



Bodleian Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks>



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.

the
Roman father:
— a tragedy —
w. Whitehead
— 1750 —

K/4
m

1st Ed-

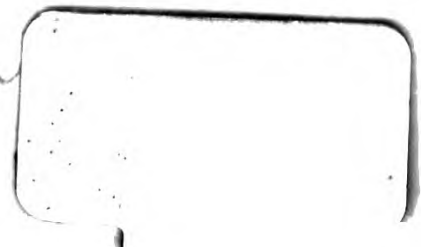
MARSHALL MONTGOMERY
COLLECTION

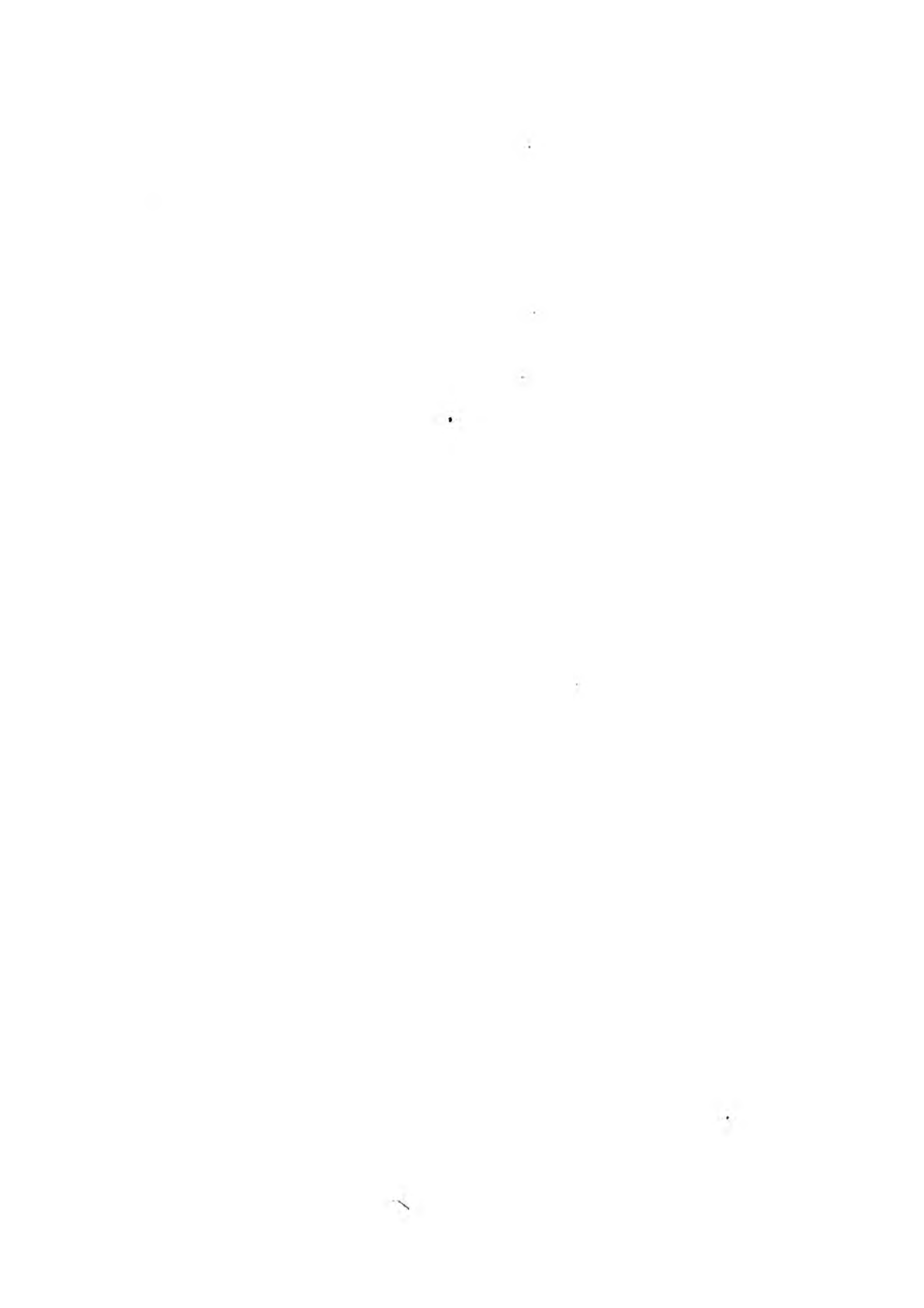


Montgomery

7-10

Mon







THE
ROMAN FATHER,
A
TRAGEDY.



[Price One Shilling and Six-pence.]

THE
ROMAN FATHER,
A
TRAGEDY.

As it is Acted at the

THEATRE ROYAL in *Drury-Lane*,

By His MAJESTY's Servants.

By Mr. *W. WHITEHEAD*.

—— — *Utcunque ferent ea facta Minores,
Vincet Amor Patriæ, Laudumque immensa Cupido!* VIRG.



1st Ed -

L O N D O N :

Printed for R. DODSLEY at *Tully's-head*, *Pall-mall*
and sold by M. COOPER in *Pater-noster-Row*.

M DCC L.



T O

The HONOURABLE

THOMAS VILLIERS,

One of the LORDS COMMISSIONERS for
executing the Office of Lord High
Admiral of *Great Britain,*

The following TRAGEDY is in-
scribed by

His most obliged,

and most obedient

humble Servant,

W. WHITEHEAD.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T,

I Think it necessary to acquaint the Public, that I should never have thought of writing a Play on the following Subject, if I had not first read the justly celebrated *Horace* of Mr. *Corneille*, and admired his Management of some Parts of the Story. They will find me tracing him very closely (with some few Alterations) in the latter End of the Third Act, and in the Beginning of the Fourth. In the other Acts I am hardly conscious to myself of having borrowed even a Thought from him; tho' I might have been proud to have translated whole Scenes, if my Plan and Characters would have admitted of it.

I must beg leave to add, that I was induced, for the Sake of the Action, to put several Speeches at the latter End of the Play into the Mouth of *Publius*, which more properly belong to the Father. The Reader will accordingly find them restored here to their first Situation.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. BARRY.

BRITONS, *To-night in native Pomp we come,
True Heroes all, from virtuous ancient Rome;
In those far distant Times when Romans knew
The Sweets of guarded Liberty, like You;
And, safe from Ills which Force or Faction brings,
Saw Freedom reign beneath the Smile of Kings.*

*Yet from such Times, and such plain Chiefs as these,
What can we frame a polish'd Age to please?
Say, can you listen to the artless Woes
Of an old Tale, which every School-boy knows?
Where to your Hearts alone the Scenes apply,
No Merit their's but pure Simplicity.*

*Our Bard has play'd a most adventurous Part,
And turn'd upon himself the Critic's Art:
Stripp'd each luxuriant Plume from Fancy's Wings,
And torn up Similies like vulgar Things.
Nay even each Moral, Sentimental, Stroke,
Where not the Character but Poet spoke,
He lopp'd, as foreign to his chaste Design;
Nor spar'd an useless tho' a golden Line.*

*These are his Arts; if these cannot atone
For all those nameless Errors yet unknown,
If skunning Faults which nobler Bards commit,
He wants their Force to strike th' attentive Pit,
Be just and tell him so; he asks Advice,
Willing to learn, and would not ask it twice.
Your kind Applause may bid him write—beware!
Or kinder Censure teach him to forbear.*

Persons

PERSONS Represented.

MEN.

TULLUS HOSTILIUS, King of *Rome*, Mr. *Sowdon*.
HORATIUS, A *Roman* Senator, Mr. *Garrick*.
PUBLIUS HORATIUS, His Son, Mr. *Barry*.
VALERIUS, A young *Patrician*, Mr. *King*.

WOMEN.

HORATIA, { Daughter to Ho- } Mrs *Pritchard*
RATIUS, }
VALERIA, { Sister to VALE- } Mrs. *Ward*,
RIUS, }

Citizens, Guards, and Attendants.

The Music composed by Dr. BOYCE.

The vocal Parts performed

By Mr. BEARD, Miss NORRIS, Miss COLE, &c.

SCENE *Rome.*



THE
ROMAN FATHER,
A
TRAGEDY.

ACT. I.

SCENE I.

A Room in HORATIUS's House.

A Soldier crosses the Stage, HORATIA following.

HORATIA.



TAY Soldier.—As you parted from my Father,
Something I overheard of near Concern,
But all imperfectly. Said you not *Alba*
Was on the Brink of Fate, and *Rome* determin'd
This Day to crush her haughty Rival's Power,
Or perish in th' Attempt?

SOLDIER.

'Twas so resolv'd
This Morning, Lady, ere I left the Camp.
Our Heroes are tir'd out with ling'ring War,
And half-unmeaning Fights.

B

HORATIA.

HORATIA.

Alas ! I hop'd

The kind Remorse which touch'd the kindred States,
 And made their Swords fall lightly on the Breasts
 Of Foes they could not hate, might have produc'd
 A milder Resolution !——Then this Day
 Is fix'd for Death or Conquest ?——

[*He bows.*]

—— To me Death

Whoever conquers !——I detain you Sir ;
 Commend me to my Brothers, say, I wish——
 But wherefore should I wish ; the Gods will crown
 Their Virtues with the just Success they merit.
 —— Yet let me ask you, Sir——

SOLDIER.

My Duty, Lady,

Commands me hence ; ere this they have engag'd ;
 And Conquest's self would lose its Charms to me,
 Should I not share the Danger.

*As the Soldier goes out, enter VALERIA:*VALERIA. [*looking first on the Soldier and then on HORATIA*]

My dear HORATIA, wherefore wilt thou court
 The Means to be unhappy, still enquiring
 Still to be more undone ? I heard it too ;
 And flew to find thee, ere the fatal News
 Had hurt thy quiet, that thou might'st have learnt it
 From a Friend's Tongue, and dress'd in gentler Terms.

HORATIA.

O I am lost, VALERIA, lost to Virtue.
 Ev'n while my Country's Fate, the Fate of *Rome*,
 Hangs on the Conqueror's sword, this Breast can feel
 A softer Passion, and divide its Cares.
Alba to me is *Rome*. Would'st thou believe it,
 I would have sent by him thou saw'st departing

Kind

A T R A G E D Y.

3

Kind Wishes to my Brothers, but my Tongue
Denied its Office, and this Rebel Heart
Ev'n dreaded their Success. O CURIATIUS,
Why art thou there, or why an Enemy!

VALERIA.

Forbear this self-reproach, he is thy Husband,
And who can blame thy Fears? if Fortune make him
Awhile thy Country's Foe, she cannot cancel
Vows register'd above. What though the Priest
Had not confirm'd it at the sacred Altar;
Yet were your Hearts united, and that Union
Approv'd by each consenting Parent's Choice.
Your Brothers lov'd him as a Friend, a Brother;
And all the Ties of Kindred pleaded for him;
And still must plead, whate'er our Heroes teach us
Of Patriot-strength: Our Country may demand
We should be wretched, and we must obey;
But never can require us not to feel
That we are miserable, Nature there
Will give the Lie to Virtue.

HORATIA.

True; yet sure
A Roman Virgin should be more than Woman.
Are we not early taught to mock at Pain,
And look on Danger with undaunted Eyes?
But what are Dangers? what the ghastliest Form
Of Death itself?—O were I only bid
To rush into the *Tiber's* foaming Wave
Swollen with uncommon Floods, or from the Height
Of yon *Tarpeian* Rock, whose giddy Steep
Has turn'd me pale with Horror at the Sight,
I'd think the Task were nothing; but to bear

B 2

These

These strange Vicissitudes of torturing Pain,
To fear, to doubt, and to despair as I do?—

VALERIA.

And why despair? have we so idly learned
The noblest Lessons of our Infant Days,
Our Trust above? Does there not still remain
The Wretch's last Retreat, the Gods, HORATIA?
'Tis from their awful Wills our Evils spring;
And at their Altars may we find Relief.
Say, shall we thither?—look not thus dejected,
But answer me. A Confidence in them,
Even in this Crisis of thy Fate, will calm
Thy troubled Soul, and fill thy Breast with Hope.

HORATIA.

Talk not of Hope; the Wretch on yonder Plain
Who hears the Victor's Threats, and sees his Sword
Impending o'er him, feels no surer Fate,
Tho' less delay'd than mine.—What shou'd I hope?
That *Alba* conquer?—Curst be every Thought
Which looks that Way, the Shrieks of captive Matrons
Sound in my Ears!—

VALERIA.

Forbear, forbear, HORATIA;
Nor fright me with the Thought. *Rome* cannot fall.
Think of the glorious Battles she has fought;
Has she once fail'd, tho' oft expos'd to Danger;
And has not her immortal Founder promis'd
That she should rise the Mistress of the World?

HORATIA.

And if *Rome* conquers, then HORATIA dies.

VALERIA.

Why wilt thou form vain Images of Horror,
Industrious to be wretched? Is it then

Become

A TRAGEDY.

5

Become impossible that *Rome* should triumph,
 And *CURIATIUS* live? He must, he shall;
 Protecting Gods shall spread their Shields around him,
 And Love shall combat in *HORATIA*'s Cause.

HORATIA.

Think'st thou so meanly of him?—No, *VALERIA*,
 His Soul's too great to give me such a Trial;
 Or could it ever come, I think, myself,
 Thus lost in Love, thus abject as I am,
 I should despise the Slave who dar'd survive
 His Country's Ruin. Ye immortal Powers!
 I love his Fame too well, his spotless Honour,
 At least I hope I do, to wish him mine
 On any Terms which he must blush to own.
 —What means that Shout?— might we not ask,

VALERIA?

Didst thou not wish me to the Temple?—Come,
 I will attend thee thither; the kind Gods
 Perhaps may ease this throbbing Heart, and spread
 At least a temporary Calm within,

VALERIA.

Alas, *HORATIA*, 'tis not to the Temple
 That thou would'st fly; the Shout alone alarms thee,
 But do not thus anticipate thy Fate;
 Why should'st thou learn each Chance of varying War,
 Which takes a thousand Turns, and shifts the Scene
 From Bad to Good, as Fortune smiles or frowns?
 Stay but an Hour perhaps, and thou shalt know
 The whole at once.—I'll send—I'll fly myself
 To ease thy Doubts, and bring thee News of Joy.

HORATIA.

Again, and nearer too—I must attend thee.

B 3

VALERIA.

The ROMAN FATHER,

VALERIA.

Hark ! 'tis thy Father's Voice, he comes to cheer thee.

*Enter HORATIUS, and VALERIUS.*HORATIUS. [*entering*]News from the Camp my Child !— [*seeing VALERIA*]
Save you, sweet Maid!

Your Brother brings the Tidings, for alas

I am no Warrior now ; my uselefs Age

Far from the Paths of Honour loiters here

In fluggish Inactivity at home.

Yet I remember——

HORATIA.

You'll forgive us, Sir,

If with Impatience we expect the Tidings.

HORATIUS.

I had forgot ; the Thoughts of what I was

Engros'd my whole Attention.—Pray, young Soldier,

Relate it for me ; you beheld the Scene,

And can report it justly.

VALERIUS.

Gentle Lady,

The Scene was piteous, tho' its end be Peace.

HORATIA.

Peace ? O my flutt'ring Heart ! by what kind Means ?

VALERIUS.

'Twere tedious, Lady, and unnecessary

To paint the Disposition of the Field ;

Suffice it we were arm'd, and Front to Front

The adverse Legions heard the Trumpet's Sound :

But vain was the Alarm, for motionless

And wrapt in Thought they stood, the kindred Ranks

Had caught each others Eyes, nor dar'd to lift

The fault'ring Spear against the Breast they lov'd.

Again

Again th' Alarm was given, and now they seem'd
 Preparing to engage, when once again
 They hung their drooping Heads, and inward mourn'd.
 Then nearer drew, and at the third Alarm
 Casting their Swords and uselefs Shields aside
 Rush'd to each others Arms.

HORATIUS.

'Twas so, just so,
 (Tho' I was then a Child, yet I have heard
 My Mother weeping oft relate the Story)
 Soft Pity touch'd the Breasts of mighty Chiefs
Romans and *Sabines*, when the Matrons rush'd
 Between their meeting Armies, and oppos'd
 Their helpless Infants, and their heaving Breasts
 To their advancing Swords, and bade them there
 Sheath all their Vengeance. — But I interrupt you, —
 Proceed, VALERIUS, they would hear th' Event.
 — And yet methinks the *Albans* — pray go on.

VALERIUS.

Our King HOSTILIUS from a rising Mound
 Beheld the tender Interview, and join'd
 His friendly Tears with theirs; then swift advanc'd
 Ev'n to the thickest Press, and cried, My Friends,
 If thus we love, why are we Enemies?
 Shall stern Ambition, Rivalship of Power,
 Subdue the soft Humanity within us?
 Are we not join'd by every Tie of Kindred,
 And can we find no Method to compose
 These Jars of Honour, these nice Principles
 Of Virtue, which infect the noble Mind?

HORATIA.

There spoke his Country's Father! this transcends
 The Flight of Earth-born Kings, whose low Ambition

But tends to lay the Face of Nature waste,
And blast Creation!—how was it receiv'd?

VALERIUS.

As he himself could wish, with eager Transport.
In short, the *Roman* and the *Alban* Chiefs
In Council have determin'd, that since Glory
Must have her Victims, and each rival State
Aspiring to Dominion scorns to yield,
From either Army shall be chose three Champions
To fight the Cause alone, and whate'er State
Shall prove superior, there acknowledg'd Power
Shall fix th' imperial Seat, and both unite
Beneath one common Head.

HORATIA.

Kind Heaven, I thank thee!
Blest be the friendly Grief that touch'd their Souls!
Blest be HOSTILIUS for the generous Counsel!
Blest be the meeting Chiefs! and blest the Tongue,
Which brings the gentle Tidings!

VALERIA.

Now, HORATIA,

Your idle Fears are o'er.

HORATIA.

Yet one remains:

Who are the Champions, are they yet elected?
Has *Rome*—

VALERIUS.

—The *Roman* Chiefs now meet in Council,
And ask the Presence of the Sage HORATIUS.

HORATIUS. [*after having seem'd some time in Thought*]

Yet still methinks, I like not this, to trust

A TRAGEDY.

9

The *Roman* Cause to such a slender Hazard—
Three Combatants!—'tis dangerous —

HORATIA. [*in a Fright*]
My Father!

HORATIUS.

I might perhaps prevent it—

HORATIA.

Do not, Sir,

Oppose the kind Decree.

VALERIUS:

Rest satisfied,

Sweet Lady, 'tis so solemnly agreed to,
Not even HORATIUS's Advice can shake it.

HORATIUS.

And yet 'twere well to end these civil Broils:
The neighb'ring States might take Advantage of them,
—Would I were young again! how glorious
Were Death in such a Cause!—and yet, who knows,
Some of my Boys may be selected for it—
Perhaps may conquer—grant me that, kind Gods,
And close my Eyes in Transport!—Come, VALERIUS,
I'll but dispatch some necessary Orders,
And strait attend thee.—Daughter, if thou lovest
Thy Brothers, let thy Prayers be pour'd to Heaven,
That one at least may share the glorious Task!

[*Exit.*

VALERIUS.

Rome cannot trust her Cause to worthier Hands.
They bade me greet you, Lady; [*To HORATIA*]
Well, VALERIA,
This is your Home I find; your lovely Friend
And you, I doubt not, have indulg'd strange Fears,
And run o'er all the horrid Scenes of War.

VALERIA:

VALERIA.

Tho' we are Women, Brother, we are *Romans*,
 Not to be scared with Shadows, tho' not Proof
 'Gainst all Alarms, when real Danger threatens.

HORATIA. [*with some Hesitation.*]

My Brothers, gentle Sir, you said were well,
 Saw you their noble Friends the CURIATII ?
 The Truce perhaps permitted it.

VALERIUS.

Yes, Lady,

I left them jocund in your Brothers Tent,
 Like Friends, whom envious Storms a-while had parted,
 Joying to meet again.

HORATIA.

Sent they no Message ?

VALERIUS.

None, Fair-one, but such general Salutations,
 As Friends would bring unbid.

HORATIA.

Said CAIUS nothing ?

VALERIUS.

CAIUS ?

HORATIA.

Ay, CAIUS,—did he mention me ?

VALERIUS.

'Twas slightly, if he did, and 'scapes me now——
 O yes, I do remember, when your Brother
 Ask'd him in Jest, if he had ought to send,
 A Sigh's soft Waftage, or the tender Token
 Of Tresses bred to fantastic Forms
 To sooth a love-sick Maid, (your Pardon, Lady,)
 He smil'd, and cry'd, Glory's the Soldier's Mistress.

Ho-

A TRAGEDY.

11

HORATIA.

Sir, you'll excuse me—something of Importance—
My Father may have Business—O VALERIA [*Aside to VA-*
Talk to thy Brother, know the fatal Truth LERIA.
I dread to hear, and let me learn to die,
If CURIATIUS has indeed forgot me. [*Exit.*

VALERIUS.

She seems disorder'd!

VALERIA.

Has she not just Cause?

Can you administer the baneful Potion,
And wonder at th' Effect?

VALERIUS.

You talk in Riddles!

VALERIA.

They're Riddles, Brother, which your Heart unfolds,
Tho' you affect Surprise. Was CURIATIUS
Indeed so cold? poor, shallow Artifice,
The Trick of hopeless Love! I saw it plainly.
Yet what could you propose? An Hour's Uneasiness
To poor HORATIA; for be sure by that Time
She sees him, and your deep-wrought Schemes are Air.

VALERIUS.

What could I do? this Peace has ruin'd me;
While War continued, I had Gleams of Hope,
Some lucky Chance might rid me of my Rival,
And Time efface his Image in her Breast.
But now—

VALERIA.

Yes, now you must resolve to follow
Th' Advice I gave you first, and root this Passion
Entirely from your Heart; for know she doats,
Ev'n to Distraction doats on CURIATIUS;

And

And every Fear she felt, while Danger threaten'd,
Will now endear him more.

VALERIUS.

Cruel VALERIA,
You triumph in my Pain!

VALERIA.

By Heaven I do not,
I only would extirpate every Thought
Which gives you Pain, nor leave one foolish Wish
For Hope to dally with. When Friends are mad,
'Tis most unkind to humour their Distraction;
Harsh Means are necessary.

VALERIUS.

Yet we first
Should try the gentler.

VALERIA:

Did I not? ye Powers!
Did I not foother your Grievs, indulge your Fondness,
While the least Prospect of Success remain'd?
Did I not press you still to urge your Suit,
Intreat you daily to declare your Passion,
Seek out unnumber'd Opportunities,
And lay the Follies of my Sex before you?

VALERIUS.

Alas, thou know'st, VALERIA, Woman's Heart
Was never won by Tales of bleeding Love:
'Tis by Degrees the sly Enchanter works
Assuming Friendship's Name, and fits the Soul
For soft Impressions, ere the fault'ring Tongue,
And guilty-blushing Cheek, with many a Glance
Shot inadvertent, tells the secret Flame.

VALERIA.

True, these are Arts for those who love at leisure;
 You had no Time for tedious Stratagem;
 A dang'rous Rival prest, and has succeeded.

VALERIUS.

I own my Error—yet once more assist me—
 Nay, turn not from me; by my Soul I mean not
 To interrupt their Loves—Yet should some Accident,
 'Tis not impossible, divide their Hearts,
 I might perhaps have Hope: Therefore 'till Marriage
 Cuts off all Commerce, and confirms me wretched,
 Be it thy Task, my Sister, with fond Stories,
 Such as our Ties of Blood may countenance,
 To paint thy Brother's Worth, his Power in Arms,
 His Favour with the King, but most of all
 That certain Tendernefs of Soul which steals
 All Womens hearts, then mention many a Fair,
 No matter whom, that fighs to call you Sister.

VALERIA.

Well, well, away— Yet tell me, ere you go,
 How did this Lover talk of his HORATIA?

VALERIUS.

Why will you mention the ungrateful Subject?
 Think what you've heard me breathe a thousand Times
 When my whole Soul dissolv'd in Tendernefs;
 'Twas Rapture all; what Lovers only feel,
 Or can exprefs when felt. He had been here,
 But sudden Orders from their Camp detain'd him.
 Farewel, HORATIUS waits me—but remember,
 My Life, nay more than Life, depends on you. [Exit.

VA-

VALERIA.

Poor Youth ! he knows not how I feel his Anguish;
Yet dare not seem to pity what I feel.
How shall I act betwixt this Friend and Brother ?
Should she suspect his Passion, she may doubt
My Friendship too; and yet to tell it her
Were to betray his Cause. No, let my Heart
With the same blameless Caution still proceed,
To each inclining most as most distressed,
Be just to both, and leave to Heaven the rest !

[*Exit.*]

ACT



ACT II.

SCENE I.

Scene continues.

Enter HORATIA and VALERIA.

HORATIA.

ALAS, how easily do we admit
 The Thing we wish were true ! yet sure, VALERIA,
 This seeming Negligence of CURIATIUS
 Betrays a secret Coldness at the Heart.
 May not long Absence, or the Charms of War
 Have damp'd, at least, if not effac'd his Passion ?
 I know not what to think.

VALERIA.

Think, my HORATIA,
 That you're a Lover, and have learn'd the Art
 To raise vain Scruples, and torment yourself
 With every distant Hint of fancied Ill.
 Your CURIATIUS still remains the same.
 My Brother idly trifled with your Passion,
 Or might perhaps unheedingly relate
 What you too nearly feel. But see, your Father.

Ho-

HORATIA.

He seems transported ; sure some happy News
Has brought him back thus early : O my Heart !
I long, yet dread to ask him ; speak, VALERIA.

Enter HORATIUS.

VALERIA.

You're soon return'd, my Lord.

HORATIUS.

Return'd, VALERIA!

My Life, my Youth's return'd, I tread in Air.

—I cannot speak ; my Joy's too great for Utterance.

—O I cou'd weep !—my Sons, my Sons are chosen
Their Country's Combatants, not one, but all.

HORATIA.

My Brothers said you, Sir ?

HORATIUS.

All three, my Child,

All three are Champions in the Cause of *Rome*.

O happy State of Fathers ! thus to feel

New Warmth revive, and springing Life renew'd

Even on the Margin of the Grave !

VALERIA.

The Time

Of Combat, is it fix'd ?

HORATIUS.

This Day, this Hour

Perhaps decides our Doom.

VALERIA.

And is it known

With whom they must engage ?

HORATIUS.

Not yet, VALERIA ;

But with Impatience we expect each Moment

The

The Resolutions of the *Alban* Senate.

And soon may they arrive, that ere we quit
Yon hostile Field; the Chiefs who dared oppose
Rome's rising Glories, may with Shame confess
The Gods protect the Empire they have rais'd.

Where are thy Smiles, *HORATIA*? whence proceeds
This fullen Silence, when my thronging Joys
Want Words to speak them? Prithee, talk of Empire,
Talk of those Darlings of my Soul thy Brothers.
Call them whate'er wild Fancy can suggest,
Their Country's Pride, the Boast of future Times,
The dear Defence, the guardian Gods of *Rome*!

By Heaven thou stand'st unmov'd, nor feels thy Breast
The Charms of Glory, the extatic Warmth
Which beams new Life, and lifts us nearer Heaven!

HORATIA.

My gracious Father, with Surprize and Transport
I heard the Tidings, as becomes your Daughter.
And like your Daughter, were our Sex allow'd
The noble Privilege which Man usurps,
Could die with Pleasure in my Country's Cause.
But yet permit a Sister's Weakness, Sir,
To feel the Pangs of Nature, and to dread
The Fate of those she loves, however glorious.
And sure they cannot all survive a Conflict
So desperate as this.

HORATIUS.

Survive! by Heaven

I could not hope that they should all survive,
No, let them fall; if from their glorious Deaths
Rome's Freedom spring, I shall be nobly paid
For every sharpest Pang the Parent feels.
Had I a thousand Sons, in such a Cause

C

I could

18 *The* ROMAN FATHER,

I could behold them bleeding at my Feet,
And thank the Gods with Tears !

Enter PUBLIUS HORATIUS

PUBLIUS.

My Father ! *[Offering to kneel.*

HORATIUS.

Hence !

Kneel not to me—stand off ; and let me view
At Distance, and with reverential Awe,
The Champion of my Country !——O, my Boy,
That I should live to this—my Soul's too full ;
Let this and this speak for me.—Bless thee, bless thee !

[Embracing him.

But wherefore art thou absent from the Camp ?
Where are thy Brothers ? has the *Alban* State
Determin'd ? is the Time of Combat fix'd ?

PUBLIUS.

Think not, my Lord, that filial Reverence,
However due, had drawn me from the Field,
Where nobler Duty calls : a Patriot's Soul,
Can feel no humbler Ties, nor knows the Voice
Of Kindred, when his Country claims his Aid.
It was the King's Command I should attend you,
Else had I staid 'till Wreaths immortal grac'd
My Brows, and made thee proud indeed to see
Beneath thy Roof, and bending for thy Blessing,
Not thine, HORATIUS, but the Son of *Rome* !

HORATIUS.

O virtuous Pride !—'tis Bliss too exquisite
For human Sense ! —thus, let me answer thee.

[Embracing him again.

Where are my other Boys ?

PUB-

A TRAGEDY.

19

PUBLIUS.

They only wait
Till *Alba's* loit'ring Chiefs declare her Champions,
Our future Victims, Sir, and with the News
Will greet their Father's Ear.

HORATIUS.

It shall not need,
Myself will to the Field. Come, let us haste ;
My old Blood boils, and my tumultuous Spirits
Pant for the Onset. O for one short Hour
Of vigorous Youth, that I might share the Toil
Now with my Boys, and be the next my last !

HORATIA.

My Brother !

PUBLIUS.

My HORATIA ! ere the Dews
Of Evening fall thou shalt with Transport own me ;
Shalt hold thy Country's Saviour in thy Arms,
Or bathe his honest Bier with Tears of Joy.

Thy Lover greets thee, and complains of Absence
With many a Sigh, and many a longing Look
Sent tow'rd the Towers of *Rome*.

HORATIA.

Methinks, a Lover
Might take th'Advantage of the Truce, and bear
His kind Complaints himself, not trust his Vows
To other Tongues, or be oblig'd to tell
The passing Winds his Passion.

PUBLIUS.

Dearest Sister,
He with Impatience waits the lucky Moment
That may with Honour bear him to your Arms.

Didst thou but hear how tenderly he talks,
 How blames the dull Delay of *Alban* Councils,
 And chides the ling'ring Minutes as they pass,
 'Till Fate determines, and the tedious Chiefs
 Permit his Absence, thou woud'st pity him.

But soon, my Sister, soon shall every Bar
 Which thwarts thy Happiness be far away.
 We are no longer Enemies to *Alba*,
 This Day unites us, and to-morrow's Sun
 May hear thy Vows, and make my Friend my Brother:

HORATIUS. [*Having talked apart with VALERIA.*
 'Tis truly *Roman*.—Here's a Maid, HORATIA,
 Laments her Brother lost the glorious Proof
 Of dying for his Country.—Come, my Son,
 Her Softness will infect thee, prithee, leave her.

HORATIA. [*Looking first on her Father, and
 then tenderly on her Brother.*

Not 'till my Soul has pour'd its Wishes for him.

Hear me, dread God of War, protect and save him!

[*Kneeling.*

For thee, and thy immortal *Rome* he fights!
 Dash the proud Spear from every hostile Hand
 That dares oppose him; may each *Alban* Chief
 Fly from his Presence, or his Vengeance feel!

And when in Triumph he returns to *Rome*, [*Rising.*
 Hail him, ye Maids, with grateful Songs of Praise,
 And scatter all the blooming Spring before him.
 Curs'd be the envious Brow that smiles not then,
 Curs'd be the Wretch that wears one Mark of Sorrow,
 Or flies not thus with open Arms to greet him.

Enter FULLUS HOSTILIUS, VALERIUS, and Guards.

VALERIUS.

The King, my Lord, approaches.

A TRAGEDY.

21

HORATIUS.

Gracious Sir,

Whence comes this Condescension?

TULLUS HOSTILIUS.

Good old Man;

Could I have found a nobler Messenger,
I would have spared myself th' ungrateful Task
Of this Day's Embassy, for much I fear
My News will want a Welcome.

HORATIUS.

Mighty King!

Forgive an old Man's Warmth——They have not sure
Made choice of other Combatants.——My Sons,
Must they not fight for *Rome*?

TULLUS HOSTILIUS.

Too sure they must.

HORATIUS.

Then I am blest!

TULLUS HOSTILIUS.

But that they must engage
Will hurt thee most, when thou shalt know with whom.

HORATIUS.

I care not whom.

TULLUS HOSTILIUS.

Suppose your nearest Friends
The *Curiatii* were the *Alban* Choice,
Could you bear that? Could you, young Man, support
A Conflict there?

PUBLIUS.

I could perform my Duty,
Great Sir, tho' even a Brother should oppose me.

C 3

TULLUS

The ROMAN FATHER,

TULLUS HOSTILIUS.

Thou art a *Roman*! Let thy King embrace thee.

HORATIUS.

And let thy Father catch thee from his Arms.

TULLUS HOSTILIUS. [*To* PUBLIUS.

Know then that Trial must be thine. The *Albans*
 With Envy saw one Family produce
 Three Chiefs, to whom their Country dared entrust
 The *Roman* Cause, and scorn'd to be outdone.

HORATIA.

Then I am lost indeed ; was it for this,
 For this, I pray'd!

[*Swoons.*

PUBLIUS.

My Sister!

VALERIA.

My HORATIA!

HORATIUS.

O foolish Girl, to shame thy Father thus!
 Here, bear her in.†—I am concern'd, my Sovereign,
 That even the meanest Part of me should blast
 With impious Grief a Cause of so much Glory.
 But let the Virtue of my Boy excuse it.

TULLUS HOSTILIUS.

It does most amply. She has Cause for Sorrow.
 The Shock was sudden, and might well alarm
 A firmer Bosom. The weak Sex demand
 Our Pity, not our Anger ; their soft Breasts
 Are nearer touch'd, and more expos'd to Sorrows
 Than Man's experter Sense. Nor let us blame
 That Tendernefs which smooths our rougher Natures,
 And

† HORATIA is carried in, VALERIUS and VALERIA follow.

And softens all the Joys of social Life.
 We leave her to her Tears. For you, young Soldier,
 You must prepare for Combat. Some few Hours
 Are all that are allow'd you. But I charge you
 Try well your Heart, and strengthen every Thought
 Of Patriot in you. Think how dreadful 'tis
 To plant a Dagger in the Breast you love;
 To spurn the Ties of Nature, and forget
 In one short Hour whole Years of virtuous Friendship.
 Think well on that.

PUBLIUS.

I do, my gracious Sovereign;
 And think the more I dare subdue Affection
 The more my Glory.

TULLUS HOSTILIUS:

True; but yet consider,
 Is it an easy Task to change Affections?
 In the dread Onset can your meeting Eyes
 Forget their usual Intercourse, and wear
 At once the Frown of War, and stern Defiance?
 Will not each Look recall the fond Remembrance
 Of Childhood past, when the whole open Soul
 Breath'd cordial Love, and plighted many a Vow
 Of tend'rest import? Think on that, young Soldier,
 And tell me if thy Breast be still unmov'd?

PUBLIUS.

Think not, O King, how'er resolv'd on Combat,
 I sit so loosely to the Bonds of Nature,
 As not to feel their Force. I feel it strongly.
 I love the *Curiatii*, and would serve them
 At Life's Expence: But here a nobler Cause
 Demands my Sword: For all Connections else,
 All private Duties are subordinate

To what we owe the Public. Partial Ties
 Of Son, and Father, Husband, Friend, or Brother,
 Owe their Enjoyments to the public Safety,
 And without that were vain.—Nor need we, Sir,
 Cast off Humanity, and to be Heroes
 Cease to be Men. As in our earliest Days,
 While yet we learn'd the Exercise of War,
 We strove together, not as Enemies,
 Yet conscious each of his peculiar Worth,
 And scorning each to yield; so will we now
 Engage with ardent not with hostile Minds,
 Not fired with Rage, but emulous of Fame.

TULLUS HOSTILIUS.

Now I dare trust thee; go, and teach thy Brothers
 To think like thee, and Conquest is your own.
 This is true Courage, not the brutal Force
 Of vulgar Heroes, but the firm Resolve
 Of Virtue, and of Reason. He who thinks
 Without their Aid to shine in Deeds of Arms,
 Builds on a sandy Basis his Renown;
 A Dream, a Vapour, or an Ague Fit
 May make a Coward of him.—Come, HORATIUS,
 Thy other Sons shall meet thee at the Camp,
 For now I do bethink me 'tis not fit
 They should behold their Sister thus alarm'd.
 Haste, Soldier, and detain them. [*To one of the Guards,*

HORATIUS.

Gracious Sir,

We'll follow on the instant.

TULLUS HOSTILIUS.

Then Farewel.

When next we meet, 'tis *Rome* and Liberty!

[*Exit with Guards.*

Ho.

HORATIUS.

Come, let me arm thee for the glorious Toil.
 I have a Sword whose Light'ning oft has blaz'd
 Dreadfully fatal on my Country's Foes ;
 Whose temper'd Edge has cleft their haughty Crests,
 And stain'd with Life-blood many a reeking Plain.
 This shalt thou bear ; myself will gird it on,
 And lead thee forth to Death or Victory. [Going.
 — And yet, my PUBLIUS, shall I own a Weakness ;
 Tho' I detest the Cause from whence they spring,
 I feel thy Sister's Sorrows like a Father.
 She was my Soul's delight.

PUBLIUS.

And may remain so.
 This sudden Shock has but alarm'd her Virtue,
 Not quite subdued its Force. At least, my Father,
 Time's lenient Hand will teach her to endure
 The ills of Chance, and Reason conquer Love.

HORATIUS.

Should we not see her ?

PUBLIUS.

By no means, my Lord ;
 You heard the King's Command about my Brothers,
 And we have Hearts as tender sure as they.
 Might I advise, you should confine her closely,
 Lest she infect the Matrons with her Grief,
 And bring a Stain we should not wish to fix
 On the *Horatian* Name.

HORATIUS.

It shall be so.

We'll think no more of her. 'Tis Glory calls,
 And humbler Passions beat Alarms in vain. [Exit.
 As HORATIUS goes off, HORATIA enters at another Door.

Ho-

HORATIA:

Where is my Brother?—O my dearest PUBLIUS,
If e'er you lov'd HORATIA, ever felt
That Tendernefs which you have seem'd to feel,
O hear her now!

PUBLIUS.

What would'st thou, my HORATIA?

HORATIA.

I know not what I would—I'm on the Rack,
Despair and Madnefs tear my lab'ring Soul.
—And yet, my Brother, sure you might relieve me.

PUBLIUS.

How, by what means? By Heaven, I'd die to do it.

HORATIA.

You might decline the Combat.

PUBLIUS.

Ha!

HORATIA.

I do not

Expect it from thee. Prithee look more kindly.
—And yet, is the Request so very hard?
I only ask thee not to plunge thy Sword
Into the Breast thou lov'st, not kill thy Friend,
Is that so hard?—I might have said thy Brother.

PUBLIUS.

What canst thou mean? Beware, beware, HORATIA.
Thou know'st I dearly love thee, nay thou know'st
I love the Man with whom I must engage.
Yet hast thou faintly read thy Brother's Soul,
If thou can'st think Entreaties have the Power,
Tho' urg'd with all the Tendernefs of Tears,
To shake his settled Purpose: They may make

My

My Task more hard, and my Soul bleed within me,
But cannot touch my Virtue.

HORATIA.

'Tis not Virtue

Which contradicts our Nature, 'tis the Rage
Of over-weening Pride. Has *Rome* no Champions
She could oppose but you? Are there not thousands
As warm in Glory, and as tried in Arms,
Who might without a Crime aspire to Conquest,
Or die with honest Fame?

PUBLIUS.

Away, away;

Talk to thy Lover thus. But 'tis not *CAIUS*
Thou would'st have infamous.

HORATIA.

O kill me not

With such unkind Reproaches. Yes, I own
I love him, more—

PUBLIUS.

Than a chaste *Roman* Maid

Should dare confess.

HORATIA.

Should dare! What means my Brother?

I had my Father's Sanction on my Love,
And Duty taught me first to feel it's Power.
—Should dare confess!—is that the dreadful Crime?
Alas but spare him, spare thy Friend, *HORATIUS*,
And I will cast him from my Breast for ever.
Will that oblige thee?—only let him die
By other Hands, and I will learn to hate him.

PUBLIUS.

Why wilt thou talk thus madly? Love him still:
And if we fall the Victims of our Country
(Which Heaven avert!) wed, and enjoy him freely.

Ho-

HORATIA.

O never, never. What, my Country's Bane!
The Murderer of my Brothers! may the Gods
First tear me, blast me, scatter me on Winds,
And pour out each unheard-of Vengeance on me!

PUBLIUS.

Do not torment thyself thus idly—Go,
Compose thyself, and be again my Sister.

Re-enter HORATIUS [with the Sword]

HORATIUS.

This Sword in *Vei*'s Field—What dost thou here?
Leave him I charge thee, Girl—Come come, my PUBLIUS,
Let's haste where Duty calls.

HORATIA.

What, to the Field?

He must not, shall not go; here will I hang—
O if you have not quite cast off Affection,
If you detest not your distracted Sister—

HORATIUS.

Shame of thy Race, why dost thou hang upon him?
Would'st thou entail eternal Infamy
On him, on me, on all?

HORATIA.

Indeed I would not.

I know I ask Impossibilities;
Yet pity me, my Father!

PUBLIUS.

Pity thee?

Begone, fond Wretch, nor urge my Temper thus.
By Heaven I love thee as a Brother ought.
Then hear my last Resolve; if Fate, averse
To *Rome*, and us, determine my Destruction,
I charge thee wed thy Lover; he will then

Deserve thee nobly. Or if kinder Gods
 Propitious hear the Prayers of suppliant *Rome*,
 And he should fall by me, I then expect
 No weak Upbraidings for a Lover's Death,
 But such Returns as shall become thy Birth,
 A Sister's Thanks for having sav'd her Country. [*Exit.*

HORATIA.

Yet stay—Yet hear me, PUBLIUS—But one Word—

HORATIUS.

Let go thy hold, rash Girl, thou'l't tempt thy Father
 To do an Outrage might perhaps distract him.—

HORATIA.

Alas, forgive me, Sir—I'm very wretched,
 Indeed I am—Yet I will strive to stop
 This swelling Grief, and bear it like your Daughter.
 Do but forgive me, Sir.

HORATIUS.

I do, I do—

Go in, my Child, the Gods may find a Way
 To make thee happy yet. But on thy Duty,
 Whate'er Reports may reach, or Fears alarm thee,
 I charge thee come not to the Field.

HORATIA.

I will not,
 If you command it, Sir. But will you then,
 As far as cruel Honor may permit,
 Remember that your poor HORATIA's Life
 Hangs on this dreadful Contest?

HORATIUS.

Lead her in.

[*Exit* HORATIA.]

Ho-

*The ROMAN FATHER,*HORATIUS. [*Looking after her.*]

Spite of my boasted Strength, her Griefs unman me.

—But let her from my Thoughts. The Patriot's Breast

No Hopes, no Fears, but for his Country knows,

And in her Danger loses private Woes.

[*Exit.*]*The END of the Second Act.*

ACT



A C T III.

S C E N E I.

Scene continues.

VALERIUS *and* VALERIA *meeting.*

VALERIUS.

NOW, my VALERIA, where's the charming she
That calls me to her? with a Lover's Haste
I fly to execute the dear Command.

VALERIA.

'Tis not the Lover, but the Friend she wants,
If thou dar'st own that Name.

VALERIUS.

The Friend, my Sister!
There's more than Friendship in a Lover's Breast,
More warm, more tender is the Flame he feels —

VALERIA.

Alas, these Raptures suit not her Distress,
She seeks th' indulgent Friend, whose sober Sense
Free from the Mists of Passion might direct
Her jarring Thoughts, and plead her doubtful Cause.

VALERIUS.

Am I that Friend? O did she turn her Thought
On me for that kind Office?

VA-

VALERIA.

Yes, VALERIUS.

She chose you out to be her Advocate
 To CURIATIUS; 'tis the only Hope
 She now dares cherish; her relentless Brother
 With Scorn rejects her Tears, her Father flies her,
 And only you remain to sooth her Cares,
 And save her ere she sinks.

VALERIUS.

Her Advocate

To CURIATIUS!

VALERIUS.

'Tis to him she sends you,
 To urge her Suit, and win him from the Field.
 But come; her Sorrows will more strongly plead
 Than all my Grief can utter.

VALERIUS.

To my Rival!

To CURIATIUS plead her Cause, and teach
 My Tongue a Lesson which my Heart abhors!
 Impossible! VALERIA, prithee say
 Thou saw'st me not; the Business of the Camp
 Confin'd me there; Farewel. [Going.

VALERIA.

What means my Brother?

You cannot leave her now; for shame turn back;
 Is this the Virtue of a *Roman* Youth?
 O by these Tears!

VALERIUS.

They flow in vain, VALERIA:

Nay, and thou knowest they do. O Earth and Heaven!

This

This Combat was the Means my happier Stars
Found out, to save me on the Brink of Ruin ;
And can I plead against it, turn Assassin
On my own Life ?

VALERIA.

Yet thou can'st murder her
Thou dost pretend to love ; away, Deceiver ;
I'll seek some worthier Messenger to plead
In Beauty's Cause ; but first inform HORATIA,
How much VALERIUS is the Friend she thought him.

[Going.

VALERIUS.

O Heav'ns ! stay, Sister ; 'tis an arduous Task.

VALERIA.

I know the Task is hard, and thought I knew
Thy Virtue too.

VALERIUS.

I must, I will obey thee.
Lead on.—Yet, prithee, for a Moment leave me,
'Till I can recollect my scatter'd Thoughts,
And dare to be unhappy.

VALERIA.

My VALERIUS!

I fly to tell her you but wait her Pleasure.

[Exit,

VALERIUS.

Yes, I will undertake this hateful Office ;
It never can succeed. — Yet at this Instant
It may be dangerous, while the People melt
With fond Compassion.—No, it cannot be ;
His Resolution's fix'd, and virtuous Pride
Forbids an Alteration. To attempt it
Makes her my Friend, and may afford hereafter

D

A

A thousand tender Hours to move my Suit.
That Hope determines all.

[Exit.]

S C E N E, *Another Apartment.*

HORATIA and VALERIA. HORATIA *with a Scarf
in her Hand.*

HORATIA.

Where is thy Brother? Wherefore stays he thus?
Did you conjure him, did he say he'd come?
I have no Brothers now, and fly to him
As my last Refuge. Did he seem averse
To thy Intreaties? Are all Brothers so!

Alas, thou told'st me he spake kindly to thee;
'Tis me, 'tis me he shuns; I am the Wretch
Whom Virtue dares not make Acquaintance with.

Yet fly to him again, intreat him hither,
Tell him for thy Sake to have Pity on me,
Thou art no Enemy to *Rome*, thou hast
No *Alban* Husband to claim half thy Tears,
And make Humanity a Crime.

VALERIA.

Dear Maid,
Refrain your Sorrows, I've already told you
My Brother will with Transport execute
Whatever you command.

HORATIA.

O wherefore then
Is he away? each Moment now is precious,
If lost, 'tis lost for ever, and if gain'd,

Long

Long Scenes of lasting Peace, and smiling Years
Of Happiness unhop'd-for wait upon it.

VALERIA.

I will again go seek him ; pray be calm ;
Success is thine if it depends on him.

[Exit.

HORATIA.

Success ! alas, perhaps ev'n now too late
I labour to preserve him ; the dread Arm
Of Vengeance is already stretch'd against him,
And he must fall. Yet let me strive to save him.

Yes, thou dear Pledge, design'd for happier Hours,

[To the Scarf.

The Gift of nuptial Love, thou shalt at least
Essay thy Power.

Oft as I fram'd the Web,
He fate beside me, and would say in Sport,
This Present, which thy Love designs for me,
Shall be the future Bond of Peace betwixt us.
By this we'll swear a lasting Love, by this,
Thro' the sweet Round of all our Days to come,
Ask what thou wilt, and CURTIUS grants it.

O I shall try thee nearly now, dear Youth ;
Glory and I are Rivals for thy Heart,
And one must conquer.

Enter VALERIUS and VALERIA.

VALERIUS.

Save you, gracious Lady ;
On the first Message which my Sister sent me
I had been here, but was oblig'd by Office,
Ere to their Champions each resign'd her Charge,
To ratify the League 'twixt Rome and Alba.

HORATIA.

Are they engag'd then ?

VALERIUS.

No, not yet engag'd ;

Soft Pity for a while suspends the Onset ;
 The Sight of near Relations, arm'd in Fight
 Against each other, touch'd the Gazers Hearts ;
 And Senators on each Side have propos'd
 To change the Combatants.

HORATIA.

My Blessings on them !

Think you they will succeed ?

VALERIUS.

The Chiefs themselves

Are resolute to fight.

HORATIA.

Infatiate Virtue !

I must not to the Field ; I am confin'd
 A Prisoner here ; or sure these Tears would move
 Their flinty Breasts.—Is CURIATIUS too
 Resolv'd on Death ?—O Sir, forgive a Maid,
 Who dares in spite of Modesty confess
 Too soft a Passion. Will you pardon me,
 If I intreat you to the Field again
 An humble Suitor from the veriest Wretch,
 That ever knew Distress.

VALERIUS.

Dear Lady speak ;

What would you I should do ?

HORATIA.

O bear this to him.

VALERIUS,

To whom ?

Ho-

HORATIA.

To CURIATIUS bear this Scarf;
 And tell him if he ever truly lov'd;
 If all the Vows he breath'd were not false Lures
 To catch th' unwary Mind,—and sure they were not!
 O tell him now he may with Honour cease
 To urge his cruel Right; the Senators
 Of *Rome* and *Alba* will approve such Mildness.
 Tell him his Wife, if he will own that Name,
 Intreats him from the Field; his lost HORATIA
 Begg on her trembling Knees he would not tempt
 A certain Fate, and murder her he loves.
 Tell him if he consents, she fondly swears
 By every God the varying World adores,
 By this dear Pledge of vow'd Affection swears,
 To know no Brothers and no Sire but him;
 With him, if Honour's harsh Commands require it,
 She'll wander forth, and seek some distant Home,
 Nor ever think of *Rome* or *Alba* more.

VALERIA

Well, well, he will; do not torment thyself.

HORATIA. [*Catching hold of the Scarf, which
 she looked upon attentively while Valeria spoke.*]

Look here, VALERIA, where my Needle's Art
 Has drawn a *Sabine* Virgin, drown'd in Tears
 For her lost Country, and forsaken Friends;
 While by her Side the youthful Ravisher
 Looks ardent Love, and charms her Grievs away.

I am that Maid distress'd, divided so
 'Twixt Love and Duty.—But why rave I thus!
 Haste, haste, to CURIATIUS; and yet stay,
 Sure I had something more to say to him;
 I know not what it was.

D 3

VA-

VALERIUS.

Could I, sweet Lady,
But paint your Grief with half the Force I feel it,
I need but tell it him, and he must yield.

HORATIA.

It may be so. Stay, stay, before you tell him,
If he rejects my Suit, no Power on Earth
Shall force me to his Arms; I will devise——
I'll die and be reveng'd!

VALERIA.

Away, my Brother;
But oh for Pity, do your Office justly; [*Aside to VALERIUS.*
Let not your Passion blind your Reason now,
But urge her Cause with Ardor.

VALERIUS.

By my Soul
I will VALERIA; her Distress alarms me;
And I have now no Interest but hers.

[*Exit.*

VALERIA.

Come, dearest Maid, indulge not thus your Sorrows:
Hope smiles again, and the sad Prospect clears.
Who knows th'Effect your Message may produce;
The milder Senators ere this perhaps
Have mov'd your Lover's Mind; and if he doubts,
He's yours.

HORATIA.

He's gone.—I had a thousand Things;
And yet I'm glad he's gone. Think you, VALERIA,
Your Brother will delay? they may engage
Before he reaches them.

VALERIA.

The Field's so near,
That a few Minutes bring him to the Place:
And 'tis not probable the Senators
So soon should yield a Cause of so much Justice.

HORATIA.

Alas, they should have thought on that before,
 'Tis now too late. The Lion when he's rous'd
 Must have his Prey, whose Den we might have pass'd
 In Safety while he slept. To draw the Sword,
 And fire the youthful Warrior's Breast to Arms
 With awful Visions of immortal Fame,
 And then to bid him sheath it, and forget
 He ever hop'd for Conquest and Renown;
 Vain, vain Attempt!

VALERIA.

Yet when that just Attempt
 Is seconded by Love, and Beauty's Tears
 Lend their soft Aid to melt the Hero down;
 What may we not expect?

HORATIA.

My dear VALERIA,
 Fain wou'd I hope I had the Power to move him,

VALERIA,

You have, you must; Success is yours already.

HORATIA.

And yet should I succeed, the hard-gain'd Strife
 May chance to rob me of my future Peace,
 He may not always with the Eyes of Love
 Look on that Fondness which has stab'd his Fame.
 He may regret too late the Sacrifice
 He made to Love, and a fond Woman's Weakness;
 And think the milder Joys of social Life
 But ill repay him for the mighty Loss
 Of Patriot-reputation!

VALERIA,

Pray forbear,
 And search not thus into eventful Time

For Ills to come. This fatal Temper, Friend,
 Alive to feel, and curious to explore
 Each distant Object of refin'd Distress,
 Shuts out all Means of Happiness, nor leaves it
 In Fortune's Power to save you from Destruction.
 Like some distemper'd Wretch, your wayward Mind
 Rejects all Nourishment, or turns to Gall
 The very Balm that should relieve its Anguish.

He will admire thy Love, which could persuade him
 To give up Glory for the milder Triumph
 Of heart-felt Ease and soft Humanity.

HORATIA.

I fain would hope so. Yet we hear not of him,
 Your Brother, much I fear, has sued in vain.
 Could we not send to urge his slow Express?
 This dread Uncertainty! I long to know
 My Life or Death at once.

VALERIA.

The Wings of Love
 Cannot fly faster than my Brother's Zeal
 Will bear him for your Service.

HORATIA.

I believe it,
 Yet doubt it too. My sickly Mind unites
 Strange Contradictions.

VALERIA.

Shall I to the Walls?
 I may from thence with Ease survey the Field,
 And can dispatch a Messenger each Moment
 To tell thee all goes well.

HORATIA.

My best VALERIA!

Fly then. I know thy Heart is there already.

Thou art a *Roman* Maid, and tho' thy Friendship
 Detains thee here with one who scarce deserves
 That sacred Name, art anxious for thy Country.
 But yet for Charity think kindly of me;
 For thou shalt find by the Event, VALERIA,
 I am a *Roman* too, however wretched.

[Exit VALERIA.

Am I a *Roman* then? Ye Powers, I dare not
 Resolve the fatal Question I propose.
 If dying would suffice, I were a *Roman*;
 But to stand up against this Storm of Passions
 Transcends a Woman's Weakness. Hark, what Noise!--
 'Tis News from CURIATIUS; Love, I thank thee!

Enter a Servant.

Well, does he yield? distract me not with Silence;
 Say in one Word.—

SERVANT.

Your Father—

HORATIA.

What of him?

Would he not let him yield? O cruel Father!

SERVANT.

Madam, he's here—

HORATIA.

Who!

SERVANT.

Borne by his Attendants.

HORATIA.

What mean'st thou?

HORATIUS *is led in by his Servants.*

HORATIUS.

Lead me yet a little onward;

I shall recover straight.

HORA-

HORATIA.

My gracious Sire!

HORATIUS.

Lend me thy Arm, HORATIA.—So—my Child,
Be not surpriz'd; an old Man must expect
These little Shocks of Nature, they are Hints
To warn us of our End.

HORATIA.

How are you, Sir?

HORATIUS.

Better, much better. My frail Body could not
Support the swelling Tumult of my Soul.

HORATIA.

No Accident I hope alarm'd you, Sir,
My Brothers——

HORATIUS.

Here, go to the Field again,

You CAUTUS and VINDICIUS; and observe
Each Circumstance; I shall be glad to hear
The manner of the Fight.

HORATIA.

Are they engag'd?

HORATIUS.

They are, HORATIA; but first let me thank thee [During this
For staying from the Field; I would have seen *Speech a Ser-*
The Fight myself, but this unlucky Illness *vant gives*
Has forc'd me to retire. Where is thy Friend? *a Paper to*
What Paper's that? Why dost thou tremble so? HORATIA.

Here let me open it.—From CURIATIUS!

HORATIA.

O keep me not in this Suspence, my Father;
Relieve me from the Rack.

Ho.

HORATIUS.

He tells thee here,
He dare not do an Action that would make him
Unworthy of thy Love, and therefore—

HORATIA.

Dies!

Well, I am satisfied.

HORATIUS.

I see by this
Thou hast endeavour'd to persuade thy Lover
To quit the Combat. Could'st thou think, HORATIA,
He'd sacrifice his Country to a Woman?

HORATIA.

I know not what I thought; he proves too plainly
Whate'er it was, I was deceiv'd in him
Whom I applied to.

HORATIUS.

Do not think so, Daughter;
Could he with Honour have declin'd the Fight,
I should myself have join'd in thy Request,
And forc'd him from the Field. But think, my Child,
Had he consented, and had *Alba's* Cause,
Supported by another Arm, been baffled,
What then could'st thou expect? Would he not curse
His foolish Love, and hate thee for thy Fondness?
Nay think, perhaps, 'twas Artifice in thee
To aggrandize thy Race, and lift their Fame
Triumphant o'er his Ruin and his Country's.
Think well on that, and Reason must convince thee

HORATIA. [*Wildly.*

Alas, had Reason ever yet the Power
To talk down Grief, or bid the tortur'd Wretch
Not feel his Anguish? 'tis impossible.

The ROMAN FATHER,

Could Reason govern, I should now rejoice
 They were engag'd, and count the tedious Moments
 'Till Conquest smil'd, and *Rome* again was free.
 Could Reason govern, I should beg of Heaven
 To guide my Brother's Sword, and plunge it deep
 Ev'n in the Bosom of the Man I love.
 I should forget he ever won my Soul;
 Forget 'twas your Command that bade me love him;
 Nay fly perhaps to yon detested Field,
 And spurn with Scorn his mangled Carcase from me.

HORATIUS.

Why wilt thou talk thus? Prithee be more calm:
 I can forgive thy Tears, they flow from Nature,
 And could have gladly wish'd the *Alban* State
 Had found us other Enemies to vanquish.
 But Heaven has will'd it, and Heaven's Will be done!
 The glorious Expectation of Success
 Buys up my Soul, nor lets a Thought intrude
 To dash my promis'd Joys.—What steady Valour
 Beam'd from their Eyes! Just so, if Fancy's Power
 May form Conjecture from his After-age,
Rome's Founder must have look'd, when warm in Youth
 And flush'd with future Conquest forth he march'd
 Against proud *Acron*, with whose bleeding Spoils
 He grac'd the Altar of *Feretrian* Jove.
 —Methinks I feel recover'd; I might venture
 Forth to the Field again. What ho! VOLSCINIUS,
 Attend me to the Camp.

HORATIA.

My dearest Father,
 Let me intreat you stay; the Tumult there
 Will discompose you, and a quick Relapse

May

May prove most dangerous. I'll restrain my Tears,
If they offend you.

HORATIUS.

Well, I'll be advis'd.

'Twere now too late, ere this they must have conquer'd.
—And here's the happy Messenger of Glory!

Enter VALERIA.

VALERIA.

All's lost, all's ruin'd, Freedom is no more!

HORATIUS.

What dost thou say?

VALERIA.

That *Rome's* subdued by *Alba*.

HORATIUS.

It cannot be; where are my Sons? all dead?

VALERIA.

PUBLIUS is still alive, the other Two
Have paid the fatal Debt they owed their Country.

HORATIUS.

PUBLIUS alive? you must mistake, VALERIA;

He knows his Duty better.

He must be dead, or *Rome* victorious.

VALERIA.

Thousands as well as I beheld the Combat;

After his Brother's Deaths he stood alone,

And acted Wonders against three Assailants;

'Till forc'd at last to save himself by Flight.

HORATIUS.

By Flight? and did the Soldiers let him pass?

O I am ill again!—the Coward Villain!

[*Throwing himself into his Chair.*]

Ho-

HORATIA.

Alas, my Brothers !

HORATIUS.

Weep not for them, Girl ;
They've died a Death which Kings themselves might envy ;
And whilst they liv'd they saw their Country free :
O had I perish'd with them ! But for him
Whose impious Flight dishonours all his Race,
Tears a fond Father's Heart, and tamely barter
For poor precarious Life his Country's Glory,
Weep, weep for him, and let me join my Tears !

VALERIA.

What could he do, my Lord, when three oppos'd him ?

HORATIUS.

He might have died !—O Villain, Villain, Villain !
—And he shall die ; this Arm shall sacrifice
The Life he dared preserve with Infamy.

[*Endeavouring to rise.*]

What means this Weakness ? 'tis untimely now,
When I should punish an ungrateful Boy.
Was this his boasted Virtue which could charm
His cheated Sovereign, and brought Tears of Joy
To my old Eyes ?—so young a Hypocrite !
O Shame, Shame, Shame !

VALERIA.

Have patience Sir, all *Rome*
Beheld his Valour, and approv'd his Flight
Against such Opposition.

HORATIUS.

Tell not me,
What's *Rome* to me ? *Rome* may excuse her Traitor ;
But I'm the Guardian of my House's Honour,

And

And I will punish. Pray ye lead me forth,
I would have Air. But grant me Strength, kind Gods,
To do this Act of Justice, and I'll own,
Whate'er 'gainst *Rome* your awful Wills decree,
Ye still are just, and merciful to me ! *Exeunt.*

The END of the Third Act.



ACT



ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A Room in HORATIUS's House.

Enter HORATIUS, VALERIA following.

HORATIUS.

AWAY, away, — I feel my strength renew'd,
 And I will hunt the Villain thro' the World;
 No Defarts shall conceal, nor Darknes hide him.
 He is well skill'd in Flight, but he shall find
 'Tis not so easy to elude the Vengeance
 Of a wrong'd Father's Arm, as to escape
 His Adversary's Sword.

VALERIA.

Restrain your Rage
 But for a Moment Sir; when you shall hear
 The whole unravel'd, you will find he's innocent.

HORATIUS.

It cannot be.

VALERIA.

And see my Brother comes,
 He may perhaps relate —

HO-

Ho-

A TRAGEDY.

49

HORATIUS.

I will not hear him ;
I will not listen to my Shame again.

Enter VALERIUS.

VALERIUS.

I come with kind condolance from the King
To sooth a Father's Grief, and to express—

HORATIUS.

I've heard it all ; I pray you spare my Blushes.
I want not Consolation, 'tis enough
They perish'd for their Country. But the third—

VALERIUS.

True, he indeed may well supply their Loss,
And calls for all your Fondness.

HORATIUS.

All my Vengeance ;
And he shall have it, Sir.

VALERIUS.

What means my Lord ?
Are you alone displeas'd with what he has done ?

HORATIUS.

'Tis I alone, I find, must punish it.

VALERIUS.

Punish, my Lord ? What Fault has he committed ?

HORATIUS.

Why will you double my Confusion thus ?
Is Flight no Fault ?

VALERIUS.

In such a Cause as his
'Twas glorious.

E

He-

The ROMAN FATHER,

HORATIUS.

Glorious! O rare Sophistry,
To find a Way through Infamy to Glory!

VALERIUS.

I scarce can trust my Senses!——Infamy!
What, was it infamous to save his Country?
Is Art a Crime? Is it the Name of Flight
We can't forgive, though its ador'd Effect
Restor'd us all to Freedom, Fame, and Empire?

HORATIUS.

What Fame, what Freedom, who has saved his Country?

VALERIUS.

Your Son, my Lord, has done it.

HORATIUS.

How, when, where?

VALERIUS.

Is't possible? Did you not say you knew?

HORATIUS.

I care not what I knew; O tell me all,
Is *Rome* still free? has *Alba*? has my Son?
Tell me.

VALERIUS.

Your Son, my Lord, has slain her Champions.

HORATIUS.

What, PUBLIUS?

VALERIUS.

He.

HORATIUS.

O let me clasp thee to me——

Were there not three remaining?

VALERIUS.

True, there were;

But wounded all.

Ho-

HORATIUS.

Your Sister here had told us
That *Rome* was vanquish'd, that my Son was fled——

VALERIUS.

And he did fly, but 'twas that Flight preserv'd us.
All *Rome* as well as she has been deceiv'd.

HORATIUS.

Let me again embrace thee.----Come, relate it.
Did I not say, VALERIA, that my Boy
Must needs be dead, or *Rome* victorious?
I long to hear the Manner.——Well, VALERIUS.

VALERIUS.

Your other Sons, my Lord, had paid the Debt
They owed to *Rome*, and he alone remain'd
'Gainst three Opponents, whose united Strength,
Tho' wounded each, and robb'd of half their Force,
Was still too great for his. Awhile he stood
Their fierce Assaults, and then pretended Flight
Only to tire his wounded Adversaries.

HORATIUS.

Pretended Flight, and this succeeded, ha!
O glorious Boy!

VALERIUS.

'Twas better still, my Lord;
For all pursued, but not with equal Speed.
Each eager for the Conquest press'd to reach him,
Nor did the first 'till 'twas too late perceive
His fainter Brothers panting far behind.

HORATIUS.

He took them singly then? an easy Conquest,
'Twas Boy's Play only.

VALERIUS.

Never did I see
Such universal Joy, as when the last
Sunk on the Ground beneath HORATIUS' Sword;
Who seem'd awhile to parley as a Friend,
And would have given him Life, but *Caius* scorn'd it.

VALERIA.

Caius! O poor HORATIA!

HORATIUS.

Peace, I charge thee.
Go, dress thy Face in Smiles, and bid thy Friend
Wake to new Transports; let Ambition fire her;
What is a Lover lost? There's not a Youth
In *Rome* but will adore her; Kings will seek
For her Alliance now, and mightiest Chiefs
Be honour'd by her Smiles. Will they not, Youth?

[Exit VALERIA.]

VALERIUS.

Most sure, my Lord, this Day has added Worth
To her, whose Merit was before unequal'd.

HORATIUS.

How could I doubt his Virtue!—Mighty Gods,
This is true Glory, to preserve his Country,
And bid by one brave Act th' *Horatian* Name
In Fame's eternal Volumes be enroll'd.
Methinks already I behold his Triumph.
Rome gazes on him like a second Founder,
The wond'ring Eye of Childhood views with Awe
The new Divinity, and trembling Age
Crowds eager on to bless him ere it dies!
Ere long, perhaps, they will raise Altars to him,
And even with Hymns and Sacrifice adore

The

The Virtue I suspected!——Gracious Heav'n!
Where is he? Let me fly, and at his Feet
Forget the Father, and implore a Pardon
For such Injustice.

VALERIUS.

You may soon, my Lord,
In his Embraces lose the fond Remembrance
Of your mistaken Rage. The King ere this
Has from the Field, dispatch'd him; he but stay'd
'Till he could send him home with some slight Honours
Of scatter'd Wreaths, and grateful Songs of Praise.
For 'till to-morrow he postpones the Pomp
Of solemn Thanks, and Sacrifice to Heaven
For Liberty restor'd. But hark! that Shout,
Which sounds from far, and seems the mingled Voice
Of Thousands, speaks him onward on his Way.

HORATIUS.

How my Heart dances!——Yet I blush to meet him.
But I will on. Come, come HORATIA, leave [*Calling at*
Thy Sorrow far behind, and let us fly *the Door.*
With open Arms to greet our common Glory.

[*Exit HORATIUS.*

Enter HORATIA and VALERIA, to VALERIUS.

HORATIA.

Yes, I will go; this Father's hard Command
Shall be obey'd, and I will meet the Conqueror;
But not in Smiles.

VALERIUS.

O go not, gentle Lady;

Might I advise ——

VALERIA.

Your Griefs are yet too fresh,
And may offend him; do not, my HORATIA,

VALERIUS.

Indeed 'twere better to avoid his Prefence,
It will revive your Sorrows, and recall —

HORATIA.

Sir, when I saw you last I was a Woman,
The Fool of Nature, a fond Prey to Grief,
Made up of Sighs and Tears, But now, my Soul
Disdains the very Thought of what I was;
'Tis grown too callous to be mov'd with Toys.
Obferve me well; am I not nobly chang'd?
Flow my sad Eyes, or heaves my Breast one Groan?
No, for I doubt no longer. 'Tis not Grief,
'Tis Refolution now, and fix'd Defpair.

VALERIA.

My dear HORATIA, you strike Terrors thro' me;
What dreadful Purpose haft thou form'd? O fpeak!

VALERIUS.

Talk gently to her.—Hear me yet, fweet Lady;
You must not go; whatever you refolve
There is a Sight will pierce you to the Soul.

HORATIA.

What Sight?

VALERIUS.

Alas, I fould be glad to hide it;
But it is——

HORATIA.

What?

VALERIUS.

Your Brother wears in Triumph

The very Scarf I bore to CURIATIUS.

HORATIA. [*Wildly.*

Ye Gods, I thank ye ! 'tis with Joy I hear it.

If I should falter now, that Sight would rouze

My drooping Rage, and swell the Tempest louder.

— But soft ; they may prevent me ; my wild Passion

Betrays my Purpose. — I'll dissemble with them.

[*She sits down.*

VALERIUS.

She softens now.

VALERIA.

How do you, my HORATIA ?

HORATIA.

Alas, my Friend, 'tis Madness which I utter —

Since you persuade me then, I will not go.

But leave me to myself ; I would sit here,

Alone in silent Sadness pour my Tears,

And meditate on my unheard-of Woes.

VALERIUS *to* VALERIA.

'Twere well to humour this. But may she not

If left alone do Outrage on herself ?

VALERIA.

I have prevented that ; she has not near her

One Instrument of Death.

VALERIUS.

Retire we then.

But oh not far, for now I feel my Soul

Still more perplex'd with Love. Who knows, VALERIA,

But, when this Storm of Grief has blown its Fill,
She may grow calm, and listen to my Vows.

[*Exeunt VALERIUS and VALERIA.*

After a short Silence HORATIA rises, and comes forward.

HORATIA.

Yes, they are gone; and now be firm my Soul!
This Way I can elude their Search. The Heart,
Which doats like mine, must break to be at Ease.

Just now I thought, had CURIATIUS lived,
I could have driven him from my Breast for ever.

But Death has cancell'd all my Wrongs at once.

—They were not Wrongs; 'twas Virtue which undid us,
And Virtue shall unite us in the Grave.

I heard them say, as they departed hence,
That they had robb'd me of all Means of Death.

Vain Thought; they knew not half HORATIA's Purpose.

Be resolute, my Brother, let no weak
Unmanly Fondness mingle with thy Virtue,
And I will touch thee nearly. O come on,
'Tis thou alone can'st give HORATIA Peace.

[*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

A Street of Rome.

CHORUS of Youths and Virgins singing and scattering Branches of Oak, Flowers, &c. Then enters HORATIUS leaning on the Arm of PUBLIUS HORATIUS.

C H O R U S.

Thus, for Freedom nobly won,
 Rome her hasty Tribute pours ;
 And on one victorious Son
 Half exhausts her blooming Stores.

A YOUTH.

Scatter here the Laurel Crown,
 Emblem of immortal Praise !
 Wond'rous Youth ! to thy Renown
 Future Times shall Altars raise.

A VIRGIN.

Scatter here the Myrtle Wreath,
 Tho' the bloodless Victor's Due ;
 Grateful Thousands fav'd from Death
 Shall devote that Wreath to you.

A YOUTH.

Scatter here the Oaken Bough ;
 Ev'n for one averted Fate ●
 We that Civic Meed bestow—
 He fav'd all, who sav'd the State.

C H O.

CHORUS.

Thus for Freedom, &c.

HORATIUS.

Thou do'ft forgive me then, my deareft Boy,
 I cannot tell thee half my Extacy.
 The Day which gave thee firft to my glad Hopes
 Was Mifery to this—I'm mad with Transport !
 Why are ye filent there ? again renew
 Your Songs of Praise, and in a louder Strain
 Pour forth your Joy, and tell the lift'ning Spheres
 That *Rome* is freed by *my* HORATIUS' Hand.

PUBLIUS.

No more, my Friends.—You muft permit me, Sir,
 To contradict you here. Not but my Soul,
 Like yours, is open to the Charms of Praise :
 There is no Joy beyond it, when the Mind
 Of him who hears it can with honeft Pride
 Confefs it juft, and liften to its Mufic.
 But now the Toils I have fuffain'd require
 Their Interval of Reft, and every Senfe
 Is deaf to Pleafure.—Let me leave you, Friends ;
 We're near our Home, and would be private now :
 To-morrow we'll expect your kind Attendance
 To fhare our Joys, and waft our Thanks to Heaven.

[*As they are going off* HORATIA *rufhes in.*

HORATIA.

Where is this mighty Chief ?

HORATIUS.

My Daughter's Voice !

I bade her come ; ſhe has forgot her Sorrows,
 And is again my Child.

HORATIA.

Is this the Hero

That

That tramples Nature's Ties, and nobly soars
Above the Dictates of Humanity?
Let me observe him well.

PUBLIUS.

What means my Sister?

HORATIA.

Thy Sister! I disclaim the impious Title;
Base and inhuman! Give me back my Husband,
My Life, my Soul, my murdered CURIATIUS!

PUBLIUS.

He perish'd for his Country.

HORATIA.

Gracious Gods,
Was't not enough that thou had'st murdered him,
But thou must triumph in thy Guilt, and wear
His bleeding Spoils?—O let me tear them from thee,
Drink the dear Drops that issued from his Wounds,
More dear to me than the whole Tide that swells
With impious Pride a hostile Brother's Heart.

HORATIUS.

Am I awake, or is it all Illusion!
Was it for this thou cam'st?

PUBLIUS.

HORATIA, hear me.

Yet I am calm, and can forgive thy Folly;
Would I could call it by no harsher Name.
But do not tempt me farther.—Go, my Sister,
Go hide thee from the World, nor let a *Roman*
Know with what Insolence thou dar'st avow
Thy Infamy, or what is more my Shame
How tamely I forgave it.—Go, HORATIA.

Ho-

HORATIA.

I will not go.—What, have I touch'd thee then ?
 And can'st thou feel ?—O think not thou shalt lose
 Thy share of Anguish. I'll pursue thee still,
 Urge thee all Day with thy unnatural Crimes,
 Tear, harrow up thy Breast : and then at Night
 I'll be the Fury that shall haunt thy Dreams ;
 Wake thee with Shrieks, and place before thy Sight
 Thy mangled Friends in all their Pomp of Horror.

PUBLIUS.

Away with her; 'tis womanish Complaining.
 Think'st thou such Trifles can alarm the Man
 Whose noblest Passion is his Country's Love ?
 —Let it be thine, and learn to bear Affliction.

HORATIA.

Curse on my Country's Love, the Trick ye teach us
 To make us Slaves beneath the Mask of Virtue ;
 To rob us of each soft endearing Sense,
 And violate the first, great Law within us,
 To scorn the impious Passion.

PUBLIUS.

Have a Care ;
 Thou'st touch'd a String which may awake my Ven-
 geance.

HORATIA. [*Afide.*

Then it shall do it.

PUBLIUS.

O, if thou dar'st prophane
 That sacred Tie which winds about my Heart,
 By Heaven I swear, by the great Gods who rule
 The Fate of Empires, 'tis not this fond Weakness

Which

Which hangs upon me, and retards my Justice,
Nor even thy Sex, which shall protect thee from me.

[Clapping his Hand on his Sword.

HORATIUS.

Drag her away—thou'lt make me curse thee, Girl—
Indeed she's mad. [To PUBLIUS.

HORATIA.

Stand off, I am not mad—

Nay, draw thy Sword; I do defy thee, Murderer,
Barbarian, *Roman!*—Mad; the Name of *Rome*
Makes Madmen of you all; my Curses on it.
I do detest its impious Policy.

Rise, rise ye States (O that my Voice could fire
Your tardy Wrath!) confound its selfish Greatness,
Rase it's proud Walls, and lay its Towers in Ashes!

PUBLIUS.

I'll bear no more— [Drawing his Sword.

HORATIUS.

Distraction!—Force her off—

HORATIA. [Struggling.

Could I but prove the *Helen* to destroy
This curs'd unsocial State, I'd die with Transport:
Gaze on the spreading Fires—'till the last Pile
Sunk in the Blaze—then mingle with its Ruins.

PUBLIUS.

Thou shalt not live to that.

HORATIUS.

Assist me, Friends—

Drag—tear her off.—O PUBLIUS—O my Son—

Spare, spare a Father! [They force her off.

1

PUB-

PUBLIUS.

[*After a Pause.*]

Let her avoid me then.—My whole Soul's mov'd,
 And *Rome's* immortal Genius stirs within me !
 Yes, ye dread Powers, whose everlasting Fires
 Blaze on our Altars, and whose sacred Shields
 From Heaven descending guard imperial *Rome*,
 I feel, I feel your Wrongs—for you I fought,
 For you I bear the Sword.—Lead on my Friends.

[*Exit.*]

HORATIUS. [*Looking at him as he goes out.*]
 How dreadful, yet how lovely is his Virtue !

[*Going after him.*]*Enter VALERIUS and two or three Servants.*

VALERIUS.

[*Stopping HORATIUS.*]

Saw you your Daughter, Sir ?

HORATIUS.

Alas, VALERIUS,

I yet stand trembling on the Brink of Fate,
 And scarce can think the dreadful Moment past.
 She has been here, and with such impious Outrage
 Assail'd her Brother, that our utmost Force
 Scarce sav'd her from his Sword.

VALERIUS.

He could not sure

Attempt her Life !

HORATIUS.

He did.

VALERIUS.

And could you bear

That Sight, my Lord ?

Ho-

HORATIUS.

VALERIUS, ask me not
What I could bear. I feel the Torment still.
And dread to think what Mischiefs had ensued
Had I like him been warm'd and deaf to Nature.

VALERIUS.

But she is safe?

HORATIUS.

Yes, from the Sword she is ;
But mad as the *Cumæan* Maid she raves,
And pours incessant Curses on her Country.
Misguided Girl !
But I can bear my Fate ; the Hand of Heaven
Chastises thus my Insolence of Joy,
I were too happy else !—Yet Art perhaps
May give her Ease, your Sister will attend her.
I must not see her now ; PUBLIUS will think
That I neglect him ; every Pang I feel
Affronts his Virtue, and each idle Doubt
Is Treason to the State his Arm has saved.
O my divided Heart !

[Exit.

VALERIUS.

PUBLIUS will think !

Then 'tis in *Rome*, it seems, become a Crime
Ev'n for the softer Sex to let their Anguish
Transport their Souls beyond the Bounds of Reason.
Our Heroes would new-mold Humanity ;
And tie down Madness to the pedant Rules
Of dull Discretion.—Dar'd attempt her Life !
Let me not think on that. I will avoid him,
'Till I am calm again.—Go some of you
This Way, some that, and search my Sister out.

Say,

Say, If I meet her not, I shall return
And wait her here.—This Violence of Grief
Cannot last long and such a Heart as hers.
So form'd for Passion, so accessible
To tender Pains, may learn once more to prove
The pleasing Transports of reviving Love.

The END of the Fourth ACT.



ACT



ACT V.

SCENE I.

The Street.

Enter VALERIA and a Servant.

VALERIA. *[in Disorder.*

Regard not me.—Did you not say, my Brother
Was here? Where is he?—Yet I know not why
I wish him here, but that my bursting Heart
May vent its Grievs, and find a Refuge for them.

SERVANT.

Madam, my Lord approaches.

Enter VALERIUS.

VALERIA.

O VALERIUS,

HORATIA, poor HORATIA's lost for ever;
Her unrelenting Brother——

VALERIUS.

Dearest Sister,

Compose your Fears. She has escap'd his Rage.
But now I saw her Father, and his Care
Has sav'd her from the Blow, and begs your Aid
To sooth her tortur'd Mind.

F

VALERIA.

VALERIA.

What says my Brother ?

How fav'd ? alas, too sure she dies this Moment.
 She had no Father there ; these Eyes beheld
 The fatal Stroke, and these sad Arms receiv'd her.
 Nor had I left her now but to obey
 Her own Command, and by Intreaties force
 Her cruel Brother to her.

VALERIUS. *[With Amazement.*

When was this ?

Where was it ?——Say, VALERIA——

VALERIA.

When I left you
 To seek some diff'rent Way our hapless Charge,
 Led by the Noise from Street to Street I ran,
 And came at last where through the gather'd Crowd
 I saw but could not reach her. Wild she seem'd,
 Struggling with all that would oppose her Passage,
 And trying every Method to provoke
 Her Brother's Fury : With dire Blasphemies,
 Which shock'd my trembling Soul, her Tongue profan'd
 Each awful Name, and not a God escap'd
 Her imprecating Rage.

VALERIUS.

Well, well, enough ;

But come to him.

VALERIA.

Silent awhile he stood,
 As the dead Calm before the Thunder rolls,
 Nor answer'd to her Rage : Then, rous'd at once,
 As if some Inspiration touch'd his Soul,
 His Bosom heav'd, he rais'd his Eyes to Heav'n,
 Then burst in Tears, and whilst he wept he drove

The

The Poiniard to her Heart, and thus, he cried,
Thus perish all the Enemies of *Rome*!

VALERIUS.

Thou seem'st to plead his Cause.

VALERIA.

Alas, my Brother,

I speak but what I saw.

VALERIUS.

Where was her Father?

VALERIA.

I know not, but some Chance, they said, detain'd him;
He scarce had left the Crowd, and thought her safe.

VALERIUS.

Scarce left the Crowd, and thought her safe?—O Gods,
'Twas I, 'twas I detain'd him; in that Moment
The horrid Deed was done.—Where are they now?

VALERIA.

I hope with her. She fear'd some fatal Violence,
And therefore beg'd me to intreat them to her.

VALERIUS.

And have you seen them? Are they Friends?

VALERIA.

O no,

I found them high in Wrath: The poor old Man
Torn with contending Passions threaten'd oft
Destruction on his Son, who with Disdain
Laid bare his Breast, and bade him strike the Blow:
The Patriot then took Place, and he would wish
He never had a Daughter. My Approach
Alarm'd them both; but PUBLIUS soon resum'd
His wonted Firmness, bade her Father go
And mingle Tears with hers, he would not see her,

Nor dared pollute his Conquests with her Presence.
 Hast thou nō Heart, the Father cried, and look'd
 Unutterable Sorrow ; at which Sight
 He yielded, and obey'd. I left them then
 To seek you out.—My Brother, you regard not
 What I have said.—You hear me not.

VALERIUS.

VALERIA,

Revenge is busy here. Yes, thou proud Chief,
 In spite of all the Glories which surround thee,
 I yet may crush thy Pride !

VALERIA.

You will not kill him ?

VALERIUS.

Kill him, VALERIA !—'Tis no common Death
 Which he shall die : I will have noble Vengeance.
 The Thought delights my Soul ! [Going.

VALERIA.

What Thought, my Brother ?

Nay tell me, or you go not.—Stay at least
 'Till you hear more.—I feel HORATIA's Wrongs
 As strong as you.— [Exit VALERIUS,

He's gone. Tho' my Heart bleeds

For my poor dying Friend, I must pursue him.
 His fatal Rashness may distress her more,
 And bring fresh Sorrows on an aged Sire
 Oppress'd too much already. [Exit.

SCENE

A TRAGEDY.

69

SCENE the last.

A Room in HORATIUS's House.

HORATIA on a Couch, and Attendants.

HORATIA,

Cease, cease your cruel Aid, ye shall not save me.
My utmost Wish is Death, and I will have it.

Enter HORATIUS and PUBLIUS.

Yet, let me thank you for this little Life
Your Art prolongs, 'till I have made my Peace,
And ask'd Forgiveness here,

HORATIUS.

My Child, my Child!

HORATIA,

What means this Tenderness?—I thought to see you
Inflamed with Rage against a worthless Wretch,
Who has dishonour'd your illustrious Race,
And stain'd its brightest Fame. In Pity look not
Thus kindly on me. O behold me, Sir,
With that stern Aspect my wrong'd Brother wears,
And I may then support this dreadful Parting ;
For I have injur'd you.

HORATIUS.

Thou has not, Girl ;
I said, 'twas Madness ; but he would not hear me,

HORATIA.

O wrong him not, his Act was noble Justice.
I forc'd him to the Deed : For know, my Father,
It was not Madness, but the firm Result
Of settled Reason, and deliberate Thought.

I was resolv'd on Death, and witness Heaven,
 I'd not have died by any Hand but his
 For the whole round of Fame his Worth shall boast
 Thro' future Ages. Nought but this, my Father,
 Could reconcile us; I forgive him now
 The Death of CURIATIUS; this last Blow
 Has cancell'd that, and he's once more my Brother.

HORATIUS.

What hast thou said? Weren't thou so bent on Death?
 Was all thy Rage dissembled?

HORATIA.

All, my Father,
 All but my Love was false; what that inspired
 I utter'd freely, and still hate the Cause
 Which has undone us, tho' I know 'twas Virtue,
 But for the rest, the Curses which I pour'd
 On Heav'n-defended *Rome*, were merely Lures
 To tempt his Rage, and perfect my Destruction.
 Heav'n! with what Transport I beheld him mov'd,
 How my Heart leap'd to meet the welcome Point,
 And leave its Sorrows there!

HORATIUS.

Unkind HORATIA!

Had'st thou no Pity on thy Father's Age?
 Could'st thou to ease thy Grievs abandon his,
 And leave him Childless.

HORATIA.

Childless? gracious Powers,
 Can he be Childless from whose happy Loins
Rome's great Deliverer sprung, and still survives
 To bless and cherish him.

Ho-

HORATIUS.

He does indeed,
 And I'm ashamed to think how I neglect him.—
 Forgive me, Boy; she has unman'd my Virtue.
 Yet can I see her thus, and not remember
 Her thousand little tender Arts, which sooth'd
 The Cares of Age, and led me gently through
 The Evening of my Days?

HORATIA.

Forget them, Sir,
 They all are nothing now; this last dire Act
 May justly shut me from your Breast for ever.
 Turn, turn to him; there blooms the kind Support
 Of your remaining Life. What tho' he bends
 His stern Regards on me, who have deserv'd them?
 He is by Nature gentle, mild, and loving,
 Will greatly pity your deserted State,
 And pay a double Duty.

HORATIUS.

Wherefore then
 Would'st thou provoke his Rage, and make me look
 With Horror on him?

HORATIA.

'Tis on me, not him,
 That thou should'st look with Horror; 'twas my Act,
 Not his.—

HORATIUS.

O foolish Nature, how it struggles here
 Against the force of Reason!—Save me, Boy,
 From the dire Conflict: when I look this way, [*To his Son.*]
 'Tis Reason's Triumph; Justice sanctifies
 Paternal Love, and Glory crowns the whole.

But when I turn to her, I feel my Strength
Again relapse, and scarce can bless the Hand
Which sav'd my Country!

HORATIA.

Then, there's nought remains,
But thus to rid you of the only Clog, [*Tearing off her*
Which keeps Affection from its proper Sphere, *Bandages.*
And shackles Coward Virtue.—But forgive me!

PUBLIUS.

My Sister, stay; I charge thee live, HORATIA.
O thou hast planted Daggers here!

HORATIA.

My Brother!
Can you forgive me too? then I am happy,
I dared not hope for that. Ye gentle Ghosts
That rove Elysium, hear the sacred Sound!
My Father and my Brother both forgive me!
I have again their Sanction on my Love.
O let me hasten to those happier Climes
Where unmolested we may share our Joys,
Nor Rome, nor Alba, shall disturb us more!

Enter VALERIA. [*In a Fright.*

O Sir, O my HORATIA—yet thou livest,
And may'st recover all.

HORATIUS.

What mean you, Lady?

VALERIA.

All Rome, my Lord, has ta'en th' Alarm, and Crowds
Of Citizens enrag'd are posting hither
To call for Justice on HORATIUS' Head.

HORATIA.

For what?

VALERIA.

For thee.

HORATIA.

O Heavens ! why Numbers of them
Beheld his Provocation.

VALERIA.

True they did ;
But my unhappy Brother—

HORATIUS.

What of him ?

VALERIA.

Alas he loved HORATIA, and her Loss
Has urg'd him to this Frenzy.

HORATIUS.

What of him ?

Does he arraign my Son ?

VALERIA.

He leads the Crowd,
And, as he pleases, sways their giddy Minds :
Paints the dire Tale in all its Pomp of Sadness,
And wakes Compassion by each varied Art
Of winning Eloquence. Around the King
They press in thousands ; his Authority,
Tho' aided with strict Promises of Justice,
Can scarcely calm their agitated Minds.
—But she shall live, and all be well again.

[Turning tenderly toward HORATIA.]

HORATIA.

O no, it cannot be—detested Parricide !
Could'st thou not die without the added Guilt
Of murdering all thy Race ?—O Sir—O Brother !

Can

Can ye behold me now, and not recall
Your kind Forgiveness?—Can ye—will ye?—Speak!
—But do not curse me, Sir!

—Yet why, my Father,
Why stand you thus amaz'd? The Laws are yours;
What Right can they pretend, ungrateful Men?
Has not a *Roman* Father Power to take
The Lives of all his Children?—He but acted
By your Command—O take the Deed on you!

PUBLIUS.

My Sister stay, and you, my Father, hear me.
I'll end this Strife, and die since they require it,
Heaven knows how willingly!
But let not Ignominy stain my Wreaths,
Let me not fall a public Spectacle
Dragg'd like a Criminal to Justice. No,
My Father, save me from that dreadful Scene,
Assume the generous Right the Laws allow you,
And take this forfeit Life with Honour from me.

[*Offering him his Sword.*]

HORATIUS.

True, and it shall be so. Yes, yes, my Children,
We'll die together.

HORATIA. [Rising from the Couch.

O forbear, forbear!—

Was this Pang wanting to compleat my Fate!
In Pity to yourselves, to the dear Honour
Of your unspotted Names!—O blind old Man
Darest thou lift up thy sacrilegious Hand
Against the Chief, the God that saved thy Country.

[*A Noise without.*]

Alas they're here—help me, I die—O now
My Father, now exert thy utmost Force With

With them, and shew thyself indeed a *Roman* ;
Not with thy Sword.

1st CITIZEN. [*Without.*

We must not be denied.

2d CITIZEN.

We will have Justice.

VALERIUS:

We demand HORATIUS.

HORATIA.

Would I could live !—it will not be—

HORATIUS.

My Daughter !

HORATIA.

Regard not me —There, there employ thy Power.

'Tis my last Prayer—VALERIA, I adjure thee

By the just Gods, proclaim him innocent—

They'll think my Father partial—O remember

Remember, dear VALERIA—Brother—Father ! [*Dies.*

VALERIA.

She's gone, she's dead !

PUBLIUS.

Then Fate has done it's worst.

Where are these Citizens ?

HORATIUS.

VALERIA,

PUBLIUS, look there—look yonder—what a Sight !

Is it for this we wish for Length of Days !—

O my poor bleeding Boys, how much I envy

Your happier Lot ! [*Noise without.*

Enter TULLUS, VALERIUS, and CITIZENS.

VALERIUS.

See ! Fellow Citizens, see where she lies

The bleeding Victim—

TUL-

TULLUS.

Stop, unmanner'd Youth!

Think'st thou we know not wherefore we are here?—
See'st thou yon drooping Sire?

HORATIUS. [Turning hastily towards them,

Permit them, Sir.

TULLUS.

What can he mean? Some other time, HORATIUS,

HORATIUS.

O no, this Infant.

1st CITIZEN.

He seems eager for it.

He sides with us,

TULLUS.

Well, be it so. I know not

What he intends; but if he meets my Wishes,

His strong unlabour'd Eloquence of Grief

May move them more than Reason's subtlest Force.

What would ye, Romans?

VALERIUS.

We are come, dread Sir,

In the behalf of murdered Innocence

Murdered by him, the Man—

HORATIUS:

Whose conquering Arm

Has saved you all from Ruin. O Shame, Shame!

Has Rome no Gratitude? Do ye not blush

To think whom your insatiate Rage pursues?

Down, down, and worship him.

1st CITIZEN.

Does he plead for him?

2d CITIZEN.

Does he forgive his Daughter's Death?

HORATIUS.

He does.

And glories in it, glories in the Thought
 That there's one *Roman* left who dares be grateful,
 If you are wrong'd, then what am I? Must I
 Be taught my Duty by th' affected Tears
 Of Strangers to my Blood? Had I been wrong'd
 I know a Father's Right, and had not ask'd
 This ready talking Sir to bellow for me,
 And mouth my Wrongs in *Rome*.

VALERIUS.

Friends, Countrymen,
 Regard him not, his Grievs have hurt his Reason.
 'Tis true that *PUBLIUS* has preserv'd his Country;
 But mast one glorious Act exalt him quite
 Beyond all Laws, and give a boundless Scope
 To his o'erweening Cruelty? ere long
 He'll claim a privilege to murder all
 Who dare oppose his Will; and when his Sword
 Has spread with mangled Carcases your Streets,
 He'll tell you 'twas that Sword which saved his Country.

HORATIUS.

Injurious Youth: That Sword which saved his Country
 Was never drawn but in his Country's Service.
 Some of you must remember, you I'm sure
SERVILIUS you were there, and must remember
 With what dire Curses this unhappy Girl—
 I will not call her mine—pursu'd us all,
 And dar'd insult the Majesty of *Rome*.

1st CITIZEN.

Yes, yes we all remember.

HORATIUS.

'Twas for that,
 For that he kill'd her ; 'twas not him she injur'd,
 'Twas in your Cause he kill'd her, not his own ;
 And must he die for that ? if 'tis a Crime
 To vindicate your Honour, he indeed
 Has been most guilty ; 'twas for that he Fought,
 For that he kill'd his Friends the *Curiatii* ;
 If that's a Crime, O let him die for that,
 Not for his Justice on a guilty Girl,
 And he shall fall contented.

VALERIUS.

Guilty Girl ?

How guilty ? Madness has a Privilege
 To talk unpunish'd, and was ne'er till now
 Arraign'd severely.

HORATIUS.

Mad ? She was not mad ;
 Believe me, Friends, she own'd it ere she died,
 Confess'd she did it to provoke his Vengeance
 Deliberately guilty.

VALERIUS.

Citizens,

Friends, Countrymen, regard not what he says,
 Stop, stop your Ears, nor hear a frantic Father
 Thus plead against his Child.

HORATIUS.

He does belie me,
 What Child have I ?—Alas, I have but One,
 And him ye would tear from me.

All CITIZENS.

Hear him, hear him !

PUBLIUS.

No, let me speak. Think'st thou, ungenerous Youth,
 To hurt my Quiet?—I am hurt beyond
 Thy Power to harm me. Death's extremest Tortures
 Were Happiness to what I feel.—Yet know
 My injur'd Honour bids me live, nay more,
 It bids me even descend to plead for Life.
 —But wherefore waste I Words. 'Tis not to him
 But you, my Countrymen, to you I speak,
 He lov'd the Maid.

CITIZENS.

How, loved her?

HORATIUS.

Fondly loved her,
 And under Show of public Justice screens
 A private Passion, and a mean Revenge.

[VALERIUS seems confounded and goes to his Sister.

Think ye I loved her not? high Heaven's my Witness
 How tenderly I loved her, and the Pangs
 I feel this Moment, could you see my Heart,
 Would prove too plainly I am still her Father.

You'll say I love him too. I glory in it.
 But 'tis not for myself, my Dregs of Life
 Will soon be spent, 'tis for my Country's Service
 I would preserve her Champion. 'Tis not me
 Whom you should pity, 'tis yourselves, your Wives,
 Your tender little Ones;—for most of you
 Are Fathers too.—O think, the Time may come,
 When you again shall want his Sword, and find
 Perhaps an hostile Ear as deaf to Mercy
 As I have found——But I forget myself,
 You are all *Romans*, and what you decree
 However hard is just.

1st CITIZEN.

He shall be saved.

VALERIUS has misled us.

ALL.

Save him, save him!

HORATIUS.

I thank you, Friends.

VALERIUS.

What mean ye, would ye save

A Murderer from Death?—I'll not be held, [*To his Sister*]

It was no Crime to love her, I will speak.

—If Justice moves you not, yet dread th' Event.

Fear ye not Heaven and the avenging Gods

Who gave him up to Shame, and urg'd him on

To stain his Conquests with a Sister's Blood.——

HORATIUS.

Away, away; is he the first whose Arm

Was stained with Kindred Blood? and dar'st thou talk

In *Rome* thus idly? What's our Founder then,

If he's a Murderer? Heaven approved the Death

Of *Remus*, as deliberate as this.——

TULLUS.

Enough, enough!

With Reverence speak we of those mighty Names

Which stand enroll'd above. All Acts of Blood

Must not be deem'd as Murders. 'Tis the Intent

And not the Action constitutes the Crime,

My Friends, and Fellow Citizens, I praise

That Zeal for Justice in you, which permits not

The Blaze of Fame, or Gratitude itself

For

A TRAGEDY.

81

For Actions which might move inferior Minds,
To blind or weaken its determin'd Force.
Tho' here perchance it err. Behold this Youth
So late your Glory, with what conscious Shame
He sees himself reduced for one rash Act,
The Crime of Virtue, to solicit here
A Life which he contemns. He loved the Maid
With a fond Brother's Love ; and had he felt
No nobler Passion, she had still survived.
That other Passion was his Love of you.
Say, shall he die for that ? For 'tis to you
He makes his last Appeal.
Or grant it were a Crime, the worst of Crimes,
You might with Ardor seize the happy Power
Which Fortune now allows you. Could you else
Have rais'd your Gratitude to his Desert ?
Fate seems to have found out this only Means
By which you could reward him. Life for Life
You may return him now, for Freedom, Freedom.

1st CITIZEN.

We did declare him free, but this VALERIUS
Would interrupt our Will.

2d CITIZEN.

Rome glories in him!

TULLUS.

Or turn this Way, if yet a Doubt remains.
Behold that virtuous Father, who could boast
This very Morn a numerous Progeny,
The dear Supports of his declining Age.
Then read the sad Reverse with pitying Eyes,
And tell your conscious Hearts they fell for you.

G

Ho-

HORATIUS.

I am o'erpaid by that, nor claim I ought
 On their Accounts ; for by high Heaven I swear
 I'd rather see him added to the Heap
 Than *Rome* enslaved.

1st CITIZEN.

O excellent HORATIUS.

2d CITIZEN.

O worthy Father !

3d CITIZEN.

Were he ten Times guilty,
 The Son of such a Sire might pass unpunish'd.

TULLUS.

Then I pronounce him free. And now, HORATIUS,
 The Evening of thy stormy Day at last
 Shall close in Peace. Here, take him to thy Breast.

HORATIUS.

My Son, my Conqueror ! — 'Twas a fatal Stroke,
 But shall not wound our Peace. This kind Embrace
 Shall spread a sweet Oblivion o'er our Sorrows.
 Or if in After-times, tho' 'tis not long
 That I shall trouble you, some sad Remembrance
 Should steal a Sigh, and peevish Age forget
 Its Resolution, only boldly say
 Thou saved'st the State, and I'll intreat Forgiveness.

TULLUS.

VALERIUS too must be your Friend again.
 But that we leave to Time. The present Hour
 Must be employ'd to expiate his Offence.
 Be that thy Care, HORATIUS ; that the Gods
 May bless To-morrow's Rites, and gracious hear
 Our Hymns of Praise for Liberty restor'd.

Learn

Learn hence, ye *Romans*, on how sure a Base
 The Patriot builds his Happiness; no Stroke,
 No keenest, deadliest, Shaft of adverse Fate
 Can make his generous Bosom quite despair,
 But that alone by which his Country falls.
 Grief may to Grief in endless Round succeed,
 And Nature suffer when our Children bleed:
 Yet still superior must that Hero prove
 Whose first, best Passion is his COUNTY'S LOVE.



EPILOGUE, spoken by Mrs. Pritchard,

LADIES, by me our courteous Author sends
 His Compliments to all his Female Friends:
 And thanks them from his Soul for every bright
 Indulgent Tear, which they have shed To-night.
 Sorrow in Virtue's Cause proclaims a MIND,
 And gives to Beauty Graces more refin'd.
 O who could bear the loveliest Form of Art,
 A Cherub's Face, without a feeling Heart!
 'Tis there alone, whatever Charms we boast,
 Tho' Men may flatter, and tho' Men will toast,
 'Tis there alone they find the Joy sincere,
 The Wife, the Parent, and the Friend are there.
 All else, the veriest Rakes themselves must own,
 Are but the paltry Play-things of the Town;

The

*The painted Clouds, which glittering tempt the Chace,
Then melt in Air; and mock the vain Embrace.*

*Well then; the private Virtues, 'tis confess,
Are the soft Inmates of the Female Breast.*

*But then, they fill so full that crouded Space,
That the poor Public seldom finds a Place.*

*And I suspect there's many a Fair-one here,
Who pour'd her Sorrows on HORATIA's Bier,
That still retains so much of Flesh and Blood,
She'd fairly hang the Brother, if she could.*

*Why, Ladies, to be sure, if that be all,
At your Tribunal he must stand or fall.*

*Whate'er his Country, or his Sire decreed,
You are his Judges now, and he must plead.*

*Like other Culprit Youths, he wanted Grace;
But could have no Self-interest in the Case.*

*Had she been Wife, or Mistress, or a Friend,
It might have answered some convenient End:*

*But a mere Sister, whom he lov'd—to take
Her Life away,—and for his Country's Sake!*

*Faith, Ladies, you may pardon him; indeed
There's very little Fear the Crime should spread.*

*True Patriots are but rare among the Men,
And really might be useful, now and then.*

*Then do not check, by your Disapprobation,
A Spirit which once rul'd the British Nation,*

And still might rule—would you but set the Fashion. }

The E N D.

