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B E L L ' s

RITISH THEATRE.

VOLUME THE TENTH,

BRITISH THEATRE
AND THE
CINEMA

VOLUME 11 NUMBER 1

Bell's

BRITISH THEATRE;

TRAGEDIES.



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BRITISH THEATRE;

TRAGEDIES.



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Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange in the

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ENGLISH PLAYS.

VOLUME THE TENTH.

Being the Fifth VOLUME of TRAGEDIES.

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Published for Bells British Theatre Nov. 1777.

M^r VINCENT in the Character of DORILAS.

— now answer

Am I Mycenæ's Monarch? —

BELL'S EDITION.



M E R O P E.

A TRAGEDY,

As written by AARON HILL, Esq.

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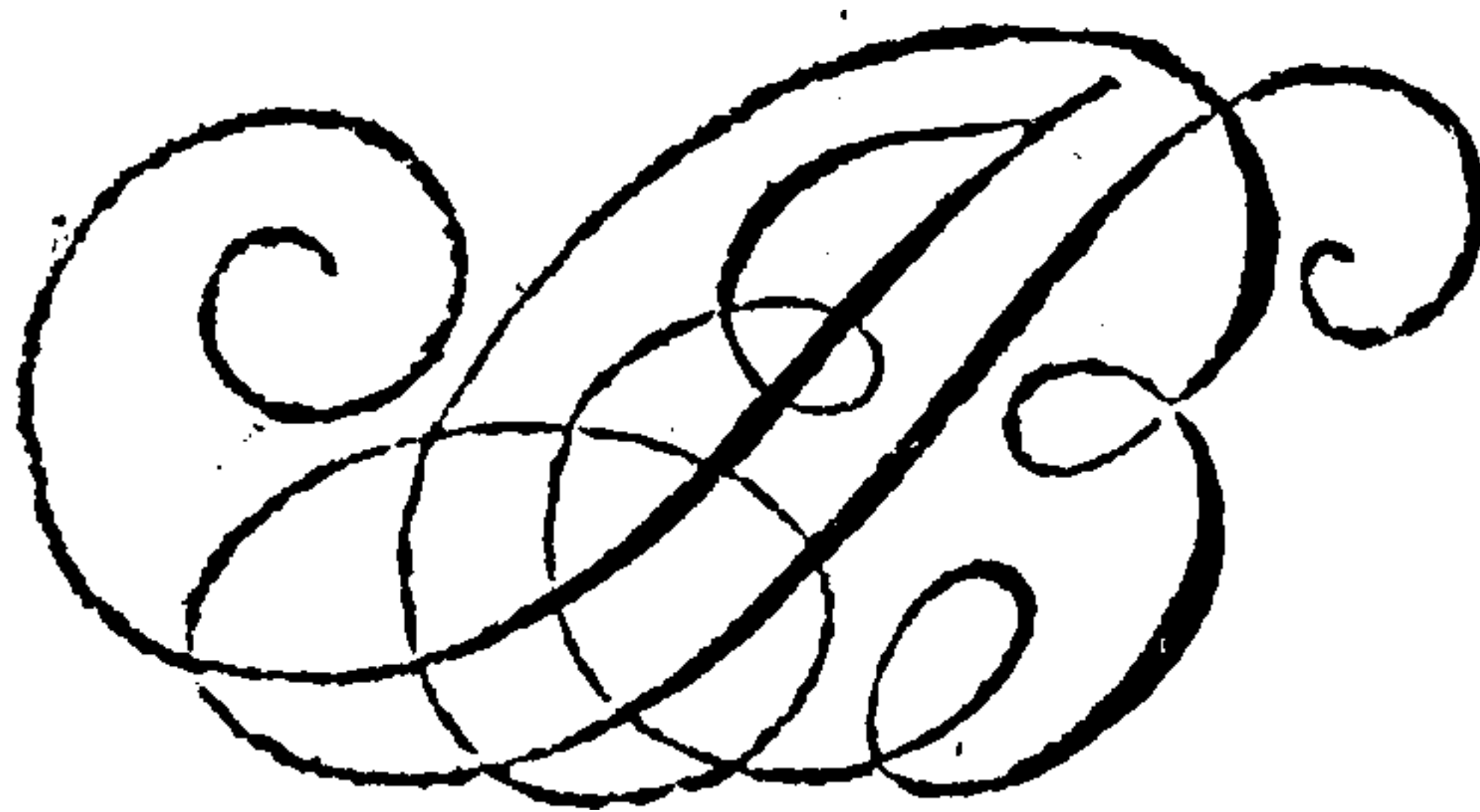
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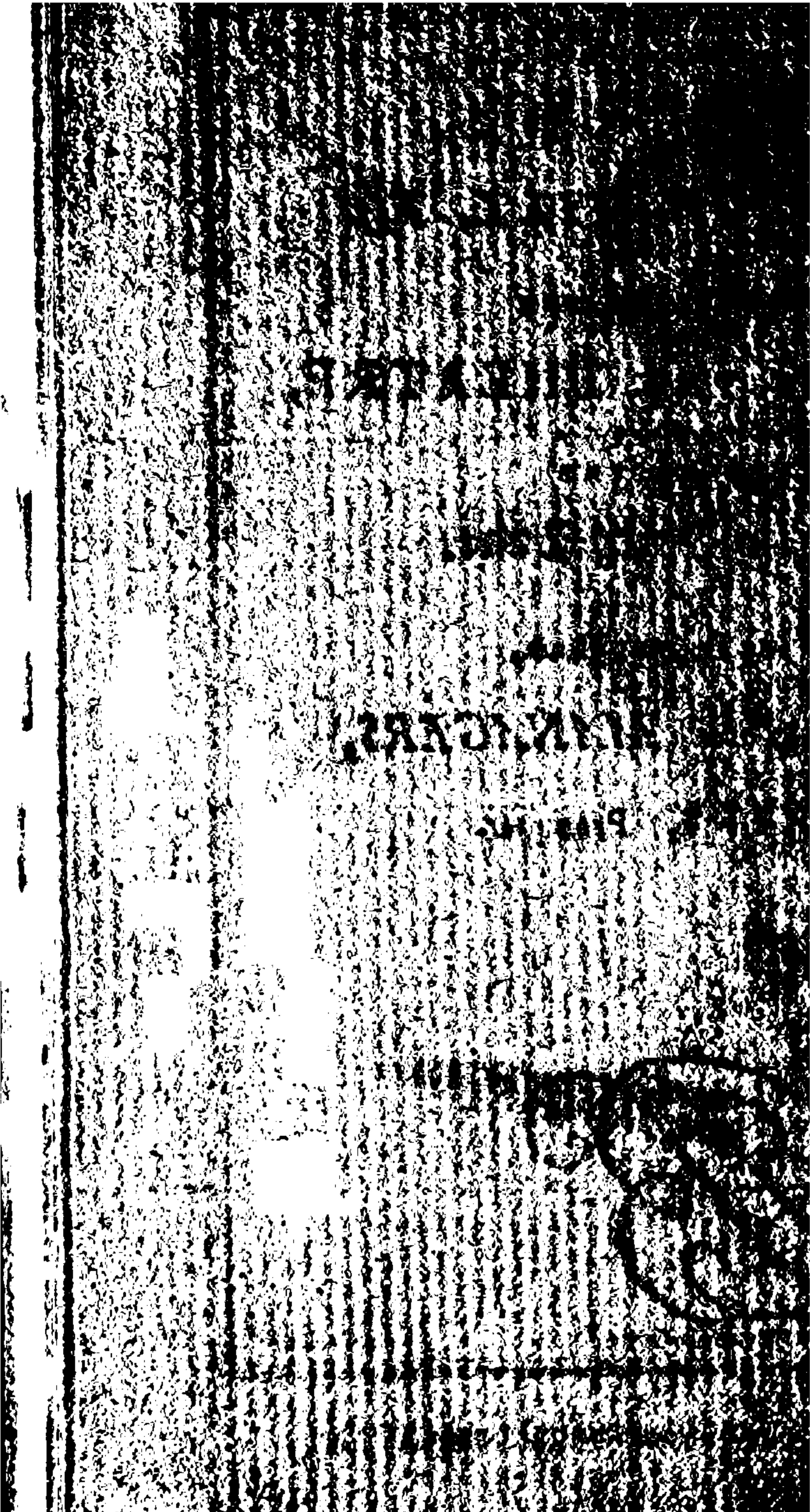
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LONDON:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at York.

MDCCLXXVI.



TOUCH'D be your generous hearts to spare this play?
 Where mirth wou'd laugh humanity away.
 Two thousand years our tale has shook the stage,
 And mov'd the heart of Greece, from age to age:
 Ev'n Alexander wept our queen's despair,
 And the world's conqueror sat conquer'd there.
 What reach of taste could Attic pride presume,
 What flame of courage e'er distinguish'd Rome,
 But Britain's sons may boast an equal merit,
 Would Britons think and act with British spirit?
 Ye flattering triflers of an hour too short;
 Ye foes to thinking, and ye friends of sport,
 Forbear to laugh, when pensively distressed;
 Sighs, in yon circle, swell the beauteous breast.
 Charms to the fairest face, soft sorrow lends;
 Pity and innocence are bosom friends!
 And when deep anguish shakes a feeling mind,
 How must it ake when wittlings sneer behind?
 Nor dream, ye gay, that only mirth should please;
 No sprightly wit e'er laugh'd off life's disease.
 Experience tells us, soon or late comes care,
 And he who flies from thought will meet despair.
 Ladies, be firm to passion's tenderest claim,
 Sighs are love's breezes, and will fan the flame.
 Laughing gallants may promise merry lives,
 But laughing husbands make you weeping wives.
 They whose own hearts can feel will treat yours best;
 And he give pain, that thinks it but a jest.
 Nobly weep-out, nor let an ill-tim'd blush,
 Keep back the struggling tear that longs to gush.
 All that are wise and brave, by nature know,
 'Tis virtue's mark, to weep at others' woe.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

	Drury-Lane.
<i>Polyphontes</i> , general of Mycene,	Mr. Palmer.
<i>Erox</i> , favourite of <i>Polyphontes</i> ,	Mr. Hurst.
<i>Eumenes</i> , son of <i>Merope</i> ,	Mr. Cautherley.
<i>Euricles</i> , a lord of <i>Merope's</i> party,	Mr. Aickin.
<i>Narbas</i> , foster-father to <i>Eumenes</i> ,	Mr. Packer.

W O M E N.

<i>Merope</i> , widow of the late king,	Miss Younge.
<i>Ismene</i> , daughter of <i>Narbas</i> .	Miss Hopkins.

Chief Priest, and other Priests.

Ladies, Officers, Guards, &c.

MEROPE.

M E R O P E.

* * * *The lines marked with inverted commas, 'thus,' are omitted in the representation.*

A C T. I.

SCENE, *an apartment in the palace.*

Merope, *mournful, on a couch; Ismene leaning melancholy below; and Attendants.*

ISMENE.

SEE where the lone majestic mourner weeps;
 Lost, even to music's power—try, strain each note
 In melody's wide compass.—Happily,
 Some change, through sad, to lively, may have force,
 To strike recov'ring sense, and wake regard.
 —First, in low sympathy of sorrow's softness:
 Sooth her dejected soul—then, start at once
 To swells of joy, and storm attention's ear.

[*Music with trumpets.*

[*After the music, Merope rises, and comes forward.*

Mer. Let me, when next thy too officious love,
 Faithful Ismene, tries th' harmonious charm,
 Let me have music, solemn all, and slow,
 Sad-suited to my thoughts—Mix not for me,
 Who have no power to taste, such sprightly notes,
 As they who are more happy find more sweet.

Ism. Why, when the gods grow gentle, are you sad?
 You felt their anger sharply—Now they smile,
 Embrace their proffer'd bounty—All the lords
 Of glad Mycene, in full senate met,
 Take measures to proclaim you reigning queen:
 You, whom distress but brightens; to whose charms,
 Made awful by your grief, woes add new majesty.

Mer. What, no news yet, of Narbas, or my son?

Ism. May it be soon—No prince, of birth like his,
Where'er conceal'd, can 'scape such search, unknown.

Mer. Will ye, at length, ye Powers, reward my tears?
Will ye, at last, restore Eumenes to me?

If he yet live—this only remnant heir

Of his wrong'd mother's miseries, Oh, save him!

From his dear breast, strike wide the murd'rer's dagger.

Is he not yours, a branch from great Alcides?

'What tho', (forget it, and be hush'd, Oh, faith!)

What tho' to traitors prosp'rous swords you gave

His father's fated life—Ah, yet, desert not

This image of his form, that fills my soul!

Ism. Dear tho' he doubtless was, and justly mourn'd,
Should you exclude all sense of bliss beside?

Mer. I am a mother—with a mother's fears.

Ism. But can a mother's fears efface the stamp
Of hero's soul, that marks a race like yours?

Sweet tho' his infant smiles, they dwell too fix'd,

Too deep on your touch'd memory—Long years

Are past since first you lost him.

Mer. Lost him!—never—

In twice seven dreadful years, no moment's light

Broke on my eyes, but brought his image with it.

Why tell'st thou me of time?—Days, months, and years

Have grown, but with 'em grew my pain, to lose him.

Weigh that last fatal hint thy father sent me;

Hope soon, said he, to see the prince Eumenes

All you would wish—fear all from Polyphontes.

Ism. Wisely you fear him—But 'twere wiser still,

So fearing, to prevent him. Hear the states;

Quit, at their prayer, this regent's name; be crown'd,

And rise indeed the queen they meant to make you.

Mer. Is not the crown my son's?

Ism. A son so lov'd,
Should he return, would thank—

Mer. Perish the heart,
That, meanly proud, and poorly fill'd for self,
Swells from another's losses!

Ism. Public interest—

Mer. Curse on all interest that includes not honesty!
But here, ev'n int'rest brings no plea to tempt me.
What can a childless mother hope from empire?

What



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Naybas knows all his dangers—I, mean while,
Watch, with a guardful eye, these murd'reis motions,
And, with determin'd hand, prepare to save him.

Mer. On faith so try'd as thine, ev'n woe leans easy.

Euri. Doubt but my power's defect; my will finds.
But I have news more threat'ning: [none.
Th' assembled senate vote, in warm debate,
A consort in your crown.—

Mer. Presumptuous care!
You should have call'd it insult.

Euri. Words were vain.
Truth, unsustain'd by power, but fights to fall.
The partial people roar for Polyphontes;
And right, and law, and pity sink before him.

Mer. Can fortune, then, reduce the great to pity?
Can kings, in their own realms, contract to slaves?

Euri. Something must be resolv'd, to check their speed.

Mer. Yes, I will face these lords of kings and law;
Comets of empire: these portentous stars,
That sparkle by the fire they steal from majesty.
I will go dart truth's lightning in their eyes,
And thunder in their ears the rights of thrones.
I will revive lost sense of trust and duty;
I will assert their sov'reign's near return. [Going.

Euri. Oh, Heav'n! be wary—That way ruin lies.
Their tyrant leader starts, already fir'd
By that alarm, and dreams of what he dreads.

Mer. What can he more, so much already done?

Euri. Jealous of danger, men make haste in guilt,
Work to be safe, and hold no means too wicked.
Mycene, but by faction freed from faction,
Claim'd like a conquest, he computes his own.
No tie so sacred binds endanger'd valour,
Where hot ambition spurs it—Every rampart
Gives way before him. Law, corrupted, guards him.
Wealth dresses, poverty attends, pride leads,
And priesthood presses gods who hate—to serve him.

Mer. I see th' abyts before me—Let it be.
If I plunge in, and crush this Polyphontes,
'Tis but to fall for vengeance.

Euri. Soft!——he comes.

[Exit Euricles and Ismene.
Mer.

M E R O P E

Mer. Wear, for a moment, heart, the veil thou hat'st,

Enter Polypones.

Pol. Ever in tears, my queen!—Lend a long truce
To sighs, and cast aside your needless sorrow.
Shake from those injur'd eyes each cloud that dims 'em,
And to the voice of love vouchsafe your ear.
You frown——

Mer. I do indeed, and gaze with horror.

Pol. Gaze on—I am no stranger to myself,
Nor to a woman's passions. I grew grey
Beneath a weight of winters spent in arms.
I know time's furrows are no paths to love;
I know it all—but wisdom knows it not.
Weigh not my offer in disdain's light balance.
You are the daughter, mother, wife of kings;
But the state wants a master: What avails
Vain title, till some sword, like mine, supports it?

Mer. Bold subject of a king who call'd me wife,
Dar'st thou defame the mem'ry of thy lord
With such audacious hope?—Aspire to me!
Me, to supplant my child, my heart's whole care;
Stain his dishonour'd throne with guilt and thee!
Me, canst thou dream so base to wed thy lowness,
And crown with empire's wreath a soldier's brow?

Pol. Soldier! Immortal gods! who more deserves
To govern states, than he who best can save?
He who was first call'd king, ere that, was soldier.
Great, because brave; and scepter'd by his sword.
I am above descent; and prize no blood.
Scarce is my own left mine; 'tis lost for glory;
Spilt in my country's cause, in yours, fair scorners.
Take safety—'tis my gift. Fill half my throne;
My party calls all mine; love shares it yours.

Mer. Party! thou fell provoker of reproach!
Party should tremble, where a monarch rules.

Pol. There will be parties, and there must be kings;
And he who best can curb, was form'd to reign.
I, who reveng'd your lord, by right succeed him.

Mer. Succeed him, traitor!—Has he not a son?
Gods were his great forefathers—thence his claim.

Pol. Far other value bears Mycene's crown.
Right to rule men is now no longer held

10 M E R O P E.

By dull descent, like land's low hermitage ;
'Tis the pluck'd fruit of toil : 'tis the paid price
Of blood, lost nobly ; and, 'tis thence my due. [hope ?

Mer. What hast thou done, thou wretch, to dare such

Pol. Bethink you of that day, when these proud walls
Blush'd with the blood you boast, from traitors swords.

Review your helpless husband—see your sons

Expiring round you—Wipe those gushing eyes,

And view me what I was, not then, too low

To share your ruffled passions—Yes, 'twas I,

From your freed palace chas'd th' o'erwhelming foe,

Sav'd your Herculean sceptre, and its queen :

I, I repell'd the woes you could but weep.

See there my right, my rank, my claim to love ! [son !

Mer. Hear, hear him, Heav'n, and give me back my

Pol. Yes, let him come, this son—He shall be taught
Lessons of glory ; taught my arts to reign.

Joy to the blood of Hercules !—I too

Revere, let others dread it. My ambition

Climbs beyond progeny—To spring from gods

Is less than mine, who like a god command.

Mer. If thou wouldst emulate a god, be just :

Man can be brave too boldly—Hercules

Sav'd many a king—But did he steal their diadems ?

Wouldst thou resemble Hercules ?—Protect

Unfriended innocence. Assert thy prince ;

Restore th' unhappy wand'rer to my arms ;

Cease to afflict, and give him to my fondness.

Thus could thy influence move ; so try'd, so courted,

Who knows—for gratitude has power like love—

Who knows—how far I might forget my glory—

And—if peace dwells with thee—expect it not—

I will not bid you hope—that I can stoop

So low—Bend, I am sure I cannot.

[*Ex. Mer.*

Enter Erox.

Erox. Ent'ring, I heard her too presumptuous scorn,
And wonder'd at your patience. Waits a king

For a weak woman's wish, to fix his throne ?

Greatly and bravely have you clear'd your way

To the hill's foot ; yet, when it courts your climbing,

Fall back to fight, and seek her hand to lead you.

Pol. Near as thou think'st I stand, my warier eye

Marks,

Marks, 'twixt the throne and me, a precipice.
 Where faith or I fall headlong——Does not Merope
 Know her Eumenes near? ——Should he return,
 Th' inconstant people would with shouts receive him,
 And smooth his way to empire o'er my bosom.
 Thou know'st, from proofs, most timely intercepted,
 This new boy king returns, and hopes Mycene.

Erox. Trust your high fortune, and disdain to doubt.
 Foresight and fierceness are the brave man's gods,
 And his own hand supports him.

Pol. My late order——

Erox. 'Twas, with a silent firmness, well obey'd.
 From Elis to Mycene, every road
 Is watch'd by sleepless warders——If they come,
 Narbas and he, their gods must march before them,
 Or not Alcides' blood could 'scape the shedding.
 Your soldiers' zeal is warm.

Pol. But is it blind?

Erox. It is——None knows his name, whose life he waits,
 All they have yet been told, is a sad tale
 Of an old wily traitor, leading with him,
 On murd'rous purpose, an assassin youth,
 Urg'd, by exacted oaths, to seek your death.

Pol. But what this rumour of Misanthus kill'd
 Before Alcides' temple?——Is that true?

Erox. Too sure he fell——I chose his trusty arm,
 Join'd with his martial brother's as most fit
 To guard that likeliest station; where should Narbas
 Dare, with his exile, touch Mycene's border,
 First they would rest, to beg that godhead's care,
 From whom their race presumes its proud descent.

Pol. 'Twas forecast worthy of a zeal like thine;
 Nor could thy care have chosen an abler hand,
 Or one more try'd in blood, than that Misanthus.
 'Twas he, thou know'st, that, faithful to my cause,
 On that black night, attending near Cresphontes,
 Taught the king's sword, amid the dusk of slaughter,
 To pierce its master's breast——An act so daring,
 Deserv'd the sword, tho' three rich gems adorn'd it.
 He had it, and he wore it for his pains.

Erox. Yet at Alcides temple, drew it rashly,
 And lost it, with his life.

Pol. How scap'd his brother?

Erox. Scar'd out of mem'ry's use, all he cou'd tell me
Was, that the god inspir'd some dreadful form;
Some more than mortal monster;—and he fled.

Pol. Vile safety!—left his brother unrevenge'd,
And shunn'd a soldier's death.—We must be watchful.
Some in-felt bodings bid me call this stranger
Eumenes, or his friend.

Erox. That fear was mine;
Till, on reflection that he came alone,
It look'd unlikely.—Chance it as it may,
Whene'er he this way comes, he comes to die.

Pol. True.—Yet, I cou'd have wish'd to spare this
But, one first chosen, the rest grew necessary: [crime.
So falls the son.—The mother must not follow.
Her, I have need of. Marriage mends my reign.
Her rightful title consecrates ambition:
And usurpation whitens into law.
—The people love her: I, possessing her,
Hold her friend too, in dowry.—Erox!—thou,
Whose fate grows close to mine, assist my scheme.
Skill'd how to spread craft's nets, allure the people.
Train 'em by ev'ry art: poize ev'ry temper,
Avarice will sell his soul: buy that and mould it,
Weakness will be deluded; there, grow eloquent.
Is there a tott'ring faith? grapple it fast
By flatt'ry; and profusely deal my favours.
Threaten the guilty. Entertain the gay.
Frighten the rich. Find wishes, for the wanton;
And reverence, for the godly—let none 'scape thee.
Dive into hearts: sound every nature's bias—
And bribe men by their passions—but, these arts,
Already thine, why waste I time to teach thee!
Vainly the sword successful scales a throne;
Since, fortune changing, strength's lost hope is flown,
But art, call'd in, attracts reluctant will:
And, what were lost by power, is gain'd by skill.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T II.

SCENE, *the Palace.**Enter Merope, Euricles, Ismene.*

MEROPE.

IS the world dumb, on my Eumenes' fate!

Ism. Calamity, too soon, had found a tongue.

Mer. Has nothing, from the borders, yet been heard?

Eur. Nothing, that claims your notice.

Mer. Who is he,

This prisoner, I am told, but now, brought guarded?

Euri. A rash young stranger, caught with guilty hand,
Red, from the recent marks of some new murder.

Mer. A murder! an unknown!—Whom has he kill'd?
How? and where was it?—I am fill'd with horror.

Ism. Oh, sense too lively, of maternal love!

All things alarm your tenderness. You hear
Chance speak; and take her voice, for that of nature.

Mer. What is his name? whence came he?—Why
unknown. [ance,

Euri. He seems, and is, if truth may trust appear—
A youth of that soft stamp which fortune leaves
To nature's gentlest care; some nymph's Adonis,
Whose eye, might sooner be suppos'd to kill
Th' un pity'd maid, than his gay sword the man.

Mer. Whom (tell me) has he kill'd?—answer—I'll
see him.

Euri. What strange emotion, this!—

Mer. No matter,—bring him.

If I discover guilt, 'tis mine to punish:

If wrong'd, I owe him mercy.

Euri. —Should he have merit,
'Tis plac'd so low, by fortune—

Mer. Fortune's faults,

Where merit suffers, call on kings, to mend 'em.

Euri. What can a wretch like this deserve from power?

Mer. Oh, Euricles! look inward: ask thy heart.

Be, for a moment, but, this wretch, thyself—

And, then, acquit the power, that scorn'd to note thee.

—Besides, who knows? he may—Be still, prompt
fear.

‘ Perhaps, my troubled mind starts hints too lightly.
 ‘ Hearts that have ev’ry thing to fear, slight nothing.
 ‘ —Let him be brought---I will, myself, examine
 him.’

Euri. Your will must be obey’d.

Mer. Go, my Ismene;

Bid those who guard the pris’ner bring him hither.

[*Exit Ismene.*]

Mer. Stay, Euricles. [Euricles offering to go.

Stay, and partake more terrors---cou’d you think it?

Press’d by new sorrows, I forget my past,

And have not yet inform’d you—Poliphontes

Has dar’d demand my hand: dar’d talk of marriage.

Euri. Oh, queen,

I know his offer’d insult: know, it stains

Your name; yet, blushing, add,---your forc’d consent,

Grown infamously necessary,——stands,

The sole, safe bar, ’twixt all your race, and ruin.

‘ *Mer.* ’Tis horror, but to think, so vile a dream!

‘ *Euri.* So thinks the army.---So, the senate thinks.

‘ So think th’ exacting gods:——and, so——

‘ *Mer.* The gods!——

‘ Why were they nam’d?---could they forgive such fall:

‘ From their own offspring, to a son of clay?’

Euri. The king, your son——

Mer. Ah, name not him.---How, Euricles,

How wou’d he thank, my choice of such a father?

Euri. Princes grow wise by sorrows. He will see

That hated choice the root of all his safety.

Mer. What, what, have you been telling me?

Euri. Hard truth:

Due, from firm loyalty, to weak distress.

Mer. Can Euricles then plead for Poliphontes?

Euri. I know him guilty:---but I knew him rash:

Know him resifless:---know him childless too;

And know you love Eumenes.

Mer. Loving him,

How can I chuse but hate the hand that wrongs him?

Princes shou’d be above these self-securings:

And born to live for truth---or die for glory.

[*Sits and weeps, regardless of Eumenes’s entrance.*

Enter



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If he attack'd thee, thy defence was necessary.
And sad necessity makes all things just.

Eum. Heaven is my witness, I provok'd him not.
'Tis not in valour's wish, to offer insult:
And sure, it is no crime, to check it, offer'd.

Mer. On, then—relate the chance, that led thee
hither.

Eum. Entering your borders, I beheld a temple,
Sacred to Hercules; the God my soul,
Low as my lot was cast, aspires to honour.
—What should I do? bare vot'ry as I was!
I had no off'rings: brought no victims with me.
Poor, and oppress'd by fortune, what I cou'd
I gave—I knelt, and pou'd a heart before him,
Warm, as a hundred hecatombs! pure, humble,
Pious, and firm.—Th' unhappy can no more.
I ask'd not, for myself, his undue blessing,
I pray'd protection, to his own high race:
For, I had heard, great queen! your wrongs requir'd it.
'The present god, methought, receiv'd my prayer:
His altar trembled; and his temple rung;
Keen, undulating, glories beam'd about me:
I know not how I bore it!---but, my heart,
Full of the force infus'd, at once grew vaster.
My swelling courage, far above myself,
Sustain'd me ----and I glow'd, with all the god.

Mer. [*Rising in emotion.*] Go on, methinks, the god
thou nam'st speaks in thee;
And ev'ry hearer glows, as warm'd as thou!

Eum. I how'd, and left the temple---Following came
Two men, of haughty stride, with angry low'r:
Roughly accosting, they reproach'd my prayer.
How did I dare, they ask'd, solicit Heaven,
To aid sedition's purposes? No god
Shou'd save a wretch like me, proscrib'd by power.
—I heard, astonish'd; and prepar'd to speak:
When, with impatient fierceness, each rais'd arm,
With rage conjoin'd, came on.

Mer. [*Interrupting.*] Both!—Came they,
To wound thee?—

Eum. Both, with madman's frenzy,
Struck at my breast, ignobly.

Mer.

Mer. Thou hast eas'd me.

Go on.—These men had souls, that match'd their fate.

Eum. Unarm'd, and inoffensive, so surpriz'd,
The god I had address'd repaid my prayer.
—Warding the weakest stroke, with swordless hand,
Swiftly I clos'd, and seiz'd the wrested steel
From him whose stronger arm more nearly press'd me.
Seiz'd it with lightning's swiftness: for, oppression
Rouses distress to vengeance.—On himself,
I turn'd his pointed weapon; sav'd my breast,
And plung'd it in his own.—He fell.—The other
Started, and curs'd: but, like a coward, fled,
False to his dying fellow.—Mighty queen,
This is the sad short truth. May the kind power
I bow'd to, touch your ear; and move your pity!

Mer. She were a tygress, that cou'd hear this tale,
And pause upon thy pardon—Still, go on:
How wer't thou seiz'd? hide nothing; and hope all.

Eum. Shock'd by uncertain dread for what was done,
I gaz'd astonish'd round; and mark'd, beneath,
Where, at a furlong's distance, the salt wave
Broke on the shore. Sudden I snatch'd the corps,
And, hast'ning to the beach, gave it to the sea.
That done, I sigh'd, and fled: your guards, great queen,
For what escapes such eyes as Heaven's and yours!
Unseen by me, mark'd all; follow'd, and took me.

Mer. [*To Euricles.*] Did he resist, when seiz'd?

Eum. I cou'd not, Madam.

The name of Merope disarm'd my will.

They told me they were yours. I bow'd, and yielded.
Gave 'em my new-gain'd sword, and took their chains.

Euri. This youth, by him he kill'd, was judg'd
another.

Mer. Oh, I have noted all: and Heaven was just.

—Retire, to farther distance; gentle youth.—

I'll tell thee, Euricles!

Methought, at every word this wanderer spoke,

Pity—or something, tenderer than pity,

Clung to my tender heartstrings; nay, 'twas stranger!

For, I will tell thee all.—Cresphontes features,

'Heav'ns, what ideas hopes and fears can raise!

My dear dead manly lord's resembled features;

I saw, and trac'd, (I blush, to think what folly !)
Trac'd—in this cottage hero's honest face.

Ism. Compassion is a kind and generous painter.
—Yet, truth herself must grow as blind, as fortune,
Ere she cou'd look on that unhappy youth,
And find him less than worth her kindest pity.

Euri. Ismene speaks my thoughts. He's innocent.
The gods have stamp'd their mark of candor on him,
And no impostor's art inhabits there.

Mer. [*To Eumenes.*] Again approach me.—In what
part of Greece
Did it please Heaven to give thee birth, good youth ?

Eum. [*Advancing.*] In Elis, generous queen.

Mer. In Elis———Tell me.
I hop'd it had been nearer.—Hast thou, ever,
In thy low converse, heard the swains, thy neighbours,
Mention the name of Narbas—or Eumenes ?
—The last, thou must have heard of.

Eum. Never, Madam. [condition ?

Mer. Never ?---That's strange ! what then was thy
What thy employment ? and thy father's name ?

Eum. My father was a shepherd ; learn'd and wise ;
Prince of the sylvan shades, and past'ral vale,
He led th' attracted hearts of list'ning swains ;
And pleas'd 'em into subjects---in himself
Too humble for distinction---had not virtue
Compell'd him into notice.—

He liv'd unenvied ; for, excelling all,
He veil'd superior eminence, by modesty ;
No claim'd exemption eas'd his life from care :
Peacefully poor ! and reverently lov'd !
His fleecy harvests fed him : and, his name
Was Policletes, Madam.

Mer. What thy own ?

Eum. Low, like my past'ral care—to cottage ears
Adapted—and unform'd for your regard.

—Yet, Elis, oft, may deign to speak of—Dorilas.

Mer. Oh, I have lost my hope. Heaven mocks relief :
And every starting spark is quench'd in darkness :
So, then, your parents held no rank in Greece ?

Eum. Did rank draw claim from goodness, they have
rights

Wou'd

Wou'd leave all place behind 'em ; ' inborn virtue
 ' Can borrow no enlargement, but lends all
 ' That keeps contempt from titles.'

Mer. Every word

He utters has a charm? — But, why, at home
 So blest'd, and to such parents doubly dear,
 Didst thou, forgetful of the care thou owed'st 'em,
 Quit their kind cot, and leave 'em to their tears?

Eum. A vain desire of glory, first seduc'd me.
 Oft have I heard my father mourn Mycene,
 Weep for her civil wars, and suff'ring queen.
 Oft had he charm'd my young aspiring soul -
 With wonder, at your firmness! — So, inflam'd,
 I learnt, by slow degrees, to think my youth
 Disgrac'd by home-felt virtues: weigh'd the call
 Of glory against duty; and grew bold
 To hope, my humble arm might add some aid
 To prop your warring standards. — See, great queen,
 The only motive of my erring rashness.

For heaven has taught me, tho' it loves your cause,
 I merit my distress: who left my father,
 Wanting, perhaps, in age's feeble calls,
 Some help I might have lent him. — 'Twas a fault.

But, 'twas my first; and I may live to mend it. [*Aside.*]

Mer. Methinks, I hear Eumenes — So, my soul
 Informs me, had he known descent thus lowly,
 So my Eumenes wou'd have thought, and spoke.
 — Such is his age, where'er conceal'd he mourns:
 Perhaps too, such his fortune — driven, like this,
 From realm to realm, a wand'ring, thus unknown!
 Friendless, and hopeless, and expos'd to poverty!
 — I will have pity on this youth's distress,
 And cultivate his fortune. — What bold noise?

[*Shouts heard without.*]

Whence can such rudeness flow! — What is't, Eumene?

Ism. [*At a window.*] All ills are Poliphontes. The
 vile rabble

Shout their sure vote for treason. Poliphontes
 Is king proclaim'd — and hope is now no more.

Eum. Oh, for the sword, once more, your guards
 took from me!

Now, now, 'I feel these chains: now, first they bind me,

Mer.

Mer. Give him his sword. Let him be free as air.
Honest proposer!—but thy help's too weak
To prop a throne in danger.——

Eum. Oh, queen!—forgive presumption in the
When they dare pity greatness. [poor,
All have their mis'ries—but, when crowns grow wretched,
'Tis arrogance in mean ones to complain.

[*Exit Eumenes.*

Euri. Too fatally, I prophesied——confess
This hard necessity; which now you find;
And seem, at least; to sooth the tyrant's hope.

Mer. I misconceiv'd the gods. I durst not dream
They cou'd have bid guilt thrive, and given up virtue.

Euri. They will not, Madam.

Mer. So my sad heart still
Struggles to hope; and, if they mark my woe,
They will forgive my rashness.

Euri. Come what must,
I will assemble round you the few faithful,
And, failing to protect, partake your fall.

[*Exit Euricles.*

Mer. Oh, people, people! They, who trust your faith,
Bid the wild winds blow constant.

Ism. The people's voice is called the voice of gods.

Mer. What villain baseness wants some bold pretence
That drags in heaven, to grace it! Thefts, plots, per-
juries,

Avarice, revenge, the bloody zeal, of pride,
And unforgiving bitterness of heart;
All—have their gods to friend; their priests to sanctify.

Enter Euricles, with a sword.

Euri. Sorrow on sorrows bear down hope's last prop.
Now, be a queen, indeed!—arm your great heart,
With preparation, to its utmost stretch:
For, if it stands this shock, its power's immortal.

Mer. No—I am sinking, from all sense of pain;
And shall grow safe, by want of strength to suffer.
Speak—there is now but one sad truth to dread;
And my soul waits it heard;—then rests for ever.

Euri. It has pleas'd Heav'n—this sword! this fatal
sword!

Mer. I understand thee; thou would'st say, he's dead.

Euri.

Euri. Oh, 'tis too surely so; th' atrocious crime,
At last, succeeded—and all care is vain.

Mer. Gods! gods!—'tis done—now all your bolts
have struck me.

Ism. Guard her distracted brain!

Euri. Save her, kind Heaven!

Mer. What have I done? where have I been?

Euri. Alas, where grief, too oft,
Has left th' unhappy——recollect.

Mer. Oh, Euricles, I recollect too much.
Trust my sustaining heart, it breaks not yet.
Comfort's brief clouds, methought, came shadowing o'er
But I am found again; a wretch, so friendless, [me;
That madness will not lend relief, but stuns me.

Euri. Perish that young, that impious hypocrite!
That ill-admir'd attracter of your pity,
Whom your protection spar'd for fancied virtue!

Mer. Who? — What? —

Ism. Not Dorilas?

Euri. Him, him — That Dorilas.

Mer. Monster! beyond all credit of deceit!

Ism. He! — 'tis impossible.

Euri. He was the murderer;
I bring too clear a proof. Passing, but now,
I found him waiting; freed him from his chains;
And, to re-arm him, for the cause he chose;
Call'd for his sword—Which, as he stretch'd his hand
To take, I mark'd, and trembled at the view,
These once-known gems—too well remember'd here.

Mer. [*Taking the sword.*] Oh, all ye sleeping gods!
'twas my Cresphontes',
'Twas the king's sword. Narbas, beyond all doubting,
Sav'd it, that dreadful night, for my Eumenes.
Oh, what a false vile tale this flatterer form'd,
To cheat us into pardon!

Take the dumb dreadful witness from my sight.

[*Giving Euricles the sword.*]

Yet, stay——return it me.——

[*Resumes the sword, and kneels.*]

I thank ye, gods!

Thank your inspiring justice, and accept it.

Live, but to thank you, for this dire, due, sacrifice,

Which,

Which, from the childless mother's widow'd hand,
 Your heav'n-directed vengeance well demands. [*She rises.*
 Yes, I will sheathe it, on my husband's tomb,
 Deep, in the bleeding murd'rer's panting heart ;
 ' Then, scorning Poliphontes, pierce my own ;'
 So, die, reveng'd, and safe,—absolving heaven.
 —Go, Euricles.—

Euri. Not so.—Yet bear his fight ;
 That, from his own dire mouth, we may compel
 Discovery, of his guilt's commission'd cause ;
 And, to the bottom, search this fatal tale.

[*Exit Euricles.*

Ism. Erox !—the tyrant's minister of death.

Enter Erox.

' *Erox.* [*Aside.*] Now, aid me, wily powers of win-
 ning art !'

Mer. How now ! what bold intrusion plac'd thee here ?

Erox. Queen of the kingdom's lord, his heart's high
 Suffer a voice unequal to the task, [*emprefs !*
 To wrong th' intrusted sense of his told grief
 Who sends me to condole you.—Poliphontes,
 Had you but smooth'd that brow's majestic bend,
 I meant to have said, the king,—this moment, heard
 The fate, most pitied, of the prince, your son,
 Heard, and takes equal part in all your wrongs.

Mer. More, than his part, he takes, in what is mine:
 Else, had he never dar'd aspire, to seize
 His master's throne, nor name my murder'd son.

Erox. Wishing, he waits but leave. Respect is delicate,
 And wou'd not, unadmitted, now approach.
 Fain would he talk of comfort to your sorrows,
 Who, weeping, wants the power to curb his own.

Mer. What wou'd your artful sender come to say ?

Erox. To beg, that to his hand you wou'd commit
 This hateful murd'rer's punishment.—He glows
 For vengeance in your cause. Shou'd think his claim
 Unworthy a crown's trust ; less worthy yours,
 Cou'd he forget, that justice props a throne.

Mer. No, tell him no. My hand revenges here.
 Too short of reach, heaven knows ! but, what it can,
 It shall ; and neither asks, nor bears, his aid.

Erox. The king too tenderly regards your will,

To



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Bless the resembled mother's copied softness!

'Tis my Ismene; 'tis my own dear daughter.

Time cannot hide her from a parent's eye;

Child as she was—and chang'd since last I saw her.

Enter Ismene, followed by a train of virgins in white, who bring baskets, and strew flowers on the tomb.

Ism. Who is this bold unknown? so sagely form'd,
Yet indiscretely rude—at such an hour,
To break, abruptly, on the queen's sad purpose.

Nar. Fairest of forms——

Ism. Who are you?

Nar. Chide me not,

Sweet picture of the powers who shed soft pity!

---I am a nameless, friendless, weak, old man.

Once; I was a servant to the queen you serve;

Oh, grant the gracious privilege to see her.

Ism. Rev'rend, and wise! the first, I see you are;
The last, my heart conceives you---what a time
Have your misguided wants unaptly chosen!
Your sight wou'd now offend her.---Deep distress,
From dire solemnity of purpose, brings her.

'Twere prudent to withdraw.

Nar. [*In a low voice.*] Come near, Ismene.

Ism. Immortal powers! who can it be?---he knows me!
Fain wou'd I dare mix hope, with fear and wonder.

[*Approaching him.*

Nar. Thou art my child. Kind Heaven has sent thee
---Be cautious, and observe. [to me,

Ism. [*Kneeling.*] Prophetic heart.

Oh, Sir——I cannot speak!

Nar. [*Raising her.*] Hide thy surprize,
Ere yet some dang'rous note detects our meeting.
---Soft as thy eyes Ismene, be thy voice.

And answer to my question---round this tomb,
Why thus assembled moves that virgin train?

Ism. Alas, the afflicted queen,
Distracted comes,——to offer on this tomb,
Her life's last sacrifice——a dreadful victim!
---The murd'rer of her son.

Nar. Eumenes, dead!

Ism. Alas, Sir, cou'd you be a stranger to it?

Nar.

Nar. Blast of my soul's best hope.--Who dar'd this
villainy ?

Ism. A youth who found him in Alcides' temple.
One, from whose air of manly modesty,
None surely cou'd have fear'd---behold, he comes.
That fetter'd criminal is he.—Oh, Sir,
Where will you now be hid ?

Nar. In death, Ismene ;
If I now hear and see, and am not dreaming.

Ism. From the queen's eye, I dare no longer—

Nar. Stay.

Queens, kings, nor gods, shall tear thee from my arm,
Till thou hast heard me fully.

Solemn procession to a dead march. Merope, Euricles, with
the sword. Eumenes in chains. Guards. Priests, as to
sacrifice—The queen goes up weeping, and kneels silent
at the tomb, while the rest range themselves on each side
of the scene.

Nar. [To *Ism.*] Some black-soul'd fiend, some fury
ris'n from hell,

Has darken'd all discernment !—Call'dst thou not

That fetter'd youth the murd'rer of Eumenes ?

Ism. I call'd him so, too truly.

Nar. He is Eumenes.

What angry god misleads the queen to madness ?

She dreams Eumenes kill'd—and kills Eumenes !

Ism. Now are my heart's late tremblings well ex-
plain'd.

Quick let me rush, and warn her erring hand.

Nar. Not for a thousand worlds—to save him so,

Were but to lose him surer—Poliphontes

Has ears and eyes too near us.—

I may anon find means, when all are busied

To hide myself, unmark'd, amidst the crowd.'

Sad and solemn music. Then a song of sacrifice by the chief
priest.

Hear, from the dark and silent shade ;

Hear, ye pale bands of death ;

Gliding from graves, where once your bones were laid,

Receive a murd'rer's breath.

Chorus of priests and virgins.

Receive a murd'rer's breath.

Mer. [*Rising and coming forward.*] Where is this victim
 ---odious to all powers,
 But one, — the dreadful Nemesis?

[*The guards bring up Eumenes.*]

Euri. Yet, ere he dies,
 'Twere fit some force of torture should compel him
 To name his vile accomplices.

Mer. It shall.

Say, monster! what provok'd thee to this guilt;
 And what associates join'd thee.

Eum. I appeal

The gods, who find it fit my soul shou'd buy
 At this dear rate, the moment's hope you lent it;
 Those gods can witness for me; they, who curse
 The perjurd, and disclaim the base one's safety,
 My lips detect imposture:
 —Nor know I, by what change in Heav'n's high will,
 I, who of late so blest'd, had touch'd your pity,
 Fall now beneath your anger.

Mer. View this sword.

[*Taking the sword from Euricles.*]

Know you the dreadful object?

Eum. 'Twas the villain's,
 My just hand punish'd with it.

Mer. Seize him. Rend him.

Swift to the destin'd altar drag the traitor.

He owns it! glories in his bloody crime:

And my flock'd soul akes at him. [*The guards seize him.*]

Eum. Off — away —

[*Struggling.*]

Spare your officious grasp — I will be heard,
 One last loud word — In spite of arms and insult.

Mer. [*After a signal to the guards, who quit Eumenes.*]

Thou then, who deal'st in death, can'st find death fearful.

Eum. No, Madam, you mistake. Death shakes the
 But he who is a wretch receives him gladly. [happy:
 — Yet 'gainst imputed guilt, the humblest wrong'd,
 Rise bold in innocence.

— Tell me, nor let your pride deface your pity,
 Whose so high-rated blood was this I shed?

— If he was dear to you, curs'd be my memory,
 Or I had rather lost my own than his.

Mer. Where has this cruel wretch been taught deceit?

Why

Why was that look, so like Cresphontes, his!

[Half fainting,

Euri. Great queen! sustain your purpose. Think of vengeance;

The laws of nature, and the lives of kings.

Eum. Do laws, and kings, then call injustice vengeance? Shame on the great! Why long'd my eyes for courts?

' Courts, where the pride of guilt lays claim to honour.

' —Haughty of heart, why have they souls thus abject?

' They threaten, praise, fright, flatter, and insult me!

' —Yet, Oh, 'twas just.' —I left my father rashly!

Felt not the pangs, weigh'd not the tears I cost him:

Fate drew me from my forest's guiltless quiet,

Deaf to the warnings of a father's wisdom,

And a griev'd mother's bodings,

Mer. Mother, said he!

Barbarian! hast thou yet a mother left thee?

I was a mother too — till thy fell hand

Depriv'd me of a son, and all life's comforts.

Eum. A son! — your son?

Mer. Mine, monster! murd'rer! mine.

Eum. ' If such was my misfortune, such my curse,'
If Heaven has made it possible — that he,

Who in a fatal moment, err'd — and fell.

By my ill-destin'd rashness, was your son,

Earth holds not such another wretch as I am!

And mercy's faintest glimpse shou'd shun to reach me. —

Mer. Mercy! thou hypocrite. — If thou dar'st pray,
Raise thy dumb hands; and ask, in vain, from Heaven,
The mercy thou deny'dst my dying son.

Eum. Yet hear —

Mer. Stop his detested mouth;

Force the doom'd victim to the altar's foot,

Veil him from light, no more to be beheld:

Hide his quench'd eyes for ever.

[Two priests approaching with a veil, he snatches it, and
throws it from him.

Eum. Off, ye vain forms!

Cover the eyes of cowards; mine disdain ye.

Mine can, with steadfast and advancing scorn,

Look in death's face full-fighted. — When it comes,

'Tis to be met, not hid. —

Welcome 'eternal day; bad world, farewell:

[*Advances between the Priests to the tomb, followed by the Queen, Euricles, Ismene, &c.*

Mer. [*At the tomb, with the sword drawn, and Eumenes kneeling ready.*]

Shade of my murder'd husband;—hear my call.

Chorus of singers voices. Oh, hear!

Mer. Soul of my bleeding son, hear thou!

Chorus of singers voices. Oh, hear!

Mer. Unexpiated souls—if in those glooms,
Where walk the fullen ghosts of earth-wrong'd kings,
You hear atonement's voice, and wait redress,
Rise from your dire domains.

Chorus of singers voices. Oh, rise!

Mer. Thou last,

Tremendous power, pale goddess; present still!

To direful vengeance nerve this lifted arm;

And thus assisting

[*Ismene, preventing the blow; Narbas breaks into fight, and cries out loudly.*]

Nar. Stay, stay that bloody purpose;

Death has already been too busy here;

And Heaven disclaims such sacrifice.

Mer. [*In a frighted and trembling attitude*] Who art

Euri. Oh, 'tis Narbas!

[*thou?*]

Cautious conceal this chance, or ruin finds him.

Ism. [*Aside, to the queen.*] Your victim is your son—
the prince Eumenes.

[*Merope lets fall the sword, astonished and trembling.*]

Eum. [*Raising himself to look round.*] I heard a well-
known voice, now heard no longer.

Open, sad eyes, once more, from the grave's brink,

And find what seem'd—Oh, 'tis—it is—my father!

Nar. [*Aside to Eum.*] Hear, and be mute. Thy fate,
Depends upon thy silence. [*unwary youth,*]

Eum. Whence, Oh, ye Powers!

Can all these myst'ries rise?

Mer. Oh, 'tis too much!

And life and I are lost.

[*Faints, and is supported by Ismene.*]

Nar. Assist the queen.

[*ger.*]

Ism. Stay your unhallow'd rites; the queen's in dan-

Euri.

Euri. Quit, rev'rend priests, your unpropitious sacrifice. [*Exeunt Priests.*]

Follow me, guards; I will secure your victim.

Eum. Oh, father—— [*portant cause.*]

Nar. [*To Eum.*] Shun me, and patient wait th' im-

Eum. Oh, bid me, ere I die, but hope your pardon;
And if I leave you blest'd, 'tis all my prayer. [*tue.*]

Nar. No more—The gods, who love, reward thy vir-
[*The Soldiers, and Euricles go off with Eumenes.*]

Ism. Kind Heaven restores the queen.

Mer. Where—whither have ye brought me?

Isinene, what means this? Why weep my virgins?

Oh, I have kill'd him! [*Looking wildly round her.*] for I
see him not;

And I am doom'd to pains in life immortal.

Nar. Ease your sad heart's too apprehensive startings.
Euricles has secur'd him, and nothing's known. [*bas?*]

Mer. Still that kind vision haunts me—Art thou Nat—

Nar. Let my tears answer——In this gush of joy—
I give you back my trust, my king Eumenes.

Mer. [*On her knees.*] Oh, gracious Heaven! support
a woman's weakness;

And what my heart, yet panting, fails to utter,
Take from my soul's touch'd sense, and make my prayer.
You are too great for thanks, too good for duty. [*Rises.*]

Re-enter Euricles hastily.

Eur. Death to th' insatiate tyrant's thirst of insult!
This royal scandal to the name he steals
Has with some fatal purpose seiz'd the king,
And holds him to examine.

Mer. Follow me:—

Now shall he see what marks denote the queen;
What difference 'twixt the guilty and the wrong'd.

[*Going.*]

Nar. Madam——it must not be.

Euri. Stay——curb this rashness.

Mer. Is he not mine? Is he not yours? Your king;

Euri. The moment you confess that dang'rous truth,
No god but hated Hymen saves Eumenes.

Mer. There thou hast let in light upon my soul——
Rather than wed this Polophontes——

Nar. Wed him!
Wed Polyphontes?

Euri. Him.

Nar. The world's last groan,
Wrapp'd in surrounding fires, had less amaz'd me!

Euri. 'Tis with that view the people call him king.
Since he reveng'd Cresphontes' blood, they say,
He best——

Nar. He!—— Every curse of death surround him!
He! he reveng'd!—— The villain's own damn'd train
Shed, spilt it. I beheld them; trac'd the fiend
Thro' all his dark disguises—— thro' night's eye
Saw the pale murd'rer stalk amidst his furies.
His was the half-hid torch, the postern key,
That open'd to the rebels rage the palace.
In the pierc'd infant breasts of two doom'd innocents,
I saw him plunge his poignard; twice receiv'd it
Deep in my own, encumber'd with my charge,
Struggling to bear the third sav'd prince to shelter;
And, track'd by my lost blood, with pain escap'd him.

Mer. When will my growing horrors reach their end?
Oh, my fix'd hate was instinct! something fatal
Dwelt on his dreadful brow, and bad me shun him.
Blind, headlong, ill-discerning, noise-driv'n people!

Euri. [*Looking out.*] Soft, the tyrant comes!

Mer. 'Can the gods leave that possible?'——
Narbas, be hid this moment—— [*Exit Narbas.*]
Euricles——

Fly thou—— find to my mournful son access;
Comfort his fears, but keep the secret from him.
[*Exit Euricles.*]

Enter Poliphontes in nuptial robes, Erox, and train.

Pol. Health to my sovereign, late, now to the states.
Decree, my wife, my sister, and my soul!
Dress'd is the altar, and the priests attend.——
Nay, do not turn aside, and shun your triumph.
Look, and admire the wonders of your power:
The god of love, to-day, smooths all my wrinkles,
And I am taught by joy to smile back youth.
One care alone precedes impatient love:
They tell me your too tender heart recoil'd,
And lost your purpos'd vengeance—— Let it be.

Beauty



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Half sentences broke short ; looks fill'd with horror ;
 Are Nature's thin disguise to cover danger,
 Something you will not tell, alarms my caution,
 And bids my summon'd fear take place of love.
 In ent'ring here, I had a glimpse, but now,
 Of an old man, who seem'd to shun my presence :
 Why is he fled ? Who was he ?

Mer. Scarce yet call'd

A king—and see, already fill'd with jealousies !

Pol. Be kind, and bear your part, then—Burthens,
 shar'd,

Press light the eas'd sustainers. Come, your hand.

Mer. A moment since, you talk'd but of revenge ;

Now 'tis again all love — Away, keep separate.

Two passions nature never yet saw join'd.

Pol. Let it be so then : death shall strait remove

That obstacle, and one wish remains.

Follow, at leisure, you, while I prepare.

[*Exeunt Polyphontes, Erox, and Train.*]

Mer. Aet for me now, and save me, great Alcides !

To power like thine all things are possible ;

And grief, oppress'd on earth, finds friends in heaven.

Then when the woe-sunk heart is tir'd with care,

And every human prospect bids despair,

Break but one gleam of heav'nly comfort in,

And a new race of triumphs thence begin.

[*Exit, with Attendants.*]

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

S C E N E, *the Castle of Polyphontes.*

Enter Polyphontes and Erox.

POLYPHONTES.

SHE has her views, I mine—I should have fear'd

Some hint's officious reach had touch'd her ear ;

I should have dreamt her eyes had catch'd some glance

To guide discovery down the dark abyss

Where my close crime lies veil'd in dumb obscurity ;

But

But that I know she is a woman, Erox,
And born to be capricious.

Erox. -Pride; not distaste,
Holds out her heart against you.

Pol. Let her keep it.

My hope is humbler, Erox. 'Tis her hand
I seek: hearts are girls gifts to school-boy lovers.
Now let her spleen start wild; when time serves aptly,
Means shall be found to curb it—Thou art come
From founding this fierce captive son of wonder;
What have thy thoughts concluded?

Erox. 'Tis hot lie.

No race of Hercules need there alarm you.
This but some rural brave, of simple nurture;
Void of ambition's flame; bold, blunt, and honest;
Fearless of menace, tasteless of reward;
And wanting ev'n the wish to dare for power.
He cannot be Eumenes.

Pol. Who, then, is he?

Erox. He says he is a shepherd's son; what more,
He will not be provok'd nor brib'd to tell.
Firm without fierceness; without weakness, gentle;
Open as day-light, yet as dumb as death:
Spite of my prejudice, he forc'd my praise,
And hatred must admire him.

Pol. Praise him on.

Be what or whom he may, 'tis fit he die.
The people, who conclude his punishment
Inflicted for Eumenes' fancied murder,
Will dream that race extinct, and cleave to me:
So danger comes less near, nor shakes my throne.
What hast thou learn'd of that conceal'd presumer,
Who, when the arm of Metope was rais'd,
Restrain'd it with some power that touch'd her soul?

Erox. The young man call'd him father. Chance, it
In that nice moment brought him to his view: [seems,
He mov'd the queen's compassion for his son,
Fled, like a wanton, from the good man's care;
Who, in his search, came forrowing on from Elis.

Pol. I cannot trust this tale. Thou grow'st too credu-
Mysterious caution hangs too thick a veil [lous.
O'er all their late proceedings. That old man

Left

Left the queen's presence, starting, at my entrance.

Why was he hid, if a young rustic's father?

Why should my coming fright him? He has heard,

Since then, his son's redoubled danger dwells

But in my menace; yet he comes not near me.

I had, ere now, beheld him at my feet,

Had his heart trembled with a father's terrors.

Erox. See, Sir, he's free; and mark, the queen, how

Pol. I note it, and determine. [near—

Now, my sister—

Enter Merope, Ismene, Euricles, Eumenes, and Guards.

Mer. You see, Sir, I dare know, and use my rights.

How had your will presum'd to seize my victim?

Am I but queen of shadows, that my vengeance

Must move as you direct it?

Pol. Nobly urg'd!

The victim is your right, requires your hand:

Mine had defac'd your vengeance—I assum'd

Pretence to aid it, but to fire your languor.

Take courage; I resign him; with his blood

Wash this reluctant faintness from your heart,

And give it warmth to meet me at the altar.

Mer. Horrid and impious hope!

Pol. Looks love so frightful?

Eum. [To *Pol.*] Who taught thee to associate love
with cruelty?

What right has Cupid to a captive's blood?

Yet mispresume not, that I court thy pity:

He has too poor a view from life, to prize it,

Whose death can only serve to shorten pain.

But I am told thou call'st thyself a king:

Know, if thou art one, that the poor have rights;

And power, in all its pride, is less than justice.

I am a stranger, innocent, and friendless,

And that protection which thou ow'st to all,

Is doubly due to me — for I'm unhappy.

Pol. Protection is for worth; guilt calls for vengeance.

Eum. And what does wrong's licentious insult call for?

In my own just defence I kill'd a robber;

Law call'd it murder, and the queen condemn'd me:

Queens may mistake; ev'n gods, who love, grow par-

I can forgive th' injustice of a mother,

[*tial.*]

And

And could have blest'd her hand beneath the blow:
 ' Nature has weaknesſes that err to virtue.'
 But what haſt thou to do with mother's vengeance?
 Law that ſhocks equity, is reaſon's murder.

Pol. So young, ſo wretched, and ſo arrogant!
 Methinks the pride of an Alcides' blood
 Could ſcarce have ſwell'd a ſoul to loftier boldneſs.

Mer. Pity preſumptuous heat; 'tis youth's prerogative.

Pol. Mean while, how happy ſuch unpoliſh'd plainneſs,
 To move defence from art ſo ſkill'd as yours!
 Your ſon, ſure, lives.

Mer. Lives! and ſhall live. I truſt him to the gods;
 They can, they did, they will protect him.

Pol. What cannot woman's pity? None, who marks
 The willing pardon your ſoft looks inſure him,
 Can charge your heart with cruelty.

Mer. My looks,
 Perhaps, hint meanings prudence ſhould decline
 To lend too loud a tongue to—but there are,
 Whoſe heart ſpeaks nothing, yet tells all by actions.

Pol. Mark if I ſpeak not now my heart's true language.
 Traitor, receive thy doom — [Drawing his ſword.]

Mer. [Interpoſing.] Strike here, here, murd'rer!
 Menace my breaſt, not his.

Pol. Whoſe heart ſpeaks now?

Eum. Now, ye immortals, not to die, were not
 To triumph — To be pitied here, ſo pitied,
 By ſuch a queen as Merope! — 'Tis glory
 That every power beneath a god might envy!

Pol. If you would have him live, confeſs, who is he!

Mer. He is —

Eur. [To Iſmene.] Oh, we are loſt!

Iſm. All, all is hopeleſs.

Pol. If he has right in you, be ſwift to own him;
 Or loſe him by your ſilence. [Offers to kill Eumenes.]

Mer. Stay — he is —

Pol. Who? What? — Say quickly —

Mer. He is my ſon Eumenes.

Pol. [Starting, and aſide.] 'Tis as I fear'd, and all my
 ſchemes are air. [Stands penſively fix'd.]

Eum. Heav'ns! — Did I hear that rightly?

Mer. [Embracing him.] Thou art my ſon.

Loud

Loud in the face of men; and ears of gods,
 Cresphontes was thy father; I attest it;
 I tell it to the winds; proclaim it; boast it!—
 Hear it, thou soul of murder—I have found him;
 And if I lose him now, whole Heaven shall curse thee.

Eum. I cannot comprehend it—Yet I kneel,
 To thank you but for deigning to deceive me.
 ' Bless'd is his fate who dies in such a dream !'

Mer. One way thou art deceiv'd—the mother's love
 Forgets the monarch's danger—Poliphontes—

Pol. [*Starting.*] Go on—I meditated—but speak,
 Madam.

Mer. Thou now hast wrung from my affrighted heart,
 The secret that oppress'd it. Thou behold'st
 Thy king, distress'd, before thee—Sigh, if thou canst,
 Sigh for the son, prince, mother, fame and nature.

Pol. How to resolve will ask some needful pause—
 Mean while, it shakes my faith to trust your story.
 You hear, the young man's honesty disclaims
 This greatness you would lend him.

Eum. Modest sense.

Of my unequal worth compell'd some doubting;
 But now 'tis truth contestless, Royal tears
 Flow not for pitied falsehood, and they prove it. [*'em.*]

Mer. Tears touch not hearts of flint, and I will spare
 Did your pride [*Kneels.*] bear me—for your pity cannot:
 See me an humble suppliant at your feet,
 Now first confessing I can fear your anger.

This should, beyond all proof of tears, convince you
 That Merope's his mother—Still you frown:
 I forget

My own long sorrows, all my wrongs and insults;
 Smile to the future, and absolve the past—
 Let him but breathe – to reign were to be wretched.
 Cruel! you answer nothing—Look less dreadful—
 Ease my distracted soul, and speak some comfort.

Eum. Oh, Madam, quit that posture!—My proud
 Aspires to keep the glory you have lent it. [*heart*]
 If I, indeed, was born to call you mother,
 Why do I see and hear you not a queen? [*Raises her.*]
 Nor think my soul too haughty—No distress
 Absolves dejection: 'tis the brave's prerogative,

To feel without complaining.

‘ Now——strike, tyrant——

‘ Courage, restrain’d from act, takes pride to suffer.’

Pol. [*To Merope.*] ‘Tis well. I have, with just attention, heard ;

And in impartial silence weigh’d it all.

Your sorrow claims some right to call for mine,

And his high spirit charms me. I take him

[*Takes Eumenes by the hand.*

Into my heedful care ; remit his sentence,

And, if found yours, adopt him as my son.

Eum. Yours ! said you ?—Yours !

Mer. Be patient, good Eumenes.

Pol. You know his destiny ; you know what price I rate his life at. Smile, and meet my wishes : For, may the gods, conjointly, curse my reign, If he survives refusal of my prayer.

Bethink you. In an hour I shall expect you ;

Where, at the altar, to th’ attesting powers [him

You may proclaim your choice. That moment makes

My victim or my son. ‘Till then, farewell.

Mer. You cannot be so cruel——Leave him with me. To see him might persuade me.

Pol. See him there ;

See him in Hymen’s temple. Erox attend him.

[*Exit Poliphontes.*

Eum. Oh, queen ! Oh, mother !

If I already dare assume a right

To call you by that dear, that awful name,

Think nothing that may misbecome your glory ;

Do nothing that may mix contempt with mine.

I leave you to the care of Heaven, and die.

Lead me to the tyrant. [*Exeunt Eum. and Erox.*

Mer. Fly, follow, Euricles ; hold thy kind eye Fix’d to this tyrant’s motions. Fain would I dream He threatens but to fright me.

‘ *Euri.* Willing hope

‘ So flatters to deceive you. Too, too sure

‘ His purpose : ev’n by nature stern and bloody,

‘ How more, when power and safety prompt his cruelty ?’

[*Exit Euricles.*

Mer. Find thy good father ; haste ; Ismene, call him ;

D

Tell

Tell him distress grows headstrong, and my soul
Sickens for want of counsel.

Ism. [*Aside.*] What a blindness
Is thirst of human grandeur! Give me, gods!
A cottage and concealment. Save the queen;
And from the curse of courts remotely place me.

[*Exit Ismene.*]

Mer. [*Alone.*] No, there is none, no ruler of the stars
Regardful of my miseries——

Oh, my beloved son! my eyes have lost thee ever.

I shall no more snatch comfort from thy hopes,
Or wonder at thy sweetness.

Why have the deities permitted this?

Why have they sported with a mortal's mind.

Unpitying its distraction? Sent him to me

From a far distant land—Sent him, for what?

To glut the murderer's sword, who kill'd his father.

Yet you are just, ye gods!—Amazing darkness

Dwells o'er th' eternal will, and hides all cause.

I must not dare to tax almighty power

For what I suffer from it. Let it but pay me

With that curs'd tyrant's punishment attain'd;

Let me but see myself depriv'd of him——

See him expell'd from light, from earth, from name,

Deep as the cheerless void below can plunge him!

And I will kneel [*Kneeling.*] a wretch, and thank your
justice,

Enter Ismene and Narbas.

Nar. Oh, queen, august in woes! what wrongs are
yours!

Mer. [*rising.*] Yes, Narbas, I have sacrific'd my son—
Have given him up to death—have madly own'd him.

What mother, who beheld her son as I did,

Doom'd and endanger'd, could have then kept silence?

Nar. Gen'rous purpose! gloriously you err'd,

And fell; but from a height, 'twas fame to reach:

Dry up your tears, and summon all your soul:

Time presses, and a moment lost is fate. [*Shouts heard.*]

Ism. [*Looking out.*] Uproar and cries without, in rising
wildness,

Heard from the city, reach the palace walls:

Sure sign of new confusion.

Nar.



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In dread this great'discovery comes too late.
 The shouting people crowd the waiting altar,
 And, erring in their zeal, mis-hail the day.
 What can be, shall be try'd to cross his doom.
 They shall be taught, with bold, advent'rous speed,
 To save their sovereign's right—And hence, rash queen,
 Learn due repentance, and no more let loose
 The rage of wrongs against the tongues of gods.

[*Exeunt Priests.*]

Mer. This solemn sharpness of deserv'd reproach
 Struck my too conscious guilt with infelt awe.
 I have been warm too soon, and just too late.
 What tho' Religion's guardian's taint her tide,
 Pure is the fountain, tho' the stream flows wide:
 Too oft her erring guides her cause betray;
 Yet rage grows impious when it bars her way.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

SCENE, *a Prison.*

Enter Eumenes, Narbas, and Euricles.

EUMENES.

THINK, think upon your danger; fly, lov'd father,
 Fly from the tyrant's power, and leave me to my
Nar. All sense of my own danger lost in yours, [fate.
 I threw myself, regardless, at his feet:
 Full of the fatal subject, I began,
 Uncautious in my transport. Starting conscience
 Fled from the face of truth. He shunn'd to hear,
 Broke short, reply'd, 'twas well; gave me permission,
 Nay, full of seeming zeal, injoin'd my coming—
 Bade me go pay my last short debt of counsel,
 And try to bend your heart to meet his will.

Euri. He added, that his queen—he call'd her his—
 I blush to name her such; but so he charg'd me.
 Since she, he said, in pity but for you,
 Yields a reluctant hand to close with his,
 'Tis time her son, whose life she holds so dear,

Aids

Aids his own int'rest, and confirms her safety.
 —The rest, he paus'd and thought; but held it in,
 Frown'd a disdainful nod, and bade us leave him,

Eum. Slowly awaking from my dream of wonders,
 I seem reborn to some new world unknown;
 Where every thing I meet with shocks my soul.
 ' —You talk of dying, whilst I yet half doubt,
 ' Whether, existing now, I really live!
 If I am truly the lost wretch I seem,
 If in Mycene now inclos'd, I find
 Queen Merope, my mother---King Cresphontes,
 My father, murder'd---his fear'd murd'rer crown'd,
 With his stol'n diadem; and in it daring
 Offer his widow'd queen a hand, stain'd, frightful,
 In her first husband's blood——All this to me!
 Seems, while I drink in Heav'n's fair light, and view
 Yon mansions of the gods, who govern man——
 Incredible! astonishing!—and horrid!

Euri. 'Tis horrible, indeed! too dark for thought!
 —But reason's line wants depth to found Heaven's will.

Nar. Deign, my devoted prince! my king! my son!
 Suffer me still to use that long-lov'd name—
 Deign but to live.—Time, chance, and fortune's
 changes,

May vindicate your glory.—Since the tyrant
 Tempts to betray, reward him with his own.
 Deceive deceivers, and deceit grows virtue.

Eum. This in thy forests, Elis! had I heard
 Even there, I shou'd have blush'd to hear from Narbas!
 But as I am.—No more.—

Kind was your motives!---pitying my distress,
 You but forgot my duty.

Nar. Happy forests!

Wou'd ye were ours once more! there peace dwelt with
 There safety slept upon unguarded hills, [us;
 And every tree's soft shadow cover'd anguish.

' *Euri.* Soft! behold! the tyrant comes!

Enter Poliphontes, speaking to the foregoing.

Pol. Retire, and wait without.

[*Exeunt Euricles and Narbas.*

——And thou, rash youth,
 Whose unexperienc'd years, and gen'rous plainness,

Fill me with all the pity due to weakness !
 For the last time I come to bring thee power.
 Leave to my toil, to smooth thy future paths ;
 And root out faction's thorns, which trouble empire.
 —When I am dead, as age admits short stay,
 Thou, and my Merope, will reign at ease,
 And thank my painful cares, and love my memory.
 —Why art thou dumb?—Paule on—I read thee
 rightly.

Thou hast, I know, a kind of stubborn pride,
 Call'd courage—and mistak'st it for a virtue.
 —'Tis virtue, when presumption drives it not ;
 But suffers thought to guide it.

Eum. Guiding thought
 Has held me patient long.—Now, answer me,
 Am I Mycene's monarch ?

Poli. For thy birth,
 Be it, as truth, or trick, or chance, conclude it ;
 If from some low, some nameless stock, derived,
 Be humble, and advis'd—and rise to greatness.
 If happier offspring cast thee for a king,
 Make thyself worthy of the crown I mean thee.
 —'Tis but to wait me to the marriage altar,
 Where love, and Merope, and peace, attend.
 There, to the gods and me, (Mycene's guardians)
 Swear homage, and devote thy faithful sword.
 That done, sports, joys, and safety, crown thy youth :
 And in thy riper years expect the diadem.
 —Determine, —

Eum. 'Tis determin'd.

Poli. Tell me how ?

Eum. Why am I left unfree to chuse—yet press'd
 To tell thee my decision?—The compell'd
 To yield, disgrace consent ; and make faith doubtful.
 —I am a captive. He who holds not freedom,
 Has not his will his own ; and chuses nothing.

Poli. Fierce, amid misery ! thou at once art brave,
 And insolent, and wretched!—but, beware,
 Nor trust, too far, my pity of thy poorness.
 I give thee yet some moments to resolve.
 I go before thee : but my guards attend
 To bring thee to the altar. Come, determin'd

To swear, and hope my crown, and live, my son,
Or die a slave unown'd, and lose thy name. [*Is going.*]

Eum. [*Calling after him.*] Thou goest then?

Poli. [*Stopping.*] To expect thee.

Eum. I will come.

And with me, (tremble to be told it) comes
The god that rais'd my race to root out tyrants,
Soon shall the throne thou stol'st no more be thine:
Horror and penitence shall pale thole eyes,
Whose daring insolence now frown on virtue.
Menace and insult then shall quit thy voice,
And groaning anguish grind it.—What the gods
Restrain my hand from reaching, happier sons
Of my immortal fire shall rise to execute;
And hurl thee from a power that hurts mankind.

Poli. Here, Narbas! Euricles!—You may return,

Enter Narbas and Euricles.

I leave him to your lessons. Too, too deeply,
He feels their past impression. Teach him better;
Or your exacted heads shall answer to me,
For every well-known help I owe your hatred.
—Narbas, thy age, I think, might best be trusted.
Experience lays his dangers open to thee.
Thou, as thou lov'st, advise him.—Whether born
The son of Merope, or thine, no matter.
I must adopt him mine, —or death demands him.

[*Exit Poliphontes.*]

Eum. Where did this ill-instructed tyrant learn
To threaten for persuasion!—I suspect
He does not seem to doubt, but doubts indeed,
I shate no blood of Hercules.—He's gone:
And call'd me to his altar.—Let us follow.

Nar. Stay.—Whither wou'd such fatal rashness
lead you?

Euri. The queen has friends, howe'er too weak, too
Who dare defend her cause. Give us but time [*few:*
To weigh, and to resolve, and these shall aid you.

Eum. No.—In an hour so black, so dire as this,
If I must fall, I will.—I go—to try
I task but my own heart, and Heav'n to aid me,
What god forsakes the friendless.

[*Going out, meets Merope and Ismene.*]

Mer. Stay, my son—

Th'

Th' usurper sends me to thee.—Rest, unheard;
His errand: but my own requires thy ear.
It has, perhaps, been told thee, that the woman
Conquers the queen.

—Let no light credit of a guilt so shameful
Insult the daughter, mother, wife—ah, me!
And widow—of a king.—Yet I must go;
Must at the altar lend my trembling hand;
And seem—Oh, Heaven!—

Eum. Oh, Madam! so to seem,
Were so to be. Can solemn vows at altars,
Leave room for art's evasions? ' See me sooner
' Tinging the spotted stone with gushing blood:
' And my torn breast th'unseeming sacrifice.

' *Mer.* So look'd, so spoke---so sometimes frown'd,
Cresphontes.

' Full of thy godlike father, copy too
' The confidence he lent me. He had scorn'd
' To doubt me, for a moment, less than Merope.

' *Eum.* If I was guilty,——think'——

Mer.——No more.——Time presses;
Hear my resolving will, and curb thy own.
Th' usurper of thy throne no sooner joins
My hand's suppos'd consent, than at the altar
He swears, in all the pomp of priestly witness,
To free thee from thy chains—and, from that hour,
Confirm succession thine.——

Eum. Think at what price comes empire bought so.
Rather than see you wed this—— [dear!

Mer. Rash, again?——

Bound by an oath, so witness'd by the gods,
And all Mycene's priests——and all her peers——
He dares not break it; and thou liv'st to reign.
For me, who have thenceforth no call for life,
I seek thy father in the glooms below.

Eum. ——No more.

——It shall not be---See, my repugnant soul
Shrinks from th' abhorr'd conception. The felt god,
The god glows in me; swells against controul;
And every springy nerve is active fire!
Come on, friends! father! mother!——trust my
firmness.

See, if I bear a heart that brooks this wrong ;
That poorly pants for a base hour of life——
And let a woman's blood out-dare a king's.

[*Going.*

Mer. Oh, stay ! return.——Call : stop him.

Euri. Sir !

Nar. Prince !

Mer. Son !

Eum. [*Returning.*] Look out : see yonder : view my
father's tomb.

Know you his voice ! Are you a queen ?

Come, listen——.

I hear him---Hark!---my king, my father calls !

Mer. Methinks the god

He talk'd of, swells indeed his widening soul,
Lifts him above himself——above mankind.

Eum. Come---let me lead you to the altar's foot.

There hear, there see---there dwells th'Eternal's eye !

Mer. Ah, what is thy design !

Eum. To die——to live.

Friends !—in this warm embrace, divide my soul.

[*To Narbas, who presses him tenderly.*

——Weep not, my Narbas.

No blush, for deeds unworthy your instructions,
Shall stain remembrance of the care I cost you.

Stay thou, that this good lord returning from me,

May find thee, and impart a ripening hope

Whereon your council may direct and save.

On to the work of fate——— it calls me hence——

I hear it, and obey. [*Exeunt Eum. Mer. and Euri.*

Nar. Away—I wou'd not see thee share my sorrow.

Ism. Oh, 'twere too poor a wish. Heaven knows, I
No share,——I long for power to bear it all. [*seek.*

Nar. Thou art too good for courts—where ruin preys
On innocence ; and nought but guile is safe.

—What are thy thoughts of this lost prince's virtues ?

Ism. I am unskill'd in men ; and most in kings.

But, sure ! if ever beauty dwelt in form,

Courage in gentleness, or truth in grandeur,

All those adorn'd perfections meet in him.

Nar. Yet, see, how Heaven, that gave him all these
claims,

Forgets 'em, and resigns him.---Let that teach thee,

When

When soon, as soon they will, thy splendors fall,
Thou lovest nothing, but a right to woes.

Ism. Shou'd the queen,
Best of her sex,
Leave this loud stage of pain, and rest in death,
Oh, teach my willing feet to find some gloom,
Dark, as my prospects, deep inclos'd, for safety,
And silent as the brow of midnight sleep!

Nar. Yes, we will go, my sweet Ismene, go,
Where sorrow's sharpest eye shall fail to find us.
Where we may mix with men, who ne'er deceiv'd,
And women, born to be the charms they look.

— There is a place, which my Eumenes lov'd,
Till youth's fond hope of glory dash'd his peace;
Where nature, plainly noble, knows no pomp;
And virtue moves no envy.

[Shouts.

— Hark! That cry
Bodes horror—'tis the signal of some fate.

— Listen, again—

[Shouts.

Ism. Again I hear, and tremble.
Who knows, but now the queen's too direful deed
Has ended all her mis'ries! —

Nar. No more these eyes shall find thee, fated king!
Cresphontes, and his race, are all no more.

Ism. [At a window.] Hence, from the temple to the
palace gate,
The scatt'ring crowd runs wide a thousand ways;
All busied, without view—All driven by terror.

Enter Euricles, bloody.

Nar. Breathless and bleeding see! who comes!—Oh,
Euricles!

Euri. Scarce had I strength, wedg'd in by crossing
crowds,

To stem yon breathing torrent.—Give me rest.

Nar. Eumenes?—does he live?

Euri. He is—the son confess'd of Grecian gods?

Nar. What has he suffer'd?

Euri. Nothing—but has done—

Beyond example's boast.—Oh, such a deed!
So terrible! so just!—so fill'd with wonders!
That half Alcides' labours scarce were more.

Nar. And shall he be a king.

Euri.



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Hear hearts, and make voice needless—
 ‘ Doubt not then
 ‘ They are the good mind’s guardians—my deliverance
 ‘ Proves how they lov’d your virtue :’ in your safety
 I feel the blessing perfect—May I live

In deeds, not words, to thank the good they gave.

Mer. Deeds, words, and thoughts are theirs—
 Heav’n claims us all.

Eum. [*To the people.*] Hear me, my people, take
 your king, and with him,

‘ Heav’n’s best gift, your liberty—haughtier monarchs

‘ Place greatness in oppression : let my throne

‘ Find safety but in saving—

‘ Pride is too apt to harden prosp’rous pow’r,

‘ But he, whose youth is chasten’d by distress,

‘ Makes subjects happy, and himself ador’d.’

Enter Narbas, Euricles, and Ismene. All speaking, kneeling.

Hail ! and be ever blest’d, Oh, king ! Oh, queen !

Mer. Rise—and lament no more, ye happy friends
 Of virtue and of Heav’n !—see, what the gods
 Have done—to shame suspicion into faith !

Oh, never let the innocent despair :

The hand that made can save ; and best knows when.

[*To Eumenes.*

— Son of Alcides !—for what heart, but his,
 Nourish’d in misery ! by wants obstructed !

Ere sprung, like thine, at youth’s first shoot to glory,
 Trod on a tyrant, and redeem’d a people ?

Eum. ’Tis but the low, the last, the lightest duty
 Of a king’s hand to dare. ’Tis his to save ;

To think, to hear, to labour, to discern,

To form, to remedy,—to be but one ;

Yet act, and love, and fear, and feel,—for all.

—Oh, Madam, I am yours, midst all these claims.

Be those my glory’s, this my duty’s care,

To add my royal father’s love to mine :

And, with a doubled reverence, seek your comfort :

—Narbas ! what power can language lend my love,

To paint the joy, thy sense of pleasure gives me ?

Thou source, and soul, and author of my virtues :

Suspend we thoughts, thus tender.—Let us now

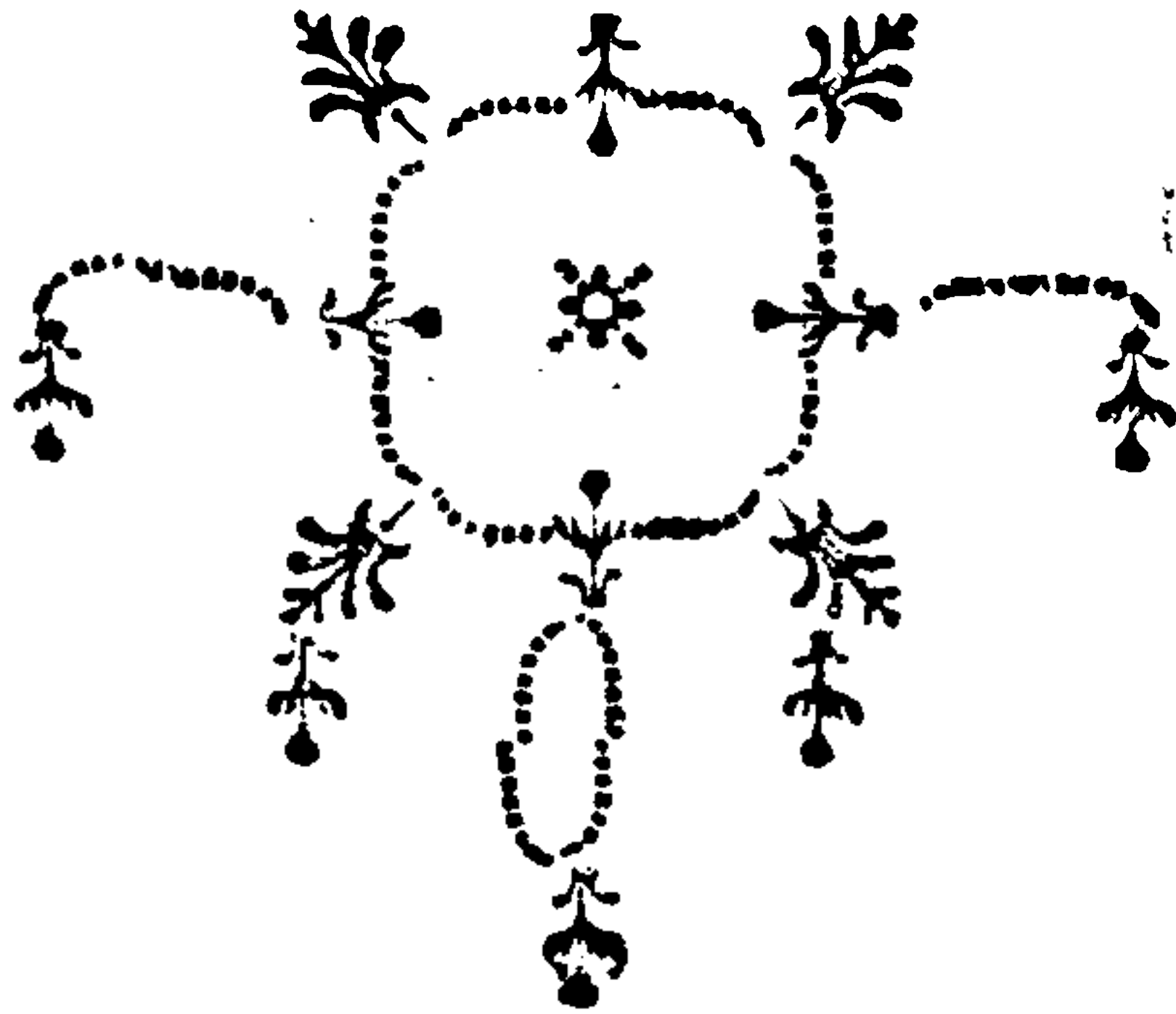
Summon Mycene’s chiefs, and calm her people.

[*To Merope.*

— Come,

Come, Madam ! he who reigns, but climbs to care ;
Tho' safe his throne, he finds no softness there.
Dangers, and doubts, and toils, each moment seize,
Hang on his business, and perplex his ease.
Bright but by pomp of woe, kings shine in vain ;
Envy'd for anguish, and adorn'd for pain. [*Exeunt.*]

END of the FIFTH ACT.



E

EPI.

E P I L O G U E.

I'M glad with all my heart, I've scap'd my wedding—
Glad! cry the maids?—Heaven keep such joy from
spreading!

Marriage (poor things!) don't move their hearts so coldly.

'Tis a dark leap, they own—but love jumps boldly.—

Fair fall th' advent'urers; I'm no husband-hater.

Only, be warn'd by me, and wed no traitor.

Pain-hunting murmur! born to growl and grumble;

No king can please him,——and no wife can humble;

Sick to the soul, be Heav'n his kind physician!

Earth's ablest drugs are lost upon ambition.

All Warwick-lane falls short:---and, to my knowledge,

No cure is hop'd for, in our female college.

Shun plotting heads, dear ladies!—All miscarries,

When one, who hums and haws at midnight, marries.

Better, plain downright dunce---No dream pursuing:

One that means bluntly---and knows what he's doing?

Not him, whose factious mind, outsoaring pleasure,

Is still most busy, when his wife's at leisure.

Better, a sportsman, sound of wind, and hearty.—

Better, Sir Sot—than spouse dry drunk with party;

A hunting husband hallovs—and you hear him.—

A drunken deary staggers—and you steer him.—

Each, conscious of his wife, takes care to make her,

One way or other—an indulg'd partaker.

But your sage, saturnine, ambitious lover,

Keeps no one secret, woman wou'd discover.

Stranger at home, he strolls abroad, for blessing:

And holds whate'er he has not worth possessing.

Freedom, and mirth, and health, and joy,—despises!

And scorns all rest—he, so profoundly wise is!

At length, thank Heaven! he dies: kind vapours strike him,

And leaves behind,—ten thousand madmen, like him.





ts del.

Published for Bells British Theatre May 17th 8.

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MISS HOPKINS in the Character of IRENE.

Blest is Irene! Blest if Selim lives!

BELL'S EDITION.



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A TRAGEDY.

As written by the Rev. Dr. BROWN.

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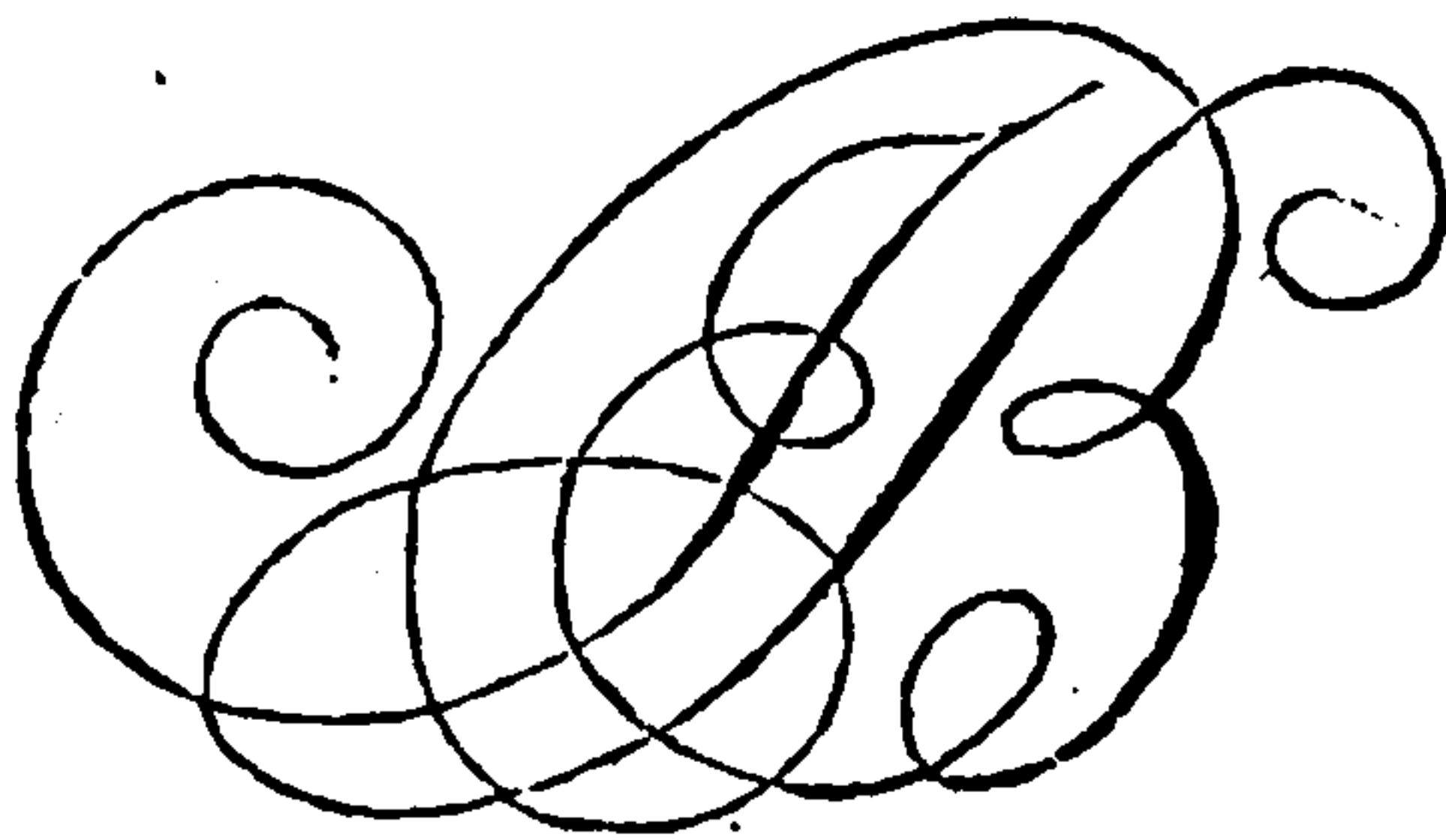
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Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. WILD, Prompter.



LONDON;

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

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P R O L O G U E.

Written by Mr. GARRICK, and spoken by him in the
character of a Country Boy.

Measter! Measter!

IS not my measter here among you, pray?
Nay, speak—my measter wrote this fine new play—
The actor-folks are making such a clatter!
They want the pro-log—I know nought o' th' matter!
He must be there among you—look about—
A weezen, pale-fac'd man, do—find him out—
Pray, measter, come—or all will fall to sheame—
Call Mister—bold—I must not tell his neame.

Law!—what a crowd is here! what noise and pother!
Fine lads and lasses! one o' top o' t'other. [Pointing to the
I cou'd for ever here with wonder geaze! rows of pit and
I ne'er saw church so full in all my days!— gallery.
Your servunt, Surs!—What do you laugh for? Eh!
You donna take me, sure, for one o' th' play?
You should not flout an honest country lad—
You think me fool, and I think you half mad:
You're all as strange as I, and stranger too;
And, if you laugh at me, I'll laugh at you. [Laughing.
I donna like your London tricks, not I;
And, since you've rais'd my blood, I'll tell you why?
And if you wull, since now I am before ye,
For want of pro-log, I'll relate my story.

I came from country here to try my fate,
And get a place among the rich and great;
But troth I'm sick o' th' journey I ha' ta'en,
I like it not—would I were whoame again.

First, in the city I took up my station,
And got a place with one of th' corporation,
A round big man—he eat a plaguy deal,
Zooks! he'd have beat five ploomen at a meal!
But long with him I could not make abode,
For, could you think't!—He eat a great sea-toad!
It came from Indies—'twas as big as me,
He call'd it belly patch, and, capapee:

Law!

Law! how I star'd!—I thought—who knows, but I,
 For want of monsters, may be made a pye?
 Rather than tarry here for bribe or gain,
 I'll back to whoame, and country fare again.

I left Toad-rater; then I serv'd a lord;
 And there they promis'd!—but ne'er kept their word,
 While 'mong the great, this geaming work the trade is,
 They mind no more poor servants than their ladies.

A lady next, who lik'd a smart young lad,
 Hir'd me forthwith — but, troth, I thought her mad.
 She turn'd the world top down, as I may say,
 She chang'd the day to neet, the neet to day!

I stood one day with coach, and did but stoop
 To put the foot-board down, and with her hoop
 She cover'd me all o'er — where are you, lout?
 Here, Maam, says I, for Heaven's sake let me out.
 I was so sheam'd with all her freakish ways,
 She wore her gear so short, so low her stays —
 Fine folks shew all for nothing now-a-days!

Now I'm the poet's man — I find with wits,
 There's nothing sartain — Nay, we eat by fits.
 Our meals, indeed, are slender — what of that?
 There are but three on's — measter, I, and cat.
 Did you but see us all, as I'm a sinner,
 You'd scarcely say which of the three is thinner.

My wages all depend on this night's piece,
 But should you find that all our swans are geese!
 E'feck, I'll trust no more to measter's brain,
 But pack up all, and whistle whoame again.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

		<i>Covent-Garden.</i>
<i>Barbarossa,</i>	-	Mr. Bensley.
<i>Achmet,</i>		Mr. Savigny.
<i>Otoman,</i>		Mr. Clarke.
<i>Sadi,</i>	-	Mr. Hull.
<i>Aladin,</i>	-	Mr. Gardner.
<i>Officer,</i>	-	Mr. Fox.
<i>Slave,</i>	-	Mr. Bates.

W O M E N.

<i>Zaphira,</i>	=	Mrs. Yates.
<i>Irene,</i>		Miss Miller.
<i>Slave,</i>		Miss Pearce.

Officers, Attendants, and Slaves.

SCENE, the Royal Palace of ALGIERS.

TIME, A few hours about midnight.

B A R B A R O S S A.

* * The lines distinguished by inverted commas, 'thus,' are omitted in the Representation, and those printed in Italics are the additions of the Theatre.

A C T I.

Enter Othman and a Slave.

OTHMAN.

A Stranger, sayst thou, that enquires of Othman?
Slave. He does; and waits admittance.

Oth. Did he tell
His name and quality?

Slave. That he declin'd:
But call'd himself thy friend.

' *Oth.* Where didst thou see him?

' *Slave.* Ev'n now, while twilight clos'd the day, I
' Musing amid the ruins of yon tow'r. [spy'd him
' That overhangs the flood. On my approach,
' With aspect stern, and words of import dark,
' He question'd me of Othman. Then the tear
' Stole from his eye. But when I talk'd of pow'r
' And courtly honours here conferr'd on thee,
' His frown grew darker: All I wish, he cry'd,
' Is to confer with him, and then to die.'

Oth. What may this mean?—Conduct the stranger
to me. [Exit Slave.

Perhaps some worthy citizen, return'd
From voluntary exile to Algiers,
Once known in happier days:

Enter Sadi.

Ah, Sadi here!
My honour'd friend!

Sadi. Stand off—pollute me not.

These

These honest arms, tho' worn with want, disdain
Thy gorgeous trappings, earn'd by foul dishonour.

Oth. Forbear thy rash reproaches : for, beneath
This habit, which, to thy mistaken eye,
Confirms my guilt, I wear a heart as true
As Sadi's to my king.

Sadi. Why then beneath
This curst roof, this black usurper's palace,
Dar'st thou to draw infected air, and live
The slave of insolence ? ' Why lick the dust
' Beneath his feet, who laid Algiers in ruin ?
' But age, which should have taught thee honest caution,
' Has taught thee treachery.

Oth. Mistaken man !
' Could passion prompt me to licentious speech
' Like thine —

Sadi. Peace, false one, peace ! The slave to pow'r
' Still wears a pliant tongue.' — Oh, shame, to dwell
With murder, lust, and rapine ! Did he not
Come from the depths of Barca's solitude,
With fair pretence of faith and firm alliance ?
Did not our grateful king, with open arms,
Receive him as his guest ? Oh, fatal hour !
Did he not then, with hot, adult'rous eye,
Gaze on the queen Zaphira ? Yes, 'twas lust,
Lust gave th' infernal whisper to his soul,
And bade him murder, if he would enjoy.
' Oh, complicated horrors ! hell-born treach'ry !
' Then fell our country, when good Selim dy'd !
Yet thou, pernicious traitor, unabash'd,
Canst wear the murd'rer's badge.

Oth. Mistaken man !

' Yet hear me, Sadi —

Sadi. What can dishonour plead ?

Oth. Yet blame not prudence.

Sadi. Prudence ! the stale pretence of ev'ry knave !
' The traitor's ready mask !'

Oth. Yet still I love thee :
Still, unprovok'd by thy intemperate zeal.
Could passion prompt me to licentious speech,
Bethink thee — might not I reproach thy flight
With the foul names of fear or perfidy ?

Didst thou not fly, when Barbarossa's sword
Reek'd with the blood of thy brave countrymen?
What then did I!—Beneath this hated roof,
In pity to my widow'd queen——

Sadi. In pity?

Oth. Yes, Sadi: Heav'n's witness, pity sway'd me.

' *Sadi.* Words, words! Diffimulation all, and guilt!'

Oth. With honest guile I did inroll my name
In the black list of Barbarossa's friends;
In hope that some propitious hour might rise,
When Heav'n would dash the murd'rer from his throne,
And give young Selim to his orphan'd people.

Sadi. Indeed! Canst thou be true?

Oth. By Heav'n, I am.

Sadi. Why then dissemble thus?

Oth. Have I not told thee?

I held it vain to stem the tyrant's pow'r,
By the weak efforts of an ill-tim'd rage.

Sadi. 'Enough:' I find thee honest; and with pride
Will join thy counsels. 'This, my faithful arm,
' Wasted with misery, shall gain new nerves
' For brave resolves.' Can aught, my friend, be done?
Can aught be dar'd?

Oth. We groan beneath the scourge.
This very morn, on false pretence of vengeance,
For the foul murder of our honour'd king,
Five guiltless wretches perish'd on the rack.
' Our long-lov'd friends, and bravest citizens,
' Self-banish'd to the desert, mourn in exile:
' While the fell tyrant lords it o'er a crew
' Of abject sycophants, the needy tools
' Of pow'r usurp'd; and a degen'rate train
' Of slaves in arms.'

Sadi. Oh, my devoted country!——

But say, the widow'd queen—my heart bleeds for her.

Oth. If pain be life, she lives; 'but in such woe,
' As want and slavery might view with pity,
' And bless their happier lot.' Hemm'd round by terrors,
Within this cruel palace, once the seat
Of ev'ry joy, thro' sev'n long tedious years,
She mourns her murder'd lord, her exil'd son,
Her people fall'n: the murd'rer of her lord,

Returning

Returning now from conquest o'er the Moors,
 Tempts her to marriage; 'spurr'd at once by lust,
 'And black ambition.' But with noble firmness,
 Surpassing female, she rejects his vows,
 Scorning the horrid union. Meantime, he,
 With ceaseless hate, her exil'd son pursues;
 'And——Oh, detested monster!

[*He weeps.*]

' *Sadi.* Yet more deeds
 ' Of cruelty! Just Heav'n!
 ' *Oth.* His rage pursues'

The virtuous youth, ev'n into foreign climes.
 Ere this, perhaps, he bleeds. A murd'ring ruffian
 Is sent to watch his steps, and plunge the dagger
 Into his guiltless breast.

Sadi. Is this thy faith,
 Tamely to witness to such deeds of horror?
 Give me thy poignard; lead me to the tyrant.
 What tho' surrounding guards——

' *Oth.* Repress thy rage,
 Thou wilt alarm the palace; wilt involve
 Thyself, thy friend, in ruin. Haste thee hence;
 Haste to the remnant of our loyal friends,
 And let maturer counsels rule thy zeal.

Sadi. Yet let us ne'er forget our prince's wrongs.
 Remember, Othman; (and let vengeance rise)
 How in the pangs of death, and in his gore
 Welt'ring, we found our prince! 'The deadly dagger
 ' Deep in his heart was fix'd!' His royal blood,
 The life-blood of his people, o'er the bath
 Ran purple. Oh, remember, and revenge!

Oth. Doubt not my zeal. But haste, and seek our
 Near to the western port Almanzor dwells, [friends.
 Yet uneduc'd by Barbarossa's pow'r.
 He will disclose to thee, if aught be heard
 Of Selim's safety, or (what more I dread)
 Of Selim's death. Thence best may our resolves
 Be drawn hereafter. But let caution guide thee.
 ' For in these walks, where tyranny and guilt
 ' Usurp the throne, wakeful suspicion dwells,
 ' And squint-ey'd jealousy, prone to pervert
 ' Ev'n looks and smiles to treason.'

Sadi. I obey thee.
 Near to the western port, thou say'st.

Oth.



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Young Selim ; would restore the crown, which death
 Rest from his father's head—He scorns my bounty,
 ' Shuns me with fullen and obdurate hate,'
 And proudly kindles war in foreign climes,
 Against my pow'r, who fav'd his bleeding country.

Oth. 'Tis strange, indeed.'

Enter Aladin.

Alad. Brave prince, I bring thee tidings,
 Of high concernment to Algiers, and thee.
 Young Selim is no more.

Oth. ' Indeed'—*Selim no more!*

Bar. ' Indeed!'—Why that astonishment?
 He was our bitterest foe.

Oth. So perish all
 Thy causeless enemies.

Bar. ' What says the rumour!'
 How dy'd the prince, and where?

Alad. The rumour tells,
 That flying to Oran, he there begg'd succours
 From Ferdinand of Spain, t' invade Algiers.

Bar. From Christian dogs?

Oth. How! league with infidels!

Alad. And there held counsel with the haughty
 To conquer and dethrone thee: but in vain; [Spaniard,
 For in a dark encounter with two slaves,
 Wherein the one fell by his youthful arm,
 Selim at length was slain.

Bar. Ungrateful boy!
 Oft have I courted him to meet my kindness;
 But still in vain; he shunn'd me like a pestilence:
 Nor could I e'er behold him, since the down
 Cover'd his manly cheek—How many years
 Number'd he?

Oth. I think, scarce thirteen, when his father dy'd,
 And now some twenty.

Bar. Othman, now for proof
 Of undissembled service—Well I know,
 Thy long-experienc'd faith hath plac'd thee high
 In the queen's confidence. ' The crown I wear
 ' Yet totters on my head, till marriage-rites
 ' Have made her mine.' Othman, she must be won.
 Plead thou my cause of love: ' bid her dry up

‘ Her fruitless tears : paint forth her long delays,
 ‘ Wake all thy eloquence :’ make her but mine,
 And such unfought reward shall crown thy zeal,
 As shall out-soar thy wishes.

Oth. Mighty king,
 Where duty bids, I go.

Barb. Then haste thee, Othman,
 Ere yet the rumour of her son’s decease
 Hath reach’d her ear ; ‘ ere yet the mournful tale
 ‘ Hath whelm’d her in a new abyss of woe,
 ‘ And quench’d all soft affection, save for him.’
 Tell her, I come, borne on the wings of love !—
 Haste—fly—I follow thee. [Exit Othman.

Now, Aladin,

Now fortune bears us to the wish’d-for port :
 ‘ We ride secure on her most prosp’rous billow.’
 This was the rock I dreaded. Dost not think
 Th’ attempt was greatly daring ?

Aladin. Bold as needful.

What bootéd it, to cut th’ old serpent off,
 While the young adder nested in his place ?

Barb. True : ‘ we have conquer’d now.’ Algiers is mine,
 Without a rival. ‘ Thus great souls aspire :
 ‘ And boldly snatch at crowns, beyond the reach
 ‘ Of coward conscience.’—Yet I wonder much,
 Omar returns not : Omar, whom I sent
 On this high trust. I fear, ’tis he hath fallen.
 Didst thou not say, two slaves encounter’d Selim ?

Aladin. Ay, two : ’tis rumour’d so.

Barb. And that one fell ?

‘ *Aladin.* Ev’n so :’ by Selim’s hand : while his com-
 ‘ Planted his happier steel in Selim’s heart. [panion

Barb. Omar, I fear, is fall’n. From my right-hand
 I gave my signet to the trusty slave :
 And bade him send it, as the certain pledge
 Of Selim’s death ; if sickness or captivity,
 Or wayward fate, shou’d thwart his quick return.

Aladin. The rumour yet is young ; perhaps forerun-
 The trusty slave’s approach.

Barb. We’ll wait th’ event.

Mean time give out, that now the widow’d queen
 Hath dry’d her tears, prepar’d to crown my love

By marriage-rites: spread wide the flatt'ring tale :
For if persuasion win not her consent,
Pow'r shall compel.

' *Aladin*. It is indeed a thought;
' Which prudence whispers.
' *Barb*. Thou, brave Aladin,
' Hast been the firm companion of my deeds :
' Soon shall my friendship's warmth reward thy faith.—
This night my will devotes to feast and joy,
For conquest o'er the Moor. Hence, Aladin :
And see the night-watch close the palace round.

[*Exit Aladin.*

Now to the queen. My heart expands with hope.
Let high ambition flourish : in Selim's blood
Its root is struck : from this, the rising stem
Proudly shall branch o'er Afric's continent,
And stretch from shore to shore.

Enter Irene.

My wayward daughter ! still with folly thwart
Each purpose of my soul ? When pleasures spring
Beneath our feet, thou spurn'st the proffer'd boon ;
To dwell with sorrow.—Why these sullen tears ?

Irene. ' Let not these tears offend my father's eye :
They are the tears of pity. From the queen
I come, thy suppliant.

Barb. ' On some rude request.'
What wou'dst thou urge ?

Irene. Thy dread return from war,
And proffer'd love, have open'd ev'ry wound
The soft and lenient hand of time had clos'd.
If ever gentle pity touch'd thy heart,
' Now let it melt !' Urge not thy ' harsh' command
To see her ! Her distracted soul is bent
To mourn in solitude. She asks no more.

Barb. She mocks my love. How many tedious years
Have I endur'd her coyness ? Had not war,
And great ambition, call'd me from Algiers,
Ere this, my pow'r had reap'd what she denies.
But there's a cause, which touches on my peace,
' And bids me brook no more her false delays.

Irene. Oh, frown not thus ! ' Sure, pity ne'er deserv'd
' A parent's frown ! Then look more kindly on me.'

But

But let thy consenting pity mix with mine,
And heal the woes of weeping majesty!
Unhappy queen!

Barb. What means that gushing tear?

Irene. Oh, never shall Irene taste of peace,
While poor Zaphira mourns!

Barb. Is this my child?
Perverse and stubborn! — As thou lov'st thy peace,
Dry up thy tears. What! damp the general triumph
That echoes through Algiers! which now shall pierce,
The vaulted heav'n, as soon as fame shall spread
Young Selim's death, my empire's bitterest foe.

Irene. Oh, generous Selim!

[Weeps.]

Barb. Ah, there's more in this!
Tell me, Irene: on thy duty, tell me:
'As thou dost wish, I wou'd not cast thee off,
'With an incensed father's curses on thee,
'Now tell me' why, at this detested name of *Selim*,
A fresh thy sorrow streams?

Irene. Yes, I will tell thee,
'For he is gone! and cheds thy hate no more!
My father knows, that scarce five moons are past,
Since the Moors seiz'd, and sold me at Oran,
A hopeless captive in a foreign clime!

Barb. Too well I know, and rue the fatal day.
But what of this?

Irene. 'Why shou'd I tell, what horrors
'Did then beset my soul?' — Oft' have I told thee,
How, 'midst the throng, a youth appear'd: his eye
Bright as the morning star!

Barb. And was it Selim?
Did he redeem thee?

Irene. With unsparing hand
He paid th' allotted ransom: 'and o'erbade
'Av'rice and appetite.' At his feet I wept,
Dissolv'd in tears of gratitude and joy.
But when I told my quality and birth,
He started at the name of Barbarosa;
'And thrice turn'd pale.' Yet, with recovery mild,
Go to Algiers, he cry'd; protect my mother,
And be to her, what Selim is to thee. —
Ev'n such, my father, was the gen'rous youth,

Who, by the hands of bloody, bloody men,
Lies number'd with the dead.

Barb. Amazement chills me !

Was this thy unknown friend, conceal'd from me ?
False, faithless child !

Irene. Cou'd gratitude do less !

He said thy wrath pursu'd him ; thence conjur'd me,
Not to reveal his name.

Barb. Thou treacherous maid !

To stoop to freedom from thy father's foe !

Irene. Alas, my father !

He never was thy foe.

Barb. What ! plead for Selim !

' Away ! He merited the death he found !'

Oh, coward ! Traitors to thy father's glory !

Thou shou'dst have liv'd a slave,—been sold to shame,

Been banish'd to the depth of howling desarts,

Been aught but what thou art, rather than blot

A father's honour, by a deed so vile :—

Hence, from my sight.—Hence, thou unthankful child !

Beware thee ! Shun the queen : nor taint her ear

With Selim's fate. Yes, she shall crown my love ;

Or, by our prophet, she shall dread my pow'r.

[*Exit Barbarossa.*

Irene. Unhappy queen !

To what new scenes of horror art thou doom'd !

Bereft of her lov'd lord, of every joy bereft.

' Oh, cruel father ! Hapless child ! whom pity

' Compels to call him cruel ! Gen'rous Selim !

' Poor injur'd queen !' she but intreats to die

In her dear father's tents ! Thither, good queen,

My care shall speed thee, while suspicion sleeps.

What though my frowning father pour'd his rage

On my defenceless head ? Yet innocence

Shall yield her firm support ; and conscious virtue

Gild all my days. Cou'd I but save Zaphira,

Let the storm beat. I'll weep and pray, till she,

And heav'n forget, my father e'er was cruel.

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T II.

Zaphira 'and female slaves' discovered.

ZAPHIRA.

WHEN shall I be at peace!—Oh, righteous heav'n,
 Strengthen my fainting soul, which fain wou'd rise
 To confidence in thee!—But woes on woes
 O'erwhelm me! First my husband! now, my son!
 Both dead! both slaughter'd by the bloody hand
 Of Barbarossa! 'Sweet content, farewell!
 'Farewel, sweet hope! Grief is my portion here!
 'Oh, dire ambition! what infernal pow'r
 'Unchain'd thee from thy native depth of hell,
 'To stalk the earth with thy destructive train,
 'Murder and lust! to waste domestic peace,
 'And ev'ry heart-felt joy!'

Enter Othman.

Oh, faithful Othman!

Our feats were true! My Selim is no more!

Oth. Has then the fatal secret reach'd thine ear?
 Inhuman tyrant!

Zaph. Strike him, Heav'n, with thunder!
 Nor let Zaphira doubt thy Providence.

Oth. 'Twas what we fear'd. Oppose not Heav'n's
 high will,
 Nor struggle with the ten-fold chain of fate,
 That links thee to thy woes! Oh, rather yield,
 And wait the happier hour, when innocence
 Shall weep no more. Rest in that pleasing hope,
 And yield thyself to heav'n.—My honour'd queen,
 The king——

Zaph. Whom stil'st thou king?

Oth. 'Tis Barbarossa.

He means to see thee——

'*Zaph.* Curses blast the tyrant!
 Does he assume the name of king?

Oth. He does.

Zaph. Oh, title vilely purchas'd! by the blood
 Of innocence! By treachery and murder!
 May Heav'n incens'd pour down its vengeance on him;

Blast all his joys, and turn them into horror ;
 Till phrenzy rise, and bid him curse the hour
 That gave his crimes their birth ! My faithful Othman,
 My sole surviving prop ! Canst thou devise
 No secret means, by which I may escape
 This hated palace ! with undaunted step
 I'd roam the waste, to reach my father's vales
 Of dear Mutija !—Can no means be found,
 To fly these black'ning horrors that surround me ?

Oth. That hope is vain ! The tyrant knows thy hate.
 Hence, day and night, his 'watchful' guards surround thee,
 ' Impenetrable as walls of Adamant.
 ' Curb then thy mighty griefs : justice and truth
 ' He mocks as shadows : ' rouse not then his anger :
 Let soft persuasion and mild eloquence,
 Redeem that liberty, which stern rebuke
 Wou'd rob thee of for ever.

Zaph. Cruel task !

' For royalty to bow,'—an injur'd queen
 To kneel for liberty ! And, Oh, to whom !
 Ev'n to the murd'rer of her lord and son !
 Oh, perish first, Zaphira ! Yes, I'll die !
 For what is life to me ! My dear, dear lord !
 My hapless child ! Yes, I will follow you.

Oth. Wilt thou not see him, then ?

Zaph. I will not, Othman.

Or if I do, with bitter imprecation,
 More keen than poison shot from serpents tongues.
 I'll pour my curses on him !

Oth. Will Zaphira

Thus meanly sink in woman's fruitless rage,
 When she should wake revenge ?

Zaph. Revenge ?—Oh, tell me—

Tell me but how ! what can a helpless woman !

Oth. Gain but the tyrant's leave, and reach thy father :
 Pour thy complaints before him : let thy wrongs
 Kindle his indignation, to pursue
 This vile usurper, till unceasing war
 Blast his ill-gotten pow'r.

Zaph. Ah !—say'st thou, Othman ?

Thy words have shot like lightning through my frame ;
 And all my soul's on fire !—Thou faithful friend !

Yes,



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Give me safe convoy to my native vales
Of dear Mutija, where my father reigns.

Barb. Oh, blind to proffer'd bliss? what, fondly quit
This 'lofty palace, and the envy'd' pomp
Of empire, for an Arab's 'wand'ring' tent!
Where the mock chieftain leads his vagrant tribes
From plain to plain, 'as thirst or famine sways:
'Obscurely vain!' and faintly shadows out
The majesty of kings!—Far other joys
Here shall attend thy call: 'the winged bark
'For thee shall traverse seas; and ev'ry clime
'Be tributary to Zaphira's charms.
'To thee, exalted fair,' submissive realms
Shall bow the neck; and swarthy kings and queens,
From the far-distant Niger and the Nile,
Drawn captive at my conqu'ring chariot-wheels,
Shall kneel before thee.

Zaph. Pomp and pow'r are toys,
Which ev'n the mind at ease may well disdain:
But, ah, what mockery is the tinsel pride
Of splendor, when 'by wasting woes,' the mind
Lies desolate within!—Such, such, is mine!
O'erwhelm'd with ills, and dead to every joy:
Envy me not this last request, to die
In my dear father's tents!

Barb. Thy suit is vain——

Zaph. Thus kneeling at thy feet—I do beseech thee——

Barb. Thou thankless fair!

Thus to repay the labours of my love!
Had I not seiz'd the throne when Selim dy'd,
Ere this, thy foes had laid Algiers in ruin:
I check'd the warring pow'rs, and gave you peace.

'*Zaph.* Peace dost thou call it! what can worse be
fear'd

'From the war's rage, than violence and blood?
'Have not unceasing horrors mark'd thy reign?
'Through seven long years, thy slaughter'd sword hath
'With guileless blood. [reek'd

'*Barb.* With guileless blood?—Take heed——

'Rouse not my slumbering rage: nor vindicate
'Thy country's guilt and treason.

'*Zaph.* Where violence reigns, there innocence is guilt,
'And

‘ And virtue, treason.—Know, Zaphira scorns
 ‘ Thy menace.—Yes, thy slaughter’ing sword hath reek’d
 ‘ With guiltless blood. Through thee, exile and death
 ‘ Have thinn’d Algiers. Is this thy boasted peace?
 ‘ So might the tiger boast the peace he brings,
 ‘ When he o’erleaps by stealth, and wastes the fold.

‘ *Barb.* Ungrateful queen! I’ll give thee proof of love,
 ‘ Beyond thy sex’s pride!’ Make thee but mine,
 I will descend the throne, and call thy son
 From banishment to empire.

‘ *Zaph.* Oh, my heart!

Can I bear this!—

Inhuman tyrant! Curses on thy head!

May dire remorse and anguish haunt thy throne,

And gender in thy bosom fell despair!

Despair as deep as mine!

Barb. What means Zaphira?

What means this burst of grief?

Zaph. Thou fell destroyer!

Had not guilt steel’d thy heart, awak’ning conscience

Wou’d flash conviction on thee, and each look,

Shot from these eyes, be arm’d with serpent-horrors,

To turn thee into stone!—Relentless man!

Who did the bloody deed? Oh, tremble, guilt,

Where’er thou art!—Look on me!—Tell me, tyrant,

Who slew my blameless son?

Barb. What envious tongue,

‘ My foe,’ hath dar’d to taint my name with slander?

‘ This is the rumour of some coz’ning slave,

‘ Who thwarts my peace. Believe it not, Zaphira,’

Thy Selim lives: nay, more, he soon shall reign,

If thou consent to bless me.

Zaph. Never! Oh, never—Sooner wou’d I roam

An unknown exile through the torrid climes

Of Afric; sooner dwell with wolves and tygers,

Than mount with thee my murder’d Selim’s throne!

Barb. Rash queen, forbear; think on thy captive-state:
 Remember, that within these palacé-walls,

I am omnipotent: ‘ That every knee

‘ Bends at my dread approach:’ that shame and honour,

Reward and punishment, await my nod,

The vassals of my pleasure.—Yield thee then:

Avert

Avert the gath'ring horrors that furround thee,
And dread my pow'r incens'd.

Zaph. Dares thy licentious tongue pollute mine ear
With that foul menace?—Tyrant! dread'st thou not
Th' all seeing eye of Heav'n, its lifted thunder,
And all the red'ning vengeance which it stores
For crimes like thine? Yet know, Zaphira scorns thee.
Though robb'd by thee of ev'ry dear support;
No tyrant's threat can awe the free born soul,
That greatly dares to die [Exit Zaphira.

Barb. Where should she learn the tale of Selim's death!
Cou'd Othman dare to tell it? If he did,
My rage shall sweep him, swifter than the whirlwind,
To instant death!—'Curse on her steadiness!
'She lords it o'er my heart. There is a charm
'Of majesty in virtue, that disarms
'Reluctant pow'r, and hends the struggling will
'From her most firm resolve.'

Enter Aladin.

Aladin. Oh, Aladin!
Timely thou com'st, to ease my lab'ring thought,
That swells with indignation and despair.
This stubborn woman—

Aladin. What, unconquer'd still?

Barb. The news of Selim's fate hath reach'd her ear.
Whence could this come?

Aladin. I can resolve thy doubt.
A female slave, attendant on Zaphira,
O'erheard the messenger who brought the tale,
And gave it to her ear.

Barb. Perdition seize her!
Nor threat can move, nor promise now allure
Her haughty soul: nay, she defies my pow'r:
And talks of death, as if her female form
Inshrin'd some hero's spirit.

Aladin. Let her rage foam.
I bring thee tidings that will ease thy pain.

Barb. Say'st thou?—Speak on—Oh, give me quick
relief!—

Aladin. The gallant youth is come, who slew her son.

Barb. Who? Omar!

Aladin. No; unhappy Omar fell

By

By Selim's hand. But Achmet, whom he join'd
His brave associate, so the youth bids tell thee,
Reveng'd his death by Selim's.

Barb. Gallant youth!

Beats he the signet?

Aladin. Ay.

Barb. That speaks him true. Conduct him, Aladin.
[*Exit Aladin.*

This is beyond my hope. The secret pledge
Restor'd, prevents suspicion of the deed,
While it confirms it done.

Enter Achmet and Aladin.

Ach. Hail, mighty Barbarossa! As the pledge

[*Kneels.*

Of Selim's death, behold thy ring restor'd:
That pledge will speak the rest.

Bar. Rise, valiant youth!

But first, no more a slave—I give thee freedom.
Thou art the youth whom Omar (now no more)
Join'd his companion in this brave attempt?

Ach. I am.

Barb. Then tell me how you sped.—Where found ye
That insolent?

Ach. We found him at Oran,
Plotting deep mischiefs to thy throne and people.

Barb. Well ye repaid the traitor.—

Ach. As we ought.

While night drew on, we leapt upon our prey.
Full at his heart brave Omar aim'd the poignard,
Which Selim shunning, wrench'd it from his hand,
Then plung'd it in his breast. I hasted on,
Too late to save, yet I reveng'd my friend:
My thirsty dagger, with repeated blows,
Search'd ev'ry artery: they fell together,
Gasp'g in folds of mortal enmity;
And thus in frowns expir'd.

Barb. Well hast thou sped.

Thy dagger did its office, faithful Achmet;
And high reward shall wait thee.—One thing more—
Be the thought fortunate!—Go, seek the queen.
For know the rumour of her Selim's death
Hath reach'd her ear: hence dark suspicions rise,

Glancing

Glancing at me! Go, tell her, that thou saw'st
 Her son expire; that with his dying breath,
 He did conjure her to receive my vows,
 And give her country peace.—'That, sure will lull
 ' Suspicion. Aladin, that sure will win her.
 • *Aladin.* 'Tis wisely thought.—It must.'

Enter Othman.

Barb. Most welcome, Othman.
 Behold this gallant stranger. He hath done
 The state good service. Let some high reward
 Await him, such as may o'erpay his zeal.
 Conduct him to the queen; for he hath news
 Worthy her ear, from her departed son;
 Such as may win her love—Come, Aladin:
 The banquet waits our presence: festal joy
 Laughs in the mantling goblet; and the night,
 Illumin'd by the taper's dazzling beam,
 Rivals departed day. [*Exeunt Barb. and Alad.*]

Ach. What anxious thought
 Rows in thine eye, and heaves thy lab'ring breast?
 Why join'st thou not the loud excess of joy,
 That riots through the palace?

Oth. Dar'st thou tell me,
 On what dark errand thou art here?

Achmet. I dare.

Dost thou not perceive the savage lines of blood
 Deform my visage? Read'st not in mine eye
 Remorseless fury?—I am Selim's murd'rer.

Oth. Selim's murd'rer!

Ach. Start not from me.
 My dagger thirsts not but for regal blood.
 Why this amazement?

Oth. Amazement?—No—'Tis well:—'tis as it should
 He was indeed a foe to Barbarossa. [*be.—*]

Ach. And therefore to Algiers:---Was it not so?---
 Why dost thou pause? What passion shakes thy frame?

Oth. Fate, do thy worst!---I can no more dissemble!
 Can I unmov'd behold the murd'ring ruffian,
 Smear'd with my prince's blood!---Go, tell the tyrant,
 Othman defies his pow'r; that, tir'd with life,
 He dares his bloody hand, and pleads to die.

Ach. What, didst thou love this Selim?

Othman.

Othman. All men lov'd him.
He was of such unmix'd and blameless quality,
That envy, at his praise stood mute, nor dar'd
To sully his fair name! Remorseless tyrant!

Ach. I do commend thy faith. And since thou lov'st
I'll whisper to thee, that with honest guile [him
I have deceiv'd this tyrant Barbarossa;
Selim is yet alive.

Othman. Alive!

Ach. Nay, more——
Selim is in Algiers.

Othman. Impossible!

Ach. Nay, if thou doubt'st, I'll bring him hither,

Othman. Not for an empire! [straight.

Thou might'st as well bring the devoted lamb
Into the tyger's den.

Ach. 'Nay,' but I'll bring him
Hid in such deep disguise, as shall deride
Suspicion, though she wear the Lynx's eye:
Not ev'n thyself couldst know him.

Othman. Yes, sure: too sure, to hazard such an awful
Trial!

Ach. Yet seven revolving years, worn out
In tedious exile, may have wrought such change
Of voice and feature, in the state of youth,
As might elude thine eye.

Othman. No time can blot
The mem'ry of his sweet majestic mien,
'The lustre of his eye! Besides, he wears
A mark indelible, a beauteous scar,
Made on his forehead by a furious pard,
Which, rushing on his mother, Selim flew.

Ach. A scar!

Othman. Ay, on his forehead.

Ach. What, like this? [Lifting his turban.

Othman. Whom do I see!—am I awake!—my prince!
My honour'd, honour'd king! [Kneels.

Selim. Rise, faithful Othman.
Thus let me thank thy truth!

Othman. Oh, happy hour!

Selim. Why dost thou tremble thus? Why, grasp my hand?

And why that ardent gaze? Thou canst not doubt me?

Othman. Ah, no! I see thy fire in ev'ry line.—
How did my prince escape the murd'rer's hand?

Selim. I wrench'd the dagger from him; and gave back
That death he meant to bring. The ruffian wore
The tyrant's signet:—Take this ring, he cry'd,
The sole return my dying hand can make thee
For its accurs'd attempt: this pledge restor'd,
Will prove thee slain: 'safe may'st thou see Algiers,
'Unknown to all.'—This said, th' assassin dy'd.

Othman. But how to gain admittance, thus unknown?

Selim. Disguis'd as Selim's murderer I come:
Th' accomplice of the deed: the ring restor'd,
Gain'd credence to my words.

Othman. Yet ere thou cam'st, thy death was rumour'd
here.

Selim. I spread the flatt'ring tale, and sent it hither;
'That babbling rumour, like a lying dream,
'Might make belief more easy.' Tell me, Othman,
And yet I tremble to approach the theme,—
How fares my mother? Does she still retain
Her native greatness?

Othman. Still: in vain the tyrant
Tempts her to marriage, though with impious threats
Of death or violation.

Selim. May kind heav'n
Strengthen her virtue, and by me reward it!
When shall I see her, Othman?

Othman. Yet, my prince,
I tremble for thy presence.

Selim. Let not fear
Sully thy virtue: 'tis the lot of guilt
To tremble. 'What hath innocence to do with fear?

'Othman. Yet think—should Barbarossa—

'*Selim.* Dread him not—
'Thou know'st, by his command, I see Zaphira.
'And wrapt in this disguise, I walk secure,
'As if from heav'n some guardian pow'r attending,
'Threw ten-fold night around me.'

Othman.



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Othman. Then, on thy life,
Do not reveal thyself,---Assume the name
Of Selim's friend; sent to confirm her virtue,
And warn her that he lives.

Selim. It shall be so: I yield me to thy will.

Othman. Thou greatly daring youth! May angels
watch,
And guard thy upright purpose! That Algiers
May reap the blessings of thy virtuous reign,
And all thy godlike father shine in thee!

Selim. Oh, thou hast rous'd a thought, on which re-
venge

Mounts with redoubled fire!---Yes, here, ev'n here,---
Beneath this very roof, my honour'd father
Shed round his blessings, till accursed treach'ry
Stole on his peaceful hour! Oh, blessed shade!
If yet thou hover'st o'er thy once-lov'd clime,
Now aid me to redress thy bleeding wrongs!
Infuse thy mighty spirit into my breast,
'Thy firm and dauntless fortitude, unaw'd
'By peril, pain, or death!' that undismay'd,
I may pursue the just intent; and dare
Or bravely to revenge, or bravely die.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

Enter Irene.

CAN air-drawn visions mock the waking eye?
Sure 'twas his image!---Yet, his presence here--
'After full rumour had confirm'd him dead!
'Beneath this hostile roof to court destruction!
'It staggers all belief! Silent he shot
'Athwart my view, amid' the glimmering lamps,
'With swift and ghost-like step, that seem'd to shun
'All human converse.' This way, sure he mov'd.
But, Oh, how chang'd! He wears no gentle smiles,
But terror in his frown. He comes.---'Tis he: --
For Othman points him hither, and departs.
Disguis'd, he seeks the Queen: secure, perhaps,

And

And heedless of the ruin that surrounds him.
 Oh, generous Selim! can I see thee thus;
 And not forewarn such virtue of its fate!
 Forbid it gratitude!

Enter Selim.

Selim. Be still, ye sighs!
 Ye struggling tears of filial love, be still.
 Down, down fond heart!

Irene. Why, stranger, dost thou wander here?

Selim. Oh, ruin! *[Shunning her.]*

Irene. Blest, is Irene! Blest if Selim lives!

Selim. Am I betray'd!

Irene. Betray'd to whom? to her
 Whose grateful heart would rush on death to save thee.

Selim. It was my hope,
 That time had veil'd all semblance of my youth,
 'And thrown the mask of manhood o'er my visage.'
 Am I then known?

Irene. To none, but love and me—
 To me, who late beheld thee at Oran;
 Who saw thee here, beset with unseen peril,
 And flew to save the guardian of my honour.

Selim. Thou sum of ev'ry worth! Thou heav'n of
 sweetness!

How cou'd I pour forth all my soul before thee,
 In vows of endless truth!—It must not be!—
 This is my destin'd goal!—The mansion drear,
 Where grief and anguish dwell; where bitter tears,
 And sighs and lamentations, choak the voice,
 And quench the flame of love!

Irene. Yet, virtuous prince,
 Tho' love be silent, gratitude may speak.
 Hear then her voice, which warns thee from these walls.
 Mine be the grateful task to tell the Queen,
 Her Selim lives. Ruin and death inclose thee.
 O speed thee hence, while yet destruction sleeps!

' *Selim.* Too generous maid! Oh, heav'n! that Barba-
 rossa

' Shou'd be Irene's father.

' *Irene.* Injur'd prince!

' Lose not a thought on me! I know thy wrongs,

' And merit not thy love. No, learn to hate me.

‘ Or if ‘Irene e’er can hope such kindness.

‘ First pity; then forget me !

‘ *Selim.* When I do,

‘ May heav’n pōur down its righteous vengeance on me !

‘ *Irene.* Hence ! haste thee, hence !’

Selim. Wou’d it were possible !

Irene. What can prevent it ?

Selim. Justice ! Fate, and justice !

A murder’d father’s wrongs !

‘ *Irene.* Ah, prince, take heed !

‘ I have a father too !

‘ *Selim.* What did I say ?—my father ?—not my father.

‘ Can I depart till I have seen Zaphira ?’—

Irene. Justice, said’st thou ?

That word hath struck me, like a peal of thunder !

Thine eye, which wont to melt with gentle love,

Now glares with terror ! Thy approach by night—

Thy dark disguise, thy looks, and fierce demeanor,

Yes, all conspire to tell me, I am lost !

Ah, prince ! take heed, I have a father too !

Think, *Selim*, what *Irene* must indure,

Should she be guilty of a father’s blood !

‘ *Selim.* A father’s blood !

‘ *Irene.* Too sure. In vain thou hid’st

‘ Thy dire intent ! Forbid it, heav’n, *Irene*

‘ Shou’d see destruction bov’ring o’er her father,

‘ And not prevent the blow !

‘ *Selim.* Is this thy love,

‘ Thy gratitude to him who sav’d thy honour ?

‘ *Irene.* ’Tis gratitude to him who gave me life :

‘ He who preserv’d me, claims the second place.

‘ *Selim.* Is he not a tyrant, murderer ?

‘ *Irene.* O spare my shame ! I am his daughter still !

‘ *Selim.* Wou’dst thou become the partner of his crimes ?

‘ *Irene.* Forbid it, heav’n !—Yet I must save a father !’

Selim. Come on then. Lead me to him. Glut thine
eye

With *Selim*’s blood—

Irene. Was e’er distress like mine !

O *Selim*, can I see my father perish !

‘ Would I had ne’er been born !

‘ *Selim.* Thou virtuous maid !

[Weeps.]

• My heart bleeds for thee!

Irene. Quit, O quit these walls!

Heav'n will ordain some gentler, happier means,
To heal thy woes! Thy dark attempt is big
With horror and destruction! Generous prince;
Resign thy dreadful purpose, and depart!

Selim. May not I see Zaphira, ere I go?
Thy gentle pity will not, sure, deny us
The mournful pleasure of a parting tear?

Irene. Go, then, and give her peace. But fly these
walls,

As soon as morning shines:—Else, tho' despair
Drive me to madness;—yet—to save a father!—
O Selim! spare my tongue the horrid sentence!
Fly! ere destruction seize thee! [Exit Irene.

Selim. Death and ruin!

Must I then fly?—what!—coward-like betray
My father, mother, friends?—Vain terrors, hence?
Danger looks big to fear's deluded eye.
But courage, on the heights and steeps of fate,
Dares snatch her glorious purpose from the edge
Of peril: and while sick'ning caution shrinks,
Or self-betray'd, falls headlong down the steep;
Calm resolution, unappal'd, can walk
The giddy brink, secure.—Now to the Queen,---
How shall I dare to meet her thus unknown!
How stifle the warm transports of my heart,
That pants at her approach!—Who waits the Queen?
Who waits Zaphira?

Enter a female Slave.

Slave. Whence this intrusion, stranger, at an hour
Destin'd to rest?

Selim. I come, to seek the Queen,
On matter of such import, as may claim
Her speedy audience.

Slave. Thy request is vain.
Ev'n now the Queen hath heard the mournful tale
Of her son's death, and drown'd in grief she lies.
Thou canst not see her.

Selim. Tell the Queen, I come
On message from her dear, departed son;
And bring his last request.

Slave. I'll haste to tell her.

'With all a mother's tend'rest love she'll fly,

'To meet that name.' [Exit *Slave.*

Selim. O ill-dissembling heart!—My ev'ry limb
Trembles with grateful terror!—'Wou'd to heav'n,

'I had not come!' Some look, or starting tear,

Will sure betray me.—Honest guile assist

My fault'ring tongue!

Enter Zaphira.

Zaphira. Where is this pious stranger?

Say, generous youth, whose pity leads thee thus

To seek the weeping mansions of distress!

Didst thou behold in death my hapless son?

'Didst thou receive my *Selim's* parting breath?'

Did he remember me?

Selim. Most honour'd queen!

Thy son,—Forgive these gushing tears, which flow

To see distress like thine!

Zaphira. I thank thy pity!

'Tis generous thus to feel for others woe.—

What of my son? 'Say, didst thou see him die?'

Selim. By *Barbarossa's* dread command I come,

To tell thee, that these eyes alone beheld

Thy son expire.

'*Zaphira.* Oh heav'n!—my child! my child!

'*Selim.* That ev'n in death, the pious youth remem-
ber'd

'His royal mother's woes.

'*Zaphira.* Where, where was I?'

Relentless fate!—that I should be deny'd

The mournful privilege to see him die!

To clasp him in the agony of death,

And catch his parting soul! O tell me all,

All that he said and look'd: deep in my heart

That I may treasure ev'ry parting word,

Each dying whisper of my dear, dear son!

Selim. Let not my words offend.—What if he said,

Go, tell my hapless mother, that her tears

Have stream'd too long: then bid her weep no more:

Bid her forget the husband and the son,

In *Barbarossa's* arms!

Zaphira. O, 'false as hell!' basely false!

Thou

Thou art some creeping slave to Barbarossa,
Sent to surprize my unsuspecting heart !
Vile slave, begone !—My son betray me thus !—
Cou'd he have e'er conceiv'd so base a purpose,
My griefs for him shou'd end in great disdain !—
But he was brave ; and scorn'd a thought so vile !
Wretched Zaphira ! How art thou become
The sport of slaves ! ' O griefs incurable !'

Selim. Yet hope for peace, unhappy queen ! Thy woes
May yet have end.

Zaphira. Why weep'st thou, crocodile ?
Thy treacherous tears are vain.

Selim. My tears are honest.
I am not what thou think'st.

Zaphira. Who art thou then !

Selim. Oh, my full heart !—I am—thy friend and
Selim's.

I come not to insult but heal thy woes.—
Now check thy heart's wild tumult while I tell thee—
Perhaps—thy son yet lives.

Zaphira. Lives ! O, gracious heav'n !
Do I not dream ? say, stranger,—didst thou tell me,
Perhaps my Selim lives ?—What do I ask ?
Wild, wild, and fruitless hope !—What mortal pow'r
Can e'er re-animate his mangled carcase,
Shoot life into the cold and silent tomb,
Or bid the ruthless grave give up its dead !

Selim. O pow'rful nature, thou wilt sure betray me !
[*Aside.*

Thy Selim lives : for since his rumour'd death,
I saw him at Oran.

Zaphira. Ye heav'nly pow'rs !—
Didst thou not say, thou saw'st my son expire ?
Didst not ev'n now relate his dying words ?

Selim. It was an honest falshood, meant to prove
Zaphira's unstain'd virtue.

Zaphira. Why---but Othman---
Othman affirm'd that my poor son was dead ;
And I have heard, the murderer is come,
In triumph o'er his dear and innocent blood.

Selim. I am that murderer---Beneath this guise
I spread th' abortive tale of Selim's death,

And

And haply won the tyrant's confidence,
Hence gain'd access : and from thy Selim tell thee,
Selim yet lives ; and honours all thy virtues.

Zaphira. O, generous youth, who art thou ?---From
what clime

Comes such exalted virtue, as dares give
A pause to griefs like mine !---As dares approach,
And prop the ruin tott'ring on its base,
Which selfish caution shuns---Oh, say---who art thou ?

Selim. A friendless youth, self-banish'd with thy son ;
Long his companion in distress and danger :
One who rever'd thy worth in prosp'rous days :
And more reveres thy virtue in distress.

Zaph. Gentle stranger, mock not my woes,
But tell me truly,---does my Selim live ?

Selim. He does, by Heav'n !

Zaph. Oh, generous Heaven, thou at length o'erpay'st
My bitterest pangs, if my dear Selim lives.

And does he still remember
His father's wrongs, and mine !

Selim. He bade me tell thee,
That in his heart indelibly are stamp'd
His father's wrongs, and thine : that he but waits
'Till awful justice may unsheath her sword,
' And lust and murder tremble at her frown !'
That till th' arrival of that happy hour,
Deep in his soul the hidden fire shall glow,
And his breast labour with the great revenge !

Zaph. Eternal blessings crown my virtuous son !
' I feel my heart revive ! Here, peace once more
' Begins to dawn.

Selim. Much honour'd queen, farewell.

Zaph. Not yet,---not yet ;---indulge a mother's love !
In thee, the kind companion of his griefs,
Methinks I see my Selim stand before me.
Depart not yet. A thousand fond requests
Croud on my mind : wishes, and pray'rs and tears,
Are all I have to give. Oh, hear him these !

Selim. Take comfort then ; for know thy son, o'erjoy'd
To rescue thee, wou'd bleed at ev'ry vein !
Bid her, he said, yet hope we may be blest !
Bid her remember that the ways of heav'n,



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Sadi. All, all is ready. Our confed'rate friends
Burn with impatience, till the hour arrive.

Selim. What is the signal of th' appointed hour?

Sadi. The midnight watch gives signal of our meeting:
And when the second watch of night is rung,
The work of death begins.

Selim. Speed, speed ye minutes!
Now let the rising whirlwind shake Algiers,
And justice guide the storm! 'Scarce two hours hence—

' *Sadi.* Scarce more than one.

' *Selim.* Oh, as ye love my life,
Let your zeal hasten on the great event:
The tyrant's daughter found, and knew me here;
And half suspects the cause.

Othman. Too daring prince,
Retire with us! Her fears will sure betray thee!

Selim. What! leave my helpless mother, here, a prey
To cruelty and lust?—I'll perish first:

This very night the tyrant threatens violence:
I'll watch his steps: I'll haunt him through the palace:
And, shou'd he meditate a deed so vile,
I'll hover o'er him like an unseen pestilence,
And blast him in his guilt!

' *Sadi.* Intrepid prince!
Worthy of empire!—Yet accept my life,
My worthless life: do thou retire with Othman;
I will protect Zaphira.

Selim. Think'it thou, Sadi,
That when the trying hour of peril comes,
Selim will shrink into a common man!
Worthless were he to rule, who dares not claim
Pre-eminence in danger. Urge no more.

Here shall my station be: and if I fall,
Oh, friends, let me have vengeance!—Tell me now,
Where is the tyrant!

Othman. Revelling at the banquet.

Selim. 'Tis good.—Now tell me, how our pow'rs are
destin'd?

Sadi. Near ev'ry port, a secret band is posted:
By these the watchful centinels must perish:
The rest is easy: for the gluttoned troops
Lie drown'd in sleep; the dagger's che'pest prey.

Almanzor,

Almanzor, with his friends, will circle round
The avenues of the palace. Othman and I
Will join our brave confederates (all sworn
To conquer or to die) and burst the gates
Of this foul den. Then tremble, Barbárossa!

Selim. Oh, how the near approach of this great hour
Fires all my soul! But, valiant friends, I charge you,
Reserve the murd'rer to my just revenge;
My poignard claims his blood.

Othman. Forgive me, prince!
Forgive my doubts!—Think—shou'd the fair Irene—

Selim. Thy doubts are vain. I wou'd not spare the ty-
Tho' the sweet maid lay weeping at my feet! [rant,
Nay, shou'd he fall by any hand but mine,
By Heav'n, I'd think my honor'd father's blood
Scarce half reveng'd! My love indeed is strong!
But love shall yield to justice!

Sadi. Gallant prince!
Bravely resolv'd!

Selim. But is the city quiet!

Sadi. All, all is hush'd. Throughout the empty streets.
Nor voice, nor sound. As if th' inhabitants,
Like the presaging herds that seek the covert
Ere the loud thunder rolls, had inly felt
And shunn'd th' impending uproar.

Othman. There is a solemn horror in the night too,
That pleases me: a general pause through nature:
The winds are hush'd—

Sadi. And as I pass'd the beach,
The lazy billows scarce cou'd lash the shore:
No star peeps through the firmament of heav'n—

Selim. And lo—where eastward, o'er the fullen wave,
The waning moon, depriv'd of half her orb,
Rises in blood: her beam, well-nigh extinct,
Faintly contends with darkness— [Bell tolls.

Hark!—what meant
That tolling bell?

Othman. It rings the midnight watch.

Sadi. This was the signal—
Come, Othman, we are call'd: the passing minutes
Chide our delay: brave Othman, let us hence.

Selim. One last embrace!—nor doubt, but crown'd in
glory,

We soon shall meet again. But, Oh, remember,—
Amid' the tumult's rage, remember mercy!

'Stain not a righteous cause with guiltless blood!
Warn our brave friends, that we unsheath the sword,
Not to destroy, but save! Nor let blind zeal,
Or wanton cruelty, e'er turn its edge

On age or innocence! or bid us strike,
Where the most pitying angel in the skies
That now looks on us from his blest abode,
Wou'd, with that we shou'd spare.

Othman. So may we prosper,
As mercy shall direct us.

Selim. Farewel, friends!

Sadi. Intrepid prince, farewell. [*Exeunt Oth. and Sadi.*]

Selim. Now sleep and silence

Brood o'er the city.—The devoted centinel
Now takes his lonely stand; and idly dreams,
Of that to-morrow, he shall never see!

In this dread interval, Oh, busy thought,

'From outward things' descend into thyself!
Search deep my heart! Bring with thee awful conscience,

And firm resolve! That in th' approaching hour

Of blood and horror, I may stand unmov'd;

Nor fear to strike where justice calls, nor dare

To strike where she forbids!—'Why hear I then

'This dark, insidious dagger?---' 'Tis the badge

'Of vile assassins; of the coward hand

'That dares not meet its foe---Detested thought!

'Yet,---as foul lust and murder, though on thrones

'Triumphant, still retain their hell-born quality;

'So justice, groaning beneath countless wrongs,

'Quits not her spotless and celestial nature;

'But in th' unhallow'd murderer's disguise,

'Can sanctify this steel!

'Then be it so;—Witness, ye pow'rs of heav'n,

That not from you, but from the murderer's eye,

I wrap myself in night!—To you I stand

Reveal'd in noon-tide day!—Oh, cou'd I arm

My hand with pow'r! Then, like to you, array'd

In storm and fire, my swift-avenging thunder

Shou'd



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‘ Mangled and bloody was his coarſe : his hair
 ‘ Clotted with gore ; his glaring eyes on fire !’
 Dreadful he ſhook a dagger in his hand.
 By ſome myſterious pow’r he roſe in air.
 When lo, ---at his command, this yawning roof
 Was cleft in twain, and gave the phantom entrance !
 Swift he deſcended with terrific brow,
 Ruſh’d on my guardleſs father at the banquet,
 And plung’d his furious dagger in thy breaſt !

Barb. Wouldſt thou appal me by a brain-ſick viſion ?
 Get thee to reſt. --- ‘ Sleep but as found till morn,
 ‘ As Selim in his grave ſhall ſleep for ever,
 ‘ And then no haggard dreams ſhall ride thy fancy !’

Irene. Yet hear me, deareſt father !

Barb. ‘ To the couch !’

Provoke me not. —

Irene. ‘ What ſhall I ſay, to move him !’
 Merciful Heav’n, inſtruct me what to do !

Enter Aladin.

Barb. What mean thy looks ? --- why doſt thou gaze ſo
 wildly ?

Aladin. I haſted to inform thee, that ev’n now,
 Rounding the watch, I met the brave Abdalla ;
 Breathleſs with tidings of a rumour dark,
 ‘ Which runs throughout the city,’ that young Selim
 Is yet alive —

Barb. May plagues conſume the tongue
 That broach’d the falſhood ! --- ‘Tis not poſſible ---
 What did he tell thee further ?

Aladin. More he ſaid not :
 Save only, that the ſpreading rumour wak’d
 A ſpirit of revolt.

Irene. Oh, gracious father ! ---

Barb. The rumour’s falſe -- And, yet, your coward fears
 Infect me ! --- What ! --- ſhall I be terrify’d
 By midnight viſions ? --- ‘ Can the troubled brain
 ‘ Of ſleep out-ſtretch the reaſon’s waking eye ?’
 I’ll not believe it.

Aladin. But this gath’ring rumour —
 Think but on that, my Lord !

Barb. Infernal darkneſs
 Swallow the ſlave that rais’d it ! --- ‘ Yet, I’ll do

‘ What

‘What caution dictates.’---Hark thee, Aladin --
 ‘Slave, hear my will.’---See that the watch be doubled.---
 Find out this stranger, Achmet; and forthwith
 Let him be brought before me.

Irene. Oh, my father!

I do conjure thee, as thou lov’st thy life,
 Retire, and trust thee to thy faithful guards---
 See not this Achmet!

Barb. ‘Not see him!---Death and torment!---
 ‘Think’st thou, I fear a single arm that’s mortal?’
 Not see him?---Forthwith bring the slave before me.---
 If he prove false---if hated Selim live,
 I’ll heap such vengeance on him ---

Irene. Mercy! Mercy!

Barb. Mercy.---To whom?

Irene. To me:---and to thyself:
 To him---to all---Thou think’st I rave; yet true
 My visions are, as ever prophet utter’d,
 When heav’n inspires his tongue!

Barb. Ne’er did the moon-struck madman rave with
 dreams
 More wild than thine!---Get thee to rest; e’er yet
 Thy folly wake my rage.---Call Achmet hither.

Irene. Thus prostrate on my knees!---Oh, see him not.
 Selim is dead:---Indeed the rumour’s false!---
 There is no danger near:---or, if there be,
 Achmet is innocent!

Barb. Off, frantic wretch!
 This idiot-dream hath turn’d her brain to madness!
 Hence---to thy chamber, till returning reason
 Hath calm’d this tempest.---On thy duty hence!

Irene. Yet hear the voice of caution!---Cruel fate!
 What have I done!---Heav’n shield my dearest father!
 Heav’n shield the innocent!---Undone Irene!
 Whate’er th’ event, thy doom is misery. [Exit Irene.

Barb. Her words are wrapt in darkness.---Aladin,
 Forthwith send Achmet hither.---‘Mark him well.---
 ‘His countenance and gesture.’---Then with speed
 Double the centinels. [Exit Aladin.

Infernal guilt!
 How dost thou rise in ev’ry hideous shape,
 Of rage and doubt, suspicion and despair,

To rend my soul! 'more wretched far than they,
 'Made wretched by my crimes!'---Why did I not
 Repent, while yet my crimes were delible!
 Ere they had struck their colours through my soul,
 As black as night or hell!---'Tis now too late!---
 'Hence' then, 'ye vain repinings!'---Take me all,
 Unfeeling guilt! Oh, banish, if thou canst,
 This fell remorse, and ev'ry fruitless fear!
 'Be this my glory,---to be great in evil!
 'To combat my own heart, and, scorning conscience,
 'Rise to exalted crimes!'

Enter Selim.

Come hither, slave:---

Hear me, and tremble:---art thou what thou seem'st?

Selim. Ha!

Barb. Do'st thou pause?---By hell, the slave's con-
 founded!

Selim. That Barbarossa shou'd suspect my truth!

Barb. Take heed! For by the hov'ring pow'rs of ven-
 geance,

If I do find thee treach'rous, I will doom thee
 To death and torment, such as human thought
 Ne'er yet conceiv'd! Thou com'st beneath the guise
 Of Selim's murderer.---Now tell me:---Is not
 That Selim yet alive?

Selim. Selim alive!

Barb. Perdition on thee! Dost thou echo me!

Answer me quick, or die! *[Draws his dagger.*

Selim. Yes, freely strike.—

Already hast thou giv'n the fatal wound,
 And pierc'd my heart with thy unkind suspicion!
 Oh, cou'd my dagger find a tongue, to tell
 How deep it drank his blood!---But since thy doubt
 Thus wrongs my zeal,---Behold my breast---strike here--
 For bold is innocence.

Barb. I scorn the task. *[Puts up his dagger.*

Time shall decide thy doom.---Guards, mark me well.

See that ye watch the motions of this slave:

And if he meditates t'escape your eye,

Let your good sabres cleave him to the chine.

Selim. I yield me to thy will, and when thou know'st



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B. A. R. B. A. R. O. S. S. A.

Hear all ye pow'rs that watch o'er innocence!
 Angels of light! And thou, dear honour'd shade
 Of my departed lord! attend, while here
 I ratify with yows my last resolve!
 ' If e'er I wed this tyrant murderer'
 If I pollute me with this horrid union,
 ' Black as adultery or damned incest,'
 May ye, the ministers of heav'n, depart,
 Nor shed your influence on the guilty scene!
 May horror blacken all our days and nights!
 May discord light the nuptial torch! And ' rising
 ' From hell, may swarming' fiends in triumph howl
 Around th' accursed bed!

Barb. Begone, remorse! —

Guards do your office: drag her to the altar.
 Heed not her tears or cries. — ' What? --- dare ye doubt?
 ' Instant obey my bidding; or, by hell,
 ' Torment and death shall overtake' you all!

[*Guards go to seize Zaphira.*]

Zaph. Oh, spare me! --- Heav'n protect me! --- Oh,
 my son,

Wert thou but here, to save thy helpless mother! ---
 What shall I do! --- Undone, undone Zaphira!

Enter Selim.

Selim: Who call'd on Achmet? — Did not Barbarossa
 Requires me here?

Barb. Officious slave, retire!
 I call'd thee not.

Zaph. Oh, kind and gen'rous stranger, lend thy aid!
 Oh, rescue me from these impending horrors!
 Heav'n will reward thy pity!

' *Barb.* Drag her hence!'

Selim. Pity her woes, Oh, mighty Barbarossa!

Barb: Rouze not my vengeance, slave!

Selim. Oh, hear me, hear me!

[*Kneels.*]

Barb. Curse on thy forward zeal! —

Selim. Yet, yet have mercy.

[*Lays hold of Barbarossa's garment.*]

Barb. Presuming slave, begone!

[*Strikes Selim.*]

Selim. Nay, then — die, tyrant.

[*Rises, and aims to stab Barbarossa.*]

[*Barbarossa wrests his dagger from him.*]

Barb.

Barb. Ah, traitor, have I caught thee.--Hold--forbear--
 [To guards who offer to kill Selim.

Kill him not yet—I will have greater vengeance.—
 Perfidious wretch, who art thou? Bring the rack:
 Let that extort the secrets of his heart.

Selim. Thy impious threats are lost! I know that death
 And torments are my doom.—Yet, ere I die,
 I'll strike thy soul with horror.—Off, vile habit!—
 ' Let me emerge from this dark cloud that hides me,
 ' And make my setting glorious!'—If thou dar'st,
 Now view me!—Hear me, tyrant;—while with voice
 More terrible than thunder, I proclaim,
 That he who aim'd the dagger at thy heart,
 Is Selim!

Zaph. Oh, heav'n! my son! my son! [*She faints.*

Selim. Unhappy mother! [*Runs to embrace her.*

Barb. Tear them asunder. [*Guards separate them.*

Selim. Barb'rous, barb'rous ruffians!

Barb. Slaves, seize the traitor. [*They offer to seize him.*

Selim. Off, ye vile slaves! I am your king!---Retire,
 And tremble at my frowns! That is the traitor;
 That is the murderer, 'tyrant, ravisher:' seize him
 And do your country right!

Barb. Ah, coward dogs!

Start ye at words!---or seize him, or by hell,
 This dagger ends you all. [*They seize him.*

Selim. ' 'Tis done!'—Dost thou revive, unhappy
 Now arm thy soul with patience! [*Queen!*

Zaph. My dear son!

Do I then live, once more to see my Selim!

But, Oh, to see thee thus! [*Weeping.*

Selim. Canst thou behold
 Her speechless agonies, and not relent!

' *Barb.* At length revenge is mine!---Slaves, force
 her hence!

' This hour shall crown my love.

' *Zaph.* Oh, mercy, mercy!

' *Selim.* Lo, Barbarossa! thou at length hast con-
 quer'd!

Behold a hapless prince, o'erwhelm'd with woes, [*Kneels.*
 Prostrate before thy feet!---Not for myself
 I plead!---Yes, plunge the dagger in my breast!

Tear

Tear, tear me piecemeal! But, Oh, spare Zaphira!
 Yet, yet relent! force not her matron honour!
 'Reproach not heav'n!

Barb. Have I then bent thy pride?
 Why, this is conquest ev'n beyond my hope!--
 Lie there, thou slave! lie, till Zaphira's cries
 Arouse thee from thy posture!

Selim. Dost thou insult my griefs?--unmanly wretch!
 Curse on the fear that cou'd betray my limbs, [*Rising.*
 My coward limbs, to this dishonest posture!
 Long have I scorn'd, I now defy thy pow'r.

Barb. I'll put thy boasted virtue to the trial.
 Slaves, bear him to the rack.

Zaph. Oh, spare my son!
 Sure filial virtue never was a crime!
 Save but my son!--I yield me to thy wish!
 What do I say?--The marriage vow--Oh, horror!
 This hour shall make me thine!

Selim. What! doom thyself
 The guilty partner of a murderer's bed,
 Whose hands yet reek with thy dear husband's blood!
 'To be the mother of destructive tyrants,
 'The curses of mankind!--By heav'n, I swear,
 The guilty hour that gives thee to the arms
 Of that detested murderer, shall end
 This hated life!--

Barb. Or yield thee, or he dies?--

Zaph. The conflict's past.--I will resume my greatness:
 We'll bravely die, as we have liv'd, with honour!
 [*Embracing.*

Selim. Now, tyrant, pour thy fiercest fury on us!--
 Now see, despairing guilt! that virtue still
 Shall conquer, though in ruin.

Barb. Drag them hence:
 Her to the altar: Selim to his fate.

'*Zaph.* Oh, Selim! Oh, my son!--Thy doom is
 'Wou'd it were mine! [*death!*

'*Selim.* Wou'd I cou'd give it thee!
 'Is there no means to save her! Lend, ye guards,
 'Ye ministers of death, in pity lend
 'Your swords, or some kind weapon of destruction!

' Sure



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A C T V.

Enter Barbarossa and Aladin.

BARBAROSSA.

IS the watch doubled? Are the gates secur'd
Against surprize?

Alad. They are, and mock th' attempt
Of force or treachery.

Barb. This whisper'd rumour
Of dark conspiracy, 'on further inquest,'
Seems but a false alarm. Our spies, sent out,
'And now return'd from search,' affirm that sleep
Has wrap'd the city.

Alad. But while Selim lives,
Destruction lurks within the palace walls;
'Nor bars, nor centinels can give us safety.'

Barb. Right, Aladin. His hour of fate approaches.
How goes the night?

Alad. The second watch is near.

Barb. 'Tis well :---Whene'er it rings the traitor dies.
'So hath my will ordain'd.—I'll seize the occasion,
'While I may fairly plead my life's defence.

Alad. True: for he aim'd his dagger at thy heart.

Barb. He did. Hence justice, uncompell'd shall seem
'To lend her sword, and do ambition's work.

Alad. His bold resolves have steel'd Zaphira's breast.
'Against thy love: thence he deserves to die.

Barb. And death's his doom—Yet, first the rack
shall rend

Each secret from his heart; 'unless he give

'Zaphira to my arms, by marriage-vows,

'With full consent; ere yet the second watch

'Toll for his death.—Curse on this woman's weakness!

'I yet wou'd win her love!' Haste, seek out Othman:

Go, tell him, that destruction and the sword

Hang o'er young Selim's head, if swift compliance

Plead not his pardon.

[*Exit Aladin.*

Stubborn fortitude!

Had he not interpos'd, success had crown'd

My love, now hopeless.—Then let vengeance seize him.

Enter

Enter Irene.

Irene. Oh, night of horror!—Hear me, honour'd fa-
 If e'er Irene's peace was dear to thee, [ther!
 Now hear me!

Barb. Impious! Darest thou disobey?
 Did not my sacred will ordain thee hence?
 Get thee to rest; for death is stirring here.

Irene. Oh, fatal words! By ev'ry sacred tie,
 Recall the dire decree!—

Barb. What wou'd thou say?
 Whom plead for?

Irene. For a brave unhappy prince,
 Sentenc'd to die.

Barb. And justly!—But this hour,
 The traitor half-fulfill'd thy dream, and aim'd
 His dagger at my heart.

' *Irene.* Might pity plead!

' *Barb.* What!—plead for treachery?

Irene. ' Yet pity might bestow a milder name.
 ' Would'st thou not love the child, whose fortitude
 ' Shou'd hazard life for thee?—Oh, think on that:—
 The noble mind hates not a virtuous foe:
 His gen'rous purpose was to save a mother!

Barb. Damn'd was his purpose: and accurst art thou,
 Whose perfidy wou'd save the dark assassin
 Who fought thy father's life!—Hence, from my sight.

Irene. Oh, never, till thy mercy spare my Selim!

Barb. Thy Selim?—Thine?

Irene. Thou know'st—by gratitude
 He's mine.—Had not his generous hand redeem'd me,
 What then had been Irene?

' *Barb.* Faithless wretch!

' Unhappy father! whose perfidious child
 ' Leagues with his deadliest foe; and guides the dagger
 ' Ev'n to his heart!—Perdition catch thy falshood!
 ' And is it thus, a thankless child repays me,
 ' For all the guilt in which I plung'd my soul,
 ' To raise her to a throne!

' *Irene.* Oh, spare these words,
 ' More keen than daggers to my bleeding heart!
 ' Let me not live suspected!—Dearest father!—
 ' Behold my breast! write thy suspicions here:

‘ Write them in blood ; but’ spare the gen’rous youth,
Who fav’d me from dishonour.

Barb. By the pow’rs
Of great revenge : thy fond intreaties seal
His instant death.---In him, I’ll punish thee.---
Away !

Irene. Yet hear me ! Ere my tortur’d soul
Rush on some deed of horror !

Barb. ‘ Seize her, guards,’—
Convey the frantic ideot from my presence :
See that she do no violence on herself. [fears

Irene. Oh, Selim !—generous youth !—how have my
Betray’d thee to destruction !—Slaves, unhand me !—
Think ye, I’ll live to bear these pangs of grief,
These horrors that oppress my tortur’d soul ?—
Inhuman father !—Generous, injur’d prince !—
Methinks I see thee stretch’d upon the rack,
Hear thy expiring groans :—Oh, horror ! horror !
What shall I do to save him !---Vain, alas !
Vain are my tears and pray’rs !---At least, I’ll die.
Death shall unite us yet ! [Exit Irene and Guards.

Barb. Oh, torment, torment !
Ev’n in the midst of pow’r !---the vilest slave
More happy far than I !---The very child,
Whom my love cherish’d from her infant years,
Conspires to blast my peace !—Oh, false ambition,
‘ Thou lying phantom !’ whither hast thou lur’d me !
Ev’n to this giddy height ; where now I stand,
Forsaken, comfortless ! with not a friend
In whom my soul can trust ; now, *Aladin* !

Enter Aladin.

Hast thou seen Othman ?
He will not, sure, conspire against my peace.

Alad. He’s fled, my lord. I dread some lurking ruin.
‘ The centinel on watch says, that’ he pass’d
The gate, since midnight, with an unknown friend :
And as they pass’d, Othman in whispers said,
Now farewell, bloody tyrant.

Barb. Slave, thou ly’st.
He did not dare to say it, or, if he did,
‘ Pernicious slave,’ why dost thou wound my ear
By the foul repetition ?—‘ Gracious pow’rs,



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Is in our pow'r : and therefore who dares greatly,
Does greatly.

Barb. Yet bethink thee, stubborn boy,
What horrors now surround thee---

Selim. Think'st thou, tyrant,
I came so ill prepar'd?—'Thy rage is weak,
'Thy torments pow'rless o'er the steady mind:'
He who cou'd bravely dare, can bravely suffer.

Barb. Yet, lo, I come, by pity led, to spare thee,
Relent, and save Zaphira!---For the hell
Ev'n now expects the centinel, to toll
The signal of thy death.

Selim. Let guilt like thine
Tremble at death : I scorn his darkest frown.
Hence, tyrant, nor profane my dying hour!

Barb. Then take thy wish. [Bell tolls,
There goes the fatal knell.

'Thy fate is seal'd.'---Not all thy mother's tears,
Nor pray'rs, nor eloquence of grief, shall save thee
From instant death. Yet ere the assassin die,
Let torment wring each secret from his heart.

The traitor Othman's fled;---conspiracy
Lurks in the womb of night, and threatens ruin.
Spare not the rack, nor cease, till it extort
The lurking treason ; 'and this murd'rer call
'On death, to end his woes.'

[Exit Barbarossa.

Selim. Come on then.

[They bind him.]

Begin the work of death---'what ! bound with cords,
'Like a vile criminal!'---Oh, valiant friends,
When will ye give me vengeance !

Enter Irene.

Irene. Stop, Oh, stop!
Hold your accursed hands!--On me, on me,
Pour all your torments ;—how shall I approach thee ?

Selim. These are thy father's gifts!--Yet thou art
guiltless :

Then let me take thee to my heart, thou best
Most amiable of women !

Irene. Rather curse me,
As the betrayer of thy virtue !

Selim. Ah !

Irene.

Irene. 'Twas I—my fears, my frantic fears betray'd
Thus falling at thy feet! may I but hope [thee] I
For pardon ere I die!

Selim. Hence, to thy father!

Irene. Never, Oh, never!—Crawling in the dust,
I'll clasp thy feet, and bathe them with my tears!
Tread me to earth! I never will complain;
But my last breath shall bless thee!

Selim. Lov'd Irene!

What hath my fury done?

Irene. Indeed, 'twas hard!

' But I was born to sorrow!

Selim. Melt me not.

' I cannot bear thy tears;—they quite unman me!

' Forgive the transports of my rage!

Irene. Alas!

' The guilt is mine:—Canst thou forgive those fears

' That first awak'd suspicion in my father!

' Those fears that have undone thee!—Heav'n is witness,

' They meant not ill to thee!

Selim. None; none, Irene!

' No; 'twas the generous voice of filial love:

' That, only, prompted thee to save a father.

' Yes; from my inmost soul I do approve

' That virtue which destroys me.'

Irene. Canst thou, then,
Forgive and pity me?

Selim. I do,—I do.

Irene. On my knees,

Thus let me thank thee, generous, injur'd prince!—

Oh, earth and heav'n! That such unequal'd worth

Shou'd meet so hard a fate!—That I—That I—

Whom his love rescu'd from the depth of woe,

Shou'd be th' accurst destroyer! Strike, in pity:

And end this hated life!

Selim. Cease, dear Irene.

Submit to heav'n's high will.—I charge thee live;

And to thy utmost pow'r, protect from wrong

My helpless, friendless mother!

Irene. With my life

I'll shield her from each wrong.—That hope alone

Can tempt me to prolong a life of woe!

Selim. Oh, my ungovern'd rage!—To frown on thee!
Thus let me expiate the cruel wrong, [Embracing.
And mingle rapture with the pains of death!

Officer. No more.—Prepare the rack.

Irene. Stand off, ye fiends!
Here will I cling. No pow'r on earth shall part us
Till I have sav'd my *Selim*! [A shout.

Officer. Hark! what noise
Strikes on mine ear? [A shout.

Selim. Again!

Aladin. Arm, arm!--Treach'ry and murder! [Without.
[Executioners go to seize *Selim*.

Selim. Off, slaves!--Or I will turn my chains to arms,
And dash you piece-meal!--' For I have heard a sound,
' Which lifts my tow'ring soul to Atlas' height,
' That I cou'd prop the skies!'

Enter Aladin.

Aladin. Where is the king?
The foe pours in: ' the palace gates are burst:
' The centinels are murdered! Save the king!
' They seek him through the palace!'

Officer. Death and ruin!
Follow me, slaves, and save him.

[Exit Officer and Executioners.

Selim. Now, bloody tyrant! Now, thy hour is come!

' *Irene.* What means yon mad'ning tumult?—Oh,
my fears!--

' *Selim.* Vengeance at length hath pierc'd these guilty
And walks her deadly round! [walls,

Irene. Whom dost thou mean? my father?

Selim. ' Yes.' Thy father;
Who murder'd mine!

Irene. Is there no room for mercy?
Oh, *Selim*, by our love! —

Selim. Thy tears are vain!
Vain were thy eloquence, though thou didst plead
With an archangel's tongue!

Irene. Spare but his life!

Selim. Heav'n knows I pity thee. But he must bleed;
Tho' my own life-blood, nay, tho' thine, more dear,
Shou'd issue at the wound!

Irene. Must he then die!

Let



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‘ To combat crimes like thine, by force or wiles,
‘ Is equal glory. [Barbarossa falls.

‘ Barb. I faint! I die!—Oh, horror!’

Enter Selim and Sadi.

Selim. The foe gives way: sure this way went the storm.
Where is the tiger fled!—What do I see?

Sadi. Algiers is free!

Othman. This sabre did the deed!

Selim. I envy thee the blow!—‘ Yet’ valour scorns
To wound the fallen.—But if life remain,

‘ I will speak daggers to his guilty soul!

Hoa! Barbarossa! Tyrant! Murderer!

Barb. Off, ye fiends!

Torment me not!--Oh, Selim, art thou there!--

Swallow me earth! ‘ Bury me deep, ye mountains!

‘ Accursed be the day that gave me birth!’

Oh, that I ne’er had wrong’d thee!

Selim. Dost thou then

Repent thee of thy crimes!-- He does! He does!

He grasps my hand! See the repentant tear

Starts from his eye!--Dost thou indeed repent?---

Why then I do forgive thee: ‘ from my soul

‘ I freely do forgive thee!’ And if crimes,

Abhor’d as thine, dare plead to hea’vn for mercy,---

May heav’n have mercy on thee!

Barb. Gen’rous Selim;

Too good,---I have a daughter; Oh, protect her!—

Let not my crimes—

[Dies.

Othman There fled the guilty soul!

Selim. Haste to the city,—stop the rage of slaughter.

Tell my brave people, that Algiers is free;

And tyranny no more.

[Exit Slaves.

‘ *Sadi.* And, to confirm

‘ The glorious tidings, soon as morning shines,

‘ Be his dead carcase dragg’d throughout the city,

‘ A spectacle of horror!

‘ *Selim.* Curb thy zeal.

‘ Let us be brave, not cruel: nor disgrace

‘ Valour, by barbrous and inhuman deeds.

‘ Black was his guilt: and he hath paid his life,

‘ The forfeit of his crimes. Then sheathe the sword:

‘ Let vengeance die.---Justice is satisfy’d.’

Enter

Enter Zaphira.

Zaph. What mean these horrors !---wherefoe'er I turn
My trembling steps, I find some dying wretch,
Welt'ring in gore !---And dost thou live, my Selim.

Selim. Lo, where the bloody tyrant breathless lies.

Zaph. The bloody tyrant slain !

Oh, righteous Heav'n !

Selim. Behold thy valiant friends,

Whose faith and courage have o'erwhelm'd the pow'r

Of Barbarossa. Here, once more, thy virtues

Shall dignify the throne and bless thy people.'

Zaph. Just are thy ways, Oh, Heav'n !---Vain ter-
rors, hence ;

Once more Zaphira's blest :---My virtuous son,

How shall I e'er repay thy boundless love !

Thus let me snatch thee to my longing arms,

And on thy bosom weep my griefs away !

Selim. Oh, happy hour !---happy, beyond ' the flight

Ev'n ' of my ardent' hope !---Look down, blest shade,

From the bright realms of bliss !---Behold thy queen

Unspotted, uneduc'd, unmov'd in virtue.

Behold the tyrant prostrate at my feet !

And to the mem'ry of thy blees ing

Accept this sacrifice !

Zaph. My generous Selim !

Selim. Where is Irene ?

Sadi. With looks of wildness, and distracted mien,

She sought her father where the tumult rag'd :

She pass'd me, while the coward Aladin

Fled from my sword ; and as I cleft him down,

She fainted at the sight.

Othman. But soon recover'd ;

Zamor, our trusty friend, at my command,

Convey'd the weeping fair-one to her chamber.

Selim. Thanks to thy generous care :---Come, let us
feck

Th' afflicted maid.

Zaph. Her virtues might atone

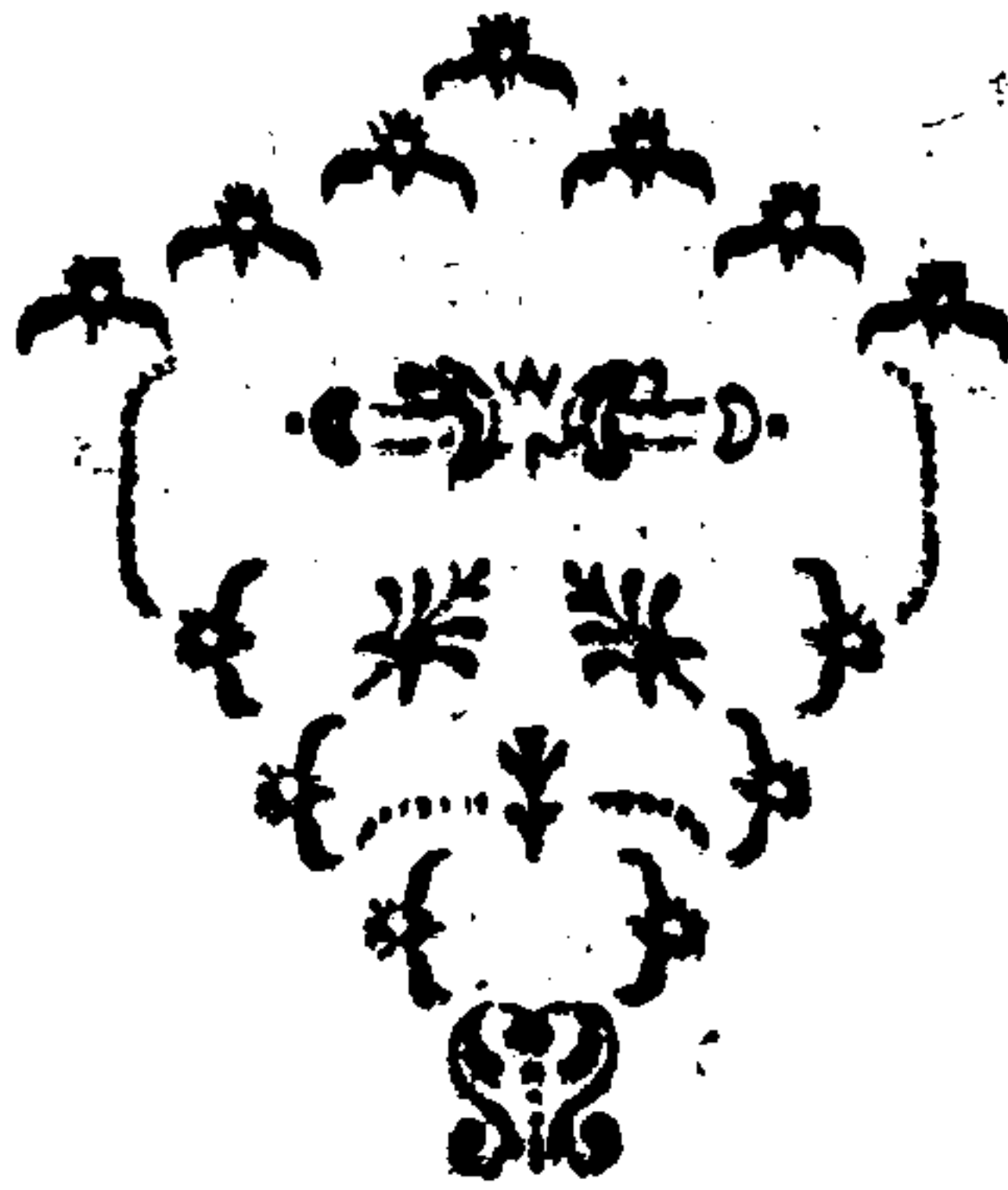
For all her father's guilt !---Thy throne be hers :

She merits all thy love.

Selim. Then haste, and find her.---O'er her father's
crimes

Pity shall draw a veil; 'nay, half absolve them,'
When she beholds the virtues of his child!
Now let us thank th' eternal Pow'r: convinc'd,
That Heav'n but tries our virtue by affliction:
That oft' the cloud which wraps the present hour,
Serves but to brighten all our future days!

END OF THE FIFTH ACT.





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They are, forsooth, too much expos'd, and free---
 Were more expos'd, no ill effects I see,
 For more, or less, 'tis all the same to me. }
 Poor gaming, too, was maul'd among the rest,
 That precious cordial to a high-life breast!
 When thoughts arise I always game, or drink,
 An English gentleman shou'd never think---
 The reason's plain, which ev'ry soul might hit on---
 What trims a Frenchman, oversets a Briton;
 In us reflection breeds a sober sadness,
 Which always ends in politics or madness:
 I therefore now propose---by your command,
 That tragedies no more shall cloud this land;
 Send o'er your Shakespeares to the sons of France,
 Let them grow grave---Let us begin to dance!
 Banish your gloomy scenes to foreign climes,
 Reserve alone to bless these golden times,
 A farce or two---and Woodward's pantomimes! }





Roberts del.

Published for the British Theatre March 1. 1777.

Thornthwaite Sculp.

M^r. LEWIS in the Character of ZAMOR.

*Look on all; and recollect his face,
who, wisely spared thy Life, to spread thy Virtues.*



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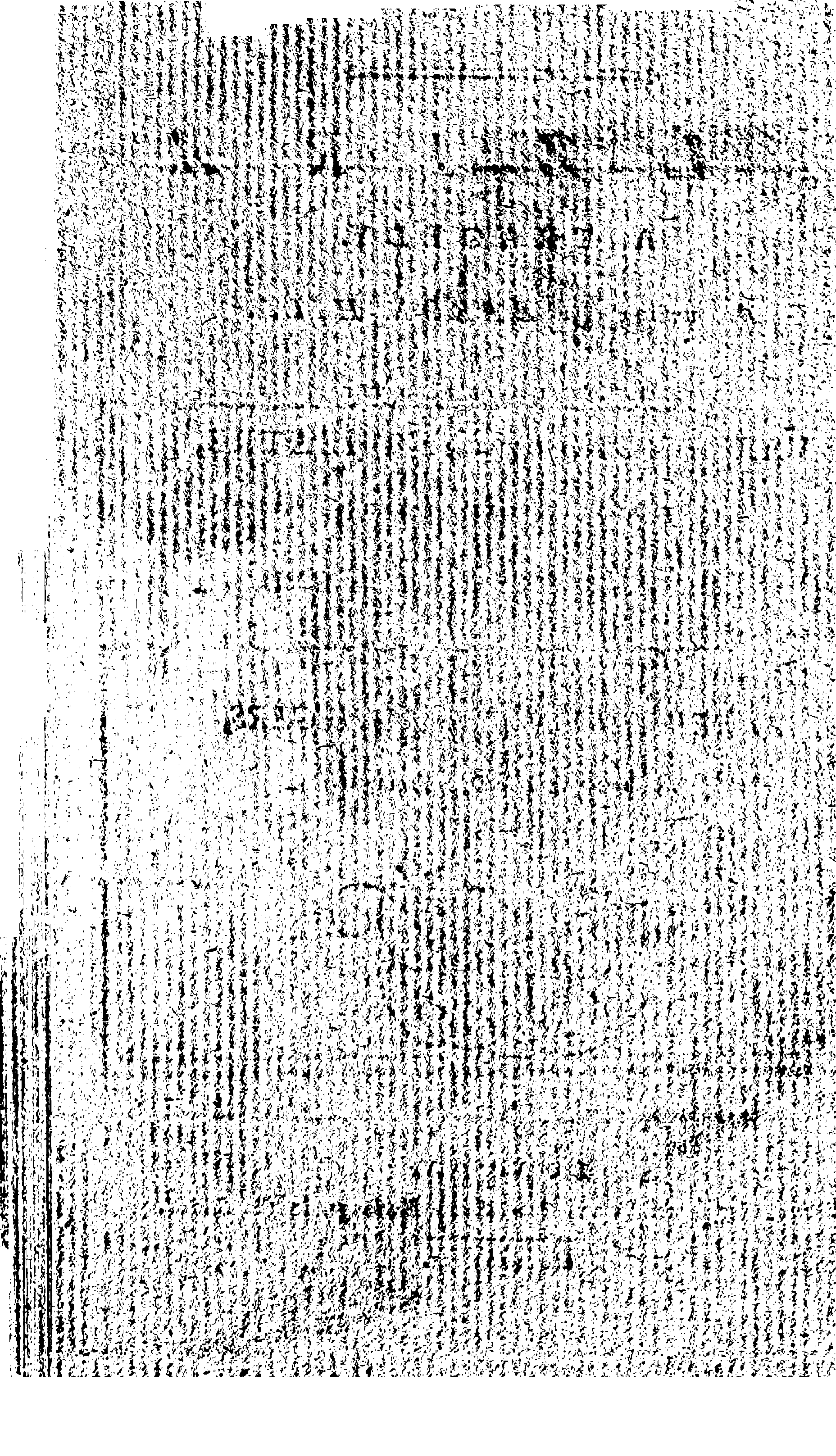
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To his Royal Highness

F R E D E R I C K

PRINCE OF

W A L E S.

S I R,

THOUGH a prince is born a patron, yet a benevolent expansion of his heart gives nobler title to the homage of the arts, than all the greatness of his power to propagate them.—There respect is, either way, so much your Royal Highness's unquestioned due, that he who asks your leave to offer such a duty, calls in question your prerogative, or means to sell his own acknowledgments.

They have not marked, with penetration, the distinction of your spirit, who dare look upon you as inclosed against the access of sincerity. The judgment and humanity of princes are obscured by difficulties in approaching them. Nor can the benefactors of mankind be so far inconsistent with themselves, as to interpose the obstacles of distance, or cold ceremony, between their goodness, and our gratitude.

Allow me, therefore, Sir, the honour to present *Alzira* to your patronage: disclaiming, for myself, all expectation of your notice. It is just that I should give up my own small pretensions: but Mr. de Voltaire brings title to your Royal Highness's regard. The merit of his work

will recommend him to your judgment: and the noble justice he has done her Majesty's distinguished character, in his French preface to this tragedy, (himself mean while a foreigner, and writing in a foreign nation) will, perhaps, deserve the glory of the son's partiality, in sense of reverence for the royal mother.

It were indeed, some violation of respect and gratitude, not to devote *Alzira* to the hand that honoured her, in public, with an applause so warm and weighty, in her representation on the English theatre.—Here Mr. de Voltaire enjoyed the triumph due to genius; while his heroic characters at the same time, made evident the force of nature, when it operates upon resembling qualities.—When tragedies are strong in sentiment, they will be touchstones to their hearer's hearts. The narrow and inhumane will be unattentive, or unmoved; while princely spirits, like your Royal Highness's, (impelled by their own conscious tendency) shew us an example in their generous sensibility, how great thoughts should be received by those who can think greatly.

Yet, in one strange circumstance, *Alzira* suffered by the honour of your approbation; for while the audience hung their eyes upon your Royal Highness's discerning delicacy, their joy to see you warmed by, and applauding most, those sentiments which draw their force from love of pity, and of liberty, became the only passion they would feel; and thereby lessened their attention to the very scenes they owed it to.

Can it be possible, after so important a public declaration in honour of passion and sentiment, that this best use of the poet's art, should any longer continue to languish under general neglect, or indifference?—No, surely, Sir!—Your Royal Highness, but persisting to keep reason and nature in countenance at the theatres, will universally establish what you so generously and openly avow. For, if where men love, they will imitate, your example must be copied by millions; till the influence of your attraction shall have planted your taste; and overspread three kingdoms with laurels.

It may at present perhaps, be a fruitless, but it can never be an irrational wish, that a theatre entirely new, (if not rather the old ones new-modelled) professing only
what



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lence, beautifully calls it the bow of the mind ; as if, to express it more clearly, he had said, the stage is an instrument in the hands of the poet, as capable of giving modulation and tone to the heart, as the bow to the violin in the hands of a musician.

There is another advantage in poetry, which still further intitles it to the protection of princes, who are lovers, like your Royal Highness, of ages, which are only to hear of them. Other arts have some single and limited effect ; but the creations of poetry have a power to multiply their species in new and emulative successions of virtue and heroism ; the seeds, as it were, of those passions which produce noble qualities, being sown in all poems of genius.

If such desirable effects are now less common than anciently, it is only because sometimes tuneful emptiness is mistaken for poetry ; and sometimes calm, cold sense conveyed in unpassionate metre ; whereas poetry has no element but passion : and therefore rhyme, turn, and measure, are but fruitless affectations, where a spirit is not found that conveys the heat and enthusiasm. The poet, to say in all in a word, who can be read without excitement of the most passionate emotions in the heart, having been busily losing his pains, like a smith who would fashion cold iron : he has the regular return in the descent of the strokes, the insignificant jingle in the ring of the sound, and the hammering delight in the labour ; but he has neither the penetration, the glow, nor the sparkling.

When in some unbending moments your Royal Highness shall reflect, perhaps, on the most likely measures for diminishing our pretences to poetry, yet augmenting its essential growth, how kind wou'd heaven be to the legitimate friends of the muses, should it, at those times, whisper in your ear, that no art ever flourished in monarchies till the favour of the court made it fashionable !

On my own part, I have little to say, worth the honour of your Royal Highness's notice ; being no more than an humble solicitor, for an event I have nothing to hope from. Not that I presume to represent myself as too stoical to feel the advantage of distinction. I am only too busy to be disposed for pursuing it ; having renounced
the

the world, without quitting it; that, standing aside in an uncrowded corner, I might escape being burned along in the dust of the show, and quietly see, and consider the whole as it passes; instead of acting a part in it; and that, perhaps, but a poor one.

In a situation so calm and untroubled, there arises a salutary habitude of supposing distinction to be lodged in the mind, and ambition in the use and command of the faculties. Such a choice may be silent, but not inactive: nay, I am afraid, he who makes it, is but a concealed kind of Epicure, notwithstanding his pretences to forbearance and philosophy: for while he partakes, in full relish, all the naked enjoyments of life, he throws nothing of it away, but its false face and its prejudices. He takes care to live at peace in the very centre of malice and faction; for, viewing greatness without hope, he views it also without envy.

Upon the whole, though there may be a suspicion of something too selfish in this personal system of liberty, it will free a man in a moment from all those byassing partialities which hang their dead weight upon judgment; and leave him as disinterested a spectator of the virtues or vices of cotemporary greatness, as of that which history has transmitted to him from times he had nothing to do with. I am, therefore, sure, it is no flattery, when I congratulate your Royal Highness on the humane glories of your future reign, and thank you for a thousand blessings I expect not to partake of.

I am,

With a profound respect,

S I R,

Your Royal Highness's

Most obedient and

Most humble servant,

A. HILL.

EPI-



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D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

Covent-Garden.

<i>Don Carlos</i> , governor of <i>Peru</i> , for the <i>Spaniards</i> , ——— ———	Mr. Wright.
<i>Don Alvarez</i> , father of <i>Don Carlos</i> , and former governor, ———	Mr. Gifford.
<i>Zamor</i> , <i>Indian</i> sovereign of one part of the country, ——— ———	Mr. Lewis.
<i>Ezmont</i> , <i>Indian</i> sovereign of another part, ——— ———	Mr. Havard.

W O M E N.

<i>Alzira</i> , daughter of <i>Ezmont</i> , ———	Mrs. Giffard.
<i>Emira</i> , } <i>Alzira's</i> women.	
<i>Cephanía</i> , }	

Spanish and *American* Captains and Soldiers.

SCENE, in the City of LIMA.

ALZIRA.

A L Z I R A.

A C T I.

Don Alvarez and Don Carlos.

ALVAREZ.

AT length the council partial to my prayer,
 Has to a son, I love, transferr'd my power.
 Carlos, rule happy ; be a viceroy long ;
 Long for thy prince, and for thy God, maintain
 This younger, richer, lovelier, half the globe ;
 Too fruitful, heretofore, in wrongs and blood ;
 Crimes the lamented growths of powerful gold !
 Safe to thy abler hand devolve, resign'd,
 Those sovereign honours which oppress'd my years,
 And dimm'd the feeble lamp of wasted age.
 Yet had it long, and not unuseful, flam'd.
 I first o'er wond'ring Mexico in arms
 March'd the new horrors of a world unknown !
 I steer'd the floating towers of fearless Spain
 Through the plow'd bosom of an untried sea.
 Too happy had my labours been so blest'd,
 To change my brave associate's rugged souls,
 And soften stubborn heroes into men.
 Their cruelties, my son, eclips'd their glory :
 And I have wept a conqu'ror's splendid shame.
 Whom heaven not better made, and yet made great.
 Wearied at length, I reach my life's last verge ;
 Where I shall peaceful veil my eyes in rest ;
 If ere they close, they but behold my Carlos
 Ruling Potosi's realm by Christian laws,
 And making gold more rich by gifts from heav'n.

D. Carlos. Taught and supported by your great exam-
 I learnt beneath your eye to conquer realms,

[ple,
 Which

Which by your counfels I may learn to govern ;
Giving thofe laws I firft receive from you.

Alvarez. Not fo.—Divided power is power difarm'd.
Outworn by labour, and decay'd by time,
Pomp is no more my wifh. Enough for me
That heard in council age may temper rashnefs,
Trust me, mankind but ill rewards the pains
Of over-prompt ambition — 'Tis now time
To give my long-neglected God thofe hours,
Which clofe the languid period of my days.
One only gift I afk ; refufe not that ;
As friend I afk it ; and as father claim.
Pardon thofe poor Americans, condemn'd
For wand'ring hither, and this morning feiz'd.
To my difpofal give 'em kindly up,
That liberty, unhop'd, may charm the more.
A day like this fhould merit fmiles from all ;
And mercy, foft'ning juftice, mark it blefs'd.

D. Carlos. Sir, all that fathers afk, they muft command.
Yet condefcend to recollect how far
This pity, undeferv'd, might hazard all.
In infant towns like ours, methinks 'twere fafe
Not to familiarize thefe favage fpies.
If we accustom foes to look too near,
We teach 'em, at our coft, to flight thofe fwords
They once flew trembling from, whene'er they faw.
Frowning revenge, and awe of diftant dread,
Not fmiling friendship, tames thefe fullen fouls.
The fow'r American, unbroke, and wild,
Spurns with indignant rage, and bites his chain,
Humble when punifh'd ; if regarded, fierce.
Power fickens by forbearance : rigid men,
Who feel not pity's pangs, are beft obey'd.
Spaniards, 'tis true, are rul'd by honour's law,
Submit unmurm'ring, and unforc'd go right.
But other nations are impell'd by fear,
And muft be rein'd, and fpurr'd, with hard controll.
The gods themfelves in this ferocious clime,
Till they look grim with blood, excite no dread.

Alvarez. Away, my fon, with thefe detefted fchemes !
Perifh fuch politic reproach of rule !
Are we made captains in our Maker's caufe,

O'er



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Graceful approach'd, and, kneeling, press'd my knees.
Alvarez, is it you, he cry'd—Live long!

Ours be your virtue, but not ours your blood!
Live, and instruct oppressors to be lov'd.

Bless'd be those tears, my son!—I think you weep.

Joy to your soft'ning soul! Humanity
Has power, in nature's right, beyond a father.

But from what motive sprung this late decline
From clemency of heart to new-born rigour?

Had you been always cruel, with what brow

Cou'd you have hop'd to charm the lov'd Alzira?

Heirefs to realms, dispeopled by your sword!

And though your captive, yet your conqu'ror too.

Trust me,—with women worth the being won,

The softest lover ever best succeeds.

D. Carlos. Sir, I obey: your pleasure breaks their
Yet 'tis their duty to embrace our faith: [chains;

So runs the king's command.—To merit life,

Quit they their idol worship, and be free.

So thrives religion, and compels the blind;

So draws our holy altar souls by force,

Till opposition dies, and sleeps in peace;

So links a govern'd world in faith's strong chain;

And but one monarch serves, and but one God.

Alv. Hear me, my son.—That crown'd in this new
Religion may erect her holy throne, [world,

Is what, with ardent zeal, my soul desires;

Let Heaven and Spain find here no future foe!

Yet ne'er did persecution's offspring thrive:

For the forc'd heart, submitting, still resists.

Reason gains all men by compelling none.

Mercy was always Heaven's distinguish'd mark;

And he who bears it not, has no friend there.

D. Carlos. Your reasons, like your arms, are sure to
I am instructed and ennobled by them! [conquer.

Indulgent virtue dwells in all you say,

And softens, while you speak, the list'ning soul!

Since Heaven has bless'd you with this powerful gift,

To breathe persuasion and uncharm resolves,

Pronounce me favour'd, and you make me so.

Warm my Alzira's coldness; dry her tears;

And teach her to be mine.—I love that maid,

Spite of my pride ! blush at it——but still love her !
 Yet will I ne'er, to sooth unyielding scorn,
 Unman the soldier in the lover's cause.
 I cannot stoop to fan a hopeless flame,
 And be in vain her slave.—You, Sir, might aid me :
 You can do all things with Alzira's father.
 Bid him command his daughter to be kind :
 Bid him.—But whither would my love mislead me !
 Forgive the blind presumption of a hope,
 That to my int'rest stoops my father's rank ;
 And sends him beggar to an Indian's door !

Alv. 'Tis done already. I have urg'd it to him.
 Ezmont has mov'd his daughter in your cause.
 Wait the prepar'd event. Heaven has been kind ;
 Since these illustrious captives both are Christians ;
 Ezmont my convert, and his daughter his.
 Alzira governs a whole people's minds ;
 Each watchful Indian reads her studied eye,
 And to her silent heart conforms his own.
 Your marriage shall unite two distant worlds :
 For when the stern repiner at our law
 Sees in your arms the daughter of his king,
 With humbler spirit, and with heart less fierce,
 His willing neck shall court the yoke he scorn'd.
 But look, where Ezmont comes !—Retire, my son ;
 And leave me to complete the task begun. [*Exit D. Car.*

Enter Ezmont.

Welcome, my friend ; your council, or command,
 Has left, I hope, Alzira well resolv'd.

Ezm. Great father of the friendless !—Pardon yet,
 If one, whose sword seem'd fatal to her race,
 Keeps her heart cold, with some remains of horror,
 We move with ling'ring steps to thole we fear.
 But prejudice will fly before your voice,
 Whose winning manners consecrate your laws.
 To you who gave us heav'n, our earth is due.
 Yours our new being, our enlighten'd souls ;
 Spain may hold realms by purchase of her sword ;
 And worlds may yield to power—but we to virtue,
 Your bloody nation's unucceeding pride
 Had made their God disgustful as their crimes !
 We saw him hateful in their murd'rous zeal ;

But lov'd him in your mercy.—From your heart
 His influence stream'd accepted ; and my crown,
 My daughter, and my soul, became your slaves.
 Father alike of Carlos and of me,
 I give him my Alzira for your sake ;
 And with her all Potofi and Peru.

Summon the reverend choir ; prepare the rites ;
 And trust my promise for my daughter's will.

Alv. Bless'd be the long-wish'd found !—This great
 work past,

I shall go down in peace, and hail my grave,
 Oh, thou great leader ! whose almighty hand
 Drew the dark veil aside that hid new worlds ;
 Smile on this union, which, confirmed by thee,
 Shall in one empire grasp the circled globe,
 And task the sun's whole round to measure Spain !
 Ezmont, farewell,—I go to greet my son,
 With welcome news, how much he owes my friend.

[*Exit.*

Ezm. [*Alone.*] Thou, nameless Power, unequal'd and
 alone !

Whose dreadful vengeance overwhelm'd, at once,
 My country, and her gods, too weak to save !
 Protect my failing years from new distress.
 Robb'd of my all : but this one daughter left me :
 Oh, guard her heart, and guide her to be bless'd !

Enter Alzira.

Daughter, be happy, while good-fortune courts thee ;
 And in thy blessing cheer thy country's hope.
 Protect the vanquish'd : rule the victor's will ;
 Seize the bent thunder in his lifted hand ;
 And from despair's low seat, remount a throne.
 Lend the lov'd public thy reluctant heart ;
 And in the joy of millions find thy own.
 Nay, do not weep, Alzira : tears will now
 Seem insults, and reproach thy father's care.

Alz. Sir, my whole soul, devoted, feels your power.
 Yet, if Alzira's peace was ever dear,
 Shut not your ear to my despairing grief ;
 But, in my nuptials, read my certain doom.

Ezm. Urge it no more : it is an ill-tim'd sorrow.
 Away ! I had thy kind consent before.

Alz. No,—you compell'd the frightful sacrifice :

And,



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Lord of her soul, and holds back all her wishes.
 You frown.—Alas, you blame a guilt you caus'd.
 Quench then this flame, too hard for death and time;
 And force me to be his whom most I hate.
 If my lov'd country bids, I must obey.
 Yet, while by force you join unsocial hands,
 Tremble whene'er you drag me to the altar,
 Tremble to hear my tongue deceive my God:
 To hear me to this hated tyrant vow
 A heart, that beats, unchang'd, another's due.

Ezm. Alas, my child, what unweigh'd words are these!
 Pity my age, unfit for length'ning woes:
 Nature asks rest: pity these falling tears.
 By all our fates, that all depend on thee,
 Let me conjure thee to be blest'd thyself,
 Nor close in misery my life's last scene.
 Why do I live, but to redeem thy hopes?
 For thy own sake, not mine, assist my care.
 Blast not the ripening prospect of thy peace,
 Hard, and with labour'd patience, slowly grown.
 Now, on thy instant choice, depends thy fate!
 Nor only thine, but a whole people's fate!
 Wilt thou betray them? Have they other help?
 Have they a hope, but thee?—Think, think, Alzira;
 And nobly lose thyself to save a state. [Exit.

Alz. Cruel accomplishment! sublime defect!
 So feign we virtues to become a throne,
 Till public duty drowns our private truth.

Enter Don Carlos.

D. Carlos. Princess, you give a lover cause to doubt,
 That this long labour of your slow consent
 Springs from a heart too cold to feel his flame.
 While, for your sake, suspended law forbears
 To punish rebels, whom you wish to save,
 Ungrateful, you compel a nation's freedom,
 And bind, in recompence, my chains more close!
 Yet misconceive me not.—I would not owe
 A softened sentiment to having serv'd you;
 That were to bribe a heart my pride wou'd win.
 I shou'd with mingled joy and blushes gain you,
 If, as my perquisite of power you fell.
 Let me attract, not force you.—I would owe you,

All

All to yourself; nor could I taste a joy,
That, in your giving it, might cost you pain.

Alz. Join, Sir, my fruitless prayers to angry Heav'n!
This dreadful day comes charg'd with pains for both.
—No wonder you detect my troubled soul:

It bursts unveil'd from my disclosing eyes,
And glows on every feature's honest air.
Such is the plainness of an Indian heart,
That it disdains to sculk behind the tongue;
But throws out all its wrongs, and all its rage.
She who can hide her purpose, can betray;
And that's a Christian virtue I've not learnt.

D. Car. I love your frankness, but reproach its cause.
Zamor, remember'd Zamor speaks in this.
With hatred stretch'd beyond th' extent of life,
He crosses from the tomb, his conqueror's will;
And felt through death revenge's rival love.
Cease to complain, and you may learn to bear.
My fame, your duty, both require a change;
And I must wish it were from tears to joy.

Alz. A rival's grave should bury jealousy.
But whence your right to censure sorrow for him?
I lov'd him; I proclaim it. Had I not,
I had been blind to sense, and lost to reason.
Zamor was all the prop of our fallen world:
And, but he lov'd me much, confess'd no weakness!
Had I not mourn'd a fate he not deserv'd,
I had deserv'd the fate he felt unjustly.
For you,—be proud no more; but dare be honest.
Far from presuming to reproach my tears,
Honour my constancy, and praise my virtue:
Cease to regret the dues I pay the dead;
And merit, if you can, a heart thus faithful. *[Exit.]*

D. Car. *[Alone.]* Spite of my fruitless passion, I confess,
Her pride, thus starting its sincere disdain,
Astonishes my thought, and charms my anger.
—What then shall I resolve?—Must it cost more
To tame one female heart than all Peru!
Nature, adapting her to suit her climate,
Left her all savage, yet all shining too!
But 'tis my duty to be master here;

Where

Where, she alone excepted, all obey.
 Since then too faintly I her heart incline,
 I'll force her stubborn hand, and fix her mine.

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

Zamor, and four Indian Captains, in Chains.

ZAMOR.

FRIENDS, who have dar'd beyond the strength of
 mortals;
 Whose courage scorn'd restraint, and grew in danger;
 Associates in my hopes and my misfortunes!
 Since we have lost our vengeance, let death find us!
 Why should we longer be condemn'd to life,
 Defenceless to our country and Alzira?
 Yet why should Spanish Carlos 'scape our swords?
 Why thrive beneath a weight of uncheck'd crimes?
 And why has Heaven forsaken us and virtue?
 Ye strengthless powers! whose altars smok'd in vain!
 Gods of a faithful, yet a cheated people!
 Why have you thus betray'd us to the foe?
 Why had six hundred Spanish vagrants power
 To crush my throne, your temples, rites, and you?
 Where are your altars? where my glories now?
 Where is Alzira? more herself a god,
 Than your collected queens of fancied heaven!
 Helpless once more thou seest me,—lost Peru!
 O'er shifting lands, through desarts, cross'd in vain,
 From forest wilds, impervious to the sun;
 From the world's wastes, beneath the burning zone,
 I brought thee unhop'd aid! the wond'ring stars
 Beheld me gath'ring from remotest wilds,
 New strength, new prospects, and new means to die!
 Your arms, your furtherance, your vast support,
 New-furnish'd my desires, and wing'd my hope.
 Vengeance and love once more had mann'd my heart.
 But, ah, how vain that hope! how lost that vengeance!
 The slaves of avarice are honour's masters!

Ind.



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What vast mysterious accident of virtue ?
 Some power divine, in sport, deceives my wonder !
 Thou seem'st a Spaniard !—and—but thou forgiveſt,
 I cou'd have ſworn thee Chriſtian !—Who ? what art thou ?
 Art thou ſome god ? or this new city's king ?

Alv. Chriſtian I am ; and Spaniard : but no king.

Yet ſerves my power to ſave the weak, diſtreſs'd. [deſ.]

Zam. What thy diſtinction then ? thou gen'rous won-

Alv. The love of pity, when the wretched want it.

Zam. Pity ! and Chriſtian !—-what inspir'd thy great-

Alv. My memory, my duty, and my God. [nefs ?

Zam. Thy God ?—perhaps then, theſe inſatiate waſters,

Theſe human ſeemers, with but forms of men ;

Theſe thirſters after only gold and blood :

From ſome coarſe, lawleſs part of Europe came ;

And ſerve ſome bloodier God that wars with thine ?

Alv. Their faith the ſame with mine, but not their
 nature :

Chriſtians by birth, by error, made unchriſtian,
 In power grown giddy, they diſgrace command.
 Thou know'ſt their faults too well : now, know my duty.

Twice has the ſun's broad traſerſe girt the globe,
 Twice wheel'd the ſummer round your world and ours,

Since a brave Indian, native of your land,
 To whom ſurprize in ambuſh made me captive,
 Gave me the forfeit life his ſword had won.

The unexpected mercy forc'd my bluſhes :

For, I perceiv'd, compaſſion of your wces,
 Was but a duty, when I thought 'twas virtue.

Thenceforth, your countrymen became my brothers ;

And I have now but one complaint againſt them ;

—That I muſt never know his name who ſav'd me.

Zam. He has Alvarez's voice ! He has his features !

His age the ſame too ; and the ſame his ſtory !

'Tis he !—there is no other honeſt Chriſtian.

Look on us all ; and recollect his face,

Who wiſely ſpar'd thy life to ſpread thy virtues.

Alv. Come nearer, noble youth.—By Heaven, 'tis he !

Now, my dim eyes, you teach me my decay,

That cou'd not let me ſee my wiſh indulg'd,

But clouded ev'n my gratitude !—My ſon !

My benefactor ! Saviour of my age !

What can I do ! Inſtruct me to deſerve thee.

Dwell in my sight; and I will be thy father.
 Thou wilt have lost the merit of thy gift,
 If, from the power it gave, thou claim'st no payment.

Zam. Trust me, my father, had thy Spanish sons
 Shewn but a glimm'ring of thy awful virtue,
 Grateful Peru, now desolately, theirs,
 Had been a peopled world of willing slaves.
 But cruelty, and pride, and plunder, claim them.
 Rather than live among that felon race,
 Hide, hide me, silent death; and screen my soul
 From the reliefless rage of unfelt curses.

All I wou'd ask, all I will take from Spain,
 Is but to be inform'd, if Ezmont lives?
 Or, has his blood new-stain'd their hands with murder?
 Ezmont?---perhaps you knew him not?---That Ezmont,
 Who was Alzira's father?---I must stop,
 And weep---before I dare go on, to ask---
 Whether---that father,---and that daughter---live?

Alv. Hide not thy tears: weep boldly---and be proud
 To give the flowing virtue manly way;
 'Tis nature's mark to know an honest heart by.
 Shame on those breasts of stone, that cannot melt,
 In soft adoption of another's sorrow.
 But be thou comforted; for both thy friends
 Live, and are happy here.

Zam. And shall I see 'em?

Alv. Ezmont, within this hour, shall teach his friend
 To live, and hope---and be as bless'd as he.

Zam. Alzira's Ezmont?---

Alv. From his mouth, not mine,
 Thou shalt, this moment, learn whate'er thou seek'st.
 He shall instruct thee in a smiling charge,
 That has united Spain with sav'd Peru.
 I have a son to bless with this new joy:
 He will partake my happiness, and love thee.
 ---I quit thee,---but will instantly return
 To charm thee with this union's happy story,
 That nothing now on earth has power to sever
 Yet, which once clos'd, shall quiet warring worlds.

[Exit, with Guards.

Zam. At length, th' awak'ning gods remember Zamor,
 And to atone my wrongs by working wonders,

Have

Have made a Spaniard honest to reward me!
 Alvarez is himself the Christians' God;
 Who long provok'd, and blushing at their crimes,
 In his own right descends, to veil their shame.
 He says, he has a son; that son shall be
 My brother, if, at least, he does but prove
 Worthy, (cou'd man be so) of such a father!
 Oh, day! Oh, dawn of hope, on my sad heart!
 Ezmont, now, after three long years of woe,
 Ezmont, Alzira's father, is restor'd me!
 Alzira too, the dear, the gen'rous maid,
 She, whom my fighting soul has been at work for?
 She, who has made me brave, and left me wretched!
 Alzira too is here! and lives to thank me.

Enter Ezmont.

Oh, ye profuse rewarders of my pain!
 He comes! my Ezmont comes!—Spring of my hopes,
 Thou father of my lab'ring mind's inspirer!
 Hard let me press thee to a heart that loves thee.
 Escap'd from death, behold returning Zamor.
 He will not, cannot die, while there is hope,
 That he may live to serve a suff'ring friend.
 Speak, speak; and be thy first soft word Alzira!
 Say, she is here; and blest'd, as Heaven can make her.

Ezm. Unhappy prince!---She lives; nor lives remote.
 Words cannot reach description of her grief,
 Since first the news of thy sad death was brought her.
 Long dwelt she, sorrowing, o'er an empty tomb,
 Which, for thy fancied form, she rais'd to weep on.
 But thou still liv'st!---amazing chance!---thou liv'st!
 Heav'n grant some doubtful means to bless thee long,
 And make thy life as happy——as 'tis strange!
 ——What brought thee hither, Zamor?

Zam. Cruel question!
 Colder than all the deaths I have escap'd from!
 Why dost thou ask? Where else cou'd I have hop'd
 To find, and to redeem thyself and daughter?

Ezm. Say that no more---'tis misery to hear thee.

Zam. Bethink thee of the black, the direful day,
 When that vile Spaniard, Carlos, curse the name!
 Invulnerable, or to sword or shame,
 O'erturn'd those walls, which time, when young, saw built,
 By



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Returns of benefit and due protection :
 Outrage and wrongs require correction only.
 These lightnings and these thunders; these safe shells,
 Cases for fear, which guard their iron war ;
 These fiery steeds, that tear the trampled earth,
 And hurl their headlong riders on the foe ;
 These outward forms of death, that fright the world,
 I can look stedfast on ; and dare despise.
 The novelty once lost, the force will fail.
 Curse on our feeble gold ! it calls in foes ;
 Yet helps not to repel the wrongs it draws !
 Oh, had but steel been ours !---but partial heaven
 Has, with that manly wealth, enrich'd our foe !
 Yet, not to leave our vengeance quite disarm'd,
 Depriving us of steel, it gave us virtue.

Ezm. Virtue was bless'd of old :---but,---times are
 chang'd.

Zam. No matter---let us keep our hearts the same.
 Alzira cannot change---Alzira's just.
 Alzira's faithful to her vows and me.
 Save me, ye gods ! from a friend's downcast eye !
 Whence are those sighs and tears ?

Ezm. Too wretched Zamor !

Zam. I thought myself Alzira's father's son ;
 But find these tyrants have unking'd thy soul ;
 And taught thee, on the grave's last edge, to wrong me.

Ezm. They cannot. 'Tis an art I will not learn.
 Nor are our conqu'rors all unjust ;--- for, know,
 'Twas Heaven induc'd these Christians to our climè,
 Less to subdue, and rule us, than instruct.
 Know, they brought with them virtues, here unfound :
 Secrets, immortal, that preserve the soul !
 The science of salvation by belief !
 The art of living bless'd, and dying safe !

Zam. Or I am deaf : or, wou'd to Heaven, I were !
 But, if I heard thee right, thou seem'st to praise
 These pilfering zealots, who usurp thy throne,
 And wou'd convert thy daughter to a slave !

Ezm. Alzira is no slave.

Zam. Ah !---Royal Ezmont !
 Pardon some transport, which despair inflam'd ;
 And, to great woes, indulge a little warmth.

Remember, she was mine by solemn vow :
By thy own oath, before our altar sworn ;
Honour and perjury can never meet.

Ezm. What are our altars ? what our idol gods ?
Phantoms of human coinage, fear'd no more !
I would not wish to hear thee cite their name.

Zam. What ! was our father's altars vain deceit ?

Ezm. It was ; and I have happily disclaim'd it.
May the great single Power, that rules whole heaven,
Lend thy dark heart one ray of truth divine !
May'it thou, unhappy Zamor, learn to know,
And, knowing, to confess, in Europe's right,
Her god should be ador'd, her sons obey'd !

Zam. Obey'd ! Hell blast 'em !—What ! these sons of
rapine ?

They have not robb'd thee of thy faith alone,
But pilfer'd even thy reason !—Yet, 'twas wise,
When thou would'st keep no vows, to own no gods.
But, tell me ;—is Alzira too forsworn ?
True to her father's weakness has she fallen ?
Serves she the gods of Christians ?

Ezm. Hapless youth !

Though bless'd in my own change, I weep for thine.

Zam. He, who betrays his friend, has cause for weep.
Yet tears, they say, shew pity :—if they do, [ing.
Pity this torment, which thy shame has cost me.
Pity my heart, at once alarm'd, for heaven,
For heav'n betray'd, like me ; and torn at once,
By love, and zeal, and vengeance. Take me, Carlos ;
Drag me to die at my Alzira's feet ;
And I will fight away a soul, she saves not.
But have a care—be cautious, e're I fall,
Of urging me, too rashly, to despair,
Resume a human heart ! and feel some virtue.

Enter Alonzo.

Alon. My Lord, the ceremonies wait your presence.

Ezm. Farewel—I follow thee.

* *Zam.* No, by my wrongs !
I will not quit this hold, till I have learnt,
What ceremony, what black purpose, waits thee ?

Ezm. Away—be counsell'd—fly this fatal city,

Zam. Not though the Christian power that blasts my
love,

Shou'd rain down lightnings on my destin'd head,
And my own gods cry'd, stay, I still would follow thee.

Ezm. Forgive the force of an unwish'd refusal.—
Guards, to your care I must commit this madman.
Restrain him—He wou'd violate our altar.

These Pagans, obstinate in idol zeal,
Malign our holy myst'ries; and profane
The church's solemn service.—Guard the doors.

'Tis not in right of my own power I speak;
But, Carlos, in my voice, commands your care.

[*Exit with Guards; after they have freed him from Zamor.*

Zam. Did I not hear him, friends! —or am I mad?
Did I not hear him use the name of Carlos?

Oh, treachery! Oh, baseness! Oh, my wrongs!

Oh, last, uncredited, reproach of nature!

Ezmont commands for Carlos?—'Twas not Ezmont:

'Twas that black devil, that scares the Christian cowards,
Lied, in his snape, to scandalize Peru!

Oh, virtue! thou art banish'd from mankind:

Even from Alzira's heart, thou now art fled.

—These villain bart'ners rob us not of gold,

They pay its fatal price, in morals ruin'd.

Detested Carlos, then is here!—Oh, friends!

What council? what resource? to stop despair.

Ind. Cap. Let not my prince condemn the faithful zeal,
That wou'd advise his sorrows.—Old Alvarez

Will strait return, and bring, perhaps, that son,

With whom to share his joy the good man hasten'd.

Urge him to see you safe without their gates:

Then suddenly rejoin your ambush'd friends,

And march, more equal, to your purpos'd vengeance.

Let us not spare a life, but good Alvarez,

And this lov'd son! I, near the wall, remark'd

Their arts, and modes of structure: mark'd their angles,

Deep ditch, broad bulwarks, and their sleeping thunders.

I saw, and weigh'd it all: and found hope strongest.

Our groaning fathers, brothers, sons, and friends,

In fetter'd labour toil, to house their spoilers.

These, when we march to their unhop'd relief,

Will rise, within the town, behind their masters:

While you, mean while, without, advance against them:

And, o'er our dying bodies, proudly heap'd,

Bridge



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Fail'd to divide our hands——and he has reach'd me !
 The altar trembled at th' unhallow'd touch ;
 And Heaven drew back, reluctant, at our meeting.
 Oh, thou soft-hovering ghost, that haunt'ft my fancy !
 Thou dear and bloody form, that skims before me !
 Thou never-dying, yet thou buried Zamor !
 If sighs and tears, have power to pierce the grave ;
 If death, that knows no pity, will but hear me ;
 If still thy gentle spirit loves Alzira :
 Pardon, that even in death, she dar'd forsake thee !
 Pardon her rigid sense of nature's duties :
 A parent's will !——a pleading country's safety !
 At these strong calls, she sacrific'd her love ;
 To joyless glory, and to tasteless peace :
 And to an empty world, in which thou art not !
 Oh, Zamor ! Zamor ! follow me no longer,
 Drop some dark veil, snatch some kind cloud before thee,
 Cover that conscious face, and let death hide thee !
 Leave me to suffer wrongs that Heaven allots me :
 And teach my busy fancy to forget thee.

Enter Emira.

Where are those captives ? Are they free, Emira ?
 Where those sad children of my mournful country ?
 Will they not suffer me to see, to hear them ?
 To sit and weep, and mingle with their mournings ?

Emira. Ah, rather dread the rage of angry Carlos,
 Who threatens 'em with some new stroke of horror.
 Some cruel purpose hangs, this moment, o'er 'em !
 For, through this window look, and see display'd,
 The broad red standard, that betokens blood ;
 Loud bursts of death roar from their iron prisons,
 And answer, dreadful, to each others call ! [Guns.
 The council hastes, alarm'd, and meets in uproar. [Shouts.
 All I have heard besides is, that the prince,
 Your father, has been summon'd to attend.

Alz. Immortal guardian of th' endanger'd just !
 Have I for this, in vain, betray'd my peace ?
 Dares the dire husband, recent from the altar,
 New to my forc'd consent,—and scarce yet lord
 Of my repenting hand ; so soon let loose
 His recommission'd murders ! Must my nuptials
 Serve, as the prelude, to my people's blood !

Oh,

Oh, marriage ! marriage ! what a curse is thine,
Where hands alone consent, and hearts abhor !

Enter Cephania.

Ceph. One of the captive Indians, just set free,
In honour of the joy that crowns this day,
Prays your permission, Madam, to be heard,
And at your princely feet disclose some secret.

Alz. Let him, with firmness, and with freedom enter.
For him, and for his friends, he knows I live.
Dear to my eyes, I mark 'em with delight,
And love, alas, in them, their poor lost country.
—— But why alone ? —— Why one ?

Ceph. It is that captain,
To whose victorious hand, I heard, but now,
Alvarez, your new lord's illustrious father,
Ow'd his remitted life, from Indians sav'd.

Emira. With earnest pressure, he has sought your
presence :
He met me entering, and with trembling haste,
Implor'd me to befriend th' important prayer.
He told me, further, that the prince your father,
For some strange cause, this Indian seems to know,
Had charg'd the guards he 'scap'd from, to prevent
His access to your ear —— Methinks, there sits
A kind of sullen greatness on his brow,
As if it veil'd, in grief, some awful purpose.

Ceph. I watch'd him —— and he walks, and turns, and
weeps :
Then starts, and looks at heaven ; and to the gods,
Pours up an ardent sigh, that breathes your name !
I pitied him —— but, gather'd, from this freedom,
That he's a stranger to your rank and greatness.

Alz. What rank ? What greatness ? —— Perish all dis-
tinction,
That, from the wrong'd unhappy, bars the great !
Who knows, but this was once some gen'rous friend,
Some brave companion of my Zamor's arms !
Who knows ; but he was near him, when he fell ;
And brings some message from his parting soul !
How dare I then receive him ? —— Can my heart
Be proof against the last kind words of Zamor ?
Will not the half-lull'd pain, rekindling fresh,

Burn, with increase of smart, and wring my soul ?

—No matter, —let him enter. — [*Exit Cephania.*

—Ha, what means

This sudden chillness, sadd'ning round my heart,

In short, faint flutt'ings never felt before !

Ah, fatal residence ! — From the first hour

These hated walls became Alzira's prison,

Each diff'rent moment brought some diff'rent pain.

Enter Zamor.

Zam. Art thou, at length, restor'd me ? — Cruel ! tell
Art thou, indeed, Alzira ? [*me !*

Alz. —Gentle spirit ! —

Forgive me. — Do not come to chide th' unhappy !

I have been wrong'd ; but — [*Faints into his arms.*

Zam. Thine, she wou'd have said ;
And her imperfect purpose fully blest'd me.
Revive, thou dearest, loveliest, lost Alzira !
Zamor will live no longer, shou'dst thou die.

Alz. The kind, forgiving shade, is still before me !
It wak'd me, by a sound, that seem'd his name.

Zam. I am no shadow, if Alzira's mine ;
I am thy living lover, at thy feet [*Kneeling.*
Reclaiming thee, thou noblest half himself !

Alz. Can it be possible, thou should'st be Zamor ?

Zam. Thy Zamor — thine.

Alz. But, — art thou sure, thou liv'st ?

Zam. 'Tis in thy power,
To make that truth undoubted. — Do but say
Thou would'st not have me die, — and I will live,
To thank thee ; thus with everlasting love.

[*Rises, and catches her in his arms.*

Alz. Oh, days of softness ! — Oh, remembered years,
Of ever-vanish'd happiness ! — Oh, Zamor !
Why has the grave been bountiful too late ?
Why sent thee back in vain ? to make joy bitter ;
By mix'd ideas of distracting horror !
Ah, Zamor ! — What a time is this, — to charm in !
Thy every word, and look, shoots daggers through me.

Zam. Then mourn'st thou my return ?

Alz. I do, — I do.

Because, — it was no sooner.

Zam. Generous tenderness !

Alz.



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I will lay open the vast horror to thee :
Then thou wilt weep and live ;—and bid me—die.

Zam. Alzira !——Oh !——

Alz. This Carlos——

Zam. Carlos !

Alz. He.——

I was this morning sworn forever——his !

Zam. Sworn whose ?——not Carlos ?

Alz. I have been betray'd.

I was too weak alone,——against my country.

——Even on this fatal, this foreboding day,

Almost within thy sight, Christian Alzira

Plighted, in presence of the Christian God,

Her hapless hand to Carlos.——'Tis a crime,

That hopes no pardon !——All my gods renounc'd !

My lover wrong'd ! my country's fame betray'd !

All, all, demand revenge.—Do thou then kill me :

Thou wilt strike tenderly——and my glad blood

Shall meet thy dear-lov'd hand—and that way join thee.

Zam. Carlos, Alzira's husband !---'tis impossible !

Alz. Were I dispos'd to mitigate my crime,

I cou'd alledge a father's awful power ;

I cou'd remind thee of our ruin'd state :

And plead my tears, my struggles, and distraction :

Till three long wretched years confirm'd thee dead.

I cou'd, with justice, charge my faith renounc'd

On hatred of those gods, who sav'd not Zamor.

But I disclaim excuse,——to shun remission.

Love finds me guilty ; and that guilt condemns me.

Since thou art safe, no matter what I suffer.

When life has lost the joys that make it blest'd,

——The shortest liver is the happiest always.

Why dost thou view me with so kind an eye ?

Thou should'st look sternly, and retract all pity.

Zam. No---if I still am lov'd, thou art not guilty.

——Wishing me blest'd, methinks thou mak'st me so.

Alz. When, by my father urg'd, and by Alvarez,

And inly too impell'd, perhaps, to fate,

By some forsaken god, who meant revenge ;

When by the Christian's fears, and my touch'd heart,

At once beset, they dragg'd me to the temple,

Even in the moment when advancing Carlos

Sought

Sought my escaping hand, though I then thought thee
 Dead, and for ever lost to my fond hopes :
 Yet then, beneath the altar's sacred gloom,
 I bow'd my soul to Zamor : memory,
 Reliev'd me, with thy image.—Indians, Spaniards,
 All, all have heard, how ardently I lov'd thee,
 'Twas my heart's pride to boast it to the world !
 To earth, to heav'n,——to Carlos, I proclaim'd it !
 And now, e'en now, in this distressful moment,
 For the last time,——I tell thyself, I love thee.

Zam. For the last time ! Avert the menace, Heav'n !
 Art thou at once restor'd——and lost again !
 'Tis not love's language, this !——Alas, Alzira !

Alz. Oh, Heaven !——Alvarez comes, and with him
 Carlos.

Enter Don Alvarez, followed by Don Carlos.

Alv. See ! with Alzira there, my life's restorer !
 Approach ; young hero ! 'tis my son who seeks thee ;
 Spain's delegate, who here holds power supreme :
 My Carlos, bids thee share his bridal joy.
 ——Meet, and embrace : divide your father's love :
 My son, of nature, one——and one of choice.

Zam. Nam'd he not Carlos ?——Perish such a son,
 As the detested Carlos !

Alz. Heaven avert
 The rising tempest, that o'erwhelms my soul !

Alv. What means this wonder ?

Zam. 'Tis not possible !——
 No——I wou'd disbelieve attesting gods,
 Shou'd they, from heaven, assert this shock to nature ;
 That such a father——can——have such a son !

D. Car. [*To Zamor.*] Slave !——from what spring
 does thy blind fury rise ?
 Know'st thou not who I am ?

Zam. Thou art——a villain.
 My country's horror——and whole nature's shame !
 Among the scourges whom just Heaven has left thee,
 Know me, for Zamor.

D. Car. Thou, Zamor ?

Alv. Zamor !

Zam. Yes——the tortur'd Zamor.
 Blush'd to be told it ; and remember, with it,

The bloody rage of thy remorseless cruelty ;
 That basely dar'd insult a yielded captive !
 Now he returns——triumphant in distress,
 To look thee into shame : to see those eyes
 Fall their stretch'd fierceness, and decline before him.
 Thou waster of the world ! Thou licens'd robber !
 Thou whose last spoil was my Alzira's glory ?
 Win her against this sword : [*Draws.*]---the sole good
 Zamoran can boast he owes thy haughty country ! [gain,
 Now the same band, that gave the father life,
 Claims, in return, the son's devoted blood :
 And, so reveng'd, atones a dying realm.

Alv. Confounded and amaz'd, I hear him speak ;
 And every word grows stranger !——Carlos cannot
 Be guilty——or, if guilty, cannot answer.

D. Car. To answer, is a poorness I despise.
 Where rebels dare accuse, should power reply,
 'Twou'd but forget to punish.——With this sword,
 I might ; but that I know the reverence due
 To your protecting presence, well have answer'd.
 ---Madam, [*To Alzira.*] your heart shou'd have instructed
 Why you offend me, while I see you here. [you,
 If not my peace, at least your fame, demands
 That you now drive this outlaw from your thoughts.
 You weep then ! and insult me with your tears ?
 And yet I love, and can be jealous of you !

Alz. Cruel ! [*To Carlos.*] and you, [*To Alvarez.*] my
 father, and protector !

And thou ! [*To Zamor.*] my soul's past hope, in hap-
 pier times !

Mark---and condole my fate.——Mix your due pity :
 And tremble, at the horror of my woes.
 Behold this lover, which my father chose me,
 Before I knew there was a world, but ours.
 With his reported death our empire fell :
 And I have liv'd to see my father's throne
 O'erturn'd ; and all things chang'd in earth and heav'n !
 By every human help, alas, forsaken,
 At length, my father, from the Christian's God
 Sought help, and screen'd a state, behind his name.
 Compell'd before this unknown power, to kneel,
 A dreadful oath has bound my backward soul,



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The stretch'd battalions move, in martial justness.
 They hold such discipline, such order'd motion,
 As ne'er was known before to savage foes.
 As if from us they catch'd the lights of war,
 And turn'd the burning lessons on their teachers.

D. Car. Away then: let us think 'em worth our meet-
 ---Heroes of Spain! ye fav'rite sons of war! [ing.
 All corners of the world are yours to shine in.
 Help me to teach these slaves to know their masters.
 Bring him along by force.

Zam. Tyrant, they dare not.
 Or, are they gods, who cannot be repell'd?
 And proof against the wounds, they seek to give?

D. Car. Surround him.

Alz. Spare him, save him!

Alv. Son, be cool;
 And still remember what your father owes him.

D. Car. Sir, I remember, 'tis a soldier's duty
 To bear down opposition: so you taught me.

[Alonzo, and Spanish Soldiers, surround and seize Zamor.
 Your pardon, Sir,—I go, where honour calls me.

[Exit, with Zamor, and all the Spanish Soldiers.

Alz. [To Alv.] Low, at your feet, I fall; your vir-
 tue's claim.

'Tis the first homage fortune yet has taught me.
 Grant me the wish'd release of death's kind hand,
 From miseries, I cannot live to see.
 But, dying, let me leave this witness with you,
 That, true to my first vows, I change not lightly.
 Two different claimers cannot both possess
 One faithful heart, that can but once be given.
 Zamor is mine; and I am only Zamor's.
 Zamor is virtuous, as a fancied angel.

'Twas Zamor gaye his life, to good Alvarez!

Alv. I feel the pity of a father for thee.
 I mourn afflicted Zamor: I will guard him:
 I will protect you both, unhappy lovers!
 Yet, ah, be mindful of the marriage tie,
 That, but this morning, bound thy days to Carlos.
 Thou art no longer thine, my mournful daughter.
 Carlos has been too cruel; but repents it:
 And this once-cruel Carlos is thy husband.

He is my son too ; and he loves us both.
Pity soon softens hearts, where love has enter'd.

Alz. Ah, why did Heav'n not make you Zamor's father?

Greatness with sweetness join'd, like fire with light,
Each aiding other, mingle warm with bright.
What the kind wants, th' associate strong supplies,
And from the gentle, peace and calmness rise.

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

Don Alvarez and Don Carlos.

Shouts, Trumpets, a long and lofty flourish.

ALVAREZ.

DESERVE, my son, this triumph of your arms,
Your numbers, and your courage, have prevail'd ;
And of this last best effort of the foe,
Half are no more ; and half are yours, in chains.
Disgrace not due success, by undue cruelties :
But call in mercy, to support your fame.
I will go visit the afflicted captives,
And pour compassion on their aching wounds.
Mean while, remember, you are man and Christian.
Bravely, at once, resolve to pardon Zamor.
—Fain wou'd I soften this indocil fierceness :
And teach your courage how to conquer hearts.

D. Car. Your words pierce mine, — freely devote
But leave at liberty my just revenge. [my life,
Pardon him, — Why ! the savage brute is lov'd !

Alv. Th' unhappily belov'd most merit pity.

D. Car. Pity ! --- Cou'd I be sure of such reward,
I wou'd die pleas'd, — and she shou'd pity me.

Alv. How much to be lamented is a heart,
At once by rage of headlong will oppress'd,
And by strong jealousies and doubtings torn !

D. Car. When jealousy becomes a crime — Guard,
Heaven,

That husband's honour, whom his wife not loves !
Your pity takes in all the world —but me.

Alv. Mix not the bitterness of distant fear
With your arriv'd misfortunes.—Since Alzira
Has virtue, it will prove a wiser care
To soften her, for change, by patient tenderness,
Than, by reproach, confirm a willing hate.
Her heart is, like her country, rudely sweet :—
Repelling force, but gentle to be kind.
Softness will soonest bend the stubborn will.

D. Car. Softness !---by all the wrongs of woman's hate,
Too much of softness but invites disdain.
Flatter'd too long, beauty at length grows wanton,
And, insolently scornful, flights its praiser.
Oh, rather, Sir, be jealous for my glory ;
And urge my doubting anger to resolve.
Too low already, condescension how'd,
Nor blush'd, to match the conqu'ror with the slave !
But, when this slave, unconscious what she owes,
Proudly repays humility with scorn,
And braves, and hates the un aspiring love,
Such love is weakness :—and submission, there,
Gives sanction to contempt, and rivets pain.

Alv. Thus, youth is ever apt to judge in haste,
And lose the medium in the wild extreme.
Do not repent, but regulate, your passion :
Though love is reason, its excess is rage.
Give me, at least, your promise, to reflect,
In cool, impartial, solitude : and still,
No last decision, till we meet again.

D. Car. It is my father asks—and, had I will,
Nature denies me pow'r, to answer, No.
I will, in wisdom's right, suspend my anger.
—Yet—Spare my loaded heart :—nor add more weight ;
Lest my strength fail beneath th' unequal pressure.

Alv. Grant yourself time, and all you want comes with
it. [Exit.

D. Car. [Alone.] 'And——must I coldly then, to pen-
five piety,
Give up the livelier joys of wish'd revenge !
Must I repel the guardian cares of jealousy,
And slacken every rein, to rival love !

Must



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Yet---try what changes gratitude can make.
 A Spanish wife, perhaps, wou'd promise more :
 Profuse in charms, and prodigal of tears,
 Wou'd promise all things——and forget 'em all.
 But I have weaker charms, and simpler arts.
 Guileless of soul, and left as nature form'd me,
 I err, in honest innocence of aim,
 And, seeking to compose, inflame you more.
 All I can'add, is this :——Unlovely force
 Shall never bow me to reward constraint ;
 But---to what lengths I may be led, by benefits,
 'Tis in your pow'r to try : not mine to tell.

D. Car. 'Tis well.---Since justice has such 'pow'r to
 guide you,
 That you may follow duty, know it first.
 Count modesty among your country's virtues ;
 And copy, not condemn, the wives of Spain.
 'Tis your first lesson, Madam, to forget.
 ——Become more delicate, if not more kind,
 And never let me hear the name I hate.
 ---You shou'd learn, next, to blush away your haste,
 And wait in silence, till my will resolves
 What punishment, or pity, suits his crimes.
 — Know, last, that (thus provok'd) a husband's clemency
 Out-stretches nature, if it pardons you.
 Learn thence, ungrateful ! that I want not pity :
 And be the last to dare believe me cruel.

[*Exit Don Carlos.*

Em. Madam, be comforted ;——I mark'd him well ;
 I see, he loves ; and love will make him softer.

Alz. Love has no pow'r to act, when curb'd by jealousy.
 Zamor must die :——for I have ask'd his life.

Why did not I foresee the likely danger ?

--But has thy care been happier ?—Canst thou save him ?
 Far, far, divided from me, may he live !

——Hast thou made trial of his keeper's faith ?

Em. Gold, that with Spaniards, can outweigh their
 God,

Has bought his hand :—and, so his faith's your own.

Alz. Then Heav'n be bless'd, this metal, form'd for
 Sometimes atones the wrongs 'tis dug to cause ! [crimes,
 —But, we lose time :—Why dost thou seem to pause ?

Em.

Em. I cannot think they purpose Zamor's death.
Alvarez has not lost his pow'r so far,
Nor can the council——

Alz. They are Spaniards all.
Mark the proud, partial guilt of these vain men:
Ours, but a country held to yield them slaves:
Who reign o'er kings, by right of different clime,
Zamor, mean while, by birth, true sovereign here,
Weighs but a rebel in their righteous scale.
Oh, civiliz'd assent of social murder!—
But why, Emira, should this soldier stay?

Em. We may expect him instantly. The night,
Methinks, grown darker, veils your bold design.
Wearied by slaughter, and unwash'd from blood,
The world's proud spoilers, all lie hush'd in sleep.

Alz. Away, and find this Spaniard. Guilt's bought
Opening the prison, innocence goes free. [hand

Em. See! by Cephania led, he comes with Zamor.
Be cautious, Madam, at so dark an hour,
Lest, met, suspected honour should be lost;
And modesty, mistaken, suffer shame.

Alz. What does thy ill-taught fear mistake for shame?
Virtue, at midnight, walks as safe within,
As in the conscious glare of flaming day.
She who in forms finds virtue, has no virtue.
All the shame lies in hiding honest love.
Honour, the alien phantom, here unknown,
Lends but a length'ning shade to setting virtue.
Honour's not love of innocence, but praise;
The fear of censure, not the scorn of sin.
But I was taught, in a sincerer clime,
That Virtue, tho' it shines not, still is virtue;
And inbred honour grows not, but at home.
This my heart knows; and, knowing, bids me dare,
Should Heav'n forsake the just, be bold and save him.

Enter Zamor, with Cephania, and a Spanish Soldier.
Ah, fly! thy hopes are lost; thy torturer's ready.
Escape this moment, or thou stay'st to die.
Haste—lose no time—begone: this guardian Spaniard
Will teach thee to deceive the murderer's hope.
Reply not; judge thy fate from my despair;
Save, by thy flight, the man I love from death;

The man whom I have sworn t' obey, from blood ;
 And a lost world, that knows thy worth, from tears.
 Thy country calls thee ; night conceals thy steps.
 Pity thy fate, and leave me to my own.

Zam. Thou robber's property ! Thou Christian's wife !
 Thou, who dar'st love me, yet dar'st bid me live !
 If I must live, come thou, to make life tempting.
 But 'twas a cruel wish—How could I shield thee,
 Stript of my power and friends, and nothing left me,
 But wrongs and misery ?—I have no dower
 To tempt reluctant love. All thou canst share
 With me, will be—my desert—and my heart.
 When I had more, I laid it at thy feet.

Alz. Ah, what are crowns that must no more be thine ?
 I lov'd not power, but thee ; thyself once lost,
 What has an empty world to tempt my stay ?
 Far in the depth of thy sad deserts, trac'd,
 My heart will seek thee ; Fancy, there, misleads
 My weary, wand'ring steps ; there horror finds,
 And preys upon my solitude ; there leaves me,
 To languish life out in unheard complaints ;
 To waste and wither in the tearless winds ;
 And die with shame at breach of plighted faith,
 For being only thine—and yet another's.
 Go, carry with thee both my peace and life,
 And leave—Ah, would thou couldst !—thy sorrows here.
 I have my lover and my fame to guard,
 And I will save them both—Begone—for ever.

Zam. I hate this fame, false avaice of fancy ;
 The sickly shade of an unsolid greatness ;
 The lying lure of pride, that Europe cheats by :
 Perish the groundless seemings of their virtue !
 But shall forc'd oaths at hated Christians' altars,
 Shall gods, who rob the gods of our forefathers,
 Shall these obtrude a lord, and blast a lover ?

Alz. Since it was sworn, or to your gods or theirs,
 What help is left me ?

Zam. None—Adieu—for ever.

Alz. Stay—What a farewell this ?—Return, [Going.
 I charge thee.

Zam. Carlos, perhaps, will hear thee.

Alz. [Returning.] Ah, pity, rather
 Than thus upbraid my wretchedness !



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Vanquish'd and victors are alike to thee ;
 And all our vain distinctions mix before thee.
 Ah, what foreboding shriek !—Again ! and louder !
 Oh, heav'n ! amidst the wildness of that sound,
 I heard the name of Zamor !—Zamor's lost—
 Hark !—a third time !—And now the mingled cries
 Come quick'ning on my ear !

Enter Emira, frightened.

Emira, save me !

What has he done ?—In pity of my fears,
 Speak, and bestow some comfort.

Em. Comfort is lost :

And all the rage of death has sure possess'd him.
 First, he chang'd habits with the trembling soldier :
 Then snatch'd his weapon from him—The robb'd wretch
 Flew, frightened, toward the gate—while furious Zamor,
 Wild, as the fighting rage of wint'ry winds,
 Rush'd to the public hall, where sits the council.
 Following, I saw him pass the sleeping guards ;
 But lost him when he enter'd. In a moment,
 I heard the sound of voices cry, He's dead.
 Then, clam'rous calls from ev'ry way at once,
 To arms, To arms !—Ah, Madam, stay not here !
 Fly to the inmost rooms, and shun the danger.

Alz. No, dear Elmira ; rather let us try,
 Whether our weakness may not find some means,
 Late and unlikely as it is, to save him.
 I, too, dare die.

Em. They come—Protect us, Heaven !

Enter Don Alonzo.

Alon. Madam, you stir no farther—I have orders
 To seize your person. 'Tis a charge unwish'd.

Alz. Whence dost thou come ? What fury sent thee
 What is become of Zamor ? [hither ?

Alon. At a time
 So full of danger, my respect gives way
 To duty.—You must please to follow me.

Alz. Oh, Fortune, Fortune !—This is too severe !
 Zamor is dead, and I am only captive !
 Why dost thou weep ? What have a Spaniard's tears
 To do with woes, which none but Spaniards cause ?

Come ;

Come; if to death thou lead'st me, 'twill be kind :
There only, weakness wrong'd, can refuge find.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

Alzira, guarded.

ALZIRA.

AM I to die? Answer, ye dumb destroyers!
Ye wretches, who provoke, yet mock at Heaven;
And when you mean to murder, say you judge!
Why does your brutal silence leave my soul
Flutt'ring, 'twixt hope and fear; in torturing doubt?
Why am I not inform'd of Zainor's fate?
They will not speak—No matter—She who hopes
To hear no good, why should she hear at all?
The conduct of these watchful mutes is strange.
They seize me, guard me, and confine me here;
Yet answer nothing, but with looks of hate.
Chancing, but now, to sigh my Zamor's name,
Ev'n these low monsters, struck with Spanish envy,
Started, turn'd pale, and trembled at the sound,

Enter Ezmont.

Alas!—my father, too!

Ezm. To what dark depth
Of sad despair, hast thou reduc'd us all?
See now, the fruits of thy unlist'ning love!
Even in the instant, while, with growing hope,
We pleaded earnest for the life of Zamor;
While we yet hung on the half-granted prayer;
An ent'ring soldier drew our notice toward him.
'Twas Zamor—dreadful, in a borrow'd dress!
At once he hurl'd his furious eyes amongst us,
And his more furious person. Scarce I saw,
So rapid was his motion, that his hand
Held a drawn sword. To enter, reach our seats,
And, lion-like, spring to the breast of Carlos;
Th' assault, the wound, the death, was all one moment.
Out gush'd your husband's blood, to stain your father,

As

As if 'twould lend me blushes for a daughter.
 Zamor, mean while, the dreadful action done,
 Soft'ning to sudden calmness, at the feet
 Of sad Alvarez fell, and to his hand
 Resign'd the sword, which his son's blood made horrid.
 The father started into back'ning terror !
 The murd'rer dash'd his bosom to the ground ;
 I but reveng'd (he cry'd) my wrongs and shame ;
 I but my duty knew—Know you your own.
 Nature your motive, and oppression mine.
 He said no more ; but, prostrate, hop'd his doom.
 Th' afflicted father sunk upon my bosom ;
 The silent night grew frightful with our cries.
 From ev'ry side at once in broke the swarms ;
 A flow of fruitless help surrounded Carlos,
 To stop th' out-welling blood, and hold back life.
 But what most shakes me, tho' tis told thee last,
 Is, that they think thee guilty of his death ;
 And, insolently loud, demand thy own.

Alz. Ah!—can you—

Exm. No. Impossible. I cannot.

I know thy heart too well to wrong thee so.
 I know thee too, too capable of weakness ;
 But not of purpos'd blood. I saw this danger ;
 But thy own eyes, even on the brink of fate,
 Were blinded by thy love, and thou art fall'n.
 Thy husband murder'd by thy lover's hand ;
 The council that accuses, will condemn thee,
 And ignominious death becomes thy doom.
 I came to warn thee, and prepare thy spirit.
 Now, hast'ning back, try every hope for pardon ;
 Or, failing to redeem thee, share thy death.

Alz. My pardon!—Pardon at these wretches hands !
 The prince my father stoop his prayers to them !
 Death, if it hides me from that thought, is rapture.
 Ah, Sir, live on ! hope still some happier day,
 To pay back all these pangs, and bless Peru ;
 Wait that due day, and love the lost Alzira :
 'Tis all the prayer she makes, and all she wishes.
 I pity dying Carlos ; for I find
 His fate too cruel ; and I mourn it deeper,
 Thro' fear he has deserv'd it. As for Zamor,
 Whose rashness has reveng'd a country's wrongs,

Urg'd



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For this sole blow, that could have broke my chain.
 Think that this period of suppos'd distress,
 This moment, that unites us, tho' in death,
 Is the first time my love was free from woe.

The smiling fate restores me to myself ;

And I can give a heart, now all my own.

If there's a cause for tears, Alvarez claims 'em :

I while he speaks our doom, shall feel but his. [rand.

Zam. See where the mourner comes, and weeps his er-

Enter Alvarez.

Alv. Which of us three, does fortune most distress ?

What an assemblage ours, of mingled woes ?

Zam. Since Heaven will have it so, that, from thy
 I should receive Death's summons, let it come : [tongue,
 'Twill have one power to please—for I shall hear thee.

Do not then pity, but condemn me boldly ;

And, if thy heart, tho' Spanish, bends beneath it,

Think thou but doom'st an unsubmitting savage,

Who kill'd thy son, because unlike his father.

But what has poor Alzira done against thee ?

Why must she die in whom a people lives ;

In whom alone glows that collected soul,

That, in past ages, brighten'd all Peru ?

Is innocence a crime where Spaniards judge ?

Known, and assum'd by us, for all thy virtues,

'The jealous envy of thy land reclaims thee,

And crops thy Indian growth, to creep like Spain.

Alz. Wond'rous old virtue ! obstinately kind !

Thou, singly just, amidst a race of thieves !

'Twere to be base as they are, could I stoop

To deprecate a vengeance duly thine.

For thy son's blood be mine the willing sacrifice.

All I require is but escape from slander ;

From poor suspicion of a guilt I scorn.

Carlos, tho' hated, was a hated husband ;

Whence, even my hatred ow'd his life defence.

He was Alvarez' son too ; and, as such,

Call'd for that rev'ence which himself deserv'd not.

As for thy nation, let them praise or blame me ;

Thy witness only can be worth my claim.

As for my death, 'tis joy to die with Zamor :

And all the pain I suffer—is for thee.

Alv. Words will have way; or grief, suppress'd in vain,
 Would burst its passage with th' out-rushing soul.
 Whose sorrows ever match'd this mingled scene
 Of tenderness with horror? My son's murderer
 Is Zamor: he who guarded me from murder,
 Is also Zamor. Hold that image fast,
 Afflicted nature. Life, unwish'd by me
 Is due to Zamor. Young, belov'd, untry'd
 In hope's false failings, life might make him happy.
 My taste of time is gone; and life, to me,
 Is but an evening's walk in rain and darkness.
 Father I am (at least I was a father);
 But every father first was form'd a man:
 And, spite of nature's cail, that cries for vengeance,
 The voice of gratitude must still be heard.
 Oh, thou, so late my daughter! thou, whom yet,
 Spite of these tears, I call by that lov'd name!
 Mistake not my pursuit. I cannot taste
 Those horrible reliefs that rise from blood.
 It shocks me thro' a soul that feels for three.
 Hard stroke of justice! thus to lose at once,
 My daughter, my deliverer, and my son.
 The council, with misguided view to sooth me,
 Ill chose my tongue to tell their dreadful will.
 True, I receiv'd the charge; for I had weigh'd it.
 'Twere not impossible, perhaps, to save you:
 Zamor might make it easy.

Zam. Can I do it?

Can Zamor save Alzira? Quickly tell me
 How, by what length of torments, and 'tis done?

Alv. Cast off thy idol gods, and be a Christian:
 That single change reverses all our fates.
 Kind to the courted souls of Pagan converts,
 We have a law remits their body's doom.
 This latent law, by Heaven's peculiar mercy,
 Points out a road, and gives a right to pardon.
 Religion can disarm a Christian's anger.
 Thy blood becomes a brother's, so converted,
 And with a living son repays a dead.
 Prevented vengeance, seiz'd in her descent,
 So rests suspended, and forgets to fall.
 From thy new faith, Alzira draws new life;

And both are happy here, and fav'd hereafter.

Why art thou silent? Is the task so hard,

To add eternal life, to life below?

Speak——from thy choice, determine my relief,

Fain wou'd I owe thee yet a second being.

Yes——to restore the life thou robb'ft me of,

A childless father wishes thee to live.

Alzira is a Christian; be thou so.

'Tis all the recompence my wrongs will urge.

Zam. [*To Alzira.*] Shall we, thou fairest, noblest
boast of beauty!

Shall we so far indulge our fear to die?

Shall the soul's baseness bid the body live?

Shall Zamor's gods bow to the gods of Carlos?

Why wou'd Alvarez bend me down to shame?

Why wou'd he thus become the spirit's tyrant?

Into how strange a snare am I impell'd!

Either Alzira dies, or lives to scorn me!

Tell me——When fortune gave thee to my power,

Had I, at such a purchase, held thy life,

Tell me, with honest truth---wou'd thou have bought it?

Alv. I shou'd have pray'd the power, I now implore,

To widen, for his truth, a heart like thine:

Dark as it is, yet worthy to be Christian.

Zam. [*To Alzira.*] Death has no pain, but what I
feel for thee.

Life has no power to charm, but what thou giv'ft it.

Thou, then, art my soul, vouchsafe to guide it.

But, think!---remember, ere thou bid'ft me chuse!

'Tis on a matter of more weight than life;

'Tis on a subject that concerns my gods:

And all those gods in one——my dear Alzira!

I-trust it to thy honour——Speak——and fix me.

If thou conceiv'ft it shame, thou wilt disdain it.

Alz. Then, hear me, Zamor,---My unhappy father

Dispos'd my willing heart, 'twixt heaven and thee:

The God, he chose, was mine:---thou may'ft, perhaps,

Accuse it, as the weakness of my youth:

But, 'twas not so. My soul, enlarg'd, and clear,

Took in the solemn light of Christian truth.

I saw——at least, I thought I saw, conviction.

And, when my lips abjur'd my country's gods,

My



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I shou'd, in life, have given thy pride example :
Take it, too late, in death ; and mark it well.

[*To Alv.*] Sir, my departing spirit staid its journey,
First, 'till my eyes might leave their beams in yours ;
And their dim lights expire, amidst your blessing.
Next, what you taught me, 'tis my task to show,
And die the son of your paternal virtue.

——Eager in life's warm race, I never stopp'd
To look behind me, and review my way.

But, at the goal, before I judg'd it near ;

I start——and recollect forgotten slidings.

On the grave's serious verge, I turn——and see
Humanity oppress'd, to cherish pride :

Heaven has reveng'd the earth :—and Heav'n is just !

Cou'd my own blood but expiate what I shed,

All my rash sword has drawn from suff'ring innocence,
I shou'd lie down in dust——and rest in peace.

Cheated by prosp'rous fortune, death deals plainly ;

But——I have learnt to live, when life forlakes me.

Safe and forgiven, be the hand I fall by.

Power is yet mine ; and it absolves my murder.

Live, my proud enemy ; and live in freedom.

Live——and observe, tho' Christians oft act ill,

They must forgive ill actions in another.

—Ezmont, my friend ! and you, ye friendless Indians !

Subjects, not slaves ! be rul'd henceforth by law.

Be grateful to my pity, though 'twas late ;

And teach your country's kings to fear no longer.

—Rival, learn hence the diff'rence 'twixt our gods ;

Thine have inspir'd thee to pursue revenge :

But mine, when that revenge had reach my life,

Command me to esteem, and give thee pardon.

Alv. Virtues like these, my son, secure thy peace :
But double the distress of us who lose thee.

Alz. Of all the painful wonders thou hast caus'd me,
This change, this language, will afflict me most !

Zam. Die soon, or live for ever.—If thou thus

Go'st on, to charm my anger into envy,

I shall repent, I was not born a Christian,

And hate the justice that compell'd my blow !

D. Car. I will go farther yet ;—I will not leave thee,
Till I have soften'd envy into friendship.

—My

—Mournful Alzira has been too unhappy :
 Lov'd to distrefs, and married to misfortune !
 I wou'd do fometh'g to atone her wrongs ;
 And with a fofter fenfe, imprint her pity.
 Take her ——— and owe her to the hand ſhe hates.
 Live ——— and remember me without a curſe.
 Refume loſt empire o'er your conquer'd ſtates :
 Be friends to Spain :—nor enemies to me.
 [*To Alvarez.*]—Vouchſafe my claim, Sir, to this fon,
 this daughter :

And be both father and protector too.
 May Heaven and you be kind ! and they be Chriſtians !

Zam. I ſtand immoveable—confus'd—astonish'd
 If theſe are Chriſtian virtues, I am Chriſtian.
 The faith that can inſpire this gen'rous change,
 Muſt be divine, ——— and glows with all its God !
 ———Friendſhip, and conſtancy, and right, and pity,
 All theſe were leſſons I had learnt before.

But this unnatural grandeur of the ſoul
 Is more than mortal ; and out reaches virtue.
 It draws—it charms—it binds me to be Chriſtian.
 It bids me bluſh at my remember'd raſhneſs :
 Curſe my revenge———and pay thee all my love.

[*Throws himſelf at his feet.*]

Alx. A widow'd wife, bluſhing to be thus late,
 In her acknowledgment of tender pity ;
 Low, at your injur'd feet, with proſtrate heart,

[*Kneels with Zamor.*]

Weeps your untimely death ; and thanks your goodneſs.
 ———Torn by contending paſſions, I want power
 To ſpeak a thouſand truths, I ſee you merit :
 But honour and confeſs your greatneſs wrong'd.

D. Car. Weep not, Alzira—I forgive again.
 —For the laſt time, my father, lend your boſom.
 Live to be bleſs'd !—and make Alzira ſo !

Remember, Zamor—that a Chriſtian—Oh ! [Dies.]

Alv. [*To Ezmont.*] I ſee the hand of Heaven in our
 miſfortune.

But juſtice ſtrikes ; and ſuff'ers muſt ſubmit.

Woes are good counſellors ; and kindly ſhow,
 What proſp'rous error never lets us know.

END of the FIFTH ACT.

E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by ALZIRA.

THE Fifth Act pass'd, you'll think it strange to find
 My scene of deep distress is yet behind.
 Task'd for the epilogue, I fear you'll blame
 My want—of what you love, behind that name.
 But, for my soul, I can't, from such high scening,
 Descend, plum down at once—to double-meaning.
 Judges! protect me—and pronounce it fit,
 That solemn sense, shou'd end with serious wit.
 When the full heart o'erflows with pleasing pain,
 Why should we wish to make th' impression vain?
 Why, when two thinking hours have fix'd the play,
 Shou'd two light minutes, laugh its use away?
 'Twere to proclaim our virtues but a jest,
 Should they who ridicule 'em, please us best.
 No—rather, at your actor's hands require
 Off'rings more apt; and a sublimer fire!
 Thoughts that may rivet, not efface, the scene:
 Aids to the mind; not flatteries for the spleen.
 When love, hate, pity,—doubt, hope, grief, and rage,
 With clashing influence, fire the glowing stage;
 When the touch'd heart, relenting into woe,
 From others fate, does its own danger know:
 When soft'ning tenderness unlocks the mind,
 And the stretch'd bosom takes in all mankind:
 Sure, 'tis no time, for the bold hand of wit
 To snatch back virtues from the plunder'd pit.
 Still be it ours, to give you scenes thus strong,
 And yours to cherish, and retain 'em long!
 Then shall the stage its general use endear;
 And every virtue gather firmness here.
 Pow'r be to pardon,—wealth to pity mov'd;
 And truth be taught the art, to grow believ'd:
 Women to charm, with fast and sure effect;
 And men to love 'em with a soft respect.
 Till all alike, some diff'rent motive rouses;
 And tragedy, unforc'd, invites full houses.



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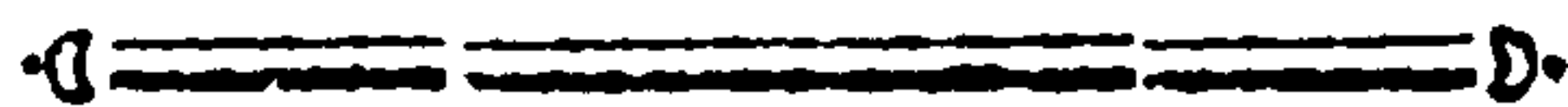
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Published for Bells British Theatre March 1st 1777

Ja^s. Roberts sculp.

*M^{rs} BARRY in the Character of PHEDRA.
Now, all ye kindred Gods, look down and see
How I'll revenge you, and myself on Phædra.*

BELL'S EDITION.



PHÆDRA & HIPPOLITUS.

A TRAGEDY.

As written by Mr. EDMUND SMITH.

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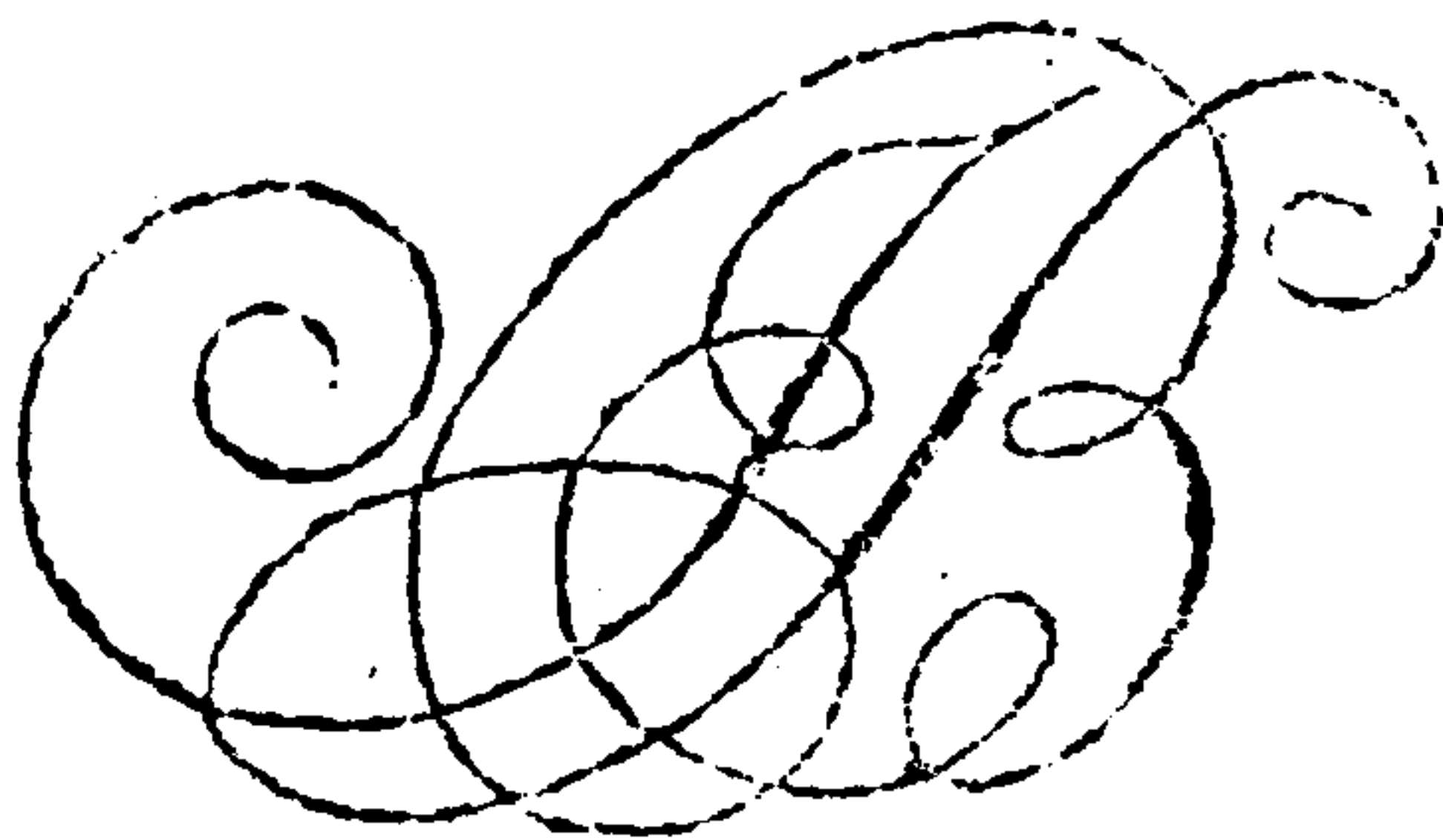
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Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. WILD, Prompter.



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relish the politeness of the English; that the poets at home adorn that court, which they formerly used only to divert; that abroad they travel, in a manner very unlike their predecessor, Homer, and with an equipage he could not bestow, even on the heroes he designed to immortalize.

And this, my Lord, shews your knowledge of men, as well as writings, and your judgment no less than your generosity; you have distinguished between those, who, by their inclinations or abilities were qualified for the pleasure only, and those that were fit for the service of your country; you made the one easy, and the other useful: you have left the one no occasion to wish for any preferment, and you have obliged the public by the promotion of the others.

And now, my Lord, it may seem odd that I should dwell on the topic of your bounty only, when I might enlarge on so many others; when I ought to take notice of that illustrious family from which you are sprung, and yet of the great merit which was necessary to set you on a level with it, and to raise you to that house of peers, which was already filled with your relations; when I ought to consider the brightness of your wit in private conversation, and the solidity of your eloquence in public debates; when I ought to admire in you the politeness of a courtier, and the sincerity of a friend; the openness of behaviour, which charms all who address themselves to you; and yet that hidden reserve, which is necessary for those great affairs in which you are concerned.

To pass over all these great qualities, my Lord, and insist only on your generosity, looks as if I solicited it for myself; but to that I quitted all manner of claim, when I took notice of your Lordship's great judgment in the choice of those you advance; so that all, at present, my ambition aspires to is, that your Lordship would be pleased to pardon this presumption, and permit me to profess myself, with the most profound respect,

Your Lordship's most humble,

And most obedient servant,

EDM. SMITH.

P R O.

P R O L O G U E.

Written by Mr. ADDISON.

LONG has a race of heroes fill'd the stage,
That rant by note, and thro' the gamut rage :
In songs and airs express their martial fire,
Combat in trills, and in a feuge expire ;
While, lull'd by sound, and undisturb'd by wit,
Calm and serene you indolently sit ;
And from the dull fatigue of thinking free,
Hear the facetious fiddles repartee :
Our homespun authors must forsake the field,
And Shakespear to the soft Scarlatti yield.
To your new taste the poet of this day,
Was by a friend advis'd to form his play :
Had Valentini, musically coy,
Shunn'd Phædra's arms, and scorn'd the proffer'd joy,
It had not mov'd your wonder to have seen
An eunuch fly from an enamour'd queen :
How would it please, should she in English speak,
And could Hippolitus reply in Greek ?
But he, a stranger to your modish way,
By your old rules must stand or fall to-day ;
And hopes you will your foreign taste command,
To bear, for once, with what you understand.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

Covent-Garden.

<i>Theseus</i> , King of Crete,	—	Mr. Barry.
<i>Hippolitus</i> , his son, in love with <i>Ismena</i> ,		Mr. Lewis.
<i>Lycon</i> , minister of state,	—	Mr. Lee.
<i>Cratander</i> , captain of the guards,		Mr. Aickin.

W O M E N.

<i>Phædra</i> , Theseus's queen, in love with		
<i>Hippolitus</i> ,	—	— Mrs. Barry.
<i>Ismena</i> , a captive princess, in love with		
<i>Hippolitus</i> .	—	— Mrs. Bulkley.

Guards, Attendants.



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8 PHÆDRA AND HIPPOLITUS.

Why, when a happy mother, queen and widow,
 Why did she wed old Theseus, while his son,
 The brave Hippolitus, with equal youth,
 And equal beauty, might have fill'd her arms?

Lyc. Hippolitus, (in distant Scythia born,
 The warlike Amazon, Camilla's son)
 Till our queen's marriage, was unknown to Crete:
 And sure the queen could wish him still unknown:
 She loaths, detests him, flies his hated presence,
 And shrinks and trembles at his very name.

Crat. Well may she hate the prince she needs must fear:
 He may dispute the crown with Phædra's son.
 He's brave, he's fiery, youthful, and beloved;
 His courage charms the men, his form the women;
 His very sports are war.

Lyc. Oh, he's all hero! scorns th' inglorious case
 Of lazy Crete; delights to shine in arms,
 To wield the sword, and launch the pointed spear;
 To tame the gen'rous horse, that, nobly wild,
 Neighs on the hills, and dares the angry lion;
 ' To join the struggling coursers to his chariot,
 ' To make their stubborn necks the rein obey,
 ' To turn, or stop, or stretch along the plain.'
 Now the queen's sick, there's danger in his courage—
He must be watch'd.

Be ready with your guards—I fear Hippolitus.

[*Exit Crat.*

Fear him! for what? Poor, silly, virtuous wretch!
 Affecting glory, and contemning power;
 Warm without pride, without ambition brave;
 A senseless hero, fit to be a tool
 To those whose godlike souls are turn'd for empire.
 An open, honest tool, that loves and hates,
 And yet more fool to own it. He hates flatterers;
 He hates me too: weak boy, to make a foe,
 Where he might have a slave. I hate him too;
 But cringe and flatter, fawn, adore, yet hate him.
 Let the queen live or die, the prince must fall.

Enter Ismena.

What, still attending on the queen, Ismena?
 Oh, charming virgin! Oh, exalted virtue!
 Can still your goodness conquer all your wrongs?

Are

Are you not robb'd of your Athenian crown ?
 Was not your royal father, Pallas, slain,
 And all his wretched race, by conqu'ring Theseus ?
 And do you still watch o'er his consort, Phædra ?
 And still repay such cruelty with love ?

Ism. Let them be cruel that delight in mischief :
 I'm of a softer mold. Poor Phædra's sorrows
 Pierce thro' my yielding heart, and wound my soul.

Lyc. Now thrice the rising sun has cheer'd the world,
 Since she renew'd her strength with due refreshment ;
 Thrice has the night brought ease to man, to beast,
 Since wretched Phædra clos'd her streaming eyes :

‘ She flies all rest, all necessary food,
 ‘ Resolv'd to die, nor capable to live.’

Ism. But now her grief has wrought her into frenzy ;
 The images her troubled fancy forms
 Are incoherent, wild ; her words disjointed :
 Sometimes she raves for music, light and air ;
 Nor air, nor light, nor music calm her pains :
 Then with extatic strength she springs aloft,
 And moves and bounds with vigour not her own.

Lyc. Then life is on the wing ; then most she sinks,
 When most she seems reviv'd. Like boiling water,
 That foams and hisses o'er the crackling wood,
 And bubbles to the brim ; ev'n then most wasting,
 When most it swells.

Ism. My lord, now try your art ;
 Her wild disorder may disclose the secret
 Her cooler sense conceal'd ; ‘ the Pythian goddess
 ‘ Is dumb and fullen, till, with fury fill'd,
 ‘ She spreads, she rises, growing to the sight,
 ‘ She stares, she foams, she raves ; the awful secrets
 ‘ Burst from her trembling lips, and ease the tortur'd
 maid.’

But Phædra comes ; ye gods, how pale, how weak !

Enter Phædra and Attendants.

Phæd. Stay, virgins, stay ; I'll rest my weary steps.
 My strength forsakes me, and my dazzled eyes
 Ake with the flashing light ; my loosen'd knees
 Sink under their dull weight. Support me, Lycon.
 Alas, I faint !

Lyc. Afford her ease, kind Heav'n ! [head ?

Phæd. Why blaze these jewels round my wretched
 ‘ Why

‘ Why all this labour’d elegance of dress ?

‘ Why flow these wanton curls in artful rings ?’

Take, snatch them hence. Alas ! you all conspire

To heap new sorrows on my tortur’d soul :

All, all conspire to make your queen unhappy.

Lady. This you requir’d, and to the pleasing task

Call’d your officious maids, and urg’d their art ;

You bid them lead you from yon hideous darkness,

To the glad chearing day ; yet now avoid it,

And hate the light you sought.

Phæd. Oh, my Lycon !

Oh, how I long to lay my weary head

On tender flow’ry beds, and springing grass !

To stretch my limbs beneath the spreading shades

Of venerable oaks ; to slake my thirst

With the cool nectar of refreshing springs.

Lyc. I’ll sooth her frenzy. Come, Phædra, let’s away ;

Let’s to the woods, and lawns, and limpid streams.

Phæd. Come, let’s away ; and thou, most bright Diana,

Goddess of woods, immortal, chaste Diana,

‘ Goddess presiding o’er the rapid race,’

Place me, Oh, place me in the dusty ring,

Where youthful charioteers contend for glory !

See how they mount, and shake the flowing reins ;

See from the goal the fiery coursers bound ;

Now they strain panting up the steepy hill,

Now sweep along its top, now neigh along the vale ;

How the car rattles, how its kindling wheels

Smoke in the whirl ! the circling sand ascends,

And in the noble dust the chariot’s lost.

Lyc. What, Madam ?

Phæd. Ah, my Lycon ! Ah ! what said I ?

Where was I hurry’d by my roving fancy ?

My languid eyes are wet with sudden tears,

And on my cheeks unbidden blushes glow.

Lyc. Then blush ; but blush for your destructive silence,

That tears your soul, and weighs you down to death.

Oh, should you die ! (ye pow’rs forbid her death !)

Who then would shield from wrongs your helpless orphan ?

He then might wander, Phædra’s son might wander,

A naked suppliant, thro’ the world, for aid.

‘ Then he may cry, invoke his mother’s name :

‘ He



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Phæd. Do not upbraid me, Lycon.

I love——Alas, I shudder at the name!

My blood runs backward, and my fault'ring tongue

Sticks at the fount——I love——Oh, righteous Heav'n!

Why was I born with such a sense of virtue,

So great abhorrence of the smallest crime,

And yet a slave to such impetuous guilt?

Rain on me, gods, your plagues, your sharpest tortures

Afflict my soul with any thing but guilt;

And yet that guilt is mine——I'll think no more;

I'll to the woods among the happier brutes.

Come, let's away; hark, the shrill horn resounds;

The jolly huntsmen's cries rend the wide heav'ns.

Come, o'er the hills pursue the bounding stag;

Come, chase the lion and the foamy boar;

Come, rouse up all the monsters of the wood;

For there, ev'n there, Hippolitus will guard me.

Lyc. Hippolitus!

Phæd. Who's he that names Hippolitus?

Ah, I'm betray'd, and all my guilt discover'd!

' Oh, give me poison, swords! I'll not live, nor bear it;

' I'll stop my breath.

' *Ism.* I'm lost; but what's that loss?

' Hippolitus is lost, or lost to me.

' Yet should her charms prevail upon his soul;

' Should he be false, I would not wish him ill;

' With my last parting breath I'd bless my lord;

' Then in some lonely desert place expire,

' Whence my unhappy death shall never reach him,

' Lest it should wound his peace, or damp his joys. [*Aside.*]

Lyc. Think still the secret in your royal breast;

For, by the awful majesty of Jove,

By the all-seeing sun, by righteous Minos,

By all your kindred gods, we swear, Oh, Phædra!

Safe as our lives we'll keep the fatal secret.

' *Ism. &c.* We swear, all swear, to keep it ever secret.'

Phæd. Keep it! from whom? Why it's already known;

The tale, the whisper of the babbling vulgar.

Oh, can you keep it from yourselves; unknow it?

Or do you think I'm so far gone in guilt,

That I can see, can bear the looks, the eyes

Of one who knows my black detested crimes;

Of one who knows that Phædra loves her son?

Lyc.

Lyc. Unhappy queen ! august, unhappy race !
 Oh, why did Theseus touch this fatal shore ?
 Why did he save us from Nicander's arms,
 To bring worse ruin on us by his love ?

Phæd. His love indeed ; for that unhappy hour
 In which the priests join'd Theseus' hand to mine,
 Shew'd the young Scythian to my dazzled eyes.
 Gods ! how I shook ! what boiling heat inflam'd
 My panting breast ! how from the touch of Theseus
 My slack hand dropp'd, and all the idle pomp,
 Priests, altars, victims, swam before my light !
 The god of Love, ev'n the whole god, possess'd me.

Lyc. At once, at first possess'd you !

Phæd. Yes, at first.

That fatal ev'ning we pursu'd the chase,
 When from behind the wood, with rustling sound,
 A monstrous boar rush'd forth : ' his baleful eyes
 ' Shot glaring fire, and his stiff-pointed bristles
 ' Rose high upon his back : ' at me he made,
 Whetting his tusks, and churning hideous foam ;
 Then, then Hippolitus flew in to aid me :
 Collecting all himself, and rising to the blow,
 He launch'd the whistling spear ; the well-aim'd jav'lin
 Pierc'd his tough hide, and quiver'd in his heart ;
 The monster fell, ' and gnashing with huge tusks,
 ' Plow'd up the crimson earth.' But then Hippolitus !
 Gods ! how he mov'd and look'd, when he approach'd
 me !

' When hot and panting from the savage conquest,
 ' Dreadful as Mars, and as his Venus lovely,
 ' His crimson cheeks with purple beauties glow'd,
 ' His lovely sparkling eyes shot martial fires.'

Oh, godlike form ! Oh, extacy and transport !

My breath grew short, my beating heart sprung upward,
 And leap'd and bounded in my heaving bosom.

Alas, I'm pleas'd ; the horrid story charms me.—

No more—That night with fear and love I sicken'd.

Oft I receiv'd his fatal charming visits ;

Then would he talk with such an heav'nly grace,

Look with such dear compassion on my pains,

That I could wish to be so sick for ever.

My ears, my greedy eyes, my thirsty soul,

Drank gorging in the dear delicious poison,
 'Till I was lost; quite lost in impious love.

' And shall I drag an execrable life ?

' And shall I hoard up guilt, and treasure vengeance ?

' *Lyc.* No ; labour, strive, subdue that guilt, and live.

' *Phæd.* Did I not labour, strive, all-seeing pow'rs !

' Did I not weep and pray, implore your aid ?

' Burn clouds of incense on your loaded altars ?

' Oh, I call'd heav'n and earth to my assistance,

' All the ambitious thirst of fame and empire,

' And all the honest pride of conscious virtue :

' I struggled, rav'd ; the new-born passion reign'd

' Almighty in its birth.'

Lyc. Did you e'er try

To gain his love ?

Phæd. Avert such crimes, ye pow'rs !

' No ; to avoid his love I fought his hatred :

' I wrong'd him, shunn'd him, banish'd him from Crete ;

' I sent him, drov'e him, from my longing sight :

' In vain I drove him, for his tyrant form

' Reign'd in my heart, and dwelt before my eyes.

' If to the gods I play'd, the very vows

' I made to heav'n were by my erring tongue

' Spoke to Hippolitus. If I try'd to sleep,

' Straight to my drowsy eyes my restless tancy

' Brought back his fatal form, and curs'd my slumber.]

' *Lyc.* First let me try to melt him into love.'

Phæd. No ; did his hapless passion equal mine,

I would refuse the bliss I most desir'd,

Consult my fame, and sacrifice my life.

Yes, I would die, heav'n knows, this very moment,

Rather than wrong my lord, my husband Theseus.

Lyc. Perhaps that lord, that husband is no more ;

He went from Crete in haste, his army thin,

To meet the numerous troops of fierce Molossians ;

Yet though he lives, while ebbing life decays,

Think on your son.

Phæd. Alas, that shocks me.

Oh, let me see my young one, let me snatch

A hasty farewell, a last dying kiss.

Yet stay ; his sight will melt my just resolves :

But, Oh, I beg with my last falling breath,

Cherish my babe.

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‘ Soothe his ambitious mind with thirst of empire,
 ‘ And all his tender thoughts with soft allurements.’

Phæd. But shou’d the youth refuse my proffer’d love!
 Oh, should he throw me from his loathing arms!

I fear the trial; for I know Hippolitus
 Fierce in the right, and obstinately good:

‘ When round beset, his virtue like a flood,
 ‘ Breaks with resistless force th’ opposing dams,
 ‘ And bears the mounds along; they’re hurry’d on,
 ‘ And swell the torrent they were rais’d to stop.’

I dare not yet resolve; I’ll try to live,
 And to the awful gods I’ll leave the rest.

Lyc. Madam, your signet, that your slave may order
 What’s most expedient for your royal service.

Phæd. Take it, and with it take the fate of Phædra.

And thou, Oh, Venus! aid a suppliant queen,
 That owns thy triumphs, and adores thy pow’r:

‘ Oh, spare thy captives, and subdue thy foes!

‘ On this cold Scythian let thy pow’r be known,

‘ And in a lover’s cause assert thy own:

‘ Then Crete as Paphos shall adore thy shrine;

‘ This nurse of Jove with grateful fires shall shine,

‘ And with thy father’s flames shall worship thine.’

[*Exeunt Phæd. &c.*

Lyc. [*Solus.*] If she proposes love, why then as surely
 His haughty soul refuses it with scorn.—

Say I confine him!—If she dies he’s safe;

And if she lives, I’ll work her raging mind.

A woman scorn’d, with ease I’ll work to vengeance:

With humble, wise, obsequious fawning arts

I’ll rule the whirl and transport of her soul;

That when her reason hates, her rage may act.

When barks glide slowly through the lazy main,

The baffled pilots turn the helms in vain;

When driv’n by winds they cut the foamy way,

The rudders govern, and the ships obey.

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T · II.

To Phædra and Lycôn, enter Messenger.

MESSENGER.

MADAM, the prince Hippolitus attends.

Phæd. Admit him. Where, where, Phædra's
now thy soul!

What—shall I speak? And shall my guilty tongue

Let this insulting victor know his pow'r?

Or shall I still confine within my breast

My restless passions and devouring flames?

But see, he comes, the lovely tyrant comes.—

He rushes on me like a blaze of light;

I cannot bear the transport of his presence,

But sink oppress'd with woe.

[Swoons.]

Enter Hippolitus.

Hip. Immortal gods!

What have I done to raise such strange abhorrence?

What have I done to shake her shrinking nature

With my approach, and kill her with my sight?

Lyc. Alas, another grief devours her soul,
And only your assistance can relieve her.

Hip. Ha! make it known, that I may fly and aid her.

Lyc. But promise first, my lord, to keep it secret.

Hip. Promise! I swear, on this good sword I swear,
This sword, which first gain'd youthful Theseus honour!

Which oft has punish'd perjury and falshood;

By thund'ring Jove, by Grecian Hercules,

' By the majestic form of godlike heroes,

' That shine around, and consecrate the steel;'

No racks, no shame, shall ever force it from me.

Phæd. Hippolitus.

Hip. Yes, 'tis that wretch, who begs you to dismiss
That hated object from your eyes for ever.

Begs leave to march against the foes of Theseus,

And to revenge or share his father's fate.

Phæd. Oh, Hippolitus!

I own I've wrong'd you, most unjustly wrong'd you;

Drove you from court, from Crete, and from your father:

The court, all Crete, deplor'd their suffering hero,

And I (the sad occasion) most of all.

Yet could you know relenting Phædra's soul !
 Oh, could you think with what reluctant grief
 I wrong'd the hero whom I wish'd to cherish !
 Oh, you'd confess me wretched, not unkind,
 And own those ills did most deserve your pity,
 Which most procur'd your hate.

Hip. My hate to Phædra !

Ha ! cou'd I hate the royal spouse of Theseus,
 My queen, my mother ?

Phæd. Why your queen and mother ?
 More humble ties would suit my lost condition.
 Alas, the iron hand of death is on me,
 And I have only time t' implore your pardon.
 Ah, would my lord forget injurious Phædra,
 And with compassion view her helpless orphan !
 Would he receive him to his dear protection,
 Defend his youth from all encroaching foes !

Hip. Oh, I'll defend him ! with my life defend him !
 Heav'n dart your judgment on this faithless head,
 If I don't pay him all a slave's obedience,
 And all a father's love.

Phæd. A father's love !
 Oh, doubtful sounds ! Oh, vain deceitful hopes !
 My grief's much eas'd by this transcending goodness,
 And Theseus' death fits lighter on my soul.
 Death ! he's not dead ; he lives, he breathes, he speaks ;
 He lives in you, he's present to my eyes ;
 I see him, speak to him. — My heart ! I rave,
 And all my folly's known.

Hip. Oh, glorious folly !
 See, Theseus, see, how much your Phædra lov'd you.

Phæd. Love him, indeed ! dote, languish, die for him.
 Forsake my food, my sleep, all joys for Theseus ;
 ' (But not that hoary venerable Theseus)'
 But Theseus, as he was when mantling blood
 Glow'd in his lovely cheeks ; ' when his bright eyes
 ' Sparkled with youthful fires ;' when ev'ry grace
 Shone in the father, which now crowns the son :
 When Theseus was Hippolitus.

Hip. Ha ! amazement strikes me :
 Where will this end ?

Lyc. Is't difficult to guess ?



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Hip. Then let me take the warning and retire ;
I'd rather trust the rough Ionian waves,
Than woman's fiercer rage.

[*Ismena shews herself, listening.*]

Lyc. Alas, my lord !
You must not leave the queen to her despair.

Hip. Must not ! from thee ? from that vile upstart
Lycon !

Lyc. Yes ; from that Lycon who derives his greatness
From Phædra's race, and now would guard her life.
Then, Sir, forbear : view here this royal signet,
And in her faithful slave obey the queen.

[*Enter Guards and Cratander.*]

Guards, watch the prince, but at that awful distance,
With that respect, it may not seem confinement,
But only meant for honour.

Hip. So, confinement is
The honour Crete bestows on Theseus' son,
Am I confin'd ? and is't so soon forgot,
When fierce Procrustes' arms o'er-ran your kingdom ?
When your streets echo'd with the cries of orphans,
Your shrieking maids clung round the hallow'd shrines,
When all your palaces and lofty towers
Smoak'd on the earth, when the red sky around
Glow'd with your city's flames (a dreadful lustre :)
Then, then my father flew to your assistance ;
Then Theseus sav'd your lives, estates, and honours.
And do you thus reward the hero's toil ?
And do you now confine the hero's son ?

Lyc. Take not an easy short confinement ill,
Which your own safety and the queen's requires.
Nor harbour fear of one that joys to serve you.

Hip. Oh, I disdain thee, traitor, but not fear thee ;
Nor will I hear of services from Lycon.
Thy very looks are lies, eternal falsehood
Smiles in thy looks, and flatters in thy eyes :
Ev'n in thy humble face I read my ruin,
In ev'ry cringing bow and fawning smile.
Why else d'ye whisper out your dark suspicions ?
Why with malignant eulogies encrease
The people's fears, and praise me to my ruin ?
Why through the troubled streets of frighted Gnoſſus

Do bucklers, helms, and polish'd armour blaze?
Why sounds the dreadful din of instant war,
Whilst still the foe's unknown?

Lyc. Then quit thy arts;
Put off the statesman, and resume the judge. [*Aside.*
Thou Proteus, shift thy various forms no more,
But boldly own the god. — That foe's too near.
[*To Hippolitus.*

The queen's disease, and your aspiring mind,
Disturb all Crete, and give a loose to war.

Hip. Gods! dares he speak thus to a monarch's son,
And must this earth-born slave command in Crete?
Was it for this my godlike father fought?
Did Theseus bleed for Lycon? Oh, ye Cretans,
See there your king, the successor of Minos,
And heir of Jove.

Lyc. You may as well provoke
That Jove you worship, as this slave you scorn.
Go seize Almæon, Nicias, and all
The black abettors of this impious treason.

[*Exit a Soldier.*

Now o'er thy head th' avenging thunder rolls;
For know on me depends thy instant doom.
Then learn, proud prince, to bend thy haughty soul,
And, if thou think'st of life, obey the queen.

Hip. Then free from fear or guilt I'll wait my doom.
Whate'er's my fault, no stain shall blot my glory.
I'll guard my honour, you dispose my life.

Lyc. Be it so; Cratander, follow me.

[*Exeunt Lyc. and Crat.*

Hip. Since he dares brave my rage, the danger's near.
The timorous hounds that hunt the generous lion
Bay afar off, and tremble in pursuit;
But when he struggles in th' entangling toils,
Insult the dying prey.

Enter Ismena and Lady.

'Tis kindly done, Ismena,
With all your charms to visit my distress;
Softens my chains, and makes confinement easy.
Oh, Ismena; is it then giv'n me to behold thy beauties!
Those blushing sweets, those lovely loving eyes!
To press, to strain thee to my beating heart,

And

And grow thus to my love ! What's liberty to this ?
 What's fame or greatness ? take 'em, take 'em, Phædra,
 ' Freedom and fame,' and in the dear confinement
 Enclose me thus for ever.

Ism. Oh, Hippolitus !
 Oh, I could ever dwell in this confinement !
 Nor wish for aught while I behold my lord :
 But yet that wish, that only wish is vain,
 When my hard fate thus forces me to beg you,
 Drive from your godlike soul a wretched maid :
 Take to your arms (assist me, heav'n, to speak it)
 Take to your arms imperial Phædra,
 And think of me no more.

Hip. Not think of thee ?
 What, part ! for ever part ? Unkind Ismena !
 Oh, can you think that death is half so dreadful,
 As it would be to live, and live without thee ?
 Say, should I quit thee, should I turn to Phædra,
 Say, couldst thou bear it ? Could thy tender soul
 Endure the torment of despairing love,
 And see me settled in a rival's arms ?

Ism. Think not of me : perhaps my equal mind
 May learn to bear the fate the gods allot me.
 Yet would you hear me ; ' could your lov'd Ismena
 ' With all her charms o'er-rule your sullen honour,'
 You yet might live, nor leave the poor Ismena.

Hip. Speak : if I can, I'm ready to obey.

Ism. Give the queen hopes.

Hip. No more—my soul disdains it.
 No ; should I try, my haughty soul would swell,
 Sharpen each word, and threaten in my eyes.
 Oh, should I stoop to cringe, to lie, forswear ?
 Deserve the ruin which I strive to shun ?

Ism. Oh, I can't bear this cold contempt of death !
 This rigid virtue, that prefers your glory
 To liberty or life. Oh, cruel man !

' By these sad sighs, by these poor streaming eyes,
 ' By that dear love that makes us now unhappy,
 ' By the near danger of that precious life,
 ' Heav'n knows I value much above my own.
 ' What ! not yet mov'd ?' Are you resolv'd on death ?

Then,



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Oh, I'd remember that 'twas my request,
And die well pleas'd I made the hero happy.

Lady. Die! does Ismena then resolve to die?

Ism. Can I then live? can I, who lov'd so well,
To part with all my blifs to save my lover?

Oh, can I drag a wretched life without him,
And see another revel in his arms?

Oh, 'tis in death alone I can have comfort!

Enter Lycon.

Lyc. What a reverse is this? Perfidious boy,
Is this thy truth? is this thy boasted honour?
Then all are rogues alike: I never thought
But one man bonest, and that one deceives me. [*Aside.*
Ismena here? ———

Ismena. Now, my Lord, is the queen's rage abated?
How is the prince dispos'd?

Lyc. Happily.

All's chang'd to love and harmony, my fair.

'Tis all agreed, and now the prince is safe
From the sure vengeance of despairing love;
Now Phædra's rage is chang'd to soft endearments:
She doats, she dies; and few, but tedious days,
With endless joys will crown the happy pair.

Ism. Does he then wed the queen?

Lyc. At least I think so.

I, when the prince approach'd, not far retir'd,
Pale with my doubts: he spoke; th' attentive queen
Dwelt on his accents, and her gloomy eyes
Sparkled with gentler fires; he blushing how'd;
She, trembling, lost in love, with soft confusion
Receiv'd his passion, and return'd her own.
Then smiling turn'd to me, and bade me order
The pompous rites of her ensuing nuptials,
Which I must now pursue. Farewel, Ismena. [*Exit.*

Ism. Then I'll retire, and not disturb their joys.

Lady. Stay and learn more.

Ism. Ah! wherefore should I stay?

What! shall I stay to rave, t'upbraid, to hold him?
To snatch the struggling charmer from her arms?
For could you think that open gen'rous youth
Could with feign'd love deceive a jealous woman?
' Could he so soon grow artful in dissembling?

' Ah,

‘ Ah, without doubt his thoughts inspir’d his tongue,
 ‘ And all his soul receiv’d a real love.
 ‘ Perhaps new graces darted from her eyes,
 ‘ Perhaps soft pity charm’d his yielding soul,
 ‘ Perhaps her love, perhaps her kingdom, charm’d him;
 ‘ Perhaps—alas, how many things might charm him!

‘ *Lady*. Wait the success: it is not yet decided.

‘ *Ism*. Not yet decided! did not Lycon tell us
 ‘ How he protested, sigh’d, and look’d, and vow’d?
 ‘ How the soft passion languish’d in his eyes?’

Ay, no, he loves, he doats on Phædra’s charms.

Now, now he clasps her to his panting breast,

‘ Now he devours her with his eager eyes,’

Now grasps her hands, and now he looks, and vows

The dear false things that charm’d the poor Ismena.

He comes; be still, my heart; the tyrant comes,

Charming though false, and lovely in his guilt.

Enter Hippolitus.

Hip. Why hangs that cloudy sorrow on your brow?
 Why do you sigh? Why flow your swelling eyes?
 Those eyes that us’d with joy to view Hippolitus.

Ism. My lord, my soul is charm’d with your success.
 You know, my lord, my fears are but for you,
 For your dear life; and since my death alone
 Can make you safe, that soon shall make me happy.
 ‘ Yet had you brought less love to Phædra’s arms,
 ‘ My soul had parted with a less regret,
 ‘ Blest if surviving in your dear remembrance.’

Hip. Your death! ‘ my love! my marriage! and to
 Phædra!’

Hear me, Ismena.

Ism. No, I dare not hear you.
 But though you’ve been thus cruelly unkind,
 Though you have left me for the royal Phædra,
 Yet still my soul o’er-runs with fondness tow’rds you;
 Yet still I die with joy to save Hippolitus.

Hip. Die to save me! could I outlive Ismena?

Ism. Yes, you’d outlive her in your Phædra’s arms,
 And may you there find ev’ry blooming pleasure!
 Oh, may the gods show’r blessings on thy head!
 ‘ May the gods crown thy glorious arms with conquest,
 ‘ And all thy peaceful days with sure repose!’

May'st thou be blest with lovely Phædra's charms,
And for thy ease forget the lost Ismena!

'Farewel, Hippolitus.'

Hip. Ismena, stay,
Stay, hear me speak; or by th' infernal powers
I'll not survive the minute you depart.

Ism. What would you say? ah! don't deceive my
weakness.

Hip. Deceive thee! why, Ismena, do you wrong me?
Why doubt my faith? Oh, lovely; cruel maid!
Why wound my tender soul with harsh suspicion?
Oh, by those charming eyes, by thy dear love,
I neither thought nor spoke, design'd nor promis'd,
To love, or wed the queen.

Ism. Speak on, my lord,
My honest soul inclines me to believe thee;
And much I fear, and much I hope I've wrong'd thee.

Hip. Then thus. I came and spake, but scarce of love;
The easy queen receiv'd my faint address
With eager hope and unsuspecting faith.
Lycou, with seeming joy, dismiss'd my guards:
My gen'rous soul disdain'd the mean deceit,
But still deceiv'd her to obey Ismena.

Ism. Art thou then true? Thou art. Oh, pardon me?
Pardon the errors of a silly maid,
Wild with her fears, and mad with jealousy;
For still that fear, that jealousy was love.
Haste then, my lord, and save yourself by flight;
'And when your absent, when your godlike form
'Shall cease to cheer forlorn Ismena's eyes,
'Then let each day, each hour, each minute, bring
'Some kind remembrance of your constant love;
'Speak of your health, your fortune, and your friends,
'(For sure those friends shall have my tender'st wishes)
'Speak much of all; but of thy dear, dear love,
'Speak much, speak very much, but still speak on.'

Hip. Oh, thy dear love shall ever be my theme;
Of that alone I'll talk the live-long day;
But thus I'll talk, thus dwelling in thy eyes,
Tasting the odours of thy fragrant bosom.
Come then, to crown me with immortal joys,
Come, be the kind companion of my flight,

Come,



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There, when the horrid darkness shall inclose us,
 When the bleak wind shall chill my shiv'ring limbs,
 Thou shalt alone supply the distant sun,
 And cheer my gazing eyes, and warm my heart.

Hip. Come, let's away; and, like another Jason,
 I'll bear my beauteous conquest thro' the seas:

A greater treasure, and a nobler prize,
 Than he from Colchos bore. Sleep, sleep in peace
 Ye monsters of the woods, on Ida's top
 Securely roam; no more my early horn
 Shall wake the lazy day. Transporting love
 Reigns in my heart, and makes me all its own.
 So, when bright Venus yielded up her charms,
 The bless'd Adonis languish'd in her arms;
 His idle horn on fragrant myrtles hung,
 His arrows scatter'd, and his bow untrung:
 Obscure in coverts lie his dreaming hounds,
 And lay the fancy'd boar with feebleounds;
 For nobler sports he quits the savage fields,
 And all the hero to the lover yields.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

Enter Lycon and Guards.

LYCON.

HEAV'N is at last appear'd: the pitying gods
 Have heard our wishes, and auspicious Jove
 Smiles on his native isle; for Phædra lives,
 Restor'd to Crete, and to herself, she lives:
 Joy with fresh strength inspirès her drooping limbs,
 ' Revives her charms,' and o'er her faded checks
 Spreads ' a fresh' rosy bloom: ' as kindly springs
 ' With genial heat renew the frozen earth,
 ' And paints its smiling face with gaudy flow'rs.
 ' But see, she comes, the beauteous Phædra comes.

Enter Phædra and four Ladies.

' How her eyes sparkle! how their radiant beams
 ' Confess their shining ancestor the sun!

Your

Your charms to-day will wound despairing crowds,
And give the pains you suffer'd: nay, Hippolitus,
The fierce, the brave, th' insensible Hippolitus,
Shall pay a willing homage to your beauty,
And in his turn adore.

Phæd. 'Tis flatt'ry all.

Yet, when you name the prince, that flatt'ry's pleasing.
You wish it so; poor good old man, you wish it.
The fertile province of Cydonia's thine.

Is there aught else? Has happy Phædra aught
In the wide circle of her far-stretch'd empire?

Ask, take, my friend, secure of no repulse.

Let spacious Crete, thro' all her hundred cities,
Resound her Phædra's joy. ' Let altars smoke,

' And richest gums, and spice, and incense roll

' Their fragrant wreaths to Heav'n, to pitying Heav'n,

' Which gives Hippolitus to Phædra's arms.

' Set all at large, and bid the loathsome dungeons

' Give up the meagre slaves that pine in darkness,

' And waste in grief, as did despairing Phædra:

' Let them be cheer'd, let the starv'd prisoners riot,

' And glow with gen'rous wine.' Let sorrow cease:

Let none be wretched, none, since Phædra's happy.

' But now he comes, and with an equal passion

' Rewards my flame, and springs into my arms!'

Enter Messenger.

Say, where's the prince?

Mess. He's no where to be found.

Phæd. Perhaps he hunts.

Mess. He hunted not to-day.

Phæd. Ha! have you search'd the walks, the courts,

Mess. Search'd all in vain. [the temples?

Phæd. Did he not hunt to-day?

Alas, you told me once before he did not! [Exit Mess.

My heart misgives me.

Lyc. ' So, indeed, doth mine.'

Then my fears were true.

Phæd. Could he deceive me? Could that godlike youth
Delign the ruin of a queen that loves?

Oh, he's all truth! his words, his looks, his eyes,

Open to view his inmost thoughts—He comes— [Hippolitus?

Ha! who art thou? Whence com'st thou? Where's Hip-

Enter Messenger.

Mess. Madam, Hippolitus, with fair Ismena,
Drove tow'rd the port.

Phæd. With fair Ismena!
Curs'd be her cruel beauty, curs'd her charms,
Curs'd all her soothing, fatal, false endearments.
' That heav'nly virgin, that exalted goodness,
' Could see me tortur'd with despairing love;
' With artful tears could mourn my monstrous suff'rings,
' While her base malice plotted my destruction.'

Lyc. A thousand reasons crowd upon my soul,
That evidence their love.

' *Phæd.* Yes, yes, they love;
' Why else should he refuse my proffer'd bed?
' Why should one warm'd with youth, and thirst of glory,
' Disdain a foul, a form, a crown like mine?

' *Lyc.* Where, Lycon, where was then thy boasted
Dull, thoughtless wretch! [cunning?]

Phæd. Oh, pains unfelt before!
The grief, despair, the agonies, and pangs,
All the wild fury of distracted love,
Are nought to this——Say, famous politician,
Where, when, and how did their first passion rise?
Where did they breathe their sighs? What shady groves,
What gloomy woods, conceal'd their hidden loves?
Alas, they hid it not! the well-pleas'd sun,
With all his beams survey'd their guiltless flame;
Glad zephyrs wafted their untainted sighs,
And Ida echo'd their endearing accents.
While I, the shame of nature, hid in darkness,
Far from the balmy air, and cheering light,
Press'd down my sighs, and dry'd my falling tears,
Search'd a retreat to mourn, and watch'd to grieve.

Lyc. Now cease that grief, and let your injur'd love
Contrive due vengeance; let majestic Phædra,
That lov'd the hero, sacrifice the villain.
Then haste, send forth your ministers of vengeance,
To snatch the traitor from your rival's arms,
And force him, trembling, to your awful presence.

Phæd. Oh, rightly thought!—Dispatch th' attending
Bid them bring forth their instruments of death; [guards;
Darts;



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‘ See the chaste matron mount the neighing steed ;
 ‘ In strict embraces lock the struggling warrior,
 ‘ And choose the lover in the sturdy foe.

‘ *Enter Messenger, and seems to talk earnestly with Lycon.*

‘ *Hip.* No, she refus’d the vows of godlike Theseus,
 ‘ And chose to stand his arms, not meet his love ;
 ‘ And doubtful was the fight. The wide Thermodoon
 ‘ Heard the huge strokes resound ; its frightened waves
 ‘ Convey’d, the rattling din to distant shores,
 ‘ While she alone supported all his war ;
 ‘ Nor till she sunk beneath his thund’ring arm,
 ‘ Beneath which warlike nations bow’d, would yield
 ‘ To honest, wish’d-for love.

‘ *Phæd.* Not so her son,
 ‘ Who boldly ventures on forbidden flames,
 ‘ On one descended from the cruel Pallas,
 ‘ Foe to thy father’s person and his blood ;
 ‘ Hated by him, of kindred yet more hated,
 ‘ The last of all the wicked race he ruin’d.
 ‘ In vain a fierce successive hatred reign’d
 ‘ Between your fires ; in vain, like Cadmus’ race,
 ‘ With mingled blood they dy’d the blushing earth.

‘ *Hip.* In vain, indeed, since now the war is o’er :
 ‘ We, like the Theban race, agree to love ;
 ‘ And by our mutual flames and future offspring,
 ‘ Atone for slaughter past.

‘ *Phæd.* Your future offspring !
 ‘ Heav’ns ! what a medley’s this ? What dark confusion
 ‘ Of blood and death, of murder and relation !
 ‘ What joy’t had been to old disabled Theseus,
 ‘ When he should take the offspring in his arms,
 ‘ Ev’n in his arms to hold an infant Pallas,
 ‘ And be upbraided with his grandfire’s fate ?’

Oh, barbarous youth !

Lyc. Too barbarous, I fear. [Distant shout.]
 Perhaps e’en now his faction’s up in arms,
 Since waving crowds roll onward towards the palace,
 And rend the city with tumultuous clamours.
 Perhaps to murder Phædra and her son,
 And give the crown to him and his Ismena.
 But I’ll prevent it.

[Exit.
 Ismena.]

Ismena brought in by two Gentlemen.

Phæd. What, the kind *Ismena*,
 That nurs'd me, watch'd my sickness! Oh, she watch'd me,
 As rav'nous vultures watch the dying lion,
 To tear his heart, and riot in his blood!
 ' Hark, hark, my little infant cries for justice!
 ' Oh, be pleas'd, my babe, thou shalt have justice!
 Now all the spirits of my godlike race
 Enflame my soul, and urge me on to vengeance.
 ' *Arsamnes*, *Minos*, *Jove*, th' avenging *Sun*,
 ' Inspire my fury, and demand my justice:
 ' Oh, you shall have it! thou, *Minos*, shalt applaud it.
 ' Yes, thou shalt copy it in their pains below.'
 God of revenge, arise!—He comes! he comes!
 ' And shoots himself thro' all my kindling blood.'
 I have it here—Now base, perfidious wretch,
 Now sigh, and weep, and tremble in thy turn.
 Yes, your *Ismena* shall appease my vengeance.
Ismena dies; and thou, her pitying lover,
 Doom'd her to death—Thou too shalt see her bleed,
 See her convulsive pangs, and hear her dying groans.
 Go, glut thy eyes with thy ador'd *Ismena*,
 And laugh at dying *Phædra*.

Hip. Oh, *Ismena*!

Ism. Alas, my tender soul should shrink at death,
 Shake with its fears, and sink beneath its pains,
 In any cause but this!—But now I'm steel'd,
 And the near danger lessens to my fight.
 Now, if I live, 'tis only for *Hippolitus*;
 And with an equal joy I'll die to save him.
 ' Yes, for his sake I'll go a willing shade,
 ' And wait his coming in th' *Elysian* fields;
 ' And there enquire of each descending ghost
 ' Of my lov'd hero's welfare, life, and honour:
 ' That dear remembrance will improve the bliss, [py.
 ' Add to th' *Elysian* joys, and make that heav'n more hap-

Hip. ' Oh, heav'nly virgin! [*Aside.*] Oh, imperial
 Let your rage fall on this devoted head; [Phædra'
 But spare, Oh, spare a guiltless virgin's life!

' Think of her youth, her innocence, her virtue;
 ' Think with what warm compassion she bemoan'd you;
 ' Think how she serv'd and watch'd you in your sickness;
 ' How

‘ How ev’ry rising and descending sun
 ‘ Saw kind Ismena watching o’er the queen.’
 I only promis’d; I alone deceiv’d you;
 And I, and only I, should feel your justice.

Ism. Oh, by those pow’rs to whom I soon must answer
 For all my faults; by that bright arch of heav’n
 I now last see, I wrought him by my wiles,
 By tears, by threats, by ev’ry female art,
 Wrought his disdain’ing soul to false compliance.
 The son of Theseus could not think of fraud;
 ’Twas woman all. :

Phæd. I see ’twas woman all:
 And woman’s fraud should meet with woman’s vengeance.
 But yet thy courage, truth, and virtue shock me:
 A love so warm, so firm, so like my own.
 Oh, had the gods so pleas’d! had bounteous heav’n
 Bestow’d Hippolitus on Phædra’s arms,
 So had I stood the shock of angry fate;
 So had I giv’n my life with joy to save him.

Hip. And can you doom her death? Can Minos’ daugh-
 Condemn the virtue which her soul admires? [ter
 Are not you Phædra, once the boast of fame,
 Shame of our sex, and pattern of your own?

Phæd. Am I that Phædra? No; another soul
 Informs my alter’d frame. Could else Ismena
 Provoke my hatred, yet deserve my love?
 Aid me, ye gods, support my sinking glory,
 Restore my reason, and confirm my virtue.
 Yet, is my rage unjust? Then, why was Phædra
 Rescu’d for torment, and preserv’d for pain?
 Why did you raise me to the height of joy,
 Above the wreck of clouds and storms below,
 To dash and break me on the ground for ever;

Ism. Was it not time to urge him to compliance,
 ‘At least to feign it, when perfidious Lycon
 Confin’d his person, and conspir’d his death?

Phæd. Confin’d and doom’d to death! Oh, cruel Lycon!
 Could I have doom’d thy death? Could these sad eyes,
 That lov’d thee living, e’er behold thee dead?
 Yet thou couldst see me die without concern,
 Rather than save a wretched queen from ruin.
 ‘ Else could you choose to trust the warring winds,

‘ The



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‘ O’er hills, o’er vales pursue the shaggy lion.
 ‘ Careless of danger, and of wasting toil,
 ‘ Of pinching hunger, and impatient thirst,
 ‘ I’ll find all joys in thee.

‘ *Hip.* Why stoops the queen
 ‘ To ask, intreat, to supplicate, and pray
 ‘ To prostitute her crown and sex’s honour
 ‘ To one whose humble thoughts can only rise
 ‘ To be your slave, not lord?’

Phæd. ‘ And is that all?’

See if he deign to force an artful groan,
 Or call a tear from his unwilling eyes?

‘ Hard as his native rocks, cold as his sword,
 ‘ Fierce as the wolves that howl’d around his birth;
 ‘ He hates the tyrant, and the suppliant scorns.
 ‘ Oh, heav’n! Oh, Minos! Oh, Imperial Jove!
 ‘ Do ye not blush at my degenerate weakness?’

Hence, lazy, mean, ignoble passions, fly!

Hence from my soul — ’Tis gone, ’tis fled for ever,
 And Heav’n inspires my thoughts with righteous ven-
 Thou shalt no more despise my offer’d love; [geance.
 No more Ismena shall upbraid my weakness.

[*Catches Hip. sword to stab herself.*

Now, all ye kindred gods, look down and see
 How I’ll revenge you, and myself, on Phædra.

Enter Lycon, and snatches away the sword.

Lyc. Horror on horror! Theseus is return’d.

Phæd. Theseus! then what have I to do with life?
 May I be snatch’d with winds, by earth o’erwhelm’d,
 Rather than view the face of injur’d Theseus.
 Now wider still my growing horrors spread,
 My fame, my virtue, nay, my frenzy’s fled:
 Then view my wretched race, Imperial Jove,
 If crimes enrage you, or misfortunes move;
 On me your flames, on me your bolts employ,
 Me, if your anger spares, your pity should destroy.

[*Runs off.*

Lyc. This may do service yet.

[*Exit Lycon, carries off the sword.*

Hip. Is he return’d? Thanks to the pitying gods!
 Shall I again behold his awful eyes?
 Again be folded in his loving arms?

Yet,

Yet, in the midst of joy, I fear for Phædra ;
I fear his warmth, and unrelenting justice.

Oh ! should her raging passion reach his ears,
His tender love, by anger fir'd, would turn [oil,
To burning rage ; [*Trumpets sound.*] ' as soft Cydonian
' Whose balmy juice glides o'er th' untasting tongue,
' Yet touch'd with fire, with hottest flames will blaze.'

But, Oh, ye pow'rs ! I see his godlike form.
Oh, extacy of joy ! he comes ! he comes !

Enter Theseus, Officer, and Guards.

Is it my lord, my father ? Oh, 'tis he !

' I see him, touch him, feel his own embraces ;

See all the father in his joyful eyes,

Where have you been, my lord ? What angry demon

Hid you from Crete, from me ? What god has sav'd you ?

Did not Philotas see you fall ? Oh, answer me !

And then I'll ask a thousand questions more.

Thes. No ; but to save my life I feign'd my death ;
My horse and well-known arms confirm'd the tale,
And hinder'd farther search. This honest Greek
Conceal'd me in his house, and cur'd my wounds ;
Procur'd a vessel, and, to bless me more,
Accompan'd my flight——

But this at leisure. Let me now indulge

A father's fondness ; let me snatch thee thus,

Thus fold thee in my arms. Such, such was I,

[*Embraces Hippolitus.*

When first I saw thy mother, chaste Camilla ;

And much she lov'd me. Oh, did Phædra view me

With half that fondness !——But she's still unkind,

Elle hasty joy had brought her to these arms,

To welcome me to liberty, to life,

And make that life a blessing. Come, my son,

Let us to Phædra..

Hip. Pardon me, my lord.

Thes. Forget her former treatment ; she's too good
Still to persist in hatred to my son.

Hip. Oh, let me fly from Crete, from you, [*Aside.*]
' and Phædra !

Thes. My son, what means this turn, this sudden start ?
Why would you fly from Crete, and from your father ?

Hip. Not from my father, but from lazy Crete ;

To follow danger, and acquire renown;
To quell the monsters that escap'd your sword,
And make the world confess me Theseus' son.

Thes. What can this coldness mean?—Retire, my son,
[*Exit Hippolitus.*]

While I attend the queen——What shock is this?
Why tremble thus my limbs? Why faints my heart?
Why am I thrill'd with fear, till now unknown?
Where's now the joy, the extasy and transport,
That warm'd my soul, and urg'd me on to Phædra?
Oh, had I never lov'd her, I'd been blest'd!
Sorrow and joy in love alternate reign;
Sweet is the bliss, distracting is the pain.

' So when the Nile its fruitful deluge spreads,
' And genial heat informs its slimy beds;
' Here yellow harvests crown the fertile plain,
' There monstrous serpents fright the lab'ring swain:
' A various product fills the fatten'd sand,
' And the same floods enrich and curse the land.

[*Exit.*]

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

Enter Lycon.

THIS may gain time, till all my wealth's embark'd,
To ward my foes' revenge, and finish mine,
To shake that empire which I can't possess.
But then the queen—she dies—why let her die;
Let wild destruction seize on all together,
So Lycon live——A safe, triumphant exile,
Great in disgrace, and envied in his fall.
The queen! then try thy art, and work her passions;

Enter Phædra and Ladies.

Draw her to act what most her soul abhors;
Possess her whole, and speak thyself in Phædra.

' *Phæd.* Off, let me loose; why, cruel, barb'rous maids,
Why am I barr'd from death, the common refuge,
That spreads its hospitable arms for all?
' Why must I drag the insufferable load
' Of total dishonour, and despairing love?

Oh,



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' *Phæd.* Could I, when present to his awful eyes,
 ' Conceal the wild disorders of my soul?
 ' Would not my groans, my looks, my speech betray me?
 ' Betray thee, Phædra! then thou'rt not betray'd.
 ' Live, live secure, adoring Cete conceals thee;
 ' Thy pious love, and most endearing goodness
 ' Will charm the kind Hippolitus to silence.
 ' Oh, wretched Phædra! Oh, ill-guarded secret!
 ' To foes alone disclos'd!

' *Lyc.* I needs must fear them,
 ' Spite of their vows, their oaths, their imprecations.

' *Phæd.* Do imprecations, oaths, or vows avail?
 ' I too have sworn, ev'n at the altar sworn,
 ' Eternal love and endless faith to Theseus;
 ' And yet am false, forsworn: the hallow'd shrine
 ' That heard me swear, is witness to my falshood.
 ' The youth, the very author of my crimes,
 ' Ev'n he shall tell that fault himself inspir'd;
 ' The fatal eloquence that charm'd my soul
 ' Shall lavish all its arts to my destruction.'

Lyc. Hippolitus, Oh, he will tell it all—Destruction
 seize him.

With seeming grief, and aggravating pity,
 And more to blacken, will excuse your folly;
 False tears shall wet his unrelenting eyes,
 And his glad heart, with artful sighs shall heave;
 Then Theseus—How will indignation swell
 His mighty heart? How his majestic frame
 Will shake with rage too fierce, too swift for vent?

While the proud Scythian—

' How he'll expose you to the public scorn,
 ' And loathing crowds shall murmur out their horror?
 ' Then the fierce Scythian—now methinks I see
 ' His fiery eyes with sullen pleasures glow,
 ' Survey your tortures, and insult your pangs;
 ' I see him, smiling on the pleas'd Ismena,
 ' Point out with scorn the once-proud tyrant Phædra.'

Phæd. Curs'd be his name! may infamy attend him!
 May swift destruction fall upon his head,
 Hurl'd by the hand of those he most adores.

Lyc. By Heav'n; prophetic truth inspires your tongue:
 ' He shall endure the shame he means to give;

For all the torments which he heaps on you,
With just revenge, shall Theseus turn on him.

Phæd. Is't possible? Oh, Lycon! Oh, my refuge!
Oh, good old man! thou oracle of wisdom!

Declare the means, that Phædra may adore thee.

Lyc. Accuse him first.

Phæd. Oh, heav'n's! accuse the guiltless?

Lyc. Then be accus'd; let Theseus know your crimes;
Let lasting infamy o'erwhelm your glory;

Let your foe triumph, and your infant fall—

• Shake off this idle lethargy of pity;

• With ready war prevent th' invading foe,

• Preserve your glory, and secure your vengeance,

• Be yours the fruit, security, and ease,

• The guilt, the danger, and the labour mine.

Phæd. Heav'n's! Theseus comes.

Lyc. Declare your last resolves,

Phæd. Do you resolve, for Phædra can do nothing.

[Exit Phædra]

Lyc. Now, Lycon, heighten his impatient love,
Now raise his pity, now enflame his rage,
Quicken his hopes, then quash 'em with despair;
Work his tumultuous passions into phrenzy;
Unite them all, then turn them on the foe.

Enter Theseus.

Thes. Was that my queen, my wife, my idol Phædra?
Does she still shun me? Oh, injurious heav'n!
Why did you give me back again to life?
Why did you save me from the rage of battle,
To let me fall by her more fatal hatred?

Lyc. Her hatred! no; she loves you with such fond-
ness

As none but that of Theseus e'er could equal:

• Yet so the gods have doom'd, so heav'n will have it,

• She ne'er must view her much-lov'd Theseus more.

• *Thes.* Not see her! by my suff'rings but I will,

• Though troops embattled should oppose my passage,

• And ready death shall guard the fatal way.

• Not see her! Oh, I'll clasp her in these arms,

• Break through the idle bands that yet have held me,

• And seize the joys my honest love may claim.

• *Lyc.* Is this a time for joy, when Phædra's grief—

' *Thes.* Is this a time for grief? Is this my welcome,
 ' To air, to life, to liberty, and Crete?
 ' Not this I hop'd, when urg'd by ardent love,
 ' I wing'd my eager way to Phædra's arms;
 ' Then, to my thoughts, relenting Phædra flew,
 ' With open arms to welcome my return;
 ' With kind endearing blame condemn'd my rashness,
 ' And made me swear to venture out no more.
 ' Oh, my warm soul, my boiling fancy glow'd
 ' With charming hopes of yet-untasted joys;
 ' New pleasures fill'd my mind, all dangers, pains,
 ' Wars, wounds, defeats, in that dear hope were lost.
 ' And does she now avoid my eager love?
 ' Pursue me still with unrelenting hatred?
 ' Invent new pains? detest, loath, shun my fight?
 ' Fly my return, and sorrow for my safety?

' *Lyc.* Oh, think not so! for, by th' unerring gods,
 When first I told her of your wish'd return,
 When the lov'd sound of Theseus reach'd her ears,
 At that dear name she rear'd her drooping head,
 ' Her feeble hands, and wat'ry eyes to heav'n,
 ' To bless the bounteous gods: at that dear name
 ' The raging tempest of her grief was calm'd;
 Her sighs were hush'd, and tears forgot to flow.

Thes. Did my return bring comfort to her sorrow?
 Then haste, conduct me to the lovely mourner.
 Oh, I will kiss the pearly drops away;
 ' Suck from her rosy lips the fragrant sighs;
 ' With other sighs her panting breast shall heave,
 ' With other dews her swimming eyes shall melt,
 With other pangs her throbbing heart shall beat,
 And all her sorrows shall be lost in love.

Lyc. Does Theseus burn with such unheard of passion?
 And shall not she with out-stretch'd arms receive him;
 ' And with an equal ardor meet his vows?
 ' The vows of one so dear! Oh, righteous gods!
 Why must the bleeding heart of Theseus bear
 Such tort'ring pangs? while Phædra, dead to love,
 Now with accusing eyes on angry heav'n
 Steadfastly gazes, and upbraids the gods:
 ' Now with dumb piercing grief and humble shame,
 ' Fixes her gloomy watery orbs to earth;



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Thef. Where lies the danger? wherefore should I stay?

Lyc. Your sudden presence would surprize her soul;
Renew the galling image of her wrongs,
‘ Revive her sorrow, indignation, shame;’

And all your son would strike her from your eyes.

Thef. My son!—But he’s too good, too brave to
wrong her.—

Whence then that shocking change, that strong surprize,
That tright that seiz’d him at the name of Phædra?

Lyc. Was he surpriz’d? that shew’d at least remorse.

Thef. Remorse! for what? by heav’n, my troubled
thoughts

Presage some dire attempts.—Say, what remorse?

Lyc. I would not—yet I must: this you command;
This Phædra orders; thrice her fault’ring tongue
Bade me unfold the guilty scene to Theseus;
Thrice with loud cries recall’d me on my way,
And blam’d my speed, and chid my rash obedience,
‘ Lest the ‘unwelcome tale should wound your peace.’
At last, with looks serenely sad, she cried,
Go tell it all; but in such artful words,
Such tender accents, and such melting sounds,
As may appease his rage, and move his pity;
As may incline him to forgive his son
A grievous fault, but still a fault of love.

Thef. Of love! what strange suspicions rack my soul!
As you regard my peace, declare what love!

Lyc. Thus urg’d, I must declare. Yet, pitying
heav’n!

Why must I speak? Why must unwilling Lycôn
Accuse the prince of impious love to Phædra?

Thef. Love to his mother! to the wife of Theseus!

Lyc. Yes; at the moment first he view’d her eyes,
Ev’n at the altar, when you join’d your hands,
His easy heart receiv’d the guilty flame,
And from that time he press’d her with his passion.

Thef. Then ’twas for this she banish’d him from Crete;
I thought it hatred all. Oh, righteous hatred!
Forgive me, heav’n; forgive me, injur’d Phædra,
That I in sectet have condemn’d thy justice,
Oh, ’twas all just, and Theseus shall revenge,
Ev’n on his son, revenge his Phædra’s wrongs.

Lyc.

Lyc. What easy tools are these blunt honest heroes,
 Who with keen hunger gorge the naked hook;
 Prevent the bait the statesman's art prepares,
 And post to ruin—' Go, believing fool,
 ' Go act thy far-fam'd justice on thy son,
 ' Next on thyself, and both make way for Lycon.'

[*Afide.*

Thes. Ha! am I sure she's wrong'd? Perhaps 'tis ma-
 lice.

Slave; make it clear, make good your accusation,
 Or treble fury shall revenge my son.

Lyc. Am I then doubted? Can Phædra or your Lycon
 Be thought to forge such execrable falsehoods?

' Gods! when the queen unwillingly complains,
 ' Can you suspect her truth? Oh, godlike Theseus!
 ' Is this the love you bear unhappy Phædra?
 ' Is this her hop'd-for aid? Go, wretched matron,
 ' Sigh to the winds, and rend th' unpitying heav'ns
 ' With thy vain sorrows; since relentless Theseus,
 ' Thy hope, thy refuge, Theseus will not hear thee.

Thes. ' Not hear my Phædra! not revenge her wrongs!'
 Speak, make thy proofs, and then his doom's as fix'd,
 As when Jove nods, and high Olympus shakes,
 And fate his voice obeys.

Lyc. Yet stay, bear witness, heav'n! [*Fetches a sword.*
 With what reluctance I produce this sword,
 This fatal proof against th' unhappy prince;
 Lest it should work your justice to his ruin,
 And prove he aim'd at force as well as incest.

Thes. Gods! 'tis illusion all! ' Is this the sword,
 ' By which Procrustes, Scyron, Pallas fell?
 ' Is this the weapon which my darling son
 ' Swore to employ in nought but acts of honour?
 ' Now, faithful youth, thou nobly hast fulfill'd
 ' Thy gen'rous promise. Oh, most injur'd Phædra!
 ' Why did I trust to his deceitful form?
 ' Why blame thy justice, or suspect thy truth?'

Lyc. Had you this morn beheld his ardent eyes,
 Seen his arm lock'd in her dishevell'd hair,
 That weapon glitt'ring o'er her trembling bosom,
 Whilst she with screams refus'd his impious love,
 Entreating death, and rising to the wound!

Oh,

' Oh, had you seen her, when th' affrighted youth,
 ' Retir'd at your approach; had you then seen her,
 ' In the chaste transports of becoming fury,
 ' Seize on the sword to pierce her guiltless bosom;
 Had you seen this, you could not doubt her truth.

Thes. Oh, impious monster! Oh, forgive me, Phædra!
 And may the gods inspire my injur'd soul
 With equal vengeance that may suit his crimes.

Lyc. For Phædra's sake forbear to talk of vengeance;
 That with new pains would wound her tender breast.
 Send him away from Crete, and by his absence
 Give Phædra quiet, and afford him mercy.

Thes. ' Mercy! for what? Oh, well has he rewarded
 ' Poor Phædra's mercy.—Oh, most barb'rous traitor!
 ' To wrong such beauty, and insult such goodness.'
 Mercy! what's that? a virtue coined by villains,
 ' Who praise the weakness which supports their crimes.'
 Be mute, and fly, lest when my rage is rous'd,
 Thou for thyself in vain implore my mercy.

Lyc. Dull fool, I laugh at mercy more than thou dost,
 More than I do the justice thou'rt so fond of.
 Now come, young hero, to thy father's arms,
 Receive the due reward of haughty virtue;
 Now boast thy race, and laugh at earth-born Lycos.

[Aside and exit.]

Enter Hippolitus.

Thes. Yet can it be?—Is this th' incestuous villain?
 ' How great his presence, how erect his look,
 ' How ev'ry grace, how all his virtuous mother
 ' Shines in his face, and charms me from his eyes!
 ' Oh, Neptune! Oh, great founder of our race!
 ' Why was he fram'd with such a godlike look?
 Why wears he not some most detested form,
 ' Baleful to sight, as horrible to thought;
 That I might act my justice without grief,
 Punish the villain, nor regret the son?

Hip. Mây I presume to ask, what secret care
 Broods in your breast; and clouds your royal brow?
 Why dart your awful eyes those angry beams,
 And fright Hippolitus they us'd to cheer?

Thes. Answer me first. When call'd to wait on Phædra,
 What sudden fear surpriz'd your troubled soul?



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Mowing down troops, and dealing out destruction.

‘ Sometimes with wholesome laws reforming states,

‘ Crowning their happy joys with peace and plenty ;’

While you——

Hip. With all my father’s soul inspir’d,

Burnt with impatient thirst of early honour,

To hunt through bloody fields the chace of glory,

And bless your age with trophies like your own.

Gods, how that warm’d me ! how my throbbing heart

Leap’d to the image of my father’s joy,

When you should strain me in your folding arms,

And with kind raptures, ‘ and with sobbing joys,

‘ Commend my valour, and confess your son !

‘ How did I think my glorious toil o’erpaid !

‘ Then great indeed, and in my father’s love,

‘ With more than conquest crown’d !’

Cry, Go on, Hippolitus.

Go tread the rugged paths of daring honour ;

Practise the strictest and austereſt virtue,

And all the rigid laws of righteous Minos :

Theſeus, thy father Theſeus will reward thee.

Theſ. Reward thee !——Yes ; as Minos would reward thee.

Was Minos then thy pattern ? and did Minos,

The great, the good, the juſt ; the righteous Minos,

‘ The judge of hell, and oracle of earth,’

Did he inſpire adultery, force, and inceſt ?

Iſmena appears.

Iſm. Ha, what’s this ?

[*Aſide.*]

Hip. Amazement ! inceſt !

Theſ. Inceſt with Phædra, with thy mother Phædra.

Hip. This charge ſo unexpected, ſo amazing,

So new, ſo ſtrange, impoſſible to thought,

Stuns my aſtoniſh’d ſoul, and ties my voice.

Theſ. Then let this wake thee, this once-glorious ſword,

With which thy father arm’d thy infant hand,

Not for this purpoſe. Oh, abandon’d ſlave !

Oh, early villain ! moſt deteſted coward !

With this my inſtrument of youthful glory !

With this t’invade the ſpotleſs Phædra’s honour !

Phædra, my life, my better half, my queen !

That

That very Phædra, for whose just defence
The gods would claim thy sword.

Hip. Amazement! death!

Heav'ns! durst I raise the far-fam'd sword of Theseus
Against his queen, against my mother's bosom?

Thef. If not, declare when, where, and how you lost it?
How Phædra gain'd it?—Oh, all ye gods! he's silent.
Why was it bar'd? Whose bosom was it aim'd at?
What meant thy arm advanc'd, thy glowing cheeks,
Thy hand, heart, eyes? Oh, villain! monstrous villain!

Hip. Is there no way, 'no thought, no beam of light,
'No clue to guide me through this gloomy maze,'
To clear my honour, yet preserve my faith?

'None, none, ye pow'rs! and must I groan beneath

'This execrable load of foul dishonour?

'Must Theseus suffer such unheard of torture?

'Theseus, my father! No.' I'll break through all;

All oaths, all vows, all idle imprecations.

I'll give them to the winds. Hear me, my lord;

Hear your wrong'd son. The sword—Oh, fatal vow!

'Ensnaring oaths, and thou, rash thoughtless fool,

'To bind thyself in voluntary chains;

'Yet to thy fatal trust continue firm!

'Beneath disgrace, though infamous, yet honest.'

Yet hear me, father: may the righteous gods

Show'r all their curses on this wretched head;

Oh, may they doom me——

Thef. Yes, the gods will doom thee.

The sword, the sword!—Now swear, and call to witness

Heav'n, hell, and earth, I mark it not from one

That breathes beneath such complicated guilt.

Hip. Was that like guilt, when with expanded arms
I sprang to meet you at your wish'd return?

Does this appear like guilt, when thus serene,

With eyes erect, and visage unappall'd,

Fix'd on that awful face, I stand the charge,

Amaz'd, not fearing? 'Say, if I am guilty;

'Where are the conscious looks, the face now pale,

'Now flushing red, the down-cast haggard eyes,

'Or fix'd on earth, or slowly rais'd to catch

'A fearful view, then sunk again with horror?'

E

Thef.

Thes. This is for raw, untaught, unfinish'd villains. I
 ' Thou in thy bloom hast reach'd th' abhorr'd perfection;
 ' Thy even looks could wear a peaceful calm,
 ' The beauteous stamp (Oh, Heav'n!) of faultless virtue,
 ' While thy foul heart contriv'd this horrid deed!
 " Oh, harden'd fiend! I'll hear no more!
 ' Disturb thy soul; or ruffle thy smooth brow!
 ' What, no remorse! no qualms! no pricking pangs!
 ' No feeble struggle of rebelling honour!
 ' Oh, 'twas thy joy, thy secret hoard of bliss,
 ' To dream, to ponder; act it o'er in thought;
 ' To doat, to dwell on; as rejoicing misers
 ' Brood o'er their precious stores of secret gold.'

Hip. Must I not speak? Then say, unerring heav'n,
 Why was I born with such a thirst of glory?
 Why did this morning dawn to my dishonour?
 Why did not pitying fate with ready death
 Prevent the guilty day?

Thes. Guilty indeed.

Ev'n at the time you heard your father's death;
 ' And such a father (Oh, immortal gods!)
 ' As held thee dearer than his life and glory!
 ' When thou shouldst rend the skies with clam'rous grief,
 ' Beat thy sad breast, and tear thy starting hair;
 Then to my bed to force your impious way;
 ' With horrid lust t'insult my yet warm urn;
 Make me the scorn of hell, and sport for fiends!
 These are the fun'ral honours paid to Theseus,
 These are the sorrows, these the hallow'd rites,
 To which you'd call your father's hov'ring spirit.

Enter Ismena.

Ism. Hear me, my lord; ere yet you fix his doom:

[Turning to Theseus.]

Hear one that comes to shield his injur'd honour,
 And guard his life with hazard of her own.

Thes. Though thou'rt the daughter of my hated foe,
 ' Though ev'n thy beauty's loathsome to my eyes,
 Yet justice bids me hear thee.

Ism. Thus I thank you.

Kneels.

Then know, mistaken prince, his honest soul
 Could ne'er be sway'd by impious love to Phædra,
 Since I before engag'd his early vows;



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I scarce can hold my rage ; my eager hands
Tremble to reach thee. No, dishonour'd Theseus,
Blot not thy fame with such a monster's blood.
Snatch him away.

Hip. Lead on, Farewel, Ismena. [Exit guarded.]

Ism. Oh, take me with him, let me share his fate.
Oh, awful Theseus ! yet revoke his doom.

' See, see the very ministers of death,
' Though bred to blood, yet shrink, and wish to save him.'

Thes. Slaves, villains, drag her away.

' *Ism.* Oh, tear me, cut me, till my sever'd limbs
' Grow to my lord, and share the pains he suffers.

' *Thes.* Villains, away !'

Ism. Oh, Theseus ! hear me, hear me.

' *Thes.* Away, nor taint me with thy loathsome touch.
' Off, woman !'

Ism. Oh, let me stay ! I'll tell you all.

[Exit Theseus.]

' Already gone. Tell it, ye conscions walls ;
' Bear it, ye winds, upon your pitying wings ;
' Resound it, Fame, with all your hundred tongues.
' Oh, hapless youth ! all heaven conspires against you.
' The conscions walls conceal the fatal secret ;
' Th' untainted winds refuse th' infecting load,
' And Fame itself is mute. Nay, ev'n Ismena,
' Thy own Ismena's sworn to thy destruction.
' But still, whate'er the cruel gods design,
' In the same fate our equal stars combine,
' And he who dooms thy death pronounces mine.'

Thes. Too well I know the truth ;

What cou'd she tell me but fictitious art,

By woman's art deriv'd to turn the course

*Of justice from a wretch, whose death both gods
And men demand of Theseus.*

END of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

Enter Phædra and Lycon.

LYCON.

ACCUSE yourself! On my knees I beg you,
By all the gods, recal the fatal message.

Heav'ns! will you stand the dreadful rage of Theseus?
And brand your fame, and work your own destruction?

Phæd. By thee I'm branded, and by thee destroy'd;
Thou bosom serpent! thou alluring fiend!
Yet shan't you boast the miseries you cause,
Nor 'scape the ruin you have brought on all.

Lyc. Was it not your command? Has faithful Lycon
E'er spoke, e'er thought, 'design'd, contriv'd, or acted?

'Has he done aught' without the queen's consent?

'*Phæd.* Plead'st thou consent to what thou first in-
spir'dst?

'Was that consent? Oh, senseless politician!

'When adverse passions struggled in my breast,

'When anger, fear, love, sorrow, guilt, despair,

'Drove out my reason, and usurp'd my soul,

'Yet this consent you plead, Oh, faithless Lycon!

'Oh, only zealous for the fame of Phædra!

'With this you blot my name, and clear your own;

'And what's my phrenzy shall be call'd my crime.

'What then is thine? thou cool, deliberate villain!

'Thou wise, fore-thinking, weighing politician!

Lyc. Oh, 'twas so black a charge, my tongue recoil'd
At its own sound, and horror shook my soul.

Yet still, though pierc'd with such amazing anguish,

Such was my zeal, so much I lov'd my queen,

I broke through all, to save the life of Phædra.

Phæd. What's life? Oh, all ye gods! can life atone
For all the monstrous crimes by which 'tis bought?

Or can I live, when thou, Oh, foul of honour!

Oh, early hero! by my crimes art ruin'd?

Perhaps ev'n now the great unhappy youth

Falls by the fordid hands of butchering villains;

Now, now he bleeds, he dies.— Oh, perjurd traitor!

'See, his rich blood in purple torrents flows,

'And Nature fallies in unbidden groans;

' Now mortal pangs distort his lovely form,
 ' His rosy beauties fade, his starry eyes
 ' Now darkling swim, and fix their closing beams ;
 ' Now in short gasps his lab'ring spirit heaves,
 ' And weakly flutters on his fault'ring tongue,
 ' And struggles into sound.' Hear; monster, hear,
 With his last breath he curses perjur'd Phædra ;
 He summons Phædra to the bar of Minos :
 Thou too shalt there appear ; to torture thee,
 Whole hell shall be employ'd, and suff'ring Phædra .
 Shall find some ease, to see thee still more wretched.

Lyc. Oh, all ye pow'rs ! Oh, Phædra, hear me, hear
 ' By all my zeal, by all my anxious cares, [me,
 ' By those unhappy crimes I wrought to serve you,
 By these old wither'd limbs, and hoary hairs,
 By all my tears—Oh, heav'ns ! she minds me not ;
 She hears not my complaints. Oh, wretched Lycon !
 To what art thou reserv'd ?

Phæd. Reserv'd to all
 The sharpest, slowest pains that earth can furnish :
 To all I wish—on Phædra—Guards, secure him.

[*The Guards enter, and carry off Lycon.*
 Ha, Theseus !—Gods !—my freezing blood, congeals,
 And all my thoughts, designs, and words are lost.

Enter Theseus.

Thef. Dost thou at last repent, Oh, lovely Phædra !
 At last with equal ardor meet my vows ?
 ' Oh, dear-bought blessing !—Yet I'll not complain,
 ' Since now my sharpest grief is all o'er-paid,
 ' And only heightens joy—Then haste, my charmer,
 ' Let's feast our famish'd souls with amorous riot,
 ' With fiercest blis atone for our delay,
 ' And in a moment love the age we've lost.'

Phæd. Stand off ; approach me, touch me not ; fly
 Far as the distant skies, or deepest centre. [hence,

Thef. Amazement ! death ! Ye gods, who guide the
 What can this mean ? ' So fierce a detestation, [world,
 ' So strong abhorrence !—Speak, exquisite tormentor !
 ' Was it for this your summons fill'd my soul
 ' With eager raptures and tumultuous transports ;
 ' Ev'n painful joys, and agonies of blis ;'
 Did I for this obey my Phædra's call,

And



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Oh, slave! to wrong such purity as thine;
 Such dazzling brightness, such exalted virtue.

Phæd. Virtue! all-seeing gods; ye know my virtue.
 Must I support all this? Oh, righteous Heav'n!
 Can't I yet speak? Reproach I could have borne,
 Pointed his satire's stings, and edg'd his rage:
 But to be prais'd—Now, Minos; I defy thee;
 Ev'n all thy dreadful magazines of pains,
 Stones, furies, wheels; are slight to what I suffer,
 And hell itself's relief.

Thef. What's hell to thee?

• What crimes couldst thou commit, or what reproaches
 • Could innocence so pure as Phædra's fear?
 • Oh, thou'rt the chastest matron of thy sex,
 • The fairest pattern of excelling virtue!
 • Our latest annals shall record thy glory,
 • The maid's example; and the matron's theme.
 • Each skilful artist shall express thy form
 • In animated gold. The threat'ning sword
 • Shall hang for ever o'er thy snowy bosom;
 • Such heav'nly beauty on thy face shall bloom
 • As shall almost excuse the villain's crime;
 • But yet that firmness, that unshaken virtue,
 • As still shall make the monster more detested.
 • Where-e'er you pass, the crowded way shall sound
 • With joyful cries, and endless acclamations:
 • And when aspiring bards, in daring strains,
 • Shall raise some heav'nly matron to the pow'rs; [dra.
 • They'll say, She's great; she's true; she's chaste as Phæ-

• *Phæd.* This might have been—but now, Oh, cruel
 • Now, as I pass; the crowded way shall sound [stars!
 • With hissing scorn, and murmur'ing detestation.
 • The latest annals shall record my shame;
 • And when th' avenging muse; with pointed rage,
 • Would sink some impious woman down to hell,
 • She'll say, She's false, she's base, she's foul as Phædra.

• *Thef.* Hadst thou been foul, had horrid violation
 • Cast any stains on purity like thine;
 • They're wash'd already in the villain's blood;
 • The very sword, his instrument of horror,
 • Ere this time drench'd in his incestuous heart,

Hath

Hath done thee justice, ' and aveng'd the crimes
' He us'd it to perform.'

Enter Messenger.

Mess. Ajas, my lord,
Ere this the prince is dead! I saw Cratander
Give him a sword; I saw him boldly take it,
Rear it on high, and point it to his breast.
With steady hands, and with disdainful looks,
As one that fear'd not death, but scorn'd to die,
And not in battle. A loud clamour follow'd;
And the surrounding soldiers hid from sight;
But all pronounc'd him dead.

Phæd. Is he then dead?

Thef. Yes, yes, he's dead; and dead by my command.
And in this dreadful act of mournful justice
I'm more renown'd, than in my dear-bought laurels.

Phæd. Then thou'rt renown'd indeed.—Oh, happy
Oh, only worthy of the love of Phædra! [Theseus!
Haste, then, let's join our well-met hands together,
Unite for ever, and defy the gods
To shew a pair so eminently wretched. [praise me;

Thef. Wretched!—for what? For what the world must
For what the nations shall adore my justice;
A villain's death?

Phæd. Hippolitus a villain!
Oh, he was all his godlike fire could wish;
The pride of Theseus, and the hopes of Crete!
Nor did the bravest of his godlike race
Tread with such early hopes the paths of honour. [dram,

Thef. What can this mean? Declare, ambiguous Phæ-
' Say, whence these shifting gusts of clashing rage?
' Why are thy doubted speeches dark and troubled,
' As Cretan seas when vex'd by warring winds?'
Why is a villain, with alternate passion,
Accus'd and prais'd, detested and deplor'd?

Phæd. Canst thou not guess?
Canst thou not read it in my furious passions?
In all the wild disorders of my soul?
Couldst thou not see it in the noble warmth
That urg'd the darling youth to acts of honour?
' Couldst thou not find it in the gen'rous truth
' Which sparkled in his eyes, and open'd in his face?'
Couldst

58 PHÆDRA AND HIPPOLITUS.

Couldst not perceive it in the chaste reserve,
In every word and look, each godlike act,
Couldst thou not see Hippolitus was guiltless?

Thes. Guiltless! Oh, all ye gods! what can this mean?

Phæd. Mean! that the guilt is mine, that virtuous
The maid's example, and the matron's theme, [Phædra,
With bestial passion woo'd your loathing son,
And when deny'd, with impious accusation
Sullied the lustre of his shining honour;
Of my own crimes accus'd the faultless youth,
And with ensnaring wiles destroy'd that virtue
I try'd in vain to shake.

Thes. Is he then guiltless?

Guiltless? Then what art thou? And, Oh, just Heav'n!
What a detested parricide is Theseus?

Phæd. What am I? What, indeed, but one more black
That earth or hell e'er bore. Oh, horrid mixture
'Of crimes and woes, of parricide and incest,
'Perjury and murder; to arm the erring father
'Against the guiltless son!' Oh, impious Lycon,
In what a hell of woes thy arts have plung'd me!

Thes. Lycon! — Here, guards! — Oh, most aban-
don'd villain!
Secure him, seize him, drag him piece-meal hither.

Enter Guards.

Gua. Who has, my lord, incur'd your high displeasure?

Thes. Who can it be, ye gods, but perjur'd Lycon?
Who can inspire such storms of rage, but Lycon?
Where has my sword left one so black, but Lycon?
Where, wretched Theseus! in thy bed and heart,
The very darling of my soul and eyes,
Oh, beautiful fiend! But trust not to thy form.
'You too, my son, were fair; your manly beauties
'Charm'd ev'ry heart (Oh, heav'n's!) to your destruction;
'You too were good, your virtuous soul abhor'd
'The crimes for which you died. Oh, impious Phædra!
Incestuous fury! execrable murd'ers!
Is there revenge on earth, or pain in hell;
Can art invent, or boiling rage suggest,
Ev'n endless torture, which thou shalt not suffer?

Phæd. And is there aught on earth I would not suffer?
Oh, were there vengeance equal to my crimes,

Thou



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Boasted his fate, and triumph'd in his ruin.
 Not this I promis'd to his dying mother,
 When, in her mortal pangs, she sighing gave me
 The last cold kisses from her trembling lips,
 ' And reach'd her feeble wand'ring hand to mine ;
 ' When her last breath now quiv'ring at her mouth,
When her last words now falt'ring from her tongue,
 Implor'd my goodness to her lovely son;
 To her Hippolitus. He, alas ! descends
 An early victim to the lazy shades,
 (Oh, heav'n and earth !) by Theseus doom'd, descends.

Phæ. He's doom'd by Theseus, but accus'd by Phædra,
 By Phædra's madness and by Lycon's hatred.

' Yet, with my life I expiate my frenzy,
 And die for thee, my headlong rage destroy'd.
 ' Thee I pursue (Oh, great ill-fated youth)
 ' Pursue thee still, but now with chaste desires ;
 ' Thee thro' the dismal waste of gloomy death,
 ' Thee thro' the glimm'ring dawn, and purer day,
 ' Thro' all th' Elysian plains——Oh, righteous Minos !
 ' Elysian plains ! there he and his Ismena
 ' Shall sport for ever, shall for ever drink
 ' Immortal love ; while I far off shall howl :
 ' In lonely plains, while all the blackest ghosts
 ' Shrink from the baleful sight of one more monstrous
 ' And more accurs'd than they.'

Thef. I too must die ;

I too must once more see the burning shore
 Of livid Acheron and black Cocytus,
 Whence no Alcides will release me now.

Phæd. Then why this stay ? Come on, let's plunge to-
 See, Hell sets wide its adamantine gates ; [gether.
 ' See, thro' the sable gates the black Cocytus
 ' In smoky circles rows its fiery waves ;'
 Hear, hear the stunning harmonies of woe,
 The din of rattling chains, of clashing whips,
 Of groans, or loud complaints, of piercing shrieks,
 That wide thro' all its gloomy world resound.
 How huge Megara stalks ! what streaming fires
 Blaze from her glaring eyes ! what serpents curl
 In horrid wreaths, and hiss around her head !
 Now, now she drags me to the bar of Minos :

See how the awful judges of the dead
 Look stedfast hate, and horrible dismay !
 See, Minos turns away his loathing eyes ;
 ‘ Rage choaks his struggling words ; the fatal urn
 ‘ Drops trembling from his hand.’ Oh, all ye gods !
 What, Lycon here ? Oh, execrable villain !
 Then am I still on earth ? By hell I am,
 A fury now, a scourge preserv’d for Lycon.
 See, the just beings offer to my vengeance
 That impious slave. Now, Lycon, for revenge :
 Thanks, Heav’n, ’tis here. I’ll strike it to his heart.

[Mistaking Theseus for Lycon, offers to stab him.]

Gua. Heav’n’s ! ’tis your lord.

Phæd. My lord ! Oh, equal Heav’n !

Must each portentous moment rise in crimes,
 And sallying life go off in parricide ?

*This glimpse of reason some indulgent god
 Hath granted me, to close the scene of guilt.*

Then trust not thy slow drugs—Thou sure of death,
 Compleat thy horrors—And if this suffice not,
 Thou, Minos, do the rest. *[Stabs herself.]*

Thef. *Desp’rate to the last—in ev’ry passion furious.*

Phæd. *I ask not,*

*Nor do I hope from thee forgiveness, Theseus ;
 But yet, amidst my crimes, remember still,
 That my offence, was not my nature’s fault.*

*The wrath of Venus, which pursues our race,
 First kindled in my breast those guilty fires.*

*Resistless goddess, I confess thy pow’r,
 To thee I make libation of my blood.*

*Venus, avert thy hate—May wretched Phædra
 Prove the last victim of her fated line.* *[Dies.]*

Thef. ‘ At length she’s quiet, she’s dead ;
 And now earth bears not such a wretch as Theseus.

‘ Yet I’ll obey Hippolitus, and live :

‘ Then to the wars ; and as the Corybantines,

‘ With clashing shields, and braying trumpets, drown’d

‘ The cries of infant Jove, I’ll stifle conscience,

‘ And Nature’s murmurs, in the din of arms.

‘ But what are arms to me ? Is he not dead

‘ For whom I fought ; for whom my hoary age

‘ Glow’d with the boiling heat of youth in battle ?’

How then to drag a wretched life, beneath
 An endless round of still-returning woes,
 And all the gnawing pangs of vain remorse?
 What torment's this?—Therefore, Oh, greatly thought!
 Therefore do justice on thyself, and live;
 Live above all most infinitely wretched.
 Ismena too—Nay then, avenging Heav'n

Enter Ismena.

Has vented all its rage—Oh, wretched maid!
 Why dost thou come to swell my raging grief?
 ' Why add to sorrows, and embitter woes?
 ' Why do thy mournful eyes upbraid my guilt?'
 Why thus recall to my afflicted soul
 The sad remembrance of my godlike son,
 Of that dear youth my cruelty has murder'd?
Oh, gods, your reddest bolts of fire
Had dealt less torment to my suff'ring frame,
Than that destructive word hath giv'n my heart!
Life yields beneath the sound.

' *Ism.* Ruin'd! Oh, all ye powers! Oh, awful Theseus!
 ' Say, where's my lord? Say, where has fate dispos'd him?
 ' Oh, speak! the fear distracts me.

' *Thef* Gods! can I speak?
 ' Can I declare his fate to his Ismena?
 ' Oh, lovely maid! couldst thou admit of comfort,
 ' Thou shouldst for ever be my only care,
 ' Work of my life, and labour of my soul.
 ' For thee alone my sorrows; lull'd, shall cease,
 ' Cease for a while to mourn my murder'd son;
 ' For thee alone my sword once more shall rage,
 ' Restore the crown of which it robb'd your race.
 ' Then let your grief give way to thoughts of empire;
 ' At thy own Athens reign. The happy crowd
 ' Beneath the easy yoke with pleasure bow,
 ' And think in thee their own Minerva reigns.

' *Ism.* Must I then reign; nay, must I live without him?
 ' Not so, Oh, godlike youth! you lov'd Ismena:
 ' You, for her sake, refus'd the Cretan empire,
 ' And yet a nobler gift, the royal Phædra.
 ' Shall I then take a crown, a guilty crown,
 ' From the relentless hand that doom'd thy death?

' Oh,



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' Since 'twas to them I owe divine Ismena,
 ' To them I owe the dear consent of Theseus?
 Yet there's a pain lies heavy on my heart,
 For the disastrous fate of hapless Phædra.

Thes. - Deep was her anguish for the wrongs she did you.
 She chose to die, and in her death deplor'd
 Your fate, and not her own.

Hip. ' I've heard it all.' ' *Unhappy Phædra!*
 ' Oh, had not passion sully'd her renown,
 ' None e'er on earth had shone with equal lustre;
 ' So glorious liv'd, or so lamented died.
 ' Her faults were only faults of raging love,
 ' Her virtues all her own.

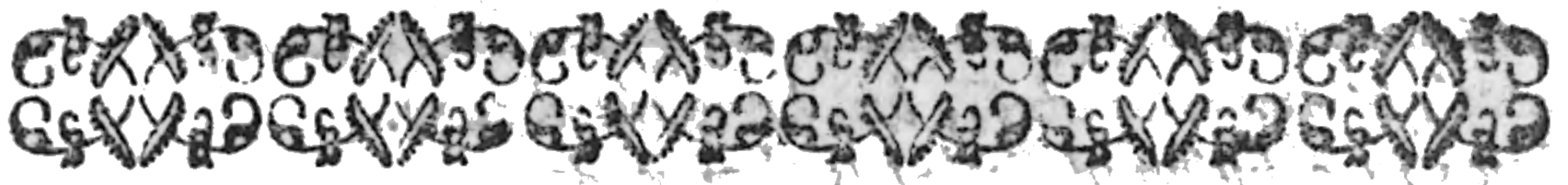
' *Ism.* Unhappy Phædra!
 ' Was there no other way, ye pitying pow'rs,
 ' No other way to crown Ismena's love?
 ' Then must I ever mourn her cruel fate,
 ' And in the midst of my triumphant joy,
 ' Ev'n in my hero's arms, confess some sorrow.'

Thes. - ' Oh, tender maid, forbear with ill-tim'd grief
 ' To damp our blessings, and incense the gods!
 But let's away, and pay kind Heav'n our thanks,
 For all the wonders in our favour wrought;
 That Heav'n, whose mercy rescu'd erring Theseus
 From execrable crimes, and endless woes:
 Then learn from me, ye kings that rule the world:
 With equal poize let steady justice sway,
 And flagrant crimes with certain vengeance pay,
 But till the proofs are clear, the stroke delay.

' *Hip.* The righteous gods, that innocence require,
 ' Protect the goodness which themselves inspire;
 ' Unguarded virtue human arts defies,
 ' Th' accus'd is happy, while th' accuser dies.'

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FIFTH ACT.



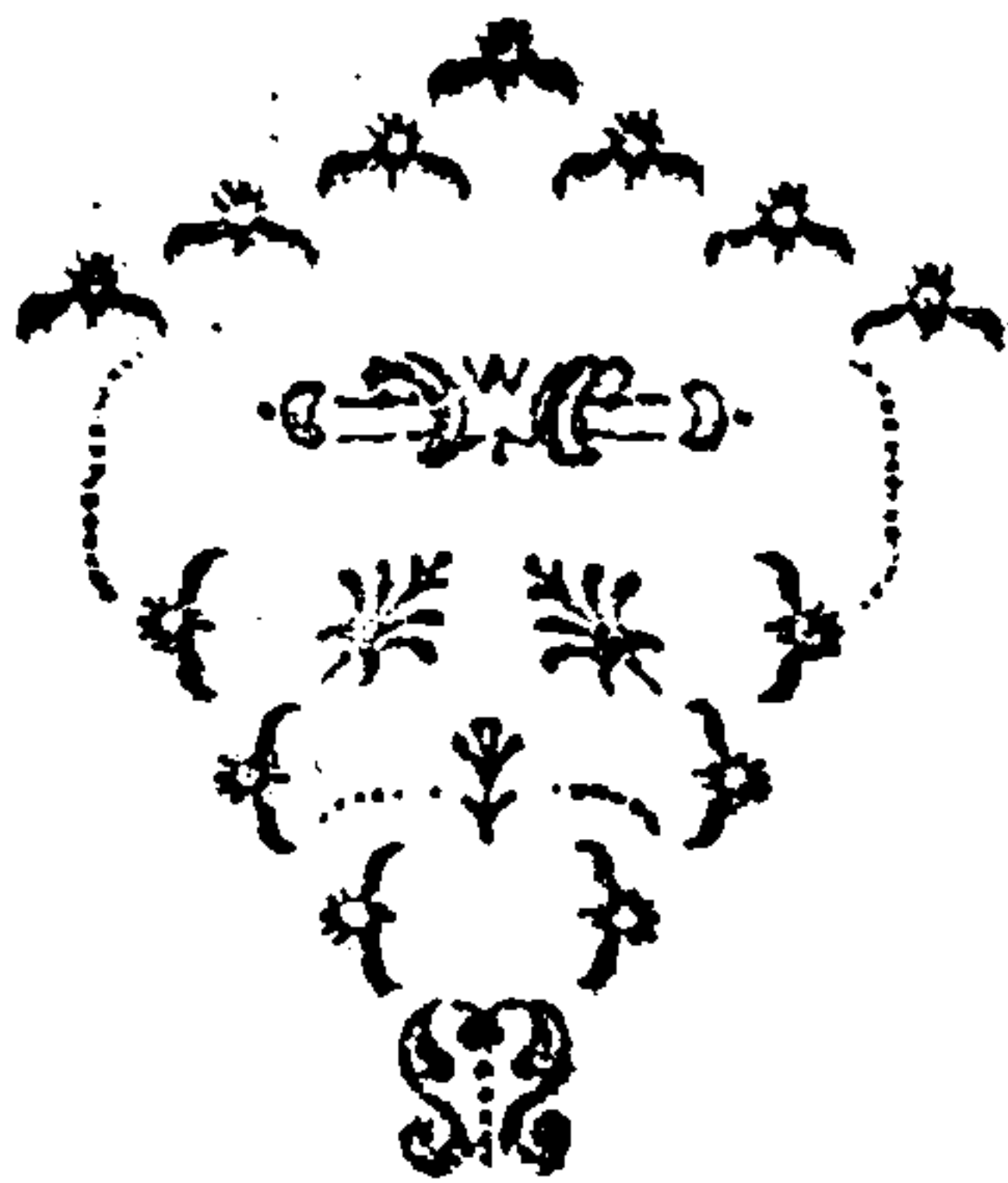
E P I L O G U E.

Written by Mr. PRIOR.

LADIES, to-night your pity I implore,
For one who never troubled you before;
An Oxford man, extremely read in Greek,
Who from Eu—ripides makes Phædra speak;
And comes to town to let us moderns know
How women lov'd two thousand years ago.
If that be all, said I, e'en burn your play,
Egad, we know all that as well as they:
Shew us the handsome youthful charioteer,
Firm in his seat, and running his career;
Our souls would kindle with as gen'rous flames
As e'er inspir'd the ancient Grecian dames:
Ev'ry Ismena would resign her breast,
And ev'ry dear Hippolitus be blest.
But, as it is, six flouncing Flanders mares
Are e'en as good as any two of theirs;
And if Hippolitus can but contrive
To buy the gilded chariot, John can drive.
Now of the bustle you have seen to-day,
And Phædra's morals, in this scholar's play;
Something, at last, in justice, should be said,
But this Hippolitus so fills one's head —
Well, Phædra liv'd as chastly as she cou'd,
For she was father Jove's own flesh and blood;
Her awkward love, indeed, was oddly fated,
She and her Poly were too near related;
And yet that scruple had been laid aside,
If honest Theseus had but fairly dy'd:

E P I L O G U E.

*But when he came, what need'd he to know,
But that all matters stood in statu quo :
There was no harm, you see ; or, grant there were,
She might want conduct, but he wanted care.
'Twas in a husband little less than rude,
Upon his wife's retirement to intrude :
He should have sent a night or two before,
That he would come exact at such an hour ;
Then he had turn'd all tragedy to jest,
Found ev'ry thing contribute to his rest ;
The picquet friend dismiss'd, the coast all clear,
And spouse alone, impatient for her dear.
But if these gay reflections come too late
To keep the guilty Phædra from her fate,
If your more serious judgment must condemn
The dire effects of her unbappy flame ;
Yet, ye chaste matrons, and ye tender fair,
Let love and innocence engage your care ;
My spotless flames to your protection take,
And spare poor Phædra for Ismena's sake.*





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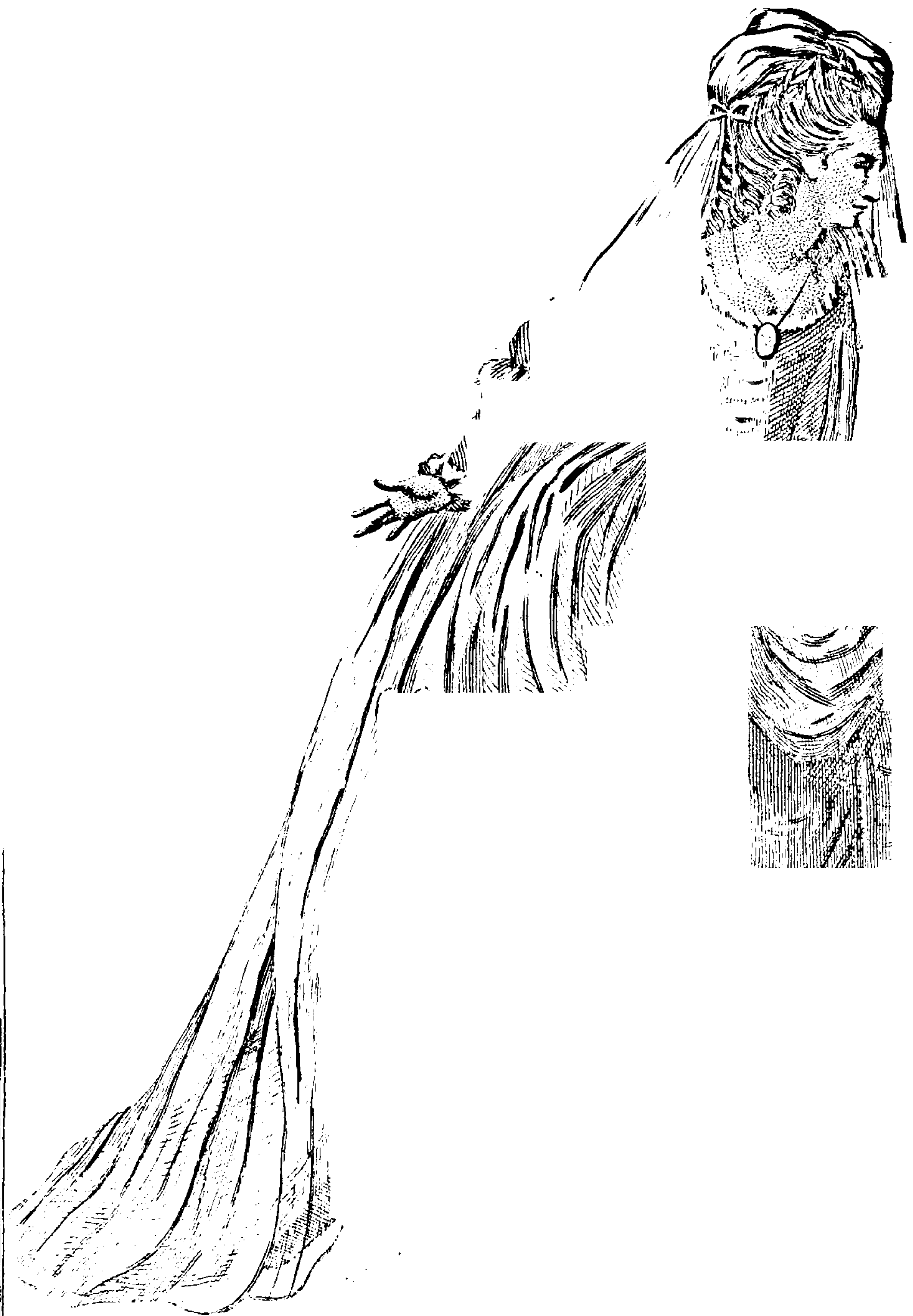
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I. Roberts del.

M^{rs} YATES in the Character of ISABEL

M E A S U R E for M E A S U R E.

**AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.**

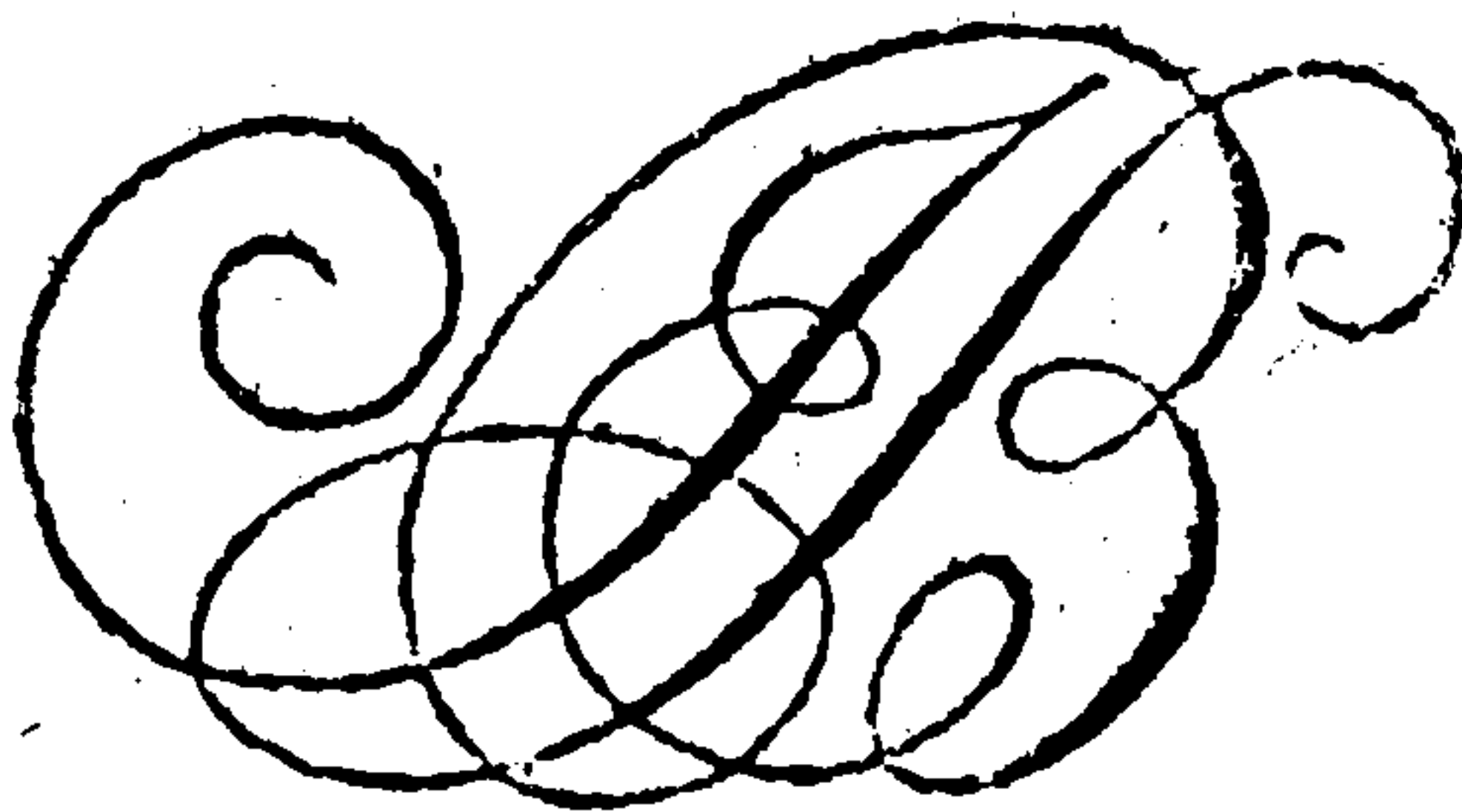
R E V I S E D

By Mr. Y O U N G E R,

Prompter of that Theatre.

**An INTRODUCTION, and NOTES
CRITICAL and ILLUSTRATIVE,**

**ARE ADDED BY THE
AUTHORS of the DRAMATIC CENSOR.**



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M D C C L X X I I I.



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D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

Covent-Garden.

DUKE,
ANGELO,
ESCALUS,
CLAUDIO,
LUCIO,
PROVOST,
THOMAS,
PETER,
ELBOW,
CLOWN,
ABHORSON,
BARNARDINE,

Mr. BENSLEY.
Mr. CLARKE.
Mr. HULL.
Mr. WROUGHTON.
Mr. WOODWARD.
Mr. GARDNER.
Mr. REDMAN.
Mr. R. SMITH.
Mr. QUICK.
Mr. DUNSTALL.
Mr. BATES.
Mr. STOPPELAER.

ISABELLA,
MARIANA,
JULIET.
FRANCISCA,
Mistress OVER-DONE,

Mrs. YATES,
Mrs. BULKLEY.
Mrs. INVILE.
Miss PEARCE.
Mrs. WHITE.

Guards, Officers, and other Attendants.

S C E N E, *Vienna.*

ME A-

MEASURE FOR MEASURE*.

A C T I.

SCENE, *The Duke's Palace.*

Enter Duke, Escalus, and Lords.

DUKE.

ESCALUS,—

Escal. My Lord,

Duke. Of government the properties t'unfold,
 Would seem in me t'affect speech and discourse.
 Since I am not to know that your own science
 Exceeds, in that, the lists of all advice
 My strength can give you:
 The nature of our people,
 Our city's institutions, and the terms
 Of common justice, y'are as pregnant in,
 As art and practice hath enriched any,
 That we remember. There is our commission,
 From which we would not have you warp. Call hither,
 I say, bid come before us *Angelo*:
 What figure of us, think you, he will bear?
 For you must know, we have with special soul
 Elected him our absence to supply;
 Lent him our terror, drest him with our love;
 And giv'n our deputation all the organs
 Of our own power: say, what think you of it?

* The title of this play to persons not very intelligent, sounds rather odd, and is somewhat obscure; but the play fully justifies and appropriates it.

6 MEASURE for MEASURE:

Escal. If any in *Vienna* be of worth,
To undergo such ample grace and honour,
It is Lord *Angelo*.

Enter Angelo.

Duke. Look, where he comes!

Ang. Always obedient to your Grace's will,
I come to know your pleasure.

Duke. Angelo,
There is a kind of character in thy life,
That to th' observer doth thy history
Fully unfold: thyself and thy belongings
Are not thine own so proper, as to walte
Thyself upon thy virtues; they on thee.
Heav'n doth with us, as we with torches do,
Not light them for themselves: for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touch'd,
But to fine issues: nor nature never lends
The smal'est scruple of her excellence,
But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines
Herself the glory of a creditor,
Both thanks, and use. But I do bend my speech
To one that can my part in him advertise;
Hold therefore, *Angelo*:
In our remove, be thou at full ourself.
Mortality and mercy in *Vienna*,
Live in thy tongue and heart: old *Escalus*,
Though first in question, is thy secondary:
Take thy commission.

Ang. Now, good my Lord,
Let there be some more test made of my metal,
Before so noble and so great a figure
Be stamp't upon it.

Duke. We have with a prepar'd and leaven'd choice,
Proceeded to you; therefore take your honours.
We shall write to you,
As time and our concernings shall importune,



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8 MEASURE for MEASURE.

Prov. I do it not in evil disposition;
But from Lord *Angelo* by special charge:

Claud. Thus can the Demi-god, Authority,
Make us pay down, for our offence, by weight.
The words of heav'n; on whom it will, it will;
On whom it will not, so; yet still 'tis just.

Enter Lucio.

Lucio. Why how now, *Claudio*? whence comes this
restraint?

Claud. From too much liberty, my *Lucio*, liberty;
As surfeit is the father of much fast,
So every scope, by th' immoderate use,
Turns to restraint: our natures do pursue,
Like rats that ravin down their proper bane,
A thirsty evil; and when we drink, we die.

Lucio. If I could speak so wisely under an arrest, I
would send for certain of my creditors; and yet, to
say the truth, I had as lief have the foppery of free-
dom, as the morality of imprisonment: what's thy
offence, *Claudio*?

Claud. What, but to speak of, would offend again.

Lucio. What is't, murder?

Claud. No.

Lucio. Wenching?

Claud. Cail it so.

Prov. Away, Sir, you must go.

Claud. One word, good friend:—*Lucio*, a word with
you.

Lucio. A hundred; if they'll do you any good:
Is wenching so look'd after?

Claud. Thus stands it upon me: upon a true contract,
I got possession of *Julietta's* bed,
(You know the lady,) she is fast my wife;
Save that we do the denunciation lack,
Of outward order. This we came not to,
Only for propagation of a dower,
Remaining in the coffer of her friends;
From whom we thought it meet to hide our love,
'Till time had made them for us. But it chances,

The

The stealth of our molt mutual entertainment,
With character too gross, is writ on *Juliet*.

Lucio. With child, perhaps?

Claud. Unhappily, even so.

And the new Deputy now for the Duke,
* (Whether it be the fault, and glimpse, of newness;
Or whether that the body-public be
A horse whereon the Governor doth ride,
Who, newly in the seat, that it may know
He can command, lets it strait feel the spur;
Whether the tyranny be in his place,
Or in his eminence that fills it up,
I stagger in:—)—but this new Governor
Awakes me all th' enrolled penalties †,
Which have, like unscour'd armour, hung by th' wall
So long, that nineteen Zodiacks have gone round,
And none of them been worn: and, for a name,
Now puts the drowsy and neglected act
Freshly on me: 'tis surely, for a name.

Lucio. I warrant, it is; and thy head stands so tickle
on thy shoulders, that a milk-maid, if she be in love,
may sigh it off. Send after the Duke, and appeal to
him.

Claud. I have done so, but he's not to be found.
I pr'ythee, *Lucio*, do me this kind service:
This day my sister should the cloister enter,
And there receive her approbation.
Acquaint her with the danger of my state,
Implore her, in my voice, that she make friends,
To the strict Deputy: bid herself assay him;
I have great hope in that; for in her youth
There is a prone and speechless dialect ‡,
Such as moves men! beside, she hath prosp'rous art.

* This is an unpardonable long parenthesis; hard to speak intelligibly.

† Arbitrary governors will rake amongst the most antiquated authorities, to gloss rigid exertion and extension of power.

‡ The power of female youth and beauty, is expressed with comprehensive brevity, in this line.

10. M E A S U R E for M E A S U R E.

When she will play with reason and discourse;
And well she can persuade.

Lucio. I pray she may; as well for the encouragement of the like, as for the enjoying of thy life, which I would be sorry should be thus foolishly lost, at a game of ticktack. I'll to her.

* *Claud.* I thank you, good friend *Lucio*.

Lucio. Within two hours,—

Claud. Come, officer, away. [Exeunt.]

S C E N E, *A Monastery.*

Enter Duke, and Friar Thomas †.

Duke. No, holy father; throw away that thought;
Believe not that the dribbling dart of love,
Can pierce a compleat bosom; why I desire thee
To give me secret harbour, hath a purpose,
More grave and wrinkled, than the aims and ends,
Of burning youth.

Fri. May your Grace speak of it?

Duke. My holy Sir, none better knows than you,
How I have ever lov'd the life remov'd;
And held in idle price to haunt assemblies,
Where youth, and cost, and witness bravery keeps.
I have deliver'd to Lord *Angelo*,
(A man of stricture and firm abstinence)
My absolute pow'r and place, here in *Vienna*;
And he supposes me travell'd to *Poland*.
For so I've strew'd it in the common ear,
And so it is receiv'd: now, pious Sir,
You will demand of me, why I do this?

* Though *Lucio* is drawn a spirited coxcomb, yet for the melancholy circumstance his acquaintance *Claudio* is in, we think him furnished in this scene with too much levity.

† That performer, who personates the Duke, in this piece, should be a sound, firm, judicious orator; possessed of agreeable medium tones, action of dignity, and emphasis of force: the character is finely written, yet from its length and sameness, requires considerable help from the actor; who, if not very clever, stands a chance to pall.

Fri.



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Stands at a guard with envy ; scarce confesses
That his blood flows, or that his appetite
Is more to bread than stone : hence shall we see,
If pow'r change purpose, what our seemers be.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E, *A Nunnery.*

* *Enter Isabella and Francisca.*

Isab. And have you nuns no farther privileges ?

Nun. Are not these large enough ?

Isab. Yes, truly : I speak not, as desiring more ;
But rather wishing a more strict restraint,
Upon the sister-hood, the votarists of *Saint Clare.*

Lucio. [*Within.*] Ho ! peace be in this place !

Isab. Who's that, which calls ?

Nun. It is a man's voice : gentle *Isabella*,
Turn you the key, and know his business of him ;
You may ; I may not ; you are yet unsworn :
When you have vow'd, you must not speak with men,
But in the presence of the Prioress ;
Then, if you speak, you must not shew your face ;
Or, if you shew your face, you must not speak.
He calls again ; I pray you, answer him. [*Exit Franc.*]

Enter Lucio. †

Lucio. Hail, virgin, (if you be) as those cheek-roses
Proclaim you are no less ; can you so stead me,
As bring me to the sight of *Isabella*,
A novice of this place, and the fair sister
To her unhappy brother *Claudio* ?

Isab. Why her unhappy brother ? let me ask,
The rather, for I now must make you know
I am that *Isabella*, and his sister.

* *Isabella* should be graceful and amiable in figure ; her voice full and harmonious, her emphasis strictly just, her cadences unaffected ; and the whole of her utterance remarkably persuasive.

† The requisites for pert self-sufficient foppery, will render *Lucio* a pleasant character ; it is more in favour of the actor, than any other in the piece.

Lucio.

Lucio. Gentle and fair, your brother kindly greets
you;

Not to be weary with you, he's in prison.

Isab. Wo me! for what?

Lucio. For that, which, if myself might be his judge,
He should receive his punishment in thanks;
He hath got his friend with child.

Isab. Sir, make me not your story.

Lucio. 'Tis true:—I would not (tho' 'tis my familiar sin,
With maids to seem the lapwing, and to jest,
Tongue far from heart) play with all virgins so.
I hold you as a thing en-sky'd, and sainted;
And to be talk'd with in sincerity,
As with a Saint.

Isab. Some one with child by him?—my cousin *Juliet*!

Lucio. Is she your cousin?

Isab. Adoptedly, as school-maids change their names,
By vain, tho' apt, affection.

Lucio. She it is.

Isab. O, let him marry her.

Lucio. This is the point.

The Duke is very strangely gone from hence;
Upon his place,

And with full line of his authority,
Governs Lord *Angelo*; a man whole blood
Is very snow-broth.

He hath pick'd out an act,
Under whose heavy sense your brother's life
Falls into forfeit; he arrests him on it;
And follows close the rigor of the statute,
To make him an example; all hope's gone,
Unless you have the grace by your fair prayer,
'To soften *Angelo*; and that's my pith of business,
'Twixt you and your poor brother.

Isab. Doth he so
Seek for his life?

Lucio. He 'as censur'd him, already;
And, as I hear, the Provost hath a warrant,
For's execution.

Isab. Alas! what poor
Ability's in me, to do him good!

MEASURE for MEASURE.

Lucio. Assay the power you have.

Isab. My power! Alas! I doubt.

Lucio. Our doubts are traitors *;

And make us lose the good, we oft might win,
By fearing to attempt. Go to Lord *Angelo*,
And let him learn to know, when maidens sue,
Men give like Gods; but when they weep and kneel,
All their petitions are as truly theirs,
As they themselves would owe them.

Isab. I'll see what I can do,

Lucio. But, speedily.

Isab. I will about it strait;

No longer staying, but to give the mother
Notice of my affair. I humbly thank you;
Commend me to my brother: soon at night,
I'll send him certain word of my success.

Lucio. I take my leave of you.

Isab. Good Sir, adieu.

[*Exeunt* †.]

* This is an excellent remark, very often felt by the shy and timorous, who let slip, through diffidence, advantageous opportunities, which the more confident suitors of Fortune, push on to meet

† The first Act is sufficiently interesting, as it opens the plot and characters, in a pleasing manner.

A C T II.

S C E N E, *the Palace.*

Enter Angelo, and Escalus. *

ANGELO.

WE must not make a scarecrow of the law,
Setting it up to fear the birds of prey,
And let it keep one shape, 'till custom make it
Their pearch, and not their terror.

* *Angelo* and *Escalus*, though material agents in the Play, may be sufficiently supported by third-rate abilities; however, they should look nobility, and speak like men of sense.

Escal.



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16 MEASURE for MEASURE.

Ang. Did not I tell thee, yea? hadst thou not order?
Why dost thou ask again?

Prov. Lest I might be too rash.
Under your good correction, I have seen,
When, after execution, judgment hath
Repented o'er his doom.

Ang. Go to; let that be mine.
Do you your office, or give up your place,
And you shall well be spar'd.

Prov. I crave your pardon.
What shall be done, Sir, with the groaning *Juliet*?
She's very near her hour.

Ang. Dispose of her
To some more fitting place, and that with speed.

Serv. Here is the sister of the man condemn'd,
Desires access to you.

Ang. Hath he a sister?

Prov. Ay, my good lord, a very virtuous maid,
And to be shortly of a sisterhood,
If not already.

Ang. Well; let her be admitted. [Exit *Servant*.]

Enter Lucio, and Isabella.

Ang. Y'are welcome; what's your will?

Isab. I am a woful suitor to your Honour,
Please but your Honour hear me.

Ang. Well; what's your suit?

Isab. There is a vice that most I do abhor,
And most desire should meet the blow of justice:
For which I would not plead, but that I must;
And yet I am
At war, 'twixt will, and will not.

Ang. Well; the matter?

Isab. I have a brother is condemn'd to die;
I do beseech you, let it be his fault,
And not my brother.

Prov. Heav'n give thee moving graces!

Ang. Condemn the fault, and not the actor of it?
Why, every fault's condemn'd, ere it be done;
Mine were the very cypher of a function,

To

To find the faults, whose fine stands in record,
And let go by the actor.

Ijab. O just, but severe law!

I had a brother, then;—heav'n keep your Honour!

Lucio. Give not o'er so: to him again, intreat him,
Kneel down before him: hang upon his gown:
You are too cold; if you should need a pin,
You could not with more tame a tongue desire it.
To him, I say.

Ijab. Must he needs die?

Ang. Maiden, no remedy.

Ijab. Yes; I do think, that you might pardon him;
And neither heav'n, nor man, grieve at the mercy.

Ang. I will not do't.

Ijab. But can you, if you would?

Ang. Look, what I will not, that I cannot do.

Ijab. But might you do't, and do the world no wrong,
If so your heart were touch'd with that remorse,
As mine is to him?

Ang. He's sentenc'd; 'tis too late.

Ijab. Too late? why, no; I, that do speak a word,
May call it back again: Well, believe this,
No ceremony that to Great ones 'longs,
Not the King's crown, nor the deputed sword,
The marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe,
Become them with one half so good a grace,
As mercy does: if he had been as you,
And you as he, you would have slipt like him;
But he, like you, would not have been so stern.

Ang. Pray you, be gone.

Ijab. I wou'd to heav'n I had your potency,
And you were *Isabel*; should it then be thus?
No; I would tell what 'twere to be a judge,
And what a prisoner.

Lucio. Ay, touch him; there's the vein.

Ang. Your brother is a forfeit of the law,
And you but waste your words.

Isab. Alas! alas!

Why, all the souls that were, were forfeit once;
And he, that might the 'vantage best have took,

Found out the remedy. How would you be,
If He, which is the top of Judgment, should
But judge you, as you are? Oh, think on that;
And mercy then will breathe within your lips,
Like man new made.

Ang. * Be you content, fair maid;
It is the Law, not I, condemns your brother.
Were he my kinsman, brother, or my son,
It should be thus with him; he dies, to-morrow.

Isab. To-morrow? oh! that's sudden. Spare him,
Spare him:

Good, good my Lord, bethink you:
Who is it, that hath dy'd for this offence?
There's many have committed it.

Lucio. Ay, well said.

Ang. The Law hath not been dead, tho' it hath slept:
Those many had not dar'd to do that evil,
If the first man, that did th' edict infringe,
Had answer'd for his deed.

Isab. Yet shew some pity.

Ang. I shew it most of all, when I shew justice;
For then I pity those, I do not know;
Which a dismiss'd offence would after gaul;
And do him right, that, answering one foul wrong,
Lives not to act another. Be satisfy'd;
Your brother dies, to-morrow; be content.

Isab. So you must be the first, that gives this sentence;
And he, that suffers: oh, 'tis excellent,
To have a Giant's strength; but it is tyrannous,
To use it like a Giant.

Lucio. That's well said.

Isab. Could great men thunder †

* The supplicative persuasion of *Isabella*, in this scene, is delicate, pathetic, and forceable; *Shakespeare's* humane disposition, and love of mercy, are very evident, in his masterly recommendations of that heavenly attribute, particularly those in this Play, and the *Merchant of Venice*.

† There is as much poetic fire, as fine reflections, as strict moral truth, and as powerful reasoning, in this speech, as any *Shakespeare* ever wrote.



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20 MEASURE for MEASURE.

That shall be up at heav'n, and enter there,
Ere sun-rise: prayers from preserved souls,
From fasting maids, whose minds are dedicate
To nothing temporal. *

Ang. Well; come, to-morrow.

Ijab. Heav'n keep your Honour safe!

Ang. Amen:

For I am that way going to temptation,
Where prayers cross.

Ijab. At what hour, to-morrow,
Shall I attend your Lordship?

Ang. At any time 'fore noon.

Isab. Save your Honour! [*Exe. Lucio, and Isabella.*]

Ang. From thee; even from thy virtue.

What's this? what's this? is this her fault, or mine? †
The tempter, or the tempted, who sins most?

Not she, nor doth she tempt; but it is I,

That, lying by the violet in the sun,

Do, as the carrion does, not as the flower,

Corrupt with virtuous season. Can it be,

That modesty may more betray our sense,

Than woman's lightness? having waste ground enough,

Shall we desire to raze the sanctuary,

And pitch our evils there? oh, fie, fie, fie!

What dost thou? or what art thou, *Angelo*?

Dost thou desire her foully, for those things

That make her good? Oh, let her brother live:

Thieves for their robbery have authority,

When judges steal themselves. What? do I love her,

That I desire to hear her speak again,

And feast upon her eyes?

Oh, cunning enemy, that to catch a faint,

With faints dost bait thy hook! most dangerous

Is that temptation, that doth goad us on

* The superior estimation of orisons, breathed from chaste sincerity, to temporal riches, is here beautifully set forth.

† The agitations of even a bad mind, first verging on, and then plunging into extreme guilt, are finely depicted in this soliloquy: the discerning auditor and reader may collect much instructive and pleasing matter from it.

To sin in loving virtue: ne'er could the strumpet,
 With all her double vigour, art and nature,
 Once stir my temper; but this virtuous maid
 Subdues me quite: ever till this very now,
 When men were fond, I smil'd, and wonder'd how.

[Exit.

S C E N E changes to a Prison.

Enter Duke habited like a Friar, and Provost.

Duke. Hail to you, *Provost*; so, I think, you are.

Prov. I am the *Provost*; what's your will, good
Friar?

Duke. Bound by my charity, and my blest order,
 I come to visit the afflicted spirits
 Here in the prison; do me the common right
 To let me see them, and to make me know
 The nature of their crimes; that I may minister
 To them, accordingly.

Prov. I would do more than that, if more were
 needful.

Enter Juliet.

Look, here comes one; a gentlewoman;
 She is with child; *
 And he, that got it, sentenc'd: a young man,
 More fit to do another such offence,
 Than die for this.

Duke. When must he die?

Prov. As I do think, to-morrow.

I have provided for you; stay a while, [To Juliet.
 And you shall be conducted.

Duke. Repent you, fair-one, of the sin you carry?

Juliet. I do; and bear the shame most patiently.

Duke. I'll teach you how you shall arraign your
 conscience,

And try your penitence, if it be sound,
 Or hollowly put on.

* We cannot help pronouncing the cause of that difficulty,
~~Cloud~~ labours under, indecent; and therefore blameable.

Juliet.

22 MEASURE for MEASURE.

Juliet. I'll gladly learn.

Duke. Love you the man that wrong'd you?

Juliet. Yes, as I love the woman that wrong'd him.

Duke. So then, it seems, your most offenceful act
Was mutually committed.

Juliet. Mutually.

Duke. Then was your sin of heavier kind than his.

Juliet. I do confess it, and repent it, father:

Duke. 'Tis meet so, daughter; but repent you not,
As that the sin hath brought you to this shame?

Juliet. I do repent me, as it is an evil;
And take the shame with joy.

Duke. There rest.

Your partner, as I hear, must die, to-morrow,
And I am going with instruction to him;
So grace go with you! *benedicite.*

[*Exit.*]

S C E N E changes to the Palace.

Enter Angelo.

Ang. When I would pray and think, I think and
pray,

To sev'ral subjects: heav'n hath my empty words,
Whilst my invention, hearing not my tongue,
Anchors on *Isabel*: Heav'n's in my mouth,
And in my heart the strong and swelling evil
Of my conception: the state, whereon I studied,
Is like a good thing, being often read,
Grown fear'd and tedious; yea, my gravity,
Wherein (let no man hear me) I take pride,
Could I with boot change for an idle plume,
Which the air beats for vain. Oh place! oh form!
How often dost thou with thy case, thy habit,
Wrench awe from fools, and tie the wiser souls
To thy false seeming *?
How now, who's there? 'tis *Isabel*. O heav'ns!

* This soliloquy has some similitude to that of the King in *Hamlet*; to which it is certainly inferior, yet wants not considerable merit.

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Ang. Pleas'd you to do't, at peril of your soul,
Were equal poile of sin and charity.

Isab. That I do beg his life, if it be sin,
Heav'n, let me hear it! you granting my suit,
If that be sin, I'll make it my morn-pray'r
To have it added to the faults of mine,
And nothing of yours answer.

Ang. Nay, but hear me:
Your sense pursues not mine: either you're ignorant;
Or seem so, craftily; and that's not good.*

Isab. Let me be ignorant, and in nothing good,
But graciously to know I am no better.

Ang. Thus wisdom wishes to appear most bright,
When it doth tax itself:

But mark me,
'To be received plain, I'll speak more gross;
Your brother is to die.

Isab. So.

Ang. And his offence is so, as it appears
Accountant to the law upon that pain.

Isab. True.

Ang. Admit' no other way to save his life,
(As I subscribe not that, nor any other,
But in the loss of question,) that you his sister,
Finding yourself desir'd of such a person,
Whose credit with the judge, or own great place,
Could fetch your brother from the manacles
Of the all-holding law, and that there were
No earthly mean to save him, but that either
You must lay down the treasures of your body,
'To this suppos'd; or else to let him suffer;
What would you do?

Isab. As much for my poor brother, as myself;
That is, were I under the terms of death,
Th' impression of keen whips I'd wear as rubies,
And strip myself to death, as to a bed,

* The manner in which *Angelo* winds about his vicious purpose, is artfully distant; he wants to save explanation on his side, by drawing *Isabella* to meet his meaning.

That longing I've been sick for, ere I'd yield
My body up to shame. *

Ang. Then must your brother die.

Isab. And 'twere the cheaper way;
Better it were a brother dy'd, at once;
Than that a sister, by redeeming him,
Should die for ever.

Ang. Were not you then as cruel as the sentence,
That you have slander'd so?

Isab. An ignominious ransom, and free pardon,
Are of two houses; lawful mercy, sure,
Is nothing kin to foul redemption.

Ang. You seem'd of late to make the law a tyrant,
And rather prov'd the sliding of your brother
A merriment, than a vice.

Isab. Oh pardon me, my Lord; it oft falls out
To have what we would have, we speak not what we
mean:

I something do excuse the thing I hate,
For his advantage that I dearly love.

Ang. We are all frail.

Isab. Else let my brother die.

Ang. Nay, women are frail, too.

Isab. Ay, as the glasses where they view themselves;
Which are as easy broke, as they make forms.
For we are soft as our complexions are,
And credulous to false prints.

Ang. I think it well;
And from this testimony of your sex,
(Since, I suppose, we're made to be no stronger,
Than faults may shake our frames) let me be bold:
I do aneath your words; be that you are,
That is, a woman; if you're more, you're none.
If you be one, as you are well expreis'd,
By all external warrants, shew it now,
By putting on the destin'd livery.

Isab. I have no tongue but one; gentle my Lord,
Let me intreat you, speak the former language.

* The plausible, villainous sophistry of *Angelo*, is finely exposed, by the ingenuous, immoveable, virtuous resolution of *Isabella*.

26 MEASURE for MEASURE.

Ang. Plainly conceive, I love you.

Isab. My brother did love Juliet;
And you tell me, that he shall die for it.

Ang. He shall not, *Isabel*, if you give me love.

Isab. I know, your virtue hath a licence in't,
Which seems a little fouler than it is,
To pluck on others.

Ang. Believe me, on mine honour,
My words express my purpose.

Isab. Ha! little honour to be much believ'd,
And most pernicious purpose!
I will proclaim thee, *Angelo*; look for't:
Sign me a present pardon for my brother,
Or, with an out-stretch'd throat, I'll tell the world,
Aloud, what man thou art.

Ang. Who will believe thee, *Isabel*?
My unsoil'd name, th'laurel-ness of my life,
My vouch against you, and my place i' th' state,
Will so your accusation over-weigh,
That you shall stifle in your own report,
And smell of a junny. I have begun;
And now I give my sensual race the rein.
Fit thy consent to my sharp appetite,
Lay by all nicety, and * prolixious blushes,
That banish what they sue for: redeem thy brother,
By yielding up thy body to my will:
Or, else he must not only die the death,
But thy unkindness shall his death draw out,
To ling'ring sufferance. Answer me, to-morrow;
Or by th' affection that now guides me most,
I'll prove a tyrant to him. As for you,
Say what you can; my false o'erweighs your true.

[*Exit.*

Isab. To whom should I complain? did I tell this,
Who would believe me? O most perilous mouths,
That bear in them one and the self-same tongue,
Either of condemnation or approval:

* We think the word *prolixious* rather exceptionable, and are ready to deem *baffling blushes* better.



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Of a poor worm. Thy best of rest is sleep,
And that thou oft provok'st; yet grossly fear'st
Thy death, which is no more.

Happy thou art not;

For what thou hast not, still thou striv'st to get;

And what thou hast, forget'st.

If thou art rich, thou'rt poor;

For, like an ass, whose back with ingots bows,

Thou bear'st thy heavy riches but a journey,

* And death unloadeth thee. Friend thou hast none;

For thy own bowels, which do call thee Sire,

The meer effusion of thy proper loins,

Do curse the *Gout*, *Sciatica*, and *Rheum*,

For ending thee no sooner. Thou hast nor youth, nor
age,

But as it were an after-dinner's sleep,

Dreaming on both; for all thy blessed youth

Becomes as aged; and when thou'rt old and rich,

Thou hast neither heat, affection, limb, nor beauty,

To make thy riches pleasant. What's yet in this,

That bears the name of life? yet in this life

Lie hid more thousand deaths; yet death we fear,

That makes these odds all even †.

Claud. I humbly thank you.

To sue to live, I find, I seek to die;

And, seeking death, find life: let it come on.

Enter Isabella.

Isab. What, ho? peace here; grace and good com-
pany!

Prov. Who's there? come in: the wish deserves a
welcome.

* This is an admirable idea of worldly-minded men; bearing about that wealth, like asses, which at the unerring call of death they must be disburthened of. This speech requires peculiar weight of delivery.

† The Duke, in his address to *Claudio*, presents us with a very fine, and strictly moral, chain of reasoning; worthy the constant recollection of human nature, which thereby may be taught a just, yet not irreligious, contempt of death.

Duke.

Duke. Dear Sir, ere long I'll visit you again.

Claud. Most holy Sir, I thank you.

Isab. My business is a word, or two, with *Claudio*.

Prov. And very welcome. Look, Signior, here's
your fistet.

Duke. *Provost*, a word with you.

Provost. As many as you please.

Duke. Bring me where I may be conceal'd,
Yet hear them speak. [Exeunt *Duke* and *Provost*.

Claud. Now, sister, what's the comfort?

Isab. Why, as all comforts are; most good in deed:
Lord Angelo, having affairs to beav'n,
Intends you for his swift ambassador;
Where you shall be an everlasting lieger.
Therefore your best appointment make with speed,
To-morrow you set on.

Claud. Is there no remedy?

Isab. None, but such remedy as, to save a head,
To cleave a heart in twain.

Claud. But is there any?

Isab. Yes, brother, you may live:
There is a devilish mercy in the judge,
If you'll implore it, that will free your life,
But fetter you till death.

Claud. But in what nature?

Isab. In such a one, as you, consenting to't,
Would bark your honour from that trunk you bear,
And leave you naked.

Claud. Let me know the point.

Isab. Oh, I do fear thee, *Claudio*; and I quake,
Lest thou a fev'rous life should't entertain,
And six or seven winters more respect,
Than a perpetual honour. Darest thou die?
The sence of death is most in apprehension;
And the poor beetle, that we tread upon,
In corp'ial sufferance finds a pang as great,
As when a giant dies *.

* *Shakespeare's* darling principle of humanity, is delightfully expressed here; in four lines we are instructed, as we fear death ourselves, not to be forward in administering it even to insects.

Claud. Why give you me this shame?
Think you, I can a resolution fetch
From flow'ry tenderness? if I must die,
I will encounter darkness as a bride,
And hug it in mine arms.

Isab. There spake my brother; there my father's
grave
Did utter forth a voice. Yes, thou must die;
Thou art too noble to conserve a life,
In base appliances. This outward fainted deputy,
Yet is a devil.

Claud. The princely *Angelo*?

Isab. Oh, 'tis the cunning livery of hell.
Dost thou think, *Claudio*,
If I would yield him my virginity,
'Thou might'st be freed?

Claud. Oh, heavens! it cannot be.

Isab. Yes, he would give't thee for this rank
offence
So to offend him still. This night's the time,
That I should do what I abhor to name,
Or else thou dy'st, to-morrow.

Claud. That shalt not do't.

Isab. Oh, were it but my life,
I'd throw it down for your deliverance,
As frankly as a pin*.

Claud. Thanks, dearest *Isabel*.

Isab. Be ready, *Claudio*, for your death, to-morrow.

Claud. Yes. Has he affections in him,
That thus can make him bite the law by th' nose,
When he would force it? sure, it is no sin;
Or of the deadly seven it is the least.

Isab. Which is the least?

Claud. If it were damnable, he being so wise,
Why would he for the momentary trick
Be perdurably fin'd? oh, *Isabel*!

Isab. What says my brother?

Claud. Death's a fearful thing.

* *Isabella*, in this scene, rises to a very peculiar degree of estimation, by her noble ideas, and spirited maintenance, of chastity.



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I'll pray a thousand prayers for thy death;
No word to save thee.

Claud. Nay, bear me, *Isabel*.

Isab. Oh, fie, fie, fie!

Thy sin's not accidental, but a trade;
Mercy to thee would prove itself a sin;
'Tis best, that thou dy'st quickly.

Claud. Oh hear me, *Isabella*.

To them; enter Duke and Provost.

Duke. Vouchsafe a word, young sifter; but one word.

Isab. What is your will?

Duke. Might you dispense with your leisure, I would by and by have some speech with you: the satisfaction I would require, is likewise your own benefit.

Isab. I have no superfluous leisure; my stay must be stolen out of other affairs: but I will attend, you a while.

Duke. [*Aside to Claudio.*] Son, I have over-heard what hath past between you and your sifter. *Angelo* had never the purpose to corrupt her; only he hath made an assay of her virtue, to practise his judgment with the disposition of natures. She, having the truth of honour in her, hath made him that gracious denial, which he is most glad to receive: I am confessor to *Angelo*, and I know this to be true; therefore prepare yourself to death. Do not satisfy your resolution with hopes that are fallible; to-morrow you must die; go to your knees, and make ready.

Claud. Let me ask my sifter pardon. Pardon, dearest *Isabel*; I am ~~so~~ out of love with life, that I will sue to be rid of it. [*Exit Claudio.*]

Duke. Hold you there; farewell. *Provost*, a word with you.

Prov. What's your will, father?

Duke. That you will leave me a while with the maid: my mind promises with my habit, no loss shall touch her by my company.

7 good time.

[*Exit Provost.*]

Duke.

Duke. The hand, that made you fair, hath made you good; the goodness that is cheap in beauty, makes beauty brief in goodness; but grace, being the soul of your complexion, shall keep the body of it ever fair. The assault, that *Angelo* hath made on you, fortune hath convey'd to my understanding; and, but that frailty hath examples for his falling, I should wonder at *Angelo*: how will you do to content this substitute, and to save your brother?

Isab. I am now going to resolve him: I had rather my brother die by the law, than my son should be unlawfully born. But, oh, how much is the good Duke deceiv'd in *Angelo*! If ever he return, and I can speak to him, I will open my lips in vain, or discover his government.

Duke. That shall not be much amiss; yet, as the matter now stands, he will avoid your accusation; he made trial of you, only. Therefore fasten your ear on my advisings: to the love I have in doing good, a remedy presents itself. I do make myself believe, that you may most uprightly do a poor wronged lady a merited benefit; redeem your brother from the angry law; do no stain to your own gracious person; and much please the absent Duke, if, peradventure, he shall ever return to have hearing of this business.

Isab. Let me hear you speak farther; I have spirit to any thing, that appears not foul in the truth of my spirit.

Duke. Virtue is bold, and goodness is never fearful: have you not heard speak of *Mariana*, the sister of *Frederick*, the great soldier who miscarried at sea?

Isab. I have heard of the lady; and good words went with her name.

Duke. Her should this *Angelo* have marry'd; was affianc'd to her by oath, and the nuptial appointed: between which time of the contract, and limit of the solemnity, her brother *Frederick* was wreckt at sea, having in that perish'd vessel the dowry of his sister. But mark, how heavily this beset to the poor gentlewoman; there she lost a noble and renowned brother,

in his love toward her, ever most kind and natural; with him the portion and sinew of her fortune, her marriage-dowry; with both, her husband, this well-seeming *Angelo*.

Isab. Can this be so? did *Angelo* so leave her?

Duke. Left her in her tears, and dry'd not one of them with his comfort; swallow'd his vows whole, pretending, in her, discoveries of dishonour: in few, bestow'd her on her own lamentation, which she yet wears for his sake; and he, a marble to her tears, is washed with them, but relents not.

Isab. What a merit were it in death, to take this poor maid from the world! what corruption in this life, that it will let this man live! but how out of this can she avail?

Duke. It is a rupture that you may easily heal; and the cure of it not only saves your brother, but keeps you from dishonour in doing it.

Isab. Shew me how, good father.

Duke. This fore-nam'd maid hath yet in her the continuance of her first affection; his unjust unkindness (that in all reason should have quenched her love) hath, like an impediment in the current, made it more violent and unruly. Go you to *Angelo*, answer his requiring, with a plausible obedience; agree with his demands; only refer yourself to this advantage: first, that your stay with him may not be long; that the time may have all shadow and silence in it; and the place answer to convenience. This being granted, in course now follows all: we shall advise this wronged maid to stand up your appointment, go in your place; if the encounter acknowledge itself hereafter, it may compel him to her recompence; and here by this is your brother saved, your honour untainted, the poor *Mariana* advantaged, and the corrupt deputy scaled. The maid will I frame, and make fit for this attempt: if you think well to carry this as you may, the doubleness of the benefit defends the deceit from reproof. What think you of it?

NOW

Isab.



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36 MĒASURE for MĒASURE:

Duke. Fie, Sirrah, a bawd, a wicked bawd!
The evil that thou causelt to be done,
That is thy means to live.

Canst thou believe thy living is a life,
So stinkingly depending! go, mend, mend.

Clown. Indeed, it doth stink in some sort, Sir; but
yet, Sir, I would prove—

Duke. Nay, if the devil have giv'n thee proofs for
sin,

Thou wilt prove his. Take him to prison, officer;
Correction and instruction must both work,
Ere this rude beast will profit.

Elb. He must before the deputy, Sir; he has given
him warning; the deputy cannot abide a whore-mas-
ter; if he be a whore-monger, and comes before him,
he were as good go a mile on his errand.

Duke. That we were all, as some would seem to be,
Free from all faults!

Enter Lucio.

Clown. I spy comfort: I cry bail: here's a gentle-
man and a friend of mine.

Lucio. How now, noble *Pompey*? what, at the wheels
of *Cæsar*? art thou led in triumph? what, is there
none of *Pigmalion's* images newly made women, to be
had now? how doth my dear morsel, thy mistress?
procures she still? ha. Art going to prison, *Pompey*?

Clown. Yes, faith, Sir.

Lucio. Why, 'tis not amiss, *Pompey*: farewell: go,
say, I sent thee thither. For debt, *Pompey*? or how?

Elb. For being a bawd, for being a bawd.

Lucio. Well, then, imprison him; if imprisonment
be the due of a bawd, why, 'tis his right. Bawd is
he, doubtless, and of antiquity too; bawd born. Fare-
wel, good *Pompey*: commend me to the prison, *Pom-
pey*: you will turn good husband now, *Pompey*; you
will keep the house.

Clown. I hope, Sir, your good worship will be my
bail.

Lucio.

Lucio. No, indeed, will I not, *Pompey*; it is not the wear; I will pray, *Pompey*, to increase your bondage; if you take it not patiently, why, your mettle is the more: adieu, truity *Pompey*. Bleis you, *Friar*.

Duke. And you.

Elb. Come your ways, Sir, come.

Clown. You will not bail me, then, Sir?

Lucio. Then, *Pompey*! no, nor now. What news abroad, *Friar*? what news?

Elb. Come your ways, Sir, come.

Lucio. Go to kennel, *Pompey*, go.

[*Exeunt Elbow, Clown, and Officers.*

What news, *Friar*, of the *Duke*?

Duke. I know none: can you tell me of any?

Lucio. Some say he is with the Emperor of *Russia*; other some, he is in *Rome*: but where is he, think you?

Duke. I know not where; but wheresoever, I wish him well.

Lucio. It was a mad fantastical trick of him to steal from the state, and usurp the beggary he was never born to. Lord *Angelo* dukes it well in his absence; he puts transgression to't.

Duke. He does well in't.

Lucio. A little more lenity to wenching, would do no harm in him: something too crabbed, that way, *Friar*.

Duke. It is too general a vice, and severity must cure it.

Lucio. Yes, in good sooth, the vice is of a great kindred; it is well aly'd; but it is impossible to extirp it quite, *Friar*, 'till eating and drinking be put down. They say, this *Angelo* was not made by man and woman after the downright way of creation; is it true, think you?

Duke. How should he be made, then?

Lucio. Some report, a sea-maid spawn'd him. Some, that he was begot between two stock-fishes.

Duke. You are pleasant, Sir, and I speak apace.

Lucio. Why, what a ruthless thing is this in him! would the Duke, that is absent, have done this? ere he would have hang'd a man for the getting a hundred bastards, he would have paid for the nursing a thousand. He had some feeling of the sport, he knew the service, and that instructed him to mercy.

Duke. I never heard the absent Duke much detected for women; he was not inclin'd that way.

Lucio. Oh, Sir, you are deceiv'd.

Duke. 'Tis not possible.

Lucio. Who, not the Duke? yes, your beggar of fifty; and his use was, to put a ducklet in her clack-dish. The Duke had crotchets in him. He would be drunk, too, that let me inform you.

Duke. You do him wrong, surely.

Lucio. Sir, I was an inward of his: a sly fellow was the Duke: and, I believe, I know the cause of his withdrawing.

Duke. What, pr'ythee, might be the cause?

Lucio. No, pardon; 'tis a secret must be lockt within the teeth and the lips; but this I can let you understand, the greater file of the subject held the Duke to be wise.

Duke. Wise? why, no question but he was.

Lucio. A very superficial, ignorant, unweighing fellow.

Duke. Either this is envy in you, folly, or mistaking; the very stream of his life, and the business he hath helmed, must upon a warranted need give him a better proclamation: let him be but testimonied in his own bringings forth, and he shall appear to the envious, a scholar, a statesman, and a soldier. Therefore, you speak unskilfully; or, if your knowledge be more, it is much darken'd in your malice.

Lucio. Sir, I know him, and I love him.

Duke. Love talks with better knowledge, and knowledge with dearer love.

Lucio. Come, Sir, I know what I know.

Duke. I can hardly believe that, since you know not what you speak. But if ever the Duke return, as our prayers



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Prov. So please you, this *Friar* hath been with him; and advis'd him for the entertainment of death.

Escal. Good-even, good-father.

Duke. Bliss and goodness on you!

Escal. Of whence are you?

Duke. Not of this country, tho' my chance is now To use it for my time: I am a brother.

Of gracious order come from the see of *Rome*; In special business from his Holiness.

Escal. What news-abroad i'th' world?

Duke. * None, but that there is so great a fever on goodness, that the dissolution of it must cure it. Novelty is only in request; and it is as dangerous to be aged in any kind of course, as it is virtuous to be constant in any undertaking. Much upon this riddle runs the wisdom of the world; this news is old enough, yet it is every day's news. I pray you, Sir, of what disposition was the Duke?

Escal. One, that, above all other trifles, Contended specially to know himself.

Duke. What pleasure was he giv'n to?

Escal. Rather rejoicing to see another merry, than merry at any thing which profess to make him rejoice. A gentleman of all temperance. But leave we him to his events; with a prayer they may prove prosperous; and let me desire to know, how you find *Claudio* prepar'd? I am made to understand, that you have lent him visitation.

Duke. He professes to have received no snifter measure from his judge, but most willingly humbles himself to the determination of justice; yet had he fram'd to himself, by the instruction of his frailty, many deceiving promises of life; which I, by my good leisure, have discredited to him, and now is he resolv'd to die.

* The Duke's remarks here, are very sensible, and well suited to the present times; Novelty, having never been in any age or country more worshiped, than at this day, when frippery ornaments and entertainment for the body, are preferred to wholesome food for the mind.

Escal.

Ejcal. You have paid the prisoner the very debt of your calling. I have labour'd for the good gentleman; but my brother justice have I found so severe, that he hath forc'd me to tell him, he is indeed justice.

Duke. If his own life answer the straitness of his proceeding, it shall become him well; wherein if he chance to fail, he hath sentenc'd himself.

Ejcal. I am going to visit the prisoner; fare you well. [Exit.]

Duke. Peace be with you!
 He who the sword of heav'n will bear,
 Should be as holy as severe*:
 More nor less to others paying,
 Than by self-offences weighing.
 Shame to him, whose cruel striking,
 Kills for faults of his own liking.
 Twice treble shame on *Angelo*,
 To weed my vice, and let his grow!
 Oh, what may man within him hide,
 Tho' angel on the outward side!
 Craft against vice I must apply.
 With *Angelo* to-night, shall lie
 His old betrothed, but despis'd;
 So disguise shall by th' disguis'd,
 Pay with falshood false exacting,
 And perform an old contracting. [Exit.†]

* The sentiments of this soliloquy are just and instructive; but the namby-pamby versification, in which they are conveyed to our apprehension, is abominable.

† This Act, save the second scene, which we have objected to, is written with great ability, and contains some as fine sentiments as ever *Shakespeare* penned.

A C T IV.

SCENE, *A Grange.**Enter Duke and Isabella, meeting.*

DUKE.

VERY well met, and well come * :

What is the news from this good deputy ?

Isab. He hath a garden with a vineyard backt ;
And to that vineyard is a planced gate,
That makes his opening with this bigger key :
This other doth command a little door,
Which from the vineyard to the garden leads ;
There, on the heavy middle of the night,
Have I my promise made to, call upon him.

Duke. But shall you on your knowledge find this way ?

Isab. I've ta'en a due and wary note upon't ;
With whisp'ring and most guilty diligence,
In action all of precept, he did shew me
The way twice o'er.

Duke. Are there no other tokens
Between you 'greed, concerning her observance ?

Isab. No, none ; but only a repair i'th' dark ;
And that I have possess't him, my most stay
Can be but brief ; for I have made him know,
I have a servant comes with me along,
That stays upon me ; whose persuasion is,
I come about my brother.

Duke. 'Tis well born up.

I have not yet made known to *Mariana*,
A word of this. What, ho ! within ! come forth !

Enter Mariana.

I pray you, be acquainted with this maid ;
She comes to do you good.

* There are some speeches and a song, previous to this, properly left out ; the Act begins better here.

Isab.



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SCENE changes to a Prison.

Enter Provost and Clown.

Prov. Come hither, sirrah: can you cut off a man's head?

Clown. If the man be a batchelor, Sir, I can; but if he be a marry'd man, he is his wife's head, and I can never cut off a woman's head.

Prov. Come, Sir, leave me your snatches, and yield me a direct answer: To-morrow morning are to die *Claudio* and *Barnardine*: here is in our prison a common executioner, who in his office lacks a helper; if you will take it on you to assist him, it shall redeem you from your gyves: if not, you shall have your full time of imprisonment, and your deliverance with an unpitied whipping; for you have been a notorious bawd.

Clown. Sir, I have been an unlawful bawd, time out of mind, but yet I will be content to be a lawful hangman: I would be glad to receive some instruction from my fellow-partner.

Prov. What hoa, *Abhorson*! where's *Abhorson*, there?

Enter *Abhorson*.

Abhor. Do you call, Sir?

Prov. Sirrah, here's a fellow will help you, to-morrow, in your execution. He cannot plead his estimation with you, he hath been a bawd.

Abhor. A bawd, Sir? fie upon him; he will discredit our mystery.

Prov. Go to, Sir, you weigh equally; a feather will turn the scale. [Exit.]

Clown. Pray, Sir, by your good favour; (for, surely, Sir, a good favour you have, but that you have a hanging look;) do you call, Sir, your occupation a mystery?

Abhor. Ay, Sir; a mystery.

Clown. Painting, Sir, I have heard say, is a mystery; and your whores, Sir, being members of my occupation, using painting, do prove my occupation a mystery:

tey : but what mystery there should be in hanging, if I should be hang'd, I cannot imagine.

Abhor. Sir, it is a mystery.

Clown. Proof——

Abhor. Every true man's apparel fits your thief,
Clown: if it be too little for your true man, your thief thinks it big enough: If it be too big for your true man, your thief thinks it little enough; so every true man's apparel fits your thief.

Re-enter Provost.

Prov. Are you agreed?

Clown. Sir, I will serve him: for I do find, your hangman is a more penitent trade than your bawd; he doth oftner ask forgiveness.

Prov. You, firrah, provide your block and your ax, to-morrow, four o'clock.

Abhor. Come on, bawd; I will instruct thee in my trade; follow.

Clown. I do desire to learn, Sir; and I hope, if you have occasion to use me for your own turn, you shall find me yare: for truly, Sir, for your kindness I owe you a good turn. [Exit.

Prov. Call hither *Barnardine* and *Claudio*:
One has my pity; not a jot the other,
Being a murth'rer.

Enter Claudio.

* Look, here's the warrant, *Claudio*, for thy death;
'Tis now dead midnight, and by eight to-morrow,
Thou must be made immortal. Where's *Barnardine*?

Claud. As fast lock'd up in sleep, 'as guileless labour,
When it lies starkly in the traveller's bones;
He'll not awake.

* We could wish all the preceding part of this scene omitted, as trifling, or rather worse; and that *Claudio's* meeting the *Provost* should begin it. We suppose several parts which are retained, as well as this, owe their preservation to a fear of shortening the play, too much; not any merit they possess.

Prov.

46. MEASURE for MEASURE.

Prov. Who can do good on him?
Well, go, prepare yourself. [Exit Claudio.
Heav'n give your spirits comfort!——
Welcome, father.

Enter Duke.

Duke. The best and wholesom'st spirits of the night,
Envelop you, good *Provost!* who call'd here, of late?

Prov. None, since the curfew rung.

Duke. Not *Isabel*?

Prov. No.

Duke. She will then, ere't be long.

Prov. What comfort is for *Claudio*?

Duke. There is some in hope.

Prov. It is a bitter deputy.

Duke. Not so, not so: his life is parallel'd,
Ev'n with the stroke and line of his great justice;
He doth with holy abstinence subdue
That in himself, which he spurs on his pow'r
To qualify in others. Were he meal'd,
With that, which he corrects, then were he tyrannous;
But this being so, he's just. Now are they come.

[Knock again. *Provost* goes out.

This is a gentle *Provost*; seldom when
The steeled gaoler is the friend of men.
How now? what noise? that spirit's possess'd with haste,
That wounds th' unresisting postern with these strokes.

[*Provost* returns.

Prov. There he must stay, until the officer
Arise to let him in; he is call'd up.

Duke. Have you no countermand for *Claudio*, yet,
But he must die, to-morrow?

Prov. None, Sir, none.

Duke. As near the dawning, *Provost*, as it is,
You shall hear more, ere morning.

Prov. Happily,
You something know; yet, I believe there comes
No countermand;

Lord *Angelo* hath to the public ear,
Profest the contrary.

Enter



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Prov. A man that apprehends death no more dreadfully, but as a drunken sleep; careless, reckless, and fearless of what's past, present, or to come; insensible of mortality, and desperately mortal.

Duke. He wants advice.

Prov. He will hear none. We have very oft awak'd him, as if to carry him to execution; but it hath not mov'd him at all.

Duke. More of him, anon. There is written in your brow, *Provost*, honesty and constancy; if I read it not truly, my ancient skill beguiles me; but in the boldness of my cunning, I will lay myself in hazard. *Claudio*, whom here you have a warrant to execute, is no greater forfeit to the law, than *Angelo*, who hath sentenc'd him. To make you understand this in a manifested effect, I crave but four days respite; for the which you are to do me both a present and a dangerous courtesy.

Prov. Pray, Sir, in what?

Duke. In the delaying death.

Prov. Alack! how may I do it, having the hour limited, and an express command, under penalty, to deliver his head in the view of *Angelo*? I may make my case as *Claudio's*, to cross this, in the smallest.

Duke. By the vow of mine order, I warrant you, if my instructions may be your guide: let this *Barnardine* be this morning executed, and his head born to *Angelo*.

Prov. *Angelo* hath seen them both, and will discover the favour.

Duke. Oh, death's a great disguiser, and you may add to it; shave the head, and say it was the desire of the penitent, before his death; you know the course is common. If any thing fall to you, upon this, more than thanks and good fortune, by the saint whom I profess, I will plead against it, with my life.

Prov. Pardon me, good father; it is against my oath.

Duke. Were you sworn to the Duke, or to the Deputy?

Prov. To him, and to his Substitutes.

Duke. You will think you have made no offence, if the Duke avouch the justice of your dealing?

Prov. But what likelihood is in that?

Duke. Not a resemblance, but a certainty. Yet since I see you fearful, that neither my coat, integrity, nor my persuasion, can with ease attempt you, I will go further than I meant, to pluck all fears out of you. Look you, Sir, here is the hand and seal of the Duke; you know the character, I doubt not, and the signet is not strange to you.

Prov. I know them both.

Duke. The contents of this is the return of the Duke; you shall anon over-read it, at your pleasure; where you shall find, within these two days he will be here. This is a thing which *Angelo* knows not; for he this very day receives letters of strange tenor; perchance, of the Duke's death; perchance, of his entering into some monastery; but, by chance, nothing of what is writ. Look, the unfolding star calls up the shepherd! * put not yourself into amazement how these things should be; all difficulties are but easy, when they are known. Call your executioner, and off with *Barnardine's* head: I will give him a present shrift, and advise him for a better place. Yet you are amaz'd; but this shall absolutely resolve you. Come away, it is almost clear dawn. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Abhorson and Clown.

Abhor. Sirrah, bring *Barnardine* hither.

Clown. Master *Barnardine*, you must rise, and be hang'd, master *Barnardine.*

Abhor. What, ho, *Barnardine!*

Barnar. [*Within.*] A pox o' your throats! who makes that noise there? what are you?

Clown. Your friend, Sir, the hangman: you must be so good, Sir, to rise, and be put to death.

* This short break, in the Duke's speech, is very beautiful; it is a well-timed relief to, and pleasing gratification of, attention.

50 MEASURE for MEASURE.

Barnar. [*Within.*] Away, you rogue, away; I am sleepy.

Abbor. Tell him, he must awake, and that quickly too.

Clown. Pray, master, *Barnardine*, awake; till you are executed, and sleep afterwards.

Abbor. Go in to him, and fetch him out.

Clown. He is coming, Sir, he is coming; I hear the straw rustle.

Enter Barnardine. *

Abbor. Is the ax upon the block, firrah?

Clown. Very ready, Sir.

Barnar. How now, *Abborson*! what's the news with you?

Abbor. Truly, Sir, I would desire you to clap into your prayers: for, look you, the warrant's come.

Barnar. You rogue, I have been drinking, all night, I am not fitted for't.

Clown. Oh, the better, Sir; for he that drinks all night, and is hang'd betimes in the morning, may sleep the founder all the next day.

Enter Duke.

Abbor. Look you, Sir, here comes your ghostly father; do we jest now, think you?

Duke. Sir, induced by my charity, and hearing how hastily you are to depart, I am come to advise you, comfort you, and pray with you.

Barnar. Friar, not I: I have been drinking hard, all night, and I will have more time to prepare me, or they shall beat out my brains with billets: I will not consent to die, this day, that's certain.

Duke. Oh, Sir, you must; and therefore, I beseech you, look forward on the journey you shall go.

* *Barnardine*, though natural, is a character of that cast we deem unworthy both of the stage and closet.

Barnar.



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Now will I write letters to *Angelo*,
 (The *Provost*, he shall hear them;) whose contents
 Shall witness to him, I am near at home;
 And that, by great injunctions, I am bound
 To enter publicly: him I'll desire
 To meet me at the consecrated fount,
 A league below the city; and from thence,
 By cold gradation and weal-balanc'd toim,
 We shall proceed with *Angelo*.

Enter Provost.

Prov. Here is the head, I'll carry it myself.

Duke. Convenient is it: make a swift return;
 For I would commune with you of such things,
 That want no ears but yours.

Prov. I'll make all speed.

[*Exit.*

Isab. [*Within.*] Peace, ho, be here!

Duke. The tongue of *Isabella*.—She comes to know,
 If yet her brother's pardon be come hither:
 But I will keep her ign'rant of her good,
 To make her heav'nly comforts of despair,
 When it is least expected.

Enter Isabel.

Isab. Ho, by your leave——

Duke. Good morning to you, fair and gracious
 daughter.

Isab. The better, given me by so bold a man:
 Hath yet the Deputy sent my brother's pardon?

Duke. He hath releas'd him, *Isabel*, from the world;
 His head is off, and sent to *Angelo*.

Isab. Nay, but it is not so?

Duke. It is no other.

Isab. Unhappy *Claudio*, wretched *Isabel*!
 Injurious world, most damned *Angelo*!

Duke. This nor hurts him, nor profits you a jot:
 Forbear it, therefore, give your cause to heav'n:
 Mark what I say; which you shall surely find

By

By ev'ry syllable a faithful verity.

The Duke comes home, to-morrow; dry your eyes;

One of our Convent, and his Confessor,

Gives me this instance: already he hath carry'd.

Notice to *Escalus* and *Angelo*,

Who do prepare to meet him at the gates,

There to give up their pow'r. If you can, pace your
wisdom

In that good path that I would wish it go,

And you shall have your bosom on this wretch,

Grace of the Duke, revenges to your heart,

And gen'ral honour.

Isab. I'm directed by you.

Duke. This letter then to Friar *Peter* give,

'Tis that he sent me of the Duke's return:

Say, by this token, I desire his company

At *Mariana's* house, to-night. Her cause and yours

I'll perfect him withal, and he shall bring you

Before the Duke; and to the head of *Angelo*

Accuse him home, and home. For my poor self;

I am combined by a sacred vow,

And shall be absent. Wend you with this letter:

Command these fretting waters from your eyes,

With a light heart; trust not my holy Order,

If I pervert your course.

Enter Lucio.

Lucio. Good even;

Friar, where's the *Provost*?

Duke. Not within, Sir.

Lucio. Oh, pretty *Isabella*, I am pale at mine heart,
to see thine eyes so red; thou must be patient; I am
fain to dine and sup with water and bran; I dare not
for my head fill my belly: one fruitful meal would
set me to't. But, they say, the Duke will be here, to-
morrow. By my troth, *Isabel*, I lov'd thy brother:
if the old fantastical Duke of dark corners, had been
at home, he had liv'd. [*Exit Isabella.*

54 MEASURE for MEASURE.

Duke. Sir, the Duke is marvellous little beholden to your reports; but the best is, he lives not in them.

Lucio. *Friar*, thou knowest not the Duke, so well as I do; he's a better woodman, than thou tak'st him for.

Duke. Well; you'll answer this, one day. Fare ye well.

Lucio. Nay, tarry, I'll go along with thee; I can tell thee pretty tales of the Duke.

Duke. You have told me too many of him already, Sir, if they be true; if not true, none were enough.

Lucio. I was once before him, for getting a wench with child. *

Duke. Did you such a thing?

Lucio. Yes, marry, did I; but I was fain to forswear it; they would else have marry'd me to the rotten medlar.

Duke. Sir, your company is fairer than honest: rest you well.

Lucio. By my troth, I'll go with thee to the lane's-end: if bawdy talk offend you, we'll have very little of it; nay, *Friar*, I am a kind of burr, I shall stick.

[*Exeunt.* †

S C E N E changes to the Palace.

Enter Angelo and Escalus.

Escal. Every letter he hath writ, hath disvouch'd the other.

Ang. In most uneven and distracted manner. His actions shew much like to madness: pray heav'n, his wisdom be not tainted: and why meet him at the gates, and deliver our authorities there?

Escal. I guess not.

Ang. And why should we proclaim it, an hour before his entring, that if any crave redress of injustice, they should exhibit their petitions in the street?

* There is too much child-getting in this piece.

† There is considerable pleasantry suggested in this short scene, between the *Duke* and *Lucio*.

Escal.



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A C T V.

SCENE, a public Place near the City.

Enter Duke, Lords, Angelo, Escalus, Lucio, at several doors.

DUKE.

MY very worthy cousin, fairly met;
 Our old and faithful friend, we're glad to see you.
Ang. and Escal. Happy return be to your royal
 Grace!

Duke. Many and hearty thanks be to you both;
 We've made enquiry of you, and we hear
 Such goodness of your justice, that our soul
 Cannot but yield you forth to public thanks,
 Forerunning more requital.

Ang. You make my bonds still greater.

Duke. Oh your desert speaks loud. *

Give me your hand,
 And let the subjects see, to make them know
 That outward courtesies would fain proclaim
 Favours that keep within. ; Come, *Escalus*;
 You must walk by us on our other hand:
 And good supporters are you. [*As the Duke is going out,*

Enter Peter and Isabella.

Peter. Now is your time; speak loud, and kneel
 before him.

* These lines ought to be spoken,

*And I should wrong it,
 To lock it in the wards of covert bosom,
 When it deserves, with characters of brass,
 A fortified residence, 'gainst the tooth of time,
 And razure of oblivion.*

Isab.

Isab. Justice, O royal Duke; vail * your regard
Upon a wrong'd, I'd fain have said, a maid;
Oh, worthy Prince, dishonour not your eye
By throwing it on any other object,
'Till you have heard me in my true complaint,
And given me justice, justice, justice, justice. †

Duke. Relate your wrongs; in what, by whom?
be brief:

Here is Lord *Angelo* shall give you justice;
Reveal yourself to him.

Isab. Oh, worthy Duke,
You bid me seek Redemption of the Devil:
Hear me, yourself; for that which I must speak,
Must either punish me, not being believ'd,
Or wring redress from you: oh, hear me, hear me.

Ang. My Lord, her wits, I fear me, are not firm:
She hath been a suitor to me for her brother,
Cut off by course of justice.

Isab. Course of justice!

Ang. And she will speak most bitterly, and strange.

Isab. Most strange, but yet most truly, will I speak;
That *Angelo*'s forsworn: is it not strange?
That *Angelo*'s a murth'rer: is't not strange?
An hypocrite, a virgin-violater:
Is it not strange, and strange? ‡

Duke. Nay, it is ten times strange.

Isab. It is not truer he is *Angelo*,
Than this is all as true, as it is strange:
Nay, it is ten times true; for truth is truth,
To th' end of reckoning.

Duke. Away with her; poor soul!
She speaks this in th' infirmity of sense.

Isab. O Prince, I conjure thee, as thou believ'st
There is another comfort than this world,

* *Vail*—for cast.

† These emphatic repetitions of the word *Justice!* are well imagined, and have a fine, forceable effect.

‡ This speech is very feelingly written, and requires the expression of strong sensibility.

That thou neglect me not, with that opinion
 That I am touch'd with madness. Make not impossible
 That which but seems unlike; 'tis not impossible,
 But one, the wicked'st carter on the ground,
 May seem as shy, as grave, as just, as absolute,
 As *Angelo*; even so may *Angelo*,
 In all his dressings, caracters, titles, forms,
 Be an arch-villain: believe it, royal Prince,
 If he be less, he's nothing; but he's more,
 Had I more name for badness.

Duke. By mine honesty,
 If she be mad, as I believe no other,
 Her madness hath the oddest frame of sense;
 Such a dependency of thing on thing,
 As e'er I heard in madness.

Ishab. Gracious Duke,
 Harp not on that; nor do not banish reason,
 For inequality: but let your reason serve
 To make the truth appear, where it seems hid;
 Not hide the false, seems true.

Duke. Many, that are not mad,
 Have, sure, more lack of reason.
 What would you say?

Ishab. I am the sister of one *Claudio*,
 Condemn'd, upon the Act of Fornication,
 To lose his head; condemn'd by *Angelo*:
 I, in probation of a sisterhood,
 Was sent to by my brother; one *Lucio*
 Was then the messenger—

Lucio. That's I, an't like your Grace:
 I came to her from *Claudio*, and desir'd her
 To try her gracious fortune with Lord *Angelo*,
 For her poor brother's pardon.

Ishab. That's he indeed.

Duke. You were not bid to speak. [To *Lucio*.]

Lucio. No, my good Lord, nor wish'd to hold my
 peace.

Duke. I wish you now, then;
 Pray you, take note of it: and when you have

A busi-



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Confess the truth, and say, by whose advice,
Thou cam'st here to complain. *

Isab. And is this All?

Then, oh, you blessed ministers above!
Keep me in patience; and with ripen'd time,
Unfold the evil which is here wrapt up
In countenance: heav'n shield your Grace from woe!
As I, thus wrong'd, hence unbeliev'd go.

Duke. I know you'd fain be gone. An officer!
To prison with her; shall we thus permit
A blasting and a scandalous breath to fall
On him so near us? this needs must be a practice.
Who knew of your intent, and coming hither?

Isab. One that I-would were here, *Friar Lodowick*:

Duke. A ghostly father, belike:
Who knows that *Lodowick*?

Lucio. My Lord, I know him; 'tis a meddling *Friar*;
I do not like the man; had he been Lay, my Lord,
For certain words he spake against your Grace,
In your retirement, I had swing'd him soundly.

Duke. Words against me? This is a good *Friar* belike;
And to set on this wretched woman here,
Against our Substitute! let this *Friar* be found.

Lucio. But yesternight, my Lord, she and that *Friar*,
I saw them at the prison: a saucy *Friar*,
A very scurvy fellow.

Peter. Blessed be your royal Grace!
I have stood by, my Lord, and I have heard
Your royal ear abus'd. First, hath this woman
Most wrongfully accus'd your Substitute;
Who is as free from touch or toil with her,
As she from one ungot.

Duke. We did believe no less.
Know you that *Friar Lodowick*, which she speaks of?

Peter. I know him for a man divine and holy;
Not scurvy; nor a temporary meddler,
As he's reported by this gentleman;

* The Duke's strong scruples, to credit *Isabella's* heavy charge, is finely imagin'd; to render *Angelo's* situation more interesting.

And, on my trust, a man that never yet
Did, as he vouches, misreport your Grace.

Lucio. My Lord, most villainously; believe it.

Peter. Well; he in time may come to clear himself;
But at this instant he is sick, my Lord,
Of a strange fever.

As for this woman;

To justify this worthy Nobleman,
So vulgarly and personally accus'd,
Her shall you hear disproved to her eyes,
'Till she herself confess it.

Duke. Good *Friar*, let's hear it.
Do you not smile at this, Lord *Angelo*?
O heav'n! the vanity of wretched fools!
Give us some seats; come, cousin *Angelo*,
In this I will be partial: be you Judge,
Of your own cause. Is this the witness, *Friar*?
[*Isabella is carried off, guarded.*]

Enter Mariana, veild.

First, let her shew her face; and after, speak.

Mari. Pardon, my Lord, I will not shew my face,
Until my husband bid me.

Duke. What, are you marry'd?

Mari. No, my Lord.

Duke. Are you a maid?

Mari. No, my Lord.

Duke. A widow, then?

Mari. Neither, my Lord.

Duke. Why, are you 'nothing then?' neither maid,
widow, nor wife?

Lucio. My Lord, she may be a punk; for many of
them are neither maid, widow, nor wife. †

* The progressive steps to *Angelo's* detection, keep expectation in play, and bring the result upon us with more force.

† *Lucio's* pert interruptions, through this scene, are very laughable and characteristic.

Duke. Silence that fellow: I would he had some cause to prattle for himself.

Lucio. Well, my Lord.

Mari. My Lord, I do confess, I ne'er was marry'd; And I confess besides, I am no maid; I've known my husband; yet my husband knows not, That ever he knew me.

Lucio. He was drunk then, my Lord; it can be no better.

Duke. For the benefit of silence, would thou wert so too!

Lucio. Well, my Lord.

Duke. This is no witness for Lord *Angelo*.

Mari. Now I come to't, my Lord. She, that accuses him of fornication, In self-same manner doth accuse my husband; And charges him, my Lord, with such a time, When I'll depose I had him in mine arms, With all th' effect of love.

Ang. Charges she more than me?

Mari. Not that I know.

Duke. No? you say, your husband. [To Marian.

Mari. Why, just; my Lord; and that is *Angelo*.

Ang. This is a strange abuse; let's see thy face.

Mari. My husband bids me; now I will unmask.

[Unveiling.

This is that face, thou cruel *Angelo*, Which once thou swor'st, was worth the looking on: This is the hand, which, with a vow'd contract, Was fast belock'd in thine; this is the body, That took away the match from *Isabel*; And did supply thee, In her imagin'd person.

Duke. Know you this woman?

Lucio. Carnally, she says.

Duke. Sirrah, no more.

Lucio. Enough, my Lord.

Ang. My Lord, I must confess, I know this woman; And five years since there was some speech of marriage, Betwixt myself and her; which was broke off,

Partly,



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64 MEASURE for MEASURE.

Duke. Go, do it, instantly.

And, you, my noble and well-warranted Cousin,
Whom it concerns to hear this matter forth;
Do with your injuries, as seems you best,
In any chastisement: I, for a while,
Will leave you; but stir not you, till you have well
Determin'd upon these slanderers. * [Exit.

Escal. My Lord, we'll do it thoroughly. Signior *Lucio*,
did not you say, you knew that Friar *Lodowick* to be a
dishonest person?

Lucio. *Cucullus non facit monachum*; honest in no-
thing, but in his cloaths; and one that hath spoke molt
villainous speeches of the Duke.

Escal. We shall intreat you to abide here, till he
come; we shall find this *Friar* a notable fellow.

Lucio. As any in *Vienna*, on my word.

Escal. Call that same *Isabel* here, once again: I would
speak with her; pray you, my Lord, give me leave to
question; you shall see how I'll handle her.

Lucio. Not better than he, by her own report.

Escal. Say you?

Lucio. Marry, Sir, I think, if you handled her pri-
vately, she should sooner confess; perchance, publicly
she'll be asham'd.

*Enter Duke in the Friar's habit, and Provost; Isabella
is brought in.*

Escal. I will go darkly to work with her.

Lucio. That's the way; for women are light, at mid-
night.

Escal. Come on, mistress; here's a gentlewoman de-
nies all that you have said.

Lucio. My Lord, here comes the rascal I spoke of,
here with the *Provost*.

* This encouragement, and peculiar countenance, shewn to
Ange'o, is a judicious preparation to render his situation more
striking, at the catastrophe.

Escal.

Escal. In very good time: Speak not you to him, till we call upon you.

Lucio. Mum——

Escal. Come, Sir, did you set these women on, to slander Lord *Angelo*? they have confess'd you did.

Duke. 'Tis false.

Escal. How? know you where you are?

Duke. Respect to your great place! and let the devil Be sometime honour'd; for his burning throne.

Where is the Duke? 'tis he should hear me speak.

Escal. The Duke's in us; and we will hear you speak: Look, you speak justly.

Duke. Boldly, at least. But oh, poor souls, Come you to seek the lamb here of the fox?

Good-night to your redress: is the Duke gone?

Then is your cause gone too. The Duke's unjust, Thus to retort your manifest appeal,

And put your trial in the villain's mouth,

Which here you come to accuse.

Lucio. This is the rascal; this is he, I spoke of.

Escal. Why, thou unrev'rend and unhallow'd *Friar*, Is't not enough thou hast suborn'd these women,

T'accuse this worthy man, but with foul mouth,

To call him villain; and then glance from him,

To th' Duke himself, to tax him with injustice?

Take him hence; to th' rack with him: we'll touze you,

Joint by joint, but we will know his purpose:

What? unjust?

Duke. Be not so hot; the Duke dare no more stretch:

This finger of mine, then he dare rack his own:

His subject am I not,

Nor here provincial; my business in this state,

Made me a looker on here in *Vienna*;

Where I have seen corruption boil and bubble,

'Till it o'er-run the stew:

Escal. Slander to th' state! away with him to prison.

Ang. What can you vouch against him, Signiors?

Lucio?

Is this the man, that you did tell us of?

Lucio. 'Tis he, my Lord. : Come, hither, goodman bald-pate ;

Do you know me ?

Duke. I remember you, Sir, by the sound of your voice ; I met you at the prison, in the absence of the Duke.

Lucio. Oh, did you so ? and do you remember what you said of the Duke ?

Duke. Most notably, Sir.

Lucio. Do you so, Sir ? and was the Duke a flesh-monger, a fool, and a coward, as you then reported him to be ?

Duke. You must, Sir, change persons with me, ere you make that my report : you spoke so of him, and much more, much worse.

Lucio. Oh thou damnable fellow ! did not I pluck thee by the nose, for thy speeches ?

Duke. I protest, I love the Duke, as I love myself.

Ang. Hark ! how the villain would close now, after his treasonable abuses.

Escal. Such a fellow is not to be talk'd withal ; away with him to prison ; away with those giglets too, and with the other confederate companion.

Duke. Stay, Sir, stay, a-while.

Ang. What ! resists he ? help him, *Lucio.*

Lucio. Come, Sir ; come, Sir ; come, Sir ; for, Sir ; why, you bald-pated lying rascal ; you must be hooded, must you ? show your knave's visage, with a pox to you ; show your sheep-biting face, and be hang'd an hour : wili't not off ?

[Pulls off the Friar's hood, and discovers the Duke.

Duke. Thou art the first knave, that e'er mad'st a Duke.

First, *Provost*, let me bail these gentle three.

Sneak not away, Sir ; for the *Friar* and you.

Must have a word, anon : lay bold on him.

Lucio. This may prove worse than hanging.

Duke. What you have spoke, I pardon ; sit you down : [To Escalus.

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Than that which lives to fear : make it your comfort ;
So, happy is your brother.

*Enter Angelo, Mariana, Peter, and Provost.**

Isab. I do, my Lord.

Duke. For this new-marry'd man, approaching here,
Whose salt imagination yet hath wrong'd
Your well-defended honour, you must pardon,
For *Mariana's* sake : but as he adjudg'd your brother,
Being criminal, in double violation,
Of sacred chastity, and of promise-breach,
Thereon dependant for your brother's life,
The very merey of the law cries out,
Most audible, even from his proper tongue,
An *Angelo* for *Claudio* ; death for death.
Haste still pays haste, and leisure answers leisure ;
Like doth quit like, and *Measure* still for *Measure*.
Then, *Angelo*, thy faults are manifested ;
Which tho' thou would'st deny, denies thee vantage.
We do condemn thee to the very block,
Where *Claudio* stoop'd to death ; and with like haste ;
Away with him.

Mari. Oh, my most gracious Lord,
I hope, you will not mock me with a husband ?

Duke. It is your husband mock'd you with a husband.
Consenting to the safeguard of your honour,
I thought your marriage fit ; else imputation,
For that he knew you, might reproach your life,
And choke your good to come : for his possessions,
Altho' by confiscation they are ours,
We do enstate and widow you withal,
To buy you a better husband.

Mari. Oh, my dear Lord,
I crave no other, nor no better man.

Duke. Never crave him ; we are definitive.

Mari. Gentle my Liege—

* This marriage is celebrated in a very short improbable space of time ; but as the author was here circumstanced, he could not well allow more.

Duke.

Duke. You do but lose your labour :
Away with him to death.

Mari. Oh, my good Lord. Sweet *Isabel*, take my
part ;

Lend me your knees, and all my life to come
I'll lend you all my life, to do you service.

Duke. Against all sense you do importune her ;
Should she kneel down, in mercy of this fact,
Her brother's ghost his paved bed would break,
And take her hence in horror.

Mari. *Isabel*,
Oh, *Isabel* ! will you not lend a knee ?

Duke. He dies for *Claudio's* death.

Isab. Most bounteous Sir, [Kneeling.]
Look, if it please you, on this man condemn'd,
As if my brother liv'd : I partly think,
A due sincerity govern'd his deeds,
'Till he did look on me ; since it is so,
Let him not die. My brother had but justice,
In that he did the thing for which he dy'd ;
For *Angelo*, his act did not o'ertake his bad intent ;
And must be bury'd but as an intent,
That perish'd by the way : thoughts are no subjects ;
Intent, but meerly thoughts.

Mari. Meerly, my Lord.

Duke. Your suit's unprofitable ; stand up, I say :
I have bethought me of another fault.

Provost, how came it, *Claudio* was beheaded,
At an unusual hour ?

Prov. It was commanded so.

Duke. Had you a special warrant for the deed ?

Prov. No, my good Lord ; it was by private message.

Duke. For which I do discharge you of your office :
Give up your keys.

Prov. Pardon me, noble Lord.
I thought it was a fault, but knew it not ;
Yet did repent me, after more advice :
For testimony whereof, one in th' prison,
That should by private order else have dy'd,
I have reserv'd alive.

Duke.

70 MEASURE for MEASURE.

Duke. What's he?

Prov. His name is *Barnardine*.

Duke. I would, thou had'st done so by *Claudio*;
Go, fetch him hither; let me look upon him.

Escal. I'm sorry, one so learned and so wise,
As you, Lord *Angelo*, have still appear'd,
Should slip so grossly both in heat of blood,
And lack of temper'd judgment afterward.

Ang. I'm sorry, that such sorrow I procure;
And so deep sticks it in my penitent heart,
That I crave death more willingly than mercy:
'Tis my deserving, and I do intreat it.

Enter Provost, Barnardine, Claudio, and Julietta.

Duke. Which is that *Barnardine*?

Prov. This, my Lord.

Duke. There was a *Friar* told me of this man,
Sirrah, thou'rt said to have a stubborn soul,
That apprehends no further than this world;
And squar'st thy life according: thou'rt condemn'd;
But for those earthly faults, I quit them all:
I pray thee, take this mercy to provide
For better times to come.

What muffled fellow's that?

Prov. This is another prisoner, that I sav'd,
Who should have dy'd when *Claudio* lost his head,
As like almost to *Claudio* as himself.

Duke. If he be like your brother, for his sake

[*To Isab.*

Is he pardon'd; and for your lovely sake,
He is my brother too; but fitter time for that.

By this, Lord *Angelo* perceives he's safe;

Methinks, I see a quick'ning in his eye.

Well, *Angelo*, your evil quits you well;

Look, that you love your wife; her worth, worth yours.
I find an apt remission in myself,

And yet here's one in place I cannot pardon.

You, sirrah, that knew me for a fool, a coward;

[*To Lucio.*

One of all luxury, an ass, a mad man;

Wherein



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Dear *Isabel*, I have a motion much imports your good,
Shade not, sweet saint, those graces with a veil,
Nor in a Nunnery hide thee; say thou'rt mine;
Thy Duke, thy Friar, tempts thee from thy vows.
Let thy clear spirit shine in publick life;
No cloister'd sister, but thy Prince's Wife.

[*Exeunt.* †

luable truth—that nothing is more dangerous, than to trust a seemingly virtuous statesman with too extensive powers of rule over his fellow-subjects; delegated authority being generally more liable to abuse, than the power which gives it.

† Though we approve the catastrophe, when unfolded, yet it appears tedious in the winding up; wherefore the last act seems heaviest of the five.

The End of MEASURE for MEASURE.