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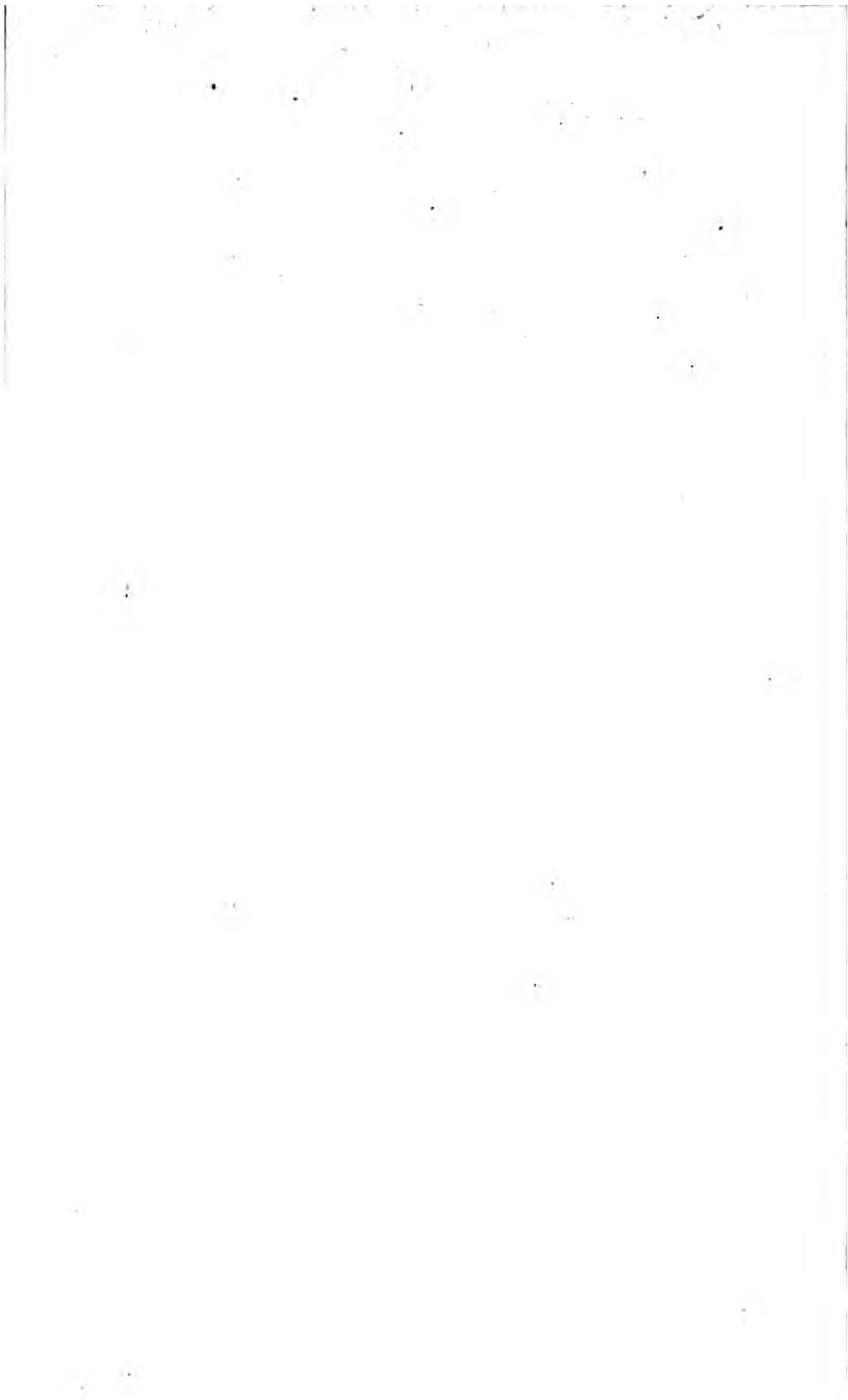


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Thurston del

Raimbach Sculp^t

The Robbers.

Act III. Scene II.

THE
German Theatre,

Translated by

BENJAMIN THOMPSON, Esq.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL V.

Containing

THE ROBBERS.

THE HAPPY FAMILY.

CONSCIENCE.

FOURTH EDITION.

London:

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COLEMAN-STREET.**

1811.



T. Hood and Co. Printers, St. John's Square, London.

THE ROBBERS.



A TRAGEDY,
IN FIVE ACTS.



FROM
SCHILLER.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

COUNT MOOR.

CHARLES, } *His Sons.*
FRANCIS, }

SPIEGELBERG, }

SCHWEITZER, }

GRIMM, }

SCHUFTERLE, } *Libertines, who become Robbers.*

ROLLER, }

RAZMAN, }

KOSINSKI, }

HERMAN, *the natural Son of a Nobleman.*

DANIEL, *an old Servant of Count Moor.*

COMMISSARY.

WOMAN.

AMELIA, *Niece of the Count.*

Robbers, Servants, &c.

THE ROBBERS.

ACT THE FIRST.

Scene, an Apartment in the Castle of COUNT MOOR.

Enter COUNT and FRANCIS.

Fra. BUT are you well, my father?—You look so pale——

Count. Quite well, my son. What tidings do you bring?

Fra. The post is arrived. A letter from our correspondent at Leipzig——

Count.—(*With great anxiety.*)—Does it contain any account of my son Charles?

Fra. It does; but I fear, if you be ill—if you feel in the smallest degree disordered, allow me—I will communicate the matter to you at a more proper time.—(*Half aside.*)—This intelligence is ill adapted to the ear of a feeble, sickly father.

Count. Heavens! What can he mean?

Fra. First let me step aside, and drop a tear of pity for my poor lost brother. I ought to be mute—for he is your son. I ought to conceal his disgrace—for he is my brother: but to obey you is my first duty, and by this mournful duty I am bound to speak—therefore forgive me.

Count. Oh, Charles, Charles! didst thou but know how thy conduct tortures thy father;—durst thou but know that happy tidings of thee would add ten years to my existence—whereas, all I have lately heard has led me, with rapid strides, to the grave.

Fra. If my father's life be dependant on happy tidings from my brother, I must go. Were I to state all I know, we should, even to-day, tear our hair over your corpse.

Count. Stay.—The step to the grave is but short. Be it so.—(*Sits himself.*)—The sins of the father are visited even unto the third and fourth generation. Be it so.

Fra.—(*Draws a letter from his pocket.*)—You know our correspondent. I would forfeit this finger if I could say he lied. Collect yourself. Forgive me, if I do not allow *you* to read this letter: you must not know all.

Count. As you will. My son, you are the prop of my declining years.

Fra.—(*Reads.*)—“Leipzig, 1st of May. Your brother seems, at length, to have filled the measure of his infamy, unless his genius, in this respect, soars above every thing I can comprehend. After having contracted debts to the amount of forty thousand dollars,”—a decent sum, Sir—“after having seduced the daughter of a rich banker, and mortally wounded her lover in a duel, he, last night, with seven of his dissipated companions, escaped the arm of justice by flight.”—Father! for Heaven's sake, father—how do you feel?

Count. Enough, my son; read no further.

Fra. I pity you sincerely. “Warrants have been issued against him; the injured cry aloud for redress, and a reward is offered for his apprehension. The name of Moor”—No, my lips shall not destroy

my father.—(*Tears the letter.*)—Do not believe it, Sir. Do not believe one syllable of it.

Count.—(*Overpowered with sorrow.*)—My name—my honourable name—

Fra. Oh, that he did not bear the name of Moor! Oh, that my heart did not feel such warm affection for him! It is an affection which I cannot eradicate, though I feel that the Eternal Judge will hereafter condemn it.

Count. Oh, my prospects—my enchanting visions!

Fra. Yes, yes, “That ardent spirit,” you were wont to say, “which already appears in my boy Charles, which already makes him feel the force of every thing sublime and beautiful. That candour which beams in his eye — that sensibility — that manly courage—that juvenile ambition—that unconquerable perseverance, and all those shining virtues which adorn my son, will one day make him a sincere friend, a worthy citizen, an illustrious hero.” How gloriously is your prophecy fulfilled! The *ardent spirit* has shewn itself, and admirable indeed are his achievements. The *candour* is transformed to impudence, the *sensibility* is shewn by attachment to every wanton Phryne. Can the pleasure of six years have burnt away the oil of this illustrious fiery genius? Yes—so completely, that as he passes through the streets, the passers-by exclaim—“C’est l’amour qui a fait ça.” The *illustrious hero* has, indeed, achieved exploits beyond his years, and when he has attained the age of maturity, what may we not expect? Perhaps, father, you may live to enjoy the happiness of beholding him at the head of a troop, which takes its station in the sacred recesses of the woods, in order to ease the weary traveller of his burden. Perhaps, ere you die, you may behold the monument erected for him between Heaven and earth. Perhaps—Oh, my father! seek

another name; lest the boys, who have seen the effigy of your son in the market-place of Leipzig, should point the finger of derision at you.

Count. Must you, too, torment me thus? How do my children lacerate my heart.

Fra. You perceive that I have a spirit, too; but 'tis a scorpion's spirit. "Yes," you were wont to say, "that poor puppet Francis, that weak creature"—with twenty other titles, pointing out the difference between me and Charles, as he sat upon your knee, and pinched your cheek—"that inanimate dolt will die, decay, and be forgotten, while his brother's fame will fly from pole to pole." Yes, with uplifted hands I thank thee, Heaven, for having made the *poor puppet* Francis unlike his brother.

Count. Pardon me, my son; rail not against your father, when he owns himself deceived. The God who doomed that Charles should cause these tears, will wipe them from my eyes, through thee, my Francis.

Fra. Yes, dear father; Francis will wipe them from your eyes: Francis will employ his life in prolonging yours. You shall be the oracle which guides his actions—the mirror in which he surveys his every project. No duty shall be too sacred to be broken, when your precious life depends on the transgression.

Count. I thank you, my son. Heaven reward you for what you have done, and will do, for me!

Fra. Confess to me, then, that you would be a happy man, if you were not obliged to own my brother as your son.

Count. Hold! Oh, hold! when the nurse first brought him to me, I raised him in my arms towards Heaven, and cried—"I am most happy."

Fra. And feel you happy now? No, you envy the condition of your meanest vassal. Charles is

the cause of your sorrow; as long as he remains your son, this sorrow will increase, and at last prove fatal.

Count. True! True!

Fra. Well then, disinherit this son.

Count.—(*Starts.*)—Francis! Francis! what say you?—Wish you that I should curse my son?

Fra. That do I not. But whom do you call your son? The man, to whom you have given life, and whose constant endeavour is to shorten yours?

Count. I own his conduct is unnatural—but still, still he is my child.

Fra. An amiable child truly, whose constant study is to put an end to his father's life. Oh, that you could view his conduct in a proper light! Oh, that the scales would fall from your eyes! But no: your indulgence confirms him in his dissolute pursuits—your supplies of money justify his conduct. True it is that you thus remove the curse of Heaven from him, but on you, father, on you it will fall with tenfold vengeance.

Count. It is just—most just. Mine, mine is all the guilt.

Fra. How many thousands, after having drenched the voluptuous bowl of libertinism, have been reclaimed by suffering? Is not the corporal pain, which succeeds every excess, a proof of heavenly interference? Shall man dare to avert this by impious affection? Shall the father dare to destroy, by ill-timed tenderness, the pledge entrusted to his care?—Consider, Sir—if you doom him to undergo, for a short time, the misery he has prepared for himself, must he not reform? In the other case, must he not become habituated to vice?—Then woe be to the father, who, by countenancing the crimes of his son, has destroyed the intentions of a higher Power.

Count. I'll write to him—I'll tell him that I abandon him for ever.

Fra. Such conduct will be wise.

Count. I'll forbid him to appear again before me.

Fra. That will have a wholesome effect upon him.

Count.—(In a tone of affection.)—Till he reforms.

Fra. Right, Sir. But may he not come with the mask of a hypocrite; sue for your compassion; with tears implore your pardon; and, after having obtained it, may he not depart, and, in the arms of his harlots, laugh at his old father's weakness?—No, Sir; believe me, he will of his own accord, return as soon as his conscience has acquitted him.

Count. I must write to him without delay.—
(Going.)

Fra. Hold! another word, my father. Your anger may, I fear, dictate to your pen expressions which may drive him to despair; and, on the other hand—will he not deem a letter written by yourself to be a token of forgiveness? It will, therefore, be better if you allow me to write the letter?

Count. Do so, Francis. Alas! It would have broken my heart. Tell him——

Fra.—(Eagerly.)—You wish me to write, then?

Count. Yes. Tell him that he has made me shed a thousand tears of blood—that he has made me toss upon my couch a thousand sleepless nights—but he is my son—do not drive him to despair.

Fra. Retire to bed, dear father. You are much agitated.

Count. Tell him that his father's bosom—but do not, do not drive him to despair. [Exit.

Fra.—(Looks after him with derision.)—Yes, console thyself, poor dotard, for his loss. Thou shalt never clasp him in thy arms. The gulph between thee and thy darling son is as wide as that which

seperates Heaven from hell. He was torn from thy arms, ere thou hadst determined that it was thy will. I must collect these scraps. How easily might any one recognize my hand!—(*Gathers the pieces of the letter which he had torn.*)—What a wretched bungler should I be, had I not yet discovered the means of alienating a father from his son: even were they bound by chains of iron to each other. Yes, honoured father, I have drawn a magic circle round thee, which thy darling cannot overstep. Sorrow will soon do its duty, and close thy mortal career. From *her* heart too I must tear this Charles, even if half her life depended on it.—(*Walks to and fro with rapid strides.*)—Nature, I have great right to hate thee, and, by my soul, I'll be revenged. Why hast thou loaded me with such a burden of deformity? Why me alone of all that bear the name of Moor? Hell and furies, why me alone? But, 'tis well. Thou didst damn me while I was begotten—and, in return, I vow eternal hatred against thee. I see no other human being like me—therefore will I blast thy works. The sweet fraternity of souls I cannot know—the soft persuasive eloquence of love I cannot use. Force, therefore—force and cunning must assist me. With them I'll crush each creature that opposes me, till I have gained the height of my ambition.

Enter AMELIA slowly.

She comes. Ha! I perceive, by her step, that the medicine takes effect. I do not love her; but I am resolved that no one else shall revel in her charms. In my arms shall they wither, untasted, unenjoyed by man.—Ha! What is she doing now?—(*Amelia, without perceiving Francis, destroys a nosegay, and tramples upon it. Francis approaches with a mali-*

cious mien.)—What crime have these poor violets committed?

Ame.—(*Starts and measures him with a long look.*)—You here! 'Tis as I wished. You alone, of all mankind, did I wish to see.

Fra. Transcendant bliss! me alone of all mankind!

Ame. Yes: I have panted for this moment, and will enjoy it. Stay, I conjure you—stay, that I may—curse thee, villain.

Fra. What! Treat me thus! You have mistaken the object of your hate. Go to my father.

Ame. Father!—true. A father who dooms his son to eat the food of sorrow and despair, while he regales himself with dainties, quaffs delicious wines, and rests his palsied frame on beds of down. Shame on you, monsters—shame on you, brutal wretches! How could a father be persuaded thus to treat his only son?

Fra. His only son! I thought that he had two.

Ame. Yes, he deserves such sons as thou art. When stretched upon the bed of death, in vain will he stretch forth his withered hand, in hopes to feel the hand of Charles. With horror will he shrink from the icy touch of Francis. Yes, wretch, one transport still awaits thee—a dying father's curse.

Fra. Your mind is disordered, dear Amelia. I lament your fate.

Ame. Dost thou lament thy brother's fate? No: monster, thou hatest him. I hope thou hatest me too.

Fra. Oh, Amelia! I love you more than life

Ame. If this be true, you surely cannot deny me one request.

Fra. Never, never! ask any thing.

Ame. The boon is small—(*With dignity.*)—All I require is that thou wilt hate me. Shame would overpower me, were I to know that, while I thought

of Charles, thou didst not hate me. Give me thy promise, and begone.

Fra. Lovely enthusiast! How does that firm, immutable affection charm me.—(*Placing his hand on Amelia's heart.*)—Here, here reigned my brother. Charles was the god of this temple. In motion, or on her pillow, Charles was the idol of Amelia's fancy. In Charles creation seemed to be concentrated.—

Ame.—(*Much agitated.*)—'Tis true—I own it. Yes, in defiance of you, barbarous wretches as you are, I'll tell it to the world—I love him.

Fra. Inhuman villain, thus to reward her tender passion—to forget her.

Ame. What? Forget me!

Fra. Did you not place a ring upon his finger. A diamond ring, as a pledge of your fidelity? But what youth can resist the fascinating arts of a wanton? Who can blame him? He had no money—and she rewarded him, no doubt, for his liberality, by many a warm embrace.

Ame.—(*Incensed.*)—My ring to a wanton!

Fra. Shame overtake him! Yes.

Ame.—(*Violently.*)—My ring!

Fra. No other, Amelia. Oh, had you placed such a jewel on my finger, death himself should not have robbed me of the treasure. 'Tis not the sparkling diamond, nor the costly workmanship, but *love*, which gives value to the present. You are in tears, sweet girl. Damned be the wretch who made them flow. Alas! did you know all; were you to see him in his present state?

Ame. Monster! In what state?

Fra. Dear Amelia, do not ask me.—(*As if aside, but audibly.*)—Well would it be for the libertine and the debauchee could he conceal his crimes from the world's observation; but they are horribly betrayed by the dim, livid eye, the death-like features, faltering voice, projecting bones, and tottering frame.

The poison pierces to the very marrow, and—disgusting dreadful thought!—(*Turns towards her.*)—Amelia, you recollect the wretch who expired in our hospital. You once looked at him, but modesty forbade that the look should be more than momentary. Recall the image of that wretch to your mind, and think you see—my brother Charles. Yes, such is he. His kisses are infectious—poison is on his lips.

Ame. Infamous slanderer!—(*Turns away.*)—

Fra. Does this weak description fill you with horror? Go, then—behold himself—behold your amiable, angelic Charles—go—inhale the balsam of his breath—feast on the ambrosial air which issues from his lips.—(*Amelia conceals her face.*)—How voluptuous to embrace him! But is it not unjust to condemn a person on account of his external appearance? May not a great soul beam from a miserable cripple, like a diamond from a dunghill?—(*With a malicious smile.*)—True it is, if debauchery undermines the firmness of character, if virtue makes her escape when modesty is banished, as the perfume leaves the withered rose—if the mind becomes a cripple with the body—

Ame.—(*Transported.*)—Ha! Charles! Now I know thee again. Thou art still the same. Villain, it cannot be. Thy tale is false.—(*Francis stands awhile lost in thought, then suddenly turns, and is going.*)—Whither so quick. Art thou ashamed, because detected?

Fra.—(*Concealing his face.*)—Let me weep unmolested. Hard-hearted father—thus to consign to misery the worthiest of his sons. Let me hasten to him, dear Amelia. I'll fall at his feet, and, on my knees, implore that he will transfer his curse to me—that he will disinherit me—my blood—my life—my every thing.

Ame.—(*Falls on his neck.*)—Brother of my Charles! Best, dearest Francis!

Fra. Oh, Amelia, how do I love you for your unshaken constancy towards Charles. Pardon me for having thus put your affection to the test. How sweetly have you justified my wishes. These tears, these sighs, this praiseworthy indignation—all, all prove our souls to be congenial.

Ame.—(*Shakes her head.*)—No, no. By your chaste light of Heaven, thou canst not feel like Charles. His sensibility and spirit are alike unknown to thee.

Fra. The evening which preceded his departure for Leipzig was silent and serene. He led me to the arbour, where you and he so often had exchanged soft vows of love. Long we remained silent, till he at length seized my hand, and whispered in a voice which his tears almost choked: “I leave my Amelia—I cannot account for my sensations—but I fear that I leave her for ever. Do not forsake her, brother. Be her friend—her Charles—should Charles never return.”—(*Falls at her feet, and kisses her hand with fervour.*)—And never will he return. Amelia, I acceded to his wishes, and he bound me to the observance of them by an oath.

Ame.—(*Starts back.*)—Traitor! Have I detected thee? In that very arbour did he conjure me that, if death divided us, no other passion should—Wretch! villain most accursed! Away from me!

Fra. Amelia, you do not know me.

Ame. Oh, I know thee well. Wouldst thou convince me that Charles could entrust his secrets to a wretch like thee? Begone instantly.

Fra. You insult me.

Ame. Begone, I say. Thou hast robbed me of a costly hour. May it be deducted from thy life.

Fra. You hate me, then?

Ame. I abhor thee. Begone.

Fra.—(*Furiously.*)—Enough! Soon shall you tremble for this conduct. You shall feel what it is to prefer a beggar. [*Exit.*]

Ame. Go, villain. I am now again with Charles. Beggar, said he? I would not exchange the tatters which hang upon him, for the purple of an emperor. How dignified must be the look with which he begs. A look, which instantly annihilates the pageantry and splendor of the great. Down to the dust ye splendid baubles!—(*Tears her necklace.*)—Ye rich and mighty barons, may your gold, your jewels and your banquets be your curse! Charles! Charles! Now I deserve thee. [*Exit.*]

Scene changes to an Inn on the borders of Saxony. CHARLES is discovered walking to and fro in great agitation.

Cha. Where can these fellows tarry? Surely they have been on horseback. Holla! More wine here! Evening approaches, and the post is not yet arrived.—(*Laying his hand on his breast.*)—How my heart beats! Wine, wine, I say! I am doubly in want of courage to-day, whether to bear joyful or disastrous tidings.—(*Wine is brought—he drinks, and strikes the table with violence.*)—What a damned inequality prevails throughout this world! While many a miser hoards whole chests of gold, poverty lays her leaden hand upon the bold enterprising flights of youth. Fellows, whose income is incalculable, torment me hourly to discharge my paltry debts, and though I press their hands, and beg them to allow me but a single day—all is vain. Entreaties, oaths, and tears, have no effect on their impenetrable souls.

Enter SPIEGELBERG.

Spi. Damnation! One stroke follows close upon another. Have you heard the news, Moor?

Cha. No—What has happened?

Spi. Happened! Read this paper, which is just arrived by the post. Peace is proclaimed throughout Germany. The devil take all monks, say I.

Cha. Peace throughout Germany!

Spi. Ay. The news is enough to make a man hang himself. Club-law is at an end. All contests are forbidden on pain of death. Hell and furies! Cut your throat, Moor. Pens will scribble now, where swords used to be employed.

Cha.—(*Casts his sword from him.*)—Let cowards, then, head our regiments, and men break their swords. Peace throughout Germany! The news has branded thee with infamy for ever, Germany. Goose-quills usurp the place of swords! I'll not think of it. Shall I curb my ardent spirit, and submit, without resistance, to despotic laws? Peace throughout Germany! Damned be the peace, which would make a man crawl like a snail upon the earth, when he feels that he could overtop the eagle in his flight! Peace never produced a great man—war has made many a hero. Oh, that the spirit of our forefathers would revive! Place me at the head of a few bold determined Germans. Germans! No, no, no. That cannot be. Germany must fall. Her hour is come. Not one spark of resolution animates the descendants of Barbarossa. I will forget the use of arms, and wander in my peaceful native groves.

Spi. What, in the devil's name, do you mean? Why, you surely would not act the part of the prodigal son—you, a fellow, who has written more legible characters with his sword, than half a dozen quill-drivers could scribble in a leap-year! P!

You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Misfortune must never transform a hero into a coward.

Cha. Yes, Maurice, I will act the part of the repentant prodigal. You may call it weakness in me to revere my father. It is the weakness of a man; and he who does not feel it, must be exalted above humanity, or degraded below it. I will pursue the middle course.

Spi. Go, go—You are no longer the Charles Moor, whom once I knew. Don't you remember how often you have laughed at the old miser, with the glass in your hand. Have I not heard you say a thousand times, "Let him enjoy his hoards of wealth, while I enjoy my bottle." Don't you remember this, I say? 'Twas spoken like a man, but——

Cha. Damnation overtake thee, Maurice, for reminding me of such expressions! Damnation overtake myself for having uttered them! But, no—I was intoxicated. My heart knew not what escaped my lips.

Spi.—(*Shakes his head.*)—Charles, it is impossible you can be serious. Come, confess now, that necessity compels you to think of this plan. Pshaw! Never fear, man, happen what may. True courage grows in proportion to the increase of danger. Fate seems resolved to make great men of us, by casting so many impediments in our way.

Cha.—(*In a peevish tone.*)—I know not of what use courage would be now.

Spi. Of much. What! Would you suffer your talent to moulder and decay? Would you bury your great abilities in the earth? Do you fancy that your genius is incapable of any thing beyond your petty exploits at Leipzig? Let us hurry together into the bustle of the world. Paris and London are the places for us. There if you greet a person by the title of an honest man, you are sure

to feel his fist. There a man of genius may carry on the trade by wholesale. Yes—you will stare, I promise you, when you see how gloriously writing is counterfeited—dice loaded—cards palmed—locks picked—strong boxes gutted. Huzza! Paris and London for ever! I'll be your tutor. Hang the miserable dolt, who would starve rather than belong to the crook-fingered tribe.

Cha.—(*With asperity.*)—Have you reached such a length as this?

Spi. I could almost fancy that you doubt my powers. Let me once become warm, and you shall see miracles. Your shallow understanding will be struck with astonishment, when my pregnant genius shall bring forth.—(*Striking the table.*)—*Aut Cæsar, aut nihil.* You shall be jealous of me.

Cha.—(*Keenly surveying him.*)—Maurice!

Spi.—(*With ardour.*)—Yes, you shall be jealous of me—you, and all our comrades. I'll devise schemes which shall amaze and confound you. What mighty plans are dawning in my mind! What gigantic projects fill this teeming brain! Cursed be the lethargy—(*Striking his forehead.*)—which hitherto confined my powers, and darkened all my prospects! I am, now, awake—I feel who I am, and what I must become.—Leave me, all of you. You shall live from my bounty.

Cha. You are a fool. The wine has mounted into your brain.

Spi.—(*With increasing ardour.*)—“*Spiegelberg,*” you will say, “are you concerned with the devil, *Spiegelberg?*”—“What a pity it is, *Spiegelberg,*” the King will say, “that you were not a general when the Turks attacked us! You would have soon made them beat a retreat.”—“What a lamentable circumstance it is,” I hear the doctors cry, “that this young man did not study physic! His discoveries would have immortalized him as the first of

our profession.”—“Alas! had he devoted his mind to finance,” will the statesman exclaim, “he would have converted even stones to gold.”—The name of Spiegelberg will be echoed from east to west—from north to south—and while he soars with outspread wings to the temple of renown, you, paltry reptiles, shall be crawling in the mire.

Cha. Success attend you! Mount to the summit of fame by the ladder of infamy, if such be *your* inclination. More honourable happiness awaits me, in the shade of my paternal groves, and in the arms of my Amelia. A week has now elapsed since I wrote to entreat my father’s pardon. I have not concealed from him the smallest circumstance, and forgiveness is ever the reward of sincerity. Let us take leave of each other, Maurice. We shall never meet again after to-day. The post is arrived. My father’s pardon is already within the walls of this town.

Enter SCHWEITZER, GRIMM, ROLLER, and SCHUF-TERLE.

Rol. Have you heard that there are officers in search of us?

Gri. And that we may expect every minute to be apprehended.

Cha. I am not surprised to hear it. I care not what happens. Have you seen Razman? I expect he has a letter for me.

Rol. I dare say he has, for I observed him in search of you some time ago.

Cha. Where, where is he?—(*Going.*)

Rol. Stay. I told him to come hither. Why, how now? You tremble.

Cha. Not I, indeed. Why should I tremble? This letter—rejoice with me my friends—I am the happiest man on earth. Why should I tremble?—

(Schw. seats himself in the chair previously occupied by Spi. and drinks his wine.)

Enter RAZMAN.

Cha.—(Flies towards him.)—My friend! The letter! the letter!

Raz.—(Delivers the letter, which Charles hastily tears open.)—What now? Why you are as pale as a white-washed wall.

Cha. My brother's hand!

Rol. What's the matter with Spiegelberg?

Gri. The fellow has lost his senses. He is troubled with St. Vitus's dance.

Schw. He seems to me as if he were making verses.

Rol. Spiegelberg! Holla! Spiegelberg! Damn the fellow! He does not hear me.

Gri.—(Shaking him.)—Maurice, are you dreaming? or—

Spi.—(Who has been, since his conversation with Charles, sitting in a corner, and making gestures, which convey the idea of some great project, starts wildly from his chair, and seizes Schweitzer by the throat.)—*La bourse ou la vie.*—(Schweitzer, with perfect composure, pushes him against the wall. The rest laugh. Charles drops his letter, and is bursting out of the room. All start.)

Rol.—(Holding Charles.)—Moor, whither so fast?

Gri. What is the matter? He is as pale as death.

Cha. Lost, lost for ever.—(Rushes out.)

Rol.—(Takes up the letter and reads it.)—“Unfortunate brother!” The beginning is pleasant enough, to be sure. “I am under the necessity of briefly informing you that your hopes are defeated. Our father says, you may go wherever your depraved, abandoned mind directs. He forbids every

personal attempt, on your part, to obtain his pardon, unless you wish to live on bread and water in the lowest dungeon of the castle, till your hairs grow like the feathers of an eagle, and your nails like the talons of a vulture. These are his last words. He commands me to close the letter. Farewell, for ever. I sincerely pity you.

FRANCIS MOOR."

Schw. Most amiable brother Francis!

Spi. You mentioned bread and water, I think? Temperate kind of diet, to be sure—but I have provided otherwise for you. Have not I always said that I should be obliged at last to think for you all?

Schw. The blockhead! You think for us all!

Spi. If you be not poltroons—if you have courage enough to attempt something great—

Rol. Will it release us from our present infernal scrapes?

Spi.—(*With a smile of self-approbation.*)—Release us from our present scrapes! Ha! ha! ha! Would that satisfy you? Can your thimble-full of brains project nothing greater than that? Yes, yes, Spiegelberg must think for you. I'll point out to you the way by which you shall become heroes, barons, princes, gods!

Raz. That's a long stride, by my soul. But I presume your project is rather of the break-neck kind. It will cost each of us a head at least, I suppose.

Spi. Not yours depend upon it, Razman. Courage alone is wanted, for with respect to the mode of proceeding, I take the management of that entirely upon myself. Courage, I say, Schweitzer! Courage, Roller, Grimm, Razman, Schufterle! Courage.

Schw. If that be all you want. I've courage enough to walk through hell barefooted.

Rol. And I enough to fight the devil under the gallows for the body of a thief just executed.

Spi. Spoken like men! If you feel thus courageous, let any step forth and say, "I still have something to lose."—(*A long pause.*)—No answer to this?

Rol. Why should we waste our time in idle words? If common sense can understand, and determined spirit execute your project—out with it!

Spi. Be it so.—(*Stations himself in the midst of them and proceeds in a solemn tone.*)—If you have one drop of that blood which filled the veins of German heroes, follow me. Let us hasten to the forest of Bohemia, there collect a band of robbers—and—why do you stare at me? Is your little fume of valour already evaporated?

Rol. You are not the first freebooter who has defied the gallows—and yet—what else can we do?

Spi. What else? Nothing. Would you be confined in a dungeon for debt, and doomed to hard labour till the last trumpet sounds? Would you earn a morsel of rye-bread by tilling the earth? Would you gain a mean subsistence by singing ballads through the streets? Would you follow the drum (I mean if your countenances did not forbid that any regiments should accept you) and submit to the overbearing insults of a corporal, till flogged to death, or doomed to fill the station of a beast, and drag artillery? such is the choice now left you.

Rol. Spiegelberg, you are a glorious orator, when your object is to transform an honest man into a villain. But what is become of Moor?

Spi. An honest man, did you say? Do you think my project will make you less honest than you are at present? Is it not praiseworthy to take from the miser a third of that which causes care, and banishes repose—to force the hoarded treasure into

circulation—to restore equality of property—in a word, to create a second golden age—to assist Heaven, by removing from the world war, pestilence, famine, and physic—to feel the flattering conviction, when we sit down to dinner, that our meal is procured by the exertion of our own genius and courage—to acquire the respect of every rank in society—

Rol. And, finally, to be dispatched by a hangman—to dangle, in defiance of wind and weather, between Heaven and earth, while the fowls of the air join in celestial concert round us—to have the honour, while monarchs are food for worms, of being visited by the royal bird of Jove—Maurice, Maurice, beware of the beast with three legs.

Spi. Hen-hearted fool! Does this alarm you? Many a fine fellow, with a genius extensive enough to have effected universal reformation, has been doomed to perish by the halter;—but does not such a man's renown extend through centuries and tens of centuries, while many a prince would be overlooked in history, were it not the historian's interest to increase the number of his pages? Nay, when the traveller sees a gibbet,—does he not exclaim—“That fellow was no fool,” and lament the hardship of the times?

Raz. Spiegelberg, give me your hand. Your arguments, like the lyre of Orpheus, have lulled that howling Cerberus, my conscience, to repose.—I am yours.

Gri. Let them catch us too, if they can. At all events one may carry a concealed powder which is capable of conveying us across Acheron at short notice.—Your hand, Maurice. You have heard my catechism.

Schuf. Damnation! There's an auction in my head. A mountebank—a sharper—a coiner—a robber—I am ready to adopt any character. He

who bids the most secures me.—Give me your hand, Maurice.

Schw.—(*Approaches slowly, and presents his hand.*)—Spiegelberg, you are a great man—or a blind sow has found an acorn.

Rol.—(*After a long pause, during which he has rivetted his eye on Schweitzer.*)—You too, my friend! (*Stretches forth his hand.*)—Roller and Schweitzer shall support each other—even to the jaws of hell.

Spi. Right, my lads! All is settled. To the stars let us force our way,—to Cæsars and to Catilines.—Fill your glasses. Health to the god of thieves.

All. Health to Mercury!

Spi. Now, let us proceed to business. A year hence each of us will be rich enough to buy an earldom.

Schw.—(*Aside.*)—Yes—if we be not broken on the wheel before the year is expired.—(*They are going.*)

Rol. Stay, comrades, stay. Ugly as the beast may be, it must have a head. Rome and Sparta fell for want of one.

Spi.—(*With a fawning mien.*)—True, Roller is right. A leader you must have—a penetrating, politic leader.—(*Stalks into the midst of them.*)—When I reflect what you were but a few moments since, and what one happy thought has made you—(yes, yes,—of course you must have a chief)—a thought, too, which must have had its origin in an enlightened mind—

Rol. If we might hope---but I fear he will not consent---

Spi.—(*In a complacent tone.*)—Don't despair, Roller. Hard as is the task to steer the vessel, when the winds and waves oppose it—oppressive as is the weight of a crown—speak frankly, man. Perhaps—perhaps—he may be prevailed upon—

Rol. If he be not at our head, the whole scheme is a bubble. Without *Moor*, we shall be a body without a soul.

Spi.—(*Turning away with a look of peevish disappointment.*)—Dolt! Blockhead!

Enter CHARLES, in violent agitation.

Cha.—(*Walks to and fro with furious gestures, not perceiving that any one is present.*)—Man!—man! False hypocrite!—Deceitful crocodile!—Thy eyes overflow—but thy heart is iron.—Thou stretchest forth thy open arms—but a poniard is concealed in thy bosom. Lions and leopards feed their young,—the raven feasts its little ones on carrion, and he, he—Experience has made me proof against the shafts of malice. I could smile, while my enemy quaffed my heart's blood—but when the affection of a father is converted into the hatred of a fury—let manly composure catch fire—let the gentle lamb become a tiger—let every nerve in my frame be braced, that I may spread around me vengeance and destruction.

Rol. *Moor*, what think you?—Is not the cavern of a robber better than the dungeon of a prison.

Cha. Why did not my spirit take up its abode in the body of a tiger, which satisfies its ravenous appetite with human flesh? Is this a parent's love? Oh that I were a bear—then might I instigate my whole species to revenge my wrongs. Thus penitent—yet thus rejected! I could pour poison into the ocean—I could annihilate mankind.

Rol. Listen to me, *Moor*.

Cha. It is incredible—it is a vision.—So pathetic a description of my sufferings—so fervent an avowal of my penitence—the beasts of the forest would have felt compassion, yet—were I to declare this openly, the world would deem it a libel upon human nature.—Oh, that I could blow the trumpet of rebellion

through creation—that I could arm earth, air, and sea against the barbarous race!

Gri. Hear us, Moor! Your fury makes you deaf to us.

Cha. Away from me! Is not thy name *man*? Art thou not born of woman? Away from me instantly Oh, I loved him so sincerely—so unutterably. No son could feel the same affection towards a father.—A thousand times would I have sacrificed my life in his defence.—(*Foaming with fury, and stamping most violently.*)—Ha!—Who will arm this hand with a sword, that I may destroy this brood of otters? Who will instruct me how to extirpate the whole race?—He shall be my friend, my guardian angel.—I will adore him.

Rol. We are the friends whom you describe.—Listen to us, Moor.

Gri. Accompany us to the Bohemian forests. We intend to form a band of robbers, and you—(*Charles rivets his eye on him.*)

Schw. You shall be our captain—You must be our captain.

Spi.—(*Throws himself into a chair.*)—Slaves and cowards!

Cha. Who first thought of this?—Hear me, fellows!—(*Seizes Roller.*)—Thy mind is incapable of conceiving such a project—Who mentioned it to thee?—Yes, by the thousand arms of death, the project suits my temper.—He who first planned this enterprize, is worthy of a seat in Heaven. Robbers and murderers!—By my soul, I will be your captain.

All.—(*With a joyful shout.*)—Long live our captain!

Spi.—(*Aside.*)—Till I dispatch him.

Cha. The scales fall from my eyes. What a fool was I to sigh for the cage, in which I have before been confined! My soul thirsts for action—my heart

pants for the blessings of freedom.—Robbers and murderers!—Yes. I will unite with these, and trample on all laws. I appealed to man, and man shut his ear against me —Away, therefore, all sympathy—all mercy—all humanity! I no longer have a father—I no longer feel an attachment. Blood and death shall teach me to forget that any one was ever dear to me.—Tremble, tremble, ye who are doomed to be in my power.—For my vengeance shall be horrible.—We are agreed, my friends. I am your captain—and happy shall be his lot, who most shall spread around him desolation and despair: for, as I live, he shall be recompensed most royally. Come round me, friends, and swear you will be faithful and obedient to me till death.

All.—(Present their hands.)—Yours till death.—(Spiegelberg walks furiously up and down.)

Cha. And now, by this right hand I swear to remain your faithful, steadfast leader, till I shall be no more. This arm shall make a corpse of him who hesitates when danger calls, or retreats when it presses. The same punishment overtake me from your hands, if ever I swerve from my oath. Are you satisfied?

All.—(Throwing their hats in the air.)—We are, we are.—(Spiegelberg turns away with a malicious smile.)

Cha. Now, let us go. Be not afraid of danger or of death; for over us presides a destiny, which cannot be controlled. We all hasten towards the fatal day:—Die we must—whether upon a bed of down, the field of battle, or the scaffold.—One of these must be our lot. *[Exit, followed by the rest.]*

Spi.---(*Aside, as he goes.*)---The catalogue is not complete. Thou hast omitted treason and assassination. *[Exit.]*

ACT THE SECOND.

Scene, a Chamber in the COUNT'S Castle.

FRANCIS is discovered in deep meditation.

Fra. How tedious are these medical men!---What an eternity is an old man's life!---Must my towering plans be confined to the snail-paced infirmities of a father? Oh, that I understood the method of conveying death into the fort of life---of destroying the body by operating on the mind!---That were a glorious discovery,---it would raise me to the rank of a second Columbus in the realms of death.---Let me reflect awhile. Such an art deserves that I should be the inventor of it.---How shall I begin?---What sensation would soonest overpower the faculties of life?---*Rage?* No. That is a voracious wolf, which soon surfeits itself.---*Grief?* No. That is a worm, which creeps too slowly.---*Fear?* No. *Hope* defeats its power.---Are these the only executioners of man?---Is the arsenal of death so soon exhausted?---(After a pause.)---Ha! True!---*Terror!* What cannot terror effect?---What can reason or religion oppose to this giant?---Yet, it is possible he may even survive the effects of terror.---Assist me, then, *Anguish*, and thou, *Repentance*, undermining viper, who dost ruminate thy food. Assist me, thou, *Self-Accusation*, who dost destroy thine own inheritance, and turn against thy parent. Lend me thy aid, too, *Memory*, who dost multiply our present sorrows by recalling former happiness. Display thy mirror, thou deceitful nymph, *Futurity*. Let him behold therein the

joys of Heaven, but never, never let him taste them. The plan is excellent. Blow shall follow blow. This band of furies shall immediately commence their terrible combined assault, and that malignant fiend, *Despair*, shall follow, and inflict the fatal blow. Triumph! Triumph!

Enter HERMAN.

Ha! *Deus ex machiná!* Herman!

Her. Your humble servant, Sir.

Fra.—(*Presents his hand.*)—You shall not find me ungrateful.

Her. I have proof of your liberality.

Fra. You shall soon have more—very soon. Herman, listen to me.

Her. I am all attention.

Fra. I know you, Herman. You are a resolute, intrepid fellow. My father has insulted you most grossly.

Her. May hell receive me when I forget it!

Fra. Spoken like a man! Revenge becomes you, Herman. Take this purse. It should be heavier, were I lord of these domains.

Her. That is my constant wish. I thank you, Sir.

Fra. Is it your wish I should be lord of these domains?—is it really your wish, Herman? But it cannot be. My father has the constitution of a lion, and I am a younger son.

Her. I wish, Sir, that you were heir to the estates, and that your father had the constitution of a love-sick girl.

Fra. Were such the case, Herman should be royally rewarded for his services. I would raise thee from thy ignoble situation, to the rank which thou deservest. By Heaven, thou shouldst possess a treasure—thou shouldst rival the equipages of our

proudest nobles—but I am wandering from the subject, on which I wished to converse with you. Have you forgotten Amelia?

Her. Damnation! Why remind me of her?

Fra. My brother gained her affection—my brother robbed you——

Her. For which he shall most dearly pay.

Fra. She refused you—nay, I believe, he kicked you down stairs——

Her. For which I'll kick him into hell.

Fra. I have often heard him say, that your father never could look at you without striking his breast and exclaiming — “God be merciful to me, a sinner!”

Her.—(*With frantic violence.*)—Hell and damnation seize him!—No more!

Fra. He advised you to sell the patent of your father's nobility, and buy worsted to mend your stockings.

Her. The curse of Heaven overtake him! I'll tear his eyes out.

Her. Why thus irritated, Herman? How can you be revenged? What harm can a mouse do to a lion? Your fury will sweeten his triumph. You can do no more than grind your teeth, and vent your rage upon a crust of bread.

Her.—(*Stamping with violence.*)—I'll trample him in the dust.

Fra. Right.—Herman, you are a gentleman. You must not tamely submit to this insult. You must not lose Amelia—no, by Heaven, you *shall* not lose Amelia. Hell and furies! I would attempt the utmost were I in your situation.

Her. I will not rest, till I have felled him to the earth.

Fra. Be not so violent, Herman. Come nearer. You shall have Amelia.

Her. That I will in spite of the devil.

Fra. You shall have her, I tell you. You shall receive her from my hand. Come nearer, I say. You are ignorant, perhaps, that Charles is disinherited.

Her. Amazing! I have never heard a syllable respecting it.

Fra. Compose yourself and listen. Eleven months have elapsed since he has been discarded. But my father already repents the hasty step, though—(*with a smile*) I flatter myself he ought not to have the credit of it. Amelia, too, torments him daily with reproaches and complaints. In short, I am convinced he will soon be persuaded to send people in search of him throughout the world, and if he be found—good night, Herman! You may bow to him at the coach-door, when he drives with her to church, for the purpose of marrying her.

Her. I would strangle him at the altar.

Fra. My father will soon resign to my brother his estates, that he himself may live in retirement. Then will your proud rival have the reins in hand, and laugh at those who envy him—while I, who who would exalt you to the rank which you deserve, I must be dependent on him for a bare subsistence.

Her.—(*Enraged.*)—No. By my soul, you shall not be dependent on him.

Fra. Can you prevent it? You, too, Herman, will be doomed to feel the scourge of his malice. When he meets you in the street he will spit at you, and if you shrug your shoulders, or complain—woe be to you!—Such is your chance to obtain Amelia—such are your prospects.

Her.—(*In a resolute tone.*)—Instruct me, then, how to act.

Fra. I will; I feel for your fate, and will advise you as a friend. Go—disguise yourself—so completely that no one can recognize you, and procure

admission to the old man. Tell him that you are come from Hungary—that you served with my brother during the last campaign—that you saw him die on the field of battle——

Her. But shall I be believed?

Fra. Leave that to me. Take this packet. It contains instructions and documents, which will silence all suspicion. Now contrive to leave the castle unperceived. Escape through the back-door, and over the garden-wall. For the management of the catastrophe rely on me.

Her. And that will end in—Long live our new Lord, Francis Count Moor!

Fra. How sly the rogue is!—Right, Herman. By this plan we shall obtain all we wish. Amelia will renounce every hope of possessing Charles. The old man will blame himself for having been the cause of his son's untimely end—will fall sick—and then, Herman—there needs no earthquake to destroy a falling house. He will not survive the news—I shall inherit his property. Amelia, having lost every support, must become the plaything of my will. Of course, therefore, you perceive—in short every thing will be as we wish.—But, you must not retract, Herman.

Her. Retract!—*(With an air of triumph.)*—Sooner shall the ball return to the cannon which discharged it. Rely on me. Farewell. *[Exit.*

Fra.—*(Calls after him.)*—Remember that all you do is for your own advantage. The harvest is your own.—Yes. When the ox hast dragged the corn to the barn, he must be content with hay. Some village wench thou mayst espouse, but not Amelia. How ready is the impetuous fool to stride over the bounds of honesty for the purpose of obtaining an object, which it is impossible he ever can possess!—This fellow, though he himself is a villain, relies upon my promise. Willingly does he consent to

deceive an unsuspecting father—yet never would he forgive the man who retaliates by deceiving *him*. Is such the creature appointed by his Maker to be lord of the creation? Forgive me, then, dame Nature, if I have accused thee of making me unlike the rest of mankind, and rid me of the little resemblance which still exists.—Man, thou hast forfeited my respect, and firmly am I now convinced that there can be no sin in straining every nerve to injure thee. [Exit.

Scene changes to the COUNT'S Chamber. He is discovered asleep. AMELIA is standing at his side.

Ame. Softly let me tread—he is asleep.—(*Approaches him.*)—How benignant, how venerable is his countenance!—Venerable as the countenance with which saints are depicted. No, good man, I cannot be incensed against thee. Slumber amidst the perfume of the rose.—(*Scatters roses on the bed.*)—Dream of your Charles—and wake with grateful odours round you.—(*Going.*)

Count.—(*In his sleep.*)—My Charles! My Charles!

Ame.—(*Slowly returns.*)—Hark! His guardian angel listened to my supplication.—(*Walks close to the bed.*)—It is sweet to breathe the air, in which his name is floating. I will remain here.

Count.—(*Still asleep.*)—Are you there, Charles? Are you really there? Oh, turn away that look of horror. I am already wretched enough.—(*Appears to be much agitated.*)

Ame.—(*Shakes him.*)—Awake, uncle. It was but a dream.

Count.—(*Half awake.*)—He was not here, then. I did not hold his hand. Cruel, hard-hearted Francis! Will you not even allow me to see him in a dream?

Ame.—(*Starts.*)—Ha! mark that, Amelia.

Count.—(*Rouses himself.*)—Where am I? You here, my neice?

Ame. Your slumbers were enviable, uncle.

Count. True. I was dreaming of my Charles. Why did I not continue to dream of him? Perhaps, I might have obtained his forgiveness.

Ame.—(*With a look of benignity.*)—Angels harbour no resentment. He forgives you.—(*Gently pressing his hand.*)—Father of my Charles, I forgive you.

Count. No, dearest girl. The deadly paleness of thy countenance bears witness against me. Poor Amelia! I destroyed thy happiness for ever. Do not forgive me—yet, oh, do not curse me.

Ame. Never, never! Be this my only curse!—(*Kisses his hand with tenderness.*)

Count.—(*Rising.*)—What do I see? Roses!—Girl, dost thou strew roses on the murderer of thy Charles?

Ame. I strewed them on the father of my Charles.—(*Falls on the Count's neck.*)—On Charles himself I cannot strew them.

Count. How happy would you be, were that in your power.—(*Draws forth a miniature.*)—Know you this picture?

Ame.—(*Rushes towards it.*)—My Charles?

Count. Such were his looks, when sixteen years of age. How altered are they now! Dreadful thought! This benignant look is now supplanted by the frown of fell misanthropy. This smile of hope is banished by despair. Doubtless you recollect the day on which you painted this, Amelia. It was his birth-day.

Ame. Oh! never shall I forget it. Never shall I again feel so happy! How charming were his looks! The reflection of the setting sun illumined his countenance, while his dark locks wantoned in

the air. The sensations of the woman overpowered the skill of the artist. My pencil fell from my hand, while my soul fed on his enchanting features. The full beauty of the original took root in my heart, while on the ivory the touches were feeble and inanimate as is the recollection of past music.

Coun'. Proceed, proceed. These enthusiastic ideas recall my youth. Oh, my Amelia, your mutual affection made me so happy.

Ame.—(*Rivetting her eye upon the miniature.*)—No, it is not he—he is not Charles. Here, and here—(*pointing to her heart and head*)—the likeness is exact. It was not in the power of colours to imitate that heavenly fire which sparkles in his eye. Away with it—'tis a paltry daub.

Enter DANIEL.

Dan. A man waits without, who wishes to see you my Lord. He says that he has tidings of importance to communicate.

Count. To me there is, in this world, but one subject which can be of importance. You know it, Amelia.—Perhaps it is some unfortunate man, who comes to crave my charity. He shall not depart unassisted. [*Exit Daniel.*]

Ame. If he be a beggar, admit him instantly.

Enter FRANCIS, HERMAN in disguise, and DANIEL.

Fra. This is the man who demands admittance to you. He says that he is the bearer of most dreadful tidings—can you bear to hear his recital?

Count. I know but one circumstance which can be dreadful to me. Approach, and spare me not. Give him a cup of wine.

Her.—(*In a feigned voice.*)—My Lord, I hope you will forgive me, if, against my inclination, I

distress you by my narrative. I am a stranger in this country ; but I know you well—you are the father of Charles Moor.

Count. How know you this ?

Her. I knew your son.

Ame. Where is he ? where is he ?

Count. Do you bring tidings of him ?

Her. He was a student at the university of Leipzig.—When he left that place, he wandered far and wide. He himself has told me that he strolled through Germany bare-headed and bare-footed, begging his bread from door to door. Five months after this, the fatal war between the Poles and Turks broke out, and, as he had no hopes in this world, he was attracted by the sound of King Matthias's victorious drum. "Permit me," said he to his Majesty, "to die upon the bed of honour. I am fatherless."

Count. Do not look at me, Amelia.

Her. The King bestowed on him an ensign's commission, and he accompanied the royal hero during his victorious career. It happened that he and I slept in the same tent. He often spoke of his old father, and said he had known better days ; nay, sometimes he would dwell upon his disappointed hopes, till tears rose into our eyes.

Count.—(*Hiding his face.*)—No more ! no more !

Her. A week after this period a bloody battle occurred, and your son conducted himself like a gallant warrior. The whole army was witness of his wonderful exploits. Five regiments were obliged to relieve each other---and your son kept his post. Balls whizzed past him on every side---and he kept his post. A bullet shattered his right hand---he grasped the colours with his left---and kept his post.

Ame.---(*Transported.*)---Uncle, he kept his post.

Her. I found him, after the battle, stretched on

the very spot where he had stood. He was mortally wounded.---With his left hand he was trying to repel the streaming blood---his right he had buried in the earth. "Comrade," said he, "it was reported through the ranks that our general is slain."---"He is," answered I. "Then let every brave soldier follow his commander," cried he. With these words he withdrew his left hand from the wound, and, in a few minutes, expired like a hero.

Fra.---(*Affecting to be enraged.*)---Peace, wretch! May thy tongue deny its office for ever! Art thou come hither to destroy my father.

Her. I am come to fulfil the last request of my dying comrade. "Take this sword," said he, in a feeble voice, "and deliver it to my father. Tell him that it is stained with the blood of his son Charles, whom his curse forced into the field. Tell him that I died in despair." The word which accompanied his last sigh was---*Amelia.*

Ame.---(*As if roused from a reverie.*)---Was Amelia!

Count.---(*Overpowered with anguish, tears his hair.*)
---My curse forced him into the field! He died in despair!

Her. This is the sword, and this a miniature, which, at the same time, he drew from his bosom: it bears a strong resemblance to that lady. "Deliver this to my brother Francis, and tell him"---Here his voice failed him. I know not what he would have added.

Fra.---(*Counterfeiting astonishment.*)---Amelia's picture to me! Amelia's picture from Charles to me!

Ame.---(*Approaching Herman with violence.*)---Vile impostor! Execrable hireling!---(*Seizes him.*)

Her. I merit not this treatment, Madam! Look, and be convinced it is your picture. Perhaps you yourself presented it to him.

Fra. By my soul, Amelia, 'tis the very picture.

Ame. It is, it is.---Oh, Heaven and earth!

Count.---(*In agony.*)---My curse forced him into the field---my curse drove him to despair.

Fra. And he thought of me in the last bitter hour---thought of me when death already waved his sable banner over him. Worthy, affectionate brother.

Count. My curse drove my son into the field of battle---my curse made him die in despair.

Her.---(*Scarcely able to conceal his agitation.*)---I cannot bear the sight of so much misery. Farewell, my Lord.---(*Aside to Francis.*)---Would that you had not employed me. [*Exit hastily.*]

Ame. Stay, oh, stay, what was his last word?

Her.---(*Calls to her in a broken voice.*)---Amelia.

Ame. Amelia! No:---thou art not an impostor. He is dead---yes, he is dead. Charles is dead.

Fra. What do I see? Letters written with blood upon the sword!---Amelia!

Ame. Written with his blood?

Fra. Am I awake? Look at these bloody characters "*Francis, do not forsake my Amelia.*" And see---on the other side of the blade;---"*Amelia, almighty death releases you from your vows.*" Mark that. He wrote it with a hand almost benumbed by death: he wrote it with his heart's warm blood; he wrote it on the awful brink of eternity.

Ame. Gracious God! it is his hand. Oh, horrible! He never loved me. [*Rushes out.*]

Fra.---(*Aside.*)---Damnation, the dotard will survive the attack.

Count. Oh, my Amelia, my niece, my child, do not leave me. Francis, Francis, restore to me my son.

Fra. Who loaded him with a malediction? Who drove him to the field of battle? Who doomed him

to die in despair? He was a noble youth. May the curse of Heaven overtake his murderer!

Count.—(*Striking his breast and forehead with frantic violence.*)—Yes. Heaven's curse must overtake me! I am the father, the unnatural father who destroyed him. I am the murderer of my son. He loved me even at the hour of death. Monster, monster that I am!

Fra. Why this fruitless sorrow? He is dead—(*With a malignant smile.*)—It is easier to murder than to reanimate a son.

Count. It was by thy persuasion that I cursed my son. It was by thy hellish arts.—Wretch! restore to me my Charles.

Fra. Rouse not my fury. I abandon thee at the hour of death.

Count. Villain! Monster! Barbarous monster! Restore to me my son.—(*Rushes furiously towards Francis, who eludes his grasp, and exit.*)—A thousand curses follow thee! Thou hast robbed me of my son.—(*Overwhelmed with despair, he throws himself upon a couch.*)—Forsaken by all—forsaken at my dying hour. My guardian angel turns away, and all the saints of Heaven abhor me as a murderer.—O horrible, horrible!—Will no kind soul support my head? Will no one close my eyes? I call not my kindred, or my friends. I have no kindred—I have no friends. I call on mankind. Will no one—forsaken—alone—death—despair.—(*Sinks senseless upon the couch.*)

Enter AMELIA.

Ame.—(*Espies him, and shrieks.*)—Dead! dead!
[*Rushes out.*]

Scene changes to a forest in Bohemia. Enter RAZMAN from one side, and SPIEGELBERG, with several Robbers from the other.

Raz. Welcome, comrade, welcome to the forest of Bohemia.—(*Embraces him.*)—Where the devil have you been? From what quarter has the wind blown you hither, precious brother in iniquity?

Spi. I am piping hot from the fair at Leipzig. Rare fun we had, I assure you. Schufterle will tell you all particulars, when you see him. He has joined our captain's principal division on the road.—(*Throws himself on the earth.*)—Well, and how have you fared since we parted. Is the trade brisk? Oh, I could spend a day in relating our pranks, and damn me if you would not forget your meals while listening to them.

Raz. That I believe---that I believe. We have seen some accounts of you in the newspapers. But where, in the devil's name, did you find these fellows? Why, you have brought an army of recruits. You are a notable dog at discovering rogues, Maurice.

Spi. Ay, and a glorious set of rogues I've brought. You may hang your hat on the sun, and I'll bet half a week's booty that the fellows steal it, and that not a soul shall know how it was taken away.

Raz.---(*Laughs.*)---Well said, Maurice, you and these gentlemen will be welcome to our noble captain. He has enticed some fine fellows, too, I promise you.

Spi.---(*Maliciously.*)---Captain, forsooth!—Compare his men to mine!—Pshaw!

Raz. Come, come.—Yours may know how to manage their fingers; but our captain's reputation

has procured him some determined dogs—brave, hearty, honest fellows.

Spi. So much the worse.

Enter GRIMM in haste.

Raz. Who's there? What's the matter? Have you seen any travellers?

Gri. Damnation! Where are the rest? What! Must you stand prating here, while poor Roller—

Raz. Roller! What of him?

Gri. Why he is hanged, and four more with him.

Raz. Roller hanged! how do you know that?

Gri. He has been in prison three weeks: and we knew nothing about the matter. During that time he has been thrice stretched on the wheel, but the staunch dog refused to confess where his captain was. Yesterday he was condemned—and this morning he went post-haste to the devil.

Raz. What a damned business! Does the captain know it?

Gri. The first account of it reached him yesterday. He foamed at the mouth like a wild boar. You know he was always very fond of Roller. Away he went, and fixed a ladder against the wall of the prison, but in vain. He gained admittance disguised as a friar, and wanted to take Roller's situation, but the noble fellow would not consent to it. Moor then returned, and this morning swore (our blood ran cold while we heard him) that Roller should be lighted to eternity by such a torch as never yet graced the funeral of an emperor. The town will feel the effect of his fury; for he hates the inhabitants on account of their bigotry, and you know, when he says he will do any thing, it is as certain as if already done.

Raz. Poor Roller.

Spi. *Memento mori.* But I have not much to do with that maxim.—(*Sings.*)

When a gibbet I pass
 I am not such an ass
 As to blubber and think of my end ;
 But I shut my left eye,
 Nod, and wink while I cry :
 “ Better you there than Maurice—good friend.”

Raz. Hark ! a shot !—(*A noise is heard.*)

Spi. Another !

Raz. And a third ! Huzza ! It is the captain.—
 (*Several Robbers sing at a distance.*)

Long live such judges ! Who can match 'em ?
 They hang no rogues—unless they catch 'em.

(*Schweitzer's and Roller's voices are heard.*)—
 Holla ! Holla ! Ho !

Raz. Roller's voice, or a thousand devils seize me !
 (*Schweitzer and Roller are again heard.*)—Raz-
 man ! Grimm ! Spiegelberg ! Razman !

Raz. Roller ! Schweitzer ! Fire, fury and hell.—
 (*Running to meet them.*)

*Enter CHARLES, SCHWEITZER, ROLLER, SCHUF-
 TERLE, and other Robbers, covered with dirt.*

Cha. Liberty ! Liberty ! Roller, you are free.
 Take my horse, and wash him with wine.—(*Throws
 himself on the earth.*)—We have had warm work, by
 my soul.

Raz.—(*To Roller.*)—What ! Escaped after having
 been thrice on the wheel !

Spi. Are you alive, or do I see a ghost ?

Roll. Alive and hearty, comrade. Where am I
 come from, think you ?

Gri. How can we know ? We expected you were
 gone to prepare for our reception below.

Roll. You might have guessed worse, for I had

begun my journey thither. I am come straight from the gallows. Let me recover my breath. Schweitzer will tell you the whole history. Give me a glass of brandy. You here again Maurice. I expected to have met you elsewhere. Give me a glass of brandy. All my bones are loose.

Raz. But come--tell us how you escaped. From the gallows, did you say?

Rol.—(*Swallows a glass of brandy.*)—That's the liquor of life! It warms my heart. Yes—straight from the gallows, as I told you. I was only three steps from the damned ladder on which I was to mount into Abraham's bosom. My chance was not worth a pinch of snuff. To the captain I am indebted for liberty and life.

Schw. It was an excellent joke, to be sure. We were told by our spies, yesterday, that Roller was safe in the stone jug, and that, unless the sky fell before this morning, he would inevitably go the way of all flesh. "Follow me," cried the captain. "What will not a man attempt, when the life of a friend is in danger? We will rescue him if it be possible—if not, we'll light him to eternity by such a torch as never yet graced the funeral of an emperor." The band collected. We employed a clever fellow to apprise Roller of our intention, which he contrived by throwing a small note into his soup.

Rol. I despaired of success.

Schw. We waited till the streets were cleared. All the inhabitants followed poor Roller. We heard their shouts, and now and then could distinguish the voices of the psalm-singers. "Now," said the captain, "execute my orders." We flew like arrows, set fire to the town in thirty-three places at once, hurled firebrands into the neighbourhood of the powder magazine, into the churches and granaries—Hell and the devil! Before a quarter of

an hour had elapsed, the north-east wind, which must have felt a grudge against the town, came to our assistance, and soon made the blaze mount above the chimnies. We ran up and down the streets like furies, crying "Fire! Fire!" Shrieks, shouts, and confusion pervaded the place. The bells began to ring backwards, when suddenly the powder-magazine blew up. What a cursed explosion did it make! One might have fancied that the earth was split asunder, that the sky was driven almost beyond space, and hell sunk at least ten thousand fathoms lower.

Rol. Just at this time my attendants cast a look behind them. The town appeared like Sodom and Gomorrah. The horizon seemed to be on fire. All sulphur, smoke, and flame. The forty hills which surrounded the town re-echoed with continual explosions. Terror and dismay overpowered every spectator of the scene. This was the decisive moment. I availed myself of it. So near was my fate that my irons had been already taken off. Away I flew, swift as the wind, while the people round me were looking back like Lot's wife. After having run about sixty yards, I threw my clothes away, plunged into the river, and swam under water till I thought myself no longer in danger. I then landed, and found our captain waiting for me with horses and clothes. Thus I escaped, and here I am. Moor, Moor, I wish you may soon be in a scrape, that I may have an opportunity of paying my debt.

Raz. A brutal wish, for which you ought to be hanged. But it was a capital stroke.

Rol. No one can know what it was, unless he has been in the same situation. To understand and feel it, you must march like me with half a hundred armed attendants. Then you must observe the damned preparations—you must see all the ceremonies of the executioner—you must look at the

infernal machine, to which every reluctant step brings you nearer—you must hear those horrid psalm-singers—(their cursed twang still rings through my head)—you must hear the croak of the hungry ravens, who are picking up the half-corrupted remnant of your predecessor's carcass. All this combined with the happy prospect of eternity, must be felt, before you can judge what were my sensations. I would not undergo the same damned process for all the wealth the devil can bestow. Death is no more than a harlequin's leap, but the preparations—oh, curse them.

Spi. I can't help thinking of the powder magazine. When it blew up, I'll answer for it that the air stunk as insufferably of brimstone, as if the devil had hung out his whole wardrobe.

Schw. If the town rejoiced so much at the idea of seeing our friend Roller swing, why should not we rejoice at the destruction of the town? Schusterle, do you know how many lives were lost?

Schuf. Eighty-three, I was told. The church-steeple alone buried sixty people under it.

Cha.—(*Who has listened with the utmost gravity.*) Roller, thy life was dearly bought.

Schuf. Pshaw! what does that signify? To be sure, if they had been men—but mere infants in swaddling-clouts—silly beldams, employed in driving the flies from them—blind chimney-corner cripples, no longer able to find the door—what the devil are they worth? All who could move, were gone to see the farce. None but the dregs of the town remained at home.

Cha. Poor unfortunate creatures! infants, cripples, and old nurses, said you?

Schuf. Ay, damn'em—some invalids too—women with child—a few, perhaps, actually in labour. I happened to pass a house in which I heard an odd noise—I peeped into it, and what do you think I

saw? A child—a little healthy chubby boy. It was stretched on the floor, under a table, and the flames were gathering round it. “Poor little devil,” said I, “why you seem cold.” So I lifted him by the arm, and threw him into the fire.

Cha. Didst thou so? May that fire burn in thy bosom till eternity grows grey. Quit my presence, monster, and dare not to appear again before me. I discharge thee from my band.—(*Several Robbers begin to murmur.*)—What! Do you murmur? Do you reflect upon the justice of my sentence? Who dares to murmur or to think when Moor commands? Away with him, I say. There are more among you who are ripe for my resentment. I know you, Spiegelberg. But I shall soon investigate more narrowly the conduct of you all; and better had it been for any one who dreads this scrutiny, if he had never seen the light of Heaven.—(*All the Robbers withdraw in great agitation. Charles walks to and fro with rapid strides.*)—God of vengeance, canst thou blame me for being what I am? Do not those engines of thy indignation, pestilence and famine, sweep away the just as well as the unjust? Who can command the flames to kill the vermin, but to spare the grain? Here do I stand before the face of Heaven, and feel ashamed to own my degradation. I, who essayed to hurl the thunderbolt of Jove, have murdered pigmies, while the Titans triumph. My first attempt has failed. I feel I have not strength to wield the avenging sword of God. Here, then, I renounce the audacious project. I will retire to some rude corner of the earth, and shun the light of day.

Enter ROLLER in great haste.

Rol. Captain, we are discovered. Several troops

of Bohemian cavalry are patrolling through the forest. Damn blue stockings, they have betrayed us.

Enter GRIMM.

Gri. Captain, we are tracked to our haunts. We are surrounded by a thousand horsemen.

Enter SPIEGELBERG.

Spi. Lost, lost, inevitably lost! Every man of us is hung, drawn, and quartered. Several thousand hussars and dragoons are stationed on the heights, and prevent all possibility of escape. [*Exit Charles.*

Enter SCHWEITZER, RAZMAN, SCHUFTERLE, and other Robbers, from various quarters.

Sch. It seems to have routed the fellows at last. I am glad to see these knights of the broad sword. I have long wished to face them. Where is our captain? Is all the band assembled? We have ammunition enough, I hope?

Raz. Plenty, plenty. But our troop consists of no more than eighty. The odds are thirty to one against us at least.

Schw. So much the better. These fellows are paid for risking their persons—we fight for liberty and life. Let us rush upon them like a deluge and fire, as if all the demons of hell were let loose. Where is our captain?

Spi. He forsakes us in the hour of distress. Is there no possibility of escape?

Schw. Escape! When you attempt it, coward, may you sink in the mire, and be trampled to death! Yes, poltroon, you always can talk, but when you see a pistol—You chicken-hearted boaster, if you

don't behave like a man to-day, I'll sew you in a boar's skin, and throw you to the dogs.

Raz. The captain! the captain!

Enter CHARLES slowly.

Cha.—(*Aside.*)—I have seen that the forest is surrounded. They must now fight with the courage of despair.—(*Aloud.*)—My friends, the decisive hour is arrived. We must conquer or die.

Schw. This sword shall rip up a few of them, by Heavens. Lead on, captain. We'll follow you into the jaws of death.

Cha. Let every man load his fire-arms. We are not in want of ammunition, I hope?

Schw. Ammunition! We have enough to drive the earth to the moon.

Raz. Each of us is armed with five brace of pistols, and three carbines, all of which are loaded.

Cha. That is well. And now some of you must climb the trees, or hide yourselves in the thickets, in order to fire upon them before they can perceive you.

Schw. That station will suit you, Spiegelberg.

Cha. The rest will follow me, and fall like furies on their flank.

Schw. I'll belong to that division, captain.

Cha. Every man must blow his whistle, that our numbers may appear more formidable. All the dogs, too, must be let loose, and encouraged to attack the ranks, that, when separated and confused, they may rush upon our fire. Roller, Schweitzer, and I, will lead the main division.

Enter COMMISSARY.

Gri. Look, Captain. Here comes one of the blood-hounds of justice.

Schw. Down with him! Don't let him utter a word?

Cha. Silence! I will hear him.

Com. With your permission, gentlemen.—I am vested with authority, by the tribunal of justice, and every hair of my head is guarded by eight hundred soldiers.

Schw. Comfortable tidings for us.

Cha. Peace, comrade. Be brief, Sir. What have you to say?

Com. I am a delegate of that august power, which decides on life and death. I shall address one word to you, and a couple to your band.

Cha.—(*Leaning on his sword.*)—Begin, then.

Com. Horrible murderer! Are not thy hands stained with the blood of a murdered count—a count of the Holy Roman Empire? Hast thou not dared with sacrilegious arm, to break into the temple of the Lord, and bear away the consecrated vessels? Hast thou not hurled firebrands into our religious town, destroyed our church, and murdered many pious Christians?—(*With uplifted hands.*)—Oh, abominable act, the stench of which has mounted to the throne of the Most High, and may, perhaps, provoke him to destroy the world, and summon all into his heavenly presence.

Cha. Thus far you have conducted yourself in a masterly manner. But now, Sir, to the point. What information does this august tribunal of justice send to me through you?

Com. It sends what thou never wilt deserve to receive. Look round thee, fell incendiary. On every side, far as thine eye can see, our cavalry is stationed. Escape is impossible. As surely as cherries grow upon these oaks, and peaches on these pines—so surely will you turn your backs on them in safety.

Cha. Do you hear this comrades?—But proceed.

Com. Hear, then, how mercifully the tribunal proceeds. If thou wilt instantly surrender, own thy guilt, and sue for a mitigation of thy punishment, the rigour of the law will not be exercised against thee, but justice will become a loving mother. She will shut her eyes to half thy guilt, and only condemn thee to be broken on the wheel.

Schw. Captain, let me cut his throat. By God I should like to make his blood gush from every pore.

Rol. Captain! Hell, damnation, and the devil! Captain! How he bites his lip. Captain, let me split his skull, and manure the earth with his brains, if he has got any.

Cha. Hold! Let no one dare to touch him.—*(To Commissary.)*—Look you, Sir. Here stand seventy-nine men, whose commander I am. Not one whom you behold is skilled in military tactics, or can dance to the music of artillery. Opposed to us are eight hundred soldiers, who have been regularly disciplined. Now attend to me. Thus speaks Moor, the captain of these robbers: True it is, that I have murdered a count of the empire, that I have hurled fire-brands into your superstitious town, that I have caused the death of many pious Christians—but fancy not that this is all.—*(Stretches forth his hand.)*—You see, that, on each finger of this hand, I wear a valuable ring. This ruby belonged to a prime minister, whom my sabre felled to the earth, when he and his prince were hunting. From the most abject situation he had raised himself to royal favour. His elevation was obtained by crimes innumerable, which weeping widows and forsaken orphans daily proved. This diamond I drew from the finger of a state-treasurer, who disposed of offices and posts of honour to the highest bidder. This agate was the property of a monk, whom I strangled with my own hand, because he had la-

mented, in the pulpit, that the inquisition was no longer in repute. I could recite to you more anecdotes respecting these my rings, were I not already sorry to have thrown away so many words upon you.

Com. How can a villain be so proud?

Cha. As yet you have not heard me speak with pride—but now you shall, Sir. Go, and report my words to that august tribunal, which decides on life and death according to its pleasure. I am not one of those mean thieves, who enter into compact with darkness, and creep into a dwelling under covert of the night. What I have done, I doubtless shall be doomed to read in the Eternal Judge's register, but on his miserable earthly representatives, I shall not waste another word.—Tell your employers that retaliation is the trade I follow. Tell them, that vengeance is my occupation.—(*Turns away with contempt.*)

Com. Thou dost refuse, then, all mercy and compassion? To thee I shall say no more.—(*Addresses himself to the band.*)—Listen to me, all of you. I am authorised to state, that if you will instantly bind and deliver into my hands this abominable villain, your crimes shall no longer be remembered. The holy church will receive you, as sheep who had strayed from her flock, and the road to preferment shall be open to every one of you. Here is the general pardon, signed and sealed.—(*Delivers it to Schweitzer, with a triumphant smile.*)—How does your Majesty like this? Bind him and be free.

Cha. You hear his offer—why this appearance of surprise—this look of hesitation? He offers you liberty, and you are already prisoners. He offers you life, and you must feel he *can* do this, because you are already doomed to die. He assures you that you may obtain honourable offices, and what

can be the consequence of your refusal, but disgrace and infamy? He announces to you Heaven's forgiveness, though you are already damned. There is not a hair upon your heads which will not blaze in hell's eternal fire. Do you still hesitate? Is there a choice between celestial bliss and torture everlasting? Aid my endeavours to persuade them, Sir.

Com.—(*Aside.*)—Some demon surely speaks through him. He makes me tremble.

Cha. How! Still no answer! Do you fancy that your arms and intrepidity can extricate you from your present situation? Look round you—look on every side. The idea of escape is childish and absurd! Or do you flatter yourselves that you will fall like heroes? What can induce you to think thus? *My* late delight in scenes of devastation? Oh, do not thus deceive yourselves. Among you all there is not one like *Moor*. You are mere thieves—poor paltry tools which I employ to execute my nobler projects—despicably mean as is the hangman's halter. Thieves cannot fall like heroes. Thieves have a right to be afraid of death. Hear you not how their trumpets echo through the forest? See you not how their sabres glitter all around you? How! Still irresolute! Are you mad?—Think not that I am grateful for my life—I am indignant at the sacrifice you make.—(*Trumpets are heard.*)

Com.—(*Confused by his dignity.*)—Never did I see a man like this! I must away.

Cha. Or are you fearful that I shall destroy myself, and thereby counteract the pardon offered for delivering me alive? Your fears are groundless. Here I throw away my dagger—my pistols—my poison.—What! still irresolute! You, perhaps, imagine I shall oppose the man who attempts to seize me.—See!—I bind my right hand to this branch of oak—Now opposition is impossible. A

child might overpower me. Who will be the first to betray me? Who will first forsake his captain in the hour of peril?

Rol.—(*With frantic violence.*)—Hell seize him, if there be one in our band!—(*Brandishes his sword.*)—Damn the villain who refuses to defend our captain!

Schw.—(*Tears the pardon, and throws it in the face of the Commissary.*)—Take that, and begone, scoundrel! Our pardon is our swords and fire-arms. Tell the senate which sent you, that you did not find one traitor in Moor's band.—Save the captain!

All. Save the captain! Save him! Save the captain!

Cha.—(*Joyfully extricating himself from the tree.*)—Comrades---friends---brothers! Now we are free. I feel a tenfold vigour nerve this arm. I could oppose a host. Death or liberty! They shall at all events not make us prisoners. Follow me.—(*All draw their swords and exeunt. The charge is immediately sounded.*)

ACT THE THIRD.

Scene, a Garden. AMELIA is discovered in a pensive attitude. Enter FRANCIS. Both in deep mourning.

Fra. Do I find you here again, dear enthusiast? As soon as you stole away from table, my guests were no longer in spirits.

Ame. Shame on you for having guests!—Does

not your father's funeral dirge still vibrate in your ears?

Fra. Why this incessant lamentation? Let the dead rest in peace, and make the living happy. I come——

Ame. And when will you go again?

Fra. Amelia, do not treat me with this cold disdain. I come to tell you——

Ame. That Francis Moor is lord of these domains.

Fra. Exactly. Maximilian reposes in the tomb of his forefathers, and I become the lord of these domains. Yet even these do not satisfy me, dear Amelia. You know, that you have always made my father's house your home. He loved you with a parent's tenderness. You will never forget that.

Ame. Never, never! How could I endeavour, by revelry and mirth, to banish from my mind the recollection of his goodness?

Fra. I admire your sentiments, Amelia. What you owed my father for his goodness, you have now an opportunity of paying to his son. Charles is dead, and Francis offers—(*Aside.*)—By my soul, so flattering is the thought, it even is too much for woman's pride.—(*Aloud.*)—Francis tramples on the hopes of many a noble family. Francis offers a forsaken orphan his heart, his hand, his wealth, his castle, his estates. Francis, whom all his neighbours fear and envy, declares himself Amelia's voluntary slave.

Ame. Why do not Heaven's lightnings blast thee, whilst thou makest the declaration? Hast thou not been guilty of fratricide? Hast thou not robbed me of my Charles? And thinkest thou that Amelia will accept thy hand,—thou monster!

Fra. Be not so violent, most gracious princess. True it is, that Francis does not fawn and flatter like a cooing Celadon. True it is, he has not learnt, like the sighing shepherds of Arcadia, to complain

of fair Amelia's cruelty to grottos and to rocks.—
No. Francis speaks; and if he be not answered—
he commands.

Ame. Vile reptile!—Thou command me! And
if I scorn thy great commands?

Fra. That you will not. I know a most excellent
receipt for conquering female pride and obstinacy—
a cloister.

Ame. Welcome thought! In a cloister I shall
not be gazed upon by thee, thou basilisk, but shall
have leisure to reflect upon the virtues of my
Charles!—Take me to a a cloister instantly.

Fra. Ha! Is it so!—I thank you for having
taught me the art of tormenting you.—Like a fury,
will I drive the recollection of this Charles from your
heart. My disgusting form shall lurk behind the
image of your minion like the dragon which sleeps
on subterraneous treasures. By the hair will I drag
you to the altar,—with a dagger in my hand will
I force from your lips the nuptial vow.

Ame.—(*Strikes him.*)—Take this, then, as my
dowry.

Fra.—(*Enraged.*)—Damnation!—I will think of
tenfold vengeance.—Thou shalt not be my wife—
no, that were too great an honour.—Thou shalt be
my paramour, that every peasant's wife may point
the finger of derision at thee.—Ay, gnash thy teeth
—dart fire and murder from thine eyes. To me a
woman's fury is a treat—it makes her lovelier—more
desirable.—Come.—Thy struggles shall enhance the
value of my triumph, and sweeten the delight of
forced embraces.—Come with me to the altar.—This
instant thou shalt go.—(*Dragging her away.*)

Ame.—(*Falls on his neck.*)—Forgive me, Francis.
---(*As he is about to embrace her, she draws the sword
from his side, and hastily steps back.*)---See'st thou,
villain, what I now can do? Thou art in my power.
I am a woman---but a woman roused to fury.—

Dare to approach me, and with this sword I'll stab thee to the heart. My uncle's spirit will direct my hand.---Instantly begone.---(*Drives him away.*)---Ha!—I breathe more freely. I feel myself endowed with strength and fury—such as animate the mettled steed and tiger.—To a cloister, said he? Thanks for the happy thought. There shall I find a safe retreat. A cloister is the right abode for hopeless love. [*Exit.*

Scene changes to a Hill near the Danube. The ROBBERS are stretched under various trees on the summit, while their horses are grazing on the side of the Hill.

Cha. Here I must rest awhile.—(*Throws himself on the earth.*)—My sinews are unstrung—my tongue is dry as a potsherd. I would ask you to fetch me a little water from the neighbouring stream, but you are all as weary as myself.

[*Exit Schweitzer, unobserved.*

Gri. We have swallowed all our wine, too.—How gloriously the sun sets to-night!

Cha.—(*Gazing at it.*)—Thus worthy of admiration dies a hero.

Gri. You seem deeply affected.

Cha. When I was a boy, my favourite thought was that I would live and die like yonder glorious orb.—(*Suppressing his emotion.*)—It was a boyish thought.

Gri. True, captain.

Cha.—(*Draws his hat over his face.*)—There was a time——Comrades, leave me to myself.

Gri. Captain! Captain!—Damnation! How his colour changes!

Raz. Death and the devil! What ails him?

Cha. There was a time, when I could not sleep if I had forgotten my evening-prayer.

Gri. Have you lost your senses? Who would be guided by the mere fancies of a boy?

Cha.—(*Rests his head on Grimm's breast.*)—Brother! Brother!

Gri. Come, come. Don't be a child, I beg.

Cha. Would that I were a child again!

Gri. Pshaw! Cheer up, man.—Look at this picturesque country, and enjoy the lovely evening.

Cha. Yes, friends—this world is so beautiful—

Gri. Right! Now, you talk properly.

Cha. This earth so admirable—

Gri. True. I like to hear you when you are in this humour.

Cha. And I so ugly in this beauteous world—I, a monster on this admirable earth.—(*Sinking back.*)—Lost, lost for ever!

Gri. Pray do not talk thus.

Cha. My innocence! My innocence! See—every creature has stepped forth to enjoy the vivifying warmth of spring. Why must this heavenly scene be hell to me? Yet thus it is.—All on this earth are happy—all united by the mild spirit of concord—all one family—whose father is above them—but he is not my father—I, alone, am rejected—I, alone, am banished from the empire of the good.—(*Wildly looking at the Robbers.*)—Surrounded by murderers—bound by adamant chains to guilt and infamy.—

Raz. Unaccountable! I never saw him thus.

Cha. Oh, that I could return into my mother's womb! Oh, that I could be born a peasant! I would labour till the blood rolled from my temples to buy the luxury of a noon-day's slumber—the rapture of one solitary tear.

Gri.—(*To the rest.*)—Don't disturb him. The paroxysm is already decreasing.

Cha. There was a time, when my tears flowed willingly.—Oh, days of peace!—Thou castle of my fathers—and ye green delightful valleys, shall I no more behold you?—Oh, beauteous groves, so oft enjoyed in childhood—will you not cool my burning bosom with your perfumed zeyhyrs? Mourn with me, nature. Never, never will those happy days return. Past, past—irrevocably past!

Enter SCHWEITZER, with water in his hat.

Schw. Drink, captain. Here is water enough—and cold as ice.

Gri. Why, Schweitzer, you are bleeding. What's the matter?

Schw. Nothing, man. To be sure, the joke might have cost me a limb or two. As I was running on the edge of the hill, which consists of nothing but sand, down sunk the whole mass, and away rolled I, full ten yards, to the bottom.—There I lay awhile; and as soon as I recovered my five senses, I found a clear spring close to me, among some gravel.—“Well,” thought I, “Fortune has not tried to break my neck for nothing. Here is some good fresh water for the captain.”

Cha.—(*Returns Schweitzer's hat, and throws a few drops of water upon his face.*)—The dust and dirt have hidden the wounds on your forehead, which you received from the Bohemian cavalry.—The water was excellent, Schweitzer.—Your scars become you.

Schw. Pshaw! There is room for thirty more.

Cha. Yes, comrades. The battle was bloody, though we only lost a single friend.—Roller died a noble death. Had he fallen in any other cause, a monument would have been erected to his memory.—Let this suffice.—(*Wipes a tear away.*)—How many of our enemies were slain?

Schw. Sixty hussars, ninety-three dragoons, and about forty-rifle-men—in all, two hundred.

Cha. Two hundred for one. Every man of you has a claim upon this head.---(*Takes off his hat.*)---Here, in the presence of you all, I raise my dagger, and swear, by my soul, I never will forsake you.

Schw. Captain, don't swear. Should happier prospects open to you, perhaps you may repent.

Cha. By the ashes of Roller, I never will forsake you.

Enter KOSINSKI.

Kos.---(*Aside.*)---I was told that I should find him in this country. Ha! who are these fellows? Should they be—they are, they are. I will address them.

Gri. Look who comes here?

Kos. Pardon me, gentlemen. I know not whether I am right in my conjecture.

Cha. Who should we be, if you were right?

Kos. Men.

Schw. We have proved that, I think, captain.

Kos. I am in search of men who can look unappalled at death, and sport with danger as with a tame dragon---men, who rate liberty at a far higher price than life---men, whose very names, while welcome to the oppressed and needy, make courage fly, and tyranny turn pale.

Schw. I like this fellow. Friend, you have found the very people you are seeking.

Kos. I trust I have—and trust, too, I shall be soon allowed to call them comrades. You, then, will doubtless tell me, where I can find your captain—the intrepid Moor.

Schw.—(*Shaking hands with him.*)—You and I are sworn friends,

Cha.—(*Approaching.*)—Do you know this Moor?

Kos. You are he. In that mien—who could be-

hold you without knowing you?—(*Gazes at him for some time.*)—Often have I wished to see the man, who sat with destruction-dealing look upon the ruins of Carthage. Now I no longer wish to see him.

Schw. A noble lad, by my soul.

Cha. And what has brought you hither?

Kos. My more than cruel fate. Oh, captain, I have been wrecked on the tempestuous ocean of this world. I have been doomed to see my hopes destroyed, and nothing now remains but the torturing recollection of my loss, which, I feel, will rob me of my senses, if I do not try to dissipate all thought by action.

Cha. Another wretch, by Heaven abandoned!—Proceed.

Kos. I entered early into the army—misfortune followed me. I embarked for the East Indies—the vessel in which I sailed struck against a rock. Various have been my projects, but all alike have failed. At length, the fame of the great hero, Moor (the great incendiary some term him) reached my ears. I have travelled many miles with the fixed determination of serving under him, if he will accept my services. Oh, captain, do not refuse me.

Schw.—(*Springs into the air.*)—Huzza! Huzza! Another Roller! A noble fellow for the band!

Cha. What is your name?

Kos. Kosinski.

Cha. Kosinski, thou art a thoughtless boy, and art about to take a most decisive step, without reflection. Here thou wilt find no tennis to amuse thee.

Kos. I understand what you mean to imply. I am only four-and-twenty years of age—but I have seen many a sword glitter before me, and have heard many a ball whiz around me.

Cha. Have you then learnt the use of arms, merely that you may assassinate a harmless traveller,

for the sake of a paltry dollar, or murder helpless women? Go, go. You have escaped from your nurse, because you saw the rod in her hand.

Schw. Captain, what in the devil's name do you mean? Would you dismiss such a fellow as this? Why, he is a perfect Hercules.

Cha. Because your airy schemes have failed, you wish to become a villain, an assassin. Boyish idea! Know you what it is to become an assassin? You may sleep soundly after beheading thistles, but, after committing murder—

Kos. I will be answerable for every murder which you direct me to commit.

Cha. How wonderous clever. Think you that a *man* is to be caught by flattery? How can you know whether I am not tormented by bad dreams, or whether I shall not turn pale with terror on the bed of death? How many things have you already done, for which you thought, while doing them, that you must one day be accountable?

Kos. But very few. I, however, reckon in the number, my journey in search of Moor.

Cha. Did your tutor ever put into your hands the adventures of Robin Hood? Such incautious block-heads should be chained to the galleys. They heat the imagination of the child, and tickle its vanity with the mad idea of renown. Is this your object, Kosinski? Wish you to purchase immorality by murdering your fellow-creatures? Believe me, ambitious youth, no laurel decks the assassin's brow—no triumph awaits the conquests of banditti—but execration, danger, death, and infamy. Do you see that gibbet on the hill?

Spi.—(*Walking to and fro with a peevish look.*)—How stupid! How unpardonably stupid! Is this the proper way to increase the band? I should have talked in another style.

Kos. What can he fear, who fears not death?

Cha. Excellent! You have learnt Seneca by heart, I perceive. But be assured, young man, you will not alleviate the sufferings of nature—you will not blunt the arrow of anguish by these sententious arguments. Consider well, my son—(*Takes his hand.*)—Think that you hear the counsel of a father. Learn the depth of the abyss, ere you spring into it. Reflect whether you have in this world any distant chance of comfort—for the moment may arrive when you awake, and find it is too late. By joining us, you at once bid adieu to all connection with mankind. To do this, you must be more than human, or—a demon. Once more, then, let me warn you, my son. If any spark of hope still glimmer in your breast, avoid the horrible confederacy you came to join in. You may have deceived yourself. You may mistake, for strength of mind, what will, in the end, drive you to despair. Believe what Moor says to you—and fly.

Kos. It cannot be. I will not leave you. Since my entreaties have not moved you, hear the true recital of my sorrows. You yourself will, then, place a poniard in my hand—you yourself will—Friends, seat yourselves around me, and listen attentively.

Cha. I will listen attentively.

Kos. Know, then, I am a Bohemian nobleman. By the early death of my father I came into possession of a considerable manor. The country, in which I lived, was a Paradise—for it contained an angel. It contained a lovely girl, adorned with all the charms of blooming youth, and chaste as is the light of Heaven. But to whom do I say this? Such descriptions suit not men who never loved, who never were beloved.

Schw. Look! our captain is as red as fire.

Cha. Hold, Kosinski! No more at present! I'll

hear the rest to-morrow—soon—at another time—when I have seen blood.

Kos. Blood, say you? Nay, hear me now. Mine is a tale which calls for blood. She was not of noble extraction, but her look subdued all prejudice. With captivating bashfulness, she listened to my vows, and it was fixed that, in two days, I should lead my Amelia to the altar.—(*Charles starts and rises.*)—Amidst the bustle of preparations for our union—while I was anticipating the happiness which awaited me, I was summoned by an express to court. I obeyed. Letters which teemed with treason, were produced, and I was accused of having written them. I blushed at the infamous charge. My sword was taken away—I was thrown into prison—my senses forsook me.

Schw. And in the mean time—go on. I smell a rat.

Kos. There I lay a month, and grieved for my Amelia, who would, I knew, feel pangs unutterable. At length the prime minister came to my dungeon, congratulated me on the discovery of my innocence, politely informed me I was at liberty, and returned my sword. Triumphant I flew to my castle, to my Amelia—as I hoped. She was gone. She had been borne away at midnight—no one knew by whom, or whither. Like lightning a suspicion darted through my brain. I flew to town—made enquiries at court. All rivetted their eyes upon me—but none would give me the wished-for information. At length I discovered my Amelia through a grated window of the palace—she threw me a note.

Schw. Ay, ay, I thought how it would be.

Kos. Hell and damnation! She had been allowed to choose whether she would see me die, or become the prince's mistress. A contest arose between her honour and affection. The latter conquered—and I was saved.

Schw. How did you act then.

Kos. After having read her letter, I stood rooted to the spot. Blood was my first—my last—my only thought. Foaming with fury, I ran home, chose a three-edged sword, and flew to the minister's house—for he had been the infernal pander. I must have been previously observed from the windows, for I found all the apartments locked. I was informed that the minister was gone to the palace. I repaired thither—the attendants assured me they had not seen him. I returned—burst open the doors—found him—and was on the point of dispatching him, when five or six servants wrested the sword from my hand.

Schw.—(*Stamps with violence.*)—The devil seize him! So he escaped?

Kos. I was again imprisoned—brought to trial—and sentenced—as a mark of peculiar lenity—to be banished from my native land for ever. My estates were given to the minister, my Amelia remained in the claws of the tiger, and now wastes her life in fruitless lamentation, while my revenge must bend to the iron yoke of despotism.

Schw.—(*Rises and draws his sword.*)—This is water for our mill. Captain! Here is employment for us.

Cha.—(*Who has been walking to and fro in violent agitation, turns hastily to the Robbers.*)—I must see her. Rise! Prepare for instant departure. Kosinski your hand. You shall remain with us. Prepare for instant departure, I say.

Robbers. Captain, where—

Cha. Who dares to ask a question?—(*With violence to Schweitzer.*)—Traitor, you wish to make me abandon my project, but by the hope of Heaven—

Schw. I a traitor! Lead into hell, if you like, I'll follow you.

Cha.—(*Falls on his neck.*)—I believe you, brother. She wastes her life in lamentation. Follow me, all of you. We must reach Franconia in a week. *Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

Scene, a Gallery. CHARLES and AMELIA are discovered—the former in disguise. Both are intently gazing at a portrait. The habit of a nun lies on the table.

Cha.—(*Deeply affected.*)—He was an excellent man.

Ame. The picture seems to interest you much, Count Brand.

Cha.—(*With his eyes still rivetted upon it.*)—An excellent—a godlike man. And he is dead?

Ame. Yes—he has past away like all the joys of life.—(*Gently taking his hand.*)—Count, there is no happiness in this world.

Cha. True — most true. Has sad experience taught you this? You cannot be much more than twenty years of age.

Ame. And yet have learnt that all who live must die in sorrow—that all who gain must feel the pang of losing.

Cha.—(*Keenly looking at her.*)—Have you lost any thing?

Ame. Any thing! Every thing.

Cha. And hope you to forget your loss, when clad in yonder sacred garment?

Ame. I do——Shall we proceed, my Lord?

Cha. Why in such haste? Whose portrait is that on the right? He has an unfortunate countenance.

Ame. This on the left is the late Count's son—the present owner of the castle.

Cha. His only son?

Ame. Let us proceed, I beg.

Cha. But this picture on the right?

Ame. You will not accompany me into the garden?

Cha. With pleasure—but inform me first—
How! You are in tears, Amelia.—(*Exit Amelia hastily.*)—She loves me still. The treacherous tears rolled down her cheeks. She loves me. That is the sofa upon which I oft have drank the nectar of her lips. This is the castle in which I was born. Wretched as I am, the golden recollection of those happy days I once enjoyed, still cheers my soul. Here should I have lived, an honour to my house—the admiration of my vassals—here should I a second time have felt the joys of childhood, while observing the offspring of my dear Amelia at their gambols—here should I—No more! No more! Let me return to that dread station which fate has appointed me to fill Farewell, dear castle of my fathers. Thou didst witness my delight in earlier years—now witness my despair.—(*Is going, but suddenly stops.*)—Must I never see her more? Must I renounce all hopes of ever kissing those sweet lips? Must I depart without one last farewell? No. Once more I will behold her—once more I will embrace her—that I may doubly feel my wretched fate in having lost her. Once more I'll quaff the sweet voluptuous poison—and then away, far as the winds of Heaven, and all the demons of despair can drive me. [*Exit.*]

Enter FRANCIS, in deep meditation.

Fra. Begone from me, thou torturing image——

Vile coward that I am! Of what or whom am I afraid? This Count has been but a few hours in my castle—yet to me he seems a spy employed by hell to watch my every step. Surely I should know his features. There is a something great—something familiar to me in his wild and sun-burnt countenance, which makes me tremble.—(*Rings.*)—I must be on my guard. A plot is laid against me.

Enter DANIEL.

Dan. What are your Lordship's commands?

Fra.—(*After having stedfastly gazed at him for some time.*)—Nothing. But yes. Bring me a goblet of wine directly. [*Exit Daniel.*

Who knows but this fellow will confess, if I use threats to force the secret from him? I'll rivet my eye so keenly on him, that his features shall become the mirror of his conscience.—(*Turns to the portrait of Charles.*)—That long craggy neck—those thick black bushy eye-brows—those bold fiery eyes.—(*Suddenly starting back.*)—Ha! Does hell inspire me with the dread suspicion? It is Charles.

Enter DANIEL, with wine.

Place it on that table. Now look stedfastly at me—eye to eye. How the fellow's knees totter! Villain, confess. What hast thou done?

Dan. Nothing, my Lord, as I hope to be saved.

Fra. Drink this wine. How! Dost thou hesitate? Instantly confess what thou hast mixed with this wine.

Dan. Gracious God! Mixed with the wine!

Fra. Yes, wretch. Thou hast mingled poison with it. Art thou not as white as snow? Confess, I say. Who gave thee the poison? The Count? Did not the Count?

Dan. Good Heavens, my Lord—the Count gave me nothing.

Fra.—(Seizes him.)—I'll strangle thee, grey-headed liar. Nothing! Why, then, did I see him and Amelia and thee whispering together? Did I not see her, after all her modest vows, cast amorous glances at him? Did I not see her tears fall into the wine which he so eagerly swallowed? Yes—though it was behind me, by my soul I saw it in the mirror.

Dan. God knows I was quite ignorant of it.

Fra. What, darest thou deny it? Darest thou tell thy master that he lies? What mode of dispatching me have you agreed upon? Do you mean to smother me at midnight—or to cut my throat—or to poison me. Out with the truth. I know all.

Dan. As I hope for God's assistance when I need it, all I have said is true.

Fra. This time I'll forgive you, Daniel. But no doubt he lined your purse—he pressed your hand more than is usual, as if you were an old acquaintance. Did he not, Daniel?

Dan. Never, my Lord.

Fra. He said, for example, that he had known you before—that you almost ought to know him—that the scales would soon fall from your eyes—that—yes, yes—he said this, Daniel.

Dan. Not a word of it.

Fra. That he would be revenged—amply revenged.

Dan. Not a syllable of it, my Lord

Fra. How! Recollect yourself. Surely you heard him say that he knew your old master very well—particularly well—that he loved him—loved him most sincerely—as sincerely—as a son loves a father.

Dan. I recollect I did hear him say something of that kind.

Fra.—(*Alarmed.*)—Did you? Did you, indeed? He said he was my brother—did he?

Dan. I never heard him say that. But while Miss Amelia was shewing him the pictures in the gallery, I observed him suddenly stop at the portrait of my late master. Miss Amelia pointed to it, and said, “An excellent man,” which he repeated and wiped his eyes.

Fra. Enough! Run! Haste! Send Herman hither. [*Exit Daniel.*]

All doubt is at an end. It is Charles. He is come to demand his estate. Have I, then, sacrificed my nightly rest—have I removed huge rocks, and levelled mountains, to be thus defeated? Have I rebelled against humanity, only to become the victim of an outcast? No, no. One way is always open to me. By murder I surely can escape. What a blockhead must he be, who, after having partly done his work, stands idly looking whether time will finish it.

Enter HERMAN.

Ha! Welcome, my Eurypylus—welcome my trusty agent.

Her.—(*In a sullen tone.*)—You have sent for me.

Fra. True, Herman. I wish you to end what you have so ably begun.

Her. Indeed!

Fra. Shall I order the carriage? We can arrange the matter while we take an airing.

Her. No ceremony, if you please. The arrangements which we have to make to-day, can be as well fixed upon in this room as elsewhere. At all events, I can say a word or two which will spare your lungs some exertion.

Fra.—(*Alarmed.*)—What do you mean?

Her. That you promised me Amelia's hand.

Fra. Herman!

Her. Did you not tell me that she would become the play-thing of your will, and that, then, she should be mine?—*(In a tone of defiance.)*—What have you now to say, Count Moor?

Fra. Nothing to you—I sent for Herman.

Her. No evasion. Why was I summoned? Again to be the fool I have been? Again to prop the ladder that the thief may mount?

Fra.—*(As if he had suddenly recollected something.)*—True. We must not forget that. I wished to have some conversation with you respecting the dowry.

Her. This is mockery---or something worse. Moor, be careful—drive me not mad. We are without witnesses, Moor. Confide not in a villain, though you yourself have made him such.

Fra.---*(With a haughty mien.)*---Dare you conduct yourself thus towards your lord? Tremble slave.

Her.---*(Contemptuously.)*---At your displeasure, perhaps? What is your displeasure to a man, who is incensed at himself? I already detest you as a villain, Moor---do not make me deride you as a blockhead. I can open sepulchres---I can raise the dead. Which of us is now the slave?

Fra.---*(With great condescension.)*---Friend, act rationally---keep your promise.

Her. Peace! To act rationally, were to abhor thee, villain---to keep my promise were madness. A promise made to whom? To him by whom perfidy is practised as a virtue.—But patience, patience! Revenge is subtle.

Fra. Right! I am glad I recollect it. You lately lost a purse containing a hundred louis d'ors. I had almost forgotten the circumstance. Take back what is your own, good Herman.---*(Gives him a purse.)*

Her.—(*Throws it contemptuously at the feet of Francis.*)—Damned be the vile Iscariot-bribe! Has hell employed thee to complete my ruin? You once imagined you had made my poverty the pander of my heart—but you are mistaken, Moor; grossly mistaken. The former purse of gold is useful---it supplies with food---*a certain person.*

Fra.---(*Alarmed.*)---Herman! Herman!--Do not make me fancy---If you have done any thing contrary to my will, you are a traitor to your master.

Her.---(*In a triumphant tone.*)---Indeed!--I rejoice to hear it. Mark me, then. I will soon prepare a banquet, at which your infamy shall be produced, and every nation of the earth shall be invited to it. Do you comprehend this, mighty, revered, and gracious master?

Fra. Villain! traitor! devil!--(*Strikes his forehead.*)---Fool that I was to place confidence in such a creature.---(*Throws himself upon a couch.*)

Her. Ha! ha! ha!—Behold the cautious sly projector foiled at his own weapons.

Fra. It is a truth, then, a confirmed truth, that no thread is so finely spun, so soon torn asunder, as the tie of guilt.

Her. Vastly fine!—Devils are beginning to moralise.

Fra.—(*Suddenly rises, and addresses Herman with a malignant smile.*)—The discovery will reflect great credit on yourself, no doubt?

Her.—(*Clasps his hands.*)—Excellent! Inimitable! You act your part most admirably. First you drag the easy fool into the mire—then vent your rage against him, because he attempts to extricate himself. What a refinement of villany! But, Count,—(*Laying his hand on Francis's shoulder*)—you are not yet thoroughly acquainted with me. You have not yet learnt how far the loser of the game dare venture. What says the pirate in such a situation?

—“ Throw a match into the powder magazine, and blow friend as well as foe into the air.”

Fra.—(*Runs to the wall and seizes a pistol.*)—
Treason!—I must be resolute.

Her.—(*Draws a pistol from his pocket.*)—Give yourself no trouble. I took care to be prepared before I came.

Fra.—(*Throws the pistol away, and falls on the couch.*)—Don't betray me, Herman, till I have reflected how to act.

Her. You mean till you have hired a dozen bravos, who will make me dumb for ever. But—(*In a lower tone.*)—I have committed the secret to paper, and my heirs will read it. [*Exit.*

Fra. Is this a dream?—Where was my courage?—where my presence of mind? Alas! even my own creatures betray me. The pillars of my fortune are decayed—the furious foe already falls upon me. I must instantly determine in what way it is best to act. How if I go in person, and stab him in the back.—A wounded man is a mere infant.—It is resolved—(*Is walking away with a firm step, but stops, as if overpowered by sudden debility.*)—Who are these men behind me?—(*Rolling his eyes with horrible wildness.*)—I never saw their faces before—their looks are terrific.—Away! away!—Courage I certainly have---the courage of a—But if a mirror were to betray me---or my shadow---or the sound created by raising my arm to inflict the deadly blow? Hush!---My hair bristles towards Heaven---my every limb quakes---(*A dagger falls from his breast.*)---A coward I am not---perhaps I am too tender-hearted. Yes: these are the last struggles of departing virtue. I admire them. I should be a monster, were I to assassinate my brother. No, no, no. I will revere these relics of humanity. I will not murder. Thou hast conquered, nature. I still

feel something which is like affection.---He shall live. [Exit.]

Scene changes to a Garden, in which an Arbour is seen.

Enter AMELIA.

Ame. "You are in tears Amelia." And that he said with so much sympathy---O, I felt as if time had grown young again---as if the golden spring of love returned while he spoke. Methought I heard the nightingale---methought I smelt the perfume of the rose---methought I lay entranced upon his neck---all was the same as when my Charles was here---and, surely, if the spirits of the dead deign to revisit earth, it is my Charles.---Ha! false perfidious heart, how cunningly thou veil'st thy guilt. No, no. Away from my heart ye treacherous, impious thoughts! In this bosom, where my Charles is buried, no other image ever shall reside.---Yet, why do my thoughts so constantly, so irresistibly, dwell upon this stranger? The image of my only love mixes with his, until their features are united---and to think of one must be to think of both. "You are in tears, Amelia."---Ha!---I must begone. Tomorrow I shall take the veil, The veil! How sweet was that idea lately!---But now---Oh, my heart, how hast thou deceived me! Thou didst convince me that what I felt was resolution. Liar that thou wert---it was despair.---(*Sits herself in the arbour, and hides her face.*)

Enter HERMAN.

Her.---(*Aside.*)---I have plunged boldly in---now

let the storm rage on, even if the billows overwhelm me.---(*Aloud.*)---Miss Amelia!

Ame.---(*Alarmed.*)---A spy! What do you want here?

Her. I bring you news most pleasant, yet most horrible. If you be disposed to pardon one who has injured you, prepare yourself to hear most wondrous tidings.

Ame. I have no recollection for injuries---no ear for news.

Her. Do you not lament the death of a youth whom you loved?

Ame.---(*Gazes at him.*)---Child of misfortune, what justifies you in asking such a question?

Her ---(*Mournfully casting his eyes on the earth.*)---Hatred and love.

Ame. Can any one love who inhabits this region?

Her.---(*Looking round.*)---Yes---too much---even to the perpetration of villany.---Did not your uncle lately die?

Ame. He was to me a father.

Her. The lover and the father are alive.---(*Rushes away.*)

Ame.---(*Stands rooted to the spot---then wildly exclaims.*)---Charles alive!---(*Is about to run after Herman.*)

Enter CHARLES.

Cha. Whither in such haste, lady?

Ame.---(*Starts back with a frantic gesture.*)---Gape beneath me, earth!

Cha. I come to take leave of you.---But---Heavens! In what extreme agitation do I find you!

Ame. Go, Count---stay---happy would it have been for me, had you never come!

Cha. Would that have made you happy? Farewell.---(*Turns suddenly round and is going.*)---

Ame. For Heaven's sake stay. That was not my meaning.---(*Wringing her hands.*)---Yet---oh, God, why was it not?---Count, what have I done, that you should make me criminal? How did I injure you by that affection which you have undermined?

Cha. You pierce to my very soul, lady.

Ame. My heart was pure till I saw you. Oh, that my eyes had lost their faculty! They have corrupted my heart.

Cha. Say not so. Your eyes and heart are guiltless, I am sure.

Ame. His very look!—Count, I beseech you to avert those looks. They rouse rebellion. My treacherous fancy tells me every moment that I see himself—Go, Count—return in the hateful form of a crocodile, and you will be more welcome.

Cha.—(*With a look of fervent affection.*)—That is not true, Amelia.

Ame.—(*With increasing tenderness.*)—Should you deceive me, Count—should you be trifling with this poor weak heart—But how can falsehood dwell in an eye, which beams with the expression of his?—Alas! Happy were it for me, should you be false—happy, should I be obliged to hate you—yet, oh, how wretched should I be, might I not love you.—(*Charles presses her hand to his lips with rapture.*)—Your kisses burn like fire.

Cha. My soul burns in them.

Ame. Go.—I may yet be saved.—The mind of man is firm.—Let your firmness save me. Go.—

Cha. It cannot be.—I see you tremble—and my firmness vanishes. Here I am fixed for ever.—(*Hiding his face in her bosom.*)—Here will I die.

Ame.—(*Quite confounded.*)—Away!—Leave me.—What have you done, Count?—Away with those lips!—(*She struggles feebly against his violent caresses.*)—An impious fire creeps through my veins.

—(*Weeping in a tone of tenderness.*)—Must you come from a distant country to destroy a passion which had even defied the power of death?—(*Clasps him with increasing fervour in her arms.*)—God forgive you, Count!

Cha.—(*Still embracing her.*)—If such be the separation of the soul and body, how blissful, how rapturous must it be to die.

Ame. Here, where you now stand, has he stood a thousand times, and at his side, I, who, when at his side, forgot both Heaven and earth. Here,—here his eye wandered over the lovely charms of nature—he seemed to feel how grateful was the sight, and she appeared to dress herself more gaily while her Prince admired her. Here he would listen to the celestial music of the nightingale. Here he would pluck fresh roses for his loved Amelia.—Here—here he pressed me to the heart, and glued his lips to mine.—(*Charles, no longer able to control his passion, presses his lips to her's—she meets him with equal rapture, and they remain for some time lost in ecstasy—Amelia then sinks, almost in a swoon, upon the seat of the arbour.*)—Come, Charles, and be revenged. My oath is broken.

Cha.—(*Steps from her with a frantic look.*)—This must be some snare designed by hell for my destruction—I am so happy.—(*Gazes at her.*)

Ame.—(*Espies her ring, and hastily rises.*)—What? Art thou still upon my finger—thou, that hast been a witness of my perjury? Away!—(*Gives the ring to Charles.*)—Take it—take it, beloved seducer, and with it my soul's adored—my all—my Charles.—(*Falls back.*)

Cha.—(*Becomes pale.*)—Almighty God, is this thy sovereign will?—It is the very ring I gave her as a pledge of my affection.—She has returned it.—Oh, horrible!

Ame.---(*Alarmed.*)---Heavens! What is the matter? How wildly your eyes roll---and how pale your lips!---Wretch that I am! Do you so soon repent the blissful crime?

Cha.---(*Suppressing his emotion.*)---Nothing---nothing.---(*Raising his eyes.*)---I am still a man.---(*Draws his ring from his hand, and gives it to Amelia.*)---Take this, sweet fury of my heart, and with it my soul's adored---my all---my Amelia.

Ame.---(*Springs from the seat.*)---Your Amelia!

Cha.---(*Mournfully.*)---Oh, she was a lovely girl, and faithful as an angel. When I left her, she gave me a ring, I her another, as pledges of our mutual faith. She heard that I was dead, and remained constant to the dead. She heard again, that I was living, and became faithless to the living. I flew into her arms---my transports equalled heavenly bliss. Think what my heart was doomed to feel. She returned to me my ring---I her's to her.

Ame.---(*Looks with amazement on the earth.*)---Strange! Dreadfully strange!

Cha. True, my good child.---Man has much, very much to learn, ere he can dive into the great decrees of that being, who laughs at his vows, and weeps over his projects.---My Amelia is an unfortunate girl.

Ame. She is---because she rejected you.

Cha. She is---because she loves me. How, if I were an assassin! How if, for every kiss bestowed by her, I could recount a murder?---Would not my Amelia, then, be unfortunate?

Ame. She would; but what you mention is impossible. He, whom you resemble, could not bear to see a fly suffer.

Cha. What I have said, is true. There is a world in which the veil will be removed entirely, and those who loved will meet again---with horror.

Eternity is its name. Yes. My Amelia is unfortunate, for when she thought she clasped an angel in her arms, she held—a murderer.

Ame.—(*Overpowered with anguish.*)—Horrible! I will weep for your sad fate.

Cha.—(*Takes her hand, and holds the ring before her eyes.*)—Weep for your own. [*Exit instantly.*]

Ame.—(*Recognizes the ring.*)—Charles! Charles! O Heaven and earth.—(*Swoons.*)

Scene changes to a forest, in which the ruins of a tower are discernible. The moon shines bright, and the ROBBERS are stretched on the earth. SPIEGELBERG and RAZMAN advance from the rest.

Raz. It is almost midnight, and our captain is not yet arrived.

Spi. A word in confidence, Razman. Captain, said you? Who made him our captain? Did he not usurp the title, when it justly belonged to *me*? What are we to expose our lives, and buffet all the storms of Fate, merely that we may be called the slaves of Moor,—slaves, when we might be princes? By God, Razman, I'll bear it no longer.

Raz. Hell and damnation—nor I. But what can we do?

Spi. Can you ask that, who have dispatched many a fine fellow? Razman, if you be the man I think you—he is missing—some begin to think him lost—Razman, his hour is come. How! Don't you spring into the air at the idea of being free? Why, you surely don't understand me.

Raz. The idea is tempting, I must own.

Spi. Right! Follow me, then. I observed the road he took. Come. A brace of pistols seldom fail, and then—

Schw.—(*Springs up.*)—Villain, I have overheard you. I remember how you behaved in the forests of Bohemia. Like a coward you began to skulk, when the enemy approached. At that time I swore by my soul—Down to hell, assassin.—(*Both draw and begin to fight.*)

Robbers.—(*Rising in confusion.*)—Murder! Murder! — Schweitzer! — Spiegelberg! — Tear them asunder.

Schw.—(*Stabs Spiegelberg.*)—There lie and rot. Be quiet, comrades. Don't let this poltroon disturb you. The scoundrel always hated the captain, and has not one scar upon his whole body. He wanted to lie in ambush—to murder unseen. Have we toiled thus long, to be sent out of the world in that way? Have we passed our lives amidst fire and smoke, to be caught, like rats in a trap?

Gri. But, damn it—the captain will be in a terrible fury.

Schw. Let me settle that. Schusterle acted in the same way, and now he is gibbeted, as the captain prophesied.—(*A shot is heard.*)

Gri. Hark! A shot!—(*A second is heard.*)—Another! Huzza! It is the captain.

Kos. Patience! He must fire a third.—(*A third shot is heard.*)

Gri. It is the captain. Conceal yourself, Schweitzer, till we have explained to him—

Enter CHARLES.

Schw.—(*Meets him.*)—You are welcome, captain. I have been somewhat rash since you left us.—(*Leads him to the dead body.*)—You shall decide between this man and me. He wished to waylay and murder you.

Cha.—(*After a pause, during which his eyes have been fixed upon the corpse.*)—Wonderful and incom-

prehensible are thy ways, O God of vengeance. Was it not this man, who sung the syren song, which made me what I am? Consecrate the sword by which he fell, to the avenger.---Schweitzer, this was not done by you.

Schw. By my soul it was, and the devil take me, if I think it the worst thing I ever did.---(*Throws the sword upon the body with a look of dissatisfaction.*)

Cha.---(*In deep meditation.*)---I understand thee---Heavenly Judge---I understand thee. The leaves fall from the branches. The autumn of my life is come.---Remove this body from my sight.---(*He is obeyed.*)

Gri. Now, captain, give us orders. What shall we do next?

Cha. Soon---soon will all be accomplished. Since I left you I have lost myself. Sound your horns. I must recall former days to my mind, and gather strength from the remembrance.

Kos. It is midnight, captain, and three days have elapsed since we closed our eyes. Sleep hangs heavy on them.

Cha. Can, then, assassins taste the balm of soft repose? Why am *I* not allowed to sleep? Sound your horns, I say. I must hear warlike music, that my torpid spirit may awake.---(*The Robbers play a march, while Charles walks to and fro with a gloomy mien. At length he suddenly interrupts them.*)---No more!---Good night. In the morning I shall issue my commands.

Robbers.---(*Stretch themselves on the earth.*)---Good night, captain.---(*They sleep.*)

Cha. Good night---for ever. It is a night, to which no morning will succeed.---Ye spirits numberless of those whom I have murdered, think you that I shall tremble? Never, never. Your fearful dying

groans, your black and strangled features, your horrid gaping wounds are but links of an indissoluble chain, by which Almighty Fate has bound me. My nurse's humours may have caused them, my father's temper, or my mother's blood. Why has no Perillus made a bull of me, and fed me with the flesh of man.---(*Raises a pistol to his head.*)--- Time and eternity embrace each other over this little weapon. Dread key, which locks behind me the prison of life and opens the abode of everlasting freedom. Tell me, oh, tell me whither thou wilt lead me.---To some strange land, which no one ever circumnavigated. Human nature shudders at the awful thought, while busy fancy introduces unknown phantoms, and appals, still more, the shrinking soul. Away with these ideas! Man must not hesitate. Be what thou may'st, thou world without a name, Moor shall still be faithful to himself. Be what thou wilt, if I but take my soul. The external form is but the colour which the fancy paints. I myself am my Heaven or my hell.---(*Looking towards the horizon.*)---Wert thou disposed, Creator of the world, to place me in some blasted region, which thou hadst banished from thy sight, where darkness, solitude, and dreary desolation were my only prospects---my visionary brain would people the expanse. But such is not thy will. Perhaps, after having led me, step by step, through scenes of misery and horror, thou wilt, at last, annihilate me. May I not be able to break the thread of the next life, as easily as I shall do it now? At all events it is a liberty, of which I cannot be deprived in this world.---(*Again raises the pistol.*)---But hold! Am I not about to die from the mean dread of living here in agony?---Cowardly deed! Shall it be said, that Moor was conquered by misfortune?---No. I will brave the malice of fate.---(*Throws the pistol*

away.)---My pride shall triumph over every difficulty.---(*The darkness increases, and a distant clock strikes twelve.*)

Enter HERMAN

Her. Hark! How the nightcrows shriek!---The village clock has just struck twelve. All are asleep but those who feel the pangs of a bad conscience, and those who brood revenge.---(*Knocks at the tower.*)---Rise, man of misery. I have brought your meal.

Cha.---(*Starts.*)---What means this?

A voice from the tower. Who knocks! Is it you, Herman? Is it my raven?

Her. It is.---Climb to the grate and eat.---What a dreadful noise the owlets make!---Old man,---you like your food, I hope?

Voice. It is most welcome, Herman---I was very hungry. Oh, thou, who sendest my raven, accept my thanks for this food in the wilderness.---

Her. Silence! Hark! I hear a noise. The wind whistles through the chinks of the tower, and makes my teeth chatter. Hark! again I heard a noise. I could fancy some one was asleep and snoring. You have company, old man. Hush!

Voice. Do you see any one?

Her. Farewell! Farewell! I must be gone. Descend into the dungeon again. Your deliverer---your avenger is near.---(*Going.*)

Cha. Hold!

Her. Who's there?

Cha. Hold! Answer me. Who art thou? For what purpose camest thou hither? Speak.

Her.---(*Aside.*)---One of his spies, no doubt. It matters not. Fear is become a stranger to me.---(*Draws his sword.*)---Villain, defend thyself. Thou hast a man before thee.

Cha.—(*Strikes Herman's sword, which flies from his grasp.*)—I will have an answer. Of what avail is this sword-play? Thou didst speak of vengeance—Vengeance is my occupation—mine alone of all who dwell on earth. What mortal dares to interfere with my vocation?

Her.—(*Starts back.*)—By Heaven, he was not born of woman. His blow was like the stroke of death.

Voice. Herman, to whom are you speaking?

Cha. There is some one in the tower. A dreadful mystery lurks here.—(*Rushes to the tower.*)—This sword shall unravel it.

Her.—(*Approaches trembling.*)—Terrible stranger, art thou the demon of this forest, or one of those dread spirits, who wander through the lower world observing every midnight act? If the latter, oh, welcome to this dungeon.

Cha. Thou art right. I am the angel of desolation, but am, nevertheless, flesh and blood like thyself. If some prisoner be confined here by the power of man, I will release him. Where is the door?

Her. Belzebub would as easily burst open the portal of Heaven as you this. The villain's cunning is superior to a mortal's strength.

Cha. But not superior to a robber's cunning.—(*Draws forth a bunch of keys.*)—I thank thee, Heaven, for having placed me at the head of robbers. These keys deride the power of hell.—(*Opens the door. An old man steps forth pale and horribly emaciated. Charles starts back.*)—My father!—Dreadful phantom!

Count. Oh, God, accept my thanks. The hour of deliverance is arrived.

Cha. Shade of the venerable Moor, what has disturbed thee in thy tomb? Hast thou taken with thee to the other world some crime, which bars thy passage through the gates of Paradise! I will

pray, I will order masses to be read that thy wandering spirit may be sent to its abode. Hast thou buried the gold of widows and orphans, and art doomed to wander here at midnight? I will tear the subterraneous treasures from the dragons which defend it, even if they vomit the flames of hell at me. Or comest thou to reveal to me the secrets of eternity? Speak, oh, speak. My colour will not change with fear.

Count. I am not a spirit.—Touch me. Thou perceivest I live—and wretchedly I live.

Cha. What! Wert thou not buried?

Count. Alas, no. A dog was buried in the vault of my forefathers, and I, for three long months, have languished in this gloomy tower, where no sunbeam ever shines, no wholesome breath of air can penetrate—where my companions are the croaking raven and the shrieking bird of night.

Cha. Heaven and earth! Who did this?

Her. A son.

Count. Oh, do not, do not curse him.

Cha. A son!—(*Furiously rushing towards Herman.*)—Liar! Villain!—A son! Repeat that word and ten times will I plunge my sword into thy slanderous throat. A son!

Her. Yes—if it rouse all hell—I say *his son*.

Cha.—(*As if petrified.*)—Oh, eternal chaos!

Count. If you be a man, if you possess a human heart, listen to me, mighty and unknown deliverer. Listen to the sorrows and the sufferings which my sons have heaped upon their father.—For three sad dreary months I have uttered my complaints to these deaf walls, and none but echo answered to my groans. If, therefore, you be a man—if you possess a human heart, oh, listen to me.

Cha. Wolves would be tame, when thus conjured.

Count. I lay upon the bed of sickness, and scarcely had regained a portion of my former strength, when

a man appeared, who told me that my first-born son had fallen in the field of battle, and at the hour of death had declared his father's curse had driven him to despair.

Her. It was false. I was the villain, who pretended to have witnessed it. Bribed by the gold and promises of Francis, I became the messenger, whose tidings were to hinder all enquiries after Charles, and, if possible, to end your days.

Count. You! You! Gracious God! I was deceived, then.

Cha.—(*Turns away in the greatest agitation.*)—How dreadfully the day begins to dawn!

Her. Tread on me—crush me like a poisonous adder.—I consented to destroy you—I intercepted all letters from your Charles—destroyed those written to him by yourself, and substituted others, couched in the language of hatred and resentment. Thus were you imposed upon—thus was your eldest son banished from your heart.

Cha.—(*In a tone of dreadful anguish.*)—And hence that son became a robber and a murderer.—(*Strikes his breast and forehead.*)—Fool! Block-head! Dolt!—A villain's arts have made thee a thief and an incendiary.—(*Walks to and fro with looks of horror and distraction.*)

Count. Francis! Francis!—But I will not curse him.—To be thus deceived!—Blind dotard that I was!

Cha.—(*Suddenly stops.*)—While my father was confined in this tower—(*Suppressing his emotion.*)—I have no right to complain.—(*Turns to the Count, and endeavours to appear composed.*)—Proceed.

Count. When this intelligence was brought, I swooned. Doubtless I was supposed to be dead, for when my senses returned, I found myself upon a bier, clad in a shroud. I knocked at the top of the coffin—which was opened. It was midnight, and my

son Francis stood before me. "What!" cried he, with a voice of thunder, "will you live for ever!" and instantly again shut the coffin. These words overpowered me. When I awoke, I felt the coffin raised and carried away. At length it was opened, and I found myself at the entrance of this tower. At my side stood Francis and the man, who had brought me my Charles's bloody sword.—I embraced my son's knees—prayed—entreated—conjured him—in vain. His flinty heart was dead to pity. "Down with the dotard!" roared he. "I have been plagued with him too long"—upon which I was cast into the dungeon, and my son Francis locked the door.

Cha. It is not possible. You must be mistaken.

Count. Oh, that I were! Hear the sequel of my story, but be not incensed. Thus I lay full twenty hours in dreadful solicitude. No mortal ever ventures hither, for it is universally believed that the spirits of my ancestors wander at midnight through these ruins, rattling their chains, and chaunting songs of death. At length I again heard the door open. This man appeared. He brought me bread and water; told me that I was doomed to die by hunger, and added that his life was in danger, should it be discovered that he supplied me with food. Thus has my life been preserved, but my remnant of strength was unable to oppose the chilling blast—the fetid air—the unutterable anguish of my mind. A thousand times have I prayed that I might be allowed to die; but doubtless the measure of my punishment was not filled—or some happiness awaits me ere I quit this world—else why is my life thus miraculously prolonged?—But it is just that I should suffer. My Charles! My Charles!

Cha. Enough!—(*To the Robbers.*)—Rise! Ye logs—ye idle, senseless lumps of clay! Rise, I say. Will none of you awake?—(*Fires a pistol over them.*)

Rob.—(*Starting from their sleep.*)—Holla! What now? What's the matter?

Cha. Could not this horrid story wake you from your slumbers? Methinks it might have roused the dead. Look here! Look here! The laws of this world are become a game at dice. The bands of nature have been rent asunder. Discord is let loose, and stalks triumphant. A son has slain his father.

Rob. What says the captain?

Cha. Slain! No. That is too mild a term. A son has butchered, racked, flead his father. Where shall I find words? He has committed a crime, at which even the cannibal would shudder—a crime, of which no devil would have thought. In this tower has a son confined his own father. Oh, see, see—he faints. In this tower—cold—naked—hungry---thirsty---oh, see, see---this is the father---this is *my* father.

Rob.---(*Rush forward and surround the old man.*)
---Your father! Your father!

Schw.---(*Approaches with reverence, and kneels.*)---
Father of my captain, let me kiss thy feet. My dagger is ready to avenge thy wrongs.

Cha. Ay---horribly, most horribly shalt thou be avenged, much injured venerable man. Thus I destroy for ever the tie of fraternity.---(*Tears his coat from top to bottom.*)---Thus, in the face of Heaven, I curse each drop of blood, which flows in the veins of him, who was my brother. Hear me, oh moon and stars! Hear me, ye spirits of the night, who witnessed the abominable act! Hear me, terrific Judge, whose lightnings pierce through darkness to avenge the injured---thus I kneel before thee---prostrate I raise my arm towards thy throne, and swear ---May Nature drive me like a hideous monster from her boundaries, if I greet the light of day until my sword has drank the heart's blood of this fell parricide---until the purple current stains the earth,

and spreads its noisome vapours through the air.

—(*Rises.*)

Rob. Glorious! Glorious! Who can call us villains, now? By all the fiends of hell, we never yet have been so well employed.

Cha. True---and by the dreadful groans of those, whom we have murdered---of those who were devoured by fire, or crushed beneath the tower at Leipzig---no thought of rapine shall find place in our minds, till each of us has dyed his garment purple in the blood of the foul villain. You never dreamt that it would be your lot to execute the great decrees of Heaven. The clue of destiny, so long confused, is now unravelled. This day does an invisible power dignify our occupation. Offer up your prayers and thanks to him, who has exalted you to this honourable rank; who has deigned to appoint you the dreadful agents of his dark decrees. Bare your heads---prostrate yourselves in the dust---and rise hallowed men.---(*They kneel.*)

Schw. Now, captain, issue your commands. We are ready.

Cha. Rise, Schweitzer, and touch these sacred locks.---(*Leads him to the Count, and places a lock of hair in his hand.*)---You recollect, that once, when overpowered and breathless, I had sunk upon my knee, you cleft the skull of a Bohemian, who had already raised his sword to slay me. At that time I promised you a royal recompense, but have never been able to discharge the obligation.

Schw. Yow made this promise, I allow, but let me for ever be your creditor.

Cha. No, Schweitzer---to-day I have it in my power to pay the debt. No mortal ever was so highly honoured. I appoint thee the avenger of my father's wrongs.

Schw.---(*Rises.*)---Great captain, you have to-day

made me for the first time proud. Command me. How, where, and when shall I make the attack?

Cha. The moments are precious. You must depart instantly. Select from the band as many as you please, and proceed to the villain's castle. Drag him from his bed, though he be asleep, or in the arms of a wanton. Seize him at the banquet—tear him from the crucifix. But mark my words, and let them not escape thy memory at the decisive moment. He must be delivered to me alive. Should any one attempt to wound him, or to hurt a hair of his head, that man shall perish by this arm. I'll tear him piecemeal, and feed the hungary vultures with his carcase. I must have him whole and uninjured. If you bring him thus, your recompence shall be a million. I'll plunder some monarch, at the peril of my life, in order to obtain it. If you have understood me, go.

Schw. Enough, captain! There is my hand. You shall see both of us or neither. Follow me, comrades.

[*Exeunt Schweitzer, Herman, and several Robbers.*

Cha.---(To the rest.)---Disperse yourselves in the forest. I shall stay here.

ACT THE FIFTH.

Scene, a Gallery in which are seen doors to various apartments. FRANCIS rushes from one of them.

Fra. Betrayed! Betrayed! A thousand spirits have started from their graves. All the empire of

death is in motion, and on every side my ear is tortured with the name of murderer. Ha! Who moves there?

Enter DANIEL.

Dan. Heaven have mercy on us! Is it you, my Lord, whose shrieks echo through the gallery, and rouse all who sleep?

Fra. Sleep! Who permitted you to sleep! Let every one instantly arise—let every one clothe himself in armour, and load his musket. Didst thou not see them flit along the corridors?

Dan. Whom, my Lord?

Fra. Whom! blockhead! whom! Canst thou thus coldly ask me whom? Oh, the sight thrilled through my very marrow. Spirits of the damned! What is the hour of night?

Dan. The watchman has just called two.

Fra. Two! Will this night, then, extend to the day of judgment. Did you hear no noise in the neighbourhood---no shout of triumph---no galloping of horses? Where is Charles---the Count I mean?

Dan. I do not know, my Lord.

Fra. Not know? Thou art in the plot, then. I'll tear thy entrails piecemeal, villain. What have my dependants too---have even beggars conspired against me? Heaven---hell---every thing conspires against me.

Dan. Count Moor!

Fra. No. I will not tremble. It was but a dream. The dead cannot awake from their eternal sleep. Who says that I tremble and am pale? I feel easy and well.

Dan. You are pale as death---your voice falters, my Lord.

Fra. Yes---I am somewhat feverish---my surgeon shall bleed me in the morning.

Dan. Oh, you are very ill—

Fra. True---I am ill. My disorder affects my brain, and is the cause of these terrific dreams ; but dreams mean nothing. Daniel, dreams mean nothing. I had a merry dream just now.---(*Faints.*)

Dan. Gracious God ! What can this mean ! George ! Conrad ! Bastion ! Martin ! Rouse yourself, my Lord.---(*Shakes him.*)---I shall be suspected of having murdered him. God have mercy on me !

Fra. Away ! away ! Why dost thou shake me thus, vile ghastly spectre ? The dead cannot awake from—

Dan. Merciful Heaven ! He knows not what he says.

Fra.---(*Raises himself slowly.*)---Where am I ? You here, Daniel ? What did I say, just now ? Pay no regard to it---for it was false, be it what it might. Come hither. Raise me. It was only a kind of fit, in consequence of wanting rest.

Dan. I'll call your surgeon, my Lord.

Fra. Hold ! Seat yourself at my side, upon this sofa. You are a sensible, a worthy man. Listen to me.

Dan. Another time, my Lord. Let me lead you to bed. Repose is necessary.

Fra. No. Listen to me, Daniel, and laugh at me. Methought I had been feasting at a splendid banquet. My heart was elated, and I lay stretched on the platform, with sensations the most pleasing, when suddenly---suddenly---but laugh at me, I charge you.

Dan. Proceed, my Lord.

Fra. Suddenly my ear was assailed by a tremendous peal of thunder. I started up, and saw the whole horizon wrapped in flames. Mountains, cities, and forests, melted like wax in a furnace, while a terrific hurricane swept before it the ocean, the Heavens, and the earth.

Dan. Horrible! It is the description of the last day.

Fra. Pshaw! nonsense! Then a person stepped forth with scales in his hand, which he held between east and west, and said: "Approach ye children of dust, I weigh the thoughts of man."

Dan. God have mercy on me!

Fra. All turned pale. Fearful expectation beat in every breast. My name was first heard. The sound issued from the bowels of the mountain. My blood congealed with terror---my teeth chattered---my knees smote each other.

Dan. Oh, God forgive you!

Fra. That he did not. An old man appeared, pale---emaciated---bent towards the earth, by sorrow and distress. Raging hunger had compelled him to eat his own arm. At his approach all shuddered, and turned away. I knew the man. He cut a lock from his hoary head, and threw it towards me. Instantly a voice thundered through the smoke: "Mercy, mercy to all sinners upon earth. Thou alone art rejected."---(A long pause.)---Now, why do you not laugh?

Dan. Can I be expected to laugh, when my flesh creeps? Dreams are sent by Heaven.

Fra. Pshaw, pshaw! Talk not thus. Call me a fool, a blockhead---call me any thing, dear Daniel---laugh at me---I beseech you, laugh at me.

Dan. Dreams are sent by Heaven. I will pray for you. [Exit.

Fra. Mean, vulgar prejudice and superstition! It has never been proved that any eye, above this earth, observes what passes on it. What makes me just now think of this subject? Is there an avenging Judge above the stars? Alas, I fear there is. Dreadful, horrible idea! To appear this very night before the avenging Judge---No, no, no. Solitude and silence reign beyond this world. It must

not, shall not, be otherwise. Yet should it notwithstanding.—Why do I tremble thus? To die! Why am I alarmed at this idea?—Oh, should I be obliged to give account of all my actions---and should my Judge be just——

Enter a Servant, hastily.

Ser. My Lord, Amelia has escaped, and the Count has suddenly disappeared.

Enter DANIEL, much alarmed.

Dan. Count Moor, a troop of horsemen has this instant galloped into the court. The whole village is in motion.

Fra. Ring the alarm-bell. Let every one hasten to the chapel, and pray for me. I will release all the prisoners. Threefold I will repay what I have taken from the helpless. Go---call my confessor, that he may give me absolution. Go, I say.---(*The tumult becomes more audible.*)

Dan. God forgive me my sins! May I believe what I hear? You who always ridiculed religion.

Fra. No more. Death, Daniel, death---It is too late.---(*Schweitzer is heard without.*)---Pray for me! Oh, pray for me.

Dan. Yes, I always told you that when the fatal day arrived——

Schw.---(*Without.*)---Down with them! burst the gates open. I see a light. He must be there.

Fra.---(*Kneels.*)---Hear my prayer, Almighty God. It is the first I have ever uttered. Hear me, Almighty God!

Schw.---(*Still in the court.*)---Drive them back, comrades. Back, you damned dogs. I am the devil, and am come for your master. Where is the black fellow and his troop? Grimm, station your men at

distances from each other, round the castle. Storm the ramparts to the east.

Gri. Hurl the fire-brands. The scoundrel will appear when he smells the flames

Fra.—(*Prays.*)—Oh, Lord God! I have not been a common murderer---I have not been guilty of any trifling crimes.

Dan. God have mercy on us! Even his prayers are crimes.---(*Firebrands and stones are thrown into the castle.*)

Fra. I cannot pray. Here---here---(*Striking his breast and forehead.*)---All is so dreary.---(*Rises.*)—No. I will not pray.

Dan. Jesus Maria! Help! Help! The whole castle is in flames.

Fra. Daniel—obey me—take this sword, and plunge it to my heart, that I may not be made the sport of these rascals.---(*The fire spreads on all sides.*)

Dan. Heaven forbid! I should not like to send any one too soon to Heaven—far less to—

[*Runs out.*]

Fra.—(*After a pause, during which he has followed Daniel with a look of horror and despair.*)---To hell, thou wouldst have said---and rightly wouldst have said. Is this the triumphant tumult of the demons who await me? Hark! They approach—they have entered the castle. Why does this murderous weapon make me tremble? Ha! The gates are broken. Escape is impossible. Welcome, hell.---(*Springs into the flames.*)

Scene, the forest and tower as at the end of the fourth act. The COUNT is discovered sitting upon a stone. CHARLES stands near him. Several Robbers are seen at a distance in the forest.

Cha. And you loved this other son?

Count. Heaven knows how sincerely. Oh, why did I listen to the falsehoods of that monster Francis? I was once an enviable parent—blessed with most hopeful children—but, oh, in an unlucky hour that demon Envy entered into the breast of my younger son. I listened to the serpent, and lost both my children.---(*Hides his face. Charles walks from him.*)
 ---Deeply do I feel the truth of thy words, dear Amelia. The spirit of vengeance spoke from thy lips. Alas, yes. In vain do I stretch forth my arms to embrace my son. In vain do I wish to grasp the warm hand of my Charles.---(*Charles presents his hand, with averted countenance.*)---Oh, that this were his hand! But he is dead---buried far from his native home---he can never hear his father's lamentations.---Wretch that I am!---I have no son to close my eyes. I must die in the arms of a stranger.

Cha.---(*In most violent agitation.*)---It must be so. The decisive moment is arrived.---(*To the Robbers.*)
 ---Leave me. And yet---can I restore to him his son?---Alas, no.

Count. Why do you mutter thus, my generous friend?

Cha. Your son---yes, old man---your son is---lost for ever.

Count. True, true.

Cha.---(*Raising his eyes towards Heaven.*)---Support my sinking soul.---Grant me but fortitude to bear this trial.---(*Aloud.*)---Yes, your son is lost for ever.

Count. Stranger, stranger, did you release me from the tower only to remind me of my sorrows?

Cha.---(*Aside.*)---How, if I were to snatch his blessing---to steal it, like a thief, and escape with the precious prize.---(*sinks on his knee at the feet of the Count.*)---'Twas I, who liberated thee, venerable man, I crave thy blessing.

Count.---(*Presses him to his heart.*)---Think that a

father blesses thee—and I will think I bless my Charles.—Thou, too, canst weep, I see.

Cha.—(In great emotion.)—Yes, I will think it is a father's blessing.—(Hangs on the Count's neck. A pause ensues. At length a confused noise is heard, and torches are seen at a distance. Charles starts from the Count's arms.)—Hark! Vengeance calls to me. They come.—(Gazes awhile at the old man---then looks towards the approaching Robbers with grim ferocity.)—Inflame me, suffering lamb, with the murderous fury of the tiger. I will offer a sacrifice to thee, which shall make the stars grow dim, and petrify all animated nature.—(The torches become more visible---the noise more audible. Several pistols are fired.)

Count. Merciful Heaven! What means this dreadful noise? Are my son's creatures coming to drag me to the scaffold?

Cha.—(Folding his hands with fervour.)—Listen, oh, Heavenly Judge, listen to the prayer of an assassin. Make this wretch immortal. Let not the first stroke of this sword destroy him. No. Let me enjoy his lengthened agonies. Let me feast on the convulsions of his tortured frame!

Count. What are you muttering, stranger?

Cha. I am praying.—*(The wild noise of the approaching Robbers is heard.)*

Count. Oh, think of Francis in you prayers.

Cha.—(Suppressing his fury.)—Be assured I do.

Count. But is that the tone of supplication? Cease, cease. I shudder at such prayers.

Enter SCHWEITZER, and other Robbers, conducting FRANCIS, who is in irons.

Schw. Triumph, captain! I have fulfilled my vow.—Here is the villain.

Gri. We snatched him from the flames.

Kos. And reduced his castle to ashes.

Cha.—(After a dreadful pause, approaches Francis.)—Dost thou know me?—(Francis rivets his eyes on the earth, and returns no answer. Charles leads him to the Count.)—Dost thou know this man?

Fra.—(Starts back, with a look of horror.)—Lightnings blast me! 'Tis my father.

Count.—(Turns away.)—Go.—God forgive thee! I will forget all.

Cha.—(With a terrific sternness.)—And may my curse hang on that prayer like tons of lead, that it may never reach the ear of mercy.—Dost thou know this tower too?

Fra.—(With violence to Herman.)—Monster! has thy hatred to our race pursued my father even to this tower.

Her. Bravo! Bravo! The devil is not so wicked as to let his friends perish for want of a lie.

Cha. Enough! conduct this old man further into the forest. That which must now be done, shall not be interrupted by a father's tears.—(Count is led away.)—Come nearer, ye banditti.(They form a semicircle round Charles and Francis, and lean upon their muskets.)—Now—not another word. As I hope for mercy, the man who dares to move his tongue till I command it dies on the spot.—Silence.

Fra.—(Transported with fury, rushes towards Herman.)—Villain, Villain! O that I could spit a flood of poison on thee!—(Bites his chains.)

Cha.—(With dignified majesty.)—I stand here, appointed by the Eternal Judge, to execute his office upon earth. The sentence I shall pass is such as all creation will approve. The tribunal is formed of villains, and I, the greatest, am its head. Let your daggers speak your sentiments. Let every one compare his actions with those of this wretch, and if,

then, there be among you one, who does not feel himself a saint, let him withdraw and break his dagger.---(*All the Robbers throw down their daggers unbroken. Charles turns to Francis.*)---Now thou mayst be proud, for to-day thou hast converted sinners into angels.---One dagger still is wanted.---(*Draws forth his own.*)---His mother was also mine.---(*To Kosinski and Schweitzer.*)---Be you his judges.---(*Breaks his dagger and walks aside in great emotion.*)

Schw.---(*After a pause.*)---I feel a very school-boy, and rack my mind in vain. Numerous as are the enjoyments of life, the torments of death seem to be few.---(*Stamping with violence.*)---Kosinski, speak. I can devise no torture, which I think sufficient.

Kos. Shame on you, grey-beard! Cast a glance at the tower---let that inspire you. I am but a scholar. Don't make me feel ashamed of my tutor.

Schw. I am grown grey amidst scenes of horror, but, at present, I feel a beggar in ideas. I thank you, comrade. Was not this tower the place in which he exercised his cruelties? Do we not stand as judges before this tower? Down with him! There let him die and rot.

Rob.---(*With shouts of joy.*)---Right! Right! Down with him into the dungeon!

Fra.---(*Rushes into his brother's arms.*)---Save me from the claws of these assassins. Save me, brother.

Cha.---(*With stern solemnity.*)---Thou didst make me their leader.---(*Francis starts back alarmed.*)---Canst thou still ask me to save thee?

Rob.---(*With increasing eagerness.*)---Down with him! To the dungeon with him!

Cha.---(*Approaches him with a dignified mien and a look of sorrow.*)---Son of my father, thou hast robbed me of celestial happiness. Be that crime pardoned. The tortures of hell await thee as a son---as a brother I forgive thee.---(*Embraces him, and*

hastens away. The Robbers with frantic shouts of delight, plunge Francis into the dungeon. Charles returns.)---It is accomplished. Accept my thanks, Almighty Ruler of the world. The dreadful deed is done.---(*A pause ensues, during which he appears to be meditating some great design.*)---Should Providence have decreed, after so far leading me upon the path of blood, that this tower should be the goal of my career, I bend to his decree and willingly obey. I rely upon the mercy of my God, and rejoice that my work is at end. How gloriously the hero dies, whom victory has crowned. This was the greatest action of my life---'tis right that it should be the last. Amidst the gloom of night I will expire. Conduct my father hither.

[*Exeunt Robbers.*]

Re-enter COUNT and ROBBERS.

Count. Whither will you lead me? Where is my son?

Cha.---(*Meets him with dignified composure.*)---Each planet and each grain of sand has its appointed place in the creation---your son, too, has his. Compose yourself, and be seated.

Count.---(*Bursts into tears.*)---No longer a son---no longer a son in this world.

Cha. Compose yourself, and be seated.

Count. Oh, ye compassionate barbarians! You drag a dying father from his dungeon, that you may tell him he is childless. Let your compassion do still more! Replace me where I was, I beseech you.

Cha.---(*Grasps his hand with fervour, and raises it towards Heaven.*)---Blaspheme not, old man. Accuse not that Being, whom I to-day have worshipped with sincerity. Men more wicked far than you, have this day been allowed to approach the throne of God.

Count. Murderers approach the throne of God!

Cha.---(*Incensed.*)---Not another word, I do command thee.---(*In a milder tone.*)---If ever sinners feel the influence of heavenly kindness, shall saints despair of feeling it? Where could you find words to atone for such a sin, were God this day to baptize for you a SON.

Count.---(*With asperity.*)---Are sons to-day baptized with blood?

Cha. Yes. Providence can baptize with blood, and does so to-day. The ways of Heaven are dreadful and mysterious---but tears of joy await us, when we have reached the point of destination.

Count. Where shall I shed them?

Cha.---(*Rushes into his arms.*)---On the breast of Charles.

Count.---(*With a shout of transport.*)---My Charles alive?

Cha. He is alive---and has been sent hither to release and to avenge you. This---(*Pointing to the tower*)---was the reward bestowed upon you by the favoured son---this---(*Pressing him to his heart*)---is the vengeance of the son whom you abandoned.

Rob. There are people in the forest. We hear voices.

Cha. Call the rest.---(*Exeunt Robbers.*)---I must be resolute, and dash the cup of joy from my lips ere it be converted into poison.

Count. Are these men your friends! I almost fear their looks.

Cha. I will answer any question but this, my father. Do not ask this.

Enter AMELIA, with dishevelled hair followed by the Robbers.

Ame. They say his voice has raised the dead---

they say my uncle is alive.---Charles! Uncle! Where shall I find them?

Cha.---(*Shuddering.*)---What demon brings that image to my view?

Count.---(*Raises himself.*)---Amelia! my niece!

Ame.---(*Rushes into his arms.*)---Do I again behold you, dearest uncle---and my Charles too?

Count. Yes. Charles is alive---You---I---all.

Cha.---(*In a phrenzy to the band.*)---Away, comrades. The archfiend has betrayed me.

Ame.---(*Releases herself from the Count's embrace, and clasps Charles in her arms.*)---I have him again! Angels of bliss! I have him again.

Cha. Tear her from my neck. Murder her---murder him---me---every one. Let all the world perish.

Ame.---Dearest Charles!---The transport overpowers him. Why am I thus cool? Am I not as happy as himself?

Count. Come, children. Your hand, Charles---and yours Amelia. Oh, I little thought that so much bliss awaited me. I will unite you for ever.

Ame. Oh, ecstasy indescribable! Mine, mine for ever! Ye powers of Heaven, release me from this load of bliss, lest I should sink beneath the weight of it.

Cha.---(*Who has torn himself from her arms.*)---Away! Away!---Most unfortunate of brides! Look at these men---ask them---listen to them---Most unfortunate of fathers! Let me fly far away, and hide myself for ever.

Ame. Fly! Whither? Why? A life of ecstasy awaits you---and you wish to fly?

Count. Can my son wish to fly---my son---Amelia's husband?

Cha. Too late!---In vain!---Curse me, my father.---Ask me no more questions.---Die, Amelia---die my father---rescued by me, to be by me destroyed.

These thy deliverers are robbers and assassins. Thy son is their CAPTAIN.

Count. God of Heaven! My children!---(*Falls and instantly expires. Amelia stands rooted to the spot, and all the Robbers preserve a dreadful silence.*)

Cha. The souls of those whom I murdered amidst the enjoyments of love---of those whom I strangled in their sleep---of those---Ha! ha! ha! Do you hear the powder magazine? Do you observe that roof falling upon the helpless woman, who is in childbed? Do you see those flames creeping round the cradle of the infant? That is the hymeneal torch. Hear you those shrieks? That is the bridal music. Oh, he does not forget---he claims his due---therefore away from me, all joys of love--- This is retaliation.

Ame.---(*Awaking from her reverie.*)---What have I done, Father of all, what have I done?

Cha. This is more than man can bear. I who have seen death in its every shape, and never was appalled---shall I now be taught to tremble by a woman? No. It shall not be. I will drink blood, and bid defiance to the tyrant Fate.---(*Going.*)

Ame.---(*Throws herself into his arms.*)---Murderer! Demon! I cannot lose thee, angel.

Cha.---(*Stops with an astonished air.*)---Am I awake? Am I mad? Has hell devised some new method of tormenting me? She hangs upon the neck of an assassin.

Ame. For ever.

Cha. She still loves me---loves me with all my crimes. Then am I pure as is the light of day. A child of light weeps upon the neck of a pardoned demon. The furies can no longer lash me with their serpents---the power of hell is annihilated---I am happy.---(*Hides his face in her bosom.*)

Gri.---(*Approaches with a furious look.*)---Hold,

traitor. Instantly quit her embrace, or I will speak a word that shall convulse thy frame.

Schw.—(*Places his sword between Charles and Amelia.*)—Remember the forest of Bohemia. Traitor! Where are now your vows? Have you forgotten that in your defence we risked our lives—our honour—every thing? Did any one of us escape without wounds? Did we not stand like rocks? And did not you raise your arm, and swear never to forsake us, as we had not forsaken you? Traitor! Can a woman make you false to your oath?

Rob.—(*Tear open their clothes.*)—Look here—and here—and here. Do you know these scars? We bought you with our heart's blood. Ours you are, and shall remain, though angels try to tear you from us. Come with us. A victim for a victim! A woman for the band!

Cha. Be it so. I wished to return to virtue, but He who reins in Heaven forbids it. Roll not your eyes thus wildly, dear Amelia. God has millions of beings created by himself, and wants not me. He can easily spare one—that one am I.—(*Turns to the band.*)

Ame.—(*Holds him back.*)—Stay, I beseech you. A single blow—strike but a single blow. Draw your sword, and be compassionate.

Cha. Compassion dwells among the beasts of the forest. I will not murder thee.

Ame.—(*Embracing his knees.*)—Oh, for Heaven's sake—for mercy's sake—I ask you not for affection—but for death. See, my hand trembles. I have not courage to guide the fatal weapon. For you it is easy—for you are accustomed to it. Plunge your sword into my heart—and I shall be happy.

Cha.—(*With great sternness.*)—And why must you alone be happy? Begone: Moor cannot slay a woman.

Ame. Inhuman wretch! You pass by those who

are weary of existence, and murder none but the happy.—(*To the Robbers, in a tone of supplication.*)
—Have compassion on me, men of blood. There is a ferocious scowl upon your foreheads, which to the wretched is consoling. Fire at me. Your leader is a boaster and a coward.—(*Some of the Robbers take aim at her.*)

Cha.—(*Enraged.*)—Away, ye demons!—(*Walks forward with a majestic mien.*)—Who dares to break into my sanctuary? She is mine.—(*Draws her to him, and puts his arm round her waist.*)—Now let Heaven and hell attempt to part us. Love scorns the power of oaths.—(*Raises her into the air, and with dauntless look holds her before the band.*)—Who will dare to separate what nature has united?

Rob.—(*Again taking aim.*)—We will.

Cha.—(*With a smile of contempt.*)—Impotent reptiles!—(*Places Amelia upon a stone—she is almost bereft of every faculty.*)—Look up, my bride. No priestly blessing will unite us, but I know something better.—(*Removes the handkerchief from Amelia's neck, and exposes her bosom to the Robbers.*)—Look at these heavenly charms.—(*With mournful tenderness.*)—Do they not even melt the hearts of murderers?—(*After a pause, in a milder tone.*)—Look at me, murderers—I am young. I love and am beloved—I adore and am adored. I have reached the gate of paradise.—(*With great emotion.*)—Will my comrades drive me back?—(*Robbers laugh. Charles summons his resolution, and looks at them with dignity and sternness.*)—Enough! Thus far nature has prevailed—now let the man appear. I am an assassin, and—(*Walking toward them with indescribable majesty*)—your CAPTAIN. Traitors, dare you raise your arms against your captain?—(*In a commanding tone.*)—Ground your muskets! 'Tis your leader who addresses you.—(*The Robbers are alarmed, and*

throw their arms down.)---Right! Now you are mere children---I am free. Moor must be free in order to be great. I would not exchange the triumphant sensations which I now enjoy, for an Elysium of love. ---(*Draws his sword.*)---Call not that phrenzy, which you are incapable of calling great. Despair outstrips the tardy course of calm philosophy. A deed like this will not allow deliberation to precede it. I will reflect when it is done.---(*Plunges the sword into Amelia's breast.*)

Rob.---(*Clap their hands.*)---Bravo! Bravo! Thy honour is redeemed, thou king of robbers.

Cha.---(*Leans over Amelia.*)---Now she is mine---mine for ever---or eternity is a mere blockhead's whim. With my sword have I obtained my bride, in spite of all the dragons with which FATE, my deadly foe, had guarded her. Many, many a time shall this our earth revolve around the sun, ere he shall behold another deed like this. Sweet must it be, Amelia, thus to receive your death from your beloved.

Ame.---(*Weltering in blood.*)---Most sweet.---(*Stretches forth her hands and dies.*)

Cha. Now, miserable reptiles—are you satisfied? Had you hearts hard enough to claim a sacrifice so great? Your sacrifice to me was a life of infamy—the victim I have offered up to you was an angel.—(*Throws his sword into the midst of them with disdain.*)—Banditti—we are even. Over this corpse I claim my liberty, and grant you yours.

Rob.---(*Crowd round him.*)—We will never forsake you—We will be obedient till death.

Cha. No, no, no. My mission is accomplished. My genius whispers to me that I may not proceed. I have reached the goal of my career. Take back this blood-stained plume.—(*Throws it down.*)—Let him who chooses to be your captain take it up.

Rob. Coward! Where are now your mighty projects? Were they mere bubbles, which a woman's dying groan could burst?

Cha.---(*With dignity.*)---Dare not to scrutinize what Moor has done. This is my last command. Now, form a circle round me, and listen to your dying captain's testament.---(*Rivets his eyes upon the band.*)---You have been faithful to me---faithful beyond example. Had virtue bound you as firmly to each other as guilt, you had been heroes, and your names had never been uttered but with veneration. Go, and devote your talents to the service of a Monarch, who is contending for the rights of man. With this blessing I disband you. Schweitzer and Kosinski, stay.---(*The Robbers walk away slowly and much affected.*)

Manent CHARLES, SCHWEITZER, and KOSINSKI

Your hand, Kosinski---and yours, Schweitzer.---(*To Kosinski.*)---Young man, you are still uncontaminated. Among the guilty you alone are guiltless.---(*To Schweitzer.*)---Deeply have I bathed this hand in blood. 'Twas I who did it, and with this cordial grasp I claim my own. Schweitzer you are free from guilt.---(*Raises their hands with fervour.*)---Father of the world, I restore them to thee. They will serve thee more faithfully than those who never fell.---(*Kosinski and Schweitzer embrace each other with warmth.*)---Not now---not now, my friends. Spare me at this decisive hour. To-day I am become possessed of an immense domain. Divide it between you---become good citizens, and, if for *ten* whose comfort I have blasted, you confer happiness on *one*, my soul may still be saved. Go ;---no farewell---in another world we may meet again. Go, go---ere my resolution fail me---(*Both conceal their*

faces and exeunt.)---I too am a good citizen. Have I not fulfilled a law the most horrible? Have I not faithfully executed the vengeance it enjoined? I remember that when I first came hither I observed a poor disbanded officer, who was working in the field, that he might support a numerous family. A large reward is offered to the man who shall deliver the terrific robber Moor into the hands of justice. This officer shall have it. [Exit.



THE END.

THE HAPPY FAMILY.



A DRAMA,
IN FIVE ACTS.



FROM
KOTZEBUE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

WELLING, *a rich farmer.*
FREDERICK, *his son.*
LEWIS, *his adopted son.*
REHBERG, *a poor clergyman.*
DALNER, *chief forester.*
ERNORF, *under-secretary of the district.*
COUNT LÖHRSTEIN.
BRAVE, *licutenant of hussars.*
ZAHN, *a courtier.*
FRANCIS, }
JACOB, } *COUNT LÖHRSTEIN'S servants.*

WOMEN.

Mrs. WELLING.
PAULINA, }
ROSA, } *daughters of WELLING.*

The Scene lies on the borders of a German principality.

THE HAPPY FAMILY.

ACT THE FIRST.

Scene, a Room in Welling's House, from which are various doors to a Dining-room, a Study, his Daughter's Chambers, &c. On one side is a large Closet. The furniture is strong. Taste and Elegance every where prevail, unmixed with ostentation, but evidently shewing the Owner of the House to be in good circumstances. Paulina and Rosa are discovered spinning; Frederick and Lewis are engaged in making a large net. The clock strikes five.

Lew. FIVE o'clock.

Pau. They'll soon rise now.

Fre. I heard my father cough.

Ros. And I saw my mother throw barley out of the window to the pigeons.

Fre. Have you all your presents ready?

Pau. Mine is in my pocket.

Ros.---(*Pointing at the table.*)---Mine is under that white cloth.

Fre. And mine is in the court.

Lew.---(*Aside, with a sigh.*)---I alone have nothing to offer.

Pau.---(*To Frederick.*)---May one ask what it is?

Fre.---(*Jocosely.*)---Can you keep a secret?

Pau. Oh, yes.

Fre. So can I.

Pau. Well, I am not so cruel. I have woven some handkerchiefs for my mother; and for my father---guess.

Fre. It will not be worth while.

Pau. Ha! ha! ha! Do you hear, Lewis? What think you?

Lew. He is probably right.

Pau. How modest! But, Frederick, I'll tell you ---Lewis has made some verses for me: they are so sweet and affecting.---

Fre. I don't understand verses.

Lew. Paulina is so kind as to think them tolerable.

Pau. Mr. Ernof makes verses too, but nobody can understand them.

Fre. Hark! They are coming.---(*All rise, and stand in anxious suspense.*)

Ros. No, it was the servant below.---(*They return to their work.*)

Fre. My father and mother must be very happy to-day.

Pau. That they always are.

Fre. Yes: but only consider, they have been married twenty-five years to-day.

Ros. And did you hear what my father said when they went to bed last night? They had not quarrelled, during all that time, for twenty-five minutes.

Pau. He had tears in his eyes when he mentioned it.

Ros. My mother pressed his hand, too.

Fre. And looked as affectionate as a bride.

Lew.---(*Sighing.*)---It is a singular happiness.

Pau. They are singular people.

Ros. God bless them!

Fre. And soon send me a wife!

Pau.---(*Archly.*)---You have made a choice, I think?

Fre. Perhaps I have.

Ros. The forester's daughter?

Fre. She is a good girl.

Lew. Brother, I wish you joy.

Pau. I wish her father may not have higher views.

Fre. Well, who knows what may happen?

Ros. Hark! Now they are coming.---(*All rise again, and look anxiously round.*)

Enter ERNORF.

Ros. Oh, no—It is Mr. Ernorf.

Pau.---(*In a disappointed tone.*)---Only Mr. Ernorf.

Fre.---(*The same.*)---Good morning to you, Mr. Ernorf. How happens it that you are abroad so early?

Ern. The Muses and Graces awoke me.

Pau. The cock awoke us by crowing.

Ern. This is Mr. Welling's wedding-day.

Ros. Do you mean that for news?

Ern. The news is to come. As Miss Paulina yesterday signified that she wished to celebrate the happy event by an ode, I have prepared one.---(*Draws a paper from his pocket, and delivers it with self-satisfaction.*)

Pau. I am much obliged to you, but it is too late.

Ern. Too late!

Pau. I am already provided with one.

Ern.---(*Consequently.*)---I should like to know where a poet could be found within many miles, who—

Pau. You need not go so far to find him.

Ros.---(*Laughing.*)---Not many steps.

Fre. Lewis—

Ern.—(With a smile of contempt and derision.)—
This young man? Ha! ha! May one be allowed
a sight of the attempt?

Pau. Here it is.

Ern.---(Muttering as he reads.)---Happy pair—
know no care—domestic joy—never cloy—very to-
lerable, if they had a little energy in them. I al-
ways say, that when one reads a solemn poem, the
breast ought to be contracted, the breath to fail, the
eye to start from the head, and every vein to swell.

Fre. Heaven forbid!

Pau. I like the poetry which inspires gentle sen-
sibility.

Ern. Oh, that was the fashion thirty years ago,
when your Yoricks used to take their sentimental
trips, but in our days nothing will do but hexa-
meters.

Fre. What are those?

Ern. You shall hear directly.---(To Lewis.)---
Don't be ashamed, young man. Rome was not
built in a day.---(Coughs, and prepares to read.)

Pau. I thank you, Mr. Ernorf, but if your verses
be the best that were ever written, they can now be
of no use to me.

Ern. Oh, I beg pardon. Only listen.---(Scans.)---
“Rise with | splendor | a | bove the ho | rison |
sweating A | pollo.”

Fre. Who is that poor fellow?

Ern. “See thy | humble bard | and smile | from
thy e | thereal | coach-box.”

Pau. Far too high, Mr. Ernorf.

Ern. Be patient. We shall soon descend.
“Here view a | couple with | Love's wrinkles | like
Phi | lemon and | Baucis.”

Lew. Love has no wrinkles.

Ern. I almost believe you mean to criticise, Sir.

Lew.—(Apologizing.)—By no means. I beg par-
don.

Ern. There! You can't support the character you assume, for a critic never begs pardon. You will, therefore, do better if you employ yourself in procuring a certificate of your birth. The times are dangerous, and our prince will not harbour any——

Lew. Speak it boldly—vagrants.

Ern. Just so.

Fre.—(Gravely.)—Enough, Mr. Ernorf.

Pau.—(Exasperated.)—Too much, I think. He who is treated by my father as his own son, must be a good man, though he may not be able to write hexameters.

Lew. I thank you, dear Paulina.

Ern. Your father is not in office as I am. He has not such heavy duties upon him. But—I fear——

Pau. What?

Ern. That some investigation must be made.

Pau. Into what?

Ern. Into the rank, age, name, origin and employment of this young man—this votary of the Muses.

Pau. Oh, Lewis! It would have been better if you had suffered love to be covered with wrinkles.

Lew. He who makes use of his office to revenge a fancied insult——

Fre. Is a——

Ros. An under-secretary.

Pau. My father and mother are coming.—(All rise. The girls collect their presents.)

Ern.—(Aside.)—How provoking! Why could they not sleep another hour?

Enter WELLING, and Mrs. WELLING.

(They are immediately surrounded by their children,

who call :)---Good morning, dear father! Many more happy years to you, dear mother!

Wel. and Mrs. W. Thank you---thank you, good children.

Pau. Mother, I have---

Ros. Father, here is---

Fre. Stop! I am the oldest.

Pau. In filial affection age has no claim.

Ros. Look here, father.

Fre. Come to the window, father.

Pau. Read this, father.

Wel. Children, one after another. What have you there, Rosa?

Ros. A pair of gloves made by myself.

Wel. I thank you, my dear girl.

Pau. And here are some handkerchiefs for you, mother, spun and made by myself---and a poem for my father.

Wel.---(*Reads it.*)---'The sentiments are beautifully expressed. I guess who is the author. Lewis, why do you stand in that corner?

Lewis.---(*Distressed.*)---I have nothing to give you.

Wel. A kind word, at least, I hope---a sincere congratulation.

Lew. God sees my heart.

Wel. Come nearer, then, that I may see it too.

Lew. Oh, my benefactor! How I wish you could!

Wel. I do.---(*Shakes his hand.*)---It is swimming in your eyes.---Well, Frederick?

Fre. To the window, father!

Wel. Why?---(*Goes to it.*)

Fre. Do you see what the man is leading across the court?

Wel. A handsome horse.

Fre. You don't remember it?

Wel. No.

Fre. Don't you recollect, about three years ago, that you admired our neighbour's foal?

Wel. I did, and afterwards heard it was dead.

Fre. That was a deception, for I bought it with my pocket-money, and was resolved, when it was in condition to surprise you agreeably.

Wel. I thank you, my son.

Pau. Dear, good parents, give us your blessing.

Ros. Your blessing ---(*The children kneel.*)

Wel. and Mrs. W.---(*Bending with emotion over them.*)---God bless you!

Wel.---(*To Lewis, who wipes his eyes.*)---You too, good Lewis!

Lew.---(*Seizes his hand, and eagerly kisses it.*)---Then have I again found a father.

Wel. As long as I live.---(*The children rise.*)---Good morning, Mr. Ernorf. Don't take it amiss that I did not welcome you sooner. The heart has its privileges.

Ern. "See, I | come to your | hospita | ble board | congratu | lating." |

Wel. At which I shall be glad to see you.

Ern. I will have that pleasure. It is a family jubilee; and perhaps——

Fre. Father!

Ern. Perhaps, I say——

Fre. All our people are assembled in the court.

Ern. Perhaps, I say——

Fre. They want to congratulate you.

Pau. They have all made garlands and wreaths.

Wel. Come then, such wreaths are more valuable than crowns, for affection twined them together.

[*Exeunt Wel. Mrs. W. Fre. Pau. and Ros.*]

Ern. Perhaps, I say—very civil conduct indeed!

Lew. You must make some allowances for the bustle of the day.

Ern. So it seems your fine verses are liked?

Lew. These good people consider that my intention is good.

Ern. You have been at school, then, as you think yourself capable of writing poetry?

Lew. I seldom write poetry.

Ern. In that you are perfectly right, for your Muse would not repay the many obligations which this family——

Lew. I often remind myself of those obligations, and should be ashamed if it were necessary for another to do it.

Ern. It certainly was a lucky circumstance for you, that Mr. Welling should just happen to enter the inn as the recruiting party was going to take you away.

Lew. I acknowledge it.

Ern. And that he should be so generous or *weak* as to pay forty dollars for your discharge.

Lew. You, Sir, I suppose, only do this in poetry.

Ern. What do you mean by that?

Lew. It is said that poets are, from the nature of their profession, only capable of *describing* good actions.

Ern.---(*Offended.*)---I am much inclined to prove the contrary this very day, by ridding the neighbourhood of a conceited fellow.

Lew. In that you would be perfectly right.

Ern. And this conceited fellow is yourself. *Dixi.*

Lew. I do not regard your scornful language, for it cannot disgrace me: but I should like to know by what right——

Ern.---(*Enraged.*)---What! I no right? I under-secretary to his Serene Highness---own cousin to the Cabinet-President's housekeeper---joint editor of a Critical Journal!

Enter PAULINA.

Pau. For Heaven's sake, what is the cause of all this noise ?

Lew.---(*Smiling.*)---Mr. Under-Secretary Ernorf is just demonstrating to me that he has a right to be rude.

Pau. I think no one has that right ; especially in a stranger's house.

Ern.---(*Suddenly assuming a look of friendly complacency.*)---Can I consider this as a stranger's house ?

Pau. As far as I know you may.

Ern. Not a word, then, of the confidential connection between us ?

Pau. Between us !—But yes. We stood as godfather and godmother together, about two years ago.

Ern. Oh, that is only a spiritual connection.

Pau. We will let it rest there, then.

Ern. You are joking, fair Paulina ; but when I have spoken a serious word to your parents, you will joke no more.

Pau. That I believe.

Ern. Who knows what may happen to-day ?

Pau. Oh !

Ern. This timid sigh assures me that my happiness is not far distant.

Pau. I think, Mr. Ernorf, you should have a wife who understands hexameters better than I do.

Ern. Had I but been allowed to proceed——

Pau. We had but just left our beds.---(*Yawning.*)
---Were we so soon again——

Ern.---(*Offended.*)---Miss Paulina is vastly witty and sarcastic. The melodious lines of this Arcadian swain probably pleased her better.

Pau. Most certainly they did.

Ern. But they will probably be the last, which he will make in this country.

Pau. Well, we can live without verses.

Ern. And without the poet, for he will to-morrow be cited to appear, and if he cannot produce the necessary credentials, will be transported beyond the confines. *Dixi.* [Exit.

Pau. He threatens.

Lew. To satisfy his vanity.

Pau. But he may involve you in difficulties. It would be better to declare who you are.

Lew. Does Paulina wish to know it?

Pau. It makes no difference to me. I know you are a good man.

Lew. Is not that the best title?

Pau. In our house it is.

Lew. Your house is my world.

Pau. But, should my father be compelled to send you away?

Lew. Then I'll go.

Pau. And you will distress us thus by obstinacy?

Lew. You wrong me.

Pau. We are all so fond of you.

Lew. Paulina too?

Pau. I am indeed, and was before you drew the poor child out of the pond, and——

Lew. I shall, then, take your good wishes with me into banishment.

Pau. Rather stay, and be happy with us.

Lew. That I am.

Pau. Yet sometimes you seem to forget yourself, and your eyes are full of tears.

Lew. I do not complain.

Pau. So much the worse, for, if you did, one might relieve you.

Lew. Alas! no,

Pau. But at least console you.

Lew. No.

Pau. Have you, then, no hope on earth?

Lew. None.

Pau.—(*Seriously.*)—Lewis---you have not committed any crime?

Lew.—(*Lays his hand on his breast.*)—That have I not.

Pau. None but the guilty can be quite devoid of hope.

Lew. That is a pious falsehood.

Pau. A good man every where inspires confidence.

Lew. I have found it.

Pau. And friendship——

Lew. Sustains my life

Pau.—(*With timid uncertainty.*)—And love——

Lew. Alas! love I must renounce.

Pau. Why?

Lew. Poor, without a name——

Pau. Who falls in love with names?

Lew. Without parents, without——

Pau. Any more?

Lew. Perhaps I have too long remained in a house where captivating innocence, united with sisterly affection, have deceived my heart with lovely visions—where the danger of appearing ungrateful increases every hour, and the pleasure of daily beholding Paulina may at last rob me of my only treasure---a good conscience. [*Exit hastily.*]

Pau. What does he mean?—Is it a sin to love me?—When there was a great fire in our village, and he carried the old man on his back through the flames, did not my father himself allow him to call me sister? “Love him as your brother,” he said to us all, “for he deserves it.” I have loved him as my brother, and what is the consequence?—Mysterious man!

Enter FREDERICK hastily.

Fre. Away, sister!

Pau. Why?

Fre. My father and mother are coming.

Pau. Why should I run away from them?

Fre. I have been talking to my mother about my dear Louisa, and she is going to mention it to my father.

Pau. I wish you success, brother.

Fre. And Mr. Dalner will soon be here too.

Pau. Hark! they are coming

Fre. Go, then, and tell Rosa not to disturb them, while I run to the dove-cot, and watch when Mr. Dalner comes. *[Runs away.]*

Pau. Now will he be so violent that he'll spoil a nest or two. The poor pidgeons!---(*Sighing.*)---
Poor Paulina! *[Exit into her room.]*

Enter WELLING and Mrs. WELLING, arm in arm.

Mrs. W. I hope you approve of my having sent to invite my poor relations.

Wel. Approve! I do indeed, and am angry with myself that it did not occur to me.

Mrs. W. The good people come so seldom, and are so reserved on account of their poverty.

Wel. For that reason we must give them a more hearty welcome, that they may not reckon us among the creatures who find delight in ostentatiously exhibiting their wealth to poor relations, and making every morsel nauseous by humiliating arrogance.

Mrs. W. I may place my old uncle at the top of the table---may I not?

Wel. Certainly.

Mrs. W. Mr. Dalner won't be offended?

Wel. Not he—nor Rehberg.

Mrs. W. Oh, I am not afraid of his being so ; for he had rather himself belong to the family

Wel. How so ?

Mrs. W. Have not you perceived that he is fond of Rosa ?

Wel. The mother is always quicker in discoveries of this kind than the father, but I am glad to hear it.

Mrs. W. Yet I don't altogether like it.

Wel. Why not ? Rehberg is a worthy young man.

Mrs. W. The world says a great deal against him.

Wel. Scandal.

Mrs. W. It is said that he does not strictly conform to the orthodox belief.

Wel. His conduct is upright, and I have often before remarked, that calumny does not attack a man's *opinion* till his *conduct* is found to be irreproachable.

Mrs. W. His intercourse with the daughter of the Secretary, appears to many of a suspicious nature.

Wel. Because many feel what they would do in Rehberg's situation.

Mrs. W. It is said, too, that he squanders his small fortune away at cards, when at the Secretary's house.

Wel. And, you know I hate that term, "It is said," when an honest man's character is concerned. Is he in debt ?

Mrs. W. Not exactly that, but he had a good library, which he lately sold for a trifle to an antiquarian who was passing through the place.

Wel. What is that to us ?

Mrs. W. I am sorry for it. The schoolmaster says that when the man took the books away, Rehberg looked out of the window after him, and tears stood in his eyes.

Wel. Pshaw ! If you will give the schoolmaster a

pint of beer, and his wife a cup of coffee, you may hear a hundred such stories. I cannot bear that any one's good name should be destroyed to afford conversation at a tea table, that the gosling should catch it from the goose, and learn to hiss at every one who is quietly passing by.

Mrs. W.—(*Surveying him calmly and affectionately.*)—I know this censure was not intended for me.

Wel.—(*Gives her his hand.*)—Heaven forbid! you are a good woman, and I dare be sworn you will receive Rehberg kindly.

Mrs. W. That I will.

Wel. I wish to see none but smiling countenances to-day.

Mrs. W. Then I fear Frederick must not come to table.

Wel. Why not?

Mrs. W. He has something on his mind.

Wel. Nothing wrong I hope?

Mrs. W. Oh, no—he thinks of marrying.

Wel. If his choice be proper.

Mrs. W. It is.

Wel. And the girl likes him——

Mrs. W. She does—but her rank is rather above his——Dalner's daughter.

Wel. Hem---with all my heart---if her father will consent to the match.

Mrs. W. There lies the difficulty. He shook his head.

Wel. Dalner is a sensible man, and my friend.

Mrs. W. He is coming hither to converse with you on the subject.

Wel. I am glad to hear it. Such men as he and I shall soon understand each other.

Mrs. W. May I give Frederick any encouragement? I see the poor fellow is at the door.

Wel.—(*Turns round.*)—Frederick, what are you doing there? Do you avoid your father?

Enter FREDERICK, *fearfully*.

Fre. Father, Mr. Dalner will be here directly.

Wel. Are you afraid of him?

Fre. I don't know. I am not timorous in general; but for several weeks I have felt all day as if there was a storm in the air, and all night as if a fire would break out in the village.

Wel. --- (*Smiling.*) --- Yes, yes—But are you thoroughly convinced that you will be happy with the girl?

Fre.—(*Strikes his breast with both hands.*)—I am indeed.

Wel. As happy as your parents?

Fre. We love each other as sincerely as they do.

Wel. I am not speaking of days, but years.

Fre. So will I, by God's assistance, speak to my son in five-and-twenty years.

Wel. 'Tis well. Go with your mother, while I speak to Dalner.

Fre.—(*Kisses his hand in great emotion.*)—Father—true father—you must speak—for I---I can't speak. [*Exeunt Mrs. W. and Frederick.*]

Wel. From my heart I wish to bind him for ever to his present rank in life. A good wife will complete what habit and education have founded. Then I shall die in peace, and he may pry into the secrets of yonder closet. He will find nothing there which can disturb his nightly rest.

Enter DALNER.

Dal. Joy be with you neighbour! Your hand!—(*Shakes it.*)---Understood?

Wel. It is the congratulation of an honest man.

Dal. Right, by my soul. It comes from the heart. In walking hither I stumbled so often, that

I nearly broke my neck two or three times; for I was calling to mind those happy days when my Maria was alive, and we so often used to spend our Sundays together like good neighbours——

Wel. Talking about peace and war.

Dal. While our wives talked about pies and puddings——

Wel. And our children were playing around us.

Dal. Then we used to wander to the tall oak Neighbour, when I passed that oak to-day, I felt an odd sensation. I could see the church-yard from it.—Understood? The trees, which I planted there—you know where—are grown large and handsome. I saw them peering above the wall, and my eyes.—Understood?

Wel. You would have been married almost as long as myself.

Dal. True. When I espied your house, I was well again. It is the house, thought I, of a man whom I have known twenty-seven years. I have two things on which I can still rely—my gun and my friend Welling.

Wel.—(*Kindly offers his hand.*)—Your sincere friend, Welling.

Dal. Well, we may perhaps be united still closer, if we do as two young people seem to wish.—Understood?

Wel. Almost.

Dal. Your son has taken a liking to my daughter, and she by no means seems cruel.

Wel. So much the better.

Dal. Perhaps it may be so, but allow me, neighbour, to ask what your intentions are respecting the young man.

Wel. He is my only son, and my heir.

Dal. What do you mean to make of him?

Wel. A countryman, and a farmer like myself.

Dal. To that I have no objection. Heaven bless

all honest countrymen ! They are the trees, and all other people the caterpillars, who feast upon their leaves.

Wel. 'Tis well. If such be your sentiments——

Dal. Such are *my* sentiments, but I have still to ask another question. Were we not old friends I should be ashamed of doing it---but you know me. You know I never was tormented by that demon---*pride*. We have lived on the terms of brothers. I have never asked you where you came from, who you are, and so forth.

Wel. I have often felt the obligation you conferred upon me by this silence.

Dal. Nor should I have ever said a word on that subject, had not this affair of the children---Understand me properly, neighbour---not that *I* have any scruples. No. An honest man is a nobleman. But I have two brothers, who are as proud as Lucifer. They are both rich, and my daughter will inherit their property,---*nota bene*, provided she marries with their consent.

Wel. Poor Frederick !

Dal. Why so ? You are rich, and that goes a great way. But *one* stone lies in the way---your origin.---(*With sincere good humour.*)---Don't be offended.

Wel. By no means.

Dal. People are fond of talking, and some account of you has reached my brothers. When you arrived here twenty-seven years ago, and your late father-in-law farmer Wiedeman treated you so kindly, it is said you were a foundling, and when the magistracy insisted on your producing a certificate of your birth.

Wel. I appealed to the Prince in person.

Dal. Very true. And as the secretary here dropped the subject, nay was afterwards seen to take off his hat as he passed you, it was rumoured

that he had received orders from court not to molest you.

Wel. He probably had.

Dal. The wise folks then maintained, that you were certainly the natural son of some distinguished personage.---Understood?

Wel. Perfectly.

Dal. One of my brothers was then tutor to the pages at court, and stated that your audience with the Prince exceeded an hour.

Wel. It did.

Dal. The world, therefore, not knowing what to make of the matter——

Wel. Made something bad of it. That is natural.

Dal. But you see if I could retain the family property for my daughter---but without a mean action.---Understood?

Wel. Certainly, you would be glad to do it.

Dal. You will, therefore, oblige me, if you will entrust me with a few particulars of your descent.

Wel. My dear friend, I will do it with pleasure, for I am sure you will not make a bad use of my confidence. The time too, when this discovery might be attended with danger, is past, for my enemies have forgotten me.----I am by birth a nobleman——

Dal. A nobleman!

Well. The last branch of the old house of Wellingrode. I was fortunate enough in my youth, to become the favourite of a prince, and unfortunate enough to have none but honest intentions towards him.

Dal. I understand. You wanted to introduce truth at court.

Wel. The intrigues of an ambitious woman (who wished to raise her husband to the rank of prime-minister in order to govern through him) hurled me from my eminence. I was accused of treason---

my property was confiscated, and bestowed upon the new favourite. I escaped imprisonment by flight. How I was pursued and what I endured I will relate at another time. At present I will merely confine myself to the lucky turn of my fortunes.

Dal. Right—how you were metamorphosed from a nobleman into a peasant?

Wel. My late father-in-law had rented a farm on my mother's estate, and I had always heard him mentioned as an upright man.

Dal. He was one.

Wel. No longer knowing where I could be secure from the spies of my victorious rival, I suddenly remembered this old faithful servant. I clothed myself as a peasant, cut my hair, and on a summer's evening arrived at the house of Hans Wiedeman.

Dal. I'll bet you a wager you were received with open arms.

Wel. Peace be to the ashes of that worthy man! At first I merely meant to stay with him till the storm was blown over—till I was forgotten. That I might not, in the mean time, be without employment, I began to cultivate a part of the garden. My Ann was then but fourteen years of age, and assisted me.

Dal. Yes, yes—I understand.

Wel. You are mistaken. Much as I admired her, I little thought that we should celebrate a day like this. But the garden soon became too confined for me, and I began to accompany good Wiedeman to the field. I acquired a love of agriculture. I daily felt fresh air and industry enliven both my body and the mind. I was healthier than before, and I was happier than before.

Dal. I can easily conceive it.

Wel. One evening, as I was walking alone across the meadows, the idea suddenly struck me—Oh, I

could shew you the very spot—to forget the distressing vision of my younger days, to renounce the airy phantoms of ambition, and become a quiet peasant.

Dal. What thought honest old Wiedeman to this?

Wel. He shook his head.

Dal. I should have done so too.

Wel. He thought my intention a mere whim, and that, when the times altered, I should repent my resolution. In vain did I represent to him that he was old, that he wanted a hale son-in-law——

Dal. He shook his head again, I suppose?

Wel. He smiled, wished to convince me I was wrong, and when he found his arguments were ineffectual, he said he would try my resolution for two years. Finding, after the expiration of them, that I thought no more of court, and that his daughter sincerely loved me, he said: “God bless you!”—and God has blessed us.

Dal. H-m!—Do your children know——

Wel. No.

Dal. But your wife——?

Wel. Nor she. Her father carried the secret with him to the grave. She is happy in her present situation.

Dal. Well, I will say no more to my brothers than is absolutely necessary—Understood? But——

Wel. Another but!

Dal. You injure your son by this connection.

Wel. How so?

Dal. My daughter has no ancestors.

Wel. And my son is a farmer.

Dal. Well, then—if you be so inclined——

Wel. I am from my heart——

Dal. Let me embrace you, then.—I may call you, as hitherto, friend and neighbour?

Wel. Most certainly.

Dal. If my good Maria had lived to see this day—or if those above know what passes here below.—Understood?

Enter Mrs. WELLING and FREDERICK.

Mrs. W. I can restrain him no longer.

Fre.—(*With eager anxiety.*)—Well father! You look kindly—so does Mr. Dalner.

Dal. We are agreed.

Fre. Huzza!—(*Running away.*)

Wel. Frederick, where are you going?

Fre. To Louisa.

Wel. Hold! Has your mother consented?

Dal. If you have no objection——

Mrs. W. Objection! It makes me shed tears of joy.

Fre. Now I may.—(*Is again going.*)

Dal. Stop! Such intelligence as this ought to be conveyed by the father.

Fre. But I may go with you.

Dal. Go you may, but instead of *going* you'll *run*, and I am not in a hurry to provoke the asthma. No, be patient till evening—then I'll bring my daughter hither. Till then, good bye, neighbours.

[*Exit.*

Fre.—(*Following him.*)—Afternoon, instead of evening.—

[*Exit.*

Mrs. W. He is in love indeed!

Wel. He will be so.

Mrs. W. He is so, surely.

Wel. Impossible, for real love never exists till after marriage. The passion of youth is only smok, but the husband's affection is the pure flame, with which he is warmed even in old age.

Mrs. W. As is our case.

Wel. Yes, good Ann, as is our case. In spite of all our Frederick's warmth, I dare be sworn that I

shall be, when sixty years of age, still more in love than he.

Mrs. W.—(*Smiling.*)—You in love! With whom?

Wel. Can you ask?—(*Affectionately giving his hand.*)—With you, who have for a quarter of a century been my faithful companion—with you, who have so cheerfully, so excellently adhered to the duties of a wife and mother.

Mrs. W. I have but done my duty.

Wel. And always did it cheerfully.

Mrs. W. God has rewarded me.

Wel. God bless you! Come to my heart!

Mrs. W. Good William!

(*Wel. presses her with emotion in his arms.*)

The Curtain falls.

ACT THE SECOND.

Enter ERNORE, in full dress. His pockets are full of papers---He surveys himself in the glass, and arranges his cravat.

Ern. Now she may decide. Should she wish to see the under-secretary, the man of business—(*Laying his hand on his right coat-pocket*)—here he is. Should she prefer the poet, the author—(*Pointing to his left coat-pocket*)—here he is. The right pocket will suit the father and mother—the left their daughters—both will, I think, overpower the Arcadian shepherd, Mr. Lewis—To-day will I bestow this hand, which has written so many a folio—

so many a quarto, on——Paulina or Rosa? Immaterial.

Enter FREDERICK *and* REHBERG.

Fre. Come in, Sir,—we are all happy.

Reh. It is your father's wedding-day.

Fre. Oh, yes, but other weddings will soon take place.

Ern.—(*Aside.*)—Yes, yes, no doubt.

Fre. You shall perform the ceremony—

Reh. For whom?

Fre.—(*Jocosely.*)—Guess.

Reh. Perhaps Miss Paulina.

Ern.—(*Aside.*)—Perhaps.

Fre. You are wrong.

Reh.—(*In great agitation.*)—Or perhaps Miss Rosa?

Ern.—(*Aside.*)—Perhaps.

Fre. Wrong again.

Reh.—(*Recovering.*)—Then I know nobody—

Fre. How! Am I nobody?

Reh. You yourself, dear Frederick?

Fre. Yes, I myself, and somebody else too—
Louisa Dalner—What say you now, eh?

Reh. I am really glad to hear it, and as all the family is so happy, I cannot suppose that Miss Rosa will attend to her harpsichord to-day.

Fre. I don't know, but I'll call her. [*Exit.*

Reh. Happy man!

Ern. Under the rose, Mr. Rehberg, you will, ere long, have to read the marriage ceremony for one of his sisters.

Reh. Which of them?

Ern. That is not yet determined. Cupid gropes in the dark, as at the rape of the Sabines.

Reh. Perhaps you yourself are Cupid.

Ern.—(*With self-satisfaction.*)—At your service.

Reh. You are about to marry, then?

Ern. Prosaically answered: Yes.

Reh. Can you marry without affection?

Ern. Who said that? I love with ardour indescribable!

Reh. Yet you said you had not made a choice.

Ern. My heart certainly inclines rather towards Paulina—

Reh. Obey the impulse, I beseech you.

Ern. But she wants taste. Her sister is, I think, in many respects superior—and she has so poetical a name—*Rosa!*

Reh.—You have spoken to Mr. Welling, I presume—?

Ern. Not yet. He is a good honest kind of man—But—(*Looking at his watch.*)—it grows late, and I must attend to the duties of my office. Your servant, Mr. Rehberg. [*Exit.*

Reh. This fellow is a silly coxcomb—but can I, for that reason, feel at ease? He is rich, and, oh, how many fools, how many villains have I known, who have obtained the most amiable wives because they were rich! I have hitherto been silent, but my intentions are upright—why, therefore, should I be ashamed of declaring them?

Enter ROSA.

Ros. Good morning, Mr. Rehberg, I was almost afraid you would come.

Reh. Afraid!

Ros. Because I have been idle. Look, only, what a quantity of dust there is upon the harpsichord.

Reh. That is indeed unusual.

Ros. I have been making a present for my father and mother, on their wedding-day—

Reh. You have, then, certainly been far better employed than in attending to music.

Ros. Yet I have often been singing; for when I am alone I always sing—and you know my favourite words:—

“Why dost thou, Fate, thine ear thus shut,
“And why my supplications mock?—

Reh.

“I ask but to possess a hut,
“A friend, and little fleecy flock.

Ros.

“Blest with such gifts, I still should know
“Peace and delight enjoy’d by few.

Reh.

“Yet how much more my breast would glow,
“Might I but share the gifts with you.”

Ros. You repeat the last lines as if you were the author of them.

Reh. How if I were?

Ros.—(*Jocosely.*)—Why, then I would ask who it is, for whom your breast would glow?

Reh. And I would answer, a cheerful, good, pretty girl.

Ros. Do I know her?

Reh. Perhaps you do.

Ros. She must live in our village, then, for I have scarcely been half a mile from it.

Reh. Will you say a kind word for me?

Ros. Why don’t you speak to her yourself?

Reh. I am afraid of displeasing her.

Ros. Well, that is odd. Mr. Ernorf, whom nobody likes, torments every girl in the village with his nonsense, and you whom we all like—

Reh. Mr. Ernorf is rich—I am poor.

Ros. But a good man without a dollar is preferable to him and all his riches.

Reh. Poverty is oppressive.

Ros. Without affection it is.

Reh. Are you in earnest, dear Rosa? Would a good man's poverty not deter you from marrying him?

Ros. If I liked him, certainly not.

Reh. You are accustomed to affluence.

Ros. There you are mistaken. My father is, to be sure, reckoned rich—

Reh. He certainly is rich.

Ros. Then he has acted very properly in not letting us discover it. We are as industrious and economical as any peasant's family in the village.

Reh. What you say makes me truly happy.

Ros. Indeed! Why so?

Reh. Because it seems not so difficult to gain your affections as I supposed.

Ros. Does any one wish to gain them?

Reh.—(After a pause.)—

“Blest with such gifts I still should know
“Peace and delight enjoy'd by few;
“Yet how much more my breast would glow,
“Might I but share the gifts with you.”

Ros.—(Confused.)—What do you mean?

Reh. Ask your heart.

Ros. My heart is a flatterer.

Reh. Will you share my fate?

Ros. Does that depend on me?

Reh. Will you make me happy?

Ros. Is that in my power?

Reh. An indigent mother is my only property.

Ros. I should then have two good mothers.

Reh. I live in a small hut.

Ros. Content is not a friend of palaces.

Reh. I live on scanty fare.

Ros. And are healthy with it.

Reh. May I speak to your father?

Ros.—(*With downcast eyes.*)—My mother must know it too.

Reh. And if they both consent—

Ros. I must obey.

Reh. Must!

Ros. I will most cheerfully.

Reh. Thanks, good Rosa, you shall not repent it.

Ros.—(*Much confused.*)—Shall we go to the harpsichord?

Reh. You would learn nothing of me to-day.

Ros. I'll bring my notes.—(*Runs away to conceal her confusion.*)—

Reh. Sweet, lovely being! What a friendly look will every thing assume when you come to inhabit my hut? The coughing old servant will no longer wake me, but Rosa's simple song.—And my mother—my good mother!—On her too I shall bestow comfort in her latter days.—Oh God! bend the hearts of the parents, that when they find I am honest, they may not ask whether I am rich.

Enter WELLING.

Wel. Welcome, Mr. Rehberg. I thank you for your well-meant congratulation.

Reh. It is indeed well-meant, though you have not allowed me time to offer it.

Wel. Sincerity is sparing in words. I hope, therefore, you will be silent, and celebrate this happy day by drinking a glass of wine with me.

Reh. With great pleasure.

Wel. You must play us a good tune,—Rosa shall sing, and we will join in chorus. We will pass the bottle round to the health of every honest man,

with a wish that after days of toil he may enjoy such happiness as mine.

Reh. Alas, Mr. Welling! Such happiness is seldom found.

Wel. True, and most seldom among those who are bred to a profession. You waste your best years in study, and are often at last obliged to be satisfied with a single dish upon your table.

Reh. But the professional man can also feel the charms of love, and sometimes find a girl who is willing to share his poverty.

Wel. Oh, yes, but the girl is, with your permission, a very silly one.

Reh.—(*Starts.*)—Such sentiments astonish me from your lips.

Wel. Love is a pretty flower, but it must grow in the shade of a fruitful tree.

Reh. You think, then, that riches only can make the married state happy?

Wel. Heaven forbid that I should have such an idea! There is a pleasant easy track, between the high-road of wealth and the thorny path of penury. I only mean that a man who marries with no other prospect than care and poverty, is either very unwise, or very much in love.

Reh.—(*Aside.*)—Oh, misery! --- (*Aloud.*) --- You would, therefore, not bestow your daughters upon any but men of tolerable means?

Wel. I think, at least, that no man of honour would wish to be supported entirely by his wife's means.

Reh.---(*Checking his sensibility.*)---Such a declaration would silence any one.

Enter ERNORF and MRS. WELLING.

Ern. Have I at last found you, worthy Mr. Welling?

Mrs. W. Mr. Ernorf wishes to have some conversation with you.

Ern. Wishes to unburden his over-loaded heart.

Wel. How happens it that your heart is over-loaded?

Ern. Through the sly manœuvres of the little god who tames the lion—through a wanton frolic of the little urchin, who put into the hands of Hercules the distaff of fair Deianira.

Wel. Mr. Ernorf, your mode of explanation is original, but unintelligible.

Reh. I will assist him, Sir. He is in love.

Wel. With one of my daughters?

Reh.—(Laughing.)—With both!

Mrs. W.—(Shaking her head.)—With both!

Ern. Yes. This is a privilege which belongs exclusively to us poets. We may be in love with two or three women at the same time.

Wel. And you wish to marry both?

Ern. My wishes are more limited. If either of the ladies——

Reh. My presence may be unpleasant. Allow me to withdraw.

Wel. For what reason?

Reh.—(With a degree of sensibility, but without asperity.)—To make room for a man of property.

[Exit.

Wel.—(Aside.)—So, so! Understood, as my friend Dalner would say.

Ern.---(Calling after him.)---Stay! stay! We shall want a black coat at the wedding.

Wel. Are matters advanced so far?

Ern. They very soon will be. In the first place it is proper that I should ascertain my pedigree.---(Presents a large scroll.)---Here is the testimonial of my matriculations at the university. Here is his Highness's appointment of me to my present office.

Wel. We read that in the newspapers.

Ern. Here are some bonds, and——

Wel. Enough, enough, Mr. Ernorf!

Ern. Yes, enough indeed. I flatter myself there are few sons-in-law who could produce so much.

Wel. The choice of my daughters will depend upon their hearts.

Mrs. W. Is it to Paulina or to Rosa that your intentions are directed?

Ern. That I leave entirely to the decision of the lovely creatures themselfs.

Enter PAULINA and ROSA.

Wel. 'Tis well. Here come the lovely creatures. Talk to them, Mr. Ernorf; for if I know their dispositions, I may quietly remain a silent spectator.

Mrs. W. Children, Mr. Ernorf wishes to marry one of you.

Pau. and *Ros.*---(*Make low curtsies.*)---He does us great honour.

(*Ernorf returns their compliments by two low bows.*)

Wel. He thinks you both so amiable, that he finds it impossible to make a choice.

Pau. and *Ros.*---(*As above.*)---He does us great honour.

Mrs. W. And leaves you, therefore, to decide.

Ros. My sister is the oldest, and has a right to the preference.

Pau. But Rosa excels me in accomplishments.

Ros. Such modesty deserves to be rewarded.

Pau. It is only your modesty which makes you not feel superior to me.

Ern. Ha! ha! ha! What a noble contest! I perceive I must advance to the aid of their reserve.---(*Solemnly.*)---Accept, beauteous Paulina, a heart, which——

Pau. I beg your pardon, Mr. Ernorf, but I accept no present which I cannot return.

Ern.—(*Somewhat confused, but suppressing his mortification.*)---Indeed! Well then, accept it, you, fair Rosa—

Ros. Indeed, Mr. Ernorf, I cannot.

Ern. What! Both! How am I to understand this?

Mrs. W. My daughters are grateful for the honour you wish to confer upon them.

Pau. and Ros.---(*Curtseying.*)---Yes, we are grateful for the honour.

Mrs. W. But do not as yet feel inclined to marry.

Ern.---(*Whose mortification begins to appear, and soon after increases to rage.*)---Such may be your opinion, Mrs. Welling, but you are much mistaken. The ladies had rather be married to-day than to-morrow---yes, rather to-day than to-morrow, I say.

Pau. How do you know, that?

Ern. The girls are in love---yes, they are in love, I say.

Ros. You seem to be an interpreter of hearts.

Ern. And a certain stripling in this house, a shallow poetaster, is a conqueror of hearts.

Wel.---(*Seriously.*)---What do you mean, Sir?

Ern. A fellow, of whom we know no more than we do of the wind, where he comes from, or is going to?

Wel.---(*Emphatically.*)---Mr. Ernorf, I request an explanation.

Ern. You shall have it. I came here to make an explanation. The dapper spark, Lewis, whose release you thought proper to buy of a recruiting party, has in return enlisted your daughters.

Mrs. W. Mr. Ernorf, my daughters are virtuous.

Ern. Virtuous they may be; but they are in love. The whole village, the whole neighbourhood, the whole country talks of it. They are in love with a vagrant, who will be cited to appear before the ma-

gistracy, to-morrow, and be sent over the boundaries next day.

Wel. Sir, can you prove your accusation?

Ern. Pshaw! the world seldom requires proofs. The worse any thing appears to be, the readier it is believed.

Wel. Alas! True.

Ern. I, therefore, advise you, as a friend, Mr. Welling, and I advise you, Mrs. Welling, to keep a watchful eye upon these two love-sick damsels, and as to the gentle rhymester---to-morrow before the magistracy! *Dixi.* [Exit.

(Paulina and Rosa burst into a fit of laughter.)

Wel. I am not pleased at seeing you laugh.

Pau. Dear father he is only a fool.

Wel. How often have I told you that fools do more mischief in the world than villains! A villain is generally possessed of sense, and does not deal in defamation, unless he can thereby attain some end, but a fool is continually prating. I merely go out of a rascal's road, but I conceal myself from a block-head. As to what Ernorf said, it cannot be his own invention.—

Pau. It is indeed. The whole secret is, that Lewis writes better poetry than he does.

Wel. I have, perhaps, too much relied upon the idea that fraternal intercourse is seldom dangerous to the heart. The young man has, perhaps, really made some impression upon you.---(Surveys them attentively.)---How! Silent! Have your parents lost your confidence?

Ros. No, dear father. I like Lewis very much---but I don't love him.

Wel. And you, Paulina? You cast down your eyes.

Pau.---(Stammering.)---I own, father---that I think Lewis---the most amiable man I ever saw.

Wel. You mean, in other words——

Pau. I can't express it by words ; but I feel that if I were allowed to love him—(*With a sigh*)—I should love him most ardently.

Wel. How long have you felt this sensation?

Pau. I almost feel as if I had been born with it.

Wel. Did he himself endeavour to gain your affections?

Pau. Never. You know how reserved and bashful he is.

Mrs. W. So much the more dangerous he is to a woman's heart.

Pau.—(*Sighing.*)—True, dear mother.

Ros.—(*The same.*)—Yes, true indeed.

Wel. Do you believe your affection is returned?

Pau. I do.

Mrs. W. Perhaps because you wish it?

Pau. It may be so.

Wel. I see but two modes of settling this. Lewis must either marry you, or leave the house.

Pau.—(*Fearfully.*)—Which shall you embrace?

Wel. Let us hear your mother's opinion.

Mrs. W. Well—Lewis is a good young man——

Wel. But poor.

Mrs. W. So were you, my dear William.

Wel. We don't know who he is.

Mrs. W. Nor did we know who you were.

Wel. Yes, yes. Your father knew it.

Mrs. W. I don't know it to this very hour.

Pau. Oh ! If I were in twenty-five years to know Lewis as well as you know my father——

Wel. Paulina, I can explain no further ; but before Lewis can become my son-in-law, I must be convinced his conduct has always been as praiseworthy as since he lived with us. Go, Rosa, and call him. [*Exit Rosa.*

Mrs. W. Would you just to-day —— ?

Wel. Instantly, or I should not enjoy the pleasures of to-day.

Mrs. W. Go, then, Paulina, it is not proper that you should be present on this occasion.

Pau. Indeed, dear mother, if it were proper, I am sure I could not stay. [Exit.

Wel. Lewis is become dear to me by his honesty and diligence—perhaps still more so, by a certain similarity in our fortunes. If, therefore, I find every thing accordant to my wishes, and you have no objection——

Mrs. W. It would certainly be the best means of silencing the world.

Enter LEWIS.

Lew. I understand you want me.

Wel. Did Rosa tell you for what purpose?

Lew. No.

Mrs. W. The under-secretary dislikes you.

Lew. Natural enough. Because my verses are liked.

Wel. He insists upon knowing who you are.

Lew. That he will not learn.

Wel. Should the secretary unite with him——

Lew. And you cannot protect me, I will go.

Wel. Will that be so easy to you?

Lew. No. Very difficult.

Wel. You may avoid it.

Lew. How?

Wel. Tell us every thing respecting you.

Lew. I cannot.

Wel. You have lived with us two years; I have observed you narrowly, and am sure you are incapable of a crime. If you have been guilty of any juvenile indiscretion, avow it. You know my sentiments.

Lew. My conscience does not accuse me of a crime, or even levity; I am only unfortunate.

Mrs. W. We will assist you in sustaining your misfortunes.

Lew. I must sustain them alone; for if I confess them, I shall be acting against a sacred duty.

Wel. Enough! Let us drop the subject.

Mrs. W. Our intentions were good.

Lew. Oh, you have not confined yourselves to intentions. Your house was my asylum, and the small measure of enjoyment, of which my heart was susceptible, you have bestowed on me.

Wel. We would willingly double it, by reconciling you to your fate.

Lew. Let me then dwell in private as hitherto. Do not, do not rob me of the bliss I feel in calling you my parents.

Wel. I would not do it for my own sake, were I not compelled to it. When you entered my house, my daughters were still almost children, and we thought not that your presence would ever injure their reputation.

Lew. You alarm me.

Mrs. W. Do you now perceive why it was necessary we should speak to you?

Lew. Oh, God! yes.

Wel. If you be such a man as I have fancied you, I may at once declare, that not only the reputation, but the peace of a daughter depends on your departure.

Lew.—(After a pause.)—I will go.

Wel. I acted imprudently in having desired Paulina to consider you as her brother, and in having been silent, while her attachment increased.

Lew. Oh! I would fall at your feet, and say—“Consider not my poverty, but look at my heart, and let me marry your Paulina,” but—

Wel. You do not love her?

Lew. I love her from my soul.

Wel. And yet——?

Lew.—(After a pause.)—I am already married.

Mrs. W. Married!

Wel. And have forsaken your wife?

Lew. Condemn me not.

Mrs. W.—(Shaking her head.)—Such conduct,
Lewis——

Wel. Do not reproach him, Ann. If he be guilty, he bears a judge within himself, before whom he cannot be a hypocrite.

Lew. Oh! you will send me away far poorer than I was when I came, if my confession should rob me of your regard.

Wel. I do not decide upon it. Two years of upright conduct are to be placed in competition with this apparently bad action, and—I do not decide. But my duty, as a father, commands me seriously to repeat, that your presence disturbs the tranquillity of my family.

Lew. Shall I depart to-day—immediately?

Wel.—(After a moment's consideration.)—It will hurt me not to see you sitting to-night among my children—but—act as you think I have deserved.

[Exit.

Lew. Oh! Allow me to remain one hour.

Mrs. W. Yes, Lewis, he did not mean it in that light. Stay till morning.

Lew. I will creep into some corner, and not disturb your happiness.

Mrs. W. Oh that this should just happen to-day!

Lew. Let me but wander once more through the house and garden. When the guests come, I will steal away.

Mrs. W. Not without taking leave!

Lew. I cannot take leave of you.

Mrs. W. Lewis, do you think we wish to turn you out of doors like a dishonest servant? Despair

shall not force you to enlist again. I know my husband. He parts with you because he feels he *must*; but he will not abandon you—I will not abandon you. What he will do for you I don't know, but—*(Secretly draws from her pocket a small purse)*—for my part, my love and blessing shall be a substitute for what is wanting—in the amount.—*(Puts the purse into his hand, wipes her eyes, and exit hastily.)*

Lew.—*(After a pause, during which he mournfully surveys the purse.)*—Wretched outcast that I am! Have I at length found a mother, only to be doomed doubly to feel the loss of her? Have I gained a lovely girl's affections, only to make my chains the heavier?—*(He stands in an attitude of deep reflection and despondency.)*

Enter PAULINA.

Pau.—*(Softly steals behind him, and puts her hands upon his eyes.)*—Guess who it is.—*(Draws her hands back with sudden alarm, and looks at them.)*—What does this mean? Your eyes are full of tears.

Lew. You should not have seen them.

Pau. Why are you in tears?

Lew. They are the lot of humanity.

Pau. What is the matter? What has happened? What have you to do with my mother's purse?

Lew.—*(After a pause)*—It contains money to defray the expenses of my journey.

Pau.—*(Terrified.)*—Are you going to leave us?

Lew. I must.

Pau. Where are you going?

Lew. Any where. The farther the better.

Pau. Have you, then, staid too long with us?

Lew. Much too long.

Pau.—*(With a sigh.)*—I almost think so too.

Lew.—(*Gives her his hand.*)—You have ever been kind and affectionate towards me.

Pau.—(*With innocence and fervour.*)—And am so still.—(*Somewhat confused.*)—My father—wanted to speak to you.

Lew. He has spoken to me.

Pau. And does he approve of your intention?

Lew. I go by his desire.

Pau. Your answers are enigmas.

Lew. My whole being is an enigma, which death alone can solve. Farewell, Paulina—do not forget me. I have loved all this family—but you particularly. Wherever I go, your image will accompany me,—When you sit under the great lime-tree—think sometimes of me.

Pau. Lewis!

Lew. Remember me to the old woman, who used to receive your charities through me.

Pau.—(*Bursts into tears.*)—Lewis, what does this mean? If you love me—

Lew. My affection for you is a crime,—my heart is sinning against a hateful duty.

Pau. Oh! Speak more plainly, I beseech you.

Lew. Yes, good Paulina, you shall not learn from another what separates us. It is hard to tell you—but tell you I *must*, that—I am married.

Pau.—(*Almost shrieking.*)—Married! That is not true.

Lew. Would to God it were not!

Pau. Married! Oh, Lewis! Why did you conceal it?

Lew. Do not hate me.

Pau. Go, go to your wife, and tell her you have robbed Paulina of her peace for ever.—(*Covers her face with both hands, and rushes out.*)

Lew. Paulina! Is it thus you bid me farewell?—(*Strikes his forehead, and rests his head against the wall.*)

The Curtain falls.

ACT THE THIRD.

Scene, a Wood. Count Lohrstein is discovered in the back-ground, sleeping under a tree—at his head lies a casket. Francis and Jacob are in conversation towards the front of the stage.

Fra. He is asleep. What think you, Jacob? Do you chuse to follow him through woods and bogs any longer? It is a strange kind of inclination, methinks.

Jac.—(*Scratching his head.*)—Not exactly inclination.

Fra. Why, a dog leads a better life.

Jac. But our master himself fares no better.

Fra. The cook was the wisest of us, for he ran away when he had only travelled one stage.

Jac. The Count smiled at that: but last night when his valet disappeared, on whom he placed such firm reliance——

Fra. Yes, yes—no doubt he took some valuable effects with him, my advice is, Jacob, that we do the same.

Jac. What! leave the old gentleman quite alone!

Fra. Why, he must dismiss us in a day or two, for how can he support us?

Jac. That's true, to be sure.

Fra. And how long shall we be able to endure such a life as this? We have passed six nights in the open air. If we espy a chimney, we leave it a quarter of a mile on one side. We buy our coarse bread at solitary shepherds' huts, and have nothing to drink but water from the springs we meet with.

Jac. But we have known better days in his service.

Fra. Was it our fault that there was an end to those days? Who knows what crime he has committed? The prince would scarcely send hussars in pursuit of him for nothing.

Jac. Damn those fellows! They nearly caught us once or twice.

Fra. And if they should catch us, we may perhaps be doomed to keep our master company in prison.

Jac. But we must be near the borders now.

Fra. Well—can't the hussars ride over the borders?—Besides, we are now in a worse situation than ever. Our horses are so tired that we shall be obliged to leave them, and if we be seen creeping through the thickets, we may be mistaken for robbers, and shot.

Jac. Hang it, Francis, you frighten me.

Fra. Therefore, I say, let us be off before he awakes.—Believe me, we shall be doing him a kindness.

Jac. If I thought so—

Fra. He won't dismiss us, and he can't pay us. But if when he awakes, he finds we have decamped, he'll be heartily glad to have got rid of us.

Jac.—(*Casting a glance towards the Count.*)—See! He begins to move.

Fra. Let us lose no more time. Does he owe you any wages?

Jac. Yes, for a couple of months.

Fra. And me for a quarter of a year. We can't afford to make him a present of that. In the casket, there, he has several trinkets, rings, and so forth.

Jac. Surely you would not take them?

Fra. Blockhead! Why not?

Jac. What! Rob him?

Fra. Doesn't he owe us money?

Jac. But not so much.

Fra. Pshaw! Who knows what the baubles are worth? We can sell them at the first place we come to, and if they produce more than is due to us, we can send it to him by some means or other.

Jac. Why yes, if that can be done—

Fra. Follow that foot-path. I'll be with you in a minute.

Jac. Good old master! I pity him, nevertheless.

[*Exit.*

Fra.—(*Walks gently to the Count, takes the casket, and then returns on tip-toe. When arrived at some yards distance, he bows sarcastically.*)—Good-bye to your excellency! Your Lordship will now not be overburdened.

[*Exit.*

Loh.—(*Tormented by frightful dreams.*)—Oh! not into this subterraneous dungeon.—Give me air!—Give me air!—(*Awakes.*)—Where am I?—(*Raises himself.*)—Heaven be praised, not yet in the hands of my persecutors,—not yet in the hands of the most abandoned of women. Alas! my sleep has not refreshed me.—The rain has drenched my clothes.—I must hasten towards the borders, that I may at least find a roof under which I may die.—(*Raises himself with difficulty.*)—Perhaps my people have, meanwhile, discovered a safe path.—(*Calls.*)—Francis! Jacob! The honest fellows are endeavouring to find the shortest road through the thickets.—Francis! Jacob!—Yet I ordered them not to go far.—Where can they be? My strength is exhausted, and I am no longer able to call.—(*Exerting himself.*)—Francis! Jacob!—What can this mean?—No answer!—Can they—impossible!—(*Draws out a whistle, gives a signal towards different quarters, and listens for a reply.*)—Not yet?—Can they too have forsaken me?—Must I then despair of finding honesty among mankind?—(*His casket suddenly occurs to him—he looks at the place where it lay, and strikes his forehead.*)—Yes.—'Tis true.—Forsaken and rob-

bed!—They have deprived me of my last resource.—(*Rivets his eyes on the earth — a pause.*)—Here do I stand—I, who but ten days ago, possessed half a million---and have not now a morsel of bread to share with my dog.---(*Looks hastily round.*)---Sultan! Sultan!—Alas! My dog too has forsaken me.---(*A pause of dreadful anguish.*)—God protect me from insanity! I'll tear a bough from yonder tree, and wander through the wood.---If I hunger, I must gnaw the bark from my staff.—Yes, they have plundered me, and stolen from my heart all confidence in God or man.---(*Feels his pockets.*)---Nothing, nothing have they left me.---(*Stops suddenly.*)---But, yes---they have.---(*Draws forth a pistol.*)---Thee I still possess.---Welcome, thou friend in need, thou last resource of a despairing man!---(*A pause.*)---Answer me, Philosophy, thou sweet companion of my better days, thou phantom of my brain---I am now in earnest---Answer me. May that man who has been hurled from the pinnacle of greatness into the gulph of misery, who has been sold by a faithless wife, and whom each step conducts to an eternal prison---may that man, who has no child, no friend, no hope---(*Puts the pistol to his forehead.*)---

Enter DALNER.

Dal.---(*As he is passing, hears part of the above soliloquy, rushes towards the Count, and wrenches the pistol from his hand.*)---Hold!---Zounds! That must not be.---An old man, too! How short a time will it be ere Death of his own accord will summon you?

Loh. Oh that he would!

Dal. This trigger is soon pulled, but how do you expect to be received above?---Understood?

Loh. Oh, my friend! Your intentions are, doubtless, good, but a man in despair has no ear for your cool precepts.

Dal. Why, you are right there, to be sure. But can I help you, eh?---

Loh. I am a wretched fugitive, pursued by enemies, and forsaken by every friend!

Dal. Indeed!--I could ask why, but there is no time for that, just now. If, therefore, I can be of any use to you, I will with all my heart.

Loh. Are we far from the borders?

Dal. A hundred yards, perhaps.

Loh. Oh, tell me, instantly---to the right or left?

Dal. Where you see a little bridge over the stream, yonder. But which way are you going?

Loh. Any way. I only wish to find a hovel or barn where I can rest till morning, for I have slept six nights beneath the canopy of heaven.

Dal. Do you suppose, then, we have no beds?

Loh. I have been robbed, and can only pay with gratitude.

Dal. I'll take you to a house, where that coin is always current. At night you shall return home with me, but at present we'll go to a cottage hard by, for you seem in want of refreshment.

Loh. Generous man! who are you?

Dal. Henry Dalner, Chief Forester of this district---but that's of no consequence.---Understood?---I'll take you to an old farmer, who is celebrating his twenty-sixth wedding-day.

Loh.---(*Uneasy.*)---I wish we were beyond the borders.

Dal. Farmer Welling lives just on the other side of them. Oh! there comes his son, who will soon be *my* son too.---Understood?

Enter FREDERICK.

Fre. Well, father, where is Louisa?

Dal. She is staying to nurse her old aunt, and can't come till evening.

Fre. But cou'dn't the maid have nursed the old aunt?

Dal. That old aunt acted as a mother to Louisa, and never entrusted her education to the maid.

Fre. I came in such spirits to meet you.

Dal. Well---you shall not have come in vain, for though you don't find Louisa, you find an opportunity of doing good. Here is a poor man whom I have promised to take with me, and I hope you will receive my guest kindly.

Fre. Of course. If he be unfortunate he needs no recommendation.

Dal. Look in good humour, then.

Fre. How can I, when Louisa is not here?---(*To the Count.*)---Don't mind my countenance, Sir. At night, when Louisa is with me, you'll see me in spirits.

Dal. Come, then---

I.oh.---(*Exhausted.*)---Good man, lend me your stick.

Dal. Pshaw! As long as I have an arm, why should I lend my stick?—Understood? [*Exeunt.*]

Scene, Welling's House.

Mrs. WELLING is discovered at Needle-Work. WELLING leads LEWIS into the Room.

Wel. I have brought a man, whom I surprised, as he was endeavouring to escape through the back door, without having taken leave.

Mrs. W. Indeed! Would he not even accept this linen which I have been selecting for him?

Lew. You have already given me so much—

Mrs. W. Pshaw, Lewis!

Lew. And my father has been so generous—

Wel. Silence! I did not bring you hither to hear myself praised.

Lew. Oh! how painful do I find it to bid you farewell!—I had rather forsake the world than this house.

Wel. We are travellers, whose journey has hitherto been the same way; but we have now reached the cross road, and must part.

Lew. Adieu, then, father—Adieu, good mother. Wherever my road may conduct me, it will never lead to ingratitude.—Words fail me at this bitter hour—God sees my heart—and you, my tears.

Wel.—(*Much affected.*)—A father's benediction be upon thee, youth! May'st thou, like me, at length enjoy the blessings of affection, industry and health, and thank Providence for having, by early sufferings, enhanced the value of thy later bliss.

Mrs. W. Let us often hear where you are, and how you do.

Wel. And, Lewis, if you should ever be in want of any thing—I have your promise?

Lew. You have taught me to work.

Mrs. W. But you may fall sick.

Lew.—(*With a look towards Heaven, expressive of his wishes.*)—And I may die.

Mrs. W. You break my heart.

Wel. Go, my son. It is time that we should part.
(*Lewis is going.*)

Mrs. W.—(*Follows and embraces him.*)—Alas! It was thus I felt when my eldest boy died—His name was Lewis, too—I have lost him—who knows whether I shall ever see you again?

Wel. Let him go, good Ann. He has enough to bear.

Lew.—(*Scarcely able to speak.*)—Father, grant me my last request.

Wel. Willingly, my son.

Lew. Allow me to see Paulina once again.

Wel. Would you add to the horrors of the separation?

Lew. Oh, allow me to see her once again.

Wel.—(To *Mrs. W.*)—Where is she?

Mrs. W. In her own room.

Wel. Let her come.

Mrs. W.—(Goes to the door and opens it.)—Paulina! Lewis is here, and wishes to bid you farewell.

Enter PAULINA.

(Her eyes are red with weeping—She gives LEWIS her hand.—They stand opposite each other silent and trembling. A long pause.)

Wel.—(With great emotion.)—Embrace each other, children.

(Lewis and Paulina embrace. Paulina walks sobbing to her chamber, and Lewis rushes out.)—

Mrs. W.—(Following him.)—Lewis—the linen!

[Exit.

Wel. Short-sighted mortals! Thus you often do harm while striving to do good. Had I left this poor youth to his fate, perhaps, ere now, some cannon-ball might have swept him from the world. He would then have been happy.—Well, be this as it may, I will not cease to do what conviction tells me is right.

Enter ROSA.

Ros. Father, Lewis is gone.

Wel. I know it.

Ros. I heard him sob, as he disappeared behind the hedge.

Wel. God be with him!

Ros. My mother is in tears.

Wel. Go, and console her.

Ros. I shall only weep with her.

Wel. Go, then, to your sister.

Ros. Father, you are, in general, so good—tell me—why may not Paulina marry him?

Wel. Because he is already married.

Ros. Already married!—Then, she must submit to her fate.

Wel. She will, I am sure.

Ros. And is that the only reason why Lewis is obliged to leave us?

Wel. It is.

Ros. Not because he is poor?

Wel. By no means.

Ros.—(*Timidly advancing towards her object.*)—You would have let him marry Paulina, in spite of his poverty?

Wel. I would.

Ros. And if I were—to like a man—who was not married—but poor—

Wel. If he were honest and industrious—

Ros.—(*Eagerly.*)—That he is.

Wel. Who?

Ros.—(*Much confused.*)—I mean—but you are not angry, dear father?

Wel. At what?

Ros. I would have told you it sooner—but I only knew it myself an hour or two ago.

Wel. What?

Ros. That I—that I love Mr. Rehberg.

Wel. Indeed! And how did you learn it?

Ros. He asked me about it.

Wel. And you, with your usual frankness—

Ros. I referred him to you.

Wel. He has not mentioned the subject to me.

Ros. Oh, he durst not. You frightened him.

Wel. I!

Ros. You railed against the poverty of professional men.

Wel. Hence, then, the sensibility which I remarked.

Ros. But I am certain he misunderstood you. Honesty and industry are all the qualifications my father requires.

Wel. But as I told him, the industry of a professional man will not always support a family. You are but sixteen years of age, and can wait.

Ros. For Rehberg!

Wel. Why not? If in a few years he should obtain a moderate living, and his sentiments, as well as yours, remain the same—

Ros. Oh! There is no doubt of that.

Wel. Why, then, we can talk further on the subject.

Ros. But what shall I say to him now?

Wel. Nothing.

Ros. But he is walking so sorrowfully in the garden—

Wel. Go, then, and send him hither.

Ros.—(*Stroking his cheek.*)—Dear father!

Wel. What now?

Ros. Talk kindly to him.

Wel. I almost think I see a tear in your eye.

Ros. I love him so sincerely. [*Exit.*]

Wel.—(*Alone.*)—Rehberg is a sensible man, and that is all I know of him.—But who can decide whether poverty or affection be the mother of his wishes?—Wretched indeed would be my Rosa, if she borrowed charms from her father's coffers.

Enter REHBERG.

Reh.—(*With reserve.*)—Rosa has just informed me—

Wel.—(*Half joking, half in earnest.*)—My dear Sir, she has told you many things too soon, and I must own I had rather have heard from *you*, what she has just confessed to me.

Reh. Appearances are against me.

Wel. Yet good news is welcome from any one.

Reh. How happy should I be, if I could think you serious!—

Wel. Can I make a joke of my daughter's happiness? When I tell you that I have observed qualities in you which claim my respect, I speak the truth.

Reh. The respect of a worthy man satisfies my ambition, but not my heart.

Wel.—(After a pause.)—Our relative situations give me a right to be candid with you.

Reh. I shall evade no question you shall please to ask.

Wel. You have enemies.

Reh. That is a compliment to me.

Wel. How so?

Reh. He who injures no one, and yet has enemies, cannot be a common kind of man.

Wel. The secretary's house is not in the best repute, and you are often at it.

Reh. Because I give lessons in music there, as well as here.

Wel. It is said you admire one of his daughters.

Reh. I have heard as much.

Wel. And do not cease your visits?

Reh. No. Because there no regard is paid to so absurd a report, and I myself cannot afford to renounce the profits of my attendance.

Wel. Why not?—Forgive me if I seem too forward.—You are a single man.—

Reh. I have a poor mother.—(A pause.)

Wel. But it is said you play—and play for large sums.

Reh. To this assertion I shall answer with a mere negative.

Wel. You do not play?

Reh. I have once or twice taken the cards of another, when called away—I myself never play.

Wel. You had, as I am told, a good library?

Reh. I had.

Wel. You sold it?

Reh.—(*With a sigh.*)—I did.

Wel. I have heard that the money you obtained for it was lost at the secretary's card-table.

Reh. That is an infamous falsehood.

Wel. I guess—your poor mother—

Reh.—(*Confused.*)—No.—(*After a pause.*)—'Tis well. I will not conceal from you even this circumstance, but I beg you to believe that nothing except my present situation should induce me to disclose it. I am of low origin, and my father was seized with the pious whim of making me a clergyman, without being able to bestow any thing on my education. My humble talents, however, procured me a patron, who was in easy circumstances, and who defrayed the expences of my studies. To him I was obliged for every thing; and the library, you have mentioned, was his present. About a year ago, this worthy man was plundered by the French, and obliged in his age to become a beggar. It was then I sold my books.

Wel. And sent him the money?

Reh. I could do no more for him.

Wel. I know enough, and as you are not satisfied with my respect—(*Offers his hand.*)—accept my admiration—regard—affection—

Reh.—(*With warmth.*)—Will you be my father?

Wel. Good Rehberg! You consider not what weighty duties already rest on you. A poor mother—a poor benefactor—and a wife too—children—or do you calculate on my daughter's fortune?

Reh. No.

Wel. Perhaps you have prospects at our vicar's death?

Reh. None.—I had prospects elsewhere, but within an hour my hopes from that quarter have been

destroyed, and had I sooner received the intelligence, I would have been silent.

Wel. Explain yourself.

Reh. I had succeeded in interesting some men of consequence for me at the neighbouring court.

Wel.—(*Starts.*)—At the neighbouring court.

Reh. A pamphlet, in which at least my patriotic zeal was evident, excited the attention of the minister.

Wel.—(*Confused and agitated.*)—The minister! Oh, I know him.

Reh. He is a man of great influence—

Wel. Certainly.

Reh. He has large estates—

Wel. True—he has—confiscated estates—

Reh. Among others, the living of Birkendorf is in his gift.

Wel.—(*Aside.*)—Birkendorf! Oh, God!

Reh. This living was described to me as a very profitable one, and the place as pleasant and retired.

Wel.—(*Suppressing his agitation.*)—Oh! 'tis a sweet place—I was once there.—Well? You received a promise—?

Reh. I was almost certain of success.

Wel. And were, nevertheless, disappointed? By what means?

Reh. Of that I am ignorant. A letter, which I received about an hour ago, briefly states that unexpected circumstances have taken place, which deprive me of all hope at present.

Wel. I am sorry, good Rehberg, I am sorry that I cannot make you vicar of Birkendorf, but it really is not in my power.

Reh.—(*Somewhat surprised.*)—That I know.

Wel. Yet—if you have resolution enough to wait—you shall have Rosa.

Reh.—(*Enraptured.*)—Thanks, dearest Sir! I

care not how rough the path, if *she* be the object to which it leads.

Wel. I should have liked to have visited you at Birkendorf very much---oh, very much.

Enter Mrs. WELLING.

Mrs. W. Dear William, our neighbour Dalner is bringing another guest with him.

Wel. Whom?

Mrs. W. Frederick says he found him in the wood.

Wel. I don't like strangers.

Mrs. W. A poor man in distress—

Wel. Then he is welcome. I should ill deserve my present happiness, were I, on such a day as this, to send a fellow-creature in distress from my door.

Mrs. W. Poor Lewis!

Wel. We have lost a son in him---but here stands a man who will supply his place.

Mrs. W.---(*With formal civility.*)---Indeed!

Wel. Come, come, Ann. I have proved him, and will be surety for him.

Mrs. W. You!

Wel. The reports you heard are false.

Mrs. W. I am glad they are.

Wel. Pshaw, wife! you don't speak from your heart.

Mrs. W.---(*With warmth.*)---Indeed I am glad.

Wel. He is a good son, and a grateful man.

Reh.---(*With diffidence.*)---Dear Mr. Welling!

Wel. You know, Ann, that I only give this title to those who remain so longer than the kindness itself endures, and whose gratitude is not like a crayon picture, which every year loses a portion of its colours. Such men are rare, and he is one of them.

Mrs. W. I am ashamed of having done him an injustice.

Wel. Receive him, then, as your future son-in-law.

Mrs. W. With all my heart!---(*Gives her hand to Rehberg.*)

Wel. That is, as soon as he obtains a living, which will banish all cares for subsistence. Instil this idea into Rosa's mind, and tell her to be patient.

Mrs. W. But, my dear husband, why delay their happiness? With our fortune—

Wel. You know my sentiments. A good wife is so great a treasure, that I am not at all surprised when I read of countries, where the parents receive money from the bridegroom, when they bestow a daughter on him. A girl ought to have no dowry but beauty and virtue. Thus thought your father-- thus think I.—

Reh. Who would not think such a dowry sufficient?

Enter Mr. DALNER, COUNT LOHRSTEIN, and FREDERICK.

Fre. Father, Louisa is not come.

Dal. With your permission, neighbour, I'll introduce a stranger.—(*Welling gazes full at the Count.*)

Loh. Encouraged by this worthy man, I have ventured to intrude upon you.—(*Welling, without making any reply, surveys him with close attention.*)

Mrs. W. You are sincerely welcome.

Loh. If misfortunes give me any claim on your compassion—

Dal.—(*Whispering to Welling, who stands like a statue.*)—Speak a kind word or two. He is a poor fellow, whom fate seems to have dealt hardly by. I found him in the wood, just when he was going—(*Imitates the action of holding the pistol to his head.*)—Understood?

Wel.—(*Recovering.*)---I---Sir---I rejoice---consider

my house as your own—and, if you are in search of an asylum---you have found it.

Loh. I thank you. That is the first word of consolation I have heard after six days of horror. Am I over the borders, here?

Wel.—(*Always agitated.*)---You are.

Loh. In safety, then?

Wel. Perfectly.

Loh. And if my pursuers were even to force their way hither——

Wel. Here dwells no traitor.

Loh. Your hand, honest old man!—(*Welling gives it.*)---The trembling of it might make me suspicious——

Dal. Never fear, Sir. This man's promise, with a shake of the hand, is as safe as a bond with a dozen seals to it.

Wel.---(*In a broken voice.*)---My wife—and my children---will take care—that you want nothing. I myself--forgive me—I must leave you for a few moments.

Mrs. W.---(*Alarmed.*)---What is the matter, dear William?

Dal. Neighbour, you grow pale.

Wel. I am not well.---(*Frederick and Mrs. W. run to him.*)

Fre. Father!

Mrs. W. For Heaven's sake——

Wel. Let me go---It will soon be over---I'll step into my chamber—stay—stay—I wish to be alone.—(*Reels a few steps—then supports himself on a chair, which stands near him.*)---I cannot---Frederick—assist me.—(*Frederick runs and conducts him to the chamber.*)

Mrs. W. Heavens! What is this?

Dal. A serious accident.—(*To Rehberg.*)---Something like an apoplectic fit.—(*Welling having reached*

the door, is unable any longer to keep his feet, and sinks into the arms of his son.)

Mrs. W.—(Shrieks.)---He is dying! He is dying—(Dalner and Rehberg hasten to his assistance.)

Reh. Heaven forbid!

Dal. Put him to bed directly.—(They carry him in.)

Loh.—(Alone.)---Of all my followers none has remained with me but misery. Am I then doomed to bring sorrow into this peaceful hut too?

Mrs. W.—(Rushes from her chamber.)---Paulina! Rosa! Your father---(Runs back.)

Pau.—(Without.)---What is the matter?

Fre.—(Meeting her.)---My father is ill. We must send for a surgeon directly.---(Runs out.)

Pau.—(Without paying any attention to the stranger.)---Heavens! So suddenly!---(Runs into the chamber.)

Ros.—(Without.)---My father! My father!---(Rushes shrieking across the stage into the chamber.)

Fre.—(Returning---as he crosses the stage.)---Oh, God! Help! Help!---(Runs in.)

Loh.—(Alone.)---Oh, that I could die thus! Oh, that I had children, who thus loved me!

Mrs. W.—(With Paulina.)---There's the key---in the little cupboard---on the right---a brown vial---or on the left---or right---oh, I don't know.—(Returns.)

[Paulina runs out.]

Loh.—(Alone, and deeply moved.)---I thank thee, God! I still can feel for others' woes.

(Paulina crosses the stage with the vial in her hand, and sobbing violently.)

Loh.—(Alone.)---What was my rank---my splendid station? What has my life been, compared with this man's death?

Dal.—(Gently pushing Mrs. Welling and her Daughters out of the chamber.)---Pshaw! Your groans and cries only make the evil the greater.

Pray stay here. Nothing shall be neglected.—
(Returns.)

Mrs. W.—(Transported beyond herself.)---Heavens! After living twenty-five years with him, must I leave him at his dying hour?

Pau. Mother, he will not die.

Ros. Oh, no, no! He will not die.

Mrs. W. Let me go to fulfil my duty. When you were born, Paulina, and I was dangerously ill, your father never left my side. Shall I then leave him in the hands of strangers?

Reh.—(Opens the door.)---Be quiet. He recovers.

Ros. Did you hear that, mother? He recovers.

Pau.—(Falling on Mrs. Welling's neck.)---Mother! Mother! Rejoice! Heaven will restore him to us.

Mrs. W. Is it, then, true? Oh, yes! It must be true. God will not separate two such loving hearts. Come, children, kneel, and pray with me for your father's recovery.---(Sinks on her knees. Paulina and Rosa kneel on each side of her. All raise their hands towards Heaven, and pray.)

Fre.—(From the chamber.)---Joy! Mother! My father is come to himself again.

Mrs. W.—(Stretches her arms towards him---he raises her.)---Frederick, I thought I had blessed you as far as I was able---I was mistaken---Heaven bless you a thousand times for this intelligence!

Pau.—(Hanging on him.)---Are you sure of it, brother?

Ros.—(The same.)---Is all the danger over?

Fre. I believe it is. He can stand again. He is only rather weak, and has just drank a glass of wine.

Mrs. W. May I, then, go to him?---(In a tone of entreaty.)---Yes, yes. Let me go to him.

Fre. Good mother, this has affected you very much. Come! I'll support you.

Mrs. W. I have him again. Oh, God! Forgive

me---as yet I cannot thank you.—(*Goes slowly towards the chamber, supported by Frederick. The door opens.*)

Fre. See! There he is!

(*Welling appears at the door, leaning on Dalner and Rehberg.*)

Mrs. W.—(*Flies into his arms.*)---My husband!

(*The three children kneel around him, the Count stands in a corner, and casts a look of bitter sorrow towards the group. The curtain falls.*)

ACT THE FOURTH.

Welling is discovered, sitting in the middle of the stage, surrounded by his Wife and Children. On each side of him stand Dalner and Rehberg—the Count is more towards the front.

Wel. Good Ann, be at ease. It is past.

Mrs. W. Let somebody bring your bed-gown?

Pau. I'll go for it.

Ros. I'll fetch your slippers.

Wel. Will you, then, make me ill by compulsion? I tell you I am well. Give me a glass of wine. That is all I want.—(*Mrs. Welling and her daughters run to the door.*)

Wel. Hold! You need not all go for it.

Pau. I was the first.

Ros. No—I was.

Pau. No—I was.

Mrs. W. And I am your mother. Where are the keys?

Wel. You know, Ann, I don't like you any longer to fatigue yourself by going into the cellar.

Pau. There—you hear, mother—I am to go.

Ros. No, it is my week.

Pau. You have nothing to do with the cellar. Your week only relates to the kitchen.

Ros. But I love my father as much as you do.

Wel. Children, at this rate, I shall not have any thing. I love you both. Go, both of you.—(*They run out.*)

Dal. Neighbour, I think what is passing round you must revive you more than wine.—Understood?

Wel. True. If there be any medicine, which can promote long life, it must be affection.

*Re-enter PAULINA and ROSA, the one with a bottle
—the other with a silver goblet.*

Pau. Number 4.

Ros. With a black seal.

Pau. There is Hochheim upon it.

Ros. And 1776.

Wel.—(*Drinks.*)—Fill it again.—(*Rosa obeys—he turns to the Count.*)—Sir, I am sorry that, added to your own misfortunes, you have been obliged to witness the distress of others.—(*Raises the goblet.*)—According to the ancient custom of our country I sincerely bid you welcome.

(*Paulina takes the goblet and delivers it to the Count with a curtsey.*)

Loh.—(*Empties it.*)—To the health of my worthy host!—Now, Sir, if you really remain true to the customs of our forefathers, I am secure in your house, for we have drank from the same goblet.

Wel. Here lurks no traitor.

Dal. Spies gain nothing here.

Fre. But a drubbing.

Reh. And contempt.

Mrs. W. If you be weary, Sir, I'll conduct you to a retired chamber.

Pau. You shall sleep on linen, which we wove ourselves.

Ros. And feathers of our own geese.

Loh. Heaven be praised that I again find myself among human beings! All I see and hear inspires confidence. I should like, good old man, to have a little private conversation with you.

Wel. With all my heart! My friends and children, you will find employment enough, by going into the court, and assisting in the preparation for our little country seat.

Dal. I sent you a few small trees for the purpose, from the forest.

Pau. And I made the garlands for them.

[*Exeunt Dalner and Paulina.*]

Ros. Mr. Rehberg will teach us a chorus, in the mean time.

Reh. With all my heart.

[*Exeunt Rosa and Rehberg.*]

Fre. I can't sing, but I can join with my violin.

[*Exit.*]

Mrs. W. You'll not be long before you follow us?

Wel. As soon as possible. [*Exit Mrs. Welling.*]

Loh. Generous man, it is my duty to make a discovery of my rank and situation to you, that you may know you are not harbouring a criminal.

Wel. Of a crime I hold Count Lohrstein to be incapable.

Loh.—(*Alarmed.*)—How! You know me.

Wel.—(*Stedfastly.*)—Yes, Count. Business has sometimes carried me to your prince's residence, where I have seen you.

Loh. Then you are probably not ignorant what rank and honours I possessed but a few days since?

Wel. You were your prince's all-powerful minister.

Loh. In reality, an office but ill adapted to my in-

clination. Aas! There was a time, when domestic felicity in the arms of my first consort left me no other wish.—She died.—I forsook my solitary rural dwelling, rushed into the whirlpool of the city to dissipate my grief and to seek another affectionate partner; instead of which I found a deceitful and ambitious woman, who from an admirer of a country life transformed me into a courtier, and used me as the tool of her designs.

Wel. I know the Countess too.

Loh. By situations for ever new and intricate she kept me remote from nature and affection. By inexhaustible intrigues and plots she, for a train of years, bound to our house the favour of the court, till the old prince, feeling the approach of death—

Wel.—(*In involuntary agitation.*)—He died—

Loh. Some months previous to his dissolution, my wife, in combination with an abandoned daughter-in-law, engendered new designs. She knew the hereditary prince disliked me, and that his father's death would be followed by my dismissal; but she also knew the connection which subsisted between the young prince and my daughter-in-law. With her, therefore, she began to cabal, finding she could no longer maintain her station by her own devices. These two furies suppressed the hatred which had subsisted for years, and the snakes that curled upon their heads were intertwined.—(*Overpowered with agony.*)—Oh!

Wel. It is to your praise, my Lord, that you were not invited to share in this coalition.

Loh. I was. I had been persuaded to so many things—had so often despotically forced my heart to silence, that, on this occasion too, they thought their game an easy one. Yet although I had breathed none but court-air for seven-and-twenty years, I would not cringe to a woman, who had plunged my son into misery, and branded my name

with infamy. I was not even able to suppress some severe remarks occasioned by the abandoned life of my daughter-in-law. She thirsted for revenge, and my wife prudently took the stronger side. The prince died—

Wel.—(*With an involuntary sigh.*)—He was a good man, and not formed for the intrigues of a court.

Loh.—(*Astonished.*)—Your opinion is just. How happens it that you—

Wel.—(*Interrupting him.*)—It was not exactly my opinion. Proceed, my Lord.

Loh. I was prepared to receive my dismissal, but not to give account of every weakness, which might be laid to my charge during the twenty-seven years of my administration—of every injustice, perhaps, to which, at the pressing instigation of my wife and her adherents, I had now and then been led. I was not prepared against proofs, which my wife had stolen from my cabinet, and lodged in the hands of my enemies.—Her reward was the permission to remain at court, and wander like the spectre of her former greatness, while I am doomed to perpetual imprisonment.

Wel. Which you escaped by flight?

Loh. Forsaken by all who had been obliged to me for their situations, I was apprized of the impending danger by an old man, for whom I had done nothing—whom I had always considered as a cypher. Heaven's blessings be shed on honest Zahn!

Wel.—(*Starts.*)—Zahn!

Loh. At the peril of losing his scanty subsistence, he forced his way at midnight to my chamber. "My Lord," said he, "I am under no obligation to you, and I do not like you; but you are about to be ill-treated. Fly, or at break of day you will be imprisoned in the castle."

Wel.—(*Aside.*)—Such conduct is what I should expect of honest Zahn.

Loh. I fled,—and was pursued with such alacrity and fury as none but female vengeance could devise. Twice have I been surrounded by hussars. My escape was almost a miracle, and who knows whether even here—

Wel. Be at ease, my Lord. No force shall intrude upon you here. You are on the borders of a just prince, and in the house of a man who honours hospitality.

Loh. You engage I am secure?

Wel. I do.

Loh. And will you allow me to remain with you, till a trusty friend, informed of my situation, can assist me in proceeding farther?

Wel. As long as you please.

Loh. For I must confess to you that my sudden flight allowed me to rescue but little, and even this little has been stolen by people on whose fidelity I relied.

Wel. Comand my purse.

Loh. Good man, you carry your generosity too far.

Wel. Not so, my Lord. I merely pay an old debt.

Loh. To me!

Wel. I too was once a wretched fugitive, and therefore consider every unfortunate man as a creditor sent by Heaven.

Enter Mrs. WELLING.

Mrs. W. Dear William, I beg pardon for disturbing you, but the people below are talking about soldiers.

Loh.—(*Alarmed.*)—Soldiers!

Mrs. W. They are listening and looking among the thickets in the wood—they certainly are on no good errand.

Wel. Who can know that? for we live peaceably? They are, perhaps, looking for strawberries.

Enter PAULINA.

Pau. Father, there are hussars belonging to the neighbouring prince in the village.

Loh. Oh, God!

Wel. Well, what is that to us?

Pau. They go from house to house, and break open every room that is locked, like robbers.

Wel. Then they must be taken into custody like robbers.

Pau. They are in search of somebody.

Wel. They have no right to search here.

Enter ROSA.

Ros. Father, there are hussars at the gate.

Wel. Let the gate be locked.

Ros. They have been asking our men whether there was not a stranger in the house.

Wel. And what answer was returned?

Ros. As you had not forbidden it, the men told the truth.

Wel. The truth is never forbidden in my house.

Loh. I am lost.

Wel. Be at ease. I am surety for your safety.

Enter REHBERG.

Reh. The whole court is full of hussars.

Wel. My dear Ann, these people have had a great deal of trouble to no purpose. Give them a little beer.

Reh. They insist with violence on your delivering up a prisoner.

Wel. They will be more civil when they learn my determination.

Reh. They threaten.

Wel. How many of them are there ?

Reh. About twenty.

Wel. Then their threats are ridiculous.

Loh. Oh, rather deliver me into their hands. Shall I plunge you too, worthy man, and your whole family into ruin.

Wel. My Lord, I have pledged to you my word that you are in safety. I will abide by it.

Enter DALNER.

Dal. The devil has let loose a set of rascals, who act as if they were in an enemy's country.

Wel. Paulina, send some one by the back way into the village, and ask a dozen young fellows to come hither. [*Exit. Pau.*

Loh. How! Would you oppose them?

Wel. Be patient. We shall not be obliged to have recourse to extremities.

Dal. Hark ye, Rosa. Send a man to my house with orders that all the foresters come hither directly with their guns and hangers. Do you hear? [*Exit Ros.*

Loh. Oh, Sir! Return me the friend of whom you robbed me in the wood,

Dal. Be quiet. Not a hair of your head shall be touched, by God.—Understood?

Fre.—(*Without.*)—Back!

Bra.—(*The same*)—Out of my way, boy!

Fre. This is not a pot-house.

Wel. Let him come my son.

Enter FREDERICK and BRAVE.

Bra.—(*Sees the Count.*)—Ha! Ha! Have I found you at last? Follow me my Lord, without opposition.

Loh. Sir, the person, in whose hands you are an instrument——

Bra. I am not an instrument, but a servant of my prince. Come with me instantly. The carriagewaits.

Dal.—(*Suppressing his anger.*)—But you must know, Sir, that in this country it is not usual for people to break into a house, like a hawk into a nest.—Understood?—You must know, Sir, that we understand a little law, if you do not.

Fre.—(*Attacking him on the other side.*)—And you must know that the carriage may perhaps wait some time.

Mrs. W.—(*Pulling him away.*)—Frederick!

Bra. Who are you, and what do you mean?

Dal. We are people who belong to this place.—Understood?

Fre. Yes, and the word of command is—To the right about face, and march home again.

Mrs. W.—(*Pulling him away.*)—Frederick! Frederick!

Bra. What! dare you attempt, by abusive language——

Wel. Hold! hold! Your pardon, Sir. My friend and son are rather incensed at the illegal way in which you have entered this house.

Bra. Illegal! How do you know that?

Wel. How! I am the master of this house, and know my privileges.

Bra. I want nothing of you.

Wel. But you want to take away one, who is enjoying the rights of hospitality here. You want to do it by compulsion.

Bra. I hope you will be rational, and not oblige me to do so.

Wel. I beg you will produce your orders.

Bra. My orders? I don't know that I am answerable to you for my conduct—but that is of no consequence. Here are my orders.

Wel.—(*Opens the paper.*)—You are surely joking, lieutenant. These orders are not from *my* prince.

Bra. But they are from mine.

Wel. To whom I owe no obedience.

Bra. But I do, and by my soul I have neglected it too long.

Wel. I do not perceive one syllable in these orders which justifies you in disturbing the dominions of a neighbouring monarch.

Bra. Enough! I know how far I dare proceed.

Wel. Has your prince commanded this?

Bra. I am not bound to answer that question.

Wel. And will *mine* submit to it?

Bra. With that I have nothing to do. In a word, the Count will please to come with me.

Wel. In a word, lieutenant, he shall not.

Bra.—(*Starts.*)—Shall not!

Wel.—(*Emphatically.*)—No.

Bra. Sir, I advise you to retract this declaration, or it will be the cause of bloodshed.

Enter PAULINA.

Pau. Father, there are not twelve, but forty of the villagers assembled in the court, and armed with forks.

Wel. Do you hear, lieutenant?

Bra. We are not afraid of such rabble.

Enter ROSA.

Ros. Mr. Dalner, the foresters are running down the hill.

Dal. These, Sir, are my lads, armed with guns and hangers—marksmen, Sir, who can hit a button.—Understood?

Bra. You surely do not mean to oppose my

orders. Beware what you do. The Count is a criminal.

Loh. That am I not.

Wel. Lieutenant, you and I are no longer young. Let us have a little conversation together, in private. Strange will it be, if men like us cannot part with each other on friendly terms.

Bra. With all my heart.

Wel. My dear Ann, take your daughters into another room.

Mrs. W.—(In a tone of apprehension.)—My dearest husband——

Pau. and Ros. Dear father!

Wel. Be at ease. There is no danger. Mr. Rehberg, be kind enough to accompany them. Your assurances of my safety may make them less afraid.

[*Exeunt Mrs. W. Pau. Ros. and Reh.*

Wel.—(To *Dalner.*)—Go you, my friend, with Frederick, into the court, and see that our peasants do not begin a quarrel with the hussars.

Dal. I will. Not one of them shall move. [*Exit.*

Fre. But if the hussars behave improperly, I'll not answer for them. [*Exit.*

Wel.—(Calls after him in a serious tone)—I command you to keep them quiet. You, my Lord, will be kind enough to step into the next room.

Bra. Hold! I shall not allow my prisoner to be out of sight.

Wel.—(After a pause.)—Well, then, he may remain here. I did not, indeed wish—but circumstances make it necessary. He must, however, promise not to interrupt our conversation.

Loh. You know that here I must obey, and you, generous man, I willingly obey.

Bra. Wave all further preface, for my time is short.

Wel. Enough!—Lieutenant, you seem determined rigidly to follow your instructions.

Bra. I have been thirty years in service, and must know my duty.

Wel. But I well know that in the execution of severe orders, you always have not been so exact.

Bra. Mr. Farmer, or whatever else you may be, this is very presumptuous language to an old officer.

Wel. Had you never before any orders of a similar nature?

Bra. None that I recollect.

Wel. It is, I own, a long time ago, and the circumstances may have escaped your memory. About twenty-seven years since, when Baron Wellingrode fled—(*Brave starts*)—were not you sent in pursuit of him?

Bra.—(*Somewhat confused.*)—How do you know that?

Wel. I know still more. You overtook him, made him a prisoner in your own prince's territories, and yet—allowed him to escape.

Bra. Yes—I remember—he escaped.

Wel. With your consent.

Bra. Who says that?

Wel. You ventured it at the risk of being cashiered.

Bra. Who can prove that?

Wel. You even shared your purse with him. You were then a youth, whose heart could feel for the misfortunes of another. Has age made it callous?

Bra. Well—I own this account is true, but the case was quite different. Baron Wellingrode was rewarded by his prince with ingratitude, and the people loved him as their father; whereas Count Lohrstein—

Wel. Are you appointed his judge, or were you then the baron's judge?

Bra. You strike home to me. You are right—I ought not to have connived at his escape, but I was under material obligations to him. He was my

benefactor. When I was but a poor orphan, he procured me a situation in the Military Academy. Through his recommendation I was made a cornet, and had he not fallen, I should long since have had a troop. Never, never can I think of that man, without being affected. Peace be to his ashes!

Wel.—(*Aside.*)---Oh! what a blissful moment!

Bra. I undertook to go in pursuit of him only that I might escort him to a place of safety. Sooner should this hand have withered than I would have stretched it out against my benefactor.

Wel. If the memory of this man be so dear to you, give liberty to the Count for his sake.

Bra. To the Count! Why, he it was who ruined Baron Wellingrode.

Loh. Not I---my wife——

Wel. Immaterial. When Wellingrode has pardoned him, and taken him under his protection—

Bra. Let him go, and throw himself upon that good man's grave. His place of refuge will then be more sacred to me than the altar.

Wel. Why upon his grave? Let him throw himself into the arms of Wellingrode---(*Goes towards the Count with open arms.*)---and find safety on the bosom of a reconciled enemy.

Loh. Heaven! What is this?

Wel.—(*Presses him to his heart.*)---Now, Brave, tear him from your old patron's arms.

Bra.—(*In the utmost astonishment.*)—What! Can you---you be——

Wel. I am Baron Wellingrode.

(*The Count sinks on his knee. Welling raises him, and gently seats him on a chair.*)

Bra.—(*After a pause, during which he endeavours to compose himself, presses Welling's hand between both his own, and gazes intently at him for several moments.*)—Yes, it is he—it is my benefactor. Alas! Have I then found him in *this* situation?

Wel. Content has no peculiar situation ; but, whether clad in ermine or the peasant's frock, dwells only with affection and domestic comfort. Good Brave, I am truly happy.

Bra. That declaration will console me at my dying hour. Oh, thou, whose ashes I so oft have blessed, whom I a thousand times have wished back to our world that I might be able to evince my gratitude, tell me, can old Brave do nothing for you? I'll inform the Prince you are alive. I'll summon all your friends to appear in your behalf. Oh, how many still remember, how many still bless you!

Wel. Not so, honest Brave. If I merit any recompence, bestow on me the liberty of this old man, whom the inscrutable ways of Providence have directed to *my* house---perhaps to try whether I was worthy of my present happiness.

Bra. Will you protect this man?

Wel. As long as I am able.

Bra. You have forgotten—

Wel. Every thing.

Bra. Revenge is sweet.

Wel. Forgiveness sweeter.

Bra.—(*Deeply affected.*)—Yes. Could I not have called to mind those venerable features, I should have known you by these noble sentiments. Feel, Count Lohrstein, feel how this man acts. You are free. My people shall depart immediately.

[*Wipes his eyes, shakes Welling's hand, and exit.*]

Loh.—(*Quite abashed.*)—My Lord—

Wel. Dear Count, I am no longer accustomed to hear that title.

Loh. Your revenge is sweet to your own sensations, but to mine bitter.

Wel. He, who can feel that, deserves no other vengeance to be inflicted on him.

Loh. To be confounded and ashamed before an enemy is insupportable.

Wel. Am I your enemy?

Loh. My wife's ambition robbed you of every thing

Wel. And my heart restored to me every thing.

Loh. Your estates——

Wel. Those you mean I but inherited—those I now possess I have earned. Oh, my Lord, a tree raised by our own industry affords more pleasure than a whole wood planted by chance.

Loh. You were deprived of your rank——

Wel. I am loved here for my own sake.

Loh. The favour of the Prince——

Wel. Favour I never aimed at. I only sought friendship in a soil where it does not grow.

Loh. The power of doing good——

Wel. That dwells in every one, and may, like air, be compressed into a narrow compass. Even the beggar can purchase, with his farthing, this happy conviction.

Loh. You will, perhaps, at last even attempt to prove that I am *your* benefactor, and——

Wel.—(*Hastily interrupting him.*)---That you are, Count. By the Almighty, that you are, for had not your power been directed against me, I never should have gained this pleasing harmony of all my feelings; this perfect satisfaction, this peace, which neither passion nor reproach can disturb. I am healthy, in easy circumstances, and possessed of an affectionate wife, and three good children. I am never peevish, never tormented by that demon, *ennui*—I am familiar with nature, and surrounded by uncorrupted people. I find sincerity in every hut, affection in every eye, and peace in my own breast. Point out to me the man at court, who, while basking in the sun-shine of favour, can say as much---Yes, Count, you are indeed my benefactor.

Loh. Is it not enough to have abashed me? Would you excite my envy, too?

Wel. Share my happiness by remaining with us.

Loh. Alas! It is too late. The art of being happy must, like other arts, be learnt in youth. When old, it can no longer be comprehended.

Wel. You are mistaken. The art of being happy, consists in seriously wishing to be so.

Loh. Yes, if you could raise my first wife from the dead, if you could restore my unhappy son to me—

PAULINA rushes breathless into the room.

Pau. Father! Father?

Wel. What now, my child? Is your mother ill?

Pau. No. Lewis—Lewis—

Wel. Well?

Pau.—(*Scarcely able to articulate.*)---He is dead!
—(*Sinks upon a chair.*)

Wel. God forbid! Has he killed himself?

Pau. No---the hussars---(*Welling is going.*)

Enter ERNORF.

Ern.—(*In a tone of triumph.*)---Such are the consequences—

Wel. What is the matter, Mr. Ernorf? Speak! My poor girl cannot.

Ern. Thus it is, when people of any description are admitted into a family.

Wel. I beseech you, for Heaven's sake, to wave your comments, and relate what has happened.

Ern. Well, then---Mr. Lewis, with his usual forwardness, has thought proper to attack the hussars, who, in return, have struck off his nose and ears, and split his skull completely asunder.

Wel. Is he dead?

Ern. He is struggling, as yet---but that will soon be over.

Wel. Where is he?

Ern. He was carried into the room, where your labourers sit. [*Exit Welling hastily.*

He'll write no more poetry now, but I will be so generous as to sketch an elegy for him. [*Exit.*

(*Paulina sheds not a tear, but looks around her with wild despair.*)

Loh.—(*Approaching her compassionately.*)---Good lady, who is this Lewis?

Pau.—(*With a convulsive smile.*)---Don't you know him?

Loh. Perhaps your brother?

Pau.—(*With heartfelt sorrow.*)---Yes---my brother.

Loh. Compose yourself. He may still recover.

Pau. May he? Are you a surgeon? Oh, save him!

Loh. No, dear lady, I am not a surgeon.

Pau.—(*Sinks on her knees before the chair.*)—Then save him, thou, oh God!

Loh.—(*Looks at her with sympathy.*)—Good father! Where is thy peace and happiness now?

The Curtain falls.

ACT THE FIFTH.

Enter Mrs. WELLING, quite exhausted.

Mrs. W.—(*Seats herself.*)—I can no more.—Weary as I am, I find no rest.—

Enter DALNER.

Dal.—(*Wiping his forehead.*)—A hot day this, good neighbour.—Understood?

Mrs. W. Alas, Mr. Dalner! What an intermixture of joy and sorrow!

Dal. All's well that ends well.

Mrs. W. They won't admit me to my Lewis.

Dal. He must be kept quite composed.

Mrs. W. Have you seen him?

Dal. No—nor do I wish it. I don't like even to be present when a stag is dying.

Mrs. W. Oh! Heavens! Then you really think he will die?

Enter PAULINA.

Pau. I can stay no longer with the stranger.

Mrs. W. Who sent you to him?

Pau. My father wished it. He thought it might dissipate my anxiety, but his conduct is so strange, that he quite alarms me. He walks up and down the room, talking to himself. When I speak to him he smiles, and if he makes any reply, it is quite unintelligible.

Dal. His misfortunes may perhaps have—(*pointing to his head*)—Understood?

Pau. And no one was compassionate enough to bring me tidings of Lewis. Is he still alive?

Mrs. W. Yes, he is.

Pau. Will he recover?

Mrs. W. The surgeon and your father are with him, but they will not allow any other person to enter the room.

Pau. Oh! You won't tell me—but I am sure he is dead.

Dal. He is not indeed. A couple of wounds seldom kill a man.

Enter FREDERICK, hastily.

Fre.—(*In ill-humour.*)—The infernal scoundrels have better horses than ours.

Mrs. W. Where have you been? You seem quite heated.

Fre. Your foresters, Mr. Dalner, and I, and a dozen of the villagers, followed the hussars as long as we could see the dust, but we cou'dn't keep pace with them.

Dal. Well, and suppose you had overtaken them?

Fre. Then, as I hope to be saved, they should have paid dearly for every drop of blood which Lewis has shed.

Pau. I thank you, brother.

Mrs. W. And if they had wounded you in the same way?

Dal. What a hot-headed stripling! How do you know whether Lewis was not guilty of the first provocation?

Pau. I am sure he was not.

Fre. If he attacked them, I am sure he had good reason for it.

Mrs. W. Does nobody yet know how the quarrel rose?

Fre. How can any body know it? Lewis is unable to speak, and the hussars have run away.

Mrs. W. Were none of our people concerned then?

Fre. Not one.

Enter WELLING.

[*All surround him.*]

Pau. Well, Father?

Dal. How go matters on?

Mrs. W. Is Lewis better?

Fre. Will he recover?

Wel. He is out of danger.

Mrs. W. and Pau. Heaven be praised.

Dal. I am glad to hear it.

Fre. I must go to him.

Wel. Hold, Frederick! The surgeon has prescribed rest as the most effectual medicine. His wounds have been examined. That in the head is of no consequence—the one in his arm is larger, but not dangerous. It was only the loss of blood which overpowered him, and he is come to himself again.

Mrs. W. You know, then, what has happened?

Wel. No. He was going to tell me, but the surgeon would not allow him to speak, and desired us to leave the room, as repose was absolutely necessary. Nobody but Mr. Rehberg remained with him.

Mrs. W. He is not in want of any thing, I hope?

Wel. I have provided every thing necessary.

Pau. Are you sure of that father? If you would allow me—if I might—

Wel.—(In a tone of admonition.)—Paulina?

Pau. You are right. It is improper.

Enter REHBERG.

Reh. Lewis insists on speaking to you.

Wel. I will come to him when he has slept awhile.

Reh. He says he cannot sleep, be easy, or recover, till he has had some conversation with you.

Wel. If the surgeon will allow it—

Reh. The surgeon thinks composure of mind still more necessary than sleep, and I am of opinion that if his soul be wounded, you may effect more than the whole faculty.

Wel. Enough! I hasten to him.—(Going.)

Pau.—(Shrieks.)—Oh! There he is.

Enter LEWIS.

Pale and rather weak, with his head bound, and his arm in a sling.

Mrs. W.—(Runs to him, and embraces him.)—
Lewis!

*Fre.—(Shakes him by the hand.)—*Brave lad!

Wel. Lewis can you, when scarcely recovering from a swoon, thus creep up stairs again?

Lew. Oh, I am not ill—I was only stunned.

Wel. I was just coming to you.

Lew. My impatience and anxiety have driven me hither. Allow me a few words without a witness.

Wel. Be seated then. Go, friends. Neighbour, I know you will not take it amiss.

Dal. Not another word. Come, neighbour Rehberg. *[Exeunt Dal. and Reh.]*

Fre. Lewis, I have such a regard for you that I have not thought of Louisa before. I'll away to meet her. *[Exit.]*

Pau. Oh, Lewis! How pale you look!

[Hides her face, and exit into her chamber.]

Mrs. W. Don't let him talk too much, good William, lest he should irritate his wounds.

Lew. Be not afraid, dear mother. He will heal my deepest wound. *[Exit Mrs. W.]*

Wel. Now, Lewis, we are alone.

Lew. I am obliged to you for inestimable kindnesses, and beg to-day a greater than any of them.

Wel. You know me. Speak.

Lew. You must have been surprised on hearing that I attacked the hussars.

Wel. I was, indeed, for I have always thought you of a peaceable disposition.

Lew. When I left you, I intended to travel a few miles before sun-set, but my heart was so heavy,

that my feet could not support me. I went to the little inn, which was full of soldiers. I left them—wandered into the garden, and seated myself under an elm, where I indulged myself in a flood of tears. Ere long two hussars joined me. They laughed at me for my effeminacy—as they called it—but I paid no regard to them. At length they ceased their taunts, and began to converse about their own affairs—in which, alas, I was too nearly concerned.

Wel. You!

Lew. They spoke in opprobrious terms of my father.

Wel. Your father!

Lew. They called him a villain, and by the Almighty that he is not.

Wel. Who is your father?

Lew. A weak, but a good man. He was high in office—Heaven knows what has lately happened to him! He must have fled, and these hussars, as far as I can learn, are in pursuit of him.—The two I mentioned, having spoken of him in terms the most abusive, I could no longer refrain—I considered not that I alone was opposing twenty—I considered nothing but my father's honour, and struck to the earth the villain, whose language had been most opprobrious. Of course I immediately became the victim of my rashness.

Wel. Lewis!—Is it possible? Who are you?

Lew. Oh!

Wel. They are in search of one Count Lohrstein?

Lew. He it is.

Wel. He is your father!

Lew. Yes.

Wel.—(*Aside.*)—Oh, God, what bliss hast thou reserved for me on this day!—(*Aloud.*)—Speak, worthy youth! Let me have all your confidence. Let not two fathers be too many for you. Relate to me the mysterious particulars of your fate.

Lew. My first education and my heart destined me to act a happy, but not a brilliant part in the world. My mother was formed for domestic comfort, and tutored me for the same enjoyment. She died. An ambitious, deceitful woman succeeded to my father's affections. Through her he became minister—through her I too was to make my fortune (as it is called) at court. I was married to a woman whom I knew not, but whom I discovered, when too late, to be the Prince's mistress. Yes. Then I might have raised myself, from step to step, in splendid infamy, and bending under the load of turpitude, might have climbed to the summit of courtly favour. But, thanks to Heaven, the sentiments which she, who now enjoys celestial bliss, had graven in my mind, could not be eradicated by my step-mother. Soon as I discovered the labyrinth, in which they had involved my inexperience, my resolution was irrevocably formed. I fled. From a delicacy which was, perhaps, carried to too great an excess, I took nothing with me. Beg I could not—I knew not how to work, so that at last, driven by hunger and despair, I accepted the offers of the recruiting party, with which you found me.

Wel. Now all is plain—and how do I rejoice to find it thus! How willingly do I request your pardon for the suspicion, which, to-day, I could not quite suppress!

Lew. My character must have appeared dubious to you, and, alas! that alone made my separation from you so painful.

Wel. Why did you not sooner discover yourself?

Lew. Could I accuse my father—or could I assist him? Even now, I would not have broken my silence, had not anxiety for his safety compelled me to do it. He is pursued, and suspected to be in this neighbourhood. I am at present incapable of assisting him; for my arm is maimed, and the loss

of blood has so much reduced me, that I cannot even go in search of him, to give him notice that he is pursued. Oh, I beseech you, kind, benevolent, generous man, I beseech you, send all your people through the wood, the hills, and if they find him—have compassion on his age—on his misfortunes.

Wel. I engage that he shall find beneath my roof a safe retreat. But at present attend to the wounds, which reflect so much honour upon you, and quietly await the issue. Will you do this?

Lew. Quietly! Oh!

Wel. Go into my study. Throw yourself upon the couch, and sleep if you can.

Lew. Bring me some account of my father. Till then I cannot sleep. [*Exit.*

Wel.—(*Looking after him in great emotion.*)—Indeed!—God has been pleased to place in my hands the means of rewarding thy virtue, noble youth. To release thee from bondage so unworthy of that heart is my lot.—(*Goes to a chamber door.*)—Paulina!

Enter PAULINA.

Pau. My father!

Wel. Lewis is in my study.

Pau.—(*Alarmed.*)—Not ill, again?

Wel. Not ill, but alone, and that he dislikes. Go, and keep him company.

Pau.—(*Astonished.*)—How, my father!

Wel. Have you not understood me?—I wish you to keep Lewis company. Is that so difficult to you?

Pau. Oh, no—I do not understand it—but I obey most willingly. [*Exit to Lewis.*

Wel. What ecstatic moments now await me? Yes, good Brave, thou art right: revenge like this is sweet—But they are both weak and exhausted.—How shall I prepare them for the interview? I must consult my Ann.—(*Going.*)

Enter ZAHN.

Zah. Unannounced, but not, I hope, unwelcome—

Wel. Heavens! What do I see? Zahn! my honest Zahn!

Zah. Will your Excellency allow a faithful old servant—

Wel. Silence! Silence! no Excellency dwells here.--Come into my arms, thou honest man, thou only friend, from whom misfortune has not severed me.—(*Presses him with fervour to his heart.*)

Zah.—(*Returning his embrace with reserve.*)---An honour---as well as a pleasure—Oh that I should live to enjoy this hour in my old age!

Wel. What, for Heaven's sake, has brought you to my peaceful retreat?

Zah. ---(*Somewhat ceremoniously.*) --- His Serene Highness has been pleased to command---had he been pleased to appoint me one of his Privy Council, he would not so highly have honoured me---

Wel. What is your business, then, dear Zahn? I observe tears in your eyes.

Zah. I humbly beg pardon---but just at this moment I cannot suppress them.---(*Turns away and wipes his eyes.*)

Wel.---(*Surveys him---aside.*)---Fifty years has he lived at court, yet has it had no influence but on his manners.---(*Aloud.*)---I hear the old Prince is dead.

Zah.---(*Composing himself.*)---Yes; it has pleased the Highest to take him home, and what I prophesied twenty-seven years ago has happened. The prayers of the poor and forsaken, whose father you always were, have been heard, and his Serene Highness restores to you all your former offices, estates, and dignities.

Wel. How could the Prince learn—

Zah. Pardon me, my Lord. When his Highness was pleased to manifest his sentiments, I found it impossible to keep silence any longer. I therefore announced myself, obtained an audience, and reported what I knew.

Wel. Your intentions were good, but—

Zah. His Highness was highly delighted. “Such a man,” he was pleased to observe, “is wanting both for me and my subjects. Haste, and invite him to court.”

Wel. I again appear at court!

Zah. Yes, I, old as I am, shall have the honour of again serving in the administration of your Excellency. I own I cannot proceed with the same facility as twenty-seven years ago, but the pleasure of doing my duty under my old worthy director will make me young again.

Wel. No, dear Zahn. To court I shall not return I am not disposed again to encounter the cabals of Countess Lohrstein.

Zah. That you will not, my Lord. The Countess has finished her cabals, and at present is a prisoner in the castle.

Wel. How! Was she not closely allied to the Prince's *female friend*?

Zah. Ladies, who are allied in that way, seldom hold their post *ad dies vitæ*. The order of the privy-council was indeed issued at the instigation of the Countess Lohrstein's late daughter-in-law.

Wel. Late!—How so?

Zah. His Serene Highness has been pleased to declare the marriage null and void.

Wel. Indeed!

Zah. On account of her having been shamefully forsaken by her husband.

Wel.—(*Embracing him with fervour.*)—Oh, my friend! This intelligence is more welcome to me than the restoration of my estates and rank.

Zah. I do not exactly comprehend—

Wel. You soon will. You soon shall share with me the enjoyment of this evening.

Zah. It is his Highness's wish that you should return with me immediately.

Wel. No, dear Zahn, I shall not return with you.

Zah. This most gracious invitation is written by his own hand.

Wel.—(*Breaks the seal, and reads it.*)—Most kind, most gracious, and I could almost say, most sincere—but I shall not go.

Zah. I am astonished.

Wel. Sit but one evening at my frugal board, and you will no longer be astonished.—(*Draws out a small key.*)—Look, dear Zahn, this key is rusty.—(*Opens the closet with some difficulty.*)—It will scarcely do its duty.—(*Takes a packet out of the closet.*)—Here are the insignia of the order, to which I belonged—my diploma—and all the remains of my former greatness. I pledge to you my word that this closet has not been opened during five-and-twenty years.

Zah. Your Excellency opens it to-day for the good of your country.

Wel. Can my country be so devoid of honest men as to make this necessary? No. Virtue will appear at court, as soon as the court will respect her.

Zah. For the good of your family—

Wel. Enough, my family shall decide the matter Till then, good Zahn, I claim your secrecy.

Zah. I know how to obey.

Wel. Let me but have time to recollect myself; occurrences have followed each other so rapidly to-day, that I feel I am appointed by Heaven to make many people happy, yet know not how to begin. Come, honest Zahn—(*Takes his hand.*)—Walk into this room—we shall soon see each other again.—(*Opens the door and calls.*)—Neighbour, I send another

friend to you, and put him under your protection, till I have finished some business, which just now engages me.

Dal.—(*Within.*)—Understood. Come in.

(*Zahn goes in.*)

Wel. Mr. Rehberg, I wish to have a little conversation with you.

Enter REHBERG.

Reh. Here I am.

Wel. You wish to marry my daughter Rosa, I presume?

Reh. What a question!

Wel. She is yours.

Reh. Mr. Welling!—Why this sudden alteration in your sentiments? I am as poor as I was.

Wel. But I am not so pertinacious as I was.

Reh. If you be not in earnest—this is cruel.

Wel. If you any longer doubt it, you will hurt me.

Reh.—(*Falls on his neck.*)—Worthy, mysterious man!

Wel. As to the mysterious part of my character, it will soon be explained. Have the goodness, my son, to assemble my whole family and all my friends in this room immediately. You will find Paulina there. I wish to converse on a subject which relates to us all, and on the decision of which each shall have a vote.—(*Takes the packet from the table and is going. Rosa meets him.*)—

Wel. Ha!—Just at the right time.—(*Takes her hand, leads her to Rehberg, joins their hands and embraces them.*)—God bless you! [Exit.

Ros. What does this mean?

Reh. That Rosa is mine.

Ros. How!—I must rub my eyes to be certain that I am not dreaming.—Have you obtained a living?

Reh. No.

Ros. I don't ask on my own account, for I am really glad you are poor. I always think one can't convince a rich man how much one loves him.

Reh. Whom do you call a rich man? Oh, I am rich indeed.—(*Clasps her in his arms.*)

Enter Mrs. WELLING.

Mrs. W. Rosa, remember that you are still at a great distance from the altar.

Reh. No. We have reached it, if we may hope for your blessing.

Mrs. W. How am I to understand this?

Ros. My father has consented.

Mrs. W. Indeed!

Reh. And if this parental blessing be echoed from your lips——

Mrs. W. With all my heart—although I do not comprehend——

Reh. He will soon be here again. My transport had almost made me forget what he desired. All, who are united to him by affection or by friendship are to assemble in this room.—(*Goes to the door of the dining-room.*)—Mr. Dalner,—and Sir—we request your company here.

Enter DALNER, ZAHN, and FREDERICK.

Fre. Mother, this gentleman is one of my father's friends.

Mrs. W. You are welcome, Sir.

Dal. Mr. Zahn, this is the Lady of the house.

Zah. Accept, Madam, the assurances of my respect and——

Mrs. W. No more, I beg, Sir. You are among simple country people.

Reh.—(*Who has, in the mean time, opened the door*

of the study.)—By order of your father, dear Paulina, I invite you hither—as well as Lewis, if his strength will allow it.

Enter PAULINA and LEWIS.

Mrs. W.—(*Astonished.*)—How, Paulina! You in that room!

Pau. My father himself sent me to keep Lewis company.

Mrs. W. Well, for the first time in my life I cannot discover the motives for your father's conduct.

Zah.—(*Attentively observing Lewis—aside.*)—I should know that young man.

Lew.—(*Aside.*)—Heavens! What can this man want here?

Enter WELLING,

With a star upon his coat and the ribband of the order. He holds in his hand the Prince's letter. On his appearance all speak confusedly among each other.

Mrs. W. Dear husband, what means this?

Pau. Father, is it you?

Dal. Neighbour, are we going to have a masquerade?

Reh. I suspect a secret, here.

Ros. Brother, what is all this?

Fre. Don't you see I am as much astonished as yourself?

Lew.—(*Aside.*)—That is the order to which my father belonged.

Zah.—(*Aside.*)—I alone have the key to this enigma.

Wel. You seem as if you think me little better than a lunatic—be patient. In one moment, the mystery will be solved—but let me not be inter-

rupted. Lewis, how do you feel? Have you sufficient strength to receive from me a present, which your filial affection has obtained from fate?

Lew.—(*Starts.*)—Father, I do not comprehend you.

Wel. Has your heart no presages?

Lew.—(*With tremulous utterance.*)—Were it so—if my heart deceive me not—oh, do not keep me in suspense.

Wel. Paulina, go for our guest. [*Exit Paulina.*]

Lew.—(*In great agitation.*)—Guest! and these mysterious words—may I accompany Paulina?

Wel. Stay where you are. I have said enough. Doubt—hope—think of your wounds—and moderate your rapture.—(*Lewis breathes with difficulty and rivets his eye upon the door, no longer observing what passes round him. Welling points to Rehberg.*)—I have given this man my promise, dear wife, that he shall have Rosa.

Mrs. W. I could scarcely believe it, for, according to our conversation yesterday—

Wel. He was first to obtain a benefice—and he has obtained one. My son, I congratulate you on your appointment to the living of Birkendorf.

Reh.—(*Quite astonished.*)—Birkendorf! Dear Sir—how can you—

Wel. Be so forward as to promise what—

Zah.—(*Smiling.*)—The gentleman may be at ease.

Mrs. W. But explain to us—

Dal. In truth, neighbour—

Lew.—(*Distracted with anxiety.*)—I hear footsteps.

Wel. Make room for him, children. He has been long enough deprived of his father.

All. His father!

Enter LOHRSTEIN and PAULINA.

Lewis stands at a short distance from the Count, and in great agitation stretches out the arm which is at liberty.

Loh.—(*Violently terrified.*)—What phantom do I behold? Wert thou slain, bloody form, and comest thou to demand revenge?

Lew.—(*Kneeling.*)—Forgive your son.

Loh. Forgive!—I, thee!—Oh, if I be not wrong in thinking thee a spirit—come into my arms.—(*Lewis rushes into his arms.*)—What is this? I again feel a heart beating against mine—I feel a warm tear upon my cheek. Am I, then, still beloved by any one on earth? Lewis, dost thou still love me?—(*Lewis kneels, and covers his father's hand with tears and kisses.*)

Wel. Spare him, my Lord. That he loves you these wounds declare, which he received to-day in defence of your honour.

Loh. And thou kneel'st to me! Let me—let me kneel.—(*Is sinking.*)

Lew.—(*Hinders it, and presses him with fervour to his heart.*)—Father.

Loh. What have I lost? I hear a voice which calls me father!

Lew. Wealth and dignity divided us—poverty and lowliness restore us to each other.

Loh. Where was I? What apathy had crept around my heart? Forgive me, Lewis, for thy mother's sake.

Lew. I have not been in distress—thanks to this worthy man, who received me as his son.

Loh. How! Has he been *thy* benefactor too—Could you consider the son of your enemy as your own son?

All. His enemy!

Dal. I guess how this is.

Loh. Oh, my Lord!

All. Lord!

Loh. What revenge is this!

Wel. The only revenge which becomes me.

Lew. What means this?

Wel. My friends, it is time that I solve the enigma. Will you pardon me, my dearest Ann, if I have concealed this only secret from you? You will, I am certain, when I tell you I was obliged to promise inviolable secrecy to your father on his death-bed.

Mrs. W.—(*Confused and astonished.*)—Are you really a Lord, then?

Wel. I am Baron Wellingrode, formerly the favourite of a prince, and not happy—now an honest farmer, and the happiest man on earth.—(*All shew signs of astonishment.*)—This letter, from a good prince, restores to me my rank, estates, and former office. This man is come to conduct me to court.

Mrs. W. Fre. Pau. and Ros.—(*Alarmed.*)—To court!

Wel. The hand, which has here so long held the plough, has forgotten how to guide the rudder of state. Nevertheless, if you, my dear wife and children, think this alteration in our fortunes enviable, I will comply with your wishes.

Mrs. W. Oh, no!

Fre. Pau. and Ros. No, no!

Wel. Consider well. What thousands sigh for in vain, is offered you by chance.

Pau. What do we want?

Fre. We are accustomed to our present situation.

Ros. What can we do at court?

Wel. You may hereafter repent——

Fre. Pau. and Ros. Never! Never!

Wel. Is this your firm desire?

Fre. Pau. and *Ros.* It is! It is!

Wel.—(*Opens his arms.*)—Come, then, to my heart.
—(*The children approach with a degree of timidity.*)

Wel. What now! Are you afraid of me?

Fre. Oh, no—but the star——

Pau. The ribband——

Ros. You are grown a baron so suddenly——

Wel. My dear Ann, you seem to keep at a distance too.

Mrs. W. My dear William, I am sorry to do it—but you appear almost a stranger to me.

Wel. And shall I return to a situation, which causes a distance between me and my family? Shall I wear an ornament which withholds my wife and children from my bosom?—(*Throws the ribband away with violence.*)—Take it—take it—release me from this gew-gaw.—(*The children run to him with delight, take the star from his breast, and lay it aside with the ribband.*)

Fre. There! Now you are our father again.

Pau. Now we know you.

Ros. Now we love you.

Wel. And you, good Ann?

Mrs. W. Thus you offered me your hand five-and-twenty years ago.

Wel. You see, dear Zahn——

Zah.—(*Wiping his eyes.*)—I do, and wish his Serene Highness had seen it also.

Wel. To court I'll go, but only to thank the Prince, and petition for the pardon of this man.

Loh. You destroy me.

Wel. How! By acting a self-interested part? I shall only be promoting the happiness of our son.—Lewis, the Prince has declared your marriage void.—(*Lewis gazes at him in silent astonishment.*)—Count, the young people are attached to each other. Will you seal our reconciliation?

Loh. Will I! How can you ask?

Lew.—(*Clasps Paulina with ardour in his arms.*)—
Oh God!

Ros.—(*Giving her hand to Rehberg.*)—Now we
are all happy.

Fre. All.

Mrs. W.—(*Much affected.*)—All.

Wel. And through me. My children I have
doubled, and I have found a brother.—(*Pointing
to the Count.*)

Dal. Two brothers, neighbour.—Understood?

Wel. Come then to me, all. Come into the arms
of the happiest man on earth. Are you still afraid
of me? No star now hides my heart. Let me press
you all to it.—(*Mrs. Welling sinks on his bosom, while
the surrounding children hang on him and caress him.*)

The Curtain falls.

THE END.



CONSCIENCE.

—
A TRAGEDY,
IN FIVE ACTS.

—
FROM
IFFLAND.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Mr. WEHRMAN, *in Office under Government.*
Mr. TALLAND.
LEWIS, *his Son, Secretary to Wehrman.*
RATHING, *Talland's Son-in-law, and an Advocate.*
BOLFELD, *Comptroller of the Customs.*
ELLOF, *an Emigrant Farmer.*
HENRY, *Talland's Servant.*

WOMEN.

Mrs. RATHING, *Talland's Daughter.*
FREDERICA SOLTAU.
Miss BOLFELD, *Sister of Bolfeld, and Talland's Housekeeper.*

CONSCIENCE.

ACT THE FIRST.

Scene, a Room in Rathing's House. Enter Mr. and Mrs. RATHING.

Rath. I SEE your brother coming. Speak seriously to him, I beseech you. His dissatisfaction with your father, his attachment to high life, and his consequent distance towards us all, daily increase.

Mrs. R. Alas, too true! Perhaps he may feel still more uneasy at the alteration of my father's looks. His friends now scarcely recognize him.

Rath. I fear——but see, your brother comes. I will withdraw, for I should say too much, and rather hurt than support our intentions. *[Exit.*

Enter LEWIS.

Lew.—*(Throws his hat on the table.)*—What a life do we lead at home!

Mrs. R. Has any thing particular happened?

Lew. No. All goes on as usual. My father is insufferable.

Mrs. R. The poor man——

Lew. Was worth six thousand dollars before he inherited from a stranger, whom he had obliged,

thirty thousand more, since which time he has accustomed himself to eat half as much as is necessary, and to make himself miserable from morning to night.

Mrs. R. The fortune which he inherited has indeed afforded him little gratification.

Lew. Because he—

Mrs. R.—(*With warmth.*)---Because his feelings are of a nature so delicate that we must respect them.

Lew. Very delicate feelings he must have truly, who, when in possession of a large fortune, can suffer his children to be in want.

Mrs. R. My husband and I do not complain.

Lew. But in what a miserable style do you live? No. Other means must be adopted. Such is the opinion of Mr. Wehrman too—and he is our friend. Were our father poor, we ought to submit patiently, but with such a fortune——

Mrs. R. Does he not live in a still more frugal way than any of us.

Lew. Yes—and his old house-keeper in a more extravagant way than any of us.

Mrs. R. She attended on his deceased friend, who left him the thirty thousand dollars. Is it not, therefore, natural that he should behave well to her?

Lew. He will at last, perhaps, behave so well as to prove his gratitude by marrying her?

Mrs. R. Lewis! Lewis!

Lew. I suspect the worse, when I daily observe how generous he is towards other people—how niggardly towards his children.

Mrs. R. Your dissatisfaction makes every thing worse than it really is.

Lew. He was more generous towards us before he obtained this large fortune. Our home was then the abode of cheerfulness, and he gratified all our wishes. There was not a more affectionate father in the world, or one who every moment convinced

his children so completely that they were his sole delight. No sooner did his friend die, and he become possessed of thousands, than avarice and misery took possession of the house, and no one was allowed any controul but the infernal housekeeper.

Mrs. R. I still revere my father, and though often obliged to exert my patience, I will, nevertheless, repay the sincere affection, which so often appears through his melancholy, like a sun-beam through a cloud. Lewis, it may be in our power to learn the cause of his sorrow by persuasion, but far be it from us to attempt to learn it by compulsion.

Lew. My heart agrees to this, but my reason asks whether I can learn to live without eating, and if I can, whether I ought to do it, for the purpose of gratifying a whim. I must live.

Mrs. R. You live in—

Lew. I involve myself in debt. Is it more proper that I should remain the prey of usurers, and at last lose all credit, than that I should request my father to spare me a portion of his superfluous wealth?

Mrs. R. You lose your credit more by your conduct than your debts.

Lew. What part of my conduct displeases you?

Mrs. R. Were I to mention nothing else, your intimacy with Wehrman—

Lew. Does he not visit your house daily?

Mrs. R. I allow that he does, and my motive for not declining the acquaintance is that I may discover his intentions. He is our father's enemy. He never will forget that, when persuaded by the artifices of a base woman, to whom he was attached, he was guilty of injustice, and that his partiality—his refusal of the orphan's just claims, were proved by our father. The business was taken out of his hands, and transferred to the man who convicted him, whereby the injured obtained redress.

Lew. With far too much exultation.

Mrs. R. The exultation was not on the part of our father, but of the redressed. Do you think Wehrman will ever pardon this?

Lew. Yet he seems pleased in every opportunity of visiting you.

Mrs. R. He exasperates you against our father, and attempts to convince me too that—

Lew. He sees our father's folly in the same light that every body sees it. No. He is my friend—my sincere friend. Through him I have been introduced to the world.

Mrs. R. Alas! The world, as you call it—

Lew. Would you have me always stay at home?

Mrs. R. You aim at the talent of feeling at home when in splendid parties. Of what advantage can this be to one of your rank, which is inferior to theirs?

Lew. Why not? Might not your husband remain an honest man, and yet raise himself by his talents above the sphere of middle rank?

Mrs. R. You always make references to other people.

Lew. And you never, though they interfere with what is your own right. Miss Bolfeld lives luxuriously, while we are starving.

Mrs. R. Overlook this one unaccountable weakness in our father, for the sake of his numerous virtues.

Lew. How am I to pay my debts?

Mrs. R. Were you obliged to incur them?

Lew. If you be satisfied with the life you lead, affection forbids that I should by my observations disturb your tranquillity. But be equally just towards me, and do not attempt to confine my extensive plans and hopes within a narrow circle. Act as you please in your own behalf. I can extricate myself.

Mrs. R. In what way?

Lew. By appealing to the affection and understanding of my father. If in the midst of riches he will starve, it will hurt me, but I cannot help it; me he must at least assist, unless he wishes to think as ill of himself, as the world already thinks of him. I know what I may become, and what I will become, if I have a father who deserves the name. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter RATHING.

Rath. Your advice has been fruitless, I fear.

Mrs. R. Dear good William, how many cares do I heap upon you!

Rath. A sympathy with virtue is not care. It animates the faculties and exalts the whole man.

Mrs. R. When you married me, you were justified in the expectation of a considerable portion, instead of which, you only receive the interest of my share in my mother's small fortune.

Rath. When I solicited your hand, I thought not of your portion. With sincerity I can declare that every enjoyment which I anticipated I have richly found in the possession of Maria.

Mrs. R. But so few conveniences of life—

Rath. These we shall obtain in old age. Manhood is the time for action. We sow at present, and believe me we shall one day reap.

Mrs. R. I do believe you. But forgive me if I mention, what I, perhaps, ought to conceal. It grieves me to behold men of your age, whose pretensions and whose intellects are far more limited, filling honourable offices, and enjoying the emoluments of them, while you renounce them, and withdraw from the world, that you may live for me and my relations.

Rath. By no means—

Mrs. R. That you may by your mode of life

accommodate yourself to the peculiarities of my father. It is a kindness, which I cannot silently accept, feeling, as I do, its full value.

Rath. You value it at too high a rate! My own inclination in some degree leads me to this mode of life. I do not like the society of the world, and should feel all the horrors of *ennui*, were I obliged to frequent the innumerable rapid routs of the great. My humble meal at our little table is far preferable to a banquet. I do not apply for any office, because the consciousness of diligence and honesty makes a man as good a character as the state can boast, and domestic tranquillity as happy a one.

Mrs. R.—(*Embraces him.*)—Dear good William!

Rath. Yet I have a care which you can remove.

Mrs. R. Oh, name it.

Rath. Wehrman comes too often hither, and I perceive that he is pleased with your society. As to any jealousy on my part, I trust you think me incapable of it. We know each other, and feel the value of each other.

Mrs. R. We do indeed.

Rath. I perceive that you do not object to his visits at my house, merely because you hope through his interest to meliorate the situation of your brother and myself.

Mrs. R. He has given me cause to hope for his assistance.

Rath. I thank you for your good intentions, and do not doubt his, but I wish not to be promoted in such a way. Besides, his visits do not suit our humble mode of life. He is a man of the world, who wishes rather to appear possessed of sense than feeling, and who knows how to make all his humours and desires wear the appearance of deliberate reflection. Such a man as this can never bring peace or happiness into a family—and I know no happiness but peace. Such a man can never bear to see

another satisfied with mediocrity. He thinks this a prejudice which ought to be opposed, undermined, and destroyed, and it is much sooner destroyed than restored.

Mrs. R. I will decline his visits.

Rath. Not in an abrupt way—but by degrees.

Mrs. R. I understand you. I must however, mention that his politeness and sympathy have ever appeared equal, and that he has never trespassed beyond the bounds of that propriety which is sanctioned by friendship.

Rath. Perhaps he never will. I repeat that I think him better than he wishes to appear. But for this very reason he compels us to treat him according to his appearance.

Enter BOLFELD.

Bol. Your servant. My name is Bolfeld.

Rath. May I enquire your business, Sir?

Bol. In a private conversation with you I will explain it. [Mrs. R. *curtsies and is going.*

But no. Stay, Madam, stay. What I have to mention relates to your father.

Rath. Be seated, Sir.

Bol. I don't chuse it.

Rath. As you please. Proceed, then.

Bol. Well—you know that my sister lives in the capacity of a house-keeper at Mr. Talland's house. The poor creature used to wait upon the late Mr. Soltau, and was transferred with the property to your father.

Mrs. R. Who treats her as if she were a relative.

Bol. Mercy on us! What do you mean?

Rath. What do you mean, Sir?

Bol. Is not the old gentleman a grumbling, avaricious—

Mrs. R. Does she complain of his avarice?

Bol. In a word, he may soon, perhaps, quit this world, and it is, therefore, natural to ask what reward my poor silly sister is to expect for her faithful services and attention to the strange old curmudgeon?

Rath. Use more becoming expressions, Sir.

Bol. Has he declared what she is to have? I must know how much.

Rath. I don't interfere with my father-in-law's will.

Bol. But you would like to read it, I suppose. A dead father-in-law is the best father-in-law—eh?

Mrs. R. I can stay no longer. [Exit.

Bol. Mercy on us! What a tender-hearted daughter!

Rath. To the point, Sir. In what respect does my father-in-law's will concern you?

Bol. In a very material respect. I am my sister's heir, and she will probably not marry—or at least I shall advise her to remain single. She is, to be sure, younger than I am, but she will doubtless depart before me, for she is of a choleric disposition, and is troubled with an asthmatic complaint in the spring. Now, should this take her off—why, of course, I step forward to claim her property.

Rath. Well—and what is this to me?

Bol. I want you to manage matters in such a way as that—that—that some sum may be fixed—some recompence I mean, for the poor silly creature's attendance.

Rath. No more, Sir!

Bol. If you wish to import a trifling quantity of wine—coffee—silk—I am comptroller of the customs—carry the goods to the right—I'll look to the left.

Rath. Paltry—Begone, Sir.

Bol. You will not, then?—Well—my sister and I must go to the old fellow himself, and see what we can do with him.

Rath. You are capable of attempting any thing, no doubt.

Bol. Yes, and of succeeding in any thing. Ha! Ha! Ha! My sister says that ideas are free, but my ideas generally produce a heavy impost.—There are few men, whose dealings may not be taxed.—Your servant.—But mercy on us, I had nearly forgotten a principal object of my visit. Pray what do you think of your brother-in-law---young Talland---the secretary?

Rath. Why do you ask this?

Bol. He has paid attention to my daughter.

Rath. The family never wished him to do so.

Bol. What says the old gentleman to it.

Rath. I hope he is ignorant of it.

Bol. Well---then, what think you?

Rath. He is a young man, and of a warm temperament---I think you a cautious father.

Bol. Your ideas of me are correct. I have taken proper precautions---otherwise I should not have admitted him into the house. My enquiries only arise from my surprise at not having seen him this week.

Rath. Indeed!

Bol. I hope he will conduct himself properly, for I am not to be jested with.

Rath. How do you expect him to conduct himself?

Bol. I expect him to keep his promise to marry the girl.

Rath.---(*Astonished.*)---Has he appointed this?

Bol. He has.

Rath. But without the knowledge and consent of his family.---

Bol. He is of age.

Rath. Does it seem to you right that he should without any reference---

Bol. His references are not my concern.

Rath. I must own you astonish me.

Bol. Why? my Sabina is a pretty girl.

Rath. But I think---

Bol. It is better not to think. For my own part, I have three objects at present in view, and the sooner one is obtained, the sooner can I proceed to the execution of the other two.---When I proceed, I generally succeed.

Rath. The matter requires consideration, at all events.

Bol. By no means. Every man knows at once whether he will or will not do a thing. If he will not marry my daughter---why I know how to act.

Rath. I'll speak to his father and brother-in-law.

Bol. That is proper—but I give notice—marry her he must, or pay dearly for his conduct.

Rath. One ought not to be too soon alarmed.

Bol. True, that has always been my maxim.---At what hour shall I receive an answer?

Rath. How! you must, of course, conceive---

Bol. I'll tell you what I conceive---that you wish to make my daughter and myself appear to the world a couple of fools. Now I never was thought a fool, and I never will be. I shall return for an answer in the course of to-day, and if that answer be not accordant to my wishes, your brother-in-law shall soon be known to the whole world for ---you understand me---marriage or money---play or pay.

[*Exit.*

Rath. Unguarded young man! what has he done?

Enter WEHRMAN.

Weh. Good morning, my dear Sir.

Rath. Your servant, Mr. Wehrman.

Weh. You seem agitated—this is unusual.

Rath. No man is at all times on his guard.

Weh. Of course, you too are at length displeased with the conduct of your father-in-law.

Rath. Indeed I am not. My good father-in-law.

Weh. Good! A man like you ought never to apply a word without a meaning to it.—Were your father-in-law good, times would be better with you, and his son. He is a morose old man, who embitters your life and his own.

Rath. Say not so, I beseech you.

Weh. You will at least discover that nothing can be effected by mere-submissive patience, and I have resolved to see you in a better situation.

Rath. I feel truly obliged to you.

Weh. My plan in your behalf wants nothing but your own assistance.

Rath. Your goodness makes me feel ashamed. I have myself no plan, and do not wish that any other person should project one in my behalf.

Weh. That is a fault. You should always be projecting plans. After many have failed, one may at last succeed. You must be forwarded—but you yourself must assist in obtaining a promotion. Frequent visits—

Rath. Weary the patron.

Weh. So much the better. The petitioner's request is at last granted, in order that his importunity may be avoided.

Rath. I should be sorry to obtain any request on such terms.

Weh. You may be truly useful to the state, but you conceal your virtues. When virtue wishes to be rewarded, she must become a coquette. A man of business ought to calculate at his desk as accurately how he is to shine, as a lady at her toilet.

Rath. I believe you are right—but I was not born to act thus.

Weh. We are born as nothing, and may make

ourselves every thing. Apropos. Talking of ladies, I hope Mrs. Rathing is well.

Rath. She is, Sir, I thank you.

Weh. She too must be introduced to the world. You both ought to occupy high stations. A place is at present vacant which will suit you.—I have mentioned your name.—Make application.—I am sure you will be successful.

Rath.—(*Bows.*)—I must see.

Weh. You must act. Be not so proud as to neglect yourself. I will assist you as far as I can, and thereby avenge myself on your father-in-law. He has almost ruined my credit, and I intend in return to make him an affectionate father to his children.

Rath. Your words are as smooth as your thoughts, but the smoothest steel cuts deepest.—Is it not a thankless office to serve people against their inclination?

Weh. Who requires thanks?—I want to serve myself by serving you. The conduct of your father-in-law has cost me many a sleepless night. Mine be the game and yours the gain.

Rath. I am firmly resolved never to accept any thing on such terms, and seriously beg you will desist from your purpose.

Enter TALLAND.

Tal. Good morning, my son.—(*Bows to Weh.*)

Weh. Well, Mr. Talland, how goes it? Still gloomy and dejected?

Tal.—(*Looks solemnly at him.*)—Did you sleep well last night, Mr. Wehrman?

Weh.—(*Smiling.*)—I am at all events, in very good spirits this morning.

Tal. Such a man as you cannot be so without reason.

Weh. I'll just pay my respects to Mrs. Rathing. You, gentlemen, may, in the mean time, shrug your shoulders at me. [Exit.

Rath. You are well, Sir, I hope?

Tal. Rid yourself of that man.

Rath. We are devising the means of doing it.

Tal. He corrupts my son.

Rath. My dear Sir, you must absolutely endeavour to raise your spirits.

Tal. My spirits are always better when I come hither.

Rath. Go to some watering-place.

Tal. It would be too expensive.

Rath. With your fortune——

Tal. Mention not that.

Rath. I really mention it only on your account.

Tal. You are a good man—a very good man.

Rath. You do not allow yourself even the conveniences of life. You do nothing to recruit your constitution, but suffer it gradually to decay.

Tal. Yes, yes—sometimes I allow myself——

Rath. You even forfeit your breakfast.

Tal.—(Confused.)—Who told you this?

Rath. Forgive your children, if affection urged them to enquire.

Tal. My breakfast—did not agree with me—for that reason——

Rath.—(Grasps his hand.)—For that reason?—For that reason only?

Tal. Leave me as I am.

Rath. Your goodness towards others is unceasing. It is only towards yourself you are unjust.

Tal. If I but act justly towards you, I am satisfied.

Rath. Dear Sir!

Tal. There is the amount of interest due to you.—(Rath. takes it and bows.)—It is but little, yet do

not bear ill-will against me, children. I—I can do no more for you.

Rath. Do we evince any expectation of more?

Tal. No—oh, no. The other property—which I inherited——

Rath. Let us not speak of that.

Tal. Old Soultau had legal heirs—I did not deserve it—I ought not to have accepted it.

Rath. Of late you have often mentioned this subject. Follow the impulse of your heart, and bestow a considerable sum on the heir of your late friend.

Tal. His two nephews are dead.

Rath. Indeed!

Tal.—(*With tremulous utterance.*)—They are dead.

Rath. Are you sure of this?

Tal. I am. They fell in the field of battle, to which despair had led them.

Rath. May not inclination——

Tal. Oh, no, no, no!—(*Throws himself into a chair.*)

Rath.—(*After a pause.*)—His niece is still alive.

Tal. True.

Rath. Act towards her as you are no longer able to act towards her brothers.

Tal.—(*Surveys him a while, rises, and grasps his hand.*)—I will.

Rath. The sooner the better.

Tal. She is in service.

Rath. Take her into your house.

Tal. Right, right! Your advice accords exactly with my feelings. She is poor, but virtuous, and I am told she possesses an enlightened mind.

Rath. Which she probably would not have possessed, had she been rich.

Tal. But what will the world say?

Rath. It will revere you.

Tal. Malice has already been industrious against

me. Soltau's relations have always calumniated me.

Rath. Disappointment and envy made them do so. Did you not offer them a present of five thousand dollars?

Tal. I did, and they refused it. They would have all or nothing. They said that I had obtained the will by fraudulent means. Should I now do any thing for this girl—should I do much—

Rath. Has not every one witnessed the purity of your conduct during forty years? Does not the gratitude of many relieved by you from wretchedness speak for your heart? Dear Sir, have confidence in yourself.

Tal. And if I act thus towards the girl, how am I acting towards my family?

Rath. If there be one of us, to whom your peace of mind is not dearer than wealth, that one does not deserve to be provided for.

Tal.—(After a pause.)—I'll send for the girl.—(Lays his hand on Rath's shoulder.)—Have patience with me.

Rath. Your conscientious motives are a blessing to your children.

Tal. I shall not long trouble you.

Rath. Say not so, my father.

Enter Mrs. RATHING, with a bason.

Mrs. R. Good morning, dear father.

Tal. God bless you, Maria!

Mrs. R. I have brought you some soup. I am so vain as to think that we make it more to your taste than at your own house.

Tal. I understand you, my child.—(Takes the bason and looks at them by turns.)—You do wrong in supporting my weak frame.—(They take his hat and

stick, and he eats the soup.)—I thank you—I thank you. God knows I have ever wished to make my children happy. If I have not succeeded, it was an error—a mournful error, and no one suffers more for it than myself. God reward you, Maria!—*(Returns the bason to her; takes his hat and stick, and shakes hands with them.)*—Good morning.—*(Mrs. Rathing kisses his hand.)*

Rath. We shall see each other again to-day.

Tal. Yes, but let it be here—for here I feel my only peace.—*(Draws a box from his pocket.)*—This is a plaything for your children.

Mrs. R. I thank you. Will you not give it to them, before you go? I'll bring them hither in a moment.

Tal. No, Maria. My sorrowful countenance shall not damp their innocent enjoyments. Take it to them. It is a palace, which they may put together. Tell them it is my gift.—*(Mrs. R. wipes her eyes.)*—I must own I might have made a better choice.—A palace!—Return it to me. It is not proper.—*(Takes the box again.)*—I'll buy them a cottage instead of it. Teach them to find delight in a humble sphere.—*(Kisses Mrs. R.)*—Good morning!—*(Shakes Rathing's hand.)*—Good morning!

[Exit attended by Rath.]

ACT THE SECOND.

Scene, a Room in TALLAND'S House. Mrs. RATHING is discovered, seated at a Table.

Mrs. R. It is true that I am accustomed to patience, but Miss Bolfeld abuses it. How much longer must I wait for her?

Enter HENRY.

Hen. Mis Bolfeld will come.

Mrs. R. Very well.

Hen.—(*Bows and is going—stops at the door, and returns.*)—Alas, Madam! what a house is this become? You know it, to be sure, in part—but still it is worse than you believe.

Mrs. R. Be patient, Henry, be patient.

Hen. I don't think of myself, Madam, but I am sorry for my poor master. No one knows what the old maid makes him endure, and no one knows why he endures it.

Mrs. R. Do every thing that you can for him.

Hen. That I will, but I can be of little service. Matters grow worse every day, and—only think, Madam, she has lately sometimes locked herself in my master's study.

Mrs. R. You must tell him this.

Hen. Do you think so? I am fearful, for her influence is unlimited. To be sure I can't prove that she was guilty of any thing blameable—but what had she to do in the study? [*Sees Lewis, and exit.*

Enter LEWIS.

Lew. What has brought you hither?

Mrs. R. My wish to release you, if it be possible.

Lew. Release me! from what?

Mrs. R. From your thoughtless promise of marriage to Miss Bolfeld's niece.

Lew. What promise? The people are mad. I never thought of such a thing.

Mrs. R. Bolfeld asserts it.

Lew. And I deny it.

Mrs. R. I will speak to Miss Bolfeld on the subject. Her brother is very determined.

Lew. A blockhead! I marry his ugly green-eyed wench, forsooth!

Mrs. R. Heaven grant you may be able to avoid it.

Lew. Has his daughter any written promise?

Mrs. R. My husband is much distressed on your account.

Lew. I pay my court to Mr. Wehrman's sister, and never thought of the other creature.

Enter MISS BOLFELD.

Miss B. Madam, I am very sorry that you have been obliged to wait, but really in such weather as this, one cannot sleep enough. I have a rheumatic pain in my shoulder too.—Be seated, I beg.—(*Sits.*)—Will you take a little breakfast with me—coffee—chocolate?

Mrs. R. I beg to be excused.

Lew. What will you give me, if I decline the offer too?

Miss B. I was speaking to your sister.—(*To Mrs. R.*)—So you will not have any thing? Well—

Henry! My chocolate!—I am truly happy to see you Mrs. Rathig. How happens it?—Do you want any thing from our furniture?

Mrs. R. Nothing whatever.

Lew. Then you are welcome, no doubt. [*Exit.*

Miss B. Your brother is a hopeful youth, to be sure.—(Henry brings the chocolate.)—Put it on the table.—Now bring the table hither.—Close to me.—There!—Now go. [*Exit Henry.*

I don't know how you manage servants, Mrs. Rathig, but they are the plague of my life. Well, in what can I serve you?

Mrs. R. Have the goodness to tell me, as far as you can, the relative situations of my brother and your niece.

Miss B. That he has promised to marry her.

Mrs. R. Do you really believe that?

Miss B. Most certainly.

Mrs. R. Do you think the connexion proper?

Miss B. Why not?

Mrs. R. Even if your family were obliged to enforce it.

Miss B. Do you wish matters to go so far?

Mrs. R. At present I only wish to hear your opinion.

Miss B. Promises must be performed.

Mrs. R. But the alliance is not suitable.

Miss B. Not suitable! Let me tell you, Madam, the Bolfelds are an honest family.

Mrs. R. That I do not deny.

Miss B. And as good as other people, who fancy themselves such mighty great folks.

Mrs. R. Miss Bolfeld!

Miss B. Yes, and they have upright hearts, let me tell you, and will not allow any body to behave ill to them. Do you understand me?

Mrs. R. You will not understand me.

Miss B. I'll tell you what, Madam, I do understand you, and am not to be caught by your tricks.

Mrs. R.—(*Rises.*)—This is insufferable.

Miss B. So much the better. Why waste time in compliments? Tell your father, or the person who sent you, that the embassy has failed.

Mrs. R. Yet you subsist on my father's charity.

Miss B. I want no person's charity.

Mrs. R. Then leave the house, and not abuse what you do not need.

Miss B. I am ready to go to-day, but ask your father if he will consent to it.

Mrs. R. I have no doubt of it.

Miss B. Try then—ask your father, Madam.—Ha! Ha! Ha!—I stand on firm ground.

Mrs. R. Are you married to my father?

Miss B. Heaven forbid!

Mrs. R. Then I cannot comprehend—

Miss B. Any more than other people.

Mrs. R. Act as you please, but I assure you I will use every persuasion which can prevent this act of folly on the part of my brother.

Miss B. Folly! What do you mean—eh? What do you mean, I say? Who am I—who is my brother—who is my niece—and who are you, your father and your brother all taken together, that you dare call an alliance with my family an act of folly?

[*Exit Mrs. R.*athing.]

(*Miss B.*—*Follows her.*)—We are honest, reputable people, and will teach your haughty family how to conduct itself even if we be ruined by it.—

(*Returns.*)—An impertinent—proud—abusive woman!—(*Stamps violently.*)—But I'll be revenged.—

(*Throws open the window.*)—Yes, Madam, go home and tell your husband that I am a match for him and twenty advocates.—I'll face him and a score like him, I say.—(*Shuts the window.*)—She returns no

answer.—She is in too great a passion to speak. Well, I am glad I have made her more angry than myself.—Attack me! I should like to see the person who can gain any thing by attacking me.

Enter FREDERICA.

Fre. Can I speak to Mr. Talland?

Miss B. No, he is not at home. What do you want with him?

Fre. He sent for me.

Miss B. Indeed! Every body says the same thing, who want to partake of his purse.

Fre. I have no such wish.

Miss B. Who are you, then?

Fre. My name is Frederica Soltau.

Miss B. Indeed! Sure!—Frederica—

Fre. The name of Soltau must be familiar to you, Madam, for my late uncle had a great regard for you.

Miss B. And I exhibited great fidelity in his service—so his regard was justified by my fidelity—was it not, pert Miss?

Fre. Poor people are seldom pert, and that I am poor you know.

Miss B. Your poverty is not my fault. I should not have cared if your uncle had left you his whole fortune.

Fre. Of that I do not wish to speak.

Miss B. Why did your father behave so ill that his brother, justly irritated, rather chose to leave his fortune to those, who acted properly, than to his relations? Mr. Talland compassionately offered you and the rest of you five thousand dollars, but you were too proud to accept it—so now you are reduced to poverty. Thus it is—arrogance precedes a fall.

Fre. Very often.

Miss B. Where have your brothers strolled to?

Fre. They are dead.

Miss B. Then they are provided for. You are in mourning for the fellows, I suppose?

Fre. I am in mourning for my benefactors.

Miss B. How do you earn your bread?

Fre. By service.

Miss B. That's right. Be humble and submissive, and all may go well. Conduct yourself with propriety and modesty, and some honest footman may one day or other marry you.

Fre. I'll come again, if you please. [Going.]

Miss B. No. Here is Mr. Talland.

Enter TALLAND.

Tal. Who is this?—(*Frederica courtsies.*)

Miss B. Soltau's niece.

Tal. Welcome, welcome! Be seated.—(*Frederica declines it.*)—Leave us, Miss Bolfeld.

Miss B. With your permission—it is more proper that I should stay.

Tal.—(*After a moment's reflection.*)—Perhaps it may.—(*To Frederica.*)—Your brothers are dead, and you have lost their support. I heard so good an account of you that I wish to supply their place. I have adjusted matters with the family in whose service you are, and you may now, if you please, remain with me.

Miss B. We want no more servants.

Tal. Remain in my house as the unfortunate and respected niece of my friend, whose place I have undertaken to supply. You have nothing to do here but to be as happy as I can wish you.

Fre.—(*Embarrassed.*)—Sir—

Miss B. A pretty offer, on my conscience!

Fre. Sir, I feel your kindness,—and should rejoice at such an improvement in my situation—but the fear of being troublesome to you—makes me irresolute.

Miss B. A fine sum of money it would cost!

Tal. You will be a consolation, not a trouble to me.

Fre. Though reduced to a lower sphere, I have not forgotten the sentiments created by my former rank and education, and therefore—

Tal. You accept my proposal.

Miss B. Your parents were not in the best situation, methinks.

Tal. Peace! You are insufferable.

Fre. Rather than be obliged to endure humiliation while I receive a favour, I will return to my late service.

Tal. You shall remain with me, and, if you please, have no concern with any one but me.

Fre. Your goodness affects me deeply. Such a man was worthy of my uncle's attachment. I reproach myself for any idea which I have hitherto harboured against you.—When you entered, your look, your tone of voice, at once dispelled the opinion I had formed of you.

Tal.—(*Takes her hand.*)—My dear child, I will—

Fre. Oh, call me so.—(*Kisses his hand.*)—It is so long since I was addressed by that title—

Tal. I will—Fate has been unjust towards you.—(*Much affected.*)—I will repair this injustice.

Fre. With filial gratitude I accept your kind offer. Believe me, I am incapable of abusing it.

Tal. I am sure you are. Arrange your concerns, and return as soon as possible.

Fre. Heaven reward you for the happiness you bestow!

Miss B. With permission—what am I?

Tal. My house-keeper.

Miss B. And when this beggar is admitted into the family, what shall I be?

Tal. My house-keeper.

Miss B. And what will she be?

Tal. What she pleases.

Miss B. And you really think of acting thus while I remain here?

Tal. I wish it.

Miss B. Then I'll tell you at once, that if this girl dares to enter the house, I'll walk out of it.

Tal. What do you mean by this language? Have you forgotten that at Soltau's death, I took you into my service from mere kindness, when you were in want of a place?

Miss B. Ha! Ha! Ha! From mere kindness! —There was a little policy in it too.

Tal. Explain yourself.

Miss B. Not at present.

Tal. If you wish to end your days quietly, and to be provided for the purpose, I am ready—

Miss B. No, Sir. I know what I do. If you attempt to dismiss me from your house, you will find —what you don't expect.

Tal. What do you want?

Miss B. At present nothing but that this girl may remain where she has been.

Tal. That she shall not.

Miss B. You may allow her an annual gratuity.

Tal. No. She shall not remain in service—positively she shall not.

Miss B.—(*Smiling.*)—Why are you so suddenly inclined to assist her?

Tal. Because she is unfortunate.

Miss B. That she has long been.

Tal. Never so much as now—now she has lost her brothers—her only support.

Miss B. This is all nonsense. Play some other game. It is better to be candid and open.

Tal. I am so.

Miss B. No. If you were candid and open, I might reason with you, but as you will not be so, I now declare that I know you hate me, but that you

find me necessary and useful to you. Act as you ought to do,—then you,—your children and I shall gain by your conduct. But if you think proper to treat me as a cypher, I give you notice that I'll do the utmost, rather than submit to it. I have told you my resolution—now act as you please. [*Exit.*

Tal.—(*Stands some time, overpowered with agony, then raises his clasped hands.*)—Cursed—cursed moment!

Enter WEHRMAN.

Weh. I only mean to detain you a few moments.

Tal. What procures me this visit.

Weh. You probably know that your son has for some time paid his addresses to my sister.

Tal. Indeed I do not.

Weh. Well! The young man may have been backward in telling you from a fear of not obtaining my consent. I am accustomed to doubt and suspicion from your family, but I wish to put you to the blush. Therefore, I am willing that the alliance shall take place, if—

Tal. I must candidly tell you that I am averse to all alliances, which can be so suddenly acceded to.

Weh. But you, of course, will consent to—

Tal. Besides which, my son's fortune gives him no claim to a connexion with a lady of such brilliant prospects.

Weh. Why has he not a claim, while he has a father, who can advance a considerable sum for him?—

Tal. I can but advance his share of the interest of three thousand dollars—his mother's jointure.

Weh. But it is known that Soltau's property—

Tal. With respect to that property, I shall act according to my own inclination.

Weh. Can your inclination lead you to any thing detrimental to your children?

Tal. Every father and every owner of an estate has a right to act by conviction.

Weh. I am sorry to be under the necessity of remarking that every one is astonished at your conduct towards your children.

Tal. My children know me, and are satisfied. But is it not your opinion, Mr. Wehrman, that many people take great pains to make my children dissatisfied.

Weh. I cannot be surprised if such be the case. No one can understand the motives for your conduct. You are thought harsh—opinions are circulated respecting you—

Tal. Of course, of course.

Weh. Which are very singular, for—

Tal. Thus far—Mr. Wehrman, enough!

Weh. As it seems, then, that you object to the union, I shall forbid any further intercourse between your son and my sister.

Tal. That I request.

Weh. Yet I think the father, who, without paying any regard to the merit of the object, can even when old devote himself to love, ought not so absolutely to condemn this sensation in his son.

Tal. I beg no more may be said on this subject.

Weh. At one time you took care that the world should say enough of me. Why am I now to be silent?

Tal. I only did my duty.

Weh. And I am doing mine. I grant that revenge is the impulse by which I am guided. But even my revenge gives way, when I can promote the happiness of others. I do not like you, but even if I did, even if you had been my friend instead of my enemy, how could I act more properly than

when I endeavour to procure for your children what is sacrificed to a harlot? On her you squander your money, while your daughter wants the common necessaries of life, and your son is the prey of usurers.

Tal. Is my son in debt?

Weh. Of course. You compel him to be so.

Tal. I will relieve him as far as I can.

Weh. That is the way to appease me.

Tal. Whose business is this, but our own? Who are you that you dare——

Weh. A man—an injured man—one who requires private satisfaction or open war.

Tal. War you may find, disgraceful as it is on your part to enter the lists against an old man.

Weh. Disgraceful! I thank you for the warning. I go to collect my forces, and shall return triumphant—till then all overtures of peace are needless.—*(Slowly walks to him, and says, in a solemn tone,)*—Mr. Talland, you are on every side surrounded. Think of an honourable capitulation. [*Exit.*

Tal. What an enemy have I created! Discontented with my own conduct, I became rigid against others, and now this rigour falls upon myself. What shall I do? What can I do? Oh God, end my days—and soon—soon!——

Enter MISS BOLFIELD.

Miss B. Have you sent for more beggars to inhabit the house?

Tal. What do you want?—*(Half aside.)*—In hell there cannot be a greater torment.

Miss B. There's an old vagabond without, who has brought his bundle into the house, as if he belonged to it.

Enter ELLOF.

Ell. Brother! God bless you!

Miss B. Have you a brother?

Tal. Whom have I the honour—

Ell. There is very little honour in the case. I only wish there may be some pleasure.

Tal. Who are you?

Ell. Him, whom intimacy once induced you to call brother. I am grown old, yet surely you recollect me.—

Tal. I must own—

Ell. I do not read in your countenance a wish to know me.

Tal. But tell me—

Ell. That is what I did not wish, for when I have declared who I am, I shall probably be welcomed— for *to-night*. Well—well! I meant to reside here— but no matter! Instead of residence I shall have a night's lodging. I beg pardon for reminding you of the term *brother*, and now introduce myself as your school-fellow. I am a fugitive—my name Ellof.

Tal.—(*Astonished.*)—Ellof! Merciful Heavens!

Ell. Ellof, whom the sword and party-spirit have driven from his house.

Tal. My good—my worthy Ellof.—(*Presses him to his heart.*)

Miss B.—(*Aside.*)—Mercy on us! An emigrant!

Tal. How came you hither.

Ell. On foot, with little money, but much confidence. “Talland,” thought I, “always had a regard for me. I’ll go, and if he be still alive, ask him for a bed. As for the rest, my head or my hands will procure it.” With this idea I tied my bundle, bad adieu to my plundered farm, and find— what?

Tal. A friend—a brother!—(*Embraces him.*)

Ell. God be praised! To him I consign the care of my flocks and fields, from which the enemy has driven me. Your hand! I see the tear of joy in your eye. I am happy. Now introduce me to your wife.

Tal. I am a widower.

Ell.—(*Pointing to Miss B.*)—But——

Tal. Miss Bolfeld, my house-keeper.

Ell. Bolfeld—Bol——Zounds! Catherine! Yes! Catherine Bolfeld! My old play-fellow! How are you? How are you? You and I have often knocked our heads against each other at blind man's-buff.—(*Takes her hand.*)—Catherine! Catherine! You are grown old.

Miss B.—(*Drawing her hand away.*)—Sir——

Ell. Pshaw! Never mind that! I am grown old too. It is many years since we were children.—(*Takes a chair.*)—Well, comrade, how are you?

Tal. Old, very old.

Ell. Pshaw, pshaw! Though you are a widower, you have somebody to bind your temples when you have the head-ache. Eh, Catherine?

Miss B. Upon my word—Sir, I'd have you to know my reputation is not to be slandered. [*Exit.*]

Tal. She is only my house-keeper.

Ell. But one of the ruling sort, I suppose. When I entered the house, she addressed me with a voice as shrill as if she had whistled through a key-hole. I could not bear to have such a creature near me.

Tal. Custom.

Ell. How horrid are your looks! Cheer up, cheer up, friend!

Tal. I like you, Ellof.

Ell. But I don't like you.

Tal. Perhaps you may exhilarate me.

Ell. I, who have left every thing behind me, am

cheerful and merry, while you, who are a man of fortune, sink into despondency. Shame on you!

Tal. Come, let me shew you your chamber.

Ell. And a breakfast——

Tal. Of course.

Ell. But tell me—for I must know how to act—are you governed by this hag?

Tal. I am aecommodating, from custom, and a love of peace.

Ell. That means I am grown very old. Should you like to be young again?

Tal. Alas, no, no, no.

Ell. Well—a breakfast I must have before I say any more. Hungry people are not fit for a consultation.—Come. [*Exeunt.*

Enter LEWIS and WEHRMAN.

Lew. How! My father positively refused his consent to my marriage with your sister?

Weh. Most positively.

Lew. Yet he is not apt to destroy the happiness of others. What reason did he assign for his refusal.

Weh. None.

Lew. I must submit.

Weh. That would I not.

Lew. But what can I do, without losing my own good opinion?

Weh. Speak to him as your duty and his direct.

Lew. Can I mention his fortune without appearing to encroach upon his rights?

Weh. Mention me. Say that I have made you aware of a conduct, which approaches towards disinheritance. Persist till you obtain some explanation.

Lew. It must be so. I will.

Weh. Do not suffer the torpidity of your relatives

to infect you. Establish your own fortune, and remove the obstructions, which surround the old man, that he himself may breathe more freely. You are one of the few, who do not misunderstand me. Attend to my advice. [Exit.]

Enter RATHING.

Rath. Has Mr. Wehrman been with you?

Lew. Yes.

Rath. Be on your guard.

Lew. Against my only friend?

Rath. Against the enemy of yourself—of me—of us all—of himself.

Lew. Why do you think him our enemy?

Rath. Because his mind is incapable of understanding what is felt by such a heart as your father's. If you have any filial affection, do not listen to Wehrman.

Lew. That no one may interrupt my father's obstinate determination to ruin me.

Rath. Brother. I do not love you less than I revere your father. I cannot wish your ruin. Let us rely on his parental feelings, and suffer not a third to interfere. No good can result from it.

Lew. Speak more plainly.

Rath.—(After a pause.)—I dare not.

Lew. Why?

Rath. You see your father's strength of mind and body daily decay. Do you think a mere whim could effect this?

Lew. What else?

Rath. Revere his sorrows. The day may come when you would give the wealth of the whole world that you had not touched any string too violently.

Lew. What can I do? Even if I be willing to sacrifice myself completely, what can I do to remove his melancholy?

Rath. Act as a son.

Lew. Have I ever acted otherwise?

Rath. It is a great title, and its tenderest duties are already in part neglected, when the mind begins to argue upon it without the heart being concerned.

Lew. Brother!

Rath. Son! [*They embrace and exeunt.*]



ACT THE THIRD.

Scene, a Room in TALLAND'S House. LEWIS and HENRY meet.

Hen. I beg pardon, Mr. Lewis—are you going out?

Lew. Yes. Why do you ask?

Hen. Your father wishes to see you, Sir.

Lew. Very well. Who is the old gentleman I just now saw?

Hen. A Mr. Ellof.

Lew. What does he want here? Is he introduced by Miss Bolfeld?

Hen. God forbid, Sir! No. She seems not very well pleased at his arrival.

Lew. Then he is doubtless an honest man.

Enter FREDERICA, somewhat better cloathed than before, but still in a humble dress.

Fre. Allow me, Mr. Lewis, to request your goodwill and sympathy. Your father has promised me both, in the most generous manner, as you must have heard.

Lew. I have heard it with pleasure, and consider your abode in this house an auspicious omen.

[*Exit Henry.*

Fre. I understand this answer only as far as it claims my gratitude.

Lew. Inmates of one house should understand each other as soon as possible. Why should I conceal from you, what you must have already in part observed! My father is old and infirm. A dragon has made this house her nest, and endeavours to banish his children from it. She will endeavour to procure your banishment too, if she observes any kind attentions on your part to the old man.

Fre. The unfortunate enjoy with gratitude the present moment, and leave futurity to Providence.

Lew. But Providence ordains that caution is a duty. I am naturally ingenuous, and I read something in that countenance, which would make me so, were I otherwise. Love my father. He deserves it more than I do—or rather he wants it more, for he is older than I am, though not more unfortunate. You have entered a wretched house.

Fre. Heaven forbid!

Lew. My helpless situation commands me to do what surprises even myself—it commands me to confide in you.

Fre. I cannot deserve this sudden confidence. Allow me time to fulfil one duty before I enter on another. Your father's kind disposition spared me all confusion—or at least greatly alleviated it. Imitate his example. The kinder he is, the more attentive will I be, that I may thereby please his children. Be satisfied with this my good-will.

Lew. I am satisfied, and ashamed of having commenced our acquaintance by an appeal of sorrow.

Fre. I did not wish you to think thus. Let us wait for a calmer moment, when we may, perhaps, understand each other better.

Lew. Shall I ever know a calm moment.

Fre. A feeling son may always find one in the arms of his father. You have justified the freedom with which I address you. Amidst the tempest of your soul, confide in the words of a stranger.

Lew. They are not the words of a stranger. Praised be Providence, for having conducted you to this house!

Fre. When, on a better acquaintance, I have restored your father's peace of mind, you yourself may decide what I can do towards yours. [*Exit.*

Lew. She must despise me. I despise myself. A weak woman has a better understanding—has more firmness and resolution than myself. I turn towards every side. A thousand wishes are contending in my bosom, and I cannot satisfy one of them. Oh, I must—I must speak. My father gave being to this compound of desire and inability—and must assist me. It is his work—be it his care.

Enter TALLAND.

Tal. I have, for some time, avoided all conversation with you, because all that a father could say, neither seemed to make you wiser, nor me easier. Finding, however, that you are now in a very critical situation, I must once more attempt to direct you in your progress. Lewis, at what point do you aim?

Lew. Rather allow me to ask at what point you wish me to aim?

Tal. I wish you to become a reputable, honest man; but while you thus waste time and money, how can you expect to support any reputation?

Lew. If you will allow that the fortunate state of your circumstances justifies me in considerable expectations, you cannot be surprised that I act in such a way as to establish for myself a proper rank in life.

Tal. I wish you happiness. Believe me, my son, I wish you happiness.

Lew. And yet refuse your consent to my marriage with Mr. Wehrman's sister?

Tal. Do you feel an affection for her?

Lew.—(*Shrugging his shoulders.*)—Does she for me?—Does any woman of fashion know what affection is?—I like her. The match will make me of more consequence, and that, according to the present opinions of the world is a great object.

Tal. Are you obliged to act according to the present opinions of the world on every occasion?

Lew. Was the world ever better?

Tal. Marriages were happier.

Lew. Let me hear your plan, my father.

Tal. You are in debt. To what amount?

Lew. Two thousand dollars.

Tal. Good God!—(*Walks to and fro in great agitation.*)

Lew. My small salary——

Tal. Your expensive mode of life—your consummate vanity in associating with a class, to which you do not belong——

Lew. But surely, according to your circumstances——

Tal. Circumstances! With a fortune of three thousand dollars, it is, no doubt, justifiable to contract debts amounting to two.

Lew. But the thirty thousand——

Tal. Don't belong to you.

Lew. At present, certainly not, but——

Tal. Nor do they belong to me.

Lew. To whom, then? Pardon me. The question is natural.

Tal. It is.

Lew. I know that since this fortune was bequeathed to you, no use has been made of it—that you deprive yourself of the necessaries of life, in

order to gratify your benevolent propensities, without interfering with the estate. I lament this. I grieve to see my sister in such confined circumstances, and cannot think myself happy, as you will do nothing for me, while I see the insolent creature who directs your household, revelling with your bounty.

Tal. You appear to have justice on your side, and I am sorry I cannot remove this appearance. But do not form a judgment according to it. I was many years a good father—be you a good son.

Lew. May I speak openly?

Tal. Do so, Lewis.

Lew. Relieve yourself from this unpleasant and uncertain situation. Bestow on this Miss Bolfeld decisive privileges rather than a dubious, dangerous influence. Bestow on her your name.

Tal.—(*Throws himself into a chair, and covers his face.*)—Not so, my son, not so.

Lew. I know no better counsel.

Tal.—(*Rises, embraces him, and then walks up and down for a short time.*)—Let us return to the subject. Lewis, notwithstanding the way in which you have hitherto lived, I still place such firm confidence in you, that at this moment my only hope of happiness depends upon you.

Lew. Speak—proceed.

Tal. You may refuse to do what I wish. It will be hard upon me, but never will I compel you even by arguments to do it. You may refuse this, I say, but my command, my injunction—nay if you please—my petition never to repeat what I am about to say—you will not, cannot refuse.

Lew. You raise my expectations——

Tal. Give me your hand. Now, promise your father, whose trembling hand holds yours, that you never will repeat what I shall say.

Lew. I swear by——

Tal. Hold! Do not swear. Oaths are become the playthings of form. Give me an upright filial promise.

Lew.—(*Presses his father's hand to his heart.*)—I do promise.

Tal. It is well.—(*Releases his hand.*)—A moment—I am so much oppressed.—(*Draws his breath with difficulty.*)—Listen—Soltau's property belongs to me according to his will,—but according to my conviction, it belongs to his relations.

Lew. Did not those relations behave ill to him, when you acted as his sincere friend?

Tal. The father behaved ill—not the children. I ought never to have accepted this fortune, and cannot now return it to the person who ought to have it, without exposing myself to calumnious reports—yet I will not retain it. My children shall not have it.

Lew. That must be as you please.

Tal. You know the nature of my resolutions. One way still remains, by which you and your sister may obtain this fortune. Lewis, my son, it is in your power to bestow on your father peace of mind. This is a decisive moment. Accede to my wish, and I will a second time thank Heaven as fervently as I thanked it, when I first heard I had a son.

Lew. Proceed, I beseech you.

Tal. You have confessed your heart is not engaged, and you only want an establishment in life. Take half of the fortune—assign to your sister the remaining half—and obtain a right to both by marrying Soltau's lawful heiress. Do not yet reply. You have seen her. She is handsome, and every word she utters, proclaims the goodness of her heart. Answer me not till I have finished. Reflect that you may become the benefactor of your sister—of your father—that you—oh, that I could find

words to describe what blessings you will confer on me by this act! It will sweeten thy dying hour, Lewis, to have made thy father so happy, so—I can say no more.—Answer.—Give me life or death.

Lew. Dear father, can you doubt my readiness to obey this solemn injunction? But can you conceive that on me alone depends the power to obey it? How can your wish be represented to Miss Soltau, without conveying an appearance which must rather excite in her mind suspicions of injustice, than gratitude for your kind intentions?

Tal.—(*Doubtfully.*)—Lewis.

Lew. Should she feel no attachment to me, will she not perceive on your part an absolute necessity—I use her own expression—to do her justice? What will be the consequence? She will refuse me—make me the derision of the world—and not make you more easy.

Tal. Oh, my son!

Lew.—(*With enthusiasm.*)—My brother-in-law has roused in my bosom the sensation of the duties attached to the name of son. Be assured that your blessing is far more valuable to your children than your wealth. Give Miss Soltau, therefore, without any conditions, what you think you cannot justly withhold, and be happy.

Tal.—(*Taking his hand.*)—I am old and weak. Let me reflect ere I decide——

Lew. Allow me time, also, to try whether I am ever likely to obtain Miss Soltau's affections.

Tal. Be it so. Take my blessing, Lewis—my blessing and my thanks. There!—(*Gives him a paper.*)

Lew. What is this?

Tal. An engagement that I will discharge your debts. I would not give it to you sooner, that you might not be induced to think I wished to bribe

you. Send your creditors to me in the morning. Thanks to my economy, I can pay them from my own property.

Lew.—(*Falling at his feet.*)—Oh, my father!

Tal.—(*Raises him.*)—Rise. My son, my friend, be silent. I dare not tell you all. Were I to confess all, you would both justify and condemn me. From the fear of condemnation, I dare not attempt to justify myself. Lewis, be silent. [*Exit.*

Lew. Rathing is right. A mere whim cannot have such effect on any man. I feel as if I had no sorrows of my own, while there is a chance of my having it in my power to alleviate his.

Enter RATHING.

Rath. Have you mentioned Bolfeld's claim upon you as to his daughter?

Lew. Who would think of the fellow for a moment?

Rath. He is waiting at my house for your answer.

Lew. He may go to the devil.

Rath. Lewis, this affair becomes serious. What promise did you make to these people?

Lew. I can swear with truth that I don't know—they made me drunk.

Rath. Have compassion on your father, and compromise the matter.

Lew. How can I? Bolfeld will not be satisfied but by a considerable sum of money. Let him bellow and bawl as usual. He cannot make my father alter the favourable sentiments of me, which he has even this moment avowed. No, no. I care not for him or that harridan his sister.

Enter MISS BOLFELD.

Miss B. Who is a harridan, Sir—eh?

Lew. She, who listens.

Rath. What do you want here?

Miss B. Nothing with you. I want to speak to Mr. Lewis.

Rath. Speak respectfully, or by Heaven you will repent it.

Miss B. I shall speak as I please. *Advocates* may give an opinion, but the decision rests with the judge.

Rath. Speak respectfully—I warn you for the last time.

Miss B.—(To *Lew.*)—Will you marry my niece, or not?

Lew. Never.

Miss B. Positively you will not?

Lew. Most positively never.

Miss B. Then our business is at end.—(*Curtseys.*)—Your servant, gentlemen. Take my word for it, I'll teach you both to speak respectfully. Ha! Ha! Ha! [*Exit.*]

Lew. Hell and furies! What means she?

Rath. The woman speaks in a tone of dreadful resolution.

Lew. Damnation! I'll follow her, and——

Rath. Hold! Be cool.

Lew. Once more I swear that, as far as I know, I never made a promise of marriage.

Rath. I must have time for reflection. We will speak further on the subject soon.

Lew. But what will you——

Rath. For the present farewell. [*Exit.*]

Enter FREDERICA.

Fre. Have the goodness, Mr. Lewis, to interfere between Miss Bolfeld, and the stranger who is here. Mr. Talland is in his own room, and I fear there will be a dispute.

Lew. I go immediately to prevent it. [Exit.

Fre. I will return to my lowly situation, for discord reigns in this house.

Enter TALLAND.

Tal. My dear girl, I have been thinking that your abode here is not likely to be pleasant. To-morrow I will take you to my daughter.

Fre. Your kindness knows no bounds.

Enter ELLOF.

Ell.—(As he enters.)—Damn the Jezabel!

[Exit Fre.

Tal. Has any thing disagreeable happened to you?

Ell. Yes, and to your amiable house-keeper too, for your son, without saying a word, has handed her so gently out of doors, that I believe her limbs will not soon recover the concussion.

Tal. Where is she?

Ell. Lying in the street, and there let her lie. Stop, I say—remain here.

Tal. What occasioned this commotion?

Ell. My pipe. I was smoaking in as peaceable a way as possible, and thinking of my poor farm, when into the room burst the dragon, and poured forth such a torrent of abuse as man never heard.

Tal. Ellof—pity me.

Ell. I do, but I'll not witness such misery any longer. I shall leave you to-morrow.

Tal. No, no, my friend.

Ell. Melancholy is infectious, and by degrees converts the firmest man into a mere child. Melancholy kills me. Mirth is my maxim.

Tal. Do you abandon me, because I cannot be cheerful?

Ell. Not because you cannot, but because you will not.—My good fellow, did I not know your excellent heart, I should think you had a bad conscience.

Tal.—(*Suddenly seizes his hand.*)—You must not leave me Ellof—you must not leave me.

Ell. Will you be cheerful?

Tal. I have a great plan dependant on you.

Ell. Will you be cheerful?

Tal. Who can teach, and who can learn that art?

Ell. I and you. I'll give you an hour's lesson every day, over a bottle of wine. He, who when old, when robbed of all, can wander from his former home, and still support his spirits—he is the proper teacher of cheerfulness—and I am the man. Accept me as your preceptor.

Tal. Your intention is good, but——

Ell. The lesson is over a bottle of wine.

Tal. Alas, what can you do with me?

Ell. Why I can make you drink with me. But come with me, at present, to your daughter, and think no more of the fallen Jezabel. Should she have the same fate as her predecessor—so much the better. Come, come. When we return from your daughter, out comes the bottle of wine, and forthwith begin my instructions. You shall have a glass—and if you then behave ill—why, I'll empty the bottle—Agreed! Agreed! Come!—(*Drawing him away.*)

Tal. I am without a hat.

Ell.—(*Looks at him.*)—True.—(*Throws his own hat aside.*)—There—now we are alike. Come, come.

Tal.—(*Resisting.*)—But the people——

Ell. Pshaw! Confuse the people—something new, and our point is carried.

Enter MISS BOLFELD.

Miss B. Stop, I say. That monster——

Ell. Huzza! March! Huzza!

Miss B. He has behaved in such——

Ell. Huzza! Huzza! *Vive la joie! Vive l'alle-*
gresse! [*Exit leading Tal.*

Miss B. That ever I was born to endure such conduct!—Thrown down half a dozen steps into the street! But their triumph shall be short. I'll be revenged.

Enter BOLFELD.

Bol. Well, what have you done? Here have I been exerting myself in every quarter, and not one proceeding do I know on your part that is likely to produce any profit.

Miss B. Be at ease. Half of old Soltau's property must be ours—one way or other.

Bol. One way or other! Pshaw! Nonsense. You have been talking in that silly way for half a year, and we seem no nearer the mark. I verily believe I shall some night hear you knock at my door, after having been kicked out of the house without a farthing.

Miss B. Heaven defend me! Mr. Lewis has made a beginning, for he kicked me out of doors just now.

Bol. A pretty way of treating his future aunt!

Miss B. His aunt I will be, too. I go on certain grounds.

Bol. I advise you to do so. I am not to pay for champagne in order to intoxicate the fellow, and then have no reward. I have made an attack on Rathing, but it did not succeed. What's to be done now?

Miss B. Attack the old man.

Bol. But if I alarm him too much, he may die without a will.

Miss B. Never fear. He has as many lives as a cat.—Attack him I say, and bellow without mercy. Depend upon it, that before sun-set I will be at your house with half the fortune—for half I will have. Now go to the old man, and insist on the marriage.

Bol. May I be loud?

Miss B. The louder the better.

Bol. And if he will not consent---

Miss B. Then he shall hear *my* thunder, and that will end the matter.

Bol. Are you sure of that? For if you should come without money---damnation---

Miss B. I tell you again most positively that before evening I will bring you half of old Soltau's fortune.

Bol. Well, then, wherever I find old Talland,---it matters not whether in house or street,---I'll bawl till——

Miss B. Go, then, and find him. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

Scene, a Room in Talland's House.

Enter TALLAND and ELLOF, hastily.

Tal.—(*In great agitation and much exhausted.*)—
This is too much.—(*Throws himself into a chair.*)

Ell. But who is the fellow, that had the impudence to attack you thus in the street?

Tal. Bolfeld—my house-keeper's brother.

Ell. The scoundrel!

Tal. To address me thus!

Ell. I wish you would have allowed me to make him feel my stick.

Tal. And my son too! What can the madman mean by forming a connection with such a creature?—(*Rises.*)—Go, go, my friend. Leave me. Why waste your life with one, whose sorrows daily increase?

Ell. I will assist you, my friend. You are irritable.—Compose yourself and procure me a conversation with your son. All will yet end well.

Tal. Alas! How is that possible?

Ell. Never despair. He who gives way to melancholy, can never succeed in any thing. Cheer up, and while I am settling matters with your son—talk to your housekeeper. Act as her master. Abolish the ascendancy she has gained over you. It matters not how it was acquired—destroyed it must be.—Delays are dangerous.—I'll tell the servant to send her hither. Talland—act like a man.

[*Exit.*

Tal. He is right.—Yes.—I'll destroy this growing evil.—I'll learn my situation—I'll learn what she knows—what she does not know.—She comes.

Enter MISS BOLFELD.

Miss B. What are your commands?

Tal. Deceitful, ungrateful woman!

Miss B. It would be better for you, if you could end with such words instead of beginning with them.

Tal. Thou torment of my life!

Miss B. How can so indifferent a person be able to torment you?

Tal. Because my impolitic kindness—

Miss B. If it seems to you more politic—dismiss me.

Tal. I do. You shall leave my house to-day.

Miss B. With all my heart.

Tal. Your wages you shall receive for life.

Miss B. I want no wages.

Tal. As you please.

Miss B. I have other pretensions. If you refuse them—

Tal. What pretensions?

Miss B. I have my opinion respecting certain transactions.

Tal. If you mean to refer to my son's conduct, I positively tell you he shall not marry your niece.

Miss B. Then I have done.—(*Going.*)

Tal. Hold! Your brother and you do not wish this connection to take place. I plainly see that money is your object. You surround me on every side in order that you may extort money from me. If there be any spark of humanity in you, sell me the repose I want. I will purchase repose—I am old and cannot long enjoy it—therefore do not value it at too high a rate.

Miss B. Now you talk rationally.

Tal. How much, do you think, will satisfy your brother and provide for you?

Miss B. What are you disposed to give?

Tal.—(*After a pause.*)—Two thousand dollars.

Miss B. That is nothing.

Tal. I am obliged to pay my son's debts.

Miss B. Soltau left you thirty thousand dollars.

Tal.—(*With terrific violence.*)—Damned be—(*Walks up and down, endeavouring to compose himself.*)

Miss B. That I believe.

Tal. What mean you, then? How far do your diabolical plans extend? How much do you require?

Miss B. Half.

Tal. Of what?

Miss B. Of the thirty thousand.

Tal. Begone!—Out of my house!—Begone!

Miss B. I will not.—Compose yourself, and listen, for the period is arrived, when it becomes us both to declare our sentiments openly. Every one has an end in view. You had one and obtained it. At that time I formed one too. Had you engaged me in your plan, you might have lived more comfortably. Mine is fixed. If you will let me share your prize with you, I am satisfied---if not, we shall, it is true, neither of us obtain any thing, but you have more to lose than myself. I believe you perfectly understand me.

Tal. Hear me.—We are both old. I daily grow more infirm. Let us both face death with a good conscience. From the fortune which I possessed before Soltau's death, I have, by rigid economy, saved seven thousand dollars. Of this I can dispose. With two thousand I can pay my son's debts. The same sum will I give to my daughter, and the remaining three thousand to you.

Miss B. And who is to have the thirty thousand?

Tal. None of us. I have made a vow that it shall devolve to my friend's nearest relation—Frederica Soltau.

Miss B. Indeed!—Strange enough!

Tal. Take the three thousand dollars and remain with me. Make this act easier to me—for you must feel it is a good act. I will forget what you have done to displease me, and you will cause me to die in peace. Grant what I ask—I ask but little of you—and yet to me it is much. Can one fellow creature refuse another, when he asks no more?

Miss B. Let the girl have the three thousand,

and us twelve.—(Tal. *clasps his hands together with violence.*)—Then I shall be satisfied.

Tal.—(After a pause.)—I have made a vow.

Miss B. So have I.

Tal. Go, go. I have nothing more to say.

Miss B. Are you serious?

Tal. I am.

Miss B. You will not agree to my proposal?

Tal. No.—(Firmly.)—No.

Miss B.—(After a pause.)—Reflect.—(Tal. *beckons to her to go.*)—Shall I go?—(Tal. *turns away.*)—Shall I go? Are you resolved?

Tal. God will assist me!

Miss B. You may assist yourself.

Tal.—(With coldness and contempt.)—Go.

Miss B.—(Approaches, and endeavours in vain to catch his eye—then in a furious and determined tone.)—I will go. [Exit.

Tal.—(Walks up and down.)—Honour!—Alas!—What speaks here—(Laying his hand on his breast.)—is more.—For my honour I can now do nothing. What can I do for my conscience?—(Casts his eyes in gloomy despair on the earth.)—Thou end of human pain and sorrow, Welcome! Welcome, death.—(Raises his eyes slowly towards Heaven.)—Almighty Judge, be merciful, if misery and despair lead me into the arms of my last friend.

Enter LEWIS.

Lew. Mr. Ellof has spoken to me.

Tal. What do you want?

Lew. Be at ease with respect to Bolfeld's ridiculous demand.

Tal. It is dreadful.

Lew. One evening he intoxicated me, and I know not what I said. I am ignorant of any promise, and will swear that I am so.

Tal. To-day you will receive the money for your creditors.

Lew. With respect to what you mentioned as your wish—

Tal. My dear son, I fear my wish was not mentioned till too late. At present I am afflicted by other matters. Leave me.

Lew. Oh, there comes my brother-in-law. [*Exit.*

Enter RATHING.

Tal. What do you want, my son?

Rath. Dear Sir, your happiness is the sole object of my pursuits. Your sorrow increases every hour. Disclose to me the cause of it.

Tal. I acknowledge your good intentions, but---

Rath. Some uncommon burden hangs upon your mind. If, from the delicacy of your feelings, you reproach yourself in any degree, do yourself justice ---look back upon the list of your good deeds---and find repose.

Tal.---(*Takes his hand.*)---In the afternoon I'll come to you, and converse with you on several subjects. This is not the time, my son.

Rath. I cannot bear that you should be seen in a false light.

Tal.---(*Sighs.*)---It must be borne.

Rath. You know that I have always feared Mr. Wehrman more than respected him. He is not your friend, and I am forry to say he even speaks against you to your daughter.

Tal. At three o'clock I'll be with you. No more, I do beseech you. I must be left alone in order to compose myself. Good morning.---(*Tal. throws himself in a chair. Rath. bows and exit.*)

Enter ELLOF.

Ell. Friend, be at ease, with respect to your son. If Bolfeld should think proper to appear here again, he shall soon be taught where the door lies, and his gentle sister---

Tal. She is resolved to leave me.

Ell. Bravo! Then peace will take her place.

Tal. Alas, no. I am oppressed by a burden, which cannot be removed.

Ell. Where does it lie?

Tal.---(*Lays his hand on his heart.*)---Here---here it has lain for years.

Ell. Disclose the nature of it.

Tal. I cannot.

Ell. Look at me stedfastly. Talland, many a person has found consolation by confiding in me. I can comprehend sorrow, endure it, and remove it. ---(*Tal. throws himself into his arms.*)---Right, my friend.

Tal.---(*Gazes at him.*)---Ellof, when you have cast a look into the horrible abyss---you will start back, and leave me for ever.

Ell.---(*With firmness.*)---I will not.---If you have ever forgotten yourself for a moment---

Tal. I have---I have---and this moment has been followed by years of misery---yet still---still does my burden become heavier.

Ell. Then bear it not alone---let me share it or remove it. Were your house on fire, would you shut the door against your neighbour, who offers his assistance?

Tal. No. You shall know my secret. It is better to sink in the opinion of my friend, than of my children.

Ell. I can be silent, and may Heaven rob me of my cheerful disposition if I be not!

Tal. On that condition I begin. Old Soltau was my bosom-friend. He hated his relations, for they behaved infamously to him. Several years previous to his death, he bequeathed his whole fortune to me. This he afterwards repented, and three days before his death he made a second will.---He placed ---oh, look more mildly at me---he placed so much confidence in me that he employed me as his notary to prepare the will, and after signing it, deposited it in my hands.---(*Strikes his breast.*)---One moment!---(*Leans on Ell.*)

Ell. Cheer up, my friend. I know mankind.

Tal. Oh God, God!—By this second will he left his whole fortune to his relations, except a legacy to me. I never was covetous, but had rejoiced at the prospect of this fortune, from sincere affection to my children. For years I had been accustomed to consider it my own. The idea that my children would lose it was insufferable.—Parental affection misled me—I—(*Covers his face.*)—I cannot proceed.

Ell. You concealed the second will.

Tal. And produced the first.

Ell. And thus became possessed of the property. I have heard the nature of your crime, and your present looks sufficiently proclaim your painful penitence.

Tal. In motion, or on my pillow, the image of my dying friend appears before me. Every shadow which I see, every voice which I hear, calls on me for retribution. My conscience accuses me, my eyes betray me, and every one who looks keenly at me seems to condemn me. My punishment is every day new—every day more dreadful.—God have mercy on me—I can no more—

Ell. Unhappy man, retain no longer the cause of your torments.

Tal. Soltau's relations traduced my character.—

Shame would not allow me to give up the whole fortune, and they refused to accept a part.—Never have I used any part of it, and at my death it shall devolve to the lawful heiress.

Ell. Right, my friend! All will, then, be properly settled. Your penitence will be complete.

Tal. This Miss Bolfeld was Soltau's housekeeper. She may, perhaps, suspect that a second will was made—nay, she may even know it. For this reason I took the monster into my family. She long conceived that my evil conscience would induce me to marry her, but finding this a fruitless hope, she began to tyrannize over me by oblique allusions to my guilt. I have been in a continual state of alarming uncertainty, but this uncertainty she has to-day removed by expressly demanding half of Soltau's property,—or—

Ell. Or what?

Tal. She did not complete her threat, but a perfect knowledge of her character makes me sure she will proceed to the utmost.

Ell. Unfortunate friend!

Tal. I am lost. I would not repine at that, but my children—my children!

Ell. Is she covetous?

Tal. Very covetous—and her brother still more so.

Ell. You are, at all events, resolved that the lawful heiress shall have the fortune.

Tal. Most positively.

Ell. Then you need not any longer torment yourself. Of course you have destroyed the second will.

Tal. No. It is still in my possession.

Ell. Away with it!

Tal. Often have I had it in my hands with the intention of burning it, but—I saw the signature of my late friend—I felt his unsuspecting confidence in me—I remembered that he died in my arms—I shuddered at the idea of what I had done, and fan-

ced that by destroying the will I was, a second time, committing the crime. The will fell from my hands, and with tears of agony I knelt near it and prayed.—It is still in my possession.

Ell. It must be destroyed—this very day. Allow me a quarter of an hour's reflection, that I may determine how we should act towards this housekeeper.

Tal. You despise me.

Ell. Talland, the tempter has thrown you down, but you have valiantly fought against him till you have placed your foot upon his neck.—

Tal. I am prepared for all that may occur, and strive not against the decision of just Fate. But my children, my children! That I, who erred through sincere affection for them—that I should brand them with infamy—

Ell. Fear not that. You are not lost. Exert yourself, and follow my directions.

Tal. Nothing can now retrieve me. Oh, conscience, conscience, thou robbest the soul of every faculty, and consumest the very marrow in our bones.

[*Exit, led by Ell.*]

Enter MISS BOLFELD, from the opposite side.

Miss B. So, Mr. Talland!—The lawful heiress is to have the property! Then have I lost all chance? No.—After ten years expectation, I will not.

Enter WEHRMAN.

Weh. Is Mr. Lewis at home?

Miss B. I don't know.

Weh. It is well that I find you here. Mark me. If your brother dares to utter another syllable relative to the marriage with his daughter, I'll talk to the fellow in a way he will not like.

Miss B.—(*In a tone of defiance.*)—Let me tell you, Sir, we are not so easily alarmed.

Weh. Indeed!—Then I may perhaps begin with you.

Miss B.—(*Astonished.*)—Me!

Weh. You were in Soltau's house, and attended him during his last illness. You will be very seriously interrogated as to what you know;—but if you will place confidence in me, you may find it to your advantage.

Miss B. I shall not listen to any such proposal, mighty Sir.

Weh. As you like. I don't want your assistance. When the flame mounts, you probably will feel that it burns. Where is the new boarder?

Miss B. Boarder!

Weh. Yes—who, from well-calculated economical compassion, has been taken into the house.

Miss B. You mean Miss Soltau, then?

Weh. I do, and mean that she may become very rich, if instructed how to act. [*Exit.*]

Miss B. Mercy on me!—The whole face of circumstances has undergone a change. Must I, then, lose every thing?—(*A pause.*)—Every thing!—No.—No.—I'll lose nothing. One person still remains, through whom I am certain to succeed. Henry!

Enter HENRY.

Beg Miss Soltau to come hither.—(*Exit Hen.*)—You, Mr. Ellof, may reflect, and you, Mr. Wehrman, may commence a law-suit. I'll outwit you both. You shall soon see whether your wisdom or my cunning is most effective.

Enter FREDERICA.

Fre. What can you want with me?

Miss B. I want to strike a bargain with you. Heaven has appointed me to be the means of bestowing happiness upon you.

Fre. How am I to understand this?

Miss B. Come with me to my chamber, that we may not be interrupted. Heaven provides most miraculously for you.

Fre. Through you?

Miss B. Through me. Be grateful to God, and reward his agent, that I pass reputably through life.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter TALLAND and ELLOF.

Tal. There she goes.—(*He has a pistol in his hand, and attempts to follow her.*)—All is lost.

Ell. Hold! She is not alone.—(*Looks through the door.*)—She goes down the gallery—and enters a chamber.

Tal. God of Heaven!—let me pass.

Ell. Hold, I say. Is your servant honest?

Tal. I dare be sworn he is.

Ell. Talk to him with composure—tell him some accounts are missing—but with composure, I say, or all is lost. Go. I'll wait here till you return.

Tal. She has the will.—(*Wipes his forehead.*)—The agonies of death are on me.

Ell. Talland, on your instant composure depends every thing.—(*Exit Tal.*)—I never was in such a situation. Assist me, invention, that I may save my friend.—No.—My mind is dark and clouded.—(*Suddenly.*)—How if I—No.—I must not do any thing. He must act. Surprise may gain the point—it is too late to compromise.—It must be so.—By

this method we shall be rid of the brother.—But if she—that matters not. There is no other resource.

Re-enter TALLAND.

Tal.—(*Rushes with open arms towards Ell.*)—She has it.

Ell. Are you certain?

Tal. She has locked herself more than once in my study.

Ell. Summon your resolution. Seek her—speak to her—seize her—and place the pistol to her breast. She is not accustomed to resolution from you. Terror may effect much.

Tal. And if she declares she has taken no paper, how dare I make a reference to the will?

Ell. She was locked in your study, and this justifies search. While you are speaking to her, Henry and I will open her chests and make strict examination.

Tal. And if the will be in her brother's hands—

Ell. Then we have no resource, but bribery. The Bolfelds must have half—Miss Soltau half.—Come! No more delay. Henry shall lead me to her room.—I see her coming. [*Exit.*

Enter MISS BOLFELD and FREDERICA from one side
—WEHRMAN *from the other.*

Weh. Where is Miss Soltau, Mr. Talland?

Tal. This is Miss Soltau.—(*Fre. curtsies.*)

Weh. She lives here at present, I am told.

Tal. She does.

Weh. Madam, I feel a sincere interest in your uncommon fate.

Tal. This, Miss Soltau, is Mr. Wehrman.

Weh. Be so good as to inform me, Sir, what this Lady's fortune is?

Fre. Sir, I have no fortune.

Weh. As far as you know.

Tal. Have you any further knowledge?

Weh. Perhaps I have. I have to communicate some very agreeable prospects to the Lady, and shall be happy if she will, for that purpose, accompany me to my sister.

Tal. Do you accept this invitation, Miss Soltau?

Fre.—(*To Weh.*)—I am grateful for your kindness, Sir, but no good fortune can happen to me, which I should not be more pleased to hear in the presence of my benefactor than in any other place.

Weh. As you please.—(*To Tal.*)—At present, therefore, you and I share the good intentions towards this Lady. How happy would it make us, if you and I could discover that she is entitled to a fortune!—(*To Fre.*)—I have therefore only to warn you against any agreement or compromise. You shall soon know what are your pretensions.—

[*Bows and exit.*

Tal.—(*To Fre.*)—Leave us a while, my good girl.—(*Exit Fre.*—*Miss B. is following her.*)—A word with you.

Miss B. I must speak to Miss Soltau.

Tal.—(*Resolutely.*)—You shall not.

Miss B. What do you want?

Tal.—(*Locking the door.*)—Confess.

Miss B. What?

Tal. You have been in my study.

Miss B. Sir——

Tal. You have opened my desk.

Miss B. Shall I speak in another tone?

Tal. It is in vain. Your last hour is come, if you do not confess.

Miss B. If you have a bad conscience, that is not my case.

Tal.—(*Holds the pistol to her breast.*)—The papers!

Miss B.—(*Alarmed beyond all measure.*)—Merciful God!

Tal. May he be merciful to me for having deprived thee of life—if thou dost not confess.

Miss B. Help!

Tal. Utter another word, and it shall be thy last. This murder would be pardonable, compared with all the misery and infamy, which for years thy malice has heaped upon me. Not all my patience, not all my kindness and generosity, not all the sums which I withheld from my children and lavished upon thee, could ever make thee so humane as to grant me one moment's comfort—Now expect no compassion—no mercy.—Vengeance, vengeance for all the torments thou hast inflicted upon me!—Hast thou stolen the papers?—Confess, or this moment thou diest.

Miss B. Mercy! Mercy!—I did take a paper.

Tal. This instant restore it.

Miss B. Oh, Heavens! I no longer have it.

Tal.—(*Cocks the pistol.*)—Who has it?

Miss B. Miss Soltau.

Tal. How long has she had it?

Miss B. Only a few minutes.—(*A knock is heard at the door.*)—When I found that you would dismiss me without any reward—(*The knock is repeated.*)

Tal. Not another syllable! You are my prisoner.

Bol.—(*Without.*)—Is nobody here?

Miss B. Yes, brother, yes.

Tal.—(*To Miss B.*)—Go into the next room, instantly.

Miss B. Burst the door open. Help! Help!—(*Tal. puts the pistol in his pocket and opens the door.*)

Enter BOLFELD.

Bol. What has happened here?

Miss B. He held a pistol to my breast.

Bol. Damnation! I'll go to a magistrate.

Miss B. Take me with you, brother.

Tal. She shall not move from the spot.

Bol. But I say she shall go with me, and he who attempts to detain her——

Tal.—(*In a tone of stupefaction and despair.*)—
True. She may go, and act as she pleases. I am tired of interfering with her conduct.

Miss B. Now we shall see whose life is in danger. Yours I rather think, Sir.

[*Exeunt Bol. and Miss B.*

Enter ELLOF, from the other side.

Ell. Whither is she going?

Tal. She is gone to publish my infamy. All is inevitably lost. Miss Soltau is already in possession of the will.

Ell. But don't let this woman go.—(*Going.*)

Tal.—(*Detains him.*)—Leave every thing to Heaven.—My hour is come.—(*Draws the pistol hastily from his pocket, and attempts to shoot himself.*)

Ell.—(*Seizes his arm.*)—Man!

Tal. Release me—I can endure no more—Cruel man, let me put an end to my sufferings.—(*Endeavours to release himself.*)—Despair is stronger than friendship.

Ell. Help! Henry! Henry!

Enter on one side, HENRY, and on the other Mr. and Mrs. RATHING.

Hen. For Heaven's sake.—(*Seizes Tal's. right arm, and wrests the pistol from his hand.*)—Dear, worthy Sir——

Rath. What has happened?

Mrs. R. Dear father!

Tal. Oh that you had a father!—Go, Maria. You are a poor forsaken orphan.

Mrs. R. Say not so, dearest father.

Tal. Mention not that name—and look not thus at me. There is peace and virtue in your looks. I cannot bear them.

Ell. Compose yourself, friend. Go, Henry.

[*Exit Henry.*]

Tal. You cannot now assist me. Farewell, Maria—embrace me.—(*Presses her in his arms, then pushes her gently from him.*)—And now forget me—forget me, all of you.

Mrs. R. Oh, may God forget me, if I do not love you with the same affection that I always felt for you!

Tal. That was not sufficient for me. I regarded not the costly blessing, and have brought infamy upon my children. Forgive me, Maria. You are poor—you are deprived of wealth and reputation—I have plundered you.—(*Takes her hand.*)—Forgive me.

Mrs. R. Oh that I could allay the tempest, which rages in this breast!—(*Lays her hand on his heart.*)

Tal. That you cannot. No one can—no one shall. The form—the dying man—his breaking eye. Do not look at me, Maria—thus he looked at me—thus my hand lay on his breast.—(*Puts Mrs. R's hand aside.*)—When I pledged to him—Away! Away!—His lips are closed—but every figure which I see proclaims his dying will.

Rath. I conjure you by all that is dear to you—

Tal. Here it is hidden—(*Beating his breast.*)—here—here—deep below his will is hidden—it has been hidden fourteen years—air—air—air—my heart will break—give me air.

Mrs. R. Father! Father!

Rath. For Heaven's sake—

Ell. Rouse yourself.

Tal. The angel of the Almighty has opened the tribunal. The world is summoned—I am condemned—my children declared infamous—through *me*.—Curse me not.---Grant me---(*Sinks on his knees before his daughter*)---Grant me thy pity---I beseech thee---(*Falls back in a swoon. They catch him in their arms.*)

ACT THE FIFTH.

Scene, the same. Enter LEWIS and WEHRMAN.

Weh. What means this sudden alteration in the house? No one is to be seen?

Lew. I cannot understand it.

Weh. Indeed. But I can---and have long understood it.---Who could have thought that a man with so bad a conscience would be the first to place others in a disgraceful light? But for your father's conduct, I should now have been at the top of preferment. For years I have used every possible effort that I might be able to gain public satisfaction for the public disgrace he brought upon me. The wished-for moment is arrived, and I will not let it pass without availing myself of it.

Lew. Is this your friendship? Would you try to ruin the father of your friend?

Weh. He is my enemy, and I am only doing an act of justice. Soltau's fortune must be transferred to the lawful heiress. It is evident that the will by which your father obtained it, was a false one.

Lew. Dare you attempt—

Weh. I every moment perceive more palpably that the attempt is not daring. As for you---of course there is an end to the connection between you and my sister; but I will, nevertheless, assist you in your pursuits.

Lew. And if the worst were true, how will you act towards my father?

Weh. The only means of persuading me not to make his crime public, will be to confess to me that he is as guilty as he wished to make me appear in the eyes of the world---but he must throw himself entirely upon my mercy.

Lew. You are a monster. I despise myself for listening to you.

Weh. You feel as a son ought to feel, but remember your father's situation makes it necessary that you should beware of using illiberal language to me.

Lew. My father cannot be what you describe.

Weh. Come with me to your room, and I will communicate the proofs to you.---But, however, you are young, and may, perhaps, gain the affections of this Miss Soltau, by which you will become possessed of the whole fortune, and can support your relations.

Lew. Spare your humiliating counsel, and have compassion on my father.

Weh. I have observed his conduct with a watchful eye so long, that I sink under the foolish weakness of feeling pity for him. I promise to conceal his error from the world, but only on condition of being allowed to convince him that it is in my power to retaliate upon him.

Lew. The son must be silent, but at least avoid the family for the present, and let me speak to you as a friend.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter MR. and MRS. RATHING and ELLOF.

Mrs. R. Alas, I have no hope. My father is lost to the world and us.

Rath. Compose yourself, Maria.

Ell. I must own the attack is severe, but this might naturally be expected. That a secret on which his character depends, should be brought to light after having been concealed in his own breast for so many years,---that his sincere repentance may not be so well known as his crime---all this must affect him deeply. But, thank Heaven, the storm is over. He must now seek repose elsewhere.

Rath. Undoubtedly. He must see the inhabitants of this place as little as possible.

Ell. He must prevail upon himself to appear once more among them---and then away! I will accompany him.

Mrs. R. But what is to be done? Miss Soltau has the will.

Ell. Perhaps it is not yet opened.

Mrs. R. And the Bolfelds! What---

Ell. With them nothing but money will avail. Go, my dear Sir, and send Bolfeld to me.

Rath. Offer what you please. We wish for no parental inheritance if a father's peace can be purchased with it.

Mrs. R. Dearest William! [*Embraces him.*]

Ell. Right!---Lewis must undertake to silence Wehrman---I'll direct this. But that he may not form a combination with Bolfeld, send the avaricious bully hither instantly. You, Madam, must attend to your father---but at present let him sleep. I will have an immediate conversation with Miss Soltau, after which I shall be ready for Bolfeld.

Mrs. R. Heaven reward you, Sir, for the interest you feel——

Ell. Not another word---and not another tear! For the crime which has been committed torrents of tears have already been shed.---(*Takes their hands.*) ---Courage, my friends! All may yet end well. Go, go.---(*Exeunt Mr. and Mrs. R.*)---Wehrman! Wehrman!---Alas! There hangs the cloud which threatens to destroy my plans.

Enter LEWIS, much agitated.

Lew. Where is my father?

Ell. In his room, but how long he will remain there---or can remain there, I know not.

Lew. God of Heaven!

Ell. What will you do for him?

Lew. Every thing that man can do.---Who will advise me---

Ell. I will.

Lew. Is it true then that the will——

Ell. It is true.

Lew. That my father's honour——

Ell. Young man, I admire your feeling, but recollect that he, who exposed himself to danger for your sake, ought not to be deprived of honour in your eyes.

Lew. Can you imagine I condemn him?

Ell.---(*Takes his hand.*)---Henceforth I shall not imagine you capable of it.---As for honour, if you chuse to gain it by filial exertion, I'll be your instructor.

Lew. I am astonished that a stranger——

Ell. Congenial minds are not strangers to each other.

Lew. Oh, speak then. What must be done?

Ell.---(*Lays his hand on Lewis's breast.*)---This must tell you.

Lew.---(*Resolutely.*)---Frederica shall have the fortune.

Ell. Right!

Lew. But I fear it will be difficult to silence Wehrman.

Ell. That you must attempt. Your father's distress urges this implacable man to prove his suspicions by force; and such conduct has as great, perhaps a greater effect, on a suffering penitent, than absolute proof would have upon a hardened villain.

Lew. He will conceal the circumstance from the world, if my father will confess all to him in private.

Ell. Such a demand will kill your father.

Lew. All petitions are in vain.

Ell. Then only one expedient remains. The laws forbid it, but filial affection, roused to the utmost by despair, justifies it.

Lew. I understand you, and my sensations anticipated your sentiments; but the fear of doing any thing which might draw the attention of the public to my father, deterred me. Now, however, when you urge it—(*Going.*)

Ell. Yet hold!—You are right.—Another way is still open to us. Falsehood must aid where truth cannot prevail. Be ready to maintain every thing I propose—every thing I say of you.

Lew. I do not comprehend you.

Ell. Time is precious. Send Wehrman to me.

Lew. I place my father's fate in your hands.

Ell. Some one comes.—Send Wehrman hither.

[*Exit. Lew.*]

Enter FREDERICA.

Miss Soltau, I am a friend of this family. At my age, a man may be supposed to have obtained some

knowledge of the world. I wish for your confidence, and time will not permit me to say more than that you shall find me worthy of it.

Fre. After having witnessed your conduct, Sir, since I came to this house, I willingly grant it—nay, came hither to ask your advice.

Ell. That you shall have. Providence has placed you in a critical situation. You have received a paper. Was it open, when you received it!

Fre. It was.

Ell. Have you read it?

Fre. I have.

Ell. And how mean you to act?

Fre. In such a manner as to injure no one. Oh, instruct my inexperienced youth, and tell me how I can be of any service to Mr. Talland.

Ell. I perceive you are worthy of the fortune, which must fall to you. But hear me. As God shall judge me, Talland had determined that you should have it before he took you into his house.

Fre. Oh, I willingly believe it. Your word, and the kindness with which he sought me, are sufficient proofs. I am still more indebted to him than I thought. His children shall not be deprived of all.

Ell. Good girl! Bolfeld may, I think, be bribed, but the suspicions of Wehrman——

Enter LEWIS.

Lew. Mr. Ellof, my father wants you.

Ell. Will you consent to appear ignorant of all that has happened, and to accept the whole fortune as a present from Talland?

Fre. I will.—

Ell. We must lose no time. May I rely on this?

Fre.—(*Presents her hand to him.*)—Most firmly.

Ell. God reward you, and when a young man, worthy of you, shall obtain this hand, the recollection of your present conduct must make you completely happy. God bless you! [*Exit.*

Fre.—(*To Lewis, who is going.*)—Mr. Lewis!

Lew. Madam!

Fre. When I last saw you, I begged that our conversation might end. I now intreat your patience.

Lew. You need but command.

Fre. Pardon me, if I avail myself of this opportunity to speak on the subject with which your mind must at present be wholly concerned. Your father is justified in my eyes and in the eyes of Heaven, for his contrition has been sincere: willingly, therefore, will I lend my aid to justify him in the eyes of the world. Repeat this to your sister and brother-in-law, to whom I would be happy to say it if I did not wish to make you the messenger of good tidings, who have so often gone to them for a far different purpose.

Lew. You surprise me——

Fre. Hear further. My uncle did not forget his friend, entirely—nor shall I forget him. Be assured that Mr. Talland may be at ease with respect to his children.

Lew. Can you, by humiliating generosity——

Fre. Your father is just—you are just—allow me to be so too. I shall rejoice to see you more happy and composed. [*Exit.*

Lew. My admiration of her sense and virtue increases each time that I converse with her, but it is, thank Heaven, admiration unmingled with interested motives.

Enter BOLFIELD.

Bol. Pshaw! Never tell me——

Lew. What do you want, Sir?

Bol. Not you for a son-in-law, Mr. Light-purse.

Lew. Scoundrel, I'll kick you out of doors.

Bol. But not till you have paid me---and paid me handsomely too. Oh, that I had known this story of the will sooner! You should have offered me a round sum on your knees.

Lew. If you have any regard for your bones---

Bol. You ought to thank me for only bawling within doors, for if I were to proclaim what I know in the street, every window of the house would be broken in a trice.

Enter RATHING.

Rath. Be quiet, I beseech you, and have compassion on the old man.

Bol. What! Have compassion on a man, who held a pistol to my sister's breast! At a word---eight thousand dollars I'll have---or the devil himself shall be let loose.

Rath. But Miss Soltau will obtain the fortune.

Bol. That's your concern---not mine. The money I will have, and if my sister had not been a great fool, we should have had a great deal more long ago.

Rath. I have already made the utmost offer.

Bol. What! a few paltry dollars, forsooth! Will you, or will you not, give me eight thousand?

Rath. I will not.

Bol. Then abide by the consequence.---(*Going.*)

Enter ELLOF.

Ell.---(*Detains Bolfeld.*)---Holla, townsman!

Bol. Townsman! Who are you?

Ell. One, who proceeds with vigour, when he

discovers villanous intentions. I know Mr. Bolfeld well. Submit, or dread me.

Bol. Damnation! What do you mean?

Ell. You shall have a thousand dollars, on condition that you and your sister sign an article, declaring it to be your joint opinion that no second will was ever made. Instantly consent, or the nefarious traffic in smuggled goods, between you and Reefeld, shall be brought to light, and Mr. Bolfeld's dismissal must of course ensue. Answer.

Bol. Smuggled! Does a run-away fellow presume to accuse me——

Ell.---(Seizes him by the collar.)---Scoundrel!---

Bol. Mercy on me---for Heaven's sake.

Ell. You have robbed the government of its revenue, and that part of its revenue, which you are appointed to receive.

Bol. Pray, Sir, can you produce any proofs of this?

Ell. I can, villain. The waggoners employed by you are ready to testify it.

Bol.---(Aside.)---Damnation!

Ell. Now consent instantly, or I will proceed to establish your guilt.

Bol. Mercy on me! I must first consult my poor sister, and if she has no objection——

Ell. Begone, then. A thousand dollars---and no more. Begone, I say.

Bol. I always told the blockhead to bring the affair to a conclusion. Now, we must be satisfied with a paltry thousand. The stupid old fool!

[Exit.

Ell. That fellow is secured. Reefeld and I lived in the same village, and I was lately apprized of the connection between him and Bolfeld. I was resolved to expose their villany, but rejoice I have so good a reason for concealing it. We must now disarm Wehrman. Go to your father, Mr. Lewis---re-

ceive the money designed for the payment of your debts, and take leave of him.

Lew. I will not forsake my father.

Rath. Leave!

Ell. The carriage is ordered. He must quit this place for a short time. I own I wish your wife could accompany him.

Rath. She can and will.

Ell. Some one else must accompany him too, if all be as I wish.

Lew. I repeat that I will not forsake him.

Ell. If you will not confirm his melancholy by letting him perceive your own, I can have no objection. Remember you must support me in every thing. Wehrman will come, I presume?

Lew. Very soon.

Ell. Go, then---summon your spirits, and return with a cheerful countenance.

Lew. As cheerful as it can be. [Exit.

Ell. Now to business again. Wehrman can make no complaint respecting a concealed will, if the heiress deny its existence. We must confuse him by a bold stroke.---(*Espies Frederica.*)---It is well you come.

Enter FREDERICA.

Fre. It cannot be pleasant to any one that I should any longer remain in this house.---(*Presents a paper to Ellof.*)---Here is my grateful acknowledgment of Mr. Talland's bounty.

Ell. Generous girl! Will you rescue the good man entirely? It is in your power.

Fre. Most willingly.

Ell. Will you, to effect this, undertake---what I dare scarcely ask?

Fre. Any thing compatible with my honour.

Ell. His melancholy situation---makes me ven-

ture any request, by which my friend can be rescued. My dear girl, consent for a short time to acknowledge yourself engaged to Lewis. The most solemn article shall be given to you, declaring you are free. Confess that you are engaged to him in the presence of Wehrman, and leave this place with us. At the expiration of a few weeks, it may be said, that not finding him the man with whom you can be happy, you have declined his addresses, and that his father, incensed at his conduct, has restored to you the property of your uncle. Thus, for a short time, we shall silence the world, and all will, meanwhile, be properly adjusted. Do you feel yourself capable of doing so much to save my unhappy friend?

Fre.---(After a pause.)---As far as I can at present judge---it will not be easy to me.

Rath. That I feel.

Fre. But if you both think that it will produce such happy consequences---

Rath. It will; it will.

Fre. I will consent to it, then, on the conditions you have mentioned.

Rath.---(Kisses her hand.)---I admire---revere you.

Ell. The deed by which you are acknowledged to be at liberty, you shall receive from me. Now, Wehrman is completely disarmed. Go, dear generous girl. We expect him every moment.---(Exit Frederica.)---When he comes, we must, as if by accident, make some allusion to the pretended connexion between the young people.

Enter TALLAND, LEWIS, and MRS. RATHING.

Come, my friend---hold up your head. All goes on as we wish.---(Talland looks at him.)

Ratk. You may be at ease now, dear Sir.---(Talland sighs.)

Lew. I accompany you on the journey---don't I, my father?

Tal. Journey!---(Reflects awhile.)---Yes---I must begin the journey---

Ell. Right, my good friend.

Tal.---(Takes his daughter's hand.)---Do you hear?

Mrs. R. We are all of one opinion in that respect, dear father.

Ell. Miss Soltau consents to the declaration that she is engaged to Mr. Lewis.

Lew. To me!

Ell. Not another word. Obey, that you may prove your filial affection---but remember this is only a pretended engagement---

Lew. You need not remind me of that.

Ell. So much the better. All, then, is settled. You must now, my friend, lend us some little assistance by appearing cheerful as we pass through the streets, after which we will allow you a tear, if you feel yourself thereby relieved.

Tal.---(Smiles.)---I have shed many tears---and I remember they relieved me,---but how to appear cheerful---I know not.---(Looks around.)---I feel as if I was many years older---(Sighs.)---I am so weary---

Mrs. R.---(Apart to Ellof.)--Heavens! What means this?

Ell.---(With composure.)---I am sorry for it.

Tal. Give me a chair---I cannot bear my sorrows and my body.---(Seats himself.)---The burden is too great---too great.

Ell. You will soon be better, my good friend.---(Talland shakes his head, and smiles.)---You will, indeed.

Tal. Not here---not here. Maria, come hither---
seat yourself close to me---close to my heart.

Mrs. R.---(*Takes a chair.*)---Dearest father!

Tal. I thought I had something more to say to
you. Perhaps it would have been better, if I had
not seen you---for the sight of you distresses me.

Lew.---(*Kneeling before him.*)---My father!

Tal. Maria, your hand!--You were always good.
Your hand too, Lewis.--It trembles, my son.--I
wanted to tell you that I love you--and you, too,
Rathing. This is old--but it is true.

Ell. You must not give way to this despondency,
friend.

Mrs. R. Oh, cease, or you will break my heart.

Tal. I will no longer distress any one.--(*Clasps
his hands, and looks around.*)--Oh!--(*Strikes his
breast.*)--Open a window.--(*Lew. obeys.*--I am so
hot--so oppressed--and--(*Beckons to Ell. who ap-
proaches, and to whom he whispers.*)---Don't let
them all flit before me thus.

Ell. I'll prevent it.--(*Shakes his head, turns away,
and wipes his eyes.*)

Tal. Must it be so?--Well, well--it is late--and
I must go to the chancellor.--(*Rises.*)

Mrs. R. Compose yourself, dear father.--(*Causes
him to sit down again.*)--Compose yourself.

Tal. Is not that Mr. Wehrman?

Rath. He is not here, Sir.

Tal. Indeed!--(*Sighs.*)--Wehrman is the cause
of my being obliged to go away.--(*A pause.*)---I
was thinking, that as I must go away, and we are
now together, I might give you some good advice---
for who knows when we shall meet again?

Lew. Your will shall be our law.

Tal. Much will be said against me now, and
after my death--but you must not attend to it.
You, Maria, must not weep when you hear my ho-
nour called in question---and you, my sons, must

not be violent, as good sons might be on such an occasion. Call to mind that you are good children, but that I---was not a good father.

Ell. For Heaven's sake, cease, I beseech you.

Tal.---(*Wipes his eyes.*)---Now I have been obliged to weep.—Yes.—I must go—I must leave my family, my native land, and the tomb which contains your mother, and which I wished to have contained me too.—(*Gazes at all with folded hands.*)—Old and infirm as I am, I must fly, and avoid the sight of every honest man.

Ell.—(*Much agitated.*)—Cease, I say. I command—I insist upon it.

Tal.—(*Seems somewhat alarmed, looks at Ell. and then says with composure*)—Yes---I obey---I'll do any thing you wish. I have no will.---(*In a friendly tone to Ell.*)---Shall I go?

Ell. Yes---your son and daughter will accompany you on the journey.

Lew. and Mrs. R. Yes, dear father.

Tal. Don't deceive me, for were I to leave my home without you, it would break my heart.

Lew. and Mrs. R. We will accompany you, indeed.

Tal. Well—take my blessing for your filial affection. I may be allowed to bless you---for the greatest criminal is allowed before his execution—

Mrs. R.---(*Kneels.*)---I receive with gratitude the blessing of the best and most unfortunate of fathers.

Lew.---(*Kneels.*)---The blessing of Heaven.

Tal. Never become rich---never---never---for I can tell you in confidence—---(*Draws his children to him. Rath. unperceived by his wife takes the hand of Ell. and points with a look of anguish to his forehead.*)

Ell. Oh, God!

Mrs. R.—(*Turns away, and throws herself into the arms of her husband.*)—He is lost.

Tal.---(*Seems to be seeking something in his breast.*)
---See---here---there---(*Puts his hand to his head*)---
and there---how painful!

Lew. What thus distresses you?

Tal. Conscience, conscience. Oh, I am hot---
dreadfully hot---and you---you are all in tears.
Right! I have robbed you of every thing---but for-
give me---for although I make you unhappy, I am
so too---and I am still your father.

[*Throws himself into the arms of his son.*]

Enter WEHRMAN.

Weh. I hear strange news, indeed.

Ell. Come, madam. We will conduct your father
to his room.

Tal. (*Rivets his eyes on Weh.*)---There he is. I
am ready.---(*To the rest.*)---Farewell!

Weh. are you not well?

Tal.---(*Releases himself*)---I am extremely well.
---(*Presses Wehrman's hand.*)---I sincerely thank
you for having relieved me.---(*Gives his keys to
Rath.*)---There!---(*Kisses his daughter, and embraces
his son and friend.*)---Yes---I am released. Celebrate
my release without a curse.

Lew.---(*To Weh.*)---Oh leave us.

Tal. Peace! Listen to me.

Ell. You are too weak---

Tal. Mr. Wehrman, you are my friend. I may
entrust it to you.

Ell.---(*To Weh.*)---Sir, you see his situation.---
(*Seizes Tal. by the arm.*)---Come to your room.

Tal. No---no---I must first make peace---I will
honourably restore all---

Rath. He has made his daughter-in-law a present
of the Soltau estate---(*Leading him away.*)

Tal. See---they want to drag me away. Help!---
(*They quit their hold.*)

Weh. Compose yourself, Mr. Talland.

Tal.---(*Goes towards Weh.*)---The will was false---totally false.---(*Mrs. R. almost faints. Rath. supports her.*)

Lew. You see his situation, Mr. Wehrman.

Weh. I go.

Tal. No. Stay. All is well. I feel better than I was---I feel easier---more cheerful.---Ha! What are those men bearing?---See---there---see---how kindly he looks at me.---Don't you see him---old Soltau?---There, to the right---there he lies---Silence! Silence!---His eyes are closed. He is asleep. I'll wake him.---(*Totters towards a chair. Lew. supports him.*)

Mrs. R. Oh, my father, my father!

Ell. His senses are fled.

Lew. There is your victory.

Weh.---(*Agitated.*)---Oh, I wished not for such a victory.

Tal.---(*Kneels before the chair.*)---Awake! Awake! I have restored all---I have no more.---Persecute me no longer---awake and forgive me---awake!---Ha!---He opens his eyes---he offers me his hand---he draws me to him.---(*With a cry of horror.*)---Oh! How cold you are!---(*Becomes very weak.*)---So cold---so cold---oh!---(*His breath begins to fail---he contends against the oppression, and attempts to rise.*)---Let me---(*They support him.*)---Let me---

Weh.---(*To Ell.*)---I will maintain that I have seen and heard nothing.---This is too much. [*Exit.*

Tal. So cold---so dark---(*Draws breath with great difficulty.*)---Now I am well---very well.---(*Staggers, and becomes convulsed.*)

Rath. A chair!

Tal.---(*Starts from the arms of those who support him.*)---Fire! Fire!---Oh!---(*Falls---his breast heaves high---he expires.*)

Mrs. R. Help! Help!

[*Rushes out.*

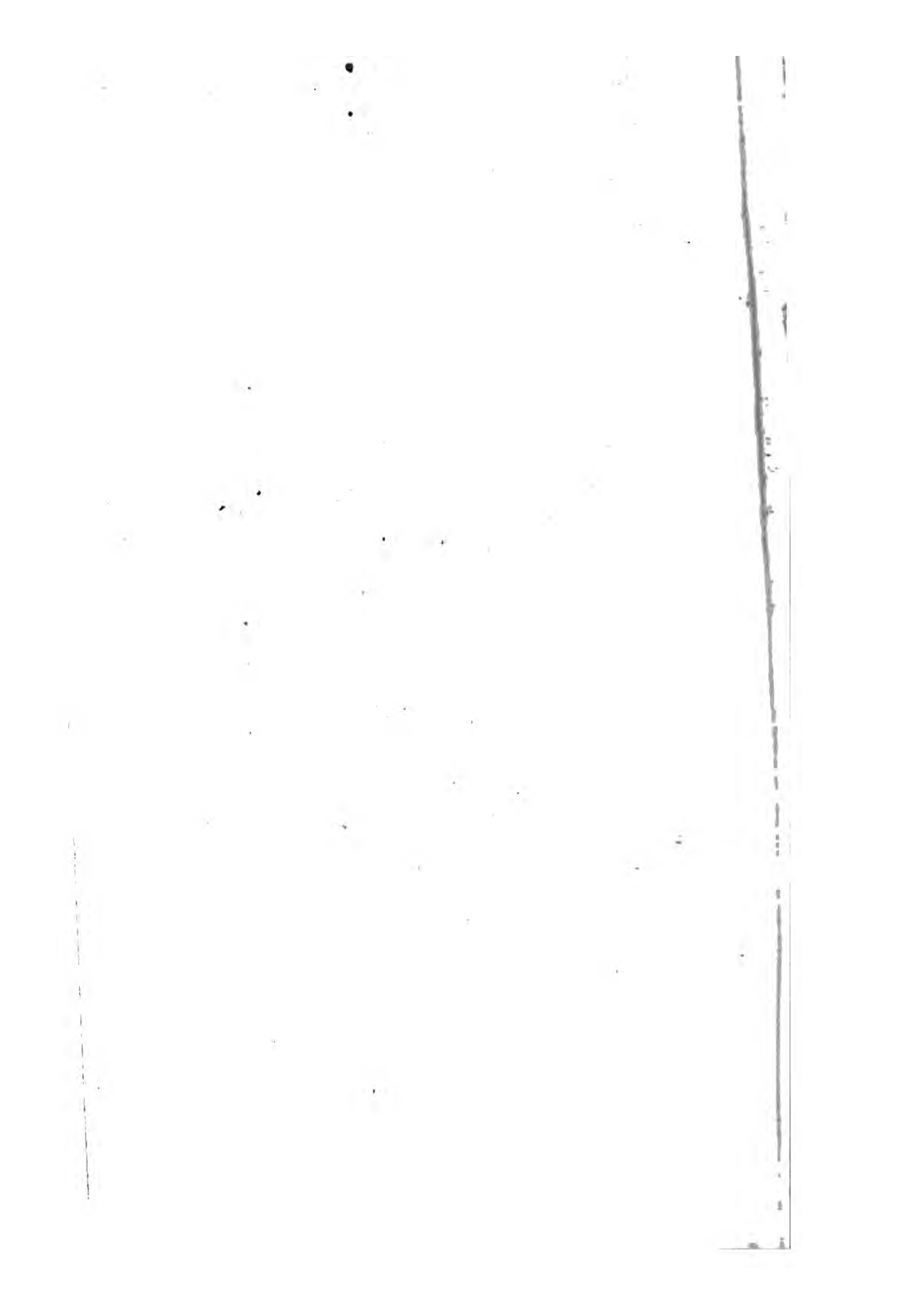
Lew. God of Heaven!—(*Kneels, and takes his hand.*)

Rath.—(*With uplifted hands, and voice choaked with tears.*)—Oh, conscience, conscience!

Ell.—(*Casts a look of agony towards Tal.*)—My friend!—We shall meet again.—(*The curtain falls.*)

END OF VOL. V.





1



