldst have prov'd it
on me,

Amidst the sweat and blood of yonder field,
When through the tumult of the war I sought thee,
Fenc'd in with nations.

Baj. Curse upon the stars,
That fated us to diff'rent scenes of slaughter!
Oh! could my sword have met thee—

Tam. Thou hadst then;
As now, been in my pow'r, and held thy life
Dependent on my gift. Yes, Bajazet,
I hid thee live; (*They take off Bajazet's chains.*)
Nay, more; couldst thou forget thy brutal fierce-
ness,

And form thyself to manhood, I would bid thee
Live, and be still a king, that thou may'st learn
What man should be to man, in war remem'ring
The common tie and brotherhood of kind.
This royal tent, with such of thy domestics
As can be found, shall wait upon thy service;
Nor will I use my fortune to demand
Hard terms of peace, but such as thou may'st offer
With honour, I with honour may receive.

Baj. Ha! say'st thou? no: our prophet's ven-
geance blast me,

If thou shalt buy my friendship with thy empire.
Damnation on thee! thou smooth, fawning talker!
Give me again my chains, that I may curse thee,
And gratify my rage: or, if thou wilt
Be a vain fool, and play with thy perdition,
Remember I'm thy foe, and hate thee deadly.
Thy folly on thy head!

Tam. Be still my foe.
Great minds, like heav'n, are pleas'd in doing
good,

Though the ungrateful subjects of their favours
Are barren in return. Virtue still does
With scorn the mercenary world regard,
Where abject souls do good, and hope reward:
Above the worthless trophies men can raise,
She seeks not honours, wealth, nor airy praise, }
But with herself, herself the goddess pays.

[*Flourish. Exeunt Tamerlane, Axalla, Prince,
Mirvan, Zama, and Attendants.*]

Baj. Come, lead me to my dungeon; plunge me
down

Deep from the hated sight of man and day;
Where, under covert of the friendly darkness,
My soul may brood at leisure o'er its anguish.

Omar. Our royal master would, with noble
usage,

Make your misfortunes light: he bids you hope—
Baj. I tell thee, slave, I have shook hands with
hope,

And all my thoughts are rage, despair, and horror.

[*Exit Omar and Guards.*]
Ha! wherefore am I thus? Perdition seize me!
But my cold blood runs shiv'ring to my heart,
The rage and fiercer passions of my breast
Are lost in new confusion.

Arpasia!
Enter ARPASIA.

Haly!
Enter HALY.

Haly. Oh! emperor, for whose hard fate our
prophet

And all the heroes of thy sacred race
Are sad in paradise, thy faithful Haly,
The slave of all thy pleasures, in this ruin,
This universal shipwreck of thy fortunes,
Has gather'd up this treasure for thy arms:
Nor ev'n the victor, haughty Tamerlane,
(By whose command once more thy slave beholds
thee,)

Denies this blessing to thee, but with honour
Renders thee back thy queen, thy beauteous bride.

Baj. Oh! had her eyes with pity seen my sor-
rows,

Had she the fondness of a tender bride,
Heav'n could not have bestow'd a greater bless-
ing,

And love had made amends for loss of empire.
But see, what fury dwells upon her charms!
What lightning flashes from her angry eyes!
With a malignant joy she views my ruin:
Even beauteous in her hatred, still she charms
me,

And awes my fierce tumultuous soul to love.
Arp. And dar'st thou hope, thou tyrant rav-
isher!

That heav'n has any joy in store for thee?
Look back upon the sum of thy past life,
Where tyranny, oppression, and injustice,
Perjury, murders, swell the black account;
Where lost Arpasia's wrongs stand bleeding fresh,
Thy last recorded crime. But heav'n has found
thee;

At length the tardy vengeance has o'er'ta'en thee.
My weary soul shall bear a little longer
The pain of life, to call for justice on thee:
That once complete, sink to the peaceful grave,
And lose the memory of my wrongs and thee.

Baj. Thou rail'st! I thank thee for it: be per-
verse,

And muster all the woman in thy soul;
Goad me with curses, be a very wife,
That I may fling off this tame love and hate thee.
(*Bajazet starts.*)

Enter MONESES.

Al! keep thy temper, heart; nor take alarm
At a slave's presence.

Mon. It is Arpasia! Leave me, thou cold fear.
Sweet as the rosy morn she breaks upon me;
And sorrow, like the night's unwholesome shade,
Gives way before the golden dawn she brings.

Baj. (*Advancing towards him.*) Ah! Christian, is
it well that we meet thus?
Is this thy faith?

Mon. Why does thy frowning brow
Put on this storm of fury? Is it strange
We should meet here, companions in misfortune,
The captives of one common chance of war?
Nor shouldst thou wonder that my sword has
fail'd

Before the fortune of victorious Tamerlane,
When thou, with nations like the sanded shore,
With half the warring world upon thy side,
Couldst not stand up against this dreadful battle,
That crush'd thee with its shock. Thy men can
witness,

Those cowards that forsook me in the combat,
My sword was not inactive.

Baj. No: 'tis false!
Where is my daughter, thou vile Greek? Thou
hast

Betray'd her to the Tartar; or even worse,
Pale with thy fear, didst lose her like a coward;
And, like a coward now, would cast the blame
On fortune and ill stars.

Mon. Ah! saidst thou, like a coward?
What sanctity, what majesty divine
Hast thou put on, to guard thee from my rage,
That thus thou dar'st to wrong me?

Baj. Out, thou slave!
And know me for thy lord.

Mon. I tell thee, tyrant,
When in the pride of power thou sat'st on high,
When like an idol thou wert vainly worshipp'd
By prostrate wretches, born with slavish souls;
Ev'n when thou wert a king, thou wert no more
Nor greater than Moneses, born of a race
Royal and great as thine. What art thou now,
then?

The fate of war has set thee with the lowest;
And captives, (like the subjects of the grave,)
Losing distinction, serve one common lord.

Baj. Brav'd by this dog! Now give a loose to
rage,
And curse thyself; curse thy false, cheating pro-
phet.
Ah! yet there's some revenge. Hear me, thou
Christian!
Thou left'st that sister with me: Thou impostor!
Thou boaster of thy honesty! Thou liar!
But take her to thee back.
Now to explore my prison—if it holds
Another plague like this. The restless damn'd
(If mufties lie not) wander thus in hell;
From scorching flames to chilling frosts they run,
Then from their frosts to fires return again,
And only prove variety of pain. [*Exit, with Haly.*]

Arp. Stay, Bajazet, I charge thee, by my
wrongs,

Stay and unfold a tale of so much horror,
As only fits thy telling. Oh, Moneses!

Mon. Why dost thou weep? Why 'tis tempe-
stuous passion,

That stops thy falt'ring tongue short on my name?
Oh! speak, unveil this mystery of sorrow.

Arp. Thou art undone, lost, ruin'd, and undone!

Mon. I will not think 'tis so, while I have
thee;

While thus 'tis given to fold thee in my arms;
The sad remembrance of past woes is lost.

Arp. Forbear to sooth thy soul with flat'ring
thoughts

Of evils overpast, and joys to come:
Our woes are like the genuine shade beneath,
Where fate cuts off the very hopes of day,
And everlasting night and horror reign.

Mon. By all the tenderness and chaste endear-
ments

Of our past love, I charge thee, my Arpasia,
To ease my soul of doubts! Give me to know,
At once, the utmost malice of my fate!

Arp. Take, then, thy wretched share in all I
suffer,

Still partner of my heart!—Scarce hadst thou left
The sultan's camp, when the imperious tyrant,
Soft'ning the pride and fierceness of his temper,
With gentle speech made offer of his love.

Amaz'd, as at the shock of sudden death,
I started into tears, and often urg'd
(Though still in vain) the difference of our faiths.

At last, as flying to the utmost refuge,
With lifted hands and streaming eyes, I own'd
The fraud, which when we first were made his
—prisoners,

I forc'd thee to put on;

Thy borrow'd name of brother, mine of sister;
Hiding between that veil the nearer tie

Our mutual vows had made before the priest.

Kindling to rage at hearing of my story,
"Then be it so," he cry'd: "Think'st thou, thy
vows,

Giv'n to a slave, shall bar me from thy beauties?"
Then bade the priest pronounce the marriage rites:
Which he perform'd; whilst, shrieking with de-
spair,

I call'd in vain the pow'rs of heav'n to aid me.

Mon. Villain! Imperial villain! Oh! the
coward!

Aw'd by his guilt, though back'd by force and
power,

He durst not to my face avow his purpose:

But, in my absence, like a lurking thief,
Stole on my treasure, and at once undid me.

Oh! I cannot bear it.

Thou lovely hoard of sweets, where all my joys
Were treasur'd up, to have thee rifled thus!

But I will have thee from him. Tamerlane

(The sovereign judge of equity on earth,) Shall do me justice on this mighty robber,

And render back thy beauties to Moneses.

Arp. And who shall render back my peace, my
honour?

I am the tyrant's wife. Oh, fatal title!

And, in the sight of all the saints, have sworn,

By honour, womanhood, and blushing shame,

To know no second bride-bed but my grave.

Mon. Tell me, Arpasia—say, what joys are
those

That wait to crown the wretch who suffers here?

Oh! tell me, and sustain my failing faith.

Arp. Imagine, 'tis a tract of endless joys, which
fancy cannot paint

Without satiety or interruption;

Imagine, 'tis to meet and part no more.

Oh, my Moneses! now the surges rise,

The swelling sea breaks in between our barks,

And drives us to our fate on different rocks.

Farewell! my soul lives with thee.

Mon. Death is parting,

'Tis the last sad adieu 'twixt soul and body.

But this is somewhat worse. My joy, my com-
fort,

All that was left in life, fleets after thee;

My aching sight hangs on thy parting beauties,

Thy lovely eyes, all drown'd in floods of sorrow.

So sinks the setting sun beneath the waves,

And leaves the traveller in pathless woods,

Benighted and forlorn. Thus, with sad eyes,

Westward he turns, to mark the light's decay,

Till, having lost the last faint glimpse of day,

Cheerless, in darkness, he pursues his way. }
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Interior of the royal Tent.*

Enter AXALLA and SELIMA.

Axal. Why was I ever blest? Why is remem-
brance

Rich with a thousand pleasing images

Of past enjoyments, since 'tis but to plague me?

When thou art mine no more, what will it ease
me

To think of all the golden minutes past,

To think that thou wert kind, and I was happy;

But, like an angel fall'n from bliss, to curse

My present state, and mourn the heav'n I've lost?

Sel. Hope better for us both; nor let thy fears,

Like an unlucky omen cross my way.

My father, rough and stormy in his nature,

To me was always gentle, and with fondness

Paternal ever met me with a blessing.

Oft, when offence had stirr'd him to such fury,

That not grave counsellors for wisdom fam'd,

Nor hardy captains that had fought his battles,

Presum'd to speak, but struck with awful dread

Were hush'd as death; yet has he smil'd on me,

Kiss'd me, and bade me utter all my purpose,

Till with my idle prattle I had sooth'd him,

And won him from his anger.

Axal. Oh! I know

Thou hast a tongue to charm the wildest tempers.

But, oh! when I revolve each circumstance,

My Christian faith, my service closely bound

To Tamerlane, my master and my friend,

Tell me, my charmer, if my fears are vain?

Think what remains for me, if the fierce sultan

Should doom thy beauties to another's bed!

Sel. 'Tis a sad thought; but to appease thy
doubts,

Here, in the awful sight of heav'n, I vow

No power shall e'er divide me from thy love;

Ev'n duty shall not force me to be false.

My cruel stars may tear thee from my arms,

But never from my heart.

Axal. But see, the sultan comes!

Enter BAJAZET.

Baj. To have a nauseous courtesy forc'd on me,
Spite of my will, by an insulting foe!
Ah! they would break the fierceness of my temper,

And make me supple for their slavish purpose.
Curse on their fawning arts! From heav'n itself
I would not, on such terms, receive a benefit,
But spurn it back upon the giver's hand.

Sel. My lord! my royal father!
(*Comes forward, and kneels to Bajazet.*)

Baj. Ah! what art thou?
What heavenly innocence, that in a form
So known, so lov'd, hast left thy paradise,
For joyless prison, for this place of woe?
Art thou my Selima?

Sel. Have you forgot me?
Alas! my piety is then in vain:
Your Selima, your daughter whom you lov'd,
The fondling once of her dear father's arms,
Is come to claim her share in his misfortunes;
To help to wear the tedious minutes out,
To soften bondage, and the loss of empire.

Baj. Now, by our prophet, if my wounded mind

Could know a thought of peace, it would be now:
Ev'n from thy prating infancy thou wert
My joy, my little angel: smiling comfort
Came with thee still to glad me. Now I'm curs'd

Ev'n in thee too. Reproach and infamy
Attend the Christian dog t' whom thou wert trusted.

To see thee here—'twere better see thee dead!

Axal. Thus Tamerlane, to royal Bajazet,
With kingly greeting, sends: since with the brave

(The bloody bus'ness of the fight once ended)
Stern hate and opposition ought to cease;
Thy queen already to thy arms restor'd,
Receive this second gift, thy beauteous daughter;
And if there be aught further in thy wish,
Demand with honour, and obtain it freely.

Baj. Bear back the fulsome greeting to thy master;

Tell him, I'll none on't. Had he been a god,
All his omnipotence could not restore
My fame diminish'd, loss of sacred honour,
The radiancy of majesty eclips'd:
For aught besides, it is not worth my care;
The giver and his gifts are both beneath me.

Axal. Enough of war the wounded earth has known;

Wearied at length, and wasted with destruction,
Sadly she rears her ruin'd head to shew
Her cities humbled, and her countries spoil'd.
Oh! sultan, by the pow'r divine I swear,
With joy I would resign the savage trophies,
In blood and battle gain'd, could I atone
The fatal breach 'twixt thee and Tamerlane;
And think a soldier's glory well bestow'd
To buy mankind a peace.

Baj. And what art thou,
That dost presume to mediate 'twixt the rage
Of angry kings?

Axal. A prince, born of the noblest,
And of a soul that answers to that birth,
That dares not but do well. Thou dost put on
A forc'd forgetfulness, thus not to know me,
A guest so lately to thy court, then meeting
On gentler terms.

Sel. Could aught efface the merit
Of brave Axalla's name, yet when your daughter
Shall tell how well, how nobly she was us'd,
How light this gallant prince made all her bondage,

Most sure the royal Bajazet will own

That honour stands indebted to such goodness,
Nor can a monarch's friendship more than pay it.

Baj. Ah! know'st thou that, fond girl? Go: 'tis not well;

And when thou couldst descend to take a benefit
From a vile Christian, and thy father's foe,
Thou didst an act dishonest to thy race:
Henceforth, unless thou mean'st to cancel all
My share in thee, and write thyself a bastard,
Die, starve, know any evil, any pain,
Rather than taste a mercy from these dogs.

Sel. Alas, Axalla!

Axal. Weep not, lovely maid!
I swear, one pearly drop from those fair eyes
Would over-pay the service of my life!
One sigh from thee has made a large amends
For all thy angry father's frowns and fierceness.

Baj. Oh, my curs'd fortune! Am I fall'n thus low?

Dishourou'd to my face! Thou earth-born thing!
Thou clod! how hast thou dar'd to lift thy eyes
Up to the sacred race of mighty Ottoman,
Whom kings, whom e'en our prophet's holy offspring,

At distance have beheld? And what art thou?

What glorious titles blazon out thy birth?
Thou vile obscurity! ah! say, thou base one!

Axal. Thus challeng'd, virtue, modest as she is,

Stands up to do herself a common justice;
To answer, and assert that in-born merit,
That worth, which conscious to herself she feels.
Were honour to be scann'd by long descent
From ancestors illustrious, I could vaunt
A lineage of the greatest,

Heroes and god-like patriots, who subdu'd
The world by arms and virtue, and, being Romans,

Scorn'd to be kings; but that be their own praise:
Nor will I borrow merit from the dead,
Myself an undeserver. I could prove
My friendship such as thou might'st deign t'accept

With honour, when it comes with friendly office,
To render back thy crown and former greatness.
And yet e'n this, e'en all is poor, when Selima,
With matchless worth weighs down the adverse scale.

Baj. To give me back what yesterday took from me,

Would be to give like heaven, when, having finish'd

This world, (the goodly work of his creation,)
He bid his favourite man be lord of all.
But this—

Axal. Nor is this gift beyond my pow'r.
Oft has the mighty master of my arms
Urg'd me, with large ambition, to demand
Crowns and dominions from his bounteous pow'r:
'Tis true, I wav'd the proffer, and have held it
The worthier choice to wait upon his virtues,
To be the friend and partner of his wars,
Than to be Asia's lord. Nor wonder, then,
If in the confidence of such a friendship,
I promise boldly, for the royal giver,
Thy crown and empire.

Baj. For our daughter thus
Mean'st thou to barter? Ha! I tell thee, Christian,

There is but one, one dowry thou canst give,
And I can ask, worthy my daughter's love.

Axal. Oh! name the mighty ransom; task my pow'r;
Let there be danger, difficulty, death,
T' enhance the price.

Baj. I take thee at thy word.
Bring me the Tartar's head.

Axal. Ah!

Baj. Tamerlane's!
That death, that deadly poison to my glory.

Axal. Prodigious! Horrid!

Sel. Lost! for ever lost!

Baj. And couldst thou hope to bribe me with
aught else?

With a vile peace patch'd up on slavish terms?

With tributary kingship? No! To merit

A recompense from me, sate my revenge.

The Tartar is my bane, I cannot bear him:

One heav'n and earth can never hold us both;

Still shall we hate, and with defiance deadly

Keep rage alive, till one be lost for ever:

As if two suns should meet in the meridian,

And strive in fiery combat for the passage.

Weep'st thou, fond girl? Now, as thy king and
father,

I charge thee, drive this slave from thy remem-
brance!

Hate shall be pious in thee. Come and join

To curse thy father's foes.

[*Exit, leading out Selima, she looking back
on Axalla.*]

Axal. 'Tis what I fear'd; fool that I was t'
obey!

The coward love, that could not bear her frown,
Has wrought his own undoing.

He bade me take her—but, oh, gracious honour!

Upon what terms? My soul yet shudders at it.

The head of Tamerlane! monstrous impiety!

Bleed, bleed to death, my heart, be virtue's
martyr.

Oh! emperor, I own I ought to give thee

Some nobler mark than dying of my faith.

Then let the pains I feel my friendship prove,

'Tis easier far to die, than cease to love. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Tamerlane's Camp.*

Enter TAMERLANE and a Dervise.

Tam. Thou bring'st me thy credentials from the
highest,

From Alba and our prophet. Speak thy mes-
sage;

It must import the best and noblest ends.

Der. Thus speaks our holy Mahomet, who has
giv'n thee

To reign and conquer: Ill dost thou repay

The bounties of his hand, unmindful of

The fountain whence thy streams of greatness
flow.

Thou hast forgot high heav'n, hast beaten down
And trampled on religion's sanctity.

Tam. Now, as I am a soldier and a king,

(The greatest names of honour,) do but make

Thy imputation out, and Tamerlane

Shall do thee ample justice on himself.

So much the sacred name of heaven awes me,

Could I suspect my soul of harbouring aught

To its dishonour, I would search it strictly,

And drive th' offending thought with fury forth.

Der. Yes, thou hast hurt our holy prophet's ho-
nour,

By fostering the pernicious Christian sect;

Those, whom his sword pursu'd with fell destruc-
tion,

Thou tak'st into thy bosom, to thy councils;

They are thy only friends. The true believers

Mourn to behold thee favour this Axalla.

Tam. I fear me, thou out-go'st the prophet's
order,

And bring'st his venerable name to shelter

A rudeness ill-becoming thee to use,

Or me to suffer. When thou nam'st my friend,

Thou nam'st a man beyond a monk's discerning,

Virtuous and great, a warrior and a prince.

Der. He is a Christian; there our law condemns
him,

Although he were even all thou speak'st, and
more.

Tam. 'Tis false; no law divine condemns the vir-
tuous,

For differing from the rules your schools devise.

Look round, how Providence bestows alike,

Sunshine and rain, to bless the fruitful year;

On different nations, all of different faiths;

And (though by several names and titles wor-
shipp'd)

Heav'n takes the various tribute of their praise;

Since all agree to own, at least to mean,

One best, one greatest, only Lord of all.

Der. Most impious and prophane! Nay, frown
not, prince;

Full of the prophet, I despise the danger

Thy angry power may threaten. I command thee

To hear and to obey; since thus says Mahomet:

Why have I made thee dreadful to the nations?

Why have I giv'n thee conquest; but to spread

My sacred law ev'n to the utmost earth,

And make my holy Mecca the world's worship?

Go on, and wheresoe'er thy arms shall prosper,

Plant there the prophet's name; with sword and
fire

Drive out all other faiths, and let the world

Confess him only.

Tam. Had he but commanded

My sword to conquer all, to make the world

Know but one Lord, the task were not so hard;

'Twere but to do what has been done already;

And Philip's son and Cæsar did as much;

But to subdue th' unconquerable mind,

To make one reason have the same effect

Upon all apprehensions; to force this

Or this man just to think as thou and I do;

Impossible! unless souls were alike

In all, which differ now like human faces.

Der. Well might the holy cause be carried on,

If Mussulmen did not make war on Mussulmen.

Why hold'st thou captive a believing monarch?

Now, as thou hop'st to 'scape the prophet's

curse,

Release the royal Bajazet, and join

With force united, to destroy the Christians.

Tam. 'Tis well: I've found the cause that mov'd
thy zeal.

What shallow politician set thee on,

In hopes to fright me this way to compliance?

Der. Our prophet only—

Tam. No: thou dost belie him,

Thou maker of new faiths! that dar'st to build

Thy fond inventions on religion's name.

Religion's lustre is, by native innocence,

Divinely pure and simple from all arts;

You daub and dress her like a common mistress,

The harlot of your fancies; and by adding

False beauties, which she wants not, make the
world

Suspect her angel's face is foul beneath,

And wo'not bear all lights. Hence, I have found
thee.

Der. I have but one resort. Now aid me, pro-
phet! (*Aside.*)

Yet I have somewhat further to unfold;

Our prophet speaks to thee in thunder—thus—

(*Draws a concealed dagger, and offers to
stab Tamerlane.*)

Tam. No villain; heav'n is watchful o'er its wor-
shippers, (*Wresting the dagger from him.*)

And blasts the murderer's purpose. Think, thou
wretch!

Think on the pains that wait thy crime, and
tremble

When I shall doom thee—

Der. 'Tis but death at last;

And I will suffer greatly for the cause
That urg'd me first to the bold deed.

Tam. Oh, impious!

Enthusiasm thus makes villains martyrs. (*Pauses.*)
It shall be so. To die! 'twere a reward.
Now learn the difference 'twixt thy faith and
mine:

Thine bids thee lift thy dagger to my throat;
Mine can forgive the wrong, and bid thee live.
Keep thy own wicked secret, and be safe;
If thou repent'st, I have gain'd one to virtue,
And am, in that, rewarded for my mercy;
If thou continu'st still to be the same,
'Tis punishment enough to be a villain.
Hence from my sight! It shocks my soul to
think

That there is such a monster in my kind.

[*Exit Dervise.*]

Whither will man's impiety extend?
Oh, gracious heav'n! dost thou withhold thy
thunder,
When bold assassins take thy name upon 'em,
And swear they are the champions of thy cause?

Enter MONESES.

Mon. Oh! emperor, before whose awful throne
Th' afflicted never kneel in vain for justice,

(*Kneels.*)

Undone and ruin'd, blasted in my hopes,
Here let me fall before your sacred feet,
And groan out my misfortunes, till your pity
(The last support and refuge that is left me,)
Shall raise me from the ground, and bid me live.

Tam. Rise, prince; nor let me reckon up thy
worth,

And tell how boldly that might bid thee ask,
Lest I should make a merit of my justice,
The common debt I owe to thee, to all,
Ev'n to the meanness of mankind, the charter
By which I claim my crown, and heav'n's protec-
tion.

Speak, then, as to a king, the sacred name
Where pow'r is lodg'd, for righteous ends alone.

Mon. One only joy, one blessing, my fond
heart

Had fix'd its wishes on, and that is lost:
That sister, for whose safety my sad soul
Endur'd a thousand fears—

Tam. I well remember,

When, ere the battle join'd, I saw thee first,
With grief uncommon to a brother's love,
Thou told'st a moving tale of her misfortunes,
Such as bespoke my pity. Is there aught
Thou canst demand from friendship? Ask, and
have it.

Mon. First, oh! let me entreat your royal good-
ness:

Forgive the folly of a lover's caution,
That forg'd a tale of folly to deceive you.
Said I, she was my sister? Oh! 'tis false;
She holds a dearer interest in my soul;
She was the mistress of my vows, my bride,
By contract mine; and long ere this, the priest
Had ty'd the knot for ever, had not Bajazet—

Tam. Ha! Bajazet! If yet his pow'r with-
holds

The cause of all thy sorrows, all thy fears,
E'en gratitude for once shall gain upon him,
Spite of his savage temper, to restore her.
This morn a soldier brought a captive beauty,
Sad though she seem'd, yet of a form more rare,
By much the noblest spoil of all the field;
E'en Scipio, or a victor yet most cold,
Might have forgot his virtue at her sight.
Struck with a pleasing wonder, I beheld her,
Till, by a slave that waited near her person,
I learn'd she was the captive sultan's wife:

Straight I forbade my eyes the dangerous joy
Of gazing long, and sent her to her lord.

Mon. There was Moneses lost. Too sure my
heart

(From the first mention of her wondrous charms)
Presag'd it could be only my Arpasia.

Tam. Arpasia! didst thou say?

Mon. Yes, my Arpasia.

Tam. Sure I mistake, or I fain would mistake
thee;

I nam'd the queen of Bajazet; his wife.

Mon. His queen! his wife! He brings that holy
title

To varnish o'er the monstrous wrongs he has done
me.

Tam. Alas! I fear me, prince, thy griefs are
just;

Thou art, indeed, unhappy.

Mon. Can you pity me,

And not redress? Oh! royal Tamerlane! (*Kneels.*)
Thou succour of the wretched, reach thy mercy
To save me from the grave and from oblivion;
Let thy justice

Restore me my Arpasia; give her back,
Back to my wishes, to my transports give her:
Oh! give her to me yet, while I have life
To bless thee for the bounty. Oh, Arpasia!

Tam. Unhappy, royal youth, why dost thou ask
What honour must deny? Ah! is she not

His wife, whom he has wedded, whom enjoy'd?
And wouldst thou have my partial friendship
break

That holy knot, which, ty'd once, all mankind
Agree to hold sacred and undissolvable?

The brutal violence would stain my justice,
And brand me with a tyrant's hated name
To late posterity.

Mon. Are then the vows,

The holy vows we register'd in heav'n,
But common air?

Tam. Could thy fond love forget

The violation of a first enjoyment?
But sorrow, has disturb'd and hurt thy mind.

Mon. Perhaps it has; and like an idle madman,
That wanders with a train of hooting boys,

I do a thousand things to shame my reason.
Then let me fly, and bear my follies with me,
Far, far from the world's sight. Honour and
fame,

Arms and the glorious war, shall be forgotten;
No noble sound of greatness or ambition
Shall wake my drowsy soul from her dead sleep,
Till the last trump do summon.

Tam. Let thy virtue

Stand up and answer to these warring passions,
That vex thy manly temper. From the moment
When first I saw thee, something wondrous
noble

Shone through thy form, and won my friendship
for thee,

Without the tedious form of long acquaintance;
Nor will I lose thee poorly for a woman.

Come, droop no more, thou shalt with me pursue
True greatness, till we rise to immortality.
Thou shalt forget these lesser cares, Moneses;
Thou shalt, and help me to reform the world.

Mon. Sacred Tamerlane!

Thy words are as the breath of angels to me.
But, oh! too deep the wounding grief is fix'd,
For any hand to heal.

Tam. This dull despair

Is the soul's laziness. Rouse to the combat,
And thou art sure to conquer. War shall restore
thee:

The sound of arms shall wake thy martial ardour,
And cure this amorous sickness of thy soul.

The boy, fond love,

Is nurs'd and bred in sloth, and too much ease;

Near purling streams, in gloomy shades, he lies,
And loosely there, instructs his votaries,
Honour and active virtue to despise:
But if the trumpets echo from afar,
On silken wings sublime he cuts the air,
Scar'd at the noise and clangor of the war.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Bajazet's Tent.**Enter HALY and Dervise.*

Haly. To 'scape with life from an attempt like this,

Demands my wonder justly.

Der. True, it may;

But 'tis a principle of his new faith;
'Tis what his Christian favourites have inspir'd;
Who fondly make a merit of forgiveness,
And give their foes a second opportunity,
If the first blow should miss, Failing to servè
The sultan to my wish, and e'en despairing
Of further means t' effect his liberty,
A lucky accident retriev'd my hopes.

Haly. The prophet and our master will reward
Thy zeal in their behalf; but speak thy purpose.

Der. Just enter'ing here I met the Tartar general,

Fierce Omar.

Haly. He commands, if I mistake not,
This quarter of the army, and our guards.

Der. The same. By his stern aspect, and the fire

That kindled in his eyes, I guess'd the tumult
Some wrong had rais'd in his tempestuous soul;
A friendship of old date had giv' me privilege
To ask of his concerns. In short, I learn'd,
That burning for the sultan's beauteous daughter,

He had begg'd her, as a captive of the war,
From Tamerlane; but meeting with denial
Of what he thought his services might claim,
Loudly he storms, and curses the Italian,
As cause of this affront. I join'd his rage,
And added to his injuries the wrongs
Our prophet daily meets with from Axalla.

But see, he comes. Improve what I shall tell,
And all we wish is ours.

*(They seem to talk together aside.)**Enter OMAR.*

Omar. No: if I forgive it,
Dishonour blast my name! Was it for this
That I directed his first steps to greatness,
Taught him to climb, and made him what he is?
Was it for this, that like a rock I stood
And stemm'd a torrent of our Tartar lords,
Who scorn'd his upstart sway? When Calibes,
In bold rebellion, drew e'en half the provinces
To own his cause, I, like his better angel,
Stood by his shaking throne, and fix'd it fast;
And am I now so lost to his remembrance,
That, when I ask a captive, he shall tell me,
She is Axalla's right, his Christian minion?

Der. Allow me, valiant Omar, to demand,
Since injur'd thus, why right you not yourself?
The prize you ask is in your pow'r.

Omar. It is,
And I will seize it, in despite of Tamerlane
And that Italian dog.

Haly. What need of force,
When ev'ry thing concurs to meet your wishes?
Our mighty master would not wish a son
Nobler than Omar. From a father's hand

Receive that daughter, which ungrateful Tamerlane

Has to your worth deny'd.

Omar. Now, by my arms,
It will be great revenge. What will your sultan
Give to the man that shall restore his liberty,
His crown, and give him pow'r to wreak his hatred
Upon his greatest foe?

Haly. All he can ask,
And far beyond his wish. *(Trumpets.)*

Omar. These trumpets speak
The emperor's approach; he comes once more
To offer terms of peace. Retire within.
I will know further—he grows deadly to me;
And curse me, prophet, if I not repay
His hate, with retribution full as mortal. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Tent.**ARPASIA discovered lying on a couch.*

SONG.

*To thee, oh! gentle sleep, alone
Is owing all our peace;
By thee our joys are heighten'd shewn,
By thee our sorrows cease.*

*The nymph, whose hand, by fraud or force,
Some tyrant has possess'd,
By thee, obtaining a divorce,
In her own choice is bless'd.*

*Oh! stay; Arpasia bids thee stay;
The sadly weeping fair
Conjures thee not to lose in day
The object of her care.*

*To grasp whose pleasing form she sought,
That motion chas'd her sleep;
Thus by ourselves are oft'nest wrought
The griefs for which we weep.*

Arp. Oh, death! thou gentle end of human sorrows!

Still must my weary eye-lids vainly wake
In tedious expectation of thy peace?
Why stand thy thousand thousand doors still
open,

To take the wretched in, if stern religion
Guards ev'ry passage, and forbids my entrance,
When urg'd with griefs beyond a mortal sufferance?

But here it must not be. Think then, Arpasia,
Think on the sacred dictates of thy faith,
And let that arm thy virtue to perform
What Cato's daughter durst not—Live, Arpasia,
And dare to be unhappy.

Enter TAMERLANE.

Tam. When fortune smiles upon the soldier's arms,

And adds e'en beauty to adorn his conquest,
Yet she ordains the fair should know no fears.
Such welcome as a camp can give, sultaness,
We hope you have receiv'd; it shall be larger,
And better as it may.

Arp. Since I have borne
That miserable mark of fatal greatness,
I have forgot all diff'rence of conditions;
Sceptres and fetters are grown equal to me,
And the best change my fate can bring is death.

Tam. Oh! teach my pow'r
To cure those ills which you unjustly suffer,
Lest heav'n should wrest it from my idle hand,
If I look on and see you weep in vain.

Arp. Not that my soul disdains the gen'rous aid

Thy royal goodness proffers; but, oh! emperor—
Tam. Why is my pity all that I give
To tears like your's? And yet, I fear 'tis all;
Nor dare I ask what mighty loss you mourn,
Lest honour should forbid to give it back.

Arp. No, Tamerlane, nor did I mean thou shouldst.

But know (though to the weakness of my sex
I yield these tears) my soul is more than man.
Think I am born a Greek, nor doubt my virtue;
They must be mighty evils that can vanquish
A Spartan courage and a Christian faith.

Enter BAJAZET.

Baj. To know no thought of rest; to have the mind

Still minist'ring fresh plagues, as in a circle,
Where one dishonour treads upon another;
What know the fiends beyond it?—Ha! by hell,

(*Sees Arpasia and Tamerlane.*)

There wanted only this to make me mad.
Comes he to triumph here? to rob me of my love,
And violate the last retreat of happiness?

Tam. But that I read upon thy frowning brow,
That war yet lives and rages in thy breast;
Once more (in pity to the suff'ring world)
I meant to offer peace.

Baj. And mean'st thou, too,
To treat it with our empress; and to barter
The smiles which fortune gave thee for her favours?

Arp. What would the tyrant? (*Aside.*)

Baj. Seek'st thou thus our friendship?
Is this the royal usage thou didst boast?

Tam. The boiling passion that disturbs thy soul
Spreads dark clouds around, and makes thy purpose dark.

Unriddle what thy mystic fury aims at.

Baj. Is it a riddle? Read it there explain'd;
There, in my shame. Now judge me thou, oh!
prophet,

And equal heav'n, if this demand not rage!
The peasant hind, begot and born to slavery,
Yet dares assert a husband's sacred right,
And guards his homely couch from violation:
And shall a monarch tamely bear the wrong
Without complaining?

Tam. If I could have wrong'd thee;
If conscious virtue and all-judging heav'n
Stood not between, to bar ungovern'd appetite,
What hinder'd, but, in spite of thee my captive,
I might have us'd a victor's boundless power,
And sated every wish my soul could form?
But, to secure thy fears, know, Bajazet,
This is among the things I dare not do.

Baj. By hell, 'tis false! else wherefore art thou present?

What cam'st thou for, but to undo my honour?
I found thee holding amorous parley with her,
Gazing and glutting on her wanton eyes,
And bargaining for pleasures yet to come:
My life, I know, is the devoted price—
But take it, I am weary of the pain.

Tam. Yet, ere thou rashly urge my rage too far,
I warn thee to take heed: I am a man,
And have the frailties common to man's nature;
The fiery seeds of wrath are in my temper,
And may be blown up to so fierce a blaze
As wisdom cannot rule. Know, thou hast touch'd
me

Ev'n in the nicest, tend'rest part, my honour;
My honour! which, like pow'r, disdains being
question'd;

Thy breath has blasted my fair virtue's fame,
And mark'd me for a villain and a tyrant.

Arp. And stand I here an idle looker on,
To see my innocence murder'd and mangled
By barbarous hands, nor can revenge the wrong?
Art thou a man, and dar'st thou use me thus?

(*To Bajazet.*)

Hast thou not torn me from my native country;
From the dear arms of my lamenting friends;
From my soul's peace, and from my injur'd
love;

And driv'n me to the brink of black despair?
And is it in thy malice yet to add
A wound more deep, to sully my white name,—
My virtue?

Baj. Yes, thou hast thy sex's virtues,
Their affectation, pride, ill-nature, noise,
Proneness to change, e'en from the joy that pleas'd
'em;

So gracious is your idol, dear variety,
That for another love you would forego
An angel's form, to mingle with a devil's.

Arp. Why sought'st thou not from thy own im-
pious tribe

A wife like one of these?
Know, I abhor, detest the crime thou mention'st:
Not that I fear or reverence thee, thou tyrant;
But that my soul, conscious of whence it sprung,
Sits unpolluted in its sacred temple,
And scorns to mingle with a thought so mean.

Tam. Oh, pity! that a greatness so divine
Should meet a fate so wretched, so unequal.
Though blind and wilful to the good that courts
thee,

(*To Bajazet.*)

With open-handed bounty heav'n pursues thee,
And bids thee (undeserving as thou art,
And monstrous in thy crimes) be happy yet;
Whilst thou, in fury, dost avert the blessing,
And art an evil genius to thyself.

Baj. No: thou, thou art my greatest curse on
earth!

Thou, who hast robb'd me of my crown and glory,
And now pursu'st me to the verge of life,
To spoil me of my honour. Thou, thou hypo-
crite!

That wear'st a pageant outside shew of virtue,
To cover the hot thoughts that glow within!
Thou rank adult'rer!

Tam. Oh! that thou wert
The lord of all those thousands that lie breathless
On yonder field of blood, that I again
Might hunt thee, in the face of death and danger,
Through the tumultuous battle, and there force
thee,

Vanquish'd and sinking underneath my arm,
To own thou hast traduc'd me like a villain.

Baj. Ha! does it gall thee, Tartar? By re-
venge,

It joys me much to find thou feel'st my fury.
Yes, I will echo to thee, thou adulterer!
Thou dost profane the name of king and soldier,
And, like a ruffian bravo, cam'st with force
To violate the holy marriage-bed.

Tam. Wert thou not shelter'd by thy abject
state,

The captive of my sword, by my just anger,
My breath, like thunder, should confound thy
pride,

And doom thee dead this instant with a word.

Baj. 'Tis false! my fate's above thee, and thou
dar'st not.

Tam. Ha! dare not! Thou hast rais'd my pon-
d'rous rage,

And now it falls to crush thee at a blow.

A guard there!—

Enter Guard.

Seize and drag him to his fate!

(*They seize Bajazet.*)

Tyrant, I'll do a double justice on thee;
At once revenge myself and all mankind.

Baj. Well dost thou, ere thy violence and lust
Invalidate my bed, thus to begin with murder:
Drown all thy fears in blood, and sin securely.

Tam. Away!

Arp. (*Kneeling.*) Oh! stay, I charge thee, by
renown;

By that bright glory thy great soul pursues,
Call back the doom of death!

Tam. Fair injur'd excellence,

Why dost thou kneel, and waste such precious
pray'rs,

For one to goodness lost, who first nudid thee,
Who still pursues, and aggravates the wrong?

Baj. By Alha! no: I will not wear a life

Bought with such vile dishonour. Death shall free
me

At once from infamy and thee, thou traitress!

Arp. No matter, though the whistling winds
grow loud,

And the rude tempest roars, 'tis idle rage:

Oh! mark it not; but let thy steady virtue

Be constant to its temper. Save his life,

And save Arpasia from the sport of talkers.

Think how the busy, meddling world will toss

Thy mighty name about, in scurril mirth;

Branding thy vengeance as a foul design;

And make such monstrous legends of our lives,

As late posterity shall blush in reading.

Tam. Oh! matchless virtue! Yes, I will obey;

Though laggard in the race, admiring yet,

I will pursue the shining path thou tread'st.

Sultan, be safe! reason resumes her empire,

(*The Guard release Bajazet.*)

And I am cool again.—Here break we off,

Lest further speech should minister new rage.

Wisely from dangerous passions I retreat,

To keep a conquest which was hard to get:

And, oh! 'tis time I should for flight prepare,

A war more fatal seems to threaten there,

And all my rebel-blood assists the fair:

One moment more, and I too late shall find,

That love's the strongest pow'r that lords it o'er
the mind. [*Exit, followed by the Guard.*]

Baj. To what new shame, what plague am I re-
serv'd?

Why hast thou forc'd this nauseous life upon me?

Is it to triumph o'er me?—But I will,

I will be free; I will forget thee all;

Death shall expunge at once, and ease my soul.

Prophet, take notice, I disclaim thy paradise,

Thy fragrant bow'rs, and everlasting shades:

Thou hast plac'd woman there, and all thy joys are
tainted. [*Exit.*]

Arp. A little longer yet, be strong, my heart;

A little longer let the busy spirits

Keep on their cheerful round.

And see, the poor Moneses comes to take

One sad adieu, and then we part for ever.

Enter MONESSES.

Mon. Already am I onward of my way;
Thy tuneful voice comes like a hollow sound,
At distance, to my ears. My eyes grow heavy,
And all the glorious lights of heav'n look dim;
'Tis the last office they shall ever do me,
To view thee once, and then to close and die.

Arp. Alas! how happy have we been, Mo-
neses!

Ye gentle days, that once were ours, what joys
Did every cheerful morning bring along!
No fears, no jealousies, no angry parents,
That for unequal births or fortunes frown'd;
But love, that kindly join'd our hearts to bless
us,

Made us a blessing, too, to all besides.

Mon. Oh! cast not thy remembrance back, Ar-
pasia!

'Tis grief unutterable; 'tis distraction;

But let this last of hours be peaceful sorrow!

Here let me kneel, and pay my latest vows.

Be witness, all ye saints, thou heav'n and nature,

Be witness of my truth, for you have know'd it!

Be witness that I never knew a pleasure,

In all the world could offer, like Arpasia!

Be witness that I liv'd but in Arpasia!

And, oh! be witness that her loss has kill'd me!

Arp. Oh! my Moneses,

While thou art speaking, life begins to fail,

And ev'ry tender accent chills like death.

The last dear object of my parting soul

Will be Moneses; the last breath that lingers

Within my panting breast, shall sigh Moneses.

Mon. It is enough! Now to thy rest, my soul,

The world and thou have made an end at once.

Arp. Fain would I still detain thee, hold thee
still:

Nor honour can forbid, that we together

Should share the poor few minutes that remain:

I swear, methinks this sad society

Has somewhat pleasing in it.—Death's dark
shades

Seem, as we journey on, to lose their horror;

At near approach, the monsters, form'd by fear,

Are vanish'd all, and leave the prospect clear:

Amidst the gloomy vale, a pleasing scene,

With flow'rs adorn'd, and never-fading green,

Inviting stands, to take the wretched in:

No wars, no wrongs, no tyrants, no despair,

Disturb the quiet of a place so fair,

But injur'd lovers find Elysium there.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Re-enter BAJAZET, with OMAR, HALY, and the
Devise.*

Baj. Now, by the glorious tomb that shrines our
prophet,

By Mecca's sacred temple, here I swear,

Our daughter is thy bride! and to that gift

Such wealth, such pow'r, such honours will I
add,

That monarchs shall with envy view thy state,

And own thou art a demi-god to them.

Thou hast given me what I wish'd,—pow'r of re-
venge;

And when a king rewards, 'tis ample retribution.

Omar. Twelve Tartar lords, each potent in his
tribe,

Have sworn to own my cause, and draw their
thousands,

To-morrow, from the ungrateful Parthian's side.

The day declining, seems to yield to night,

Ere little more than half her course be ended.

In an auspicious hour prepare for flight:

The leaders of the troops through which we
pass,

Rais'd by my pow'r, devoted to my service,

Shall make our passage secret and secure.

Der. Already, mighty sultan, thou art safe,

Since, by yon passing torches' light I guess,

To his pavilion Tamerlane retires,

Attended by a train of waiting courtiers.

All who remain within these tents are thine,

And hail thee as their lord.

Ha! the Italian prince,

With sad Moneses, are not yet gone forth!

Baj. Ha! with our queen and daughter!

Omar. They are ours:

I mark'd the slaves who waited on Axalla;

They, when the emperor pass'd out, press'd ou,

And mingled with the crowd, nor miss'd their
lord:

He is your pris'ner, sir: I go this moment,

To seize, and bring him to receive his doom.

[Exit. *Baj.* Haste, Haly, follow, and secure the Greek : Him, too, I wish to keep within my power.

[Exit *Haly.* *Der.* If my dread lord permit his slave to speak, I would advise to spare Axalla's life, 'Till we are safe beyond the Parthian's power : Him, as our pledge of safety, may we hold ; And, could you gain him to assist your flight, It might import you much.

Baj. Thou counsell'st well ; And though I hate him, (for he is a Christian, And to my mortal enemy devoted,) Yet, to secure my liberty and vengeance, I wish he now were ours.

Der. And see, they come ! Fortune repents ; again she courts your side, And, with this first fair offering of success, She woos you to forget her crime of yesterday.

Re-enter OMAR, with AXALLA prisoner ; SELIMA follows, weeping.

Axal. I wo'not call thee villain ; 'tis a name Too holy for thy crime. To break thy faith, And turn a rebel to so good a master, Is an ingratitude unmatch'd on earth. The first revolting angel's pride could only Do more than thou hast done. Thou copiest well, And keep'st the black original in view.

Omar. Do rage, and vainly call upon thy master To save his minion. My revenge has caught thee, And I will make thee curse that fond presumption That set thee on to rival me in aught.

Baj. Christian, I hold thy fate at my disposal ! One only way remains to mercy open ; Be partner of my flight and my revenge, And thou art safe : the other choice is death.

Axal. Then briefly thus : death is the choice I make ;

Since, next to heav'n, my master and my friend Has interest in my life, and still shall claim it.

Baj. Then take thy wish. Call in our mutes !

Sel. My father, If yet you have not sworn to cast me off, And turn me out to wander in misfortune ; If yet my voice be gracious in your ears ; If yet my duty and my love offend not ; Oh ! call your sentence back, and save Axalla.

Baj. Rise, Selima ! The slave deserves to die, Who durst, with sullen pride, refuse my mercy ; Yet, for thy sake, once more I offer life.

Sel. Some angel whisper to my anxious soul, What I shall do to save him.— Oh ! my Axalla, seem but to consent.—

[*Aside to Axalla.*] Unkind and cruel, will you then do nothing ? I find I am not worth thy least of cares.

Axal. Oh ! labour not to hang dishonour on me ! I could bear sickness, pain, and poverty, Those mortal evils, worse than death, for thee : But this—it has the force of fate against us, And cannot be.

Sel. See, see, sir ! he relents ; (To *Bajazet.*) Already he inclines to own your cause. A little longer, and he is all yours.

Baj. Then mark how far a father's fondness yields :

Till midnight I defer the death he merits, And give him up till then to thy persuasion. If by that time he meets my will, he lives ; If not, thyself shalt own he dies with justice.

Axal. 'Tis but to lengthen life upon the rack : I am resolv'd already.

Sel. Oh ! be still, Nor rashly urge a ruin on us both ;

'Tis but a moment more I have to save thee.

Be kind, auspicious Alha, to my pray'r ; More for my love than for myself I fear ; Neglect mankind awhile, and make him all thy care ! [Exit with *Axalla.*]

Baj. Moneses—is that dog secur'd ?

Omar. He is.

Baj. 'Tis well. My soul perceives returning greatness,

As nature feels the spring : lightly she bounds, And shakes dishonour, like a burden, from her, Once more imperial, awful, and herself.

So, when of old, Jove from the Titans fled, Ammon's rude front his radiant face bely'd, And all the majesty of heav'n lay hid : At length, by fate, to pow'r divine restor'd, His thunder taught the world to know its lord, The god grew terrible again, and was again ador'd. [Exit.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Bajazet's Tent.**ARPASIA discovered.*

Arp. Sure, 'tis a horror, more than darkness brings,

That sits upon the night ! Fate is abroad ; Some ruling fiend hangs in the dusky air, And scatters ruin, death, and wild distraction O'er all the wretched race of man below.

Not long ago, a troop of ghastly slaves Rush'd in, and forc'd Moneses from my sight ;

Death hung so heavy on his drooping spirits, That scarcely could he say—farewell for ever !

And yet, methinks, some gentle spirit whispers, Thy peace draws near, Arpasia, sigh no more !

And see, the king of terrors is at hand : His minister appears.

Enter BAJAZET and HALY.

Baj. The rest I leave

To thy despatch : for, oh ! my faithful Haly, Another care has taken up thy master.

Spite of the high-wrought tempest in my soul, Spite of the pangs which jealousy has cost me, This haughty woman reigns within my breast.

[*Apart to Haly.*]

Haly. Why wears my lord

An anxious thought for what his pow'r commands ? When, in an happy hour, you shall, ere long,

Have borne the empress from amidst your foes, She must be your's, be only and all your's.

Baj. On that depends my fear. Yes, I must have her ;

I own I will not, cannot go without her.

Be near to wait my will. [Exit *Haly.*]

When last we parted, 'twas on angry terms ; Let the remembrance die, or kindly think

That jealous rage is but an hasty flame,

That blazes out, when love too fiercely burns.

Arp. For thee to wrong me, and for me to suffer,

Is the hard lesson which my soul has learnt ;

Nor is it worth my leisure to distinguish

If love or jealousy commit the violence :

Each have alike been fatal to my peace,

Confirming me a wretch, and thee a tyrant.

Baj. Still to deform thy gentle brow with frowns,

And still to be perverse, it is a manner

Abhorrent from the softness of thy sex :

Women, like summer storms, awhile are cloudy,

Burst out in thunder and impetuous show'rs ;

But straight the sun of beauty dawns abroad,

And all the fair horizon is serene.

Arp. Then, to retrieve the honour of my sex,

Here I disclaim that changing and inconstancy :
To thee I will be ever as I am.

Baj. Thou say'st I am a tyrant ; think so still,
And let it warn thy prudence to lay hold
On the good hour of peace, that courts thee now.
Souls, form'd like mine, brook being scorn'd but
ill.

Be well advis'd, and profit by my patience ;
It is a short-liv'd virtue.

Arp. Turn thy eyes
Back on the story of my woes, barbarian !
Thou that hast violated all respects
Due to my sex and honour of my birth !
Thou brutal ravisher, can I have peace with
thee ?

Impossible ! First heav'n and hell shall join ;
They only differ more.

Baj. I see, 'tis vain
To court thy stubborn temper with endearments.
Resolve, this moment, to return my love,
And be the willing partner of my flight,
Or, by the prophet's holy law, thou diest !

Arp. And dost thou hope to fright me with the
phantom—

Death ? 'Tis the greatest mercy thou canst give ;
Know, I disdain to aid thy treach'rous purpose ;
And, shouldst thou dare to force me, with my
cries

I will call heav'n and earth to my assistance.

Baj. Confusion ! Dost thou brave me ? But my
wrath

Shall find a passage to thy swelling heart,
And rack thee worse than all the pains of death.
That Grecian dog, the minion of thy wishes,
Shall be dragg'd forth, and butcher'd in thy
sight ;

Thou shalt behold him when his pangs are ter-
rible,

Till thou shalt rend thy hair, tear out thy eyes,
And curse thy pride, while I applaud my ven-
geance.

Arp. Oh ! fatal image, all my pow'rs give way,
And resolution sickens at the thought ;
Come, all ye great examples of my sex,
Chaste virgins, tender wives, and pious matrons ;
Come to my aid, and teach me to defy
The malice of this fiend ! I feel, I feel
Your sacred spirit arm me to resistance.
Yes, tyrant, I will stand this shock of fate ;
Will live to triumph o'er thee, for a moment,
Then die well pleas'd, and follow my Moneses.

Baj. Thou talk'st it well : but talking is thy
privilege ;

'Tis all the boasted courage of thy sex ;
Though, for thy soul, thou dar'st not meet the
danger.

Arp. By all my hopes of happiness I dare !
My soul is come within her ken of heav'n ;
Charm'd with the joys and beauties of that place,
Her thoughts and all her cares she fixes there,
And 'tis in vain for thee to rage below.

Baj. This moment is the trial.

Arp. Let it come !
This moment, then, shall shew I am a Greek,
And speak my country's courage in my suff'ring.

Baj. Here, mercy, I disclaim thee ! Mark me,
traitress !

My love prepares a victim to thy pride,
And when it greets thee next, 'twill be in blood.

[*Exit.*]
Arp. My heart beats higher, and my nimble
spirits

Ride swiftly through their purple channel's round.
'Tis the last blaze of life. Nature revives,
Like a dim winking lamp, that flashes brightly
With parting light, and straight is dark for ever.
And see, my last of sorrows is at hand ;
Death and Moneses come together to me ;

As if my stars, that had sol ong been cruel,
Grew kind at last, and gave me all I wish.

Enter MONESES, guarded by some Mutes ; others
attending with a cup of poison and a bow-string.

Mon. I charge ye, oh ! ye ministers of fate !
Be swift to execute your master's will ;
Bear me to my Arpasia ; let me tell her
The tyrant is grown kind. He bids me go,
And die beneath her feet.

Arp. If it be happiness, alas ! to die,
To lie forgotten in the silent grave,
To love and glory lost, and from among
The great Creator's works expung'd and blotted,
Then, very shortly, shall we both be happy.

Mon. There is no room for doubt ; 'tis certain
bliss.

The tyrant's cruel violence, thy loss,
Already seem more light ; nor has my soul
One unrepented guilt upon remembrance,
To make me dread the justice of hereafter :
But, standing now on the last verge of life,
Boldly I view the vast abyss, eternity,
Eager to plunge, and leave my woes behind me.

Arp. By all the truth of our past loves, I vow,
To die appears a very nothing to me !

This very now I could put off my being
Without a groan : but to behold thee die !—
Nature shrinks in me at the dreadful thought,
Nor can my constancy sustain this blow.

Mon. Since thou art arm'd for all things after
death,

Why should the pomp and preparation of it
Be frightful to thy eyes ? There's not a pain,
Which age or sickness brings, the least disorder
That vexes any part of this fine frame,
But's full as grievous. All that the mind feels
Is much, much more—

*Enter a Mute : he signs to the rest, who proffer a
bow-string to Moneses.*

And see, I go to prove it.

Arp. Think, ere we part !

Mon. Of what ?

Arp. Of something soft,
Tender, and kind ; of something wondrous sad.
Oh ! my full soul !

Mon. My tongue is at a loss ;
Thoughts crowd so fast, thy name is all I've left,
My kindest, truest, dearest, best Arpasia !

[*The Mutes struggle with him.*]
Arp. I have a thousand thousand things to
utter,

A thousand more to hear yet. Barbarons villains !
Give me a minute. Speak to me, Moneses !

Mon. Speak to thee ? 'Tis the business of my
life,

'Tis all the use I have for vital air.
Stand off, ye slaves !—To tell thee that my heart
Is full of thee ; that even, at this dread moment,
My fond eyes gaze with joy and rapture on thee ;
Angels and light itself are not so fair—

Enter BAJAZET, HALY, and Attendants.

Baj. Ha ! wherefore lives this dog ? Be quick,
ye slaves !
And rid me of my pain.

Mon. For only death,
And the last night, can shut out my Arpasia—

[*The Mutes strangle Moneses.*]
Arp. Oh, dismal ! 'tis not to be borne ! Ye mor-
talists !

Ye talkers ! what are all your precepts now ?
Patience ! distraction ! Blast the tyrant, blast
him,

Avenging lightnings! Snatch him hence, ye fiends!
Love—death—Moneses!
(Dies.)

Baj. Fly, ye slaves!
And fetch me cordials. No, she shall not die!
Spite of her sullen pride, I'll hold in life,
And force her to be blest against her will.

Haly. Already 'tis beyond the power of art;
For see, a deadly cold has froze the blood;
The pliant limbs grow stiff, and lose their use,
And all the animating fire is quench'd.

Baj. Can it be possible? Can rage and grief,—
Can love and indignation be so fierce,
So mortal in a woman's heart? Confusion!
Is she escap'd, then? What is royalty,
If those that are my slaves, and should live for
me,
Can die, and bid defiance to my power? [Exit.]

SCENE II.

Enter BAJAZET and the Dervise.

Der. The valiant Omar sends to tell thy greatness
The hour of flight is come, and urges haste;
Since he descries, near Tamerlane's pavilion,
Bright troops of crowding torches, who from
thence,
On either hand, stretch far into the night,
And seem to form a shining front of battle.
Behold, e'en from this place, thou may'st discern
them. (Looking out.)

Baj. By Alha, yes! they cast a day around 'em,
And the plain seems thick set with stars, as heav'n.
Ha! or my eyes are false, they move this way:
'Tis certain so. Fly, Haly, to our daughter!

[Exit Haly.]
Let some secure the Christian prince Axalla:
We will begone this minute.

Enter OMAR.

Omar. Lost, undone!
Baj. What mean'st thou?
Omar. All our hopes of flight are lost.
Mirvan and Zama, with the Parthian horse,
Enclose us round: they hold us in a toil.
Baj. Ha! whence this unexpected curse of
chance?

Omar. Too late I learn'd, that early in the night
A slave was suffer'd, by your daughter's order,
To pass the guard. I clove the villain down
Who yielded to his flight; but that's poor ven-
geance.

That fugitive has rais'd the camp upon us,
And unperceiv'd, by favour of the night,
In silence they have march'd to intercept us.

Baj. My daughter! Oh! the traitress!
Der. Yet we have
Axalla in our pow'r: and angry Tamerlane
Will buy his fav'rite's life on any terms.

Omar. With those few friends I have, I for
awhile
Can face their force: if they refuse us peace,
Revenge shall sweeten ruin. [Exit.]

Re-enter HALY, with SELIMA weeping.

Baj. See where she comes, with well-dissembled
innocence;
With truth and faith so lovely in her face,
As if she durst e'en disavow the falsehood.
Hop'st thou to make amends with trifling tears,
For my lost crown and disappointed vengeance?
Ungrateful Selima! thy father's curse!
Bring forth the minion of her foolish heart!
He dies this moment.

Haly. Would I could not speak
The crime of fatal love! The slave who fled,
By whom we are undone, was that Axalla.

Baj. Ha! say'st thou?
Haly. Hid beneath that vile appearance,
The princess found a means for his escape.

Sel. I am undone! e'en nature has disclaim'd
me!

My father, have I lost you all? My father!
Baj. Talk'st thou of nature, who hast broke her
bands?

Thou art my bane, thou witch, thou infant parricide!

But I will study to be strangely cruel;
I will forget the folly of my fondness;
Drive all the father from my breast; now snatch
thee,

Tear thee to pieces, drink thy treach'rous blood,
And make thee answer all my great revenge!
Now, now, thou traitress! (Offers to kill her.)

Sel. Plunge the poniard deep! (Embraces him.)
The life my father gave shall hear his summons,
And issue at the wound;
Since from your spring I drew the purple stream,
And I must pay it back, if you demand it.

Baj. Hence from my thoughts, thou soft, re-
lentling weakness!

Hast thou not giv'n me up a prey—betray'd me?
Sel. Oh! not for worlds! not e'en for all the
joys,

Love, or the prophet's paradise can give!
Amidst the thousand pains of anxious tenderness,

I made the gentle, kind Axalla swear
Your life, your crown, and honour should be safe.

Baj. Away! my soul disdains the vile depend-
ence!

No, let me rather die, die like a king!
Shall I fall down at the proud Tartar's foot,
And say, "Have mercy on me!"—(A shout.)—

Hark! they come!
Disgrace will overtake my ling'ring hand:
Die, then! Thy father's shame and thine die with
thee. (Offers to kill her.)

Sel. For heav'n, for pity's sake!
Baj. No more, thou trifier!

(Selima catches hold of his arm.)
Ha! dar'st thou har my will? Tear off her hold!

Sel. What, not for life! Should I not plead for
life?

Look on my eyes, which you so oft have kiss'd,
And swore they were your best-lov'd queen's, my
mother's:

Behold 'em now, streaming for mercy, mercy!
Look on me, and deny me if you can!

'Tis but for life I beg. Is that a boon
So hard for me to obtain, or you to grant?
Oh! spare me! spare your Selima, my father!

Baj. A lazy sloth hangs on my resolution:
It is my Selima!—Ah! what, my child!
And can I murder her? (Shouts.)

Again they come! I leave her to my foes!
And shall they triumph o'er the race of Bajazet?
Die, Selima!—Is that a father's voice?

Rouse, rouse my fury!—Yes, she dies the victim
To my last hopes. Out, out, thou foolish nature!
Justly she shares the ruin she has made.

Enter Mutes.

Seize her, ye slaves! and strangle her this mo-
ment! (To the Mutes.)

Sel. Oh! let me die by you!
I wo'not shrink!—Oh! save me but from these!
Baj. Despatch! (The Mutes seize her.)

Sel. But for a moment, while I pray
That heav'n may guard my father.
Baj. Dogs!

Sel. That you may only bless me ere I die.

(*Shout.*)

Baj. Ye tedious villains, then the work is mine!
[*As Bajazet runs at Selima with his sword, enter TAMERLANE, AXALLA, &c. Axalla gets between Bajazet and Selima, whilst Tamerlane and the rest drive Bajazet and the Mutes off the stage.*]

Axal. And am I come to save thee? Oh! my joy!

This one success is more than all my wars,
The noblest, dearest glory of my sword.

Sel. Alas! Axalla, death has been around me;
My coward soul still trembles at the fright,
And seems but half secure, ev'n in thy arms.

Axal. Retire, my fair, and let me guard thee forth:

Blood and tumultuous slaughter are about us,
Nor will the pleasure of my heart be full,
Till all my fears are ended in thy safety. [*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter TAMERLANE, the PRINCE of TANAIS, ZAMA, MIRVAN, and Soldiers, with BAJAZET, OMAR, and the Dervise, prisoners.

Tam. Mercy at length gives up her peaceful sceptre,

And justice sternly takes her turn to govern;
'Tis a rank world, and asks her keenest sword,
To cut up villany of monstrous growth.
Zama, take care, that with the earliest dawn,

Those traitors meet the fate their treason merits!
(*Points to Omar and the Dervise.*)

For thee, thou tyrant!—(*to Bajazet*)—whose oppressive violence

Has ruin'd those thou shouldst protect at home;
What punishment is equal to thy crimes?

The doom thy rage design'd for me be thine:
Clos'd in a cage, like some destructive beast,

I'll have thee borne about in public view,
A great example of that righteous vengeance
That waits on cruelty and pride like thine.

Baj. It is beneath me to decline my fate;
I stand prepar'd to meet thy utmost hate:
Yet think not I will long thy triumph see;
None want the means, when the soul dares be free.
I'll curse thee with my last, my parting breath,
And keep the courage of my life in death;
Then boldly venture on that world unknown;
It cannot use me worse than this has done.

[*Exit, guarded.*]

Tam. Behold the vain effects of earth-born pride,
That scorn'd heav'n's laws, and all its pow'r defy'd;

That could the hand which form'd it first forget,
And fondly say, "I made myself be great!"

But justly those above assert their sway,
And teach ev'n kings what homage they should

pay,
Who then rule best, when mindful to obey.

[*Exeunt.*]

TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY JAMES THOMSON.



Act IV.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

TANCRED
SIFFREDI

OSMOND
RODOLPHO

SIGISMUNDA
LAURA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Palace.

Enter SIGISMUNDA and LAURA.

Sig. Ah! fatal day to Sicily! the king
Touches his last moments.

Lau. So 'tis fear'd.

[charg'd

Sig. Laura, 'tis said, the heart is sometimes
With a prophetic sadness: such, methinks,
Now hangs on mine. The king's approaching death
Suggests a thousand fears. What troubles thence
May throw the state once more into confusion;
What sudden changes in my father's house
May rise, and part me from my dearest Tancred,
Alarm my thoughts.

Lau. The fears of love-sick fancy!
Perversely busy to torment itself,
But be assur'd your father's steady friendship,
Join'd to a certain genius, that commands,
Not kneels to fortune, will support and cherish,
Here in the public eye of Sicily,
This, I may call him, his adopted son,
The noble Tancred, form'd to all his virtues.

Sig. Ah! form'd to charm his daughter. This
fair morn
Has tempted far the chase. Is he not yet
Return'd?

Lau. No. When your father to the king,
Who now expiring lies, was call'd in haste,
He sent each way his messengers to find him;
With such a look of ardour and impatience,
As if this near event was to Connt Tancred
Of more importance than I comprehend. [birth,

Sig. There lies, my Laura, o'er my Tancred's
A cloud I cannot pierce. With princely accost,
Nay, with respect, which oft I have observ'd,
Stealing at times submissive o'er his features,
In Belmont's woods my father rear'd this youth,

Ah! woods, for ever dear! where first my artless
bosom learn'd

The sighs of love. He gives him out the son
Of an old friend, a baron of Apulia,
Who in the late crusado bravely fell;
But then, 'tis strange; is all his family,
As well as father, dead? and all their friends,
Except my sire, the gen'rous, good Siffredi?
Had he a mother, sister, brother left,
The last remain of kindred, with what pride,
What rapture, might they fly o'er earth and sea,
To claim this rising honour of their blood!
This bright unknown! this all-accomplish'd youth!
Who charms too much the heart of Sigismunda.
What says Rodolpho? Does he duly credit
The story of his birth?

Lau. He has sometimes,
Like you, his doubts; yet, when maturely weigh'd,
Believes it true. As for lord Tancred's self,
He never entertain'd the slightest thought
That verg'd to doubt; but oft laments his state,
By cruel fortune so ill pair'd to your's.

Sig. Merit like his, the fortune of the mind,
Beggars all wealth. Then, to your brother, Laura,
He talks of me?

Lau. Of nothing else. How'er
The talk begin, it ends with Sigismunda;
Their morning, noon-tide, and their ev'ning walks,
Are full of you; and all the woods of Belmont
Enamour'd with your name—

Sig. Away, my friend;
You flatter: yet the dear delusion charms.

Lau. No, Sigismunda; 'tis the strictest truth,
Nor half the truth, I tell you. Ev'n with fondness
My brother talks for ever of the passion [him
That fires young Tancred's breast. So much it strikes
He praises love as if he were a lover.
Heaven, he says,

In lavish bounty form'd the heart for love;
In love included all the finer seeds
Of honour, virtue, friendship, purest bliss—
Sig. Virtuous Rodolpho!

Lau. Then his pleasing theme
He varies to the praises of your lover.
Sig. And what, my Laura, says he on the subject?

Lau. He says that though he was not nobly born,
Nature has form'd him noble, gen'rous, brave.
Chiefly one charm
He in his graceful character observes;
That though his passions burn with high impatience,
And sometimes, from a noble heat of nature,
Are ready to fly off; yet the least check
Of ruling reason brings them back to temper,
And gentle softness.

Sig. True! oh! true, Rodolpho!
Blest be thy kindred worth for loving his!
He is all warmth, all amiable fire,
All quick, heroic ardour! temper'd soft
With gentleness of heart, and manly reason!
If virtue were to wear a human form,
To light it with her dignity and flame,
Then soft'ning mix her smiles and tender graces;
Oh! she would choose the person of my Tancred.
Go on, my friend; go on, and ever praise him;
The subject knows no bounds, nor can I tire,
While my breast trembles to that sweetest music.
The heart of woman tastes no truer joy,
Is never flatter'd with such dear enchantment,
As when she hears the praises of the man she loves.

Lau. Madam, your father comes.

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. (To an Attendant as he enters.) Lord Tancred is found?

Atten. My lord, he quickly will be here.

Sif. 'Tis well; retire. You, too, my daughter, leave me.

Sig. I go, my father. But how fares the king?

Sif. He is no more. Gone to that awful state,
Where kings the crown wear only of their virtues.

Sig. How bright must then be his. This stroke
is sudden;

He was this morning well, when to the chase
Lord Tancred went.

Sif. 'Tis true. But at his years
Death gives short notice. Drooping nature then,
Without a gust of pain to shake it, falls.
His death, my daughter, was that happy period
Which few attain. The duties of his day
Were all discharg'd, calm as evening skies
Was his pure mind, and lighted up with hopes
That open heaven; when for his last long sleep
Timely prepar'd, a lassitude of life,
A pleasing weariness of mortal joy,
Fell on his soul, and down he sunk to rest.

Oh! may my death be such! He but one wish
Left unfulfill'd, which was to see Count Tancred.

Sig. To see Count Tancred! Pardon me, my
lord—

Sif. For what, my daughter? But with such emo-
tion,
Why did you start at mention of Count Tancred?

Sig. Nothing—I only hop'd the dying king
Might mean to make some generous, just provision
For this your worthy charge, this noble orphan.

Sif. For this he has done it largely. Leave me now;
I want some private conference with Lord Tancred.

[*Exeunt Sigismunda and Laura.*]

My doubts are but too true. If these old eyes
Can trace the marks of love, a mutual passion
Has seiz'd, I fear, my daughter, and this prince,
My sovereign now. Should it be so? Ah! there,
There lurks a brooding tempest, that may shake
My long concerted scheme, to settle firm
The public peace and welfare, which the king
Has made the prudent basis of his will.
Away, unworthy views, you shall not tempt me!
Nor interest, nor ambition shall seduce
My fix'd resolve. Perish the selfish thought,

Which our own good prefers to that of millions!
He comes, my king, unconscious of his fortune.

Enter TANCRED.

Tan. My Lord Siffredi, in your looks I read,
Confirm'd, the mournful news that fly abroad
From tongue to tongue: we, then, at last, have lost
The good old king.

Sif. Yes, we have lost a father;
The greatest blessing heaven bestows on mortals
A good, a worthy king! Hear me, my Tancred,
And I will tell thee, in a few plain words,
How he deserv'd that best, that glorious title.
He lov'd his people, deem'd them all his children;
The good exalted, and depress'd the bad.
He sought alone the good of those for whom
He was entrusted with the sovereign power:
Well knowing that a people in their rights
And industry protected, living safe
Beneath the sacred shelter of the laws,
Are ne'er ungrateful. With unsparing hand
They will for him provide: their filial love
And confidence are his unfailling treasure,
And every honest man his faithful guard.

Tan. A general face of grief o'erspreads the city.
I mark'd the people, as I hither came,
In crowds assembled, struck with silent sorrow,
And pouring forth the noblest praise of tears.
A mingled murmur ran
Along the streets; and from the lonely court
Of him who can no more assist their fortunes,
I saw the courtier-fry, with eager haste,
All hurrying to Constantia.

Sif. Noble youth!
I joy to hear from thee these just reflections,
Worthy of riper years. But if they seek
Constantia, trust me, they mistake their course.

Tan. How! Is she not, my lord, the late king's
sister?

Heir to the crown of Sicily? the last
Of our fam'd Norman line, and now our queen?

Sif. Tancred, 'tis true, she is the late king's sister,
The sole surviving offspring of that tyrant,
William the Bad; born some months
After the tyrant's death, but not next heir.

Tan. You much surprise me. May I, then, presume
To ask who is?

Sif. Come nearer, noble Tancred,
Son of my care. I must, on this occasion,
Consult thy generous heart, which, when conducted
By rectitude of mind and honest virtues,
Gives better counsel than the hoary head.
Then know, there lives a prince, here in Palermo,
The lineal offspring of our famous hero,
And rightful heir of Sicily.

Tan. Great heaven! How far remov'd
From that our mighty founder?

Sif. His great grandson:
Sprung from his eldest son, who died untimely,
Before his father.

Tan. Ha! the prince you mean,
Is he not Manfred's son? The generous, brave,
Unhappy Manfred! whom the tyrant William,
You just now mention'd, not content to spoil
Of his paternal crown, threw into fetters,
And infamously murder'd?

Sif. Yes, the same.

Tan. But this prince,
Where has he lain conceal'd?

Sif. The late good king,
By noble pity mov'd, contriv'd to save him
From his dire father's unrelenting rage,
And had him rear'd in private, as became
His birth and hopes, with high and princely nurture.
Till now, too young to rule a troubled state,
By civil broils most miserably torn,
He in his safe retreat has lain conceal'd,
His birth and fortune to himself unknown;
But when the dying king to me intrusted,

As to the chancellor of the realm, his will,
He nam'd him his successor.

Tan. Happy youth!

He then will triumph o'er his father's foes,
O'er haughty Osmond, and the tyrant's daughter.

Sif. Ay, that is what I dread—the heat of youth;
There lurks, I fear, perdition to the state;
I dread the horrors of rekindled war:
Though dead, the tyrant still is to be fear'd;
His daughter's party still is strong and numerous;
Her friend, earl Osmond, constable of Sicily,
Experienc'd, brave, high-born, of mighty interest.
Better the prince and princess should by marriage
Unite their friends, their interest, and their claims.
Then will the peace and welfare of the land
On a firm basis rise.

Tan. My lord Siffredi,
If by myself I of this prince may judge,
That scheme will scarce succeed. Your prudent age
In vain will counsel, if the heart forbids it.
But wherefore fear! The right is clearly his;
All Sicily will rouse, all faithful hearts,
Will range themselves around prince Manfred's son.
For me, I here devote me to the service
Of this young prince; I every drop of blood
Will lose with joy, with transport, in his cause—
Pardon my warmth—but that, my lord, will never
To this decision come. Then find the prince;
Lose not a moment to awaken in him
The royal soul. Perhaps he, now desponding,
Pines in a corner, and laments his fortune
That in the narrow bounds of private life
He must confine his aims, those swelling virtues
Which, from his noble father, he inherits.

Sif. Perhaps, regardless, in the common bane
Of youth he melts, in vanity and love.

But if the seeds of virtue glow within him,
I will awake a higher sense, a love
That grasps the loves and happiness of millions.

Tan. Why that surmise? Or should he love,
Siffredi,

I doubt not, it is nobly, which will raise
And animate his virtues. Oh! permit me
To plead the cause of youth: their virtue oft,
In pleasure's soft enchantment lull'd awhile,
Forgets itself; it sleeps and gaily dreams,
Till great occasion rouse it; then, all flame,
It walks abroad, with heighten'd soul and vigour,
And by the change astonishes the world. [thers!]

Sif. Hear him, immortal shades of his great fa-
Forgive me, sir, this trial of your heart.

Thou, thou art he!

Tan. Siffredi!

Sif. Tancred, thou!

Thou art the man, of all the many thousands
That toil upon the bosom of this isle,
By heaven elected to command the rest,
To rule, protect them, and to make them happy.

Tan. Manfred, my father! I the last support
Of the fam'd Norman line, that awes the world!
I, who, this morning, wander'd forth an orphan,
Outcast of all but thee, my second father!
Thus call'd to glory! to the first great lot
Of humankind! Oh! wonder-working hand,
That in majestic silence sways at will
The mighty movements of unbounded nature!
Oh! grant me, heaven, the virtues to sustain
This awful burden of so many heroes!
Let me not be exalted into shame;
Set up the worthless pageant of vain grandeur.
Meantime, I thank the justice of the king,
Who has my right bequeath'd me. Thee, Siffredi,
I thank thee! Oh! I ne'er enough can thank thee.
Yes, thou hast been—thou art—shalt be my father!
Thou shalt direct my inexperienced years;
Shalt be the ruling head, and I the hand.

Sif. It is enough for me to see my sov'reign
Assert his virtues, and maintain his honour.

Tan. I think, my lord, you said the king committed

To you his will? I hope it is not clogg'd
With any base conditions, any clause,
To tyrannise my heart, and to Constantia
Enslave my hand devoted to another.
The hint you just now gave of that alliance,
You must imagine, wakes my fear. But know,
In this alone I will not bear dispute,
Not ev'n from thee, Siffredi. Let the council
Be straight assembled, and the will there open'd:
Thence issue speedy orders to convene,
This day, ere noon, the senate, where those barons,
Who now are in Palermo, will attend,
To pay their ready homage to the king.

Sif. I go, my liege. But once again permit me
To tell you, now is the trying crisis
That must determine of your future reign.
Oh! with heroic rigour watch your heart;
And to the sovereign duties of the king,
Th' unequal'd pleasures of a god on earth,
Submit the common joys, the common passions,
Nay, even the virtues of the private man.

Tan. Of that no more. They not oppose, but aid,
Invigorate, cherish, and reward each other.

[Exit Sif.]

Now, generous Sigismunda, comes my turn,
To shew my love was not of thine unworthy,
When fortune bade me blush to look to thee.
But what is fortune to the wish of love?
A miserable bankrupt!
Quick, let me find her; taste that highest joy,
Th' exalted heart can know, the mix'd effusion
Of gratitude and love! Behold, she comes!

Re-enter SIGISMUNDA.

My flutt'ring soul was on the wing to find thee,
My love, my Sigismunda!

Sif. Oh! my Tancred,
Tell me what means this mystery and gloom,
That lowers around? Just now involv'd in thought,
My father shot athwart me—You, my lord,
Seem strangely mov'd—I fear, some dark event
From the king's death, to trouble our repose;
That tender calm we in the woods of Belmont
So happily enjoy'd. Explain this hurry;
What means it? say.

Tan. It means that we are happy!
Beyond our most romantic wishes happy!

Sif. You but perplex me more.

Tan. It means, my fairest,
That thou art queen of Sicily; and I
The happiest of mankind!
Because with thee, I can adorn my throne.
Manfred, who fell by tyrant William's rage,
Was my father. (Pausing.)

You droop, my love; dejected on a sudden;
You seem to mourn my fortune. The soft tear
Springs in thy eye: oh! let me kiss it off,
Why this, my Sigismunda?

Sif. Royal Tancred,
None at your glorious fortune can like me
Rejoice; yet me alone, of all Sicilians,
It makes unhappy.

Tan. I should hate it, then!
Should throw, with scorn, the splendid ruin from me.
No, Sigismunda, 'tis my hope with thee
To share it, whence it draws its richest value.

Sif. You are my sov'reign; I at humble distance—
Tan. Thou art my queen! the sovereign of my
soul!

The dear, the tender, gen'rous Sigismunda!
Sif. Your heart, I know, disdains the little thought
Of changing with the vain, external change
Of circumstance and fortune.

But, ah! the hearts of kings are not their own.
Some high descended princess, who will bring
New power and interest to your throne, demands
Your royal hand; perhaps, Constantia—

Tan. She!

Oh! name her not: were I this moment free
And disengag'd as he who never sigh'd

For matchless worth like thine, I should abhor
All thoughts of that alliance. Her fell father
Most basely murder'd mine;
And canst thou deem me, then, so poorly tame,
So cool a traitor to my father's blood,
As from the prudent cowardice of state
E'er to submit to such a base proposal;
They whom just heaven has to a throne exalted,
To guard the rights and liberties of others,
What duty binds them to betray their own?
Or if, indeed, my choice must be directed
By views of public good, whom shall I choose
So fit to grace, to dignify a crown,
And beam sweet mercy on a happy people.
As thee, my love? Whom place upon my throne
But thee, descended from the good Siffredi?
Sig. Cease, cease to raise my hopes above my
duty;

Charm me no more, my Tancred! Oh! that we
In those blest woods, where first you won my soul,
Had pass'd our gentle days; far from the toil
And pomp of courts! Such is the wish of love:
'Tis all in vain; you cannot hush a voice
That murmurs here—I must not be persuaded.

Tan. (*Kneeling.*) Hear me, thou soul of all my
hopes and wishes!

And witness, heaven, prime source of love and joy!
Not a whole warring world combin'd against me,
Shall ever shake my faith to Sigismunda!

(*Trumpets and acclamations heard.*)

But, hark! the public voice to duties call me,
Which with unwearied zeal I will discharge;
And thou, yes, thou shalt be my bright reward.
Yet, ere I go, to hush thy lovely fears, [blank,
Thy delicate objections, (*writes his name*) take this
Sign'd with my name, and give it to thy father:
Tell him 'tis my command it be fill'd up
With a most strict and solemn marriage contract.
How dear each tie! how charming to my soul!
That more unites me to my Sigismunda.
For thee, and for my people's good to live,
Is all the bliss which sov'reign power can give.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A grand Saloon.*

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. So far 'tis well. The late king's will proceeds
Upon the plan I counsel'd; that prince Tancred
Shall make Constantia partner of his throne.
Oh! great, oh! wish'd event!
But how this mighty obstacle surmount,
Which love has thrown betwixt? My daughter owns
Her passion for the king; she trembling own'd it,
With prayers, and tears, and tender supplications,
That almost shook my firmness. And this blank,
Which his rash fondness gave her, shews how much,
To what a wild extravagance he loves.
I see no means—it foils my deepest thought
How to controul this madness of the king,
That wears the face of virtue, and will thence
Disdain restraint. The crowding barous
Here summon'd to the palace, meet already,
To pay their homage, and confirm the will.
On a few moments hangs the public fate,
On a few hasty moments—Ha! there shone
A gleam of hope. Yes, with this very paper
I yet will save him. Here is the royal hand;
I will beneath it write a perfect, full,
And absolute agreement to the will;
Which read before the nobles of the realm
Assembled, in the sacred face of Sicily,
Constantia present, every heart and eye
Fix'd on their monarch, every tongue applauding,
He must submit; his dream of love must vanish.
It shall be done. To me, I know, 'tis ruin;
But safety to the public, to the king.
I will not reason more. No; 'tis fix'd!
I here devote me for my prince und country;

Let them be safe, and let me nobly perish!
Behold, earl Osmond comes, without whose aid
My schemes are all in vain.

Enter OSMOND.

Osm. My lord Siffredi,
I from the council hasten'd to Constantia,
And have accomplish'd what we there propos'd.
The princess to the will submits her claims.
She with her presence means to grace the senate,
And of your royal charge, young Tancred's hand,
Accept. Methought, besides,
I could discern, that not from prudence merely
She to his choice submitted.

Sif. Noble Osmond,
You have in this done to the public great
And signal service. Yes, I must avow it;
This frank and ready instance of your zeal,
In such a trying crisis of the state,
Upbraids the rashness of my former judgment.

Osm. Siffredi, no. To you belongs the praise;
'Tis you, my lord, to whom the many thousands,
That by the barbarous sword of civil war
Had fallen inglorious, owe their lives.
I blush to think

I have so long oppos'd the best good man
In Sicily:

To your's I join my hand; with you will own
No int'rest and no party but my country.
Nor is your friendship only my ambition:
There is a dearer name, the name of father,
By which I should rejoice to call Siffredi.
Your daughter's hand would to the public weal
Unite my private happiness.

Sif. My lord,
You have my glad consent. To be allied
To your distinguish'd family and merit,
I shall esteem an honour. From my soul
I here embrace earl Osmond as my friend
And son.

Osm. You make him happy.
I from this moment vow myself the friend
And zealous servant of Siffredi's house.

Enter an Officer belonging to the Court.

Offi. (*To Siffredi.*) The king, my lord, demands
your speedy presence.

Sif. I will attend him straight. Farewell, my lord;
The senate meets: there, a few moments hence,
I will rejoin you.

Osm. There, my noble lord,
We will complete this salutary work;
Will there begin a new, auspicious era.

[*Exeunt Siffredi and Officer.*]

Siffredi gives his daughter to my wishes,
But does she give herself? Gay, young, and flat-
ter'd,

Perhaps, engag'd, will she her youthful heart
Yield to my harsher, uncomplying years?
I am not form'd, by flattery and praise,
By sighs and tears, and all the winning trade
Of love, to feed a fair one's vanity;
To charm at once and spoil her. These soft arts
Nor suit my years nor temper; these be left
To boys and doting age. A prudent father,
By nature charg'd to guide and rule her choice,
Resigns his daughter to a husband's power,
Who with superior dignity, with reason,
And manly tenderness will ever love her;
Not first a kneeling slave, and then a tyrant. [*Exit.*]

Enter RODOLPHO from the Senate.

Rod. This will perplexes all. No, Tancred never
Can stoop to these conditions, which at once
Attack his rights, his honour, and his love.
Th' unjust, the base conditions of the will!
Uncertain, toss'd in cruel agitation,
He oft, methought, address'd himself to speak,
And interrupt Siffredi, who appear'd,
With conscious haste to dread that interruption,

And hurry'd on—But, hark! I hear a noise,
As if the assembly rose.

[*Sigismunda and Attendants pass through the back scene.*]

Enter LAURA.

Lau. Your high prais'd friend, the king,
Is false, most vilely false. The meanest slave
Had shewn a nobler heart.
He Manfred's son! away! it cannot be!
The son of that brave prince could never sacrifice
All faith, all honour, gratitude, and love,
All in a moment. And for what? why, truly,
For kind permission, gracious leave, to sit
On his own throne with tyrant William's daughter!

Rod. I stand amaz'd. You surely wrong him,
Laura;

There must be some mistake.

Lau. There can be none:

Siffredi read his full and free consent
Before th' applauding senate. True, indeed,
A small remain of shame, a timorous weakness,
Even dastardly in falsehood, made him blush
To act this scene in Sigismunda's eye,
Who sunk beneath his perfidy and baseness.
Hence, till to-morrow he adjourn'd the senate;
To-morrow fix'd, with infamy to crown him;
Then, leading off his gay, triumphant princess,
He left the poor unhappy Sigismunda
To bend her trembling steps to that sad home
His faithless vows will render hateful to her.
He comes. Farewell! I cannot bear his presence.

[*Exit.*]

Enter TANCRED and SIFFREDI.

Tan. Avoid me, hoary traitor! Go, Rodolpho,
Give orders that all passages this way
Be shut. Defend me from the hateful world,
The bane of peace and honour; then return.

[*Exit Rodolpho.*]

What dost thou haunt me still! Oh! monstrous
insult!

Unparallel'd indignity! Just heaven!
Was ever king, was ever man so treated?
So trampled into baseness?

Sif. Here, my liege,
Here strike! I nor deserve, nor ask for mercy.

Tan. All, all but this I could have borne: but
this!

This daring insolence beyond example!
This murder's stroke, that stabs my peace for ever!
That wounds me there—there, where the human
heart

Most exquisitely feels—

Sif. Oh! bear it not,

My royal lord; appease on me your vengeance!

Tan. Did ever tyrant image aught so cruel?

The lowest slave that crawls upon the earth,
Robb'd of each comfort heav'n bestows on mortals,
On the bare ground has still his virtue left,
The sacred treasure of an honest heart,
Which thou hast dar'd, with rash, audacious hand,
And impious fraud, in me to violate—

Sif. Behold, my lord, that rash, audacious hand,
Which not repents its crime. Oh! glorious, happy!
If by my ruin I can save your honour. [scorn]

Tan. Such honour I renounce; with sovereign
Greatly detest it, and its mean adviser!

Hast thou not dar'd beneath my name to shelter,
Beneath thy sovereign's name, basely presum'd
To shield a lie—a lie, in public utter'd,
To all deluded Sicily? But know,
This poor contrivance is as weak as base.
What, marry her! Constantia! her! the daughter
Of the fell tyrant who destroy'd my father!
The very thought is madness! Ere thou seest
The torch of Hymen light these hated nuptials,
Thou shalt behold Sicilia wrapp'd in flames,
Her cities raz'd, her valleys drench'd with slaughter,
Love set aside, my pride assumes the quarrel;
My honour now is up; in spite of thee,

A world combin'd against me, I will give
This scatter'd will in fragments to the winds,
Assert my rights, the freedom of my heart,
Crush all who dare oppose me to the dust,
And heap perdition on thee!

Sif. Sir, 'tis just.

Exhaust on me thy rage; I claim it all.
But for these public threats thy passion utters,
'Tis what thou canst not do.

Tan. I cannot! ha!

Who shall arrest my vengeance? Who?

Sif. Thyself.

Tan. Away! Dare not to justify thy crime:
That, that alone can aggravate its horror;
Add insolence to insolence—perhaps,
May make my rage forget—

Sif. Oh! let it burst

On this grey head, devoted to thy service!
But when the storm has vented all its fury,
Thou then must hear; nay, more, I know thou wilt;
Wilt hear the calm, yet stronger voice of reason.
Thou must reflect that there are other duties;
Yes, thou must,
In calmer hours, divest thee of thy love,
These common passions of the vulgar breast,
This boiling heat of youth, and be a king,
The lover of thy people!

Tan. Yes, I will be a king, but not a slave;
In this will be a king; in this my people
Shall learn to judge how I will guard their rights,
When they behold me vindicate my own.
But have I, say, been treated like a king?

Heav'n! could I stoop to such outrageous usage,
I were a mean, a shameless wretch, unworthy
To wield a sceptre in a land of slaves;
A soil abhorr'd of virtue; should belie
My father's blood; belie those very maxims,
At other times you taught my youth,—Siffredi!

Sif. Behold, my prince, thy poor old servant,
Whose darling care, these twenty years, has bent
To nurse thee up to virtue; behold him here,
Bent on his feeble knees, to beg, conjure thee,
With tears to beg thee, to controul thy passion,
And save thyself, thy honour, and thy people!
Kneeling with me, behold the many thousands
To thy protection trusted; fathers, mothers,
The sacred front of venerable age,
The tender virgin, and the helpless infant;
See them all

Here at thy feet conjuring thee to save them
From misery and war, from crimes and rapine!
Turn not away: oh! is there not some part
In thy great heart, so sensible to kindness,
And generous warmth, some nobler part, to feel
The prayers and tears of these, the mingled voice
Of heaven and earth?

Tan. There is, and thou hast touch'd it.
Rise, rise, Siffredi. Oh! thou hast undone me!
Unkind old man! Oh! ill-entreated Tancred!
Which way soe'er I turn, Dishonour rears
Her hideous front, and misery and ruin.

Why have you rais'd this miserable conflict
Betwixt the duties of the king and man?
Set virtue against virtue? But, hold, my soul,
Thy steady purpose; toss'd by various passions
To this eternal anchor keep: there is,
Can be no public without private virtue.
Then, mark me well, observe what I command;
To-morrow, when the senate meets again,
Unfold the whole; unravel the deceit:
Start not, my lord—this must and shall be done,
Or here our friendship ends. Howe'er disguis'd,
Whatever thy pretence, thou art a traitor.

Sif. I should, indeed, deserve the name of traitor,
And ev'n a traitor's fate, had I so slightly,
From principles so false, done what I did,
As e'er to disavow it.

Tan. Ha!

Sif. My liege,

Expect not this: though practis'd long in courts,
I have not so far learn'd their subtle trade,
To veer obedient with each gust of passion.
I honour thee, I venerate thy orders,
But honour more my duty. Nought on earth
Shall ever shake me from that solid rock,
Nor smiles, nor frowns—

Tan. You will not, then?

Sif. I cannot.

Tan. Away! begone! Oh! my Rodolpho, come,
And save me from this traitor. Hence, I say!
No reply! Away!

[*Exit Siffredi.*]

Be-enter RODOLPHO.

Rod. What can incense my prince so highly
Against his friend Siffredi?

Tan. Friend, Rodolpho!

When I have told thee what this friend has done,
How play'd me like a boy, a base-born wretch,
Who had nor heart nor spirit, thou wilt stand
Amaz'd, and wonder at my stupid patience.

Rod. Nothing so mean

As weak, insulted power, that dares not punish.
And how would that have suited with your love;
His daughter present, too? Trust me, your conduct,
Howe'er abhorrent to a heart like your's,
Was fortunate and wise. Not that I mean
E'er to advise submission—

Tan. Heav'n's! submission!

Could I descend to bear it, ev'n in thought,
Despise me, you, the world, and Sigismunda!
Submission! No! To-morrow's glorious light
Shall flash discovery on the scene of baseness.
Whatever be the risk, by heav'n's! to-morrow,
I will o'erturn the dirty, lie-built schemes
Of these old men, and shew my faithful senate,
That Manfred's son knows to assert and wear,
With undiminish'd dignity, that crown
This unexpected day has plac'd upon him.
But this, my friend, these stormy gusts of pride
Are foreign to my love. Till Sigismunda
Be disabus'd, my breast is tumult all,
And can obey no settled course of reason.
I see her still, I feel her pow'ful image,
That look, where with reproach complaint was mix'd,
Big with soft woe, and gentle indignation,
Which seem'd at once to pity and to scorn me.
Oh! let me find her. I too long have left
My Sigismunda to converse with tears,
A prey to thoughts that picture me a villain.
But ah! how, clogg'd with this accursed state,
A tedious world, shall I now find access?
Her father, too—ten thousand horrors crowd
Into the wild, fantastic eye of love—
Who knows what he may do? Come, then, my friend,
And by thy sister's hand, oh! let me steal
A letter to her bosom. I no longer
Can bear her absence, by the just contempt
She now must brand me with, inflam'd to madness.
Fly, my Rodolpho, fly! engage thy sister
To aid my letter. And this very evening
Secure an interview. I would not bear
This rack another day, not for my kingdom.
Till then, deep plung'd in solitude and shades,
I will not see the bated face of man.
Thought drives on thought, on passions passions roll;
Her smiles alone can calm my raging soul. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber.*

SIGISMUNDA discovered.

Sig. Ah! tyrant prince! ah! more than faithless
Tancred!

Ungenerous and inhuman in thy falsehood!
Hadst thou this morning, when my hopeless heart,
Submissive to my fortune and my duty,
Had so much spirit left, as to be willing
To give thee back thy vows; ah! hadst thou then
Confess'd the sad necessity thy state
Impos'd upon thee, and with gentle friendship,

Since we must part at last, our parting soften'd;
I should, indeed—I should have been unhappy,
But not to this extreme.

Is there, kind heav'n, no constancy in man?
No steadfast truth, no gen'rous, fix'd affection,
That can bear up against a selfish world?
No, there is none; ev'n Tancred is inconstant!
Hence! let me fly this scene! Whate'er I see,
These roofs, these walls, each object that surrounds
me,

Are tainted with his vows. But whither fly?
The groves are worse, the soft retreat of Belmont,
Its deep'ning glooms, gay lawns, and airy summits,
Will wound my busy memory to torture,
And all its shades will whisper—Faithless Tancred!
My father comes. How, sunk in this disorder,
Shall I sustain his presence?

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. Sigismunda,

My dearest child! I grieve to find thee thus
A prey to tears.

Awake to reason from this dream of love,
And shew the world thou art Siffredi's daughter.

Sig. Alas! I am unworthy of that name.

Sif. Thou art, indeed, to blame; thou hast too
rashly

Engag'd thy heart, without a father's sanction.
But this I can forgive; and if thy heart
Will now resume its pride, assert itself,
And greatly rise superior to this trial,
I to my warmest confidence again
Will take thee, and esteem thee more my daughter.

Sig. Oh! you are gentler far than I deserve.

It is, it ever was, my darling pride,
To bend my soul to your supreme commands,
Your wisest will; and though by love betray'd,
(Alas! and punish'd, too,) I have transgress'd
The nicest bounds of duty, yet I feel
A sentiment of tenderness, a source
Of filial nature springing in my breast,
That, should it kill me, shall controul this passion,
And make me all submission and obedience
To you, my honour'd lord, the best of fathers.

Sif. Come to my arms, thou comfort of my age!
Thou only joy and hope of these grey hairs!
Come, let me take thee to a parent's heart;
There, with the kindly aid of my advice,
Ev'n with the dew of these paternal tears,
Revive and nourish this becoming spirit;
Then thou dost promise me, my Sigismunda—
Thy father stoops to make it his request—
Thou wilt resign thy fond, presumptuous hopes,
And henceforth never more indulge one thought
That in the light of love regards the king.

Sig. Hopes I have none! Those by this fatal day
Are blasted all. But from my soul to banish,
While weeping mem'ry there retains her seat,
Thoughts which the purest bosom might have cher-
ish'd,

Once my delight, now ev'n in anguish charming,
Is more, my lord, than I can promise. [*Sions,*]

Sif. Absence and time, the soft'ner of our pas-
Will conquer this. Meantime, I hope from thee
A great, a gen'rous effort; that thou wilt now
Exert thy utmost force, nor languish thus
Beneath the vain extravagance of love.
Let not thy father blush to hear it said,
His daughter was so weak e'er to admit
A thought so void of reason, that a king
Should to his rank, his honour, and his glory,
The high, important duties of a throne,
Ev'n to his throne itself, madly prefer
A wild, romantic passion, the fond child
Of youthful dreaming thought and vacant hours;
That he should quit his heav'n-appointed station,
Desert his awful charge, the care of all.

What! must for thee,

To make thee blest, Sicilia be unhappy?

Rouse thee, for shame! and if a spark of virtue

Lies slumb'ring in thy soul, bid it blaze forth;
Nor sink unequal to the glorious lesson,
This day thy lover gave thee from his throne.

Sig. Ah! that was not from virtue. Had, my father,
That been his aim, I yield to what you say.
Why did you drag me to a sight so cruel?

Sif. It was a scene to fire thy emulation.

Sig. It was a scene of perfidy! But know,
I will do more than imitate the king;
For he is false: I, though sincerely pierc'd
With the best, truest passion, ever touch'd
A virgin's breast, here vow to heav'n and you,
Though from my heart I cannot, from my hopes
To cast this prince. What would you more, my
father! [happy:

Sif. Yes, one thing more; thy father then is
This world from thee, my honour, and thy own,
Demands one step; a step, by which, convinc'd,
The king may see thy heart disdains to wear
A chain which his has greatly thrown aside.
But above all, thou must root out for ever
From the king's breast the least remain of hope,
And henceforth make his mention'd love dishonour.
These things, my daughter, that must needs be done,
Can but this way be done—by the safe refuge,
The sacred shelter of a husband's arms.
And there is one—

Sig. Good heav'ns! what means my lord?

Sif. One of illustrious family, high rank,
Yet still of higher dignity and merit,
Who can and will protect thee; one to awe
The king himself—nay, hear me, Sigismunda—
The noble Osmond courts thee for his bride,
And has my plighted word. This day—

Sig. (Kneels.) My father!

Let me with trembling arms embrace thy knees.
Oh! if you ever wish to see me happy;
If e'er in infant years I gave you joy,
When, as I prattling twin'd around your neck,
You snatch'd me to your bosom, kiss'd my eyes,
And melting said you saw my mother there;
Oh! save me from that worst severity
Of fate! Oh! outrage not my breaking heart
To that degree! I cannot—'tis impossible—
So soon withdraw it, give it to another—
Or I shall die; shall, by the sudden change,
Be to distraction shock'd. Let me wear out
My hapless days in solitude and silence,
Far from the malice of a prying world;
At least—you cannot, sure, refuse me this—
Give me a little time; I will do all,
All I can do, to please you.

Sif. My daughter! you abuse

The softness of my nature—

Sig. Here, my father,

Till you relent, here will I grow for ever!

Sif. Rise, Sigismunda. Though you touch my
heart,

Nothing can shake the inexorable dictates
Of honour, duty, and determin'd reason.
Then by the holy ties of filial love,
Resolve, I charge thee, to receive Earl Osmond,
As suits the man who is thy father's choice,
And worthy of thy hand—I go to bring him—

Sig. Spare me, my dearest father!

Sif. I must rush

From her soft grasp, or nature will betray me!

(Aside.)

Quit me, my child!

Sig. You cannot, oh, my father!

You cannot leave me thus!

Sif. Come hither, Laura,

Come to thy friend. Now show thyself a friend.
Combat her weakness, dissipate her tears,
Cherish, and reconcile her to her duty. [Exit.

Enter LAURA.

Sig. Oh, woe on woe! distress'd by love and
duty!

Oh, every way unhappy Sigismunda!

Lau. Forgive me, madam, if I blame your grief.
How can you waste your tears on one so false?

Unworthy of your tenderness; to whom

Nought but contempt is due, and indignation?

Sig. You know not half the horrors of my fate!
I might, perhaps, have learn'd to scorn his false-
hood;

Nay, when the first sad burst of tears was past,
I might have rous'd my pride and scorn'd himself—
But 'tis too much, this greatest, last misfortune—
Oh, whither shall I fly? Where hide me, Laura,
From the dire scene my father now prepares?

Lau. What thus alarms you, madam?

Sig. Can it be?

Can I—ah, no!—at once give to another

My violated heart? in one wild moment!

He brings Earl Osmond to receive my vows.

Oh, dreadful change! for Tancred, haughty Os-
mond. [heart

Lau. Now, on my soul, 'tis what an outrage'd
Like yours should wish!—I should, by heav'ns,
esteem it

Most exquisite revenge!

Sig. Revenge! on whom?

On my own heart, already but too wretched!

Lau. On him! this Tancred! who has basely sold,

For the dull form of despicable grandeur,

His faith, his love!—At once a slave and tyrant!

Sig. Oh, rail at me, at my believing folly,

My vain, ill-founded hopes, but spare him, Laura.

Lau. Who rais'd these hopes? who triumphs
o'er that weakness?

Pardon the word—You greatly merit him;

Better than him, with all his giddy pomp;

You rais'd him by your smiles when he was nothing.

Where is your woman's pride, that guardian spirit

Give'n us to dash the peridy of man? [ence—

Ye pow'rs! I cannot bear the thought with pati-
ence

Before the public thus, before your father,

By an irrevocable, solemn deed,

With such inhuman scorn, to throw you from him;

To give his faithless hand, yet warm from thine,

With complicated meanness, to Constantia.

And to complete his crime, when thy weak limbs

Could scarce support thee, then, of thee regardless,

To lead her off!

Sig. That was indeed a sight

To poison love; to turn it into rage [ness

And keen contempt. What means this stupid weak-

That hangs upon me? Hence, unworthy tears!

Disgrace my cheek no more! No more, my heart,

For one so coolly false, or meanly fickle,

Dare to suggest

The least excuse! Yes, traitor, I will wring

Thy pride, will turn thy triumph to confusion!

Sicilia's daughters

Shall wond'ring see in me a great example

Of one who punish'd an ill-judging heart,

Who made it bow to what it most abhor'd,

Crush'd it to misery, for having thus

So lightly listen'd to a worthless lover.

Lau. At last it mounts, the kindling pride
of virtue;

Trust me, thy marriage will embitter his.

Sig. Oh, may the furies light his nuptial torch!

Be it accurs'd as mine! For the fair peace,

The tender joys of hymeneal love,

May jealous awak'd, and fell remorse,

Pour all their fiercest venom through thy breast!

Where the fates lead, and blind revenge, I follow—

Let me not think—By injur'd love! I vow,

Thou shalt, base prince! perfidious and inhuman!

Thou shalt behold me in another's arms;

In his thou hatest! Osmond's!

Lau. Ay, that will sting

His soul to madness.

Your cooler thought besides will of the change

Approve, and think it happy.

Sig. Talk not of Osmond, but perfidious Tancred!

Rail at him, rail! invent new names of scorn!
Assist me, Laura, lend my rage fresh fuel;
Support my stagg'ring purpose, which already
Begins to fail me—Ah, my vaults, how vain!
How have I lied to my own heart!—Alas,
My tears return, the mighty flood o'erwhelms
me!

Lau. If thy own peace and honour cannot keep
Thy resolution fix'd, yet, Sigismunda,
Oh, think how deeply, how beyond retreat,
Thy father is engag'd.

Sig. Ah, wretched weakness!
That thus enthrals my soul;
And have I then no tears for thee, my father?
Can I forget thy cares, from helpless years,
Thy tenderness for me? Shall I for these
Repay thy stooping, venerable age,
With shame, disquiet, anguish, and dishonour?
It must not be!—Thou first of angels! come,
Sweet filial piety, and firm my breast!
Yes, let one daughter to her fate submit,
Be nobly wretched—but her father happy!
Laura!—they come! Oh, heav'n's, I cannot stand
The horrid trial!—Open, open, earth!
And hide me from their view.

Lau. Madam.

Re-enter SIFFREDI and OSMOND.

Sif. My daughter,
Behold my noble friend who courts thy hand,
And whom to call my son I shall be proud.

Osm. Think not, I presume,
Madam, on this, your father's kind consent,
To make me blest. I love you from a heart,
That seeks your good superior to my own;
And will by ev'ry art of tender friendship,
Consult your dearest welfare. May I hope,
Yours does not disavow your father's choice?

Sig. I am a daughter, sir—and have no pow'r
O'er my own heart—I die—Support me, *Laura.*

(Faints.)

Sif. Help—Bear her off—She breathes—my
daughter!

Sig. Oh!
Forgive my weakness—soft—my *Laura*, lead me—
To my apartment. *[Exeunt Sig. and Lau.]*

Sif. Pardon me, my lord,
If by this sudden accident alarm'd,
I leave you for a moment. *[Exit.]*

Osm. Let me think—
What can this mean! Is it to me aversion?
Or is it, as I fear'd she loves another?
Ha!—yes; perhaps the king, the young Count
Tancred,

They were bred up together—Surely that,
That cannot be—Has he not giv'n his hand,
In the most solemn manner, to *Constantia*?
Does not his crown depend upon the deed?
What is it then? I care not what it be.
My honour now, my dignity demands,
That my propos'd alliance, by her father,
And ev'n herself accepted, be not scorn'd.
I love her too—I never knew till now
To what a pitch I love her. Oh, she shot
Ten thousand charms into my inmost soul!
She look'd so mild, so amiably gentle,
She how'd her head, she glow'd with such confu-
sion,

Such loveliness of modesty! She is,
In gracious mind, in manners, and in person,
The perfect model of all female beauty!
She must be mine—She is!—If yet her heart
Consents not to my happiness, her duty,
Join'd to my tender cares, will gain so much
Upon her gen'rous nature—That will follow.

The man of sense, who acts a prudent part,
Not flatt'ring steals, but forns himself the heart.
[Exit.]

SCENE I.—*The Garden belonging to Siffredi's house.*

Enter SIGISMUNDA and LAURA. Sigismunda with a letter in her hand.

Sig. 'Tis done!—I am a slave! The fatal vow
Has pass'd my lips! Methought in those sad
moments,

The tombs around, the saints, the darken'd altar,
And all the trembling shrines with horror shook.
But here is still new matter of distress.
Oh, Tancred, cease to persecute me more!
Oh, grudge me not some calmer state of woe;
Some quiet gloom to shade my hopeless days,
Where I may never hear of love and thee!
Has *Laura* too conspir'd against my peace?
Why did you take this letter? Bear it back—
I will not court new pain. *(Gives her the letter.)*

Lau. Madam, *Rodolph* ^[in]
Urg'd me so much, nay, ev'n with tears conjur'd
But this once more to serve the unhappy king—
For such he said he was—that though enrag'd,
Equal with thee, at his inhuman falsehood,
I could not to my brother's fervent pray'r
Refuse this office—Read it—His excuses
Will only more expose his falsehood.

Sig. No:
It suits not *Osmond's* wife to read one line
From that contagious hand—she knows too well!

Lau. He paints him out distress'd beyond ex-
pression,

Ev'n on the point of madness.
He dies to see you, and to clear his faith.

Sig. Save me from that! That would be worse
than all! ^[then]

Lau. I but report my brother's words; who
Began to talk of some dark imposition,
That had deceiv'd us all; when interrupted,
We heard your father and *Earl Osmond* near,
As summon'd to *Constantia's* court they went.

Sig. Ha! imposition? Well, if I am doom'd
To be, o'er all my sex, the wretch of love,
In vain I would resist—Give me the letter—
To know the worst is some relief—Alas!
It was not thus, with such dire palpitations,
That, *Tancred*, once I us'd to read thy letters.

(Attempts to read the letter, but gives it to Laura.)
Ah, fond remembrance blinds me! Read it, *Laura.*

Lau. *(Reads.)* "Deliver me, *Sigismunda*, from that
most exquisite misery which a faithful heart can suffer
—to be thought base by her, from whose esteem even
virtue borrows new charms. When I submitted to my
cruel situation, it was not falsehood you beheld, but an
excess of love. Rather than endanger that, I for awhile
gave up my honour. Every moment till I see you stabs
me with severer pangs than real guilt itself can feel.
Let me then conjure you to meet me in the garden, to-
wards the close of the day, when I shall explain the
mystery. We have been most inhumanly abused; and
that by the means of the very paper which I gave you,
from the warmest sincerity of love, to ensure you the
heart and hand of
TANCRED."

Sig. There, *Laura*, there, the dreadful secret
sprung!

That paper! ah, that paper! it suggests
A thousand horrid thoughts—I to my father
Gave it! and he perhaps—I dare not cast
A look that way—If yet indeed you love me,
Oh, blast me not, kind *Tancred*, with the truth!
Oh, pitying keep me ignorant for ever.
What strange, peculiar misery is mine!
Reduc'd to wish the man I love were false!

Lau. Madam,
Behold he comes—the king—

Sig. Heav'n's! how escape?
No—I will stay—This one last meeting—Leave me.

[Exit Laura.]

Enter TANCRED.

Tan. And are these long, long hours of torture
past!

My life! my Sigismunda!

(Throws herself at her feet.)

Sig. Rise, my lord.

To see my sov'reign thus no more becomes me.

Tan. Oh, let me kiss the ground on which you tread!

Let me exhale my soul in softest transport!

Since I again behold my Sigismunda! (Rises.)

Unkind! how couldst thou ever deem me false?

How thus dishonour love? After the vows,

The fervent truth, the tender protestations,

Which mine has often pour'd, to let thy breast,

Whate'er th' appearance was, admit suspicion?

Sig. How! when I heard myself your full consent

To the late king's so just and prudent will?

Heard it before you read, in solemn senate?

When I beheld you give your royal hand,

To her, whose birth and dignity of right

Demands that high alliance? Yes, my lord,

You have done well. The man whom heav'n appoints

To govern others, should himself first learn

To bend his passions to the sway of reason.

In all, you have done well; but when you hid

My humbled hopes look up to you again,

And sooth'd with wanton cruelty my weakness—

That too was well—My vanity deserv'd

The sharp rebuke.

[now,

Tan. Chide on, chide on. Thy soft reproaches

Instead of wounding, only sooth my fondness.

No, no, thou charming consort of my soul!

I never lov'd thee with such faithful ardour,

As in that cruel, miserable moment

You thought me false.

It was thy barb'rous father, Sigismunda,

Who caught me in the toil. He turn'd that paper,

Meant for th' assuring bond of nuptial love,

To ruin it for ever; he, he wrote

That forg'd consent, you heard, beneath my name,

Had he not been thy father—Ha! my love!

You tremble, you grow pale!

Sig. Oh, leave me, Tancred!

[set

Tan. No!—Leave thee!—Never! never till you

My heart at peace, till these dear lips again

Pronounce thee mine! Without thee, I renounce

Myself, my friends, the world—Here on this hand—

Sig. My lord, forget that hand, which never now

Can be to thine united—

Tan. Sigismunda!

What dost thou mean?

Sig. Inquire no more—I never can be thine.

Tan. What, who shall interpose? Who dares attempt

To brave the fury of an injur'd king,

Who, ere he sees thee ravish'd from his hopes,

Will wrap all blazing Sicily in flames?

Sig. In vain your pow'r, my lord—'Tis fatal error,

Join'd to my father's unrelenting will,

Has plac'd an everlasting bar betwixt us—

I am—Earl Osmond's—wife!

Tan. Earl Osmond's wife!

(After a long pause, during which they look at one another with the highest agitation, and most tender distress.)

Heav'n! did I hear thee right? What! marry'd?

marry'd!

Lost to thy faithful Tancred? lost for ever!

Couldst thou then doom me to such matchless woe,

Without so much as hearing me? Distraction!

Alas! what hast thou done? Ah, Sigismunda!

Thy rash credulity has done a deed,

Which, of two happiest lovers that e'er felt

The blissful pow'r, has made two finish'd wretches!

But—madness!—Sure thou know'st it cannot be!

This hand is mine! a thousand thousand vows—

Enter OSMOND.

Osm. (Snatches her hand from the king.) Madam,

this hand, by the most solemn rites,

A little hour ago, was giv'n to me,

And did not sov'reign honour now command me,

Never but with my life to quit my claim,

I would renounce it—thus!

Tan. Ha, who art thou?

Presumptuous man!

Sig. (Aside.) Where is my father? Heav'n!

[Exit.

Osm. One thou shouldst better know—Yes—

view me, one

Who can and will maintain his rights and honour,

Against a faithless prince, an upstart king,

Whose first base deed is what a harden'd tyrant

Would blush to act.

Tan. Insolent Osmond! know,

This upstart king will hurl confusion on thee,

And all who shall invade his sacred rights,

Prior to thine—thine, founded on compulsion,

On infamous deceit!—I will annul,

By the guilty pow'r with which the laws invest me,

Those guilty forms in which you have entrapp'd,

My queen betroth'd, who has my heart, my hand,

And shall partake my throne—if, haughty lord,

If this thou didst not know, then know it now;

And know, besides, as I have told thee this,

Shouldst thou but think to urge thy treason further—

Thy life shall answer for it.

Osm. Ha! my life!

It moves my scorn to hear thy empty threats.

When was it that a Norman baron's life

Became so vile, as on the frown of kings

To hang?—Of that, my lord, the law must judge;

Or, if the law be weak, my guardian sword—

Tan. Dare not to touch it, traitor, lest my rage

Break loose, and do a deed that misbecomes me.

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. My gracious lord, what is it I behold?

My sov'reign in contention with his subject?

Surely this house deserves from royal Tancred

A little more regard, than to be made

A scene of trouble, and unseemly jars.

Heavens! can your highness

From your exalted character descend,

Unkindly thus disturb the sweet repose,

The secret peace of families, for which

Alone the free-born race of man to laws

And government submitted?

Tan. My lord Siffredi,

Spare thy rebuke. The duties of my station

Are not to me unknown. But thou, old man,

Dost thou not blush to talk of rights invaded;

And of our best our dearest bliss disturb'd?

Thou, who with more than barbarous perfidy

Hast trampled all allegiance, justice, truth,

Humanity itself, beneath thy feet?

Thou know'st thou hast—I could, to thy confusion,

Return thy hard reproaches; but I spare thee

Before this lord, for whose ill-sorted friendship

Thou hast most basely sacrific'd thy daughter.

Farewell, my lord. For thee, lord constable,

Who dost presume to lift thy surly eye

To my soft love, my gentle Sigismunda,

I once again command thee on thy life—

Yes, chew thy rage, but mark me, on thy life,

No further urge thy arrogant pretensions! [Exit.

Osm. Ha! Arrogant pretensions! Heaven and

earth!

What! arrogant pretensions to my wife?

My wedded wife! Where are we? in a land

Of civil rule, of liberty and laws?

Not, on my life, pursue them? Giddy prince!

My life disdains thy nod. It is the gift

Of parent heaven, who gave me to an arm,

A spirit to defend it against tyrants.

Mine is a common cause. My arm shall guard,

Mix'd with my own, the rights of each Sicilian;

Ere to thy tyrant rage they fall a prey,

I shall find means to shake thy tottering throne,

And crush thee in the ruins!

Constantia is my queen!

Sif. Lord constable,
Let us be steadfast in the right; but let us
Act with cool prudence, and with manly temper,
As well as manly firmness. Remember that my
house

Protects my daughter still; and ere I saw her
Thus ravish'd from us by the arm of power,
This hand should act the Roman father's part.
Fear not; be temperate; all will yet be well.
I know the king. Trust me, to reason
He will return.

Osm. He will! By heavens, he shall!
You know the king—I wish, my Lord Siffredi,
That you had deign'd to tell me all you knew—
And would you have me wait, with duteous pati-
ence,

Till he return to reason? Ye just powers!
When he has planted on our necks his foot,
And trod us into slaves; when his vain pride
Is cloy'd with our submission.

No, no, my lord! there is a nobler way,
To teach the blind oppressive fury reason:
Oft has the lustre of avenging steel
Unseal'd the stupid eyes—The sword is reason!

Enter RODOLPHO, with Guards.

Rod. My lord high constable of Sicily.
In the king's name, and by his special order,
I here arrest you prisoner of state.

Osm. What king? I know no king of Sicily,
Unless he be the husband of Constantia. [orders

Rod. Then know him now—behold his royal
To bear you to the castle of Palermo.

Sif. Let the big torrent foam its madness off.
Submit, my lord—No castle long can hold
Our wrongs. This, more than friendship or alli-
ance,

Confirms me thine; this binds me to thy fortunes,
By the strong tie of common injury,
Which nothing can dissolve. I grieve, Rodolpho,
To see the reign in such unhappy sort
Begin.

Osm. The reign! the usurpation call it!
This meteor king may blaze awhile, but soon
Must spend his idle terrors—sir, lead on—
Farewell, my lord—more than my life and fortune,
Remember well, is in your hands—my honour!

Sif. Our honour is the same. My son, farewell—
We shall not long be parted. On these eyes
Sleep shall not shed his balm, till I behold thee
Restor'd to freedom, or partake thy bonds.

[*Exeunt*
ACT V.—SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. The prospect lowers around. I found the
king,

Though calm'd a little, with subsiding tempest,
As suits his generous nature, yet in love
Abated nought, most ardent in his purpose;
Inexorably fix'd, whate'er the risk,
To claim my daughter, and dissolve this marriage—
I have embark'd, upon a perilous sea,
A mighty treasure.

Bear witness, heaven! thou mind-inspecting eye!
My breast is pure. I have prefer'd my duty,
The good and safety of my fellow-subjects,
To all those views that fire the selfish race
Of mortal men, and mix them in eternal broils.

Enter an Officer belonging to Siffredi.

Offi. My lord, a man of noble port, his face
Wrapt in disguise, is earnest for admission.

Sif. Go, bid him enter— [Exit *Offi.*
Ha! wrap'd in disguise!
And at this late unseasonable hour!
Who can it be?

Enter OSMOND, discovering himself.

Sif. Earl Osmond, you? Welcome, once more,
To this glad roof! But why in this disguise?
Would I could hope the king exceeds his promise!
I have his faith, soon as to-morrow's sun

Shall gild Sicilia's cliffs, you shall be free—
Has some good angel turn'd his heart to justice?

Osm. It is not by the favour of Count Tancred
That I am here. As much I scorn his favour,
As I defy his tyranny and threats—
Our friend Goffredo, who commands the castle,
On my parole, ere dawn to render back
My person, has permitted me this freedom.
Know then, the faithless outrage of to-day,
By him committed whom you call the king,
Has rous'd Constantia's court. Our friends, the
friends

Of virtue, justice, and of public faith,
Ripe, for revolt, are in high ferment all.
I thence of you, as guardian of the laws,
As guardian of this will, to you entrusted,
Desire, nay more, demand your instant aid,
To see it put in vig'rous execution. [renew.

Sif. You cannot doubt, my lord, of my concur-
Who, more than I, have labour'd this great point?
'Tis my own plan; and if I drop it now,
I should be justly branded with the shame
Of rash advice, or despicable weakness.
But let us not precipitate the matter.

Constantia's friends are numerous and strong;
Yet Tancred's, trust me, are of equal force:
E'er since the secret of his birth was known,
The people all are in a tumult hurl'd,
Of boundless joy. Oh! if our prattling virtue

Dwells not in words alone—Oh, let us join,
My generous Osmond, to avert these woes,
And yet sustain our tott'ring Norman kingdom!

Osm. But how, Siffredi, how? If by soft means
We can maintain our rights, and save our country,
May his unnatural blood first stain the sword,
Who with un pitying fury first shall draw it!

Sif. I have a thought—The glorious work be
thine.

Suppose my daughter, to her God devoted,
Were plac'd within some convent's sacred verge,
Beneath the dread protection of the altar—

Osm. Ere then, by heavens! I would
Turn whining monk myself,
And pray incessant for the tyrant's safety.
What! how! because an insolent invader,
A sacrilegious tyrant, demands my wife;
What! shall I tamely yield her up,

Even in the manner you propose? Oh, then
I were supremely vile! degraded! sham'd!
The scorn of manhood! and abhor'd of honour!

Sif. There is, my lord, an honour, the calm child
Of reason, of humanity, and mercy,
Superior far to this punctilious demon,
That singly minds itself, and oft embroils
With proud barbarian niceties the world.

Osm. My lord, my lord, I cannot brook your
prudence;

It holds a pulse unequal to my blood—
Unblemish'd honour is the flower of virtue!
The vivifying soul! and he who slights it,
Will leave the other dull and lifeless dross.

Sif. No more, you are too warm.

Osm. You are too cool.

Sif. Too cool, my lord? I were indeed too cool,
Not to resent this language, and to tell thee—
I wish Earl Osmond were as cool as I
To his own selfish bliss—ay, and as warm
To that of others—But of this no more—
My daughter is thy wife—I gave her to thee,
And will, against all force, maintain her thine.

But think not I will catch thy headlong passions,
Whirl'd in a blaze of madness o'er the land;
Or, till the last extremity compell'd me,
Risk the dire means of war—The king, to-morrow,
Will set you free; and, if by gentle means
He does not yield my daughter to your arms,
And wed Constantia, as the will requires,
Why then expect me on the side of justice—
Let that suffice.

Osm. It does—Forgive my heart,
My rankled mind, by injuries inflam'd,
May be too prompt to take and give offence.

Sif. 'Tis past—Your wrongs, I own, may well
transport

The wisest mind—But henceforth, noble Osmond,
Do me more justice, honour more my truth,
Nor mark me with an eye of squint suspicion—
Return, my son, and from your friend Goffredo
Release your word. There try, by soft repose,
To calm your breast.

Osm. Bid the vex'd ocean sleep,
Swept by the pinions of the raging north—
But your frail age, by care and toil exhausted,
Demands the balm of all-repairing rest. [skies,

Sif. Soon as to-morrow's dawn shall streak the
I, with my friends in solemn state assembled,
Will to the palace, and demand your freedom.
Then by calm reason, or by higher means,
The king shall quit his claim, and in the face
Of Sicily, my daughter shall be yours.
Farewell.

Osm. My lord, good night. [Exit *Sif.*

(After a long pause.) I like him not—
Yes, I have mighty matter of suspicion.
My honour is not safe, while here my wife
Remains. Who knows but he this very night
May bear her to some convent, as he mention'd.
The king too, though I smother'd up my rage,
I mark'd it well—will set me free to-morrow.
Why not to-night? He has some dark design—
By heav'n's, he has! I'm abus'd most grossly;
Made the vile tool of this old statesman's schemes;
I will not wait his crawling timid motions,
I will convince him that Earl Osmond never
Was form'd to be his dupe—I will bear her off
This night, and lodge her in a place of safety:
I have a trusty hand that waits not far.
Hence! let me lose no time—One rapid moment
Should ardent form, at once, and execute
A bold design—'Tis fix'd—The mine is laid,
And only wants my kindling torch to spring. [Exit.

SCENE II.—*Sigismunda's Apartment.*

Thunder. SIGISMUNDA and LAURA discovered.

Lau. Heavens! 'tis a fearful night!

Sig. Ah! the black rage

Of midnight tempest, or th' assuring smiles
Of radiant morn, are equal all to me.
Nought now has charms or terror to my breast.
The seat of stupid woe! Leave me, my Laura.
Kind rest, perhaps, may hush my woes a little.
Oh, for that quiet sleep that knows no morning!

Lau. Madam, indeed I know not how to go.
Indulge my fondness—Let me watch awhile
By your sad bed, 'till these dread hours shall pass.

Sig. Alas! what is the toil of elements, (*Thunder.*)
This idle perturbation of the sky,
To what I feel within? Oh, that the fires
Of pitying heaven would point their fury here!
Good night, my dearest Laura.

Lau. Oh, I know not
What this oppression means—But 'tis with pain,
With tears, I can persuade myself to leave you—
Well then—Good night, my dearest Sigismunda. [Exit.

Sig. And am I then alone? The most undone,
Most wretched being now beneath the cope
Of this affrighting gloom that wraps the world—
I said I did not fear—Ah, me! I feel
A shiv'ring horror run through all my powers!
Oh, I am nought but tumult, fears, and weakness!
And yet how idle fear, when hope is gone,
Gone, gone for ever! Oh, thou gentle scene
(Looking towards her bed.)

Of sweet repose, where, by the oblivious draught
Of each sad toilsome day, to peace restor'd,
Unhappy mortals lose their woes awhile,—
Thou hast no peace for me! What shall I do?

How pass this dreadful night, so big with terror?
Here with the midnight shade, here will I sit,
(Sitting down.)

A prey to dire despair, and ceaseless weep
The hours away—Bless me—I heard a noise—
(Starting up.)

No, I mistook; nothing but silence reigns,
And awful midnight round. Again! Oh, heav'n's!
My lord the king!

Enter TANCRED.

Tan. Be not alarm'd, my love!

Sig. My royal lord, why, at this midnight hour—
How came you hither?

Tan. By that secret way
My love contriv'd, when we, in happier days,
Us'd to devote these hours, so much in vain,
To vows of love, and everlasting friendship.

Sig. Why will you thus persist to add new stings
To her distress, who never can be thine?
Oh, fly me! fly! you know—

Tan. I know too much.

Oh, how I could reproach thee, Sigismunda!
Pour out my injur'd soul in just complaints!
But now the time permits not; these swift mo-
ments—

I told thee how thy father's artifice
Forc'd me to seem perfidious in thy eyes.
Ever since—a dreadful interval of care!
My thoughts have been employ'd, not without hope,
How to defeat Siffredi's barb'rous purpose.
But thy credulity has ruin'd all,

Thy rash, thy wild—I know not what to name it—
Oh, it has prov'd the giddy hopes of man
To be delusion all, and sick'n'g folly!

Sig. Ah, gen'rous Tancred! ah, thy truth de-
stroys me!

Yes, yes, 'tis I, 'tis I alone am false!
My hasty rage, join'd to my tame submission,
More than the most exalted filial duty
Could e'er demand, has dash'd our cup of fate
With bitterness unequal'd. But, alas!
What are thy woes to mine?—to mine! just
heaven! [me!

Now is thy turn of vengeance—hate, renounce
Oh, leave me to the fate I well deserve,
To sink in hopeless misery! At least,
Try to forget the worthless Sigismunda!

Tan. Forget thee! No! Thou art my soul itself!
I have no thought, no hope, no wish but thee!
Ah, how forget thee! Much must be forgot,
Ere Tancred can forget his Sigismunda!

Sig. But you, my lord, must make that great
effort.

Tan. Can Sigismunda make it?

Sig. Ah, I know not
With what success—But all that feeble woman
And love-entangl'd reason can perform,
I to the utmost will exert to do it.

Tan. Oh, barbarous Sigismunda!
And canst thou talk thus steadily; thus treat me
With such un pitying, unrelenting rigour?
Poor is the love, that rather than give up
A little pride, a little formal pride,

The breath of vanity, can bear to see
The man, whose heart was once so dear to thine,
By many a tender vow so mix'd together,
A prey to anguish, fury, and distraction!

Thou canst not surely make me such a wretch,
Thou canst not, Sigismunda! Yet relent,
Oh, save us yet! Rodolpho, with my guards,
Waits in the garden—Let us seize the moments
We ne'er may have again. With more than power
I will assert thee mine, with fairest honour.

The world shall ev'n approve; each honest bosom
Swell'd with a kindred joy to see us happy.
Sig. The world approve! what is the world
to me?

The conscious mind is its own awful world—
And mine is fix'd—Distress me, then, no more;

Not all the heart can plead (and it, alas!
Pleads but too much)
Shall ever shake th' unalterable dictates
That tyrannize my breast.

Tan. 'Tis well—no more—
I yield me to my fate. Yes, yes, inhuman!
Since thy barbarian heart is steel'd by pride,
Shut up to love and pity, here behold me
Cast on the ground, a vile and abject wretch!
Lost to all cares, all dignities, all duties!
Here will I grow, breathe out my faithful soul,
Here at thy feet—Death, death alone shall part us!

Sig. Have you then vow'd to drive me to perdition!

What can I more? Yes, Tancred! once again
I will forget the dignity my station
Commands me to sustain—for the last time
Will tell thee, that, I fear no ties, no duty,
Can ever root thee from thy hapless bosom.
Oh, leave me! fly me! were it but in pity!
To see what once we tenderly have lov'd,
Cut off from every hope—cut off for ever!
Is pain thy generosity should spare me.
Then rise, my lord; and if you truly love me,
If you respect my honour, nay, my peace,
Retire! for though th' emotions of my heart
Can ne'er alarm my virtue; yet, alas!
They tear it so, they pierce it with such anguish—
Oh, 'tis too much! I cannot bear the conflict!

Enter OSMOND.

Osm. Turn, tyrant, turn! and answer to my honour,
For this thy base insufferable outrage!

Tan. Insolent traitor! Think not to escape
Thyself my vengeance! (*They fight, Osm. falls.*)

Sig. Help, here, help! Oh, heavens!
(*Throwing herself down by him.*)

Alas, my lord, what meant your headlong rage?
That faith, which I this day, upon the altar,
To you devoted, is unblemish'd, pure
As vestal truth; was resolutely yours,
Beyond the power of aught on earth to shake it.

Osm. Perfidious woman! die! (*Shortening his sword, he plunges it into her breast.*) and to the grave

Attend a husband, yet but half aveng'd!

Tan. Oh, horror! horror! execrable villain!

Osm. And, tyrant! thou!—thou shalt not o'er my tomb

Exult—'Tis well—"Tis great!—I die content!
(*Dies.*)

Enter RODOLPHO and LAURA.

Tan. (*Throwing himself down by Sig.*) Quick!
here! bring aid! Ah, that gentle bosom

Pours fast the streams of life.

Sig. All aid is vain,
I feel the powerful hand of death upon me—
But, oh! it sheds a sweetness through my fate,
That I am thine again; and without blame
May in my Tancred's arms resign my soul!

Tan. Oh, death is in that voice so gently mild,
So sadly sweet, as mixes even with mine
The tears of hovering angels! Mine again!
And is it thus the cruel fates have join'd us?

Are these the horrid nuptials they prepare
For love like ours? Yes, death shall soon unite us.

Sig. Live, live, my Tancred! Let my death suffice

To expiate all that may have been amiss.
May it appease the fates, avert their fury
From thy propitious reign!

Enter SIFREDI, fixed in astonishment and grief.

My father! Oh, how shall I lift my eyes

To thee, my sinking father?

Sif. Awful heaven!

I am chastis'd—My dearest child!

Sig. Where am I?

A fearful darkness closes all around—

My friends! We needs must part—I must obey
Th' impetuous call. Farewell, my Laura!
Oh, my dear father, bow'd beneath the weight
Of age and grief—the victim ev'n of virtue,
Receive my last adieu! Where art thou, Tancred?
Give me thy hand—But, ah—it cannot save me
From the dire king of terrors, whose cold pow'r
Creeps o'er my heart—Oh!

Tan. How these pangs distract me!
Oh, lift thy gracious eyes;—Thou leav'st me then!
Thou leav'st me, Sigismunda!

Sig. Yes, but thy love and tenderness for me,
Sure makes it needless—Harbour no resentment
Against my father, venerate his zeal,
That acted from a principle of goodness,
From faithful love to thee. Live, and maintain
My innocence embalm'd, with holiest care—
Preserve my spotless memory! Oh—I die—
Eternal Mercy take my trembling soul!
Oh, 'tis the only stieg of death to part
From those we love—from thee—farewell, my
Tancred!
(*Dies.*)

Tan. Thus then!

(*Flies to his sword, is held by Rodolpho.*)

Rod. Hold, hold, my lord! Have you forgot
Your Sigismunda's last request already?

Tan. Off! set me free! Think not to bind me
down,

With barb'rous friendship, to the rack of life!
What hand can shut the thousand thousand gates
Which death still opens to the woes of mortals?
I shall find means—No pow'r in earth or heav'n
Can force me to endure the hateful light,
Thus robb'd of all that lent it joy and sweetness!
Oh, traitors, off! or my distracted soul
Will burst indignant from the goal of nature,
To where she beckons yonder. No, mild seraph,
Point not to life—I cannot linger here,
Cut off from thee, the miserable pity,
The scorn of humankind! A trampled king!
Who let his mean, poor-hearted love, one moment,
To coward prudence stoop! who made it not
The first undoubting action of his reign,
To snatch thee to his throne, and there to shield
Thy helpless bosom from a ruffian's fury!
Oh, shame! Oh, agony! Oh, the fell stings
Of late, of vain repentance! Ha! my brain
Is all on fire! a wild abyss of thought!
Th' infernal world discloses! See! Behold him!
Lo! with fierce smiles he shakes the bloody steel,
And mocks my feeble tears. Hence, quickly hence!
Spurn his vile carcass! give it to the dogs!
Expose it to the winds and screaming ravens!
Or hurl it down that fiery steep to hell,
There with his soul to toss in flames for ever.
Ah, impotence of rage!

Rod. Preserve him, heaven!

Tan. What am I? Where?

Sad, silent, all! The forms of dumb despair,
Around some mournful tomb. What do I see?
This soft abode of innocence and love
Turn'd to the house of death! a place of horror!
Ah, that poor corpse! pale! pale! deform'd with
murder!

Is that my Sigismunda?

(*Throws herself down by her.*)

Sif. (*After a pathetic pause, looking on the scene
before him.*) Have I liv'd

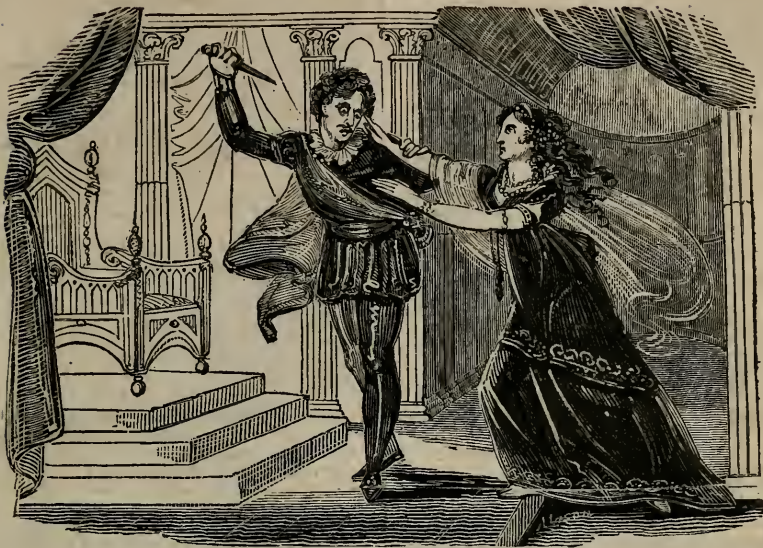
To these enfeebled years, by heav'n reserv'd
To be a dreadful monument of justice!

Taught hence, ye parents, who from nature stray,
And the great ties of social life betray;
Ne'er with your children act a tyrant's part:
'Tis yours to guide, not violate the heart.
Ye vainly wise, who o'er mankind preside,
Behold my righteous woes, and drop your pride;
Keep virtue's simple path before your eyes,
Nor think from evil good can ever rise.

[*Exeunt.*]

VENICE PRESERVED;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY THOMAS OTWAY.



Act IV.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

DUKE OF VENICE
PRIULI
PIERRE
JAFFIER
RENAULT

SPINOSA
BEDAMAR
CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD
OFFICER
ELLIOT

THEODORE
MEZZANA
DURAND
CONSPIRATORS
BELVIDERA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Venice.*

Enter PRIULI and JAFFIER.

Pri. No more : I'll hear no more. Be gone, and leave me.

Jaf. Not hear me ? By my sufferings but you shall ! My lord, my lord ! I'm not that abject wretch You think me. Patience ! where's the distance throws

Me back so far, but I may boldly speak In right, though proud oppression will not hear me ?

Pri. Have you not wrong'd me ?

Jaf. Could my nature e'er Have brook'd injustice, or the doing wrongs, I need not now thus low have bent myself, To gain a hearing from a cruel father. Wrong'd you ?

Pri. Yes, wrong'd me ! In the nicest point, The honour of my house, you've done me wrong. You may remember (for I now will speak, And urge its baseness) when you first came home From travel, with such hopes as made you look'd on,

By all men's eyes, a youth of expectation ; Pleas'd with your growing virtue, I receiv'd you ; Courted, and sought to raise you to your merits ;

My house, my table, nay, my fortune, too ; My very self was your's ; you might have us'd me To your best service ; like an open friend I treated, trusted you, and thought you mine : When, in requital of my best endeavours, You treacherously practis'd to undo me ; Seduc'd the weakness of my age's darling, My only child, and stole her from my bosom. Oh, Belvidera !

Jaf. 'Tis to me you owe her : Childless you had been else, and in the grave Your name extinct ; no more Priuli heard of. You may remember, scarce five years are past, Since in your brigantine you sail'd to see The Adriatic wedded by our duke ; And I was with you : your unskilful pilot Dash'd us upon a rock ; when to your boat You made for safety : enter'd first yourself ; Th' affrighted Belvidera following next, As she stood trembling on the vessel's side, Was, by a wave, wash'd off into the deep ; When instantly I plung'd into the sea, And buffeting the billows to her rescue, Redeem'd her life with half the loss of mine. Like a rich conquest, in one hand I bore her, And with the other dash'd the saucy waves, That through'd and press'd to rob me of my prize. I brought her, gave her to your despairing arms : Indeed you thank'd me ; but a nobler gratitude

Rose in her soul : for from that hour she lov'd me,
Till for her life she paid me with herself.

Pri. You stole her from me ; like a thief you stole her.

At dead of night ! that cursed hour you chose
To rife me of all my heart held dear.
May all your joys in her prove false, like mine ;
A sterile fortune, and a barren bed,
Attend you both ; continual discord make
Your days and nights bitter and grievous ; still
May the hard hand of a vexatious need
Oppress and grind you ; till at last, you find
The curse of disobedience all your portion.

Jaf. Half of your curse you have bestow'd in vain :

Heav'n has already crown'd our faithful loves
With a young boy, sweet as his mother's beauty :
Maybe live to prove more gentle than his grandsire,
And happier than his father.

Pri. Rather live,
To bait thee for his bread, and din your ears
With hungry cries ; whilst his unhappy mother
Sits down and weeps in bitterness of want.

Jaf. You talk as if 'twould please you.

Pri. 'Twould, by heav'n !

Jaf. Would I were in my grave !

Pri. And she too with thee :

For, living here, you're but my ourstrengtheners,
I once was happy.

Jaf. You use me thus, because you know my soul
Is fond of Belvidera. You perceive
My life feeds on her, therefore thus you treat me.
Oh ! could my soul ever have known satiety ;
Were I that thief, the doer of such wrongs
As you upbraid me with, what hinders me
But I might send her back to you with contumely,
And court my fortune where she would be kinder ?

Pri. You dare not do't.

Jaf. Indeed, my lord, I dare not.

My heart, that awes me, is too much my master :
Three years are past, since first our vows were plighted,

During which time, the world must bear me witness,

I've treated Belvidera like your daughter,
The daughter of a senator of Venice :
Distinction, place, attendance, and observance,
Due to her birth, she always has commanded.
Out of my little fortune I've done this ;
Because (though hopeless e'er to win your nature)
The world might see I lov'd her for herself :
Not as the heiress of the great Priuli.

Pri. No more.

Jaf. Yes, all ; and then adieu for ever.
There's not a wretch, that lives on common charity,
But's happier than me : for I have known
The luscious sweets of plenty ; every night
Have slept with soft content about my head,
And never wak'd, but to a joyful morning ;
Yet now must fall, like a full ear of corn,
Whose blossom 'scap'd, yet's wither'd in the ripening.

Pri. Home, and be humble ; study to retrench ;
Discharge the lazy vermin of thy hall,
Those pageants of thy folly :
Reduce the glittering trappings of thy wife
To humble weeds, fit for thy little state :
Then, to some suburb cottage both retire ;
Drudge to feed loathsome life ; get brats and starve—

Home, home, I say.

Jaf. Yes, if my heart would let me— [Exit.
This proud, this swelling heart : home I would go,
But that my doors are bateful to my eyes,
Fill'd and damn'd up with gaping creditors,
Watchful as fowlers when their game will spring.
I've now not fifty ducats in the world,
Yet still I am in love, and pleas'd with ruin.

Oh, Belvidera ! Oh ! she is my wife ;
And we will bear our wayward fate together,
But ne'er know comfort more.

Enter PIERRE.

Pier. My friend, good morrow ;
How fares the honest partner of my heart ?
What, melancholy ? not a word to spare me ?

Jaf. I'm thinking, Pierre, how that damn'd starv-
ing quality,
Call'd honesty, got footing in the world.

Pier. Why, powerful villany first set it up,
For its own ease and safety. Honest men
Are the soft easy cushions on which knaves
Repose and fatten. Were all mankind villains,
'They'd starve each other ; lawyers would want
practice,

Cut-throats reward : each man would kill his brother
Himself ; none would be paid or hang'd for murder.
Honesty ! 'twas a cheat, invented first
To bind the bands of bold, deserving rogues,
That fools and cowards might sit safe in power,
And lord it uncontroll'd above their betters.

Jaf. Then honesty is but a notion ?

Pier. Nothing else ;

Like wit, much talk'd of, not to be defin'd :
He that pretends to most, too, has least share in't.

'Tis a ragged virtue. Honesty ! no more on't.

Jaf. Sure, thou art honest !

Pier. So, indeed, men think me ;
But they're mistaken, Jaffier : I'm a rogue
As well as they ;

A fine, gay, bold-fac'd villain, as thou seest me.
'Tis true, I pay my debts, when they're contracted ;

I steal from no man ; would not cut a throat,
To gain admission to a great man's purse,
Or a whore's bed ; I'd not betray my friend,
To get his place or fortune ; I scorn to flatter
A blown-up fool above me, or crush the wretch
beneath me ;

Yet, Jaffier, for all this, I'm a villain.

Jaf. A villain !

Pier. Yes, a most notorious villain ;
To see the sufferings of my fellow creatures,
And own myself a man : to see our senators
Cheat the deluded people with a shew
Of liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of.
They say, by them our hands are free from fetters ;
Yet whom they please they lay in basest bonds ;
Bring whom they please to infamy and sorrow ;
Drive us, like wrecks, down the rough tide of
power,

Whilst no hold's left to save us from destruction.
All that bear this are villains, and I one,
Not to rouse up at the great call of nature,
And check the growth of these domestic spoilers,
That make us slaves, and tell us, 'tis our charter.

Jaf. I think no safety can be here for virtue,
And grieve, my friend, as much as thou, to live
In such a wretched state as this of Venice,
Where all agree to spoil the public good ;
And villains fatten with the brave man's labours.

Pier. We've neither safety, unity, nor peace ;
For the foundation's lost of common good ;
Justice is lame, as well as blind, amongst us ;
The laws (corrupted to their ends that make 'em)
Serve but for instruments of some new tyranny,
That ev'ry day starts up, t'enslave us deeper.
Now could this glorious cause but find out friends,
To do it right, oh, Jaffier ! then might'st thou
Not wear these seals of woe upon thy face ;
The proud Priuli should be taught humanity,
And learn to value such a son as thou art.
I dare not speak, but my heart bleeds this moment.

Jaf. Cars'd be the cause, though I thy friend be
part on't :

Let me partake the troubles of thy bosom,

For I am us'd to misery, and perhaps
May find a way to sweeten't to thy spirit.

Pier. Too soon 'twill reach thy knowledge.

Jaf. Then from thee

Let it proceed. There's virtue in thy friendship,
Would make the saddest tale of sorrow pleasing,
Strengthen my constancy, and welcome ruin.

Pier. Then thou art ruined!

Jaf. That I long since knew;

I and ill fortune have been long acquainted.

Pier. I pass'd this very moment by thy doors,
And found them guarded by a troop of villains;
The sons of public rapine were destroying.
They told me, by the sentence of the law,
They had commission to seize all thy fortune:

Nay, more, Priuli's cruel hand had sign'd it.

Here stood a ruffian with a horrid face,

Lording it o'er a pile of mussy plate,

Tumbled into a heap for public sale;

There was another, making villainous jests

At thy undoing: he had ta'en possession

Of all thy ancient, most domestic ornaments,

Rich hangings intermix'd and wrought with gold;

The very bed, which on thy wedding night

Receiv'd thee to the arms of Belvidera,

The scene of all thy joys, was violated

By the coarse hands of filthy, dungeon villains,

And thrown amongst the common lumber.

Jaf. Now thank heaven—

Pier. Thank heaven! for what?

Jaf. That I'm not worth a ducat.

Pier. Curse thy dull stars, and the worse fate of

Venice,

Where brothers, friends, and fathers, all are false;

Where there's no truth, no trust; where innocence

Stoops under vile oppression, and vice lords it.

Hadst thou but seen, as I did, how, at last,

Thy beauteous Belvidera, like a wretch

That's doom'd to banishment, came weeping forth,

Shining through tears, like April suns in showers,

That labour to o'ercome the cloud that loads 'em:

Whilst two young virgins, on whose arms she

lean'd,

Kindly look'd up, and at her grief grew sad,

As if they catch'd the sorrows that fell from her.

Ev'n the lewd rabble, that were gather'd round

To see the sight, stood mute when they beheld her;

Govern'd their roaring throats, and grumbled pity.

I could have hugg'd the greasy rogues: they pleas'd

me.

Jaf. I thank thee for this story, from my soul;

Since now I know the worst that can befall me.

Ah, Pierre! I have a heart that could have borne

The roughest wrong my fortune could have done me;

But when I think what Belvidera feels,

The bitterness her tender spirit tastes of,

I own myself a coward: bear my weakness:

If throwing thus my arms about thy neck,

I play the boy, and blubber in thy bosom.

Oh! I shall drown thee with my sorrows.

Pier. Burn,

First, burn and level Venice to thy ruin.

What! starve, like beggars' brats, in frosty weather,

Under a hedge, and whine ourselves to death!

Thou or thy cause shall never want assistance,

Whilst I have blood or fortune fit to serve thee:

Command my heart, thou'rt every way its master.

Jaf. No, there's a secret pride in bravely dying.

Pier. Rats die in holes and corners, dogs run

mad;

Man knows a braver remedy for sorrow:

Revenge, the attribute of gods; they stamp'd it,

With their great image, on our natures. Die!

Consider well the cause, that calls upon thee:

And, if thou'rt base enough, die then. Remember,

Thy Belvidera suffers; Belvidera!

Die—damn first—What! be decently interr'd

In a church-yard, and mingle thy brave dust

With stinking rogues, that rot in winding-sheets,
Surfeit-slain fools, the common dung o'th' soil!

Jaf. Oh!

Pier. Well said, out with't, swear a little.

Jaf. Swear! By sea and air; by earth, by heav'n,
and hell,

I will revenge my Belvidera's tears.

Hark thee, my friend—Priuli—is—a senator.

Pier. A dog.

Jaf. Agreed.

Pier. Shoot him.

Jaf. With all my heart.

No more; where shall we meet at night?

Pier. I'll tell thee;

On the Rialto, every night at twelve,

I take my evening's walk of meditation;

There we two will meet, and talk of precious

Mischief.

Jaf. Farewell.

Pier. At twelve.

Jaf. At any hour; my plagues

Will keep me waking. [Exit Pierre.]

Tell me why, good heaven,

Thou mad'st me, what I am, with all the spirit,

Aspiring thoughts, and elegant desires,

That fill the happiest man? Ah, rather, why

Didst thou not form me sordid as my fate,

Base-minded, dull, and fit to carry burthens?

Why have I sense to know the curse that's on me?

Is this just dealing, nature?—Belvidera!

Poor Belvidera!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. Lead me, lead me, my virgins,

To that kind voice. My lord, my love, my refuge!

Happy my eyes, when they behold thy face!

My heavy heart will leave its doleful beating

At sight of thee, and bound with sprightly joys.

Oh smile! as when our loves were in their spring,

And cheer my fainting soul.

Jaf. As when our loves

Were in their spring! Has then our fortune chang'd?

Art thou not Belvidera, still the same,

Kind, good, and tender, as my arms first found thee?

If thou art alter'd, where shall I have harbour?

Where ease my loaded heart? Oh! where complain?

Bel. Does this appear like change, or love de-

caying,

When thus I throw myself into thy bosom,

With all the resolution of strong truth?

Beats not my heart, as 'twould alarm thine

To a new charge of bliss?—I joy more in thee,

Than did thy mother, when she hugg'd thee first,

And bless'd the gods for all her travail past.

Jaf. Can there in woman be such glorious faith?

Sure all ill stories of thy sex are false!

Oh, woman! lovely woman! nature made thee

To temper man: we had been brutes without you.

Angels are painted fair, to look like you;

There's in you all that we believe of heaven:

Amazing brightness, purity, and truth,

Eternal joy, and everlasting love.

Bel. If love be treasure, we'll be wond'rous rich;

I have so much, my heart will surely break with't:

Vows can't express it. When I would declare

How great's my joy, I'm dumb with the big thought;

I swell, and sigh, and labour with my longing.

O! lead me to some desert wide and wild,

Barren as our misfortunes, where my soul

May have its vent, where I may tell aloud

To the high heavens, and every list'ning planet,

With what a boundless stock my bosom's fraught;

Where I may throw my eager arms about thee,

Give loose to love, with kisses kindling joy,

And let off all the fire that's in my heart.

Jaf. Oh, Belvidera! doubly I'm a beggar;

Undone by fortune, and in debt to thee.

Want, worldly want, that hungry, meagre fiend,
Is at my heels, and chases me in view.
Canst thou bear cold and hunger? Can these limbs,
Fram'd for the tender offices of love,
Endure the bitter gripes of smarting poverty?
When banish'd by our miseries abroad
(As suddenly we shall be) to seek out
In some far climate, where our names are strangers,
For charitable succour; wilt thou, then,
When in a bed of straw, we shrink together,
And the bleak winds shall whistle round our heads;
Wilt thou, then, talk thus to me? Wilt thou, then,
Hush my cares thus, and shelter me with love?

Bel. Oh! I will love thee, even in madness love thee:

Though my distracted senses should forsake me,
I'd find some intervals, when my poor heart
Should 'suage itself, and be let loose to thine.
Though the bare earth be all our resting-place,
Its roots our food, some cliff our habitation,
I'll make this arm a pillow for thine head;
And, as thou sighing liest, and swell'd with sorrow,
Creep to thy bosom, pour the balm of love
Into thy soul, and kiss thee to thy rest:
Then praise our God, and watch thee till the morning.

Jaf. Hear this, you heavens! and wonder how you made her:

Reign, reign, ye monarchs that divide the world;
Busy rebellion ne'er will let you know
Tranquillity and happiness like mine!
Like gaudy ships th' obsequious billows fall,
And rise again to lift you in your pride;
They wait but for a storm, and then devour you;
I, in my private bark, already wreck'd,
Like a poor merchant driven to unknown land,
That had by chance pack'd up his choicest treasure
In one dear casket, and sav'd only that;
Since I must wander further on the shore,
Thus hug my little, but my precious store,
Resolv'd to scorn, and trust my fate no more.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Rialto.*

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. I'm here; and thus, the shades of night
around me,

I look as if all hell were in my heart,
And I in hell. Nay, surely, 'tis so with me!—
For every step I tread, methinks some fiend
Knocks at my breast, and bids me not be quiet.
I've heard how desperate wretches, like myself,
Have wander'd out at this dead time of night,
To meet the foe of mankind in his walk.
Sure I'm so curs'd, that, though of heaven forsaken,
No minister of darkness cares to tempt me.
Hell, hell! why sleep'st thou?

Enter PIERRE.

Pier. Sure I've staid too long:
The clock has struck, and I may lose my proselyte.
Speak, who goes there?

Jaf. A dog, that comes to howl
At yonder moon. What's he that asks the question?

Pier. A friend to dogs, for they are honest creatures,

And ne'er betray their masters: never fawn
On any that they love not. Well met, friend;
Jaffier!

Jaf. The same.

Pier. Where's Belvidera?

Jaf. For a day or two

I've lodg'd her privately, till I see further
What fortune will do for me. Pr'ythee, friend,

If thou wouldst have me fit to hear good counsel,
Speak not of Belvidera.

Pier. Not of her!

Jaf. Oh, no!

Pier. Not name her! May be I wish her well.

Jaf. Whom well?

Pier. Thy wife; thy lovely Belvidera.

I hope a man may wish his friend's wife well,
And no harm done.

Jaf. You're merry, Pierre.

Pier. I am so:

Thou shalt smile, too, and Belvidera smile:
We'll all rejoice. Here's something to buy pins;
Marriage is chargeable. (*Gives him a purse.*)

Jaf. I but half wish'd

To see the devil, and he's here already. Well?
What must this buy? Rebellion, murder, treason?
Tell me, which way I must be damn'd to this.

Pier. When last we parted, we'd no qualms like these,

But entertain'd each other's thoughts like men
Whose souls were well acquainted. Is the world
Reform'd since our last meeting? What new mi-
racles

Have happen'd? Has Priuli's heart relented?
Can he be honest?

Jaf. Kind heav'n, let heavy curses

Gall his old age; cramps, aches, rack his bones,
And bitterest disquiet wring his heart,
Oh! let him live, till life becomes his burden:
Let him groan under 't long, linger an age
In the worst agonies and pangs of death,
And find its cause, but late.

Pier. Nay, couldst thou not
As well, my friend, have stretch'd the curse to all
The senate round, as to one single villain?

Jaf. But curses stick not: could I kill with
oursing,

By heaven! I know not thirty heads in Venice
Should not be blasted. Senators should rot
Like dogs on dunghills. Oh! for a curse
To kill with!

Pier. Daggers, daggers are much better.

Jaf. Ha!

Pier. Daggers.

Jaf. But where are they?

Pier. Oh! a thousand

May be dispos'd of, in honest hands, in Venice.

Jaf. Thou talk'st in clouds.

Pier. But yet, a heart, half wrong'd
As thine has been, would find the meaning, Jaffier.

Jaf. A thousand daggers, all in honest hands!
And have not I a friend will stick one here?

Pier. Yes, if I thought thou wert not cherish'd
T' a nobler purpose, I would be thy friend;
But thou hast better friends; friends, whom thy
wrongs

Have made thy friends; friends, worthy to be call'd
so.

I'll trust thee with a secret: There are spirits
This hour at work.—But as thou art a man,
Whom I have pick'd and chosen from the world,
Swear that thou wilt be true to what I utter;
And when I've told thee that which only gods,
And men like gods, are privy to, then swear
No chance or change shall wrest it from thy bosom.

Jaf. When thou wouldst bind me, is there need
of oaths?

For thou'rt so near my heart, that thou may'st see
Its bottom, sound its strength and firmness to thee.
Is coward, fool, or villain in my face?

If I seem none of these, I dare believe
Thou wouldst not use me in a little cause,
For I am fit for honour's toughest task,
Nor ever yet found fooling was my province;
And for a villanous, inglorious enterprise,
I know thy heart so well, I dare lay mine
Before thee, set it to what point thou wilt.

Pier. Nay, 'tis a cause thou wilt be fond of,
Jaffier;
For it is founded on the noblest basis;
Our liberties, our natural inheritance;
There's no religion, no hypocrisy in't:
We'll do the business, and ne'er fast and pray
for't;

Openly act a deed, the world shall gaze
With wonder at, and envy when 'tis done.

Jaf. For liberty!

Pier. For liberty, my friend.
Thou shalt be free from base Priuli's tyranny,
And thy sequester'd fortunes heal'd again:
I shall be free from those opprobrious wrongs
That press me now, and bend my spirit downward;
All Venice free, and every growing merit
Succeed to its just right: fools shall be pull'd
From wisdom's seat; those baleful, unclean birds,
Those lazy owls, who, perch'd near fortune's top,
Sit only watchful with their heavy wings
To cuff down new-fledg'd virtues, that would rise
To nobler heights, and make the grove harmo-
nious.

Jaf. What can I do?

Pier. Cause thou not kill a senator?

Jaf. Were there one wise or honest, I could kill
him,

For herding with that nest of fools and knaves.
By all my wrongs, thou talk'st as if revenge
Were to be had; and the brave story warms me.

Pier. Swear then!

Jaf. I do, by all those glittering stars,
And yon great ruling planet of the night;
By all good pow'rs above, and ill below;
By love and friendship, dearer than my life,
No pow'r or death shall make me false to thee.

Pier. Here we embrace, and I'll unlock my
heart.

A council's held hard by, where the destruction
Of this great empire's hatching: there I'll lead
thee.

But be a man! for thou'rt to mix with men
Fit to disturb the peace of all the world,
And rule it when it's wildest.

Jaf. I give thee thanks

For this kind warning. Yes, I'll be a man;
And charge thee, Pierre, whene'er thou seest my
fears

Betray me less, to rip this heart of mine
Out of my breast, and shew it to a coward's.
Come, let's be gone, for from this hour I chase
All little thoughts, all tender human follies
Out of my bosom: Vengeance shall have room.
Revenge!

Pier. And liberty!

Jaf. Revenge—revenge! [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*Aquilina's House.*

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Why was my choice ambition? the worst
ground

A wretch can build on! It's, indeed, at distance,
A goodly prospect, tempting to the view;
The height delights us, and the mountain top
Looks beautiful, because it's nigh to heav'n.
But we ne'er think how sandy's the foundation,
What storm will batter, and what tempest shake us.
Who's there?

Enter SPINOSA.

Spin. Renault, good morrow, for by this time
I think the scale of night has turn'd the balance,
And weighs up morning. Has the clock struck
twelve?

Ren. Yes; clocks will go as they are set; but
man,

Irregular man's ne'er constant, never certain:
I've spent at least three precious hours of dark-
ness

In waiting dull attendance: 'tis the curse
Of diligent virtue to be mix'd, like mine,
With giddy tempers, souls but half resolv'd.
Spin. Hell seize that soul amongst us it can
frighten.

Ren. What's then the cause that I am here alone?
Why are not we together?

Enter ELLIOT.

O, sir, welcome!
You are an Englishman; when treason's hatching,
One might have thought you'd not have been be-
hind-hand.

In what whore's lap have you been lolling?
Give but an Englishman his whore and ease,
Beef, and a sea-coal fire, he's your's for ever.

Ell. Frenchman, you are saucy.

Ren. How! (Puts his hand to his sword.)

*Enter BEDAMAR, the Ambassador; and the rest
of the Conspirators. Spinosa is endeavouring to
pacify Elliot; Bedamar goes behind Elliot and
Spinosa.*

Bed. At difference? Fie!
Is this a time for quarrels? Thieves and rogues
Fall out and brawl: should men of your high call-
ing,

Men separated by the choice of Providence
From the gross heap of mankind, and set here
In this assembly as in one great jewel,
T'adorn the bravest purpose it e'er smil'd on;
Should you, like boys, wrangle for trifles?

Ren. Boys!

Bed. Renault, thy hand.

Ren. I thought I'd given my heart
Long since to every man that mingles here;
But grieve to find it trusted with such tempers,
That can't forgive my froward age its weakness.

Bed. Elliot, thou once hadst virtue. I have seen
Thy stubborn temper bent with godlike goodness,
Not half thus courted. 'Tis thy nation's glory
To hug the foe that offers brave alliance.

(They advance in front of Bedamar, and give
their hands.)

One more embrace, my friends—we'll all embrace.
United thus, we are the mighty engine
Must twist this rooted empire from its basis.
Totters not it already?

Ell. Would 'twere tumbling.

Bed. Nay, it shall down; this night we seal its
ruin.

Enter PIERRE.—All bow to him.

Oh, Pierre, thou art welcome.
Come to my breast, for by its hopes thou look'st
Lovely dreadful, and the fate of Venice
Seems on thy sword already. Oh, my Mars!
The poets that first feign'd a god of war,
Sure prophesied of thee.

Pier. Friend, was not Brutus
(I mean that Brutus, who in open senate
Stabb'd the first Cæsar that usurp'd the world,)
A gallant man?

Ren. Yes, and Catiline too;
Though story wrong his fame: for he conspir'd
To prop the reeling glory of his country:
His cause was good.

Bed. And our's as much above it,
As, Renault, thou'rt superior to Cethegus,
Or Pierre to Cassius.

Pier. Then to what we aim at.
When do we start? or must we talk for ever?

Bed. No, Pierre, the deed's near birth; fate seems to have set

The business up, and given it to our care;
I hope there's not a heart or hand amongst us,
But is firm and ready.

All. All.

We'll die with Bedamar.

Bed. O men,

Matchless! as will your glory be hereafter:
The game is for a matchless prize, if won;
If lost, disgraceful ruin.

Pier. Ten thousand men are armed at your nod,
Commanded all by leaders fit to guide
A battle for the freedom of the world:
This wretched state has starv'd them in its service;
And by your bounty quicken'd, they're resolv'd
To serve your glory, and revenge their own:
They've all their different quarters in this city,
Watch for th' alarm, and grumble 'tis so tardy.

Bed. I doubt not, friend, but thy unweary'd diligence

Has still kept waking, and it shall have ease;
After this night it is resolv'd we meet
No more, till Venice owns us for her lords.

Pier. How lovely the Adriatic whore,
Dress'd in her flames, will shine! Devouring flames!
Such as shall burn her to the watery bottom,
And hiss in her foundation.

Bed. Now if any

Amongst us, that owns this glorious cause,
Have friends or interest he'd wish to save,
Let it be told: the general doom is seal'd;
But I'd forego the hopes of a world's empire,
Rather than wound the bowels of my friend.

Pier. I must confess, there you have touch'd my weakness.

I have a friend; hear it! such a friend,—
My heart was ne'er shut to him. Nay, I'll tell you:

He knows the very business of this hour;

(*All start, and look at each other.*)

But he rejoices in the cause, and loves it;
We've chang'd a vow to live and die together,
And he's at hand to ratify it here.

Ren. How! all betray'd!

Pier. No; I've nobly dealt with you;
I've brought my all into the public stock;
I've but one friend, and him I'll share amongst you:

Receive and cherish him; or if, when seen
And search'd, you find him worthless: as my tongue

Has lodg'd this secret in his faithful breast,

To ease your fears, I wear a dagger here—

Shall rip it out again, and give you rest.—

Come forth, thou only good I e'er could boast.

Enter JAFFIER, with a dagger.—All bow to him.

Bed. His presence bears the shew of manly virtue.

Jaf. I know you'll wonder all, that thus uncall'd,
I dare approach this place of fatal councils;
But I'm amongst you, and by heav'n, it glads me
To see so many virtues thus united
To restore justice, and dethrone oppression.
Command this sword, if you would have it quiet,
Into this breast; but, if you think it worthy
(*Renault, Elliot, and Spinosa, observe Jaffier narrowly.*)

To cut the throats of reverend rogues in robes,

Send me into the curs'd assembled senate:

It shrinks not, though I meet a father there.

Would you behold this city flaming? here's

A hand that shall bear a lighted torch at noon

To th' arsenal, and set its gates on fire.

Ren. You talk this well, sir.

Jaf. Nay—by heav'n, I'll do this!

Come, come, I read distrust in all your faces;
You fear me villain, and indeed it's odd
To hear a stranger talk thus, at first meeting,
Of matters that have been so well debated;
But I come ripe with wrongs, as you with councils.
I hate this senate, am a foe to Venice;
A friend to none, but men resolv'd like me
To push on mischief. Oh! did you but know me,
I need not talk thus!

Bed. Pierre, I must embrace him.

(*Advances to Jaffier, and embraces him.*)
My heart beats to this man, as if it knew him.

Ren. I never lov'd these huggers.

Jaf. Still I see

The cause delights ye not. Your friends survey me

As I were dangerous; but I come arm'd
Against all doubts, and to your trust will give
A pledge, worth more than all the world can pay for.

My Belvidera! Ho! my Belvidera!

Bed. What wonder's next?

Jaf. Let me entreat you,

As I have henceforth hopes to call you friends,
That all but the Ambassador, and this
Grave guide of councils, with my friend that owns me,

Withdraw awhile to spare a woman's blushes.

(*Bedamar signs to them to retire.*)

[*Exeunt all but Bedamar, Renault, Jaffier, and Pierre.*]

Bed. Pierre, whither will this ceremony lead us?

Jaf. My Belvidera! Belvidera!

Bel. (*Within.*) Who,

Who calls so loud at this late, peaceful hour?
That voice was wont to come in gentle whispers,
And fill my ears with the soft breath of love.

Enter BELVIDERA.

Thou hourly image of my thoughts, where art thou?

Jaf. Indeed 'tis late.

Bel. Alas! where am I? whither is't you lead me?
Methinks I read distraction in your face,
Something less gentle than the fate you tell me.
You shake and tremble, too! your blood runs cold!
Heav'n's guard my love, and bless his heart with patience.

Jaf. That I have patience, let our fate bear witness,

Who has ordain'd it so, that thou and I

(*Thou, the divinest good man e'er possess'd,*

And I, the wretched st of the race of man)

This very hour, without one tear, must part.

Bel. Part! must we part? Oh, am I then forsaken?

Why drag you from me?

Whither are you going?

My dear! my life! my love!

(*Following him, and falling on her knees.*)

Jaf. Oh, friends!

Bel. Speak to me.

Jaf. Take her from my heart,
She'll gain such hold else, I shall ne'er get loose.
I charge thee take her, but with tender care
Relieve her troubles, and assuage her sorrows.

Ren. Rise, madam, and command amongst your servants.

(*Renault and Bedamar raise her up.*)

Jaf. To you, sirs, and your honours, I bequeath her;

And with her this, whene'er I prove unworthy—
(*Gives a dagger to Renault.*)

You know the rest—Then strike it to her heart;

And tell her, he who three whole happy years

Lay in her arms, and each kind night repeated

The passionate vows of still increasing love,

Sent that reward for all her truth and sufferings.

Bel. Nay, take my life, since he has sold it cheaply.

Oh! thou unkind one!

Never meet more! have I deserv'd this from you?

Look on me, tell me, speak, thou fair deceiver—

Why am I separated from thy love?

If I am false, accuse me; but if true,

Don't, prythee don't, in poverty forsake me:

But pity the sad heart that's torn with parting.

Yet hear me, yet recall me—

[*Exeunt Renault, Bedamar, and Belvidera.*]

Jaf. Oh! my eyes,

Look not that way, but turn yourselves awhile

Into my heart, and be warr'd altogether.

My friend, where art thou?

Pier. Here, my honour'd brother.

Jaf. Is Belvidera gone?

Pier. Renault has led her

Back to her own apartment; but, by heav'n,

Thou must not see her more, till our work's over.

Jaf. No!

Pier. Not for your life.

Jaf. Oh, Pierre! wert thou but she,

How I would pull thee down into my heart,

Gaze on thee, till my eye-strings crack'd with love;

Then, swelling, sighing, raging to be blest,

Come like a panting turtle to thy breast;

On thy soft bosom hovering, bill and play,

Confess the cause why last I fled away;

Ow'n 'twas a fault, but swear to give it o'er,

And never follow false ambition more. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. I'm sacrific'd! I'm sold! betray'd to shame!
Inevitable ruin has enclos'd me!
He that should guard my virtue has betray'd it;
Left me! undone me! Oh, that I could hate him!
Where shall I go? Oh, whither, whither, wander?

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. Can Belvidera want a resting-place,
When these poor arms are ready to receive her?
There was a time—

Bel. Yes, yes, there was a time,
When Belvidera's tears, her cries, and sorrows,
Were not despis'd; when, if she chauc'd to sigh,
Or look'd but sad—there was indeed a time,
When Jaffier would have ta'en her in his arms,
Eas'd her declining head upon his breast,
And never left her till he found the cause.

Jaf. Oh, Portia, Portia! What a soul was thine!

Bel. That Portia was a woman; and when Brutus,
Big with the fate of Rome, (heav'n guard thy
safety!)

Conceal'd from her the labours of his mind;
She let him see her blood was great as his,
Flow'd from a spring as noble, and a heart
Fit to partake his troubles as his love.

Fetch, fetch that dagger back, the dreadful dower,
Thou gav'st last night in parting with me; strike it
Here to my heart; and as the blood flows from it,
Judge if it run not pure as Cato's daughter's.

Jaf. Oh! Belvidera!

Bel. Why was I last night deliver'd to a villain?

Jaf. Ha! a villain?

Bel. Yes, to a villain! Why at such an hour
Meets that assembly, all made up of wretches?
Why, I in this band, and in that dagger,
Was I deliver'd with such dreadful ceremonies?
"To you, sirs, and to your honours, I bequeath
her,

And with her this: Whene'er I prove unworthy—
You know the rest—then strike it to her heart."

Oh! why's that rest conceal'd from me? Must I

Be made the hostage of a bellish trust?

For such I know I am; and that's all my value.

But, by the love and loyalty I owe thee,

I'll free thee from the bondage of the slaves;

Straight to the senate, tell 'em all I know,

All that I think, all that my fears inform me.

Jaf. Is this the Roman virtue; this the blood

That boasts its purity with Cato's daughter?

Would she have e'er betray'd her Brutus?

Bel. No:

For Brutus trusted her. Wert thou so kind,

What would not Belvidera suffer for thee?

Jaf. I shall undo myself, and tell thee all.

Yet think a little, ere thou tempt me further;

Think I've a tale to tell will shake thy nature,

Melt all this boasted constancy thou talk'st of,

Into vile tears and despicable sorrows:

Then if thou should'st betray me!—

Bel. Shall I swear?

Jaf. No, do not swear; I would not violate

Thy tender nature with so rude a bond;

But as thou hop'st to see me live my days,

And love thee long, lock this within thy breast;

I've bound myself by all the strictest sacraments,

Divine and human—

Bel. Speak!

Jaf. To kill thy father.

Bel. My father!

Jaf. Nay, the throats of the whole senate

Shall bleed, my Belvidera. He, amongstst us,

That spares his father, brother, or his friend,

Is damn'd.

Bel. Oh!

Jaf. Have a care, and shrink not even in
thought;

For, if thou dost—

Bel. I know it; thou wilt kill me.

Do; strike thy sword into this bosom; lay me

Dead on the earth, and then thou wilt be safe.

Murder my father! though his cruel nature

Has persecuted me to my undoing;

Driven me to basest wants; can I behold him,

With smiles of vengeance, butcher'd in his age?

The sacred fountain of my life destroy'd?

And canst thou shed the blood that gave me

being?

Nay, be a traitor, too, and sell thy country?

Can thy great heart descend so vilely low,

Mix with hir'd slaves, braves, and common

stabbers?

Join with such a crew, and take a ruffian's wages,

To cut the throats of wretches as they sleep?

Jaf. Thou wrong'st me, Belvidera! I've en-

gag'd

With men of souls; fit to reform the ills

Of all mankind: there's not a heart amongstst them

But 's stout as death, yet honest as the nature

Of man first made, ere fraud and vice were

fashion.

Bel. What's he, to whose curs'd hands last night
thou gav'st me?

Was that well done? Oh! I could tell a story,

Would rouse thy lion heart out of its den,

And make it rage with terrifying fury.

Jaf. Speak on, I charge thee.

Bel. O, my love! If e'er

Thy Belvidera's peace deserv'd thy care,

Remove me from this place. Last night, last

night!—

Jaf. Distract me not, but give me all the truth.

Bel. No sooner wert thou gone, and I alone,

Left in the power of that old sou of mischief;

No sooner was I laid on my sad bed,

But that vile wretch approach'd me! Then my

heart

Throbb'd with its fears: Oh, how I wept and sigh'd!

And shrunk and trembled! wish'd in vain for him That should protect me! Thou, alas! wert gone.

Jaf. Patience, sweet heav'n, till I make vengeance sure.

Bel. He drew the hideous dagger forth, thou gav'st him,

And with upbraiding smiles, he said, "Behold it; This is the pledge of a false husband's love:"

And in my arms then press'd, and would have clasp'd me:

But with my cries, I scar'd his coward heart, Till he withdrew, and mutter'd vows to hell.

These are thy friends! with these thy life, thy honour,

Thy love, all stak'd, and all will go to ruin.

Jaf. No more: I charge thee keep this secret close.

Clear up thy sorrows; look as if thy wrongs

Were all forgot, and treat him like a friend,

As no complaint were made. No more; retire,

Retire, my life, and doubt not of my honour;

I'll heal its failings, and deserve thy love.

Bel. Oh! should I part with thee, I fear thou wilt,

In anger leave me, and return no more.

Jaf. Return no more! I would not live without thee

Another night, to purchase the creation.

Bel. When shall we meet again?

Jaf. Anon, at twelve

I'll steal myself to thy expecting arms,

Come like a travell'd dove, and bring thee peace.

Bel. Indeed!

Jaf. By all our loves.

Bel. 'Tis hard to part;

But sure no falsehood ever look'd so fairly.

Farewell; remember twelve.

Jaf. Let heav'n forget me, When I remember not thy truth, thy love.

Enter PIERRE.

Pier. Jaffier!

Jaf. Who calls?

Pier. A friend, that could have wish'd T' have found thee otherwise employed. What, hunt

A wife on the dull soil! Sure a staunch husband,

Of all hounds is the dullest. Wilt thou never,

Never be wear'd from candles and confections?

What feminine tales hast thou been list'ning to,

Of unair'd shirts, catarrhs, and tooth-ache, got

By thin-sol'd shoes? Damnation! that a fellow,

Chosen to be a sharer in the destruction

Of a whole people, should sneak thus into corners

To ease his fulsome lusts, and fool his mind.

Jaf. May not a man then trifle out an hour

With a kind woman, and not wrong his calling?

Pier. Not in a cause like our's.

Jaf. Then, friend, our cause

Is in a damn'd condition; for I'll tell thee,

That canker-worm, called lechery, has touch'd

it;

'Tis tainted vilely. Wouldst thou think it? Renault,

(That mortified, old, wither'd, winter rogue,)

He visited her last night, like a kind guardian:

Faith! she has some temptation, that's the truth

on't.

Pier. He durst not wrong his trust.

Jaf. 'Twas something late, though,

To take the freedom of a lady's chamber.

Pier. Was she in bed?

Jaf. Yes, faith, in virgin sheets,

White as her bosom, Pierre, dish'd neatly up,

Might tempt a weaker appetite to taste.

Oh! how the old fox stunk, I warrant thee,

When the rank fit was upon him!

Pier. Patience guide me!

He us'd no violence?

Jaf. No, no; out on't, violence!

Play'd with her neck, brush'd her with his grey beard;

But not a jot of violence.

Pier. Damn him.

Jaf. Ay, so say I; but hush, no more on't.

All hitherto is well, and I believe

Myself no monster yet. Sure it is near the hour

We all should meet for our concluding orders.

Will the ambassador be here in person?

Pier. No, he has sent commission to that villain, Renault,

To give the executing charge:

I'd have thee be a man, if possible,

And keep thy temper; for a brave revenge

Ne'er comes too late.

Jaf. Fear not, I am cool as patience.

Pier. He's yonder, coming this way through the

hall;

His thoughts seem full.

Jaf. Pr'ythee retire, and leave me

With him alone; I'll put him to some trial;

See how his rotten part will bear the touching.

Pier. Be careful, then. [Exit.]

Jaf. Nay, never doubt, but trust me.

What! be a devil, take a damning oath

For shedding native blood! Can there be a sin

In merciful repentance? Oh, this villain! (Retires.)

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Perverse and peevish! What a slave is man,

To let his rebel passions master him!

Despatch the tool her husband—that were well.

Who's there? (Jaffier advances.)

Jaf. A man.

Ren. My friend, my near ally, The hostage of your faith, my beauteous charge,

is very well.

Jaf. Sir, are you sure of that?

Stands she in perfect health? Beats her pulse even?

Neither too hot nor cold?

Ren. What means that question?

Jaf. Oh! women have fantastic constitutions,

Inconstant in their wishes, always wavering,

And never fix'd. Was it not boldly done,

Even at first sight, to trust the thing I lov'd

(A tempting treasure too) with youth so fierce

And vigorous as thine? but thou art honest.

Ren. Who dares accuse me?

Jaf. Curs'd be he that doubts

Thy virtue! I have tried it, and declare,

Were I to choose a guardian of my honour,

I'd put it in thy keeping; for I know thee.

Ren. Know me!

Jaf. Ay, know thee. There's no falsehood in thee:

Thou look'st just as thou art. Let us embrace.

Now wouldst thou cut my throat, or I cut thine.

Ren. You dare not do't.

Jaf. You lie, sir. (A noise without.)

Ren. How!

Jaf. No more:

'Tis a base world, and must reform, that's all.

Enter SPINOSA, ELLIOT, THEODORE, DURAND, REVILLIDO, BRAMVEIL, and the rest of the Conspirators.

Ren. Spinosa! Theodore!

Spin. The same.

Ren. You are welcom.

Spin. You are trembling, sir.

Ren. 'Tis a cold night, indeed, and I am aged;
Full of decay and natural infirmities: (*They retire.*)

Re-enter PIERRE.

We shall be warm, my friends, I hope, to-morrow.

Pier. 'Twas not well done; thou shouldst have stroak'd him,
And not have gall'd him. (*Aside to Jaffier.*)

Jaf. Damn him, let him chew on't!
(*Aside to Pierre.*)

Heav'n! where am I? beset with cursed fiends,
That wait to damn me! What a devil's man,
When he forgets his nature!

(*Conspirators advance.*)

Hush, my heart.

Ren. My friends, 'tis late; are we assembled
all?

To-morrow's rising sun must see you all
Deck'd in your honours. Are the soldiers ready?

Pier. All, all.

Ren. You, Durand, with your thousand, must
possess
St. Mark's; you, captain, know your charge al-
ready;

'Tis to secure the ducal palace:

Be all this done with the least tumult possible,
Till in each place you post sufficient guards:
Then sheathe your swords in every breast you
meet.

Jaf. Oh! reverend cruelty! damn'd bloody villain!
(*Aside.*)

Ren. During this execution, Durand, you
Must in the midst keep your battalia fast;
And, Theodore, be sure to plant the cannon
That may command the streets;
This done, we'll give the general alarm,
Apply petards, and force the ars'nal gates;
Then fire the city round in several places,
Or with our cannon (if he dare resist)

Batter to ruin. But above all, I charge you,
Shed blood enough; spare neither sex nor age,
Name nor condition: if there live a senator
After to-morrow, though the dullest rogue
That e'er said nothing, we have lost our ends.
If possible, let's kill the very name
Of senator, and bury it in blood.

Jaf. Merciless, horrid slave. Ay, blood enough!
Shed blood enough, old Renault! how thou charm'st
me! (*Aside.*)

Ren. But one thing more, and then farewell, till
fate

Join us again, or sep'rate us for ever.

Let's all remember,

We wear no common cause upon our swords:

Let each man think that on his single virtue

Depends the good and fame of all the rest;

Eternal honour or perpetual infamy.

You droop, sir.

(*To Jaffier.*)

Jaf. No; with most profound attention

I've heard it all, and wonder at thy virtue.

Oh, Belvidera! take me to thy arms,

And shew me where's my peace, for I have lost it.
[*Aside, and exit.*]

Ren. Without the least remorse, then, let's re-
solve

With fire and sword t'exterminate these tyrants:

Under whose weight this wretched country la-
bours;

The means are only in our hands to crown them.

Pier. And may those pow'rs above that are pro-
pitious

To gallant minds, record this cause and bless it.

Ren. Thus happy, thus secure of all we wish for,
Should there, my friends, be found among us one
False to this glorious enterprise, what fate,
What vengeance were enough for such a villain?

Ell. Death here without repentance, hell here-
after.

Ren. Let that be my lot, if, as here I stand,
Listed by fate among her darling sons,
Though I had one only brother, dear by all
The strictest ties of nature; could I have such a
friend

Join'd in this cause, and had but ground to fear
He meant foul play; may this right hand drop from
me,

If I'd not hazard all my future peace,
And stab him to the heart before you. Who,
Who would do less? Wouldst thou not, Pierre,
the same?

Pier. You've singled me, sir, out for this hard
question,

As if 'twere started only for my sake.

Am I the thing you fear? Here, here's my bosom,
Search it with all your swords. Am I a traitor?

Ren. No: but I fear your late commended friend
Is little less. Come, sirs, 'tis now no time
To trifle with our safety. Where's this Jaffier?

Spin. He left the room just now, in strange dis-
order.

Ren. Nay, there is danger in him; I observ'd
him

During the time I took for explanation:

He was transported from most deep attention

To a confusion which he could not smother,

His looks grew full of sadness and surprise,

All which betray'd a wavering spirit in him,

That labour'd with reluctance and sorrow.

What's requisite for safety must be done

With speedy execution: he remains

Yet in our power: I, for my own part, wear

A dagger— (*Taking out the dagger Jaf. gave him.*)

Pier. Well?

Ren. And I could wish it—

Pier. Where?

Ren. Buried in his heart.

Pier. Away!

(*Takes the dagger from him and puts it in
his pocket.*)

We're yet all friends;

No more of this, 'twill breed ill blood among us.

Spin. Let us all draw our swords, and search the
house,

Pull him from the dark hole where he sits
brooding

O'er his cold fears, and each man kill his share of
him.

Pier. Who talks of killing? Who's he'll shed
the blood

That's dear to me? Is't you, or you, or you, sir?

What! not one speak? how you stand gaping all

On your grave oracle, your wooden god there!

Yet not a word? Then, sir, I'll tell you a secret;

Suspicion's but at best a coward's virtue.

(*To Renault.*)

Ren. A coward!

(*Handles his sword.*)

Pier. Put up thy sword, old man;

Thy hand shakes at it. Come, let's heal this
breach;

I am too hot: we yet may all live friends.

Spin. Till we are safe, our friendship cannot be
so.

Pier. Again! Who's that?

Spin. 'Twas I.

Theo. And I.

Ren. And I.

All. And all.

Ren. Who are on my side?

Spin. Every honest sword.

Let's die like men, and not be sold like slaves.

Pier. One such word more, by heav'n, I'll to the
senate,

And hang ye all, like dogs, in clusters.

(*They half draw their swords.*)

Why peep your coward swords half out their
shells?

Why do you not all brandish them like mine?
You fear to die, and yet dare talk of killing.

Ren. Go to the senate and betray us! haste!
Secure thy wretched life; we fear to die

Less than thou dar'st be honest. (*Going.*)
Pier. That's rank falsehood.

(*Seizes Renault's arm.*)
Fear'st thou not death? Fie! there's a knavish itch
In that salt blood, an utter foe to smarting.
Had Jaffier's wife prov'd kind, he'd still been
true.

Faugh, how that stinks! Thou die? thou kill my
friend?

Or thou? or thou? with that lean, wither'd face?
Away! disperse all to your several charges,
And meet to-morrow where your honour calls you.
I'll bring that man whose blood you so much thirst
for,

And you shall see him venture for you fairly.
Hence! hence, I say! (*Exit Renault angrily.*)

Spin. I fear we've been to blame,
And done too much.

Theo. 'Twas too far urg'd against the man you
lov'd.

Rev. Here, take our swords, and crush them
with your feet.

Spin. Forgive us, gallant friend.

Pier. Nay, now you've found
The way to melt and cast me as you will.

Whence arose all this discord?

Oh! what a dangerous precipice have we 'scap'd!
How near a fall was all we'd long been building!

What an eternal blot had stain'd our glories,
If one, the bravest and the best of men,
Had fall'n a sacrifice to rash suspicion,
Butcher'd by those whose cause he came to
cherish!

Come but to-morrow, all your doubts shall end,
And to your loves me better recommend,
That I've preserv'd your fame, and sav'd my
friend. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Rialto.*

Enter JAFFIER and BELVIDERA.

Jaf. Where dost thou lead me? Every step I
move,
Methinks I tread upon some mangled limb
Of a rack'd friend. Oh, my charming ruin!
Where are we wandering?

Bel. To eternal honour;
To do a deed shall chronicle thy name
Among the glorious legends of those few
That have sav'd sinking nations. Thy renown
Shall be the future song of all the virgins,
Who by thy piety have been preserv'd
From horrid violation. Every street
Shall be adorn'd with statues to thy honour;
And at thy feet this great inscription written,
"Remember him that propp'd the fall of Venice."

Jaf. Rather, remember him, who, after all
The sacred bonds of oaths, and holier friendship,
In fond compassion to a woman's tears,
Forgot his manhood, virtue, truth, and honour,
To sacrifice the bosom that reliev'd him.
Why wilt thou damn me?

Bel. Oh, inconstant man!
How will you promise; how will you deceive!
Do, return back, replace me in my bondage,
Tell all thy friends how dangerously thou lov'st
me,

And let thy dagger do its bloody office.
Or if thou think'st it nobler, let me live,

'Till I'm a victim to the hateful lust
Of that infernal devil.

Last night, my love!

Jaf. Name, name it not again:
It shows a beastly image to my fancy,
Will wake me into madness.

Destruction, swift destruction,
Fall on my coward head if I forgive him!

Bel. Delay no longer, then, but to the senate,
And tell the dismal'st story ever utter'd:
Tell 'em what bloodshed, rapines, desolations,
Have been prepar'd: how near's the fatal hour.
Save thy poor country, save the reverend blood
Of all its nobles, which to-morrow's dawn
Must else see shed.

Jaf. Oh! think what then may prove my lot:
By all heav'n's powers, prophetic truth dwells in
thee;

For every word thou speak'st strikes through my
heart;

Just what thou'st made me, take me, Belvidera,
And lead me to the place where I'm to say
This bitter lesson; where I must betray
My truth, my virtue, constancy, and friends.
Must I betray my friend? Ah! take me quickly:
Secure me well before that thought's renew'd;
If I relapse once more, all's lost for ever.

Bel. Hast thou a friend more dear than Belvi-
dera?

Jaf. No: thou'rt my soul itself; wealth, friend-
ship, honour,

All present joys, and earnest of all future,
Are summ'd in thee,

Enter Officers and Guards.

Offi. Stand! who goes there?

Bel. Friends.

Offi. But what friends are you?

Bel. Friends to the senate, and the state of Ve-
nice.

Offi. My orders are to seize on all I find
At this late hour, and bring 'em to the council,
Who are now sitting.

Jaf. Sir, you shall be obey'd.

Now the lot's cast, and fate, do what thou wilt.
[*Exeunt, guarded.*]

SCENE II.—*The Senate-house, where appear sit-
ting, the Duke of VENICE, PRIULI, and other
Senators.*

Duke. Anthony, Priuli, senators of Venice,
Speak, why are we assembled here this night?
What have you to inform us of, concerns
The state of Venice' honour, or it's safety:

Pri. Could words express the story I've to tell
you,

Fathers, these tears were useless, these sad tears
That fall from my old eyes; but there is cause
We all should weep, tear off these purple robes,
And wrap ourselves in sackcloth, sitting down
On the sad earth, and cry aloud to heav'n:
Heav'n knows, if yet there be an hour to come
Ere Venice be no more.

All Sen. How!

Pri. Nay, we stand
Upon the very brink of gaping ruin.
Within this city's form'd a dark conspiracy,
To massacre us all, our wives and children,
Kindred and friends; our palaces and temples
To lay in ashes: nay, the hour too fix'd;
The swords, for aught I know, drawn e'en this mo-
ment,

And the wild waste began. From unknown hands
I had this warning; but, if we are men,
Let's not be tamely butcher'd, but do something
That may inform the world, in after ages,
Our virtue was not ruin'd, though we were.

(*A noise without.*)

Capt. Room, room, make room for some prisoners. *(Without.)*

Enter Officer and Guards.

Duke. Speak, there. What disturbance?

Offi. Two prisoners have the guards seiz'd in the street,

Who say, they come t'inform this reverend council About their present danger.

All Sen. Give 'em entrance.

Enter JAFFIER, Captain, and Guards.

Well, who are you?

Jaf. A villain!

Would every man, that hears me,
Would deal so honestly, and own his title.

Duke. 'Tis rumour'd, that a plot has been contriv'd

Against this state; and you've a share in't, too.

If you are a villain, to redeem your honour,
Unfold the truth, and be restor'd with mercy.

Jaf. Think not, that I to save my life came hither;

I know its value better; but in pity
To all those wretches whose unhappy dooms
Are fix'd and seal'd. You see me here before you,
The sworn and covenanted foe of Venice:
But use me as my dealings may deserve,
And I may prove a friend.

Duke. The slave capitulates;
Give him the tortures.

Jaf. That you dare not do;

Your fear won't let you, nor the longing itch
To hear a story which you dread the truth of:
Truth, which the fear of smart shall ne'er get from me.

Cowards are scar'd with threat'nings: boys are whipp'd

Into confessions; but a steady mind
Acts of itself, ne'er asks the body's counsel.
Give him the tortures! Name but such a thing
Again, by heav'n I'll shut these lips for ever.
Not all your racks, your engines, or your wheels,
Shall force a groan away, that you may guess at.

Duke. Name your conditions.

Jaf. For myself full pardon,
Besides the lives of two-and-twenty friends,
Whose names are here enroll'd, Nay, let their crimes,

Be ne'er so monstrous, I must have the oaths
And sacred promises of this reverend council,
That, in a full assembly of the senate
The thing I ask be ratified. Swear this,
And I'll unfold the secret of your danger.

Duke. Propose the oath.

Jaf. By all the hopes
Ye have of peace and happiness hereafter,
Swear. Ye swear?

All Sen. We swear. *(All the Council bow.)*

Jaf. And, as ye keep the oath,
May you and your posterity be bless'd,
Or curs'd for ever.

All Sen. Else be curs'd for ever. *(They bow again.)*

Jaf. Then here's the list, and with't the full disclose

Of all that threatens you.

(Delivers a paper to the Officer, who gives it to the Duke.)

Now, fate, thou hast caught me.

Duke. Give order that all diligent search be made

To seize these men; their characters are public.

(The Duke gives the first paper to the Officer.)
The paper intimates their rendezvous

To be at the house of a fam'd Grecian courtesan,

Call'd Aquilina; see that place secur'd.

You, Jaffier, must with patience bear till morning
To be our prisoner.

Jaf. Would the chains of death
Had bound me safe, ere I had known this minute!

Duke. Captain, withdraw your prisoner.

Jaf. Sir, if possible,
Lead me where my own thoughts themselves may lose me;

Where I may doze out what I've left of life,
Forget myself, and this day's guilt and falsehood.
Cruel remembrance! how shall I appease thee?

(Exit, guarded.)

Offi. *(Without.)* More traitors;
make room there!

Duke. How's this? guards!
Where are your guards? Shut up the gates; the
treason's
Already at our doors.

Enter Officer.

Offi. My lords, more traitors,
Seiz'd in the very act of consultation;
Furnish'd with arms, and instruments of mischief,
Bring in the prisoners.

*Enter ELLIOT, THEODORE, RENAULT, REVILLIDO,
PIERRE, and other Conspirators, in fetters.*

Pier. You, my lords, and fathers
(As you are pleas'd to call yourselves) of Venice;
If you sit here to guide the course of justice,
Why these disgraceful chains upon the limbs
That have so often labour'd in your service?
Are these the wreaths of triumph ye bestow
On those that bring you conquest home, and honours?

Duke. Go on; you shall be heard, sir.

Sen. And be hang'd too, I hope.

Pier. Are these the trophies I've deserv'd for fighting

Your battles with confederated powers?
When winds and seas conspir'd to overthrow you;
And brought the fleets of Spain to your own harbours;

When you, great duke, shrunk trembling in your palace,

And saw your wife, the Adriatic, plough'd,
Like a lewd whore, by bolder prows than your's;
Stepp'd not I forth, and taught your loose Venetians
The task of honour, and the way to greatness?

Rais'd you from your capitulating fears
To stipulate the terms of sued-for peace?

And this my recompense! If I'm a traitor,
Produce my charge; or shew the wretch that's base

And brave enough to tell me I'm a traitor.

Duke. Know you one Jaffier?

(Conspirators murmur.)

Pier. Yes, and know his virtue.
His justice, truth, his general worth, and sufferings,

From a hard father taught me first to love him.

Duke. See him brought forth.

Enter JAFFIER, guarded.

Pier. My friend, too, bound! nay, then
Our fate has conquer'd us, and we must fall.
Why droops the man whose welfare's so much mine,

They're but one thing? These reverend tyrants,
Jaffier,

Call us traitors; art thou one, my brother?

Jaf. To thee I am the falsest, veriest slave,
That e'er betray'd a generous, trusting friend,
And gave up honour to be sure of ruin.

All our fair hopes which morning was t'have crown'd,

Has this curst tongue o'erthrown.

Pier. So, then, all's over :
Venice has lost her freedom, I my life.
No more : Farewell !

Duke. Say : will you make confession
Of your vile deeds, and trust the senate's mercy.

Pier. Curs'd be your senate ! curs'd your constitution :

The curse of growing factions and divisions,
Still vex your councils, shake your public safety,
And make the robes of government you wear
Hateful to you, as these base chains to me.

Duke. Pardon, or death ?

Pier. Death ! honourable death !

Ren. Death's the best thing we ask, or you can give ;

No shameful bonds, but honourable death,

Duke. Break up the council. Captain, guard your prisoners.

Jaffier, you're free, but these must wait for judgment.

[*The Captain takes off Jaffier's chains. The Duke and Council go away through the arch. The Conspirators, all but Jaffier and Pierre, go off, guarded.*]

Pier. Come, where's my dungeon ? Lead me to my straw :

It will not be the first time I've lodg'd hard
To do the senate service.

Jaf. Hold, one moment.

Pier. Who's he disputes the judgment of the senate ?

Presumptuous rebel ! (*Strikes Jaffier.*) On !
(*To Officer.*)

Jaf. By heav'n, you stir not !
I must be heard ; I must have leave to speak.
Thou hast disgrac'd me, Pierre, by a vile blow :
Had not a dagger done thee nobler justice ?
But use me as thou wilt, thou canst not wrong me ;

For I am fallen beneath the basest injuries :
Yet look upon me with an eye of mercy,
With pity and with charity behold me :
And as there dwells a godlike nature in thee,
Listen with mildness to my supplications.

Pier. What whining monk art thou ? what holy cheat,

That wouldst encroach upon my credulous ears,
And canst thus, vilely ? Hence ! I know thee not :
Leave, hypocrite !

Jaf. Not know me, Pierre ?

Pier. No, I know thee not. What art thou ?

Jaf. Jaffier, thy friend ; thy once-lov'd, valu'd friend ;

Though now deservedly scorn'd, and us'd most hardly.

Pier. Thou, Jaffier ! thou, my once-lov'd, valu'd friend !

By heavens, thou liest ! the man so call'd, my friend,

Was generous, honest, faithful, just, and valiant ;
Noble in mind, and in his person lovely ;
Dear to my eyes, and tender to my heart :

But thou,—a wretched, base, false, worthless coward,

Poor even in soul, and loathsome in thy aspect !
All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest thee.
Pr'ythee avoid ; nor longer cling thus round me,
Like something baneful, that my nature's chill'd at.

Jaf. I have not wrong'd thee ; by these tears I have not.

Pier. Hast thou not wrong'd me ? Dar'st thou call thyself

That once lov'd, valu'd friend of mine,
And swear thou hast not wrong'd me ? Whence these chains ?

Whence the vile death which I may meet this moment ?

Whence this dishonour, but from thee, thou false one ?

Jaf. All's true, yet grant one thing, and I've done asking.

Pier. What's that ?

Jaf. To take thy life, on such conditions
The council have propos'd : thou and thy friends
May yet live long, and to be better treated.

Pier. Life ! ask my life ! confess ! record myself
A villain, for the privilege to breathe !
And carry up and down this curs'd city,
A discontented and repining spirit,
Burthensome to itself, a few years longer ;
To lose it, may be at last, in a lewd quarrel
For some new friend, treacherous and false as thou art !

No, this vile world and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better terms than now,
When only men, like thee, are fit to live in't.

Jaf. By all that's just—

Pier. Swear by some other powers,
For thou hast broke that sacred oath too lately.

Jaf. Then, by that hell I merit, I'll not leave thee,

Till, to thyself, at least thou'rt reconcil'd,
However thy resentment deal with me.

Pier. Not leave me !

Jaf. No, thou shalt not force me from thee.
Use me reproachfully, and like a slave ;
Tread on me, buffet me, heap wrongs on wrongs
On my poor head ; I'll bear it all with patience
Shall weary out thy most unfriendly cruelty :
Lie at thy feet, and kiss 'em though they spur me,

Till wounded by my sufferings, thou relent,
And raise me to thy arms, with dear forgiveness.

Pier. Art thou not—

Jaf. What ?

Pier. A traitor ?

Jaf. Yes.

Pier. A villain ?

Jaf. Granted.

Pier. A coward, a most scandalous coward ;
Spiritless, void of honour ; one who has sold
Thy everlasting fame, for shameless life ?

Jaf. All, all and more, much more : my faults
are numberless.

Pier. And would'st thou have me live on terms
like thine ?

Base, as thou art false—

Jaf. No : 'tis to me that's granted :

The safety of thy life was all I aim'd at,
In recompense for faith and trust so broken.

Pier. I scorn it more, because preserv'd by thee ;

And, as when first my foolish heart took pity
On thy misfortunes, sought thee in thy miseries,
Reliev'd thy wants, and rais'd thee from the state
Of wretchedness, in which thy fate had plung'd thee,

To rank thee in my list of noble friends,
All I receiv'd, in surety for thy truth,
Were unregarded oaths, and this, this dagger,
Giv'n with a worthless pledge, thou since hast stol'n :

So I restore it back to thee again ;
Swearing by all those powers which thou hast
violated,

Never, from this curs'd hour, to hold communion,
Friendship, or interest, with thee, though our
years

Were to exceed those limited the world.
Take it ; farewell—for now I owe thee nothing.

Jaf. Say, thou wilt live then.

Pier. For my life, dispose it
Just as thou wilt, because 'tis what I'm tir'd with.

Jaf. Oh, Pierre!

Pier. No more.

Jaf. My eyes won't lose sight of thee,
But languish after thee, and ache with gazing.

Pier. Leave me. Nay then, thus, thus I throw
thee from me;

And curses, great as is thy falsehood, catch thee.
[*Exit guarded.*]

Jaf. Amen.

He's gone, my father, friend, preserver!
And here's the portion he has left me:

(*Holds the dagger up.*)

This dagger. Well remember'd! with this dagger,
I gave a solemn vow, of dire importance;
Parted with this and Belvidera together.

Have a care, mem'ry, drive that thought no farther:
No, I'll esteem it as a friend's last legacy;
Treasure it up within this wretched bosom,
Where it may grow acquainted with my heart,
That when they meet they start not from each other.
So, now for thinking. A blow!—call'd a traitor,
villain,

Coward, dishonourable coward! laugh!

Oh! for a long, sound sleep, and so forget it!

Down, busy devil!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. Whither shall I fly?

Where hide me and my miseries together?
Where's now the Roman constancy I boasted?

Sunk into trembling fears and desperation,
Not daring to look up to that dear face
Which us'd to smile, ev'n on my faults; but down,
Bending these miserable eyes on earth,
Must move in penance, and implore much mercy.

Jaf. Mercy! kind heav'n has surely endless
stores,

Hoarded for thee, of blessings yet untasted:
Oh, Belvidera! I'm the wretched'st creature
E'er crawl'd on earth.

My friend too, Belvidera, that dear friend,
Who, next to thee, was all my health rejoic'd in,
Has us'd me like a slave, shamefully us'd me:
'Twould break thy pitying heart to hear the story.

Bel. What has he done?

Jaf. Before we parted,

Ere yet his guards had led him to his prison,
Full of severest sorrows for his sufferings,
With eyes o'erflowing, and a bleeding heart,
As at his feet I kneel'd and sued for mercy;
With a reproachful hand he dash'd a blow:
He struck me, Belvidera! by heav'n, he struck
me!

Buffeted, call'd me traitor, villain, coward!
Am I a coward? Am I a villain? Tell me:
Thou'rt the best judge, and mad'st me, if I am so!
Damnation! Coward!

Bel. Oh! forgive him, Jaffier;
And, if his sufferings wound thy heart already,
What will they do to-morrow?

Jaf. Ah!

Bel. To-morrow,
When thou shalt see him stretch'd in all the
agonies

Of a tormenting and a shameful death:
His bleeding bowels, and his broken limbs,
Insulted o'er, by a vile, butchering villain;
What will thy heart do then? Oh! sure 'twill
stream,

Like my eyes now.

Jaf. What means thy dreadful story?
Death, and to-morrow!

Bel. The faithless senators, 'tis they've de-
creed it:

They say, according to our friends' request,
They shall have death, and not ignoble bondage:
Declare their promis'd mercy all as forfeited:

False to their oaths, and deaf to intercession,
Warrants are pass'd for public death to-morrow.

Jaf. Death! doom'd to die! condemn'd unheard!
unpleaded!

Bel. Nay, cruel'st racks and torments are pre-
paring

To force confession from their dying pangs.

Oh! do not look so terribly upon me!

How your lips shake, and all your face disorder'd!
What means my love?

Jaf. Leave me, I charge thee, leave me.—Strong
temptations

Wake in my heart.

Bel. For what?

Jaf. No more, but leave me.

Bel. Why?

Jaf. Oh! by heav'n, I love thee with that fond-
ness,

I would not have thee stay a moment longer

Near these curs'd hands: Are they not cold upon
thee?

(*Pulls the dagger half out of his bosom, and
puts it back again.*)

Bel. No, everlasting comfort's in thy arms.

To lean thus on thy breast, is softer ease

Than downy pillows deck'd with leaves of roses.

Jaf. Alas! thou think'st not of the thorns 'tis
fill'd with:

Fly, ere they gall thee. There's a lurking serpent,
Ready to leap and sting thee to the heart:

Art thou not terrified?

Bel. No.

Jaf. Call to mind

What thou hast done, and whither thou hast
brought me.

Bel. Ha!

Jaf. Where's my friend? my friend, thou smil-
ling mischief!

Nay, shrink not, now 'tis too late; thou should'st
have fled

When thy guilt first had cause; for dire revenge

Is up, and raging for my friend. He groans!

Hark, how he groans! his screams are in my
ears!

Already, see, they've fix'd him on the wheel,
And now they tear him—Murder! Perjur'd senate!

Murder—Oh—Hark thee, traitress, thou hast
done this,

Thanks to thy tears and false persuading love.

How her eyes speak! Oh, thou bewitching crea-
ture!

Madness can't hurt thee. Come, thou little trem-
bler,

Creep even into my heart, and there lie safe:

'Tis thy own citadel.—Ha!—yet stand off.

Heav'n must have justice, and my broken vows

Will sink me else beneath its reaching mercy.

I'll wink, and then 'tis done—

Bel. What means the lord

Of me, my life, and love? What's in thy bosom,
Thou grasp'st at so? Nay, why am I thus treated!

(*Jaffier draws the dagger, and offers to
stab her.*)

Jaf. Know, Belvidera, when we parted last,
I gave this dagger with thee, as in trust,

To be thy portion if I e'er prov'd false.

On such condition, was my truth believ'd:

But now 'tis forfeited, and must be paid for.

(*Offers to stab her again.*)

Bel. Oh! mercy!

Jaf. Nay, no struggling.

Bel. Now then, kill me.

While thus I cling about thy cruel neck,

Kiss thy revengful lips, and die in joys

Greater than any I can guess hereafter.
(*Leaps on his neck, and kisses him.*)

Jaf. I am, I am a coward; witness, heav'n,
Witness it, earth, and every being, witness:

'Tis but one blow! yet, by immortal love,
I cannot longer bear a thought to harm thee.
(*He throws away the dagger, and embraces her.*)
The seal of providence is sure upon thee:
And thou wert born for yet unheard-of wonders.
Oh! thou wert either born to save or damn me!
By all the power that's giv'n thee o'er my soul,
By thy resistless tears and conquering smiles,
By the victorious love that still waits on thee,
Fly to thy cruel father, save my friend,
Or all our future quiet's lost for ever.
Fall at his feet, cling round his reverend knees,
Speak to him with thy eyes, and with thy tears,
Melt his hard heart, and wake dead nature in him,
Crush him in th' arms, torture him with thy soft-
ness;
Nor, till thy prayers are granted, set him free,
But conquer him, as thou hast conquer'd me.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Priuli's house.**Enter PRIULI.*

Pri. Why, cruel heav'n, have my unhappy days
Been lengthen'd to this sad one? Oh! dishonour
And deathless infamy is fallen upon me.
Was it my fault? Am I a traitor? No.
But then, my only child, my daughter wedded:—
There my best blood runs foul, and a disease
Incurable has seiz'd upon my memory.

Enter BELVIDERA, in a long mourning veil.

Bel. He's there; my father, my inhuman father,
That for three years has left an only child
Expos'd to all the outrages of fate,
And cruel ruin!—Oh—

Pri. What child of sorrow
Art thou, that com'st wrapt up in weeds of sadness,
And mov'st as if thy steps were tow'rd's a grave?

Bel. A wretch, who from the very top of happi-
ness

Am fall'n into the lowest depths of misery,
And want your pitying hand to raise me up again.

Pri. What wouldst thou beg for?

Bel. Pity and forgiveness. (*Throws up her veil.*)
By the kind, tender names of child and father,
Hear my complaints, and take me to your love.

Pri. My daughter!

Bel. Yes, your daughter!
And you've oft told me,
With smiles of love and chaste paternal kisses,
I'd much resemblance of my mother.

Pri. Don't talk thus.

Bel. Yes, I must, and you must hear me too.
I have a husband.

Pri. Damn him.

Bel. Oh! do not curse him;
He would not speak so hard a word towards you,
On any terms, howe'er he deals with me.

Pri. Ha! what means my child?

Bel. Oh! my husband, my dear husband,
Carries a dagger in his once kind bosom,
To pierce the heart of your poor Belvidera.

Pri. Kill thee!

Bel. Yes, kill me. When he pass'd his faith
And covenant against your state and senate,
He gave me up a hostage for his truth:
With me a dagger and a dire commission,
Whene'er he fail'd, to plunge it through this bo-
som.

I learn't the danger, chose the hour of love
T' attempt his heart, and bring it back to honour.
Great love prevail'd, and bless'd me with success!
He came, confess'd, betray'd his dearest friends

For promis'd mercy. Now they're doom'd to suffer.
Gall'd with remembrance of what then was sworn,
If they are lost, he vows t'appease the gods
With this poor life, and make my blood the atone-
ment.

Pri. Heav'n's!

Bel. If I was ever then your care, now hear me:
Fly to the senate, save the promis'd lives
Of his dear friends, ere mine be made the sacrifice.

Pri. Oh, my heart's comfort!

Bel. Will you not, my father?

Weep not, but answer me.

Pri. By heav'n I will.

Not one of them but what shall be immortal.
Canst thou forgive me all my follies past?
I'll henceforth be indeed a father; never,
Never more thus expose, but cherish thee,
Dear as the vital warmth that feeds my life,
Dear as those eyes that weep in fondness o'er thee,
Peace to thy heart. Farewell.

Bel. Go, and remember,

'Tis Belvidera's life her father pleads for. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Garden.**Enter JAFFIER.*

Jaf. Final destruction seize on all the world!
Bend down, ye heav'n's, and shutting round this
earth,
Crush the vile globe into its first confusiu!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. My life. (*Meeting him.*)

Jaf. My plague. (*Turning from her.*)

Bel. Nay, then I see my ruin.

If I must die!—

Jaf. Nor let the thoughts of death perplex thy
fauey;

But answer me to what I shall demand,
With a firm temper and unshaken spirit.

Bel. I will, when I have done weeping.

Jaf. Fie! no more on't—

How long is't since that miserable day
We wedded first.

Bel. Oh! Oh!

Jaf. Nay, keep in thy tears,
Lest they unman me too.

Bel. Heav'n knows I cannot;
The words you utter sound so very sadly,
The streams will follow.

Jaf. Come, I'll kiss 'em dry then.

Bel. But was't a miserable day?

Jaf. A curs'd one.

Bel. I thought it otherwise; and you've often
sworn,

In the transporting hours of warmest love,
When sure you spoke the truth, you've sworn you
bless'd it.

Jaf. 'Twas a rash oath.

Bel. Then why am I not curs'd too?

Jaf. No, Belvidera; by th' eternal truth,
I dote with too much fondness.

Bel. Still so kind?

Still then do you love me?

Jaf. Man ne'er was blest
Since the first pair met, as I have been.

Bel. Then sure you will not curse me?

Jaf. No, I'll bless thee.

I came on purpose, Belvidera, to bless thee.
'Tis now, I think three years, we've liv'd together.

Bel. And may no fatal minute ever part us,
Till, reverend grown for age and love, we go
Down to one grave, as our last bed, together:
There sleep in peace, till an eternal morning.

Jaf. Did I not say, I came to bless thee?

Bel. You did.

Jaf. Then hear me, hounteous heav'n:
Pour down your blessings on this beauteous
head,

Where everlasting sweets are always springing,
With a continual giving hand:—let peace,
Honour, and safety, always hover round her!
Feed her with plenty; let her eyes ne'er see
A sight of sorrow, nor her heart know mourning:
Crown all her days with joy, her nights with rest,
Harmless as her own thoughts; and prop her vir-
tue,

To bear the loss of one that too much lov'd;
And comfort her with patience in our parting.

Bel. How! parting? parting?

Jaf. Yes, for ever part;

I have sworn, Belvidera, by you heav'n,
That best can tell how much I lose to leave thee,
We part this hour for ever.

Bel. Oh! call back

Your cruel blessing; stay with me, and curse
me.

Jaf. Now hold, heart, or never.

Bel. By all the tender days we've liv'd to-
gether,

Pity my sad condition; speak, but speak.

Jaf. Oh! Oh!

Bel. By these arms, that now cling round thy
neck,

By these poor streaming eyes—

Jaf. Murder! unhold me:

Or by th' immortal destiny that doom'd me

(*Draws the dagger.*)

To this curs'd minute, I'll not live one longer;

Resolve to let me go or see me fall.—

Hark the dismal bell (*Passing bell tolls.*)

Tolls out for death! I must attend its call too;

For my poor friend, my dying Pierre, expects
me:

He sent a message to require I'd see him
Before he died, and take his last forgiveness.
Farewell, for ever.

Bel. Leave thy dagger with me;

Bequeath me something. Not one kiss at part-
ing?

Oh! my poor heart, when wilt thou break?

(*Going out, looks back at him.*)

Jaf. Yet stay:

We have a child, as yet a tender infant:
Be a kind mother to him when I am gone:
Breed him in virtue, and the paths of honour,
But never let him know his father's story.
I charge thee, guard him from the wrongs my
fate

May do his future fortune, or his name:

Now—nearer yet— (*Approaching each other.*)

Oh! that my arms were riveted

Thus round thee ever! But my friend! my oath!

This, and no more. (*Kisses her.*)

Bel. Another, sure another,

For that poor little one you've ta'en such care of.
I'll giv' him truly.

Jaf. So, now farewell.

Bel. For ever?

Jaf. Heav'n knows, for ever; all good angels
guard thee. [*Exit.*]

Bel. All ill ones sure had charge of me this mo-
ment.

Curs'd be my days, and doubly curs'd my nights,
Oh! give me daggers, fire, or water:

How I could bleed, how burn, how drown the
waves

Huzzing and booming round my sinking head,

Till I descended to the peaceful bottom:

Oh! there's all quiet; here, all rage and fury:
The air's too thin, and pierces my weak brain;

I long for thick, substantial sleep; hell! hell!
Burst from the centre, rage and roar aloud,

If thou art half so hot, so mad as I am. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*A Scaffold, and a wheel prepared for
the execution of Pierre.*

*Enter Officer, PIERRE, Guards, Executioner, and
a great Rabble.*

Pier. My friend not come yet?

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. Oh, Pierre!

(*They embrace.*)

Pier. Yet nearer.

Dear to my arms, though thou'st undone my fame,
I can't forget to love thee. Pr'ythee, Jaffier,
Forgive that filthily blow my passion dealt thee;
I'm now preparing for the land of peace,
And fain would have the charitable wishes
Of all good men, like thee, to bless my journey.

Jaf. Good! I am the vilest creature, worse
than e'er

Suffer'd the shameful fate thou'rt going to taste of.

Off. The time grows short; your friends are
dead already.

Jaf. Dead!

Pier. Yes, dead, Jaffier; they've all died like
men too,

Worthy their character.

Jaf. And what must I do?

Pier. Oh, Jaffier!

Jaf. Speak aloud thy burthen'd soul,
And tell thy troubles to thy tortur'd friend.

Pier. Friend! Could'st thou yet be a friend, a
generous friend,

I might hope comfort from thy noble sorrows.

Heav'n knows, I want a friend.

Jaf. And I a kind one,

That would not thus scorn my repenting virtue,

Or think, when he's to die, my thoughts are idle.

Pier. No! live, I charge thee, Jaffier.

Jaf. Yes, I will live:

But it shall be to see thy fall reveng'd

At such a rate, as Venice long shall groan for.

Pier. Wilt thou?

Jaf. I will, by heav'n!

Pier. Then still thou'rt noble,

And I forgive thee. Oh—yet—shall I trust thee?

Jaf. No; I've been false already.

Pier. Dost thou love me?

Jaf. Rip up my heart, and satisfy thy doubtings.

Pier. Curse on this weakness. (*Weeps.*)

Jaf. Tears! Amazement! Tears!

I never saw thee melted thus before;

And know there's something lab'ring in thy bosom,
That must have vent: though I'm a villain, tell
me.

Pier. Seest thou that engine?

(*Pointing to the wheel.*)

Jaf. Why?

Pier. Is't fit a soldier, who has liv'd with honour,
Fought nations' quarrels, and been crown'd with
conquest,

Be expos'd a common carcass on a wheel?

Jaf. Ha!

Pier. Speak! is't fitting?

Jaf. Fitting?

Pier. Yes; is't fitting?

Jaf. What's to be done?

Pier. I'd have thee undertake

Something that's noble, to preserve my memory

From the disgrace that's ready to attain it.

Off. The day grows late, sir.

Pier. I'll make haste. Oh, Jaffier!

Though thou'st betray'd me, do me some way jus-
tice.

Jaf. No more of that: thy wishes shall be sa-
tisfied;

I have a wife, and she shall bleed: my child too,
Yield up his little throat, and all

T' appease thee. (*Going away, Pierre holds him.*)

Pier. No—this—no more. (Whispers *Jaf.*)

Jaf. Ha! is't then so?

Pier. Most certainly.

Jaf. I'll do it.

Pier. Remember.

Off. Sir.

Pier. Come, now I'm ready.

(*Pierre and Jaffier ascend the scaffold.*)

Captain, you should be a gentleman of honour;

Keep off the rabble, that I may have room

To entertain my fate, and die with decency.

Come. (Takes off his gown, executioner prepares to bind him.)

You'll think on't. (To *Jaffier.*)

Jaf. 'Twon't grow stale before to-morrow.

Pier. Now, *Jaffier!* now I'm going. Now—

(*Executioner having bound him.*)

Jaf. Have at thee.

Thou honest heart, then—here— (Stabs him.)

And this is well too. (Stabs himself.)

Pier. Now thou hast indeed been faithful.

This was done nobly—We have deceiv'd the senate.

Jaf. Bravely.

Pier. Ha, ha, ha,—Oh! oh! (Dies.)

Jaf. Now, ye curs'd rulers,

Thus of the blood y'have shed, I make libation,

And sprinkle it mingling. May it rest upon you,

And all your race. Be henceforth peace a stranger

Within your walls; let plagues and famine waste

Your generation.—Oh, poor *Bclvidera!*

Sir, I have a wife, bear this in safety to her,

A token that with my dying breath I bless'd her

And the dear little infant left behind me.

I'm sick—I'm quiet.

(Dies. Scene shuts upon them.)

SCENE IV.—An Apartment at *Priuli's.*

Enter *BELVIDERA, distracted; PRIULI, and Servants.*

Pri. Strengthen her heart with patience, pitying heav'n!

Bel. Come, come, come, come, come, nay, come to bed,

Pr'ythee, my love. The winds! hark how they whistle;

And the rain beats: Oh! how the weather shrinks me!

You are angry now; who cares? Pish! no indeed,

Choose then; I say you shall not go, you shall not;

Whip your ill nature; get you gone then. Oh!

Are you return'd? See, father, here he's come again:

Am I to blame to love him? Oh, thou dear one!

Why do you fly me? are you angry still then?

Jaffier, where art thou? Father, why do you thus?

Staud off, don't hide him from me. He's here somewhere,

Stand off, I say; What, gone? Remember't, tyrant:

I may revenge myself for this trick, one day.

Enter *Officer.*

Pri. News; what news?

(*Officer whispers Priuli.*)

Off. Most sad, sir;

Jaffier, upon the scaffold, to prevent

A shameful death, stabb'd *Pierre*, and next himself;

Both fell together.

Pri. Daughter!

Bel. Ha! look there!

My husband bloody, and his friend too! Murder!

Who has done this? Speak to me, thou sad vision:

On these poor trembling knees I beg it. Vanish'd—

Here they went down. Oh, I'll dig, dig the den up!

You sha'n't delude me thus. Ho! *Jaffier*, *Jaffier*,

Peep up, and give me but a look. I have him!

I've got him, father. Oh!

My love; my dear! my blessing! help me! help me!

They have hold on me, and drag me to the bottom.

Nay—now they pull so hard—farewell. (Dies.)

(The Curtain falls to slow music.)

ZARA;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY AARON HILL.



Act III.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

OSMAN
LUSIGNAN
CHATILLON

NERESTAN
ORASMIN
MELIDOR

ZARA
SELIMA
ATTENDANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Seraglio.*

Enter ZARA and SELIMA.

Sel. It moves my wonder, young and beauteous
Zara,

Whence these new sentiments inspire your heart!
Your peace of mind increases with your charms;
Tears now no longer shade your eyes' soft lustre:
You meditate no more those happy climes,
To which Nerestan will return to guide you.

Zara. Since after two long years he not returns,
'Tis plain his promise stretch'd beyond his
power.

I own
I once admired the unprofitable zeal,
But now it charms no longer.

Sel. What if yet,
He, faithful, should return, and hold his vow;
Would you not, then—

Zara. No matter: time is past,
And everything is changed.

Sel. But whence comes this?

Zara. Go: 'twere too much to tell thee Zara's
fate:
The sultan's secrets, all, are sacred here:

But my fond heart delights to mix with thine.
Some three months past, when thou, and other
slaves,

Were forc'd to quit fair Jordan's flow'ry bank,
Heav'n, to cut short the anguish of my days,
Rais'd me to comfort by a powerful hand:

This mighty Osman—
Sel. What of him?

Zara. This sultan,
This conqueror of the Christians, loves—
Sel. Whom?

Zara. Zara.
Thou blushest, and, I guess, thy thoughts accuse
me;

But know me better: 'twas unjust suspicion.
All emperor as he is, I cannot stoop
To honours that bring shame and baseness with
them:

He offers marriage; and its rites now wait
To crown me empress of this eastern world.

Sel. Your virtue and your charms deserve it
all:

My heart is not surprised, but struck to hear it.
If to be empress can complete your happiness,
I rank myself, with joy, among your slaves.

Zara. Be still my equal, and enjoy my bles-
sings;

For, thou partaking, they will bless me more.
Sel. Alas! but heaven, will it permit this mar-
riage?

Will not this grandeur, falsely call'd a bliss,
Plant bitterness, and root it in your heart?
Have you forgot you are of Christian blood?

Zara. Ah me! What hast thou said? Why
wouldst thou thus

Recal my wav'ring thoughts? How know I,
what,

Or whence I am? Heaven kept it hid in dark-
ness,

Conceal'd me from myself, and from my blood.

Sel. Nerestan, who was born a Christian, here,
Asserts that you, like him, had Christian parents;
Besides, that cross, which, from your infant
years,

Has been preserved, was found upon your bosom,
As if design'd by heaven a pledge of faith
Due to the God you purpose to forsake.

Zara. This cross, as often as it meets my eye,
Strikes through my heart a kind of awful fear.
I honour, from my soul, the Christian laws;
Those laws, which, softening nature by humanity,
Melt nations into brotherhood: no doubt,
Christians are happy; and 'tis just to love them.

Sel. Why have you, then, declared yourself their
foe?

Why will you join your hand with this proud
Osman's,

Who owes his triumph to the Christians' ruin?

Zara. Ah! Who could slight the offer of his
heart?

Nay, for I mean to tell thee all my weakness,
Perhaps I had ere now professed thy faith,
But Osman lov'd me, and I've lost it all:
I think on none but Osman: my pleased heart,
Fill'd with the blessing to be loved by him,
Wants room for other happiness. Place thou
Before thy eyes his merit and his fame,
His youth, yet blooming but in manhood's dawn;
How many conquer'd kings have swell'd his
pow'r!

Think, too, how lovely! how his brow becomes
This wreath of early glories! Oh! my friend,
I talk not of a sceptre, which he gives me:
No; to be charm'd with that were thanks too
humble;

Offensive tribute, and too poor for love!
'Twas Osman won my heart, not Osman's crown:
I love not in him aught besides himself.
'Thou think'st, perhaps, that these are starts of
passion;

But had the will of heav'n, less bent to bless him,
Doom'd Osman to my chains, and me to fill
The throne that Osman sits on, ruin and wretched-
ness

Catch and consume my wishes! but I would,
To raise me to myself, descend to him.

Sel. Hark! the wish'd music sounds. 'Tis he!
he comes! [Exit.

Enter OSMAN, reading a paper, which he delivers to
ORASMAN; Attendants following.

Osm. Wait my return; or should there be a
cause

That may require my presence, do not fear
To enter; ever mindful, that my own

[Exit Orasman with Attendants.
Follows my people's happiness. At length,
Cares have releas'd my heart to love and Zara.

Zara. 'Twas not in cruel absence to deprive
me

Of your imperial image; everywhere
You reign triumphant: memory supplies
Reflection with your power; and you, like hea-
ven,

Are always present, and are always gracious.

Osm. The sultans, and my great ancestors, be-
neath'd

Their empire to me, but their taste they gave
not;

Their laws, their lives, their loves, delight not
me:

I know our prophet smiles on am'rous wishes,
And opens a wide field to vast desire;

I know, that at my will I might possess;
That, wasting tenderness in wild profusion,
I might look down to my snrrouded feet,
And bless contending beauties. I might speak,
Serenely slothful, from within my palace,

And bid my pleasure be my people's law.
But, sweet as softness is, its end is cruel;
I can look round and count a hundred kings,
Unconquer'd by themselves, and slaves to
others:

Hence was Jerusalem to Christians lost;
Hence from the distant Euxine to the Nile,
The trumpet's voice has waked the world to
war;

Yet, amidst arms and death thy power has reach'd
me;

For thou disdain'st, like me, a languid love;
Glory and Zara join and charm together.

Zara. I hear at once with blushes and with
joy,

This passion, so unlike your country's customs.

Osm. Passion like mine disdains my country's
customs;

I know to love you, Zara, with esteem;
To trust your virtue, and to court your soul.

Nobly confiding, I unveil my heart,
And dare inform you that 'tis all your own.
My joys must all be your's; only my cares
Shall lie conceal'd within, and reach not Zara.

Zara. How low, how wretched was the lot of
Zara!

Too poor, with aught but thanks to pay such bles-
sings!

Osm. Not so; I love, and would be loved
again;

Let me confess it, I possess a soul,
That what it wishes, wishes ardently.

I should believe you hated, had you power
To love with moderation: 'tis my aim,

In everything to reach supreme perfection.
If with an equal flame I touch your heart,
Marriage attends your smile. But know, 'twill
make

Me wretched, if it make not Zara happy.

Zara. Ah! sir, if such a heart as gen'rous
Osman's

Can, from my will, submit to take its bliss,
What mortal ever was decreed so happy?

Pardon the pride with which I own my joy;
Thus wholly to possess the man I love;

To know and to confess his will my fate;
To be the happy work of his dear hands;

To be—

Enter ORASMIN.

Osm. Already interrupted! What?
Who? Whence?

Oras. This moment, sir, there is arrived
That Christian slave, who, licens'd on his faith,
Went hence to France; and now returned, prays
audience.

Osm. Admit him.—What? Why comes he
not?

Oras. He waits without. No Christian dares ap-
proach

This place, long sacred to the sultan's privacies.

Osm. Go, bring him with thee; monarchs, like
the sun,
Shine but in vain, unwarining, if unseen;
With forms and rev'rence let the great approach
us,

Not the unhappy; every place alike

Gives the distress'd a privilege to enter.

[Exit Orasmin.]

I think with horror on these dreadful maxims,
Which harden kings, insensibly, to tyrants.

Enter ORASMIN with NERESTAN.

Ner. Imperial sultan! honour'd even by foes!

See me return'd, regardful of my vow,
And punctual to discharge a Christian's duty.
I bring the ransom of the captive Zara,
Fair Selima, the partner of her fortune,
And of ten Christian captives, prisoners here.
You promised, sultan, if I should return,
To grant their rated liberty: behold,
I am return'd, and they are your's no more.
I would have stretch'd my purpose to myself,
But fortune has deny'd it; my poor all
Suffic'd no further, and a noble poverty
Is now my sole possession. I redeem
The promis'd Christians, for I taught them hope;
But, for myself, I come again your slave,
To wait the fuller hand of future charity.

Osm. Christian, I must confess thy courage
charms me;

But let thy pride be taught it treads too high
When it presumes to climb above my mercy.
Go, ransomless, thyself, and carry back
Their unaccepted ransoms, join'd with gifts,
Fit to reward thy purpose; instead of ten,
Demand a hundred Christians; they are thine:
Take them, and bid them teach their haughty
country

They left some virtue among Saracens:
Be Lusignan excepted. He,
Who boasts the blood of kings, and dares lay
claim

To my Jerusalem—that claim, his guilt!
Such is the law of states; had I been vanquish'd,
Thus had he said of me. I mourn his lot,
Who must in fetters, lost to daylight, pine
And sigh away old age in grief and pain.
For Zara, but to name her as a captive,
Were to dishonour language; she's a prize
Above thy purchase: all the Christian realms,
With all their kings to guide them, would unite
In vain to force her from me. Go, retire.

Ner. For Zara's ransom, with her own consent,

I had your royal word. For Lusignan—
Unhappy, poor, old man—

Osm. Was I not heard?

Have I not told thee, Christian, all my will?

What, if I prais'd thee! This presumptuous
virtue,

Compelling my esteem, provokes my pride:
Begone; and, when to-morrow's sun shall rise
On my dominions, be not found too near me.

[Exit Nerestan.]

Zara, retire a moment.

Assume, throughout my palace, sovereign empire,

While I give orders to prepare the pomp
That waits to crown thee mistress of my throne.

[Leads her out, and returns.]

Orasmin, didst thou mark th' imperious slave?
What could he mean? He sigh'd, and as he

went,
Turn'd and look'd back at Zara. Didst thou mark
it?

Oras. Alas! my sovereign master, let not jealousy

Strike high enough to reach your noble heart.

Osm. Jealousy, saidst thou? I disdain it: no!
Distrust is poor, and a misplaced suspicion
Invites and justifies the falsehood fear'd.
Yet, as I love with warmth, so I could hate.
But Zara is above disguise and art:
My love is stronger, nobler, than my power.

Jealous! I was not jealous: if I were,
I am not—no—my heart—but let us drown
Remembrance of the word:
My heart is fill'd with a diviner flame.
Go, and prepare for the approaching nuptials;
Zara to careful empire joins delight;
I must allot one hour to thoughts of state,
Then, all the smiling day is love and Zara's.

[Exit Orasmin.]

Monarchs, by forms of pompous misery press'd,
In proud, unsocial misery unblest'd,
Would, but for love's soft influence, curse their
throne,
And, among crowded millions, live alone. [Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Another Apartment.

Enter NERESTAN and CHATILLON.

Chat. Matchless Nerestan! generous and
great!

You, who have broke the chains of hopeless
slaves!

You, Christian saviour, by a Saviour sent;
Appear, be known, enjoy your due delight.

The grateful weepers wait to clasp your knees,
They throng to kiss the happy hand that sav'd
them:

Indulge the kind impatience of their eyes,
And, at their head, command their hearts for
ever.

Ner. Illustrious Chatillon! this praise o'erwhelms
me;

What have I done beyond a Christian's duty?
Beyond what you would, in my place, have
done?

Chat. True, it is every honest Christian's
duty;

Nay, 'tis the blessings of such minds as ours,
For others' good to sacrifice our own;

Yet, happy they, to whom heav'n grants the
power

To execute, like you, that duty's call.

For us, the relics of abandon'd war,
Forgot in France, and, in Jerusalem,

Left to grow old in fetters,—Osman's father
Consign'd us to the gloom of a damp dungeon,

Where, but for you, we must have groan'd out
life,

And native France have bless'd our eyes no
more.

Ner. The will of gracious heav'n, that soften'd
Osman,

Inspir'd me for your sakes. But with our joy
Flows mix'd a bitter sadness. I had hoped

To save from their perversion a young beauty,
Who, in her infant innocence, with me,

Was made a slave by cruel Noradin;
When, sprinkling Syria with the blood of Chris-

tians,
Cæsarea's walls saw Lusignan surpris'd,
And the proud crescent rise in bloody triumph.

From this seraglio, having young escap'd,
Fate, three years since, restor'd me to my

chains;

Then, sent to Paris on my plighted faith,
I flatter'd my fond hope with vain resolves,

To guide the lovely Zara to that court;
But Osman will detain her—yet, not Osman,

Zara herself forgets she is a Christian,
And loves the tyrant sultan. Let that pass:

I mourn a disappointment still more cruel;
The prop of all our Christian hope is lost.

Chat. Dispose me at your will; I am your
own.

Ner. Oh! sir, great Lusignan, so long their captive,
That last of an heroic race of kings;
That warrior, whose past fame has fill'd the world,
Osman refuses to my sighs for ever.

Chat. Nay, then, we have been all redeem'd in vain;

Perish that soldier who would quit his chains
And leave his noble chief behind in fetters.
Alas! you know him not as I have known him;
Thank heav'n, that plac'd your birth so far re-
mov'd

From those detested days of blood and woe.
But I, less happy, was condemn'd to see
Thy walls, Jerusalem, beat down,
And our last king, oppress'd with age and arms,
Murder'd, and bleeding o'er his murder'd sons.
Then, Lusignan, sole remnant of his race,
Rallying our fated few amidst the flames,
Fearless, beneath the crush of falling towers,
The conqu'rors and the conquer'd, groans and
death;

Dreadful!—and waving in his hand a sword,
Red with the blood of infidels, cried out,
"This way, ye faithful Christians, follow me."

Ner. How full of glory was that brave re-
treat!

Chat. 'Twas heav'n, no doubt, that sav'd and led
him on;

Pointed his path, and march'd our guardian
guide:

We reach'd Cæsarea; there the general voice
Chose Lusignan thenceforth to give us laws;
Alas! 'twas vain: Cæsarea could not stand,
When Zion's self was fallen! we were betray'd,
And Lusignan condemn'd to length of life,
In chains, in damps, and darkness, and despair:
Yet, great amidst his miseries, he look'd
As if he could not feel his fate himself,
But as it reach'd his followers. And shall we,
For whom our generous leader suffer'd this,
Be vilely safe, and dare be bless'd without him?

Ner. Oh! I should hate the liberty he shar'd
not.

I know too well the miseries you describe,
For I was born amidst them. Chains and death,
Cæsarea lost, and Saracens triumphant,
Were the first objects which my eyes e'er look'd
on.

Hurried, an infant, among other infants,
Snatch'd from the bosoms of their bleeding mo-
thers,

A temple sav'd us, till the slaughter ceased;
Then were we sent to this ill-fated city,
Here, in the palace of our former kings,
To learn from Saracens their hated faith,
And be completely wretched. Zara, too,
Shar'd this captivity; we both grew up,
So near each other, that a tender friendship
Ender'd her to my wishes. My fond heart
(Pardon its weakness) bleeds to see her lost;
And, for a barb'rous tyrant, quit her God.

Chat. Such is the Saracens' too fatal policy!
Watchful seducers still of infant weakness:
Happy that you so young escap'd their hands!
But let us think—May not this Zara's int'rest,
Loving the sultan, and by him belov'd,
For Lusignan procure some softer sentence?
The wise and just, with innocence, may draw
Their own advantage from the guilt of others.

Ner. What prospect of success from an apos-
tate?

On whom I cannot look without disdain;
And who will read her shame upon my brow.
The hardest trial of a generous mind
Is to court favours from a hand it scorns.

Chat. Think it is Lusignan we seek to serve.

Ner. Well, it shall be attempted. Hark! who's
this?

Are my eyes false, or is it really she?

Enter ZARA.

Zara. Start not, my worthy friend, I come to
seek you;

The sultan has permitted it;
It pleas'd your pity, shall I say, your friend-
ship?

Or rather, shall I call it generous charity?
To form that noble purpose, to redeem
Distressful Zara; you procur'd my ransom,
And with a greatness that out-soar'd a crown,
Return'd, yourself a slave, to give me freedom;
But heav'n has cast our fate for different climes:
Here, in Jerusalem, I fix for ever;
Yet, among all the shine that marks my fortune,
I shall with frequent tears remember your's;
Your goodness will for ever soothe my heart,
And keep your image still a dweller there:
Warm'd by your great example to protect
That faith that lifts humanity so high,
I'll be a mother to distressful Christians.

Ner. How! You protect the Christians! You,
who can

Abjure their saving truth, and coldly see
Great Lusignan, their chief, die slow in chains!

Zara. To bring him freedom you behold me
here;

You will this moment meet his eyes in joy.

Chat. Shall I, then, live to bless that happy
hour?

Zara. See where they bring the good old chief,
grown dim

With age, by pain and sorrows hasten'd on.

Enter LUSIGNAN, led in by two Guards.

Lus. Where am I? From the dungeon's depth,
what voice

Has call'd me to revisit long-lost day?
Am I with Christians? I am weak—forgive me,
And guide my trembling steps. I'm full of
years;

My miseries have worn me more than age.
Am I, in truth, at liberty? (*Seating himself.*)

Chat. You are;
And every Christian's grief takes end with
your's.

Lus. Oh, light! Oh! dearer far than light, that
voice!

Chatillon, is it you? my fellow martyr!
And shall our wretchedness, indeed, have end?
In what place are we now? my feeble eyes,
Disus'd to daylight, long in vain to find you.

Chat. This was the palace of your royal fa-
thers:

'Tis now the son of Noradin's seraglio.

Zara. The master of this place, the mighty
Osman,

Distinguishes and loves to cherish virtue.
This generous Frenchman, yet a stranger to you,
Drawn from his native soil, from peace and rest,
Brought the vow'd ransoms of ten Christian
slaves,

Himself contented to remain a captive:
But Osman, charm'd by greatness like his own,
To equal what he lov'd, has giv'n him you.

Lus. So gen'rous France inspires her social
sons!

They have been ever dear and useful to me.
Would I were nearer to him! Noble sir,
(*Nerestan approaches.*)

How have I merited that you for me
Should pass such distant seas to bring me bles-
sings,

And hazard your own safety for my sake?

Ner. My name, sir, is Nerestan; born in
Syria,

I wore the chains of slavery from my birth;
Till quitting the proud crescent for the court
Where warlike Lewis reigns, beneath his eye
I learnt the trade of arms;
Your sight, unhappy prince, would charm his
eye;

That best and greatest monarch will behold
With grief and joy these venerable wounds,
And print embraces where your fetters bound
you.

All Paris will revere the cross's martyr.

Lus. Alas! in times long past, I've seen its
glory:

When Philip the victorious liv'd, I fought
Abreast with Montmorency and Melun,
D'Estaing, De Neile, and the far-famous
Courcy;
Names which were then the praise and dread of
war;

But what have I to do at Paris now?
I stand upon the brink of the cold grave;
That way my journey lies; to find, I hope,
The King of kings; and ask the recompense
For all my woes, long suffer'd for his sake.
You generous witnesses of my last hour,
While yet I live, assist my humble prayers,
And join the resignation of my soul.
Nerestan! Chatillon! and you, fair mourner,
Whose tears do honour to an old man's sorrows,
Pity a father, the unhappiest, sure,
That ever felt the hand of angry heaven!
My eyes, though dying, still can furnish tears;
Half my long life they flow'd, and still will
flow:

A daughter and three sons, my heart's proud
hopes,

Were all torn from me in their tend'rest years;
My friend Chatillon knows, and can remember—

Chat. Would I were able to forget your woe!
Lus. Thou wert a prisoner with me in Cæsarea,
And there beheldst my wife and two dear sons
Perish in the flames.

Chat. A captive, and in fetters,
I could not help them.

Lus. I know thou couldst not.
Oh! 'twas a dreadful scene! these eyes beheld
it—

Husband and father, helpless I beheld it—
Denied the mournful privilege to die.
Oh! my poor children! whom I now deplore,
If ye be saints in heav'n, as sure ye are,
Look with an eye of pity on that brother,
That sister whom you left! If I have yet
Or son or daughter: for, in early chains,
Far from their lost and unassisting father,
I heard that they were sent, with numbers more,
To this seraglio; hence to be dispers'd
In nameless remnants o'er the east, and spread
Our Christian miseries round a faithless world.

Chat. 'Twas true; for, in the horrors of that
day,

I snatch'd your infant daughter from her cradle;
When, from my bleeding arms, fierce Saracens
Forc'd the lost innocent, who smiling lay,
And pointed, playful, at the swarthy spoilers.
With her, your youngest, then your only son,
Whose little life had reach'd the fourth sad year,
And just giv'n sense to feel his own misfortunes,
Was order'd to this city.

Ner. I, too, hither,
Just at that fatal age, from lost Cæsarea,
Came in that cloud of undistinguish'd Chris-
tians.

Lus. You! came you thence? Alas! who knows
but you
Might heretofore have seen my two poor children.
(*Looking up.*)
Ha! madam, that small ornament you wear,

Its form a stranger to this country's fashion,
How long has it been your's?

Zara. From my first birth, sir.
Ah! what! you seem surpris'd! why should this
move you?

Lus. Would you confide it to my trembling
hands?

Zara. To what new wonders am I now re-
serv'd?

Oh! sir, what mean you?

Lus. Providence and heaven!
Oh! failing eyes, deceive ye not my hope!
Can this be possible? Yes, yes, 'tis she;

This little cross—I know it by sure marks.
Oh! take me, heav'n, while I can die with joy—

Zara. Oh! do not, sir, distract me: rising
thoughts,

And hopes and fears, o'erwhelm me!

Lus. Tell me yet,
Has it remain'd for ever in your hands?
What, both brought captives from Cæsarea
hither?

Zara. Both, both.
Lus. Their voice, their looks,
The living images of their dear mother!

Oh! God, who see'st my tears, and know'st my
thoughts,

Do not forsake me at this dawn of hope;
Strengthen my heart, too feeble for this joy.

Madam—Nerestan—Help me, Chatillon;
(*Rising.*)

Nerestan, hast thou on thy breast a scar,
Which, ere Cæsarea fell, from a fierce hand,
Surprising us by night, my child receiv'd?

Ner. Bless'd hand! I bear it, sir; the mark is
there.

Lus. Merciful heaven!
Zara. (*Kneeling.*) My father! Oh!
Lus. Oh! my children!

My son, my daughter! lost in embracing you,
I would now die, lest this should prove a dream.

Chat. How touch'd is my glad heart to see their
joy! (*Aside.*)

Lus. Again I find you; dear in wretched-
ness:

Oh! my brave son, and thou, my nameless daugh-
ter;

Now dissipate all doubt, remove all dread.
Has heaven, that gives me back my children, giv'n
them

Such as I lost them? Come they Christians to
me?

One weeps, and one declines a conscious eye:
Your silence speaks—too well I understand it.

Zara. I cannot, sir, deceive you: Osman's
laws

Were mine, and Osman is not Christian.

Lus. Her words are thunder bursting on my
head;

Wer't not for thee, my son, I now should die.
Full sixty years I fought the Christian's cause,
Saw their doom'd temple fall, their power de-
stroy'd;

Twenty, a captive, in a dungeon's depth,
Yet never for myself my tears sought heaven;
All for my children rose my fruitless prayers.
Yet what avails a father's wretched joy?

I have a daughter gain'd, and heav'n an enemy!
Oh! my misguided daughter, lose not thy faith;
Reclaim thy birthright; think upon the blood
Of twenty Christian kings that fills thy veins;
What would thy mother feel to see thee thus!
She and thy murder'd brothers! think they call
thee!

Think that thou seest them stretch their bloody
arms,

And weep, to win thee from their murd'rer's
bosom.

Ev'n in the place where thou betray'st thy God,
He died, my child, to save thee. Turn thy eyes
And see; for thou art near his sacred sepulchre;
Thou canst not move a step but where he trod!
Thou tremblest—Oh! admit me to thy soul;
Kill not thy aged, thy afflicted father;
Take not, thus soon, again, the life thou gav'st
him;

Shame not thy mother, nor renounce thy God.
'Tis past. Repentance dawns in thy sweet eyes;
I see bright truth descending to thy heart,
And now, my long-lost child is found for ever.

Zara. Oh! my father,
Dear author of my life, inform me, teach me,
What should my duty do?

Lus. By one short word,
To dry up all my tears, and make life welcome,
Say, thou art a Christian.

Zara. Sir, I am a Christian.

Lus. Receive her, gracious heaven! and bless
her for it!

Enter ORASMIN.

Oras. Madam, the sultan order'd me to tell
you,
That he expects you instant quit this place,
And bid your last farewell to these vile Chris-
tians.

You, captive Frenchmen, follow me; for you,
It is my task to answer.

Chat. Still new miseries!
How cautious man should be to say, "I'm
happy!"

Lus. These are the times, my friends, to try
our firmness,
Our Christian firmness.

Zara. Alas! sir—Oh!

Lus. Oh! you—I dare not name you:
Farewell! but come what may, be sure remember
You keep the fatal secret; for the rest,
Leave all to heaven: be faithful, and be bless'd.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in the Seraglio.

Enter OSMAN and ORASMIN.

Osm. Orasmin, this alarm was false and ground-
less;

Lewis no longer turns his arm on me:
The French, grown weary by a length of woes,
Wish not at once to quit their fruitful plains,
And famish on Arabia's desert sands:
Their ships, 'tis true, have spread the Syrian
seas;

And Lewis, hovering o'er the coast of Cyprus,
Alarms the fears of Asia. But I've learnt,
That, steering wide from our unmenac'd ports,
He points his thunder at th' Egyptian shore.
There let him war and waste my enemies;
Their mutual conflict will but fix my throne.
Release those Christians: I restore their free-
dom;

'Twill please their master, nor can weaken me:
Transport them at my cost, to find their king;
I wish to have him know me: carry thither
This Lusignan, whom, tell him, I restore,
Because I cannot fear his fame in arms;
But love him for his virtue and his blood.
Tell him, my father, having conquer'd twice,
Condemn'd him to perpetual chains; but I
Have set him free, that I may triumph more.

Oras. The Christians gain an army in his name.

Osm. I cannot fear a sound.

Oras. But, sir, should Lewis—

Osm. Tell Lewis and the world—It shall be
so:

Zara propos'd it, and my heart approves:
Thy statesman's reason is too dull for love.
But I talk on, and waste the smiling moments.
For one long hour I yet defer my nuptials;
But 'tis not lost, that hour; 'twill be all her's;
She would employ it in a conference

With that Nerestan, whom thou know'st—that
Christian.

Oras. And have you, sir, indulg'd that strange
desire?

Osm. What mean'st thou? They were infant slaves
together;
Friends should part kind, who are to meet no
more.

When Zara asks, I will refuse her nothing:
Restraint was never made for those we love.
Down with those rigours of the proud seraglio!
I hate its laws: where blind austerity
Sinks virtue to necessity. My blood
Disclaims your Asian jealousy. I hold
The fierce, free plainness of my Scythian ances-
tors,

Their open confidence, their honest hate,
Their love unfeared, and their anger told.
Go; the good Christian waits; conduct him to
her;

Zara expects thee; what she wills, obey. [Exit.
Oras. Ho! Christian, enter. Wait a moment
here.

Enter NERESTAN.

Zara will soon approach: I go to find her. [Exit.
Ner. In what a state, in what a place I leave
her!

Enter ZARA.

Thank heaven, it is not, then, unlawful
To see you yet once more, my lovely sister!
For Lusignan,
His last sad hour's at hand.
Oh! let not doubt
Disturb his parting moments with distrust;
Let me, when I return to close his eyes,
Tell him

You are confirm'd a Christian.

Zara. What, am I not your sister? and shall
you

Refuse me credit? You suppose me light;
You, who would judge my honour by your own,
Shall you distrust a truth I dar'd avow,
And stamp apostate on a sister's heart?

Ner. Ah! do not misconceive me. If I err'd,
Affection, not distrust, misled my fear;
Your will may be a Christian, yet not you;
Swear, swear by all the woes we all have borne,
By all the martyr'd saints who call you daugh-
ter,

That you consent, this day, to seal our faith,
By that mysterious rite which waits your call.
Zara. I swear by heaven, and all its holy
host,

Its saints, its martyrs, its attesting angels,
And the dread presence of its living Author,
To have no faith but yours:—to die a Christian!
But, tell me—nor be tender on this point,
What punishment your Christian laws decree,
For an unhappy wretch, who, to herself
Unknown, and all abandon'd to the world,
Lost and enslav'd, has, in her sov'reign master,
Found a protector, generous as great,
Has touch'd his heart, and given him all her
own?

Ner. The punishment of such a slave should be
Death in this world, and pain in that to come.

Zara. I am that slave—

Ner. Destruction to my hopes! Can it be you?

Zara. It is: adored by Osman, I adore him:
This hour the nuptial rites will make us one.

Ner. What, marry Osman! Let the world grow dark,

That the extinguish'd sun may hide thy shame!
Could it be thus, it were no crime to kill thee.

Zara. Strike, strike! I love him; yes, by heav'n,
I love him.

Ner. Death is thy due; but not thy due from me.

Yes, I will dare acquaint our father with it:

Departing Lusignan may live so long,
As just to hear thy shame, and die to 'scape it.

Zara. Stay, my too angry brother, stay; per-
haps,

Zara has resolution great as thine:

'Tis cruel, and unkind! Thy words are crimes;
My weakness but misfortune! Dost thou suffer?

I suffer more. Oh! would to heaven this blood
Of twenty boasted kings would stop at once,

And stagnate in my heart! it then no more
Would rush in boiling fevers through my veins,

And ev'ry trembling drop be fill'd with Osman.
How has he lov'd me, how has he oblig'd me!

I owe thee to him:

For me, he softens the severe decrees

Of his own faith; and is it just that mine

Should bid me hate him, but because he loves
me?

No; I will be a Christian; but preserve

My gratitude as sacred as my faith.

Ner. Here, then, begin performance of thy
vow;

Here, in the trembling horrors of thy soul,
Promise thy king, thy father, and thy God,

Not to accomplish these detested nuptials,

Till first the rev'rend priest has clear'd your
eyes,

Taught you to know, and giv'n you claim to
heav'n.

Promise me this—

Zara. So bless me, heaven, I do!

Go, hasten the good priest, I will expect him;

But first return,—cheer my expiring father,

Tell him I am, and will be, all he wishes me:

Tell him, to give him life, 'twere joy to die.

Ner. I go. Farewell, farewell, unhappy sister!
[Exit.]

Zara. I am alone; and now he just, my heart!

And tell me, wilt thou dare betray thy God?

What am I? What am I about to be?

Daughter of Lusignan, or wife to Osman?

Help me, heaven!

To thy hard laws I reuder up my soul;

But, oh! demand it back, for now 'tis Osman's.

Enter OSMAN.

Osm. Shine out, appear, be found, my lovely
Zara!

Impatient eyes attend, the rites expect thee;

And my devoted heart no longer brooks

This distance from its soft'ner!

Come, my slow love! the ceremonies wait thee;

Come, and begin from this dear hour my tri-
umph.

Zara. Oh! what a wretch am I! Oh, grief! oh,
love!

Osm. Nay, Zara, give me thy hand, and
come—

Zara. My lord, my sov'reign!

Heav'n knows this marriage would have been a
bliss

Above my humble hopes: yet, witness, love!

Not from the grandeur of your throne that bliss,

But from the pride of calling Osman mine.

But, as it is,—these Christians—

Osm. Christians! What!

How start two images into thy thoughts,
So distant—as the Christians and my love!

Zara. That good old Christian, rev'rend Lu-
signan,

Now dying, ends his life and woes together.

Osm. Well, let him die! What has thy heart to
feel,

Thus pressing, and thus tender, from the death
Of an old wretched Christian? Thank our pro-
phet,

Thou art no Christian! Educated here,

Thy happy youth was taught our better faith:

Sweet as thy pity shines, 'tis now mis-tim'd.

What, though an aged saff'rer die unhappy,

Why should his foreign fate disturb our joys?

Zara. Sir, if you love me, and would have me
think

That I am truly dear—

Osm. Heaven, if I love!—

Zara. Perinit me—

Osm. What?

Zara. To desire—

Osm. Speak out.

Zara. The nuptial rites

May be deferr'd till—

Osm. What!—Is that the voice

Of Zara?

Zara. Oh! I cannot bear his frown! (*Aside.*)

Osm. Of Zara?

Zara. It is dreadful to my heart—

Pardon my grief—Alas! I cannot bear it;

There is a painful terror in your eye

That pierces to my soul: hid from your sight,

I go to make a moment's truce with tears,

And gather force to speak of my despair.

Osm. I stand immoveable, like senseless mar-
ble:

Horror had frozen my suspended tongue,

And an astonish'd silence robb'd my will

Of power to tell her that she shock'd my soul!

Spoke she to me? Sure, I misunderstood her!

Could it be me she left?—What have I seen!

Enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin, what a change is here! She's gone,

And I permitted it, I know not how.

Oras. Perhaps you but accuse the charming
fault

Of innocence, too modest oft in love.

Osm. But why, and whence those tears? those
looks, that slight,

That grief, so strongly stamp'd on every feature?

If it has been that Frenchman!—What a thought!

How low, how horrid a suspicion that!

The dreadful flash at once gives light and kills
me.—

But tell me, didst thou mark them at their part-
ing?

Didst thou observe the language of their eyes?

Hide nothing from me—Is my love betray'd?

Tell me my whole disgrace: nay, if thou trem-
blest,

I hear thy pity speak, though thou art silent.

Oras. I did, 'tis true, observe some parting
tears;

But they were tears of charity and grief:

I cannot think there was a cause deserving

This agony of passion—

Osm. Why no—I thank thee—

Orasmin, thou art wise. It could not be,

That I should stand expos'd to such an insult.

Thou know'st, had Zara meant me the offence,

She wants not wisdom to have hid it better.

How rightly didst thou judge! Zara shall know
it,

And thank thy honest service.—After all,

Might she not have some cause for tears, which I
Claim no concern in, but the grief it gives her?
What an unlikely fear—from a poor slave,
Who goes to-morrow, and, no doubt, who wishes,
Nay, who resolves, to see these climes no more.

Oras. Why did you, sir, against our country's
custom,

Indulge him with a second leave to come?

He said he should return once more to see her.

Osm. Return! The traitor! he return! Dares
he

Presume to press a second interview?
Would he be seen again? He shall be seen,
But dead. I'll punish the audacious slave,
To teach the faithless fair to feel my anger.
Be still, my transports; violence is blind:
I know my heart at once is fierce and weak.
Rather than fall
Beneath myself, I must, how dear soe'er
It costs me, rise—till I look down on Zara!
Away—but mark me: these seraglio doors
Against all Christians be they henceforth shut,
Close as the dark retreats of silent death.

[*Exit Orasmin.*
What have I done, just heav'n! thy rage to
move,

That thou shouldst sink me down so low—to love?
[*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Seraglio.*

ZARA and SELIMA discovered.

Sel. Ah! madam, how at once I grieve your
fate,
And how admire your virtue! Heaven permits,
And heaven will give you strength, to bear mis-
fortune;

To break these chains, so strong and yet so dear.
Zara. Oh! that I could support the fatal stro-
gle!

Sel. To-night the priest,
In private introduc'd, attends you here:
You promis'd him admission.

Zara. Would I had not!
I promis'd, too, to keep this fatal secret:
Compell'd to silence, Osman is enrag'd;
Suspicion follows, and I lose his love.

Enter OSMAN.

Osm. Madam, there was a time when my charm'd
heart

Made it a virtue to be lost in love;
When, without blushing, I indulg'd my flame,
And ev'ry day still made you dearer to me.
You taught me, madam, to believe my love
Rewarded and return'd; nor was that hope,
Methinks, too hold for reason. Emperors,
Who choose to sigh devoted at the feet
Of beauties, whom the world conceive their
slaves,

Have fortune's claim, at least, to sure success:
But 'twere prophane to think of power in love.
Dear as my passion makes you, I decline
Possession of her charms, whose heart's ano-
ther's.

You will not find me a weak, jealous lover,
By coarse reproaches, giving pain to you,
And shaming my own greatness: wounded deeply,
Yet shunning and disdaining low complaint,
I come—to tell you—
Osman, in every trial, shall remember
That he is emperor. Whate'er I suffer,

'Tis due to honour that I give up you,
And to my injur'd bosom take despair,
Rather than shamefully possess you sighing;
Convinc'd those sighs were never meant for me.
Go, madam; you are free from Osman's pow'r;
Expect no wrongs, but see his face no more.

Zara. At last, tis come; the fear'd, the mur-
d'ring moment
Is come; and I am curs'd by earth and heaven!
(*Kneels.*)

If it be true that I am lov'd no more;
If you—

Osm. It is too true, my fame requires it;
It is too true, that I unwilling leave you;
That I at once renounce you and adore—
Zara. you weep!

Zara. If I am doom'd to lose you;—
If I must wander o'er an empty world,
Unloving and unlov'd;—oh! yet, do justice
To the afflicted; do not wrong me doubly:
Punish me, if't be needful to your peace;
But say not, I deserv'd it.
May heav'n, that punishes, for ever hate me,
If I regret the loss of aught but you.

Osm. What! is it love to force yourself to
wound

The heart you wish to gladden?
Lovers least know themselves; for I believ'd,
That I had taken back the power I gave you;
Yet, see! you did but weep, and have resum'd
me!

Proud as I am, I must confess, one wish
Evades my power—the blessing to forget you.
Zara, thy tears were form'd to teach disdain,
That softness can disarm it. 'Tis decreed,
I must for ever love! but from what cause,
(If thy consenting heart partake my fires,)
Art thou reluctant to a blessing meant me?
Speak! Is it artifice?

Oh! spare the needless pains. Art was not made
For *Zara*: art, however innocent,
Looks like deceiving; I abhorr'd it ever.

Zara. Alas! I have no art; not even enough
To hide this love, and this distress you give me.

Osm. New riddles! Speak with plainness to my
soul:

What canst thou mean?

Zara. I have no power to speak it.

Osm. Is it some secret dangerous to my state?
Is it some Christian plot grown ripe against me?

Zara. Lives there a wretch so vile as to betray
you?

Osman is bless'd beyond the reach of fear:
Fears and misfortunes threaten only *Zara*.

Osm. Why threaten *Zara*?

Zara. Permit me, at your feet,
Thus trembling, to beseech a favour from you.

Osm. A favour! Oh! you guide the will of
Osman.

Zara. But this day;
But this one sad, unhappy day, permit me,
Alone, and far divided from your eye,
To cover my distress, lest you, too tender,
Should see and share it with me: from to-mor-
row,

I will not have a thought conceal'd from you.

Osm. If it must be, it must. Be pleased, my
will

Takes purpose from your wishes; and consent
Depends not on my choice, but your decree.
Go; but remember how he loves, who thus
Finds a delight in pain, because you give it.

Zara. It gives me more than pain to make you
feel it.

Osm. And can you, *Zara,* leave me?

Zara. Alas, my lord! [*Exit.*

Osm. It should be yet, methinks, too soon to
fly me!

Too soon, as yet, to wrong my easy faith.
The more I think, the less I can conceive
What hidden cause should raise such strange despair!
Now, when her hopes have wings, and every wish
Is courted to be lively! when love,
And joy, and empire, press her to their bosom!
Yet, was I blameless? No; I was too rash:
I have felt jealousy, and spoke it to her;
I have distrusted her, and still she loves:
Generous atonement that
I remark'd,
Ev'n while she wept, her soul, a thousand times,
Sprung to her lips, and long'd to leap to mine,
With honest, ardent utterance of her love.
Who can possess a heart so low, so base,
To look such tenderness; and yet have none?

Enter MELIDOR and ORASMIN.

Mel. This letter, great disposer of the world!
Address'd to Zara, and in private brought,
Your faithful guards this moment intercepted,
And humbly offer to your sov'reign eye.

Osm. Come nearer; give it me.—To Zara!—
Rise!
Bring it with speed—Shame on your flattering distance!

(Advancing, and snatching the letter.)

Be honest; and approach me like a subject,
Who serves the prince, yet not forgets the man.

Mel. One of the Christian slaves, whom late
your bounty
Releas'd from bondage, sought, with heedful guile,
Unnotic'd, to deliver it. Discover'd,
He waits, in chains, his doom from your decree.

Osm. Leave me.—*[Exit Melidor.]*—I tremble, as
if something fatal

Were meant me from this letter—Should I read
it?

Oras. Who knows but it contains some happy
truth,
That may remove all doubts, and calm your
heart?

Osm. Be it as 'twill, it shall be read.
'Tis done: and now, *(Opens the letter.)*
Fate, be thy call obey'd.—Orasmin, mark:—
(Reads.)

*“There is a secret passage tow'rd the mosque;
That way you might escape; and, unperceiv'd,
Fly your observers, and fulfil our hope:
Despise the danger, and depend on me,
Who wait you, but to die, if you deceive.”*

Hell! tortures! death! and woman!—What, Orasmin!

Are we awake? Heard'st thou? Can this be
Zara?

Oras. 'Would I had lost all sense; for what I
heard

Has cover'd my afflicted heart with horror!

Osm. Thou see'st how I am treated!

Oras. Monstrous treason!

To an affront like this you cannot, must not,
Remain insensible. You, who but now,
From the most slight suspicion, felt such pain,
Must, in the horror of so black a guilt,
Find an effectual cure, and banish love.

Osm. Seek her this instant! go, Orasmin, fly!
Shew her this letter; bid her read, and tremble;
Then, in the rising horrors of her guilt,
Stab her unfaithful breast, and let her die.
Say, while thou strik'st—Stay, stay; return, and
pity me;

I will first think a moment: let that Christian
Be straight confronted with her—Stay; I will,
I will—I know not what!—'Would I were
dead!

'Would I had died, unconscious of this shame!
Oras. Never did prince receive so bold a
wrong!

Osm. See here detected this infernal secret!
This fountain of her tears, which my weak heart
Mistook for marks of tenderness and pain!
Why, what a reach has woman to deceive!
Under how fine a veil of grief and fear
Did she propose retirement till to-morrow!
And I, blind dotard! gave the fool's consent,
Sooth'd her, and suffer'd her to go. She parted,
Dissolv'd in tears; and parted to betray me!

Oras. Could you, my gracious lord, forgive my
zeal,

You would—

Osm. I know it—thou art right—I'll see her—
I'll tax her in thy presence—I'll upbraid her—
I'll let her learn—Go; find, and bring her to me.

Oras. Believe me, sir, your threat'nings, your
complaints,

What will they all produce, but Zara's tears,
To quench this fancied anger? Your lost heart,
Seduc'd against itself, will search but reasons
To justify the guilt, which gives it pain.
Rather conceal from Zara this discovery;
And let some trusty slave convey the letter,
Reclos'd, to her own hand; then shall you learn,
Spite of her frauds, disguise, and artifice,
The firmness or abasement of her soul.

Osm. Thy counsel charms me!

Here, take this fatal letter; choose a slave,
Whom yet she never saw, and who retains
His tried fidelity. Despatch—begone!

[Exit Orasmin.]

Now, whither shall I turn my eyes and steps,
The surest way to shun her, and give time
For this discovering trial?—Heav'n! she's here.

Enter ZARA.

So, madam! fortune will befriend my cause,
And free me from your fetters. You are met
Most aptly, to dispel a new-ris'n doubt,
That claims the finest of your arts to gloss it.
Unhappy each by other, it is time
To end our mutual pain, that both may rest.
You want not generosity, but love;
My pride forgotten, my obtruded throne,
My favours, cares, respect, and tenderness,
Touching your gratitude, provok'd regard;
Till, by a length of benefits besieg'd,
Your heart submitted, and you thought 'twas
love:

But you deceiv'd yourself, and injur'd me.
There is, I'm told, an object more deserving
Your love than Osman: I would know his name.
Be just, nor trifle with my anger: tell me,
Now, while expiring pity struggles faint;
While I have yet, perhaps, the power to pardon,
Give up the bold invader of my claim,
And let him die to save thee. Thou art known:
Think and resolve. While I yet speak, renounce
him;

While yet the thunder rolls suspended, stay it:
Let thy voice charm me, and recall my soul,
That turns averse, and dwells no more on Zara.

Zara. Can it be Osman speaks, and speaks to
Zara?

If my heart

Deserve reproach, 'tis for, but not from, Osman.

Osm. What, does she yet presume to swear sin-
cerity?

Oh! boldness of unblushing perjury!

Had I not seen, had I not read such proof

Of her light falsehood as extinguish'd doubt,
I could not be a man, and not believe her.

Zara. Alas! my lord, what cruel fears have seiz'd you?

What harsh, mysterious words were those I heard?

Osm. What fears should Osman feel, since Zara loves him?

Zara. I cannot live and answer to your voice
In that reproachful tone; your angry eye
Trembles with fury while you talk of love.

Osm. Since Zara loves him!

Zara. Is it possible
Osman should disbelieve it?

Can it be kind, can it be just to doubt me?

Osm. No; I can doubt no longer. You may retire.
[*Exit Zara.*]

Enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin, she's perfidious, even beyond
Her sex's undiscover'd power of seeming;
She's at the topmost point of shameless artifice;

An empress at deceiving!
Say, hast thou chos'n a slave? Is he intrusted?
Haste to detect her vileness and my wrongs.

Oras. Punctual I have obey'd your whole command:

But have you arm'd, my lord, your injur'd heart
With coldness and indifference? Can you hear,
All painless and unmov'd, the false one's shame?

Osm. Orasmin, I adore her more than ever.

Oras. My lord! my emperor! forbid it, heaven!

Osm. I have discern'd a gleam of distant hope;
This hateful Christian, the light growth of France,
Proud, young, vain, amorous, conceited, rash,
Has misconceiv'd some charitable glance,

And judg'd it love in Zara: he alone,
Then, has offended me. Is it her fault,
If those she charms are indiscreet and daring?

Zara, perhaps, expected not this letter;
And I, with rashness groundless as its writer's,
Took fire at my own fancy, and have wrong'd her.

Now, hear me with attention. Soon as night
Has thrown her welcome shadows o'er the palace;

When this Nerestan, this ungrateful Christian,
Shall lurk in expectation near our walls,
Be watchful that our guards surprise and seize him;

Then, bound in fetters, and o'erwhelm'd with shame,

Conduct the daring traitor to my presence:

But, above all, be sure you hurt not Zara;
Mindful to what supreme excess I love.

[*Exit Orasmin.*]

On this last trial all my hopes depend;
Prophet, for once thy kind assistance lend,
Dispel the doubts that rack my anxious breast;
If Zara's innocent, thy Osman's bless'd. [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Seraglio.*

ZARA and SELIMA discovered.

Zara. Soothe me no longer with this vain desire;

To a recluse, like me, who dares henceforth
Presume admission? the seraglio's shut;
Barr'd and impassable—as death to time.

My brother ne'er must hope to see me more.

How now! what unknown slave accosts us here?

Enter MELIDOR.

Mel. This letter, trusted to my hands, receive,
In secret witness I am wholly your's.
(*Zara reads the letter.*)

Sel. Thou everlasting Ruler of the world,
(*Aside.*)

Shed thy wish'd mercy on our hopeless tears;
Redeem us from the hand of hated infidels,
And save my princess from the breast of Osman!

Zara. I wish, my friend, the comfort of your counsel.

Sel. Retire; you shall be call'd: wait near. Go, leave us. [*Exit Melidor.*]

Zara. Read this, and tell me what I ought to answer:

For I would gladly hear my brother's voice.

Sel. Say, rather, you would hear the voice of heav'n:

'Tis not your brother calls you, but your God.

Zara. I know it, nor resist his awful will;
Thou know'st that I have bound my soul by oath;

But can I—ought I to engage myself,
My brother, and the Christians, in this danger?

Sel. 'Tis not their danger that alarms your fears;

Your love speaks loudest to your shrinking soul;
This tiger, savage in his tenderness,
Courts with contempt, and threatens amidst softness;

Yet, cannot your neglected heart efface
His fated, fix'd impression.

But talk no more of this unhappy passion:
What resolution will your virtue take?

Zara. All things combine to sink me to despair:

From the seraglio death alone will free me.

I'll send my brother word he may expect me.

Call in the faithful slave. God of my fathers!
[*Exit Selima.*]

Let thy hand save me, and thy will direct!

Enter SELIMA and MELIDOR.

Go, tell the Christian, who entrusted thee,
That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor shrinks at danger;
And that my faithful friend will, at the hour,
Expect, and introduce him to his wish.

Away! [*Exit with Selima.*]

Enter OSMAN and ORASMIN.

Osm. Swifter, ye hours, move on; my fury glows

Impatient, and would push the wheels of time.
How now! What message dost thou bring? Speak boldly:

What answer gave she to the letter sent her?

Mel. She blush'd and trembled, and grew pale,
and paus'd;

Then blush'd, and read it, and again grew pale;
And wept, and smil'd, and doubted, and resolv'd:

For after all this race of vary'd passions,
When she had sent me out, and call'd me back,
"Tell him," she cried, "who has intrusted thee,

That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor shrinks at danger;
And that my faithful friend will, at the hour,
Expect and introduce him to his wish."

Osm. Enough—begone—I have no ear for more.
[*Exit Melidor.*]

Leave me, thou, too, Orasmin. Leave me, life;
For ev'ry mortal aspect moves my hate:
Leave me to his distraction. I grow mad,
And cannot bear the visage of a friend.
Leave me to rage, despair, and shame and
wrongs;
Leave me to seek myself, and shun mankind.

[*Exit Orasmin.*
Who am I? Heav'n! Who am I? What resolve
I?

Zara! Nerestan! sounds the words like names
Decreed to join? Why pause I? Perish Zara!
Would I could tear her image from my heart!
'Twere happier not to live at all, than live
Her scorn.

Enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin! Friend, return; I cannot bear
This absence from thy reason. 'Twas unkind,
'Twas cruel to obey me, thus distress'd,
And wanting power to think, when I had lost
thee.

How goes the hour? has he appear'd, this rival?
Perish the shameful sound! This villain Chris-
tian!

Has he appear'd below?

Oras. Silent and dark,
Th' unbreathing world is hush'd, as if it heard,
And listen'd to your sorrows.

Osm. Oh! treacherous night!
Thou lend'st thy ready veil to ev'ry treason,
And teeming mischiefs thrive beneath thy shade.
Hearst thou nothing?

Oras. My lord!

Osm. A voice, like dying groans?

Oras. I listen, but can hear nothing.

Osm. Again! look out—he comes!

Oras. Nor tread of mortal foot, nor voice I
hear;

The still seraglio lies profoundly plung'd
In death-like silence; nothing stirs. The air
Is soft as infant sleep, no breathing wind
Steals through the shadows to awaken night.

Osm. Horrors a thousand times more dark than
these

Benight my suffering soul. Thou dost not know
To what excess of tenderness I lov'd her:
I knew no happiness but what she gave me;
Nor could have felt a misery but for her.
Pity this weakness: mine are tears, Orasmin,
That fall not oft, nor lightly.

Oras. Tears! Oh, heaven!

Osm. The first which ever yet unmann'd my
eyes.

Oh! pity Zara—pity me, Orasmin.

These but forerun the tears of destin'd blood.

Oras. Oh! my unhappy lord! I tremble for
you.

Osm. Do, tremble at my sufferings, at my
love;

At my revenge, too, tremble; for 'tis due,
And will not be deluded.

Oras. Hark! I hear

The steps of men along the neighb'ring wall.

Osm. Fly—seize him—'tis Nerestan! Wait no
chains,

But drag him down to my impatient eye.

[*Exit Orasmin.*

Enter ZARA and SELIMA, in the dark.

Zara. Where art thou, Selima? Give me thy
hand.

It is so dark, I tremble as I step,
With fears and startings never felt till now.

[*Exit with Selima.*

Osm. Damnation! 'tis her voice; the well-known
sound,

That has so often charm'd me into baseness!

Oh! the perfidious hypocrite! she goes

To meet th' inviting infidel! now now,

(*Drawing a dagger.*)

Revenge, stand firm, and intercept his wishes!

Revenge! on whom? No matter: earth and hea-
ven

Would blush, should I forbear. Now, Zara, now!

(*Drops the dagger.*)

I must not, cannot strike; the starting steel

Unwilling flies my hand, and shuns to wound her.

Enter ZARA and SELIMA.

Zara. This is the private path; come nearer,
lead me.

Are we not notic'd, think'st thou?

Sel. Fear not, madam;

It cannot now be long ere we shall meet him.

Osm. That word has given me back my ebbing
rage. (*Recovers the dagger.*)

Zara. I walk in terror, and my heart fore-
bodes—

Who's there? Nerestan! Is it you? Oh! wel-
come—

Osm. (*Stabbing her.*) This to thy heart! 'Tis
not the traitor meets thee,

'Tis the betray'd—who writes it in thy blood.

Zara. Oh! gracious heaven! receive my parting
soul,

And take thy trembling servant to thy mercy.

(*Dies.*)

Osm. "Soul!" then revenge has reach'd thee. I
will now

Haste from this fatal place. I cannot leave her!

Whom did I strike? Was this the act of love?

Swallow me, earth! She's silent—Zara's dead!

And should I live to see returning day,

'Twill shew me but her blood! shew me, left joy-
less:

In wide, empty world, with nothing round me

But penitence and pain. And yet, 'twas just;

Hark! Destiny has sent her lover to me,

To fill my vengeance, and restore my joy!

Enter ORASMIN with NERESTAN.

Approach, thou wretch! thou more than curs'd!
come near:

Thou, who, in gratitude for freedom gain'd,

Hast given me miseries beyond thy own!

Thou heart of hero with a traitor's soul!

Go; reap thy due reward; prepare to suffer

Whate'er inventive malice can inflict,

To make thee feel thy death, and perish slow.

Are my commands obey'd?

Oras. All is prepared.

Osm. Thy wanton eyes look round in search of
her,

Whose love descending to a slave like thee,

From my dishonour'd hand receiv'd her doom.

See, where she lies!

Ner. Oh! fatal, rash mistake!

Osm. Dost thou behold her, slave?

Ner. Unhappy sister!

Osm. Sister! Didst thou say, "sister?" If thou
didst,

Bless me with deafness, heaven!

Ner. Tyrant, I did.

She was my sister. All that now is left thee

Despatch. From my distracted heart drain next

The remnant of the royal Christian blood:

Old Lusignan, expiring in my arms,

Sent his too wretched son, with his last blessing,

To his now murder'd daughter.

Osm. Thy sister! Lassignan her father! Selima,
Can this be true?

Sel. Thy love was all the cloud, 'twixt her and
heav'n.

Osm. Be dumb! for thou art base, to add dis-
traction

To my already more than bleeding heart.

And was thy love sincere? What then re-
mains?

Ner. Why should a tyrant hesitate on mur-
der?

There now remains but mine of all the blood
Which, through thy father's cruel reign and
thine,

Has never ceas'd to stream on Syria's sands!

Restore a wretch to his unhappy race;

Nor hope that torments, after such a scene,

Can force one feeble groan, to feast thy anger.

I waste my fruitless words in empty air;

The tyrant, o'er the bleeding wound he made,

Hangs his unmoving eye, and heeds not me.

Osm. Oh, Zara!

Oras. Alas! my lord, return; whither would
grief

Transport your generous heart? This Christian
dog—

Osm. Take off his fetters, and observe my
will:

To him and all his friends give instant liberty:

Pour a profusion of the richest gifts

On these unhappy Christians; and when heap'd

With varied benefits, and charg'd with riches,

Give them safe conduct to the nearest port.

Oras. But, sir—

Osm. Reply not, but obey:

Fly; nor dispute thy master's last command;

Thy prince, who orders, and thy friend, who loves
thee.

Unhappy warrior! yet less lost than I,

Haste from our bloody land; and to thy own,

Convey this poor, pale object of my rage.

Thy king, and all his Christians, when they hear

Thy miseries, shall mourn them with their tears;

But, if thou tell'st them mine, and tell'st them

truly,

They, who hate my crime, shall pity me.

Take, too, this poniard with thee, which my
hand

Has stain'd with blood far dearer than my own;

Tell them, with this I murder'd her I lov'd;

The noblest and most virtuous among women!

The soul of innocence, and pride of truth!

Tell them, I laid my empire at her feet;

Tell them, I plung'd my dagger in her blood;

Tell them, I so ador'd—and thus reveng'd her.

(Stabs himself.)

THE CURFEW;

A PLAY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY JOHN TOBIN.



Act II.—Scene 3.

CHARACTERS.

BARON DE TRACY
ROBERT
FITZHARDING
BERTRAND

WALTER
PHILIP
CONRAD
ARMSTRONG

VASSALS
FRIAR
MATILDA
FLORENCE

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room in Baron de Tracy's Castle.
BARON DE TRACY discovered, kneeling to a picture of Matilda.

Baron. Thou frail memorial of that blessed spirit,
Which, after earthly martyrdom, now sittest
Thron'd with rejoicing angels, see me kneel
With the prone spirit of contrition,
And deep despair, to do thee rev'rence:
If that foul deeds, as horrible as mine,
Do ever at the throne of grace find mercy,
Be thou my advocate, with boundless love,
Larger than thy exceeding wrongs, plead for me,
That what cannot be pardon'd, may thro' thee
Provoke a lighter penance. (*Rises.*) So, that done,
My heart hath heav'd off somewhat of its load;
For when, in full confession, we pour forth
The inward meditation of dark deeds,
They cease awhile to haunt us.

Enter PHILIP.

What brings you?

Philip. Old Walter, the curfew-toller, is
without, and impatient to speak with your lordship.

Baron. Let him come in. [*Exit Philip.*]
A talkative old fool!

What can he want?

Enter WALTER.

Well, sir, your business briefly?

Walter. Out of respect to your lordship, I will
dispatch it with all brevity and circumlocution.

Baron. Proceed, then.

Walter. Your lordship has, no doubt, heard of
old Margery?

Baron. What! the strange woman on the heath?

Walter. Ay, my lord, they say all over the vil-

lage that she's a witch, and has dealings with the
devil; brings blight upon the corn, and murrain
among the cattle; she is charged with having con-
jured the late terrible drought; and she certainly
caused the flood that followed it, for she was heard
the day before to wish for rain: she turns her nose
up at all our country pastimes, pores all day over
books of magic, and prowls all night about the
lanes and hedges, gathering poisonous herbs, which
she boils in a three-cornered kettle: she has more
hard words at her tongue's end than a convent of
monks, and has actually been seen taking an airing
on a broomstick. 'Tis plain she converses with
people of the other world, for she never talks to
anybody in this, and 'tis impossible that any woman
can be always holding her tongue.

Baron. What's this to me?

Walter. They wish your lordship to have her to
the castle and examine her; for, if she be a witch,
your lordship knows we have a very wise law, that
she must be drowned alive; or, in plainer terms,
suffer conflagration.

Baron. Well, well; we'll send for her. Is there
ought else? [*your lordship.*]

Walter. Something that more nearly concerns

Baron. That concerns me?

Walter. Your lordship cannot be ignorant that I
am an officer of the peace to his most gracious
majesty, King William; whose business it is to see
that all his majesty's merry-making subjects put
out fire and candle at the tolling of my bell. I am
a sort of eight o'clock extinguisher.

Baron. And is this, fellow, what so nearly con-
cerns me?

Walter. Your lordship shall hear. In going my

rounds I have noted, for some evenings past, a glimmering light, after curfew-time, in the north tower of your lordship's castle.

Baron. A light in the north tower? Thou dreamest, fellow: 'tis uninhabited.

Walter. Why, then, 'twas the devil, or a will-o'-the-wisp; though they never open their mouths, and I'm sure I heard voices.

Baron. Are you sure of that?

Walter. Positive, my lord. They didn't talk very loud, indeed, for when people are doing things contrary to law, they seldom make much noise.

Baron. You've mentioned this to no one?

Walter. Not to a post, saving your lordship.

Baron. Then keep your counsel still.

Walter. Yes, my lord. I hope your lordship is not offended.

Baron. No, no; you've done your duty.

Walter. Your lordship knows if a rushlight be seen to twinkle in the hamlet, after the stopping of my clapper, (my bell-clapper I mean, my lord,) I am in visible danger of losing my place, and his majesty a most faithful officer.

Baron. Psha! this tediousness!

Walter. Tediousness! (*Aside.*) I wish your lordship a good day. My tediousness! (*Aside.*) I wish your lordship many happy returns of it; you—your lordship won't forget to examine old Marjery.

Baron. A light in the north tower, and voices heard!

What should this mean? Can it be possible?

Oh! Florence, in, in spite of my forbidding,

Basely forgetting your high rank and fortune,

You have declin'd upon a peasant slave,

Sorrow and shame light on you! [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in the castle.*

BERTRAND and FLORENCE discovered.

Florence. Urge me no more, I will not hear it, Bertrand:

No more I'll risk the breaking of our law,

Lest I bring danger on my father's house

And mine own honour.

Bertrand. Well, at curfew, then,

We'll weep, and bid adieu; yet, sure, the hour

Sacred to love, when all the world is still,

When lovers cheat the stern commandment

Of such a tyrant law, outweighs in value

The dull unvaried round of common time:

For danger gives fresh keenness to delight,

When we usurp the joy we fear to lose,

And tremble whilst possessing.

Florence. Tempt me not,

For we must part to-night, to meet no more.

Bertrand. Or meet to-night, never to part again.

The abbot of St. Cuthbert's is my friend,

His charitable aid will join our hands,

And make me master of the richest treasure

That ever lover sigh'd for.

Florence. Nay, forbear;

Think of my father: he will ne'er consent.

Bertrand. I know he'll take it sernly at the first,

But as his storm of passion heaves to rest,

Nature will softly whisper for his child;

And his affection take a quicker sense

From his short-liv'd unkindness. Speak, my

Florence.

Florence. Nay, do not press me.

Bertrand. Come, you must be mine.

There is a kind consenting in your eye,

Which mocks the faint refusal of your tongue;

Love, on your rising bosom, reigns supreme,

And speaks his triumph in this yielding sigh.

Florence. There is my hand; to-night I will be thine:

My kindred, dwelling, and proud hopes I quit,

To cleave to thee, and thy poor, humble fortunes.

Bertrand. At sun-set, then, you'll meet me at the abbey.

And test your person should create suspicion,
Suppose you come apparell'd as a boy;
And wear, like many a gallant, cap'ring knight,
Whose smooth complexion scarce would hazard
twice

The keen encounter of the northern wind,
The front of Hector with a woman's heart.

Florence. Is it so easy, then, to play the hero?

Bertrand. 'Tis but to strut, and swell, and knit
your brow,

Tell twenty lies in a breath, and round them off

With twice as many oaths; to wear a sword

Longer than other men's, and clap your hand

Upon the hilt, when the wind stirs, to shew

How quick the sense of valour beats within you.

How many valiant cowards in brave armour,

Have bluster'd, unsuspected, to their graves!

Nay, afterwards, frown'd terrible in marble,

Who, at the trumpet's charge, had stood aghast,

And shrunk, like tortoises, into their shells,

To die with apprehension. (*Noise without.*)

Florence. Hark! my father.

Bertrand. You will not fail?

Florence. Away! if I appear not,

Conclude me dead.

Bertrand. Farewell, then. [*Exit.*]

Florence. It was not fancy. Hush! again it comes

Along the gallery.

Enter BARON DE TRACY.

My father!

Baron. Florence!

What do you here?

Florence. My lord—

Baron. Nay, answer quickly.

Florence. I came—

Baron. To meet young Bertrand.

Florence. You have said it.

Baron. There have been lights observ'd in the
north tow'r,

And voices heard long after curfew-time.

Florence. The light was mine, sir.

Baron. Whose the voices?

Florence. Mine and Bertrand's.

Baron. Have I not forbid your meeting?

Florence. When 'twas too late. You let our
early years

Beyond the reach of fate, entwine our hearts;

Then do not, in the blossom, kill the hope

Which, in the bud, you cherish'd. I have been ever

A most obedient child; from men'y's dawn

Have hung, with silent awe, upon your lips,

And in my heart your counsels treasur'd up,

Next to the hallow'd precepts of my God.

But with a new delight my bosom throbb'd,

When first you talk'd of Bertrand: you observ'd,
sir,

He was a handsome youth; I thought so, too;

A brave one. My heart beat with fearful joy.

Not rich, you added: there I heav'd a sigh

And turn'd my head aside; but whilst the tear

Stood in my eye, you said, that fortune's gifts

Were poor, compar'd with nature's: then, my fa-
ther bade me learn to love him. [*ther,*]

Baron. Once, indeed,

I had a foolish dream of such a thing.

Florence. Nay, but I dream so still.

Baron. 'Tis time to wake, then.

Hear me, and let thy froward heart determine.

If thou hast grace to scorn this object passion,

Here is thy father's bosom, in it hide

Thy kindling blushes, and be mine again.

What! stubborn to the last, and unrelenting!

Then hear me, and let thy free choice decide:

If in the headstrong course of thy desires,

And the rank pride of disobedience,

Thou wed'st thyself to this my low-born vassal,

Living, my persecution shall attend thee,

And when I die, my curses be thy portion.

You know me resolute, and know my purpose;

And as you dread or slight a father's wrath,
So shape your course of action. [Exit.

Florence. Stay, my father.
He's gone and will not listen to his child.
Then, since a cruel parent has disown'd me,
Bertrand, I am all thine.

And now that I have giv'n up all to thee,
And cast off every other hope of joy,
If thou shouldst ever treat me with unkindness,
Reprove me with sharp words, or frowning looks,
Or (which is keenest agony to those
Who deeply love) torture me to the soul
With civil, cutting, cold indifference—
No; thou art truth itself, I will not doubt thee. [Exit.

SCENE III.—*A Forest.*

Enter FITZHARDING and ARMSTRONG.

Armstrong. Now, then, we are alone, and secret;
your business, captain?

Fitzharding. You are my enemy.

Armstrong. Indeed!

Fitzharding. You sav'd my life.

Armstrong. I did, and at some peril. Does that
offend you? [since,

Fitzharding. So mortally, that day and night, e'er
I've studied how I should despatch you.

Armstrong. How! 'tis rather a new mode of re-
turning such an obligation. [here

Fitzharding. 'Twas in the outskirts of the forest
We fell in with the officers of justice.

Armstrong. Ay, not a month since.

Fitzharding. We stood them stoutly, till your
sword being broke

To the hilt, and I fast bleeding with my wounds,
We were compell'd to fly; the tangling wood,
Familiar to our steps, confounded theirs;

And we had lost the yell of their pursuit,
When, quite exhausted with the loss of blood,
I sunk into your arms, in which you rais'd me,
And as the lion bears her wounded whelp

From the thick danger of the hunters' spears,
You bore me home; there, being arriv'd, I fainted.

Armstrong. I thought 'twas an act of kindness.

Fitzharding. So far I was your debtor, but what
follow'd? [then?

You stripp'd me to get at my wounds. What
Nay, you perceiv'd it. Speak.

Armstrong. I saw a brand upon your left shoulder,
that— [awoke,

Fitzharding. I know you did: for when I first
Your eyes were to that quarter riveted.

You know my secret, sir, and have revealed it.

Armstrong. No, on my soul.

Fitzharding. Swear some tremendous oath,
It ne'er has pass'd thy lips.

Armstrong. May mercy never reach me, if I e'er
breathed a syllable of it.

Fitzharding. Thou art my friend, then. Hark!

Armstrong. 'Tis a man's tread.

Fitzharding. A lusty one. Stand back and let us
note him. *Enter a Friar.*

Whither so fast, good father? (*Stopping him.*)

Friar. Stay me not;

I have most pressing business at the castle.

Fitzharding. At the castle! (*Aside.*) What's thy
business there?

Friar. You are rude, son.

It is of private import.

Fitzharding. Answer me,

Or I will pluck it from thy heart.

Armstrong. Speak quickly.

Friar. Well, well—

Fitzharding. No preface, sir.

Friar. Well, thus it is, then:

The Baron hath a reck'ning with his conscience,
Which I must settle for him.

Fitzharding. Does he know you?
I mean, your person?

Friar. He has never seen it. [you, sir?

Fitzharding. But his attendants—they have seen

Friar. None of them.

Fitzharding. And thy name: thy name is—

Friar. Dunstan.

Fitzharding. It shall be so. (*Aside.*) Quickly
unhood thee, friar,

And cast thy robe of reverence; nay, quickly,
Or I shall call some myrmidons about us,
Will strip thee at the peril of thy skin.

(*Takes the Friar's hood and cloak.*)

So, that is well. Now mark me: to thy convent
Speed straight, and nimble; and, as you would 'scape
A deadly cold, take not the air to-night:

I have my spirits abroad: home to thy beads,
Fast, pray, confess thyself, do something, nothing,
But keep within doors, or—

Friar. I will observe.

May heav'n, in the abundance of its mercy,
Pardon this outrage on the church.

Fitzharding. Away! [Exit Friar.

You apprehend my meaning?

Armstrong. I can guess it. [mand

Fitzharding. Back to our company; to your com-
I trust the leading of this night's adventures.

You'll find some stirring friends within the castle
Shall smooth your passage there.

Armstrong. Till then, good night. [Exit.

Fitzharding. The Baron's conscience rid, and I
his priest!

(*For so I must be.*) Surely, out of this
Revenge may fashion something strangely cruel,
Whose bloody memory, in after times,
This truth shall teach inexorable man,

Who has no touch of mercy tow'rd's his fellow:
Most injuries a noble mind may pardon,
But there are insults cannot be forgiv'n. [Exit.

ACT II.—SCENE I.—*The Inside of a Cottage.*

Robert. (*Without.*) Hist, hist! Mother!

Enter ROBERT.

Not at home? Then I'll leave this purse on the
table, and call for her blessing another time.

Enter MATILDA.

Matilda. My son.

Robert. Your blessing, mother; let it be a short
one. There is something will keep famine from
the door till I return.

Matilda. Where got you this?

Robert. Your blessing, mother; let it be a short
one. There is something will keep famine from
the door till I return.

Matilda. Where got you this?

Robert. Ask no questions; 'tis your's. [guilt.

Matilda. No, not for worlds would I partake thy
How came it thine? Oh! my foreboding heart!

Where have you slept these three nights?

Robert. Peace, I say. [vage ruffians—

Matilda. Should you have join'd the band of sa-
Robert. I have; what then?

Matilda. What then! hast thou a moment
Weigh'd the full horrors of an outlaw's life?

T' exchange the noblest attributes of man
For the worst quality of beasts; to herd
With the vile dregs and offscum of society,
And bear about a conscience that will start
And tremble at the rustling of a leaf;

To shroud all day in darkness, and steal forth,
Cursing the moon, that with inquiring eye
Watches your silent and felonious tread,
And every twinkling star that peeps abroad
A minister of terror—

Robert. Peace, I say. [sweet influence

Matilda. The blessed sleep you know not, whose
Ere he can stretch his labour-aching limbs,
Softly seals up the peasant's weary lids.

On the cold earth, with over-watching spent,
You stir and fret in fev'rish wakefulness;

Till nature, wearied out, at length o'ercomes
The strong conceit of fear, and gins to doze;

But as oblivion steals upon your senses,
The hollow groaning wind uprears you quick,
And you sit, catching with suspended breath,
Well as the beating of your heart will let you,
The fancied step of justice.

Robert. Hark! who's there?

Matilda. No one, my son.

Robert. Again! 'tis a man's footing.

Matilda. I hear nothing;

Nor aught do I behold, save on yon tree,
The miserable remnant of a wretch

That was hang'd there for murder. Look!

Robert. I dare not.

Can you look on it?

Matilda. It annoys not me:

I am no murderer.

Robert. Nor I, nor I:

I am no murderer neither; yet, for worlds,

I dare not look that way.

Matilda. You are a robber;

And he who robs, by sharp resistance press'd,

Will end the deed in blood: 'twas so with him;

He once possess'd a soul, quick as your own

To mercy, and would quake as you do now,

At the bare apprehension of the act

That has consign'd him to yon naked tree,

Where every blast to memorize his shame

May whistle shrilly through his hollow bones,

And in his tongueless jaws a voice renew,

To preach with more than mortal eloquence.

Robert. 'Tis a damned life, and I will leave it,

mother—to-morrow.

Matilda. Nay, to night; why not to-night?

Robert. To-night I cannot. (A knocking at the door.) Hark!

Matilda. There's some one now.

Robert. To-morrow, mother, I am your's again.

Matilda. To-morrow, then—[Exit Robert.]—

What visitor is this

That knocks so gently? (Opens the door.)

Enter PHILIP.

Is it thou, old man? (Aside.)

What brings thee o'er the bitter breathing heath,

Out of thy dwelling at this freezing hour?

The piercing air will not respect thine age,

Or do thy white hairs reverence. Who art thou?

Philip. Servant to the Baron; or, rather, one

grown out of service; yet he keeps me, like an old

tree that has borne good fruit in its time. He had

a lady once, and I a mistress; once do I say? She

may be yet alive; strange things have come to

pass; they report you have the gift of knowing all

events, that nothing can betide on earth, sea, or

air, but you are acquainted with it.

Matilda. They have abused thee.

Philip. Be not offended: if you would but tell

me whether my dear lady outlived the wreck—

Matilda. You would reveal it.

Philip. Never.

Matilda. Yes, you would reveal it;

Old men and women will be ever babbling.

Philip. No, as I'm a man. [swear.]

Matilda. I almost trust thee, for thou dost not

If I should tell thee, then, that she surviv'd—

Philip. I would bless thy voice for ever.

Matilda. Should guide thee to the spot which

she inhabits—

Philip. I would walk barefoot to it over flint.

Matilda. If I should shew her to thy wand'ring

sight— [follow'd.]

Philip. I would gaze on her though blindness

Matilda. Look at me: I am she.

Philip. Nay, now you mock me.

Matilda. I am not on such subjects us'd to jest.

Old Philip, too, forget me?

Philip. Nay, now I look again, it is—it is my

lady; my ever-honoured lady, my sweet lady, my

kind lady!—but how did you escape the winds and

the waters? Does my young master—yet, I fear

Matilda. He lives, and is a man. [to ask—]

Philip. Thank heaven, thank heaven! [cries,

Matilda. The warring elements, that heard my

Would not divorce a mother from her child;

We were both sav'd: to yonder dreary coast

The guardian waves their trembling burden bore.

A little treasure, from the wreck preserv'd,

Bought us this humble dwelling.

Philip. 'Tis a sad one; but you shall change it soon. I am sent by the Baron to bring you to the

Matilda. How? [castle.]

Philip. The foolish people have accused you of being a witch. [this,

Matilda. Of witchcraft! Well; I see an end in

Most level to my wishes. Come, let's on.

All will be set to rights.

Philip. Grant heav'n it may! [streams

Matilda. We shall be happy yet; and like two

United once, and parted by mischance,

Meet at the close, and end our course together.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Heath.

Enter FLORENCE, in male attire.

Florence. Thus far I have not met a living soul,

Save, on the heath, an homeward villager,

Who chid his barking cur, and had good night

With such kind greeting; that my sinking heart

Took courage.

Enter CONRAD and other Robbers, who surround

Florence.

Heav'n's! what are ye?

Conrad. Don't be frightened, young man: your

money; come, your valuables; give us all you have,

and we sha'n't do you the least injury; only, if you

make any disturbance, we shall beat your brains

out, that's all.—[Enter BERTRAND.]

Bertrand. Unhand the trembling fawn, if ye are

And dare a nobler spoil. [men,

Conrad. So, there'll be some blood-letting here.

I'll make sure of my bird, however. No resistance,

youth; 'tis vain.

[Whilst Bertrand is contending with some of the Robbers, the rest carry off Florence, and, as he is on the point of being overcome, some of the Baron's vassals enter and rescue him: the Robbers run off, and are pursued.]

I Vassal. (To Bertrand.) Come, you must with

us to the castle. [wood,

Bertrand. Nay, let us plunge into the thickest

And track these savage felons to their den.

I Vassal. No, no; there are enough gone upon

that errand; our orders are to bring you to the

castle. [her thus—

Bertrand. Unhand me, coward slaves! to lose

I Vassal. We dare not disobey orders.

Bertrand. Dare not! Slaves! [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—The Robber's Cave.

ARMSTRONG, HERMAN, and other Robbers discovered, drinking.

CHORUS OF ROBBERS.

What tho' we shroud in savage den

From day's all-piercing eye,

Yet have we joys, as other men;

Our watchful fears,

Our perils, cares,

We sweeten still with liberty.

The rising sun let others greet,

We worship his declining ray;

And whilst the midnight cask we drain,

Where sparkling meet

His light and heat,

We feel alive in ev'ry vein

The spirit of departed day.

Herman. Come, push the liquor about. Here's

heavy purses and light fingers. So, the captain,

you say, has made free with a friar's canonicals?

Armstrong. Ay, and with his character, too, for

a short time.

Herman. And in that disguise means to enter the

castle? (A whistle without.) Hark!

Armstrong. 'Tis Conrad's whistle; pass the

countersign. (They pass the countersign.)

Enter CONRAD and Robbers, with FLORENCE.
Welcome, lads, welcome! Who have you got there?
Conrad. A youth that we picked up in our travels; we found him near the monastery, going, as I conjecture, to pray for a beard, for his chin seems to have a marvellous lack of bristle. He'll bear some plucking, though.

Armstrong. Ay, ay, the bird's in pretty feather. Speak, stripling, who are you? whence come you? and whither were you going? [not.]

Florence. Good gentlemen, I pray you, harm me.
Conrad. You're too rough with him; the youth's abashed at being in strange company; he hasn't been used to converse with gentlemen in our sphere; and to say truth, I don't wonder he's a little ashamed. Don't be alarmed, my pretty boy; there's nothing here to frighten you; our worthy commander would know your history.

Florence. I am a simple lad; [that's all.] Honest, though very poor, yet what I have is freely your's. This purse contains a trifle, would it were better worth your kind acceptance! But, as it is, you're very welcome.

Conrad. *(Taking the purse.)* A pretty spoken youth, and perfectly understands good breeding.

Armstrong. Sit down and eat, boy. Our fare is coarse, but you are welcome. Sit down, I say: do you mistrust us?

Florence. Oh! no; I never did wrong to any: Whom should I fear, then?

Armstrong. Well, sit down. *(She sits at the table.)* Now, Conrad, you saw our minstrels safely on their journey?

Conrad. Ay, and the plan is thus concerted: after gaining admittance to the castle—Mind thy repast, youth *(to Florence, who appears agitated)*—they'll easily procure a night's lodging—What, again! *(To Florence.)* Within a quarter of an hour from the tolling of the curfew we must be ready at the northern gate.

Armstrong. Enough: we understand the rest. But what is this same curfew, that has made such a noise lately?

Conrad. What is it! Why, it's a new mode with your great statesmen of keeping the people in the dark. After this same bell has tolled, 'tis a misdemeanor for a horse-shoe to strike a spark from a flint, and high treason for a glow-worm to carry fire in his tail.

Armstrong. A truce with your jests.

Conrad. Why, then, in sober sadness, this curfew custom is a clever invention of this Norman prince of darkness, to set honest men snoring, and give rogues an earlier opportunity of cutting their throats; and which, by shortening their days, will most probably lengthen ours.

Armstrong. Still listening. *(Seeing Florence attentive.)* I like not that boy. He has been deeply attentive to our discourse. *(To Herman.)*

Herman. Despatch him, then.

Armstrong. 'Twere safest.

Herman. Robert shall do it. Being last entered in our troop, it is his office. *(Beckons Robert.)*

Armstrong. Robert, that boy has overheard our *Herman.* And may betray us. [whole design.]

Robert. There's no fear of that.

Herman. Not when he's dead.

Robert. How?

Herman. You must do it.

Robert. Murder him? [patch him.]

Herman. Call it what you please, you must des-

Robert. Keep him a prisoner till to-morrow.

Armstrong. I tell you our lives are in his breath; and he must die.

Robert. Well, if it must be so—

Herman. It shall. I like not that hesitating eye. *(Aside.)*

Armstrong. We will but skirt the wood, and then return. You'll remember. *(To Robert.)*

Robert. Ay, ay.

Herman. *(Aside.)* I'll stay and see it done. My mind misgives me, he may want assistance.

[All the Robbers go out except Herman, who conceals himself.]

Florence. What mean their dark looks, and half smother'd speeches, Where more the eye interprets than the tongue, And silence is most horrible?

Robert. My mother's a witch, sare enough. She prophesied I should soon turn cut-throat. *(Aside.)* Well, youth, you can guess, I suppose, why they have left us alone. [hope.]

Florence. Indeed, I know not; for no harm, I *Robert.* That I should kill thee. [fellow.]

Florence. Nay, but you will not do it, my good What's my offence?

Robert. You ne'er offended me. [form.]

Florence. Nor any that doth bear a human I never wrong'd the smallest living thing, Or trod designedly upon a worm;

For I was bred to gentleness, and know [mercy.] Nought that hath fleeting breath, too mean for Why seek you, then, my life, which, gone from me, Will never add a moment's breath to your's?

Robert. Peace, boy.

Florence. Oh! think upon the horror of the deed. You have a friend, who knows—perhaps, a parent, A father or a mother,—think on them,— [death] 'Twould almost break their hearts to learn you In nature's common course; how would they start To hear you had been slaughter'd in cold blood!

But if they knew you were a murderer, Oh! they would curse the hour that gave you birth, And die stark mad with agony.

Robert. I cannot strike; he withers up my arm. Now, then, I'll do't. *(Aside.)* Speak, youth, are you prepar'd? [ribble.]

Florence. Oh! no; for life is sweet, death ter- The firmest stoic meets it with a pang; How, then, should I, an unschool'd, simple boy, Look calm at that, which makes the sternest

Robert. You must die, youth. [shudder?]

Florence. Nay, yet you will not do it; You cannot; for your cold, relaxing hand Loosens its gripe, and all your limbs, too,

Robert. Now then. [tremble.]

Florence. Nay, turn not thus your head aside, I fain would see how stern the butcher looks When he doth strike the lamb. You tremble still: And in your eyes twiu drops of mercy stand;

They fall upon your cheek; nay, then, you cannot.

Robert. Hear me: I have passed my word to my comrades that you shall die; my hand may shrink, mine eye may drop a tear. No matter; 'tis past, and thus—*(Lifts his hand to strike.)*

Florence. Have mercy on my sex—I am a woman.

Robert. A woman! [horrible]

Florence. What have I said? A thought more Then death runs through me now.

Robert. To save her would be great. [act]

Florence. Oh! 'twould be glorious! that one single Shall clear thee at the great day of account.

Robert. You have prevailed.

Florence. And will you save me?

Robert. Were ye a man, I couldn't hurt you now; for you have made me woman.

Florence. I've no fit means to thank you but my tears, my warmest prayers.

Robert. Here is a recompence which those who have once felt will want no other motive to humanity. But the night wears, my companions will soon return. Can you trust yourself with an *Florence.* Ay, through the world. [assassin?]

Robert. Come, then, I'll guide you faithfully.

Herman. You pass not here. *(Interposes.)*

Robert. Herman!

Herman. The same, good, trusty Robert.

Robert. Stand by, and let us pass; it is a woman.

Herman. Were it an angel, what then?

Robert. Young, fair, and innocent: nay, look upon
Can you resist that supplicating eye? [her;

Herman. I know my duty.

Robert. Do it, then; and the first duty of our sex is
to protect the helplessness of hers. Come, come, let
us pass. You can't be serious.

Herman. You'll find me so.

Robert. Nay, look upon her, Herman.

Herman. Well.

Robert. Can neither her youth, her beauty, her
sex, or her condition move you?

Herman. Not a step.

Robert. You are a devil, then. [one.

Herman. If you attempt to pass, you'll find me

Robert. Why, then, there's left no argument but
this. *(Drawing his sword.)*

Herman. Which thus I answer. [blood.

Robert. If blood must be shed, it shall be man's

Herman. Your's or mine.

Robert. Come on, then. *(They fight off the
stage.)* [heaven,

Florence. Now sit upon the righteous sword, just
And where the cause is honest, give the power.
Hark! the rude clashing of their angry steel
Gives way to death-like silence.

Re-enter ROBERT.

Robert. Now then, lady.

Florence. What, is he dead?

Robert. And buried; I have thrown him
Into the roaring torrent, that must serve
Both for his shroud and knell. Think not of him;
He was a wretch without remorse or pity,
Who bloodily hath bought a bloody end.
Come, 'tis no time for words. [Exit.

ACT III.—SCENE I.—*The Cottage.*

Enter ROBERT, leading in FLORENCE.

Robert. This is the humble dwelling that I
spoke of. You may rest here in safety to-night, and,
to-morrow, shape your course as it pleases you.

Florence. *(Looking round.)* You know the wo-
man who inhabits here?

Robert. Ay, know her well; you'll find her a
kind soul. I would stay with you till she returned;
but I must get back before my comrades, to avoid
suspicion. Farewell! Should we meet no more,
you'll sometimes think of me.

Florence. Whilst I have life.

Robert. Farewell! [Exit.

Florence. Upon the bleak and solitary waste
Which my proud father's castle overlooks,
I've sometimes heard, there dwells a wretched
woman,

So deeply skill'd in potent herbs and flow'rs,
The wond'ring village shun her as a witch.
This must her hovel be; for, sure, a spot
So desolate, and dwelling so unshelter'd,
Can harbour no one else. *(A knocking at the door.)*

2 Vassal. *(Without.)* Open the door.

Florence. Hush! I have heard that voice.

2 Vassal. *(Without.)* Nay, open quickly.

Florence. It is my father's vassal: should he
know me—

2 Vassal. *(Without.)* Still do you hesitate?

Florence. I will assume

A tone and manner foreign to my nature,
That so, without exposure of myself,
I may betray the mischief that is hatching.

(Opens the door.)

Enter three of the Baron's Vassals.

What means this violence?

2 Vassal. 'Tis well you came,
Or we had beat the house about your ears.

Florence. Thou poor man's tyrant, and thou great
man's slave!

Wherefore this outrage? The low peasant's latch
Should be held sacred as the triple bolt
That guards a palace—ay, more sacred, fellow:
For high-raised mightiness is its own shield;
But who, if lordly pow'r be first t' invade,

Shall bar the poor man's dwelling from oppres-
sion? [Baron

2 Vassal. We are commanded by our lord the
To bring before him every living thing,

That in this lonely dwelling we found shelter'd.

Florence. Well, sir, you will not shame your
lord's commands

By doing them humanely. I attend you. [Exit.

SCENE II.—*Outside of the Baron's castle.*

Enter ROBERT.

Robert. Once more I have a moment for reflec-
tion. Shall I return to these merciless dogs?
Yes, my safety requires it. But then, the night's
adventure: to murder a whole family in cold
blood! that I'll prevent, however. My mother,
now doubly thanked be her care, taught me the
use of letters. I have shortly stated here our hor-
rible design, yet interceded for the lives of all.
(Shoots an arrow into the castle.) So, speed it
well. My heart accuses me of treachery; yet
there is no alternative. I must either be false to
my companions or a traitor to humanity. [Exit.

SCENE III.—*A Room in the castle.*

Enter BARON DE TRACY with Vassals.

Baron. You were too tame, to let them bear her off.
1 Vassal. My lord, they were too many for us.
Five, at least, to one: and all completely armed,
too. [trand in-

Baron. Well, 'tis no matter; bring young Ber-
trand is brought in.

So, sir, your noble purpose has miscarried,
And I have lost the honour you intended
To fix upon my house

Bertrand. You speak, my lord,
As if your daughter's peril touch'd you not.

Baron. So I be robb'd, what matters who the
Into what viler hands can she have fall'n, [thief?
Than mine own vassal's?

Bertrand. True, I am your vassal,
And on my body bear some ill-shap'd scars
That vouch my services; but chiefly one
Stamp'd in the bloody field of Hastings—What,
You do remember 't!—When you were unhors'd,
Prostrate beneath th' uplifted battle-axe,
With outstretch'd hand, and deprecating eye,
Had not your vassal, 'twixt descending death
And you, his forward body interpos'd,
You might have gorg'd the rav'nin' vultures there.

Baron. It was thy duty, fellow.

Bertrand. Yet the act

So pleas'd you, that you call'd me your preserver,
And breath'd such wanton praises on my valour,
That I forgot the low-born thing I had been,
Outstretch'd my wing, and sought a nobler quarry;
You fann'd my young ambition; I became
The priz'd companion of your blooming daughter.
Oft when I won, at tilt or tournament,
Some hard-earn'd prize, and laid it at her feet,
With trembling admiration she survey'd me,
Breath'd a full sigh of joy at my escape;
And you applauded. We grew up together:
Our pastimes, studies, sorrows, joys, hopes, fears,
Had but one soul; and what, at first, was friendship,
Soon ripen'd into love; which you encourag'd.

Baron. Which I forbade.

Bertrand. Your reason?

Baron. Your low birth.

Bertrand. That is, indeed, past cure. [too late
'Tis now

To summon back the dust of my progenitors,
And stamp it with nobility. What then?

Am I to hang my head, creep into corners,
Because my father was a hind? I know not
Why I was pressed into this bustling world;
But here I am, and let my deeds proclaim me.
Our actions are our heralds, and they fix,
Beyond the date of tombs and epitaphs,
Renown or infamy.

Baron. You talk it highly. [a point

Bertrand. My lord, you touch'd me roughly on
At which the poor man's blood is quick to kindle.

To something of more weight:—your daughter, sir,
Is in the hands of ruffians; grant me, then,
Twenty of your attendants, nay, but ten,
Five, or if they, for a lost daughter's ransom,
Be thought too great a venture, give me freedom,
And I alone, ere food shall pass my lips
Or sleep embrace me, will recover her
Or lose myself.

Baron. We shall not trust your valour.

Enter First Vassal.

I Vassal. My lord, a stranger from St. Cuthbert's
abey.

Baron. Ay, I would speak with him. Bear off
this madman, and guard him strictly.

Bertrand. Heaven protect her, then!

[*Exit, guarded.*]

Baron. Stand up, my heart; my shrinking nerves,
wax firm!

For what to this good man I must reveal,
Will want your full assurance.

Enter FITZHARDING, disguised and Attendants.
Take good heed

That none approach us. [*To the Attend., who retire.*]
Welcome, rev'rend father,
If to the holy Dunstan I address me.

Fitzharding. I answer to that name.

Baron. It is a name

That loud report delights to send abroad
For endless deeds of saint-like charity;
But chiefly has she blazon'd your renown,
That with an excellence almost divine,
You can blow out from the distracted brain
The memory of guilt, and chase away
The frightful apparition of foul deeds,
Which, unatou'd for, will not be at rest.

Fitzharding. You over-praise my poor abilities,
Tho' in the holy office you have mention'd
I am not meanly skill'd.

Baron. Therein I want
Your aid and counsel.

Fitzharding. Then deliver boldly
The secret cause that preys upon your quiet;
And fully, too: for in the mind's diseases,
As in the body's, there be patients,
Who, by a scant disclosure of their ills,
(Either from foolish modesty or pride,)
Mock the physician's labour.

Baron. Trust me, father,
You shall hear all, as fully and distinctly
As were I now before heav'n's judgment seat,
To make confession of the fact.

Fitzharding. Proceed.

Baron. You know I am not native of this isle,
But born in Normandy.

Fitzharding. So I have heard. [*lady,*]

Baron. I wedded there, long since, an English
Most rare in her endowments.

Fitzharding. You were happy? [*observ'd,*]

Baron. I should have been so: you must have
For you have deeply read the heart of man,
A wayward disposition in some natures,
Out of the very height of their enjoyments
To breed their discontents; and make, like devils,
A hell of paradise.

Fitzharding. Alas! 'tis true. [*lieve it?*]

Baron. E'en such a man was I: would you be-
Possess'd of such a woman, for no cause
But the excess of her perfections,
Compar'd with my weak merits to deserve them,
From love's extremest dotage I fell off
To sudden jealousy; in which dark mood,
A letter reach'd me, in an unknown hand,
Containing nought but this: "Look to your wife!"

Fitzharding. Some villain—

Baron. You shall hear, and then decide.
This letter was soon follow'd by another,
Which circumstantially disclos'd my shame,
And made surmise conviction: pointed out
The time, when I might find, in mine own chamber,
My wife in guilty converse with a lover.

Think with what pangs I waited for that hour!
When, as advis'd, I did surprise my wife
In secret with a man.

Fitzharding. And in your chamber?

Baron. I stabb'd the woman; her companion fled,
And in the darkness of the night escap'd me.
Returning quickly back, I found my wife, too,
Whose wound though deep was nothing dangerous,
Had, with our only son, a tender infant,
Fled in most wild amazement. Soon in safety
She reach'd the nearest sea-port; thence embarking
For this her native land, they were both wreck'd;
And with the rest of that devoted crew,
In the wide bosom of the ocean perish'd.

Fitzharding. It was a lamentable fate, indeed!
But where's your crime in this? Was she not
guilty? [*villain,*]

Baron. Nay, she was spotless: that same precious
(For that he was a villain soon was palpable,)
In a last letter clos'd this scene of horror
With these emphatic words, which, as I dread them,
Were graven on my heart: "Your wife was inno-
Yet I'm but half revenged!" [*cent;*]

Fitzharding. But half reveng'd!
Some one whom you had wrong'd, then—

Baron. It should seem so;
Yet to this hour, by what resentment mov'd,
Or who the dark contriver of my shame,
I am most ignorant.

Fitzharding. That's strange, indeed!
And could you never guess?

Baron. No, on my soul. [*member no one,*]

Fitzharding. Most wonderful! Could you re-
Whom by some galling wrong, some deep fix'd in-
You had most grievously provok'd? [*sult,*]

Baron. No, never.

Fitzharding. Ere long I will refresh your me-
mory. [*Aside.*]

Baron. I never struck but one man to the heart,
And him I after recompens'd so nobly,
That my large bounty salv'd his rankling pride,
And drew out all his enmity.

Fitzharding. Indeed! [*Aside.*]

Baron. Besides, that man was dead.

Fitzharding. Art sure of that? [*Aside.*]

Baron. Or had he been alive, 'twere idle now
To waste the precious time in wild surmise
Who was my instigator. Here am I,
Sole actor of that woful tragedy;
Whose strong remembrance, like an evil spirit
In some lone house, usurping all my brain,
Drives reason from her seat; and scares away
The fellowship of comfortable thoughts,
To dwell alone in desolate despair.
Now, I have heard you have a charm for this,
That by some sacred and mysterious pow'r,
You can make clean my fancy—recreate me,
What once I was, a reasonable man,
Full of the common feelings of my kind,
Pray with an unclog'd heart; that food shall nou-
That I shall laugh and weep like other men, [*rish,*]
And sleep refresh me, as the dews of heav'n
Lift up the languid blossoms; in a word—

Enter First Vassal with an arrow.

How, fellow, whence this boldness?

I Vassal. Your pardon, my lord; walking near
the northern tower, I found this arrow. This was
the feather to it; thinking it contained charac-
ters that might be of importance, I have broken
through your commands to present it. [*Kneeling,*
presents the arrow.] [*racters—*]

Baron. What have we here? these look like cha-
Yet not for me to scan; peruse them, father,
And tell us what they signify. [*Gives it to Fitz.*]

I Vassal. I hope my lord will pardon my pre-
Baron. Well, wait without, sir; [*sumption.*]
Nor dare intrude again till you are call'd for.

Fitzharding. Confusion! [*Exit First Vassal.*]
[*Aside.*]

Baron. What, a churchman puzzled, too?

Fitzharding. Somewhat perplex'd, I own: let's try again.

Oh! now I understand it; 'tis a song,
A mere love-ballad, that the minstrels chaunt
In every town and village; a dull ditty,
And not quite decent for a priest to utter,
Or for a high-bred Baron to attend to:
However, if you wish it, when at leisure
I will repeat the idle madrigal;
But let it not employ this apt occasion
For more grave deliberations.
I have drawn in with an attentive ear
All you have utter'd: your offence is grievous.

Baron. Ay, father!

Fitzharding. But the grace of heav'n is great,
And for the truly contrite, will work wonders.
Leave me awhile to meditate alone,
That here, in still communion with myself,
And cool abstraction from all other objects,
I may devote my mind entire to you.

Baron. You'll find me in the gallery.

Fitzharding. 'Tis well:

In the meantime, be sooth'd with this assurance,
I will resolve on something speedily,
Shall give you ease for ever.

Baron. How! for ever?

So that the bloody image of that deed
Shall never rise to my remembrance more?

Fitzharding. Not even in thy dreams—for death
has none. *(Aside.)*

Baron. May heav'n assist your holy contemplations!

Fitzharding. *(Reads.)*—"Your castle will be this night surprized; yourself, and all that are in it, slaughtered: after the tolling of the curfew, look to the northern gate."

A pretty madrigal! The friar—No, no;
He would have mention'd my disguise: who then?
I do suspect that Robert. He is one,
Whom nature has so deeply wrought with pity,
That habit cannot harden him to blood.
'Twas shrewdly aim'd, but it has miss'd the mark,
Nor shall perplex me further; for this Baron,
I hold him in my eye, and, when I please,
Fast in my gripe. I do but soar aloft,
(Like the pois'd vulture hov'ring o'er his prey,)
Till having track'd him beyond human help,
I may pounce down securely.

SCENE IV.—*The Robbers' Cave.*

Enter ROBERT.

Robert. So, all's well. I have escaped the track
of the blood-hounds, though they can't be far off.
I met an half-starv'd wolf in my way, and slew him:
his blood will give a colour to my story. *(A whistle heard.)* Hark! they are at hand. Approach,
I am prepared.

Enter ARMSTRONG, CONRAD, and other Robbers.

Armstrong. Well, is it done? *(Robert shews his hands.)*

Conrad. Ay, this is well.

Armstrong. Where's the body?

Conrad. Come, give us the particulars.

Robert. I led him, by discourse, to the cliff that
overhangs the sea—

Conrad. What, where I pushed down the bald-
headed friar, whilst at his prayers, and bid him say
amen as he descended?

Robert. The same. As he gazed upon the elements,
I stabbed him in the back; I heard his
body dash against the waves, and all again was silent.

Conrad. *(Looking round.)* Where's Herman?

Armstrong. I missed him soon after our setting
out. Has no one seen him?

1 Robber. Not I.

2 Robber. Nor I.

3 Robber. Nor I.

Conrad. Taking one of his solitary strolls, I
suppose; he generally avoids our company, lest he
should catch the contagion of a little humanity:
your right beast of prey always prowls by himself.

Armstrong. I wish he may not have fallen into
the hands of the wolf-hunters.

Conrad. If he be, there's not a rogue in England
will do greater justice to the gallows.

Armstrong. Nor one to whom the gallows will
do greater justice.

Conrad. I have known him since he was first
hatched; he had a trick of killing flies in his
cradle, which his mother encouraged, that she
might not spoil his temper. Before he was out of
swaddling clothes, he wrang off the neck of a fa-
vourite bird for singing too loud, and she patted
him on the cheek, and said he had an excellent ear
for music. On being breeched, he was appointed
the family-hangman to superannuated dogs, and
superannuery kittens; when a school-boy, he
would break bounds at the risk of having his back
slayed, to see an execution. As he grew to man-
hood, the lust for blood grew with him, till having
exhausted his genius in tormenting all the other
animals of the genus, he fixed, at last, on man.
But come, let's to the armoury.

Armstrong. And every man equip himself stoutly,
for we shall have a hot night's work.

Conrad. And if we should be caught, we shall
hang, cheek by jowl, like kites on a dove-cote, or
rats against a barn-door. No matter, lads; do your
duty, and leave the rest to fortune; though it may
not be our luck to escape the gallows, 'tis at least
in our power to deserve it, and that, to a man of
spirit, is always some consolation. Come, to the
armoury. *(Exit.)*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Baron's castle.*

Enter FITZHARDING, followed by BARON DE TRACY.

Fitzharding. The place you say is private?

Baron. Still as night.

Fitzharding. Where sight nor sound, save of
ourselves alone, can find admission?

Baron. 'Tis an hallow'd spot,
Which I have chosen for the burial place
Of all my future race.—

Fitzharding. It will do well. *[o'er,*

Baron. There, when the turmoil of my brain is
And all my senses lie benumb'd in death,
I shall sleep soundly.—

Fitzharding. Ay, and quickly, too. *(Aside.)*

Baron. There, too, my wife,—for I have raised
to her

As proud a monument as art could fashion,—
Instead of the vast ocean's stormy bed,
Should in the silent confines of cold marble
Have crumbled quietly.

Fitzharding. It is a place
Meet for our bus'ness. When the bell hath toll'd,
We will repair to that sequester'd spot,
Where, under heav'n's attesting eye alone,
We will perform a deed,—which being done,
You are a man again.

Baron. Accomplish that,
And name your recompense.

Fitzharding. For shame, my lord;
A pious act remunerates itself;
Or, if it did not, my reward is fix'd
Beyond the utmost reach of human pow'r
To give or take away. *(Music without.)*

Baron. What sounds are these?

Fitzharding. Minstrels, if I may guess.

Enter a Vassal.

Vassal. Three vagrant harpers,
Who carry in their looks long fast and travel,
Beg for refreshment and a night's repose. *[drink.*

Baron. We are engaged. Go give them food and
And speed them on their journey.

Fitzharding. Nay, my lord,
Do not, however weightily inclin'd,
Forget the laws of hospitality:
They are a people, harmless at the worst,
And often entertaining; and they claim,

From long establish'd custom, as their charter,
Such entertainment, as the truly great
Bestow on humble ingenuity.

I pray you give them audience.

Baron. Be it so. [Exit Vassal.]

Fitzharding. They are the only records of the time;
And many a sad and merry chronicle,
Worthy the note of all posterity,
But for the kindling spirit of their strings,
Would sleep for ever in oblivion.

Enter three Robbers, disguised as Minstrels.
From what country, friends!

1 Min. From the north, father.

Fitzharding. Whither bound?

1 Min. For that

We trust to fortune. But the day being spent,
We would your debtors be for a night's lodging.
Such minstrelsy as our rude skill can touch
Shall be our thanks.

Baron. 'Tis well. We listen to you.

GLEE.—*Minstrels.*

Hark! the curfew's solemn sound

Silent darkness spreads around;

Heavy it beats on the lover's heart,

Who leaves, with a sigh, his tale half told.

The poring monk and his book must part;

And fearful the miser locks up his gold.

Now, whilst labour sleeps, and charmed sorrow;

O'er the dewy green,

By the glow-worm's light,

Dance the elves of night,

Unheard, unseen.

Yet where their midnight pranks have been

The circled turf will betray to-morrow.

Baron. They have perform'd it with no vulgar
taste or common execution.

Enter a Vassal.

Well, what now?

Vassal. The woman whom you sent for is with-
out, and waits your further orders.

Baron. Bring her before us.— [Exit Vassal.]
Stand back awhile. (To the Minstrels.)

This urgent business speedily despatch'd,
We'll task you further. (The Minstrels retire.)

'Tis the prophetess,
Whom you, no doubt, have heard of.

Fitzharding. Tho' not giv'n

To note the fleeting rumours of the time,
Some strange and wild reports of such a person,
Have reach'd our convent.

Enter MATILDA.

Baron. Now observe her, then.

Woman, stand forth, and answer to our charge.
The universal cry is loud against you
For practis'd witchcraft. The consuming plagues
Of murrain, blight, and mildew, that make vain
The peasant's labour, blasting his full hopes,
Are laid to your account; they charge, moreover,
Your skill in noxious herbs, and ev'ry weed
Of pois'nous growth, the teeming earth is rank with,
Fatal to man and beast: that these collecting
By the full moon, with wicked industry,
You do apply to hellish purposes;—

To shrink up the sound limb, and, with a touch,
Plant wrinkles on the blooming cheek of youth.
This is not all: they urge most vehemently,
That you usurp the night's solemnity
For deeds of darkness, horrible to think of!
That, when the yawning church-yards vomit forth
The grisly troops of fiends, that haunt the night,
You have been heard to mutter mischief with them,
Dancing around a pile of dead men's bones
To your own howling; and, with hideous yells,
Invoking curses for the coming day.
How answer you to this?

Matilda. That it is false.

Fitzharding. You answer boldly, woman.

Matilda. Holy father,

I answer with the voice of innocence.

That I enjoy the silent hour of night,
And shun the noisy tumult of the day;
Prize the pale moon beyond the solar blaze,
And choose to meditate while others sleep.
If these be crimes, I am most culpable.
For, from the inmost feeling of my soul,
I love the awful majesty sublime
Of nature in her stillness. To o'erlook,
Fix'd on some bleak and barren promontory,
The wide, interminable waste of waves;
To gaze upon the star-wrought firmament
Till mine eyes ache with wonder; these are joys
I gather undisturb'd. The day's delights
I am proscrib'd; and, if I venture forth
To taste the morning's freshness, I am star'd at
As one of nature's strangest prodigies.

At my unmeasur'd step, and rude attire,
'The speechless babe is taught to point the finger;
And unbreech'd urchins hoot me as I pass,
And drive me to the shelter of my cottage.
The very dogs are taught to bark at me!
But to your charge: I am accus'd most wrongly
Of having both the faculty and will [ness]
T' infest the earth with plagues, and man with sick-
Of holding converse with superior beings.
Why, what a mockery of sense is this?
It is the wildest stuff of folly's dreams,
That I, possessing super-human pow'r,
Should thus submit to human agency;
And, being brought by your rude vassals here,
Stand to be judg'd by man!

Fitzharding. That's shrewdly put.

This is no common woman. (To the Baron.)

Baron. Hear her further. [time]

Matilda. Yet have I not consum'd the lapse of
In fruitless musing—something I can do,
Of mine own pow'r—for other I have none,
Of which the mention may create a smile,
A sneering smile of infidel contempt,
But whose performance would convert you all
Into the bloodless forms of staring statues.
Have you a dear, departed relative,
A buried friend, still living in your hearts,
Whom in their earthly and corporeal state
You would behold again?

Baron. Woman, beware!

Matilda. Thy wife, shall I revive her? Speak!

Baron. Away! [to thee!]

Matilda. Be she in heav'n or hell, I'll bring her
Scatter'd throughout the ocean, I'll reknit
Her sea-bleach'd bones, put living flesh upon them;
Light up her eyeless sockets with twin stars;
Bid the warm blood rush through her kindling veins,
And her heart beat with new-created life:
A breathing woman she shall stand before thee;
And thou, in freezing horror and amazement,
Shalt look more like a corpse unshrouded.

Fitzharding. Nay, my lord,
You let the wild words of this foolish beldam,
Take too strong a hold upon you.

Matilda. I have promis'd, sir;
And to the very height of expectation,
I will fulfil my pledge.

Enter a Vassal with FLORENCE.

Baron. Who have you there? [cottage.]

Vassal. A lad, whom we found lurking at the
Fitzharding. 'Tis time to end this foolery. (Aside.)

Baron. Speak, boy:

What led you to the dwelling of that woman?

Florence. I had heard mention of her wondrous
In divination, and I sorely long'd [skill]

To put her to the proof; for I myself
Can tell of things to come; command that no one
Stir from this spot, till I have told my story.

Fitzharding. What can this mean? (Aside.)
My lord, you will not hear him?

He hath confess'd himself to be inspir'd,
Which, by the tenor of the law, is death.

Florence. Forbear a moment, I will tell you that
Shall make your blood start back upon your heart,

And all your senses pause, entranc'd with wonder.—
To-night, to-night—

Baron. What will befall to-night? [hatching,
Florence. Nay, at this moment, a foul plot is
Whose birth will be the death of all thine house.
Thy castle walls, breaking their peaceful silence,
Ere the cock crow, will shriek to rape and murder.
I say, this very hour, almost before
The bell of night breaks off the gossip's tale,
A fierce banditti will besiege your castle.
Look to the northern gate, for there they'll enter.

Fitzharding. Peace, heedless prophet! I will
hear no more;

It is a scandal to my holy office,
A miserable waste of precious time,
And an enormous blasphemy against reason,
To listen to the lunatic discourse
Of this audacious boy.

Florence. Why, holy father,
I didn't say thy cloak conceal'd a villain;
Tho' saintly outsiders sometimes mask foul hearts;
But for those minstrels yonder, you will find
They are not what they seem.

Baron. Search them.

(*They strip off the Robbers' disguise.*)

Fitzharding. All's lost!
Curse on the hag, how narrowly she eyes me!

(*Observing Matilda looking at him.*)

Matilda. Some villain, on my life? (*Aside.*)

Florence. What think you now, sir? (*To Fitz.*)

Fitzharding. I am struck mute with wonder!

Matilda. With strong guilt. (*Aside.*)

(*They bring forward the Robbers.*)

Baron. Speak, wretches, or the torture shall
Who and what you are. [wring from ye
1 *Rob.* Let your prophet tell you. 'Tis bad
policy when rogues betray each other; but he
must be a fool, indeed, that turns evidence against
himself.

2 *Rob.* That we come upon no charitable des-
ign, our present appearance speaks; that's all the
information you'll get from me.

3 *Rob.* Or from me.

Baron. Take them away, and watch them care-
fully. [*Exeunt Robbers.*]

What have you more to tell us? (*To Florence.*)

Florence. Nothing, sir.

Baron. How!

Florence. For your safety I have said enough.
Should I more circumstantially relate
The means which I have possess'd me of this secret,
I may betray myself. Urge me no further:
What I have said will happen. My tir'd spirits
Have need of rest. [bidding.]

Baron. (*To the Vassals.*) Attend, and wait his

Florence. One thing I had forgot: amongst the
That will beset your castle, there is one, [hand
A tall, fresh-colour'd youth; his curling hair
Black as the raven; but the truest mark
That shall denote him to you, is a scar
On his right cheek.

Matilda. My son! (*Aside.*)

Florence. Upon your lives,
Touch not a hair of him. As you would shun
The pangs of deep contrition, and remorse
Indelible, have mercy on that youth.
You shall know more hereafter. [*Exit with Vassals.*]

Baron. Isn't that strange? (*To Fitzharding.*)

Fitzharding. Most wonderful!—That may re-
cover all. (*Aside.*)

Baron. There must be something in it. For
this woman,
Whom vulgar clamour only hath accus'd,
And no particular grievance, she is free.

Matilda. Touching my skill to raise again the dead,
You shall have full conviction.

Baron. Well, to-morrow.

Matilda. Perhaps to-night.

This priest and I must have some conference.

[*Aside.*—*Exit with Vassals.*]

Baron. To-night! What can she mean?

Fitzharding. Some things I've studied;

But I profess not to interpret woman

Baron. I am confounded with these myste-
ries. [not apt]

Fitzharding. Why, 'tis a night of riddles! Tho'
To trust foreboding tales of dreaming wizards,
And quake myself into an ague-fit,
When toothless hags have mumbled prophecies,
I cannot choose but wonder.

Baron. 'Tis most clear
Some foul play is intended.

Fitzharding. I'm afraid so. [truth]

Baron. I'll have those minstrels rack'd until the
Be forc'd from their keen tortures.

Fitzharding. Hold, my lord!

No doubt they have deserv'd the sharpest justice:
But they are stubborn villains, men of steel;
Who, with clenched teeth, will smile at your in-
And mock your bloody executioner. [flitions,
Or, if they should confess, would you believe them?
Truth is not to be torn from tortur'd limbs:
Its dwelling is the heart; and he who knows
Deepest to sound the heart, has found the key to't.

Have you not heard of most abandon'd wretches,
Desprate as savage beasts in their wild courses,
Dead to all punishment of pain or shame,
Who, in a dark and solitary cell,
Whence stern reflection will not be shut out,
And the persuasive rhetoric of the church,
Have felt compunction creep upon their natures,
And melting into penitence and shame,
Unbosom'd all their guilt? Such men are these:
Leave them to my discretion: presently,
I'll bring you the full scope of their intents;
Or else the wide spread fame I have acquir'd
For holy influence o'er the minds of men,
Is built on no foundation.

Baron. You shall try them.

Fitzharding. I'll touch their conscience to the
quick, depend on't:
There is a sacred something here within,
Whispers a prosperous issue.

Baron. Speed you well.

I will but give directions to my vassals,
And here attend you.

Fitzharding. You may soon expect me.

[*Exit Baron.*]

So constant spirits draw safety from their dangers.
Re-enter MATILDA.

This woman still.—Your business? I'm in haste
Matilda. No friar art thou,
Fitzharding. If not, what is't to thee?
Matilda. It is a lonely spot that you have chosen
For a mysterious work.

Fitzharding. 'Twill suit the purpose.

Matilda. A ruffian hour.—What holy purpose is't,
That the sun must not look upon?

Fitzharding. A deed,
That better suits the winking eye of night. [looks.

Matilda. Some horrid meaning lives in your dark
I mark'd you at th' unmasking of the minstrels:
It was not mere surprise that shook you through,
But the strong stir of guilty apprehension
That trembled in the paleness of your cheek,
And fix'd you horror-struck.

Fitzharding. I am their captain.

You know me now—But build not upon that—
Your son—

Matilda. What of him?

Fitzharding. Safe within my gripe
He pants an easy prey. Observe me well:—
We hold him on strong grounds, a recreant traitor
To this night's enterprize; which, if it fail—
If by design or chance (no matter which)
Aught lights on me untoward to my hopes,
He dies on the instant.

Fitzharding. I am their captain.

You know me now—But build not upon that—
Your son—

Matilda. What of him?

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To this night's enterprize; which, if it fail—
If by design or chance (no matter which)
Aught lights on me untoward to my hopes,
He dies on the instant.

Fitzharding. I am their captain.

As for this foolish baron and his fate,
'Tis not within the compass of thy spells :
For vainly seeking to enfranchise him,
You will yourself entangle. Keep aloof ;
Home to your hovel and your housewifery ;
And when the bell of night has toll'd his summons,
Keep not abroad : there will be mischief stirring,
Which 'twill behove thee better to avoid
Than pry into.

Thy son, remember, lie but draws his breath
Whilst I walk harmless. Home, and be advis'd.
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.—SCENE I.—*The dark part of the Forest.
The Curfew is heard tolling at a distance.*

Enter ARMSTRONG, CONRAD, and a Robber.

Armstrong. All's dark as pitch.
Rob. And still as death. You may hear the
falling of a leaf. As we passed the gallows of Rodolpho,
methought he muttered vengeance.

Armstrong. Ay, lads, for his sake give no quarter.
Remember they are Normans who have spoiled us
of our inheritance, and chased us into this forest ;
where, like wolves, they have set a price upon
our heads.

Conrad. That's out of compliment to our understandings :
'tis not every man's head that will bear to have
a price set upon it.

Armstrong. Are we worried like beasts, and shall we
not turn upon our hunters? Remember, I say, they are
Normans, and spare not.

Conrad. Right, noble commander! If, after tomorrow's
sun-rise, a flea be seen to hop in the castle, or there
be left life in an unhatched egg, 'twill be a slovenly
performance.

Armstrong. Hark! Who comes?

1 Rob. (Without.) Nay, answer you.

Armstrong. Oswald?

Enter the three Robbers from the Castle.

1 Rob. The same. Well met, lads.

Armstrong. Have you been discovered, then?

1 Rob. Yes; but the captain remains snug, and will
redeem everything. The bell has gone; the whole
village lies in a profound sleep; the Baron is lulled
into security, and our game is a sure one. Follow
me, and you shall learn the rest as we proceed.

Armstrong. On then. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Chapel, in the midst of which appears a tomb.*

Enter BARON DE TRACY and FITZHARDING.

Baron. This is the place.

Fitzharding. Are we secure from interruption?

Baron. None, on their lives, dare enter.

Fitzharding. It is well.

The silent melancholy of this spot

Will suit our ceremony.

Baron. And the moon, [brightness,

When from the clouds which now oppress her
She breaks into full majesty again,

Will shed a solemn lustre o'er our purpose.

Fitzharding. We need not wait for her.

Baron. Now, then, unfold

Why with such mystic preparation,

At this dark hour and unfrequented spot,

We are alone together?

Fitzharding. Can you doubt?

Your crime was murder; and it has been said,

"Blood will have blood!"

Baron. What mean you?

Fitzharding. Such a deed

Cries for no common penance: whining pray'rs,

Self-castigation; wasting abstinence;

A galling pilgrimage twice round the world;

Your wealth, whilst living, all consum'd in alms;

Or left, when dead, to raise up hospitals:

These things will not absolve you from an act,

Which has but one atonement.

Baron. Name it.

Fitzharding. Death! (*Discovers himself.*)

Baron. Ha!—What art thou? Some villain in
disguise? [be thy knell.]

Fitzharding. Stir not, nor raise thy voice; 'twill
Has time defac'd me with so rude a hand,
That you have forgot me?

Baron. Speak! who are you?

Fitzharding. D'ye know me now?
(*Stripping his arm.*)

Baron. Fitzharding, and alive?

Fitzharding. I am no apparition. Look again!

If your eyes doubt it, you shall feel me soon.

The woman promis'd you to raise the dead;

I have perform'd it.

Baron. Wonder-working pow'rs!

Yet wherefore do we meet as enemies?

Fitzharding. Wherefore?

I think thou art the self-same man, [troop

Who, some time since, in Normandy, a valiant

Commanded; into which, being then a boy,

In a wild fit of spleen, I madly enter'd,

And of the meanest soldier bore the toil.

In angry mood, once, publicly thou gav'st me

Some sharp rebuke, which I as sharply answer'd;

For this, didst thou condemn me to be branded

As the most common felon, with a spirit

Unworthy of a soldier—nay, a man—

A sullen, savage sensuality

Of vengeance. In the public market-place,

Beneath the full blaze of a mid-day sun,

Where all the scum and rabble of the place,

By ling'ring preparation, were collected

To make their vulgar comments: there it was

This badge of infamy was fix'd upon me! [it.

Baron. It was a galling wrong; but thou forgav'st

Fitzharding. I seemingly forgave it. Thou be-

liev'dst me;

And when thou held'st me to thy cred'lous breast,

I did not strangle thee. We drunk together,

And still I mix'd no poison with thy wine.

Alone, at midnight, o'er a dreary heath

Have we pass'd; on the extremest verge

Of a sea-impending cliff, yet I abstain'd.

Ask me why, thus so often strangely tempted,

I have withlied the blow? 'Twas not in mercy.

Say, was not this an honourable scar

(*Stripping his arm.*)

To stamp upon a young and gallant soldier?

A shame which on my body is so fix'd,

That I must be half rotted in my grave

Ere death can cancel it.—Thou thought'st me dead,

And so I was to all but my revenge. [ber,

The man whom thou didst find in thy wife's cham-

ber—Was I! The letters sent to thee were mine;

And often, under terrible affliction, [chiding,

When thou hast bow'd to heaven's mysterious

This arm, like thunder from a cloud, has reach'd

Baron. And are you not content? [thee.

Fitzharding. No jot appears'd!

Tho' I should kill thee with extremest torture,

To 'suage the burning thirst of my revenge;

Drink thy blood life-warm; tear those trembling

limbs,

And scatter them as whirlwinds strew the dust;

'Mid the triumphant paintings of my soul, [tal.

Vengeance would weep to think thy pangs were mor-

Think'st thou thy life (for thou must quickly die)

Will make me reparation?

Baron. Spare it, then. [mercy;]

Fitzharding. Thou hast no reasonable hope for

Thou canst not have; for when on my behalf

Petitions throng'd, thou, with a sneer, replied,

'He shall have justice!' Justice, then, o'ertake thee.

Baron. Help! Murder! Villain! Help!

(*He is pursued by Fitzharding.—Matilda,
from the tomb, interposes between them.*)

Fitzharding. What art thou? Speak!

The real existence of a living woman;

Or but the mind's creation of a form,

That night and this occasion conjure up,

To fright me from my steady resolution?

It has no human faculty of speech;
And cannot from that attitude relax,
To which 'tis spell-bound.

(*She strikes with her foot, and some of the Vassals enter.*)

Foil'd at last!

And by a woman! [hence.]

Matilda. Seize on that ruffian, and convey him
Fitzharding. Well, well, the night's not over!

[*The Vassals bear him off.*]

Matilda. Yet amaz'd? [To the Baron.]

Baron. My flesh creeps still, and my uncurdling
Slowly and fearfully resumes its functions. [blood
Whate'er thou art, mortal or blessed spirit,
Thy voice familiar doth proclaim the first;
But the strange apparition of that form,
Almost persuades the other; who within
The sanctuary of that hallow'd spot intomb'd thet,
That, at the very crisis of my fate,
Thou shouldst burst forth, in terrible array,
To stagger resolute murder, and make reel
Destruction back upon itself?

Matilda. Survey me.

I am the very substance of that form,
Whose apparition I do only feign.
The woman, whom you least expect to meet;
That once you dearly lov'd, now deeply mourn;
That you would most desire, yet least dare hope
Now stands before you. [for;

Baron. If 'twere possible—

Matilda. What, that among so many sinking souls,
One should be sav'd?

Baron. Remembrance steals upon me:
The look, the voice—Yes, yes; thou art my wife!
And the wild waves were merciful.

Matilda. Speak for me,

The silent rapture of these starting tears,
These arms, that eager open to enfold thee,
And clasp thee with more transport to my heart
Than from the roaring sea, they snatch'd our child.

[*They embrace.*]

Baron. This is to live anew! Our son survives,

Matilda. He lives, but— [too?

Baron. What? Proceed—

[*Enter a Vassal.*]

The matter, sir?

Vassal. My lord, the castle is attack'd.

Matilda. Fear nothing:

I have prepar'd your vassals to receive them.

Baron. I will myself among them; in the mean-
Within the friendly covert of the tomb, [time,
Rest you secur'd, till the rude conflict's past.

Matilda. That must not be; I will along with you;
For what remains to do, may want my help.

Baron. Come, let us on, then. [Exit.

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in the castle.*

*A skirmish between the Vassals and the Robbers,
who are driven back, and pursued.*

Enter ROBERT, pursued by BARON DE TRACY.

Baron. Then yield thee, villain!

[*They fight. Robert is overcome, and falls. The Baron is on the point of killing him, when MATILDA enters.*]

Matilda. Forbear! it is thy son!

Robert. My father!

Baron. Holy pow'rs!

Matilda. Disown him not:

Tho' he appear in this rude character,
He is no reprobate confirm'd.

Baron. My son! [*They embrace.*]

Robert. In this the hand of heav'n is most miracu-
Had I ne'er fall'n into this deep disgrace. [lous!
Destruction would, ere this, have whelm'd you all.
The arrow, which I shot into the castle—

Baron. Well, what of that?

Robert. It bore the full intent
Of our dark enterprize.

Baron. Indeed!

Robert. Most truly. [riddled! (*Aside.*)]

Baron. Why, then, the priest's confusion is un-

It was well meant; but, by a subtle turn,
Which you shall know hereafter, miss'd its object.

But see, our prisoners—

*FITZHARDING, and the rest of the Robbers, are
brought in by the Vassals, headed by BERTRAND.*
Thou unhappy man! [To Fitzharding.]

Who, by thine own deep malice, art betray'd,
What answer wilt thou make to justice?

Fitzharding. None:

For nothing of my purpose, but it's failure,
Do I repent.

Baron. Will't live, and be my friend? [my.

Fitzharding. Never! whilst I can die thine ene-
What you have made me, still expect to find me:
A man, struck from the common roll of men;
Exil'd from all society; stamp'd like Cain,
To wander savage and forlorn; why, then,
Revenge he still my solitary comfort;
By darkness and by daylight, my companion,
My food, my sleep, my study, and my pastime;
Pulse of my heart, and life of all my being:
For till you can divorce me from myself,
Or, put another soul into this body,
You may as soon enthrone the fires of heav'n,
Or shake the rooted earth from its foundation,
As alter me. Your friendship I disdau;
Despise your pow'r. My life I value not;
For when you stabb'd my fame, you murder'd that
Which honourable men call life,—the glow
Of young ambition; the high-swelling hope
Of present glory, and renown immortal.
Beauty's soul thrilling smile, the social joys
Of kindling friendship. Out upon this softness!
Come, lead me to the solace of a dungeon,
Where I may curse him privately. [Exit.

Matilda. How fix'd

And unrelenting in his enmity! [rest—

Baron. He may be wrought on yet. But for the
To-morrow we will speak to them again.

[*Exit Robbers and Vassals.*]

Bertrand, your hand. I thank you for this ser-
Which shall not lack requital. [vice,

[*Enter FLORENCE.*]

My deliverer! [zard?

Florence. Am I a babbler now? A prating wi-
Is fire or miry pool to be my portion?

Baron. Look round my wide domain with curious
Whatever is most precious in thy sight, [eye;
There pause, and ask it boldly.

Florence. Oh! beware, sir;

My wishes may be wilder than the dreams
Of dotting avarice. I may demand
This princely habitation; or, perhaps—

Baron. Ask what you will, by holy heav'n I
It shall be granted freely. [swear,

Florence. Then I fix

On this your humble vassal.

Here I kneel [Takes Bertrand's hand.]

And beg a father's, and (for I have heard
The strange and tender tale) a mother's blessing.

Baron. Florence?

Florence. It is, indeed, sir.

Baron. Rise, my girl!

Let me, in my daughter, clasp my preserver.

Florence. Your child was your preserver; but
not I, sir.

Being made pris'ner by that rude banditti,
I was deliver'd to my brother's hands
For sacrifice; but inly touch'd with pity,
As if instinctive nature held his hand,
He brought me thro' the dangers of the forest,
Safe from that horrid cavern: there it was
I learnt to be a prophet.

Baron. Still new wonders!

The sister by the brother's hand preserv'd,
The husband by the wife's! Is there aught else?
Or, have we reach'd, at length, the farthest maze
Of this eventful night? Come, let us in, then;
And, as we shake amazement from our senses,
Discourse more fully on these prodigies. [Exit.

THE CASTLE SPECTRE;

A DRAMATIC ROMANCE IN FIVE ACTS.—BY M. G. LEWIS.



Act IV.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

OSMOND	MOTLEY	MULEY	HAROLD
REGINALD	KENRIC	ALARIC	ANGELA
PERCY	SAIB	ALLAN	ALICE
FATHER PHILIP	HASSAN	EDRIC	EVELINA

ACT I.—SCENE I. A Grove.

Enter FATHER PHILIP and MOTLEY through a gate.

F. Phil. Never tell me. I repeat it, you are a fellow of a very scandalous course of life. But what principally offends me is, that you pervert the minds of the maids, and keep kissing and smuggling all the pretty girls you meet. Oh! fie! fie!

Mot. I kiss and smuggle them? St. Francis forbid! Lord love you, Father, 'tis they who kiss and smuggle me. I protest I do what I can to preserve my modesty; and I wish that Archbishop Dunstan had heard the lecture upon chastity which I read last night to the dairy-maid in the dark; he'd have been quite edified. But yet what does talking signify? The eloquence of my lips is counteracted by the lustre of my eyes; and really, the little devils are so tender, and so troublesome, that I'm half angry with nature for having made me so very bewitching.

F. Phil. Nonsense! nonsense!

Mot. Put yourself in my place. Suppose that a sweet, smiling rogue, just sixteen, with rosy cheeks, sparkling eyes, pouting lips, &c.—

F. Phil. Oh! fie! fie! fie! To hear such licentious discourse brings the tears into my eyes!

Mot. I believe you, Father; for I see the water is running over at your mouth; which puts me in mind, my good Father, that there are some little points which might be altered in you still better than in myself: such as intemperance, gluttony—

F. Phil. Gluttony! Oh! abominable falsehood!

Mot. Plain matter of fact! Why, will any man pretend to say that you came honestly by that enormous belly, that tremendous tomb of fish,

flesh, and fowl? And, for incontinence, you must allow yourself, that you are unequalled.

F. Phil. I!—I!—

Mot. You; you. May I ask what was your business in the beech-grove, the other evening, when I caught you with buxom Margery, the miller's pretty wife? Was it quite necessary to lay your heads together so close?

F. Phil. Perfectly necessary: I was whispering in her ear wholesome advice, and she took it as kindly as I gave it.

Mot. So you was, faith! Father; you gave it with your lips, and she took it with her's. Well done, Father Philip!

F. Phil. Son, son, you give your tongue too great a license.

Mot. Nay, Father, be not angry: fools, you know, are privileged persons.

F. Phil. I know they are very useless ones; and, in short, master Motley, to be plain with you, of all fools I think you the worst; and for fools of all kinds I've an insuperable aversion.

Mot. Really! Then you have one good quality at least, and I cannot but admire such a total want of self-love! (*Bell rings.*) But, hark! there goes the dinner-bell. Away to table, Father. Depend upon't, the servants will rather eat *part* of their dinner unblest, than stay 'till your stomach comes, like *Jonas's* whale, and swallows up the *whole*.

F. Phil. Well, well, fool; I am going; but first let me explain to you that my bulk proceeds from no indulgence of voracious appetite. No, son, no. Little sustenance do I take; but St. Cuthbert's blessing is upon me, and that little prospers with

me most marvelously. Verily, the saint has given me rather too plentiful an increase, and my legs are scarce able to support the weight of his bounties. [Exit.]

Mot. He looks like an overgrown turtle, waddling upon its hind fins. Yet, at bottom, 'tis a good fellow enough; warm-hearted, benevolent, friendly, and sincere; but no more intended by nature to be a monk, than I to be a maid of honour to the Queen of Sheba. (*Going.*)

Enter PERCY.

Per. I cannot be mistaken. In spite of his dress, his features are too well known to me. Hist! Gilbert! Gilbert!

Mot. Gilbert? Oh Lord! that's I!—Who calls?

Per. Have you forgotten me?

Mot. Truly, sir, that would be no easy matter; I never forgot in my life what I never knew.

Per. Have ten years altered me so much, that you cannot—

Mot. Eh!—can it be? Pardon me, my dear Lord Percy. In truth, you may well forgive my having forgotten your name, for at first I didn't very well remember my own. However, to prevent further mistakes, I must inform you, that he, who in your father's service was Gilbert the knave, is Motley the fool in the service of Earl Osmond.

Per. Of Earl Osmond! This is fortunate, Gilbert, you may be of use to me; and if the attachment which, as a boy, you professed for me still exists—

Mot. It does, with ardour unabated; for I'm not so unjust as to attribute to you my expulsion from Alwrick-castle. But now, sir, may I ask, what brings you to Wales?

Per. A woman whom I adore.

Mot. Yes, I guessed that the business was about a petticoat. And this woman is—

Per. The orphan ward of a villager, without friends, without family, without fortune!

Mot. Great points in her favour, I must confess. And which of these excellent qualities won your heart?

Per. I hope I had better reasons for bestowing it on her. No, Gilbert; I loved her for a person beautiful without art, and graceful without affectation; for a heart tender without weakness, and noble without pride. I saw her at once beloved and revered by her village companions; they looked on her as a being of a superior order: and I felt that she, who gave such dignity to the cottage maid, must needs add new lustre to the coronet of the Percies.

Mot. From which I am to understand, that you mean to marry this rustic?

Per. Could I mean otherwise, I should blush for myself.

Mot. Yet surely the baseness of her origin—

Per. Can to me be no objection: in giving her my hand, I raise her to my station, not debase myself to her's; nor ever, while gazing on the beauty of a rose, did I think it less fair because planted by a peasant.

Mot. Bravo!—And what says your good grumbling father to this?

Per. Alas! he has long slept in the grave.

Mot. Then he's quiet at last! Well, heaven grant him that peace above, which he suffered nobody to enjoy below. But what obstacle now prevents your marriage?

Per. You shall hear.—Fearful lest my rank should influence this lovely girl's affections, and induce her to bestow her hand on the noble, while she refused her heart to the man, I assumed a peasant's habit, and presented myself as Edwy the low-born and the poor. In this character I gained her heart, and resolved to hail, as Countess of Northumberland, the betrothed of Edwy the low-born and the poor. Judge, then, how great must have been my disappointment, when, on entering her guardian's cottage with this design, he informed me,

that the unknown, who sixteen years before had conformed her to his care, had reclaimed her on that very morning, and conveyed her no one knew whither.

Mot. That was unlucky.

Per. However, in spite of his precautions, I have traced the stranger's course, and find him to be Kenric, a dependant upon Earl Osmond.

Mot. Surely 'tis not lady Angela, who—

Per. The very same. Speak, my good fellow: do you know her?

Mot. Not by your description; for here she's understood to be the daughter of Sir Malcolm Mowbray, my master's deceased friend. And what is your present intention?

Per. To demand her of the Earl in marriage.

Mot. Oh! that will never do: for, in the first place, you'll not be able to get a sight at him. I've now lived with him five long years; and, 'till Angela's arrival, never witnessed a guest in the castle. Oh! 'tis the most melancholy mansion! And, as to the Earl, he's the very antidote to mirth. None dare approach him, except Kenric and his four blacks; all others are ordered to avoid him; and whenever he quits his room, ding! dong! goes a great bell, and away run the servants like so many scared rabbits.

Per. Strange!—and what reasons can he have for—

Mot. Oh! reasons in plenty. You must know there's an ugly story respecting the last owners of this castle. Osmond's brother, his wife, and infant child, were murdered by banditti, as it was said: unluckily, the only servant who escaped the slaughter deposited, that he recognised among the assassins a black still in the service of Earl Osmond. The truth of this assertion was never known, for the servant was found dead in his bed the next morning.

Per. Good heavens!

Mot. Since that time, no sound of joy has been heard in Conway-castle. Osmond instantly became gloomy and ferocious. He now never utters a sound except a sigh, has broken every tie of society, and keeps his gates barred unceasingly against the stranger.

Per. Yet Angela is admitted. But no doubt affection for her father—

Mot. Why, no; I rather think that affection for her father's child—

Per. How!

Mot. If I've any knowledge in love, the Earl feels it for his fair ward; but the lady will tell you more of this, if I can procure for you an interview.

Per. The very request, which—

Mot. 'Tis no easy matter, I promise you; but I'll do my best. In the meanwhile, wait for me in yonder fishing-but: its owner's name is Edric; tell him that I sent you, and he will give you a retreat.

Per. Farewell, then; and remember, that whatever reward—

Mot. Dear master, to mention a reward insults me. You have already shewn me kindness; and when 'tis in my power to be of use to you, to need the inducement of a second favour would prove me a scoundrel undeserving of the first. [Exit.]

Per. How warm is this good fellow's attachment! Yet our barons complain that the great can have no friends. If they have none, let their own pride bear the blame. Instead of looking with scorn on those whom a smile would attract, and a favour bind for ever, how many firm friends might our nobles gain, if they would but reflect that their vassals are men as they are, and have hearts whose feelings can be grateful as their own. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—The Castle Hall.

Enter SAIB and HASSAN.

Saib. Now, Hassan; what success?

Has. My search has been fruitless. In vain have I paced the river's banks, and pierced the grove's deepest recesses. Nor glen nor thicket have I passed unexplored, yet found no stranger to whom Kenric's description could apply.

Saib. Saw you no one?

Has. A troop of horsemen passed me as I left the wood.

Saib. Horsemen, say you? Then Kenric may be right. Earl Percy has discovered Angela's abode; and lurks near the castle, in hopes of carrying her off.

Has. His hopes then will be vain. Osmond's vigilance will not easily be eluded; sharpened by those powerful motives, love and fear.

Saib. His love, I know; but should he lose Angela, what has he to fear?

Has. If Percy gain her, everything. Supported by such wealth and power, dangerous would be her claim to these domains, should her birth be discovered. Of this our lord is aware; nor did he sooner hear that Northumberland loved her, than he hastened to remove her from Allan's care. At first, I doubt his purpose was a foul one: her resemblance to her mother induced him to change it. He now is resolved to make her his bride, and restore to her those rights of which himself deprived her.

Saib. Think you the lady perceives that our master loves her?

Has. I know she does not. Absorbed in her own passion for Percy, on Osmond she bestows no thought; and, while roving through these pompous halls and chambers, sighs for the Cheviot-hills, and Allan's humble cottage.

Saib. But as she still believes Percy to be a low-born swain, when Osmond lays his coronet at her feet, will she reject his rank and splendour?

Has. If she loves well, she will. *Saib.* I too have loved. I have known how painful it was to leave her on whom my heart hung; how incapable was all else to supply her loss. I have exchanged want for plenty; fatigue for rest; a wretched hut for a splendid palace. But am I happier? O, no! Still do I regret my native land, and the partners of my poverty. Then toil was sweet to me, for I laboured for Samba! then repose ever blessed my bed of leaves; for there, by my side, lay Samba sleeping.

Saib. This from you, Hassan? Did love ever find a place in your flinty bosom?

Has. Did it? Oh, *Saib!* my heart once was gentle, once was good; but sorrows have broken it, insults have made it hard. I have been dragged from my native land; from a wife who was everything to me, to whom I was everything! Twenty years have elapsed since these Christians tore me away; they trampled upon my heart, mocked my despair, and, when in frantic terms I raved of Samba, laughed, and wondered how a negro's soul could feel. In that moment, when the last point of Africa faded from my view,—when, as I stood on the vessel's deck, I felt that all I loved was to me lost for ever—in that bitter moment, did I banish humanity from my breast. I tore from my arm the bracelet of Samba's hair; I gave to the sea the precious token; and while the high waves swift bore it from me, vowed aloud, endless hatred to mankind. I have kept my oath; I will keep it!

Saib. Ill-starred Hassan! your wrongs have indeed been great.

Has. To remember them unmans me. Farewell! I must to Kenric. Hold! Look, where he comes from Osmond's chamber.

Saib. And seemingly in wrath.

Has. His conferences with the Earl of late have had no other end. The period of his favour is arrived.

Saib. Not of his favour merely, Hassan.

Has. How! Mean you that—

Saib. Silence! He's here! you shall know more anon.

Enter KENRIC.

Ken. Ungrateful Osmond, I will bear your ingratitude no longer. Now, Hassan, found you the man described?

Has. Nor any that resembled him.

Ken. Yet, that I saw Percy, I am convinced. As I crossed him in the wood, his eye met mine. He started as had he seen a basilisk, and fled with rapidity. But I will submit no longer to this painful dependance. To-morrow, for the last time, will I summon him to perform his promise: if he refuse, I will bid him farewell for ever; and, by my absence, free him from a restraint equally irksome to myself and him.

Saib. Will you so, Kenric? Be speedy then, or you will be too late.

Ken. Too late! And wherefore?

Saib. You will soon receive the reward of your services.

Ken. Ha! Know you what the reward will be?

Saib. I guess,—but may not tell.

Ken. Is it a secret?

Saib. Can you keep one?

Ken. Faithfully.

Saib. As faithfully can I. Come, Hassan. [*Exeunt.*]

Ken. What meant the slave? Those doubtful expressions—Ha! should the Earl intend me false! Kenric! Kenric! how is thy nature changed! There was a time when fear was a stranger to my bosom; when guiltless myself, I dreaded not art in others. Now, where'er I turn me, danger appears to lurk; and I suspect treachery in every breast, because my own heart hides it. [*Exit.*]

Enter FATHER PHILIP, followed by ALICE.

F. Phil. Nonsense! You silly woman; what you say is not possible.

Alice. I never said it was possible: I only said it was true; and that if ever I heard music, I heard it last night.

F. Phil. Perhaps the Fool was singing to the servants.

Alice. The Fool, indeed! Oh! fie! fie! How dare you call my lady's ghost a fool?

F. Phil. Your lady's ghost! You silly old woman!

Alice. Yes, Father, yes; I repeat it, I heard the guitar, lying upon the oratory table, play the very air which the lady Evelina used to sing while rocking her little daughter's cradle. She warbled it so sweetly, and ever at the close it went—(*Singing.*)

"Lullaby! Lullaby! hush thee, my dear!

Thy father is coming, and soon will be here!"

F. Phil. Nonsense! Nonsense! Why, pr'ythee, *Alice*, do you think that your lady's ghost would get up at night only to sing lullaby for your amusement? Besides, how should a spirit, which is nothing but air, play upon an instrument of material wood and catgut?

Alice. How can I tell?—Why, I know very well that men are made; but if you desired me to make a man, I vow and protest I shouldn't know how to set about it. I can only say, that last night I heard the ghost of my murdered lady—

F. Phil. Playing upon the spirit of a cracked guitar! *Alice!* *Alice!* these fears are ridiculous! The idea of ghosts is a vulgar prejudice; and they, who are timid and absurd enough to encourage it, prove themselves the most contemptible—

Alice. (*Screaming.*) Oh! Lord bless us!

F. Phil. What?—Eh!—Oh! dear!

Alice. Look! look!—A figure in white!—It comes from the haunted room!

F. Phil. (*Dropping on his knees.*) Blessed St. Patrick!—Who has got my beads? Where's my prayer-book?—It comes!—It comes! Now! now!—Lack-a-day! it's only lady Angela! (*Rising.*) Lack-a-day! I am glad of it with all my heart!

Alice. Truly so am I.—But what say you now, Father, to the fear of spectres?

F. Phil. Why, the next time you are afraid of a ghost, remember and make use of the receipt which I shall now give you; and instead of calling for a priest to lay the spirits of other people in the red sea, call for a bottle of red wine to raise your own. *Probatum est.* [*Exit.*]

Alice. Wine, indeed!—I believe he thinks I like drinking as well as himself. No, no: let the old toping friar take his bottle of wine; I shall confine myself to plain cherry brandy.

Enter ANGELA.

Ang. I am weary of wandering from room to room; in vain do I change the scene, discontent is everywhere. There was a time, when music could delight my ear, and nature could charm my eye—when I could pour forth a prayer of gratitude, and thank my good angels for a day unclouded by sorrow. Now, all is gone, all lost, all faded! (*Aside.*)

Alice. Lady!

Ang. Perhaps at this moment he thinks upon me. Perhaps then he sighs, and murmurs to himself, "The flowers, the rivulets, the birds, every object reminds me of my well-beloved; but what shall remind her of Edwy?"—Oh! that will my heart, Edwy; I need no other remembrancer. (*Aside.*)

Alice. Lady! lady Angela! She minds me no more than a post.

Ang. Oh! are you there, good Alice? What would you with me?

Alice. Only ask how your ladyship rested?

Ang. Ill; very ill.

Alice. Lack-a-day! and yet you sleep in the best bed!

Ang. True, good Alice; but my heart's anguish strewed thorns upon my couch of down.

Alice. Marry! I'm not surprised that you rested ill in the cedar-room. Those noises so near you—

Ang. What noises? I heard none.

Alice. How?—When the clock struck one, heard you no music?

Ang. Music!—None.—Not that I—Stay; now I remember, that while I sat alone in my chamber this morning—

Alice. Well, lady, well!

Ang. Methought I heard some one singing; it seemed as if the words ran thus:—(*Singing*) "Lullaby! Lullaby! lush thee, my dear!"

Alice. (*Screaming.*) The very words!—It was the ghost, lady! it was the ghost!

Ang. The ghost, Alice! I protest I thought it had been you.

Alice. Me, lady! Lord! when did you hear this singing?

Ang. Not five minutes ago; while you were talking with Father Philip.

Alice. The lord be thanked!—Then it was not the ghost. It was I, lady! It was I!—And have you heard no other singing since you came to the castle?

Ang. None. But why that question?

Alice. Because, lady—But perhaps you may be frightened?

Ang. No, no!—Proceed, I entreat you.

Alice. Why, then, they do say, that the chamber in which you sleep is haunted. You may have observed two folding doors, which are ever kept locked: they lead to the oratory, in which the lady Evelina passed most of her time, while my lord was engaged in the Scottish wars. She would sit there, good soul! hour after hour, playing on the lute, and singing airs so sweet, so sad, that many a time and oft have I wept to hear her. Ah! when I kissed her hand at the castle-gate, little did I suspect that her fate would have been so wretched.

Ang. And what was her fate?

Alice. A sad one, lady! Impatient to embrace her lord, after a year's absence, the Countess set out to meet him on his return from Scotland, accompanied by a few domestics and her infant daughter, then scarce a twelvemonth old. But, as she returned with her husband, robbers surprised the party scarce a mile from the castle; and, since that time, no news has been received of the Earl, of the Countess, the servants, or the child.

Ang. Dreadful! Were not their corse found?

Alice. Never. The only domestic who escaped, pointed out the scene of action; and, as it proved to be on the river's banks, doubtless the assassins plunged the bodies into the stream.

Ang. Strange! And did Earl Osmond then become owner of this castle? Alice, was he ever suspected of—

Alice. Speak lower, lady. It was said so, I own; but for my own part I never believed it. To my certain knowledge, Osmond loved the lady Evelina too well to hurt her; and when he heard of her death, he wept and sobbed as if his heart were breaking. Nay, 'tis certain that he proposed to her before marriage, and would have made her his wife, only that she liked his brother better. But I hope you are not alarmed by what I mentioned of the cedar-room?

Ang. No, truly, Alice; from good spirits I have nothing to fear, and heaven and my innocence will protect me against bad.

Alice. My very sentiments, I protest. But heaven forgive me; while I stand gossiping here, I warrant all goes wrong in the kitchen. Your pardon, lady; I must away, I must away. (*Exit.*)

Ang. (*Musing.*) Osmond was his brother's heir.—His strange demeanour!—Yes, in that gloomy brow is written a volume of villainy.—Heavenly powers! an assassin then is master of my fate!—An assassin too, who—I dare not bend my thoughts that way.—Oh! would I had never entered these castle walls!—had never exchanged for fearful pomp the security of my pleasures—the tranquillity of my soul! (*Exit.*)

ACT II.—SCENE I. *The Armoury.*

Suits of armour are arranged on both sides upon pedestals, with the names of their possessors written under each.

Enter MOTLEY, peeping.

The coast is clear. Hist! hist! You may enter.

Enter PERCY.

Per. Loiter not here. Quick! my good fellow! Conduct me to Angela.

Mot. Softly, softly. A little caution is needful; and I promise you just now I'm not upon roses.

Per. If such are your fears, why not lead me at once to Angela?

Mot. Be contented, and leave all to me: I will contrive matters so, that Osmond shall have you before his eyes, and be no jot the wiser. But you must make up your mind to play a statue for an hour or two.

Per. How!

Mot. Nay, 'tis absolutely necessary. The late Earl's servants are fully persuaded that his ghost wanders every night through the long galleries, and parades the old towers and dreary halls which abound in this melancholy mansion. He is supposed to be dressed in complete armour; and that which you are to wear at present was formerly his. Now hear my plan. The Earl prepares to hold a conference with lady Angela; here, placed upon the pedestal, you may listen to their discourse unobserved, and thus form a proper judgment both of your mistress and her guardian. As soon as it grows dark, I will conduct you to Angela's apartments: and even should you be observed, you will pass for Earl Reginald's spectre.

Per. I do not dislike your plan: but tell me, Gilbert, do you believe this tale of the apparition?

Mot. Oh! heaven forbid! Not a word of it. Had I minded all the strange things related of this castle, I should have died of fright in the first half hour. Why, they say, that Earl Hubert rides every night round the castle on a white horse; that the ghost of Lady Bertha haunts the west pinnacle of the chapel tower; and that Lord Hildebrand, who was condemned for treason some sixty years ago, may be seen in the great hall, regu-

larly at midnight, walking about without his head. Above all, they say, that the spirit of the late Countess sits nightly in her oratory, and sings her baby to sleep. Quick! quick! ere the servants quit the hall, where they are now at dinner. (*Takes down a suit of armour.*) Here's the helmet—the gauntlets—the shield. So now, take the truncheon in your hand, and there we have you armed cap-a-pee.—(*Bell sounds thrice.*)—Hark! 'tis the Earl; quick, to your post. (*Percy ascends the pedestal.*) Farewell—I must get out of his way; but as soon as he quits this chamber, I'll rejoice you. [*Exit.*]

(*The folding doors are thrown open; Saib, Hassan, Muley, and Alaric enter, preceding Earl Osmond, who walks with his arms folded, and his eyes bent upon the ground. Saib advances to a sofa, into which, after making a few turns through the room, Osmond throws himself. He motions to his attendants, and they withdraw. He appears lost in thought; then suddenly rises, and again traverses the room with disordered steps.*)

Osm. I will not sacrifice my happiness to her's! No, Angela, you ask of me too much. Since the moment when I pierced her heart, deprived of whom life became odious; since my soul was stained with his blood who loved me; with her's whom I loved; no form has been grateful to my eye, no voice spoken pleasure to my soul, save Angela's, save only Angela's!—Mine she is; mine she shall be, though Reginald's bleeding ghost flit before me, and thunder in my ear—"Hold! Hold!"—Peace, stormy heart! She comes!

Enter ANGELA.

Osm. (*In a softened voice.*) Come hither, Angela. Wherefore so sad? That downcast eye, that listless air, neither suit your age or fortunes. The treasures of India are lavished to adorn your person; yet, still do I see you, forgetting what you are, look back with regret to what you were.

Ang. Oh! my good lord! esteem me not ungrateful. I acknowledge your bounties; but they have not made me happy. I still linger, in thought, near those scenes where I passed the blessed period of infancy; I still thirst for those simple pleasures which habit has made so dear; the birds which my own hands reared; and the flowers which my own hands planted; the banks on which I rested when fatigued; all have acquired rights to my memory and my love.

Osm. Absurd!

Ang. While I saw you, Cheviot-hills, I was happy; oh! how happy! At morn, when I left my bed, light were my spirits, and gay as the zephyrs of summer; and when at night my head again pressed my pillow, I whispered to myself, "happy has been to-day, and to-morrow will be as happy!" Then sweet was my sleep; and my dreams were of those whom I loved dearest.

Osm. Romantic enthusiast! These thoughts did well for the village maid, but disgrace the daughter of Sir Malcolm Mowbray. Hear me, Angela. An English baron loves you; a nobleman, than whom our island boasts few more potent. 'Tis to him that your hand is destined; 'tis on him that your heart must be bestowed.

Ang. I cannot dispose of that which has long been another's. My heart is Edwy's.

Osm. Edwy's? A peasant's?

Ang. For the obscurity of his birth, chance must be blamed; the merit of his virtues belongs wholly to himself.

Osm. By heaven! you seem to think that poverty is a virtue.

Ang. Sir, I think 'tis a misfortune, not a crime. Edwy has my plighted faith. He received it on the last evening which I passed in Northumberland. It was then, that, for the first time, I gave him my hand, and I swore that I never would give it but

to him! It was then, that, for the first time, he pressed his lips to mine, and I swore that my lips should never be pressed by another.

Osm. Girl! girl! you drive me to distraction!

Ang. You alarm me, my lord! Permit me to retire.—(*Going. Osmond detains her violently by the arm.*)

Osm. Stay! (*In a softer tone.*) Angela, I love you.

Ang. (*Starting.*) My lord!

Osm. (*Passionately.*) Love you to madness. Nay, strive not to escape; remain, and hear me. I offer you my hand; if you accept it, mistress of these fair and rich domains, your days shall glide away in happiness and honour; but, if you refuse and scorn my offer, force shall this instant—

Ang. Force! Oh! no! You dare not be so base.

Osm. Reflect on your situation, Angela; you are in my power. Remember it, and be wise.

Ang. If you have a generous mind, that will be my surest safeguard. Be it my plea, Osmond, when thus I sue to you for mercy, for protection. Look on me with pity, Osmond! 'Tis the daughter of the man you loved; 'tis a creature, friendless, wretched, and forlorn, who kneels before you, who flies to you for refuge! True, I am in your power; then save me, respect me, treat me not cruelly; for—I am in your power!

Osm. I will hear no more. Will you accept my offer?

Ang. Osmond, I conjure you—

Osm. Answer my question.

Ang. Mercy! Mercy!

Osm. Will you be mine?—Speak! Speak!

Ang. (*After a moment's pause, rises, and pronounces with firmness.*) Never! so help me heaven!

Osm. (*Seizing her.*) Your fate then is decided. (*Angela shrieks.*)

Per. (*In a hollow voice.*) Hold!

Osm. (*Starts, but still grasps Angela's arm.*) Ha! what was that?

Ang. (*Struggling to escape.*) Hark! hark! Heard you not a voice?

Osm. (*Gazing upon Percy.*) It came from hence! From Reginald! Was it not a delusion? Did indeed his spirit—(*Relapsing into his former passion.*) Well, be it so! Though his ghost should rush between us, thus would I clasp her!—horror! What sight is this?—(*At the moment that he again seizes Angela, Percy extends his truncheon with a menacing gesture, and descends from the pedestal. Osmond releases Angela, who immediately rushes from the chamber; while Percy advances a few steps, and remains gazing on the Earl stedfastly.*) I know that shield!—that helmet! Speak to me, dreadful vision!—Tax me with my crimes!—Tell me that you come—Stay! Speak!—(*Following Percy, who, when he reaches the door, through which Angela escaped, turns, and signs to him with his hand. Osmond starts back in terror.*)—He forbids my following!—He leaves me!—The door closes!—(*In a sudden burst of passion, and drawing his sword.*)—Hell, and fiends! I'll follow him, though lightnings blast me!—(*He rushes distractedly from the chamber.*)

SCENE II.—The Castle Hall.

Enter ALICE.

Alice. Here's rudeness! here's ill-breeding! On my conscience, this house grows worse and worse every day! Enter MOTLEY.

Mot. What can Earl Percy have done with himself? How now, dame Alice; you look angry.

Alice. By my troth, fool, I have little reason to look pleased. To be frightened out of my wits by night, and thumped and bumped about by day, is not likely to put one in the best humour.

Mot. Poor soul! And who has been thumping and bumping you?

Alice. Who has? You should rather ask who has not. Why only hear. As I was just now going along the narrow passage which leads to the armoury, singing to myself, and thinking of nothing,

I met lady Angela flying away as if for dear life. So I dropped her a curtsy; but might as well have spared my pains. Without minding me any more than if I had been a dog or a cat, she pushed me on one side; and before I could recover my balance, somebody else, who came bounding by me, gave me t'other thump; and there I lay sprawling upon the floor. However, I tumbled with all possible decency.

Mot. Somebody else! What somebody else?

Alice. I know not; but he seemed to be in armour.

Mot. In armour! Pray, Alice, looked he like a ghost?

Alice. What he looked like, I cannot say; but I'm sure he didn't feel like one; however, you've not heard the worst. While I was sprawling upon the ground, my lord comes tearing along the passage. The first thing he did was to stumble against me. Away went his heels—over he came—and in the twinkling of an eye, there lay his lordship! As soon as he got up again, mercy! how he stormed! He snatched me up, called me an ugly old witch, shook the breath out of my body, then clapped me on the ground again, and bounced away after the other two.

Mot. My mind misgives me. But what cau this mean, Alice?

Alice. The meaning I neither know nor care about; but this I know,—I'll stay no longer in a house where I am treated so disrespectfully. "My lady!" says I:—"Out of my way!" says she, and pushes me on one side.—"My lord!" says I:—"You be d—d!" says he, and pushes me on t'other! I protest I never was so ill used, even when I was a young woman! [Exit.]

Mot. Should Earl Percy be discovered! The very thought gives me a crick in my neck. At any rate I had better inquire whether—(Gong.)

Enter FATHER PHILIP, hastily.

F. Phil. (Stopping him.) Get out of the house! That's your way.

Mot. Why, what's the meaning—

F. Phil. Don't stand prating, but do as I bid you.

Mot. But first tell me—

F. Phil. I can only tell you to get out of the house. Kenric has discovered Earl Percy. You are known to have introduced him. The Africans are in search of you. If you are found, you will be hung out of hand. Fly then to Edric's cottage; hide yourself there. Hark! Some one comes. Away, away, ere it is too late.—(Pushing him out.)

Mot. (Confused.) But Earl Percy—but Angela—

F. Phil. Leave them to me. You shall hear from me soon. Only take care of yourself, and fly with all diligence. Away! [Exit Motley.] So, so; he's off; and now I've time to take breath. I've not moved so nimbly for the last twenty years; and, in truth, I'm at present but ill calculated for velocity of motion; however, my exertions have not been thrown away: I have saved this poor knave from Osmond's vengeance; and should my plan for the lady's release succeed—Poor little soul!—To see how she took on, when Percy was torn from her! Well, well, she shall be rescued from her tyrant. The moveable pannels—the subterraneous passages, the secret springs, well known to me—Oh! I cannot fail of success; but, in order to secure it, I'll finally arrange my ideas in the buttry. Whenever I've any great design in hand, I always ask advice of a flaggon of ale, and mature my plan over a cold venison-pasty. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—A spacious Chamber; on one side is a couch; on the other, a table, which is placed under an arched and lofty window.

Enter OSMOND, followed by SAIB, HASSAN, MULEY, and ALARIC, who conduct PERCY, disarmed.

Osm. This, sir, is your prison; but doubtless, your confinement will not continue long. The mo-

ment which gives me Angela's hand, shall restore you to liberty; and, 'till that moment arrives, farewell.

Per. Stay, sir, and bear me! By what authority presume you to call me captive? Have you forgotten that you speak to Northumberland's Earl?

Osm. Well may I forget him, who could so far forget himself. Was it worthy of Northumberland's Earl to steal disguised into my castle, and plot with my servant to rob me of my most precious treasure?

Per. Mine was that treasure. You deprived me of it basely; and I was justified in striving to regain my own.

Osm. Earl, nothing can justify unworthy means. If you were wronged, why sought you not your right with your sword's point? I then should have esteemed you a noble foe, and as such would have treated you; but you have stooped to paltry artifice, and attacked melike some midnight ruffian, privately, and in disguise. By this am I authorised to forget your station, and make your penance as degrading as your offence was base.

Per. If such are indeed your sentiments, prove them now. Restore my sword, unsheathe your own, and be Angela the conqueror's reward.

Osm. No, Earl Percy. I am not so rash a gamester as to suffer that cast to be recalled, by which the stake is mine already. Angela is in my power; the only man who could wrest her from my arms has willfully made himself my captive; such he is, and such he shall remain.

Per. Insulting coward!

Osm. Be calm, Earl Percy. You forget yourself. That I am no coward, my sword has proved in the fields of Scotland. My sword shall again prove it, if, when you are restored to liberty, you still question the courage of my heart. Angela once mine, repeat your defiance, nor doubt my answering.

Per. Angela thine? That she shall never be. There are angels above, who favour virtue, and the hour of retribution must one day arrive.

Osm. Muley and Saib!

Both. My lord!

Osm. To your charge I commit the Earl; quit not this apartment, nor suffer him for one moment from your sight.

Saib and Muley. My lord, we shall obey you.

Osm. Farewell, Earl Percy.

[Goes off, attended by Hassan and Alaric.]

Saib. Look, Muley, how bitterly he frowns!

Muley. Now he starts from the sofa. 'Faith! he's in a monstrous fury.

Saib. That may well be. When you mean to take in other people, it certainly is provoking to be taken in yourself.

Per. (After walking a few turns with a disordered air, suddenly stops.) He is gone to Angela! Gone, perhaps, to renew that outrage, whose completion my presence alone prevented.

Muley. Now he's in a deep study. Marry, if he studies himself out of this tower, he's a cleverer fellow than I take him for.

Per. Were I not Osmond's captive, all might yet be well. Summoning my vassals, who by this time must be near at hand, forcing the castle, and tearing Angela from the arms of her tyrant. Alas! my captivity has rendered this plan impracticable. And are there then no hopes of liberty?

Saib. He fixes his eyes on us.

Per. Might not these fellows—I can but try. Now stand my friend, thou master-key to human hearts! Aid me, thou potent devil, gold! Hear me, my worthy friends. Come nearer!

Saib. His worthy friends!

Per. My good fellows, you are charged with a disagreeable office, and to obey a tyrant's mandates cannot be pleasant to you; there is something in your looks which has prejudiced me too much in your favour to believe it possible.

Saib. Nay, there certainly is something in our appearance highly prepossessing.

Muley. And I know that you must admire the delicacy of our complexions!

Per. The tincture of your skin, my good fellow, is of little consequence; many a worthy heart beats within a dusky bosom, and I am convinced that such a heart inhabits your's; for your looks tell me that you feel for, and are anxious to relieve my sufferings. See you this purse, my friends?

Muley. It's too far off, and I am short-sighted. If you'll put it a little nearer—

Per. Restore me to liberty; and not this purse alone, but ten times its value shall be yours.

Saib. To liberty?

Muley. That purse?

Saib. Muley!

Muley. Saib!

Per. (*Aside.*) By all my hopes, they hesitate! You well know, that my wealth and power are equal, if not superior, to Earl Osmond's: release me from my dungeon, and share that power and wealth!

Saib. I know not what to answer.

Muley. In truth, my lord, your offers are so generous, and that purse is so tempting—Saib, what say you? (*Winking at him.*)

Saib. The Earl speaks so well, and promises so largely, that I own I am strangely tempted.

Muley. Look you, Saib; will you stand by me?

Saib. (*After a moment's thought.*) I will.

Muley. There's my hand then. My lord, we are your servants.

Per. This is beyond my hopes. You agree then to release me?

Muley. 'Tis impossible to do otherwise; for I feel that pity, generosity, and every moral feeling, command me to trouble your lordship for that purse.

Per. There it is. And now unlock the door.

Muley. (*Thinking the purse.*) Here it is! And now I'm obliged to you. As for your promises, my lord, pray don't trouble yourself to remember them, as I sha'n't trouble myself to remember mine.

Per. (*Starting.*) Ha! what mean you?

Saib. (*Firmly.*) Earl, that we are faithful.

Per. What! will you not keep your word?

Muley. In good troth, no; we mean to keep nothing—except the purse.

Per. Confusion! To be made the jest of such rascals.

Saib. Earl Percy, we are none. We have but done our duty—you have but gained your just reward; for they who seek to deceive others should ever be deceived themselves.

Per. Silence, fellow! Leave me to my thoughts. (*Throwing himself passionately upon the couch.*)

Muley. Oh! with all our hearts. We ask no better.

Saib. Muley, we share that purse?

Muley. Undoubtedly. Sit down, and examine its contents. (*They seat themselves on the floor in the front of the stage.*)

Per. How unfortunate! that the only merit of these fellows should be fidelity.

CHORUS OF VOICES. (*Singing without.*)

"Sing Megeu-oh! Oh! Megeu-Ee!"

Muley. Hark! What's that?

Saib. I'll see. (*Mounting upon the table.*) This window is so high—

Muley. Here, here! Take this chair. (*Saib places the chair upon the table, and thus lifts himself to a level with the window, which he opens.*)

SONG AND CHORUS.

Mot. (*Singing without.*) Sleep you, or wake you, lady bright?

Chorus. Sing Megeu-oh! Oh! Megeu-Ee!

Mot. Now is the fittest time for fight.

Chorus. Sing Megeu-oh! Oh! Megeu-Ee!

Mot. Know, from your tyrant father's power,
Beneath the window of your tower,

A boat now waits to set you free;

Sing Megeu-oh! Oh! Megeu-Ee!

Chorus. Sing Megeu-oh! Oh! Megeu-Ee!

Per. (*Who has half-raised himself from the couch during the latter part of the song, and listened attentively.*) Surely I know that voice!

Muley. Now, what's the matter?

Saib. A boat lies at the foot of the tower, and the fisherman sing while they draw their nets.

Per. I could not be mistaken; it was Gilbert.

SECOND STANZA.

Mot. *Though deep the stream, though high the wall,*

Chorus. Sing Megeu-oh! Oh! Megeu-Ee!

Mot. *The danger trust me, love, is small;*

Chorus. Sing Megeu-oh! Oh! Megeu-Ee!

Mot. *To spring below then never dread;*

My arms to catch you shall be spread;

And far from hence you soon shall be,

Sing Megeu-oh! Oh! Megeu-Ee!

Sing Megeu-oh! Oh! Megeu-Ee!

Chorus. I understand him. He bids me—Yet the danger—What course shall I pursue?

Muley. Pr'ythee, come down, Saib; I long to divide the purse.

Saib. Stay a moment; I'm with you. (*Shutting the window and descending.*) Here I am; and now for the purse. (*They resume their seats upon the ground; Saib opens the purse, and begins to reckon the gold.*)

Per. Yes, I must brave the danger. I will feign to sleep; and when my gaolers are off their guard, then aid me, blest Providence! (*Extending himself upon the couch.*)

Saib. Hold, Muley! What if, instead of sharing the purse, we throw for its contents? Here are dice.

Muley. With all my heart; and look: to pass our time the better, here's a bottle of the best sack in the Earl's cellar.

Saib. Good! Good! And now, be this angel the stake. But first, what is our prisoner doing?

Muley. Oh! he sleeps; mind him not. Come, come; throw.

Saib. Here goes. Nine! Now to you.

Muley. Nine too! Double the stake.

Saib. Agreed; and the throw is mine. Hark! What noise? (*During this dialogue, Percy has approached the table in silence: at the moment that he prepares to mount it, Saib looks round, and Percy hastily throws himself back on the couch.*)

Muley. Oh!—nothing, nothing.

Saib. Methought I heard the Earl—

Muley. Mere fancy. You see he is sleeping soundly. Come, come; throw.

Saib. There then: eleven!

Muley. That's bad: huzza!—sixes!

Saib. Plague on your fortune! Come, double or quits.

Muley. Be it so, and I throw—zounds! only five.

Saib. Then I think this hit must be mine: aces, by heavens!

Muley. Ha! ha!—your health, friend!

Per. (*Who has again reached the table, mounted the chair, and opening the window, now stands at it, and signs to the men below.*) They see me, and extend a cloth beneath the window. 'Tis a fearful height!

Saib. Do you mean to empty the bottle? Come, come; give it to me.

Muley. Take it, blunderhead. (*Saib drinks.*)

Per. They encourage me to venture. Now then, or never. (*Aloud.*) Angels of bliss, protect me! (*He throws himself from the window.*)

Muley and Saib. (*Starting at the noise.*) Hell and furies!

Saib. (*Dashes down the bottle and climbs to the window hastily, while Muley remains below in an attitude of surprise.*) Escaped! Escaped!

Per. Mot. &c. (*Without.*) Huzza! huzza!

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A View of the River Conway, with a fisherman's hut. Sun-set.*

Enter ALLAN and EDRIC.

Allan. Still they come not. Dear, dear, still they come not. Ah! these tumults are too much for my old body to hear.

Edr. Then you should have kept your old body at home. 'Tis a fine thing, truly, for a man of your age to be galloping about the country after a girl, who, by your own account, is neither your chick nor child.

Allan. Ah! she was more to me. She was my all, Edric, my all. How could I bear my home when it no longer was the home of Angela? How could I rest in my cottage at night, when her sweet lips had not kissed me, and murmured, "Father, sleep well!" She is so good, so gentle! I was sick once, sick almost to death. Angela was then my nurse and comforter; she watched me when I slept, and cheered me when I awoke; she rejoiced when I grew better; and when I grew worse, no medicine gave me ease like the tears of pity which fell on my burning cheeks from the eyes of my darling.

Edr. Tears of pity, indeed! A little rhubarb would have done you more good by half. But our people stay a long time; perhaps Motley has been discovered and seized; if so, he will lose his life, the Earl his freedom, Angela her lover, and, what's worst of all, I shall lose my boat. I wish I hadn't lent it, for I doubt that Motley's scheme has failed.

Allan. I hope not. Oh! I hope not. Should Percy remain a captive, Angela will be left unprotected in your wicked lord's power. Oh! that will break my poor old wife's heart for certain.

Edr. And if it should break it, a mighty misfortune truly! Zounds! master Allan, any wife is at best a bad thing; a poor one makes matters yet worse; but when she's old,—lord! 'tis the very devil.

Allan. Hark! hark! Do you hear? 'Tis the sound of ours! They are friends! Oh! heaven be thanked! the Earl is with them. (*A boat appears, with Percy, Motley, and soldiers, disguised as fishermen. They land.*)

Per. (*Springing on shore.*) Once more then I breathe the air of liberty! Worthy Gilbert, what words can suffice to thank you?

Mot. None; therefore do not waste your breath in the attempt. You are safe, thanks to St. Peter and the blanket! and your lady's deliverance now demands all your thoughts. Ha! who is that with Edric?

Per. Allan, by all my hopes!—Welcome, welcome, good old man: say, came my vassals with you?

Allan. Three hundred chosen men are within the sound of your bugle; but now, my lord, tell me of Angela. Is she well? Did you speak to her? And speaks she sometimes of me?

Per. She is well, my old friend, and I have spoken to her; though but for a moment. But be comforted, good Allan! Should other means fail, I will this very night attack the castle, and compel Osmond to resign his prey.

Allan. Heaven grant that you may succeed! Let me but once see Angela your bride; let me but once hear her say the sweet words, "Allan, I am happy!" then I and my old wife will seek our graves, lay us down, and die with pleasure.

Mot. Die with pleasure, you silly old man! you shall do nothing so ridiculous.—But now let us talk of our affairs, which, if I mistake not, are in the high road to success.

Per. How! Has any intelligence reached you of your ally, the friar?

Mot. You have guessed it. As it passed beneath his window, the pious porpus contrived to

drop this letter into the boat. Pray examine it, my lord. I never can read when the wind's easterly. (*Motley gives Percy the letter, who reads to himself.*) Its contents must needs be of consequence, for I assure you it comes from one of the greatest men in England. Well, sir, what says the letter?

Per. Listen.—"I have recognized you in spite of your disguise, and seized the opportunity to advise your exerting yourself solely to obtain Earl Percy's liberty. Heed not Angela: I have sure and easy means for procuring her escape; and before the clock strikes two, you may expect me with her at the fisherman's hut. Farewell, and rely upon Father Philip!"—Now, Gilbert, what say you? May the monk's fidelity be trusted?

Mot. His fidelity may, undoubtedly; but whether his success will equal his good intentions, is a point which time alone can decide. Should it not—

Per. Then with my faithful vassals will I storm the castle to-morrow. But where are my followers?

Allan. Fearing lest their numbers should excite suspicion, I left them concealed in yonder wood.

Per. Guide me to them. Edric, for this night I must request the shelter of your hut.

Edr. Willingly, my lord. But my cottage is so humble, your treatment so wretched—

Per. Silence, my good fellow! The hut where good-will resides is to me more welcome than a palace, and no food can be so sweet as that which is seasoned with smiles. You give me your best; a monarch could give no more, and it happens not often that men ever give so much. Now, farewell for an hour!—Allan, lead on!

[*Exeunt Percy, Allan, &c.*]

Mot. And in the meanwhile, friend Edric, I'll lend you a hand in preparing supper.

Edr. Truly, the task won't give you much trouble, for times have gone hard with me of late. Our present lord sees no company, gives no entertainments, and thus I sell no fish. Things went better while Earl Reginald lived.

Mot. What! you remember him?

Edr. Never shall I forget him, or his sweet lady. Why, I verily believe they possessed all the cardinal virtues. So pious, so generous, so mild! so kind to the poor—and so fond of fish!

Mot. Fond of fish! One of the cardinal virtues, of which I never heard before.

Edr. But these thoughts make me sad. Come, master Motley; your lord's supper still swims in the river:—if you'll help to catch it, why do so, and thank you heartily. Can you fish?

Mot. Can I? Who in this world cannot?—I'll assure you, friend Edric, there is no profession more universal than your's: we all spread our nets to catch something or other; and happy are they, in this world of disappointments, who throw out no nets save fishing ones!

SCENE II.—*The Castle Hall.*

Enter KENRIC.

Ken. Yonder he stalks, and seems buried in himself. Now then to attack him while my late service is still fresh upon his memory. Should he reject my petition positively, he shall have good cause to repent his ingratitude. Percy is in the neighbourhood; and that secret, known only to myself, will surely—But, silence!—Look where he comes!

Enter OSMOND.

Osm. It shall not be. Away with these foreboding terrors, which weigh down my heart!—I will forget the past, I will enjoy the present, and make those raptures again mine, which—Ah! no, no, no!—Captivity, that serpent, winds her folds round the cup of my bliss, and, ere my lips can reach it, her venom is mingled with the draught. And see where he walks, the chief object of my fears. He shall not be so long. His anxiety to

leave me, his mysterious threats—No, no; I will not live in fear.—Soft!—He advances.

Ken. So melancholy, my lord?

Osm. Aye, Kenric; and must be so 'till Angela is mine. Know that even now she extorted from me a promise, that 'till to-morrow I would leave her unmolested.

Ken. But 'till to-morrow?

Osm. But 'till to-morrow!—Oh! in that little space a lover's eye views myriads of dangers. Yet think not, good Kenric, that your late services are undervalued by me, or that I have forgotten those for which I have been long your debtor. When, bewildered by hatred of Reginald, and grief for Evelina's loss, my dagger was placed on the throat of their infant, your hand arrested the blow. Judge then how grateful I must feel when I behold in Angela, her mother's living counterpart.—Worthy Kenric, how can I repay your services?

Ken. These you may easily. But what, Earl Osmond, what can repay me for the sacrifice of my innocence? My hands were pure 'till you taught me to stain them with blood. You painted in strong colours the shame of servitude; you promised freedom, riches, independence. Let me then claim that independence so long promised, and seek for peace in some other climate, since memory forbids me to taste it in this.

Osm. Kenric, ere named, your wish was granted. In a far distant country a retreat is already prepared for you: there you may hush those clamours of conscience, which must reach me, I fear, e'en in the arms of Angela.

Ken. (*Affected.*) My lord!—Gratitude—Amazement—and I doubted—I suspected—Oh! my good lord, how have I wrong'd your kindness!

Osm. No more: I must not hear you. (*Aside.*) Shame! shame! that ever my soul should stoop to dissemble with my slave!

Saib enters, and advances with apprehension.

Osm. How now?—Why this confusion?—Why do you tremble?—Speak!

Saib. My lord! The prisoner—

Osm. The prisoner?—Go on! go on!

Saib. (*Kneeling.*) Pardon, my lord, pardon; Our prisoner has escaped.

Osm. Villain! (*Wild with rage, he draws his dagger, and rushes upon Saib: Kenric holds his arm.*)

Ken. Hold! hold! What would you do?

Osm. (*Struggling.*) Unhand me, or by heaven—

Ken. Away! away!—Fly, fellow, and save yourself. [*Exit Saib.*] (*Releasing Osmond.*) Consider, my lord; haply 'twas not by his keeper's fault that—

Osm. (*Furiously.*) What is't to me by whose? Is not my rival fled? Soon will Northumberland's guards encircle my walls, and force from me—Yet that by heaven they shall not. No! Rather than resign her, my own hand shall give this castle a prey to flames; then, plunging with Angela into the blazing gulph, I'll leave these ruins to tell posterity how desperate was my love, and how dreadful my revenge! (*Going, he stops, and turns to Kenric.*)—And you, who dared to rush between me and my resentment—you, who could so well succeed in saving others—now look to yourself. [*Exit.*]

Ken. Ha! that look—that threat—Yet he seemed so kind, so grateful. He smiled too. Oh! there is ever danger when a villain smiles.

Saib enters softly, looking round him with caution.

Saib. (*In a low voice.*) Hist!—Kenric!

Ken. How now? What brings—

Saib. Silence, and hear me. You have saved my life; nor will I be ungrateful. Look at this phial.

Ken. Ha! did the Earl—

Saib. Even so: a few drops of this liquor should to-night have flavoured your wine; you would never have drunk again. Mark me then. When I offer you a goblet at supper, drop it as by acci-

dent. For this night I give you life; use it to quit the castle; for no longer than 'till to-morrow dare I disobey our lord's commands. Farewell, and fly from Conway. You bear with you my thanks. [*Exit.*]

Ken. Can it be possible? Is not all this a dream? Villain! villain! Yes, yes, I must away. But tremble, traitor! A bolt, of which you little think, hangs over, and shall crush you. The keys are still in my possession. Angela shall be the partner of my flight. My prisoner too—Yet hold! May not resentment—may not Reginald's sixteen years' captivity—Oh! no! Angela shall be my advocate; and, grateful for her own, for her parent's life preserved, she can—she will obtain my pardon. Yet, should she fail, at least I shall drag down Osmond in my fall, and sweeten death's bitter cup with vengeance. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III. *The Cedar-room, with folding-doors in the middle, and a large antique bed: on one side is a portrait of a lady, on the other, that of a warrior armed. Both are at full length. After a pause, the female portrait falls back, and Father Philip, after looking in, advances cautiously.*

F. Phil. (*Closing the pannel.*) Thus far I have proceeded without danger, though not without difficulty. Yon narrow passage is by no means calculated for persons of my habit of body. By my holy dame! I begin to suspect that the fool is in the right. I certainly am growing corpulent. And now, how shall I employ myself? Sinner that I am, why did I forget my bottle of sack? The time will pass tediously 'till Angela comes; and to complete the business, yonder is the haunted oratory. What if the ghost should pop out on me? Blessed St. Bridget, there would be a tête-à-tête! Yet this is a foolish fear: 'tis yet scarce eight o'clock, and your ghosts always keep late hours; yet I don't like the idea of our being such near neighbours. If Alice says true, the apparition just now lives next door to me; but the lord forbid that we should ever be visiting acquaintance.

Osm. (*without.*) What, Alice! Alice! I say.

F. Phil. By St. David, 'tis the Earl! I'll away as fast as I can. (*Trying to open the door.*) I can't find the spring. Lord forgive me my sins! Where can I hide myself? Ha! the bed! 'Tis the very thing. (*Throws himself into the bed, and conceals himself under the clothes.*) Heaven grant that it mayn't break down with me! for, oh! what a fall would be there, my countrymen! They come! (*The door is unlocked.*)

ENTER OSMOND, ANGELA, and ALICE.

Osm. (*Entering.*) You have heard my will, lady. 'Till your hand is mine, you quit not this chamber.

Ang. If then it must be so, welcome, my eternal prison! Yet eternal it shall not be. My hero, my guardian-angel, is at liberty. Soon shall his horn make these hateful towers tremble, and your fetters be exchanged for the arms of Percy.

Osm. Beware, beware, Angela! Dare not before me—

Ang. Before you! Before the world! Is my attachment a disgrace? No! 'tis my pride; for its object is deserving. Long ere I knew him, Percy's fame was dear to me. While I still believed him the peasant Edwy, often, in his hearing, have I dwelt upon Northumberland's praise, and chid him that he spoke of our lord so coldly. Ah! little did I think that the man then seated beside me was he whom I envied for his power of doing good, whom I loved for exerting that power so largely. Judge then, Earl Osmond, on my arrival here, how strongly I must have felt the contrast. What peasant names you his benefactor? What beggar has been comforted by your bounty? What sick man preserved by your care? Your breast is unmoved by woe, your ear is deaf to complaint, your doors are barred against the poor and wretched,

Not so are the gates of Alnwick-castle; they are open as their owner's heart.

Osm. Insulting girl! This to my face?

Ang. Nay, never bend your brows. Shall I tremble, because you frown? Shall my eye sink, because anger flashes from your's? No; that would ill become the bride of Northumberland.

Osm. Amazement!—Can this be the gentle, timid Angela?

Ang. Wonder you that the worm should turn when you trample it so cruelly? Oh! wonder no more: ere he was torn from me, I clasped Percy to my breast, and my heart caught a spark of that fire which flames in his unceasingly.

Alice. Caught fire! lady?

Osm. Silence, old crone! I have heard you calmly, Angela; now then hear me. Twelve hours shall be allowed you to reflect upon your situation; 'till that period is elapsed, this chamber shall be your prison, and Alice, on whose fidelity I can depend, your sole attendant. This term expired, should you still reject my hand, force shall obtain for me what love denies. Speak not: I will hear nothing. I swear that to-morrow sees you mine, or undone; and skies rain curses on me if I keep not my oath! Mark that, proud girl! mark it, and tremble. [Exit.]

F. Phil. (From the bed.) Heaven he praised! he's gone.

Ang. Tremble, did he say? Alas! how quickly is my boasted courage vanished! Yet I will not despair; there is a power in heaven, there is a Percy on earth; on them will I rely to save me.

Alice. The first may, lady; but as to the second, he'll be of no use, depend on't. Now might I advise, you'd accept my lord's offer. What matters it whether the man's name be Osmond or Percy? An earl's an earl after all: and though one may be something richer than t'other—

Ang. Oh! silence, Alice; nor aid my tyrant's designs: rather instruct me how to counteract them; assist me to escape.

Alice. I help you to escape! Not for the best gown in your ladyship's wardrobe. I tremble at the very idea of my lord's rage; and, besides, had I the will, I've not the power. Kenric keeps the keys; we could not possibly quit the castle without his knowledge; and if the Earl threatens to use force with you—Oh gemini! what would he use with me, lady?

Ang. Threatens, Alice! I despise his threats! Ere it pillows Osmond's head, will I plunge this poniard in my bosom.

Alice. Holy fathers! A dagger!

Ang. Even now, as I wandered through the armoury, my eye was attracted by its glittering handle. Look, Alice; it bears Osmond's name; and the point—

Alice. Is rusty with blood! Take it away, lady, take it away; I never see blood without fainting!

Ang. (Putting up the dagger.) This weapon may render me good service.—But, ah! what service has it rendered Osmond? Haply, 'twas this very poniard which drank his brother's blood—or which pierced the fair breast of Evelina! Said you not, Alice, that this was her portrait?

Alice. I did, lady; and the likeness was counted excellent.

Ang. How fair! how heavenly fair!

Alice. (Having locked the folding doors.) Ah! 'twas a sad day for me, when I heard of the dear lady's loss. Look at the bed, lady; that very bed was her's. How often have I seen her sleeping in that bed; and, oh! how like an angel she looked when sleeping! I remember, that just after Earl Reginald—Oh! Lord! didn't somebody shake the curtain?

Ang. Absurd! It was the wind.

Alice. I declare it made me tremble. Well, as I was saying, I remember, just after Earl Reginald

had set out for the Scottish wars, going into her room one morning, and hearing her sob most bitterly: so advancing to the bed-side, as it might be thus—"My lady!" says I, with a low curtsey, "Isn't your ladyship well?" So, with that, she raised her head slowly above the quilt, and, giving me a mournful look—(Here, unseen by Angela, who is contemplating Reginald's portrait, Father Philip lifts up his head, and gives a deep groan.)

Alice. Jesu Maria! the devil! the devil! [Exit.]

Ang. (Turning round.) How now? (Father Philip rising from the bed, it breaks under him, and he rolls at Angela's feet.) Good heavens! (Attempting to pass him, he detains her by her robe.)

F. Phil. Stay, daughter, stay! If you run, I can never overtake you.

Ang. Amazement! Father Philip!

F. Phil. The very same, and at present the best friend that you have in the world. Daughter, I came to save you.

Ang. To save me? Speak! Proceed!

F. Phil. Observe this picture; it conceals a spring, whose secret is unknown to all in the castle, except myself. Upon touching it, the pannel slides back, and a winding passage opens into the marble hall. Thence we must proceed to the vaulted vestibule; a door is there concealed, similar to this; and, after threading the mazes of a subterranean labyrinth, we shall find ourselves in safety on the outside of the castle walls.

Ang. Oh! worthy, worthy father! Quick! let us hasten; let us not lose one moment.

F. Phil. Hold! hold! Not so fast. You forget that between the hall and vestibule we must traverse many chambers much frequented at this early hour. Wait 'till the castle's inhabitants are asleep. Expect me, without fail, at one; keep up your spirits, and doubt not of success. Now then, I must away, lest the Earl should perceive my absence.

Ang. Stay yet one moment. Tell me, does Percy—

F. Phil. I have apprised him, that this night will restore you to liberty, and he expects you at the fisherman's cottage. Now, then, farewell, fair daughter. [Exit F. Phil. through the sliding pannel.]

Ang. Good friar, till one, farewell! Till that hour arrive, will I kneel at the feet of yonder saint, there tell my beads, and pray for morning. (Soft music, as the scene comes down very slowly.)

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Castle-Hall: the lamps are lighted.

Enter FATHER PHILIP.

F. Phil. 'Tis near midnight, and the Earl is already retired to rest. What if I ventured now to the lady's chamber? Hark! I hear the sound of footsteps.

Enter ALICE.

F. Phil. How, Alice! is it you?

Alice. So! So! Have I found you at last, Father? I have been in search of you these four hours! Oh! I've been so frightened since I saw you, that I wonder I keep my senses!

F. Phil. So do I; for I'm sure they're not worth the trouble. And, pray, what has alarmed you thus? I warrant you've taken an old cloak pinned against the wall for a spectre, or discovered the devil in the shape of a tabby cat.

Alice. (Looking round in terror.) For the love of heaven, Father, don't name the devil! or, if you must speak of him, pray mention the good gentleman with proper politeness. I'm sure, for my own part, I had always a great respect for him, and if he hears me, I dare say he'll own as much; for he certainly haunts this castle in the form of my late lady.

F. Phil. Form of a fiddlestick!—Don't tell me of your—

Alice. Father, on the word of a virgin, I saw him this very evening in lady Angela's bed.

F. Phil. In lady Angela's? On my conscience, the devil has an excellent taste. But, Alice! Alice! how dare you trot about the house at this time of night, propagating such abominable falsehoods? One comfort is, that nobody will believe you. Lady Angela's virtue is too well known, and I'm persuaded she wouldn't suffer the devil to put a single claw into her bed for the universe.

Alice. How you run on! Lord bless me, she wasn't in bed herself.

F. Phil. Oh! Was she not?

Alice. No, to be sure: but you shall hear how it happened. We were in the cedar-room together, and while we were talking of this and that, lady Angela suddenly gave a great scream. I looked round, and what should I see but a tall figure, all in white, extended upon the bed! At the same time, I heard a voice, which I knew to be the Countess Evelina's, pronounce in a hollow tone—"Alice! Alice! Alice!" three times. You may be certain that I was frightened enough. I instantly took to my heels; and just as I got outside of the door, I heard a loud clap of thunder.

F. Phil. Well done, Alice! A very good story, upon my word. It has but one fault—'tis not true.

Alice. Ods my life! Father, how can you tell anything about it? Sure I should know best; for I was there, and you were not. I repeat it—I heard the voice as plain as I hear your's. Do you think I've no ears?

F. Phil. Oh! far from it: I think you've uncommonly good ones; for you not only hear what has been said, but what has not. As to this wonderful story of your's, Alice, I don't believe one word of it: I'll be sworn that the voice was no more like your lady's than like mine; and that the devil was no more in the bed than I was. Therefore, take my advice, set your heart at rest, and go quietly to your chamber, as I am now going to mine. Good night! [*Exit.*]

Alice. There, he's gone. Dear heart! Dear heart! what shall I do now? 'Tis past twelve o'clock, and stay by myself I dare not. I'll e'en wake the laundry-maid, make her sit up in my room all night; and 'tis hard if two women aren't a match for the best devil in christendom. [*Exit.*]

Enter SAIB and HASSAN.

Saib. The Earl then has forgiven me! A moment longer and his pardon would have come too late. Had not Kenric held his hand, by this time I should be at supper with St. Peter.

Has. Your folly well deserved such a reward. Knowing the Earl's hasty nature, you should have shunned him 'till the first storm of passion was past, and circumstances had again made your ministry needful. Anger then would have armed his hand in vain; for interest, the white man's god, would have blunted the point of his dagger.

Saib. I trusted that his gratitude for my past services—

Has. European gratitude! Seek constancy in the winds; fire in ice; darkness in the blaze of sunshine! But seek not gratitude in the breast of an European.

Saib. Then, why so attached to Osmond? For what do you value him?

Has. Not for his virtues, but for his vices, Saib. Can there for me be a greater cause to love him? Am I not branded with scorn? Am I not marked out for dishonour? Was I not free, and am I not a slave? Was I not once beloved, and am I not now despis'd? What man, did I tender my service, would accept the negro's friendship? What woman, did I talk of affection, would not turn from the negro with disgust? Yet, in my own dear land, my friendship was courted, my love was returned. I had parents, children, wife!—Bitter thought! In one moment all were lost to me! Can I remember this, and not hate these white men! Can I think how cruelly they have wronged me, and not rejoice when

I see them suffer? Attached to Osmond, say you? Saib, I hate him. Yet viewing him as an avenging fiend, sent hither to torment his fellows, it glads me that he fills his office so well. Oh! 'tis a thought which I would not barter for empires, to know that in this world he makes others suffer, and will suffer himself for their tortures in the next.

Saib. But say you be one of those whom he causes to suffer, how then? Hassan, I will sleep no more in the lion's den. My resolve is taken: I will away from the castle, and seek in some other service that security—

Osm. (*Within.*) What—ho! Help! Lights there! Lights!

Has. Hark! Surely 'twas the Earl.

OSMOND rushes in wildly.

Osm. Save me! Save me! They are at hand! Oh! let them not enter! (*Sinks into the arms of Saib.*)

Saib. What can this mean? See how his eyes roll! how violently he trembles!

Has. Speak, my lord. Do you not know us?

Osm. (*Recovering himself.*) Ha! Whose voice? Hassan's? And Saib too here? Oh! was it then but a dream! Did I not hear those dreadful, those damning words? Still, still they ring in my ears. Hassan! Hassan! Death must be bliss, in flames or on the rack, compared to what I have this night suffered.

Has. Compose yourself, my lord. Can a mere dream unman you thus?

Osm. A mere dream, say'st thou? Hassan, 'twas a dream of such horror, did such dreams haunt my bitterest foe, I should wish him no severer punishment. Mark you not, how the ague of fear still makes my limbs tremble? Roll not my eyes as if still gazing on the spectre? Are not my lips convulsed, as were they yet pressed by the kiss of corruption? Oh! 'twas a sight that might have bleached joy's rosy cheek for ever, and strewed the snows of age upon youth's auburn ringlets! Hassan, thou saidst 'twas but a dream—I was deceived by fancy. Hassan, thou saidst true; there is not, there cannot be a world to come.

Has. My lord!—

Osm. Answer me not. Let me not hear the damning truth. Tell me not, that flames await me! that for moments of bliss, I must endure long ages of torture. Say, that with my body must perish my soul. For, oh! should my fearful dream be prophetic—Hark, fellows! Instruments of my guilt, listen to my punishment. Methought I wandered through the low browed caverns, where repose the reliques of my ancestors. My eye dwelt with awe on their tombs, with disgust on mortality's surrounding emblems. Suddenly, a female form glided along the vault: it was Angela! She smiled upon me, and beckoned me to advance. I flew towards her; my arms were already unclosed to clasp her—when suddenly her figure changed, her face grew pale, a stream of blood gushed from her bosom—Hassan, 'twas Evelina!

Saib and Has. Evelina!

Osm. Such as when she sank at my feet expiring, while my hand grasped the dagger still crimsoned with her blood. "We meet again this night!" murmured her hollow voice. "Now rush to my arms; but first see what you have made me. Embrace me, my bridegroom. We must never part again!" While speaking, her form withered away: the flesh fell from her bones; her eyes burst from their sockets: a skeleton, loathsome and meagre, clasped me in her mouldering arms!

Saib. Most horrible!

Osm. Her infected breath was mingled with mine; her rotting fingers pressed my hand, and my face was covered with her kisses. Oh! then, then how I trembled with disgust! And then blue dismal flames gleamed along the walls; the tombs were rent asunder; bands of fierce spectres rushed

round me in frantic dance; furiously they gnashed their teeth while they gazed upon me, and shrieked in loud yell—"Welcome, thou fratricide! Welcome, thou lost for ever!" Horror burst the bands of sleep; distracted, I flew hither: but my feelings—words are too weak, too powerless to express them.

Saib. My lord, my lord, this was no idle dream. 'Twas a celestial warning; 'twas your better angel that whispered—"Osmond, repent your former crimes; commit not new ones." Remember, that this night should Kenric—

Osm. Kenric?—Speak! Drank he the poison?

Saib. Obedient to your orders, I presented it at supper; but ere the cup reached his lips, his favourite dog sprang upon his arm, and the liquor fell to the ground untasted.

Osm. Praised be heaven! Then my soul is lighter by a crime. Kenric shall live, good Saib. What, though he quit me, and betray my secrets;—proofs he cannot bring against me, and bare assertions will not be believed. At worst, should his tale be credited, long ere Percy can wrest her from me, shall Angela be mine. Hassan, to your vigilance I leave the care of my beloved. Fly to me that instant, should any unbidden footstep approach yon chamber-door. I'll to my couch again. Follow me, Saib, and watch me while I sleep. Then, if you see my limbs convulsed, my teeth clenched, my hair bristling, and cold dew trembling on my brow; seize me! rouse me! snatch me from my bed! I must not dream again. Oh! how I hate thee, sleep! Friend of virtue, oh! how I dread thy coming!

[*Exit with Saib.*]

Has. Yes, thou art sweet, vengeance. Oh! how it joys me when the white man suffers! Yet weak are his pangs, compared to those I felt when torn from thy shores, O native Africa! from thy bosom, my faithful Samba!—Ah! dost thou still exist, my wife? Has sorrow for my loss, traced thy smooth brow with wrinkles? My boy too,—whom on that morning when the man-hunters seized me, I left sleeping on thy bosom—say, lives he yet? does he ever speak of me? Does he ask, "Mother, describe to me my father; show me how the warrior looked?" Ha! has my bosom still room for thoughts so tender? Hence with them! Vengeance must possess it all. Oh! when I forget my wrongs, may I forget myself! When I forbear to hate these Christians, god of my fathers! may'st thou hate me! Ha! Whence that light? A man moves this way with a lamp! How cautiously he steals along! He must be watched. This friendly column will shield me from his regards. Silence! He comes. (*Retires.*)

Enter KENRIC, softly, with a lamp.

Ken. All is hushed! the castle seems buried in sleep. Now then to Angela!

[*Exit.*]

Has. (*Advancing.*) It was Kenric! Still he moves onwards. Now he stops. 'Tis at the door of Angela's chamber. He unlocks it! He enters! Away then to the Earl: Christian, soon shall we meet again.

SCENE II.—*Angela's Apartment.*

ANGELA stands by the window, which is open, and through which the moon is seen.

Ang. Will it never arrive, this tedious lingering hour? Sure an age must have elapsed since the friar left me, and still the bell strikes not one. Hark! Surely I heard—some one unlocks the door! Oh! should it be the Earl! should he not retire ere the monk arrives! The door opens!—How! Kenric here!—Speak—what would you?

Enter KENRIC.

Ken. Softly, lady! If overheard, I am lost, and your fate is connected with mine—

Ang. What means this mystery? This midnight visit—

Ken. Is the visit of a friend, of a penitent!—Lady, I must away from the castle: the keys are

in my possession: I will make you the companion of my flight, and deliver you safe into the hands of Percy. But ere we depart, (*kneeling*) oh! tell me, lady, will you plead for me with one, who to me alone owes sixteen years of hard captivity?

Ang. Rise, Kenric: I understand you not. Of what captive do you speak?

Ken. Of one, who by me has been most injured, who to you will be most dear. Listen, lady, to my strange narration. I was brought up with Osmond, was the partner of his pleasures, the confidant of his cares. The latter sprang solely from his elder brother, whose birthright he coveted, whose superiority he envied. Yet his aversion burst not forth, till Evelina Neville, rejecting his hand, bestowed her's with her heart on Reginald. Then did Osmond's passion overleap all bounds. He resolved to assassinate his brother when returning from the Scottish wars, carry off the lady, and make himself master of her person by force. This scheme he imparted to me: he flattered, threatened, promised, and I yielded to his seduction.

Ang. Wretched man!

Ken. Condemn me not unheard. 'Tis true, that I followed Osmond to the scene of slaughter, but no blood that day imbrued my hand. It was the Earl, whose sword struck Reginald to the ground: it was the Earl, whose dagger was raised to complete his crime, when Evelina threw herself upon her husband's body, and received the weapon in her own.

Ang. Dreadful! dreadful!

Ken. Osmond's wrath became madness. He gave the word for slaughter, and Reginald's few attendants were butchered on the spot. Scarce could my prayers and arguments save from his wrath his infant niece, whose throat was already gored by his poniard. Angela, your's still wears that mark.

Ang. Mine? Almighty powers!

Ken. Lady, 'tis true. I concealed in Allan's cottage the heiress of Conway: there were you doomed to languish in obscurity; 'till, alarmed by the report of his spies that Percy loved you, he caused me to reclaim you from Allan, and resolved, by making you his wife, to give himself a lawful claim to these possessions.

Ang. The monster! Oh! good, good Kenric! and you knelt to me for pardon? You to whom I owe my life! You to whom—

Ken. Hold! oh! hold! Lady, how little do I deserve your thanks! Oh! listen! listen!—I was the last to quit the bloody spot: sadly was I retiring, when a faint groan struck my ear. I sprang from my horse; I placed my hand on Reginald's heart; it beat beneath the pressure. (*Here Osmond appears at the door, motions to Saib to retire, and advances himself unobserved.*)

Ang. It beat! It beat! Cruel!—and your dagger—

Ken. Oh! that would have been mercy! No, lady. It struck me, how strong would be my hold over Osmond, while his brother was in my power; and this reflection determined me to preserve him. Having plunged the other bodies in the Conway's flood, I placed the bleeding Earl's on my horse before me, and conveyed him, still insensible, to a retreat, to all, except myself, a secret. There I tended his wounds carefully, and succeeded in preserving his life.—Lady, Reginald still exists.—(*Here Osmond, with a furious look, draws his dagger, and motions to stab Kenric. A moment's reflection makes him stay his hand, and he returns the weapon into the sheath.*)

Ang. Still exists, say you? My father still exists?

Ken. He does, if a life so wretched can be termed existence. While his swoon lasted, I chained him to his dungeon wall; and no sooner were his wounds healed, than I entered his prison

no more. Lady, near sixteen years have passed, since the human voice struck the ear of Reginald.

Ang. Alas! alas!

Ken. But the hour of his release draws near: then follow me in silence; I will guide you to Reginald's dungeon: this key unlocks the castle gates; and ere the cock crows, safe in the arms of Percy—*(Here his eye falls upon Osmond, who has advanced between him and Angela. She shrieks, and sinks into a chair.)* Horror!—the Earl!—Undone for ever!

Osm. Miscreant!—Within there!

Enter SAIB, HASSAN, and MULEY.

Osm. Hence with that traitor! Confine him in the western tower!

Ang. *(Starting wildly from her seat.)* Yet speak once more, Kenric! Where is my father? What place conceals him?

Osm. Let him not speak! Away with him! *(Kenric is forced off by the Africans.)*

Osm. *(Paces the stage with a furious air, while Angela eyes him with terror; at length he stops, and addresses her.)* Nay, stifle not your curses! Why should your tongue be silent when your eye speaks? Is there not written on every feature "Vengeance on the assassin! Justice on my mother's murderer?"—But mark me, Angela! Compared to that which soon must be thine, these titles are sweet and lovely. Know'st thou the word paricide, Angela? Know'st thou their pangs who shed the blood of a parent?—Those pangs must be thine to-morrow. This long-concealed captive, this new-found father—

Ang. Your brother, Osmond! your brother!—Surely you cannot, will not—

Osm. Still doubt you, that I both can, and will? Remember Kenric's tale! Remember, though the first blow failed, the second will strike deeper! But from whom must Reginald receive that second? Not from his rival brother; not from his inveterate foe; from his daughter, his unfeeling daughter! 'Tis she, who, refusing me her hand, will place a dagger in mine; 'tis she, whose voice declaring that she hates me, will bid me plunge that dagger in her father's heart.

Ang. Man! man! drive me not mad!

Osm. Then fancy that he lies in some damp, solitary dungeon, writhing in death's agonies, his limbs distorted, his eye-strings breaking, his soul burthened with crimes, his last words curses on his unnatural child, who could have saved him, but would not!

Ang. Horrible! horrible!

Osm. Must Reginald die, or will Angela be mine?

Ang. Thine? She will perish first.

Osm. You have pronounced his sentence, and his blood be on your head. Farewell!

Ang. *(Detaining him, and throwing herself on her knees.)* Hold! hold! Look with pity on a creature whom your cruelty has bowed to the earth, whose heart you have almost broken, whose brain you have almost turned! Mercy, Osmond! Oh! mercy! mercy!

Osm. Lovely, lovely suppliant! Why owe to cold consent what force may this instant give me? It shall be so; and thus—*(Attempting to clasp her in his arms, she starts from the ground suddenly, and draws her dagger with a distracted look.)*

Ang. Away! approach me not! dare not to touch me, or this poniard—

Osm. Foolish girl! let me but say the word, and thou art disarmed that moment. *(Attempting to seize it, his eyes rest upon the hilt, and he starts back with horror.)* By hell! the very poniard which—

Ang. *(In an exulting tone.)* Ha! hast thou found me, villain? Villain! dost thou know this weapon? Know'st thou whose blood incrusts the point? Murderer! it flowed from the bosom of my mother!

Osm. Within, there! help! *(Hassan and Alaric enter.)* Oh! God in heaven! *(He falls*

senseless into their arms, and they convey him from the chamber; the door is locked after them.)

Ang. He faints! Long may the villain wear thy chains, oblivion! Long be it ere he wakes to commit new crimes! *(She remains for some moments prostrate on the ground in silent sorrow. The castle bell strikes "one!")* Hark! the bell! 'Tis the time which the monk appointed. He will not tarry: Ha! what was that? Methought the sound of music floated by me! It seemed as some one had struck the guitar. I must have been deceived; it was but fancy. *(A plaintive voice sings within, accompanied by a guitar.)*

*"Lullaby!—Lullaby!—Hush thee, my dear,
"Thy father is coming, and soon will be here!"*

Ang. Heavens! the very words which Alice—*(The folding doors unclose, and the oratory is seen illuminated. In its centre, stands a tall female figure, her white and flowing garments spotted with blood; her veil is thrown back, and discovers a pale and melancholy countenance; her eyes are lifted upwards, her arms extended towards heaven, and a large wound appears upon her bosom. Angela sinks upon her knees, with her eyes rivetted upon the figure, which, for some moments, remains motionless. At length, the spectre advances slowly to a soft and plaintive strain; she stops opposite Reginald's picture, and gazes upon it in silence. She then turns, approaches Angela, seems to invoke a blessing upon her, points to the picture, and retires to the oratory. The music ceases. Angela rises with a wild look, and follows the vision, extending her arms towards it. The spectre waves her hand, as bidding her farewell. Instantly the organ's swell is heard; a full chorus of female voices chaunts "Jubilate!" a blaze of light flashes through the oratory, and the folding doors close with a loud noise.)*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—View of Conway Castle by moonlight.

Enter ALLAN and MOTLEY.

Allan. But should the friar's plot have failed—

Mot. Failed, and a priest and a petticoat concerned in it! Oh, no! a plot composed of such good ingredients cannot but succeed. Ugh! would I were again seated by the fisher's hearth. The wind blows cruel sharp and bitter.

Allan. For shame, Gilbert, is not my lord equally exposed to its severity?

Mot. Oh! the flame in his bosom keeps him warm, and in a cold night love wraps one up better than a blanket; but that not being my situation, the present object of my desires is a blazing wood fire, and Venus would look to me less lovely than a smoking sack-posset. Oh! when I was in love I managed matters much better. I always paid my addresses by the fire-side, and contrived to urge my soft suit just at dinner-time; then, how I filled my fair one's ears with fine speeches, while she filled my trencher with roast beef! then, what figures and tropes came out of my mouth, and what dainties and tid-bits went in! 'Twould have done your heart good to have heard me talk, and seen me eat; and you'd have found it no easy matter to decide whether I'd most wit or appetite.

Allan. And who was the object of this voracious passion?

Mot. A person well calculated to charm both my heart and my stomach; it was a lady of great merit, who did Earl Percy's father the honour to superintend his culinary concerns. I was scarce fifteen when she kindled a flame in my heart while lighting the kitchen fire; from that moment I thought on nothing but her. My mornings were passed in composing poems on her beauty; my evenings in reciting them in her ear; for nature had equally denied the fair creature and myself the faculty of reading and writing.

Allan. You were successful, I hope.

Mot. Why, at length, she consented to be mine;

when, oh! cruel fortune! taking one night a drop too much—poor dear-creature! she never got the better of it—I wept her loss, and composed an elegy upon it.—It began thus:

“Baked be the pies to coals,
“Burn, roast meat, burn;
“Boil o’er, ye pots—ye spits, forget to turn,
“Cind’relia’s death!”—

Enter EARL PERCY, over the bridge.

Allan. Here comes the Earl.

Mot. In truth, my lord, you venture too near the castle; should you fall into Osmond’s power a second time, your next jump may be into a better world—

Per. Oh, there’s no danger, Gilbert; my followers are not far off, and will join me at a moment’s warning; then fear not for me.

Mot. With all my heart; but permit me to fear for myself. We are now within bow-shot of the castle; the archers may think proper to amuse us with a proof of their skill; and were I to feel an arrow quivering in my gizzard, probably I should be much more surprised than pleased. Good, my lord, let us back to the fisherman’s hut.

Per. Your advice may be wise, Gilbert, but I cannot follow it. See you nothing near yonder tower?

Mot. Yes, certainly. Two persons advance towards us: yet they cannot be our friends, for I see neither the lady’s petticoat nor the monk’s paunch.

Per. Still they approach, though slowly: one leans on his companion, and seems to move with pain. Let us retire and observe them.

Mot. Away, sir; I’m at your heels. [They retire.]

Enter SAIB conducting KENRIC.

Saib. Nay, yet hold up a while. Now we are near the fisher’s cottage.

Ken. Good Saib, I needs must stop. Enfeebled by Osmond’s tortures, my limbs refuse to bear me further. Here lay me down: then fly to Percy, guide him to the dungeon; and, ere ’tis too late, bid him save the father of Angela.

Per. (To Motley.) Hark! did you hear?

Saib. Yet to leave you thus alone!—

Ken. Oh! heed not me. Think that on these few moments depends our safety, Angela’s freedom, Reginald’s life. You have the master-key. Fly then; oh! fly to Percy! (Percy and Motley come forward to Kenric and Saib.)

Per. Said he not Reginald? Speak again, stranger. What of Reginald?

Saib. Ha! look up, Kenric! ’Tis Percy’s self!

Per. and Mot. How! Kenric!

Ken. (Sinking at Percy’s feet.) Yes, the guilty, penitent Kenric! Oh, surely ’twas heaven sent you hither. Know, Earl Percy, that Reginald lives, that Angela is his daughter!

Per. Amazement! And is this known to Osmond?

Ken. Two hours have scarcely passed since he surprised the secret. Tortures compelled me to avow where Reginald was hidden, and he now is in his brother’s power. Fly then to his aid! Alas! perhaps at this moment his destruction is completed! Perhaps even now Osmond’s dagger—

Per. Within there! Allan! Harold! Quick, Gilbert, sound your horn. (Motley sounds it: it is echoed.)

Enter ALLAN, EDRIC, HAROLD, and soldiers.

Per. Friends, may I depend on your support?

Har. While we breathe, all will stand by you.

Soldiers. All! All!

Per. Follow me then. Away!

Ken. Yet stay one moment. Percy, to this grateful friend have I confided a master-key, which will instantly admit you to the castle, and have described to him the retreat of Reginald. Be he your guide, and hasten—Oh! that pang! (He faints; Allan and Edric support him.)

Per. Look to him. He sinks! Bear him to your hut, Edric, and there tend his hurts. (To

Saib.) Now on, good fellow, and swiftly! Osmond, despair! I come! [Exit with Saib, Motley, Harold, and soldiers, over the bridge, while Allan and Edric convey away Kenric still fainting.]

SCENE II.—A vaulted Chamber.

Enter FATHER PHILIP, with a basket on his arm and a torch, conducting ANGELA.

F. Phil. Thanks to St. Francis, we have as yet passed unobserved! Surely, of all travelling companions, fear is the least agreeable: I could not be more fatigued, had I run twenty miles without stopping.

Ang. Why this delay? Good Father, let us proceed.

F. Phil. Ere I can go further, lady, I must needs stop to take breath, and refresh my spirits with a taste of this cordial. (Taking a bottle from the basket.)

Ang. Oh! not now. Wait ’till we are safe under Percy’s protection, and then drink as you list. But not now, Father; in pity, not now.

F. Phil. Well, well, be calm, daughter. Oh! these women! these women! they mind no one’s comfort but their own. Now, where is the door?

Ang. How tedious seems every moment which I pass within these hated walls! Ha! yonder comes a light!

F. Phil. So, so, I’ve found it at last. (Touching a spring, a secret door flies open.)

Ang. It moves this way! By all my fears, ’tis Osmond! In, father, in! Away, for heaven’s sake!

[Exeunt, closing the door after them.]

Enter OSMOND and HASSAN, with a torch.

Osm. (After a pause of gloomy meditation.) Is all still within the castle?

Has. As the silence of the grave.

Osm. Where are your fellows?

Has. Saib guards the traitor Kenric; Muley and Alaric are buried in sleep.

Osm. Their hands have been stained with blood, and yet can they sleep? Call your companions hither. (Hassan offers to leave the torch.) Away with the light! its beams are hateful. [Exit Hassan.] Yes; this is the place. If Kenric said true, for sixteen years have the vaults beneath me rung with my brother’s groans. I dread to unclose the door. How shall I sustain the beams of his eye, when they rest on Evelina’s murderer? Ha! at that name my expiring hate revives! Reginald! Reginald! for thee was I sacrificed! Oh! when it strikes a second blow, my poniard shall strike surer!

Enter HASSAN, MULEY, and ALARIC, with Torches.

The Africans (together.) My lord! my lord!

Osm. Now, why this haste?

Has. I tremble to inform you, that Saib has fled the castle. A master-key, which he found upon Kenric, and of which he kept possession, has enabled him to escape.

Osm. Saib too, gone? All are false! All forsake me!

Has. Yet more, my lord; he has made his prisoner the companion of his flight.

Osm. (Starting.) How! Kenric escaped!

Ala. ’Tis but too certain; doubtless he has fled to Percy.

Osm. To Percy?—Ha! then I must be speedy: my fate hangs on a thread. Friends, I have ever found ye faithful; mark me now. (Opening the private door.) Of these two passages, the left conducs to a long chain of dungeons: in one of these my brother still languishes. Once already have you seen him bleeding beneath my sword; but he yet exists. My fortune, my love, nay, my life, are at stake!—Need I say more? (Each half unsheathes his sword.)—That gesture speaks me understood. On then before; I follow you. (The Africans pass through the private door; Osmond is advancing towards it, when he suddenly starts back.)

Ha! Why roll these seas of blood before me? Whose mangled corse do they bear to my feet?—Fratricide! Oh! 'tis a dreadful name! Yet how preserve myself and Reginald? It cannot be. We must not breathe the same atmosphere. Fate, thy hand urges me. Fate, thy voice prompts me. Thou hast spoken; I obey. (*He follows the Africans; the door is closed after him.*)

SCENE III.—*A gloomy subterraneous Dungeon, wide and lofty; the upper part of it has, in several places, fallen in, and left large chasms. On one side, are various passages leading to other caverns; on the other, is an iron door with steps leading to it, and a wicket in the middle.* REGINALD, pale and emaciated, in coarse garments, his hair hanging wildly about his face, and a chain bound round his body, lies sleeping upon a bed of straw. A lamp, a small basket, and a pitcher, are placed near him. *After a few moments he awakes, and extends his arms.*

Reg. My child! My Evelina! Oh! fly me not, lovely forms! They are gone, and once more I live to misery. Thou wert kind to me, Sleep! Even now, methought, I sat in my castle-hall: a maid, lovely as the queen of fairies, hung on my knee, and hailed me by that sweet name, "Father!" Yes, I was happy. Yet frown not on me therefore, Darkness! I am thine again, my gloomy bride. Be not incensed, Despair, that I left thee for a moment. I have passed with thee sixteen years. Ah! how many have I still to pass? Yet fly not my bosom quite, sweet Hope! Still speak to me of liberty, of light! Whisper, that once more I shall see the morn break; that again shall my fevered lips drink the pure gale of evening. God! thou knowest that I have borne my sufferings meekly; I have wept for myself, but never cursed my foes; I have sorrowed for thy anger, but never murmured at thy will. Patient have I been; oh! then reward me; let me once again press my daughter in my arms; let me, for one instant, feel again that I clasp to my heart a being who loves me. Speed thou to heaven, prayer of a captive! (*He sinks upon a stone, with his hands clasped, and his eyes bent stedfastly upon the flame of the lamp.*)

ANGELA and FATHER PHILIP are seen through the chasms above, passing slowly.

Ang. Be cautious, Father. Feel you not how the ground trembles beneath us?

F. Phil. Perfectly well; and would give my best breviary to find myself once more on terra-firma. But the outlet cannot be far off: let us proceed.

Ang. Look down upon us, blessed angels! Aid us! Protect us!

F. Phil. Amen! fair daughter. (*They disappear.*)

Reg. (*After a pause.*) How wastes my lamp? The hour of Kenric's visit must long be past, and still he comes not. How, if death's hand hath struck him suddenly! My existence unknown. Away from my fancy, dreadful idea! (*Rising, and taking the lamp.*) The breaking of my chain permits me to wander at large through the wide precincts of my prison. Haply the late storm, whose pealing thunders were heard e'en in this abyss, may have rent some friendly chasm: haply some nook yet unexplored. Ah! no, no! my hopes are vain, my search will be fruitless. Despair in these dungeons reigns despotic; she mocks my complaints, rejects my prayers; and, when I sue for freedom, bids me seek it in the grave! Death! oh, death! how welcome wilt thou be to me. [*Exit.* (*The noise is heard of a heavy bar falling; the door opens.*)

Enter FATHER PHILIP and ANGELA.

F. Phil. How's this? A door!

Ang. It was barred on the outside.

F. Phil. That we'll forgive, as it wasn't bolted on the in. But I don't recollect—surely I've not—

Ang. What's the matter?

F. Phil. By my faith, daughter, I suspect that I've missed my way.

Ang. Heaven forbid!

F. Phil. Nay, if 'tis so, I shan't be the first man who of two ways has preferred the wrong.

Ang. Provoking! And did I not tell you to choose the right-hand passage?

F. Phil. Truly, did you; and that was the very thing which made me choose the left. Whenever I am in doubt myself, I generally ask a woman's advice. When she's of one way of thinking, I've always found that reason's on the other. In this instance, perhaps, I have been mistaken: but wait here for one moment, and the fact shall be ascertained. [*Exit.*]

Ang. How thick and infectious is the air of this cavern! yet, perhaps, for sixteen years has my poor father breathed none purer. Hark! steps are quick advancing! The friar comes, but why in such confusion?

Re-enter FATHER PHILIP, running.

F. Phil. Help! help! It follows me!

Ang. (*Detaining him.*) What alarms you? Speak! F. Phil. His ghost! his ghost!—Let me go! let me go! let me go! (*Struggling to escape from Angela, he falls and extinguishes the torch; then hastily rises, and rushes up the staircase, closing the door after him.*)

Ang. Father! Father! Stay, for heaven's sake!—He's gone. I cannot find the door.—Hark! 'Twas the clank of chains! A light too! It comes yet nearer! Save me, ye powers! What dreadful form! 'Tis here! I faint with terror! (*Sinks almost lifeless against the dungeon's side.*)

Re-enter REGINALD, with a lamp.

Reg. (*Placing his lamp upon a pile of stones.*) Why did Kenric enter my prison? Haply, when he heard not my groans at the dungeon door, he thought that my woes were relieved by death. Oh! when will that thought be verified? Thou art dead, and at rest, my wife! Safe in yon skies, no thought of me molests thy quiet. Yet sure I wrong thee! At the hour of death, thy spirit shall stand beside me, shall close mine eyes gently, and murmur, "Die, Reginald, and be at peace!"

Ang. Hark! heard I not—Pardon, good stranger—

Reg. (*Starting wildly from his seat.*) 'Tis she! She comes for me! Is the hour at hand, fair vision? Spirit of Evelina! lead on, I follow thee! (*He extends his arms towards her, staggers a few paces forwards, then sinks exhausted on the ground.*)

Ang. He faints! perhaps expires!—Still, still! See, he revives!

Reg. 'Tis gone! Once more the sport of my bewildered brain. (*Starting up.*) Powers of bliss! Look, where it moves again! Oh! say, what art thou? If Evelina, speak, oh speak!

Ang. Ha! Named he not Evelina? That look! This dungeon too! The emotions which his voice—It is, it must be! Father! Oh! Father! Father! (*Falling upon his bosom.*)

Reg. Said you? Meant you? My daughter—my infant, whom I left—Oh! yes, it must be true! My heart, which springs towards you, acknowledges my child. (*Embracing her.*) But say, how gained you entrance? Has Osmond—

Ang. Oh! that name recalls my terrors. Alas! you see in me a fugitive from his violence. Guided by a friendly monk, whom your approach has frightened from me, I was endeavouring to escape: we missed our way, and chance guided us to this dungeon. But this is not a time for explanation. Answer me. Know you the subterraneous passages belonging to this castle?

Reg. Whose entrance is without the walls? I do.

Ang. Then we may yet be saved! Father, we must fly this moment. Percy, the pride of our English youth, waits for me at the Conway's side.

Come then, oh! come. Stay not one moment longer.
(*As she approaches the door, lights appear above.*)

Reg. Look, look, my child! The beams of distant torches flash through the gloom.

Osm. (*Above.*) Hassan, guard you the door. Follow me, my friends. (*The lights disappear.*)

Ang. Osmoud's voice! Undone! Undone! Oh! my father! he comes to seek you, perhaps to—

Reg. Hark! they come! The gloom of yonder cavern may awhile conceal you: fly to it; hide yourself: stir not, I charge you.

Ang. What, leave you? Oh! no, no!

Reg. Dearest, I entreat, I conjure you, fly! Fear not for me!

Ang. Father! Oh! father!

Reg. Farewell! perhaps for ever! (*He forces Angela into the cavern, then returns hastily, and throws himself on the bed of straw.*) Now, then, to hear my doom.

Enter OSMOND, followed by MULEY and ALARIC, with torches.

Osm. The door unbarred! Softly; my fears were false! Lo! where stretched on the ground, a stone his pillow, he tastes that repose which flies from my bed of down. Wake, Reginald, and arise!

Reg. You here, Osmond? What brings you to this scene of sorrow? Alas! Hope flies while I gaze upon your frowning eye. Have I read its language aright, Osmond?

Osm. Aright, if you have read my hatred.

Reg. Have I deserved that hate? See, my brother, the once proud Reginald lies at your feet; for his pride has been humbled by suffering. Hear him adjure you by her ashes, within whose bosom we both have lain, not to stain your hands with the blood of your brother. Kenric has told me that my daughter lives. Restore me to her arms; permit us in obscurity to pass our days together. Then shall my last sigh implore upon your head heaven's forgiveness and Evelina's.

Osm. He melts me in my own despite. It shall be so. (*Aside.*) Rise, Reginald, and hear me. You mentioned, even now, your daughter: know, she is in my power; know, also, that I love her.

Reg. How!

Osm. She rejects my offers. Your authority can oblige her to accept them. Swear to use it, and this instant will I lead you to her arms. Say, will you give the demanded oath?

Reg. I cannot dissemble: Osmond, I never will.

Osm. How!—Reflect that your life—

Reg. Would be valueless, if purchased by my daughter's tears; would be loathsome if embittered by my daughter's misery. Osmond, I will not take the oath.

Osm. (*Almost choked with passion.*) 'Tis enough! (*To the Africans.*) You know your duty. Drag him to yonder cavern. Let me not see him die.

Reg. (*Holding by a fragment of the wall, from which the Africans strive to force him.*) Brother, for pity's sake! for your soul's happiness!

Osm. Obey me, slaves! Away!

ANGELA rushes in wildly, from the cavern.

Ang. Hold off! Hurt him not! He is my father!

Osm. Angela here!

Reg. Daughter, what means—

Ang. (*Embracing him.*) You shall live, father! I will sacrifice all to preserve you. Osmond, release my father, and solemnly I swear—

Reg. Hold, girl, and first hear me! (*Kneeling.*) God of nature, to thee I call! If e'er on Osmond's bosom a child of mine rest; if e'er she call him husband, who pierced her hapless mother's heart, that moment shall a wound, by my own hand inflicted—

Ang. Hold! Oh! hold—end not your oath!

Osm. I burn with rage!

Ang. I swear!

Reg. Be repaid by this embrace.

Osm. Be it your last! Tear them asunder! Ha! what noise?

Enter HASSAN, hastily.

Has. My lord, all is lost! Percy has surprised the castle, and speeds this way.

Osm. Confusion! Then I must be sudden. Aid me, Hassan. (*Hassan and Osmond force Angela from her father, who suddenly disengages himself from Muley and Alaric.*)

Reg. Friends so near? Villains! at least you shall buy my life dearly. (*Suddenly seizing Hassan's sword.*)

Osm. (*Employed with Hassan in retaining Angela, while Reginald defends himself against Muley and Alaric.*) Down with him! Wrest the sword from him! (*Alaric is wounded and falls; Muley gives back; at the same time, Osmond's party appears above, pursued by Percy's.*) Hark! they come! Dastardly villains! Nay then, my own hand must—(*Drawing his sword, he rushes upon Reginald, who is disarmed, and beaten upon his knees; when, at the moment that Osmond lifts his arm to stab him, Evelina's ghost throws herself between them: Osmond starts back, and drops his sword.—Angela disengaging herself from Hassan, springs suddenly forwards, and plunges her dagger in Osmond's bosom, who falls with a loud groan, and faints. The ghost vanishes: Angela and Reginald rush into each other's arms.*)

Ang. Father, thou art mine again!

Enter PERCY, SAIB, HAROLD, &c. pursuing OSMOND's party. They all stop, on seeing him bleeding upon the ground.

Per. Hold, my brave friends! See where lies the object of our search.

Ang. Percy! dear Percy!

Per. (*Flying to her.*) Dearest Angela!

Ang. My friend, my guardian angel! Come, Percy, come; embrace my father. Father, embrace the protector of your child.

Per. Do I then behold Earl Reginald?

Reg. (*Embracing him.*) The same, brave Percy! Welcome to my heart! Live ever next it.

Ang. Oh, moment that o'erpays my sufferings! And yet—Percy, that wretched man—he perished by my hand! (*Osmond is conveyed away: servants enter with torches.*)

Per. But say, fair Angela, what have I to hope? Is my love approved by your noble father? Will he—

Reg. Percy, this is no time to talk of love. Let me hasten to my expiring brother, and soften with forgiveness the pangs of death.

Per. Can you forget your sufferings?

Reg. Ah! youth; has he had none? Oh! in his stately chambers, far greater must have been his pangs than mine in this gloomy dungeon; for what gave me comfort was his terror, what gave me hope was his despair.

And, oh, thou wretch! whom hopeless woes oppress,

Whose days no joys, whose nights no slumbers bless,

When pale Despair alarms thy phrensied eye,
Screams in thine ear, and bids thee heaven deny,
Court thou Religion! strive thy faith to save;
Bend thy fix'd glance on bliss beyond the grave;
Hush guilty murmurs! banish dark mistrust!
Think, there's a Power above, nor doubt that
Power is just!

DEAF AND DUMB;
OR, THE ORPHAN PROTECTED;
AN HISTORICAL DRAMA, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.



Act IV.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

JULIO
 DARLEMONT
 ST. ALME
 FRANVAL

DE L'EEPE
 DUPRE
 DOMINIQUE
 PIERRE

PHILIPPE
 ETIENNE
 CHARLES
 MADAME FRANVAL

MARIANNE
 CLAUDINE
 SERVANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room in the palace of Harancour.—A whole-length portrait of a Boy hangs in the centre of the room.

Enter DUPRE and PIERRE.

Dup. Don't you be so inquisitive.

Pie. Don't you be so surly.

Dup. I won't be tormented.

Pie. Come, come, Dupré; fellow-servants should be communicative, and tell one another every thing that passes in the family.

Dup. And, if they did, woe betide some families.

Pie. Dupré, what is the meaning of all this mystery?

Dup. Why do you nail your eyes on me thus? I won't be wormed and sifted. What is it you want to pick out of me?

Pie. I want to know the meaning of your private interviews with my master's father: admitted to his closet, doors locked, cautionings—whisperings. Take care, take care; I have my suspicions.

Dup. Suspicions! of what?

Pie. Of no good, I promise you.

Dup. Why, what do you suspect?

Pie. To be plain with you, that you are aiding and abetting your old master to make his son, my young master, miserable; in short, you are making a match for him with the first President's daughter, against his will.

Dup. Oh! is that all you know?

Pie. All! and isn't that enough?

Dup. Yes—no; I could almost wish the whole world knew—Ah! (*Looking at the portrait.*)

Pie. Knew what? How you fix your eyes on that—

Dup. Do I?

Pie. Yes; you never pass through the room without pausing on that portrait.

Dup. Not half an hour ago, I saw him start from his frame, and stand before me.

Pie. What do you mean? Are you crazy?

Dup. I believe, it was only a dream. Perhaps he lives.

Pie. Lives! what lives? Why, look, man, 'tis but a picture.

Enter DARLEMONT.

Dar. How now? What are you doing?

Pie. Only looking at this picture, sir.

Dar. That picture! and why are you looking at it?

Pie. By Dupré's account, it ought to be a miracle; he says, he saw it start from its frame, and stand before him.

Dar. Fellow!

Pie. Why, didn't you say so, Dupré?

Dar. Begone! [*Exit Pierre.*] Are you mad, Dupré?

Dup. Almost, I am.

Dar. How dare you hint at what must be eternally concealed?

Dup. Dare? The sinner dreads no tyrant but his own conscience.

Dar. Let that portrait be removed.

Dup. No, that it never shall be.

Dar. Ha!

Dup. Frown on: there it shall remain, and daily haunt us.

Dar. Again this insolence? Remember, villain, that you are my slave.

Dup. I do; and I remember, too, that you are mine: accomplices in guilt are, of necessity, the slaves of each other.

Dar. I must contain myself. (*Aside.*) I see, I see, Dupré, that neither my gifts, nor my promises, have satisfied you; however, I have been thinking of you: leave me. You will soon find that you are not forgotten.

Dup. I wish I were; but you and I can never be forgotten; even in the grave we shall be remembered, only to be cursed, despised, and hated. [*Exit.*]

Dar. Must I hold wealth, reputation, nay, life itself, perhaps, at the disposal of this dotard? His slave! While he spoke it, audacious as the reptile toad, he dared to fix his brazen eyes upon me. Let him accuse. Am I not Darlemont, possessor of the fortune and the power of Harancour? Where is the man who will venture to support his accusation?

Re-enter PIERRE.

Besides, my son's marriage with the President's daughter, will, I hope—Why are you loitering there? [*in.*]

Pie. Sir, I am only waiting till my master comes

Dar. What, is he abroad so early? Something disturbs him.

Pie. Yes, sir; indeed, something or other seems to disturb every soul in the house. (*Going.*)

Dar. What's that you say? Come hither, Pierre; you know the deference due to your master's father; be faithful, and you shall profit by it. I must have no prying—mark me, no babbling; talk not of me, nor my affairs. As for Dupré, at times, you see, he raves; he has lost his senses; he grows old.

Pie. In your service, sir.

Dar. And, therefore, what would be punished in another, I overlook in him. Pay no regard to his wanderings, except, observe me, should you think them extraordinary, to inform me of them;—me alone, no other, not even my son. I have my reasons; which are not for you to inquire into. Obey me, and depend on my bounty. [*Exit.*]

Pie. Your bounty? Humph! that may be well enough; but the devil take your pride. A few years ago, this grand signior was but a petty merchant; and now—

Enter ST. ALME.

St. A. Was not that my father?

Pie. Yes, sir; you seem as much ruffled as he was.

St. A. My soul is on the rack; yet, I am resolved; this hated marriage never can, never shall take place. No; never, never will I renounce thee, my lovely Marianne!

Pie. Then, sir, you must renounce your father's favour and fortune.

St. A. Unfeeling prejudice! Is she not the daughter of a man, whose memory is honoured and beloved? The sister of a man of virtue and of talents?—of Fraval, the most renowned advocate of Toulouse?

Pie. True, sir; but his talents are the only dependence of her and her mother's!

St. A. While my father was but a merchant, he would have thought himself honoured by my marriage with the daughter of the Seneschal Fraval; but, since he has inherited the estates of his nephew and ward, the unhappy Count of Harancour, his nature seems changed; and he now listens only to the dictates of his ambition.

Pie. Ah! the old servants of the family often talk of the young Count of Harancour; they say, he had the misfortune to be deaf and dumb.

St. A. 'Tis true, he had. Poor boy! my father took him to Paris about eight years ago, in hopes that this affliction might be removed; and, whether

improper medicines were administered to him, or that his constitution sunk under the efforts for his cure, I know not; but there, in a short time, he died in the arms of Dupré, who accompanied my father on this journey.

Pie. That's the secret; now I no longer wonder, that I so often catch Dupré gazing on that picture of the young Count.

St. A. Do you? 'Tis only natural in him: this youth was the last remaining branch of an illustrious family, which Dupré had long faithfully served. My poor Julio! He once saved my life; how bravely he exposed himself for me! Never, never will his image quit my heart. I see him at the moment of his departure; dumb as he was, his form spoke moving eloquence; every look was so affectionate, every action so expressive! Dear, dear, lamented Julio! he crushed me into his very heart, as if he had foreknown, and would have told me, that that embrace was to be our last. Ah! were he now alive, I should enjoy his tender and endearing friendship; and my father, less opulent, would not then oppose my union with Marianne.

Pie. But you say, sir, you have never yet told this lady that you love her; how, then, do you know what her thoughts of you may be?

St. A. I cannot mistake them: our mutual tremours when we meet; my faltering voice, her downcast eyes; and other thousand, thousand delicious proofs of sympathizing thoughts.

Pie. You know best, sir; but, for my part, I should wish for more substantial proofs; besides, her mother—

St. A. Born of a noble family, is, if possible, more haughty than my father; but her son has a complete empire over her affections: he is my friend; he cannot but have discovered that I love his sister; and, as our intimacy daily strengthens, I must presume that he approves my pretensions.

Dom. (*Without.*) I'll just deliver my message myself.

Pie. Hush! here comes their gossiping footman, old Dominique. Now, sir, if you wish to know the lady's real sentiments, only let me set his tongue running, and he will tell you, in his own chuckling, talkative way, all that he sees, and hears.

Enter DOMINIQUE.

Ha! Good morning, friend Dominique. What brings you to our house?

Dom. Good day, good day, friend! So, sir! (*to St. Alme*) you're an early stirrer. Ha, ha, ha, ha! I saw you just now, I saw you; ha, ha, ha!

St. A. Saw me?

Dom. Yes, I did; pacing backwards and forwards, under my young lady's window; ha, ha, ha!

St. A. I was only taking the morning air, I do assure you, Dominique.

Dom. Ha, ha, ha!

Pie. Ha, ha, ha! What do you mean, Dominique?

Dom. Why, that I'd take the morning air myself, old as I am, if I hoped to see a young, blooming, lovely—ha, ha, ha!—But, no, fast as a church; she was up till two o'clock this morning practising the song, that somebody made on her recovery (*significantly*)—Ha, ha, ha! and at last went to bed, I dare say, only to dream of the author—ha, ha, ha!

St. A. Your frankness and good humour forbid dissimulation; yes, Dominique, I adore your charming mistress.

Pie. Ay, that he does; the more's his misfortune.

Dom. Misfortune! and pray, sir, why so?

Pie. Because I can see very well, and so do you, too, Dominique, that your young lady does not care a straw for my master.

Dom. You can see it, can you? Lord! what a clear-sighted wisecrack thou art! Ha, ha, ha!

St. A. Why, Dominique, do you believe she loves me?

Dom. No, I don't believe it; I know it. Why, there was, in the first place—

St. A. Ay, Dominique—

Pie. Let him go on, sir. Well, but let us hear what proofs?

Dom. Proofs! a thousand. Why, when she was recovering from her last illness, and I told her how you had called to inquire after her—"Did he come himself, Dominique?" says she—"and did he come often?" "Every minute in the day, ma'am," says I. "And did he look concerned?" "Ma'am," says I, "he looked charmingly: his eyes were as red as a ferret's; his cheeks as white as a sheet; he looked like a perfect ghost; a sweet lover-like figure, indeed, ma'am." "I think I'm better," says she, "Dominique: I'm a great deal better: I'm sure I shall soon be well." Ha, ha, ha! true love is your best doctor.

Pie. O, Lord! and is this all you know?

Dom. No, sir; it is not all I know, nor half I know. She gave me such a scolding about you,

St. A. About me?

[t'other day!

Dom. Yes: she was painting away at her little desk, and took no notice of my coming in, to put the room to rights; so I crept softly on tip-toe towards her; and, peeping over her shoulder, (I love to detect the sly rogues,) what should I behold, but the picture of a young gentleman.

St. A. What young gentleman?

Pie. Yes; what young gentleman?

Dom. What young gentleman? "How like it is!" says I, pop, at once, without thinking of it. "Like!" says she, starting up—"Like who? Do you think it is like my brother?" "Your brother! Like a certain person, called Captain St. Alme, to be sure!" "St. Alme?" says she, pointing, and vexed a little—"I desire, Dominique," (you know her way,) "I desire you won't say any such thing; I beg and desire you won't." And away she went, blushing as red as a rose, but all the while hiding somebody carefully in her bosom; ha, ha, ha! But, Lord, I stand chattering here—

St. A. Thank you, thank you, Dominique; you have made me happy beyond measure.

Dom. I knew I should. Doesn't care a straw for my master! Ha, ha, ha! I knew very well I should make you happy: I love to make people happy, and to be happy myself. But I must not forget my errands. (Takes out a paper.) What with my old mistress, and my young mistress, and my master—(Going.) O, Lord! he sent me here to tell you that he wants to speak with you. Now, don't you blab one word of all this, for your life; these girls have such freaks and vagaries! Though they're in love over head and ears, and can't conceal it a moment; yet they expect other folks to be blind, and see nothing at all of the matter. (Going.)

St. A. Pray, say, I'll wait on your master, Dominique.

Dom. To be sure; you'll wait on my master, because you expect to see my young mistress. Ha, ha, ha! O, the turnings and twinings of your true lovers! Yes, yes; she hid the picture in her fair bosom; I warrant, as near as she could to her heart! Ha, ha, ha! [Exit.]

St. A. Now, Pierre, is there any cause for doubt?

Pie. I think not, sir.

St. A. And would my father tear me from her? Never! Run to the President's; inquire when I may have the honour of seeing him. [Exit Pierre.] I'll go to Franval's, avow to him my passion for his sister, and openly declare myself to her in her brother's presence. If I obtain their consents, I'll instantly wait on the President, acquaint him with my love for Marianne, make him refuse me his daughter, and thus, strike at once at the very root of my misfortunes. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Square in the city of Toulouse. On one side the palace of Harancour, on the other the house of Franval, bridge, church, &c.

Enter DE L'ÉPÉE and THEODORE, over the bridge. *Theodore precedes De l'Épée; and, advancing in great agitation, expresses by signs that he recollects the spot they are in.*

De l'E. This warm emotion, this sudden change in all his features, convinces me that he recollects this place. Hadst thou the use of speech! (Theodore, looking round him, observes a church, and gives signs more expressive of his knowing the place.) It is, it must be so: and am I then at length arrived at the period of my long and painful search? (Theodore now sees the palace of Harancour; he starts, rivets his eyes to it, advances a step or two, points to the statues, utters a shriek, and drops breathless into the arms of De l'Épée.) Ah, my poor wronged boy, for such I'm sure you are, that sound goes to my very heart! He scarcely breathes! I never saw him so much agitated. There, there! Come, come! Why was a voice denied to sensibility so eloquent? (Theodore makes signs with the utmost rapidity, that he was born in that palace; that he lived in it when a child; had seen the statues; come through the gate, &c. &c.) Yes; in that house was he born: words could not tell it more plainly. The care of heaven still wakes upon the helpless. (Theodore makes signs of gratitude to De l'Épée, and fervently kisses his hands. De l'Épée explains that it is not to him, but to heaven, that he ought to pay his thanks. Theodore instantly drops on his knee, and expresses a prayer for blessings on his benefactor. De l'Épée, bareheaded, bows, and says,)—O, thou, who guidest at thy will the thoughts of men; thou, by whom I was inspired to this great undertaking; O, power omnipotent! deign to accept the grateful adoration of thy servant, whom thou hast still protected, and of this speechless orphan, to whom thou hast made me a second father! If I have uprightly discharged my duty; if all my love and labours for him may dare to ask a benediction; vouchsafe to shed its dew on this forlorn one, and let his good be all my great reward! (De l'Épée raises Theodore, and embraces him.) We must proceed with caution; and first, to learn who is the owner of this house. (Theodore is running to knock at the gate; De l'Épée stops him, &c.)

Enter PIERRE.

Pie. Well, that President is the best natured gentleman—

De l'E. O, here comes one that may, perhaps, instruct me. (Signs to Theodore to attend.) Pray, sir, can you tell me the name of this square?

Pie. (Aside.) Strangers, I perceive. It is called St. George's-square, sir. (Looking at Theodore.)

De l'E. Thank you, sir. Another word: do you know this superb mansion?

Pie. (Observing De l'Épée and Theodore more closely.) Know it! I think I ought; I have lived here these five years.

De l'E. That's fortunate. And you call it—

Pie. (Aside.) Plaguy inquisitive. A few years ago it was called the palace of Harancour.

De l'E. Of Harancour?

Pie. But, at present, it belongs to a gentleman of the name of Darlemont. (Observing Theodore.) 'Tis odd! He seems to talk by signs. Is he dumb? (During the above dialogue, Theodore examines the gateway, pillars, arms, &c. of the palace of Harancour, and explains to De l'Épée his recollection of the various objects, &c.)

De l'E. And who is this gentleman of the name of Darlemont? (Theodore now turns his face fairly towards Pierre.)

Pie. 'Gad, how like it is! Sir? Who is he?

De l'E. Yes; I mean, what is his rank, his profession?

Pie. (Still looking at Theodore.) Profession! He has no profession, sir; he's one of the richest men in Toulouse. (Looking at Theodore.) One might almost swear to it. Your servant, sir; I'm wanted. (Aside.) Very odd, all these questions. (Looking at Theodore.) The strongest likeness I ever saw in my life. [Exit Pierre into the palace.]

De l'E. Ay, my friend; you little know the motive of my questions. There's not a moment to be lost. This house, that once belonged to so distinguished a family; this Darlemont, the present possessor of it; every circumstance relating to it, must be publicly known in Toulouse. I'll instantly away, seek out some lodging, and then—But, for fear it should escape me—(Writes in a note-book.) Harancour—Darlemont. (Theodore, as *De l'Épée* writes, runs to him with eager curiosity; *De l'Épée* presses him in his arms.) Yes, my poor mute Theodore, if you belong to parents who can feel, no doubt, they still lament your loss; and will, with transport, hail your return:—If, as I fear, you are the victim of unnatural foul play, grant me, Providence, to unmask and confound it! So men shall have another proof, that every fraud will soon or late be detected, and that no crime escapes eternal justice.

[Exit *De l'Épée*, over the bridge, leading Theodore, who looks back at the palace of Harancour, &c.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Franval's Library. A library-table, with books, parchments, vase with flowers, &c.*

FRANVAL discovered, reading.

Fran. I shall never be happy, till I have accomplished this task. To reconcile mistaken friends, is an employment as useful to society, as it is honourable to my profession.

Enter *MARIANNE*, with a basket of flowers in her hand.

Mar. Good morning, brother.

Fran. (Rises.) Good morning, Marianne.

Mar. Late and early, always at your studies.

Fran. The causes which a lawyer is expected to undertake, are frequently so disguised, either by the passions, or the arts of men, that, if he is honest, he cannot consider them too attentively.

Mar. Ah! your's must often be a painful employment.

Fran. 'Tis odious, indeed, to witness villany; but then to justify the innocent, is the noblest and most gratifying duty of man.

Mar. True; it is sweeter to the soul than these flowers to the sense. (She takes the flowers out of the vases, and puts those which she has brought into their places.)

Fran. Every morning fresh odoriferous flowers, and a kind kiss from my dear sister (He kisses her.) My thoughts must be clear and pure. Ah! Marianne, delightful as these gifts are to me, I have a young friend to whom they would be still more precious.

Mar. What do you mean, brother?

Fran. Nay, I would not make you blush. (He leads her forward, and looks stedfastly in her face.) Sister!

Mar. (With a downcast look.) Brother!

Fran. Your presents are sweet; your affections sweeter; yet both want of their true value, while you deny me your confidence.

Mar. Nay!

Fran. Besides, Marianne, you may as well frankly own it; for your heart is too innocent and simple to wear disguise gracefully.

Mar. Pray, forbear!

Fran. And why this hesitation? Do not the noble qualities of St. Alme make him worthy any woman's love?

Mar. I—I—believe they do.

Fran. I won't speak of his person—

Mar. Which is elegance itself.

Fran. I won't speak of his countenance—

Mar. Which is all comeliness and candour.

Fran. But, for his heart and understanding—

Mar. They are excellent and generous, indeed!

Fran. What woman but must be happy with such a husband?

Mar. So I have often thought! (Sighing.)

Fran. In a word, Marianne, he loves you.

Mar. Why do you think so?

Fran. Every look declares it.

Mar. Ah! I'm afraid to trust to looks.

Fran. Are you so? At last, Marianne, you're caught. You own, then, that you love him in return?

Mar. Oh! (Hides her face in his bosom.)

Enter *ST. ALME*, hastily.

Fran. My friend, you come at a lucky moment. You seem disturbed; is anything the matter?

St. A. Never stood I so much in need of your friendship. (Takes *Franval's* hand.)

Mar. Heavens!

Fran. Explain yourself.

Mar. I'll leave you. (Going.)

St. A. No; stay a moment—I entreat you, stay. My father, *Franval*, my father!

Fran. What of him?

St. A. His dreadful menaces still sound in my ears; and wherefore were they uttered? Because I cannot second his ambition. Had he required my blood, my life, I would have given them willingly; but to renounce her I love, the tenderest and first affections of my soul!

Mar. Ah!

St. A. Cruel parents! You cannot look with our eyes; you cannot feel with our hearts! Are we your children, only to become your victims?

Fran. Be calm, and tell me what has passed.

St. A. My father has this morning informed me, that the marriage I have so much dreaded, must take place within these three days. "Three days!" I exclaimed. "No, sir; never, never." This reply, which burst from the very bottom of my wounded heart, roused his displeasure into a rage too violent for all my excuses or prayers to pacify: he insisted on my instantly giving him a reason for my peremptory refusal. Hoping the name of her I adore might disarm his fury, I at once declared, that my affections were irrevocably devoted to—

Fran. To whom? Speak out.

St. A. To your sister.

Mar. Me!

St. A. (Throwing himself at her feet.) Forgive my rashness! Yes, to you; 'tis you alone I love, and ever, ever shall; and, might I hope—

Mar. (Much agitated, and raising him.) What said your father?

St. A. Embarrassed at first, and overpowered with confusion, he acknowledged your worth and beauty; but added, that he had disposed of me elsewhere, and enjoined me to forget you. "Sooner forget to live!" At this, his wrath redoubled: he reprobated my audacious disobedience; threatened me with his malediction; and forbade me ever again to enter his presence, but with repentance and submission.

Mar. Alas!

St. A. My whole frame shuddered while he spoke; yet I felt my heart revolt against this tyranny. Banished the bosom of a father, I come to find a refuge in the arms of a friend.

Fran. (Embracing him.) Of a friend, my dear

St. Alme, whose first advice to you is to calm this over-eager sensibility; and to remember, that a parent is to be respected, even under his mistakes.

St. A. Ah! were the heart of Marianne but mine!

Fran. Of that you are secure.

Mar. O, brother!

St. A. Am I so blessed? Am I, indeed?

Fran. And why dissemble what will alleviate his sufferings? (To Marianne.)

Mar. And why reveal what may increase our misery?

St. A. O, no; since that I am blessed, obstinate and stern as my father is, I shall subdue, I shall soften his inflexibility; and he will hereafter rejoice in the happiness of his children. But I forget: I must away.

Fran. Whither are you hurrying?

St. A. To the President's; I cannot now tell you more. We shall have every thing to hope, if I can prevail on him to countenance my project. I shall—I will! Secure of thy heart, my lovely Marianne, what can I not perform? [Exit.]

Fran. St. Alme! My friend! Hear me one moment.

Mar. I tremble, lest his ardent temper should precipitate him into—

Enter DOMINIQUE, with books under his arm.

Dom. Sir, your mother desires to know whether you choose to have breakfast in your study.

Fran. By all means; as she pleases.

Mar. You have not been to pay her your respects this morning. (Dominique lays the books on Franval's desk, and places a breakfast-table, chairs, &c.)

Fran. Come, let us wait on her. Cheer up, Marianne; all will go well yet.

Mar. You are very good, brother. But, you should not have told.

[Exit Franval and Marianne.]

Dom. I'm tired to death already. I verily believe, I have walked five miles this morning. Let me see that I have done all my errands though, or Madame Franval will be telling me I begin to grow old, and good for nothing. (Looks over a paper.) "Cards of invitation to the Prior and the Countess of—;" both delivered. "Books from the library;" there they are. "Go to the lawyer, and desire him to stop proceedings against the poor officer, the money being ready to discharge the debt;" paid by my good master to save an unfortunate family from prison. Ha, ha, ha! O, stop! Ah! "And, as I return, to leave six crowns with—" sent by my young mistress, Marianne, to the widow of the late porter of the palace of Harancour—That's because she's a favourite of Captain St. Alme's. How the poor soul did bless and pray for her lovely benefactress! Ha, ha, ha! I am tired; but it's a pleasure to go on such errands. Ha, ha, ha! They're coming.

[Exit Dominique, who returns immediately with the breakfast, which he places on the table, and exit.]

Enter MADAME FRANVAL, leaning on FRANVAL'S arm; MARIANNE following.

Mad. F. Yes, my son, there are few families in Toulouse, more ancient than our's; and, though but an advocate, I trust that you will shew yourself worthy of the name of Franval.

Fran. My employment, madam, is an honour to all who exercise it properly. (They sit; Marianne prepares the breakfast.)

Mad. F. The office of seneschal had been, I may say, for ages held by your ancestors; at the death of your father, I was obliged to sell it, and the degradation cuts me to the soul.

Fran. Yet, madam, this very circumstance has stimulated me to attain by my own talents that consideration in the world, for which I should other-

wise, in all probability, have stood indebted merely to accident and prejudice.

Enter DOMINIQUE.

Dom. A letter for you, madam. (Gives Madame Franval a letter.) The servant waits for an answer.

Mad. F. Have you been on those messages?

Dom. Yes, madam.

Mad. F. (Reading.) "Darlemont!" What occasion can Darlemont have to write to me?

Fran. (With surprise and looking at Marianne.) Darlemont!

Mad. F. (Reads.) "Madam, I take the freedom of addressing myself to you, in claim of the most sacred rights"—(To Dominique.) You may leave us. [Exit Dominique.] (Reads.) "Sacred rights of a father." What does he mean? (Reads.) "Rights of a father: my son loves your daughter." Indeed! (Reads.) "I met him this moment, and he assures me that his love is returned." (They all rise. Marianne starts. Madame Franval casts a severe look at her.)

Fran. (Diverting her attention from Marianne.) Go on, madam; I beseech you, go on.

Mad. F. (Reads.) "Be assured their union never can take place." Ha, ha, ha! No, sir; be assured their union never can take place.

Mar. What will become of me!

Mad. F. (Reads.) "I therefore trust you will forbid him your house; and no longer encourage him to contemn and brave the authority of a father. DARLEMONT." Encourage! I encourage! Insupportable insolence!

Fran. Be calm, I beg you, madam.

Mad. F. Who told this petty trader, this gentleman of yesterday, that I should dream of an alliance with his mushroom family? What, have his riches made him forget the disparity of our births? Daughter, I cannot believe this of you. I hope, son Franval, after such an insult, you will no longer honour this St. Alme with your notice. As for the father, should he ever—Yes, he shall have an answer. (Sits down to write.)

Enter DOMINIQUE.

Dom. Sir, a stranger desires to speak with you.

Fran. A stranger?

Dom. Yes, sir; a very good-looking gentleman desires to see you: I believe he's a clergyman.

Fran. Desire him to walk in. [Exit Dom.]

Mad. F. (Reading the letter with vexation.) "Their union never can take place." Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. My dreams of happiness are ended.

Fran. Madam, the gentleman comes: if you please, we'll consider the letter another time.

Mad. F. (Rising.) No; I won't honour him with an answer at all.

Enter the ABBE DE L'EPÉE, introduced by DOMINIQUE.

Dom. Walk in, sir; pray walk in. [Exit.]

De l'E. (Salutes the ladies, then Franval.) I presume, sir, you are Monsieur Franval?

Fran. At your service.

De l'E. Could you favour me with a few moments' conversation?

Fran. Very willingly. May I take the liberty of asking who—

De l'E. I am from Paris; my name is De l'Epée.

Fran. De l'Epée! The instructor of the deaf and dumb? (De l'Epée bows.) Madam—sister—you see before you one who is an honour to human nature.

De l'E. Sir! (Bows. The ladies salute De l'Epée with great respect.)

Fran. How often have I admired you as the dispenser of the most valuable gifts of heaven!

De l'E. Then have I been fortunate, indeed, in applying myself to you.

Fran. How can I serve you?

De l'E. By aiding me to redress the injured. Your high reputation, sir, has brought me hither, in order to communicate to you an affair of the utmost importance.

Mad. F. Daughter, we'll retire. (*Going.*)

De l'E. If you have time to listen, ladies, pray stay. It is my earnest wish to interest every virtuous and feeling heart in the cause I have undertaken.

Mad. F. If we have your leave, sir.

Fran. Be seated, pray, sir. (*They sit.*)

De l'E. Perhaps, you will think my story tedious; yet I must be particular.

Mar. How interesting an appearance! (*Aside.*)

Fran. Pray, proceed.

De l'E. (*Bowing to the ladies.*) This, then, is my business. About eight years ago, a boy, deaf and dumb, found in the dead of night on the Pont Neuf, was brought to me by an officer of the police. From the meanness of his dress, I supposed him of poor parents, and undertook to educate and provide for him.

Fran. As I know you have done for many others.

De l'E. I soon remarked an uncommon intelligence in his eyes; a well-mannered ease and assurance in his behaviour; and, above all, a strange and sorrowful surprise in his looks, whenever he examined the coarseness of his clothing. In a word, the more I saw, the more I was convinced, that he had been purposely lost in the streets. I gave a public, full, minute description of the unhappy foundling; but in vain. Few will claim interest in the unfortunate.

Fran. Ah! I fear indeed!

De l'E. Placed among my scholars, he profited so well by my lessons, that he was, at last, able to converse with me by signs, rapid almost as thought itself. One day, as we were passing the high court of justice, a judge alighted from his carriage. The sight gave Theodore (for so I called him) an emotion, violent and instant. The tears ran down his cheeks in torrents, while he explained to me, that, when a child, a man, who often wore similar robes of purple and ermine, had been accustomed to caress, and take him in his arms. Observe: another time, a grand funeral passed us in the streets; I watched the various changes in his colour, and learned that he had himself, long ago, followed the coffin of the very person, by whom he had been thus fondly caressed. I could not be mistaken. I concluded, that he was probably the orphan heir of some chief magistrate, purposely turned adrift in a strange and populous city; defrauded, robbed, and even fortunate to have escaped with life.

Mar. Poor youth!

De l'E. These strong presumptions redoubled all my hope and zeal. Theodore grew every day more and more interesting. He confirmed to me many circumstances of his story. Yet, how proceed in his behalf? He had never heard his father's name, he neither knew his family, nor the place of his birth. Well, sir, some months ago, as we went through the Barriere d'Enfer, observing a carriage stopped and examined, the recollection suddenly struck him, that this was the very gate through which he entered Paris, and that the chaise, in which he travelled with two persons, whom he well remembered, had, in this very spot, been thus visited. I see—I see it in your eyes—you anticipate my firm persuasion, that he came from some city in the south of France, of which, in all likelihood, his father had been the chief magistrate.

Fran. For heaven's sake, sir, go on!

De l'E. Finding all my researches ineffectual, I resolved at last to take my pupil with me, and traverse, in person, and on foot, the whole of the south of France. We embraced each other, invoked the

protection of heaven, and set forward. After a journey, long, fatiguing, almost hopeless, we this morning, blessed be the Divine Providence! arrived at the gates of Toulouse.

Fran. Good heavens!

De l'E. He knew the place, he seized my hand, uttered wild cries of joy, and led me quickly, here and there, through various quarters of the city. At length, we arrived at this square; he stopped, pointed to the mansion opposite your door, shrieked, and senseless dropped into my arms.

Fran. The palace of Harancour?

De l'E. Yes; and from the inquiries I have already made, I am convinced that my poor boy is the lawful heir of that family; and that his inheritance has been seized by his guardian and maternal uncle—Darlemont.

Mad. F. I don't doubt it. O, the wretch! (*She rises.*)

De l'E. To you, sir, I have been directed; to your talents; to your virtue; and to you, in the names of justice and humanity, I now address myself for aid. Earth, heaven, and all the blessings it can promise, will second my petition. O, let the voice of irresistible truth be raised in his behalf! Let not a noble orphan, denied the precious bounties of nature, and quickened by these privations into ten-fold sensibility—let him not, I conjure you, let him not fall the victim of the ambitious and the base.

Fran. Sir, could I have listened to a tale like this unmoved, I were unworthy the form and name of man. (*To Mad. F.*) If ever I were truly proud of my profession, madam, it is at this moment, when I am called upon to assault the powerful, and defend the helpless. (*To De l'E.*) Sir, the faculties of life, body, and soul, while I possess them, shall be employed to serve him.

Mad. F. Thank heaven! I shall see him reduced to his original insignificance at last.

Mar. Ah! poor St. Alme! Brother—

Fran. I don't forget St. Alme. Sir, I must now acquaint you, that this Darlemont is the father of my dearest friend. Delicacy, duty, require me to try persuasion, gentleness, and every milder method; should these fail with him, I shall be driven to expose his guilt, and publicly compel him to restore the rights, which I have cause to fear, he has so unnaturally usurped. Where is your pupil?

De l'E. I left him at our lodgings; and his anxiety, no doubt, makes my absence seem long.

Fran. Dear sir, why didn't you bring him with you?

Mar. How impatient I am to see him!

Fran. Let me beg that you will use us like old friends, and accept apartments here.

De l'E. I am afraid—

Mad. F. Not, I hope, to do us pleasure and an honour?

De l'E. It is impossible to resist such goodness. Madam, I obey. (*De l'E. and Fran. talk together.*)

Mad. F. Come, Marianne, we'll go and prepare for our young guest. Yes, yes, you shall have an answer; my son shall be your correspondent. Come, Marianne. [*Exit.*]

Mar. Brother, remember your friend. Your servant, sir. (*To De l'E.*) [*Exit.*]

Fran. Yes, sir; we shall have great difficulties to encounter in our way: the wealth and influence of Darlemont are formidable; his temper daring, haughty, and obstinate. Yet, in the First President, we have so upright and wise a judge to hear us, that, if truth and justice are on our side, our triumph is certain.

De l'E. I rely entirely on you. Let the result of our inquiry be what it may, to have done my duty, will be my consolation; and to have known you, sir, my recompense. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The same Room in the palace of Harancour.*

Enter DARLEMONT, followed by PHILIPPE and ETIENNE, to whom he gives his hat and cane, and they retire.

Dar. My life is one continued scene of terror and disappointment. This undutiful, this headstrong boy! to refuse the match I had provided for him! Thus to thwart my long-laboured plan for our security! But let the rebel dread the consequence of his disobedience.

Enter PIERRE.

Now, sir, where is your master?

Pie. I don't know, sir; but, indeed, I am very much afraid—

Dar. Afraid! Of what? Speak.

Pie. That he'll soon lose his senses, poor gentleman!

Dar. Blockhead!

Pie. He had such a wild look, when you turned away from him in the street just now. Do, good sir, pardon my boldness; do take this wedding into a little consideration.

Dar. Silence! Who were they you were chattering with so busily in the square, about an hour ago!

Pie. In the square? O! they were strangers.

Dar. How came they to examine, and point at this house so often?

Pie. I don't know, sir; but one of them asked me whose that fine house was, and I said it had been the palace of Harancour.

Dar. You said!

Pie. Yes, sir; but that now it belonged to—

Dar. Babbling dunce!

Pie. I beg your pardon, sir; if I had been a babbler, I should have staid with them; but, no; I got away as fast as I could, that they might ask me no questions about you, sir.

Dar. About me! And why should you fear any questions being asked about me?

Pie. I'm sure, I don't know, sir.

Dar. Don't know! Tell me this moment, who put that thought into your head?

Pie. Upon my life, sir, you frighten me out of my wits! Why, sir, it was—

Dar. Who, who was it?

Pie. It was you yourself, sir, who ordered me not to talk of you, nor your affairs, to anybody.

Dar. Well; and pray, what passed between them?

Pie. They kept that to themselves. They seemed to me to talk by signs.

Dar. By signs! Why talk by signs?

Pie. I can't tell, sir; only I guess that the young gentleman was dumb.

Dar. Dumb?

Pie. He surely was; at least I thought so.

Dar. Dumb! 'tis false. [sir.]

Pie. No, indeed; you'll find it true, I believe.

Dar. Impossible. Was it the youth, do you say, that was dumb.

Pie. Yes, sir, the boy; and I was the more sorry for him some how, because he is so very like—

Dar. Like whom?

Pie. So very like that picture of the young Count. And so—

Dar. And so! And what so? Officious fool! isn't the boy dead?

Pie. So I have heard, sir.

Dar. Heard, reptile! Do you dare to doubt, sir?

Pie. I, sir! No. Only this morning Dupré said that, perhaps, he was still alive.

Dar. When did he say so?

Pie. While we were looking at the picture.

Dar. Flames devour the picture! *(Aside.)* Let that picture be removed into my apartment.

Pie. Yes, sir. So I thought, if it should happen to be him, it might turn out to be a lucky discovery. My master, thinks I—

Dar. Go; send them to remove that picture.

Pie. Yes, sir. It's very odd, all this. [Exit.]

Dar. Here I am countermined again. That picture I had painted at the moment of our departure, in order to impress an opinion of my affection for this boy, and so prevent suspicion. My very precautions work towards my detection.—Like the picture!—Dumb! No, no; it can't be. And yet—

Enter DUPRE, abruptly, having a paper in his hand.

Now, sir; who sent for you? What want you here?

Dup. I come to unburthen a loaded conscience.

Dar. I'm busy; and can't be troubled.

Dup. I come to—*(Holding out a letter.)*

Dar. Did you hear me? I'm busy.

Dup. Sir, sir, you waste your anger on me; you have laid a crime on my soul, that annihilates the duties and distance of my calling: I cast off the servant, and assume the man.

Dar. What is it you mean by this insolence?

Dup. First, sir, please to take back the annuity you have sent me.

Dar. *(Snatching the paper.)* Take back! Is it not yet sufficient? I thought it beyond your hopes. Your conscience knows its price.

Dup. No, sir; you wrong me; 'twas when I had no conscience, that I had a price.

Dar. Liar! You come to practise on me. You tattler! Gossip of sworn secrets! Perjurer—Go—point, and pretend to start at pictures—pernicious dotard! Conscience! 'Tis false! No; 'tis to wring my purse, you act remorse, and feign this pity for a thing; who, say the best, was but an idiot—an automaton.

Dup. Of me, sir, think what you will; I have deserved it; but in behalf of that injured youth, I must retort the falsehood.

Dar. You?

Dup. I.—Though speech and hearing were denied him, yet nature-recompensed him with a mind that glowed with intelligence, and a heart that ran over with benevolence. And you, sir—is your heart so deadened by the injuries you have done him, that you forget it was this idiot saved the life of that most excellent young man, your only son. Did not Julio—regardless of danger to himself, and thoughtful only for St. Alme—when the fierce wolf had fastened on his throat, did he not bravely rend asunder his bloody jaws, receiving in his own arm a wound, so deep and dangerous, that the scar could never be effaced?

Dar. Silence, I charge you!

Dup. When I call to mind his infancy, his pretty looks, his fond kisses, when I have borne him in my arms—and think how I yielded, weak and wicked as I was! to your temptations, and abandoned him to perish—poor helpless babe!—in a wide un pitying world, I could call for curses on my head, proclaim my guilt, and take delight in the abhorrence and punishment, which men enraged, and the just laws, would pursue me to destruction!

Dar. Hence, raving visionary! The serpent that stung the friend that fostered him, paid with his life the forfeit of his ingratitude. *(Puts his hand on his sword.)* Coward, beware! Shall my honour stand in danger from your treachery?

Dup. Treachery has never entered my mind. Julio is gone, and the crime cannot be repaired; yet, the sincere repentance of a servant might claim respect from that master, who, after a blameless life of forty years, had seduced him to villany.

Dar. Villany!

Dup. My part was impious villany: what your's was—ask of the vexing thoughts that nightly take watch on the pillow of the wicked.

Dar. Urge me no further. Lectured by my slave!—a worm that crawls at the mercy of my foot! Because I have forborne, presumest thou that I dare not strike? Hence! Here, take thy recompense: (*offering him the paper*) be thankful, and obedient; guard thy lips, or—

Dup. No; vile as you think me, my silence is not to be bought; my sins shall not be pensioned. Hitherto you are safe. Don't let your insult drive me to disclose you.

Dar. Here, here; and have done. (*Offering him the paper.*)

Dup. You are deceived. I was bribed, not by your gold, but by the wild vanity of sharing your confidence, your familiarity; and becoming, instead of him you call your slave, your friend.

Dar. Such you might have been.

Dup. No: there can be no friendship in guilt—'tis my doom to live in dread of you, and of my own reflections—'tis your's, to know that your honour and life are in the keeping of a man stung in conscience, distracted in mind; and by yourself rendered a wretch, infamous, and never more to be trusted. *[Exit.]*

Dar. Indeed! Do you grow so fast on us? Prevention or treachery—his life or mine. And shall I hesitate? A single blow will give me peace. Whither am I going? Peace! No, no, 'tis false; peace dwells only with innocence; yet to be led—exposed—a public malefactor—help heaven! shield me from the phrenzy of these thoughts! *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—*Franval's Study, as before.*

Enter MARIANNE.

Mar. Where can Dominique loiter all this while? When I told him, too, how anxiously I should wait for his return! My dear father valued his honest simplicity of heart; and he has lived among us so long, and so familiarly indulged, that he treats me with as little ceremony, as if he were guiding me in my leading-strings again. Ah! poor fellow! here he comes, quite out of breath. I beg his pardon—

Enter DOMINIQUE.

Well, my good, dear Dominique, have you seen St. Alme?

Dom. I was coming to tell you, ma'am. No, ma'am, he has not been at home since.

Mar. Unlucky! Never did I wish so earnestly to see him.

Dom. Lord, Lord, what a pity! Where is he? Where can he be? Ha, ha, ha! If he did but know how you are fretting about him, he'd fly on the wings of lo—

Mar. (*Interrupting him.*) I had forgot—Did you go to the poor widow?

Dom. Yes, true, ma'am; and gave her your present. Ha, ha! poor Claudine! She kissed the crows because they had touched your hand; and blessed your sweet name a thousand and a thousand times.

Mar. Surely, you didn't tell her that it came from me?

Dom. Lord, ma'am! I couldn't help it. To be sure, nobody, though I say it myself, can keep a secret better than I can; but, then—ha, ha! poor soul!—she begged, and prayed, and laughed, and cried: ha, ha! I reckon she'll be here in a minute to thank you.

Mar. I can't see her, Dominique. I'm too much disturbed. I'm not—It was very wrong, indeed.

Dom. Well, then, she sha'n't come. And yet, why should you be so ashamed of doing good? I'm sure, virtue should have somebody to shew it a little countenance now-a-days. Ah, poor Claudine! times are sadly changed with her since her good man, Blaise, was porter at the palace of Harancour. She wanted for nothing then. Ah! when Count Julio died, his uncle, Darlemont, turned away all

the old servants; and, but for the charity of his son, I believe, some of them might have starved, poor things! He has been very good to Claudine, too, and would have done more, but for fear of his father.

Mar. Yes; the father is unlike the son.

Dom. Unlike! The one is as proud as the—and the other as mild as a May morning. O, he'd make an admirable master for one, he would; an excellent head of a family; and, above all, a most charming spouse. Don't you think so, ma'am?

Mar. Yes; I believe the woman of his choice—

Dom. That's heard. His choice is made, *Mar.* I've heard he's to be married to the great heiress, the President's daughter.

Dom. So have I.

Mar. Have you?

Dom. Yes. Ha, ha, ha! But he won't have her.

Mar. Dominique!

Dom. Lord, ma'am! you know very well, he loves somebody else.

Mar. (*Much agitated.*) Are the apartments ready for our two guests?

Dom. I can do that in a minute, ma'am. Yes, yes, he—

Mar. Go, go; make haste; they are expected instantly. Go.

Dom. Well, well, I'm gone. (*Aside.*) No, never can make her own it. Ah! you cunning little hypocrite! Ha, ha! a girl in love is for all the world like the moon in a cloudy night; now out, now in: this moment clear as the day; and the next you're all in the dark again. *[Exit.]*

Mar. One would think that this old man took a pleasure in tormenting me. If this scholar of De l'Epee's should prove to be Count Julio, and recover the possessions he has been deprived of, St. Alme would then be only the equal of my fortune, and his father no longer, perhaps, see any distance between us. Ah! flattering Hope, you are too forward.

SONG.

[Written by M. G. LEWIS, Esq.]

*What, tho' Fate forbids me offer
Golden gifts from Fortune's store;
All I have to Love I proffer,
Fortune cannot offer more.*

*What, tho' bright the jewell'd treasure,
Which Peruvian mines supply;
Brighter still the tear of pleasure,
Sparkling in Affection's eye.*

*Hymen, in his power for ever,
Firm the God of hearts would hold;
Binding oft—ah, vain endeavour!
Love with Interest's chains of gold.*

*Soon their weight his strength o'erpowers;
Soon they crush the petty elf;
Love can bear no chains but flowers,
Light and blooming like himself.*

Ah, me! Why is St. Alme out of the way? He must be prepared for this discovery—and yet, my mother!—Should Darlemont be softened, will she consent?

Enter MADAME FRANVAL and FRANVAL.

Mad. F. Don't tell me, son; don't tell me. This is my opinion—to hesitate to deliver up this usurper to the vengeance of the laws; to wink at such enormities—is to become an accomplice in them.

Fran. You will allow us first to prove them on him, madam. Besides, can I forget, that he is the father of my friend? (*Madame Franval turns away in great displeasure.*) Has Dominique been to St. Alme? (*To Marianne.*)

Mar. Yes; but he hadn't been at home.

Mad. F. (*Comes down between them.*) And to tell

you my opinion further, son—after this letter, I very much disapprove of that young man's visits here.

Fran. Ought we to make him responsible for his father's faults?

Mar. Which he is so far from sharing, that he will devote his life to atone them. (*Madame Franval gives her a look of disapprobation.*) One need only look in his face, to be sure of it.

Mad. F. Oh! had the Seneschal been living now!

Fran. If only Darlemont were concerned, madam, I should, without regret, tear away his specious visor, and expose him bare-faced; such, however, are the prejudices of the world, that I cannot publish the guilt of the parent without reflecting the disgrace of his actions on his blameless son.

Mad. F. What, then, he is to escape after all?

Fran. Here's somebody coming. My dear madam—

Mar. Good mother—

Mad. F. Nay, nay—

Enter DE L'ÉPÉE, introducing THEODORE.

De l'É. In obedience to your kind commands, I present to you my adopted child, my Theodore. This, sir, is the orphan, whose story you have heard, and whose wrongs you will redress. (*Theodore, having saluted them with great vivacity, fixes his eyes on Franval.*)

Mar. How intelligent and animated a look!

Mad. F. The perfect image of his late father!

De l'É. (*Earnestly.*) Do you say so, madam?

Mad. F. I see his father in him, at his age, as if he stood before me. (*Theodore, to whom De l'Épée is attentive, points to Franval; lays the fore-finger of his right hand on his forehead, and assumes an expression of genius; then darts his arm forward with force, grandeur, &c.*)

De l'É. Ay! he tells me, that he reads in your countenance the certainty of triumphing, and confounding his oppressor.

Fran. Yes; I have given him my promise, and will perform it. (*Theodore having touched his lips with a look of regret, seizes the hand of Franval; holds it to his heart; and, with his other hand, beats quickly and often on the bosom of Franval.*)

De l'É. Ah! that he could speak his gratitude! But, by the throbbings of his heart, he bids you learn, that your goodness to him will live there for ever. These are his true expressions.

Fran. Are you then so perfectly comprehensible to each other?

Mad. F. Are your signs so minutely accurate?

De l'É. As speech itself.

Mar. And does he understand every thing you desire to express?

De l'É. You shall have proof of it this moment. (*De l'Épée taps Theodore on the shoulder, to make him observe, rubs his forehead, then points to Marianne, and writes a line or two with his finger on the palm of his left hand. Theodore nods to De l'Épée; runs to Franval's table; sits down, snatches up a pen, and shews that he is ready to write.*) Now, madam, make what inquiry you please of him, he will copy it down from my action, and immediately give you his reply. He waits for you.

Mar. (*With timidity.*) I really don't know what to—

Fran. Anything—anything.

Mad. F. Ay, ay, child; the first thing that comes into your head.

Mar. (*After a moment's reflection.*) In your opinion,—

De l'É. Speak slowly, and repeat the question, as if you were dictating to him yourself. (*Theodore expresses that he attends to De l'Épée's signs.*)

Mar. In your opinion,—

De l'É. (*Makes a sign, Theodore writes.*)

Mar. Who is the greatest genius,—

De l'É. (*Makes a sign, Theodore writes.*)

Mar. That France has ever produced?

De l'É. (*Makes a sign, Theodore writes.—De l'É. takes the paper from the table, and shews it to Franval.*) You see he has written the question distinctly. (*De l'Épée returns the paper to Theodore, who for a moment sits motionless and meditating.*)

Mar. He seems a little at a loss.

De l'É. I don't wonder at it; it's a delicate question. (*Theodore starts from his reverie; looks affectionately at De l'Épée; wipes his eyes, and writes with the utmost rapidity.*)

Fran. Look, look! what fire sparkles in his eyes! What animation in every turn! I dare promise you, this will be the answer of a feeling heart, and an enlightened mind. (*Theodore starts up; presents the paper to Marianne; and desires her to read it to the company. Madame Franval and Franval look over Marianne as she reads; Theodore runs to De l'Épée, and looks at him with fond curiosity.*)

Mar. (*Reads.*) "In your opinion, who is the greatest genius that France has ever produced?"

Mad. F. Ay; what does he say to that?

Mar. (*Reads.*) "Science would decide for D'Alembert, and Nature say, Buffon; Wit and Taste present Voltaire; and Sentiment pleads for Rousseau; but Genius and Humanity cry out for De l'Épée; and him I call the best and greatest of human creatures." (*Marianne drops the paper, and retires to a chair in tears. Theodore throws himself into De l'Épée's arms. M. Franval and Franval look at each other in astonishment.*)

De l'É. (*With an emotion which he strives to repress.*) You must excuse him; 'tis a great mistake; but a very, very pardonable one.

Fran. (*Takes up the paper, and examines it.*) I can hardly credit what I see.

Mad. F. What do you think of this Darlemont now? (*Theodore and Madame Franval go to Marianne.*)

Fran. This decision discovers an extent of acquirements, and shews a purity of taste, that—(*To De l'Épée.*) What study, what pains, must it have cost you to accomplish such effects!

De l'É. To tell you what it has cost me, were impossible; but the bare thought of prompting to the forgetfulness of nature; of calling forth the faculties of mind; this one persuasion gives strength, courage, and perseverance, to accomplish miracles. If the labourious husbandman, when he views a rich harvest waving over the lands he has fertilized, experiences a pleasure proportioned to his toils; judge what are my sensations, when, surrounded by my pupils, I watch them gradually emerging from the night that overshadows them, and see them dazzled at the widening dawn of opening Deity, till the full blaze of perfect intellect informs their souls to hope and adoration. This is to new-create our brethren. What transport to bring man acquainted with himself! Enjoyments, I own, there may be, more splendid, more alluring; but I am sure, that, in the wide round of our capacities, none will be found more true.

Fran. They are the just reward of such benevolence; and if my efforts—(*Claudine and Dominique without.*)

Dom. Come back, come back! I tell you, Claudine, you can't see her.

Clau. I tell you I must and will see her, if I search the whole house after her. (*Theodore, Madame Franval, and Marianne come forward.*)

Enter CLAUDINE, followed by DOMINIQUE.

Clau. (*To Madame Franval.*) I beg pardon for being so bold—

Dom. (*To Marianne.*) She slipped by, the back

way, and got the start of me. (*Theodore, on the entrance of Claudine, appears struck with recollection of her; then falls in the most lively agitation; and signifies to De l'Epée, that she was wife to the porter of the house he lived in, and had been his nurse. De l'Epée answers him in signs of surprise and joy.*)

Clau. (To Franval.) Sir, I beg pardon; yet, when the heart is full—This dear young lady has been so good. (*Kisses Marianne's hand.*)

Mad. F. What does all this mean, Marianne?

Mar. (Hesitating.) Madam—

Clau. Sweet saint! She blushes to speak her own good deeds. Ah! madam, this angel of a girl, heard I was in distress, and has been for a long time my benefactress; I never knew what charitable hand was stretched to me, till this morning Dominique told me—

Dom. No, I didn't tell you; you coaxed it out of me. Come away, come away; you're a rare one to keep a secret! (*Signs to her to be gone.*)

De l'E. Good woman! good woman!

Clau. Me, sir? (*Curtysying.*)

De l'E. You lived formerly in the palace of Harancour?

Clau. My husband was porter there nine-and-twenty years.

De l'E. Do you remember young Count Julio, your late master's son?

Clau. Remember him? I had him in my arms the very hour he was born. My lady died in child-bed: I was his nurse; his mother, begging your pardon, I may say; and a sweet babe he was. I shall never forget him. His death was a hard pinch to us all. (*Weeping—Theodore gazes on Claudine, in great agitation.*)

De l'E. (Takes Theodore by the hand.) Did you ever see his face?

Clau. (Starting.) Merciful goodness! why sure—(*Theodore flings back the hair from his forehead, &c.*)

Clau. It is, it is he! it is young Count Julio himself! (*Theodore, as she runs to him, and is falling at his feet, immediately prevents, and kisses her.*)

Dom. Ha, ha! and there I had like not to have let her in.

De l'E. Providential encounter!

Fran. This may lead to other proofs.

Mad. F. And confound the insolent Darlemont. Now, son!

Clau. If my poor Blaise were but alive! But where has he been; and the dear boy! where has he—

De l'E. Hush! recollect yourself: are you so thoroughly convinced, that this is Julio of Harancour, that you dare solemnly attest it—

Clau. To the whole world; to men and angels; earth and heaven.

Fran. Can't you immediately, without letting them know what has passed, bring hither some others of the servants, who knew Count Julio in his infancy?

Clau. To be sure; there's the coachman's widow living still; and there's—

Dom. Ay, so there is; and there's Denys the groom besides, and his old wife; they don't live far off.

Mad. F. Fetch them this moment; fetch them all.

Dom. Come along, Claudine; come along. (*Going.*)

Fran. And—not a word, for your lives.

Dom. Oh! I know better than to chatter about what doesn't concern me. Long live Count Julio!

Fran. Dominique—

Dom. Oh! come along, Claudine.

[*Exeunt Dominique and Claudine.*]

Mad. F. There, there! make haste, make haste!

Mar. My dear madam, if they should discover—

Mad. F. Daughter, daughter, he must be punished for his ambition; his insolence must be

humbled. Son, we'll leave you together. Come, we'll shew the Count of Harancour his apartment.

[*Signs to Theodore to go with her; he takes her hand. Exeunt Madame Franval, very ceremoniously; Theodore nodding to De l'Epée; and Marianne, with an imploring look to Franval.*]

Fran. I have already told you, the friendship that binds me to St. Alme, imposes on me the duty of proceeding by the gentlest steps. I now propose, that we present ourselves at the palace of Harancour; there, jointly, and in private, we may attack this Darlemont; you, with the energy so good a cause inspires; and I, with all the terror of the laws. He must be more hardened and audacious than I think him, if he can withstand us.

De l'E. I agree; and a thought this instant strikes me, which, if he is not quite a monster, must insure our success. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Room in the palace of Harancour. The picture being removed.*

Enter DARLEMONT and PIERRE.

Dar. Go and inquire immediately. [*Exit Pierre.*] Vain, groundless apprehensions, leave me! what an absurd propensity there is in man to be his own tormentor; to conjure up the wildest visions; to fancy the most frightful accidents; and shlake the more, the more preposterous the terrors are which his imagination creates!

Re-enter PIERRE.

Pie. Sir, my master is not come in yet.

Dar. I suppose he's at Franval's, then.

Pie. No, sir, he's not; they sent here just now to inquire for him.

Dar. (Aside.) My son opposing all my wishes; my servant ready to betray me; whom can I trust in? my ambition is my curse; the moment I attained its object, my plagues began. Where is Dupré?

Pie. Shut up in his own room.

Dar. (Alarmed.) Is anybody with him?

Pie. No, sir, I saw him go in alone, and heard the door lock. (*Going.*)

Dar. Well! Pierre, have you seen anything more of these—

Pie. What, the strangers, sir?

Dar. So very like the—No, nothing. You may go. [*Exit Pierre.*] Dumb! Like the picture! Should he be still alive; should some infernal accident have returned him hither. Well, how will he prove his story? His death is registered: that testimony no evidence but Dupré's can now invalidate; and him, too, I might set at defiance, and be at rest for ever, could I but link my interest to the President's by this marriage with his daughter; that would place me beyond the result of danger.

Enter ST. ALME, who stands at a distance, as if not daring to approach his father.

I am on the rack, till it is accomplished.

St. A. Am I permitted, sir,—

Dar. (Alarmed.) Who's there?

St. A. I was told, sir, you wished to see me.

Dar. I do; and let me warn you, sir, that unless you come resolved to shew a proper sense of duty to your father, you have heard that wish for the last time. Tell me, where have you been all this morning?

St. A. My father, it is not in my nature to dissemble with you—I come from the President's.

Dar. (Startled.) Ha! What was your business there, and without me?

St. A. To lay open my whole soul before him;

to acquaint him from my own lips with my engagements to Marianne. (*Darlemont starts.*) Pardon me, sir. O, think how resistless must be the power that over-masters me, since it could hurry me to make this declaration, even at the risk of your displeasure!

Dar. (*Stiffing his rage.*) Well, sir; what was his answer?

St. A. Noble, kind, and like himself. He gently told me, it would have been the pride of his heart, and the comfort of his declining years, to have seen me happy with his daughter; but that the choice I had made did me honour—

Dar. (*Gradually giving way to his fury.*) How!

St. A. And that the ties by which I was engaged to so worthy an object must be indissoluble.

Dar. (*Bursting out.*) Parricide! You have undone me. Vain, empty schemes of human foresight! I possess myself of my ne—of a vast inheritance: I devote it to your advancement; employ it to ally you with the most powerful and wealthy family in Languedoc; and, when I have succeeded in removing every prejudice, every obstacle, you dare to make a mockery of my solicitudes, and audaciously reject power, rank, fortune, for the interested attractions of a beggar, the seductive arts of a—

St. A. O, no; that she has fixed me her's, and her's alone, 'tis true; but, sir, 'twas without artifices, as it was without design. Her enchanting loveliness; my father—her innocence, if possible, still more lovely; these are the seductions, these the arts, this virtuous girl has practised on me.

Dar. (*Bursting into tears.*) Short-sighted, foolish parents! for thankless children, thus to plunge yourselves in guilt and danger.

St. A. O, sir! (*Affectionately.*) Surely, you are in no danger?

Dar. (*Resolutely.*) No! I don't know what I am. Yet, should the world once suspect—

St. A. Who can live fairer in the opinion of the world?

Dar. He who lives fair in his own mind.

St. A. For heaven's sake, sir! what labours in your bosom?

Dar. O, misery! to think I have a son, and want a friend!

St. A. You rend my heart with these doubts. Honour me as a friend; shew me how I may serve my father; and let man and heaven renounce me, if I forget the duty of a son!

Dar. (*Eagerly.*) Do you speak this from your soul? May I depend on you?

St. A. Can it be a question, sir?

Dar. (*Solemn and earnest.*) Then return to the President—

St. A. Ha!

Dar. Retrieve the mischief; apologize, plead, obtain his daughter.

St. A. Sir!

Dar. If you have the affection of a son—if you value the safety, life, and honour of your father—go.

St. A. Your agitation terrifies me. Tell me, I conjure you, tell me the cause of it.

Dar. Impossible! Think, 'tis no trivial cause that could induce me to plead by dark hints for a son's obedience.

St. A. Speak, sir; O, speak!

Dar. It is not to be told. Nothing but the support of rank, wealth, office, can secure me: the gulph of ruin gapes at my feet. I call on my son; him to whom I have given life; for whom I have risked life, infamy, and perdition. I once more call on him; save me, or never see me more. [*Exit.*]

St. A. Such guilt! Such danger! Can this be real? Impossible! 'Tis but a cruel artifice to extort my consent to this hated marriage. Unkind father! Thus with suborned emotions, to practise on the affections of a son, who would die for you.

Enter PIERRE.

Pie. Sir, the porter says, Dominique was here just now in a great hurry to ask for you.

St. A. I come. Yes, Franval; my friend; my brother! Your advice and assistance are the only reliance left me. [*Exit.*]

Pie. And now for a little chat with Dupré about this picture. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Franval's Study as before.*

Enter MADAME FRANVAL, MARIANNE, DE L'ÉPÉE, and FRANVAL, with a paper in his hand.

Mad. F. Bless my soul! Where can they be? No news of these witnesses yet?

De l'E. We must have patience, madam.

Mad. F. This Dominique is so slow!

Fran. (*To De l'Épée.*) How severe is the duty you have imposed on me! Must I present the accusation of the father of St. Alme? My heart bleeds at the thought!

De l'E. Would he had been less criminal, and Theodore less injured!

Mad. F. No, no; his punishment cannot be too sudden, nor too public.

Fran. Think of his virtuous son.

Mar. (*With the utmost tenderness.*) Who, innocent of his crimes, would share in his disgrace.

De l'E. Besides, madam, we must remember that he still is my poor boy's uncle; his mother's brother.

Mad. F. How the Count of Harancour could stoop to marry into such a family; and then, to make this wretch his eventual heir!

De l'E. Integrity and honour, it may be, governed his life, till this temptation overpowered him; at least, under that persuasion, madam, I would first try, whether he may not still be reclaimable by lenient means.

Fran. On that I am fixed.

Mad. F. Remember, I tell you, he'll treat all your sentiments, and your lenient means, with contempt.

Enter ST. ALME, in the deepest dejection.

Fran. Then, madam—St. Alme! I wished to see you. (*He goes to St. Alme, and they talk together.*)

De l'E. Is this his son? (*To Marianne.*)

Mar. Yes, sir.

Mad. F. Daughter!

[*Exit Mad. F. looking disdainfully at St. Alme.*]

Mar. (*To De l'E.*) O, sir, speak with him; acquaint yourself with the virtues of his heart, then ask your own, whether ignominy be his desert!

[*Exit in tears.*]

Fran. (*To De l'E.*) My friend requests a moment's conversation.

De l'E. Honour and persuasion sit on his brow; trust him at once; his father will never be able to resist him.

Fran. You judge him by yourself.

De l'E. Try every thing. Theodore shall know that his cousin is here. [*Exit.*]

Fran. St. Alme, why are your looks so sad?

St. A. My distresses double every moment, and are inexplicable. The stern reserve, in which my father has so long wrapped himself, is suddenly changed to terrors that distract him.

Fran. (*Aside.*) Indeed!

St. A. The horror of his thoughts seem agonizing. To me he appeals for safety; yet mysteriously hides from me the cause of his alarm: by the sacred names of son and friend; with prayers, with tears, and solemn warnings, I am adjured to shield a father from perdition.

Fran. (*Aside.*) Surely he cannot have heard—What are the means? (*To St. Alme.*)

St. A. The means? The sacrifice of friendship,

happiness, and love. O, heaven, can this be just? And yet, he is my father.

Fran. Ay, would he were not!

St. A. Hold, hold, Franval! If you are my friend, no wish like that.

Fran. I am your friend; and have an office to discharge, that might better suit your bitterest enemy.

St. A. No word against my father; or, here for ever—

Fran. Be calm, and hear me. You had a cousin, Julio, Count of Harancourt!

St. A. You know I had.

Fran. St. Alme, I cannot proceed; I cannot tell you; yet you must know it, for all your sakes.

St. A. Speak out at once.

Fran. I want the courage to reveal it.

St. A. Speak; what of Julio?

Fran. You loved him.

St. A. Dearly as my own life.

Fran. You would not see him wronged.

St. A. What mean you? Wronged! Who wrongs him? 'Tis eight years and more, since Julio died in Paris.

Fran. Ay, in the report of guilt.

St. A. Sir, in the report of Darlemont. Wronged! He died in Paris.

Fran. No, no.

St. A. Whether would these dark insinuations tend? Merciful heaven! add not to my miseries, that of hating the brother of Marianne! Julio—

Fran. Is still alive.

St. A. Franval! you are deceived; the attestation of his death is in my father's hands. Dupré was present in his last moments, and is a surviving witness to it.

Fran. Indeed! Then let your own eyes judge between us. Look, who comes here. Darlemont declares Count Julio dead; I, Franval, present him living. There—

Enter DE L'ÉPÉE and THEODORE.

St. A. All gracious heaven! Do my eyes deceive me? Risen from the dead! It is, it is—*(Theodore, after they have gazed a moment on each other, utters a shriek of joy, and rushes into St. Alme's arms.)*

De l'E. No, you are not deceived. He calls you friend; he speaks to you in smiles and tears, the language of the heart; his only language.

St. A. Can this be real? I know not yet. Speechless! it must, it must be he—my long lost, dear, lamented Julio! And yet, stand off awhile, and let me gaze till I have satisfied my doubts. *(Theodore affected at St. Alme's putting him away, hastily recollects himself, bares his right arm, and points to the scar upon it. St. Alme bursting into tears, runs to him, and kisses the scar.)*

St. A. That scar!

De l'E. O, nature, nature, how resistless is thy eloquence!

Fran. St. Alme, compose yourself; I shudder for the final close of this discovery.

St. A. It is, it is my Julio. Friend! companion! preserver of my life! I'm lost in joy and wonder. To whom are we indebted for this strange blessing?

Fran. To him; to the benevolence of De l'Épée.

St. A. De l'Épée! has Julio been an object of your generous pity? O, sir; I cannot thank you. *(Kisses De l'Épée's hand.)* Come, come, my dear Julio; *(to De l'Épée)* my father's gratitude shall bless you; bow will he rejoice at this event! Let us haste to him; he has been much altered since your loss; your presence shall dispel all gloom, and his heart dance with transport to behold you.

Fran. Hold, hold, one moment. *(Madame Franval and Dupré within.)*

Mad. F. *(Within.)* Come in, come in, Dupré; he is here—it's all true.

Fran. Dupré! *(Looking at St. Alme.)*

Dup. *(Within.)* Where is he? Let me see him, let me see him.

Enter MADAME FRANVAL and DUPRE.

Fran. How has he learned—

Dup. No; Pierre was not mistaken. O, Julio, Julio! *(Throws himself at Theodore's feet.)*

Mad. F. We expect the other servants every moment.

St. A. All overjoyed to hear of his return. *(Theodore instantly recollects Dupré, shrinks from him, and explains to De l'Épée who he is.)*

Dup. Now I have seen him once again, let me but ask forgiveness, and expire at his feet.

De l'E. *(To St. A.)* This man seems strangely agitated.

St. A. Forgiveness! What does he mean? He was his favourite servant, and attended Julio, when my father carried him to Paris.

Dup. *(Starting up.)* Yes, I am that ungrateful viper; that villain who became the accomplice of an act. He lives, however, and I can now substantiate the truth. Drag me away; I am ready. Deliver me and my seducer to the just punishment of our crimes.

De l'E. You went with him to Paris about eight years ago?

Dup. Yes, yes—with Darlemont, with Darlemont!

St. A. With Darlemont! What then?

Fran. St. Alme! St. Alme!

St. A. Rack me not thus, but speak.

Dup. I must; and may my true confession and remorse find acceptance there *(pointing to heaven)* towards the remission of my guilt.

De l'E. Be but sincere, it will. Go on.

Dup. The very evening we reached Paris, your father, pointing to a small trunk, sternly ordered me to dress his nephew in those clothes; it contained a beggar's wretched covering. *(St. Alme starts back, and turns away a moment, hiding his face.)*

Mad. F. The very rags they brought him to you in.

Dup. Muffled in these tatters, shrouded by midnight darkness, my master hurried him away; and, till this moment, I never saw him more.

St. A. Strike me with deafness, heaven!

Mad. F. Why didn't you immediately accuse him? He might have murdered the poor child for aught you knew.

Dup. At first, I feared it. Pressed and overpowered by my suspicions on his return alone, he owned that he had put in execution the design which brought him to Paris, and under shelter of the night, had lost the disguised and helpless innocent beyond recovery, in the inextricable mazes of that wide city.

Mad. F. Thank heaven, he'll find himself disappointed and detected.

De l'E. Madam—Well, sir—

Dup. In order to possess himself of the estates of the young Count, it still was necessary that he should prove his death. Two witnesses were wanting; seduced by gold, one, since dead, was the poor wretch we lodged with.

Fran. The other—was yourself; and by this dark and perjured attestation—

St. A. His name annihilated, his rich inheritance purloined, his death a forgery, and my own father the perpetrator! Saints of heaven, guard my soul from desperation! Already the licentious rabble point at me as I pass; I hear them cry,—“There goes the monster, the unnatural villain, who conspired to rob his noble kinsman, the friend of his youth, the saviour of his life, and turned him forth, naked and speechless, on a desert and un pitying world.”

De l'E. Listen, sir, listen for a moment to a

stranger, who views the dignity of your sorrow with reverence, and the severity of your fate with compassion; be just to yourself, you are not guilty.

St. A. Compassion? O heaven! Am I not his son? Not guilty? I'll hear of no compassion. Proclaim our crimes; clothe us in the same infamy; overwhelm us in one common ruin; raise monuments to perpetuate the villany of the house of Darlemont; let the name be recorded as pestilential to virtue, and the race exterminated from the world for ever. (*St. Alme throws himself in an agony on a chair. Theodore, to whom De l'Epée has explained Dupré's confession, endeavours by every means to console him.*)

Dup. Since that fatal deed, my horror and remorse have never given me one moment's peace. But heaven is just; it has preserved this noble youth, and sends me to unload my conscience at the tribunal of the laws. Deliver me this moment to them. I know the punishment that awaits me, and am resigned to it; too blest at last, if in confessing and expiating the crimes to which I have been an accomplice, I can repair the evils they have caused.

St. A. (*Starting up, as if with a sudden thought, and rushing forward between De l'Epée and Franval.*) Yes, yes—they must be repaired. Follow me, wretched old man.

Fran. St. Alme, where are you going?

St. A. Where despair calls me.

De l'E. Look on your Julio.

St. A. The sight of him drives me to madness.

Fran. What is your design?

St. A. To avenge him, or die.—Come, villain.

[*Exit St. Alme, dragging Dupré away with him.—Dupré looking back on Theodore.*]

Fran. I must follow and detain him; or, in this madness of conflicting passions, he may publish his father's crimes, and defeat our very hope to save him from such dishonour. [*Exit.*]

Mad. F. We follow you. Well, this St. Alme is a very good young man, upon my word; and, though he is Darlemont's son, I can't help being concerned for him, I protest.

De l'E. Franval speaks highly of his virtues and his honour. Ah! thou poor reed, shaken so long by storms! How this eventful day may end for thee, heaven knows! But come, my Theodore, should an unfeeling uncle persist in renouncing thee, should the laws reject thy appeal, thou shalt still find a warm, though humble, asylum, in the affection of De l'Epée. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Room in the palace of Harancour. The picture having been removed.*

Enter PHILIPPE, PIERRE, CHARLES, and ETIENNE.

Pie. Nay, nay, don't be in such a hurry.—Friends! fellow-servants! what have I done? what have I done?

Phil. Nay, nay, no hanging back:—you must come to my master.

Cha. Come along, come along.

Pie. Let me go, I say. I am coming along; but you have a mind to strangle me before I get there. Hands off, gentlemen! (*Disengages himself from them.*) I won't be dragged in this manner, like a lamb to a slaughter-house. What's the meaning of this? What's the matter, I say?

Phil. O, poor innocent creature; you'll know what the matter is, sooner than you desire, I fancy. You must always act the great man; you must affect to be in all your young master's secrets.

Pie. I! I wish I may be hanged if I know any of his secrets.

Eti. Ay, ay; so you say. You call us wretched plodders, you know. What do you think of us now? My master has been in a fine rage about you and Dupré; you must be tattling.

Pie. Tattling?

Eti. Ay, you have been telling Dupré something or other.

Pie. Me! upon my soul, I—

Phil. Well, well, it doesn't signify; whatever it was, it drove Dupré into the square, raving like a madman, and my master has been raving ever since. He has almost murdered the porter, I can tell you, for letting Dupré out,—against his express orders, it seems.

Pie. Letting him out! and why not? where is he gone?

Eti. I fancy, that's the very thing my master wishes to know.

Pie. Is it? I'm sure then he wishes to know more than I can tell him.

Phil. Ay, ay, that's your business; but he'll find a way to make you tell him, I believe.

Pie. Make me tell! None of your impertinence, if you please, sir.

Eti. Don't make a fool of yourself, but come quietly with us; we shall all be finely handled for staying so long.

Pie. Handled, indeed! Come, I like that, too: handled!

Phil. Don't be too flippant, friend Pierre; he's in a most unmerciful humour, I promise you. Come.

Pie. This is all about that confounded picture, I suppose. My cursed curiosity will be the ruin of me at last.

Phil. Eti. Cha. Come away! come away!

Pie. Well, well; friends, fellow-servants, gentlemen! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Saloon in the palace of Harancour, in which the picture is now placed.*

Enter DARLEMONT.

Dar. Doubt, horror, and distraction! Where now can I look for support? my son estranged from me! Dupré a fugitive! All torments that disobedience, treachery, and self-condemnation can conjure up, beleaguer and confound me! (*A noise without.*)

Enter PHILIPPE.

Now, sir.

Phil. We have brought him, sir: Pierre is at the door.

Dar. So! he's in the plot, too. Bring him in, [*Exit Philippe.*] Down, thro'ing apprehensions, down! I shall betray myself.

Enter PIERRE, PHILIPPE, ETIENNE, and CHARLES.

Tell me, sirrah! whither is he fled?

Pie. Fled, sir! Who, sir?

Dar. No prevarication, rascal!—the hypocritical comploter of your schemes.—Speak!—Dupré,—where is he?

Pie. If you'll believe me, sir, I can't tell.

Dar. I'll not believe you, villain! I'll have the truth, though I tear it out of your heart. I know you went to him into his room: deny that too.

Pie. Went to him in his—yes, yes, I did, I believe,—I did, sir.

Dar. (*Seizing him.*) What was your business with him, then?

Pie. (*Very much frightened.*) As I hope for mercy, sir, I only went, after you ordered me to take away the young Count's picture, just to—

Dar. (*Perceiving the other servants, he recovers himself.*) Go; I'll call you, when I have done with him. [*Exeunt Philippe, Etienne, and Charles;*

Darlemont pulls the door very violently.

Pie. Sir, I see I have done something that alarms you.

Dar. Alarms me!

Pie. That displeases you; I read it in your looks: but, what it is, I protest I know no more than I do what is become of Dupré.

Dar. (*Having composed himself.*) I'm not displeas'd; you are mistaken. Come, tell me honestly what passed between you.

Pie. Why, nothing, sir; only, at first, when I said something about your bidding me remove the picture, he shook his head, with a deep groan. So, to spirit him up a little, I told him,—as I told you, sir,—that I had seen a young gentleman in the morning, a stranger, who seem'd deaf and dumb, too, as like that picture, as if he had sat for it.

Dar. (*Very eagerly.*) What did he say to that?

Pie. Not one single word, sir; but all the blood flew into his face in a moment, and he sunk on the table, weeping bitterly; then he waved his hand so, and I left him.

Dar. (*Aside.*) Ha! he has revealed nothing yet. You have seen nothing of him since, then?

Pie. No, sir.

Dar. Nor of the strangers?

Pie. Nothing, sir.

Dar. Leave me.

Pie. (*Aside.*) And glad to be so cheaply quit, too. What is the meaning of all this rout? I durst not own that I told Dupré the strangers were at Franval's. (*Going.*)

Dar. And—stay within call. [*Exit Pierre.*] I know not what to think, nor what course to take. Is this fellow's account true, or false? am I betrayed, or not? nor dare I tax him too closely; that would excite suspicion. Horrible uncertainty! O, let no man ever trust himself into the path of guilt! it is a labyrinth beset with dismay and remorse, and not to be retr'd without a miracle! Yet I think, for his own sake, I think, Dupré will not divulge me. No, no, this sudden start is but the restlessness of his sickly conscience.

Re-enter PIERRE.

Pie. Sir, the Advocate Franval begs the favour of a few moments' private conversation with you.

Dar. Franval! With me, or with my son?

Pie. With you he said, sir.

Dar. Tell him, I beg his pardon, I'm particularly engag'd. [*Exit Pierre.*] He comes to torture me on his side; to prattle to me of his sister, and the match they have so craftily settled with St. Alme: but I shall counterwork their project. My son is good and dutiful, and loves me; and, though he could withstand my commands, I know he cannot long be proof to my intreaties; and the alliance I have provided, is the only imaginable means of securing me and himself against all turns of fortune.

Re-enter PIERRE.

Pie. I beg pardon, sir; the Advocate Franval has sent me back to inform you, that he has immediate business of the first importance, and that the Abbé D'Épée, from Paris, is with him.

Dar. (*Starts.*) Who?

Pie. The Abbé De l'Épée.

Dar. What! the instructor of the deaf and dumb?

Pie. I don't know, sir; but I dare say it is; for it's the very gentleman that stopp'd me with the young stranger in the square this morning.

Dar. (*Having paced once or twice across the room in great agitation.*) Desire them to walk up. [*Exit Pierre.*] He in Toulouse! accompanied by a youth, speaking by signs, pointing out this house, and like the picture! I'll not believe it. What! after so many years? Yet, wherefore should this very man address himself to me? I must command myself; and by a firm and calm exterior, baffle the

keenest scrutiny of suspicion. I hear them. Be their errand what it may, my resolution's fixed. Defiance is a champion whose vigour may be dreaded; but Fear, a recreant destined to fall by the very sword which he surrenders. They come; I must withdraw one moment. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter PIERRE, introducing FRANVAL and DE L'ÉPÉE. Pierre places chairs, and exit.

Fran. Pray, sir, remember; not one word of Dupré. I know him well; to find his servant his accuser, would rouse his pride to fury, and render all our endeavours to serve him, and in him my friend, ineffectual. No hint of Dupré's evidence, unless he absolutely drives us to desperate measures, I beg.

De l'E. I shall observe.

Re-enter DARLEMONT.

(*Darlemont and De l'Épée eye each other steadfastly. Franval presents De l'Épée.*)

De l'E. Your servant, sir. (*Darlemont bows to them, points to the chairs, and they all sit; Darlemont in the centre, evidently struggling with his alarm.*)

Dar. You desire, I am told, to speak with me in private. May I ask what motive—

De l'E. The deep interest we both take in the honour of the father of St. Alme, and the solemn obligation we are at the same time under to fulfil an act of justice; these, sir, are the motives on which we judg'd it proper to request this interview in private.

Dar. (*Embarassed.*) Does any man suppose my honour, then, in question?

Fran. A moment's patience, sir.

De l'E. You are the uncle, and were left the guardian of Julio, Count of Harancour.

Dar. (*Shocked.*) Well, sir!

De l'E. Of that unhappy youth, who was deprived by death of the watchful affection of his parents, and by nature left destitute of that distinctive prerogative of man, the power of appealing against injustice and oppression!

Dar. (*Haughtily.*) Oppression, sir?

De l'E. Ha! then you conceive my meaning?

Dar. (*Checking himself.*) If you have business, state it plainly.

De l'E. Do you desire it?

Dar. What means—

De l'E. Are you prepared for plain and honest speaking?

Dar. I'm not prepared for rude interrogation. (*Rises to go away.*)

Fran. (*Rises and stops him.*) Listen one instant, and perhaps, what he has spoken, will hardly be construed thus.

Dar. Damnation! (*Aside.*) To the point at once.

De l'E. (*Rises.*) With all my soul. In one plain word then, learn, that chance, or rather that good Power that governs chance and the destiny of man, first placed your nephew, Julio, in my hands. This defrauded orphan, whose misfortunes should have doubled the tenderness of his natural protector towards him; this outcast, deaf and dumb, is still alive; and by our mouths now demands of you the restitution of his name and fortune.

Dar. (*After a convulsion of his whole frame.*) Lives, do you say? still lives? You will not wonder, if I am astonished, while I listen to fables such as these.

De l'E. No, sir; struck as I see you are by this discovery, my only wonder is, that your emotions are not more terrible.

Dar. And who are you, who arrogantly presume to interpret looks? You, who attribute the crimes

you first invent for sordid, selfish ends, and dare pronounce men guilty in the face of proof?

Fran. Not so; the proofs are ours.

Dar. Away! my nephew died in Paris.

Fran. Are you sure of that?

De l'E. Recollect, sir, that he is your nephew, and let your conscience answer. Were you present in his expiring moments? dare you deliberately affirm you saw him dead?

Dar. (After another dreadful emotion, and a pause before he can recover himself.) And do you know the man to whom you put these dishonourable and malignant questions?

Fran. Far otherwise:—we come not with malignity, but with sincere solicitude to save the father of St. Alme, the uncle of Julio, from public ignominy, and inevitable impending ruin.

Dar. Begone! And if you are vain enough to think your brawling eloquence has power to overthrow the credit and character of Darlemont, to annul a legal act, a formal register of death, exert that power: I hurl defiance at you.

Fran. Rush not on your destruction. Confide in us; and believe that, next to those just claims of which I am the assertor, nothing, no nothing, can be more sacred to me than the honour of the father of my friend.

Dar. My heart throws back the imputation. I dare your malice to produce one proof, that this supposititious foundling is the descendant of the house of Harancour.

De l'E. A thousand! The time when he was found; his transport on re-entering this the loved place of his nativity; his emotion on first seeing this house,—

Fran. His infirmity; his striking likeness to the late President, his father; the declaration of poor Claudine;—

De l'E. His own declarations.

Dar. His declarations!

De l'E. His.—Be not too obstinately incredulous.

Fran. Yes; fostered by his humanity, and guided by his lessons, Julio has found in De l'Epée a more than father: genius has compensated the wrongs that nature did him, and made him, even in dumbness, eloquently intelligible.

Dar. Concerted fraud and artifice! I know my holds of safety, and despise your menace. His death is registered.

De l'E. Suppose that register a forgery.

Dar. (Aside.) So; then the villain has betrayed me!

De l'E. It staggers him; we triumph. (Aside to *Franval.*) I see, your lips are ready to avow the secret of your heart. O, for your own sake, listen to the charities of nature.

Fran. Free yourself at once from the torments that too long have burrowed in your bosom.

Dar. Why do I submit to the ascendancy these men assume over me?

Fran. (Taking his hand.) Yield to our friendship.

De l'E. (Taking his other hand.) Yield to our prayers.

Dar. Leave me, I say—begone! Never will I acknowledge this impostor! (Going.)

Enter ST. ALME.

St. A. O, my father, have compassion on me!—on yourself! my cousin Julio—

Dar. What, you conspire against me! St. Alme! St. Alme!

St. A. If I was ever dear to you—

Dar. Peace, fool! Join to calumniate your father, and defraud yourself! (De l'Epée sends *Franval* out; he returns immediately.)

St. A. Do not, do not aggravate our dishonour! Relent, relent! Let me not hate myself by knowing that your affection for me led you into crimes,

at which your soul revolts. Have I not witnessed the agonies of your despair—the horrors of your self-accusation? O, sir, do not make it believed that you justify the deeds, which I know you abhor.

Dar. Hence! for ever leave me! I can maintain my rights, though I am deserted by an unnatural son.

St. A. Since you will drive me from you, sir, I go—Enjoy your riches; but enjoy them in cheerless solitude: no child, no friend to share them. Where I shall hide this dishonoured head, I know not. But to haunt with savages, or dwell with lepers, will be paradise to that board, where a son and father must daily meet, blackened with mutual guilt, and consciously living under each other's contempt. (Going.)

Dar. Stay, ruffian! monster!—No, begone—league with the assassins of your father, and of your own hopes; I shall find means to confront you all. (Going.)

Enter MADAME FRANVAL, THEODORE, and MARIANNE.

St. A. Confront this witness, too. (Points to *Theodore.*)

Dar. (Turns round and sees *Theodore.*) Horror! madness! Hide me from his sight!

St. A. Turn to him—take him to you: his looks speak blessings and forgiveness.

Dar. To be disgraced—never! This is the very crisis of my fate, and I will stand the event. I do look on him. Is this your instrument? I know him not. And you at once decide your choice—Him, or me, you must renounce this instant. (To *St. Alme.*)

St. A. Put me not to so severe a trial.

Dar. Enough—'Tis past—Farewell for ever. (Going.)

St. A. (Falls on his knees, and catches *Darlemont.*) In the name of all that's sacred, my father! You heed me not!—You fly me!—Look on me, father!—For all our sakes—relent, relent!

Dar. Never, never.

St. A. O! sir! sir—I must be heard.

[Exit *Darlemont* in the greatest agony, dragging *St. Alme* after him on his knees. *Theodore* all this while in the greatest agitation.]

De l'E. Obdurate man! Be still, be still, poor boy, you shall have justice yet.

Mad. F. Now, son; can you any longer hesitate?

Fran. No; I should become criminal myself, if I delayed the execution of the trust reposed in me; this dreadful memorial must instantly be preferred. (Takes the accusation from his pocket.)

Mar. Then we are lost for ever.

Enter DOMINIQUE and CLAUDINE.

Mad. F. Well, Dominique: well, Claudine! Heyday! where are your companions?—What, have you brought none of the old servants with you?

Dom. It isn't for want of searching for them, madam. First, we called at Denys, the groom's;—he and his old wife went out early in the morning, nobody knows where.

Clau. Then we went to the coachman's widow.

Dom. She was gone to pass the day at her cousin's in the country. However, we told all the neighbours to be sure to tell them they were wanted, the moment they came back.

Fran. You took care to conceal the motive of our sending for them?

Dom. O, to be sure. You'll never catch me blabbing, when I'm trusted with a secret.

Fran. 'Tis well; wait without.

[Exeunt *Dominique* and *Claudine.* The facts this paper contains, will, I doubt not, excite the immediate attention and zeal of the ma-

gistrates. We must be gone. If St. Alme returns in our absence, calm and console him, I beseech you! You Marianne, particularly—you, my sister, tell him what I undergo. But, come; a single moment of delay may—(A noise within.)

Mar. Hark! bark! What noise?

De l'E. It is St. Alme.—Good heaven! in what agitation! in what alarm!

Enter ST. ALME.

St. A. O, sir!—My friend!—(Falls on Franval.)

Fran. St. Alme! Speak—speak—

St. A. My father—

Fran. Heavens!

St. A. My father—

De l'E. Go on.

St. A. Distracted by Julio's wrongs—I ran, I burst into the chamber with my father—Dupié followed, and at once owned he had revealed all to you; and was resolved (unless he did the young Count justice) by a public confession to make him the partner of his punishment. My father shuddered—maddening and agonized I drew my sword, and vowed, if he persisted to refuse his acknowledgment of Julio, that moment to expire on its point before his eyes. The dread of indelible disgrace—the cry of my despair—the horror of my death prevailed—nature triumphed—my father relented—and with a trembling hand—there, there—(Gives De l'Épée a paper.)

De l'E. (Reads.) "I do acknowledge Theodore, the pupil of De l'Épée, to be Julio, the lawful Count of Harancour; and am prepared immediately to reinstate him in all his rights. DARLEMONT." To thee, all-gracious heaven, be endless praise and thanks! (Gives the paper to Theodore.)

Fran. (Tearing the accusation to pieces.) From what a load is my heart relieved! (Theodore, having read the paper, throws himself at De l'Épée's feet, and kisses them; rises transported, and embraces Franval: then running towards St. Alme, pauses, as if struck by some sudden thought; looks stedfastly at him, and runs to the table, where he writes something under Darlemont's declaration.)

Fran. What would he do? What is his design?

De l'E. I know not.

Mad. F. He seems extremely moved.

Mar. How the tears stream from his eyes! (Theodore returns to St. Alme, takes one of his hands and places it on his heart, then gives what he has been

writing into his other hand, and makes signs to him to read it.)

St. A. (Reads.) "Half of my fortune must be your's, St. Alme—if you refuse me, I here vow again to disappear, and never more be heard of. From our cradles we were accustomed to share every good, like brothers—and I can never be happy at the expense of my friend." Still the same, noble Julio! (Embraces Theodore.)

De l'E. This single act overpays all I have done for him

Mad F. The very spirit of the old count.—He's his frither's own son.

St. A. O, that I could efface the memory of thy wrongs! How shall I ever bear the weight of that recollection?

De l'E. (Looking at Marianne.) If this young lady would but kindly condescend to take a title to assist you, you might, perhaps—

Mad. F. Nay, nay; reflect, sir, that such an union would—

De l'E. Bless, for ever bless, two virtuous hearts, that heaven formed for each other, and make the happiness of this fortunate day complete.

Mad. F. I protest, I can't—really I don't know—

Fran. I am sure, madam—

Mad F. Upon my word, son, you seem to persuade me to anything. (To St. Alme.) You need not speak, sir; (to Marianne) no, nor you Marianne. The matter has been settled among you, I see, and now you pretend to ask my approbation: though, after that letter, I assure you, if you had not found a friend to whose intercession nothing can be refused, I should not have been prevailed with to give my consent. (Theodore, after a sign from De l'Épée, kisses Marianne, and gives her hand to St. Alme.)

St. A. O, joy unutterable!—

Mar. How are we all beholden to your goodness!—

De l'E. 'Tis to the prudence of your brother, and to the fortitude of St. Alme, we owe our final triumph. (To St. Alme.) Consoled by love, by friendship, and a father's return to virtue, all cause of regret may well be forgotten, sir; and let us hope, that the example of this protected orphan, may terrify the unjust man from the abuse of trust, and confirm the benevolent in the discharge of all the gentle duties of humanity. [Exeunt.

LOVERS' VOWS;

A PLAY, IN FIVE ACTS:

ALTERED FROM THE GERMAN OF KOTZEBUE.—BY MRS. INCHBALD.



Act I.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

COUNT CASSEL
BARON WILDENHAIM
MR. ANHALT
FREDERICK
VERDUN

LANDLORD
COTTAGER
FARMER
COUNTRYMAN
HUNTSMEN

AGATHA FRIBURG
AMELIA WILDENHAIM
COTTAGER'S WIFE
COUNTRY GIRL
SERVANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A high Road; a town at a distance. A small inn on one side the road, and a cottage on the other.*

The Landlord of the inn leads AGATHA FRIBURG by the hand out of his house.

Land. No, no; no room for you any longer. It is the fair to-day in the next village; as great a fair as any in the German dominions. The country people, with their wives and children, take up every corner we have.

Agatha. You will turn a poor sick woman out of doors, who has spent her last farthing in your house?

Land. For that very reason; because she has spent her last farthing.

Agatha. I can work.

Land. You can hardly move your hands.

Agatha. My strength will come again.

Land. Then you may come again.

Agatha. What an I to do? where shall I go?

Land. It is fine weather, you may go anywhere.

Agatha. Who will give me a morsel of bread to satisfy my hunger?

Land. Sick people eat but little.

Agatha. Hard, unfeeling man, have pity.

Land. When times are hard, pity is too expensive for a poor man. Ask alms of the different people that go by.

Agatha. Beg! I would rather starve.

Land. You may beg, and starve, too. What a fine lady you are! Many an honest woman has been obliged to beg: why should not you? (*Agatha sits down upon a large stone, under a tree.*) For instance: here comes somebody; and I will teach you how to begin. (*A Countryman, with working tools, crosses the road.*) Good day, neighbour Nicholas!

Countr. Good day! (*Stops.*)

Land. Won't you give a trifle to this poor woman? (*Countryman takes no notice, but walks off.*) That would not do; the poor man has nothing himself but what he gets by hard labour. Here comes a rich farmer; perhaps he will give you something.

Enter Farmer.

Good morning to you, sir! Under you tree sits a poor woman in distress, who is in need of your charity.

Far. Is she not ashamed of herself? Why don't she work?

Land. She has had a fever. If you would but pay for one dinner—

Far. The harvest has been but indifferent, and my cattle and sheep have suffered by a distemper.

Land. My fat, smiling face was not made for begging: you'll have more luck with your thin, sour one; so, I'll leave you to yourself. [*Exit.*]

Agatha. (Rises and comes forward.) Oh, Providence! thou hast till this hour protected me, and hast given me fortitude not to despair. Receive my humble thanks, and restore me to health, for the sake of my poor son, the innocent cause of my sufferings, and yet my only comfort. *(Kneeling.)* Oh! grant that I may see him once more! See him improved in strength of mind and body; and that, by thy gracious mercy, he may never be visited with afflictions great as mine. *(After a pause.)* Protect his father, too, merciful Providence, and pardon his crime of perjury to me! Here, in the face of heaven, (supposing my end approaching, and that I can but a few days longer struggle with want and sorrow,) here, I solemnly forgive my seducer for all the ills, the accumulated evils, which his allurements, his deceit and cruelty, have for twenty years past drawn upon me.

Enter a country Girl, with a basket.

Agatha. (Near fainting.) My dear child, if you could spare me a trifle—

Girl. I have not a farthing in the world: but I am going to market to sell my eggs, and as I come back I'll give you threepence. And I'll be back as soon as ever I can. *[Exit.]*

Agatha. There was a time when I was as happy as this country girl, and as willing to assist the poor in distress. *(Retires to the tree, and sits down.)*

Enter FREDERICK, dressed in a German soldier's uniform, with a knapsack on his shoulders; he appears in high spirits, and stops at the door of the inn.

Fred. Halt! stand at ease! It is a very hot day. A draught of good wine will not be amiss. But first, let me consult my purse. *(Takes out a couple of pieces of money, which he turns about in his hand.)* This will do for a breakfast; the other remains for my dinner; and in the evening, I shall be at home. *(Calls out.)* Ah! hallo, landlord! *(Takes notice of Agatha, who is leaning against the tree.)* Who is that? A poor sick woman! She don't beg; but her appearance makes me think she is in want. Must one always wait to give till one is asked? Shall I go without my breakfast now, or lose my dinner? The first, I think, is the best. Ay, I don't want a breakfast, for dinner-time will soon be here. To do good satisfies both hunger and thirst. *(Going towards her with the money in his hand.)* Take this, good woman. *(She stretches her hand for the gift, looks steadfastly at him, and cries out with astonishment and joy.)*

Agatha. Frederick!

Fred. Mother! *(With amazement and grief.)* Mother! for God's sake, what is this? how is this? and why do I find my mother thus? Speak!

Agatha. I cannot speak, dear son! *(Rising, and embracing him.)* My dear Frederick! the joy is too great: I was not prepared—

Fred. Dear mother, compose yourself: *(leans her head against his breast)* now, then, be comforted. How she trembles! she is fainting.

Agatha. I am so weak, and my head so giddy: I had nothing to eat all yesterday.

Fred. Good heavens! Here is my little money, take it all. Oh! mother, mother! *(Runs to the inn.)* Landlord, landlord! *(Knocking violently at the door.)*

Enter Landlord.

Land. What is the matter?

Fred. A bottle of wine; quick, quick!

Land. (Surprised.) A bottle of wine! for who?

Fred. For me. Why do you ask? Why don't you make haste?

Land. Well, well, Mr. Soldier; but can you pay for it?

Fred. Here is money; make haste, or I'll break every window in your house.

Land. Patience, patience! *[Exit.]*

Fred. You were hungry yesterday, when I sat down to a comfortable dinner. You were hungry, when I partook of a good supper. Oh! why is so much bitter mixed with the joy of my return?

Agatha. Be patient, my dear Frederick. Since I see you, I am well; but I have been very ill: so ill that I despaired of ever beholding you again.

Fred. Ill, and I were not with you? I will, now, never leave you more. Look, mother, how tall and strong I am grown. These arms can now afford you support. They can, and shall, procure you subsistence.

Enter Landlord, from the house, with a small pitcher.

Land. Here is wine; a most delicious nectar. It is only Rhenish; but it will pass for the best old hock. *(Aside.)*

Fred. (Impatiently snatching the pitcher.) Give it me.

Land. No, no; the money first. One shilling and two-pence, if you please. *(Fred. gives him the money.)*

Fred. This is all I have. Here, here, mother! *(While she drinks, Landlord counts the money.)*

Land. Three halfpence too short! However, one must be charitable. *[Exit.]*

Agatha. I thank you, my dear Frederick! Wine revives me: wine, from the hand of my son, gives me almost a new life.

Fred. Don't speak too much, mother. Take your time.

Agatha. Tell me, dear child, how you have passed the five years since you left me.

Fred. Both good and bad, mother. To-day plenty, to-morrow not so much; and, sometimes, nothing at all.

Agatha. You have not written to me this long while.

Fred. Dear mother, consider the great distance I was from you! and then, in the time of war, how often letters miscarry! Besides—

Agatha. No matter, now I see you. But have you obtained your discharge?

Fred. Oh! no, mother. I have leave of absence only for two months; and that for a particular reason. But I will not quit you so soon, now I find you are in want of my assistance.

Agatha. No, no, Frederick; your visit will make me so well, that I shall, in a very short time, recover strength to work again; and you must return to your regiment, when your furlough is expired. But you told me leave of absence was granted you for a particular reason—what reason?

Fred. When I left you, five years ago, you gave me everything you could afford, and all you thought would be necessary for me. But one trifle you forgot, which was, the certificate of my birth from the church-book. You know, in this country, there is nothing to be done without it. At the time of parting from you, I little thought it could be of that consequence to me, which, I have since found, it would have been. Once I became tired of a soldier's life, and in the hope I should obtain my discharge, offered myself to a master to learn a profession; but his question was, "Where is your certificate from the church-book of the parish in which you were born?" It vexed me that I had not it to produce, for my comrades laughed at my disappointment. My captain behaved kinder, for he gave me leave to come home to fetch it; and you see, mother, here I am. *(During this speech Agatha is confused and agitated.)*

Agatha. So, you are come for the purpose of fetching your certificate from the church-book?

Fred. Yes, mother.

Agatha. Oh, oh!

Fred. What is the matter? (*She bursts into tears.*) For heaven's sake, mother, tell me what's the matter?

Agatha. You have no certificate.

Fred. No!

Agatha. No. The laws of Germany excluded you from being registered at your birth, for—you are a natural son.

Fred. (*Starts. After a pause.*) So! And who is my father!

Agatha. Oh! Frederick, your wild looks are daggers to my heart. Another time.

Fred. (*Endeavouring to conceal his emotion.*) No, no; I am still your son, and you are still my mother. Only tell me, who is my father?

Agatha. When we parted, five years ago, you were too young to be intrusted with a secret of so much importance; but the time is come, when I can, in confidence, open my heart, and unload that burthen with which it has long been oppressed. And yet, to reveal my errors to my child, and sue for his mild judgment on my conduct—

Fred. You have nothing to sue for; only explain this mystery.

Agatha. I will, I will. But my tongue is locked with remorse and shame. You must not look at me.

Fred. Not look at you! Cursed be that son who could find his mother guilty, although the world should call her so.

Agatha. Then listen to me, and take notice of that village, (*pointing*) of that castle, and of that church. In that village I was born; in that church I was baptized. My parents were poor, but reputable farmers. The lady of that castle and estate requested them to let me live with her, and she would provide for me through life. They resigned me; and, at the age of fourteen, I went to my patroness. She took pleasure to instruct me in all kinds of female literature and accomplishments, and three happy years had passed under her protection, when her only son, who was an officer in the Saxon service, obtained permission to come home: I had never seen him before; he was a handsome young man—in my eyes, a prodigy: for he talked of love, and promised me marriage. He was the first man who had ever spoken to me on such a subject. His flattery made me vain, and his repeated vows—Don't look at me, dear Frederick! I can say no more. (*Frederick, with his eyes cast down, takes her hand, and puts it to his heart.*) Oh, oh! my son! I was intoxicated by the fervent caresses of a young, inexperienced, capricious man; and did not recover from the delirium till it was too late.

Fred. (*After a pause.*) Go on. Let me know more of my father.

Agatha. When the time drew near that I could no longer conceal my guilt and shame, my seducer prevailed on me not to expose him to the resentment of his mother. He renewed his former promises of marriage at her death: on which relying, I gave him my word to be secret; and I have, to this hour, buried his name deep in my heart.

Fred. Proceed, proceed! give me full information: I will have courage to hear it all. (*Greatly agitated.*)

Agatha. His leave of absence expired, he returned to his regiment, depending on my promise, and well assured of my esteem. As soon as my situation became known, I was questioned, and received many severe reproaches; but I refused to confess who was my undoer; and for that obstinacy was turned from the castle. I went to my parents; but their door was shut against me. My mother, indeed, wept as she bade me quit her sight for

ever; but my father wished increased affliction might befall me.

Fred. (*Weeping.*) Be quick with your narrative, or you'll break my heart.

Agatha. I now sought protection from the old clergyman of the parish. He received me with compassion. On my knees I begged forgiveness for the scandal I had caused to his parishioners; promised amendment; and he said he did not doubt me. Through his recommendation I went to town, and, hid in humble lodgings, procured the means of subsistence by teaching to the neighbouring children what I had learnt under the tuition of my benefactress. To instruct you, my Frederick, was my care and my delight; and, in return for your filial love, I would not thwart your wishes when they led to a soldier's life; but I saw you go from me with an aching heart. Soon after, my health declined, I was compelled to give up my employment; and, by degrees, became the object you now see me. But, let me add, before I close my calamitous story, that—when I left the good old clergyman, taking along with me his kind advice and his blessing, I left him with a firm determination to fulfil the vow I had made of repentance and amendment; I have fulfilled it—and now, Frederick, you may look at me again. (*Fred. embraces her.*)

Fred. But my father all this time? (*Mournfully.*) I apprehend he died.

Agatha. No; he married.

Fred. Married!

Agatha. A woman of virtue; of noble birth and immense fortune. Yet, (*weeps*) I had written to him many times; had described your infant innocence and wants; had glanced obliquely at former promises—

Fred. (*Rapidly.*) No answer to those letters?

Agatha. Not a word. But, in the time of war, you know, letters miscarry.

Fred. Nor did he ever return to this estate?

Agatha. No: since the death of his mother, this castle has only been inhabited by servants; for he settled as far off as Alsace, upon the estate of his wife.

Fred. I will carry you in my arms to Alsace. No: why should I ever know my father, if he is a villain. My heart is satisfied with a mother. No, I will not go to him; I will not disturb his peace; I leave that task to his conscience. What say you, mother, can't we do without him? (*Struggling between his tears and his pride.*) We don't want him. I will write directly to my captain. Let the consequence be what it will, leave you again I cannot. Should I be able to get my discharge, I will work all day at the plough, and all the night with my pen. It will do, mother, it will do. Heaven's goodness will assist me; it will prosper the endeavours of a dutiful son for the sake of a helpless mother.

Agatha. (*Presses him to her breast.*) Where could be found such another son?

Fred. But tell me my father's name, that I may know how to shun him.

Agatha. Baron Wildenheim.

Fred. Baron Wildenheim! I shall never forget it. Oh! you are nearly fainting. Your eyes are cast down. What's the matter? speak, mother!

Agatha. Nothing particular: only fatigued with talking. I wish to take a little rest.

Fred. I did not consider that we have been all this time in the open road. (*Goes to the inn, and knocks at the door.*) Here, landlord!

Enter Landlord.

Land. Well, what is the matter now?

Fred. Make haste, and get a bed ready for this good woman.

Land. (With a sneer.) A bed for this good woman! Ha, ha, ha! She slept, last night, in that pent-house; so she may to-night.

[Exit, shutting the door.]

Fred. You are an infamous—(Goes back to his mother.) Oh! my poor mother! (Runs to the cottage at a little distance, and knocks.) Ah! hallo! Who is there?

Enter Cottager.

Cot. Good day, young soldier! What is it you want?

Fred. Good friend, look at that poor woman. She is perishing in the public road. It is my mother. Will you give her a small corner in your hut? I beg for mercy's sake! heaven will reward you.

Cot. Can't you speak quietly? I understand you very well. (Calls at the door of the hut.) Wife, shake up our bed; here is a poor sick woman wants it.

Enter Wife.

Why could not you say all this in fewer words? Why such a long preamble? Why for mercy's sake, and heaven's reward? Why talk about reward for such trifles as these? Come, let us lead her in; and welcome she shall be to a bed, as good as I can give her, and to our homely fare.

Fred. Ten thousand thanks—and blessings on you!

Wife. Thanks and blessings! Here's a piece of work, indeed, about nothing! Good sick lady, lean on my shoulder. (To *Fred.*) Thanks and reward, indeed! Do you think husband and I have lived to these years, and don't know our duty? Lean on my shoulder. [Exit into the cottage.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in the cottage.

AGATHA, Cottager, his Wife, and FREDERICK, discovered. Agatha reclining upon a wooden bench; Frederick leaning over her.

Fred. Good people, have you nothing to give her? Nothing that's nourishing?

Wife. Run, husband, run, and fetch a bottle of wine from the landlord of the inn.

Fred. No, no; his wine is as bad as his heart: she has drunk some of it, which, I am afraid, has turned to poison.

Cot. Suppose, wife, you look for a new-laid egg?

Wife. Or a drop of brandy, husband: that mostly cures me.

Fred. Do you hear, mother? will you, mother? (Agatha makes a sign with her hand as if she could not take anything.) She will not. Is there no doctor in this neighbourhood?

Wife. At the end of the village, there lives a horse-doctor. I have never heard of any other.

Fred. What shall I do? She is dying: my mother is dying. Pray for her, good people.

Agatha. Make yourself easy, dear Frederick; I am well, only weak: some wholesome nourishment—

Fred. Yes, mother, directly—directly. (Aside.) Oh! where shall I—no money—not a farthing left.

Wife. Oh, dear me! Had you not paid the rent yesterday, husband—

Cot. I then should know what to do. But, as I hope for mercy, I have not a penny in my house.

Fred. Then I must—(Aside.) Yes, I will go and beg. But should I be refused—I will then—I leave my mother in your care, good people. Do all you can for her, I beseech you! I shall soon be with you again. [Exit in haste and confusion.]

Cot. If he should go to our parson, I am sure he would give him something.

Agatha. (Having revived by degrees, rises.) Is that good old man still living who was minister here some time ago?

Wife. No: it pleased Providence to take that worthy man to heaven two years ago. We have lost in him both a friend and a father. We shall never get such another.

Cot. Wife, wife, our present rector is likewise a very good man.

Wife. Yes, but he is so very young.

Cot. Our late parson was once young, too.

Wife. (To Agatha.) This young man being tutor in our Baron's family, he is very much beloved by them all; and so the Baron gave him this living in consequence.

Cot. And well he deserved it for his pious instructions to our young lady; who is, in consequence, good and friendly to everybody.

Agatha. What young lady do you mean?

Cot. Our Baron's daughter.

Agatha. Is she here?

Wife. Dear me! don't you know that? I thought everybody had known that. It is almost five weeks since the Baron and all his family arrived at the castle.

Agatha. Baron Wildenhaim?

Wife. Yes, Baron Wildenhaim.

Agatha. And his lady?

Cot. His lady died in France, many miles from hence; and her death, I suppose, was the cause of his coming to this estate; for the Baron has not been here till within these five weeks ever since he was married. We regretted his absence much, and his arrival has caused great joy.

Wife. (To Agatha.) By all accounts, the Baroness was very haughty, and very whimsical.

Cot. Wife, wife, never speak ill of the dead. Say what you please against the living, but not a word against the dead.

Wife. And yet, husband, I believe the dead care the least what is said against them; and so, if you please, I'll tell my story. The late Baroness was, they say, haughty and proud; and they do say, the Baron was not so happy as he might have been; but he, bless him, our good Baron is still the same as when a boy. Soon after madam had closed her eyes, he left France, and came to Wildenhaim, his native country.

Cot. Many times has he joined in our village dances. Afterwards, when he became an officer, he was rather wild, as most young men are.

Wife. Yes, I remember when he fell in love with poor Agatha, Friburg's daughter: what a piece of work that was! It did not do him much credit. That was a wicked thing.

Cot. Have done: no more of this. It is not well to stir up old grievances.

Wife. Why, you said I might speak ill of the living. 'Tis very hard, indeed, if one must not speak ill of one's neighbours, dead nor alive.

Cot. Who knows whether he was the father of Agatha's child? She never said he was.

Wife. Nobody but him, that I am sure. I would lay a wager—no, no, husband, you must not take his part; it was very wicked. Who knows what is now become of that poor creature? She has not been heard of this many a year. May be, she is starving for hunger. Her father might have lived longer, too, if that misfortune had not happened. (Agatha faints)

Cot. See here! help! she is fainting: take hold.

Wife. Oh, poor woman!

Cot. Let us take her into the next room.

Wife. Oh, poor woman! I am afraid she will not live. Come, cheer up, cheer up! You are with those who feel for you. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—An Apartment in the castle.

A table spread for breakfast. Several Servants in livery disposing the equipage. Enter BARON WILDENHAIN, attended by a Gentleman in waiting.

Baron W. Has not Count Cassel left his chamber yet?

Gent. No, my lord; he has but now rung for his valet.

Baron W. The whole castle smells of his perfumery. Go, call my daughter hither. [Exit Gent.] And am I, after all, to have an ape for a son-in-law? No, I shall not be in a hurry: I love my daughter too well. We must be better acquainted before I give her to him. I shall not sacrifice my Amelia to the will of others, as I myself was sacrificed. The poor girl might, in thoughtlessness, say yes, and afterwards be miserable. What a pity she is not a boy! The name of Wildenheim will die with me. My fine estates, my good peasants, all will fall into the hands of strangers. Oh! why were not my Amelia a boy?

Enter AMELIA WILDENHAIN.

Amelia. (Kissing the Baron's hand.) Good morning, dear my lord!

Baron W. Good morning, Amelia! Have you slept well?

Amelia. Oh! yes, papa. I always sleep well.

Baron W. Not a little restless last night?

Amelia. No.

Baron W. Amelia, you know you have a father, who loves you; and, I believe, you know you have a suitor, who is come to ask permission to love you. Tell me candidly how you like Count Cassel.

Amelia. Very well.

Baron W. Do not you blush when I talk of him?

Amelia. No.

Baron W. No! I am sorry for that. (Aside.) Have you dreamt of him?

Amelia. No.

Baron W. Have you not dreamt at all to-night?

Amelia. Oh! yes; I have dreamt of our chaplain, Mr. Anhalt.

Baron W. Ha, ha! As if he stood before you and the Count to ask for the ring.

Amelia. No, not that. I dreamt we were all still in France; and he, my tutor, just going to take his leave of us for ever. I awoke with the fright, and found my eyes full of tears.

Baron W. Psha! I want to know if you can love the Count. You saw him at the last ball we were at in France; when he capered round you; when he danced minuets; when he—but I cannot say what his conversation was.

Amelia. Nor I either. I do not remember a syllable of it.

Baron W. No! Then I do not think you like him.

Amelia. I believe not.

Baron W. But I think proper to acquaint you, he is rich, and of great consequence:—rich, and of consequence; do you hear?

Amelia. Yes, dear papa. But my tutor has always told me, that birth and fortune are inconsiderable things, and cannot give happiness.

Baron W. There he is right. But if it happens that birth and fortune are joined with sense and virtue—

Amelia. But is it so with Count Cassel?

Baron W. Hem, hem! (Aside.) I will ask you a few questions on this subject; but be sure to answer me honestly. Speak the truth.

Amelia. I never told an untruth in my life.

Baron W. Nor ever conceal the truth from me, I command you.

Amelia. (Earnestly.) Indeed, my lord, I never will.

Baron W. I take you at your word. And now reply to me truly: do you like to hear the Count spoken of?

Amelia. Good or bad?

Baron W. Good—good.

Amelia. Oh! yes; I like to hear good of everybody.

Baron W. But do not you feel a little fluttered when he is talked of?

Amelia. No. (Shaking her head.)

Baron W. Are not you a little embarrassed?

Amelia. No.

Baron W. Don't you wish sometimes to speak to him, and have not the courage to begu!

Amelia. No.

Baron W. Do not you wish to take his part, when his companions laugh at him?

Amelia. No: I love to laugh at him myself.

Baron W. Provoking! (Aside.) Are not you afraid of him when he comes near you?

Amelia. No, not at all. Oh! yes; once. (Recollecting herself.)

Baron W. Ah! now it comes!

Amelia. Once at a ball he trod on my foot; and I was so afraid he should tread on me again.

Baron W. You put me out of patience. Hear me, Amelia! to see you happy is my wish. But matrimony, without concord, is like a duetto badly performed; for that reason, nature, the great composer of all harmony, has ordained, that when bodies are allied, hearts should be in perfect unison. However, I will send Mr. Anhalt to you—

Amelia. Do, papa.

Baron W. He shall explain to you my sentiments. (Rings.) A clergyman can do this better than—

Enter Servant.

Go directly to Mr. Anhalt, tell him I shall be glad to see him for a quarter of an hour, if he is not engaged. [Exit Servant.]

Amelia. (Calls after him.) Wish him a good morning from me.

Baron W. (Looking at his watch.) The Count is a tedious time dressing. Have you breakfasted, Amelia?

Amelia. No, papa. (They sit down to breakfast.)

Baron W. How is the weather? Have you walked this morning?

Amelia. Oh! yes: I was in the garden at five o'clock; it is very fine.

Baron W. Then I'll go out shooting. I do not know in what other way to amuse my guest.

Enter COUNT CASSEL.

Count C. Ah! my dear Colonel! Miss Wildenheim, I kiss your hand.

Baron W. Good morning, good morning! though it is late in the day, Count. In the country, we should rise earlier. (Amelia offers the Count a cup of tea.)

Count C. It is Hebe herself, or Venus, or—

Amelia. Ha, ha, ha! Who can help laughing at his nonsense?

Baron W. (Rather angry.) Neither Venus, nor Hebe, but Amelia Wildenheim, if you please.

Count C. (Sitting down to breakfast.) You are beautiful, Miss Wildenheim. Upon my honour, I think so! I have travelled, and seen much of the world, and yet I positively admire you.

Amelia. I am sorry I have not seen the world.

Count C. Wherefore!

Amelia. Because I might then, perhaps, admire you.

Count C. True; for I am an epitome of the world. In my travels, I learnt delicacy in Italy; hauteur in

Spain; in France, enterprise; in Russia, prudence; in England, sincerity; in Scotland, frugality; and in the wilds of America, I learnt love.

Amelia. Is there any country where love is taught?

Count C. In all barbarous countries. But the whole system is exploded in places that are civilized.

Amelia. And what is substituted in its stead?

Count C. Intrigue.

Amelia. What a poor, uncomfortable substitute!

Count C. There are other things: song, dance, the opera, and war. (*Since the entrance of the Count, the Baron has removed to a table at a little distance.*)

Baron W. What are you talking of there?

Count C. Of war, Colonel.

Baron W. (*Rising.*) Ay, we like to talk on what we don't understand.

Count C. (*Rising.*) Therefore, to a lady, I always speak of politics; and to her father, on love.

Baron W. I believe, Count, notwithstanding your sneer, I am still as much of a proficient in that art as yourself.

Count C. I do not doubt it, my dear Colonel, for you are a soldier; and, since the days of Alexander, whoever conquers men, is certain to overcome women.

Baron W. An achievement to animate a poltroon.

Count C. And, I verily believe, gains more recruits than the king's pay.

Baron W. Now we are on the subject of arms, should you like to go out a shooting with me for an hour before dinner?

Count C. Bravo, Colonel! A charming thought! This will give me an opportunity to use my elegant gun: the butt is inlaid with mother-of-pearl. You cannot find better work, or better taste. Even my coat-of-arms is engraved.

Baron W. But can you shoot?

Count C. That I have never tried—except with my eyes, at a fine woman.

Baron W. I am not particular what game I pursue. I have an old gun; it does not look fine; but I can always bring down my bird.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Anhalt begs leave—

Baron W. Tell him to come in. I shall be ready in a moment. [*Exit Servant.*]

Count C. Who is Mr. Anhalt?

Amelia. Oh! a very good man. (*With warmth.*)

Count C. A good man! In Italy, that means a religious man; in France, it means a cheerful man; in Spain, it means a wise man; and in England, it means a rich man. Which good man of all these is Mr. Anhalt?

Amelia. A good man in every country except England.

Count C. And give me the English good man before that of any other nation.

Baron W. And of what nation would you prefer your good woman to be, Count?

Count C. Of Germany. (*Bowing to Amelia.*)

Amelia. In compliment to me?

Count C. In justice to my own judgment.

Baron W. Certainly. For have we not an instance of one German woman, who possesses every virtue that ornaments the whole sex; whether as a woman of illustrious rank, or in the more exalted character of a wife and a mother?

Enter MR. ANHALT.

Anhalt. I come by your command, Baron—

Baron W. Quick, Count; get your elegant gun.

I pass your apartments, and will soon call for you.

Count C. I fly. Beautiful Amelia, it is a sacrifice I make to your father, that I leave for a few hours his amiable daughter. [*Exit.*]

Baron W. My dear Amelia, I think it scarcely necessary to speak to Mr. Anhalt, or that he should speak to you, on the subject of the Count; but as he is here, leave us alone.

Amelia. Good morning, Mr. Anhalt. I hope you are very well. [*Exit.*]

Baron W. I'll tell you in a few words why I sent for you. Count Cassel is here, and wishes to marry my daughter.

Anhalt. (*Much concerned.*) Really!

Baron W. He is—he—in a word, I don't like him.

Anhalt. (*With emotion.*) And Miss Wildenhaim—

Baron W. I shall not command, neither persuade her to the marriage. I know too well the fatal influence of parents on such a subject. Objections, to be sure, if they could be removed—but when you find a man's head without brains, and his bosom without a heart, these are important articles to supply. Young as you are, Anhalt, I know no one so able to restore, or to bestow, those blessings on his fellow-creatures, as you. (*Anhalt bows.*) The Count wants a little of my daughter's simplicity and sensibility. Take him under your care while he is here, and make him something like yourself. You have succeeded to my wish in the education of my daughter. Form the Count after your own manner; I shall then have what I have sighed for all my life—a son.

Anhalt. With your permission, Baron, I will ask one question. What remains to interest you in favour of a man whose head and heart are good for nothing?

Baron W. Birth and fortune. Yet, if I thought my daughter absolutely disliked him, or that she loved another, I would not thwart a first affection; no, for the world I would not. (*Sighing.*) But that her affections are already bestowed is not probable.

Anhalt. Are you of opinion that she will never fall in love?

Baron W. Oh, no! I am of opinion that no woman ever arrived at the age of twenty without that misfortune. But this is another subject. Go to Amelia; explain to her the duties of a wife, and of a mother: if she comprehends them as she ought, then ask her if she thinks she could fulfil those duties as the wife of Count Cassel.

Anhalt. I will—but—I—Miss Wildenhaim—(*confused*)—I—I shall—I—I shall obey your commands.

Baron W. Do so. (*Sighs.*) Ah! so far this weight is removed; but there lies still a heavier next my heart. You understand me. How is it, Mr. Anhalt—have you not yet been able to make any discoveries on that unfortunate subject?

Anhalt. I have taken infinite pains; but in vain. No such person is to be found.

Baron W. Believe me, this burthen presses on my thoughts so much, that many nights I go without sleep. A man is sometimes tempted to commit such depravity when young! Oh! Anhalt, had I, in my youth, had you for a tutor—but I had no instructor but my passions; no governor but my own will. [*Exit.*]

Anhalt. This commission of the Baron's, in respect to his daughter, I am—(*Looks about.*) If I should meet her now, I cannot—I must recover myself first, and then prepare. A walk in the fields, and a fervent prayer—after these, I trust, I shall return as a man, whose views are solely placed on a future world; all hopes in this, with fortitude resigned. [*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An open Field.*

FREDERICK, alone, with a few pieces of money, which he turns about in his hands.

Fred. To return with this trifle, for which I have stooped to beg! return to see my mother dying! I would rather fly to the world's end. (*Looking at the money.*) What can I buy with this? It is hardly enough to pay for the nails that will be wanted for her coffin. My great anxiety will drive me to distraction. However, let the consequence of our affliction be what it may, all will fall upon my father's head; and may he pant for heaven's forgiveness as my poor mother—(*At a distance is heard the firing of a gun, then the cry of 'hallo, hallo!' Gamekeepers and Sportsmen run across the stage. Fred. looks about.*) Here they come! a nobleman, I suppose, or a man of fortune. Yes, yes; and I will once more beg for my mother. May heaven send relief!

Enter BARON WILDENHAIM, followed slowly by COUNT CASSEL.

Baron W. Quick, quick, Count! Ay, ay, that was a blunder, indeed! Don't you see the dogs? There they run; they have lost the scent. [*Exit.*]

Count C. So much the better, Colonel, for I must take a little breath. (*Leans on his gun. Fred. goes up to him with great modesty.*)

Fred. Gentleman, I beg you will bestow from your superfluous wants, something to relieve the pain, and nourish the weak frame of an expiring woman.

Re-enter BARON WILDENHAIM.

Count C. What police is here! that a nobleman's amusements should be interrupted by the attack of vagrants.

Fred. (*To the Baron.*) Have pity, noble sir, and relieve the distress of an unfortunate son, who supplicates for his dying mother.

Baron W. (*Taking out his purse.*) I think, young soldier, it would be better if you were with your regiment on duty, instead of begging.

Fred. I would with all my heart; but at this present moment my sorrows are too great. (*Baron W. gives something.*) I entreat your pardon. What you have been so good as to give me is not enough.

Baron W. (*Surprised.*) Not enough!

Fred. No, it is not enough.

Count C. The most singular beggar I ever met in all my travels.

Fred. If you have a charitable heart, give me one dollar.

Baron W. This is the first time I was ever dictated by a beggar what to give him.

Fred. With one dollar you will save a distracted man.

Baron W. I don't choose to give any more. Count, go on. [*Exit Count: as the Baron follows, Frederick seizes him by the breast, and draws his sword.*]

Fred. Your purse, or your life!

Baron W. (*Calling.*) Here, here! seize and secure him. (*Some of the Gamekeepers enter, lay hold of Frederick, and disarm him.*)

Fred. What have I done?

Baron W. Take him to the castle, and confine him in one of the towers. I shall follow you immediately.

Fred. One favour I have to beg, one favour only. I know that I am guilty, and am ready to receive the punishment my crime deserves. But I have a mother who is expiring for want—pity her, if you cannot pity me; bestow on her relief. If you will send to yonder hut, you will find that I do

not impose on you a falsehood. For her it was I drew my sword; for her I am ready to die.

Baron W. Take him away, and imprison him where I told you.

Fred. Woe to that man to whom I owe my birth! [*Exit.*]

Baron W. (*Calls another Gamekeeper.*) Here, Frank, run directly to yonder hamlet, inquire in the first, second, and third cottage, for a poor, sick woman; and, if you really find such a person, give her this purse. [*Exit Gamekeeper.*] A most extraordinary event! and what a well-looking youth! something in his countenance and address which struck me inconceivably! If it is true, that he begged for his mother—but, if he did, for the attempt upon my life he must die. Vice is never half so dangerous as when it assumes the garb of morality. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room in the castle.*

AMELIA WILDENHAIM discovered.

Amelia. Why am I so uneasy, so peevish? who has offended me? I did not mean to come into this room. In the garden I intended to go. (*Going, turns back.*) No, I will not—yes, I will, just go and look if my auriculas are still in blossom, and if the apple-tree is grown which Mr. Anhalt planted. I feel very low-spirited; something must be the matter. Why do I cry? Am I not well?

Enter MR. ANHALT.

Ah! good morning, my dear sir!—Mr. Anhalt, I meant to say. I beg pardon.

Anhalt. Never mind, Miss Wildenheim; I don't dislike to hear you call me as you did.

Amelia. In earnest?

Anhalt. Really. You have been crying. May I know the reason? The loss of your mother still?

Amelia. No; I have left off crying for her.

Anhalt. I beg pardon if I have come at an improper hour; but I wait upon you by the commands of your father.

Amelia. You are welcome at all hours. My father has more than once told me, that he who forms my mind, I should always consider as my greatest benefactor. And my heart tells me the same.

Anhalt. I think myself amply rewarded by the good opinion you have of me.

Amelia. When I remember what trouble I have sometimes given you, I cannot be too grateful.

Anhalt. (*Aside.*) Oh, heavens! (*To Amelia.*) I—I come from your father with a commission. If you please we will sit down. (*Places chairs, and they sit.*) Count Cassel is arrived.

Amelia. Yes, I know.

Anhalt. And do you know for what reason?

Amelia. He wishes to marry me.

Anhalt. Does he? (*Hastily.*) But, believe me, the Baron will not persuade you. No, I am sure he will not.

Amelia. I know that.

Anhalt. He wishes that I should ascertain whether you have an inclination—

Amelia. For the Count, or for matrimony, do you mean?

Anhalt. For matrimony.

Amelia. All things that I don't know, and don't understand, are quite indifferent to me.

Anhalt. For that very reason I am sent to you to explain the good and the bad of which matrimony is composed.

Amelia. Then I beg first to be acquainted with the good.

Anhalt. When two sympathetic hearts meet in the marriage state, matrimony may be called a happy life. When such a wedded pair find thorns

in their path, each will be eager, for the sake of the other, to tear them from the root. Where they have to mount hills, or wind a labyrinth, the most experienced will lead the way, and be a guide to his companion. Patience and love will accompany them in their journey, while melancholy and discord they leave far behind. Hand in hand they pass on from morning till evening, through their summer's day, till the night of age draws on, and the sleep of death overtakes the one. The other, weeping and mourning, yet looks forward to the bright region, where he shall meet his still surviving partner among trees and flowers, which themselves have planted in the fields of eternal verdure.

Amelia. (*Rising.*) You may tell my father I'll marry.

Anhalt. (*Rising.*) This picture is pleasing; but I must beg you not to forget that there is another on the same subject. When convenience and fair appearance, joined to folly and ill humour, forge the fetters of matrimony, they gall with their weight the married pair. Discontented with each other, at variance in their opinions, their mutual aversion increases with the years they live together. They contend most where they should most unite; torment where they should most soothe. In this rugged way, choked with the weeds of suspicion, jealousy, anger, and hatred, they take their daily journey till one of these also sleep in death. The other then lifts up his dejected head, and calls out in exclamations of joy, "Oh! liberty, dear liberty!"

Amelia. I will not marry.

Anhalt. You mean to say you will not fall in love.

Amelia. Oh! no. I am in love.

Anhalt. Are in love! (*Staring.*) And with the Count?

Amelia. I wish I were.

Anhalt. Why so?

Amelia. Because he would, perhaps, love me again.

Anhalt. (*Warmly.*) Who is there that would not?

Amelia. Would you?

Anhalt. I—I—me—I—I am out of the question.

Amelia. No; you are the very person to whom I have put the question.

Anhalt. What do you mean?

Amelia. I am glad you don't understand me. I was afraid I had spoken too plain. (*Confused.*)

Anhalt. Understand you! As to that, I am not dull.

Amelia. I know you are not. And as you have for a long time instructed me, why should not I now begin to teach you?

Anhalt. Teach me what?

Amelia. Whatever I know and you don't.

Anhalt. There are some things I had rather never know.

Amelia. So, you may remember, I said when you began to teach me mathematics. I said I had rather not know it: but now I have learnt it, it gives me a great deal of pleasure; and (*hesitating*) perhaps, who can tell but that I might teach something as pleasant to you as resolving a problem is to me?

Anhalt. Woman herself is a problem.

Amelia. And I'll teach you to make her out.

Anhalt. You teach?

Amelia. Why not? None but a woman can teach the science of herself: and though I own I am very young, a young woman may be as agreeable to a tutress as an old one. I am sure I always learnt faster from you than from the old clergyman who taught me before you came.

Anhalt. This is nothing to the subject.

Amelia. What is the subject?

Anhalt. Love.

Amelia. (*Going up to him.*) Come, then, teach it me; teach it me as you taught me geography, languages, and other important things.

Anhalt. (*Turning from her.*) Psha!

Amelia. Ah! you won't. You know you have already taught me that, and you won't begin again.

Anhalt. You misconstrue—you misconceive everything I say or do. The subject I came to you upon was marriage.

Amelia. A very proper subject for the man who has taught me love, and I accept the proposal. (*Courtesying.*)

Anhalt. Again you misconceive and confound me.

Amelia. Ay, I see how it is: you have no inclination to experience with me "the good part of matrimony:" I am not the female with whom you would like to go "hand in hand up hills, and through labyrinths;" with whom you would like to "root up thorns;" and with whom you would delight to "plant lilies and roses." No; you had rather call out, "Oh! liberty, dear liberty!"

Anhalt. Why do you force from me what it is villainous to own? I love you more than life. Oh! *Amelia,* had we lived in those golden times which the poets picture, no one but you—but, as the world is changed, your birth and fortune make—our union is impossible. To preserve the character and, more, the feelings of an honest man, I would not marry you without the consent of your father. And could I, dare I, propose it to him?

Amelia. He has commanded me never to conceal or disguise the truth. I will propose it to him. The subject of the Count will force me to speak plainly, and this will be the most proper time, while he can compare the merit of you both.

Anhalt. I conjure you not to think of exposing yourself and me to his resentment.

Amelia. It is my father's will that I should marry. It is my father's wish to see me happy. If, then, you love me as you say, I will marry, and will be happy—but only with you. I will tell him this. At first he will start; then grow angry; then be in a passion: in his passion he will call me "undutiful;" but he will soon recollect himself, and resume his usual smiles, saying, "Well, well, if he love you, and you love him, in the name of heaven, let it be." Then I shall hug him round the neck, kiss his hands, run away from him, and fly to you; it will soon be known that I am your bride, the whole village will come to wish me joy, and heaven's blessing will follow.

Enter VERDUN.

(*Discontented.*) Ah! is it you?

Ver. Without vanity, I have taken the liberty to enter this apartment the moment the good news reached my ears.

Amelia. What news?

Ver. Pardon an old servant, your father's old butler, gracious lady, who has had the honour to carry the Baron in his arms; and afterwards, with humble submission, to receive many a box o' the ear from you—if he thinks it his duty to make his congratulations with due reverence on this happy day, and to join with the muses in harmonious tunes on the lyre.

Amelia. Oh! my good butler, I am not in a humour to listen to the muses and your lyre.

Ver. There has never been a birth-day, nor wedding-day, nor christening-day, celebrated in your family, in which I have not joined with the muses in full chorus. In forty-six years, three hundred and ninety-seven congratulations on different occasions have dropped from my pen. To-day, the

three hundred and ninety-eighth is coming forth ; for heaven has protected our noble master, who has been in great danger.

Amelia. Danger! My father in danger! What do you mean?

Ver. One of the gamekeepers has returned to inform the whole castle of a base and knavish trick, of which the world will talk, and my poetry hand down to posterity.

Amelia. What, what is all this?

Ver. The Baron, my lord and master, in company with the strange Count, had not been gone a mile beyond the lawn, when one of them—

Amelia. What happened? Speak, for heaven's sake!

Ver. My verse shall tell you.

Amelia. No, no; tell us in prose.

Anhalt. Yes, in prose.

Ver. Ah! you have neither of you ever been in love, or you would prefer poetry to prose. But excuse (*pulls out a paper*) the haste in which it was written. I heard the news in the fields; always have paper and a pencil about me, and composed the whole forty lines crossing the meadows and the park in my way home. (*Reads.*)

*Oh! muse, ascend the forked mount,
And lofty strains prepare,
About a Baron and a Count
Who went to hunt the hare.*

*The hare she ran with utmost speed,
And sad and anxious looks,
Because the furious hounds, indeed,
Were near to her, gadzooks!*

*At length, the Count and Baron bold
Their footsteps homeward bended;
For why, because, as you were told,
The hunting it was ended.*

*Before them straight a youth appears,
Who made a piteous pother,
And told a tale, with many tears,
About his dying mother.*

*The youth was in severe distress,
And seem'd as he had spent all;
He look'd a soldier by his dress,
For that was regimental.*

*The Baron's heart was full of ruth,
And from his eye fell brine, oh!
And soon he gave the mournful youth
A little ready rhino.*

*He gave a shilling, as I live,
Which, sure, was mighty well;
But to some people if you give
An inch—they'll take an ell.*

*The youth then drew his martial knife,
And seiz'd the Baron's collar;
He swore he'd have the Baron's life,
Or else another dollar.*

*Then did the Baron, in a fume,
Soon raise a mighty din,
Whereon came butler, huntsman, groom,
And eke the whipper-in.*

*Maugre this young man's warlike coat,
They bore him off to prison;
And held so strongly by his throat,
And almost stopp'd his whizzen.*

*Soon may a neckcloth, call'd a rope,
Of robbing cure this elf;
If so, I'll write, without a trope,
His dying speech myself.*

*And had the Baron chanc'd to die,
Oh! grief to all the nation!
I must have made an elegy,
And not this fine narration.*

MORAL.

*Henceforth, let those who all have spent,
And would by begging live,
Take warning here, and be content
With what folks choose to give.*

Amelia. Your muse, Mr. Butler, is in a very inventive humour this morning.

Anhalt. And your tale too improbable even for fiction.

Ver. Improbable! It's a real fact.

Amelia. What, a robber in our grounds at noon-day? Very likely, indeed!

Ver. I don't say it was likely: I only say it is true

Anhalt. No, no, Mr. Verdun; we find no fault with your poetry; but don't attempt to impose it upon us for truth.

Amelia. Poets are allowed to speak falsehood, and we forgive your's.

Ver. I won't be forgiven, for I speak truth; and here the robber comes, in custody, to prove my words. "I'll write his dying speech myself."

[*Exit.*

Amelia. Look! as I live, so he does. They come nearer: he's a young man, and has something interesting in his figure. An honest countenance, with grief and sorrow in his face. No, he is no robber. I pity him! Oh! look how the keepers drag him unmercifully into the tower. Now they lock it. Oh! how that poor unfortunate man must feel!

Anhalt. (*Aside.*) Hardly worse than I do.

Enter BARON WILDENHAIM.

Amelia. A thousand congratulations, my dear papa.

Baron W. For heaven's sake, spare your congratulations. The old butler, in coming up stairs, has already overwhelmed me with them.

Anhalt. Then, it is true, my lord? I could hardly believe the old man.

Amelia. And the young prisoner, with all his honest looks, is a robber?

Baron W. He is: but I verily believe, for the first and last time. A most extraordinary event, Mr. Anhalt. This young man begged; then drew his sword upon me; but he trembled so when he seized me by the breast, a child might have overpowered him. I almost wish he had made his escape; this adventure may cost him his life, and I might have preserved it with one dollar; but now to save him would set a bad example.

Amelia. Oh! no, my lord, have pity on him! Plead for him, Mr. Anhalt.

Baron W. Amelia, have you had any conversation with Mr. Anhalt?

Amelia. Yes, my lord.

Baron W. Respecting matrimony?

Amelia. Yes; and I have told him—

Anhalt. (*Very hastily.*) According to your commands, Baron—

Amelia. But he has conjured me—

Anhalt. I have endeavoured, my lord, to find out—

Amelia. Yet, I am sure, dear papa, your affection for me—

Anhalt. You wish to say something to me in your closet, my lord?

Baron W. What the devil is all this conversation? You will not let one another speak; I don't understand either of you.

Amelia. Dear father, have you not promised you will not thwart my affections when I marry, but suffer me to follow their dictates?

Baron W. Certainly.

Amelia. Do you hear, Mr. Anhalt?

Anhalt. I beg pardon; I have a person who is waiting for me: I am obliged to retire. [*Exit.*]

Baron W. (*Calls after him.*) I shall expect you in my closet. I am going there immediately. (*Retiring towards the opposite door.*)

Amelia. Pray, my lord, stop a few minutes longer: I have something of great importance to say to you.

Baron W. Something of importance; to plead for the young man, I suppose. But that's a subject I must not listen to. [*Exit.*]

Amelia. I wish to plead for two young men. For one, that he may be let out of prison; for the other, that he may be made a prisoner for life. (*Looks out.*) The tower is still locked. How dismal it must be to shut up in such a place; and perhaps—(*Calls*) Butler! Butler! come this way. I wish to speak to you. This young soldier has risked his life for his mother, and that accounts for the interest I take in his misfortunes.

Enter VERDUN.

Pray, have you carried anything to the prisoner to eat?

Ver. Yes.

Amelia. What was it?

Ver. Some fine black bread, and water as clear as crystal.

Amelia. Are you not ashamed? Even my father pities him. Go directly down to the kitchen, and desire the cook to give you something good and comfortable; and then go into the cellar for a bottle of wine.

Ver. Good and comfortable, indeed!

Amelia. And carry them both to the tower.

Ver. I am willing at any time, dear lady, to obey your orders; but, on this occasion, the prisoner's food must remain bread and water. It is the Baron's particular command.

Amelia. Ah! My father was in the height of passion when he gave it.

Ver. Whatsoever his passion might be, it is the duty of a true and honest dependant to obey his lord's mandates. I will not suffer a servant in this house, nor will I myself give the young man anything except bread and water. But I'll tell you what I'll do; I'll read my verses to him.

Amelia. Give me the key of the cellar; I'll go myself.

Ver. (*Gives the key.*) And there's my verses; carry them with you, they may comfort him as much as the wine. [*Amelia throws them down, and exit*] Not take them! Refuse to take them!

*"I must have made an elegy,
And not this fine narration."* [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Prison in one of the towers of the castle.*

FREDERICK discovered.

Fred. How a few moments destroy the happiness of man. When I, this morning, set out from my inn, and saw the sun rise, I sung with joy. Flattered with the hope of seeing my mother, I formed a scheme how I would with joy surprise her. But, farewell all pleasant prospects: I return to my native country, and the first object I behold is my dying parent; my first lodging a prison; and my next walk will perhaps be—Oh! merciful Providence! have I deserved all this?

Enter AMELIA, with a basket, speaking as she enters.

Amelia. Wait there, Francis, I shall soon be back.

Fred. (*Hearing the door open, and turning round.*) Who's there?

Amelia. You must be both hungry and thirsty, I fear.

Fred. Oh, no! neither.

Amelia. Here's a bottle of wine, and something to eat. I have often heard my father say that wine is quite a cordial to the heart.

Fred. A thousand thanks, dear stranger. Ah! could I prevail on you to have it sent to my mother, who is upon her death-bed, under the roof of an honest peasant called Hubert. Take it hence, my kind benefactress, and save my mother.

Amelia. But first assure me that you did not intend to murder my father.

Fred. Your father! heaven forbid. I meant but to preserve her life who gave me mine. Murder your father! No, no; I hope not.

Amelia. And I thought not; or, if you had murdered any one, you had better have killed the Count; nobody would have missed him.

Fred. Who, may I inquire were those gentlemen whom I hoped to frighten into charity?

Amelia. Ay, if you only intended to frighten them, the Count was the very person for your purpose. But you caught hold of the other gentleman: and could you hope to intimidate Baron Wildenhaim?

Fred. Baron Wildenhaim! Almighty powers!

Amelia. What's the matter?

Fred. The man to whose breast I held my sword—(*Trembling.*)

Amelia. Was Baron Wildenhaim—the owner of this estate; my father.

Fred. (*With emotion.*) My father!

Amelia. Good heaven, how he looks! I am afraid he's mad. Here, Francis, Francis! [*Exit.*]

Fred. (*Agitated.*) My father! Eternal Judge! thou dost not slumber. The man against whom I drew my sword this day, was my father. One moment longer, and provoked, I might have been the murderer of my father! My hair stands on end! My eyes are clouded! I cannot see anything before me! (*Sinks down into a chair.*) If Providence had ordained that I should give the fatal blow, who would have been most in fault? I dare not pronounce—(*After a pause.*) That benevolent young female who left me just now, is then, my sister; and I suppose the fop who accompanied my father—

Enter MR. ANHALT.

Welcome, sir! By your dress, you are of the church, and consequently a messenger of comfort. You are most welcome, sir.

Anhalt. I wish to bring comfort, and avoid upbraids; for your own conscience will reproach you more than the voice of a preacher. From the sensibility of your countenance, together with a language and address superior to the vulgar, it appears, young man, you have had an education which should have preserved you from a state like this.

Fred. My education I owe to my mother. Filial love, in return, has plunged me into the state you see. A civil magistrate will condemn according to the law: a priest, in judgment, is not to consider the act itself, but the impulse which led to the act.

Anhalt. I shall judge with all the lenity my religion dictates: and you are the prisoner of a nobleman who compassionates you for the affection which you bear towards your mother; for he has sent to the village where you directed him, and has found the account you gave relating to her true. With this impression in your favour, it is my advice, that you endeavour to see and supplicate the Baron for your release from prison, and all the peril of his justice.

Fred. (*Starting.*) I—I see the Baron!—I supplicate for my deliverance! Will 'you favour me with his name? Is it not Baron—

Anhalt. Baron Wildenhaim.

Fred. Baron Wildenhaim! He lived formerly in Alsace?

Anhalt. The same. About a year after the death of his wife, he left Alsace; and arrived here a few weeks ago, to take possession of this his paternal estate.

Fred. So! his wife is dead; and that generous young lady who came to my prison just now is his daughter?

Anhalt. Miss Wildenhaim, his daughter.

Fred. And that young gentleman I saw with him this morning is his son?

Anhalt. He has no son.

Fred. (*Hastily.*) Oh! yes, he has—(*Recollecting himself.*)—I mean him that was out shooting to-day.

Anhalt. He is not his son.

Fred. (*To himself.*) Thank heaven!

Anhalt. He is only a visitor.

Fred. I thank you for this information; and if you will undertake to procure me a private interview with Baron Wildenhaim—

Anhalt. Why private? However, I will venture to take you for a short time from this place, and introduce you; depending on your innocence, or your repentance; on his conviction in your favour, or his mercy towards your guilt. Follow me. [*Exit.*]

Fred. I have beheld an affectionate parent in deep adversity.—Why should I tremble thus? Why doubt my fortitude in the presence of an unnatural parent in prosperity? [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room in the Castle.*

Enter BARON WILDENHAIM and AMELIA WILDENHAIM.

Baron W. I hope you judge more favourably of Count Cassel's understanding since the private interview you have had with him. Confess to me the exact effect of the long conference between you.

Amelia. To make me hate him.

Baron W. What has he done?

Amelia. Oh! told me of such barbarous deeds he has committed.

Baron W. What deeds?

Amelia. Made vows of love to so many women, that, on his marriage with me, a hundred female hearts will at least be broken.

Baron W. Psha! do you believe him?

Amelia. Suppose I do not; is it to his honour that I believe he tells a falsehood?

Baron W. He is mistaken merely.

Amelia. Indeed, my lord, in one respect I am sure he speaks truth. For our old butler told my waiting-maid of a poor young creature who has been deceived, undone; and she and her whole family involved in shame and sorrow by his perfidy.

Baron W. Are you sure the butler said this?

Amelia. See him, and ask him. He knows the whole story, indeed he does; the names of the persons, and every circumstance.

Baron W. Desire he may be sent to me.

Amelia. (*Calls.*) Order old Verdun to come to the Baron directly.

Baron W. I know tale-bearers are apt to be erroneous. I'll hear from himself the account you speak of.

Amelia. I believe it is in verse.

Baron W. In verse!

Amelia. But, then, indeed, it's true.

Enter VERDUN.

Verdun, pray have you not some true poetry?

Ver. All my poetry is true—and, so far, better than some people's prose.

Baron W. But I want prose on this occasion, and command you to give me nothing else. (*Verdun bows.*) Have you heard of an engagement

which Count Cassel is under to any other woman than my daughter?

Ver. I am to tell your honour in prose?

Baron W. Certainly. (*Verdun appears uneasy and loth to speak.*) Amelia, he does not like to divulge what he knows in the presence of a third person: leave the room. [*Exit Amelia.*]

Ver. No, no; that did not cause my reluctance to speak.

Baron W. What then?

Ver. Your not allowing me to speak in verse; for here is the poetic poem. (*Holding up a paper.*)

Baron W. How dare you pretend to contend with my will? Tell me, in plain language, all you know of the subject I have named.

Ver. Well then, my lord, if you must have the account in quiet prose, thus it was: Phœbus, one morning, rose in the east, and having handed in the long-expected day, he called up his brother Hy-men—

Baron W. Have done with your rhapsody.

Ver. Ay; I knew you'd like it best in verse:

There liv'd a lady in this land,

Whose charms the heart made tingle;

At church she had not given her hand,

And therefore still was single.

Baron W. Keep to prose.

Ver. I will, my lord; but I have repeated it so often in verse, I scarcely know how. Count Cassel, influenced by the designs of Cupid in his very worst humour,

Count Cassel woo'd this maid so rare,

And in her eye found grace;

And if his purpose was not fair—

Baron W. No verse.

Ver. It probably was base.

I beg your pardon, my lord; but the verse will intrude, in spite of my efforts to forget it. 'Tis as difficult for me at times to forget, as 'tis for other men at times to remember. But in plain truth, my lord, the Count was treacherous, cruel, forsworn.

Baron W. I am astonished!

Ver. And would be more so, if you would listen to the whole poem. Pray, my lord, listen to it.

Baron W. You know the family? All the parties?

Ver. I will bring the father of the damsel to prove the veracity of my muse. His name is Baden. Poor old man!

The sire consents to bless the pair,

And names the nuptial day,

When, lo! the bridegroom was not there,

Because he was away.

Baron W. But tell me: had the father his daughter's innocence to deplore?

Ver. Ah! my lord, ah! and you must hear that part in rhyme. Loss of innocence never sounds well except in verse.

For, ah! the very night before,

No prudent guard upon her,

The Count he gave her oaths a score,

And took in change her honour.

MORAL.

Then you, who now lead single lives,

From this sad tale beware;

And do not act as you were wives,

Before you really are.

Enter COUNT CASSEL.

Baron W. (*To Verdun.*) Leave the room instantly.

Count C. Yes, good Mr. Family Poet, leave the room, and take your doggerels with you.

Ver. Don't affront my poem, your honour; for I am indebted to you for the plot.

"The Count he gave her oaths a score,
And took in change her honour." [Exit.]

Baron W. Count, you see me agitated.

Count C. What can be the cause?

Baron W. I'll not keep you in doubt a moment. You are accused, young man, of being engaged to another woman, while you offer marriage to my child.

Count C. To only one other woman?

Baron W. What do you mean?

Count C. My meaning is, that when a man is young and rich, has travelled, and is no personal object of disapprobation; to have made vows but to one woman, is an absolute slight upon the rest of the sex.

Baron W. Without evasion, sir, do you know the name of Baden? Was there ever a promise of marriage made by you to his daughter? Answer me plainly; or must I take a journey to inquire of the father.

Count C. No; I dare say, he can tell you no more than you already know; and which I shall not contradict.

Baron W. Amazing insensibility! And can you hold your head erect while you acknowledge perfidy?

Count C. My dear Baron, if every man who deserves to have a charge such as this brought against him, was not permitted to look up, it is a doubt whom we might not meet crawling on all fours. (He accidentally taps Baron W. on the shoulder.)

Baron W. (Starts.) Yet—nevertheless—the act is so atrocious—

Count C. But nothing new.

Baron W. (Faintly.) Yes—I hope—I hope it is new.

Count C. What, did you never meet with such a thing before?

Baron W. (Agitated.) If I have, I pronounced the man who so offended—a villain.

Count C. You are singularly scrupulous. I question if the man thought himself so.

Baron W. Yes he did.

Count C. How do you know?

Baron W. (Hesitating.) I have heard him say so.

Count C. But he ate, drunk, and slept, I suppose?

Baron W. (Confused.) Perhaps he did.

Count C. And was merry with his friends; and his friends as fond of him as ever?

Baron W. Perhaps—perhaps they were.

Count C. And perhaps he now and then took upon him to lecture young men for their gallantries?

Baron W. Perhaps he did.

Count C. Why, then, after all, Baron, your villain is a mighty good, prudent, honest fellow; and I have no objection to your giving me that name.

Baron W. But do you not think of some atonement to the unfortunate girl?

Count C. Did your villain atone?

Baron W. No: when his reason was matured, he wished to make some recompense; but his endeavours were too late.

Count C. I will follow his example, and wait till my reason is matured, before I think myself competent to determine what to do.

Baron W. And till that time, I defer your marriage with my daughter.

Count C. Would you delay her happiness so long? Why, my dear Baron, considering the fashionable life I lead, it may be these ten years before my judgment arrives to its necessary standard.

Baron W. I have the head-ach, Count. These tidings have discomposed, disordered me. I beg your absence for a few minutes.

Count C. I obey.—And let me assure you, my lord, that although, from the extreme delicacy of your honour, you have ever through life shuddered at seduction, yet there are constitutions, and there are circumstances, in which it can be palliated.

Baron W. (Violently.) Never!

Count C. Not in a grave, serious, reflecting man, such as you, I grant; but in a gay, lively, inconsiderate, flimsy, frivolous coxcomb, such as myself, it is excusable: for me to keep my word to a woman, would be deceit: 'tis not expected of me. It is in my character to break oaths in love; as it is in your nature, my lord, never to have spoken anything but wisdom and truth. [Exit.]

Baron W. Could I have thought a creature so insignificant as that, had power to excite sensations such as I feel at present! I am, indeed, worse than he is, as much as the crimes of a man exceed those of an idiot.

Enter AMELIA WILDENHAIM.

Amelia. I heard the Count leave you, my lord, and so I am come to inquire—

Baron W. (Sitting down, and trying to compose himself.) You are not to marry Count Cassel; and now mention his name to me no more.

Amelia. I won't; indeed I won't; for I hate his name.—But thank you, my dear father, for this good news. (Sits on the opposite side of the table.—After a pause.) And who am I to marry?

Baron W. I can't tell.

Amelia. I never liked the Count.

Baron W. No more did I.

Amelia. (After a pause.) I think love comes just as it pleases, without being asked.

Baron W. It does so.

Amelia. And there are instances, where, perhaps, the object of love makes the passion meritorious.

Baron W. To be sure there are.

Amelia. For example; my affection for Mr. Anhalt as my tutor.

Baron W. Right.

Amelia. (Sighing.) I should like to marry.

Baron W. So you shall. It is proper for every body to marry.

Amelia. Why, then, does not Mr. Anhalt marry?

Baron W. You must ask him that question yourself.

Amelia. I have.

Baron W. And what did he say?

Amelia. Will you give me leave to tell you what he said?

Baron W. Certainly.

Amelia. And what I said to him?

Baron W. Certainly.

Amelia. And won't you be angry?

Baron W. Undoubtedly not.

Amelia. Why, then—you know you commanded me never to disguise or conceal the truth.

Baron W. I did so.

Amelia. Why, then, he said—

Baron W. What did he say?

Amelia. He said—he would not marry me without your consent for the world.

Baron W. (Starting.) And, pray, how came this the subject of your conversation?

Amelia. (Rising.) I brought it up.

Baron W. And what did you say?

Amelia. I said, that birth and fortune were such old-fashioned things to me, I cared nothing about either: and that I had once heard my father declare he should consult my happiness in marrying me beyond any other consideration.

Baron W. I will once more repeat to you my sentiments.—It is the custom in this country for the children of nobility to marry only with their equals; but as my daughter's content is more dear to me than an ancient custom, I would bestow you on the first man I thought calculated to make you happy: by this I do not mean to say that I should not be severely nice in the character of the man to whom I gave you; and Mr. Anhalt, from his obligations, and his high sense of honour, thinks too nobly—

Amelia. Would it not be noble to make the daughter of his benefactor happy?

Baron W. But when that daughter is a child, and thinks like a child—

Amelia. No, indeed, papa, I begin to think very like a woman: ask him if I don't.

Baron W. Ask him! You feel gratitude for the instructions you have received from him, and you fancy it love.

Amelia. Are there two gratitudes?

Baron W. What do you mean?

Amelia. Because I feel gratitude to you; but that is very unlike the gratitude I feel towards him.

Baron W. Indeed!

Amelia. Yes; and then he feels another gratitude towards me. What's that?

Baron W. Has he told you so?

Amelia. Yes.

Baron W. That was not right of him.

Amelia. Oh! if you did but know how I surprised him!

Baron W. Surprised him!

Amelia. He came to me by your command, to examine my heart respecting Count Cassel. I told him that I would never marry the Count.

Baron W. But him?

Amelia. Yes, him.

Baron W. Very fine, indeed! And what was his answer?

Amelia. He talked of my rank in life; of my aunts and cousins; of my grandfather, and great grandfather; of his duty to you; and endeavoured to persuade me to think no more of him.

Baron W. He acted honestly.

Amelia. But not politely.

Baron W. No matter.

Amelia. Dear father, I shall never be able to love another; never be happy with any one else. *(Throwing herself on her knees.)*

Baron W. Rise, I command you.

Enter MR. ANHALT.

Anhalt. My lord, forgive me! I have ventured, on the privilege of my office, as a minister of holy charity, to bring the poor soldier, whom your justice has arrested, into the adjoining room; and I presume to entreat you will admit him to your presence, and hear his apology or supplication.

Baron W. Anhalt, you have done wrong. I pity the unhappy boy; but you know I cannot, must not forgive him.

Anhalt. I beseech you, then, my lord, to tell him so yourself: from your lips he may receive his doom with resignation.

Amelia. Oh! father, see him, and take pity on him; his sorrows have made him frantic.

Baron W. Leave the room, Amelia. *(On her attempting to speak, he raises his voice.)* Instantly!

[Exit Amelia.]

Anhalt. He asked a private audience: perhaps he has some confession to make that may relieve his mind, and may be requisite for you to hear.

Baron W. Well, bring him in; and do you wait in the adjoining room till our conference is over: I must, then, sir, have a conference with you.

Anhalt. I shall obey your commands. *(He goes to the door, and re-enters with FREDERICK.—Exit.)*

Baron W. I know, young man, you plead your mother's wants in excuse for an act of desperation: but powerful as this plea might be in palliation of a fault, it cannot extenuate a crime like your's.

Fred. I have a plea for my conduct even more powerful than a mother's wants.

Baron W. What's that?

Fred. My father's cruelty.

Baron W. You have a father, then?

Fred. I have, and a rich one: nay, one that's reputed virtuous and honourable: a great man, possessing estates and patronage in abundance; much esteemed at court, and beloved by his tenants; kind, benevolent, honest, generous—

Baron W. And with all those great qualities abandons you?

Fred. He does, with all the qualities I mention.

Baron W. Your father may do right; a dissipated, desperate youth, whom kindness cannot draw from vicious habits, severity may.

Fred. You are mistaken. My father does not discard me for my vices: he does not know me; has never seen me. He abandoned me, even before I were born.

Baron W. What do you say?

Fred. The tears of my mother are all that I inherit from my father. Never has he protected or supported me—never protected her.

Baron W. Why don't you apply to his relations?

Fred. They disown me, too. I am, they say, related to no one. All the world disclaim me, except my mother; and there again I have to thank my father.

Baron W. How so?

Fred. Because I am an illegitimate son. My seduced mother has brought me up in patient misery. Industry enabled her to give me an education; but the days of my youth commenced with hardship, sorrow, and danger. My companions lived happy around me, and had a pleasing prospect in their view, while bread and water only were my food, and no hopes joined to sweeten it.—But my father felt not that!

Baron W. (Aside.) He touches my heart.

Fred. After five years' absence from my mother, I returned this very day, and found her dying in the streets for want: not even a hut to shelter her, or a pallet of straw.—But my father feels not that! He lives in a palace, sleeps on the softest down, enjoys all the luxuries of the great; and, when he dies, a funeral sermon will praise his great benevolence, his Christian charities.—

Baron W. (Greatly agitated.) What is your father's name?

Fred. He took advantage of an innocent young woman; gained her affection by flattery and false promises; gave life to an unfortunate being, who was on the point of murdering his father.

Baron W. Who is he?

Fred. Baron Wildeohaim.—*(Baron W. expresses surprise.)*—In this house did you rob my mother of her honour; and in this house I am a sacrifice for the crime.—I am your prisoner. I will not be free: I am a robber; I give myself up. You shall deliver me into the hands of justice. You shall accompany me to the spot of public execution: you shall hear in vain the chaplain's consolation and injunctions: you shall find how I, in despair, will, to the last moment, call for retribution on my father.—

Baron W. Stop! Be pacified—

Fred. And when you turn your head from my extended corse, you will behold my weeping mother—need I paint how her eyes will greet you?

Baron W. Desist, barbarian, savage, stop!

Enter MR. ANHALT.

Anhalt. What do I hear? What is this? Young man, I hope you have not made a second attempt?
Fred. Yes; I have done what it was your place to do; I have made a sinner tremble.

[Points to Baron W. and exit.

Anhalt. What can this mean? I do not comprehend—

Baron W. He is my son! he is my son! Go, Anhalt—advise me—help me—Go to the poor woman, his mother. He can shew you the way. Make haste—speed to protect her—

Anhalt. But what am I to—

Baron W. Go—your heart will tell you how to act. [Exit Anhalt.] Who am I? what am I? Mad—raving—no—I have a son, a son! The bravest—I will—I must—oh!—(With tenderness.) Why have I not embraced him yet? why not pressed him to my heart? Ah! see—(Looking after him.) He lies from the castle!—Who's there? Where are my attendants?

Enter Servants.

Follow him—bring the prisoner back. But observe my command: treat him with respect; treat him as my son, and your master. [Exit.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Inside of the Cottage.*

AGATHA FRIBURG, *Cottager and his Wife, discovered.*

Agatha. Pray, look and see if he is coming.

Cot. It is of no use. I have been in the road; have looked up and down; but neither see nor hear anything of him.

Wife. Have a little patience.

Agatha. I wish you would step out once more: I think he cannot be far off.

Cot. I will; I will go. [Exit.

Wife. If your son knew what heaven had sent you, he would be here very soon.

Agatha. I feel so anxious—

Wife. But why? I should think a purse of gold, such as you have received, would make anybody easy.

Agatha. Where can he be so long? He has been gone four hours. Some ill must have befallen him.

Wife. It is still broad day-light: don't think of any danger. This evening we must all be merry: I'll prepare the supper. What a good gentleman our Baron must be! I am sorry I ever spoke a word against him.

Agatha. How did he know I was here?

Wife. Heaven only can tell. The servant that brought the money was very secret.

Agatha. (Aside.) I am astonished! I wonder! Oh! surely, he has been informed; why else should he have sent so much money?

Re-enter Cottager.

Well, not yet?

Cot. I might look till I am blind for him; but I saw our new rector coming along the road; he calls in sometimes: may be, he will this evening.

Wife. He is a very good gentleman; pays great attention to his parishioners; and where he can assist the poor, he is always ready.

Enter MR. ANHALT.

Anhalt. Good evening, friends.

Both. Thank you, reverend sir. (They run to fetch a chair.)

Anhalt. I thank you, good people.—I see you have a stranger here.

Cot. Yes, your reverence; it is a poor sick woman, whom I took in doors.

Anhalt. You will be rewarded for it.—(To Agatha.) May I beg leave to ask your name?

Agatha. Ah! if we were alone—

Anhalt. Good neighbours, will you leave us alone for a few minutes? I have something to say to this poor woman.

Cot. Wife, do you hear? come along with me.

[Exit Cottager and his Wife.]

Anhalt. Now—

Agatha. Before I tell who I am, what I am, and what I was, I must beg to ask, are you of this country?

Anhalt. No; I was born in Alsace.

Agatha. Did you know the late rector personally, whom you have succeeded?

Anhalt. No.

Agatha. Then you are not acquainted with my narrative?

Anhalt. Should I find you to be the person whom I have long been in search of, your history is not altogether unknown to me.

Agatha. That you have been in search of! Who gave you such a commission?

Anhalt. A man, who, if it so prove, is much concerned for your misfortunes.

Agatha. How? Oh! sir, tell me quickly—whom do you think to find in me?

Anhalt. Agatha Friburg.

Agatha. Yes, I am that unfortunate woman; and the man who pretends to take concern in my misfortunes is—Baron Wildenheim: he who betrayed me, abandoned me and my child, and killed my parents. He would now repair our sufferings with this purse of gold. (Takes out the purse.) Whatever may be your errand, sir, whether to humble or to protect me, it is alike indifferent; I, therefore, request you to take this money to him who sent it: tell him my honour has never been saleable; tell him, destitute as I am, even indigence will not tempt me to accept charity from my seducer. He despised my heart, I despise his gold; he has trampled on me, I trample on his representative. (Throws the purse on the ground.)

Anhalt. Be patient: I give you my word, that when the Baron sent this present to an unfortunate woman, for whom her son had supplicated, he did not know that woman was Agatha.

Agatha. My son! what of my son?

Anhalt. Do not be alarmed: the Baron met with an affectionate son, who begged for his sick mother, and it affected him.

Agatha. Begged of the Baron? of his father?

Anhalt. Yes; but they did not know each other; and the mother received the present on the son's account.

Agatha. Did not know each other? Where is my son?

Anhalt. At the castle.

Agatha. And still unknown?

Anhalt. Now he is known: an explanation has taken place; and I am sent here by the Baron, not to a stranger, but to Agatha Friburg; not with gold! his commission was, "do what your heart directs you."

Agatha. How is my Frederick? How did the Baron receive him?

Anhalt. I left him just in the moment the discovery was made. By this time your son is, perhaps, in the arms of his father.

Agatha. Oh! is it possible, that a man, who has been twenty years deaf to the voice of nature, should change so suddenly?

Anhalt. I do not mean to justify the Baron; but he has loved you; and fear of his noble kindred alone, caused his breach of faith to you.

Agatha. But to desert me wholly, and wed another—

Anhalt. War called him away: wounded in the field, he was taken to the adjacent seat of a nobleman, whose only daughter, by anxious attention to his recovery, won his gratitude; and, influenced by the will of his worldly friends, he married. But no sooner was I received into the family, and admitted to his confidence, than he related to me your story; and, at times, would exclaim in anguish, "The proud, imperious Baroness avenges the wrongs of my deserted Agatha." Again, when he presented me with this living, and I left France to take possession of it, his last words, before we parted, were, "The moment you arrive at Wildenhaim, make all inquiries to find out my poor Agatha." Every letter I afterwards received from him contained, "Still, still no tidings of my Agatha." And fate ordained it should be so till this fortunate day.

Agatha. What you have said has made my heart overflow. Where will this end?

Anhalt. I know not yet the Baron's intentions; but your sufferings demand immediate remedy; and one way only is left. Come with me to the castle. Do not start: you shall be concealed in my apartments till you are called for.

Agatha. I go to the Baron's!—No.

Anhalt. Go for the sake of your son. Reflect, that his fortune may depend upon your presence.

Agatha. And he is the only branch on which my hope still blossoms; the rest are withered. I will forget my wrongs as a woman, if the Baron will atone to the mother; he shall have the woman's pardon, if he will merit the mother's thanks.—*(After a struggle.)*—I will go to the castle; for the sake of my Frederick, go even to his father. But where are my good host and hostess, that I may take leave, and thank them for their kindness?

Anhalt. *(Taking up the purse which Agatha had thrown down.)* Here, good friend! Good woman!

Enter the Cottager and his Wife.

Wife. Yes, yes, here am I.

Anhalt. Good people, I will take your guest with me. You have acted an honest part; and, therefore, receive this reward for your trouble. *(He offers the purse to the Cottager, who puts it by, and turns away.—To the Wife.)* Do you take it.

Wife. I always obey my pastor. *(Taking it.)*

Agatha. Good b'ye. For your hospitality to me, may ye enjoy continued happiness.

Cot. Fare you well, fare you well.

Wife. If you find friends and get health, we won't trouble you to call on us again: but if you should fall sick, or be in poverty, we shall take it very unkind if we don't see you. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—A Room in the Castle.

BARON WILDENHAIM and FREDERICK discovered.

Baron W. Been in battle, too! I am glad to hear it. You have known hard services; but now they are over, and joy and happiness will succeed. The reproach of your birth shall be removed; for I will acknowledge you my son and heir to my estate.

Fred. And my mother—

Baron W. She shall live in peace and affluence. Do you think I would leave your mother unprotected? No; about a mile from this castle, I have an estate, called Weldendorf; there she shall live, and call her own whatever it produces; there she shall reign, and be sole mistress of the little paradise: there her past sufferings shall be changed to peace and tranquillity. On a

summer's morning, we, my son, will ride to visit her; pass a day, a week with her; and, in this social intercourse, time will glide pleasantly.

Fred. And pray, my lord, under what name is my mother to live, then?

Baron W. *(Confused.)* How?

Fred. In what capacity? As your domestic, or as—

Baron W. That we will settle afterwards.

Fred. Will you allow me, sir, to leave the room a little while, that you may have leisure to consider now?

Baron W. I do not know how to explain myself in respect to your mother, more than I have done already.

Fred. My fate, whatever it may be, shall never part me from her: this is my firm resolution, upon which I call heaven to witness. My lord, it must be Frederick of Wildenhaim, and Agatha of Wildenhaim; or Agatha Friburg, and Frederick Friburg. *[Exit.]*

Baron W. Young man! Frederick! *(Calling after him.)* Hasty, indeed! would make conditions with his father! No, no; that must not be. I just now thought how well I had arranged my plans—had relieved my heart of every burden, when, a second time, he throws a mountain upon it. Stop, friend conscience, why do you take his part? For twenty years thus you have used me, and been my torture.

Enter Mr. ANHALT.

Ah! Anhalt, I am glad you are come. My conscience and myself are at variance.

Anhalt. Your conscience is in the right.

Baron W. You don't know yet what the quarrel is.

Anhalt. Conscience is always right—because it never speaks unless it is so.

Baron W. Ay, a man of your order can more easily attend to its whispers, than an old warrior. The sound of cannon has made him hard of hearing. I have found my son again, Mr. Anhalt, a fine brave young man; I mean to make him my heir; am I in the right?

Anhalt. Perfectly.

Baron W. And his mother shall live in happiness. My estate, Weldendorf, shall be her's; I'll give it to her, and she shall make it her residence. Don't I do right?

Anhalt. No.

Baron W. *(Surprised.)* No! And what else should I do?

Anhalt. Marry her.

Baron W. *(Starting.)* I marry her!

Anhalt. Baron Wildenhaim is a man who will not act inconsistently; as this is my opinion, I expect your reasons if you do not.

Baron W. Would you have me marry a beggar?

Anhalt. *(After a pause.)* Is that your only objection?

Baron W. I have more—many more.

Anhalt. May I beg to know them likewise?

Baron W. My birth.

Anhalt. Go on.

Baron W. My relations would despise me.

Anhalt. Go on.

Baron W. 'Sdeath! are not these reasons enough I know no other.

Anhalt. Now, then, it is my turn to state mine for the advice I have given you. But first I presume to ask a few questions. Did Agatha, through artful insinuation, gain your affection? or did she give you cause to suppose her inconstant?

Baron W. Neither. But for me she were always virtuous and good.

Anhalt. Did it cost you trouble and earnest entreaty to make her otherwise?

Baron W. Yes.

Anhalt. You pledged your honour?

Baron W. (*Confused.*) Yes.

Anhalt. Called God to witness?

Baron W. Yes.

Anhalt. The witness you called at that time was the Being who sees you now. What you gave in pledge was your honour, which you must redeem; therefore, thank heaven that it is in your power to redeem it. By marrying Agatha the ranson's made: and she brings a dower greater than any princess can bestow—peace to your conscience. If you then esteem the value of this portion, you will not hesitate a moment to exclaim,—Friends, wish me joy, I will marry Agatha! (*Baron W. in great agitation, walks backwards and forwards, then takes Anhalt by the hand.*)

Baron W. Friend, wish me joy—I will marry Agatha.

Anhalt. I do wish you joy.

Baron W. Where is she?

Anhalt. In the castle—in my apartments here. I conducted her through the garden to avoid curiosity.

Baron W. Well, then, this is the wedding-day. This very evening you shall give us your blessing.

Anhalt. Not so soon, not so private. The whole village was witness of Agatha's shame; the whole village must be witness of Agatha's re-established honour. Do you consent to this?

Baron W. I do.

Anhalt. Now the quarrel is decided. Now is your conscience quiet?

Baron W. As quiet as an infant's. I only wish the first interview was over.

Anhalt. Compose yourself. Agatha's heart is to be your judge.

Enter AMELIA WILDENHAIM.

Baron W. Amelia, you have a brother.

Amelia. I have just heard so, my lord; and rejoice to find the news confirmed by you.

Baron W. I know, my dear Amelia, I can repay you for the loss of Count Cassel; but what return can I make to you for the loss of half your fortune?

Amelia. My brother's love will be ample recompense.

Baron W. I will reward you better. Mr. Anhalt, the battle I have just fought, I owe to myself: the victory I gained I owe to you. A man of your principles, at once a teacher and an example of virtue, exalts his rank in life to a level with the

noblest family; and I shall be proud to receive you as my son.

Anhalt. (*Falling on his knees, and taking Baron W.'s hand.*) My lord, you overwhelm me with confusion, as well as with joy.

Baron W. My obligations to you are infinite; Amelia shall pay the debt. (*Gives her to him.*)

Amelia. Oh! my dear father! (*Embracing Baron W.*) what blessings have you bestowed on me in one day! (*To Anhalt.*) I will be your scholar still, and use more diligence than ever to please my master.

Anhalt. His present happiness admits of no addition.

Baron W. Nor does mine. And there is yet another task to perform that will require more fortitude, more courage than this has done! A trial that—(*Bursts into tears.*)—I cannot prevent them—Let me—let me—A few minutes will bring me to myself. Where is Agatha?

Anhalt. I will go and fetch her. [*Exit.*]

Baron W. Stop! Let me first recover a little. (*Walks up and down, looks at the door through which Anhalt left the room.*) That door she will come from: that was once the dressing-room of my mother.—From that door I have seen her come many times—have been delighted with her lovely smiles. How shall I behold her altered looks! Frederick must be my mediator. Where is he? Where is my son? Now I am ready; my heart is prepared to receive her. Haste! haste! Bring her in. (*He looks steadfastly at the door.* Mr. ANHALT leads in AGATHA FRIBURG; *Baron W. runs and clasps her in his arms; supported by him, she sinks into a chair; Baron W. kneels by her side, holding her hand.*)

Baron W. Agatha, Agatha, do you know this voice?

Agatha. Wildenhaim.

Baron W. Can you forgive me?

Agatha. Forgive you! (*Embracing him.*)

Enter FREDERICK.

Fred. (*As he enters.*) I hear the voice of my mother! Ha!—Mother! Father!

[*Frederick throws himself on his knees by his mother; she clasps him in her arms. Amelia is placed by the side of her father, attentively viewing Agatha; Anhalt stands on the side of Frederick, with his hands gratefully raised to heaven.—Exeunt.*]

THE MERCHANT OF BRUGES;

OR, BEGGAR'S BUSH:

A PLAY, IN FIVE ACTS.—ALTERED FROM BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER,
BY DOUGLAS KINNAIRD.



Act III.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

GOSWIN, OR FLOREZ
GERRARD, OR CLAUSE
WOLFORD
HUBERT

HEMSKIRKE
VANDUNKE
MERCHANTS
HIGGEN

CLOWN
PRIG
SNAP
FERRET

SAILOR
JACULIN
BERTHA
MARGARET

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The outside of the gate of Bruges. Public-house on one side, with the sign of the "Right heir."*
HIGGIN, PRIG, FERRET, and other Beggars discovered as having been drinking at a table.

GLEE AND CHORUS.

Well, brothers, our merry old king is dead;
What matters? we'll soon have another instead:
He would not have cried
Had you or I died.

Then mourn him no longer, but merrily sing,
Rest, rest to the bones of our merry old king.
Drain the can, brother;
Fill up another;

Drink till our eyes with tears shall swell;
Tears of brandy alone;
And the monarch that's gone

Shall be wept in the liquor he lov'd so well.

Hig. Well said, my masters, peace be to his rags!
His was a gold and silver reign; he, tyrant-like,
Did never force away your hens and bacon
When ye had ventur'd for't.

Prig. And in return
We've lent him Christial burial; in good sooth,
That's more than follows on your soldier's end.

Fer. The chance was his.
Hig. Ay, marry, was't. But mark,
The chance that laid him low did make him king,
And yet may crown us, too.

Prig. So't be in right
Of our old custom and election—law.

Hig. True, Prig; 'tis fit we do observe the laws.
Here is the table doth exact from all
A strict obedience, or expulsion. First,
Be perfect in your crutches and your feign'd hurts,
Then your torn passports; with the learned ways
To stammer and be dumb, and blind and lame.

Prig. Ay, and shed tears to move compassion.
Fer. Are not the halting paces all set down?

Hig. All in the learned language. Brother—
Prig. Peace! (Boors call from behind.)
To your postures.

Enter three or four Boors, with pipes.

1 Boor. What, ho! mine host with the big belly!
beer!

Stark English beer! Well met, my merry souls.
What! your trade thrives, methinks, since Wolfort
reigns

O'er prostrate Flanders, in despite of Bruges!
Your state doth grow in numbers; marry, why?
He now thrives best who hath the least to lose.

Hig. Bless you, masters, we suffer with the times,
2 Boor. Come, landlord, beer.

Enter Landlord from the house, with beer.

Land. Here's o'the right sort. [Florez,
1 Boor. Then here's to the right heir—the lost earl
Where is old Clause?

He gives respect and countenance to beggary; [ject,
An' ye make him your king, I'd call myself his sub-

Hig. What, old solemnity, our grey-beard bishop?
Prig. See, here he comes! [eh!

Enter CLAUSE.

1 Boor. Good morrow, worthy Clause;
How fares it with ye, man?

Clause. Not better than the times
Give token of: but for old Bruges here,
Whose charitable sons still feed our wants,
We had long fled this bleeding land,
Where tyrants do make beggars of ye all. [more—

1 Boor. There thou say'st well! Our nobles are no
Our cities ruin'd, and the great wealth of Flanders
Center'd in Bruges. She alone defends
Her rights and liberty 'gainst Wolfort's power.
Here's to her burgomaster, old Vandunke.

(Beggars and Boors drink to Vandunke.)

Clause. I will be with you straight; but first
must hence

Awhile into the town. We'll meet anon. [Exit.

Hig. Let's forward then. Our doxies do repose

Under you trees. Go some, and call them hither,
And then trudge gaily home to Beggar's Busb.

GLEE.

Mèn. *Côme, doxies, come. The cheerful day
Is bright, and winds are hush.*

Enter Women.

Women. *Then take thy staff, and troll the lay,
And trudge to Beggar's Busb.
Our welcome home, a blithe one, too,
The thrush's song shall be;
And never dwell a merrier crew
Beneath the greenwood tree.* [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*Presence-chamber of the Earl of Flanders.*

*Enter HUBERT disarmed and guarded, met by WOL-
FORT and train.* [arm'd him?]

Wolf. What, Hubert stealing from me? Who dis-
'Twas more than I commanded; take your sword,
I am best guarded with it in your hand;
I've seen you use it nobly.

Hub. And will turn it
On my own bosom, ere it shall be drawn
Unworthily or rudely.

Wolf. Would you leave me
Without a farewell, Hubert? Fly a friend,
Unwearing in his study to advance you?
Who ever yet arriv'd to any grace,
Reward, or trust from me, but his approaches
Were by your fair reports of him prefer'd?
Nay, what is more, I've made myself your servant
In making you the master of those secrets, [me:
Which not the rack of conscience could draw from
Nor I, when I ask'd mercy, trust my pray'rs with.
Yet, after these assurances of love,
These ties and bonds of friendship, to forsake me!
Forsake me as an enemy! Come, you must
Give me a reason.

Hub. Sir, and so I will,
If I may do't in private; and you hear it.

Wolf. All leave the room. [Exeunt Guards, &c.
You have your will; now speak,
And use the liberty of our first friendship.

Hub. Friendship! When you prov'd traitor first,
that vanish'd;
Nor do I owe you any thought but hate.
I know my flight hath forfeited my head,
And so I make you first to understand
What a strange monster you have made yourself:
I welcome it.

Wolf. To me this is strange language.

Hub. To you! Why, what are you?

Wolf. Your price and master,
The earl of Flanders.

Hub. By a proper title!
Rais'd to it by cunning, circumvention, force,
Blood, and proscriptions.

Wolf. And in all this wisdom
Had I not reason,—when the protector, Gerrard,
Who underhand had by his ministers
Detracted my great actions, made my faith
And loyalty suspected? in which failing,
He sought my life by practice.

Hub. With what forehead
Do you speak this to me? Who, as I know't,
Must and will say, 'tis false.

Wolf. Ha! my guard there. [hear,

Hub. You bade me speak, and promis'd you would
Which I now say you shall: not a sound more;
For I, that am contemner of mine own,
Am master of your life; then here's a sword
Between you and all aids: although you blind
The credulous beast, the multitude, you
Pass not these untruths on me.

Wolf. How! untruths?

Hub. Ay, and it is favourable language;
They'd been in a mean man lies and foul ones.
Were not those rumours,
Of being call'd unto your trial, spread
By your own followers? who, being suborn'd,
Came forth and took their oaths they had hir'd

By Gerrard to your murder: this once heard
And easily believ'd, your well-taught slaves
Snatch'd hastily their arms, and barbarously kill'd
Such as were servants, or thought friends, to Ger-
Vowing the like to him. [rard.

Wolf. Will you yet end?

Hub. But he with his son Florez, (the true heir
By right unto this country from his mother,)
Forsook the city, and by secret ways,
As you give out, and we would gladly have't,
Escap'd their fury; though 'tis more than fear'd
They fell among the rest. Your cruelties since
So far transcend your former bloody ills,
As if, compar'd, they only would appear
Essays of mischief—do not stop your ears,
More are behind yet.

Wolf. Repeat them not.

Hub. A prince in nothing but your princely lusts
And boundless rapines.

Wolf. Hold, I beseech you;
Thou art to me in this a greater tyrant
Than e'er I was to any.

Hub. I end thus

The general grief. Now to my private wrong:
The loss of Gerrard's daughter, Jaculin,
The hop'd for partner of my lawful bed,
Your cruelty hath frighted from mine arms.
Think you that I had reason now to leave you?
My life is irksome; here securely take it,
And do me but this fruit of all your friendship,
That I may die by you, and not your hangman. [have

Wolf. Oh! Hubert, these your words and reasons
As well drawn drops of blood from my griev'd heart,
As from mine eyes these tears! Can you but think
Where Gerrard is, or your lost love, or Florez,
Whom in his infancy—

Hub. You stole; and since
Have kept conceal'd, the better to maintain
The usurpation of his seat.

Wolf. By heav'n!

I stole him not, nor know I where he is,
Nor if he lives; soon after my return
From Brabant, whither I was sent to treat
About a future match with our young earl,
He was at that time missing, and remains
Unheard of to this hour; if you can find him,
I will resign the earldom.

Hub. Sir, do not abuse
My aptness to believe.

Wolf. Suspect not you

A faith that's built upon so true a sorrow.
Make your own terms, ask for them all conditions
My power can grant, or your suspicion prompt.
Hemskirke, the partner of my secret'st councils,
Shall journey with you to this wish'd discovery.
I have of late receiv'd intelligence,
That some of Gerrard's friends are 'bout Bruges
To be found; which I did then interpret
The cause of that town's standing out against me.
But now am glad, it may direct your purpose
Of giving them their safety, and me peace.

Hub. Be constant to your promise, and you have it.

Wolf. Distrust me not: and prosp'rous be your
search. [Exit Hubert.

Let me but have them once within my grasp,
Their blood shall write the warrant of my peace. [Exit.

SCENE III.—*A Street or Square in Bruges.*

Enter three Merchants.

1 Mer. 'Tis much that you deliver of this Goswin.

2 Mer. He bears himself with such a confidence
As if he were the master of the sea,
And not a wind upon the sailor's compass
But from one point or other were his factor,
To bring him in the best commodities
Merchants e'er ventur'd for.

3 Mer. 'Tis strange!

2 Mer. Yet does he still continue a good man;
To doubt him would be held an injury,
Or rather, malice, with the best that traffic;

Yet this in him deserves the least of wonder,
 Compar'd with other his peculiar fashions :
 Is there a virgin of good fame wants dower,
 He is a father to her: or soldier
 That in his country's service, from the war
 Hath brought home only scars and want, his house
 Receives him, and relieves him with that care
 As if what he possess'd had been laid up
 For such good uses, and he steward on't.

1 *Mer.* I would not wish a better man to deal with.

2 *Mer.* Ne'er doubt it; he's your man. See, here
 he comes!

Enter GOSWIN, speaking to a Servant.

Gos. From England, said ye? bid him be welcome
 to my house. [*Exit Servant.*]

2 *Mer.* Save you, master Goswin!

Gos. Good day to all! [*dities.*]

1 *Mer.* We bring you the refusal of more commo-

Gos. Are you the owner of the ship that last night
 put into the harbour?

1 *Mer.* Both of the ship and lading.

Gos. What's the freight?

3 *Mer.* Rich cloth of gold, brought from Cambal.

Gos. Some two hours hence I'll come aboard.

1 *Mer.* The gunner shall speak you welcome.

Gos. I'll not fail.

3 *Mer.* Good morrow! [*Exit with 1 Mer.*]

2 *Mer.* Have you brought ye further, sir,

On what I am to part with? [*prus,*

Gos. I take it at your own rate, your wine of Cy-
 But for the rest, I cannot save in them.

2 *Mer.* Make me offer of something near the price
 That may assure me, you can deal for them.

Gos. And if I could,

I would not do't with too much loss. [*cheap.*]

2 *Mer.* 'Tis a rich lading; you know they are so

Gos. For which I were your chapman, but I am
 Already out of cash. [*Going.*]

2 *Mer.* I'll give you day. [*Following him.*]

Gos. Why, look you, there is now in prison

And at your suit, a pirate; and past hope

To live a week, if you should prosecute

What you can prove against him: set him free,

And you shall have your money to a stiver,

And early payment.

2 *Mer.* This is above wonder!

A merchant of your rank, that have at sea

So many bottoms in the danger of

These water thieves, should be a means to save 'em,

And stay the hand of justice that is ready

To fall on them.

Gos. You mistake me,

If you think I would cherish in this captain

The wrong he did to you, or any man.

But I was lately with him, being assur'd

A braver fellow never put from shore.

I read his letters granted from this state.

Since want of what he could not live without

Compell'd him to the pirate act he did,

I pity his misfortunes; and to work you

To some compassion of them, I come up

To your own price. Save him, the goods are mine;

If not, seek elsewhere; I'll not deal for them.

2 *Mer.* Well, sir, for your love, I will once be led

To change my purpose.

Gos. For your own profit rather.

2 *Mer.* I'll presently make means for his dis-
 charge. [*Exit.*]

Gos. Heaven grant my ships a safe return before

The day of this great payment, as they are

Expected hourly in port; my credit yet

Stands good with all the world.—[*Enter GERRARD.*]

Ger. Bless my good master!

The prayers of your poor beadsman ever shall

Be sent up for you.

Gos. God o' mercy, Clause!

There's something to put thee in mind hereafter

To think of me.

Ger. May He that gave it you,

Reward you for it with increase, good master!

Gos. I thrive the better for thy prayers.

Ger. I hope so;

For that I have fed upon your bounties,
 And by the fire of your bless'd charity warm'd me:
 And yet, good master, pardon that I'm bold
 To make one suit more to you.

Gos. What is't? say on.

Ger. 'Tis not for money, [*me.*]

Nor clothes, good master; but your good word for

Gos. That thou shalt have, Clause; for I think thee
 honest. [*ble*]

Ger. To-morrow, then, dear master, take the trou-

Of walking early unto Beggar's Bush;

And, as you see me, among others, brethren

In my affliction, when you are demanded

Which you like best amongst us, point out me,

And then pass by, as if you knew me not.

Gos. But what will that advantage thee?

Ger. Oh! much, sir;

'Twill give me the pre-eminence of the rest,

Make me a king among 'em.

At your better leisure,

I will inform you further of the good

It may do to me.

Gos. 'Tis troth! thou mak'st a wonder:

Have you a king and commonwealth among you?

Ger. We have. And there are states are govern'd

Gos. Ambition among beggars! [*worse.*]

Ger. Many great ones

Do part with half their states to have the place,

To cringe and beg in the first file, master.

Shall I be so bound unto your furtherance

In my petition?

Gos. That thou shalt not miss of,

Nor any worldly care make me forget it.

I will be early there. [*Exit.*]

Ger. Heaven guard my master! as it surely will,

To wrest the bloody sword from Wolfort's grasp,

And save himself the land he's born to rule.

My friends, ere long, shall see their long-lost prince;

And Flanders, to the latest ages shew,

A merchant's still the tyrant's deadliest foe. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.—SCENE I.

HIGGIN, FERRET, PRIG, JACULIN, CLAUSE,

SNAP, GINKES, and other Beggars discovered.

Hig. Come, princes of the ragged regiment;

You o' the blood; what title e'er you bear,

I speak to all that stand in fair election

For the proud diadem of king of beggars.

Higgen, your orator, doth beseech you

All to stand forth, and put yourselves in rank,

That the first single comer may at view

Make a free choice.

Prig. First put a sentinel.

Hig. 'Thanks to my lord. The word's Fumbumbis.

[*Exit Snap.*]

Fer. Well; pray, my masters all, that Ferret be

chosen:

Y'are like to have a merciful mild prince of me.

Prig. A very tyrant, I; an arrant tyrant,

If e'er I come to reign; therefore, look to't,

Except you do provide me mum enough,

And beer to booze with. I must have my rapons,

And ducklings in the season, and fat chickens,

Or straight I seize on all your privilege,

Call in your crutches, wooden legs, false arms,

All shall be escheated; and then, some one cold night

I'll watch you, what old barn you go to roost in,

And there I'll smother you all i'th' musty hay.

Hig. Whew! This is tyrant-like, indeed.

Enter SNAP, preceding HUERT and HEMSKIRKE,

in cloaks.

Snap. Fumbumbis!

Prig. To your postures. Arm.

Hub. Yonder's the town, I see it.

Hig. Bless your good worships!

Fer. One small piece of money.

Ginkes. Amongst us all, poor wretches!

Prig. Blind and lame!

Hig. Pitiful worships!

Snapp. One little stiver.
Prig. Here be seven of us.
Hig. Seven, good masters! Oh! remember seven!
 Seven blessings 'gainst seven deadly sins!
Prig. And seven sleepers.
Hems. There's, amongst you all.
Fer. Heaven reward you!
Hig. The prince of pity bless thee!
Hub. Do I see right? or is't my fancy?
 Sure, 'tis her face. Come hither, pretty maid.
Jac. What would you? Can you keep a secret?
 You look as though you could. I'll tell you. Hush!

SONG.—JACULIN.

*In ev'ry woodland, dale, and bower,
 The fragrant roses blossom fair;
 But where's the youth shall cull each flower,
 To braid a garland for my hair?
 Oh! he is far, far away,
 And he knows not where I stray;
 And should he e'er return
 To his love, I'll answer nay.
 My love in fight shall meet his doom,
 Or for some fairer maiden sigh;
 And with the rose's with'ring bloom,
 My hopeless, hopeless heart shall die.*

Hub. Her voice, too, says the same; but, for my I would not that her manners were so chang'd. [head, Hear me, thou honest fellow; what's this maiden, That lives amongst you here?

Snapp. Ao, ao, ao!

Hub. How! Nothing but signs? This is strange! I would fain have it her—but not her thus.

Hig. He is deaf and dumb. (Stutters.)

Hub. 'Slid! they did all speak plain enough e'en Dost thou know this same maid? [now.]

Prig. She was born at the barn, yonder, (stutters) By Beggar's Bush. Her name is—

Hig. So was her mother's, too. (Beggars retire.)

Hub. I must be better informed than by this way. Here was another face, too, that I mark'd, Of the old man's; I will come here again. Protect us, our disguise now: pr'ythee, Hemskirke, If we be taken, how dost thou imagine This town will use us, that hath so long stood Out against Wolfort?

Hems. Even to hang us forth Upon their walls a sunning, to make crows' meat. If I were not assur'd o' the burgomaster, And had a pretty excuse to see a niece there, I should scarce venture.

Hub. Come, 'tis now too late To look back at the ports: good luck, and enter.

[Exit with Hems.]

Hig. A peery dog, I warrant him. [mean?]

Gincks. (To Clause.) What could his question Clause. I know not; yet 'twas time to fly, he grew Too close in his inquiries 'bout my daughter.

Hig. Hang them, for disturbing our Noble ceremonies. Shall we renew them?

Prig. Incontinently, noble brother.

Enter GOSWIN.

Hig. Oh! here a judge comes! (Cry of "a judge!")

Gos. What ails you, sirs? What means this out-

Hig. Master, [cry?] A sort of poor souls met, heav'n's tools, good master, Have had some little variance amongst ourselves Who should be honestest of us, and which lives Uprightest in his calling: now, 'cause we thought We ne'er should 'gree upon 't ourselves, because Indeed, 'tis hard to say, we all resolv'd to put it To him that should come next, and that's your mastership: [ter,

Which does your worship think is he? Sweet mas- Look on us all, and tell us: we are seven of us, Like to the seven wise masters, or the planets.

Ges. I should judge this, the man with the grey beard; (Pointing to Clause.)

And if he be not, I would he were! There's something, too, amongst you, To keep you all honest. [Exit.

Clause. Heav'n go with you!

Snapp. What is't?

Prig. A crown of gold.

Fer. For our new king—good luck! [Clause!]

Prig. King Clause! I bid, God save the first king After this golden token of a crown, Where's Higgen, with his gratulating speech In all our names?

Fer. Here he is, pumping for't. [once more, Gincks. H' has cough'd the second time; 'tis but And then it comes.

Hig. Thou art chosen, venerable Clause, Our king and sov'reign; monarch o' th' maunders; And who is he that did not wish thee chosen, Now thou art chosen? Ask 'em; all will say so; Nay, swear't. 'Tis sworn so every day; The times do give it sanction. When t' other day We sat lamenting o'er our buried prince, Of famous memory, (rest go with his rags!) I then presag'd thou shortly wouldst be king, And now thou art so. By that beard, king Clause, Thou wert found out, and mark'd for sovereignty, Oh! happy prince, and beard! long may it grow, And thick, and fair, that who lives under it May live as safe as under Beggar's Bush. Of which this is the thing—that but the type. (Coughs.)

Prig. On, good Higgen!

Hig. No impositions, taxes, grievances, Lie lurking in this beard: but under him Each man shall eat his own stol'n eggs and bacon In his own shade: he will have no purveyors For pigs, or poultry—

Clause. That we must have, my learned orator; It is our will; and every man to keep In his own path and circuit.

Hig. Do you hear?

You must hereafter maund in your own pads. He says.

Clause. Besides, to give good words.

Hig. Do you mark?

To cut bien whids, that is the second law.

Clause. And keep afoot the humble and the common Phrase of begging, lest men discover us. We love not heaps of laws, where few will serve.

All. Oh! gracious prince! Save, save the good king Clause!

Hig. A song to crown him.

GLEE AND CHORUS.

Cast our caps and cares away,

This is beggars' holiday;

At the crowning of our king,

Thus we ever dance and sing.

In the world look out and see,

Where so happy prince as he,

Where the nations live so free

And so merry as do we?

Be it peace, or be it war,

Here at liberty we are.

And enjoy our ease and rest;

To the field we are not press'd;

Nor will any go to law

With the beggar for a straw:

All which happiness he brags,

He doth owe unto his rags. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Room in Vandunke's house.

Enter VANDUNKE, HUBERT, HEMSKIRKE, and

MARGARET. [friend,

Vand. Captain, you're welcome; so is this your Most safely welcome; though our town stand out Against your master, you shall find good quarters. The truth is we love not him—Margaret, some wine. Let's talk a little treason, if we can Talk treason 'gainst the traitors; by your leave, We, here in Bruges, think he does usurp; And, therefore, I am bold—

[Exit Margaret, and returns with wine.]

Hub. Sir, your boldness Haply becomes your tongue, but not our ears, While we are his servants.

Vand. Good! let's drink, then;
That will become us all.

Here's to you with a heart, my captain's friend,
With a good heart; and if this make us speak
Bold words anon, 'tis all under the rose,
Forgotten; drown all memory when we drink.

Hub. 'Tis freely spoken; noble burgomaster,
I'll do you right.

Hems. Nay, sir, mynheer Vandanke
Is a true statesman. [throat

Vand. Fill my captain's cup; oh! that your cat-
Master, Wolfort, had been an honest man!

Hub. Sir?

Vand. Under the rose—

Hems. Here's to you;

And how does my niece?

Almost a woman, I think; she was my errand.

Vand. Ay, a kind uncle you are—fill him his glass—
That in seven years could not find leisure—

Hems. No, 'tis not so much.

Vand. I'll bate you ne'er an hour on't.

It was before the Brabander 'gan his war,
For moonshine, i' the water there, his daughter
That ne'er was lost, yet you could not find time
To see a kinswoman; but she is worth the seeing, sir,
Now you are come: you ask if she were a woman?
She is a woman, sir—bring her forth, Margaret—
And a fine woman, and has suitors.

Hems. How! What suitors are they?

Vand. Bachelors; young burghers;

And one a gallant, the prince of merchants

We call him here in Bruges.

Hems. How! a merchant?

I thought, Vandanke, you had understood me better,
And my niece, too, so trusted to you by me,
Than to admit of such in name of suitors.

Vand. Such! he is such a such, as were she mine,
I'd give him thirty thousand crowns with her.

Hems. Sir, you may deal for your own wares, but
know,

That the same things, sir, fit not you and me. [Exit.

Vand. Why, give's some wine, then, that will fit us
Here's to you still, my captain's friend; but still [all;
I say, would Wolfort were an honest man!

Under the rose I speak it. But this merchant

Is a brave boy; he lives so, in the town here,

We know not what to think of him.

Your master is a traitor for all this,

Under the rose—here's to you—and usurps

The earldom from a better man.

Hub. Ay, marry, sir, where is this man?

Vand. Nay, soft! an' I could tell you,

'Tis ten to one I would not. Here's my hand—

I love not Wolfort—sit you still with that.

See, here my captain comes, and his fine niece,

And there's my merchant—view him well.

Enter HEMSKIRKE, GERTRUDE, and GOSWIN.

Hems. You most

Not only know me for your uncle now,

But obey me: you, to go cast yourself

Away upon a merchant; fie upon't! one

That makes his trade with oaths and perjuries.

Gos. If it be me you speak of, as your eye

Seems to direct, I wish you would speak to me, sir.

Hems. Sir, I do say she is no merchandise.

Will that suffice you?

Gos. Merchandise! good sir,

Though you be kinsman to her, take no leave thence

To use me with contempt. I ever thought

Your niece above all price.

Hems. And do so still;

Dost hear? her rate's at more than you are worth.

Gos. You do not know what is a gentleman's

Nor can you value him. [worth;

Hub. Well said, merchant.

Vand. Nay, let him alone.

Hems. A gentleman!

What, o' the woolpack, or the sugar-chest,

Or list of velvet? Which is't, pound or yard,

You vend your gentry by?

Hub. Oh! Hemskirke, fie! [Wolfort,

Vand. Come, do not mind 'em: drink; he is no
Captain, I advise you.

Hems. If 'twere the blood
Of Charlemagne, as't may for aught I know,
Be some good butcher's issue here in Bruges.

Gos. How!

Hems. Nay, I'm not certain on't; of this I am:
If you once buy and sell, your gentry's goue.

Gos. Ha, ha, ha!

Hems. You're angry, though you laugh.

Gos. Now do I smile in pity and contempt

Of your poor argument: do not you, the lords

Of land, if you be any, sell the grass,

The corn, the straw, the milk, the cheese?

Vand. And butter?

Remember butter, do not leave out butter.

Gos. The beefs and muttons that your grounds are

stor'd with,

Beside the woods! Your empty honour, fetch'd

From the heralds A, B, C, and said o'er

With your court faces once an hour, shall ne'er

Make me mistake myself. Do not your lawyers

Sell all their practice, as your priests their prayers?

What is not bought and sold?

Hems. You now grow bold, sir.

Gos. I have been bred

Still with my honest freedom, and must use it.

Hems. Upon your equals, then.

Gos. Sir, he that will

Provoke me first, doth make himself my equal.

Hems. No more.

Gos. Yes, sir; this little—

'Tshall be aside: then after as you please.

You appear the uncle, sir, to her I love

More than mine eyes; and I have heard your scorn

With so much scoffing, and with so much shame,

As each striv'd which is greater: but believe me,

I suck'd not in this patience with my milk;

Cast no despites on my profession

For the civility and tameness of it.

A good man bears a contumely worse

Than he would do an injury.

I would approach your kinswoman

With all respect due to yourself and her.

Hems. Away, companion! hauling her!

[Pulls him from her.]

Gos. Nay, I do love no blows, sir.

[They fight; he gets Hemskirke's sword, and

throws it away.]

Hub. Hold, sir!

Gert. Help, my Goswin!

Vand. Let 'em alone; my life for one.

Gos. Nay, come,

If you have will.

Hub. None to offend you, sir. [yes, sir,

Gos. He that had, thank himself! Not hand her?

And clasp her, and embrace her, and bear her

Through a whole race of uncles, arm'd;

And all their nephews, though they stood a wood

Of pikes, and wall of cannon. Kiss me, Gertrude;

Quake not, but kiss me.

Vand. Well said,

My merchant royal; fear no uncles; hang 'em,

Hang up all uncles!

Gos. In this circle, love,

Thou art as safe as in a tower of brass;

Let such as do wrong fear.

Vand. Ay, that's good.

Let Wolfort look to that.

Gos. Sir, here she stands,

Your niece and my belov'd; one of these titles

She must apply to; if unto the last,

Not all the anger can be sent unto her,

In frown or voice, or other art, shall force her,

Had Hercules a hand in't. Come, my joy,

Say, thou art mine, aloud, love—and profess it.

Vand. Do, and I drink to it.

Gos. Pr'ythee, say so, love. [blushes.

Gert. 'Twould take away the honour from my

Do not you play the tyrant, sweet; they speak it.

Hems. I thank you, niece.

Gos. Sir, thank her for your life,

And fetch your sword within. *[Exit with Gert.]*

Hub. A brave, clear spirit;

Hemskirke, you were to blame. A civil habit

Of covers a good man; and you may meet

In person of a merchant, with a soul

As resolute and free, and always worthy

As else in any file of mankind. Pray you,

What meant you so to slight him?

Hems. 'Tis done now;

Ask me no more on't:

I was to blame, and I must suffer—*(aside)*—but yet

I'll be reveng'd. *[Exit.]*

Hub. I'll to the woods

To find our much-wrong'd banish'd nobles,

And trace the lonely haunt where my lost love,

My Jaculin, laments her alter'd fortunes.

There I may chance to learn

Somewhat to help my inquiries further.

How now, brave burgomaster? *[dunke.]*

Vand. I love not Wolfort, and my name's Van-

Hub. Come, go sleep within. *[Wolfort—]*

Vand. Earl Florez is right heir; and this same

Under the rose I speak it—

Hub. Very hardly. *[breath'd,*

Vand. Usurps; and is a rank traitor as ever

And all that do uphold him. Let me go:

Do you uphold him?

Hub. No.

Vand. Then hold up me. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT III.—SCENE I.—A Wood.

Enter GOSWIN.

Gos. No wind blows fair yet! no return of mo-

Letters, nor anything to hold my hopes up! *[nies,*

Why, then, 'tis destin'd that I fall! Fall miserably!

My credit I was built on sinking with me.

The raging north wind blows still stubbornly,

And on his boisterous rack rides my sad ruin.

To-morrow with the sun-set, sets my credit:

To prison now! Well, yet there's this hope left me,

I may sink fairly under this day's venture;

And so to-morrow's cross'd, and all its curses.

This is the place his challenge call'd me to;

Now let me fall before my foe i'th' field,

And not at bar before my creditors.

He has kept his word. *[Enter HEMSKIRKE.]*

Now, sir, your sword's tongue only,

Loud as you dare—all other language—

Hem. Well, sir,

You shall not be long troubled: draw!

Gos. 'Tis done, sir; and now have at ye.

Hems. Now! *[Enter Boors who attack Goswin.]*

Gos. Betray'd to villains! Slaves, you shall buy me dearly.

Enter GERRARD and Beggars.

Ger. Now upon 'em bravely, boys!

Down with the gentlemen.

Boors. Hold, hold! *[em!]*

Ger. Down with 'em into the wood, and swinge

Conjure 'em soundly, boys! swinge 'em to jelly!

[Beggars beat off Hemskirke and Boors.]

Blessings upon my master! thou art not hurt?

Gos. That heav'n, which sent thee to my aid,

Still nerv'd my arm.

Ger. And let my wandering steps,

To where conceal'd I heard you coward knave

Tutor his ruffian band to thy undoing.

Ger. I thank ye, Clause. Pr'ythee, now leave me,

For, by my troth, I have nothing left to give thee.

Ger. Indeed, I do not ask, sir; only it grieves me

To see you look so sad. Now goodness keep you

From troubles in your mind!

Gos. If I were troubled, *[me.]*

What could thy comfort do? Pr'ythee, Clause, leave

Ger. Why are ye sad?

Gos. Most true, I am so;

And such a sadness I have got will sink me! *[ble]*

What would the knowledge do thee good, so misera-

Thou canst not help thyself! canst thou work mira-

Ger. You do not know, sir, what I can do. *[cles?]*

Tell me your cause of grief; I must not leave ye.

Gos. How! *[goodness,*

Ger. By what ye hold most precious, by heav'n's

As your fair birth may prosper, good sir, tell me;

My mind believes yet something's in my power

May ease you of this trouble.

Gos. I will tell thee:

For a hundred thousand crowns, upon my credit

Taken up of merchants to supply my traffic,

To-morrow, Clause—to-morrow, which must come,

In prison thou shalt find me, poor and broken.

Ger. I cannot blame your grief, sir.

Gos. Now, what say'st thou? *[ye]*

Ger. I say, you should not shrink; for he that gave

Can give you more. Are ye, good master, ty'd

Within the compass of a day?

Gos. Even to-morrow.

But why do I stand mocking of my misery?

Is't not enough that floods and friends forsake me?

Ger. Have ye no friends left?

None that have felt your bounty worth the duty?

Gos. Friendship! thou know'st it not.

Ger. It is a duty; and as a duty, from those men

have felt ye,

Should be return'd again; therefore, I'll do't.

Distrust not, but pull up your noble spirit;

For if the fortunes of ten thousand people

Can save ye, rest assur'd. You have forgot, sir,

The good you did; that was the pow'r you gave me.

You shall now know the king of beggars' treasure;

And let the winds blow as they list, the sea roar,

Yet here in safety you shall find your harbour.

Distrust me not, for if I live, I'll fit ye.

Gos. How fain I would believe thee!

Ger. If I fail, master, believe no man hereafter.

Gos. I will try thee; but He knows, that knows

Ger. Know me to-morrow: *[all.]*

And if I know not how to cure ye, kill me!

So pass in peace, my best, my worthiest master. *[Exit.]*

Gos. Still bluw't st thou there? and from all other

Do all my agents sleep, that nothing comes? *[parts]*

There's a conspiracy of friends and servants,

If not of elements, to ha' me break.

What should I think, unless the seas and sands

Had swallow'd up, or fire devour'd my ships,

I must ha' had some returns.

Enter first Merchant,

1 *Mer.* Save you, sir!

Gos. Save you!

1 *Mer.* No news yet o' your ships?

Gos. Not any yet, sir.

1 *Mer.* 'Tis strange! *[Exit.]*

Gos. 'Tis true, sir. What a voice was here now!

This was one passing bell; a thousand ravens

Sung in that man now, to presage my ruin!

Enter second Merchant.

2 *Mer.* Goswin, good day! these winds are very

Gos. They are so, sir—to hurt. *[constant.]*

2 *Mer.* Ha' you had no letters

Lately from England, nor from Denmark?

Gos. Neither. *[lands]*

2 *Mer.* This wind brings them. Nor no news over

Through Spain, from the Straits?

Gos. Not any.

2 *Mer.* I am sorry, sir. *[Exit.]*

Gos. They talk me down; and, as 'tis said of vultures,

That scent a field fought, and do smell the carcasses

By many hundred miles: so do these, my wrecks,

At greater distances. Then, heaven, thy will

Come on, and be! For base, deceitful fortune

Shall never say, she's cut my throat in fear:

I am not broken yet; nor should I fall,

Metinks, with less than that; that ruins all. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—Another part of the Wood.

Enter HUBERT, as a Huntsman.

Hub. Thus have I stol'n away disguis'd from Hems-

To try these people; for my heart yet tells me *[kirke,*

Some of these beggars are the men I look for. Appearing like myself, they have no reason (Though my intent be fair,) but still to avoid me. This is the wood they make their hidden home, A fit place for concealment; where, till fortune Crown me with that I seek, I'll live amongst 'em. They come: I'll couch awhile, and mark my time.

[Exit.

Enter HIGGEN, PRIG, FERRET, GINKES, and the rest, with the Boors in custody.

Hig. Come, bring him out, for here we sit in justice. Each man take a cudgel, a good cudgel: [tice; And now attend our sentence. That you are rogues, And mischievous, base rascals—there's the point I take it, is confess'd. [now—

Prig. Deny it, if ye dare, knaves.

Boors. We are rogues, sir.

Hig. To amplify the matter, then; rogues ye are, And cudgell'd ye shall be, ere we leave ye.

Boors. Yes, sir.

Hig. Why did ye this?

Were you drunk when ye did it?

Boors. Yes, indeed, we were.

Prig. You shall be beaten sober.

Hig. Was it for want ye undertook it?

Boors. Yes, sir.

Hig. Ye shall be swing'd abundantly.

Has not the gentleman (pray, mark this point, Brother Prigg,) reliev'd you often?

Boors. 'Tis most true, sir.

Hig. And as ye are true rascals,

Tell me but this: have ye not been drunk and often At his charge?

Boors. O'ten, often.

Hig. There's the point, then:

They have cast themselves, brother Prig. Proceed you now; I'm somewhat weary.

Prig. Can you do these things,

You most abominable scurvy rascals, You turnip-eating rogues?

Boors. We're truly sorry.

[presently

Prig. To the proof, you knaves; to the proof, and

Give us a sign you feel compunction.

Every man up with his cudgel, and on his neighbour Bestow such alms, till we shall say sufficient.

Hig. You know your doom:

One, two, three, and about it.

[Boors beat each other off.

Prig. That fellow in the blue has true compunc-

tion. Enter GERRARD.

Ger. Call in the gentleman:

His cause I'll hear myself.

Enter HEMSKIRKE, handcuffed.

Prig. With all due reverence

We do resign, sir.

Ger. Go fetch that paper was found upon him.

But, soft! who have we here? [Exit Ferret.

Enter HUBERT.

Hub. Good ev'n, my honest friends!

Ger. Good ev'n, good fellow!

Hub. May a poor huntsman, with a merry heart, A voice shall make the forest ring about him,

Get leave to live amongst ye? True as steel, boys;

That knows all chases, and can watch all hours,

Force ye the crafty reynard, climb the quick-sets,

And rouse the lofty stag; and with my bell-horn

Ring him a knell, that all the woods shall mourn him,

Till in his funeral tears he fall before me.

Ger. Well spoke, my brave fellow.

Hub. (Aside.) What mak'st thee here?

Hemskirke, thou art not right, I fear.

Re-enter FERRET, with a paper.

Ger. Here is the paper.

Ger. Give it to me. You are sent here, sirrah,

To discover certain gentlemen; a spy knave!

And if you find 'em, if not by persuasion,

To bring 'em back—by poison to dispatch 'em!

Hub. By poison! ha! (Aside.)

Ger. Here is another—Hubert. What is that Hu-

Hub. You may perceive there— [bert, sir?

Ger. Here thou art commanded, when that Hubert Has done his best and worthiest service this way, To cut his throat; for here he's set down dangerous.

Hub. This is most impious! (Aside.)

Ger. Is not this true?

Hems. Yes. What are you the better? [dom;

Ger. You shall perceive, sir, ere you get your free- Keep him still bound: and, friend, we take thee to us, Into our company. Thou dar'st be true unto us?

Hig. Ay, and obedient, too?

Hub. As you had bred me. [us.

Ger. Then take our hand; thou'rt now a servant to Welcome him all.

Hig. Stand off, stand off, I'll do't; [son, We bid you welcome three ways: first, for your per- Which is a promising person; next for your quality, Which is a decent and a gentle quality;

Last, for the frequent means you have to feed us; You can steal, 'tis presum'd?

Hub. Yes, venison; an' if you want—

Hig. 'Tis well you understand that, for you Shall practise it daily; you can drink, too?

Hub. Soundly. [cock;

Hig. And ye dare know a woman from a weather-

Hub. If I handle her.

Ger. As earnest of thy faith and resolution

Wilt thou undertake to keep this rascal prisoner?

One who basely contriv'd to undermine A noble life, dear to the state and us. [wonder,

Hub. Sirs, I have kept wild dogs, and beasts for And made 'em tame, too. Give into my custody This roaring rascal, I shall hamper him.

Oh! he smells rank o'th' rascal.

Ger. Take him to thee; but if he 'scape—

Hub. Let me be even hang'd for him.

Come, sir, I'll tie you to the leash.

Hems. Away, rascal! [soundly,

Hub. Be not so stubborn: I shall swinge ye An ye play tricks with me.

Ger. So, now away;

But ever have an eye, sir, to your prisoner.

Hub. He must blind both mine eyes, if he get from me. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—A Room in Gertrude's house.

Enter GOSWIN and GERTRUDE.

Ger. Indeed, you're welcome; I have heard your 'scape,

And, therefore, give her leave, that only loves you, To bid you welcome: what is't makes you sad?

Why do you look so wild? Is't I offend you? Beshrew my heart, not willingly.

Gos. No, Gertrude. [for,

Ger. Is't the delay of that you long have look'd A happy marriage?

Gos. No news yet.

Ger. Do you hear, sir?

Gos. Have I liv'd

In all the happiness that fortune could seat me?

In all men's fair opinions?

Ger. Do you love me?

Gos. And can the devil,

In one ten days—that devil chance, devour me?

Ger. You do not love me.

Gos. No star prosperous! all at a swoop!

Ger. Goswin, you will not look upon me.

Gos. Can men's prayers,

Shot up to heaven with such a zeal as mine are,

Fall back like lazy mists, and never prosper?

Gives I must wear, and cold must be my comfort,

Darkness, and want of meat—alas! she weeps, too,

Which is the top of all my sorrow—Gertrude!

Ger. No, no, you will know me.

Gos. The time grows on still,

And like a tumbling wave, I see my ruin

Come rolling over me. [sighting?

Ger. Tell me but how I have deserv'd your

Gos. For a hundred thousand crowns!

Ger. Farewell!

Gos. Of which I have scarce ten—oh! how it starts me!

Gert. And may the next you love, hearing my
ruin—

Gos. I had forgot myself—oh! my best Gertrude!
Crown of my joys and comforts.

Gert. Sweet, what ails ye?
I thought you had been vex'd with me.

Gos. My mind, wench,
My mind, o'erflow'd with sorrow, sunk my memory.

Gert. Am I not worthy of the knowledge of it?
And cannot I as well affect your sorrows
As your delights? you love no other woman?

Gos. No, I protest.
Gert. You have no ships lost lately?

Gos. None that I know of. [cense

Gert. I hope you have spilled no blood whose inno-
May lay this on your conscience.

Gos. Clear, by heaven!
Gert. Why should you be thus, then?

Gos. Good Gertrude, ask not.
Even by the love you bear me.

Gert. I am obedient.
Gos. Go in, my fair; I will not be long from ye—
Nor long, I fear me, with thee. At my return

Dispose me as you please. [Exit.

Gert. The good gods guide ye!
Gos. Now for myself, which is the least I hope for,
And when that fails, for man's worst fortune, pity. [Exit.

ACT IV.—SCENE I.—A Street in Bruges.

Enter GOSWIN and two Merchants.

Gos. Why, gentlemen, 'tis but a week more; I
entreat you

But seven short days; I am not running from you,
Nor, if you give me patience, is it possible
All my adventures fail. You've ships abroad
Endure the beating both of wind and weather,
I'm sure 'twould vex your hearts to be protested;
Ye're all fair merchants.

1 *Mer.* And must have fair play.
There is no living here else; for my part,
I would gladly stay; but my wants tell me,
I must wrong others in't.

Gos. No mercy in ye?
2 *Mer.* 'Tis foolish to depend on others' mercy.
Keep yourself right, sir; you have yet liv'd here
In lord-like prodigality, high and open;
Now ye find what 'tis.

1 *Mer.* Before your poverty,
We were of no mark, of no endeavour.
2 *Mer.* You stood alone; and scarce a sail at sea
But laden with your goods. Now I hope, sir,
We shall have sea-room.

Gos. Is my misery
Become my scorn, too? Have you no mercy,
No part of men left? Are all my bounties
To you, and to the town, turn'd my reproaches?

2 *Mer.* Well, get your monies ready; 'tis but two
We shall protest ye else, and suddenly. [hours;

Gos. But two days—
2 *Mer.* Not an hour. Ye know the hazard. [Exit Merchants.

Gos. How soon my light's put out! Hard-hearted
Bruges!

Within thy walls may never honest merchant
Venture his fortune more! [Enter GERRARD.]

Gert. Good fortune, master!
Gos. Thou mistak'st me, Clause;

I am not worth thy blessing.
Gert. Still a sad man!

No belief, gentle master?
Enter FERRET and GINKES, as porters.

Bring it in, then;
And now believe your headsman.

Gos. Is this certain?
Or dost thou work upon my troubled senses?

Gert. 'Tis gold; 'tis there, a hundred thousand
crowns;

And, good, sweet master, now be merry. Pay 'em!
Pay the poor, pelting kuaves, that know no good-
And cheer your heart up. [ness.

Gos. But, good Clause, tell me, [fully,
How cam'st thou by this mighty sum? If wrong-
I must not take it of thee; 'twill undo me!

Gert. Fear not; you have it by as honest means,
As though your father gave it.

Gos. What great security?
Gert. Away with that, sir;

Were ye not more than all the men in Bruges,
And all the money, in my thoughts?

Gos. But, Clause,
I may die presently.

Gert. Then this dies with you. [ments.
Pay when you can, good master; I'll no parch-
Only this charity I entreat you,

Leave me this ring.
Gos. Alas! it is too poor, Clause.

Gert. 'Tis all I ask; and this withal, that when
I shall deliver't back, you shall graunt me,
Freely, one poor petition.

Gos. There, I confirm it. (Gives the ring.)
And may my faith forsake me when I shun it! [Ex.

Gert. Away! take up the money,
And follow that young gentleman. [Exit.

SCENE II.—A Wood.—Enter JACULIN.

Jac. I surely cannot err. What borrow'd dress
can hide my Hubert from me? How I wish,
Yet fear to be resolv'd. He went this way.

Shall I adventure? Oh! this dread suspense,
How it does load my heart!

Enter HUBERT.

Hub. I've lock'd my mouth up close enough from
In an old tree, and set watch over him. [gadding,
My schemes are almost ripe—Ha, Jaculin!

If through her means, I can but make discovery.
Come hither, pretty maid.

Jac. No, no; you'll kiss me.
Hub. So I will. (Kisses her.)

What's your father's name?
Jac. He's gone to heaven!

Hub. Is it not Gerrard, sweet?
Jac. I'll stay no longer.

My mother's an old woman, and my brother
Was drown'd at sea. (Gong.)

Hub. Stay! do not fly me thus. [me.
Jac. (Aside.) Oh! how my heart melts within

Hub. (Aside.) 'Tis certain she! Pray, let me
Jac. No, no. [see your hand, sweet.

Hub. (Aside.) Sure, I should know that ring!
Jac. (Aside.) 'Tis certain he. I had forgot my

Hub. Do you know me, chuck? [ring, too.
Jac. No, indeed; I never saw ye:

I must be married to-morrow, to a capper.
Hub. (Aside.) How fain she would conceal her-
self, yet cannot.

My pretty wanderer, will you love me,
And leave that man? I'll wait you through the vale,
And make you dainty nosegays.

Jac. And where put them?
Hub. Here, in thy bosom, sweet.

Jac. Can you love, then?
SONG.—JACULIN.

Tho' he is far away,
And over land and sea;

He'll come some happy day,
And prove his truth to me.

And when my love's returning,
My secret known too well,

Thro' all my blushes burning,
Shall want no tongue to tell.

Hub. One word more.
Did you ever know a maid call'd Jaculin?

Jac. Oh! I'm discover'd!
Hub. 'Tis she! Now I'm certain

They're all here. Turn, turn thee, lovely maid,
Thy Hubert speaks to thee.

Jac. Alas! I am forbid? Why thus disguis'd?
Hub. For justice and for thee, love!

Meet me anon, I'll tell thee all my purpose.
Jac. And may I trust thee, Hubert?

Hub. As thine own soul.

Jac. But yet you must not know me. This, and be constant ever. [Exit.]

Hub. Oh! blessed certainty!
Now for my other project.
To turn the cunning toils were laid for me
To Hemskirke's ruin, and the tyrant's fall. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.

Enter VANDUNKE, followed by a Servant.

Van. With officers of justice, said ye? and Inquir'd for Goswin? Bid 'em come in. [Exit Serv.]
Now will I play upon this envious crew,
That fain would run a royal vessel down.
They're here as bidden to a feast, before their hour:
I'll whet and disappoint their hungry appetites.

Enter the four Merchants.

2 Mer. Good day, most worthy burgomaster.
Our visit was to the rich merchant, Goswin.
Van. I'm sorry for't. I fear his strong necessity
Will bring him empty-handed. [ties]
You must be merciful.

1 Mer. Oh! but he'll come;
He's rich, or from his 'ventures should be so.

2 Mer. I only wish
His forwardness to embrace all bargains,
Sink him not in the end.

1 Mer. (To Vand.) Have better hopes;
For my part, I am confident. [friends!]

Vand. (Aside.) Here's a set of smiling mouth
3 Mer. His noble mind and ready hand contend
Which can add most to his free courtesies.

Vand. Affable wolves! (Aside.)

2 Mer. It was at his bidding,
I did free from prison a sea robber,
Who yet may live to pay him with his ruin.

What think you of that deed, burgomaster?
Vand. What think! as of a deed of noble pity:

And if that act did plunge him into ruin,
You may now share its glory, by relieving him;
And holding off your bonds.

2 Mer. I love and honour him,
But must not break my neck to heal his finger.

3 Mer. For my part, though his bounty has no eyes,
Yet my necessities compel me to some foresight.

Vand. Have ye not often profited by this man,
And revell'd at his cost?

2 Mer. Sir, we confess—

Vand. Do, that ye're all base knaves and hypocrites.
See, here he comes to challenge a return
Of kindness from ye.

1 Mer. When our bonds he paid.

Enter GOSWIN, with men carrying bags of money.

Gos. Now, sirs, your bonds. Set down those bags
Your pardon, that you wait. [of gold.]

2 Mer. (Aside.) He deals in witchcraft!

1 Mer. Nay, sir, if it would do you courtesies,—
Gos. None at all, sir. (The Merchants bow.)

Vand. There's bending now of backs,
And jutting out of hips. (Aside.)

Gos. Take it, 'tis yours.
There's your ten thousand, sir. Give in my bills.
Your sixteen—

3 Mer. Pray, be pleas'd to make further use.
Gos. No.

Vand. That's plump! You're answer'd, I hope?

4 Mer. What I have, sir,
You may command. Pray, let me be your servant.

Gos. Put on your hats. I care not for your courtesies;

They're most untimely done, and no truth in 'em.

Vand. They're all lies, I'll vouch for 'em ev'ry

2 Mer. I have a freight of pepper. [one.]

Vand. Rot your pepper! [thousand.]

Gos. Shall I trust you again?—There's your ten

4 Mer. Or, if you want fine sugar, 'tis but sending.

Gos. No, I can send to Barbary; those people,
That never yet knew faith, have nobler freedoms.

How now?—[Enter a Sailor.]

Sail. Why, health to the noble merchant!

The Susan is returned.

Gos. Well?

Sail. Well, and rich, sir;
And now put in.

Vand. Do you mark that?

Gos. Heav'n, thou hast heard my prayers.

What news o'th' fly-boat?

Sail. If this wind hold till midnight,
She will be here, and wealthy.—'Scap'd fairly.

Vand. D'ye hear that, too, knaves.

Gos. How, prythee, sailor?

Sail. Thus, sir. She had fought
Seven hours together, with six Turkish galleys,
And she fought bravely; but, at last, was boarded,
And overlaid with strength; when, presently,
Comes bearing up i'the wind, Captain Vanuoke,

That valiant gentleman you redeem'd from prison.
He knew the boat, set in, and fought it bravely;
Beat all the galleys off, sunk three; redeem'd her,
And, as a service to ye, sent her home, sir.

Gos. An honest, noble captain, and a thankful!

Vand. And this is he you would have hang'd,

Ye land pirates!

Gos. There's for thy news. Go, drink the mer-
chant's health, sailor.

Sail. Thank your bounty; and I'll do it to a doit.

Vand. Ay, drink till ye drown yourself,

Or you're no Englishman. [Exit Sailor.]

Gos. This year, I hope, my friends, I shall 'scape

For all your cares to catch me. [prison.]

Vand. Come, sir, leave these pitiful knaves;

You must along with me:

Yonder is one who weeps and sobs.

Gos. Alas! how does she?

Vand. She will be better soon, I hope.

Gos. Why soon, sir? [night.]

Vand. Why, when you have her in your arms. This

My boy, she is thy wife:

I'll cheer thee up with sack,
And, when thou'rt joyous, fling thee to thy mistress.

Gos. With all my heart, I take her.

You are paid, I hope?

2 Mer. You may please, sir,
To think of your poor servants in displeasure,
Whose all they have—goods, moneys, are at your

Gos. I thank you; [service.]

And when I've need of you, I shall forget you.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—A Wood.

Enter HUBERT and HEMSKIRKE.

Hub. You the earl's servant? [him]

Hems. I swear I am near as his own thoughts to

able to do thee service. Release me,

I'll make thee ranger over all the game. [too.]

Hub. This may provoke me. Yet to prove a knave

Hems. 'Tis to prove honest; 'tis to do good ser-
vice [prince.]

For him thou'rt sworn to, huntsman; for thy

Hub. Then thou shalt see, sir. I will do a ser-
vice that shall deserve, indeed. [vice.]

'Tis not your setting free, for that's mere nothing;

But such a service, if the earl be noble,

He shall for ever love me.

Hems. What is't, huntsman?

Hub. Do you know any of these people live here?

Hems. No. [have 'em]

Hub. You are a fool, then. Here be those, to

I know the earl so well, would make him caper.

Hems. Any of the old lords, that rebell'd?

Hub. Peace!

All. I know 'em all, and can betray 'em.

Hems. But wilt thou do this service?

Hub. More than that, too.

Here's the right heir!

Hems. What, Florez? Oh! honest,

Honest huntsman!

Hub. Now, how to get them,

There's the matter.

Hems. By force.

Hub. Ay, that must do't.

And, with the person of the earl himself,

Authority and might must come on 'em,
Or else in vain. And thus I would have you do't.
To-morrow night be here, the hour be twelve:
Now for a guide to draw ye on these persons,
The woods being thick, and hard to hit, myself
With some beside, will wait you by th' great oak.
Hems. Keep but thy faith, and such a shower of
wealth—

Hub. I warrant ye. Miss nothing that I tell ye.
Away, away! for here come those will hold ye.

[*Exit Hemskirke.*]

*Enter GERRARD, HIGGEN, PRIG, GINKES,
SNAP, FERRET, and others.*

Ger. Now, what's the news in town?

Ginkes. No news but joy, sir.

Ev'ry man wooing of the noble merchant,
Who sends his hearty commendations to ye.

Fer. Yes; there's this news. This night he's to
be married.

Ger. This night! He must not marry now.

Hub. Good sir,

By your leave, one word in private with ye.

Nay, do not start; I know ye.

Hubert speaks to ye, and you must be Gerrard,
The time invites you to it.

Ger. Challenge'd thus,

I throw aside disguise, and trust your honour.

Sir, I am Gerrard; say, how stand our hopes?

Hub. Fair, if you now pursue 'em. Hemskirke.

Let go, and these my causes I'll tell ye [I've

Privately, and how I have wrought on him,

Gull'd him, and sent him home as a decoy,

To bring Lord Wolfort hither, with his guards,

To seize (so he'll expect) the banish'd lords;

But, so my plan succeed, his very guards

Shall serve to crush the tyranny they rais'd,

And, at my voice, shall hail their lawful prince.

Till I can prove me honest to my friends,

Look on, and strictly follow these directions.

Snap. What! does he marry Vandunke's pretty
daughter? [pies!

Prig. Oh! the puddings, the piping hot mince-

Hig. For the leg of a goose, now would I venture

I love a fat goose, as I love allegiance; [alimb:

And plague upon the boors, too well they know't;

And, therefore, starve their poultry.

Prig. Brother Higgen,

What think you of a wassail?

Hig. Worthily;

And then I'll make a speech in praise of merchants.

Prig. And I'll so roar out songs and glees!

Ger. 'Tis passing well, I both believe and joy in't,

And will be ready. Hear me all: keep in

Till this, your huntsman, call ye forth; then do

His bidding faithfully. I must awhile

Forsake ye. On mine anger, no man stir hence.

Prig. Not to the wedding, sir?

Ger. Not any whither. [meat, too.

Hig. The wedding must be seen, sir. We want

We're horribly out of meat.

Prig. Shall it be spoken,

Fat capons shak'd their tails at's in defiance?

Shall pigs, sir, that the parson's self would envy,

And dainty ducks—

Ger. Not a word more. Obey me! [*Exit.*]

Hig. Why, then, come doleful death, this is flat
And by this hand— [tyranny!

Hub. What?

Hig. I'll go to sleep upon't.

Hub. No sleep to-night for any that have hearts

To hunt with me the savage, bloody boar

That wastes the land. I have a scheme, my hearts,

Shall, by one night of watching, win a feast,

Whereat a royal host shall bid you welcome.

[*Exeunt, crying "Long live our huntsman,
Hubert!"*]

SCENE V.—An entrance Hall in Bruges.

Enter GOSWIN, with a paper in his hand.

Gos. Such earnest bidding; nay, more like com-
mand,

To meet him here, on th' forfeit of my word,
In this the moment of my nuptial hour!

What this man is I know not, nor for what cause
He twice has thrust himself into my dangers.

But, sure, heav'n's hand is in't. By strange instinct,
Nature has taught me to behold his wants,
Not as a stranger's.—[*Enter GERRARD.*]

My honest, my best friend, I have been careful
To see thy moneys—

Clause. Sir, that brought not me.

Do you know this ring again?

Gos. Thou hadst it of me.

Clause. And do you well remember yet the boon
Upon the return of this? [you gave me

Gos. Yes; and I grant it,

Be it what it will. Ask what thou canst, I'll do it,
Within my power.

Clause. You are not married yet?

Gos. No.

[*turb ye.*]

Clause. 'Faith, I shall ask you that, that will dis-
Gos. Do;

And if I faint and sinch in't,—

Clause. Well said, master;

And yet it grieves me, too, and yet it must be.

Gos. Pr'ythee, distrust me not.

Clause. You must not marry.

That's part of the power you gave me.

Gos. Not marry, Clause?

Clause. Not if you keep your promise,

And give me power to ask.

Gos. Pr'ythee, think better.

I will obey, by heaven!

Clause. I have thought the best, sir. [nesty?

Gos. Give me thy reason. Dost thou fear her ho-

Clause. Chaste as the ice, for anything I know,

Gos. Must not marry? [sir.

Shall I break now, when my poor heart is pawn'd?

When all the preparation—

Clause. Now, or never.

Gos. Come, 'tis not that thou wouldst: thou dost
but fright me.

Clause. You may break, sir;

But never more in my thoughts appear honest.

Gos. Didst ever see her?

Clause. No.

Gos. She is such a wonder

For beauty and fair virtue, Europe has not.

Why hast thou made me happy to undo me?

But look upon her, then if thy heart relent not,

I'll quit her presently. Who waits there?

My fair love come hither.

Pr'ythee, be merciful; take a man's heart,

And look upon her truly: take a friend's heart,

And feel what misery must follow this. [mise.

Clause. Take you a noble heart, and keep your pro-
I forsook all I had to make you happy.

[*Enter GERTRUDE.*]

Can that thing call'd a woman stay your virtue?

Gos. Look, there she is. Now deal with me as
Didst ever see a fairer? [thou wilt.

Ger. What ails my love?

Gos. Didst thou ever,

By the fair light of heav'n, behold a sweeter?

Ger. Sure, h'as some strange design in hand,

He starts so.

Clause. She is most goodly.

Gos. Is she a thing, then, to be lost thus lightly?
Her mind is ten times sweeter, ten times nobler,—

And but to hear her speak—a paradise.

And such a love she bears to me,—a chaste love,—

And ready now to bless me; the priest too, ready

To say the holy words, shall make us happy.

This is a cruelty beyond man's study;

'Twill be her death to do't.

Clause. Let her die, then.

Gos. 'Twill kill me, too; 'twill murder me. By
heav'n, Clause, [me.

I'll give thee half I have. Come, thou shalt save
Clause. Then you must go with me; I can stay
no longer.

If you be true and noble, in the dark walk
Of aged elms, that opens to the plain,
You'll meet me in this hour.

Gos. Hard heart, I'll follow thee. [*Exit Clause.*
Pray ye, go in. I have a weighty business
Concerns my life and state, (make no inquiry,)
This present hour befall'n me. My cloak there!

Gert. Is this your ceremony? Why is this stop,
Gos. We must part, [sir?
Gertrude, we must!

Gert. Must! What voice enjoins?
What power commands?

Gos. We shall meet again.
Gert. Who is yon man, that rules so absolute
O'er Goswin's will? [sweet,

Gos. Ask me no more. I can but tell thee this,
I'm ever thine. Farewell. [*Exit Gert.*
I know not why,

But to obey this man, to me seems now
As payment of some great religious debt
Nature stands bound for. [*Exit.*

ACT V.—SCENE I.—Woods.

Enter GERTRUDE and a Clown.

Ger. Lead, if we're right; thou said'st thou
knew'st the way. [homeward!

Clown. Fear nothing, I do know it. Would 'twere
Gert. Wrought from me by a beggar! at the time
That most should tie him! 'tis some other love

That hath a more command on his affections,
And he that fetch'd him, a disguised agent,
Not what he personated. Darkness shroud
And cover love's too curious search in me;
For yet, suspicion, I would not name thee.

Clown. Mistress, it grows somewhat pretty and
Gert. What then? [dark.

Clown. Nay, nothing. Do not think I am afraid,
Although, perhaps, you are.

Gert. I am not. Forward! [fear nothing.
Clown. Sure, hut you are. Give me your hand—

What a fright one on's are in, you or I?
Gert. What ails the fellow?

Clown. Hark, hark! I beseech you.
Do you hear nothing?

Gert. No.
Clown. List! This wood is full of wolves,
Of logs, and such carnivorous vermin.

Hark! 'tis the howling of a wolf!
Gert. Of the wind, coward! [now!

Clown. Help me to say my pray'rs. He's got me
I cannot speak! Do I speak, mistress? Tell me.

Gert. A precious guide I've got. (*One halloo.*)
Clown. It thunders now. You hear that, mistress?

Gert. I hear one halloo! [lightning!
Clown. 'Tis thunder, thunder! See, a flash of

Are you not blasted, mistress?
'T has played the barber with me; I have lost
My beard—I am shaven, mistress.

Gert. Pr'ythee, hold thy peace.
Both love and jealousy have made me hold.

Where my fate leads me, I must go. Hold off! [*Ex.*
Clown. The Lord go with you, then, for I will not.

Enter WOLFORT, HEMSKIRKE, and Soldiers.
Hems. It was the fellow,—sure, he that should

guide—
The huntsman that did halloo. Who goes there?

Clown. Mistress, I am taken.
Hems. Ah, mistress! Now look forth.

Wolf. What are you, sirrah?
Clown. Truly, all is left

Of a poor boor by day, nothing by night.
I'm none that will stand out, great sir.

You might have spar'd your guns and drum;
You may subdue me with a walking-stick,
E'en when you please, and hold me with a pack-

Hems. What woman was't you call'd to? [*Thread.*
Clown. I? None, sir.

Wolf. None! Did not you name a mistress?
Clown. Yes; but she's

No woman yet: she should have been this night,
But that a beggar stole away her bridegroom.

Enter Soldiers with GERTRUDE.

Hems. 'Tis she!

Gert. Ha! I am miserably lost!

Hems. This was a noble entrance to your fortune;
That being thus upon the point of marriage,
Upon her venture here, you should surprise her.

Wolf. I begin, Hemskirke, to believe my fate
Works to my end.

Hems. Yes, sir; and this adds trust
Unto our guide, who did assure me Florez
Liv'd in some merchant's shape, as Gerrard did

In the old beggar's. (*Shouts heard.*) That's he
Wolf. Good! Go we forth to meet him. [*again!*

Hems. Here's the oak, my lord. Come, madam,
you must along with us. [*Exeunt.*

Enter HUBERT, HIGGEN, PRIG, FERRET, SNAP,
and GINKES, like boors.

Hub. I like your habits well. They're safe!
stand close!

Hig. But what's the action we are for now, eh?
Robbing a ripper of his fish?

Prig. Or taking a poultterer prisoner?
Hig. Without ransom?

Snap. Or cutting off a convoy of butter?
Prig. Oh! I could drive a regiment

Of geese afore me, such a night as this,
Ten leagues with my hat and staff, and not a hiss

Heard, or a wing of my troop disorder'd.
Hig. Is it a fetching off a buck of clothes?

We are horribly out of linen.
Hub. No such matter.

Hig. Let me alone for any farmer's dog:
If you've a mind to the cheese-loft, 'tis but thus.

And he's a silenc'd mastiff during pleasure.
Hub. Would it please you to be silent?

Hig. Mum!
Re-enter WOLFORT, HEMSKIRKE, and Soldiers.

Wolf. Who's there?
Hub. A friend, the huntsman.

Hems. 'Tis he, himself. [*these?*
Hub. I have kept touch, sir. Which is the earl of

Hems. This, my lord, 's the friend
Hath undertook the service.

Hub. And I have don't.
I know to pitch my toils, drive in my game;

For Florez, and his father
Gerrard, and Jaculin, young Florez' sister,
I'll have 'em all.

Wolf. We will double
Whatever Hemskirke now hath promis'd thee.

Hub. And I'll deserve it treble. What horse ha'
Wolf. A hundred. [*you?*

Hub. That's well. Ready to take 'em on sur-
Wolf. Yes. [*prise?*

Hems. Divide, then,
Your force into five squadrons; for there are

So many outlets; of all which passages
We must possess ourselves to round 'em in.

And that they may be more secure, I'll use
My wonted whoops and halloos, as I were

A hunting for 'em; which will make them rest
Careless of any noise, and be a direction

To other guides, how we approach 'em still.
Wolf. 'Tis order'd well, and relisheth the soldier.

Make the division, huntsman. You are my charge,
My fair one, I'll look to you. [*Exeunt.*

Clown. No one shall need to look to me,
I'll look unto myself. [*Exit.*

Hub. Now, comrades, is the promis'd hour at
hand!

Here, where the roads do meet, lie conceal'd;
And, at the hagle's sound, rush forth to aid

Lord Hubert, who then rings the knell
Of Wolfort's power, and hails found Florez,

prince. [*Exit with Guards.*
Enter GERRARD and FLOREZ.

Flo. 'Tis passing strange!
Ger. When we fled from Wolfort,

I sent you into England, there plac'd you [*win,*
With a brave Flanders merchant, call'd rich Gos-

Who, dying, left his name and wealth unto you,
As his reputed son. But though I
Should, as a subject, study you, my prince,
'Twill not discredit you to call me father.

Flo. Acknowledge you my father! Sir, I do;
And may impiety, conspiring with
My other sins, sink me, and suddenly,
When I forget to pay you a son's duty. (*Kneels.*)

Ger. I pray you, rise;
And may those powers that see and love this in you
Reward you for it. Taught by your example,
Having receiv'd the rights due to a father,
I tender you th' allegiance of a subject,
Which, as my prince, accept of.

Flo. Kneel to me!
May mountains first fall down beneath their valleys,
And fire no more mount upwards, when I suffer
An act in nature so preposterous.
I am your son, sir; prouder to be so,
Than I shall ever of those specious titles,
Left to me by my mother.

Ger. I do believe it.—
By this time, sir, I hope you want no reasons
Why I broke off your marriage;
For now, as Florez, and a prince, remember
The fair maid whom you chose to be your bride,
Being so far beneath you, even your love
Must grant she's not your equal.

Flo. In descent,
Or borrow'd glories from dead ancestors;
But for her beauty, chastity, and virtues,
A monarch might receive from her, not give,
Though she were his crown's purchase.

Enter HUBERT, HEMSKIRKE, WOLFPORT, BERTHA,
and Lords, with torches.

Hub. Sir, here be two of 'em,
The father and the son.

Ger. Who's this? Wolfport? [*treason.*]
Wolf. Impostor! ay, to obarge thee with thy
In this disguise, that hath so long conceal'd you,
I must find Gerrard.

And in this merchant's habit, one call'd Florez,
Who would be earl.

Flo. And is, wert thou a subject.
Bertha. Goswin turn'd prince!
Oh! I am poorer by this greatness
Than all my former jealousies or misfortunes!

Flo. Gertrude!
Wolf. Stay, sir; hold, on your life!
Bertha. His life! oh! first take mine;
And since I cannot hope to wed him now,
Let me but fall a part of his glad ransom. [*treat*]

Flo. So proud a fiend as Wolfport!
Wolf. For so lost a thing as Florez!

Flo. And that be so,
Rather than she should stoop again to thee!
There is no death, but's sweeter than all life,
When Wolfport is to give it. Oh! my Gertrude!

Wolf. This is no Gertrude, nor no Hemskirke's
niece, [*tha,*]
Nor Vandunke's daughter; this is Bertha, Ber-
Heiress of Brabant, she that caus'd the war.

Hems. Whom I did steal to do great Wolfport ser-
Flo. Insolent villain! [*vice.*]

Enter JACULIN.

Wolf. Who is this, huntsman? [*Florez.*]
Hub. More, more, sir. This is Jaculin, sister to
Ger. How they triumph in their treachery!
Wolf. Why here's brave game! this was sport
royal!

Huntsman, your horn: first wind me Florez' fall,
Next Gerrard's, then his daughter, Jaculin's.
We'll hang 'em, Hemskirke, on these trees.

Hems. Nothere, my lord; 'twill spoil your triumph.
Hub. A public scaffold will shew better sport.

Florez. Wretch! art thou not content thou hast be-
But mock'st us, too? [*tray'd us,*]

Ger. False Hubert! this is monstrous!
Wolf. Hubert!

Hems. Who, this? [*bert!*]
Ger. Yes, this is Hubert; false and perjurd Hu-
I hope he has help'd himself unto a tree.

Wolf. The first, the first of any; and most glad I
I'll let you go before, but for a train: [have you, sir,
Is't you have done this service? [*Hubert.*]

Hub. As your poor huntsman, sir. But now as
The wolf's a-foot, let slip. [*Sounds his horn.*]

Enter VANDUNKE, Merchants, HIGGEN, PRIG,
FERRET, SNAP, and Soldiers, who seize on
Wolfport and Hemskirke.

Wolf. Betray'd!
Hub. No; but well catch'd; and I the huntsman.

Vand. How do you, Wolfport? Rascal! good
knave, Wolfport!

I speak it now without the rose: and Hemskirke,
Rogue Hemskirke! you that have no niece; this lady
Was stol'n by you, and ta'en by you, and now
Resigned by me, to the right owner here.
Take her, my prince.

Flo. Can this be possible?
Welcome, my love! my sweet, my heanteous love!

Ger. And shall we part no more? [*ter,*]

Vand. I ha' given you her twice; now keep her bet-
And thank lord Hubert that compos'd the plot,
And in good Gerrard's name set for Vandunke,
And got me out with my brave boys, to march
Like Cæsar when he bred his commentaries;
So I to breed my chronicle, came forth,
Cæsar Vandunke, and *veni, vidi, vici.*

Hig. Captain Prig, sir!
Prig. And colonel Higgen!

Vand. Peace, rogues!
Give me my bottle, and set down my drums,
I'll sit in judgment on 'em: you stole the lady.

Wolf. Well, I can stand, and praise the toil that
took me,

And laughing in them die! they were brave snares!
Flo. 'Twere truer valour, if thou durst repent

The wrongs th' hast done, and live!
Wolf. Who! I repent,

And say I am sorry! Yes; 'tis the fool's language,
But not for Wolfport.

Vand. Wolfport, thou art a devil, [*longing!*]
And speak'st his language. Now, might I have my
Under this row of trees here would I hang thee.

Florez. No; let him live
Banish'd from our state. That is thy doom.

Vand. Then hang this worthy captain here, this
For profit of th' example. [*Hemskirke,*]

Florez. No, let him
Enjoy his shame, too, with his conscious life,

To shew how much our innocence contemns
All practice from the guiltiest to molest us.

Away with them! [*Exit Wolfport, guarded.*]

Ger. Sir, you must help to join
A pair of hands, as they have done of hearts,
And to their loves wish joys.

Flo. As to mine own—my gracious sister,—
Worthiest brother! [*Embracing.*]

Vand. Away with them! a noble prince!
And yet I'd fain some one were hang'd.

Ger. Sir, here be friends ask to be look'd on too,
And thank'd; who though their trade be none o'th'
best,

Have yet us'd me with courtesy, and been true
Subjects unto me, while I was their king. [*Bruges,*]

Vand. Your grace command them follow me to
They'll turn the wheel for Crab the rope-maker.

Flo. Do you hear, sirs?
Hig. We do; thanks to your grace. [*a week,*]

Vand. They shall beat hemp, and be whipp'd twice
Prig. Thank your good lordship.

Flo. No, I will take the care on me to find
Some manly and more profitable course,
To fit them as a part of the republic.

Be it our care to prove unto the world
Our better title o'er usurped favour,

In how much we shall use it for the good
Ev'n of the meanest subjects in our state. [*Exeunt.*]

THE STRANGER;

A DRAMA, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY BENJAMIN THOMPSON.



Act IV.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

COUNT WINTERSEN
BARON STEINFORT
THE STRANGER
SOLOMON
PETER

TOBIAS
FRANCIS
GEORGE
CHILDREN
COUNTESS WINTERSEN

MRS. HALLER
CHARLOTTE
ANNETTE
CLAUDINE
SUSAN

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Skirts of Count Winteresen's Park. The park-gates in the centre. On one side, a low lodge among the trees; on the other, in the background, a peasant's hut.*

Enter PETER.

Peter. Pooh, pooh! never tell me; I'm a clever lad, for all father's crying out every minute, "Peter," and "stupid Peter!" But I say, Peter is not stupid, though father will always be so wise. First, I talk too much; then I talk too little; and if I talk a bit to myself, he calls me a driveller. Now I like best to talk to myself; for I never contradict myself, and I don't laugh at myself as other folks do. That laughing is often a plagny teasing custom. To be sure, when Mrs. Haller laughs, one can bear it well enough; there is a sweetness even in her reproof, that somehow—but, lud! I had near forgot what I was sent about. Yes, then they would have laughed at me, indeed. (*Draws a green purse from his pocket.*) I am to carry this money to old Tobias; and Mrs. Haller said I must be sure not to blab, or say that she had sent it. Well, well, she may be easy for that matter; not a word shall drop from my lips. Mrs. Haller is charming, but silly, if father is right; for father says, "He that spends his money is not wise, but he that gives it away is stark mad."

Enter the STRANGER from the lodge, followed by FRANCIS. At sight of Peter the Stranger stops, and looks suspiciously at him. Peter stands opposite to him with his mouth wide open. At length, he takes off his hat, scrapes a bow, and goes into the hut.

Stra. Who is that?

Fra. The steward's son.

Stra. Of the castle!

Fra. Yes.

Stra. (*After a pause.*) You were—you were speaking last night—

Fra. Of the old countryman?

Stra. Ay.

Fra. You would not hear me out.

Stra. Proceed.

Fra. He is poor.

Stra. Who told you so?

Fra. Himself.

Stra. (*With acrimony.*) Ay, ay; he knows how to tell his story, no doubt.

Fra. And to impose, you think?

Stra. Right!

Fra. This man does not.

Stra. Fool!

Fra. A feeling fool is better than a cold sceptic.

Stra. False!

Fra. Charity begets gratitude.

Stra. False!

Fra. And blesses the giver more than the receiver.

Stra. True.

Fra. Well, sir. This countryman—

Stra. Has he complained to you?

Fra. Yes.

Stra. He who is really unhappy never complains. (*Pauses.*) Francis, you have had means of education beyond your lot in life, and hence you are encouraged to attempt imposing on me: but go on.

Fra. His only son has been taken from him.

Stra. Taken from him?

Fra. By the exigency of the times for a soldier.

Stra. Ay!

Fra. The old man is poor.

Stra. 'Tis likely.

Fra. Sick and forsaken.

Stra. I cannot help him.

Fra. Yes.

Stra. How?

Fra. By money. He may buy his son's release.

Stra. I'll see him myself.

Fra. Do so.

Stra. But if he is an impostor?

Fra. He is not.

Stra. In that hut?

Fra. In that hut. (*Stranger goes into the hut.*) A good master, though one almost loses the use of speech by living with him. A man kind and clear; though I cannot understand him. He rails against the whole world, and yet no beggar leaves his door unsatisfied. I have now lived three years with him, and yet I know not who he is. A hater of society, no doubt; but not by Providence intended to be so. Misanthropy in his head, not in his heart.

Enter the STRANGER and PETER from the hut.

Peter. Pray, walk on.

Stra. (*To Francis.*) Fool!

Fra. So soon returned!

Stra. What should I do there?

Fra. Did you find it as I said?

Stra. This lad I found.

Fra. What has he to do with your charity?

Stra. The old man and he understand each other perfectly well.

Fra. How?

Stra. What were this boy and the countryman doing?

Fra. (*Smiling, and shaking his head.*) Well, you shall hear. (*To Peter.*) Young man, what were you doing in that hut?

Peter. Doing! Nothing.

Fra. Well, but you couldn't go there for nothing.

Peter. And why not, pray? But I did go there for nothing, though. Do you think one must be paid for everything? If Mrs. Haller were to give me but a smiling look, I'd jump up to my neck in the great pond for nothing.

Fra. It seems, then, Mrs. Haller sent you?

Peter. Why, yes; but I'm not to talk about it.

Fra. Why so?

Peter. How should I know? "Look you!" says Mrs. Haller, "Master Peter, be so good as not to mention it to anybody." (*With much consequence.*) "Master Peter, be so good,"—Hi, hi, hi! "Master Peter, be so"—Hi, hi, hi!

Fra. Oh! that is quite a different thing. 'Of course, you must be silent, then.

Peter. I know that; and so I am, too. For I told old Tobias, says I, "Now, you're not to think as how Mrs. Haller sent the money; for I shall not say a word about that as long as I live," says I.

Fra. There you were very right. Did you carry him much money?

Peter. I don't know; I didn't count it. It was in a bit of a green purse. Mayhap, it may be some little matter that she has scraped together in the last fortnight.

Fra. And why just in the last fortnight?

Peter. Because, about a fortnight since, I carried him some money before.

Fra. From Mrs. Haller?

Peter. Ay, sure! who else, think you? Father's not such a fool. He says it is our bounden duty, as Christians, to take care of our money, and not give anything away, especially in summer; for then, says he, there's herbs and roots enough in conscience to satisfy all the reasonable hungry poor. But I say father's wrong, and Mrs. Haller's right.

Fra. Yes, yes. But this Mrs. Haller seems a strange woman, Peter.

Peter. Ay, at times, she is plaguy odd. Why, she'll sit and cry you a whole day through, without any one's knowing why. Ay, and yet, somehow or other, whenever she cries, I always cry too, without knowing why.

Fra. (*To the Stranger.*) Are you satisfied?

Stra. Rid me of that babbler.

Fra. Good day, Master Peter.

Peter. You're not going yet, are you?

Fra. Mrs. Haller will be waiting for an answer.

Peter. So she will. And I have another place or two to call at. (*Takes off his hat to the Stranger.*) Servant, sir!

Stra. Psha!

Peter. Psha! What, he's angry? (*Peter turns to Francis in a half whisper.*) He's angry, I suppose, because he can get nothing out of me.

Fra. It almost seems so.

Peter. Ay, I'd have him to know that I'm no blab. [*Exit.*]

Fra. Now, sir.

Stra. What do you want?

Fra. Were you not wrong, sir?

Stra. Hem! Wrong!

Fra. Can you still doubt?

Stra. I'll bear no more! Who is this Mrs. Haller? Why do I always follow her path? Go where I will, whenever I try to do good, she has always been before me.

Fra. You should rejoice at that.

Stra. Rejoice!

Fra. Surely! That there are other good and charitable people in the world beside yourself.

Stra. Oh, yes!

Fra. Why not seek to be acquainted with her. I saw her yesterday in the garden up at the castle. Mr. Solomon, the steward, says she has been unwell, and confined to her room almost ever since we have been here. But one would not think it to look at her; for a more beautiful creature I never saw.

Stra. So much the worse. Beauty is a mask.

Fra. In her it seems a mirror of the soul. Her charities—

Stra. Talk not to me of her charities. All women wish to be conspicuous: in town by their wit; in the country by their heart.

Fra. 'Tis immaterial in what way good is done.

Stra. No; 'tis not immaterial.

Fra. To this poor old man, at least.

Stra. He needs no assistance of mine.

Fra. His most urgent wants, indeed, Mrs. Haller has relieved; but whether she has or could have given as much as would purchase liberty for the son, the prop of his age—

Stra. Silence! I will not give him a doit! (*In a peevish tone.*) You interest yourself very warmly in his behalf. Perhaps you are to be a sharer in the gift.

Fra. Sir, sir, that did not come from your heart.

Stra. (*Recollecting himself.*) Forgive me!

Fra. Poor master! How must the world have used you before it could have instilled this hatred of mankind, this constant doubt of honesty and virtue!

Stra. Leave me to myself. (*Throws himself on a seat; takes a book from his pocket, and reads.*)

Fra. (*Aside, surveying him.*) Again reading! Thus it is from morn to night. To him nature has no beauty; life no charm. For three years I have never seen him smile. What will be his fate at last? Nothing diverts him. Oh! if he would but attach himself to any living thing! were it an animal—for something man must love.

Enter TOBIAS from the hut.

Tob. Oh! how refreshing, after seven long weeks, to feel these warm sun-beams once again! Thanks,

thanks, bounteous heaven! for the joy I taste.
(*Presses his cap between his hands, looks up, and prays. The Stranger observes him attentively.*)

Fra. (*To the Stranger.*) This old man's share of earthly happiness can be but little; yet mark how grateful he is for his portion of it.

Stra. Because, though old, he is but a child in the leading-strings of Hope.

Fra. Hope is the nurse of life.

Stra. And her cradle is the grave. (*Tobias replaces his cap.*)

Fra. I wish you joy. I am glad to see you are so much recovered.

Tob. Thank you! Heaven and the assistance of a kind lady have saved me for another year or two.

Fra. How old are you, pray?

Tob. Seventy-six. 'To be sure I can expect but little joy before I die. Yet, there is another and a better world.

Fra. To the unfortunate, then, death is scarcely an evil?

Tob. Am I so unfortunate? Do I not enjoy this glorious morning? Am I not in health again? Believe me, sir, he who, leaving the bed of sickness, for the first time breathes the fresh pure air, is, at that moment, the happiest of his Maker's creatures.

Fra. Yet 'tis a happiness that fails upon enjoyment.

Tob. True; but less so in old age. Some fifty years ago my father left me this cottage. I was a strong lad; and took an honest wife. Heaven blessed my farm with rich crops, and my marriage with five children. This lasted nine or ten years. Two of my children died. I felt it sorely. The land was afflicted with a famine. My wife assisted me in supporting our family: but, four years after, she left our dwelling for a better place; and of my five children only one son remained. This was blow upon blow. It was long before I regained my fortitude. At length resignation and religion had their effect. I again attached myself to life. My son grew, and helped me in my work. Now the state has called him away to bear a musket. This is to me a loss, indeed. I can work no more. I am old and weak; and true it is, but for Mrs. Haller, I must have perished.

Fra. Still, then, life has its charms for you?

Tob. Why not, while the world holds anything that's dear to me! Have not I a son?

Fra. Who knows that you will ever see him more? He may be dead.

Tob. Alas! he may. But as long as I am not sure of it, he lives to me: and if he falls, 'tis in his country's cause. Nay, should I lose him, still I should not wish to die. Here is the hut in which I was born. Here is the tree that grew with me; and, I am almost ashamed to confess it—I have a dog I love.

Fra. A dog!

Tob. Yes! Smile if you please: but hear me. My benefactress once came to my hut herself, some time before you fixed here. The poor animal, unused to see the form of elegance and beauty enter the door of penury, growled at her. "I wonder you keep that surly, ugly animal, Mr. Tobias," said she; "you, who have hardly food enough for yourself." "Ah! madam," I replied, "if I part with him, are you sure that anything else will love me?" She was pleased with my answer.

Fra. (*To the Stranger.*) Excuse me, sir; but I wish you had listened.

Stra. I have listened.

Fra. Then, sir, I wish you would follow this poor old man's example.

Stra. (*Pauses.*) Here, take this book, and lay it on my desk. [*Francis goes into the lodge with the book.*] How much has this Mrs. Haller given you?

Tob. Oh! sir, she has given me so much that I can look towards winter without fear.

Stra. No more? [might—

Tob. What could I do with more? Ah! true; I
Stra. I know it. You might buy your son's release. There!

[*Presses a purse into his hand, and exit.*

Tob. What is all this? (*Opens the purse, and finds it full of gold.*) Merciful heaven!

Enter FRANCIS.

Now, look, sir; is confidence in heaven unrewarded?

Fra. I wish you joy! My master gave you this.

Tob. Yes, your noble master. Heaven reward him!

Fra. Just like him. He sent me with his book, that no one might be witness to his bounty.

Tob. He would not even take my thanks. He was gone before I could speak.

Fra. Just his way.

Tob. Now I'll go as quick as these old legs will bear me. What a delightful errand! I go to release my Robert! How the lad will rejoice! There is a girl, too, in the village, that will rejoice with him. Oh! Providence, how good art thou! Years of distress never can efface the recollection of former happiness; but one joyful moment drives from the memory an age of misery. [*Exit.*

Fra. (*Looks after him.*) Why am I not wealthy? 'Sdeath! why am I not a prince? I never thought myself envious; but I feel I am. Yes, I must envy those who, with the will, have the power to do good. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*An Antichamber in Wintersen castle.*

Enter SUSAN, meeting Footmen with table and chairs.

Susan. Why, George, Harry! where have you been loitering? Put down these things. Mrs. Haller has been calling for you this half hour.

Foot. Well, here I am, then. What does she want with me?

Susan. That she will tell you herself. Here she comes.

Enter MRS. HALLER with a letter, a Maid following.

Mrs. H. Very well; if those things are done, let the drawing-room be made ready immediately. [*Exit Maids.*] And, George, run immediately into the park, and tell Mr. Solomon I wish to speak with him. [*Exit Footman.*] I cannot understand this. I do not learn whether their coming to this place be but the whim of a moment, or a plan for a longer stay; if the latter, farewell, solitude! farewell, study!—farewell! Yes, I must make room for gaiety and mere frivolity. Yet could I willingly submit to all; but should the Countess give me new proofs of her attachment, perhaps of her respect, oh! how will my conscience upbraid me! Or—I shudder at the thought!—if this seat be visited by company, and chance should conduct hither any of my former acquaintances!—Alas, alas! how wretched is the being who fears the sight of any one fellow-creature! But, oh! superior misery! to dread still more the presence of a former friend! Who's there?

Enter PETER.

Peter. Nobody. It's only me.

Mrs. H. So soon returned?

Peter. Sharp lad, a'n't I? On the road I've had a bit of talk, too; and—

Mrs. H. But you have observed my directions?

Peter. Oh! yes, yes. I told old Tobias as how he would never know, as long as he lived, that the money came from you.

Mrs. H. You found him quite recovered, I hope?

Peter. Ay, sure, did I. He's coming out to-day for the first time.

Mrs. H. I rejoice to hear it.

Peter. He said that he was obliged to you for all; and, before dinner, would crawl up to thank you.

Mrs. H. Good Peter, do me another service.

Peter. Ay, a hundred, if you'll only let me have a good long stare at you.

Mrs. H. With all my heart. Observe when old Tobias comes, and send him away. Tell him I am busy, or asleep, or unwell, or what you please.

Peter. I will, I will.

Sol. (Without.) There, there, go to the post-office.

Mrs. H. Oh! here comes Mr. Solomon.

Peter. What, father? Ay, so there is. Father's a main clever man: he knows what's going on all over the world.

Mrs. H. No wonder; for you know he receives as many letters as a prime minister and all his secretaries.

Enter SOLOMON.

Sol. Good morning, good morning to you, Mrs. Haller. It gives me infinite pleasure to see you look so charmingly well. You have had the goodness to send for your humble servant. Any news from the great city? There are very weighty matters in agitation. I have my letters too.

Mrs. H. (Smiling.) I think, Mr. Solomon, you must correspond with the four quarters of the globe.

Sol. Beg pardon, not with the whole world, Mrs. Haller; but (*consequently*) to be sure, I have correspondents, on whom I can rely, in the chief cities of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America.

Mrs. H. And yet I have my doubts whether you know what is to happen this very day, at this very place.

Sol. At this very place! Nothing material. We meant to have sown a little barley to-day, but the ground is too dry; and the sheep-shearing is not to be till to-morrow.

Peter. No, nor the bull-baiting till—

Sol. Hold your tongue, blockhead! Get about your business.

Peter. Blockhead! There again! I suppose I'm not to open my mouth. (*To Mrs. H.*) Good b'ye! [*Exit.*]

Mrs. H. The Count will be here to-day.

Sol. How? What?

Mrs. H. With his lady, and his brother-in-law, Baron Steinfort.

Sol. My letters say nothing of this. You are laughing at your humble servant.

Mrs. H. You know, sir, I'm not much given to jesting.

Sol. Peter! Good lack-a-day! His right honourable excellency Count Wintersen, and her right honourable excellency the Countess Wintersen, and his honourable lordship Baron Steinfort—and, Lord have mercy! nothing in proper order! Here, Peter, Peter!

Enter PETER.

Peter. Well, now, what's the matter again?

Sol. Call all the house together directly! Send to the gamekeeper, tell him to bring some venison. Tell Rebecca to uncase the furniture, and take the covering from the Venetian looking-glasses, that her right honourable ladyship the Countess may look at her gracious countenance: and tell the cook to let me see him without loss of time: and tell John to catch a brace or two of carp. And tell—and tell—and tell—tell Frederick to friz my Sunday wig. Mercy on us! Tell—there, go! [*Exit Peter.*] Heavens and earth! so little of the new furnishing of this old castle is completed! Where are we to put his honourable lordship the Baron?

Mrs. H. Let him have the little chamber at the

head of the stairs; it is a neat room, and commands a beautiful prospect.

Sol. Very right, very right. But that room has always been occupied by the Count's private secretary. Suppose—hold! I have it. You know the little lodge at the end of the park: we can thrust the secretary into that.

Mrs. H. You forget, Mr. Solomon; you told me that the Stranger lived there.

Sol. Psh! What have we to do with the Stranger? Who told him to live there? He must turn out.

Mrs. H. That would be unjust; for you said that you let the dwelling to him; and, by your own account, he pays well for it.

Sol. He does, he does. But nobody knows who he is. The devil himself can't make him out. To be sure, I lately received a letter from Spain, which informed me that a spy had taken up his abode in this country, and from the description—

Mrs. H. A spy! Ridiculous! Everything I have heard bespeaks him to be a man, who may be allowed to dwell anywhere. His life is solitude and silence.

Sol. So it is.

Mrs. H. You tell me, too, he does much good.

Sol. That he does.

Mrs. H. He hurts nothing; not the worm in his way.

Sol. That he does not.

Mrs. H. He troubles no one.

Sol. True, true!

Mrs. H. Well, what do you want more?

Sol. I want to know who he is. If the man would only converse a little, one might have an opportunity of pumping; but if one meets him in the lime-walk, or by the river, it is nothing but "Good morrow;" and off he marches. Once or twice I have contrived to edge in a word: "Fine day." "Yes." "Taking a little exercise, I perceive." "Yes;" and off again like a shot. The devil take such close fellows, say I. And, like master like man; not a syllable do I know of that mumps his servant, except that his name is Francis.

Mrs. H. You are putting yourself into a passion, and quite forget who are expected.

Sol. So I do. Mercy on us! There now, you see what misfortunes arise from not knowing people.

Mrs. H. 'Tis near twelve o'clock already! If his lordship has stolen an hour from his usual sleep, the family must soon be here. I go to my duty; you will attend to your's, Mr. Solomon. [*Exit.*]

Sol. Yes, I'll look after my duty, never fear. There goes another of the same class. Nobody knows who she is again. However, thus much I do know of her, that her right honourable ladyship, the Countess, all at once, popped her into the house, like a blot of ink upon a sheet of paper. But why, wherefore, or for what reason, not a soul can tell. "She is to manage the family within doors." She to manage! Fire and faggots! Haven't I managed everything, within and without, most reputationally, these twenty years? I must own I grow a little old, and she does take a deal of pains; but all this she learned of me. When she first came here—mercy on us!—she didn't know that linen was made of flax. But what was to be expected from one who has no foreign correspondence? [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Drawing-room in the castle.

Enter SOLOMON.

Sol. Well, for once, I think I have the advantage of Madam Haller. Such a dance have I provided to welcome their excellencies, and she quite out of the secret! and such a hornpipe by the little brunette! I'll have a rehearsal first, though, and

then surprise their honours after dinner. (*Flourish of rural music without.*)

Peter. (*Without.*) Stop; not yet, not yet; but make way there, make way, my good friends, tenants, and villagers. John, George, Frederick! Good friends, make way.

Sol. It is not the Count: it's only Baron Steinfort. Stand back, I say; and stop the music.

Enter BARON STEINFORT, ushered in by PETER and Footmen. *Peter mimicks and apes his father.*

I have the honour to introduce to your lordship myself, Mr. Solomon, who blesses the hour in which fortune allows him to become acquainted with the honourable Baron Steinfort, brother-in-law of his right honourable excellency Count Wintensen, my noble master.

Peter. Bless our noble master!

Baron S. Old and young, I see, they'll allow me no peace. (*Aside.*) Enough, enough, good Mr. Solomon. I am a soldier: I pay but few compliments, and require as few from others.

Sol. I beg, my lord—We do live in the country, to be sure, but we are acquainted with the reverence due to exalted personages.

Peter. Yes; we are acquainted with exalted personages.

Baron S. What is to become of me? (*Aside.*) Well, well, I hope we shall be better acquainted. You must know, Mr. Solomon, I intend to assist, for a couple of months, at least, in attacking the well-stocked cellars of Wintensen.

Sol. Why not whole years, my lord? Inexpressible would be the satisfaction of your humble servant. And, though I say it, well-stocked, indeed, are our cellars. I have, in every respect, here managed matters in so frugal and provident a way, that his right honourable excellency the Count will be astonished. (*Baron S. yawns.*) Extremely sorry it is not in my power to entertain your lord-

Peter. Extremely sorry. [ship.]

Sol. Where can Mrs. Haller have hid herself?

Baron S. Mrs. Haller! who is she?

Sol. Why, who she is, I can't exactly tell your lordship.

Peter. No, nor I.

Sol. None of my correspondents give any account of her. She is here in the capacity of a kind of a superior housekeeper. Methinks I hear her silver voice upon the stairs. I will have the honour of sending her to your lordship in an instant.

Baron S. Oh! don't trouble yourself.

Sol. No trouble whatever. I remain, at all times, your honourable lordship's most obedient, humble, and devoted servant. [Exit, bowing.]

Peter. Devoted servant. [Exit, bowing.]

Baron S. Now for a fresh plague. Now am I to be tormented by some chattering, old, ugly hag, till I am stunned with her noise and officious hospitality. Oh! patience, what a virtue art thou!

Enter MRS. HALLER, with a becoming courtesy.

Baron S. rises, and returns a bow, in confusion.

(*Aside.*) No, old she is not. (*Casts another glance at her.*) No, by Jove! nor ugly.

Mrs. H. I rejoice, my lord, in thus becoming acquainted with the brother of my benefactor.

Baron S. Madam, that title shall be doubly valuable to me, since it gives me an introduction equally to be rejoiced at.

Mrs. H. (*Without attending to the compliment.*) This lovely weather, then, has enticed the Count from the city.

Baron S. Not exactly that. You know him. Sunshine or clouds are to him alike, as long as eternal summer reigns in his own heart and family.

Mrs. H. The Count possesses a most cheerful and amiable philosophy. Ever in the same happy humour; ever enjoying each minute of his life. But you must confess, my lord, that he is a favourite

child of fortune; and has much to be grateful to her for. Not merely because she has given him birth and riches, but for a native sweetness of temper, never to be acquired; and a graceful suavity of manners, whose school must be the mind. And, need I enumerate among fortune's favours, the hand and affections of your accomplished sister?

Baron S. True, madam; my good easy brother, too, seems fully sensible of his happiness, and is resolved to retain it. He has quitted the service to live here. I am yet afraid he may soon grow weary of Wintensen and retirement.

Mrs. H. I should trust not. They who bear a cheerful and unapproaching conscience into solitude, surely must increase the measure of their own enjoyments. They quit the poor, precarious, the dependent pleasures, which they borrowed from the world, to draw a real bliss from that exhaustless source of true delight, the fountain of a pure unsullied heart.

Baron S. Has retirement long possessed so lovely an advocate?

Mrs. H. I have lived here three years.

Baron S. And never felt a secret wish for the society you left, and must have adorned?

Mrs. H. Never.

Baron S. To feel thus belongs either to a very rough or a very polished soul. The first sight convinced me in which class I am to place you.

Mrs. H. (*With a sigh.*) There may, perhaps, be a third class.

Baron S. Indeed, madam, I wish not to be thought forward; but women always seemed to me less calculated for retirement than men. We have a thousand employments, a thousand amusements, which you have not.

Mrs. H. Dare I ask what they are?

Baron S. We ride, we hunt, we play, read, write.

Mrs. H. The noble employments of the chase, and the still more noble employment of play, I grant you.

Baron S. Nay, but dare I ask what are your employments for a day?

Mrs. H. Oh! my lord, you cannot imagine how quickly time passes when a certain uniformity guides the minutes of our life. How often do I ask, "Is Saturday come again so soon?" On a bright cheerful morning, my books and breakfast are carried out upon the grass-plot. Then is the sweet picture of reviving industry and eager innocence always new to me. The birds' notes, so often heard, still awaken new ideas: the herds are led into the fields; the peasant bends his eye upon his plough. Everything lives and moves; and in every creature's mind it seems as it were morning. Towards evening, I begin to roam abroad; from the park into the meadows: and sometimes, returning, I pause to look at the village boys and girls as they play. Then do I bless their innocence, and pray to heaven those laughing, thoughtless hours, could be their lot for ever.

Baron S. This is excellent! But these are summer amusements. The winter, the winter!

Mrs. H. Why for ever picture winter like old age; torpid, tedious, and uncheerful? Winter has its own delights: this is the time to instruct and mend the mind by reading and reflection. At this season, too, I often take my harp, and amuse myself by playing or singing the little favourite airs, that remind me of the past, or solicit hope for the future.

Baron S. Happy, indeed, are they who can thus create and vary their own pleasures and employments!

Enter PETER.

Peter. Well, well—pray, now—I was ordered—I can keep him back no longer; he will come in.

Enter TOBIAS, forcing his way.

Tob. I must, good heaven! I must.

Mrs. H. (Confused.) I have no time at present.
I—I—You see I am not alone.

Tob. Oh! this good gentleman will forgive me.

Baron S. What do you want?

Tob. To return thanks. Even charity is a burden if one may not be grateful for it.

Mrs. H. To-morrow, good Tobias; to-morrow.

Baron S. Nay, no false delicacy, madam. Allow him to vent the feelings of his heart; and permit me to witness a scene which convinces me, even more powerfully than your conversation, how nobly you employ your time. Speak, old man!

Tob. Oh! lady, that each word which drops from my lips, might call down a blessing on your head! I lay forsaken and dying in my hut; not even bread nor hope remained. Oh! then you came in the form of an angel, brought medicines to me; and your sweet consoling voice did more than those. I am recovered. To-day, for the first time, I have returned thanks in presence of the sun; and now I come to you, noble lady. Let me drop my tears upon your charitable hand. For your sake, heaven has blessed my latter days. The Stranger, too, who lives near me, has given me a purse of gold to buy my son's release. I am on my way to the city: I shall purchase my Robert's release. Then I shall have an honest daughter-in-law. And you, if ever after that you pass our happy cottage, oh! what must you feel when you say to yourself, "This is my work!"

Mrs. H. (In a tone of entreaty.) Enough Tobias; enough!

Tob. I beg pardon; I cannot utter what is breathing in my breast. There is one who knows it. May his blessing and your own heart reward you!

[*Exit, Peter following. Mrs. Haller casts her eyes upon the ground, and contends against the confusion of an exalted soul, when surprised in a good action. The Baron stands opposite to her, and from time to time casts a glance at her.*

Mrs. H. (Endeavouring to bring about a conversation.) I suppose, my lord, we may expect the Count and Countess every moment now?

Baron S. Not just yet, madam. He travels at his leisure. I am selfish, perhaps, in not being anxious for his speed: the delay has procured me a delight which I shall never forget.

Mrs. H. (Smiling.) You satirise mankind, my lord.

Baron S. How so?

Mrs. H. In supposing such scenes to be uncommon.

Baron S. I confess I was little prepared for such an acquaintance as yourself: I am extremely surprised. When Solomon told me your name and situation, how could I suppose that—Pardon my curiosity: you have been, or are, married?

Mrs. H. (Suddenly sinking from her cheerful raillery into mournful gloom.) I have been married, my lord.

Baron S. (Whose inquiries evince his curiosity, yet are restrained within the bounds of the nicest respect.) A widow, then?

Mrs. H. I beseech you—there are strings in the human heart, which touched, will sometimes utter dreadful discord: I beseech you—

Baron S. I understand you. I see you know how to conceal everything except your perfections.

Mrs. H. My perfections, alas! (*Rural music without.*) But I hear the happy tenantry announce the Count's arrival. Your pardon, my lord; I must attend them. [Exit.]

Baron S. Excellent creature! What is she, and what can be her history? I must seek my sister instantly. How strong and how sudden is the

interest I feel for her! but it is a feeling I ought to check. And yet, why so? Whatever are the emotions she has inspired, I am sure they arise from the perfections of her mind; and never shall they be met with unworthiness in mine. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—*The Lawn.*

SOLOMON and PETER are discovered arranging the Tenantry. *Rural music.* Enter COUNT and COUNTESS WINTERSEN, (the latter leading her Child,) BARON STEINFORT, MRS. HALLER, CHARLOTTE, and Servants following.

Sol. Welcome, ten thousand welcomes, your excellencies. Some little preparation made for welcome, too. But that will be seen anon.

Count W. Well, here we are! Heaven bless our advance and retreat! Mrs. Haller, I bring you an invalid, who, in future, will swear to no flag but your's.

Mrs. H. Mine flies for retreat and rural happiness.
Count W. But not without retreating graces, and retiring cupids, too.

Countess. (Who has, in the meantime, kindly embraced Mrs. Haller, and by her been welcomed to Wintersen.) My dear Count, you forget that I am present.

Count W. Why, in the name of chivalry, how can I do less than your gallant brother, the Baron? who has been so kind as nearly to kill my four greys, in order to be here five minutes before me.

Baron S. Had I known all the charms of this place, you should have said so with justice.

Countess. Don't you think William much grown?
Mrs. H. The sweet boy! (Stoops to kiss him, and deep melancholy overshadows her countenance.)

Count W. Well, Solomon, you've provided a good dinner.

Sol. As good as haste would allow, please your right honourable excellency.

Peter. Yes, as good as—(Count goes aside with Solomon and Peter.)

Baron S. Tell me, I conjure you, sister, what jewel you have thus buried in the country?

Countess. Ha, ha, ha! What, brother, you caught at last?

Baron S. Answer me.

Countess. Well, her name is Mrs. Haller.

Baron S. That I know; but—

Countess. But! but I know no more myself.

Baron S. Jesting apart, I wish to know.

Countess. And, jesting apart, I wish you would not plague me. I have at least a hundred thousand important things to do. Heavens! the vicar may come to pay his respects to me before I have been at my toilet; of course, I must consult my looking-glass on the occasion. Come, William, will you help to dress me, or stay with your father?

Count W. We'll take care of him.

Countess. Come, Mrs. Haller.

[Exit with Mrs. Haller, Charlotte following.]

Baron S. (Aside and going.) I am in a very singular humour.

Count W. Whither so fast, good brother?

Baron S. To my apartment. I have letters to—

I—
Count W. Psha! stay. Let us take a turn in the park together.

Baron S. Excuse me. I am not perfectly well. I should be but bad company. I—

[Exit. The Tenantry retire.]

Count W. Well, Solomon, you are as great a fool as ever, I see.

Sol. Ha, ha! At your right honourable excellency's service.

Count W. (Points to Peter.) Who is that ape in the corner?

Sol. Ape! Oh! that is, with respect to your excellency he it spoken, the son of my body; by name, Peter, (Peter bows.)

Count W. So, so! Well, how goes all on?

Sol. Well and good, well and good. Your excellency will see how I've improved the park: you'll not know it again. An hermitage here, serpentine walks there; an obelisk, a ruin; and all so sparingly, all done with the most economical economy.

Count W. Well, I'll have a peep at your obelisk and ruins, while they prepare for dinner.

Sol. I have already ordered it, and will have the honour of attending your right honourable excellency.

Count W. Come, lead the way. Peter, attend your young master to the house; we must not tire him.

[*Exit, conducted by Solomon.*]

Peter. We'll go round this way, your little excellency, and then we shall see the bridge as we go by; and the new boat, with all the fine ribands and streamers. This way, your little excellency.

[*Exit, leading the Child.*]

SCENE III.—*The Antichamber.*

Enter MRS. HALLER.

Mrs. H. What has thus alarmed and subdued me? My tears flow; my heart bleeds. Already had I apparently overcome my chagrin; already had I at least assumed that easy gaiety once so natural to me, when the sight of this child in an instant overpowered me. When the Countess called him William—oh! she knew not that she plunged a poniard in my heart. I have a William, too, who must be as tall as this, if he be still alive. Ah! yes, if he be still alive. His little sister, too! Why, fancy, dost thou rack me thus? Why dost thou image my poor children, fainting in sickness, and crying to their mother? To the mother who has abandoned them! (*Weeps.*) What a wretched out-cast am I! And that just to-day I should be doomed to feel these horrible emotions! just to-day, when disguise was so necessary.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. Very pretty, very pretty, indeed! better send me to the garret at once. Your servant, Mrs. Haller. I beg, madam, I may have a room fit for a respectable person.

Mrs. H. The chamber into which you have been shewn is, I think, a very neat one.

Char. A very neat one, is it? Up the back stairs; and over the laundry. I should never be able to close my eyes.

Mrs. H. (*Very mildly.*) I slept there a whole year.

Char. Did you? Then I advise you to remove into it again, and the sooner the better. I'd have you to know, madam, there is a material difference between certain persons and certain persons. Much depends upon the manner in which one has been educated. I think, madam, it would only be proper if you resigned your room to me.

Mrs. H. If the Countess desires it, certainly.

Char. The Countess! Very pretty, indeed! Would you have me think of plaguing her ladyship with such trifles? I shall order my trunk to be carried wherever I please.

Mrs. H. Certainly; only not into my chamber.

Char. Provoking creature! But how could I expect to find breeding among creatures born of one knows not whom, and coming one knows not whence?

Mrs. H. The remark is very just.

Enter PETER, in haste.

Peter. Oh, lud! oh, lud! oh, lud!

Mrs. H. What's the matter?

Peter. The child has fallen into the river. His little excellency is drowned.

Mrs. H. Who—what?

Peter. His honour, my young master.

Mrs. H. Drowned?

Peter. Yes.

Mrs. H. Dead?

Peter. No, he's not dead.

Mrs. H. Well, well; then, softly; you will alarm the Countess.

Enter BARON STEINFORT.

Baron S. What is the matter? Why all this noise?

Peter. Noise! why—

Mrs. H. Be not alarmed, my lord. Whatever may have happened, the dear child is now, at least, safe. You said so, I think, master Peter?

Peter. Why, to be sure, his little excellency is not hurt; but he's very wet, though; and the Count is taking him by the garden-door to the house.

Baron S. Right; that the Countess may not be alarmed. But tell us, young man, how could it happen?

Peter. From beginning to end?

Mrs. H. Never mind particulars. You attended the dear child?

Peter. True.

Mrs. H. Into the park?

Peter. True.

Mrs. H. And then you went to the river?

Peter. True. Why, rabbit it! I believe you're a witch.

Mrs. H. Well, and what happened further?

Peter. Why, you see, his dear little excellency would see the bridge that father built out of the old summer-house; and the streamers, and the boat, and all that. I only turned my head round for a moment, to look after a magpie, crush! down went the bridge with his little excellency; and, oh! how I was scared to see him carried down the river!

Baron S. And you drew him out again directly?

Peter. No, I didn't.

Mrs. H. No; your father did?

Peter. No, he didn't.

Mrs. H. Why, you did not leave him in the water?

Peter. Yes, we did. But we bawled as loud as we could; you might have heard us down to the village.

Mrs. H. Ay; and so the people came immediately to his assistance?

Peter. No, they didn't; but the Stranger came that lives yonder, close to old Toby, and never speaks a syllable. Odsbodikius! what a devil of a fellow it is! With a single spring, bounces he slap into the torrent; sails and dives about and about like a duck; gets me hold of the little angel's hair, and, heaven bless him! pulls him safe and sound to dry land again. Ha, ha, ha!

Baron S. Is the Stranger with them?

Peter. Oh, lud! no. He ran away. His excellency wanted to thank him, and all that; but he was off; vanquished like a ghost.

Enter SOLOMON.

Sol. Oh! thou careless varlet! I disown you! What an accident might have happened! and how you have terrified his excellency! But I beg pardon, (*bows*) his right honourable excellency, the Count, requests you—

Baron S. We come. [*Exit with Mrs. H.*]

Char. Ha, ha, ha! Why, Mr. Solomon, you seem to have an hopeful pupil.

Sol. Ah, sirrah!

Char. But, Mr. Solomon, why were you not nimble enough to have saved his young lordship?

Sol. Not in time, my sweet miss. Besides, mercy on us! I should have sunk like a lump of lead; and I happened to have a letter of consequence in my pocket, which would have been made totally illegible; a letter from Constantinople, written by Chevalier—What's-his-name? (*Draws a letter from his pocket, and putting it up again directly, drops it.* *Peter takes it up, slyly and unobserved.*) It contains momentous matter, I assure you. The world will be astonished when it comes to light; and not a

soul will suppose that old Solomon had a finger in the pie.

Char. No, that I believe.

Sol. But I must go and see to the cellar. Miss, your most obedient servant. [Exit.]

Char. (With pride.) Your servant, Mr. Solomon.

Peter. Here's the letter from Constantinople. I wonder what it can be about. Now for it! (Opens it.)

Char. Ay, let us have it.

Peter. (Reads.) "If so be you say so, I'll never work for you never no more. Considering as how your Sunday waistcoat has been turned three times, it doesn't look amiss, and I've charged as little as any tailor of 'em all. You say, I must pay for the buckram; but I say, I'll be d—d if I do. So no more from your loving nephew, TIMOTHY TWIST." From Constantinople! Why, cousin Tim writ it.

Char. Cousin Tim! Who is he?

Peter. Good lack! Don't you know cousin Tim? Why, he's one of the best tailors in all—

Char. A tailor! No, sir, I do not know him. My father was state-coachman, and wore his highness's livery. [Exit.]

Peter. (Mimicking.) "My father was state-coachman, and wore his highness's livery." Well, and cousin Tim could have made his highness's livery, if you go to that. State-coachman, indeed! (Going.)

Enter SOLOMON.

Sol. Peter, you ninny, stay where you are. Is that chattering girl gone? Didn't I tell you we would have a practice of our dance? they are all ready on the lawn. Mark me; I represent the Count, and you the Baron.

[Exit, with affected dignity. Peter follows, mimicking.]

SCENE IV.—The Lawn. Seats placed. Rustic music. Dancers are discovered as ready to perform.

SOLOMON and PETER enter, and seat themselves. A dance, in which the dancers pay their reverence to Solomon and Peter as they pass. At the end, Solomon and Peter strut off before the Dancers.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Skirts of the Park and Lodge, &c. as before.

The STRANGER is discovered on a seat, reading.

Enter FRANCIS,

Fra. Sir, sir, dinner is ready.

Str. I want no dinner.

Fra. I've got something good.

Str. Eat it yourself.

Fra. You are not hungry?

Str. No. (Rises.)

Fra. Nor I. The heat takes away all appetite.

Str. Yes.

Fra. I'll put it by; perhaps, at night—

Str. Perhaps.

Fra. Dear sir, dare I speak?

Str. Speak.

Fra. You have done a noble action.

Str. What?

Fra. You have saved a fellow-creature's life.

Str. Peace!

Fra. Do you know who he was?

Str. No.

Fra. The only son of Count Wintensen.

Str. Immaterial.

Fra. A gentleman, by report, worthy and benevolent as yourself.

Str. (Angry.) Silence! Dare you flatter me?

Fra. As I look to heaven for mercy, I speak from my heart. When I observe how you are doing good around you, how you are making every individual's wants your own, and are yet yourself unhappy, alas! my heart bleeds for you.

Str. I thank you, Francis. I can only thank you.

Yet share this consolation with me; my sufferings are unmerited.

Fra. My poor master!

Str. Have you forgotten what the old man said this morning? "There is another and a better world!" Oh! 'twas true. Then let us hope with fervency, and yet endure with patience. What's here?

Enter CHARLOTTE, from the Park-gate.

Char. I presume, sir, you are the strange gentleman that drew my young master out of the water? (The Stranger reads.) Or (to Francis) are you he? (Francis makes a wry face.) Are the creatures both dumb? (Looks at them by turns.) Surely, old Solomon has fixed two statues here by way of ornament; for of any use there is no sign. (Approaches Francis.) No, this is alive, and breathes; yes, and moves its eyes. (Bawls in his ear.) Good friend!

Fra. I'm not deaf.

Char. No, nor dumb, I perceive, at last. Is you lifeless thing your master?

Fra. That honest, silent gentleman is my master.

Char. The same that drew the young Count out of the water?

Fra. The same.

Char. (To the Stranger.) Sir, my master and mistress, the Count and Countess, present their respectful compliments, and request the honour of your company at a family supper this evening.

Str. I shall not come.

Char. But you'll scarce send such an uncivil answer as this. The Count is overpowered with gratitude. You saved his son's life.

Str. I did it willingly.

Char. And won't accept of, "I thank you," in return?

Str. No.

Char. You really are cruel, sir, I must tell you. There are three of us ladies at the castle, and we are all dying with curiosity to know who you are. [Exit Stranger.] The master is crabbed enough, however; let me try what I can make of the man. Pray, sir—(Francis turns his back to her)—the beginning promises little enough. Friend, why won't you look at me?

Fra. I like to look at green trees better than green eyes.

Char. Green eyes, you monster! Who told you that my eyes were green? Let me tell you there have been sonnets made on my eyes before now.

Fra. Glad to hear it.

Char. To the point, then, at once. What is your master?

Fra. A man

Char. I surmised as much. But what's his name?

Fra. The same as his father's.

Char. Not unlikely: and his father was—

Fra. Married.

Char. To whom?

Fra. To a woman.

Char. (Enraged.) I'll tell you what: who your master is I see I shall not learn, and I don't care; but I know what you are.

Fra. Well, what am I?

Char. A bear!

Fra. Thank you! Now to see how habit and example corrupts one's manners! I am naturally the civilest spoken fellow in the world to the pretty prattling rogues; yet, following my master's humour, I've rudely driven this wench away. I must have a peep at her, though. (Looking towards the park-gate.)

Enter STRANGER.

Str. Is that woman gone?

Fra. Yes.

Str. Francis!

Fra. Sir?

Stra. We must be gone, too.

Fra. But whither?

Stra. I don't care.

Fra. I'll attend you.

Stra. To any place?

Fra. To death.

Stra. Heaven grant it—to me, at least. There is peace.

Fra. Peace is everywhere. Let the storm rage without, if the heart be but at rest. Yet, I think we are very well where we are: the situation is inviting; and nature lavish of her beauties, and of her bounties, too.

Stra. But I am not a wild beast, to be stared at, and sent for as a shew. Is it fit I should be?

Fra. Another of your interpretations! That a man, the life of whose only son you have saved, should invite you to his house, seems to me not very unnatural.

Stra. I will not be invited to any house.

Fra. For once, methinks, you might submit. You'll not be asked a second time.

Stra. Proud wretches! They believe the most essential service is required, if one may but have the honour of sitting at their table. Let us begone.

Fra. Yet hold, sir! This bustle will soon be over. Used to the town, the Count and his party will soon be tired of simple nature, and you will again be freed from observation.

Stra. Not from your's.

Fra. This is too much. Do I deserve your doubts?

Stra. Am I in the wrong?

Fra. You are, indeed!

Stra. Francis, my servant, you are my only friend.

Fra. That title makes amends for all.

Stra. But, look, Francis! there are uniforms and gay dresses in the walk again. No, I must begone. Here I'll stay no longer.

Fra. Well, then, I'll tie up my bundle.

Stra. The sooner the better. They come this way. Now must I shut myself in my hovel, and lose this fine breeze. Nay, if they be your high-bred class of all, they may have impudence enough to walk into my chamber. Francis, I shall lock the door. [*Goes into the lodge, locks the door, and fastens the shutters.*]

Fra. And I'll be your centinel.

Stra. Very well.

Fra. Now, should these people be as inquisitive as their maid, I must summon my whole stock of impertinence. But their questions and my answers need little study. They can learn nothing of the Stranger from me; for the best of all possible reasons—I know nothing myself.

Enter BARON STEINFORT and COUNTESS WINTENSEN.

Countess. There is a strange face. The servant, probably.

Baron S. Friend, can we speak to your master?

Fra. No.

Baron S. Only for a few minutes.

Fra. He has locked himself in his room.

Countess. Tell him a lady waits for him.

Fra. Then be's sure not to come.

Countess. Does he hate our sex?

Fra. He hates the whole human race, but woman particularly.

Countess. And why?

Fra. He may, perhaps, have been deceived.

Countess. This is not very courteous.

Fra. My master is not over courteous; but when he sees a chance of saving a fellow-creature's life, he'll attempt it at the hazard of his own.

Baron S. You are right. Now hear the reason of our visit. The wife and brother-in-law of the man whose child your master has saved, wish to acknowledge their obligations to him.

Fra. That he dislikes. He only wishes to live unnoticed.

Countess. He appears to be unfortunate.

Fra. Appears!

Countess. An affair of honour, perhaps, or some unhappy attachment may have—

Fra. They may.

Countess. Be this as it may, I wish to know who he is.

Fra. So do I.

Countess. What, don't you know him yourself?

Fra. Oh! I know him well enough. I mean his real self: his heart, his soul, his worth, his honour. Perhaps, you think one knows a man, when one is acquainted with his name and person.

Countess. 'Tis well said, friend; you please me much. And now I should like to know you. Who are you?

Fra. Your humble servant.

[*Exit.*]

Countess. This is affection! A desire to appear singular. Every one wishes to make himself distinguished. One sails round the world, another creeps into a hovel.

Baron S. And the man apes his master!

Countess. Come, brother, let us seek the Count. He and Mrs. Haller turned into the lawn. (*Going.*)

Baron S. Stay! First, a word or two, sister. I am in love.

Countess. For the hundredth time.

Baron S. For the first time in my life.

Countess. I wish you joy.

Baron S. Till now you have evaded my inquiries. Who is she? I beseech you, sister, be serious. There is a time for all things.

Countess. Bless us! Why, you look as if you were going to raise a spirit. Don't fix your eyes so earnestly. Well, if I am to be serious, I obey. I do not know who Mrs. Haller is, as I have already told you; but what I do know of her, shall not be concealed from you. It may now be three years ago, when, one evening, about twilight, a lady was announced, who wished to speak to me in private. Mrs. Haller appeared with all that grace and modesty which have enchanted you. Her features, at that moment, bore keener marks of the sorrow and confusion which have since settled into gentle melancholy. She threw herself at my feet; and besought me to save a wretch who was on the brink of despair. She told me she had heard much of my benevolence, and offered herself as a servant to attend me. I endeavoured to dive into the cause of her sufferings, but in vain. She concealed her secret; yet opening to me more and more each day a heart, chosen by virtue as her temple, and an understanding improved by the most refined attainments, she no longer remained my servant, but became my friend; and, by her own desire, has ever since resided here. (*Courtesying.*) Brother, I have done.

Baron S. Too little to satisfy my curiosity; yet enough to make me realize my project. Sister, lend me your aid—I would marry her.

Countess. You?

Baron S. I.

Countess. Baron Steinfort?

Baron S. For shame! if I understand you.

Countess. Not so harsh, and not so hasty! Those great sentiments of contempt of inequality in rank are very fine in a romance; but we happen not to be inhabitants of an ideal world. How could you introduce her to the circle we live in? You surely would not attempt to present her to—

Baron S. Object as you will, my answer is—I love. Sister, you see a man before you, who—

Countess. Who wants a wife.

Baron S. No: who has deliberately poised advantage against disadvantage; domestic ease and comfort against the false gaieties of fashion. I can withdraw into the country. I need no honours to

make my tenants happy; and my heart will teach me to make their happiness my own. With such a wife as this, children who resemble her, and fortune enough to spread comfort around me, what would the soul of man have more?

Countess. This is all vastly fine! I admire your plan; only, you seem to have forgotten one trifling circumstance.

Baron S. And that is—

Countess. Whether Mrs. Haller will have you or not.

Baron S. There, sister, I just want your assistance. (*Seizing her hand.*) Good Henriëtta!

Countess. Well, here's my hand. I'll do all I can for you. Hist! We had nearly been overheard. They are coming. Be patient and obedient.

Enter COUNT WINTERSEN, *and* MRS. HALLER *leaning on his arm.*

Count W. Upon my word, Mrs. Haller, you are a nimble walker: I should be sorry to run a race with you.

Mrs. H. Custom, my lord. You need only take the same walk every day for a month.

Count W. Yes; if I wanted to resemble my greybonds. But what said the Stranger?

Countess. He gave Charlotte a flat refusal; and you see his door, and even his shutters, are closed against us.

Count W. What an unaccountable being! But it won't do. I must shew my gratitude one way or other. Steinfort, we will take the ladies home, and then you shall try once again to see him. You can talk to these oddities better than I can.

Baron S. If you wish it, with all my heart.

Count W. Thank you, thank you! Come, ladies: come, Mrs. Haller. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A close Walk in the garden.*

Enter COUNTESS WINTERSEN *and* MRS. HALLER.

Countess. Well, Mrs. Haller, how do you like the man that just now left us?

Mrs. H. Who?

Countess. My brother.

Mrs. H. He deserves to be your brother.

Countess. (*Courtesying.*) Your most obedient! That shall be written in my pocket-book.

Mrs. H. Without flattery, then, madam, he appears to be most amiable.

Countess. Good! And a handsome man?

Mrs. H. (*With indifference.*) Oh! yes.

Countess. "Oh, yes!" It sounded almost like "Oh, no!" But I must tell you, that he looks upon you to be a handsome woman. (*Mrs. H. smiles.*) You make no reply to this?

Mrs. H. What shall I reply? Derision never fell from your lips; and I am little calculated to support it.

Countess. As little as you are calculated to be the cause of it. No; I was in earnest. Now?

Mrs. H. You confuse me. But why should I play the prude? I will own there was a time when I thought myself handsome. 'Tis past. Alas! the enchanting beauties of a female countenance arise from peace of mind. The look, which captivates an honourable man, must be reflected from a noble soul.

Countess. Then heaven grant my bosom may ever hold as pure a heart, as now those eyes bear witness lives in your's!

Mrs. H. (*With sudden wildness.*) Oh! heaven forbid!

Countess. (*Astonished.*) How!

Mrs. H. (*Checking her tears.*) Spare me! I am a wretch. The sufferings of three years can give me no claim to your friendship—no, not even to your compassion. Oh! spare me! (*Going.*)

Countess. Stay, Mrs. Haller. For the first time, I beg your confidance. My brother loves you.

Mrs. H. (*Starting, and gazing full in the face of the Countess.*) For mirth, too much; for earnest, too mournful!

Countess. I revere that modest blush. Discover to me who you are. You risk nothing. Pour all your griefs into a sister's bosom. Am I not kind? and can I not be silent?

Mrs. H. Alas! but a frank reliance on a generous mind is the greatest sacrifice to be offered by true repentance. This sacrifice I will offer. (*Hesitating.*) Did you never hear—pardon me—did you never hear—Oh! how shocking it is to unmask a deception, which alone has recommended me to your regard! But it must be so. Madam—fie! Adelaide, does pride become you?—Did you never hear of the Countess Waldbourg?

Countess. I think I did hear, at the neighbouring court, of such a creature. She plunged an honourable husband into misery. She ran away with a villain.

Mrs. H. She did, indeed. (*Falls at the feet of the Countess.*) Do not cast me from you.

Countess. For heaven's sake! You are—

Mrs. H. I am that wretch.

Countess. (*Turning from her with horror.*) Ha! begone! (*Going. Her heart draws her back.*) Yet, she is unfortunate; she is unfriended! Her image is repentance: her life the proof. She has wept her fault in her three years' agony. Be still awhile, remorseless prejudice, and let the genuine feelings of my soul avow—they do not truly honour virtue, who can insult the erring heart that would return to her sanctuary. (*Looking with sorrow on her.*) Rise, I beseech you, rise! My husband and my brother may surprise us. I promise to be silent. (*Raising her.*)

Mrs. H. Yes, you will be silent; but, oh! conscience, conscience! thou never wilt be silent. (*Clasping her hands.*) Do not cast me from you.

Countess. Never! Your lonely life, your silent anguish and contrition, may, at length, atone your crime. And never shall you want an asylum, where your penitence may lament your loss. Your crime was youth and inexperience; your heart never was, never could be concerned in it.

Mrs. H. Oh! spare me! My conscience never martyrs me so horribly, as when I catch my base thoughts in search of an excuse. No, nothing can palliate my guilt; and the only just consolation left me, is to acquit the man I wronged, and own I erred without a cause of fair complaint.

Countess. And this is the mark of true repentance. Alas! my friend, when superior sense, recommended, too, by superior charms of person, assail a young, though wedded—

Mrs. H. Ah! not even that mean excuse is left me. In all that merits admiration, respect, and love, he was far, far beneath my husband. But to attempt to account for my strange infatuation—I cannot bear it. I thought my husband's manner grew colder to me. 'Tis true, I knew that his expenses, and his confidence in deceitful friends, had embarrassed his means, and clouded his spirits; yet I thought he denied me pleasures and amusements still within our reach. My vanity was mortified! My confidence not courted. The serpent tongue of my seducer promised everything. But never could such arguments avail, till assisted by forged letters and the treachery of a servant, whom I most confided in: he fixed my belief that my lord was false, and that all the coldness I complained of was disgust to me, and love for another; all his home retrenchments but the means of satisfying a rival's luxury. Maddened with his conviction, (conviction it was, for artifice was most ingenious in its proof,) I left my children—father—husband—to follow a villain.

Countess. But, with such a heart, my friend could not remain long in her delusion?

Mrs. H. Long enough to make a sufficient penitence impossible. 'Tis true, that in a few weeks the delirium was at an end. Oh! what were my sensations when the mist dispersed before my eyes! I called for my husband, but in vain. I listened for the prattle of my children, but in vain.

Countess. (*Embracing her.*) Here, here, on this bosom only shall your future tears be shed; and may I, dear sufferer, make you again familiar with hope!

Mrs. H. Oh! impossible!

Countess. Have you never heard of your children?

Mrs. H. Never.

Countess. We must endeavour to gain some account of them. We must—hold! my husband and my brother!—Oh! my poor brother, I had quite forgotten him. Quick, dear Mrs. Haller, wipe your eyes. Let us meet them.

Mrs. H. Madam, I'll follow. Allow me a moment to compose myself. [*Exit Countess.*] I pause! Oh! yes: to compose myself! (*Ironically.*) She little thinks it is but to gain one solitary moment to vent my soul's remorse. Once the purpose of my unsettled mind was self-destruction: heaven knows how I have sued for hope and resignation. I did trust my prayers were heard. Oh! spare me further trial! I feel, I feel my heart and brain can bear no more. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Skirts of the Park, Lodge, &c. as before. A table spread out with fruits, &c.*

FRANCIS discovered placing the supper.

Fra. I know he loves to have his early supper in the fresh air; and, while he sups, not that I believe anything can amuse him, yet I will try my little Savoyards' pretty voices. I have heard him speak as if he had loved music. (*Music without.*) Oh! here they are.

Enter ANNETTE and CLAUDINE, playing on their guitars.

Ann. To welcome mirth and harmless glee,
We rambling minstrels, blithe and free,
With song the laughing hours beguile,
And wear a never-fading smile:

Where'er we roam,
We find a home

And greeting, to reward our toil.

Clau. No anxious griefs disturb our rest,
Nor busy cares annoy our breast;
Fearless we sink in soft repose,
While night her sable mantle throws.

With grateful lay,
Hail rising day,

That rosy health and peace bestows.

During the duett, the STRANGER looks from the lodge window; and, at the conclusion, he comes out.

Fra. What mummery is this?

Fra. I hoped it might amuse you, sir.

Fra. Amuse me, fool!

Fra. Well, then, I wished to amuse myself a little. I don't think my recreations are so very numerous.

Fra. That's true, my poor fellow; indeed they are not. Let them go on: I'll listen.

Fra. But to please you, poor master, I fear it must be a sadder strain. Annette, have you none but these cheerful songs?

Ann. Oh! plenty. If you are dolefully given, we can be as sad as night. I'll sing you an air Mrs. Haller taught me the first year she came to the castle.

Fra. Mrs. Haller! I should like to hear that.

Ann. I have a silent sorrow here,

A grief I'll ne'er impart;

It breathes no sigh, it sheds no tear,

But it consumes my heart.

This cherish'd woe, this lov'd despair,

My lot for ever be,

So, my soul's lord, the pangs I bear

Be never known by thee!

And when pale characters of death

Shall mark this alt' r'd cheek,

When my poor wasted trembling breath

My life's last hope would speak,

I shall not raise my eyes to heav'n,

Nor mercy ask for me;

My soul despairs to be forgiv'n,

Unpardon'd, love, by thee.

Stra. (*Surprised and moved.*) Oh! I have heard that air before; but it was with other words. Francis, share our supper with your friends: I need none. [*Enters the lodge.*]

Fra. So I feared. Well, my pretty favourites, here are refreshments. So, disturbed again! Now will this gentleman call for more music, and make my master mad. Return when you observe this man is gone. [*Exeunt Annette and Claudine.—Francis sits, and eats.*] I were in hopes that I might at least eat my supper peaceably in the open air; but they follow at our heels like blood-hounds.

Enter BARON STEINFORT.

Baron S. My good friend, I must speak to your master.

Fra. Can't serve you.

Baron S. Why not?

Fra. It's forbidden.

Baron S. (*Offers money.*) There! announce me.

Fra. Want no money.

Baron S. Well, only announce me, then.

Fra. I will announce, you, sir; but it won't avail! I shall be abused, and you rejected. However, we can but try. (*Going.*)

Baron S. I only ask half a minute. [*Francis goes into the lodge.*] But when he comes, how am I to treat him? I never encountered a misanthrope before. I have heard of instructions as to conduct in society; but how I am to behave towards a being who loathes the whole world and his own existence, I have never learned.

Enter the STRANGER.

Stra. Now, what's your will?

Baron S. I beg pardon, sir, for—(*Suddenly recognizing him.*) Charles!

Stra. Steinfort! (*They embrace.*)

Baron S. Is it really you, my dear friend?

Stra. It is.

Baron S. Merciful heaven! how you are altered.

Stra. The hand of misery lies heavy on me.—But how came you here? What want you?

Baron S. Strange! Here was I ruminating how to address this mysterious recluse: he appears, and proves to be my old and dearest friend. (*Aside*)

Stra. Then you were not in search of me, nor knew that I lived here?

Baron S. As little as I know who lives on the summit of Caucasus. You this morning saved the life of my brother-in-law's only son: a grateful family wishes to behold you in its circle. You refused my sister's messenger; therefore, to give more weight to the invitation, I was deputed to be the bearer of it: and thus has fortune restored to me a friend, whom my heart has so long missed, and whom my heart just now so much requires.

Stra. Yes, I am your friend; your sincere friend. You are a true man; an uncommon man. Towards you my heart is still the same. But if this assurance be of any value to you—go—leave me, and return no more.

Baron S. Stay! All that I see and hear of you is inexplicable. 'Tis you; but these, alas! are not the features which once enchanted every female bosom, beamed gaiety through all society, and won you friends before your lips were opened!

Why do you avert your face? Is the sight of a friend become hateful? Or, do you fear that I should read in your eye what passes in your soul? Where is that open look of fire, which at once penetrated into every heart, and revealed your own?

Stra. (With asperity.) My look penetrate into every heart! Ha, ha, ha!

Baron S. Oh, heavens! Rather may I never hear you laugh, than in such a tone. For heaven's sake, tell me, Charles! tell me, I conjure you, what has happened to you?

Stra. Things that happen every day; occurrences heard of in every street. Steinfort, if I am not to hate you, ask me not another question: if I am to love you, leave me.

Baron S. Oh! Charles, awake the faded ideas of past joys! feel that a friend is near! recollect the days we passed in Hungary, when we wandered, arm in arm, upon the banks of the Danube, while nature opened our hearts, and made us enamoured of benevolence and friendship! In those blessed moments, you gave me this seal as a pledge of your regard. Do you remember it?

Stra. Yes.

Baron S. Am I since that time become less worthy of your confidence?

Stra. No!

Baron S. Charles, it grieves me that I am thus compelled to enforce my rights upon you. Do you know this scar?

Stra. Comrade! friend! it received and resisted the stroke aimed at my life: I have not forgotten it. Alas! you knew not what a present you then made me.

Baron S. Speak, then, I beseech you.

Stra. You cannot help me.

Baron S. Then I can mourn with you.

Stra. That I hate; besides, I cannot weep.

Baron S. Then give me words instead of tears: both relieve the heart.

Stra. Relieve the heart! My heart is like a close-shut sepulchre: let what is within it moulder and decay. Why, why open the wretched charnel-house to spread a pestilence around!

Baron S. How horrid are your looks! For shame! A man like you thus to crouch beneath the chance of fortune!

Stra. Steinfort! I did think that the opinion of all mankind was alike indifferent to me; but I feel that it is not so. My friend, you shall not quit me without learning how I have been robbed of every joy which life afforded. Listen: much misery may be contained in a few words.—Attracted by my native country, I quitted you and the service. What pleasing pictures did I draw of a life employed in improving society, and diffusing happiness! I fixed on Cassel to be my abode. All went on admirably. I found friends: at length, too, I found a wife; a lovely, innocent creature, scarcely sixteen years of age. Oh! how I loved her! She bore me a son and a daughter: both were endowed by nature with the beauty of their mother. Ask me not how I loved my wife and children! Yes, then, then I was really happy. (Wipes his eyes.) Ah! a tear! I could not have believed it: welcome, old friends! 'twas long since we have known each other. Well, my story is nearly ended. One of my friends, for whom I had become engaged, treacherously lost me more than half my fortune. This hurt me. I was obliged to retrench my expenses. Contentment needs but little. I forgave him. Another friend—a villain! to whom I was attached heart and soul; whom I had assisted with my means, and promoted by my interest, this fiend seduced my wife, and bore her from me. Tell me, sir, is this enough to justify my hatred of mankind, and palliate my seclusion from the world? Kings, laws, tyranny, or guilt, can but imprison me or kill me; but, oh, God! oh,

God! oh! what are chains or death compared to the tortures of a deceived yet doting husband!

Baron S. To lament the loss of a faithless wife is madness.

Stra. Call it what you please—say what you please—I love her still.

Baron S. And where is she?

Stra. I know not, nor do I wish to know.

Baron S. And your children?

Stra. I left them at a small town, hard by.

Baron S. But why did you not keep your children with you? They would have amused you in many a dreary hour.

Stra. Amused me! Oh, yes! while their likeness to their mother would every hour remind me of my past happiness! No. For three years I have never seen them. I hate that any human creature should be near me, young or old! Had not ridiculous habits made a servant necessary, I should long since have discharged him, though he is not the worst among the bad.

Baron S. Such too often are the consequences of great alliances; therefore, Charles, I have resolved to take a wife from a lower rank of life.

Stra. You marry! Ha, ha, ha!

Baron S. You shall see her: she is in the house where you are expected. Come with me.

Stra. What, I mix again with the world!

Baron S. To do a generous action without requiring thanks is noble and praiseworthy; but so obstinately to avoid those thanks, as to make the kindness a burden, is affectation.

Stra. Leave me, leave me! Every one tries to form a circle of which he may be the centre. As long as there remains a bird in these woods to greet the rising sun with its melody, I shall court no other society.

Baron S. Do as you please to-morrow; but give me your company this evening.

Stra. No.

Baron S. Not though it were in your power, by this single visit, to secure the happiness of your friend for life!

Stra. (Starting.) Ha! then I must—But how?

Baron S. You shall see in my behalf to Mrs. Haller: you have the talent of persuasion.

Stra. I, my dear Steinfort!

Baron S. The happiness or misery of your friend depends upon it. I'll contrive that you shall speak to her alone. Will you?

Stra. I will; but upon one condition.

Baron S. Name it.

Stra. That you allow me to begone to-morrow, and not endeavour to detain me.

Baron S. Go! Whither?

Stra. No matter! promise this, or I will not come.

Baron S. Well, I do promise. Come.

Stra. I have directions to give my servant.

Baron S. In half an hour, then, we shall expect you. Remember, you have given your word.

Stra. I have. [Exit *Bar. S.*—*The Stranger walks up and down thoughtful and melancholy.*—Francis! Enter FRANCIS.]

Fra. Sir?

Stra. Why are you out of the way?

Fra. Sir, I came when I heard you call.

Stra. I shall leave this place to-morrow.

Fra. With all my heart.

Stra. Perhaps to go into another land.

Fra. With all my heart again.

Stra. Perhaps into another quarter of the globe.

Fra. With all my heart still. Into which quarter?

Stra. Wherever heaven directs! Away, away, from Europe! from this cultivated moral lazaret! Do you hear, Francis? to-morrow early.

Fra. Very well. (Going.)

Stra. Come here, come here first; I have an

errand for you. Hire that carriage in the village; drive to the town hard by; you may be back by sun-set. I shall give you a letter to a widow who lives there: with her you will find two children; they are mine.

Fra. (*Astonished.*) Your children, sir?

Str. Take them and bring them hither.

Fra. Your children, sir?

Str. Yes, mine! Is it so very inconceivable?

Fra. That I should have been three years in your service, and never have heard them mentioned, is somewhat strange.

Str. Psha!

Fra. You have been married, then?

Str. Go, and prepare for our journey.

Fra. That I can do in five minutes. (*Going.*)

Str. I shall come and write the letter directly.

Fra. Very well, sir. [*Exit.*]

Str. Yes, I'll take them with me: I'll accus-tom myself to the sight of them. The innocents! they shall not be poisoned by the refinements of society: rather let them hunt their daily sustenance upon some desert island with their bow and arrow; or creep, like torpid Hottentots, into a corner, and stare at each other. Better to do nothing than to do evil. Fool that I was to be prevailed upon once more to exhibit myself among these apes! What a ridiculous figure shall I be! and in the capacity of a suitor, too! Psha! he cannot be serious! 'tis but a friendly artifice to draw me from my solitude. Why did I promise him? Yes, my sufferings have been many; and to oblige a friend, why should I hesitate to add another painful hour to the wretched calendar of my life!—I'll go, I'll go! [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*The Anti-chamber.*

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. No, indeed, my lady! if you choose to bury yourself in the country, I shall take my leave. I am not calculated for a country life: and, to sum up all, when I think of this Mrs. Haller,—

Enter SOLOMON.

Sol. (*Overhearing her last words.*) What of Mrs. Haller, my sweet miss?

Char. Why, Mr. Solomon, who is Mrs. Haller? You know every thing; you hear every thing.

Sol. I have received no letters from any part of Europe on the subject, miss.

Char. But who is to blame? The Count and Countess. She dines with them; and, at this very moment, is drinking tea with them. Is this proper?

Sol. By no means.

Char. Shouldn't a Count and Countess, in all their actions, shew a certain degree of pride and pomposity?

Sol. To be sure! to be sure they should!

Char. No, I won't submit to it. I'll tell her ladyship, when I dress her to-morrow, that either Mrs. Haller or I must quit the house.

Sol. (*Seeing the Baron.*) Hist!

Enter BARON STEINFORT.

Baron S. Didn't I hear Mrs. Haller's name here?

Sol. Why—yes—we—we—

Baron S. Charlotte, tell my sister I wish to see her as soon as the tea-table is removed.

Char. (*Aside to Solomon.*) Either she or I go, that I'm determined. [*Exit.*]

Baron S. May I ask what it was you were saying?

Sol. Why, please your honourable lordship, we were talking here and there—this and that—

Baron S. I almost begin to suspect some secret.

Sol. Secret! heaven forbid! Mercy on us! No; I should have had letters on the subject, if there had been a secret.

Baron S. Well, then, since it was no secret, I presume I may know your conversation.

Sol. You do us great honour, my lord. Why, then, at first, we were making a few commonplace observations. Miss Charlotte remarked that we all had our faults. I said, "Yes." Soon after I remarked, that the best persons in the world are not without their weaknesses. She said, "Yes."

Baron S. If you referred to Mrs. Haller's faults and weaknesses, I am desirous to hear more.

Sol. Sure enough, sir, Mrs. Haller is an excellent woman; but she's not an angel for all that. I am an old faithful servant to his excellency the Count; and, therefore, it is my duty to speak when anything is done disadvantageous to his interest.

Baron S. Well!

Sol. For instance, now: his excellency may think he has at least some score of dozens of the old six-and-twenty hock. Mercy on us! there are not ten dozen bottles left; and not a drop has gone down my throat, I'll swear.

Baron S. (*Smiling.*) Mrs. Haller has not drunk it, I suppose?

Sol. Not she herself, for she never drinks wine; but if anybody be ill in the village, any poor woman lying-in, away goes a bottle of the six-and-twenty! Innumerable are the times that I've re-proved her; but she always answers me snappishly, that she will be responsible for it.

Baron S. So will I, Mr. Solomon.

Sol. Oh! with all my heart, your honourable lordship; it makes no difference to me. I had the care of the cellar twenty years, and can safely take my oath, that I never gave the poor a single drop in the whole course of my trust.

Baron S. How extraordinary is this woman!

Sol. Extraordinary! One can make nothing of her. To-day, the vicar's wife is not good enough for her; to-morrow, you may see her sitting with all the women of the village. To be sure, she and I agree pretty well; for, between me and your honourable lordship, she has cast an eye upon my son Peter.

Baron S. Has she?

Sol. Yes; Peter's no fool, I assure you. The schoolmaster is teaching him to write. Would your honourable lordship please to see a specimen? I'll go for his copy-book. He makes his pot-books capitally.

Baron S. Another time, another time! Good b'ye for the present, Mr. Solomon. (*Solomon bows, without attempting to go.*) Good day, Mr. Solomon.

Sol. (*Not understanding the hint.*) Your honourable lordship's most obedient servant.

Baron S. Mr. Solomon, I wish to be alone.

Sol. As your lordship commands. If the time should seem long in my absence, and your lordship wishes to hear the newest news from the seat of war, you need only send for old Solomon. I have letters from Leghorn, Cape Horn, and every known part of the habitable globe. [*Exit.*]

Baron S. Tedious old fool! Yet hold. Did he not speak in praise of Mrs. Haller? Pardon'd be his rage for news and politics.

Enter COUNTESS WINTERSSEN.

Well, sister, have you spoken to her?

Countess. I have: and if you do not steer for another haven, you will be doomed to drive upon the ocean for ever.

Baron S. Is she married?

Countess. I don't know.

Baron S. Is she of a good family?

Countess. I can't tell.

Baron S. Does she dislike me?

Countess. Excuse my making a reply.

Baron S. I thank you for your sisterly affection, and the explicitness of your communications: luckily, I placed little reliance on either; and

have found a friend, who will save your ladyship all further trouble.

Countess. A friend!

Baron S. Yes: the Stranger who saved your son's life this morning, proves to be my intimate friend.

Countess. What's his name?

Baron S. I don't know.

Countess. Is he of a good family?

Baron S. I can't tell.

Countess. Will he come hither?

Baron S. Excuse my making a reply.

Countess. Well, the retort is fair—but insufferable.

Baron S. You can't object to the *de capo* of your own composition.

Enter COUNT WINTERSEN and MRS. HALLER.

Count W. Zounds! do you think I am Xenocrates; or like the poor sultan with marble legs? There you leave me *tête-à-tête* with Mrs. Haller, as if my heart were a mere flint. So, you prevailed, brother. The Stranger will come, then, it seems.

Baron S. I expect him every minute.

Count W. I'm glad to hear it. One companion more, however: in the country, we never can have too many.

Baron S. This gentleman will not exactly be an addition to your circle; for he leaves this place to-morrow.

Count W. But he won't, I think. Now, Lady Wintersen, summon all your charms. There is no art in conquering us poor devils; but this strange man, who does not care a doit for you all together, is worth your efforts. Try your skill: I sha'n't be jealous.

Countess. I allow the conquest to be worth the trouble: but what Mrs. Haller has not been able to effect in three months, ought not to be attempted by me.

Mrs. H. Oh! yes, madam. He has given me no opportunity of trying the force of my charms, for I have never once happened to see him.

Count W. Then he's a blockhead, and you an idler.

Sol. (*Without.*) This way, sir! this way!

Enter SOLOMON.

Sol. The Stranger begs leave to have the honour—

Count. S. Welcome! welcome. [*Exit Solomon. Turns to meet the STRANGER, whom he conducts in by the hand.*] My dear sir—Lady Wintersen—Mrs. Haller—

[*Mrs. Haller, as soon as she sees the Stranger, shrieks, and swoons in the arms of Bar. S.: the Stranger casts a look at her; and, struck with astonishment and horror, rushes out of the room: Baron S. and the Countess bear Mrs. Haller off; the Count following, in great surprise.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Anti-chamber.*

Enter BARON STEINFORT.

Baron S. Oh! deceitful hope! thou phantom of future happiness! to thee have I stretched out my arms, and thou hast vanished into air! Wretched Steinfort! the mystery is solved. She is the wife of my friend! I cannot myself be happy; but I may, perhaps, be able to reunite two lovely souls whom cruel fate has severed. Ha! they are here. I must propose it instantly.

Enter COUNTESS WINTERSEN and MRS. HALLER.

Countess. Into the garden, my dear friend! into the air!

Mrs. H. I am quite well. Do not alarm yourselves on my account.

Baron S. Madam, pardon my intrusion; but to lose a moment may be fatal. He means to quit the country to-morrow. We must devise means to reconcile you to—the Stranger.

Mrs. H. How, my lord! you seem acquainted with my history?

Baron S. I am: Waldbourg has been my friend ever since we were boys. We served together from the rank of cadet. We have been separated seven years: chance brought us this day together, and his heart was open to me.

Mrs. H. Now do I feel what it is to be in the presence of an honest man, when I dare not meet his eye. (*Hides her face.*)

Baron S. If sincere repentance, if years without reproach, do not give us a title to man's forgiveness, what must we expect hereafter? No, lovely penitent! your contrition is complete. Error for a moment wrested from slumbering virtue the dominion of your heart; but she awoke, and with a look, banished her enemy for ever. I know my friend: he has the firmness of a man; but, with it, the gentlest feelings of your sex. I hasten to him: with the fire of pure disinterested friendship will I enter on this work; that when I look back upon my past life, I may derive, from this good action, consolation in disappointment, and even resignation in despair. (*Going.*)

Mrs. H. Oh, stay! What would you do? No, never! My husband's honour is too sacred to me. I love him unutterably; but never, never can I be his wife again, even if he were generous enough to pardon me.

Baron S. Madam! Can you, Countess, be serious? Mrs. H. Not that title, I beseech you! I am not a child who wishes to avoid deserved punishment. What were my penitence, if I hoped advantage from it beyond the consciousness of atonement for past offence?

Countess. But if your husband himself—

Mrs. H. Oh! he will not, he cannot! And let him rest assured, I never would replace my honour at the expense of his.

Baron S. He still loves you.

Mrs. H. Loves me! then he must not—No; he must purify his heart from a weakness which would degrade him!

Baron S. Incomparable woman! I go to my friend; perhaps, for the last time? Have you not one word to send him?

Mrs. H. Yes, I have two requests to make: often when, in excess of grief, I have despaired of every consolation, I have thought I should be easier if I might behold my husband once again; acknowledge my injustice to him, and take a gentle leave of him for ever: this, therefore, is my first request, a conversation for a few short minutes, if he does not quite abhor the sight of me. My second request is—oh!—not to see, but to hear some account of my poor children.

Baron S. If humanity and friendship can avail, he will not for a moment delay your wishes.

Countess. Heaven be with you.

Mrs. H. And my prayers.

[*Exit Bar. S.*]

Countess. Come, my friend, come into the air, till he returns with hope and consolation.

Mrs. H. Oh! my heart, how art thou afflicted! My husband! my little ones! Past joys and future fears. Oh! dearest madam, there are moments in which we live years! moments which steal the roses from the cheek of health, and plough deep furrows in the brow of youth.

Countess. Banish these sad reflections. Come, let us walk. The sun will set soon; let nature's beauties dissipate anxiety.

Mrs. H. Alas!—Yes, the setting sun is a proper scene for me.

Countess. Never forget, a morning will succeed.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Skirts of the park, lodge, &c. as before.*

Enter BARON STEINFORT.

Baron S. On earth there is but one such pair:

they shall not be parted. Yet what I have undertaken is not so easy as I at first hoped. What can I answer when he asks me, whether I would persuade him to renounce his character, and become the derision of society? For he is right: a faithless wife is a dishonour; and to forgive her, is to share her shame. What, though Adelaide may be an exception; a young deluded girl, who has so long and so sincerely repented, yet what cares an unfeeling world for this? The world! he has quitted it. 'Tis evident he loves her still; and, upon this assurance, builds my sanguine heart the hope of a happy termination to an honest enterprize.

Enter FRANCIS, with two Children, WILLIAM and AMELIA.

Fra. Come along, my pretty ones—come.

Will. Is it far to home?

Fra. No, we shall be there directly now.

Baron S. Hold! Whose children are these?

Fra. My master's.

Will. Is that my father?

Baron S. It darts like lightning through my brain. A word with you. I know you love your master. Strange things have happened here: your master has found his wife again.

Fra. Indeed! Glad to hear it.

Baron S. Mrs. Haller—

Fra. Is she his wife? Still more glad to hear it.

Baron S. But he is determined to go from her.

Fra. Oh!

Baron S. We must try to prevent it.

Fra. Surely.

Baron S. The unexpected appearance of the children may perhaps assist us.

Fra. How so?

Baron S. Hide yourself with them in that hut; before a quarter of an hour is passed, you shall know more.

Fra. But—

Baron S. No more questions, I entreat you. Time is precious.

Fra. Well, well! questions are not much in my way. Come, children.

Will. Why, I thought you told me I should see my father?

Fra. So you shall, my dear. Come, moppets.

[Goes into the hut with the children.]

Baron S. Excellent! I promise myself much from this little artifice. If the mild look of the mother fails, the innocent smiles of these his own children will surely find the way to his heart. *(Taps at the lodge door, and the STRANGER comes out.)* Charles, I wish you joy.

Str. Of what?

Baron S. You have found her again.

Str. Shew a bankrupt the treasure which he once possessed, and then congratulate him on the amount!

Baron S. Why not, if it be in your power to retrieve the whole?

Str. I understand you: you are a negotiator from my wife. It won't avail.

Baron S. Learn to know your wife better. Yes, I am a messenger from her; but without power to treat. She, who loves you unutterably, who without you can never be happy, renounces your forgiveness; because, as she thinks, your honour is incompatible with such a weakness.

Str. Psha! I am not to be caught.

Baron S. Charles, consider well—

Str. Steinfort, let me explain all this. I have lived here four months: Adelaide knew it.

Baron S. Knew it! She never saw you till today.

Str. That you may make fools believe. Hear further: she knows, too, that I am not a common sort of man; that my heart is not to be attacked in the usual way; she, therefore, framed a deep-

concerted plan. She played a charitable part; but in such a way, that it always reached my ears; she played a pious, modest, reserved part, in order to excite my curiosity; and, at last, to day, she plays the prude: she refuses my forgiveness, in hopes, by this generous device, to extort it from my compassion.

Baron S. Charles, I have listened to you with astonishment! This is a weakness only to be pardoned in a man who has so often been deceived by the world. Your wife has expressly and steadfastly declared, that she will not accept your forgiveness, even if you yourself were weak enough to offer it.

Str. What, then, has brought you hither?

Baron S. More than one reason. First, I am come in my own name, as your friend and comrade, to conjure you solemnly not to spurn this creature from you; for, by my soul, you will not find her equal.

Str. Give yourself no further trouble.

Baron S. Be candid, Charles: you love her still.

Str. Alas! yes.

Baron S. Her sincere repentance has long since obliterated her crime.

Str. Sir, a wife once induced to forfeit her honour, must be capable of a second crime.

Baron S. Not so, Charles. Ask your heart what portion of the blame may be your own.

Str. Mine!

Baron S. Your's. Who told you to marry a thoughtless, inexperienced girl? One scarce expects established principles at five-and-twenty in a man, yet you require them in a girl at sixteen! But of this no more. She has erred; she has repented; and, during three years, her conduct has been so far above reproach, that even the piercing eye of calumny has not discovered a speck upon this radiant orb.

Str. Now, were I to believe all this, (and I confess that I would willingly believe it,) yet can she never again be mine. Oh! what a feast would it be for the painted dolls and vermin of the world, when I appeared among them with my runaway wife upon my arm! what mocking, whispering, pointing! Never, never, never!

Baron S. Enough! As a friend I have done my duty: I now appear as Adelaide's ambassador. She requests one moment's conversation: she wishes once again to see you, and never more! You cannot deny her this only, this last request.

Str. Oh! I understand this too: she thinks my firmness will be melted by her tears: she is mistaken. She may come.

Baron S. She will come, to make you feel how much you mistake her. I go for her.

Str. Another word.

Baron S. Another word!

Str. Give her this paper and these jewels: they belong to her. *(Presenting them.)*

Baron S. That you may do yourself. *[Exit.]*

Str. The last anxious moment of my life draws near. I shall see her once again; I shall see her on whom my soul dotes. Is this the language of an injured husband? What is this principle which we call honour? Is it a feeling of the heart, or a quibble in the brain? I must be resolute: it cannot now be otherwise. Let me speak solemnly, yet mild; and beware that nothing of reproach escape my lips. Yes, her penitence is real. She shall not be obliged to live in mean dependence: she shall be mistress of herself, she shall—*(Looks round, and shudders.)* Ha! they come. Awake, insulted pride! protect me, injured honour!

Enter MRS. HALLER, COUNTESS WINTERSEN, and BARON STEINFORT.

Mrs. H. *(Advances slowly, and in a tremor: the Countess attempts to support her.)* Leave me now,

I beseech you. (*Approaches the Stranger, who, with averted countenance, and in extreme agitation, awaits her address.*) My lord!

Str. (*With gentle tremulous utterance, and face still turned away.*) What would you with me, Adelaide?

Mrs. H. (*Much agitated.*) No—for heaven's sake! I was not prepared for this. Adelaide!—No, no. For heaven's sake!—Harsh tones alone are suited to a culprit's ear.

Str. (*Endeavouring to give his voice firmness.*) Well, madam!

Mrs. H. Oh! if you will ease my heart, if you will spare and pity me, use reproaches.

Str. Reproaches! Here they are; here on my sallow cheek, here on my hollow eye, here in my faded form: these reproaches I could not spare you.

Mrs. H. Were I a hardened sinner, this forbearance would be charity; but I am a suffering penitent, and it overpowers me. Alas! then I must be the herald of my own shame; for where shall I find peace, till I have eased my soul by my confession?

Str. No confession, madam: I release you from every humiliation. I perceive you feel that we must part for ever.

Mrs. H. I know it: nor come I here to supplicate your pardon; nor has my heart contained a ray of hope that you would grant it. All I dare ask is, that you will not curse my memory.

Str. No; I do not curse you: I shall never curse you.

Mrs. H. From the conviction that I am unworthy of your name, I have, during three years, abandoned it. But this is not enough: you must have that redress which will enable you to choose another—another wife; in whose chaste arms may heaven protect your hours in bliss. This paper will be necessary for the purpose; it contains a written acknowledgment of my guilt. (*Offers it, trembling.*)

Str. (*Tearing it.*) Perish the record for ever! No, Adelaide; you only have possessed my heart; and, I am not ashamed to own it, you alone will reign there for ever. Your own sensations of virtue, your resolute honour, forbid you to profit by my weakness; and even if—Now, by heaven, this is beneath a man!—But never, never will another fill Adelaide's place here.

Mrs. H. Then nothing now remains but that one sad, hard, just word—farewell!

Str. Stay a moment. For some months we have, without knowing it, lived near each other. I have learnt much good of you: you have a heart open to the wants of your fellow-creatures. I am happy that it is so: you shall not be without the power of gratifying your benevolence. I know you have a spirit that must shrink from a state of obligation. This paper, to which the whole remnant of my fortune is pledged, secures you independence, Adelaide; and let the only recommendation of the gift be, that it will administer to you the means of indulging in charity, the divine propensity of your nature.

Mrs. H. Never! To the labour of my hands alone will I owe my sustenance. A morsel of bread, moistened with the tear of penitence, will suffice my wishes, and exceed my merits. It would be an additional reproach to think that I served myself, or even others, from the bounty of a man whom I had so deeply injured.

Str. Take it, madam; take it.

Mrs. H. I have deserved this. But I throw myself upon your generosity: have compassion on me!

Str. (*Aside.*) Villain! of what a woman hast thou robbed me! (*Puts up the paper.*) Well, madam, I respect your sentiments, and withdraw my request; but on condition, that if ever you shall be in want of anything, I may be the first and only person in the world to whom you will make application.

Mrs. H. I promise, it my lord.

Str. And now I may, at least, desire you to take back what is your own—your jewels. (*Gives her the casket.*)

Mrs. H. (*Opens it in violent agitation, and her tears burst upon it.*) How well do I recollect the sweet evening when you gave me these! that evening my father joined our hands, and joyfully I pronounced the oath of eternal fidelity: it is broken. This locket you gave me on my birthday: that was a happy day. We had a country feast: how cheerful we all were! This bracelet I received after my William was born!—No! take them, take them! I cannot keep these, unless you wish that the sight of them should be an incessant reproach to my almost broken heart. (*Gives them back.*)

Str. (*Aside.*) I must go: my soul and pride will hold no longer. (*Turning towards her.*) Farewell!

Mrs. H. Oh! but one minute more! an answer to but one more question. Feel for a mother's heart!—Are my children still alive?

Str. Yes, they are alive.

Mrs. H. And well?

Str. Yes, they are well.

Mrs. H. Heaven be praised! William must be much grown?

Str. I believe so.

Mrs. H. What, have you not seen them?—And little Amelia, is she still your favourite? (*The Stranger, who is in violent agitation throughout this scene, remains in silent contention between honour and affection.*) Oh! let me behold them once again! let me once more kiss the features of their father in his babes, and I will kneel to you, and part with them for ever. (*She kneels, and he raises her.*)

Str. Willingly, Adelaide! This very night: I expect the children every minute. They have been brought up near this spot. I have already sent my servant for them: he might, ere this time, have returned. I pledge my word to send them to the castle, as soon as they arrive; there, if you please, they may remain till day-break to-morrow, then they must go with me. (*The Countess and Bar. S., who, at a little distance, have listened to the whole conversation with the warmest sympathy, exchange signals. Baron S. goes into the hut, and soon returns with FRANCIS and the Children: he gives the girl to the Countess, who places herself behind the Stranger; he himself walks with the boy behind Mrs. Haller.*)

Mrs. H. In this world, then, we have no more to say—(*Seizing his hand.*)—Forget a wretch, who never will forget you: and when my penance shall have broken my heart; when we again meet in a better world—

Str. There, Adelaide, you may be mine again.

Mrs. H. and *Str.* Oh! oh! (*Parting. But, as they are going, she encounters the boy, and he the girl.*)

Children. Dear father! dear mother!

(*They press the Children in their arms with speechless affection; then tear themselves away, gaze at each other, spread their arms, and rush into an embrace. The Children run, and cling round their parents.—Exeunt.*)

SUCH THINGS ARE;

A PLAY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY MRS. INCHBALD.



Act V.—Scene 3.

CHARACTERS.

SULTAN	MR. HASWELL	KEEPERS	LADY TREMOR
LORD FLINT	ELVIRUS	PRISONERS	AURELIA
SIR LUKE TREMOR	MR. MEANRIGHT	GUARD	FEMALE PRISONER
MR. TWINEALL	ZEDAN	MESSENGER	

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Parlour at Sir Luke Tremor's.

Enter SIR LUKE, followed by LADY TREMOR.

Sir Luke. I tell you, madam, you are two and thirty.

Lady. I tell you, sir, you are mistaken.

Sir Luke. Why, did not you come over from England exactly sixteen years ago?

Lady. Not so long.

Sir Luke. Have not we been married, the tenth of next April, sixteen years?

Lady. Not so long.

Sir Luke. Did you not come over the year of the great eclipse? Answer me that.

Lady. I don't remember it.

Sir Luke. But I do; and shall remember it as long as I live. The first time I saw you in the garden of the Dutch envoy; you were looking through a glass at the sun; I immediately began to make love to you, and the whole affair was settled while the eclipse lasted; just one hour, eleven minutes, and three seconds.

Lady. But what is all this to my age?

Sir Luke. Because I know you were at that time near seventeen; and without one qualification, except your youth, and your fine clothes.

Lady. Sir Luke, Sir Luke, this is not to be borne!

Sir Luke. Oh, yes! I forgot; you had two letters of recommendation from two great families in England.

Lady. Letters of recommendation?

Sir Luke. Yes; your character. That, you know, is all the fortune we poor Englishmen, situated in India, expect with a wife, who crosses the sea at the hazard of her life, to make us happy.

Lady. And what, but our characters, would you

have us bring? Do you suppose any lady ever came to India, who brought along with her friends or fortune?

Sir Luke. No, my dear; and what is worse, she seldom leaves them behind.

Lady. No matter, Sir Luke; but, if I delivered to you a good character—

Sir Luke. Yes, my dear, you did; and, if you were to ask me for it again, I can't say I could give it you.

Lady. How uncivil! how unlike are your manners to the manners of my Lord Flint!

Sir Luke. Ay, you are never so happy as when you have an opportunity of expressing your admiration of him. A disagreeable, nay, a very dangerous man; one is never sure of one's self in his presence; he carries every thing he hears to the ministers of our suspicious Sultan; and I feel my head shake whenever I am in his company.

Lady. How different does his lordship appear to me! To me he is all *politesse*.

Sir Luke. *Politesse!* how should you understand what is real *politesse*? You know your education was very much confined.

Lady. And if it was confined? I beg, Sir Luke, you will cease these reflections; you know, they are what I can't hear. (*Walks about in a passion.*) Pray, does not his lordship continually assure me, I might be taken for a countess, were it not for a certain little groveling toss I have caught with my head, and a certain little confined hitch in my walk; both which I learnt of you; learnt by looking so much at you.

Sir Luke. And now, if you don't take care, by looking so much at his lordship, you may catch some of his defects.

Lady. I know of very few he has.

Sir Luke. I know of many; besides those he assumes.

Lady. Assumes?

Sir Luke. Yes; do you suppose he is as forgetful as he pretends to be? No, no; but, because he is a favourite with the Sultan, and all our great men, he thinks it genteel or convenient to have no memory; and yet, I'll answer for it, he has one of the best in the universe.

Lady. I don't believe your charge.

Sir Luke. Why, though he forgets his appointments with his tradesmen, did you ever hear of his forgetting to go to court when a place was to be disposed of? Did he ever make a blunder, and send a bribe to a man out of power? Did he ever forget to kneel before the prince of this island, or to look in his highness's presence like the statue of patient resignation in humble expectation?

Lady. Dear Sir Luke—

Sir Luke. Sent from his own country in his very infancy, and brought up in the different courts of petty, arbitrary princes here in Asia, he is the slave of every rich man, and the tyrant of every poor one.

Lady. "Petty princes!" 'tis well his highness, our Sultan, does not hear you.

Sir Luke. 'Tis well he does not; don't you repeat what I say: but you know how all this fine country is harassed and laid waste by a set of princes; Sultans, as they style themselves, and I know not what; who are for ever calling out to each other, "That's mine," and "That's mine;" and "You have no business here," and "You have no business there;" and "I have business every where." (*Strutting.*) Then, "Give me this," and "Give me that;" and "Take this," and "Take that." (*Makes signs of fighting.*)

Lady. A very elegant description, truly.

Sir Luke. Why, you know 'tis all matter of fact: and Lord Flint, brought up from his youth among these people, has not one trait of an Englishman about him: he has imbibed all this country's cruelty; and, I dare say, would mind no more seeing me hung up by my thumbs, or made to dance upon a red hot gridiron—

Lady. That is one of the tortures I never heard of. O! I should like to see that, of all things!

Sir Luke. Yes, by keeping this man's company, you'll soon be as cruel as he is; he will teach you every vice. A consequential, grave, dull—and yet with that degree of levity which dares to pay address to a woman, even before her husband's face.

Lady. Did not you declare, this minute, his lordship had not a trait of his own country about him?

Sir Luke. Well, well; as you say, that last is a trait of his own country.

Enter Servant and LORD FLINT.

Serv. Lord Flint. [*Exit Servant.*]

Lady. My lord, I am extremely glad to see you; we were just mentioning your name.

Lord. Were you, indeed, madam? You do me great honour.

Sir Luke. No, my lord; no great honour.

Lord. Pardon me, Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. But, I assure you, my lord, in what I said, I did myself a great deal.

Lady. Yes, my lord; and I'll acquaint your lordship what it was. (*Going up to him.*)

Sir Luke. (*Pulling her aside.*) Why, you would not inform against me, sure? Do you know what would be the consequence? My head must answer it. (*Frightened.*)

Lord. Nay, Sir Luke, I insist upon knowing.

Sir Luke. (*To her.*) Hush! hush! No, my lord; pray, excuse me: your lordship, perhaps, may think what I said did not come from my heart; and I assure you, upon my honour, it did.

Lady. O, yes; that I am sure it did.

Lord. I am extremely obliged to you. (*Bowing.*)

Sir Luke. O, no, my lord, not at all; not at all. (*Aside to her.*) I'll be extremely obliged to you, if you will hold your tongue. Pray, my lord, are you engaged out to dinner to-day? for her ladyship and I are.

Lady. Yes, my lord; and we should be happy to find your lordship of the party.

Lord. "Engaged out to dinner?" Egad! very likely; very likely: but, if I am, I have positively forgotten where.

Lady. We are going to—

Lord. No; I think, now you put me in mind of it—I think, I have company to dine with me. I am either going out to dinner, or have company to dine with me; but I really can't tell which. However, my people know; but I can't recollect.

Sir Luke. Perhaps your lordship has dined; can you recollect that?

Lord. No, no; I have not dined. What's o'clock? [*fasted?*]

Lady. Perhaps, my lord, you have not break-

Lord. O, yes; I've breakfasted: I think so; but, upon my word, these things are very difficult to remember.

Sir Luke. They are, indeed, my lord; and I wish all my family would entirely forget them.

Lord. What did your ladyship say was o'clock?

Lady. Exactly twelve, my lord.

Lord. Bless me! I ought to have been somewhere else, then; an absolute engagement; I have broke my word; a positive appointment.

Lady. Shall I send a servant?

Lord. No, no, no, no; by no means. It can't be helped now; and they know my unfortunate failing: besides, I'll beg their pardon; and, I trust, that will be ample satisfaction.

Lady. You are very good, my lord, not to leave us.

Lord. I could not think of leaving you so soon; the happiness I enjoy in your society is so extreme—

Sir Luke. That were your lordship to go away now, you might never remember to come again.

Enter Servant.

Serv. A gentleman, sir, just landed from on board an English vessel, says, he has letters to present to you.

Sir Luke. Shew him in. [*Exit Servant.*] He has brought his character, too, I suppose; and left it behind, too, perhaps.

Enter MR. TWINEALL, in a fashionable undress.

Tw. Sir Luke, I have the honour of presenting to you—(*gives letters*)—one from my Lord Cleland, one from Sir Thomas Shoestring, one from Colonel Frill.

Sir Luke. (*Aside.*) Who, in the name of wonder, have my friends recommended? (*Reads, while Lord Flint and the Lady talk apart.*) No; as I live, he is a gentleman, and the son of a lord. (*Going to Lady Tremor.*) My dear, that is a gentleman, notwithstanding his appearance. Don't laugh; but let me introduce you to him.

Lady. A gentleman! Certainly: I did not look at him before; but now I can perceive it.

Sir Luke. Mr. Twineall, give me leave to introduce Lady Tremor to you, and my Lord Flint: this, my lord, is the Honourable Mr. Twineall, from England, who will do me the favour to remain in my house till he is settled to his mind in some post here. (*They bow.*) I beg your pardon, sir, for the somewhat cool reception Lady Tremor and I at first gave you; but, I dare say, her ladyship was under the same mistake as myself; and, I must own, I took you at first sight for something very different from the person you prove to be: for, really, no English ships having arrived in this harbour for these five years past, and the dress of

English gentlemen being so much altered since that time—

Tw. But, I hope, Sir Luke, if it is, the alteration meets with your approbation.

Lady. Oh! it is extremely elegant and becoming.

Sir Luke. Yes, my dear, I don't doubt but you think so; for, I remember, you used to make your favourite monkey wear just such a jacket, when he went out a visiting.

Tw. Was he your favourite, madam? Sir, you are very obliging. (*Bowing to Sir Luke.*)

Sir Luke. My lord, if it were possible for your lordship to call to your remembrance such a trifle—

Lady. Dear Sir Luke—(*Pulling him.*)

Lord. Egad! I believe I do call to my remembrance. (*Gravely considering.*) Not, I assure you, sir, that I perceive any great resemblance; or, if it was so—I dare say it is merely in the dress; which, I must own, strikes me as most ridiculous; very ridiculous, indeed.

Tw. My lord!

Lord. I beg pardon, if I have said anything that—Lady Tremor, what did I say?—make my apology, if I have said anything improper; you know my unhappy failing. (*Goes up the stage.*)

Lady. (*To Twineall.*) Sir, his lordship has made a mistake in the word “ridiculous,” which I am sure he did not mean to say; but, he is apt to make use of one word for another. His lordship has been so long out of England, that he may be said, in some measure, to have forgotten his native language.

Tw. You have perfectly explained, madam. Indeed, I ought to have been convinced, without your explanation, that, if his lordship made use of the word ridiculous, even intentionally, that the word had now changed its former sense, and was become a mode to express satisfaction; or he would not have used it, in the very forcible manner he did, to a perfect stranger.

Sir Luke. What, Mr. Twineall, have you new fashions for words, too, in England, as well as for dresses? and are you equally extravagant in their adoption?

Lady. I never heard, Sir Luke, but that the fashion of words varied, as well as the fashion of every thing else.

Tw. But what is most extraordinary, we have now a fashion, in England, of speaking without any words at all.

Lady. Pray, sir, how is that?

Sir Luke. Ay, do, Mr. Twineall, teach my wife to do without words, and I shall be very much obliged to you; it will be a great accomplishment. Even you, my lord, ought to be attentive to this fashion.

Tw. Why, madam, for instance; when a gentleman is asked a question, which is either troublesome or improper to answer, he does not say he won't answer it, even though he speaks to an inferior; but he says, “Really, it appears to me, e-e-e-e—(*mutters and shrugs*)—that is, mo-mo-mo-mo—(*mutters*)—if you see the thing—for my part—te-te-te-te—and that's all I can tell about it at present.”

Sir Luke. And you have told nothing.

Tw. Nothing upon earth.

Lady. But mayn't one guess what you mean?

Tw. Oh, yes; perfectly at liberty to guess.

Sir Luke. Well, I'll be shot, if I could guess.

Tw. And again; when an impertinent pedant asks you a question, which you know nothing about, and it may not be convenient to say so—yon answer, boldly, “Why really, sir, my opinion is, that the Greek poet—he-he-he-he—(*mutters*)—we-we-we-we—you see; if his ideas were—and if the Latin translator—mis-mis-mis-mis—(*shrugs*)—that I should think—in my humble opinion. But the doctor may know better than I.”

Sir Luke. The doctor must know very little else.

Tw. Or, in case of a duel, where one does not care to say who was right, or who was wrong; you answer: “This, sir, is the state of the matter: Mr. F. came first—te-te-te-te—on that—be-be-be-be—if the other; in short—(*whispers*)—whis-whis-whis-whis—”

Sir Luke. What?

Tw. “There, now you have it; there it is: but don't say a word about it; or, if you do, don't say it came from me.”

Lady. Why, you have not told a word of the story!

Tw. But that your auditor must not say to you; that's not the fashion; he never tells you that; he may say—“You have not made yourself perfectly clear;” or, he may say, “He must have the matter more particularly pointed out somewhere else;” but that is all the auditor can say with good breeding.

Lady. A very pretty method, indeed, to satisfy curiosity!

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Haswell.

Sir Luke. This is a countryman of our's, Mr. Twineall; and a very worthy man, I assure you.

Enter MR. HASWELL.

Sir Luke. Mr. Haswell, how do you do?

Hasw. Sir Luke, I am glad to see you. Lady Tremor, how do you do? (*He bows to the rest.*)

Lady. Oh, Mr. Haswell, I am extremely glad you are come; here is a young adventurer, just arrived from England, who has been giving us such a strange account of all that's going on there.

Hasw. Sir, you are welcome to India. (*Sir Luke whispers Haswell.*) Indeed! his son.

Lady. Do, Mr. Haswell, talk to him; he can give you great information.

Hasw. I am glad of it; I shall then hear many things I am impatient to become acquainted with. (*Goes up to Twineall.*) Mr. Twineall, I have the honour of knowing your father extremely well; he holds his seat in parliament still, I presume?

Tw. He does, sir.

Hasw. And your uncle, Sir Charles?

Tw. Both, sir; both in parliament still.

Hasw. Pray, has any act in behalf of the poor clergy taken place?

Tw. In behalf of the poor clergy, sir? I'll tell you; I'll tell you, sir. As to that act—concerning—(*shrugs and mutters*)—em-em-em-em—the committee—em-em—ways and means—hee-hee—te-te—(*Sir Luke, Lady, and Lord Flint, laugh.*) My father and my uncle both think so, I assure you.

Hasw. Think how, sir?

Sir Luke. Nay, that's not good breeding; you must ask no more questions.

Hasw. Why not?

Sir Luke. Because—we-we-we-we—(*mimics*) he knows nothing about the matter.

Hasw. What! not know?

Tw. Yes, sir, perfectly acquainted with every thing that passes in the house; but, I assure you, that when parliamentary business is reported—By the by, Sir Luke, permit me, in my turn, to make a few enquiries concerning the state of this country. (*Sir Luke starts, and fixes his eyes suspiciously on Lord Flint.*)

Sir Luke. Why, one does not like to speak much about the country one lives in. But, Mr. Haswell, you have been visiting our encampments; you may tell us what is going on there.

Lady. Pray, Mr. Haswell, is it true that the Sultan cut off the head of one of his wives the other day, because she said to him, “I won't?”

Sir Luke. Do, my dear, be silent.

Lady. I won't.

[*of me!*]

Sir Luke. Oh, that the Sultan had you instead

Lady. And with my head off, I suppose?

Sir Luke. No, my dear; in that state, I should have no objection to you myself.

Lady. (*Aside to Sir Luke.*) Now, I'll frighten you ten times more. But, Mr. Haswell, I am told there are many persons suspected of disaffection to the present Sultan, who have been lately, by his orders, arrested, and sold to slavery; notwithstanding there was no proof against them produced.

Hasw. Proof! in a state such as this, the charge is quite sufficient.

Sir Luke. (*In apparent agonies, wishing to turn the discourse.*) Well, my lord, and how does your lordship find yourself this afternoon? this morning, I mean. Bless my soul! why, I begin to be as forgetful as your lordship. (*Smiling and fawning.*)

Lady. How I pity the poor creatures!

Sir Luke. (*Aside to Lady.*) Take care what you say before that tool of state; look at him, and tremble for your head.

Lady. Look at him, and tremble for your own. And so, Mr. Haswell, all this is true? and some persons of family, too, I am told, dragged from their homes, and sent to slavery, merely on suspicion?

Hasw. Yet, less do I pity those, than some, whom prisons and dungeons, crammed before, are yet prepared to receive.

Lord. Mr. Haswell, such is the Sultan's pleasure.

Sir Luke. Will your lordship take a turn in the garden? it looks from this door very pleasant. Does not it, my lord?

Lady. But pray, Mr. Haswell, has not the Sultan sent for you to attend at his palace this morning?

Hasw. He has, madam.

Lady. There! I heard he had; but Sir Luke said not. I am told, he thinks himself under the greatest obligations to you.

Hasw. The report has flattered me; but, if his highness should think himself under obligations, I can readily point a way by which he may acquit himself of them.

Lady. In the meantime, I am sure you feel for those poor sufferers.

Hasw. (*With stifled emotion.*) Sir Luke, good morning to you. I called upon some trifling business, but I have out-staid my time, and therefore I'll call again in a couple of hours. Lady Tremor, good morning; my lord; Mr. Twineall.

[*Bows, and exit.*]

Twineall. Sir Luke, your garden does look so divinely beautiful—

Sir Luke. Come, my lord, will you take a turn in it? Come, Mr. Twineall; come, my dear. (*Taking her hand.*) I can't think what business Mr. Haswell has to speak to me upon; for my part, I am quite a plain man, and busy myself about no one's affairs, except my own; but, I dare say, your lordship has forgotten all we have been talking about.

Lord. If you permit me, Sir Luke, I'll hand Lady Tremor.

Sir Luke. Certainly, my lord, if you please; come, Mr. Twineall, and I'll conduct you. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at Sir Luke Tremor's.*

Enter TWINEALL and MEANRIGHT.

Twineall. My dear friend, after so long a separation, how devilish unlucky that you should, on the very day of my arrival, be going to set sail for another part of the world! yet, before you go, I must beg a favour of you. You know Sir Luke and his family perfectly well, I dare say?

Meanright. I think so; I have been in his house near six years.

Twineall. The very person on earth I wanted. Sir Luke has power here, I suppose? a word from him might do a man some service, perhaps?

Meanright. Why, yes; I don't know a man who has more influence at a certain place.

Twineall. And Lady Tremor seems a very clever gentlewoman.

Meanright. Very.

Twineall. And I have a notion they think me very clever.

Meanright. I dare say they do.

Twineall. Yes; but I mean very clever.

Meanright. No doubt.

Twineall. But, my dear friend, you must help me to make them think better of me still; and when my fortune is made, I'll make your's; for when I once become acquainted with people's dispositions, their little weaknesses, foibles, and faults, I can wind, twist, twine, and get into the corner of every one's heart, and lie so snug, they can't know I'm there till they want to pull me out, and find 'tis impossible.

Meanright. Excellent talent!

Twineall. Is not it? And now, my dear friend, do you inform me of the secret dispositions and propensities of every one in this family, and that of all their connexions? What lady values herself upon one qualification, and what lady upon another? What gentleman will like to be told of his accomplishments, or what man would rather hear of his wife's or his daughters? or of his horses, or of his dogs? Now, my dear Ned, acquaint me with all this; and, within a fortnight, I will become the most necessary rascal; not a creature shall know how to exist without me.

Meanright. Why, such a man as you ought to have made your fortune in England.

Twineall. No; there, my father and my three uncles monopolized all the great men themselves, and would never introduce me where I was likely to become their rival. This, this is the very spot for me to display my genius. But then I must first penetrate the people, unless you will kindly save me that trouble. Come, give me all their characters; all their little propensities; all their whims; in short, all I am to praise, and all I am to avoid praising, in order to endear myself to them. [*Takes out tablets.*] Come; begin with Sir Luke.

Meanright. Sir Luke values himself more upon personal bravery, than upon anything.

Twineall. Thank you, my dear friend; thank you. [*Writes.*] Was he ever in the army?

Meanright. Oh, yes; besieged a capital fortress a few years ago: and now, the very name of a battle, or a great general, tickles his vanity; and he takes all the praises you can lavish upon the subject as compliments to himself.

Twineall. Thank you; thank you, a thousand times. [*Writes.*] I'll mention a battle very soon.

Meanright. Not directly.

Twineall. Oh, no; let me alone for time and place. Go on, my friend; go on: her ladyship—

Meanright. Descended from the ancient kings of Scotland.

Twineall. You don't say so?

Meanright. And though she is so nicely scrupulous as never to mention the word genealogy, yet I have seen her agitation so great, when the advantages of high birth have been extolled, that she could scarcely withhold her sentiments of triumph; which, in order to disguise, she has assumed a disdain for all "vain titles, empty sounds, and idle pomp."

Twineall. Thank you, thank you; this is a most excellent trait of the lady's. [*Writes.*] "Pedigree of the kings of Scotland." Oh, I have her at once.

Meanright. Yet, do it nicely; oblique touches, rather than open explanations.

Twineall. Let me alone for that.

Meanright. She has, I know, in her possession; but I dare say she would not shew it you; nay, on the contrary, would affect to be highly offended, were you to mention it; and yet, it certainly would

flatter her, to know you were acquainted with her having it.

Tw. What—what—what is it?

Mean. A large old-fashioned wig; which Malcolm the third or fourth, her great ancestor, wore when he was crowned at Scone, in the year—

Tw. I'll mention it.

Mean. Take care.

Tw. O, let me alone for the manner.

Mean. She'll pretend to be angry.

Tw. That I am prepared for. Pray, who is my Lord Flint?

Mean. A deep man; and a great favourite at court.

Tw. Indeed! how am I to please him?

Mean. By insinuations against the present Sultan.

Tw. Indeed!

Mean. With all his pretended attachment, his heart—

Tw. Are you sure of it?

Mean. Sure: he blinds Sir Luke; who, by the by, is no great politician; but I know his lordship: and, if he thought he was certain of his ground—and he thinks, he shall be soon—then—

Tw. I'll insinuate myself, and join his party; but, in the meantime, preserve good terms with Sir Luke, in case anything should fall in my way there. Who is Mr. Haswell?

Mean. He pretends to be a man of principle and sentiment; flatter him on that.

Tw. The easiest thing in the world; no characters love flattery better than such as those: they will bear even to hear their vices praised. I will myself, undertake to praise the vices of a man of sentiment, till he shall think them so many virtues. You have mentioned no ladies yet, but the lady of the house.

Mean. I know little about any other, except a pretty girl who came over from England, about two years ago, for a husband; and, not succeeding in a distant part of the country, was recommended to this house; and has been here three or four months.

Tw. Let me alone to please her.

Mean. Yes; I believe you are skilled.

Tw. In the art of flattery, no one more.

Mean. But, d—n it, it is not a liberal art.

Tw. It is a great science, notwithstanding; and studied, at present, by all wise men. Zounds! I have staid a long time; I can't attend to any more characters at present; Sir Luke and his lady will think me inattentive, if I don't join them. Shall I see you again? if not, I wish you a pleasant voyage. I'll make the most of what you have told me; you'll hear I'm a great man. Heaven bless you! good day! you'll hear I'm a great man. [Exit.]

Mean. And, if I am not mistaken, I shall hear you are turned out of this house before to-morrow morning. O, Twineall! exactly the reverse of every character have you now before you. The greatest misfortune in the life of Sir Luke has been, flying from his regiment in the midst of an engagement, and a most humiliating degradation in consequence; which makes him so feelingly alive on the subject of a battle, that nothing, but his want of courage, can secure my friend Twineall's life, for venturing to name the subject. Then, my Lord Flint, firmly attached to the interest of the Sultan, will be all on fire when he hears of open disaffection. But, most of all, Lady Tremor, whose father was a grocer, and uncle a noted advertising "Periwig-maker, on a new construction." She will run mad to hear of births, titles, and long pedigrees. Poor Twineall! little dost thou think what is prepared for thee. There is Mr. Haswell, too! but to him have I sent you to be reclaimed; to him, who, free from faults, or even foibles, of his own, has yet more potently received the blessing—of pity for his neighbours. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—*The Inside of a Prison.*

Enter Keeper and HASWELL, with lights.

Keep. This way, sir; the prisons this way are more extensive still. You seem to feel for those unthinking men; but they are a set of unruly people, whom no severity can make such as they ought to be.

Hasw. And would not gentleness, or mercy, do you think, reclaim them?

Keep. That I can't say; we never make use of those means in this part of the world. That man, yonder, suspected of disaffection, is sentenced to be here for life, unless his friends can lay down a large sum, by way of penalty; which he finds they cannot do, and he is turned melancholy.

Hasw. (After a pause.) Who is that? (Pointing to another.)

Keep. He has been tried for heading an insurrection, and acquitted.

Hasw. What keeps him here?

Keep. Fees due to the court; a debt contracted while he proved his innocence.

Hasw. Lead on, my friend; let us go to some other part. (Putting his hand to his eyes.)

Keep. In the ward we are going to, are the prisoners, who, by some small reserve of money, some little stock when they arrived, or by the bounty of some friends who visit them, or such like fortunate circumstance, are in a less dismal place.

Hasw. Lead on.

Keep. But stop—put on this cloak; for, before we arrive at the place I mention, we must pass a damp vault, which, to those who are not used to it—(Haswell puts on the cloak.) Or will you postpone your visit?

Hasw. No: go on.

Keep. Alas! who would suppose you had been used to see such places? You look concerned—grieved to see the people suffer. I wonder you should come, when you seem to think so much about them.

Hasw. O, that, that is the very reason!

[Exit, following the Keeper.]

1st. Pris. Who is this man!

2nd. Pris. From Britain. I have seen him once before.

1st. Pris. He looks pale: he has no heart.

2nd. Pris. I believe, a pretty large one.

Re-enter ZEDAN.

Zedan. Brother, a word with you. (To the first prisoner—the other retires.) As the stranger and our keeper passed by the passage, a noxious vapour put out the light; and, as they groped along, I purloined this from the stranger. (Shows a pocket-book.) See, it contains two notes will pay our ransom. (Shewing the notes.)

1st. Pris. A treasure: our certain ransom!

Zedan. Liberty, our wives, our children, and our friends, will these papers purchase.

1st. Pris. What a bribe for our keeper! He may rejoice too.

Zedan. And, then, the pleasure it will be to hear the stranger fret, and complain for his loss! O, how my heart loves to see sorrow! Misery, such as I have known, dealt to men who spurn me—who treat me as if, in my own island, I had no friends who loved me; no servants who paid me honour; no children who revered me. Taskmasters, forgetful that I am a husband—a father—nay, a man.

1st. Pris. Conceal your thoughts—conceal your treasure, too; or the Briton's complaint—

Zedan. Will be in vain. Our keeper will conclude the prize must come to him at last; and, therefore, make no great search for it. Here in the corner of my belt, (puts up the pocket-book) 'twill be secure. Come this way, and let us indulge our pleasant prospect. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*Another part of the Prison.*

A kind of sofa, with an old Man sleeping upon it. ELVIRUS sitting attentively by him.

Enter Keeper and HASWELL.

Keep. That young man, watching his aged father as he sleeps, by the help of fees gains his admission; and he never quits the place, except to go and purchase cordials for the old man; who, though healthy and strong when he was first a prisoner, is now become languid and ill.

Hasw. Are they from Europe?

Keep. No: but descended from Europeans. See how the youth holds his father's hand! I have sometimes caught him bathing it with tears.

Hasw. I'll speak to the young man.

Keep. He will speak as soon as he sees me: he has sent a petition to the Sultan about his father, and never fails to inquire if a reply is come. (*They approach: Elvirus starts, and comes forward.*)

Elvir. (*To Haswell.*) Sir, do you come from court? Has the Sultan received my humble supplication, can you tell? Softly! let not my father hear you speak.

Hasw. I come but as a stranger, to see the prison.

Elvir. No answer yet, *Keep?*

Keep. No. I told you it was in vain to implore: they never read petitions sent from prisons: their hearts are hardened to such worn-out tales of sorrow. (*Elvirus turns towards his father, and weeps.*)

Hasw. Pardon me, sir; but what is the request you are thus denied?

Elvir. Behold my father! But three months has he been confined here; and yet, unless he breathes a purer air—O, if you have influence at court, sir, pray represent what passes in this dreary prison—what passes in my heart. My supplication is, to remain a prisoner here, while my father, released, shall retire to his paternal estate, and never more take arms against the present government, but at the peril of my life; or, if the Sultan would allow me to serve him as a soldier—

Hasw. You would fight against the party your father fought for?

Elvir. (*Starting.*) No; but in the forests, or on the desert sands, amongst those slaves who are sent to battle with the wild Indians, there I would go, to earn the boon I ask; or in the mines—

Hasw. Give me your name: I will, at least, present your suit; and, perhaps—

Elvir. Sir! do you think it is likely? Joyful hearing!

Hasw. Nay, be not too hasty in your hopes. I cannot answer for my success. (*Repeats.*) "Your father humbly implores to be released from prison; and, in his stead, you take his chains: or, for the Sultan's service, fight as a slave, or dig in his mines." [you, sir.

Elvir. Exactly, sir: that is the petition. I thank

Keep. You don't know, young man, what it is to dig in mines; or fight against foes, who make their prisoners die by unheard-of tortures.

Elvir. You do not know, sir, what it is to see a parent suffer.

Hasw. (*Writing.*) Your name, sir?

Elvir. Elvirus Casimir.

Hasw. Your father's?

Elvir. The same: one who followed agriculture in the fields of Symria; but, induced by the call of freedom—

Hasw. How? Have a care.

Elvir. I thank you. His son, by the call of nature, supplicates his freedom.

Keep. The rebel, you find, breaks out!

Elvir. (*Aside to Keep.*) Silence! silence! he forgives it. Don't remind him—don't undo my hopes.

Hasw. I will serve you, if I can.

Elvir. And I will merit it; indeed I will. You shall not complain of me. I will be—

Hasw. Retire. I trust you. (*Elvirus bows lowly, and retires.*)

Keep. Yonder cell contains a female prisoner.

Hasw. A female prisoner!

Keep. Without a friend or comforter, she has existed there these many years—nearly fifteen.

Hasw. Is it possible?

Keep. Would you wish to see her?

Hasw. If it won't give her pain.

Keep. At least, she'll not resent it; for she seldom complains, except in moans to herself. (*Goes to the cell.*) Lady, here is one come to visit all the prisoners; please to appear before him.

Hasw. I thank you: you speak with reverence and respect to her.

Keep. She has been of some note, though now totally unfriended: at least, we think she has, from her gentle manners; and our governor is in the daily expectation of some liberal ransom for her: this makes her imprisonment without hope of release, till that day arrives. (*Going to the cell.*) Take my hand; you are weak. (*He leads her from the cell; she appears faint, and as if the light affected her eyes. Haswell pulls off his hat, and after a pause—*

Hasw. I fear you are not in health, lady? (*She looks at him solemnly for some time.*)

Keep. Speak, madam; speak.

Pris. No: not very well. (*Faintingly.*)

Hasw. Where are your friends? When do you expect your ransom?

Pris. (*Shaking her head.*) Never.

Keep. She persists to say so; thinking, by that declaration, we shall release her without a ransom.

Hasw. Is that your motive?

Pris. I know no motive for a falsehood.

Hasw. I was to blame: pardon me.

Keep. Your answers are somewhat more proud than usual. (*He retires up the stage.*)

Pris. They are. (*To Haswell.*) Forgive me: I am mild with all these people; but from a countenance like your's, I could not bear reproach.

Hasw. You flatter me.

Pris. Alas! sir, and what have I to hope from such a meanness? You do not come to ransom me.

Hasw. Perhaps I do.

Pris. Oh! do not say so, unless—unless—I am not to be deceived. Pardon, in your turn, this suspicion: but when I have so much to hope for—when the sun, the air, fields, woods, and all that wondrous world wherein I have been so happy, is in prospect: forgive me, if the vast hope makes me fear.

Hasw. Unless your ransom is fixed at something beyond my power to give, I will release you.

Pris. Release me! Benevolent!

Hasw. How shall I mark you down in my petition? (*Takes out his book.*) What name?

Pris. 'Tis almost blotted from my memory.

Keep. It is of little note: a female prisoner, taken with the rebel party, and in the cells confined for fifteen years.

Pris. During which time I have demeaned myself with all humility to my governors: neither have I distracted my fellow-prisoners with a complaint that might recall to their memory their own unhappy fate. I have been obedient, patient; and cherished hope to cheer me with vain dreams, while despair possessed my reason.

Hasw. Retire. I will present the picture you have given.

Pris. And be successful; or, never let me see you more. (*She goes up the stage.*)

Hasw. So it shall be.

Pris. (*Returns.*) Or, if you should miscarry in your views—for who forms plans that do not sometimes fail? I will not reproach you, even to myself. No; nor will I suffer much from the disappointment; merely, that you may not have what I suffer, to account for. [Exit to her cell.

Hasw. Excellent mind!

Keep. In this cell—(Going to another.)

Hasw. No; take me away: I have enough to do for those I have seen. I dare not see more at present. [Exit.

SCENE IV.—*The former Prison Scene.*

Enter ZEDAN.

Zedan. They are coming. I'll stand here in his sight; that, should he miss what I have taken, he may not suspect me to be the robber, but suppose it is one who has hid himself.

Enter Keeper and HASWELL.

Keep. (To *Zedan*.) What makes you here? Still moping by yourself, and lamenting for your family? (To *Hasw.*) That man, the most ferocious I ever met with, laments, sometimes even with tears, the separation from his wife and children.

Hasw. (Going to him.) I am sorry for you, friend; (*Zedan looks sullen and morose*) I pity you.

Keep. Yes, he had a pleasant hamlet on the neighbouring island: plenty of fruits, clear springs, and wholesome roots; and now complains bitterly of his repasts—sour rice and muddy water. [Exit.

Hasw. Poor man! bear your sorrows nobly. And, as we are alone, no miserable eye to grudge the favour; (*looking round*) take this trifle: (*gives money*) it will, at least, make your meals better for a few short weeks, till heaven may please to favour you with a less sharp remembrance of the happiness you have lost. Farewell. (Going; *Zedan catches hold of him, and taking the pocket-book from his belt, puts it into Haswell's hand.*) What's this?

Zedan. I meant to gain my liberty with it; but I will not vex you.

Hasw. How came you by it?

Zedan. Stole it: and would have stabbed you, too, had you been alone; but I am glad I did not. Oh! I am glad I did not.

Hasw. You like me, then?

Zedan. (*Shakes his head and holds his heart.*) 'Tis something that I never felt before; it makes me like not only you, but all the world besides. The love of my family was confined to them alone; but this sensation makes me love even my enemies.

Hasw. O, nature! grateful, mild, gentle, and forgiving! worst of tyrants they, who, by hard usage, drive you to be cruel.

Re-enter Keeper.

Keep. The lights are ready, sir, through the dark passage. (To *Zedan*.) Go to your fellows.

Hasw. (To *Zedan*.) Farewell: we will meet again. [Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at Sir Luke Tremor's.*

Enter SIR LUKE and AURELIA.

Sir Luke. Why, then, Aurelia, (though I never mentioned it to my Lady Tremor) my friend wrote me word he had reason to suppose your affections were improperly fixed upon a young gentleman in that neighbourhood; and this was his reason for wishing you to leave that place to come hither; and this continual dejection convinces me my friend was not mistaken. Answer me: can you say he was?

Aure. Sir Luke, candidly to confess—

Sir Luke. Nay, no tears. Why in tears? for a husband? Be comforted, we'll get you one ere long, I warrant.

Aure. Dear Sir Luke, how can you imagine I am in tears because I have not a husband, while you see Lady Tremor every day in tears for the very opposite cause?

Sir Luke. No matter; women like to have a husband through pride; and I have known a woman marry, from that very motive, even a man she has been ashamed of.

Aure. Perhaps Lady Tremor married from pride. *Sir Luke.* Yes: and I'll let her know that pride is painful.

Aure. But, sir, her ladyship's philosophy—
Sir Luke. She has no philosophy.

Enter LADY TREMOR and TWINEALL.

Sir Luke. Where is my Lord Flint? What have you done with him?

Lady. He's speaking a word to Mr. Mearright, about his passport to England. Did you mean me, Sir Luke, who has no philosophy? I protest, I have a great deal.

Sir Luke. When did you shew it?

Lady. When the servant at my Lady Grissel's threw a whole urn of boiling water upon your legs. Did I then give any proofs of female weakness? Did I faint, scream, or even shed a tear?

Sir Luke. No; very true; and while I lay sprawling on the carpet, I could see you holding a smelling-bottle to the lady of the house, begging of her not to make herself uneasy, "for that the accident was of no manner of consequence."

Aure. Dear, sir, don't be angry: I am sure her Ladyship spoke as she thought.

Sir Luke. I suppose she did, miss.

Aure. I mean, she thought the accident might be easily—she thought you might be easily recovered.

Lady. No, indeed, I did not: but I thought Sir Luke had frequently charged me with the want of patience; and, that moment, the very thing in the world I could have wished occurred, on purpose to give me an opportunity to prove his accusation false.

Sir Luke. Very well, madam; but did not the whole company censure your behaviour? Did not they say, it was not the conduct of a wife?

Lady. Only our particular acquaintance could say so; for the rest of the company, I am sure, did not take me to be your wife. Thank heaven! our appearance never betrays that secret. Do you think we look like the same flesh and blood?

Sir Luke. That day, in particular, we did not; for I remember you had been no less than three hours at your toilet.

Lady. And indeed, Sir Luke, if you were to use milk of roses, and several other things of the same kind, you can't think how much more like a fine gentleman you would look. Such things as those make, almost, all the difference between you and such a man as Mr. Twineall.

Tw. No, pardon me, madam, a face like mine may use those things; but in Sir Luke's they would entirely destroy that fine martial appearance (*Sir Luke looks confounded*) which women, as well as men admire; for, as valour is the first ornament of our sex—

Lady. What are you saying, Mr. Twineall? (*Aside.*) I'll keep on this subject if I can.

Tw. I was going to observe, madam, that the reputation of a general—which puts me in mind, Sir Luke, of an account I read of a battle. (*Sir Luke retires.*)

Lady. Well, sir; go on, go on; you were going to introduce—

Tw. A battle, madam; but Sir Luke is gone.

Lady. Never mind that, sir: he generally runs away on these occasions.

Sir Luke. (*Coming back.*) What were you saying, Aurelia, about a husband?

Lady. She did not speak.

Sir Luke. To be sure, ladies in India do get husbands very soon.

Tw. Not always, I am told, Sir Luke. Women of family, (*fixing his eyes steadfastly on Lady Tremor*) indeed, may soon enter into the matrimonial state; but the rich men in India, we are told in England, are grown of late very cautious with whom they marry; and there is not a man of any repute that will now look upon a woman as a wife,

unless she is descended from a good family. (*Lady Tremor retires.*)

Sir Luke. I am very sorry, very sorry to say, Mr. Twineall, that has not been always the case.

Twineall. Then I am very sorry, too, Sir Luke; for it is as much impossible that a woman, who is not born of an ancient family, can be—(*Lady Tremor returns.*)

[*he—*
Sir Luke. That is just what I say; they cannot
Lady. Sir Luke, let me tell you—
Sir Luke. It does not signify telling, my dear—
you have proved it.

Lady. (*To Twineall.*) Sir, let me tell you.
Twineall. O! O! my dear madam, 'tis all in vain; there is no such thing—it can't be—there is no pleading against conviction; a person of low birth must, in every particular, be a terrible creature.

Sir Luke. (*Going to her.*) A terrible creature! a terrible creature!

Lady. Here comes my Lord Flint; I'll appeal to him.

Enter LORD FLINT.

Sir Luke. (*Going to him.*) My lord, I was saying, as a proof that our great Sultan, who now fills this throne, is no impostor, as the rebel party would insinuate; no low-born man, but of the royal stock; his conduct palpably evinces; for, had he not been nobly born, we should have beheld the plebeian bursting forth upon all occasions, (*looking at Lady Tremor*) and plebeian manners who can support?

Lady. Provoking!
Lord. Sir Luke, is there a doubt of the emperor's birth and title? he is the real Sultan, depend upon it: it surprises me to hear you talk with the smallest uncertainty.

Twineall. Indeed, Sir Luke, I wonder at it, too: (*Aside to Lord Flint.*) and yet, d—n me, my lord, if I have not my doubts. (*Lord Flint starts.*)

Sir Luke. I, my lord? far be it from me! I was only saying what other people have said; for my part, I never harboured a doubt of the kind. (*Aside.*) My head begins to nod, only for that word. Pray heaven, I may die with it on. I should not like to lose my head; nor should I like to die by a bullet, nor by a sword; and a cannon-ball would be as disagreeable as anything I know. It is very strange that I never yet could make up my mind in what manner I should like to go out of the world. (*During this speech, Twineall is paying court to Lord Flint; they come forward, and Sir Luke retires.*)

Lord. Your temerity astonishes me.
Twineall. I must own, my lord, I feel somewhat awkward in saying it to your lordship; but my own heart, my own conscience, my own sentiments; they are my own; and they are dear to me. So it is, the Sultan does not appear to me (*with significance*) that great man some people think him.

Lord. Sir, you astonish me. Pray, what is your name? I have forgotten it.

Twineall. My lord; the Honourable Henry Twineall; your lordship does me great honour to ask. Landed this morning from England, as your lordship may remember, in the ship Mercury, my lord; and all the officers on board speaking with the highest admiration and warmest terms of your lordship's official character.

Lord. Why, then, Mr. Twineall, I am very sorry—

Twineall. And so am I, my lord, that your sentiments and mine should so far disagree, as I know they do. I am not unacquainted with your firm adherence to the Sultan, but I am unused to disguise my thoughts: I could not, if I would. I have no little views, no sinister motives, no plots, no intrigues, no schemes of preferment; and I verily believe, that if a pistol was now directed to my heart, or a large pension directed to my pocket, (in the first case at least,) I should speak my mind.

Lord. (*Aside.*) A dangerous young man this; and I may make something of the discovery.

Twineall. (*Aside.*) It tickles him to the soul, I find. My lord, now I begin to be warm on the subject, I feel myself quite agitated; and, from the intelligence which I have heard, even when I was in England, there is every reason to suppose—*exm—exm—(mutters.)*

Lord. What, sir? what?

Twineall. You understand me.

Lord. No; explain.

Twineall. Why, then, there is every reason to suppose, some people are not what they should be; pardon my suspicions, if they are wrong.

Lord. I do pardon your thoughts, with all my heart; but your words, young man, you must answer for. (*Aside.*) Lady Tremor, good morning.

Twineall. (*Aside.*) He is going to raminate on my sentiments, I dare say.

Lady. Shall we have your lordship's company in the evening. Mr. Haswell will be here; if your lordship has no objection.

Sir Luke. How do you know Mr. Haswell will be here?

Lady. Because he has just called in his way to the palace, and said so; and he has been telling us some of the most interesting stories—

Sir Luke. Of his morning visits, I suppose; I heard Meanright say, he saw him very busy.

Lady. Sir Luke and I dine out, my lord; but we shall return early in the evening.

Lord. I will be here, without fail. Sir Luke, a word with you, if you please. (*They come forward.*) Mr. Twineall has taken some very improper liberties with the Sultan's name, and I must insist on making him accountable for them.

Sir Luke. My lord, you are extremely welcome—(*trembling*)—to do whatever your lordship pleases with any one belonging to me, or to my house; but I hope your lordship will pay some regard to the master of it.

Lord. O! great regard to the master; and to the mistress also. But for that gentleman—

Sir Luke. Do what your lordship pleases.

Lord. I will; and I will make him—

Sir Luke. If your lordship does not forget it.

Lord. I sha'n't forget it, Sir Luke; I have a very good memory when I please.

Sir Luke. I don't in the least doubt it, my lord; I never did doubt it.

Lord. And I can be very severe, Sir Luke, when I please.

Sir Luke. I don't in the least doubt it, my lord; I never did doubt it.

Lord. You may depend upon seeing me here in the evening; and then you shall find, I have not threatened more than I mean to perform. Good morning.

Sir Luke. Good morning, my lord; I don't in the least doubt it. [*Exit Lord Flint.*]

Lady. (*Coming forward with Twineall.*) For heaven's sake, Mr. Twineall, what has birth to do with—

Twineall. It has to do with every thing, even with beauty; and I wish I may suffer death, if a woman, with all the mental and personal accomplishments of the finest creature in the world, would, to me, be of the least value, if lowly born.

Sir Luke. I sincerely wish every man, who visits me, was of the same opinion.

Aure. For shame, Mr. Twineall! persons of mean birth ought not to be despised for what it was not in their power to prevent; and, if it is a misfortune, you should consider them only as objects of pity.

Twineall. And so I do pity them; and so I do; most sincerely. Poor creatures! (*Looking on Lady Tremor.*)

Sir Luke. Ay, now he has atoned most properly.

Lady. Mr. Twineall, let me tell you—

Sir Luke. My dear Lady Tremor—(taking her aside)—let him alone; let him go on; there is something preparing for him he little expects; so let the poor man say and do what he pleases for the present; it won't last long, for he has offended my Lord Flint; and I dare say his lordship will be able, upon some account or another, to get him imprisoned for life.

Lady. Imprisoned! Why not take off his head at once?

Sir Luke. Well, my dear, I am sure I have no objection; and I dare say my lord will have it done, to oblige you. Egad! I must make friends with her, to keep mine safe. (Aside.)

Lady. Do you mean to take him out to dinner with us?

Sir Luke. Yes, my dear, if you approve of it; not else.

Lady. You are become extremely polite.

Sir Luke. Yes, my dear, his lordship has taught me how to be polite. Mr. Twineall, Lady Tremor, and I, are going to prepare for our visit, and I will send a servant to shew you to your apartment, to dress; for you will favour us with your company, I hope?

Tw. Certainly, Sir Luke, I shall do myself the honour.

Lady. Come this way, Aurelia; I can't bear to look at him. [Exit with Aurelia.]

Sir Luke. Nor I to think of him. [Exit.]

Tw. If I have not settled my business in this family, I am mistaken: they seem to be but of one opinion about me. Devilish clever fellow! egad I am the man to send into the world; such a volatile, good-looking scoundrel, too, that no one suspects me. To be sure, I am under some few obligations to my friend for letting me into the different characters of the family; and yet I don't know whether I am obliged to him or not; for if he had not made me acquainted with them, I should soon have had the skill to find them out myself. No: I will not think myself under any obligation to him; it is very inconvenient for a gentleman to be under obligations. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—*The Palace. The Sultan discovered, with Guards and Officers attending.*

HASWELL is conducted in by an Officer.

Sult. Sir, you were invited hither to receive public thanks for our troops restored to health by your prescriptions. Ask a reward adequate to your services.

Hasw. Sultan, the reward I ask, is to preserve more of your people still.

Sult. How! more! my subjects are in health: no contagion visits them.

Hasw. The prisoner is your subject. There, misery, more contagious than disease, preys on the lives of hundreds: sentenced but to confinement, their doom is death. Immured in damp and dreary vaults, they daily perish; and who can tell but that, among these many hapless sufferers, there may be hearts bent down with penitence to heaven and you for every slight offence—there may be some, among the wretched multitude, even innocent victims. Let me seek them out—let me save them and you.

Sult. Amazement! retract your application: curb this weak pity; and receive our thanks.

Hasw. Restrain my pity! and what can I receive in recompense for that soft bond which links me to the wretched? and while it soothes their sorrow, repays me more than all the gifts an empire could bestow. But, if repugnant to your plan of government, I apply not in the name of pity, but of justice.

Sult. Justice!

Hasw. The justice which forbids all, but the worst of criminals, to be denied that wholesome air the very brute creation freely takes.

Sult. Consider for whom you plead—for men (if not base culprits) so misled, so depraved, they are dangerous to our state, and deserve none of its blessings.

Hasw. If not upon the undeserving—if not upon the hapless wanderer from the paths of rectitude, where shall the sun diffuse his light, or the clouds distil their dew? Where shall spring breathe fragrance or autumn pour its plenty?

Sult. Sir, your sentiments, still more your character, excite my curiosity. They tell me, that in our camps you visited each sick man's bed, administered yourself the healing draught, encouraged our savages with the hope of life, or pointed out their better hope in death. The widow speaks your charities, the orphan lisps your bounties, and the rough Indian melts in tears to bless you. I wish to ask why you have done all this? What is it which prompts you thus to befriend the wretched and forlorn?

Hasw. In vain for me to explain: the time it would take to reveal to you—

Sult. Satisfy my curiosity in writing, then.

Hasw. Nay, if you will read, I'll send a book in which is already written why I act thus.

Sult. What book? What is it called?

Hasw. "The Christian Doctrine." (Haswell bows here with the utmost reverence.) There you will find—all I have done was but my duty.

Sult. (To the Guards.) Retire, and leave me alone with the stranger. (All retire except Haswell and the Sultan—they come forward.) Your words recall reflections that distract me; nor can I bear the pressure on my mind, without confessing—I am a Christian.

Hasw. A Christian! What makes you thus assume the apostate?

Sult. Misery and despair.

Hasw. What made you a Christian?

Sult. My Arabella, a lovely European, sent hither in her youth, by her mercenary parents, to sell herself to the prince of all these territories. But 'twas my happy lot, in humble life, to win her love, snatch her from his expecting arms, and bear her far away; where, in peaceful solitude we lived, till, in the heat of the rebellion against the late Sultan, I was forced from my happy home to take a part. I chose the imputed rebels' side, and fought for the young aspirer. An arrow, in the midst of the engagement, pierced his heart; and his officers, alarmed at the terror this stroke of fate might cause among their troops, urged me (as I bore a strong resemblance to him,) to counterfeit a greater still, and shew myself to the soldiers as their king recovered. I yielded to their suit, because it gave me ample power to avenge the loss of my Arabella, who had been taken from her home by the merciless foe, and barbarously murdered. [Sult. dreads.]

Sult. I learnt so, and my fruitless search to find her has confirmed the intelligence. Frantic for her loss, I joyfully embraced a scheme which promised vengeance on the enemy: it prospered; and I revenged my wrongs and her's with such unsparring justice on the opposite army and their king, that even the men, who made me what I am, trembled to reveal their imposition; and for their interest still continue it.

Hasw. Amazement!

Sult. Nay, they fill my prisons every day with wretches, who but whisper I am not their real Sultan. The secret, therefore, I myself boldly relate in private: the danger is to him who speaks it again; and, with this caution, I trust it is safe with you.

Hasw. It was, without that caution. Now hear my answer to your tale: involved in deeds, in cruelties, at which your better thoughts revolt, the meanest wretch your camps or prisons hold, claims

not half the compassion you have excited. Permit me, then, to be your comforter.

Sult. Impossible!

Hasw. In the most fatal symptoms, I have undertaken the body's cure. The mind's disease, perhaps, I am not less a stranger to. Oh! trust the noble patient to my care.

Sult. What medicine will you apply?

Hasw. Lead you to behold the wretched in their misery, and then shew you yourself in their deliverer. I have your promise for a boon—'tis this: give me the liberty of six whom I shall name, now in confinement, and be yourself a witness of their enlargement. See joy lighted in the countenance where sorrow still has left its rough remains—behold the tear of rapture chase away that of anguish—hear the faltering voice, long used to lamentation, in broken accents, utter thanks and blessings! Behold this scene, and if you find the prescription ineffectual, dishonour your physician.

Sult. I will make trial of it.

Hasw. Come, then, to the governor's house this very night, into that council-room so often perverted to the use of the torture; and there (unknown to those, I shall release, as their king,) you will be witness to all the grateful heart can dictate, and feel all that benevolence can taste.

Sult. I will meet you there.

Hasw. In the evening?

Sult. At ten precisely. Guards, conduct the stranger from the palace. *[Exit.]*

Hasw. Thus far advanced, what changes may not be hoped for? *[Exit.]*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at Sir Luke Tremor's.*

Enter ELVIRUS and AURELIA.

Elvir. Oh! my Aurelia, since the time I first saw you—since you left the pleasant spot where I first beheld you—what distress, what anguish have we known!

Aure. Your family?

Elvir. Yes; and that caused the silence which I hope you have lamented. I could not wound you with the recital of our misfortunes: and now, only with the sad idea that I shall never see you more, am I come to take my last farewell.

Aure. Is there a chance that we may never meet again?

Elvir. There is; and I sincerely hope it may prove so. To see you again, would be again to behold my father pining in misery.

Aure. Explain.—*(A loud rapping at the door.)* That is Sir Luke and Lady Tremor. What shall I say, should they come into this room? They suspect I correspond with some person in the country. Who shall I tell them you are? upon what business can I say you are come?

Elvir. To avoid all suspicion of my real situation, and to ensure admittance, I put on this habit, and told the servant, when I inquired for you, I was just arrived from England. *(She starts.)* Nay, it was but necessary I should conceal who I was in this suspicious place, or I might plunge a whole family in the imputed guilt of mine.

Aure. Good heaven!

Elvir. I feared, besides, there was no other means, no likelihood, to gain admission; and what, what would I not have sacrificed, rather than have left you for ever without a last farewell? Think on these weighty causes, and pardon the deception.

Aure. But if I should be asked—

Elvir. Say as I have done. My stay must be so short, it is impossible they should detect me; for I must be back—

Aure. Where?

Elvir. No matter where, I must be back before the evening, and wish never to see you more. I

love you, Aurelia—O, how truly! and yet there is a love more dear, more sacred still.

Aure. You torture me with suspense. Sir Luke is coming this way; what name shall I say if he asks me?

Elvir. Glamore; I announced that name to the servant.

Aure. You tremble.

Elvir. The imposition hurts me; and I feel as if I dreaded a detection, though 'tis scarce possible. Sorrows have made a coward of me: even the servant, I thought looked at me with suspicion, and I was both confounded and enraged.

Aure. Go into this apartment: I'll follow you.

[Exit Elvirus at a door.]

Sir Luke. *(Without.)* Abominable! provoking! impertinent! not to be borne!

Aure. *(Listening.)* Thank heaven, Sir Luke is so perplexed with some affairs of his own, he may not think of mine. *[Exit to Elvirus.]*

Enter SIR LUKE, followed by LADY TREMOR.

Sir Luke. I am out of all patience, and all temper; did you ever hear of such a complete impertinent coxcomb? Talk, talk, talk, continually! and referring to me on all occasions! "Such a man was a brave general, another a great admiral;" and then he must tell a long story about a siege, and ask me if it did not make my bosom glow!

Lady. It had not that effect upon your face, for you were as white as ashes.

Sir Luke. But you did not see yourself while he was talking of grandfathers and great grandfathers; if you had—

Lady. I was not white, I protest.

Sir Luke. No—but you were as red as scarlet.

Lady. And you ought to have resented the insult, if you saw me affected by it. Oh! some men would have given him such a dressing!

Sir Luke. Yes, my dear, if your uncle the friseur had been alive, he would have given him a dressing, I dare say.

Lady. Sir Luke, none of your impertinence: you know I can't, I won't bear it—neither will I wait for Lord Flint's resentment on Mr. Twineall. No, I desire you will tell him to quit this roof immediately.

Sir Luke. My dear, you must excuse me; I can't think of quarrelling with a gentleman in my own house.

Lady. Was it your own house to-day at dinner when he insulted us? and would you quarrel then?

Sir Luke. No; that was a friend's house, and I make it a rule never to quarrel in my own house, a friend's house, in a tavern, or in the streets.

Lady. Well, then, I would quarrel in my own house, a friend's house, a tavern, or in the street, if any one offended me.

Sir Luke. O, my dear, I have no doubt of it—no doubt, in the least.

Lady. But, at present, it shall be in my own house: and I will desire Mr. Twineall to quit it immediately.

Sir Luke. Very well, my dear—pray do.

Lady. I suppose, however, I may tell him, I have your authority to bid him go?

Sir Luke. Tell him I have no authority—none in the world over you, but that you will do as you please.

Lady. I can't tell him so; he won't believe it.

Sir Luke. Why not? You tell me so, and make me believe it too.

Lady. Here the gentleman comes; go away for a moment.

Sir Luke. With all my heart, my dear. *(Going in a hurry.)*

Lady. I'll give him a few hints, that he must either change his mode of behaviour, or leave us.

Sir Luke. That's right, but don't be too warm;

or if he should be very impertinent, or insolent—I hear Aurelia's voice in the next room; call her, and I dare say she'll come and take your part.

[Exit Sir Luke.]

Enter TWINEALL.

Twineall. I positively could pass a whole day upon that stair-case—those reverend faces! I presume they are the portraits of some of your ladyship's illustrious ancestors?

Lady. Sir! Mr. Twineall, give me leave to tell you—*(In a violent passion.)*

Twineall. The word illustrious, I find, displeases you. Pardon me, I did not mean to make use of so forcible an epithet. I know the delicacy of sentiment, which cannot bear the reflection that a few centuries only should reduce from royalty, one whose dignified department seems to have been formed for that resplendent station.

Lady. The man is certainly mad! Mr. Twineall—

Twineall. Pardon me, madam; I own I am an enthusiast on these occasions. The dignity of blood—

Lady. You have too much, I am sure; do have a little taken from you.

Twineall. Gladly would I lose every drop that fills these plebeian veins, to be ennobled by the smallest—

Lady. Pray, sir, take up your abode in some other place.

Twineall. Madam! *(Surprised.)*

Lady. Your behaviour, sir—

Twineall. If my friend had not given me the hint, I should not think her downright angry. *(Aside.)*

Lady. I can scarcely contain my rage at being so laugh'd at. *(Aside.)*

Twineall. I'll mention the wig: this is the time—*(Aside.)*—Perhaps you may resent it, madam; but there is a favour—

Lady. A favour, sir! is this a time to ask a favour?

Twineall. To an admirer of antiquity, as I am—

Lady. Antiquity again!

Twineall. I beg pardon—but—a wig—

Lady. A what? *(Petrified.)*

Twineall. A wig. *(Bowing.)*

Lady. Oh! oh! oh! *(Choking.)* this is not to be borne—this is to much—Ah! ah! *(Sitting down and going into fits.)* A direct, plain, palpable, and unequivocal attack upon my family, without evasion or palliative. I can't bear it any longer. Oh! oh!—*(Shrieking.)*

Twineall. Bless my soul, what shall I do? what's the matter?

Sir Luke. *(Without.)* Maids! maids! go to your mistress—that good-for-nothing man is doing her a mischief.

Enter AURELIA.

Aurelia. Dear madam, what is the matter?

Enter SIR LUKE.

Lady. Oh! oh! *(Crying.)*

Sir Luke. How do you do now, my dear?

Twineall. Upon my word, Sir Luke—

Sir Luke. O, sir, no apology; it does not signify; never mind it; I beg you won't put yourself to the trouble of an apology; it is of no kind of consequence.

Lady. What do you mean, Sir Luke? *(Suddenly recovering.)*

Sir Luke. To shew proper philosophy, my dear, under the affliction I feel for your distress.

Lady. *(To Aurelia.)* Take Twineall out of the room.

Aurelia. Mr. Twineall, her ladyship begs you'll leave the room till she is a little recovered.

Twineall. Certainly. *[Exit with Aurelia.]*

Sir Luke. I thought what you would get by quarrelling, fits, and tears.

Lady. And you know, Sir Luke, if you had

quarrell'd, you would have been in the same situation. *(Rising from her seat.)* But, Sir Luke, my dear Sir Luke, shew yourself a man of courage but on this occasion.

Sir Luke. My dear, I would do as much for you as I would for my own life; but d—e if I think I could fight to save that.

Enter LORD FLINT.

Lord. Lady Tremor, did the servant say you were very well, or very ill?

Lady. O, my lord, that insolent coxcomb, the Honourable Mr. Twineall—

Lord. I am very glad you put me in mind of him—I dare say I should have forgot else, notwithstanding I came on purpose.

Lady. Forgot what?

Lord. A little piece of paper here: *(pulling out a parchment)* but it will do a great deal. Has he offended you?

Lady. Beyond bearing.

Lord. I am glad of it, because it gives double pleasure to my vengeance. He is a disaffected person—boldly told me he doubted the Sultan's right to the throne. I have informed against him; and his punishment is left to my discretion. I may have him imprisoned, shot, sent to the galleys, or his head cut off: but which does your ladyship choose? Which ever you choose is at your service. *(Bowing.)*

Lady. *(Curtysying.)* O, they are all alike to me: which ever you please, my lord.

Sir Luke. What a deal of ceremony! how cool they are upon the subject!

Lord. And why not cool, sir? why not cool?

Sir Luke. O, very true; I am sure it has frozen me.

Lord. I will go instantly, for fear it should slip my memory, and put this paper into the hands of proper officers. In the meantime, Sir Luke, if you can talk with your visitor, Mr. Twineall, do. Inquire his opinion of the Sultan's rights: ask his thoughts, as if you were commissioned by me; and, while he is revealing them to you, the officers shall be in ambush, surprise him in the midst of his sentiments, and bear him away to—*(Twineall looking in.)*

Twineall. May I presume to inquire how your ladyship does?

Lady. O, yes; and pray walk in, I am quite recovered.

Lord. Lady Tremor, I bid you good day for the present.

Sir Luke. *(Following him to the door.)* Your lordship won't forget?

Lord. No; depend upon it, I shall remember.

Sir Luke. Yes, and make some other people remember too. *[Exit Lord Flint.]*

Twineall. Is his lordship gone? I am very sorry.

Sir Luke. No, don't be uneasy, he'll soon come back.

Enter HASWELL.

Sir Luke. Mr. Haswell, I am glad to see you!

Haswell. I told Lady Tremor I would call in the evening, Sir Luke; and I have kept my word. I hoped to meet my Lord Flint here, as I have some business on which I want to speak to him; but he passed me at the door in such great haste he would hardly allow me to ask him how he did. I hope your ladyship is well this afternoon.

[Exit Sir Luke at the door to Aurelia and Elvira.]

Twineall. Pardon me, Mr. Haswell; but I almost suspect you heard of her ladyship's indisposition, and therefore paid this visit; for I am perfectly acquainted with your care and attention to all under affliction.

Haswell. *(Bows gravely.)* Has your ladyship been indisposed?

Lady. A little, but I am much better.

Twì. Surely, of all virtues, charity is the first! it so protects our neighbour!

Hasw. Do not you think, sir, that patience frequently protects him as much?

Twì. Dear sir, pity for the poor and miserable—
Hasw. Is oftener excited than the poor and miserable are aware of. (*Looking significantly at him.*)

Sir Luke. (*From the room where Aurelia and Elvirus are.*) Nay, sir, I beg you will walk into this apartment. Aurelia, introduce the gentleman to Lady Tremor.

Lady. Who has she with her?

Hasw. Aurelia! oh! I have not seen her I know not when: and, besides my acquaintance with her relations in England, there is a frank simplicity in her manners that has won my friendship.

Enter SIR LUKE, AURELIA, and ELVIRUS.

Sir Luke. You should have introduced Mr. Glanmore before. I assure you, sir, (*to Elvirus*) I did not know, nor should I have known, if I had not accidentally come into that room—(*Haswell starts on seeing Elvirus.*)

Sir Luke. (*To Lady Tremor.*) A relation of Aurelia's—a Mr. Glanmore, my dear, just arrived from England; who has called to pass a few minutes with us before he sets off to the part of India he is to reside in. (*Elvirus and Aurelia appear in confusion.*)

Lady. I hope, sir, your stay with us will not be so short as Sir Luke has mentioned?

Elvir. Pardon me, madam. The caravan, with which I travel, goes off this evening, and I must accompany it.

Hasw. (*Aside.*) I doubted my eyes: but his voice confirms me. (*Looking on Elvirus.*)

Lady. Why, if you only arrived this morning, Mr. Glanmore, you came passenger in the same ship with Mr. Twineall?

Twì. No, madam. Sir, I am very sorry we had not the pleasure of your company on board of us. (*To Elvirus.*)

Sir Luke. You had: Mr. Glaumore came over in the Mercury.—Did not you tell me so, sir? (*Elvirus bows.*)

Twì. Bless my soul, sir! I beg your pardon: but surely that cannot be. I got acquainted with every soul on board of us—every creature—all their connexions—and I can scarcely suppose you were of the number.

Sir Luke. (*Aside.*) How impertinent he is to every body! O, that I had but courage to knock him down!

Elvir. (*To Twineall.*) Perhaps, sir—

Aure. Yes, I dare say, that was the case.

Twì. What was the case, madam?

Sir Luke. Wha—wha—wha—(*mimics*) that is not good breeding.

Hasw. Why do you blush, Aurelia?

Aure. Because (*hesitating*) this gentleman—came over in the same ship with Mr. Twineall.

Sir Luke. And I can't say I wonder at your blushing.

Twì. Why, then, positively, sir, I thought I had known every passenger; and surely—

Lady. Mr. Twineall, your behaviour puts me out of all patience. Did you not hear Mr. Glanmore say he came in the same vessel; and is not that sufficient?

Twì. Perfectly, madam, perfectly; but I thought there might be some mistake.

Elvir. And there is, sir: you find you are mistaken.

Lady. I thought so.

Hasw. (*To Elvirus.*) And you did come in the same vessel?

Elvir. Sir, do you doubt it?

Hasw. Doubt it!

Elvir. Dare not doubt it.

Hasw. Dare not?

Elvir. No, sir; dare not. (*Violently.*)

Aure. Oh, heavens!

Sir Luke. (*To Aurelia.*) Come, my dear, you and I will get out of the way. (*Retiring with her.*)

Lady. O dear!—for heaven's sake! Mr. Twineall, this is your doing.

Twì. Me, madam!—

Hasw. I beg the company's pardon—but (*to Elvirus*) a single word with you, sir, if you please.

Lady. Dear Mr. Haswell—

Hasw. Trust my prudence and forbearance, madam—I will but speak a word in private to this gentleman. (*Haswell takes Elvirus down to the bottom of the stage—the rest retire.*)

Hasw. Are you, or are you not, an impostor?

Elvir. I am—I am; but do not you repeat my words—do not you say it. (*Threatening.*)

Hasw. What am I to fear?

Elvir. Fear me—I cannot lie with fortitude; but I can—Beware of me.

Hasw. I will beware of you, and so shall all my friends.

Elvir. Insolent, insulting man!

Lady Tremor and the rest come forward.

Lady. Come, come, gentlemen, I hope you are now perfectly satisfied concerning this little misunderstanding; let us change the subject. Mr. Haswell, have you been successful before the Sultan for any of those poor prisoners you visited this morning?

Sir Luke. Ay; Meanright told me he saw you coming from them wrapt up in your long cloak; and he said he should not have known you, if somebody had not said it was you. (*Elvirus looks with surprise, confusion, and repentance.*)

Lady. But what success with the Sultan?

Hasw. He has granted me the pardon and freedom of any six whom I shall present as objects of his mercy.

Lady. I sincerely rejoice: then the youth and his father, whom you felt so much for, I am sure will be in the number of those who are to share your intercession. (*Haswell makes no reply; and, after a pause—*)

Elvir. (*With the most supplicatory tone and manner.*) Sir—Mr. Haswell—O heavens! I did not know you.

Sir Luke. Come, Mr. Haswell, this young man seems sorry he has offended you, forgive him.

Lady. Ay, do, Mr. Haswell. Are you sorry, sir?

Elvir. Wounded to the heart; and, without his pardon, see nothing but despair.

Lady. Good heavens!

Hasw. Sir Luke, my Lord Flint told me he was coming back directly. Pray inform him I had business elsewhere, and could wait no longer. [*Exit.*]

Elvir. O! I'm undone.

Lady. Follow him if you have anything to say.

Elvir. I dare not, I feel the terror of his just reproach.

Lady. Did you know him in England?

Aure. Dear madam, will you suffer me to speak a few words?

Sir Luke. (*Aside to Lady Tremor.*) Leave her and her relation together, and let us take a turn in the garden with Mr. Twineall. I am afraid his lordship will be back before we have drawn him to say any more on the subject, for which he is to be arrested.

Lady. You are right.

Sir Luke. Mr. Twineall, will you walk this way? that young lady and gentleman wish to have a little private conversation.

Twì. O, certainly, Sir Luke, by all means. [*Exeunt Sir Luke and Lady.*] (*To Elvirus.*) I am extremely sorry, sir, that you kept your bed during the voyage: I should else have been most prodigiously happy in such good company. [*Exit.*]

Aure. Why are you thus agitated? It was wrong to be so impetuous—but such regret as this is too much.

Elvir. Hear the secret I refused to tell you before—my father is a prisoner for life.

Aure. Oh, heavens! then Mr. Haswell was the only man—

Elvir. And he had promised me—promised me, with benevolence, his patronage: but the disguise he wore, when I first saw him, led me to mistake his figure and appearance—has made me to expose my falsehood, my infamy, and treat his honoured person with abuse.

Aure. Yes, let his virtues make you thus repent: but let them also make you hope for pardon.

Elvir. Nay, he is just, as well as compassionate; and for detected falsehood—

Aure. You make me tremble.

Elvir. Yet he shall hear my story; I'll follow him, and obtain his pity, if not his forgiveness.

Aure. And do not blush, or feel yourself degraded to kneel to him, for he would scorn that pride which triumphs over the humbled. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*The Garden.*

Enter SIR LUKE, TWINEALL, and LADY TREMOR.

Tw. Why, really, Sir Luke, as my lord has given you charge to sound my principles, I must own they are just such as I delivered them to him.

Sir Luke. Mr. Twineall, I only wish you to be a little more circumstantial. We will suppose the present Sultan no impostor; yet what pretensions do you think the other family possessed?

Tw. That I'll make clear to you at once; or if my reasons are not very clear, they are at least very positive, and that you know is the same thing. This family—no—that family; the family that reigned before this; this came after that; that came before this. Now every one agrees that this family was always—so and so—(whispering)—and that the other was always—so and so—(whispering)—in short, every body knows that one of them had always a very suspicious—you know what?

Sir Luke. No, I don't.

Tw. Psha, psha! every body conjectures what; and though it was never said in so many words, yet it was always supposed; and though there never has been any proof, yet there have been things much more strong than proof; and for that very reason, Sir William, (Sir Luke, I mean, I beg your pardon,) for that very reason—I can't think what made me call you Sir William; for that very reason—(O, I was thinking of Sir William Tiffany) for that very reason, let people say what they will; that, that must be their opinion. But then where is the man who will speak his thoughts freely, as I have done?

Enter Guards, who had been listening at a distance, during this speech.

Sir Luke. (Starting.) Bless my soul, gentlemen, you make my heart leap to my very lips.

Guards. (To Twineall.) Sir, you are our prisoner, and must go with us.

Tw. Gentlemen, you are mistaken. I had all my clothes made in England, and 'tis impossible the bill can have followed me already.

Guard. You are charged with treason against the state.

Tw. Treason against the state. You are mistaken: it cannot be me.

Guard. No; there is no mistake. (Pulling out a paper.) You are here called Henry Twineall.

Tw. But if they have left out honourables, it can't be me. I am the Honourable Henry Twineall.

Sir Luke. That you are to prove before your judges.

Guard. Yes, sir; and we are witnesses of the long speech you have just now been making.

Tw. And pray, gentlemen, did you know what I meant by it?

Guard. Certainly.

Tw. Why, then, upon my soul, it is more than I did. I wish I may be sacrificed—

Sir Luke. Well, well, you are going to be sacrificed. Don't be impatient.

Tw. But, gentlemen—Sir Luke! (The Guards seize him.)

Lady. Dear Mr. Twineall, I am afraid you will have occasion for the dignity of all my ancestors to support you under this trial.

Sir Luke. And have occasion for all my courage, too.

Tw. But, sir; but, gentlemen—

Sir Luke. Oh, I would not be in your coat, fashionable as it is, for all the Sultan's dominions. [Exeunt.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Prison.*

HASWELL and the female Prisoner discovered.

Hasw. Rather remain in this loathsome prison! refuse the blessing offered you! the blessing your pleased fancy formed so precious, that you durst not even trust its reality!

Pris. While my pleased fancy only saw the prospect, I own it was delightful: but now reason beholds it, the view is changed; and what, in the gay dream of fond delirium, seemed a blessing, in my waking hours of sad reflection, would prove the most severe of punishments.

Hasw. Explain; what is the cause that makes you think thus?

Pris. A cause, that has alone for fourteen years made me resigned to a fate like this. When you first mentioned my release from this dark dreary place, my wild ideas included, with the light, all that had ever made the light a blessing. 'Twas not the sun I saw in my mad transport, but a lost husband filled my imagination; 'twas his idea, that gave the colours of the world their beauty, and made me fondly hope to be cheered by its brightness.

Hasw. A husband?

Pris. But the world that I was woot to enjoy with him; to see again without him; every well-known object would wound my mind with dear delights for ever lost, and make my freedom torture.

Hasw. But yet—

Pris. Oh! on my knees a thousand times I have thanked heaven that he partook not of this dire abode; that he shared not with me my hard bondage; a greater blessing I possessed from that reflection, than all his loved society could have given. But in a happy world, where smiling nature pours her boundless gifts, oh! there his loss would be insupportable.

Hasw. Do you lament him dead?

Pris. Yes; or, like me, a prisoner; else he would have sought me out; have sought his Arabella! (Haswell starts.) Why do you start?

Hasw. Are you a Christian? an European?

Arab. I am.

Hasw. The name made me suppose it. I am shocked that the Christian's sufferings—(trying to conceal his surprise)—But were you made a prisoner in the present Sultan's reign?

Arab. I was; or I had been set free on his ascent to the throne; for he of course gave pardon to all the enemies of the slain monarch, among whom I and my husband were reckoned: but I was taken in a vessel, where I was hurried, in the heat of the battle, with a party of the late emperor's friends; and all these prisoners were, by the officers of the present Sultan, sent to slavery, or confined, as I have been, in hopes of ransom.

Hasw. And did never intelligence or inquiry reach you from your husband?

Arab. Never.

Hasw. Never?

Arab. I was once informed of a large reward offered for the discovery of a female Christian; and, with boundless hopes, I asked an interview with the messenger; but found, on questioning him, I could not answer his description; as he secretly informed me, it was the Sultan who had caused the search, for one, himself had known, and dearly loved.

Hasw. Good heaven! (*Aside.*) You then conclude your husband dead?

Arab. I do; or, like me, by some mischance, taken with the other party: and having no friend to plead his cause before the emperor whom he served—

Hasw. I will plead it, should I ever chance to find him: but, ere we can hope for other kindness, you must appear before the Sultan, to thank him for the favour which you now decline, and to tell the cause why you cannot accept it.

Arab. Alas! almost worn out with sorrow, an object of affliction as I am, in pity excuse me. Present my acknowledgments, my humble gratitude; but pardon my attendance.

Hasw. Nay, you must go; it is necessary. I will accompany you to his presence. Retire a moment; but when I send, be ready.

Arab. I shall obey. [*She bows obediently, and exits.*

(*As Haswell comes down, Elvirus places himself in his path. Haswell stops, looks at him with an austere earnestness, which Elvirus observing, turns away his face.*)

Elvir. Nay, reproach me. I can bear your anger, but do not let me meet your eye. Oh! it is more awful, now I know who you are, than if you had kingdoms to dispense, or could deal instant death. (*Haswell looks on him with a manly firmness, and then walks on, Elvirus following him.*) I do not plead for my father now. Since what has passed, I only ask forgiveness.

Hasw. Do you forgive yourself?

Elvir. I never will.

Enter Keeper.

Keep. One of our prisoners, who, in his cell, makes the most piteous moans, has sent to entreat that Mr. Haswell will not leave this place till he has heard his complaints and supplications.

Hasw. Bring me to him. (*Going.*)

Elvir. Nay, leave me not thus; perhaps never to see you more!

Hasw. You shall see me again: in the meantime, reflect on what you merit. [*Exit with Keeper.*]

Elvir. And what is that? Confusion! and yet, he says, I am to see him again; speak with him, perhaps. Oh! there's a blessing the most abandoned feel, a divine propensity, they know not why, to commune with the virtuous. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*The first Prison Scene.*

Enter Second Keeper, HASWELL following.

Hasw. Where is the poor unfortunate?

2nd. Keep. Here, sir.

Hasw. Am I to behold greater misery still? a still greater object of compassion?

Second Keeper opens a door, and TWINEALL enters a prisoner, in one of the prison dresses.

Hasw. What have we here?

Tw. Don't you know me, Mr. Haswell?

Hasw. I beg your pardon; I beg your pardon! but is it—is it—

Tw. Why, Mr. Haswell, if you don't know me, or won't know me, I shall certainly lose my senses.

Hasw. O, I know you; know you very well.

Tw. What, notwithstanding the alteration in my dress? there was a cruel plunder!

Hasw. O, I'll procure you that again; and, for all things else, I'm sure you will have patience.

Tw. O, no, I can't; upon my soul, I can't. I

want a little lavender water. My hair is in such a trim too! no powder, no brushes—

Hasw. I will provide you with them all:

Tw. But who will you provide to look at me, when I am dressed?

Hasw. I'll bring all your acquaintance.

Tw. I had rather you would take me to see them.

Hasw. Pardon me.

Tw. Dear Mr. Haswell! Dear sir! Dear friend! What shall I call you? Only say what title you like best, and I'll call you by it directly. I always did love to please every body; and I am sure, at this time, I am more in need of a friend than ever I was in my life.

Hasw. What has brought you here?

Tw. Trying to get a place.

Hasw. A place?

Tw. Yes; and you see I have got one; and a very bad place it is; in short, sir, my crime is said to be an offence against the state; and they tell me, no man on earth but you can get that remitted.

Hasw. Upon my word the pardons I have obtained are but for few persons, and those already promised.

Tw. O, I know I am no favourite of your's: you think me an impertinent, silly, troublesome fellow; and that my conduct in life will be neither of use to my country, nor of benefit to society.

Hasw. You mistake me, sir; I think such glaring imperfections as your's are, will not be of so much disadvantage to society, as those of a less faulty man. In beholding your conduct, thousands shall turn from the paths of folly to which fashion impels them: therefore, Mr. Twineall, if not pity for your failings, yet a concern for the good effect they may have upon the world, (should you be admitted there again) will urge me to solicit your release.

Tw. Sir, you have such powers of oratory; such eloquence! and I doubt not but that you are admired by the world equally for those advantages.

Enter Messenger to HASWELL.

Mess. Sir, the Sultan is arrived in the council chamber, and has sent me—(*Whispers.*)

Hasw. I come. Mr. Twineall, farewell for the present. [*Exit with Messenger.*]

Tw. Now, what was that whisper about? Oh, heavens! perhaps my death in agitation! I have brought myself into a fine situation! done it by wheedling too!

2nd. Keep. Come, your business with Mr. Haswell being ended, return to your cell. (*Roughly.*)

Tw. Certainly, sir; certainly! O, yes! How happy is this prison in having such a keeper as you! so mild, so gentle; there is something about you—I said, and I thought the moment I had the happiness of meeting you here, "Dear me!" said I, "what would one give for such a gentleman as him in England!" You would be of infinite service to some of our young bucks, sir.

2nd. Keep. Go to your cell; go to your cell. (*Roughly.*)

Tw. This world would be nothing without elegant manners, and elegant people in all stations of life.

Enter Messenger, who whispers Second Keeper.

Another whisper! (*Terrified.*)

2nd. Keep. No; come this way. The judges are now sitting in the hall, and you must come before them.

Tw. Before the judges, sir. O, dear sir! what, in this dislabille? in this coat? Dear me! but to be sure one must conform to customs; to the custom of the country where one resides. (*He goes to the door, and then stops.*) I beg your pardon, sir; would not you choose to go first?

2nd. Keep. No.

Tw. O!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Council Chamber.*

Enter SULTAN, HASWELL, and Guards.

Hasw. Sultan, I have gone beyond the limits of your bounty in my promises; and for one poor unhappy female, I have still to implore your clemency.

Sult. No; you named yourself the number to release, and it is fixed. I'll not increase it.

Hasw. A poor miserable female—

Sult. Am I less miserably than she is? And who shall relieve me of my sorrows?

Hasw. Then let me tell you, Sultan, she is above your power to oblige, or to punish. Ten years, nay, more, confinement in a dreary cell, has been no greater punishment to her, than had she lived in a pleasant world without the man she loved.

Sult. Ha!

Hasw. And freedom, which I offered, she rejects with scorn, because he is not included in the blessing.

Sult. You talk of prodigies! (*He makes a sign for the Guards to retire, and they withdraw.*) And yet I once knew a heart equal to this description.

Hasw. Nay, will you see her; witness yourself the fact?

Sult. I will. Why do I tremble? My busy fancy presents an image—

Hasw. Yes, tremble! (*Threatening.*)

Sult. Ha! have a care; what tortures are you preparing for me? My mind shrinks at the thought.

Hasw. Your wife you will behold; whom you have kept in want, in wretchedness, in a damp dungeon, for these fourteen years, because you would not listen to the voice of pity.—Dread her look; her frown; not for herself alone, but for hundreds of her fellow-sufferers: for while your selfish fancy was searching with wild anxiety for her you loved; upituting, you forgot others might love like you.

Sult. O! do not bring me to a trial which I have not courage to support.

Hasw. She attends without. I sent for her to thank you for the favour she declines. Nay, be composed; she knows you not; cannot, thus disguised as the Sultan. [*Exit Haswell.*]

Sult. O, my Arabella! could I have thought that your approach would ever impress my mind with horror! or that, instead of flying to your arms with all the love I bear you, terror and shame should fix me a statue of remorse!

Enter HASWELL, leading ARABELLA.

Hasw. Here kneel, and return your thanks.

Sult. My Arabella! worn with grief and anguish. (*Aside.*)

Arab. (*Kneeling to the Sultan.*) Sultan, the favour you would bestow, I own and humbly thank you for.

Sult. Gracious heaven! (*In much agitation.*)

Arab. But as I am now accustomed to confinement, and the brightest prospect of all the world can give, cannot inspire a wish that warms my heart to the enjoyment, I supplicate permission to transfer the blessing you have offered, to one of those who may have friends to welcome their return from bondage, and so make freedom precious. I have none to rejoice at my release; none to lament my destiny while a prisoner. And were I free in this vast world, forlorn and friendless, 'tis but a prison still.

Sult. What have I done! (*Throwing himself on a sofa, with the greatest emotion.*)

Hasw. Speak to him again: he repents of the severity with which he has caused his fellow-creatures to be used. Tell him you forgive him.

Arab. (*Going to him.*) Believe me, emperor, I forgive all who have ever wronged me; all who

have ever caused my sufferings—pardon you. Alas! I have pardoned even those who tore me from my husband! Oh, Sultan! all the tortures you have made me suffer, compared to such a pang as that was—did I say I had forgiven those enemies of my peace? oh! I am afraid—afraid I have not yet.

Sult. Forgive them now, then; for he is restored. (*Taking off his turban.*) Behold him in the Sultan, and once more seal my pardon. (*She faints on Haswell.*) Nay, pronounce it quickly, or my remorse for what you have endured will make my present tortures greater, than any my cruelties have yet inflicted.

Arab. (*Recovering.*) Is this the light you promised? (*To Haswell.*) Dear precious light! Is this my freedom? to which I bind myself a slave for ever. (*Embracing the Sultan.*) Was I your captive?—Sweet captivity! more precious than an age of liberty!

Sult. Oh! my Arabella! through the amazing changes of my fate (which I will soon disclose,) think not, but I have searched for thee with unceasing care: but the blessing to behold you once again was left for my kind monitor alone to bestow. Oh, Haswell! had I, like you, made others' miseries my concern, like you sought out the wretched, how many days of sorrow had I spared myself, as well as her I love! for I long since had found my Arabella.

Arab. Oh, heaven! that weighest our sufferings with our joys, and as our lives decline, seest, in the balance, thy blessings far more ponderous than thy judgments; be witness, I complain no more of what I have endured, but find an ample recompense this moment.

Hasw. I told you, sir, how you might be happy.

Sult. Take your reward—(to a heart like your's, more valuable than treasure from my coffers)—this signet, with power to redress the wrongs of all my injured subjects.

Hasw. Valuable indeed!

Arab. (*To Haswell.*) Oh, virtuous man! to reward thee are we made happy; to give thy pitying bosom the joy to see us so, heaven has remitted its intended punishment of continual separation,

Sult. Come, my beloved wife! come to my palace: there, equally, my dearest blessing, as when the cottage gave its fewer joys. And in him (*to Haswell*) we not only find our present happiness, but dwell securely on our future hopes; for here I vow, before he leaves our shores, I will adopt every measure he shall point out; and those acts of my life, whereon he shall lay his censure, these will I make the subject of repentance.

[*Exeunt Sultan and Arabella.*]

Enter Keeper.

Keep. An English prisoner, just now condemned to lose his head, one Henry Twineall, humbly begs permission to speak a few short sentences, his last dying words, to Mr. Haswell.

Hasw. Condemned to lose his head! Lead me to him.

Keep. O, sir, you need not hurry yourself: for it is off by this time, I dare say.

Hasw. Off?

Keep. Yes, sir: we don't stand long about these things in this country. I dare say it is off.

Hasw. (*Impatiently.*) Lead me to him instantly.

Keep. O! 'tis of consequence, is it, sir? if that is the case— [*Exit Keeper, followed by Haswell.*]

SCENE IV.—*An Archway at the top of the stage; through which several Guards enter. TWINEALL in the middle, dressed for execution, with a large book in his hand.*

Tw. One more stave, gentlemen, if you please.

Off. The time is expired.

Twi. One more, gentlemen, if you please.

Off. The time is expired.

Enter HASWELL.

Twi. Oh! my dear Mr. Haswell!

Hasw. What, in tears at parting with me? This is a compliment indeed!

Twi. I hope you take it as such. I am sure I mean it as such. It kills me to leave you; it breaks my heart; and I once flattered myself such a charitable, good, feeling, humane heart, as you—

Hasw. Hold! hold! This, Mr. Twineall, is the vice which has driven you to the fatal precipice whereon you stand! and in death will you not relinquish it!

Twi. What vice, sir, do you mean?

Hasw. Flattery! a vice that renders you not only despicable, but odious.

Twi. But how has flattery been the cause?

Hasw. Your English friend, before he left the island, told me what information you had asked from him; and that he had given you the direct reverse of every person's character, as a just punishment for your mean premeditation and designs.

Twi. I never imagined that amiable friend had sense enough to impose upon anybody!

Hasw. And, I presume, he could not suppose that fate would carry resentment to a length like this.

Twi. Oh! could fate be arrested in its course!

Hasw. You would reform your conduct?

Twi. I would. I would never say another civil thing to anybody; never—never again make myself agreeable.

Hasw. Release him; here is the Sultan's signet.

Twi. Oh! my dear Mr. Haswell! never was compassion! never benevolence! never such a heart as your's!

[already.

Hasw. Seize him; he has broken his contract
Twi. No, sir. No, sir. I protest you are an ill-natured, surly, crabbed fellow. I always thought so, upon my word, whatever I may have said.

Hasw. And, I'll forgive that language sooner than the other; utter any thing but flattery. Oh! never let the honest, plain, blunt, English name become a proverb for so base a vice.

Lady. (Without.) Where is the poor creature?

Enter LADY TREMOR.

Lady. Oh! if his head be off, pray let me look at it.

Twi. No, madam, it is on; and I am very happy to tell you so.

Lady. Dear heaven! I expected to have seen it off! but no matter. As it is on, I am come that it may be kept on; and have brought my Lord Flint, and Sir Luke, as witnesses.

Enter LORD FLINT, AURELIA, and SIR LUKE.

Hasw. And what have they to say?

Sir Luke. Who are we to tell our story to? There does not seem to be any one sitting in judgment.

Hasw. Tell it to me, sir. I will report it.

Sir Luke. Why, then, Mr. Haswell, as ghosts sometimes walk, and as one's conscience is sometimes troublesome, I think Mr. Twineall has done nothing to merit death; and the charge which his lordship sent in against him, we begin to think was too hastily made: but, if there was any false statement—

Lord. It was the fault of my not charging my memory. Any error I have been guilty of must be laid to the fault of my total want of memory.

Hasw. And what do you hope from this confession?

Sir Luke. To have the prisoner's punishment of death remitted for some more favourable sentence.

Lord. Yes; for ten or twelve year's imprisonment; or the galleys for fourteen years; or—

Sir Luke. Ay, ay, something in that mild way.

Hasw. For shame, for shame, gentlemen! the extreme rigour you shew in punishing a dissention from your opinion, or a satire upon your folly, proves, to conviction, what reward you had bestowed upon the skilful flatterer.

Twi. Gentlemen and ladies, pray, why would you wish me requited with such extreme severity, merely for my humble endeavours to make myself agreeable? Lady Tremor, upon my honour, I was credibly informed your ancestors were kings of Scotland.

Lady. Impossible! you might as well say that you heard Sir Luke had distinguished himself at the battle of—

Twi. And I did hear so.

Lady. And he did distinguish himself; for he was the only one who ran away.

Twi. Could it happen?

Lady. Yes, sir, it did happen.

Sir Luke. And go you, Mr. Twineall, into a field of battle, and I think it is very likely to happen again.

Lord. If Mr. Haswell has obtained your pardon, sir, it is all very well: but let me advise you to conceal your sentiments on politics for the future, as you value your head.

Twi. I thank you, sir. I do value it.

Enter ELVIRUS.

Hasw. (Going to him.) Aurelia, in this letter to me, has explained your story with so much compassion, that, I must pity it too. With freedom to your father and yourself, the Sultan restores his forfeited lands; and might I plead, Sir Luke, for your interest with Aurelia's friends, this young man's filial love should be repaid by conjugal affection.

Sir Luke. As for that, Mr. Haswell, you have so much interest at court, that your taking the young man under your protection is at once making his fortune; and as Aurelia was sent hither merely to get a husband, I don't see—

Aure. True, Sir Luke; and I am afraid my father and mother will begin to be uneasy that I have not procured one yet; and I should be very sorry to grieve them.

Elvir. No; say rather sorry to make me wretched. (Taking her hand.)

Enter ZEDAN.

Hasw. My Indian friend, have you received your freedom?

Zedan. Yes; and come to bid you farewell; which I would never do, had I not a family in sorrow till my return; for you should be my master, and I would be your slave.

Hasw. I thank you; may you meet at home every comfort!

Zedan. May you—may you—what shall I say? May you once in your life be a prisoner; then released; to feel such joy as I feel now!

Hasw. I thank you for a wish that tells me most emphatically, how much you think I have served you.

Twi. And, my dear lord, I sincerely wish you may once in your life have your head chopped off; just to know what I should have felt in that situation.

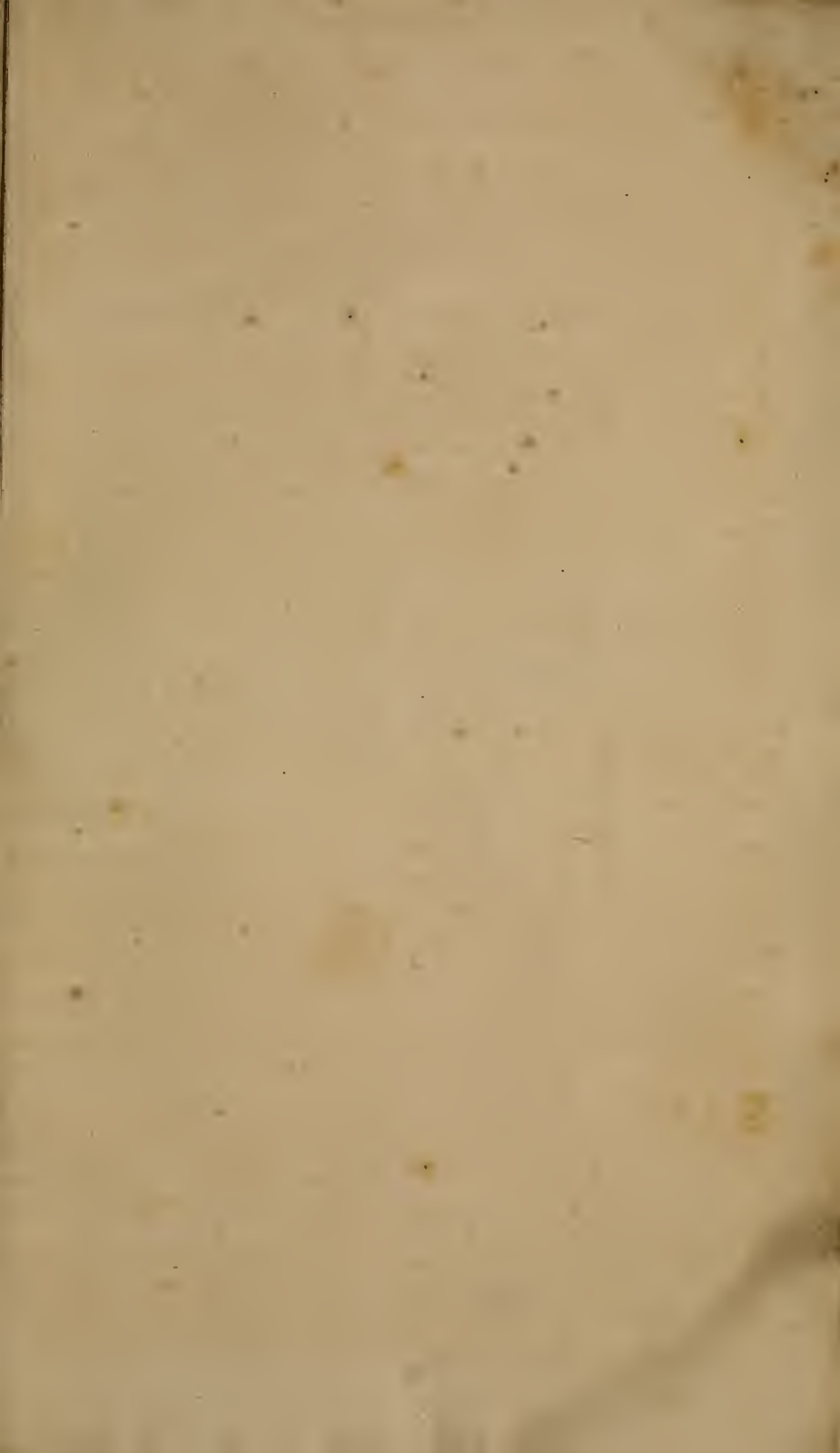
Zedan. (Pointing to Haswell.) Are all his countrymen as good as he?

Sir Luke. No-no-no-no; not all; but the worst of them are good enough to admire him.

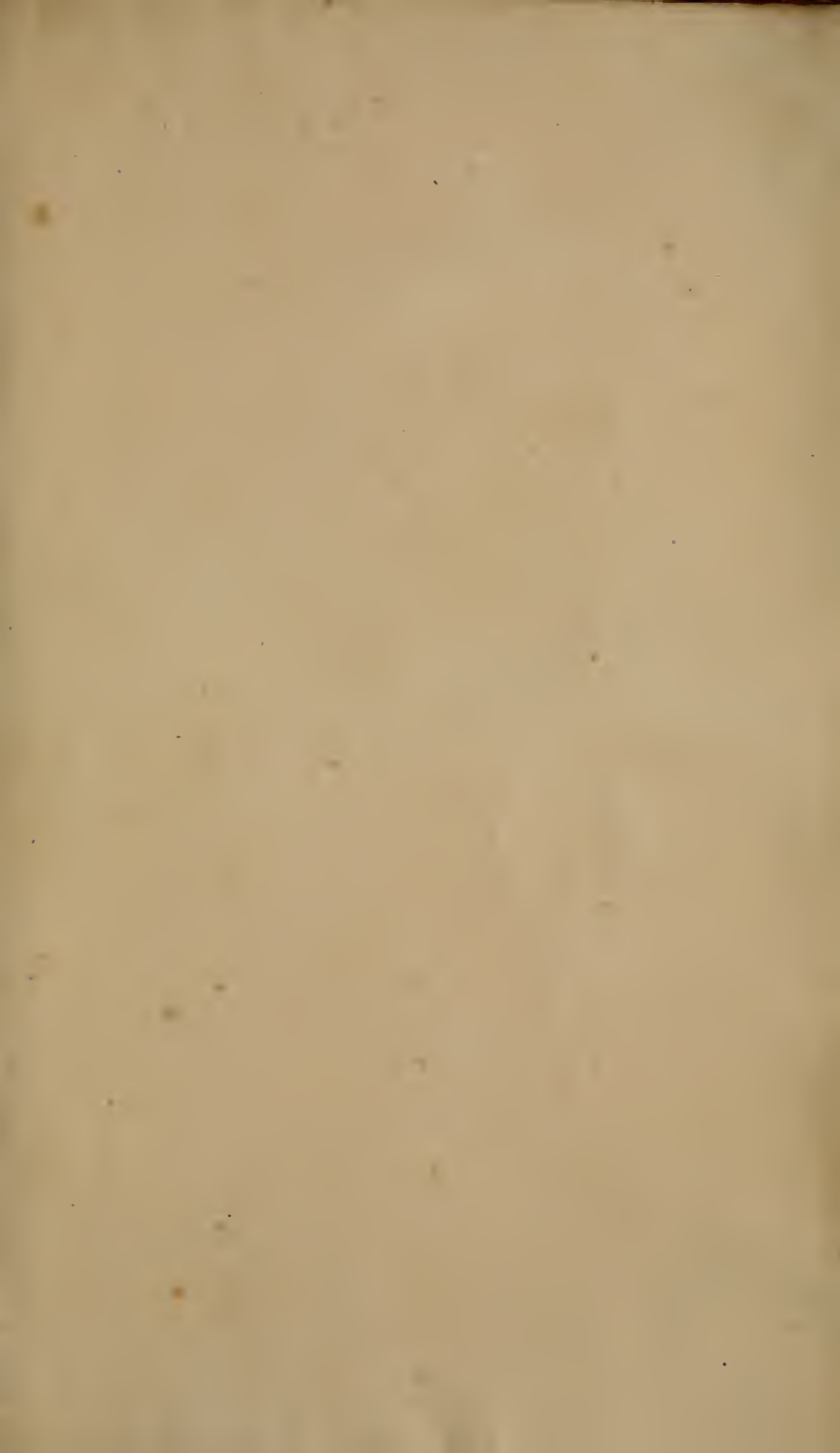
Twi. Pray, Mr. Haswell, will you suffer all these encomiums?

Elvir. He must suffer them. There are virtues which praise cannot taint; such are Mr. Haswell's; for they are the offspring of a mind superior even to the love of fame. Neither can he, through malice, suffer by applause; for his character is too sacred to incite envy, and conciliates the respect, the love, and the admiration of all mankind.

[Exeunt.]

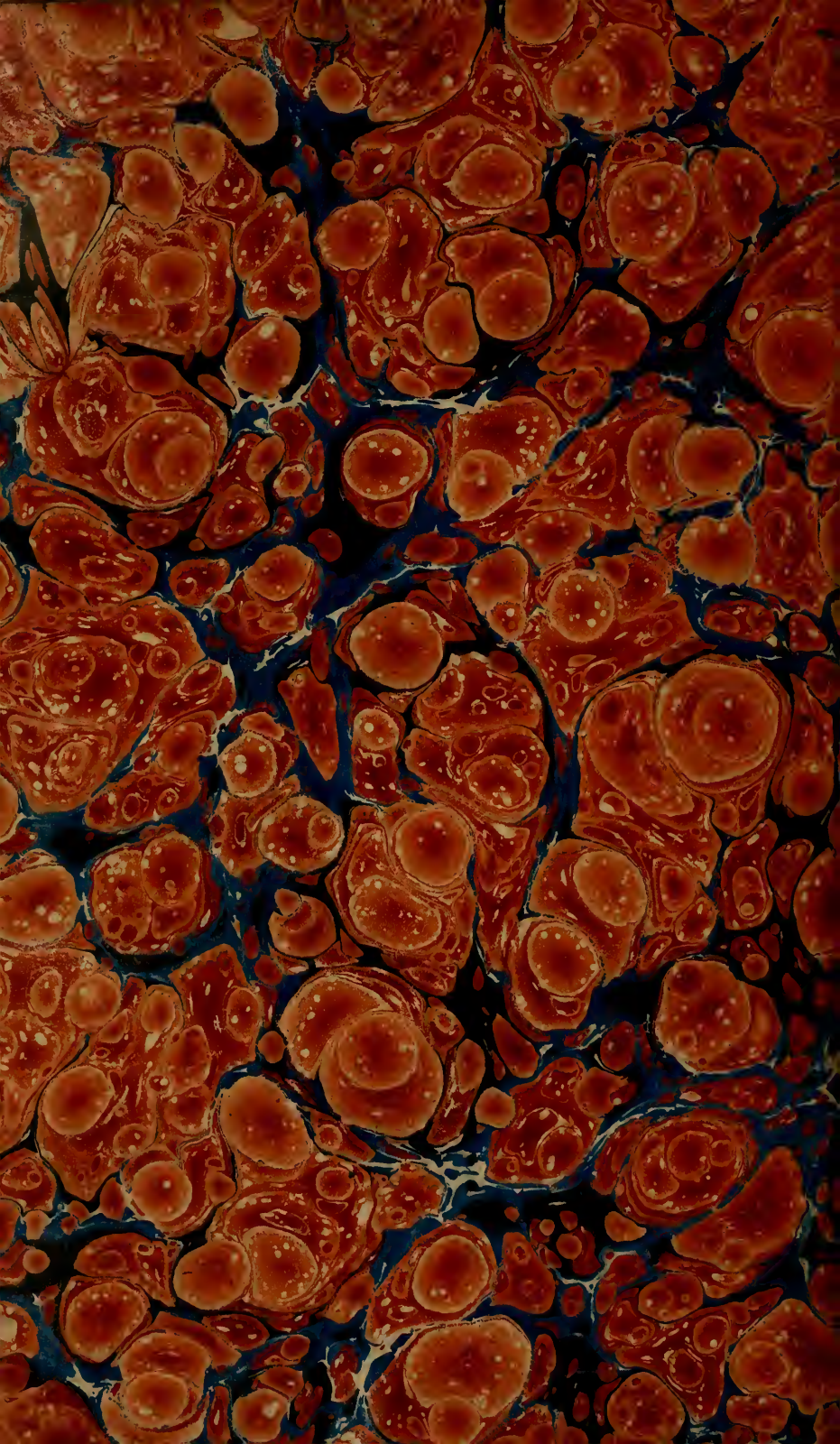


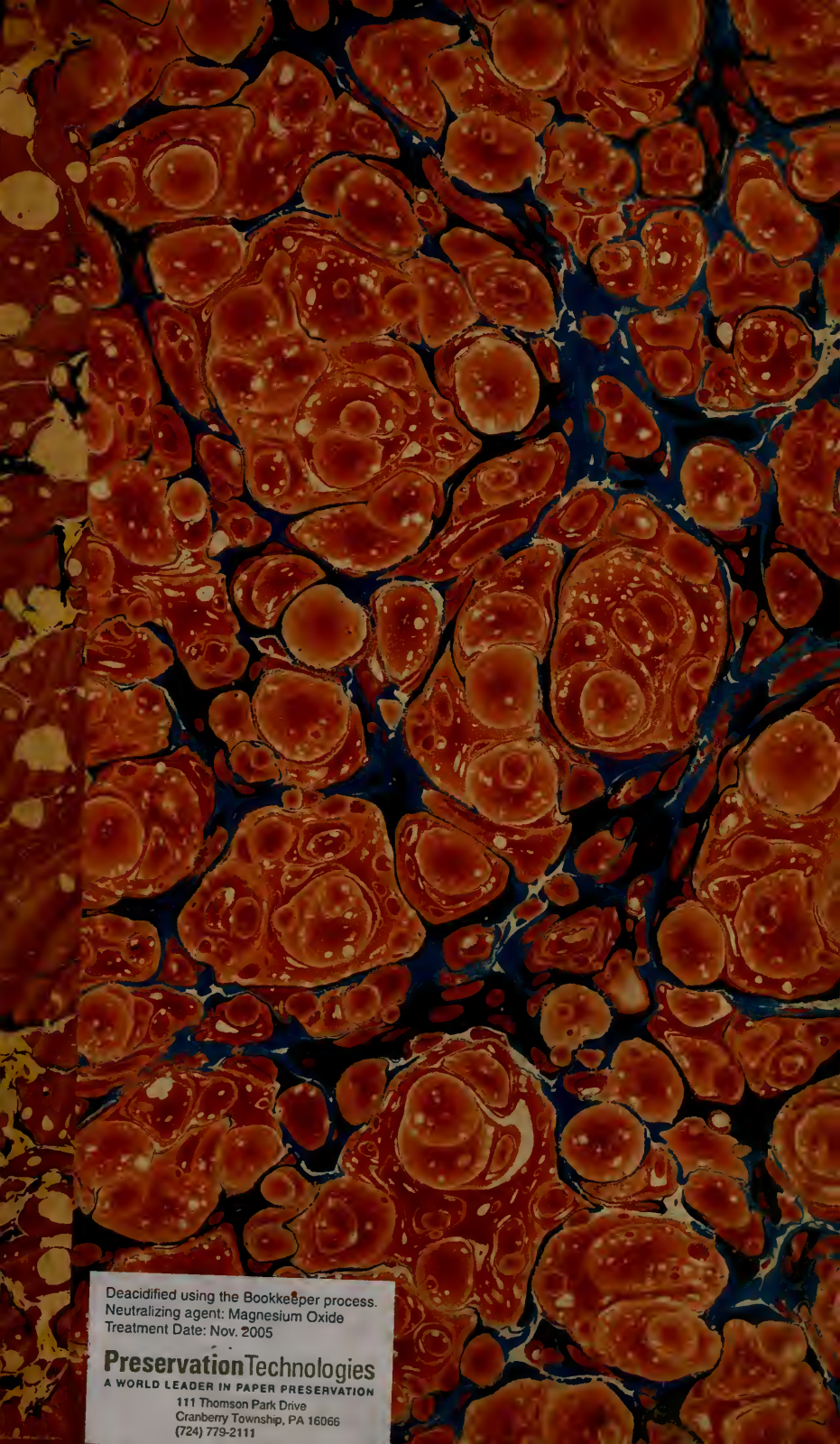






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