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C O L Y A R E .

THE  
DRAMATIC WORKS  
OF  
LORD BYRON;

INCLUDING

MANFRED; CAIN; DOGE OF VENICE; SARDANAPALUS;  
AND THE TWO FOSCARI.

TOGETHER

WITH HIS HEBREW MELODIES AND

OTHER POEMS.

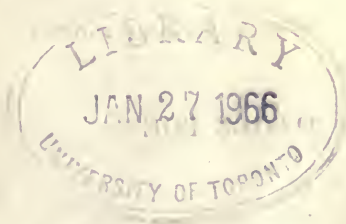
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# MANFRED,

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

---

“There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”

---



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

---

MANFRED.  
CHAMOIS HUNTER.  
ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.  
MANUEL.  
HERMAN.

WITCH OF THE ALPS.  
ARIMANES.  
NEMESIS.  
THE DESTINIES.  
SPIRITS, &c.

---

*The Scene of the Drama is amongst the Higher Alps—partly  
in the Castle of Manfred, and partly in the Mountains.*



# MANFRED.

---

## ACT I.

### SCENE I.

MANFRED *alone.* — *Scene, a Gothic Gallery.* — *Time, Midnight.*

*Man.* THE lamp must be replenish'd, but even then  
It will not burn so long as I must watch :  
My slumbers — if I slumber — are not sleep,  
But a continuance of enduring thought,  
Which then I can resist not : in my heart  
There is a vigil, and these eyes but close  
To look within ; and yet I live, and bear  
The aspect and the form of breathing men.  
But grief should be the instructor of the wise ;  
Sorrow is knowledge : they who know the most  
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth,  
The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life.  
Philosophy and science, and the springs  
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,  
I have essay'd, and in my mind there is  
A power to make these subject to itself —  
But they avail not : I have done men good,  
And I have met with good even among men —  
But this avail'd not : I have had my foes,  
And none have baffled, many fallen before me —  
But this avail'd not : — Good, or evil, life,  
Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,  
Have been to me as rain unto the sands,  
Since that all-nameless hour. I have no dread,  
And feel the curse to have no natural fear,  
Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes or wishes,  
Or lurking love of something on the earth. —  
Now to my task. —

## Mysterious Agency!

Ye spirits of the unbounded Universe!  
 Whom I have sought in darkness and in light —  
 Ye, who do compass earth about, and dwell  
 In subtler essence — ye, to whom the tops  
 Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,  
 And earth's and ocean's caves familiar things —  
 I call upon ye by the written charm  
 Which gives me power upon you — Rise! appear!  
[*A pause.*]

They come not yet. — Now by the voice of him  
 Who is the first among you — by this sign,  
 Which makes you tremble — by the claims of him  
 Who is undying, — Rise! appear! — Appear!  
[*A pause.*]

If it be so. — Spirits of earth and air,  
 Ye shall not thus elude me: by a power,  
 Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,  
 Which had its birthplace in a star condemn'd,  
 The burning wreck of a demolish'd world,  
 A wandering hell in the eternal space;  
 By the strong curse which is upon my soul,  
 The thought which is within me and around me,  
 I do compel ye to my will. — Appear!

*[A star is seen at the darker end of the gallery; it is stationary; and a voice is heard singing.]*

## FIRST SPIRIT.

Mortal! to thy bidding bow'd,  
 From my mansion in the cloud,  
 Which the breath of twilight builds,  
 And the summer's sunset gilds  
 With the azure and vermilion,  
 Which is mix'd for my pavilion;  
 Though thy quest may be forbidden,  
 On a star-beam I have ridden;  
 To thine adjuration bow'd,  
 Mortal — be thy wish avow'd!

*Voice of the SECOND SPIRIT.*

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains;  
 They crown'd him long ago  
 On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,  
 With a diadem of snow.

Around his waist are forests braced,  
 The Avalanche in his hand ;  
 But ere it fall, that thundering ball  
 Must pause for my command.  
 The Glacier's cold and restless mass  
 Moves onward day by day ;  
 But I am he who bids it pass,  
 Or with its ice delay.  
 I am the spirit of the place,  
 Could make the mountain bow  
 And quiver to his cavern'd base —  
 And what with me wouldst *Thou* ?

*Voice of the* THIRD SPIRIT.

In the blue depth of the waters,  
 Where the wave hath no strife,  
 Where the wind is a stranger,  
 And the sea-snake hath life,  
 Where the mermaid is decking  
 Her green hair with shells ;  
 Like the storm on the surface  
 Came the sound of thy spells ;  
 O'er my calm Hall of Coral  
 The deep echo roll'd —  
 To the Spirit of Ocean  
 Thy wishes unfold !

FOURTH SPIRIT.

Where the slumbering earthquake  
 Lies pillow'd on fire,  
 And the lakes of bitumen  
 Rise boilingly higher ;  
 Where the roots of the Andes  
 Strike deep in the earth,  
 As their sommits to heaven  
 Shoot soaringly forth ;  
 I have quitted my birthplace,  
 Thy bidding to bide —  
 Thy spell hath subdued me,  
 Thy will be my guide !

FIFTH SPIRIT.

I am the Rider of the wind,  
 The Stirrer of the storm ;  
 The hurricane I left behind  
 Is yet with lightning warm ;

To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea  
 I swept upon the blast :  
 The fleet I met sail'd well, and yet  
 'T will sink ere night be past.

## SIXTH SPIRIT.

My dwelling is the shadow of the night,  
 Why doth thy magic torture me with light ?

## SEVENTH SPIRIT.

The star which rules thy destiny  
 Was ruled, ere earth began, by me :  
 I was a world as fresh and fair  
 As e'er revolved round sun in air ;  
 Its course was free and regular,  
 Space bosom'd not a lovelier star.  
 The hour arrived. — and it became  
 A wandering mass of shapeless flame,  
 A pathless comet, and a curse,  
 The menace of the universe ;  
 Still rolling on with innate force,  
 Without a sphere, without a course,  
 A bright deformity on high,  
 The monster of the upper sky !  
 And thou ! beneath its influence born —  
 Thou worm ! whom I obey and scorn —  
 Forced by a power (which is not thine,  
And lent thee but to make thee mine)  
 For this brief moment to descend,  
 Where these weak spirits round thee bend  
 And parley with a thing like thee —  
 What wouldst thou, Child of Clay ! with me ?

*The SEVEN SPIRITS.*

✕ Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains, winds, thy star,  
 Are at thy beck and bidding, Child of Clay !  
 Before thee at thy quest their spirits are —  
 What wouldst thou with us, son of mortals — say ?

*Man.* Forgetfulness —

*First Spirit.* Of what — of whom — and why ?

*Man.* Of that which is within me ; read it there —

Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.

✓ *Spirit.* We can but give thee that which we possess :  
 Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the power

O'er earth, the whole, or portion, or a sign  
 Which shall control the elements, whereof  
 We are the dominators, each and all,  
 These shall be thine.

*Man.* Oblivion, self-oblivion —  
 Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms  
 Ye offer so profusely what I ask ?

*Spirit.* It is not in our essence, in our skill ;  
 But — thou mayst die.

*Man.* Will death bestow it on me ?

*Spirit.* We are immortal, and do not forget ;  
 We are eternal ; and to us the past  
 Is, as the future, present. Art thou answer'd ?

*Man.* Ye mock me — but the power which brought ye  
 here

Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not at my will !

The mind, the spirit, the Promethean spark,

The lightning of my being, is as bright,

Pervading, and far-darting as your own,

And shall not yield to yours, though coop'd in clay !

Answer, or I will teach ye what I am.

*Spirit.* We answer as we answer'd ; our reply  
 Is even in thine own words.

*Man.* Why say ye so ?

*Spirit.* If, as thou say'st, thine essence be as ours  
 We have replied in telling thee, the thing  
 Mortals call death hath nought to do with us.

*Man.* I then have call'd ye from your realms in vain ;  
 Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.

*Spirit.* Say ;

What we possess we offer ; it is thine :

Bethink ere thou dismiss us, ask again —

Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of days —

*Man.* Accursed ! what have I to do with days ?

They are too long already. — Hence — begone !

*Spirit.* Yet pause : being here, our will would do thee  
 service ;

Bethink thee, is there then no other gift

Which we can make not worthless in thine eyes ?

*Man.* No, none : yet stay — one moment, ere we part —

I would behold ye face to face. I hear

Your voices, sweet and melancholy sounds,

As music on the waters ; and I see

The steady aspect of a clear large star ;

But nothing more. Approach me as ye are,

Or one, or all, in your accustom'd forms.

*Spirit.* We have no forms, beyond the elements  
Of which we are the mind and principle :  
But choose a form — in that we will appear.

*Man.* I have no choice ; there is no form on earth  
Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,  
Who is most powerful of ye, take such aspect  
As unto him may seem most fitting — Come !

*Seventh Spirit.* (*Appearing in the shape of a beautiful  
female figure.*) Behold !

*Man.* Oh God ! if it be thus, and thou  
Art not a madness and a mockery,  
I yet might be most happy. I will clasp thee,  
And we again will be — *[The figure vanishes.]*

My heart is crush'd !

*[MANFRED falls senseless.]*

*(A voice is heard in the Incantation which follows.)*

When the moon is on the wave,  
And the glow-worm in the grass,  
And the meteor on the grave,  
And the wisp on the morass ;  
When the falling stars are shooting,  
And the answer'd owls are hooting,  
And the silent leaves are still  
In the shadow of the hill,  
Shall my soul be upon thine,  
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep,  
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep ;  
There are shades which will not vanish,  
There are thoughts thou canst not banish ;  
By a power to thee unknown,  
Thou canst never be alone ;  
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,  
Thou art gather'd in a cloud ;  
And for ever shalt thou dwell  
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,  
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye  
As a thing that, though unseen,  
Must be near thee, and hath been ;  
And when in that secret dread  
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,

Thou shalt marvel I am not  
As thy shadow on the spot,  
And the power which thou dost feel  
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse  
Hath baptized thee with a curse ;  
And a spirit of the air  
Hath begirt thee with a snare ;  
In the wind there is a voice  
Shall forbid thee to rejoice ;  
And to thee shall Night deny  
All the quiet of her sky ;  
And the day shall have a sun,  
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil  
An essence which hath strength to kill ;  
\* From thy own heart I then did wring  
The black blood in its blackest spring ;  
From thy own smile I snatch'd the snake,  
For there it coil'd as in a brake ;  
+ From thy own lip I drew the charm  
Which gave all these their chiefest harm ;  
In proving every poison known,  
- I found the strongest was thine own.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,  
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,  
By that most seeming virtuous eye,  
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy ;  
By the perfection of thine art  
Which pass'd for human thine own heart ;  
By thy delight in others' pain,  
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,  
I call upon thee ! and compel  
Thyself to be thy proper Hell !

And on thy head I pour the vial  
Which doth devote thee to this trial ;  
Nor to slumber, nor to die,  
Shall be in thy destiny ;  
Though thy death shall still seem near  
To thy wish, but as a fear ;

rampant:

nice inversion!  
of "vial"  
grave.

Lo! the spell now works around thee,  
 And the clankless chain hath bound thee ;  
 O'er thy heart and brain together  
 Hath the word been pass'd — now wither !

## SCENE II.

*The Mountain of the Jungfrau. — Time, Morning. — MAN-  
 FRED alone upon the Cliffs.*

*Man.* The spirits I have raised abandon me —  
 The spells which I have studied baffle me —  
 The remedy I reck'd of tortured me ;  
 I lean no more on super-human aid,  
 It hath no power upon the past, and for  
 The future, till the past be gulf'd in darkness,  
 It is not of my search. — My mother Earth !  
 And thou fresh breaking Day, and you, ye Mountains,  
 Why are ye beautiful ? I cannot love ye.  
 And thou, the bright eye of the universe,  
 That openest over all, and unto all  
 Art a delight — thou shin'st not on my heart.  
 And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme edge  
 I stand, and on the torrent's brink beneath  
 Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs  
 In dizziness of distance ; when a leap,  
 A stir, a motion, even a breath, would bring  
 My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed  
 To rest for ever — wherefore do I pause ?  
 I feel the impulse — yet I do not plunge ;  
 I see the peril — yet do not recede ;  
 And my brain reels — and yet my foot is firm :  
 There is a power upon me which withholds,  
 And makes it my fatality to live ;  
 If it be life to wear within myself  
 This barrenness of spirit, and to be  
 My own soul's sepulchre, for I have ceased  
 To justify my deeds unto myself —  
 The last infirmity of evil. Ay,  
 Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minister,  
 [An eagle passes.  
 Whose happy flight is highest into heaven,  
 Well may'st thou swoop so near me — I should be  
 Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets ; thou art gone  
 Where the eye cannot follow thee ; but thine  
 Yet pierces downward, onward, or above,

With a pervading vision. — Beautiful !  
 How beautiful is all this visible world !  
 How glorious in its action and itself !  
 But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,  
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit

To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence make  
A conflict of its elements, and breathe  
The breath of degradation and of pride,  
 Contending with low wants and lofty will,  
 Till our mortality predominates,  
 And men are — what they name not to themselves,  
 And trust not to each other. Hark ! the note,

[*The Shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard.*

The natural music of the mountain reed —  
For here the patriarchal days are not  
A pastoral fable — pipes in the liberal air,  
 Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd ;  
 My soul would drink those echoes. — Oh, that I were  
 The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,  
 A living voice, a breathing harmony,  
 A bodiless enjoyment — born and dying  
 With the blest tone which made me !

*Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.*

*Chamois Hunter.*

Even so

This way the chamois leapt : her nimble feet  
 Have baffled me ; my gains to-day will scarce  
 Repay my break-neck travail. — What is here ?  
 Who seems not of my trade, and yet hath reach'd  
 A height which none even of our mountaineers,  
 Save our best hunters, may attain : his garb  
 Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air  
 Proud as a free-born peasant's, at this distance —  
 I will approach him nearer.

*Man. (not perceiving the other.)* To be thus —  
 Gray-hair'd with anguish, like these blasted pines,  
 Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless,  
A blighted trunk upon a cursed root,  
Which but supplies a feeling to decay —  
 And to be thus, eternally but thus,  
 Having been otherwise ! Now furrow'd o'er  
 With wrinkles, plough'd by moments, not by years  
 And hours — all tortured into ages — hours  
 Which I outlive ! — Ye toppling crags of ice !  
 Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down

*For commodity creature*

In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me !  
 I hear ye momentarily above, beneath,  
 Crash with a frequent conflict ; but ye pass,  
 And only fall on things that still would live ;  
 On the young flourishing forest, or the hut  
 And hamlet of the harmless villager.

*C. Hun.* The mists begin to rise from up the valley ;  
 I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance  
 To lose at once his way and life together.

*Man.* The mists boil up around the glaciers ; clouds  
 Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,  
 Like foam from the roused ocean of deep Hell,  
 Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,  
 Heap'd with the damn'd like pebbles. — I am giddy.

*C. Hun.* I must approach him cautiously ; if near,  
 A sudden step will startle him, and he  
 Seems tottering already.

*Man.* Mountains have fallen,  
 Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock  
 Rocking their Alpine brethren ; filling up  
 The ripe green valleys with destruction's splinters ;  
 Damming the rivers with a sudden dash,  
 Which crush'd the waters into mist, and made  
 Their fountains find another channel — thus,  
 Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosenberg —  
 Why stood I not beneath it ?

*C. Hun.* Friend ! have a care,  
 Your next step may be fatal ! — for the love  
 Of him who made you, stand not on that brink !

*Man.* (*not hearing him.*) Such would have been for me  
 a fitting tomb ;

My bones had then been quiet in their depth ;  
 They had not then been strewn upon the rocks  
 For the wind's pastime — as thus — thus they shall be —  
 In this one plunge. — Farewell, ye opening heavens !  
 Look not upon me thus reproachfully —

Ye were not meant for me — Earth ! take these atoms !

[*As MANFRED is in act to spring from the cliff, the  
 CHAMOIS HUNTER seizes and retains him with a  
 sudden grasp.*]

*C. Hun.* Hold, madman ! — though aweary of thy life,  
 Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood —  
 Away with me — I will not quit my hold.

*Man.* I am most sick at heart — nay, grasp me not —  
 I am all feebleness — the mountains whirl  
 Spinning around me — I grow blind — What art thou ?

*C. Hun.* I'll answer that anon. — Away with me —  
 The clouds grow thicker — there — now lean on me —  
 Place your foot here — here, take this staff, and cling  
 A moment to that shrub — now give me your hand,  
 And hold fast by my girdle — softly — well —  
 The Chalet will be gained within an hour —  
 Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing,  
 And something like a pathway, which the torrent  
 Hath wash'd since winter. — Come, 't is bravely done —  
 You should have been a hunter. — Follow me.

[*As they descend the rocks with difficulty, the scene closes.*]

---

ACT II.

SCENE I.

*A Cottage amongst the Bernese Alps.*

MANFRED and the CHAMOIS HUNTER.

*C. Hun.* No, no — yet pause — thou must not yet go  
 forth :

Thy mind and body are alike unfit  
 To trust each other, for some hours, at least ;  
 When thou art better, I will be thy guide —  
 But whither ?

*Man.* It imports not : I do know  
 My route full well, and need no further guidance.

*C. Hun.* Thy garb and gait bespeak thee of high lin-  
 eage —  
 One of the many chiefs, whose castled crags  
 Look o'er the lower valleys — which of these  
 May call thee lord ? I only know their portals ;  
 My way of life leads me but rarely down  
 To bask by the huge hearths of those old halls,  
 Carousing with the vassals ; but the paths,  
 Which step from out our mountains to their doors,  
 I know from childhood — which of these is thine ?

*Man.* No matter.

*C. Hun.* Well, sir, pardon me the question,  
 And be of better cheer. Come, taste my wine ;  
 'T is of an ancient vintage ; many a day  
 'T has thawed my veins among our glaciers, now  
 Let it do thus for thine — Come, pledge me fairly.

*Man.* Away, away! there 's blood upon the brim!  
Will it then never — never sink in the earth?

*C. Hun.* What dost thou mean? thy senses wander from thee.

*Man.* I say 't is blood — my blood! the pure warm stream

Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and in ours  
When we were in our youth, and had one heart,  
And loved each other as we should not love,  
And this was shed: but still it rises up,  
Colouring the clouds, that shut me out from heaven,  
Where thou art not — and I shall never be.

*C. Hun.* Man of strange words, and some half-maddening sin,

Which makes thee people vacancy, whate'er  
Thy dread and sufferance be, there 's comfort yet —  
The aid of holy men, and heavenly patience —

*Man.* Patience and patience! Hence — that word was made

For brutes of burthen, not for birds of prey;  
Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine, —  
I am not of thine order.

*C. Hun.* Thanks to heaven!

I would not be of thine for the free fame  
Of William Tell; but whatsoe'er thine ill,  
It must be borne, and these wild starts are useless.

*Man.* Do I not bear it? — Look on me — I live.

*C. Hun.* This is convulsion, and no healthful life.

*Man.* I tell thee, man! I have lived many years,  
Many long years, but they are nothing now  
To those which I must number: ages — ages —  
Space and eternity — and consciousness,  
With the fierce thirst of death — and still unslaked!

*C. Hun.* Why, on thy brow the seal of middle age  
Hath scarce been set; I am thine elder far.

*Man.* Think'st thou existence doth depend on time?  
It doth; but actions are our epochs: mine  
Have made my days and nights imperishable,  
Endless, and all alike, as sands on the shore,  
Innumerable atoms; and one desert,  
Barren and cold, on which the wild waves break,  
But nothing rests, save carcasses and wrecks,  
Rocks, and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness.

*C. Hun.* Alas! he 's mad — but yet I must not leave [him.

*Man.* I would I were — for then the things I see  
Would be but a distemper'd dream.

*C. Hun.* What is it?

That thou dost see, or think thou look'st upon?

*Man.* Myself, and thee — a peasant of the Alps —

Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,

And spirit patient, pious, proud, and free;

Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts;

Thy days of health, and nights of sleep; thy toils,

By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes

Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,

With cross and garland over its green turf,

And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph;

This do I see — and then I look within —

It matters not — my soul was scorch'd already! [mine?

*C. Hun.* And would'st thou then exchange thy lot for

*Man.* No, friend! I would not wrong thee, nor exchange

My lot with living being: I can bear —

However wretchedly, 't is still to bear —

In life what others could not brook to dream,

But perish in their slumber.

*C. Hun.* And with this —

This cautious feeling for another's pain,

Canst thou be black with evil? — say not so.

Can one of gentle thoughts have wreak'd revenge

Upon his enemies?

*Man.*

Oh! no, no, no! — *vague guilt*

My injuries came down on those who loved me —

On those whom I best loved: I never quell'd

An enemy, save in my just defence —

But my embrace was fatal.

*C. Hun.*

Heaven give thee rest!

And penitence restore thee to thyself;

My prayers shall be for thee.

*Man.*

I need them not,

But can endure thy pity. I depart —

'T is time — farewell! — Here 's gold and thanks for thee —

No words — it is thy due. — Follow me not —

I know my path — the mountain peril 's past:

And once again, I charge thee, follow not! [Exit MAN

## SCENE II.

*A lower Valley in the Alps. A Cataract.*

*Enter MANFRED.*

It is not noon — the sunbow's rays (1) still arch

The torrent with the many hues of heaven,

(1) This iris is formed by the rays of the sun over the lower part of the Alpine  
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And roll the sheeted silver's waving column  
 O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,  
 And fling its lines of foaming light along,  
 And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,  
 The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death,  
 As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes  
 But mine now drink this sight of loveliness ;  
 I should be sole in this sweet solitude,  
 And with the Spirit of the place divide  
 The homage of these waters.— I will call her.

[*MANFRED takes some of the water into the palm of his hand, and flings it into the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the WITCH OF THE ALPS rises beneath the arch of the sunbow of the torrent.*

Beautiful Spirit ! with thy hair of light,  
 And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form  
 The charms of earth's least mortal daughters grow  
 To an unearthly stature, in an essence  
 Of purer elements ; while the hues of youth, —  
 Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,  
 Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,  
 Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves  
 Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow,  
 The blush of earth embracing with her heaven, —  
 Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame  
 The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee.  
 Beautiful Spirit ! in thy calm clear brow,  
 Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul,  
 Which of itself shows immortality,  
 I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son  
 Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit  
 At times to commune with them — if that he  
 Avail him of his spells — to call thee thus,  
 And gaze on thee a moment.

*Witch.*

Son of Earth !

I know thee, and the powers which give thee power ;  
 I know thee for a man of many thoughts,  
 And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,  
 Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.  
 I have expected this — what would'st thou with me ?

*Man.* To look upon thy beauty — nothing further.  
 The face of the earth hath madden'd me, and I  
 Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce  
 To the abodes of those who govern her —

---

torrents : it is exactly like a rainbow come down to pay a visit, and so close that you may walk into it : — this effect lasts till noon.

But they can nothing aid me. I have sought  
From them what they could not bestow, and now  
I search no further.

*Witch.* What could be the quest  
Which is not in the power of the most powerful,  
The rulers of the invisible ?

*Man.* A boon ;  
But why should I repeat it ? 't were in vain.

*Witch.* I know not that ; let thy lips utter it.

*Man.* Well, though it torture me, 't is but the same ;

My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards

My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men,

Nor look'd upon the earth with human eyes ;

The thirst of their ambition was not mine,

The aim of their existence was not mine ;

My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my powers,

Made me a stranger ; though I wore the form,

I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,

Nor midst the creatures of clay that girded me

Was there but one who — but of her anon.

I said with men, and with the thoughts of men,

I held but slight communion ; but instead,

My joy was in the Wilderness, to breathe

The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,

Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's wing

Flit o'er the herbless granite ; or to plunge

Into the torrent, and to roll along

On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave

Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow.

In these my early strength exulted ; or

To follow through the night the moving moon,

The stars and their development ; or catch

The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim ;

Or to look, list'ning, on the scatter'd leaves,

While Autumn winds were at their evening song.

These were my pastimes, and to be alone ;

For if the beings, of whom I was one, —

Hating to be so, — cross'd me in my path,

I felt myself degraded back to them, *Frankenstein*

And was all clay again. And then I dived,

In my lone wanderings, to the caves of death,

Searching its cause in its effect ; and drew

From wither'd bones, and skulls, and heap'd up dust,

Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd

The nights of years in sciences untaught,

Save in the old time ; and with time and toil,

And terrible ordeal, and such penance  
 As in itself hath power upon the air,  
 And spirits that do compass air and earth,  
 Space, and the peopled infinite, I made  
 Mine eyes familiar with Eternity,  
 Such as, before me, did the Magi, and  
 He who from out their fountain dwellings raised  
 Eros and Anteros, (1) at Gadara,  
 As I do thee ; — and with my knowledge grew  
 The thirst of knowledge, and the power and joy  
 Of this most bright intelligence, until —

*Witch.* Proceed.

*Man.* Oh ! I but thus prolong'd my words  
 Boasting these idle attributes, because  
 As I approach the core of my heart's grief —  
 But to my task. [I have not named to thee  
 Father or mother, mistress, friend, or being,  
 With whom I wore the chain of human ties ;  
 If I had such, they seem'd not such to me —  
 Yet there was one —

*Witch.* Spare not thyself — proceed.

*Man.* She was like me in lineaments — her eyes,  
 Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone  
 Even of her voice, they said were like to mine ;  
 But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty ;  
 She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,  
 The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind  
 To comprehend the universe : nor these  
 Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine,  
 Pity, and smiles, and tears — which I had not ;  
 And tenderness — but that I had for her ;  
 Humility — and that I never had.  
 Her faults were mine — her virtues were her own —  
 I loved her, and destroy'd her !

*Witch.* With thy hand ?

*Man.* Not with my hand, but heart — which broke her  
 heart —  
 It gazed on mine, and wither'd. I have shed  
 Blood, but not hers — and yet her blood was shed —  
 I saw — and could not stanch it.

*Witch.* And for this —  
 A being of the race thou dost despise,  
 The order which thine own would rise above,  
 Mingling with us and ours, thou dost forego

(1) The philosopher Iamblicus. The story of the raising of Eros and Anteros may be found in his life by Eunapius. It is well told.

The gifts of our great knowledge, and shrink'st back  
To recreant mortality — Away!

*Man.* Daughter of Air! I tell thee, since that hour —  
But words are breath — look on me in my sleep,  
Or watch my watchings — Come and sit by me!  
My solitude is solitude no more,  
But peopled with the Furies; — I have gnash'd  
My teeth in darkness till returning morn,  
Then cursed myself till sunset; — I have pray'd  
For madness as a blessing — 't is denied me.  
I have affronted death — but in the war  
Of elements the waters shrunk from me, *unabused*  
And fatal things pass'd harmless — the cold hand  
Of an all-pitiless demon held me back,  
Back by a single hair, which would not break.  
In fantasy, imagination, all  
The affluence of my soul — which one day was  
A Cræsus in creation — I plunged deep,  
But, like an ebbing wave, it dash'd me back  
Into the gulf of my unfathom'd thought.  
I plunged amidst mankind — Forgetfulness  
I sought in all, save where 't is to be found,  
And that I have to learn — my sciences,  
My long pursued and super-human art,  
Is mortal here — I dwell in my despair —  
And live — and live for ever.

*Witch.*

It may be

That I can aid thee.

*Man.*

To do this thy power

Must wake the dead, or lay me low with them.

Do so — in any shape — in any hour —

With any torture — so it be the last.

*Witch.* That is not in my province; but if thou  
Wilt swear obedience to my will, and do  
My bidding, it may help thee to thy wishes.

*Man.* I will not swear — Obey! and whom? the spirits  
Whose presence I command, and be the slave  
Of those who served me — Never!

*Witch.*

Is this all?

Hast thou no gentler answer? — Yet bethink thee,  
And pause ere thou rejectest.

*Man.*

I have said it.

*Witch.* Enough! — I may retire then — say!

*Man.*

Retire!

[*THE WITCH disappears.*]

*Man.* (*alone.*) We are the fools of time and terror: Days

Steal on us and steal from us ; yet we live,  
 Loathing our life, and dreading still to die.  
 In all the days of this detested yoke —  
 This vital weight upon the struggling heart,  
 Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick with pain,  
 Or joy that ends in agony or faintness —  
 In all the days of past and future, for  
 In life there is no present, we can number  
 How few — how less than few — wherein the soul  
 Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws back  
 As from a stream in winter, though the chill  
 Be but a moment's. I have one resource  
 Still in my science — I can call the dead,  
 And ask them what it is we dread to be :  
 The sternest answer can but be the Grave,  
 And that is nothing — if they answer not —  
 The buried Prophet answer'd to the Hag  
 Of Endor ; and the Spartan Monarch drew  
 From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping spirit  
 An answer and his destiny — he slew  
 That which he loved, unknowing what he slew,  
 And died unpardon'd — though he call'd in aid  
 The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia roused  
 The Arcadian Evocators to compel  
 The indignant shadow to depose her wrath,  
 Or fix her term of vengeance — she replied  
 In words of dubious import, but fulfilled. (1)  
 If I had never lived, that which I love  
 Had still been living ; had I never loved,  
 That which I love would still be beautiful —  
 Happy and giving happiness. What is she ?  
 What is she now ? — a sufferer for my sins —  
 A thing I dare not think upon — or nothing.  
 Within few hours I shall not call in vain —  
 Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare :  
 Until this hour I never shrunk to gaze  
 On spirit, good or evil — now I tremble,  
 And feel a strange cold thaw upon my heart.  
 But I can act even what I most abhor,  
 And champion human fears. — The night approaches.

[Exit.]

(1) The story of Pausanias, king of Sparta, (who commanded the Greeks at the battle of Plataea, and afterwards perished for an attempt to betray the Lacedemonians,) and Cleonice, is told in Plutarch's life of Cimon ; and in the Laconics of Pausanias the sophist, in his description of Greece.

## SCENE III.

*The Summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.**Enter FIRST DESTINY.*

The moon is rising broad, and round, and bright ;  
 And here on snows, where never human foot  
 Of common mortal trod, we nightly tread,  
 And leave no traces ; o'er the savage sea,  
 The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,  
 We skim its rugged breakers, which put on  
 The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,  
 Frozen in a moment — a dead whirlpool's image :  
 And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,  
 The fretwork of some earthquake — where the clouds  
 Pause to repose themselves in passing by —  
 Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils ;  
 Here do I wait my sisters, on our way  
 To the Hall of Arimanes, for to-night  
 Is our great festival — 't is strange they come not.

*A Voice without, singing.*

The Captive Usurper,  
 Hurl'd down from the throne,  
 Lay buried in torpor,  
 Forgotten and lone ;  
 I broke through his slumbers,  
 I shiver'd his chain,  
 I leagu'd him with numbers —  
 He 's Tyrant again !

With the blood of a million he 'll answer my care,  
 With a nation's destruction — his flight and despair.

*Second Voice, without.*

The ship sail'd on, the ship sail'd fast,  
 But I left not a sail, and I left not a mast ;  
 There is not a plank of the hull or the deck,  
 And there is not a wretch to lament o'er his wreck ;  
 Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by the hair,  
 And he was a subject well worthy my care ;  
 A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea —  
 But I saved him to wreak further havoc for me !

FIRST DESTINY, *answering.*

The city lies sleeping ;  
 The morn, to deplore it,  
 May dawn on it weeping :  
 Sullenly, slowly,  
 The black plague flew o'er it —  
 Thousands lie lowly ;  
 Tens of thousands shall perish —  
 The living shall fly from  
 The sick they should cherish ;  
 But nothing can vanquish  
 The touch that they die from.  
 Sorrow and anguish,  
 And evil and dread,  
 Envelope a nation —  
 The blest are the dead,  
 Who see not the sight  
 Of their own desolation —  
 This work of a night —

This wreck of a realm — this deed of my doing —  
 For ages I 've done, and shall still be renewing !

*Enter the SECOND and THIRD DESTINIES.*

*The Three.*

Our hands contain the hearts of men,  
 Our footsteps are their graves ;  
 We only give to take again  
 The spirits of our slaves !

*First Des.* Welcome ! — Where 's Nemesis ?

*Second Des.* At some great work ;

But what I know not, for my hands were full.

*Third Des.* Behold she cometh.

*Enter NEMESIS.*

*First Des.* Say, where hast thou been ?

My sisters and thyself are slow to-night.

*Nem.* I was detain'd repairing shatter'd thrones,  
 Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,  
 Avenging men upon their enemies,  
 And making them repent their own revenge ;  
 Goading the wise to madness ; from the dull  
 Shaping out oracles to rule the world  
 Afresh, for they were waxing out of date,  
 And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,

To weigh kings in the balance, and to speak  
Of freedom, the forbidden fruit. — Away!  
We have outstayed the hour — mount we our clouds!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE I V.

*The Hall of Arimanes — Arimanes on his Throne, a Globe of Fire, surrounded by the Spirits.*

*Hymn of the SPIRITS.*

Hail to our Master! — Prince of Earth and Air!  
Who walks the clouds and waters — in his hand  
The sceptre of the elements, which tear  
Themselves to chaos at his high command!  
He breatheth — and a tempest shakes the sea;  
He speaketh — and the clouds reply in thunder;  
He gazeth — from his glance the sunbeams flee;  
He moveth — earthquakes rend the world asunder.  
Beneath his footsteps the volcanoes rise;  
His shadow is the Pestilence; his path  
The comets herald through the crackling skies;  
And planets turn to ashes at his wrath.  
To him War offers daily sacrifice;  
To him Death pays his tribute; Life is his,  
With all its infinite of agonies —  
And his the spirit of whatever is!

*Enter the DESTINIES and NEMESIS.*

*First Des.* Glory to Arimanes! on the earth  
His power increaseth — both my sisters did  
His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty!

*Second Des.* Glory to Arimanes! we who bow  
The necks of men, bow down before his throne!

*Third Des.* Glory to Arimanes! we await  
His nod!

*Nem.* Sovereign of Sovereigns! we are thine,  
And all that liveth, more or less, is ours,  
And most things wholly so; still to increase  
Our power, increasing thine, demands our care  
And we are vigilant — Thy late commands  
Have been fulfill'd to the utmost.

*Enter MANFRED.*

*A Spirit.* What is here?  
A mortal! — Thou most rash and fatal wretch,  
Bow down and worship!

*Second Spirit.* I do know the man —  
A Magian of great power, and fearful skill!

*Third Spirit.* Bow down and worship, slave! — What  
know'st thou not

Thine and our Sovereign? — Tremble, and obey! [clay,

*All the Spirits.* Prostrate thyself, and thy condemned  
Child of the Earth! or dread the worst.

*Man.* I know it;  
And yet ye see I kneel not.

*Fourth Spirit.* 'T will be taught thee.

*Man.* 'T is taught already; — many a night on the earth,  
On the bare ground, have I bow'd down my face,  
And strew'd my head with ashes; I have known  
The fulness of humiliation, for  
I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt  
To my own desolation.

*Fifth Spirit.* Dost thou dare  
Refuse to Arimanes on his throne  
What the whole earth accords, beholding not  
The terror of his Glory — Crouch! I say.

*Man.* Bid *him* bow down to that which is above him,  
The overruling Infinite — the Maker  
Who made him not for worship — let him kneel,  
And we will kneel together.

*The Spirits.* Crush the worm!  
Tear him in pieces! —

*First Des.* Hence! Avaunt! — he's mine.  
Prince of the Powers invisible! This man  
Is of no common order, as his port  
And presence here denote; his sufferings  
Have been of an immortal nature, like  
Our own; his knowledge, and his powers and will,  
As far as is compatible with clay,  
Which clogs the ethereal essence, have been such  
As clay hath seldom borne; his aspirations  
Have been beyond the dwellers of the earth,  
And they have only taught him what we know —  
That knowledge is not happiness, and science  
But an exchange of ignorance for that  
Which is another kind of ignorance.  
This is not all — the passions, attributes  
Of earth and heaven, from which no power, nor being,  
Nor breath from the worm upwards is exempt,  
Have pierced his heart; and in their consequence  
Made him a thing, which I, who pity not,  
Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine,

And thine, it may be — be it so, or not,  
No other Spirit in this region hath  
A soul like his — or power upon his soul.

*Nem.* What doth he here then ?

*First Des.* Let him answer that.

*Man.* Ye know what I have known ; and without power  
I could not be amongst ye : but there are  
Powers deeper still beyond — I come in quest  
Of such, to answer unto what I seek.

*Nem.* What would'st thou ?

*Man.* Thou canst not reply to me.

Call up the dead — my question is for them.

*Nem.* Great Arimanes, doth thy will avouch  
The wishes of this mortal ?

*Ari.* Yea.

*Nem.* Whom would'st thou

Uncharnel ?

*Man.* One without a tomb — call up  
Astarte.

#### NEMESIS.

Shadow ! or Spirit !

Whatever thou art,

Which still doth inherit

The whole or a part

Of the form of thy birth,

Of the mould of thy clay,

Which return'd to the earth,

Re-appear to the day !

Bear what thou borest,

The heart and the form,

And the aspect thou worst

Redeem from the worm.

Appear ! — Appear ! — Appear !

Who sent thee there requires thee here !

[*The Phantom of ASTARTE rises and stands in  
the midst.*]

*Man.* Can this be death ? there's bloom upon her cheek ;  
But now I see it is no living hue,  
But a strange hectic — like the unnatural red  
Which Autumn plants upon the perish'd leaf.  
It is the same ! Oh, God ! that I should dread  
To look upon the same — Astarte ! — No,  
I cannot speak to her — but bid her speak —  
Forgive me or condemn me.

## NEMESIS.

By the power which hath broken  
 The grave which enthrall'd thee,  
 Speak to him who hath spoken,  
 Or those who have call'd thee !

*Man.* She is silent,  
 And in that silence I am more than answer'd.

*Nem.* My power extends no further. Prince of air !  
 It rests with thee alone — command her voice.

*Ari.* Spirit — obey this sceptre !

*Nem.* Silent still !  
 She is not of our order, but belongs  
 To the other powers. Mortal ! thy quest is vain,  
 And we are baffled also.

*Man.* Hear me, hear me —  
 Astarte ! my beloved ! speak to me :  
 I have so much endured — so much endure —  
 Look on me ! the grave hath not changed thee more  
 Than I am changed for thee. Thou lovedst me  
 Too much, as I loved thee : we were not made  
 To torture thus each other, though it were  
 The deadliest sin to love as we have loved.  
 Say that thou loath'st me not — that I do bear  
 This punishment for both — that thou wilt be  
 One of the blessed — and that I shall die ;  
 For hitherto all hateful things conspire  
 To bind me in existence — in a life  
 Which makes me shrink from immortality —  
 A future like the past. I cannot rest.  
 I know not what I ask, nor what I seek :  
 I feel but what thou art — and what I am ;  
 And I would hear yet once before I perish  
 The voice which was my music — Speak to me !  
 For I have call'd on thee in the still night,  
 Startled the slumbering birds from the hush'd boughs,  
 And woke the mountain wolves, and made the caves  
 Acquainted with thy vainly echoed name,  
 Which answer'd me — many things answer'd me —  
 Spirits and men — but thou wert silent all.  
 Yet speak to me ! I have outwatch'd the stars,  
 And gazed o'er heaven in vain in search of thee.  
 Speak to me ! I have wander'd o'er the earth,  
 And never found my likeness — Speak to me !  
 Look on the fiends around — they feel for me :  
 I fear them not, and feel for thee alone —

Speak to me! though it be in wrath; — but say —  
I reckon not what — but let me hear thee once —  
This once — once more!

*Phantom of Astarte.* Manfred!

*Man.* Say on, say on —  
I live but in the sound — it is thy voice!

*Phan.* Manfred! To-morrow ends thine earthly ills.  
Farewell!

*Man.* Yet one word more — am I forgiven?

*Phan.* Farewell!

*Man.* Say, shall we meet again?

*Phan.* Farewell!

*Man.* One word for mercy! Say, thou lovest me.

*Phan.* Manfred!

[*The Spirit of ASTARTE disappears.*

*Nem.* She's gone, and will not be recall'd;  
Her words will be fulfill'd. Return to the earth.

*A Spirit.* He is convulsed — This is to be a mortal, b  
And seek the things beyond mortality. [makes

*Another Spirit.* Yet, see, he mastereth himself, and  
His torture tributary to his will.

Had he been one of us, he would have made  
An awful spirit.

*Nem.* Hast thou further question  
Of our great sovereign, or his worshippers?

*Man.* None.

*Nem.* Then for a time farewell.

*Man.* We meet then! Where? On the earth? —  
Even as thou wilt: and for the grace accorded

I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well! [*Exit MANFRED.*  
(*Scene closes.*)

## ACT III.

### SCENE I.

*A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.*

MANFRED and HERMAN.

*Man.* What is the hour?

*Her.* It wants but one till sunset,  
And promises a lovely twilight.

*Man.* Say,  
Are all things so disposed of in the tower  
As I directed?

*Her.* All, my lord, are ready ;  
Here is the key and casket.

*Man.* It is well :  
Thou may'st retire. [*Exit HERMAN.*]

*Man. (alone.)* There is a calm upon me —  
Inexplicable stillness ! which till now  
Did not belong to what I knew of life.  
If that I did not know philosophy  
To be of all our vanities the motliest,  
The merest word that ever fool'd the ear  
From out the schoolman's jargon, I should deem  
The golden secret, the sought "Kalon," found,  
And seated in my soul. It will not last,  
But it is well to have known it, though but once :  
It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,  
And I within my tablets would note down  
That there is such a feeling. Who is there ?

*Re-enter HERMAN.*

*Her.* My lord, the abbot of St. Maurice craves  
To greet your presence.

*Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.*

*Abbot.* Peace be with Count Manfred !

*Man.* Thanks, holy father ! welcome to these walls ;  
Thy presence honours them, and blesseth those  
Who dwell within them.

*Abbot.* Would it were so, Count ! —  
But I would fain confer with thee alone.

*Man.* Herman, retire. What would my reverend guest ?

*Abbot.* Thus, without prelude : — Age and zeal, my  
office,  
And good intent, must plead my privilege ;  
Our near, though not acquainted neighbourhood,  
May also be my herald. Rumours strange,  
And of unholy nature, are abroad,  
And busy with thy name ; a noble name  
For centuries : may he who bears it now  
Transmit it unimpair'd !

*Man.* Proceed, — I listen.

*Abbot.* 'T is said thou holdest converse with the things  
Which are forbidden to the search of man ;  
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,  
The many evil and unheavenly spirits  
Which walk the valley of the shade of death,

Thou communest. I know that with mankind,  
Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely  
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude  
Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.

*Man.* And what are they who do avouch these things?

*Abbot.* My pious brethren — the scared peasantry —  
Even thy own vassals — who do look on thee  
With most unquiet eyes. Thy life 's in peril.

*Man.* Take it.

*Abbot.* I come to save, and not destroy —  
I would not pry into thy secret soul;  
But if these things be sooth, there still is time  
For penitence and pity: reconcile thee  
With the true church, and through the church to heaven.

*Man.* I hear thee. This is my reply; whate'er  
I may have been, or am, doth rest between  
Heaven and myself. — I shall not choose a mortal  
To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd

Against your ordinances? prove and punish!

*Abbot.* My son! I did not speak of punishment,  
But penitence and pardon; — with thyself,  
The choice of such remains — and for the last,  
Our institutions and our strong belief  
Have given me power to smooth the path from sin  
To higher hope and better thoughts; the first  
I leave to heaven — “Vengeance is mine alone!”  
So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness  
His servant echoes back the awful word.

*Man.* Old man! there is no power in holy men,  
Nor charm in prayer — nor purifying form  
Of penitence — nor outward look — nor fast —  
Nor agony — nor, greater than all these,  
The innate tortures of that deep despair,  
Which is remorse without the fear of hell,  
But all in all sufficient to itself  
Would make a hell of heaven — can exorcise  
From out the unbounded spirit, the quick sense  
Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and revenge  
Upon itself; there is no future pang  
Can deal that justice on the self-condemn'd  
He deals on his own soul.

*Abbot.* All this is well;  
For this will pass away, and be succeeded  
By an auspicious hope, which shall look up  
With calm assurance to that blessed place,  
Which all who seek may win, whatever be

Their earthly errors, so they be atoned :  
 And the commencement of atonement is  
 The sense of its necessity.— Say on —  
 And all our church can teach thee shall be taught ;  
 And all we can absolve thee shall be pardon'd.

*Man.* When Rome's sixth emperor was near his last,  
 The victim of a self-inflicted wound,  
 To shun the torments of a public death  
 From senates once his slaves, a certain soldier,  
 With show of loyal pity, would have stanch'd  
 The gushing throat with his officious robe ;  
 The dying Roman thrust him back, and said —  
 Some empire still in his expiring glance,  
 " It is too late — is this fidelity ? "

*Abbot.* And what of this ?

*Man.* I answer with the Roman —  
 " It is too late ! "

*Abbot.* It never can be so,  
 To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,  
 And thy own soul with heaven. Hast thou no hope ?  
 'T is strange — even those who do despair above,  
 Yet shape themselves some fantasy on earth,  
 To which frail twig they cling like drowning men.

*Man.* Ay — father ! I have had those earthly visions  
 And noble aspirations in my youth,  
 To make my own the mind of other men,  
 The enlightener of nations ; and to rise  
 I knew not whither — it might be to fall ;  
 But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,  
 Which having leapt from its more dazzling height,  
 Even in the foaming strength of its abyss,  
 (Which casts up misty columns that become  
 Clouds raining from the re-ascended skies,)  
 Lies low but mighty still. But this is past,  
 My thoughts mistook themselves.

*Abbot.* And wherefore so ?

*Man.* I could not tame my nature down ; for he  
 Must serve who fain would sway — and soothe — and sue —  
 And watch all time — and pry into all place —  
 And be a living lie — who would become  
A mighty thing among the mean, and such  
The mass are ; I disdain'd to mingle with  
A herd, though to be leader — and of wolves.  
 The lion is alone, and so am I.

*Abbot.* And why not live and act with other men ?

*Man.* Because my nature was averse from life ;

And yet not cruel ; for I would not make,  
 But find a desolation : — like the wind,  
 The red-hot breath of the most lone Simoom,  
 Which dwells but in the desert, and sweeps o'er  
 The barren sands which bear no shrubs to blast,  
 And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,  
 And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,  
 But being met is deadly ; such hath been  
 The course of my existence ; but there came  
 Things in my path which are no more.

*Abbot.* Alas !

I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid  
 From me and from my calling ; yet so young,  
 I still would —

*Man.* Look on me ! there is an order  
 Of mortals on the earth, who do become  
 Old in their youth, and die ere middle age,  
 Without the violence of warlike death ;  
 Some perishing of pleasure — some of study —  
 Some worn with toil — some of mere weariness —  
 Some of disease — and some insanity —  
 And some of wither'd, or of broken hearts ;  
 For this last is a malady which slays  
 More than are number'd in the lists of Fate,  
 Taking all shapes, and bearing many names.  
 Look upon me ! for even of all these things  
Have I partaken ; and of all these things,  
One were enough : then wonder not that I  
 Am what I am, but that I ever was,  
 Or having been, that I am still on earth.

*Abbot.* Yet, hear me still —

*Man.* Old man ! I do respect  
 Thine order, and revere thine years ; I deem  
 Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain :  
 Think me not churlish ; I would spare myself,  
 Far more than me, in shunning at this time  
 All further colloquy — and so — farewell.

[*Exit MANFRED.*]

*Abbot.* This should have been a noble creature : he  
 Hath all the energy which would have made  
 A goodly frame of glorious elements,  
 Had they been wisely mingled ; as it is,  
 It is an awful chaos — light and darkness —  
 And mind and dust — and passions and pure thoughts  
 Mix'd, and contending without end or order,  
 All dormant or destructive : he will perish,

And yet he must not ; I will try once more,  
 For such are worth redemption ; and my duty  
 Is to dare all things for a righteous end.  
 I'll follow him — but cautiously, though surely.

[*Exit* ABBOT.]

SCENE II.

*Another Chamber.*

MANFRED and HERMAN.

*Her.* My lord, you bade me wait on you at sunset :  
 He sinks behind the mountain.

*Man.* Doth he so ?  
 I will look on him.

[MANFRED *advances to the Window of the Hall.*

Glorious Orb ! the idol  
 Of early nature, and the vigorous race  
 Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons (1)  
 Of the embrace of angels, with a sex  
 More beautiful than they, which did draw down  
 The erring spirits who can ne'er return.—  
 Most glorious orb ! that wert a worship, ere  
 The mystery of thy making was reveal'd !  
 Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,  
 Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops, the hearts  
 Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they pour'd  
 Themselves in orisons ! Thou material God !  
 And representative of the Unknown —  
 Who chose thee for his shadow ! Thou chief star !  
 Centre of many stars ! which mak'st our earth  
 Endurable, and temperest the hues  
 And hearts of all who walk within thy rays !  
 Sire of the seasons ! Monarch of the climes,  
 And those who dwell in them ! for near or far,  
 Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee  
 Even as our outward aspects ; — thou dost rise,  
 And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee well !  
 I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first glance  
 Of love and wonder was for thee, then take

(1) " That the *Sons of God* saw the daughters of men, that they were fair," &c.  
 " There were giants in the earth in those days ; and also after that, when the  
*Sons of God* came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them,  
 the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."

*Genesis*, ch. vi. verses 2 and 4.

My latest look : thou wilt not beam on one  
To whom the gifts of life and warmth have been  
Of a more fatal nature. He is gone :

I follow.

[*Exit* MANFRED.]

SCENE III.

*The Mountains — The Castle of Manfred at some distance — A Terrace before a Tower. — Time, Twilight.*

HERMAN, MANUEL, and other Dependants of  
MANFRED.

*Her.* 'T is strange enough ; night after night, for years,  
He hath pursued long vigils in this tower,  
Without a witness. I have been within it, —  
So have we all been oft-times ; but from it,  
Or its contents, it were impossible  
To draw conclusions absolute, of aught  
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is  
One chamber where none enter : I would give  
The fee of what I have to come these three years,  
To pore upon its mysteries.

*Manuel.* 'T were dangerous ;  
Content thyself with what thou know'st already.

*Her.* Ah ! Manuel ! thou art elderly and wise,  
And couldst say much ; thou hast dwelt within the castle —  
How many years is 't ?

*Manuel.* Ere Count Manfred's birth,  
I served his father, whom he nought resembles.

*Her.* There be more sons in like predicament.  
But wherein do they differ ?

*Manuel.* I speak not  
Of features or of form, but mind and habits ;  
Count Sigismund was proud, — but gay and free, —  
A warrior and a reveller ; he dwelt not  
With books and solitude, nor made the night  
A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,  
Merrier than day ; he did not walk the rocks  
And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside  
From men and their delights.

*Her.* Beshrew the hour,  
But those were jocund times ! I would that such  
Would visit the old walls again ; they look  
As if they had forgotten them.

*Manuel.* These walls  
Must change their chieftain first. Oh ! I have seen  
Some strange things in them, Herman.

*Her.* Come, be friendly ;  
 Relate me some to while away our watch :  
 I've heard thee darkly speak of an event  
 Which happen'd hereabouts, by this same tower.

*Manuel.* That was a night indeed ! I do remember  
 'T was twilight, as it may be now, and such  
 Another evening ; — yon red cloud, which rests  
 On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then, —  
 So like that it might be the same ; the wind  
 Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows  
 Began to glitter with the climbing moon ;  
 Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower, —  
 How occupied, we knew not, but with him  
 The sole companion of his wanderings  
 And watchings — her, whom of all earthly things  
 That lived, the only thing he seem'd to love, —  
 As he, indeed, by blood, was bound to do,  
 The lady Astarte, his —

Hush ! who comes here ?

*Enter the ABBOT.*

*Abbot.* Where is your master ?

*Her.* Yonder in the tower.

*Abbot.* I must speak with him.

*Manuel.* 'T is impossible ;

He is most private, and must not be thus  
 Intruded on.

*Abbot.* Upon myself I take  
 The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be —  
 But I must see him.

*Her.* Thou hast seen him once  
 This eve already.

*Abbot.* Herman ! I command thee,  
 Knock, and apprise the Count of my approach.

*Her.* We dare not.

*Abbot.* Then it seems I must be herald  
 Of my own purpose.

*Manuel.* Reverend father, stop —  
 I pray you pause.

*Abbot.* Why so ?

*Manuel.* But step this way,  
 And I will tell you further. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE IV.

*Interior of the Tower.*MANFRED *alone.*

*Man.* The stars are forth, the moon above the tops  
 Of the snow-shining mountain.—Beautiful!  
 I linger yet with Nature, for the night  
 Hath been to me a more familiar face  
 Than that of man; and in her starry shade  
 Of dim and solitary loveliness,  
 I learn'd the language of another world.  
 I do remember me, that in my youth,  
 When I was wandering, — upon such a night  
 I stood within the Coliseum's wall,  
 Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;  
 The trees which grew along the broken arches  
 Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars  
 Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar  
 The watchdog bay'd beyond the Tiber; and  
 More near from out the Cæsars' palace came  
 The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,  
 Of distant sentinels the fitful song  
 Begun and died upon the gentle wind.  
 Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach  
 Appear'd to skirt the horizon, yet they stood  
 Within a bowshot — Where the Cæsars dwelt,  
 And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst  
 A grove which springs through levell'd battlements,  
 And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,  
 Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth; —  
 But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,  
 A noble wreck in ruinous perfection!  
 While Cæsar's chambers and the Augustan halls,  
 Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.—  
 And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon  
 All this, and cast a wide and tender light,  
 Which soften'd down the hoar austerity  
 Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,  
 As 't were anew, the gaps of centuries;  
 Leaving that beautiful which still was so,  
 And making that which was not, till the place  
 Became religion, and the heart ran o'er

With silent worship of the great of old! —  
The dead, but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule  
Our spirits from their urns. —

'T was such a night!  
'T is strange that I recall it at this time;  
But I have found our thoughts take wildest flight  
Even at the moment when they should array  
Themselves in pensive order.

*Enter the ABBOT.*

*Abbot.* My good lord!  
I crave a second grace for this approach;  
But yet let not my humble zeal offend  
By its abruptness — all it hath of ill  
Recoils on me; its good in the effect  
May light upon your head — could I say *heart* —  
Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers, I should  
Recall a noble spirit which hath wander'd;  
But is not yet all lost.

*Man.* Thou know'st me not;  
My days are number'd, and my deeds recorded:  
Retire, or 't will be dangerous — Away!

*Abbot.* Thou dost not mean to menace me?

*Man.* Not I;  
I simply tell thee peril is at hand,  
And would preserve thee.

*Abbot.* What dost thou mean?

*Man.* Look there!

What dost thou see?

*Abbot.* Nothing.

*Man.* Look there, I say,  
And steadfastly; — now tell me what thou seest?

*Abbot.* That which should shake me, — but I fear it  
not —

I see a dusk and awful figure rise,  
Like an infernal god, from out the earth;  
His face wrapt in a mantle, and his form  
Robed as with angry clouds; he stands between  
Thyself and me — but I do fear him not. [but

*Man.* Thou hast no cause — he shall not harm thee —  
His sight may shock thine old limbs into palsy.  
I say to thee — Retire!

*Abbot.* And I reply —  
Never — till I have battled with this fiend: —  
What doth he here?

*Man.* Why — ay — what doth he here? —  
I did not send for him, — he is unbidden.

*Abbot.* Alas! lost mortal! what with guests like these  
Hast thou to do? I tremble for thy sake:  
Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on him?  
Ah! he unveils his aspect: on his brow  
The thunder-scars are graven; from his eye  
Glares forth the immortality of hell —  
Avaunt! —

*Man.* Pronounce — what is thy mission?

*Spirit.*

Come!

*Abbot.* What art thou, unknown being? answer! —  
speak!

*Spirit.* The genius of this mortal. — Come! 't is time.

*Man.* I am prepared for all things, but deny  
The power which summons me. Who sent thee here?

*Spirit.* Thou 'lt know anon — Come! come!

*Man.*

I have commanded

Things of an essence greater far than thine,  
And striven with thy masters. Get thee hence!

*Spirit.* Mortal! thine hour is come — Away! I say.

*Man.* I knew, and know my hour is come, but not  
To render up my soul to such as thee:

Away! I 'll die as I have lived — alone.

*Spirit.* Then I must summon up my brethren. — Rise!

[*Other Spirits rise up.*]

*Abbot.* Avaunt! ye evil ones! — Avaunt! — I say, —  
Ye have no power where piety hath power,  
And I do charge ye in the name —

*Spirit.*

Old man!

We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order;  
Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,  
It were in vain: this man is forfeited.

Once more I summon him — Away! away!

*Man.* I do defy ye, — though I feel my soul

Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye;

Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath

To breathe my scorn upon ye — earthly strength

To wrestle, though with spirits; what ye take

Shall be ta'en limb by limb.

*Spirit.*

Reluctant mortal!

Is this the Magian who would so pervade

The world invisible, and make himself

Almost our equal? — Can it be that thou

Art thus in love with life? the very life

Which made thee wretched!

*Man.* Thou false fiend, thou liest!  
 My life is in its last hour, — *that* I know,  
 Nor would redeem a moment of that hour;  
 I do not combat against death, but thee  
 And thy surrounding angels; my past power  
 Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,  
 But by superior science — penance — daring —  
 And length of watching — strength of mind — and skill  
 In knowledge of our fathers — when the earth  
 Saw men and spirits walking side by side,  
 And gave ye no supremacy: I stand  
 Upon my strength — I do defy — deny —  
 Spurn back, and scorn ye! —

*Spirit.* But thy many crimes  
 Have made thee —

*Man.* What are they to such as thee?  
 Must crimes be punish'd but by other crimes,  
 And greater criminals? — Back to thy hell!  
 Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel;  
 Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know:  
 What I have done is done; I bear within  
 A torture which could nothing gain from thine:  
 The mind which is immortal makes itself  
 Requit for its good or evil thoughts —  
Is its own origin of ill and end —  
And its own place and time — its innate sense,  
 When stripp'd of this mortality, derives  
 No colour from the fleeting things without;  
 But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,  
 Born from the knowledge of its own desert.  
*Thou* didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not tempt me;  
 I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey —  
 But was my own destroyer, and will be  
 My own hereafter. — Back, ye baffled fiends!  
 The hand of death is on me — but not yours!

[*The Demons disappear.*]

*Abbot.* Alas! how pale thou art — thy lips are white —  
 And thy breast heaves — and in thy gasping throat  
 The accents rattle — Give thy prayers to Heaven —  
 Pray — albeit but in thought, — but die not thus.

*Man.* 'T is over — my dull eyes can fix thee not;  
 But all things swim around me, and the earth  
 Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well —  
 Give me thy hand.

*Abbot.* Cold — cold — even to the heart —  
 But yet one prayer — Alas! how fares it with thee? —

*Man.* Old man! 't is not so difficult to die.

*Abbot.* He 's gone — his soul hath ta'en its earthless  
flight —

Whither? I dread to think — but he is gone.



**HEBREW MELODIES.**

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE subsequent poems were written at the request of my friend, the Hon. D. Kinnaird, for a Selection of Hebrew Melodies, and have been published, with the music, arranged by Mr. BRAHAM and Mr. NATHAN.

January, 1815.



## HEBREW MELODIES.

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### SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY.

#### I.

SHE walks in beauty, like the night  
Of cloudless climes and starry skies ;  
And all that's best of dark and bright  
Meet in her aspect and her eyes :  
Thus mellow'd to that tender light  
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

#### II.

One shade the more, one ray the less,  
Had half impair'd the nameless grace  
Which waves in every raven tress,  
Or softly lightens o'er her face ;  
Where thoughts serenely sweet express  
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

#### III.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,  
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,  
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,  
But tell of days in goodness spent,  
A mind at peace with all below,  
A heart whose love is innocent !

---

### THE HARP THE MONARCH MINSTREL SWEPT.

#### I.

THE harp the monarch minstrel swept,  
The King of men, the loved of Heaven,  
Which Music hallow'd while she wept  
O'er tones her heart of hearts had given,  
Redoubled be her tears, its chords are riven !

It soften'd men of iron mould,  
 It gave them virtues not their own ;  
 No ear so dull, no soul so cold,  
 That felt not, fired not to the tone,  
 Till David's lyre grew mightier than his throne !

## II.

It told the triumphs of our King,  
 It wasted glory to our God ;  
 It made our gladden'd valleys ring,  
 The cedars bow, the mountains nod ;  
 Its sound aspired to Heaven and there abode !  
 Since then, though heard on earth no more,  
 Devotion and her daughter Love  
 Still bid the bursting spirit soar  
 To sounds that seem as from above,  
 In dreams that day's broad light can not remove.

---

 IF THAT HIGH WORLD.

## I.

If that high world, which lies beyond  
 Our own, surviving Love endears ;  
 If there the cherish'd heart be fond,  
 The eye the same, except in tears —  
 How welcome those untrodden spheres !  
 How sweet this very hour to die !  
 To soar from earth and find all fears  
 Lost in thy light — Eternity !

## II.

It must be so : 't is not for self  
 That we so tremble on the brink ;  
 And striving to o'erleap the gulf,  
 Yet cling to Being's severing link.  
 Oh ! in that future let us think  
 To hold each heart the heart that shares,  
 With them the immortal waters drink,  
 And soul in soul grow deathless theirs !

## THE WILD GAZELLE.

## I.

THE wild gazelle on Judah's hills  
 Exulting yet may bound,  
 And drink from all the living rills  
 That gush on holy ground ;  
 Its airy step and glorious eye  
 May glance in tameless transport by : —

## II.

A step as fleet, an eye more bright  
 Hath Judah witness'd there ;  
 And o'er her scenes of lost delight  
 Inhabitants more fair.  
 The cedars wave on Lebanon,  
 But Judah's statelier maids are gone !

## III.

More blest each palm that shades those plains  
 Than Israel's scatter'd race ;  
 For, taking root, it there remains  
 In solitary grace :  
 It cannot quit its place of birth,  
 It will not live in other earth.

## IV.

But we must wander witheringly,  
 In other lands to die ;  
 And where our fathers' ashes be,  
 Our own may never lie :  
 Our temple hath not left a stone,  
 And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

## OH! WEEP FOR THOSE.

## I.

OH ! weep for those that wept by Babel's stream,  
 Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream ;  
 Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell ;  
 Mourn — where their God hath dwelt the Godless dwell !

## II.

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet?  
 And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet?  
 And Judah's melody once more rejoice  
 The hearts that leap'd before its heavenly voice?

## III.

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,  
 How shall ye flee away and be at rest!  
 The wild-dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,  
 Mankind their country — Israel but the grave!

---

 ON JORDAN'S BANKS.

## I.

On Jordan's banks the Arab's camels stray,  
 On Sion's hill the False One's votaries pray,  
 The Baal-adorer bows on Sinai's steep —  
 Yet there — even there — Oh God! thy thunders sleep:

## II.

There — where thy finger scorch'd the tablet stone!  
 There — where thy shadow to thy people shone!  
 Thy glory shrouded in its garb of fire:  
 Thyself — none living see and not expire!

## III.

Oh! in the lightning let thy glance appear;  
 Sweep from his shiver'd hand the oppressor's spear:  
 How long by tyrants shall thy land be trod!  
 How long thy temple worshipless, Oh God!

---

 JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.

## I.

SINCE our Country, our God — Oh, my Sire!  
 Demand that thy Daughter expire;  
 Since thy triumph was bought by thy vow —  
 Strike the bosom that's bared for thee now!

## II.

And the voice of my mourning is o'er,  
 And the mountains behold me no more :  
 If the hand that I love lay me low,  
 There cannot be pain in the blow !

## III.

And of this, oh, my Father ! be sure —  
 That the blood of thy child is as pure  
 As the blessing I beg ere it flow,  
 And the last thought that soothes me below.

## IV.

Though the virgins of Salem lament,  
 Be the judge and the hero unbent !  
 I have won the great battle for thee,  
 And my Father and Country are free !

## V.

When this blood of thy giving hath gush'd,  
 When the voice that thou lovest is hush'd,  
 Let my memory still be thy pride,  
 And forget not I smiled as I died !

---

 OH ! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM.

## I.

OH ! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,  
 On thee shall press no ponderous tomb ;  
 But on thy turf shall roses rear  
 Their leaves, the earliest of the year ;  
 And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom :

## II.

And oft by yon blue gushing stream  
 Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,  
 And feed deep thought with many a dream,  
 And lingering pause and lightly tread ;  
 Fond wretch ! as if her step disturb'd the dead.

## III.

Away! we know that tears are vain,  
 That death nor heeds nor hears distress :  
 Will this unteach us to complain ?  
 Or make one mourner weep the less ?  
 And thou — who tell'st me to forget,  
 Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

---

## MY SOUL IS DARK.

## I.

My soul is dark — Oh! quickly string  
 The harp I yet can brook to hear ;  
 And let thy gentle fingers fling  
 Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear.  
 If in this heart a hope be dear,  
 That sound shall charm it forth again :  
 If in these eyes there lurk a tear,  
 'T will flow, and cease to burn my brain.

## II.

But bid the strain be wild and deep,  
 Nor let thy notes of joy be first :  
 I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,  
 Or else this heavy heart will burst ;  
 For it hath been by sorrow nursed,  
 And ached in sleepless silence long ;  
 And now 't is doom'd to know the worst,  
 And break at once — or yield to song.

---

## I SAW THEE WEEP.

## I.

I saw thee weep — the big bright tear  
 Came o'er that eye of blue ;  
 And then methought it did appear  
 A violet dropping dew :  
 I saw thee smile — the sapphire's blaze  
 Beside thee ceased to shine ;  
 It could not match the living rays  
 That fill'd that glance of thine.

## II.

As clouds from yonder sun receive  
 A deep and mellow dye,  
 Which scarce the shade of coming eve  
 Can banish from the sky,  
 Those smiles unto the moodiest mind  
 Their own pure joy impart ;  
 Their sunshine leaves a glow behind  
 That lightens o'er the heart.

---

THY DAYS ARE DONE.

---

## I.

THY days are done, thy fame begun ;  
 Thy country's strains record  
 The triumphs of her chosen Son,  
 The slaughters of his sword !  
 The deeds he did, the fields he won,  
 The freedom he restored !

## II.

Though thou art fall'n, while we are free  
 Thou shalt not taste of death !  
 The generous blood that flow'd from thee  
 Disdain'd to sink beneath :  
 Within our veins its currents be,  
 Thy spirit on our breath !

## III.

Thy name, our charging hosts along,  
 Shall be the battle-word !  
 Thy fall, the theme of choral song  
 From virgin voices pour'd !  
 To weep would do thy glory wrong ;  
 Thou shalt not be deplored.

---

SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE.

## I.

WARRIORS and chiefs ! should the shaft or the sword  
 Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,  
 Heed not the course, though a king's, in your path :  
 Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath !

## II.

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,  
Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,  
Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet!  
Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

## III.

Farewell to others, but never we part,  
Heir to my royalty, son of my heart!  
Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,  
Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day!

## SAUL.

## I.

THOU whose spell can raise the dead,  
Bid the prophet's form appear.  
"Samuel, raise thy buried head!  
King, behold the phantom seer!"  
Earth yawn'd; he stood the centre of a cloud:  
Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud.  
Death stood all glassy in his fixed eye;  
His hand was wither'd, and his veins were dry;  
His foot, in bony whiteness, glitter'd there,  
Shrunken and sinewless, and ghastly bare;  
From lips that moved not and unbreathing frame,  
Like cavern'd winds, the hollow accents came.  
Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak,  
At once, and blasted by the thunder-stroke.

## II.

"Why is my sleep disquieted?  
Who is he that calls the dead?  
Is it thou, O king? Behold,  
Bloodless are these limbs, and cold:  
Such are mine; and such shall be  
Thine to-morrow, when with me:  
Ere the coming day is done,  
Such shalt thou be, such thy son.  
Fare thee well, but for a day,  
Then we mix our mouldering clay.

Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,  
 Pierced by shafts of many a bow ;  
 And the falchion by thy side  
 To thy heart thy hand shall guide :  
 Crownless, breathless, headless fall,  
 Son and sire, the house of Saul !”

---

“ ALL IS VANITY, SAITH THE PREACHER.”

I.

FAME, wisdom, love, and power were mine,  
 And health and youth possess'd me ;  
 My goblets blush'd from every vine,  
 And lovely forms caress'd me ;  
 I sunn'd my heart in beauty's eyes,  
 And felt my soul grow tender ;  
 All earth can give, or mortal prize,  
 Was mine of regal splendour.

II.

I strive to number o'er what days  
 Remembrance can discover,  
 Which all that life or earth displays  
 Would lure me to live over.  
 There rose no day, there roll'd no hour  
 Of pleasure unembitter'd ;  
 And not a trapping deck'd my power  
 That gall'd not while it glitter'd.

III.

The serpent of the field, by art  
 And spells, is won from harming ;  
 But that which coils around the heart,  
 Oh ! who hath power of charming ?  
 It will not list to wisdom's lore,  
 Nor music's voice can lure it ;  
 But there it stings for evermore  
 The soul that must endure it.

## WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS SUFFERING CLAY.

## I.

WHEN coldness wraps this suffering clay,  
 Ah! whither strays the immortal mind?  
 It cannot die, it cannot stay,  
 But leaves its darken'd dust behind.  
 Then, unembodied, doth it trace  
 By steps each planet's heavenly way?  
 Or fill at once the realms of space,  
 A thing of eyes, that all survey?

## II.

Eternal, boundless, undecay'd,  
 A thought unseen, but seeing all,  
 All, all in earth, or skies display'd,  
 Shall it survey, shall it recall:  
 Each fainter trace that memory holds  
 So darkly of departed years,  
 In one broad glance the soul beholds,  
 And all, that was, at once appears.

## III.

Before Creation peopled earth,  
 Its eye shall roll through chaos back;  
 And where the furthest heaven had birth,  
 The spirit trace its rising track.  
 And where the future mars or makes,  
 Its glance dilate o'er all to be,  
 While sun is quench'd or system breaks,  
 Fix'd in its own eternity.

## IV.

Above or Love, Hope, Hate, or Fear,  
 It lives all passionless and pure:  
 An age shall fleet like earthly year;  
 Its years as moments shall endure.  
 Away, away, without a wing,  
 O'er all, through all, its thought shall fly;  
 A nameless and eternal thing,  
 Forgetting what it was to die.

## VISION OF BELSHAZZAR.

## I.

THE King was on his throne,  
 The Satraps throng'd the hall;  
 A thousand bright lamps shone  
 O'er that high festival.  
 A thousand cups of gold,  
 In Judah deem'd divine —  
 Jehovah's vessels hold  
 The godless Heathen's wine!

## II.

In that same hour and hall,  
 The fingers of a hand  
 Came forth against the wall,  
 And wrote as if on sand:  
 The fingers of a man; —  
 A solitary hand  
 Along the letters ran,  
 And traced them like a wand.

## III.

The monarch saw, and shook,  
 And bade no more rejoice;  
 All bloodless wax'd his look,  
 And tremulous his voice.  
 "Let the men of lore appear,  
 The wisest of the earth,  
 And expound the words of fear,  
 Which mar our royal mirth."

## IV.

Chaldea's seers are good,  
 But here they have no skill;  
 And the unknown letters stood  
 Untold and awful still.  
 And Babel's men of age  
 Are wise and deep in lore;  
 But now they were not sage,  
 They saw — but knew no more.

## V.

A captive in the land,  
 A stranger and a youth,  
 He heard the king's command,  
 He saw that writing's truth.  
 The lamps around were bright,  
 The prophecy in view ;  
 He read it on that night, —  
 The morrow proved it true.

## VI.

“ Belshazzar's grave is made,  
 His kingdom pass'd away,  
 He, in the balance weigh'd,  
 Is light and worthless clay.  
 The shroud, his robe of state,  
 His canopy the stone ;  
 The Mede is at his gate !  
 The Persian on his throne ! ”

---

 SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS.

SUN of the sleepless ! melancholy star !  
 Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,  
 That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,  
 How like art thou to joy remember'd well !  
 So gleams the past, the light of other days,  
 Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays ;  
 A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,  
 Distinct, but distant — clear — but, oh how cold !

---

 WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS THOU DEEM'ST  
 IT TO BE.

## I.

WERE my bosom as false as thou deem'st it to be,  
 I need not have wander'd from far Galilee ;  
 It was but abjuring my creed to efface  
 The curse which, thou say'st, is the crime of my race.

## II.

If the bad never triumph, then God is with thee !  
 If the slave only sin, thou art spotless and free !  
 If the Exile on earth is an Outcast on high,  
 Live on in thy faith, but in mine I will die.

## III.

have lost for that faith more than thou canst bestow  
 As the God who permits thee to prosper doth know ;  
 In his hand is my heart and my hope — and in thine  
 The land and the life which for him I resign.

## HEROD'S LAMENT FOR MARIAMNE.

## I.

OH, Mariamne ! now for thee  
 The heart for which thou bled'st is bleeding ;  
 Revenge is lost in agony,  
 And wild remorse to rage succeeding.  
 Oh, Mariamne ! where art thou ?  
 Thou canst not hear my bitter pleading :  
 Ah, couldst thou — thou wouldst pardon now,  
 Though Heaven were to my prayer unheeding.

## II.

And is she dead ? — and did they dare  
 Obey my frenzy's jealous raving ?  
 My wrath but doom'd my own despair :  
 The sword that smote her 's o'er me waving. —  
 But thou art cold, my murder'd love !  
 And this dark heart is vainly craving  
 For her who soars alone above,  
 And leaves my soul unworthy saving.

## III.

She 's gone, who shared my diadem ;  
 She sunk, with her my joys entombing ;  
 I swept that flower from Judah's stem  
 Whose leaves for me alone were blooming ;  
 And mine 's the guilt and mine the hell,  
 This bosom's desolation dooming ;  
 And I have earn'd those tortures well,  
 Which unconsumed are still consuming !

ON THE DAY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM  
BY TITUS.

## I.

FROM the last hill that looks on thy once holy dome  
I beheld thee, oh Sion! when render'd to Rome:  
'T was the last sun went down, and the flames of thy fall  
Flash'd back on the last glance I gave to thy wall.

## II.

I look'd for thy temple, I look'd for my home,  
And forgot for a moment my bondage to come;  
I beheld but the death-fire that fed on thy fane,  
And the fast-fetter'd hands that made vengeance in vain.

## III.

On many an eve, the high spot whence I gazed  
Had reflected the last beam of day as it blazed;  
While I stood on the height, and beheld the decline  
Of the rays from the mountain that shone on thy shrine.

## IV.

And now on that mountain I stood on that day,  
But I mark'd not the twilight beam melting away;  
Oh! would that the lightning had glared in its stead,  
And the thunderbolt burst on the conqueror's head!

## V.

But the Gods of the Pagan shall never profane  
The shrine where Jehovah disdain'd not to reign;  
And scatter'd and scorn'd as thy people may be,  
Our worship, oh Father! is only for thee.

---

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT DOWN AND  
WEPT.

## I.

WE sate down and wept by the waters  
Of Babel, and thought of the day  
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,  
Made Salem's high places his prey;

And ye, oh her desolate daughters !  
 Were scatter'd all weeping away.

## II.

While sadly we gazed on the river  
 Which roll'd on in freedom below,  
 They demanded the song ; but, oh never  
 That triumph the stranger shall know !  
 May this right hand be wither'd for ever,  
 Ere it string our high harp for the foe !

## III.

On the willow that harp is suspended,  
 Oh Salem ! its sound should be free ;  
 And the hour when thy glories were ended  
 But left me that token of thee :  
 And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended  
 With the voice of the spoiler by me !

---

 THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB.

## I.

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,  
 And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold ;  
 And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,  
 When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

## II.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,  
 That host with their banners at sunset were seen :  
 Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,  
 That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

## III.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,  
 And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd ;  
 And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,  
 And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still !

## IV.

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,  
 But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride :  
 And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,  
 And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

## V.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,  
 With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail ;  
 And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,  
 The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

## VI.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,  
 And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal ;  
 And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,  
 Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord !

---

 FROM JOB.

## I.

A SPIRIT pass'd before me : I beheld  
 The face of immortality unveil'd —  
 Deep sleep came down on every eye save mine —  
 And there it stood, — all formless — but divine :  
 Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake ;  
 And as my damp hair stiffen'd, thus it spake :

## II.

“ Is man more just than God ? Is man more pure  
 Than he who deems even Seraphs insecure ?  
 Creatures of clay — vain dwellers in the dust !  
 The moth survives you, and are ye more just ?  
 Things of a day ! you wither ere the night,  
 Heedless and blind to Wisdom's wasted light ! ”

ODE

TO

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

---

“ Expende Annibalem :— quot libras in duce summo  
Invenies ? ”

JUVENAL *Sat. X.*

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“ THE Emperor Nepos was acknowledged by the *Senate*, by the *Italians*, and by the *Provincials of Gaul*; his moral virtues, and military talents, were loudly celebrated; and those who derived any private benefit from his government announced in prophetic strains the restoration of public felicity.

\* \* \* \* \*

By this shameful abdication he protracted his life a few years, in a very ambiguous state, between an Emperor and an Exile, till ————”

GILBON'S *Decline and Fall*, vol. vi. p. 220.



## ODE

TO

## NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

---

I.

'T is done — but yesterday a King !  
And arm'd with Kings to strive —  
And now thou art a nameless thing :  
So abject — yet alive !  
Is this the man of thousand thrones,  
Who strew'd our earth with hostile bones,  
And can he thus survive ?  
Since he, miscall'd the Morning Star,  
Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

II.

Ill-minded man ! why scourge thy kind  
Who bow'd so low the knee ?  
By gazing on thyself grown blind,  
Thou taught'st the rest to see.  
With might unquestion'd, — power to save, —  
Thine only gift hath been the grave  
To those that worshipp'd thee ;  
Nor till thy fall could mortals guess  
Ambition's less than littleness !

III.

Thanks for that lesson — it will teach  
To after-warriors more  
Than high Philosophy can preach,  
And vainly preach'd before.  
That spell upon the minds of men  
Breaks never to unite again,  
That led them to adore  
Those Pagod things of sabre sway,  
With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

## IV.

The triumph, and the vanity,  
 The rapture of the strife — (1)  
 The earthquake voice of Victory,  
 To thee the breath of life ;  
 The sword, the sceptre, and that sway  
 Which man seem'd made but to obey,  
 Wherewith renown was rife —  
 All quell'd ! — Dark Spirit ! what must be  
 The madness of thy memory !

## V.

The Desolator desolate !  
 The Victor overthrown !  
 The Arbiter of others' fate  
 A Suppliant for his own !  
 Is it some yet imperial hope  
 That with such change can calmly cope ?  
 Or dread of death alone ?  
 To die a prince — or live a slave —  
 Thy choice is most ignobly brave !

## VI.

He (2) who of old would rend the oak,  
 Dream'd not of the rebound ;  
 Chain'd by the trunk he vainly broke —  
 Alone — how look'd he round ?  
 Thou in the sternness of thy strength  
 An equal deed hast done at length,  
 And darker fate hast found :  
 He fell, the forest-prowlers' prey ;  
 But thou must eat thy heart away !

## VII.

The Roman, (3) when his burning heart  
 Was slaked with blood of Rome,  
 Threw down the dagger — dared depart,  
 In savage grandeur, home.—  
 He dared depart in utter scorn  
 Of men that such a yoke had borne,  
 Yet left him such a doom !  
 His only glory was that hour  
 Of self-upheld abandon'd power.

(1) "*Certaminis gaudia*," the expression of Attila in his harangue to his army, previous to the battle of Chalons, given in Cassiodorus.

(2) Milo.

(3) Sylla.

## VIII.

The Spaniard, (1) when the lust of sway  
 Had lost its quickening spell,  
 Cast crowns for rosaries away,  
 An empire for a cell ;  
 A strict accountant of his beads,  
 A subtle disputant on creeds,  
 His dotage trifled well :  
 Yet better had he neither known  
 A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

## IX.

But thou — from thy reluctant hand  
 The thunderbolt is wrung —  
 Too late thou leav'st the high command  
 To which thy weakness clung ;  
 All Evil Spirit as thou art,  
 It is enough to grieve the heart  
 To see thine own unstrung ;  
 To think that God's fair world hath been  
 The footstool of a thing so mean ;

## X.

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,  
 Who thus can hoard his own !  
 And Monarchs bow'd the trembling limb,  
 And thank'd him for a throne !  
 Fair Freedom ! we may hold thee dear,  
 When thus thy mightiest foes their fear  
 In humblest guise have shown.  
 Oh ! ne'er may tyrant leave behind  
 A brighter name to lure mankind !

## XI.

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,  
 Nor written thus in vain —  
 Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,  
 Or deepen every stain :  
 If thou hadst died as honour dies,  
 Some new Napoleon might arise,  
 To shame the world again —  
 But who would soar the solar height,  
 To set in such a starless night ?

(1) Charles V.

## XII.

Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust  
 Is vile as vulgar clay ;  
 Thy scales, Mortality ! are just  
 To all that pass away :  
 But yet methought the living great  
 Some higher sparks should animate,  
 To dazzle and dismay :  
 Nor deem'd Contempt could thus make mirth  
 Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

## XIII.

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,  
 Thy still imperial bride ;  
 How bears her breast the torturing hour ?  
 Still clings she to thy side ?  
 Must she too bend, must she too share  
 Thy late repentance, long despair,  
 Thou throneless Homicide ?  
 If still she loves thee, hoard that gem,  
 'T is worth thy vanish'd diadem !

## XIV.

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,  
 And gaze upon the sea ;  
 That element may meet thy smile,  
 It ne'er was ruled by thee !  
 Or trace with thine all idle hand  
 In loitering mood upon the sand  
 That Earth is now as free !  
 That Corinth's pedagogue hath now  
 Transferr'd his by-word to thy brow

## XV.

Thou Timour ! in his captive's cage (1)  
 What thought will there be thine,  
 While brooding in thy prison'd rage ?  
 But one — " The world *was* mine !"  
 Unless, like he of Babylon,  
 All sense is with thy sceptre gone,  
 Life will not long confine  
 That spirit pour'd so widely forth —  
 So long obey'd — so little worth !

(2) The cage of Bajazet, by order of Tamerlane.

## XVI.

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven, (1)  
 Wilt thou withstand the shock?  
 And share with him, the unforgiven,  
 His vulture and his rock!  
 Foredoom'd by God — by man accurst,  
 And that last act, though not thy worst,  
 The very Fiend's arch mock; (2)  
 He in his fall preserved his pride,  
 And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

(1) Prometheus.

(2) "The very fiend's arch mock —  
 To lip a wanton and suppose her chaste." —*Shakespeare.*

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MONODY

ON THE

DEATH OF THE RIGHT HON. R. B. SHERIDAN.

SPOKEN AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE.



# MONODY

ON THE

DEATH OF THE RIGHT HON. R. B. SHERIDAN,

SPOKEN AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

---

WHEN the last sunshine of expiring day  
In summer's twilight weeps itself away,  
Who hath not felt the softness of the hour  
Sink on the heart, as dew along the flower?  
With a pure feeling which absorbs and awes  
While Nature makes that melancholy pause,  
Her breathing moment on the bridge where Time  
Of light and darkness forms an arch sublime,  
Who hath not shared that calm so still and deep,  
The voiceless thought which would not speak but weep,  
A holy concord — and a bright regret,  
A glorious sympathy with suns that set?  
'T is not harsh sorrow — but a tenderer woe,  
Nameless, but dear to gentle hearts below,  
Felt without bitterness — but full and clear,  
A sweet dejection — a transparent tear,  
Unmix'd with worldly grief or selfish stain,  
Shed without shame — and secret without pain.

Even as the tenderness that hour instils  
When Summer's day declines along the hills,  
So feels the fulness of our heart and eyes  
When all of Genius which can perish dies.  
A mighty Spirit is eclips'd — a Power  
Hath pass'd from day to darkness — to whose hour  
Of light no likeness is bequeath'd — no name,  
Focus at once of all the rays of Fame!  
The flash of Wit — the bright Intelligence,  
The beam of Song — the blaze of Eloquence,  
Set with their Sun — but still have left behind  
The enduring produce of immortal Mind;

Fruits of a genial morn, and glorious noon  
 A deathless part of him who died too soon.  
 But small that portion of the wondrous whole,  
 These sparkling segments of that circling soul,  
 Which all embraced — and lighten'd over all,  
 To cheer — to pierce — to please — or to appal.  
 From the charm'd council to the festive board,  
 Of human feelings the unbounded lord ;  
 In whose acclaim the loftiest voices vied,  
 The praised — the proud — who made his praise their pride.  
 When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan\*  
 Arose to Heaven in her appeal from man,  
 His was the thunder — his the avenging rod,  
 The wrath — the delegated voice of God !  
 Which shook the nations through his lips — and blazed  
 Till vanquish'd senates trembled as they praised.

And here, oh ! here, where yet all young and warm  
 The gay creations of his spirit charm,  
 The matchless dialogue — the deathless wit,  
 Which knew not what it was to intermit ;  
 The glowing portraits, fresh from life, that bring  
 Home to our hearts the truth from which they spring ;  
 These wondrous beings of his Fancy, wrought  
 To fulness by the fiat of his thought,  
 Here in their first abode you still may meet,  
 Bright with the hues of his Promethean heat ;  
 A halo of the light of other days,  
 Which still the splendour of its orb betrays.

But should there be to whom the fatal blight  
 Of failing Wisdom yields a base delight,  
 Men who exult when minds of heavenly tone  
 Jar in the music which was born their own,  
 Still let them pause — ah ! little do they know  
 That what to them seem'd Vice might be but Woe.  
 Hard is his fate on whom the public gaze  
 Is fix'd for ever to detract or praise ;  
 Repose denies her requiem to his name,  
 And Folly loves the martyrdom of Fame.  
 The secret enemy whose sleepless eye  
 Stands sentinel — accuser — judge — and spy,

\* See Fox, Burke, and Pitt's eulogy on Mr. Sheridan's speech on the charges exhibited against Mr. Hastings in the House of Commons. Mr. Pitt entreated the House to adjourn, to give time for a calmer consideration of the question than could then occur after the immediate effect of that oration.

The foe — the fool — the jealous — and the vain,  
 The envious who but breathe in others' pain,  
 Behold the host ! delighting to deprave  
 Who track the steps of Glory to the grave,  
 Watch every fault that daring Genius owes  
 Half to the ardour which its birth bestows,  
 Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,  
 And pile the Pyramid of Calumny !  
 These are his portion — but if join'd to these  
 Gaunt Poverty should league with deep Disease,  
 If the high Spirit must forget to soar,  
 And stoop to strive with Misery at the door,  
 To soothe Indignity — and face to face  
 Meet sordid Rage — and wrestle with Disgrace,  
 To find in Hope but the renew'd caress,  
 The serpent-fold of further Faithlessness : —  
 If such may be the Ills which men assail,  
 What marvel if at last the mightiest fail ?  
 Breasts to whom all the strength of feeling given  
 Bear hearts electric — charged with fire from Heaven,  
 Black with the rude collision, inly torn,  
 By clouds surrounded, and on whirlwinds borne,  
 Driven o'er the lowering atmosphere that nurst  
 Thoughts which have turn'd to thunder — scorch — and  
 burst.

But far from us and from our mimic scene  
 Such things should be — if such have ever been ;  
 Ours be the gentler wish, the kinder task,  
 To give the tribute Glory need not ask,  
 To mourn the vanish'd beam — and add our mite  
 Of praise in payment of a long delight.  
 Ye Orators ! whom yet our councils yield,  
 Mourn for the veteran Hero of your field !  
 The worthy rival of the wondrous *Three* ! (1)  
 Whose words were sparks of Immortality !  
 Ye Bards ! to whom the Drama's Muse is dear,  
 He was your Master — emulate him *here* !  
 Ye men of wit and social eloquence !  
 He was your brother — bear his ashes hence !  
 While Powers of mind almost of boundless range,  
 Complete in kind — as various in their change,  
 While Eloquence — Wit — Poesy — and Mirth,  
 That humbler Harmonist of care on Earth,

(1) Fox — Pitt — Burke.

Survive within our souls — while lives our sense  
Of pride in Merit's proud pre-eminence,  
Long shall we seek his likeness — long in vain,  
And turn to all of him which may remain,  
Sighing that Nature form'd but one such man,  
And broke the die — in moulding Sheridan !

THE  
**LAMENT OF TASSO.**

AT Ferrara (in the Library) are preserved the original MSS. of Tasso's *Gierusalemme* and of Guarini's *Pastor Fido*, with letters of Tasso, one from Titian to Ariosto; and the inkstand and chair, the tomb and the house of the latter. But as misfortune has a greater interest for posterity, and little or none for the contemporary, the cell where Tasso was confined in the hospital of St. Anna attracts a more fixed attention than the residence or the monument of Ariosto — at least it had this effect on me. There are two inscriptions, one on the outer gate, the second over the cell itself, inviting, unnecessarily, the wonder and the indignation of the spectator. Ferrara is much decayed, and depopulated: the castle still exists entire; and I saw the court where Parisina and Hugo were beheaded, according to the annal of Gibbon.

THE

## LAMENT OF TASSO.

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I.

LONG years! — It tries the thrilling frame to bear  
And eagle-spirit of a Child of Song —  
Long years of outrage, calumny, and wrong ;  
Imputed madness, prison'd solitude,  
And the mind's canker in its savage mood,  
When the impatient thirst of light and air  
Parches the heart ; and the abhorred grate,  
Marring the sunbeams with its hideous shade,  
Works through the throbbing eyeball to the brain  
With a hot sense of heaviness and pain ;  
And bare, at once, Captivity display'd  
Stands scoffing through the never-open'd gate,  
Which nothing through its bars admits, save day,  
And tasteless food, which I have eat alone  
Till its unsocial bitterness is gone ;  
And I can banquet like a beast of prey,  
Sullen and lonely, couching in the cave  
Which is my lair, and — it may be — my grave.  
All this hath somewhat worn me, and may wear,  
But must be borne. I stoop not to despair ;  
For I have battled with mine agony,  
And made me wings wherewith to overfly  
The narrow circus of my dungeon wall,  
And freed the Holy Sepulchre from thrall ;  
And revell'd among men and things divine,  
And pour'd my spirit over Palestine,  
In honour of the sacred war for Him,  
The God who was on earth and is in heaven,  
For he hath strengthen'd me in heart and limb.  
That through this sufferance I might be forgiven,  
I have employed my penance to record  
How Salem's shrine was won, and how adored.

## II.

But this is o'er — my pleasant task is done : —  
 My long-sustaining friend of many years !  
 If I do blot thy final page with tears,  
 Know, that my sorrows have wrung from me none.  
 But thou, my young creation ! my soul's child !  
 Which ever playing round me came and smiled,  
 And woo'd me from myself with thy sweet sight,  
 Thou too art gone — and so is my delight :  
 And therefore do I weep and inly bleed  
 With this last bruise upon a broken reed.  
 Thou too art ended — what is left me now ?  
 For I have anguish yet to bear — and how ?  
 I know not that — but in the innate force  
 Of my own spirit shall be found resource.  
 I have not sunk, for I had no remorse,  
 Nor cause for such : they call'd me mad — and why ?  
 Oh Leonora ! wilt not *thou* reply ?  
 I was indeed delirious in my heart  
 To lift my love so lofty as thou art ;  
 But still my frenzy was not of the mind ;  
 I knew my fault, and feel my punishment  
 Not less because I suffer it unbent.  
 That thou wert beautiful, and I not blind,  
 Hath been the sin which shuts me from mankind ;  
 But let them go, or torture as they will,  
 My heart can multiply thine image still ;  
 Successful love may sate itself away,  
 The wretched are the faithful ; 't is their fate  
 To have all feeling save the one decay,  
 And every passion into one dilate,  
 As rapid rivers into ocean pour ;  
 But ours is fathomless, and hath no shore.

## III.

Above me, hark ! the long and maniac cry  
 Of minds and bodies in captivity.  
 And hark ! the lash and the increasing howl,  
 And the half-inarticulate blasphemy !  
 There be some here with worse than frenzy foul,  
 Some who do still goad on the o'er-labour'd mind,  
 And dim the little light that 's left behind  
 With needless torture, as their tyrant will  
 Is wound up to the lust of doing ill :

With these and with their victims am I class'd,  
 'Mid sounds and sights like these long years have pass'd;  
 'Mid sights and sounds like these my life may close:  
 So let it be — for then I shall repose.

## IV.

I have been patient, let me be so yet,  
 I had forgotten half I would forget,  
 But it revives — Oh! would it were my lot  
 To be forgetful as I am forgot! —  
 Feel I not wroth with those who bade me dwell  
 In this vast lazar-house of many woes?  
 Where laughter is not mirth, nor thought the mind,  
 Nor words a language, nor ev'n men mankind;  
 Where cries reply to curses, shrieks to blows,  
 And each is tortured in his separate hell —  
 For we are crowded in our solitudes —  
 Many, but each divided by the wall,  
 Which echoes Madness in her babbling moods; —  
 While all can hear, none heed his neighbour's call —  
 None! save that One, the veriest wretch of all,  
 Who was not made to be the mate of these,  
 Nor bound between Distraction and Disease.  
 Feel I not wroth with those who placed me here?  
 Who have debased me in the minds of men,  
 Debarring me the usage of my own,  
 Blighting my life in best of its career,  
 Branding my thoughts as things to shun and fear?  
 Would I not pay them back these pangs again,  
 And teach them inward Sorrow's stifled groan?  
 The struggle to be calm, and cold distress,  
 Which undermines our Stoical success?  
 No! — still too proud to be vindictive — I  
 Have pardon'd princes' insults, and would die.  
 Yes, Sister of my Sovereign! for thy sake  
 I weed all bitterness from out my breast,  
 It hath no business where *thou* art a guest;  
 Thy brother hates — but I can not detest;  
 Thou pitiest not — but I can not forsake.

## V.

Look on a love which knows not to despair,  
 But all unquench'd is still my better part,  
 Dwelling deep in my shut and silent heart  
 As dwells the gather'd lightning in its cloud,

Encompass'd with its dark and rolling shroud,  
 Till struck, — forth flies the all-ethereal dart !  
 And thus at the collision of thy name  
 The vivid thought still flashes through my frame,  
 And for a moment all things as they were  
 Flit by me ; — they are gone — I am the same.  
 And yet my love without ambition grew ;  
 I knew thy state, my station, and I knew  
 A Princess was no love-mate for a bard ;  
 I told it not, I breathed it not, it was  
 Sufficient to itself, its own reward ;  
 And if my eyes reveal'd it, they, alas !  
 Were punish'd by the silentness of thine,  
 And yet I did not venture to repine.  
 Thou wert to me a crystal-girded shrine,  
 Worshipp'd at holy distance, and around  
 Hallow'd and meekly kiss'd the saintly ground ;  
 Not for thou wert a princess, but that Love  
 Had robed thee with a glory, and array'd  
 Their lineaments in beauty that dismay'd —  
 Oh ! not dismay'd — but awed, like One above ;  
 And in that sweet severity there was  
 A something which all softness did surpass —  
 I know not how — thy genius master'd mine —  
 My star stood still before thee : — if it were  
 Presumptuous thus to love without design,  
 That sad fatality hath cost me dear ;  
 But thou art dearest still, and I should be  
 Fit for this cell, which wrongs me — but for *thee*.  
 The very love which lock'd me to my chain  
 Hath lighten'd half its weight ; and for the rest,  
 Though heavy, lent me vigour to sustain,  
 And look to thee with undivided breast  
 And foil the ingenuity of Pain.

## VI.

It is no marvel — from my very birth  
 My soul was drunk with love, which did pervade  
 And mingle with whate'er I saw on earth ;  
 Of objects all inanimate I made  
 Idols, and out of wild and lonely flowers,  
 And rocks, whereby they grew, a paradise,  
 Where I did lay me down within the shade  
 Of waving trees, and dream'd uncounted hours,  
 Though I was chid for wandering ; and the Wise

Shook their white aged heads o'er me, and said  
 Of such materials wretched men were made,  
 And such a truant boy would end in woe,  
 And that the only lesson was a blow ; —  
 And then they smote me, and I did not weep,  
 But cursed them in my heart, and to my haunt  
 Return'd and wept alone, and dream'd again  
 The visions which arise without a sleep.  
 And with my years my soul began to pant  
 With feelings of strange tumult and soft pain ;  
 And the whole heart exhaled into One Want,  
 But undefined and wandering, till the day  
 I found the thing I sought, and that was thee ;  
 And then I lost my being all to be  
 Absorb'd in thine — the world was past away —  
*Thou* didst annihilate the earth to me !

## VII.

I loved all Solitude — but little thought  
 To spend I know not what of life, remote  
 From all communion with existence, save  
 The maniac and his tyrant ; — had I been  
 Their fellow, many years ere this had seen  
 My mind like theirs corrupted to its grave,  
 But who hath seen me writhe, or heard me rave ?  
 Perchance in such a cell we suffer more  
 Than the wreck'd sailor on his desert shore ;  
 The world is all before him — *mine* is *here*,  
 Scarce twice the space they must accord my bier  
 What though *he* perish, he may lift his eye  
 And with a dying glance upbraid the sky —  
 I will not raise my own in such reproof,  
 Although 't is clouded by my dungeon roof.

## VIII.

Yet do I feel at times my mind decline,  
 But with a sense of its decay : — I see  
 Unwonted lights along my prison shine,  
 And a strange demon, who is vexing me  
 With pilfering pranks and petty pains, below  
 The feeling of the healthful and the free ;  
 But much to One, who long hath suffer'd so,  
 Sickness of heart, and narrowness of place,  
 And all that may be borne, or can debase.

I thought mine enemies had been but Man,  
 But Spirits may be leagued with them — all Earth  
 Abandons — Heaven forgets me ; — in the dearth  
 Of such defence the Powers of Evil can,  
 It may be, tempt me further, — and prevail  
 Against the outworn creature they assail.  
 Why in this furnace is my spirit proved  
 Like steel in tempering fire ? because I loved ?  
 Because I loved what not to love, and see,  
 Was more or less than mortal, and than me.

## IX.

I once was quick in feeling — that is o'er ; —  
 My scars are callous, or I should have dash'd  
 My brain against these bars as the sun flash'd  
 In mockery through them ; — if I bear and bore  
 The much I have recounted, and the more  
 Which hath no words, 't is that I would not die  
 And sanction with self-slaughter the dull lie  
 Which snared me here, and with the brand of shame  
 Stamp Madness deep into my memory,  
 And woo Compassion to a blighted name,  
 Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.  
 No — it shall be immortal ! — and I make  
 A future temple of my present cell,  
 Which nations yet shall visit for my sake.  
 While thou, Ferrara ! when no longer dwell  
 The ducal chiefs within thee, shalt fall down,  
 And crumbling piecemeal view thy heartless halls,  
 A poet's wreath shall be thine only crown, —  
 A poet's dungeon thy most far renown,  
 While strangers wonder o'er thy unpeopled walls !  
 And thou, Leonora ! thou — who wert ashamed  
 That such as I could love — who blush'd to hear  
 To less than monarchs that thou couldst be dear,  
 Go ! tell thy brother, that my heart, untamed  
 By grief, years, weariness — and it may be  
 A taint of that he would impute to me —  
 From long infection of a den like this,  
 Where the mind rots congenial with the abyss,  
 Adores thee still ; — and add — that when the towers  
 And battlements which guard his joyous hours  
 Of banquet, dance, and revel, are forgot,  
 Or left untended in a dull repose,  
 This — this — shall be a consecrated spot !  
 But Thou — when all that Birth and Beauty throws

Of magic round thee is extinct — shalt have  
One half the laurel which o'er shades my grave.  
No power in death can tear our names apart,  
As none in life could rend thee from my heart.  
Yes, Leonora ! it shall be our fate  
To be entwined for ever — but too late !



POEMS.

1000

# P O E M S .

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## WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM.

### I.

As o'er the cold sepulchral stone  
Some name arrests the passer-by ;  
Thus, when thou view'st this page alone,  
May mine attract thy pensive eye !

### II.

And when by thee that name is read,  
Perchance in some succeeding year,  
Reflect on me as on the dead,  
And think my heart is buried here.

*September 14th, 1809.*

---

### TO \* \* \*

OH Lady ! when I left the shore,  
The distant shore, which gave me birth,  
I hardly thought to grieve once more,  
To quit another spot on earth :  
Yet here, amidst this barren isle,  
Where panting Nature droops the head,  
Where only thou art seen to smile,  
I view my parting hour with dread.  
Though far from Albin's craggy shore,  
Divided by the dark-blue main ;  
A few, brief, rolling seasons o'er,  
Perchance I view her cliffs again :  
But wheresoe'er I now may roam,  
Through scorching clime, and varied sea,  
Though Time restore me to my home,  
I ne'er shall bend mine eyes on thee :

On thee, in whom at once conspire  
 All charms which heedless hearts can move,  
 Whom but to see is to admire,  
 And, oh! forgive the word — to love.  
 Forgive the word, in one who ne'er  
 With such a word can more offend;  
 And since thy heart I cannot share,  
 Believe me, what I am, thy friend.  
 And who so cold as look on thee,  
 Thou lovely wand'rer, and be less?  
 Nor be, what man should ever be,  
 The friend of Beauty in distress?  
 Ah! who would think that form had past  
 Through Danger's most destructive path,  
 Hath braved the Death-wing'd tempest's blast,  
 And 'scaped a tyrant's fiercer wrath?  
 Lady! when I shall view the walls  
 Where free Byzantium once arose,  
 And Stamboul's Oriental halls  
 The Turkish tyrants now enclose;  
 Thou mightiest in the lists of fame,  
 That glorious city still shall be;  
 On me 't will hold a dearer claim,  
 As spot of thy nativity:  
 And though I bid thee now farewell,  
 When I behold that wond'rous scene,  
 Since where thou art I may not dwell,  
 'T will sooth to be, where thou hast been.

*September, 1809.*

---

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN PASSING THE AMBRACIAN GULF.

NOVEMBER 14, 1809.

I.

THROUGH cloudless skies, in silvery sheen,  
 Full beams the moon on Actium's coast:  
 And on these waves, for Egypt's queen,  
 The ancient world was won and lost.

II.

And now upon the scene I look,  
 The azure grave of many a Roman;

Where stern Ambition once forsook  
His wavering crown to follow woman.

## III.

Florence! whom I will love as well  
As ever yet was said or sung,  
(Since Orpheus sang his spouse from hell)  
Whilst thou art fair and I am young;

## IV.

Sweet Florence! those were pleasant times,  
When worlds were staked for ladies' eyes:  
Had bards as many realms as rhymes,  
Thy charms might raise new Anthonies.

## V.

Though Fate forbids such things to be,  
Yet, by thine eyes and ringlets curl'd!  
I cannot lose a world for thee,  
But would not lose thee for a world.

---

 STANZAS

COMPOSED OCTOBER 11TH, 1809, DURING THE NIGHT, IN A THUNDER-STORM, WHEN THE GUIDES HAD LOST THE ROAD TO ZITZA, NEAR THE RANGE OF MOUNTAINS FORMERLY CALLED PINDUS, IN ALBANIA.

## I.

CHILL and mirk is the nightly blast,  
Where Pindus' mountains rise,  
And angry clouds are pouring fast  
The vengeance of the skies.

## II.

Our guides are gone, our hope is lost,  
And lightnings, as they play,  
But show where rocks our path have crost,  
Or gild the torrent's spray.

## III.

Is yon a cot I saw, though low?  
When lightning broke the gloom —  
How welcome were its shade! — ah, no!  
'T is but a Turkish tomb.

## IV.

Through sounds of foaming waterfalls,  
 I hear a voice exclaim —  
 My way-worn countryman, who calls  
 On distant England's name.

## V.

A shot is fired — by foe or friend ?  
 Another — 't is to tell  
 The mountain-peasants to descend,  
 And lead us where they dwell.

## VI.

Oh! who in such a night will dare  
 To tempt the wilderness ?  
 And who 'mid thunder peals can hear  
 Our signal of distress ?

## VII.

And who that heard our shouts would rise  
 To try the dubious road ?  
 Nor rather deem from nightly cries  
 That outlaws were abroad.

## VIII.

Clouds burst, skies flash, oh, dreadful hour !  
 More fiercely pours the storm !  
 Yet here one thought has still the power  
 To keep my bosom warm.

## IX.

While wand'ring through each broken path,  
 O'er brake and craggy brow ;  
 While elements exhaust their wrath,  
 Sweet Florence, where art thou ?

## X.

Not on the sea, not on the sea,  
 Thy bark hath long been gone :  
 Oh, may the storm that pours on me,  
 Bow down my head alone !

## XI.

Full swiftly blew the swift Siroc,  
 When last I press'd thy lip ;

And long ere now, with foaming shock,  
Impell'd thy gallant ship.

## XII.

Now thou art safe ; nay, long ere now  
Hast trod the shore of Spain ;  
'T were hard if aught so fair as thou  
Should linger on the main.

## XIII.

And since I now remember thee  
In darkness and in dread,  
As in those hours of revelry  
Which mirth and music sped ;

## XIV.

Do thou amidst the fair white walls,  
If Cadiz yet be free,  
At times from out her latticed halls  
Look o'er the dark blue sea ;

## XV.

Then think upon Calypso's isles,  
Endear'd by days gone by ;  
To others give a thousand smiles,  
To me a single sigh.

## XVI.

And when the admiring circle mark  
The paleness of thy face,  
A half-form'd tear, a transient spark  
Of melancholy grace,

## XVII.

Again thou 'lt smile, and blushing shun  
Some coxcomb's raillery ;  
Nor own for once thou thought'st of one,  
Who ever thinks on thee.

## XVIII.

Though smile and sigh alike are vain,  
When sever'd hearts repine,  
My spirit flies o'er mount and main,  
And mourns in search of thine.

## WRITTEN AT ATHENS,

JANUARY 16, 1810.

THE spell is broke, the charm is flown !  
 Thus is it with life's fitful fever :  
 We madly smile when we should groan ;  
 Delirium is our best deceiver.  
 Each lucid interval of thought  
 Recalls the woes of Nature's charter,  
 And he that acts as wise men ought,  
 But lives, as saints have died, a martyr.

WRITTEN AFTER SWIMMING FROM SESTOS TO ABYDOS,(<sup>1</sup>)

MAY 9, 1810.

## I.

IF, in the month of dark December,  
 Leander, who was nightly wont  
 (What maid will not the tale remember ?)  
 To cross thy stream, broad Hellespont !

## II.

If, when the wintry tempest roar'd,  
 He sped to Hero, nothing loth,  
 And thus of old thy current pour'd,  
 Fair Venus ! how I pity both !

(1) On the 3d of May, 1810, while the *Salsette* (Captain Bathurst) was lying in the Dardanelles, Lieutenant Ekenhead of that frigate, and the writer of these rhymes, swam from the European shore to the Asiatic—by-the-by, from Abydos to Sestos would have been more correct. The whole distance from the place whence we started to our landing on the other side, including the length we were carried by the current, was computed by those on board the frigate at upwards of four English miles ; though the actual breadth is barely one. The rapidity of the current is such that no boat can row directly across, and it may in some measure be estimated from the circumstance of the whole distance being accomplished by one of the parties in an hour and five, and by the other in an hour and ten, minutes. The water was extremely cold from the melting of the mountain snows. About three weeks before, in April, we had made an attempt, but having ridden all the way from the Troad the same morning and the water being of an icy chillness, we found it necessary to postpone the completion till the frigate anchored below the castles, when we swam the straits, as just stated ; entering a considerable way above the European, and landing below the Asiatic, fort. Chevalier says that a young Jew swam the same distance for his mistress ; and Oliver mentions its having been done by a Neapolitan ; but our consul, Tarragona, remembered neither of these circumstances, and tried to dissuade us from the attempt. A number of the *Salsette's* crew were known to have accomplished a greater distance ; and the only thing that surprised me was, that, as doubts had been entertained of the truth of Leander's story, no traveller had ever endeavoured to ascertain its practicability.

## III.

For me, degenerate modern wretch,  
 Though in the genial month of May,  
 My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,  
 And think I've done a feat to-day.

## IV.

But since he cross'd the rapid tide,  
 According to the doubtful story,  
 To woo, — and — Lord knows what beside,  
 And swam for Love, as I for Glory ;

## V.

'T were hard to say who fared the best :  
 Sad mortals ! thus the Gods still plague you !  
 He lost his labour, I my jest :  
 For he was drown'd, and I've the ague.

## SONG.

*Zώνη μου, σάς αγαπῶ. (1)*

ATHENS, 1810.

## I.

MAID of Athens, ere we part,  
 Give, oh, give me back my heart !  
 Or, since that has left my breast,  
 Keep it now, and take the rest !  
 Hear my vow before I go,  
*Zώνη μου, σάς αγαπῶ.*

## II.

By those tresses unconfined,  
 Woo'd by each Ægean wind ;

(1) *Zoë mou, sas agapo*, or *Zώνη μου, σάς αγαπῶ*, a Romaic expression of tenderness : if I translate it, I shall affront the gentlemen, as it may seem that I suppose they could not ; and if I do not, I may affront the ladies. For fear of any misconstruction on the part of the latter I shall do so, begging pardon of the learned. It means, " My life, I love you ! " which sounds very prettily in all languages, and is as much in fashion in Greece at this day as, Juvenal tells us, the two first words were among the Roman ladies, whose exotic expressions were all Hellenized.

By those lids whose jetty fringe  
 Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge ;  
 By those wild eyes like the roe,  
 Ζώνη μου, σάς αγαπῶ.

## III.

By that lip I long to taste ;  
 By that zone-encircled waist ;  
 By all the token-flowers (1) that tell  
 What words can never speak so well ;  
 By Love's alternate joy and woe,  
 Ζώνη μου, σάς αγαπῶ

## IV.

Maid of Athens! I am gone :  
 Think of me, sweet ! when alone.  
 Though I fly to Istambol, (2)  
 Athens holds my heart and soul :  
 Can I cease to love thee ? No !  
 Ζώνη μου, σάς αγαπῶ.

## TRANSLATION OF THE FAMOUS GREEK WAR SONG,

Δεύτε παῖδες τῶν Ἑλλήνων,

WRITTEN BY RIGA, WHO PERISHED IN THE ATTEMPT TO REVOLUTIONIZE GREECE. THE FOLLOWING TRANSLATION IS AS LITERAL AS THE AUTHOR COULD MAKE IT IN VERSE ; IT IS OF THE SAME MEASURE AS THAT OF THE ORIGINAL. SEE PAGE 52.

## I.

Sons of the Greeks, arise !  
 The glorious hour 's gone forth,  
 And, worthy of such ties,  
 Display who gave us birth.

## CHORUS.

Sons of Greeks ! let us go  
 In arms against the foe,  
 Till their hated blood shall flow  
 In a river past our feet.

(1) In the East (where ladies are not taught to write, lest they should scribble assignations) flowers, cinders, pebbles, &c., convey the sentiments of the parties by that universal deputy of Mercury—an old woman. A cinder says, "I burn for thee;" a bunch of flowers tied with hair, "Take me and fly;" but a pebble declares—what nothing else can.

(2) Constantinople.

## II.

Then manfully despising  
 The Turkish tyrant's yoke,  
 Let your country see you rising,  
 And all her chains are broke.  
 Brave shades of chiefs and sages,  
 Behold the coming strife!  
 Hellénes of past ages,  
 Oh start again to life!  
 At the sound of my trumpet; breaking  
 Your sleep, oh, join with me!  
 And the seven-hill'd (1) city seeking,  
 Fight, conquer, till we 're free.  
 Sons of Greeks, &c.

## III.

Sparta, Sparta, why in slumbers  
 Lethargic dost thou lie?  
 Awake, and join thy numbers  
 With Athens, old ally!  
 Leonidas recalling,  
 That chief of ancient song,  
 Who saved ye once from falling,  
 The terrible! the strong!  
 Who made that bold diversion  
 In old Thermopylæ,  
 And warring with the Persian  
 To keep his country free;  
 With his three hundred waging  
 The battle, long he stood,  
 And like a lion raging,  
 Expired in seas of blood.  
 Sons of Greeks, &c.

(1) Constantinople. "Ἑπτάλοφος."

## TRANSLATION OF THE ROMAIC SONG,

“Μπενω μες ’τα’ περίβδλι  
 ’Ωραιότατη Χάηδη,” &c.

THE SONG FROM WHICH THIS IS TAKEN IS A GREAT FAVOURITE WITH THE YOUNG GIRLS OF ATHENS, OF ALL CLASSES. THEIR MANNER OF SINGING IT IS BY VERSES IN ROTATION, THE WHOLE NUMBER PRESENT JOINING IN THE CHORUS. I HAVE HEARD IT FREQUENTLY AT OUR “Χόροι” IN THE WINTER OF 1810-11. THE AIR IS PLAINTIVE AND PRETTY.

## I.

I ENTER thy garden of roses,  
 Beloved and fair Haidée,  
 Each morning where Flora reposes,  
 For surely I see her in thee.  
 Oh, Lovely! thus low I implore thee,  
 Receive this fond truth from my tongue,  
 Which utters its song to adore thee,  
 Yet trembles for what it has sung;  
 As the branch, at the bidding of Nature,  
 Adds fragrance and fruit to the tree,  
 Through her eyes, through her every feature,  
 Shines the soul of the young Haidée.

## II.

But the loveliest garden grows hateful  
 When Love has abandon'd the bowers;  
 Bring me hemlock — since mine is ungrateful.  
 That herb is more fragrant than flowers.  
 The poison, when pour'd from the chalice,  
 Will deeply imbitter the bowl;  
 But when drunk to escape from thy malice,  
 The draught shall be sweet to my soul.  
 Too cruel! in vain I implore thee  
 My heart from these horrors to save:  
 Will naught to my bosom restore thee?  
 Then open the gates of the grave.

## III.

As the chief who to combat advances  
 Secure of his conquest before,  
 Thus thou, with those eyes for thy lances,  
 Hast pierced through my heart to its core.  
 Ah, tell me, my soul! must I perish  
 By pangs which a smile would dispel?  
 Would the hope, which thou once bad'st me cherish,  
 For torture repay me too well?

Now sad is the garden of roses,  
 Beloved but false Haidée !  
 There Flora all wither'd reposes,  
 And mourns o'er thine absence with me.

---

WRITTEN BENEATH A PICTURE. 

I.

DEAR object of defeated care !  
 Though not of Love and thee bereft,  
 To reconcile me with despair  
 Thine image and my tears are left.

II.

'T is said with Sorrow Time can cope ;  
 But this I feel can ne'er be true :  
 For by the death-blow of my Hope  
 My Memory immortal grew.

---

ON PARTING.

I.

THE kiss, dear maid ! thy lip has left,  
 Shall never part from mine,  
 Till happier hours restore the gift  
 Untainted back to thine.

II.

Thy parting glance, which fondly beams,  
 An equal love may see :  
 The tear that from thine eyelid streams  
 Can weep no change in me.

III.

I ask no pledge to make me blest  
 In gazing when alone ;  
 Nor one memorial for a breast,  
 Whose thoughts are all thine own.

## IV.

Nor need I write — to tell the tale  
 My pen were doubly weak :  
 Oh! what can idle words avail,  
 Unless the heart could speak ?

## V.

By day or night, in weal or woe,  
 That heart, no longer free,  
 Must bear the love it cannot show  
 And silent ache for thee.

---

 TO THYRZA.

WITHOUT a stone to mark the spot,  
 And say, what truth might well have said  
 By all, save one, perchance forgot,  
 Ah, wherefore art thou lowly laid ?  
 By many a shore and many a sea  
 Divided, yet beloved in vain ;  
 The past, the future fled to thee  
 To bid us meet — no — ne'er again !  
 Could this have been — a word, a look  
 That softly said, " We part in peace,"  
 Had taught my bosom how to brook,  
 With fainter sighs, thy soul's release.  
 And didst thou not, since Death for thee  
 Prepared a light and pangless dart,  
 Once long for him thou ne'er shalt see,  
 Who held, and holds thee in his heart ?  
 Oh! who like him had watch'd thee here ?  
 Or sadly mark'd thy glazing eye,  
 In that dread hour ere death appear,  
 When silent sorrow fears to sigh,  
 Till all was past ? But when no more  
 'T was thine to reckon of human woe,  
 Affection's heart-drops, gushing o'er,  
 Had flow'd as fast — as now they flow.  
 Shall they not flow, when many a day  
 In these, to me, deserted towers,  
 Ere call'd but for a time away,  
 Affection's mingling tears were ours ?

Ours too the glance none saw beside ;  
 The smile none else might understand ;  
 The whisper'd thought of hearts allied,  
 The pressure of the thrilling hand ;  
 The kiss, so guiltless and refined  
 That Love each warmer wish forbore ;  
 Those eyes proclaim'd so pure a mind,  
 Even passion blush'd to plead for more.  
 The tone, that taught me to rejoice,  
 When prone, unlike thee to repine ;  
 The song, celestial from thy voice,  
 But sweet to me from none but thine ;  
 The pledge we wore — I wear it still,  
 But where is thine ? — ah, where art thou ?  
 Oft have I borne the weight of ill,  
 But never bent beneath till now !  
 Well hast thou left in life's best bloom  
 The cup of woe for me to drain,  
 If rest alone be in the tomb,  
 I would not wish thee here again ;  
 But if in worlds more blest than this  
 Thy virtues seek a fitter sphere,  
 Impart some portion of thy bliss,  
 To wean me from mine anguish here.  
 Teach me — too early taught by thee !  
 To bear, forgiving and forgiven  
 On earth thy love was such to me ;  
 It fain would form my hope in heaven !

---

 STANZAS.

## I.

**AWAY**, away, ye notes of woe :  
 Be silent, thou once soothing strain,  
 Or I must flee from hence, for, oh !  
 I dare not trust those sounds again.  
**To** me they speak of brighter days —  
 But lull the chords, for now, alas !  
 I must not think, I may not gaze  
 On what I am — on what I was.

## II.

The voice that made those sounds more sweet  
 Is hush'd, and all their charms are fled ;  
 And now their softest notes repeat  
 A dirge, an anthem o'er the dead !  
 Yes, Thyrza ! yes, they breathe of thee,  
 Beloved dust ! since dust thou art ;  
 And all that once was harmony  
 Is worse than discord to my heart !

## III.

'T is silent all ! — but on my ear  
 The well-remember'd echoes thrill ;  
 I hear a voice I would not hear,  
 A voice that now might well be still :  
 Yet oft my doubting soul 't will shake ;  
 Even slumber owns its gentle tone,  
 Till consciousness will vainly wake  
 To listen, though the dream be flown.

## IV.

Sweet Thyrza ! waking as in sleep,  
 Thou art but now a lovely dream ;  
 A star that trembled o'er the deep,  
 Then turn'd from earth its tender beam.  
 But he, who through life's dreary way  
 Must pass, when heaven is veil'd in wrath  
 Will long lament the vanish'd ray  
 That scatter'd gladness o'er his path.

---

 TO THYRZA.

## I.

ONE struggle more, and I am free  
 From pangs that rend my heart in twain ;  
 One last long sigh to love and thee  
 Then back to busy life again.  
 It suits me well to mingle now  
 With things that never pleased before :  
 Though every joy is fled below,  
 What future grief can touch me more ?

## II.

Then bring me wine, the banquet bring  
 Man was not form'd to live alone :  
 I 'll be that light unmeaning thing  
 That smiles with all, and weeps with none.  
 It was not thus in days more dear,  
 It never would have been, but thou  
 Hast fled, and left me lonely here ;  
 Thou 'rt nothing, all are nothing now.

## III.

In vain my lyre would lightly breathe !  
 The smile that sorrow fain would wear  
 But mocks the woe that lurks beneath,  
 Like roses o'er a sepulchre.  
 Though gay companions o'er the bowl  
 Dispel awhile the sense of ill ;  
 Though pleasure fires the maddening soul,  
 The heart — the heart is lonely still !

## IV.

On many a lone and lovely night  
 It sooth'd to gaze upon the sky ;  
 For then I deem'd the heavenly light  
 Shone sweetly on thy pensive eye :  
 And oft I thought at Cynthia's noon,  
 When sailing o'er the Ægean wave,  
 " Now Thyrsa gazes on that moon —"  
 Alas, it gleam'd upon her grave !

## V.

When stretch'd on fever's sleepless bed,  
 And sickness shrunk my throbbing veins,  
 " 'T is comfort still," I faintly said,  
 " That Thyrsa cannot know my pains : "  
 Like freedom to the time-worn slave,  
 A boon 't is idle then to give,  
 Relenting Nature vainly gave,  
 My life, when Thyrsa ceased to live !

## VI.

My Thyrsa's pledge in better days,  
 When love and life alike were new !  
 How different now thou meet'st my gaze !  
 How tinged by time with sorrow's hue !

The heart that gave itself with thee  
 Is silent — ah, were mine as still!  
 Though cold as e'en the dead can be,  
 It feels, it sickens with the chill.

## VII.

Thou bitter pledge! thou mournful token!  
 Though painful, welcome to my breast!  
 Still, still, preserve that love unbroken,  
 Or break the heart to which thou 'rt prest!  
 Time tempers love, but not removes,  
 More hallow'd when its hope is fled:  
 Oh! what are thousand living loves  
 To that which cannot quit the dead?

---

 EUTHANASIA.

## I.

WHEN Time, or soon or late, shall bring  
 The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead.  
 Oblivion! may thy languid wing  
 Wave gently o'er my dying bed!

## II.

No band of friends or heirs be there,  
 To weep, or wish, the coming blow:  
 No maiden, with dishevell'd hair,  
 To feel, or feign, decorous woe.

## III.

But silent let me sink to Earth,  
 With no officious mourners near:  
 I would not mar one hour of mirth,  
 Nor startle friendship with a fear.

## IV.

Yet Love, if Love in such an hour  
 Could nobly check its useless sighs,  
 Might then exert its latest power  
 In her who lives and him who dies.

## V.

'T were sweet, my Psyche ! to the last  
 Thy features still serene to see :  
 Forgetful of its struggles past,  
 E'en Pain itself should smile on thee.

## VI.

But vain the wish — for Beauty still  
 Will shrink, as shrinks the ebbing breath ;  
 And woman's tears, produced at will,  
 Deceive in life, unman in death.

## VII.

Then lonely be my latest hour,  
 Without regret, without a groan !  
 For thousands Death hath ceased to lower,  
 And pain been transient or unknown.

## VIII.

“ Ay, but to die, and go,” alas !  
 Where all have gone, and all must go !  
 To be the nothing that I was  
 Ere born to life and living woe !

## IX.

Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,  
 Count o'er thy days from anguish free,  
 And know, whatever thou hast been  
 'T is something better not to be.

---

 STANZAS.

“HEU QUANTO MINUS EST CUM RELIQUIS VERSARI QUAM TUI MEMINISSE.”

## I.

AND thou art dead, as young and fair  
 As aught of mortal birth ;  
 And form so soft, and charms so rare,  
 Too soon return'd to Earth !  
 Though Earth received them in her bed,  
 And o'er the spot the crowd may tread  
 In carelessness or mirth.  
 There is an eye which could not brook  
 A moment on that grave to look.

## II.

I will not ask where thou liest low  
 Nor gaze upon the spot ;  
 There flowers or weeds at will may grow,  
 So I behold them not :  
 It is enough for me to prove  
 That what I loved and long must love  
 Like common earth can rot ;  
 To me there needs no stone to tell,  
 'T is Nothing that I loved so well.

## III.

Yet did I love thee to the last  
 As fervently as thou,  
 Who didst not change through all the past,  
 And canst not alter now.  
 The love where Death has set his seal,  
 Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,  
 Nor falsehood disavow :  
 And, what were worse, thou canst not see,  
 Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

## IV.

The better days of life were ours ;  
 The worst can be but mine :  
 The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,  
 Shall never more be thine.  
 The silence of that dreamless sleep  
 I envy now too much to weep,  
 Nor need I to repine  
 That all those charms have pass'd away ;  
 I might have watch'd through long decay.

## V.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd  
 Must fall the earliest prey ;  
 Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,  
 The leaves must drop away :  
 And yet it were a greater grief  
 To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,  
 Than see it pluck'd to-day ;  
 Since earthly eye but ill can bear  
 To trace the change to foul from fair.

## VI.

I know not if I could have borne  
 To see thy beauties fade;  
 The night that follow'd such a morn  
 Had worn a deeper shade :  
 Thy day without a cloud hath pass'd,  
 And thou wert lovely to the last ;  
 Extinguish'd, not decay'd ;  
 As stars that shoot along the sky  
 Shine brightest as they fall from high.

## VII.

As once I wept, if I could weep,  
 My tears might well be shed,  
 To think I was not near to keep  
 One vigil o'er thy bed ;  
 To gaze, how fondly ! on thy face,  
 To fold thee in a faint embrace,  
 Uphold thy drooping head ;  
 And show that love, however vain,  
 Nor thou nor I can feel again.

## VIII.

Yet how much less it were to gain,  
 Though thou hast left me free,  
 The loveliest things that still remain,  
 Than thus remember thee !  
 The all of thine that cannot die  
 Through dark and dread Eternity,  
 Returns again to me,  
 And more thy buried love endears  
 Than aught, except its living years.

---

 STANZAS.

## I.

IF sometimes in the haunts of men  
 Thine image from my breast may fade,  
 The lonely hour presents again  
 The semblance of thy gentle shade :  
 And now that sad and silent hour  
 Thus much of thee can still restore,  
 And sorrow unobserved may pour  
 The plaint she dare not speak before.

## II.

Oh, pardon that in crowds awhile,  
 I waste one thought I owe to thee,  
 And, self-condemn'd, appear to smile,  
 Unfaithful to thy Memory!  
 Nor deem that memory less dear,  
 That then I seem not to repine;  
 I would not fools should overhear  
 One sigh that should be wholly *thine*.

## III.

If not the goblet pass unquaff'd,  
 It is not drain'd to banish care;  
 The cup must hold a deadlier draught,  
 That brings a Lethe for despair.  
 And could Oblivion set my soul  
 From all her troubled visions free,  
 I'd dash to earth the sweetest bowl  
 That drown'd a single thought of thee.

## IV.

For wert thou vanish'd from my mind,  
 Where could my vacant bosom turn?  
 And who would then remain behind,  
 To honour thine abandon'd Urn?  
 No, no — it is my sorrow's pride  
 That last dear duty to fulfil;  
 Though all the world forget beside,  
 'T is meet that I remember still.

## V.

For well I know, that such had been  
 Thy gentle care for him, who now  
 Unmourn'd shall quit this mortal scene,  
 Where none regarded him, but thou;  
 And, oh! I feel in *that* was given  
 A blessing never meant for me;  
 Thou wert too like a dream of Heaven,  
 For earthly love to merit thee.

March 14th, 1812.

## ON A CORNELIAN HEART WHICH WAS BROKEN.

I.

ILL-FATED Heart! and can it be  
 That thou shouldst thus be rent in twain?  
 Have years of care for thine and thee  
 Alike been all employ'd in vain?

II.

Yet precious seems each shatter'd part,  
 And every fragment dearer grown,  
 Since he who wears thee feels thou art  
 A fitter emblem of *his own*.

TO A YOUTHFUL FRIEND 

I.

Few years have pass'd since thou and I  
 Were firmest friends, at least in name,  
 And childhood's gay sincerity  
 Preserved our feelings long the same.

II.

But now, like me, too well thou know'st  
 What trifles oft the heart recall;  
 And those who once have lov'd the most,  
 Too soon forget they loved at all.

III.

And such the change the heart displays,  
 So frail is early friendship's reign,  
 A month's brief lapse, perhaps a day's,  
 Will view thy mind estranged again.

IV.

If so, it never shall be mine  
 To mourn the loss of such a heart;  
 The fault was Nature's fault, not thine,  
 Which made thee fickle as thou art.

## V.

As rolls the ocean's changing tide,  
 So human feelings ebb and flow ;  
 And who would in a breast confide  
 Where stormy passions ever glow ?

## VI.

It boots not, that together bred,  
 Our childish days were days of joy :  
 My spring of life has quickly fled ;  
 Thou, too, hast ceased to be a boy.

## VII.

And when we bid adieu to youth,  
 Slaves to the specious world's control,  
 We sigh a long farewell to truth ;  
 That world corrupts the noblest soul.

## VIII.

Ah, joyous season ! when the mind  
 Dares all things boldly but to lie ;  
 When thought ere spoke is unconfined,  
 And sparkles in the placid eye.

## IX.

Not so in Man's maturer years,  
 When man himself is but a tool ;  
 When interest sways our hopes and fears  
 And all must love and hate by rule.

## X.

With fools in kindred vice the same,  
 We learn at length our faults to blend ;  
 And those, and those alone, may claim  
 The prostituted name of friend.

## XI.

Such is the common lot of man :  
 Can we then 'scape from folly free ?  
 Can we reverse the general plan,  
 Nor be what all in turn must be ?

## XII.

No, for myself, so dark my fate  
 Through every turn of life hath been ;  
 Man and the world I so much hate,  
 I care not when I quit the scene.

## XIII.

But thou, with spirit frail and light,  
 Wilt shine awhile and pass away ;  
 As glow-worms sparkle through the night,  
 But dare not stand the test of day.

## XIV.

Alas ! whenever folly calls  
 Where parasites and princes meet,  
 (For cherish'd first in royal halls,  
 The welcome vices kindly greet,)

## XV.

Ev'n now thou 'rt nightly seen to add  
 One insect to the fluttering crowd ;  
 And still thy trifling heart is glad  
 To join the vain, and court the proud.

## XVI.

There dost thou glide from fair to fair,  
 Still simpering on with eager haste,  
 As flies along the gay parterre,  
 That taint the flowers they scarcely taste.

## XVII.

But say, what nymph will prize the flame  
 Which seems, as marshy vapours move,  
 To flit along from dame to dame,  
 An ignis-fatuus gleam of love ?

## XVIII.

What friend for thee, howe'er inclined,  
 Will deign to own a kindred care ?  
 Who will debase his manly mind,  
 For friendship every fool may share ?

## XIX.

In time forbear ; amidst the throng,  
 No more so base a thing be seen ;  
 No more so idly pass along :  
 Be something, any thing, but — mean.

---

## TO \* \* \* \* \*

## I.

WELL ! thou art happy, and I feel  
 That I should thus be happy too ;  
 For still my heart regards thy weal  
 Warmly, as it was wont to do.

## II.

Thy husband's blest — and 't will impart  
 Some pangs to view his happier lot :  
 But let them pass — Oh ! how my heart  
 Would hate him, if he loved thee not !

## III.

When late I saw thy favourite child,  
 I thought my jealous heart would break ;  
 But when th' unconscious infant smiled,  
 I kiss'd it for its mother's sake.

## IV.

I kiss'd it, and repress'd my sighs,  
 Its father in its face to see ;  
 But then it had its mother's eyes,  
 And they were all to love and me.

## V.

Mary, adieu ! I must away :  
 While thou art blest I 'll not repine,  
 But near thee I can never stay ;  
 My heart would soon again be thine.

## VI.

I deem'd that time, I deem'd that pride  
 Had quench'd at length my boyish flame,  
 Nor knew, till seated by thy side,  
 My heart in all, save hope, the same.

## VII.

Yet was I calm : I knew the time  
 My breast would thrill before thy look,  
 But now to tremble were a crime —  
 We met, and not a nerve was shook.

## VIII.

I saw thee gaze upon my face,  
 Yet meet with no confusion there :  
 One only feeling could'st thou trace ;  
 The sullen calmness of despair.

## IX.

Away ! away ! my early dream,  
 Remembrance never must awake :  
 Oh ! where is Lethe's fabled stream ?  
 My foolish heart be still, or break.

---

 FROM THE PORTUGUESE.

IN moments to delight devoted,  
 " My life ! " with tend'rest tone, you cry ;  
 Dear words ! on which my heart had doted,  
 If youth could neither fade nor die.  
 To death even hours like these must roll,  
 Ah ! then repeat those accents never ;  
 Or change " my life ! " into " my soul ! "  
 Which, like my love, exists for ever.

---

 IMPROMPTU, IN REPLY TO A FRIEND.

WHEN from the heart where Sorrow sits,  
 Her dusky shadow mounts too high,  
 And o'er the changing aspect flits,  
 And clouds the brow or fills the eye.  
 Heed not that gloom, which soon shall sink :  
 My thoughts their dungeon know too well ;  
 Back to my breast the wanderers shrink,  
 And droop within their silent cell.

## ADDRESS,

SPOKEN AT THE OPENING OF DRURY-LANE THEATRE, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1812.

IN one dread night our city saw, and sigh'd,  
Bow'd to the dust, the Drama's tower of pride ;  
In one short hour beheld the blazing fane,  
Apollo sink, and Shakspeare cease to reign.

Yet who beheld, (oh ! sight admired and mourn'd  
Whose radiance mock'd the ruin it adorn'd !)  
Through clouds of fire the massy fragments riven,  
Like Israel's pillar, chase the night from heaven ;  
Saw the long column of revolving flames  
Shake its red shadow o'er the startled Thames,  
While thousands, throng'd around the burning dome,  
Shrank back appall'd, and trembled for their home,  
As glared the volumed blaze, and ghastly shone  
The skies, with lightnings awful as their own,  
Till blackening ashes and the lonely wall  
Usurp'd the Muse's realm, and mark'd her fall ;  
Say — shall this new, nor less aspiring pile,  
Rear'd where once rose the mightiest in our isle,  
Know the same favour which the former knew,  
A shrine for Shakspeare — worthy him and *you* ?

Yes — it shall be — the magic of that name  
Defies the scythe of time, the torch of flame ;  
On the same spot still consecrates the scene,  
And bids the Drama *be* where she hath *been*.  
This fabric's birth attests the potent spell —  
Indulge our honest pride, and say, *How well !*

As soars this fane to emulate the last,  
Oh ! might we draw our omens from the past,  
Some hour propitious to our prayers may boast  
Names such as hallow still the dome we lost.  
On Drury first your Siddons' thrilling art  
O'erwhelm'd the gentlest, storm'd the sternest heart.  
On Drury, Garrick's latest laurels grew ;  
Here your last tears retiring Roscius drew,  
Sigh'd his last thanks, and wept his last adieu :  
But still for living wit the wreaths may bloom  
That only waste their odours o'er the tomb.

Such Drury claim'd and claims — nor you refuse  
 One tribute to revive his slumbering muse ;  
 With garlands deck your own Menander's head !  
 Nor hoard your honours idly for the dead !

Dear are the days which made our annals bright,  
 Ere Garrick fled, or Brinsley ceased to write.  
 Heirs to their labours, like all high-born heirs,  
 Vain of *our* ancestry as they of *theirs* ;  
 While thus Remembrance borrows Banquo's glass  
 To claim the sceptred shadows as they pass,  
 And we the mirror hold, where imaged shine  
 Immortal names, emblazon'd on our line,  
 Pause — ere their feebler offspring you condemn,  
 Reflect how hard the task to rival them !

Friends of the stage ! to whom both Players and Plays  
 Must sue alike for pardon or for praise,  
 Whose judging voice and eye alone direct  
 The boundless power to cherish or reject ;  
 If e'er frivolity has led to fame,  
 And made us blush that you forbore to blame ;  
 If e'er the sinking stage could condescend  
 To soothe the sickly taste it dare not mend,  
 All past reproach may present scenes refute,  
 And censure, wisely loud, be justly mute !  
 Oh ! since your fiat stamps the Drama's laws,  
 Forbear to mock us with misplaced applause ;  
 So pride shall doubly nerve the actor's powers,  
 And reason's voice be echo'd back by ours !

This greeting o'er, the ancient rule obey'd,  
 The Drama's homage by her herald paid,  
 Receive *our* welcome too, whose every tone  
 Springs from our hearts, and fain would win your own.  
 The curtain rises — may our stage unfold  
 Scenes not unworthy Drury's days of old !  
 Britons our judges, Nature for our guide,  
 Still may *we* please — long, long may *you* preside !

## TO TIME.

TIME ! on whose arbitrary wing  
 The varying hours must flag or fly,  
 Whose tardy winter, fleeting spring,  
 But drag or drive us on to die—

Hail thou ! who on my mirth bestow'd  
 Those boons to all that know thee known ;  
 Yet better I sustain thy load,  
 For now I bear the weight alone.

I would not one fond heart should share  
 The bitter moments thou hast given ;  
 And pardon thee, since thou could'st spare  
 All that I loved, to peace or heaven.

To them be joy or rest, on me  
 Thy future ills shall press in vain ;  
 I nothing owe but years to thee,  
 A debt already paid in pain.

Yet even that pain was some relief ;  
 It felt, but still forgot thy power :  
 The active agony of grief  
 Retards, but never counts the hour.

In joy I've sigh'd to think thy flight  
 Would soon subside from swift to slow ;  
 Thy cloud could overcast the light,  
 But could not add a night to woe ;

For then, however drear and dark,  
 My soul was suited to thy sky ;  
 One star alone shot forth a spark  
 To prove thee — not Eternity.

That beam hath sunk, and now thou art  
 A blank ; a thing to count and curse  
 Through each dull tedious trifling part,  
 Which all regret, yet all rehearse.

One scene even thou canst not deform ;  
 The limit of thy sloth or speed  
 When future wanderers bear the storm  
 Which we shall sleep too sound to heed :

And I can smile to think how weak  
 Thine efforts shortly shall be shown,  
 When all the vengeance thou canst wreak  
 Must fall upon — a nameless stone.

---

TRANSLATION OF A ROMAIC LOVE SONG.

AH ! Love was never yet without  
 The pang, the agony, the doubt,  
 Which rends my heart with ceaseless sigh,  
 While day and night roll darkling by.

Without one friend to hear my woe,  
 I faint, I die beneath the blow.  
 That Love had arrows, well I knew ;  
 Alas ! I find them poison'd too.

Birds, yet in freedom shun the net  
 Which Love around your haunts hath set ;  
 Or, circled by his fatal fire,  
 Your hearts shall burn, your hopes expire.

A bird of free and careless wing  
 Was I, through many a smiling spring ;  
 But caught within the subtle snare,  
 I burn, and feebly flutter there.

Who ne'er have loved, and loved in vain,  
 Can neither feel nor pity pain,  
 The cold repulse, the look askance,  
 The lightning of Love's angry glance.

In flattering dreams I deem'd thee mine ;  
 Now hope, and he who hoped, decline ;  
 Like melting wax, or withering flower,  
 I feel my passion, and thy power.

My light of life ! ah, tell me why  
 That pouting lip, and alter'd eye ?  
 My bird of love ! my beauteous mate !  
 And art thou changed, and canst thou hate ?

Mine eyes like wintry streams o'erflow :  
 What wretch with me would barter woe ?  
 My bird ! relent : one note could give  
 A charm, to bid thy lover live.

My curdling blood, my madd'ning brain,  
 In silent anguish I sustain ;  
 And still thy heart, without partaking  
 One pang, exults — while mine is breaking.

Pour me the poison ; fear not thou !  
 Thou canst not murder more than now :  
 I 've lived to curse my natal day,  
 And Love, that thus can lingering slay.

My wounded soul, my bleeding breast,  
 Can patience preach thee into rest ?  
 Alas ! too late, I dearly know  
 That joy is harbinger of woe.

---

STANZAS.

THOU art not false, but thou art fickle,  
 To those thyself so fondly sought ;  
 The tears that thou hast forced to trickle  
 Are doubly bitter from that thought :  
 'T is this which breaks the heart thou grievest  
 Too well thou lov'st — too soon thou leavest.

The wholly false the heart despises,  
 And spurns deceiver and deceit ;  
 But she who not a thought disguises,  
 Whose love is as sincere as sweet, —  
 When she can change who loved so truly,  
 It feels what mine has felt so newly.

To dream of joy and wake to sorrow,  
 Is doom'd to all who love or live ;  
 And if, when conscious on the morrow,  
 We scarce our fancy can forgive,  
 That cheated us in slumber only,  
 To leave the waking soul more lonely,

What must they feel whom no false vision,  
 But truest, tenderest passion warm'd ?  
 Sincere, but swift in sad transition,  
 As if a dream alone had charm'd ?  
 Ah ! sure such grief is fancy's scheming,  
 And all thy change can be but dreaming !

---

## ON BEING ASKED WHAT WAS THE "ORIGIN OF LOVE."

THE "Origin of Love !" — Ah, why  
 That cruel question ask of me,  
 When thou may'st read in many an eye  
 He starts to life on seeing thee ?

And should'st thou seek his *end* to know :  
 My heart forebodes, my fears foresee,  
 He 'll linger long in silent woe ;  
 But live — until I cease to be.

---

## STANZAS.

["REMEMBER HIM," &c.]

REMEMBER him, whom passion's power  
 Severely, deeply, vainly proved :  
 Remember thou that dangerous hour  
 When neither fell, though both were loved.

That yielding breast, that melting eye,  
 Too much invited to be bless'd :  
 That gentle prayer, that pleading sigh,  
 The wilder wish reprov'd, repress'd.

Oh ! let me feel that all I lost  
 But saved thee all that conscience fears :  
 And blush for every pang it cost  
 To spare the vain remorse of years.

Yet think of this when many a tongue,  
 Whose busy accents whisper blame,  
 Would do the heart that loved thee wrong,  
 And brand a nearly blighted name.

Think that, whate'er to others, thou  
 Hast seen each selfish thought subdued :  
 I bless thy purer soul even now,  
 Even now, in midnight solitude.

Oh, God ! that we had met in time,  
 Our hearts as fond, thy hand more free ;  
 When thou hadst loved without a crime,  
 And I been less unworthy thee !

Far may thy days, as heretofore,  
 From this our gaudy world be past !  
 And that too bitter moment o'er,  
 Oh ! may such trial be thy last !

This heart, alas ! perverted long,  
 Itself destroy'd might there destroy ;  
 To meet thee in the glittering throng,  
 Would wake Presumption's hope of joy.

Then to the things whose bliss or woe,  
 Like mine is wild and worthless all,  
 That world resign — such scenes forego,  
 Where those who feel must surely fall.

Thy youth, thy charms, thy tenderness,  
 Thy soul from long seclusion pure ;  
 From what even here hath pass'd, may guess  
 What there thy bosom must endure.

Oh ! pardon that imploring tear,  
 Since not by Virtue shed in vain,  
 My frenzy drew from eyes so dear ;  
 For me they shall not weep again.

Though long and mournful must it be,  
 The thought that we no more may meet ;  
 Yet I deserve the stern decree,  
 And almost deem the sentence sweet.

Still, had I loved thee less, my heart  
 Had then less sacrificed to thine ;  
 It felt not half so much to part,  
 As if its guilt had made thee mine.

## LINES

INSCRIBED UPON A CUP FORMED FROM A SKULL.

START not — nor deem my spirit fled :  
 In me behold the only skull,  
 From which, unlike a living head,  
 Whatever flows is never dull.

I lived, I loved, I quaff'd, like thee ;  
 I died ; let earth my bones resign :  
 Fill up — thou canst not injure me ;  
 The worm hath fouler lips than thine.

Better to hold the sparkling grape,  
 Than nurse the earth-worm's slimy brood ;  
 And circle in the goblet's shape  
 The drink of Gods, than reptile's food.

Where once my wit, perchance, hath shone,  
 In aid of others' let me shine ;  
 And when, alas ! our brains are gone,  
 What nobler substitute than wine ?

Quaff while thou canst — another race,  
 When thou and thine like me are sped,  
 May rescue thee from earth's embrace,  
 And rhyme and revel with the dead.

Why not ? since through life's little day  
 Our heads such sad effects produce ;  
 Redeem'd from worms and wasting clay,  
 This chance is theirs, to be of use.

*Newstead Abbey, 1808.*

## ON THE DEATH OF SIR PETER PARKER, BART.

THERE is a tear for all that die,  
 A mourner o'er the humblest grave ;  
 But nations swell the funeral cry,  
 And Triumph weeps above the brave.

For them is Sorrow's purest sigh  
 O'er Ocean's heaving bosom sent :  
 In vain their bones unburied lie,  
 All earth becomes their monument !

A tomb is theirs on every page,  
 An epitaph on every tongue :  
 The present hours, the future age,  
 For them bewail, to them belong.

For them the voice of festal mirth  
 Grows hush'd, *their name* the only sound ;  
 While deep Remembrance pours to Worth  
 The goblet's tributary round.

A theme to crowds that knew them not,  
 Lamented by admiring foes,  
 Who would not share their glorious lot ?  
 Who would not die the death they chose ?

And, gallant Parker ! thus enshrined  
 Thy life, thy fall, thy fame shall be ;  
 And early valour, glowing, find  
 A model in thy memory.

But there are breasts that bleed with thee  
 In woe, that glory cannot quell ;  
 And shuddering hear of victory,  
 Where one so dear, so dauntless, fell.

Where shall they turn to mourn thee less ?  
 When cease to hear thy cherish'd name ?  
 Time cannot teach forgetfulness,  
 While Grief's full heart is fed by Fame.

Alas ! for them, though not for thee,  
 They cannot choose but weep the more ;  
 Deep for the dead the grief must be,  
 Who ne'er gave cause to mourn before.

October, 1814.

## TO A LADY WEeping.

WEEP, daughter of a royal line,  
 A Sire's disgrace, a realm's decay ;  
 Ah, happy ! if each tear of thine  
 Could wash a father's fault away !

Weep — for thy tears are Virtue's tears —  
 Auspicious to these suffering isles ;  
 And be each drop in future years  
 Repaid thee by thy people's smiles !

March, 1812.

---

 THE CHAIN I GAVE.

(From the Turkish.)

THE chain I gave was far to view,  
 The lute I added sweet in sound ;  
 The heart that offer'd both was true,  
 And ill deserved the fate it found.

These gifts were charm'd by secret spell  
 Thy truth in absence to divine ;  
 And they have done their duty well, —  
 Alas ! they could not teach thee thine.

That chain was firm in every link,  
 But not to bear a stranger's touch ;  
 That lute was sweet — till thou could'st think,  
 In other hands its notes were such.

Let him, who from thy neck unbound  
 The chain which shiver'd in his grasp,  
 Who saw that lute refuse to sound,  
 Restrung the chords, renew the clasp.

When thou wert changed, they alter'd too ;  
 The chain is broke, the music mute.  
 'T is past — to them and thee adieu —  
 False heart, frail chain, and silent lute.

## SONNET, TO GENEVRA.

THINE eyes' blue tenderness, thy long fair hair,  
 And the wan lustre of thy features — caught  
 From contemplation — where serenely wrought,  
 Seems Sorrow's softness charm'd from its despair —  
 Have thrown such speaking sadness in thine air,  
 That — but I know thy blessed bosom fraught  
 With mines of unalloy'd and stainless thought —  
 I should have deem'd thee doom'd to earthly care.  
 With such an aspect, by his colours blent,  
 When from his beauty-breathing pencil born,  
 (Except that *thou* hast nothing to repent,)  
 The Magdalen of Guido saw the inorn —  
 Such seem'st thou — but how much more excellent!  
 With nought Remorse can claim — nor Virtue scorn.

December 17, 1813.

## SONNET TO THE SAME.

THY cheek is pale with thought, but not from woe  
 And yet so lovely, that if Mirth could flush  
 Its rose of whiteness with the brightest blush,  
 My heart would wish away that ruder glow :  
 And dazzle not thy deep-blue eyes — but, oh !  
 While gazing on them sterner eyes will gush,  
 And into mine my mother's weakness rush,  
 Soft as the last drops round heaven's airy bow.  
 For, through thy long dark lashes low depending,  
 The soul of melancholy Gentleness  
 Gleams like a seraph from the sky descending,  
 Above all pain, yet pitying all distress ;  
 At once such majesty with sweetness blending,  
 I worship more, but cannot love thee less.

December 17, 1813.

## INSCRIPTION

## ON THE MONUMENT OF A NEWFOUNDLAND DOG.

“ NEAR THIS SPOT  
 ARE DEPOSITED THE REMAINS OF ONE  
 WHO POSSESSED BEAUTY WITHOUT VANITY,  
 STRENGTH WITHOUT INSOLENCE,  
 COURAGE WITHOUT FEROCITY,  
 AND ALL THE VIRTUES OF MAN WITHOUT HIS VICIES.  
 THIS PRAISE, WHICH WOULD BE UNMEANING FLATTERY  
 IF INSCRIBED OVER HUMAN ASHES,  
 IS BUT A JUST TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF  
 BOATSWAIN, A DOG,  
 WHO WAS BORN AT NEWFOUNDLAND, MAY 1803,  
 AND DIED AT NEWSTEAD ABBEY, NOV. 18, 1808.”

WHEN some proud son of man returns to earth,  
 Unknown to glory, but upheld by birth,  
 The sculptor's art exhausts the pomp of woe,  
 And storied urns record who rests below ;  
 When all is done, upon the tomb is seen,  
 Not what he was, but what he should have been :  
 But the poor dog, in life the firmest friend,  
 The first to welcome, foremost to defend,  
 Whose honest heart is still his master's own,  
 Who labours, fights, lives, breathes for him alone,  
 Unhonour'd falls, unnoticed all his worth,  
 Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth :  
 While man, vain insect ! hopes to be forgiven,  
 And claims himself a sole exclusive heaven.  
 Oh man ! thou feeble tenant of an hour,  
 Debased by slavery, or corrupt by power,  
 Who knows thee well must quit thee with disgust,  
 Degraded mass of animated dust !  
 Thy love is lust, thy friendship all a cheat,  
 Thy smiles, hypocrisy, thy words deceit !  
 By nature vile, ennobled but by name,  
 Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame.  
 Ye ! who perchance behold this simple urn,  
 Pass on — it honours none you wish to mourn :  
 To mark a friend's remains these stones arise ;  
 I never new but one, and here he lies.

*Newstead Abbey, Oct. 30, 1808.*

## FAREWELL.

FAREWELL ! if ever fondest prayer  
 For other's weal avail'd on high,  
 Mine will not all be lost in air,  
 But waft thy name beyond the sky.  
 'T were vain to speak, to weep, to sigh ;  
 Oh ! more than tears of blood can tell.  
 When wrung from Guilt's expiring eye,  
 Are in that word — Farewell ! — Farewell !

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry ;  
 But in my breast, and in my brain,  
 Awake the pangs that pass not by,  
 The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.  
 My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,  
 Though grief and passion there rebel ;  
 I only know we loved in vain —  
 I only feel — Farewell ! — Farewell !

## I.

BRIGHT be the place of thy soul !  
 No lovelier spirit than thine  
 E'er burst from its mortal control,  
 In the orbs of the blessed to shine.  
 On earth thou wert all but divine,  
 As thy soul shall immortally be ;  
 And our sorrow may cease to repine,  
 When we know that thy God is with thee.

## II.

Light be the turf of thy tomb !  
 May its verdure like emeralds be :  
 There should not be the shadow of gloom,  
 In aught that reminds us of thee.  
 Young flowers and an evergreen tree  
 May spring from the spot of thy rest :  
 But nor cypress nor yew let us see ;  
 For why should we mourn for the blest ?

## I.

WHEN we two parted  
 In silence and tears,  
 Half broken-hearted  
 To sever for years,  
 Pale grew thy cheek and cold,  
 Colder thy kiss ;  
 Truly that hour foretold  
 Sorrow to this.

## II.

The dew of the morning  
 Sunk chill on my brow —  
 It felt like the warning  
 Of what I feel now.  
 Thy vows are all broken,  
 And light is thy fame ;  
 I hear thy name spoken,  
 And share in its shame.

## III.

They name thee before me,  
 A knell to mine ear ;  
 A shudder comes o'er me —  
 Why wert thou so dear ?  
 They know not I knew thee,  
 Who knew thee too well : —  
 Long, long shall I rue thee,  
 Too deeply to tell.

## IV.

In secret we met —  
 In silence I grieve,  
 That thy heart could forget,  
 Thy spirit deceive.  
 If I should meet thee  
 After long years,  
 How should I greet thee ? —  
 With silence and tears.

1808.

## STANZAS FOR MUSIC.\*

[“ THERE’S NOT A JOY THE WORLD CAN GIVE,” &amp;C.]

“ O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros  
 Ducentium ortus ex animo : quater  
 Felix ! in imo qui scatentem  
 Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit.”

GRAY’S *Poemata*.

THERE ’s not a joy the world can give like that it takes  
 away,  
 When the glow of early thought declines in feeling’s dull  
 decay ;  
 ’T is not on youth’s smooth cheek the blush alone, which  
 fades so fast, [past.  
 But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be  
 [ness  
 Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of happi-  
 Are driven o’er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess :  
 The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in vain  
 The shore to which their shiver’d sail shall never stretch  
 again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself comes  
 down ;  
 It cannot feel for others’ woes, it dare not dream its own ;  
 That heavy chill has frozen o’er the fountain of our tears,  
 And though the eye may sparkle still, ’t is where the ice ap-  
 pears.

[breast,  
 Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract the  
 Through midnight hours that yield no more their former hope  
 of rest ;  
 ’T is but as ivy-leaves around the ruin’d turret wreath,  
 All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and gray be-  
 neath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt, — or be what I have been,  
 Or weep as I could once have wept, o’er many a vanish’d  
 scene :  
 As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish though  
 they be,  
 So, midst the wither’d waste of life, those tears would flow  
 to me.

March, 1815.

\* These verses were given by Lord Byron to Mr Power, of the Strand, who has published them, with very beautiful music by Sir John Stevenson.

## STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

["THERE BE NONE OF BEAUTY'S DAUGHTERS."]

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters  
 With a magic like thee ;  
 And like music on the waters  
 Is thy sweet voice to me :  
 When, as if its sound were causing  
 The charmed ocean's pausing,  
 The waves lie still and gleaming,  
 And the lull'd winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving  
 Her bright chain o'er the deep ;  
 Whose breast is gently heaving,  
 As an infant's asleep :  
 So the spirit bows before thee,  
 To listen and adore thee ;  
 With a full but soft emotion,  
 Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

---

 FARE THEE WELL.
 

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"Alas! they had been friends in Youth ;  
 But whispering tongues can poison truth,  
 And constancy lives in realms above :  
 And Life is thorny ; and youth is vain :  
 And to be wroth with one we love,  
 Doth work like madness in the brain :  
 \* \* \* \* \*

But never either found another  
 To free the hollow heart from paining —  
 They stood aloof, the scars remaining,  
 Like cliffs, which had been rent asunder ;  
 A dreary sea now flows between,  
 But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder  
 Shall wholly do away, I ween,  
 The marks of that which once hath been."

COLERIDGE'S *Christabel*.

---

FARE thee well ! and if for ever,  
 Still for ever, fare *thee well* :  
 Even though unforgiving, never  
 'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee  
 Where thy head so oft hath lain,  
 While that placid sleep came o'er thee  
 Which thou ne'er canst know again :

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,  
 Every inmost thought could show !  
 Then thou would'st at last discover  
 'T was not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend thee —  
 Though it smile upon the blow,  
 Even its praises must offend thee,  
 Founded on another's woe :

Though my many faults defaced me,  
 Could no other arm be found,  
 Than the one which once embraced me,  
 To inflict a cureless wound ?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not ;  
 Love may sink by slow decay,  
 But by sudden wrench, believe not  
 Hearts can thus be torn away :

Still thine own its life retaineth —  
 Still must mine, though bleeding, beat ;  
 And the undying thought which paineth  
 Is — that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow  
 Than the wail above the dead ;  
 Both shall live, but every morrow  
 Wake us from a widow'd bed.

And when thou would solace gather  
 When our child's first accents flow,  
 Wilt thou teach her to say " Father ! "  
 Though his care she must forego ?

When her little hands shall press thee,  
 When her lip to thine is press'd,  
 Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,  
 Think of him thy love had bless'd !

Should her lineaments resemble  
 Those thou never more may'st see,  
 Then thy heart will softly tremble  
 With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,  
 All my madness none can know ;  
 All my hopes, where'er thou goest,  
 Wither, yet with *thee* they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken ;  
 Pride, which not a world could bow,  
 Bows to thee — by thee forsaken,  
 Even my soul forsakes me now :

But 't is done — all words are idle —  
 Words from me are vainer still ;  
 But the thoughts we cannot bridle  
 Force their way without the will. —

Fare thee well ! — thus disunited,  
 Torn from every nearer tie,  
 Sear'd in heart, and lone, and blighted  
 More than this I scarce can die.

*March, 17, 1816.*

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A SKETCH. (1)

“ Honest — Honest Iago !  
 If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.” — SHAKESPEARE.

BORN in the garret, in the kitchen bred,  
 Promoted thence to deck her mistress' head ;  
 Next — for some gracious service unexpress'd,  
 And from its wages only to be guess'd —  
 Raised from the toilet to the table, — where  
 Her wondering betters wait behind her chair.  
 With eye unmoved, and forehead unabash'd,  
 She dines from off the plate she lately wash'd.  
 Quick with the tale, and ready with the lie —  
 The genial confidante, and general spy —  
 Who could, ye gods ! her next employment guess —  
 An only infant's earliest governess !

(1) Mrs. Charlmont.

She taught the child to read, and taught so well,  
 That she herself, by teaching, learn'd to spell.  
 An adept next in penmanship she grows,  
 As many a nameless slander deftly shows :  
 What she had made the pupil of her art,  
 None know — but that high Soul secured the heart,  
 And panted for the truth it could not hear,  
 With longing breast and undeluded ear.  
 Foil'd was perversion by that youthful mind,  
 Which Flattery fool'd not — Baseness could not blind,  
 Deceit infect not — near Contagion soil —  
 Indulgence weaken — nor Example spoil —  
 Nor master'd Science tempt her to look down  
 On humbler talents with a pitying frown —  
 Nor Genius swell — nor Beauty render vain —  
 Nor Envy ruffle to retaliate pain —  
 Nor Fortune change — Pride raise — nor Passion bow  
 Nor Virtue teach austerity — till now.  
 Serenely purest of her sex that live,  
 But wanting one sweet weakness — to forgive,  
 Too shock'd at faults her soul can never know,  
 She deems that all could be like her below :  
 Foe to all vice, yet hardly Virtue's friend,  
 For Virtue pardons those she would amend.

But to the theme : — now laid aside too long  
 The baleful burthen of this honest song —  
 Though all her former functions are no more,  
 She rules the circle which she served before.  
 If mothers — none know why — before her quake ;  
 If daughters dread her for the mothers' sake ;  
 If early habits — those false links, which bind  
 At times the loftiest to the meanest mind —  
 Have given her power too deeply to instil ;  
 The angry essence of her deadly will ;  
 If like a snake she steal within your walls,  
 Till the black slime betray her as she crawls  
 If like a viper to the heart she wind,  
 And leave the venom there she did not find ;  
 What marvel that this hag of hatred works  
 Eternal evil latent as she lurks,  
 To make a Pandemonium where she dwells,  
 And reign the Hecate of domestic hells ?  
 Skill'd by a touch to deepen scandal's tints  
 With all the kind mendacity of hints

While mingling truth with falsehood — sneers with smiles —  
 A thread of candour with a web of wiles ;  
 A plain blunt show of briefly-spoken seeming,  
 To hide her bloodless heart's soul-harden'd scheming ;  
 A lip of lies — a face form'd to conceal ;  
 And, without feeling, mock at all who feel :  
 With a vile mask the Gorgon would disown ;  
 A cheek of parchment — and an eye of stone.  
 Mark, how the channels of her yellow blood  
 Ooze to her skin, and stagnate there to mud,  
 Cased like the centipede in saffron mail,  
 Or darker greenness of the scorpion's scale —  
 (For drawn from reptiles only may we trace  
 Congenial colours in that soul or face) —  
 Look on her features ! and behold her mind  
 As in a mirror of itself defined :  
 Look on the picture ! deem it not o'ercharged —  
 There is no trait which might not be enlarged :  
 Yet true to " Nature's journeymen," who made  
 This monster when their mistress left off trade —  
 This female dog-star of her little sky,  
 Where all beneath her influence droop or die.

Oh ! wretch without a tear — without a thought,  
 Save joy above the ruin thou hast wrought —  
 The time shall come, nor long remote, when thou  
 Shalt feel far more than thou inflictest now ;  
 Feel for thy vile self-loving self in vain,  
 And turn thee howling in unpitied pain.  
 May the strong curse of crush'd affections light  
 Back on thy bosom with reflected blight !  
 And make thee in thy leprosy of mind  
 As loathsome to thyself as to mankind !  
 Till all thy self-thoughts curdle into hate,  
 Black — as thy will for others would create :  
 Till thy hard heart be calcined into dust,  
 And thy soul welter in its hideous crust.  
 Oh, may thy grave be sleepless as the bed, —  
 The widow'd couch of fire, that thou hast spread !  
 Then, when thou fain wouldst weary Heaven with prayer.  
 Look on thine earthly victims — and despair !  
 Down to the dust ! — and, as thou rott'st away,  
 Even worms shall perish on thy poisonous clay.  
 But for the love I bore, and still must bear,  
 To her thy malice from all ties would tear —

Thy name — thy human name — to every eye  
 The climax of all scorn should hang on high,  
 Exalted o'er thy less abhorr'd compeers —  
 And festering in the infamy of years.

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TO ——— \*

[WHEN ALL AROUND," &c.]

I.

WHEN all around grew drear and dark,  
 And reason half withheld her ray —  
 And hope but shed a dying spark  
 Which more misled my lonely way ;

II.

In that deep midnight of the mind,  
 And that internal strife of heart,  
 When dreading to be deem'd too kind,  
 The weak despair — the cold depart ;

III.

When fortune changed — and love fled far,  
 And hatred's shafts flew thick and fast,  
 Thou wert the solitary star  
 Which rose and set not to the last.

IV.

Oh ! blest be thine unbroken light !  
 That watch'd me as a seraph's eye,  
 And stood between me and the night,  
 For ever shining sweetly nigh.

V.

And when the cloud upon us came,  
 Which strove to blacken o'er thy ray —  
 Then purer spread its gentle flame,  
 And dash'd the darkness all away.

VI.

Still may thy spirit dwell on mine,  
 And teach it what to brave or brook —  
 There 's more in one soft word of thine  
 Than in the world's defied rebuke.

(1) His sister Mrs. Leigh.

## VII.

Thou stood'st, as stands a lovely tree,  
 That still unbroke, though gently bent,  
 Still waves with fond fidelity  
 Its boughs above a monument.

## VIII.

The winds might rend — the skies might pour,  
 But there thou wert — and still would'st be  
 Devoted in the stormiest hour  
 To shed thy weeping leaves o'er me.

## IX.

But thou and thine shall know no blight,  
 Whatever fate on me may fall ;  
 For heaven in sunshine will requite  
 The kind — and thee the most of all.

## X.

Then let the ties of baffled love  
 Be broken — thine will never break ;  
 Thy heart can feel — but will not move ;  
 Thy soul, though soft, will never shake.

## XI.

And these, when all was lost beside,  
 Were found and still are fix'd in thee ; —  
 And bearing still a breast so tried,  
 Earth is no desert — ev'n to me.

---

 ODE FROM THE FRENCH.

["WE DO NOT CURSE THEE WATERLOO!"]

## I.

We do not curse thee, Waterloo !  
 Though Freedom's blood thy plain bedew ;  
 There 't was shed, but is not sunk —  
 Rising from each gory trunk,  
 Like the water-spout from ocean,  
 With a strong and growing motion —  
 It soars, and mingles in the air,  
 With that of lost Labedoyère —  
 With that of him whose honour'd grave  
 Contains the "bravest of the brave."  
 A crimson cloud it spreads and glows,  
 But shall return to whence it rose ;

When 't is full 't will burst asunder —  
 Never yet was heard such thunder  
 As then shall shake the world with wonder —  
 Never yet was seen such lightning  
 As o'er heaven shall then be bright'ning!  
 Like the Wormwood Star foretold  
 By the sainted Seer of old,  
 Show'ring down a fiery flood,  
 Turning rivers into blood. (1)

## II.

The Chief has fallen, but not by you,  
 Vanquishers of Waterloo!  
 When the soldier citizen  
 Sway'd not o'er his fellow-men —  
 Save in deeds that led them on  
 Where Glory smiled on Freedom's son —  
 Who, of all the despot's banded,  
     With that youthful chief competed?  
     Who could boast o'er France defeated,  
 Till lone Tyranny commanded?  
 Till, goaded by ambition's sting,  
 The Hero sunk into the King?  
 Then he fell: — so perish all,  
 Who would men by man enthrall!

## III.

And thou, too, of the snow-white plume!  
 Whose realm refused thee ev'n a tomb; (2)  
 Better hadst thou still been leading  
 France o'er hosts of hirelings bleeding,  
 Than sold thyself to death and shame  
 For a meanly royal name;  
 Such as he of Naples wears,  
 Who thy blood-bought title bears.

(1) See Rev. chap. viii. verse 7, &c. "The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood," &c.

Verse 8. "And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood," &c.

Verse 10. "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp; and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters."

Verse 11. "And the name of the star is called *Wormwood*: and the third part of the waters became *wormwood*; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

(2) Murat's remains are said to have been torn from the grave and burnt.

Little didst thou deem, when dashing  
     On thy war-horse through the ranks  
     Like a stream which burst its banks,  
 While helmets cleft, and sabres clashing,  
 Shone and shiver'd fast around thee —  
 Of the fate at last which found thee :  
 Was that haughty plume laid low  
 By a slave's dishonest blow ?  
 Once — as the Moon sways o'er the tide,  
 It roll'd in air, the warrior's guide ;  
 Through the smoke-created night  
 Of the black and sulphurous fight,  
 The soldier raised his seeking eye  
 To catch that crest's ascendancy, —  
 And, as it onward rolling rose,  
 So moved his heart upon our foes.  
 There, where death's brief pang was quickest,  
 And the battle's wreck lay thickest,  
 Strew'd beneath the advancing banner  
     Of the eagle's burning crest —  
 (There with thunder-clouds to fan her,  
     *Who* could then her wing arrest —  
     Victory beaming from her breast ?)  
 While the broken line enlarging  
     Fell, or fled along the plain ;  
 There be sure was MURAT charging !  
     There he ne'er shall charge again !

## IV.

O'er glories gone the invaders march,  
 Weeps Triumph o'er each levell'd arch —  
 But let Freedom rejoice,  
 With her heart in her voice ;  
 But, her hand on her sword,  
 Doubly shall she be adored ;  
 France hath twice too well been taught  
 The “ moral lesson ” dearly bought —  
 Her safety sits not on a throne,  
 With CAPET or NAPOLEON !  
 But in equal rights and laws,  
 Hearts and hands in one great cause —  
 Freedom, such as God hath given  
 Unto all beneath his heaven,  
 With their breath, and from their birth,  
 Though Guilt would sweep it from the earth ;

With a fierce and lavish hand  
 Scattering nations' wealth like sand ;  
 Pouring nations' blood like water,  
 In imperial seas of slaughter !

## v.

But the heart and the mind,  
 And the voice of mankind,  
 Shall arise in communion —  
 And who shall resist that proud union ?  
 The time is past when swords subdued —  
 Man may die — the soul's renew'd :  
 Even in this low world of care  
 Freedom ne'er shall want an heir ;  
 Millions breathe but to inherit  
 Her for ever bounding spirit —  
 When once more her hosts assemble,  
 Tyrants shall believe and tremble —  
 Smile they at this idle threat !  
 Crimson tears will follow yet.

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 FROM THE FRENCH.

[“ MUST THOU GO, MY GLORIOUS CHIEF ? ”]

## I.

Must thou go, my glorious Chief, (1)  
 Sever'd from thy faithful few ?  
 Who can tell thy warrior's grief,  
 Maddening o'er that long adieu ?  
 Woman's love, and friendship's zeal,  
 Dear as both have been to me —  
 What are they to all I feel,  
 With a soldier's faith for thee ?

## II.

Idol of the soldier's soul !  
 First in fight, but mightiest now :  
 Many could a world control ;  
 Thee alone no doom can bow.

(1) “ All wept, but particularly Savary, and a Polish officer who had been exalted from the ranks by Buonaparte. He clung to his master's knees ; wrote a letter to Lord Keith, entreating permission to accompany him, even in the most menial capacity, which could not be admitted.”

By thy side for years I dared  
 Death ; and envied those who fell,  
 When their dying shout was heard,  
 Blessing him they served so well. (1)

## III.

Would that I were cold with those,  
 Since this hour I live to see ;  
 When the doubts of coward foes  
 Scarce dare trust a man with thee,  
 Dreading each should set thee free !  
 Oh ! although in dungeons pent,  
 All their chains were light to me,  
 Gazing on thy soul unbent.

## IV.

Would the sycophants of him  
 Now so deaf to duty's prayer,  
 Were his borrow'd glories dim,  
 In his native darkness share ?  
 Were that world this hour his own,  
 All thou calmly dost resign,  
 Could he purchase with that throne  
 Hearts like those which still are thine ?

## V.

My chief, my king, my friend, adieu !  
 Never did I droop before ;  
 Never to my sovereign sue,  
 As his foes I now implore :  
 All I ask is to divide  
 Every peril he must brave ;  
 Sharing by the hero's side  
 His fall, his exile, and his grave.

(1) " At Waterloo, one man was seen, whose left arm was shattered by a cannon ball, to wrench it off with the other, and throwing it up in the air, exclaimed to his comrades, ' Vive l'Empereur, jusqu'à la mort ! ' There were many other instances of the like ; this you may, however, depend on as true."—*A private Letter from Brussels.*

## ON THE STAR OF "THE LEGION OF HONOUR."

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

STAR of the brave! — whose beam hath shed  
 Such glory o'er the quick and dead —  
 Thou radiant and adored deceit!  
 Which millions rush'd in arms to greet, —  
 Wild meteor of immortal birth!  
 Why rise in Heaven to set on Earth?

Souls of slain heroes form'd thy rays;  
 Eternity flash'd through thy blaze;  
 The music of thy martial sphere  
 Was fame on high and honour here;  
 And thy light broke on human eyes,  
 Like a volcano of the skies.

Like lava roll'd thy stream of blood,  
 And swept down empires with its flood;  
 Earth rock'd beneath thee to her base,  
 As thou didst lighten through all space,  
 And the shorn Sun grew dim in air,  
 And set while thou wert dwelling there.

Before thee rose, and with thee grew,  
 A rainbow of the loveliest hue  
 Of three bright colours, (1) each divine,  
 And fit for that celestial sign;  
 For Freedom's hand had blended them,  
 Like tints in an immortal gem.

One tint was of the sunbeam's dyes;  
 One, the blue depth of Seraph's eyes;  
 One, the pure Spirit's veil of white  
 Had robed in radiance of its light:  
 The three so mingled did beseem  
 The texture of a heavenly dream.

Star of the brave! thy ray is pale,  
 And darkness must again prevail!

(1) The tri-colour.

But, oh thou Rainbow of the free!  
 Our tears and blood must flow for thee.  
 When thy bright promise fades away,  
 Our life is but a load of clay.

And Freedom hallows with her tread  
 The silent cities of the dead;  
 For beautiful in death are they  
 Who proudly fall in her array;  
 And soon, oh Goddess! may we be  
 For evermore with them or thee!

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NAPOLEON'S FAREWELL.

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

I.

FAREWELL to the Land, where the gloom of my Glory  
 Arose and o'ershadow'd the earth with her name —  
 She abandons me now — but the page of her story,  
 The brightest or blackest, is fill'd with my fame.  
 I have warr'd with a world which vanquish'd me only  
 When the meteor of conquest allured me too far;  
 I have coped with the nations which dread me thus lonely,  
 The last single Captive to millions in war.

II.

Farewell to thee, France! when thy diadem crown'd me,  
 I made thee the gem and the wonder of earth, —  
 But thy weakness decrees I should leave as I found thee,  
 Decay'd in thy glory, and sunk in thy worth.  
 Oh! for the veteran hearts that were wasted  
 In strife with the storm, when their battles were won —  
 Then the Eagle, whose gaze in that moment was blasted,  
 Had still soar'd with eyes fix'd on victory's sun!

III.

Farewell to thee, France! — but when Liberty rallies  
 Once more in thy regions, remember me then, —  
 The violet still grows in the depth of thy valleys;  
 Though wither'd, thy tears will unfold it again —  
 Yet, yet, I may baffle the hosts that surround us,  
 And yet may thy heart leap awake to my voice — [us,  
 There are links which must break in the chain that has bound  
 Then turn thee and call on the Chief of thy choice!

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF OF "THE PLEASURES OF  
MEMORY."

ABSENT or present, still to thee,  
 My friend, what magic spells belong!  
 As all can tell, who share, like me,  
 In turn thy converse, and thy song.  
 But when the dreaded hour shall come  
 By Friendship ever deem'd too nigh,  
 And "MEMORY" o'er her Druid's tomb  
 Shall weep that aught of thee can die,  
 How fondly will she then repay  
 Thy homage offer'd at her shrine,  
 And blend, while ages roll away,  
 Her name immortally with *thine*!

April 19, 1812.

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SONNET.

ROUSSEAU — Voltaire — our Gibbon — and de Staël —  
 (1) Leman! these names are worthy of thy shore,  
 Thy shore of names like these! wert thou no more,  
 Their memory thy remembrance would recall;  
 To them thy banks were lovely as to all,  
 But they have made them lovelier, for the lore  
 Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core  
 Of human hearts the ruin of a wall  
 Where dwelt the wise and wond'rous; but by *thee*  
 How much more, Lake of Beauty! do we feel,  
 In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,  
 The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,  
 Which of the heirs of immortality  
 Is proud, and makes the breath of glory rea

(1) Geneva, Ferney, Coppet, Lausanne.

## STANZAS TO ——.\*

## I.

THOUGH the day of my destiny 's over,  
 And the star of my fate hath declined,  
 Thy soft heart refused to discover  
 The faults which so many could find ;  
 Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,  
 It shrunk not to share it with me,  
 And the love which my spirit hath painted  
 It never hath found but in *thee*.

## II.

Then when nature around me is smiling,  
 The last smile which answers to mine,  
 I do not believe it beguiling,  
 Because it reminds me of thine ;  
 And when winds are at war with the ocean,  
 As the breasts I believed in with me,  
 If their billows excite an emotion,  
 It is that they bear me from *thee*.

## III.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,  
 And its fragments are sunk in the wave,  
 Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd  
 To pain — it shall not be its slave.  
 There is many a pang to pursue me :  
 They may crush, but they shall not contemn —  
 They may torture, but shall not subdue me —  
 'T is of *thee* that I think — not of them.

## IV.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,  
 Though woman, thou didst not forsake,  
 Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,  
 Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake, —  
 Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,  
 Though parted, it was not to fly,  
 Though watchful, 't was not to defame me,  
 Nor, mute, that the world might belie.

\* His sister, Mrs. Leigh.

## v.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,  
 Nor the war of the many with one —  
 If my soul was not fitted to prize it,  
 'T was folly not sooner to shun :  
 And if dearly that error hath cost me,  
 And more than I once could foresee,  
 I have found that, whatever it lost me,  
 It could not deprive me of *thee*.

## vi.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,  
 Thus much I at least may recall,  
 It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd  
 Deserved to be dearest of all :  
 In the desert a fountain is springing,  
 In the wide waste there still is a tree,  
 And a bird in the solitude singing,  
 Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

July 24, 1816.

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 DARKNESS.

I HAD a dream, which was not all a dream.  
 The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars  
 Did wander darkling in the eternal space,  
 Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth  
 Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air ;  
 Morn came, and went — and came, and brought no day,  
 And men forgot their passions in the dread  
 Of this their desolation ; and all hearts  
 Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light :  
 And they did live by watchfires — and the thrones,  
 The palaces of crowned kings — the huts,  
 The habitations of all things which dwell,  
 Were burnt for beacons ; cities were consumed,  
 And men were gather'd round their blazing homes  
 To look once more into each other's face ;  
 Happy were those who dwelt within the eye  
 Of the volcanos, and their mountain-torch :  
 A fearful hope was all the world contain'd ;  
 Forests were set on fire — but hour by hour  
 They fell and faded — and the crackling trunks  
 Extinguish'd with a crash — and all was black.

The brows of men by the despairing light  
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits  
The flashes fell upon them; some lay down  
And hid their eyes and wept; and some did rest  
Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smiled;  
And others hurried to and fro, and fed  
Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd up  
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,  
The pall of a past world; and then again  
With curses cast them down upon the dust,  
And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd: the wild birds shriek'd,  
And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,  
And flap their useless wings; the wildest brutes  
Came tame and tremulous; and vipers crawl'd  
And twined themselves among the multitude,  
Hissing, but stingless — they were slain for food:  
And War, which for a moment was no more,  
Did glut himself again; — a meal was bought  
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart  
Gorging himself in gloom: no love was left;  
All earth was but one thought — and that was death,  
Immediate and inglorious; and the pang  
Of famine fed upon all entrails — men  
Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh;  
The meagre by the meagre were devour'd,  
Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save one,  
And he was faithful to a corse, and kept  
The birds and beasts and famish'd men at bay,  
Till hunger clung them, or the dropping dead  
Lured their lank jaws; himself sought out no food,  
But with a piteous and perpetual moan,  
And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand  
Which answer'd not with a caress — he died.  
The crowd was famish'd by degrees; but two  
Of an enormous city did survive,  
And they were enemies; they met beside  
The dying embers of an altar-place  
Where had been heap'd a mass of holy things  
For an unholy usage; they raked up,  
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands  
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath  
Blew for a little life, and made a flame  
Which was a mockery; then they lifted up  
Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld  
Each other's aspects — saw, and shriek'd, and died —  
Even of their mutual hideousness they died,

Unknowing who he was upon whose brow  
 Famine had written Fiend. The world was void,  
 The populous and the powerful was a lump,  
 Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless —  
 A lump of death — a chaos of hard clay.  
 The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,  
 And nothing stirr'd within their silent depths ;  
 Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,  
 And their masts fell down piecemeal ; as they dropp'd  
 They slept on the abyss without a surge —  
 The waves were dead ; the tides were in their grave,  
 The Moon, their mistress, had expired before ;  
 The winds were wither'd in the stagnant air,  
 And the clouds perish'd ; Darkness had no need  
 Of aid from them — She was the universe.

*Diodati, July, 1816.*

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### CHURCHILL'S GRAVE.

A FACT LITERALLY RENDERED.

I stood beside the grave of him who blazed  
 The comet of a season, and I saw  
 The humblest of all sepulchres, and gazed  
 With not the less of sorrow and of awe  
 On that neglected turf and quiet stone,  
 With name no clearer than the names unknown,  
 Which lay unread around it ; and I ask'd  
 The Gardener of that ground, why it might be  
 That for this plant strangers his memory task'd  
 Through the thick deaths of half a century ;  
 And thus he answer'd — “ Well, I do not know  
 Why frequent travellers turn to pilgrims so ;  
 He died before my day of Sextonship,  
 And I had not the digging of this grave.”  
 And is this all ? I thought, — and do we rip  
 The veil of Immortality ? and crave  
 I know not what of honour and of light  
 Through unborn ages, to endure this blight ?  
 So soon and so successful ? As I said,  
 The Architect of all on which we tread,

For Earth is but a tombstone, did essay  
 To extricate remembrance from the clay,  
 Whose minglings might confuse a Newton's thought,  
 Were it not that all life must end in one,  
 Of which we are but dreamers ; — as he caught  
 As 't were the twilight of a former Sun,  
 Thus spoke he, — “ I believe the man of whom  
 You wot, who lies in this selected tomb,  
 Was a most famous writer in his day,  
 And therefore travellers step from out their way  
 To pay him honour, — and myself whate'er  
 Your honour pleases,” — then most pleased I shook  
 From out my pocket's avaricious nook  
 Some certain coins of silver, which as 't were  
 Perforce I gave this man, though I could spare  
 So much but inconveniently : — Ye smile,  
 I see ye, ye profane ones ! all the while,  
 Because my homely phrase the truth would tell.  
 You are the fools, not I — for I did dwell  
 With a deep thought, and with a soften'd eye,  
 On that Old Sexton's natural homily,  
 In which there was Obscurity and Fame, —  
 The Glory and the Nothing of a Name.

*Diodati, 1816.*

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THE DREAM.

I.

Our life is twofold : Sleep hath its own world,  
 A boundary between the things misnamed  
 Death and existence : Sleep hath its own world,  
 And a wide realm of wild reality,  
 And dreams in their developement have breath,  
 And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy ;  
 They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,  
 They take a weight from off our waking toils,  
 They do divide our being ; they become  
 A portion of ourselves as of our time,  
 And look like heralds of eternity ;  
 They pass like spirits of the past, — they speak  
 Like sibyls of the future ; they have power —  
 The tyranny of pleasure and of pain ;

They make us what we were not — what they will,  
 And shake us with the vision that 's gone by,  
 The dread of vanish'd shadows — Are they so?  
 Is not the past all shadow? What are they?  
 Creations of the mind? — The mind can make  
 Substance, and people planets of its own  
 With beings brighter than have been, and give  
 A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.  
 I would recall a vision which I dream'd  
 Perchance in sleep — for in itself a thought,  
 A slumbering thought, is capable of years,  
 And curdles a long life into one hour.

## II.

I saw two beings in the hues of youth  
 Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,  
 Green and of mild declivity, the last  
 As 't were the cape of a long ridge of such,  
 Save that there was no sea to lave its base,  
 But a most living landscape, and the wave  
 Of woods and cornfields, and the abodes of men  
 Scatter'd at intervals, and wreathing smoke  
 Arising from such rustic roofs; — the hill  
 Was crown'd with a peculiar diadem  
 Of trees, in circular array, so fix'd,  
 Not by the sport of nature, but of man:  
 These two, a maiden and a youth, were there  
 Gazing — the one on all that was beneath  
 Fair as herself — but the boy gazed on her;  
 And both were young, and one was beautiful:  
 And both were young — yet not alike in youth.  
 As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge,  
 The maid was on the eve of womanhood;  
 The boy had fewer summers, but his heart  
 Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye  
 There was but one beloved face on earth,  
 And that was shining on him; he had look'd  
 Upon it till it could not pass away;  
 He had no breath, nor being, but in hers;  
 She was his voice; he did not speak to her,  
 But trembled on her words; she was his sight,  
 For his eye follow'd hers, and saw with hers,  
 Which colour'd all his objects: — he had ceased  
 To live within himself; she was his life,  
 The ocean to the river of his thoughts,

Which terminated all : upon a tone,  
 A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,  
 And his cheek change tempestuously — his heart  
 Unknowing of its cause of agony.  
 But she in these fond feelings had no share :  
 Her sighs were not for him ; to her he was  
 Even as a brother — but no more ; 't was much,  
 For brotherless she was, save in the name  
 Her infant friendship had bestow'd on him ;  
 Herself the solitary scion left  
 Of a time-honour'd race. — It was a name  
 Which pleased him, and yet pleased him not — and why ?  
 Time taught him a deep answer — when she lov'd  
 Another ; even *now* she lov'd another,  
 And on the summit of that hill she stood  
 Looking afar if yet her lover's steed  
 Kept pace with her expectancy, and flew.

## III.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.  
 There was an ancient mansion, and before  
 Its walls there was a steed caparison'd :  
 Within an antique Oratory stood  
 The Boy of whom I spake ; — he was alone,  
 And pale, and pacing to and fro : anon  
 He sate him down, and seized a pen, and traced  
 Words which I could not guess of ; then he lean'd  
 His bow'd head on his hands, and shook as 't were  
 With a convulsion — then arose again,  
 And with his teeth and quivering hands did tear  
 What he had written, but he shed no tears.  
 And he did calm himself, and fix his brow  
 Into a kind of quiet : as he paused,  
 The Lady of his love re-enter'd there ;  
 She was serene and smiling then, and yet  
 She knew she was by him beloved, — she knew,  
 For quickly comes such knowledge, that his heart  
 Was darken'd with her shadow, and she saw  
 That he was wretched, but she saw not all.  
 He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp  
 He took her hand ; a moment o'er his face  
 A tablet of unutterable thoughts  
 Was traced, and then it faded, as it came ;  
 He dropp'd the hand he held, and with slow steps  
 Retired, but not as bidding her adieu,

For they did part with mutual smiles ; he pass'd  
 From out the massy gate of that old Hall,  
 And mounting on his steed he went his way ;  
 And ne'er repass'd that hoary threshold more.

## IV.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.  
 The Boy was sprung to manhood : in the wilds  
 Of fiery climes he made himself a home,  
 And his Soul drank their sunbeams : he was girt  
 With strange and dusky aspects ; he was not  
 Himself like what he had been ; on the sea  
 And on the shore he was a wanderer ;  
 There was a mass of many images  
 Crowded like waves upon me, but he was  
 A part of all ; and in the last he lay  
 Reposing from the noontide sultriness,  
 Couch'd among fallen columns, in the shade  
 Of ruin'd walls that had survived the names  
 Of those who rear'd them ; by his sleeping side  
 Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds  
 Were fasten'd near a fountain ; and a man  
 Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,  
 While many of his tribe slumber'd around :  
 And they were canopied by the blue sky,  
 So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,  
 That God alone was to be seen in Heaven.

## V.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.  
 The Lady of his love was wed with One  
 Who did not love her better : — in her home,  
 A thousand leagues from his, — her native home,  
 She dwelt, begirt with growing Infancy,  
 Daughters and sons of Beauty, — but behold !  
 Upon her face there was the tint of grief,  
 The settled shadow of an inward strife,  
 And an unquiet drooping of the eye  
 As if its lid were charged with unshed tears.  
 What could her grief be ? — she had all she loved,  
 And he who had so loved her was not there  
 To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,  
 Or ill-repress'd affliction, her pure thoughts.  
 What could her grief be ? — she had loved him not,  
 Nor given him cause to deem himself beloved,

Nor could he be a part of that which prey'd  
Upon her mind — a spectre of the past.

## VI.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.  
The Wanderer was return'd. — I saw him stand  
Before an Altar — with a gentle bride ;  
Her face was fair, but was not that which made  
The Starlight of his Boyhood ; — as he stood  
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came  
The selfsame aspect, and the quivering shock  
That in the antique Oratory shook  
His bosom in its solitude ; and then —  
As in that hour — a moment o'er his face  
The tablet of unutterable thoughts  
Was traced, — and then it faded as it came,  
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke  
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,  
And all things reel'd around him ; he could see  
Not that which was, nor that which should have been —  
But the old mansion, and the accustom'd hall,  
And the remember'd chambers, and the place,  
The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,  
All things pertaining to that place and hour,  
And her who was his destiny, came back  
And thrust themselves between him and the light :  
What business had they there at such a time ?

## VII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.  
The Lady of his love ; — Oh ! she was changed  
As by the sickness of the soul ; her mind  
Had wander'd from its dwelling, and her eyes  
They had not their own lustre, but the look  
Which is not of the earth ; she was become  
The queen of a fantastic realm ; her thoughts  
Were combinations of disjointed things ;  
And forms impalpable and unperceived  
Of others' sight familiar were to hers.  
And this the world calls frenzy ; but the wise  
Have a far deeper madness, and the glance  
Of melancholy is a fearful gift ;  
What is it but the telescope of truth ?  
Which strips the distance of its fantasies  
And brings life near in utter nakedness,  
Making the cold reality too real !

## VIII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.  
 The Wanderer was alone as heretofore,  
 The beings which surrounded him were gone,  
 Or were at war with him ; he was a mark  
 For blight and desolation, compass'd round  
 With Hatred and Contention ; Pain was mix'd  
 In all which was served up to him, until,  
 Like to the Pontic monarch of old days, (1)  
 He fed on poisons, and they had no power,  
 But were a kind of nutriment ; he lived  
 Through that which had been death to many men,  
 And made him friends of mountains : with the stars  
 And the quick Spirit of the Universe  
 He held his dialogues ; and they did teach  
 To him the magic of their mysteries ;  
 To him the book of Night was open'd wide,  
 And voices from the deep abyss reveal'd  
 A marvel and a secret — Be it so.

## IX.

My dream was past ; it had no further change.  
 It was of a strange order, that the doom  
 Of these two creatures should be thus traced out  
 Almost like a reality — the one  
 To end in madness — both in misery.

---

 PROMETHEUS.

## I.

TITIAN ! to whose immortal eyes  
 The sufferings of mortality,  
 Seen in their sad reality,  
 Were not as things that gods despise ;  
 What was thy pity's recompense ?  
 A silent suffering, and intense ;  
 The rock, the vulture, and the chain,  
 All that the proud can feel of pain,  
 The agony they do not show,  
 The suffocating sense of woe,

(1) Mithridates of Pontus.

Which speaks but in its loneliness,  
 And then is jealous lest the sky  
 Should have a listener, nor will sigh  
 Until its voice is echoless.

## II.

Titan! to thee the strife was given  
 Between the suffering and the will,  
 Which torture where they cannot kill;  
 And the inexorable Heaven,  
 And the deaf tyranny of Fate,  
 The ruling principle of Hate,  
 Which for its pleasure doth create  
 The things it may annihilate,  
 Refused thee even the boon to die:  
 The wretched gift eternity  
 Was thine — and thou hast borne it well.  
 All that the Thunderer wrung from thee,  
 Was but the menace which flung back  
 On him the torments of thy rack;  
 The fate thou didst so well foresee,  
 But would not to appease him tell;  
 And in thy Silence was his Sentence,  
 And in his Soul a vain repentance,  
 And evil dread so ill dissembled  
 That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

## III.

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,  
 To render with thy precepts less  
 The sum of human wretchedness,  
 And strengthen Man with his own mind;  
 But baffled as thou wert from high,  
 Still in thy patient energy,  
 In the endurance, and repulse  
 Of thine impenetrable Spirit,  
 Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,  
 A mighty lesson we inherit:  
 Thou art a symbol and a sign  
 To Mortals of their fate and force;  
 Like thee, Man is in part divine,  
 A troubled stream from a pure source;  
 And Man in portions can foresee  
 His own funereal destiny;  
 His wretchedness, and his resistance,  
 And his sad unallied existence:

To which his Spirit may oppose  
Itself — and equal to all woes,  
And a firm will, and a deep sense,  
Which even in torture can descry  
Its own concenter'd recompense,  
Triumphant where it dares defy,  
And making Death a Victory.

*Diodati, July, 1816.*

ROMANCE MUY DOLOROSO

DEL

SITIO Y TOMA DE ALHAMA.



**THE effect of the original ballad — which existed both in Spanish and Arabic — was such, that it was forbidden to be sung by the Moors, on pain of death, within Granada.**

## ROMANCE MUY DOLOROSO

DEL

SITIO Y TOMA DE ALHAMA.

*El qual dezia en Aravigo assi.*

I.

PASSEAVASE el Rey Moro  
Por la ciudad de Granada,  
Desde las puertas de Elvira  
Hasta las de Bivarambla.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

II.

Cartas le fueron venidas  
Que Alhama era ganada.  
Las cartas echò en el fuego,  
Y al mensagero matava.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

III.

Descavalga de una mula,  
Y en un cavallo cavalga.  
Por el Zacatin arriba  
Subido se avia al Alhambra.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

IV.

Como en el Alhambra estuvo,  
Al mismo punto mandava  
Que se toquen las trompetas  
Con añafiles de plata.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

V.

Y que atambores de guerra  
Apriessa toquen alarma ;  
Por que lo oyan sus Moros,  
Los de la Vega y Granada.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

A VERY MOURNFUL BALLAD

ON THE

SIEGE AND CONQUEST OF ALHAMA.

*Which, in the Arabic language, is to the following purport.*

I.

THE Moorish King rides up and down  
Through Granada's royal town ;  
From Elvira's gates to those  
Of Bivarambla on he goes.

Woe is me, Alhama !

II.

Letters to the monarch tell  
How Alhama's city fell :  
In the fire the scroll he threw,  
And the messenger he slew.

Woe is me, Alhama !

III.

He quits his mule, and mounts his horse,  
And through the street directs his course ;  
Through the street of Zacatin  
To the Alhambra spurring in.

Woe is me, Alhama !

IV.

When the Alhambra walls he gain'd,  
On the moment he ordain'd  
That the trumpet straight should sound  
With the silver clarion round.

Woe is me, Alhama !

V.

And when the hollow drums of war  
Beat the loud alarm afar,  
That the Moors of town and plain  
Might answer to the martial strain,

Woe is me, Alhama !

## VI.

Los Moros que el son oyeron,  
 Que al sangriento Marte llama,  
 Uno a uno, y dos a dos,  
 Un gran esquadron formavan.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

## VII.

Alli hablò un Moro viejo ;  
 Desta manera hablava : —  
 Para que nos llamas, Rey ?  
 Para que es este llamada ?

Ay de mi, Alhama !

## VIII.

Aveys de saber, amigos,  
 Una nueva desdichada :  
 Que Christianos, con braveza,  
 Ya nos han tomado Alhama.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

## IX.

Alli hablò un viejo Alfaqui,  
 De barba crecida y cana : —  
 Bien se te emplea, buen Rey,  
 Buen Rey ; bien se te empleava.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

## X.

Mataste los Bencerrages,  
 Que era la flor de Granada ;  
 Cogiste los tornadizos  
 De Cordova la nombrada.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

## XI.

Por esso mereces, Rey,  
 Una pene bien doblada ;  
 Que te pierdas tu y el reyno,  
 Y que se pierda Granada.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

## VI.

Then the Moors, by this aware  
 That bloody Mars recall'd them there,  
 One by one, and two by two,  
 To a mighty squadron grew.

Woe is me, Alhama !

## VII.

Out then spake an aged Moor  
 In these words the king before,  
 " Wherefore call on us, oh King ?  
 What may mean this gathering ? "

Woe is me, Alhama !

## VIII.

" Friends ! ye have, alas ! to know  
 Of a most disastrous blow,  
 That the Christians, stern and bold,  
 Have obtain'd Alhama's hold."

Woe is me, Alhama !

## IX.

Out then spake old Alfaqui,  
 With his beard so white to see,  
 " Good King ! thou art justly served,  
 Good King ! this thou hast deserved.

Woe is me, Alhama !

## X.

" By thee were slain, in evil hour,  
 The Abencerrage, Granada's flower ;  
 And strangers were received by thee  
 Of Cordova the Chivalry.

Woe is me, Alhama !

## XI.

" And for this, oh King ! is sent  
 On thee a double chastisement :  
 Thee and thine, thy crown and realm,  
 One last wreck shall overwhelm.

Woe is me, Alhama !

## XII.

Si no se respetan leyes,  
Es ley que todo se pierda ;  
Y que se pierda Granada,  
Y que te pierdas en ella.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

## XIII.

Fuego por los ojos vierte,  
El Rey que esto oyera.  
Y como el otro de leyes  
De leyes tambien hablava.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

## XIV.

Sabe un Rey que no ay leyes  
De darle a Reyes disgusto —  
Esso dize el Rey Moro  
Relinchando de colera.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

## XV.

Moro Alfaqui, Moro Alfaqui,  
El de la vellida barba,  
El Rey te manda prender,  
Por la perdida de Alhama.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

## XVI.

Y cortarte la cabeza,  
Y ponerla en el Alhambra,  
Por que a ti castigo sea,  
Y otros tiemblen en miralla.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

## XVII.

Cavalleros, hombres buenos,  
Dezid de mi parte al Rey,  
Al Rey Moro de Granada,  
Como no le devo nada.

Ay de mi, Alhama !

## XII.

“ He who holds no laws in awe,  
 He must perish by the law ;  
 And Granada must be won,  
 And thyself with her undone.”  
 Woe is me, Alhama !

## XIII.

Fire flash'd from out the old Moor's eyes,  
 The Monarch's wrath began to rise,  
 Because he answer'd, and because  
 He spake exceeding well of laws.  
 Woe is me, Alhama !

## XIV.

“ There is no laws to say such things  
 As may disgust the ear of kings : ” —  
 Thus, snorting with his choler, said  
 The Moorish King, and doom'd him dead.  
 Woe is me, Alhama !

## XV.

Moor Alfaqui ! Moor Alfaqui !  
 Though thy beard so hoary be,  
 The King hath sent to have thee seized,  
 For Alhama's loss displeas'd.  
 Woe is me, Alhama !

## XVI.

And to fix thy head upon  
 High Alhambra's loftiest stone ;  
 That this for thee should be the law,  
 And others tremble when they saw.  
 Woe is me, Alhama !

## XVII.

“ Cavalier, and man of worth !  
 Let these words of mine go forth ;  
 Let the Moorish Monarch know,  
 That to him I nothing owe ;  
 Woe is me, Alhama !

## XVIII.

De averse Alhama perdido  
 A mi me pesa en el alma.  
 Que si el Rey perdiò su tierra,  
 Otro mucho mas perdiera.  
 Ay de mi, Alhama !

## XIX.

Perdieran hijos padres,  
 Y casados las casadas :  
 Las cosas que mas amara  
 Perdiò l' un y el otro fama.  
 Ay de mi, Alhama !

## XX.

Perdi una hija donzella  
 Que era la flor d' esta tierra,  
 Cien doblas dava por ella,  
 No me las estimo en nada.  
 Ay de mi, Alhama !

## XXI.

Diziendo assi al hacen Alfaqui,  
 Le cortaron la cabeça,  
 Y la elevan al Alhambra,  
 Assi come el Rey lo manda.  
 Ay de mi, Alhama !

## XXII.

Hombres, niños y mugeres,  
 Lloran tan grande perdida.  
 Lloravan todas las damas  
 Quantas en Granada avia.  
 Ay de mi, Alhama !

## XXIII.

Por las calles y ventanas  
 Mucho luto parecia ;  
 Llora el Rey como fembra,  
 Qu' es mucho lo que perdia.  
 Ay de mi, Alhama !

## XVIII.

“ But on my soul Alhama weighs,  
 And on my inmost spirit preys ;  
 And if the King his land hath lost,  
 Yet others may have lost the most.  
 Woe is me, Alhama

## XIX.

“ Sires have lost their children, wives  
 Their lords, and valiant men their lives ;  
 One what best his love might claim  
 Hath lost, another wealth, or fame.  
 Woe is me, Alhama !

## XX.

‘ I lost a damsel in that hour,  
 Of all the land the loveliest flower ;  
 Doubloons a hundred I would pay,  
 And think her ransom cheap that day.”  
 Woe is me, Alhama !

## XXI.

And as these things the old Moor said,  
 They sever’d from the trunk his head ;  
 And to the Alhambra’s wall with speed  
 ’T was carried, as the King decreed.  
 Woe is me, Alhama !

## XXII.

And men and infants therein weep  
 Their loss, so heavy and so deep ;  
 Granada’s ladies, all she rears  
 Within her walls, burst into tears.  
 Woe is me, Alhama !

## XXIII.

And from the windows o’er the walls  
 The sable web of mourning falls ;  
 The King weeps as a woman o’er  
 His loss, for it is much and sore.  
 Woe is me, Alhama !

## SONETTO DI VITTORELLI.

PER MONACA.

Sonetto composto in nome di un genitore, a cui era morta poco innanzi una figlia appena maritata; è diretto al genitore della sacra sposa.

Di due vaghe donzelle, oneste, accorte  
Lieti e miseri padri il ciel ne feo,  
Il ciel, che degne di più nobil sorte  
L' una e l' altra veggendo, ambo chiedo.  
La mia fu tolta da veloce morte  
A le fumanti tede d' imeneo :  
La tua, Francesco, in sugellate porte  
Eterna prigioniera or si rendeo.  
Ma tu almeno potrai de la gelosa  
Irremeabil soglia, ove s' asconde,  
La sua tenera udir voce pietosa.  
Io verso un fiume d' amarissim' onde,  
Corro a quel marino, in cui la figlia or posa,  
Batto, e ribatto, ma nessun risponde.

## TRANSLATION FROM VITTORELLI.

## ON A NUN.

Sonnet composed in the name of a father, whose daughter had recently died shortly after her marriage; and addressed to the father of her who had lately taken the veil.

OF two fair virgins, modest, though admired,  
 Heaven made us happy; and now, wretched sires,  
 Heaven for a nobler doom their worth desires,  
 And gazing upon *either, both* required.  
 Mine, while the torch of Hymen newly fired  
 Becomes extinguish'd, soon — too soon — expires;  
 But thine, within the closing grate retired,  
 Eternal captive, to her God aspires.  
 But *thou* at least from out the jealous door,  
 Which shuts between your never-meeting eyes,  
 May'st hear her sweet and pious voice once more:  
 I to the marble, where *my daughter* lies,  
 Rush, — the swoln flood of bitterness I pour,  
 And knock, and knock, and knock — but none replies.



**ODE ON VENICE.**



## ODE ON VENICE.

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### I.

OH Venice! Venice! when thy marble walls  
Are level with the waters, there shall be  
A cry of nations o'er thy sunken halls,  
A loud lament along the sweeping sea!  
If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,  
What should thy sons do? — any thing but weep:  
And yet they only murmur in their sleep.  
In contrast with their fathers — as the slime,  
The dull green ooze of the receding deep,  
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam  
That drives the sailor shipless to his home.  
Are they to those that were; and thus they creep,  
Crouching and crab-like, through their sapping streets.  
Oh! agony — that centuries should reap  
No mellow harvest! Thirteen hundred years,  
Of wealth and glory turn'd to dust and tears;  
And every monument the stranger meets,  
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets;  
And even the Lion all subdued appears,  
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum,  
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats  
The echo of thy tyrant's voice along  
The soft waves, once all musical to song,  
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the throng  
Of gondolas — and to the busy hum  
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds  
Were but the overbeating of the heart,  
And flow of too much happiness, which needs  
The aid of age to turn its course apart  
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood  
Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.  
But these are better than the gloomy errors,  
The weeds of nations in their last decay,  
When Vice walks forth with her unsoften'd terrors,  
And Mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay;  
And Hope is nothing but a false delay,

The sick man's lightning half an hour ere death,  
 When Faintness, the last mortal birth of Pain,  
 And apathy of limb, the dull beginning  
 Of the cold staggering race which Death is winning,  
 Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away ;  
 Yet so relieving the o'er-tortured clay,  
 To him appears renewal of his breath,  
 And freedom the mere numbness of his chain ; —  
 And then he talks of life, and how again  
 He feels his spirits soaring — albeit weak,  
 And of the fresher air, which he would seek ;  
 And as he whispers knows not that he gasps,  
 That his thin finger feels not what it clasps,  
 And so the film comes o'er him — and the dizzy  
 Chamber swims round and round — and shadows busy,  
 At which he vainly catches, flit and gleam,  
 Till the last rattle chokes the strangled scream,  
 And all is ice and blackness, — and the earth  
 That which it was the moment ere our birth.

## II.

There is no hope for nations ! — Search the page  
 Of many thousand years — the daily scene,  
 The flow and ebb of each recurring age,  
 The everlasting *to be* which *hath been*,  
 Hath taught us nought or little : still we lean  
 On things that rot beneath our weight, and wear  
 Our strength away in wrestling with the air ;  
 For 't is our nature strikes us down : the beasts  
 Slaughter'd in hourly hecatombs for feasts  
 Are of as high an order — they must go  
 Even where their driver goads them, though to slaughter.  
 Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as water,  
 What have they given your children in return ?  
 A heritage of servitude and woes,  
 A blindfold bondage, where your hire is blows.  
 What ! do not yet the red-hot ploughshares burn,  
 O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,  
 And deem this proof of loyalty the *real* ;  
 Kissing the hand that guides you to your scars,  
 And glorying as you tread the glowing bars ?  
 All that your sires have left you, all that Time  
 Bequeaths of free, and History of sublime,  
 Spring from a different theme ! — Ye see and read,  
 Admire and sigh, and then succumb and bleed !

Save the few spirits, who, despite of all,  
 And worse than all, the sudden crimes engender'd  
 By the down-thundering of the prison-wall,  
 And thirst to swallow the sweet waters tender'd,  
 Gushing from Freedom's fountains — when the crowd,  
 Madden'd with centuries of draught, are loud,  
 And trample on each other to obtain  
 The cup which brings oblivion of a chain  
 Heavy and sore, — in which long yoked they plough'd  
 The sand, — or if there sprung the yellow grain,  
 'T was not for them, their necks were too much bow'd,  
 And their dead palates chew'd the cud of pain : —  
 Yes! the few spirits, — who, despite of deeds  
 Which they abhor, confound not with the cause  
 Those momentary starts from Nature's laws,  
 Which, like the pestilence and earthquake, smite  
 But for a term, then pass, and leave the earth  
 With all her seasons to repair the blight  
 With a few summers, and again put forth  
 Cities and generations — fair, when free —  
 For, Tyranny, there blooms no bud for thee !

## III.

Glory and Empire! once upon these towers  
 With Freedom — godlike Triad! how ye sate!  
 The league of mightiest nations, in those hours  
 When Venice was an envy, might abate,  
 But did not quench, her spirit — in her fate  
 All were enwrapp'd: the feasted monarchs knew  
 And loved their hostess, nor could learn to hate,  
 Although they humbled — with the kingly few  
 The many felt, for from all days and climes  
 She was the voyager's worship; — even her crimes  
 Were of the softer order — born of Love,  
 She drank no blood, nor fatten'd on the dead,  
 But gladden'd where her harmless conquests spread;  
 For these restored the Cross, that from above  
 Hallow'd her sheltering banners, which incessant  
 Flew between earth and the unholy Crescent,  
 Which, if it waned and dwindled, Earth may thank  
 The city it has clothed in chains, which clank  
 Now, creaking in the ears of those who owe  
 The name of Freedom to her glorious struggles;  
 Yet she but shares with them a common woe,  
 And call'd the “ kingdom ” of a conquering foe, —

But knows what all — and, most of all, *we* know —  
With what set gilded terms a tyrant juggles !

## IV.

The name of Commonwealth is past and gone  
O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe ;  
Venice is crush'd, and Holland deigns to own  
A sceptre, and endures the purple robe ;  
If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone  
His chainless mountains, 't is but for a time,  
For tyranny of late is cunning grown,  
And in its own good season tramples down  
The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,  
Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean  
Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion  
Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for, and  
Bequeath'd — a heritage of heart and hand,  
And proud distinction from each other land,  
Whose sons must bow them at a monarch's motion,  
As if his senseless sceptre were a wand  
Full of the magic of exploded science —  
Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,  
Yet rears her crest, unconquer'd and sublime,  
Above the far Atlantic ! — She has taught  
Her Esau-brethren that the haughty flag,  
The floating fence of Albion's feeblcr crag,  
May strike to those whose red right hands have bought  
Rights cheaply earn'd with blood.— Still, still, for ever  
Better, though each man's life-blood were a river,  
That it should flow, and overflow, than creep  
Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,  
Damm'd like the dull canal with locks and chains,  
And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,  
Three paces, and then faltering : — better be  
Where the extinguish'd Spartans still are free,  
In their proud charnel of Thermopylæ,  
Than stagnate in our marsh, — or o'er the deep  
Fly, and one current to the ocean add,  
One spirit to the souls our fathers had,  
One freeman more, America, to thee !

THE  
PROPHECY OF DANTE.

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"Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,  
And coming events cast their shadows before."

CAMPBELL.

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## DEDICATION.

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LADY! if for the cold and cloudy clime  
Where I was born, but where I would not die,  
Of the great Poet-Sire of Italy  
I dare to build the imitative rhyme,  
Harsh Runic copy of the South's sublime,  
THOU art the cause; and howsoever I  
Fall short of his immortal harmony,  
Thy gentle heart will pardon me the crime.  
Thou, in the pride of Beauty and of Youth,  
Spakest; and for thee to speak and be obey'd  
Are one; but only in the sunny South  
Such sounds are utter'd, and such charms display'd,  
So sweet a language from so fair a mouth —  
Ah! to what effort would it not persuade?

*Ravenna, June 21, 1819.*



## P R E F A C E .

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IN the course of a visit to the city of Ravenna in the summer of 1819, it was suggested to the author that having composed something on the subject of Tasso's confinement, he should do the same on Dante's exile,—the tomb of the poet forming one of the principal objects of interest in that city, both to the native and to the stranger.

“ On this hint I spake,” and the result has been the following four cantos, in terza rima, now offered to the reader. If they are understood and approved, it is my purpose to continue the poem in various other cantos to its natural conclusion in the present age. The reader is requested to suppose that Dante addresses him in the interval between the conclusion of the *Divina Commedia* and his death, and shortly before the latter event, foretelling the fortunes of Italy in general in the ensuing centuries. In adopting this plan I have had in my mind the *Cassandra* of Lycophron, and the *Prophecy of Nereus* by Horace, as well as the *Prophecies of Holy Writ*. The measure adopted is the terza rima of Dante, which I am not aware to have seen hitherto tried in our language, except it may be by Mr. Hayley, of whose translation I never saw but one extract, quoted in the notes to *Caliph Vathek*; so that—if I do not err—this poem may be considered as a metrical experiment. The cantos are short, and about the same length of those of the poet, whose name I have borrowed, and most probably taken in vain.

Amongst the inconveniences of authors in the present day, it is difficult for any who have a name, good or bad, to escape translation. I have had the fortune to see the fourth canto of *Childe Harold* translated into Italian *versi sciolti*—that is, a poem written in the *Spenserean stanza* into *blank verse*, without regard to the natural divisions of the stanza or of the sense. If the present

poem, being on a national topic, should chance to undergo the same fate, I would request the Italian reader to remember that when I have failed in the imitation of his great "Padre Alighier," I have failed in imitating that which all study and few understand, since to this very day it is not yet settled what was the meaning of the allegory in the first canto of the *Inferno*, unless Count Marchetti's ingenious and probable conjecture may be considered as having decided the question.

He may also pardon my failure the more, as I am not quite sure that he would be pleased with my success, since the Italians, with a pardonable nationality, are particularly jealous of all that is left them as a nation — their literature ; and in the present bitterness of the classic and romantic war, are but ill disposed to permit a foreigner even to approve or imitate them, without finding some fault with his ultramontane presumption. I can easily enter into all this, knowing what would be thought in England of an Italian imitator of Milton, or if a translation of Monti, or Pindemonte, or Arici, should be held up to the rising generation as a model for their future poetical essays. But I perceive that I am deviating into an address to the Italian reader, when my business is with the English one ; and be they few or many, I must take my leave of both.

THE  
PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO THE FIRST.

ONCE more in man's frail world! which I had left  
So long that 't was forgotten; and I feel  
The weight of clay again, — too soon bereft  
Of the immortal vision which could heal  
My earthly sorrows, and to God's own skies  
Lift me from that deep gulf without repeal,  
Where late my ears rung with the damned cries  
Of souls in hopeless bale; and from that place  
Of lesser torment, whence men may arise  
Pure from the fire to join the angelic race;  
Midst whom my own bright Beatricē bless'd (1)  
My spirit with her light; and to the base  
Of the eternal Triad! first, last, best,  
Mysterious, three, sole, infinite, great God!  
Soul universal! led the mortal guest,  
Unblasted by the glory, though he trod  
From star to star to reach the almighty throne.  
Oh Beatricē! whose sweet limbs the sod  
So long hath press'd, and the cold marble stone,  
Thou sole pure seraph of my earliest love  
Love so ineffable, and so alone,  
That nought on earth could more my bosom move,  
And meeting thee in heaven was but to meet  
That without which my soul, like the arkless dove,  
Had wander'd still in search of, nor her feet  
Relieved her wing till found; without thy light  
My paradise had still been incomplete. (2)  
Since my tenth sun gave summer to my sight

(1) The reader is requested to adopt the Italian pronunciation of Beatrice, sounding all the syllables.

(2) "Che sol per le belle opre  
Che fanno in Cielo il sole e l' altre stelle  
Dentro di lui' si crede il Paradiso,  
Così se guardi fiso  
Pensar ben dèi ch' ogni terren' piacere."

Canzone, in which Dante describes the person of Beatrice, Strophe third.

Thou wert my life, the essence of my thought,  
 Loved ere I knew the name of love, and bright  
 Still in these dim old eyes, now overwrought  
 With the world's war, and years, and banishment,  
 And tears for thee, by other woes untaught ;  
 For mine is not a nature to be bent  
 By tyrannous faction, and the brawling crowd,  
 And though the long, long conflict hath been spent  
 In vain, and never more, save when the cloud  
 Which overhangs the Apennine, my mind's eye  
 Pierces to fancy Florence, once so proud  
 Of me, can I return, though but to die,  
 Unto my native soil, they have not yet  
 Quench'd the old exile's spirit, stern and high.  
 But the sun, though not overcast, must set,  
 And the night cometh ; I am old in days,  
 And deeds, and contemplation, and have met  
 Destruction face to face in all his ways.  
 The world hath left me, what it found me, pure,  
 And if I have not gather'd yet its praise,  
 I sought it not by any baser lure ;  
 Man wrongs, and Time avenges, and my name  
 May form a monument not all obscure,  
 Though such was not my ambition's end or aim,  
 To add to the vain-glorious list of those  
 Who dabble in the pettiness of fame,  
 And make men's fickle breath the wind that blows  
 Their sail, and deem it glory to be class'd  
 With conquerors, and virtue's other foes,  
 In bloody chronicles of ages past.  
 I would have had my Florence great and free : (1)  
 Oh Florence ! Florence ! unto me thou wast  
 Like that Jerusalem which the Almighty He  
 Wept over, " but thou wouldst not ; " as the bird  
 Gathers its young, I would have gather'd thee  
 Beneath a parent pinion, hadst thou heard  
 My voice ; but as the adder, deaf and fierce,  
 Against the breast that cherish'd thee was stirr'd  
 Thy venom, and my state thou didst amerce,  
 And doom this body forfeit to the fire.

(1)

" L'Esilio che m' è dato onor mi tegno.

\* \* \* \* \*

Cader tra' bouni è pur di lode degno."

*Sonnet of Dante,*

in which he represents Right, Generosity, and Temperance as banished from among men, and seeking refuge from Love, who inhabits his bosom.

Alas! how bitter is his country's curse  
 To him who *for* that country would expire,  
 But did not merit to expire *by* her,  
 And loves her, loves her even in her ire.  
 The day may come when she will cease to err,  
 The day may come she would be proud to have  
 The dust she dooms to scatter, and transfer <sup>(1)</sup>  
 Of him, whom she denied a home, the grave.  
 But this shall not be granted; let my dust  
 Lie where it falls; nor shall the soil which gave  
 Me breath, but in her sudden fury thrust  
 Me forth to breathe elsewhere, so reassume  
 My indignant bones, because her angry gust  
 Forsooth is over, and repeal'd her doom;  
 No, — she denied me what was mine — my roof,  
 And shall not have what is not hers — my tomb.  
 Too long her armed wrath hath kept aloof  
 The breast which would have bled for her, the heart  
 That beat, the mind that was temptation proof,  
 The man who fought, toil'd, travell'd, and each part  
 Of a true citizen fulfill'd, and saw  
 For his reward the Guelf's ascendant art  
 Pass his destruction even into a law.  
 These things are not made for forgetfulness,  
 Florence shall be forgotten first; too raw  
 The wound, too deep the wrong, and the distress  
 Of such endurance too prolong'd to make  
 My pardon greater, her injustice less,  
 Though late repented; yet — yet for her sake  
 I feel some fonder yearnings, and for thine,  
 My own Beatricē, I would hardly take  
 Vengeance upon the land which once was mine,  
 And still is hallow'd by thy dust's return,  
 Which would protect the murderess like a shrine,  
 And save ten thousand foes by thy sole urn.  
 Though, like old Marius from Minturnæ's marsh  
 And Carthage ruins, my lone breast may burn  
 At times with evil feelings hot and harsh,  
 And sometimes the last pangs of a vile foe  
 Writhe in a dream before me, and o'erarch  
 My brow with hopes of triumph, — let them go!  
 Such are the last infirmities of those

(1) "Ut si quis predictorum ullo tempore in fortiam dicti communis pervenerit, talis perveniens igne comburatur, sic quod moriatur."

Second sentence of Florence against Dante, and the fourteen accused with him.—  
 The Latin is worthy of the sentence.

Who long have suffer'd more than mortal woe,  
 And yet being mortal still, have no repose  
     But on the pillow of Revenge — Revenge,  
     Who sleeps to dream of blood, and waking glows  
 With the oft-baffled, slakeless thirst of change,  
     When we shall mount again, and they that trod  
     Be trampled on, while Death and Até range  
 O'er humbled heads and sever'd necks — Great God!  
     Take these thoughts from me — to thy hands I yield  
     My many wrongs, and thine almighty rod  
 Will fall on those who smote me, — be my shield!  
     As thou hast been in peril, and in pain,  
     In turbulent cities, and the tented field —  
 In toil, and many troubles borne in vain  
     For Florence. — I appeal from her to Thee!  
     Thee, whom I late saw in thy loftiest reign,  
 Even in that glorious vision, which to see  
     And live was never granted until now,  
     And yet thou hast permitted this to me.  
 Alas! with what a weight upon my brow  
     The sense of earth and earthly things come back,  
     Corrosive passions, feelings dull and low,  
 The heart's quick throb upon the mental rack,  
     Long day, and dreary night; the retrospect  
     Of half a century bloody and black,  
 And the frail few years I may yet expect  
     Hoary and hopeless, but less hard to bear,  
     For I have been too long and deeply wreck'd  
 On the lone rock of desolate Despair  
     To lift my eyes more to the passing sail  
     Which shuns that reef so horrible and bare;  
 Nor raise my voice — for who would heed my wail?  
     I am not of this people, nor this age,  
     And yet my harpings will unfold a tale  
 Which shall preserve these times when not a page  
     Of their perturbed annals could attract  
     An eye to gaze upon their civil rage,  
 Did not my verse embalm full many an act  
     Worthless as they who wrought it; 't is the doom  
     Of spirits of my order to be rack'd  
 In life, to wear their hearts out, and consume  
     Their days in endless strife, and die alone;  
     Then future thousands crowd around their tomb,  
 And pilgrims come from climes where they have known  
     The name of him — who now is but a name,  
     And wasting homage o'er the sullen stone,

Spread his — by him unheard, unheeded — fame ;  
 And mine at least hath cost me dear : to die  
 Is nothing ; but to wither thus — to tame  
 My mind down from its own infinity —  
 To live in narrow ways with little men,  
 A common sight to every common eye,  
 A wanderer, while even wolves can find a den,  
 Ripp'd from all kindred, from all home, all things  
 That make communion sweet, and soften pain —  
 To feel me in the solitude of kings  
 Without the power that makes them bear a crown —  
 To envy every dove his nest and wings  
 Which waft him where the Apennine looks down  
 On Arno, till he perches, it may be,  
 Within my all inexorable town,  
 Where yet my boys are, and that fatal she, (1)  
 Their mother, the cold partner who hath brought  
 Destruction for a dowry — this to see  
 And feel, and know without repair, hath taught  
 A bitter lesson ; but it leaves me free :  
 I have not vilely found, nor basely sought,  
 They made an Exile — not a slave of me.

(1) This lady, whose name was *Gemma*, sprung from one of the most powerful Guelf families, named Donati. Corso Donati was the principal adversary of the Ghibellines. She is described as being "*Admodum morosa, ut de Xantippe Socratis philosophi conjuge scriptum esse legimus,*" according to Giannozzo Manetti. But Lionardo Aretino is scandalised with Boccace, in his life of Dante, for saying that literary men should not marry. "Qui il Boccaccio non ha pazienza, e dice, le mogli esser contrarie agli studj; e non si ricorda che Socrate il più nobile filosofo che mai fosse, ebbe moglie e figliuoli e uffici della Repubblica nella sua Città; e Aristotele che, &c. &c. ebbe due mogli in varj tempi, ed ebbe figliuoli, e ricchezze assai. — E Marco Tullio — e Catone — e Varrone — e Seneca — ebbero moglie," &c. &c. It is odd that honest Lionardo's examples, with the exception of Seneca, and, for any thing I know, of Aristotle, are not the most felicitous. Tully's Terrentia, and Socrates' Xantippe, by no means contributed to their husbands' happiness, whatever they might do to their philosophy — Cato gave away his wife — of Varro's we know nothing — and of Seneca's, only that she was disposed to die with him, but recovered, and lived several years afterwards. But, says Lionardo, "L'uomo è animale civile, secondo piace a tutti i filosofi." And thence concludes that the greatest proof of the *animal's civism* is "la prima congiunzione, dalla quale moltiplicata nasce la Città."

The first part of the report is devoted to a general description of the country, its climate, soil, and productions. It then proceeds to a detailed account of the various tribes and nations which inhabit the region, and of their manners, customs, and languages. The author has made a great deal of research into the history and antiquities of the country, and has collected a vast amount of materials for the purpose of illustrating the progress of civilization in this part of the world.

The second part of the report is a collection of the various languages spoken in the country, with a description of the different dialects and idioms. The author has also collected a great deal of information concerning the natural history and mineral resources of the country, and has made a great deal of research into the various arts and manufactures which are practiced by the different tribes.

The third part of the report is a collection of the various laws and customs of the different tribes, and of the different modes of government which they practice. The author has also collected a great deal of information concerning the various religious and philosophical opinions which are held by the different tribes, and has made a great deal of research into the various modes of agriculture and husbandry which are practiced by them.

The fourth part of the report is a collection of the various names of the different tribes and nations, and of the different places and objects which are mentioned in the report. The author has also collected a great deal of information concerning the various modes of navigation and commerce which are practiced by the different tribes, and has made a great deal of research into the various modes of warfare and military operations which are practiced by them.

THE  
PROPHECY OF DANTE.

---

CANTO THE SECOND.

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THE Spirit of the fervent days of Old,  
When words were things that came to pass, and thought  
Flash'd o'er the future, bidding men behold  
Their children's children's doom already brought  
Forth from the abyss of time which is to be,  
The chaos of events, where lie half-wrought  
Shapes that must undergo mortality ;  
What the great Seers of Israel wore within,  
That spirit was on them, and is on me,  
And if, Cassandra-like, amidst the din  
Of conflict none will hear, or hearing heed  
This voice from out the Wilderness, the sin  
Be theirs, and my own feelings be my meed,  
The only guerdon I have ever known.  
Hast thou not bled ? and hast thou still to bleed,  
Italia ? Ah ! to me such things, foreshown  
With dim sepulchral light, bid me forget  
In thine irreparable wrongs my own ;  
We can have but one country, and even yet  
Thou 'rt mine — my bones shall be within thy breast,  
My soul within thy language, which once set  
With our old Roman sway in the wide West ;  
But I will make another tongue arise  
As lofty and more sweet, in which express'd  
The hero's ardour, or the lover's sighs,  
Shall find alike such sounds for every theme  
That every word, as brilliant as thy skies,  
Shall realise a poet's proudest dream,  
And make thee Europe's nightingale of song ;  
So that all present speech to thine shall seem  
The note of meaner birds, and every tongue

Confess its barbarism, when compared with thine.  
 This shalt thou owe to him thou didst so wrong,  
 Thy Tuscan Bard, the banish'd Ghibelline.  
 Woe! woe! the veil of coming centuries  
 Is rent, — a thousand years which yet supine  
 Lie like the ocean waves ere winds arise,  
 Heaving in dark and sullen undulation,  
 Float from eternity into these eyes ;  
 The storms yet sleep, the clouds still keep their station,  
 The unborn earthquake yet is in the womb,  
 The bloody chaos yet expects creation,  
 But all things are disposing for thy doom ;  
 The elements await but for the word,  
 " Let there be darkness ! " and thou grow'st a tomb !  
 Yes! thou, so beautiful, shalt feel the sword,  
 Thou, Italy ! so fair that Paradise,  
 Revived in thee, blooms forth to man restored :  
 Ah! must the sons of Adam lose it twice ?  
 Thou, Italy ! whose ever golden fields,  
 Plough'd by the sunbeams solely, would suffice  
 For the world's granary ; thou, whose sky heaven gilds  
 With brighter stars, and robes with deeper blue ;  
 Thou, in whose pleasant places Summer builds  
 Her palace, in whose cradle Empire grew,  
 And form'd the Eternal City's ornaments  
 From spoils of kings whom freemen overthrew ;  
 Birthplace of heroes, sanctuary of saints,  
 Where earthly first, then heavenly glory made  
 Her home ; thou, all which fondest fancy paints,  
 And finds her prior vision but portray'd  
 In feeble colours, when the eye — from the Alp  
 Of horrid snow, and rock, and shaggy shade  
 Of desert-loving pine, whose emerald scalp  
 Nods to the storm — dilates and dotes o'er thee,  
 And wistfully implores, as 't were, for help  
 To see thy sunny fields, my Italy,  
 Nearer and nearer yet, and dearer still  
 The more approach'd, and dearest were they free,  
 Thou — Thou must wither to each tyrant's will :  
 The Goth hath been, — the German, Frank, and Hun  
 Are yet to come, — and on the imperial hill  
 Ruin, already proud of the deeds done  
 By the old barbarians, there awaits the new,  
 Throned on the Palatine, while lost and won  
 Rome at her feet lies bleeding ; and the hue  
 Of human sacrifice and Roman slaughter

Troubles the clotted air, of late so blue,  
 And deepens into red the saffron water  
 Of Tiber, thick with dead; the helpless priest,  
 And still more helpless nor less holy daughter,  
 Vow'd to their God, have shrieking fled, and ceased  
 Their ministry: the nations take their prey,  
 Iberian, Almain, Lombard, and the beast  
 And bird, wolf, vulture, more humane than they  
 Are; these but gorge the flesh and lap the gore  
 Of the departed, and then go their way;  
 But those, the human savages, explore  
 All paths of torture, and insatiate yet,  
 With Ugolino hunger prowl for more.  
 Nine moons shall rise o'er scenes like this and set; (1)  
 The chiefless army of the dead, which late  
 Beneath the traitor Prince's banner met,  
 Hath left its leader's ashes at the gate;  
 Had but the royal Rebel lived, perchance  
 Thou hadst been spared, but his involved thy fate.  
 Oh! Rome, the spoiler or the spoil of France,  
 From Brennus to the Bourbon, never, never  
 Shall foreign standard to thy walls advance  
 But Tiber shall become a mournful river.  
 Oh! when the strangers pass the Alps and Po,  
 Crush them, ye rocks! floods overwhelm them, and for ever!  
 Why sleep the idle avalanches so,  
 To topple on the lonely pilgrim's head?  
 Why doth Eridanus but overflow  
 The peasant's harvest from his turbid bed?  
 Were not each barbarous horde a nobler prey?  
 Over Cambyses' host the desert spread  
 Her sandy ocean, and the sea waves' sway  
 Roll'd over Pharaoh and his thousands, — why,  
 Mountains and waters, do ye not as they?  
 And you, ye men! Romans, who dare not die,  
 Sons of the conquerors who overthrew  
 Those who overthrew proud Xerxes, where yet lie  
 The dead whose tomb Oblivion never knew,  
 Are the Alps weaker than Thermopylæ?  
 Their passes more alluring to the view  
 Of an invader? is it they, or ye,  
 That to each host the mountain-gate unbar,

(1) See "Sacco di Roma," generally attributed to Guicciardini. There is another written by a Jacopo Buonaparte, Gentiluomo Samminiatese, che vi si trovò presente,

And leave the march in peace, the passage free ?  
 Why, Nature's self detains the victor's car,  
 And makes your land impregnable, if earth  
 Could be so ; but alone she will not war,  
 Yet aids the warrior worthy of his birth  
 In a soil where the mothers bring forth men :  
 Not so with those whose souls are little worth ;  
 For them no fortress can avail, — the den  
 Of the poor reptile which preserves its sting  
 Is more secure than walls of adamant, when  
 The hearts of those within are quivering.  
 Are ye not brave ? Yes, yet the Ausonian soil  
 Hath hearts, and hands, and arms, and hosts to bring  
 Against Oppression ; but how vain the toil,  
 While still Division sows the seeds of woe  
 And weakness, till the stranger reaps the spoil.  
 Oh ! my own beauteous land ! so long laid low,  
 So long the grave of thy own children's hopes,  
 When there is but required a single blow  
 To break the chain, yet — yet the Avenger stops,  
 And Doubt and Discord step 'twixt thine and thee,  
 And join their strength to that which with thee copes ;  
 What is there wanting then to set thee free  
 And show thy beauty in its fullest light ?  
 To make the Alps impassable ; and we,  
 Her sons, may do this with *one* deed — Unite.

THE  
PROPHECY OF DANTE.

---

CANTO THE THIRD.

---

FROM out the mass of never-dying ill,  
The Plague, the Prince, the Stranger, and the Sword,  
Vials of wrath but emptied to refill  
And flow again, I cannot all record  
That crowds on my prophetic eye : the earth  
And ocean written o'er would not afford  
Space for the annal, yet it shall go forth ;  
Yes, all, though not by human pen, is graven,  
There where the farthest suns and stars have birth,  
Spread like a banner at the gate of heaven,  
The bloody scroll of our millennial wrongs  
Waves, and the echo of our groans is driven  
Athwart the sound of archangelic songs,  
And Italy, the martyr'd nation's gore,  
Will not in vain arise to where belongs  
Omnipotence and mercy evermore :  
Like to a harpstring stricken by the wind,  
The sound of her lament shall, rising o'er  
The seraph voices, touch the Almighty Mind.  
Meantime I, humblest of thy sons, and of  
Earth's dust by immortality refined  
To sense and suffering, though the vain may scoff,  
And tyrants threat, and meeker victims bow  
Before the storm because its breath is rough,  
To thee, my country ! whom before, as now,  
I loved and love, devote the mournful lyre  
And melancholy gift high powers allow  
To read the future ; and if now my fire  
Is not as once it shone o'er thee, forgive !  
I but foretell thy fortunes — then expire ;  
Think not that I would look on them and live.

A spirit forces me to see and speak,  
 And for my guerdon grants *not* to survive ;  
 My heart shall be pour'd over thee and break :  
 Yet for a moment, ere I must resume  
 Thy sable web of sorrow, let me take  
 Over the gleams that flash unawart thy gloom  
 A softer glimpse ; some stars shine through thy night,  
 And many meteors, and above thy tomb  
 Leans sculptured Beauty, which Death cannot blight ;  
 And from thine ashes boundless spirits rise  
 To give thee honour, and the earth delight ;  
 Thy soil shall still be pregnant with the wise,  
 The gay, the learn'd, the generóus, and the brave,  
 Native to thee as summer to thy skies,  
 Conquerors on foreign shores, and the far wave, (1)  
 Discoverers of new worlds, which take their name ; (2)  
 For *thee* alone they have no arm to save,  
 And all thy recompense is in their fame,  
 A noble one to them, but not to thee —  
 Shall they be glorious, and thou still the same ?  
 Oh ! more than these illustrious far shall be  
 The being — and even yet he may be born —  
 The mortal saviour who shall set thee free,  
 And see thy diadem so changed and worn  
 By fresh barbarians, on thy brow replaced ;  
 And the sweet sun replenishing thy morn,  
 Thy moral morn, too long with clouds defaced  
 And noxious vapours from Avernus risen,  
 Such as all they must breathe who are debased  
 By servitude, and have the mind in prison.  
 Yet through this centuried eclipse of woe  
 Some voices shall be heard, and earth shall listen ;  
 Poets shall follow in the path I show,  
 And make it broader ; the same brilliant sky  
 Which cheers the birds to song shall bid them glow,  
 And raise their notes as natural and high ;  
 Tuneful shall be their numbers ; they shall sing  
 Many of love, and some of liberty,  
 But few shall soar upon that eagle's wing,  
 And look in the sun's face with eagle's gaze  
 All free and fearless as the feather'd king,  
 But fly more near the earth ; how many a phrase

(1) Alexander of Parma, Spinola, Pescara, Eugene of Savoy, Montecucco.

(2) Columbus Americus Vespasius, Sebastian Cabot.

Sublime shall lavish'd be on some small prince  
 In all the prodigality of praise  
 And language, eloquently false, evince  
 The harlotry of genius, which, like beauty,  
 Too oft forgets its own self-reverence,  
 And looks on prostitution as a duty.  
 He who once enters in a tyrant's hall <sup>(1)</sup>  
 As guest is slave, his thoughts become a booty,  
 And the first day which sees the chain enthrall  
 A captive, sees his half of manhood gone — <sup>(2)</sup>  
 The soul's emasculation saddens all  
 His spirit; thus the Bard too near the throne  
 Quails from his inspiration, bound to *please*, —  
 How servile is the task to please alone!  
 To smooth the verse to suit his sovereign's ease  
 And royal leisure, nor too much prolong  
 Aught save his eulogy, and find, and seize,  
 Or force, or forge fit argument of song!  
 Thus trammell'd, thus condemn'd to Flattery's trebles,  
 He toils through all, still trembling to be wrong:  
 For fear some noble thoughts, like heavenly rebels,  
 Should rise up in high treason to his brain,  
 He sings, as the Athenian spoke, with pebbles  
 In 's mouth, lest truth should stammer through his strain.  
 But out of the long file of sonneteers  
 There shall be some who will not sing in vain,  
 And he, their prince, shall rank among my peers, <sup>(3)</sup>  
 And love shall be his torment: but his grief  
 Shall make an immortality of tears,  
 And Italy shall hail him as the Chief  
 Of Poet-lovers, and his higher song  
 Of Freedom wreath him with as green a leaf.  
 But in a farther age shall rise along  
 The banks of Po two greater still than he;  
 The world which smiled on him shall do them wrong  
 Till they are ashes, and repose with me.  
 The first will make an epoch with his lyre,  
 And fill the earth with feats of chivalry:  
 His fancy like a rainbow, and his fire,  
 Like that of Heaven, immortal, and his thought  
 Borne onward with a wing that cannot tire:  
 Pleasure shall, like a butterfly new caught,

(1) A verse from the Greek tragedians, with which Pompey took leave of Cornelia on entering the boat in which he was slain.

(2) The verse and sentiment are taken from Homer.

(3) Petrarch.

Flutter her lovely pinions o'er his theme,  
 And Art itself seem into Nature wrought  
 By the transparency of his bright dream.—  
 The second, of a tenderer, sadder mood,  
 Shall pour his soul out o'er Jerusalem ;  
 He, too, shall sing of arms, and Christian blood  
 Shed where Christ bled for man ; and his high harp  
 Shall, by the willow over Jordan's flood,  
 Revive a song of Sion, and the sharp  
 Conflict, and final triumph of the brave  
 And pious, and the strife of hell to warp  
 Their hearts from their great purpose, until wave  
 The red-cross banners where the first red Cross  
 Was crimson'd from his veins who died to save,  
 Shall be his sacred argument ; the loss  
 Of years, of favour, freedom, even of fame  
 Contested for a time, while the smooth gloss  
 Of courts would slide o'er his forgotten name,  
 And all captivity a kindness, meant  
 To shield him from insanity or shame,  
 Such shall be his meet guerdon ! who was sent  
 To be Christ's Laureate — they reward him well  
 Florence dooms me but death or banishment,  
 Ferrara him a pittance and a cell,  
 Harder to bear and less deserved, for I  
 Had stung the factions which I strove to quell ;  
 But this meek man, who with a lover's eye  
 Will look on earth and heaven, and who will deign  
 To embalm with his celestial flattery  
 As poor a thing as e'er was spawn'd to reign,  
 What will *he* do to merit such a doom ?  
 Perhaps he 'll *love*, — and is not love in vain  
 Torture enough without a living tomb ?  
 Yet it will be so — he and his compeer,  
 The Bard of Chivalry, will both consume  
 In penury and pain too many a year,  
 And, dying in despondency, bequeath  
 To the kind world, which scarce will yield a tear,  
 A heritage enriching all who breathe  
 With the wealth of a genuine poet's soul,  
 And to their country a redoubled wreath,  
 Unmatch'd by time ; not Hellas can unroll  
 Through her olympiads two such names, though one  
 Of hers be mighty ; — and is this the whole  
 Of such men's destiny beneath the sun ?  
 Must all their finer thoughts, the thrilling sense,

The electric blood with which their arteries run,  
Their body's self turn'd soul with the intense  
Feeling of that which is, and fancy of  
That which should be, to such a recompense  
Conduct? shall their bright plumage on the rough  
Storm be still scatter'd? Yes, and it must be,  
For, form'd of far too penetrable stuff,  
These birds of Paradise but long to flee  
Back to their native mansion, soon they find  
Earth's mist with their pure pinions not agree,  
And die or are degraded, for the mind  
Succumbs to long infection, and despair,  
And vulture passions flying close behind,  
Await the moment to assail and tear ;  
And when at length the winged wanderers stoop,  
Then is the prey-birds' triumph, then they share  
The spoil, o'erpower'd at length by one fell swoop.  
Yet some have been untouch'd who learn'd to bear,  
Some whom no power could ever force to droop,  
Who could resist themselves even, hardest care !  
And task most hopeless ; but some such have been,  
And if my name amongst the number were,  
That destiny austere, and yet serene,  
Were prouder than more dazzling fame unblest'd ;  
The Alp's snow summit nearer heaven is seen  
Than the volcano's fierce eruptive crest,  
Whose splendour from the black abyss is flung,  
While the scorch'd mountain, from whose burning breast  
A temporary torturing flame is wrung,  
Shines for a night of terror, then repels  
Its fire back to the hell from whence it sprung,  
The hell which in its entrails ever dwells.



THE  
PROPHECY OF DANTE.

---

CANTO THE FOURTH.

---

MANY are poets who have never penn'd  
Their inspiration, and perchance the best :  
They felt, and loved, and died, but would not lend  
Their thoughts to meaner beings ; they compress'd  
The god within them, and rejoin'd the stars  
Unlaurell'd upon earth, but far more bless'd  
Than those who are degraded by the jars  
Of passion, and their frailties link'd to fame,  
Conquerors of high renown, but full of scars.  
Many are poets but without the name,  
For what is poesy but to create  
From overfeeling good or ill ; and aim  
At an external life beyond our fate,  
And be the new Prometheus of new men,  
Bestowing fire from heaven, and then, too late  
Finding the pleasure given repaid with pain,  
And vultures to the heart of the bestower,  
Who, having lavish'd his high gift in vain,  
Lies chain'd to his lone rock by the sea-shore ?  
So be it : we can bear.— But thus all they  
Whose intellect is an o'ermastering power  
Which still recoils from its encumbering clay  
Or lightens it to spirit, whatsoe'er  
The form which their creations may essay,  
Are bards ; the kindled marble's bust may wear  
More poesy upon its speaking brow  
Than aught less than the Homeric page may bear ;  
One noble stroke with a whole life may glow,  
Or deify the canvass till it shine  
With beauty so surpassing all below  
That they who kneel to idols so divine

Break no commandment, for high heaven is there  
 Transfused, transfigured : and the line  
 Of poesy, which peoples but the air  
 With thought and beings of our thoughts reflected,  
 Can do no more : then let the artist share  
 The palm, he shares the peril, and dejected  
 Faints o'er the labour unapproved — Alas !  
 Despair and Genius are too oft connected,  
 Within the ages which before me pass  
 Art shall resume and equal even the sway  
 Which with Apelles and old Phidias  
 She held in Hellas' unforgotten day.  
 Ye shall be taught by Ruin to revive  
 The Grecian forms at least from their decay,  
 And Roman souls at last again shall live  
 In Roman works wrought by Italian hands,  
 And temples, loftier than the old temples, give  
 New wonders to the world ; and while still stands  
 The austere Pantheon, into heaven shall soar  
 A dome, (1) its image, while the base expands  
 Into a fane surpassing all before,  
 Such as all flesh shall flock to kneel in : ne'er  
 Such sight hath been unfolded by a door  
 As this, to which all nations shall repair,  
 And lay their sins at this huge gate of heaven.  
 And the bold Architect unto whose care  
 The daring charge to raise it shall be given,  
 Whom all arts shall acknowledge as their lord,  
 Whether into the marble chaos driven  
 His chisel bid the Hebrew, (2) at whose word  
 Israel left Egypt, stop the waves in stone,

(1) The cupola of St. Peter's.

(2) The statue of Moses on the monument of Julius II.

#### SONETTO

*Di Giovanni Battista Zappi.*

Chi è costui, che in dura pietra scolto,  
 Siede gigante ; e le più illustre, e conte  
 Opere dell' arte avvanza, e ha vive, e pronte  
 Le labbra sì, che le parole ascolto ?  
 Quest' è Mosè ; ben me 'l diceva il folto  
 Onor del mento, e 'l doppio raggio in fronte,  
 Quest' è Mosè, quando scendea del monte,  
 E gran parte del Nume avea nel volto.  
 Tal era allor, che le sonanti, e vaste  
 Acque ei sospese a se d' intorno, e tale  
 Quando il mar chiuse, e ne fè tomba altrui.  
 E voi sue turbe un rio vitello alzaste ?  
 Alzata avete imago a questa eguale !  
 Ch' ora men fallo l' adorar costui.

Or hues of Hell be by his pencil pour'd  
 Over the damn'd before the Judgment throne, (1)  
 Such as I saw them, such as all shall see,  
 Or fanes be built of grandeur yet unknown,  
 The stream of his great thoughts shall spring from me, (2)  
 The Ghibelline, who traversed the three realms  
 Which form the empire of eternity.  
 Amidst the clash of swords, and clang of helms,  
 The age which I anticipate, no less  
 Shall be the Age of Beauty, and while whelms  
 Calamity the nations with distress,  
 The genius of my country shall arise,  
 A Cedar towering o'er the Wilderness,  
 Lovely in all its branches to all eyes,  
 Fragrant as fair, and recognised afar,  
 Wafting its native incense through the skies.  
 Sovereigns shall pause amidst their sport of war,  
 Wean'd for an hour from blood, to turn and gaze  
 On canvass or on stone ; and they who mar  
 All beauty upon earth, compell'd to praise,  
 Shall feel the power of that which they destroy ;  
 And Art's mistaken gratitude shall raise  
 To tyrants, who but take her for a toy  
 Emblems and monuments, and prostitute  
 Her charms to pontiffs proud, (3) who but employ  
 The man of genius as the meanest brute  
 To bear a burthen, and to serve a need,  
 To sell his labours, and his soul to boot.  
 Who toils for nations may be poor indeed,  
 But free ; who sweats for monarchs is no more  
 Than the gilt chamberlain, who, clothed and fee'd,  
 Stands sleek and slavish, bowing at his door.  
 Oh, Power that rulest and inspirest ! how  
 Is it that they on earth, whose earthly power  
 Is likest thine in heaven in outward show,  
 Least like to thee in attributes divine,  
 Tread on the universal necks that bow,  
 And then assure us that their rights are thine ?  
 And how is it that they, the sons of fame,  
 Whose inspiration seems to them to shine  
 From high, they whom the nations ofttest name,

(1) The Last Judgment, in the Sistine Chapel.

(2) I have read somewhere (if I do not err, for I cannot recollect where,) that Dante was so great a favourite of Michael Angelo's, that he had designed the whole of the Divina Commedia ; but that the volume containing these studies was lost by sea.

(3) See the treatment of Michael Angelo by Julius II., and his neglect by Leo X.

Must pass their days in penury or pain,  
 Or step to grandeur through the paths of shame,  
 And wear a deeper brand and gaudier chain?  
 Or if their destiny be born aloof  
 From lowliness, or tempted thence in vain,  
 In their own souls sustain a harder proof,  
 The inner war of passions deep and fierce?  
 Florence! when thy harsh sentence razed my roof,  
 I loved thee; but the vengeance of my verse,  
 The hate of injuries which every year  
 Makes greater, and accumulates my curse,  
 Shall live, outliving all thou holdest dear,  
 Thy pride, thy wealth, thy freedom, and even *that*,  
 The most infernal of all evils here,  
 The sway of petty tyrants in a state;  
 For such sway is not limited to kings,  
 And demagogues yield to them but in date  
 As swept off sooner; in all deadly things  
 Which make men hate themselves, and one another,  
 In discord, cowardice, cruelty, all that springs  
 From Death the Sin-born's incest with his mother,  
 In rank oppression in its rudest shape,  
 The faction Chief is but the Sultan's brother  
 And the worst despot's far less human ape:  
 Florence! when this lone spirit, which so long  
 Yearn'd, as the captive toiling at escape,  
 To fly back to thee in despite of wrong,  
 An exile, saddest of all prisoners,  
 Who has the whole world for a dungeon strong,  
 Seas, mountains, and the horizon's verge for bars,  
 Which shut him from the sole small spot of earth  
 Where — whatsoever his fate — he still were hers,  
 His country's, and might die where he had birth —  
 Florence! when this lone spirit shall return  
 To kindred spirits, thou wilt feel my worth,  
 And seek to honour with an empty urn  
 The ashes thou shalt ne'er obtain — Alas!  
 "What have I done to thee, my people?" (1) Stern  
 Are all thy dealings, but in this they pass  
 The limits of man's common malice, for  
 All that a citizen could be I was;  
 Raised by thy will, all thine in peace or war,

(1) "E scrisse più volte non solamente a particolari cittadini del reggimento, ma ancora al popolo, e intra l'altre una Epistola assai lunga che comincia: — 'Popule mi, quid feci tibi?'"

And for this thou hast warr'd with me.—'T is done :  
I may not overleap the eternal bar  
Built up between us, and will die alone,  
Beholding with the dark eye of a seer  
The evil days to gifted souls foreshown,  
Foretelling them to those who will not hear.  
As in the old time, till the hour be come  
When Truth shall strike their eyes through many a tear,  
And make them own the Prophet in his tomb.



C A I N ,

A MYSTERY.

---

“ Now the Serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.” — *Gen.* ch. iii. ver. 1.

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TO  
SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

THIS MYSTERY OF CALN

IS INSCRIBED,

BY HIS OBLIGED FRIEND,

AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.



## P R E F A C E.

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THE following scenes are entitled "A Mystery," in conformity with the ancient title annexed to dramas upon similar subjects, which were styled "Mysteries, or Moralities." The author has by no means taken the same liberties with his subject which were common formerly, as may be seen by any reader curious enough to refer to those very profane productions, whether in English, French, Italian, or Spanish. The author has endeavoured to preserve the language adapted to his characters; and where it is (and this is but rarely) taken from actual Scripture, he has made as little alteration, even of words, as the rhythm would permit. The reader will recollect that the book of Genesis does not state that Eve was tempted by a demon, but by "the Serpent;" and that only because he was "the most subtil of all the beasts of the field." Whatever interpretation the Rabbins and the Fathers may have put upon this, I take the words as I find them, and reply, with Bishop Watson upon similar occasions, when the Fathers were quoted to him, as Moderator in the schools of Cambridge, "Behold the Book!"—holding up the Scripture. It is to be recollected, that my present subject has nothing to do with the *New Testament*, to which no reference can be here made without anachronism. With the poems upon similar topics I have not been recently familiar. Since I was twenty, I have never read Milton; but I had read him so frequently before, that this may make little difference. Gesner's "Death of Abel" I have never read since I was eight years of age, at Aberdeen. The general impression of my recollection is delight; but of the contents I remember only that Cain's wife was called Mahala, and Abel's Thirza: in the following pages I have called them "Adah" and "Zilla," the earliest female names which

occur in Genesis; they were those of Lamech's wives: those of Cain and Abel are not called by their names. Whether, then, a coincidence of subject may have caused the same in expression, I know nothing, and care as little.

The reader will please to bear in mind (what few choose to recollect), that there is no allusion to a future state in any of the books of Moses, nor indeed in the Old Testament. For a reason for this extraordinary omission he may consult Warburton's "Divine Legation;" whether satisfactory or not, no better has yet been assigned. I have therefore supposed it new to Cain, without, I hope, any perversion of Holy Writ.

With regard to the language of Lucifer, it was difficult for me to make him talk like a clergyman upon the same subjects; but I have done what I could to restrain him within the bounds of spiritual politeness.

If he disclaims having tempted Eve in the shape of the Serpent, it is only because the book of Genesis has not the most distant allusion to any thing of the kind, but merely to the Serpent in his serpentine capacity.

*Note.*—The reader will perceive that the author has partly adopted in this poem the notion of Cuvier, that the world had been destroyed several times before the creation of man. This speculation, derived from the different strata and the bones of enormous and unknown animals found in them, is not contrary to the Mosaic account, but rather confirms it; as no human bones have yet been discovered in those strata, although those of many known animals are found near the remains of the unknown. The assertion of Lucifer, that the pre-Adamite world was also peopled by rational beings much more intelligent than man, and proportionably powerful to the mammoth, &c. &c. is, of course, a poetical fiction to help him to make out his case.

I ought to add, that there is a "tramelogedia" of Alfieri, called "Abele."—I have never read that, nor any other of the posthumous works of the writer, except his Life.

Ravenna, Sept. 20, 1821.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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*Men.* ADAM.  
CAIN.  
ABEL.

*Spirits.* ANGEL OF THE LORD.  
LUCIFER.

*Women.* EVE.  
ADAH.  
ZILLAH.



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# C A I N ,

## A MYSTERY.

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### ACT I.

#### SCENE I.

*The Land without Paradise.— Time, Sunrise.*

ADAM, EVE, CAIN, ABEL, ADAH, ZILLAH, offering a sacrifice.

*Adam.* GOD, the Eternal! Infinite! All-wise! —  
Who out of darkness on the deep didst make  
Light on the waters with a word — all hail!  
Jehovah, with returning light, all hail!

*Eve.* God! who didst name the day, and separate  
Morning from night, till then divided never —  
Who didst divide the wave from wave, and call  
Part of thy work the firmament — all hail!

*Abel.* God! who didst call the elements into  
10 Earth — ocean — air — and fire, and with the day  
And night, and worlds which these illuminate,  
Or shadow, madest beings to enjoy them,  
And love both them and thee — all hail! all hail!

*Adah.* God, the Eternal! Parent of all things!  
Who didst create these best and beauteous beings,  
To be beloved, more than all, save thee —  
Let me love thee and them : — All hail! all hail!

*Zillah.* Oh, God! who loving, making, blessing all,  
20 Yet didst permit the Serpent to creep in,  
And drive my father forth from Paradise,  
Keep us from further evil : — Hail! all hail!

*Adam.* Son Cain, my first-born, wherefore art thou  
silent?

*Cain.* Why should I speak ?

*Adam.* To pray.

*Cain.* Have ye not pray'd ?

*Adam.* We have, most fervently.

*Cain.* And loudly : I

Have heard you.

*Adam.* So will God, I trust.

*Abel.* Amen !

*Adam.* But thou, my eldest born, art silent still.

*Cain.* 'T is better I should be so.

*Adam.* Wherefore so ?

*Cain.* I have nought to ask.

*Adam.* Nor aught to thank for ?

*Cain.* No.

*Adam.* Dost thou not live ?

*Cain.* Must I not die ?

*Eve.* Alas !

The fruit of our forbidden tree begins

To fall.

*Adam.* And we must gather it again.

Oh, God ! why didst thou plant the tree of knowledge ?

*Cain.* And wherefore pluck'd ye not the tree of life ?

Ye might have then defied him.

*Adam.* Oh ! my son,

Blaspheme not : these are serpent's words.

*Cain.* Why not ?

The snake spoke truth : it was the tree of knowledge ;

It was the tree of life : knowledge is good.

And life is good ; and how can both be evil ?

*Eve.* My boy ! thou speakest as I spoke, in sin,

Before thy birth : let me not see renew'd

My misery in thine. I have repented.

Let me not see my offspring fall into

The snares beyond the walls of Paradise,

Which e'en in Paradise destroy'd his parents.

Content thee with what *is*. Had we been so,

Thou now hadst been contented.— Oh, my son !

*Adam.* Our orisons completed, let us hence,

Each to his task of toil — not heavy, though

Needful : the earth is young, and yields us kindly

Her fruits with little labour.

*Eve.* Cain, my son,

Behold thy father cheerful and resign'd,

And do as he doth. [ *Exeunt ADAM and EVE.*

*Zillah.* Wilt thou not, my brother ?

*Abel.* Why wilt thou wear this gloom upon thy brow.

70 Which can avail thee nothing, save to rouse  
The Eternal anger?

*Adah.* My beloved Cain,

Wilt thou frown even on me?

*Cain.* No, Adah! no;

I fain would be alone a little while.

Abel, I'm sick at heart; but it will pass;

Precede me, brother — I will follow shortly.

And you, too, sisters, tarry not behind;

Your gentleness must not be harshly met:

85 I'll follow you anon.

*Adah.* If not, I will

Return to seek you here.

*Abel.* The peace of God

Be on your spirit, brother!

[*Exeunt ABEL, ZILLAH, and ADAH.*

*Cain (solus).*

And this is

Life! — Toil! and wherefore should I toil? — because *LABOUR*

My father could not keep his place in Eden.

What had I done in this? — I was unborn:

I sought not to be born; nor love the state

90 To which that birth has brought me. Why did he

Yield to the serpent and the woman? or,

Yielding, why suffer? What was there in this?

The tree was planted, and why not for him? *problems of doctrine*

If not, why place him near it, where it grew,

The fairest in the centre? They have but

One answer to all questions, " 'T was his will, *— sic. in questions*

And he is good." How know I that? Because *of geology &*

He is all-powerful, must all-good, too, follow? *natural science*

I judge but by the fruits — and they are bitter — *too*

100 Which I must feed on for a fault not mine.

Whom have we here? — A shape like to the angels, *natural disasters*

Yet of a sterner and a sadder aspect

Of spiritual essence: why do I quake?

Why should I fear him more than other spirits,

Whom I see daily wave their fiery swords

Before the gates round which I linger oft,

In twilight's hour, to catch a glimpse of those

Gardens which are my just inheritance,

Ere the night closes o'er the inhibited walls

105 And the immortal trees which overtop

The cherubim-defended battlements?

If I shrink not from these, the fire-arm'd angels,

Why should I quail from him who now approaches?

Yet he seems mightier far than they, nor less

Beauteous, and yet not all as beautiful  
 As he hath been, and might be : sorrow seems  
Half of his immortality. And is it  
So ? and can aught grieve save humanity ?  
 He cometh.

*Enter LUCIFER.*

*Lucifer.* Mortal !

*Cain.* Spirit, who art thou ?

*Lucifer.* Master of spirits.

*Cain.* And being so, canst thou  
 Leave them, and walk with dust ?

*Lucifer.* I know the thoughts  
 Of dust, and feel for it, and with you.

*Cain.* How !  
 You know my thoughts ?

*Lucifer.* They are the thoughts of all  
 Worthy of thought ; — 't is your immortal part  
Which speaks within you.

*Cain.* What immortal part ?  
 This has not been reveal'd : the tree of life  
 Was withheld from us by my father's folly,  
 While that of knowledge, by my mother's haste,  
 Was pluck'd too soon ; and all the fruit is death !

*Lucifer.* They have deceived thee ; thou shalt live.

*Cain.* I live,

145 { But live to die : and, living, see nothing.  
 To make death hateful, save an innate clinging,  
 A loathsome and yet all invincible  
 Instinct of life, which I abhor, as I  
 Despise myself, yet cannot overcome —  
 And so I live. Would I had never lived !

*Lucifer.* Thou livest, and must live for ever : think not  
The earth, which is thine outward cov'ring, is  
Existence. — it will cease, and thou wilt be  
 No less than thou art now.

*Cain.* No less ! and why  
 No more ?

*Lucifer.* It may be thou shalt be as we.

*Cain.* And ye ?

*Lucifer.* Are everlasting.

*Cain.* Are ye happy ?

*Lucifer.* We are mighty.

*Cain.* Are ye happy ?

*Lucifer.* No : art thou ?

*Cain.* How should I be so ? Look on me !

*Lucifer.*

Poor clay!

160 And thou pretendest to be wretched! Thou!

*Cain.* I am: — and thou, with all thy might, what art thou?

*Lucifer.* One who aspired to be what made thee, and  
Would not have made thee what thou art.

*Cain.*

Ah!

Thou look'st almost a god; and —

*Lucifer.*

I am none:

And having fail'd to be one, would be nought  
Save what I am. He conquer'd; let him reign!

70 *Cain.* Who?

*Lucifer.*

Thy sire's Maker, and the earth's.

*Cain.*

And heaven's,

And all that in them is. So I have heard  
His seraphs sing; and so my father saith.

*Lucifer.* They say — what they must sing and say, on  
pain

Of being that which I am — and thou art —  
Of spirits and of men.

*Cain.*

And what is that?

*Lucifer.* Souls who dare use their immortality —

Souls who dare look the Omnipotent tyrant in  
His everlasting face, and tell him that  
His evil is not good! If he has made,  
As he saith — which I know not, nor believe —  
But, if he made us — he cannot unmake:  
We are immortal! — nay, he 'd have us so,  
That he may torture: — let him! He is great —  
But, in his greatness, is no happier than  
We in our conflict! Goodness would not make  
Evil; and what else hath he made? But let him

90 Sit on his vast and solitary throne,  
Creating worlds, to make eternity  
Less burthensome to his immense existence  
And unparticipated solitude;

Let him crowd orb on orb: he is alone  
Indefinite, indissoluble tyrant;  
Could he but crush himself, 't were the best boon  
He ever granted: but let him reign on,  
And multiply himself in misery!

100 Spirits and Men, at least we sympathise —  
And, suffering in concert, make our pangs  
Innumerable, more endurable,  
By the unbounded sympathy of all —  
With all! But He! so wretched in his height,

So restless in his wretchedness, must still  
Create, and re-create —

*Cain.* Thou speak'st to me of things which long have  
swum.

In visions through my thought: I never could  
Reconcile what I saw with what I heard.  
My father and my mother talk to me  
Of serpents, and of fruits and trees: I see  
The gates of what they call their Paradise  
Guarded by fiery-sworded cherubim,  
Which shut them out, and me: I feel the weight  
Of daily toil, and constant thought: I look  
Around a world where I seem nothing, with  
Thoughts which arise within me, as if they  
Could master all things: — but I thought alone  
This misery was *mine*. — My father is  
Tamed down; my mother has forgot the mind  
Which made her thirst for knowledge at the risk  
Of an eternal curse; my brother is  
A watching shepherd boy, who offers up  
The firstlings of the flock to him who bids  
The earth yield nothing to us without sweat;  
My sister Zillah sings an earlier hymn  
Than the birds' matins; and my Adah, my  
Own and beloved, she too understands not  
The mind which overwhelms me: never till  
Now met I aught to sympathise with me.

'T is well — I rather would consort with spirits.

*Lucifer.* And hadst thou not been fit by thine own soul  
For such companionship, I would not now  
Have stood before thee as I am: a serpent  
Had been enough to charm ye, as before.

*Cain.* Ah! didst thou tempt my mother?

*Lucifer.*

I tempt none,  
Save with the truth: was not the tree, the tree  
Of knowledge? and was not the tree of life  
Still fruitful? Did I bid her pluck them not?  
Did I plant things prohibited within  
The reach of beings innocent, and curious  
By their own innocence? I would have made ye  
Gods; and even He who thrust ye forth, so thrust ye  
Because "ye should not eat the fruits of life,  
And become gods as we." Were those his words?

*Cain.* They were, as I have heard from those who heard  
them,

In thunder.

*Lucifer.* Then who was the demon? He  
 Who would not let ye live, or he who would  
 Have made ye live for ever in the joy  
 And power of knowledge?

*Cain.* Would they had snatch'd both  
 The fruits, or neither!

*Lucifer.* One is yours already,  
 The other may be still.

*Cain.* How so?

*Lucifer.* By being  
 Yourselves, in your resistance. Nothing can  
 Quench the mind, if the mind will be itself  
 And centre of surrounding things — 't is made  
 To sway.

*Cain.* But didst thou tempt my parents?

*Lucifer.* I?  
 Poor clay! what should I tempt them for, or how?

*Cain.* They say the serpent was a spirit.

*Lucifer.* Who

270 Saith that? It is not written so on high:  
 The proud One will not so far falsify,  
 Though man's vast fears and little vanity  
 Would make him cast upon the spiritual nature  
 His own low failing. The snake *was* the snake —  
 Nor more; and yet not less than those he tempted,  
 In nature being earth also — *more* in wisdom,  
 Since he could overcome them, and foreknew  
 The knowledge fatal to their narrow joys.

Think'st thou I'd take the shape of things that die?

*Cain.* But the thing had a demon?

*Lucifer.* He but woke one.

In those he spake to with his forky tongue.

I tell thee that the serpent was no more  
 Than a mere serpent: ask the cherubim  
 Who guard the tempting tree. When thousand ages  
 Have roll'd o'er your dead ashes, and your seed's,  
 The seed of the then world may thus array  
 Their earliest fault in fable, and attribute

To me a shape I scorn, as I scorn all

280 That bows to him, who made things but to bend  
 Before his sullen, sole eternity;

But we, who see the truth, must speak it. Thy  
 Fond parents listen'd to a creeping thing,  
 And fell. For what should spirits tempt them? What  
 Was there to envy in the narrow bounds  
 Of Paradise, that spirits who pervade

Space — but I speak to thee of what thou know'st not,  
With all thy tree of knowledge.

*Cain.* But thou canst not  
300 Speak aught of knowledge which I would not know,  
And do not thirst to know, and bear a mind  
To know.

*Lucifer.* And heart to look on ?

*Cain.* Be it proved.

*Lucifer.* Darest thou to look on Death ?

*Cain.* He has not yet  
Been seen.

*Lucifer.* But must be undergone.

*Cain.* My father  
310 Says he is something dreadful, and my mother  
Weeps when he 's named ; and Abel lifts his eyes  
To heaven, and Zillah casts hers to the earth,  
And sighs a prayer ; and Adah looks on me,  
And speaks not.

*Lucifer.* And thou ?

*Cain.* Thoughts unspeakable  
Crowd in my breast to burning, when I hear  
Of this almighty Death, who is, it seems,  
Inevitable. Could I wrestle with him ?  
320 I wrestled with the lion, when a boy,  
In play, till he ran roaring from my gripe.

*Lucifer.* It has no shape ; but will absorb all things  
That bear the form of earth-born being.

*Cain.* Ah !

I thought it was a being : who could do  
Such evil things to beings save a being ?

*Lucifer.* Ask the Destroyer.

*Cain.* Who ?

*Lucifer.* The Maker — call him

330 Which name thou wilt : he makes but to destroy.

*Cain.* I knew not that, yet thought it, since I heard  
Of death : although I know not what it is,  
Yet it seems horrible. I have look'd out  
In the vast desolate night in search of him ;  
And when I saw gigantic shadows in  
The umbrage of the walls of Eden, chequer'd  
By the far-flashing of the cherubs' swords,  
I watch'd for what I thought his coming ; for  
With fear rose longing in my heart to know  
340 What 't was which shook us all — but nothing came.  
And then I turn'd my weary eyes from off  
Our native and forbidden Paradise,

Up, to the lights above us, in the azure,  
Which are so beautiful : shall they, too, die ?

*Lucifer.* Perhaps — but long outlive both thine and thee.

*Cain.* I 'm glad of that : I would not have them die — *beauty*

They are so lovely. What is death ? I fear

I feel, it is a dreadful thing ; but what,

I cannot compass ; 't is denounced against us,

350 Both them who sinn'd and sinn'd not, as an ill —

What ill ?

*Lucifer.* To be resolved into the earth.

*Cain.* But shall I know it ?

*Lucifer.* As I know not death,

I cannot answer.

*Cain.* Were I quiet earth

That were no evil : would I ne'er had been

Aught else but dust !

*Lucifer.* That is a groveling wish,

40 Less than thy father's, for he wish'd to know.

*Cain.* But not to live, or wherefore pluck'd he not  
The life-tree ?

*Lucifer.* He was hinder'd.

*Cain.* Deadly error !

Not to snatch first that fruit : — but ere he pluck'd

The knowledge, he was ignorant of death.

Alas ! I scarcely now know what it is,

And yet I fear it — fear I know not what !

10 *Lucifer.* And I, who know all things, fear nothing : see  
What is true knowledge.

*Cain.* Wilt thou teach me all ?

*Lucifer.* Ay, upon one condition.

*Cain.* Name it.

*Lucifer.* That

Thou dost fall down and worship me — thy Lord.

*Cain.* Thou art not the Lord my father worships.

*Lucifer.* No.

*Cain.* His equal ?

*Lucifer.* No ; — I have nought in common with him !

350 Nor would : I would be aught above — beneath —

Aught save a sharer or a servant of

His power. I dwell apart ; but I am great : —

Many there are who worship me, and more

Who shall — be thou amongst the first.

*Cain.* I never

As yet have bow'd unto my father's God,

Although my brother Abel oft implores

That I would join with him in sacrifice : —

Why should I bow to thee?

*Lucifer.* Hast thou ne'er bow'd  
To him?

*Cain.* Have I not said it? — need I say it?  
Could not thy mighty knowledge teach thee that?

*Lucifer.* He who bows not to him has bow'd to me!

*Cain.* But I will bend to neither.

*Lucifer.* Ne'er the less,  
Thou art my worshipper: not worshipping  
Him makes thee mine the same.

*Cain.* And what is that?

*Lucifer.* Thou 'lt know here — and hereafter.

*Cain.* Let me but

Be taught the mystery of my being.

*Lucifer.* Follow  
Where I will lead thee.

*Cain.* But I must retire  
To till the earth — for I had promised ——

*Lucifer.* What?

*Cain.* To cull some first-fruits.

*Lucifer.* Why?

*Cain.* To offer up

With Abel on an altar.

*Lucifer.* Saidst thou not  
Thou ne'er hadst bent to him who made thee?

*Cain.* Yes —

But Abel's earnest prayer has wrought upon me;  
The offering is more his than mine — and Adah ——

*Lucifer.* Why dost thou hesitate?

*Cain.* She is my sister,  
Born on the same day, of the same womb; and  
She wrung from me, with tears, this promise; and  
Rather than see her weep, I would, methinks,  
Bear all — and worship aught.

*Lucifer.* Then follow me!

*Cain.* I will.

*Enter ADAH.*

*Adah.* My brother, I have come for thee;  
It is our hour of rest and joy — and we  
Have less without thee. Thou hast labour'd not  
This morn; but I have done thy task: the fruits  
Are ripe, and glowing as the light which ripens:  
Come away.

*Cain.* See'st thou not?

*Adah.* I see an angel;  
We have seen many: will he share our hour

Of rest? — he is welcome.

*Cain.*

But he is not like

The angels we have seen.

*Adah.*

Are there, then, others?

But he is welcome, as they were: they deign'd

To be our guests — will he?

*Cain (to Lucifer).*

Wilt thou?

*Lucifer.*

I ask

Thee to be mine.

*Cain.*

I must away with him.

*Adah.* And leave us?

*Cain.*

Ay.

*Adah.*

And me?

*Cain.*

Beloved Adah!

*Adah.* Let me go with thee.

*Lucifer.*

No, she must not.

*Adah.*

Who

Art thou that steppest between heart and heart?

*Cain.* He is a god.

*Adah.*

How know'st thou?

*Cain.*

He speaks like

A god.

*Adah.* So did the serpent, and it lied.

*Lucifer.* Thou errest, Adah! — was not the tree that  
Of knowledge?

*Adah.*

Ay — to our eternal sorrow

[not:

*Lucifer.* And yet that grief is knowledge — so he lied

And if he did betray you, 't was with truth;

And truth in its own essence cannot be

But good.

*Adah.*

But all we know of it has gather'd

Evil on ill: expulsion from our home,

And dread, and toil, and sweat, and heaviness;

Remorse of that which was — and hope of that

Which cometh not. Cain! walk not with this spirit.

Bear with what we have borne, and love me — I

Love thee.

*Lucifer.* More than thy mother, and thy sire?

*Adah.* I do. Is that a sin, too?

*Lucifer.*

No, not yet;

It one day will be in your children.

*Adah.*

What!

Must not my daughter love her brother Enoch?

*Lucifer.* Not as thou lovest Cain.

*Adah.*

Oh, my God!

Shall they not love and bring forth things that love

incest; they  
in love is  
necessary w/  
future  
generations

490 Out of their love? have they not drawn their milk  
 Out of this bosom? was not he, their father,  
 Born of the same sole womb, in the same hour  
 With me? did we not love each other? and  
 In multiplying our being multiply  
 Things which will love each other as we love  
 Them? — And as I love thee, my Cain! go not  
 Forth with this spirit; he is not of ours.

*Lucifer.* The sin I speak of is not of my making,  
 And cannot be a sin in you — whate'er  
 It seem in those who will replace ye in  
 Mortality.

*Adah.* What is the sin which is not  
 Sin in itself? Can circumstance make sin  
 Or virtue? — if it doth, we are the slaves  
 Of —

*Lucifer.* Higher things than ye are slaves: and higher  
 Than them or ye would be so, did they not  
 Prefer an independency of torture  
 To the smooth agonies of adulation,  
 In hymns and harpings, and self-seeking prayers,  
 To that which is omnipotent, because  
 It is omnipotent, and not from love,  
 But terror and self-hope

*Adah.* Omnipotence  
 Must be all goodness.

*Lucifer.* Was it so in Eden?

*Adah.* Fiend! tempt me not with beauty; thou art fairer  
 Than was the serpent, and as false.

*Lucifer.* As true.  
 Ask Eve, your mother: bears she not the knowledge  
 Of good and evil?

*Adah.* Oh, my mother! thou  
 Hast pluck'd a fruit more fatal to thine offspring  
 Than to thyself; thou at the least hast pass'd  
 Thy youth in Paradise, in innocent  
 And happy intercourse with happy spirits:  
 But we, thy children, ignorant of Eden,  
 Are girt about by demons, who assume  
 The words of God, and tempt us with our own  
 Dissatisfied and curious thoughts — as thou  
 Wert work'd on by the snake, in thy most flush'd  
 And heedless, harmless wantonness of bliss.  
 I cannot answer this immortal thing  
 Which stands before me; I cannot abhor him;  
 I look upon him with a pleasing fear,

incest

yes, as  
 we know

from theus

And yet I fly not from him : in his eye  
 There is a fastening attraction which  
 Fixes my fluttering eyes on his ; my heart  
 Beats quick ; he awes me, and yet draws me near,  
 Nearer and nearer : — Cain — Cain — save me from him !

*Cain.* What dreads my Adah ? This is no ill spirit.

*Adah.* He is not God — nor God's : I have beheld  
 The cherubs and the seraphs ; he looks not  
 Like them.

*Cain.* But there are spirits loftier still —  
 The archangels.

*Lucifer.* And still loftier than the archangels.

*Adah.* Ay — but not blessed.

*Lucifer.* If the blessedness  
 Consists in slavery — no.

*Adah.* I have heard it said,  
 The seraphs *love most* — cherubim *know most* —  
 And this should be a cherub — since he loves not.

*knowledg, e  
 without  
 feeling*

*Lucifer.* And if the higher knowledge quenches love,  
 What must *he be* you cannot love when known ?  
 Since the all-knowing cherubim love least,  
 The seraphs' love can be but ignorance :  
That they are not compatible, the doom  
Of thy fond parents, for their daring, proves.  
Choose betwixt love and knowledge — since there is  
No other choice : your sire hath chosen already ;  
His worship is but fear.

*love vs. knowledg*

*Adah.* Oh, Cain ! choose love.

*Cain.* For thee, Adah, I choose not — it was  
 Born with me — but I love nought else.

*Adah.* Our parents ?

*Cain.* Did they love us when they snatch'd from the tree  
 That which hath driven us all from Paradise ?

*Adah.* We were not born then — and if we had been,  
 Should we not love them and our children, Cain ?

*Cain.* My little Enoch ! and his lisping sister !  
 Could I but deem them happy, I would half  
 Forget — but it can never be forgotten  
 Through thrice a thousand generations ! never  
Shall men love the remembrance of the man  
Who sow'd the seed of evil and mankind  
In the same hour ! — They pluck'd the tree of science  
And sin — and, not content with their own sorrow,  
Begot me — thee — and all the few that are,  
And all the unnumber'd and innumerable  
Multitudes, millions, myriads, which may be,

To inherit agonies accumulated  
 By ages! — and *I* must be sire of such things!  
 Thy beauty and thy love — my love and joy,  
 The rapturous moment and the placid hour,  
 All we love in our children and each other,  
 But lead them and ourselves through many years  
 Of sin and pain — or few, but still of sorrow,  
 Intercheck'd with an instant of brief pleasure,  
 To Death — the unknown! Methinks the tree of knowledge  
 Hath not fulfill'd its promise: — if they sinn'd,  
 At least they ought to have known all things that are  
 Of knowledge — and the mystery of death.  
 What do they know? — that they are miserable.  
 What need of snakes and fruits to teach us that?

*Adah.* I am not wretched, Cain, and if thou  
 Wert happy —

*Cain.* Be thou happy, then, alone —  
 I will have nought to do with happiness,  
 Which humbles me and mine.

*Adah.* Alone I could not,  
 Nor *would* be happy: but with those around us  
 I think I could be so, despite of death,  
 Which, as I know it not, I dread not, though  
 It seems an awful shadow — if I may  
 Judge from what I have heard.

*Lucifer.* And thou couldst not  
 Alone, thou say'st, be happy?

*Adah.* Alone! Oh, my God!  
 Who could be happy and alone, or good?  
 To me my solitude seems sin; unless  
 When I think how soon I shall see my brother,  
 His brother, and our children, and our parents.

*Lucifer.* Yet thy God is alone; and is he happy,  
 Lonely, and good?

*Adah.* He is not so; he hath  
 The angels and the mortals to make happy,  
 And thus becomes so in diffusing joy:  
 What else can joy be, but the spreading joy?

*Lucifer.* Ask of your sire, the exile fresh from Eden;  
 Or of his first-born son: ask your own heart;  
 It is not tranquil.

*Adah.* Alas! no! and you —  
 Are you of heaven?

*Lucifer.* If I am not, enquire  
 The cause of this all-spreading happiness  
 (Which you proclaim) of the all-great and good

Maker of life and living things ; it is  
 His secret, and he keeps it. We must bear,  
And some of us resist, and both in vain,  
 His seraphs say : but it is worth the trial,  
 Since better may not be without : there is  
 A wisdom in the spirit, which directs  
 To right, as in the dim blue air the eye  
 Of you, young mortals, lights at once upon  
 The star which watches, welcoming the morn.

*Adah.* It is a beautiful star ; I love it for  
Its beauty.

*Lucifer.* And why not adore ?

*Adah.* Our father

Adores the Invisible only.

*Lucifer.* But the symbols

Of the Invisible are the loveliest  
 Of what is visible ; and yon bright star  
 Is leader of the host of heaven.

*Adah.* Our father

Saith that he has beheld the God himself  
 Who made him and our mother.

*Lucifer.* Hast thou seen him ?

*Adah.* Yes — in his works.

*Lucifer.* But in his being ?

*Adah.* No —

Save in my father, who is God's own image ;  
 Or in his angels, who are like to thee —  
 And brighter, yet less beautiful and powerful  
 In seeming : as the silent sunny noon,  
 All light, they look upon us ; but thou seem'st  
 Like an ethereal night, where long white clouds,  
 Streak the deep purple, and unnumber'd stars  
 Spangle the wonderful mysterious vault  
 With things that look as if they would be suns ;  
 So beautiful, unnumber'd, and endearing,  
 Not dazzling, and yet drawing us to them,  
 They fill my eyes with tears, and so dost thou.  
 Thou seem'st unhappy : do not make us so,  
 And I will weep for thee.

*Lucifer.* Alas ! those tears !

Could'st thou but know what oceans will be shed —

*Adah.* By me ?

*Lucifer.* By all.

*Adah.* What all ?

*Lucifer.* The million millions —

The myriad myriads — the all-peopled earth —

The unpeopled earth — and the o'er-peopled Hell,  
Of which thy bosom is the germ.

*Adah.* O Cain!

This spirit curseth us.

*Cain.* Let him say on;

Him will I follow.

*Adah.* Whither?

*Lucifer.* To a place

Whence he shall come back to thee in an hour;

But in that hour see things of many days.

*Adah.* How can that be?

*Lucifer.* Did not your Maker make

Out of old worlds this new one in few days?

And cannot I, who aided in this work,

Show in an hour what he hath made in many,

Or hath destroy'd in few?

*Cain.* Lead on.

*Adah.* Will he,

In sooth, return within an hour?

*Lucifer.* He shall.

With us acts are exempt from time, and we

Can crowd eternity into an hour,

Or stretch an hour into eternity:

We breathe not by a mortal measurement —

But that 's a mystery. Cain, come on with me.

*Adah.* Will he return?

*Lucifer.* Ay, woman! he alone'

Of mortals from that place (the first and last

Who shall return, save ONE), shall come back to thee

To make that silent and expectant world

As populous as this: at present there

Are few inhabitants.

*Adah.* Where dwellest thou?

*Lucifer.* Throughout all space. Where should I dwell?

Where are

Thy God or Gods — there am I: all things are

Divided with me; life and death — and time —

Eternity — and heaven and earth — and that

Which is not heaven nor earth, but peopled with

Those who once peopled or shall people both —

These are my realms! So that I do divide

His, and possess a kingdom which is not

His. If I were not that which I have said,

Could I stand here? His angels are within

Your vision.

*Adah.* So they were when the fair serpent

x+1  
Christ

✂

Spoke with our mother first.

*Lucifer.*

Cain! thou hast heard.

If thou dost long for knowledge, I can satiate

That thirst; nor ask thee to partake of fruits

Which shall deprive thee of a single good

The conqueror has left thee. Follow me.

*Cain.* Spirit, I have said it.

[*Exeunt LUCIFER and CAIN.*

*Adah* (follows, exclaiming). Cain! my brother! Cain!

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ACT II.

SCENE I.

*The Abyss of Space.*

→ total removal from locality; non-material but cosmic

*Cain.* I tread on air, and sink not; yet I fear  
To sink.

*Lucifer.* Have faith in me, and thou shalt be  
Borne on the air, of which I am the prince.

*Cain.* Can I do so without impiety?

*Lucifer.* Believe—and sink not! doubt—and perish!  
thus

Would run the edict of the other God,  
Who names me demon to his angels; they  
Echo the sound to miserable things,  
Which, knowing nought beyond their shallow senses,  
Worship the word which strikes their ear, and deem  
Evil or good what is proclaim'd to them  
In their abasement. I will have none such:  
Worship or worship not, thou shalt behold  
The worlds beyond thy little world, nor be  
Amerced for doubts beyond thy little life,  
With torture of my dooming. There will come  
An hour, when, toss'd upon some water-drops,  
A man shall say to a man, "Believe in me,  
And walk the waters;" and the man shall walk  
The billows and be safe. I will not say,  
Believe in me, as a conditional creed  
To save thee; but fly with me o'er the gulf  
Of space an equal flight, and I will show  
What thou dar'st not deny, the history  
Of past, and present, and of future worlds.

i.e. monarchy

*Cain.* Oh, god, or demon, or whate'er thou art,  
Is yon our earth?

*Lucifer.* Dost thou not recognise  
The dust which form'd your father?

*Cain.* Can it be?  
Yon small blue circle, swinging in far ether,  
With an inferior circlet near it still,  
Which looks like that which lit our earthly night?  
Is this our Paradise? Where are its walls,  
And they who guard them?

*Lucifer.* Point me out the site  
Of Paradise.

*Cain.* How should I? As we move  
Like sunbeams onward, it grows small and smaller,  
And as it waxes little, and then less,  
Gathers a halo round it, like the light  
Which shone the roundest of the stars, when I  
Beheld them from the skirts of Paradise:  
Methinks they both, as we recede from them,  
Appear to join the innumerable stars  
Which are around us: and, as we move on,  
Increase their myriads.

*Lucifer.* And if there should be  
Worlds greater than thine own, inhabited  
By greater things, and they themselves far more  
In number than the dust of thy dull earth,  
Though multiplied to animated atoms,  
All living, and all doom'd to death, and wretched,  
What wouldst thou think?

*Cain.* I should be proud of thought  
Which knew such things.

*Lucifer.* But if that high thought were  
Link'd to a servile mass of matter, and,  
Knowing such things, aspiring to such things,  
And science still beyond them, were chain'd down  
To the most gross and petty paltry wants,  
All foul and fulsome, and the very best  
Of thine enjoyments a sweet degradation,  
A most enervating and filthy cheat  
To lure thee on to the renewal of  
Fresh souls and bodies, all foredoom'd to be  
As frail, and few so happy —

*Cain.* Spirit! I  
Know nought of death, save as a dreadful thing  
Of which I have heard my parents speak, as of  
A hideous heritage I owe to them



No less than life ; a heritage not happy,  
 If I may judge, till now. But, spirit ! if  
It be as thou hast said, (and I within  
Feel the prophetic torture of its truth),  
 Here let me die : for to give birth to those  
 Who can but suffer many years, and die,  
 80 Methinks is merely propagating death,  
And multiplying murder.

*Lucifer.* Thou canst not  
 All die — there is what must survive.

*Cain.* The Other  
 Spake not of this unto my father, when  
 He shut him forth from Paradise, with death  
 Written upon his forehead. But at least  
Let what is mortal of me perish, that  
 I may be in the rest as angels are.

90 *Lucifer.* I am angelic : wouldst thou be as I am ?

*Cain.* I know not what thou art : I see thy power,  
 And see thou show'st me things beyond my power,  
 Beyond all power of my born faculties,  
Although inferior still to my desires  
And my conceptions.

*Lucifer.* What are they which dwell } *man*  
 So humbly in their pride, as to sojourn  
 With worms in clay ?

100 *Cain.* And what art thou who dwellest } *demon*  
 So haughtily in spirit, and canst range } *(spirit)*  
 Nature and immortality — and yet  
 Seem'st sorrowful ?

*Lucifer.* I seem that which I am ;  
 And therefore do I ask of thee, if thou  
 Wouldst be immortal ?

*Cain.* Thou hast said, I must be  
 Immortal in despite of me. I knew not  
 This until lately — but since it must be,  
 Let me, or happy or unhappy, learn  
 110 To anticipate my immortality.

*Lucifer.* Thou didst before I came upon thee.

*Cain.* How ?

*Lucifer.* By suffering.

*Cain.* And must torture be immortal ?

*Lucifer.* We and thy sons will try. But now, behold !  
 Is it not glorious ?

*Cain.* Oh, thou beautiful  
 And unimaginable ether ! and  
 Ye multiplying masses of increased



CAIN

170 And still increasing lights! what are ye? what  
 Is this blue wilderness of interminable  
 Air, where ye roll along, as I have seen  
 The leaves along the limpid streams of Eden?  
Is your course measured for ye? Or do ye  
 Sweep on in your unbounded revelry  
 Through an aërial universe of endless  
 Expansion, at which my soul aches to think —  
 Intoxicated with eternity?  
 Oh God! Oh Gods! or whatso'er ye are!  
 175 How beautiful ye are! how beautiful  
 Your works, or accidents, or whatso'er  
 They may be! Let me die, as atoms die,  
 (If that they die) or know ye in your might  
 And knowledge! My thoughts are not in this hour  
 Unworthy what I see, though my dust is;  
 Spirit! let me expire, or see them nearer.

*Lucifer.* Art thou not nearer? look back to thine earth!

*Cain.* Where is it? I see nothing save a mass  
 Of most innumerable lights.

*Lucifer.* Look there!

*Cain.* I cannot see it.

*Lucifer.* Yet it sparkles still.

*Cain.* That! — yonder!

*Lucifer.* Yea.

*Cain.* And wilt thou tell me so?

Why, I have seen the fire-flies and fire-worms  
 Sprinkle the dusky groves and the green banks  
 In the dim twilight, brighter than yon world  
 Which bears them.

*Lucifer.* Thou hast seen both worms and worlds,  
 Each bright and sparkling — what dost think of them?

*Cain.* That they are beautiful in their own sphere,  
 And that the night, which makes both beautiful,  
 The little shining fire-fly in its flight,  
 And the immortal star in its great course,  
 Must both be guided.

*Lucifer.* But by whom or what?

*Cain.* Show me.

*Lucifer.* Dar'st thou behold?

*Cain.* How know I what

I dare behold? As yet, thou hast shown nought  
 I dare not gaze on further.

*Lucifer.* On, then, with me.

Wouldst thou behold things mortal or immortal?

*Cain.* Why, what are things?

order  
pl. 11

*Lucifer* *Both* partly : but what doth  
Sit next thy heart ?

*Cain.* The things I see.

*Lucifer.* But what  
Sate nearest it ?

*Cain.* The things I have not seen,  
Nor ever shall — the mysteries of death.

*Lucifer.* What, if I show to thee things which have died,  
As I have shown thee much which cannot die ?

*Cain.* Do so.

*Lucifer.* Away, then ! on our mighty wings.

*Cain.* Oh ! how we cleave the blue ! 'The stars fade  
from us !

The earth ! where is my earth ? Let me look on it,  
For I was made of it.

*Lucifer.* 'T is now beyond thee,  
Less, in the universe, than thou in it ;  
Yet deem not that thou canst escape it ; thou  
Shalt soon return to earth, and all its dust ;  
'T is part of thy eternity, and mine.

*Cain.* Where dost thou lead me ?

*Lucifer.* To what was before thee  
The phantasm of the world ; of which thy world  
Is but the wreck.

*Cain.* What ! is it not then new ?

*Lucifer.* No more than life is ; and that was ere thou  
Or I were, or the things which seem to us  
Greater than either : many things will have  
No end ; and some, which would pretend to have  
Had no beginning, have had one as mean.  
As thou ; and mightier things have been extinct  
To make way for much meaner than we can  
Surmise ; for moments only and the space  
Have been and must be all unchangeable.  
But changes make not death, except to clay ;  
But thou art clay — and canst but comprehend  
That which was clay, and such thou shalt behold.

*Cain.* Clay, spirit ! What thou wilt, I can survey.

*Lucifer.* Away, then !

*Cain.* But the lights fade from me fast,  
And some till now grew larger as we approach'd,  
And wore the look of worlds.

*Lucifer.* And such they are.

*Cain.* And Edens in them ?

*Lucifer.* It may be.

*Cain.* And men ?

*Lucifer.* Yea, or things higher.

*Cain.*

Ay? and serpents too?

*Lucifer.* Wouldst thou have men without them? must no reptiles

Breathe, save the erect ones?

*Cain.*

How the lights recede!

Where fly we?

*Lucifer.* To the world of phantoms, which

Are beings past, and shadows still to come.

*Cain.* But it grows dark, and dark — the stars are gone!

*Lucifer.* And yet thou seest.

*Cain.*

'T is a fearful light!

No sun, no moon, no lights innumerable.

The very blue of the empurpled night

Fades to a dreary twilight, yet I see

Huge dusky masses; but unlike the worlds

We were approaching, which, begirt with light,

Seem'd full of life even when their atmosphere

Of light gave way, and show'd them taking shapes

Unequal, of deep valleys and vast mountains;

And some emitting sparks, and some displaying

Enormous liquid plains, and some begirt

With luminous belts, and floating moons, which took,

Like them, the features of fair earth: — instead,

All here seems dark and dreadful.

*Lucifer.*

But distinct.

Thou seekest to behold death, and dead things?

*Cain.* I seek it not; but as I know there are

Such, and that my sire's sin makes him and me,

And all that we inherit, liable

To such, I would behold at once, what I

Must one day see perforce.

*Lucifer.*

Behold!

*Cain.*

'T is darkness.

*Lucifer.* And so it shall be ever; but we will

Unfold its gates!

*Cain.*

Enormous vapours roll

Apart — what's this?

*Lucifer.*

Enter!

*Cain.*

Can I return?

*Lucifer.* Return! be sure: how else should death be  
peopled?

Its present realm is thin to what it will be,

Through thee and thine.

*Cain.*

The clouds still open wide

And wider, and make widening circles round us.

next as  
animal

holder

prophetic

*Lucifer.* Advance!

*Cain.* And thou!

*Lucifer.* Fear not — without me thou  
 Couldst not have gone beyond thy world. On! on!  
 [*They disappear through the clouds.*]

↳ DANIEL WISSE

SCENE II.

*Hades.*

*Enter LUCIFER and CAIN.*

*Cain.* How silent and how vast are these dim worlds!  
 For they seem more than one, and yet more peopled  
 Than the huge brilliant luminous orbs which swung  
 So thickly in the upper air, that I  
 Had deem'd them rather the bright populace  
 Of some all unimaginable Heaven,  
 Than things to be inhabited themselves,  
 But that on drawing near them I beheld  
 Their swelling into palpable immensity  
 Of matter, which seem'd made for life to dwell on,  
 Rather than life itself. But here, all is  
 So shadowy and so full of twilight, that  
 It speaks of a day past.

*Lucifer.* It is the realm  
Of death. — Wouldst have it present?

*Cain.* Till I know  
 That which it really is, I cannot answer.  
 But if it be as I have heard my father  
 Deal out in his long homilies, 't is a thing —  
 Oh God! I dare not think on 't! Cursed be  
He who invented life that leads to death!  
 Or the dull mass of life, that, being life,  
 Could not retain, but needs must forfeit it —  
 Even for the innocent!

*Lucifer.* Dost thou curse thy father?

*Cain.* Cursed he not me in giving me my birth?  
 Cursed he not me before my birth, in daring  
 To pluck the fruit forbidden?

*Lucifer.* Thou say'st well:  
The curse is mutual 'twixt thy sire and thee —  
 But for thy sons and brother?

*Cain.* Let them share it  
 With me, their sire and brother ! What else is  
 Bequeath'd to me ? I leave them my inheritance.  
 Oh, ye interminable gloomy realms  
 Of swimming shadows and enormous shapes,  
 Some fully shown, some indistinct, and all  
 Mighty and melancholy — what are ye ?  
 Live ye, or have ye lived ?

*Lucifer.* Somewhat of both.

*Cain.* Then what is death ?

*Lucifer.* What ? Hath not he who made ye

Said 't is another life ?

*Cain.* Till now he hath

Said nothing, save that all shall die.

*Lucifer.* Perhaps

He one day will unfold that further secret.

*Cain.* Happy the day !

*Lucifer.* Yes ; happy ! when unfolded

50 Through agonies unspeakable, and clogg'd  
 With agonies eternal, to innumerable  
 Yet unborn myriads of unconscious atoms,  
 All to be animated for this only !

*Cain.* What are these mighty phantoms which I see  
 Floating around me ? — They wear not the form  
 Of the intelligences I have seen  
 Round our regretted and unenter'd Eden,  
 Nor wear the form of man as I have view'd it  
 In Adam's and in Abel's, and in mine,  
 Nor in my sister-bride's, nor in my children's :  
 And yet they have an aspect, which, though not  
 Of men nor angels, looks like something, which,  
 If not the last, rose higher than the first,  
 Haughty, and high, and beautiful, and full  
 Of seeming strength, but of inexplicable  
 Shape ; for I never saw such. They bear not  
 The wing of seraph, nor the face of man,  
 Nor form of mightiest brute, nor aught that is  
 Now breathing ; mighty yet and beautiful  
 70 As the most beautiful and mighty which  
 Live, and yet so unlike them, that I scarce  
 Can call them living.

*Lucifer.* Yet they lived.

*Cain.* Where ?

*Lucifer.* Where

Thou livest.

*Cain.* When ?

death in life  
 life in death

future  
 man

*Lucifer.* On what thou callest earth

They did inhabit.

90 *Cain.* Adam is the first.

*Lucifer.* Of thine, I grant thee — but too mean to be  
The last of these.

*Cain.* And what are they?

*Lucifer.* That which  
Thou shalt be.

*Cain.* But what were they?

*Lucifer.* Living, high,  
Intelligent, good, great, and glorious things,  
As much superior unto all thy sire,

90 Adam, could e'er have been in Eden, as

The sixty-thousandth generation shall be,

In its dull damp degeneracy, to

Thee and thy son; — and how weak they are, judge

By thy own flesh.

*Cain.* Ah me! and did *they* perish?

*Lucifer.* Yes, from their earth, as thou wilt fade from  
thine.

*Cain.* But was *mine* theirs?

*Lucifer.* It was.

100 *Cain.* But not as now.

It is too little and too lowly to

Sustain such creatures.

*Lucifer.* True, it was more glorious.

*Cain.* And wherefore did it fall?

*Lucifer.* Ask him who fells.

*Cain.* But how?

*Lucifer.* By a most crushing and inexorable  
Destruction and disorder of the elements,

Which struck a world to chaos, as a chaos

110 Subsiding has struck out a world: such things,

Though rare in time, are frequent in eternity.—

Pass on, and gaze upon the past.

*Cain.* 'T is awful!

*Lucifer.* And true. Behold these phantoms! they were  
once

Material as thou art.

*Cain.* And must I be

Like them?

*Lucifer.* Let He who made thee answer that.

120 I show thee what thy predecessors are,

And what they *were* thou feelest, in degree

Inferior as thy petty feelings and

Thy pettier portion of the immortal part

end of the  
world

Of high intelligence and earthly strength.  
 What ye in common have with what they had  
 Is life, and what ye *shall* have — death: the rest  
 Of your poor attributes is such as suits  
 Reptiles engender'd out of the subsiding  
 Slime of a mighty universe, crush'd into  
 A scarcely-yet shaped planet, peopled with  
 Things whose enjoyment was to be in blindness —  
 A Paradise of Ignorance, from which  
 Knowledge was barr'd as poison. But behold  
 What these superior beings are or were;  
 Or, if it irk thee, turn thee back and till  
 The earth, thy task — I'll waft thee there in safety.

*Cain.* No: I'll stay here.

*Lucifer.* How long?

*Cain.* For ever! Since

I must one day return here from the earth,  
 I rather would remain; I am sick of all  
 That dust has shown me — let me dwell in shadows.

*Lucifer.* It cannot be: thou now beholdest as  
 A vision that which is reality.

To make thyself fit for this dwelling, thou  
 Must pass through what the things thou see'st have pass'd —  
 The gates of death.

*Cain.* By what gate have we enter'd  
 Even now?

*Lucifer.* By mine! but, plighted to return,  
 My spirit buoys thee up to breathe in regions  
 Where all is breathless save thyself. Gaze on;  
 But do not think to dwell here till thine hour  
 Is come.

*Cain.* And these, too; can they ne'er repass  
 To earth again?

*Lucifer.* Their earth is gone for ever —  
 So changed by its convulsion, they would not  
 Be conscious to a single present spot  
 Of its new scarcely harden'd surface — 't was —  
 Oh, what a beautiful world it was!

*Cain.* And is.  
 It is not with the earth, though I must till it,  
 I feel at war, but that I may not profit  
 By what it bears of beautiful, untailing,  
 Nor gratify my thousand swelling thoughts  
 With knowledge, nor allay my thousand fears  
 Of death and life.

*Lucifer.* What thy world is, thou sees't,

170 But canst not comprehend the shadow of  
That which it was.

*Cain.* And those enormous creatures,  
 Phantoms inferior in intelligence

(At least so seeming) to the things we have pass'd,  
 Resembling somewhat the wild habitants *Dinosaur?*  
 Of the deep woods of earth, the hugest which  
 Roar nightly in the forest, but ten-fold  
 In magnitude and terror; taller than  
 The cherub-guarded walls of Eden, with  
 180 Eyes flashing like the fiery swords which fence them,  
 And tusks projecting like the trees stripp'd of  
 Their bark and branches—what were they?

*Lucifer.* That which

The Mammoth is in thy world; — but these lie  
 By myriads underneath its surface.

*Cain.* But

None on it?

*Lucifer.* No: for thy frail race to war  
 With them would render the curse on it useless —  
 190 'T would be destroy'd so early.

*Cain.* But why war?

*Lucifer.* You have forgotten the denunciation  
 Which drove your race from Eden — war with all things, ✓  
 And death to all things, and disease to most things,  
 And pangs, and bitterness; these were the fruits  
 Of the forbidden tree.

*Cain.* But animals —

Did they, too, eat of it, that they must die?

*Lucifer.* Your Maker told ye, they were made for you,  
 200 As you for him. — You would not have their doom  
 Superior to your own? Had Adam not  
 Fallen, all had stood.

*Cain.* Alas! the hopeless wretches

They too must share my sire's fate, like his sons;  
 Like them, too, without having shared the apple;  
 Like them, too, without the so dear-bought knowledge!  
 It was a lying tree — for we know nothing.  
 At least it promised knowledge at the price  
 Of death — but knowledge still: but what knows man?

210 *Lucifer.* It may be death leads to the highest knowledge;  
 And being of all things the sole thing certain,  
 At least leads to the surest science: therefore  
 The tree was true, though deadly.

*Cain.* These dim realms!

I see them, but I know them not.

*Lucifer.*

Because

Thy hour is yet afar, and matter cannot  
Comprehend spirit wholly — but 't is something  
To know there are such realms.

210

*Cain.*

We knew already

That there was death.

*Lucifer.*

But not what was beyond it.

*Cain.* Nor know I now.

*Lucifer.*

Thou knowest that there is

A state, and many states beyond thine own —  
And this thou knewest not this morn.

*Cain.*

But all

Seems dim and shadowy.

*Lucifer.*

Be content ; it will

220

Seem clearer to thine immortality.

*Cain.* And yon immeasurable liquid space  
Of glorious azure which floats on beyond us,  
Which looks like water, and which I should deem  
The river which flows out of Paradise  
Past my own dwelling, but that it is bankless  
And boundless, and of an ethereal hue —  
What is it ?

ocean

*Lucifer.* There is still some such on earth,  
Although inferior, and thy children shall  
Dwell near it — 't is the phantasm of an ocean.

230

*Cain.* 'T is like another world ; a liquid sun —  
And those inordinate creatures sporting o'er  
Its shining surface ?

*Lucifer.*

Are its habitants,

The past leviathans.

*Cain.*

And yon immense

Serpent, which rears his dripping mane and vasty  
Head ten times higher than the haughtiest cedar  
Forth from the abyss, looking as he could coil  
Himself around the orbs we lately look'd on —  
Is he not of the kind which bask'd beneath  
The tree in Eden ?

240

*Lucifer.*

Eve, thy mother, best

Can tell what shape of serpent tempted her.

*Cain.* This seems too terrible. No doubt the other  
Had more of beauty.

*Lucifer.*

Hast thou ne'er beheld him ?

*Cain.* Many of the same kind (at least so call'd),  
But never that precisely which persuaded  
The fatal fruit, nor even of the same aspect.

250

*Lucifer.* Your father saw him not ?

*Cain.* No: 't was my mother  
Who tempted him — she tempted by the serpent.

*Lucifer.* Good man! whene'er thy wife, or thy sons'  
wives,  
Tempt thee or them to aught that's new or strange,  
Be sure thou see'st first who had tempted *them*.

*Cain.* Thy precept comes too late : there is no more  
For serpents to tempt woman to.

*Lucifer.* But there  
Are some things still which woman may tempt man to,  
And man tempt woman : — let thy sons look to it!  
My council is a kind one ; for 'tis even  
Given chiefly at my own expense : 't is true,  
'T will not be follow'd, so there's little lost.

*Cain.* I understand not this.

*Lucifer.* The happier thou!  
Thy world and thou art still too young! Thou thinkest  
Thyself most wicked and unhappy : is it  
Not so?

*Cain.* For crime, I know not ; but for pain,  
I have felt much.

*Lucifer.* First-born of the first man!  
The present state of sin — and thou art evil,  
Of sorrow—and thou sufferest, are both Eden  
In all its innocence compared to what  
*Thou* shortly may'st be ; and that state again, *prophecy*  
In its redoubled wretchedness, a Paradise  
To what thy sons' sons' sons, accumulating  
In generations like to dust (which they  
In fact but add to), shall endure and do.—  
Now let us back to earth!

*Cain.* And wherefore didst thou  
Lead me here only to inform me this?

*Lucifer.* Was not thy quest for knowledge?

*Cain.* Yes : as being  
The road to happiness.

*Lucifer.* If truth be so,  
Thou hast it.

*Cain.* Then my father's God did well  
When he prohibited the fatal tree.

*Lucifer.* But had done better in not planting it.  
But ignorance of evil doth not save  
From evil ; it must still roll on the same,  
A part of all things.

*Cain.* Not of all things. No :  
I 'll not believe it — for I thirst for good.

✓ *Lucifer.* And who and what doth not? Who covets evil  
For its own bitter sake? — None — nothing! 'tis  
 The haven of all life, and lifelessness.

*Cain.* Within those glorious orbs which we behold,  
 Distant and dazzling, and innumerable,  
 Ere we came down into this phantom realm,  
Ill cannot come: they are too beautiful.

*Lucifer.* Thou hast seen them from afar.

*Cain.*

And what of that?

Distance can but diminish glory — they,  
 When nearer, must be more ineffable.

*Lucifer.* Approach the things of earth most beautiful,  
 And judge their beauty near.

*Cain.*

I have done this —

The loveliest thing I know is loveliest nearest.

*Lucifer.* Then there must be delusion — What is that,  
 Which being nearest to thine eyes is still  
 More beautiful than beauteous things remote?

*Cain.* My sister Adah. — All the stars of heaven,  
 The deep blue noon of night, lit by an orb  
 Which looks a spirit, or a spirit's world —  
 The hues of twilight — the sun's gorgeous coming —  
 His setting indescribable, which fills

My eyes with pleasant tears as I behold  
 Him sink, and feel my heart float softly with him  
 Along that western paradise of clouds —

The forest shade — the green bough — the bird's voice —  
 The vesper bird's, which seems to sing of love,  
 And mingles with the song of cherubim,  
 As the day closes over Eden's walls; —

All these are nothing, to my eyes and heart,  
 • Like Adah's face: I turn from earth and heaven  
 To gaze on it.

*Lucifer.* 'T is frail as fair mortality,  
 In the first dawn and bloom of young creation  
 And earliest embraces of earth's parents,  
 Can make its offspring; still it is delusion.

*Cain.* You think so, being not her brother.

*Lucifer.*

Mortal!

My brotherhood's with those who have no children.

*Cain.* Then thou canst have no fellowship with us.

*Lucifer.* It may be that thine own shall be for me.  
 But if thou dost possess a beautiful  
 Being beyond all beauty in thine eyes,  
Why art thou wretched?

*Cain.*

Why do I exist?

beauty-  
imperfect  
illusion

beauty  
love

is beauty

Why art thou wretched? why are all things so?

evil vs. good ✓  
mangled, is. feeling

Ev'n he who made us must be, as the maker -  
Of things unhappy! To produce destruction,  
Can surely never be the task of joy,  
And yet my sire says he 's omnipotent:  
Then why is evil — he being good? I ask'd  
This question of my father; and he said,  
Because this evil only was the path  
To good. Strange good, that must arise from out  
Its deadly opposite. I lately saw

example:  
natural evil

A lamb stung by a reptile: the poor suckling  
Lay foaming on the earth, beneath the vain  
And piteous bleating of its restless dam;  
My father pluck'd some herbs, and laid them to  
The wound; and by degrees the helpless wretch  
Resumed its careless life, and rose to drain  
The mother's milk, who o'er it tremulous  
Stood licking its reviving limbs with joy.  
Behold, my son! said Adam how from evil  
Springs good!

Lucifer. What didst thou answer?  
Cain.

Nothing; for

He is my father: but I thought, that 't were  
A better portion for the animal  
Never to have been stung at all, than to  
Purchase renewal of its little life  
With agonies unutterable, though  
Dispell'd by antidotes.

Lucifer. But as thou saidst  
Of all beloved things thou lovest her

Who shared thy mother's milk, and giveth hers  
Unto thy children —

Cain. Most assuredly:

What should I be without her?

Lucifer. What am I?

Cain. Dost thou love nothing?

Lucifer. What does thy God love?

Cain. All things, my father says; but I confess  
I see it not in their allotment here.

Lucifer. And, therefore, thou canst not see if I love  
Or no, except some vast and general purpose,  
To which particular things must melt like snows.

Cain. Snows! what are they?

Lucifer. Be happier in not knowing  
What thy remoter offspring must encounter;  
But bask beneath the clime which knows no winter!

X

*Cain.* But dost thou not love something like thyself?

*Lucifer.* And dost thou love *thyself*?

*Cain.* Yes, but love more

What makes my feelings more endurable,  
And is more than myself, because I love it.

*Lucifer.* Thou lovest it, because 't is beautiful,  
As was the apple in thy mother's eye;  
And when it ceases to be so, thy love  
Will cease, like any other appetite.

*Cain.* Cease to be beautiful! how can that be?

*Lucifer.* With time.

*Cain.* But time has past, and hitherto

Even Adam and my mother both are fair:  
Not fair like Adah and the seraphim —  
But very fair.

*Lucifer.* All that must pass away  
In them and her.

*Cain.* I 'm sorry for it; but  
Cannot conceive my love for her the less.  
And when her beauty disappears, methinks  
He who creates all beauty will lose more  
Than me in seeing perish such a work.

*Lucifer.* I pity thee who lovest what must perish.

*Cain.* And I thee who lov'st nothing.

*Lucifer.* And thy brother  
Sits he not near thy heart?

*Cain.* Why should he not?

*Lucifer.* Thy father loves him well — so does thy God.

*Cain.* And so do I.

*Lucifer.* 'T is well and meekly done.

*Cain.* Meekly!

*Lucifer.* He is the second born of flesh,  
And is his mother's favourite.

*Cain.* Let him keep  
Her favour, since the serpent was the first  
To win it.

*Lucifer.* And his father's?

*Cain.* What is that  
To me? should I not love that which all love?

*Lucifer.* And the Jehovah — the indulgent Lord,  
And bounteous planter of barr'd Paradise —  
He, too, looks smilingly on Abel.

*Cain.* I  
Ne'er saw him, and I know not if he smiles.

*Lucifer.* But you have seen his angels.

*Cain.* Rarely.

Temptation  
of Cain  
(1844)

*Lucifer.*

But

Sufficiently to see they love your brother :

*His sacrifices are acceptable.*

*Cain.* So be they ! wherefore speak to me of this ?

*Lucifer.* Because thou hast thought of this ere now.

*Cain.*

And if

I have thought, why recall a thought that — (*he pauses, as agitated*) — Spirit !

Here we are in *thy* world ; speak not of *mine*.

Thou hast shown me wonders ; thou hast shown me those

Mighty Pre-Adamites who walk'd the earth

Of which ours is the wreck ; thou hast pointed out

Myriads of starry worlds, of which our own

Is the dim and remote companion, in

Infinity of life : thou hast shown me shadows

Of that existence with the dreaded name

Which my sire brought us — Death ; thou hast shown me much —

But not all : show me where Jehovah dwells,

In his especial Paradise — or *thine* :

Where is it ?

*Lucifer.* Here, and o'er all space.

*Cain.*

But ye

Have some allotted dwelling — as all things ;

Clay has its earth, and other worlds their tenants ;

All temporary breathing creatures their

Peculiar element ; and things which have

Long ceased to breathe *our* breath, have theirs, thou say'st ;

And the Jehovah and thyself have *thine* —

Ye do not dwell together ?

*Lucifer.*

No, we reign

Together ; but our dwellings are asunder.

division

*Cain.* Would there were only one of ye ! perchance

An unity of purpose might make union

In elements which seem now jarr'd in storms.

How came ye, being spirits, wise and infinite,

To separate ? Are ye not as brethren in

Your essence, and your nature, and your glory ?

desire for unity

*Lucifer.* Art thou not Abel's brother ?

*Cain.*

We are brethren,

And so we shall remain ; but were it not so,

Is spirit like to flesh ? can it fall out ?

Infinity with Immortality ?

Jarring and turning space to misery —

For what ?

*Lucifer.* To reign.

pass

*Cain.* Did ye not tell me that  
Ye are both eternal?

*Lucifer.* Yea!

*Cain.* And what I have seen,  
Yon blue immensity, is boundless?

*Lucifer.* Ay.

*Cain.* And cannot ye both *reign* then? — is there not  
Enough? — why should ye differ?

*Lucifer.* We both reign.

*Cain.* But one of you makes evil.

*Lucifer.* Which?

*Cain.* Thou! for

If thou canst do man good, why dost thou not?

*Lucifer.* And why not he who made? I made ye not;  
Ye are *his* creatures, and not mine.

*Cain.* Then leave us

*His* creatures, as thou say'st we are, or show me  
Thy dwelling, or *his* dwelling.

*Lucifer.* I could show thee

Both; but the time will come thou shalt see one  
Of them for evermore.

*Cain.* And why not now?

*Lucifer.* Thy human mind hath scarcely grasp to gather  
The little I have shown thee into calm

And clear thought; and *thou* wouldst go on aspiring

To the great double Mysteries! the *two Principles!*

And gaze upon them on their secret thrones!

Dust! limit thy ambition; for to see

Either of these, would be for thee to perish!

*Cain.* And let me perish, so I see them!

*Lucifer.* There

The son of her who snatch'd the apple spake!

But thou wouldst only perish, and not see them;

That sight is for the other state.

*Cain.* Of death?

*Lucifer.* That is the prelude.

*Cain.* Then I dread it less,

Now that I know it leads to something definite.

*Lucifer.* And now I will convey thee to thy world,

Where thou shalt multiply the race of Adam,

Eat, drink, toil, tremble, laugh, weep, sleep, and die.

*Cain.* And to what end have I beheld these things  
Which thou hast shown me?

*Lucifer.* Didst thou not require

Knowledge? And have I not, in what I show'd,

Taught thee to know thyself?

mental  
life  
(incl. emotion)

Death

*Cain.*

Alas! I seem

Nothing.

} *Cain's*  
*Knowledge*

*Lucifer.* And this should be the human sum  
Of knowledge, to know mortal nature's nothingness ;  
Bequeath that science to thy children, and  
'T will spare them many tortures.

*Cain.*

Haughty spirit !

Thou speak'st it proudly ; but thyself, though proud,  
Hast a superior.

*Lucifer.*

No ! By heaven, which He

Holds, and the abyss, and the immensity  
Of worlds and life, which I hold with him — No !  
I have a victor — true ; but no superior.

Homage he has from all — but none from me :

I battle it against him, as I battled  
In highest heaven. Through all eternity,  
And the unfathomable gulfs of Hades,  
And the interminable realms of space,  
And the infinity of endless ages,

All, all, will I dispute ! And world by world,

And star by star, and universe by universe

Shall tremble in the balance, till the great

Conflict shall cease, if ever it shall cease,

Which it ne'er shall, till he or I be quench'd !

And what can quench our immortality,

Or mutual and irrevocable hate ?

He as a conqueror will call the conquer'd

Evil ; but what will be the good he gives ?

Were I the victor, his works would be deem'd

The only evil ones. And you, ye new

And scarce-born mortals, what have been his gifts

To you already, in your little world ?

*Cain.* But few ; and some of those but bitter.

*Lucifer.*

Back

With me, then, to thine earth, and try the rest

Of his celestial boons to you and yours.

Evil and good are things in their own essence,

And not made good or evil by the giver ;

But if he gives you good — so call him ; if

Evil springs from *him*, do not name it *mine*,

Till ye know better its true fount ; and judge

Not by words, though of spirits, but the fruits

Of your existence, such as it must be.

One good gift has the fatal apple given —

Your *reason* : — let it not be over-sway'd

By tyrannous threats to force you into faith

*addition of*  
*Lucifer*

'Gainst all external sense and inward feeling :  
 Think and endure, — and form an inner world  
 In your own bosom — where the outward fails ;  
 So shall you nearer be the spiritual  
 Nature, and war triumphant with your own.

[*They disappear.*]

### ACT III.

#### SCENE I.

*The Earth, near Eden, as in Act I.*

*Enter CAIN and ADAH*

*Adah.* Hush ! tread softly, Cain.

*Cain.* I will ; but wherefore ?

*Adah.* Our little Enoch sleeps upon yon bed  
 Of leaves, beneath the cypress.

*Cain.* Cypress ! 't is  
 A gloomy tree, which looks as if it mourn'd  
 O'er what it shadows ; wherefore didst thou choose it  
 For our child's canopy ?

*Adah.* Because its branches  
 Shut out the sun like night, and therefore seem'd  
 Fitting to shadow slumber.

*Cain.* Ay, the last —  
 And longest ; but no matter — lead me to him.

[*They go up to the child.*]

How lovely he appears ! his little cheeks,  
 In their pure incarnation, vying with  
 The rose leaves strewn beneath them.

*Adah.* And his lips, too,  
 How beautifully parted ! No ; you shall not  
 Kiss him, at least not now : he will awake soon —  
 His hour of mid-day rest is nearly over ;  
 But it were pity to disturb him till  
 'T is closed.

*Cain.* You have said well ; I will contain  
 My heart till then. He smiles, and sleeps ! — Sleep on  
 And smile, thou little, young inheritor  
 Of a world scarce less young : sleep on, and smile !

Thine are the hours and days when both are cheering  
 And innocent! thou hast not pluck'd the fruit —  
 Thou know'st not thou art naked! Must the time  
 Come thou shalt be amerced for sins unknown,  
 Which were not thine nor mine? But now sleep on!  
 His cheeks are reddening into deeper smiles,  
 And shining lids are trembling o'er his long  
 Lashes, dark as the cypress which waves o'er them;  
 Half open, from beneath them the clear blue  
 Laughs out, although in slumber. He must dream —  
Of what? Of Paradise! — Ay! dream of it,  
My disinherited boy! 'T is but a dream;  
 For never more thyself, thy sons, nor fathers,  
 Shall walk in that forbidden place of joy!

*Adah.* Dear Cain! Nay, do not whisper o'er our son  
 Such melancholy yearnings o'er the past:  
Why wilt thou always mourn for Paradise?  
Can we not make another?

*Cain.* Where?

*Adah.* Here, or

Where'er thou wilt: where'er thou art, I feel not  
 The want of this so much regretted Eden.  
 Have I not thee, our boy, our sire, and brother,  
 And Zillah — our sweet sister, and our Eve,  
 To whom we owe so much besides our birth?

*Cain.* Yes — death, too, is among the debts we owe her.

*Adah.* Cain! that proud spirit, who withdrew thee hence,  
 Hath sadden'd thine still deeper. I had hoped  
 The promised wonders which thou hast beheld,  
 Visions, thou say'st, of past and present worlds,  
 Would have composed thy mind into the calm  
 Of a contented knowledge; but I see  
Thy guide hath done thee evil: still I thank him,  
 And can forgive him all, that he so soon  
 Hath given thee back to us.

*Cain.* So soon?

*Adah.* 'T is scarcely

Two hours since ye departed: two long hours  
 To me, but only hours upon the sun.

*Cain.* And yet I have approach'd that sun, and seen  
 Worlds which he once shone on, and never more  
 Shall light; and worlds he never lit: methought  
 Years had roll'd o'er my absence.

*Adah.* Hardly hours.

*Cain.* The mind then hath capacity of time,  
 And measures it by that which it beholds,

Pleasing or painful ; little or almighty.  
 I had beheld the immemorial works  
 Of endless beings ; skirr'd extinguish'd worlds ;  
 And, gazing on eternity, methought  
 I had borrow'd more by a few drops of ages  
 From its immensity : but now I feel  
 My littleness again. Well said the spirit,  
 That I was nothing !

*Adah.* Wherefore said he so ?

Jehovah said not that.

*Cain.* No : *he contents him*

With making us the *nothing* which we are ;  
 And after flattering dust with glimpses of  
 Eden and Immortality, resolves  
 It back to dust again — for what ?

*Adah.* Thou know'st —

Even for our parents' error.

*Cain.* What is that

To us ? they sinn'd, then *let them die* !

*Adah.* Thou hast not spoken well, nor is that thought  
 Thy own, but of the spirit who was with thee.

Would *I* could die for them, so *they* might live !

*Cain.* Why, so say I — provided that one victim

Might satiate the insatiable of life,  
 And that our little rosy sleeper there  
 Might never taste of death nor human sorrow,  
 Nor hand it down to those who spring from him.

*Adah.* How know we that some such atonement one day  
 May not redeem our race ?

*Cain.* By sacrificing

The harmless for the guilty ? what atonement  
 Were there ? why, *we* are innocent : what have we  
 Done, that we must be victims for a deed  
 Before our birth, or need have victims to  
 Atone for this mysterious, nameless sin —  
 If it be such a sin to seek for knowledge ?

*Adah.* Alas ! thou sinnest now, my Cain : thy words  
 Sound impious in mine ears.

*Cain.* Then leave me !

*Adah.* Never,

Though thy God left thee.

*Cain.* Say, what have we here ?

*Adah.* Two altars, which our brother Abel made  
 During thine absence, whereupon to offer  
 A sacrifice to God on thy return.

*Cain.* And how knew *he*, that *I* would be so ready

With the burnt offerings, which he daily brings  
 With a meek brow, whose base humility  
 Shows more of fear than worship, as a bribe  
 To the Creator ?

*Adah.* Surely, 't is well done.

*Cain.* One altar may suffice ; I have no offering.

*Adah.* The fruits of the earth, the early, beautiful  
 Blossom and bud, and bloom of flowers, and fruits ;  
 These are a goodly offering to the Lord,  
 Given with a gentle and a contrite spirit.

*Cain.* I have toil'd, and till'd, and sweaten in the sun  
 According to the curse : — must I do more ?

For what should I be gentle ? for a war  
 With all the elements ere they will yield  
 The bread we eat ? For what must I be grateful ?

For being dust, and groveling in the dust,  
 Till I return to dust ? If I am nothing —  
 For nothing shall I be an hypocrite,

And seem well-pleas'd with pain ? For what should I  
 Be contrite ? for my father's sin, already

Expiate with what we all have undergone,

And to be more than expiated by

The ages prophesied, upon our seed.

Little deems our young blooming sleeper, there,

The germs of an eternal misery

To myriads is within him ! better 't were

I snatch'd him in his sleep, and dash'd him 'gainst

The rocks, than let him live to —

*Adah.* Oh, my God !

Touch not the child — my child ! thy child ! Oh Cain !

*Cain.* Fear not ! for all the stars, and all the power  
 Which sways them, I would not accost yon infant  
 With ruder greeting than a father's kiss.

*Adah.* Then, why so awful in thy speech ?

*Cain.* I said,

'T were better that he ceased to live, than give

Life to so much of sorrow as he must

Endure, and, harder still, bequeath ; but since

That saying jars you, let us only say —

'T were better that he never had been born.

*Adah.* Oh, do not say so ! Where were then the joys,  
 The mother's joys of watching, nourishing,  
 And loving him ? Soft ! he awakes. Sweet Enoch !

[*She goes to the child.*]

Oh Cain ! look on him ; see how full of life,  
 Of strength, of bloom, of beauty, and of joy,

How like to me — how like to thee, when gentle,  
 For *then* we are *all* alike ; is 't not so, Cain ?  
 Mother, and sire, and son, our features are  
 Reflected in each other ; as they are  
 In the clear waters, when *they* are *gentle*, and  
 When *thou* art *gentle*. Love us, then, my Cain !  
 And love thyself for our sakes, for we love thee.  
 Look ! how he laughs and stretches out his arms,  
 And opens wide his blue eyes upon thine,  
 To hail his father ; while his little form  
 Flutters as wing'd with joy. Talk not of pain !  
 The childless cherubs well might envy thee  
 The pleasures of a parent ! Bless him, Cain !  
 As yet he hath no words to thank thee, but  
 His heart will, and thine own too.

*Cain.* Bless thee, boy !

If that a mortal blessing may avail thee,  
 To save thee from the serpent's curse !

*Adah.* It shall.

Surely a father's blessing may avert  
 A reptile's subtlety.

*Cain.* Of that I doubt ;

But bless him ne'er the less.

*Adah.* Our brother comes.

*Cain.* Thy brother Abel.

*Enter ABEL.*

*Abel.* Welcome, Cain ! My brother,  
 The peace of God be on thee !

*Cain.* Abel, hail !

*Abel.* Our sister tells me that thou hast been wandering  
 In high communion with a spirit, far  
 Beyond our wonted range. Was he of those  
 We have seen and spoken with, like to our father ?

*Cain.* No.

*Abel.* Why then commune with him ? he may be  
 A foe to the Most High.

*Cain.* And friend to man.

Has the Most High been so — if so you term him ?

*Abel.* Term him ! your words are strange to-day, my  
 brother.

My sister Adah, leave us for awhile —  
 We mean to sacrifice.

*Adah.* Farewell, my Cain ;

But first embrace thy son. May his soft spirit,

And Abel's pious ministry, recall thee  
To peace and holiness! [Exit ADAH, with her child.

Abel. Where hast thou been?

Cain. I know not.

Abel. Nor what thou hast seen?

Cain. The dead,

The immortal, the unbounded, the omnipotent,  
The overpowering mysteries of space —  
The innumerable worlds that were and are —  
A whirlwind of such overwhelming things,  
Suns, moons, and earths, upon their loud-voiced spheres  
Singing in thunder round me, as have made me  
Unfit for mortal converse: leave me, Abel.

Abel. Thine eyes are flashing with unnatural light —  
Thy cheek is flush'd with an unnatural hue —  
Thy words are fraught with an unnatural sound —  
What may this mean?

Cain. It means — I pray thee, leave me.

Abel. Not till we have pray'd and sacrificed together.

Cain. Abel, I pray thee, sacrifice alone —  
Jehovah loves thee well.

Abel. Both well, I hope.

Cain. But thee the better: I care not for that;  
Thou art fitter for his worship than I am;  
Revere him, then — but let it be alone —  
At least, without me.

Abel. Brother, I should ill  
Deserve the name of our great father's son,  
If, as my elder, I revered thee not,  
And in the worship of our God call'd not  
On thee to join me, and precede me in  
Our priesthood — 't is thy place.

Cain. But I have ne'er  
Asserted it.

Abel. The more my grief; I pray thee  
To do so now: thy soul seems labouring in  
Some strong delusion; it will calm thee.

Cain. No;  
Nothing can calm me more. Calm! say I? Never  
Knew I what calm was in the soul, although  
I have seen the elements still'd. My Abel, leave me!  
Or let me leave thee to thy pious purpose.

Abel. Neither; we must perform our task together.  
Spurn me not.

Cain. If it must be so — well, then,  
What shall I do?

*Abel.* Choose one of those two altars.

*Cain.* Choose for me : they to me are so much turf  
And stone.

*Abel.* Choose thou !

*Cain.* I have chosen.

*Abel.* 'T is the highest,

And suits thee, as the elder. Now prepare

Thine offerings.

*Cain.* Where are thine ?

*Abel.* Behold them here —

The firstlings of the flock, and fat thereof —

A shepherd's humble offering.

*Cain.* I have no flocks ;

I am a tiller of the ground, and must

Yield what it yieldeth to my toil — its fruit :

[*He gathers fruits.*

Behold them in their various bloom and ripeness.

[*They dress their altars and kindle a flame upon them.*

*Abel.* My brother, as the elder, offer first  
Thy prayer and thanksgiving with sacrifice.

*Cain.* No — I am new to this ; lead thou the way,  
And I will follow — as I may.

*Abel (kneeling).* Oh God !

Who made us, and who breathed the breath of life

Within our nostrils, who hath blessed us,

And spared, despite our father's sin, to make

His children all lost, as they might have been,

Had not thy justice been so temper'd with

The mercy which is thy delight, as to

Accord a pardon like a Paradise,

Compared with our great crimes : — Sole Lord of light !

Of good, and glory, and eternity ;

Without whom all were evil, and with whom

Nothing can err, except to some good end

Of thine omnipotent benevolence —

Inscrutable, but still to be fulfill'd —

Accept from out thy humble first of shepherd's

First of the first-born flocks — an offering,

In itself nothing — as what offering can be

Aught unto thee ? — but yet accept it for

The thanksgiving of him who spreads it in

The face of thy high heaven, bowing his own

Even to the dust, of which he is, in honour

Of thee, and of thy name, for evermore !

*Cain (standing erect during his speech).* Spirit! whate'er

or whatsoe'er thou art,

Omnipotent, it may be — and, if good,  
 Shown in the exemption of thy deeds from evil ;  
 Jehovah upon earth ! and God in heaven !  
 And it may be with other names, because  
 Thine attributes seem many, as thy works : —  
 If thou must be propitiated with prayers,  
 Take them ! If thou must be induced with altars,  
 And soften'd with a sacrifice, receive them !  
 Two beings here erect them unto thee.  
 If thou lov'st blood, the shepherd's shrine, which smokes  
 On my right hand, hath shed it for thy service  
 In the first of his flock, whose limbs now reek  
 In sanguinary incense to thy skies ;  
 Or if the sweet and blooming fruits of earth,  
 And milder seasons, which the unstain'd turf  
 I spread them on now offers in the face  
 Of the broad sun which ripen'd them, may seem  
 Good to thee, inasmuch as they have not  
 Suffer'd in limb or life, and rather form  
A sample of thy works, than supplication.  
 To look on ours ! If a shrine without victim,  
 And altar without gore, may win thy favour,  
 Look on it ! and for him who dresseth it,  
He is — such as thou mad'st him ; and seeks nothing  
 Which must be won by kneeling : if he 's evil,  
 Strike him ! thou art omnipotent, and may'st —  
 For what can he oppose ? If he be good,  
 Strike him, or spare him, as thou wilt ! since all  
 Rests upon thee ; and good and evil seem  
 To have no power themselves, save in thy will ;  
 And whether that be good or ill I know not,  
 Not being omnipotent, nor fit to judge  
 Omnipotence, but merely to endure  
 Its mandate ; which thus far I have endured.

[*The fire upon the altar of ABEL kindles into a column of the brightest flame, and ascends to heaven ; while a whirlwind throws down the altar of CAIN, and scatters the fruits abroad upon the earth.*

Abel (kneeling). Oh, brother, pray ! Jehovah's wroth with thee.

Cain. Why so ?

Abel. Thy fruits are scatter'd on the earth.

Cain. From earth they came, to earth let them return ;  
 Their seed will bear fresh fruit there ere the summer :  
 Thy burnt flesh-off'ring prospers better ; see  
 How heav'n licks up the flames, when thick with blood !

contrast to  
Abel's  
prayer

(qualification)

rejection  
of Cain's  
prayer

*Abel.* Think not upon my offering's acceptance,  
But make another of thine own before  
It is too late.

*Cain.* I will build no more altars,  
Nor suffer any. —

*Abel (rising).* Cain! what meanest thou?

*Cain.* To cast down yon vile flatt'rer of the clouds,  
The smoky harbinger of thy dull pray'rs —  
Thine altar, with its blood of lambs and kids,  
Which fed on milk, to be destroy'd in blood.

*Abel (opposing him).* Thou shalt not: — add not im-  
pious works to impious  
Words! let that altar stand — 't is hallow'd now  
By the immortal pleasure of Jehovah,  
In his acceptance of the victims.

*Cain.* His!

*His pleasure!* what was his high pleasure in  
The fumes of scorching flesh and smoking blood,  
To the pain of the bleating mothers, which  
Still yearn for their dead offspring? or the pangs  
Of the sad ignorant victims underneath  
Thy pious knife? Give way! this bloody record  
Shall not stand in the sun, to shame creation!

*Abel.* Brother, give back! thou shalt not touch my altar  
With violence: if that thou wilt adopt it,  
To try another sacrifice, 't is thine.

*Cain.* Another sacrifice! Give way, or else  
That sacrifice may be —

*Abel.* What mean'st thou?

*Cain.* Give —

Give way! — thy God loves blood! — then look to it: —  
Give way, ere he hath more!

*Abel.* In his great name,  
I stand between thee and the shrine which hath  
Had his acceptance.

*Cain.* If thou lov'st thyself,  
Stand back till I have strew'd this turf along  
Its native soil: — else —

*Abel, (opposing him.)* I love God far more  
Than life.

*Cain (striking him with a brand on the temples, which he  
snatches, from the altar).* Then take thy life unto thy  
God,  
Since he loves lives.

*Abel (falls).* What hast thou done, my brother?

*Cain.* Brother!

Murder

*Abel.* Oh, God! receive thy servant, and  
 Forgive his slayer, for he knew not what  
 He did. — Cain, give me — give me thy hand; and tell  
 Poor Zillah —

*Cain (after a moment's stupefaction).* My hand! 't is all  
 red, and with —  
 What?

[A long pause. — Looking slowly round.

Where am I? alone! Where 's Abel? where

*Cain?* Can it be that I am he? My brother,  
 Awake! — why liest thou so on the green earth?  
 'T is not the hour of slumber: — why so pale?  
 What, hast thou! — thou wert full of life this morn!  
 Abel! I pray thee, mock me not! I smote  
 Too fiercely, but not fatally. Ah, why  
 Would'st thou oppose me? 'This is mockery;  
 And only done to daunt me: — 't was a blow —  
 And but a blow. Stir — stir — nay, only stir!  
 Why, so — that 's well! — thou breath'st! breathe upon  
 me!

Oh, God! Oh, God!

*Abel (very faintly).* What 's he who speaks of God?

*Cain.* Thy murderer.

*Abel.* Then may God forgive him! Cain  
 Comfort poor Zillah: — she has but one brother  
 Now.

*Cain.* And I none! — Who makes me brotherless?

His eyes are open! then he is not dead!  
 Death is like sleep; and sleep shuts down our lids.  
 His lips, too, are apart; why then he breathes;  
 And yet I feel it not. — His heart! — his heart! —  
 Let me see, doth it beat? — methinks — No! — no!  
 This is a vision, else I am become

The native of another and worse world.

The earth swims round me: — what is this? 't is wet;

[Puts his hand to his brow, and then looks at it.

And yet there are no dews! 'T is blood — my blood —  
 My brother's and my own; and shed by me!

Then what have I further to do with life,  
 Since I have taken life from my own flesh?  
 But he can not be dead! — Is silence death?  
 No; he will wake: then let me watch by him.

Life cannot be so slight, as to be quenched  
 Thus quickly! — he hath spoken to me since —  
 What shall I say to him? — My brother! — No:  
 He will not answer to that name; for brethren

1st  
 Death

ABEL dies.

evil

Smite not each other. Yet — yet — speak to me.  
Oh! for a word more of that gentle voice,  
That I may bear to hear my own again!

*Enter ZILLAH.*

*Zillah.* I heard a heavy sound; what can it be?  
'T is Cain; and watching by my husband. What  
Dost thou there, brother? Doth he sleep? Oh! heav'n!  
What means this paleness, and yon stream? — No! no!  
It is not blood; for who would shed his blood?  
Abel! what's this? — who hath done this? He moves not;  
He breathes not: and his hands drop down from mine  
With stony lifelessness! Ah! cruel Cain!  
Why cam'st thou not in time to save him from  
This violence? Whatever hath assail'd him,  
Thou wert the stronger, and should'st have stepp'd in  
Between him and aggression! Father! — Eve! —  
Adah! — come hither! Death is in the world!

[*Exit ZILLAH, calling on her Parents, &c.*

*Cain (solus).* And who hath brought him there? — I —  
who abhor

The name of Death so deeply, that the thought  
Empoison'd all my life, before I knew  
His aspect — I have led him here, and giv'n  
My brother to his cold and still embrace,  
As if he would not have asserted his  
Inexorable claim without my aid.  
I am awake at last — a dreary dream  
Had madden'd me; — but he shall ne'er awake!

*Enter ADAM, EVE, ADAH, and ZILLAH.*

*Adam.* A voice of woe from Zillah brings me here. —  
What do I see? — 'T is true! — My son! — my son!  
Woman, behold the serpent's work, and thine!

[*To EVE.*

*Eve.* Oh! speak not of it now: the serpent's fangs  
Are in my heart. My best beloved, Abel!  
Jehovah! this is punishment beyond  
A mother's sin, to take him from me!

*Adam.*

Who,

Or what hath done this deed? — speak, Cain, since thou  
Wert present; was it some more hostile angel,  
Who walks not with Jehovah? or some wild  
Brute of the forest?

*Eve.*

Ah! a livid light

Breaks through, as from a thunder-cloud! yon brand,

key: yes!

Massy and bloody! snatch'd from off the altar,  
And black with smoke, and red with ——

*Adam.*

Speak, my son

Speak, and assure us, wretched as we are,  
That we are not more miserable still.

*Adah.* Speak, Cain! and say it was not *thou!*

*Eve.*

It was.

I see it now — he hangs his guilty head,  
And covers his ferocious eye with hands  
Incarnadine. *Macbeth*

*Adah.* Mother, thou dost him wrong —  
Cain! clear thee from this horrible accusal,  
Which grief wrings from our parent.

*Eve.*

Hear, Jehovah!

May the eternal serpent's curse be on him!

For he was fitter for his seed than ours.

May all his days be desolate! May ——

*Adah.*

Hold!

Curse him not, mother, for he is thy son —  
Curse him not, mother, for he is my brother,  
And my betroth'd.

*Eve.*

He hath left thee no brother —

Zillah no husband — me *no son!* — for thus

I curse him from my sight for evermore!

All bonds I break between us, as he broke

That of his nature, in you —— Oh death! death!

Why didst thou not take *me*, who first incurr'd thee?

Why dost thou not so now?

*Adam.*

Eve! let not this,

Thy natural grief, lead to impiety!

A heavy doom was long forespoken to us;

And now that it begins, let it be borne

In such sort as may show our God, that we

Are faithful servants to his holy will.

*Eve (pointing to Cain).* His will!! the will of yon in-  
carnate spirit

Of death, whom I have brought upon the earth

To strew it with the dead. May all the curses

Of life be on him! and his agonies

Drive him forth o'er the wilderness, like us

From Eden, till his children do by him

As he did by his brother! May the swords

And wings of fiery cherubim pursue him

By day and night — snakes spring up in his path —

Earth's fruits be ashes in his mouth — the leaves

On which he lays his head to sleep be strew'd

With scorpions! May his dreams be of his victim!  
 His waking a continual dread of death!  
 May the clear rivers turn to blood as he  
 Stoops down to stain them with his raging lip!  
 May every element shun or change to him!  
 May he live in the pangs which others die with!  
 And death itself wax something worse than death  
 To him who first acquainted him with man!  
 Hence, fratricide! henceforth that word is *Cain*,  
 Through all the coming myriads of mankind,  
 Who shall abhor thee, though thou wert their sire!  
 May the grass wither from thy feet! the woods  
 Deny thee shelter! earth a home! the dust  
 A grave! the sun his light! and heaven her God!

[Exit EVE.]

*Adam.* Cain! get thee forth: we dwell no more together.  
 Depart! and leave the dead to me — I am  
 Henceforth alone — we never must meet more.

*Adah.* Oh, part not with him thus, my father: do not  
 Add thy deep curse to Eve's upon his head!

*Adam.* I curse him not: his spirit be his curse.  
 Come, Zillah!

*Zillah.* I must watch my husband's corse.

*Adam.* We will return again, when he is gone  
 Who hath provided for us this dread office.  
 Come, Zillah!

*Zillah.* Yet one kiss on yon pale clay,  
 And those lips once so warm — my heart! my heart!

[Exeunt ADAM and ZILLAH, weeping.]

*Adah.* Cain! thou hast heard, we must go forth. I am  
 ready,

So shall our children be. I will bear Enoch,  
 And you his sister. Ere the sun declines  
 Let us depart, nor walk the wilderness  
 Under the cloud of night. Nay, speak to me.  
To me — thine own.

*Cain.* Leave me!

*Adah.* Why, all have left thee.

*Cain.* And wherefore lingerest thou? Dost thou not fear  
 To dwell with one who hath done this?

*Adah.* I fear

Nothing except to leave thee, much as I  
 Shrink from the deed which leaves thee brotherless.  
 I must not speak of this — it is between thee  
 And the great God.

*A Voice from within exclaims, Cain! Cain!*

*Adah.* Hear'st thou that voice ?

*The Voice within.* Cain ! Cain !

*Adah.* It soundeth like an angel's tone.

*Enter the ANGEL of the Lord.*

*Angel.* Where is thy brother Abel ?

*Cain.* Am I then ×

My brother's keeper ?

*Angel.* Cain ! what hast thou done ?

The voice of thy slain brother's blood cries out,

Even from the ground, unto the Lord ! — Now art thou

Cursed from the earth, which opened late her mouth

To drink thy brother's blood from thy rash hand.

Henceforth, when thou shalt till the ground, it shall not

Yield thee her strength ; a fugitive shalt thou

Be from this day, and vagabond on earth ! — *Frankenstein*

*Curse  
of  
God*

*Adah.* This punishment is more than he can bear.

Behold, thou drivest him from the face of earth,

And from the face of God shall he be hid.

A fugitive and vagabond on earth,

'T will come to pass, that whoso findeth him

Shall slay him.

*Cain.* Would they could ! but who are they

Shall slay me ? Where are these on the lone earth

As yet unpeopled ?

*Angel.* Thou hast slain thy brother,

And who shall warrant thee against thy son ?

*Adah.* Angel of Light ! be merciful, nor say

That this poor aching breast now nourishes

A murderer in my boy, and of his father.

*Angel.* Then he would but be what his father is.

Did not the milk of Eve give nutriment

To him thou now see'st so besmear'd with blood ?

The fratricide might well engender parricides. —

But it shall not be so — the Lord thy God

And mine commandeth me to set his seal

On Cain, so that he may go forth in safety.

Who slayeth Cain, a sevenfold vengeance shall

Be taken on his head. Come hither !

*Cain.* What

Wouldst thou with me ?

*Angel.* To mark upon thy brow

Exemption from such deeds as thou hast done.

*Cain.* No, let me die !

*Angel.* It must not be.

*his  
punishment  
-long life*

[ *The ANGEL sets the mark on CAIN's brow,*

*Cain.*

It burns

My brow, but nought to that which is within it.  
Is there more? let me meet it as I may.

*Angel.* Stern hast thou been and stubborn from the womb,

As the ground thou must henceforth till; but he  
Thou slew'st was gentle as the flocks he tended.

*Cain.* After the fall too soon was I begotten;  
Ere yet my mother's mind subsided from  
The serpent, and my sire still mourn'd for Eden.  
That which I am, I am; I did not seek  
For life, nor did I make myself; but could I  
With my own death redeem him from the dust —  
And why not so? let him return to-day,  
And I lie ghastly! so shall be restored  
By God the life to him he loved; and taken  
From me a being I ne'er loved to bear.

*Angel.* Who shall heal murder? what is done is done;  
Go forth! fulfil thy days! and be thy deeds  
Unlike the last! [The ANGEL disappears.]

*Adah.* He's gone, let us go forth;  
I hear our little Enoch cry within  
Our bower.

*Cain.* Ah! little knows he what he weeps for!  
And I who have shed blood cannot shed tears!  
But the four rivers<sup>(1)</sup> would not cleanse my soul.  
Think'st thou my boy will bear to look on me?

*Adah.* If I thought that he would not, I would —

*Cain* (interrupting her). No,  
No more of threats: we have had too many of them:  
Go to our children; I will follow thee.

*Adah.* I will not leave thee lonely with the dead;  
Let us depart together.

*Cain.* Oh! thou dead  
And everlasting witness! whose unsinking  
Blood darkens earth and heaven! what thou now art  
I know not! but if thou see'st what I am,  
I think thou wilt forgive him, whom his God  
Can ne'er forgive, nor his own soul. — Farewell!  
I must not, dare not touch what I have made thee.  
I, who sprung from the same womb with thee, drain'd  
The same breast, clasp'd thee often to my own,  
In fondness brotherly and boyish, I

(1) The "four rivers" which flowed round Eden, and consequently the only waters with which Cain was acquainted upon earth.

Can never meet thee more, nor even dare  
 To do that for thee, which thou shouldst have done  
 For me — compose thy limbs into their grave —  
 The first grave yet dug for mortality.  
 But who hath dug that grave? Oh, earth! Oh, earth!  
 For all the fruits thou hast render'd to me, I  
 Give thee back this. — Now for the wilderness.

[*ADAH stoops down and kisses the body of ABEL.*]

*Adah.* A dreary, and an early doom, my brother,  
 Has been thy lot! Of all who mourn for thee,  
 I alone must not weep. My office is  
 Henceforth to dry up tears, and not to shed them;  
 But yet of all who mourn, none mourn like me,  
 Not only for thyself, but him who slew thee.  
 Now, Cain! I will divide thy burden with thee.

*Cain.* Eastward from Eden will we take our way;  
 'T is the most desolate, and suits my steps.

*Adah.* Lead! thou shalt be my guide, and may our God  
 Be thine! Now let us carry forth our children.

*Cain.* And *he* who lieth there was childless. I  
 Have dried the fountain of a gentle race,  
 Which might have graced his recent marriage couch,  
 And might have temper'd this stern blood of mine,  
 Uniting with our children Abel's offspring!  
 O Abel.

*Adah* Peace be with him!

*Cain.*

But with me! —

[*Exeunt.*]



MARINO FALIERO,  
DOGE OF VENICE;  
AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY,  
IN FIVE ACTS.

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'DUX inquieti turbidus Adriæ.' — HORACE.

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262  
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## P R E F A C E.

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THE conspiracy of the Doge Marino Faliero is one of the most remarkable events in the annals of the most singular government, city, and people of modern history. It occurred in the year 1355. Every thing about Venice is, or was, extraordinary—her aspect is like a dream, and her history is like a romance. The story of this Doge is to be found in all her Chronicles, and particularly detailed in the “Lives of the Doges,” by Marin Sanuto, which is given in the Appendix. It is simply and clearly related, and is perhaps more dramatic in itself than any scenes which can be founded upon the subject.

Marino Faliero appears to have been a man of talents and of courage. I find him commander in chief of the land forces at the siege of Zara, where he beat the King of Hungary and his army of 80,000 men, killing 8000 men, and keeping the besieged at the same time in check; an exploit to which I know none similar in history, except that of Cæsar at Alesia, and of Prince Eugene at Belgrade. He was afterwards commander of the fleet in the same war. He took Capo d'Istria. He was ambassador at Genoa and Rome, — at which last he received the news of his election to the dukedom; his absence being a proof that he sought it by no intrigue, since he was apprized of his predecessor's death and his own succession at the same moment. But he appears to have been of an ungovernable tempér. A story is told by Sanuto, of his having, many years before, when podèsta and captain at Treviso, boxed the ears of the bishop, who was somewhat tardy in bringing the Host. For this, honest Sanuto “saddles him with a judgment,” as Thwackum did Square; but he does not tell us whether he was punished or rebuked by the Senate for this outrage at the time of its commission. He seems, indeed, to have been afterwards at peace with the

church, for we find him ambassador at Rome, and invested with the fief of Val di Marino, in the march of Treviso, and with the title of Count, by Lorenzo Count-bishop of Ceneda. For these facts my authorities are Sanuto, Vettor Sandi, Andrea Navagero, and the account of the siege of Zara, first published by the indefatigable Abate Morelli, in his "Monumenti Veneziani di varia Letteratura," printed in 1796, all of which I have looked over in the original language. The moderns, Darù, Sismondi, and Laugier, nearly agree with the ancient chroniclers. Sismondi attributes the conspiracy to his *jealousy*; but I find this nowhere asserted by the national historians. Vettor Sandi, indeed, says, that "Altri scrissero che . . . . dalla gelosa suspizion di esso Doge siasi fatto (Michel Steno) staccar con violenza," &c. &c.; but this appears to have been by no means the general opinion, nor is it alluded to by Sanuto or by Navagero; and Sandi himself adds, a moment after, that "per altre Veneziane memorie traspiri, che non il *solo* desiderio di vendetta lo dispose alla congiura ma anche la innata abituale ambizion sua, per cui anelava a farsi principe indipendente." The first motive appears to have been excited by the gross affront of the words written by Michel Steno on the ducal chair, and by the light and inadequate sentence of the Forty on the offender, who was one of their "tre Capit." The attentions of Steno himself appear to have been directed towards one of her damsels, and not to the "Dogaressa" herself, against whose fame not the slightest insinuation appears, while she is praised for her beauty, and remarked for her youth. Neither do I find it asserted (unless the hint of Sandi be an assertion), that the Doge was actuated by jealousy of his wife; but rather by respect for her, and for his own honour, warranted by his past services and present dignity.

I know not that the historical facts are alluded to in English, unless by Dr. Moore in his View of Italy. His account is false and flippant, full of stale jests about old men and young wives, and wondering at so great an effect from so slight a cause. How so acute and severe an observer of mankind as the author of Zeluco could wonder at this is inconceivable. He knew that a basin of water spilt on Mrs. Masham's gown deprived the Duke of Marlborough of his command, and led to the inglorious peace

of Utrecht — that Louis XIV. was plunged into the most desolating wars because his minister was nettled at his finding fault with a window, and wished to give him another occupation — that Helen lost Troy — that Lucretia expelled the Tarquins from Rome — and that Cava brought the Moors to Spain — that an insulted husband led the Gauls to Clusium, and thence to Rome — that a single verse of Frederick II. of Prussia on the Abbé de Bernis, and a jest on Madame de Pompadour, led to the battle of Rosbach — that the elopement of Dearbhorgil with Mac Murchad conducted the English to the slavery of Ireland — that a personal pique between Maria Antoinette and the Duke of Orleans precipitated the first expulsion of the Bourbons — and, not to multiply instances, that Commodus, Domitian, and Caligula fell victims not to their public tyranny, but to private vengeance — and that an order to make Cromwell disembark from the ship in which he would have sailed to America destroyed both king and commonwealth. After these instances, on the least reflection, it is indeed extraordinary in Dr. Moore to seem surprised that a man used to command, who had served and swayed in the most important offices, should fiercely resent, in a fierce age, an unpunished affront, the grossest that can be offered to a man, be he prince or peasant. The age of Faliero is little to the purpose, unless to favour it —

“ The young man’s wrath is like straw on fire,  
But like red hot steel is the old man’s ire.”

“ Young men soon give and soon forget affronts,  
Old age is slow at both.”

Laugier’s reflections are more philosophical : — “ Tale fù il fine ignominioso di un’ uomo, che la sua nascita, la sua età, il suo carattere dovevano tener lontano dalle passioni produttrici di grandi delitti. I suoi *talenti* per lungo tempo esercitati ne’ maggiori impieghi, la sua capacità sperimentata ne’ governi e nelle ambasciate, gli avevano acquistato la stima e la fiducia de’ cittadini, ed avevano uniti i suffragj per collocarlo alla testa della repubblica. Innalzato ad un grado che terminava gloriosamente la sua vita, il risentimento di un’ ingiuria leggiera insinuò nel suo cuore tal veleno che bastò a corrompere le antiche sue qualità, e a condurlo al termine dei scellerati ; serio esempio, che prova

*non esservi età, in cui la prudenza umana sia sicura, e che nell'uomo restano sempre passioni capaci a disonorarlo, quando non invigili sopra se stesso.* — *Laugier, Italian translation, vol. iv. page 30, 31.*

Where did Dr. Moore find that Marino Faliero begged his life? I have searched the chroniclers, and find nothing of the kind; it is true that he avowed all. He was conducted to the place of torture, but there is no mention made of any application for mercy on his part; and the very circumstance of their having taken him to the rack seems to argue any thing but his having shown a want of firmness, which would doubtless have been also mentioned by those minute historians who by no means favour him: such, indeed, would be contrary to his character as a soldier, to the age in which he lived, and *at which he died*, as it is to the truth of history. I know no justification, at any distance of time, for calumniating an historical character: surely truth belongs to the dead, and to the unfortunate; and they who have died upon a scaffold have generally had faults enough of their own, without attributing to them that which the very incurring of the perils which conducted them to their violent death renders, of all others, the most improbable. The black veil which is painted over the place of Marino Faliero amongst the Doges, and the Giants' Staircase where he was crowned, and discrowned, and decapitated, struck forcibly upon my imagination; as did his fiery character and strange story. I went, in 1819, in search of his tomb more than once to the church San Giovanni e San Paolo; and, as I was standing before the monument of another family, a priest came up to me and said, "I can show you finer monuments than that." I told him that I was in search of that of the Faliero family, and particularly of the Doge Marino's. "Oh," said he, "I will show it you;" and conducting me to the outside, pointed out a sarcophagus in the wall with an illegible inscription. He said that it had been in a convent adjoining, but was removed after the French came, and placed in its present situation; that he had seen the tomb opened at its removal; there were still some bones remaining, but no positive vestige of the decapitation. The equestrian statue of which I have made mention in the third act as before that church is not, however, of a Faliero,

but of some other now obsolete warrior, although of a later date. There were two other Doges of this family prior to Marino : Ordelafo, who fell in battle at Zara in 1117 (where his descendant afterwards conquered the Huns), and Vital Faliero, who reigned in 1082. The family, originally from Fano, was of the most illustrious in blood and wealth in the city of once the most wealthy and still the most ancient families in Europe. The length I have gone into on this subject will show the interest I have taken in it. Whether I have succeeded or not in the tragedy, I have at least transferred into our language an historical fact worthy of commemoration.

It is now four years that I have meditated this work ; and before I had sufficiently examined the records, I was rather disposed to have made it turn on a jealousy in Faliero. But perceiving no foundation for this in historical truth, and aware that jealousy is an exhausted passion in the drama, I have given it a more historical form. I was, besides, well advised by the late Matthew Lewis on that point, in talking with him of my intention at Venice in 1817. "If you make him jealous," said he, "recollect that you have to contend with established writers, to say nothing of Shakspeare, and an exhausted subject ; — stick to the old fiery Doge's natural character, which will bear you out, if properly drawn ; and make your plot as regular as you can." Sir William Drummond gave me nearly the same counsel. How far I have followed these instructions, or whether they have availed me, is not for me to decide. I have had no view to the stage ; in its present state it is, perhaps, not a very exalted object of ambition ; besides, I have been too much behind the scenes to have thought it so at any time. And I cannot conceive any man of irritable feeling putting himself at the mercies of an audience. The sneering reader, and the loud critic, and the tart review, are scattered and distant calamities ; but the trampling of an intelligent or of an ignorant audience on a production which, be it good or bad, has been a mental labour to the writer, is a palpable and immediate grievance, heightened by a man's doubt of their competency to judge, and his certainty of his own imprudence in electing them his judges. Were I capable of writing a play which could be deemed stage-worthy, success would give

me no pleasure, and failure great pain. It is for this reason that, even during the time of being one of the committee of one of the theatres, I never made the attempt, and never will. (1) But surely there is dramatic power somewhere, where Joanna Baillie, and Millman, and John Wilson exist. The "City of the Plague" and the "Fall of Jerusalem" are full of the best "*materiel*" for tragedy that has been seen since Horace Walpole, except passages of Ethwald and De Montfort. It is the fashion to under-rate Horace Walpole; firstly, because he was a nobleman, and secondly, because he was a gentleman; but, to say nothing of the composition of his incomparable letters, and of the Castle of Otranto, he is the "Ultimus Romanorum," the author of the Mysterious Mother, a tragedy of the highest order, and not a puling love-play. He is the father of the first romance and of the last tragedy in our language, and surely worthy of a higher place than any living writer, be he who he may.

In speaking of the drama of Marino Faliero, I forgot to mention, that the desire of preserving, though still too remote, a nearer approach to unity than the irregularity, which is the reproach of the English theatrical compositions, permits, has induced me to represent the conspiracy as already formed, and the Doge ac-

(1) While I was in the sub-committee of Drury Lane Theatre, I can vouch for my colleagues, and I hope for myself, that we did our best to bring back the legitimate drama. I tried what I could to get "De Montfort" revived, but in vain, and equally in vain in favour of Sotheby's "Ivan," which was thought an acting play; and I endeavoured also to wake Mr. Coleridge to write a tragedy. Those who are not in the secret will hardly believe that the "School for Scandal" is the play which has brought *least money*, averaging the number of times it has been acted since its production; so Manager Dibdin assured me. Of what has occurred since Maturin's "Bertram," I am not aware; so that I may be traducing, through ignorance, some excellent new writers: if so, I beg their pardon. I have been absent from England nearly five years, and, till last year, I never read an English newspaper since my departure, and am now only aware of theatrical matters through the medium of the Parisian *Gazette* of Galignani, and only for the last twelve months. Let me then deprecate all offence to tragic or comic writers, to whom I wish well, and of whom I know nothing. The long complaints of the actual state of the drama arise, however, from no fault of the performers. I can conceive nothing better than Kemble, Cooke, and Kean in their very different manners, or than Elliston in *gentleman's* comedy, and in some parts of tragedy. Miss O'Niell I never saw, having made and kept a determination to see nothing which should divide or disturb my recollection of Siddons. Siddons and Kemble were the *ideal* of tragic action; I never saw any thing at all resembling them even in *person*: for this reason, we shall never see again Coriolanus or Macbeth. When Kean is blamed for want of dignity, we should remember that it is a grace and not an art, and not to be attained by study. In all, *not super-natural* parts, he is perfect; even his very defects belong, or seem to belong, to the parts themselves, and appear truer to nature. But of Kemble we may say, with reference to his acting, what the Cardinals de Retz said of the Marquis of Montrose, "that he was the only man he ever saw who reminded him of the heroes of Plutarch."

ceding to it; whereas, in fact, it was of his own preparation and that of Israel Bertuccio. The other characters (except that of the Duchess), incidents, and almost the time, which was wonderfully short for such a design in real life, are strictly historical, except that all the consultations took place in the palace. Had I followed this, the unity would have been better preserved; but I wished to produce the Doge in the full assembly of the conspirators, instead of monotonously placing him always in dialogue with the same individuals. For the real facts, I refer to the Appendix.

The first part of the book is devoted to a general introduction to the subject of the history of the world. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the general principles of history, and the second section deals with the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day. The first section is divided into three parts: the first part deals with the general principles of history, the second part deals with the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day, and the third part deals with the history of the world from the present day to the future. The second section is divided into two parts: the first part deals with the history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day, and the second part deals with the history of the world from the present day to the future.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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### MEN.

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge of Venice.*

BERTUCCIO FALIERO, *Nephew of the Doge.*

LIONI, *a Patrician and Senator.*

BENINTENDE, *Chief of the Council of Ten.*

MICHEL STENO, *One of the three Capi of the Forty.*

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, *Chief of*  
*the Arsenal,*

PHILIP CALENDARO,

DAGOLINO,

BERTRAM,

} *Conspirators.*

*Signor of the Night,* { "*Signore di Notte,*" *one of the Offi-*  
*cers belonging to the Republic.*

*First Citizen.*

*Second Citizen.*

*Third Citizen.*

VINCENZO,

PIETRO,

BATTISTA,

} *Officers belonging to the Ducal Palace.*

*Secretary of the Council of Ten.*

*Guards, Conspirators, Citizens, The Council of Ten, The*  
*Giunta, &c. &c.*

### WOMEN.

ANGIOLINA, *Wife to the Doge.*

MARIANNA, *her Friend.*

*Female Attendants, &c.*

Scene VENICE — in the year 1355.



# MARINO FALIERO.

## ACT I.

### SCENE I.

*An Antechamber in the Ducal Palace.*

PIETRO *speaks, in entering, to BATTISTA.*

*Pie.* Is not the messenger return'd ?

*Bat.*

Not yet ;

I have sent frequently, as you commanded,  
But still the Signory is deep in council,  
And long debate on Steno's accusation.

*Pie.* Too long — at least so thinks the Doge.

*Bat.*

How bears he

These moments of suspense ?

*Pie.*

With struggling patience.

Placed at the ducal table, cover'd o'er  
With all the apparel of the state ; petitions,  
Despatches, judgments, acts, reprieves, reports,  
He sits as rapt in duty ; but whene'er  
He hears the jarring of a distant door,  
Or aught that intimates a coming step,  
Or murmur of a voice, his quick eye wanders,  
And he will start up from his chair, then pause,  
And seat himself again, and fix his gaze  
Upon some edict ; but I have observed  
For the last hour he has not turn'd a leaf.

*Bat.* 'T is said he is much moved, and doubtless 't was  
Foul scorn in Steno to offend so grossly.

*Pie.* Ay, if a poor man : Steno's a patrician,  
Young, galliard, gay, and haughty.

*Bat.*

Then you think

He will not be judged hardly ?

*Pie.* 'T were enough  
He be judged justly ; but 't is not for us  
To anticipate the sentence of the Forty.

*Bat.* And here it comes. — What news, Vincenzo ?

*Enter VINCENZO.*

*Vin.* 'T is  
Decided ; but as yet his doom's unknown :  
I saw the president in act to seal  
The parchment which will bear the Forty's judgment  
Unto the Doge, and hasten to inform him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*The Ducal Chamber.*

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge* ; and his Nephew, BERTUCCIO  
FALIERO.

*Ber. F.* It cannot be but they will do you justice.

*Doge.* Ay, such as the Avogadori did,  
Who sent up my appeal unto the Forty  
To try him by his peers, his own tribunal.

*Ber. F.* His peers will scarce protect him ; such an act  
Would bring contempt on all authority.

*Doge.* Know you not Venice ? Know you not the Forty  
But we shall see anon.

*Ber. F.* (*addressing VINCENZO, then entering.*)  
How now — what tidings ?

*Vin.* I am charged to tell his highness that the court  
Has pass'd its resolution, and that, soon  
As the due forms of judgment are gone through,  
The sentence will be sent up to the Doge ;  
In the mean time the Forty doth salute  
The Prince of the Republic, and entreat  
His acceptance of their duty.

*Doge.* Yes —  
They are wond'rous dutiful, and ever humble.  
Sentence is pass'd, you say ?

*Vin.* It is, your highness :  
The president was sealing it, when I  
Was call'd in, that no moment might be lost  
In forwarding the intimation due

Not only to the Chief of the Republic,  
But the complainant, both in one united.

*Ber. F.* Are you aware, from aught you have perceived,  
Of their decision?

*Vin.* No, my lord; you know  
The secret custom of the courts in Venice.

*Ber. F.* True; but there still is something given to  
guess,

Which a shrewd gleaner and quick eye would catch at;  
A whisper, or a murmur, or an air  
More or less solemn spread o'er the tribunal.  
The Forty are but men — most worthy men,  
And wise, and just, and cautious — this I grant —  
And secret as the grave to which they doom  
The guilty; but with all this, in their aspects —  
At least in some, the juniors of the number —  
A searching eye, an eye like yours, Vincenzo,  
Would read the sentence ere it was pronounced.

*Vin.* My lord, I came away upon the moment,  
And had no leisure to take note of that  
Which pass'd among the judges, even in seeming;  
My station near the accused, too, Michel Steno,  
Made me —

*Doge (abruptly).* And how look'd he? deliver that.

*Vin.* Calm, but not overcast, he stood resign'd  
To the decree, whate'er it were; — but lo!  
It comes, for the perusal of his highness.

*Enter the SECRETARY of the Forty.*

*Sec.* The high tribunal of the Forty sends  
Health and respect to the Doge Faliero,  
Chief Magistrate of Venice, and requests  
His highness to peruse and to approve  
The sentence pass'd on Michel Steno, born  
Patrician, and arraign'd upon the charge  
Contain'd, together with its penalty,  
Within the rescript which I now present.

*Doge.* Retire, and wait without.

[*Exeunt SECRETARY and VINCENZO.*

Take thou this paper:

The misty letters vanish from my eyes;  
I cannot fix them.

*Ber. F.* Patience, my dear uncle:  
Why do you tremble thus? — nay, doubt not, all  
Will be as could be wish'd.

*Doge.*

Say on.

*Ber. F.* (*reading*). "Decreed  
In council, without one dissenting voice,  
That Michel Steno, by his own confession,  
Guilty on the last night of Carnival  
Of having graven on the ducal throne  
The following words ——"

*Doge.* Would'st thou repeat them?  
Would'st *thou* repeat them — *thou*, a Faliero,  
Harp on the deep dishonour of our house,  
Dishonour'd in its chief — that chief the prince  
Of Venice, first of cities? — To the sentence.

*Ber. F.* Forgive me, my good lord; I will obey —  
(*Reads.*) "That Michel Steno be detain'd a month  
In close arrest."

*Doge.* Proceed.

*Ber. F.* My lord, 't is finish'd.

*Doge.* How, say you? — finish'd! Do I dream? — 't is  
false —

Give me the paper — (*Snatches the paper and reads*) —  
" 'T is decreed in council  
That Michel Steno" —— Nephew, thine arm!

*Ber. F.* Nay,  
Cheer up, be calm; this transport is uncall'd for —  
Let me seek some assistance.

*Doge.* Stop, sir — Stir not —  
'T is past.

*Ber. F.* I cannot but agree with you  
The sentence is too slight for the offence —  
It is not honourable in the Forty  
To affix so slight a penalty to that  
Which was a foul affront to you, and even  
To them, as being your subjects; but 't is not  
Yet without remedy: you can appeal  
To them once more, or to the Avogadori,  
Who, seeing that true justice is withheld,  
Will now take up the cause they once declined,  
And do you right upon the bold delinquent.  
Think you not thus, good uncle? why do you stand  
So fix'd? You heed me not: — I pray you, hear me!

*Doge* (*dashing down the ducal bonnet, and offering to  
trample upon it, exclaims as he is withheld by his  
nephew*)

Oh! that the Saracen were in St. Mark's!  
Thus would I do him homage.

*Ber. F.* For the sake  
Of Heaven and all its saints, my lord ——

*Doge.*

Away!

Oh, that the Genoese were in the port!  
 Oh, that the Huns whom I o'erthrew at Zara  
 Were ranged around the palace!

*Ber. F.*

'T is not well

In Venice' Duke to say so.

*Doge.*

Venice' Duke!

Who now is Duke in Venice? let me see him,  
 That he may do me right.

*Ber. F.*

If you forget

Your office, and its dignity and duty,  
 Remember that of man, and curb this passion.  
 The Duke of Venice —

*Doge (interrupting him).* There is no such thing —

It is a word — nay, worse — a worthless by-word:  
 The most despised, wrong'd, outraged, helpless wretch,  
 Who begs his bread, if 't is refused by one,  
 May win it from another kinder heart;  
 But he, who is denied his right by those  
 Whose place it is to do no wrong, is poorer  
 Than the rejected beggar — he 's a slave —  
 And that am I, and thou, and all our house,  
 Even from this hour; the meanest artisan  
 Will point the finger, and the haughty noble  
 May spit upon us: — where is our redress?

*Ber. F.* The law, my prince? —*Doge (interrupting him).* You see what it has done —

I ask'd no remedy but from the law —  
 I sought no vengeance but redress by law —  
 I call'd no judges but those named by law —  
 As sovereign, I appeal'd unto my subjects,  
 The very subjects who had made me sovereign,  
 And gave me thus a double right to be so.  
 The rights of place and choice, of birth and service,  
 Honours and years, these scars, these hoary hairs,  
 The travel, toil, the perils, the fatigues,  
 The blood and sweat of almost eighty years,  
 Were weigh'd i' the balance, 'gainst the foulest stain,  
 The grossest insult, most contemptuous crime  
 Of a rank, rash patrician — and found wanting!  
 And this is to be borne!

*Ber. F.*

I say not that: —

In case your fresh appeal should be rejected,  
 We will find other means to make all even.

*Doge.* Appeal again! art thou my brother's son?

A scion of the house of Faliero?

The nephew of a Doge? and of that blood  
Which hath already given three dukes to Venice?  
But thou say'st well — we must be humble now.

*Ber. F.* My princely uncle! you are too much moved: —  
I grant it was a gross offence, and grossly  
Left without fitting punishment: but still  
This fury doth exceed the provocation,  
Or any provocation: if we are wrong'd,  
We will ask justice; if it be denied,  
We'll take it; but may do all this in calmness —  
Deep Vengeance is the daughter of deep Silence.  
I have yet scarce a third part of your years,  
I love our house, I honour you, its chief,  
The guardian of my youth, and its instructor —  
But though I understand your grief, and enter  
In part of your disdain, it doth appal me  
To see your anger, like our Adrian waves,  
O'ersweep all bounds, and foam itself to air.

*Doge.* I tell thee — *must* I tell thee — what thy father  
Would have required no words to comprehend?  
Hast thou no feeling save the external sense  
Of torture from the touch? hast thou no soul —  
No pride — no passion — no deep sense of honour?

*Ber. F.* 'T is the first time that honour has been doubted,  
And were the last, from any other sceptic.

*Doge.* You know the full offence of this born villain,  
This creeping, coward, rank, acquitted felon,  
Who threw his sting into a poisonous libel,  
And on the honour of — Oh God! — my wife,  
The nearest, dearest part of all men's honour,  
Left a base slur to pass from mouth to mouth  
Of loose mechanics, with all coarse foul comments,  
And villanous jests, and blasphemies obscene;  
While sneering nobles, in more polish'd guise,  
Whisper'd the tale, and smiled upon the lie  
Which made me look like them — a courteous wittol,  
Patient — ay, proud, it may be, of dishonour.

*Ber. F.* But still it was a lie — you knew it false,  
And so did all men.

*Doge.* Nephew, the high Roman  
Said, "Cæsar's wife must not even be suspected,"  
And put her from him.

*Ber. F.* True — but in those days —

*Doge.* What is it that a Roman would not suffer,  
That a Venetian prince must bear? Old Dandolo  
Refused the diadem of all the Cæsars,

: And wore the ducal cap I trample on,  
Because 't is now degraded.

*Ber. F.* 'T is even so.

*Doge.* It is — it is ; — I did not visit on  
The innocent creature thus most vilely slander'd  
Because she took an old man for her lord,  
For that he had been long her father's friend  
And patron of her house, as if there were  
No love in woman's heart but lust of youth  
And beardless faces ; — I did not for this  
Visit the villain's infamy on her,  
But craved my country's justice on his head,  
The justice due unto the humblest being  
Who hath a wife whose faith is sweet to him,  
Who hath a home whose hearth is dear to him,  
Who hath a name whose honour 's all to him,  
When these are tainted by the accursing breath  
Of calumny and scorn.

*Ber. F.* And what redress  
Did you expect as his fit punishment ?

*Doge.* Death ! Was I not the sovereign of the state —  
Insulted on his very throne, and made  
A mockery to the men who should obey me ?  
Was I not injured as a husband ? scorn'd  
As man ? reviled, degraded, as a prince ?  
Was not offence like his a complication  
Of insult and of treason ? — and he lives !  
Had he instead of on the Doge's throne  
Stamp'd the same brand upon a peasant's stool,  
His blood had gilt the threshold ; for the carle  
Had stabbed him on the instant.

*Ber. F.* Do not doubt it,  
He shall not live till sunset — leave to me  
The means, and calm yourself.

*Doge.* Hold, nephew : this  
Would have sufficed but yesterday ; at present  
I have no further wrath against this man.

*Ber. F.* What mean you ? is not the offence redoubled  
By this most rank — I will not say — acquittal ;  
For it is worse, being full acknowledgment  
Of the offence, and leaving it unpunish'd ?

*Doge.* It is *redoubled*, but not now by him :  
The Forty hath decreed a month's arrest —  
We must obey the Forty.

*Ber. F.* Obey them !  
Who have forgot their duty to the sovereign ?

*Doge.* Why yes ; — boy, you perceive it then at last :  
 Whether as fellow-citizen who sues  
 For justice, or as sovereign who commands it,  
 They have defrauded me of both my rights  
 (For here the sovereign is a citizen) ;  
 But, notwithstanding, harm not thou a hair  
 Of Steno's head — he shall not wear it long.

*Ber. F.* Not twelve hours longer, had you left to me  
 The mode and means ; if you had calmly heard me,  
 I never meant this miscreant should escape,  
 But wish'd you to suppress such gusts of passion,  
 That we more surely might devise together  
 His taking off.

*Doge.* No, nephew, he must live ;  
 At least, just now — a life so vile as his  
 Were nothing at this hour ; in th' olden time  
 Some sacrifices ask'd a single victim,  
 Great expiations had a hecatomb.

*Ber. F.* Your wishes are my law : and yet I fain  
 Would prove to you how near unto my heart  
 The honour of our house must ever be.

*Doge.* Fear not ; you shall have time and place of proof :  
 But be not thou too rash, as I have been.  
 I am ashamed of my own anger now ;  
 I pray you, pardon me.

*Ber. F.* Why that 's my uncle !  
 The leader, and the statesman, and the chief  
 Of commonwealths, and sovereign of himself !  
 I wonder'd to perceive you so forget  
 All prudence in your fury at these years,  
 Although the cause —

*Doge.* Ay, think upon the cause —  
 Forget it not : — When you lie down to rest,  
 Let it be black among your dreams ; and when  
 The morn returns, so let it stand between  
 The sun and you, as an ill-omen'd cloud  
 Upon a summer-day of festival :  
 So will it stand to me ; — but speak not, stir not, —  
 Leave all to me ; — we shall have much to do,  
 And you shall have a part. — But now retire,  
 'T is fit I were alone.

*Ber. F.* (*taking up and placing the ducal bonnet on the  
 table.*) Ere I depart,  
 I pray you to resume what you have spurn'd,  
 Till you can change it haply for a crown.  
 And now I take my leave, imploring you

In all things to rely upon my duty  
As doth become your near and faithful kinsman,  
And not less loyal citizen and subject.

[Exit BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

*Doge (solus).* Adieu, my worthy nephew. — Hollow bauble!

[Taking up the ducal cap.

Beset with all the thorns that line a crown,  
Without investing the insulted brow  
With the all-swaying majesty of kings;  
Thou idle, gilded, and degraded toy,  
Let me resume thee as I would a vizor. [Puts it on.  
How my brain aches beneath thee! and my temples  
Throb feverish under thy dishonest weight.  
Could I not turn thee to a diadem?  
Could I not shatter the Briarean sceptre  
Which in this hundred-handed senate rules,  
Making the people nothing, and the prince  
A pageant? In my life I have achieved  
Tasks not less difficult — achieved for them,  
Who thus repay me! — Can I not requite them?  
Oh for one year! Oh! but for even a day  
Of my full youth, while yet my body served  
My soul as serves the generous steed his lord,  
I would have dash'd among them, asking few  
In aid to overthrow these sworn patricians;  
But now I must look round for other hands  
To serve this hoary head; — but it shall plan  
In such a sort as will not leave the task  
Herculean, though as yet 't is but a chaos  
Of darkly brooding thoughts: my fancy is  
In her first work, more nearly to the light  
Holding the sleeping images of things  
For the selection of the pausing judgment. —  
The troops are few in ———

*Enter VINCENZO.*

*Vin.* There is one without  
Craves audience of your highness.

*Doge.* I 'm unwell —  
I can see no one, not even a patrician —  
Let him refer his business to the council.

*Vin.* My lord, I will deliver your reply;  
It cannot much import — he 's a plebeian,  
The master of a galley, I believe.

*Doge.* How! did you say the patron of a galley;  
That is — I mean — a servant of the state:

Admit him, he may be on public service.

[*Exit* VINCENZO.]

*Doge (solus)*. This patron may be sounded; I will try him.

I know the people to be discontented :  
 They have cause, since Sapienza's adverse day,  
 When Genoa conquer'd : they have further cause,  
 Since they are nothing in the state, and in  
 The city worse than nothing — mere machines,  
 To serve the nobles' most patrician pleasure.  
 The troops have long arrears of pay, oft promised,  
 And murmur deeply — any hope of change  
 Will draw them forward : they shall pay themselves  
 With plunder : — but the priests — I doubt the priesthood  
 Will not be with us ; they have hated me  
 Since that rash hour, when, madden'd with the drone,  
 I smote the tardy bishop at Treviso, (1)  
 Quickening his holy march ; yet, ne'ertheless,  
 They may be won, at least their chief at Rome,  
 By some well-timed concessions ; but, above  
 All things, I must be speedy : at my hour  
 Of twilight little light of life remains.  
 Could I free Venice, and avenge my wrongs,  
 I had lived too long, and willingly would sleep  
 Next moment with my sires ; and, wanting this,  
 Better that sixty of my fourscore years  
 Had been already where — how soon, I care not —  
 The whole must be extinguish'd ; — better that  
 They ne'er had been, than drag me on to be  
 The thing these arch-oppressors fain would make me.  
 Let me consider — of efficient troops  
 There are three thousand posted at —

*Enter* VINCENZO and ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

*Vin.* May it please  
 Your highness, the same patron whom I spake of  
 Is here to crave your patience.

*Doge.* Leave the chamber,  
*Vincenzo.* — [Exit VINCENZO.]

Sir, you may advance — what would you ?

*I. Ber.* Redress.

*Doge.* Of whom ?

*I. Ber.* Of God and of the Doge.

*Doge.* Alas ! my friend, you seek it of the twain

(1) An historical fact. See Marin Sanuto's Lives of the Doges,

Of least respect and interest in Venice.  
You must address the council.

*I. Ber.* 'T were in vain ;

For he who injured me is one of them.

*Doge.* There 's blood upon thy face — how came it there ?

*I. Ber.* 'T is mine, and not the first I 've shed for Venice,  
But the first shed by a Venetian hand :  
A noble smote me.

*Doge.* Doth he live ?

*I. Ber.* Not long —

But for the hope I had and have, that you,  
My prince, yourself a soldier, will redress  
Him, whom the laws of discipline and Venice  
Permit not to protect himself ; — if not —  
I say no more.

*Doge.* But something you would do —

Is it not so ?

*I. Ber.* I am a man, my lord.

*Doge.* Why so is he who smote you.

*I. Ber.* He is call'd so ;

Nay, more, a noble one — at least, in Venice :  
But since he hath forgotten that I am one,  
And treats me like a brute, the brute may turn —  
'T is said the worm will.

*Doge.* Say — his name and lineage ?

*I. Ber.* Barbaro.

*Doge.* What was the cause ? or the pretext ?

*I. Ber.* I am the chief of the arsenal, employ'd

At present in repairing certain galleys  
But roughly used by the Genoese last year.  
This morning comes the noble Barbaro  
Full of reproof, because our artisans  
Had left some frivolous order of his house,  
To execute the state's decree ; I dared  
To justify the men — he raised his hand ; —  
Behold my blood ! the first time it e'er flow'd  
Dishonourably.

*Doge.* Have you long time served ?

*I. Ber.* So long as to remember Zara's siege,  
And fight beneath the chief who beat the Huns there,  
Sometime my general, now the Doge Faliero. —

*Doge.* How ! are we comrades ? — the state's ducal robes

Sit newly on me, and you were appointed  
Chief of the arsenal ere I came from Rome ;

So that I recognised you not. Who placed you?

*I. Ber.* The late Doge; keeping still my old command  
As patron of a galley: my new office  
Was given as the reward of certain scars  
(So was your predecessor pleased to say):  
I little thought his bounty would conduct me  
To his successor as a helpless plaintiff;  
At least, in such a cause.

*Doge.* Are you much hurt?

*I. Ber.* Irreparably in my self-esteem.

*Doge.* Speak out; fear nothing: being stung at heart,  
What would you do to be revenged on this man?

*I. Ber.* That which I dare not name, and yet will do.

*Doge.* Then wherefore came you here?

*I. Ber.* I come for justice,

Because my general is Doge, and will not  
See his old soldier trampled on. Had any,  
Save Faliero, fill'd the ducal throne,  
This blood had been wash'd out in other blood.

*Doge.* You come to me for justice — unto me!  
The Doge of Venice, and I cannot give it;  
I cannot even obtain it — 'T was denied  
To me most solemnly an hour ago.

*I. Ber.* How says your highness?

*Doge.* Steno is condemn'd  
To a month's confinement.

*I. Ber.* What! the same who dared  
To stain the ducal throne with those foul words,  
That have cried shame to every ear in Venice?

*Doge.* Ay, doubtless they have echo'd o'er the arsenal,  
Keeping due time with every hammer's clink  
As a good jest to jolly artisans;  
Or making chorus to the creaking oar,  
In the vile tune of every galley-slave,  
Who, as he sung the merry stave, exulted  
He was not a shamed dotard like the Doge.

*I. Ber.* Is 't possible? a month's imprisonment!  
No more for Steno?

*Doge.* You have heard the offence,  
And now you know his punishment; and then  
You ask redress of me! Go to the Forty,  
Who pass'd the sentence upon Michel Steno;  
They'll do as much by Barbaro, no doubt.

*I. Ber.* Ah! dared I speak my feelings!

*Doge.* Give them breath.  
Mine have no further outrage to endure.

*I. Ber.* Then, in a word, it rests but on your word  
To punish and avenge — I will not say  
*My* petty wrong, for what is a mere blow,  
However vile, to such a thing as I am? —  
But the base insult done your state and person.

*Doge.* Your overrate my power, which is a pageant.  
This cap is not the monarch's crown; these robes  
Might move compassion, like a beggar's rags;  
Nay, more, a beggar's are his own, and these  
But lent to the poor puppet, who must play  
Its part with all its empire in this ermine.

*I. Ber.* Wouldst thou be king?

*Doge.* Yes — of a happy people.

*I. Ber.* Wouldst thou be sovereign lord of Venice?

*Doge.* Ay,

If that the people shared that sovereignty,  
So that nor they nor I were further slaves  
To this o'ergrown aristocratic Hydra,  
The poisonous heads of whose envenom'd body  
Have breathed a pestilence upon us all.

*I. Ber.* Yet, thou wast born, and still hast lived, patrician.

*Doge.* In evil hour was I so born; my birth  
Hath made me Doge to be insulted: but  
I lived and toil'd a soldier and a servant  
Of Venice and her people, not the senate;  
Their good and my own honour were my guerdon.  
I have fought and bled; commanded, ay, and conquered;  
Have made and marr'd peace oft in embassies,  
As it might chance to be our country's 'vantage;  
Have traversed land and sea in constant duty,  
Through almost sixty years, and still for Venice,  
My fathers' and my birthplace, whose dear spires,  
Rising at distance o'er the blue Lagoon,  
It was reward enough for me to view  
Once more; but not for any knot of men,  
Nor sect, nor faction, did I bleed or sweat!  
But would you know why I have done all this?  
Ask of the bleeding pelican why she  
Hath ripp'd her bosom? Had the bird a voice,  
She 'd tell thee 't was for *all* her little ones.

*I. Ber.* And yet they made thee duke.

*Doge.* *They made me so;*

I sought it not, the flattering fetters met me  
Returning from my Roman embassy;  
And never having hitherto refused  
Toil, charge, or duty for the state, I did not,

At these late years, decline what was the highest  
Of all in seeming, but of all most base  
In what we have to do and to endure :  
Bear witness for me thou, my injured subject,  
When I can neither right myself nor thee.

*I. Ber.* You shall do both, if you possess the will ;  
And many thousands more not less oppress'd,  
Who wait but for a signal — will you give it ?

*Doge.* You speak in riddles.

*I. Ber.* Which shall soon be read  
At peril of my life ; if you disdain not  
To lend a patient ear.

*Doge.* Say on.

*I. Ber.* Not thou,  
Nor I alone, are injured and abused,  
Contemn'd and trampled on ; but the whole people  
Groan with the strong conception of their wrongs :  
The foreign soldiers in the senate's pay  
Are discontented for their long arrears ;  
The native mariners, and civic troops,  
Feel with their friends ; for who is he amongst them  
Whose brethren, parents, children, wives, or sisters,  
Have not partook oppression, or pollution,  
From the patricians ? And the hopeless war  
Against the Genoese, which is still maintain'd  
With the plebeian blood, and treasure wrung  
From their hard earnings, has inflamed them further :  
Even now — but, I forget that speaking thus,  
Perhaps I pass the sentence of my death !

*Doge.* And suffering what thou hast done — fear'st thou  
Death ?

Be silent then, and live on, to be beaten  
By those for whom thou hast bled.

*I. Ber.* No, I will speak  
At every hazard ; and if Venice' Doge  
Should turn delator, be the shame on him,  
And sorrow too ; for he will lose far more  
Than I.

*Doge.* From me fear nothing ; out with it !

*I. Ber.* Know then, that there are met and sworn in secret  
A band of brethren, valiant hearts and true ;  
Men who have proved all fortunes, and have long  
Grieved over that of Venice, and have right  
To do so ; having served her in all climes,  
And having rescued her from foreign foes,  
Would do the same from those within her walls.

They are not numerous, nor yet too few  
For their great purpose ; they have arms, and means,  
And hearts, and hopes, and faith, and patient courage.

*Doge.* For what then do you pause ?

*I. Ber.*

An hour to strike:

*Doge (aside).* Saint Mark's shall strike that hour !

*I. Ber.*

I now have placed

My life, my honour, all my earthly hopes  
Within thy power, but in the firm belief  
That injuries like ours, sprung from one cause,  
Will generate one vengeance : should it be so,  
Be our chief now — our sovereign hereafter.

*Doge.* How many are ye ?

*I. Ber.*

I 'll not answer that

Till I am answer'd.

*Doge.*

How, sir ! do you menace ?

*I. Ber.* No ; I affirm. I have betray'd myself ;

But there 's no torture in the mystic wells  
Which undermine your palace, nor in those  
Not less appalling cells, the " leaden roofs,"  
To force a single name from me of others.  
The Pozzi and the Piombi were in vain ;  
They might wring blood from me, but treachery never.  
And I would pass the fearful " Bridge of Sighs,"  
Joyous that mine must be the last that e'er  
Would echo o'er the Stygian wave which flows  
Between the murderers and the murder'd, washing  
The prison and the palace walls : there are  
Those who would live to think on 't, and avenge me.

*Doge.* If such your power and purpose, why come here  
To sue for justice, being in the course  
To do yourself due right ?

*I. Ber.*

Because the man,

Who claims protection from authority,  
Showing his confidence and his submission  
To that authority, can hardly be  
Suspected of combining to destroy it.  
Had I sate down too humbly with this blow,  
A moody brow and mutter'd threats had made me  
A mark'd man to the Forty's inquisition ;  
But loud complaint, however angrily  
It shapes its phrase, is little to be fear'd,  
And less distrusted. But, besides all this,  
I had another reason.

*Doge.*

What was that ?

*I. Ber.* Some rumours that the Doge was greatly moved

By the reference of the Avogadori  
Of Michel Steno's sentence to the Forty  
Had reach'd me. I had served you, honour'd you,  
And felt that you were dangerously insulted,  
Being of an order of such spirits, as  
Requite tenfold both good and evil: 't was  
My wish to prove and urge you to redress.  
Now you know all; and that I speak the truth,  
My peril be the proof.

*Doge.* You have deeply ventured;  
But all must do so who would greatly win:  
Thus far I'll answer you — your secret's safe.

*I. Ber.* And is this all?

*Doge.* Unless with all intrusted,  
What would you have me answer?

*I. Ber.* I would have you  
Trust him who leaves his life in trust with you.

*Doge.* But I must know your plan, your names, and  
numbers;

The last may then be doubled, and the former  
Matured and strengthen'd.

*I. Ber.* We're enough already;  
You are the sole ally we covet now.

*Doge.* But bring me to the knowledge of your chiefs.

*I. Ber.* That shall be done upon your formal pledge  
To keep the faith that we will pledge to you.

*Doge.* When? where?

*I. Ber.* This night I'll bring to your apartment  
Two of the principals; a greater number  
Were hazardous.

*Doge.* Stay, I must think of this.  
What if I were to trust myself amongst you,  
And leave the palace?

*I. Ber.* You must come alone.

*Doge.* With but my nephew.

*I. Ber.* Not were he your son.

*Doge.* Wretch! darest thou name my son? He died in  
arms

At Sapienza for this faithless state.

Oh! that he were alive, and I in ashes!

Or that he were alive ere I be ashes!

I should not need the dubious aid of strangers.

*I. Ber.* Not one of all those strangers whom thou doubtest,  
But will regard thee with a filial feeling,  
So that thou keep'st a father's faith with them.

*Doge.* The die is cast. Where is the place of meeting?

*I. Ber.* At midnight I will be alone and mask'd  
Where'er your highness pleases to direct me,  
To wait your coming, and conduct you where  
You shall receive our homage, and pronounce  
Upon our project.

*Doge.* At what hour arises  
The moon?

*I. Ber.* Late, but the atmosphere is thick and dusky,  
'T is a sirocco.

*Doge.* At the midnight hour, then,  
Near to the church where sleep my sires; the same,  
Twin-named from the apostles John and Paul;  
A gondola, (1) with one oar only, will  
Lurk in the narrow channel which glides by.  
Be there.

*I. Ber.* I will not fail.

*Doge.* And now retire —

*I. Ber.* In the full hope your highness will not falter  
In your great purpose. Prince, I take my leave.

[*Exit* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.]

*Doge (solus).* At midnight, by the church Saints John  
and Paul,

Where sleep my noble fathers, I repair —  
To what? to hold a council in the dark  
With common ruffians leagued to ruin states!  
And will not my great sires leap from the vault,  
Where lie two doges who preceded me,  
And pluck me down amongst them? Would they could!  
For I should rest in honour with the honour'd.  
Alas! I must not think of them, but those  
Who have made me thus unworthy of a name  
Noble and brave as aught of consular  
On Roman marbles; but I will redeem it  
Back to its antique lustre in our annals,  
By sweet revenge on all that's base in Venice,  
And freedom to the rest, or leave it black  
To all the growing calumnies of time,  
Which never spare the fame of him who fails,  
But try the Cæsar, or the Catiline,  
By the true touchstone of desert — success.

(1) A gondola is not like a common boat, but is as easily rowed with one oar as with two (though, of course, not so swiftly), and often is so from motives of privacy; and, since the decay of Venice, of economy.

## ACT II.

## SCENE I.

*An Apartment in the Ducal Palace.*

ANGIOLINA (*wife of the DOGE*) and MARIANNA.

*Ang.* What was the Doge's answer?

*Mar.* That he was

That moment summon'd to a conference ;  
But 't is by this time ended. I perceived  
Not long ago the senators embarking ;  
And the last gondola may now be seen  
Gliding into the throng of barks which stud  
The glittering waters.

*Ang.* Would he were return'd !

He has been much disquieted of late ;  
And Time, which has not tamed his fiery spirit,  
Nor yet enfeebled even his mortal frame,  
Which seems to be more nourish'd by a soul  
So quick and restless that it would consume  
Less hardy clay — Time has but little power  
On his resentments or his griefs. Unlike  
To other spirits of his order, who,  
In the first burst of passion, pour away  
Their wrath or sorrow, all things wear in him  
An aspect of eternity : his thoughts,  
His feelings, passions, good or evil, all  
Have nothing of old age ; and his bold brow  
Bears but the scars of mind, the thoughts of years,  
Not their decrepitude : and he of late  
Has been more agitated than his wont.  
Would he were come ! for I alone have power  
Upon his troubled spirit.

*Mar.* It is true,

His highness has of late been greatly moved  
By the affront of Steno, and with cause :  
But the offender doubtless even now  
Is doom'd to expiate his rash insult with  
Such chastisement as will enforce respect  
To female virtue, and to noble blood.

*Ang.* 'T was a gross insult ; but I heed it not  
For the rash scorner's falsehood in itself,  
But for the effect, the deadly deep impression

Which it has made upon Faliero's soul,  
The proud, the fiery, the austere — austere  
To all save me : I tremble when I think  
To what it may conduct.

*Mar.* Assuredly  
The Doge can not suspect you ?

*Ang.* Suspect me !  
Why Steno dared not : when he scrawl'd his lie,  
Groveling by stealth in the moon's glimmering light,  
His own still conscience smote him for the act,  
And every shadow on the walls frown'd shame  
Upon his coward calumny.

*Mar.* 'T were fit  
He should be punish'd grievously.

*Ang.* He is so.

*Mar.* What ! is the sentence pass'd ? is he condemn'd ?

*Ang.* I know not that, but he has been detected.

*Mar.* And deem you this enough for such foul scorn ?

*Ang.* I would not be a judge in my own cause,  
Nor do I know what sense of punishment  
May reach the soul of ribalds such as Steno ;  
But if his insults sink no deeper in  
The minds of the inquisitors than they  
Have ruffled mine, he will, for all acquittance,  
Be left to his own shamelessness or shame.

*Mar.* Some sacrifice is due to slander'd virtue.

*Ang.* Why, what is virtue if it needs a victim ?  
Or if it must depend upon men's words ?  
The dying Roman said, " 't was but a name : "  
It were indeed no more, if human breath  
Could make or mar it.

*Mar.* Yet full many a dame,  
Stainless and faithful, would feel all the wrong  
Of such a slander ; and less rigid ladies,  
Such as abound in Venice, would be loud  
And all-inexorable in their cry  
For justice.

*Ang.* This but proves it is the name  
And not the quality they prize : the first  
Have found it a hard task to hold their honour,  
If they require it to be blazon'd forth ;  
And those who have not kept it, seek its seeming  
As they would look out for an ornament  
Of which they feel the want, but not because  
They think it so ; they live in others' thoughts,  
And would seem honest as they must seem fair.

*Mar.* You have strange thoughts for a patrician dame.

*Ang.* And yet they were my father's ; with his name,  
The sole inheritance he left.

*Mar.* You want none ;  
Wife to a prince, the chief of the Republic.

*Ang.* I should have sought none though a peasant's  
bride,

But feel not less the love and gratitude  
Due to my father, who bestow'd my hand  
Upon his early, tried, and trusted friend,  
'The Count Val di Marino, now our Doge.

*Mar.* And with that hand did he bestow your heart ?

*Ang.* He did so, or it had not been bestow'd.

*Mar.* Yet this strange disproportion in your years,  
And, let me add, disparity of tempers,  
Might make the world doubt whether such an union  
Could make you wisely, permanently happy.

*Ang.* The world will think with worldlings ; but my heart  
Has still been in my duties, which are many,  
But never difficult.

*Mar.* And do you love him ?

*Ang.* I love all noble qualities which merit  
Love, and I loved my father, who first taught me  
To single out what we should love in others,  
And to subdue all tendency to lend  
The best and purest feelings of our nature  
To baser passions. He bestow'd my hand  
Upon Faliero : he had known him noble,  
Brave, generous ; rich in all the qualities  
Of soldier, citizen, and friend ; in all  
Such have I found him as my father said.  
His faults are those that dwell in the high bosoms  
Of men who have commanded ; too much pride  
And the deep passions fiercely foster'd by  
'The uses of patricians, and a life  
Spent in the storms of state and war ; and also  
From the quick sense of honour, which becomes  
A duty to a certain sign, a vice  
When overstrain'd, and this I fear in him.  
And then he has been rash from his youth upwards,  
Yet temper'd by redeeming nobleness  
In such sort, that the wariest of republics  
Has lavish'd all its chief employs upon him,  
From his first fight to his last embassy,  
From which on his return the dukedom met him.

*Mar.* But previous to this marriage, had your heart

Ne'er beat for any of the noble youth,  
Such as in years had been more meet to match  
Beauty like yours? or since have you ne'er seen  
One, who, if your fair hand were still to give,  
Might now pretend to Loredano's daughter?

*Ang.* I answer'd your first question when I said  
I married.

*Mar.* And the second?

*Ang.* Needs no answer.

*Mar.* I pray you pardon, if I have offended.

*Ang.* I feel no wrath, but some surprise: I knew not  
That wedded bosoms could permit themselves  
To ponder upon what they *now* might choose,  
Or aught save their past choice.

*Mar.* 'T is their past choice  
That far too often makes them deem they would  
Now choose more wisely, could they cancel it.

*Ang.* It may be so. I know not of such thoughts.

*Mar.* Here comes the Doge — shall I retire?

*Ang.* It may

Be better you should quit me; he seems rapt  
In thought. — How pensively he takes his way!

[*Exit MARIANNA.*]

*Enter the DOGE and PIETRO.*

*Doge (musing).* There is a certain Philip Calendaro  
Now in the Arsenal, who holds command  
Of eighty men, and has great influence  
Besides on all the spirits of his comrades:  
This man, I hear, is bold and popular,  
Sudden and daring, and yet secret; 't would  
Be well that he were won: I needs must hope  
That Israel Bertuccio has secured him,  
But fain would be ——

*Pie.* My lord, pray pardon me  
For breaking in upon your meditation;  
The Senator Bertuccio, your kinsman,  
Charged me to follow and enquire your pleasure  
To fix an hour when he may speak with you.

*Doge.* At sunset. — Stay a moment — let me see —  
Say in the second hour of night. [ *Exit PIETRO.* ]

*Ang.* My lord!

*Doge.* My dearest child, forgive me — why delay  
So long approaching me? — I saw you not.

*Ang.* You were absorb'd in thought, and he who now

Has parted from you might have words of weight  
To bear you from the senate.

*Doge.* From the senate?

*Ang.* I would not interrupt him in his duty  
And theirs.

*Doge.* The senate's duty! you mistake;  
'Tis we who owe all service to the senate.

*Ang.* I thought the Duke had held command in Venice.

*Doge.* He shall. — But let that pass. — We will be jocund.

How fares it with you? have you been abroad?  
The day is overcast, but the calm wave  
Favours the gondolier's light skimming oar;  
Or have you held a levee of your friends?  
Or has your music made you solitary?  
Say — is there aught that you would will within  
The little sway now left the Duke? or aught  
Of fitting splendour, or of honest pleasure,  
Social or lonely, that would glad your heart,  
To compensate for many a dull hour, wasted  
On an old man oft moved with many cares?  
Speak, and 't is done.

*Ang.* You 're ever kind to me.

I having nothing to desire, or to request,  
Except to see you oftener and calmer.

*Doge.* Calmer?

*Ang.* Ay, calmer, my good lord. — Ah, why  
Do you still keep apart, and walk alone,  
And let such strong emotions stamp your brow,  
As not betraying their full import, yet  
Disclose too much?

*Doge.* Disclose too much! — of what?  
What is there to disclose?

*Ang.* A heart so ill  
At ease.

*Doge.* 'T is nothing, child. — But in the state  
You know what daily cares oppress all those  
Who govern this precarious commonwealth;  
Now suffering from the Genoese without,  
And malcontents within — 't is this which makes me  
More pensive and less tranquil than my wont.

*Ang.* Yet this existed long before, and never  
Till in these late days did I see you thus.  
Forgive me; there is something at your heart  
More than the mere discharge of public duties,  
Which long use and a talent like to yours

Have render'd light, nay, a necessity,  
 To keep your mind from stagnating. 'T is not  
 In hostile states, nor perils, thus to shake you ;  
 You, who have stood all storms and never sunk,  
 And climb'd up to the pinnacle of power  
 And never fainted by the way, and stand  
 Upon it, and can look down steadily  
 Along the depth beneath, and ne'er feel dizzy.  
 Were Genoa's galleys riding in the port,  
 Were civil fury raging in St. Mark's,  
 You are not to be wrought on, but would fall,  
 As you have risen, with an unalter'd brow —  
 Your feelings now are of a different kind ;  
 Something has stung your pride, not patriotism.

*Doge.* Pride! Angiolina? Alas! none is left me.

*Ang.* Yes — the same sin that overthrew the angels,  
 And of all sins most easily besets  
 Mortals the nearest to the angelic nature :  
 The vile are only vain ; the great are proud.

*Doge.* I had the pride of honour, of *your* honour,  
 Deep at my heart — But let us change the theme.

*Ang.* Ah no! — As I have ever shared your kindness  
 In all things else, let me not be shut out  
 From your distress : were it of public import,  
 You know I never sought, would never seek  
 To win a word from you ; but feeling now  
 Your grief is private, it belongs to me  
 To lighten or divide it. Since the day  
 When foolish Steno's ribaldry detected  
 Unfix'd your quiet, you are greatly changed,  
 And I would soothe you back to what you were.

*Doge.* To what I was! — Have you heard Steno's sentence?

*Ang.* No.

*Doge.* A month's arrest.

*Ang.* Is it not enough?

*Doge.* Enough! — yes, for a drunken galley slave,  
 Who, stung by stripes, may murmur at his master ;  
 But not for a deliberate, false, cool villain,  
 Who stains a lady's and a prince's honour  
 Even on the throne of his authority.

*Ang.* There seems to me enough in the conviction  
 Of a patrician guilty of a falsehood :  
 All other punishment were light unto  
 His loss of honour.

*Doge.* Such men have no honour ;

They have but their vile lives — and these are spared.

*Ang.* You would not have him die for this offence?

*Doge.* Not *now* : — being still alive, I'd have him live.  
Long as *he* can ; he has ceased to merit death ;  
The guilty saved hath damn'd his hundred judges,  
And he is pure, for now his crime is theirs.

*Ang.* Oh ! had this false and flippant libeller  
Shed his young blood for his absurd lampoon,  
Ne'er from that moment could this breast have known  
A joyous hour, or dreamless slumber more.

*Doge.* Does not the law of Heaven say blood for blood ?  
And he who *taints* kills more than he who sheds it.  
Is it the *pain* of blows, or *shame* of blows,  
That make such deadly to the sense of man ?  
Do not the laws of man say blood for honour ?  
And, less than honour, for a little gold ?  
Say not the laws of nations blood for treason ?  
Is 't nothing to have fill'd these veins with poison  
For their once healthful current ? is it nothing  
To have stain'd your name and mine — the noblest names ?  
Is 't nothing to have brought into contempt  
A prince before his people ? to have fail'd  
In the respect accorded by mankind  
To youth in woman, and old age in man ?  
To virtue in your sex, and dignity  
In ours ? — but let them look to it who have saved him.

*Ang.* Heaven bids us to forgive our enemies.

*Doge.* Doth Heaven forgive her own ? Is Satan saved  
From wrath eternal ?

*Ang.* Do not speak thus wildly —  
Heaven will alike forgive you and your foes.

*Doge.* Amen ! May Heaven forgive them !

*Ang.* And will you ?

*Doge.* Yes, when they are in Heaven !

*Ang.* And not till then ?

*Doge.* What matters my forgiveness ? an old man's,  
Worn out, scorn'd, spurn'd, abused ; what matters then  
My pardon more than my resentment, both  
Being weak and worthless ? I have lived too long. —  
But let us change the argument. — My child !  
My injured wife, the child of Loredano,  
The brave, the chivalrous, how little deem'd  
Thy father, wedding thee unto his friend,  
That he was linking thee to shame ! — Alas !  
Shame without sin, for thou art faultless. Hadst thou  
But had a different husband, *any* husband

In Venice save the Doge, this blight, this brand,  
 This blasphemy had never fallen upon thee.  
 So young, so beautiful, so good, so pure,  
 To suffer this, and yet be unavenged !

*Ang.* I am too well avenged, for you still love me,  
 And trust, and honour me ; and all men know  
 That you are just, and I am true : what more  
 Could I require, or you command ?

*Doge.* 'T is well,  
 And may be better ; but whate'er betide,  
 Be thou at least kind to my memory.

*Ang.* Why speak you thus ?

*Doge.* It is no matter why ;  
 But I would still, whatever others think,  
 Have your respect both now and in my grave.

*Ang.* Why should you doubt it ? has it ever fail'd ?

*Doge.* Come hither, child ; I would a word with you.  
 Your father was my friend ; unequal fortune  
 Made him my debtor for some courtesies  
 Which bind the good more firmly : when, oppress'd  
 With his last malady, he will'd our union,  
 It was not to repay me, long repaid  
 Before by his great loyalty in friendship ;  
 His object was to place your orphan beauty  
 In honourable safety from the perils,  
 Which, in this scorpion nest of vice, assail  
 A lonely and undower'd maid. I did not  
 Think with him, but would not oppose the thought  
 Which soothed his death-bed.

*Ang.* I have not forgotten  
 The nobleness with which you bade me speak  
 If my young heart held any preference  
 Which would have made me happier ; nor your offer  
 To make my dowry equal to the rank  
 Of aught in Venice, and forego all claim  
 My father's last injunction gave you.

*Doge.* Thus,  
 'T was not a foolish dotard's vile caprice,  
 Nor the false edge of aged appetite,  
 Which made me covetous of girlish beauty,  
 And a young bride : for in my fieriest youth  
 I sway'd such passions ; nor was this my age  
 Infected with that leprosy of lust  
 Which taints the hoariest years of vicious men,  
 Making them ransack to the very last  
 The dregs of pleasure for their vanish'd joys ;

Or buy in selfish marriage some young victim,  
 Too helpless to refuse a state that 's honest,  
 Too feeling not to know herself a wretch.  
 Our wedlock was not of this sort ; you had  
 Freedom from me to choose, and urged in answer  
 Your father's choice.

*Ang.* I did so ; I would do so  
 In face of earth and heaven ; for I have never  
 Repented for my sake ; sometimes for yours,  
 In pondering o'er your late disquietudes.

*Doge.* I knew my heart would never treat you harshly ;  
 I knew my days could not disturb you long ;  
 And then the daughter of my earliest friend,  
 His worthy daughter, free to choose again,  
 Wealthier and wiser, in the ripest bloom  
 Of womanhood, more skilful to select  
 By passing these probationary years  
 Inheriting a prince's name and riches,  
 Secured, by the short penance of enduring  
 An old man for some summers, against all  
 That law's chicane or envious kinsmen might  
 Have urged against her right ; my best friend's child  
 Would choose more fitly in respect of years,  
 And not less truly in a faithful heart.

*Ang.* My lord, I look'd but to my father's wishes,  
 Hallow'd by his last words, and to my heart  
 For doing all its duties, and replying  
 With faith to him with whom I was affianced.  
 Ambitious hopes ne'er cross'd my dreams ; and should  
 The hour you speak of come, it will be seen so.

*Doge.* I do believe you ; and I know you true :  
 For love, romantic love, which in my youth  
 I knew to be illusion, and ne'er saw  
 Lasting, but often fatal, it had been  
 No lure for me, in my most passionate days,  
 And could not be so now, did such exist.  
 But such respect, and mildly paid regard  
 As a true feeling for your welfare, and  
 A free compliance with all honest wishes ;  
 A kindness to your virtues, watchfulness  
 Not shown, but shadowing o'er such little failings  
 As youth is apt in, so as not to check  
 Rashly, but win you from them ere you knew  
 You had been won, but thought the change your choice ;  
 A pride not in your beauty, but your conduct, —  
 A trust in you — a patriarchal love,

And not a doting homage — friendship, faith —  
Such estimation in your eyes as these  
Might claim, I hoped for.

*Ang.* And have ever had.

*Doge.* I think so. For the difference in our years  
You knew it, choosing me, and chose : I trusted  
Not to my qualities, nor would have faith  
In such, nor outward ornaments of nature,  
Were I still in my five and twentieth spring ;  
I trusted to the blood of Lorendano  
Pure in your veins ; I trusted to the soul  
God gave you — to the truths your father taught you —  
To your belief in heaven — to your mild virtues —  
To your own faith and honour, for my own.

*Ang.* You have done well. — I thank you for that trust,  
Which I have never for one moment ceased  
To honour you the more for.

*Doge.* Where is honour,  
Innate and precept-strengthen'd, 't is the rock  
Of faith connubial : where it is not — where  
Light thoughts are lurking, or the vanities  
Of worldly pleasure rankle in the heart,  
Or sensual throbs convulse it, well I know  
'T were hopeless for humanity to dream  
Of honesty in such infected blood,  
Although 't were wed to him it covets most :  
An incarnation of the poet's god  
In all his marble-chisell'd beauty, or  
The demi-deity, Alcides, in  
His majesty of superhuman manhood,  
Would not suffice to bind where virtue is not ;  
It is consistency which forms and proves it :  
Vice cannot fix, and virtue cannot change.  
The once fall'n woman must for ever fall ;  
For vice must have variety, while virtue  
Stands like the sun, and all which rolls around  
Drinks life, and light, and glory from her aspect.

*Ang.* And seeing, feeling thus this truth in others,  
(I pray you pardon me ;) but wherefore yield you  
To the most fierce of fatal passions, and  
Disquiet your great thoughts with restless hate.  
Of such a thing as Steno ?

*Doge.* You mistake me.

It is not Steno who could move me thus ;  
Had it been so, he should — but let that pass.

*Ang.* What is 't you feel so deeply, then, even now ?

*Doge.* The violated majesty of Venice,  
At once insulted in her lord and laws.

*Ang.* Alas! why will you thus consider it?

*Doge.* I have thought on 't till — but let me lead you  
back

To what I urged; all these things being noted,  
I wedded you; the world then did me justice  
Upon the motive, and my conduct proved  
They did me right, while yours was all to praise:  
You had all freedom — all respect — all trust  
From me and mine; and, born of those who made  
Princes at home, and swept kings from their thrones  
On foreign shores, in all things you appear'd  
Worthy to be our first of native dames.

*Ang.* To what does this conduct?

*Doge.* To thus much — that  
A miscreant's angry breath may blast it all —  
A villain, whom for his unbridled bearing,  
Even in the midst of our great festival,  
I caused to be conducted forth, and taught  
How to demean himself in ducal chambers;  
A wretch like this may leave upon the wall  
The blighting venom of his sweltering heart,  
And this shall spread itself in general poison;  
And woman's innocence, man's honour, pass  
Into a by-word; and the doubly felon  
(Who first insulted virgin modesty  
By a gross affront to your attendant damsels  
Amidst the noblest of our dames in public)  
Requite himself for his most just expulsion  
By blackening publicly his sovereign's consort,  
And be absolved by his upright compeers.

*Ang.* But he has been condemn'd into captivity.

*Doge.* For such as him a dungeon were acquittal;  
And his brief term of mock-arrest will pass  
Within a palace. But I've done with him;  
The rest must be with you.

*Ang.* With me, my lord?

*Doge.* Yes, Angiolina. Do not marvel; I  
Have let this prey upon me till I feel  
My life cannot be long; and fain would have you  
Regard the injunctions you will find within  
This scroll (*Giving her a paper*) — Fear not; they are  
for your advantage:  
Read them hereafter at the fitting hour.

*Ang.* My lord, in life, and after life, you shall

Be honour'd still by me : but may your days  
 Be many yet — and happier than the present !  
 This passion will give way, and you will be  
 Serene, and what you should be — what you were.

*Doge.* I will be what I should be, or be nothing ;  
 But never more — oh ! never, never more,  
 O'er the few days or hours which yet await  
 The blighted old age of Faliero, shall  
 Sweet Quiet shed her sunset ! Never more  
 Those summer shadows rising from the past  
 Of a not ill-spent nor inglorious life,  
 Mellowing the last hours as the night approaches,  
 Shall soothe me to my moment of long rest.  
 I had but little more to task, or hope,  
 Save the regards due to the blood and sweat,  
 And the soul's labour through which I had toil'd  
 To make my country honour'd. As her servant —  
 Her servant, though her chief — I would have gone  
 Down to my fathers with a name serene  
 And pure as theirs ; but this has been denied me. —  
 Would I had died at Zara !

*Ang.* There you saved  
 The state ; then live to save her still. A day,  
 Another day like that would be the best  
 Reproof to them, and sole revenge for you.

*Doge.* But one such day occurs within an age ;  
 My life is little less than one, and 't is  
 Enough for Fortune to have granted *once*,  
 That which scarce one more favour'd citizen  
 May win in many states and years. But why  
 Thus speak I ? Venice has forgot that day —  
 Then why should I remember it ? — Farewell,  
 Sweet Angiolina ! I must to my cabinet ;  
 There 's much for me to do — and the hour hastens.

*Ang.* Remember what you were.

*Doge.* It were in vain !  
 Joy's recollection is no longer joy,  
 While Sorrow's memory is a sorrow still.

*Ang.* At least, whate'er may urge, let me implore  
 That you will take some little pause of rest :  
 Your sleep for many nights has been so turbid,  
 That it had been relief to have awaked you,  
 Had I not hoped that Nature would o'erpower  
 At length the thoughts which shook your slumbers thus.  
 An hour of rest will give you to your toils  
 With fitter thoughts and freshen'd strength.

*Doge.*

I cannot —

I must not, if I could ; for never was  
Such reason to be watchful : yet a few —  
Yet a few days and dream-perturbed nights,  
And I shall slumber well — but where ? — no matter.  
Adieu, my Angiolina.

*Ang.*

Let me be

An instant — yet an instant your companion !  
I cannot bear to leave you thus.

*Doge.*

Come then,

My gentle child — forgive me ; thou wert made  
For better fortunes than to share in mine,  
Now darkling in their close toward the deep vale  
Where Death sits robed in his all-sweeping shadow.  
When I am gone — it may be sooner than  
Even these years warrant, for there is that stirring  
Within — above — around, that in this city  
Will make the cemeteries populous  
As e'er they were by pestilence or war, —  
When I *am* nothing, let that which I *was* .  
Be still sometimes a name on thy sweet lips,  
A shadow in thy fancy, of a thing  
Which would not have thee mourn it, but remember ; —  
Let us begone, my child — the time is pressing.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

*A retired Spot near the Arsenal.*

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO and PHILIP CALENDARO.

*Cal.* How sped you, Israel, in your late complaint ?

*I. Ber.* Why, well.

*Cal.*

Is 't possible ! will he be punish'd ?

*I. Ber.*

Yes.

*Cal.* With what ? a mulct or an arrest ?

*I. Ber.*

With death ! —

*Cal.* Now you rave, or must intend revenge,  
Such as I counsell'd you, with your own hand.

*I. Ber.* Yes ; and for one sole draught of hate, forego  
The great redress we meditate for Venice,  
And change a life of hope for one of exile ;  
Leaving one scorpion crush'd, and thousands stinging  
My friends, my family, my countrymen !  
No, Calendaro ; these same drops of blood,  
Shed shamefully, shall have the whole of his

For their requital — But not only his ;  
 We will not strike for private wrongs alone :  
 Such are for selfish passions and rash men,  
 But are unworthy a tyrannicide.

*Cal.* You have more patience than I care to boast.  
 Had I been present when you bore this insult,  
 I must have slain him, or expired myself  
 In the vain effort to repress my wrath.

*I. Ber.* Thank Heaven, you were not — all had else been  
 marr'd :

As 't is, our cause looks prosperous still.

*Cal.* You saw

The Doge — what answer gave he ?

*I. Ber.* That there was

No punishment for such as Barbaro.

*Cal.* I told you so before, and that 't was idle  
 To think of justice from such hands.

*I. Ber.* At least,

It lull'd suspicion, showing confidence.

Had I been silent, not a sbirro but  
 Had kept me in his eye, as meditating  
 A silent, solitary, deep revenge.

*Cal.* But wherefore not address you to the Council ?  
 The Doge is a mere puppet, who can scarce  
 Obtain right for himself. Why speak to him ?

*I. Ber.* You shall know that hereafter.

*Cal.* Why not now ?

*I. Ber.* Be patient but till midnight. Get your musters,  
 And bid our friends prepare their companies : —  
 Set all in readiness to strike the blow,  
 Perhaps in a few hours ; we have long waited  
 For a fit time — that hour is on the dial,  
 It may be, of to-morrow's sun : delay  
 Beyond may breed us double danger. See  
 That all be punctual at our place of meeting,  
 And arm'd, excepting those of the Sixteen,  
 Who will remain among the troops to wait  
 The signal.

*Cal.* These brave words have breathed new life  
 Into my veins ; I am sick of these protracted  
 And hesitating councils : day on day  
 Crawl'd on, and added but another link  
 To our long fetters, and some fresher wrong  
 Inflicted on our brethren or ourselves,  
 Helping to swell our tyrants' bloated strength.  
 Let us but deal upon them, and I care not

For the result, which must be death or freedom!  
I 'm weary to the heart of finding neither.

*I. Ber.* We will be free in life or death! the grave  
Is chainless. Have you all the musters ready?  
And are the sixteen companies completed  
To sixty?

*Cal.* All save two, in which there are  
Twenty-five wanting to make up the number.

*I. Ber.* No matter; we can do without. Whose are they?

*Cal.* Bertram's and old Soranzo's, both of whom  
Appear less forward in the cause than we are.

*I. Ber.* Your fiery nature makes you deem all those  
Who are not restless cold: but there exists  
Oft in concentrated spirits not less daring  
Than in more loud avengers. Do not doubt them.

*Cal.* I do not doubt the elder; but in Bertram  
There is a hesitating softness, fatal  
To enterprise like ours: I've seen that man  
Weeping like an infant o'er the misery  
Of others, heedless of his own, though greater;  
And in a recent quarrel I beheld him  
Turn sick at sight of blood, although a villain's.

*I. Ber.* The truly brave are soft of heart and eyes,  
And feel for what their duty bids them do.  
I have known Bertram long; there doth not breathe  
A soul more full of honour.

*Cal.* It may be so:  
I apprehend less treachery than weakness;  
Yet as he has no mistress, and no wife  
To work upon his milkiness of spirit,  
He may go through the ordeal; it is well  
He is an orphan, friendless save in us:  
A woman or a child had made him less  
Than either in resolve.

*I. Ber.* Such ties are not  
For those who are call'd to the high destinies  
Which purify corrupted commonwealths;  
We must forget all feelings save the *one* —  
We must resign all passions save our purpose —  
We must behold no object save our country —  
And only look on death as beautiful,  
So that the sacrifice ascend to heaven,  
And draw down freedom on her evermore.

*Cal.* But if we fail —

*I. Ber.* They never fail who die  
In a great cause: the block may soak their gore;

Their heads may sodden in the sun ; their limbs  
 Be strung to city gates and castle walls —  
 But still their spirit walks abroad. Though years  
 Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,  
 They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts  
 Which overpower all others, and conduct  
 The world at last to freedom : What were we,  
 If Brutus had not lived ? He died in giving  
 Rome liberty, but left a deathless lesson —  
 A name which is a virtue, and a soul  
 Which multiplies itself throughout all time  
 When wicked men wax mighty, and a state  
 Turns servile : he and his high friend were styled  
 “ The last of Romans ! ” Let us be the first  
 Of true Venetians, sprung from Roman sires.

*Cal.* Our fathers did not fly from Attila  
 Into these isles, where palaces have sprung  
 On banks redeem'd from the rude ocean's ooze,  
 To own a thousand despots in his place.  
 Better bow down before the Hun, and call  
 A Tartar lord, than these swoln silkworms masters !  
 The first at least was man, and used his sword  
 As sceptre : these unmanly creeping things  
 Command our swords, and rule us with a word  
 As with a spell.

*I. Ber.* It shall be broken soon.  
 You say that all things are in readiness ;  
 To-day I have not been the usual round,  
 And why thou knowest ; but thy vigilance  
 Will better have supplied my care : these orders  
 In recent council to redouble now  
 Our efforts to repair the galleys, have  
 Lent a fair colour to the introduction  
 Of many of our cause into the arsenal,  
 As new artificers for their equipment,  
 Or fresh recruits obtain'd in haste to man  
 The hoped-for fleet. — Are all supplied with arms ?

*Cal.* All who were deem'd trust-worthy : there are some  
 Whom it were well to keep in ignoranc'e  
 Till it be time to strike, and then supply them :  
 When in the heat and hurry of the hour  
 They have no opportunity to pause,  
 But needs must on with those who will surround them.

*I. Ber.* You have said well. Have you remark'd all such ?

*Cal.* I've noted most ; and caused the other chiefs  
 To use like caution in their companies.

As far as I have seen, we are enough  
To make the enterprise secure, if 't is  
Commenced to-morrow ; but, till 't is begun,  
Each hour is pregnant with a thousand perils.

*I. Ber.* Let the Sixteen meet at the wonted hour,  
Except Soranzo, Nicoletto Blondo,  
And Marco Giuda, who will keep their watch  
Within the arsenal, and hold all ready,  
Expectant of the signal we will fix on.

*Cal.* We will not fail.

*I. Ber.* Let all the rest be there ;  
I have a stranger to present to them.

*Cal.* A stranger ! doth he know the secret ?

*I. Ber.* Yes.

*Cal.* And have you dared to peril your friends' lives  
On a rash confidence in one we know not ?

*I. Ber.* I have risk'd no man's life except my own —  
Of that be certain : he is one who may  
Make our assurance doubly sure, according  
His aid ; and if reluctant, he no less  
Is in our power : he comes alone with me,  
And cannot 'scape us ; but he will not swerve.

*Cal.* I cannot judge of this until I know him :  
Is he one of our order ?

*I. Ber.* Ay, in spirit,  
Although a child of greatness ; he is one  
Who would become a throne, or overthrow one —  
One who has done great deeds, and seen great changes ,  
No tyrant, though bred up to tyranny ;  
Valiant in war, and sage in council ; noble  
In nature, although haughty ; quick, yet wary :  
Yet for all this, so full of certain passions,  
That if once stirr'd and baffled, as he has been  
Upon the tenderest points, there is no Fury  
In Grecian story like to that which wrings  
His vitals with her burning hands, till he  
Grows capable of all things for revenge ;  
And add too, that his mind is liberal,  
He sees and feels the people are oppress'd,  
And shares their sufferings. 'Take him all in all,  
We have need of such, and such have need of us.

*Cal.* And what part would you have him take with us ?

*I. Ber.* It may be, that of chief.

*Cal.* What ! and resign  
Your own command as leader ?

*I. Ber.* Even so.

My object is to make your cause end well,  
 And not to push myself to power. Experience,  
 Some skill, and your own choice, had mark'd me out  
 To act in trust as your commander, till  
 Some worthier should appear : if I have found such  
 As you yourselves shall own more worthy, think you  
 That I would hesitate from selfishness,  
 And, covetous of brief authority,  
 Stake our deep interest on my single thoughts,  
 Rather than yield to one above me in  
 All leading qualities? No, Calendaro,  
 Know your friend better; but you all shall judge. —  
 Away! and let us meet at the fix'd hour.  
 Be vigilant, and all will yet go well.

*Cal.* Worthy Bertuccio, I have known you ever  
 Trusty and brave, with head and heart to plan  
 What I have still been prompt to execute.  
 For my own part, I seek no other chief;  
 What the rest will decide I know not, but  
 I am with you, as I have ever been,  
 In all our undertakings. Now farewell,  
 Until the hour of midnight sees us meet.

[*Exeunt.*]

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ACT III.

SCENE I.

*Scene, the Space between the Canal and the Church of San Giovanni e San Paolo. An equestrian Statue before it. — A Gondola lies in the Canal at some distance.*

*Enter the DOGE alone, disguised.*

*Doge (solus).* I am before the hour, the hour whose  
 voice,  
 Pealing into the arch of night, might strike  
 These palaces with ominous tottering,  
 And rock their marbles to the corner-stone,  
 Waking the sleepers from some hideous dream  
 Of indistinct but awful augury  
 Of that which will befall them. Yes, proud city!

Thou must be cleansed of the black blood which makes thee  
 A lazar-house of tyranny: the task  
 Is forced upon me, I have sought it not;  
 And therefore was I punish'd, seeing this  
 Patrician pestilence spread on and on,  
 Until at length it smote me in my slumbers,  
 And I am tainted, and must wash away  
 The plague-spots in the healing wave. Tall fane!  
 Where sleep my fathers, whose dim statues shadow  
 The floor which doth divide us from the dead,  
 Where all the pregnant hearts of our bold blood,  
 Moulder'd into a mite of ashes, hold  
 In one shrunk heap, what once made many heroes,  
 When what is now a handful shook the earth —  
 Fane of the tutelar saints who guard our house!  
 Vault where two Doges rest — my sires! who died  
 The one of toil, the other in the field,  
 With a long race of other lineal chiefs  
 And sages, whose great labours, wounds, and state  
 I have inherited, — let the graves gape,  
 Till all thine aisles be peopled with the dead,  
 And pour them from thy portals to gaze on me!  
 I call them up, and them and thee to witness  
 What it hath been which put me to this task —  
 Their pure high blood, their blazon-roll of glories,  
 Their mighty name dishonour'd all *in* me,  
 Not *by* me, but by the ungrateful nobles  
 We fought to make our equals, not our lords: —  
 And chiefly thou, Ordelafo the brave,  
 Who perish'd in the field, where I since conquer'd,  
 Battling at Zara, did the hecatombs  
 Of thine and Venice' foes, there offer'd up  
 By thy descendant, merit such acquittance?  
 Spirits! smile down upon me; for my cause  
 Is yours, in all life now can be of yours, —  
 Your fame, your name, all mingled up in mine,  
 And in the future fortunes of our race!  
 Let me but prosper, and I make this city  
 Free and immortal, and our house's name  
 Worthier of what you were, now and hereafter!

*Enter* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

*I. Ber.* Who goes there?

*Doge.*

A friend to Venice.

*I. Ber.*

'T is he.

Welcome, my lord, — you are before the time.

*Doge.* I am ready to proceed to your assembly.

*I. Ber.* Have with you. — I am proud and pleased to see  
Such confident alacrity. Your doubts  
Since our last meeting, then, are all dispell'd?

*Doge.* Not so — but I have set my little left  
Of life upon this cast : the die was thrown  
When I first listen'd to your treason — Start not !  
*That* is the word ; I cannot shape my tongue  
To syllable black deeds into smooth names,  
Though I be wrought on to commit them. When  
I heard you tempt your sovereign, and forbore  
To have you dragg'd to prison, I became  
Your guiltiest accomplice : now you may,  
If it so please you, do as much by me.

*I. Ber.* Strange words, my lord, and most unmerited ;  
I am no spy, and neither are we traitors.

*Doge.* *We — We!* — no matter — you have earn'd the  
right  
To talk of *us*. — But to the point. — If this  
Attempt succeeds, and Venice, render'd free  
And flourishing, when we are in our graves,  
Conducts her generations to our tombs  
And makes her children with their little hands  
Strew flowers o'er her deliverers' ashes, then  
The consequence will sanctify the deed,  
And we shall be like the two Bruti in  
The annals of hereafter ; but if not,  
If we should fail, employing bloody means  
And secret plot, although to a good end,  
Still we are traitors, honest Israel ; — thou  
No less than he who was thy sovereign  
Six hours ago, and now thy brother rebel.

*I. Ber.* 'T is not the moment to consider thus,  
Else I could answer. — Let us to the meeting,  
Or we may be observed in lingering here.

*Doge.* *We are* observed, and have been.

*I. Ber.*

*We observed!*

Let me discover — and this steel —

*Doge.*

Put up ;

Here are no human witnesses : look there —

What see you ?

*I. Ber.* Only a tall warrior's statue  
Bestriding a proud steed, in the dim light  
Of the dull moon.

*Doge.* That warrior was the sire  
Of my sire's fathers, and that statue was  
Decreed to him by the twice rescued city : —  
Think you that he looks down on us or no ?

*I. Ber.* My lord, these are mere fantasies ; there are  
No eyes in marble.

*Doge.* But there are in Death.  
I tell thee, man, there is a spirit in  
Such things that acts and sees, unseen, though felt ;  
And, if there be a spell to stir the dead,  
'T is in such deeds as we are now upon.  
Deem'st thou the souls of such a race as mine  
Can rest, when he, their last descendant chief,  
Stands plotting on the brink of their pure graves  
With stung plebeians ?

*I. Ber.* It had been as well  
To have ponder'd this before, — ere you embark'd  
In our great enterprise. — Do you repent ?

*Doge.* No — but I *feel*, and shall do to the last.  
I cannot quench a glorious life at once,  
Nor dwindle to the thing I now must be,  
And take men's lives by stealth, without some pause :  
Yet doubt me not ; it is this very feeling,  
And knowing *what* has wrung me to be thus,  
Which is your best security. There 's not  
A roused mechanic in your busy plot  
So wrong'd as I, so fall'n, so loudly call'd  
To his redress : the very means I am forced  
By these fell tyrants to adopt is such,  
That I abhor them doubly for the deeds  
Which I must do to pay them back for theirs.

*I. Ber.* Let us away — hark — the hour strikes.

*Doge.* On — on —  
It is our knell, or that of Venice — On.

*I. Ber.* Say rather, 't is her freedom's rising peal  
Of triumph — This way — we are near the place.

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

*The House where the Conspirators meet.*

DAGOLINO, DORO, BERTRAM, FEDELE TREVISANO, CALENDARO, ANTONIO DELLE BENDE, &c. &c.

*Cal. (entering).* Are all here ?

*Dag.* All with you ; except the three  
On duty, and our leader Israel,  
Who is expected momentarily.

*Cal.* Where 's Bertram ?

*Ber.* Here !

*Cal.* Have you not been able to complete  
The number wanting in your company ?

*Ber.* I had mark'd out some : but I have not dared  
To trust them with the secret, till assured  
That they were worthy faith.

*Cal.* There is no need  
Of trusting to their faith : *who*, save ourselves  
And our more chosen comrades, is aware  
Fully of our intent ? they think themselves  
Engaged in secret to the Signory, (1)  
To punish some more dissolute young nobles  
Who have defied the law in their excesses ;  
But once drawn up, and their new swords well-flesh'd  
In the rank hearts of the more odious senators,  
They will not hesitate to follow up  
Their blow upon the others, when they see  
The example of their chiefs, and I for one  
Will set them such, that they for very shame  
And safety will not pause till all have perish'd.

*Ber.* How say you ? *all!*

*Cal.* Whom wouldst thou spare ?

*Ber.* *I spare*

I have no power to spare. I only question'd,  
Thinking that even amongst these wicked men  
There might be some, whose age and qualities  
Might mark them out for pity.

*Cal.* Yes, such pity  
As when the viper hath been cut to pieces,  
The separate fragments quivering in the sun,

(1) An historical fact. See APPENDIX, Note (A).

In the last energy of venomous life,  
 Deserve and have. Why, I should think as soon  
 Of pitying some particular fang which made  
 One in the jaw of the swoln serpent, as  
 Of saving one of these : they form but links  
 Of one long chain ; one mass, one breath, one body ;  
 They eat, and drink, and live, and breed together,  
 Revel, and lie, oppress, and kill in concert, —  
 So let them die as *one* !

*Dag.* Should *one* survive,  
 He would be dangerous as the whole ; it is not  
 Their number, be it tens or thousands, but  
 The spirit of this aristocracy  
 Which must be rooted out ; and if there were  
 A single shoot of the old tree in life,  
 'T would fasten in the soil, and spring again  
 To gloomy verdure and to bitter fruit.  
 Bertram, we must be firm !

*Cal.* Look to it well,  
 Bertram ; I have an eye upon thee.

*Ber.* Who  
 Distrusts me ?

*Cal.* Not I ; for if I did so,  
 Thou wouldst not now be there to talk of trust :  
 It is thy softness, not thy want of faith,  
 Which makes thee to be doubted.

*Ber.* You should know  
 Who hear me, who and what I am ; a man  
 Roused like yourselves to overthrow oppression ;  
 A kind man, I am apt to think, as some  
 Of you have found me ; and if brave or no,  
 You, Calendaro, can pronounce, who have seen me  
 Put to the proof ; or, if you should have doubts,  
 I 'll clear them on your person !

*Cal.* You are welcome,  
 When once our enterprise is o'er, which must not  
 Be interrupted by a private brawl.

*Ber.* I am no brawler ; but can bear myself  
 As far among the foe as any he  
 Who hears me ; else why have I been selected  
 To be of your chief comrades ? but no less  
 I own my natural weakness ; I have not  
 Yet learn'd to think of indiscriminate murder  
 Without some sense of shuddering ; and the sight  
 Of blood which spouts through hoary scalps is not  
 To me a thing of triumph, nor the death

Of man surprised a glory. Well — too well  
 I know that we must do such things on those  
 Whose acts have raised up such avengers; but  
 If there were some of these who could be saved  
 From out this sweeping fate, for our own sakes  
 And for our honour, to take off some stain  
 Of massacre, which else pollutes it wholly,  
 I had been glad; and see no cause in this  
 For sneer, nor for suspicion!

*Dag.* Calm thee, Bertram;  
 For we suspect thee not, and take good heart.  
 It is the cause, and not our will, which asks  
 Such actions from our hands: we 'll wash away  
 All stains in Freedom's fountain!

*Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, and the DOGE, disguised.*

*Dag.* Welcome, Israel.

*Consp.* Most welcome. — Brave Bertuccio, thou art  
 late —

Who is this stranger?

*Cal.* It is time to name him.

Our comrades are even now prepared to greet him  
 In brotherhood, as I have made it known  
 That thou wouldst add a brother to our cause,  
 Approved by thee, and thus approved by all,  
 Such is our trust in all thine actions. Now  
 Let him unfold himself.

*I. Ber.* Stranger, step forth!

[*The DOGE discovers himself.*]

*Consp.* To arms! — we are betray'd — it is the Doge!  
 Down with them both! our traitorous captain, and  
 The tyrant he hath sold us to.

*Cal.* (*drawing his sword*). Hold! Hold!  
 Who moves a step against them dies. Hold! hear  
 Bertuccio — What! are you appall'd to see  
 A lone, unguarded, weaponless old man  
 Amongst you? — Israel, speak! what means this mystery?

*I. Ber.* Let them advance and strike at their own bo-  
 soms,  
 Ungrateful suicides! for on our lives  
 Depend their own, their fortunes, and their hopes.

*Doge.* Strike! — If I dreaded death, a death more fearful  
 Than any your rash weapons can inflict,  
 I should not now be here: — Oh, noble Courage  
 The eldest born of Fear, which makes you brave

Against this solitary hoary head !  
 See the bold chiefs, who would reform a state  
 And shake down senates, mad with wrath and dread  
 At sight of one patrician ! — Butcher me,  
 You can ; I care not. — Israel, are these men  
 The mighty hearts you spoke of ? look upon them !

*Cal.* Faith ! he hath shamed us, and deservedly.  
 Was this your trust in your true Chief Bertuccio,  
 To turn your swords against him and his guest ?  
 Sheathe them, and hear him.

*I. Ber.* I disdain to speak.  
 They might and must have known a heart like mine  
 Incapable of treachery ; and the power  
 They gave me to adopt all fitting means  
 To further their design was ne'er abused.  
 They might be certain that whoe'er was brought  
 By me into this council had been led  
 To take his choice — as brother, or as victim.

*Doge.* And which am I to be ? your actions leave  
 Some cause to doubt the freedom of the choice.

*I. Ber.* My lord, we would have perish'd here together,  
 Had these rash men proceeded ; but, behold,  
 They are ashamed of that mad moment's impulse,  
 And droop their heads ; believe me, they are such  
 As I described them — Speak to them.

*Cal.* Ay, speak ;  
 We are all listening in wonder.

*I. Ber.* (*addressing the Conspirators*). You are safe,  
 Nay, more, almost triumphant — listen then,  
 And know my words for truth.

*Doge.* You see me here,  
 As one of you hath said, an old, unarm'd,  
 Defenceless man ; and yesterday you saw me  
 Presiding in the hall of ducal state,  
 Apparent sovereign of our hundred isles,  
 Robed in official purple, dealing out  
 The edicts of a power which is not mine,  
 Nor yours, but of our masters — the patricians.  
 Why I was there you know, or think you know ;  
 Why I am *here*, he who hath been most wrong'd,  
 He who among you hath been most insulted,  
 Outraged and trodden on, until he doubt  
 If he be worm or no, may answer for me,  
 Asking of his own heart what brought him here ?  
 You know my recent story, all men know it,  
 And judge of it far differently from those

Who sate in judgment to heap scorn on scorn.  
But spare me the recital — it is here,  
Here at my heart the outrage — but my words,  
Already spent in unavailing plaints,  
Would only show my feebleness the more,  
And I come here to strengthen even the strong,  
And urge them on to deeds, and not to war  
With woman's weapons ; but I need not urge you.  
Our private wrongs have sprung from public vices  
In this — I cannot call it commonwealth  
Nor kingdom, which hath neither prince nor people,  
But all the sins of the old Spartan state  
Without its virtues — temperance and valour.  
The lords of Lacedæmon were true soldiers,  
But ours are Sybarites, while we are Helots,  
Of whom I am the lowest, most enslaved ;  
Although dress'd out to head a pageant, as  
The Greeks of yore made drunk their slaves to form  
A pastime for their children. You are met  
To overthrow this monster of a state,  
This mockery of a government, this spectre,  
Which must be exorcised with blood, — and then  
We will renew the times of truth and justice,  
Condensing in a fair free commonwealth  
Not rash equality but equal rights,  
Proportion'd like the columns to the temple,  
Giving and taking strength reciprocal,  
And making firm the whole with grace and beauty,  
So that no part could be removed without  
Infringement of the general symmetry.  
In operating this great change, I claim  
To be one of you — if you trust in me ;  
If not, strike home, — my life is compromised,  
And I would rather fall by freemen's hands  
Than live another day to act the tyrant  
As delegate of tyrants : such I am not,  
And never have been — read it in our annals ;  
I can appeal to my past government  
In many lands and cities ; they can tell you  
If I were an oppressor, or a man  
Feeling and thinking for my fellow men.  
Haply had I been what the senate sought,  
A thing of robes and trinkets, dizen'd out  
To sit in state as for a sovereign's picture ;  
A popular scourge, a ready sentence-signer,  
A stickler for the Senate and “ the Forty,”

A sceptic of all measures which had not  
 The sanction of "the Ten," a council-fawner,  
 A tool, a fool, a puppet, — they had ne'er  
 Foster'd the wretch who stung me. What I suffer  
 Has reach'd me through my pity for the people ;  
 That many know, and they who know not yet  
 Will one day learn : meantime I do devote,  
 Whate'er the issue, my last days of life —  
 My present power such as it is, not that  
 Of Doge, but of a man who has been great  
 Before he was degraded to a Doge,  
 And still has individual means and mind ;  
 I stake my fame (and I had fame) — my breath —  
 (The least of all, for its last hours are nigh)  
 My heart — my hope — my soul — upon this cast !  
 Such as I am, I offer me to you  
 And to your chiefs, accept me or reject me,  
 A Prince who fain would be a citizen  
 Or nothing, and who has left his throne to be so.

*Cal.* Long live Faliero ! — Venice shall be free !

*Consp.* Long live Faliero !

*I. Ber.* Comrades ! did I well ?

Is not this man a host in such a cause ?

*Doge.* This is no time for eulogies, nor place  
 For exultation. Am I one of you ?

*Cal.* Ay, and the first amongst us, as thou hast been  
 Of Venice — be our general and chief.

*Doge.* Chief ! — general ! — I was general at Zara,  
 And chief in Rhodes and Cyprus, prince in Venice :  
 I cannot stoop — that is, I am not fit  
 To lead a band of — patriots : when I lay  
 Aside the dignities which I have borne,  
 'T is not to put on others, but to be  
 Mate to my fellows — but now to the point :  
 Israel has stated to me your whole plan —  
 'T is bold, but feasible if I assist it,  
 And must be set in motion instantly.

*Cal.* E'en when thou wilt. Is it not so, my friends ?  
 I have disposed all for a sudden blow ;  
 When should it be then ?

*Doge.* At sunrise.

*Ber.* So soon ?

*Doge.* So soon ? — so late — each hour accumulates  
 Peril on peril, and the more so now  
 Since I have mingled with you ; — know you not  
 The Council, and "the Ten ?" the spies, the eyes

Of the patricians dubious of their slaves,  
 And now more dubious of the prince they had made one?  
 I tell you, you must strike, and suddenly,  
 Full to the Hydra's heart — its heads will follow.

*Cal.* With all my soul and sword, I yield assent;  
 Our companies are ready, sixty each,  
 And all now under arms by Israel's order;  
 Each at their different place of rendezvous,  
 And vigilant, expectant of some blow;  
 Let each repair for action to his post!  
 And now, my lord, the signal?

*Doge.* When you hear  
 The great bell of Saint Mark's, which may not be  
 Struck without special order of the Doge  
 (The last poor privilege they leave their prince),  
 March on Saint Mark's!

*I. Ber.* And there? —

*Doge.* By different routes  
 Let your march be directed, every sixty  
 Entering a separate avenue, and still  
 Upon the way let your cry be of war  
 And of the Genoese fleet, by the first dawn  
 Discern'd before the port; form round the palace,  
 Within whose court will be drawn out in arms  
 My nephew and the clients of our house,  
 Many and martial; while the bell tolls on,  
 Shout ye, "Saint Mark! — the foe is on our waters!"

*Cal.* I see it now — but on, my noble lord.

*Doge.* All the patricians flocking to the Council,  
 (Which they dare not refuse, at the dread signal  
 Pealing from out their patron saint's proud tower,)  
 Will then be gather'd in unto the harvest,  
 And we will reap them with the sword for sickle.  
 If some few should be tardy or absent them,  
 'T will be but to be taken faint and single  
 When the majority are put to rest.

*Cal.* Would that the hour were come! we will not scotch,  
 But kill.

*Ber.* Once more, sir, with your pardon, I  
 Would now repeat the question which I ask'd  
 Before Bertuccio added to our cause  
 This great ally who renders it more sure,  
 And therefore safer, and as such admits  
 Some dawn of inercy to a portion of  
 Our victims — must all perish in this slaughter?

*Cal.* All who encounter me and mine, be sure.

The mercy they have shown, I show.

*Consp.*

All! all!

Is this a time to talk of pity? when  
Have they e'er shown, or felt, or feign'd it?

*I. Ber.*

Bertram,

This false compassion is a folly, and  
Injustice to thy comrades and thy cause  
Dost thou not see, that if we single out  
Some for escape, they live but to avenge  
The fallen? and how distinguish now the innocent  
From out the guilty? all their acts are *one* —  
A single emanation from one body,  
Together knit for our oppression! 'T is  
Much that we let their children live; I doubt  
If all of these even should be set apart:  
The hunter may reserve some single cub  
From out the tiger's litter, but who e'er  
Would seek to save the spotted sire or dam,  
Unless to perish by their fangs? however,  
I will abide by Doge Faliero's counsel:  
Let him decide if any should be saved.

*Doge.* Ask me not — tempt me not with such a question —

Decide yourselves.

*I. Ber.*

You know their private virtues

Far better than we can, to whom alone  
Their public vices, and most foul oppression,  
Have made them deadly; if there be amongst them  
One who deserves to be repeal'd, pronounce.

*Doge.* Dolfino's father was my friend, and Lando  
Fought by my side, and Marc Cornaro shared  
My Genoese embassy: I saved the life  
Of Veniero — shall I save it twice?  
Would that I could save them and Venice also!  
All these men, or their fathers, were my friends  
Till they became my subjects; then fell from me  
As faithless leaves drop from the o'erblown flower,  
And left me a lone blighted thorny stalk,  
Which, in its solitude, can shelter nothing;  
So, as they let me wither, let them perish!

*Cal.* They cannot co-exist with Venice' freedom!

*Doge.* Ye, though you know and feel our mutual mass  
Of many wrongs, even ye are ignorant  
What fatal poison to the springs of life,  
To human ties, and all that's good and dear,  
Lurks in the present institutes of Venice:

All these men were my friends ; I loved them, they  
 Requite honourably my regards ;  
 We served and fought ; we smiled and wept in concert ;  
 We revell'd or we sorrow'd side by side ;  
 We made alliances of blood and marriage ;  
 We grew in years and honours fairly, — till  
 Their own desire, not my ambition, made  
 Them choose me for their prince, and then farewell !  
 Farewell all social memory ! all thoughts  
 In common ! and sweet bonds which link old friendships,  
 When the survivors of long years and actions,  
 Which now belong to history, soothe the days  
 Which yet remain by treasuring each other,  
 And never meet, but each beholds the mirror  
 Of half a century on his brother's brow,  
 And sees a hundred beings, now in earth,  
 Flit round them whispering of the days gone by,  
 And seeming not all dead, as long as two  
 Of the brave, joyous, reckless, glorious band,  
 Which once were one and many, still retain  
 A breath to sigh for them, a tongue to speak  
 Of deeds that else were silent, save on marble ——  
 Oime ! Oime ! — and must I do this deed ?

*I. Ber.* My lord, you are much moved : it is not now  
 That such things must be dwelt upon.

*Doge.*

Your patience

A moment — I recede not : mark with me  
 The gloomy vices of this government.  
 From the hour that made me Doge, the *Doge* THEY made  
 me —

Farewell the past ! I died to all that had been,  
 Or rather they to me : no friends, no kindness,  
 No privacy of life — all were cut off :  
 They came not near me, such approach gave umbrage ;  
 They could not love me, such was not the law ;  
 They thwarted me, 't was the state's policy ;  
 They baffled me, 't was a patrician's duty ;  
 They wrong'd me, for such was to right the state ;  
 They could not right me, that would give suspicion ;  
 So that I was a slave to my own subjects ;  
 So that I was a foe to my own friends ;  
 Begirt with spies for guards — with robes for power —  
 With pomp for freedom — gaolers for a council —  
 Inquisitors for friends — and hell for life !  
 I had one only fount of quiet left,  
 And *that* they poison'd ! My pure household gods

Were shiver'd on my hearth, and o'er their shrine  
Sate grinning Ribaldry and sneering Scorn.

*I. Ber.* You have been deeply wrong'd, and now shall be  
Nobly avenged before another night.

*Doge.* I had borne all — it hurt me, but I bore it —  
Till this last running over of the cup  
Of bitterness — until this last loud insult,  
Not only unredress'd, but sanction'd ; then,  
And thus, I cast all further feelings from me —  
The feelings which they crush'd for me, long, long  
Before, even in their oath of false allegiance !  
Even in that very hour and vow, they abjured  
Their friend and made a sovereign, as boys make  
Playthings, to do their pleasure — and be broken !  
I from that hour have seen but senators  
In dark suspicious conflict with the Doge,  
Brooding with him in mutual hate and fear ;  
They dreading he should snatch the tyranny  
From out their grasp, and he abhorring tyrants.  
To me, then, these men have no *private* life,  
Nor claim to ties they have cut off from others ;  
As senators for arbitrary acts  
Let them be dealt upon.

*Cal.* And now to action !  
Hence brethren, to our posts, and may this be  
Amenable, I look on them—as such  
The last night of mere words : I'd fain be doing !  
Saint Mark's great bell at dawn shall find me wakeful !

*I. Ber.* Disperse then to your posts : be firm and vigilant ;  
Think on the wrongs we bear, the rights we claim.  
This day and night shall be the last of peril !  
Watch for the signal, and then march. I go  
To join my band ; let each be prompt to marshal  
His separate charge : the Doge will now return  
To the palace to prepare all for the blow.  
We part to meet in freedom and in glory !

*Cal.* Doge, when I greet you next, my homage to you  
Shall be the head of Steno on this sword !

*Doge.* No ; let him be reserved unto the last,  
Nor turn aside to strike at such a prey,  
Till nobler game is quarried : his offence  
Was a mere ebullition of the vice,  
The general corruption generated  
By the foul aristocracy ; he could not —  
He dared not in more honourable days  
Have risk'd it. I have merged all private wrath

Against him in the thought of our great purpose.  
A slave insults me — I require his punishment  
From his proud master's hands ; if he refuse it,  
The offence grows his, and let him answer it.

*Cal.* Yet, as the immediate cause of the alliance  
Which consecrates our undertaking more,  
I owe him such deep gratitude, that fain  
I would repay him as he merits ; may I ?

*Doge.* You would but lop the hand, and I the head ;  
You would but smite the scholar, I the master ;  
You would but punish Steno, I the senate.  
I cannot pause on individual hate,  
In the absorbing, sweeping, whole revenge,  
Which, like the sheeted fire from heaven, must blast  
Without distinction, as it fell of yore,  
Where the Dead Sea hath quench'd two cities' ashes.

*I. Ber.* Away, then, to your posts ! I but remain  
A moment to accompany the Doge  
To our late place of tryst, to see no spies  
Have been upon the scout, and thence I hasten  
To where my allotted band is under arms.

*Cal.* Farewell, then, until dawn !

*L. Ber.*

Success go with you !

*Consp.* We will not fail — away ! My lord, farewell !

[*The Conspirators salute the DOGE and ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, and retire, headed by PHILIP CALENDARO. The DOGE and ISRAEL BERTUCCIO remain.*]

*I. Ber.* We have them in the toil — it cannot fail !  
Now thou 'rt indeed a sovereign, and wilt make  
A name immortal greater than the greatest :  
Free citizens have struck at kings ere now ;  
Cæsars have fallen, and even patrician hands  
Have crush'd dictators, as the popular steel  
Has reach'd patricians ; but, until this hour,  
What prince has plotted for his people's freedom ?  
Or risk'd a life to liberate his subjects ?  
For ever, and for ever, they conspire  
Against the people, to abuse their hands  
To chains, but laid aside to carry weapons  
Against the fellow nations, so that yoke  
On yoke, and slavery and death may whet,  
*Not glut*, the never-gorged Leviathan !  
Now, my lord, to our enterprise ; — 't is great,  
And greater the reward ; why stand you rapt ?  
A moment back, and you were all impatience !

*Doge.* And is it then decided ! must they die ?

*I. Ber.* Who ?

*Doge.* My own friends by blood and courtesy,  
And many deeds and days — the senators ?

*I. Ber.* You pass'd their sentence, and it is a just one.

*Doge.* Ay, so it seems, and so it is to you ;  
You are a patriot, plebeian Gracchus —  
The rebel's oracle, the people's tribune —  
I blame you not—you act in your vocation ;  
They smote you, and oppress'd you, and despised you ;  
So they have *me* : but *you* ne'er spake with them ;  
You never broke their bread, nor shared their salt ;  
You never had their wine-cup at your lips ;  
You grew not up with them, nor laugh'd, nor wept,  
Nor held a revel in their company ;  
Ne'er smiled to see them smile, nor claim'd their smile  
In social interchange for yours, nor trusted  
Nor wore them in your heart of hearts, as I have :  
These hairs of mine are gray, and so are theirs,  
The elders of the council : I remember  
When all our locks were like the raven's wing,  
As we went forth to take our prey around  
The isles wrung from the false Mahometan ;  
And can I see them dabbled o'er with blood ?  
Each stab to them will seem my suicide.

*I. Ber.* Doge ! Doge ! this vacillation is unworthy  
A child ; if you are not in second childhood,  
Call back your nerves to your own purpose, nor  
Thus shame yourself and me. By heavens ! I'd rather  
Forego even now, or fail in our intent,  
Than see the man I venerate subside  
From high resolves into such shallow weakness !  
You have seen blood in battle, shed it, both  
Your own and that of others ; can you shrink then  
From a few drops from veins of hoary vampires,  
Who but give back what they have drain'd from millions ?

*Doge.* Bear with me ! Step by step, and blow on blow,  
I will divide with you ; think not I waver :  
Ah ! no ; it is the *certainty* of all.  
Which I must do doth make me tremble thus.  
But let these last and lingering thoughts have way  
To which you only and the Night are conscious,  
And both regardless ; when the hour arrives,  
'Tis time to sound the knell, and strike the blow,  
Which shall unpeople many palaces,  
And hew the highest genealogic trees  
Down to the earth, strew'd with their bleeding fruit,

And crush their blossoms into barrenness :

*This will I — must I — have I sworn to do,*

Nor aught can turn me from my destiny ;

But still I quiver to behold what I

Must be, and think what I have been ! Bear with me.

*I. Ber.* Re-man your breast ; I feel no such remorse,  
I understand it not : why should you change ?

You acted, and you act, on your free will.

*Doge.* Ay, there it is — *you* feel not, nor do I,

Else I should stab thee on the spot, to save

A thousand lives, and, killing, do no murder ;

You *feel* not — *you* go to this butcher-work

As if these high-born men were steers for shambles !

When all is over, you'll be free and merry,

And calmly wash those hands incarnadine ;

But I, outgoing thee and all thy fellows

In this surpassing massacre, shall be,

Shall see and feel — oh God ! oh God ! 't is true,

And thou dost well to answer that it was

“ My own free will and act,” and yet you err,

For I *will* do this ! Doubt not — fear not ; I

Will be your most unmerciful accomplice !

And yet I act no more on my free will,

Nor my own feelings — both compel me back ;

But there is *hell* within me and around,

And like the demon who believes and trembles

Must I abhor and do. Away ! away !

Get thee unto thy fellows, I will hie me

To gather the retainers of our house.

Doubt not, Saint Mark's great bell shall wake all Venice,

Except her slaughter'd senate : ere the sun

Be broad upon the Adriatic there

Shall be a voice of weeping, which shall drown

The roar of waters in the cry of blood !

I am resolved — come on.

*I. Ber.* With all my soul !

Keep a firm rein upon these bursts of passion ;

Remember what these men have dealt to thee,

And that this sacrifice will be succeeded

By ages of prosperity and freedom

To this unshackled city : a true tyrant

Would have depopulated empires, nor

Have felt the strange compunction which hath wrung you

To punish a few traitors to the people.

Trust me, such were a pity more misplaced

Than the late mercy of the state to Steno.

*Doge.* Man, thou hast struck upon the chord which jars  
All nature from my heart. Hence to our task!

[*Exeunt.*]

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ACT IV.

SCENE I.

*Palazzo of the Patrician LIONI.* LIONI *laying aside mask and cloak which the Venetian Nobles wore in public, attended by a Domestic.*

*Lioni.* I will to rest, right weary of this revel,  
The gayest we have held for many moons,  
And yet, I know not why, it cheer'd me not ;  
There came a heaviness across my heart,  
Which, in the lightest movement of the dance,  
Though eye to eye, and hand in hand united  
Even with the lady of my love, oppress'd me,  
And through my spirit chill'd my blood, until  
A damp like death rose o'er my brow ; I strove  
To laugh the thought away, but 't would not be ;  
Through all the music ringing in my ears  
A knell was sounding as distinct and clear,  
Though low and far, as e'er the Adrian wave  
Rose o'er the city's murmur in the night,  
Dashing against the outward Lido's bulwark :  
So that I left the festival before  
It reach'd its zenith, and will woo my pillow  
For thoughts more tranquil, or forgetfulness.  
Antonio, take my mask and cloak, and light  
The lamp within my chamber.

*Ant.* Yes, my lord :

Command you no refreshment ?

*Lioni.* Nought, save sleep,

Which will not be commanded. Let me hope it,

[*Exit.* ANTONIO.]

Though my breast feels too anxious ; I will try  
Whether the air will calm my spirits : 't is  
A goodly night ; the cloudy wind which blew  
From the Levant hath crept into its cave,  
And the broad moon has brighten'd. What a stillness !

[*Goes to an open lattice.*]

And what a contrast with the scene I left,  
Where the tall torches' glare, and silver lamps'  
More pallid gleam along the tapestried walls,  
Spread over the reluctant gloom which haunts  
Those vast and dimly-latticed galleries  
A dazzling mass of artificial light,  
Which show'd all things, but nothing as they were.  
There Age essaying to recall the past,  
After long striving for the hues of youth  
At the sad labour of the toilet, and  
Full many a glance at the too faithful mirror,  
Prank'd forth in all the pride of ornament,  
Forgot itself, and trusting to the falsehood  
Of the indulgent beams, which show, yet hide,  
Believed itself forgotten, and was fool'd.  
There Youth, which needed not, nor thought of such  
Vain adjuncts, lavish'd its true bloom, and health,  
And bridal beauty, in the unwholesome press  
Of flush'd and crowded wassailers, and wasted  
Its hours of rest in dreaming this was pleasure,  
And so shall waste them till the sunrise streams  
On sallow cheeks and sunken eyes, which should not  
Have worn this aspect yet for many a year.  
The music, and the banquet, and the wine —  
The garlands, the rose odours, and the flowers —  
The sparkling eyes, and flashing ornaments —  
The white arms and the raven hair — the braids  
And bracelets ; swanlike bosoms, and the necklace,  
An India in itself, yet dazzling not  
The eye like what it circled ; the thin robes,  
Floating like light clouds 'twixt our gaze and heaven ;  
The many-twinkling feet so small and sylphlike,  
Suggesting the more secret symmetry  
Of the fair forms which terminate so well —  
All the delusion of the dizzy scene,  
Its false and true enchantments — art and nature,  
Which swam before my giddy eyes, that drank  
The sight of beauty as the parch'd pilgrim's  
On Arab sands the false mirage, which offers  
A lucid lake to his eluded thirst,  
Are gone.—Around me are the stars and waters—  
Worlds mirror'd in the ocean, godlier sight  
Than torches glared back by a gaudy glass ;  
And the great element, which is to space  
What ocean is to earth, spreads its blue depths,  
Softened with the first breathings of the spring ;

The high moon sails upon her beauteous way,  
 Serenely smoothing o'er the lofty walls  
 Of those tall piles and sea-girt palaces,  
 Whose porphyry pillars, and whose costly fronts,  
 Fraught with the orient spoil of many marbles,  
 Like altars ranged along the broad canal,  
 Seem each a trophy of some mighty deed  
 Rear'd up from out the waters, scarce less strangely  
 Than those more massy and mysterious giants  
 Of architecture, those Titanian fabrics,  
 Which point in Egypt's plains to times that have  
 No other record. All is gentle : nought  
 Stirs rudely ; but, congenial with the night,  
 Whatever walks is gliding like a spirit.  
 The tinklings of some vigilant guitars  
 Of sleepless lovers to a wakeful mistress,  
 And cautious opening of the casement, showing  
 That he is not unheard ; while her young hand,  
 Fair as the moonlight of which it seems part,  
 So delicately white, it trembles in  
 The act of opening the forbidden lattice,  
 To let in love through music, makes his heart  
 Thrill like his lyre-strings at the sight ; the dash  
 Phosphoric of the oar, or rapid twinkle  
 Of the far lights of skimming gondolas,  
 And the responsive voices of the choir  
 Of boatmen answering back with verse for verse ;  
 Some dusky shadow checkering the Rialto ;  
 Some glimmering palace roof, or tapering spire,  
 Are all the sights and sounds which here pervade  
 The ocean-born and earth-commanding city is —  
 How sweet and soothing is this hour of calm !  
 I thank thee, Night ! for thou hast chased away  
 Those horrid bodements which, amidst the throng,  
 I could not dissipate : and with the blessing  
 Of thy benign and quiet influence, —  
 Now will I to my couch, although to rest  
 Is almost wronging such a night as this —

[*A knocking is heard from without.*]

Hark ! what is that ? or who at such a moment ?

*Enter ANTONIO.*

*Ant.* My lord, a man without, on urgent business,  
 Implores to be admitted.

*Lioni.*

Is he a stranger ?

*Ant.* His face is muffled in his cloak, but both  
 His voice and gestures seem familiar to me ;

I craved his name, but this he seem'd reluctant  
To trust, save to yourself; most earnestly  
He sues to be permitted to approach you.

*Lioni.* 'Tis a strange hour, and a suspicious bearing!  
And yet there is slight peril: 't is not in  
Their houses noble men are struck at; still,  
Although I know not that I have a foe  
In Venice, 't will be wise to use some caution.  
Admit him, and retire; but call up quickly  
Some of thy fellows, who may wait without.—  
Who can this man be? —

[*Exit ANTONIO, and returns with BERTRAM muffled.*]

*Ber.* My good Lord Lioni,  
I have no time to lose, nor thou — dismiss  
This menial hence; I would be private with you.

*Lioni.* It seems the voice of Bertram — Go, Antonio.

[*Exit ANTONIO.*]

Now, stranger, what would you at such an hour?

*Ber. (discovering himself).* A boon, my noble patron; you  
have granted

Many to your poor client, Bertram; add  
This one, and make him happy.

*Lioni.* Thou hast known me  
From boyhood, ever ready to assist thee  
In all fair objects of advancement, which  
Beseem one of thy station; I would promise  
Ere thy request was heard, but that the hour,  
Thy bearing, and this strange and hurried mode  
Of suing, gives me to suspect this visit  
Hath some mysterious import — but say on —  
What has occurred, some rash and sudden broil? —  
A cup too much, a scuffle, and a stab? —  
Mere things of every day; so that thou has not  
Spilt noble blood, I guarantee thy safety;  
But then thou must withdraw, for angry friends  
And relatives, in the first burst of vengeance,  
Are things in Venice deadlier than the laws.

*Ber.* My lord, I thank you; but —

*Lioni.* But what? You have not  
Raised a rash hand against one of our order?  
If so, withdraw and fly, and own it not;  
I would not slay — but then I must not save thee!  
He who has shed patrician blood —

*Ber.* I come  
To save patrician blood, and not to shed it!  
And thereunto I must be speedy, for

Each minute lost may lose a life ; since Time  
Has changed his slow scythe for the two-edged sword,  
And is about to take, instead of sand,  
The dust from sepulchres to fill his hour-glass ! —  
Go not *thou* forth to-morrow !

*Lioni.* Wherefore not ? —

What means this menace ?

*Ber.* Do not seek its meaning,

But do I as implore thee ; — stir not forth,  
Whate'er be stirring ; though the roar of crowds —  
The cry of women, and the shrieks of babes —  
The groans of men — the clash of arms — the sound  
Of rolling drum, shrill trump, and hollow bell,  
Peal in one wide alarum ! — Go not forth  
Until the tocsin's silent, nor even then  
Till I return

*Lioni.* Again, what does this mean ?

*Ber.* Again, I tell thee, ask not ; but by all  
Thou holdest dear on earth or heaven — by all  
The souls of thy great fathers, and thy hope  
To emulate them, and to leave behind  
Descendants worthy both of them and thee —  
By all thou hast of bless'd in hope or memory —  
By all thou hast to fear here or hereafter —  
By all the good deeds thou hast done to me,  
Good I would now repay with greater good,  
Remain within — trust to thy household gods,  
And to my word for safety, if thou dost  
As I now counsel — but if not, thou art lost !

*Lioni.* I am indeed already lost in wonder ;  
Surely thou ravest ! what have *I* to dread ?  
Who are my foes ? or if there be such, *why*  
Art *thou* leagued with them ? — *thou* ! or if so leagued,  
Why comest thou to tell me at this hour,  
And not before ?

*Ber.* I cannot answer this.

Wilt thou go forth despite of this true warning ?

*Lioni.* I was not born to shrink from idle threats,  
The cause of which I know not : at the hour  
Of council, be it soon or late, I shall not  
Be found among the absent.

*Ber.* Say not so !

Once more, art thou determined to go forth ?

*Lioni.* I am. Nor is there aught which shall impede me !

*Ber.* Then Heaven have mercy on thy soul ! — Farewell !

[*Going.*

*Lioni.* Stay — there is more in this than my own safety  
Which makes me call thee back ; we must not part thus :  
Bertram, I have known thee long.

*Ber.* From childhood, signor,  
You have been my protector : in the days  
Of reckless infancy, when rank forgets,  
Or, rather, is not yet taught to remember  
Its cold prerogative, we play'd together ;  
Our sports, our smiles, our tears, were mingled oft ;  
My father was your father's client, I  
His son's scarce less than foster-brother ; years  
Saw us together — happy, heart-kill hours !  
Oh God ! the difference 'twixt those hours and this !

*Lioni.* Bertram, 'tis thou who hast forgotten them.

*Ber.* Nor now, nor ever ; whatso'er betide,  
I would have saved you : when to manhood's growth  
We sprung, and you, devoted to the state,  
As suits your station, the more humble Bertram  
Was left unto the labours of the humble,  
Still you forsook me not : and if my fortunes  
Have not been towering, 't was no fault of him  
Who oftentimes rescued and supported me  
When struggling with the tides of circumstance  
Which bear away the weaker : noble blood  
Ne'er mantled in a nobler heart than thine  
Has proved to me, the poor plebeian Bertram.  
Would that thy fellow senators were like thee !

*Lioni.* Why, what hast thou to say against the senate ?

*Ber.* Nothing.

*Lioni.* I know that there are angry spirits  
And turbulent mutterers of stifled treason,  
Who lurk in narrow places, and walk out  
Muffled to whisper curses to the night ;  
Disbanded soldiers, discontented ruffians,  
And desperate libertines who brawl in taverns ;  
*Thou* herdest not with such : 't is true, of late  
I have lost sight of thee, but thou wert wont  
To lead a temperate life, and break thy bread  
With honest mates, and bear a cheerful aspect.  
What hath come to thee ? in thy hollow eye  
And hueless cheek, and thine unquiet motions,  
Sorrow and shame and conscience seem at war  
To waste thee.

*Ber.* Rather shame and sorrow light  
On the accursed tyranny which rides  
The very air in Venice, and makes men

Madden as in the last hours of the plague  
Which sweeps the soul deliriously from life!

*Lioni.* Some villains have been tampering with thee, Bertram ;

This is not thy old language, nor own thoughts ;  
Some wretch has made thee drunk with disaffection :  
But thou must not be lost so ; thou wert good  
And kind, and art not fit for such base acts  
As vice and villany would put thee to :  
Confess — confide in me — thou know'st my nature —  
What is it thou and thine are bound to do,  
What should prevent thy friend, the only son  
Of him who was a friend unto thy father,  
So that our good-will is a heritage  
We should bequeath to our posterity  
Such as ourselves received it, or augmented ;  
I say, what is it thou must do, that I  
Should deem thee dangerous, and keep the house  
Like a sick girl?

*Ber.* Nay, question me no further :  
I must be gone.——

*Lioni.* And I be murder'd ! — say,  
Was it not thus thou said'st, my gentle Bertram ?

*Ber.* Who talks of murder ? what said I of murder ? —  
'Tis false ! I did not utter such a word.

*Lioni.* Thou didst not ; but from out thy wolfish eye,  
So changed from what I knew it, there glares forth  
The gladiator. If *my* life's thine object,  
Take it — I am unarm'd, — and then away !  
I would not hold my breath on such a tenure  
As the capricious mercy of such things  
As thou and those who have set thee to thy task-work.

*Ber.* Sooner than spill thy blood, I peril mine ;  
Sooner than harm a hair of thine, I place  
In jeopardy a thousand heads, and some  
As noble, nay, even nobler than thine own.

*Lioni.* Ay, is it even so ? Excuse me, Bertram ;  
I am not worthy to be singled out  
From such exalted hecatombs — who are they  
That *are* in danger, and that *make* the danger ?

*Ber.* Venice, and all that she inherits, are  
Divided like a house against itself,  
And so will perish ere to-morrow's twilight !

*Lioni.* More mysteries, and awful ones ! But now,  
Or thou, or I, or both, it may be, are  
Upon the verge of ruin ; speak once out,

And thou art safe and glorious ; for 't is more  
Glorious to save than slay, and slay i' the dark too --  
Fie, Bertram ! that was not a craft for thee !

How would it look to see upon a spear  
The head of him whose heart was open to thee,  
Borne by thy hand before the shuddering people ?  
And such may be my doom ; for here I swear,  
Whate'er the peril or the penalty  
Of thy denunciation, I go forth,

Unless thou dost detail the cause, and show  
The consequence of all which led thee here !

*Ber.* Is there no way to save thee ? minutes fly,  
And thou art lost ! — *thou !* my sole benefactor,  
The only being who was constant to me  
Through every change. Yet, make me not a traitor !  
Let me save thee — but spare my honour !

*Lioni.*

Where

Can lie the honour in a league of murder ?  
And who are traitors save unto the state ?

*Ber.* A league is still a compact, and more binding  
In honest hearts when words must stand for law ;  
And in my mind, there is no traitor like  
He whose domestic treason plants the poniard  
Within the breast which trusted to his truth.

*Lioni.* And *who* will strike the steel to mine ?

*Ber.*

Not I ;

I could have wound my soul up to all things  
Save this. *Thou* must not die ! and think how dear  
Thy life is, when I risk so many lives,  
Nay, more, the life of lives, the liberty  
Of future generations, *not* to be  
The assassin thou miscall'st me ; — once, once more  
I do adjure thee, pass not o'er thy threshold !

*Lioni.* It is in vain — this moment I go forth.

*Ber.* Then perish Venice rather than my friend !  
I will disclose — ensnare — betray — destroy —  
Oh, what a villain I become for thee !

*Lioni.* Say, rather thy friend's saviour and the state's ! —  
Speak — pause not — all rewards, all pledges for  
Thy safety and thy welfare ; wealth such as  
The state accords her worthiest servants ; nay,  
Nobility itself I guarantee thee,  
So that thou art sincere and penitent.

*Ber.* I have thought again : it must not be — I love  
thee —

Thou knowest it — that I stand here is the proof,

Not least though last ; but having done my duty  
By thee, I now must do it by my country !  
Farewell — we meet no more in life ! — farewell !

*Lioni.* What, ho ! — Antonio — Pedro — to the door !  
See that none pass — arrest this man ! —

*Enter ANTONIO and other armed Domestics, who seize  
BERTRAM.*

*Lioni (continues).* Take care  
He hath no harm ; bring me my sword and cloak,  
And man the gondola with four oars — quick —  
[*Exit ANTONIO.*

We will unto Giovanni Gradenigo's,  
And send for Marc Cornaro : — fear not, Bertram ;  
This heedful violence is for thy safety,  
No less than for the general weal.

*Ber.* Where wouldst thou  
Bear me a prisoner ?

*Lioni.* Firstly to “ the Ten ; ”  
Next to the Doge.

*Ber.* To the Doge ?

*Lioni.* Assuredly :  
Is he not chief of the state ?

*Ber.* Perhaps at sunrise —

*Lioni.* What mean you ? — but we 'll know anon.

*Ber.* Art sure !

*Lioni.* Sure as all gentle means can make ; and if  
They fail, you know “ the Ten ” and their tribunal,  
And that St. Mark's has dungeons, and the dungeons  
A rack.

*Ber.* Apply it then before the dawn  
Now hastening into heaven. — One more such word,  
And you shall perish piecemeal, by the death  
You think to doom to me.

*Re-enter ANTONIO.*

*Ant.* The bark is ready,  
My lord, and all prepared.

*Lioni.* Look to the prisoner.  
Bertram, I 'll reason with thee as we go  
To the Magnifico's, sage Gradenigo.

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

*The Ducal Palace. — The Doge's Apartment.*

*The DOGE and his nephew BERTUCCIO FALIERO.*

*Doge.* Are all the people of our house in muster?

*Ber. F.* They are array'd, and eager for the signal,  
Within our palace precincts at San Polo. (1)  
I come for your last orders.

*Doge.* It had been  
As well had there been time to have got together,  
From my own fief, Val di Marino, more  
Of our retainers — but it is too late.

*Ber. F.* Methinks, my lord, 't is better as it is :  
A sudden swelling of our retinue  
Had waked suspicion ; and, though fierce and trusty,  
The vassals of that district are too rude  
And quick in quarrel to have long maintain'd  
The secret discipline we need for such  
A service, till our foes are dealt upon.

*Doge.* True ; but when once the signal has been given,  
*These* are the men for such an enterprise ;  
These city slaves have all their private bias,  
Their prejudice *against* or *for* this noble,  
Which may induce them to o'erdo or spare  
Where mercy may be madness ; the fierce peasants  
Serfs of my county of Val di Marino,  
Would do the bidding of their lord without  
Distinguishing for love or hate his foes ;  
Alike to them Marcello or Cornaro,  
A Gradenigo or a Foscari ;  
They are not used to start at those vain names,  
Nor bow the knee before a civic senate ;  
A chief in armour is their Suzerain,  
And not a thing in robes.

*Ber. F.* We are enough ;  
And for the dispositions of our clients  
Against the senate I will answer.

*Doge.* Well,  
The die is thrown ; but for a warlike service,  
Done in the field, commend me to my peasants :

(1) The Doge's family palace.

They made the sun shine through the host of Huns  
 When sallow burghers slunk back to their tents,  
 And cower'd to hear their own victorious trumpet.  
 If there be small resistance, you will find  
 These citizens all lions, like their standard ;  
 But if there 's much to do, you 'll wish with me,  
 A band of iron rustics at our backs

*Ber. F.* Thus thinking, I must marvel you resolve  
 To strike the blow so suddenly.

*Doge.* Such blows  
 Must be struck suddenly or never. When  
 I had o'ermaster'd the weak false remorse  
 Which yearn'd about my heart, too fondly yielding  
 A moment to the feelings of old days,  
 I was most fain to strike ; and, firstly, that  
 I might not yield again to such emotions ;  
 And, secondly, because of all these men,  
 Save Israel and Philip Calendaro,  
 I know not well the courage or the faith :  
 To-day might find 'mongst them a traitor to us,  
 As yesterday a thousand to the senate ;  
 But once in, with their hilts hot in their hands,  
 They must *on* for their own sakes ; one stroke struck,  
 And the mere instinct of the first-born Cain,  
 Which ever lurks somewhere in human hearts,  
 Though circumstance may keep it in abeyance,  
 Will urge the rest on like to wolves ; the sight  
 Of blood to crowds begets the thirst of more,  
 As the first wine-cup leads to the long revel ;  
 And you will find a harder task to quell  
 Than urge them when they *have* commenced, but *till*  
 That moment, a mere voice, a straw, a shadow,  
 Are capable of turning them aside. —  
 How goes the night ?

*Ber. F.* Almost upon the dawn.

*Doge.* Then it is time to strike upon the bell.  
 Are the men posted ?

*Ber. F.* By this time they are ;  
 But they have orders not to strike, until  
 They have command from you through me in person.

*Doge.* 'T is well. — Will the morn never put to rest  
 These stars which twinkle yet o'er all the heavens ?  
 I am settled and bound up, and being so,  
 The very effort which it cost me to  
 Resolve to cleanse this commonwealth with fire,  
 Now leaves my mind more steady. I have wept,

And trembled at the thought of this dread duty ;  
 But now I have put down all idle passion,  
 And look the growing tempest in the face,  
 As doth the pilot of an admiral galley :  
 Yet (wouldst thou think it, kinsman ?) it hath been  
 A greater struggle to me, than when nations  
 Beheld their fate merged in the approaching fight,  
 Where I was leader of a phalanx, where  
 Thousands were sure to perish — Yes, to spill  
 The rank polluted current from the veins  
 Of a few bloated despots needed more  
 To steel me to a purpose such as made  
 Timoleon immortal, than to face  
 The toils and dangers of a life of war.

*Ber. F.* It gladdens me to see your former wisdom  
 Subdue the furies which so wrung you ere  
 You were decided.

*Doge.* It was ever thus  
 With me ; the hour of agitation came  
 In the first glimmerings of a purpose, when  
 Passion had too much room to sway ; but in  
 The hour of action I have stood as calm  
 As were the dead who lay around me : this  
 They knew who made me what I am, and trusted  
 To the subduing power which I preserved  
 Over my mood, when its first burst was spent.  
 But they were not aware that there are things  
 Which make revenge a virtue by reflection,  
 And not an impulse of mere anger ; though  
 The laws sleep, justice wakes, and injured souls  
 Oft do a public right with private wrong,  
 And justify their deeds unto themselves. —  
 Methinks the day breaks — is it not so ? look,  
 Thine eyes are clear with youth ; — the air puts on  
 A morning freshness, and, at least to me,  
 The sea looks grayer through the lattice.

*Ber. F.* True,  
 The morn is dappling in the sky.

*Doge.* Away then !  
 See that they strike without delay, and with  
 The first toll from St. Mark's, march on the palace  
 With all our house's strength ; here I will meet you —  
 The Sixteen and their companies will move  
 In separate columns at the self-same moment —  
 Be sure you post yourself at the great gate :  
 I would not trust " the Ten " except to us —

The rest, the rabble of patricians, may  
 Glut the more careless swords of those leagued with us.  
 Remember that the cry is still " Saint Mark !  
 The Genoese are come — ho ! to the rescue !  
 Saint Mark and Liberty ! " — Now — now to action !

*Ber. F.* Farewell then, noble uncle ! we will meet  
 In freedom and true sovereignty, or never !

*Doge.* Come hither, my Bertuccio — one embrace —  
 Speed, for the day grows broader — Send me soon  
 A messenger to tell me how all goes  
 When you rejoin our troops, and then sound — sound  
 The storm-bell from Saint Mark's !

[*Exit BERTUCCIO FALIERO.*

*Doge (solus).*

He is gone,

And on each footstep moves a life. — 'T is done.  
 Now the destroying Angel hovers o'er  
 Venice, and pauses ere he pours the vial,  
 Even as the eagle overlooks his prey,  
 And for a moment, poised in middle air,  
 Suspends the motion of his mighty wings,  
 Then swoops with his unerring beak. — Thou day !  
 That slowly walk'st the waters ! march — march on —  
 I would not smite i' the dark, but rather see  
 That no stroke errs. And you, ye blue sea-waves !  
 I have seen you dyed ere now, and deeply too,  
 With Genoese, Saracen, and Hunnish gore,  
 While that of Venice flow'd too, but victorious ;  
 Now thou must wear an unmix'd crimson ; no  
 Barbaric blood can reconcile us now  
 Unto that horrible incarnadine,  
 But friend or foe will roll in civic slaughter.  
 And have I lived to fourscore years for this ?  
 I, who was named Preserver of the City ?  
 I, at whose name the million's caps were flung  
 Into the air, and cries from tens of thousands  
 Rose up, imploring Heaven to send me blessings,  
 And fame, and length of days — to see this day ?  
 But this day, black within the calendar,  
 Shall be succeeded by a bright millennium  
 Doge Dandolo survived to ninety summers  
 To vanquish empires, and refuse their crown ;  
 I will resign a crown, and make the state  
 Renew its freedom — but oh ! by what means ?  
 The noble end must justify them — What  
 Are a few drops of human blood ? 't is false,  
 The blood of tyrants is not human ; they,

Like to incarnate Molochs, feed on ours,  
 Until 't is time to give them to the tombs  
 Which they have made so populous. — Oh world!  
 Oh men! what are ye, and our best designs,  
 That we must work by crime to punish crime?  
 And slay as if Death had but this one gate,  
 When a few years would make the sword superfluous?  
 And I, upon the verge of th' unknown realm,  
 Yet send so many heralds on before me? —  
 I must not ponder this

[*A pause.*]

Hark! was there not  
 A murmur as of distant voices, and  
 The tramp of feet in martial unison?  
 What phantoms even of sound our wishes raise!  
 It cannot be — the signal hath not rung —  
 Why pauses it? My nephew's messenger  
 Should be upon his way to me, and he  
 Himself perhaps even now draws grating back  
 Upon its ponderous hinge the steep tower portal,  
 Where swings the sullen huge oracular bell,  
 Which never knells but for a princely death,  
 Or for a state in peril, pealing forth  
 Tremendous bodements; let it do its office,  
 And be this peal its awfulest and last  
 Sound till the strong tower rock! — What! silent still?  
 I would go forth, but that my post is here,  
 To be the centre of re-union to  
 The oft discordant elements which form  
 Leagues of this nature, and to keep compact  
 The wavering of the weak, in case of conflict;  
 For if they should do battle, 't will be here,  
 Within the palace, that the strife will thicken;  
 Then here must be my station, as becomes  
 The master-mover. — Hark! he comes — he comes,  
 My nephew, brave Bertuccio's messenger. —  
 What tidings? Is he marching? hath he sped? —  
 They here! — all 's lost — yet will I make an effort.

*Enter a SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT, with Guards,  
 &c. &c.*

*Sig.* Doge, I arrest thee of high treason!

*Doge.*

Me!

Thy prince, of treason? — Who are they that dare  
 Cloak their own treason under such an order?

*Sig.* (*showing his order*). Behold my order from the as-  
 sembled Ten.

*Doge.* And *where* are they, and *why* assembled? no  
Such council can be lawful, till the prince  
Preside there, and that duty's mine: on thine  
I charge thee, give me way, or marshal me  
To the council chamber.

*Sig.* Duke! it may not be:  
Nor are they in the wonted Hall of Council,  
But sitting in the convent of Saint Saviour's.

*Doge.* You dare to disobey me, then?

*Sig.* I serve  
The state, and needs must serve it faithfully;  
My warrant is the will of those who rule it.

*Doge.* And till that warrant has my signature  
It is illegal, and, as *now* applied,  
Rebellious — Hast thou weigh'd well thy life's worth,  
That thus you dare assume a lawless function?

*Sig.* 'T is not my office to reply, but act —  
I am placed here as guard upon thy person,  
And not as judge to hear or to decide.

*Doge (aside).* I must gain time — So that the storm-bell  
sound  
All may be well yet. — Kinsman, speed — speed — speed! —  
Our fate is trembling in the balance, and  
Woe to the vanquish'd! be they prince and people,  
Or slaves and senate —

[*The great bell of Saint Mark's tolls.*  
Lo! it sounds — it tolls!

*Doge (aloud).* Hark, Signor of the Night! and you, ye  
hirelings,  
Who wield your mercenary staves in fear,  
It is your knell — Swell on, thou lusty peal!  
Now, knaves, what ransom for your lives?

*Sig.* Confusion!  
Stand to your arms, and guard the door — all's lost  
Unless that fearful bell be silenced soon.  
The officer hath miss'd his path or purpose,  
Or met some unforeseen and hideous obstacle.  
Anselmo, with thy company proceed  
Straight to the tower; the rest remain with me.

[*Exit part of the Guard.*

*Doge.* Wretch! if thou wouldst have thy vile life, im-  
plore it;  
It is not now a lease of sixty seconds.  
Ay, send thy miserable ruffians forth;  
They never shall return.

*Sig.* So let it be!

They die then in their duty, as will I.

*Doge.* Fool! the high eagle flies at nobler game  
Than thou and thy base myrmidons, — live on,  
So thou provok'st not peril by resistance,  
And learn (if souls so much obscured can bear  
To gaze upon the sunbeams) to be free.

*Sig.* And learn thou to be captive — It hath ceased,  
[*The bell ceases to toll.*]

The traitorous signal, which was to have set  
The bloodhound mob on their patrician prey —  
The knell hath rung, but it is not the senate's!

*Doge (after a pause).* All 's silent, and all 's lost!

*Sig.* Now, Doge, denounce me  
As rebel slave of a revolted council!  
Have I not done my duty?

*Doge.* Peace, thou thing!  
Thou hast done a worthy deed, and earn'd the price  
Of blood, and they who use thee will reward thee.  
But thou wert sent to watch, and not to prate,  
As thou said'st even now — then do thine office,  
But let it be in silence, as behoves thee,  
Since, though thy prisoner, I am thy prince.

*Sig.* I did not mean to fail in the respect  
Due to your rank: in this I shall obey you.

*Doge (aside).* There now is nothing left me save to die;  
And yet how near success! I would have fallen,  
And proudly, in the hour of triumph, but  
To miss it thus! —

*Enter other SIGNORS OF THE NIGHT, with BERTUCCIO  
FALIERO prisoner.*

*2d Sig.* We took him in the act  
Of issuing from the tower, where, at his order,  
As delegated from the Doge, the signal  
Had thus begun to sound.

*1st Sig.* Are all the passes  
Which lead up to the palace well secured?

*2d Sig.* They are — besides, it matters not; the chiefs  
Are all in chains, and some even now on trial —  
Their followers are dispersed, and many taken.

*Ber. F.* Uncle!

*Doge.* It is in vain to war with Fortune;  
The glory hath departed from our house.

*Ber. F.* Who would have deem'd it? — Ah! one mo-  
ment sooner!

*Doge.* That moment would have changed the face of  
ages ;

*This* gives us to eternity — We 'll meet it  
As men whose triumph is not in success,  
But who can make their own minds all in all,  
Equal to every fortune. Droop not, 't is  
But a brief passage — I would go alone,  
Yet if they send us, as 't is like, together,  
Let us go worthy of our sires and selves,

*Ber. F.* I shall not shame you, uncle.

*1st Sig.*

Lords, our orders

Are to keep guard on both in separate chambers,  
Until the council call ye to your trial.

*Doge.* Our trial! will they keep their mockery up  
Even to the last? but let them deal upon us  
As we had dealt on them, but with less pomp.  
'T is but a game of mutual homicides,  
Who have cast lots for the first death, and they  
Have won with false dice. — Who hath been our Judas?

*1st Sig.* I am not warranted to answer that.

*Ber. F.* I 'll answer for thee — 't is a certain Bertram,  
Even now deposing to the secret giunta.

*Doge.* Bertram, the Bergamask! With what vile tools  
We operate to slay or save! This creature,  
Black with a double treason, now will earn  
Rewards and honours, and be stamp'd in story  
With the geese in the Capitol, which gabbled  
Till Rome awoke, and had an annual triumph,  
While Manlius, who hurl'd down the Gauls, was cast  
From the Tarpeian.

*1st Sig.* He aspired to treason,  
And sought to rule the state.

*Doge.* He saved the state,  
And sought but to reform what he revived —  
But this is idle — Come, sirs, do your work.

*1st Sig.* Noble Bertuccio, we must now remove you  
Into an inner chamber.

*Ber. F.* Farewell, uncle!  
If we shall meet again in life I know not,  
But they perhaps will let our ashes mingle.

*Doge.* Yes, and our spirits, which shall yet go forth,  
And do what our frail clay, thus clogg'd, hath fail'd in!  
They cannot quench the memory of those  
Who would have hurl'd them from their guilty thrones,  
And such examples will find heirs, though distant.

## ACT V.

## SCENE I.

*The Hall of the Council of Ten assembled with the additional Senators, who, on the Trials of the Conspirators for the Treason of MARINO FALIERO, composed what was called the Giunta. — Guards, Officers, &c. &c. — ISRAEL BERTUCCIO and PHILIP CALENDARO as Prisoners. — BERTRAM, LIONI, and Witnesses, &c.*

*The Chief of the Ten, BENINTENDE.*

*Ben.* There now rests, after such conviction of  
Their manifold and manifest offences,  
But to pronounce on these obdurate men  
The sentence of the law : — a grievous task  
To those who hear, and those who speak. Alas !  
That it should fall to me ! and that my days  
Of office should be stigmatised through all  
The years of coming time, as bearing record  
To this most foul and complicated treason  
Against a just and free state, known to all  
The earth as being the Christian bulwark 'gainst  
The Saracen and the schismatic Greek,  
The savage Hun, and not less barbarous Frank ;  
A city which has open'd India's wealth  
To Europe ; the last Roman refuge from  
O'erwhelming Attila ; the ocean's queen ;  
Proud Genoa's prouder rival ! 'T is to sap  
The throne of such a city, these lost men  
Have risk'd and forfeited their worthless lives —  
So let them die the death.

*I. Ber.* We are prepared ;  
Your racks have done that for us. Let us die.

*Ben.* If ye have that to say which would obtain  
Abatement of your punishment, the Giunta  
Will hear you ; if you have aught to confess,  
Now is your time, perhaps it may avail ye.

*I. Ber.* We stand to hear, and not to speak.

*Ben.* Your crimes  
Are fully proved by your accomplices,  
And all which circumstance can add to aid them ;

Yet we would near from your own lips complete  
 Avowal of your treason : on the verge  
 Of that dread gulf which none repass, the truth  
 Alone can profit you on earth or heaven —  
 Say, then, what was your motive ?

*I. Ber.* Justice !

*Ben.* What

Your object ?

*I. Ber.* Freedom !

*Ben.* You are brief, sir.

*I. Ber.* So my life grows : I

Was bred a soldier, not a senator.

*Ben.* Perhaps you think by this blunt brevity  
 To brave your judges to postpone the sentence ?

*I. Ber.* Do you be brief as I am, and believe me,  
 I shall prefer that mercy to your pardon.

*Ben.* Is this your sole reply to the tribunal ?

*I. Ber.* Go, ask your racks what they have wrung from us,

Or place us there again ; we have still some blood left,

And some slight sense of pain in these wretch'd limbs :

But this ye dare not do ; for if we die there —

And you have left us little life to spend

Upon your engines, gorged with pangs already —

Ye lose the public spectacle, with which

You would appal your slaves to further slavery !

Groans are not words, nor agony assent,

Nor affirmation truth, if nature's sense

Should overcome the soul into a lie,

For a short respite — must we bear or die ?

*Ben.* Say, who are your accomplices ?

*I. Ber.* The Senate !

*Ben.* What do you mean ?

*I. Ber.* Ask of the suffering people,

Whom your patrician crimes have driven to crime.

*Ben.* You know the Doge ?

*I. Ber.* I served with him at Zara

In the field, when *you* were pleading here your way

To present office ; we exposed our lives,

While you but hazarded the lives of others,

Alike by accusation or defence ;

And, for the rest, all Venice knows her Doge,

Through his great actions, and the Senate's insults.

*Ben.* You have held conference with him ?

*I. Ber.* I am weary —

Even wearier of your questions than your tortures :

I pray you pass to judgment.

*Ben.* It is coming. —

And you, too, Philip Calendars, what  
Have you to say why you should not be doom'd?

*Cal.* I never was a man of many words,  
And now have few left worth the utterance.

*Ben.* A further application of yon engine  
May change your tone.

*Cal.* Most true: it *will* do so;  
A former application did so; but  
It will not change my words, or, if it did —

*Ben.* What then?

*Cal.* Will my avowal on yon rack  
Stand good in law?

*Ben.* Assuredly.

*Cal.* Whoe'er  
The culprit be whom I accuse of treason?

*Ben.* Without doubt, he will be brought up to trial.

*Cal.* And on this testimony would he perish?

*Ben.* So your confession be detail'd and full,  
He will stand here in peril of his life.

*Cal.* Then look well to thy proud self, President!  
For by the eternity which yawns before me,  
I swear that *thou*, and only thou, shalt be  
The traitor I denounce upon that rack,  
If I be stretch'd there for the second time.

*One of the Giunta.* Lord President, 't were best proceed  
to judgment;

There is no more to be drawn from these men.

*Ben.* Unhappy men! prepare for instant death.  
The nature of your crime — our law — and peril  
The state now stands in, leave not an hour's respite —  
Guards! lead them forth, and upon the balcony  
Of the red columns, where, on festal Thursday, (1)  
The Doge stands to behold the chase of bulls,  
Let them be justified: and leave exposed  
Their wavering relics, in the place of judgment,  
To the full view of the assembled people! —  
And Heaven have mercy on their souls!

*The Giunta.* Amen!

*I. Ber.* Signors, farewell! we shall not all again  
Meet in one place.

*Ben.* And lest they should essay  
To stir up the distracted multitude —

(1) "Giovedì grasso," — "fat or greasy Thursday," — which I cannot literally translate in the text, was the day.

Guards ! let their mouths be gagg'd, (1) even in the act  
Of execution. — Lead them hence !

*Cal.* What ! must we  
Not even say farewell to some fond friend,  
Nor leave a last word with our confessor ?

*Ben.* A priest is waiting in the antechamber ;  
But, for your friends, such interviews would be  
Painful to them, and useless all to you.

*Cal.* I knew that we were gagg'd in life ; at least  
All those who had not heart to risk their lives  
Upon their open thoughts ; but still I deem'd  
That in the last few moments, the same idle  
Freedom of speech accorded to the dying,  
Would not now be denied to us ; but since —

*I. Ber.* Even let them have their way, brave *Calendaro* !  
What matter a few syllables ? let 's die  
Without the slightest show of favour from them ;  
So shall our blood more readily arise  
To Heaven against them, and more testify  
To their atrocities, than could a volume  
Spoken or written of our dying words !  
They tremble at our voices — nay, they dread  
Our very silence — let them live in fear ! —  
Leave them unto their thoughts, and let us now  
Address our own above ! — Lead on ; we are ready.

*Cal.* Israel, hadst thou but hearken'd unto me  
It had not now been thus ; and yon pale villain,  
'The coward *Bertram*, would —

*I. Ber.* Peace, *Calendaro* !  
What brooks it now to ponder upon this ?

*Bert.* Alas ! I fain you died in peace with me :  
I did not seek this task ; 't was forced upon me :  
Say, you forgive me, though I never can  
Retrieve my own forgiveness — frown not thus !

*I. Ber.* I die and pardon thee !

*Cal.* (*spitting at him*). I die and scorn thee !

[*Exeunt ISRAEL BERTUCCIO and PHILIP  
CALENDARO, Guards, &c.*]

*Ben.* Now that these criminals have been disposed of,  
'T is time that we proceed to pass our sentence  
Upon the greatest traitor upon record  
In any annals, the Doge *Faliero* !  
The proofs and process are complete ; the time  
And crime require a quick proceduré : shall

(2) Historical fact. See *Sanuto*, APPENDIX, Note (A).

He now be call'd in to receive the award ?

*The Giunta.* Ay, ay.

*Ben.* Avogadori, order that the Doge  
Be brought before the council.

*One of the Giunta.* And the rest,  
When shall they be brought up ?

*Ben.* When all the chiefs  
Have been disposed of. Some have fled to Chiozza ;  
But there are thousands in pursuit of them,  
And such precaution ta'en on terra firma,  
As well as in the islands, that we hope  
None will escape to utter in strange lands  
His libellous tale of treasons 'gainst the senate.

*Enter the DOGE as Prisoner, with Guards, &c. &c.*

*Ben.* Doge — for such still you are, and by the law  
Must be consider'd, till the hour shall come  
When you must doff the ducal bonnet from  
That head, which could not wear a crown more noble  
Than empires can confer, in quiet honour,  
But it must plot to overthrow your peers,  
Who made you what you are, and quench in blood  
A city's glory — we have laid already  
Before you in your chamber at full length,  
By the Avogadori, all the proofs  
Which have appear'd against you ; and more ample .  
Ne'er rear'd their sanguinary shadows to  
Confront a traitor. What have you to say  
In your defence ?

*Doge.* What shall I say to ye,  
Since my defence must be your condemnation ?  
You are at once offenders and accusers,  
Judges and executioners ! — Proceed  
Upon your power.

*Ben.* Your chief accomplices  
Having confess'd, there is no hope for you.

*Doge.* And who be they ?

*Ben.* In number many ; but  
The first now stands before you in the court,  
Bertram, of Bergamo, — would you question him ?

*Doge (looking at him contemptuously).* No.

*Ben.* And two others, Israel Bertuccio,  
And Philip Calendaro, have admitted  
Their fellowship in treason with the Doge !

*Doge.* And where are they ?

*Ben.* Gone to their place, and now  
Answering to Heaven for what they did on earth.

*Doge.* Ah! the plebeian Brutus, is he gone?  
And the quick Cassius of the arsenal? —  
How did they meet their doom?

*Ben.* Think of your own;  
It is approaching. You decline to plead, then?

*Doge.* I cannot plead to my inferiors, nor  
Can recognise your legal power to try me.  
Show me the law!

*Ben.* On great emergencies,  
The law must be remodel'd or amended:  
Our fathers had not fix'd the punishment  
Of such a crime, as on the old Roman tables  
The sentence against parricide was left  
In pure forgetfulness; they could not render  
That penal, which had neither name nor thought  
In their great bosoms: who would have foreseen  
That nature could be filed to such a crime  
As sons 'gainst sires, and princes 'gainst their realms?  
Your sin hath made us make a law which will  
Become a precedent 'gainst such haught traitors,  
As would with treason mount to tyranny;  
Not even contented with a sceptre, till  
They can convert it to a two-edged sword!  
Was not the place of Doge sufficient for ye?  
What 's nobler than the signory of Venice?

*Doge.* The signory of Venice! You betray'd me —  
You — you, who sit there, traitors as ye are!  
From my equality with you in birth,  
And my superiority in action,  
You drew me from my honourable toils  
In distant lands — on flood — in field — in cities —  
You singled me out like a victim to  
Stand crown'd, but bound and helpless, at the altar  
Where you alone could minister. I knew not —  
I sought not — wish'd not — dream'd not the election,  
Which reach'd me first at Rome, and I obey'd;  
But found on my arrival, that, besides  
The jealous vigilance which always led you  
To mock and mar your sovereign's best intents,  
You had, even in the interregnum of  
My journey to the capital, curtail'd  
And mutilated the few privileges  
Yet left the duke: all this I bore, and would  
Have borne, until my very hearth was stain'd

By the pollution of your ribaldry,  
And he, the ribald, whom I see amongst you —  
Fit judge in such tribunal! —

*Ben. (interrupting him).* Michel Steno  
Is here in virtue of his office, as  
One of the Forty; “the Ten” having craved  
A Giunta of patricians from the senate  
To aid our judgment in a trial arduous  
And novel as the present: he was set  
Free from the penalty pronounced upon him,  
Because the Doge, who should protect the law,  
Seeking to abrogate all law, can claim  
No punishment of others by the statutes  
Which he himself denies and violates!

*Doge.* His PUNISHMENT! I rather see him *there*,  
Where he now sits, to glut him with my death,  
Than in the mockery of castigation,  
Which your foul, outward, juggling show of justice  
Decreed as sentence! Base as was his crime,  
'T was purity compared with your protection.

*Ben.* And can it be, that the great Doge of Venice,  
With three parts of a century of years  
And honours on his head, could thus allow  
His fury, like an angry boy's, to master  
All feeling, wisdom, faith, and fear, on such  
A provocation as a young man's petulance?

*Doge.* A spark creates the flame — 't is the last drop  
Which makes the cup run o'er, and mine was full  
Already: you oppress'd the prince and people;  
I would have freed both, and have fail'd in both:  
The price of such success would have been glory,  
Vengeance, and victory, and such a name  
As would have made Venetian history  
Rival to that of Greece and Syracuse  
When they were freed, and flourish'd ages after,  
And mine to Gelon and to Thrasybulus: —  
Failing, I know the penalty of failure  
Is present infamy and death — the future  
Will judge, when Venice is no more, or free;  
Till then, the truth is in abeyance. Pause not;  
I would have shown no mercy, and I seek none;  
My life was staked upon a mighty hazard,  
And being lost, take what I would have taken!  
I would have stood alone amidst your tombs:  
Now you may flock round mine, and trample on it,  
As you have done upon my heart while living.

*Ben.* You do confess then, and admit the justice  
Of our tribunal ?

*Doge.* I confess to have fail'd ;  
Fortune is female : from my youth her favours  
Were not withheld, the fault was mine to hope  
Her former smiles again at this late hour.

*Ben.* You do not then in aught arraign our equity ?

*Doge.* Noble Venetians ! stir me not with questions.  
I am resign'd to the worst ; but in me still  
Have something of the blood of brighter days,  
And am not over-patient. Pray you, spare me  
Further interrogation, which boots nothing,  
Except to turn a trial to debate.  
I shall but answer that which will offend you,  
And please your enemies — a host already ;  
'T is true, these sullen walls should yield no echo :  
But walls have ears — nay, more, they have tongues ;  
and if

There were no other way for truth to o'erleap them,  
You who condemn me, you who fear and slay me,  
Yet could not bear in silence to your graves  
What you would hear from me of good or evil ;  
The secret were too mighty for your souls :  
Then let it sleep in mine, unless you court  
A danger which would double that you escape.  
Such my defence would be, had I full scope  
To make it famous ; for true *words* are *things*,  
And dying men's are things which long outlive,  
And oftentimes avenge them ; bury mine,  
If ye would fain survive me : take this counsel,  
And though too oft ye made me live in wrath,  
Let me die calmly ; you may grant me this ; —  
I deny nothing — defend nothing — nothing  
I ask of you, but silence for myself,  
And sentence from the court !

*Ben.* This full admission  
Spares us the harsh necessity of ordering  
The torture to elicit the whole truth.

*Doge.* The torture ! you have put me there already,  
Daily since I was Doge ; but if you will  
Add the corporeal rack, you may : these limbs  
Will yield with age to crushing iron ; but  
There's that within my heart shall strain your engines.

*Enter an OFFICER.*

*Officer.* Noble Venetians! Duchess Faliero  
Requests admission to the Giunta's presence.

*Ben.* Say, conscript fathers, (1) shall she be admitted?

*One of the Giunta.* She may have revelations of importance

Unto the state, to justify compliance  
With her request.

*Ben.* Is this the general will?

*All.* It is.

*Doge.* Oh, admirable laws of Venice!  
Which would admit the wife, in the full hope  
That she might testify against the husband.  
What glory to the chaste Venetian dames!  
But such blasphemers 'gainst all honour, as  
Sit here, do well to act in their vocation.  
Now, villain Steno! if this woman fail,  
I'll pardon thee thy lie, and thy escape,  
And my own violent death, and thy vile life.

*The DUCHESS enters.*

*Ben.* Lady! this just tribunal has resolved,  
Though the request be strange, to grant it, and  
Whatever be its purport, to accord  
A patient hearing with the due respect  
Which fits your ancestry, your rank, and virtues:  
But you turn pale — ho! there, look to the lady!  
Place a chair instantly.

*Ang.* A moment's faintness —  
'Tis past; I pray you pardon me, — I sit not  
In presence of my prince and of my husband,  
While he is on his feet.

*Ben.* Your pleasure, lady?

*Ang.* Strange rumours, but most true, if all I hear  
And see be sooth, have reach'd me, and I come  
To know the worst, even at the worst; forgive  
The abruptness of my entrance and my bearing.  
It is — I cannot speak — I cannot shape  
The question — but you answer it ere spoken,  
With eyes averted, and with gloomy brows —  
Oh God! this is the silence of the grave!

(1) The Venetian senate took the same title as the Roman, of "Conscript Fathers."

*Ben.* (after a pause). Spare us, and spare thyself the repetition

Of our most awful, but inexorable  
Duty to heaven and man!

*Ang.* Yet speak; I cannot —  
I cannot — no — even now believe these things.  
Is he condemn'd?

*Ben.* Alas!

*Ang.* And was he guilty?

*Ben.* Lady! the natural distraction of  
Thy thoughts at such a moment makes the question  
Merit forgiveness; else a doubt like this  
Against a just and paramount tribunal  
Were deep offence. But question even the Doge,  
And if he can deny the proofs, believe him  
Guiltless as thy own bosom.

*Ang.* Is it so?

My lord — my sovereign — my poor father's friend —  
The mighty in the field, the sage in council;  
Unsay the words of this man! — Thou art silent!

*Ben.* He hath already own'd to his own guilt,  
Nor, as thou see'st, doth he deny it now.

*Ang.* Ay, but he must not die! Spare his few years,  
Which grief and shame will soon cut down to days!  
One day of baffled crime must not efface  
Near sixteen lustres crowded with brave acts.

*Ben.* His doom must be fulfill'd without remission  
Of time or penalty — 't is a decree.

*Ang.* He hath been guilty, but there may be mercy.

*Ben.* Not in this case with justice.

*Ang.* Alas! signor,

He who is only just is cruel; who  
Upon the earth would live were all judged justly?

*Ben.* His punishment is safety to the state.

*Ang.* He was a subject, and hath served the state;  
He was your general, and hath saved the state;  
He is your sovereign, and hath ruled the state.

*One of the Council.* He is a traitor, and betray'd the  
state.

*Ang.* And, but for him, there now had been no state  
To save or to destroy; and you, who sit  
There to pronounce the death of your deliverer,  
Had now been groaning at a Moslem oar,  
Or digging in the Hunnish mines in fetters!

*One of the Council.* No, lady, there are others who would  
die

Rather than breathe in slavery !

*Ang.* If there are so  
Within *these* walls, *thou* art not of the number :  
The truly brave are generous to the fallen ! —  
Is there no hope ?

*Ben.* Lady, it cannot be.

*Ang.* (*turning to the Doge*). Then die, Faliero ! since it  
must be so ;

But with the spirit of my father's friend.  
Thou hast been guilty of a great offence,  
Half cancell'd by the harshness of these men.  
I would have sued to them — have pray'd to them —  
Have begg'd as famish'd mendicants for bread —  
Have wept as they will cry unto their God  
For mercy, and be answer'd as they answer —  
Had it been fitting for thy name or mine,  
And if the cruelty in their cold eyes  
Had not announced the heartless wrath within.  
Then, as a prince, address thee to thy doom !

*Doge.* I have lived too long not to know how to die !  
Thy suing to these men were but the bleating  
Of the lamb to the butcher, or the cry  
Of seamen to the surge : I would not take  
A life eternal, granted at the hands  
Of wretches, from whose monstrous villanies  
I sought to free the groaning nations !

*Michel Steno.* Doge,

A word with thee, and with this noble lady,  
Whom I have grievously offended. Would  
Sorrow, or shame, or penance on my part,  
Could cancel the inexorable past !  
But since that cannot be, as Christians let us  
Say farewell, and in peace : with full contrition  
I crave, not pardon, but compassion from you,  
And give, however weak, my prayers for both.

*Ang.* Sage Benintende, now chief judge of Venice,  
I speak to thee in answer to yon signor.  
Inform the ribald Steno, that his words  
Ne'er weigh'd in mind with Loredano's daughter  
Further than to create a moment's pity  
For such as he is : would that others had  
Despised him as I pity ! I prefer  
My honour to a thousand lives, could such  
Be multiplied in mine, but would not have  
A single life of others lost for that  
Which nothing human can impugn — the sense

Of virtue, looking not to what is call'd  
 A good name for reward, but to itself.  
 To me the scorner's words were as the wind  
 Unto the rock : but as there are — alas !  
 Spirits more sensitive, on which such things  
 Light as the whirlwind on the waters ; souls  
 To whom dishonour's shadow is a substance  
 More terrible than death, here and hereafter ;  
 Men whose vice is to start at vice's scoffing,  
 And who, though proof against all blandishments  
 Of pleasure, and all pangs of pain, are feeble  
 When the proud name on which they pinnacled  
 Their hopes is breathed on, jealous as the eagle  
 Of her high airy ; let what we now  
 Behold, and feel, and suffer, be a lesson  
 To wretches how they tamper in their spleen  
 With beings of a higher order. Insects  
 Have made the lion mad ere now ; a shaft  
 I' the heel o'erthrew the bravest of the brave ;  
 A wife's dishonour was the bane of Troy ;  
 A wife's dishonour unking'd Rome for ever ;  
 An injured husband brought the Gauls to Clusium,  
 And thence to Rome, which perish'd for a time ;  
 An obscene gesture cost Caligula  
 His life, while Earth yet bore his cruelties ;  
 A virgin's wrong made Spain a Moorish province ;  
 And Steno's lie, couch'd in two worthless lines,  
 Hath decimated Venice, put in peril  
 A senate which hath stood eight hundred years,  
 Discrown'd a prince, cut off his crownless head,  
 And forged new fetters for a groaning people !  
 Let the poor wretch, like to the courtesan  
 Who fired Persepolis, be proud of this,  
 If it so please him — 't were a pride fit for him !  
 But let him not insult the last hours of  
 Him, who, whate'er he now is, *was* a hero,  
 By the intrusion of his very prayers ;  
 Nothing of good can come from such a source,  
 Nor would we aught with him, nor now, nor ever :  
 We leave him to himself, that lowest depth  
 Of human baseness. Pardon is for men,  
 And not for reptiles — we have none for Steno,  
 And no resentment : things like him must sting,  
 And higher beings suffer ; 't is the charter  
 Of life. The man who dies by the adder's fang  
 May have the crawler crush'd, but feels no anger :

'T was the worm's nature ; and some men are worms  
In soul, more than the living things of tombs.

*Doge (to Ben.).* Signor ! complete that which you deem  
your duty.

*Ben.* Before we can proceed upon that duty,  
We would request the princess to withdraw ;  
'T will move her too much to be witness to it.

*Ang.* I know it will, and yet I must endure it,  
For 't is a part of mine — I will not quit,  
Except by force, my husband's side.— Proceed !  
Nay, fear not either shriek, or sigh, or tear ;  
Though my heart burst, it shall be silent.— Speak !  
I have that within which shall o'ermaster all.

*Ben.* Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice,  
Count of Val di Marino, Senator,  
And some time General of the Fleet and Army,  
Noble Venetian, many times and oft  
Intrusted by the state with high employments,  
Even to the highest, listen to the sentence.  
Convict by many witnesses and proofs,  
And by thine own confession, of the guilt  
Of treachery and treason, yet unheard of  
Until this trial — the decree is death.  
Thy goods are confiscate unto the state,  
Thy name is razed from out her records, save  
Upon a public day of thanksgiving  
For this our most miraculous deliverance,  
When thou art noted in our calendars  
With earthquakes, pestilence, and foreign foes,  
And the great enemy of man, as subject  
Of grateful masses for Heaven's grace in snatching  
Our lives and country from thy wickedness.  
The place wherein as Doge thou shouldst be painted,  
With thine illustrious predecessors, is  
To be left vacant, with a death-black veil  
Flung over these dim words engraved beneath, —  
“ This place is of Marino Faliero,  
Decapitated for his crimes.”

*Doge.*

“ His crimes ! ”

But let it be so : — it will be in vain.

The veil which blackens o'er this blighted name,  
And hides, or seems to hide, these lineaments,  
Shall draw more gazers than the thousand portraits  
Which glitter round it in their pictured trappings —  
Your delegated slaves — the people's tyrants !

“ Decapitated for his crimes ! ” — *What crimes ?*

Were it not better to record the facts,  
 So that the contemplator might approve,  
 Or at the least learn *whence* the crimes arose ?  
 When the beholder knows a Doge conspired,  
 Let him be told the cause — it is your history.

*Ben.* Time must reply to that ; our sons will judge  
 Their fathers' judgment, which I now pronounce.  
 As Doge, clad in the ducal robes and cap,  
 Thou shalt be led hence to the Giants' Staircase,  
 Where thou and all our princes are invested ;  
 And there, the ducal crown being first resumed  
 Upon the spot where it was first assumed,  
 Thy head shall be struck off ; and Heaven have mercy  
 Upon thy soul !

*Doge.* Is this the Giunta's sentence ?

*Ben.* It is.

*Doge.* I can endure it. — And the time ?

*Ben.* Must be immediate. — Make thy peace with God :  
 Within an hour thou must be in His presence.

*Doge.* I am already ; and my blood will rise  
 To Heaven before the souls of those who shed it. —  
 Are all my lands confiscated ?

*Ben.* They are ;  
 And goods, and jewels, and all kind of treasure,  
 Except two thousand ducats — these dispose of.

*Doge.* That 's harsh. — I would have fain reserved the  
 lands

Near to Treviso, which I hold by investment  
 From Laurence the Count-bishop of Ceneda,  
 In fief perpetual to myself and heirs,  
 To portion them (leaving my city spoil,  
 My palace and my treasures, to your forfeit)  
 Between my consort and my kinsmen.

*Ben.* These  
 Lie under the state's ban ; their chief, thy nephew,  
 In peril of his own life ; but the council  
 Postpones his trial for the present. If  
 Thou will'st a state unto thy widow'd princess,  
 Fear not, for we will do her justice.

*Ang.* Signors,  
 I share not in your spoil ! From henceforth, know  
 I am devoted unto God alone,  
 And take my refuge in the cloister.

*Doge.* Come !  
 The hour may be a hard one, but 't will end.  
 Have I aught else to undergo save death ?

*Ben.* You have nought to do, except confess and die.  
The priest is robed, the scimitar is bare,  
And both await without.— But, above all,  
Think not to speak unto the people ; they  
Are now by thousands swarming at the gates,  
But these are closed : the Ten, the Avogadori,  
The Giunta, and the chief men of the Forty,  
Alone will be beholders of thy doom,  
And they are ready to attend the Doge.

*Doge.* The Doge !

*Ben.* Yes, Doge, thou hast lived and thou shalt die  
A sovereign ; till the moment which precedes  
The separation of that head and trunk,  
The ducal crown and head shall be united.  
Thou hast forgot thy dignity in deigning  
To plot with petty traitors ; not so we,  
Who in the very punishment acknowledge  
The prince. Thy vile accomplices have died  
The dog's death, and the wolf's ; but thou shalt fall  
As falls the lion by the hunters, girt  
By those who feel a proud compassion for thee,  
And mourn even the inevitable death  
Provoked by thy wild wrath, and regal fierceness.  
Now we remit thee to thy preparation :  
Let it be brief, and we ourselves will be  
Thy guides unto the place where first we were  
United to thee as thy subjects, and  
Thy senate ; and must now be parted from thee  
As such for ever, on the self-same spot.—  
Guards ! form the Doge's escort to his chamber.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*The Doge's Apartment.*

*The DOGE as Prisoner, and the DUCHESS attending him.*

*Doge.* Now, that the priest is gone, 't were useless  
To linger out the miserable minutes ;  
But one pang more, the pang of parting from thee,  
And I will leave the few last grains of sand,  
Which yet remain of the accorded hour,  
Still falling — I have done with Time.

*Ang.*

Alas!

And I have been the cause, the unconscious cause ;  
 And for this funeral marriage, this black union,  
 Which thou, compliant with my father's wish,  
 Didst promise at *his* death, thou hast seal'd thine own.

*Doge.* Not so : there was that in my spirit ever  
 Which shaped out for itself some great reverse ;  
 The marvel is, it came not until now —  
 And yet it was foretold me.

*Ang.*

How foretold you ?

*Doge.* Long years ago— so long, they are a doubt  
 In memory, and yet they live in annals :  
 When I was in my youth, and served the senate  
 And signory as podesta and captain  
 Of the town of Treviso, on a day  
 Of festival, the sluggish bishop who  
 Convey'd the Host aroused my rash young anger,  
 By strange delay, and arrogant reply  
 To my reproof ; I raised my hand and smote him,  
 Until he reel'd beneath his holy burthen ;  
 And as he rose from earth again, he raised  
 His tremulous hands in pious wrath towards heaven.  
 Thence pointing to the Host, which had fallen from him,  
 He turn'd to me, and said, " The hour will come  
 When he thou hast o'erthrown shall overthrow thee :  
 The glory shall depart from out thy house,  
 The wisdom shall be shaken from thy soul,  
 And in thy best maturity of mind  
 A madness of the heart shall seize upon thee ;  
 Passion shall tear thee when all passions cease  
 In other men, or mellow into virtues ;  
 And majesty, which decks all other heads,  
 Shall crown to leave thee headless ; honours shall  
 But prove to thee the heralds of destruction,  
 And hoary hairs of shame, and both of death.  
 But not such death as fits an aged man."  
 Thus saying, he pass'd on.— That hour is come.

*Ang.* And with this warning couldst thou not have striven  
 To avert the fatal moment, and atone,  
 By penitence for that which thou hadst done ?

*Doge.* I own the words went to my heart, so much  
 That I remember'd them amid the maze  
 Of life, as if they form'd a spectral voice,  
 Which shook me in a supernatural dream ;  
 And I repented ; but 't was not for me  
 To pull in resolution : what must be

I could not change, and would not fear.— Nay more,  
 Thou canst not have forgot, what all remember,  
 That on my day of landing here as Doge,  
 On my return from Rome, a mist of such  
 Unwonted density went on before  
 The bucentaur, like the columnar cloud  
 Which usher'd Israel out of Egypt, till  
 The pilot was misled, and disembark'd us  
 Between the pillars of Saint Mark's, where 't is  
 The custom of the state to put to death  
 Its criminals, instead of touching at  
 The Riva della Paglia, as the wont is, —  
 So that all Venice shudder'd at the omen.

*Ang.* Ah! little boots it now to recollect  
 Such things.

*Doge.* And yet I find a comfort in  
 The thought that these things are the work of Fate ;  
 For I would rather yield to gods than men,  
 Or cling to any creed of destiny,  
 Rather than deem these mortals, most of whom  
 I know to be as worthless as the dust  
 And weak as worthless, more than instruments  
 Of an o'er-ruling power; they in themselves  
 Were all incapable — they could not be  
 Victors of him who oft had conquer'd for them !

*Ang.* Employ the minutes left in aspirations  
 Of a more healing nature, and in peace  
 Even with these wretches take thy flight to heaven.

*Doge.* I am at peace : the peace of certainty  
 That a sure hour will come, when their sons' sons,  
 And this proud city, and these azure waters,  
 And all which makes them eminent and bright,  
 Shall be a desolation and a curse,  
 A hissing and a scoff unto the nations,  
 A Carthage, and a Tyre, an Ocean Babel !

*Ang.* Speak not thus now ; the surge of passion still  
 Sweeps o'er thee to the last ; thou dost deceive  
 Thyself, and canst not injure them — be calmer.

*Doge.* I stand within eternity, and see  
 Into eternity, and I behold —  
 Ay, palpable as I see thy sweet face  
 For the last time — the days which I denounce  
 Unto all time against these wave-girt walls,  
 And they who are indwellers.

*Guard (coming forward).* Doge of Venice,  
 The Ten are in attendance on your highness.

*Doge.* Then farewell, Angiolina! — one embrace —  
 Forgive the old man who hath been to thee  
 A fond but fatal husband — love my memory —  
 I would not ask so much for me still living,  
 But thou canst judge of me more kindly now,  
 Seeing my evil feelings are at rest.  
 Besides, of all the fruit of these long years,  
 Glory, and wealth, and power, and fame, and name,  
 Which generally leave some flowers to bloom  
 Even o'er the grave, I have nothing left, not even  
 A little love, or friendship, or esteem,  
 No, not enough to extract an epitaph  
 From ostentatious kinsmen; in one hour  
 I have uprooted all my former life,  
 And outlived every thing, except thy heart,  
 The pure, the good, the gentle, which will oft  
 With unimpair'd but not a clamorous grief  
 Still keep — Thou turn'st so pale! — Alas! she faints,  
 She has no breath, no pulse! — Guards! lend your aid —  
 I cannot leave her thus, and yet 't is better,  
 Since every lifeless moment spares a pang.  
 When she shakes off this temporary death,  
 I shall be with the Eternal. — Call her women —  
 One look! — how cold her hand! — as cold as mine  
 Shall be ere she recovers. — Gently tend her,  
 And take my last thanks — I am ready now.

[*The Attendants of ANGIOLINA enter and surround  
 their mistress, who has fainted. — Exeunt the DOGE,  
 Guards, &c. &c.*

### SCENE III.

*The Court of the Ducal Palace: the outer gates are shut  
 against the people. — The DOGE enters in his ducal robes,  
 in procession with the Council of Ten and other Patri-  
 cians, attended by the Guards till they arrive at the top of  
 the "Giants' Staircase," (where the Doges took the oaths);  
 the Executioner is stationed there with his sword. — On  
 arriving, a Chief of the Ten takes off the ducal cap from  
 the Doge's head.*

*Doge.* So now the Doge is nothing, and at last  
 I am again Marino Faliero:  
 'T is well to be so, though but for a moment.

Here was I crown'd, and here, bear witness, Heaven!  
 With how much more contentment I resign  
 That shining mockery, the ducal bauble,  
 Than I received the fatal ornament.

*One of the Ten.* Thou tremblest, Faliero!

*Doge.* 'T is with age, then. (1)

*Ben.* Faliero! hast thou aught further to commend,  
 Compatible with justice, to the senate?

*Doge.* I would commend my nephew to their mercy,  
 My consort to their justice; for methinks  
 My death, and such a death, might settle all  
 Between the state and me.

*Ben.* They shall be cared for;  
 Even notwithstanding thine unheard-of crime.

*Doge.* Unheard of! ay, there's not a history  
 But shows a thousand crown'd conspirators  
 Against the people; but to set them free  
 One sovereign only died, and one is dying.

*Ben.* And who were they who fell in such a cause?

*Doge.* The King of Sparta, and the Doge of Venice —  
 Agis and Faliero!

*Ben.* Hast thou more  
 To utter or to do?

*Doge.* May I speak?

*Ben.* Thou may'st;  
 But recollect the people are without,  
 Beyond the compass of the human voice.

*Doge.* I speak to Time and to Eternity,  
 Of which I grow a portion, not to man.  
 Ye elements! in which to be resolved  
 I hasten, let my voice be as a spirit  
 Upon you! Ye blue waves! which bore my banner,  
 Ye winds! which flutter'd o'er as if you loved it,  
 And fill'd my swelling sails as they were wafted  
 To many a triumph! Thou, my native earth,  
 Which I have bled for, and thou foreign earth,  
 Which drank this willing blood from many a wound!  
 Ye stones, in which my gore will not sink, but  
 Reek up to Heaven! Ye skies, which will receive it!

(1) This was the actual reply of Bailli, maire of Paris, to a Frenchman who made him the same reproach on his way to execution, in the earliest part of their revolution. I find in reading over (since the completion of this tragedy), for the first time these six years, " Venice Preserved," a similar reply on a different occasion by Renault, and other coincidences arising from the subject. I need hardly remind the gentlest reader, that such coincidences must be accidental, from the very facility of their detection by reference to so popular a play on the stage and in the closet as *Otway's chef-d'œuvre*.

Thou sun! which shinest on these things, and Thou!  
 Who kindlest and who quenchest suns! — Attest!  
 I am not innocent — but are these guiltless?  
 I perish'd, but not unavenged; far ages  
 Float up from the abyss of time to be,  
 And show these eyes, before they close, the doom  
 Of this proud city, and I leave my curse  
 On her and hers for ever! — Yes, the hours  
 Are silently engendering of the day,  
 When she, who built 'gainst Attila a bulwark,  
 Shall yield, and bloodlessly and basely yield  
 Unto a bastard Attila, without  
 Shedding so much blood in her last defence  
 As these old veins, oft drain'd in shielding her,  
 Shall pour in sacrifice. — She shall be bought  
 And sold, and be an appanage to those  
 Who shall despise her! — She shall stoop to be  
 A province for an empire, petty town  
 In lieu of capital, with slaves for senates,  
 Beggars for nobles, panders for a people! <sup>(1)</sup>  
 Then when the Hebrew's in thy palaces, <sup>(2)</sup>  
 The Hun in thy high places, and the Greek  
 Walks o'er thy mart, and smiles on it for his!  
 When thy patricians beg their bitter bread  
 In narrow streets, and in their shameful need  
 Make their nobility a plea for pity!  
 Then, when the few who still retain a wreck  
 Of their great fathers' heritage shall fawn  
 Round a barbarian Vice of Kings' Vicegerent,  
 Even in the palace where they sway'd as sovereigns,  
 Even in the palace where they slew their sovereign,  
 Proud of some name they have disgraced, or sprung  
 From an adulteress boastful of her guilt  
 With some large gondolier or foreign soldier,  
 Shall bear about their bastardy in triumph  
 To the third spurious generation; — when

(1) Should the dramatic picture seem harsh, let the reader look to the historical, of the period prophesied, or rather of the few years preceding that period. Voltaire calculated their "nostre bene merite Meretrici" at 12,000 of regulars, without including volunteers and local militia, on what authority I know not; but it is, perhaps, the only part of the population not decreased. Venice once contained 200,000 inhabitants: there are now about 90,000, and THESE!! few individuals can conceive, and none could describe, the actual state into which the more than infernal tyranny of Austria has plunged this unhappy city.

(2) The chief palaces on the Brenta now belong to the Jews; who in the earlier times of the republic were only allowed to inhabit Mestri, and not to enter the city of Venice. The whole commerce is in the hands of the Jews and Greeks, and the Huns form the garrison.

Thy sons are in the lowest scale of being,  
 Slaves turn'd o'er to the vanquish'd by the victors,  
 Despised by cowards for greater cowardice,  
 And scorn'd even by the vicious for such vices  
 As in the monstrous grasp of their conception  
 Defy all codes to image or to name them ;  
 Then, when of Cyprus, now thy subject kingdom,  
 All thine inheritance shall be her shame  
 Entail'd on thy less virtuous daughters, grown  
 A wider proverb for worse prostitution ; —  
 When all the ills of conquer'd states shall cling thee,  
 Vice without splendour, sin without relief  
 Even from the gloss of love to smooth it o'er,  
 But in its stead, coarse lusts of habitude,  
 Prurient yet passionless, cold studied lewdness,  
 Depraving nature's frailty to an art ; —  
 When these and more are heavy on thee, when  
 Smiles without mirth, and pastimes without pleasure,  
 Youth without honour, age without respect,  
 Meanness and weakness, and a sense of woe  
 'Gainst which thou wilt not strive, and dar'st not murmur  
 Have made thee last and worst of peopled deserts,  
 Then, in the last gasp of thine agony,  
 Amidst thy many murders, think of *mine* !  
 Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes ! (1)  
 Gehenna of the waters ! thou sea Sodom !  
 Thus I devote thee to the infernal gods !  
 Thee and thy serpent seed !

[*Here the DOGE turns, and addresses the Executioner.*

Slave, do thine office !

Strike as I struck the foe ! Strike as I would  
 Have struck those tyrants ! Strike deep as my curse !  
 Strike — and but once !

[*The DOGE throws himself upon his knees, and as the Executioner raises his sword the scene closes.*

#### SCENE IV.

*The Piazza and Piazzetta of Saint Mark's.— The People in crowds gathered round the grated gates of the Ducal Palace, which are shut.*

*First Citizen.* I have gain'd the gate, and can discern the  
 Ten,

Robed in their gowns of state, ranged round the Doge.

(1) Of the first fifty Doges, five abdicated — five were banished with their eyes

*Second Cit.* I cannot reach thee with mine utmost effort.  
How is it? let us hear at least, since sight  
Is thus prohibited unto the people,  
Except the occupiers of those bars.

*First Cit.* One has approach'd the Doge, and now they  
strip  
The ducal bonnet from his head — and now  
He raises his keen eyes to Heaven; I see  
Them glitter, and his lips move — Hush! hush! — no,  
'T was but a murmur — Curse upon the distance!  
His words are inarticulate, but the voice  
Swells up like mutter'd thunder; would we could  
But gather a sole sentence!

*Second Cit.* Hush! we perhaps may catch the sound.

*First Cit.* 'T is vain,  
I cannot hear him. — How his hoary hair  
Streams on the wind like foam upon the wave!  
Now — now — he kneels — and now they form a circle  
Round him, and all is hidden — but I see  
The lifted sword in air — Ah! hark! it falls!

[*The People murmur.*]

*Third Cit.* Then they have murder'd him who would have  
freed us.

*Fourth Cit.* He was a kind man to the commons ever.

*Fifth Cit.* Wisely they did to keep their portals barr'd.  
Would we had known the work they were preparing  
Ere we were summon'd here, — we would have brought  
Weapons, and forced them!

*Sixth Cit.* Are you sure he's dead?

*First Cit.* I saw the sword fall — Lo! what have we  
here?

*Enter on the Balcony of the Palace which fronts Saint  
Mark's Place, a CHIEF OF THE TEN, (1) with a bloody  
sword. He waves it thrice before the People, and exclaims,*

“ Justice hath dealt upon the mighty Traitor ! ”

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put out — five were MASSACRED — and nine deposed: so that nineteen out of fifty lost the throne by violence, besides two who fell in battle: this occurred long previous to the reign of Marino Faliero. One of his more immediate predecessors, Andrea Dandolo, died of vexation. Amongst his successors, *Foscari*, after seeing his son repeatedly tortured and banished, was deposed, and died of breaking a blood-vessel, on hearing the bell of Saint Mark's toll for the election of his successor. *Morosini* was impeached for the loss of Candia; but this was previous to his dukedom, during which he conquered the Morea, and was styled the Peloponnesian. Faliero might truly say, “ Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes ! ”

(1) “ Un Capo de' Dieci ” are the words of Sanuto's Chronicle.

*[The gates are opened; the populace rush in towards the  
"Giants' Staircase," where the execution has taken place.  
The foremost of them exclaims to those behind,*

The gory head rolls down the "Giants' Steps!"  
*[The curtain falls.*



## APPENDIX.

### I.

MCCCLIV.

#### MARINO FALIERO DOGE XLIX.

“ Fu eletto da quarant uno Elettori, il quale era Cavaliere e conte di Valdemarino in Trivigiana, ed era ricco, e si trovava ambasciadore a Roma. E a dì 9, di Settembre, dopo sepolto il suo predecessore, fu chiamato il gran Consiglio, e fu preso di fare il Doge giusta il solito. E furono fatti i cinque Correttori, Ser Bernardo Giustiniani Procuratore, Ser Paolo Loredano, Ser Filippo Aurio, Ser Pietro Trivisano, e Ser Tommaso Viadro. I quali a dì 10, misero queste correzioni alla promozione del Doge: che i Consiglieri non odano gli Oratori e Nunzi de' Signori, senza i Capi de' quaranta, ne possano rispondere ad alcuno, se non saranno quattro Consiglieri e due Capi de' Quaranta. E che osservino la forma del suo Capitolare. E che Messer lo Doge signetta nella miglior parte, quando i giudici tra loro non fossero d'accordo. E ch' egli non possa far vendere i suoi imprestiti, salvo con legittima causa, e co voler di cinque Consiglieri, di due Capi de' Quaranta, e delle due parti del Consiglio de' Pregati. *Item*, che in luogo di tre mila pelli di Conigli, che debbon dare i Zaratini per regalla al Doge, non trovandosi tante pelli, gli diano Ducati ottanta l' anno. E poi a dì 11, detto, misero, *etiam* altre correzioni, che se il Doge, che sarà eletto, fosse fuori di Venezia, i savj possano provvedere del suo ritorno. E quando fosse il Doge ammalato, sia Vicedoge uno de' Consiglieri, da essere eletto tra loro. E che il detto sia nominato Viceluogotenente di Messer, lo Doge, quando i giudici faranno i suoi attl. E nota, perché fu fatto Doge uno, ch' era assente, che fu Vicedoge Ser Marino Badoero più vecchio de' Consiglieri. *Item*, che il governo del Ducato sia commesso a' Consiglieri, e a' Capi de' Quaranta, quando vaccherà il Ducato finchè sarà eletto l' altro Doge. E così a dì 11 di Settembre fu creato il prefato Marino Faliero Doge. E fu preso, che il governo del Ducato sia commesso a' Consiglieri e a' Capi de' Quaranta. I quali stiano in Palazzo di continuo, fino che verrà il Doge. Sicchè di continuo stiano in Palazzo due Consiglieri e un Capo de' Quaranta. E subito furono spedite lettere al detto Doge, il quale era a Roma Oratore al Legato di Papa Innocenzo VI. ch' era in Avignone. Fu preso nel gran Consiglio d' eleggere dodici ambasciadori incontro a Marino Faliero Doge, il quale veniva da Roma. E giunto a Chioggia, il Podesta mandò Taddeo Giustiniani suo figliuolo incontro, con quindici Ganzaruoli. E poi venuto a S. Clemente nel Bucintoro, venne un gran caligo, *adeo* che il Bucintoro non si potè levare. Laonde il Doge co' gentiluomini nelle piatte vennero di lungo in questa Terra a' 5 d' Ottobre del 1354. E dovendo smontare alla riva della Paglia per lo caligo andarono ad ismontare alla riva della Piazza in mezzo alle due colonne dove si fa la Giustizia, che fu un malissimo augurio. E a' 6, la mattina venne alla Chiesa di San Marco alla laudazione di quello. Era in questo tempo Cancellier Grande Messer Benintende. I quarantuno Elettori furono, Ser Giovanni Contarini, Ser' Andrea Giustiniani, Ser Michele Morossini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Pietro Lando, Ser Marino Gradenigo, Ser Marco Dolfino, Ser Nicold Faliero, Ser Giovanni Quirini, Ser Lorenzo Soranzo, Ser Marco Bembo, Sere Stefano Belegno, Ser Francesco Loredano, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Giovanni Mocenigo, Ser Andrea Barbaro, Ser Lorenzo Barbarigo, Ser Bettino da

Mollino, Ser' Andrea Arizzo Procuratore, Ser Marco Celsi, Ser Paolo Donato, Ser Bertuccio Grimani, Ser Pietro Steno, Ser Luca Duodo, Ser' Andrea Pisani, Ser Francesco Caravello, Ser Jacopo Trivisano, Sere Schiavo Marcello, Ser Maffeo Aimò, Ser Marco Capello, Ser Pancrazio Giorgio, Ser Giovanni Foscarini, Ser Tommaso Viadro, Sere Schiava Polani, Ser Marco Polo, Ser Marino Sagredo, Sere Stefano Mariani, Ser Francesco Suriano, Ser Orio Pasqualigo, Ser' Andrea Gritti, Ser Buono da Mosto.

“ *Trattato di Messer Marino Faliero Doge, tratto da una Cronica antica.* Essendo venuto il Giovedì della Caccia, fu fatta giusta il solito la Caccia. E a' que' tempi dopo fatta la Caccia s'andava in Palazzo del Doge in una di quelle sale, e con donne facevasi una festiciuola, dove si ballava fino alla prima comparsa, e veniva una colazione; la quale spesa faceva Messer lo Doge, quando v'era la Dogaresa. E poscia tutti andavano a casa sua. Sopra la qual festa, pare, che Ser Michele Steno, molto giovane e povero gentiluomo, ma arditò e astuto, il quale era innamorato in certa donzella della Dogaresa, essendo sul Solajo appresso le donne, facesse cert' atto non conveniente, *adeo* che il Doge comandò ch' e' fosse buttato giù dal Solajo. E così quegli scudieri del Doge lo spinsero giù di quel Solajo. Laonde a Ser Michele parve, che fossegli stata fatta troppo grande ignominia. E non considerando altramente il fine, ma sopra quella passione fornita la festa, e andati tutti via, quella notte egli andò, e sulla cadrega, dove aedeava il Doge nella Sala dell' Udenza (perchè allora i Dogi non tenevano panno di seta sopra la cadrega, ma sedevano in una cadrega di legno) scrisse alcune parole disoneste del Doge e della Dogaresa, cioè: *Marin Faliero dalla bella moglie: Altri la gode, ed egli la mantiene.* E la mattina furono vedute tali parole scritte. E parve una brutta cosa. E per la Signoria fu commessa lacosa agli Avvogadori del Comune con grande efficacia. I quali Avvogadori subito diedero taglia grande per venire in chiaro della verità di chi avea scritto tal lettera. E *tandem* si seppe, che Michele Steno aveale scritte. E fu per li Quaranta preso di ritenerlo; e ritenuto confessò, che in quella passione d' essere stato, spinto giù dal Solajo, preante la sua amante, egli aveale scritte. Onde poi fu placitato nel detto Consiglio, e parve al Consiglio sì per rispetto all' età, come per la caldezza d'amore, di condannarlo a compiere due mesi in prigione serrato, e poi ch' e' fosse bandito di Venezia e dal distretto per un' anno. Per la qual condanna tanto piccola il Doge ne prese grande sdegno, parendogli che non fosse stata fatta quella estimazione della cosa, che ricercava la sua dignità del Ducato. E diceva, ch' egli doveano averlo fatto appiccare per la gola, o *saltem* bandirlo in perpetuo da Venezia. E perchè (quando dee succedere un' effetto è necessario che vi concorra la cangione a fare tal' effetto) era destinato, che a Messer Marino Doge fosse tagliata la testa, perciò occorse, che entrata la Quaresima il giorno dopo che fu condannato il detto Ser Michele Steno, un gentiluomo da Cà Barbaro, di natura collerico, andasse all' Arsenal, domandasse certe cose ai Padroni, ed era alla presenza de' Signori l' Ammiraglio dell' Arsenal. Il quale intesa la domanda, disse, che non si poteva fare. Quel gentiluomo venne a parole coll' Ammiraglio, e diedegli un pugno su un'occhio. E perchè avea un'anello in dito, coll' anello gli ruppe la pelle, e fece sangue. E l' Ammiraglio così battuto e insanguinato andò al Doge a lamentarsi, acciocchè il Doge facesse fare gran punizione contra il detto da Cà Barbaro: Il Doge disse: *Che vuoi che ti faccia? Guarda le ignominiose parole scritte di me, e il modo ch'è stato punito quel ribaldo di Michele Steno, che le scrisse. E quale stima hanno i Quaranta fatto della persona nostra?* Laonde l' Ammiraglio gli disse: *Messer lo Doge, se voi volete farvi Signore, e fare tagliare tutti questi becchi gentiluomini a pezzi, mi basta l' animo, dandomi voi ajuto, di farvi Signore di questa Terra. E allora voi potrete castigare tutti costoro.* Inteso questo, il Doge disse, *Come si può fare una simile cosa?* E così entrarono in ragionamento.

“ Il Doge mandò a chiamare Ser Bertuccio Faliero suo nipote, il quale stava con lui in Palazzo, e entrarono in questa macchinazione. Ne si partirono di lì, che mandarono per Filippo Calendaro, uomo marittimo e di gran seguito, e per Bertuccio Israelo, ingegnere e uomo astutissimo. E consigliatisi insieme diede ordine di chiamare alcuni altri. E così per alcuni giorni la notte si riducevano insieme in Palazzo in casa del Doge. E chiamarono a parte a parte altri, *videlicet* Niccolò Fagiolo, Giovanni da Corfù, Stefano Fagiano, Niccolò dalle Bende, Niccolò Biondo, e Stefano Trivisano. E ordinò di fare sedici o diciassette Capi in diversi luoghi della Terra, i quali avessero cadaun di loro quarant' uomini provvigionati, preparati, non dicendo a' detti suoi quaranta quello, che volessero fare. Ma che il giorno stabilito si mostrasse di far quistione tra loro in diversi luoghi, acciocchè il Doge facesse sonare a San Marco le campane, le quali non si possono suonare, a' egli nol comanda. E al suono delle campane questi sedici o diciassette co' auoi uomini venissero a San Marco alle strade, che buttano in Piazza. E così i nobili e primarj cittadini, che

venissero in Piazza, per sapere del romore ciò ch'era, li tagliassero a pezzi. E seguito, che fosse chiamato per Signore Messer Marino Faliero Doge. E fermate le cose tra loro, stabilito fu, che questo dovess' essere a' 15 d' Aprile del 1355 in giorno di Mercoledì. La quale macchinazione trattata fu tra loro tanto segretamente, che mai nè pure se ne sospettò, non che se ne sapesse cos' alcuna. Ma il Signor Iddio, che ha sempre ajutato questa gloriosissima città, e che per le santissime e giustizie sue mai non l'ha abbandonata, ispirò a un Beltramo Bergamasco il quale fu messo Capo di quarant' uomini per uno de' detti congiurati (il quale intese qualche parola, sicchè comprese l'effeto, che doveva succedere, e il qual era di casa di Ser Niccolò Lioni di Santo Stefano) di an dare a dì \* \* \* \* d' Aprile a casa del detto Ser Niccolò Lioni. E gli disse ogni cosa dell' ordin dato. Il quale intese le cose, rimase come morto; e intese molte particolarità, il detto Beltramo il pregò che lo tenesse segreto, e glielo disse, acciocchè il detto Ser Niccolò non si partisse di casa a dì 15, acciocchè egli non fosse morto. Ed egli volendo partirsi, il fece ritenere a suoi di casa, e serrarlo in una camera. Ed esso andò a casa di M. Giovanni Gradenigo Nasone, il quale fu poi Doge, che stava anch' egli a Santo Stefano; e dissegli la cosa. La quale parendogli, com'era, d'una grandissima importanza, tutti e due andarono a casa di Ser Marco Cornaro, che stava a San Felice. E dettogli il tutto, tutti e tre deliberarono di venire a casa del detto Ser Niccolò Lioni, ed esaminare il detto Beltramo. E quello esaminato, intese le cose, il fecero stare serrato. E andarono tutti e tre a San Salvatore in sacristia, emandarono i loro famigli a chiamare i Consiglieri, gli Avvogadori, i Capi de' Dieci, e que' del Consiglio. E ridotti insieme dissero loro le cose. I quali rimasero morti. E deliberarono di mandare pel detto Beltramo, e fattolo venire cautamente, ed esaminatolo, e verificate le cose, ancorchè ne sentissero gran passione, pure pensarono la provvisione. E mandarono pe' Capi de' Quaranta, pe' Signori di notte, pe' Capi de' Sestieri, e pe' Cinque della Pace. E ordinato, ch' egli no' loro uomini trovassero degli altri buoni uomini, e mandassero a casa de' capi de' congiurati, *ut supra* mettersero loro le mani addosso. E tolsero i detti le Maestrierie dell' Arsenal, acciocchè i provisionati de' congiurati non potessero offenderli. E si ridussero in Palazzo verso la sera. Dove ridotti fecero serrare le porte della corte del Palazzo. E mandarono a ordinare al campanaro, che non sonasse le campane. E così fu eseguito, e messe le mani addosso a tutti i nominati di sopra, furonoque' condotti al Palazzo. E vedendo il Consiglio de' Dieci, che il Doge era nella cospirazione, presero di eleggere venti de' primarj della Terra, di giunta al detto Consiglio a consigliare, non però che potessero mettere palotta.

“ I Consiglieri furono questi: Ser Giovanni Mocenigo, del Sestiero di San Marco; Ser Almorè Veniero da Santa Marina, del Sestiero di Castello; Ser Tommaso Viadro, del Sestiero di Caneregio; Ser Giovanni Sanudo, del Sestiero di Santa Croce; Ser Pietro Trivisano, del Sestiero di San Paolo; Ser Pantalione Barbo il Grande, del Sestiero d'Ossoduro. Gli Avvogadori del Comune furono Ser Zufredo Morosini, e Ser Orio Pasqualigo, e questi non ballottarono. Que' del Consiglio de' Dieci; furono: Ser Giovanni Marcello, Ser Tommaso Sanudo, e Ser Micheletto Dolfino, Capi del detto Consiglio de' Dieci; Ser Luca da Legge, e Ser Pietro da Mosto, Inquisitori del detto Consiglio: Ser Marco Polani, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Lando Lombardo, Ser Nicoletto Trivisano da Sant' Angiolo. Questi elessero tra loro una Giunta, nella notte ridotti quasi sul romper del giorno, di venti nobili di Venezia de' migliori, de' più savj, e de' più antichi, per consultare, non però che mettersero pallottola. E non vi vollero alcuno da Cà Faliero. E cacciarono fuori del Consiglio Niccolò Faliero, e un' altro Niccolò Faliero, da San Tommaso, per essere della casata del Doge. E questa provvigione di chiamare i venti della Giunta fu molto commendata per tutta la Terra. Questi furono i venti della Giunta, Ser Marco Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser' Andrea Erizzo, Procuratore, Ser Lionardo, Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser' Andrea Contarini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Niccolò Volpe, Ser Giovanni Loredano, Ser Marco Diedo, Ser Giovanni Gradenigo, Ser' Andrea Cornaro, Cavaliere, Ser Marco Soranzo, Ser Rinieri da Mosto, Ser Gazzo Marcello, Ser Marino Morosinc, Sere Stefano Belegno, Ser Niccolò Lioni, Ser Filippo Orio, Ser Marco Trivisano, Ser Jacopo Bragadino, Ser Giovanni Foscarini. E chiamati questi venti nel Consiglio de' Dieci, fu mandato per Messer Marino Faliero Doge, il quale andava pel Palazzo con gran gente, gentiluomini, e altra buona gente, che non sapeano ancora come il fatto stava. In questo tempo fu condotto, preso, e legato, Bertuccio Israello, uno de' Capi del trattato per que' di Santa Croce, e ancora fu preso Zanello del Brin, Nicoletto di Rosa, e Nicoletto Alberto, il Guardiaga, e altri uomini da mare, e d' altre condizioni. I quali furono esaminati e trovato la verità del tradimento. A dì 16 d' Aprile fu sentenziato pel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, che Filippo Calandario, e Bertucci Israello fossero appic-

cati alle colonne rosse del balconate del Palazzo, nelle quali sta a vedere il Doge la festa della Caccia. E così furono appiccati con spranghe in bocca. E nel giorno seguente questi furono condannati, Niccolò Zuceuolo, Nicoletto Blanco, Nicoletto Doro, Marco Giuda, Jacomello Dagolino, Nicoletto Fedele figliuolo di Filippo Calendaro, Marco Torello, detto Israello, Stefano Trivisano, cambiatore di Santa Margherita, Antonio dalle Bende. Furono tutti presi a Chioggia, che fuggivano, e dipoi in diversi giorni a due a due, ed a uno a uno, per sentenza fatta nel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, furono appiccati per la gola alle colonne, continuando dalle rosse del Palazzo, seguendo fin verso il Canale. E altri presi furono lasciati, perchè sentirono il fatto, ma non vi furono tal che fu dato loro ad intendere per questi capi, che venissero coll' arme, per prendere alcuni malfattori in servizio della Signoria, nè altro sapeano. Fu ancora liberato Nicoletto Alberto, il Guardiagia, e Bartolommeo Ciriuela, e suo figliuolo, e molti altri, che non erano in colpa.

“ E a dì 16 d' Aprile, giorno di Venerdì, fu sentenziato nel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, di tagliare la testa a Messer Marino Faliero Doge sul pato della scala di pietra, dove i Dogi giurano il primo sagramento, quando montano prima in Palazzo. E così serrato il Palazzo, la mattina seguente a ora di terza, fu tagliata la testa al detto Doge a dì 17 d' Aprile. E prima la berretta fu tolta di testa al detto Doge, avanti che venisse giù dalla scala. E compiuta la giustizia, pare che un Capo de' Dieci andasse alle Colonne del Palazzo sopra la Piazza, e mostrasse la spada insanguinata a tutti, dicendo: *E stata fatta la gran giustizia del Traditore*. E aperta la porta, tutti entrarono dentro con gran furia a vedere il Doge, ch' era stato iustiziato. E' da sapere, che a fare la detta giustizia non fu Ser Giovanni Sanudo il Consigliere, perchè era andato a casa per difetto della persona, sicchè furono quattordici soli, che ballottarono, cioè cinque Consiglieri, e nove del Consiglio de' Dieci. E fu preso, che tutti i beni del Doge fossero confiscati nel Comune, e così degli altri traditori. El fu concesso al detto Doge pel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, ch' egli potesse ordinare del suo per ducati due mila. Ancora fu preso, che tutti i Consiglieri, e Avvogadori del Comune, que' del Consiglio de' Dieci, e della Giunta, ch' erano stati a fare la detta sentenza del Doge, e d'altri, avessero licenza di portar' arme di dì e di notte in Venezia e da Grado fino a Cavarzere, ch' è sotto il Dogato, con due fanti in vita loro, stando i fanti con essi in casa al suo pane e al suo vino. E chi non avesse fanti, potesse dar tal licenza a' suoi figliuoli ovvero fratelli, due però e non più. Eziandio fu data licenza dell' arme a quattro Notaj della Cancelleria, cioè della Corte Maggiore, che furono a prendere le deposizioni e inquisizioni, in perpetuo a loro soli i quali furono Amadio, Nicoletto di Loreno, Steffanello, e Pietro de' Compostelli, Scrivani de' Signori di notte. Ed essendo stati impiccati i traditori, e tagliata la testa al Doge, rimase la Terra in gran riposo e quiete. E come in una cronica ho trovato, fu portato il corpo del Doge in una barca con otto dopplieri a seppellire nella sua arca a San Giovanni e Paolo, la quale al presente è in quell' andito per mezzo la Chiesa di Santa Maria della Pace, fatta fare pel Vescovo Gabriello di Bergamo, e un cassone di pietra con queste lettere: *Heic jacet Dominus Marinus Faliero Dux*. E nel gran Consiglio non gli è stato fatto alcun breve, ma il luogo vacuo con lettere che dicono così: *Hic est locus Marini Falero, decapitati pro criminibus*. E pare, che la sua casa fosse data alla Chiesa di Sant' Apostolo, la qual era quella grande sul ponte. *Tamen* vedo il contrario che è pure di Cà Faliero, o che i Falieri la ricuperassero con danari dalla Chiesa. Nè voglio restar di scrivere alcuni, che volevano, che fosse messo nel suo breve, cioè *Marinus Falero Dux, temeritas cepit, penas lui, de capitatus pro criminibus*. Altri vi fecero un distico assai degno al suo merito, il quale è questo, da cessere posto su la sua sepoltura:

“ *Dux Venetum jacet heic, patriam qui prodere tentans,  
Sceptra, decus, censum, perdidit, atque caput.*”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Non voglio restar di scrivere quello che ho letto in una cronica, cioè, che Marino Faliero trovandosi Podestà e Capitano a Treviso, e dovendosi fare una processione, il vescovo stette troppo a far venire il Corpo di Cristo. Il detto Faliero era di tanta superbia e arroganza, che diede un buffetto al prefato Vescovo, per modo ch' egli quasi cadde in terra. Però fu permesso, che il Faliero perdette l'intelletto, e fece la mala morte, come ho scritto di sopra.”

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*Cronica di Sanuto — Muratori S. S. Rerum Italicarum — vol. xxii. 628 — 639.*

## II

MCCCLIV.

## MARINO FALIERO, DOGE XLIX.

On the eleventh day of September, in the year of our Lord 1354, Marino Faliero was elected and chosen to be the Duke of the Commonwealth of Venice. He was Count of Valdemarino, in the Marches of Treviso, and a Knight, and a wealthy man to boot. As soon as the election was completed, it was resolved in the Great Council, that a deputation of twelve should be despatched to Marino Faliero, the Duke, who was then on his way from Rome; for when he was chosen, he was ambassador at the court of the Holy Father, at Rome,—the Holy Father himself held his court at Avignon. When Messer Marino Faliero, the Duke, was about to land in this city, on the 5th day of October, 1354, a thick haze came on, and darkened the air; and he was enforced to land on the place of Saint Mark, between the two columns, on the spot where evil doers are put to death; and all thought that this was the worst of tokens.—Nor must I forget to write that which I have read in a chronicle. When Messer Marino Faliero was Podesta and Captain of Treviso, the bishop delayed coming in with the holy sacrament, on a day when a procession was to take place. Now, the said Marino Faliero was so very proud and wrathful, that he buffeted the bishop, and almost struck him to the ground: and, therefore, Heaven allowed Marino Faliero to go out of his right senses, in order that he might bring himself to an evil death.

When this Duke had held the dukedom during nine months and six days, he, being wicked and ambitious, sought to make himself Lord of Venice, in the manner which I have read in an ancient chronicle. When the Thursday arrived upon which they were wont to hunt the bull, the bull-hunt took place as usual; and, according to the usage of those times, after the bull-hunt had ended, they all proceeded unto the palace of the Duke, and assembled together in one of his halls; and they disported themselves with the women. And until the first bell tolled they danced, and then a banquet was served up. My Lord the Duke paid the expenses thereof, provided he had a Duchess, and after the banquet they all returned to their homes.

Now to this feast there came a certain Ser Michele Steno, a gentleman of poor estate and very young, but crafty and daring, and who loved one of the damsels of the Duchess. Ser Michele stood amongst the women upon the solajo; and he behaved indiscreetly, so that my Lord the Duke ordered that he should be kicked off the solajo; and the esquires of the Duke flung him down from the solajo accordingly. Ser Michele thought that such an affront was beyond all bearing; and when the feast was over, and all other persons had left the palace, he, continuing heated with anger, went to the hall of audience, and wrote certain unseemly words relating to the Duke and the Duchess, upon the chair in which the Duke was used to sit; for in those days the Duke did not cover his chair with cloth of sendal, but he sat in a chair of wood. Ser Michele wrote thereon:—“*Marin Falier, the husband of the fair wife; others kiss her, but he keeps her.*” In the morning the words were seen, and the matter was considered to be very scandalous; and the Senate commanded the Avogadori of the Commonwealth to proceed therein with the greatest diligence. A largess of great amount was immediately proffered by the Avogadori, in order to discover who had written these words. And at length it was known that Michele Steno had written them. It was resolved in the Council of Forty that he should be arrested; and he then confessed, that in the fit of vexation and spite, occasioned by his being thrust off the solajo in the presence of his mistress, he had written the words. Therefore the Council debated thereon. And the Council took his youth into consideration, and that he was a lover, and therefore they adjudged that he should be kept in close confinement during two months, and that afterwards he should be banished from Venice and the state during one year. In consequence of this merciful sentence the Duke became exceedingly wroth, it appearing to him, that the Council had not acted in such a manner as was required by the respect due to his ducal dignity; and he said that they ought to have condemned Ser Michele to be hanged by the neck, or at least to be banished for life.

Now it was fated that my Lord Duke Marino was to have his head cut off. And as it is necessary, when any effect is to be brought about, that the cause of such effect must happen, it therefore came to pass, that on the very day after sentence had been pronounced on Ser Michele Steno, being the first day of Lent, a gentleman of the house of Barbaro, a choleric gentleman, went to the arsenal, and required certain things of the masters of the galleys. This he did in the presence of the Admiral of the arsenal, and he, hearing the request, answered,—No it cannot be done. High words arose between the gentleman and the admiral, and the gentleman struck him with his fist just above the eye; and as he happened to have a ring on his finger, the ring cut the Admiral and drew blood. The Admiral, all bruised and bloody, ran straight to the Duke to complain, and with the intent of praying him to inflict some heavy punishment upon the gentleman of Cà Barbaro.—“What wouldst thou have me do for thee?” answered the Duke:—“think upon the shameful gibe which hath been written concerning me; and think on the manner in which they have punished that ribald Michele Steno, who wrote it; and see how the Council of Forty respect our person.”—Upon this the Admiral answered,—“My Lord Duke, if you would wish to make yourself a prince, and to cut all those cuckoldy gentlemen to pieces, I have the heart, if you do but help me, to make you prince of all this state; and then you may punish them all.”—Hearing this, the Duke said;—“How can such a matter be brought about?”—and so they discoursed thereon.

The Duke called for his nephew, Ser Bertuccio Faliero, who lived with him in the palace, and they communed about this plot. And, without leaving the place, they sent for Philip Calendaro, a seaman of great repute, and for Bertuccio Israello, who was exceedingly wily and cunning. Then taking counsel amongst themselves, they agreed to call in some others; and so, for several nights successively, they met with the Duke at home in his palace. And the following men were called in singly; to wit;—Niccolo Fagiuolo, Giovanni da Corfu, Stefano Fagiono, Niccolo dalle Bende, Niccolo Biondo, and Stefano Trivisano.—It was concerted that sixteen or seventeen leaders should be stationed in various parts of the City, each being at the head of forty men, armed and prepared; but the followers were not to know their destination. On the appointed day they were to make affrays amongst themselves here and there, in order that the Duke might have a pretence for tolling the bells of San Marco; these bells are never rung but by the order of the Duke. And at the sound of the bells, these sixteen or seventeen, with their followers, were to come to San Marco, through the steets which open upon the Piazza. And when the noble and leading citizens should come into the Piazza, to know the cause of the riot, then the conspirators were to cut them in pieces; and this work being finished, my Lord Marino Faliero the Duke was to be proclaimed the Lord of Venice. Things having been thus settled, they agreed to fulfil their intent on Wednesday, the fifteenth day of April, in the year 1355. So covertly did they plot, that no one ever dreamt of their machinations.

But the Lord, who hath always helped this most glorious city, and who, loving its righteousness and holiness, hath never forsaken it, inspired one Beltramo Bergamasco to be the cause of bringing the plot to light, in the following manner. This Beltramo, who belonged to Ser Niccolo Lioni of Santo Stefano, had heard a word or two of what was to take place; and so, in the before-mentioned month of April, he went to the house of the aforesaid Ser Niccolo Lioni, and told him all the particulars of the plot. Ser Niccolo, when he heard all these things, was struck dead, as it were, with affright. He heard all the particulars; and Beltramo prayed him to keep it all secret; and if he told Ser Niccolo, it was in order that Ser Niccolo might stop at home on the fifteenth of April, and thus save his life. Beltramo was going, but Ser Niccolo ordered his servants to lay hands upon him, and lock him up. Ser Niccolo then went to the house of Messer Giovanni Gradenigo Nasoni, who afterwards became Duke, and who also lived at Santo Stefano, and told him all. The matter seemed to him to be of the very greatest importance, as indeed it was; and they two went to the house of Ser Marco Conaro, who lived at San Felice; and, having spoken with him, they all three then determined to go back to the house of Ser Niccolo Lioni, to examine the said Beltramo; and having questioned him, and heard all that he had to say, they left him in confinement. And then they all three went into the sacristy of San Salvatore, and sent their men to summon the Councillors, the Avogadori, the Capi de' Dieci, and those of the Great Council.

When all were assembled, the whole story was told to them. They were struck dead, as it were, with affright. They determined to send for Beltramo. He was brought in before them. They examined him, and ascertained that the matter was true; and, although they were exceedingly troubled, yet they determined upon

their measures. And they sent for the Capi de' Quarante, the Signori di Notte, the Capi de' Sestieri, and the Cinque della Pace; and they were ordered to associate to their men other good men and true, who were to proceed to the houses of the ringleaders of the conspiracy, and secure them. And they secured the foreman of the arsenal, in order that the conspirators might not do mischief. Towards nightfall they assembled in the palace. When they were assembled in the palace, they caused the gates of the quadrangle of the palace to be shut. And they sent to the keeper of the Bell-tower, and forbade the tolling of the bells. All this was carried into effect. The before-mentioned conspirators were secured, and they were brought to the palace; and, as the Council of Ten saw that the Duke was in the plot, they resolved that twenty of the leading men of the state should be associated to them, for the purpose of consultation and deliberation, but that they should not be allowed to ballot.

The counsellors were the following: Ser Giovanni Mocenigo, of the Sestiero of San Marco; Ser Almoro Veniero da Santa Marina, of the Sestiero of Castello; Ser Tomaso Viadro, of the Sestiero of Canaregio; Ser Giovanni Sanudo, of the Sestiero of Santa Croce; Ser Pietro Trivisano, of the Sestiero of San Paolo; Ser Pantalone Barbo il Grande, of the Sestiero of Ossoduro. The Avogadori of the Commonwealth were Zufredo Morosini, and Ser Orio Pasqualigo; and these did not ballot. Those of the Council of Ten were Ser Giovanni Marcello, Ser Tomaso Sanudo, and Ser Micheletto Dolfino, the heads of the aforesaid Council of Ten. Ser Luca da Legge, and Ser Pietro da Mosto, inquisitors of the aforesaid Council. And Ser Marco Polani, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Lando Lombardo, and Ser Nicoletto Trivisano, of Sant' Angelo.

Late in the night, just before the dawning, they chose a junta of twenty noblemen of Venice from amongst the wisest, and the worthiest, and the oldest. They were to give counsel, but not to ballot. And they would not admit any one of Cà Faliero. And Niccolo Faliero, and another Niccolo Faliero, of San Tomaso, were expelled from the Council, because they belonged to the family of the Doge. And this resolution of creating the junta of twenty was much praised throughout the state. The following were the members of the junta of twenty:—Ser Marco Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser Andrea Erizzo, Procuratore, Ser Lionardo Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser Andrea Contarini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Niccolo Volpe, Ser Giovanni Loredano, Ser Marco Diedo, Ser Giovanni Gradenigo, Ser Andrea Cornaro, Cavaliere, Ser Marco Soranzo, Ser Rinieri du Mosto, Ser Gazano Marcello, Ser Marino Morosini, Ser Stefano Belegno, Ser Nicolo Lioni, Ser Filippo Orio, Ser Marco Trivisano, Ser Jacopo Bragadino, Ser Giovanni Foscarini.

These twenty were accordingly called in to the Council of Ten; and they sent for my Lord Marino Faliero the Duke; and my Lord Marino was then consorting in the palace with people of great estate, gentlemen, and other good men, none of whom knew yet how the fact stood.

At the same time Bertuccio Israello, who, as one of the ringleaders, was to head the conspirators in Santa Croce, was arrested and bound, and brought before the Council. Zanello del Brin, Nicoletto di Roso, Nicoletto Alberto, and the Guardiaga, were also taken, together with several seamen, and people of various ranks. These were examined, and the truth of the plot was ascertained.

On the sixteenth of April, judgment was given in the Council of Ten, that Filippo Calendaro and Bertuccio Israello should be hanged upon the red pillars of the balcony of the palace, from which the Duke is wont to look at the bull-hunt: and they were hanged with gags in their mouths.

The next day the following were condemned:—Niccolo Zuccuolo, Niccoletto Blondo, Nicoletto Doro, Marco Giuda, Jacomello Dagolino, Nicoletto Fidele, the son of Filippo Calendaro, Marco Torello, called Israello, Stefano Trivisano, the money-changer of Santa Margherita, and Antonio dalle Bende. These were all taken at Chiozza, for they were endeavouring to escape. Afterwards, by virtue of the sentence which was passed upon them in the Council of Ten, they were hanged on successive days, some singly and some in couples, upon the columns of the palace, beginning from the red columns, and so going onwards towards the canal. And other prisoners were discharged, because, although they had been involved in the conspiracy, yet they had not assisted in it: for they were given to understand by some of the heads of the plot, that they were to come armed and prepared for the service of the state, and in order to secure certain criminals; and they knew nothing else. Nicoletto Alberto, the Guardiaga, and Bartolommeo Ciricolo and his son, and several others, who were not guilty, were discharged.

On Friday, the sixteenth day of April, judgment was also given, in the aforesaid Council of Ten, that my Lord Marino Faliero, the Duke, should have his heart cut off; and that the execution should be done on the landing-place of the stone staircase,

where the Dukes take their oath when they first enter the palace. On the following day, the seventeenth of April, the doors of the palace being shut, the Duke had his head cut off, about the hour of noon. And the cap of estate was taken from the Duke's head before he came down stairs. When the execution was over, it is said that one of the Council of Ten went to the columns of the palace over against the place of St. Mark, and that he showed the bloody sword unto the people, crying out with a loud voice — "The terrible doom hath fallen upon the traitor!" — and the doors were opened, and the people all rushed in, to see the corpse of the Duke, who had been beheaded.

It must be known, that Ser Giovanni Sanudo, the councillor, was not present when the aforesaid sentence was pronounced; because he was unwell and remained at home. So that only fourteen balloted; that is to say, five councillors, and nine of the Council of Ten. And it was adjudged, that all the lands and chattels of the Duke, as well as of the other traitors, should be forfeited to the state. And, as a grace to the Duke, it was resolved in the Council of Ten, that he should be allowed to dispose of two thousand ducats out of his own property. And it was resolved, that all the councillors and all the Avogadori of the Commonwealth, those of the Council of Ten, and the members of the junta, who had assisted in passing sentence on the Duke and the other traitors, should have the privilege of carrying arms both by day and by night in Venice, and from Grado to Cavazere. And they were also to be allowed two footmen carrying arms, the aforesaid footmen living and boarding with them in their own houses. And he who did not keep two footmen might transfer the privilege to his sons or his brothers; but only to two. Permission of carrying arms was also granted to the four Notaries of the Chancery, that is to say, of the Supreme Court, who took the depositions; and they were Amèdio, Nicoletto di Lorino, Steffanello, and Pietro de Compostelli, the secretaries of the Signori di Notte.

After the traitors had been hanged, and the Duke had had his head cut off, the state remained in great tranquillity and peace. And, as I have read in a Chronicle, the corpse of the Duke was removed in a barge, with eight torches, to his tomb in the church of San Giovanni e Paolo, where it was buried. The tomb is now in that aisle in the middle of the little church of Santa Maria della Pace, which was built by Bishop Gabriel of Bergamo. It is a coffin of stone, with these words engraven thereon: "*Heic jacet Dominus Marinus Faletro Dux.*"—And they did not paint his portrait in the hall of the Great Council:—but in the place where it ought to have been, you see these words — "*Hic est locus Marini Faletro, decapitati pro crimibus.*"—And it is thought that his house was granted to the church of Sant' Apostolo: it was that great one near the bridge. Yet this could not be the case, or else the family bought it back from the church; for it still belongs to Cà Faliero. I must not refrain from noting, that some wished to write the following words in the place where his portrait ought to have been, as aforesaid:—"*Marinus Faletro Dux, temeritas me cepit. Pœnas lui, decapitatus pro crimibus.*"—Others, also, indited a couplet, worthy of being inscribed upon his tomb.

"Dux Venetum jacet heic, patriam qui prodere tentans,  
Sceptra, decus, censum, perdidit, atque caput."

[I am obliged for this excellent translation of the old chronicle to Mr. F. Cohen, to whom the reader will find himself indebted for a version that I could not myself (though after many years' intercourse with Italian,) have given by any means so purely and so faithfully.]

### III.

"Al giovane Doge Andrea Dandolo succedette un vecchio, il quale tardi si pose al timon e della repubblica, ma sempre prima di quel, che faceva d'uopo a lui, ed alla patria: egli è Marino Faliero, personaggio a me noto per antica dimestichezza. Falsa era l' opinione intorno a lui, giacchè egli si mostrò fornito più di coraggio che di senno. Non pago della prima dignità, entrò con sinistro piede nel pubblico Palazzo; imperciocchè questo Doge del Veneti, magistrato sacro in tutti i secoli, che dagli antichi fu sempre venerato qual nume in quella città l' altr' jeri fu decollato nel vestibolo dell' istesso Palazzo. Discorrerei fin dal principio le cause di un tale avvenimento, e così vario, ed ambiguo non ne fosse il grido. Nessuno però lo scusa.

tutti affermano, che egli abbia voluto cangiar qualche cosa nell' ordine della repubblica a lui trimandato dai maggiori. Che desiderava egli di più? Io son d' avviso, che egli abbia ottenuto ciò, che non si concedette a nessun altro: mentre adempiva gli uffici di legato presso il Pontefice, e sulle rive del Rodano trattava la pace, che io prima di lui avevo indarno tentato di conchiudere, gli fu conferito l' onore del Ducato, che ne chiedeva, ne s' aspettava. Tornato in patria, pensò a quello, cui nessuno non pose mente giammai, e soffrì quello, che a niuno accadde mai di soffrire: giacchè in quel luogo celeberrimo, e chiarissimo, e bellissimo infra tutti quelli, che io vidi, ove i suoi antenati avevano ricevuti grandissimi onori in mezzo alle pompe trionfali, ivi egli fù trascinato in modo servile, e spogliato delle insegne ducali, perdette la testa, e macchiò col proprio sangue le soglie del tempio, l' atrio del Palazzo, e le scale marmoree rendute spesse volte illustri o dalle solenni festività, o dalle ostili spoglie. Ho notato il luogo, ora noto il tempo: è l' anno del Natale di Cristo 1355, iù il giorno 18 d' Aprile. Si alto è il grido sparso, che se alcuno esaminerà la disciplina, e le costumanze di quella città, e quanto mutamento di cose venga minacciato dalla morte di un sol uomo (quantunque molti altri, come narrano, essendo complici, o subirono l' istesso supplizio, o lo aspettano) si accorgerà, che nulla di più grande avvenne ai nostri tempi nella Italia. Tu forse qui attendi il mio giudizio: assolvo il popolo, se credere alla fama, benchè abbia potuto e castigare più mitemente, e con maggior dolcezza vendicare il suo dolore: ma non così facilmente, si modera un' ira giusta insieme, e grand in un numeroso popolo principalmente, nel quale il precipitoso, ed instabile volgo aguzza gli stimoli dell' irracondia con rapidi, e sconsigliati clamori. Compatisco, e nell' istesso tempo mi adiro con quell' infelice uomo, il quale adorno di un' insolito onore non so, che cosa si volesse negli estremi anni della sua vita: la calamità di lui diviene sempre più grave, perchè dalla sentenza contra di esso promulgata aperirà, che egli fu non solo misero, ma insano, e demente, e che con vane arti si usurpò per tanti anni una falsa fama di sapienza. Ammonisco i Dogi, i quali gli succederano, che questo e un' esempio posto inanzi ai loro occhj, quale specchio nel quale veggano d' essere non Signori, ma Duci, anzi nemmeno Duci, ma onorati servi della Repubblica. Tu sta sano; e giacchè fluttuano le pubbliche cose, sforsiamosi di governar modestissimamente i privati nostri affari."

*Levati. Viaggi di Petrarca, vol. iv. p. 323.*

The above Italian translation from the Latin epistles of Petrarch, proves—

1stly, That Marino Faliero was a personal friend of Petrarch's: "antica dimestichezza," old intimacy, is the phrase of the poet.

2dly, That Petrarch thought that he had more courage than conduct, "più di corraggio che di senno."

3dly, That there was some jealousy on the part of Petrarch: for he says that Marino Faliero was treating of the peace which he himself had "vainly attempted to conclude."

4thly, That the honour of the dukedom was conferred upon him, which he neither sought nor expected, "che nè chiedeva nè aspettava," and which had never been granted to any other in like circumstances, "ciò che non si concedette a nessun altro;" "a proof of the high esteem in which he must have been held."

5thly, That he had a reputation for wisdom, only forfeited by the last enterprise of his life, "si usurpò per tanti anni una falsa fama di sapienza."—"He had usurped for so many years a false fame of wisdom;" rather a difficult task, I should think. People are generally found out before eighty years of age, at least in a republic.

From these, and the other historical notes which I have collected, it may be inferred that Marino Faliero possessed many of the qualities, but not the success of a hero; and that his passions were too violent. The paltry and ignorant account of Dr. Moore falls to the ground. Petrarch says, "that there had been no greater event in his times," (*our times* literally), "nostri tempi," in Italy. He also differs from the historian in saying that Faliero was "on the banks of the Rhone," instead of at Rome, when elected; the other accounts say, that the deputation of the Venetian senate met him at Ravenna. How this may have been, it is not for me to decide, and is of no great importance. Had the man succeeded, he would have changed the face of Venice, and perhaps of Italy. As it is, what *are* they both?

## IV.

*Extrait de l'ouvrage. — Histoire de la République de Venise, par P. Daru, de l'Académie Française, tom. v. liv. xxxv. p. 95, &c. Edition de Paris, MDCCCXIX.*

“ A CES attaques si fréquentes que le gouvernement dirigeait contre le clergé, à ces luttes établies entre les différens corps constitués, à ces entreprises de la masse de la noblesse contre les dépositaires du pouvoir, à toutes ces propositions d'innovation qui se terminaient toujours par des coups d'état ; il faut ajouter une autre cause, non moins propre à propager le mépris des anciennes doctrines, c' était l'excès de la corruption.

“ Cette liberté de mœurs, qu'on avait long-temps vantée comme le charme principal de la société de Venise, était devenue un désordre scandaleux ; le lien du mariage était moins sacré dans ce pays catholique que dans ceux où les lois civiles et religieuses permettent de le dissoudre. L'aute de pouvoir rompre le contrat, on supposait qu'il n'avait jamais existé, et les moyens de nullité, allégués avec impudeur par les époux, étaient admis avec la même facilité par des magistrats et par des prêtres également corrompus. Ces divorces colorés d'un autre nom devinrent si fréquents, que l'acte le plus important de la société civile se trouva de la compétence d'un tribunal d'exception, et que ce fut à la police de réprimer le scandale. Le conseil des dix ordonna, en 1782, que toute femme qui intenterait une demande en dissolution de mariage serait obligée d'en attendre le jugement dans un couvent que le tribunal désignerait.\* Bientôt après il évoqua devant lui toutes les causes de cette nature.† Cet empîement sur la juridiction ecclésiastique ayant occasionné des réclamations de la part de la cour de Rome, le conseil se réserva le droit de débouter les époux de leur demande ; et consentit à la renvoyer devant l'officialité, toutes les fois qu'il ne l'aurait pas rejetée.‡

“ Il y eut un moment où sans doute le renversement des fortunes, la perte des jeunes gens, les discordes domestiques, déterminèrent le gouvernement à s'écarter des maximes qu'il s'était faites sur la liberté de mœurs qu'il permettait à ses sujets : on chassa de Venise toutes les courtisanes. Mais leur absence ne suffisait pas pour ramener aux bonnes mœurs toute une population élevée dans la plus honteuse licence, Le désordre pénétra dans l'intérieur des familles, dans les cloîtres ; et l'on se crut obligé de rappeler, d'indemniser même § des femmes qui surprenaient quelquefois d'importants secrets, et qu'on pouvait employer utilement à ruiner des hommes que leur fortune aurait pu rendre dangereux. Depuis, la licence est toujours allée croissant, et l'on a vu non seulement des mères trafiquer de la virginité de leurs filles, mais la vendre par un contrat, dont l'authenticité était garantie par la signature d'un officier public, et l'exécution mise sous la protection des lois.¶

“ Les parloirs des couvents où étaient renfermées les filles nobles, les maisons des courtisanes, quoique la police y entretint soigneusement un grand nombre de surveillans, étaient les seuls points de réunion de la société de Venise, et dans ces deux endroits si divers on était également libre. La musique, les collations, la galanterie, n'étaient pas plus interdites dans les parloirs que dans les casinos. Il y avait un grand nombre de casinos destinés aux réunions publiques, où le jeu était la principale occupation de la société. C'était un singulier spectacle de voir autour d'une table des personnes des deux sexes en masque, et de graves personnages en robe de magistrature, implorant le hasard, passant des angoisses du désespoir aux illusions de l'espérance, et cela sans proférer une parole.

“ Les riches avaient des casinos particuliers ; mais ils y vivaient avec mystère ; leurs femmes délaissées trouvaient un dédommagement dans la liberté dont elles jou-

\* Correspondance de M. Schlick, chargé d'affaires de France, dépêche du 24 Août, 1782.

† Ibid. Dépêche du 31 Août.

‡ Ibid. Dépêche du 3 Septembre, 1785.

§ Le décret de rappel les désignait sous le nom de *nostre benemerite meretrici*. On leur assigna un fonds et des maisons appelées *Case rampane*, d'où vient la dénomination injurieuse de *Carampane*.

¶ Mayer, *Description de Venise*, tom. ii. et M. Archenholtz *Tableau de l'Italie*, tom. i. chap. 2.

issaient; la corruption des mœurs les avait privées de tout leur empire; on vient de parcourir toute l'histoire de Venise, et on ne les a pas vues une seule fois exercer la moindre influence."

## V:

*Extract from the History of the Republic of Venice, by P. Daru, Member of the French Academy, vol. v. b. xxxiv. p. 95, &c. Paris Edit. 1819.*

"To these attacks, so frequently pointed by the government against the clergy, — to the continual struggles between the different constituted bodies, — to these enterprises carried on by the mass of the nobles against the depositaries of power, — to all those projects of innovation, which always ended by a stroke of state policy; we must add a cause not less fitted to spread contempt for ancient doctrines; *this was the excess of corruption.*

"That freedom of manners which had been long boasted of as the principal charm of Venetian society, had degenerated into scandalous licentiousness: the tie of marriage was less sacred in that Catholic country, than among those nations where the laws and religion admit of its being dissolved. Because they could not break the contract, they feigned that it had not existed; and the ground of nullity, immodestly alleged by the married pair, was admitted with equal facility by priests and magistrates, alike corrupt. These divorces, veiled under another name, because so frequent, that the most important act of civil society was discovered to be amenable to a tribunal of exceptions; and to restrain the open scandal of such proceedings became the office of the police. In 1782 the Council of Ten decreed, that every woman who should sue for a dissolution of her marriage should be compelled to await the decision of the judges in some convent, to be named by the court.\* Soon afterwards the same council summoned all causes of that nature before itself.† This infringement on ecclesiastical jurisdiction having occasioned some remonstrance from Rome, the council retained only the right of rejecting the petition of the married persons, and consented to refer such causes to the holy office as it should not previously have rejected.‡

"There was a moment in which, doubtless, the destruction of private fortunes, the ruin of youth, the domestic discord occasioned by these abuses, determined the government to depart from its established maxims concerning the freedom of manners allowed the subject. All the courtesans were banished from Venice; but their absence was not enough to reclaim and bring back good morals to a whole people brought up in the most scandalous licentiousness. Depravity reached the very bosoms of private families, and even into the cloister; and they found themselves obliged to recall, and even to indemnify § women who sometimes gained possession of important secrets, and who might be usefully employed in the ruin of men whose fortunes might have rendered them dangerous. Since that time licentiousness has gone on increasing; and we have seen mothers, not only selling the innocence of their daughters, but selling it by a contract, authenticated by the signature of a public officer, and the performance of which was secured by the protection of the laws.||

"The parlours of the convents of noble ladies, and the houses of the courtesans, though the police carefully kept up a number of spies about them, were the only assemblies for society in Venice; and in these two places, so different from each other, there was equal freedom. Music, collations, gallantry, were not more forbidden in the parlours than at the casinos. There were a number of casinos for the purpose of public assemblies, where gaming was the principal pursuit of the company. It was

\* Correspondence of M. Schlick, French chargé d'affaires. Despatch of 24th August, 1782.

† Ibid. Despatch, 31st August.

‡ Ibid. Despatch, 3d September, 1785.

§ The decree for their recall designates them as *nostre benemerite meretrici*. A fund and some houses, called *Case rampane*, were assigned to them; hence the opprobrious appellation of *Carampane*.

|| Mayer, *Description of Venice*, vol. ii. and M. Archenholz, *Picture of Italy*, vol. i. chap. 2.

a strange sight to see persons of either sex masked, or grave personages in their magisterial robes, round a table, invoking chance, and giving way at one instant to the agonies of despair, at the next to the illusions of hope, and that without uttering a single word.

"The rich had private casinos, but they lived *incognito* in them; and the wives whom they abandoned found compensation in the liberty they enjoyed. The corruption of morals had deprived them of their empire. We have just reviewed the whole history of Venice, and we have not once seen them exercise the slightest influence."

From the present decay and degeneracy of Venice under the barbarians, there are some honourable individual exceptions. There is Pasqualigo, the last, and alas! *posthumous* son of the marriage of the Doges with the Adriatic, who fought his frigate with far greater gallantry than any of his French coadjutors in the memorable action off Lissa. I came home in the squadron with the prizes in 1811, and recollect to have heard Sir William Hoste, and the other officers engaged in that glorious conflict, speak in the highest terms of Pasqualigo's behaviour. There is the Abbate Morelli. There is Alvise Querini, who, after a long and honourable diplomatic career, finds some consolation for the wrongs of his country, in the pursuits of literature, with his nephew, Vittor Benzon, the son of the celebrated beauty, the heroine of "La Biondina in Gondoletta." There are the patrician poet Morosini, and the poet Lamberti, the author of the "Biondina," &c. and many other estimable productions; and, not least in an Englishman's estimation, Madame Michelli, the translator of Shakspeare. There are the young Dandolo, and the improvvisatore Carrer, and Giuseppe Albrizzi, the accomplished son of an accomplished mother. There is Aglietti, and, were there nothing else, there is the immortality of Canova. Cicognara, Mustoxithi, Bucati, &c. &c. I do not reckon, because the one is a Greek, and the others were born at least a hundred miles off, which, throughout Italy, constitutes, if not a *foreigner*, at least a *stranger* (*forestiere*).

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## VI.

*Extrait de l'ouvrage — Histoire littéraire d'Italie, par P. L. Ginguené, tom. ix. chap. xxxvi. p. 144. Edition de Paris, 1819.*

"IL y a une prédiction fort singulière sur Venise: 'Si tu ne changes pas,' dit-elle à cette république altière, 'ta liberté, qui déjà s'enfuit, ne comptera pas un siècle après la millième année.'

"En faisant remonter l'époque de la liberté Vénitienne jusqu'à l'établissement du gouvernement sous lequel la république a fleuri, on trouvera que l'élection du premier Doge date de 697, et si l'on y ajoute un siècle après mille, c'est-à-dire onze cents ans, on trouvera encor que le sens de la prédiction est littéralement celui-ci: 'Ta liberté ne comptera pas jusqu'à l'an 1797.' Rappelez-vous maintenant que Venise a cessé d'être libre en l'an cinq de la République française, ou en 1799; vous verrez qu'il n'y eut jamais de prédiction plus précise et plus ponctuellement suivie de l'effet. Vous noterez donc comme très remarquables ces trois vers de l'Alamani, adressés à Venise, que personne pourtant n'a remarqués:

'Se non cangi pensiero, l'un secol solo  
Non conterà sopra 'l millesimo anno  
Tua libertà, che va fuggendo a volo.'

Bien des prophéties ont passé pour telles, et bien des gens ont été appelés prophètes à meilleur marché."

## VII.

*Extract from the Literary History of Italy, by P. L. Ginguené, vol. ix. p. 144. Paris Edit. 1819.*

"THERE is one very singular prophecy concerning Venice: 'If thou dost not change,' it says to that proud republic, 'thy liberty, which is already on the wing, will not reckon a century more than the thousandth year.'

"If we carry back the epocha of Venetian freedom to the establishment of the government under which the republic flourished, we shall find that the date of the election of the first Doge is 697; and if we add one century to a thousand, that is, eleven hundred years, we shall find the sense of the prediction to be literally this: 'Thy liberty will not last till 1797.' Recollect that Venice ceased to be free in the year 1796, the fifth year of the French republic; and you will perceive that there never was prediction more pointed, or more exactly followed by the event. You will, therefore, note as very remarkable the three lines of Alamanni, addressed to Venice, which, however, no one has pointed out:

' Se non cangi pensier, l'un secol solo  
Non conterà sopra, 'l millesimo anno  
Tua libertà, che va fuggendo a volo.'

Many prophecies have passed for such, and many men have been called prophets for much less."

If the Doge's prophecy seem remarkable, look to the above, made by Alamanni two hundred and seventy years ago.

—

THE author of "Sketches Descriptive of Italy," etc. one of the hundred tours lately published, is extremely anxious to disclaim a possible charge of plagiarism from "Childe Harold" and "Beppo." He adds, that still less could this presumed coincidence arise from "my conversation," as he had *repeatedly declined an introduction to me while in Italy.*

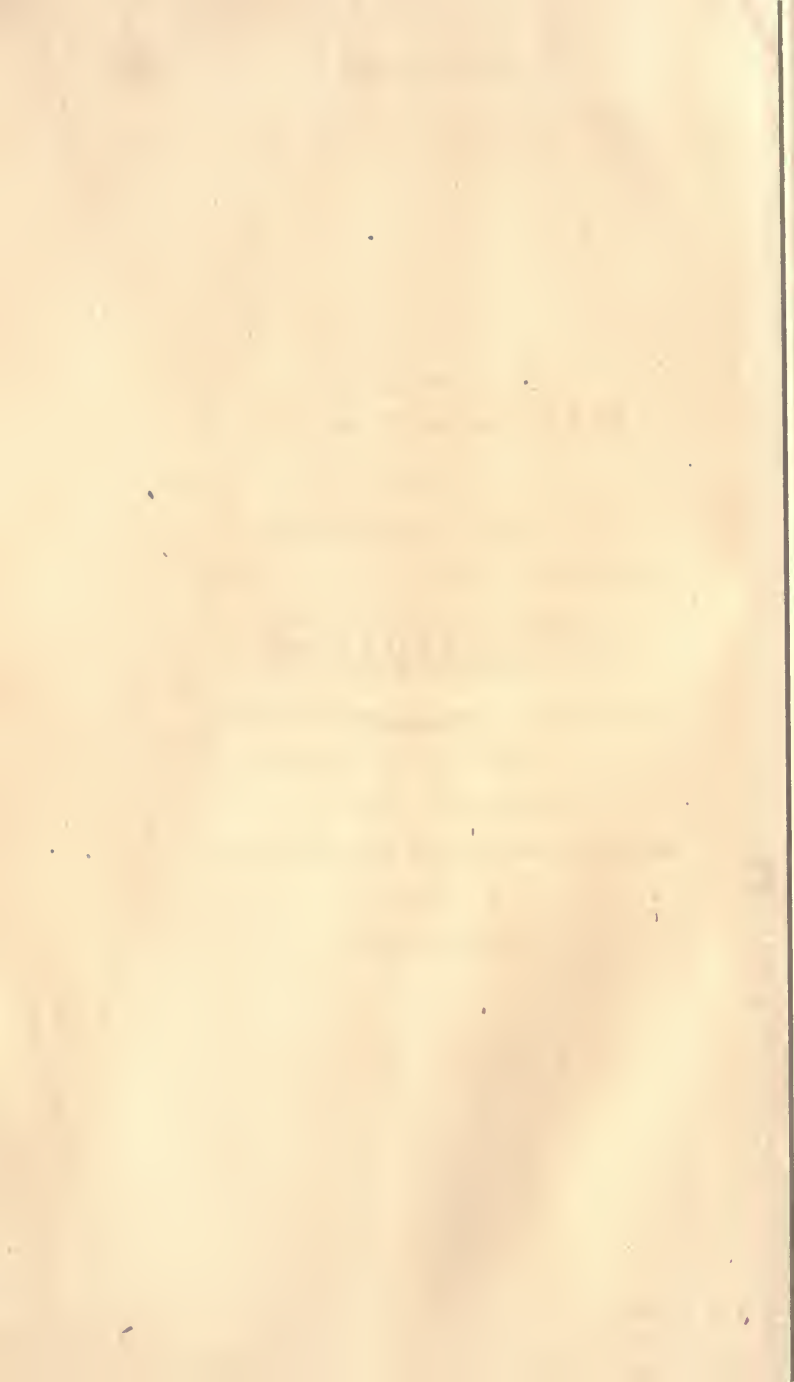
Who this person may be, I know not; but he must have been deceived by all or any of those who "repeatedly offered to introduce" him, as I have invariably refused to receive any English with whom I was not previously acquainted, even when they had letters from England. If the whole assertion is not an invention, I request this person not to sit down with the notion that he COULD have been introduced, since there has been nothing I have so carefully avoided as any kind of intercourse with his countrymen, — excepting the very few who were a considerable time resident in Venice, or had been of my previous acquaintance. Whoever made him any such offer was possessed of impudence equal to that of making such an assertion without having had it. The fact is, that I hold in utter abhorrence any contact with the travelling English, as my friend the Consul-General Hoppner, and the Countess Benzoni, (in whose house the *Conversazione* mostly frequented by them is held,) could amply testify, were it worth while. I was persecuted by these tourists even to my riding ground at Lido, and reduced to the most disagreeable circuits to avoid them. At Madame Benzoni's I repeatedly refused to be introduced to them; — of a thousand such presentations pressed upon one, I accepted two, and both were to Irish women.

I should hardly have descended to speak of such trifles publicly, if the impudence of this "sketcher" had not forced me to a refutation of a disingenuous and gratuitously impertinent assertion; — so meant to be, for what could it import to the reader to be told that the author "had repeatedly declined an introduction," even had it been true, which, for the reasons I have above given, is scarcely possible. Except Lords Lansdowne, Jersey, and Lauderdale; Messrs. Scott, Hammond, Sir Humphry Davy, the late M. Lewis, W. Bankes, Mr. Hoppner, Thomas Moore, Lord Kinnaird, his brother, Mr. Joy, and Mr. Hobhouse, I do not recollect to have exchanged a word with another Englishman since I left their country; and almost all these I had known before. The others — and God knows there were some hundreds — who bored me with letters or visits, I refused to have any communication with, and shall do proud and happy when that wish becomes mutual.



**SARDANAPALUS,**

**A TRAGEDY.**



TO  
THE ILLUSTRIOUS GOETHE

A STRANGER

PRESUMES TO OFFER THE HOMAGE  
OF A LITERARY VASSAL TO HIS LIEGE LORD,  
THE FIRST OF EXISTING WRITERS,  
WHO HAS CREATED  
THE LITERATURE OF HIS OWN COUNTRY,  
AND ILLUSTRATED THAT OF EUROPE.

THE UNWORTHY PRODUCTION  
WHICH THE AUTHOR VENTURES TO INSCRIBE TO HIM

IS ENTITLED  
SARDANAPALUS.



## P R E F A C E .

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IN publishing the following Tragedies I have only to repeat, that they were not composed with the most remote view to the stage.

On the attempt made by the Managers in a former instance, the public opinion has been already expressed.

With regard to my own private feelings, as it seems that they are to stand for nothing, I shall say nothing.

For the historical foundation of the following compositions the reader is referred to the Notes.

The Author has in one instance attempted to preserve, and in the other to approach, the "unities;" conceiving that with any very distant departure from them, there may be poetry, but can be no drama. He is aware of the unpopularity of this notion in present English literature; but it is not a system of his own, being merely an opinion, which, not very long ago, was the law of literature throughout the world, and is still so in the more civilised parts of it. But "*nous avons changé tout cela,*" and are reaping the advantages of the change. The writer is far from conceiving that any thing he can adduce by personal precept or example can at all approach his regular, or even irregular predecessors: he is merely giving a reason why he preferred the more regular formation of a structure, however feeble, to an entire abandonment of all rules whatsoever. Where he has failed, the failure is in the architect, — and not in the art.

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In this tragedy it has been my intention to follow the account of Diodorus Siculus; reducing it, however, to such dramatic regularity as I best could, and trying to approach the unities. I

therefore suppose the rebellion to explode and succeed in one day by a sudden conspiracy, instead of the long war of the history.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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### MEN.

SARDANAPALUS, *King of Nineveh and Assyria, &c.*

ARBACES, *the Mede who aspired to the Throne.*

BELESES, *a Chaldean and Soothsayer.*

SALEMENES, *the King's Brother-in-law.*

ALTADA, *an Assyrian Officer of the Palace.*

PANIA.

ZAMES.

SFERO.

BALEA.

### WOMEN.

ZARINA, *the Queen.*

MYRRHA, *an Ionian female Slave, and the Favourite of  
SARDANAPALUS.*

*Women composing the Harem of SARDANAPALUS, Guards, Atten-  
dants, Chaldean Priests, Medes, &c. &c.*

Scene — a Hall in the Royal Palace of Nineveh.



# SARDANAPALUS.

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## ACT I.

### SCENE I.

#### *A Hall in the Palace.*

*Salemenes (solus).* HE hath wrong'd his queen, but still  
he is her lord ;

He hath wrong'd my sister, still he is my brother ;  
He hath wrong'd his people, still he is their sovereign,  
And I must be his friend as well as subject :  
He must not perish thus. I will not see  
The blood of Nimrod and Semiramis  
Sink in the earth, and thirteen hundred years  
Of empire ending like a shepherd's tale ;  
He must be roused. In his effeminate heart  
There is a careless courage which corruption  
Has not all quench'd, and latent energies,  
Repress'd by circumstance, but not destroy'd —  
Steep'd, but not drown'd, in deep voluptuousness.  
If born a peasant, he had been a man  
To have reach'd an empire : to an empire born,  
He will bequeath none ; nothing but a name,  
Which his sons will not prize in heritage : —  
Yet, not all lost, even yet he may redeem  
His sloth and shame, by only being that  
Which he should be, as easily as the thing  
He should not be and is. Were it less toil  
To sway his nations than consume his life ?  
To head an army than to rule a harem ?  
He sweats in palling pleasure, dulls his soul,  
And saps his goodly strength, in toils which yield not  
Health like the chase, nor glory like the war —  
He must be roused. Alas ! there is no sound  
[*Sound of soft music heard from within.*  
To rouse him short of thunder. Hark ! the lute,

The lyre, the timbrel ; the lascivious tinklings  
 Of lulling instruments, the softening voices  
 Of women, and of beings less than women,  
 Must chime in to the echo of his revel,  
 While the great king of all we know of earth  
 Lolls crown'd with roses, and his diadem  
 Lies negligently to be caught up  
 By the first manly hand which dares to snatch it.  
 Lo, where they come ! already I perceive  
 The reeking odours of the perfumed trains,  
 And see the bright gems of the glittering girls,  
 At once his chorus and his council, flash  
 Along the gallery, and amidst the damsels,  
 As femininely garb'd, and scarce less female,  
 The grandson of Semiramis, the man-queen.—  
 He comes ! Shall I await him ? yes, and front him,  
 And tell him what all good men tell each other,  
 Speaking of him and his. They come, the slaves,  
 Led by the monarch subject to his slaves.

## SCENE II.

*Enter SARDANAPALUS effeminately dressed, his Head crowned with Flowers, and his Robe negligently flowing, attended by a Train of Women and young Slaves.*

*Sar. (speaking to some of his attendants).* Let the pavilion over the Euphrates  
 Be garlanded, and lit, and furnish'd forth  
 For an especial banquet ; at the hour  
 Of midnight we will sup there : see nought wanting,  
 And bid the galley be prepared. There is  
 A cooling breeze which crisps the broad clear river :  
 We will embark anon. Fair nymphs, who deign  
 To share the soft hours of Sardanapalus,  
 We'll meet again in that the sweetest hour  
 When we shall gather like the stars above us,  
 And you will form a heaven as bright as theirs ;  
 Till then, let each be mistress of her time,  
 And thou, my own Ionian Myrrha, (1) choose,  
 Wilt thou along with them or me ?

(1) 'The Ionian name had been still more comprehensive, having included the Achæians and the Bœotians, who, together with those to whom it was afterwards confined, would make nearly the whole of the Greek nation ; and among the orientals it was always the general name for the Greeks.' — MITFORD'S *Greece*, vol. i. p. 199.

*Myr.*

My lord ——

*Sar.* My lord, my life ! why answerest thou so coldly ?  
It is the curse of kings to be so answer'd.  
Rule thy own hours, thou rulest mine — say, wouldst thou  
Accompany our guests, or charm away  
The moments from me ?

*Myr.*

The king's choice is mine.

*Sar.* I pray thee say not so : my chiefest joy  
Is to contribute to thine every wish.  
I do not dare to breathe my own desire,  
Lest it should clash with thine ; for thou art still  
Too prompt to sacrifice thy thoughts for others.

*Myr.* I would remain : I have no happiness  
Save in beholding thine ; yet ——

*Sar.*

Yet ! what YET ?

Thy own sweet will shall be the only barrier  
Which ever rises betwixt thee and me.

*Myr.* I think the present is the wonted hour  
Of council ; it were better I retire.

*Sal.* (*comes forward and says*) The Ionian slave says  
well : let her retire.

*Sar.* Who answers ? How now, brother ?

*Sal.*

The *queen's* brother,

And your most faithful vassal, royal lord.

*Sar.* (*addressing his train*). As I have said, let all dis-  
pose their hours

Till midnight, when again we pray your presence.

[*The court retiring.*

(*To MYRRHA, who is going*). Myrrha ! I thought thou  
wouldst remain.

*Myr.*

Great king,

Thou didst not say so.

*Sar.*

But thou lookedst it :

I know each glance of those Ionic eyes,  
Which said thou wouldst not leave me.

*Myr.*

Sire ! your brother ——

*Sal.* His *consort's* brother, minion of Ionia !

How darest thou name me and not blush ?

*Sar.*

Not blush !

Thou hast no more eyes than heart to make her crimson  
Like to the dying day on Caucasus,  
Where sunset tints the snow with rosy shadows,  
And then reproach her with thine own cold blindness,  
Which will not see it. What, in tears, my Myrrha ?

*Sal.* Let them flow on ; she weeps for more than one,  
And is herself the cause of bitterer tears.

*Sar.* Cursed be he who caused those tears to flow !

*Sal.* Curse not thyself — millions do that already.

*Sar.* Thou dost forget thee : make me not remember  
I am a monarch.

*Sal.* Would thou couldst !

*Myr.* My sovereign,

I pray, and thou, too, prince, permit my absence.

*Sar.* Since it must be so, and this churl has check'd  
Thy gentle spirit, go ; but recollect  
That we must forthwith meet : I had rather lose  
An empire than thy presence.

[*Exit MYRRHA.*

*Sal.* It may be,

Thou wilt lose both, and both for ever !

*Sar.* Brother,

I can at least command myself, who listen  
To language such as this : yet urge me not  
Beyond my easy nature.

*Sal.* 'T is beyond

That easy, far too easy, idle nature,  
Which I would urge thee. O that I could rouse thee !  
Though 't were against myself.

*Sar.* By the god Baal !

The man would make me tyrant.

*Sal.* So thou art.

Think'st thou there is no tyranny but that  
Of blood and chains ? the despotism of vice —  
The weakness and the wickedness of luxury —  
The negligence — the apathy — the evils  
Of sensual sloth — produce ten thousand tyrants,  
Whose delegated cruelty surpasses  
The worst acts of one energetic master,  
However harsh and hard in his own bearing.  
The false and fond examples of thy lusts  
Corrupt no less than they oppress, and sap  
In the same moment all thy pageant power  
And those who should sustain it ; so that whether  
A foreign foe invade, or civil broil  
Distract within, both will alike prove fatal :  
The first thy subjects have no heart to conquer ;  
The last they rather would assist than vanquish.

*Sar.* Why, what makes thee the mouth-piece of the people ?

*Sal.* Forgiveness of the queen, my sister's wrongs ;  
A natural love unto my infant nephews ;  
Faith to the king, a faith he may need shortly,

In more than words ; respect for Nimrod's line ;  
Also, another thing thou knowest not.

*Sar.* What's that ?

*Sal.* To thee an unknown word.

*Sar.* Yet speak it ;

I love to learn.

*Sal.* Virtue.

*Sar.* Not know the word !

Never was word yet rung so in my ears —

Worse than the rabble's shout, or splitting trumpet :

I've heard thy sister talk of nothing else.

*Sal.* To change the irksome theme, then, hear of vice.

*Sar.* From whom ?

*Sal.* Even from the winds, if thou couldst listen

Unto the echoes of the nation's voice.

*Sar.* Come, I'm indulgent, as thou knowest, patient,

As thou hast often proved — speak out, what moves thee ?

*Sal.* Thy peril.

*Sar.* Say on.

*Sal.* Thus, then : all the nations,

For they are many, whom thy father left

In heritage, are loud in wrath against thee.

*Sar.* 'Gainst *me* ! What would the slaves ?

*Sal.*

A king.

*Sar.*

And what

Am I then ?

*Sal.* In their eyes a nothing ; but

In mine a man who might be something still.

*Sar.* The railing drunkards ! why, what would they  
have ?

Have they not peace and plenty ?

*Sal.* Of the first

More than is glorious ; of the last, far less

Than the king recks of.

*Sar.* Whose then is the crime,

But the false satraps, who provide no better ?

*Sal.* And somewhat in the monarch who ne'er looks

Beyond his palace walls, or if he stirs

Beyond them, 't is but to some mountain palace,

Till summer heats wear down. O glorious Baal !

Who built up this vast empire, and wert made

A god, or at the least shimest like a god

Through the long centuries of thy renown,

This, thy presumed descendant, ne'er beheld

As king the kingdoms thou didst leave as hero,

Won with thy blood, and toil, and time, and peril !

For what? to furnish imposts for a revel,  
Or multiplied extortions for a minion.

*Sar.* I understand thee — thou wouldst have me go  
Forth as a conqueror. By all the stars  
Which the Chaldeans read — the restless slaves  
Deserve that I should curse them with their wishes,  
And lead them forth to glory.

*Sal.* Wherefore not?  
Semiramis — a woman only — led  
These our Assyrians to the solar shores  
Of Ganges.

*Sar.* 'Tis most true. And *how* return'd?

*Sal.* Why, like a *man* — a hero; baffled, but  
Not vanquish'd. With but twenty guards, she made  
Good her retreat to Bactria.

*Sar.* And how many  
Left she behind in India to the vultures?

*Sal.* Our annals say not.

*Sar.* Then I will say for them —  
That she had better woven within her palace  
Some twenty garments, than with twenty guards  
Have fled to Bactria, leaving to the ravens,  
And wolves, and men — the fiercer of the three,  
Her myriads of fond subjects. Is *this* glory?  
Then let me live in ignominy ever.

*Sal.* All warlike spirits have not the same fate.  
Semiramis, the glorious parent of  
A hundred kings, although she fail'd in India,  
Brought Persia, Media, Bactria, to the realm  
Which she once sway'd — and thou *might'st* sway.

*Sar.* I *sway* them —  
She but subdued them.

*Sal.* It may be ere long  
That they will need her sword more than your sceptre.

*Sar.* There was a certain Bacchus, was there not?  
I've heard my Greek girls speak of such — they say  
He was a god, that is, a Grecian god,  
An idol foreign to Assyria's worship,  
Who conquer'd this same golden realm of Ind  
Thou prat'st of, where Semiramis was vanquish'd.

*Sal.* I have heard of such a man; and thou perceiv'st  
That he is deem'd a god for what he did.

*Sar.* And in his godship I will honour him —  
Not much as man. What, ho! my cupbearer!

*Sal.* What means the king?

*Sar.* To worship your new god

And ancient conqueror. Some wine, I say.

*Enter Cupbearer.*

*Sar. (addressing the Cupbearer).* Bring me the golden goblet thick with gems,  
Which bears the name of Nimrod's chalice. Hence,  
Fill full, and bear it quickly. [*Exit Cupbearer.*]

*Sal.* Is this moment  
A fitting one for the resumption of  
Thy yet unslept-off revels ?

*Re-enter Cupbearer, with wine.*

*Sar. (taking the cup from him).* Noble kinsman,  
If these barbarian Greeks of the far shores  
And skirts of these our realms lie not, this Bacchus  
Conquer'd the whole of India, did he not ?

*Sal.* He did, and thence was deem'd a deity.

*Sar.* Not so : — of all his conquests a few columns,  
Which may be his, and might be mine, if I  
Thought them worth purchase and conveyance, are  
The landmarks of the seas of gore he shed,  
The realms he wasted, and the hearts he broke.  
But here, here in this goblet is his title  
To immortality — the immortal grape  
From which he first express'd the soul, and gave  
To gladden that of man, as some atonement  
For the victorious mischiefs he had done.  
Had it not been for this, he would have been  
A mortal still in name as in his grave ;  
And, like my ancestor Semiramis,  
A sort of semi-glorious human monster.  
Here's that which deified him — let it now  
Humanise thee ; my surly, chiding brother,  
Pledge me to the Greek god !

*Sal.* For all thy realms  
I would not so blaspheme our country's creed.

*Sar.* That is to say, thou thinkest him a hero,  
That he shed blood by oceans ; and no god,  
Because he turn'd a fruit to an enchantment,  
Which cheers the sad, revives the old, inspires  
The young, makes weariness forget his toil,  
And fear her danger ; opens a new world  
When this, the present, palls. Well, then I pledge thee  
And *him* as a true man, who did his utmost

In good or evil to surprise mankind.

[*Drinks.*

*Sal.* Wilt thou resume a revel at this hour?

*Sar.* And if I did, 't were better than a trophy,  
Being bought without a tear. But that is not  
My present purpose : since thou wilt not pledge me,  
Continue what thou pleasest.

(*To the Cupbearer*).

Boy, retire.

[*Exit Cupbearer.*

*Sal.* I would but have recall'd thee from thy dream ;  
Better by me awaken'd than rebellion.

*Sar.* Who should rebel? or why? what cause? pretext?  
I am the lawful king, descended from  
A race of kings who knew no predecessors.

What have I done to thee, or to the people,  
That thou shouldst rail, or they rise up against me?

*Sal.* Of what thou hast done to me, I speak not.

*Sar.*

But

Thou think'st that I have wrong'd the queen : is 't not so?

*Sal.* Think! Thou hast wrong'd her!

*Sar.*

Patience, prince, and hear me.

She has all power and splendour of her station,  
Respect, the tutelage of Assyria's heirs,  
The homage and the appanage of sovereignty.  
I married her as monarchs wed — for state,  
And loved her as most husbands love their wives.  
If she or thou supposedst I could link me  
Like a Chaldean peasant to his mate,  
Ye knew nor me, nor monarchs, nor mankind.

*Sal.* I pray thee, change the theme : my blood disdains  
Complaint, and Salemenes' sister seeks not  
Reluctant love even from Assyria's lord!

Nor would she deign to accept divided passion  
With foreign strumpets and Ionian slaves.

The queen is silent.

*Sar.*

And why not her brother?

*Sal.* I only echo thee the voice of empires,  
Which he who long neglects not long will govern.

*Sar.* The ungrateful and ungracious slaves! they mur-  
mur

Because I have not shed their blood, nor led them  
To dry into the desert's dust by myriads,  
Or whiten with their bones the banks of Ganges ;  
Nor decimated them with savage laws,  
Nor sweated them to build up pyramids,  
Or Babylonian walls.

*Sal.*

Yet these are trophies

More worthy of a people and their prince  
Than songs, and lutes, and feasts, and concubines,  
And lavish'd treasures, and contemned virtues.

*Sar.* Or for my trophies I have founded cities :  
There 's Tarsus and Anchialus, both built  
In one day — what could that blood-loving beldame,  
My martial grandam, chaste Semiramis,  
Do more, except destroy them ?

*Sal.* 'T is most true ;  
I own thy merit in those founded cities,  
Built for a whim, recorded with a verse  
Which shames both them and thee to coming ages.

*Sar.* Shame me ! By Baal, the cities, though well built,  
Are not more goodly than the verse ! Say what  
Thou wilt 'gainst me, my mode of life or rule,  
But nothing 'gainst the truth of that brief record.  
Why, those few lines contain the history  
Of all things human : hear — “ Sardanapalus,  
The king, and son of Anacyndaraxes,  
In one day built Anchialus and Tarsus.  
Eat, drink, and love ; the rest 's not worth a fillip.” (1)

*Sal.* A worthy moral, and a wise inscription,  
For a king to put up before his subjects !

(1) ' For this expedition he took not only a small chosen body of the phalanx, but all his light troops. In the first day's march he reached Anchialus, a town said to have been founded by the king of Assyria, Sardanapalus. The fortifications, in their magnitude and extent, still in Arrian's time, bore the character of greatness, which the Assyrians appear singularly to have affected in works of the kind. A monument representing Sardanapalus was found there, warranted by an inscription in Assyrian characters, of course in the old Assyrian language, which the Greeks, whether well or ill, interpreted thus : ' Sardanapalus, son of Anacyndaraxes, in one day founded Anchialus and Tarsus. Eat, drink, play : all other human joys are not worth a fillip.' Supposing this version nearly exact (for Arrian says it was not quite so), whether the purpose has not been to invite to civil order a people disposed to turbulence, rather than to recommend immoderate luxury, may perhaps reasonably be questioned. What, indeed, could be the object of a king of Assyria in founding such towns in a country so distant from his capital, and so divided from it by an immense extent of sandy deserts and lofty mountains, and, still more, how the inhabitants could be at once in circumstances to abandon themselves to the intemperate joys which their prince has been supposed to have recommended, is not obvious : but it may deserve observation that, in that line of coast, the southern of Lesser Asia, ruins of cities, evidently of an age after Alexander, yet barely named in history, at this day astonish the adventurous traveller by their magnificence and elegance. Amid the desolation which, under a singularly barbarian government, has for so many centuries been daily spreading in the finest countries of the globe, whether more from soil and climate, or from opportunities for commerce, extraordinary means must have been found for communities to flourish there ; whence it may seem that the measures of Sardanapalus were directed by juster views than have been commonly ascribed to him : but that monarch having been the last of a dynasty, ended by a revolution, obloquy on his memory would follow of course from the policy of his successors and their partisans.

“ The inconsistency of traditions concerning Sardanapalus is striking in Diodorus's account of him.” — *Mitford's Greece*, vol. ix. pp. 311, 312, and 313.

*Sar.* Oh, thou wouldst have me doubtless set up edicts —  
 “Obey the king — contribute to his treasure —  
 Recruit his phalanx — spill your blood at bidding —  
 Fall down and worship, or get up and toil.”  
 Or thus — “Sardanapalus on this spot  
 Slew fifty thousand of his enemies.  
 These are their sepulchres, and this his trophy.”  
 I leave such things to conquerors ; enough  
 For me, if I can make my subjects feel  
 The weight of human misery less, and glide  
 Ungroaning to the tomb : I take no license  
 Which I deny to them. We all are men.

*Sal.* Thy sires have been revered as gods —

*Sar.*

In dust

And death, where they are neither gods nor men.  
 Talk not of such to me ! the worms are gods ;  
 At least they banqueted upon your gods,  
 And died for lack of farther nutriment.  
 Those gods were merely men ; look to their issue —  
 I feel a thousand mortal things about me,  
 But nothing godlike, unless it may be  
 The thing which you condemn, a disposition  
 To love and to be merciful, to pardon  
 The follies of my species, and (that 's human)  
 To be indulgent to my own.

*Sal.*

Alas !

The doom of Nineveh is seal'd.— Woe — Woe  
 To the unrivall'd city !

*Sar.*

What dost dread !

*Sal.* Thou art guarded by thy foes : in a few hours  
 The tempest may break out which overwhelms thee,  
 And thine and mine ; and in another day  
 What is shall be the past of Belus' race.

*Sar.* What must we dread ?

*Sal.*

Ambitious treachery,

Which has environ'd thee with snares ; but yet  
 There is resource : empower me with thy signet  
 To quell the machinations, and I lay  
 The heads of thy chief foes before thy feet.

*Sar.* The heads — how many ?

*Sal.*

Must I stay to number

When even thine own 's in peril ? Let me go ;  
 Give me thy signet — trust me with the rest.

*Sar.* I will trust no man with unlimited lives  
 When we take those from others, we nor know  
 What we have taken, nor the thing we give.

*Sal.* Wouldst thou not take their lives who seek for thine ?

*Sar.* That's a hard question — But I answer, Yes. Cannot the thing be done without ? Who are they Whom thou suspectest ? — Let them be arrested.

*Sal.* I would thou wouldst not ask me ; the next moment

Will send my answer through thy babbling troop  
Of paramours, and thence fly o'er the palace,  
Even to the city, and so baffle all.—

Trust me.

*Sar.* Thou knowest I have done so ever :  
Take thou the signet. [Gives the signet.]

*Sal.* I have one more request.—

*Sar.* Name it.

*Sal.* That thou this night forbear the banquet  
In the pavilion over the Euphrates.

*Sar.* Forbear the banquet ! Not for all the plotters  
That ever shook a kingdom ! Let them come,  
And do their worst : I shall not blench for them ;  
Nor rise the sooner ; nor forbear the goblet ;  
Nor crown me with a single rose the less ;  
Nor lose one joyous hour. — I fear them not.

*Sal.* But thou wouldst arm thee, wouldst thou not, if needful ?

*Sar.* Perhaps. I have the goodliest armour, and  
A sword of such a temper ; and a bow  
And javelin, which might furnish Nimrod forth :  
A little heavy, but yet not unwieldy.  
And now I think on 't, 't is long since I 've used them.  
Even in the chase. Hast ever seen them, brother ?

*Sal.* Is this a time for such fantastic trifling ? —  
If need be, wilt thou wear them ?

*Sar.* Will I not ?

Oh ! if it must be so, and these rash slaves  
Will not be ruled with less, I 'll use the sword  
Till they shall wish it turn'd into a distaff.

*Sal.* They say thy sceptre 's turn'd to that already ?

*Sar.* That 's false ! but let them say so : the old Greeks  
Of whom our captives often sing, related  
The same of their chief hero, Hercules,  
Because he loved a Lydian queen : thou seest  
The populace of all the nations seize  
Each calumny they can to sink their sovereigns.

*Sal.* They did not speak thus of thy fathers.

*Sar.*

No ;

They dared not. They were kept to toil and combat ;  
 And never changed their chains but for their armour :  
 Now they have peace and pastime, and the license  
 To revel and to rail ; it irks me not.

I would not give the smile of one fair girl  
 For all the popular breath that e'er divided  
 A name from nothing. What are the rank tongues  
 Of this vile herd, grown insolent with feeding,  
 That I should prize their noisy praise, or dread  
 Their noisome clamour ?

*Sal.* You have said they are men ;  
 As such their hearts are something.

*Sar.* So my dogs' are ;  
 And better, as more faithful : — but, proceed ;  
 Thou hast my signet : — since they are tumultuous,  
 Let them be temper'd, yet not roughly, till  
 Necessity enforce it. I hate all pain,  
 Given or received ; we have enough within us,  
 The meanest vassal as the loftiest monarch,  
 Not to add to each other's natural burthen  
 Of mortal misery, but rather lessen,  
 By mild reciprocal alleviation,  
 The fatal penalties imposed on life :  
 But this they know not, or they will not know.  
 I have, by Baal ! done all I could to soothe them :  
 I made no wars, I added no new imposts,  
 I interfered not with their civic lives,  
 I let them pass their days as best might suit them,  
 Passing my own as suited me.

*Sal.* Thou stopp'st  
 Short of the duties of a king ; and therefore  
 They say thou art unfit to be a monarch.

*Sar.* They lie. — Unhappily, I am unfit  
 To be aught save a monarch ; else for me  
 The meanest Mede might be the king instead.

*Sal.* There is one Mede, at least, who seeks to be so.

*Sar.* What mean'st thou ! — 't is thy secret ; thou desirest

Few questions, and I 'm not of curious nature.  
 Take the fit steps ; and, since necessity  
 Requires, I sanction and support thee. Ne'er  
 Was man who more desired to rule in peace  
 The peaceful only : if they rouse me, better  
 They had conjured up stern Nimrod from his ashes,  
 " The mighty hunter." I will turn these realms  
 To one wide desert chase of brutes, who *were*,

But *would* no more, by their own choice, be human.  
*What* they have found me, they belie; *that which*  
 They yet may find me — shall defy their wish  
 To speak it worse; and let them thank themselves.

*Sal.* Then thou at last canst feel?

*Sar.* Feel! who feels not  
 Ingratitude?

*Sal.* I will not pause to answer  
 With words, but deeds. Keep thou awake that energy  
 Which sleeps at times, but is not dead within thee.  
 And thou may'st yet be glorious in thy reign,  
 As powerful in thy realm. Farewell!

[*Exit SALEMENES.*

*Sar. (solus).*

Farewell!

He 's gone; and on his finger bears my signet,  
 Which is to him a sceptre. He is stern  
 As I am heedless; and the slaves deserve  
 To feel a master. What may be the danger,  
 I know not: he hath found it, let him quell it.  
 Must I consume my life — this little life —  
 In guarding against all may make it less?  
 It is not worth so much! It were to die  
 Before my hour, to live in dread of death,  
 Tracing revolt; suspecting all about me,  
 Because they are near; and all who are remote,  
 Because they are far. But if it should be so —  
 If they should sweep me off from earth and empire,  
 Why, what is earth or empire of the earth?  
 I have loved, and lived, and multiplied my image;  
 To die is no less natural than those  
 Acts of this clay! 'T is true I have not shed  
 Blood as I might have done, in oceans, till  
 My name became the synonyme of death —  
 A terror and a trophy. But for this  
 I feel no penitence; my life is love:  
 If I must shed blood, it shall be by force.  
 Till now, no drop from an Assyrian vein  
 Hath flow'd for me, nor hath the smallest coin  
 Of Nineveh's vast treasures e'er been lavish'd  
 On objects which could cost her sons a tear:  
 If then they hate me, 't is because I hate not:  
 If they rebel, 't is because I oppress not.  
 Oh, men! ye must be ruled with scythes, not sceptres,  
 And mow'd down like the grass, else all we reap  
 Is rank abundance, and a rotten harvest  
 Of discontents infecting the fair soil,

Making a desert of fertility. —  
I 'll think no more. — Within there, ho!

*Enter an Attendant.*

*Sar.* Slave, tell  
The Ionian Myrrah we would crave her presence.  
*Attend.* King, she is here.

*MYRRHA enters.*

*Sar.* (*apart to Attendant*). Away!  
(*Addressing MYRRHA*). Beautiful being!  
Thou dost almost anticipate my heart;  
It throbb'd for thee, and here thou comest: let me  
Deem that some unknown influence, some sweet oracle,  
Communicates between us, though unseen,  
In absence, and attracts us to each other.

*Myr.* There doth.

*Sar.* I know there doth, but not its name:  
What is it?

*Myr.* In my native land a God,  
And in my heart a feeling like a God's,  
Exalted; yet I own 't is only mortal;  
For what I feel is humble, and yet happy —  
That is, it would be happy; but —

[*MYRRHA pauses.*

*Sar.* There comes  
For ever something between us and what  
We deem our happiness: let me remove  
The barrier which that hesitating accent  
Proclaims to thine, and mine is seal'd.

*Myr.* My lord! —

*Sar.* My lord — my king — sire — sovereign; thus it  
is —

For ever thus, address'd with awe. I ne'er  
Can see a smile, unless in some broad banquet's  
Intoxicating glare, when the buffoons  
Have gorged themselves up to equality,  
Or I have quaff'd me down to their abasement.  
Myrrha, I can hear all these things, these names,  
Lord — king — sire — monarch — nay, time was I prized  
them;

That is, I suffer'd them — from slaves and nobles  
But when they falter from the lips I love,  
The lips which have been press'd to mine, a chill  
Comes o'er my heart, a cold sense of the falsehood

Of this my station, which represses feeling  
 In those for whom I have felt most, and makes me  
 Wish that I could lay down the dull tiara,  
 And share a cottage on the Caucasus  
 With thee, and wear no crowns but those of flowers.

*Myr.* Would that we could!

*Sar.* And dost *thou* feel this? — Why?

*Myr.* Then thou wouldst know what thou canst never  
 know.

*Sar.* And this is ——

*Myr.* The true value of a heart;  
 At least, a woman's.

*Sar.* I have proved a thousand —  
 A thousand, and a thousand.

*Myr.* Hearts?

*Sar.* I think so.

*Myr.* Not one! the time may come thou may'st.

*Sar.* It will.

Hear, Myrrha; Salemenes has declared —  
 Or why or how he hath divined it, Belus,  
 Who founded our great realm, knows more than I —  
 But Salemenes hath declared my throne  
 In peril.

*Myr.* He did well.

*Sar.* And say'st *thou* so?

Thou whom he spurn'd so harshly, and now dared  
 Drive from our presence with his savage jeers,  
 And made thee weep and blush?

*Myr.* I should do both  
 More frequently, and he did well to call me  
 Back to my duty. But thou spakest of peril —  
 Peril to thee ——

*Sar.* Ay, from dark plots and snares  
 From Medes — and discontented troops and nations.  
 I know not what — a labyrinth of things —  
 A maze of mutter'd threats and mysteries:  
 Thou know'st the man — it is his usual custom.  
 But he is honest. Come, we 'll think no more on 't —  
 But of the midnight festival.

*Myr.* 'T is time  
 To think of aught save festivals. Thou hast not  
 Spurn'd his sage cautions?

*Sar.* What? — and dost thou fear?

*Myr.* Fear? — I 'm a Greek, and how should I fear  
 death?

A slave, and wherefore should I dread my freedom?

*Sar.* Then wherefore dost thou turn so pale?

*Myr.*

I love.

*Sar.* And do not I? I love thee far — far more  
Than either the brief life or the wide realm,  
Which, it may be, are menaced; — yet I blench not.

*Myr.* That means thou lovest nor thyself nor me;  
For he who loves another loves himself,  
Even for that other's sake. This is too rash:  
Kingdoms and lives are not to be so lost.

*Sar.* Lost! — why, who is the aspiring chief who dared  
Assume to win them?

*Myr.* Who is he should dread  
To try so much? When he who is their ruler  
Forgets himself, will they remember him?

*Sar.* Myrrha!

*Myr.* Frown not upon me: you have smiled  
Too often on me not to make those frowns  
Bitterer to bear than any punishment  
Which they may augur. — King, I am your subject!  
Master, I am your slave! Man, I have loved you! —  
Loved you, I know not by what fatal weakness,  
Although a Greek, and born a foe to monarchs —  
A slave, and hating fetters — an Ionian,  
And, therefore, when I love a stranger, more  
Degraded by that passion than by chains!  
Still I have loved you. If that love were strong  
Enough to overcome all former nature,  
Shall it not claim the privilege to save you?

*Sar.* Save me, my beauty! Thou art very fair,  
And what I seek of thee is love — not safety.

*Myr.* And without love where dwells security?

*Sar.* I speak of woman's love.

*Myr.* The very first  
Of human life must spring from woman's breast,  
Your first small words are taught you from her lips,  
Your first tears quench'd by her, and your last sighs  
Too often breathed out in a woman's hearing,  
When men have shrunk from the ignoble care  
Of watching the last hour of him who led them.

*Sar.* My eloquent Ionian! thou speak'st music;  
The very chorus of the tragic song  
I have heard thee talk of as the favourite pastime  
Of thy far father-land. Nay, weep not — calm thee.

*Myr.* I weep not — But I pray thee, do not speak  
About my fathers or their land.

*Sar.*

Yet oft

*Thou* speakest of them.

*Myr.* True — true : constant thought  
Will overflow in words unconsciously ;  
But when another speaks of Greece, it wounds me.

*Sar.* Well, then, how wouldst thou *save* me, as thou saidst ?

*Myr.* By teaching thee to save thyself, and not  
Thyself alone, but these vast realms, from all  
The rage of the worst war — the war of brethren.

*Sar.* Why, child, I loathe all war, and warriors ;  
I live in peace and pleasure : what can man  
Do more ?

*Myr.* Alas ! my lord, with common men  
There needs too oft the show of war to keep  
The substance of sweet peace ; and, for a king,  
'T is sometimes better to be fear'd than loved.

*Sar.* And I have never sought but for the last.

*Myr.* And now art neither.

*Sar.* Dost thou say so, Myrrha ?

*Myr.* I speak of civic popular love, *self-love*,  
Which means that men are kept in awe and law,  
Yet not oppress'd — at least they must not think so ;  
Or if they think so, deem it necessary,  
To ward off worse oppression, their own passions.  
A king of feasts, and flowers, and wine, and revel  
And love, and mirth, was never king of glory.

*Sar.* Glory ! what 's that ?

*Myr.* Ask of the gods thy fathers.

*Sar.* They cannot answer ; when the priests speak for  
them,

'T is for some small addition to the temple.

*Myr.* Look to the annals of thine empire's founders.

*Sar.* They are so blotted o'er with blood, I cannot.  
But what wouldst have ? the empire *has been* founded.  
I cannot go on multiplying empires.

*Myr.* Preserve thine own.

*Sar.* At least, I will enjoy it.  
Come, Myrrha, let us on to the Euphrates :  
The hour invites, the galley is prepared,  
And the pavilion, deck'd for our return,  
In fit adornment for the evening banquet,  
Shall blaze with beauty and with light, until  
It seems unto the stars which are above us  
Itself an opposite star ; and we will sit  
Crown'd with fresh flowers like —

*Myr.*

Victims.

*Sar.*

No, like sovereigns,

The shepherd king of patriarchal times,  
 Who knew no brighter gems than summer wreaths,  
 And none but tearless triumphs. Let us on.

*Enter PANIA.*

*Pan.* May the king live for ever !

*Sar.* Not an hour

Longer than he can love. How my soul hates  
 This language, which makes life itself a lie,  
 Flattering dust with eternity. Well, Pania !  
 Be brief.

*Pan.* I am charged by Salemenes to  
 Reiterate his prayer unto the king,  
 That for this day, at least, he will not quit  
 The palace : when the general returns,  
 He will adduce such reasons as will warrant  
 His daring, and perhaps obtain the pardon  
 Of his presumption.

*Sar.* What ! am I then coop'd ?  
 Already captive ? can I not even breathe  
 The breath of heaven ? Tell prince Salemenes,  
 Were all Assyria raging round the walls  
 In mutinous myriads, I would still go forth.

*Pan.* I must obey, and yet —

*Myr.* Oh, monarch, listen.—

How many a day and moon thou hast reclined  
 Within these palace walls in silken dalliance,  
 And never shown thee to thy people's longing ;  
 Leaving thy subjects' eyes ungratified,  
 The satraps uncontroll'd, the gods unworshipp'd,  
 And all things in the anarchy of sloth,  
 Till all, save evil, slumber'd through the realm !  
 And wilt thou not now tarry for a day, —  
 A day which may redeem thee ? Wilt thou not  
 Yield to the few still faithful a few hours,  
 For them, for thee, for thy past father's race,  
 And for thy sons' inheritance ?

*Pan.* 'T is true !

From the deep urgency with which the prince  
 Despatch'd me to your sacred presence, I  
 Must dare to add my feeble voice to that  
 Which now has spoken.

*Sar.* No, it must not be.

*Myr.* For the sake of thy realm !

*Sar.* Away !

*Pan.* For that  
Of all thy faithful subjects, who will rally  
Round thee and thine.

*Sar.* These are mere fantasies ;  
There is no peril : — 'tis a sullen scheme  
Of Salemenés, to approve his zeal,  
And show himself more necessary to us.

*Myr.* By all that's good and glorious take this counsel.

*Sar.* Business to-morrow.

*Myr.* Ay, or death to-night.

*Sar.* Why let it come then unexpectedly  
'Midst joy and gentleness, and mirth and love ;  
So let me fall like the pluck'd rose ! — far better  
Thus than be wither'd.

*Myr.* Then thou wilt not yield,  
Even for the sake of all that ever stirr'd  
A monarch into action, to forego  
A trifling revel.

*Sar.* No.

*Myr.* Then yield for *mine* ;  
For my sake !

*Sar.* Thine, my Myrrha !

*Myr.* 'Tis the first  
Boon which I ever ask'd Assyria's king.

*Sar.* That's true, and wer't my kingdom must be  
granted.

Well, for thy sake, I yield me. Pania, hence !  
Thou hear'st me.

*Pan.* And obey. [Exit PANIA.]

*Sar.* I marvel at thee.

What is thy motive, Myrrha, thus to urge me ?

*Myr.* Thy safety ; and the certainty that nought  
Could urge the prince thy kinsman to require  
Thus much from thee, but some impending danger.

*Sar.* And if I do not dread it, why shouldst thou ?

*Myr.* Because *thou* dost not fear, I fear for *thee*.

*Sar.* To-morrow thou wilt smile at these vain fancies.

*Myr.* If the worst come, I shall be where none weep,  
And that is better than the power to smile.  
And thou ?

*Sar.* I shall be king, as heretofore.

*Myr.* Where ?

*Sar.* With Baal, Nimrod, and Semiramis,  
Sole in Assyria, or with them elsewhere.  
Fate made me what I am — may make me nothing —  
But either that or nothing must I be ;

I will not live degraded.

*Myr.* Hadst thou felt  
Thus always, none would ever dare degrade thee.

*Sar.* And who will do so now?

*Myr.* Dost thou suspect none?

*Sar.* Suspect! — that's a spy's office. Oh! we lose  
Ten thousand precious moments in vain words,  
And vainer fears. Within there! — ye slaves, deck  
The hall of Nimrod for the evening revel:  
If I must make a prison of our palace,  
At least we'll wear our fetters jocundly;  
If the Euphrates be forbid us, and  
The summer dwelling on its beauteous border,  
Here we are still unmenaced. Ho! within there!

[*Exit* SARDANAPALUS.]

*Myr. (sola).* Why do I love this man? My country's  
daughters

Love none but heroes. But I have no country!  
The slave hath lost all save her bonds. I love him;  
And that's the heaviest link of the long chain —  
To love whom we esteem not. Be it so:  
The hour is coming when he'll need all love,  
And find none. To fall from him now were baser  
Than to have stabb'd him on his throne when highest  
Would have been noble in my country's creed:  
I was not made for either. Could I save him,  
I should not love *him* better, but myself;  
And I have need of the last, for I have fallen  
In my own thoughts, by loving this soft stranger:  
And yet methinks I love him more, perceiving  
That he is hated of his own barbarians,  
The natural foes of all the blood of Greece.  
Could I but wake a single thought like those  
Which ever the Phrygians felt when battling long  
'Twi'x Ilion and the sea, within his heart,  
He would tread down the barbarous crowds, and triumph.  
He loves me, and I love him; the slave loves  
Her master, and would free him from his vices.  
If not, I have a means of freedom still,  
And if I cannot teach him how to reign,  
May show him how alone a king can leave  
His throne. I must not lose him from my sight. [*Exit.*]

## ACT II.

## SCENE I.

*The Portal of the same Hall of the Palace.*

*Beleses (solus).* The sun goes down : methinks he sets  
more slowly,  
Taking his last look of Assyria's empire.  
How red he glares amongst those deepening clouds,  
Like the blood he predicts. If not in vain,  
Thou sun that sinkest, and ye stars which rise,  
I have outwatch'd ye, reading ray by ray  
The edicts of your orbs, which make Time tremble  
For what he brings the nations, 'tis the furthest  
Hour of Assyria's years. And yet how calm !  
An earthquake should announce so great a fall —  
A summer's sun discloses it. Yon disk,  
To the star-read Chaldean, bears upon  
Its everlasting page the end of what  
Seem'd everlasting ; but oh ! thou true sun !  
The burning oracle of all that live,  
As fountain of all life, and symbol of  
Him who bestows it, wherefore dost thou limit  
Thy lore unto calamity ? Why not  
Unfold the rise of days more worthy thine  
All-glorious burst from ocean ? why not dart  
A beam of hope athwart the future years,  
As of wrath to its days ? Hear me ! oh, hear me !  
I am thy worshipper, thy priest, thy servant —  
I have gazed on thee at thy rise and fall,  
And bow'd my head beneath thy mid-day beams,  
When my eye dared not meet thee. I have watch'd  
For thee, and after thee, and pray'd to thee,  
And sacrificed to thee, and read, and fear'd thee,  
And ask'd of thee, and thou hast answer'd — but  
Only to thus much : while I speak, he sinks —  
Is gone — and leaves his beauty, not his knowledge  
To the delighted west, which revels in  
Its hues of dying glory. Yet what is  
Death, so it be but glorious ? 'Tis a sunset ;  
And mortals may be happy to resemble  
The gods but in decay.

*Enter ARBACES, by an inner door.*

*Arb.* Beleses, why  
So rapt in thy devotions? Dost thou stand  
Gazing to trace thy disappearing god  
Into some realm of undiscover'd day?  
Our business is with night — 'tis come.

*Bel.* But not  
Gone.

*Arb.* Let it roll on — we are ready.

*Bel.* Yes.

Would it were over!

*Arb.* Does the prophet doubt,  
To whom the very stars shine victory?

*Bel.* I do not doubt of victory — but the victor.

*Arb.* Well, let thy science settle that. Meantime  
I have prepared as many glittering spears  
As will out-sparkle our allies — your planets.  
There is no more to thwart us. The she-king,  
That less than woman, is even now upon  
The waters with his female mates. The order  
Is issued for the feast in the pavilion.  
The first cup which he drains will be the last  
Quaff'd by the line of Nimrod.

*Bel.* 'Twas a brave one.

*Arb.* And is a weak one — 't is worn out — we 'll mend it.

*Bel.* Art sure of that?

*Arb.* Its founder was a hunter —

I am a soldier — what is there to fear?

*Bel.* The soldier.

*Arb.* And the priest, it may be: but  
If you thought thus, or think, why not retain  
Your king of concubines? why stir me up?  
Why spur me to this enterprise? your own  
No less than mine?

*Bel.* Look to the sky!

*Arb.* I look.

*Bel.* What seest thou?

*Arb.* A fair summer's twilight, and  
The gathering of the stars.

*Bel.* And midst them, mark  
Yon earliest, and the brightest, which so quivers,  
As it would quit its place in the blue ether.

*Arb.* Well?

*Bel.* 'Tis thy natal ruler — thy birth planet.

*Arb.* (*touching his scabbard*). My star is in this scabbard : when it shines,

It shall out-dazzle comets. Let us think  
Of what is to be done to justify  
Thy planets and their portents. When we conquer,  
They shall have temples — ay, and priests — and thou  
Shalt be the pontiff of — what gods thou wilt ;  
For I observe that they are ever just,  
And own the bravest for the most devout.

*Bel.* Ay, and the most devout for brave — thou hast not  
Seen me turn back from battle.

*Arb.* No ; I own thee  
As firm in fight as Babylonia's captain,  
As skilful in Chaldea's worship : now,  
Will it but please thee to forget the priest,  
And be the warrior ?

*Bel.* Why not both ?

*Arb.* The better ;  
And yet it almost shames me, we shall have  
So little to effect. This woman's warfare  
Degrades the very conqueror. To have pluck'd  
A bold and bloody despot from his throne,  
And grappled with him, clashing steel with steel,  
That were heroic or to win or fall ;  
But to upraise my sword against this silkworm,  
And hear him whine, it may be —

*Bel.* Do not deem it :  
He has that in him which may make you strife yet ;  
And were he all you think, his guards are hardy,  
And headed by the cool, stern Salemenes.

*Arb.* They'll not resist.

*Bel.* Why not ? they are soldiers.

*Arb.* True,  
And therefore need a soldier to command them.

*Bel.* That Salemenes is.

*Arb.* But not their king.  
Besides, he hates the effeminate thing that governs,  
For the queen's sake, his sister. Mark you not  
He keeps aloof from all the revels ?

*Bel.* But  
Not from the council — there he is ever constant.

*Arb.* And ever thwarted ; what would you have more  
To make a rebel out of ? A fool reigning,  
His blood dishonour'd, and himself disdain'd :  
Why, it is *his* revenge we work for.

*Bel.* Could

He but be brought to think so : this I doubt of.

*Arb.* What, if we sound him ?

*Bel.* Yes — if the time served.

*Enter BALEA.*

*Bal.* Satraps ! The king commands your presence at  
The feast to-night.

*Bel.* To hear is to obey.

In the pavilion ?

*Bal.* No ; here in the palace.

*Arb.* How ! in the palace ? it was not thus order'd.

*Bal.* It is so order'd now.

*Arb.* And why ?

*Bal.* I know not.

May I retire ?

*Arb.* Stay.

*Bel.* (*to Arb. aside*). Hush ! let him go his way.

(*Alternately to Bal.*) Yes, Balea, thank the monarch, kiss  
the hem

Of his imperial robe, and say, his slaves  
Will take the crums he deigns to scatter from  
His royal table at the hour — was 't midnight ?

*Bal.* It was : the place, the hall of Nimrod. Lords,  
I humble me before you, and depart. [*Exit BALEA.*]

*Arb.* I like not this same sudden change of place ;  
There is some mystery : wherefore should he change it ?

*Bel.* Doth he not change a thousand times a day ?  
Sloth is of all things the most fanciful —  
And moves more parasangs in its intents  
Than generals in their marches, when they seek  
To leave their foe at fault. — Why dost thou muse ?

*Arb.* He loved that gay pavilion, — it was ever  
His summer dotage.

*Bel.* And he loved his queen —  
And thrice a thousand harlotry besides —  
And he has loved all things by turns, except  
Wisdom and glory.

*Arb.* Still — I like it not.  
If he has changed — why, so must we : the attack  
Were easy in the isolated bower,  
Beset with drowsy guards and drunken courtiers ;  
But in the hall of Nimrod —

*Bel.* Is it so ?  
Methought the haughty soldier fear'd to mount  
A throne too easily — does it disappoint thee  
To find there is a slipperier step or two

Than what was counted on?

*Arb.* When the hour comes,  
Thou shalt perceive how far I fear or no.  
Thou hast seen my life at stake — and gaily play'd for —  
But here is more upon the die — a kingdom.

*Bel.* I have foretold already — thou wilt win it:  
Then on, and prosper.

*Arb.* Now were I a soothsayer,  
I would have boded so much to myself.  
But be the stars obey'd — I cannot quarrel  
With them, nor their interpreter. Who 's here?

*Enter SALEMENES.*

*Sal.* Satraps!

*Bel.* My prince!

*Sal.* Well met — I sought ye both,  
But elsewhere than the palace.

*Arb.* Wherefore so?

*Sal.* 'T is not the hour.

*Arb.* The hour! — what hour?

*Sal.* Of midnight.

*Bel.* Midnight, my lord!

*Sal.* What, are you not invited?

*Bel.* Oh! yes — we had forgotten.

*Sal.* Is it usual  
Thus to forget a sovereign's invitation?

*Arb.* Why — we but now received it.

*Sal.* Then why here?

*Arb.* On duty.

*Sal.* On what duty?

*Bel.* On the state's.  
We have the privilege to approach the presence;  
But found the monarch absent.

*Sal.* And I too  
Am upon duty.

*Arb.* May we crave its support?

*Sal.* To arrest two traitors. Guards! Within there!

*Enter Guards.*

*Sa.* (*continuing*). Satraps,  
Your swords.

*Bel.* (*delivering his*). My lord, behold my scimitar.

*Arb.* (*drawing his sword*). Take mine.

*Sal.* (*advancing*). I will.

*Arb.* But in your heart the blade —

The hilt quits not this hand.

*Sal.* (*drawing*). How! dost thou brave me?  
'T is well — this saves a trial, and false mercy.  
Soldiers, hew down the rebel!

*Arb.* Soldiers! Ay —  
*Alone you dare not.*

*Sal.* Alone! foolish slave —  
What is there in thee that a prince should shrink from  
Of open force? We dread thy treason, not  
Thy strength: thy tooth is nought without its venom —  
The serpent's, not the lion's. Cut him down.

*Bel.* (*interposing*.) Arbaces! Are you mad? Have I not  
render'd

*My sword? Then trust like me our sovereign's justice.*

*Arb.* No — I will sooner trust the stars thou prat'st of,  
And this slight arm, and die a king at least  
Of my own breath and body — so far that  
None else shall chain them.

*Sal.* (*to the Guards*). You hear him and me.  
Take him not, — kill.

[*The Guards attack ARBACES, who defends himself  
valiantly and dexterously till they waver.*

*Sal.* Is it even so; and must  
I do the hangman's office? Recreants! see  
How you should fell a traitor.

[*SALEMENES attacks ARBACES.*

*Enter SARDANAPLUS and Train.*

*Sar.* Hold your hands —  
Upon your lives, I say. What, deaf or drunken?  
My sword! O fool, I wear no sword: here, fellow,  
Give me thy weapon.

[*To a Guard.*  
[*SARDANAPALUS snatches a sword from one of the  
soldiers, and rushes between the combatants — they  
separate.*

*Sar.* In my very palace!  
What hinders me from cleaving you in twain,  
Audacious brawlers?

*Bel.* Sire, your justice.

*Sal.* Or —  
Your weakness.

*Sar.* (*raising the sword*). How?

*Sal.* Strike! so the blow's repeated  
Upon yon traitor — whom you spare a moment,  
I trust, for torture — I'm content.

Sar. What — him!  
 Who dares assail Arbaces?  
 Sal. I!  
 Sar. Indeed!  
 Prince, you forget yourself. Upon what warrant?  
 Sal. (*showing the signet*). Thine.  
 Arb. (*confused*). The king's!  
 Sal. Yes! and let the king confirm it.  
 Sar. I parted not from this for such a purpose.  
 Sal. You parted with it for your safety — I  
 Employ'd it for the best. Pronounce in person.  
 Here I am but your slave — a moment past  
 I was your representative.  
 Sal. Then sheathe  
 Your swords.

[ARBACES and SALEMENES return their swords to  
 the scabbards.]

Sal. Mine 's sheathed: I pray you sheathe *not* yours:  
 'T is the sole sceptre left you now with safety.

Sar. A heavy one; the hilt, too, hurts my hand.  
 (*To a Guard*.) Here, fellow, take thy weapon back.

Well, sirs,  
 What doth this mean?

Bel. The prince must answer that.

Sal. Truth upon my part, treason upon theirs.

Sar. Treason — Arbaces! treachery and Beleses!  
 That were an union I will not believe.

Bel. Where is the proof?

Sal. I 'll answer that, if once  
 The king demands your fellow-traitor's sword.

Arb. (*to Sal*.) A sword which hath been drawn as oft as  
 thine  
 Against his foes.

Sal. And now against his brother,  
 And in an hour or so against himself.

Sar. That is not possible: he dared not; no —  
 No — I 'll not hear of such things. These vain bickerings  
 Are spawn'd in courts by base intrigues, and baser  
 Hirelings, who live by lies on good men's lives.  
 You must have been deceived, my brother.

Sal. First  
 Let him deliver up his weapon, and  
 Proclaim himself your subject by that duty,  
 And I will answer all.

Sar. Why, if I thought so —  
 But no, it cannot be: the Mede Arbaces —

The trusty, rough, true soldier — the best captain  
Of all who discipline our nations — No,  
I'll not insult him thus, to bid him render  
The scimitar to me he never yielded  
Unto our enemies. Chief, keep your weapon.

*Sal.* (*delivering back the signet.*) Monarch, take back  
your signet.

*Sar.* No, retain it ;  
But use it with more moderation.

*Sal.* Sire,  
I used it for your honour, and restore it  
Because I cannot keep it with my own.  
Bestow it on Arbaces.

*Sar.* So I should :  
He never ask'd it.

*Sal.* Doubt not, he will have it,  
Without that hollow semblance of respect.

*Bel.* I know not what hath prejudiced the prince  
So strongly 'gainst two subjects, than whom none  
Have been more zealous for Assyria's weal.

*Sal.* Peace, factious priest, and faithless soldier ! thou  
Unit'st in thy own person the worst vices  
Of the most dangerous orders of mankind.  
Keep thy smooth words and juggling homilies  
For those who know thee not. Thy fellow's sin  
Is, at the least, a bold one, and not temper'd  
By the tricks taught thee in Chaldea.

*Bel.* Hear him,  
My liege — the son of Belus ! he blasphemes  
The worship of the land, which bows the knee  
Before your fathers.

*Sar.* Oh ! for that I pray you  
Let him have absolution. I dispense with  
The worship of dead men ; feeling that I  
Am mortal, and believing that the race  
From whence I sprung are — what I see them — ashes.

*Bel.* King ! Do not deem so : they are with the stars,  
And —

*Sar.* You shall join them there ere they will rise,  
If you preach farther — Why, *this* is rank treason.

*Sal.* My lord !

*Sar.* To school me in the worship of  
Assyria's idols ! Let him be released —  
Give him his sword.

*Sal.* My lord, and king, and brother,  
I pray ye pause.

*Sar.* Yes, and be sermonised,  
And dinn'd, and deafen'd with dead men and Baal,  
And all Chaldea's starry mysteries.

*Bel.* Monarch! respect them.

*Sar.* Oh! for that — I love them :  
I love to watch them in the deep blue vault,  
And to compare them with my Myrrha's eyes ;  
I love to see their rays redoubled in  
The tremulous silver of Euphrates' wave,  
As the light breeze of midnight crimps the broad  
And rolling water, sighing through the sedges  
Which fringe his banks : but whether they may be  
Gods, as some say, or the abodes of gods,  
As others hold, or simply lamps of night,  
Worlds, or the lights of worlds, I know nor care not.  
There's something sweet in my uncertainty  
I would not change for your Chaldean lore ;  
Besides, I know of these all clay can know  
Of aught above it, or below it — nothing.  
I see their brilliancy and feel their beauty —  
When they shine on my grave I shall know neither.

*Bel.* For neither, sire, say better.

*Sar.* I will wait,  
If it so please you, pontiff, for that knowledge.  
In the mean time receive your sword, and know  
That I prefer your service militant  
Unto your ministry — not loving either.

*Sal.* (*aside*). His lusts have made him mad. Then must  
I save him,  
Spite of himself.

*Sar.* Please you to hear me, Satraps!  
And chiefly thou, my priest, because I doubt thee  
More than the soldier ; and would doubt thee all  
Wert thou not half a warrior : let us part  
In peace — I'll not say pardon — which must be  
Earn'd by the guilty ; this I'll not pronounce ye,  
Although upon this breath of mine depends  
Your own ; and, deadlier for ye, on my fears.  
But fear not — for that I am soft, not fearful —  
And so live on. Were I the thing some think me,  
Your heads would now be dripping the last drops  
Of their attained gore from the high gates  
Of this our palace, into the dry dust,  
Their only portion of the coveted kingdom  
They would be crown'd to reign o'er — let that pass.  
As I have said, I will not deem ye guilty.

Nor doom ye guiltless. Albeit better men  
Than ye or I stand ready to arraign you ;  
And should I leave your fate to sterner judges,  
And proofs of all kinds, I might sacrifice  
Two men, who, whatsoe'er they now are, were  
Once honest. Ye are free, sirs.

*Arb.* Sire, this clemency —

*Bel.* (*interrupting him*). Is worthy of yourself ; and, al  
though innocent,

We thank —

*Sar.* Priest ! keep your thanksgivings for Belus ;  
His offspring needs none.

*Bel.* But being innocent —

*Sar.* Be silent — Guilt is loud. If ye are loyal,  
Ye are injured men, and should be sad, not grateful.

*Bel.* So we should be, were justice always done  
By earthly power omnipotent ; but innocence  
Must oft receive her right as a mere favour.

*Sar.* That 's a good sentence for a homily,  
Though not for this occasion. Prithce keep it  
To plead thy sovereign's cause before his people.

*Bel.* I trust there is no cause.

*Sar.* No cause, perhaps ;

But many causers : — if ye meet with such  
In the exercise of your inquisitive function  
On earth, or should you read of it in heaven  
In some mysterious twinkle of the stars,  
Which are your chronicles, I pray you note,  
That there are worse things betwixt earth and heaven  
Than him who ruleth many and slays none ;  
And, hating not himself, yet he loves his fellows  
Enough to spare even those who would not spare him  
Were they once masters — but that 's doubtful. Satraps !  
Your swords and persons are at liberty  
To use them as ye will — but from this hour  
I have no call for either. Salemenes !  
Follow me.

[*Exeunt SARDANAPALUS, SALEMENES, and the Train, &c.*  
*leaving ARBACES and BELESES.*

*Arb.* Beleses !

*Bel.* Now, what think you ?

*Arb.* That we are lost.

*Bel.* That we have won the kingdom.

*Arb.* What ? thus suspected — with the sword slung  
o'er us

But by a single hair, and that still wavering,

To be blown down by his imperious breath  
Which spared us — why, I know not.

*Bel.* Seek not why ;

But let us profit by the interval.

The hour is still our own — our power the same —  
The night the same we destined. He hath changed  
Nothing except our ignorance of all  
Suspicion into such a certainty  
As must make madness of delay.

*Arb.* And yet —

*Bel.* What, doubting still ?

*Arb.* He spared our lives, nay, more,  
Saved them from Salemenes.

*Bel.* And how long

Will he so spare ? till the first drunken minute.

*Arb.* Or sober, rather. Yet he did it nobly ;  
Gave royally what we had forfeited

Basely —

*Bel.* Say bravely.

*Arb.* Somewhat of both, perhaps.

But it has touch'd me, and, whate'er betide,

I will no further on.

*Bel.* And lose the world !

*Arb.* Lose any thing except my own esteem.

*Bel.* I blush that we should owe our lives to such  
A king of distaffs !

*Arb.* But no less we owe them ;

And I should blush far more to take the grantor's !

*Bel.* Thou may'st endure whate'er thou wilt, the stars  
Have written otherwise.

*Arb.* Though they came down,  
And marshall'd me the way in all their brightness,  
I would not follow.

*Bel.* This is weakness — worse  
Than a sacred beldam's dreaming of the dead,  
And waking in the dark. — Go to — go to.

*Arb.* Methought he look'd like Nimrod as he spoke,  
Even as the proud imperial statue stands  
Looking the monarch of the kings around it,  
And sways, while they but ornament, the temple.

*Bel.* I told you that you had too much despised him,  
And that there was some royalty within him —  
What then ? he is the nobler foe.

*Arb.* But we

The meaner : — Would he had not spared us !

*Bel.*

So —

Wouldst thou be sacrificed thus readily ?

*Arb.* No — but it had been better to have died  
Than live ungrateful.

*Bel.* Oh, the souls of some men !  
Thou wouldst digest what some call treason, and  
Fools treachery — and, behold, upon the sudden,  
Because for something or for nothing, this  
Rash reveller steps, ostentatiously,  
'Twixt thee and Salemenes, thou art turn'd  
Into — what shall I say ? — Sardanapalus !  
I know no name more ignominious.

*Arb.* But  
An hour ago, who dared to term me such  
Had held his life but lightly — as it is,  
I must forgive you, even as he forgave us —  
Semiramis herself would not have done it.

*Bel.* No — the queen liked no sharers of the kingdom,  
Not even a husband.

*Arb.* I must serve him truly —

*Bel.* And humbly ?

*Arb.* No, sir, proudly — being honest.  
I shall be nearer thrones than you to heaven ;  
And if not quite so haughty, yet more lofty.  
You may do your own deeming — you have codes,  
And mysteries and corollaries of  
Right and wrong, which I lack for my direction,  
And must pursue but what a plain heart teaches.  
And now you know me.

*Bel.* Have you finish'd ?

*Arb.* Yes —

With you.

*Bel.* And would, perhaps, betray as well  
As quit me ?

*Arb.* That's a sacerdotal thought,  
And not a soldier's.

*Bel.* Be it what you will —  
Truce with these wranglings, and but hear me.

*Arb.* No —

There is more peril in your subtle spirit  
Than in a phalanx.

*Bel.* If it must be so —  
I'll on alone.

*Arb.* Alone !

*Bel.* Thrones hold but one.

*Arb.* But this is fill'd.

*Bel.* With worse than vacancy —

A despised monarch. Look to it, Arbaces :  
 I have still aided, cherish'd, loved, and urged you ;  
 Was willing even to serve you, in the hope  
 To serve and save Assyria. Heaven itself  
 Seem'd to consent, and all events were friendly,  
 Even to the last, till that your spirit shrunk  
 Into a shallow softness ; but now, rather  
 Than see my country languish, I will be  
 Her saviour or the victim of her tyrant,  
 Or one or both, for sometimes both are one ;  
 And if I win, Arbaces is my servant.

*Arb.* Your servant !

*Bel.* Why not ? better than be slave,  
 The pardon'd slave of *she* Sardanapalus !

*Enter PANIA.*

*Pan.* My lords, I bear an order from the king.

*Arb.* It is obey'd ere spoken.

*Bel.* Notwithstanding,  
 Let's hear it.

*Pan.* Forthwith, on this very night,  
 Repair to your respective satrapies  
 Of Babylon and Media.

*Bel.* With our troops ?

*Pan.* My order is unto the satraps and  
 Their household train.

*Arb.* But ——

*Bel.* It must be obey'd :  
 Say, we depart.

*Pan.* My order is to see you  
 Depart, and not to bear your answer.

*Bel.* (*aside*). Ay !

Well, sir, we will accompany you hence.

*Pan.* I will retire to marshal forth the guard  
 Of honour which befits your rank, and wait  
 Your leisure, so that it the hour exceeds not.

[*Exit PANIA.*

*Bel.* Now then obey !

*Arb.* Doubtless.

*Bel.* Yes, to the gates  
 That grate the palace, which is now our prison —  
 No further.

*Arb.* Thou hast harp'd the truth indeed  
 The realm itself, in all its wide extension,  
 Yawns dungeons at each step for thee and me.

*Bel.* Graves!

*Arb.* If I thought so, this good sword should dig  
One more than mine.

*Bel.* It shall have work enough.

Let me hope better than thou augurst ;  
At present, let us hence as best we may.  
Thou dost agree with me in understanding  
This order as a sentence ?

*Arb.* Why, what other  
Interpretation should it bear ? it is  
The very policy of orient monarchs —  
Pardon and poison — favours and a sword —  
A distant voyage, and an eternal sleep.  
How many satraps in his father's time —  
For he I own is, or at least *was*, bloodless —

*Bel.* But *will* not, *can* not be so now.

*Arb.* I doubt it.

How many satraps have I seen set out  
In his sire's day for mighty vice-royalties,  
Whose tombs are on their path ! I know not how,  
But they all sicken'd by the way, it was  
So long and heavy.

*Bel.* Let us but regain  
The free air of the city, and we'll shorten  
The journey.

*Arb.* 'T will be shorten'd at the gates,  
It may be.

*Bel.* No ; they hardly will risk that.  
They mean us to die privately, but not  
Within the palace or the city walls,  
Where we are known, and may have partisans :  
If they had meant to slay us here, we were  
No longer with the living. Let us hence.

*Arb.* If I but thought he did not mean my life —

*Bel.* Fool ! hence — what else should despotism alarm'd  
Mean ? Let us but rejoin our troops, and march.

*Arb.* Towards our provinces ?

*Bel.* No ; towards your kingdom.  
There's time, there's heart, and hope, and power, and  
means,  
Which their half measures leave us in full scope.—  
Away !

*Arb.* And I even yet repenting must  
Relapse to guilt !

*Bel.* Self-defence is a virtue,  
Sole bulwark of all right. Away, I say !

Let's leave this place, the air grows thick and choking,  
 And the walls have a scent of night-shade — hence !  
 Let us not leave them time for further council.  
 Our quick departure proves our civic zeal  
 Our quick departure hinders our good escort,  
 The worthy Pania, from anticipating  
 The orders of some parasangs from hence :  
 Nay, there's no other choice, but — hence, I say.  
 [*Exit with ARBACES, who follows reluctantly.*]

*Enter SARDANAPALUS and SALEMENES.*

*Sar.* Well, all is remedied, and without bloodshed,  
 That worst of mockeries of a remedy ;  
 We are now secure by these men's exile.

*Sal.* Yes,  
 As he who tread on flowers is from the adder  
 Twined round their roots.

*Sar.* Why, what wouldst have me do ?

*Sal.* Undo what you have done.

*Sar.* Revoke my pardon ?

*Sal.* Replace the crown now tottering on your temples.

*Sar.* That were tyrannical.

*Sal.* But sure.

*Sar.* We are so.

What danger can they work upon the frontier ?

*Sal.* They are not there yet — never should they be so,  
 Were I well listen'd to.

*Sar.* Nay, I *have* listen'd  
 Impartially to thee — why not to them ?

*Sal.* You may know that hereafter ; as it is,  
 I take my leave to order forth the guard.

*Sar.* And you will join us at the banquet ?

*Sal.* Sire,

Dispense with me — I am no wassailer :  
 Command me in all service save the Bacchant's.

*Sar.* Nay, but 't is fit to revel now and then

*Sal.* And fit that some should watch for those who revel  
 Too oft. Am I permitted to depart ?

*Sar.* Yes — Stay a moment, my good Salemenes,  
 My brother, my best subject, better prince  
 Than I am king. You should have been the monarch,  
 And I — I know not what, and care not ; but  
 Think not I am insensible to all  
 Thine honest wisdom, and thy rough yet kind,  
 Though oft reproving, sufferance of my follies.

If I have spared these men against thy counsel,  
That is, their lives — it is not that I doubt  
The advice was sound ; but, let them live : we will not  
Cavil about their lives — so let them mend them.  
Their banishment will leave me still sound sleep,  
Which their death had not left me.

*Sal.* Thus you run  
The risk to sleep for ever, to save traitors —  
A moment's pang now changed for years of crime.  
Still let them be made quiet.

*Sar.* Tempt me not :  
My word is past.

*Sal.* But it may be recall'd.

*Sar.* 'Tis royal.

*Sal.* And should therefore be decisive.  
This half indulgence of an exile serves  
But to provoke — a pardon should be full,  
Or it is none.

*Sar.* And who persuaded me  
After I had repeal'd them, or at least  
Only dismiss'd them from our presence, who  
Urged me to send them to their satrapies ?

*Sal.* True ; that I had forgotten ; that is, sire,  
If they e'er reach'd their satrapies — why, then,  
Reprove me more for my advice.

*Sar.* And if  
They do not reach them — look to it ! — in safety,  
In safety, mark me — and security —  
Look to thine own.

*Sal.* Permit me to depart ;  
Their *safety* shall be cared for.

*Sar.* Get thee hence, then ;  
And, prithee, think more gently of thy brother.

*Sal.* Sire, I shall ever duly serve my sovereign.

[*Exit* SALEMENES.]

*Sar.* (*solus*). That man is of a temper too severe ;  
Hard but as lofty as the rock, and free  
From all the taints of common earth — while I  
Am softer clay, impregnated with flowers :  
But as our mould is, must the produce be.  
If I have err'd this time, 't is on the side  
Where error sits most lightly on that sense,  
I know not what to call it ; but it reckons  
With me oftentimes for pain, and sometimes pleasure ;  
A spirit which seems placed about my heart  
To count its throbs, not quicken them, and ask

Questions which mortal never dared to ask me,  
 Nor Baal, though an oracular deity —  
 Albeit his marble face majestic  
 Frowns as the shadow of the evening dim  
 His brows to changed expression, till at times  
 I think the statue looks in act to speak.  
 Away with these vain thoughts, I will be joyous —  
 And here comes Joy's true herald.

*Enter MYRRHA.*

*Myr.* King! the sky  
 Is overcast, and musters muttering thunder,  
 In clouds that seem approaching fast, and show  
 In forked flashes a commanding tempest.  
 Will you then quit the palace?

*Sar.* Tempest, say'st thou?

*Myr.* Ay, my good lord.

*Sar.* For my own part, I should be  
 Not ill content to vary the smooth scene,  
 And watch the warring elements; but this  
 Would little suit the silken garments and  
 Smooth faces of our festive friends. Say, Myrrha,  
 Art thou of those who dread the roar of clouds?

*Myr.* In my own country we respect their voices  
 As auguries of Jove.

*Sar.* Jove! — ay, your Baal —  
 Ours also have a property in thunder,  
 And ever and anon some falling bolt  
 Proves his divinity, — and yet sometimes  
 Strikes his own altars.

*Myr.* That were a dread omen.

*Sar.* Yes — for the priests. Well, we will not go forth  
 Beyond the palace walls to-night, but make  
 Our feast within.

*Myr.* Now, Jove be praised! that he  
 Hath heard the prayer thou wouldst not hear. The gods  
 Are kinder to thee than thou to thyself,  
 And flash this storm between thee and thy foes,  
 To shield thee from them.

*Sar.* Child, if there be peril,  
 Methinks it is the same within these walls  
 As on the river's brink.

*Myr.* Not so; these walls  
 Are high and strong, and guarded. Treason has  
 To penetrate through many a winding way,  
 And massy portal; but in the pavilion

There is no bulwark.

*Sar.* No, nor in the palace,  
Nor in the fortress, nor upon the top  
Of cloud-fenced Caucasus, where the eagle sits  
Nested in pathless clefts, if treachery be :  
Even as the arrow finds the airy king,  
The steel will reach the earthly. But be calm :  
The men, or innocent or guilty, are  
Banish'd, and far upon their way.

*Myr.* They live, then ?

*Sar.* So sanguinary ? *Thou !*

*Myr.* I would not shrink  
From just infliction of due punishment  
On those who seek your life : wer 't otherwise,  
I should not merit mine. Besides, you heard  
The princely Salemenes.

*Sar.* This is strange ;  
The gentle and the austere are both against me,  
And urge me to revenge.

*Myr.* 'Tis a Greek virtue.

*Sar.* But not a kingly one — I 'll none on 't ; or  
If ever I indulge in 't, it shall be  
With kings — my equals.

*Myr.* These men sought to be so.

*Sar.* Myrrha, this is too feminine, and springs  
From fear —

*Myr.* For you.

*Sar.* No matter, still 't is fear.  
I have observed your sex, once roused to wrath,  
Are timidly vindictive to a pitch  
Of perseverance, which I would not copy.  
I thought you were exempt from this, as from  
The childless helplessness of Asian women.

*Myr.* My lord, I am no boaster of my love,  
Nor of my attributes ; I have shared your splendour  
And will partake your fortunes. You may live  
To find one slave more true than subject myriads ;  
But this the gods avert ! I am content  
To be beloved on trust for what I feel,  
Rather than prove it to you in your griefs,  
Which might not yield to any cares of mine.

*Sar.* Grief cannot come where perfect love exists,  
Except to heighten it, and vanish from  
That which it could not scare away. Let's in —  
The hour approaches, and we must prepare  
To meet the invited guests, who grace our feast. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT III.

## SCENE I.

*The Hall of the Palace illuminated — SARDANAPALUS and his Guests at Table.— A Storm without, and Thunder occasionally heard during the Banquet.*

*Sar.* Fill full! why this is as it should be: here  
Is my true realm, amidst bright eyes and faces  
Happy as fair! Here sorrow cannot reach.

*Zam.* Nor elsewhere — where the king is, pleasure  
sparkles.

*Sar.* Is not this better now than Nimrod's huntings,  
Or my wild grandam's chase in search of kingdoms  
She could not keep when conquer'd?

*Alt.* Mighty though  
They were, as all thy royal line have been,  
Yet none of those who went before have reach'd  
The acmé of Sardanapalus, who  
Has placed his joy in peace — the sole true glory.

*Sar.* And pleasure, good Altada, to which glory  
Is but the path. What is it that we seek?  
Enjoyment! We have cut the way short to it,  
And not gone tracking it through human ashes,  
Making a grave with every footstep.

*Zam.* No;  
All hearts are happy, and all voices bless  
The king of peace, who holds a world in jubilee.

*Sar.* Art sure of that? I have heard otherwise;  
Some say that there be traitors.

*Zam.* Traitors they  
Who dare to say so! — 'T is impossible.  
What cause?

*Sar.* What cause? true, — fill the goblet up;  
We will not think of them: there are none such,  
Or if there be, they are gone.

*Alt.* Guests, to my pledge!  
Down on your knees, and drink a measure to  
The safety of the king — the monarch, say I?  
The god Sardanapalus!

[ZAMES and the Guests kneel and exclaim —

Mightier than  
 His father Baal, the god Sardanapalus!  
*[It thunders as they kneel; some start up in confusion.]*

*Zam.* Why do you rise, my friends? in that strong peal  
 His father gods consented.

*Myr.* Menaced, rather.  
 King, wilt thou bear this mad impiety?

*Sar.* Impiety! — nay, if the sires who reign'd  
 Before me can be gods, I'll not disgrace  
 Their lineage. But arise, my pious friends;  
 Hoard your devotion for the thunderer there:  
 I seek but to be loved, not worshipp'd.

*All.* Both —  
 Both you must ever be by all true subjects.

*Sar.* Methinks the thunders still increase: it is  
 An awful night.

*Myr.* Oh yes, for those who have  
 No palace to protect their worshippers.

*Sar.* That's true, my Myrrha; and could I convert  
 My realm to one wide shelter for the wretched,  
 I'd do it.

*Myr.* Thou 'rt no god, then, not to be  
 Able to work a will so good and general,  
 As thy wish would imply.

*Sar.* And your gods, then,  
 Who can, and do not?

*Myr.* Do not speak of that,  
 Lest we provoke them.

*Sar.* True, they love not censure  
 Better than mortals. Friends, a thought has struck me:  
 Were there no temples, would there, think ye, be  
 Air worshippers? that is, when it is angry,  
 And pelting as even now.

*Myr.* The Persian prays  
 Upon his mountain.

*Sar.* Yes, when the sun shines.

*Myr.* And I would ask if this your palace were  
 Unroof'd and desolate, how many flatterers  
 Would lick the dust in which the king lay low?

*All.* The fair Ionian is too sarcastic  
 Upon a nation whom she knows not well;  
 The Assyrians know no pleasure but their king's,  
 And homage is their pride.

*Sar.* Nay, pardon, guests,  
 The fair Greek's readiness of speech.

*Alt.**Pardon! sire:*

We honour her of all things next to thee.

Hark! what was that?

*Zam.*

That! nothing but the jar

Of distant portals shaken by the wind.

*Alt.* It sounded like the clash of — hark again!

*Zam.* The big rain pattering on the roof.

*Sar.*

No more.

Myrrha, my love, hast thou thy shell in order?

Sing me a song of Sappho, her, thou know'st,

Who in thy country threw —

*Enter PANIA, with his sword and garments bloody, and disordered. The Guests rise in confusion.*

*Pan.* (to the Guards).

Look to the portals;

And with your best speed to the walls without.

Your arms! To arms! the king's in danger. Monarch!

Excuse this haste, — 't is faith.

*Sar.*

Speak on.

*Pan.*

It is

As Salemenes fear'd; the faithless satraps —

*Sar.* You are wounded — give some wine. Take breath,  
good Pania.

*Pan.* 'Tis nothing — a mere flesh wound. I am worn  
More with my speed to warn my sovereign,  
Than hurt in his defence.

*Myr.*

Well, sir, the rebels?

*Pan.* Soon as Arbaces and Beleses reach'd

Their stations in the city, they refused

To march; and on my attempt to use the power

Which I was delegated with, they call'd

Upon their troops, who rose in fierce defiance.

*Myr.* All?

*Pan.*

Too many.

*Sar.*

Spare not of thy free speech,

To spare mine ears the truth.

*Pan.*

My own slight guard

Were faithful, and what's left of it is still so.

*Myr.* And are these all the force still faithful?

*Pan.*

No —

The Bactrians, now led on by Salemenes,

Who even then was on his way, still urged

By strong suspicion of the Median chiefs,

Are numerous, and make strong head against

The rebels, fighting inch by inch, and forming

An orb around the palace, where they mean  
To centre all their force, and save the king.  
(*He hesitates.*) I am charged to —

*Myr.* 'T is no time for hesitation.

*Pan.* Prince Salemenes, doth implore the king  
To arm himself, although but for a moment,  
And show himself unto the soldiers : his  
Sole presence in this instant might do more  
Than hosts can do in his behalf.

*Sar.* What, ho !

My armour there.

*Myr.* And wilt thou ?

*Sar.* Will I not ?

Ho, there ! — but seek not for the buckler : 't is  
Too heavy : — a light cuirass and my sword.  
Where are the rebels ?

*Pan.* Scarce a furlong's length  
From the outward wall the fiercest conflict rages.

*Sar.* Then I may charge on horseback. Sfero, ho !  
Order my horse out. — There is space enough  
Even in our courts, and by the outer gate,  
To marshal half the horsemen of Arabia.

[*Exit SFERO for the armour.*]

*Myr.* How I do love thee !

*Sar.* I ne'er doubted it.

*Myr.* But now I know thee.

*Sar.* (*to his Attendant.*) Bring down my spear too —  
Where's Salemenes ?

*Pan.* Where a soldier should be,  
In the thick of the fight.

*Sar.* Then hasten to him — Is  
The path still open, and communication  
Left 'twixt the palace and the phalanx ?

*Pan.* 'T was  
When I late left him, and I have no fear :  
Our troops were steady, and the phalanx form'd.

*Sar.* Tell him to spare his person for the present,  
And that I will not spare my own — and say,  
I come.

*Pan.* There 's victory in the very word.

[*Exit PANIA.*]

*Sar.* Altada — Zames — forth, and arm ye ! There  
Is all in readiness in the armoury.  
See that the women are bestow'd in safety  
In the remote apartments : let a guard  
Be set before them, with strict charge to quit

The post but with their lives — command it, Zames.  
 Altada, arm yourself, and return here ;  
 Your post is near our person.

[*Exeunt ZAMES, ALTADA, and all save MYRRHA.*

*Enter SFERO and others with the King's Arms, &c.*

*Sfe.* King! your armour.

*Sar.* (*arming himself.*) Give me the cuirass — so : my  
 baldric ; now

My sword : I had forgot the helm — where is it ?  
 That's well — no, 't is too heavy : you mistake, too —  
 It was not this I meant, but that which bears  
 A diadem around it.

*Sfe.* Sire, I deem'd

That too conspicuous from the precious stones  
 To risk your sacred brow beneath — and trust me,  
 This is of better metal, though less rich.

*Sar.* You deem'd ! Are you too turn'd a rebel ? Fellow !  
 Your part is to obey : return, and — no —  
 It is too late — I will go forth without it.

*Sfe.* At least, wear this.

*Sar.* Wear Caucasus ! why, 't is

A mountain on my temples.

*Sfe.* Sire, the meanest

Soldier goes not forth thus exposed to battle.  
 All men will recognise you — for the storm  
 Has ceased, and the moon breaks forth in her brightness.

*Sar.* I go forth to be recognised, and thus  
 Shall be so sooner. Now — my spear ! I'm arm'd.

[*In going stops short, and turns to SFERO.*

*Sfero* — I had forgotten — bring the mirror.\*

*Sfe.* The mirror, sire ?

*Sar.* Yes, sir, of polish'd brass,

Brought from the spoils of India — but be speedy.

[*Exit SFERO.*

*Sar.* Myrrha, retire unto a place of safety.

Why went you not forth with the other damsels ?

*Myr.* Because my place is here.

*Sar.* And when I am gone —

*Myr.* I follow.

*Sar.* You ! to battle ?

*Myr.* If it were so.

'T were not the first Greek girl had trod the path.

\* " Such the *mirror* Otho held  
 In the Illyrian field." — See Juvenal.

I will await here your *return*.

*Sar.* The place  
Is spacious, and the first to be sought out,  
If they prevail; and, if it be so,  
And I return not——

*Myr.* Still we meet again.

*Sar.* How?

*Myr.* In the spot where all must meet at last—  
In Hades! if there be, as I believe,  
A shore beyond the Styx: and if there be not,  
In ashes.

*Sar.* Darest thou so much?

*Myr.* I dare all things  
Except survive what I have loved, to be  
A rebel's booty: forth, and do your bravest.

*Re-enter SFERO with the mirror.*

*Sar.* (*looking at himself.*) This cuirass fits me well, the  
baldric better,  
And the helm not at all. Methinks I seem  
[*Flings away the helmet after trying it again.*  
Passing well in these toys; and now to prove them.  
Altada! Where 's Altada?

*Sfe.* Waiting, sire,  
Without: he has your shield in readiness.

*Sar.* True; I forgot he is my shield-bearer  
By right of blood, derived from age to age.  
Myrrha, embrace me;—yet once more—once more—  
Love me, whate'er betide. My chiefest glory  
Shall be to make me worthier of your love.

*Myr.* Go forth, and conquer!

[*Exeunt SARDANAPALUS and SFERO.*

Now, I am alone,

All are gone forth, and of that all how few  
Perhaps return. Let him but vanquish, and  
Me perish! If he vanquish not, I perish;  
For I will not outlive him. He has wound  
About my heart, I know not how nor why.  
Not for that he is king; for now his kingdom  
Rocks underneath his throne, and the earth yawns  
To yield him no more of it than a grave;  
And yet I love him more. Oh, mighty Jove!  
Forgive this monstrous love for a barbarian,  
Who knows not of Olympus! yes, I love him  
Now, now, far more than——Hark—to the war shout!



And rushes from the banquet to the battle,  
As though it were a bed of love, deserves  
That a Greek girl should be his paramour,  
And a Greek bard his minstrel, a Greek tomb  
His monument. How goes the strife, sir?

*Enter an Officer.*

*Officer.* Lost,  
Lost almost past recovery. Zames! Where  
Is Zames?

*Myr.* Posted with the guard appointed  
To watch before the apartment of the women.

[*Exit Officer.*

*Myr. (sola.)* He's gone; and told no more than that all's  
lost!

What need have I to know more? In those words,  
Those little words, a kingdom and a king,  
A line of thirteen ages, and the lives  
Of thousands, and the fortune of all left  
With life, are merged; and I, too, with the great,  
Like a small bubble breaking with the wave  
Which bore it, shall be nothing. At the least,  
My fate is in my keeping: no proud victor  
Shall count me with his spoils.

*Enter PANIA.*

*Pan.* Away with me,  
Myrrha, without delay; we must not lose  
A moment — all that's left us now.

*Myr.* The king?

*Pan.* Sent me here to conduct you hence, beyond  
The river, by a secret passage.

*Myr.* Then  
He lives —

*Pan.* And charged me to secure your life,  
And beg you to live on for his sake, till  
He can rejoin you.

*Myr.* Will he then give way?

*Pan.* Not till the last. Still, still he does whate'er  
Despair can do; and step by step disputes  
The very palace.

*Myr.* They are here, then: — ay,  
Their shouts come ringing through the ancient halls,  
Never profaned by rebel echoes till  
This fatal night. Farewell, Assyria's line!

Farewell to all of Nimrod! Even the name  
Is now no more.

*Pan.* Away with me — away!

*Myr.* No: I'll die here! — Away, and tell your king  
I loved him to the last.

*Enter SARDANAPALUS and SALEMENES with Soldiers. PANIA  
quits MYRRHA, and ranges himself with them.*

*Sar.* Since it is thus,  
We'll die where we were born — in our own halls.  
Serry your ranks — stand firm. I have despatch'd  
A trusty satrap for the guard of Zames,  
All fresh and faithful; they'll be here anon.  
All is not over. — Pania, look to Myrrha.

[*PANIA returns towards MYRRHA.*

*Sal.* We have breathing time; yet once more charge, my  
friends —

One for Assyria!

*Sar.* Rather say for Bactria!  
My faithful Bactrians, I will henceforth be  
King of your nation, and we'll hold together  
This realm as province.

*Sal.* Hark! they come — they come.

*Enter BELESES and ARBACES with the Rebels.*

*Arb.* Set on, we have them in the toil. Charge! Charge!

*Bel.* On! on! — Heaven fights for us, and with us. —  
On!

[*They charge the King and SALEMENES with their  
Troops, who defend themselves till the Arrival of  
ZAMES, with the Guard before mentioned. The  
Rebels are then driven off, and pursued by SALE-  
MENES, &c. As the King is going to join the  
pursuit, BELESES crosses him.*

*Bel.* Ho! tyrant — I will end this war.

*Sar.* Even so,

My warlike priest, and precious prophet, and  
Grateful and trusty subject: — yield, I pray thee.  
I would reserve thee for a fitter doom,  
Rather than dip my hands in holy blood.

*Bel.* Thine hour is come.

*Sar.* No, thine. — I've lately read,  
Though but a young astrologer, the stars;  
And, ranging round the zodiac, found thy fate  
In the sign of the Scorpion, which proclaims

That thou wilt now be crush'd.

*Bel.*

But not by thee.

[*They fight; BELESES is wounded and disarmed.*]

*Sar.* (*raising his sword to despatch him, exclaims*) —

Now call upon thy planets, will they shoot  
From the sky to preserve their seer and credit?

[*A party of Rebels enter and rescue BELESES. They assail the King, who, in turn, is rescued by a Party of his Soldiers, who drive the Rebels off.*]

The villain was a prophet after all.

Upon them — ho! there — victory is ours.

[*Exit in pursuit.*]

*Myr.* (*to Pan.*) Pursue! Why stand'st thou here, and  
leavest the ranks

Of fellow-soldiers conquering without thee?

*Pan.* The king's command was not to quit thee.

*Myr.*

*Me!*

Think not of me — a single soldier's arm  
Must not be wanting now. I ask no guard,  
I need no guard: what, with a world at stake,  
Keep watch upon a woman? Hence, I say,  
Or thou art shamed! Nay, then, I will go forth,  
A feeble female, 'midst their desperate strife,  
And bid thee guard me *there* — where thou shouldst shield  
Thy sovereign. [Exit MYRRHA.]

*Pan.* Yet stay, damsel! She's gone.

If aught of ill betide her, better I  
Had lost my life. Sardanapalus holds her  
Far dearer than his kingdom, yet he fights  
For that too; and can I do less than he,  
Who never flash'd a scimitar till now?  
Myrrha, return, and I obey you, though  
In disobedience to the monarch.

[*Exit PANIA.*]

*Enter ALTADA and SFERO by an opposite door.*

*Alt.*

Myrrha!

What, gone? yet she was here when the fight raged  
And Pania also. Can aught have befallen them?

*Sfe.* I saw both safe, when late the rebels fled:  
They probably are but retired to make  
Their way back to the harem.

*Alt.*

If the king

Prove victor, as it seems even now he must,  
And miss his own Ionian, we are doom'd

To worse than captive rebels.

*Sfe.* Let us trace them ;  
She cannot be fled far ; and, found, she makes  
A richer prize to our soft sovereign  
Than his recover'd kingdom.

*All.* Baal himself  
Ne'er fought more fiercely to win empire, than  
His silken son to save it : he defies  
All augury of foes or friends ; and like  
The close and sultry summer's day, which bodes  
A twilight tempest, bursts forth in such thunder  
As sweeps the air and deluges the earth.  
The man's inscrutable.

*Sfe.* Not more than others.  
All are the sons of circumstance : away —  
Let 's seek the slave out, or prepare to be  
Tortured for his infatuation, and  
Condemn'd without a crime.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter SALEMENES and Soldiers, &c.*

*Sal.* The triumph is  
Flattering : they are beaten backward from the palace,  
And we have open'd regular access  
To the troops station'd on the other side  
Euphrates, who may still be true ; nay, must be,  
When they hear of our victory. But where  
Is the chief victor ? where 's the king ?

*Enter SARDANAPALUS, cum suis, &c. and MYRRHA.*

*Sar.* Here, brother.

*Sal.* Unhurt, I hope.

*Sar.* Not quite ; but let it pass.

We 've clear'd the palace —

*Sal.* And I trust the city.  
Our numbers gather ; and I 've ordered onward  
A cloud of Parthians, hitherto reserved,  
All fresh and fiery, to be pour'd upon them  
In their retreat, which soon will be a flight.

*Sar.* It is already, or at least they march'd  
Faster than I could follow with my Bactrians,  
Who spared no speed. I am spent : give me a seat.

*Sal.* There stands the throne, sire.

*Sar.* 'T is no place to rest on,  
For mind nor body : let me have a couch,

[*They place a seat.*]

A peasant's stool, I care not what : so — now  
I breathe more freely.

*Sal.* This great hour has proved  
The brightest and most glorious of your life.

*Sar.* And the most tiresome. Where 's my cupbearer ?  
Bring me some water.

*Sal.* (*smiling.*) 'T is the first time he  
Ever had such an order : even I,  
Your most austere of counsellors, would now  
Suggest a purpler beverage

*Sar.* Blood, — doubtless.  
But there 's enough of that shed ; as for wine,  
I have learn'd to-night the price of the pure element :  
Thrice have I drank of it, and thrice renew'd,  
With greater strength than the grape ever gave me,  
My charge upon the rebels. Where 's the soldier  
Who gave me water in his helmet ?

*One of the Guards.* Slain, sire !  
An arrow pierced his brain, while, scattering  
The last drops from his helm, he stood in act  
To place it on his brows.

*Sar.* Slain ! unrewarded !  
And slain to serve my thirst : that 's hard, poor slave !  
Had he but lived, I would have gorged him with  
Gold : all the gold of earth could ne'er repay  
The pleasure of that draught ; for I was parch'd  
As I am now. [*They bring water — he drinks.*]

I live again — from henceforth  
The goblet I reserve for hours of love,  
But war on water.

*Sal.* And that bandage, sire,  
Which girds your arm ?

*Sar.* A scratch from brave Beleses.

*Myr.* Oh ! he is wounded !

*Sar.* Not too much of that ;  
And yet it feels a little stiff and painful,  
Now I am cooler.

*Myr.* You have bound it with ——

*Sar.* The fillet of my diadem : the first time  
That ornament was ever aught to me,  
Save an incumbrance.

*Myr.* (*to the Attendants.*) Summon speedily  
A leech of the most skilful : pray, retire :  
I will unbind your wound and tend it.

*Sar.* Do so,  
For now it throbs sufficiently : but what

Know'st thou of wounds? yet wherefore do I ask?  
 Know'st thou, my brother, where I lighted on  
 This minion?

*Sal.* Herding with the other females,  
 Like frighten'd antelopes.

*Sar.* No: like the dam  
 Of the young lion, femininely raging,  
 (And femininely meaneth furiously,  
 Because all passions in excess are female,)  
 Against the hunter flying with her cub,  
 She urged on with her voice and gesture, and  
 Her floating hair and flashing eyes, the soldiers,  
 In the pursuit.

*Sal.* Indeed!

*Sar.* You see, this night  
 Made warriors of more than me. I paused  
 To look upon her, and her kindled cheek;  
 Her large black eyes, that flash'd through her long hair  
 As it stream'd o'er her; her blue veins that rose  
 Along her most transparent brow; her nostril  
 Dilated from its symmetry; her lips  
 Apart; her voice that clove through all the din,  
 As a lute's pierceth through the cymbal's clash,  
 Jarr'd but not drown'd by the loud brattling; her  
 Waved arms, more dazzling with their own born whiteness  
 Than the steel her hand held, which she caught up  
 From a dead soldier's grasp; — all these things made  
 Her seem unto the troops a prophetess  
 Of victory, or Victory herself,  
 Come down to hail us hers.

*Sal. (aside.)* This is too much.  
 Again the love-fit's on him, and all's lost,  
 Unless we turn his thoughts.

*(Aloud.)* But pray thee, sire,  
 Think of your wound — you said even now 't was painful.

*Sar.* That's true, too; but I must not think of it.

*Sal.* I have look'd to all things needful, and will now  
 Receive reports of progress made in such  
 Orders as I had given, and then return  
 To hear your further pleasure.

*Sar.* Be it so.

*Sal. (in retiring.)* Myrrha!

*Myr.* Prince!

*Sal.* You have shown a soul to-night,  
 Which, were he not my sister's lord — But now  
 I have no time: thou lovest the king?

*Myr.* I love

Sardanapalus.

*Sal.* But wouldst have him king still ?

*Myr.* I would not have him less than what he should be.

*Sal.* Well then, to have him king, and yours, and all  
He should, or should not be ; to have him *live*,  
Let him not sink back into luxury.

You have more power upon his spirit than  
Wisdom within these walls, or fierce rebellion  
Raging without : look well that he relapse not.

*Myr.* There needed not the voice of Salemenes  
To urge me on to this : I will not fail.  
All that a woman's weakness can ——

*Sal.* Is power

Omnipotent o'er such a heart as his :

Exert it wisely.

[*Exit SALEMENES.*]

*Sar.* Myrrha ! what, at whispers  
With my stern brother ? I shall soon be jealous.

*Myr.* (*smiling*). You have cause, sire ; for on the earth  
there breathes not

A man more worthy of a woman's love —  
A soldier's trust — a subject's reverence —  
A king's esteem — the whole world's admiration !

*Sar.* Praise him, but not so warmly. I must not  
Hear those sweet lips grow eloquent in aught  
That throws me into shade ; yet you speak truth.

*Myr.* And now retire, to have your wound look'd to.  
Pray, lean on me.

*Sar.* Yes, love ! but not from pain.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.

SARDANAPALUS discovered sleeping upon a Couch, and occasionally disturbed in his Slumbers, with MYRRHA watching.

*Myr.* (*sola, gazing*). I have stolen upon his rest, if rest  
it be,

Which thus convulses slumber : shall I wake him ?  
No, he seems calmer. Oh, thou God of Quiet !

Whose reign is o'er seal'd eyelids and soft dreams,  
 Or deep, deep sleep, so as to be unfathom'd,  
 Look like thy brother, Death — so still — so stirless —  
 For then we are happiest, as it may be, we  
 Are happiest of all within the realm  
 Of thy stern, silent, and unwakening twin.  
 Again he moves — again the play of pain  
 Shoots o'er his features, as the sudden gust  
 Crisps the reluctant lake that lay so calm  
 Beneath the mountain shadow ; or the blast  
 Ruffles the autumn leaves, that drooping cling  
 Faintly and motionless to their loved boughs.  
 I must awake him — yet not yet : who knows  
 From what I rouse him ? It seems pain ; but if  
 I quicken him to heavier pain ? The fever  
 Of this tumultuous night, the grief too of  
 His wound, though slight, may cause all this, and shake  
 Me more to see than him to suffer. No :  
 Let Nature use her own maternal means, —  
 And I await to second, not disturb her.

*Sar. (awakening).* Not so — although ye multiplied the  
 stars,

And gave them to me as a realm to share  
 From you and with you ! I would not so purchase  
 The empire of eternity. Hence — hence —  
 Old hunter of the earliest brutes ! and ye,  
 Who hunted fellow-creatures as if brutes !  
 Once bloody mortals — and now bloodier idols,  
 If your priests lie not ! And thou, ghastly beldame !  
 Dripping with dusky gore, and trampling on  
 The carcasses of Inde — away ! away !  
 Where am I ? Where the spectres ? Where — No —  
 that

Is no false phantom : I should know it 'midst  
 All that the dead dare gloomily raise up  
 From their black gulf to daunt the living. Myrrha !

*Myr.* Alas ! thou art pale, and on thy brow the drops  
 Gather like night dew. My beloved, hush —  
 Calm thee. Thy speech seems of another world,  
 And thou art lord of this. Be of good cheer ;  
 All will go well.

*Sar.* Thy hand — so — 't is thy hand ;  
 'T is flesh ; grasp — clasp — yet closer, till I feel  
 Myself that which I was.

*Myr.* At least know me  
 For what I am, and ever must be — thine.

*Sar.* I know it now. I know this life again.  
Ah, Myrrha! I have been where we shall be.

*Myr.* My lord!

*Sar.* I've been i' the grave — where worms are lords,  
And kings are — But I did not deem it so;  
I thought 't was nothing.

*Myr.* So it is; except  
Unto the timid, who anticipate  
That which may never be.

*Sar.* Oh, Myrrha! if  
Sleep shows such things, what may not death disclose?

*Myr.* I know no evil death can show, which life  
Has not already shown to those who live  
Embodied longest. If there be indeed  
A shore where mind survives, 't will be as mind,  
All unincorporate: or if there flits  
A shadow of this cumbrous clog of clay,  
Which stalks, methinks, between our souls and heaven,  
And fetters us to earth — at least the phantom,  
Whate'er it have to fear, will not fear death.

*Sar.* I fear it not; but I have felt — have seen —  
A legion of the dead.

*Myr.* And so have I.  
The dust we tread upon was once alive,  
And wretched. But proceed: what hast thou seen?  
Speak it, 't will lighten thy dimm'd mind.

*Sar.* Methought —

*Myr.* Yet pause, thou art tired — in pain — exhausted;  
all  
Which can impair both strength and spirit: seek  
Rather to sleep again.

*Sar.* Not now — I would not  
Dream; though I know it now to be a dream  
What I have dreamt: — and canst thou bear to hear it?

*Myr.* I can bear all things, dreams of life or death,  
Which I participate with you in semblance  
Or full reality.

*Sar.* And this look'd real,  
I tell you: after that these eyes were open,  
I saw them in their flight — for then they fled.

*Myr.* Say on.

*Sar.* I saw, that is, I dream'd myself  
Here — here — even where we are, guests as we were,  
Myself a host that deem'd himself but guest,  
Willing to equal all in social freedom;  
But, on my right hand and my left, instead

Of thee and Zames, and our custom'd meeting,  
 Was ranged on my left hand a haughty, dark,  
 And deadly face — I could not recognise it,  
 Yet I had seen it, though I knew not where :  
 The features were a giant's, and the eye  
 Was still, yet lighted ; his long locks curl'd down  
 On his vast bust, whence a huge quiver rose  
 With shaft-heads feather'd from the eagle's wing,  
 That peep'd up bristling through his serpent hair.  
 I invited him to fill the cup which stood  
 Between us, but he answer'd not — I fill'd it —  
 He took it not, but stared upon me, till  
 I trembled at the fix'd glare of his eye :  
 I frown'd upon him as a king should frown —  
 He frown'd not in his turn, but look'd upon me  
 With the same aspect, which appall'd me more,  
 Because it changed not ; and I turn'd for refuge  
 To milder guests, and sought them on the right,  
 Where thou wert wont to be. But —

[*He pauses.*]

*Myr.*

What instead ?

*Sar.* In thy own chair — thy own place in the banquet —  
 I sought thy sweet face in the circle — but  
 Instead — a gray-hair'd, wither'd, bloody-eyed,  
 And bloody-handed, ghastly, ghostly thing,  
 Female in garb, and crown'd upon the brow,  
 Furrow'd with years, yet sneering with the passion  
 Of vengeance, leering too with that of lust,  
 Sate : — my veins curdled.

*Myr.*

Is this all ?

*Sar.*

Upon

Her right hand — her lank, bird-like right hand — stood  
 A goblet, bubbling o'er with blood ; and on  
 Her left, another, fill'd with — what I saw not,  
 But turn'd from it and her. But all along  
 The table sate a range of crowned wretches,  
 Of various aspects, but of one expression.

*Myr.* And felt you not this a mere vision ?

*Sar.*

No :

It was so palpable, I could have touch'd them.  
 I turn'd from one face to another, in  
 The hope to find at last one which I knew  
 Ere I saw theirs : but no — all turn'd upon me,  
 And stared, but neither ate nor drank, but stared,  
 Till I grew stone, as they seem'd half to be,  
 Yet breathing stone, for I felt life in them,

And life in me : there was a horrid kind  
 Of sympathy between us, as if they  
 Had lost a part of death to come to me,  
 And I the half of life to sit by them.  
 We were in an existence all apart  
 From heaven or earth — And rather let me see  
 Death all than such a being !

*Myr.* And the end ?

*Sar.* At last I sate, marble, as they, when rose  
 The hunter and the crone ; and smiling on me —  
 Yes, the enlarged but noble aspect of  
 The hunter smiled upon me — I should say,  
 His lips, for his eyes moved not — and the woman's  
 Thin lips relax'd to something like a smile.  
 Both rose, and the crown'd figures on each hand  
 Rose also, as if aping their chief shades —  
 Mere mimics even in death — but I sate still :  
 A desperate courage crept through every limb,  
 And at the last I fear'd them not, but laugh'd  
 Full in their phantom faces. But then — then  
 The hunter laid his hand on mine : I took it,  
 And grasp'd it — but it melted from my own ;  
 While he too vanish'd, and left nothing but  
 The memory of a hero, for he look'd so.

*Myr.* And was : the ancestor or heroes, too,  
 And thine no less.

*Sar.* Ay, Myrrha, but the woman,  
 The female who remain'd, she flew upon me,  
 And burnt my lips up with her noisome kisses ;  
 And, flinging down the goblets on each hand,  
 Methought their poisons flow'd around us, till  
 Each form'd a hideous river. Still she clung ;  
 The other phantoms, like a row of statues,  
 Stood dull as in our temples, but she still  
 Embraced me, while I shrunk from her, as if,  
 In lieu of her remote descendant, I  
 Had been the son who slew her for her incest.  
 Then — then — a chaos of all loathsome things  
 Throng'd thick and shapeless : I was dead, yet feeling —  
 Buried, and raised again — consumed by worms,  
 Purged by the flames, and wither'd in the air !  
 I can fix nothing further of my thoughts,  
 Save that I long'd for thee, and sought for thee,  
 In all these agonies, and woke and found thee.

*Myr.* So shalt thou find me ever at thy side,  
 Here and hereafter, if the last may be.

But think not of these things — the mere creations  
Of late events, acting upon a frame  
Unused to toil, yet over-wrought by toil  
Such as might try the sternest.

*Sar.* I am better.

Now that I see *thee* once more, *what was seen*  
Seems nothing.

*Enter SALEMENES.*

*Sal.* Is the king so soon awake ?

*Sar.* Yes, brother, and I would I had not slept ;  
For all the predecessors of our line  
Rose up, methought, to drag me down to them.  
My father was amongst them, too ; but he,  
I know not why, kept from me, leaving me  
Between the hunter-founder of our race,  
And her, the homicide and husband-killer,  
Whom you call glorious.

*Sal.* So I term you also,  
Now you have shown a spirit like to hers.  
By day-break I propose that we set forth,  
And charge once more the rebel crew, who still  
Keep gathering head, repulsed, but not quite quell'd.

*Sar.* How wears the night ?

*Sal.* There yet remain some hours  
Of darkness : use them for your further rest.

*Sar.* No, not to-night, if 't is not gone : methought  
I pass'd hours in that vision.

*Myr.* Scarcely one ;  
I watch'd by you : it was a heavy hour,  
But an hour only.

*Sar.* Let us then hold council ;  
To-morrow we set forth.

*Sal.* But ere that time,  
I had a grace to seek.

*Sar.* 'T is granted.

*Sal.* Hear it  
Ere you reply too readily ; and 't is  
For *your* ear only.

*Myr.* Prince, I take my leave.

[*Exit MYRRHA.*

*Sal.* That slave deserves her freedom.

*Sar.* Freedom only !  
That slave deserves to share a throne.

*Sal.* Your patience —

'T is not yet vacant, and 't is of its partner  
I come to speak with you.

*Sar.* How ! of the queen ?

*Sal.* Even so. I judg'd it fitting for their safety,  
That, ere the dawn, she sets forth with her children  
For Paphlagonia, where our kinsman Cotta  
Governs ; and there at all events secure  
My nephews and your sons their lives, and with them  
Their just pretensions to the crown in case ——

*Sar.* I perish — as is probable : well thought —  
Let them set forth with a sure escort.

*Sal.* That  
Is all provided, and the galley ready  
To drop down the Euphrates ; but ere they  
Depart, will you not see ——

*Sar.* My sons ? It may  
Unman my heart, and the poor boys will weep ;  
And what can I reply to comfort them,  
Save with some hollow hopes, and ill-worn smiles ?  
You know I cannot feign.

*Sal.* But you can feel !  
At least, I trust so : in a word, the queen  
Requests to see you ere you part — for ever.

*Sar.* Unto what end ? what purpose ? I will grant  
Aught — all that she can ask — but such a meeting.

*Sal.* You know, or ought to know, enough of women,  
Since you have studied them so steadily,  
That what they ask in aught that touches on  
The heart, is dearer to their feelings or  
Their fancy, than the whole external world.  
I think as you do of my sister's wish ;  
But 't was her wish — she is my sister — you  
Her husband — will you grant it ?

*Sar.* 'T will be useless :  
But let her come.

*Sal.* I go.

[*Exit SALEMENES.*

*Sar.* We have lived asunder  
Too long to meet again — and *now* to meet !  
Have I not cares enow, and pangs enow,  
To bear alone, that we must mingle sorrows,  
Who have ceased to mingle love ?

*Re-enter SALEMENES and ZARINA.*

*Sal.* My sister ! Courage :

Shame not your blood with trembling, but remember  
From whence we sprung. The queen is present, sire.

Zar. I pray thee, brother, leave me.

Sal.

Since you ask it.

[Exit SALEMENES.]

Zar. Alone with him! How many a year has pass'd,  
Though we are still so young, since we have met,  
Which I have worn in widowhood of heart.  
He loved me not: yet he seems little changed —  
Changed to me only — would the change were mutual!  
He speaks not — scarce regards me — not a word —  
Nor look — yet he *was* soft of voice and aspect,  
Indifferent, not austere. My lord!

Sar.

Zarina!

Zar. No, *not* Zarina — do not say Zarina.  
That tone — that word — annihilate long years,  
And things which make them longer.

Sar.

'T is too late

To think of these past dreams. Let's not reproach —  
That is, reproach me not — for the *last* time —

Zar. And *first*. I ne'er reproach'd you.

Sar.

'T is most true;

And that reproof comes heavier on my heart  
Than — But our hearts are not in our own power.

Zar. Nor hands; but I gave both.

Sar.

Your brother said

It was your will to see me, ere you went  
From Nineveh with — (*He hesitates*).

Zar.

Our children: it is true.

I wish'd to thank you that you have not divided  
My heart from all that's left it now to love —  
Those who are yours and mine, who look like you,  
And look upon me as you look'd upon me  
Once — But they have not changed.

Sar.

Nor ever will.

I fain would have them dutiful.

Zar.

I cherish

Those infants, not alone from the blind love  
Of a fond mother, but as a fond woman.  
They are now the only tie between us.

Sar.

Deem not

I have not done you justice: rather make them  
Resemble your own line than their own sire.  
I trust them with you — to you: fit them for  
A throne, or, if that be denied — You have heard  
Of this night's tumults?

*Zar.* I had half forgotten,  
And could have welcomed any grief save yours,  
Which gave me to behold your face again.

*Sar.* The throne — I say it not in fear — but 'tis  
In peril; they perhaps may never mount it:  
But let them not for this lose sight of it.  
I will dare all things to bequeath it them;  
But if I fail, then they must win it back  
Bravely — and, won, wear it wisely, not as I  
Have wasted down my royalty.

*Zar.* They ne'er  
Shall know from me of aught but what may honour  
Their father's memory.

*Sar.* Rather let them hear  
The truth from you than from a trampling world.  
If they be in adversity, they'll learn  
Too soon the scorn of crowds for crownless princes,  
And find that all their father's sins are theirs.  
My boys! — I could have borne it were I childless.

*Zar.* Oh! do not say so — do not poison all  
My peace left, by unwishing that thou wert  
A father. If thou conquerest, they shall reign,  
And honour him who saved the realm for them,  
So little cared for as his own; and if —

*Sar.* 'T is lost, all earth will cry out thank your father!  
And they will swell the echo with a curse.

*Zar.* That they shall never do; but rather honour  
The name of him, who, dying like a king,  
In his last hours did more for his own memory  
Than many monarchs in a length of days,  
Which date the flight of time, but make no annals.

*Sar.* Our annals draw perchance unto their close;  
But at the least, whate'er the past, their end  
Shall be like their beginning — memorable.

*Zar.* Yet, be not rash — but careful of your life,  
Live but for those who love.

*Sar.* And who are they?  
A slave, who loves from passion — I'll not say  
Ambition — she has seen thrones shake, and loves;  
A few friends, who have revell'd till we are  
As one, for they are nothing if I fall;  
A brother I have injured — children whom  
I have neglected, and a spouse —

*Zar.* Who loves.

*Sar.* And pardons?

*Zar.* I have never thought of this,

And cannot pardon till I have condemn'd.

*Sar.* My wife!

*Zar.* Now blessings on thee for that word!  
I never thought to hear it more — from thee.

*Sar.* Oh! thou wilt hear it from my subjects. Yes —  
These slaves whom I have nurtured, pamper'd, fed,  
And swoln with peace, and gorged with plenty, till  
They reign themselves — all monarchs in their mansions —  
Now swarm forth in rebellion, and demand  
His death, who made their lives a jubilee;  
While the few upon whom I have no claim  
Are faithful! This is true, yet monstrous.

*Zar.* 'T is  
Perhaps too natural; for benefits  
Turn poison in bad minds.

*Sar.* And good ones make  
Good out of evil. Happier than the bee,  
Which hives not but from wholesome flowers.

*Zar.* Then reap  
The honey, nor inquire whence 't is derived.  
Be satisfied — you are not all abandon'd.

*Sar.* My life insures me that. How long, bethink you,  
Were not I yet a king, should I be mortal;  
That is, where mortals *are*, not where they must be?

*Zar.* I know not. But yet live for my — that is,  
Your children's sake!

*Sar.* My gentle, wrong'd Zarina!  
I am the very slave of circumstance

And impulse — borne away with every breath!  
Misplaced upon the throne — misplaced in life.

I know not what I could have been, but feel  
I am not what I should be — let it end.

But take this with thee: if I was not form'd  
To prize a love like thine, a mind like thine,  
Nor dote even on thy beauty — as I've doted  
On lesser charms, for no cause save that such  
Devotion was a duty, and I hated

All that look'd like a chain for me or others  
(This even rebellion must avouch); yet hear  
These words, perhaps among my last — that none  
E'er valued more thy virtues, though he knew not  
To profit by them — as the miner lights

Upon a vein of virgin ore, discovering  
That which avails him nothing: he hath found it,  
But 't is not his — but some superior's, who  
Placed him to dig, but not divide the wealth

Which sparkles at his feet ; nor dare he lift  
Nor poise it, but must grovel on, upturning  
The sullen earth.

*Zar.* Oh! if thou hast at length  
Discover'd that my love is worth esteem,  
I ask no more — but let us hence together,  
And *I* — let me say *we* — shall yet be happy.  
Assyria is not all the earth — we 'll find  
A world out of our own — and be more bless'd  
Than I have ever been, or thou, with all  
An empire to indulge thee.

*Enter SALEMENES.*

*Sal.* I must part ye —  
The moments, which must not be lost, are passing.

*Zar.* Inhuman brother! wilt thou thus weigh out  
Instants so high and blest?

*Sal.* Blest!

*Zar.* He hath been  
So gentle with me, that I cannot think  
Of quitting.

*Sal.* So — this feminine farewell  
Ends as such partings end, in *no* departure.  
I thought as much, and yielded against all  
My better bodings. But it must not be.

*Zar.* Not be?

*Sal.* Remain, and perish ——

*Zar.* With my husband ——

*Sal.* And children.

*Zar.* Alas!

*Sal.* Hear me, sister, like  
My sister: — all 's prepared to make your safety  
Certain, and of the boys too, our last hopes;  
'T is not a single question of mere feeling,  
Though that were much — but 't is a point of state:  
The rebels would do more to seize upon  
The offspring of their sovereign, and so crush ——

*Zar.* Ah! do not name it.

*Sal.* Well, then, mark me: when  
They are safe beyond the Median's grasp, the rebels  
Have miss'd their chief aim — the extinction of  
The line of Nimrod. Though the present king  
Fall, his sons live for victory and vengeance.

*Zar.* But could not I remain, alone?

*Sal.* What! leave

Your children, with two parents and yet orphans —  
In a strange land — so young, so distant?

*Zar.* No —

My heart will break.

*Sal.* Now you know all — decide.

*Sar.* Zarina, he hath spoken well, and we  
Must yield awhile to this necessity.

Remaining here, you may lose all; departing,  
You save the better part of what is left,  
To both of us, and to such loyal hearts  
As yet beat in these kingdoms.

*Sal.* The time presses.

*Sar.* Go, then. If e'er we meet again, perhaps  
I may be worthier of you — and, if not,  
Remember that my faults, though not atoned for,  
Are ended. Yet, I dread thy nature will  
Grieve more above the blighted name and ashes  
Which once were mightiest in Assyria — than —  
But I grow womanish again, and must not;  
I must learn sternness now. My sins have all  
Been of the softer order — *hide* thy tears —  
I do not bid thee *not* to shed them — 't were  
Easier to stop Euphrates at its source  
Than one tear of a true and tender heart —  
But let me not behold them: they unman me  
Here when I had remann'd myself. My brother,  
Lead her away.

*Zar.* Oh, God! I never shall  
Behold him more!

*Sal.* (*striving to conduct her*). Nay, sister, I *must* be  
obey'd.

*Zar.* I must remain — away! you shall not hold me.  
What, shall he die alone? — *I* live alone?

*Sal.* He shall *not die alone*; but lonely you  
Have lived for years.

*Zar.* That's false! I knew *he* lived,  
And lived upon his image — let me go!

*Sal.* (*conducting her off the stage*). Nay, then, I must use  
some fraternal force,  
Which you will pardon.

*Zar.* Never. Help me! Oh!  
Sardanapalus, wilt thou thus behold me  
Torn from thee?

*Sal.* Nay — then all is lost again,  
If that this moment is not gain'd.

*Zar.* My brain turns —

My eyes fail — where is he? [*She faints.*]

*Sar.* (*advancing*). No — set her down —  
She's dead — and you have slain her.

*Sal.* 'Tis the mere  
Faintness of o'erwrought passion : in the air  
She will recover. Pray, keep back.— [*Aside.*] I must  
Avail myself of this sole moment to  
Bear her to where her children are embark'd,  
I<sup>3</sup> the royal galley on the river.

[*SALEMENES bears her off.*]

*Sar.* (*solus*). This, too —

And this too must I suffer — I, who never  
Inflicted purposely on human hearts  
A voluntary pang! But that is false —  
She loved me, and I loved her.— Fatal passion!  
Why dost thou not expire *at once* in hearts  
Which thou hast lighted up at once? Zarina!  
I must pay dearly for the desolation  
Now brought upon thee. Had I never loved  
But thee, I should have been an unopposed  
Monarch of honouring nations. To what gulfs  
A single deviation from the track  
Of human duties leads even those who claim  
The homage of mankind as their born due,  
And find it, till they forfeit it themselves!

*Enter MYRRHA.*

*Sar.* You here! Who call'd you?

*Myr.* No one — but I heard  
Far off a voice of wail and lamentation,  
And thought ——

*Sar.* It forms no portion of your duties  
To enter here till sought for.

*Myr.* Though I might,  
Perhaps, recall some softer words of yours,  
(Although they *too were chiding*,) which reproved me,  
Because I ever dreaded to intrude;  
Resisting my own wish and your injunction  
To heed no time nor presence, but approach you  
Uncall'd for: I retire.

*Sar.* Yet stay — being here.  
I pray you pardon me: events have sour'd me  
Till I wax peevish — heed it not: I shall  
Soon be myself again.

*Myr.* I wait with patience,  
What I shall see with pleasure.

*Sar.* Scarce a moment  
Before your entrance in this hall, Zarina,  
Queen of Assyria, departed hence.

*Myr.* Ah!

*Sar.* Wherefore do you start?

*Myr.* Did I do so?

*Sar.* 'T was well you enter'd by another portal,  
Else you had met. That pang at least is spared her!

*Myr.* I know to feel for her.

*Sar.* That is too much,  
And beyond nature — 't is nor mutual  
Nor possible. You cannot pity her,  
Nor she aught but ——

*Myr.* Despise the favourite slave?  
Not more than I have ever scorn'd myself.

*Sar.* Scorn'd! what, to be the envy of your sex,  
And lord it o'er the heart of the world's lord?

*Myr.* Were you the lord of twice ten thousand worlds —  
As you are like to lose the one you sway'd —  
I did abase myself as much in being  
Your paramour, as though you were a peasant —  
Nay, more, if that the peasant were a Greek.

*Sar.* You talk it well ——

*Myr.* And truly.

*Sar.* In the hour

Of man's adversity all things grow daring  
Against the falling; but as I am not  
Quite fall'n, nor now disposed to bear reproaches,  
Perhaps because I merit them too often,  
Let us then part while peace is still between us.

*Myr.* Part!

*Sar.* Have not all past human beings parted,  
And must not all the present one day part?

*Myr.* Why?

*Sar.* For your safety, which I will have look'd to,  
With a strong escort to your native land;  
And such gifts, as, if you had not been all  
A queen, shall make your dowry worth a kingdom.

*Myr.* I pray you talk not thus.

*Sar.* The queen is gone:  
You need not shame to follow. I would fall  
Alone — I seek no partners but in pleasure.

*Myr.* And I no pleasure but in parting not.  
You shall not force me from you.

*Sar.* Think well of it —  
It soon may be too late.

*Myr.* So let it be ;  
For then you cannot separate me from you.

*Sar.* And will not ; but I thought you wish'd it.

*Myr.* I !

*Sar.* You spoke of your abasement.

*Myr.* And I feel it  
Deeply — more deeply than all things but love.

*Sar.* Then fly from it.

*Myr.* 'T will not recall the past —  
'T will not restore my honour, nor my heart.

No — here I stand or fall. If that you conquer,  
I live to joy in your great triumph : should  
Your lot be different, I 'll not weep, but share it.  
You did not doubt me a few hours ago.

*Sar.* Your courage never — nor your love till now ;  
And none could make me doubt it save yourself.  
Those words —

*Myr.* Were words. I pray you, let the proofs  
Be in the past acts you were pleased to praise  
This very night, and in my further bearing,  
Beside, wherever you are borne by fate.

*Sar.* I am content : and, trusting in my cause,  
Think we may yet be victors and return  
To peace — the only victory I covet.  
To me war is no glory — conquest no  
Renown. To be forced thus to uphold my right  
Sits heavier on my heart than all the wrongs  
These men would bow me down with. Never, never  
Can I forget this night, even should I live  
To add it to the memory of others.

I thought to have made mine inoffensive rule  
An era of sweet peace 'midst bloody annals,  
A green spot amidst desert centuries,  
On which the future would turn back and smile,  
And cultivate, or sigh when it could not  
Recall Sardanapalus' golden reign.

I thought to have made my realm a paradise,  
And every moon an epoch of new pleasures.  
I took the rabble's shouts for love — the breath  
Of friends for truth — the lips of woman for  
My only guerdon — so they are, my Myrrha :

[*He kisses her.*]

Kiss me. Now let them take my realm and life !  
They shall have both, but never thee !

*Myr.* No, never !  
Man may despoil his brother man of all

That 's great or glittering — kingdoms fall — hosts yield —  
 Friends fail — slaves fly — and all betray — and, more  
 Than all, the most indebted — but a heart  
 That loves without self-love ! 'T is here — now prove it.

*Enter SALEMENES.*

*Sal.* I sought you — How ! *she* here again ?

*Sar.* Return not

*Now* to reproof : methinks your aspect speaks  
 Of higher matter than a woman's presence.

*Sal.* The only woman whom it much imports me  
 At such a moment now is safe in absence —  
 The queen 's embark'd.

*Sar.* And well ? say that much. '

*Sal.* Yes.

Her transient weakness has pass'd o'er ; at least,  
 It settled into tearless silence : her  
 Pale face and glittering eye, after a glance  
 Upon her sleeping children, were still fix'd  
 Upon the palace towers as the swift galley  
 Stole down the hurrying stream beneath the starlight ;  
 But she said nothing.

*Sar.* Would I felt no more  
 Than she has said !

*Sal.* 'T is now too late to feel !  
 Your feelings cannot cancel a sole pang :  
 To change them, my advices bring sure tidings  
 That the rebellious Medes and Chaldees, marshal'd  
 By their two leaders, are already up  
 In arms again ; and, serrying their ranks,  
 Prepare to attack : they have apparently  
 Been join'd by other satraps.

*Sar.* What ! more rebels ?  
 Let us be first, then.

*Sal.* That were hardly prudent  
 Now, though it was our first intention. If  
 By noon to-morrow we are join'd by those  
 I 've sent for by sure messengers, we shall be  
 In strength enough to venture an attack,  
 Ay, and pursuit too ; but till then, my voice  
 Is to await the onset.

*Sar.* I detest  
 That waiting ; though it seems so safe to fight  
 Behind high walls, and hurl down foes into  
 Deep fosses, or behold them sprawl on spikes

Strew'd to receive them, still I like it not —  
 My soul seems lukewarm ; but when I set on them,  
 Though they were piled on mountains, I would have  
 A pluck at them, or perish in hot blood ! —  
 Let me then charge.

*Sal.* You talk like a young soldier.

*Sar.* I am no soldier, but a man : speak not  
 Of soldiership, I loathe the word, and those  
 Who pride themselves upon it ; but direct me  
 Where I may pour upon them.

*Sal.* You must spare  
 To expose your life too hastily ; 't is not  
 Like mine or any other subject's breath :  
 The whole war turns upon it — with it ; this  
 Alone creates it, kindles, and may quench it —  
 Prolong it — end it.

*Sar.* Then let us end both !  
 'T were better thus, perhaps, than prolong either ;  
 I 'm sick of one, perchance of both.

[*A trumpet sounds without.*

*Sal.* Hark !

*Sar.* Let us  
 Reply, not listen.

*Sal.* And your wound !

*Sar.* 'T is bound —  
 'T is heal'd — I had forgotten it. Away !  
 A leech's lancet would have scratch'd me deeper ;  
 The slave that gave it might be well ashamed  
 To have struck so weakly.

*Sal.* Now, may none this hour  
 Strike with a better aim !

*Sar.* Ay, if we conquer ;  
 But if not, they will only leave to me  
 A task they might have spared their king. Upon them !

[*Trumpet sounds again.*

*Sal.* I am with you.

*Sar.* Ho, my arms ! again, my arms !

[*Exeunt.*

## ACT V.

## SCENE I.

*The same Hall in the Palace.*

MYRRHA and BALEA.

*Myr.* (at a window). The day at last has broken. What  
a night

Hath usher'd it! How beautiful in heaven!  
Though varied with a transitory storm,  
More beautiful in that variety!  
How hideous upon earth! where peace and hope,  
And love and revel, in an hour were trampled  
By human passions to a human chaos,  
Not yet resolved to separate elements —  
'T is warring still! And can the sun so rise,  
So bright, so rolling back the clouds into  
Vapours more lovely than the unclouded sky,  
With golden pinnacles, and snowy mountains,  
And billows purpler than the ocean's, making  
In heaven a glorious mockery of the earth,  
So like we almost deem it permanent;  
So fleeting, we can scarcely call it aught  
Beyond a vision, 't is so transiently  
Scatter'd along the eternal vault: and yet  
It dwells upon the soul, and soothes the soul,  
And blends itself into the soul, until  
Sunrise and sunset form the haunted epoch  
Of sorrow and of love; which they who mark not,  
Know not the realms where those twin genii  
(Who chasten and who purify our hearts,  
So that we would not change their sweet rebukes  
For all the boisterous joys that ever shook  
The air with clamour) build the palaces  
Where their fond votaries repose and breathe  
Briefly; — but in that brief cool calm inhale  
Enough of heaven to enable them to bear  
The rest of common, heavy, human hours,  
And dream them through in placid sufferance;  
Though seemingly employ'd like all the rest  
Of toiling breathers in allotted tasks

Of pain or pleasure, *two* names for *one* feeling,  
Which our internal, restless agony  
Would vary in the sound, although the sense  
Escapes our highest efforts to be happy.

*Bal.* You muse right calmly : and can you so watch  
The sunrise which may be our last ?

*Myr.* It is  
Therefore that I so watch it, and reproach  
Those eyes, which never may behold it more,  
For having look'd upon it oft, too oft,  
Without reverence and the rapture due  
To that which keeps all earth from being as fragile  
As I am in this form. Come, look upon it,  
The Chaldee's god, which, when I gaze upon,  
I grow almost a convert to your Baal.

*Bal.* As now he reigns in heaven, so once on earth  
He sway'd.

*Myr.* He sways it now far more, then ; never  
Had earthly monarch half the peace and glory  
Which centres in a single ray of his.

*Bal.* Surely he is a god !

*Myr.* So we Greeks deem too ;  
And yet I sometimes think that gorgeous orb  
Must rather be the abode of gods than one  
Of the immortal sovereigns. Now he breaks  
Through all the clouds, and fills my eyes with light  
That shuts the world out. I can look no more.

*Bal.* Hark ! heard you not a sound ?

*Myr.* No, 't was mere fancy ;  
They battle it beyond the wall, and not  
As in late midnight conflict in the very  
Chambers : the palace has become a fortress  
Since that insidious hour ; and here, within  
The very centre, girded by vast courts  
And regal halls of pyramid proportions,  
Which must be carried one by one before  
They penetrate to where they then arrived,  
We are as much shut in even from the sound  
Of peril as from glory.

*Bal.* But they reach'd  
Thus far before.

*Myr.* Yes, by surprise, and were  
Beat back by valour : now at once we have  
Courage and vigilance to guard us.

*Bal.* May they  
Prosper !

*Myr.* That is the prayer of many, and  
The dread of more : it is an anxious hour ;  
I strive to keep it from my thoughts. Alas !  
How vainly !

*Bal.* It is said the king's demeanour  
In the late action scarcely more appall'd  
The rebels than astonish'd his true subjects.

*Myr.* 'T is easy to astonish or appal  
The vulgar mass which moulds a horde of slaves ;  
But he did bravely.

*Bal.* Slew he not Beleses ?  
I heard the soldiers say he struck him down.

*Myr.* The wretch was overthrown, but rescued to  
Triumph, perhaps, o'er one who vanquish'd him  
In fight, as he had spared him in his peril ;  
And by that heedless pity risk'd a crown.

*Bal.* Hark !

*Myr.* You are right ; some steps approach, but slowly.

*Enter Soldiers, bearing in SALEMENES wounded, with a broken Javelin in his Side ; they seat him upon one of the Couches which furnish the Apartment.*

*Myr.* Oh, Jove !

*Bal.* Then all is over.

*Sal.* That is false.

Hew down the slave who says so, if a soldier.

*Myr.* Spare him — he 's none : a mere court butterfly,  
That flutters in the pageant of a monarch.

*Sal.* Let him live on, then.

*Myr.* So wilt thou, I trust.

*Sal.* I fain would live this hour out, and the event,  
But doubt it. Wherefore did ye bear me here ?

*Sol.* By the king's order. When the javelin struck you,  
You fell and fainted : 't was his strict command  
To bear you to this hall.

*Sal.* 'T was not ill done :  
For seeming slain in that cold dizzy trance,  
The sight might shake our soldiers — but — 't is vain,  
I feel it ebbing !

*Myr.* Let me see the wound ;  
I am not quite skillless : in my native land  
'T is part of our instruction. War being constant,  
We are nerved to look on such things.

*Sol.* Best extract  
The javelin.

*Myr.* Hold! no, no, it cannot be.

*Sal.* I am sped, then!

*Myr.* With the blood that fast must follow  
The extracted weapon, I do fear thy life.

*Sal.* And I *not* death. Where was the king when you  
Convey'd me from the spot where I was stricken?

*Sol.* Upon the same ground, and encouraging  
With voice and gesture the dispirited troops  
Who had seen you fall, and falter'd back.

*Sal.* Whom heard ye  
Named next to the command?

*Sol.* I did not hear.

*Sal.* Fly, then, and tell him, 't was my last request  
That Zames take my post until the junction,  
So hoped for, yet delay'd, of Ofratanes,  
Satrap of Susa. Leave me here: our troops  
Are not so numerous as to spare your absence.

*Sol.* But prince —

*Sal.* Hence, I say! Here 's a courtier and  
A woman, the best chamber company.  
As you would not permit me to expire  
Upon the field, I 'll have no idle soldiers  
About my sick couch. Hence! and do my bidding!

[*Exeunt the Soldiers.*]

*Myr.* Gallant and glorious spirit! must the earth  
So soon resign thee?

*Sal.* Gentle Myrrha, 't is  
The end I would have chosen, had I saved  
The monarch or the monarchy by this;  
As 't is, I have not outlived them.

*Myr.* You wax paler.

*Sal.* Your hand; this broken weapon but prolongs  
My pangs, without sustaining life enough  
To make me useful: I would draw it forth  
And my life with it, could I but hear how  
The fight goes.

*Enter SARDANAPALUS and Soldiers.*

*Sar.* My best brother!

*Sal.* And the battle  
Is lost?

*Sar.* (*despondingly*). You see me here.

*Sal.* I 'd rather see you *thus!*

[*He draws out the weapon from the wound, and dies.*]

*Sar.* And *thus* I will be seen; unless the succour,  
The last frail reed of our beleaguer'd hopes,

Arrive with Ofratanes.

*Myr.* Did you not  
Receive a token from your dying brother,  
Appointing Zames chief?

*Sar.* I did.

*Myr.* Where 's Zames?

*Sar.* Dead.

*Myr.* And Altada?

*Sar.* Dying.

*Myr.* Pania? Sfero?

*Sar.* Pania yet lives; but Sfero's fled or captive.

I am alone.

*Myr.* And is all lost?

*Sar.* Our walls,

Though thinly mann'd, may still hold out against

Their present force, or aught save treachery:

But i' the field —

*Myr.* I thought 't was the intent  
Of Salemenes not to risk a sally  
Till ye were strengthen'd by the expected succours.

*Sar.* I over-ruled him.

*Myr.* Well, the fault 's a brave one.

*Sar.* But fatal. Oh, my brother! I would give  
These realms, of which thou wert the ornament,  
The sword and shield, the sole-redeeming honour,  
To call back — But I will not weep for thee;  
Thou shalt be mourn'd for as thou wouldst be mourn'd.  
It grieves me most that thou couldst quit this life  
Believing that I could survive what thou  
Hast died for — our long royalty of race.  
If I redeem it, I will give thee blood  
Of thousands, tears of millions, for atonement  
(The tears of all the good are thine already).  
If not, we meet again soon, — if the spirit  
Within us lives beyond: — thou readest mine,  
And dost me justice now. Let me once clasp  
That yet warm hand, and fold that throbbless heart  
[*Embraces the body.*]

To this which beats so bitterly. Now, bear  
The body hence.

*Soldier.* Where?

*Sar.* To my proper chamber.

Place it beneath my canopy, as though  
The king lay there: when this is done, we will  
Speak further of the rites due to such ashes.

[*Exeunt Soldiers with the body of SALEMENES.*]

*Enter PANIA.*

*Sar.* Well, Pania! have you placed the guards, and issued

The orders fix'd on?

*Pan.* Sire, I have obey'd.

*Sar.* And do the soldiers keep their hearts up?

*Pan.* Sire?

*Sar.* I 'm answer'd! When a king asks twice, and has A question as an answer to *his* question, It is a portent. Why! they are dishearten'd?

*Pan.* The death of Salemenés, and the shouts Of the exulting rebels on his fall, Have made them ——

*Sar.* *Rage* — not droop — it should have been. We 'll find the means to rouse them.

*Pan.* Such a loss Might sadden even a victory.

*Sar.* Alas! Who can so feel it as I feel? but yet, Though coop'd within these walls, they are strong, and we Have those without will break their way through hosts, To make their sovereign's dwelling what it was — A palace; not a prison, nor a fortress.

*Enter an Officer, hastily.*

*Sar.* Thy face seems ominous. Speak!

*Offi.* I dare not.

*Sar.* Dare not?

While millions dare revolt with sword in hand! That's strange. I pray thee break that loyal silence Which loathes to shock its sovereign; we can hear Worse than thou hast to tell.

*Pan.* Proceed, thou hearest.

*Offi.* The wall which skirted near the river's brink Is thrown down by the sudden inundation Of the Euphrates, which now rolling, swoln From the enormous mountains where it rises, By the late rains of that tempestuous region, O'erfloods its banks, and hath destroy'd the bulwark.

*Pan.* That's a black augury! it has been said For ages, "That the city ne'er should yield To man, until the river grew its foe."

*Sar.* I can forgive the omen, not the ravage.

How much is swept down of the wall ?

*Offi.* About  
Some twenty stadii.

*Sar.* And all this is left  
Pervious to the assailants ?

*Offi.* For the present  
The river's fury must impede the assault ;  
But when he shrinks into his wonted channel,  
And may be cross'd by the accustom'd barks,  
The palace is their own.

*Sar.* That shall be never.  
Though men, and gods, and elements, and omens,  
Have risen up 'gainst one who ne'er provoked them,  
My father's house shall never be a cave  
For wolves to horde and howl in.

*Pan.* With your sanction,  
I will proceed to the spot, and take such measures  
For the assurance of the vacant space  
As time and means permit.

*Sar.* About it straight,  
And bring me back, as speedily as full  
And fair investigation may permit,  
Report of the true state of this irruption  
Of waters. [*Exeunt PANIA and the Officer*]

*Myr.* Thus the very waves rise up  
Against you.

*Sar.* They are not my subjects, girl,  
And may be pardon'd, since they can't be punish'd.

*Myr.* I joy to see this portent shakes you not.

*Sar.* I am past the fear of portents : they can tell me  
Nothing I have not told myself since midnight :  
Despair anticipates such things.

*Myr.* Despair !

*Sar.* No ; not despair precisely. When we know  
All that can come, and how to meet it, our  
Resolves, if firm, may merit a more noble  
Word than this is to give it utterance.  
But what are words to us ? we have well nigh done  
With them and all things.

*Myr.* Save *one deed* — the last  
And greatest to all mortals ; crowning act  
Of all that was — or is — or is to be —  
The only thing common to all mankind,  
So different in their births, tongues, sexes, natures,  
Hues, features, climes, times, feelings, intellects,  
Without one point of union save in this,

To which we tend, for which we 're born, and thread  
The labyrinth of mystery, call'd life.

*Sar.* Our clew being well nigh wound out, let 's be cheerful.

They who have nothing more to fear may well  
Indulge a smile at that which once appall'd ;  
As children at discover'd bugbears.

*Re-enter PANIA.*

*Pan.* 'T is

As was reported : I have order'd there  
A double guard, withdrawing from the wall  
Where it was strongest the required addition  
To watch the breach occasion'd by the waters.

*Sar.* You have done your duty faithfully, and as  
My worthy Pania ! further ties between us  
Draw near a close. I pray you take this key :

[ *Gives a key.* ]

It opens to a secret chamber, placed  
Behind the couch in my own chamber. (Now  
Press'd by a nobler weight than e'er it bore —  
Though a long line of sovereigns have lain down  
Along its golden frame — as bearing for  
A time what late was Salemenes.) Search  
The secret covert to which this will lead you ;  
'T is full of treasure ; take it for yourself  
And your companions : there 's enough to load ye,  
Though ye be many. Let the slaves be freed, too ;  
And all the inmates of the palace, of  
Whatever sex, now quit it in an hour  
Thence launch the regal barks, once form'd for pleasure,  
And now to serve for safety, and embark.  
The river 's broad and swoln, and uncommanded  
(More potent than a king) by these besiegers.  
Fly ! and be happy !

*Pan.* Under your protection !

So you accompany your faithful guard.

*Sar.* No, Pania ! that must not be ; get thee hence,  
And leave me to my fate.

*Pan.* 'T is the first time

I ever disobey'd : but now —

*Sar.* So all men

Dare heard me now, and Insolence within  
Apes Treason from without. Question no further ;  
'T is my command, my last command. Wilt thou  
Oppose it ? *thou !*

*Pan.* But yet — not yet.

*Sar.* Well, then,  
Swear that you will obey when I shall give  
The signal.

*Pan.* With a heavy but true heart,  
I promise.

*Sar.* 'T is enough. Now order here  
Faggots, pine-nuts, and wither'd leaves, and such  
Things as catch fire and blaze with one sole spark ;  
Bring cedar, too, and precious drugs, and spices  
And mighty planks, to nourish a tall pile ;  
Bring frankincense and myrrh, too, for it is  
For a great sacrifice I build the pyre ;  
And heap them round yon throne.

*Pan.* My lord !

*Sar.* I have said it,  
And you have sworn.

*Pan.* And could keep my faith  
Without a vow. [Exit PANIA.

*Myr.* What mean you ?

*Sar.* You shall know  
Anon — what the whole earth shall ne'er forget.

*PANIA, returning with a Herald.*

*Pan.* My king, in going forth upon my duty,  
This herald has been brought before me, craving  
An audience.

*Sar.* Let him speak.

*Her.* The King Arbaces —

*Sar.* What, crown'd already ? — But, proceed.

*Her.* Beleses,

The anointed high-priest —

*Sar.* Of what god or demon ?

With new kings rise new altars. But, proceed ;  
You are sent to prate your master's will, and not  
Reply to mine.

*Her.* And Satrap Ofratanes —

*Sar.* Why, he is ours.

*Her.* (showing a ring.) Be sure that he is now  
In the camp of the conquerors ; behold  
His signet ring.

*Sar.* 'T is his. A worthy triad !  
Poor Salemenes ! thou hast died in time  
To see one treachery the less : this man  
Was thy true friend and my most trusted subject.

Proceed.

*Her.* They offer thee thy life, and freedom  
Of choice to single out a residence  
In any of the further provinces,  
Guarded and watch'd, but not confined in person,  
Where thou shalt pass thy days in peace ; but on  
Condition that the three young princes are  
Given up as hostages.

*Sar.* (*Ironically*). The generous victors !

*Her.* I wait the answer.

*Sar.* Answer, slave ! How long  
Have slaves decided on the doom of kings ?

*Her.* Since they were free.

*Sar.* Mouthpiece of mutiny !  
Thou at the least shalt learn the penalty  
Of treason, though its proxy only. Pania !  
Let his head be thrown from our walls within  
The rebels' lines, his carcass down the river.  
Away with him ! [*PANIA and the Guards seizing him.*]

*Pan.* I never yet obey'd  
Your orders with more pleasure than the present.  
Hence with him, soldiers ! do not soil this hall  
Of royalty with treasonable gore ;  
Put him to rest without.

*Her.* A single word :  
My office, king, is sacred.

*Sar.* And what 's *mine* ?  
That thou shouldst come and dare to ask of me  
To lay it down ?

*Her.* I but obey'd my orders,  
At the same peril if refused, as now  
Incurr'd by my obedience.

*Sar.* So there are  
New monarchs of an hour's growth as despotic  
As sovereigns swathed in purple, and enthroned  
From birth to manhood !

*Her.* My life waits your breath.  
Yours (I speak humbly) — but it may be — yours  
May also be in danger scarce less imminent :  
Would it then suit the last hours of a line  
Such as is that of Nimrod, to destroy  
A peaceful herald, unarm'd, in his office ;  
And violate not only all that man  
Holds sacred between man and man — but that  
More holy tie which links us with the gods ?

*Sar.* He 's right. — Let him go free. — My life's last act

Shall not be one of wrath. Here, fellow, take  
   [*Gives him a golden cup from a table near.*]

This golden goblet, let it hold your wine,  
 And think of *me*; or melt it into ingots,  
 And think of nothing but their weight and value.

*Her.* I thank you doubly for my life, and this  
 Most gorgeous gift, which renders it more precious.  
 But must I bear no answer?

*Sar.* Yes, — I ask  
 An hour's truce to consider.

*Her.* But an hour's?

*Sar.* An hour's: if at the expiration of  
 That time your masters hear no further from me,  
 They are to deem that I reject their terms,  
 And act befittingly.

*Her.* I shall not fail  
 To be a faithful legate of your pleasure.

*Sar.* And hark! a word more.

*Her.* I shall not forget it,  
 Whate'er it be.

*Sar.* Commend me to Beleses;  
 And tell him, ere a year expire, I summon  
 Him hence to meet me.

*Her.* Where?

*Sar.* At Babylon.  
 At least from thence he will depart to meet me.

*Her.* I shall obey you to the letter. [Exit Herald.]

*Sar.* Pania! —

Now, my good Pania! — quick — with what I order'd.

*Pan.* My lord, — the soldiers are already charged.  
 And, see! they enter.

[*Soldiers enter, and form a Pile about the Throne, &c.*]

*Sar.* Higher, my good soldiers,  
 And thicker yet; and see that the foundation  
 Be such as will not speedily exhaust  
 Its own too subtle flame; nor yet be quench'd  
 With aught officious aid would bring to quell it.  
 Let the throne form the *core* of it; I would not  
 Leave that, save fraught with fire unquenchable,  
 To the new comers. Frame the whole as if  
 'T were to enkindle the strong tower of our  
 Inveterate enemies. Now it bears an aspect!  
 How say you, Pania, will this pile suffice  
 For a king's obsequies?

*Pan.* Ay, for a kingdom's.  
 I understand you, now.

Sar. And blame me?

Pan. No —

Let me but fire the pile, and share it with you.

Myr. That duty 's mine.

Pan. A woman's!

Myr. 'T is the soldier's

Part to die for his sovereign, and why not

The woman's with her lover?

Pan. 'T is most strange!

Myr. But not so rare, my Pania, as thou think'st it.  
In the mean time, live thou. — Farewell! the pile  
Is ready.

Pan. I should shame to leave my sovereign  
With but a single female to partake  
His death.

Sar. Too many far have heralded  
Me to the dust, already. Get thee hence;  
Enrich thee.

Pan. And live wretched!

Sar. Think upon

Thy vow: — 't is sacred and irrevocable.

Pan. Since it is so, farewell.

Sar. Search well my chamber,

Feel no remorse at bearing off the gold;  
Remember, what you leave you leave the slaves  
Who slew me: and when you have borne away  
All safe off to your boats, blow one long blast  
Upon the trumpet as you quit the palace.  
The river's brink is too remote, its stream  
Too loud at present to permit the echo  
To reach distinctly from its banks. Then fly, —  
And as you sail, turn back; but still keep on  
Your way along the Euphrates: if you reach  
The land of Paphlagonia, where the queen  
Is safe with my three sons in Cotta's court,  
Say, what you *saw* at parting, and request  
That she remember what I *said* at one  
Parting more mournful still.

Pan. That royal hand!

Let me then once more press it to my lips;  
And these poor soldiers who throng round you, and  
Would fain die with you!

[*The Soldiers and PANIA throng round him, kissing  
his hand and the hem of his robe.*]

Sar. My best! my last friends!

Let's not unman each other: part at once:

All farewells should be sudden, when for ever,  
 Else they make an eternity of moments,  
 And clog the last sad sands of life with tears.  
 Hence, and be happy : trust me, I am not  
*Now* to be pitied ; or far more for what  
 Is past than present ; — for the future, 't is  
 In the hands of the deities, if such  
 There be : I shall know soon. Farewell — Farewell.

[*Exeunt PANIA and Soldiers.*]

*Myr.* These men were honest : it is comfort still  
 That our last looks should be on loving faces.

*Sar.* And lovely ones, my beautiful ! — but hear me !  
 If at this moment, for we now are on  
 The brink, — thou feel'st an inward shrinking from  
 This leap through flame into the future, say it :  
 I shall not love thee less ; nay, perhaps more,  
 For yielding to thy nature : and there 's time  
 Yet for thee to escape hence.

*Myr.* Shall I light  
 One of the torches which lie heap'd beneath  
 The ever-burning lamp that burns without,  
 Before Baal's shrine, in the adjoining hall ?

*Sar.* Do so. Is that thy answer ?

*Myr.*

Thou shalt see.

[*Exit MYRRHA.*]

*Sar. (solus).* She 's firm. My fathers ! whom I will re-  
 join,

It may be, purified by death from some  
 Of the gross stains of too material being,  
 I would not leave your ancient first abode  
 To the defilement of usurping bondmen ;  
 If I have not kept your inheritance  
 As ye bequeath'd it, this bright part of it,  
 Your treasure, your abode, your sacred relics  
 Of arms, and records, monuments, and spoils,  
 In which *they* would have revell'd, I bear with me  
 To you in that absorbing element,  
 Which most personifies the soul as leaving  
 The least of matter unconsumed before  
 Its fiery workings : — and the light of this  
 Most royal of funereal pyres shall be  
 Not a mere pillar form'd of cloud and flame,  
 A beacon in the horizon for a day,  
 And then a mount of ashes, but a light  
 To lesson ages, rebel nations, and  
 Voluptuous princes. Time shall quench full many

A people's records, and a hero's acts ;  
Sweep empire after empire, like this first  
Of empires, into nothing ; but even then  
Shall spare this deed of mine, and hold it up  
A problem few dare imitate, and none  
Despise — but, it may be, avoid the life  
Which led to such a consummation.

MYRRHA returns with a lighted Torch in one Hand, and a  
Cup in the other.

Myr. Lo!

I 've lit the lamp which lights us to the stars.

Sar. And the cup ?

Myr. 'T is my country's custom to  
Make a libation to the gods.

Sar. And mine  
To make libations amongst men. I 've not  
Forgot the custom ; and although alone,  
Will drain one draught in memory of many  
A joyous banquet past.

[SARDANAPALUS takes the cup, and after drinking  
and tinkling the reversed cup, as a drop falls,  
exclaims —

And this libation

Is for the excellent Beleses.

Myr. Why

Dwells thy mind rather upon that man's name  
Than on his mate's in villany ?

Sar. The other

Is a mere soldier, a mere tool, a kind  
Of human sword in a friend's hand ; the other  
Is master-mover of his warlike puppet :  
But I dismiss them from my mind. — Yet pause,  
My Myrrha ! dost thou truly follow me,  
Freely and fearlessly ?

Myr. And dost thou think

A Greek girl dare not do for love, that which  
An Indian widow braves for custom ?

Sar. Then

We but await the signal :

Myr. It is long

In sounding.

Sar. Now, farewell ; one last embrace.

Myr. Embrace, but *nor* the last ; there is one more.

Sar. True, the commingling fire will mix our ashes.

*Myr.* And pure as is my love to thee, shall they,  
Purged from the dross of earth, and earthly passion,  
Mix pale with thine. A single thought yet irks me.

*Sar.* Say it.

*Myr.* It is that no kind hand will gather  
The dust of both into one urn.

*Sar.* The better :  
Rather let them be borne abroad upon  
The winds of heaven, and scatter'd into air,  
Than be polluted more by human hands  
Of slaves and traitors. In this blazing palace,  
And its enormous walls of reeking ruin,  
We leave a nobler monument than Egypt  
Hath piled in her brick mountains, o'er dead kings,  
Or *kine*, for none know whether those proud piles  
Be for their monarch, or their ox-god Apis :  
So much for monuments that have forgotten  
Their very record !

*Myr.* Then farewell, thou earth !  
And loveliest spot of earth ! farewell, Ionia !  
Be thou still free and beautiful, and far  
Aloof from desolation ! My last prayer  
Was for thee, my last thoughts, save *one*, were of thee !

*Sar.* And that ?

*Myr.* Is yours.

[*The trumpet of PANIA sounds without.*

*Sar.* Hark !

*Myr.* Now !

*Sar.* Adieu, Assyria !

I loved thee well, my own, my fathers' land,  
And better as my country than my kingdom.  
I sated thee with peace and joys ; and this  
Is my reward ! and now I owe thee nothing,  
Not even a grave. [*He mounts the pile.*

Now, Myrrha !

*Myr.* Art thou ready ?

*Sar.* As the torch in thy grasp. [*MYRRHA fires the pile.*

*Myr.* 'T is fired ! I come.

[*As MYRRHA springs forward to throw herself into  
the flames, the Curtain falls.*



THE TWO FOSCARI,  
AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY.

---

The *father* softens, but the *governor's* resolved.—CRITIC.

---



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

---

MEN.

FRANCIS FOSCARI, *Doge of Venice.*  
JACOPO FOSCARI, *Son of the Doge.*  
JAMES LOREDANO, *a Patrician.*  
MARCO MEMMO, *a Chief of the Forty.*  
BARBARIGO, *a Senator.*  
*Other Senators, The Council of Ten, Guards,*  
*Attendants, &c. &c.*

WOMAN.

MARINA, *Wife of young Foscari.*

SCENE — the Ducal Palace, Venice.



THE  
TWO FOSCARI.

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ACT I.

SCENE I.

*A Hall in the Ducal Palace.*

*Enter LOREDANO and BARBARIGO, meeting.*

*Lor.* WHERE is the prisoner?

*Bar.* Reposing from

The Question.

*Lor.* The hour 's past — fix'd yesterday  
For the resumption of his trial. — Let us  
Rejoin our colleagues in the council, and  
Urge his recall.

*Bar.* Nay, let him profit by  
A few brief minutes for his tortured limbs;  
He was o'erwrought by the Question yesterday,  
And may die under it if now repeated.

*Lor.* Well?

*Bar.* I yield not to you in love of justice,  
Or hate of the ambitious Foscari,  
Father and son, and all their noxious race;  
But the poor wretch has suffer'd beyond nature's  
Most stoical endurance.

*Lor.* Without owning  
His crime?

*Bar.* Perhaps without committing any.  
But he avow'd the letter to the Duke  
Of Milan, and his sufferings half atone for  
Such weakness.

*Lor.* We shall see

*Bar.* You, Loredano,  
Pursue hereditary hate too far.

*Lor.* How far?

*Bar.* To extermination.

*Lor.* When they are  
Extinct, you may say this. — Let 's in to council.

*Bar.* Yet pause — the number of our colleagues is not  
Complete yet ; two are wanting ere we can  
Proceed.

*Lor.* And the chief judge, the Doge ?

*Bar.* No — he,  
With more than Roman fortitude, is ever  
First at the board in this unhappy process  
Against his last and only son.

*Lor.* True — true —  
His last.

*Bar.* Will nothing move you ?

*Lor.* Feels he, think you ?

*Bar.* He shows it not.

*Lor.* I have mark'd *that* — the wretch !

*Bar.* But yesterday, I hear, on his return  
To the ducal chambers, as he pass'd the threshold  
The old man fainted.

*Lor.* It begins to work, then.

*Bar.* The work is half your own.

*Lor.* And should be *all* mine —  
My father and my uncle are no more.

*Bar.* I have read their epitaph, which says they died  
By poison.

*Lor.* When the Doge declared that he  
Should never deem himself a sovereign till  
The death of Peter Loredano, both  
The brothers sicken'd shortly : — he *is* sovereign.

*Bar.* A wretched one.

*Lor.* What should they be who make  
Orphans ?

*Bar.* But *did* the Doge make you so ?

*Lor.* Yes.

*Bar.* What solid proofs ?

*Lor.* When princes set themselves  
To work in secret, proofs and process are  
Alike made difficult ; but I have such  
Of the first, as shall make the second needless.

*Bar.* But you will move by law ?

*Lor.* By all the laws  
Which he would leave us.

*Bar.* They are such in this  
Our state as render retribution easier  
Than 'mongst remoter nations. Is it true

That you have written in your books of commerce,  
 (The wealthy practice of our highest nobles)  
 "Doge Foscari, my debtor for the deaths  
 Of Marco and Pietro Loredano,  
 My sire and uncle?"

*Lor.* It is written thus.

*Bar.* And will you leave it uneras'd ?

*Lor.* Till balanced.

*Bar.* And how ?

[*Two Senators pass over the stage, as in their way to "the Hall of the Council of Ten."*]

*Lor.* You see the number is complete.

Follow me. [*Exit LOREDANO.*]

*Bar. (solus).* Follow thee ! I have follow'd long  
 Thy path of desolation, as the wave  
 Sweeps after that before it, alike whelming  
 The wreck that creaks to the wild winds, and wretch  
 Who shrieks within its riven ribs, as gush  
 The waters through them ; but this son and sire  
 Might move the elements to pause, and yet  
 Must I on hardily like them — Oh ! would  
 I could as blindly and remorselessly ! —  
 Lo, where he comes ! — Be still, my heart ! they are  
 Thy foes, must be thy victims : wilt thou beat  
 For those who almost broke thee ?

*Enter Guards, with young FOSCARI as prisoner, &c.*

*Guard.* Let him rest.

Signor, take time.

*Jac. Fos.* I thank thee, friend, I 'm feeble ;

But thou may'st stand reproved.

*Guard.* I 'll stand the hazard.

*Jac. Fos.* That 's kind : — I meet some pity, but no  
 mercy :

This is the first.

*Guard.* And might be last, did they

Who rule behold us.

*Bar. (advancing to the Guard.)* There is one who does :  
 Yet fear not ; I will neither be thy judge  
 Nor thy accuser ; though the hour is past,  
 Wait their last summons — I am of "the Ten,"  
 And waiting for that summons, sanction you  
 Even by my presence : when the last call sounds,  
 We 'll in together. — Look well to the prisoner !

*Jac. Fos.* What voice is that ? — 'T is Barbarigo's ! Ah !

Our house's foe, and one of my few judges.

*Bar.* To balance such a foe, if such there be,  
Thy father sits amongst thy judges.

*Jac. Fos.* True,  
He judges.

*Bar.* Then deem not the laws too harsh  
Which yield so much indulgence to a sire  
As to allow his voice in such high matter  
As the state's safety —

*Jac. Fos.* And his son's. I'm faint ;  
Let me approach, I pray you, for a breath  
Of air, yon window which o'erlooks the waters.

*Enter an Officer, who whispers BARBARIGO.*

*Bar. (to the Guard.)* Let him approach. I must not  
speak with him  
Further than thus : I have transgress'd my duty  
In this brief parley, and must now redeem it  
Within the Council Chamber. [Exit BARBARIGO.

[Guard conducting JACOPO FOSCARI to the window.

*Guard.* There, sir, 't is  
Open — How feel you ?

*Jac. Fos.* Like a boy — Oh Venice !

*Guard.* And your limbs ?

*Jac. Fos.* Limbs ! how often have they borne me  
Bounding o'er yon blue tide, as I have skimm'd  
The gondola along in childish race,  
And, masqued as a young gondolier, amidst  
My gay competitors, noble as I,  
Raced for our pleasure, in the pride of strength ;  
While the fair populace of crowding beauties,  
Plebeian as patrician, cheer'd us on  
With dazzling smiles, and wishes audible,  
And waving kerchiefs, and applauding hands,  
Even to the goal ! — How many a time have I  
Cloven with arm still lustier, breast more daring,  
The wave all roughen'd ; with a swimmer's stroke  
Flinging the billows back from my drench'd hair,  
And laughing from my lip the audacious brine,  
Which kiss'd it like a wine-cup, rising o'er  
The waves as they arose, and prouder still  
The loftier they uplifted me ; and oft,  
In wantonness of spirit, plunging down  
Into their green and glassy gulfs, and making  
My way to shells and sea-weed, all unseen  
By those above, till they wax'd fearful ; then  
Returning with my grasp full of such tokens

As show'd that I had search'd the deep : exulting,  
 With a far-dashing stroke, and drawing deep  
 The long-suspended breath, again I spurn'd  
 The foam which broke around me, and pursued  
 My track like a sea-bird.— I was a boy then.

*Guard.* Be a man now : there never was more need  
 Of manhood's strength.

*Jac. Fos.* (*looking from the lattice*). My beautiful, my  
 own,

My only Venice — *this is breath !* Thy breeze,  
 Thine Adrian sea-breeze, how it fans my face !  
 Thy very winds feel native to my veins,  
 And cool them into calmness ! How unlike  
 The hot gales of the horrid Cyclades,  
 Which howl'd about my Candiote dungeon, and  
 Made my heart sick.

*Guard.* I see the colour comes  
 Back to your cheek : Heaven send you strength to bear  
 What more may be imposed ! — I dread to think on't.

*Jac. Fos.* They will not banish me again ? — No — no,  
 Let them wring on ; I am strong yet.

*Guard.* Confess,  
 And the rack will be spared you

*Jac. Fos.* I confess'd  
 Once — twice before : both times they exiled me.

*Guard.* And the third time will slay you.

*Jac. Fos.* Let them do so,  
 So I be buried in my birth-place : better  
 Be ashes here than aught that lives elsewhere.

*Guard.* And can you so much love the soil which hates  
 you ?

*Jac. Fos.* The soil ! — Oh no, it is the seed of the soil  
 Which persecutes me ; but my native earth  
 Will take me as a mother to her arms.  
 I ask no more than a Venetian grave,  
 A dungeon, what they will, so it be here.

*Enter an Officer.*

*Offi.* Bring in the prisoner !

*Guard.* Signor, you hear the order.

*Jac. Fos.* Ay, I am used to such a summons ; 't is  
 The third time they have tortured me : — then lend me  
 Thine arm. [*To the Guard.*

*Offi.* Take mine, sir ; 't is my duty to  
 Be nearest to your person.

*Jac. Fos.* You! — you are he  
Who yesterday presided o'er my pangs —  
Away! — I'll walk alone.

*Offi.* As you please, signor ;  
The sentence was not of my signing, but  
I dared not disobey the Council when  
They ——

*Jac. Fos.* Bade thee stretch me on their horrid engine.  
I pray thee touch me not — that is, just now ;  
The time will come they will renew that order,  
But keep off from me till 't is issued. As  
I look upon thy hands my curdling limbs  
Quiver with the anticipated wrenching,  
And the cold drops strain through my brow, as if ——  
But onward — I have borne it — I can bear it. —  
How looks my father ?

*Offi.* With his wonted aspect.

*Jac. Fos.* So does the earth, and sky, the blue of ocean,  
The brightness of our city, and her domes,  
The mirth of her Piazza, even now  
Its merry hum of nations pierces here,  
Even here, into these chambers of the unknown  
Who govern, and the unknown and the unnumber'd  
Judged and destroy'd in silence, — all things wear  
The self-same aspect, to my very sire !  
Nothing can sympathise with Foscari,  
Not even a Foscari. — Sir, I attend you.

[*Exeunt* JACOPO FOSCARI, *Officer*, &c.]

*Enter* MEMMO and another Senator.

*Mem.* He 's gone — we are too late : — think you “ the  
Ten ”

Will sit for any length of time to-day ?

*Sen.* They say the prisoner is most obdurate,  
Persisting in his first avowal ; but  
More I know not.

*Mem.* And that is much ; the secrets  
Of yon terrific chamber are as hidden  
From us, the premier nobles of the state,  
As from the people.

*Sen.* Save the wonted rumours,  
Which, like the tales of spectres — that are rife  
Near ruin'd buildings — never have been proved,  
Nor wholly disbelieved : men know as little  
Of the state's real acts as of the grave's  
Unfathom'd mysteries.

*Mem.* But with length of time  
We gain a step in knowledge, and I look  
Forward to be one day of the decemvirs.

*Sen.* Or Doge?

*Mem.* Why, no; not if I can avoid it.

*Sen.* 'T is the first station of the state, and may  
Be lawfully desired, and lawfully  
Attain'd by noble aspirants.

*Mem.* To such  
I leave it; though born noble, my ambition  
Is limited: I'd rather be an unit  
Of an united and imperial "Ten,"  
Than shine a lonely, though a gilded cipher.—  
Whom have we here? the wife of Foscarei?

*Enter MARINA, with a female Attendant.*

*Mar.* What, no one? — I am wrong, there still are two;  
But they are senators.

*Mem.* Most noble lady,  
Command us.

*Mar.* *I command!* — Alas! my life  
Has been one long entreaty, and a vain one.

*Mem.* I understand thee, but I must not answer.

*Mar.* (*fiercely.*) 'True — none dare answer here save on  
the rack,  
Or question save those —

*Mem.* (*interrupting her.*) High-born dame! bethink  
thee

Where thou now art.

*Mar.* Where I now am! — It was  
My husband's father's palace.

*Mem.* The Duke's palace,

*Mar.* And his son's prison; — true, I have not forgot it;  
And if there were no other nearer, bitterer  
Remembrances, would thank the illustrious Memmo  
For pointing out the pleasures of the palace.

*Mem.* Be calm!

*Mar.* (*looking up towards heaven.*) I am; but oh, thou  
eternal God!

Canst thou continue so, with such a world?

*Mem.* Thy husband yet may be absolved.

*Mar.*

He is,

In heaven. I pray you, signor senator,  
Speak not of that; you are a man of office,  
So is the Doge; he has a son at stake

Now, at this moment, and I have a husband,  
Or had ; they are there within, or were at least  
An hour since, face to face, as judge and culprit :  
Will *he* condemn *him* ?

*Mem.* I trust not.

*Mar.* But if  
He does not, there are those will sentence both.

*Mem.* They can.

*Mar.* And with them power and will are one  
In wickedness : — my husband's lost !

*Mem.* Not so ;  
Justice is judge in Venice.

*Mar.* If it were so,  
There now would be no Venice. But let it  
Live on, so the good die not, till the hour  
Of nature's summons ; but " the Ten's " is quicker,  
And we must wait on 't. Ah ! a voice of wail !

[*A faint cry within.*]

*Sen.* Hark !

*Mem.* 'T was a cry of —

*Mar.* No, no ; not my husband's —  
Not Foscari's.

*Mem.* The voice was —

*Mar.* *Not his* : no.

He shriek ! No ; that should be his father's part,  
Not his — not his — he 'll die in silence.

[*A faint groan again within.*]

*Mem.*

What !

Again ?

*Mar.* *His* voice ! it seem'd so : I will not  
Believe it. Should he shrink, I cannot cease  
To love ; but — no — no — no — it must have been  
A fearful pang, which wrung a groan from him.

*Sen.* And, feeling for thy husband's wrongs, wouldst  
thou

Have him bear more than mortal pain, in silence ?

*Mar.* We all must bear our tortures. I have not  
Left barren the great house of Foscari,  
Though they sweep both the Doge and son from life :  
I have endured as much in giving life  
To those who will succeed them, as they can  
In leaving it : but mine were joyful pangs :  
And yet they wrung me till I *could* have shriek'd,  
But did not ; for my hope was to bring forth  
Heroes, and would not welcome them with tears.

*Mem.* All 's silent now.

*Mar.* Perhaps all's over ; but  
I will not deem it : he hath nerved himself,  
And now defies them.

*Enter an Officer hastily.*

*Mem.* How now, friend, what seek you ?

*Offi.* A leech. The prisoner has fainted.

[*Exit Officer.*  
Lady,

*Mem.*

'T were better to retire.

*Sen.* (*offering to assist her.*) I pray thee do so.

*Mar.* Off! I will tend him.

*Mem.*

You! Remember, lady!

Ingress is given to none within those chambers,  
Except "the Ten," and their familiars.

*Mar.*

Well,

I know that none who enter there return  
As they have enter'd — many never ; but  
They shall not balk my entrance.

*Mem.*

Alas! this

Is but to expose yourself to harsh repulse,  
And worse suspense.

*Mar.*

Who shall oppose me ?

*Mem.*

They

Whose duty 't is to do so.

*Mar.*

'T is *their* duty

To trample on all human feelings, all  
Ties which bind man to man, to emulate  
The fiends who will one day requite them in  
Variety of torturing! Yet I'll pass.

*Mem.* It is impossible.

*Mar.*

That shall be tried.

Despair defies even despotism : there is  
That in my heart would make its way through hosts  
With levell'd spears ; and think you a few jailors,  
Shall put me from my path? Give me, then, way ;  
This is the Doge's palace ; I am wife  
Of the Duke's son, the *innocent* Duke's son,  
And they shall hear this!

*Mem.*

It will only serve

More to exasperate his judges.

*Mar.*

What

Are *judges* who give way to anger? they

Who do so are assassins. Give me way. [*Exit MARINA.*

*Sen.* Poor lady!

*Mem.* 'T is mere desperation : she  
Will not be admitted o'er the threshold.

*Sen.* And  
Even if she be so, cannot save her husband.  
But, see, the officer returns.

[*The Officer passes over the stage with another person.*]

*Mem.* I hardly  
Thought that "the Ten" had even this touch of pity,  
Or would permit assistance to this sufferer.

*Sen.* Pity! Is 't pity to recall to feeling  
The wretch too happy to escape to death  
By the compassionate trance, poor nature's last  
Resource against the tyranny of pain?

*Mem.* I marvel they condemn him not at once.

*Sen.* That's not their policy : they 'd have him live,  
Because he fears not death ; and banish him,  
Because all earth, except his native land,  
To him is one wide prison, and each breath  
Of foreign air he draws seems a slow poison,  
Consuming but not killing.

*Mem.* Circumstance  
Confirms his crimes, but he avows them not.

*Sen.* None, save the Letter, which he says was written,  
Address'd to Milan's duke, in the full knowledge  
That it would fall into the senate's hands,  
And thus he should be re-convey'd to Venice.

*Mem.* But as a culprit.

*Sen.* Yes, but to his country ;  
And that was all he sought, — so he avouches.

*Mem.* The accusation of the bribes was proved.

*Sen.* Not clearly, and the charge of homicide  
Has been annull'd by the death-bed confession  
Of Nicolas Erizzo, who slew the late  
Chief of "the Ten."

*Mem.* Then why not clear him?

*Sen.* That  
They ought to answer ; for it is well known  
That Almore Donato, as I said,  
Was slain by Erizzo for private vengeance.

*Mem.* There must be more in this strange process than  
The apparent crimes of the accused disclose —  
But here come two of "the Ten ;" let us retire.

[*Exeunt MEMMO and Senator.*]

*Enter* LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.

*Bar.* (*addressing* LOR.) 'That were too much : believe me, 't was not meet

The trial should go further at this moment.

*Lor.* And so the Council must break up, and Justice Pause in her full career, because a woman Breaks in on our deliberations ?

*Bar.* No,

That 's not the cause ; you saw the prisoner's state.

*Lor.* And had he not recover'd ?

*Bar.* To relapse

Upon the least renewal.

*Lor.* 'T was not tried.

*Bar.* 'Tis vain to murmur ; the majority In council were against you.

*Lor.* Thanks to you, sir, And the old ducal dotard, who combined The worthy voices which o'er-ruled my own.

*Bar.* I am a judge ; but must confess that part Of our stern duty, which prescribes the Question, And bids us sit and see its sharp infliction, Makes me wish ——

*Lor.* What ?

*Bar.* That *you* would *sometimes* feel, As I do always.

*Lor.* Go to, you 're a child, Infirm of feeling as of purpose, blown About by every breath, shook by a sigh, And melted by a tear — a precious judge For Venice ! and a worthy statesman to Be partner in my policy !

*Bar.* He shed No tears.

*Lor.* He cried out twice.

*Bar.* A saint had done so, Even with the crown of glory in his eye, At such inhuman artifice of pain As was forced on him ; but he did not cry For pity ; not a word nor groan escaped him, And those two shrieks were not in supplication, But wrung from pangs, and follow'd by no prayers.

*Lor.* He mutter'd many times between his teeth, But inarticulately.

*Bar.* That I heard not. You stood more near him.

*Lor.* I did so.

*Bar.* Methought,  
To my surprise too, you were touch'd with mercy,  
And were the first to call out for assistance  
When he was failing.

*Lor.* I believed that swoon  
His last.

*Bar.* And have I not oft heard thee name  
His and his father's death your nearest wish?

*Lor.* If he dies innocent, that is to say,  
With his guilt unavow'd, he 'll be lamented.

*Bar.* What, wouldst thou slay his memory?

*Lor.* Wouldst thou have  
His state descend to his children, as it must,  
If he die unattainted?

*Bar.* War with *them* too?

*Lor.* With all their house, till theirs or mine are nothing.

*Bar.* And the deep agony of his pale wife,  
And the repress'd convulsion of the high  
And princely brow of his old father, which  
Broke forth in a slight shuddering, though rarely,  
Or in some clammy drops, soon wiped away  
In stern serenity; these moved you not?

[*Exit* LOREDANO.]

He 's silent in his hate, as Foscari  
Was in his suffering; and the poor wretch moved me  
More by his silence than a thousand outcries  
Could have effected. 'T was a dreadful sight  
When his distracted wife broke through into  
The hall of our tribunal, and beheld  
What we could scarcely look upon, long used  
To such sights. I must think no more of this,  
Lest I forget in this compassion for  
Our foes their former injuries, and lose  
The hold of vengeance Loredano plans  
For him and me; but mine would be content  
With lesser retribution than he thirsts for,  
And I would mitigate his deeper hatred  
To milder thoughts; but for the present, Foscari  
Has a short hourly respite, granted at  
The instance of the elders of the Council,  
Moved doubtless by his wife's appearance in  
The hall, and his own sufferings.—Lo! they come:  
How feeble and forlorn! I cannot bear  
To look on them again in this extremity:  
I'll hence, and try to soften Loredano. [*Exit* BARBARIGO.]

## ACT II.

## SCENE I.

*A Hall in the DOGE's Palace.*

*The DOGE and a SENATOR.*

*Sen.* Is it your pleasure to sign the report  
Now, or postpone it till to-morrow?

*Doge.* Now;

I overlook'd it yesterday: it wants  
Merely the signature. Give me the pen —

[*The DOGE sits down and signs the paper.*]

There, signor.

*Sen.* (*looking at the paper*). You have forgot; it is not  
sign'd.

*Doge.* Not sign'd? Ah, I perceive my eyes begin  
To wax more weak with age. I did not see  
That I had dipp'd the pen without effect.

*Sen.* (*dipping the pen into the ink, and placing the paper  
before the DOGE*). Your hand, too, shakes, my lord:  
allow me, thus —

*Doge.* 'T is done, I thank you.

*Sen.* Thus the act confirm'd

By you and by "the Ten," gives peace to Venice.

*Doge.* 'T is long since she enjoy'd it: may it be  
As long ere she resume her arms!

*Sen.* 'T is almost

Thirty-four years of nearly ceaseless warfare  
With the Turk, or the powers of Italy;  
The state had need of some repose.

*Doge.* No doubt:

I found her Queen of Ocean, and I leave her  
Lady of Lombardy; it is a comfort

That I have added to her diadem  
The gems of Brescia and Ravenna; Crema

And Bergamo no less are hers; her realm  
By land has grown by thus much in my reign,  
While her sea-sway has not shrunk.

*Sen.* 'T is most true,

And merits all our country's gratitude.

*Doge.* Perhaps so.

*Sen.* Which should be made manifest.

*Doge.* I have not complain'd, sir.

*Sen.* My good lord, forgive me.

*Doge.* For what?

*Sen.* My heart bleeds for you.

*Doge.* For me, signor?

*Sen.* And for your —

*Doge.* Stop!

*Sen.* It must have way, my lord:

I have too many duties towards you

And all your house, for past and present kindness,

Not to feel deeply for your son.

*Doge.* Was this

In your commission?

*Sen.* What, my lord?

*Doge.* This prattle

Of things you know not: but the treaty's sign'd;

Return with it to them who sent you.

*Sen.* I

Obey. I had in charge, too, from the Council

That you would fix an hour for their re-union.

*Doge.* Say, when they will — now, even at this moment,  
If it so please them: I am the state's servant.

*Sen.* They would accord some time for your repose.

*Doge.* I have no repose, that is, none which shall cause  
The loss of an hour's time unto the state.

Let them meet when they will, I shall be found

Where I should be, and what I have been ever.

[*Exit* SENATOR.]

[*The* DOGE remains in silence.]

*Enter an Attendant.*

*Att.* Prince!

*Doge.* Say on.

*Att.* The illustrious lady Foscari

Requests an audience.

*Doge.* Bid her enter. Poor

Marina!

[*Exit* Attendant.]

[*The* DOGE remains in silence as before.]

*Enter* MARINA.

*Mar.* I have ventured, father, on  
Your privacy.

*Doge.* I have none from you, my child.  
Command my time, when not commanded by  
The state.

*Mar.* I wish'd to speak to you of *him*.

*Doge.* Your husband ?

*Mar.* And your son.

*Doge.* Proceed, my daughter !

*Mar.* I had obtain'd permission from the " Ten "  
To attend my husband for a limited number  
Of hours.

*Doge.* You had so.

*Mar.* 'T is revoked.

*Doge.* By whom ?

*Mar.* " The Ten. " — When we had reach'd " the Bridge  
of Sighs, "

Which I prepared to pass with Foscari,  
The gloomy guardian of that passage first  
Demurr'd : a messenger was sent back to  
" The Ten ; " but as the court no longer sate,  
And no permission had been given in writing,  
I was thrust back, with the assurance that  
Until that high tribunal re-assembled  
The dungeon walls must still divide us.

*Doge.* True,

The form has been omitted in the haste  
With which the court adjourn'd ; and till it meets,  
'T is dubious.

*Mar.* Till it meets ! and when it meets,  
They 'll torture him again ; and he and *I*  
Must purchase by renewal of the rack  
The interview of husband and of wife,  
The holiest tie beneath the heavens ! — Oh God !  
Dost thou see this ?

*Doge.* Child — child ——

*Mar.* (*abruptly*). Call me not " child ! "

You soon will have no children — you deserve none —  
You, who can talk thus calmly of a son  
In circumstances which would call forth tears  
Of blood from Spartans ! Though these did not weep  
Their boys who died in battle, it is written  
That they beheld them perish piecemeal, nor  
Stretch'd forth a hand to save them ?

*Doge.* You behold me :

I cannot weep — I would I could ; but if  
Each white hair on this head were a young life,  
This ducal cap the diadem of earth,

This ducal ring with which I wed the waves  
A talisman to still them — I'd give all  
For him.

*Mar.* With less he surely might be saved.

*Doge.* That answer only shows you know not Venice.  
Alas! how should you? she knows not herself,  
In all her mystery. Hear me — they who aim  
At Foscari, aim no less at his father;  
The sire's destruction would not save the son;  
They work by different means to the same end,  
And that is — but they have not conquer'd yet.

*Mar.* But they have crush'd.

*Doge.* Nor crush'd as yet — I live.

*Mar.* And your son, — how long will he live?

*Doge.* I trust,

For all that yet is past, as many years  
And happier than his father. The rash boy,  
With womanish impatience to return,  
Hath ruin'd all by that detected letter:  
A high crime, which I neither can deny  
Nor palliate, as parent or as Duke:  
Had he but borne a little, little longer  
His Candiote exile, I had hopes — he has quench'd  
them —

He must return.

*Mar.* To exile?

*Doge.* I have said it.

*Mar.* And can I not go with him?

*Doge.* You well know

This prayer of yours was twice denied before  
By the assembled "Ten," and hardly now  
Will be accorded to a third request,  
Since aggravated errors on the part  
Of our lord renders them still more austere.

*Mar.* Austere? Atrocious! The old human fiends,  
With one foot in the grave, with dim eyes, strange  
To tears save drops of dotage, with long white  
And scanty hairs, and shaking hands, and heads  
As palsied as their hearts are hard, they council,  
Cabal, and put men's lives out, as if life  
Were no more than the feelings long extinguish'd  
In their accursed bosoms.

*Doge.* You know not —

*Mar.* I do — I do — and so should you, methinks —  
That these are demons: could it be else that  
Men, who have been of women born and suckled —

Who have loved, or talk'd at least of love — have given  
 Their bands in sacred vows — have danced their babes  
 Upon their knees, perhaps have mourn'd above them —  
 In pain, in peril, or in death — who are,  
 Or were at least in seeming, human, could  
 Do as they have done by yours, and you yourself  
 You, who abet them ?

*Doge.* I forgive this, for  
 You know not what you say.

*Mar.* You know it well,  
 And feel it nothing.

*Doge.* I have borne so much,  
 That words have ceased to shake me.

*Mar.* Oh, no doubt !  
 You have seen your son's blood flow, and your flesh shook  
 not :

And after that, what are a woman's words ?  
 No more than woman's tears, that they should shake you.

*Doge.* Woman, this clamorous grief of thine, I tell thee,  
 Is no more in the balance weigh'd with that  
 Which — but I pity thee, my poor Marina !

*Mar.* Pity my husband, or I cast it from me ;  
 Pity thy son ! *Thou* pity ! — 't is a word  
 Strange to thy heart — how came it on thy lips ?

*Doge.* I must bear these reproaches, though they wrong  
 me.

Couldst thou but read —

*Mar.* 'T is not upon thy brow,  
 Nor in thine eyes, nor in thine acts, — where then  
 Should I behold this sympathy ? or shall ?

*Doge.* (*pointing downwards*). There !

*Mar.* In the earth ?

*Doge.* To which I am tending : when  
 It lies upon this heart, far lightlier, though  
 Loaded with marble, than the thoughts which press it  
 Now, you will know me better.

*Mar.* Are you, then,  
 Indeed, thus to be pitied ?

*Doge.* Pitied ! None  
 Shall ever use that base word, with which men  
 Cloke their soul's hoarded triumph, as a fit one  
 To mingle with my name ; that name shall be,  
 As far as I have borne it, what it was  
 When I received it.

*Mar.* But for the poor children  
 Of him thou canst not, or thou wilt not save,

You were the last to bear it.

*Doge.*

Would it were so !

Better for him he never had been born,  
Better for me. — I have seen our house dishonour'd.

*Mar.* That 's false ! A truer, nobler, trustier heart,  
More loving, or more loyal, never beat  
Within a human breast. I would not change  
My exiled, persecuted, mangled husband,  
Oppress'd but not disgraced, crush'd, overwhelm'd,  
Alive, or dead, for prince or paladin  
In story or in fable, with a world  
To back his suit. Dishonour'd ! — *he* dishonour'd !  
I tell thee, Doge, 't is Venice is dishonour'd ;  
His name shall be her foulest, worst reproach,  
For what he suffers, not for what he did.  
'T is ye who are all traitors, tyrant ! — ye !  
Did you but love your country like this victim  
Who totters back in chains to tortures, and  
Submits to all things rather than to exile,  
You 'd fling yourselves before him, and implore  
His grace for your enormous guilt.

*Doge.*

He was

Indeed all you have said. I better bore  
The deaths of the two sons Heaven took from me,  
Than Jacopo's disgrace.

*Mar.*

That word again ?

*Doge.* Has he not been condemn'd ?

*Mar.*

Is none but guilt so ?

*Doge.* Time may restore his memory — I would hope  
so.

He was my pride, my — but 't is useless now —  
I am not given to tears, but wept for joy  
When he was born : those drops were ominous.

*Mar.* I say he 's innocent ! And were he not so,  
Is our own blood and kin to shrink from us  
In fatal moments ?

*Doge.*

I shrank not from him :

But I have other duties than a father's ;  
The state would not dispense me from those duties ;  
Twice I demanded it, but was refused :  
They must then be fulfill'd.

*Enter an Attendant.*

*Att.*

A message from

“ The Ten.”

*Doge.* Who bears it?

*Att.* Noble Loredano.

*Doge.* He! — but admit him. [Exit Attendant.]

*Mar.* Must I then retire?

*Doge.* Perhaps it is not requisite, if this  
Concerns your husband, and if not — Well, signor,  
Your pleasure! [To LOREDANO entering.]

*Lor.* I bear that of "the Ten."

*Doge.* They  
Have chosen well their envoy.

*Lor.* 'T is *their* choice  
Which leads me here.

*Doge.* It does their wisdom honour,  
And no less to their courtesy. — Proceed.

*Lor.* We have decided.

*Doge.* We?

*Lor.* "The Ten" in council.

*Doge.* What! have they met again, and met without  
Apprising me?

*Lor.* They wish'd to spare your feelings,  
No less than age.

*Doge.* That 's new — when spared they either?  
I thank them, notwithstanding.

*Lor.* You know well  
That they have power to act at their discretion,  
With or without the presence of the Doge.

*Doge.* 'T is some years since I learn'd this, long before  
I became Doge, or dream'd of such advancement.  
You need not school me, signor: I sate in  
That council when you were a young patrician.

*Lor.* True, in my father's time; I have heard him and  
The admiral, his brother, say as much.  
Your highness may remember them; they both  
Died suddenly.

*Doge.* And if they did so, better  
So die than live on lingeringly in pain.

*Lor.* No doubt; yet most men like to live their days  
out.

*Doge.* And did not they?

*Lor.* The grave knows best: they died,  
As I said, suddenly.

*Doge.* Is that so strange,  
That you repeat the word emphatically?

*Lor.* So far from strange, that never was there death  
In my mind half so natural as theirs.

Think *you* not so?

*Doge.* What should I think of mortals?

*Lor.* That they have mortal foes.

*Doge.* I understand you ;  
Your sires were mine, and you are heir in all things.

*Lor.* You best know if I should be so.

*Doge.* I do.  
Your fathers were my foes, and I have heard  
Foul rumours were abroad ; I have also read  
Their epitaph, attributing their deaths  
To poison. 'T is perhaps as true as most  
Inscriptions upon tombs, and yet no less  
A fable.

*Lor.* Who dares say so ?

*Doge.* I ! — 'T is true  
Your fathers were mine enemies, as bitter  
As their son e'er can be, and I no less  
Was theirs ; but I was *openly* their foe :  
I never work'd by plot in council, nor  
Cabal in commonwealth, nor secret means  
Of practice against life by steel or drug.  
'The proof is, your existence.

*Lor.* I fear not.

*Doge.* You have no cause, being what I am ; but were I  
That you would have me thought, you long ere now  
Were past the sense of fear. Hate on ; I care not.

*Lor.* I never yet knew that a noble's life  
In Venice had to dread a Doge's frown,  
That is, by open means.

*Doge.* But I, good signor,  
Am, or at least *was*, more than a mere duke,  
In blood, in mind, in means ; and that they know  
Who dreaded to elect me, and have since  
Striven all they dare to weigh me down : be sure,  
Before or since that period, had I held you  
At so much price as to require your absence,  
A word of mine had set such spirits to work  
As would have made you nothing. But in all things  
I have observed the strictest reverence ;  
Not for the laws alone, for those *you* have strain'd  
(I do not speak of *you* but as a single  
Voice of the many) somewhat beyond what  
I could enforce for my authority,  
Were I disposed to brawl ; but, as I said,  
I have observed with veneration, like  
A priest's for the high altar, even unto  
The sacrifice of my own blood and quiet,

Safety, and all save honour, the decrees,  
The health, the pride, and welfare of the state.  
And now, sir, to your business.

*Lor.* 'T is decreed,  
That, without farther repetition of  
The Question, or continuance of the trial,  
Which only tends to show how stubborn guilt is,  
("The Ten," dispensing with the stricter law  
Which still prescribes the Question till a full  
Confession, and the prisoner partly having  
Avow'd his crime in not denying that  
The letter to the Duke of Milan 's his),  
James Foscari return to banishment,  
And sail in the same galley which convey'd him.

*Mar.* Thank God! At least they will not drag him more  
Before that horrible tribunal. Would he  
But think so, to my mind the happiest doom,  
Not he alone, but all who dwell here, could  
Desire, were to escape from such a land.

*Doge.* That is not a Venetian thought, my daughter.

*Mar.* No, 't was too human. May I share his exile?

*Lor.* Of this "the Ten" said nothing.

*Mar.*

So I thought :

That were too human, also. But it was not  
Inhibited?

*Lor.* It was not named.

*Mar.* (to the Doge). Then, father,  
Surely you can obtain or grant me thus much :

[To LOREDANO.

And you, sir, not oppose my prayer to be  
Permitted to accompany my husband.

*Doge.* I will endeavour

*Mar.* And you, signor?

*Lor.*

Lady!

'T is not for me to anticipate the pleasure  
Of the tribunal.

*Mar.* Pleasure! what a word  
To use for the decrees of——

*Doge.* Daughter, know you  
In what a presence you pronounce these things?

*Mar.* A prince's and his subject's.

*Lor.*

Subject!

*Mar.*

Oh!

It galls you: — well; you are his equal, as  
You think; but that you are not, nor would be,  
Were he a peasant: — well, then, you 're a prince,

A princely noble ; and what then am I ?

*Lor.* The offspring of a noble house.

*Mar.*

And wedded

To one as noble. What, or whose, then, is

The presence that should silence my free thoughts ?

*Lor.* The presence of your husband's judges.

*Doge.*

And

The deference due even to the lightest word

That falls from those who rule in Venice.

*Mar.*

Keep

Those maxims for your mass of scared mechanics,

Your merchants, your Dalmatian and Greek slaves,

Your tributaries, your dumb citizens,

And mask'd nobility, your sbirri, and

Your spies, your galley and your other slaves,

To whom your midnight carryings off and drownings,

Your dungeons next the palace roofs, or under

The water's level ; your mysterious meetings,

And unknown dooms, and sudden executions,

Your " Bridge of Sighs," your strangling chamber, and

Your torturing instruments, have made ye seem

The beings of another and worse world !

Keep such for them : I fear ye not. I know ye ;

Have known and proved your worst, in the infernal

Process of my poor husband ! Treat me as

Ye treated him : — you did so, in so dealing

With him. Then what have I to fear *from* you,

Even if I were of fearful nature, which

I trust I am not ?

*Doge.*

You hear, she speaks wildly.

*Mar.* Not wisely, yet not wildly.

*Lor.*

Lady ! words

Utter'd within these walls I bear no further

Than to the threshold, saving such as pass

Between the Duke and me on the state's service.

Doge ! have you aught in answer ?

*Doge.*

Something from

The Doge ; it may be also from a parent.

*Lor.* My mission *here* is to the Doge.

*Doge.*

Then say

The Doge will choose his own ambassador,

Or state in person what is meet ; and for

The father —

*Lor.*

I remember *mine*. — Farewell !

I kiss the hands of the illustrious lady,

And bow me to the Duke.

[*Exit* LOREDANO.]

*Mar.* Are you content ?

*Doge.* I am what you behold.

*Mar.* And that 's a mystery.

*Doge.* All things are so to mortals ; who can read them  
 Save he who made ? or, if they can, the few  
 And gifted spirits, who have studied long  
 That loathsome volume — man, and pored upon  
 Those black and bloody leaves, his heart and brain,  
 But learn a magic which recoils upon  
 The adept who pursues it : all the sins  
 We find in others, nature made our own ;  
 All our advantages are those of fortune ;  
 Birth, wealth, health, beauty, are her accidents,  
 And when we cry out against Fate, 't were well  
 We should remember Fortune can take nought  
 Save what she *gave* — the rest was nakedness,  
 And lusts, and appetites, and vanities,  
 The universal heritage, to battle  
 With as we may, and least in humblest stations,  
 Where hunger swallows all in one low want,  
 And the original ordinance, that man  
 Must sweat for his poor pittance, keeps all passions  
 Aloof, save fear of famine ! All is low,  
 And false, and hollow — clay from first to last,  
 The prince's urn no less than potter's vessel.  
 Our fame is in men's breath, our lives upon  
 Less than their breath ; our durance upon days,  
 Our days on seasons ; our whole being on  
 Something which is not *us* ! — So, we are slaves,  
 The greatest as the meanest — nothing rests  
 Upon our will ; the will itself no less  
 Depends upon a straw than on a storm ;  
 And when we think we lead, we are most led,  
 And still towards death, a thing which comes as much  
 Without our act or choice as birth, so that  
 Methinks we must have sinn'd in some old world,  
 And *this* is hell : the best is, that it is not  
 Eternal.

*Mar.* These are things we cannot judge  
 On earth.

*Doge.* And how then shall we judge each other,  
 Who are all earth, and I, who am call'd upon  
 To judge my son ? I have administer'd  
 My country faithfully — victoriously —  
 I dare them to the proof, the *chart* of what  
 She was and is : my reign has doubled realms ;

And, in reward, the gratitude of Venice  
Has left, or is about to leave, *me* single.

*Mar.* And Foscari? I do not think of such things,  
So I be left with him.

*Doge.* You shall be so ;  
Thus much they cannot well deny.

*Mar.* And if  
They should, I will fly with him.

*Doge.* That can ne'er be.  
And whither would you fly ?

*Mar.* I know not, reckon not —  
To Syria, Egypt, to the Ottoman —  
Any where, where we might respire unfetter'd,  
And live nor girt by spies, nor liable  
To edicts of inquisitors of state.

*Doge.* What, wouldst thou have a renegade for hus-  
band,  
And turn him into traitor ?

*Mar.* He is none !  
The country is the traitress, which thrusts forth  
Her best and bravest from her. Tyranny  
Is far the worst of treasons. Dost thou deem  
None rebels except subjects ? The prince who  
Neglects or violates his trust is more  
A brigand than the robber-chief.

*Doge.* I cannot  
Charge me with such a breach of faith.

*Mar.* No ; thou  
Observ'st, obey'st, such laws as make old Draco's  
A code of mercy by comparison.

*Doge.* I found the law ; I did not make it. Were I  
A subject, still I might find parts and portions  
Fit for amendment ; but as prince, I never  
Would change, for the sake of my house, the charter  
Left by our fathers.

*Mar.* Did they make it for  
The ruin of their children ?

*Doge.* Under such laws, Venice  
Has risen to what she is — a state to rival  
In deeds, and days, and sway, and, let me add,  
In glory, (for we have had Roman spirits  
Amongst us,) all that history has bequeath'd  
Of Rome and Carthage in their best times, when  
The people sway'd by senates.

*Mar.* Rather say,  
Groan'd under the stern oligarchs.

*Doge.* Perhaps so  
 But yet subdued the world : in such a state  
 An individual, be he richest of  
 Such rank as is permitted, or the meanest,  
 Without a name, is alike nothing, when  
 The policy, irrevocably tending  
 To one great end, must be maintain'd in vigour.

*Mar.* This means that you are more a Doge than father. ✓

*Doge.* It means, I am more citizen than either.  
 If we had not for many centuries  
 Had thousands of such citizens, and shall,  
 I trust, have still such, Venice were no city.

*Mar.* Accursed be the city where the laws  
 Would stifle nature's!

*Doge.* Had I as many sons  
 As I have years, I would have given them all,  
 Not without feeling, but I would have given them  
 To the state's service, to fulfil her wishes  
 On the flood, in the field, or, if it must be,  
 As it, alas ! has been, to ostracism,  
 Exile, or chains, or whatsoever worse  
 She might decree.

*Mar.* And this is patriotism ?  
 To me it seems the worst barbarity.  
 Let me seek out my husband : the sage " Ten,"  
 With all its jealousy, will hardly war  
 So far with a weak woman as deny me  
 A moment's access to his dungeon.

*Doge.* I'll  
 So far take on myself, as order that  
 You may be admitted.

*Mar.* And what shall I say  
 To Foscari from his father ?

*Doge.* That he obey  
 The laws.

*Mar.* And nothing more ? Will you not see him  
 Ere he depart ? It may be the last time.

*Doge.* The last ! — my boy ! — the last time I shall see  
 My last of children ! Tell him I will come.

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT III.

## SCENE I.

*The Prison of JACOPO FOSCARI.*

*Jac. Fos. (solus).* No light, save yon faint gleam which shows me walls

Which never echo'd but to sorrow's sounds,  
The sigh of long imprisonment, the step  
Of feet on which the iron clank'd, the groan  
Of death, the imprecation of despair!  
And yet for this I have return'd to Venice,  
With some faint hope, 't is true, that time, which wears  
The marble down, had worn away the hate  
Of men's hearts; but I knew them not, and here  
Must I consume my own, which never beat  
For Venice but with such a yearning as  
The dove has for her distant nest, when wheeling  
High in the air on her return to greet  
Her callow breed. What letters are these which

[*Approaching the wall.*

Are scrawl'd along the inexorable wall?  
Will the gleam let me trace them? Ah! the names  
Of my sad predecessors in this place,  
The dates of their despair, the brief words of  
A grief too great for many. This stone page  
Holds like an epitaph their history;  
And the poor captive's tale is graven on  
His dungeon barrier, like the lover's record  
Upon the bark of some tall tree, which bears  
His own and his beloved's name. Alas!  
I recognise some names familiar to me,  
And blighted like to mine, which I will add,  
Fittest for such a chronicle as this,  
Which only can be read, as writ, by wretches.

[*He engraves his name.*

*Enter a Familiar of "the Ten."*

*Fam.* I bring you food.

*Jac. Fos.* I pray you set it down;  
I am past hunger: but my lips are parch'd—  
The water!

*Fam.* There.

*Jac. Fos.* (after drinking). I thank you : I am better.

*Fam.* I am commanded to inform you  
Your further trial is postponed.

*Jac. Fos.* Till when ?

*Fam.* I know not.— It is also in my orders  
That your illustrious lady be admitted.

*Jac. Fos.* Ah ! they relent, then—I had ceased to  
hope it :  
'T was time.

*Enter MARINA.*

*Mar.* My best beloved !

*Jac. Fos.* (embracing her). My true wife,  
And only friend ! What happiness !

*Mar.* We 'll part  
No more.

*Jac. Fos.* How ! would'st thou share a dungeon ?

*Mar.* Ay,  
The rack, the grave, all — any thing with thee,  
But the tomb last of all, for there we shall  
Be ignorant of each other, yet I will  
Share that — all things except new separation ;  
It is too much to have survived the first.  
How dost thou ? How are those worn limbs ? Alas !  
Why do I ask ? Thy paleness —

*Jac. Fos.* 'T is the joy  
Of seeing thee again so soon, and so  
Without expectancy, has sent the blood  
Back to my heart, and left my cheeks like thine,  
For thou art pale too, my Marina !

*Mar.* 'T is  
The gloom of this eternal cell, which never  
Knew sunbeam, and the sallow sullen glare  
Of the familiar's torch, which seems akin  
To darkness more than light, by lending to  
The dungeon vapours its bituminous smoke,  
Which cloud whate'er we gaze on, even thine eyes —  
No, not thine eyes — they sparkle — how they sparkle !

*Jac. Fos.* And thine ! — but I am blinded by the torch.

*Mar.* As I had been without it. Couldst thou see here ?

*Jac. Fos.* Nothing at first ; but use and time had taught  
me  
Familiarity with what was darkness ;  
And the gray twilight of such glimmerings as

Glide through the crevices made by the winds  
 Was kinder to mine eyes than the full sun,  
 When gorgeously o'ergilding any towers  
 Save those of Venice ; but a moment ere  
 Thou camest hither I was busy writing.

*Mar.* What ?

*Jac. Fos.* My name : look, 't is there — recorded next  
 The name of him who here preceded me,  
 If dungeon dates say true.

*Mar.* And what of him ?

*Jac. Fos.* The walls are silent of men's ends ; they only  
 Seem to hint shrewdly of them. Such stern walls  
 Were never piled on high save o'er the dead,  
 Or those who soon must be so — *What of him ?*  
 Thou askest.— What of me ? may soon be ask'd,  
 With the like answer — doubt and dreadful surmise —  
 Unless thou tell'st my tale.

*Mar.* *I speak of thee !*

*Jac. Fos.* And wherefore not ? All then shall speak of  
 me :

The tyranny of silence is not lasting,  
 And, though events be hidden, just men's groans  
 Will burst all censurement, even a living grave's !  
 I do not *doubt* my memory, but my life ;  
 And neither do I fear.

*Mar.* Thy life is safe.

*Jac. Fos.* And liberty ?

*Mar.* The mind should make its own.

*Jac. Fos.* That has a noble sound ; but 't is a sound,  
 A music most impressive, but too transient :  
 The mind is much, but is not all. The mind  
 Hath nerved me to endure the risk of death,  
 And torture positive, far worse than death,  
 (If death be a deep sleep), without a groan,  
 Or with a cry which rather shamed my judges  
 Than me ; but 't is not all, for there are things  
 More woful — such as this small dungeon, where  
 I may breathe many years.

*Mar.* Alas ! and this

Small dungeon is all that belongs to thee  
 Of this wide realm, of which thy sire is prince.

*Jac. Fos.* That thought would scarcely aid me to en-  
 dure it.

My doom is common, many are in dungeons.  
 But none like mine, so near their father's palace ;  
 But then my heart is sometimes high, and hope

Will stream along those moted rays of light  
 Peopled with dusty atoms, which afford  
 Our only day ; for, save the gaoler's torch,  
 And a strange firefly, which was quickly caught  
 Last night in yon enormous spider's net,  
 I ne'er saw aught here like a ray. Alas !  
 I know if mind may bear us up, or no,  
 For I have such, and shown it before men ;  
 It sinks in solitude : my soul is social.

*Mar.* I will be with thee.

*Jac. Fos.* Ah ! if it were so !  
 But *that* they never granted — nor will grant,  
 And I shall be alone : no men — no books —  
 Those lying likenesses of lying men.  
 I ask'd for even those outlines of their kind,  
 Which they term annals, history, what you will,  
 Which men bequeath as portraits, and they were  
 Refused me, — so these walls have been my study,  
 More faithful pictures of Venetian story,  
 With all their blank, or dismal stains, than is  
 The Hall not far from hence, which bears on high  
 Hundreds of doges, and their deeds and dates.

*Mar.* I come to tell thee the result of their  
 Last council on thy doom.

*Jac. Fos.* I know it — look !

[*He points to his limbs, as referring to the question  
 which he had undergone.*]

*Mar.* No — no — no more of that : even they relent  
 From that atrocity.

*Jac. Fos.* What then ?

*Mar.* That you

Return to Candia.

*Jac. Fos.* Then my last hope's gone.  
 I could endure my dungeon, for 't was Venice ;  
 I could support the torture, there was something  
 In my native air that buoy'd my spirits up  
 Like a ship on the ocean toss'd by storms,  
 But proudly still bestriding the high waves,  
 And holding on its course ; but *there*, afar,  
 In that accursed isle of slaves, and captives,  
 And unbelievers, like a stranded wreck,  
 My very soul seem'd mouldering in my bosom,  
 And piecemeal I shall perish, if remanded.

*Mar.* And *here* ?

*Jac. Fos.* At once — by better means, as briefer.  
 What ! would they even deny me my sire's sepulchre,

As well as home and heritage?

*Mar.* My husband!

I have sued to accompany thee hence,  
And not so hopelessly. This love of thine  
For an ungrateful and tyrannic soil  
Is passion, and not patriotism; for me,  
So I could see thee with a quiet aspect,  
And the sweet freedom of the earth and air,  
I would not cavil about climes or regions.  
This crowd of palaces and prisons is not  
A paradise; its first inhabitants  
Were wretched exiles.

*Jac. Fos.* Well I know *how* wretched!

*Mar.* And yet you see how from their banishment  
Before the Tartar into these salt isles,  
Their antique energy of mind, all that  
Remain'd of Rome for their inheritance,  
Created by degrees an ocean-Rome;  
And shall an evil, which so often leads  
To good, depress thee thus?

*Jac. Fos.* Had I gone forth  
From my own land, like the old patriarchs, seeking  
Another region, with their flocks and herds;  
Had I been cast out like the Jews from Zion,  
Or like our fathers, driven by Attila  
From fertile Italy, to barren islets,  
I would have given some tears to my late country,  
And many thoughts; but afterwards address'd  
Myself, with those about me, to create  
A new home and fresh state: perhaps I could  
Have borne this — though I know not.

*Mar.* Wherefore not?  
It was the lot of millions, and must be  
The fate of myriads more.

*Jac. Fos.* Ay — we but hear  
Of the survivors' toil in their new lands,  
Their numbers and success; but who can number  
The hearts which broke in silence of that parting,  
Or after their departure; of that malady  
Which calls up green and native fields to view  
From the rough deep, with such identity  
To the poor exile's fever'd eye, that he  
Can scarcely be restrained from treading them?  
That melody, † which out of tones and tunes

\* The calenture.

† Alluding to the Swiss air and its effects.

Collects such pasture for the longing sorrow  
 Of the sad mountaineer, when far away  
 From his snow canopy of cliffs and clouds,  
 That he feeds on the sweet, but poisonous thought,  
 And dies. You call this *weakness* ! It is strength,  
 I say, — the parent of all honest feeling.  
 He who loves not his country, can love nothing.

*Mar.* Obey her, then : 't is she that puts thee forth.

*Jac. Fos.* Ay, there it is ; 't is like a mother's curse  
 Upon my soul — the mark is set upon me.  
 The exiles you speak of went forth by nations,  
 Their hands upheld each other by the way,  
 Their tents were pitch'd together — I 'm alone.

*Mar.* You shall be so no more — I will go with thee.

*Jac. Fos.* My best Marina ! — and our children ?

*Mar.* They,

I fear, by the prevention of the state's  
 Abhorrent policy, (which holds all ties  
 As threads, which may be broken at her pleasure,)  
 Will not be suffer'd to proceed with us.

*Jac. Fos.* And canst thou leave them ?

*Mar.* Yes. With many a pang.

But — I *can* leave them, children as they are,  
 To teach you to be less a child. From this  
 Learn you to sway your feelings, when exacted  
 By duties paramount ; and 't is our first  
 On earth to bear.

*Jac. Fos.* Have I not borne ?

*Mar.* Too much

From tyrannous injustice, and enough  
 To teach you not to shrink now from a lot,  
 Which, as compared with what you have undergone  
 Of late, is mercy.

*Jac. Fos.* Ah ! you never yet  
 Were far away from Venice, never saw  
 Her beautiful towers in the receding distance,  
 While every furrow of the vessel's track  
 Seem'd ploughing deep into your heart ; you never  
 Saw day go down upon your native spires  
 So calmly with its gold and crimson glory,  
 And after dreaming a disturbed vision  
 Of them and theirs, awoke and found them not.

*Mar.* I will divide this with you. Let us think  
 Of our departure from this much-loved city,  
 (Since you must *love* it, as it seems,) and this  
 Chamber of state, her gratitude allots you.

Our children will be cared for by the Doge,  
And by my uncles : we must sail ere night.

*Jac. Fos.* That's sudden. Shall I not behold my father?

*Mar.* You will.

*Jac. Fos.* Where?

*Mar.* Here, or in the ducal chamber —  
He said not which. I would that you could bear  
Your exile as he bears it.

*Jac. Fos.* Blame him not.  
I sometimes murmur for a moment ; but  
He could not now act otherwise. A show  
Of feeling or compassion on his part  
Would have but drawn upon his aged head  
Suspicion from " the Ten," and upon mine  
Accumulated ills.

*Mar.* Accumulated !  
What pangs are those they have spared you ?

*Jac. Fos.* That of leaving  
Venice without beholding him or you,  
Which might have been forbidden now, as 't was  
Upon my former exile.

*Mar.* That is true,  
And thus far I am also the state's debtor,  
And shall be more so when I see us both  
Floating on the free waves — away — away —  
Be it to the earth's end, from this abhorr'd,  
Unjust, and —

*Jac. Fos.* Curse it not. If I am silent,  
Who dares accuse my country ?

*Mar.* Men and angels !  
The blood of myriads reeking up to heaven,  
The groans of slaves in chains, and men in dungeons,  
Mothers, and wives, and sons, and sires, and subjects,  
Held in the bondage of ten bald-heads ; and  
Though last, not least, *thy silence.* *Couldst thou say*  
*Aught in its favour, who would praise like thee ?*

*Jac. Fos.* Let us address us then, since so it must be,  
To our departure. Who comes here ?

*Enter LOREDANO, attended by Familiars.*

*Lor. (to the Familiars).* Retire,  
But leave the torch. [*Exeunt the two Familiars.*]

*Jac. Fos.* Most welcome, noble signor.  
I did not deem this poor place could have drawn  
Such presence hither.

*Lor.* 'T is not the first time  
I have visited these places.

*Mar.* Nor would be  
The last, were all men's merits well rewarded.  
Came you here to insult us, or remain  
As spy upon us, or as hostage for us ?

*Lor.* Neither are of my office, noble lady !  
I am sent hither to your husband, to  
Announce " the Ten's " decree.

*Mar.* That tenderness  
Has been anticipated : it is known.

*Lor.* As how ?

*Mar.* I have inform'd him, not so gently,  
Doubtless, as your nice feelings would prescribe,  
The indulgence of your colleagues ; but he knew it.  
If you come for our thanks, take them, and hence !  
The dungeon gloom is deep enough without you,  
And full of reptiles, not less loathsome, though  
Their sting is honester.

*Jas. Fos.* I pray you, calm you :  
What can avail such words ?

*Mar.* To let him know  
That he is known.

*Lor.* Let the fair dame preserve  
Her sex's privilege.

*Mar.* I have some sons, sir,  
Will one day thank you better.

*Lor.* You do well  
To nurse them wisely. Foscarei — you know  
Your sentence, then ?

*Jac. Fos.* Return to Candia ?

*Lor.* True —  
For life.

*Jac. Fos.* Not long.

*Lor.* I said — for *life*.

*Jac. Fos.* And I

Repeat — not long.

*Lor.* A year's imprisonment  
In Canea — afterwards the freedom of  
The whole isle.

*Jac. Fos.* Both the same to me : the after  
Freedom as is the first imprisonment.  
Is 't true my wife accompanies me ?

*Lor.* Yes,  
If she so wills it.

*Mar.* Who obtain'd that justice ?

*Lor.* One who wars not with women.

*Mar.* But oppresses

Men: howsoever let him have *my* thanks  
For the only boon I would have ask'd or taken  
From him or such as he is.

*Lor.* He receives them  
As they are offer'd,

*Mar.* May they thrive with him  
So much! — no more.

*Jac. Fos.* Is this, sir, your whole mission?  
Because we have brief time for preparation,  
And you perceive your presence doth disquiet  
This lady, of a house noble as yours.

*Mar.* Nobler!

*Lor.* How nobler?

*Mar.* As more generous!  
We say the "generous steed" to express the purity  
Of his high blood. Thus much I've learnt, although  
Venetian, (who see few steeds save of bronze),  
From those Venetians who have skimm'd the coasts  
Of Egypt, and her neighbour Araby:  
And why not say as soon the "*generous man*?"  
If race be aught, it is in qualities  
More than in years; and mine, which is as old  
As yours, is better in its product, nay —  
Look not so stern — but get you back, and pore  
Upon your genealogic tree's most green  
Of leaves and most mature of fruits, and there  
Blush to find ancestors, who would have blush'd  
For such a son — thou cold inveterate hater!

*Jac. Fos.* Again, Marina!

*Mar.* Again! *still*, Marina.  
See you not, he comes here to glut his hate  
With a last look upon our misery?  
Let him partake it!

*Jac. Fos.* That were difficult.

*Mar.* Nothing more easy. He partakes it now —  
Ay, he may veil beneath a marble brow  
And sneering lip the pang, but he partakes it.  
A few brief words of truth shame the devil's servants  
No less than master: I have probed his soul  
A moment, as the eternal fire, ere long,  
Will reach it always. See how he shrinks from me!  
With death, and chains, and exile in his hand  
To scatter o'er his kind as he thinks fit;  
They are his weapons, not his armour, for

I have pierced him to the core of his cold heart.  
I care not for his frowns! We can but die,  
And he but live, for him the very worst  
Of destinies: each day secures him more  
His tempter's.

*Jac. Fos.* This is mere insanity.

*Mar.* It may be so; and *who* hath made us *mad*?

*Lor.* Let her go on; it irks not me.

*Mar.* That's false!

You came here to enjoy a heartless triumph  
Of cold looks upon manifold griefs! You came  
To be sued to in vain — to mark our tears,  
And hoard our groans — to gaze upon the wreck  
Which you have made a prince's son — my husband;  
In short, to trample on the fallen — an office  
The hangman shrinks from, as all men from him!  
How have you sped? We are wretched, signor, as  
Your plots could make, and vengeance could desire us,  
And how *feel you*?

*Lor.* As rocks.

*Mar.* By thunder blasted:

They feel not, but no less are shiver'd. Come,  
Foscari; now let us go, and leave this felon,  
The sole fit habitant of such a cell,  
Which he has peopled often, but ne'er fitly  
Till he himself shall brood in it alone.

*Enter the DOGE.*

*Jac. Fos.* My father!

*Doge.* (*embracing him*). Jacopo! my son — my son!

*Jac. Fos.* My father still! How long it is since I  
Have heard thee name my name — *our* name!

*Doge.* My boy!

Couldst thou but know —

*Jac. Fos.* I rarely, sir, have murmur'd.

*Doge.* I feel too much thou hast not.

*Mar.* Doge, look there!

[*She points to LOREDANO.*

*Doge.* I see the man — what mean'st thou?

*Mar.* Caution!

*Lor.* Being

The virtue which this noble lady most  
May practise, she doth well to recommend it.

*Mar.* Wretch! 't is no virtue, but the policy  
Of those who fain must deal perforce with vice:

As such I recommend it, as I would  
To one whose foot was on an adder's path.

*Doge.* Daughter, it is superfluous ; I have long  
Known Loredano.

*Lor.* You may know him better.

*Mar.* Yes ; *worse* he could not.

*Jac. Fos.* Father, let not these  
Our parting hours be lost in listening to  
Reproaches, which boot nothing. Is it — is it,  
Indeed, our last of meetings ?

*Doge.* You behold  
These white hairs !

*Jac. Fos.* And I feel, besides, that mine  
Will never be so white. Embrace me, father !  
I loved you ever — never more than now.  
Look to my children — to your last child's children :  
Let them be all to you which he was once,  
And never be to you what I am now.  
May I not see *them* also ?

*Mar.* No — not *here*.

*Jac. Fos.* They might behold their parent any where.

*Mar.* I would that they beheld their father in  
A place which would not mingle fear with love,  
To freeze their young blood in its natural current.  
They have fed well, slept soft, and knew not that  
Their sire was a mere hunted outlaw. Well,  
I know his fate may one day be their heritage,  
But let it only be their *heritage*,  
And not their present fee. Their senses, though  
Alive to love, are yet awake to terror ;  
And these vile damps, too, and yon *thick green* wave  
Which floats above the place where we now stand —  
A cell so far below the water's level,  
Sending its pestilence through every crevice,  
Might strike them : *this is not their* atmosphere,  
However you — and you — and, most of all,  
As worthiest — *you*, sir, noble LOREDANO !  
May breathe it without prejudice.

*Jac. Fos.* I had not  
Reflected upon this, but acquiesce.  
I shall depart, then, without meeting them ?

*Doge.* Not so : they shall await you in my chamber.

*Jac. Fos.* And must I leave them — *all* ?

*Lor.* You must.

*Jac. Fos.* Not one ?

*Lor.* They are the state's.

*Mar.* I thought they had been mine.

*Lor.* They are, in all maternal things.

*Mar.* That is,

In all things painful. If they 're sick, they will  
Be left to me to tend them ; should they die,  
To me to bury and to mourn ; but if  
They live, they 'll make you soldiers, senators,  
Slaves, exiles — what *you* will ; or if they are  
Females with portions, brides and *bribes* for nobles !  
Behold the state's care for its sons and mothers !

*Lor.* The hour approaches, and the wind is fair.

*Jac. Fos.* How know you that here, where the genial  
wind

Ne'er blows in all its blustering freedom ?

*Lor.* 'T was so

When I came here. The galley floats within  
A bow-shot of the " Riva di Schiavoni."

*Jac. Fos.* Father ! I pray you to precede me, and  
Prepare my children to behold their father.

*Doge.* Be firm, my son !

*Jac. Fos.* I will do my endeavour.

*Mar.* Farewell ! at least to this detested dungeon,  
And him to whose good offices you owe  
In part your past imprisonment.

*Lor.* And present

Liberation.

*Doge.* He speaks truth.

*Jac. Fos.* No doubt ! but 't is  
Exchange of chains for heavier chains I owe him.  
He knows this, or he had not sought to change them.  
But I reproach not.

*Lor.* The time narrows, signor.

*Jac. Fos.* Alas ! I little thought so lingeringly  
To leave abodes like this : but when I feel  
That every step I take, even from this cell,  
Is one away from Venice, I look back  
Even on these dull damp walls, and ——

*Doge.* Boy ! no tears.

*Mar.* Let them flow on : he wept not on the rack  
To shame him, and they cannot shame him now.  
They will relieve his heart — that too kind heart —  
And I will find an hour to wipe away  
Those tears, or add my own. I could weep now,  
But would not gratify yon wretch so far.  
Let us proceed. Doge, lead the way.

*Lor.* (to the Familiar).

The torch, there !

*Mar.* Yes, light us on, as to a funeral pyre,  
With Loredano mourning like an heir.

*Doge.* My son, you are feeble ; take this hand.

*Jac. Fos.*

Alas !

Must youth support itself on age, and I  
Who ought to be the prop of yours ?

*Lor.*

Take mine.

*Mar.* Touch it not, Foscari ; 't will sting you. Signor,  
Stand off ! be sure, that if a grasp of yours  
Would raise us from the gulf wherein we are plunged,  
No hand of ours would stretch itself to meet it.  
Come, Foscari, take the hand the altar gave you ;  
It could not save, but will support you ever.

[*Exeunt.*

## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.

*A Hall in the Ducal Palace.*

*Enter LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.*

*Bar.* And have you confidence in such a project ?

*Lor.* I have.

*Bar.* 'T is hard upon his years.

*Lor.*

Say rather

Kind to relieve him from the cares of state.

*Bar.* 'T will break his heart.

*Lor.*

Age has no heart to break.

He has seen his son's half broken, and, except  
A start of feeling in his dungeon, never  
Swerved.

*Bar.* In his countenance, I grant you, never ;  
But I have seen him sometimes in a calm  
So desolate, that the most clamorous grief  
Had nought to envy him within. Where is he ?

*Lor.* In his own portion of the palace, with  
His son, and the whole race of Foscaris.

*Bar.* Bidding farewell.

*Lor.*

A last. As soon he shall

Bid to his dukedom.

*Bar.* When embarks the son ?

*Lor.* Forthwith — when this long leave is taken. 'T is  
Time to admonish them again.

*Bar.* Forbear ;  
Retrench not from their moments.

*Lor.* Not I, now  
We have higher business for our own. This day  
Shall be the last of the old Doge's reign,  
As the first of his son's last banishment,  
And that is vengeance.

*Bar.* In my mind, too deep.

*Lor.* 'T is moderate — not even life for life, the rule  
Denounced of retribution from all time ;  
'They owe me still my father's and my uncle's.

*Bar.* Did not the Doge deny this strongly ?

*Lor.* Doubtless.

*Bar.* And did not this shake your suspicion ?

*Lor.* No.

*Bar.* But if this disposition should take place  
By our united influence in the Council,  
It must be done with all the deference  
Due to his years, his station, and his deeds.

*Lor.* As much of ceremony as you will,  
So that the thing be done. You may, for aught  
I care, depute the Council on their knees,  
(Like Barbarossa to the Pope,) to beg him  
To have the courtesy to abdicate.

*Bar.* What, if he will not ?

*Lor.* We 'll elect another,  
And make him null.

*Bar.* But will the laws uphold us ?

*Lor.* What laws ? — "The Ten" are laws ; and if they  
were not,  
I will be legislator in this business.

*Bar.* At your own peril ?

*Lor.* There is none, I tell you,  
Our powers are such.

*Bar.* But he has twice already  
Solicited permission to retire,  
And twice it was refused.

*Lor.* The better reason  
To grant it the third time.

*Bar.* Unask'd ?

*Lor.* It shows  
The impression of his former instances :  
If they were from his heart, he may be thankful :

If not, 't will punish his hypocrisy.  
 Come, they are met by this time ; let us join them,  
 And be *thou* fix'd in purpose for this once.  
 I have prepared such arguments as will not  
 Fail to move them, and to remove him : since  
 Their thoughts, their objects, have been sounded, do not  
 You, with your wonted scruples, teach us pause,  
 And all will prosper.

*Bar.* Could I but be certain  
 This is no prelude to such persecution  
 Of the sire as has fallen upon the son,  
 I would support you.

*Lor.* He is safe, I tell you ;  
 His fourscore years and five may linger on  
 As long as he can drag them : 't is his throne  
 Alone is aim'd at.

*Bar.* But discarded princes  
 Are seldom long of life.

*Lor.* And men of eighty  
 More seldom still.

*Bar.* And why not wait these few years ?

*Lor.* Because we have waited long enough, and he  
 Lived longer than enough. Hence ! in to council !

[*Exeunt* LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.]

*Enter* MEMMO and a Senator.

*Sen.* A summons to "the Ten !" Why so ?

*Mem.* "The Ten"

Alone can answer ; they are rarely wont  
 To let their thoughts anticipate their purpose  
 By previous proclamation. We are summon'd —  
 That is enough.

*Sen.* For them, but not for us ;  
 I would know why.

*Mem.* You will know why anon,  
 If you obey ; and, if not, you no less  
 Will know why you should have obey'd.

*Sen.* I mean not  
 To oppose them, *but* —

*Mem.* In Venice "*but*" 's a traitor.  
 But me no "*buts*," unless you would pass o'er  
 The Bridge which few repass.

*Sen.* I am silent.

*Mem.* Why  
 Thus hesitate ? "The Ten" have call'd in aid

Of their deliberation five and twenty  
 Patricians of the senate — you are one,  
 And I another ; and it seems to me  
 Both honour'd by the choice or chance which leads us  
 To mingle with a body so august.

*Sen.* Most true. I say no more.

*Mem.* As we hope, signor,

And all may honestly, (that is, all those  
 Of noble blood may,) one day hope to be  
 Decemvir, it is surely for the senate's  
 Chosen delegates, a school of wisdom, to  
 Be thus admitted, though as novices,  
 To view the mysteries.

*Sen.* Let us view them : they,  
 No doubt, are worth it.

*Mem.* Being worth our lives  
 If we divulge them, doubtless they are worth  
 Something, at least to you or me.

*Sen.* I sought not  
 A place within the sanctuary ; but being  
 Chosen, however reluctantly so chosen,  
 I shall fulfil my office.

*Mem.* Let us not  
 Be latest in obeying " The Ten's " summons.

*Sen.* All are not met, but I am of your thought  
 So far — let 's in.

*Mem.* The earliest are most welcome  
 In earnest councils — we will not be least so. [ *Exeunt*

*Enter the DOGE, JACOPO FOSCARI, and MARINA.*

*Jac. Fos.* Ah, father ! though I must and will depart,  
 Yet — yet — I pray you to obtain for me  
 That I once more return unto my home,  
 Howe'er remote the period. Let there be  
 A point of time as beacon to my heart,  
 With any penalty annex'd they please,  
 But let me still return.

*Doge.* Son Jacopo,  
 Go and obey our country's will : 't is not  
 For us to look beyond.

*Jac. Fos.* But still I must  
 Look back. I pray you think of me.

*Doge.* Alas !  
 You've ever were my dearest offspring, when  
 They were more numerous, nor can be less so

Now you are last ; but did the state demand  
 The exile of the disinterred ashes  
 Of your three goodly brothers, now in earth,  
 And their desponding shades came flitting round  
 To impede the act, I must no less obey  
 A duty, paramount to every duty.

*Mar.* My husband ! let us on : this but prolongs  
 Our sorrow.

*Jac. Fos.* But we are not summon'd yet ;  
 The galley's sails are not unfurl'd : — who knows ?  
 The wind may change.

*Mar.* And if it do, it will not  
 Change *their* hearts, or your lot : the galley's oars  
 Will quickly clear the harbour.

*Jac. Fos.* O, ye elements !  
 Where are your storms ?

*Mar.* In human breasts. Alas !  
 Will nothing calm you ?

*Jac. Fos.* Never yet did mariner  
 Put up to patron saint such prayers for prosperous  
 And pleasant breezes, as I call upon you,  
 Ye tutelary saints of my own city ! which  
 Ye love not with more holy love than I,  
 To lash up from the deep the Adrian waves,  
 And waken Auster, sovereign of the tempest !  
 Till the sea dash me back on my own shore  
 A broken corse upon the barren Lido,  
 Where I may mingle with the sands which skirt  
 The land I love, and never shall see more !

*Mar.* And wish you this with *me* beside you ?

*Jac. Fos.* No —  
 No — not for thee, too good, too kind ! May'st thou  
 Live long to be a mother to those children  
 Thy fond fidelity for a time deprives  
 Of such support ! But for myself alone,  
 May all the winds of heaven howl down the Gulf,  
 And tear the vessel, till the mariners,  
 Appall'd, turn their despairing eyes on me,  
 As the Phenicians did on Jonah, then  
 Cast me out from amongst them, as an offering  
 To appease the waves. The billow which destroys me  
 Will be more merciful than man, and bear me,  
 Dead, but *still bear* me to a native grave.  
 From fishers' hands upon the desolate strand,  
 Which, of its thousand wrecks, hath ne'er received  
 One lacerated like the heart which then

Will be — But wherefore breaks it not? why live I?

*Mar.* To man thyself, I trust, with time, to master  
Such useless passion. Until now thou wert  
A sufferer, but not a loud one: why  
What is this to the things thou hast borne in silence —  
Imprisonment and actual torture?

*Jac. Fos.* Double,  
Triple, and tenfold torture! But you are right,  
It must be borne. Father, your blessing.

*Doge.* Would  
It could avail thee! but no less thou hast it.

*Jac. Fos.* Forgive —

*Doge.* What?

*Jac. Fos.* My poor mother, for my birth,  
And me for having lived, and you yourself  
(As I forgive you), for the gift of life,  
Which you bestow'd upon me as my sire.

*Mar.* What hast thou done?

*Jac. Fos.* Nothing. I cannot charge  
My memory with much save sorrow: but  
I have been so beyond the common lot  
Chasten'd and visited, I needs must think  
That I was wicked. If it be so, may  
What I have undergone here keep me from  
A like hereafter!

*Mar.* Fear not: *that*'s reserved  
For your oppressors.

*Jac. Fos.* Let me hope not.

*Mar.* Hope not?

*Jac. Fos.* I cannot wish them *all* they have inflicted.

*Mar.* *All!* the consummate fiends! A thousand fold  
May the worm which ne'er dieth feed upon them!

*Jac. Fos.* They may repent.

*Mar.* And if they do, Heaven will not  
Accept the tardy penitence of demons.

*Enter an Officer and Guards.*

*Offi.* Signor! the boat is at the shore — the wind  
Is rising — we are ready to attend you.

*Jac. Fos.* And I to be attended. Once more, father,  
Your hand!

*Doge.* Take it. Alas! how thine own trembles!

*Jac. Fos.* No — you mistake; 't is yours that shakes,  
my father.

Farewell!

*Doge.* Farewell! Is there aught else?

*Jac. Fos.*

No — nothing.  
[To the Officer

Lend me your arm, good signor.

*Offi.*

You turn pale —

Let me support you — paler — ho! some aid there!  
Some water!

*Mar.* Ah, he is dying!

*Jac. Fos.*

Now, I'm ready —

My eyes swim strangely — where 's the door?

*Mar.*

Away!

Let me support him — my best love! Oh, God!  
How faintly beats this heart — this pulse!

*Jac. Fos.*

The light!

Is it the light? — I am faint.

[Officer presents him with water

*Offi.*

He will be better,

Perhaps, in the air.

*Jac. Fos.*

I doubt not. Father — wife —

Your hands!

*Mar.*

There 's death in that damp clammy grasp.

Oh God! — My Foscari, how fare you?

*Jac. Fos.*

Well!

[He dies.

*Offi.* He 's gone!

*Doge.*

He 's free.

*Mar.*

No — no, he is not dead;

There must be life yet in that heart — he could not  
Thus leave me.

*Doge.*

Daughter!

*Mar.*

Hold thy peace; old man!

I am no daughter now — thou hast no son.

Oh, Foscari!

*Offi.*

We must remove the body.

*Mar.* Touch it not, dungeon miscreants! your base office

Ends with his life, and goes not beyond murder,

Even by your murderous laws. Leave his remains

To those who know to honour them.

*Offi.*

I must

Inform the signory, and learn their pleasure.

*Doge.* Inform the signory, from me, the Doge,

They have no further power upon those ashes:

While he lived, he was theirs, as fits a subject —

Now he is mine — my broken-hearted boy!

[Exit Officer.

*Mar.* And I must live!

*Doge.* Your children live, Marina.

*Mar.* My children! true — they live, and I must live  
To bring them up to serve the state, and die  
As died their father. Oh! what best of blessings  
Were barrenness in Venice! Would my mother  
Had been so!

*Doge.* My unhappy children!

*Mar.* What!  
You feel it then at last — *you!* — Where is now  
The stoic of the state?

*Doge* (*throwing himself down by the body*). *Here!*

*Mar.* Ay, weep on!  
I thought you had no tears — you hoarded them  
Until they are useless; but weep on! he never  
Shall weep more — never, never more.

*Enter LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.*

*Lor.* What's here?

*Mar.* Ah! the devil come to insult the dead! Avaunt!  
Incarnate Lucifer! 't is holy ground.  
A martyr's ashes now lie there, which make it  
A shrine. Get thee back to thy place of torment!

*Bar.* Lady, we knew not of this sad event,  
But pass'd here merely on our path from council.

*Mar.* Pass on.

*Lor.* We sought the Doge.

*Mar.* (*pointing to the Doge, who is still on the ground  
by his son's body*). He's busy, look,  
About the business you provided for him.  
Are ye content?

*Bar.* We will not interrupt  
A parent's sorrows.

*Mar.* No, ye only make them,  
Then leave them.

*Doge.* (*rising*). Sirs, I am ready.

*Bar.* No — not now.

*Lor.* Yet 't was important.

*Doge.* If 't was so, I can  
Only repeat — I am ready.

*Bar.* It shall not be  
Just now, though Venice totter'd o'er the deep  
Like a frail vessel. I respect your griefs.

*Doge.* I thank you. If the tidings which you bring  
Are evil, you may say them; nothing further  
Can touch me more than him thou look'st on there;

If they be good, say on ; you need not *fear*  
That they can *comfort* me.

*Bar.* I would they could !

*Doge.* I spoke not to *you*, but to Loredano.

*He* understands me.

*Mar.* Ah ! I thought it would be so.

*Doge.* What mean you ?

*Mar.* Lo ! there is the blood beginning  
To flow through the dead lips of Foscari —  
The body bleeds in presence of the assassin.

[*To* LOREDANO.

Thou cowardly murderer by law, behold  
How death itself bears witness to thy deeds !

*Doge.* My child ! this is a phantasy of grief.  
Bear hence the body. [*To his attendants.*] Signors, if it  
please you,

Within an hour I'll hear you.

[*Exeunt* DOGE, MARINA, and attendants with the  
body. *Manent* LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.

*Bar.* He must not

Be troubled now.

*Lor.* He said himself that nought  
Could give him trouble farther.

*Bar.* These are words ;  
But grief is lonely, and the breaking in  
Upon it barbarous.

*Lor.* Sorrow preys upon  
Its solitude, and nothing more diverts it  
From its sad visions of the other world  
Than calling it at moments back to this.  
The busy have no time for tears.

*Bar.* And therefore  
You would deprive this old man of all business ?

*Lor.* The thing's decreed. The Giunta and "the Ten"  
Have made it law — who shall oppose that law ?

*Bar.* Humanity !

*Lor.* Because his son is dead ?

*Bar.* And yet unburied.

*Lor.* Had we known this when  
The act was passing, it might have suspended  
Its passage, but impedes it not — once past.

*Bar.* I'll not consent.

*Lor.* You have consented to  
All that's essential — leave the rest to me.

*Bar.* Why press his abdication now ?

*Lor.* The feelings

Of private passion may not interrupt  
The public benefit ; and what the state  
Decides to-day must not give way before  
To-morrow for a natural accident.

*Bar.* You have a son.

*Lor.* I have — and had a father.

*Bar.* Still so inexorable ?

*Lor.* Still.

*Bar.* But let him

Inter his son before we press upon him  
This edict.

*Lor.* Let him call up into life  
My sire and uncle — I consent. Men may,  
Even aged men, be, or appear to be,  
Sires of a hundred sons, but cannot kindle  
An atom of their ancestors from earth.  
The victims are not equal ; he has seen  
His sons expire by natural deaths, and I  
My sires by violent and mysterious maladies.  
I used no poison, bribed no subtle master  
Of the destructive art of healing, to  
Shorten the path to the eternal cure.  
His sons — and he had four — are dead, without  
*My* dabbling in vile drugs.

*Bar.* And art thou sure  
He dealt in such ?

*Lor.* Most sure.

*Bar.* And yet he seems  
All openness.

*Lor.* And so he seem'd not long  
Ago to Carmagnuola.

*Bar.* The attainted  
And foreign traitor ?

*Lor.* Even so : when *he*,  
After the very night in which " the Ten "  
(Join'd with the Doge) decided his destruction,  
Met the great Duke at daybreak with a jest,  
Demanding whether he should augur him  
" The good day or good night ? " his Doge-ship answer'd,  
" That he in truth had pass'd a night of vigil,  
In which (he added with a gracious smile),  
There often has been question about you. " \*  
'T was true ; the question was the death resolved  
Of Carmagnuola, eight months ere he died ;

\* An historical fact.

And the old Doge, who knew him doom'd, smiled on him  
 With deadly cozenage, eight long months beforehand —  
 Eight months of such hypocrisy as is  
 Learnt but in eighty years. Brave Carmagnuola  
 Is dead ; so is young Foscari and his brethren —  
 I never *smiled* on *them*.

*Bar.* Was Carmagnuola  
 Your friend ?

*Lor.* He was the safeguard of the city.  
 In early life its foe, but in his manhood,  
 Its saviour first, then victim.

*Bar.* Ah ! that seems  
 The penalty of saving cities. He  
 Whom we now act against not only saved  
 Our own, but added others to her sway.

*Lor.* The Romans (and we ape them) gave a crown  
 To him who took a city ; and they gave  
 A crown to him who saved a citizen  
 In battle : the rewards are equal. Now,  
 If we should measure forth the cities taken  
 By the Doge Foscari, with citizens  
 Destroy'd by him, or *through* him, the account  
 Were fearfully against him, although narrow'd  
 To private havoc, such as between him  
 And my dead father.

*Bar.* Are you then thus fix'd ?

*Lor.* Why, what should change me ?

*Bar.* That which changes me :  
 But you, I know, are marble to retain  
 A feud. But when all is accomplish'd, when  
 The old man is deposed, his name degraded,  
 His sons all dead, his family depress'd,  
 And you and yours triumphant, shall you sleep ?

*Lor.* More soundly.

*Bar.* That 's an error, and you 'll find it  
 Ere you sleep with your fathers.

*Lor.* They sleep not  
 In their accelerated graves, nor will  
 Till Foscari fills his. Each night I see them  
 Stalk frowning round my couch, and, pointing towards  
 The ducal palace, marshal me to vengeance.

*Bar.* Fancy's distemperature ! There is no passion  
 More spectral or fantastical than Hate ;  
 Not even its opposite, Love, so peoples air  
 With phantoms, as this madness of the heart.

*Enter an Officer.*

*Lor.* Where go you, sirrah ?

*Offi.* By the ducal order  
To forward the preparatory rites  
For the late Foscari's interment.

*Bar.* Their  
Vault has been often open'd of late years.

*Lor.* 'T will be full soon, and may be closed for ever.

*Offi.* May I pass on ?

*Lor.* You may.

*Bar.* How bears the Doge  
This last calamity ?

*Offi.* With desperate firmness,  
In presence of another he says little,  
But I perceive his lips move now and then ;  
And once or twice I heard him, from the adjoining  
Apartment mutter forth the words — " My son ! "  
Scarce audibly. I must proceed. [*Exit Officer.*]

*Bar.* This stroke  
Will move all Venice in his favour.

*Lor.* Right !  
We must be speedy : let us call together

The delegates appointed to convey  
The council's resolution.

*Bar.* I protest  
Against it at this moment.

*Lor.* As you please —  
I'll take their voices on it ne'ertheless,  
And see whose most may sway them, yours or mine.

[*Exeunt BARBARIGO and LOREDANO.*]

## ACT V.

### SCENE I.

*The DOGE's Apartment.*

*The DOGE and Attendants.*

*Att.* My lord, the deputation is in waiting  
But add, that if another hour would better  
Accord with your will, they will make it theirs.

*Doge.* To me all hours are like. Let them approach.  
[*Exit Attendant.*]

*An Officer.* Prince! I have done your bidding.

*Doge.* What command?

*Offi.* A melancholy one — to call the attendance  
Of —

*Doge.* True — true — true: I crave your pardon. I  
Begin to fail in apprehension, and  
Wax very old — old almost as my years.  
Till now I fought them off, but they begin  
To overtake me.

*Enter the Deputation, consisting of six of the Signory, and the  
Chief of the Ten.*

Noble men, your pleasure!

*Chief of the Ten.* In the first place, the Council doth con-  
dole

With the Doge on his late and private grief.

*Doge.* No more — no more of that.

*Chief of the Ten.* Will not the Duke

Accept the homage of respect?

*Doge.* I do

Accept it as 't is given — proceed.

*Chief of the Ten.* "The Ten,"

With a selected giunta from the senate  
Of twenty-five of the best born patricians,  
Having deliberated on the state  
Of the republic, and the o'erwhelming cares  
Which, at this moment, doubly must oppress  
Your years, so long devoted to your country,  
Have judged it fitting, with all reverence,  
Now to solicit from your wisdom (which  
Upon reflection must accord in this),  
The resignation of the ducal ring,  
Which you have worn so long and venerably:  
And to prove that they are not ungrateful nor  
Cold to your years and services, they add  
An appanage of twenty hundred golden  
Ducats, to make retirement not less splendid  
Than should become a sovereign's retreat.

*Doge.* Did I hear rightly?

*Chief of the Ten.* Need I say again?

*Doge.* No. — Have you done?

*Chief of the Ten.* I have spoken. Twenty-four  
Hours are accorded you to give an answer.

*Doge.* I shall not need so many seconds.

*Chief of the Ten.*

We

Will now retire.

*Doge.* Stay! Four and twenty hours

Will alter nothing which I have to say.

*Chief of the Ten.* Speak!

*Doge.* When I twice before reiterated

My wish to abdicate, it was refused me :

And not alone refused, but ye exacted

An oath from me that I would never more

Renew this instance. I have sworn to die

In full exertion of the functions, which

My country call'd me here to exercise,

According to my honour and my conscience —

I cannot break *my* oath.

*Chief of the Ten.* Reduce us not

To the alternative of a decree,

Instead of your compliance.

*Doge.* Providence

Prolongs my days to prove and chasten me ;

But ye have no right to reproach my length

Of days, since every hour has been the country's.

I am ready to lay down my life for her,

As I have laid down dearer things than life :

But for my dignity — I hold it of

The *whole* republic ; when the *general* will

Is manifest, then you shall all be answer'd.

*Chief of the Ten.* We grieve for such an answer ; but it  
cannot

Avail you aught.

*Doge.* I can submit to all things,

But nothing will advance ; no, not a moment.

What you decree — decree.

*Chief of the Ten.*

With this, then, must we

Return to those who sent us ?

*Doge.*

You have heard me.

*Chief of the Ten.* With all due reverence we retire.

[*Exeunt the Deputation, &c.*]

*Enter an Attendant.*

*Att.*

My lord,

The noble dame Marina craves an audience.

*Doge.* My time is hers.

*Enter* MARINA.

*Mar.* My lord, if I intrude —  
Perhaps you fain would be alone?

*Doge.* Alone,

Alone, come all the world around me, I  
Am now and evermore. But we will bear it.

*Mar.* We will, and for the sake of those who are,  
Endeavour — Oh my husband!

*Doge.* Give it way;

I cannot comfort thee.

*Mar.* He might have lived,  
So form'd for gentle privacy of life,  
So loving, so beloved; the native of  
Another land, and who so blest and blessing  
As my poor Foscari? Nothing was wanting  
Unto his happiness and mine save not  
To be Venetian.

*Doge.* Or a prince's son.

*Mar.* Yes; all things which conduce to other men's  
Imperfect happiness or high ambition,  
By some strange destiny, to him proved deadly.  
The country and the people whom he loved,  
The prince of whom he was the elder born,  
And —

*Doge.* Soon may be a prince no longer.

*Mar.* How?

*Doge.* They have taken my son from me, and now aim  
At my too long worn diadem and ring.  
Let them resume the gewgaws?

*Mar.* Oh the tyrants!

In such an hour too!

*Doge.* 'T is the fittest time;

An hour ago I should have felt it.

*Mar.* And

Will you not now resent it? — Oh for vengeance!  
But he, who, had he been enough protectèd,  
Might have repaid protection in this moment,  
Cannot assist his father.

*Doge.* Nor should do so  
Against his country, had he a thousand lives  
Instead of that —

*Mar.* They tortured from him. This  
May be pure patriotism. I am a woman:  
To me my husband and my children were

Country and home. I loved *him* — how I loved him !  
 I have seen him pass through such an ordeal as  
 The old martyrs would have shrunk from : he is gone,  
 And I, who would have given my blood for him,  
 Have nought to give but tears ! But could I compass  
 The retribution of his wrongs ! — Well, well ;  
 I have sons, who shall be men.

*Doge.* Your grief distracts you.

*Mar.* I thought I could have borne it, when I saw him  
 Bow'd down by such oppression ; yes, I thought  
 That I would rather look upon his corse  
 Than his prolong'd captivity : — I am punish'd  
 For that thought now. Would I were in his grave !

*Doge.* I must look on him once more.

*Mar.* Come with me !

*Doge.* Is he ——

*Mar.* Our bridal bed is now his bier.

*Doge.* And he is in his shroud !

*Mar.* Come, come, old man !

[*Exeunt the DOGE and MARINA.*]

*Enter BARBARIGO and LOREDANO.*

*Bar.* (to an *Attendant*). Where is the *Doge* ?

*Att.* This instant retired hence

With the illustrious lady his son's widow.

*Lor.* Where ?

*Att.* To the chamber where the body lies.

*Bar.* Let us return, then.

*Lor.* You forget, you cannot.

We have the implicit order of the *Giunta*  
 To await their coming here, and join them in  
 Their office : they 'll be here soon after us.

*Bar.* And will they press their answer on the *Doge* ?

*Lor.* 'T was his own wish that all should be done promptly.

He answer'd quickly, and must so be answer'd ;  
 His dignity is look'd to, his estate  
 Cared for — what would he more ?

*Bar.* Die in his robes :

He could not have lived long ; but I have done  
 My best to save his honours, and opposed  
 This proposition to the last, though vainly.  
 Why would the general vote compel me hither ?

*Lor.* 'T was fit that some one of such different thoughts  
 From ours should be a witness, lest false tongues  
 Should whisper that a harsh majority

Dreaded to have its acts beheld by others.

*Bar.* And not less, I must needs think, for the sake  
Of humbling me for my vain opposition.  
You are ingenious, Loredano, in  
Your modes of vengeance, nay, poetical,  
A very Ovid in the art of *hating* ;  
'T is thus (although a secondary object,  
Yet hate has microscopic eyes), to you  
I owe, by way of foil to the more zealous,  
This undesired association in  
Your Giunta's duties.

*Lor.* How! — *my* Giunta!

*Bar.* Yours!

They speak your language, watch your nod, approve  
Your plans, and do your work. Are they not *yours* ?

*Lor.* You talk unwarily. 'T were best they hear not  
This from you.

*Bar.* Oh! they 'll hear as much one day  
From louder tongues than mine; they have gone beyond  
Even their exorbitance of power: and when  
This happens in the most contemn'd and abject  
States, stung humanity will rise to check it.

*Lor.* You talk but idly.

*Bar.* That remains for proof.  
Here come our colleagues.

*Enter the Deputation as before.*

*Chief of the Ten.* Is the Duke aware  
We seek his presence ?

*All.* He shall be inform'd.

[*Exit Attendant.*]

*Bar.* The Duke is with his son.

*Chief of the Ten.* If it be so,  
We will remit him till the rites are over.  
Let us return. 'T is time enough to-morrow.

*Lor.* (*aside to Bar.*) Now the rich man's hell-fire upon  
your tongue,  
Unquench'd, unquenchable! I 'll have it torn  
From its vile babbling roots, till you shall utter  
Nothing but sobs through blood, for this! Sage signors,  
I pray ye be not hasty. [*Aloud to the others.*]

*Bar.* But be human!

*Lor.* See, the Duke comes!

*Enter the DOGE.*

*Doge.* I have obey'd your summons.

*Chief of the Ten.* We come once more to urge our past request.

*Doge.* And I to answer.

*Chief of the Ten.* What?

*Doge.* My only answer.

You have heard it.

*Chief of the Ten.* Hear you then the last decree,  
Definitive and absolute!

*Doge.* To the point —

To the point! I know of old the forms of office,  
And gentle preludes to strong acts — Go on!

*Chief of the Ten.* You are no longer Doge; you are released.

From your imperial oath as sovereign;  
Your ducal robes must be put off; but for  
Your services, the state allots the appanage  
Already mention'd in our former congress.  
Three days are left you to remove from hence,  
Under the penalty to see confiscated  
All your own private fortune.

*Doge.* That last clause,

I am proud to say, would not enrich the treasury.

*Chief of the Ten.* Your answer, Duke!

*Lor.* Your answer, Francis Foscari!

*Doge.* If I could have foreseen that my old age  
Was prejudicial to the state, the chief  
Of the republic never would have shown  
Himself so far ungrateful, as to place  
His own high dignity before his country;  
But this *life* having been so many years  
*Not* useless to that country, I would fain  
Have consecrated my last moments to her.  
But the decree being render'd, I obey.

*Chief of the Ten.* If you would have the three days named  
extended,  
We willingly will lengthen them to eight,  
As sign of our esteem.

*Doge.* Not eight hours, signor,  
Nor even eight minutes — There's the ducal ring,  
[*Taking off his ring and cap.*

And there the ducal diadem. And so  
The Adriatic's free to wed another.

*Chief of the Ten.* Yet go not forth so quickly.

*Doge.* I am old, sir,  
And even to move but slowly must begin  
To move betimes. Methinks I see amongst you

A face I know not — Senator! your name,  
You, by your garb, Chief of the Forty!

*Mem.*

Signor,

I am the son of Marco Memmo.

*Doge.*

Ah!

Your father was my friend.— But *sons* and *fathers*! —  
What, ho! my servants there!

*Att.*

My prince!

*Doge.*

No prince —

There are the princes of the prince! [*Pointing to the Ten's  
Deputation.*] — Prepare

To part from hence upon the instant.

*Chief of the Ten.*

Why

So rashly? 't will give scandal.

*Doge.*

Answer that;

[*To the Ten.*

It is your province.— Sirs, bestir yourselves:

[*To the Servants.*

There is one burthen which I beg you bear  
With care, although 't is past all farther harm —  
But I will look to that myself.

*Bar.*

He means

The body of his son.

*Doge.*

And call Marina,

My daughter!

*Enter MARINA.*

*Doge.*

Get thee ready, we must mourn

Elsewhere.

*Mar.*

And every where.

*Doge.*

True; but in freedom,

Without these jealous spies upon the great.  
Signors, you may depart: what would you more?  
We are going: do you fear that we shall bear  
The palace with us? Its *old* walls, ten times  
As *old* as I am, and I'm very old,  
Have served you, so have I, and I and they  
Could tell a tale; but I invoke them not  
To fall upon you! else they would, as erst  
The pillars of stone Dagon's temple on  
The Israelite and his Philistine foes.  
Such power I do believe there might exist  
In such a curse as mine, provoked by such  
As you; but I curse not. Adieu, good signors!  
May the next duke be better than the present.

*Lor.* The present duke is Paschal Malipiero.

*Doge.* Not till I pass the threshold of these doors.

*Lor.* Saint Mark's great bell is soon about to toll  
For his inauguration.

*Doge.* Earth and heaven!  
Ye will reverberate this peal; and I  
Live to hear this! — the first doge who e'er heard  
Such sound for his successor: Happier he,  
My attainted predecessor, stern Faliero —  
This insult at the least was spared him.

*Lor.* What!  
Do you regret a traitor?

*Doge.* No — I merely  
Envy the dead.

*Chief of the Ten.* My lord, if you indeed  
Are bent upon this rash abandonment  
Of the state's palace, at the least retire  
By the private staircase, which conducts you towards  
The landing-place of the canal.

*Doge.* No. I  
Will not descend the stairs by which I mounted  
To sovereignty — the Giants' Stairs, on whose  
Broad eminence I was invested duke.  
My services have called me up those steps,  
The malice of my foes will drive me down them.  
There five and thirty years ago was I  
Install'd, and traversed these same halls, from which  
I never thought to be divorced except  
A corse — a corse, it might be, fighting for them —  
But not push'd hence by fellow-citizens.  
But come; my son and I will go together —  
He to his grave, and I to pray for mine.

*Chief of the Ten.* What! thus in public?

*Doge.* I was publicly  
Elected, and so will I be deposed.  
Marina! art thou willing?

*Mar.* Here 's my arm!

*Doge.* And here my staff: thus propp'd will I go forth.

*Chief of the Ten.* It must not be — the people will per-  
ceive it.

*Doge.* The people! — There 's no people, you well  
know it,

Else you dare not deal thus by them or me.  
There is a populace, perhaps, whose looks  
May shame you; but they dare not groan nor curse you,  
Save with their hearts and eyes.

*Chief of the Ten.*  
Else —

You speak in passion,

*Doge.* You have reason. I have spoken much  
More than my wont : it is a foible which  
Was not of mine, but more excuses you,  
Inasmuch as it shows that I approach  
A dotage which may justify this deed  
Of yours, although the law does not, nor will.  
Farewell, sirs !

*Bar.* You shall not depart without  
An escort fitting past and present rank.  
We will accompany, with due respect,  
The Doge unto his private palace. Say !  
My brethren, will we not ?

*Different voices.* Ay ! — Ay !

*Doge.* You shall not  
Stir — in my train, at least. I enter'd here  
As sovereign — I go out as citizen  
By the same portals, but as citizen  
All these vain ceremonies are base insults,  
Which only ulcerate the heart the more,  
Applying poisons there as antidotes.  
Pomp is for princes — I am *none* ! — That 's false,  
I am, but only to these gates. — Ah !

*Lor.*

Hark !

[*The great bell of St. Mark's tolls.*]

*Bar.* The bell !

*Chief of the Ten.* St. Mark's, which tolls for the election  
Of Malipiero.

*Doge.* Well I recognise,  
The sound ! I heard it once, but once before,  
And that is five and thirty years ago ;  
Even then I was not young.

*Bar.* Sit down, my lord !  
You tremble.

*Doge.* 'T is the knell of my poor boy !  
My heart aches bitterly.

*Bar.* I pray you sit.

*Doge.* No ; my seat here has been a throne till now.  
Marina ! let us go.

*Mar.* Most readily.

*Doge* (*walks a few steps, then stops*). I feel athirst —  
will no one bring me here  
A cup of water ?

*Bar.* I —

*Mar.* And I —

Lor.

And I —

[The DOGE takes a goblet from the hand  
of LOREDANO.

Doge. I take yours, Loredano, from the hand  
Most fit for such an hour as this.

Lor. Why so?

Doge. 'T is said that our Venetian crystal has  
Such pure antipathy to poisons as  
To burst, if aught of venom touches it.  
You bore this goblet, and it is not broken.

Lor. Well, sir!

Doge. Then it is false, or you are true.  
For my own part, I credit neither; 't is  
An idle legend.

Mar. You talk wildly, and  
Had better now be seated, nor as yet  
Depart. Ah! now you look as look'd my husband!

Bar. He sinks! — support him! — quick — a chair —  
support him!

Doge. The bell tolls on! — let's hence — my brain's on  
fire!

Bar. I do beseech you, lean upon us!

Doge. No!  
A sovereign should die standing. My poor boy!  
Off with your arms! — *That bell!*

[The DOGE drops down and dies.

Mar. My God! My God!

Bar. (to Lor.) Behold! your work's completed!

Chief of the Ten. Is there then  
No aid? Call in assistance!

Att. 'T is all over.

Chief of the Ten. If it be so, at least his obsequies  
Shall be such as befits his name and nation,  
His rank and his devotion to the duties  
Of the realm, while his age permitted him  
To do himself and them full justice. Brethren,  
Say, shall it not be so?

Bar. He has not had  
The misery to die a subject where  
He reign'd: then let his funeral rites be princely.

Chief of the Ten. We are agreed, then?

All, except Lor. answer, Yes.

Chief of the Ten. Heaven's peace be with him!

Mar. Signors, your pardon: this is mockery.  
Juggle no more with that poor remnant, which,  
A moment since, while yet it had a soul,

(A soul by whom you have increased your empire,  
 And made your power as proud as was his glory,)  
 You banish'd from his palace, and tore down  
 From his high place, with such relentless coldness ;  
 And now, when he can neither know these honours,  
 Nor would accept them if he could, you, signors,  
 Purpose, with idle and superfluous pomp,  
 To make a pageant over what you trampled.  
 A princely funeral will be your reproach,  
 And not his honour.

*Chief of the Ten.* Lady, we revoke not  
 Our purposes so readily.

*Mar.* I know it,  
 As far as touches torturing the living.  
 I thought the dead had been beyond even *you*,  
 Though (some, no doubt) consign'd to powers which may  
 Resemble that you exercise on earth.  
 Leave him to me ; you would have done so for  
 His dregs of life, which you have kindly shorten'd :  
 It is my last of duties, and may prove  
 A dreary comfort in my desolation.  
 Grief is fantastical, and loves the dead,  
 And the apparel of the grave.

*Chief of the Ten.* Do you  
 Pretend still to this office ?

*Mar.* I do, signor.  
 Though his possessions have been all consumed  
 In the state's service, I have still my dowry,  
 Which shall be consecrated to his rites,  
 And those of ——— [She stops with agitation.

*Chief of the Ten.* Best retain it for your children.

*Mar.* Ay, they are fatherless, I thank you.

*Chief of the Ten.* We  
 Cannot comply with your request. His relics  
 Shall be exposed with wonted pomp, and follow'd  
 Unto their home by the new Doge, not clad  
 As *Doge*, but simply as a senator.

*Mar.* I have heard of murderers, who have interr'd  
 Their victims ; but ne'er heard, until this hour,  
 Of so much splendour in hypocrisy  
 O'er those they slew. I've heard of widows' tears —  
 Alas ! I have shed some — always thanks to you !  
 I've heard of *heirs* in sables — you have left none  
 To the deceased, so you would act the part  
 Of such. Well, sirs, your will be done ! as one day,  
 I trust, Heaven's will be done too !

*Chief of the Ten.* Know you, lady,  
To whom ye speak, and perils of such speech?

*Mar.* I know the former better than yourselves;  
The latter — like yourselves; and can face both.  
Wish you more funerals?

*Bar.* Heed not her rash words,  
Her circumstances must excuse her bearing

*Chief of the Ten.* We will not note them down.

*Bar.* (turning to *Lor.* who is writing upon his tablets.)  
What art thou writing,  
With such an earnest brow, upon thy tablets?

*Lor.* (pointing to the *Doge's* body). That he has paid  
me! \*

*Chief of the Ten.* What debt did he owe you?

*Lor.* A long and just one; Nature's debt and mine.

[*Curtain falls.*]

\* "*L'ha pagata.*" An historical fact. See the History of Venice by P. Daru, page 411, vol. 2.

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**APPENDIX.**



## APPENDIX

TO

### THE TWO FOSCARI.

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*Extrait de l'Histoire de la République de Venise par P. Daru, de l'Académie Française, tom. II*

DEPUIS trente ans, la république n'avait pas déposé les armes. Elle avait acquis les provinces de Brescia, de Bergame, de Crème, et la principauté de Ravenne.

Mais ces guerres continuelles faisaient beaucoup de malheureux et de mécontents. Le doge François Foscari, à qui on ne pouvait pardonner d'en avoir été le promoteur, manifesta une seconde fois, en 1442, et probablement avec plus de sincérité que la première, l'intention d'abdiquer sa dignité. Le conseil s'y refusa encore. On avait exigé de lui le serment de ne plus quitter le dogat. Il était déjà avancé dans la vieillesse, conservant cependant beaucoup de force de tête et de caractère, et jouissant de la gloire d'avoir vu la république étendre au loin les limites de ses domaines pendant son administration.

Au milieu de ces prospérités, de grands chagrins vinrent mettre à l'épreuve la fermeté de son âme.

Son fils, Jacques Foscari, fut accusé, en 1445, d'avoir reçu des présents de quelques princes ou seigneurs étrangers, notamment, disait-on, du duc de Milan, Philippe Visconti. C'était non seulement une bassesse, mais une infraction des lois positives de la république.

Le conseil des dix traita cette affaire comme s'il se fut agi d'un délit commis par un particulier obscur. L'accusé fut amené devant ses juges, devant le doge, qui ne crut pas pouvoir s'abstenir de présider le tribunal. Là, il fut interrogé, appliqué à la question, \* déclaré coupable, et il entendit, de la bouche de son père, l'arrêt qui le condamnait à un bannissement perpétuel, et le reléguait à Naples de Romanie, pour y finir ses jours.

Embarqué sur une galère pour se rendre au lieu de son exil, il tomba malade à Trieste. Les sollicitations du doge obtinrent, non sans difficulté, qu'on lui assignât une autre résidence. Enfin, le conseil des dix lui permit de se retirer à Trévise, en lui imposant l'obligation d'y rester sous peine de mort, et de se présenter tous les jours devant le gouverneur.

Il y était depuis cinq ans, lorsqu'un des chefs du conseil des dix assassiné. Les soupçons se portèrent sur lui : un de ses domestiques qu'on avait vu à Venise fut arrêté et subit la torture. Les bourreaux ne purent lui arracher aucun aveu. Ce terrible tribunal se fit amener le maître, le soumit aux mêmes épreuves ; il résista à tous les tourments, ne cessant d'attester son innocence ; † mais on ne vit dans cette

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\* E datagli la cordo per avere da lui la verità ; chiamato il consiglio de dieci colla giunta, nel quale, fu messer lo doge, fù sentenziato. (Marin Sanuto, Vite de' Duchi. F. Foscari.)

† E fù tormentato nè mai confesso cosa alcuna, pure parve al consiglio de' dieci di confinarlo in vita alla Canea. (Ibid.) Voici le texte du jugement : " Cum Jacobus Foscari per occasionem percussionis et mortis Hermolai Donati fuit re-tentus et examinatus, et propter significationes, testificationes, et scripturas quæ

constance que de l'obstination ; de ce qu'il taisait le fait, on conclut que ce fait existait ; on attribua sa forme à la magie, et on le rélégua à la Canée. De cette terre lointaine, le banni, digne alors de quelque pitié, ne cessait d'écrire à son père, à ses amis, pour obtenir quelque adoucissement à sa déportation. N'obtenant rien, et sachant que la terre qu'inspirait le conseil des dix ne lui permettait pas d'espérer de trouver dans Venise une seule voix qui s'élevât en sa faveur ; il fit une lettre pour le nouveau duc de Milan, par laquelle, au nom des bons offices que Sforce avait reçus du chef de la république, il implorait son intervention en faveur d'un innocent, du fils du doge.

Cette lettre, selon quelques historiens, fut confiée à un marchand, qui avait promis de la faire parvenir au duc ; mais qui, trop averti de ce qu'il avait à craindre en se rendant l'intermédiaire d'une pareille correspondance, se hâta, en débarquant à Venise, de la remettre au chef du tribunal. Une autre version, qui paraît plus sûre, rapporte que la lettre fut surprise par un espion, attaché au pas de l'exilé.\*

Ce fut un nouveau délit dont on eut à punir Jacques Foscari. Réclamer la protection d'un prince étranger était un crime, dans un sujet de la république. Une galère partit sur-le-champ pour l'amener dans les prisons de Venise. A son arrivée il fut soumis à l'estrapade.† C'était une singulière destinée, pour le citoyen d'une république et pour le fils d'un prince, d'être trois fois dans sa vie appliqué à la question. Cette fois la torture était d'autant plus odieuse, qu'elle n'avait point d'objet, le fait qu'on avait à lui reprocher, étant incontestable.

Quand on demanda à l'accusé, dans les intervalles que les bourreaux lui accordaient, pourquoi il avait écrit la lettre qu'on lui produisait, il répondit que c'était précisément parce qu'il ne doutait pas qu'elle ne tombât entre les mains du tribunal, que toute autre voie lui avait été fermée pour faire parvenir ses réclamations, qu'il s'attendait bien qu'on le ferait amener à Venise ; mais qu'il avait tout risqué pour avoir la consolation de voir sa femme, son père, et sa mère, encore une fois.

Sur cette naïve déclaration, on confirma sa sentence d'exil ; mais on l'aggrava, en y ajoutant qu'il serait retenu en prison pendant un an. Cette rigueur, dont on usait envers un malheureux, était sans doute odieuse ; mais cette politique, qui défendait à tous les citoyens de faire intervenir les étrangers dans les affaires intérieures de la république, était sage. Elle était chez eux une maxime de gouvernement et une maxime inflexible. L'historien Paul Morosini‡ a conté que l'empereur Frédéric III, pendant qu'il était l'hôte des Vénitiens, demanda, comme une faveur particulière, l'admission d'un citoyen dans le grand conseil, et la grâce d'un ancien gouverneur de Candie, gendre du doge, et banni pour sa mauvaise administration, sans pouvoir obtenir ni l'une ni l'autre.

Cependant, on ne put refuser au condamné la permission de voir sa femme, ses enfants, ses parents, qu'il allait quitter pour toujours. Cette dernière entrevue même fut accompagnée de cruauté, par la sévère circonspection, qui retenait les épanchements de la douleur paternelle et conjugale. Ce ne fut point dans l'intérieur de leur appartement, ce fut dans une des grandes salles du palais, qu'une femme, accompagnée de ces quatre fils, vint faire les derniers adieux à son mari, qu'un père octogénaire et le dogresse accablée d'infirmités, jouirent un moment de la triste consolation de mêler leurs larmes à celles de leur exilé. Il se jeta à leurs genoux en leur tendant des mains disloquées par la torture, pour les supplier de solliciter quelque adoucissement à la sentence qui venait d'être prononcée contre lui. Son père eut le courage de lui répondre : "Non, mon fils, respectez votre arrêt, et obéissez sans

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habentur contra eum, clare apparet ipsum esse reum criminis prædicti, sed propter incantationes et verba quæ sibi reperta sunt, de quibus existit indictia manifesta, videtur propter obstinatam mentem suam, non esse possibile extrahere ab ipso illam veritatem, quæ clara est per scripturas et per testificationes, quoniam in fune aliquam nec vocem, nec gemitum, sed solum intra dentes voces ipse videtur et audiri infra se loqui, etc. . . . Tamen non est standum in istis terminis, propter honorem statûs nostri et pro multis respectibus, præsertim quod regimen nostrum occupatur in hæc re, et qui interdictum est amplius progredere: vadit pars, quod dictus Jacobus Foscari, propter ea quæ habentur de illo, mittatur in confinium in civitate Canæe." etc.—Notice sur le procès de Jacques Foscari, dans un volume, intitulé *Raccolta di memorie storiche e annedote, per formar la Storia dell' eccellentissimo consiglio di X della sua prima istituzione sino a' giorni nostri, con la diverse variazioni e riforme nelle varie epoche successe.* (Archives de Venise.)

\* La notice citée ci-dessus, qui rapporte les actes de cette procédure.

† Ebbe prima per sapere la verità trenta squassi di corda. (Marin Sanuto, *Vite de' Duchi. F. Foscari.*)

‡ *Historia di Venezia* lib. 23.

murmure à la seigneurie.”\* A ces mots il se sépara de l'infortuné, qui fut sur-le-champ embarqué pour Candie.

L'antiquité vit avec autant d'horreur que d'admiration un père condamnant ses fils évidemment coupables. Elle hésita pour qualifier de vertu sublime ou de térocité cet effort qui paraît au-dessus de la nature humaine ; † mais ici, où la première faute n'était qu'une faiblesse, où la seconde n'était pas prouvée, où la troisième n'avait rien de criminel, comment concevoir la constance d'un père, qui voit torturer trois fois son fils unique, qui l'entend condamner sans preuves, et qui n'éclate pas en plaintes ; qui ne l'aborde que pour lui montrer un visage plus austère qu'attendri, et qui, au moment de s'en séparer pour jamais, lui interdit les murmures et jusqu'à l'espérance ? Comment expliquer une si cruelle circonspection, si ce n'est en avouant, à notre honte, que la tyrannie peut obtenir de l'espèce humaine les mêmes efforts que la vertu ? La servitude aurait-elle son héroïsme comme la liberté ?

Quelque temps après ce jugement, on découvrit le véritable auteur de l'assassinat, dont Jacques Foscari portait le peine ; mais il n'était plus temps de réparer cette atroce injustice, le malheureux était mort dans sa prison.

Il me reste à raconter la suite des malheurs du père. L'histoire les attribue à l'impatience qu'avaient ses ennemis et ses rivaux de voir vaquer sa place. Elle accuse formellement Jacques Loredan, l'un des chefs du conseil des dix, de s'être livré contre ce vieillard aux conseils d'une haine héréditaire, et qui depuis long temps divisait leurs maisons. †

François Foscari avait essayé de la faire cesser, en offrant sa fille à l'illustre amiral Pierre Loredan, pour un de ses fils. L'alliance avait été rejetée, et l'inimitié des deux familles s'en était accrue. Dans tous les conseils, dans toutes les affaires, le doge trouvait toujours les Loredans prêts à combattre ses propositions ou ses intérêts. Il lui échappa un jour de dire qu'il ne se croirait réellement prince, que lorsque Pierre Loredan aurait cessé de vivre. Cet amiral mourut quelque temps après, d'une incommodité assez prompte qu'on ne put expliquer. Il n'en fallut pas davantage aux malveillants pour insinuer que François Foscari, ayant désiré cette mort, pouvait bien l'avoir hâtée.

Ces bruits s'accréditèrent encore lorsqu'on vit aussi périr subitement Marc Loredan, frère de Pierre, et cela dans le moment où, en sa qualité d'avogador, il instituait un procès contre Andié Donato, gendre du doge, accusé de péculat. On écrivit sur la tombe de l'amiral qu'il avait été enlevé à la patrie par le poison.

Il n'y avait aucune preuve, aucun indice contre François Foscari, aucune raison même de le soupçonner. Quand sa vie entière n'aurait pas démenti une imputation aussi odieuse, il savait que son rang ne lui promettait ni l'impunité ni même l'indulgence. La mort tragique de l'un de ses prédécesseurs l'en avertissait, et il n'avait que trop d'exemples domestiques du soin que le conseil des dix prenait d'humilier le chef de la république.

Cependant, Jacques Loredan, fils de Pierre, croyait ou feignait de croire avoir à venger les pertes de sa famille. § Dans ses livres de comptes (car il faisait le commerce, comme à cette époque presque tous les patriciens,) il avit inscrit de sa pro-

\* Marin Sanuto, dans sa chronique, *Vite de' Duchi*, se sert ici sans en avoir eu l'intention d'une expression assez énergique : “ Il doge era vecchio in decrepita età e caminava con una mazzetta : E quando gli andò parlogli molto costantemente che pareo che non fosse suo figliuolo, licet fosse figliuolo unico, e Jacopo disse, messer padre, vi prego che procuriate per me, acciocchè io toni a casa mia. Il doge disse : Jacopo, va e obbedisei a quello che vuole la terra, e non cercar più oltre.”

† Cela fut un acte que l'on ne sauroit ny suffisamment louer, ny assez blâmer : car, ou c'étoit une excellence de vertu, qui rendoit ainsi son cœur impassible, ou une violence de passion qui le rendoit insensible, dont ne l'une ne l'autre n'est chose petite, ainsi surpassant l'ordinaire d'humaine nature et tenant ou de la divinité ou de la bestialité. Mais il est plus raisonnable que le jugement des hommes s'accorde à sa gloire, que la faiblesse des jugeans fasse des croire sa vertu. Mais pour lors quand il se fut retiré, tout le monde demeura sur la place, comme transy d'horreur et de frayeur, par un long temps sans mot dire, pour avoir veu ce qui avait été fait. (Plutarque, *Valerius Publicola*.)

‡ Je suis principalement dans ce récit une relation manuscrite de la déposition de François Foscari, qui est dans le volume intitulé *Raccolta di memorie storiche e annedote, per formar la Storia dell' eccellentissimo consiglio di X.* (Archives de Venise.)

§ *Hasce tamen injurias quamvis imaginarias non tam ad animum revocaverat*

pre man le doge au nombre de ses débiteurs, pour la mort, y était-il dit, de mon père et de mon oncle.\* De l'autre côté du registre, il avait laissé une page en blanc, pour y faire mention du recouvrement de cette dette, et en effet, après la perte du doge, il écrivit sur son registre, il me l'a payée — l'ha pagata.

Jacques Loredan fut élu membre du conseil des dix, en devint un des trois chefs, et se promit bien de profiter de cette occasion pour accomplir la vengeance qu'il méditait.

Le doge en sortant de la terrible épreuve qu'il venait de subir, pendant le procès de son fils, s'était retiré au fond de son palais, incapable de se livrer aux affaires, consumé de chagrins, accablé de vieillesse, il ne se montrait plus en public, ni même dans les conseils. Cette retraite, si facile à expliquer dans un vieillard octogénaire si malheureux, déplut aux decemvirs, qui voulurent y voir un murmure contre leur arrêts.

Loredan commença par se plaindre devant ses collègues du tort que les infirmités du doge, son absence des conseils, apportaient à l'expédition des affaires, il finit par hasarder et réussit à faire agréer la proposition de le déposer. Ce n'était pas la première fois que Venise avait pour prince un homme dans la caducité; l'usage et les lois y avaient pourvu; dans ces circonstances le doge était suppléé par le plus ancien du conseil. Ici, cela ne suffisait pas aux ennemis de Foscari. Pour donner plus de solennité à la délibération, le conseil des dix demanda une adjonction de vingt-cinq sénateurs; mais comme on n'en énonçait pas l'objet, et que le grand conseil était loin de le soupçonner, il se trouva que Marc Foscari, frère du doge, leur fut donné pour l'un des adjoints. Au lieu de l'admettre à la délibération, ou de réclamer contre ce choix, on enferma ce sénateur dans une chambre séparée, et on lui fit jurer de ne jamais parler de cette exclusion qu'il éprouvait, en lui déclarant qu'il y allait de sa vie; ce qui n'empêcha pas qu'on n'inscrivit son nom au bas du décret comme s'il y eût pris part.†

Quand on en vint à la délibération, Loredan la provoqua en ces termes:‡ "Si l'utilité publique doit imposer silence à tous les intérêts privés, je ne doute pas que nous ne prenions aujourd'hui une mesure que la patrie réclame que nous lui devons. Les états ne peuvent se maintenir dans un ordre de choses immuable; vous n'avez qu'à voir comme le nôtre est changé, et combien il le serait davantage s'il n'y avait une autorité assez ferme pour y porter remède. J'ai honte de vous faire remarquer la confusion qui règne dans les conseils, le désordre des délibérations, l'encombrement des affaires, et la légèreté avec laquelle les plus importantes sont décidées; la licence de notre jeunesse, le peu d'assiduité des magistrats, l'introduction de nouveautés dangereuses. Quel est l'effet de ces désordres? de compromettre notre considération. Quelle en est la cause? l'absence d'un chef capable de modérer les uns, de diriger les autres, de donner l'exemple à tous, et de maintenir la force des lois.

"Où est le temps où nos décrets étaient aussitôt exécutés que rendus? Où François Carrare se trouvait investi dans Padoue, avant de pouvoir être seulement informé que nous voulions lui faire la guerre? nous avons vu tout le contraire dans la dernière guerre contre le duc de Milan. Malheureuse la république qui est sans chef!

"Je ne vous rappelle pas tous ces inconvénients et leurs suites déplorables, pour vous affliger, pour vous effrayer, mais pour vous faire souvenir que vous êtes les maîtres, les conservateurs de cet état, fondé par vos pères, et de la liberté que nous devons à leurs travaux, à leurs institutions. Ici, le mal indique le remède. Nous n'avons point de chef, il nous en faut un. Notre prince est notre ouvrage, nous avons donc le droit de juger son mérite quand il s'agit de l'élire, et son incapacité quand elle se manifeste. J'ajouterai que le peuple, encore bien qu'il n'ait pas le droit de prononcer sur les actions de ses maîtres, apprendra ce changement avec transport. C'est la providence, je n'en doute pas, qui lui inspire elle-même ces dispositions, pour vous avertir que la république réclame cette résolution, et que le sort de l'état est en vos mains."

Ce discours n'éprouva que de timides contradictions; cependant, la délibération

Jacobus Lauredanus defunctorum nepos, quam in abecedarium vindictam opportuna. (Palazzi Fasti Ducales.)

\* Ibid, et l'Histoire Venitienne de Vianolo.

† Il faut cependant remarquer que dans la notice où l'on raconte ce fait, la délibération est rapportée, que les vingt-cinq adjoints sont nommés, et que le nom de Marc Foscari ne s'y trouve pas.

‡ Cette harangue se lit dans la notice citée ci-dessus.

dura huit jours. L'assemblée, ne se jugeant pas aussi sûre de l'approbation universelle que l'orateur voulait le lui faire croire, désirait que le doge donnât lui-même sa démission. Il avait déjà proposée deux fois, et on n'avait pas voulu l'accepter.

Aucune loi ne portait que le prince fut révocable; il était au contraire à vie et les exemples qu'on pouvait citer de plusieurs doges déposés, prouvaient que de telles résolutions avaient toujours été le résultat d'un mouvement populaire.

Mais d'ailleurs, si le doge pouvait être déposé, ce n'était pas assurément par un tribunal composé d'un petit nombre de membres, institué pour punir les crimes, et nullement investi du droit de révoquer ce que le corps souverain de l'état avait fait.

Cependant, le tribunal arrêta que les six conseillers de la seigneurie, et les chefs du conseil des dix, se transporteraient auprès du doge pour lui signifier, que l'excellent conseil avait jugé convenable qu'il abdiquât une dignité dont son âge ne lui permettait plus de remplir les fonctions. On lui donnait 1500 ducats d'or pour son entretien et vingt-quatre heures pour se décider.\*

Foscari répondit sur-le-champ avec beaucoup de gravité, que deux fois il avait voulu se démettre de sa charge; qu'au lieu de le lui permettre, on avait exigé de lui le serment de ne plus réitérer cette demande; que la providence avait prolongé ses jours pour l'éprouver et pour l'affliger, que cependant on n'était pas en droit de reprocher sa longue vie à un homme qui avait employé quatre-vingt-quatre ans au service de la république; qu'il était prêt encore à lui sacrifier sa vie; mais que, pour sa dignité, il la tenait de la république entière, et qu'il se réservait de répondre sur ce sujet, quand la volonté générale se serait légalement manifestée.

Le lendemain, à l'heure indiquée, les conseillers et les chefs des dix se présentèrent. Il ne voulut pas leur donner d'autre réponse. Le conseil s'assembla sur-le-champ, lui envoya demander encore une fois sa résolution séance tenante, et la réponse ayant été la même, on prononça que le doge était relevé de son serment et déposé de sa dignité, on lui assignait une pension de 1500 ducats d'or, en lui enjoignant de sortir du palais dans huit jours, sous peine de voir tous ses biens confisqués †

Le lendemain, ce décret fut porté au doge, et ce fut Jacques Loredan qui eut la cruelle joie de le lui présenter. Il répondit: "Si j'avais pu prévoir que ma vieillesse fut préjudiciable à l'état, le chef de la république ne se serait pas montré assez ingrat, pour préférer sa dignité à la patrie; mais cette vie lui ayant été utile pendant tant d'années, je voulais lui en consacrer jusqu'au dernier moment. Le décret est rendu, je m'y conformerai." Après avoir parlé ainsi, il se dépouilla des marques de sa dignité, remit l'anneau ducal, qui fut brisé en sa présence, et dès le jour suivant il quitta ce palais, qu'il avait habité pendant trente-cinq ans, accompagné de son frère, de ses parents, et de ses amis. Un secrétaire, qui se trouva sur le perron, l'invita à descendre par un escalier dérobé, afin d'éviter la foule du peuple, qui s'était rassemblé dans les cours, mais il s'y refusa, disant qu'il voulait descendre par où il était monté; et quand il fut au bas de l'escalier des géants, il se retourna, appuyé sur la béquille, vers le palais en proférant ces paroles: "Mes services m'y avaient appelé, la malice de mes ennemis m'en fait sortir."

La foule qui s'ouvrait sur son passage, et qui avait peut-être désiré sa mort, était émue de respect et d'attendrissement. † Rentré dans sa maison, il recommanda à sa famille d'oublier les injures de ses ennemis. Personne dans les divers corps de l'état ne se crut en droit de s'étonner, qu'un prince inamovible eût été déposé sans qu'on lui reprochât rien: que l'état eût perdu son chef, à l'insu du sénat et du corps souverain lui-même. Le peuple seul laissa échapper quelques regrets: une proclamation du conseil des dix prescrivit le silence le plus absolu sur cette affaire, sous peine de mort.

Avant de donner un successeur à François Foscari, une nouvelle loi fut rendue, qui défendait au doge d'ouvrir et de lire, autrement qu'en présence de ses conseillers, les dépêches des ambassadeurs de la république, et les lettres des princes étrangers. ‡

Les électeurs entrèrent au conclave et nommèrent au dogat Paschal Malipier le 30 Octobre, 1457. La cloche de Saint-Marc, qui annonçait à Venise son nouveau

\* Ce Décret est rapporté textuellement dans la notice.

† La notice rapporte aussi ce décret.

‡ On lit dans la notice ces propres mots: "Se fosse stato in loro potere voluntieri lo avrebbero restituito."

§ Hist. di Venetia, di Paolo Morosini, lib. 24.

prince, vint frapper l'oreille de François Foscari ; cette fois sa fermeté l'abandonna, il éprouva un tel saisissement, qu'il mourut le lendemain.\*

La république ariêta qu'on lui rendrait les mêmes honneurs funèbres que s'il fut mort dans l'exercice de sa dignité ; mais lorsqu'on se présenta pour enlever ses restes, sa veuve, qui de son nom était Marine Nani, déclara qu'elle ne le souffrirait point ; qu'on ne devait pas traiter en prince après sa mort celui qui vivant on avait dépouillé de la couronne, et que, puisqu'il avait consumé ses biens au service de l'état, elle saurait, consacrer sa dot à lui faire rendre les derniers honneurs. † On ne tint aucun compte de cette résistance, et malgré les protestations de l'ancienno dogaresse, le corps fut enlevé, revêtu des ornemens ducaux, exposé en public, et les obsèques furent célébrées avec la pompe accoutumée. Le nouveau doge assista au convoi en robe de sénateur.

La pitié qu'avait inspirée le malheur de ce vieillard, ne fut pas tout-à-fait stérile. Un an après, on osa dire que le conseil des dix avait outrepassé ses pouvoirs, et il lui fut défendu par une loi du grand conseil de s'ingérer à l'avenir de juger le prince, à moins que ce ne fut pour cause de félonie. ‡

Un acte d'autorité tel que la déposition d'un doge inamovible de sa nature, aurait pu exciter un soulèvement général, ou au moins occasionner une division dans une république autrement constituée que Venise. Mais depuis trois ans, il existait dans celle-ci une magistrature, ou plutôt une autorité, devant laquelle tout devait se taire.

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*Extrait de l'Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du Moyen Age. Par J. C. L. Simonde de Sismondi, tom. x.*

Le Doge de Venise, qui avait prévenu par ce traité une guerre non moins dangereuse que celle qu'il avait terminée presque en même temps par le traité de Lodi, était alors parvenu à une extrême vieillesse. François Foscari occupait cette première dignité de l'état dès le 15 Avril, 1423. Quoiqu'il fut déjà âgé de plus de cinquante-un ans à l'époque de son élection, il était cependant le plus jeune des quarante-un électeurs. Il avait eu beaucoup de peine à parvenir au rang qu'il convoitait, et son élection avait été conduite avec beaucoup d'adresse. Pendant plusieurs jours de scrutin ses amis les plus zélés s'étaient abstenus de lui donner leur suffrage, pour que les autres ne le considérassent pas comme un concurrent redoutable. § Le conseil des dix craignait son crédit parmi la noblesse pauvre, parce qu'il avait cherché, à se la rendre favorable, tandis qu'il était procureur de Saint-Marc, en faisant employer plus de trente mille ducats à doter des jeunes filles de bonne maison, ou à établir de jeunes gentilshommes. On craignoit encore sa nombreuse famille, car alors il était père de quatre enfans, et marié de nouveau ; enfin on redoutait son ambition et son goût pour la guerre. L'opinion que ses adversaires s'étaient formée de lui fut vérifiée par les événemens ; pendant trente-quatre ans que Foscari fut à la tête de la république, elle ne cessa point de combattre. Si les hostilités étaient suspendues durant quelques mois, c'était pour recommencer bientôt avec plus de vigueur. Ce fut l'époque où Venise étendit son empire sur Brescia, Bergame, Ravenne, et Crème ; où elle fonda sa domination de Lombardie, et parut sans cesse sur le point d'asservir toute cette province. Profond, courageux, inébranlable, Foscari communiqua aux conseils son propre caractère, et ses talens lui firent obtenir plus d'influence sur la république que n'avaient exercé la plupart de ses prédécesseurs. Mais si son ambition avait eu pour but l'aggrandissement de sa famille, elle fut cruellement trompée ; trois de ses fils moururent dans les huit années qui suivirent son élection ; le quatrième, Jacob, par lequel la maison Foscari s'est perpétuée, fut victime de la jalousie du conseil des dix, et empoisonna par ses malheurs les jours de son père. ||

En effet, le conseil des dix, redoublant de défiance envers le chef de l'état, lorsqu'il

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\* Hist. di Pietro Justiniani, lib. 8.

† Hist. d'Egnatio, liv. 6. cap. 7.

‡ Ce décret est du 25 Octobre, 1458. La notice le rapporte.

§ Marin Sanuto, Vite de' Duchi di Venezia, p. 967.

|| Ibid. p. 968.

le voyoit plus fort par ses talens et sa popularité, veilloit sans cesse sur Foscari, pour le punir de son crédit, et de sa gloire. Au mois de Février, 1445, Michel Bevilacqua, Florentin, exilé à Venise, accusa en secret Jacques Foscari auprès des inquisiteurs d'état, d'avoir reçu de duc Philippe Visconti, des présens d'argent et de joyaux, par les mains des gens de sa maison. Telle était l'odieuse procédure adoptée à Venise, que sur cette accusation secrète le fils du doge, du représentant de la majesté de la république, fut mis à la torture. On lui arracha par l'estrapade l'aveu, des charges portées contre lui; il fut relégué pour le reste de ses jours à Napoli de Romanie, avec obligation de se présenter chaque matin au commandant de la place.\* Cependant, le vaisseau qui le portait ayant touché à Trieste, Jacob, grièvement malade des suites de la torture, et plus encore de l'humiliation qu'il avait éprouvée, demanda en grâce au conseil des dix de n'être pas envoyé plus loin. Il obtint cette faveur, par une délibération du 28 Décembre, 1446; il fut rappelé à Trévise; et il eut la liberté d'habiter tout le Trévisan indifféremment.†

Il vivait en paix à Trévise; et la fille de Léonard Contarini, qu'il avait épousée le 10 Février, 1441, était venue le rejoindre dans son exil, lorsque le 5 Novembre, 1450, Almo Donato, chef du conseil des dix, fut assassiné. Les deux autres inquisiteurs d'état, Triadano Gritti et Antonio Venieri, portèrent leur soupçons sur Jacob Foscari, parce-qu'un domestique à lui, nommé Olivier, avait été vu ce soir-là même à Venise, et avait des premiers donné la nouvelle de cet assassinat. Olivier fut mis à la torture, mais il nia jusqu'à la fin, avec un courage, inébranlable, le crime dont on l'accusait, quoique ses juges eussent la barbarie de lui faire donner jusqu'à quatre-vingts tours d'estrapade. Cependant, comme Jacob Foscari avait de puissans motifs d'inimitié contre le conseil des dix, qui l'avait condamné, et qui temoignait de la haine au doge son père, on essaya de mettre à son tour Jacob à la torture, et l'on prolongea contre lui ces affreux tourmens, sans réussir à en tirer aucune confession. Malgré sa dénégation, le conseil des dix le condamna à être transporté à la Canée, et accorda une récompense à son délateur. Mais les horribles douleurs que Jacob Foscari avait éprouvées avaient troublé sa raison, ses persécuteurs, touchés de ce dernier malheur, permirent, qu'on le ramenât à Venise le 26 Mai, 1451. Il embrassa son père, il puisa dans ses exhortations quelque courage et quelque calme, et il fut reconduit immédiatement à la Canée.‡ Sur ces entrefaites, Nicolas Erizzo, homme déjà noté pour un précédent crime, confessa, en mourant, que c'était lui qui avait tué Almo Donato.§

Le malheureux doge, François Foscari, avait déjà cherché à plusieurs reprises, à abdiquer une dignité si funeste à lui-même et à sa famille. Il lui semblaît que, redescendu au rang de simple citoyen, comme il n'inspirerait plus de crainte ou de jalousie, on n'accablerait plus son fils par ces effroyables persécutions. Abattu par la mort de ses premiers enfans, il avait voulu, dès le 26 Juin, 1433, déposer une dignité, durant l'exercice de laquelle sa patrie avait été tourmentée par la guerre, par la peste, et par des malheurs de tout genre.¶ Il renouvla cette proposition après les jugemens rendus contre son fils; mais le conseil des dix le retenait forcément sur le trône, comme il retenait son fils dans les fers.

En vain Jacob Foscari, obligé de se présenter chaque jour au gouverneur de la Canée, réclamait contre l'injustice de sa dernière sentence, sur laquelle la confession d'Erizzo ne lassait plus de doutes. En vain il demandait grâce au farouche conseil des dix; il ne pouvait obtenir aucune réponse. Le désir de revoir son père et sa mère, arrivés tous deux au dernier terme de la vieillesse, le désir de revoir une patrie dont la cruauté ne méritait pas un si tendre amour, se changèrent en lui en une vraie fureur. Ne pouvant retourner à Venise pour y vivre libre, il voulut du moins y aller chercher un supplice. Il écrivit au duc de Milan à la fin de Mai, 1456, pour implorer sa protection auprès du sénat: et sachant qu'une telle lettre seroit considérée comme un crime, il l'exposa lui-même dans un lieu où il étoit sûr qu'elle seroit saisie par les espions qui l'entouraient. En effet, la lettre étant déferée au conseil des dix, on l'envoja chercher aussitôt, et il fut reconduit à Venise le 19 Juillet, 1456.¶

Jacob Foscari ne ma point sa lettre, il raconta en même temps dans quel but il l'avait écrite, et comment il l'avait fait tomber entre les mains de son délateur. Malgré ces aveux, Foscari fut remis à la torture, et on lui donna trente tours d'estrapade, pour voir s'il confirmerait ensuite ses dépositions. Quand on le détacha de la corde,

\* Marin Sanuto, Vite de' Duchi di Venezia, p. 396.

† Ibid. p. 1123.

‡ Ibid. p. 1123.—M. Ant. Sabellico, Deca III. L. VI. f. 187.

§ Marin Sanuto, p. 1139.

¶ Ibid. p. 1032.

¶ Ibid. p. 1162.

on le trouva déchiré par ces horribles secousses. Les juges permirent alors à son père, à sa mère, à sa femme, et à ses fils, d'aller le voir dans sa prison. Le vieux Foscari, appuyé sur un bâton, ne se traîna qu'avec peine, dans la chambre où son fils unique était pansé de ses blessures. Ce fils demandait encore la grâce de mourir dans sa maison.—“Retourne à ton exil, mon fils, puisque ta patrie l'ordonne,” lui dit le doge, “et soumets-toi à sa volonté.” Mais en rentrant dans son palais, ce malheureux vieillard s'évanouit, épuisé par la violence qu'il s'était faite. Jacob devait encore passer une année en prison à la Canée, avant qu'on lui rendit la même liberté limitée à laquelle il était réduit avant cet événement; mais à peine fut-il débarqué sur cette terre d'exil, qu'il y mourut de douleur.\*

Dès-lors, et pendant quinze mois, le vieux doge, accablé d'années et chagrins, ne recouvra plus la force de son corps ou celle de son âme; il n'assistait plus à aucun des conseils, et il ne pouvait plus remplir aucune des fonctions de sa dignité. Il était entré dans sa quatre-vingt-sixième année, et si le conseil des dix avait été susceptible de quelque pitié, il aurait attendu en silence la fin, sans doute prochaine, d'une carrière marquée par tant de gloire et tant de malheurs. Mais le chef du conseil des dix était alors Jacques Loredano, fils de Marc, et neveu de Pierre, le grand amiral, qui toute leur vie été les ennemis acharnés du vieux doge. Ils avaient transmis leur haine à leurs enfans, et cette vieille haine n'était pas encore satisfaite.† A l'instigation de Loredano, Jérôme Barbarigo, inquisiteur d'état, proposa au conseil des dix, au mois d'Octobre, 1457, de soumettre Foscari à une nouvelle humiliation. Dès que ce magistrat ne pouvait plus remplir ses fonctions, Barbarigo demanda qu'on nommât un autre doge. Le conseil, qui avait refusé par deux fois l'abdication de Foscari, parce que la constitution ne pouvait la permettre, hésita avant de se mettre en contradiction avec ses propres décrets. Les discussions dans le conseil et la junte se prolongèrent pendant huit jours, jusque fort avant dans la nuit. Cependant, on fit entrer dans l'assemblée Marco Foscari, procureur de Saint-Marc, et frère du doge, pour qu'il fut lié par le redoutable serment du secret, et qu'il ne pût arrêter les menées de ses ennemis. Enfin, le conseil se rendit auprès du doge, et lui demanda d'abdiquer volontairement un emploi qu'il ne pouvait plus exercer. “J'ai vu,” répondit le vieillard, “de remplir jusqu'à ma mort, selon mon honneur et ma conscience, les fonctions auxquelles ma patrie m'a appelé. Je ne puis me délier moi-même de mon serment; qu'un ordre des conseils dispose de moi, je m'y soumettrai, mais je ne le devancerai pas.” Alors une nouvelle délibération du conseil délia François Foscari de son serment ducal, lui assura une pension de deux mille ducats pour le reste de sa vie, et lui ordonna d'évacuer en trois jours le palais, et de déposer les ornemens de sa dignité. Le doge ayant remarqué parmi les conseillers qui lui portèrent cet ordre, un chef de la quarante qu'il ne connaissait pas, demanda son nom: “Je suis le fils de Marco Memmo,” lui dit le conseiller.—“Ah! ton père était mon ami,” lui dit le vieux doge, en soupirant. Il donna aussitôt des ordres pour qu'on transportât ses effets dans une maison à lui; et le lendemain 23 Octobre on le vit, se soutenait à peine, et appuyé sur son vieux frère, redescendre ces mêmes escaliers sur lesquels, trente-quatre ans auparavant, on l'avait vu installé avec tant de pompe, et traverser ces mêmes salles où la république avait reçu ses sermens. Le peuple entier parut indigné de tant de dureté exercée contre un vieillard qu'il respectait et qu'il aimait; mais le conseil des dix fit publier une défense de parler de cette révolution, sous peine d'être traduit devant les inquisiteurs d'état. Le 20 Octobre, Pasqual Malipieri, procureur de Saint-Marc, fut élu pour successeur de Foscari; celui-ci n'eut pas néanmoins l'humiliation de vivre sujet, là où il avait régné. En entendant le son des cloches, qui sonnaient en actions de grâce pour cette élection, il mourut subitement d'une hémorrhagie causée par une veine qui s'éclata dans sa poitrine.‡

\* Marin Sanuto, Vite de' Duchi di Venezia, p. 1163.—Navagiero, Stor. Venez. p. 1118.

† Vettor Sandi Storia civile Veneziana, P. II. L. VIII. p. 715—717.

‡ Marin Sanuto, Vite de' Duchi di Venezia, p. 1164.—Chronicon Eugubinum, T. XXI. p. 992.—Christoforo da Soldo Istoria Bresciana, T. XXI. p. 891.—Navagiero, Storia Veneziana, XXI. p. 1120.—M. A. Sabellico, Deca III. L. VIII. f. 201.

“ Le doge, blessé de trouver constamment un contradicteur et un censeur si amer dans son frère, lui dit un jour en plein conseil : “ Messire Augustin, vous faites tout votre possible pour hater ma mort ; vous vous flattez de me succéder ; mais, si les autres vous connaissent aussi bien que je vous connais, ils n'auront garde de vous être.” Là-dessus il se le leva, ému del colère, rentra dans son appartement, et mourut quelques jours après. Ce frère, contre le lequel il s'était emporté, fut précisément le successeur qu'on lui donna. C'était un mérite dont on aimait à tenir compte ; surtout à un parent, de s'être mis en opposition avec le chef de la république.” \* — *Daru, Histoire de Venise*, vol. ii, sec, 11, 533.

In Lady Morgan's fearless and excellent work upon “ Italy,” I perceive the expression of “ Rome of the Ocean ” applied to Venice. The same phrase occurs in the “ Two Foscari.” My publisher can vouch for me that the tragedy was written and sent to England some time before I had seen Lady Morgan's work, which I only received on the 16th of August. I hasten, however, to notice the coincidence, and to yield the originality of the phrase to her who first placed it before the public. I am the more anxious to do this, as I am informed (for I have seen but few of the specimens, and those accidentally) that there have been lately brought against me charges of plagiarism. I have also had an anonymous sort of threatening intimation of the same kind, apparently with the intent of extorting money. To such charges I have no answer to make. One of them is ludicrous enough. I am reproached for having formed the description of a shipwreck in verse from the narratives of many *actual* shipwrecks in *prose*, selecting such materials as were most striking. Gibbon makes it a merit in Tasso “ to have copied the minutest details of the Siege of Jerusalem from the Chronicles.” In me it may be a demerit, I presume: let it remain so. Whilst I have been occupied in defending *Pope's* character, the lower orders of Grubstreet appear to have been assailing *mine*: this is as it should be, both in them and in me. One of the accusations in the nameless epistle alluded to is still more laughable: it states seriously that I “ received five hundred pounds for writing advertisements for Day and Martin's patent blacking !” This is the highest compliment to my literary powers which I ever received. It states also “ that a person has been trying to make acquaintance with Mr. Townsend, a gentleman of the law, who was with me on business in Venice three years ago, for the purpose of obtaining any defamatory particulars of my life from this occasional visiter.” Mr. Townsend is welcome to say what he knows. I mention these particulars “ merely to show the world in general what the *literary* lower world contains, and their way of setting to work. Another charge made, I am told, in the “ *Literary Gazette*,” is, that I wrote the notes to “ *Queen Mab* ;” a work which I never saw till some time after its publication, and which I recollect showing to Mr. Sotheby as a poem of great power and imagination. I never wrote a line of the notes, nor ever saw them except in their published form. No one knows better than their real author, that his opinions and mine differ materially upon the metaphysical portion of that work ; though, in common with all who are not blinded by baseness and bigotry, I highly admire the poetry of that and his other publications.

Mr. Southey, too, in his pious preface to a poem whose blasphemy is as harmless as the sedition of Wat Tyler, because it is equally absurd with that sincere production, calls upon the “ legislature to look to it,” as the toleration of such writings led to the French Revolution: *not* such writings as Wat Tyler, but as those of the “ *Satanic School*.” This is not true, and Mr. Southey knows it to be not true. Every French writer of any freedom was persecuted ; Voltaire and Rousseau were exiles, Marmontel and Diderot were sent to the Bastille, and a perpetual war was waged with the whole class by the existing despotism. In the next place the French Revolution was *not* occasioned by any writings whatsoever, but must have occurred had no such writers ever existed. It is the fashion to attribute every thing to the French Revolution, and the French Revolution to every thing but its real cause. That cause is obvious — the government exacted too much, and the people could neither *give* nor *bear* more. Without this, the Encyclopedists might have written their fingers off without the occurrence of a single alteration. And the *English*

\* The Venetians appear to have had a particular turn for breaking the hearts of their Doges: the above is another instance of the kind in the Doge Marco Barbarigo ; he was succeeded by his brother Agostino Barbarigo, whose chief merit is above mentioned.

Revolution — (the first, I mean) — what was it occasioned by? The *puritans* were surely as pious and moral as Wesley or his biographer? Acts — acts on the part of government, and *not* writings against them, have caused the past convulsions, and are tending to the future.

I look upon such as inevitable, though no revolutionist; I wish to see the English constitution restored and not destroyed. Born an aristocrat, and naturally one by temper, with the greater part of my present property in the funds, what have I to gain by a revolution? Perhaps I have more to lose in every way than Mr. Southey, with all his places and presents for panegyrics and abuse into the bargain. But that a revolution is inevitable, I repeat. The government may exult over the repression of petty tumults; these are but the receding waves repulsed and broken for a moment on the shore, while the great tide is still rolling on and gaining ground with every breaker. Mr. Southey accuses us of attacking the religion of the country; and is he abetting it by writing lives of *Wesley*? One mode of worship is merely destroyed by another. There never was, nor ever will be, a country without a religion. We shall be told of *France* again: but it was only Paris and a frantic party, which for a moment upheld their dogmatic nonsense of theophilanthropy. The church of England, if overthrown, will be swept away by the sectarians, and not by the skeptics. People are too wise, too well-informed, too certain of their own immense importance in the realm of space, ever to submit to the impiety of doubt. There may be a few such diffident speculators, like water in the pale sunbeam of human reason, but they are very few: and their opinions, without enthusiasm or appeal to the passions, can never gain proselytes — unless, indeed, they are persecuted — *that*, to be sure, will increase any thing.

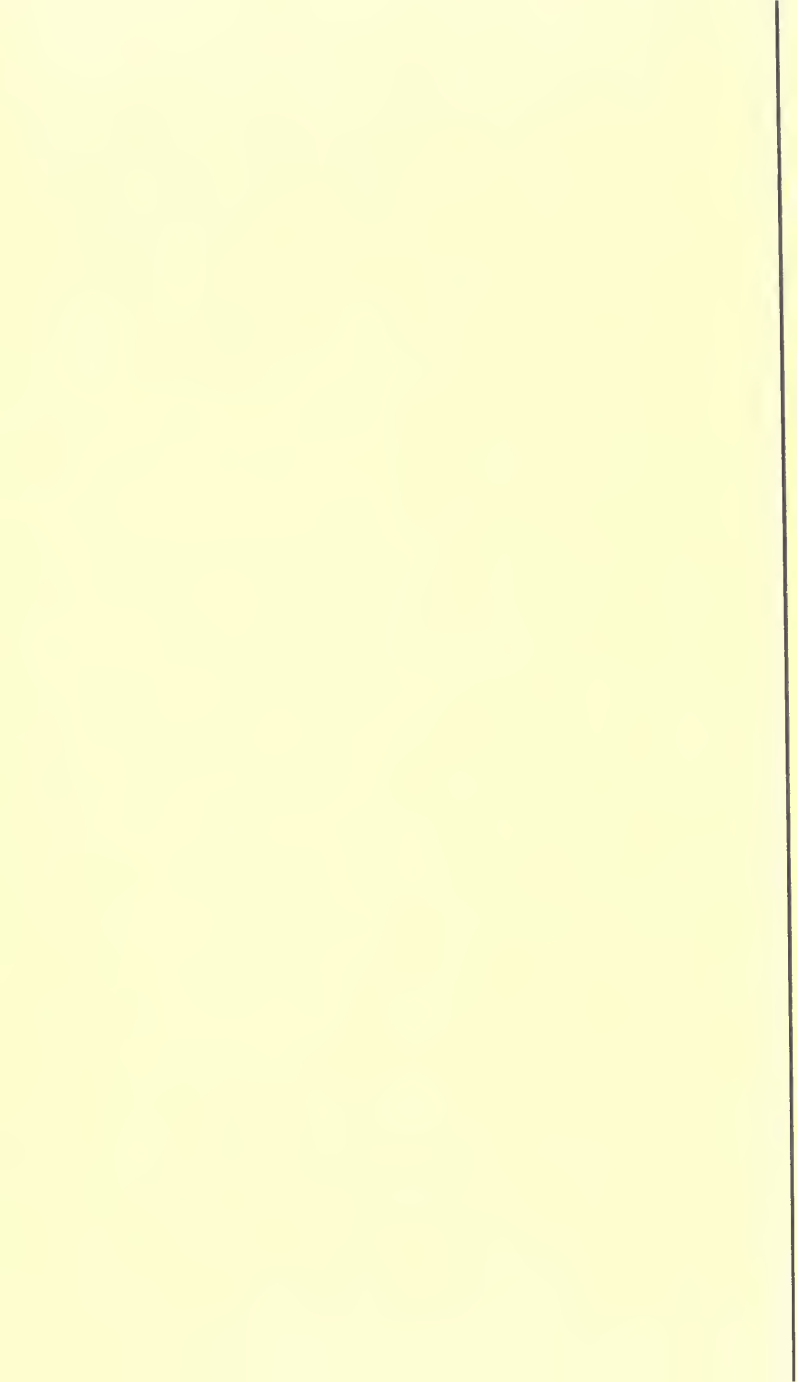
Mr. S. with a cowardly ferocity, exults over the anticipated “death-bed repentance” of the objects of his dislike; and indulges himself in a pleasant “Vision of Judgment,” in prose as well as verse, full of impious impudence. What Mr. S.’s sensations or ours may be in the awful moment of leaving this state of existence neither he nor we can pretend to decide. In common, I presume, with most men of any reflection, I have not waited for a “death-bed” to repent of many of my actions, notwithstanding the “diabolical pride” which this pitiful renegado in his rancour would impute to those who scorn him. Whether upon the whole the good or evil of my deeds may preponderate is not for me to ascertain; but, as my means and opportunities have been greater, I shall limit my present defence to an assertion, (easily proved, if necessary,) that I, “in my degree,” have done more real good in any one given year, since I was twenty, than Mr. Southey in the whole course of his shifting and turn-coat existence. There are several actions to which I can look back with an honest pride, not to be damped by the calumnies of a hireling. There are others to which I recur with sorrow and repentance; but the only *act* of *my* life of which Mr. Southey can have any real knowledge, as it was one which brought me in contact with a near connexion of his own, did no dishonour to that connexion nor to me.

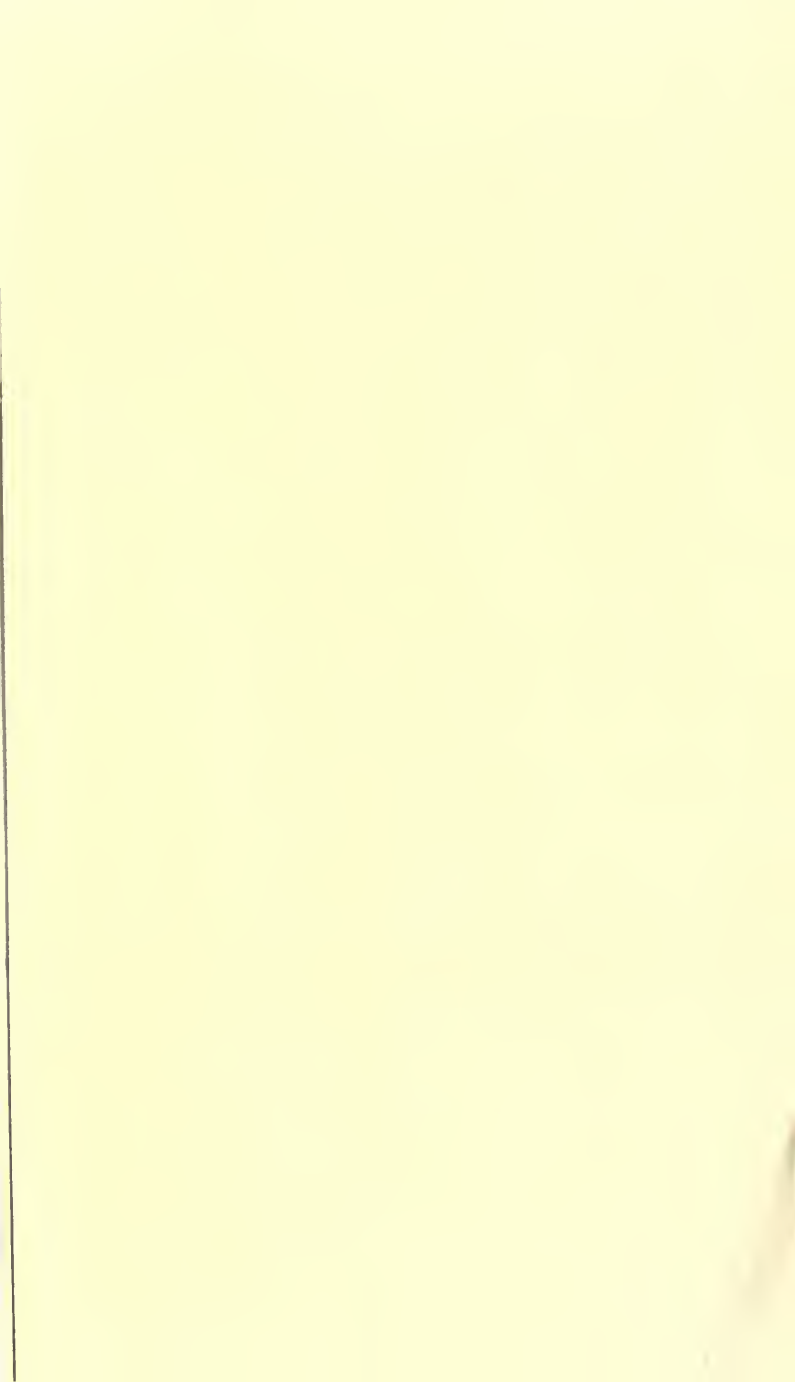
I am not ignorant of Mr. Southey’s calumnies on a different occasion, knowing them to be such, which he scattered abroad on his return from Switzerland against me and others: they have done him no good in this world, and, if his creed be the right one, they will do less in the next. What his “death-bed” may be, it is not my province to predicate: let him settle it with his Maker, as I must do with mine. There is something at once ludicrous and blasphemous in this arrogant scribbler of all work sitting down to deal damnation and destruction upon his fellow-creatures, with Wat Tyler, the Apotheosis of George the Third, and the Elegy on Martin the regicide, all shuffled together in his writing-desk. One of his consolations appears to be a Latin note from a work of a Mr. Landor, the author of “Gebir,” whose friendship for Robert Southey will, it seems, “be an honour to him when the ephemeral disputes and ephemeral reputations of the day are forgotten.” I for one neither envy him “the friendship,” nor the glory in reversion which is to accrue from it, like Mr. Thelusson’s fortune in the third and fourth generation. This friendship will probably be as memorable as his own epics, which (as I quoted to him ten or twelve years ago in “English Bards”) Porson said “would be remembered when Homer and Virgil are forgotten, and not till then.” For the present, I leave him.

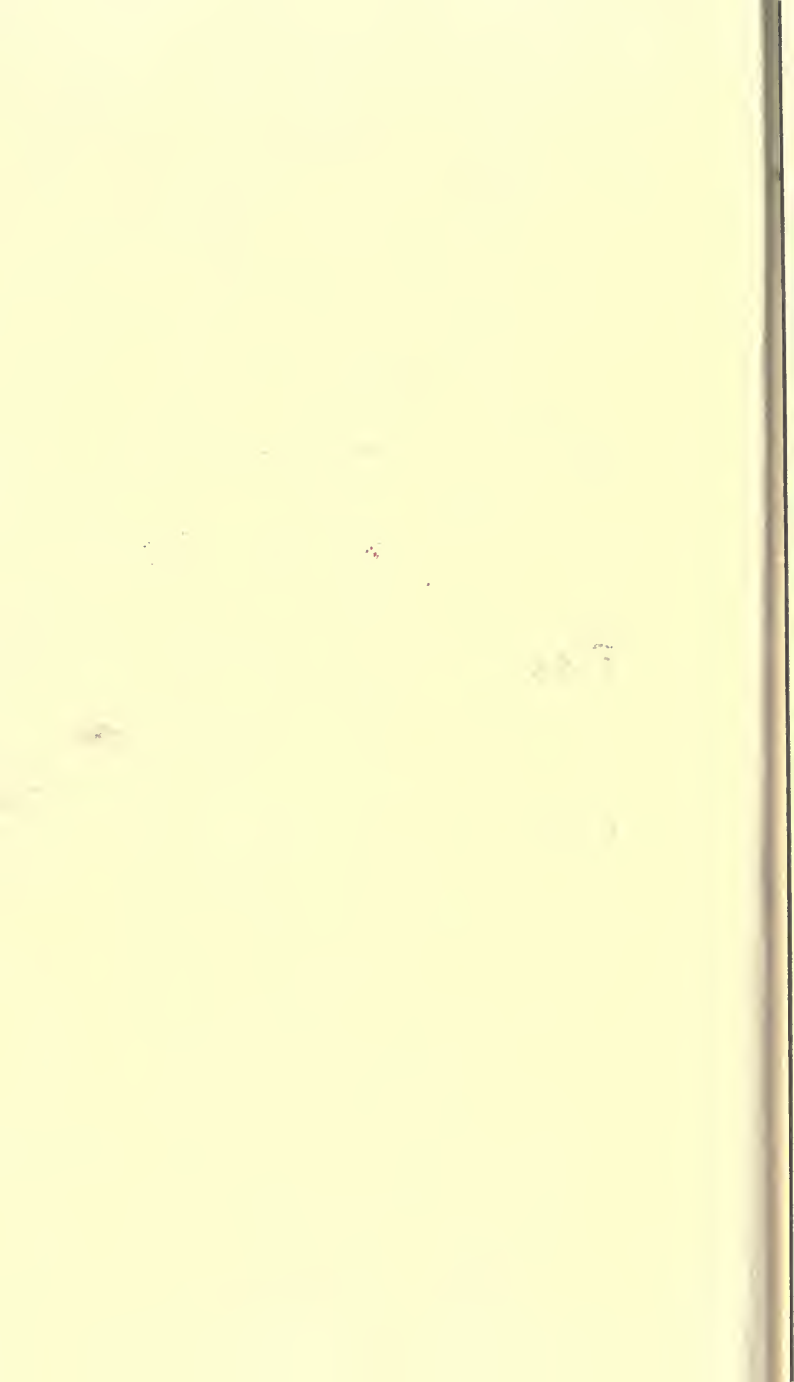












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