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THE
HEBREW PRINCE:

OR,

JONATHAN AND DAVID.

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

Written for COGSWELL & MACKENZIE, and played only by
them.

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Concord, N. H.

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1885.

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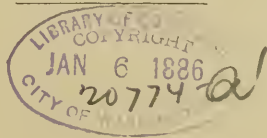
JONATHAN AND DAVID.

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Warren H. Cogswell

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PS 635
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CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY.

- JONATHAN, THE PRINCE.
- DAVID, THE SHEPHERD LAD.
- SAUL, THE KING.
- SAMUEL, THE PROPHET.
- JESSE, DAVID'S FATHER.
- DEUTERONOMY, THE BOASTFUL GUARD.
- THE KING'S OFFICER.
- THE WITCH OF ENDOR.
- MICHAL, SAUL'S DAUGHTER.

Officers, soldiers, heralds, singers, attendants, etc.

THE HEBREW PRINCE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

[*Martial music—singing behind the scenes.*]

SAUL. Let us indeed rejoice! for we have this day heaped the full measure of vengeance upon Amalek's fierce race! Our ancient foe, cruel and bloody beyond all the tribes of earth, has been destroyed utterly and forever. Their king alone survives, and awaits our will. The Hebrew maidens once again untrembling woo the timbrel, and the mothers of Israel may now cease their lamentations for slaughtered sons. What aged man do I behold coming hither? Ah! 'tis the great prophet Samuel. What mission brings him here? [SAMUEL *enters.*] Venerable father, thy presence does me honor in this great day of warlike triumph! Pronounce on me thy blessing, and thus crown the festal hour with Heaven's benediction on the finished enterprise.

SAMUEL. Thou wast commanded to sweep Amalek from the earth, and leave not one stone upon another in all his borders. Why, then, hast thou enriched thyself with forbidden flocks and herds?

SAUL. True, we were commanded to destroy them utterly, but the people reserved them for sacrifice.

SAMUEL. Sacrifice! Know ye not that obedience is better than sacrifice? The Power that has exalted thee can also cast thee down. From this time God is departed from thee, and has rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbor, who is better than thou, that all the world may know it is not a light matter to overrule the plans of the Supreme Director and Universal King.

SCENE II.—*The home of Jesse.*

SAMUEL. Jesse, what is the name of thy youngest son?

JESSE. David.

SAMUEL. I desire to speak to him privately. Wilt thou bring him unto me?

JESSE. I will, my lord. [*Exit.*]

SAMUEL. [*Alone.*] I am commanded to choose one of the sons of Jesse to be king in the place of Saul. The six eldest are tall, straight, and comely, but the Lord, who seeth not as man seeth, hath rejected them all, and hath chosen the seventh and youngest, even David. [*JESSE and DAVID enter.*]

JESSE. [*To SAMUEL.*] This is my youngest son David. [*To DAVID.*] The revered prophet Samuel would speak to thee, my son. Listen to his words of wisdom, and treasure them above all gold and jewels. [*Exit.*]

SAMUEL. My son, what is thine occupation?

DAVID. I am a shepherd, and have charge of my father's flocks.

SAMUEL. If a wolf or a bear should attack the flocks, to devour them, wouldst thou flee and escape from them?

DAVID. Would I flee from them and leave the flock to be torn by wild beasts? Never! I would front them with this strong staff, and as thou livest, I would surely overcome them and protect my charge.

SAMUEL. But the wolf and the bear are fierce and strong, and thou wouldst be in very great peril for thy life.

DAVID. True; but life is valuable for allotted work faithfully done. Peril at the post of duty is all the safety a brave man needs.

SAMUEL. You give me great joy, my son. Thy tongue speaks words of wisdom far beyond thy years. I rejoice that kingly honors are to fall on a kingly soul, for hereafter the flocks that need thy protection will be tribes of men; thy post of duty will be where earth's monarchs meet.

DAVID. This is a hidden thing; I do not understand thee.

SAMUEL. Thou shalt one day be king of Israel. The Lord is displeased at Saul, and has chosen thee to succeed him. Be careful that thou forget not justice and mercy, and that Saul shall lose the crown through disobedience to higher law. Remember these things, and whatsoever nations make war against thee thou shalt overcome them, and thy kingdom shall continue for many generations.

DAVID. When shall these things be?

SAMUEL. In good time, my son, in good time. See thou tell no man, but perform the duties each day brings to thee, and thus prepare thyself nobly to fulfil thy noble destiny. [*Exit.*]

DAVID. [*Alone.*] If this be possible, can anything be impossible? I, a shepherd, to be a king! From what a depth to what

a height! I am not sure I like the prospect, for in a road so long there must be rugged steeps as well as flowery plains, yet it must be true! 'Twas no jesting tongue that spoke those words, but our nation's greatest prophet. I must not forget his charge "to tell no man." To do so would be fatal. [*Enter Jesse.*]

JESSE [*To DAVID*]. It has now been many days since thy three eldest brothers departed to join the king's army, and I desire to hear of their welfare.

DAVID. With thy permission I will go to the camp and inquire for them.

JESSE. You may do so, my son. Bear them my greeting, and take with thee also a present unto their captain. Give heed to what thou seest, and bring me word how the war progresses, and whether our army is likely to overcome the Philistines.

DAVID. When shall I set out on the journey?

JESSE. You may depart at once. Come with me, and I will assist thee to make ready. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Israelitish Camp.* [*Soldiers earnestly conversing.*]

DEUTERONOMY. Look here! You listen while I talk. Goliath is going to get himself into trouble if he don't put brakes on his jaw. You fellows may stay here forever, and let him strut around and crow, but I won't. I'm a fighter, I am. Look at the muscle on that arm! My grandsir used to wrestle with Samson regular. Throw him every time, too! Why, Samson never got the championship till grandsir got the rheumatis! [*Sees Goliath in the distance.*] Hallo! there is the old blowhard now, over on that hill. Thinks he is safe, don't he! If grandsir was here he would n't be!

GOLIATH [*at a distance*]. I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man, that we may fight together.

DEUTERONOMY. Bah! think you are smart, don't ye? Boys, I feel the spirit of my grandsir rise in its might. It calls aloud for gore, and gore it must have! Let me get at him! I'll hew him! Here, Ephraim, you hold this cloak while I go over there a minute [*takes off his cloak, draws his sword, and sharpens it on the sole of his sandal, rolls up his sleeves, and says:*] Now clear the track! I'll give him a lesson in Marquis of Queensbury's rules. [*Goes to wing and shouts to Goliath.*] Ah! there! [*Flourish of trumpets outside as GOLIATH starts toward him. DEUT. is panic-stricken, drops his sword, and shouting*] Stay, there! [*hides behind a rock. The soldiers with him huddle together in alarm.*]

JONATHAN [*Enters*]. Why this alarm? Do the vain words of a Philistine terrify Hebrew soldiers? Men of Israel! I am directed by the king to make this proclamation unto you. Attend ye, therefore, that ye may know his will. Lo! these forty days has the Philistine champion hurled defiance at the armies of Israel. Now, therefore, know that the man who killeth him the king will enrich with great riches, and give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel. The peril is great; the reward is equally great. Who is the man with courage to meet the one, to win the other?

DAVID. I am ready to meet him, and to take away this reproach from Israel. For who is this Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?

JONATHAN. Is it not a rash enterprise for one unskilled in arms, as I judge thou art?

DAVID. Give me leave to go, and I will assure thee by action rather than by words. [*Enter SAUL.*]

JONATHAN. Here is the king; we will speak to him. O king! Behold before thee a man young in appearance, but a hero in spirit. He desires our permission to attack the Philistine giant, and believes that he has power to destroy him.

SAUL. Thou art not able to overcome so powerful an adversary. Thou art an untrained youth, while he is a scarred and grizzled warrior. No one has ever met him to return alive. It is impossible that thou couldst survive the combat.

DAVID. I fear him not. This battle will be won, not by strength, but by the right. The power that saved us from Egyptian bondage, and before our father's feet dried up the deep Red Sea; that in the desert sent us bread like dew from heaven, and caused the flinty rocks to give forth springs of water; that hath multiplied and preserved us from the days of Abraham until this hour; in His name go I to battle, and by His might I'll conquer.

JONATHAN. I am convinced, for these sound not like the words of vanity, but of one who knows wherein he trusteth. Be of good cheer, O king! for there will this day fight on our side a greater than Goliath.

SAUL. Young man, you may go, and may Heaven protect thee! Come to my tent, and we will prepare thee for the ordeal. [*Exeunt SAUL, JONATHAN, and DAVID.*]

SCENE II.—*The Israelitish camp.*

DEUTERONOMY. [*Comes from behind the rock.*] Umph! What does that fellow know about carving giants? Nothing, sirs, nothing! absolutely nothing! He don't know a Philistine from a camel! Now, I do! You hark while I give you a pointer. There has got to be more brains at the head of this! I and the king have got to talk this business over. [*Bugle outside.*] Ah, there! they are going at it. Hold your breath and see the fun! [*Shouts and bugle outside. Soldiers on stage join in the shout.*] Hurrah! didn't I tell you that boy knew his business? I couldn't have done it better myself. Come to think of it, he took lessons of me; anybody would know that by the way he went at it. As grandsir used to say, says he, Deut., my boy,—he called me Deut. for short,—says he, Deut., never forget that you are the grandson of your grandsir. Wherefore, peradventure—

[*Bugle—shouts. JONATHAN and heralds enter.*]

JONATHAN. The Philistine is slain. His mighty frame lies bleeding 'neath a Hebrew shepherd's feet. The hostile ranks

are in dire confusion. We must attack them instantly. Heralds, to your posts, and bear our commandment to the generals. Let all the host, except the king's body guard, rush upon the foe. Away! Sound the charge upon them, and let this victory be complete and overwhelming.

SAUL [*Enters*]. Who is the man who hath performed this great deed before our eyes this day?

JONATHAN. I know not his name, but all coming time shall remember and honor it.

[*DAVID enters.*]

SAUL. Who art thou, my son?

DAVID. I am David, the son of Jesse, and live at Bethlehem.

SAUL. Blessed is Jesse among the fathers of Israel, and blessed art thou who hast brought deliverance upon thy race! But I must look to the army. Come to my tent when the pursuit is ended, and claim thy reward. [*Exit.*]

JONATHAN. David, give me thy hand! Thou art a man whose friendship princes would rejoice to win. Tell me, wast thou certain of the glorious issue, or didst thou realize the venture's mighty peril?

DAVID. I had no fears. I was so aroused by the impious arrogance of the foe, and so sure of supernatural aid, that I felt no tremors when the crisis came.

JONATHAN. I trembled for thee when I heard his clanging armor shaken by his heavy strides, and saw his huge, uplifted spear poised in his mighty grasp. But something in thy bearing stilled my fears, and bade me hope against my judgment.

DAVID. I felt that something must be done. On that grim giant's life the issue rested. When he fell, the craven foe was routed, and our armies are now pressing the glorious pursuit.

JONATHAN. David, thou art no longer a private shepherd, but the chiefest among Israel's warriors. It is not fitting that thou shouldst longer wear thine humble garments. Take this cloak,—a token of good-will from a prince to a prince, and when thou needst a friend call upon him who gave it thee. And this sword, David, 'tis an honest one. Its roughened edge bears witness of the fierce blows it has rained on hostile crests. Wear it, and in battle's dread extremity wield it mightily, and let its decisive work renew in Hebrew hearts glorious memories of this day's glorious triumph.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Shouting in distance.*

SAUL. Shout again, and again, till the echoing mountains reverberate through all the earth the glad news of Israel's triumph! Away with doubts and fears! Hereafter with renewed lustre will shine the crown I wear. Fie on the prophet's dismal ravings! A victory like this does not look as though my throne tottered on ruin's verge. Wonderful youth! Such vast achievement! Such unthought of means! One moment we were in the depths of hopeless despair, the odds appalling, a crushing defeat certain! But, in the twinkling of an eye, we are stunned with a victory so sudden! so complete! so glorious! But I must not delay. The tide of fortune must be taken at its flood! I marked well the adoration the soldiers have for this new-fledged hero. I'll take advantage of it. He shall be their general! They'd follow where he led, though all the world in arms opposed them! [*Singing at a distance.*] What singing is that? Ah! a procession comes this way; they are celebrating the victory!

[*Enter Hebrew maidens playing and singing.*]

MAIDENS. Saul hath slain his thousands [*SAUL smiles*], and David his tens of thousands. [*SAUL starts and frowns.*]

SAUL. What's that I hear? Do my ears deceive me? I'll listen further!

MAIDENS [*continue singing and playing*]. Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands! [*Exit procession singing.*]

SAUL. Has it come to this? To David they ascribe tens of thousands, and to me but thousands! Is David then greater than the king? What more can he have but the kingdom? I thought of him only as an instrument well fitted to further my growing plans. Is he then my rival in the homage of my people? Do they look on him as a favored aspirant for the throne of Israel? I'll look to it! I'll look to it! And if I find 'tis true, the blooming garlands he now wears shall wither on his tomb! [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—SAUL on throne. Guards in position. Bugle—
enter attendant. Salutes the king.

ATTENDANT. Jonathan, the prince, desires to bring before thee David, the son of Jesse.

SAUL [*starts up excitedly, goes to front of stage, and mutters fiercely to himself*]. What seeks the son of Jesse here? Is his visit an honest one, or moved by deep laid policy? Accursed be the base rabble who but an hour ago ascribed to this same reckless youth achievements that out-top the King of Israel! I'll probe this matter to the core, and if within his heart I find the slightest spark of growing treason kindled by this most foolish flattery, I'll stamp it out, cost what it may! [*Reseats himself on the throne.*] Admit them. [JONATHAN and DAVID enter and salute the king.] The son of Jesse will advance to the throne and manifest his allegiance to the king.

DAVID [*advancing, kneels before SAUL, and exclaims*] All hail! and honor to our king!

SAUL. Thou art a brave man, and by thy valor in battle hast won our favor. We have given thee due credit, and before the armies of Israel have we this day publicly commended thee. What more could a subject ask of his king?

DAVID. O King! Thy servant —

SAUL. My "servant" I took to be a very modest man. This morning he came to us clad in the humble garments of a shepherd. The sun is not yet set, but by some sorcery unknown to us the shepherd's staff and sling have been transformed into the sword and buckler of a general. The plain linen garb looks now to us like the velvet vestments of a prince. Speak, son of Jesse, explain these transformations, and declare to us your object, your purpose. Why are you now in the presence of the king?

JONATHAN. Most noble king and honored sire! I beseech thee be not hasty in judging this man, but rather consider wisely and act justly. I am here to vouch for his honor, and to guarantee his loyalty. Lo! these forty days have we camped here, fearing to attack the foe. Every morning and evening the king hath heard the jeering cries and fierce challenge of Gath's mighty warrior, whom no ten of our veteran troops dared meet in mortal combat. Where all Israel's armies dared not go, David went; when Israel quailed, David's brow was calm; when Israel fled, David advanced to battle. Single-handed and alone he fronted those fearful odds; and the hills of Judah still echo with the thanksgiving songs of the nation he has saved! 'Twas not Ambition, but Friendship's hand that decked him with those princely robes, in recognition of his princely services. Know, O King, that David wears *my* cloak and sword, which I placed upon him against his wishes, for I loved him when I beheld him gentle in peace, but a lion in battle—verily one of Nature's noblemen!

DAVID. O King! I am here to crave thy permission to go in peace to my father's house. I like not the carnage of battle and the turmoil of the camp. I am a shepherd from my boyhood up, and among the flocks have I passed my days. I have been absent too long already, and greatly do they need my care. Bid me, therefore, "depart in peace."

SAUL. Nay, thou shalt not go hence, but shall remain with the king, and I will set thee over the army, and thou shalt be one of the king's officers.

[*Enter singers—*"SAUL hath slain his thousands, and DAVID his tens of thousands."]

SAUL. Verily this is treason! Silence that song! Disperse that procession! Guards, arrest the traitor! On him! Hew him to pieces! [*Guards rush on DAVID. JONATHAN snatches DAVID's sword, and hurls them back.*]

JONATHAN. Back, cowards! Back, I say! Lay not your hands on the hero of this day's victory! ere this our armies had been routed, and our homes plundered—. [*Guards falling back, the king rushes furiously at DAVID, and attempts to strike him with his sword. JONATHAN disarms and stops him.*]

SAUL. Who are you that dares resist the king!

JONATHAN. The Crown Prince of Israel, protector of an honest man! [*Curtain.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Landscape.*

[JONATHAN and DAVID enter hastily.]

JONATHAN. We are safe here for the moment. Let us pause, and consider how we may best avoid the king's wrath.

DAVID. O noble-hearted prince! I owe my life to thee. I was stunned by the appalling suddenness of the onset. Between me and death there was but a single arm, a single shield—that arm, thine own; that shield, thy manly breast. O Jonathan! what am I, and what have I done, that a king should seek to destroy me as utterly as the timid hare is destroyed by the crushing talons of the mountain eagle?

JONATHAN. Thou hast done nothing to merit such treatment. I am beyond expression amazed and humiliated to see the deliverer of a race murderously assaulted by a king he has saved from the disaster of unequal war. I can only explain it as the freak of a madman.

DAVID. Jonathan, I greatly fear that thou hast turned the blow aimed at my head only to have it fall upon thine own. Better thou hadst not interfered than to have invoked this danger on thyself. I am lowly born; thou art the second in the realm. It were not right in behalf of an unknown shepherd to imperil the life of Israel's coming king.

JONATHAN. No, no, not so; rather say that he who would not save a friend from unjust death is not fit to be a king. [Exeunt JONATHAN and DAVID. Enter king and attendants.]

SAUL. He has escaped me, but his days are numbered. I must not rest day or night until I have compassed his destruction; for while David lives I am surrounded with perils more deadly than the sword of Goliath. [Enter JONATHAN unseen. SAUL to attendants.] Ho, there! it is the decree of the king that David shall die. Go ye, therefore, search him out, and when ye find him, slay him as ye would a serpent hissing at your feet. Away! sleep not till ye have brought me his head! Fail not! for your lives fail not.

JONATHAN. Father! father! what have you done? Recall that terrible decree! Beware the blood of an innocent man!

SAUL. Jonathan, my son, why are you blind to the dire necessities of this hour? When treason lifts its hissing crest, there is no time to talk. Delay is ruin. Strike! and let not the whirlwind outstrip the swiftness of your blow! Mark ye!

David aims to be a king. He seeks to alienate the people from us. He is plotting your death and mine. Choose ye;—which shall we give him—the kingdom, or a grave? For, as sure as he lives, our throne will fall about our heads, and on the ruins of our fallen greatness, yea, on our tombs, he will found a new dynasty.

JONATHAN. My father and my king! if the power that placed you upon the throne of Israel has decreed that David shall be your successor, there is no power on earth can stay the tide of destiny. If, however, there is no such decree, what evil can we avert, what benefit attain, commensurate with the appalling crime you contemplate? What has David done to merit thy displeasure? Has he not done unto thee good and not evil all the days of his life? Has he not delivered us from derision and defeat? Has he not made the Hebrew name terrible to our enemies? Even if he had offended thee, his great achievements would deserve thy gratitude. If you should err, let it be on the side of humanity, for kindness is the brightest jewel in the diadem of kings.

SAUL. My son, you reason well. This much I'll promise thee. If nothing further should occur to prove my suspicions true, he shall suffer no harm from me. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The palace.*

The scene is musical and spectacular. The king is seated upon his throne. Troops with banners occupy the background. Hebrew maidens sing before the king. Orchestral music. Grand ballet, with tambourine and songs. David plays upon his harp. Saul, insanely jealous, hurls a javelin at him.

SCENE III.—*Home of DAVID.*

MICHAL [*embroidering cloak—sings at her work*]. I feel just like singing to-day. The king, my father, has promised to be reconciled to David. For the present the wars are over, and my brave husband, safe from so many perils, will soon be home again. I must hasten and complete this robe to tempt him to lay aside his thoughts of war, and welcome him to peace and quietude. [*Sings. Enter JONATHAN, who listens to singing, and places cloth over her eyes.*] David, is that you? Are you home at last?

JONATHAN. No, it is not David. Sorry to disappoint you. He will soon be here, however. [*Takes up cloak.*] Ah! who is the fortunate man?

MICHAL. David, of course!

JONATHAN. Of course! I well remember, though, when my favorite sister occupied her time in making ornaments for me. Ah, well! I am only a brother.

MICHAL. Jonathan!

JONATHAN. Ha! ha! ha! don't take it to heart; I was only jesting.

MICHAL. I feared you were in earnest.

JONATHAN. No! no! My sister, thou art highly favored among the women of earth. The man you love is my dearest friend. The woman he loves is my dearest sister. The bravest, noblest of men! the tenderest and most charming of women!

MICHAL. 'Tis kind of you to say so, Jonathan.

JONATHAN. Michal?

MICHAL. Yes!

JONATHAN. I wish I knew of another man who had a sister as good as mine!

MICHAL. What would you do?

JONATHAN. I'd cultivate his acquaintance.

MICHAL. Ha! ha! ha! [DAVID enters.]

JONATHAN. Why, David! I am delighted to see you! But—— David, my boy, what means this troubled look?

MICHAL. Speak, David! Thy looks —— This suspense is killing me!

DAVID. I have just escaped with my life!

MICHAL. Thy life?

JONATHAN. Where? From whom?

DAVID. In the palace. I was playing upon my harp in the royal presence, when, without word or warning, the king, furious with passion, hurled a javelin at me. It came with such force as to become fixed in the solid wood behind me. I had no shield, no time. Had he not been blinded with rage, his aim would have been deadly.

JONATHAN. Almighty heaven! Thus rudely shattered are our dreams of love and peace!

MICHAL. O Jonathan! Jonathan! what can we do?

JONATHAN. Do? Stand by him though all earth be against him! David, on the shores of the great sea are towering cliffs that have been lashed by the tides and storms of centuries. Be thou like them,—unmoved, immovable. Michal, this is no time for tears. The exigency must be met. When murder aims at loved ones, love must have eyes and ears. Whatever needs be done, whatever happens, save him. I'll to the palace, there to check this flood of danger at its fountain head.
[Exit.]

MICHAL. O David! David!

DAVID. This is not the kind of meeting I have looked forward to. But lamentations are unavailing. We might as well smile as weep.

MICHAL. True! true! I'll try to be brave; but, O David! this is terrible! [*Loud rapping at door.*]

DAVID. Ha! who is that? It may be the pursuers! Michal, look through the lattice and see who stands without? [MICHAL goes to lattice.]

MICHAL. Several armed men are at the door!

DAVID. They are the officers to arrest me! Well! arrest means death! I don't fancy execution like a common criminal! Escape is impossible! There is no way but this! [*Draws sword.*] If I must die, I'll have company! [*Loud raps.*] Michal, admit them!

MICHAL. No! no! You must not fight! There are too many! Hide thyself in my private apartment. By the laws of the land it is sacred from intrusion. No officer will dare enter it without the king's express command. With some subterfuge I'll send them away, and ere they return, you can escape. [*Louder raps.*] Haste! there is no time to lose! [*Goes to door. Enter officers.*]

MICHAL. Your pardon, sirs, for this delay. To what do I owe the honor of this visit?

OFFICER. We are here to arrest David. He was seen to enter this place, and, in the name of the king, I command you to deliver him into our keeping.

MICHAL. Seen to enter here?

OFFICER. He is here without doubt. We have only to search the house to find him.

MICHAL. Yes, he is here, but he cannot be seen. He is sick unto death. Return to the king. You have my answer.

OFFICER. Oh, no! We must take him with us, dead or alive. We will carry him upon his bed.

MICHAL. *Never!* Beware how you pass this door! It is my private apartment. Within its sacred walls unbidden none save the king dare enter. [*Officers hesitate, and then retire.*]

DAVID [*enters*]. Brave girl! Thou hast saved my life!

MICHAL. David, there is not a moment to lose! Save thyself while yet there is time!

DAVID. I will escape at once. I will visit thee as soon as possible. Till then, farewell. [*Goes toward the door.*]

MICHAL. Not that way; you may be seen. Come to the window, where the thick trees will conceal thee from watchful eyes. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Landscape.*

DAVID. Jonathan! my friend! my benefactor! Do I behold you once again? I hardly dared to hope for such a meeting.

JONATHAN. Thank heaven! I see you safe!

DAVID. O Jonathan, what have I done that here, among my kindred and my people, there is no spot where I may lay my head safe from the overshadowing horror of an outlaw's death? I am weary of the world and this ceaseless race for life. For me there is, there can be, no rest, till I find it in the grave's eternal quiet!

JONATHAN. David, surely my father will do nothing great or small in this matter but he will first show it me. Rest assured that my vigilance will never sleep while danger wakes for thee.

DAVID. My grateful heart knows that full well! Thy wondrous kindness is the one ray of sunshine that lights for me the gloom of life's wilderness. But thy father knows thy love for me, and secret instruments of death are ready at his call. [JONATHAN *shakes his head.*] You do not think so? Jonathan, I *know* it. Time and again thou hast saved me from his wrath. Should occasion require, you would again. [JONATHAN *nods.*] The king knows this full well. Experience has shown him that heralded vengeance does not reach the mark, while secret snares are almost certain. As thou livest, there is not a step between me and death!

JONATHAN. Whatsoever thou desirest me to do for thee, I will entirely perform it.

DAVID. I am sure of it. To-morrow is the new moon. The king expects me at the feast. And if he inquire why I am not present, tell him I have gone to my own city to attend a festival, and that I went with thy permission. His answer will satisfy thee whether evil is intended, and by some signal thou shalt give me warning.

JONATHAN. I will do as you desire. I'll search his inmost soul, and if secret harm for thee lurks in any nook or corner, I'll uncover it, that thou mayest live. If on the third day I fail to inform thee, know that Jonathan is not alive to tell thee.

DAVID. But you may be watched, and cannot come to me! The signal—how shall I know the king's answer, if spies prevent thy coming?

JONATHAN. Go to the plain that is beyond the city, and hide thyself near the place where I am used to practise archery. As soon as the king declares his mind, I will go thither with a

single attendant, as though I went to perform my warlike exercises. I will shoot three arrows at a distant mark, and bid my servant find them. As he runs, I will shoot an arrow toward him. If it fall to the ground between me and him, come thou, for thou art safe. But if it flies beyond him, the king is thine enemy. Go in peace!

DAVID. Farewell till we meet again. [*They separate.*]

JONATHAN [*is departing, but suddenly stops, and says*] David, for thy sake I have dared much. I promise thee I will dare everything. We may never meet again, and, before we part, give me thy solemn pledge that in the hour of thy final triumph, when thy enemies are beneath thy feet, thou shalt not forget to show kindness unto me and unto my children forever!

DAVID. By the memory of all that thou hast been unto me, by the life I many times owe thee, thou and thy posterity shall be *sacred* in mine eyes forever! [*Curtain.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.

[SAUL, JONATHAN, and others at the feast.]

SAUL. Where is David, the son of Jesse, that he cometh not to the feast, neither yesterday nor to-day?

JONATHAN. He earnestly desired to go to Bethlehem and be present at the festival of his tribe. With my permission he has gone. He also invited me to bear him company; and with thy leave I will follow, that he may know my kindly feelings toward him.

SAUL. Why hast thou done this? Know you not that David's prosperity is our ruin; that his life is our death? I tell thee again, as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Beware thou oppose me no further in this matter. Send, therefore, and bring him hither, for he shall surely die.

JONATHAN. Why shall he be slain? What hath he done?

SAUL. Traitor! Thou hast thwarted me for the last time! I'll strike thee to the earth! [SAUL leaps upon JONATHAN with a spear.]

SCENE II.

SAUL [*asleep in his camp, dreams of such horrors that he starts up in terror and shrieks*]: Off, traitor! Would you slay your king? [*Awakes.*] 'Twas a dream. Oh! when shall this horror cease? I'd rather fight an army than dream that dream again. I thought I was on the battle-field, where ten thousand unburied men lay staring at the ghastly moon. And I heard a voice like the far-off echo of approaching doom, cry, "Saul! Saul!" When, lo! a procession glided by, and on every head there was a crown, and in every hand a sceptre. And again the voice cried, "How many? How many? Why dost thou not number them?" And I numbered them, and there were twenty. And the voice cried, "Behold the line of kings that shall come after thee, until the twentieth generation. Approach and know him who heads the line." I was about to obey the voice, when the procession vanished. I looked around, and twenty thousand staring eyes were fixed on me. I cried. Who is he that leads yon line of kings? But the dead all laughed in fiendish chorus, and clapped their fleshless hands in horrid glee. Crazed by the unutterable horror, I fell upon the earth and knew no more. But soon I felt a giant hand grasp

my throat. I looked up, and I saw David with awful vengeance in his flaming eyes, and his uplifted sword descending on my head. In my terror I shrieked aloud, and thus awoke. Fie! why do I tremble so? 'Twas only a dream! 'Twill soon be over. We have the traitor surrounded. This time he cannot escape me, and to-morrow he will fall an easy prey to my trained soldiery. But I must sleep, lest my exhausted strength should fail me in the decisive hour of the stern chase. [SAUL sleeps.] [JONATHAN enters.]

JONATHAN. He sleeps. [SAUL moves in a restless manner.] He dreams. [Sees the crown.] Ha! the crown. 'Tis ambition's shining goal! The master-prize for earth's master-minds! To win it, man stakes his very soul, and in that mighty hazard ofttime loses both.

SAUL [*talks in his sleep*]. Day and night the shadow is upon me. While David lives no son of mine shall mount the throne.

JONATHAN. Unhappy king! If my stepping-stone to power must be the dead body of my soul's sworn and dearest friend, then I want none of it! I would not exchange one drop of David's honest blood for all the thrones of earth. [*Gazes on the crown.*] The crimson velvet lining of that crown has a seeming softness to the touch, but 'twould press my brow like rough and rugged iron. That weight of glittering gold and sparkling jewels might even tempt brave men to die, but the memory of all the guilt, and crime, and misery it has caused would be great mountains on my head. O David! not far from where I stand thou art hiding for thy life—hiding from a king who should protect and honor thee! Cheer up, brave heart! Thy noble form to-night is bending beneath oppression's pitiless storm. But ere long the flooding sunshine will behold thee erect, on heights of power that envy's arrows cannot reach. Cheer up! Cheer up! Eternal justice will not always sleep! [*Exit.*]

[*Enter DAVID, with attendant.*]

ATTENDANT [*raises spear to strike him.* DAVID *interposes*]. Let me strike him with this spear. [DAVID *shakes his head.*] I'll not strike him a second time. One sure blow will free you from your powerful and persistent foe.

DAVID. Destroy him not, for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's annointed and be guiltless. But take his spear and cruse of water, that he may know through what great danger he has passed. [ATTENDANT *takes them.*] Now let us go. [*Exeunt DAVID and ATTENDANT.*]

SCENE III.

[JONATHAN *with attendant*—JONATHAN *shoots three arrows.*]

JONATHAN. Go find the arrows, and when thou hast recovered them, remain there until I call thee. [*Attendant retires.*]
[DAVID *comes forth from his hiding-place and bows before* JONATHAN.]

JONATHAN [*raising him*]. David, there is no longer doubt. The king is so bent on thy destruction that he even assaulted me. Oh! I had hoped to share with thee the fierce joy in battle's fore-front, helm to helm, buckler and shield, the one to the other. And then, those delightful, sunny days, when gentle Peace smiles o'er the land, in the tall cedar's shade, dancing to the quivering harp! But, alas! I feel the chilling presence of approaching evil. We part—to meet—we know not ever!

DAVID. Jonathan, I seek no throne, no crown; enough for me to be thy younger brother, and in that dear relationship to walk life's journey side by side. Thy love for me has been wonderful, and long ages after we have passed away its memory will live in song and story. But I must hasten. Jonathan, you will not forget me?

JONATHAN. Never! and do thou remember our covenant, whatever life's vicissitudes! [*They part. Music.*]

SCENE IV.

[*Witch's hut in the forest. SAUL and two attendants enter.*]

SAUL. Here we are after a wild hard ride across the country, and if our directions are correct this must be the witch's abode. We'll soon see. [*Approaches the door, but hesitates.*] Why do I hesitate, while a chilling perspiration courses from my quaking frame? My eager soul is bursting with impetuous zeal to grasp the future, and with prophetic eye to roam its untried vistas. And yet, while the seals of coming time are breaking, and its weird scroll is about to open to my burning gaze, my startled soul shrinks from the very certainty it has striven for. But this wavering is unmanly. I must hasten, for yonder group of stars warn me 'tis near the midnight hour, and ere the dawn I must be miles away, leading my armies to front the foe. [*Raps on the door.*] Ho, there! ho! Awake! come forth and bid us enter! [*Woman appears with taper.*] [*Saul says to attendant*] Is this the woman? [*Attendant nods.*]

WITCH. What seek ye here at this untimely hour?

SAUL. O woman! mistress of the magic art, whose potent sorceries unbar the horrid gates of death, and summon from slimy graves departed spirits back to earth, bring up him whom I shall name to thee, that from his dead lips may come to me the oracle of fate.

WITCH. Heaven forbid that I should do this thing. Why dost thou lay this deadly snare to compass my destruction? Surely the king has commanded the death of all who practise the unlawful art.

SAUL. Fie on thy childish fears! Saul is far away camped with his army on Gilboa's heights. To-morrow he goes to battle. Too many other and weighty matters crowd his mind for him to think or care for thee, an unknown witch.

WITCH. Nay, I must not, cannot.

SAUL. Verily thou must! Fear not! The king shall never know thy secret! It shall be sacred forever.

WITCH. Wilt thou swear it?

SAUL. I swear it.

WITCH. On thy knee, beneath the watchful stars. [*Saul kneels.*] Wait thou yonder, I'll call thee presently.

[*Scenery opens revealing a weird cave. After various incantations the witch says*]:

WITCH. Whom shall I bring up unto thee?

SAUL. Bring up Samuel.

[*A flash of lightning rends the rock in remote end of the cave, and through the jagged opening Samuel is seen.*]

WITCH. [*Sees him first and shrieks with terror.*] Why hast thou deceived me? Thou art Saul!

SAUL. Fear not! what sawest thou?

WITCH. I saw a god ascending out of the earth.

SAUL. What form is he of?

WITCH. An old man covered with a mantle.

[*Saul bows his face to the ground.*]

SAMUEL. Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up, I who to the grave and eternal rest have been consigned?

SAUL. I am sore distressed, for the Philistines make war upon me, and God is departed from me and answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by dreams. Therefore I have called thee that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.

SAMUEL. Wherefore then doest thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy! He hath done unto thee as he spake by me! He hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbor who is better than thou, even unto David. Because thou obeyed not the

voice of the Lord, nor executed his fierce wrath upon Amelek, therefore hath he done this thing unto thee this day. Moreover, the Lord will deliver Israel with thee into the hands of the Philistines, and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me.

SAUL. No! no! Give me some hope. Blast me not with the horrors of thy fell prophecy! Oh! now, while earth's foundation rock seems reeling 'neath my feet, be thou my intercessor at the throne of Almighty Power. [*Thunder—Samuel disappears in flame.*]

SAUL. [*With a cry of horror springs up, and shrieking*] Come back! Come back! [*falls swooning on the ground.*]

SCENE V.—*Battle of Gilboa.*

[*Enter JONATHAN with an arrow through his shoulder, fearful gash on face. Staggering, feebly brandishing his sword.*]

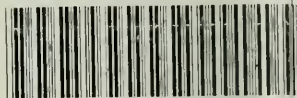
JONATHAN. One more blow for glory and for country! Let us die like men whose only hope is for an honorable death! With defiant crest we'll front the foe while life's flickering taper burns. O David! my friend! my flowing blood cements thy kingdom! When thou art king, oh! do not thou forget our covenant! Be thou a father to my orphan children! [*Dies.*]

[*Two soldiers enter supporting SAUL. SAUL leans on spear.*]

SAUL. O Jonathan! art thou, too, slain? That blood from which I fondly hoped would spring a race of kings is spilled, and wasted on the dry and barren earth! My army routed, my sons slaughtered, my strength exhausted by fierce battle and flowing wounds, whither shall I escape from the savage fury of a desperate foe? [*Shouting at distance.*] Ah! they shout! they come this way! Quick! my armor-bearer! Draw my sword and thrust me through, for living they shall not take me! Quick! quick!—No? Then a king, I'll die by the hand of a king! [*Falls on his sword. Philistine soldiers rush on stage. Tableaux.*]



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