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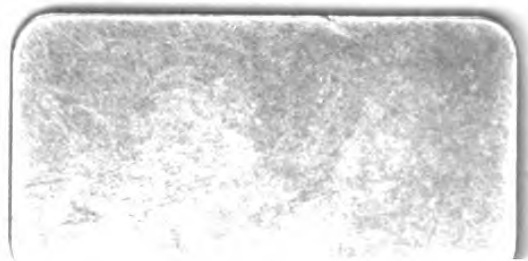


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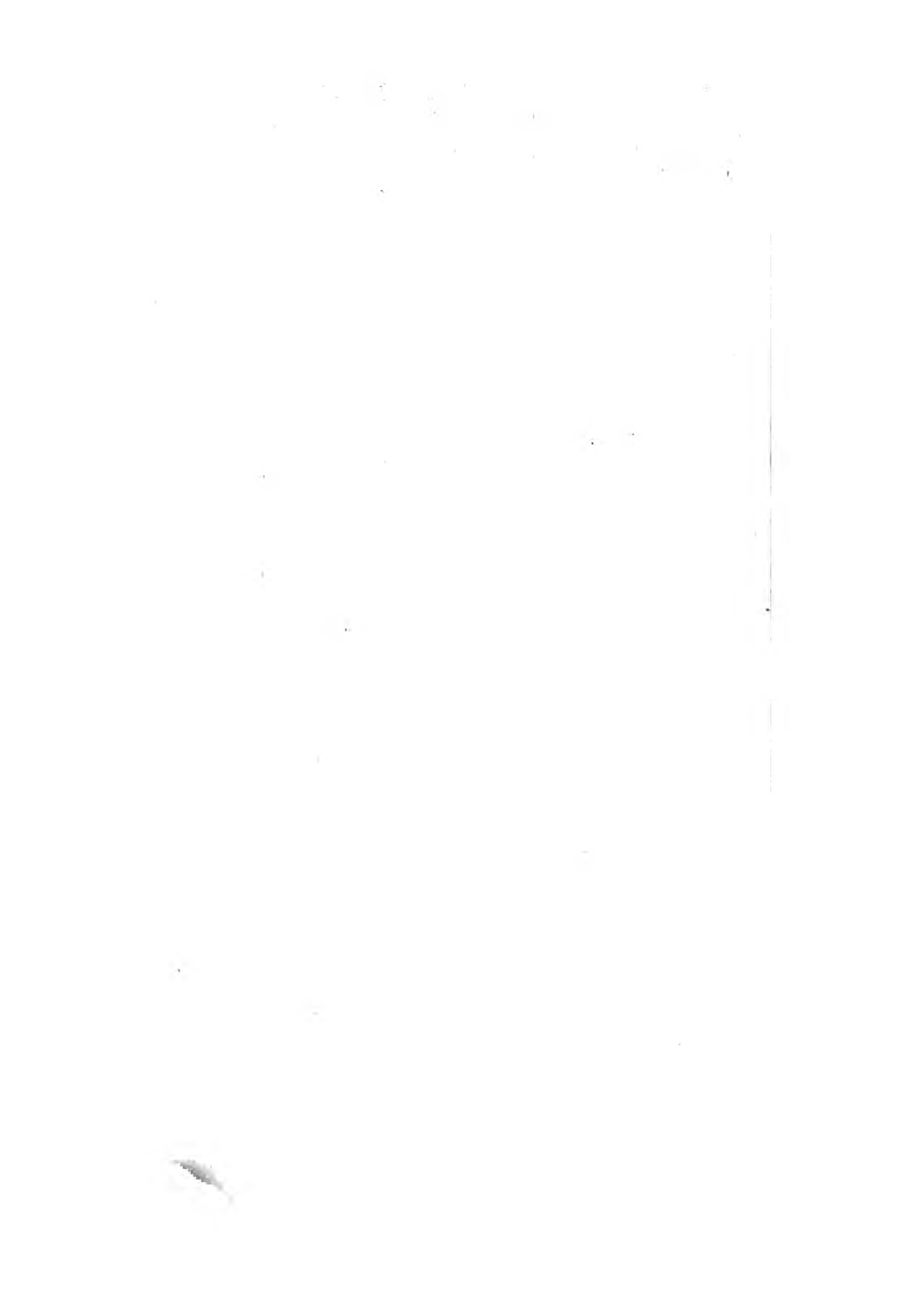


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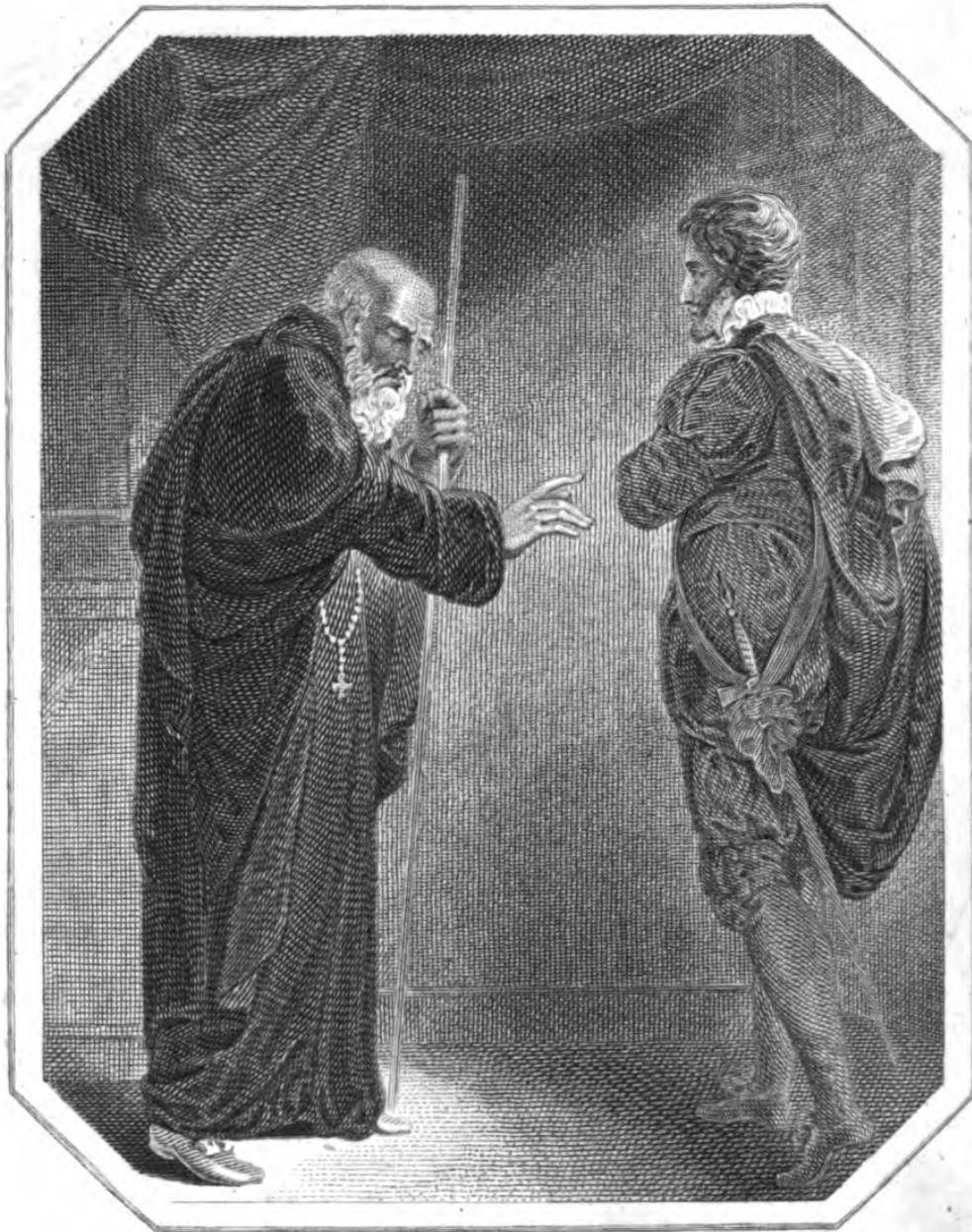


~~W. G. Smith.~~

THE
German Theatre.

VOL. II.





T. Thurston, del.

J. Neagle, sculp.

Don Carlos

Act V. Scene 10.

Published March 1st 1801, by Vernor & Hood, Poultry.

THE
German Theatre,

Translated by

BENJAMIN THOMPSON, Esq.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL II.

Containing

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COUNT BENYOWSKY.

FOURTH EDITION.

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COLEMAN-STREET.**

1811.



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

DON CARLOS,
INFANT OF SPAIN.

A TRAGEDY,
IN FIVE ACTS.

FROM
SCHILLER.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

PHILIP *the Second, King of Spain.*
DON CARLOS, *his Son.*
PRINCE OF PARMA, *his Nephew.*
MARQUIS POSA, *a Knight of Malta.*
DUKE ALBA.
COUNT LERMA, *Commander of the body-guard.*
DUKE OF FERIA, *Knight of the golden fleece.*
DUKE OF MEDINA SIDONIA, *Admiral of the Spanish fleet.*
DON RAIMOND DE TAVIS, *Postmaster-General.*
DOMINGO, *the King's Confessor.*
GRAND INQUISITOR.
PRIOR *of a Carthusian Convent.*
MERCADO, *the Queen's Physician.*

WOMEN.

ELIZABETH DE VALOIS, *Queen of Spain.*
CLARA EUGENIA, *her Daughter, three years of age.*
DUCHESS OF OLIVAREZ,
MARCHIONESS OF MONDECAR, } *Ladies attending on*
PRINCESS EBOLI, } *the Queen.*
COUNTRESS FUENTES,

Grandees, Pages, Officers, Ladies, Friars, &c.

DON CARLOS,

INFANT OF SPAIN.

ACT THE FIRST.

Scene, the Royal Garden at Aranjuez.

Enter CARLOS and DOMINGO.

Dom. THE cheerful days enjoyed by others at Aranjuez have had no effect upon your highness. Our abode at this delightful spot has been of no avail.—(Carlos is thoughtful and silent.)—Be not thus mute, and thus mysterious, Prince. Let your heart be open to a parent's heart. No monarch can purchase, at too dear a rate, the peace and comfort of his only son. The power of Philip is extensive. If you have any wish ungratified, name it to Philip. But is this possible? I was present when due homage was paid to royal Carlos in Toledo—when princes contended for the honour of kissing his hand, and six mighty potentates at the same moment knelt to him. I saw the blood mount into his cheeks—I saw his bosom heave with great resolves—I saw his sparkling eye wander with delight through the assembly—yes, and his eye confessed that he was satisfied. But this deep solemn melan-

choly, Prince, which we with sorrow have remarked during eight months, is to each member of the court a painful mystery. Many a night of care has it caused your royal father, and many a tear has it drawn from the eyes of your mother.

Car.—(*Starts.*)—Mother!

Dom.—(*Surprised.*)—Prince!

Car. Heaven grant I may forgive the man who made her my mother!

Dom. Prince!

Car.—(*Recollecting himself.*)—Holy father, I have been unfortunate in mothers. The first act of which I was guilty, when I saw the light, was matricide.

Dom. Is it possible that your Royal Highness can allow such a reproach to dwell upon your mind?

Car. And my new mother—has she not robbed me of the little love my father felt for me? My only merit in his eyes consisted in being his only son.—She has produced a daughter.—Alas! Who can foretell what futurity may disclose?

Dom. You surely are disposed to be ironical. Her Majesty is adored by all Spain. Can it be possible that your Highness alone surveys her with the eyes of hatred? Is she not the most beautiful woman on our globe? Are not her very looks royal? Is she not in the bloom of youth? Was she not to have been your bride? Impossible! Impossible! Carlos cannot hate the darling of our nation. By saying this he contradicts himself. But though I know you are not serious, Prince, let no one, I entreat you, tell the queen her son dislikes her—it would affect her deeply.

Car. Think you it would?

Dom. If, Prince, you bear in mind the last tournament at Saragossa, you can hardly doubt it. The queen sat with the ladies of the court, surveying what passed among the combatants. Suddenly some one called “The king is wounded.” The cry was

on every side repeated, till the confused report reached the queen's ears!—"The prince!" cried she, and attempted to spring from the balcony.—"No. The king himself."—"Send, then, for surgeons," was her answer, while she endeavoured to regain her breath.—(*After a pause.*)—You are thoughtful.

Car. I am lost in admiration of his Majesty's most merry confessor, who seems to have a store of pointed anecdote; but,—(*With a look of stern solemnity*)—father Domingo, I have often heard that spies and vile informers have in this world done far more harm than poison or the poniard. You have taken on yourself unnecessary trouble. If you expect to be thanked, go to the king.

Dom. Your Highness is right in being cautious; but proper distinctions should ever be made. Spurn not from you the friend as well as the hypocrite. My intentions are upright.

Car. Let not my father know this,—else is your disgrace certain—your hopes of the purple vain.

Dom.—(*Starts.*)—How!

Car. Why thus affect surprise? Are you not promised the first vacant see?

Dom. You mock me, Prince.

Car. Heaven forbid that I should mock the dreadful man who can declare my father blessed or damned!

Dom. I will not presumptuously attempt to dive into the cause of your mysterious melancholy. Allow me, however, to remind your Highness that the church offers an asylum to every oppressed mind; that no monarch has a key to this asylum; and that even crimes are undiscoverable when sealed with the signet of the sacrament. You understand me. I need say no more.

Car. Right! You need not. Far be it from me to tempt the bearer of this signet.

Dom. Prince, this suspicion—you misconstrue the intentions of your most faithful servant.

Car.—(*Takes his hand.*)—Right, again! Therefore pay no further regard to my concerns. You are a holy man—that every body knows; but, to confess the truth, you are already troubled with the cares of too many consciences. Your road, holy father, leads to St. Peter's chair. Too much knowledge might be a burden to you on the journey. Report this to the King, who sent you hither.

Dom. Sent me hither!

Car. Such were my words, most venerable father.—Too well I know that I am betrayed at this court—that a hundred eyes are bribed to observe my every action—that King Philip has sold his only son to the basest of his subjects—that every one who reports a syllable which I have uttered, is more liberally rewarded than if he had done a virtuous action—that I—but no more of this. My heart will betray all it feels on such a subject. I have already said too much.

Dom. It is his Majesty's intention to return, before the approach of evening, to Madrid. The court is already preparing for departure. Shall we have the honour, Prince—

Car. Enough!—I shall attend his Majesty.

[*Exit Dom.*

Thou art worthy of compassion, Philip; worthy of it as thy son. Already I perceive that the viper Jealousy has lodged its deadly venom in thy soul. Thy luckless anxiety hastens with eagerness to make the most dreadful of discoveries, and when made it will drive thee to distraction. Thy treasures may be exhausted—the boisterous billows may destroy thy fleets—rebellion may force its way even to the steps of thy throne. All this thou mayest witness without alarm, but when—

Enter POSA.

Spirits of bliss! Whom do I see? My Roderigo!

Posa. My Carlos!—(*They embrace.*)

Car. Is it possible? May I believe my senses?
—Yes, yes.—'Tis he, 'tis Roderigo. I press
him to my breast—I feel his heart beat against mine.
All now is well again. This embrace is balsam to
my wounded soul.

Posa. Your wounded soul! All now is well again!
What mean you by these declarations?

Car. And what brings you from Brussels at a
time that no one expected you?—How!—Can I
ask? Pardon me, holy providence, pardon the
impious question. Thou didst see the unhappy Car-
los, and hast sent to him his guardian angel.

Posa. Dear Prince, I can return no answer to
this storm of rapture, but declarations of astonish-
ment. Little did I expect to find King Philip's son
in such a state. Never did Carlos meet me with a
look so dreadful. Your haggard cheeks are flushed
with an unnatural glow—your feverish lips quiver,
and are pale.—What must I think? This cannot
be the emblem of the lion—this cannot be the bold
intrepid youth, to whom a nation, grievously op-
pressed, has sent me—for I stand not here as Ro-
derigo—as the companion of your early years.—No,
as the ambassador of a much-injured people. In
their name I embrace you. It is Flanders which
weeps upon your neck, and solemnly calls upon you
for deliverance. The day, the dreadful day is
come, which ends their liberty for ever. King
Philip is resolved to plunge a poniard into the heart
of Brabant. Your favourite country loses its free-
born rights, if Alba, that harsh instrument of fell
fanaticism, reaches the gates of Brussels with the
law of Spain. The last hope of this almost de-

spairing land, rests on the grandson of immortal Charles. If he be not affected by its sad appeal, all, all is lost.

Car. Then all is lost indeed. Tears are the utmost I can offer, and them my own misery requires. Heaven has forsaken me—why should I think of others?

Posa. Carlos, I no longer know you. Is this the man whom heaven had spared to vindicate the rights of human nature? Is this the man, who stood upright amidst the universal degeneracy of Europe, who boldly dashed from his lips the envenomed draught of popery, who defied the power of priesthood, and, in the cause of all mankind, feared not a wily king's pretended piety?

Car. Speak you of me? You are mistaken, friend. I once dreamt of a Carlos, like the man you have described—whose boiling blood would mount into his cheeks, if liberty were mentioned—but he has long been dead. The Carlos, whom you now behold, is not the man whom you took leave of, in Alkali, whose aspiring mind aimed at a knowledge of the bliss which Paradise bestows, and fondly hoped that, when upon the throne, he could transplant such bliss to Spain. The idea was childish, but oh, how heavenly!—Past is the vision, never to return.

Posa. Vision, Prince! Was it then but a vision?

Car. Let me weep; let me shed these scalding tears upon the bosom of my only friend. Far as King Philip's power extends—far as his fleets display the Spanish flag, there is no place but this where I can freely shed my tears. Oh, Roderigo, I conjure you, by our mutual hopes of heavenly bliss, throw me not from your arms.—(*Posa bends over him with speechless emotion.*)—Fancy me an orphan, who has a claim on your compassion; for though I am a monarch's son, I know not what it

is to have a father. Oh, if the hopes which my heart cherishes be gratified, if bounteous nature formed Roderigo with the same sensations as my own, if the chords of our hearts were destined to move in mutual mild vibration, if the tear which relieves me is dearer to you than King Philip's favour—

Posa. Dearer than all the world.

Car. I am become so poor and abject that I must remind you of our earlier years, and claim the debt you have owed me since that time. This debt is pure disinterested friendship. We were two wild boys, who had no cares, or nearly none, for I was only grieved to see myself so much eclipsed by you, until at length I formed the resolution of making you my friend, instead of envying you. My offer was, however, not accepted—you received my tokens of regard with coldness. Often—though you did not see them—often have tears rolled down my cheeks, when I perceived that your regard was bestowed upon inferiors. “Why,” thought I, “why are these preferred to me? Do I not feel as sincere an esteem for him as they?”—Me you approached with cold solemnity, then knelt, and said this homage was the Prince's due.

Posa. No more of this, I pray. You confuse me.

Car. I deserved not such a forced return—such cold respect: yet though you hurt me, you could not persuade me to withdraw my proffered friendship. Thrice did you discard the Prince—thrice he returned to beg and force on you a brother's love. Chance did what Carlos was not able to effect. It happened once, when we were amusing ourselves with boyish sports, that the shuttlecock, which you had struck, flew with some force against the eye of my aunt, the Queen of Bohemia. She thought you did it purposely, and with tears made her complaint to my father. Every one of our play-

mates was summoned to appear before him, that the culprit might be discovered; and the King swore he should be punished with rigour, even if he were his son. I saw you stand with fearful tremor at a distance—I approached to the King, knelt, confessed the crime was mine, and submitted to the punishment decreed.

Posa. Alas! Of what do you remind me, Prince?

Car. And the punishment was inflicted, too, in the presence of the whole commiserating court. I looked at you, but did not weep. The pain was great, and my royal blood followed each barbarous stroke, but I looked at you, and did not weep. The resolution of a boy roused the King's anger. He doomed me further to atone for my offence by an imprisonment of twelve hours in a dark, dismal dungeon. Thus dearly did I pay for my obstinate determination to possess the esteem of Roderigo. When we again met, you fell at my feet, and bathed my hand with tears. "Yes," cried you, "yes, my pride is conquered. I will repay you when you mount the throne."

Posa.—(*Presents his hand.*)—That will I, Carlos. The vow of earlier years I now confirm. I will discharge the debt I owe you. The hour of payment is perhaps at hand.

Car. It is, it is. Delay not, I beseech you. Now, even now, you can discharge the debt. I need your friendship much.

Posa. In friendship alone, dear Carlos, I will not be surpassed by Philip's son.

Car. A dreadful secret rages in my soul. No longer shall it be concealed. On Roderigo's pallid countenance I'll read the sentence of my death. Hear then—with horror hear—but do not answer me—I dote upon my mother.

Posa. Gracious God!

Car. Nay, spare me not. Speak! Confess that

on this globe no one is half so wretched as myself. But no, you need not speak. I know already what would be your observations. "Dote upon your mother! The long established customs of society, the ordinance of nature, and the laws of Rome—all, all condemn this passion. It militates against your father's rights." True. This I feel, yet still I love, although I know the path which lies before me will lead me to the scaffold or to madness. I have no hope—I know my life will be endangered by my conduct—yet still I love.

Posa. Is the Queen aware of your passion?

Car. How could I attempt to divulge it? She is the wife of Philip—she is the Queen of Spain. Guarded as she is by my father's jealousy, and surrounded by the formality of etiquette, how could I approach her without witnesses? Eight months of hopeless torture have elapsed since the King called me from the university to court. Daily has it been my destiny to hear and to behold her, and, while I panted for the liberty of speaking, to be silent. Yes. Eight months of hopeless torture have elapsed. A thousand times the dread confession has trembled on my lips, then crept with cowardly dismay back to my burning heart. Oh, Roderigo, procure me a short interview, without a witness—for a few moments only—but without a witness.

Posa. And your father, Carlos?

Car. Torture! Why remind me of him? Call to my recollection all the horrors which conscience can inflict, but mention not my father. For ever are the adamantine bonds of nature severed between him and me.

Posa. Hate you your father, then?

Car. No, no; but a tremor, such as is felt by culprits most abandoned, creeps through my frame, when I but hear him mentioned. Is it my fault, if the mean education he bestowed on me destroyed

the affection which was taking place in my heart? I was six years old before I saw the dreadful man who was, as those around me said, my father. On that very morning, without even sitting to the table, he had signed four death-warrants. After that time I never saw him, unless summoned to be punished for some fault.—Oh, heavens!—I feel the subject galls me. No more of it!

Posa. Yes, Prince. You must now unbosom yourself. Confess every sensation of your mind—then will it be relieved.

Car. Often have I contended against my own feelings—often, when the centinels have been asleep, have I at midnight knelt, with floods of tears, before my crucifix, and prayed that heaven would inspire me with filial affection; but never was I heard. Oh, Roderigo, explain to me this wondrous act of Providence. Why was this man of all others doomed to be my father? Why was I doomed to be his son, when he might have had so many who are better? In all creation, nature could not have discovered two such opposites. How could she by a tie so sacred bind to each other the extremes of all the human race? Horrible destiny!—Roderigo, in me and in my father you behold two hostile planets. Once in their course they met each other with discordant touch, and then for ever flew asunder.

Posa. I anticipate a dreadful hour.

Car. That do I also, for my mind is haunted by terrific dreams, as if the demons of despair were dancing round my couch. My spirit bends beneath their influence. My reason traverses a labyrinth of sophistry, till I at length start at the gulph which I perceive before me. Oh, Roderigo, could I but cease to think he is my father—thy pallid looks declare that thou hast understood me—could I but cease to think he is my father, what were the king to me?

Posa.—(*After a pause.*)—Dare I make one request, my Carlos? Whatever you may wish to do—however violent may be your passion, promise you will not form a resolution, till you have heard the counsel of your friend. Promise me this.

Car. I promise all which you can ask; I throw myself into your arms.

Posa. The king, I hear, returns immediately to Madrid. But little time is in your power; for, if you wish to speak in private with the queen, it must be in Aranjuez. The retirement of the country, and the banishment of form, which in some degree must take place, are in your favour.

Car. Such were the hopes I cherished, but in vain.

Posa. Not entirely so. I go to be presented to her. This I should have done at all events. She, and she alone is acquainted with the secret of our friendship. If I find her such in Spain as formerly she was at Henry's court, she will have no reserve or pride. An opportunity may occur of mentioning her son.

Car. Ecstatic thought!

Posa. Her heart speaks in her looks. If in these looks I find that you may hope—if I perceive that she has no objection to the interview, and that the attendant ladies can be removed—

Car. Most of them would serve me, especially the Marchioness of Mondecar, whose son I lately made my page.

Posa. So much the better.—Be at hand, then, that, when I give a signal, you may appear.

Car. I will, I will. Haste, then, dear friend!

Posa. Yes—but what signal?—You must be at some distance. Were you too near, we should all be in danger.

Car.—(*After some reflection.*)—How if that succeeded? It must—it will. About this time I know that she is wont to wander in the garden. All the

fountains communicate with that which you will see before the queen's pavilion. Luckily none of them are at present playing. If you by any means can open this one fountain, all the cascades will instantly burst forth. I shall then know that I am suffered to approach.

Posa. A happy thought! I will not lose a moment. Adieu, then, till we meet again. [*Exeunt severally.*]

Scene changes to another part of the garden, which commands a prospect into the country. At the end of a walk is the Queen's pavilion.

Enter QUEEN, OLIVAREZ, EBOLI, and MONDECAR.

Queen. I wish *you* to walk with me, Mondecar. The sparkling eyes of the princess have tormented me throughout the morning. Look at her; scarcely can she conceal the delight which she feels in leaving the country.

Ebo. Your Majesty will excuse me, when I own that I feel a pleasure in returning to Madrid.

Mon. And is your Majesty so unwilling to leave Aranjuez?

Queen. I am. This landscape is so beautiful. I feel, when here, in my own world. This place, some time ago, became my favourite residence. Here rural nature, the bosom friend of earlier years, greets me whenever I step forth to meet her. Here I retrace my infantine delights, and here I feel the friendly breeze of France. Pardon what I say. We are all partial to our native land.

Mon. Are they so too, who are born in France?

Ebo. But how dreary, how sad and solitary it is here. I could almost imagine myself at La Trappe.

Queen. In my opinion it is the reverse. Sadness and solitude, I think, dwell in Madrid. But what says the Duchess to this?

Oli. My opinion is that, since there were kings in

Spain, it has always been the custom to pass one month here, another in the Prado, and the winter at Madrid.

Queen. Yes, Duchess, you know I am resolved never again to enter into any controversy with you.

Mon. And what life will soon be diffused through the capital! Preparations are already making for a bull-fight, and we are to be treated with an *Auto da fê*.

Queen. Treated! Does the gentle Mondecar express herself thus?

Mon. Why not? They who are burnt, are heretics.

Queen. I hope your sentiments are different, Eboli.

Ebo. I entreat your Majesty not to think me a worse Christian than the Marchioness.

Queen. Alas! I forget where I am. Let us converse upon some other subject. We were speaking of the country, I think. This month seems to have passed away with wonderful rapidity. I promised myself much pleasure at Aranjuez; but, alas! I have not found what I expected. Does hope deceive others as well as me?

Oli. The Princess Eboli can answer that. She has not confessed whether Gomez may cherish hope—whether we shall shortly greet her as his bride.

Queen. True—I thank you for reminding me of this.—(To Eboli.)—I have been entreated to sue in his behalf. But how can I do this! The man to whom I give my Eboli must be deserving of her.

Oli. Your Majesty may rest assured he well deserves the Princess. He is a worthy man—a man whom our most gracious Monarch honours with his royal favour.

Queen. That makes him, of course, very happy; but we must know whether he loves, and ought to be beloved. This I ask you, Eboli.

Ebo.—(Is silent and confused—after a pause, during which her eyes are fixed on the earth, she falls at the Queen's feet.)—Oh, generous lady, have

compassion on me. Let me not, for heaven's sake, let me not be sacrificed.

Queen. Sacrificed! You need say no more. Rise. Dreadful is her destiny who is doomed to be sacrificed. Rise. Is it long since you refused the Count?

Ebo. Many months. Don Carlos was still at the university.

Queen.—(*Starts, and keenly rivets her eyes on Ebo.*)—Have you looked into your heart, and discovered for what reason?

Ebo.—(*With warmth.*)—Oh, never can I be his—for a thousand reasons, never!

Queen.—(*In a very solemn tone.*)—More than one is too many. You cannot feel an affection for him. That is enough. Let us say no more upon the subject.—(*To the other ladies.*)—I have not yet seen the Infanta to-day. Marchioness, let her be brought to me.

Oli.—(*Looks at her watch.*)—It is not yet the usual hour.

Queen. Not yet the hour when I may be a mother! That is hard. Forget not to tell me when the proper period is arrived.

Enter a PAGE, who whispers to OLIVAREZ.

Oli. The Marquis Posa requests your Majesty's permission——

Queen. Posa!

Oli. He is lately arrived from France and the Netherlands, and wishes to be allowed the honour of delivering letters from your royal mother.

Queen. Is this allowed?

Oli.—(*Scrupulously.*)—I must own, that, in my instructions, no mention is made of a Castilian grandee coming from a foreign court to deliver letters in the royal garden to the Queen of Spain.

Queen. I will venture, then, at my own risk.—

Oli. I hope, then, that your Majesty will allow me to withdraw.

Queen. Act as you think proper, Duchess.

[*Exit Olivarez.*

(*Queen makes a sign to the Page, who goes for the Marquis.*)

Enter POSA.

My lord, you are welcome to Spain.

Posa. Which I never was so proud to call my native land as now.

Queen.—(*To Eboli and Mondecár.*)—Ladies, the Marquis Posa, who broke a lance with my father at the tournament of Rheims, and made my colour thrice victorious—the first of his nation who taught me that it was an honour to be Queen of Spain.—(*To Posa.*)—When we last saw each other at the Louvre, Marquis, you fancied not that you would be my guest in this part of the world.

Posa. No, great Queen; for then I little fancied France would lose to us the sole incitement to our envy.

Queen. Haughty Spaniard! The sole incitement! This to a princess of the house of Valois?

Posa. I dare say this now, for now your Majesty is ours.

Queen. Your travels have, I hear, led you through France. What tidings bring you of my honoured mother, and my much-loved brothers?

Posa.—(*Presents letters to her.*)—I found the Queen Regent indisposed, and heedless of any other gratification than that of knowing her daughter is happy on the Spanish throne.

Queen. Must she not be so, when she knows with what affection her kind relatives remember her? How sweet is it to call to mind—I understand you have travelled through many countries, in the north

of Europe, and have visited many courts. You seem to have staid long in London.

Mon.—(*Surveys Posa with a look of curiosity.*)
—In London!

Ebo. In London! You have seen the heretic Queen then, Chevalier? What kind of woman is she?

Posa. Almost as lovely as the Princess Eboli.—upon a throne.

Ebo. Lovely! Mondecar!

Queen. And now you are disposed to settle in your native country. You will be a greater prince within your peaceful mansion than is King Philip—more satisfied—more free—more a philosopher. I have my doubts whether Madrid will please you.—We are very—quiet in Madrid.

Posa. That is more than can be said of any other capital in Europe.

Queen. I am told so. I have almost forgotten the transactions of this world, though I once thought I never should. Nothing is easier, I perceive, than to be a Queen.

Posa. Undoubtedly, to those who are born to be queens.

Queen.—(*Looks with earnestness at Posa.*)—The world has corrupted you, Marquis. I no longer recognize in you the philosopher who boldly spoke the truth to every one.

Posa. Surely it is the boldest frankness to avow the truth, where certainly no flatterer would venture to declare it.

Queen.—(*To Eboli.*)—Princess, I think that, at a distance I perceive a hyacinth.—Will you pluck it for me?—(*Eboli goes towards the place pointed to. Queen speaks in a tone somewhat lower than before.*)
—Marquis, if I be not much deceived, your arrival will make one more happy man at court.

Posa. I have found one in a state of abject me-

lancholy, whom nothing in this world can cheer, but—(*Eboli returns with the flower.*)

Ebo. As the Chevalier has seen so many countries, his adventures have, doubtless, been many and remarkable. We may promise ourselves much entertainment from the recital of them.

Posa. You do me honour. It is, to be sure, the duty of a knight to seek adventures, and more particularly to defend the ladies.

Mon. Against giants—but now there are no giants.

Posa. Power, when opposed to the weak, is always a giant.

Queen. The Chevalier is right. There are still giants, but no knights.

Posa. But lately, on my return from Naples, I was witness of a most affecting circumstance, which happened to a worthy youth, with whom the bonds of friendship had united me.—If I were not afraid that I should be thought tedious by your Majesty—

Queen. Have I any choice?—The curiosity of the Princess will not bear a refusal. Proceed, my lord. I am fond of anecdote.

Posa. Two noble families of Mirandola, weary of the jealousy and enmity which they had inherited for centuries as partizans of the Guelphs and Gibelines, resolved to ratify an everlasting peace, by the gentle tie of marriage. Fernando, the nephew of the powerful Pietro, and the angelic Matilda, daughter of Colonna, were fixed upon for the purpose. Never did nature form two hearts so proper to be joined—never did the world produce a couple so formed in every respect for each other. As yet Fernando had but paid his devotions to the portrait of his beautiful bride. How did he tremble with delight at the fond hope of finding her as lovely as the picture promised. In Padua, to which place he was confined by his studies, he anxiously awaited

the ecstatic summons to do homage at the feet of fair Matilda, for the first time.—(Queen *becomes more attentive*. Posa proceeds, after a short pause; and, as far as the presence of the Queen will allow it, seems as if relating the anecdote to Eboli.)—Meanwhile the death of Pietro's wife takes place. With youthful ardour the old man listens to the universal praise of sweet Matilda. He comes—he sees—he loves. This new emotion stifles the gentler voice of nature—he declares his passion for his nephew's destined bride, and sanctifies his robbery at the altar.

Queen. And how did Fernando act?

Posa. Ignorant of the fatal change in his affairs, the intoxicated youth flew, on the wings of love, to Mirandola. The stars shone bright when his fleet steed stopped at the door of the illuminated palace. The Bacchanalian sound of cymbals and of kettle-drums assailed his ear. He alighted, and, unknown to any one, entered the magnificent saloon, where, amidst his mirthful guests, sat—Pietro, with an angel at his side—an angel, whom Fernando knows, but whom his ardent fancy never yet had painted half so lovely. A single look tells him what he once was destined to possess—what he has lost for ever.

Ebo. Unfortunate Fernando!

Queen. Your story now is surely at an end—it must be at an end.

Posa. Not quite.

Queen. Did you not say Fernando was your friend?

Posa. I have not one whom I regard so much.

Ebo. Proceed with your anecdote, my lord.

Posa. It is a mournful tale—and the recollection of it gives me pain.—Allow me to omit the rest.—(An universal pause ensues.)

Queen.—(To Eboli.)—Now I may surely be al-

lowed to embrace my daughter.—Bring her hither, Princess. [Exit Eboli.]

(Posa gives a sign to a Page, who appears in the back ground, and instantly withdraws. Queen opens the letters which the Marquis had delivered to her, and evinces, by her looks, that she is much surprised. While she reads the letters, the Marquis converses at a distance with Mondecar. The Queen, at length, turns to Posa, and surveys him with a penetrating eye.)

Queen. You have given us no account of Matilda. She knows not, perhaps, how much Fernando suffers.

Posa. No one has yet dived into the secrets of Matilda's heart; but exalted minds are silent while they suffer.

Queen. You look around. Whom do you expect to see?

Posa. It occurred to me, just now, that one whom I could name, would be most happy were he in my place.

Queen. Who is to blame that he is not?

Posa. How! May I interpret this according to my wishes? Would he be pardoned if he now appeared?

Queen.—(Alarmed.)—Now! Now! What do you mean?

Posa. May he cherish hopes?

Queen.—(With increasing confusion.)—You alarm me, Chevalier.—Surely he will not—

Posa. Here he is.

Enter CARLOS.

(Posa and Mondecar withdraw to the back ground.)

Car.—(Falls at the feet of the Queen.)—At length the moment is arrived when Carlos is allowed to touch this hand. Oh happiest moment of my whole existence! Now am I truly blessed.

Queen. Inconsiderate man! What a step have you taken! What a rash and culpable surprise! Rise! We are observed. My attendants are at hand.

Car. I will not rise. Here will I kneel for ever—here will I lie enchanted—rooted to the spot.

Queen. Madman! To what excess has my indulgence led you? Do you know it is your queen, your mother, whom you with licentious language thus address? Do you know that I—I myself shall acquaint my royal husband with—

Car. Yes, and that I must die. Let me be torn from this spot, and hurried to the place of execution. One moment passed in Paradise is bought too cheap even with loss of life.

Queen. And your queen!

Car.—(*Rises.*)—God of Heaven!—I go—I will leave you. I *must*—for you require it. Mother! Mother! How great is your influence over me! A look, a sign, a syllable from your dear lips wafts me aloft to heaven or down to hell—commands me to exist or perish. What do you wish that I should do? What sacrifice can be required which I will not instantly offer?

Queen. Fly then.

Car. Oh God!

Queen. Carlos, all that I request—with tears request, is that you will fly. Do this, I conjure you, ere my attendants, my pages, my *jailors*, find you and me together in this violent agitation, and bear the dreadful tidings to your father's ears. Still can you stand irresolute? Stay then, and draw down destruction on us both.

Car. I will await my destiny, be it life or death. Have I surmounted every obstacle, waded through all the maze of etiquette, subdued the minotaurs around you, rested my hopes upon this single moment, which allows me to behold you without witnesses, and shall I, after gaining this, become the

paltry dupe of false alarm? No, Queen. A thousand times may our globe revolve upon its axis ere fortune favour me so much again.

Queen. That be assured she never shall. Unfortunate young man, what would you say to me?

Car. Oh, queen, God is my witness I have combated the passion which consumes me with resolution almost more than human—but in vain, in vain! Depressed, annihilated is my courage—I am no longer Carlos.

Queen. No more of this, if my peace of mind be dear to you.

Car. I must—I will speak. My agony is soothed by this avowal of my feelings. You were mine. You were betrothed to me by two great monarchs in the sight of the world. You were affianced to me by heaven and nature—and Philip, Philip robbed me of you.

Queen. He is your father.

Car. And your husband.

Queen. From him you will inherit the most extensive monarchy on earth.

Car. And you for a mother.

Queen. Merciful Heavens! You rave.

Car. And does he know how rich he is? Has he a heart which can feel the value of the treasure he possesses? I would not complain were this the case. No, eternal Providence, I would forgive thee—I would forget how happy—oh, how beyond description happy—I could have been with her, had he been so. But he is not—hear it, eternal Providence—he despises thy best gift—he is not happy—he never can be happy. It is this which tortures me. Thou hast robbed me of the sweetest flower that ever bloomed, and hast ordained that it should wither in the icy bosom of King Philip.

Queen. Execrable thought!

Car. Oh, I know full well who was the promoter of this union. I know the love which Philip feels, and what was the foundation of your marriage.—Almighty nature! Such a being as thou hast not been able to produce during ten centuries—as thou wilt not be able to produce during ten more—and now, now, now——oh, blush for thyself, Nature—bartered for a treaty which will soon be broken—made the shameful purchase of a peace—sent into Spain by the decision of assembled privy-counsellors and prelates—sold like a bale of merchandize, and then delivered to the purchaser! Such are the marriages of kings.

Queen. No more, I do entreat.

Car. What are you in this kingdom?—Tell me.—Have you any power? No. If you had power, would Alba thus spread desolation round him?—would Flanders bleed for maintaining its religion? Or are you Philip's wife? Impossible. A wife is in possession of her husband's heart—but to whom does his belong? The tenderness and the embrace which he bestows are borrowed from his sceptre and from age.

Queen. What has induced you to be thus presumptuous? Who told you that the wife of Philip was an object of compassion?

Car. My heart, which feels, and boldly tells you, that, were you the wife of Carlos, you would be an object of envy.

Queen. Vain man! How if my heart asserted the reverse? How if the respectful tenderness of Philip—the silent language of affection in his mien, had more effect upon me than his proud son's presumptuous rhetoric? How if the well-considered calm regard of an old man—

Car. This alters my ideas—and I beg your pardon. I did not know you loved the King.

Queen. I understand that proud contemptuous smile. No—I do not love him—but to respect him is my pleasure and my wish.

Car. Have you, then, never felt the influence of love?

Queen. This is a strange question.

Car. Have you never felt the influence of love?

Queen. I no longer feel it.

Car. Because your heart, or because the nuptial vow forbids it?

Queen. Leave me, Prince, and never renew this conversation.

Car. Because your heart, or because the nuptial vow forbids it?

Queen. Because my duty—Unfortunate young man, why do you thus arraign the will of fate, which well you know we must obey?

Car. Must;—must obey!

Queen. How! What means this tone?

Car. It means that Carlos bids defiance to a term like *must*:—that he is not disposed to bend beneath another's will:—that he is not disposed to be the most unhappy in this kingdom, when, by opposition to its laws he can become most happy.

Queen. Do I understand you? Dare you still cherish hope when all is lost?

Car. I think nothing lost while I have life.

Queen. And place you any hopes upon your mother?—(*Rivets her eyes on him for some time—then approaches with dignified solemnity.*)—But why not? The king, as soon as crowned, can do much more than this. He can annul the edicts of his predecessor; declare his memory infamous; destroy what he had built; build what he destroyed:—(*Carlos is in great agitation*)—bring forth his ashes from the escorial; expose them to the light of day; scatter them to the four winds of heaven; and, to complete these noble actions—

Car. For heaven's sake proceed no further.

Queen. He can take his mother to his bed.

Car. Cursed be such a son!—(*After a pause.*)—
It is accomplished. My destiny is fulfilled. I feel, in its utmost force, what should have been concealed from me for ever. To me you are irrevocably lost. Hell lies in the sensation—I cannot bear it. My shattered nerves will soon be rent.

Queen. I pity you, dear Carlos. Completely do I feel the nameless agony which rages in your soul. Boundless is your pain as is your love. Boundless as both is the great merit of subduing them. Be this merit yours, young hero. The prize is worthy of a mighty combatant; worthy of him whose veins contain the blood, whose heart the virtues, of so many noble ancestors. Rouse yourself, Prince. Let the grandson of Charles renew the fight, when others basely quit the field.

Car. Too late! Oh, God! It is too late!

Queen. Too late to be a man! Oh, Carlos! How great becomes our virtue when our hearts break in the practice of it! Providence has placed you, Prince, above a million of your fellow-creatures. Partial to her Carlos, she took from others what she gave to him, and millions say: "Did he, ere he was born, deserve more than all other mortals?" Rise, Prince. Justify the will of heaven. Deserve to be the first of men, by sacrificing more than any one.

Car. That can I too. To fight for you I have a giant's strength—to lose you I feel myself incapable.

Queen. Confess now, Carlos. It is pride and indignation which makes you feel this passion for your mother. The affection, which you lavishly bestow on me, belongs to nations which you will hereafter govern. You are squandering the property of your ward. Remove this affection from me to your future realms, and, instead of the pangs of conscience, feel the delight of being a God. Elizabeth was the

first object of your love—be Spain the second. How willingly, good Carlos, will I yield to a rival so superior!

Car.—(*Falls at her feet, overpowered by his sensations.*)—How great are your ideas, heavenly woman! Yes. I will do all that you request. I will make any sacrifice.—(*Rises.*)—Here I stand, in presence of my Creator, and solemnly swear I will never again think—(Oh, heavens, what do I say?)—I will be silent. I can restrain my tongue, but not my memory.

Queen. How could I ask a vow of Carlos, which I myself should be unwilling to make?

Posa hastily approaches.

Posa. The king!

Queen. Heavens!

Posa. Away! Away! Prince!

Queen. His suspicions are dreadful. Should he see you——

Car. He shall. I will remain. Has he, or have I, the greater right to stay here? I am in the humour to ask him this question.

Queen. And who will be the victim of your rashness?

Car.—(*Draws Posa away.*)—Instantly let us be gone.—(*Looks back.*)—What dare I take with me?

Queen. The esteem of your mother.

Car. Esteem! Mother!

Queen. And these tears from the Netherlands.—(*Gives him some letters.*)

Car. Ha! I comprehend this.

[*Exeunt Carlos and Posa.*
(*The Queen looks anxiously around for her attendants, whom she cannot see.*)

Enter KING, ALBA, LERMA, DOMINGO, with Ladies and Grandees.

King.—(*Looks round with surprise, and pauses awhile.*)—Quite alone, madam! Not even one lady as a companion? This surprises me. Where are your attendants?

Queen. My gracious lord—

King. What means this? You are quite confused, madam. Your face is on fire. All is not as it should be. Why alone? Where are your attendants?—(*To his suite.*)—Let this unpardonable neglect be strictly examined, and the result reported to me. Whose turn was it to wait on you to-day?

Queen. Be not incensed, my lord. I, myself, I am to blame. The Princess Eboli went by my desire—

King. By your desire!

Queen. To call the nurse; for I much wished to see my daughter.

King. And therefore you were left without attendants. This is mighty strange, by heaven. In future, madam, let it not be said, to the disgrace of Spain, that Philip's wife, when wishing to embrace her child, should thus await it unattended. My kingdom is, I trust, sufficiently populous to provide the Queen with females for her suite. But this apology exculpates only the first lady. Where was the second.

Mon.—(*Who has, in the mean time, returned and joined the other ladies, now approaches.*)—I confess to your Majesty that my conduct is culpable—

King. For which reason I allow you ten years of repentance far from Madrid.—(*Mondecar weeps, and retires to the back ground. Universal silence prevails. All eyes are anxiously directed to the Queen.*)

Queen. If I have erred, my gracious lord, methinks the diadem of Spain, to which I never did aspire, should, at least, protect me from a situation which obliges me to blush. Is there in this kingdom, a law by which a monarch's daughter can be compelled to justify herself? Are the wives of Spaniards to be guarded? Do witnesses defend them better than their virtue? I am not accustomed to let those depart in tears who have served me with cheerfulness. Mondecar, you have incensed the King, not me.—(*Unbuckles her splendid girdle, and presents it to Mondecar.*)—Accept, therefore, this token of my favour.—Leave the kingdom. You have erred only in Spain, and in my native France your tears will soon be wiped away.—Oh. Must I for ever be reminded of the difference between France and Spain.—(*Leans on one of the attendants, and conceals her face.*)

King.—(*Somewhat agitated.*)—How, Elizabeth! Is it possible? Heavens! Have I lived to hear this? Could a mere reproach, the offspring of affection, and of anxious tenderness, disturb you thus?—(*Turns to the Grandees.*)—Here stand the vassals of my throne. Can any one of you declare that sleep has ever closed my eyes till I have known the pulse of my remotest subjects? And shall I be more anxious for my throne than for the consort of my heart? My sword can protect me against rebellion, but my eye alone can insure to me my wife's affection. Am I not right, Duke Alba?—(*Alba bows.*)

Queen. If I have offended you, my lord—

King. I am esteemed the richest man in Christendom. The sun does not set in my dominions. But this my predecessor too possessed, and it will all devolve to my successor, or will not, as Fortune pleases, for to Fortune, in reality, belongs all that the monarch has, but to Philip, and to him alone, Elizabeth. In this point only am I vulnerable.

Queen. My lord—this suspicion—you alarm me. Are you afraid—

King. Look at my hoary head. If ever I knew fear, the time is long elapsed.—I am counting the nobles of my court,—the chief of them is wanting. Where is Don Carlos?—(*No one replies.*)—This boy begins to excite apprehensions in my mind. Since his return from the college at Alkali, he avoids my presence. His temperament is warm—why is his look so cold? Why is his conduct so peculiarly discreet? Duke Alba, this is a comet which approaches my horizon. I like not such a neighbour. Be vigilant—I repeat it, be vigilant. The heir to so many realms, counts with impatience the pulse of his father. The ambition of being equal to the Almighty, was the origin of devils. Be vigilant, I command you.

Alba. I am and will continue to be so. While my heart shall beat beneath this armour, King Philip may repose in peace. Like the cherubim of God, before the gates of Paradise, Duke Alba stands before the throne.

Ler. May I humbly venture to contradict the wisest of all kings? Too much do I honour and revere your sacred Majesty, to judge so harshly of your son. From the ardour of Don Carlos I fear much, but nothing from his heart.

King. You are a proper man to sooth the father, Count—the Duke shall be the monarch's prop. But more of this to-morrow.—(*Turns to his suite.*)—My royal office calls me to Madrid. Thither I instantly repair. The pest of heresy has spread among my subjects. Rebellion rages in the Netherlands. It is time that a terrible example should reclaim the wretches. To-morrow I fulfil the mighty oath, sworn by all the kings in Christendom. Terrible shall be my vengeance. The court is hereby solemnly invited to the executions.—(*Offering his arm to the Queen.*)—You will accompany me.

Queen. Excuse me.. I am a woman—a weak woman—

King. And a Christian too, I hope. Come with me to prove it.—(*Leads her away—the rest follow.*)

Enter CARLOS with letters, and POSA.

Car. Enough! I am resolved. Flanders shall be rescued. It is her will and therefore my law.

Posa. Nor must a moment be lost. Duke Alba, I am told, is already appointed governor.

Car. Appointed!—Well—but he is not gone.—To-morrow, therefore, I will apply for an audience of my father. It is my first request, and he cannot refuse it. My presence in Madrid has long been disagreeable to him. What a happy opportunity to remove me from the capital! And—shall I confess it, Roderigo—I cherish hopes that, by this personal interview, I may regain his favour. He has never listened to the voice of nature. I will try what power it will have, when it issues from my lips.

Posa. Now do I recognize my Carlos. Now you are again yourself.

Car. I feel celestial transport in each vein.—Such an effect has the sight of the dear Queen produced!

Enter LERMA.

Ler. His Majesty has just left Aranjuez, and commanded me—

Car. 'Tis well, count Lerma. I shall follow.

Posa.—(*Bows with a degree of ceremony as if going,*)—Has your Royal Highness no further commands?

Car. None, whatever, Chevalier. I congratulate you on your arrival at Madrid. I will hear more respecting Flanders at another time.—(*To Lerma, who still waits.*)—I shall follow immediately.

[*Exit Lerma.*

I understood you, and I thank you; but this ceremony can only be excused by the presence of a third. Are we not brothers? Let the parade of rank be henceforth banished from our intercourse. Fancy that we met each other at a masquerade; you in the habit of a slave, and I, for the whim's sake, clad in purple. While the company observed us, we should support our several characters with ridiculous solemnity, that their entertainment might not be destroyed; but Carlos, through his mask, might wink to you, and you, in passing, might shake hands with him.

Posa. This vision is delightful, but will it be of long duration? Does my Carlos feel positive that he can resist the charms of uncontrouled dominion? The day will come, when he will find the trial most severe.—King Philip dies. Carlos inherits the largest monarchy in Christendom. At once a boundless gulph divides him from the rest of men. He, who was yesterday but human, is to-day divine. He has now no weaknesses. Fate sits upon his brow. Crowds hasten to do homage to their idol, and to barter their honour for his favour. His sympathy is ended with his sufferings. His virtue falls a victim to voluptuousness. To support his folly, gold is sent from Peru. To encourage his vices, demons lurk at his court. Intoxicated with the pleasures provided by his slaves, he sinks to rest. His divinity exists as long as his dream, and woe be to the wretch who dares to wake him!—What would now be Roderigo's case? Friendship is bold and open. Enfeebled majesty would not be able to endure its beams! You would not endure the subject's pride, nor I the monarch's haughtiness.

Car. Faithful and horrid is your picture of a king. But this excess of pleasure you have mentioned will not corrupt your Carlos. At three and twenty years of age, I can declare that I am pure. That better half of

us, the vigour of the mind, which many thoughtless thousands have squandered in voluptuous embraces, I have reserved as a support upon the throne. Even before I knew Elizabeth, I had successfully opposed the strong allurements which surrounded me. Surely then, I need not fear them now. Tell me—could any but a woman expel you from my heart?

Posa. Yes. I myself; for could I be as much your friend, when I must fear you?

Car. That can never be. Will you want my assistance? No.—Will your passions allow you to crouch at the steps of the throne? No.—Will you wish for money? No, for you will be a richer subject than I shall be a king.—Will you covet honours?—No, for you have had abundance in your youth—nay, have refused them:—which of us will be the creditor, and which the debtor?—You are silent.—You tremble at the idea of making the attempt. Can you not, then, rely upon yourself?

Posa. Enough! I yield.—There is my hand.

Car. You will be my friend?

Posa. For ever—and in the most unlimited sense of the term.

Car. As warmly, and as faithfully devoted to the King, as you have ever been to the Infant.

Posa. That I swear.

Car. If the serpent Flattery should twine around my heart—if this eye should forget that it could weep—if this ear should be deaf to the petitions of the wretched—will you, Roderigo, will you be the undaunted guardian of my virtue? Will you rouse me, and compel me to be what I was?

Posa. I will.

Car. Then are we friends for ever. Now to the King. I have no longer any fears. Arm in arm with you, I bid defiance to temptation and to danger.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

Scene, the Royal Palace at Madrid. The King is seated on a throne beneath a canopy, and Alba is standing at a distance. Lerma opens the door, and ushers in Carlos, who kneels to the King, then rises, and retires a few steps. For some moments universal silence prevails. Carlos looks with mingled surprise and sensibility at the Duke, and then at the King.

Car. I wait in expectation of being told at what more proper hour your Majesty will hear my petition.

King. Has the Infant's petition any reference to my hours—or to me only? I shall decide upon it now. You have leave to speak.—

Car. The kingdom is entitled to a preference, and I willingly give way to the minister. He speaks in behalf of the kingdom.—*(Bows and retires.)*

King. The Duke will stay. The Infant will proceed.

Car.—*(To Alba.)*—I must then, Duke Alba, request a favour of you. This is a private audience of the King. A son, you know, may say many things to his father, which it is hardly proper that a third should hear. I will not long detain his Majesty.—*(Alba looks towards the King for his orders.)*

King. This is my friend.

Car.—*(After a short pause.)*—Has my merit been such, I may be certain he is also mine?

King. Or will your merit ever be such! I do not like the son who thinks his choice of friends superior to his father's.

Car. Can Duke Alba's spirit allow him to remain during this scene? By heaven! I would not earn a diadem by being that mean creature, who shackles the discourse of a father and his son; who blushes not to interfere with the sacred mysteries of nature.

King.—(*Leaves his seat, darting a look of fury at the Prince.*)—Retire Duke Alba.—(*Alba walks toward the door at which Carlos entered.*)—No.—Into my cabinet, till you are called.—

[*Exit Alba into the cabinet.*

Car.—(*Approaches the King, falls at his feet, and addresses him in a tone of heartfelt sensibility.*)—Now you are again my father. Accept my warmest thanks for this favour.—Your hand, my father. Oh, day of bliss! Long is it since I was allowed to kiss this hand. And why not—good heavens, why not? Oh, how the recollection racks my soul! Why have I been so long an alien to your heart? What have I done? Curse on suspicion, that destructive viper, which poison and corrupts even sacred instinct. Is it possible that, for three and twenty years, the world has called me Philip's son, and that he alone has never known it?

King. Infant, your heart is not accustomed to deceptions of this kind. No more! I like them not.

Car.—(*Rises.*)—Ha! There spoke your courtiers.—Father, all is not good which a priest says, which a priest's creatures say. No, by heaven.—Believe me, father, I am not depraved. Warmth of temper is my vice, and youth my crime. Oh, believe me, I am not depraved; and though impetuous passion storm my heart, yet still that heart is good.

King. I know your heart is pure, as is your prayer.

Car. May I never know the mercy of my Redeemer, if I be a hypocrite! This is an awful hour for me—yes, awful and decisive. We are alone—

unfettered by the chains of rank—freed from that barrier etiquette, which separates the father from his son. A beam of hope darts through my soul—sweet expectation animates my heart. The holy host of heaven looks down and smiles upon us.—My father! Be reconciled to me.—(*Falls at his feet.*)

King. Rise, and leave me.

Car. Be reconciled to me, my father.

King.—(*Tears himself from his son's embrace.*)—What means this bold hypocrisy?

Car. Is a son too bold, when he but avows his dutiful affection?

King. In tears, too!—Pshaw!—Out of my sight!

Car. The decisive moment is arrived. Be reconciled to me.

King. Begone, I say. I would as soon embrace thee, hadst thou come from my defeated army, loaded with the charge of cowardice. Thus I spurn thee.—(*Pushes him away.*)—Base guilt alone would thus attempt to wash away its stain. He who does not blush at being penitent, will fearlessly commit the crimes which ought to be repented.

Car.—(*Gazes long at the King with fearful astonishment.*)—Who is this? By what mistake has this unnatural man been sent into our world?—Tears have ever been the credentials of humanity. He never shed them. He was not born of woman. The sweet delight which inward satisfaction grants, even while we suffer, which even makes sorrow enviable, which unites mortality to immortality, which might induce even angels to accept our nature—this sweet delight, which tears afford, he never knew. Oh, compel those eyes, which never yet were moistened, to shed tears, else, in some heavy hour, thy prayers for them will be in vain.

King. Dost thou imagine that thy specious words will shake my strong suspicions?

Car. Suspensions! I will remove—annihilate them.

I will hang upon my father's heart till it has shaken them off. Who has robbed me of a parent's love! What requital has the monk given my father for the loss of Carlos? How will Alba repay him for his resolution to be childless?—You want affection?—Here, in this bosom, springs a fountain of it, more pure, more uncorrupted than the muddy sources, which must be opened by the gold of Philip.

King. Rash boy, no more. The men whom thou dost slander are my well-tried servants, and the supporters of my throne. Yes, proud boy—and thou shalt learn to honour them.

Car. Never! I feel my powers. All the services which Alba can render, Carlos can exceed. What cares a hireling for the throne, which never will be his? What cares he if Philip's head grows grey? If Philip dies, why still his king remains, for Philip's coinage still is current.—Your Carlos would have loved you.—Oh, what a dreadful thought it is to feel, when on a throne, “I am a solitary being.”

King.—(*Starts, is lost in meditation for some time, then exclaims, with a sigh.*)—I am a solitary being.

Car.—(*Approaches him with ardour.*)—You have been so. Hate me no longer. And no longer will you feel this horrible sensation. Oh, how delightful is it to know that other souls feel what we feel; that our delights delight another's heart; that our distresses cause another's sympathy—another's tears! How sweet is it with an affectionate and much loved son to trace the early years of life, and dream again what was so like a dream! How sweet to be immortal, through the virtues of that son! How great through him to appear again, as the moon shews the glorious orb from which it gained its lustre! How gratifying must it be to sow what a dear son will reap; to hoard a treasure, which he will enjoy; to anticipate the gratitude which he will feel. Oh, my father, this earthly paradise is by your monks, for

reasons which their policy directs, concealed from you.

King.—(*Somewhat affected.*)—My son, my son, you break the staff by which you would support yourself. You paint in glowing colours that happiness which you never have bestowed on me.

Car. Be the Almighty my judge! You, you yourself excluded me from your parental love, and from all interference with the state. Till now—yes, till this very day—(Oh, was it just?) the hereditary Prince of Spain, has been in Spain a stranger; a prisoner in the land which he was born to govern. How often have I blushed, and cast my eyes upon the earth, when the ambassadors of foreign powers, and newspapers, have first informed me what was passing at my father's court! Then, with a heavy heart, I oft have sportfully replied, "the King conceals his secrets from me, that, on the day of coronation, I may be more surprised."

King.—(*Earnestly fixing his eyes on Carlos.*)—Carlos, you make frequent references to the time when I shall be no more.

Car. No, by heaven. I refer but to the time when I shall be a man. Whose is the fault, if these be both the same?

King. You hold an honourable office at my court,—you are, it seems, the minute-hand of my mortality. In return for having given you life, you gratefully remind me I must die.

Car.—(*With ardour.*)—Employ me, and if my prayers could then avail, you should possess your crown for ever.

King. You must be patient. As yet your veins are swollen with the boiling blood of youth.

Car. That I own—my veins are swollen, for I am Philip's son—I am three and twenty years of age, and hitherto have been inactive. I have awoken, and now I feel my powers. My claim to the throne calls

on me as a creditor, and all the hours which I have lost are debts of honour. The glorious moment is arrived when I can pay these debts with interest. My ancestors and fame demand I should exert myself. The lists of high renown are opened.—My liege, may I declare what brought me hither? The petition, which——

King. Another petition! Proceed.

Car. The rebellion in Brabant becomes more serious. The obstinacy of the insurgents demands a strong and politic resistance. To tame the fury of the enthusiasts, Duke Alba, I am told, is going to Flanders, vested with sovereign power. How honourable is this office—how exactly suited to bring forward Philip's son and Charles's grandson, to the notice of the present age, and of posterity! To me, my liege, my father, to me entrust this great command. The inhabitants of Flanders love me, and I dare boldly answer for their firm fidelity.

King. You talk like one asleep. This situation must be filled by an experienced man—not by a boy.

Car. By a man, my father—that Alba never was.

King. Compassion, in a case like this, were madness. Your heart is weak, and soon affected. Terror alone can overpower rebellion. The Duke is feared in Flanders. Desist from your request.

Car. Send me, my father, send me with the army, I beseech you. Make this first trial of the heart which you accuse of weakness. The name of Philip's son, while it precedes my banner, will gain over to him those whom Alba's executioners would murder. On my knees I beg (and for the first time in my life) that you will give me the command in Flanders.

King.—(After a long pause, during which he surveys the Infant with a penetrating look.)—Over my choicest army! Entrust a dagger to my murderer!

Car.—(Starts.)—Gracious heaven! Is this the

fruit of an interview, which I so long have wished for?—(*After a pause, in a more humble tone.*)—Answer me more mildly. Dismiss me not with such a harsh suspicion. Let me not go with such a heavy heart. Oh, answer me more mildly. Do something which will whet my filial duty, which will for ever make me your debtor. Treat me more graciously. It is the last petition of your almost despairing son. Your affection can alone preserve my virtue.

King.—(*Suddenly turns to him with a menacing look.*)—Your virtue!

Car.—(*Alarmed.*)—Heavens! What have I said? I am almost frantic. I cannot bear with fortitude your constant opposition to my wishes. Now, let me depart. Unheard, deceived in all his sweet presages, Carlos goes, that Alba and Domingo may triumphantly enjoy their influence over his father. The assembled courtiers and grandees, as well as yonder squalid herd of monks, were witnesses that Philip granted me an audience. Do not confuse me thus. Do not so deeply wound my feelings as to shew this fawning crew that strangers revel on your bounty, but that your only son cannot obtain what he requests. As a proof that I am in your favour, send me to Flanders with the army.

King. Repeat not this, as thou dost fear thy Monarch's anger.

Car. I will meet my Monarch's anger. For the last time, send me to Flanders. I must leave Spain. A disorder rages in my frame, which no one is aware of. While I stay here I feel as if the arm of the executioner were raised against me. The air of Madrid oppresses me like the consciousness of murder. A change of climate can alone restore me. If you wish me to recover—send me, without delay, to Flanders.

King.—(*With assumed composure.*)—Such invalids as you, my son, require much care, and should be

kept under the eye of the physician. You, therefore, shall remain at home—the Duke shall go to Flanders.

Car.—(*Almost frantic.*)—Spirits of light surround me—

King.—(*Retreats a step.*)—How! What mean these gestures?

Car.—(*With tremulous utterance.*)—Is your decree irrevocable?

King. It was the King's decree.

Car. Then is my business ended.—(*Bows and is going.*)

King.—(*Looks at him with wonder.*)—Infant, this silent departure is not respectful.

Car. No!

King. No.

Car. For I just thought I saw the will of the late Emperor, your father, smoking on a pile.

King.—(*Alarmed.*)—Ha! What means this?

Car. He was a great man, and a perfect Monarch. He gave—I shall receive. Wide will be the difference between such a son and such a father. [*Exit.*

King.—(*Hides his face and strikes his breast.*)—O God, too heavily thy hand lies on me.—My son! My son!—(*Stands for some time in gloomy meditation, then walks to and fro with rapid strides. Alba approaches, somewhat embarrassed.*)—Be ready to depart for Brussels at an hour's notice.

Alba. Every preparation is made according to your Majesty's orders.

King. Your full powers are already signed and sealed. Now go—take leave of the Queen, and of the Infant.

Alba. I saw his highness hasten hence with frantic gestures. Your Majesty seems also violently agitated. Perhaps the subject of your conversation—

King. The subject was Duke Alba.—(*Rivets his eye on him.*)—Be not alarmed. I shall never alter

my opinion of you.—(*The Duke becomes thoughtful, and the King continues to observe him attentively.*)—The Prince is not your friend.

Alba. I am proud of sharing my Monarch's fate.

King.—(*With a gloomy mien.*)—I knew not that Duke Alba shared any thing with me. I could hear, with pleasure, that Don Carlos hates my ministers, but am sorry to perceive that he despises them.—(*Alba's colour mounts into his cheeks, and he is about to speak.*)—No answer, now. You have my permission to appease the Prince.

Alba. My liege, I am a soldier and a knight.

King. The Infant is your Monarch's son. I leave you to decide how far you are justified in demanding his concession. Tell me—who first apprised me of my son's designs? At that time I listened to you, and not to him. I will try an experiment. In future, Don Carlos shall be nearer to my throne. Now go. [*Exeunt severally.*]

Scene, the Queen's Antichamber.

Enter CARLOS and a PAGE. The Attendants, who were discovered in the room, withdraw, at his approach, into the adjoining apartments.

Car. A letter to me! A key sent with it too! And both delivered so privately! Come nearer. Who entrusted these to your care?

Page.—(*With an air of mystery.*)—As far as I can judge, the lady rather wishes that you should guess than I mention her name.

Car.—(*Starts.*)—The lady!—(*Observes the Page more attentively.*)—How!—Who are you?

Page. One of her Majesty's pages.

Car.—(*Rushes towards him, and places his hand on his mouth.*)—Peace, or I'll murder thee. I know enough.—(*Hastily opens the letter, and withdraws to*

*the end of the room. While he is reading it, Alba enters, and passes to the Queen's apartments, without being observed by the Prince. Carlos trembles—his face alternately glows, and is pale. He fixes his eye for a long time on the letter, and at length turns to the Page.)—*She herself gave you this?

Page. With her own hands.

Car. She herself!—Oh do not mock me. Never have I yet beheld her writing, but if you swear, I must believe you. If what you said be false, confess—but do not mock me.

Page. Mock Don Carlos!

Car.—(*Looks again at the letter, and then at the Page, with a penetrating eye.*)—Your parents are, I think, alive. Is not your father in the army?

Page. Alas, no. He fell at the battle of St. Quentin, while fighting, as a colonel of the cavalry, under the Duke of Savoy.

Car.—(*Takes his hand, and gazes significantly at him.*)—The King sent you with this letter.

Page. Gracious Prince, how have I deserved this suspicion?

Car. In tears! Oh, then forgive me.—(*Reads the letter.*)—“This key opens the door of a room in the back part of the Queen's apartments, adjoining to which is a cabinet, secure from prying curiosity. Here may that love be frankly owned, which hitherto has been confined to hints. The timid youth may here avow his flame, and reap the harvest of his hopes and patience. E.”—I am awake—and in possession of my senses. This is my right arm—this is my sword—and these are written words. True, true! It is reality. I am beloved. I am the happiest of all happy men. I am beloved.—Oh, Almighty God, why am I not the lord of thy creation, that I might grant a portion of my ecstasy to every being?

Page. Follow me then, Prince.

Car. First let me compose myself. My every limb trembles with sweet alarm. Never have I been so bold as even to dream this! Where is the man who can so suddenly alter his nature, and at once become a God. Who was I, and who am I now?—This is another climate. This is not the world where tears should flow. No. That was but a dream of my distempered fancy. It is past, and I am now awake. She loves me. O let me proclaim to all Madrid, the court, the kingdom, my unbounded bliss.--(*Going.*)

Page. Whither is your Highness going. You forget.

Car.—(*Assailed by sudden recollection.*)—The King, my father.—(*Endeavours to compose himself.*)—Horrible!—Yes, you are right, my friend. I thank you. I was not myself. That I must be silent, that I must bury in my bosom this excess of joy, is horrible. Subterraneous gold, I've heard, must be dug for, during a death-like silence; therefore I will not even breathe.—(*Takes the Page's hand, and leads him aside.*)—Be all that you have seen to-day, or even suspected, buried in your bosom. Now go. I shall find the way. Go. We must not be seen together.—(*Page is about to obey.*)—Yet hold!—(*He returns. Carlos lays his hand upon the Page's shoulder, and gazes earnestly at him.*)—You take away with you a dreadful secret. Like poison it may break the vessel which contains it.—Let it not approach too near the throne. Keep your words and gestures under strict control. Let not your reason attempt to dive into the secret which your bosom harbours. Resemble the trumpet, which receives a sound, and forwards it, yet hears it not. You are still a boy—continue to appear so, and be happy. How politic she was to fix on such a messenger. Among the pages Philip will not look for vipers.

Page. And I, Don Carlos, shall feel pleasure in the idea that I know one secret which the King does not.

Car. Vain boy! That is the exact sensation which you must avoid. If we should meet in public, approach me with formality and distance. Never let vanity induce you even to hint how gracious I am towards you. You cannot, in the eyes of courtiers, be guilty of a greater crime than pleasing me.—The messages to me, with which you may hereafter be entrusted, do not even utter. Confide not in your lips. Let not your thoughts be ready to escape when you espy me, but rather let them follow me through pathless deserts, where no one can discover them. When opportunity occurs, speak to me with your fingers—I will listen with my eyes. The light we see, the very air we breathe, are Philip's creatures. Even the deaf walls are in his pay.—I hear footsteps.—(*Enter Alba from the Queen's apartments.*)—Away!—Instantly away!

Page. Do not mistake the apartment, Prince.

Car. It is the Duke.—No, no. I shall not.

[*Exit Page.*

Alba.—(*To Carlos, who is going.*)—May I be allowed a moment's conversation with the Infant?

Car. Another time, Duke Alba.

Alba. This is not, I must own, a proper place. Perhaps it may please your Highness to grant me an audience in your own apartments.

Car. For what purpose? It may as well be done here—but be brief.

Alba. I come, in fact, most humbly to return my thanks.

Car. Thanks! For what? Thanks from Duke Alba!

Alba. Yes—for scarcely had your Highness left the King, ere I was ordered to depart for Brussels.

Car. Indeed!

Alba. To whom, therefore, can I be obliged for the dignity conferred on me, but to your Highness?

Car. No, on my soul. To me you are not in the least obliged for it. Go, and heaven be with you!

Alba. Is this all? Your Highness much surprises me. Have you no other commands to Flanders?

Car. How should I?

Alba. Yet but a short time since it seemed as if that country required the actual presence of Don Carlos.

Car. How!—But true—I am glad it is not so.

Alba. You surprise me—

Car.—(*Not ironically.*)—You are a great general—every one knows it—envy must allow it. I am a young man. Such also was the King's opinion—and the King is right. I am convinced of my error. I am glad that you are going—therefore enough of this. The rest may be discussed to-morrow, or when you return from Brussels.

Alba. How! In ten years!

Car. Till then farewell.—(*After a pause, perceiving that the Duke remains, he proceeds.*)—The season of the year is favourable. Your road is through Milan, Lorraine, Burgundy, and Germany.—Germany!—Ay, there it was. The Germans know you well. This is April—May—June—July—yes, in July, or, at the latest, early in August, you will be at Brussels. Doubtless we soon shall hear of your exploits. You will, of course, make yourself worthy of our gracious confidence.

Alba.—(*Significantly.*)—Is that possible?

Car. I understand you, Duke, and much lament I have not time for a discussion of the subject you allude to.

Alba. Prince, we do not understand each other.

Car. Explain, then, what you mean.

Alba. I mean to state the value of this arm. Your father knows that it is easier to beget a monarch

than to gain a monarchy---that it is easier to provide beings for the world, than a world for those beings.

Car. And what am I to infer from this?

Alba. That princes often ridicule their nurses, and sleep, with thoughtless ease, upon the cushion of a warrior's victories. In the diadem the jewels, and the jewels only, sparkle---not the wounds by which that diadem was gained.---This sword prescribed the laws of Spain to foreign nations. It was exerted in religion's cause, and ploughed up bloody furrows for the seeds of faith. God judged in heaven, and I on earth.

Car. Whether it was God or the devil, was immaterial. You were his right arm. I know all this---and, at present, no more of it, I beg; for I wish to avoid a painful recollection. I revere my father's choice. He feels the want of Alba, but I do not envy this sensation. You are a great man---that I allow---but I fear you were born some centuries before the proper period. Methinks an Alba should have appeared when the dissolution of all animated nature was at hand.---At such a time, when the gigantic power of guilt shall even dare to defy the Almighty, when the abundant harvest of iniquity shall demand an unexampled reaper---then would you have been in your proper place---Oh, heavens! My Paradise! My Flanders! But I must not think of it. Let us quit the subject.

Alba. To sacrifice mankind, when for the good of human nature, is compassion. Heaven itself once gave us this example. To purify the world, the world itself perished.---Pestilence---

Car. Yes, Pestilence is your symbol. It marks the life of Alba, and the government of Philip. I have heard that you take with you sentences of death, already signed. The provision is, I own, most praise-worthy.---Oh, my father, how have I mistaken you! I accused you of severity, when you

but refused me the situation in which Alba can shine. This was the first mark of your regard.

Alba. Prince, that expression merits——

Car.—(*Incensed.*)—What?

Alba. But your royal blood protects you.

Car.—(*Draws.*)—This calls for satisfaction. Draw.

Alba.—(*Coldly.*)—Against whom?

Car.—(*Rushing towards him.*)—Draw, or by heaven this moment is thy last.

Alba.—(*Draws.*)—Since it must be so.—(*They fight.*)

Enter QUEEN.

Queen.—(*Alarmed.*)—Swords!—(*To the Prince, in a commanding tone.*)—Carlos!

Car.—(*Drops his sword on seeing the Queen, remains motionless awhile, then hastens towards Alba, and presents his hand.*)—Be reconciled, Duke. Be all forgotten.—(*Falls at the Queen's feet; then rises, and instantly rushes out of the apartment.*)

Alba.—(*Who has been an attentive spectator of what passed.*)—By heaven—but this is strange.

Queen.—(*Is uneasy, and for a few moments, undecided how to act—she then slowly approaches her apartment, and turns at the door.*)—Duke Alba.—(*He follows her into the apartment.*)

Scene, The Princess EBOLI'S Cabinet. She is discovered on a sofa, with her lute. Her dress is simple, yet beautiful.

Ebo.—(*Plays and sings—in a few moments she hastily rises.*)—Ha! He comes.

Enter PAGE.

Page. Are you alone?

Ebo. He comes. I hear it in your very foot-

steps; I hear it in your very breath. Instantly declare he comes.

Page. I am much surprised that he is not already here; but you may expect him every moment.

Ebo. You are sure of this?

Page. He must be close behind me. Oh, Princess, you are loved as no one ever yet was loved. What a scene did I witness!

Ebo.—(*Draws him towards her.*)—What saw you? What said he? How did he look? Was he surprised—confused? Did he suspect that I had sent the key?—Quick!—Tell me.—Or did he suspect some other person?—Well! Why do you not reply? Speak, you never were before half so inanimate.

Page. Gracious Princess, you command, yet will not allow me to speak. I delivered the note and key to him, in the queen's antichamber. He started when I told him that a lady sent them.

Ebo. Started! Excellent! Proceed.

Page. I wanted to say more, but he turned pale, snatched the letter from my hand, and told me he knew all. He read the letter—seemed astonished—and began to tremble.

Ebo. Knew all! said he that?

Page. He did, and several times he asked me whether you yourself had actually entrusted the letter to my care?

Ebo. I myself! He mentioned my name, then?

Page. No—I don't remember that he did. He said there were spies not far off, who might repeat it to the King.

Ebo.—(*Embarrassed.*)—Said he that?

Page. He said it was of the utmost consequence that his Majesty should have no information respecting the letter.

Ebo. His Majesty! Are you sure of this?

Page. Yes. He called it a dangerous secret,

and warned me against any signs or words which might excite suspicion in the king.

Ebo.—(*Much surprised.*)—Every thing corresponds—it must be so—he knows the whole affair—yet how can he have learnt it? How? Need I ask? What is so keen as the eagle-eye of love? But proceed. He read the note——

Page. Yes, and he said the tidings were so joyful that they made him tremble, and was proceeding to speak of the key when Duke Alba entered, which compelled us——

Ebo. Tormenting! What had the Duke to do there? But the key—what said he of the key? Be not so brief—I never knew you thus before. What said he?

Page. That it was the key of Paradise.

Ebo. But why does he not come? Where is he? Surely he might have enjoyed the moments, which you have occupied, in telling me how happy he will be.

Page. The Duke, I fear—

Ebo. The Duke again! What does he want? Why does a warrior interfere with my peaceful happiness? The Prince might have left him, or dismissed him. Alas! Carlos, it seems, but little knows our sex, as little as he knows the force of love, else would the minutes——

Page. Princess, you rail against an angel.

Ebo.—(*Blushing.*)—Young deceiver! Who told you that?

Page.—(*With enthusiasm.*)—So great, so noble, yet so good. What a pity it is he must be my king. I wish he were my brother.

Ebo.—(*Turns away, wipes her eyes, and presses the Page's hand.*)—And you have never yet reminded me, how much I am a debtor for your services.—(*Takes a sword belt, covered with jewels, from*

the table, and presents it to the Page.)—Let this token remind you of me, good youth, when first you wear a sword.

Page.—(*Retreating with downcast eyes.*)—Does the happy Princess thus reward me? Has the intelligence I brought merited nothing better? Shall I, at such a moment, be content with diamonds? Shall I, who have seen those cheeks animated with the blush of love, and know who is destined to revel in those charms, be satisfied with such a recompence as this?

Ebo. Some one approaches. Away! It is the Prince. [*Exit Page.*
Where is my lute?—He shall surprise me. Music shall lead him hither.—(*Throws herself on the sofa, and plays.*)

CARLOS *rushes in.*

Car.—(*Espies Ebo's, and stands rooted to the spot.*)
—God of heaven! Where am I?

Ebo.—(*Lets the lute fall and rises.*)—Don Carlos! Yes, it is you.

Car.—(*In violent agitation.*)—Where am I? Accursed error! I have mistaken the apartment.

Ebo.—(*With affected surprise.*)—How well Don Carlos knows to find the rooms where ladies are alone.

Car.—(*Stammering.*)—Princess—pardon me, Princess—the door was open.

Ebo.—(*Jocosely.*)—Can that be possible! I thought that I myself had locked it.

Car. That you might fancy—but be assured you were mistaken. You might intend to lock it, and to bolt it—but it was not locked. The outward bolt—that is—I mean the inward bolt—yes, that was fastened, I allow.

Ebo. And yet you entered?—Well! you are mighty clever, truly. Instruct me thus to counteract the power of locks and bolts.

Car. Nothing is more natural—nothing more easy—for, fortunately—I would say unfortunately—I happened to possess a key, which exactly suited the lock. An accident led me hither—I heard some one play upon a lute—was it not a lute?—*(Looks doubtfully around.)*—Yes—there it lies—and the music of a lute, heaven knows, I love beyond description. I listened with attention, till I forgot myself, and rushed into this room, that I might see the charming minstrel, who had overpowered me.

Ebo.—*(After having, in vain, attempted to fix his wandering eye.)*—A most amiable curiosity, which you have, however, soon conquered, as I could prove.—*(After a pause, in a significant tone.)*—I admire the man, who involves himself in falsehoods, that he may spare a female's blushes.

Car. Princess, I feel that I make matters worse, by trying to improve them. Release me from a part which I am not fit to act. In this apartment you sought retirement from the world. Here, undisturbed by man, you wished to reflect upon the secrets of your heart. I, at a luckless moment, have appeared, and interrupted your sweet meditations. My instant departure shall, in some degree, atone—*(Going.)*

Ebo.—*(Is astonished and alarmed, but immediately recollects herself.)*—Prince!—Is this proper?

Car. I understand the meaning of that look in this apartment, and I revere your virtuous embarrassment. Cursed be the man who grows more bold because a woman blushes. I am a coward when I see a female tremble.

Ebo. Is it possible? Such consciences are rare among young men and princes. Now, Don Carlos, you must stay—even I myself request it; for so much virtue would remove all scruples even in the most timid of our sex. Not one in a thousand

would have acted thus, when tempted by a key which so readily obeyed him. But why should we waste in idle words the happy moments, which *accident* has granted us? Do you know that your appearance interrupted me in my favourite air?—(*Leads him to the sofa, and takes her lute.*)—I must play it again, Don Carlos, and your punishment shall be to listen.

Car.—(*Seats himself at her side, not quite without constraint.*)—A punishment as desirable as my error—and, in truth, the words, as well as the music, were so charming, that I could hear them a third time with delight.

Ebo. How! Did you hear them, then? That was shameful, Prince.—I believe love was the subject.

Car. Yes, you sung of happy love—the sweetest subject from the sweetest lips—although not quite so true as sweet.

Ebo. Not true? Have you doubts?

Car. When love is the subject, I much doubt whether Don Carlos and the Princess Eboli will ever comprehend each other.—(*Eboli starts—he observes it, and proceeds with an easy air of gallantry.*)—For who, when he beholds those rosy cheeks, will think that any passion ever raged within your bosom? Can Eboli sigh unregarded? No—and he alone can feel the power of love, whose love is hopeless.

Ebo.—(*Who has regained her former cheerfulness.*)—Oh, peace! Why this sounds terrible indeed. It seems to be your destiny to feel what you describe.—(*Taking his hand with a captivating smile.*)—You are not in good spirits, Prince. How happens this? How can you, surrounded by the pleasures of the world, and so highly gifted by the prodigal hand of nature, be thus depressed—you, who are a potent Monarch's son—you, whose talents even eclipse your rank—you, whose worth and glory have gained

the universal suffrage of those rigid judges, women—you, who conquer with a look, and have in your gift the joys of Paradise—can you be wretched?—Oh, heaven, why, when thou didst shower thy choicest gifts upon him, why didst thou make him blind to his own conquests?

Car.—(*Who has, throughout this speech, been lost in meditation, rouses himself as soon as Eboli ceases.*)—Excellent! inimitable, Princess! Pray sing that stanza again.

Ebo.—(*Astonished.*)—Carlos! Of what were you thinking?

Car.—(*Springs up.*)—True. It was well you reminded me. I must leave you instantly.

Ebo.—(*Detains him.*)—Whither are you going?

Car.—(*In violent agitation.*)—You know whither—but no, no—you do not know.—I must go—I must hasten into the open air.—Release me Princess, I feel as if the world were in flames.

Ebo.—(*Holds him back by force.*)—What means this? Whence this strange unnatural conduct?—(*Carlos again becomes thoughtful—she avails herself of this opportunity to seat him on the sofa.*)—Compose yourself, dear Carlos. You are much agitated. Sit here—here, at my side.—Do you even know what thus disturbs you!—Nay, granting that you do, is there no knight, no lady at this court, who could remove—I mean could comprehend your illness?

Car.—(*With thoughtless indifference.*)—Perhaps the Princess Eboli.

Ebo.—(*Joyfully.*)—Indeed!

Car. Give me a letter of recommendation to my father. You have great interest with him, I am told.

Ebo. Who told you so!—(*Aside.*)—Ha! It was this suspicion, then, which made him dumb.

Car. The story is, perhaps, already public. I have formed a sudden wish to visit Flanders---

merely to earn the spurs of knighthood; but my considerate father thinks that if I command an army, it will spoil my singing.

Ebo. Carlos, you deceive me. Confess, now, that this is a mere subterfuge. Look at me, hypocrite. He who thinks of nothing but the exploits of chivalry, would hardly demean himself so far as to steal the ribbands which a lady loses, and ---pardon me,---(*Nimbly draws from his bosom a ribband, which was there concealed.*)---To hide them in his breast.

Car.---(*Extremely embarrassed.*)---Princess---this is too much---I am betrayed.---You are combined with demons to undo me.

Ebo. Are you surprised at that? What will you bet, Prince, that I do not remind you of transactions which are long since faded in your memory? If even every little motion, every half-articulated sound, every transient smile---if even your features, when your mind was not expressed in them, have not escaped my observation, judge whether I could fail to understand what you intended that I should.

Car. You have a good opinion of your powers.---I will make this wager. You promise to discover some sensations in my heart, of which I was myself unconscious.

Ebo. How, Prince! Look round. This cabinet is not one of the queen's apartments, where, at a ball, Don Carlos has been known to praise a mask. ---You start---the colour mounts into your cheeks. Undoubtedly it is a daring and unpardonable act to observe the actions of Don Carlos! but it was remarked, at the late ball, that he forsook the Queen, his partner, and hurried to another couple, in order to take the hand of Eboli---a mistake which even caught the attention of his Majesty, who had just arrived.

Car.—(*With an ironical smile.*)—It was rather unfortunate, I own, that he of all men should perceive.

Ebo. I could remind you, too, that once, when playing with the Queen and me at cards, you dexterously contrived to steal this glove—(*Carlos springs up in great agitation.*)—and were gallant enough to play it on the table, as if it were a card.

Car. God of heaven! What have I done?

Ebo. Nothing which you will recall, I hope. How agreeably was I surprised when I found the note, which you had contrived to hide in the glove. The lines were written in a style so moving—

Car.—(*Interrupting her.*)—A mere copy of verses. My brain delights in forming bubbles, which burst as soon as they are made. Let us drop the subject.

Ebo.—(*Walks away, and, with looks of astonishment, surveys him at a distance.*)—This is too much.—All my attempts are fruitless.—(*A pause.*)—But how if this were pride, which but assumes the mask of diffidence, that it may the more enjoy its conquest?—(*Approaches Carlos with a doubtful look.*)—Assist me, Prince. I have now before me an enchanted chest, to which I cannot find a key.

Car. I am in the same situation.

Ebo.—(*Instantly leaves him, walks up and down the room, then turns to Carlos, with a solemn mien.*)—Be it so. At last I am obliged to speak. I make you my confidant. You are a worthy man, a knight, a Prince. I place myself under your protection. You will rescue me—or if you cannot rescue—you will sympathize in my sad fate.—(*Carlos approaches with a look of anxious expectation.*)—An audacious favorite of the King has demanded my hand—Rui Gomez, Count of Silva. Your father has consented, and I am sold, like merchandize, to this vile creature.

Car.—(*Assailed by a dreadful recollection.*)—Sold!

What! Sold again! No more of this, I beg. On this subject my nerves are most susceptible.

Ebo. You must hear all. It is not enough that I am doomed to be the victim of policy. Even my virtue is attacked. Long have I been persecuted by the shameful passion of the great voluptuary. This letter will unmask the saint.—(Carlos takes it, and attends with such impatience to her narrative, that he forgets to read it.)—Where shall I take refuge, Prince? Till now, my virtue has been guarded by my pride, but at last—

Car. At last you yielded. No, no, no—for heaven's sake, no.

Ebo. Yielded! To whom? How weak are man's ideas, when the subject of them is a woman's favours!—Love can only be purchased by itself.—Throughout this spacious earth, love is the price of love. It is the invaluable jewel, which the owner must bestow as a gift, or bury it, that no one may enjoy it—like the great merchant, who in contempt of all the gold which kings could offer, restored his pearls to the rich ocean, rather than sell them for less than their value.

Car.—(Aside.)—By heaven she is most lovely.

Ebo. Call it a whim, or vanity, or—what you please. I shall not grant shares of my affection. To the only man, whom I think worthy of my choice, I shall give every thing. One, and one only, can Ebo make happy, but that one will be a god. The enchanting harmony of souls, the kiss of rapture, the voluptuous embrace, are each a leaf belonging to a beauteous flower. Shall I then madly strip this flower of its ornaments? Shall I degrade the majesty of woman, that I may sweeten the evening of a libertine?

Car.—(Aside.)—Incredible! Has such a woman existed in Madrid—and have I not discovered her till now?

Ebo. Long since should I have forsaken this court—nay, this world, and should have taken refuge in a convent, but a single tie remains which binds me to the world. Alas! I am, perhaps, misled by a phantom, but to me this phantom is invaluable. I love, and am—not beloved.

Car.—(*Flies towards her with ardour.*)—You are, you are. By my soul I swear you are beyond description loved.

Ebo. You swear! You? That was an angel's voice. Yes, if you swear that I am beloved,—then I believe it, Carlos.

Car.—(*Clasps her in his arms.*)—Sweet emblem of sensibility—adorable being! I am lost in ecstasy and wonder. Who on this earth can boast that he has seen you, and has never loved? But what can you do here—here at the court of Philip, among monks and sycophants. This is not the proper climate for a flower so lovely. Soon will they attempt to pluck it—but no, they shall not—as I live they shall not. In these arms I'll bear you through a host of demons. Yes—let me be your guardian angel.

Eb.—(*With a look of the warmest affection.*)—Oh Carlos, how little have I known you, yet how boundless is the recompence your heart bestows for the trouble of diving into its recesses!—(*Attempts to kiss his hand.*)

Car.—(*Drawing it back.*)—What mean you, Princess?

Ebo.—(*Gazing intently at his hand.*)—How beautiful is that hand, and oh, how rich!—Two precious gifts can it bestow—a diadem, and the heart of Carlos—both, perhaps on one mortal. Great, heavenly gift! Almost too much for one. How if you divide them, Prince. A queen seldom loves sincerely, and she, who loves sincerely seldom understands the duties of a queen. Better were it, there-

fore, to divide the gifts. And why not do it now? Perhaps you have. Oh, if this be the case, name to me the happy fair one.

Car. I will. Sweet, lovely, unaffected girl, to you I will discover all. You are the only one at this court, who can entirely understand me.—Well then, I own—I love—

Ebo. Tormenting man! Was it so difficult to own this? Must I be an object of compassion because you love me?

Car.—(*Starts.*)—What means this?

Ebo. How could you thus torture me? How could you deny that you received my key?

Car. Key!—What do I hear?—But—true—oh, God!—(*His knees totter—he sinks into a chair, and hides his face.*)

Ebo. What have I done?—(*Falls.*)

Car. Plunged thus low—into the unfathomable gulph of despair!—Oh, horrible!

Ebo.—(*Hiding her face.*)—What a discovery! Oh, heavens!

Car.—(*Kneels at her side.*)—I am not guilty, Princess. My passions—an unfortunate misunderstanding.

Ebo.—(*Pushes him back.*)—Away from my sight!

Car. I cannot leave you in this dreadful agitation.

Ebo.—(*Forcibly pushing him away.*)—If you have any compassion or generosity, begone. Would you murder me? The sight of you is death. Give me my letter, and my key—then go.—Where is the other letter?

Car. What other?

Ebo. The King's.

Car.—(*Starts.*)—Whose?

Ebo. That which I put into your hand.

Car. From the King! And to whom? To you?

Ebo. Oh, heavens! In what a labyrinth have I involved myself. Return the letter. I must have it.

Car. That letter—which will unmask the saint—is it that you want?

Ebo. Oh, I shall die. Return it instantly.

Car.—(*Draws it forth.*)—No, Princess. This is an invaluable treasure—(*Holds it triumphantly.*)—which all the realms of Philip cannot purchase. This letter I shall keep.—(*Going.*)

Ebo.—(*Rushes between him and the door.*)—Merciful heavens! Should you act thus meanly, I am lost.

Car.—(*Takes her hand with dignified composure.*)—Princess Eboli, when I act meanly,—then, and not till then, I allow you to blush for what has happened. [*Exit.*]

Ebo. Another word, Don Carlos—but a single word.—He is gone—he despises me.—Here am I left alone—rejected and despised.—(*Sinks on the sofa.*)—Rejected in favour of a rival!—There is now no doubt; he himself avowed his love. But who is the happy fair one? Thus much is plain—his attachment is improper, for he fears detection, and carefully conceals his passion from the King. Is it not the father, whom he fears in Philip? How transported was he, when I betrayed the secret of the King's advances!—How happened it that his rigid virtue was on this occasion silent?—What can he gain if the Queen were thus to be—(*Suddenly pauses—her looks indicate that some extraordinary idea has occurred to her. She draws forth the ribband which she took from Carlos, and instantly recognizes it.*)—Fool, fool that I have been! Where were my senses?—The scales fall from my eyes. They had been attached to each other long before the King married her. The Prince never saw me but when *she* was also present.—She, therefore, was the object of that boundless love, which I was blind enough to think he felt for me. Oh, unexampled deception! I have betrayed my weakness too.—(*A pause.*)—That his

passion should be quite hopeless I can hardly think. Hopeless love cannot exist in such a case. He had liberty to revel in these charms, which even a monarch courted—he refused this—such a sacrifice could not have been offered by a hopeless lover. How tenderly he pressed me to his beating heart! Affection, if not returned, could not have resisted such temptation as I offered.—Let me reflect. He accepted the key which he conceives was sent to him by the Queen—he relies on this gigantic stride of love, and comes. Of course therefore, he supposes Philip's wife might have done this, and this supposition must be founded upon previous facts.—It is clear, it is clear. She loves him—this saint, this emblem of sanctity loves Carlos.—I have trembled in the presence of this virtuous Queen, have thought her supernatural, and have felt myself extinguished by the splendour of her virtues. And was the composure which I so often have beheld with wonder—was it a mask?—Yes. She wishes to enjoy two tables—she wishes to appear at the creditable board of virtue, and likewise revel at the secret feast of vice. And shall this bold attempt succeed? Shall it be unrevenged?—No, no. That shall it not, by heaven. The King shall be acquainted with this gross deception. The King—*(After reflecting awhile.)*—Right!—That is the surest road to his ear.—*(Rings the bell.)*

Enter a PAGE.

There is a ball at court this evening—is there not?

Page. Yes, Princess. The company has already begun to assemble.

Ebo. If you could draw the confessor aside—

Page. Father Domingo, do you mean?

Ebo. The same. Request him to step into the apartment on the left, till I can conveniently follow

him. Say that an event of consequence has taken place, and we must meet.

Page. I shall obey your orders. [Exit.

Ebo.—(*Paces the room with a dejected air, then stops.*)—But why should I despond?—I am not totally forsaken,—One lover I retain, and that a monarch. How many thousands are there, who would be happy if they possessed the shadow of my situation! Why am I thus dissatisfied? Is it true that happiness depends on mutual love? Nay, if it be, why should I think of love on this occasion? Is not my pride insulted—and can it be silenced by the accents of a hopeless passion? No. The King alone can execute the vengeance which my soul demands.—(*Is going, but loses herself in meditation.*)—Virtue! He, for whom I have reserved it, has refused the gift. If the flowers of virtue be not gathered by the hand of love, what is their value? Nothing. I am not allowed to love. Adieu, therefore, to all the hopes which I had founded on affection. Be my present idol—vengeance. I will love no more. [Exit.

Scene, an Apartment in the Palace. It is evening, and the room is but feebly lighted.

Enter ALBA and DOMINGO from opposite sides.

Dom. Is it you, Duke Alba?—Good evening to you.

Alba. Hold! Who mentioned my name?

Dom. For whom are you looking?

Alba. It is Domingo. Alone, too! You vanished from the room, without a moment's notice, and I have been in search of you some time.

Dom. Does his Majesty want me?

Alba. No. I myself wished to converse with you, but I am not in haste. Doubtless you expect some one. Dare I know who it is?

Dom. What was your business with me?

Alba. I wished to ask an explanation of a strange circumstance which occurred to-day.

Dom. Pray proceed.

Alba. Don Carlos and I met each other at noon in the Queen's antichamber. He insulted me—we became loud—and at last drew our swords. The Queen heard the noise, rushed from her room between us, and with a look of firm authority riveted her eye upon the Prince. It was a momentary look, but instantly he dropped his sword, presented me his hand, and disappeared.

Dom.—(*After a pause.*)—This was strange. Duke, you remind me of suspicions, which have long had their place in my mind, though as yet I have not entrusted them to any one. There are double friends, which may be compared to two-edged scymitars—I like not these. It is difficult to pry into the heart of man, therefore I concealed my secret till a proper opportunity of stating it occurred. Besides, who knows but I may be deceived, for man is often erroneous in his conjectures. I am a priest—it is my vocation rather to promote peace than enmity. The latter I leave to those whom it better suits. Different servants have different employments. Duty may command Duke Alba to do that, which would in Domingo be most culpable. I must be silent, were the certainty still greater than it is.

Alba. Certainty! I know not what you mean. All I have said is scarcely a foundation for a probability.

Dom. Of what avail is that conviction, which I dare not publish? To render certain services to kings is dangerous, Duke. If the arrow which you shoot be not precisely aimed, it is certain to recoil upon yourself. What I say, I would confirm by oath and by the sacrament, but a witness, a single

word, a scrap of paper, would weigh more than all my evidence. Pity it is we live in Spain.

Alba. Why so?

Dom. Because in other courts gallantry may be more open—here it is confined by rigid laws. The queens of Spain find it difficult to sin, especially in that respect, which best would answer the purpose of detection.

Alba. True. We must, therefore——

Dom. On one scheme I must allow that I have founded hopes. Should this succeed—May I repeat to the Princess Eboli what you have mentioned?

Alba. I wished to see you on this subject. The discovery is of great consequence to me—of greater than you, perhaps, suspect. Something happened to-day—I hope we understand each other, reverend father.

Dom. My opinion of Don Carlos you well know.

Alba. I have never thought him dangerous—nor do I yet, but if there be a mortal whom I could allow myself to fear, this boy is he.

Dom. Duke, you touch a string—

Alba. Hear me. We are in danger. The king this morning mentioned—but a few words, and I trust you know that words are not apt to make me tremble, reverend father. Yet in these words much might be comprehended. Already does he waver between us and the Infant—a reconciliation has almost taken place.

Dom. A reconciliation! Heaven forbid!

Alba. He declares that Carlos shall henceforth be nearer to his throne. Me he commanded—at least it sounded thus—to beg of his proud son that I might still continue in the father's favour.

Dom. You make me uneasy, Duke.

Alba. The audience was long. Loudly (for I heard him when I was in the cabinet) he entreated that the king would send him as commander to the

Netherlands. When I saw him I observed he had been weeping. At noon he met me with an air of joy, congratulated me, and expressed his satisfaction at the preference which the King had shewn to me. I am sure he never was a hypocrite. How, therefore, must I reconcile these contradictions? The prince rejoices in the denial of his wish, and his father confers on me the honour with every mark of anger. What am I to think? The dignity, with which I am invested, rather resembles banishment than favour.

Dom. Heavens! Is this our situation? In a moment is the building destroyed, to raise which we have employed whole years? Yet you are so calm. Do you know this youth? Do you suspect what will be our lot, should he attain any power? He hates you.

Alba. That I can forgive, for our sensations are so far mutual—but he despises me—that I will never pardon. Last year when the assembled states of Arragon did homage to him, and the turn reached me, I was not present, for my office as marshal had elsewhere detained me. Thrice had the herald summoned me ere I appeared before the throne—but how was I received? The Infant spurned me from him. In the presence of Arragon he refused to let me kiss his hand. All eyes were turned upon me, and for the first time in my life I was embarrassed. At that time I swore my vengeance should be horrible—and horrible it shall be.

Dom. I am not his enemy. Other cares oppress my mind—cares for the throne, for God, and for religion. I know the Infant—I have looked into his soul, and am convinced he has a mean opinion of our holy church.

Alba. I fear he has too high an opinion of it, for methinks he knows not yet how useful it may be made.

Dom. His heart glows with an independent novel virtue, which seeks no support in faith. Vice produces millions to the church. This support he holds in abhorrence and contempt. To be brief, he *thinks*—his mind is inflamed with strange chimeras—he respects what are called the rights of human nature—Is it fit that such a man should be our king?

Alba. These are mere phantoms—perhaps arising from a wish to be singular. Far different will be his sentiments, when he is vested with despotic power.

Dom. That I doubt. He is proud of freedom, unaccustomed to constraint, and therefore not likely to purchase it. Is such a man fit for the Spanish throne? His gigantic mind will instantly erase the laws of our state policy. In vain have I endeavoured to enervate his firm mind by the fascinations of voluptuousness. He has counteracted my attempts. The secret of relieving an overburdened conscience he despised. Such a mind, with such a constitution, is to be dreaded, and Philip is now sixty years of age.

Alba. You look far into futurity.

Dom. He and the Queen agree in sentiment. The poison of innovation has crept into the breasts of both. If it gain ground, the throne will be in danger. I do not like this Valois.

Alba.—(*Dejected.*)—Why remind me of her? You have roused a recollection which I wished to have concealed even from myself for ever.

Dom. What may it be? You seem much agitated.

Alba. The Queen of Spain once wounded me so deeply, that the blood which she drew forth will stain my reputation during whole centuries. She it was—for my spies have at last dived into the mystery—she alone it was who betrayed my project of drawing the prince of Bourbon from Navarre—a project which, to the Spanish Monarch, was of no smaller consequence than a rich kingdom. She

apprised France of my intention—the plan was defeated—and I was made the butt of ridicule.

Dom. I am acquainted with this circumstance. Should Philip relax in his authority, you may dread the vengeance of this secret foe. As yet, Fortune is in our favour. Let us avail ourselves of this, and at one blow destroy the Queen and Infant. A hint must be immediately given to the King—whether at first supported by proof is immaterial. We have gained much if we but make him waver. As to ourselves, we have no doubts, and those, who are themselves convinced, find no great difficulty in convincing others. We are certain to discover more, if we have formed a resolution that we will. I have in view another source. Was it not in January that the queen was brought to bed? Right--and it was only in April of the former year that the king recovered from his dangerous fever. Duke Alba, you understand me. This little seed shall produce a plenteous crop of jealousy—but we must be patient.

Alba. But now to the principal question. Who takes upon him the task of exciting the king to—

Dom. Neither you, nor I—but in digesting this plan, I have not failed to provide, with silent diligence; a proper person. The King loves the Princess Eboli, and I encourage this passion, because it forwards my views. I am his ambassador at present, and will instruct the Princess how to act. If I succeed, we shall, I hope, have in this lady, a most powerful friend—perhaps a future Queen. She herself has summoned me to meet her here. My hopes are great. In one night a Spanish girl may perhaps destroy this lily of Valois.

Alba. May I believe this? By heavens, you surprise me much. This promises a quick completion of our wishes. Domingo, I revere you highly. Our game is won.

Dom. Hold! Some one approaches.

Alba. That I, who have grown grey in the defence of Philip, should be obliged to use a woman's influence is torture to me, but the blush which overspreads my face, this boy shall pay for—

Dom. Go, go. 'Tis she herself.

Alba. I shall be in the next room, if you—

Dom. Enough! I'll call you. [*Exit Alba.*]

Enter EBOLI.

I am at your service, Princess.

Ebo.—(*Looks round.*)—Are we alone?

Dom. Quite so.

Ebo. Who left you just now?

Dom. Duke Alba, who requests the honour of paying his respects to you, when you are at liberty.

Ebo. Duke Alba! What can he want with me? Do you know?

Dom. Can I confess that till I know what has procured me an interview which is so rare? Perhaps some circumstance has at length made you more inclined to the King's wishes. Perhaps, mature consideration has reconciled you to an offer, which momentary caprice induced you to refuse. I come full of expectation—

Ebo. Did you report my last answer to the King?

Dom. Hitherto, I have forbore to inflict a wound so severe. Perhaps, Princess, you may now condescend to be more indulgent.

Ebo. Tell the King that I expect him.

Dom. May I believe this, Princess?

Ebo. Do you suppose I mean not what I say? Heavens! You alarm me. What have I done that even *you* must blush?

Dom. Princess, this surprise—scarcely can I comprehend what you avow—

Ebo. Good father, it is not my intention that you should. Enough is it for you that I accept the offer

of King Philip. You may save yourself the trouble of trying to discover why I do so. For your consolation, I will allow that your eloquence had no effect on me, though you declared that there were cases in which the church thought proper to use the persons of its younger daughters for purposes beyond my comprehension. These pious arguments are, I must own, too high for me.

Dom. With pleasure, I retract them, Princess, as soon as I perceive they are not necessary.

Ebo. I wish you, in my name, to beg that his Majesty will not mistake me upon this occasion. I am still what I have been, though the situation of affairs is changed. When I refused his offer with disdain, I thought him happy in possessing a most amiable consort, and believed this faithful partner was worthy of the sacrifice I made. Such was then my opinion, but now I know better than to found any renunciation upon such fallacious principles.

Dom. Proceed, Princess, proceed. We understand each other.

Ebo. I have detected the sly pilferer, and will be no longer silent. She has imposed upon the King, me, and all Spain. She loves, and is beloved. I can produce proofs of this — proofs which will make her tremble. The King is grossly imposed upon, but he shall be revenged. I will tear away the mask of virtue, which this pretended saint has worn, and exhibit to the world her guilty countenance. This triumph I must purchase at a dreadful price, but I glory in the thought that it will cost her more.

Dom. Our plan is ripe. Allow me to call the Duke. [Goes.]

Ebo.—(*Astonished.*)—What means this?

Re-enter ALBA, preceded by DOMINGO.

Dom. Our intelligence arrives too late, Duke Alba.

The Princess Eboli has disclosed to me the secret, which we intended she should learn from us.

Alba. My visit will be less surprising then. I dared not credit my own eyes; for such discoveries require the piercing penetration of a female.

Ebo. To what discoveries do you refer?

Dom. Princess, we wish to know what time and place will better suit you——

Ebo. Right! I shall expect you to-morrow noon at my apartments. I have reasons for no longer concealing this secret from the King.

Alba. This it was, which brought me hither. The King must be acquainted with it instantly. He must learn it, too, from you, for upon whose testimony will he be so willing to rely? You are the vigilant companion of the Queen——

Dom. And, when you please, may be the uncontrolled companion of the King.

Alba. I am declared to be the foe of Carlos.

Dom. The same is said of me—but not of Princess Eboli. We are obliged to be silent, while the duties of your situation compel you to speak. Be you our leader, and believe me we shall soon attain our end.

Alba. But we must be decisive. Every moment is precious. In another hour I may be ordered to depart.

Dom.—(*After a pause, turns to Eboli.*)—Might not letters be found—letters from the Prince? These would assist us greatly. Let me consider——ay——true. You sleep, I think, in the same apartment with the Queen.

Ebo. In the one next to it. But what of this?

Dom. Have you ever observed where she keeps the key of her cabinet?

Ebo.—(*After a pause.*)—That might be of use. Yes. I think the key might be found.

Dom. Letters must be conveyed by messengers.

The Queen's establishment is great—but is there no one who has excited your suspicion? Gold can do much.

Alba. Perhaps the Infant has some friend.

Dom. Not one in all Madrid.

Alba. That is strange.

Dom. It is so, but you may rely upon it; he despises the whole court. I have proofs of this.

Alba. But hold! It just occurs to me that as I left the apartments of the Queen, I saw the Prince in private conversation with a page.

Ebo. That—that was on another subject.

Dom. Another subject! How can this be known. The circumstance is really suspicious.—(*To Alba.*)—Did you know the page.

Ebo. Pshaw! I know this conversation was of no importance.—We shall see each other again, then, before I speak to the King. In the mean time, much may be discovered.

Dom.—(*Leads her apart.*)—And may I announce to his Majesty that he may hope? Will you deign to add the happy hour at which his wishes will be gratified?

Ebo. In a few days I shall feign indisposition. On such occasions the sick attendant is always removed from the person of her Majesty. I shall, then, be at my own apartments.

Dom. Oh, glorious day! Our game is won. I bid defiance to all queens on earth.—(*A bell is heard.*)—

Ebo. Hark! The Queen rings for me. Farewell.
[*Exit.*

Dom.—(*Follows her with his eyes for some time.*)—Duke Alba, those charms, combined with your services——

Alba. And supported by your religion.—What can resist such a confederacy?
[*Exeunt.*

Scene, a Room in a Carthusian Convent.

Enter CARLOS and PRIOR.

Car. He has already been here. I am sorry for it.

Pri. In the course of this morning he has thrice been here—the last time but an hour ago.

Car. Did he not say he would return?

Pri. Yes. He said I might expect him before noon.

Car.—(*Walks to the window.*)—Your convent is in a retired situation. To the right I perceive the steeples of Madrid, and here flows the Manzanares. I like your situation. All is here silent and secret—

Pri. As the entrance to the next world.

Car. To you, worthy man, I have entrusted a secret of the greatest importance. No one living must know, or even suspect, with whom I here have held a private conference. I have many reasons for concealing my acquaintance with the man whom I expect. Therefore, I fixed upon your convent. We are, I trust, secure against surprise and treachery. You remember your vow.

Pri. Rely upon me, Prince. Even the suspicion of kings will not pry into these living tombs. The ear of curiosity is stationed at the door of Fortune and of Pleasure. When you entered our portals, you left the world.

Car. If you think this timidity and caution are caused by a bad conscience, you are much mistaken, holy father.

Pri. I do not think at all upon the subject.

Car. I tremble that my secret should be known to man, but not to God.

Pri. That is to us of little consequence, my son. This asylum is open to the guilty as well as to the guiltless. Whether your intentions be good or bad,

upright, or criminal, you must settle with your own conscience.

Car.—(*With ardour.*)—Heaven cannot be displeased with our intentions. The fairest, loveliest work of all creation. In you I may confide.

Pri. To what end. Pardon me, Prince, if I decline your confidence. The world and all its vanities I have long renounced. I employ my time in preparations for the journey, which I soon must undertake. The bell calls me to prayers. Heaven be with you, Prince! [*Exit.*]

Enter POSA.

Car. Ha!—At last, at last we meet.

Posa. How have you tried the patience of a friend! Twice has the sun risen and set since your fate, my Carlos, was decided, and as yet I am in total ignorance respecting it. Can this be forgiven?

Car. This reproach from Roderigo! What have I not felt during the interval!

Posa. Enough. Be all forgotten. Now accept my best congratulations. You and your father are reconciled.

Car. How!

Posa. And your departure for Flanders is resolved upon.

Car. That Duke Alba shall depart to-morrow is resolved upon.

Posa. Impossible! Is all Madrid deceived! It is said that you had a private audience, and the King—

Car. Was deaf to my petition. We are for ever separated—further from each other than we were before.

Posa. You do not go to Flanders, then?

Car. No, no, no.

Posa. Oh, my hopes!

Car. Roderigo, what torments have I suffered since I last conversed with you! What wonderful tidings have I to communicate! But at present, let me claim your aid in obtaining me an interview. I must see her.

Posa. Your mother! No. To what end?

Car. I have hopes—you turn pale. Be at ease. I shall and will be happy. Tell me, tell me, how can I obtain an interview.

Posa. What means this feverish dream?

Car. It is not a dream. No, by the Almighty it is reality—it is reality.---(*Draws forth Philip's letter to Eboli.*)---This paper contains the important truth. The Queen is free---released from her vow in the eyes of God and man. There! Read that, and cease to be astonished.

Posa.---(*Opens it.*)---What do I see? The King's own hand!---(*After having perused it.*)---To whom was this written?

Car. To the Princess Eboli. Two days ago, a letter and a key were brought to me by one of the Queen's pages. I was invited to the left wing of the palace, in which are her Majesty's apartments, and was informed that a lady whom I long had loved would there receive me. Instantly I obeyed the signal.

Posa. Madman!

Car. I did not know the writing, but knew there was only one person to whom the description could be applied. Who but she could think herself beloved by Carlos? I flew to the place, anticipating bliss unutterable. Celestial music, which stole upon my ear from the appointed chamber, was my guide. I opened the door---but judge what were my sensations when I beheld—

Posa. Oh, I see through the whole.

Car. I was irrevocably lost, had I not fallen into an angel's hands. But what a luckless accident!

Deceived by the incautious language of my eyes, she thought herself the object of my passion, and her gentle heart, pitying my silent sorrows, determined to reward me. Respect appeared to seal my lips---she, therefore, summoned resolution to address me---and her soul lay open to my view.

Posa. Is it possible that you can relate this so calmly?—The Princess Eboli penetrated to the inmost recesses of your mind. Oh, there is no doubt but she discovered your attachment. You have mortified a woman's pride---and that woman's influence over Philip is boundless.

Car. She is virtuous.

Posa. To a certain degree. I know her virtue, and I fear it. How little does it resemble that, which, with luxuriant grace, springs from the mind's parental soil, and without a cultivator's aid expands its voluntary blossoms! Her virtue is a foreign plant, reared by artificial means, in a climate which suits it not. Judge whether such a woman can forgive that a man, who refused the offer of her charms, should waste his life in hopeless wishes to possess King Philip's wife.

Car. Are you so thoroughly acquainted with the principles of Eboli?

Posa. I cannot say I am, for I have not seen her more than twice; but allow me to remark, that I fancied she was skilful in the management of her passions, and valued herself not a little on her virtue. Then I beheld the Queen—Oh, Carlos, what a different being! Unacquainted with the affected form of etiquette; equally a stranger to timidity or boldness, she walks with silent inborn dignity on the small path of strict propriety, ignorant that she is adored by all, because not conscious of her own superiority. Does Carlos recognize his Eboli in this description? The Princess was firm, because she

loved. You did not reward her passion—therefore she will fall.

Car. No, no.—(*Walks up and down with a disordered air.*)—No, I say. Does it become you, Roderigo, thus to deprive me of my greatest comfort—a confidence in human nature?

Posa. Do I deserve this accusation? No, dearest friend. I would not rob you of such a comfort. Eboli would have been an angel, and with reverence would I have prostrated myself at her feet, had she not—learnt your secret.

Car. How vain are your fears! Has she any other proofs than such as would expose herself, were they revealed? Will she purchase the sad pleasure of revenge with her own honour?

Posa. Many have acted thus.

Car. No. You are too rigid, too severe. She is proud, and has a noble mind. I know her, and am not afraid. In vain do you endeavour to alarm my hopes. I must see my mother.

Posa. Now! Of what use—

Car. I have nothing more to fear. I must know my fate. Procure me an interview.

Posa. And you mean to shew her that letter?

Car. Ask me no more questions, but procure me an interview.

Posa.—(*Significantly.*)—Did you not tell me that you loved your mother? Yet you would shew her that.—(*Carlos fixes his eyes on the earth.*)—Carlos, there is something unusual in your conduct. You turn away. Why turn away from me? But did I understand the letter? Let me look at it again.—(*Carlos presents the letter, and Posa tears it.*)

Car. How! Are you mad?—(*Suppressing his anger.*)—I must own, Roderigo, the letter was of essential consequence to me.

Posa. I thought so, therefore I tore it.—(*Surveys*

him long with a penetrating eye.)—Tell me, what has a pollution of the royal bed to do with your—attachment? Was Philip dangerous to you? What connexion exists between the infidelity of Philip, and your bold hopes? Will the pangs of her you love be any gratification to you? Yes. Now I begin to know you. How little did I understand the nature of your passion!

Car. How, Roderigo, can you think thus meanly of me?

Posa. It was once otherwise. I can recollect the time, when your heart could find room for a whole world. This is now at an end. One selfish solitary passion has corrupted you. Not a tear do you shed for the unfortunate devoted Netherlands. Oh, Carlos, how poor, how little is the man, who loves no one but himself!

Car.—(*Falls into a chair, and can scarcely check his tears.*)—I feel that I have lost your regard.

Posa. That is not the case, for I know the meaning of your conduct. It was an error into which you were led by praise-worthy sensations. The Queen was betrothed to you, and King Philip seized the prize; but till now you doubted whether you had any solid claim. Philip, you thought, was perhaps worthy of her. It was only at intervals that you decided in your own favour. This letter at once convinced you that you were more worthy, and with proud delight you anticipated the consequences. You gloried in being injured, for exalted souls are pleased when persecuted. But here imagination has misled you. Your pride felt satisfied, and you gave way to hope. On this occasion you misunderstood yourself.

Car.—(*Much affected.*)—No, Roderigo, my sentiments were not so noble as you think them.

Posa. No more. I can always discover virtue even at the bottom of your faults. But now that

we better understand each other, mark me. You shall see the Queen—you must see her. I pledge to you my word that I will procure you an interview.

Car.—(*Falls on his neck.*)—Friend of my soul, scarcely can I look at thee.

Posa. Are you sure that my motive for acting thus is proper. May I not be influenced by secret wishes, or by interest, or even by fear? But more of this another time. I have promised. Leave the rest to me. A bold and happy thought just darts across my mind. You shall hear it from lovelier lips, Carlos. I shall find my way into the presence of the Queen. Perhaps your wishes may be accomplished to-morrow. Till then, Carlos, forget not that a project dictated by heaven, for the relief of human nature, though ten thousand times defeated, still calls for perseverance.—Remember Flanders.

Car. I will do any thing which you and virtue can enjoin.

Posa.—(*Goes to the window.*)—We must part. I hear your attendants.—(*They embrace.*)—Now we must be again the Prince and vassal.

Car. You go to Madrid immediately, I hope?

Posa. Immediately.

Car. Hold! Another word! I must mention one important circumstance, which had almost escaped my memory. All letters for Brabant are opened by the King. Be on your guard. Private orders have been sent to the post-office——

Posa. How did you learn this?

Car. Don Raimond de Taxis is my friend.

Posa.—(*After a pause.*)—Be it so. We can send our dispatches through Germany.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

ACT THE THIRD.



Scene, the King's Bedchamber. On one side is a niche, before which curtains are drawn—on the other a table, upon which two candles are burning. At the back part of the chamber several Pages are seen asleep upon their knees. The King, half undressed, is seated at the table, in an attitude of meditation. Before him lie a miniature, and several papers.

King.—(In a reverie.)—That she has always been romantic, who can deny? Never could I feel any regard for her, yet did she ever seem to feel the want of this regard? It is evident, then, she is false.—(An involuntary motion rouses him; he looks round with surprise.)—Where am I? Is no one awake but the King? How! The candles are almost entirely burnt; yet surely it cannot be day.—(Presses the spring of his repeater, which strikes four.)—I cannot sleep. Be satisfied with this, oh, nature, and do not claim thy due. Kings have no time to make amends for sleepless nights. I am awake—and now it shall be day.—(Extinguishes the candles, draws up a window-curtain, and as he paces the apartment perceives the boys who are asleep. He gazes at them for some time, then rings.)—Perhaps my attendants in the antichamber are asleep too.

Enter LERMA.

Ler.—(Starts.)—Is your Majesty not well?

King. The left wing of the palace has been on fire. Did you hear no alarm?

Ler. None whatever.

King. How! Was it but a dream, then? Such a dream cannot be the effect of chance. Does not the Queen sleep in that wing?

Ler. She does, my Liege.

King. This dream has quite alarmed me. Let the centinels be doubled there at the approach of evening—but mark me, this must be done privately, for I wish not—Why do you gaze at me thus?

Ler. Your eyes are much inflamed, and call for rest. Dare I entreat your Majesty to recollect the value of your life. Dare I remind you of your subjects, who with fearful anxiety would read in your disordered looks that their monarch had not slept? Would not even two short hours of repose—

King. Tear the scorpion from my pillow—I will not close my eyes. While asleep, the King may lose his diadem—the husband his wife's affections! I will not sleep.

Ler. Is it your Majesty's pleasure that I should wake the pages?

King. No. I can trust them better when asleep. While in a torpid state, this boy forgets his father's blood flowed to appease King Philip's just resentment. Is this proper? Could no attendant be selected in my wide domains, except the culprit's son, whom I condemned to die?

Ler. My Liege, they are children—

King. No, no. It is false. Was not a woman my authority? Woman, thy name is calumny. No crime is certain till a man confirms the truth of it.—(To the Pages, who are now awake.)—Send for Duke Alba.

[*Exeunt Pages.*
Come nearer, Count. Is it true?—(Rivets his eyes upon Lerma.)—Oh! that I could be certain, were it only for a moment.—Swear! Is it true? Am I deceived? Am I imposed upon?

Ler. Most gracious Monarch—

King. Monarch! King! Liege! Is this all you can say—this empty unavailing echo! I have struck against a rock, because I thirst, and must have water. My fever will destroy me.

Ler. To what do you refer, my Liege?

King. To nothing. Go—leave me. But hold. You are, methinks, a husband and a father.

Ler. I am.

King. What! Are you married; and dare you venture to leave your bed, that you may guard your King? Your head is silvered over, yet you place confidence in woman! Go home, go home. You will find your incestuous wife clasped in your son's arms. Believe me, and go home. You seem surprised—and look significantly at your King.—It is because my head is silvered too? Wretch, remember Queens are inviolable. Your suspicion is treason.

Ler.—(*With ardour.*)—Treason of which I never shall be guilty. Throughout King Philip's realms, where is the man who dare, with poisonous breath, to say one word reflecting on the best of Queens?

King. The best! You too call her the best! I find her zealous friends are nearest to my person. She must have paid well for this—more than I conceived she could pay. You have leave to depart. Let the Duke come.

Ler. I already hear him in the antichamber.—(*Going.*)

King.—(*In a milder tone.*)—Count, I believe that your first remark was just. Want of sleep has scorched my brain. Forget what I have said throughout my waking dream. Do you hear? Forget it. I am your gracious King.—(*Presents his hand, which Lerma kisses, then bows, opens the door for Alba, and exit.*)

Enter ALBA.

Alba.—(*Approaches with a doubtful mien.*)—An order so unexpected, at so extraordinary an hour—(*Starts on examining the King more minutely.*)—and this look—

King.—(*Has seated himself, and taken up the miniature. For a long time he silently surveys the Duke.*)—It is true, then? I have no longer any faithful servant?

Alba.—(*Astonished, turns aside.*)—How!

King. I am wounded in my tenderest part. Every one knew what danger threatened me, and no one warned me of it.

Alba.—(*With a look of astonishment.*)—Could any thing escape my eye, which threatened to disturb my Monarch's peace?

King.—(*Shews him letters.*)—Do you know this hand?

Alba. It is the Infant's.

King.—(*Looks stedfastly at Alba.*)—Have you no suspicions? You told me to be upon my guard against his ambition? Was his ambition all I had to fear?

Alba. Ambition is a word of most extensive meaning.

King. Have you, then, nothing to impart?

Alba.—(*With an air of reserve.*)—Your Majesty has entrusted your crown to my vigilance, and when I had sufficient grounds for fancying that its interest was endangered, I have ever spoken freely. What, in other respects, I fancy, or know, belongs to myself. This is a sacred property which even a purchased slave has a right to withhold from the kings of earth. Every thing which is clear to me may not be ripe for the ear of Majesty; but if you

wish to be satisfied, I must beg you will not call upon me as my King.

King.—(*Gives him the letters.*)—Read those.

Alba.—(*Reads, and turns with a look of alarm to the King.*)—Who was mad enough to place these fatal papers in my Monarch's hand?

King. What!—You know then who is meant in the contents?—I observed the name was purposely omitted.

Alba.—(*Starts.*)—I have been too hasty.

King. You know the person?

Alba.—(*After a pause.*)—I have divulged it. My King commands, and I no longer hesitate. Yes. I do know the person.

King.—(*Rises in dreadful agitation.*)—Assist me, God of vengeance, assist me in the invention of new torments. So clear, so public is the circumstance, that it was understood almost without a hint. This is too much. I, then, am the last acquainted with it—the last in my dominions.

Alba.—(*Falls at the King's feet.*)—Most gracious Monarch, I acknowledge my transgression. I am ashamed of that base policy, which hitherto has bound my tongue, while the honour of my sovereign, justice, and truth, commanded me to speak. Yes—as all are silent, as the enchantments of beauty have bound every tongue, I will speak, though well I know that the insinuating asseverations of a son, the charms and overpowering tears of a wife—

King. Rise!—You have my royal promise it shall not be so. Rise, and speak without alarm.

Alba.—(*Rises.*)—Your Majesty may perhaps recollect what happened in the gardens at Aranjuez. You found the Queen *alone*, in a retired place, and with disordered looks.

King. Ha! What shall I hear? Proceed.

Alba. The Marchioness of Mondecar was banished from the court, because she possessed sufficient ge-

nerosity to sacrifice herself for the Queen. We are now acquainted with particulars. The Marchioness had done no more than was commanded. Don Carlos had been there.

King. Ha! How know you this?

Alba. The footsteps of a man were printed in the sand, near to the Queen's pavilion—nay, near the grotto which is close to it, lay a handkerchief known to be the Infant's. A gardener met him too, and at the very time your Majesty arrived. He was retreating—

King. And she was in tears. Yet—when I seemed surprised, she wept, and made me blush in presence of the court. By heaven her virtue awed me.—(*Seats himself, and hides his face.*)—Yes, Duke—you are right—this discovery may lead to something horrible.

Alba. My Liege, this does not absolutely prove—

King.—(*Holding forth the papers.*)—Nor this—nor this—nor this. Do all these damning proofs mean nothing? Oh, it is clearer than the light of day. Their incestuous intercourse began even from the very time that you delivered her to me.

Alba. Don Carlos, when he gained a mother, lost a bride. Already had she indulged the warm wishes which her new rank forbade. Fear, which usually accompanies the first confession, was removed; and recollection fanned the flame, which raged in both their bosoms. Allied to each other by equality of years, and similarity of thinking; mutually incensed at the loss of each other's hand; they boldly gave way to those sensations which policy had opposed. Is it credible, my Liege, that she should patiently submit to the decision of a cabinet; that, after expecting the object of her love, she should be satisfied with a—diadem?

King.—(*Offended.*)—You make very sage distinctions, Duke. I admire your rhetoric, and thank

you.—(*Rises, with a cold and haughty mien.*)—You are right. The Queen has erred in concealing from me letters of such a nature, as well as in suppressing her unjustifiable interview with the Prince. Her false generosity has misled her. I shall know what punishment is necessary.—(*Rings.*)—Who else is in the antichamber? You are no longer wanted, Duke. Withdraw.

Alba. Can my zeal have a second time displeased my King?

King.—(*To a Page, who enters.*)—Send Domingo hither. [*Exit Page.*

I forgive you for having made me fear a crime, which may as easily be committed against yourself. Go. [*Exit Alba.*

(*King walks up and down the chamber several times, in order to collect himself.*)

Enter DOMINGO.

Dom.—(*After having long surveyed him.*)—How agreeably am I surprised in finding your Majesty so calm——

King. Surprised!

Dom. Heaven be praised, that my fears were groundless!

King. Fears! What had you to fear!

Dom. I dare not conceal from your Majesty that I am acquainted with a secret—

King. Did I express my wish to share it with you? You are forward enough, by my soul.

Dom. My Liege, the place where I have learnt it, and the seal under which it was communicated, free me from your reproach. It was entrusted to me at the confessional—entrusted as a crime which is a load upon the conscience of the Princess Eboli. Too late she mourns her rashness, and dreads the consequences it will produce to her Majesty.

King. Indeed!—Good creature!—I sent for you on this account. You must extricate me from the labyrinth into which my blind zeal has hurried me. From you I expect the truth. Speak openly. What am I to think—what to resolve?

Dom. My Liege, even if the station which I fill did not enjoin me to recommend gentleness and mercy, I should, nevertheless, conjure your Majesty for the sake of your own peace, to be satisfied with what you have discovered, and not dive further into a mystery, which will only make you more unhappy. What is yet known may be forgiven. Let the King say one word, and the Queen has never deviated from her duty. Our Monarch's will can bestow virtue as well as honours. His repose alone can silence the reports of calumny.

King. Reports!—Already reports among my subjects!

Dom. Lies—infernal lies, I dare be sworn. But I grant there are cases in which the opinion of the people, though without foundation, is of as much consequence as truth.

King. By heaven—and this particularly—

Dom. Unblemished reputation is the valuable property which a Queen must be eager to share with her inferiors.

King. We need not trifle thus.—(*Looks doubtfully at Domingo.*)—Father, you have something worse to mention. Withhold it not. I have almost read it in your ill-boding looks. Be it what it may let me not linger on the rack. What say my subjects?

Dom. I repeat that your subjects may be mistaken—nay that they are so. The King need not fear their bold assertions, but when they proceed to such extremities—

King. To the point, I say. Must I pray so long for poison?

Dom. Your subjects recollect the month in which

your Majesty was attacked so dangerously as to be thought at the point of death. Thirty weeks after this, the birth of a Princess was announced.—(King rises, and rings the bell.)

Enter ALBA.

Dom.—(Starts.)—I am astonished.

King. Alba, you are a man. Protect me against this priest.

Alba. Compose yourself, my Liege.

King.—(Looks at Alba, and leaves him.)—What am I doing? Into whose arms do I throw myself? To escape a crocodile, I place myself under the protection of a viper! Have I, then, no other choice?

Dom.—(Who has exchanged looks of confusion with Alba.)—Had we known that this intelligence would have drawn down resentment on the reporter of it—

King. A bastard, did you say? I had scarcely left the bed of sickness, when she became a mother! If my memory be correct, it was then that you directed thanksgivings to be offered up in every church for my miraculous recovery. Is this less miraculous? One might be as unexpected as the other; but it does not suit your purpose equally to call them miracles. Oh, I see through your devices. The plot will not succeed.

Alba. Plot!

Dom. What a degrading suspicion!

King. Is it probable that your opinions should so exactly correspond, if you did not understand each other? Will you attempt to convince me of this? You think, perhaps, that I have not observed your mutual eagerness to fall upon your prey—your triumph in having roused my anger! You think, perhaps, I have not noticed the Duke's attempts to keep my son far from my royal favour, and yours,

Domingo, to strengthen his weak enmity with the gigantic power of Philip. I am the bow, you think, which may be bent according to your will. But, let me tell you that my will is yet my own, as you, perhaps, may soon discover.

Alba. Our fidelity little expected such an interpretation.

King. What! Fidelity warns us against threatening dangers—*malice* alone speaks of the past. What have I gained by all your vaunted zeal? If all you say be true, my lot can only be a painful separation, and the sad triumph of revenge. But no. You are not sure—you waver—you conjecture—you lead me to the brink of an abyss—and fly.

Dom. Can any other proofs be adduced unless we had ocular demonstration?

King.—(*After a long pause, turns, with a solemn air, to Domingo.*)—I will convene all the grandees of Spain, and, in person, sit as judge of the tribunal. You shall appear—if you have courage to do it—you shall appear, and accuse the Queen of infidelity. If you convict her, she shall die—she and the Infant—but, mark me, should your charge be false, you yourself shall be the victim. Now, dare you proceed thus far in the defence of truth?—*Answer.* You are silent—you refuse! Such is a liar's zeal.

Alba.—(*Who has been standing at a distance, in a cold, but decisive tone.*)—I will do this.

King.—(*Turns suddenly round, and gazes earnestly at the Duke.*)—That is bold—but I remember that, in battles you have often risked your life for less than this—that, with a gamester's levity, you have risked it for that bubble, fame. What, then, is life to you? What charms can it have to one born, as it were, in fetters? I shall not sacrifice royal blood to a madman, who has no farther hope than gloriously to lose his mean existence. I reject your

offer.—Go, and in the hall of audience wait my further orders.

[*Exeunt Alba and Domingo.*

Now, favouring Providence, send me a man. Thou hast given me much—send me a man, worthy to be my friend. Thou canst reign alone, for thou canst dive into futurity; but I implore thee to bestow a friend, for I am not like thee, omniscient. Thou knowest what those are, whom thou hast stationed near me. I want truth. Send me a man with uncorrupted principles, whose enlightened mind can aid me in the search of it. Among the thousands who bask in the sunshine of my dignity, let me at least find one deserving of my firm regard.—(*Takes a large book from a cabinet, and turns over the leaves of it.*)—Nothing is written here but names—merely names. Even the service is not mentioned which entitled them to a place in this list, and what is more forgetful than gratitude? But, in the other list, I find each crime is noted. This is not well. Does memory require this aid, lest revenge should be forgotten!—(*Reads.*)—Count Egmont! Why is his name here? The victory at Saint Quentin his other actions banish from my mind. I consign him to the dead.—(*Erases his name, and adds it to the other list---then again reads.*)—Marquis Posa. Posa! I scarcely recollect this man—and yet his name is doubly marked, a proof that I designed to employ him upon some important matter. How happens it that such a man should have avoided the presence of his royal debtor? By heavens, it would seem he is the only man in my dominions who needs not my assistance. If he were swayed by avarice, or ambition, he would long ago have found his way to the steps of my throne. I will enquire after this singular character. He, who makes no application for favours, will be the more ready to avow the truth.

[*Exit.*

Scene, the Hall of Audience. CARLOS is discovered in conversation with the Prince of PARMA. ALBA, FERIA, MEDINA, LERMA, and other GRANDEES, with papers in their hands, are awaiting the arrival of the King.

Med.—(*Evidently avoided by all the Grandees, turns to Alba, who is lost in meditation.*)—You, Duke, have seen his Majesty. How was he disposed?

Alba. Very ill disposed towards you and your intelligence.

Med. I was more composed, more happy, when assailed by the slaughtering cannon of the English, than at present.—(*Carlos, who has gazed at him with silent sympathy, approaches and takes his hand.*)—Generous Prince, accept my warmest thanks. You see how all avoid me. You see that my destruction is inevitable.

Car. Hope the best, my worthy friend. Rely upon my father's mercy and your innocence.

Med. I have lost a fleet such as had never yet appeared upon the ocean. Compared to this what is my head?—But, Prince—I have five sons—hopeful as yourself.—When I think of them, my heart-strings almost crack.

Enter KING, dressed. All instantly bow, make way, and form a semicircle round him.

King.—(*Casting a hasty glance through the assembly.*) Be covered.—(*Carlos and Parma approach and kiss the King's hand. He turns with rather a friendly air to the latter, without appearing to observe his son.*)—Nephew, your mother wishes to know how you are liked at Madrid.

Par. Let her not ask that till I have served my first campaign.

King. Be patient. Your turn will come when these firm props of my throne grow weak.—(To Ferdinand.)—What tidings do you bring?

Fer.—(Kneels.)—The grand master of the Calatravian order died this morning. I render to your Majesty his cross.

King.—(Takes it, and looks round.)—Who after him is most worthy to wear it?—(Beckons to Alba, who approaches, and kneels.)—Duke, I bestow this honour upon you, my first general. Never attempt to be *more*, and you will never lose my royal favour. ---(*Espies Medina.*)---Ha!---My admiral!

Med.---(*Approaches and kneels with downcast head.*)
---This, mighty Monarch, is all that I bring back of the Armada and the Spanish youth.

King.---(*After a pause.*)—God's will be done. I sent you to contend against man, not against the elements. You are welcome to Madrid,---(*Presents his hand to Medina*)---and I thank you for having in yourself preserved one of my worthy servants. I acknowledge him as such, grandees, and expect that you will do the same.---(*Beckons to him that he may arise and be covered*---then turns to Carlos and Parma.)---I thank you for your presence, Princes.

[*Exeunt Carlos and Parma.*
(The other Grandees approach, kneel, and present their papers, which the King carelessly looks at, and gives to Alba.)---Lay these before me in my cabinet. Any thing more?---(*No one answers.*)---How happens it that, among my grandees, the Marquis Posa never shews himself? I know he has served me with great honour to himself. Is he alive?

Ler. Yes, my Liege. He lately returned from the tour of Europe, is in Madrid at present, and only waits for a court day to throw himself at the feet of your Majesty.

Alba. The Marquis Posa! True. That is the knight of Malta, whom Fame, as your Majesty has

heard, reports to be a prodigy of valour. When, by command of the grand master, the knights were summoned to defend the island from Solyman's attack, this youth, then eighteen years of age, quitted the royal college, and appeared unexpectedly before La Valette. "The cross which I wear," said he, "was bought---I will prove that I deserve it."---He was one of those forty knights, who, at noon day, defended the castle of Saint Elmo against Piali, Ulucciali, Mustapha, and Hassem, though they attacked it thrice; and, when they at last prevailed, when all the other knights had fallen round him, he plunged into the sea, and found his way to La Valette. Two months after this, the enemy forsook the island, and the knight returned to finish his studies.

Fer. This Marquis Posa, too, was he, who afterwards discovered the conspiracy in Catalonia, and, by skill alone, preserved that valuable province.

Ler. The self-same man, soon after this, became, by his father's death, a grandee, and the possessor of a million; yet, with unexampled diffidence, even in the spring of life and fame, he has not courted power, but lives retired, even in Madrid, and has escaped his Monarch's favour, only because his modest merits have made him a stranger to our court.

King. I am astonished. What man's actions were ever thus described by three, and by all without envy? This man possesses a most uncommon character, or none.---I must see him.---(*To Alba.*)---After I have been at mass, bring him to my cabinet. [*Exit Alba.*

Duke Feria, take my place in the privy council.

[*Exit.*

Fer. His Majesty is very gracious to-day.

Med. Say rather he is a God. To me he has been one.

Fer. How well do you deserve his favour! I congratulate you most sincerely, admiral.

A Grandee. And I.

Another. And I most cordially.

A third. My heart beats with delight.

First Grandee. The King was not gracious---he was merely just.

Ler.---(*Apart to Medina, as they go.*)---How great two or three royal words have made you! [*Exeunt.*

Scene, the King's cabinet. Enter POSA and ALBA.

Posa. Me!---Surely you are mistaken. What can he want with me.

Alba. All I can tell you is, that he wishes to be better acquainted with you.

Posa. I can be of no service to him---am beneath his notice. You are to blame---you should have mentioned this.

Alba. I to blame! How could I know why he thus summoned you?

Posa. If it be merely to satisfy curiosity, the time is lost when thus employed, and, alas, life is but short.

Alba. You know not how to use a propitious moment. Thousands would envy your present situation.

Posa. I am sorry for it. I see nothing very particular in this room---I see no good end in my ever having entered it. Of what consequence can I be to the King?

Alba. This is, I must own, the language of a philosopher.---(*Going.*)

Posa. Whither so fast?

Alba. I go to announce you.

Posa. You need not be in such haste. Tell me, how long will the audience be?

Alba. That depends upon his Majesty's pleasure.

Posa. I must submit---but I shall not please his Majesty.

Alba. If you do not wish it you will not. I leave you to your destiny. The King is in your hands. Avail yourself of this auspicious moment; but if it be lost, ascribe the failure to yourself. [*Exit.*

Posa. The remark is good, Duke Alba. Of the moment which is only once offered I should avail myself. This courtier teaches me an useful lesson---useful as I apply the term, though not as he would. —(*Walks to and fro.*)—But what brought me hither? —The mere caprice of accident. My name, the most unlikely name on earth, has awakened in the memory of the King.—Accident, therefore—yet perhaps more—for what is accident but the rough stone, which acquires life by the statuary's chisel? —Providence bestows the accidental moment, which man must use to his purpose. What the King's business is with me I know not, but what mine is with the King I know full well.—Could I but even throw one spark of truth into the despot's soul, how fruitful might it be if Providence assisted it! In this light, what first appeared the effect of chance, may be the act of heaven. Whether such is the case or not, I will conceive myself the instrument of a higher power, and act accordingly.—(*Walks across the apartment, and at length calmly looks at a picture. The King appears in an adjoining room, where he delivers some orders, then steps forward, and surveys Posa for some minutes unperceived. The Marquis at length espies him, instantly kneels, then rises, and stands before him without the smallest signs of embarrassment.*)

King.—(*Gazes at him with astonishment.*)—Did you speak to me?

Posa. No.

King.—(*After another pause.*)—Your services have been most essential to me. Why have you

avoided my thanks? Many men force themselves upon my recollection, and I cannot think of every one. You ought to have appeared. Why did you not?

Posa. My Liege, no more than two days have elapsed since I returned to Spain.

King. I am not disposed to be in debt to a subject. Demand some boon.

Posa. I enjoy the laws.

King. That does a murderer also.

Posa. But how much more, an honest citizen. My Liege I am quite satisfied.

King.—(*Aside.*)—Bold and spirited, by heaven, but that might be expected, for what but this could have availed against the Turks? I like my Spaniards to be proud; nay, I would sometimes have the goblet overflow.—(*Aloud.*)—I am told you left my service.

Posa. I withdrew to make room for men who were more capable.

King. I am sorry to hear it. When men like you retire, my state must suffer much. Perhaps you are afraid you may not gain a post equal to your merits?

Posa. Oh, no. I am sure that an experienced statesman will at once distinguish those who will suit his purpose. With humble gratitude I feel the favour which your Majesty confers upon me by your good opinion, but—

King. Why do you pause?

Posa. I own that I am not prepared to clothe, in the language of a subject, the ideas I had formed as a citizen of the world; for when I renounced all hopes of any favour from the crown, I thought myself released from the necessity of preparing for the explanation that your Majesty requires.

King. Is your explanation founded upon arguments so weak that you dare not produce them?

Posa. Not so. If your Majesty will allow me to complete my explanation, I will pledge my life for its validity and force; but if you refuse me this, the only choice I have left is between your displeasure and contempt, in which case I will rather appear to you a criminal than a fool.

King. Proceed.

Posa. I can serve no Prince.

King. Because you fear thereby to be a slave?

Posa. No, my Liege—that I shall never fear; but I do not wish to make the Monarch, whom I serve, my equal—(*The King gazes at him with astonishment.*)—I will not deceive my employer. Were you to claim my services, you would merely think you used my arm in the field, my talents in the cabinet. You would think that all my services appertained to the throne. The glory of my deeds, the beauty of my works, the inward rapture arising from the merit of invention, would flow into the royal treasure, which, in return, would pay me, and support me like a mere machine. My deeds themselves must be no object to me, except as they are sanctioned by the king. But to me virtue has its own intrinsic value. Of the happiness which my Sovereign might dispense through my hands, I should conceive myself the dispenser. That would be choice and pleasure to me which should only be duty. I should revel in the transporting thought of diffusing happiness, till satiated with the delightful idea, I should even disregard my Monarch's favour. Is this your opinion? Can you in your creation brook a new Creator? No. Can I demean myself to be the pencil when I may be the artist? No. I love human nature, and, under regal government, every one must love himself alone.

King. Your warmth is praise-worthy. You wish to do good. To the patriot and the philosopher it is immaterial how this is done. Choose that office in

my kingdom which you think best adapted to gratify your propensity.

Posa. I know no office which would suit me.

King. How!

Posa. Is the happiness which your Majesty would dispense through my hand the same happiness which my own pure philanthropy would bestow? No. The policy of courts has excited its own desires in the mind of man, to gratify which it must dispense its own happiness. It allows no truth but such as suits its purpose—all else is rejected. Can then a King, with such restrictions, make man happy? Can I prevail upon myself to love my fellow-creatures no longer, to enslave my brother, to deny that he shall think, and then convince myself that I am dispensing happiness? Oh, never, never! Fix not on me, my Liege, to act in such a way. I cannot serve a Prince.

King.—(*Steps back with astonishment.*)—Whence comes this man?—(*Looks doubtfully at him for some time.*)—And with this play of words, this artful sophistry, you think you can evade the duty which you owe the state?

Posa. The state to which I was indebted, is no more. Formerly there was a King, because the laws appointed him; now there are laws appointed by the King. What I then gave to my equal, I am not now compelled to give my Monarch—and as for native land, I have none. A Spaniard has no longer any concern with Spain, since it is become merely the body of a single mind. In this vast body *you* wish, alone, to think, to act, and to enjoy the luxuries of life. Man is of use to you like your ears and eyes. You survey him in no other light than as he answers your purposes. His life, his will, are no longer his own. Genius and virtue blossom for the throne, as the crops grow yellow for the reaper's sickle. I no longer know the human race. A crowned mortal has devised a wonderful plan, by which the pas-

sions and the thoughts of all are governed. Policy prompted him to invent *one* scale, by which the opinions of all mankind are measured.

King.—(*Somewhat hastily.*)—Are you a Protestant?

Posa. Your faith, my Liege, is mine.—(*After a pause.*)—Your Majesty does not understand me. I feared it would be so. You see the veil drawn by my hand from the mysteries of royalty. You think that nothing can be sacred to me which I do not fear, and suppose me dangerous because I have raised my thoughts above my condition. But this is not the case. Never can *my* blood be heated with the turbulent love of innovation, which only increases the weight of those fetters it is unable to break. The times adapted to my ideas are not yet arrived. I live a citizen of those which are to come.

King. Am I the first person to whom you have avowed these sentiments?

Posa. These sentiments! Your are.

King. Then should you have well considered whether it was not dangerous to avow them? Are you sufficiently acquainted with me?

Posa. Whether it was dangerous or not I am now to learn, my Liege; but it was my duty to suppose that you at least possessed the smaller merit when I boldly aimed at a greater—the merit of listening to those truths which I dare utter.

King.—(*Rises, and walks aside.*)—This language is new to me. The incense of servility and adulation must, at last, exhaust itself. Imitation debases a man of talents. I will try this independent counsellor.—(*Aloud.*)—If such be your sentiments, I am resolved to employ your services. The strength of mind——

Posa. How mean, my Liege, must be your opinion of human nature, that you so little expected to hear any one step forth in defence of its dignity, nay,

that even in the language of an independent man you fancy you perceive the arts of a dissembling flatterer! But you are justified in this, for you have been compelled by mankind to adopt such sentiments. They have voluntarily forfeited their rights, and descended to their present abject state. Alarmed at the shadow of your greatness, they have fled from their posts, sunk into poverty, adorned their chains with the sophistry of cowards, and deem it a virtue to wear them with submission. Thus did you overcome the world—thus did it yield its rights to your imperial father. Thus mournfully is human nature degraded—how, then, could you respect it?

King. I perceive some truth in your remarks.

Posa. But, unfortunately, when you transformed the work of the Creator into the work of your own hands, and made yourself this new-formed being's God—then you omitted something—you yourself remained no more than a created man; you continued to feel all the passions and desires of human nature. What could your subjects do? You wanted sympathy; but to a Deity we can only sacrifice and pray—to sympathize with him who dares attempt! At the pinnacle of greatness, therefore, you were not happy, for real happiness can only be felt when it beams in the eye of a friend, not of a slave. Slaves can never be faithful mirrors, but rather resemble thirsty plants, which, by their varied foliage, shew what their roots imbibed. Unhappy exchange. Sad degradation of human nature. Since man became your instrument, what harmony have you produced?

King.—(*Aside.*)—By heaven, his words pierce to my very soul.

Posa. Thus have you purchased divinity, and well is it for you that you have obtained this; for how dreadful were it, if, after trampling on the happiness of millions, and destroying all the joys of your own

existence, you had gained nothing—how dreadful if you had gained less than the freedom of these millions would have produced, these millions, whom you have reduced to poverty, in order to make yourself still poorer than they—how dreadful if you had found that the liberty which you have annihilated, was the only foundation on which you could have established what you wish!—I beg your permission to retire, my Liege. This subject hurries me away. My heart is full—

LERMA enters, and whispers a few words in the KING's ear, who gives him a signal to retire, which he obeys.

King. Finish your observations.

Posa. The generous lion suffers the insect to play about its mane. With gratitude I acknowledge—

King. You have more to say. Proceed.

Posa. My Liege, I lately arrived from Brabant. “What rich and blooming provinces are these,” thought I. “What a great and powerful nation—and a good nation too! How glorious to be its father!” While these reflections occupied my mind, I stumbled against---human bones.—(*Pauses, and rivets his eye on the King, who endeavours to look at him in return, but cannot.*)—When surrounded by flames, or branded with the glowing iron, the martyr cannot be expected to sing the praises of his executioner. It is said you must act thus; but I have been astonished that you can. The reign of Philip will be recorded in history. A milder age will succeed it, and produce milder opinions. The happiness of the subject will then be compatible with the greatness of the Prince, and humanity will be a substitute for what is now called necessity.

King. Had I feared the curses of the present age, when would that milder one, described by you, have appeared? Examine Spain. Uninterrupted happi-

ness pervades it, and the same tranquillity will I bestow on Flanders.

Posa. The tranquillity of the tomb! Can you hope to succeed in your attempt? Can you expect to overpower the convictions of reason and reflection? Will you alone oppose yourself to destiny, and, with a mortal's hand, try to detain her constantly-revolving wheel? Surely, surely, no. With enthusiasm irresistible will the gigantic power of oppression be subdued. Already have thousands fled from your kingdom; and, though poor, have rejoiced in their escape. Those whom religion has induced to emigrate, were the most valuable of your subjects. With the open arms of a mother, Elizabeth receives the fugitives, and Britain flourishes by Spanish arts. Grenada mourns the deprivation of her industrious Christians, and triumphant Europe sees her enemy's blood flow from the wounds inflicted by himself.—(*Posa perceives that the King is somewhat moved, and approaches nearer.*)—It is your wish to plant for eternity, and you are sowing death. It is in vain that you have wasted a valuable life, and sacrificed so many royal virtues, to chimerical pursuits, founded upon cruelty. You have erred in your opinion of man—he is far more than you esteem him to be. With a smile of proud contempt, he will one day walk over the ruins of that building which you had destined to be his sepulchre; with the names of Nero and Busiris he will join yours, and —this hurts me—for you once were good.

King. Who made you so sure of that?

Posa. Yes, by the Almighty, I know it well. Restore to us what you have taken away. Make us happy as we were. Become the Monarch of a million Monarchs.—(*Boldly approaches, seizes the King's hand, and gazes at him with firmness and ardour.*)—Oh, that the eloquence of all whose happiness depends on this important hour were granted

to me, that I might raise into a flame the spark which glistens in your eye. Renounce the unnatural idolatry which degrades us, and become a representative of the All-just and All-merciful. Never, never had man so much power to dispense happiness. All the potentates of Europe do homage to the name of Spain. Shew yourself worthy, then, of being their head. By writing one word, you can make the earth wear another appearance. Grant to all your subjects—(*Falls at his feet.*)—the liberty of thought.

King.—(*Turns away with astonishment.*)—Unaccountable enthusiast! But—rise—I—

Posa.—(*Still kneeling.*)—Behold the beauties of nature which surround you. Those beauties are the effects of freedom. Compared to this creation, how wretched and confined is yours. When a leaf moves, the Lord of Christendom is alarmed—every virtue makes him tremble. But our Almighty Ruler, that he may not rob us of the sweet delights which liberty imparts, suffers even vice to revel in his world, conceals himself from our view, but leaves his mild benignant laws, by which it is his will that we should regulate our conduct.

King. And would you undertake to establish such a system in my dominions?

Posa. This may be done by you. Devote that power which has been, alas, too long otherwise employed, to the promotion of your people's happiness. Restore to mankind the dignity they have lost. Let every citizen enjoy his former privileges. Let the peasant eat the produce of his labour, at his unmolested home. Let every one's thoughts be free as the air which he breathes. When you have established this, my Liege, when man again begins to feel his consequence, when each citizen again assumes his national importance, then will your Majesty feel that your kingdom is the happiest on

earth, and, in order to complete the godlike plan, it will then be your duty to conquer the whole world.

King.—(*After a long pause.*)—I have allowed you to conclude. Your opinions are, I perceive, not like those of any other person, and I do not choose that they shall be restrained by authority. To me, of all mankind, you have opened the inmost recesses of your mind. I feel it, and, in consequence of your having, till to-day, buried in your own breast opinions so warmly adopted---in consequence of this praise-worthy discretion, I will forget, young man, that you avowed such sentiments. Rise. As an experienced friend, not as a Monarch, I will judge of your unguarded conduct. Even into well-disposed minds, I perceive, the infection of heresy can enter, though it appears with less odious symptoms—but avoid my inquisition, for I should be sorry——

Posa.—(*Interrupts him with ardour.*)—Should you indeed?

King.—(*Lost in the contemplation of his mien and words.*)—Never, in my life, did I see such a man!—No, Marquis, your accusation is too strong. I will not be a Nero—especially towards you. Every one's happiness shall not be destroyed by me. To convince you that your charges are not just, you yourself shall, under my own protection, be allowed to act like a man.

Posa.—(*With ardour.*)—And what is to be the lot of my fellow-subjects? Oh, I did not mean to plead my cause, but theirs. Direct your favours towards Brabant. In Flanders there are thousands more worthy of them than I am.

King.—(*In a milder, but solemn tone.*)—No more, young man. When you have reached my age, your opinion of mankind will more resemble mine. But I would not willingly remove you from me. Tell

me how I can bind you to my interest. For the first time I perceive that my dignity is of no avail.

Posa. My Liege, your intentions are to me of greater value than any thing which royalty can grant. Allow me to remain in my present situation, for how should I justify my character if I would accept a bribe?

King. I will not submit to this pride. From to-day you are in my service. Make no reply. It is my will.—(*After a pause.*)—It seems you have discovered my situation as a King—has not your penetration dived into my domestic concerns?—(*Perceiving that Posa appears to be meditating.*)—I understand you—but—though I may be the most unfortunate of fathers, may I not be happy as a husband?

Posa. If a most hopeful son, and the possession of a most amiable consort, can give a mortal any right to the epithet of happy, your Majesty is so in both respects.

King.—(*With a gloomy mien.*)—No,—I am not, and never felt that I was not, so keenly as at present.—(*Dwelling with a look of sorrow on Posa.*)—How happy had your father been if he could have left his son a kingdom!—(*Posa turns away and wipes his eyes.*)—For so many crowns—no thanks—no gratitude.

Posa. The Prince's ideas are noble. I never found them otherwise.

King. But I have.—You are acquainted with him then?

Posa. Yes; we were at college together.

King. He was never dutiful; but, on the contrary, has made me the object of his ridicule. He has a bad heart.

Posa. May I be allowed to say in his behalf—

King.—(*In a commanding tone.*)—No—you may

not, unless you mean to forfeit my regard for ever. No diadem can be a recompence for that of which he has deprived me—a virtuous Queen.

Posa. Who can have dared, my Liege—

King. The world—fame—scandal—I myself. Here lie proofs of her guilt—more are at hand, which makes me dread the worst. But, Marquis, one thing staggers me. Who is her accuser?—Eboli. Is it not more probable that the one is guilty of slander, than the other of—incest? Does not Domingo hate my son and her? Is not Duke Alba brooding vengeance? My wife is worth more than all of them.

Posa. Right, my Liege. There is something in that woman's soul which is above appearances and scandal—its name is virtue.

King. You are right. Oh, Marquis, you have studied the nature of mankind. Long have I wished for such a friend. Yes. To sink so low as I am told the Queen is fallen, costs too much. The ties of honour are not rent asunder so easily as it is wished I should believe. The blood that flows through royal veins despises that seducing poison which burns within the hearts of slaves. You are the man whom I so long have wanted. You know the frailties and imperfections of human nature. I have therefore fixed on you—

Posa.—(*Surprised and alarmed.*)—On me, my Liege!

King. You have stood thus long in my presence without making a request. This is new to me. You will be just. Passion will not lead you astray. Force yourself into the confidence of the Prince. Dive into the Queen's sentiments. I myself will send you full powers to be admitted into her presence. Meanwhile, you are one of my chamberlains—and now leave me.—(*Rings a bell.*)

Posa. May I leave you with the conviction that

any of my wishes are gratified? Then is this day the most glorious of my life.

King.—(*Presents his hand.*)—It is not lost in mine. Farewell. Let it not be long before I again see you.

As the Marquis is going, Enter LERMA.

King.—(*To Lerma.*)—In future admit the Knight of Malta unannounced. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

Scene, one of the Queen's Apartments.

QUEEN, OLIVAREZ, EBOLI, FUENTES, and other Ladies are discovered.

Queen.—(*Rising from her seat.*)—The key has not been found, you say. Let the lock be forced, then—and immediately.—(*Espies Eboli, who approaches and kisses her hand.*)—Welcome, dear Princess. I am glad to see you so much recovered, though you still look pale.

Fue.—(*Somewhat maliciously.*)—The consequences of a nervous fever. Am I not right, Princess?

Queen. I much wished to have visited you, dear Eboli, but it is not allowed.

Oli. The Princess has not been in want of society.

Queen. That I can easily believe. What means this? You tremble—

Ebo. Nothing—nothing whatever. I beg your Majesty's permission to withdraw.

Queen. You conceal your indisposition, and are not so well as you wish us to suppose. Countess, draw the sofa nearer.

Ebo. The open air will be of more service to me.

[*Exit.*

Queen. Follow her, Countess. What a sudden change!
[*Exit Fuentes.*

Enter a PAGE, who whispers in the ear of Olivarez.

Oli. The Marquis Posa begs permission to wait upon your Majesty.—(*Queen starts.*)—He comes from the King.

Queen. Admit him.

[*Page opens the door, and exit.*

Enter POSA.

Queen.—(*Gives Posa, who kneels, a signal to rise.*)
---What are his Majesty's commands? May I thus openly—

Posa. My message is for your private ear.

[*Exeunt Olivarez and Ladies.*

Queen. May I believe my eyes, Marquis? You deputed by the King—

Posa. Does that seem so strange to your Majesty? To me it is quite otherwise.

Queen. The world is quite altered then, I must confess.

Posa. True, and the present period teems with new wonders.

Queen. Scarcely with greater.

Posa. Suppose that I am converted—that I am weary of acting a singular part at Philip's court—for of what use is singularity? To be useful, I must endeavour to appear the equal of others, and

banish the ostentatious appearance of enthusiasm. Suppose---for every one wishes to extend, as far as he can, principles which he is convinced to be right ---suppose I aimed at placing mine upon the throne.

Queen. No, Marquis. Even in jest I would not fancy you capable of adopting an idea in every respect so premature. You are not so romantic as to begin a project which can never be completed.

Posa. There rests the doubt, methinks.

Queen. The utmost which I can suspect---and much it would surprise me in you---the utmost I can suspect is---

Posa. Dissimulation. That is possible.

Queen. The King cannot intend that you should say to me what you will.

Posa. True.

Queen. And can the goodness of your cause justify the culpable means you have employed? Can your noble pride descend to such an office? Scarcely can I believe it.

Posa. Nor I, if the object were merely to deceive the King. But that is not the case. I intend to serve him more honestly, and to better effect, than if I had exactly followed his instructions.

Queen. Now I recognise the Marquis Posa. Proceed.

Posa. It is his Majesty's wish that you would not give an audience to the French ambassador to-day. This was the commission with which I was entrusted.

Queen. And is this all you have to say from him?

Posa. It is nearly all which justifies my presence here.

Queen. I did not mean to dive into secrets which it is thought proper to conceal from me.

Posa. Some there are which answer this description. I could warn you against dangers---against certain persons---but I will rather leave you in igno-

rance: for all I know is not of consequence enough to banish golden sleep from the eyes of an angel. It was, indeed, not this which brought me hither. Don Carlos——

Queen. How did you leave him?

Posa. Like a philosopher, ready to die for the object of his affections. I have not much to say--- but there is himself.---(*Delivers a letter.*)

Queen.---(*After having perused it.*)---He says he must see me.

Posa. That say I too.

Queen. Can it make him happy to be a witness of my sorrows?

Posa. No, but it can make him more active and more resolute.

Queen. How?

Posa. Duke Alba is about to depart for Flanders.

Queen. I heard he was appointed, but---

Posa. The king never revokes his appointments. He is immoveable as Nature's laws. But the Prince must, nevertheless, remain here no longer, and Flanders must not be sacrificed.

Queen. Can you prevent that?

Posa. Perhaps I can; though the remedy is almost as bad as the danger which is to be counteracted. It is the rashness of despair; but I know no other means.

Queen. Name it.

Posa. To you, and you alone, I dare disclose it: and from your lips alone can Carlos hear it without shuddering. The name it bears is harsh, I own——

Queen. Rebellion!

Posa. He shall, in contradiction to his father's will, privately go to Flanders, where he will be received with open arms. Justice will be strong, when supported by a Monarch's son. Let his arms make the Spanish throne totter, and his father will grant him in Brussels what he denied in Madrid.

Queen. Will he indeed? Are you so sure of that?

Posa. Why not? What is Philip's force, when opposed to that of the united Netherlands? Carlos will offer submission; and humanity, at the head of an army, can do wonders. The King will be left to decide between a generous pardon or a doubtful contest; and the very man, who to-day refused his petition, will then forgive his crime.

Queen. Can you, who have seen him to-day, expect this?

Posa. That is my very reason for expecting it.

Queen.—(After a pause.)—Your plan alarms, yet at the same time pleases me. I believe you are right. The idea is a bold one, and on that account charms me. Is the Prince acquainted with it?

Posa. I wished him to hear it from your lips rather than from mine.

Queen. Doubtless, the idea is an exalted one, if the Prince's youth—

Posa. Name not that. He will there find the intrepid warriors of the imperial Charles—Egmont and Orange, wise in the cabinet as dreadful in the field.

Queen. You are right, you are right. The Prince must be active. The part which he acts in Madrid oppresses me more than himself. The aid of France and Savoy I can promise. Marquis, I am of your opinion, but this plan requires the aid of money.

Posa. That is at hand.

Queen. And I too have resources.

Posa. I may give him hopes of seeing you, then?

Queen. But how can this be effected?

Posa. If natural means fail, we must have recourse to extraordinary aid.

Queen. I know of none.

Posa. What think you of the subterraneous passages?

Queen. Impossible! The King is in possession of the keys.

Posa. Even if that be the case, may we not—

Queen. I will give it some consideration.

Posa. Carlos anxiously awaits your Majesty's reply, and I promised I would not return without it.—
(*Presents his tablets to the Queen.*)—Two lines will, at present, be sufficient to rouse his expectations.

Queen.—(*After having written.*)—Shall I see you again soon?

Posa. As often as you command me to attend.

Queen. As often as I command you to attend! Marquis, how am I to interpret this liberty?

Posa. In the most innocent way you can. Be assured I have a glorious end in view.

Queen. Glorious indeed! Oh, Marquis, how should I rejoice if Europe were to regain her freedom—and through *him!* You may rely upon my secret sympathy.

Posa. Thanks, thanks! I was sure I should be understood.

OLIVAREZ appears at the door.

Queen.—(*With distance to Posa.*)—The King's wishes are my law. Present my most respectful duty to his Majesty. [*Exeunt severally.*

Scene, a gallery. Enter CARLOS and LERMA.

Car. Here we shall not be interrupted. What have you to tell me?

Ler. Your Highness had a friend at this court.

Car.—(*Starts.*)—It is more than I knew.

Ler. I must beg pardon, then, for having learnt more than I ought; but, that your Highness may be



at ease, I can assure you I had it from authority on which you may rely, for I myself discovered it.

Car. To whom do you allude?

Ler. To the Marquis Posa.

Car. Well!

Ler. If he be acquainted with more of your affairs than every one may know, which I almost fear——

Car. Fear!

Ler. He has had an audience of the King.

Car. Indeed!

Ler. Which was of a most secret nature, and of two hours duration. It was, I am sure, of material importance.

Car. That I believe.

Ler. I heard your name mentioned several times.

Car. That is no bad sign, I hope.

Ler. Some very strange allusions were also made to the Queen, in his Majesty's room, this morning.

Car.—(*Steps back, alarmed.*)—Count Lerma!

Ler. When the Marquis departed, I received orders to admit him in future unannounced.

Car. That is extraordinary indeed.

Ler. It is without a precedent since I have served his Majesty.

Car. Extraordinary indeed! And what were the allusions to the Queen which were made?

Ler.—(*Draws back.*)—Your Highness must excuse me. It is against my duty to repeat them.

Car. How strange, to mention one part and conceal another!

Ler. The former was my duty to you—the latter to his Majesty.

Car. You are right.

Ler. I own I have always thought the Marquis a man of strict integrity and honour.

Car. You have formed a very just opinion of him.

Ler. Every virtue is spotless till put to the test.

Car. And some even after that.

Ler. A Monarch's favour is a tempting bait, which has caught many a man of rigid principle.

Car. Undoubtedly.

Ler. It is indeed often politic to discover what can no longer be concealed.

Car. Politic it is, but you mentioned that you had known the Marquis only as a man of honour.

Ler. If he be still so, my doubts cannot have made him worse, and your Highness is a double gainer.—
(*Going.*)

Car.—(*Follows him, and with emotion takes his hand.*)—I am a treble gainer, worthy, upright man. I feel that I possess another friend, without having lost the one I before possessed. [*Exit Lerma.*

Enter POSA.

Posa. Carlos! Carlos!

Car. Who calls? Ha! You! Just as I wished. I hasten to the convent. Follow me as soon as possible.

Posa. Stay—if but for two minutes.

Car. Should we be seen together—

Posa. We shall not. I can say every thing in a moment. The Queen—

Car. You have had an audience of my father.

Posa. I have. He sent for me.

Car.—(*Full of expectation.*)—Well!

Posa. I have adjusted every thing. You will see her.

Car. And the King—what does he want?

Posa. He was merely curious to know who I was. I suppose some officious friend had mentioned me. He offered me employment—

Car. Which you refused.

Posa. Of course.

Car. And how did you part?

Posa. On tolerable terms.

Car. I was not the subject of your conversation, I suppose?

Posa. You! Yes. You were mentioned in general terms.—(*Draws forth his tablets.*)—There are a few words from the Queen. I shall learn the how, when, and where, to-morrow.

Car.—(*Reads in great confusion, puts the tablets into his pocket, and is going.*)—We shall meet at the convent then?

Posa. Hold! Why in such haste? No one is coming.

Car.—(*With an assumed smile.*)—We seem to have changed situations. You feel vastly secure to-day.

Posa. To-day! Why not to-day?

Car. And what has the Queen written.

Posa. Have you not this moment read—

Car. I!—True, true.

Posa. What means this!

Car.—(*Again looks at the tablets, and is in ecstasy.*)—Thou sweet angel! Yes. I will become worthy of thee. Love makes noble souls still nobler. Be what it may, I am ready to attempt it. She writes that I must prepare myself for an enterprize of great importance. What can she mean? Do you not know?

Posa. Even if I do, Carlos, are you composed enough to hear it?

Car. Have I offended you? Forgive me, Rodrigo. I was agitated.

Posa. Agitated! By what?

Car. By—I know not what. These tablets I may keep then?

Posa. Not exactly. I, on the contrary, am come to beg that you will give me yours—

Car. Mine! Why?

Posa. As well as any other trifle, which might

fall into the hands of a third—any letters—memorandums—in short, your whole pocket-book.

Car. But why?

Posa. That we may be prepared against all events. Who can be sure that you may not be surprised? On the contrary, no one will think that I am in possession of your papers. Give me them.

Car.—(*Much agitated.*)—This is very strange. Why all at once this—

Posa. Be at ease. I meant not to imply that there is any present danger, but merely wish to guard against what may occur. It was not my intention to alarm you thus. There is no cause for alarm.

Car.—(*Presents his pocket-book.*)—Take good care of it.

Posa. That I will.

Car.—(*With a significant look.*)—Roderigo, I commit much to your charge.

Posa. Not so much as I before possessed. At the convent then we meet. Till then farewell.—(*Going.*)

Car.—(*Contends with his own feelings, and at last detains him.*)—Return the papers to me. There is one among them, which was written to me when I was so ill at Alkali. I have constantly treasured it near to my heart, and cannot part with it. Return that, and keep all the rest.—(*Takes it out, and returns the pocket-book.*)

Posa. Carlos, I do not part with that letter willingly. It is the very one I most wished to have.

Car. Farewell.—(*Goes slowly towards the door--- stops---and suddenly returns.*)---There take it--- (*With a trembling hand he presents the letter---tears gush from his eyes---he falls on Posa's neck.*)---This my father could not have done. No, Roderigo. This he could not have done. [*Exit instantly.*]

Posa.—(*Looks after him with astonishment.*)—Is it

possible that I did not know him thoroughly—that this fault lurked in his heart, and had escaped my notice? Suspicion of his friend's honour! How came a stain so foul upon this polished mirror? No. I am wrong. What has he done that I should accuse him of so great a weakness? Have I not often been obliged to hurt and to distress him? This was the cause—and, oh, I must continue to distress him. The King believed, when he entrusted his secret to my keeping, that he confided in an upright man; and such confidence demands gratitude. Why should I declare all I know when the avowal would but make my Carlos completely wretched? Why should I wake the slumberer, to shew the storm which threatens him? Better is it that I let the storm pass by, that when he wakes, he may behold a bright, unclouded sky. [Exit.

Scene, the King's Cabinet. He is discovered on a sofa, and the Infanta Clara seated at his side.

King.—(After a long pause.)—No. She is my daughter. How can nature have given her, by accident, my full blue eye. In every feature I behold myself reflected. Yes, darling of my heart, I clasp thee in my arms. Thou art my blood.—(Starts.)—My blood! What can I dread more? My features! Are they not also his?—(Takes up the miniature, and looks alternately at it and in the mirror, which hangs opposite to him. At length he dashes it on the floor, pushes the Infanta from him, and starts up.)—Away! Away! In this abyss I am lost.

Enter LERMA.

Ler. Her Majesty is just arrived in the anti-chamber.

King. Arrived just now!

Ler. And requests an audience.

King. At this unusual hour! I cannot see her.

Ler. She herself approaches. [Exit.

Enter QUEEN.

(*Infanta runs to her.*)

Queen.—(*Falls at the King's feet.*)—My Lord and husband, I am under the necessity of appealing to you for justice.

King. Justice!

Queen. I am treated with indignity at your court. My cabinet has been opened by force——

King. What?

Queen. And several articles of the greatest importance to me are gone.

King. Of the greatest importance to you!

Queen. On account of the misconstruction which malicious persons, not acquainted with the circumstances——

King. Misconstruction! — Malicious persons! — But rise.

Queen. Not till you have given me your royal promise to discover and punish the offender, or have granted me permission to retire from a court, which harbours a villain and a thief.

King. Rise, I say——in this attitude——rise.

Queen.—(*Obeys.*)—That he must be of rank I am certain; for in the same cabinet were pearls and diamonds worth more than a million; but he was satisfied with letters——

King. What letters?

Queen. They were from different persons—among the rest, some from the Infant, and with them was a miniature of him.

King. From——

Queen. The Infant your son.

King. To you?

Queen. Yes.

King. From the Infant? And that you say to me!

Queen. Why not, my Lord?

King. With this composure?

Queen. What thus surprises you? Surely you recollect the letters which, by permission of both Monarchs, were sent by Don Carlos to me at Saint Germain. Whether the miniature which accompanied them was included in this permission, or whether he, of his own accord, ventured on the step, I take not upon me to determine; but if the latter were the case, surely his conduct was not culpable, for then he little thought he sent it to one who would ever be his mother.

King.—(*Almost unable to contain himself, turns aside and is going.*)—The viper! I knew this would be her excuse.

Queen.—(*Takes his hand.*)—What agitates you thus?

Inf.—(*Who has, mean while, found the miniature, brings it to the Queen.*)—Look, dear mother! What a pretty picture!

Queen.—(*Recognizes it, and stands in speechless astonishment. Both, for some time, look full at each other.*)—I must own, my Lord, this mode of conduct is most noble, most royal—but one question more I beg leave to ask—

King. It is my place to ask questions, Madam.

Queen. The innocent shall, at all events, not suffer by my suspicions. If, therefore, this theft was committed by your order—

King. It was.

Queen. Then I have no one any longer to accuse or pity but yourself. The conduct of your wife will never justify you in acting thus.

King. I am accustomed to this language, Madam; but, be assured I shall not be imposed upon

by it as I was at Aranjuez. I am now better acquainted with the pure, innocent Lady, who could defend her conduct with so much dignified Majesty—

Queen. What means this?

King.—Who only sent her attendants away that she might amuse herself with her child.

Queen. How am I to understand this?

King. In short, Madam, is it true or false that you there conversed with some one?

Queen. True. I conversed with the Infant.

King. The Infant! It is evident, then! You confess it! Had you no more regard for my honour?

Queen. Honour, my Lord! Before I was King Philip's wife, I was Henry's daughter. If any honour were concerned, a greater was at stake than Castile bestowed upon me.

King. Why did you deny what you now confess?

Queen. Because, my Lord, I am not in the habit of being accused as a delinquent in the presence of a whole court. I never shall conceal the truth when it is asked with respect and propriety. But was the tone proper, which was used by your Majesty at Aranjuez? Are the assembled grandees to be considered a tribunal at which Queens are to render account of their private actions? I granted the Prince an interview, because he so earnestly requested it, and because I will not allow custom to sway me in actions which I think innocent.—I concealed it from you, because I was not disposed to contend for this liberty in the presence of your Majesty's attendants and my own.

King. You use very bold language, Madam.

Queen. Nay, I will own another reason. I acted thus because the Infant does not possess that paternal regard which he wishes for and deserves.

King. Deserves!

Queen. Yes, deserves, my Lord. I esteem and love him as my nearest relative, who was once thought worthy of possessing my hand. I have not yet been able to discover that I ought to keep him at a greater distance than any other person, because he once was dearer to me than any other. If your state-policy can form connexions as they suit your purposes, I will prove that it cannot so easily dissolve them.—No one shall dictate to me whom I must hate or love; and, since you have compelled me to speak, I assure you that my will shall no longer be controlled. All attempts at prohibition and compulsion shall only increase my good opinion of my friends, and make me proceed even to extremities.

King. Elizabeth, you have seen me in the hours of weakness, and this recollection makes you bold. The mirror before which we stand, makes you bold. You rely on the powers by which you have so often subdued my firmness—But dread me the more on that account. What hitherto made me weak, may now drive me to madness.

Queen. What have I done, then, to offend you?

King.—(*Takes her hand.*)—If my suspicions be just—if the measure of your guilt be full—(*Drops her hand.*)—I can subdue this remnant of my weakness, and will.

Queen. What have I done to offend you?

King. If I be thus wronged, blood shall atone—

Queen. Heavens! Is it come to this?

King. All christendom shall tremble at my vengeance. I will no longer pay regard to the laws of nations, or the voice of nature—

Queen. How much I pity your Majesty---

King.—(*Transported beyond all bounds.*)---Pity!---
The compassion of a harlot!

Inf.---(*Clings affrighted to her mother.*)--The King is angry---and you are crying, dear mother.

King.---(*Pushes the child with violence from the Queen.*)---Go, and make your complaint to your father.

Queen.---(*With dignified composure, but with tremulous utterance.*)---This child, I must, at all events, protect from injury. Come with me my daughter. ---(*Takes the Infanta in her arms.*)---If the King will no longer recognize you, I must send for friends beyond the Pyrenees, who will defend us.---(*Going.*)

King.---(*Astonished.*)---Queen!

Queen. I can no more---this is too much.---(*Attempts to reach the door, with the child, but falls.*)

King.---(*Hastens to her, much alarmed.*)---Heavens! Elizabeth!

Inf. Oh, my mother bleeds.---(*Runs out.*)

Queen. Will no one come to help me from this room?

King.---(*Anxiously employed in assisting her.*)---What a dreadful accident! Blood!---Have I deserved that you should so severely punish me?---Rise---compose yourself---rise---I hear footsteps.---Is it your wish that the whole court should be spectators of this scene?---Must I even use supplications? ---(*She raises herself, supported by the King.*)

Enter ALBA, FERIA, LERMA, and DOMINGO.

King. The Queen is indisposed. Let her be conducted to her apartments.

[*Exit Queen, supported by Feria and Lerma.*

Alba.---(*Who approaches with Domingo.*)---The Queen in tears, and blood upon her face!

King. That must, of course, surprise the demons who deceived me.

Alba and Dom. We deceive your Majesty!

King. Yes, *you*, who have said enough to drive me mad, though not a word towards conviction.

Alba. We only repeated what we had heard.

King. Hell reward you for it! I have done what I am sorry for. She guilty? Was that the language of a guilty conscience?

Posa.---(*Without.*)---Is the King at liberty?

Enter POSA.

King.---(*Hears his voice, and hastens to meet him.*)
---Ha! there comes my faithful friend. Welcome Marquis!---(*To Alba and Domingo.*)---You are no longer wanted. Leave us.---(*Alba and Domingo look at each other with silent astonishment.*)

Posa.---(*Much embarrassed.*)---This defeats my hopes entirely; for I must confess that, in the business which brings me to your Majesty, I needed much Duke Alba's kind support.---(*Bows to the Duke.*)

King.---(*In a stern tone, to Alba and Domingo.*)---You know my will. Leave us.

[*Exeunt Alba and Domingo.*]

Marquis, you wanted to make amends for my error. I thank you for your good intention.

Posa. My Liege, it must hurt an old man, who has faced death in twenty battles for your Majesty, to see himself thus sent away, that a youth—

King. It becomes you to think thus, and me to act as I did. He had spent more than half his life before he became as valuable to me as you already are. I do not choose to make a secret of my feelings. The marks of my royal favour conferred on you shall meet every eye. The man whom I have made my friend shall be an object of envy. What brings you hither?

Posa. Pardon me, my Liege. As I passed through the antichamber, I heard a dreadful rumour, which to me appears incredible. A violent dispute—blood—the Queen.—Heaven forbid that the report be true, and that your Majesty should have acted in-

cautiously! Most important discoveries, which I have made, entirely alter the nature of the circumstances.

King. Proceed.

Posa. I have found an opportunity of obtaining the Prince's pocket-book, which will, I hope, throw some light upon—(*Presents it.*)

King.—(*Eagerly examines the contents.*)—A letter from the Emperor, my father—of which I never heard.—(*Reads it, lays it aside, and hastens to the other papers.*)—Plan of a garrison—extracts from Tacitus—and what is this?—This hand I have surely seen before. It is a Lady's hand.—(*Reads with great attention, partly aloud, partly to himself.*)—“This key—back part of the Queen's pavilion.”—Ha! What means this?—“Here may that love be frankly owned—flame—harvest of his hopes.”—Infernal treachery! 'Tis she. It is her hand.

Posa. The Queen's! Impossible!

King. No. It is the Princess Eboli's—

Posa. Then all was true, which was reported to me by the Page who delivered the letter and the key.

King.—(*Grasps Posa's hand, in violent agitation.*)—Marquis, I perceive that I am dreadfully imposed upon. This woman—to you I will confess it, Marquis—this woman broke open the cabinet of the Queen, and her accusation was the first which I received. Who knows how far the Monk may be an accomplice? Marquis, I begin to fear I have acted hastily towards my wife.

Posa. If any secret understanding has subsisted between her Majesty and the Prince, it was certainly of a nature very different to that of which she is accused. I have certain information that the Infant's wish to go to Flanders originated with the Queen.

King. I always thought so.

Posa. The Queen is ambitious. Need I say more? She is hurt to find herself disappointed in the proud hope of sharing the prerogatives which attach to royalty. The Prince's youthful ardour encouraged her projects; but, with respect to her heart, I doubt whether it can love.

King. I am not afraid of her mighty projects.

Posa. Whether she is beloved, or whether, indeed, nothing worse is to be expected from the Infant—this, I own, deserves investigation. In this respect I think the greatest vigilance is necessary.

King. I employ you to exercise it.

Posa.—(*After some reflection.*)—If your Majesty thinks me capable of this undertaking, I must beg that my authority may be unlimited.

King. It shall be so.

Posa. At least that I may not, by any person whatever, be disturbed in such investigations as I think necessary.

King. You have my promise. You are my guardian angel. How much am I indebted to you for the discoveries you have made.

Enter LERMA.

How did you leave the Queen?

Ler. Still very weak, my Liege.—(*Looks doubtfully at Posa.*)

King. Let her be informed that I shall come to her immediately. [*Exit Lerma.*]

Posa.—(*Follows him with a look of uneasiness, then turns to the King.*)—One precaution more appears to me necessary. I fear the Infant may have notice of our intentions. He has many friends; nay, perhaps, is connected with the rebels in Ghent. Fear may lead him to desperate resolutions. I therefore advise your Majesty to provide against this case by instant means.

King. You are right. But how——

Posa. By a secret warrant of arrest, which your Majesty may confide to my care, that I may use it at the moment of danger, and——

King.—(*Thoughtfully.*)—This is a bold step. I doubt whether——

Posa. Let it remain a secret of state till——

King.—(*Goes to his desk, and signs the warrant.*)—A kingdom is at stake. Imminent danger justifies extraordinary measures. There, Marquis! To you I need not recommend the necessary caution.

Posa.—(*Takes the warrant.*)—The case is desperate.

King. Go, dear Marquis—hasten to restore my peace of mind, and end my restless nights.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

Scene, the Gallery. Enter CARLOS, in great agitation, met by LERMA.

Car. You are the man I sought.

Ler. I too sought your Highness.

Car. Is it true? For heaven's sake, is it true?

Ler. What mean you?

Car. That he drew his dagger—that she was covered with blood when carried from his apartments. For heaven's sake speak. How much of this is true?

Ler. She fainted, and was hurt by the fall—nothing more.

Car. Was she in no further danger—on your honour, Count?

Ler. The Queen was not—therefore are you in greater.

Car. The Queen was not! Then heaven be praised! A dreadful rumour reached my ears, that

the King was exasperated against my mother and myself, and that a secret had been discovered.

Ler. The latter may be true.

Car. True!

Ler. Prince, I gave you, to-day, one warning, which you despised. Make better use of the second.

Car. How!

Ler. If I be not mistaken, some days ago I saw in your hand a pocket-book, made of blue silk, and embroidered with gold.

Car.—(*Alarmed.*)—Such a one I had. Well?

Ler. On the cover was a row of pearls, I think.

Car. Right.

Ler. But a short time since, as I unexpectedly walked into the King's cabinet, I fancied that I saw this very pocket-book in his hand, and the Marquis Posa was with him.

Car.—(*After a pause, in a violent tone.*)—That is not true.

Ler.—(*Hurt and indignant.*)—Then I am a deceiver.

Car.—(*Looks at him for some time.*)—You are.

Ler. Alas! I can forgive you.

Car.—(*Walks to and fro in most violent agitation, and at length stops directly opposite to him.*)—Thine is a dreadful occupation, man. In what has he injured thee? In what has our innocent attachment injured thee, that thus thy hellish labour is employed to rend the ties of amity asunder.

Ler. Prince, I revere the pain which makes you thus unjust.

Car. Oh, God, let me not be suspicious.

Ler. I remember, too, the King's own words:—
“How much am I indebted to you, for the discoveries you have made.” This he said as I entered.

Car. Oh, no more, no more.

Ler. Duke Alba is, I understand, disgraced, and

Ruy Gomez is deprived of the great seal, which has been presented to the Marquis.

Car.—(*Lost in meditation.*)—And this he concealed from me. For what reason could he conceal it?

Ler. The whole court already looks up to him as the uncontrolled minister and favourite.

Car. He loved me—loved me much. I was dear to him as his own soul. This I am sure of, for a thousand proofs have fully shewn it. But must not millions, must not his native land be dearer to him than a single friend? Yes—for a single friend his bosom was too large—my happiness too small for such a patriot's friendship. He has sacrificed me to his virtue. Can I blame him for this deed? Oh! it is certain, it is certain. I have lost him.—(*Walks apart, and hides his face.*)

Ler.—(*After a pause.*)—Dearest Prince, what can I do for you?

Car.—(*Without looking at him.*)—Go to the King, and also betray me. I have nothing to bestow on you.

Ler. Will you wait the consequences of—

Car.—(*Supports himself against a pillar.*)—Yes. I have lost him. Now I am completely poor.

Ler.—(*Approaches, with sympathizing emotion.*)—Prince, will you not think of providing for your safety?

Car. Safety! Good man!

Ler. And is there no one but yourself for whom you tremble?

Car.—(*Starts.*)—Gracious God! of what do you remind me? My mother? The letter which I returned to him—which I at first denied—yet at last gave him.—(*Walks up and down in extreme agitation.*)—How has she deserved this treatment? Her he might at least have spared. Might he not, Lerma?—(*In a sudden and determined tone.*)—I must

go to her—I must warn her of her danger. Lerma, dear Lerma!—whom can I employ? Is there no resource? Send the Marquis to me—immediately.

Ler. The Marquis!

Car.—(*In dreadful agony.*)—Oh, heavens!

Ler. The King, too, is with her Majesty at present.

Car.—(*Lost in thought.*)—Have I, then, not a friend in all the world.—Yes, one I have. It is impossible that my situation can be worse.

Ler. Prince, whither go you! [*Rushes out.*
[*Follows him.*

Scene, one of the Queen's apartments. Enter EBOLI and DOMINGO, from opposite sides.

Dom. Princess, have you heard the news?

Ebo. What news? You seem disordered, chaplain.

Dom. Of our new minister.

Ebo. Is this strange report, then, true, which engrosses the conversation of the whole court?

Dom. You have an interest in it. I congratulate you, queen of a single night.

Enter ALBA.

Alba.—(*To Ebo.*)—Plunge my sword into my heart. 'Twas I myself who brought him to the King.

Dom. Who could then have suspected—

Alba. So much the worse. He who could so well dissemble, who could so easily lull you and me to repose, can do still more.

Dom. “You are no longer wanted!” You remember the King's words?

Ebo. Whence has this sudden change its origin? I do not comprehend it.

Alba.—(*In deep meditation.*)—What would I now give for such a foe as the Infant has been to me.

Dom. Very true, Alba. If I understand your meaning. I could almost fancy you had dived into my mind.

Alba. In reality he is a noble Prince.

Dom. So think I.

Alba. And worthy of a better fate.

Dom. That was always my opinion.

Alba.—(*After a pause.*)—Chaplain, will you join me?

Dom. In what? Do you intend—

Alba. I intend to destroy my own work, that I may again begin it on another plan. [*Exit.*]

Dom. You are silent, Princess.

Ebo. Act as you think proper. I shall never be his friend. [*Exit Domingo.*]

Enter CARLOS on the opposite side.

Car.—(*To Ebo, who starts at sight of him.*)—Be not alarmed, Princess. I will be gentle as a child.

Ebo. Prince, this unexpected—

Car. Are you still offended?

Ebo. Prince!

Car. Are you still offended? Tell me, I beseech you.

Ebo. What means this? You appear to have forgotten yourself, Prince. What is your business with me?

Car.—(*Seizes her hand.*)—Is your hatred eternal? Can offended love never forgive?

Ebo.—(*Endeavours to extricate herself.*)—Of what do you remind me, Prince?

Car. Of your goodness, and my own ingratitude. Alas! Full well I know that I have deeply hurt

you; that I have wounded your gentle heart; that I have caused tears to flow from those angelic eyes.

Ebo. Prince, leave me, I—

Car. I am come hither, because I can rely upon your mild forgiving soul. *Eboli*, I have not one friend in the world except yourself. You once esteemed me. You cannot be inexorable.

Ebo.—(*Turns away.*)—No more, for heaven's sake—

Car. Let me remind you of your kind affection, which I so basely treated. Look upon me but once in the same light as I then appeared to you, and listen to me.

Ebo. Oh, *Carlos*, how do you torment me!

Car. Be greater than your sex. Forget my offences. Do what no woman ever did before you, or will ever do again. I request of you a favour greater than you can fancy. Let me—on my knees I conjure you, let me, for a moment, see my mother.

Enter POSA, in breathless haste, with two Officers of the body guard.

Posa.—(*Rushes between them.*)—What has he confessed? Believe him not.

Car.—(*Still on his knees, raising his voice.*)—By all that is sacred—

Posa.—(*Interrupts him in a violent tone.*)—He is mad. Do not attend to him.

Car.—(*In a louder and more earnest tone.*)—My life or death depends upon it. Conduct me to her.

Posa.—(*Draws Eboli from him by force.*)—You die if you listen to him.—(*Turns to one of the Officers.*)—Count *Cordua*, in his Majesty's name I command you to seize the Prince.—(*Produces the warrant of arrest. Carlos stands rooted to the spot—Eboli shrieks—the Officers are astonished. A long and solemn pause ensues. Posa is in a violent tremor,*

and scarcely able to suppress his feelings.)—Prince, I request your sword.—(*To Eboli, who is going.*)—Princess Eboli, you will stay here.—(*To the Officers.*)—On your life allow not his Highness to say one word to any one—he must not utter a syllable even to yourself.—(*Whispers a few more words in the Officer's ear, then turns to the rest.*)—I shall immediately give account of my proceedings to the King. You, Prince, may expect me in an hour.—(*Carlos allows himself to be led away, without appearing conscious of his situation; except that, as he passes, he casts a feeble dying look towards Posa, who conceals his face. No sooner is he gone, than Eboli again attempts to escape, but is seized by the Marquis.*)

Ebo. For heaven's sake let me quit this place—

Posa.—(*Draws her forward with terrible sternness.*)—Unfortunate creature, what has he said to thee?

Ebo. Nothing—release me—nothing.

Posa.—(*Still more sternly.*)—Thou shalt not go. What hast thou learnt? Escape is impossible. Confess, for in this world thou wilt have no other opportunity.

Ebo.—(*Extremely alarmed.*)—Gracious God!—What means this? You will not murder me?

Posa.—(*Shews a dagger.*)—That is my intention. Be brief.

Ebo. Oh, mercy, mercy! What have I done?

Posa.—(*Looks towards heaven, and points the dagger to her breast.*)—As yet all is secure. As yet the poison has not dropped from the vessel which contains it. If I destroy the vessel, its contagion cannot spread. The fate of Spain depends upon a woman's life. Great Judge of all, at thy tribunal I can justify this murder.—(*Again raises his arm, and stands in terrible suspense.*)

Ebo.—(*Falls at his feet, and looks boldly at him.*)—Now—why do you delay the blow? I sue not for mercy. I have deserved to die—and ask for death.

Posa.—(After reflecting for a short time, during which his hand gradually sinks.)—Mean, dastardly, and barbarous! No, no, no. Thank heaven, there still are other means.—(Casts the dagger from him, and hastens away. Eboli rushes from the room through the opposite door.)

Scene, another of the Queen's Apartments.—The QUEEN and FUENTES are discovered.

Queen. What a commotion there is in the palace! Every noise I hear to-day alarms me, Countess. Pray enquire what it means. [Exit Fuentes.]

EBOLI rushes into the room pale and breathless.

Ebo.—(Falls at the Queen's feet.)—Help, help! He is imprisoned.

Queen. Who?

Ebo. The Marquis Posa arrested him by the King's order.

Queen. Whom, whom?

Ebo. The Prince.

Queen. Have you lost your senses?

Ebo. Alas! I saw him led away.

Queen. And who arrested him?

Ebo. The Marquis Posa.

Queen. Well, heaven be thanked that it was the Marquis!

Ebo. Can you say that so calmly? Oh, heavens, my gracious lady, you know not—

Queen. Why was he arrested? For some error, I suppose, natural in a youth of violent passions.

Ebo. No, no, no! Oh, heavens! Cursed diabolical deed! Nothing can save him. He must die.

Queen. Die!

Ebo. And I am his murderer.

Queen. Die! You rave. Reflect on what you say.

Ebo. Oh, had I known this would have been the consequence---

Queen.---(*Takes her hand with a friendly mien.*)--- Princess, compose yourself. Collect your scattered spirits, and calmly---not in tones which make me shudder---tell me what you know, and what has happened.

Ebo. Oh, do not overwhelm me thus with kindness. It seizes on my conscience like the flames of hell. I am not worthy to raise my eyes and view the glory which surrounds your virtues. Trample, I beseech you, trample on the wretch, who, with all the sensations of repentance, shame, and self-abhorrence, writhes at your feet.

Queen. Unfortunate woman, what have you to confess?

Ebo. Angel of light, as yet you are ignorant that you have kindly smiled on a demon. I was the wretch who robbed you.

Queen. You!

Ebo. And who delivered your papers to the King.

Queen. You!

Ebo. I was the wretch who accused you---

Queen. You!---Could *you*---

Ebo. Love, vengeance, and madness were my guides. I hated you, and loved the Infant.

Queen. If you loved him—

Ebo. I avowed my passion, and it was rejected.

Queen.---(*After a pause.*)---Alas! Now all is clear. Rise. You loved him. I forgive you. It is forgotten. Rise.---(*Assists her.*)

Ebo. No, no. There yet remains a horrible confession. Not till then great Queen—

Queen. What am I still doomed to hear? Proceed.

Ebo. The King—Seduction—Oh, you avert your countenance. I read your dreadful sentence in your looks.—The crime with which I charged

you---I myself committed.---(*Falls to the earth, and hides her burning blushes. The Queen retires, and a long pause ensues. In a few minutes Olivarez comes from the room into which the Queen went, and finds Eboli in her former situation. She approaches, upon which Eboli starts up with a frantic look, and perceives the Queen is gone.*)

Ebo. Heavens! She has left me. Then all is over.

Oli. Princess Eboli--

Ebo. I know why you are come. The Queen has sent you to announce her will. Quick--let me hear it.

Oli. I am commanded by her Majesty to claim your cross and keys.

Ebo.—(*Takes the cross from her neck, and delivers it to Olivarez.*)—Yet may I not be allowed once more to kiss her hand? Surely, oh, surely the best of Queens will not—

Oli. In the convent of St. Mary you will be told what is determined respecting you.

Ebo.—(*Whose tears gush from her eyes.*)—I shall never see the Queen again, then?

Oli.—(*Embraces her with averted face.*)—Farewell.

[*Exit instantly.*

(*Eboli follows her to the door, which is shut upon her. She sinks on her knees, and remains in this attitude for some minutes, then rises, hides her face and rushes out.*)

Enter QUEEN and OLIVAREZ.

Queen. Is she gone?

Oli. Yes, and in despair. How dreadful is her lot!

Queen.—(*Goes to a window, with looks of uneasiness.*)—Where can the Countess Fuentes be? I told her to obtain information—

Enter a PAGE, who whispers to OLIVAREZ.

Oli. Duke Alba and Domingo beg permission—

Queen. Duke Alba and Domingo! Domingo and Duke Alba!

Oli. They only request a short audience.

Queen.—(*After some consideration.*)—Conduct them hither. [*Exeunt Olivarez and Page.*

Enter ALBA and DOMINGO.

Alba. Gracious Queen, if we may be allowed—

Queen. What is the motive of this visit?

Dom. An honest anxiety for your Majesty's safety.

Alba. We have hastened hither, by timely information, to defeat a plot which is formed against you—

Dom. And to lay at your Majesty's feet this testimony of our zeal and services.

Queen.—(*Looks at them with astonishment.*)—Reverend Father—and you, noble Duke—you really surprise me. I did not expect such zeal from Domingo, or from Duke Alba, and know how to value it properly. You mention a plot formed against me. May I ask by whom?

Alba. We entreat you to be on your guard against a Marquis Posa, who is secretly employed by his Majesty.

Queen. I am rejoiced to hear his Majesty has made so good a choice, I have long since been told of the Marquis Posa's talents and integrity. Never was favour more properly bestowed.

Dom. More properly bestowed! We know it otherwise.

Alba. We have long been acquainted with this man's employments and utility.

Queen. What means this? You excite my curiosity.

Dom. Is it long since your Majesty looked into your cabinet?

Queen. How?

Dom. And when you looked into it, did you miss nothing.

Queen. I do not understand you. That I have missed several articles the whole court knows. But how is the Marquis Posa concerned in this?

Alba. Very essentially; for the Prince, too, has lost papers of the utmost importance, which were this morning seen in the King's hands, during the Marquis Posa's private audience, since which his Highness has been arrested, and the Marquis declared Prime-minister.

Queen. Strange! Unaccountable! I find a foe where I suspected none, and two friends whom I never dreamt that I possessed. For, to confess the truth,—(*Rivetting her eyes upon them.*)—I was on the point of pardoning your unkind offices towards me with respect to his Majesty.

Alba. Our unkind offices!

Queen. Yours.

Dom. Duke Alba! Ours!

Queen.—(*Still attentively observing them.*)—How happy am I, therefore, to be so soon aware of my error. I had, indeed, previously resolved to request to-day, that his Majesty would produce my accusers. Your visit, therefore, gratifies me, for now I can call for Duke Alba's testimony.

Alba. Mine! Are you serious?

Queen. Why not?

Dom. Would you thus defeat all the private services, which——

Queen. Private!—(*With dignified solemnity.*)—Duke Alba, I wish to know what your Monarch's consort can have to discuss with you, or with this priest, which her Lord may not know. Am I innocent or guilty?

Dom. What a question!

Alba. But if the King were not just—I mean for the present moment—

Queen. Then I must wait till he becomes so.—

Happy are they who feel sure of success, when justice predominates. Farewell.

[*Exeunt Alba and Domingo.*]

Enter POSA.

At length I again see you, Marquis. You are welcome.

Posa.—(*Whose looks are disordered, whose voice falters, and who, throughout this scene, conveys every idea of a mind in the most dreadful state of agitation.*)—Is your Majesty alone? Can no one in the adjoining rooms hear our discourse?

Queen. We are secure. What tidings bring you?—(*Looks at him more minutely, and starts.*)—Heavens! What mean these altered features?

Posa. You, perhaps, already know—

Queen. That Carlos is a prisoner, and through you, I have been told. It is true, then! None but yourself would I have believed.

Posa. It is true.

Queen. Through you?

Posa. Through me.

Queen.—(*With a doubtful look.*)—I revere your actions even when I do not comprehend them; but, on this occasion, pardon a female's terrors. I fear you play a desperate game.

Posa. I have lost it.

Queen. God of Heaven!

Posa. Be at ease. You are provided for. The loss falls on myself.

Queen. Oh! What must I hear?

Posa. For who urged me to set my all upon a doubtful die? Who urged me thus to sport with the decrees of Heaven? I, though a mortal, have dared to seize the helm of fate, and, feeling that I cannot guide it, I allow my punishment is just. But why do I dwell on this? Every moment is precious.

Who knows but that my judge has already sent the executioner to seize me?

Queen. Your judge!—This solemn tone! Oh! explain the dreadful meaning of your words.

Posa. He is saved—it matters not at what price—yet only for to-day. Few moments are his own.—Let him make good use of them, for I have not bought them at a very moderate price. He must quit Madrid this very night.

Queen. This very night!

Posa. Every preparation is made for his escape. At the convent which has long been the resort of our friendship, he will find a conveyance, and attendants in whom he may confide. Here is, in bills of exchange, all that fortune has bestowed upon me. What is wanting you will supply. I must own I have much upon my mind which Carlos should have known—much which he must know; but I probably may not be enabled to mention every thing in person; therefore, as you will see him this evening, I have recourse to you—

Queen. As you value my repose, speak more intelligibly. What has happened?

Posa. I have still a confession of importance to make, and to you I make it. Mine has been a fortune which but few enjoy. I loved a Monarch's son. My heart, devoted but to one, made him its world. In the soul of Carlos I could see the paradise of millions. Oh, how delightful were these visions! But it has pleased eternal Providence to nip my great idea in its bud, and Roderigo soon will be no more. Here—here, on this holy altar—here, in the heart of his Queen, the object of his love and adoration, I deposit my last sacred legacy. Here may he find it, when I shall be no more!—(*Turns away, and tears choke his utterance.*)

Queen. This is the language of a dying man. Still I hope that is but the warmth of fancy—or am I

to conceive that there is serious meaning in your words?

Posa.—(*Has endeavoured to compose himself, and proceeds in a firmer tone.*)—Tell him to be mindful of the oath which, in the days of enthusiasm, we confirmed by the sacrament. Mine I have adhered to. Faithful to him I have remained to death—

Queen. To death!

Posa. Tell him to remember his. Remind him of his vow to model a new government. Whether he succeeds or fails ought not to be of importance. Sufficient is it for him that he has attempted the noble project we agreed upon. When centuries have passed, Providence may send another Prince, who fired with the same enthusiasm, may complete what he began. Tell him, that when he mounts the throne, he must bear in mind the Infant's vows; must not expose the blossom of his great ideas to that destructive insect, policy; and must not be led astray by that base wisdom which would defeat the heavenly projects of enthusiasm. I have already discoursed with him upon this head—

Queen. But wherefore, Marquis—

Posa.—(*With great solemnity.*)—And tell him that on his mind I rest the happiness of nations: that I required this at my dying hour, and felt myself justified in the demand. It was in my power to have spread a new morning through this land. The King granted me his confidence—called me his son. I bear his seal, and Alba is no more.—(*Pauses, and surveys the Queen.*)—In tears!—Sweet soul! I know those tears—they are the effect of joy. Right!—Carlos or I! The choice was sudden, and was dreadful. One *must* be lost—I chose to be the one. Ask no more.

Queen. Now—now at last I begin to understand you. Unhappy man, what have you done?

Posa. I have sacrificed two evenings to enjoy one

cheerful, glorious day. The King I resign; for what can I be to him? In this parched soil none of my roses bloom. My projects of present alteration were childish and absurd. What, then, could I do? The fate of Europe rests in the hands of Carlos. To him I resign it, and till he gains possession, it must bleed beneath the sway of Philip. But woe be to Carlos and to me, should I repent the choice which I have made—should I have mistaken the will of Heaven,—should I have acted thus for one, who—

Queen. Do not proceed, Marquis. What you fear will never happen. I know your friend and can answer for his noble mind.

Posa. That alone lay heavy on my mind. Never, never will it happen, for I have *your* promise.—(*After a pause.*)—I saw this unfortunate passion take root in his heart. At that time it was in my power to have checked it; but I did not. On the contrary, I encouraged it. The world may be of another opinion, but I do not repent my conduct—my conscience does not accuse me. I saw life where others would have seen destruction. In this hopeless passion I beheld the golden beams of hope. I wished to teach him what was excellent, and I perceived that wonder-working love would aid my project.

Queen. And could you, Marquis, could you seriously think me so divested of all female weakness, when you employed love as one of his defences? You reflected not what dangers the heart encounters when love is dignified with the title of virtue.

Posa. You speak of your sex in general. My plans were founded on the principles of *one*. Can you be ashamed of exciting a passion, which is founded upon virtue? Is king Philip injured when a painter admires the wonders of the Escorial? Does the sweet music of the lute belong to him, who, though devoid of harmony, purchases the in-

strument? He has bought the privilege of breaking it, but not the art of calling forth its melting tones. A contemplative mind searches for truth—a feeling heart submits to beauty's power. You and Carlos belong to each other. No paltry prejudices shall make me alter this opinion. Promise that you will love him—promise, and vow to me that you will love him for ever.

Queen. I promise that my heart alone shall ever be my guide.

Posa. Now I die willingly. My work is done.

[*Going.*

Queen. Marquis, are you going—without telling me when—how soon—we shall again see each other!

Posa.—(*With averted face.*)—Rest assured we shall again see each other.

Queen.—(*Gazes at him.*)—I understand you well. Oh, Posa, why have you done this?

Posa. He or I—

Queen. No, no. You have been hurried away by the idea of an exalted action. I know you have long wished for such an opportunity of falling. Should it break a thousand hearts, what cares your pride for that? Oh, now I know you well. All you have aimed at has been admiration.

Posa.—(*Astonished, and aside.*)—I was not prepared for this.

Queen.—(*After a pause.*)—Marquis, is escape impossible?

Posa. It is.

Queen. Recollect yourself. Can I do nothing?

Posa. Nothing.

Queen. Not even by a crime? You do not know me. I have courage.

Posa. That I do know.

Queen. Escape is impossible?

Posa. Quite impossible.

Queen.—(*Hides her face.*)—Go. I no longer value any man on earth.

Posa.—(*Falls at her feet, in most violent agitation.*)
—Queen!—Oh, God! I own that life is sweet.
[*Springs up, and exit.*]

Scene, the King's Antichamber. ALBA and DOMINGO are seen walking up and down, separated and silent. LERMA comes from the King's cabinet, and at the same time, TAXIS enters the antichamber.

Ler. Has not the Marquis yet appeared?

Alba. No.—(*Lerma is about to return.*)

Tax. Count Lerma, be pleased to announce me.

Ler. The King will see nobody.

Tax. Tell him he *must* see me. Much, very much depends upon an instant audience. [*Exit Lerma.*]

Alba.—(*Approaches Taxis.*)—Dear Taxis accustom yourself to patience. You will not be admitted.

Tax. Why not?

Alba. Because you have not used the precaution of soliciting permission from the Marquis Posa, who can make the King a prisoner as well as his son.

Tax. Posa! True! That is the very man from whom I received this letter.

Alba. What letter?

Tax. Which I was to forward for him to Brussels.

Alba. Brussels!

Tax. And which I now bring to his Majesty.

Alba. Brussels! Chaplain, did you hear that? Brussels!

Dom.—(*Approaching.*)—It is very suspicious.

Tax. It was confided to me with evident anxiety and embarrassment.

Dom. Anxiety and embarrassment! Indeed!

Alba. And to whom is it addressed?

Tax. To the Prince of Orange.

Alba. To William! Chaplain, treason lurks here.

Dom. How can it be otherwise? This letter must be delivered to the King without delay. How meritorious is it, worthy man, to be thus zealous in your Monarch's service!

Tax. Reverend father, I do no more than my duty.

Alba. You have acted wisely and properly.

Re-enter LERMA.

Ler. Don Raimond de Taxis is wanted.

[*Exit Taxis.*

Is the Marquis not yet come?

Dom. He has been sought for in every place.

Ler. This is very singular.

Alba. Singular indeed. The Prince is imprisoned, and the King knows not yet for what reason. How did his Majesty receive the news?

Ler. He said not a word.— (*A noise is heard in the cabinet.*)

Alba. What was that?

Tax.— (*Appears at the door.*)—Count Lerma.— (*Both go in.*)

Alba. Domingo, what means this?

Dom. Taxis spoke as if he was alarmed. Should this intercepted letter—Duke, I dread some misfortune.

Alba. He sent for Lerma, yet he knows that you and I are here.

Dom. Our day is past.

Alba. True. I am not the man, at whose approach every door opened. Every thing around me wears a different appearance.

Dom.— (*Has approached the door.*)—Hark!

Alba.— (*After a pause.*)—All is silent as death. I cannot even hear them breathe.

Dom. The double tapestry intercepts the sound.

Alba. Away! Some one comes.

Dom.---(*Leaves the door.*)---I feel as if my life depended on this moment.

Enter PARMA, FERIA, MEDINA, *and other* Grandees.

Par. Can the King be seen?

Alba. No.

Par. No! Who is with him?

Fer. The Marquis Posa, I presume.

Alba. He is every moment expected.

Par. We are this moment arrived from Saragossa. The alarming news is spread through all Madrid. It is, then, true?

Dom. Alas, yes.

Fer. It is true that he is imprisoned by the Marquis!

Alba. Exactly.

Par. But why has this happened?

Alba. Why? That no one knows but the Marquis.

Par. Without assembling the Cortes!

Fer. Cursed be the man who proposed this innovation of our rights!

Alba. Cursed be he! That say I also.

Med. And I.

The other Grandees. And all.

Par. Who will follow me into the cabinet? I will throw myself at the King's feet—

LERMA *rushes from the cabinet.*

Ler. Duke Alba!

Dom. At last! Heaven be praised!—(*Alba goes in.*)

Ler.—(*Breathless, and in great agitation.*)—Should the Marquis Posa come, his Majesty is not alone, and will summon him when at liberty.

Dom.—(*To Lerma, around whom all crowd.*)—Count, what has happened? You are pale as death.

Ler.—(*Is hastening away.*)—Diabolical!

Par. and Fer. What do you mean?

Med. How is the King disposed?

Ler. He has shed tears.

Dom. Shed tears!

All.—(*Struck with astonishment.*)—The King shed tears!—(*A bell is rung. Lerma hastens into the cabinet.*)

Dom. Count, another word—pardon me. He is gone. In what a dreadful state of doubt he leaves us!

Enter EBOLI, with distracted looks.

Ebo. Where is he? I must see him.—(*To Feria.*)
—Duke, lead me to him instantly.

Fer. The King is engaged on matters of the utmost importance. No one can be admitted.

Ebo. Is he then already signing the bloody sentence? He is imposed upon. I can prove he is imposed upon.

Dom.—(*From a distance casts a significant look towards her.*)—Princess Eboli!

Ebo.—(*Approaches him.*)—Are you here too, priest? You are the man I want. You shall confirm what I have to say.—(*Seizes his hand, and draws him to the cabinet.*)

Dom. I! Are you in your senses, Princess?

Fer. Stay where you are. The King will not attend to you at present.

Ebo. He must. Truth he must attend to.

Dom. Hold, I beseech you, hold!

Ebo. Wretch! Thou may'st tremble at thy idol's anger. I have nothing to fear.—(*As she rushes into the cabinet, Alba appears.*)

Alba.—(*Whose eyes sparkle, and whose mien conveys the idea of complete triumph, hastens towards Domingo and embraces him.*)—Order a *Te Deum* in every church. The victory is ours.

Dom. Ours!

Alba.—(To the Grandees.)—Now go in to his Majesty. You shall all hear further from me.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT THE FIFTH.

Scene, an apartment in the Palace, separated by iron bars from a large court, in which centinels walk to and fro. CARLOS is discovered sitting at a table, with his head lying on his arms, as if he was asleep. In the back ground are Officers. POSA enters, and whispers to the Officers, who immediately retire. He approaches CARLOS unperceived, and surveys him awhile. At length CARLOS raises his head, sees POSA, and starts.

Posa. 'Tis I, Carlos.

Car.—(Presents his hand.)—You even come once more to me. That is kind.

Posa. I fancied you might want a friend.

Car. Did you indeed? I am glad to hear it. Oh, I knew you would remain faithful.

Posa. I have deserved that you should think so.

Car. Oh, we understand each other well. This mercy, this mildness becomes such souls as ours.—I grant that one of my requests may have been rash and unreasonable; yet, on that account, you would not deny me those which are the reverse. Virtue may be rigid, but never can be cruel and inhuman. It is not my fault that my joys must be

the victims of your duty. You may, at all events, pity me.

Posa. You mistake me, Carlos. I have never been unworthy of your friendship.

Car. But I have been unworthy of yours.

Posa. Hear me, Carlos, I have much to say, and every moment is of value.

Car. Say not one word. I believe it cost you much—I believe that your gentle heart bled when you decorated the victim for the altar.

Posa. Carlos, what mean you?

Car. You will now complete what I should have done but could not. You will bestow on Spain those golden days which they from me in vain expected. With me all is at an end. That you foresaw. Oh, this dreadful passion has blighted all the early blossoms of my mind. All the hopes you centered in me were dead—you saw it. Providence or chance led you to the King.—By disclosing my secret he was yours — and you may be his angel. I am irrecoverably lost—perhaps Spain is too. Alas! in nothing have I been so much to blame as in not having discovered till to-day that your ideas are as exalted as your friendship was sincere.

Posa.—(*Rousing himself from extreme astonishment.*)—No.—This I did not foresee—I did not expect that the generosity of a friend would be more inventive than my cautious policy. My plan is ruined—I forgot your heart.

Car. Had you been able to have spared *her* this load of sorrow, I should have been most grateful. Why might not I suffer alone? But no more of this. I will not load you with reproach. What is the Queen to you? Do you love her? Can I expect that your rigid virtue will regard the petty cares of my attachment? Pardon me. I was unjust.

Posa. You are unjust, but not on this account.

If I deserved one reproach I should deserve all—and, in that case, I should not be here.—(*Draws forth his pocket-book.*)—Here are some of the papers which you entrusted to my care. Take them again.

Car.—(*Looks with astonishment alternately at Posa and the papers.*)—How!

Posa. I return them, because they will now be safer in your hands than in mine.

Car. How am I to understand this? The King has not read them, then?

Posa. These papers!

Car. You did not shew them all to him?

Posa. Who told you that I shewed one to him?

Car.—(*Overpowered with astonishment.*)—Is it possible?—Count Lerma.

Posa. Lerma!—I understand this—but who could foresee it?—Lerma!—That man never yet deceived. His information was right. The remaining papers are in the King's possession.

Car. But why am I here?

Posa. To prevent the folly of making Eboli your confidante a second time.

Car.—(*As if awaking from a dream.*)—Ha! now all is clear—

Posa. Who comes?

Enter ALBA.

Alba.—(*Approaches Carlos respectfully, and, throughout this scene, turns his back to Posa.*)—Prince, you are free.—His Majesty has sent me to announce it.—(*Carlos looks with surprise at Posa.*)

Posa. His Majesty can punish or can pardon as he pleases, but I must own I think it strange the Prince should be released before I have been heard.

Alba.—(*To Carlos, without looking at Posa.*)—At the same time I am happy in being the person appointed to convey—

Car.—(*Gazes at them both with complete astonish-*

ment.)—I have been imprisoned and released, then, without knowing a reason for either.

Alba. By a mistake, I understand, to which his Majesty was led by some—deception.

Car. But it is by his Majesty's command that I am here?

Alba. Yes, by a mistake of his Majesty.

Car.—I am sorry to hear it; yet, if the King has made a mistake, it becomes him to atone for this in person. Am I not King Philip's son? Am I a proper object for curiosity and scandal? I will not appear obliged to you for that which the King feels to be his duty. I am ready to appear before the assembly of the Cortes, and from your hands I will not take my sword.

Alba. The King will have no objection to make this reasonable acknowledgment, if your Highness will accompany me into his presence.

Car. That will I not. Here I remain till he or all Madrid conducts me from my prison. Bear this answer to him.—(*Alba goes, and, for some time, is seen to deliver orders in the court.*)

Car. Explain all this, I beseech you. Are you not the minister, then?

Posa. I have been, as you see.—(*Walks towards him with great emotion.*)—Oh, Carlos, my project has succeeded. Heaven be thanked! It has succeeded.

Car. Succeeded! I do not understand you.

Posa.—(*Grasps his hand.*)—Carlos, thou art rescued—thou art free—and I—(*Pauses.*)

Car. And you?

Posa. And I — I press thee for the first time to my breast, fully and completely justified. I have bought this privilege with every thing dear to me.— Oh, Carlos, what a moment is this! I am satisfied with this! I am satisfied with myself.—

Car. What a sudden alteration in your features! I never saw you thus before. Your breast seems to

heave with secret satisfaction, and your eyes beam with almost supernatural lustre.

Posa. I rejoice that I have reached the goal of my career. Yours now begins. Carlos, we must take leave of each other. Start not. Be a man, and whatever you may hear, promise that you will not, by grief unworthy of an exalted soul, make our separation more distressing. You will lose me, Carlos—for many years—fools would say for ever.—(*Carlos draws back his hand, and looks earnestly at Posa.*)—Be a man. I have placed great reliance on you; and have not hesitated to pass with you that awful hour which is called the *last*. Yes, I own I anticipated our interview with pleasure. Come. Let us be seated—I feel faint and exhausted.—(*Approaches Carlos, who is lost in terror and astonishment, and who involuntarily allows himself to be drawn to a seat.*)—Why thus silent and amazed? I will be brief. The day after I last met you at the Carthusian convent I was summoned by the King. The result of my audience is known to you and all Madrid; but you are ignorant that your secret passion had been betrayed; that your letters had been stolen from the Queen; that I learnt this from the King's own lips; and that I was entrusted with his entire confidence.—(*Pauses, as if expecting a reply from Carlos, who remains silent.*)—Yes, Carlos. I myself regulated the plot for your destruction. Your crime was manifest; your acquittal impossible. To draw his vengeance towards myself was all that I could do, and thus I became your enemy, that I might the better serve you.—Do you hear me?

Car. I do, I do. Proceed.

Posa. Thus far I was right. But soon I was betrayed by the resplendent beams of royal favour. Fame conveyed reports to you, as I might have foreseen; but I, prompted by false tenderness for your peace of mind, and dazzled by the proud idea of

completing what I had begun without assistance, concealed the dangerous secret from my friend. This was a great error. I feel it was. My confidence was madness—yet, forgive me, Carlos, it was founded on the certainty that your friendship was indissoluble.—(*Again pauses. Carlos awakes from his stupefaction, and begins to be much agitated.*)—What I feared, happened. You were made to tremble at imaginary dangers. The Queen bleeding—the alarm which pervaded the palace—Lerma's unfortunate officiousness—and my unaccountable silence—all these circumstances assailed your heart. You hesitated—and at last concluded you had lost your friend. But, too noble yourself to doubt his integrity, you ascribed his fall to noble motives, and ventured not to think him false, till you had convinced yourself his breach of faith deserved your praise. Forsaken by the only person you had trusted, you threw yourself into the arms of Eboli, —unfortunate Carlos—into the arms of a fiend, for she it was who betrayed you.—(*Carlos rises.*)—I saw you hasten to her. Fearful presages took possession of my soul. I followed you, but came too late. You were at her feet, and the confession already had escaped your lips. You were lost.

Car. No, no. My distress affected her. You are mistaken.

Posa. My mind was filled with the most gloomy apprehensions. I saw no possibility of escape for you. None in universal nature. Despair made me a monster. I held my dagger to a woman's breast—but suddenly a beam of hope shone in my soul—an idea, Carlos, bold and exalted—sent by a miracle to rescue thee. “How,” thought I, “if I succeed in deceiving the King, and convincing him that I am the criminal? Whether it be probable or not, is of little consequence. To Philip possibility will be conviction. Be it so. I will hazard the attempt.

Perhaps a blow so sudden will make the tyrant hesitate; and what more do I want? While he deliberates, Carlos gains time, and can escape to Brabant.”

Car. And you have done this?

Posa. I wrote to the Prince of Orange, that I loved the Queen; that, by the King's mistaken jealousy of you, I had eluded his suspicions, and had even induced him to provide me with opportunities of seeing her Majesty. I added, that I feared discovery; that you, being acquainted with my passion, had hastened to the Princess Eboli, probably through her to caution the Queen; that I had immediately arrested you, and, as my plans must now fail, I wished to find a retreat at Brussels. This letter—

Car.—(*Hastily interrupts him.*)—You surely did not entrust it to the post! You know that all letters for Brabant and Flanders—

Posa. Will be delivered to the King. According to present appearances, I conceive that Taxis has already done his duty.

Car. Heavens! Then I am lost.

Posa. You! Why you?

Car. Unfortunate man! You too are lost. My father never will forgive so monstrous a deception.

Posa. Deception! Recollect yourself. Who will tell him that it is a deception?

Car. Who! I, myself.—(*Going.*)

Posa. Hold! You have lost your senses.

Car. For heaven's sake, let me go. While I stay here, he is, perhaps, instructing the executioner.

Posa. Of so much greater value is our time. We have still much to say.

Car. What! Before he has been told.—(*Again attempts to go.*)

Posa.—(*Seizes his arm.*)—Carlos, was I so hasty, was I so conscientious when, in our boyish days, you bled for me?

Car.—(*Deeply affected.*)—Oh, gracious Providence!

Posa. Away to Flanders! Your destiny is to govern—mine to die for you.

Car.—(*Takes his hand with extreme emotion.*)—No. He will not—cannot resist such noble and exalted conduct. I will lead you to him. Arm in arm we will appear before him. “Father,” I will say, “thus has a friend acted for his friend.” Oh, believe me, Roderigo, my father is not devoid of humanity. He will be moved. Tears will gush from his eyes, and he will pardon us.—(*A musket is discharged from the court.*)—Ha! At whom was that aimed?

Posa.—(*Falls.*)—I believe at me.

Car.—(*Sinks at his side.*)—Merciful heavens!

Posa.—(*In a faltering voice.*)—The King is quick—I had hoped—longer—think of your escape—do you hear me—of your escape—your mother knows all—I can no more.—(*Dies.*)

CARLOS falls at his side. In a short time the KING enters, accompanied by ALBA, FERIA, MEDINA, PARMA, LERMA, DOMINGO, and many other Grandees. He starts back, alarmed at the sight. A solemn and universal pause ensues. The Grandees form a semicircle, and look alternately at the King and his son, who still lies without any sign of life.

King.—(*Mildly.*)—Infant, I have accorded with your petition, and am come, with the Grandees of Spain, to announce you are at liberty.—(*Carlos looks up, as if waking from a dream. His eyes are alternately fixed on the King, and on the dead body, but he returns no answer.*)—Receive your sword again. You have been treated too rashly and severely.—(*Approaches and presents his hand to raise him.*)—My son is not in his place. Rise, and come into your father’s arms.

Car.—(*Receives his embrace, without being conscious of it, but suddenly recollects himself, and gazes more intently at him.*)—Thou art a murderer. I cannot embrace thee.—(*Pushes him back, upon which a commotion arises among the Grandees.*)—Why this alarm? What have I done? Dared to touch the Lord's anointed! Fear not that I will lay my hand upon him. Look at the mark stamped on his forehead. That is God's mark.

King. Follow me, my Lords.

Car. Whither so fast? You shall not leave this place.—(*Forcibly detains him with both hands, one of which accident conducts to the sword brought by the King, and it is drawn by Carlos from the scabbard.*)

King. Your sword drawn against your father!

Gran.—(*Draw.*)---Regicide!

Car.—(*Holding the King fast by one hand, and his sword in the other.*)—Return your swords. What do you mean? Do you suppose that I am mad? If I were, you do ill to remind me that this sword can rob him of existence.—(*Makes a suspicious motion with it towards the King.*)—I beg you will stand back. In my situation I should be soothed—therefore stand back. What I have to settle with this Monarch has no connection with your oath of allegiance. Look at his bloody hands---look here, too. This is his work.

King.---(*To the Grandees, who anxiously crowd round him.*)---Stand back, all of you. Why are you alarmed? Is he not my son? I will see to what shameful excess nature---

Car. Nature! Her reign is past, and murder has succeeded her. The bonds of sweet humanity are rent asunder---rent asunder by thee. Shall I respect what is despised by thee? Look here, look here. Never before was such an act of barbarity perpetrated. Is there no superintending Providence, that Kings dare make such ravages? Since man was born of woman, one, and only one, died as un-

deservedly as this man. Dost thou know what thou hast done? No. Thou knowest not that the life which thou hast taken, was of far greater importance to mankind than thine, and that of all thy counselors. Thou art a common beggar, and hast broken into a sanctuary to steal a pearl, merely that thou mightest earn two paltry reals. Oh, it is horrible!

King.---(In mild a tone.)---If I have been too rash, does it become my son, for whom I have been so, to call me to account?

Car. How! Is it possible thou dost not suspect of what value he was to me? He was---tell him, my Roderigo---assist this Omniscient Monarch to solve the enigma. He was my *friend*.---(Universal astonishment pervades the assembly)---And would you know why he died? He died for me.

King. Ha! 'Tis as I suspected.

Car. Much loved martyr, pardon me if I recount thy virtues to a being so incapable of feeling their value. But let this great politician blush that his grey wisdom was defeated by the penetration of a youth. Yes. We were brothers---brothers by a nobler tie than consanguinity. His life was love. His love for me robbed him of life. He was *my* friend when he exalted you by his regard, when his eloquence sported with your haughty spirit. You fancied that you governed him, and were but the humble instrument of his exalted projects. My imprisonment was caused by the well-digested ideas of friendship. That he might rescue me, he wrote a letter to the Prince of Orange—Oh, heavens! That he might rescue me, he voluntarily threw himself into the arms of death. You bestowed your royal favour on him—but he died for me. You forced upon him your friendship and your confidence. Your sceptre was a toy he played with, then cast it away, and—died for me.—(The King's eyes are fixed on the earth, and all the Grandees observe

him with astonishment and fear.)—And was it possible you could give credit to so gross an artifice? How mean must his opinion of you have been when he attempted to impose upon you thus? You dared to hope for his esteem, yet failed in the first trial which he made of you. Oh, no! That man was not formed to be your friend. You could only murder him.

Alba.—(*Who has never withdrawn his eyes from the King, approaches fearfully.*)—My Liege, be not thus silent, I beseech you. Look round. Speak to your friends.

Car. He was not your enemy—nay, for some time he felt a regard for you. Perhaps he might have made you happy, for his heart was so rich that even its overflowings might have satisfied a Philip. The fragments of his mind would have deified you. By murdering him you have robbed yourself. Oh, royal fool! What would you give to restore a soul like this? Could you even recal your younger days---could you even counteract the law of mortality—could you even wear your crown till the general resurrection---you would not be able to form one idea equal to the worst which this creative brain produced. Nature never produced but one such man, and here---here---(Saviour of mankind!) here he lies weltering in his blood.---(*A solemn pause. Many of the Grandees turn away, and others hide their faces.*)—Oh, you, who are assembled here, you, whose astonishment and horror are so palpable, blame not the youth, who thus addresses his father and his King. Look here! This man died for me. Can you weep? Are you human beings? Look here, and then condemn me if you can.---(*Turns to the King with more composure.*)---You, perhaps, are waiting to know the issue of this unnatural conduct. There is my sword---you are my King again. Think you that I dread your vengeance? Murder me too,

as you have murdered the noblest of your subjects. I know that I have forfeited my life, and of what value is it to me? Here I renounce all my expectations in this world. Seek a son among strangers. Here lies my only kingdom.—(*Falls on the dead body, and attends to nothing which afterwards passes. In the mean time, a distant tumult is heard, mixed with the sound of bells. All the Grandees preserve a solemn silence. The King's eyes wander through the assembly, but are not met by those of any other person.*)

King. What means this? Every eye fixed on the ground. Will no one answer me? Every face concealed! I read your meaning in your silence. My subjects have passed sentence on me.—(*The same silence prevails through the assembly, and the tumult approaches.*)

Ler.—(*To Alba.*)—Surely there is a disturbance—

Alba.—(*Whispers.*)—I fear there is.

Other Gran.—(*Who have hastened to the windows.*)
—All the churches proclaim there is a riot.

Ler. They come.

Enter an OFFICER.

Off. Rebellion! Where is the King?—(*Espies him, and forces his way.*)—My Liege, the whole city is in arms. The soldiers have united with the people, and a multitude surrounds the palace. It is reported that Prince Carlos is in danger. The populace insist on seeing him alive, or threaten to destroy Madrid.

All the Gran. Save the King, save the King.

Alba. Conceal yourself, my Liege. You are in danger. We know not yet at whose instigation—

Ler. By the subterraneous passage to Aranjuez—

Alba.—(*To the King, who seems quite uncon-*

cerned.)—You return no answer. Rebellion, my Liege, rebellion! Can you be silent?

King.—(*Rouses himself, and turns with dignity to the assembly.*)—Am I still the King of Spain? No. These cowards weep at the raving exclamations of a boy. They only wait to receive the signal of revolt. I am betrayed.

Alba. What a dreadful suspicion!

King. There pay your homage--there, to your young sovereign. I am a weak old man—I am nothing.

Alba. Can you suspect our loyalty?—(*With a commanding look.*)—Spaniards!—(*All crowd round the King, and kneel with drawn swords. Carlos remains close to the dead body, forsaken by every one.*)

King.—(*Tears his robes away, and casts them from him.*)—Clothe your new monarch with these royal robes. Make me his footstool.—(*Falls into the arms of Alba and Lerma.*)

Ler. Help! Heavens!

Fer. Gracious God! What an alarming circumstance.

Alba. It is but a temporary indisposition. Not a word of it abroad, as you value your lives.

Ler. Rebellion in the capital! Spain without a head.

Alba.—(*Proudly raises himself.*)—Who says that?—(*Leaves the King in the arms of Lerma and Feria.*)—Convey him to bed. I will, in the mean time, restore tranquillity. [*Exit.*

(*The King is carried away, followed by all the Grandees, Carlos alone still remains close to the dead body. After a few moments Mercado appears, looks fearfully around, and surveys the Prince awhile unperceived, till at length the latter raises himself.*)

Mer. I come from her Majesty.—(*Carlos turns away and is silent.*)—My name is Mercado. I am her Majesty's surgeon, and here are my credentials.

—(*Delivers a ring to Carlos, who still returns no answer.*)—The Queen wishes much to see you to-day. Matters of importance——

Car. Nothing is now of importance to me in this world.

Mer. A commission, left by the Marquis Posa—

Car.—(*Starts up.*)—What! I go instantly.

Mer. No. Not now, Prince. You must wait till night. Every avenue is doubly guarded, and to approach the Queen's apartments unperceived is quite impossible.

Car. But——

Mer. One plan, and one only is practicable. The Queen herself devised it, and has employed me to communicate it; but it is bold, singular, and romantic——

Car. Name it.

Mer. A report has long prevailed, that in the vaulted galleries of the palace, our late Emperor's ghost wanders, in the habit of a monk. This rumour is credited among the centinels, who are struck with terror when they enter on that duty. If you be resolved to make use of this disguise, you may easily escape the notice of every one, and find your way to her Majesty's apartments, which this key opens. Your sacred habit protects you from every assault. But you must form your resolution on the spot, and your Highness will find the necessary disguise in your chamber. I must hasten with your answer to the Queen.

Car. And the hour?

Mer. Midnight.

Car.—(*After a pause.*)—Tell her she may expect me. [*Exit Mercado.*

Enter LERMA.

Ler. Save yourself, Prince. The King is en-

raged against you, and a plot is laid against your liberty, if not your life. Ask me no further questions. I have stolen away to apprise you of your danger. Fly without delay. As yet you may find opportunity to escape, but soon it will be too late.

Car. I am under the guidance of the Almighty.

Ler. The Queen has told me that you must leave Madrid immediately—even to-day, and fly to Brussels. Delay not your flight, I most earnestly beseech you. The riot favours it, and for this reason only did her Majesty excite it. Just at this moment no one will dare to use force against you. At the Carthusian convent you will find horses, and here are arms, if you should be compelled—(*Delivers a dagger and pistols.*)

Car. Count Lerma, I am your grateful debtor.

Ler. Heaven protect you on your way! Your conduct to-day has pierced my very soul. No friend was ever more attached. All patriots mourn your fate. I dare not at present say more.

Car. Count Lerma, my departed friend called you an honest man.

Ler. Once more farewell, and heaven preserve you! Happier times will come, but I shall then be no more. Accept my homage now.—(*Kneels.*)

Car.—(*Endeavours to prevent it, and is deeply affected.*)—No, Count, no—you unman me—

Ler.—(*Kisses his hand with great emotion.*)—Farewell, king of my offspring, farewell. Perhaps my children may die in your defence, though such is not my destiny. In them remember me. May you return in peace to Spain, and be rewarded for your sufferings by the power of dispensing happiness to your subjects! But accept, my Prince, the counsel of a well-wisher. Undertake no project by which the blood of your father may be shed. Philip compelled your grandfather to abdicate his crown, and that same Philip now trembles at his son. Re-

member this, good Prince, and heaven protect you!

[*Exit.*

(*Carlos is about to depart on the other side, but suddenly returns, falls on the dead body, and clasps it in his arms; then draws a ring from Posa's finger, rises, and hastily quits the place.*)

Scene, the King's Antichamber, lighted. Enter ALBA and FERIA.

Alba. The commotion is at an end. How did you leave the King?

Fer. In a most dreadful state. He has locked the door of his apartment, and will allow no one to enter. The treachery of the Marquis has at once altered his nature. We no longer know him.

Alba. I must see him. A discovery of the utmost consequence has just been made.

Fer. Another discovery?

Alba. A Carthusian friar, who had secretly stolen into the Prince's room, and with eagerness listened to a recital of Posa's death, raised suspicions in my spies, who seized and examined him. Fear forced from him a confession that he was the bearer of important papers, which the deceased had strictly charged him to deliver to the Prince.

Fer. Well!

Alba. The letters indicate that Carlos purposes to leave Madrid between midnight and morning.

Fer. What?

Alba. That a ship awaits him at Cadiz, and will bring him to Flushing; and that the Netherlands, on his arrival, will at once throw off the Spanish yoke.

Fer. Ha! What means this?

Alba. Other letters state that the Turkish fleet has already sailed from Rhodes to attack the King

of Spain in the Mediterranean, according to agreement.

Fer. Is it possible?

Alba. These very letters prove the object of Posa's extensive travels, which was no other than to arm all the northern powers in behalf of Flanders.

Fer. Amazing!

Alba. To one of the letters is attached a plan of the whole campaign, which was, at once and for ever, to make Flanders independent. Nothing is omitted. Instructions relative to the attack are accompanied by provisions against a repulse. All the resources of the country are minutely described, and all the rules laid down, which the allied powers agree to obey. The project is diabolical—but really deserves admiration.

Fer. What well-conducted treason!

Alba. Mention is also made of a private interview, which is to take place between Don Carlos and her Majesty, on the evening previous to his flight.

Fer. How! that implies it will take place to-night.

Alba. At twelve o'clock. I have already used the necessary precautions, for not a moment must be lost.

Enter DOMINGO.

Dom. Where is the Prince? Have no orders been given to secure him?

Alba. No.

Dom. And can you think his Majesty safe, while this madman is at liberty, and possessed of arms?

Alba. I must see the King.

Fer. You cannot. His door is locked.

Alba. I'll break it open then. The increasing danger justifies me. The King must be saved.—
(*As he goes to the door, it is opened, and the King*

appears. All are alarmed at his looks, which bear evident traces of his late attack. He passes the Grandees with long and solemn strides, and gazes at each of them. At length he stops, and casts his eyes on the floor.)

King. Restore this man to life. I must have him again.

Dom.—(*Apart to Alba.*)—Speak to him.

King. He had a mean opinion of me when he died. I must have him again.

Alba.—(*Approaches.*)—My Liege—

King. Who speaks?—(*Turns, and for a long time gazes at the whole assembly.*)—Have you forgotten who I am? Why are you not upon your knees? I am a King, and still demand obedience. Do you all think yourselves justified in rebellion, because one despised me?

Alba. Forget the worthless wretch, my Liege.

King. Worthless! What maniac brands him with that epithet? Worthless! By my soul it were much easier for thee to die guiltless, than to become the equal of the man whom thou callest worthless.

Alba. We beseech your Majesty for leave to speak. Another foe of more importance than the Marquis still exists in Spain.

Fer. Don Carlos—

King. He had a friend, who died for him, when he might have shared my kingdom. Oh, shame, shame, can thy ignominious blush mount even to the cheeks of Kings? Sacrificed for a boy, hated by my advisers, and banished from my confidence—banished from this circle—Yes. *These are the proper counsellors for Philip.*

Alba. Do you no longer recognize your faithful friends, my Liege?

King. How did he look down on me—with far more pride than Monarchs, when seated on the

throne, can look down upon their subjects! Heavens! What a loss is mine.

Dom.—(To Alba.) — Duke, we must no longer—

King. Oh, that he were still alive! I would give the Indies to recover him. How impotent are kings, though termed almighty! Can regal power atone for a rash act, by restoring animation? Alas! No. Who then can say that I am happy? Step forth, ye sycophants; fill my ears with flattery; exhibit all the machinery of admiration; praise me; deify me; worship me. Yes. *You* I still possess; but he who possessed my esteem, is dead. In what do the living interest me? Oh, in nothing. This age produced but one independent man—but one. He despised me, and died.

Alba. Our lives, then, are of no importance. Spaniards, let us hasten to our graves. Even when dead, this man deprives us of our Sovereign's favour.

King.—(Seats himself, and props his head upon his arm.)—I loved him with the affection of a father. He was the first whom I had ever loved, and no one knows what I intended to bestow upon him. All Europe may curse me, but I deserved gratitude from him.

Dom. By what amazing charm—

King. And for whom did he fall a voluntary victim? For that boy my son. Never! It is impossible. A Posa could not die for a stripling. Friendship alone could never fill a Posa's heart. It beat for the whole world; for this and every future generation. How could he, then, reconcile to himself such treason against human nature? Oh, it is evident. He did not sacrifice Philip for Carlos, but an old man for his friend and pupil. My setting sun had not power to nourish his designs; he turned, therefore, to that which is about to rise.

Alba. Read his motives in these letters.

King.—(*Rises.*)—He might be mistaken. As yet I am myself. Nature, accept my thanks. I feel in these limbs all the vigour of a youth.—(*With enthusiasm.*)—I will make him an object of derision. I will prove that his virtue was a chimera, and his death folly. In his fall he shall draw after him his friend, and the happiness of the age in which he lived. For a short time the world is still mine; and I will avail myself so well of this short time, that, during ten generations no one shall reap a harvest from the desolated land which I will leave.—(*Stalks to and fro with rapid strides.*)—He has sacrificed me to his idol humanity. On human nature, then, I'll wreak my vengeance,—and with his puppet I'll begin.—(*To Alba.*)—What said you of the Infant, and what do these letters contain?

Alba. These letters, my Liege, contain the Marquis Posa's legacy to your son.

King.—(*Reads the papers, while every one minutely observes him. After having perused them awhile, he lays them aside, and paces the apartment.*)—Send to the grand Inquisitor, and say I request the favour of his attendance.—(*One of the Grandees goes. Expectation appears in every countenance. Alba and Domingo exchange significant looks. The King again reads the papers.*)—This very night, then?

Tax. At two o'clock a conveyance will be ready at the Carthusian cloister.

Alba. And people, whom I employed to make observations, saw several chests carried thither, on which the royal arms were visible.

Fer. It is reported too, that large sums have been remitted by Moorish agents to Brussels, in the name of her Majesty.

King. Where was the Infant last seen?

Alba. Close to the corpse.

Dom. Which he has, doubtless, left since that time, to proceed on business more urgent.

King. Is there any light in the Queen's apartments?

Alba. No, my Liege. A profound silence prevails. She dismissed her attendants sooner than usual; and the Duchess of Arcos, who last came away, left her already asleep.

Enter an Officer of the guard. He draws Feria aside, and whispers; upon which the latter turns with surprise to Alba. The other Grandees crowd round them, and a murmur arises.

*Fer. Tax. and Dom.—(Together.)—*Very extraordinary!

King. What now?

Fer. Intelligence, my Liege, which scarcely deserves credit——

Dom. Two of the centinels, who had just left their post, declare—but it is a most ridiculous report.

King. Well?

Alba. That the ghost of our late Emperor appeared in the left wing of the palace, and passed them with solemn steps. The rumour is confirmed by all the centinels on the same station, who add, that the spectre entered the apartments of her Majesty.

Fer. They cannot all be mistaken.

King. And in what form did he appear?

Off. In the very habit which he wore before his death, when he was a monk of the order of Saint Ieronymo.

King. As a monk! The centinels knew him when he was alive, then, or how could they ascertain it was the emperor?

Off. He had a sceptre in his hand.

Dom. Report says that he has been often seen in this habit.

King. Did no one speak to him?

Off. No one dared. The soldiers said a prayer, and respectfully allowed him to proceed.

King. And the spectre was observed to enter the Queen's apartments?

Off. It certainly entered her Majesty's anti-chamber.

King.—(After a pause.)—What do you all think of this?

Alba. My Liege, we know not what to think.

King.—(After having reflected awhile.)—Let my guards be stationed at every entrance to the wing, and on their lives let them allow no one to leave it. I wish to have some conversation with this ghost.

[Exit Officer.

Enter a Page.

Page. My Liege, the Grand Inquisitor—

King.—(To the Grandees.)—Leave us.

Enter Grand Inquisitor, blind, decrepid, supported by a stick, and led by two Dominican Friars. As he passes, all the Grandees fall, and touch the edge of his garment. He bestows his blessing upon them, and they, as well as the Friars, withdraw. The King follows them through two rooms, and bolts every door.

Inq. Am I in the presence of the King?

King. You are.

Inq. I never expected to be again sent for.

King. I renew a scene of former times. Philip the Infant applies to his tutor for instruction.

Inq. My pupil, Charles, your most illustrious father, never was in want of instruction.

King. So much the happier was he. I have re-requested your attendance, because I must beg your aid.

Inq. My aid, or that of the church?

King. Your mind, and the arm of the church.—
(*After a pause.*)—Cardinal, I have committed murder, and my peace of mind——

Inq. Why did you commit murder?

King. A deception unexampled——

Inq. I know it.

King. Know it! Through whom?

Inq. For whole years I have known what you have learnt since sun-set.

King.—(*Astonished.*)—You are acquainted with this man's designs?

Inq. Every action of his life is recorded in the sacred register of our office.

King. And yet he was at liberty?

Inq. The chain by which he was held, was long, but indissoluble.

King. But he was some time out of my dominions.

Inq. Wherever he was, I was also.

King.—(*Walks to and fro displeased*)—It was known in whose hands I was, yet I received no warning.

Inq. Withdraw that observation. Why did you confide in this man before you had made enquiries respecting him? You knew he was a heretic, and neglected to deliver him into our hands. Are we treated thus? If majesty so far degrades itself, as to form connexions with our determined foes, what must become of us? Why must three hundred thousand souls be sacrificed, if one of the same sentiments is chosen to be favourite and prime minister?

King. He is also sacrificed.

Inq. No, he is murdered—basely, infamously murdered. The blood which ought to have flowed for the glory of our church was shed by an assassin. He was ours, and by what were you justified in seizing our property? He was appointed to die by our hands. Heaven had fixed upon him to be a terrible example. Long has it been my determination to

have shewn him as a public spectacle upon the wheel, but you have defeated my project. You have robbed the Holy Order, and stained your own hands with blood.

King. I was hurried away by passion. Forgive me.

Inq. Passion! Is that the answer of Philip the King, or Philip the Infant? Am I alone grown old? Passion!—(*Shakes his head.*)—Let every conscience in your realms be free, if you are such a slave.

King. I am still a novice in these things. Have patience with me.

Inq. No. I am dissatisfied with you. You have disgraced your reign. Where was that Philip, whose soul was firm and unalterable? Had he forgotten all his past actions, when the hand of a heretic was offered and accepted? Was poison no longer poison? Was the barrier between good and evil, between truth and falsehood, broken down? What is firmness, what is resolution, what is consistency, if in a single moment the maxims founded on the experience of sixty years, can vanish from the mind?

King. I looked at his countenance. Pardon my remark, but man has one avenue less when he approaches you, for you have lost your sight.

Inq. But of what use could this man be? What could he say which you did not already know? Are you so little acquainted with the language of innovation and enthusiasm? If your conviction can be conquered by words, with what effrontery dare you sign the sentence of a hundred thousand souls, who are doomed to die for nothing worse?

King. I wanted to find a man. This Domingo, whom you recommended to me—

Inq. A man! Men are to you but cyphers. Must I again instruct my hoary headed pupil in the elements of government? An earthly God should learn to feel no wants, but such as can be gratified. If you wish others to sympathise with you, is it not

evident that you acknowledge others to be your equals—and by what right, I would know, do you claim authority over your equals?

King.—(*Throws himself into a chair.*)—I am a weak man. I feel it. You require of the creature, what can only be done by the Creator.

Inq. No. Me you will not impose upon. You are discovered. You wanted to escape us. The bondage of our Holy Order was oppressive. You wanted to be independent, but we are revenged. Be thankful that the church is satisfied with chastising you as a parent. The choice which you were blindly allowed to make was your punishment. You have gained instruction by the issue, and now we again receive you. Had you not sent for me to-day, by the Almighty, I would have sent for you to-morrow.

King. Moderate your warmth, priest. I shall not tamely submit to such language.

Inq. Why have you cited the ghost of Samuel to appear? I have reared two kings for Spain, and hoped my labour was at an end. To have lived in vain is a painful sensation at ninety years of age. I crave your pardon—and now, why did you send for me? My time is precious, and I do not wish to repeat my visit.

King. Once more let me employ you—and only once. Peace is resolved between us, and the past is forgotten. We are friends.

Inq.—(*Presents his hand.*)—If Philip be submissive.

King. My son is guilty of high treason.

Inq. What mean you to do?

King. Every thing or nothing.

Inq. What mean you by every thing?

King. He must escape from Spain—or die.

Inq.—(*Listening with eagerness.*)—Proceed.

King. Can you mention any thing, which will diminish the horror of decreeing a son's death?

Inq. To satisfy eternal justice the Son of God died on the cross.

King. You will propagate this opinion throughout Europe.

Inq. Throughout Christendom.

King. Nature revolts at the idea. Can you silence her, too?

Inq. Faith listens not to nature.

King. To you I transfer my office. May I be entirely neutral?

Inq. Deliver him to me.

King. He is my only son. For whom have I obtained and preserved my extensive realms?

Inq.—(*With fire.*)—For destruction rather than freedom.

King. We are of the same opinion. Come.

Inq. Whither?

King. To receive the victim from my hand.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene the Queen's Apartment. Enter CARLOS in the habit of a monk, with a drawn sword under his arm, and a mask on his face. It is quite dark. He takes off his mask, and approaches a door, which is opened. The Queen appears with a taper, which she places on a marble slab.

Car.—(*Kneels.*)—Elizabeth!

Queen. Alas! Is it thus we meet again?—(*Endeavours to compose herself.*)—Rise. Let us not distress each other, Carlos. He who died for his friend wishes not that we should shed useless tears. Let them be reserved for occasions less important. I osa bought your life with his. You feel the value of this sacrifice. Carlos, I myself answered for you, and the pledge I gave made him die more willingly. You will not prove my assertion false.

Car.—(*With enthusiastic ardour.*)—I will erect such a monument to his memory as no King was ever honoured with. A paradise shall flourish over his ashes.

Queen. This is as I wished. This was the great design he formed when he devoted himself to death. He fixed on me to be the executrix of his last will, and I charge you, Carlos, to bear in mind the promise you have made.—(*A pause.*)—He bequeathed to me another legacy—I promised—and why should I conceal the truth; he bequeathed to me his friend—his Carlos. I despise all false appearances, and will no longer tremble at a mortal's frown. You perceive, Carlos, that I am not afraid of admitting you at this hour. I will be bold as becomes a friend, and openly declare my sentiments. Posa called our attachment virtuous. I believe him, and will no longer—

Car. Mother, end not what you have begun. Let no falsehood pollute those lips. You have known the godlike man—he never could wish you should degrade yourself. Let us not deceive each other. I have long been haunted by an oppressive dream, but I am now awake. Forget all that has happened. Take back your letters, and destroy my own. Fear no return of my wild paroxysms—they are past. My being is refined by a much purer flame. My passion now dwells in the tomb of the dead. This bosom no longer harbours one mortal wish.—(*After a pause.*) Give me your hand. I came to take leave of you.

Queen.—(*Turns away, and says, in a voice which proves her contending sensations.*)—Carlos—

Car. Be not surprised. This is not a sacrifice, for it has not cost me a pang. I at length perceive that there is something more worthy of ambition than to possess Elizabeth. A few hours have roused my latent faculties; have ripened my ideas. In this world I have nothing to do but to remember the in-

structions of my friend.—(*Approaches the Queen, who hides her face.*)—I go. Have you nothing to say, mother!

Queen. Pay no regard to my tears, Carlos—I cannot suppress them—but believe me, I admire your resolution.

Car. You alone were acquainted with our friendship, and this will for ever make you the most dear to me of any one on earth. I am as unable to grant you my friendship as I was yesterday to bestow my affections on any other woman. Sacred to me shall be the royal widow, should providence conduct me to the throne.

The King, Grand Inquisitor, and Grandees appear in the back ground unperceived.

I now leave Spain, and shall not see my father again in this world. I no longer respect or love him. The natural feelings of a son are stifled in my bosom. Be you again a wife to him. He has lost a son. Return to your duties. I hasten to rescue an oppressed and injured nation from the hands of tyranny. Madrid shall see me again as a king, or shall never see me. And now a long farewell, dear mother. Kiss your son.

Queen. Oh, Carlos! I cannot, dare not endeavour to acquire these great sensations, but I can comprehend them, and admire their owner.

Car. Am I not firm, Elizabeth? I hold you in my arms, and maintain my resolution. Yesterday no power on earth could have torn me from your embrace. Farewell.—(*Leaves her.*)—It is accomplished. Now, I defy fate. I held her in my arms and maintained my resolution.—Ha! What was that?

Queen. What mean you?

Car. Did you not hear some one breathe behind us?—Hark!—(*A clock strikes.*)

Queen. I hear nothing but the dreadful clock, which warns you to depart.

Car. Farewell, then. From Ghent you will receive my first letter. After that time, my conduct towards King Philip shall be public. You need not dread the discovery. Farewell. This shall be my last deception.--(*Is about to take his mask.*)

King.--(*Steps between them.*)--It is thy last.--(*Queen falls to the earth.*)

Car.--(*Hastens to her and supports her.*)--Is she dead? Oh, heaven and earth!

King.--(*With perfect apathy to the Inquisitor.*)--Cardinal, I have done my duty. Now do yours.

[*Exit.*

THE END.

COUNT BENYOWSKY;
OR, THE
CONSPIRACY OF KAMTSCHATKA.

A DRAMA,
IN FIVE ACTS.

FROM
KOTZEBUE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

GOVERNOR of *Kamtschatka*.
IWAN FEDROWITSCH, *Captain of Cossacks*.
COUNT BENYOWSKY .. }
CRUSTIEW } *Exiles.*
STEPANOFF }
KUDRIN }
BATURIN }
WASILI }
TSCHULOSNIKOFF, *Master of a vessel*.
GRIGORI, *his Nephew*.
KULOSSOW, *a Russian Lieutenant*.
KASARINOFF, *a Merchant*.
CORPORAL.

WOMEN.

ATHANASIA, *the Governor's daughter*.
THEODORA, *her Attendant*.
Exiles, Soldiers, Servants, Children.

COUNT BENYOWSKY ;
OR, THE
CONSPIRACY OF KAMTSCHATKA.

ACT THE FIRST.

Scene, one of the GOVERNOR'S Apartments in the Citadel of BOLCHERESK. The GOVERNOR and IWAN sit on one side with a Chess-board before them, paying great attention to the Game. On the other side sits ATHANASIA with a Book in her Hand, and near her THEODORA working Embroidery.

Iwan. CHECK to the king!

Gov. Indeed! And by a pawn, too? That's provoking enough.

Iwan. Yes, yes, these pawns, these common fellows, he who can manage them——

Gov. Is a match for a king? True.

Athan.—(*Throwing the book aside.*)—Oh!

Theo. You sigh!

Athan. Why was I born exactly at this place?

Theo. I care little where I was born, if I but live.

Athan. And do you live?

Theo. What a droll question! I think I prove that at my meals.

Athan. Yes, every one can eat.

Theo. Except the dead. A creature that eats, is a living creature.

Athan. You are satisfied with the torpid life of an oyster.

Theo. Oh, if wishes were but magic wands!

Athan. What are you doing?

Theo. I am embroidering flowers.

Athan. Where do these flowers grow? Not here. What a delightful country is Italy! I have just been reading a description of it. There orange groves flourish through the country; here we are obliged to work them in tapestry. There nature is a healthy youth; here an infirm old man. The inhabitants of that happy land may say they live.

Theo. I grant they have what we wish for: but, in return, they want what we possess. Our soil produces other plants and other pleasures.

Gov. Zounds! my knight is lost.

Iwan. And my queen saved.

Athan. Pleasures, say you? Every house is a prison. Wrapt in warm furs up to the very chin, we shrink from the fresh air, and hungry dogs drag our sledges through eternal snow. No flower unfolds itself in our cold climate, and no fruit ripens. Is such your idea of enjoyment?

Theo. What care I for flowers and fruit, as long as I have men?

Athan. Men! Alas! What kind of men? Do they deserve the name of human beings? "To-morrow," say they, "is a holiday. To-morrow we will be merry." And how do they show their mirth? The Russian intoxicates himself with brandy; the Kamtschadale with the juice of poisonous plants. Then they stagger through the streets, and the very dogs they meet turn away. This is their mirth; this is their enjoyment of life.

Theo. But don't we sometimes seat ourselves in a circle, and sing a cheerful air to the Balalaika? Is there no pleasure in that?

Iwan. Check to the queen!

Gov. I don't like the situation of my game.

Athan.—(*Fixing her eyes on the earth.*)—No, my friend. To my heart it affords no pleasure. Were my good mother still alive——

Theo. Have you any secret lodged in your bosom?

Athan. Oh, no. We eat, drink, and sleep. Who makes any secret of these things? Of any other, no one is in want here.

Theo. So much the better for us.

Athan. Genius and feeling do not ripen in this freezing climate; nay, scarcely bud. To estimate the value of a sable's skin, to calculate the profits of a voyage from this country to the Aleutian and Curilian Islands, is all the knowledge our rude countrymen possess. A successful bargain is their only pleasure. Other nations enjoy the delights of *love* and *wine*, but these barbarians seek enjoyment in *sensuality* and *brandy*. Even the sweet sensation of humanity is unknown to them, because it is warm to the *heart*, not to the *palate*. Wherever I direct my eyes or steps, I encounter miserable exiles. Sorrow appears in every eye, and penury on every cheek. On every side I see a muster-roll of human distress. No sunbeams melt our snow; it is consumed by tears for ever dropping on it.

Theo. This discontent arises from your never-ceasing studies. Your father should order all the books to be thrown into the great stove which warms the guard-room.

Athan. He may burn the books, but their contents are written in my heart.

Theo. Perhaps I am wrong, your discontent may arise from another cause. You have reached the age at which a female suspects every thing, and comprehends nothing. When in possession of one thing, you want every thing; and if every thing were to be granted, you would still want something.

To a heart which feels a void, the world is a desert.
To a contented heart, Kamtschatka is a paradise.

Athan. You are right, Theodora. I am a solitary being in the world: and when my father too shall leave me—he is old and infirm—when he too shall forsake me—alas! what will become of me?

Iwan.—(*Takes a bishop.*)—This bishop I have long had a design upon.

Gov. He guarded my King.

Iwan. Now for it!

Gov. I see no means of escaping.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Lieutenant Kulossow is arrived with several exiles, and waits your excellency's pleasure in the antichamber.

Gov. Conduct him and the exiles hither.

[*Exit Servant.*

Athan. Another group of wretched beings. Come, Theodora. I do not like to see them. [*Going.*

Enter KULOSSOW, preceding BENYOWSKY, and a number of Exiles. All stand at the entrance of the apartment.

Athan.—(*Starts, attempts to leave the room, but turns again, gazes at Benyowsky, becomes embarrassed, and seats herself again.*)—Theodora—let us go.

Theo. I am ready.

Athan.—(*Looking with reserve at Benyowsky.*)—Do you see that man?

Theo. I see many men.

Athan. But you surely can distinguish him I mean. There is a boldness in his eye, which seems to bear him up against his wretched fate.

Theo. I see a man whose sallow cheeks betray sickness and want.

Athan. True, but health of soul beams from his eyes. See, with what boldness he looks round, while his companions fix their eyes upon the earth. He seems to say, I am every where free. A noble spirit considers chains and the ribband of an order in the same light. His look makes me tremble.

Theo. Shall we go?

Athan. Why should we go? To make ourselves familiar with misfortune, is to provide a treasure for futurity.

Theo. Well! we will stay then.

[*Begins to work again.*]

—(*Benyowsky approaches, stops behind the Governor's chair, and observes the game.*)

Athan. See! He is as much at ease as if he were in his own house.

Theo.—(*Looking up.*)—It will be well for him, if your father should put so favourable a construction on his boldness as you do.

Athan. That he will. A lofty spirit in adversity must gain the heart of every one.

Gov.—(*Rising.*)—I have lost the game.

Iwan. Yes—you have.

Ben. Not exactly.

Gov.—(*Looks up with astonishment, surveys him keenly, and measures him from head to foot.*)—Who are you?

Ben. A soldier. I have been a general—I am now a slave.

Gov. Do you understand chess?

Ben. A little.

Gov. Do you think it possible that my game can be recovered?

Ben. Perhaps it may.

Gov. Try then.—(To Iwan.)—With your permission.

Iwan. By all means, if you wish it; but there is no chance of escape. In four moves I shall check-mate you. [Benyowsky and Iwan begin to play.

Gov.—(To Kulossow.)—Your report.

Kul. Here it is.

Gov.—(After having hastily perused it, apart to the officer.)—Do you know any thing respecting this man?

Kul. He was the general of the Polish confederates, and was made a prisoner, after being severely wounded.

Gov. What is his name?

Kul. Count Benyowsky.

Ben. Check to the king and queen!

Iwan. Damnation!

Gov.—(To Kulossow.)—Have you had a dangerous voyage?

Kul. Extremely dangerous. On our passage from Ochozk hither, we were overtaken by a dreadful storm. Our mainmast was carried away by the board, and shattered the captain's arm. His great pain made him incapable of attending to the vessel, and Count Benyowsky undertook to supply his place. Most skilfully he did it. To his dexterity and resolution we are obliged for our escape.

Ben. Check-mate!

Iwan.—(Overturms the board peevishly.)—You deal with the devil!

Ben.—(Smiling.)—Success, united with a little prudence, has before been dignified with that accusation.

Iwan. I am proverbially prudent. When I use the term *prudent*, I mean to imply, Iwan Fedrowitsch, the captain of the Cossacks, the second person in this province. Here is the money I have lost.

[Throws several bank-notes upon the table.

Gov. It seems, Count, you are as skilful a chess-player as a mariner. You have lately saved a half-lost vessel, and now a half-lost game. The latter only concerns myself. For the former I return you thanks in the name of the Empress.

Ben.—(*Bowing with great dignity.*)—Those whom I rescued from destruction have already thanked me.

Gov. Let his chains be taken off.—(*He is obeyed.*)—Your conduct has in one minute procured you what you could not otherwise have acquired for many years—my respect. You might have made yourself master of the vessel during the storm. You might have fled to some remote part of the world.

Ben. I might have done more: I had it in my power to let the vessel sink. But you perceive I had the courage to preserve my life.

Athan. Oh, Theodora! What a man!

Gov. In whatever respect my duty to my sovereign will allow me to shew you marks of my esteem, and to alleviate the severity of your fate, I will do it most readily.

Ben. I envy you, Sir, the pleasing prerogative of exercising generosity towards the wretched, and I feel a regard for you, because you know how to use it.

Gov. At present my duty commands me to prescribe your future mode of life.

Ben. The man who knew how to command, will know how to obey.

Gov. Obedience and peaceable demeanour are first required of you.

Ben. Those are easy to a slave.

Gov. You are at liberty, and will be supplied with provisions for three days; after which you must provide for your own support. Each exile will receive a gun, a lance, powder and ball. The chace will be, in future, your sole employment.

Ben.—(*With ardour and delight.*)—The chace

and arms! Transporting occupation! It will remind me of war and liberty.

Gov. You must annually deliver to me, as a tribute to the crown, the skins of six sables, fifty rabbits, two foxes, and two ermines. Not far from the town a place will be allotted to you, where you must build houses for yourselves, and each will be supplied with furniture from the magazine.

Ben. Your excellency is most kind. While you assign to us our labour, you console us.

Gov. I shall enter into an alliance with time and custom, to smooth the rugged path on which it is your destiny to wander. Meanwhile, farewell!

Ben. Your Empress is a great woman. She has placed a humane governor where humanity was most necessary. I go to shew my companions, by my example, how they should endure misfortune.

[*Exit with the Exiles.*

Gov.—(*Looking after him.*)—That is a great man.

Iwan. A great chess-player, you mean.

Athan. What a noble youth!

Iwan. How rapidly he played! Move upon move!

Gov. With what dignity he bears misfortune!

Iwan. My game was so favourable.

Athan. What noble pride, yet what easy manners!

Iwan. Check to the king and queen! I shall never forget that while I live.

Gov. Willingly will I alleviate his fate, whenever I can and dare.

Athan. Suppose, my dear father, you were not to insist upon his attention to the chace during these cold days, and were instead of it——

Gov. Well! What instead of it?

Athan. I have long felt a wish to be instructed in French and music. You, too, have sometimes said you wished it—Perhaps——

Gov. Perhaps what?

Athan. The Count could instruct me.

Gov. If he understands them.

Athan.—(With eagerness.)—Oh! I am sure he does.

Theo.—(Aside.)—Ay, ay, no doubt.

Gov. We will see. Come, friend, breakfast is ready. [Exit.

Iwan.—(As he follows the Governor.)—Check to the king and queen! It is enough to make a man distracted. [Exit.

Theo.—(Putting her embroidery into a work-bag.)—Shall we go to breakfast?

Athan.—(Lost in meditation, and scarcely hearing Theodora's question.)—Directly.

Theo.—(After a pause.)—Your father will expect you to pour out the tea.

Athan. Do you think so?

Theo.—(After another pause.)—It will be necessary, too, to fetch some sugar from the cupboard.

Athan.—(Starting, as if from a dream.)—What say you? Yes—No—You are wrong.

Theo.—(Laughing.)—In what respect?

Athan. In what respect!—(Sinks again into a reverie.)—Oh!

Theo. I am hungry.

Athan. Hungry! How can you be hungry now?

Theo.—(Laughing.)—Because I have had nothing to eat to-day.—(Athanasia makes no reply, but rivets her eyes upon the floor, while her features betray what is passing in her mind.)—Athanasia!—(Aside.)—How can I dispel these whims?

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. His Excellency requests that Miss Athanasia—

Athan.—(Awaking.)—Oh! The French master! I'll come directly. [Exit.

Theo. The French master! Ha! Ha! I comprehend all this. [Exit.

Scene changes to the Village where the Exiles dwell.

Enter CRUSTIEW from his hut.

Crus. Hail to the morning sun! It is a clear serene winter's day, but—hoo—it is cold. The snow glitters and crackles. The smoke spires into the air. Small icicles hang to my fur collar, wherever I have chanced to breathe. Oh, my heart, why dost thou alone for ever burn and glow? Old block-head that I am! My hair is white as the rime which covers these larches, and yet beneath the snow rages a flame like the volcano Kalitowa. Oh, liberty, liberty, thou art, like bread, the requisite of every rank and age. Bread nourishes the body—liberty the soul. Alas! for a single indiscretion have I been an exile three-and-twenty years. Oh, my wife, my child! Are you alive? Are you in health? Hast thou too already wrinkles on thy forehead, dear Elizabeth? Has sorrow for the loss of thy affectionate husband bleached thy cheek?—*(With romantic convulsive action.)*—See! she puts forth her hand to support her infirm old Crustiew. Give, give me thy hand, Elizabeth. What suffering can be so severe on earth as not to be alleviated by a loving wife? I see thee too, my dear Alexander. How tall thou art grown! Thou wert lying in the cradle when I imprinted my last kiss upon thy toothless mouth, and marked a cross upon thy breast with my chains. There you are sitting together, and Alexander says, “Mother, tell me how my father looked”—and his mother drops a tear upon her needle-work—a tear, in which my image floats. With sorrow she celebrates our wedding-day. She invites remembrance as a guest; and grief too appears, though uninvited.—*(Bursting into flood of tears.)*—Oh, God, allow me for one of my

few remaining moments, allow me to clasp her in my arms, that I may feel there is a being in the world that loves me!

Enter STEPANOFF with a gun in his hand, and a fox as well as a couple of rabbits on his back.

Step. Good day to you, old Crustiew! To-day the sun itself will congeal to a sheet of ice. There he stands in the firmament, as if he had been painted and placed there by some miserable dauber, so totally devoid is he of power and warmth.

Crus. Yet you went out early.

Step. I did, and have killed what you see—a fox and a couple of rabbits. In another hour they would have been frozen to death. Feel! They are as hard and stiff as bones. When I shot them, they scarcely bled. A little red ice dropped from the wound.

Crus. Have you been to town?

Siep. I was there last night. A new party of exiles is just arrived.

Crus.—(*Eagerly.*)—Indeed! Shame on me! I have caught myself in the act of giving way to a hateful sensation.

Step. What! One of your usual romantic notions?

Crus. Romantic it is not. Ought I to wish that others may be wretched, because I am so?

Step. Why not? They are companions in misery. There is some little consolation in hearing them complain of hardship, which custom has made tolerable to us.

Crus. Are there many of them?

Step. About twenty. I understand there is a noble Pole among them, a valiant, enterprising, fearless soldier. That is my man.

Crus. What are you brooding upon?

Step. Upon eggs which you had no concern in laying; upon projects beyond your courage or conception. What kind of life do we lead? Heaven and hell! If you ask me whether I had rather be the hunter, or the hunted fox, I know not how to answer you. I envy the fox, because he steals, and enjoys his booty—because, even in the chace, he listens, as he flies, with anxious hope; whereas no interchange of sensation tells me I am alive.

Crus. Courage without power is like a child who acts the soldier.

Step. Courage without power is a nonentity. Courage is never without power. In short, I will no longer submit to such a life of misery.

Crus. None of us would submit to it, were we not under control.

Step. Make me your leader, and I will appoint the stranger second in command. In a few days we shall be free.

Crus.—(*Shaking his head.*)—You, Stepanoff! Unite your valour with another's wisdom and experience; then we may perhaps succeed.

Step. How sagacious! Old people must ever be trying to convince us, that the world would perish, if not supported by their sage advice. An old man always wants a clear light, and then walks cautiously and slowly, while the youth needs but a glimpse—he sees—he snatches.

Crus. How long has this wish inhabited your mind? But a few months ago you laughed when others murmured.

Step. And now I am enraged that others *only* murmur.

Crus. Whence this sudden alteration?

Step. Hear me, old man, and comprehend me, if you can. To warm myself at an oven, or in the sun, to be drawn by horses or by dogs, to eat sterlet

or dried fish, was hitherto a matter of indifference to me, and will remain so, if the girl I love will partake of them.

Crus. The girl you love!

Step. Why, yes. Is it so wonderful that I should be in love?

Crus. Are you beloved in return?

Step. Who would ask such a question? When you purchase a woman's heart, you must not spend much time in cheapening it. Pretend you do not care much for the article, and you will obtain it at a low rate.

Crus. Who is the girl whom you admire?

Step. Athanasia.

Crus. The Governor's daughter!

Step. Yes. Why do you start?

Crus. Are you mad?

Step. Ha! Ha! Ha! Is the Governor's daughter less a woman than the daughters of other people?

Crus. You are right. I ought to have laughed instead of starting. A prisoner, an exile, who is banished from society, who cannot even call the knife his own which he carries in his pocket, who only enters the castle in which Athanasia lives, when he is obliged to work there as a slave—

Step. This it is which drives me to desperation. When the lovely creature passes me, nay, even touches me with her silken gown, she scarcely ever sees me; and when perchance she does, there is nothing but compassion in her looks. Not even on Easter Sunday, when every Russian may approach and kiss his neighbour, while he says, "Christ is risen from the dead," not even then dare I approach her. But this shall not long continue. What I am able to do I will dare to do.

Crus. Stepanoff, you are drunk earlier than usual to day.

Step. Ha! Ha! Ha! Old age calls manly spirit

drunkenness! Common souls think every great project madness; but when it has succeeded, they crown the achiever with the title of hero.

Enter WASILI, hastily.

Wasili. Some new exiles are arrived, and already approach our village.

Step. Thanks to St. George, we shall learn again, at last, how the world goes on—whether men be still fools, and what kind of folly is the present fashion.

Crus. Go, Wasili, and see that a new cask is tapped. Place the bottles and glasses, the caviare and cedar-nuts, upon the table. They are perhaps hungry. Let us try to beguile them of their sorrow for the first quarter of an hour. [*Exit Wasili.*

Step. That Wasili is an excellent fellow. There are employments in the world which mould a man into a certain form for the term of his whole life. He is like a piece of paper, which, after having been once folded, never loses its marks. Is it not evident, at first sight, that this man has been in service at court? He announces those who arrive, he conducts those who depart, he gathers intelligence wherever he can, he understands how to set out a table, he is as idle as a satiated lap-dog, and his head is like a lady's work-basket.

Crus. Yet in one thing he resembles you. His tongue is sharp.

Step. It is only a cat's tongue. It can lick the skin off, but not wound.

Crus. Here come the strangers.

Enter BENYOWSKY and the EXILES.

(Curiosity and joy immediately attract the older inhabitants of the village from their huts, who assemble round the new Exiles.)

Welcome among us, ye companions in misery.

Step. Our welcome is like the salutation of hell, when the devil arrives with a fresh stock of souls.

Ben. Participated sufferings lose half their bitterness. I greet you all as my brethren.

Crus. Stranger, give me thy hand.—(*He shakes it.*)—I observe upon this wrist the marks of recent chains. My wrist was once as red as this; but three-and-twenty years erase the impressions both of good and evil.

Ben. How! Have you dwelt on this coast for three-and-twenty years! and are you still alive?

Crus. I am, and I still hope.

Ben. Then is hope the only treasure which increases with misfortune?

Crus. It is a last resource, which we are willing to share with any one, though never entirely to consume.

Step. What is hope without courage? A broken-winded courser.

Ben. Misfortune excites courage.

Step. Not always. Despair alone excites it—Misfortune droops, and loses the faculties of exertion.

Crus. Let us have no more of this ill-timed prattle! You are in want of refreshment. We have prepared a breakfast; and though we treat you with sorry fare, we do it with willing hearts.

Ben. Tell me—where shall we dwell? Where shall we build our huts?

Crus. The inclemency of the season will not allow you to build as yet. Our huts are open to you; and we will lodge you as well as we are able till the approach of spring. Go, Wasili; fetch the tickets on which our names are written, that I may shake them in my cap, and allot to each stranger his companion.

[*Exit Wasili.*]

Ben.—(*Apart to Crustiew.*)—Good old man, let me dwell with you.

Crus.—(*The same.*)—You shall.—(*Aloud.*)—Now tell me friends. Is there no one among you who knows the forsaken wife of Crustiew? She lives, most probably, in Novogorod.—(*Looking anxiously around.*)—Is there no one?

An Exile.—(*Comes forward.*)—I know her.

Crus.—(*Clasping him with great emotion in his arms.*)—Oh, my friend, is she alive?

Exile. She is.

Crus. In what way does she live?

Exile. In quiet retirement. I saw her lately at the holy-water feast.

Crus. And my son Alexander?

Exile. He is a soldier, and has gained renown.

Crus. Oh, Almighty God! Perhaps for the first time the thanksgiving of a happy man ascends to thee from Kamtschatka's dreary coast! My friend, may you, for these happy tidings, enjoy what none but Providence can grant—consolation and happiness in slavery.

Re-enter WASILI.

Wasili. Here are the tickets.

Crus.—(*Shakes them in his cap, and selects one unobserved, which he secretly puts into Benyowsky's hand.*)—Pretend to have taken this.—(*Aloud.*)—Now, let each stranger draw the name of his future companion.

Step. This is a lottery which contains but very few prizes. The huts are filthy nests, and the inhabitants croaking ravens.

Ben.—(*Appears to draw a ticket from the cap, which he opens and reads.*)—Crustiew!

Crus. You are welcome. We will share our happy recollections, and interchange wishes and hopes.

Ben. I dare engage that you will not lose by the interchange.

First Exile.—(*Draws a ticket and reads it.*)—Stepanoff.

Step. If you can laugh when you have the cholic, I bid you welcome.

Second Exile.—(*Draws.*)—Wasili.

Step. He will tell you how they used to dance in the reign of the Empress Elizabeth.

Third Exile.—(*Draws.*)—Alexis.

Step. He was a priest, and will teach you how to pray.

Fourth Exile.—(*Draws.*)—Baturin.

Step. Oh, that fellow can describe to you the dwarf's wedding in the reign of Peter the First.

Fifth Exile.—(*Draws.*)—Heraklius Zadtkoy.

Step. That man will drink you under the table, if you have swallowed nothing but proof-spirit all your life.

Sixth Exile.—(*Draws.*)—Biatzinin.

Step. He teaches hawks to pounce upon their prey, and catches hares with springes.

Seventh Exile.—(*Draws.*)—Lobstchoff.

Step. He can count how many hairs grow on a sable's back, and how many eggs an ant lays.

Crus. All is now properly arranged. Let us, therefore, go to breakfast; that over the full goblet our young friendship may have a rapid growth.

Ben. The full goblet shall make it grow, and its firmness will be established by our common misery.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

Scene, a wretched apartment in CRUSTIEW'S Hut. BENYOWSKY is sitting at a window with his head supported on his hand.

Ben. At length the morning dawns. At length the sun casts a glance upon Kamtschatka; a glance, cold and comfortless as my wretched fate. Where are you, ye gay visions of my early youth? I am forsaken—left to solitary, gloomy meditation. No voice whispers at the side of my couch, “Hist! He sleeps.” No tears will ever drop upon my grave, declaring, “Alas! He is dead.” No one hates me—no one loves me—and am I still alive? A knife and a lance, a sword and a gun, have been given to me—and am I still alive? Quick let me break these bonds, and burst from my confinement! My soul is free, and does not own the power of chains. Alas! I am restrained by *Hope*, that daughter of the jailor, who plays the wanton with every prisoner. The dagger drops from my hand, and I sink into her arms.—*(A pause.)*—Fool that I am! I am a child in leading strings. Hope is but a doll, with which children of a larger growth play till they reach the grave, that they may not lament their misfortunes. Begone! Me thou shalt not deceive. I am a man. To what power will my spirit stoop? Who is lord over my existence but the Almighty—and myself?—*(He espies a knife upon the table. With a look of horror and desperation he rivets his eye upon it. Suddenly he stretches forth his hand, and seizes it. Irresolutely he raises his arm to stab himself. he gazes*

alternately at the knife, and towards heaven. His hand slowly sinks upon his knee. He throws his other arm upon the back of the chair, and rests his head upon it, when a miniature set in diamonds drops from his hair. He starts up alarmed, snatches it, and gazes intently at it. By degrees sorrow glistens in his eyes, and he exclaims—Emilia!—My wife!—*(He throws the knife away.)*—Thee have I preserved. Of thee my rapacious foes have not deprived me. In my hair I hid thee—and in my heart. Emilia, the globe lies between us, but God and love know neither space nor time. I will live for thee. For thee I will fight, and defy a host of combatants. This picture shall be my shield, my talisman. When real love inhabits a heart, fear is a stranger, and guilt a cast-off servant. Oh, gentle Hope! return, and associate with thy sister Love. Never part again, sweet enchanting pair. Emilia loves me—my wife loves me. It matters not whether a wall or a quarter of the world divides us. At this very hour she is perhaps praying for my deliverance, while a suckling hangs upon her arm, and lisps the name of father. Live, Benyowsky, live! Thy life belongs to her and him.

Enter CRUSTIEW.

(Benyowsky hastily conceals the picture.)

Crus. Good morning, friend, and brother.—*(They shake hands.)*—I ask not how you have slept, for we were only separated by a slight partition. I heard you pacing to and fro, throughout the night, and as I lay I groaned in unison with you.

Ben. Forgive me, good old man, if I disturbed you. Time and custom will soon teach me how to bear the want of rest myself, without infringing upon yours.

Crus. Sleep is not always rest, and hapless is the wretch whose only rest is sleep. You yesterday mentioned a few words respecting the possibility of escape. You seemed inspired by the hope of a happier futurity. My heart caught the spark, and burst into a flame.

Ben. It is a flame without fuel.

Crus. How! Think you it will be soon extinguished?—(*With solemnity, and in a lower tone.*)—No. For three-and-twenty years, the project has been ripening in my mind. It has ripened slowly, like gold in the bosom of the mountains. Much have I prepared. Much is done, much still remains to be done. Twenty men have sworn fidelity to me. They are well prepared, for they are armed with courage, understanding, experience, and determination. In one respect, and in one only, are we wanting. In none have I found the real spirit of a leader. One man is tickled by ambition. Another, though in slavery, boasts of his birth and rank. A third has no idea of a firm, well-regulated association. A fourth would to-morrow execute the project, and on the succeeding day consider of the means. In short, every one is tolerably adapted for the situation he at present holds, but in no one can I discover the stamp of a truly great spirit. We have abundance of wheels, but no mainspring.

Ben. You yourself——

Crus. I know myself. The boy may become an enterprising youth, but the greybeard can never act with the energy of man. Let me have time to survey a thing on every side, and my courage often equals my experience. But when sudden dangers surround me, like repeated flashes of lightning, when years depend upon a minute—when I must instantly determine thus or thus—then am I overpowered, irresolute, powerless.

Ben. And were you to find the man whom your

imagination has depicted, what reliance can he place upon a horde of criminals? They are rash, but not courageous; daring, but not magnanimous. Their resolution is intoxication, and at the decisive moment its effects would fall upon their nerves. Who would be surety for the fidelity of men like these?

Crus. I—and their misery. Shall I describe to you the latter? I will: for, unless you release them from it, your destination is the same.—(*With increasing energy.*)—Believe me, all who dwell here are not criminals. One hasty expression has doomed many a wretch to perish here. Miserable is the criminal—but far more miserable is he whom indiscretion only has loaded with the chains of slavery. Bowed to the earth by agony and penitence, he lands on these inhospitable shores, and penury steps forth to welcome him. Countenances, on which justice, and often nature, has stamped the mark of guilt, scowl at his approach. In vain does he seek a friend. In vain does he attempt to recall the pleasing visions of his former days: or, if he can recall them, what do they avail? To him who hopes, they are a cordial: to him who dares not hope, they are a torture. Industry and perseverance but prolong his misery. He is not allowed to possess any property, and every villain may plunder him with impunity. He must patiently endure oppression; for if his spirit, roused by injurious treatment, dare assert the rights of nature, the laws of the great Peter decree that he shall be the prey of dogs. Banned from the reputable part of society, reduced to every slavish and disgusting employment, fed on dried fish, and almost daily doomed to feel the scourge—Oh, what a wretched, wretched picture! Health affords him no delight. When sickness assails him, he is devoid of every consolation: when death overtakes him, he is forsaken by the world, ere he has left the world. In a dreary desert his last

groan dies away, and the dews of death remain upon his claycold brow, unwiped by any friend. Days and weeks creep slowly after each other, and the victims of despair perish imperceptibly. Putrefaction alone enforces from tyranny the last favour of being buried in the snow.

Ben. Hold! Thou wouldst murder me by slow poison. Lend me a dagger.

Crus. Many a victim of despair has here plunged the dagger into his own heart—and his executioners have laughed. No one has yet indulged the hope of tasting liberty, without having recourse to the compassion of death or princely power. No one has yet anticipated freedom by means of united prudence, courage and determination. For thee was reserved this glorious anticipation—this glorious achievement—for thee, Count Benyowsky—Hungarian magnet—husband—father—hero!

Ben.—(*With ardour.*)—I am ready. Speak! What can I do? What dost thou wish that I should do?

Crus. Age has but words—manhood is rich in action.

Ben. Thou hast poured oil enough into my glowing breast. I pant for action. What shall, what can I do?

Crus. Release thyself and us.

Ben. Here is my arm. Lend me thy head.

Crus. Nature has formed thine own to govern. Thou hast no need of my wisdom; but my caution shall ever wait at thy side.

Ben. Yet how is this? As yet I am in the dark. The power of man is united with all-powerful nature in opposition to us. On one side desert wastes and boundless fields of snow; on the other, unknown seas divide us from the habitable world. Without a ship, without a pilot, without arms, without provisions, how long can we struggle? If we are free to-day, to-morrow we must die.

Crus. Die and be free! Is not that far preferable to the description I have given of our present situation? The game we play at has every advantage. Much may be gained—life only can be lost.

Ben. Thou art right, old man. Let me examine the interior of thy daring project.—(*Crustiew opens a small closet, takes out a book, and presents it to Benyowsky who opens it and reads.*)—“Anson’s voyage round the world.” In what respect will this assist us?

Crus. The name of Anson is the name of a friend. On my arrival the barbarians ransacked all my pockets. My purse, which contained but little, became their booty, as well as several other trifles. I trembled; they laughed at me with exclamations of derision. The blockheads knew not that I trembled for the safety of my books. Three friends have, with fraternal affection, accompanied, and, in some measure, consoled me during my long captivity. These three are *Anson*, *Plato*, and *Plutarch*. To the second I am obliged for my belief in Heaven, for my reliance on a happier futurity. The third has made me acquainted with the heroes of antiquity, and has taught me to feel the energetic dignity of man. To hope—Oh, Benyowsky! to hope—(*Pointing to the book.*)—The first has taught me—the undaunted, noble Anson!—

Ben. How so?

Crus.—(*With youthful ardour.*)—Flight! Flight to the Marian Islands! The possibility of this Lord Anson has developed. Tinian—an Island, which is like a paradise on earth—blessed with a mild climate—harmless inhabitants—wholesome fruits—peace—liberty—contentment—happiness! Oh, Benyowsky! Benyowsky! save thyself and us.

Ben. With astonishment and rapture I look up to thy gigantic mind. Thy hand! I will execute thy great design, or perish in the attempt. With this

hand I devote to thee my life. Nothing can release me from my vow, but death or liberty. Embrace me as Misery and Despair embrace each other—embrace me as thy brother.

Crus. Pardon me. You are our leader.—(*He kneels.*)—I swear to you submission and fidelity.

Ben.—(*Sinking upon his neck.*)—I will reward this confidence—I will conquer or die. But if I fall, by him who made me, thou shalt quake, Kamtschatka!

Crus. Enough! Our brethren in misfortune, and in this union, are waiting for my signal.—(*He goes to the door, and several times pulls a rope suspended from above, on which a bell is heard.*)

Ben. What are you doing?

Crus. Come to the window. See! They crowd hither from all sides.

Ben.—(*Looking out.*)—Transporting sight! Thus does the wretch, whose vessel is about to shiver on the rock, gaze at his deliverers approaching from the shore.

Enter STEPANOFF, KUDRIN, BATURIN, and many other Exiles. Mutual salutations are exchanged, and hands shaken on every side. The assembly then forms a semicircle, in the centre of which stands CRUSTIEW and BENYOWSKY.

Crus. Friends, and fellow-sufferers! You have for several years chosen my maturer age to be your guide upon the path where thorns are plentifully scattered, and the rose is not allowed to blossom. You have been satisfied with me in all respects, except my tardy circumspection. You have always approved my conduct, except when I checked your rash impatience, restrained your daring impotence, and called to you while you gnawed your chains, “hold, for you only make the evil

greater than it is." Think you that I have felt the weight of these fetters less than yourselves? Think you that my sighs, my curses, or my tears, have been fewer than your own? No. Like you, have I panted for freedom and deliverance. Rouse yourselves, my brethren—the hour is at length arrived. I solemnly renounce every preference which your united choice has hitherto bestowed on me. At our head stands an intrepid hero,—(*Pointing to Benyowsky.*)—a noble Hungarian, bred to war and victory under the Polish banners. His arm shall free us. He wills it, and his will is absolute. The fame of his exploits will go before time, and tyrants will tremble when he unsheaths his sword.—(*Confused murmurs arise among the assembly.*)—Speak, Count Benyowsky.—(*Silence immediately prevails through the assembly.*)

Ben. Speak, say you? Be our eloquence the clash of swords! Be our morning salutation the oath of fidelity! Be our evening blessing the shout of liberty! The bonds of misery are stronger than the chains of slavery. Despair is stronger than the fear of death. You know me not—I know not you—but we are wretched—therefore we are brethren. If there be one among you, who will shed his blood for you more willingly, let him step forth, and I will instantly do homage to him. My ambition excites me not to claim pre-eminence; but if it be your will, resolved am I to climb the craggy steep on which the palm of freedom⁴ flourishes, heedless whether a fragment of the rock should roll upon me, and crush my soul out. Let him who sees me waver, plunge his sword into my breast. With you to conquer, or to die, is my firm and unalterable determination—so help me God!—(*Confused sounds of approbation arise among the Exiles.*)

Crus. 'Tis well. Let every one who thinks like

Crustiew bare his head, and raise his hand.—(*All do so except Stepanoff.*)—You alone, Stepanoff?

Step. Yes, I alone. Think'st thou that thy smooth tongue is a wire, by which we may be led like puppets? I know the power of rhetoric upon the heart. You have spoken—now will *I* speak.

Crus. Do so.

Step. My comrades, is this just? I, who am your countryman, step forward in opposition to a foreigner—a heretic. I will not dispute his heroism. He is brave—but so am I. Of his courage you have heard—mine you have witnessed. The Poles were obliged to place an Hungarian at their head—but we are Russians. He says he will shed his blood for you—that will I do also. Is it worth our trouble to discuss the value of a slave's blood? He will make a merit of his exploits—mine are the gift of brotherly affection. I will fight with you tomorrow as I feasted with you yesterday. Now, decide between us.

(*Many of the Exiles place their caps again upon their heads, when Crustiew attempts to address them.*)

Ben.—(*To Crustiew.*)—Hold! Unanimity must be our support. *Man* can do but little—*men* can do much. The chain will become useless, if *one* link be parted from another. The question is, what shall be done—not, who shall be the leader? We thirst for freedom—it is immaterial whether he or I present the smiling cup. Stepanoff, thou art a man. Give me thy hand. No ill-will, no envy shall profane this union. The decision of our partners in misfortune is a law to which I willingly submit.

Step. Enough of this prattle! How long will you delay your decision? [*A confused noise takes place.*]

Several Exiles. Old Crustiew shall decide for us.

Crus.—(*Gives a signal with his hand, on which all are silent.*)—Stepanoff is valiant as the lightning, which darts from heaven and blasts the just as well as the unjust.—(*To Stepanoff.*)—Nay, wrinkle not your forehead, knit not your eye-brows thus; for, when our freedom is at stake, I will declare the truth. Brethren, the Persians were accustomed to throw the army which opposed them into confusion, by driving elephants before them; but never was an elephant their leader. Do you comprehend me?

All. Benyowsky! Count Benyowsky! We choose him.

Step. Be it so. The elephant is taught to bend his knee.

Crus.—(*Kneeling.*)—We swear to thee—

All.—(*Kneeling, and raising their right hands.*)—We swear.—

Crus. Inviolable fidelity, and unconditional obedience. Be our united exertions devoted to our great design—if necessary, our lives. Be our tongues bound to secrecy. Be death the portion of the perjured, and be no bonds of friendship or relationship sufficient to prevent the destruction of him who abides not by his oath!

All. This we swear.

Crus. If fate should ordain that any one of us be cast into a prison, we swear that no tortures shall force us to confess that we have entered into this confederacy. We swear that we will sooner bite off our tongues, and spit them in the face of our executioners. We swear that either poison or a dagger shall rob the tyrants of their prey, and that our graves shall likewise be the graves of our secret.

All. This we swear.

Crus. Enough!

[*All rise.*]

Ben.—(*Kneels, and presents both hands to Crustiew.*)—From thy hand I accept thy oath, and that of all assembled here. In thy hand I pledge my own.

Crus. I accept it. God is witness to it.—(*After a solemn pause.*)—Brethren, at the hour of midnight assemble in the chapel, that we may ratify this sacred compact at the altar.

An EXILE hastily steps from the door.

Exile. A servant of the governor approaches.

Crus.—(*Alarmed.*)—Heavens! Our numbers will excite suspicion.

Ben. Sing, brethren! Sing any thing which first occurs to you.

(*One of the Exiles sings the first line, and the rest immediately join in chorus.*)

Come, my comrades, join with me;
Think no more of slavery.
Let us, with a jocund lay,
Drive the cares of life away.
Come, my comrades, merry be,
Think no more of slavery.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Zounds! You are vastly merry.

Crus. Welcome! Will you join us in the song?

Ser. I have no time to spare. Which of you is Count Benyowsky?

Ben. I am he.

Ser. The governor wishes to see you.

Ben. I will come immediately.

Ser. Fare you well.

[*Exit.*

Ben. Let every one go to his accustomed occu-

pation, and beware lest he by word or look excite suspicion. Retire separately. Do not form small groups in the street. If you be alone, do not fix your eyes on any spot, as if you were brooding over some material project. Let not the sounds of sorrow or of joy, of doubt or hope, escape you. Farewell! Be mindful of the oath by which you are bound—Mine has been heard by the Almighty.

[*Exit.*

All.—(*In confused conversation.*)—What a valiant man! A hero! He will deliver us from bondage. Yes. Away to the chace! Away to the chace!

[*Exeunt.*

Manent CRUSTIEW and STEPANOFF.

Crus.—(*Calling after the departing conspirators.*)—At midnight we shall meet again.—(*Stepanoff stands in a corner with his arms folded, and a gloomy scowl upon his countenance. Crustiew surveys him for a few moments with a look of suspicion.*)—Stepanoff!

Step.—(*Starting.*)—Ha! Are you here still?

Crus. You seem just at this moment not to be here.

Step. I! But I do not always seem what I am.

Crus. What is the matter with thee, thou wild man?

Step. Call me rather a wild *beast*. Thou art a wise old man, most learned and most bookish in thy notions. Thou mayest think that thou doest know the nature of every creature, from the worm to the elephant, but of one thing thou art ignorant—or at least thy memory has failed thee.

Crus. What may this thing be?

Step. That when the elephant is irritated, he is apt to turn upon the army to which he belongs, and that the consequence is desolation—*death.* [*Exit.*

Crus.—(Looking after him for several moments, and then shakes his head.)—A worm may be dangerous too. The caterpillar jealousy already feeds upon the blossom of our freedom. [Exit.

Scene, ATHANASIA'S Chamber. On the Table are a Book and a Chess-board.

Enter ATHANASIA and THEODORA.

Athan. You are sure my father sent?

Theo. Long since.

Athan. And he is not yet come!

Theo. Good Heavens! If he can do every thing else, he can't fly.

Athan.—(Walking up and down with marks of great uneasiness.)—How strange are my sensations! I know not what I want. It is still early, Theodora?

Theo. It is almost noon.

Athan.—(Walking to her looking-glass.)—I am not yet dressed.

Theo. Why, I have mentioned that a hundred times, but you forget every thing to-day.

Athan. Forget every thing! Just the reverse! I am all thought.

Theo. True. So you were this morning, when, instead of milk, you poured coffee into your tea, and yet swallowed it without perceiving the mistake.

Athan.—(Still before the glass.)—My hair is in disorder.

Theo. You have had no sleep. You tossed from side to side throughout the night.

Athan. Whom did my father send? The creature must be a perfect snail.

Theo.—(Looking through the window.)—Ha! Who comes yonder?



Athan.—(*Turning suddenly round.*)—Is it the Count?

Theo.—(*Smiling.*)—Count! You mean demi-god.

Athan.—(*Who has hastened to the window.*)—He does not look up.

Theo. You ought not to look down.

Athan. Do you know how I feel?

Theo. Thereabouts.

Athan. As if we had been long acquainted—as if I ought to call to him.

Theo. How will this end?

Athan. I never thought so little of futurity as I do to-day.

Theo. So much the worse.

Athan. Hist! I hear my father's voice.

Theo. Farewell to all advice.—(*Casting a sly look towards Athanasia, who has thrown herself into a chair, and pretends to be reading with great attention.*)—Excellent! The very emblem of artless simplicity! Oh, what a precious thing is the heart of a woman! For ever is the tempest raging in it, yet ever is the surface smooth.—(*Looks over Athanasia's shoulder, takes the book out of her hand, turns it and gives it to her again.*)—Ha! Ha! Ha! Why, you were holding your book the wrong way. Ha! Ha! Ha!
[*Exit.*]

Athan.—(*Alone.*)—The letters dance before me—(*Casting a glance towards the door;*)—and my heart flies to meet him.

Enter GOVERNOR and BENYOWSKY.

Gov. This is my daughter, Count.—(*Mutual compliments are exchanged.*)—I repeat my request. I have heard that want of employment for the head and heart is the fundamental cause of learning and of love. My daughter's heart is her father's pro-

perty. With her head do what you please. It is an uncultivated garden, but the soil is good.

Ben. I have been bred to arms, and small is the extent of my knowledge. To arrange a battle, or a ribband,—to form an army, or a cap—to sketch a plan of attack, or a pattern for a gown—are very different things.

Athan. My simple morning-dress contradicts this assertion.

Ben. Modesty and beauty are two amiable sisters.

Athan. If I feel that you make me blush, I must run away.

Ben. A threat which compels truth itself to be silent.

Gov. Well, Athanasia, you must be grateful. Count Benyowsky will cultivate your mind; in return for which you will make his fetters lighter.

Athan. with pleasure will I endeavour to do that.

Gov. He will instruct you in the French language and the harp; and you will let him have a brother's share of the few amusements which our retirement from the world affords. I release you, Count, from all public employment, and will provide for your subsistence.

Ben. My gratitude——

Gov. Hold! Who gains most by this? You or I? I now leave you awhile with your pupil, after which we will play a game at chess together. [*Exit.*]

(*A pause ensues, during which Athanasia appears confused, and casts down her eyes.*)

Athan. I wish the pupil may not disgrace her instructor.

Ben.—(*Likewise confused.*)—By too soon surpassing him.

Athan. Are you patient?

Ben. What a question to a slave!

Athan. How strange it is that happiness and misery should be thus interwoven! When one flower fades, another thrives from its remains. Your lot is bitter, Count, but it sweetens ours. To alleviate your sorrows be our duty—Duty! How could so cold a word drop from my lips! Be our delight.

Ben.—(*With a look of astonishment and transport.*)—Heavens! I hear a language which was become foreign to my ear.

Athan. This country is, I own, cold and uncultivated. Our flowers are devoid of fragrance, our fruits of flavour, and our men of sensibility.

Ben. Oh, my lady, man is the only fruit which cannot degenerate in any climate. Weeds flourish every where.

Athan. Why weeds?

Ben. Because it is not worth while to mention the few grains of wheat which grow among them.

Athan. Your language betrays that you have suffered much misfortune.

Ben. Much! Alas, yes. *One* misfortune may be much. I am a slave.

Athan. We will make your slavery tolerable.

Ben.—(*With great solemnity.*)—Slavery can never be tolerable.—(*Suddenly assuming an air of gallantry.*)—Unless it be the slavery of love.

Athan.—(*Cheerfully.*)—There is no such thing as the slavery of love.

Ben. Is love ever felt in Kamtschatka?

Athan. We live in Kamtschatka.

Ben. Without love, perhaps, as without sun.

Athan. No. What is not produced by the warmth of the sun, is effected by the warm imagination of a poet. We read as often as we can—we feel what we read. I should be glad if there were more good books in our language. I have long wished to learn French. You have promised my father——

Ben. To do all in my power.

Athan. Shall we make a beginning?

Ben. We have no book at present.

Athan. I don't wish to learn from a book, but from you.

Ben. But how, if the instructor be unable to speak in the presence of his pupil?

Athan. Because he has not a book? Count, how you gaze at me! I read in your eyes more than I ever read in any book.

Ben.—(*Confused.*)—What a pleasure do the fair sex feel in the embarrassment of a soldier!

Athan. Because it flatters our weakness, and does honour to the weapons with which we attack your sex. But no more of this! We can proceed without a book. When you mention a word, I will repeat it, till I have acquired the proper pronunciation.

Ben. A word!

Athan. Yes. I will learn a dozen to-day, and another dozen to-morrow. At this rate I shall be able at the end of a year to converse with you in French. Let us begin. What is the French word for *heart*?

Ben. *Le Cœur.*

Athan. *Le cœur—Le cœur.* There, you see. I know that already. *Le cœur.* But how would you express, *The heart beats*?

Ben. *Le cœur palpite.*

Athan. *Le cœur palpite.* What a charming language!—(*Laying her hand on her heart, and sighing.*)—*Le cœur palpite.* I am an apt scholar; for I feel what I learn.

Ben.—(*Embarrassed.*)—I had almost forgotten that the Governor expects me to play at chess. Have the goodness to allow my departure.

Athan. Why, Count, I always understood a lesson continued for an hour?

Ben.—(*Significantly.*)—A whole hour?

Athan. Yes. Am I so very tedious?

Ben. For heaven's sake, forget not that I am a banished wretch, and let me not forget it.

Athan. Why not? I will not banish you. You fought gainst the Russians. What is that to me? You were made a prisoner. What is that to me? You were brought hither. What is that—Hold! That is something to me.

Ben. Is it indeed? What office do you hold here?

Athan. The delightful office of consoling the unfortunate.

Ben.—(*Deeply affected.*)—I see that nature has not been unjust even here. She has robbed the meadows of their verdure, but she has imparted all her stores to *one* amiable soul. Kamtschatka is not a desert.

Athan. Friendship, like the swallow, builds its nest every where. Happiness is not like the butterfly, which in summer sun-shine flits from flower to flower, but becomes torpid in the winter. Happiness dwells also close to the north-pole.

Ben. Heavens! what a flower has this climate produced!

Athan. Would you make me vain? But no. I know how I am to understand this. On a barren waste a common daisy pleases.

Ben. What is art compared to nature?

Athan. Does my frankness please you?

Ben. May I be allowed to feel a pleasure in it?

Athan. Unaccountable man! How bold is your eye! How timid is your language!

Ben. Oh, then let the discretion of my language be an apology for the boldness of my eye. A word, floating on the lips, and a stone, grasped in the hand, are harmless; but when the word is uttered, or the stone is thrown, who can answer for the consequences? His Excellency expects me. Lady, accept my thanks for the fresh blossom which your

hand has woven in the faded wreath of Benyowsky's happiness. Accept my thanks for permitting Benyowsky to be proud again. Yes, I am proud of your esteem. To my misfortunes only can I owe this excess of kindness. Who could misunderstand this generous sensation? Who could be so malicious as to misinterpret it? Lady, to you is devoted every sensation which is allowed to exist in the heart of a slave. [Bows respectfully, and exit.

Athan.—(Looks after him for some time—walks up and down in great agitation—takes up the book, turns over a few leaves, and again throws it aside—walks in deep meditation to the chess-board, and mechanically moves the pieces—sighs—lays her hand on her bosom, and says,)—*Le cœur palpite.*

ACT THE THIRD.

Scene, Crustiew's Room.

CRUSTIEW is discovered at the window, anxiously awaiting the return of BENYOWSKY.

Crus. Where can he remain so long? His presence animates our body. The project begins to shoot up, and bud—his active warmth must bring it to maturity.

Enter STEPANOFF, with a bottle and glass in his hand.

Step.—(Not perfectly sober.)—Good day to you, old Crustiew! Let us drink to the health of all prattling chamber-maids. [Drinks,

Crus. What do you mean by that?

Step. Much or little, as you please. I have made a precious discovery. It has quite intoxicated me.

Crus. The cause of your intoxication is in your hand.

Step. Pshaw! Fill my head with fire instead of brains, and I shall then be all sobriety, compared with this intoxication.

Crus. What wild extravagant ideas!

Step. Do you know Kudrin, the Cossack?

Crus. That is a drunkard's question. Is he not one of our confederacy?

Step. Don't trust him; for he is the slave of a woman. He is in love with Theodora, Athanasia's attendant.

Crus. What care I for that.

Step. She knows all his secrets—he all her's—
Ha! Ha! Ha!

Crus. I don't understand you.

Step. Satan, I thank thee for the service thou hast rendered me.—(*Fills the glass and drinks.*)—
Long life to the devil!

Crus. Wretch! Thy drunkenness has made thee blasphemous.

Step. Blasphemous! I feel exactly as I ought to do.---(*Places the bottle and glass on the table.*)—There! You may drink the rest.

Crus. Go, and sleep awhile.

Step. Ay, you would be glad enough if I were never to wake again.---(*With a sneer.*)---Good night, old grey-beard. [*Exit.*

Crus. What enigma is working in this wild block-head's brain? His expressions, though confused, appeared to be the effect of something more than mere intoxication.

Enter BENYOWSKY, hastily.

Ben. I have much to impart to you.

Crus. And I to you.

Ben. Love shuffles the cards. Our game is won.

Crus. What mean you?

Ben. All my knowledge of mankind, all my knowledge of womankind deceives me, if Athanasia be not well inclined towards me.

Crus.---(*Smiles, and shakes his head.*)---This affection has sprung up in a single night like a mushroom.

Ben. Love is always an unexpected visitor! Did you ever hear of preparations having been made for his reception?

Crus. Well! To what does this tend?

Ben. Can you not guess?

Crus. Will you marry her?

Ben. I am married.

Crus. Will you seduce her?

Ben. Perish such a thought.

Crus. Will you return her affection?

Ben. I cannot. Alas! I know not—

Crus. Well!

Ben. Advise me how to act.

Crus. I advise no one who has formed a previous determination.

Ben. Determination!

Crus. Ask yourself this question. Does not the blooming Athanasia please you?

Ben.---(*After remaining in suspense for a moment, shrugs his shoulders.*)---If I look into my heart—

Crus. What find you there?

Ben.---(*After a pause.*)---Sensuality and vanity.

Crus. The vanity of man is an odious idol, to which many an unsuspecting heart has fallen a victim.

Ben. The advantages we gain by this are great.

Crus. True, if you feel strong enough not to overstep the proper bounds; false, if you intend to found our happiness upon the ruin of a harmless being.

Ben. Never!

Crus. I am old, and superstition is the inheritance of age. I would not that our project should succeed at the expence of an innocent creature's happiness. Better is it to be a slave, and daily feel the whip of tyranny, than to be free, and every moment feel the scourge of conscience. Oft as a tempest overtook us on the ocean, I should exclaim, "this is the vengeance of the Almighty." I therefore claim from you a vow, that Athanasia's virtue shall be sacred to you.

Ben. The detested thought can find no place in my imagination. I swear what you require.

Crus. Enough! Then may you nourish her fond wishes, and feast her mind with lovely visions of anticipated rapture. When we are gone, all will be well again; for every thing can be forgotten, loss of innocence excepted. Meanwhile draw an impenetrable veil over this secret. Let it not be known by our associates. Beware especially of Stepanoff.

Ben. Why?

Crus. Because he loves her to distraction.

Ben. Loves Athanasia! Does he know her?

Crus. As much as we all do.

Ben. Does she know him?

Crus. That I doubt.

Ben. Did he ever speak to her?

Crus. Never.

Ben. And is yet in love with her?

Crus. To distraction, I tell you. Now a word respecting the preparations I have made. In some degree I have been successful—in some degree the reverse.

Ben. First, to the successful part.

Crus. It exceeds the other. Tschulosnikoff sailed some time since to the Aleutian Islands, for the purpose of catching sea-otters. Eight and twenty men served under him. They are returned, and are

very much dissatisfied. These I have gained over to our interest, and the vessel is our own.

Ben. The voice of an angel!

Crus. They will assemble at midnight in the chapel, and bind their fate to ours by an oath.

Ben. You have succeeded most happily. Oh, Crustiew, my head is like a magic lantern. Lighted by my fancy, the gay pictures of futurity flit past me. Already do I see myself in China, Japan, India; already do we double the Cape of Good Hope. Hope, thou daughter of heaven!

Crus. Be not so hasty. Hide this fire beneath the ashes. We have not yet attained our object.

Ben. The way is smooth; the cliffs are all behind us.

Crus. But while we wander on the smooth path, it is possible we may suddenly sink into an abyss. Malice peeps at us from every corner. Envy listens to us on every side. He who thinks that his foes are on the highway, knows little of the matter. They are lurking in the bushes, and when you have passed them, will fall upon you unawares.

Ben. All meet me with respect.

Crus. So much the worse. The flag, which they hang out, will make you feel secure. Many hate you, because there are always people discerning enough to feel the superiority of a great mind, and base enough to envy it. Many hate you on account of the large sums which they have lost to you at chess. Among these is Kasarinoff.

Ben. The foolish merchant?

Crus. He detests you.

Ben. He! You are mistaken. This very morning I received from him a present of tea and sugar.

Crus. Be on your guard. His villany may be sugared, but villany it still remains.

Ben. Suspicious old man! Do not fancy people

worse than they are. Mistrust has hindered many a good action.

Crus. Caution is not mistrust.

Enter WASILI.

Wasili. A misfortune!

Ben. What is it?

Wasili. Our little dog Sabac is dead.

Crus. Then we have lost a watchful friend. How happened it?

Wasili. I was preparing tea for Count Benyowsky, and he amused me so much with his gambols, that I gave him a piece of the sugar sent by Kasarinoff. In a few minutes after he had swallowed it, he rolled his eyes, became convulsed, and died.

[*Benyowsky starts.*

Crus.—(*After a pause.*)—How now, Benyowsky?

Ben. I am petrified.

Crus. Which of us best knows the nature of mankind?

Ben. You. But he shall repent this diabolical design. I will hasten to the Governor——

Crus. Not unarmed, I hope!

Ben. A poisoner is the meanest of assassins. A look will terrify him. Wasili, fetch me a piece of the sugar.

[*Exit Wasili.*

Poor Sabac! If in my age I find repose, my garden shall be adorned with a statue of thee, that I may never forget my gratitude to Providence. [*Going.*

Enter TSCHULOSNIKOFF.

Tsch.—(*With a look of fury seizes Benyowsky by the collar.*)—Hold! Not another step shalt thou proceed.

Ben.—(*Pushes him back with superior strength, so*

that he almost falls.)—Address me from that corner. What dost thou want?

Tsch. Damnation! Am I to be treated thus by an exile?

Ben. Thou shouldst not have forgotten that an exile is a man.

Tsch. Disgracefully attacked by the disgraced!

Ben. That is so much the worse for thee.

Tsch. The Governor shall know it.

Ben. He shall.

Tsch. Declare what are your intentions.

Ben. To break thy neck, unless thy language is restrained within proper bounds.

Crus.—(*Apart to Benyowsky.*)—Be calm. Passion will not assist our cause.

Tsch. What are you whispering in his ear, old villain? You have bribed my crew. You have excited them to discord and rebellion.

Crus.—(*Confused.*)—I!

Ben. 'Tis false.

Tsch.—(*To Benyowsky.*)—A conspiracy is formed, and you are at the head of it.

Ben. 'Tis false.

Tsch. My pilot's conscience would not allow him to conceal it. He has discovered all.

Ben. What he has said is false.

Tsch. False! Then why is yon old scoundrel in such consternation? Terror has robbed him of his faculties. Answer me, old fellow: do you know my crew?

Crus. I do.

Tsch. Why did you steal to their huts before day-break? What had you to do with them, when you were all together, and the doors were barred?

Ben. Blockhead, I can explain this matter in a few words. The Governor, and several respectable inhabitants of the town, have persuaded me to

establish a public school. I want to erect a large building for this purpose; and as your crew were unemployed, I thought of hiring them to work for me. I commissioned Crustiew to do this for me, and he agreed with them.

Tsch. A very likely story, no doubt! But let me tell you—

Ben. Hold! I have conferred on you the honour of refuting your ridiculous suspicion; but were I any longer to brook your preposterous conduct, I should be guilty of weakness, or of fear. Beware, therefore, how you proceed.

Tsch. What! Dare you threaten—

Ben. I dare do more than threaten.

Tsch. Is a lawful citizen to be insulted by an exiled vagabond?

Ben.—(*Strikes him.*)—Take that—and that—and that—

[*Kicks him out of doors.*]

Tsch.—(*Whose fury almost chokes him.*)—This shall cost thee thy life.

[*Exit.*]

Crus. We are lost.

Ben. Why?

Crus. He is gone to the Governor.

Ben. So will I.

Crus. He will be violent.

Ben. I will be calm.

Crus. And should he not convince, he will awake suspicion.

Ben. Collected firmness will easily overpower unbridled fury.

Crus.—(*Goes to the window.*)—Haste then to the citadel before him. He is on foot. Throw yourself into the sledge which you see yonder with two dogs in harness, and drive over the river. It is a nearer road.

Ben. Enough! If no hindrance occur, you shall soon see me again.—(*As he goes Wasili meets him,*

and presents a small packet.)—True. I had almost forgotten the sugar. [Exit.

Crus.—(Alone.)—Had he not been here, our game would have been lost. My firmness quite forsook me. Slavery and age subdue both the body and the mind. Youth feasts on hopes—manhood bursts into action—age and infancy have only fruitless wishes for their portion. [Exit.

Scene, one of the Governor's Rooms.

Enter ATHANASIA.

Athan. At length I am alone, and can give vent to the sensations of my heart. Oh, that my mother were alive! She would have understood me. I must relieve my mind. He is noble, and shall know my sentiments. Confidence creates generosity. Nothing can sooner disarm a man of honour, than the avowal, "I am in your power." Hist! I hear somebody on the stairs. That hasty step is his.

Enter STEPANOFF.

Alas, no. My senses deceive my heart—Do you wish to see my father?

Step. No—you fair lady.

Athan. What do you want?

Step. More than a god can bestow—your affection.

Athan. Are you mad?

Step. I shall be if you reject me.

Athan. I ought not to listen to you. [Going.

Step. Stay, for heaven's sake, stay. Listen to me, and decide as the humanity and goodness of your nature will direct. I grant I am an exile; an outcast of mankind. I was banished for a hasty

juvenile indiscretion. My birth is equal to yours ; my heart is worthy of yours. Chance may release me from the chains of slavery, but your chains I shall for ever wear. Fair Athanasia, cast on me a look of kindness. Oh, let a single gleam of hope shine through the dreary darkness of my life.

Athan. Enough! I can make no reply to your declaration ; but from compassion I will conceal it from my father. [*Going.*

Step. Oh, stay, and let the words of sincere, of ardent love, find their way to your heart. It is about seven years ago that I was first obliged to work on the fortifications. Unaccustomed as I was to labour, my strength was soon exhausted. Powerless I lay stretched on the rampart, and prayed to heaven for death. Then it was that you appeared with your mother. Athanasia Alexiewna, you were then a little girl. Fearfully you started back, clung to your mother, and besought her to assist me. She gave me a piece of money—and I—gave you my heart. You are grown—my affection has grown with you. Years have passed away, yet still I see the little cherub, as if the circumstance had happened yesterday. Grateful I have ever been, and gratitude is ripened into love. Do not condemn me—do not reject me. I require no oath, no promise. I only beg I may be allowed to hope, that if fate should ever smile on me again, you will also smile on me.

Athan. I most sincerely pity you ; but I cannot, will not, give encouragement to useless hopes.

Step.—(*With asperity.*)—You cannot, because you will not.

Athan. To whom am I accountable for my sentiments ?

Step. Another attachment lurks in your bosom.

Athan. Does my kindness excite audacity ?

Step. The charms of novelty have attracted you.

Athan. Begone !

Step. Mere bombast has conquered you.

Athan. Leave me, insolent man. I choose to be alone.

Step. Do you expect a visitor? Is he coming, lady?

Athan. Who?

Step. The happy man, for whose sake I am trampled in the dust.

Athan. Shall I call my father?

Step. Do as you please. My life is now of no value to me. The delightful air-built castle of my hopes is destroyed. Weep I will not—pray I cannot. None but fools weep and pray. To a man of spirit and determination, despair has granted another resource. If, like Sampson, he be made a mark for contempt and derision, he can at least grasp the pillars of the temple, and crush his foes as well as himself by their fall.

Athan. You rave.

Step. I do not, yet; though soon, perhaps, I may. I will observe you with minute attention, watch your every look, pry into your every design. I will discover your every involuntary motion. Love, jealousy, despair will sharpen all my faculties; and if Satan will but grant that I may see what I wish—Ha! then shall the sport begin. Furies shall dance upon my grave, and brandish in the air your nuptial torch.

Athan. Heavens! How shall I escape this madman.—(*Espies Benyowsky, and runs joyfully towards him.*)—Ha! Count Benyowsky!

Enter BENYOWSKY.

Step. Hell and the devil! There he is. I have seen enough. Farewell, lady. It is, doubtless, time that I should take my leave. I know how to die—but not unrevenged. [*Exit.*

Ben. What means this? You in a tremor! He in a rage!

Athan. I am indeed in a tremor.

Ben. Why?

Athan. I will complain to my father.

Ben. Of what?

Athan. No, I will not.

Ben. What will you not do?

Athan. I pity him. He is insane.

Ben. Insane!

Athan. He loves me.

Ben. Is he, on that account, insane?

Athan. An exile——

Ben.—(*With a degree of asperity.*)—True, Madam. That I had forgotten.

Athan.—(*Confused.*)—Not because he is an exile—No—I did not mean to say that——

Ben. It was, however, a very rational remark.

Athan. But what is rational is not always true. Cannot an exile be deserving of affection?

Ben. He can, but he must not.

Athan. He may, but the man who has been here cannot—*That* man, I say, cannot.

Ben. Where is his Excellency? I must speak to him.

Athan. He is—Dear Count, I have offended you.

Ben. Offended me! By what?

Athan. You are an exile too!

Ben. Alas! I am.

Athan. I so easily forget that——

Ben. I shall never forget it.

Athan. That arises from—what you call rational.

Ben. You should praise me for it.

Athan. I do praise you by my words; but my heart——

Ben. The heart likes to be flattered.

Athan.—(*Bashfully.*)—You are not a flatterer.

Ben.—(*In a firm tone.*)—No.

Athan. But there are truths which the heart likes to hear.

Ben. Truth should not always be spoken.

Athan. At least not by every body.

Ben. Right.

Athan. I mean, for instance, by Stepanoff.

Ben. And his equals.

Athan. Who is his equal?

Ben. Every exile.

Athan. Every exile! I understand you.—(*Suppressing a sigh.*)—Natural coldness is not a virtue.

Ben. But to suffer and be silent is a merit.

Athan. Or obstinacy. My mother told me, if I always declared what I felt, I should never feel what I ought not.

Ben. This one maxim is a full description of your mother's sentiments.

Athan. She bequeathed me many such maxims. If she were still alive—Alas! her grave is on the hill close to the fortress. When the first grass peeps through the snow, I'll hasten thither, and entrust my secret to the earth.—(*After a pause.*)—You do not ask me what my secret is.

Ben. I have no right to do so.

Athan. You are my instructor—and I must place confidence in you. Give me your advice.

Ben. Respecting what?

Athan. If I felt an attachment for Stepanoff—

Ben. Well?

Athan. What should I do?

Ben. Discover your attachment to your father.

Athan. And then?

Ben. If his influence could restore Stepanoff to liberty, you might, without a blush, give him your hand.

Athan. You have said exactly what I feel.

Ben. Happy Stepanoff!

Athan. Indeed, dear Count! Should you think him happy—whom I love?

Ben. If he possess a feeling heart—

Athan.—(*Bashfully leans upon him, and hides her face upon his shoulder.*)—Do you possess one?

Ben.—(*Agitated.*)—Athanasia!

Athan. Yes or no?

Ben. Amiable innocence!

Athan. Yes or no.—(*Benyowsky involuntarily clasps her in his arms.*)—I fly to my father. [*Exit.*]

Ben. Athanasia! What would you do? Gracious Heavens! What is all this? The angelic charms of innocence surprised and overpowered me.—(*Striking his forehead.*)—Emilia! My wife!

Enter IWAN.

Iwan. There he is, as if sent for.

Ben.—(*Alarmed.*)—Has any one enquired for me?

Iwan. Enquired! Search has been made for you.

Ben. By whom?

Iwan. By me, because I want to have some conversation with you.

Ben. About what?

Iwan. Matters of importance.

Ben. At another time. I am come hither on business, which requires immediate attention. [*Going.*]

Iwan. Hold! Stir not from the spot. Perhaps the fate of centuries depend upon this single moment.

Ben.—(*Aside.*)—Intolerable blockhead!—(*Aloud.*)—What are you pleased to command?

Iwan. Pleased to command!—(*With a mysterious air, and consequential smile.*)—A trifle.—(*After a solemn pause.*)—Half the world.

Ben. What say you?—(*Aside.*)—He is insane, too.

Iwan. You start.—Ha! Ha! Ha!—Upon these shoulders is a head, and in that head strange things are happening.

Ben. That I perceive.

Iwan. Who subdued Kamtschatka? A Cossack.

Who is captain of the Cossacks?—Iwan Fedrowitsch.

Ben. That I know, but——

Iwan. Silence! Utter not a syllable. Promise that my confidence shall not be misplaced, that what I have entrusted to you shall remain an inviolable secret.

Ben.—(*Smiling.*)—Most willingly.

Iwan. I have a little scheme. When I use the term *little scheme*, I mean to imply a *great project*. In short,—(*drawing him aside with an air of mystery,*)—I intend to found a colony in the Aleutian Islands.

Ben. Indeed!

Iwan. You shall lend me your assistance in forwarding this plan.

Ben. If you wish it——

Iwan. When I use the term *assistance*, I mean to imply, *pen*; for, with respect to the sword, a Cossack wants no assistance. You shall persuade the Governor to submit your statement to her imperial Majesty.

Ben. Proceed.

Iwan. Don't you perceive I shall make you all happy? The Governor will be promoted to the command of Ochozk, you will take his place at Kamtschatka, I shall be Viceroy of the Aleutian Islands, and, before you are aware of it, conqueror of California.

Ben. Bravo! Your project is most admirable.

Iwan. Yes, yes.—(*With great solemnity.*)—I wish you joy, Governor of Kamtschatka.

Ben.—(*With equal gravity.*)—I thank your Californian Majesty; but it would be more agreeable to me if you would be graciously pleased to appoint me your prime minister and commander in chief.

Iwan. Count, your petition is granted.

Ben. I am deeply affected——

Iwan. So am I; for I cannot refrain from laugh-

ter, when I fancy that I see you at the head of my army. Enough! be an alliance offensive and defensive concluded between us. [*Presenting his hand.*

Ben.—(*Shaking it.*)—Agreed.—(*Aside.*)—I'll bear with the fool, for he may be useful to me.

Enter GOVERNOR.

Gov. Welcome, Count Benyowsky! Where is my daughter?

Ben. She was here but a few minutes since.

Gov. Theodora says she was in search of me.

Iwan.—(*Consequentially.*)—We have in the mean time found a kingdom.—Ha! Ha!

Ben. Before we take possession of it, I am come to demand justice.

Gov. How so?

Ben. A madman, one Tschulosnikoff, has attacked me in my hut, and irritated me so far by his insolence that I kicked him out of doors.

Gov. What was the cause?

Ben. I hired his crew to assist me in erecting a building for a school, and the blockhead asserts that I wish to excite mutiny and insurrection.

Gov. The idea is as absurd as malicious.

Iwan. The scoundrel must feel the knout.

Gov. I will send for him.

Ben. Your kindness towards me has created many enemies, who absolutely wish even to assassinate me.

Gov. Assassinate you!

Ben. Behold a proof.—(*Produces the sugar.*)—Under the mask of friendship, Kasarinoff, the merchant, sent me this sugar. A dog, which had eat a piece of it, died instantaneously.

Gov. Is it possible? Give me the sugar.

[*Takes it, and rings.*

Iwan. The scoundrel must feel the knout.

Enter a SERVANT.

Gov. Send immediately for Tschulosnikoff, and Kasarinoff.

Ser. Tschulosnikoff is already in the antichamber, and requests an audience.

Gov. Let him come. [Exit Servant.]

Enter TSCHULOSNIKOFF.

Tsch. I appear before your Excellency—

Gov. With great effrontery, as I perceive.

Iwan. You are a worthless fellow.

Tsch. I accuse this man of high treason.

Iwan. What! My minister!

Gov. Villain, dare you calumniate a man who, even in fetters, has done more for the crown, than a hundred free scoundrels like yourself?

Tsch. I have proofs—

Gov. Silence! You cannot feel the force of any thing great or good. I know the Count, and every thing he does! therefore beware how you proceed against him; for the man who dares to place any impediment in his way, has been shone upon by the sun for the last time.

Tsch. He excites rebellion—

Gov. Begone! I'll hear no more. You owe him gratitude, and pay your debt with calumny. He wants to make human beings of your children, and this does not suit your brutal disposition.

Tsch. But my pilot—

Gov. Peace! Begone!

Tsch. He has beat me—

Gov. He treated you properly.

Tsch. But, good Heavens—

[Governor rings.]

Enter a SERVANT.

Gov. To the guard with this fellow !

Tsch. Very well—I shall go. Repentance will soon overtake you,— (*To the Governor,*)— and vengeance you.

[*Shakes his clenched fist at Benyowsky, and exit.*

Ben. He still threatens.

Gov. His threats are ridiculous.

Iwan. Forty lashes will cool him.

Gov. Be at ease, Count. I promise you justice and security. Calumny can only cast a shade over a good conscience, like black gauze over a snowy bosom. It still shines through the slender covering. I know these fellows, and I know you. I would entrust you with my honour and my life.

Iwan. And I with California.

Ben.—(*Aside, with his hand upon his breast.*)—I was not prepared for this.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Kasarinoff—

Gov. Let him come.

[*Exit Servant.*

Enter KASARINOFF.

Kas. Your Excellency has been pleased to command—

Gov.—(*Calling to the Servant.*)—Bring tea. Come nearer, my dear Kasarinoff. I hear you are diligent and attentive to business. You deserve encouragement.

Kas. The honour—

Gov. Shall be no more than justice. A great merchant is a great man. The monarch's concerns

extend through his dominions; the merchant's through the world. With his right hand he touches Asia; with his left America. By a stroke of his pen, he connects one quarter of the globe with another, makes lemons grow in Kamtschatka, and finds a gold mine in a desert. Reverence should be paid to those who deserve it. Take a chair close to me, my dear Kasarinoff. Let us drink a cup of tea together, and have a little conversation upon business.—(*Pours out the tea.*)—This is Caravan tea, and I believe very good. It was sent to me from Irkuzk, as a present. I must confess I ought to be grateful; for my friends are bountiful in their presents.—(*Throws sugar into Kasarinoff's cup.*)—This sugar, for instance—what a beautiful colour it is! Count Benyowsky was so kind as to send it this morning.—(*Throws another piece into Kasarinoff's cup.*)—You deal in sugar and tea, I recollect. Try how you like these.

Kas.—(*Embarrassed and alarmed.*)—I thank your Excellency; but this is not the hour at which I usually drink tea.

Gov. Never mind that.

Kas. I am, indeed, at no time very fond of tea.

Gov. Taste this, then, to oblige me.

Kas. It makes me feel heated and nervous.

Gov. Only a single cup!

Kas. I must beg your Excellency to excuse me.

Gov.—(*Gravely.*)—Drink, friend Kasarinoff. Do you think I have mixed poison with it?

Kas. Heaven forbid that I should harbour such a thought!

Gov. Drink, then, I command you.

Kas.—(*Takes the cup with a trembling hand.*)—I have such an aversion to tea——

Gov. I'll put a little more sugar into it—then it can't do you any harm.

[*Throws another piece into the cup.*]

Kas.—(*Trembling.*)—I—I——

[*The cup falls from his hand.*

Gov.—(*Springs up.*)—Ha! Poisoner!

Kas.—(*Sinks on his knees.*)—Mercy!

Iwan. The knout!

Gov. Your wicked damnable intention is evident. Count Benyowsky, pronounce sentence on him. It shall be executed this very hour.

Kas. Mercy!

Iwan. The knout!

Ben. The punishment to be inflicted on this man is left to me?

Gov. Entirely.

Ben. I have your promise that his fate entirely rests on my decision?

Gov. You have.

Ben. Enough!—I pardon him.

Gov. How!

Iwan. What!

Kas.—(*Embracing his knees.*)—Heavens! what a man!—(*Almost unable to articulate.*)—I have no words—Oh, let these tears wash away my guilt!

Ben. Rise, depart, and be my friend.

Gov. No, Count. This I cannot allow.

Ben. I have your promise.

Gov. You act nobly, but——

Ben. If I act nobly, your heart is surety for the fulfilment of your promise.

Gov.—(*Embraces him with emotion.*)—I have esteemed you hitherto—now I admire you.—(*To Kasarinoff.*)—Go, and make yourself deserving of his pardon.

Kas.—(*Sobbing.*)—I cannot speak. I'll bring my children. They shall thank him. [*Exit.*

Iwan.—(*Affected by this scene against his inclination, offers his hand to Benyowsky.*)—Friend, you have acted like a Cossack. I appoint you Lord Chief Justice of California.

Enter ATHANASIA.

Athan.—(*Rushes towards her father, and throws her arms round his neck.*)—My father!

Gov. What now?

Athan. At last I have found you.

Gov. What do you want?

Athan. Your consent.

Gov. To what?

Athan. To my happiness.

Gov. Is not your happiness my wish? Speak!

Athan. I am in love.

Gov. In love!

Ben.—(*Much embarrassed.*)—I will withdraw.

Athan. Stay, Count Benyowsky, I am not ashamed of my affection.

Gov. I am astonished. So suddenly——

Iwan. I never observed any symptom.

Athan.—(*Goes to Benyowsky, takes his hand, and turns to the Governor.*)—Your blessing, my father!

Gov. How! Is it the Count whom you love?

Athan. Whom else could I love?

Iwan.—(*Mortified.*)—Come, come——

Gov. But don't you consider——

Athan. I consider every thing. I consider all his perfections, and the dying words of my mother. Shall I repeat them? Yes, it was in this room, in this very room she died. Here stood her bed—here you sat—and there I knelt. You wept, I sobbed, and my mother groaned. In her last struggle she once more raised herself, grasped your hand, and said, in a broken voice, "Let my Athanasia marry the man whom she loves." This is he. Oh, my father, give me the man whom I love.

Gov. Athanasia, you have taken me by surprise——

Athan.—(*Drawing Benyowsky after her.*)—Here

—on this spot, where my mother died—here do we implore your blessing.

Gov. When the Count is released from slavery—

Athan. Is he not free whenever you declare him so? Spirit of my mother, descend and let thy influence prevail upon my father to fulfil thy last request.

Iwan. Friend, I think you might without danger—

Athan. Danger! Is it dangerous to reward virtue?

Iwan. The ukase of Peter the First extends to many cases.

Athan. Blessings on Peter's ashes for this edict!

Iwan. The preservation of the vessel on the voyage from Ochozk—

Athan. Oh, yes! That alone—

Iwan. The introduction of cultivation—

Athan. True. Oh, Iwan Fedrowitsch, you are a good man.

Iwan. The Cossacks are always good men. Besides all this, when we take into account the Aleutian Islands and California—

Athan. You don't say a word, dear Count.

Ben. What can I say? I am tormented by the idea that your worthy father may believe I have urged you to take this step.

Athan. That you did not. No, my father. He afflicted my poor heart with his noble and rational sentiments, as he called them. Oh, my father, are you still irresolute? Here do I kneel, where I knelt at my mother's death-bed—here, where she pronounced on me her last blessing. That blessing must now be fulfilled—Now, or never!

Gov. Rise, Athanasia. Be it so. My hoary head obeys the impulse of my heart. I venture something for you and him, but you both deserve it. Count Benyowsky, you are free. The secretary shall execute the instrument in its legal form.—(*Clasping him in his arms.*)—I embrace my son.

Ben. Heavens! Is it possible?

Athan.—(*Kissing her father's hand.*)—Oh, my dear father! accept my heartfelt thanks. I am overpowered with joy. I know not how I feel. I could weep—I must kiss you, dear Iwan. Benyowsky is free. He is free, and mine. Where is Theodora? The whole family shall participate my happiness—the whole castle—the whole town.—(*Puts a full purse into Benyowsky's hand.*)—This for the poor captives. He is free—he is mine. [*Exit.*]

Ben.—(*Deeply affected.*)—If your Excellency—

Gov. Why not call me father?

Ben. If I be at present dumb—

Gov. I understand you.

Iwan. Ay, ay. I understand what you mean by dumb, too. Fish are dumb, because they drink water. When we have emptied a couple of bottles, our tongues will begin to wag.

Gov. Very true, Iwan Fedrowitsch. Wine is as much the companion of joy, as dew of a fine morning. Come.

Ben. Excess of joy and grief are nearly related to each other. Both express themselves in tears; not in words. Both demand retirement. I beg permission to withdraw for a few moments. [*Exit.*]

Iwan. What a strange man! When I am happy, I must drink.

Gov. Let him go. Joy is not a coin fixed at the bottom of a bowl.

Iwan. Whether it be a bowl or a bottle I don't care, except that the bowl is rather more satisfactory, because it is generally rather larger. Now as to joy—when I use the term *joy*, I mean to imply *thirst*, and by my soul I am just now as thirsty as a hound after a three hour's chase.

Gov. Come then! Let us drink to the happiness of the young couple.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Tschulosnikoff has escaped from the guard.

Gov. Escaped! Blockhead! All Kamtschatka is a prison.

Iwan. The knout will fetch him back.

Gov.—(*To Servant.*)—Bring up a bottle of wine.

Iwan. What do you mean by ordering a single bottle? Bring us four. Zounds! Is not your daughter betrothed? Turn the sea into wine, and Iwan Fedrowitsch, captain of the Cossacks, will drink it to the last drop. [*Exeunt.*

Scene, an open place without the Citadel. A balcony is visible, and under it a stone seat. It is Evening.

Enter TSCHULOSNIKOFF and GRIGORI.

Tsch. He must pass this way.

Grig. Dear uncle, what is your intention.

Tsch. Give me your knife.

Grig. What do you mean—

Tsch. I mean to be revenged, and then to die.

Grig. Revenged! On whom?

Tsch. On Benyowsky.

Grig. What has he done to you?

Tsch. I shall be distracted, if I attempt to repeat it.

Grig. But consider the risk—

Tsch. The risk is nothing. I send him to hell, that I may find a servant ready to receive me.

Grig. Will you murder him?

Tsch. Give me the knife.

Grig. Well, if you—

Tsch. The knife I say!

Grig. There it is.

Tsch. Is it sharp?—Ay—not amiss.

Grig. But for heaven's sake—

Tsch. Go to the church and pray—or to the devil. I don't want you.

Grig. I will not leave you.

Tsch. Then stay; and give the villain absolution when he dies.

Grig. It grows darker.

Tsch. So much the better.

Grig. I saw six sentinels in search of you.

Tsch. Let them continue their search.—Ha! ha! ha! They shall find me, but not till this knife has found the way to Benyowsky's heart.

Grig. I have just heard that he is declared free—

Tsch. Is he?—Ha! ha! ha!

Grig. And is to marry the Governor's daughter.

Tsch. Is he?—Ha! ha! ha!

Grig. The nuptials are perhaps celebrated this very evening—and you may wait here in vain till sun-rise.

Tsch. Then I'll wait till the sun is burnt to a cinder. Hist! I hear foot steps. Creep close to the wall.

Grig. Dear uncle——

Tsch. Go, or I'll plunge the knife into your heart.

[*They separate.*]

Enter BENYOWSKY in deep meditation.

Ben.—(*Slowly walking forward.*)—Athanasia!—Emilia!

Tsch. 'Tis he.—(*Rushes against Benyowsky.*)—Die, traitor!

Ben.—(*Turns suddenly and seizes his arm. They wrestle.*)—Help! Murder!

Tsch. Grigori! Help!

(*Grigori attacks Benyowsky from behind. At the very moment appears Kasarinoff leading his two Children. He leaves them, fells Tschulosnikoff to the earth, and disarms him. Benyowsky, in the*

mean time, disarms Grigori, and holds him fast. Tschulosnikoff raves, shouts, and curses. Theodora appears on the balcony, mixes her shrieks with the various cries of the combatants, and runs back.

Enter a CORPORAL and SOLDIERS.

Cor. Holla! Stand, I command you, in the name of the Governor. Ha! Tschulosnikoff! Have we found you again?

Kas. He was attempting to murder the Count.

Ben.—(*Releasing Grigori.*)—Fly, young man.—You shall not be punished on my account.

[*Grigori escapes.*

Cor. Come, Tschulosnikoff. You will have a comfortable share of the knout.

Tsch. Hell and furies!—(*Spits towards Benyowsky.*)

G— damn thee! [Exit, guarded.

Ben.—(*Embraces his preserver.*)—Kasarinoff!

Kas. “Go, and be my friend,” said you to me. You see I have been so.

Ben. You have honestly paid your debt.

Kas. Here are my little ones. I meant that they should embrace your knees, and thank you. But Heaven has decreed I should have a better opportunity of expressing my gratitude.

Ben. Kasarinoff! My friend! This title, when bestowed on any one by me, is not the coin in common circulation, with which a labourer is paid for his work. Farewell.

Kas. It is dark, and you are alone. Let me attend you.

Ben. To the river, if you like.

Kas. To death.

[*Exeunt, arm in arm, each leading one of the Children.*

Enter IWAN from the opposite side.

Iwan.—(*Reeling.*)—Holla! Holla!—Checkmate—

What does all this hurly-burly mean? Who makes all this noise?—(*Looking round.*)—Nobody? Nobody makes all this noise. When I use the term *nobody*, I mean to imply *many people*, who are all gone.—Zounds; how every thing dances! But I heard Theodora. Why did she shriek and squall? Why did she disturb me, when I was so comfortable?—Five glasses from the bottle—and five moves on the board, would have mated both the Governor and Iwan Fedrowitsch, captain of the Cossacks. Ha! ha! ha!—(*Sinks upon the stone seat.*)—There—Zounds! This is a cool seat. When I use the term *cool*, I mean to imply *cold*. How is this? The King of California is check-mated.—Ha! ha! ha!

[*Mutters a few more unintelligible words.*]

Enter KUDRIN, with a balalaika under his arm. He looks carefully round, but does not perceive Iwan.

Kudrin. At length all is quiet here and dark as the grave. The stars have gone to rest, and have wrapt themselves in snow-clouds.—(*Approaches the balcony.*)—Hist! Hist! Theodora! She is not on the balcony yet—or perhaps has already been there. Well! I must lure my bird.—(*Tunes his balalaika.*)—But my fingers are benumbed.—(*Breathes into his hands.*)—Well! Well! I shall succeed at last. The breath of a lover can melt a mountain of snow, or dissolve a diamond.

(*He plays and sings the following words to an air in a Russian Opera, called Melnik.*)

1.

Darkness o'er the fortress hovers;
Hasten from thy room,
'Tis the time when ghosts and lovers
Wander through the gloom.

2.

'Tis thy faithful Kudrin lingers,
Come without alarm ;
Stiff and frozen are his fingers,
But his heart is warm.

3.

Long 'twill be ere gay Aurora
Chases night away :
But the eyes of Theodora
Change the night to day.

4.

When thou com'st, no darkness hovers ;
Haste then from thy room ;
'Tis the time, when ghosts and lovers
Wander through the gloom.

(During the last strophe Theodora appears on the balcony.)

Theo. Hist !

Kudrin. Hist !

Theo. Are you there ?

Kudrin. I am, and have been some time.

Theo. Dear Kudrin, there are great rejoicings in the house.

Kudrin. So much the better.

Theo. Athanasia is soon to be married.

Kudrin. To whom ?

Theo. To Count Benyowsky.

Kudrin. Benyowsky !

Theo. Now, We shall be happy too.

Kudrin. We are all to fly across the sea, then ?

Theo. Simpleton ! I said nothing about flying.

Kudrin. What then ?

Theo. Marrying.

Kudrin. You don't know, then, and your mistress does not know——

Theo. What don't we know ?

Kudrin. And yet she is soon to be married? That's curious enough.

Theo. Tell me what you mean.

Kudrin. I would if I durst.

Theo. Why dare you not?

Kudrin. I have taken a dreadful oath—

Theo. Concerning what?

Kudrin. Concerning—can you be silent?

Theo. As the grave.

Kudrin. Listen then. I came hither Theodora, for the purpose of prevailing upon you—

Theo. To do what?

Kudrin. To accompany us in our flight.

Theo. What flight?

Kudrin. If you betray me, we are all undone.

Theo. Simpleton! Love and treachery never dwell under the same roof.

Kudrin. There are many of us—many free men as well as exiles. Count Benyowsky is at our head. We have secured a vessel, and we are about to fly God knows whither! but to a delightful country.

Theo. Are you asleep!

Kudrin. Not I. All I tell you is true, and will soon take place. Will you go with me, dear Theodora?

Theo. But my mistress—

Kudrin. If the Count be married to her, he will of course, take her with him.

Theo. Incomprehensible man!

Kudrin. Don't mind that. Pack up your clothes, and make yourself ready to accompany us.

Theo. But the Governor—

Kudrin. He may play at chess with that old fool, our Captain.

Iwan.—(*Springs up, and seizes Kudrin.*)—Traitor!

(*Theodora shrieks, and runs away.*)

Kudrin.—(*Sinks on his knees.*)—Mercy!—(*Trembling.*)—We are lost.

Iwan.—(*Holding him.*)—Villain! What have you been saying?

Kudrin. Oh, I am drunk. I don't know what I say.

Iwan. Treachery! Benyowsky! My Californian minister!

Kudrin. Some Kamtschadales have made me drink muchomor—my head is quite confused.

Iwan. Come with me. [*Dragging him away.*]

Kudrin. Let me be at liberty till morning, I beseech you.

Iwan. Come with me, scoundrel!

Kudrin.—(*Pushes him very violently, and almost knocks him down.*)—Go to the devil. [*Exit.*]

Iwan. What! This to me! This to his captain! Holla! Guard! Ship! Intrigue! Escape! Treachery!

ACT THE FOURTH.

Scene, Crustiew's Room.

CRUSTIEW, BATURIN, and several CONSPIRATORS are discovered. Some of them form groups, while others walk up and down with signs of uneasiness.

1 *Con.* He does not return.

2 *Con.* It is already dark.

Crus. Be at ease. He will come, most certainly.

3 *Con.* Tschulosnikoff is rash.

Crus. Benyowsky bold.

1 *Con.* The Governor rigid.

Crus. But not suspicious.

2 *Con.* He will be so.

Crus. Even if he be, the hour of deliverance is at hand.

1 *Con.* Ten years have I sighed for it.

2 *Con.* I, seven years.

3 *Con.* I, seventeen.

Crus. I, two-and-twenty. Picture to yourselves, my brethren, the delightful moment when we reach some land of liberty, where no snow forbids that we should kiss the earth, and where the fertile soil imbibes our tears of joy. Blest, blest be our deliverer!

All. Blest be he!

Enter STEPANOFF, *hastily.*

Step. We are lost.

All. What now?

Step. Betrayed.

All. Betrayed!

Step. Your hero, Benyowsky, has treacherously gained his own freedom.

All. How so? Go on. Tell us.

Step. The Governor bestows his daughter in marriage on the Count.

1, 2, and 3 *Con.* Well!

Step. Well! Blockheads! He has consequently betrayed us.

Crus. That *consequently* is not clear to me.

Step. Indeed! Why he is free? This is never granted but for some great service to the state, and what other can be in his power than the service of treachery? Talk he can. He has caught us with his tongue, as a woodpecker catches bees. First, he infatuated that old man, (*Pointing at Crustiew,*)—then that old man infatuated us. With Russian blood this hero pays for his freedom. With Russian blood he besprinkles the bridal couch. To-day he sees us led to execution, and to-morrow he cele-

brates his nuptials. Vengeance, vengeance on the traitor!

All. Vengeance! Vengeance!

Step. We must die; but let Benyowsky die before us.

All. He shall, he shall.

Crus. Be not so rash, my comrades.

Step. What punishment did we swear to inflict upon the perjured?

All. Death! Death!

Crus. Die he shall, if he be guilty. I myself, old as I am, will rouse the remnant of my strength to plunge a dagger in his heart. But he must be heard. If *that* man be a hypocrite, if *that* eye deceive me, adieu to all belief in honour and fidelity. I think him innocent. Hear him you must.

Step. Speak, then, old prater. Defend him.

Crus. 'Tis not I, but he himself, who must speak. *Him* you must hear.

Step. Him, forsooth! Are you such a blockhead as to think that he will dare to appear again among us!

Enter BENYOWSKY.

Crus. There he is.

Step. Ha!—(*Drawing his sword.*)—Down with him!

All.—(*Draw their swords.*)—Down with the traitor!

Crus.—(*Rushing between them and Benyowsky.*)—Then let your swords find the way to his heart through mine. Back, comrades! He is in your power. You must hear him. He cannot escape you.

Bat. Crustiew is right. Guard the door.

Ben. Let me advance, Crustiew. What do you want?

Step. Thy blood.

Ben. Have I not devoted it to your deliverance? Am I not a member of your body?

Step. Rather say, an ulcer of our body. **Defend thyself.**

Ben. Against what charge?

Step. Art thou free?

Ben. I am.

Step. Is the Governor about to bestow his daughter's hand upon thee?

Ben. He is.

Step. Now, comrades, have I not told the truth? What further evidence is necessary? **Revenge! Revenge!**

All.—(*Brandish their swords.*)—**Revenge! Revenge!**

Crus. Hold! Benyowsky, you perceive we do **not** understand your conduct. Explain the enigma.

Ben. I conceive your meaning. Think you that I should appear among you with so much calmness and composure, if I were what this villain wishes me to seem? Look in my face: does treachery appear in my eye? Do you perceive the horrors of a guilty conscience in my features?

Step. Mean, paltry prattle!

Ben. Mean, paltry prater! Hear me, my brethren, and then decide. I went to the Governor—for what reason you know. His daughter loves me: he loves his daughter. It was very natural that she should beg my liberty, and as natural that her father should grant it. He embraced me as his son-in-law. What could I do in such a case? Had I declined the honour, I must have given reasons for such conduct. And what reasons? Was not dissimulation absolutely necessary? Cannot my freedom be a double advantage to you?

Step. Thou liest.

Ben. Thee I despise. Brethren, I stand in the midst of you, unarmed and defenceless. If I have betrayed you, the centinels will, in a few minutes, surround our village. Then dispatch me to that

hell, which I should deserve, if I were guilty of a crime so monstrous.

Crus. He is innocent.

All. He is.

[*Returning their swords into the scabbards.*

Step.—(*With ferocious fury.*)—Thou crafty and deceitful villain, is it thy lot to be triumphant upon all occasions? Take a sword. I challenge thee to single combat. Be God the judge between me and thee. If thy conscience be pure, come on.

Ben. Give me a sword.

Crus. That must not be. Your life is valuable to us. Stepanoff is tortured by jealousy.

Step. Benyowsky is nothing but a mouthing hero.

Ben.—(*Incensed.*)—Give me a sword.

Bat.—(*Steps between them.*) Hold! I can no longer be silent.—(*Pointing to Stepanoff.*)—That is the traitor. [Stepanoff starts.]

All. How! What means this?

Bat.—(*To Stepanoff.*)—Look stedfastly at me—eye to eye.

Step.—(*Embarrassed.*)—What do you want with me?

Bat. See how his glowing cheek acknowledges the crime. His blood is more sincere than his tongue. What do I want with you! I will declare what you lately wanted of me.

All. Speak! Speak!

Bat. But a few hours since, my brethren,—

Step. Believe him not: he lies.

Bat. He came enraged to my hut—

Step. Blockhead, I was drunk.

Bat. Uttered curses on Benyowsky—

Step. Men curse—old women pray.

Bat. Wrote a treacherous letter—

Step.—(*Scornfully.*)—Did you read it?

Bat. I know its contents from your lips.

Step. Blockhead, I was amusing myself with your ignorance.

Bat. I was to deliver the letter.

Step. You dreamt this.

Bat. It was pregnant with the destruction of Benyowsky, and of our hopes.

All. Proceed! Proceed!

Bat. I refused—he alternately threatened and entreated, till at length he threw a piece of money on the table, as a payment for my silence.

Step. Is this story almost at an end?

Bat. He then rushed out, and I have not seen him again till now.

All. Traitor! Villain!

Step. He lies.

1, 2, and 3 *Con.*—(*Drawing their swords.*)—Down with him.

Ben. Hold! Disarm and bind him, but he must also be heard.

(*The Conspirators take away Stepanoff's sword, and, in spite of his resistance, bind his hands.*)

All. The letter! Where is the letter?

Ben. Stepanoff, you hear the question of your confederates. Answer.

Step.—(*With sullenness and effrontery.*)—I know of no letter.

Ben. Confess, or tremble.

Step.—(*With a look of contempt.*)—Tremble at thy threats!

1, 2, and 3 *Con.* Down with him!

Ben. Hold! Lead him away, and guard him in the adjoining room.

Step.—(*Gnashing his teeth as he is conducting away.*)—Will no devil rise from hell to aid me?

[*Exit.*]

Ben. Be composed, my brethren, murder is committed in a moment, and the rash act is often followed by the penitence of many years. Though

Baturin's evidence may be upright, you still are in want of Stepanoff's confession.

Bat. I swear that what I have asserted is true. May this hand wither if my testimony be false!

Ben. This is not sufficient. Did you read the letter?

Bat. No.

Ben. Proceed with mildness, I beseech you, brethren. Pardon conferred upon an enemy is a seed which often produces a rich crop. Let us be satisfied with terrifying him, by which we may, perhaps, extort a penitent avowal of his guilt.

Crus. Generous man, be you his judge, and act as seems right to you.

Ben. Are you satisfied with this?

1, 2, and 3 *Con.* We are.

Ben. 'Tis well. Bring me a cup of water.—(*He is obeyed, and places the cup on a table.*)—I know Stepanoff's disorder. I alone can be his physician. Conduct him hither.

Enter STEPANOFF, guarded.

Come nearer, Stepanoff. You are convicted of treachery. You, as well as all assembled here, swore that death should be the lot of every traitor. Pass sentence on yourself.

Step. My fate is in the hands of my enemy.

Ben. You are mistaken. All your brethren have condemned you. Confess.

Step. I will not.

Ben. You have but few moments to live. Confess.

Step. I will not.

Ben. You hate me?

Step. From my soul.

Ben. What have I done to you?

Step. Nothing.

Ben. And yet you hate me?

Step. Yes.

Ben. And you will not confess ?

Step. No.

Ben. Enough ! Silence is confession. This cup contains poison. Drink it to the last drop.

Step.—(*Looking boldly round.*)—Brethren, is this your determination ?

1, 2, and 3 *Con.* Most positively.

Step. You will sacrifice me to this stranger ?

1, 2, and 3 *Con.* Drink ! Drink !

Step. Think you that death is a spectre, and I a child alarmed by it ? I will drink ; but first a word to thee, Benyowsky. I hate thee, I abhor thee. I have sought thy death, but not the death of these men. Thou dost well in removing me. Thou dost well in binding these hands ; for were they free, by the Almighty, the first use of their liberty should be to plunge a knife into thy heart.

1, 2, and 3 *Con.* Dispatch him.

Ben. Hold ! What have *you* to do with his fate ? Me alone has he injured, and me alone have you appointed his judge. Release him. I pardon him.

Step. 'Tis in vain, Count Benyowsky. Thy accursed generosity is thrown away upon me. I hate thee. We cannot stand near each other. One of us must fall. Let me, therefore, die.

Ben. Unbind his hands.—(*It is done.*)—You are free.

Step. Am I ? Give me, then, a sword, that I may stab the man I hate.—(*Attempts to snatch a sword from one of the Conspirators, but is prevented.*)

Crus. Madman !

Ben. Leave him to me. Stepanoff, I know the worm which preys upon your heart.—(*Draws him aside.*)—Look ! This is the picture of my wife.

Step. Your wife !

Ben. I am married.

Step. Married !

Ben. I am a father.

Step. A father!

Ben. And I love my wife.

Step. Oh, God!

Ben. I cannot, therefore, accept the hand of Athanasia.

Step.—(*Is violently agitated, bursts into tears, and embraces the Count.*)—Benyowsky! I must away into the open air. [*Rushes out.*]

1, 2, and 3 *Con.* Do you allow him to go?

Ben. Be at ease. He is ours.

1, 2, and 3 *Con.* Strange! Incomprehensible!

Ben. Very natural. A silken thread can lead the most headstrong, if we but know *where* this thread is tied.

Enter WASILI, hastily.

Wasili. Athanasia is come hither on foot, and quite alone. She desires to speak with you.

Ben. Athanasia! What means this? Withdraw, my brethren, through the back door.

[*Exeunt all the Conspirators.*]

At night—alone—on foot!—So bashful—and yet so bold!—This forebodes no good.

Enter ATHANASIA.

Athan.—(*Flies breathless into his arms.*)—Oh! I can no more——

Ben.—(*Places her in a chair.*)—What is the matter? Why——

Athan. I have ran—I have flown——

Ben. For what reason?

Athan. My footsteps will not be visible in the snow.

Ben. For heaven's sake——

Athan. Feel how my heart beats.

[*She lays his hand upon her bosom.*]

Ben. Compose yourself.

Athan. Yes—I am better already—I feel easier --for I behold you again - and my terrors vanish.

Ben. Without a cloak when it is so cold!

Athan. I am without a cloak, but indeed—I am warm—very warm.

Ben. Does your father know——

Athan. No one knows but myself. The moments were precious.

Ben. Explain to me——

Athan. I will—I will— (*Drawing her breath with difficulty.*)—Oh!—Patience! Oh!—Now it is over.

Ben. You alarm me.

Athan. No, no. You are here—and all is well again. I was a child——

Ben. This enigma——

Athan.— (*Rises, approaches him, seizes both his hands, and gazes at him with a keen but affectionate look.*)—Benyowsky!

Ben. Why this penetrating look?

Athan.—(*After a pause.*)—No, it is false. He deceived me.

Ben. Who?

Athan. Laugh at me, dear Count, for I am a credulous simpleton. My attendant—she has a lover. Lovers, I have heard, like to play each other a trick. He made her believe— but you must not be angry.

Ben. Proceed.

Athan. I was alarmed, and, without reflection, ran hither. Scold me—laugh at me—I deserve it.

Ben. You make me impatient.

Athan. Indeed, dear Count, I am easy now—quite easy. When I look at you, I am ashamed to confess the cause of my alarm—but I must. Let me rest my face upon your bosom, that I may speak more freely. It is said—that you are at the head of a conspiracy—that you want to escape—to reward my father's kindness with ingratitude—to forsake

me.—(*She quits her bashful attitude.*)—There! Now you know all; but don't speak—don't make me feel ashamed by defending yourself. You shall not even say *no*.

Ben.—(*Extremely agitated.*)—Athanasia!

Athan. Not a word—not a syllable! I would beat any one, who thought it worth while to defend you.

Ben. I must——

Athan. Be silent, or I'll put my hand upon your mouth! Away with those wrinkles! Laugh, laugh at your silly childish Athanasia. Give me a kiss of reconciliation, and I shall run joyfully back to the citadel.

Ben. This is too much. Who could impose upon such an angel? Lovely, unsuspecting creature—you have not been deceived.

Athan. How!

Ben. I must fly.

Athan. Fly!

Ben. Perhaps even to-morrow.

Athan. Merciful Heavens!

Ben. I am bound by a dreadful oath.

Athan. Poor Athanasia!

Ben. I have sworn to my companions in adversity that I will conquer or die.

Athan. Poor deluded Athanasia!

Ben. Perjury is to be punished with death.

Athan.—(*Wringing her hands.*)—Death, death to me!

Ben. I cannot retreat—I dare not look around me. My heart bleeds—but I must proceed.

Athan. All is lost.

Ben. I will break this chain. My corpse alone shall be a slave. I hazard much by this confession, but I could not impose upon your unsuspecting heart. Now I am in your power. Go—discover to your father what you have heard——

Athan.—(*Weeping.*)—Benyowsky, I have not de-

served this suspicion. Though you do not love me, yet shall you, when you are enjoying happiness in a distant part of the world, never think of Athanasia but with regret. My spirit, ever attendant on you, shall often force from your heart the confession that Athanasia was not an ignoble being.

Ben. Alas! to part with you is the only difficulty which my heart has to encounter.

Athan. I shall die. I have lived but a moment— for we do not live until we love. Blessed spirit of my mother, receive me in thy maternal arms.

Ben. - (*Deeply affected.*)—Be generous, Athanasia. Spare me.

Athan. You are agitated. Dear Count, remain with me. Dear Benyowsky, remain with me. I am sure you never can be happy when you think of my distress. My pallid image will disfigure every picture of happiness. Remain with us. Are you not already free? The warmth of my affection shall make sweet flowers grow in these cold deserts. The strength of my affection shall contend with your anxiety to revisit the land which gave you birth. I will learn every thing from you, and you shall learn from me to love.

Ben. You torture me—

Athan. I do not complain—I do not weep. Your heart must decide—What, therefore, can I fear? Confidence is the coin with which a noble soul is bought. I place confidence in you—and you will not forsake me.

Ben. My confederates will murder me.

Athan. Come with me. The power of my father, and the arm of affection, will protect you.

Ben. Shall I perfidiously sacrifice my friends?

Athan. I will embrace my father's knees, and they shall not be injured. Were their condemnation written in blood, my tears should wash away the words.

Ben. I cannot——

Athan. You can---and will. What can you be in search of? Liberty? Has not love already broken your fetters? Treasures? Will you not be my father's heir? Affection? Oh! you will find it no where as it glows within this faithful bosom. Thou first sole object of my wishes, wilt thou load thy vessel with my father's curse? Wilt thou in every zephyr hear my sighs? Alas! and yet---if the weather were tempestuous, I should kneel on the shore, and pray for thy safety.

Ben. Cease, cease! I love you—by the Almighty I love you, but---

Athan. Can love use such a word as *but*?

Ben. I cannot deceive you.

Athan. You will not I am sure.

Ben. You must know all.

Athan. Still more?

Ben. Look at this picture. This is---my wife.

Athan. Ha!---(*She sinks devoid of strength into a chair. Benyowsky leans against the wall, and hides his face. A long pause ensues. Athanasia's bosom heaves, and she appears to be contending with herself. At length she rises with a resolute air.*)—Enough! I resign you.—(*Offering her hand.*)—May I call you my brother!—(*Benyowsky falls at her feet, and presses his face to her hand.*)—Fly! If your wife loves you (oh, she must love you) how anxious and miserable she must be! Hasten! Fly!

Ben.—(*Starting up.*)—God of heaven! Emilia!

Athan. Is Emilia her name? It is a mild and gentle name. Oh, doubtless your Emilia is mild and good. She will not deny me your fraternal love—

Ben. Would that this instant I could rush to battle!

Athan. Pure and guiltless is my love for you—it is the affection of a sister towards a brother. No, I will not forsake you—I cannot forsake you. I will go with you into the wide world. I will witness the

delight of your Emilia at your return. A beam of joy again warms my heart. I myself will conduct you to her arms. I will find my peace in yours—assist your wife in conducting your household—teach your babes to lisp your name—

Ben. Girl, you rob me of my senses.

Athan. No mean jealousy shall creep among us. No busy neighbour shall disturb our happy harmony. My sincerity shall gain your wife's affection—my innocence and virtue her respect. All I ask is to be always with you, to see how you act, to hear what you say, to rejoice and grieve with you. Do not dissipate the pleasing vision. Do not cast me from you. Give me a little spot in your cabin, that I may see you; a corner in your vessel, that I may pray for you.

Ben. And what is to become of your aged father?

Athan.—(Covering her face.)—Oh, God!

Enter a CONSPIRATOR.

Con. The Governor wishes to see you.

Ben. To-morrow early I——

Con. Directly.

Ben. At so unusual an hour! What can this mean?

Con. The servant says there is a dreadful commotion in the castle.

Ben. I will come.

[*Exit Conspirator.*

Athan. Never. Benyowsky, I tremble——

Ben. Why?

Athan. Did you not hear? A dreadful commotion! Oh, when my father causes a commotion, he is not instigated by a trifle. He has sent for you at this late hour. To obey him would be rash in the extreme. Let me return alone, and if I suspect any danger, of which I cannot apprize you by a note, Theodora shall bring you a red ribband. Soon as you see that, think of some means to save yourself.

Ben. Who knows whether we do not magnify an insect, till we fancy it an elephant? Your father has, perhaps, missed you, and is uneasy.

Athan. That is possible.

Ben. I'll go with you.

Athan. No, no. My terror would betray you.

Ben. Consider, dear Athanasia——

Athan. Affection cannot consider—it only feels.

Ben. If we be already discovered, escape is impossible; for our preparations are not sufficiently forwarded. Anxiety does but augment the evil. Lightning more easily finds its way to the traveller, who seeks shelter under a tree, than to him who is in the open field. Therefore let us go.

Athan. I am not sure I can. My knees tremble.

Ben. Lean on my arm. [Going.

Enter KUDRIN.

Kudrin.—(*Falls at Benyowsky's feet.*)—Kill me, Count Benyowsky, kill me.

Ben. Man, what is the matter?

Kudrin. I have betrayed you.

Ben. Betrayed!

Kudrin. Love made me a traitor.

Ben. Instantly relate what has happened.

Kudrin. I love Theodora, and wished to take her with me. A few hours since, she was standing on the balcony. Trusting to deceitful darkness, I discovered all to her, and was overheard.

Ben. Overheard? By whom?

Kudrin. The Captain of our Cossacks.

Ben. By him alone?

Kudrin. Yes.

Ben. And he discovered you.

Kudrin. Yes, he seized me, and called to the guard; but I forced him back, and escaped. My conscience has tormented me throughout the night,

and the blood of my brethren demands revenge. Pardon me, and kill me.

Ben. Are you certain that no one but Iwan Fedrowitsch overheard you?

Kudrin. I am.

Ben.—(To Athanasia.)—And is Theodora's fidelity to be relied on?

Athan. I am surety for her.

Ben. Rise, then, and go in peace. Creep cautiously to the vessel, and conceal yourself in it. To-morrow you shall hear from us.

Kudrin.—(Rising.)—How! Not an angry word!

Ben. Words employ time, and deeds alone can save us. Instantly obey my command, and do not suffer yourself to be caught a second time.

Kudrin. An unburthened conscience accelerates my steps. [Exit.

Ben. Now, Athanasia, come to your father.

Athan. Notwithstanding——

Ben. Certainly. Nothing but firmness and effrontery can invalidate the testimony of Iwan. If I but succeed in lulling your father's suspicions to rest till to-morrow morning, our game is won.

Athan. But if you fail——

Ben. Why then our game is lost.

Athan. And then?

Ben. I shall know how to die.

Athan. Oh, Benyowsky! [Exeunt arm in arm.

Scene, an Apartment in the Citadel.

The GOVERNOR is discovered walking uneasily up and down. IWAN stands at the other side of the room.

Gov. Are you sure you heard all that you describe?

Iwan. Have I ears? When I use the term *ears*, I mean to imply *large ears*.]

Gov. Incomprehensible!

Iwan. He called me an old fool.

Gov. In return for all my kindness——

Iwan. He struck me on the breast.

Gov. I bestowed my only daughter on the hypocrite.

Iwan. We must have a knout made of thunderbolts.

Gov. No. It cannot be. The deed is of too black a nature. *Iwan*, confess that you were drunk.

Iwan. Drunk! Why, yes. Is not one drunken Captain better than ten sober exiles?

Gov. Grant me composure, heaven, that, true to my dignity, I may not proceed too rashly. Law and equity ought to be the judges. The warmth of my temperament shall not influence the scales.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Count Benyowsky will come.

Gov. Will come!

Ser. Immediately.

Gov. Indeed! This is audacity or innocence. Has Theodora been found?

Ser. No.

Gov. Let a corporal and guard go in search of Kudrin the Cossack, and bring him hither.

[*Exit* Servant.]

Iwan. Ay, ay, I'll pay you with interest, young man. Zounds! To call me an old fool! I am only sorry that the fellow is a Cossack.

Gov. My poor daughter!

Enter BENYOWSKY and ATHANASIA.

Ha! Count Benyowsky!

Iwan. Welcome, my minister!

Gov. What do you want, Athanasia? You come at an inconvenient time. Leave us my daughter.

(Athanasia goes away with a heavy heart. Governor stands lost in gloomy meditation. Iwan surveys Benyowsky with a smile of ignorance from head to foot, while Benyowsky's eyes are alternately turned towards each of them. Governor rings.)

Enter a SERVANT.

Is Theodora not yet found?

Ser. She is just come from a neighbour's house.

Gov. Where is she?

Ser. With your Excellency's daughter.

Gov. Bring her hither instantly. [*Exit Servant.*]

(A pause ensues, during which the Governor rivets his eye on Benyowsky, who looks calmly in his face.)

Gov.—(*Aside.*)—If he be guilty, he is not a common villain.

Ben. Your Excellency's countenance is not the same as it was yesterday and to-day.

Gov. Heaven grant that our hearts may remain unaltered!

Ben. Heaven grant it, say I too.

Gov. I am surety for mine.

Ben. Then I am at ease.

Gov. I am glad to hear it.

Ben. You have summoned me——

Gov. Be patient.

Iwan. Very pretty things are talked of here.

Ben. How so?

Iwan. When I use the term *pretty things*, I mean to imply *high treason*.

Ben. Has Tschulosnikoff again——

Iwan. Tschulosnikoff has nothing to do with it. He is safely confined

Ben. A new calumniator, then, it seems.—Who is he?

Gov. He shall appear before you.

Ben. That I expect.

Gov. The most rigid justice—

Ben. That I demand.

Gov. He shall confess openly.

Ben. And prove his accusation.

Gov. Of course.

Ben. And if he cannot prove it.

Gov. He shall be severely punished.

Ben. I am satisfied.

Gov.—(*After a pause.*)—But if he can prove his accusation—

Ben. Then I will lay my head at your feet.

Gov.—(*Keenly looking at him.*)—Count, I hope you are innocent.

Ben. I know I am.

Gov. Beloved and free as you are, what could induce you—

Ben. Therefore—

Gov. You are right. Iwan Fedrowitsch, I fear you have needlessly caused me a most uneasy hour.

Iwan. Needlessly! Did he not call me an old fool?

Ben. Who?

Gov. That is of no consequence.

Iwan. The devil it is not.

Enter THEODORA.

Gov. Come nearer, Theodora. Do you know Kudrin the Cossack?

Theo. Certainly. He is in love with me, and I with him.

Iwan. There we have it.

Gov. Have you seen him to-day?

Theo. Yes.

Gov. Where?

Theo. Under the balcony.

Gov. On what subject did he talk to you?

Theo. On the constant subject of our conversation—love.

Gov. That I don't want to know.

Theo. What then?

Gov. He discovered a conspiracy to you.

Theo. Conspiracy! What is that?

Iwan. Did he not ask you to run away with him?

Theo. Run away! Yes, he did.

Gov. To what place?

Theo. Oh!

Iwan. Now! Was I right or not?

Gov. Speak.

Theo. Oh, forgive, forgive my poor Kudrin.

Gov. First confess.

Theo. Well—he complained of the Captain's harsh treatment, and proposed that I should escape with him to Ochozk.

Gov. Nothing more?

Iwan. Pshaw! Did you not talk of a flight beyond the sea—Eh?

Theo. Yes, I said I would go with him all the world over.

Iwan. When I use the term *sea*, I do *not* mean to imply *all the world over*.

Theo. Well then, I said I would go across the sea with him, although I was very much afraid of water.

Ben.—(*Smiling aside.*)—Excellent!

Gov. Well, Iwan! How does this sound?

Iwan.—(*Shaking his head.*)—False, every syllable! Did you not speak of a charming country, to which you would fly?

Theo. Yes, Ochozk. He has been there, and is always telling me how well the people live.

Gov. But the Count, the Count.

Theo. The Count!

Iwan. Yes, yes, the Count. Was not he to accompany you to Ochozk—Eh?

Theo. This is the first word I have heard of it. So much the better. I shall not be obliged to leave my lady then.

Iwan. She affects stupidity.

Gov. Confess. What did you say relative to the Count?

Theo. Not a word. But yes—I recollect——

Iwan. Ay, ay.

Theo. I told him that Count Benyowsky was to marry my lady.

Gov. Nothing more?

Theo. What more could I tell him?

Iwan.—(*Impatiently.*)—You talked together about a conspiracy, a ship, and escape. Will you confess?

Theo. I beg your pardon, Iwan Fedrowitsch, but your faculties were rather clouded at that time, and I believe they are so still.

Iwan. You witch! Why the slut will presently try to convince me I was not called an old fool.

Theo.—(*Weeping, and affecting to be incensed.*)—I a witch and a slut!

Iwan. Well, well!

Theo. Let me tell you I am an honest woman——

Iwan. Well, well!

Theo. Educated with my lady——

Iwan. Well—yes.

Gov. Be pacified, Theodora. Have you concealed nothing from me?

Theo. But, good Heavens, there stands the Count himself. He must know whether he thinks of travelling to Ochozk.

Ben. The Count, my dear girl, has no such intention; but there are so many people, who, after emptying a bottle, are kind enough to think for him.

Gov. Iwan, you were wrong. The wine and the air——

Iwan. As to the conspiracy, I may perhaps be mistaken; but as to the old fool, I am as positive——

Gov. Well, if that be all——

Iwan. All! Enough too, I think.

Gov. True, Iwan. We must let him feel the knout.

Iwan. Most certainly.

Gov. Thank Heaven no suspicion attaches to the man who is so dear to my heart. I believe it easily, and most willingly.

Ben. The enigma of the flight, as it is called, I probably can solve. The Captain, here, mentioned to me a project respecting the Aleutian Islands: I happened to drop a few words on the subject, which Kudrin probably heard, and misinterpreted.

Iwan. Oh, that's another affair. When I use the term *another affair*, I mean to imply——

Theo. Nothing.

Iwan. Exactly. Nothing.

Gov.—(*Shaking hands with Benyowsky.*)—Dear Count, we are, I hope, on the same terms as heretofore.

Iwan.—(*Shaking hands with Benyowsky.*)—And we too, I hope.

Gov. Pardon my suspicions as the Governor: they never entered my mind as a father.

Ben. They have hurt me, but be they forgotten.

Gov. It is late. Shall we go to supper?

Iwan. A very rational idea.

Ben. I must beg to be excused. This has been a warm day to me. I am in want of rest.

Gov. Farewell, then, till to-morrow.

[*Exit Benyowsky.*]

Iwan. What a strange, whimsical man he is! He talks about a warm day, when it is so cold out of doors, that a man's teeth might freeze together.

Gov. Where is my daughter?

Theo. In the dining room.

Gov. We will join her. But, Iwan, take heed that the wine does not again make your head so full of idle fancies—

Iwan. Wine! The very idea is a feast. Have at it! Ha! Ha! Ha! [*They are going.*]

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. A letter for your Excellency.

Gov. Who brought it?

Ser. A Kamtschadale. [*Governor opens it.*]

Iwan. I hate letters.

Theo. Why?

Iwan. Because one is obliged to read them.

Gov. What! Again! Listen, Iwan.—(*Reads.*)—
“Count Benyowsky is at the head of more than a hundred determined men. Tschulostnikoff’s vessel is in their power. At the dawn of day the Governor will be robbed of his daughter. My life is surety for the truth of this intelligence, and my liberty is due from the state. Stepanoff.”

Iwan. There we have it! What say you now, Governor? Was he drunk too, who wrote this letter?

Gov. Ha!—Was I then deceived?—Is the Count already gone?

Ser. He seemed to be in haste.

Gov. In haste! No doubt he was.—(*To Theodora.*)—Bring my daughter hither.

Theo.—(*As she goes.*)—Another tempest threatens us. [*Exit.*]

Iwan. I’ll order my Cossacks to be mounted, and in readiness.

Gov. How he stood! How innocent were his looks! How calmly he offered me his head!

Iwan. One head we must have at all events—his, or Stepanoff’s.

Enter ATHANASIA and THEODORA.

Gov.—(*Presenting the letter to Athanasia.*)—Read that letter.

Athan.—(*After having perused it.*)—Calumny, dear father.

Gov. Do you know nothing?

Athan. Nothing.

Gov. But you turn pale?

Athan. Vexation and disgust, anger and affection—

Gov. But you tremble?

Athan. Must I not tremble, lest my father, by acting too hastily—

Gov. Be easy. I shall scrutinize minutely, before I proceed further.

Athan. I am sorry to be the cause of making any man miserable; but this Stepanoff deserves to be so. To me it is evident why he wishes the Count's destruction. His jealousy is inventive.

Gov. Jealousy!

Athan. He loves me.

Gov. You!

Athan. With a sort of desperation. Even this morning he dared to surprise me here in the fortress, and to use such language as I thought nothing but madness could dictate.

Gov. He! To my daughter?

Athan. I was about to call for aid, when the Count suddenly entered the room. With violent threats Stepanoff left us—and he has kept his promise.

Gov. I am astonished.

Athan. Jealousy dictated this letter. Judge, then, my father, whether it ought to disturb you.

Gov. Why did you not immediately tell me—

Athan. I pitied him, for I thought him insane.

Theo.—(*Aside.*)—Admirable! The storm will pass away without doing harm.

Iwan. Hem! Wrong again! What a day is this—No eating or drinking! What a night is this, too—No sleep or rest!

Gov.—(*After a moment's reflection.*)—Can Stepanoff have dared to fabricate this falshood?—Tschullosnikoff! Kudrin!—Can all this have happened by accident?

Enter KUDRIN in chains, guarded by a Corporal and Soldiers.

Iwan. Ha! the bird is caught.

Cor. Had we been a minute or two later, he would have escaped us.

Theo.—(*To Athanasia.*)—We are lost.

Athan. Give him a hint.

Gov. Where did you find him?

Cor. At the haven.

Gov. Are any preparations making there?

Cor. Yes. Tschullosnikoff's vessel is preparing for sea.

Gov.—(*To Kudrin.*)—What were you doing at the haven?

Kudrin.—(*Trembling.*)—Mercy! Mercy! I'll confess all.

Theo.—(*Forcing her way to him.*)—I have already confessed all, dear Kudrin.

Iwan. Do you know who I am—Eh?

Kudrin. You are my gracious Captain.

Iwan. I am your old fool, and consequently your ungracious Captain. When I use the term *ungracious*, I mean to imply the *knout*.

Kudrin. Mercy! Spare me for the sake of my youth. I have been misled.

Gov. Who misled you?

Theo. I persuaded him—

Gov. Peace!

Theo.—(Aside.)—Fortune aid us!

Athan.—(Aside.)—We are lost!

Gov.—(To Kudrin.)—You wanted to fly from hence?

Kudrin. Yes.

Gov. To what place?

Theo. Haven't you relations at Ochozk?

Kudrin. No.

Theo. But friends and acquaintance?

Kudrin. I never was there in my life.

Gov.—(To Theodora.)—Peace!

Theo. Gracious Sir, I must speak for him. Terror has robbed him of his senses, and he will forfeit his life.

Iwan. So much the better.

Gov. Name your confederates.

Theo. Who but I—

Gov. Will you be silent?

Kudrin. Count Benyowsky—

Theo. Gave you good advice, I know, and you ought to have followed it.

Gov. Girl, I'll have you locked in your room.

Theo. But good heavens, your Excellency should consider we are attached to each other, and his affection for me has brought him into his present unfortunate situation. Do you hear, Kudrin? I besought him to fly with me to Ochozk—His affection for me made him consent—that's all. Spare him—forgive him. He is the best balalaika-player in all the country.

Gov. Begone to your chamber.

Theo. Oh, my lady, say a kind word in behalf of my poor—

Gov. Out of the room with her!

Athan. Go, Theodora.

Theo. Well, if I must, I will go. Kudrin, you have heard what I have said. I take all the blame upon myself. No one but myself knew any thing of the matter.

[Exit.]

Iwan. Am I nobody, then—Eh?

Gov. Now make a frank confession; for nothing but the truth can procure your pardon.

Kudrin. Oh, if my comrades must die, I had rather not live.

Gov. Are there many of you?

Kudrin. Yes.

Gov. Who is your leader.

Kudrin. Count Benyowsky.

Gov. Where did you enter into a confederacy?

Kudrin. At the altar.

Gov. How did you mean to escape?

Kudrin. In a vessel.

Gov. When?

Kudrin. To-morrow.

Gov. Now, Athanasia?—(*Athanasia appears about to swoon.*)—Poor child! I pity you. We have cherished a viper in our bosoms.

Iwan. A dragon.

Gov. My heart can pardon every weakness, but ingratitude is a vice of the deepest dye. Lead him away. Your lives are answerable for his.

Iwan. Come, come! I'll appoint you quarters. Bread without sun, and water without air, will tame you, I dare say. You shall not call me an old fool again in a hurry. [*Exeunt Iwan, Kudrin, and Guards.*]

Gov. There are crimes which rouse the soul, beget misanthropy, and convert inborn benevolence to cruelty. Dissembling villain! Thou hast played upon my heart, but thou shalt know me.

Athan.—(*Fall at his feet.*)—Mercy, my father! I love him still.

Gov. Shame on thee! Rise, and spare thy words, for they are a disgrace to thee and me. Hast thou forgotten that thy father's life and honour are at stake? Are they become indifferent to thee?

Athan. Oh, no! With my blood——

Gov. That I expect from my daughter. We must

proceed without delay, for the danger is at hand.
Sit down and write.

Athan.—(*Alarmed.*)—What!

Gov. Benyowsky is the ring-leader. When we have him in our power, the rest will be useless members without a head. Write.

Athan.—(*Trembling.*)—What shall I write?

Gov. He will suspect his fate, and refuse to obey my summons. You alone can intice him hither. Measure for measure. Write an affectionate note—invite him—

Athan. Never!

Gov. How! Would you—

Athan. I cannot, my father.

Gov. Ungrateful girl! Shall thy mother's blessing be counteracted by thy father's curse?

Athan. Hold, I beseech you.

Gov. Sit down, then, and write.

Athan.—(*Seats herself at the table.*)—His death warrant?

Gov. It may be so.

Athan. Then it is mine too.

Gov. Immaterial!

Athan. I am ready.—(*Governor dictates, and she with a trembling hand writes his words.*)—“Dear Count, I must speak to you to night. Come immediately. Theodora will admit you at the little gate. Fly into the arms of your affectionate Athanasia.” I have done.

Gov.—(*Reads what she has written.*)—It is scarcely legible, but it will answer its purpose. Seal it.—(*Athanasia, as she is sealing it, draws, unobserved by her father, a piece of red ribband from her bosom, and puts it in the letter.*)—Paul!

Enter a SERVANT.

Take this note to Count Benyowsky, and say that

Athanasia sent it. Do you hear?

Ser. I shall obey your Excellency's directions.

[*Exit.*

Gov. Go to sleep, Athanasia. I will be your safeguard. Go, and in your prayers beseech the Almighty to root this passion from your breast. Think of your mother—(*Much affected, and taking her hand.*)—Think of your old father. [*Exit.*

Athan. Father!—Mother!—Heaven forgive me! I think but of him.—To sleep! When Benyowsky is in danger!—Pray! Alas! That will not rescue him. Away with female timidity! Unite with me, ye unknown friends, courage and resolution. A sword, a sword for this weak hand! Deliverance to the beloved of my soul! Be my breast his shield. At his side, and fighting in his defence, will Athanasia die.

ACT THE FIFTH.

Scene, CRUSTIEW'S HUT.

The CONSPIRATORS are stretched asleep upon the earth in groups. Each has a gun near him and a brace of pistols in his belt. CRUSTIEW sits on the bench with his eyes closed; but his uneasiness evinces that his attempts to sleep are ineffectual. At length he rises.

Crus. I cannot sleep. Whether I turn my head this way or that, I hear a pulse. My blood courses through my veins. A voice seems every moment

to shout in my ear, to-morrow, to-morrow thou wilt be dead or free. The clear warm sun of liberty dispels the cold shadows of the night. To-morrow is my birth-day. To-morrow I again begin to live—in this world or another. Farewell, thou gloomy abode of misery. Unwillingly I leave thee, for custom bestows charms even on a prison. Every spider is become dear to me—every mouse is my friend. The world too is but a prison, to which custom binds us. In this we are at home; in another we are unknown, and it is unpleasant to be transported into the society of strangers.

Enter STEPANOFF.

Where have you been again?

Step. Out of doors.

Crus. You seem to run from one place to another, as if you were uneasy.

Step. Are you easy?

Crus. Is all quiet without?

Step. The wolves howl.

Crus. Their howl is the death-song of slavery.

Step. Perhaps it may be so—perhaps it may not.

Crus. Hope inspires me with confidence.

Step. We all hope, but hope is only a rainbow.

Crus. Is it late?

Step. Past midnight.

Crus. I am anxious respecting the Count.

Step. So am I.

Crus. Indeed!

Step. Why not? He is married, and Athanasia mine.

Crus. Does she love you?

Step. I will take her with me by force.

Crus. Will she love you for that?

Step. It is immaterial whether she will or not.

Crus. Shame on thy brutal passion!

Step. Age fancies love—youth feels it.

Crus. A noble minded youth will never feel what an old man may not fancy.

Step. Fine words!

Crus. Which are thrown away on you.

Step. Would it were day, and every thing settled one way or the other.

Crus. The hours steal along——

Step. Very true.

Crus. Like treachery in the dark.

Step.—(*Starts*)—What do you mean by that?

Crus. Nothing. Why does the allusion affect you thus?

Step. Because—because I am impatient.

Enter BENYOWSKY.

Crus. Ha, Benyowsky! At length you are come.

Step.—(*Aside.*)—The devil protects him.—(*Aloud.*)—Welcome!

Crus. We were uneasy.

Ben. And with justice. Suspicion and distrust have taken possession of the whole village. We must use dispatch.

Crus. All is ready.

Ben. So much the better. Kudrin had brought us to the brink of ruin by his idle prattle. But for female artifice we had been lost.

Step.—(*Aside.*)—He knows nothing, I perceive.

Crus. Where is Kudrin?

Ben. I sent him to the vessel.

Crus. There he is secure.

Ben. How are our comrades divided?

Crus. A strong party guards the haven, and another patrols through the village.

Step. The largest waits in the church, for the signal of the bell.

Crus. Those in whom we place most confidence lie here asleep.

Ben. They do right. They are collecting vigour, and will exert it. Is the bridge destroyed?

Crus. That was done in the evening.

Ben. The powder and ball——

Crus. Are properly distributed.

Ben. And the ambush at the river——

Crus. Is entrusted to Boskareff's directions.

Ben. Then we may be at ease. Stepanoff, how fare you? Are we friends?

Step. Keep your promise, and we are.

Ben. What did I promise you?

Step. The possession of Athanasia.

Ben. She alone can bestow that.

Enter a CONSPIRATOR.

Con.—(To Benyowsky.)—Kasarinoff wishes to see you.

Ben. At this late hour! Admit him.

[*Exit Conspirator.*]

Step. A stranger?

Crus. If he be aware of our preparations——

Ben. Heed not that. I am surety for him.

Enter KASARINOFF hastily.

Kas. Save yourself, Benyowsky.

Ben. Why?

Kas. You are betrayed. [*Stepanoff is alarmed.*]

Ben. By whom?

Kas. By Kudrin the Cossack.

Ben. I thank you.

Kas. Nothing more?

Ben. I already knew——

Kas. And are yet so calm?

Ben. Kudrin is in safety.

Kas. Yes—indeed he is.

Ben. In our vessel.

Kas. In prison.

Ben. What say you?

Kas. But a few minutes since he was dragged before the Governor, and came from the citadel guarded by Iwan Fedrowitsch himself. He has confessed every thing.

Ben.—(*Stamping.*)—Damnation! The blockhead suffered himself to be caught, then!

Kas. The Captain will soon be here with a strong force to secure you.

Ben. Enough! We must spring the mine rather sooner than we intended.

Kas. Farewell!

Ben. Whither go you?

Kas. Home. My wife and children will be alarmed at the commotion.

Ben. Farewell, honest Kasarinoff. To-morrow you shall receive the thanks of a free man.

[*Exit Kasarinoff.*]

Double your caution. At the first signal all must be under arms.

Crus. Shall I ring the bell?

Ben. Not yet.—(*Looks at his watch.*)—Two o'clock. Would it were day!

Step. Why not proceed immediately?

Ben. That in the dark our brethren may not destroy each other.

Enter a SERVANT, accompanied by one of the CONSPIRATORS.

Ser. My lady sends this note.

Ben. Did she herself deliver it to you?

Ser. She herself.

Ben.—(*Opens the note, and the piece of red ribband falls from it.*)—Ha! I understand this. Accept my thanks, dear girl. Thou hast fulfilled thy promise.

Be this ribband the emblem of our order!—(*Fastens it to his button-hole.*)—Take that fellow into custody.

Ser.—(*Affrighted.*)—Why?

Ben. Your words are false.

Ser. I am innocent.

Ben. Away with him!

Con. Come, honest friend, I'll shew you your habitation. [*Drags him out.*]

Ben. Danger advances towards us with huge strides. We must no longer delay our operations. Cheer up, my comrades. The important hour is arrived. We must begin even before the dawn of day. Perhaps the morning sun will be a witness of our triumph. Rise, sluggards, rise! The voice of freedom calls to you. They sleep as if to-morrow were a holiday. Holla! Will none of you awake?—(*A drum is heard without.*)—Ha, ha! The captain, I see, takes upon himself the trouble of waking them. (*—All spring up as soon as they hear the sound of the drum, and grasp their guns.*)—Rouse yourselves, my comrades. The enemy is at the door.

All.—(*Rush towards the door.*)—We are awake. We are ready.

Ben. Halt! Order! Silence! Extinguish the lights.—(*He is obeyed.*)—Go, two of you, to that window, open it, and hold yourselves in readiness to fire. Go, two more of you, to the other window, and do the same. You Crustiew and Stepanoff, will guard the door. Let any person in, but no one out.—(*The drums are again heard, and Benyowsky goes to the window.*)—What is the matter there? Who disturbs our rest?

Iwan.—(*Without.*)—Count Benyowsky, I arrest you in the name of her Imperial Majesty.

Ben. Is it you, Captain? Come in, come in. An unexpected visitor is not less welcome.

Iwan. Yield! Surrender!

Ben. Allow me first to dress myself. I have just sprung out of bed, and am half naked.

Iwan. Put on your clothes, then.

Ben. Will you not come a little closer in the mean time?

Iwan. No.

Ben. I have a flask of good Hungarian wine, which is very comfortable in this cold weather, I assure you.

Iwan.—(*Pricking up his ears.*)—What?

Ben. Absolute nectar.

Iwan. Genuine Hungarian?

Ben. I acknowledge it as my countryman. Come in and taste it.

Iwan. Are you alone?

Ben. Quite alone.

Iwan. Very well. I'll come, then.—(*To his Cossacks.*)—Corporal, and all of you, be on your guard. Watch at the door with drawn swords. I shall return directly.

Ben.—(*Leaving the window.*)—That is false, old blockhead. The footsteps of the lion's den point only inwards.

Enter IWAN.

(*Stepanoff and Crustiew seize him. He struggles, and attempts to call to his men.*)

Ben.—(*Draws forth a pistol.*)—Not a syllable, or I'll shoot you on the spot.

Iwan. How! Dare you attempt——

Ben. Captain, be calm We are on this occasion the stronger party.

Iwan. Damnation!

Ben. Deliver up your sword.

Iwan. Remember who I am.

Ben. Yes—you are our prisoner.

Iwan. No violence, I hope.

Ben. In no respect shall you be ill-treated, if you do what I require?

Iwan. What do you require?

Ben. Come to this open window, call to your Cossacks, in a cheerful tone, and tell them all to enter. Say there is no danger, and they shall have a glass of brandy.

Iwan. I will not.

Ben. Then you must die.

Iwan. That is worse than the other.

Ben. Then obey my command.

Iwan. Command!

Ben. Or request, if you like that better.

Iwan. Request! Oh, that's another affair.

[Approaches the window.

Ben.—(Holding the pistol before him.)—This ball shall pass through your head, if, by a single ambiguous expression, you betray——

Iwan. Stand off, and let me manage matters.—(Calls to the Cossacks.)—My lads, all is quiet here. Come in, and drink.

Ben.—(Whispering to him.)—All.

Iwan. Come in, all of you.

Ben. Unarmed.

Iwan. Place your muskets, in the mean time, against the wall.

Cos.—(Without.)—Very well, Captain.

Ben. Run out, brethren, seize them, and confine them in the vault. [All the Conspirators rush out.

Iwan. Do you know what this joke may cost you?

Ben. Well?

Iwan. When I use the term *joke*, I mean to imply earnest.

Ben. In earnest then, what may it cost me?

Iwan. The knout.

Ben. Indeed!

Iwan. Your nose and ears.

Ben. Sure!

Iwan. Let me go.

Ben. Patience!

Iwan. You are undone. Our preparations——

Ben. What are they?

Iwan. All our troops are under arms.

Ben. Indeed!

Iwan. They are advancing.

Ben. So much the better.

Iwan. With artillery.

Ben. They do us great honour.

Iwan. They will set the village on fire.

Ben. Then the fire must be extinguished.

Iwan. They will cut you to pieces.

Ben. Oh, misery!

Iwan. It will be in vain that you sue for quarter.

Ben. Just now, it is your turn to do so, Captain.

Iwan.—(*Aside.*)—Damn the fellow, and his Hungarian wine.

Re-enter the CONSPIRATORS, with lights.

Crus. All is happily adjusted.

Ben. 'Tis well. The Captain has been kind enough to inform me that the enemy is advancing with artillery. We must prepare to receive them. Go, comrades, ring the bell.—(*The bell is heard.*)—Captain, as no officer can resign his command in such an emergency as the present, I must request you to join the Cossacks in the vault.

Iwan. What! Put me into a vault!

Ben. Fancy it a wine-vault.

Iwan. Never.

Ben.—(*Shrugging his shoulders.*)—I shall be sorry to use compulsion.

Iwan. I'll sooner be hewn in pieces.

Ben. That shall be done, if you please.

Iwan. How long am I to remain there?

Ben. Only till morning.

Iwan. Well, be it so. You see, Count Benyowsky, I undergo a great deal to oblige you. When I use the term *a great deal*, I mean to imply *the vault*.
[*Exit guarded.*]

Ben. That fool is disposed of. Did none escape?

Crus. A single man, who sprung hastily back, and availed himself of the darkness.

Ben. That is unfortunate. The Governor will still learn, then——

ATHANASIA rushes in, habited as a Cossack, with a drawn sabre in her hand.

Athan. Benyowsky! Save yourself.

Ben.—(*Astonished.*)—Athanasia!

Athan.—(*Breathless.*)—Soldiers! On every side soldiers!

Ben. What means this disguise?

Athan. I will die with you.

Ben. Noble girl!

Athan. You are betrayed, infamously betrayed.

Ben. I know it. Kudrin——

Athan. Not Kudrin.—(*Pointing to Stepanoff.*)—There stands the traitor.

Ben. Who? Stepanoff?

Athan.—(*To Stepanoff, drawing forth his letter.*)—Do you know this letter? [*Stepanoff is confounded.*]

Ben.—(*Tears the letter from her hand, and reads it.*)—Ha, villain! Dost thou know this letter?

Step. Think'st thou I fear thee, and shall deny my hand? I wrote it.

Ben. Is it thus that thou makest a sport of thy oath, and the lives of thy brethren?

Step. Yes, of thy life I make a sport.

Ben.—(*Turning to the rest.*)—Treachery!

All. Down with him!

Step. As you please. Without this girl, my life is a burden to me. Let me have her, and the last drop of my blood shall flow in your defence.

Athan. Let thee have me! Cast me rather into my grave than into his arms.

Step. Damnation! Vengeance, vengeance! Then welcome death.

All. Down with him!

Ben. Hold! Punish him by contempt.

Step.—(*In a phrenzy.*)—Contempt! Me!—(*Hastily draws his sword, and aims a blow at Benyowsky.*)

Athan.—(*Holding him back.*)—Heavens!

Conspirators seize him from behind, and disarm him.

Step.—(*Endeavouring to suppress his fury.*)—Release me. I surrender. Benyowsky, you have conquered. She was your guardian angel—I feel penitent—forgive me—kill me—

Ben. Lead him away.

Step. Only once more, Athanasia, once more, stretch forth your soft hand as a token of forgiveness to the criminal—let me press my lips to it—

Athan.—(*Compassionately presenting her hand to him.*)—Unfortunate man!—(*Stepanoff suddenly draws out a knife, and attempts to stab her.*)

Ben.—(*Pushes her aside.*)—Ha! Monster!

Step. That too has failed.

Ben. Now dispatch him. [*All draw their swords.*

Step. That pleasure you shall not have.—(*Plunges the knife into his breast. Athanasia starts back with horror, and hides her face in Benyowsky's bosom.*)

Ben. Madman!

Step.—(*Writhing.*)—Well aimed—Well aimed! Curse on thee, Benyowsky! Curse—

Ben. Drag him out.

Step. Curse on Benyowsky! [*He is carried out.*

Ben. Compose yourself, dear Athanasia.

Athan.—(*Trembling.*)—Is he dead?

Ben. Happily for us.

Atkan. Yet I pity him.

Ben. He was his own executioner.

Athan. Love——

Ben. Profane not the name.

(A discharge of muskets, &c. is heard at a distance, and gradually increases through this scene.)

Ben. What is that?

Athan. The soldiers——

Ben. Have they met already?

Crus. 'Tis well. The decisive hour is arrived.

Enter a CONSPIRATOR.

Con. We hear a discharge of muskets.

Crus. So do we.

Ben. To arms, comrades!

Crus. Ring the bell.

(From time to time the bell is heard, and is again interrupted by the noise of the muskets, &c.)

Ben. Where will you stay, Athanasia?

Athan. With you.

Ben. But the danger——

Athan. I'll share it with you.

Enter another CONSPIRATOR.

2 Con. The firing increases.

Ben. In what quarter?

2 Con. The sound seems to come up the river.

Crus. Probably Boskareff.

Enter a third CONSPIRATOR.

3 *Con.* Help! Help!

Ben. What now?

3 *Con.* The enemy is too strong for us—below in the valley—

Ben. Away! Away! be our watch word, liberty or death. [*Rushes out.*

All.—(*Brandishing their swords.*)—Liberty or death! [*Exeunt.*

Scene, an Apartment in the Citadel.

The GOVERNOR is walking uneasily up and down.

Gov. Not one returned as yet! What can this mean? Where is Iwan? Where are all the men whom he promised to send with accounts of his proceedings? Where is my servant? I hear shot after shot. These few men defend themselves most obstinately. Oh, Benyowsky, dreadful will be thy lot, if my vengeance is equal to thy ingratitude.

A SOLDIER rushes in.

Sol. I have escaped.

Gov. Where is your Captain?

Sol. A prisoner.

Gov. Where is my servant?

Sol. A prisoner. They deceived the Captain.

Gov. Do you know nothing more?

Sol. They are coming hither.

Gov. Who?

Sol. The rebels.

Gov. Are there many?

Sol. A multitude.

Gov. Are there any free men among them?

Sol. I believe there are.

Gov.—(*With asperity.*)—Ay, most likely, for rebellion is infectious as the plague. He who attempts to gain the hearts of the populace by kindnesses, has written his account on the surface of the sea. What means this discharge of muskets?

Sol. The carnage in the valley is dreadful.

Gov. Are our men victorious?

Sol. The reverse. They fly.

Gov. Which way?

Sol. Towards the forest.

Gov. And the artillery?

Sol. Is left behind them.

Gov. Cowardly hirelings? Go, messenger of evil. Alarm the fortress. Let every one hasten to his post.

[*Exit Soldier.*]

It grows serious. Where can I leave the women.

THEODORA *rushes in.*

Theo. Oh, Heavens!

Gov. Is my daughter asleep?

Theo. She is gone.

Gov. Gone!

Theo. Escaped in men's clothes.

Gov. Die, grey-headed father!

Theo.—(*Wringing her hands.*)—Unhappy girl that I am!

Gov. That pierced to my heart.

Theo. Why was I silent?

Gov. Aid me, ye sensations of my duty.

[*The alarm drum is heard.*]

Re-enter SOLDIER hastily.

Sol. We are lost.

Gov. More misfortunes?

Sol. The rebels are victorious.

Gov. Where?

Sol. They are already on the bridge.

Gov. Who let the bridge down?

Sol. We thought they were Cossacks.

Gov. Bar the gate.

Sol. They have hewn it in pieces.

Gov. Without opposition?

Sol. They destroy all who oppose them.

Gov. 'Tis well. The ringleader shall not escape my vengeance. [*Rushes into an adjoining apartment.*

Theo.—(*Sinks on her knees.*)—Heaven assist us!

Re-enter GOVERNOR armed with pistols.

Gov. Away towards them!

Theo.—(*Throws herself on the floor, and intercepts his passage.*)—For God's sake, Sir—

Gov. What do you want?

Theo. Your life is in danger.

Gov. If my honour be lost, of what value is my life! [*Pushes her away with his foot, and is going.*

Enter BENYOWSKY, CRUSTIEW, BATURIN, and other CONSPIRATORS.

(*Theodora runs away.*)

Ben. Yield.

Gov.—(*Retreats a step, and fires a pistol at Benyowsky.*)—To hell with thee!

Ben.—(*Suddenly strikes his left arm.*)—I am wounded.

Gov. Not yet dead?

(*He attempts to fire the second pistol, but is disarmed.*)

Ben. Be calm, governor.

Gov.—(*Enraged.*)—Calm!

Ben. I came hither to protect you.

Gov. Thou to protect me!

Ben. I shall not forget how much I am indebted to you.

Gov. Indeed!—Ha! Ha! Ha!

Ben. Crustiew, I deliver him into your hands.

Crus. He is the hostage for our freedom.

Ben. Let his life be sacred to you.

Crus. To me and every one.

Ben. Conduct him to his own room, and guard the door.

Crus.—(To Governor.)—Be so kind as to follow me.

Gov. Oh, God! Thy thunder is asleep.

[*Exit, guarded by Crustiew, &c.*]

Ben. The greatest difficulty is at an end.

Bat. Thank Heaven.

Ben. And the valour of our comrades.

Bat. You said you were wounded.

Ben. I do not feel it. Go, Baturin. Let every thing we want be taken on board—ammunition, money, provisions—

Bat. They are already safely lodged in the vessel, besides a costly booty.

Ben. That you may divide among you. Where is Athanasia?

Bat. I saw her last on the stairs.

Ben. Surely she will not—

[*Going.*]

ATHANASIA *rushes in.*

Athan. Where is my father?

Ben. In safety.

Athan. Dead?

Ben. Alive.

Athan. Where?

Ben. In his room.

Athan. You deceive me.

Ben. Indeed I do not.

Athan. I heard firing.

Ben. He resisted.

Athan. Heavens! You are wounded.

Ben. In a trifling degree. Be not alarmed.

Athan. I hasten to my father.

Ben. Spare him till his grief has in some degree subsided.

Athan. Who is with him?

Ben. Crustiew.

Athan. Alas! what have I done?

Enter a CONSPIRATOR hastily.

Con. The people are surrounding the citadel.

Ben. Are they in arms?

Con. The troops are advancing to storm it.

Ben. Away to the ramparts, then!

Con. There are but few of us. Our comrades are scattered on all sides.

Ben.—(*After a moment's meditation.*)—Drag the women, children and old men into the church. Then threaten that you will set fire to it, unless we are allowed to depart peaceably.

Con. Immediately.

Ben. Lead the Governor in chains upon the rampart, and shew him to the people. His head is surety for our safety. [*Exit Conspirator.*]

Athan. Mercy!

Ben. Be not alarmed. This is but an empty threat. The people love your father.

Athan. Who does not love him?

Ben. They will tremble for his life, and let us depart unmolested.

Athan. Oh, Benyowsky, as yet it is in your power to rectify every thing. Restore yourself to me—me to my father. Release him. Open the gates. You have fought like a hero—now act like a man. You have conquered your enemies—now conquer your-

self. Exchange the laurel of victory for the myrtle of love—the perils of the ocean for repose in the arms of Athanasia. Come to my father, rid him of his chains, and receive his blessing. Your comrades will be pardoned, your own peace of mind will be restored, and I shall be supremely happy.

Ben. Athanasia, you forget I have—a wife.

Athan. Alas! I know not what I say.

Ben. The die is cast. The great wheel of fate rolls on irresistibly. Whose power can seize a spoke, and detain it?

Athan. Forgive me, heaven. I fear too I shall be swallowed by this whirlpool.

Ben. Sister, I will keep my promise.

Re-enter CONSPIRATOR.

Con. Your plan succeeds.

Ben. Are they all quiet?

Con. They tremble at our threats, and sue for peace.

Ben. And the Governor?

Con. He addressed them from the rampart, and desired them not to spare him.

Ben. Ha!

Con. “Storm the citadel,” cried he. “I command it in the name of her Imperial Majesty.”

Ben. Greatly, nobly said!

Con. But in vain.

Ben. 'Tis well. Then nothing now detains us. Beat the drum, that our scattered comrades may assemble. Lead the Governor to the haven in the midst of the confederates. There he shall be released. Load your muskets and cannon. Let artillery precede and follow the procession, and let several of our comrades bear lighted matches in their hands. No further acts of hostility shall take place, but let all proceed without tumult, without shouts, or any ex-

pression likely again to rouse the fury of the populace. Go. I follow you.—(*Exit Conspirator.*)—Come, dear Athanasia.

Athan.—(*Unwilling to go.*)—Alas! This is my paternal abode.

Ben. Cast no glance towards what is past.

Athan. Here I was born—here have I felt the blessings of a mother's—of a father's love.

Ben. Do not make departure more painful than it need be.

Athan. For the last time——

Ben. You are still at liberty to stay.

Athan. Never, never again shall I behold this seat of all my youthful pleasures. Never again shall I hear the mild voice of my father.

Ben. You torment yourself and me.

Athan. Forgive me. [*The drum is heard.*]

Ben. The moments are precious.

Athan.—(*Suppressing her anguish.*)—I am ready.

Ben. Beloved Athanasia, to part with you would be horrible, yet the choice is left to you. Stay, or go.

Athan. Stay!—Oh, my father!—Beat the drum again and again, that the noise may overpower my voice.—Away! Away! Lead me away.

Ben. Lean on your brother's arm.

Athan.—(*Looking once more mournfully around.*)—Blessings be on my aged father. [*Exit.*]

Scene changes to a Port of the Haven. The vessel is ready to sail. The crew is diligently employed, and Conspirators are seen running to and fro. A confused noise is heard on every side.

Heave the anchor.—Unfurl all the sails.—The wind is north-east-by-east. Pilot!—There they come.—The whole party is crowding down the hill.—Luck be with us! All is ready.—Huzza! huzza!

Enter BENYOWSKY, ATHANASIA, CRUSTIEW, and the rest of the CONSPIRATORS. The GOVERNOR, exhausted with fury, is conducted in chains by a strong guard. CRUSTIEW and the CONSPIRATORS run up and down the deck of the vessel, making preparations, and giving orders. BENYOWSKY approaches the GOVERNOR, while ATHANASIA fearfully remains at a distance.

Ben. But a few moments are in my power. Do we part as friends?—(Governor casts a look of contempt at him, turns away, and gnashes his teeth.)—Was it a crime that I was made a prisoner when fighting against Russians? Is it a crime that I this day break my cruel fetters?—(Governor is obstinately silent.)—Honour, and the love of my native country, led me to take this step. An oath bound my fate to that of my comrades.—(Governor returns no answer.)—I left a pregnant wife at home. Old man, what would you have done in my situation?—(Governor preserves a sullen silence.)—Am I unworthy of a word or look? Enough! What anguish and rage now condemn, your cooler blood will palliate to-morrow. Farewell.—(Governor, enraged beyond all bounds, grasps his chains, and is rushing towards Benyowsky, but is held back. He espies Athanasia, strikes his forehead with both hands, and utters loud lamentations.)

Athan.—(Runs to him, and falls at his feet.)—Pardon me, my father.

Gov.—(With averted face.)—Who speaks to me?

Athan. Your blessing!

Gov. My curse pursue thee across the ocean! Hear it when the tempest rages—Hear it in the arms of thy paramour. Tremble at it, when the lightnings hiss around thee; and when the sun shines, think with horror that it shines upon the

grave of thy murdered father—murdered by thee. When the thunder roars, may'st thou fancy that thou hearest my curse; and when a gentle zephyr breathes upon thee, may'st thou fancy it my dying groan. May all forsake thee at thy last hour, except the image of thy raging father, made more ghastly, and more horrible, by thy feverish fancy. Should'st thou bear children, be the curse of their grandfather their inheritance, and may their ingratitude revenge me on their mother. (*Athanasia sinks speechless, and almost senseless, into Benyowsky's arms. The Governor is deeply affected.*)—Remain with me, my child. My poor deluded child, remain with me. I am old and feeble. When your mother died, she said, “Do not weep—I leave you Athanasia.” Will you make the words of your dying mother false? In a few weeks, perhaps in a few days (how soon will they pass!) I shall leave this world, and you will be able to say, “I have fulfilled the command of my mother—I have closed my father's eyes.”

Ben.—(*Much agitated.*)—Spare her.

Gov. Thou art my only joy, my only consolation. I love thee with a father's tenderness. No paramour will love thee with such fondness. Cloyed by possession, he will repay thy affection with disgust, while thy aged father requires no further reward for his blessing, than the gentle pressure of thy hand upon his eyelids when they wish to close for ever. Oh, that my hair were not already grey, for at this moment it would become so, and such a sight perhaps might move thee.—(*Athanasia attempts to rise, and falls back in a swoon.*)

Ben.—(*Deeply affected.*)—Heavens!—Help!—Take her—bear her away.

Gov.—(*Overpowered with anguish.*)—Count Benyowsky, if thou hast any faith in a God, listen to me. I have never injured thee. I have been—as

kind towards thee as I could. Thou hast robbed me of my rank and honour. Leave me my daughter, and I still am rich. Count Benyowsky, if thou hast any faith in a God, listen to me. Oh, listen to me for the sake of thy wife, who prays for thy return. How can Heaven grant her prayer, if thou robbest me, a poor old man, of my only jewel? Listen to me, and grant my request for *thy* child's sake. What wouldst thou do with *mine*? See! She is already dead. Give me, give me the body of my daughter.—(*Falls on his knees, and raises his trembling hands towards Heaven.*)—Count Benyowsky—I have no words—I have no tears—but God has lightnings.

Ben.—(*Is extremely agitated, and lays Athanasia, still insensible, in the arms of her father.*)—Take her, old man.—(*Draws out the picture of his wife.*)—Emilia! My wife!—To the vessel instantly!—(*A confused noise takes place, and all hasten on board.*)

Gov.—(*Pressing his daughter to his bosom with his left hand, while he stretches forth the other towards the vessel.*)—God bless thee, stranger. God bless thee!



END OF VOL. II.

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