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Bt. from Webster

3865

f.

18



J. H. Bridges,

This, too, like the "Six Dramas" was given  
to me by the author - who has corrected  
a few misprints.



# THE MIGHTY MAGICIAN.

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## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AURELIO,	<i>Viceroy of Antioch.</i>
LELIO,	<i>his Son.</i>
FABIO,	<i>a chief Officer in Antioch.</i>
FLORO,	<i>his Son.</i>
LISANDRO,	<i>an aged Christian.</i>
JUSTINA,	<i>his Daughter.</i>
CIPRIANO,	<i>a Professor of Learning.</i>
EUSEBIO, }	<i>his Scholars.</i>
JULIAN, }	
LUCIFER,	<i>the Evil Spirit.</i>

CITIZENS, SOLDIERS, &c.

570  
1220  
100



# THE MIGHTY MAGICIAN.

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## ACT I.

SCENE I. *A retired Grove near Antioch.—Enter CIPRIANO, EUSEBIO, and JULIAN, with books.*

*Cipr.* THIS is the place, this the sequester'd spot  
Where, in the flower about and leaf above,  
I find the shade and quiet that I love,  
And oft resort to rest a wearied wing ;  
And here, good lads, leave me alone, but not  
Lonely, companion'd with the books you bring :  
That while the city from all open doors  
Abroad her gaping population pours  
To swell the triumph of the pomp divine  
That with procession, sacrifice, and song  
Convoys her tutelary Zeus along  
For installation in his splendid shrine ;  
I, flying from the hubbub of the throng  
That overflows her thoroughfares and streets,  
And here but faintly touches and retreats,  
In solitary meditation may  
Discount at ease my summer holiday.  
You to the city back, and take your fill  
Of festival, and all that with the time's,  
And your own youth's, triumphant temper chimes ;  
Leaving me here alone to mine ; until  
Yon golden idol reaching overhead,  
Dragg'd from his height, and bleeding out his fires  
Along the threshold of the west, expires,  
And drops into the sea's sepulchral lead.



*Eusebio.* Nay, sir, think once again, and go with us,  
Or, if you will, without us ; only, go ;  
Lest Antioch herself as well as we  
Cry out upon a maim'd solemnity.

*Julian.* Oh, how I wish I had not brought the books,  
Which you have ever at command—indeed,  
Without them, all within them carry—here—  
Garner'd—aloft—

*Euseb.* In truth, if stay you will,  
I scarcely care to go myself.

*Cipr.* Nay, nay,  
Good lads, good boys, all thanks, and all the more,  
If you but leave it simply as I say.  
You have been somewhat over-taxed of late,  
And want some holiday.

*Julian.* Well, sir, and you ?

*Cipr.* Oh, I am of that tougher age and stuff  
Whose relaxation is its work. Besides,  
Think you the poor Professor needs no time  
For solitary tillage of his brains  
Before such shrewd ingatherers as you  
Come on him for their harvest unawares ?  
Away, away ! and like good citizens  
Help swell the general joy with two such faces  
As such as mine would only help to cloud.

*Euseb.* Nay, sir—

*Cipr.* But I say, Yea, sir ! and my scholars  
By yea and nay as I would have them do.

*Euseb.* Well, then, farewell, sir.

*Cipr.* Farewell, both of you.

[*Exeunt* EUSEBIO and JULIAN.]

Away with them, light heart and wingèd heel,  
Soon leaving drowsy Pallas and her dull  
Professor out of sight, and out of mind.  
And yet not so perhaps ; and, were it so,  
Why, better with the frolic herd forgetting  
All in the youth and sunshine of the day  
Than ruminating in the shade apart.  
Well, each his way and humour ; some to lie

Like Nature's sickly children in her lap,  
While all the stronger brethren are at play ;  
When ev'n the mighty Mother's self would seem  
Drest out in all her festival attire  
In honour of the universal Sire  
Whom Antioch as for her own to-day  
Propitiates. Hark, the music !—Speed, good lads,  
Or you will be too late. Ah, needless caution !  
Ev'n now already half way down the hill,  
Spurr'd by the very blood within their veins,  
They catch up others, who catching from them  
The fire they re-inflame, the flying troop  
Consuming fast to distance in a cloud  
Of dust themselves have kindled, whirls away  
Where the shrill music blown above the walls  
Tells of the solemn work begun within.  
Why, ev'n the shrieking pipe that pierces here,  
Shows me enough of all the long procession  
Of white-robed priest and chanting chorister,  
The milkwhite victim crown'd, and high aloft  
The chariot of the nodding deity,  
Whose brazen eyes that as their sockets see,  
Stare at his loyal votaries. Ah me !—  
Well, here too happier, if not wiser, those  
Who, with the heart of unsuspecting youth,  
Take up tradition from their fathers' hands  
To pass it on to others in their turn ;  
But leaving me behind them in the race  
With less indeed than little appetite  
For ceremonies, and to gods, like these,  
That, let the rabble shout for as they please,  
Another sort begin to shake their heads at,  
And heav'n to rumble with uneasily  
As flinging out some antiquated gear.  
So wide, since subtle Greece the pebble flung  
Into the sleeping pool of superstition,  
Its undulation spreads to other shores,  
And saps at the foundation of our schools.  
—Why, this last Roman, Caius Plinius—

Who drawing nature's growth and history  
 Down to her root and first cause—What says he?—  
 Ev'n at the very threshold of his book  
 A definition laying over which  
 The clumsy mimic idols of our shrines  
 Stumble and break to pieces—oh, here it is—  
 “*Quapropter effigiem Dei formamque quærere,  
 Imbecillitatis humanæ reor*”—  
 “All visible effigies of God  
 But types of human imbecility.”—  
 But what has Antioch to say to that,  
 Who at such cost of marble and of gold  
 Has built the very temple into which  
 She drags her tutelary Zeus to-day?—  
 Zeus veritable God, this effigy  
 Is none of him at all! But then, alas!  
 This same *Quapropter* follows a premiss  
 That elbows out Zeus with his effigy.  
 For—as I gather from his foreign word—  
 Wherever, or Whatever, Deity—  
*Si modo est alius*—if distinct at all  
 From universal Nature—it must be  
 One all-informing, individual Whole,  
 All eye, all ear, all self, all sense, all soul—  
 Whereas this Zeus of ours, though Chief indeed—  
 Nay, *because* chief of other gods than he,  
 Comes from this Roman's hand no God at all!—  
 This is a knotty question.

*Lucifer (without).* Nor while I  
 Tangle, for you, good doctor, to untie.

*Cipr.* What! The poor bird scarce settled on the bough,  
 Before the fowler after him! How now?  
 Who's there?

*Lucifer (entering habited as a Merchant).* A stranger;  
 therefore pardon him,  
 Who somehow parted from his company,  
 And lost in his own thoughts (a company  
 You know one cannot lose so easily)  
 Has lost his way to Antioch.

*Cipr.* Antioch !  
Whose high white towers and temples ev'n from here  
Challenge the sight, and scarce a random line  
Traced by a wandering foot along the grass  
But thither leads for centre.

*Luc.* The old story,  
Of losing what one should have found on earth  
By staring after something in the clouds—  
Is it not so ?

*Cipr.* To-day too, when so many  
Are flocking thither to the festival,  
Whose current might have told—and taken—you  
The way you wished to go.

*Luc.* To say the truth,  
My lagging here behind as much I think  
From a distaste for that same festival  
(Of which they told us as we came along)  
As inadvertency—my way of life  
Busied enough, if not too much, with men  
To care for them in crowd on holidays,  
When business stands, and neither they nor I  
Gaping about can profit one another ;  
And therefore, by your leave—but only so—  
I fain would linger in this quiet place  
Till evening, under whose dusky cloak  
I may creep unobserv'd to Antioch.

*Cipr. (aside).* Humane address, at least. And why  
should I  
Grudge him the quiet I myself desire ?—  
(*Aloud*) Nay, this is public ground—for you, as me,  
To use it at your pleasure.

*Luc.* Still with yours—  
Whom by your sober suit and composed looks,  
And by this still society of books,  
I take to be a scholar—

*Cipr.* And if so ?

*Luc.* Ill brooking idle company.

*Cipr.* Perhaps ;  
But that no wiser traveller need be—

And, if I judge of you as you of me,  
Though with no book hung out for sign before,  
Perchance a scholar too.

*Luc.* If so, more read  
In men than books, as travellers are wont.  
But, if myself but little of a bookman,  
Addicted much to scholars' company,  
Of whom I meet with many on my travels,  
And who, you know, themselves are living books.

*Cipr.* And you have travell'd much?

*Luc.* Aye, little else,  
One may say, since I came into the world  
Than going up and down it : visiting  
As many men and cities as Ulysses,  
From first his leaving Troy without her crown,  
Along the charmèd coasts he pass'd, with all  
The Polyphemes and Circes in the way,  
Right to the Pillars where his ship went down.  
Nay, and yet farther, where the dark Phœnician  
Digs the pale metal which the sun scarce deigns  
With a slant glance to ripen in earth's veins :  
Or back again so close beneath his own  
Proper dominion, that the very mould  
Beneath he kindles into proper gold,  
And strikes a living Iris into stone.

*Cipr.* One place, however, where Ulysses was,  
I think you have not been to—where he saw  
Thosé he left dead upon the field of Troy  
Come one by one to lap the bowl of blood  
Set for them in the fields of Asphodel.

*Luc.* Humph!—as to that, a voyage which if all  
Must take, less need to brag of ; or perchance  
Ulysses, or his poet, apt to err  
About the people and their doings there—  
But let the wonders in the world below  
Be what they may ; enough in that above  
For any sober curiosity,  
Without one's diving down before one's time :  
Not only countries now as long ago

Known, till'd, inhabited, and civilized ;  
As Egypt, Greece, and Rome, with all their arts,  
Trades, customs, politics, and history :  
But deep in yet scarce navigated seas,  
Countries uncouth, with their peculiar growths  
Of vegetation or of life ; where men  
Are savage as the soil they never till ;  
Or never were, or were so long ago,  
Their very story blotted from the page  
Of earth they wrote it on ; unless perchance  
From riot-running nature's overgrowth  
Of swarming vegetation, peeps some scarce  
Decypherable monument, which yet,  
To those who find the key, perchance has told  
Stories of men, more mighty men, of old,  
Or of the gods themselves who walk'd the world  
When with the dews of first creation wet.

*Cipr.* Oh knowledge from the fountain freshly drawn  
Without the tedious go-between of books !  
But with fresh soul and senses unimpair'd  
What from the pale reflection of report  
We catch at second hand, and much beside  
That in our solitary cells we miss.

*Luc.* Aye, truly we that travel see strange things,  
Though said to tell of stranger ; some of us,  
Deceived ourselves, or seeking to deceive,  
With prodigies and monsters which the world,  
As wide and full of wonders as it is,  
Never yet saw, I think, nor ever will :  
Which yet your scholars use for clay and straw  
Of which to build your mighty folios—  
For instance, this same bulky Roman here,  
Whose leaf you turn'd, I doubt impatiently,  
When my intrusion rustled in the leaves—

*Cipr.* Hah ! But how knew you—

*Luc.* Nay, if some stray words  
Of old familiar Latin met my ear  
As I stood hesitating.

*Cipr.* (*holding up the book*). This at least

You read then ?

*Luc.* One might say before 'twas written.

*Cipr.* But how so ?

*Luc.* Oh, this same sufficient Roman,  
 What is he but another of the many  
 Who having seen a little and heard more  
 That others pick'd as loosely up before,  
 Constructs his little bird's-nest universe  
 Of shreds and particles of false and true  
 Cemented with some thin philosophy,  
 All filch'd from others, as from him to be  
 By the next pilfering philosopher,  
 Till blown away before the rising wind  
 Of true discovery, or dropt to nothing  
 After succeeding seasons of neglect.

*Cipr. (aside).* A strange man this—sharp wit and biting  
 word.

*(Aloud)* Yet surely Man, after so many ages  
 Of patient observation of the world  
 He lives in, is entitled by the wit  
 Vouchsafed him by the Maker of the world  
 To draw into some comprehensive whole  
 The stray particulars.

*Luc.* Aye, and forsooth,  
 Not only the material world he lives in ;  
 But, having of this undigested heap  
 Composed a World, must make its Maker too,  
 Of abstract attributes, of each of which  
 Still more unsure than of the palpable,  
 Forthwith he draws to some consistent One  
 The accumulated ignorance of each  
 In so compact a plausibility  
 As light to carry as it was to build.

*Cipr.* But, since (I know not how) you hit upon  
 The question I was trying when you came ;  
 And, spite of your disclaiming scholarship,  
 Seem versed in that which occupies the best—  
 If Pliny blunder with his single God,  
 As in our twilight reason well he may,

Confess however that a Deity  
 Plural and self-discordant, as he says,  
 Is yet more like frail man's imagination,  
 Who, for his own necessities and lusts,  
 Splits up and mangles the Divine idea  
 To pieces, as he wants a piece of each ;  
 Not only gods for all the elements  
 Divided into land, and sea, and sky ;  
 But gods of health, wealth, love, and fortune ; nay,  
 Of war and murder, rape and robbery ;  
 Men of their own worse nature making gods  
 To serve the very vices that suggest them,  
 Which yet upon their fellow-men they visit  
 (Else were an end of human polity)  
 With chain and fine and banishment and death.  
 So that unless man made such gods as these,  
 Then are these gods worse than the man they made.  
 And for the attributes, which though indeed  
 You gibe at us for canvassing, yourself  
 Must grant—as whether one or manifold,  
 Deity in its simplest definition  
 Must be at least eternal—

*Luc.* Well?—

*Cipr.* Yet those  
 Who stuff Olympus are so little that,  
 That Zeus himself, the sovereign of all,  
 Barely escaped devouring at his birth  
 By his own father, who anticipated  
 And found some such hard measure for himself ;  
 And as for Zeus' own progeny—some born  
 Of so much baser matter than his brain,  
 As from his eggs, which the all-mighty swan  
 Impregnated, and mortal Leda lay ;  
 And whose two chicken-deities once hatcht  
 Now live and die on each alternate day.

*Luc.* Aye, but if much of this be allegory  
 In which the wisdom of antiquity  
 Veils the pure Deity from eyes profane—

*Cipr.* —Deity taking arms against itself



Under Troy walls, wounding and wounded—aye,  
 And, trailing heavenly ichor from their wounds,  
 So help'd by others from the field to one  
 Who knew the leech's art themselves did not.

*Luc.* Softly—if not to swear to allegory,  
 Still less to all the poets sing of heaven,  
 High up Parnassus as they think to sit.

*Cipr.* But these same poets, therefore sacred call'd,  
 They are who these same allegories spin  
 Which time and fond tradition consecrates ;  
 What might have been of the divine within  
 So overgrown with folly and with sin  
 As but a spark of God would such impure  
 Assimilation with himself abjure,  
 Which yet with all the nostril that he may  
 Zeus snuffs from Antioch's sacrifice to-day.  
 Besides, beyond the reach of allegory  
 The gods themselves in their own oracles  
 Doubly themselves convict—  
 As when they urge two nations on to war,  
 By promising the victory to each ;  
 Whereby on one side their omniscience  
 Suffers, as their all-goodness on the other.

*Luc.* What if such seeming contradictions aim  
 Where human understanding cannot reach ?  
 But granting for the sake of argument,  
 And for that only, what you now premise ;  
 What follows ?

*Cipr.* Why, that if, as Pliny writes,  
 Deity by its very definition  
 Be one, eternal, absolute, all wise,  
 All good, omnipotent, all ear, all eyes,  
 Incapable of disintegration—  
 If this be Deity indeed—

*Luc.* Then what ?

*Cipr.* Simply—that we in Antioch know him not.

*Luc.* Rash leap to necessary non-conclusion  
 From a premiss that quarrels with itself  
 More than the deity it would impugn ;

For if one God eternal and all wise,  
Omnipotent to do as to devise,  
Whence this disorder and discordance in—  
Not only this material universe,  
That seems created only to be rack'd  
By the rebellion of its elements,  
In earthquake and tempestuous anarchy--  
But also in the human microcosm  
You say created to reflect it all?  
For Deity, all goodness as all wise,  
Why create man the thing of lust and lies  
You say reflects himself in his false god?—  
By modern oracle no more convicted  
Of falsehood, than by that first oracle  
Which first creation settled in man's heart.  
No, if you must define, premise, conclude,  
Away with all the coward squeamishness  
That dares not face the universe it questions ;  
Blinking the evil and antagonism  
Into its very constitution breathed  
By him who, but himself to quarrel with,  
Quarrels as might the many with each other.  
Or would you be yourself one with yourself,  
Catch hold of such as Epicurus' skirt,  
Who, desperately confounded this confusion  
Of matter, spirit, good and evil, yea,  
Godhead itself, into a universe  
That is created, roll'd along, and ruled,  
By no more wise direction than blind Chance.  
Trouble yourself no more with disquisition  
That by sad, slow, and unprogressive steps  
Of wasted soul and body lead to nothing :  
And only sure of life's short breathing-while,  
And knowing that the gods who threaten us  
With after-vengeance of the very crimes  
They revel in themselves, are nothing more  
Than the mere coinage of our proper brain  
To cheat us of our scanty pleasure here  
With terror of a harsh account hereafter ;—

Eat, drink, be merry ; crown yourselves with flowers  
 About as lasting as the heads they garland ;  
 And snatching what you can of life's poor feast,  
 When summon'd to depart, with no ill grace,  
 Like a too greedy guest, cling to the table  
 Whither the generations that succeed  
 Press forward famish'd for their turn to feed.  
 Nay, or before your time self-surfeited,  
 Wait not for nature's signal to be gone,  
 But with the potion of the spotted weed,  
 That peradventure wild beside your door  
 For some such friendly purpose cheaply grows,  
 Anticipate too tardy nature's call :  
 Ev'n as one last great Roman of them all  
 Dismiss'd himself betimes into the sum  
 Of universe ; not nothing to become ;  
 For that can never cease that was before ;  
 But not that sad Lucretius any more.

*Cipr.* Oh, were it not that sometimes through the dark,  
 That walls us all about, a random ray  
 Breaks in to tell one of a better day  
 Beyond—

*Enter LELIO and FLORO, as about to fight.*

*Lelio.* Enough—these branches that exclude the sun  
 Defy all other inquisition.  
 No need of further way.

*Floro.* Nor further word ;  
 Draw, sir, at once—

*Lelio.* Nay, parry that yourself  
 Which waited not your summons to be drawn.

*Cipr.* Lelio, and Floro ?

*Floro.* What, will the leaves blab ?

*Lelio.* And with their arms arrest a just revenge ?

*Cipr.* And well indeed may trees begin to talk,  
 When men as you go babbling.

*Floro.* Whoso speaks  
 And loves his life, hold back.

*Lelio.* I know the voice,

But dazzled with the darkness—Cipriano !

*Cipr.* Aye ; Cipriano, sure enough ; as you  
Lelio and Floro.

*Floro.* Well, let that suffice,  
And leave us as you find us.

*Cipr.* No, not yet—

*Floro.* Not yet !

*Lelio.* Good Cipriano—

*Cipr.* Till I know  
How it has come to pass that two such friends,  
Each of the noblest blood in Antioch,  
Are here to shed it by each other's hands.

*Lelio.* Sudden surprise, and old respect for you,  
Suspend my sword a moment, Cipriano,  
That else—

*Floro.* Stand back, stand back ! You are a scholar,  
And better versed in logic than the laws  
Of honour ; and perhaps have yet to learn  
That when two noblemen have drawn the sword,  
One only must return it to the sheath.

*Lelio.* 'Tis so indeed—once more, stand off.

*Cipr.* And once more  
Back, both of you, say I ; if of your lives  
Regardless, not of mine, which thus, unarm'd,  
I fling between your swords—  
Lelio, I look to you—Floro, as ever  
Somewhat hot-headed and thrasonical—  
Or do you hold with him the scholar's gown  
Has smother'd all the native soldiery  
That saucy so-call'd honour to itself  
Alone mis-arrogates ! You are deceived :  
I am like you by birth a gentleman,  
Under like obligation to the laws  
Of that true honour, which my books indeed  
May help distinguish from its counterfeit,  
But, older as I am, have yet not chill'd  
From catching fire at any just affront—  
And let me tell you this too—those same books,  
Ancient and modern, tell of many a hand

That, turning most assiduously the leaf,  
 When the time came, could wield as well the sword.  
 I am unarm'd : but you, with all your swords,  
 I say you shall not turn them on each other  
 Till you have told me what the quarrel is ;  
 Which after hearing if I own for one  
 That honour may not settle with good word,  
 I pledge my own to leave it to the sword.  
 Now, Lelio ?—

*Lelio.* One answer does for both :  
 He loves where I love.

*Floro.* No—I thus much more—  
 He dares to love where I had loved before ;  
 Betrayèd friendship adding to the score  
 Of upstart love.

*Lelio.* You hear him, Cipriano ?  
 And after such a challenge—

*Cipr.* Yet a moment.  
 As there are kinds of honour, so of love—  
 And ladies—

*Lelio.* Cipriano, Cipriano !  
 One friend my foe for daring love where I,  
 Let not another, daring doubt that he  
 Honours himself in so dishonouring me—

*Floro.* Slanting your sharp divisions on a jewel  
 That if the sun turn'd all his beams upon  
 He could not find, or make, a flaw—

*Cipr.* Nor I then,  
 With far less searching scrutiny than Phœbus—  
 I am to understand then, such a fair  
 Jewel as either would in wedlock wear.

*Floro.* And rather die than let another dare.

*Cipr.* Enough, enough ! of Lelio's strange logic,  
 And Floro's more intelligible rant,  
 And back to sober metaphor. Which of you  
 Has this fair jewel turn'd her light upon ?

*Floro (after a pause).* Why, who would boast—

*Lelio.* Indeed, how could she be  
 The very pearl of chastity she is,

Turn'd she her glances either left or right ?

*Cipr.* Which therefore each, as he obliquely steals,  
Counts on as given him only—

*Floro.* To have done  
With metaphor and logic, what you will,  
So as we fall to work ;  
Or if you must have reason, this, I say,  
Resolves itself to a short syllogism—  
Whether she give or we presume upon—  
If one of us devote himself to win her,  
How dares another cross him ?

*Cipr.* But if she  
Not only turn to neither, but still worse,  
Or better, turn from both ?

*Lelio.* But love by long devotion may be won,  
That only one should offer—

*Floro.* And that one  
Who first—

*Lelio.* Who first !—

*Cipr.* And all this while, forsooth,  
The lady, of whose purity one test  
Is her unblemisht unpublicity,  
Is made a target for the common tongue  
Of Antioch to shoot reproaches at  
For stirring up two noblemen to blood.  
From which she only can escape, forsooth,  
By choosing one of two she cares not for  
At once ; or else, to mend the matter, when  
He comes to claim her by the other's blood.

*Lelio.* At least she will not hate him, live or dead,  
Who staked his life upon her love.

*Cipr.* Small good  
To him who lost the stake ; and he that won—  
Will she begin to love whom not before  
For laying unloved blood upon her door ;  
Or, if she ever loved at all, love more ?  
Is this fair logic, or of one who knows  
No more of woman's honour than of man's ?  
Come, come, no more of beating round the bush.

You know how I have known and loved you both,  
 As brothers—say as sons—upon the score  
 Of some few years and some few books read more—  
 Though two such fiery fine young gentlemen,  
 Put up your swords and be good boys again,  
 Deferring to your ancient pedagogue ;  
 If cold by time and studies, as you say,  
 Then fitter for a go-between in love,  
 And warm at least in loyalty to you.  
 These jewels—to take up the metaphor  
 Until you choose to drop it of yourselves,—  
 These jewels have their caskets, I suppose—  
 Kindred and circumstance, I mean—

*Lelio.*

Oh such

As by their honourable poverty  
 Do more than doubly set their jewel off!

*Cipr.* Ev'n so? And may not one, who, you agree,  
 Proof-cold against suspicion of the kind,  
 Be so far trusted, as, if not to see,  
 To hear, at least, of where, and how, enshrined?

*Floro.* I know not what to answer. How say you?

*Lelio.* Relying on your honour and tried love—  
 Justina, daughter of the old Lisandro.

*Cipr.* I know them ; her if scarcely, yet how far  
 Your praises short of her perfections are ;  
 Him better, by some little service done  
 That rid him of a greater difficulty,  
 And would again unlock his door to me—  
 —And who knows also, if you both agree,  
 Her now closed lips ; if but a sigh between  
 May tell which way the maiden heart may lean?

*Floro.* Again, what say you, Lelio?

*Lelio.*

I, for one,

Content with that decision.

*Floro.*

Be it so.

*Cipr.* Why, after all, behold how luckily  
 You stumbled on this rock in honour's road,  
 That serves instead for Cupid's stepping-stone.  
 And when the knightly courage of you both

Was all at fault to hammer out the way,  
 Who knows but some duenna-doctor may ?  
 And will—if but like reasonable men,  
 Not angry boys, you promise to keep sheath'd  
 Your swords, while from her father or herself  
 I gather, from a single sigh perhaps,  
 To which, if either, unaware she turns ;  
 Provided, if to one, the other yield ;  
 But if to neither, both shall quit the field.  
 What say you both to this ?

*Lelio.* Aye—I for one.

*Floro.* And I ; provided on the instant done.

*Cipr.* No better time than now, when, as I think,  
 The city, with her solemn uproar busy,  
 Shuts her we have to do with close within.  
 But you must come along with me, for fear  
 Your hands go feeling for your swords again  
 If left together : and besides to know  
 The verdict soon as spoken.

*Lelio.* Let us go. [*Exeunt.*

*Lucifer (re-appearing).* Aye, Cipriano, faster than you  
 think ;  
 For I will lend you wings to burn yourself  
 In the same taper they are singed withal.—  
 By the quick feelers of iniquity  
 That from hell's mouth reach through this lower world,  
 And tremble to the lightest touch of mischief,  
 Warn'd of an active spirit hereabout  
 Of the true God inquisitive, and restless  
 Under the false by which I rule the world,  
 Here am I come to test it for myself.  
 And lo ! two fools have put into my hand  
 The snare that, wanting most, I might have miss'd ;  
 That shall not him alone en-mesh, but *her*  
 Whom I have long and vainly from the ranks  
 Striv'n to seduce of Him, the woman-born,  
 Who is one day to bruise the serpent's head—  
 So is it written ; but meanwhile my hour  
 On earth is not accomplisht, and I fain



Of this detested race would hinder all  
 From joining in the triumph of my fall  
 Whom I may hinder ; and of these, these twain ;  
 Each other by each other snaring ; yea,  
 Either at once the other's snare and prey.  
 Oh, my good doctor, you must doubt, you must,  
 And take no more the good old gods on trust ;  
 To Antioch then away ; but not so fast  
 But I shall be before you, starting last.

SCENE II. *A Room in LISANDRO'S house.*—*Enter LISANDRO, JUSTINA, and LIVIA.*

*Justina.* At length the day draws in.

*Lisandro.*

And in with it

The impious acclamation that all day,  
 Block up our doors and windows as we may,  
 Insults our faith, and doubly threatens it.  
 Is all made fast, Justina ?

*Just.*

All shall be, sir,

When I have seen you safely to your rest.

*Lis.* You know how edict after edict aim'd  
 By Rome against the little band of Christ—  
 And at a time like this, the people drunk  
 With idol-ecstasy—

*Just.*

Alas, alas !

*Lis.* Oh, gladly would I scatter these last drops  
 That now so scarcely creep along my veins,  
 And these thin locks that tremble o'er the grave,  
 In such a martyrdom as swept to heav'n  
 The holy Paul who planted, and all those  
 Who water'd here the true and only faith,  
 Wer't not for thee, for fear of thee, Justina,  
 Drawing you down at once into my doom,  
 Or leaving you behind, alone, to hide  
 From insult and suspicion worse than death—  
 I dare not think of it. Make fast ; keep close ;  
 And then, God's will be done ! You know we lie  
 Under a double danger.

*Just.*

How so, sir ?

*Lis.* Aurelio and Fabio, both, you know,  
So potent in the city, and but now  
Arm'd with a freshly whetted sword of vengeance  
Against the faith, but double-edged on us,  
Should they but know, as know they must, their sons  
Haunting the doors of this suspected house.

*Just.* Alas, alas!  
That I should draw this danger on your head!  
Which yet you know—

*Lis.* I know, I know—God knows,  
My darling daughter; but that chaste reserve  
Serves but to quicken beauty with a charm  
They find not in the wanton Venus here:  
Drawn as they are by those withdrawing eyes  
Irradiate from a mother's, into whose  
The very eyes of the Redeemer look'd,  
And whom I dare not haste to join in heav'n  
At cost of leaving thee defenceless here.

*Just.* Sufficient for the day! And now the day  
Is done. Come to your chamber—lean on me—  
Livia and I will see that all is fast;  
And, that all seen to, ere we sleep ourselves,  
Come to your bedside for your blessing. Hark!  
Knocking ev'n now! See to it, Livia.

*(She leads out Lisandro, and returns.)*

Oh, well I got my father to his chamber!  
What is it?—

*Livia.* One would see your father, madam.

*Just.* At such an hour! He cannot, Livia;  
You know, the poor old man is gone to rest—  
Tell him—

*Livia.* If not your father, then yourself,  
On matter that he says concerns you both.

*Just.* Me too!—Oh surely neither of the twain  
We both so dread?

*Livia.* No, madam; rather, one  
I think that neither need have cause to fear,—  
Cipriano.

*Just.* Cipriano! The great scholar,

Who did my father service, as I think,  
And now may mean another ; and God knows  
How much, or quickly, needed !

*Livia.* So he says.

*Just.* What shall I do ! Will not to-morrow—

*Cipriano (entering).* Oh, lady,

You scarce can wonder more than I myself  
At such a visit, and at such an hour,  
Only let what I come to say excuse  
The coming, and so much unmannerly.

*Just.* My father is withdrawn, sir, for the night,  
Never more wanting rest ; I dare not rouse him,  
And least of all with any troubled news.  
Will not to-morrow—

*Cipr.* What I have to say  
Best told to-night, at once ; and not the less  
Since you alone, whom chiefly it concerns,  
Are here to listen.

*Just.* I !—Well, sir, relying  
On your grave reputation as a scholar,  
And on your foregone favour to my father,  
If I should dare to listen—

*Cipr.* And alone ?

*Just.* Livia, leave us. [Exit LIVIA.

*Cipr.* Oh, lady—oh, Justina—

(Thus stammers the ambassador of love  
In presence of its sovereign)—  
You must—cannot but—know how many eyes  
Those eyes have wounded—

*Just.* Nay, sir,—

*Cipr.* Nay, but hear.

I do not come for idle compliment,  
Nor on my own behalf ; but in a cause  
On which hang life and death as well as love.  
Two of the noblest youths in Antioch,  
Lelio and Floro—Nay, but hear me out :  
Mine, and till now almost from birth each other's  
Inseparable friends, now deadly foes  
For love of you—

*Just.* Oh, sir!

*Cipr.* I have but now  
Parted their swords in mortal quarrel cross'd.

*Just.* Oh, that was well.

*Cipr.* I think, for several sakes —  
Their own, their fathers', even Antioch's,  
That would not lose one of so choice a pair;  
And I am sure you think so, lady—yours,  
So less than covetous of public talk,  
And least of all at such a fearful cost.

*Just.* Oh, for all sakes all thanks!

*Cipr.* Yet little due  
For what so lightly done, and it may be  
So insufficiently; this feud not stopt—  
Suspended only, on a single word—  
Which now at this unseasonable hour  
I stand awaiting from the only lips  
That can allay the quarrel they have raised.

*Just.* Alas, why force an answer from my lips  
So long implied in silent disregard?

*Cipr.* Yet, without which, like two fierce dogs, but more  
Exasperated by the holding back,  
They will look for it in each other's blood.

*Just.* And think, poor men, to find their answer there!  
Oh, sir, you are the friend, the friend of both,  
A famous scholar; with authority  
And eloquence to press your friendship home.  
Surely in words such as you have at will  
You can persuade them, for all sakes—and yet  
No matter mine perhaps—but, as you say,  
Their fathers', Antioch's, their own—

*Cipr.* Alas!  
I doubt you know not in your maiden calm  
How fast all love and logic such as that  
Burns stubble up before a flame like this!

*Just. (aside).* And none in heav'n to help them!

*Cipr.* All I can  
But one condition hardly wringing out  
Of peace, till my impartial embassy

Have ask'd on their behalf, which of the twain—  
How shall I least offend?—you least disdain?

*Just.* Disdain is not the word, sir; oh, no, no!  
I know and honour both as noblemen  
Of blood and station far above my own;  
And of so suitable accomplishments.  
Oh, there are many twice as fair as I,  
And of their own conditions, who, with half  
My wooing, long ere this had worn the wreath  
Tied with a father's blessing, and all Antioch  
To follow them with Hymenæal home.

*Cipr.* But if these fiery men, do what one will,  
Will look no way but this?—

*Just.* Oh, but they will;  
Divert their eyes awhile, a little while,  
Their hearts will follow; such a sudden passion  
Can but have struck a shallow root—perhaps  
Ere this had perisht, had not rival pride  
Between them blown it to this foolish height.

*Cipr.* Disdain is not the word then. Well, to seek,  
What still as wide as ever from assent—  
Could you but find it in your heart to feel  
If but a hair's-breadth less—say disesteem  
For one than for another—

*Just.* No, no, no!  
Even to save their lives I could not say  
What is not—cannot—nay, and if it could  
And I could say that was that is not—*can* not—  
How should that hair's-breadth less of hope to one  
Weigh with the other to desist his suit,  
Both furious as you tell me?

*Cipr.* And both are:  
But ev'n that single hair thrown in by you  
Will turn the scale that else the sword must do.

*Just.* But surely must it not suffice for both  
That they who drew the sword in groundless hope  
Sheathe it in sure despair? Despair! Good God!  
For a poor creature like myself, despair!  
That men with souls to which a word like that

Lengthens to infinite significance,  
 Should pin it on a wretched woman's sleeve !  
 But as men talk—I mean, so far as I  
 Can make them, as they say, despair of that  
 Of which, even for this world's happiness,  
 Despair is better hope of better things—  
 Will not my saying—and as solemnly  
 As what one best may vouch for ; that so far  
 As any hope of my poor liking goes,  
 Despair indeed they must—why should not this  
 Allay their wrath, and let relapsing love  
 In his old channel all the clearer run  
 For this slight interjection in the current ?  
 Why should it not be so ?

*Cipr.* Alas, I know not :  
 For though as much they promised, yet I doubt  
 When each, however you reject him now,  
 Believes you might be won hereafter still,  
 Were not another to divide the field ;  
 Each upon each charging the exigence  
 He will not see lies in himself alone,  
 Might draw the scarcely sheathèd sword at once ;  
 Or stifled hate under a hollow truce  
 Blaze out anew at some straw's provocation,  
 And I perhaps not by to put it out.

*Just.* What can, what can be done then !

*Cipr.* Oh Justina,  
 Pardon this iteration. Think once more,  
 Before your answer with its consequence  
 Travels upon my lip to destiny.  
 I know you more than maiden-wise reserved  
 To other importunities of love  
 Than those which ev'n the pure for pure confess ;  
 Yet no cold statue, which, however fair,  
 Could not inflame so fierce a passion ; but  
 A breathing woman with a beating heart,  
 Already touch'd with pity, you confess,  
 For these devoted men you cannot love.  
 Well, then—I will not hint at such a bower

As honourable wedlock would entwine  
 About your father's age and your own youth,  
 Which ev'n for him—and much less for yourself—  
 You would not purchase with an empty hand.  
 But yet, with no more of your heart within  
 Than what you now confess to—pity—pity,  
 For generous youth wearing itself away  
 In thankless adoration at your door,  
 Neglecting noble opportunities ;  
 Turning all love but yours to deadly hate—  
 Sedate, and wise, and modestly resolved,  
 Can you be, lady, of yourself so sure—  
 (And surely they will argue your disdain  
 As apt to yield as their devotion)—  
 That, all beside so honourably faced,  
 You, who now look with pity, and perhaps  
 With gratitude, upon their blundering zeal,  
 May not be won to turn an eye less loath  
 On one of them, and blessing one, save both ?

*Just.* Alas ! I know it is impossible—  
 Not if they wasted all their youth in sighs,  
 And even slavish importunities,  
 I could but pity—pity all the more  
 That all the less what only they implore  
 To yield ; so great a gulf between us lies.

*Cipr.* What—is the throne pre-occupied ?

*Just.*

If so,

By one that Antioch dreams little of.  
 But it grows late : and if we spoke till dawn,  
 I have no more to say.

*Cipr.* Nor more will hear ?

*Just.* Alas, sir, to what purpose ? When, all said,  
 Said too as you have said it—  
 And I have but the same hard answer still ;  
 Unless to thank you once and once again,  
 And charge you with my thankless errand back,  
 But in such better terms,  
 As, if it cannot stop ill blood, at least  
 Shall stop blood-shedding 'tween these hapless men.

*Cipr.* And shall the poor ambassador who fail'd  
In the behalf of those who sent him here,  
Hereafter dare to tell you how he sped  
In making peace between them ?

*Just.* Oh, do but that,  
And what poor human prayer can win from Heav'n,  
You shall not be the poorer. So, good-night !

*Cipr.* Good-night, good-night ! Oh Lelio and Floro !  
If ever friends well turn'd to deadly foes,  
Wiser to fight than I to interpose.

*Lucifer (passing from behind).* The shaft has lit the  
mark ; and by the care  
Of hellish surgery shall fester there.

## ACT II.

### SCENE I.—*The sea-shore ; a storm raging.*

*Cipriano (cavalierly drest).* Oh, mad, mad, mad, am-  
bition ! to the skies  
Lifting to drop me deep as Hades down !—  
What ! Cipriano—what the once so wise  
Cipriano—quit his wonted exercise  
Among the sober walks of old renown,  
To fly at love—to swell the wind with sighs  
Vainer than learning—doff the scholar's gown  
For cap and feather, and such airy guise  
In which triumphant love is wont to go,  
But wins less acceptance in her eyes—  
The only eyes in which I cared to show—  
My heart beneath the borrow'd feather bleeding—  
Than in the sable suit of long ago,  
When heart-whole for another's passion pleading.  
She loves not Floro—loves not Lelio,  
Whose quarrel sets the city's throat agape,  
And turns her reputation to reproof  
With altercation of some dusky shape  
Haunting the twilight underneath her roof—



Which each believes the other :—and, for me,  
 The guilty one of the distracted three,  
 She closest veils herself, or waves aloof  
 In scorn ; or in such self-abasement sweet  
 As sinks me deep and deeper at her feet,  
 Bids me return—return for very shame  
 Back to my proper studies and good name,  
 Nor waste a life on one who, let me pine  
 To death, will never but in death be mine.  
 Oh, she says well—Oh, heart of stone and ice  
 Unworthy of the single sacrifice  
 Of one true heart's devotion ! Oh divine  
 Creature, whom all the glory and the worth  
 That ever ravaged or redeem'd the earth  
 Were scanty worship offered at your shrine !  
 Oh Cipriano, master-fool of all  
 The fools that unto thee for wisdom call ;  
 Of supercilious Pallas first the mock,  
 And now blind Cupid's scorn, and laughing-stock ;  
 Who in fantastic arrogance at odds  
 With the Pantheon of your people's gods  
 Ransack'd the heavens for one more pure and whole  
 To fill the empty temple of the soul,  
 Now caught by retribution in the mesh  
 Of one poor piece of perishable flesh—  
 What baser demon of the pit would buy  
 With all your ruin'd aspirations !

*Lucifer (within).* I !—

*Cipr.* What ! The very winds and waters  
 Hear, and answer to the cry  
 She is deaf to !—Better thrown  
 On distracted nature's bosom  
 With some passion like my own  
 Torn and tortured : where the sun  
 In the elemental riot  
 Ere his daily reign half done,  
 Leaves half-quencht the tempest-drencht  
 Welkin scowling on the howling  
 Wilderness of waves that under

Slash of whirlwind, spur of lightning,  
 Roar of thunder, black'ning, whit'ning,  
 Fling them foaming on the shore—  
 Let confusion reign and roar!—  
 Lightnings, for your target take me!  
 Waves, upon the sharp rock break me,  
 Or into your monstrous hollow  
 Back regurgitating hurl;  
 Let the mad tornado whirl me  
 To the furthest airy circle  
 Dissipated of the sky,  
 Or the gaping earth down-swallow  
 To the centre!—

*Lucifer (entering).* By-and-bye.

*Cipr.* Hark again! and in her monstrous  
 Labour, with a human cry  
 Nature yearning—what portentous  
 Glomeration of the storm  
 Darkly cast in human form,  
 Has she bolted!—

*Luc.* As among  
 Flashes of the lightning flung  
 Beside you, in its thunder now  
 Aptly listen'd—

*Cipr.* What art thou?

*Luc.* One of a realm, though dimly in your charts  
 Discern'd, so vast that as from out of it  
 As from a fountain all the nations flow,  
 Back they shall ebb again; and sway'd by One  
 Who, without Oriental over-boast,  
 Because from him all kings their crowns derive,  
 Is rightfully saluted King of kings,  
 Whose reign is as his kingdom infinite,  
 Whose throne is heaven, and earth his footstool, and  
 Sun, moon, and stars his diadem and crown.  
 Who at the first disposal of his kingdom  
 And distribution into sea and land—  
 Me, who for splendour of my birth and grand  
 Capacities above my fellows shone,

Star of the Morning, Lucifer, alone—  
 Me he made captain of the host who stand  
 Clad as the morning star about his throne.  
 Enough for all ambition but my own ;  
 Who discontented with the all but all  
 Of chiefest subject of Omnipotence  
 Rebell'd against my Maker ; insolence  
 Avenged as soon as done on me and all  
 Who bolster'd up rebellion, by a fall  
 Far as from heav'n to Hades. Madness, I know ;  
 But worse than madness whining to repent  
 Under a rod that never will relent.  
 Therefore about the land and sea I go  
 Arm'd with the very instrument of hate  
 That blasted me : lightnings anticipate  
 My coming, and the thunder rolls behind ;  
 Thus charter'd to enlarge among mankind,  
 And to recruit from human discontent  
 My ranks in spirit, not in number, spent.  
 Of whom, in spite of this brave gaberdine,  
 I recognize thee one : thee, by the line  
 Scarr'd on thy brow, though not so deep as mine ;  
 Thee by the hollow circles of those eyes  
 Where the volcano smoulders but not dies :  
 Whose fiery torrent running down has scarr'd  
 The cheek that time had not so deeply marr'd.  
 Do not I read thee rightly ?

*Cipr.* But too well.

However come to read me—

*Luc.* By the light  
 Of my own darkness reading yours—how deep !  
 But not, as mine is, irretrievable :  
 Who from the fulness of my own perdition  
 Would, as I may, revenge myself on him  
 By turning to fruition your despair—  
 What if I make you master at a blow,  
 Not only of the easy woman's heart  
 You now despair of as impregnable,  
 And waiting but my word to let you in,

But lord of nature's secret, and the lore  
That shall not only with the knowledge, but  
Possess you with the very power of him  
You sought so far and vainly for before :  
So far All-eyes, All-wise, Omnipotent—  
If not to fashion, able yet to shake  
That which the other took such pains to make—  
As in the hubbub round us ; I who blurr'd  
The spotless page of nature at a word  
With darkness and confusion, will anon  
Clear it, to write another marvel on.—

By the word of power that binds  
And loosens ; by the word that finds  
Nature's heart through all her rinds,  
Hearken, waters, fires, and winds ;  
Having had your roar, once more  
Down with you, or get you gone.

*Cipr.* With the clatter and confusion  
Of the universe about me  
Reeling—all within, without me,—  
Dizzy, dazzled—if delusion,  
Waking, dreaming, seeing, seeming—  
Which I know not—only, lo !  
Like some mighty madden'd beast  
Bellowing in full career  
Of fury, by a sudden blow  
Stunn'd, and in a moment stopt  
All the roar, or into slow  
Death-ward-drawing murmur, leaving  
Scarce the fallen carcass heaving,  
With the fallen carcass dropt.—

Behold ! the word scarce fallen from his lips,  
Swift almost as a human smile may chase  
A frown from some conciliated face,  
The world to concord from confusion slips :  
The winds that blew the battle up dead slain,  
Or with their tatter'd standards swept amain  
From heav'n ; the billows of the erected deep  
Roll'd with their crests into the foaming plain ;

While the scared earth begins abroad to peep  
 And smooth her ruffled locks, as from a rent  
 In the black centre of the firmament,  
 Revenging his unnatural eclipse,  
 The Lord of heav'n from its ulterior blue  
 That widens round him as he pierces through  
 The folded darkness, from his sovereign height  
 Slays with a smile the dragon-gloom of night.

*Luc.* All you have heard and witness'd hitherto  
 But a foretaste to quicken appetite  
 For that substantial after-feast of power  
 That I shall set you down to take your fill of:  
 When not the fleeting elements alone  
 Of wind, and fire, and water, floating wrack,  
 But this same solid frame of earth and stone,  
 Yea, with the mountain loaded on her back,  
 Reluctantly, shall answer to your spell  
 From a more adamant heart stone-cold  
 Than hers you curse for inaccessible.  
 What, you would prove it? Let the mountain there  
 Step out for witness. Listen, and behold.

Monster upshot of upheaving  
 Earth, by fire and flood conceiving;  
 Shapeless ark of refuge, whither,  
 When came deluge creeping round,  
 Man retreated—to be drown'd—  
 Now your granite anchor, fast  
 In creation's centre, cast,  
 Come with all your tackle cleaving  
 Down before the magic blast—

*Cipr.* And the unwieldy vessel, lo!  
 Rib and deck of rock, and shroud  
 Of pine, top-gallanted with cloud,  
 All her forest-canvas squaring,  
 Down the undulating woodland  
 As she flounders to and fro  
 All before her tearing, bearing  
 Down upon us—

*Luc.* Anchor, ho!—

Behold the ship in port! And what if freighted  
With but one jewel, worthy welcome more  
Than ever full-fraught Argosy awaited  
At last descried by desperate eyes ashore;  
From the first moment of her topsail showing  
Like a thin cobweb spun 'twixt sea and sky;  
Then momentarily before a full wind blowing  
Into her full proportions, till athwart  
The seas that bound beneath her, by and bye  
She sweeps full sail into the cheering port—

Strangest bark that ever plied  
In despite of wind and tide,  
At the captain's magic summons  
Down your granite ribs divide,  
And show the jewel hid inside.

*Cipr.* Justina!—

*Luc.* Soft! The leap that looks so easy  
Yet needs a longer stride than you can master.

*Cipr.* Oh divine apparition, that I fain  
Would all my life as in Elysium lose  
Only by gazing after; and thus soon  
As rolling cloud across the long'd-for moon,  
The impitiable rocks enclose again!—  
But was it she indeed?

*Luc.* She that shall be,  
And yours, by means that, bringing her to you,  
Possess you of all nature, which in vain  
You sigh'd for ere for nature's masterpiece.  
And thus much, as I told you, only sent  
As foretaste of that great accomplishment,  
Which if you will but try for, you can reach  
By means which, if I practise, I can teach.

*Cipr.* And at what cost?

*Luc.* You that have flung so many years away  
In learning and in love that came to nothing,  
Think not to win the harvest in a day!  
The God you search for works, you know, by means  
(That your philosophers call second cause),  
And we by means must underwork him—

*Cipr.*

Well?—

*Luc.* To comprehend, and, after, to constrain  
Whose mysteries you will not count as vain  
A year in this same mountain lock'd with me?—

*Cipr.* Where she is?—

*Luc.*

As I told you, where shall be.

At least this mountain after a short labour  
Has brought forth something better than a mouse ;  
And what then after a whole year's gestation  
Accomplish under our joint midwifery,  
Under a bond by which you bind you mine  
In fewer and no redder drops than needs  
The leech of land or water when he bleeds ?  
Let us about—but first upon his base  
The mountain we must study in replace,  
That else might puzzle your geography.  
Come, take your stand upon the deck with me,  
Till with her precious cargo safe inside,  
And all her forest-colours flying wide,  
The mighty vessel put again to sea—  
What, are you ready ?—Wondrous smack,  
As without a turn or tack  
Hither come, so thither back,  
And let subside the ruffled deep  
Of earth to her primæval sleep.—  
How steadily her course the good ship trims,  
While Antioch far into the distance swims,  
With all her follies bubbling in the wake ;  
Her scholars that more hum than honey make :  
Muses so chaste as never of their kind  
Would breed, and Cupid deaf as well as blind ;  
For Cipriano, wearied with the toil  
Of so long working on a thankless soil,  
At last embarking upon magic seas  
In a more wondrous Argo than of old,  
Sets sails with me for such Hesperides  
As glow with more than dragon-guarded gold.

## ACT III.

SCENE I. *Before the mountain.* CIPRIANO.

*Cipriano.* Now that at last in his eternal round  
Hyperion, after skirting either pole,  
Of his own race has set the flaming goal  
In heav'n of my probation under-ground :  
Up from the mighty Titan with his feet  
Touching the centre, and his forest-hair  
Entangling with the stars ; whose middle womb  
Of two self-buried lives has been the tomb ;  
At last, my year's apprenticeship complete,  
I rise to try my cunning, and as one  
Arm'd in the dark who challenges the sun.  
You heav'ns, for me your azure brows with cloud  
Contract, or to your inmost depth unshroud :  
Thou sapphire-floating counterpart below,  
Obedient to my moon-like magic flow :  
For me you mountains fall, you valleys rise,  
With all your brooks and fountains far withdrawn ;  
You forests shudder underneath my sighs ;  
And whatsoever breathes in earth and skies ;  
You birds that on the bough salute the dawn ;  
And you wild creatures that through wood and glen  
Do fly the hunter, or the hunter flies ;  
Yea, man himself, most terrible to men ;  
Troop to my word, about my footstep fawn ;  
Yea, ev'n you spirits that by viewless springs  
Move and perplex the tangled web of things,  
Wherever in the darkest crypt you lurk  
Of nature, nature to my purpose work ;  
That not the dead material element,  
But complicated with the life beyond  
Up to pure spirit, shall my charm resent,  
And take the motion of my magic wand ;  
And, once more shaken on her ancient throne,  
In me old nature a new master own.



*Lucifer.* But how is this, Cipriano, that misled  
By hasty passion you affront the day  
Ere master of the art of darkness ?

*Cipr.* *Nay,*  
By that same blazing witness overhead  
Standing in heav'n to mark the time foretold,  
Since first imprison'd in this mountain-hold  
My magic so preluded with the dread  
Preliminary kingdom of the dead,  
That not alone the womb of general earth  
Which Death has crowded thick with second birth,  
But monuments with marble lips composed  
To dream till doomsday, suddenly disclosed,  
And woke their sleepers centuries too soon  
To stare upon the old remember'd moon.  
Wearied of darkness, I will see the day :  
Sick of the dead, the living will assay :  
And if the ghastly year I have gone through  
Bear half its promised harvest, will requite  
With a too warm good-morrow the long night  
That one cold living heart consign'd me to.

*Luc.* Justina !

*Cipr.* *Aye, Justina : now no more*  
Obsequiously sighing at the door  
That never open'd, nor the heart of stone  
On which so long I vainly broke my own ;  
But of her soul and body, when and how  
I will, I claim the forfeit here and now.

*Luc.* Enough : the hour is come ; do thou design  
The earth with circle, pentagram, and trine ;  
The wandering airs with incantation twine ;  
While through her sleep-enchanted sense I shake  
The virgin constancy I cannot break.

*(Clouds roll before the mountain, hiding CIPRIANO.)*  
Thou nether realm of darkness and despair,  
Whose fire-enthronèd emperor am I ;  
Where many-knotted till the word they lie,  
Your subtlest spirits at the word untie,

And breathe them softly to this upper air ;  
With subtle soft insinuation fair  
Of foul result encompass and attain  
The chastity of the rebellious saint  
Who dares the Spirit of this world defy.  
Spirits that do shapeless float  
In darkness as in light the mote,  
At my summons straightway take  
Likeness of the fairest make,  
And, her sleeping sense about  
Seal'd from all the world without,  
Through the bolted eyelids creep ;  
Entheatre the walls of sleep  
With an Eden where the sheen  
Of the leaf and flower between  
All is freshest, yet with Eve's  
Apple peeping through the leaves ;  
Through whose magic mazes may  
Melancholy fancy stray  
Till she lose herself, or into  
Softer passion melt away :  
While the scent-seducing rose  
Gazing at her as she goes  
With her turning as she turns,  
Into her his passion burns ;  
While the wind among the boughs  
Whispers half-remember'd vows ;  
Nightingale interpreters  
Into their passion translate hers ;  
And the murmurs of a stream  
Down one current draw the dream.  
While for hidden chorus, I  
At her dreaming supply  
Such a comment as her own  
Heart to nature's shall atone :  
Till the secret influence  
Of the genial season even  
Holy blood that sets to heaven

*ear*

Draws into the lower sense ;  
 Till array'd in angel guise  
 Earthly memories surprise  
 Ev'n the virgin soul, and win  
 Holy pity's self to sin.

*(The clouds roll away, and discover JUSTINA asleep in her chamber.)*

*Lucifer (at her ear).* Come forth, come forth, Justina,  
 come ; for scared

Winter is vanisht, and victorious Spring  
 Has hung her garland on the boughs he bared :  
 Come forth ; there is a time for everything.

*Justina (in her sleep).* That was my father's voice—  
 come, Livia—

My mantle—oh, not want it?—well then, come.

*Luc.* Aye, come abroad, Justina ; it is Spring ;  
 The world is not with sunshine and with leaf  
 Renew'd to be the tomb of ceaseless grief ;  
 Come forth : there is a time for everything.

*Just.* How strange it is—

I think the garden never look'd so gay  
 As since my father died.

*Luc.* Ev'n so : for now,  
 Returning with the summer wind, the hours  
 Dipt in the sun re-dress the grave with flowers,  
 And make new wreaths for the survivor's brow ;  
 Whose spirit not to share were to refuse  
 The power that all creating, all renews  
 With self-diffusive warmth, that, with the sun's,  
 At this due season through creation runs,  
 Nor in the first creation more exprest  
 Than by the singing builder of the nest  
 That waves on this year's leaf, or by the rose  
 That underneath them in his glory glows ;  
 Life's fountain, flower, and crown ; without whose giving  
 Life itself were not, nor, without, worth living.

*Chorus of Voices.* Life's fountain, flower, and crown ;  
 without whose giving  
 Life itself were not, nor, without, worth living.

*Song.*

Who that in his hour of glory  
 Walks the kingdom of the rose,  
 And misapprehends the story  
 Which through all the garden blows;  
 Which the southern air who brings  
 It touches, and the leafy strings  
 Lightly to the touch respond;  
 And nightingale to nightingale  
 Answering a bough beyond—

*Chorus.* Nightingale to nightingale  
 Answering a bough beyond.

*Just.* These serenaders—singing their old songs  
 Under one's window—

*Luc.* Aye, and if nature must decay or cease  
 Without it; what of nature's masterpiece?  
 Not in her outward lustre only, but  
 Ev'n in the soul within the jewel shut;  
 What but a fruitless blossom; or a lute  
 Without the hand to touch it music-mute:  
 Incense that will not rise to heav'n unfired;  
 By that same vernal spirit uninspired  
 That sends the blood up from the heart, and speaks  
 In the rekindled lustre of the cheeks?

*Chorus.* Life's fountain, flower, and crown; without  
 whose giving  
 Life itself were not, nor, without, worth living.

*Song.*

Lo the golden Girasolé,  
 That to him by whom she burns,  
 Over heaven slowly, slowly,  
 As he travels ever turns;  
 And beneath the wat'ry main  
 When he sinks, would follow fain,  
 Follow fain from west to east,  
 And then from east to west again.

*Chorus.* Follow would from west to east,  
 And then from east to west again.

*Just.* He beckon'd us, and then again was gone;  
 Oh look! under the tree there, Livia—

Where he sits—reading—scholar-like indeed!—  
 With the dark hair that was so white upon  
 His shoulder—but how deadly pale his face!—  
 And, statue-still-like, the quaint evergreen  
 Up and about him creeps, as one has seen  
 Round some old marble in a lonely place.

*Luc.* Aye, look on that—for, as the story runs,  
 Ages ago, when all the world was young,  
 That ivy was a nymph of Latium,  
 Whose name was Hedera : so passing fair  
 That all who saw fell doting on her ; but  
 Herself so icy-cruel, that her heart  
 Froze dead all those her eyes had set on fire.  
 Whom the just God who walk'd that early world,  
 By right-revenging metamorphosis  
 Changed to a thing so abject-amorous,  
 She grovels on the ground to catch at any  
 Wither'd old trunk or sapling, in her way :  
 So little loved as loath'd, for strangling those  
 Round whom her deadly-deathless arms once close.

*Song.*

So for her who having lighted  
 In another heart the fire,  
 Then shall leave it unrequited  
 In its ashes to expire :  
 After her that sacrifice  
 Through the garden burns and cries ;  
 In the sultry breathing air :  
 In the flowers that turn and stare—  
 “ What has she to do among us,  
 Falsely wise and frozen fair ? ”

*Luc.* Listen, Justina, listen and beware.

*Just.* Again ! That voice too ?—But you know my  
 father

Is ill—is in his chamber—  
 How sultry 'tis—the street is full and close—  
 Let us get home—why do they stare at us ?  
 And murmur something—“ Cipriano ?—Where  
 “ Is Cipriano ?—lost to us—some say,

“ And to himself,—self-slain—mad— Where is he ? ”  
Alas, alas, I know not—

*Luc.* Come and see—

*Justina* (*waking*). Mercy upon me ! Who is this ?

*Luc.* Justina, your good angel,  
Who, moved by your relenting to the sighs  
Of one who lost himself for your disdain,  
Will lead you to the cavern where he lies  
Subsisting on the memory of your eyes—

*Just.* 'Twas all a dream !—

*Luc.* That dreaming you fulfil.

*Just.* Oh, no, with all my waking soul renounce.

*Luc.* But, dreaming or awake, the soul is one,  
And the deed purposed in Heaven's eyes is done.

*Just.* Oh Christ ! I cannot argue—I can pray,  
Christ Jesus, oh, my Saviour, Jesu Christ !  
Let not hell snatch away from Thee the soul  
Thou gav'st Thy life to save !—Livia !—Livia !

*Enter LIVIA.*

Where is my father ? where am I ? Oh, I know—  
In my own chamber—and my father—oh !—  
But, Livia, who was it that but now  
Was here—here in my very chamber—

*Livia.* Madam ?

*Just.* You let none in ? oh, no ! I know it—but  
Some one there was—here—now—as I cried out—  
A dark, strange figure—

*Livia.* My child, compose yourself ;  
No one has come, or gone, since you were laid  
In your noon-slumber. This was but a dream.  
The air is heavy ; and the melancholy  
You live alone with since your father's death—

*Just.* A dream, a dream indeed—oh Livia,  
That leaves his pressure yet upon my arm—  
And that without the immediate help of God  
I had not overcome—Oh, but the soul,  
The soul must be unsteady in the faith,  
So to be shaken even by a dream.

Oh, were my father here ! But he's at rest—  
 I know he is—upon his Saviour's breast ;  
 And—who knows !—may have carried up my cries  
 Ev'n to His ear upon whose breast he lies !  
 Give me my mantle, Livia ; I'll to the church ;  
 Where if but two or three are met in prayer  
 Together, He has promised to be there—  
 And I shall find Him.

*Livia.* Oh, take care, take care !  
 You know the danger—in broad daylight too—  
 Or take me with you.

*Just.* And endanger two ?  
 Best serve us both by keeping close at home,  
 Praying for me as I will pray for you.

SCENE II. *Entrance to the mountain cavern.* CIPRIANO, in  
*a magician's dress, with wand, &c.*

What ! do the powers of earth, and air, and hell,  
 Against their upstart emperor rebel ?  
 Lo, in obedience to the rubric dark  
 The dusky cheek of earth with mystic mark  
 Of pentagram and circle I have lined,  
 And hung my fetters on the viewless wind,  
 And yet the star of stars, for whose ascent  
 I ransack all the lower firmament,  
 In unapparent darkness lags behind.  
 Whom once again with adjuration new  
 Of all the spirits whom these signs subdue,  
 Whether by land or water, night or day,  
 Whether awake or sleeping, yea or nay,  
 I summon now before me.—

*Enter slowly a veiled Figure of JUSTINA.*

*The Figure.* What dark spell  
 From the sequester'd sadness of my cell,  
 Through the still garden, through the giddy street,  
 And up the solitary mountain-side,  
 Leads me with sleep-involuntary feet ?—

*Cipr.* 'Tis she, as yet though clouded !—oh divine

Justina!—

*The Figure.* Cipriano!—

*Cipr.* At last here,  
In such a chamber where ev'n Phœbus fails  
To pierce, and baffled breezes tell no tales,  
At last, to crown the labour of a year  
Of solitary toil and darkness—here!—  
And at a price beside—but none too dear—  
Oh year-long night well borne for such a day!  
Oh soul, for one such sense well sold away!  
Oh Now that makes for all the past amends,  
Oh moment that eternal life transcends  
To such a point of ecstasy, that just  
About to reap the wishes that requite  
All woes—

*The Figure (unveiling a skull and vanishing as it speaks).*

Behold, the World and its delight  
Is dust and ashes, dust and ashes, dust—

*Cipr. (flinging down his Wand).* Lucifer! Lucifer!  
Lucifer!—

*Luc.* My son!

*Cipr.* Quick! With a word—

How now?—  
With a word—at once—

With all your might—

*Luc.* Well, what with it?—

*Cipr.* The charm—  
Shatter it! shatter it, I say!—Is't done?  
Is't vanisht—

*Luc.* What has thus unsensed you?

*Cipr.* Oh!—  
You know it—saw it—did it—

*Luc.* Come—be a man:  
What, scared with a mere death's-head?

*Cipr.* Death's, indeed!—

*Luc.* What was it more?—

*Cipr.* Justina's seeming self—  
After what solitary labour wrought,  
And after what re-iterated charms,



Step by step here in all her beauty brought  
 Within the very circle of these arms,  
 Then to death's grisly lineaments resign'd  
 Slipt through them, and went wailing down the wind  
 "Ashes and dust and ashes"—

Nay, nay, pretend not that the fault was mine—  
 The written incantation line by line  
 I mutter'd, and the mystic figure drew ;  
 You only are to blame—you only, you,  
 Cajoling me, or by your own cajoled,  
 Bringing me fleshless death for the warm life  
 For which my own eternal life is sold.

*Luc.* You were too rash,—I warn'd you, and if not,  
 Who thinks at a first trial to succeed?  
 Another time—

*Cipr.* No, no! No more of it!  
 What, have I so long dabbled with the dead,  
 That all I touch turns to corruption?  
 Was it indeed herself—her living self—  
 Till underneath my deadly contact slain ;  
 Or having died during the terrible year  
 I have been living worse than dead with you,  
 What I beheld not she, but what she was,  
 Out of the tomb that only owns my spell  
 Drawn into momentary lifeliness  
 To mock me with the phantom of a beauty  
 Whose lineaments the mere impalpable air  
 Let in upon disfeatures—Was it she?

*Luc.* She lives, and shall be yours.

*Cipr.* Not if herself,  
 In more than all her living beauty breathing,  
 Came to efface that deadly counterfeit!—  
 Oh, what have I been doing all this while,  
 From which I wake as from a guilty dream,  
 But with my guilt's accomplice at my side  
 To prove its terrible reality!  
 Where were my ears, my eyes, my senses! where  
 The mother-wit which serves the common boor,  
 Not to resent that black academy,

Mess-mating with dead men and living fiends,  
 And not to know no good could come of it!—  
 My better self—the good that in me grew  
 By nature, and by good instruction till'd,  
 Under your shadow turn'd to poisonous weed ;  
 And ev'n the darker art you bribed me with,  
 To master, if by questionable ways,  
 The power I sigh'd for in my better days,  
 So little reaching to the promised height,  
 As sinking me beneath the lowest fiend,  
 Who, for the inestimable self I sold,  
 Pays the false self you made me with false gold !

*Luc.* When will blind fury, falling foul of all,  
 Light where it should ? Suppose a fault so far,  
 As knowledge working through unpractised hands  
 Might fail at first encounter ; all men know  
 How a mere sand will check a vast machine ;  
 And in these complicated processes  
 An agency so insignificant  
 As to be wholly overlookt it was  
 At the last moment foil'd us.

*Cipr.* But she lives !  
 Lives—from your clutches saved, and saved from mine—  
 Ev'n from that only shadow of my guilt  
 That could have touch'd her, saved—unguilty shame,  
 That now is left with all the guilt to me.  
 Oh that I knew a God in all the heav'ns  
 To thank, or ev'n of Tartarus—ev'n thee,  
 Thee would I bless, whatever power it be  
 That with that shadow saved her, and mock'd me  
 Back to my better senses. If not she,  
 What was it ?

*Luc.* What you saw.

*Cipr.* A phantom ?

*Luc.* Well,

A phantom.

*Cipr.* But how raised ?

*Luc.* What if by her ?

She is a sorcerer as her father was.

*Cipr.* A sorcerer! She a sorcerer! oh, black lie  
 To whiten your defeat! and, were it true,  
 Oh mighty doctor to be foil'd at last  
 By a mere woman!—If a sorcerer,  
 Then of a sort you deal not with, nor hell—  
 And ev'n Olympus likes the sport too well—  
 Raising a phantom not to draw me down  
 To deeper sin, but with its ghastly face  
 And hollow voice both telling of the tomb  
 They came from, warning me of what complexion  
 Were all the guilty wishes of this world.  
 But let the phantom go where gone it is—  
 Not of what mock'd me, but what saved herself,  
 By whatsoever means—aye, what was it,  
 That pitiful agency you told me of  
 So insignificant, as overlookt  
 At the last moment thwarted us?

*Luc.* What matter?  
 When now provided for, and which when told  
 You know not—

*Cipr.* Which I will be told to know—  
 For as one ris'n from darkness tow'rd the light,  
 A veil seems clearing from before my sight—  
 She is a sorcerer, and of the kind  
 That old Lisandro died suspected of?—  
 Oh cunning doctor, to outwit yourself,  
 Outwitted as you have been, and shall be  
 By him who if your devilish magic fail'd  
 To teach its purposed mischief,  
 Thus on his teacher turns it back in full  
 To force him to confess the counter-power  
 That foil'd us both.

(*He catches up his wand.*)

*Luc.* Poor creature that you are!  
 Did not the master from his scholars hold  
 One sleight of hand that masters all the rest,  
 What magic needed to compel the devil  
 To convict those who find him out too late?  
 Yet to increase your wrath by leaving it

Blind in the pit your guilt consigns you to,  
I shall not answer—

*Cipr.* Then if your own hell  
Cannot enforce you ; by that Unknown Power  
That saved Justina from your fangs, although  
Yourself you cannot master, if you know,  
I charge you name him to me !—

*Luc.* (after a great flash of lightning, and thunder).

Jesus Christ !

*Cipr.* (after a pause). Ev'n so !—Christ Jesus—Jesus  
Christ—the same

That poor Lisandro died suspected of,  
And I had heard and read of with the rest  
But to despise, in spite of all the blood  
By which the chosen few their faith confest—  
The prophet-carpenter of Nazareth,  
Poor, persecuted, buffeted, reviled,  
Spit upon, crown'd with thorns, and crucified  
With thieves—the Son of God—the Son of man,  
Whose shape He took to teach them how to live,  
And doff'd upon the cross to do away  
The sin and death you and your devil-deities  
Had heap'd on him from the beginning ?

*Luc.* Yea !—

*Cipr.* Of the one sun of Deity one ray  
That was before the world was, and that made  
The world and all that is within it ?

*Luc.* Yea !

*Cipr.* Eternal and Almighty then : and yet  
Infinite Centre as he is of all  
The all but infinite universe he made,  
With eyes to see me plotting, and with ear  
To hear one solitary creature pray,  
From one dark corner of his kingdom ?

*Luc.* Yea !

*Cipr.* All one, all when, all where, all good, all mighty,  
All eye, all ear, all self-integrity—  
Methinks this must be He of whom I read  
In Greek and Roman sages dimly guess'd,

But never until now fully confest  
 In this poor carpenter of Nazareth,  
 With poor Justina for his confessor—  
 And now by thee—by thee—once and again  
 Spite of thyself—for answer me you must,  
 Convicted at the bar of your own thunder—  
 Is this the God for whom I sought so long  
 In mine own soul and those of other men,  
 Who from the world's beginning till to-day  
 Groped or were lost in utter darkness?

*Luc.* Yea!

*Cipr.* Enough; and your confession shall be mine—

*Luc.* And to like purpose; to believe, confess,  
 And tremble, in the everlasting fire  
 Prepared for all who Him against their will  
 Confess, and in their deeds deny him—

*Cipr.* Oh,  
 Like a flogg'd felon after full confession  
 Releas't at last!

*Luc.* To bind you mine for ever.

*Cipr.* Thine! What art thou?

*Luc.* The god whom you must worship.

*Cipr.* There is no God but one, whom you and I  
 Alike acknowledge, as in Jesus Christ  
 Reveal'd to man. What other god art thou?

*Luc.* Antichrist! He that all confessing Christ  
 Confess; Satan, the Serpent, the first Tempter,  
 Who tempted the first Father of mankind  
 With the same offer to a like result  
 That I have tempted thee with; yea, had power  
 Even Him in his humanity to tempt,  
 Though Him in vain; the god of this world; if  
 False god, true devil; true angel as I was,  
 Son of the morning, Lucifer, who fell  
 (As first I told thee, had'st thou ears to hear)  
 For my rebellion down from heaven to hell  
 More terrible than any Tartarus,  
 Where over those who fell with me I reign.  
 Whom, though with them bound in the self-same chain

Of everlasting torment, God allows  
To reach my hands out of my prison-house  
On all who like me from their God rebel,  
As thou hast done.

*Cipr.* Not when for God I knew him.

*Luc.* Aye, but who but for pride and lust like mine  
Had known Him sooner—

*Cipr.* And had sooner known  
But for thy lying gods that shut Him out.

*Luc.* Which others much less wise saw through before.

*Cipr.* All happy they then! But all guilty I,  
Yet thus far guiltless of denying Him  
Whom even thou confessest.

*Luc.* But too late—  
Already mine, if not so sworn before,  
Yet by this bond—

*Cipr.* For service unperform'd!  
But unperform'd, or done, and payment due,  
I fling myself and all my debt on Him  
Who died to undertake them—

*Luc.* He is the Saviour of the innocent,  
Not of the guilty.

*Cipr.* Who alone need saving!

*Luc.* Damnation is the sinner's just award,  
And He is just.

*Cipr.* And being just, will not  
For wilful blindness tax the want of light:  
And All-good as Almighty, and therefore  
As merciful as just, will not renounce  
Ev'n the worst sinner who confesses Him,  
And testifies confession with his blood.  
Which, not to waste a moment's argument,  
Too like the old logic that I lost my life in,  
And hangs for ever dead upon the cross;  
I will forthwith shout my confession,  
Into the general ear of Antioch,  
And from the evidence of thine own mouth,  
Not thee alone, but all thy lying gods,  
Convict; and you convicting before God,

Myself by man's tribunal judged and damn'd,  
Trust by my own blood mixing with the tide  
That flow'd for me from the Redeemer's side,  
From those few damning drops to wash me free  
That bound me thine for ever—

*Lucifer (seizing him).*

Take my answer—

*Cipriano (escaping).* Oh, Saviour of Justina, save  
Thou me!

SCENE III. *The Hall of Justice in Antioch; AURELIO, FABIO,  
SENATORS, &c., just risen from Council.*

*Aurelio.* You have done well indeed; the very Church  
These Christians flock'd to for safe blasphemy  
Become the very net to catch them in.  
How many, think you?

*Fabio.* Not so many, sir,  
As some that are of the most dangerous.

*Aur.* Among the rest this girl, Lisandro's daughter,  
As you and I know, Fabio, to our cost:  
But now convicted and condemn'd is safe  
From troubling us or Antioch any more.  
Come, such good service asks substantial thanks;  
What shall it be?

*Fabio.* No other, if you please,  
Than my son Floro's liberation,  
Whom not without good reason for so long  
You keep under the city's lock and key.

*Aur.* As my own Lelio, and for a like cause;  
Who both distracted by her witchery  
Turn'd from fast friends to deadly enemies,  
And, in each other's lives, so aimed at ours.  
But no more chance of further quarrel now  
For one whom Death anticipates for bride  
Ere they again gird weapon at their side,  
Set them both free forthwith.—

[*Exit FABIO.*]

This cursèd woman whose fair face and foul  
Behaviour was the city's talk and trouble,  
Now proved a sorceress, is well condemn'd;  
Not only for my sake and Fabio's,

But for all Antioch, whose better youth  
She might, like ours, have carried after her  
Through lust and duel into blasphemy.

*Re-enter FABIO with LELIO and FLOBO.*

*Lelio.* Once more, sir, at your feet—

*Aur.*

Up, both of you.

Floro and Lelio, you understand  
What I have done was of no testy humour,  
But for three several sakes—  
Your own, your fathers', and the city's peace.  
Henceforward, by this seasonable use  
Of public law for private purpose check'd,  
Your fiery blood to better service turn.  
Take hands, be friends ; the cause of quarrel gone—

*Lelio.* The cause of quarrel gone !—

*Aur.*

Be satisfied ;

You will know better by and bye ; meanwhile  
Taking upon my word that so it is ;  
Which were it not indeed, you were not here  
To doubt.

*Floro (aside).* Oh flimsy respite of revenge !—

*Aur.* And now the business of the day well crown'd  
With this so happy reconciliation,  
You and I, Fabio, to our homes again,  
Our homes once more, replenish'd with the peace  
We both have miss'd so long.—What noise is that ?

*(Cries without).* Stop him ! A madman ! Stop him !—

*Aur.* What is it, Fabio ?

*Fabio.* One like mad indeed,  
In a strange garb, with flaring eyes, and hair  
That streams behind him as he flies along,  
Dragging a cloud of rabble after him.

*Aur.* This is no place for either—shut the doors,  
And post the soldiers to keep peace without—

*(Cries without).* Stop him !

*Floro and Lelio.*

'Tis Cipriano !—

*Aur.*

Cipriano !—



*Enter CIPRIANO.*

*Cipriano.* Aye, Cipriano, Cipriano's self,  
Heretofore mad as you that call him so,  
Now first himself.—Noble Aurelio,  
Who sway'st the sword of Rome in Antioch ;  
And you, companions of my youthful love  
And letters ; you grave senate ranged above ;  
And you whose murmuring multitude below  
Do make the marble hall of justice rock  
From base to capital—hearken unto me :  
Yes, I am Cipriano : I am he  
So long and strangely lost, now strangely found—  
The famous doctor of your schools, renown'd  
Not Antioch only but the world about  
For learning's prophet-paragon forsooth ;  
Who long pretending to provide the truth  
For other men in fields where never true  
Wheat, but a crop of mimic darnel grew,  
Reap'd nothing for himself but doubt, doubt, doubt.  
Then 'twas that looking with despair and ruth  
Over the blasted harvest of my youth,  
I saw Justina : saw, and put aside  
The barren Pallas for a mortal bride  
Divinelier fair than she is feign'd to be :  
But in whose deep-entempl'd chastity  
That look'd down holy cold upon my fire,  
Lived eyes that but re-doubled vain desire.  
Till this new passion, that more fiercely prey'd  
Upon the wither'd spirit of dismay'd  
Ambition, swiftly by denial blew  
To fury that, transcending all control,  
I made away the ruin of my soul  
To one whom no chance tempest at my feet  
In the mid tempest of temptation threw.  
Who blinding me with the double deceit  
Of loftier aspiration and more low  
Than mortal or immortal man should owe  
Fulfill'd for me, myself for his I bound ;

With him and death and darkness closeted  
In yonder mountain, while about its head  
The sun his garland of the seasons wound,  
In the dark school of magic I so read,  
And wrought to such a questionable power  
The black forbidden art I travail'd in,  
That though the solid mountain from his base  
With all his forest I might counterplace,  
I could not one sweet solitary flower  
Of beauty to my magic passion win.  
Because her God was with her in that hour  
To guard her virtue more than mountain-fast :  
That only God, whom all my learning past  
Fail'd to divine, but from the very foe  
That would have kept Him from me come to know,  
I come to you, to witness and make known :  
One God, eternal, absolute, alone ;  
Of whom Christ Jesus—Jesus Christ, I say—  
And, Antioch, open all your ears to-day—  
Of that one Godhead one authentic ray,  
Vizor'd awhile his Godhead in man's make,  
Man's sin and death upon Himself to take ;  
For man made man ; by man unmade and slain  
Upon the cross that for mankind He bore—  
Dead—buried—and in three days ris'n again  
To His hereditary glory, bearing  
All who with Him on earth His sorrow sharing  
With Him shall dwell in glory evermore.  
And all the gods I worship'd heretofore,  
And all that you now worship and adore,  
From thundering Zeus to cloven-footed Pan,  
But lies and idols, by the hand of man  
Of brass and stone—fit emblems as they be,  
With ears that hear not ; eyes that cannot see ;  
And multitude where only One can be—  
From man's own lewd imagination built ;  
By that same devil held to that old guilt  
Who tempted me to new. To whom indeed  
If with my sin and blood myself I fee'd

For ever his—that bond of sin and blood  
 I trust to cancel in the double flood  
 Of baptism past, and the quick martyrdom  
 To which with this confession I am come.  
 Oh delegate of Cæsar to devour  
 The little flock of Jesus Christ! Behold  
 One lost sheep just admitted to the fold  
 Through the pure stream that rolling down the same  
 Mountain in which I sinn'd, and as I came  
 By holy hands administer'd, to-day  
 Shall wash the mountain of my sin away.  
 Lo, here I stand for judgment; by the blow  
 Of sudden execution, or such slow  
 Death as the devil shall, to maintain his lies,  
 By keeping life alive in death, devise.  
 Hack, rack, dismember, burn—or crucify,  
 Like Him who died to find me; Him that I  
 Will die to find; for whom, with whom, to die  
 Is life; and life without, and all his lust,  
 But dust and ashes, dust and ashes, dust—

*(He falls senseless to the ground.)*

*Aurelio (after a long pause).* So public and audacious  
 blasphemy  
 Demands as instant vengeance. Wretched man,  
 Arise and hear your sentence—

*Lelio.* Oh, sir, sir!  
 You speak to ice and marble—Cipriano!  
 Oh lookt for long, and best for ever lost!  
 But he is mad—he knows not what he says—  
 You would not, surely, on a madman visit  
 What only sane confession makes a crime?

*Aur.* I never know how far such blasphemy,  
 Which seems to spread like wild-fire in the world,  
 Be fault or folly: only this I know,  
 I dare not disobey the stern decree  
 That Cæsar makes my office answer for.  
 Especially when one is led away  
 Of such persuasion and authority,  
 Still drawing after him the better blood

Of Antioch, to better or to worse.

*Lelio.* Cipriano! Cipriano! Yet, pray the gods  
He be past hearing me!

*Fabio (to Aurelio).* Sir, in your ear—  
Justina's hour is come; and through the room  
Where she was doom'd, she passes to her doom.

*Aur.* Let us be gone; they must not look on her,  
Nor know she is to die until "to die"  
Be past predicament. Here let her wait,  
Till he she drew along with her to sin  
Revive to share with her its punishment.  
Come, Lelio—come, Floro—be assured  
I loved and honour'd this man as yourselves  
Have honour'd him—but now—

*Lelio.* Nay, sir, but—

*Aur.* Nay,

Not I, but Cæsar, Lelio. Come away.

[*Exeunt. Then JUSTINA is brought in by soldiers,  
and left alone.*]

*Just.* All gone—all silence—and the sudden stroke,  
Whose only mercy I besought, delay'd  
To make my pang the fiercer.—What is here?—  
Dead?—By the doom perhaps I am to die,  
And laid across the threshold of the road  
To trip me up with terror—Yet not so,  
If but the life, once lighted here, has flown  
Up to the living Centre that my own  
Now trembles to!—God help him, breathing still?—  
—Cipriano!—

*Cipr.* Aye, I am ready—I can rise—  
Is my time come?—Oh, God!  
Have I repented and confest too late,  
And this terrible witness of my crime  
Stands at the door of death from which it came  
To draw me deeper—

*Just.* Cipriano!

*Cipr.* Yet

Not yet disfeatured—nor the voice—

Oh, if not *That*—this time unsummon'd—come

To take me with you where I raised you from—  
Once more—once more—assure me!—

*Justina* (taking his hand).                                *Cipriano*!—

*Cipr.* And this, too, surely, is a living hand :  
Though cold, oh, cold indeed—but yet, but yet,  
Not dust and ashes, dust and ashes—

*Just.*    No—

But soon to be—

*Cipr.*                                But soon—but soon to be—  
But not as then?—

*Just.*                                I understand you not—

*Cipr.* I scarce myself—I must have been asleep—  
But now not dreaming?

*Just.*    No, not dreaming.

*Cipr.*    No—

This is the judgment-hall of Antioch,  
In which—I scarcely mind how long ago—  
Is sentence pass'd on me?—

*Just.*    This is indeed  
The judgment-hall of Antioch; but why  
You here, and what the judgment you await,  
I know not—

*Cipr.*                                No.—But stranger yet to me  
Why you yourself, *Justina*.—Oh my God!  
It flashes all across me!—  
What, all your life long giving God his due,  
Is treason unto Cæsar?—

*Just.*    Aye, *Cipriano*—  
Against his edict having crept inside  
God's fold with that good Shepherd for my guide.  
My Saviour Jesus Christ!

*Cipr.*    My Saviour too,  
And Shepherd—oh, the only good and true  
Shepherd and Saviour—

*Just.*    You confess Him!    *You*  
Confess Him, *Cipriano*!

*Cipr.*    With my blood :  
Which being all to that confession pledged,  
Now waits but to be paid.

*Just.* Oh, we shall die,  
And go to heav'n together!

*Cipr.* Amen! Amen!—  
And yet—

*Just.* You do not fear—and yet no shame—  
What I have faced so long, that present dread  
Is almost lost in long anticipation—

*Cipr.* I fear not for this mortal. Would to God  
This guilty blood by which in part I trust  
To pay the forfeit of my soul with Heav'n  
Would from man's hand redeem the innocence  
That such atonement needs not.

*Just.* Oh, to all  
One faith and one atonement—

*Cipr.* But if both,  
If both indeed must perish by the doom  
That one deserves and cries for—Oh, Justina,  
Who upward ever with the certain step  
Of faith hast follow'd unrepress'd by sin;  
Now that thy foot is almost on the floor  
Of heav'n, pray Him who opens thee the door,  
Let with thee one repenting sinner in!

*Just.* What more am I? And were I close to Him  
As he upon whose breast he leaned on here,  
No intercessor but Himself between  
Himself and the worst sinner of us all—  
If but repenting we believe in Him.

*Cipr.* I do believe—I do repent—my faith  
Have sign'd in water, and will seal in blood—

*Just.* I have no other hope, but, in that, all.

*Cipr.* Oh hope that almost is accomplishment,  
Believing all with nothing to repent!

*Just.* Oh, none so good as not to need—so bad  
As not to find, His mercy. If you doubt  
Because of your long dwelling in the darkness  
To which the light was folly—oh 'twas shown  
To the poor shepherd long before the wise;  
And if to me, as simple—oh, not mine,  
Not mine, oh God! the glory—nor ev'n theirs

From whom I drew it, and—Oh, Cipriano,  
Methinks I see them bending from the skies  
To take me up to them!

*Cipr.* Whither could I  
But into heaven's remotest corner creep,  
Where I might only but discern thee, lost  
With those you love in glory—

*Just.* Hush! hush! hush!  
These are wild words—if I so speak to one  
So wise, while I am nothing—  
But as you know—Oh, do not think of me,  
But Him, into whose kingdom all who come  
Are as His angels—

*Cipr.* Aye, but to come there!—  
Where if all intercession, even thine,  
Be vain—you say so—yet before we pass  
The gate of death together, as we shall,—  
If then to part—for ever, and for ever—  
Unless with your forgiveness in my hand—  
But say that you forgive me!—

*Just.* I forgive!  
Still I, and I, again! Oh, Cipriano,  
Pardon and intercession both alike  
With Him alone; and had I to forgive—  
Did not He pray upon the cross for those  
Who slew Him—as I hope to do on mine  
For mine—He bids us bless our enemies  
And persecutors; which I think, I think,  
You were not, Cipriano—why do you shudder?—  
Save in pursuit of that—if vain to me,  
Now you know all—

*Cipr.* I now know all—but you  
Not that, which asking your forgiveness for,  
I dare not name to you, for fear the hand  
I hold as anchor-fast to, break away,  
And I drive back to hell upon a blast  
That roar'd behind me to these very doors,  
But stopt—ev'n in the very presence stopt,  
That most condemns me his.

*Just.* Alas, alas,  
Again all wild to me. The time draws short—  
Look not to me, but Him tow'rd whom alone  
Sin is, and pardon comes from—

*Cipr.* Oh, Justina,  
You know not how enormous is my sin—

*Just.* I know, not as His mercy infinite.

*Cipr.* To Him—to thee—to Him through thee—

*Just.* 'Tis written,  
Not all the sand of ocean, nor the stars  
Of heav'n so many as His mercies are.

*Cipr.* What! ev'n for one who, mad with pouring vows  
Into an unrelenting human ear,  
Gave himself up to Antichrist—the Fiend—  
Though then for such I knew him not—to gain  
By darkness all that love had sought in vain!  
—Speak to me—if but that hereafter I  
Shall never, never, hear your voice again—  
Speak to me—

*Just.* (after a long pause).—By the Saviour on His cross  
A sinner hung who but at that last hour  
Cried out to be with Him; and was with Him  
In Paradise ere night.

*Cipr.* But was his sin  
As mine enormous?—

*Just.* Shall your hope be less,  
Offering yourself for Christ's sake on that cross  
The other only suffer'd for his sin?

*Rich.* Oh, when we come to perish, side by side,  
Look but for Him between us crucified,  
And call to Him for mercy; and, although  
Scarlet, your sin shall be as white as snow!

*Cipr.* Ev'n as you speak, yourself, though yet yourself,  
In that full glory that you saw reveal'd  
With those you love transfigured, and your voice  
As from immeasurable altitude  
Descending, tell me that, my shame and sin  
Quencht in the death that opens wide to you  
The gate, ev'n this great sinner shall pass through,



With Him, with them, with thee!—

*Just.*

Glory to God!—

Oh blest assurance on the very verge  
That death is swallow'd up in victory!  
And hark! the step of death is at the door—  
Courage!—Almighty God through Jesus Christ  
Pardon your sins and mine, and as a staff  
Guide and support us through the terrible pass  
That leads us to His rest!—

*Cipr.*

My own beloved!

Whose hand—Oh let it be no sin to say it!—  
Is as the staff that God has put in mine—  
To lead me through the shadow—yet ev'n now—  
Ev'n now—at this last terrible moment—  
Which, to secure my being with thee, thee  
Forbids to stand between my Judge and me,  
And in a few more moments, soul and soul  
May read each other as an open scroll—  
Yet, wilt thou yet believe me not so vile  
To thee, to Him who made thee what thou art,  
Till desperation of the only heart  
I ever sigh'd for, by I knew not then  
How just alienation, drove me down  
To that accursèd thing?

*Just.*

My Cipriano!

Dost thou remember, in the lighter hour—  
Then when my heart, although you saw it not,  
All the while yearn'd to thee across the gulf  
That yet it dared not pass—my telling thee  
That only Death, which others disunites,  
Should ever make us one? Behold! and now  
The hour is come, and I redeem my vow.

---

(Here the play may finish : but for any one who would follow Calderon to the end,—Enter FABIO with Guard, who lead away CIPRIANO and JUSTINA. Manent EUSEBIO, JULIAN, and Citizens.)

*Citizen 1.* Alas ! alas ! alas ! So young a pair !  
And one so very wise !

*Cit. 2.* And one so fair !

*Cit. 3.* And both as calmly walking to their death  
As others to a marriage festival.

*Julian.* Looking as calm, at least, Eusebio,  
As when, do you remember, at the last  
Great festival of Zeus, we left him sitting  
Upon the hill-side with his books ?

*Eusebio.* I think  
Almost the last we saw of him : so soon,  
Flinging his studies and his scholars by,  
He went away into that solitude  
Which ended in this madness, and now death  
With her he lost his wits for.

*Cit. 1.* And has found  
In death whom living he pursued in vain.

*Cit. 2.* And after death, as they believe ; and so  
Thus cheerfully to meet it, if the scaffold  
Divorce them to eternal union.

*Cit. 3.* Strange that so wise a man  
Should fall into so fond a superstition  
Which none but ignorance has taken up.

*Cit.* Oh, love, you know, like time works wonders.

*Eusebio.* Well—  
Antioch will never see so great a scholar.

*Julian.* Nor we so courteous a Professor—  
I would not see my dear old master die  
Were all the wits he lost my legacy.

*Citizens talking.*

{ One says that, as they went out hand in hand,  
He saw a halo like about the moon  
About their head, and moving as they went.

*Citizens talking.*

— I saw it—

— Fancy! fancy!—

— Any how,

They leave it very dark behind them—Thunder!

— They talk of madness and of blasphemy;  
Neither of these, I think, looking much guilty.

— And he, at any rate, I still maintain,  
Least like to be deluded by the folly  
For which the new religion is condemn'd.

— Before his madness, certainly: but love  
First crazed him, as I told you.

— Well, if mad,

How guilty?

— Hush! hush! These are dangerous words.

— Be not you bitten by this madness, neighbour.

Rome's arm is long.

— Aye, and some say her ears.

— Then, ev'n if bitten, bark not—Thunder again!

— And what unnatural darkness!

— Well—a storm—

— They say, you know, he was a sorcerer—

Indeed we saw the mystic dress he wore

All wrought with figures of astrology;

Nay, he confest himself as much; and now

May raise a storm to save—

— There was a crash!

— A bolt has fallen somewhere—the walls shake—

— And the ground under—

— Save us, Zeus—

Voices. Away!—

The roof is falling in upon us—

(*The wall at the back falls in, and discovers a scaffold with  
CIPRIANO and JUSTINA dead, and LUCIFER above them.*)

*Lucifer.* Stay!—

And hearken to what I am doom'd to tell.

I am the mighty minister of hell

You mis-call heav'n, and of the hellish crew  
Of those false gods you worship for the True ;  
Who, to revenge *her* treason to the blind  
Idolatry that has hoodwinkt mankind,  
And *his*, whose halting wisdom after-knew  
What her diviner virtue fore-divined,  
By devilish plot and artifices thought  
Each of them by the other to have caught ;  
But, thwarted by superior will, those eyes  
That, by my fuel fed, had been a flame  
To light them both to darkness down, became  
As stars to lead together to the skies,  
By such a doom as expiates his sin,  
And her pure innocence lets sooner in  
To that eternal bliss where, side by side,  
They reign at His right hand for whom they died.  
While I, convicted in my own despite  
Thus to bear witness to the eternal light  
Of which I lost, and they have won the crown,  
Plunge to my own eternal darkness down.

HÜNDESE.



**"SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS ARE MADE OF."**

**A D R A M A,**

**TAKEN FROM**

**CALDERON'S "VIDA ES SUEÑO."**

---

**For Calderon's Drama sufficient would seem  
The title he chose for it—"Life is a Dream;"  
Two words of the motto now filch'd are enough  
For the impudent mixture they label—"Such stuff!"**

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BASILIO,	<i>King of Poland.</i>	
SEGISMUND,	<i>his Son.</i>	}
ASTOLFO,	<i>his Nephew.</i>	
ESTRELLA,	<i>his Niece.</i>	
CLOTALDO,	<i>a General in Basilio's Service.</i>	
ROSAURA,	<i>a Muscovite Lady.</i>	
FIFE,	<i>her Attendant.</i>	

CHAMBERLAIN, LORDS IN WAITING, OFFICERS, SOLDIERS,  
&c., *in Basilio's Service.*

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*The Scene of the first and third Acts lies on the Polish  
frontier : of the second Act, in Warsaw.*

# “SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS ARE MADE OF.”

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## ACT I.

SCENE I. *A pass of rocks, over which a storm is rolling away, and the sun setting: in the foreground, half way down, a fortress. Enter first from the topmost rock ROSAURA, as from horse-back, in man's attire; and, after her, FIFE.\**

*Rosaura.* There, four-footed Fury, blast-  
-engender'd brute, without the wit  
Of brute, or mouth to match the bit  
Of man—art satisfied at last?  
Who, when thunder roll'd aloof,  
Tow'rd the spheres of fire your ears  
Pricking, and the granite kicking  
Into lightning with your hoof,  
Among the tempest-shatter'd crags  
Shattering your luckless rider  
Back into the tempest pass'd?  
There then lie to starve and die,  
Or find another Phaeton

\* As this version of Calderon's drama is not for acting, a higher and wider mountain-scene than practicable may be imagined for Rosaura's descent in the first Act and the soldier's ascent in the last. The bad watch kept by the sentinels who guarded their state-prisoner, together with much else (not all!) that defies sober sense in this wild drama, I must leave Calderon to answer for; whose audience were not critical of detail and probability, so long as a good story, with strong, rapid, and picturesque action and situation, were set before them.



Mad-mettled as yourself ; for I,  
Wearied, worried, and for-done,  
Alone will down the mountain try,  
That knits his brows against the sun.

*Fife (as to his mule).* There, thou mis-begotten thing,  
Long-ear'd lightning, tail'd tornado,  
Griffin-hoof-in hurricano,—  
(I might swear till I were almost  
Horse with roaring Asonante)  
Who forsooth because your betters  
Would begin to kick and fling—  
You forthwith your noble mind  
Must prove, and kick me oft behind,  
Tow'rd the very centre whither  
Gravity was most inclined.

There where you have made your bed  
In it lie ; for, wet or dry,  
Let what will for me betide you,  
Burning, blowing, freezing, hailing ;  
Famine waste you : devil ride you :  
Tempest baste you black and blue :—

(*To Rosaura.*) There ! I think in downright railing  
I can hold my own with you.

*Ros.* Ah, my good Fife, whose merry loyal pipe,  
Come weal, come woe, is never out of tune—  
What, you in the same plight too ?

*Fife.* Aye ;  
And madam—sir—hereby desire,  
When you your own adventures sing  
Another time in lofty rhyme,  
You don't forget the trusty squire  
Who went with you Don-quixoting.

*Ros.* Well, my good fellow—to leave Pegasus,  
Who scarce can serve us than our horses worse—  
They say no one should rob another of  
The single satisfaction he has left  
Of singing his own sorrows ; one so great,  
So says some great philosopher, that trouble  
Were worth encount'ring only for the sake

Of weeping over—what perhaps you know  
Some poet calls the “luxury of woe.”

*Fife.* Had I the poet or philosopher  
In place of her that kick'd me off to ride,  
I'd test his theory upon his hide.  
But no bones broken, madam—sir, I mean?—

*Ros.* A scratch here that a handkerchief will heal—  
And you?—

*Fife.* A scratch in *quiddity*, or kind :  
But not in “*quo*”—my wounds are all behind.  
But, as you say, to stop this strain,  
Which, somehow, once one's in the vein,  
Comes clattering after—there again!—  
What are we twain—deuce take't!—we two,  
I mean, to do—drencht through and through—  
Oh, I shall choke of rhymes, which I believe  
Are all that we shall have to live on here.

*Ros.* What, is our victual gone too?—

*Fife.* Aye, that brute  
Has carried all we had away with her,  
Clothing, and cate, and all.

*Ros.* And now the sun,  
Our only friend and guide, about to sink  
Under the stage of earth.

*Fife.* And enter Night,  
With Capa y Espada—and—pray heav'n!—  
With but her lanthorn also.

*Ros.* Ah, I doubt  
To-night, if any, with a dark one—or  
Almost burnt out after a month's consumption.  
Well! well or ill, on horseback or afoot,  
This is the gate that lets me into Poland ;  
And, sorry welcome as she gives a guest  
Who writes his own arrival on her rocks  
In his own blood—  
Yet better on her stony threshold die,  
Than live on unrevenged in Muscovy.

*Fife.* Oh what a soul some women have—I mean,  
Some men—

*Ros.* Oh, Fife, Fife, as you love me, Fife,  
Make yourself perfect in that little part,  
Or all will go to ruin!

*Fife.* Oh, I will,  
Please God we find some one to try it on.  
But, truly, would not any one believe  
Some fairy had exchanged us as we lay  
Two tiny foster-children in one cradle?

*Ros.* Well, be that as it may, Fife, it reminds me  
Of what perhaps I should have thought before,  
But better late than never—You know I love you,  
As you, I know, love me, and loyally  
Have follow'd me thus far in my wild venture :  
Well! now then—having seen me safe thus far—  
Safe if not wholly sound—over the rocks  
Into the country where my business lies—  
Why should not you return the way we came,  
The storm all cleared away, and, leaving me  
(Who now shall want you, though not thank you, less,  
Now that our horses gone) this side the ridge,  
Find your way back to dear old home again ;  
While I—Come, come!—  
What, weeping, my poor fellow?—

*Fife.* Leave you here  
Alone—my Lady—Lord! I mean my Lord—  
In a strange country—among savages—  
Oh, now I know—you would be rid of me  
For fear my stumbling speech—

*Ros.* Oh, no, no, no!—  
I want you with me for a thousand sakes  
To which that is as nothing—I myself  
More apt to let the secret out myself  
Without your help at all—Come, come, cheer up!  
And if you sing again, “Come weal, come woe,”  
Let it be that; for we will never part  
Until you give the signal.

*Fife.* 'Tis a bargain.

*Ros.* Now to begin, then. “Follow, follow me,  
“You fairy elves that be.”

*Fife.* Aye, and go on—  
Something of “following darkness like a dream,”  
For that we’re after.

*Ros.* No, after the sun ;  
Trying to catch hold of his glittering skirts  
That hang upon the mountain as he goes.

*Fife.* Ah, he’s himself past catching—as you spoke  
He heard what you were saying, and—just so—  
Like some scared water-bird,  
As we say in my country, *dōve* below.

*Ros.* Well, we must follow him as best we may.  
Poland is no great country, and, as rich  
In men and means, will but few acres spare  
To lie beneath her barrier mountains bare.  
We cannot, I believe, be very far  
From mankind or their dwellings.

*Fife.* Send it so !  
And well provided for man, woman, and beast.  
No, not for beast. Ah, but my heart begins  
To yearn for her—

*Ros.* Keep close, and keep your feet  
From serving you as hers did.

*Fife.* As for beasts,  
If in default of other entertainment,  
We should provide them with ourselves to eat—  
Bears, lions, wolves—

*Ros.* Oh, never fear.

*Fife.* Or else,  
Default of other beasts, beastlier men,  
Cannibals, Anthropophagi, bare Poles  
Who never knew a tailor but by taste.

*Ros.* Look, look ! Unless my fancy misconceive  
With twilight—down among the rocks there, *Fife*—  
Some human dwelling, surely—  
Or think you but a rock torn from the rocks  
In some convulsion like to-day’s, and perch  
Quaintly among them in mock-masonry ?

*Fife.* Most likely that, I doubt.

*Ros.* No, no—for look !

A square of darkness opening in it—

*Fife.* Oh,

I don't half like such openings!—

*Ros.* Like the loom  
Of night from which she spins her outer gloom—

*Fife.* Lord, Madam, pray forbear this tragic vein  
In such a time and place—

*Ros.* And now again  
Within that square of darkness, look! a light  
That feels its way with hesitating pulse,  
As we do, through the darkness that it drives  
To blacken into deeper night beyond.

*Fife.* In which could we follow that light's example,  
As might some English Bardolph with his nose,  
We might defy the sunset—Hark, a chain!

*Ros.* And now a lamp, a lamp! And now the hand  
That carries it.

*Fife.* Oh, Lord! that dreadful chain!

*Ros.* And now the bearer of the lamp; indeed  
As strange as any in Arabian tale,  
So giant-like, and terrible, and grand,  
Spite of the skin he's wrapt in.

*Fife.* Why, 'tis his own:  
Oh, 'tis some wild man of the woods; I've heard  
They build and carry torches—

*Ros.* Never Ape  
Bore such a brow before the heav'ns as that—  
Chain'd as you say too!—

*Fife.* Oh, that dreadful chain!

*Ros.* And now he sets the lamp down by his side,  
And with one hand clench'd in his tangled hair  
And with a sigh as if his heart would break—

[*During this* SEGISMUND *has entered from the  
fortress, with a torch.*]

*Segismund.* Once more the storm has roar'd itself away,  
Splitting the crags of God as it retires;  
But sparing still what it should only blast,  
This guilty piece of human handiwork,  
And all that are within it. Oh, how oft,

How oft, within or here abroad, have I  
 Waited, and in the whisper of my heart  
 Pray'd for the slanting hand of heav'n to strike  
 The blow myself I dared not, out of fear  
 Of that Hereafter, worse, they say, than here,  
 Plunged headlong in, but, till dismissal waited,  
 To wipe at last all sorrow from men's eyes,  
 And make this heavy dispensation clear.  
 Thus have I borne till now, and still endure,  
 Crouching in sullen impotence day by day,  
 Till some such out-burst of the elements  
 Like this rouses the sleeping fire within ;  
 And standing thus upon the threshold of  
 Another night about to close the door  
 Upon one wretched day to open it  
 On one yet wretcheder because one more ;—  
 Once more, you savage heav'ns, I ask of you—  
 I, looking up to those relentless eyes  
 That, now the greater lamp is gone below,  
 Begin to muster in the listening skies ;  
 In all the shining circuits you have gone  
 About this theatre of human woe,  
 What greater sorrow have you gazed upon  
 Than down this narrow chink you witness still ;  
 And which, did you yourselves not fore-devise,  
 You register'd for others to fulfil !

*Fife.* This is some Laureate at a birth-day ode ;  
 No wonder we went rhyming.

*Ros.* Hush ! And now,  
 See, starting to his feet, he strides about  
 Far as his tether'd steps—

*Seg.* And if the chain  
 You help'd to rivet round me did contract  
 Since guiltless infancy from guilt in act ;  
 Of what in aspiration or in thought  
 Guilty, but in resentment of the wrong  
 That wrecks revenge on wrong I never wrought  
 By excommunication from the free  
 Inheritance that all created life,

Beside myself, is born to—from the wings  
That range your own immeasurable blue,  
Down to the poor, mute, scale-imprison'd things,  
That yet are free to wander, glide, and pass  
About that under-sapphire, whereinto  
Yourselves transfusing you yourselves englass!

*Ros.* What mystery is this?

*Fife.* Why, the man's mad:  
That's all the mystery. That's why he's chain'd—  
And why—

*Seg.* Nor Nature's guiltless life alone—  
But that which lives on blood and rapine; nay,  
Charter'd with larger liberty to slay  
Their guiltless kind, the tyrants of the air  
Soar zenith-upward with their screaming prey,  
Making pure heav'n drop blood upon the stage  
Of under earth, where lion, wolf, and bear,  
And they that on their treacherous velvet wear  
Figure and constellation like your own,\*  
With their still living slaughter bound away  
Over the barriers of the mountain cage,  
Against which one, blood-guiltless, and endued  
With aspiration and with aptitude  
Transcending other creatures, day by day  
Beats himself mad with unavailing rage!

*Fife.* Why, that must be the meaning of my mule's  
Rebellion—

*Ros.* Hush!

*Seg.* But then if murder be  
The law by which not only conscience-blind  
Creatures, but man too prospers with his kind;  
Who leaving all his guilty fellows free,  
Under your fatal auspice and divine  
Compulsion, leagued in some mysterious ban

\* "Some report that they"—(panthers)—"have one marke on the shoulders resembling the moone, growing and decreasing as she doth, sometimes showing a full compasse, and otherwhiles hollowed and pointed with tips like the hornes."—*Philemon Holland's Pliny*, b. viii. c. 17.

Against one innocent and helpless man,  
 Abuse their liberty to murder mine :  
 And sworn to silence, like their masters mute  
 In heav'n, and like them twining through the mask  
 Of darkness, answering to all I ask,  
 Point up to them whose work they execute !

*Ros.* Ev'n as I thought, some poor unhappy wretch,  
 By man wrong'd, wretched, unrevenged, as I !  
 Nay, so much worse than I, as by those chains  
 Clipt of the means of self-revenge on those  
 Who lay on him what they deserve. And I,  
 Who taunted Heav'n a little while ago  
 With pouring all its wrath upon my head—  
 Alas ! like him who caught the cast-off husk  
 Of what another bragg'd of feeding on,  
 Here's one that from the refuse of my sorrows  
 Could gather all the banquet he desires !  
 Poor soul, poor soul !

*Fife.* Speak lower—he will hear you.

*Ros.* And if he should, what then ? Why, if he would,  
 He could not harm me—Nay, and if he could,  
 Methinks I'd venture something of a life  
 I care so little for—

*Seg.* Who's that ? Clotaldo ? Who are you, I say,  
 That, venturing in these forbidden rocks,  
 Have lighted on my miserable life,  
 And your own death ?

*Ros.* You would not hurt me, surely ?

*Seg.* Not I ; but those that, iron as the chain  
 In which they slay me with a lingering death,  
 Will slay you with a sudden—Who are you ?

*Ros.* A stranger from across the mountain there,  
 Who, having lost his way in this strange land  
 And coming night, drew hither to what seem'd  
 A human dwelling hidden in these rocks,  
 And where the voice of human sorrow soon  
 Told him it was so.

*Seg.* Aye ? But nearer—nearer—  
 That by this smoky supplement of day



But for a moment I may see who speaks  
So pitifully sweet.

*Fife.* Take care ! take care !

*Ros.* Alas, poor man, that I, myself so helpless,  
Could better help you than by barren pity,  
And my poor presence—

*Seg.* Oh, might that be all !  
But that—a few poor moments—and, alas !  
The very bliss of having, and the dread  
Of losing, under such a penalty  
As every moment's having runs more near,  
Stifles the very utterance and resource  
They cry for quickest ; till from sheer despair  
Of holding thee, methinks myself would tear  
To pieces—

*Fife.* There, his word's enough for it.

*Seg.* Oh, think, if you who move about at will,  
And live in sweet communion with your kind,  
After an hour lost in these lonely rocks  
Hunger and thirst after some human voice  
To drink, and human face to feed upon ;  
What must one do where all is mute, or harsh,  
And ev'n the naked face of cruelty  
Were better than the mask it works beneath ?—  
Across the mountain then ! Across the mountain !  
What if the next world which they tell one of  
Be only next across the mountain then,  
Though I must never see it till I die,  
And you one of its angels ?

*Ros.* Alas ! Alas !  
No angel ! And the face you think so fair,  
'Tis but the dismal frame-work of these rocks  
That makes it seem so ; and the world I come from—  
Alas, alas, too many faces there  
Are but fair vizors to black hearts below,  
Or only serve to bring the wearer woe !  
But to yourself—If haply the redress  
That I am here upon may help to yours.  
I heard you tax the heav'ns with ordering,

SCENE I.] SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS ARE MADE OF. 77

And men for executing, what, alas!  
I now behold. But why, and who they are  
Who do, and you who suffer—

*Seg.* (*pointing upwards*). Ask of them,  
Whom, as to-night, I have so often ask'd,  
And ask'd in vain.

*Ros.* But surely, surely—  
*Seg.*

*(Trumpet within)*  
Hark!

The trumpet of the watch to shut us in.  
Oh, should they find you!—Quick! Behind the rocks!  
To-morrow—if to-morrow—

*Ros.* (*flinging her sword toward him*). Take my sword!

*ROSAURA and FIFE hide in the rocks; Enter CLOTALDO.*

*Clotaldo.* These stormy days you like to see the last of  
Are but ill opiates, Segismund, I think,  
For night to follow: and to-night you seem  
More than your wont disorder'd. What! A sword?  
Within there!

*Enter SOLDIERS with black vizors and torches.*

*Fife.* Here's a pleasant masquerade!

*Clo.* Whosever watch this was  
Will have to pay head-reckoning. Meanwhile,  
This weapon had a wearer. Bring him here,  
Alive or dead.

*Seg.* Clotaldo! good Clotaldo!—

*Clo.* (*to Soldiers who enclose Segismund; others searching the rocks*). You know your duty.

*Soldiers* (*bringing in Rosaura and Fife*). Here are two  
of them,

Whoever more to follow—

*Clo.* Who are you,  
That in defiance of known proclamation  
Are found, at night-fall too, about this place?

*Fife.* Oh, my Lord, she—I mean he—

*Ros.* Silence, Fife,  
And let me speak for both.—Two foreign men,  
To whom your country and its proclamations

Are equally unknown ; and, had we known,  
Ourselves not masters of our lawless beasts  
That, terrified by the storm among your rocks,  
Flung us upon them to our cost.

*Fife.* My mule—

*Clo.* Foreigners ? Of what country ?

*Ros.* Muscovy.

*Clo.* And whither bound ?

*Ros.* Hither—if this be Poland ;

But with no ill design on her, and therefore  
Taking it ill that we should thus be stopt  
Upon her threshold so uncivilly.

*Clo.* Whither in Poland ?

*Ros.* To the capital.

*Clo.* And on what errand ?

*Ros.* Set me on the road,  
And you shall be the nearer to my answer.

*Clo.* (*aside*). So resolute and ready to reply,  
And yet so young—and—(*aloud*) Well,—  
Your business was not surely with the man  
We found you with ?

*Ros.* He was the first we saw,—  
And strangers and benighted, as we were,  
As you too would have done in a like case,  
Accosted him at once.

*Clo.* Aye, but this sword ?

*Ros.* I flung it toward him.

*Clo.* Well, and why ?

*Ros.* And why ?

But to revenge himself on those who thus  
Injuriouly misuse him.

*Clo.* So—so—so !

'Tis well such resolution wants a beard—  
And, I suppose, is never to attain one.  
Well, I must take you both, you and your sword,  
Prisoners.

*Fife* (*offering a cudgel*). Pray take mine, and welcome, sir ;  
I'm sure I gave it to that mule of mine  
To mighty little purpose.

*Ros.* Mine you have ;  
And may it win us some more kindness  
Than we have met with yet.

*Clo. (examining the sword).* More mystery !  
How came you by this weapon ?

*Ros.* From my father.

*Clo.* And do you know whence he ?

*Ros.* Oh, very well :  
From one of this same Polish realm of yours,  
Who promised a return, should come the chance,  
Of courtesies that he received himself  
In Muscovy, and left this pledge of it—  
Not likely yet, it seems, to be redeem'd.

*Clo. (aside).* Oh, wondrous chance—or wondrous  
Providence !

The sword that I myself in Muscovy,  
When these white hairs were black, for keepsake left  
Of obligation for a like return  
To him who saved me wounded as I lay  
Fighting against his country ; took me home ;  
Tended me like a brother till recover'd,  
Perchance to fight against him once again—  
And now my sword put back into my hand  
By his—if not his son—still, as so seeming,  
By me, as first devoir of gratitude,  
To seem believing, till the wearer's self  
See fit to drop the ill-dissembling mask.

*(Aloud).* Well, a strange turn of fortune has arrested  
The sharp and sudden penalty that else  
Had visited your rashness or mischance :  
In part, your tender youth too—pardon me,  
And touch not where your sword is not to answer—  
Commends you to my care ; not your life only,  
Else by this misadventure forfeited ;  
But ev'n your errand, which by happy chance,  
Chimes with the very business I am on,  
And calls me to the very point you aim at.

*Ros.* The capital ?

*Clo.* Aye, the capital ; and ev'n

That capital of capitals, the Court :  
 Where you may plead, and I may promise, win  
 Pardon for this, you say unwilling, trespass,  
 And prosecute what else you have at heart,  
 With me to help you forward all I can ;  
 Provided all in loyalty to those  
 To whom by natural allegiance  
 I first am bound to.

*Ros.* As you make, I take  
 Your offer : with like promise on my side  
 Of loyalty to you and those you serve,  
 Under like reservation for regards  
 Nearer and dearer still.

*Clo.* Enough, enough ;  
 Your hand ; a bargain on both sides. Meanwhile,  
 Here shall you rest to-night. The break of day  
 Shall see us both together on the way.

*Ros.* Thus then what I for misadventure blamed,  
 Directly draws me where my wishes aim'd.

SCENE II. *The Palace at Warsaw. Enter on one side*  
*ASTOLFO, Duke of Muscovy, with his train: and, on the other,*  
*the PRINCESS ESTRELLA, with hers.*

*Astolfo.* My royal cousin, if so near in blood,  
 Till this auspicious meeting scarcely known,  
 Till all that beauty promised in the bud  
 Is now to its consummate blossom blown,  
 Well met at last ; and may—

*Estrella.* Enough, my Lord,  
 Of compliment devised for you by some  
 Court tailor, and, believe me, still too short  
 To cover the designful heart below.

*Ast.* Nay, but indeed, fair cousin—

*Est.* Aye, let Deed  
 Measure your words, indeed your flowers of speech  
 Ill with your iron equipage atone ;  
 Irony indeed, and wordy compliment.

*Ast.* Indeed, indeed, you wrong me, royal cousin,  
 And fair as royal, misinterpreting

What, even for the end you think I aim at,  
If false to you, were fatal to myself.

*Est.* Why, what else means the glittering steel, my  
Lord,  
That bristles in the rear of these fine words?  
What can it mean, but, failing to cajole,  
To fight or force me from my just pretension?

*Ast.* Nay, might I not ask ev'n the same of you,  
The nodding helmets of whose men at arms  
Out-crest the plumage of your lady court?

*Est.* But to defend what yours would force from me.

*Ast.* Might not I, lady, say the same of mine?  
But not to come to battle, ev'n of words,  
With a fair lady, and my kinswoman;  
And as averse to stand before your face,  
Defenceless, and condemn'd in your disgrace,  
Till the good king be here to clear it all—  
Will you vouchsafe to hear me?

*Est.* As you will.

*Ast.* You know that, when about to leave this world,  
Our royal grandsire, King Alfonso, left  
Three children; one a son, Basilio,  
Who wears—long may he wear!—the crown of Poland;  
And daughters twain: of whom the elder was  
Your mother, Clorileña, now some while  
Exalted to a more than mortal throne;  
And Recisunda, mine, the younger sister,  
Who, married to the Prince of Muscovy,  
Gave me the light which may she live to see  
Herself for many, many years to come.  
Meanwhile, good King Basilio, as you know,  
Deep in abstruser studies than this world,  
And busier with the stars than lady's eyes,  
Has never by a second marriage yet  
Replaced, as Poland ask'd of him, the heir  
An early marriage brought and took away;  
His young queen dying with the son she bore him:  
And in such alienation grown so old  
As leaves no other hope of heir to Poland

Than his two sisters' children ; you, fair cousin,  
 And me ; for whom the Commons of the realm  
 Divide themselves into two several factions ;  
 Whether for you, the elder sister's child ;  
 Or me, born of the younger, but, they say,  
 My natural prerogative of man  
 Outweighing your priority of birth.  
 Which discord growing loud and dangerous,  
 Our uncle, King Basilio, doubly sage  
 In prophesying and providing for  
 The future, as to deal with it when come,  
 Bids us here meet to-day in solemn council  
 Our several pretensions to compose.  
 And, but the martial out-burst that proclaims  
 His coming, makes all further parley vain,  
 Unless my bosom, by which only wise  
 I prophesy, now wrongly prophesies,  
 By such a happy compact as I dare  
 But glance at till the Royal Sage declare.

(*Trumpets, &c. Enter KING BASILIO with his Council.*)

*All.* The King ! God save the King !

*Estrella.* } (*Kneeling.*) Oh, Royal Sir !—

*Astolfo.* } God save your Majesty !—

*King.* Rise, both of you,

Rise to my arms, Astolfo and Estrella ;  
 As my two sisters' children always mine,  
 Now more than ever, since myself and Poland  
 Solely to you for our succession look'd.  
 And now give ear, you and your several factions,  
 And you, the Peers and Princes of this realm,  
 While I reveal the purport of this meeting  
 In words whose necessary length I trust  
 No unsuccessful issue shall excuse.  
 You and the world who have surnamed me " Sage "  
 Know that I owe that title, if my due,  
 To my long meditation on the book  
 Which ever lying open overhead—  
 The book of heav'n, I mean—so few have read ;

Whose golden letters on whose sapphire leaf,  
 Distinguishing the page of day and night,  
 And all the revolution of the year ;  
 So with the turning volume where they lie  
 Still changing their prophetic syllables,  
 They register the destinies of men :  
 Until with eyes that, dim with years indeed,  
 Are quicker to pursue the stars that rule them,  
 I get the start of Time, and from his hand  
 The wand of tardy revelation draw.  
 Oh, had the self-same heav'n upon his page  
 Inscribed my death ere I should read my life,  
 And, by fore-casting of my own mischance,  
 Play not the victim but the suicide  
 In my own tragedy !—But you shall hear.  
 You know how once, as kings must for their people,  
 And only once, as wise men for themselves,  
 I woo'd and wedded : know too that my Queen  
 In childing died ; but not, as you believe,  
 With her, the son she died in giving life to.  
 For, as the hour of birth was on the stroke,  
 Her brain conceiving with her womb, she dream'd  
 A serpent tore her entrail. And, too surely  
 (For evil omen seldom speaks in vain)  
 The man-child breaking from that living tomb  
 That makes our birth the antitype of death,  
 Man-grateful, for the life she gave him paid  
 By killing her : and with such circumstance  
 As suited such unnatural tragedy ;  
 He coming into light, if light it were  
 That darken'd at his very horoscope,  
 When heaven's two champions—sun and moon I mean—  
 Suffused in blood upon each other fell  
 In such a raging duel of eclipse  
 As hath not terrified the universe  
 Since that that wept in blood the death of Christ :  
 When the dead walk'd, the waters turn'd to blood,  
 Earth and her cities totter'd, and the world  
 Seem'd shaken to its last paralysis.



In such a paroxysm of dissolution  
 That son of mine was born ; by that first act  
 Heading the monstrous catalogue of crime,  
 I found fore-written in his horoscope ;  
 As great a monster in man's history  
 As was in nature his nativity ;  
 So savage, bloody, terrible, and impious,  
 Who, should he live, would tear his country's entrails,<sup>1</sup>  
 As by his birth his mother's ; with which crime  
 Beginning, he should clench the dreadful tale  
 By trampling on his father's silver head.  
 All which fore-reading, and his act of birth  
 Fate's warrant that I read his life aright ;  
 To save his country from his mother's fate,  
 I gave abroad that he had died with her  
 His being slew : with midnight secrecy  
 I had him carried to a lonely tower  
 Hewn from the mountain-barriers of the realm,  
 And under strict anathema of death  
 Guarded from men's inquisitive approach,  
 Save from the trusty few one needs must trust ;  
 Who while his fasten'd body they provide  
 With salutary garb and nourishment,  
 Instruct his soul in what no soul may miss  
 Of holy faith, and in such other lore  
 As may solace his life-imprisonment,  
 And tame perhaps the Savage prophesied  
 Toward such a trial as I aim at now,  
 And now demand your special hearing to.  
 What in this fearful business I have done,  
 Judge whether lightly or maliciously,—  
 I, with my own and only flesh and blood,  
 And proper lineal inheritor !  
 I swear, had his foretold atrocities  
 Touch'd me alone, I had not saved myself .  
 At such a cost to him ; but as a king,—  
 A Christian king,—I say, advisedly,  
 Who would devote his people to a tyrant  
 Worse than Caligula fore-chronicled ?

But even this not without grave mis-giving,  
Lest by some chance mis-reading of the stars,  
Or mis-direction of what rightly read,  
I wrong my son of his prerogative,  
And Poland of her rightful sovereign.  
For, sure and certain prophets as the stars,  
Although they err not, he who reads them may ;  
Or rightly reading—seeing there is One  
Who governs them, as, under Him, they us,  
We are not sure if the rough diagram  
They draw in heav'n and we interpret here,  
Be sure of operation, if the Will  
Supreme, that sometimes for some special end  
The course of providential nature breaks  
By miracle, may not of these same stars  
Cancel his own first draft, or overrule  
What else fore-written all else overrules.  
As, for example, should the Will Almighty  
Permit the Free-will of particular man  
To break the meshes of else strangling fate—  
Which Free-will, fearful of foretold abuse,  
I have myself from my own son for-closed  
From ever possible self-extrication ;  
A terrible responsibility,  
Not to the conscience to be reconciled  
Unless opposing almost certain evil  
Against so slight contingency of good.  
Well—thus perplexed, I have resolved at last  
To bring the thing to trial : whereunto  
Here have I summon'd you, my Peers, and you  
Whom I more dearly look to, failing him,  
As witnesses to that which I propose ;  
And thus propose the doing it. Clotaldo,  
Who guards my son with old fidelity,  
Shall bring him hither from his tower by night,  
Lockt in a sleep so fast as by my art  
I rivet to within a link of death,  
But yet from death so far, that next day's dawn  
Shall wake him up upon the royal bed,

Complete in consciousness and faculty,  
 When with all princely pomp and retinue  
 My loyal Peers with due obeisance  
 Shall hail him Segismund, the Prince of Poland.  
 Then if with any show of human kindness  
 He fling discredit, not upon the stars,  
 But upon me, their misinterpreter ;  
 With all apology mistaken age  
 Can make to youth it never meant to harm,  
 To my son's forehead will I shift the crown  
 I long have wish'd upon a younger brow ;  
 And in religious humiliation,  
 For what of worn-out age remains to me,  
 Entreat my pardon both of Heav'n and him  
 For tempting destinies beyond my reach.  
 But if, as I misdoubt, at his first step  
 The hoof of the predicted savage shows ;  
 Before predicted mischief can be done,  
 The self-same sleep that loosed him from the chain  
 Shall re-consign him, not to loose again.  
 Then shall I, having lost that heir direct,  
 Look solely to my sisters' children twain ;  
 Each of a claim so equal as divides  
 The voice of Poland to their several sides,  
 But, as I trust, to be entwined ere long  
 Into one single wreath so fair and strong  
 As shall at once all difference atone,  
 And cease the realm's division with their own.  
 Cousins and Princes, Peers and Councillors,  
 Such is the purport of this invitation,  
 And such is my design. Whose furtherance  
 If not as Sovereign, if not as Seer,  
 Yet one whom these white locks, if nothing else,  
 To patient acquiescence consecrate,  
 I now demand and even supplicate.

*Ast.* Such news, and from such lips, may well suspend  
 The tongue to loyal answer most attuned ;  
 But if to me as spokesman of my faction  
 Your Highness looks for answer ; I reply

For one and all—Let Segismund, whom now  
 We first hear tell of as your living heir,  
 Appear, and but in your sufficient eye  
 Approve himself worthy to be your son,  
 Then we will hail him Poland's rightful heir.  
 What says my cousin ?

*Est.* Aye, with all my heart.

But if my youth and sex upbraid me not  
 That I should dare ask of so wise a king—

*King.* Ask, ask, fair cousin ! Nothing, I am sure,  
 Not well consider'd ; nay, if 'twere, yet nothing  
 But pardonable from such lips as those.

*Est.* Then, with your pardon, Sir—If Segismund,  
 My cousin, whom I shall rejoice to hail  
 As Prince of Poland too, as you propose,  
 Be to a trial coming upon which  
 More, as I think, than life itself depends,  
 Why, Sir, with sleep-disorder'd senses brought  
 To this uncertain contest with his stars ?

*King.* Well askt indeed ! As wisely be it answer'd !—  
*Because* it is uncertain, see you not ?  
 For as I think I can discern between  
 The sudden flaws of a sleep-startled man,  
 And of the savage thing we have to dread ;  
 If but bewilder'd, dazzled, and uncouth,  
 As might the sanest and the civilest  
 In circumstance so strange—nay, more than that,  
 If moved to any out-break short of blood,  
 All shall be well with him ; and how much more,  
 If 'mid the magic turmoil of the change,  
 He shall so calm a resolution show  
 As scarce to reel beneath so great a blow !  
 But if with savage passion uncontroll'd  
 He lay about him like the brute foretold,  
 And must as suddenly be caged again ;  
 Then what redoubled anguish and despair,  
 From that brief flash of blissful liberty  
 Remitted—and for ever—to his chain !  
 Which so much less, if on the stage of glory

Enter'd and exited through such a door  
Of sleep as makes a dream of all between.

*Est.* Oh kindly answer, Sir, to question that  
To charitable courtesy less wise  
Might call for pardon rather! I shall now  
Gladly, what, uninstructed, loyally  
I should have waited.

*Ast.*                                      Your Highness doubts not me,  
Nor how my heart follows my cousin's lips,  
Whatever way the doubtful balance fall,  
Still loyal to your bidding.

*Omnes.*                                      So say all.

*King.* I hoped, and did expect, of all no less—  
And sure no sovereign ever needed more  
From all who owe him love or loyalty.  
For what a strait of time I stand upon,  
When to this issue not alone I bring  
My son your Prince, but ev'n myself your King:  
And, whichsoever way for him it turn,  
Of less than little honour to myself.  
For if this coming trial justify  
My thus withholding from my son his right,  
Is not the judge himself justified in  
The father's shame? And if the judge proved wrong,  
My son withholding from his right thus long,  
Shame and remorse to judge and father both:  
Unless remorse and shame together drown'd  
In having what I flung for worthless found.  
But come—already weary with your travel,  
And ill refresh't by this strange history,  
Until the hours that draw the sun from heav'n  
Unite us at the customary board,  
Each to his several chamber: you to rest;  
I to contrive with old Clotaldo best  
The method of a stranger thing than old  
Time has as yet among his records told.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Throne-room in the Palace. Music within.*

*Enter KING and CLOTALDO, meeting a Lord in waiting.*

*King.* You, for a moment beckon'd from your office,  
Tell me thus far how goes it. In due time  
The potion left him?

*Lord.* At the very hour  
To which your Highness temper'd it. Yet not  
So wholly but some lingering mist still hung  
About his dawning senses—which to clear,  
We fill'd and handed him a morning drink  
With sleep's specific antidote suffused;  
And while with princely raiment we invested  
What nature surely modell'd for a Prince—  
All but the sword—as you directed—

*King.* Aye—

*Lord.* If not too loudly, yet emphatically  
Still with the title of a Prince address'd him.

*King.* How bore he that?

*Lord.* With all the rest, my liege,  
I will not say so like one in a dream  
As one himself misdoubting that he dream'd.

*King.* So far so well, Clotaldo, either way,  
And best of all if tow'rd the worse I dread.  
But yet no violence?—

*Lord.* At most, impatience;  
Wearied perhaps with importunities  
We yet were bound to offer.

*King.* Oh, Clotaldo!  
Though thus far well, yet would myself had drunk  
The potion he revives from! such suspense  
Crowds all the pulses of life's residue  
Into the present moment; and, I think,  
Whichever way the trembling scale may turn,  
Will leave the crown of Poland for some one  
To wait no longer than the setting sun!

*Clo.* Courage, my liege! The curtain is undrawn,  
And each must play his part out manfully,  
Leaving the rest to heav'n.

*King.* Whose written words  
If I should misinterpret or transgress!  
But as you say—

*(To the Lord, who exit).* You, back to him at once;  
Clotaldo, you, when he is somewhat used  
To the new world of which they call him Prince,  
Where place and face, and all, is strange to him,  
With your known features and familiar garb  
Shall then, as chorus to the scene, accost him,  
And by such earnest of that old and too  
Familiar world, assure him of the new.  
Last in the strange procession, I myself  
Will by one full and last development  
Complete the plot for that catastrophe  
That he must put to all; God grant it be  
The crown of Poland on his brows!—Hark! hark!—  
Was that his voice within?—Now louder—Oh,  
Clotaldo, what! so soon begun to roar!—  
Again! above the music— But betide  
What may, until the moment, we must hide.

[*Exeunt KING and CLOTALDO.*

*Segismund (within).* Forbear! I stifle with your perfume!  
cease

Your crazy salutations! peace, I say—  
Begone, or let me go, ere I go mad  
With all this babble, mummery, and glare,  
For I am growing dangerous—Air! room! air!—

[*He rushes in. Music ceases.*

Oh but to save the reeling brain from wreck  
With its bewilder'd senses!—

[*He covers his eyes for awhile.*

What! Ev'n now

That Babel left behind me, but my eyes  
Pursued by the same glamour, that—unless  
Alike bewitch'd too—the confederate sense  
Vouches for palpable: bright-shining floors

That ring hard answer back to the stamp'd heel,  
 And shoot up airy columns marble-cold,  
 That, as they climb, break into golden leaf  
 And capital, till they embrace aloft  
 In clustering flower and fruitage over walls  
 Hung with such purple curtain as the West  
 Fringes with such a gold; or over-laid  
 With sanguine-glowing semblances of men,  
 Each in his all but living action busied,  
 Or from the wall they look from, with fix'd eyes  
 Pursuing me; and one most strange of all  
 That, as I pass'd the crystal on the wall,  
 Look'd from it—left it—and as I return,  
 Returns, and looks me face to face again—  
 Unless some false reflection of my brain,  
 The outward semblance of myself—Myself?  
 How know that tawdry shadow for myself,  
 But that it moves as I move; lifts his hand  
 With mine; each motion echoing so close  
 The immediate suggestion of the will  
 In which myself I recognize—Myself!—  
 What, this fantastic Segismund the same  
 Who last night, as for all his nights before,  
 Lay down to sleep in wolf-skin on the ground  
 In a black turret which the wolf howl'd round,  
 And woke again upon a golden bed,  
 Round which as clouds about a rising sun,  
 In scarce less glittering caparison,  
 Gather'd gay shapes that, underneath a breeze  
 Of music, handed him upon their knees  
 The wine of heaven in a cup of gold,  
 And still in soft melodious under-song  
 Hailing me Prince of Poland!—"Segismund,"  
 They said, "Our Prince! The Prince of Poland!" and  
 Again, "Oh, welcome, welcome, to his own,  
 "Our own Prince Segismund—"

Oh, but a blast—

One blast of the rough mountain air! one look  
 At the grim features—(*He goes to the window*)



What they disvizer'd also ! shatter'd chaos  
 Cast into stately shape and masonry,  
 Between whose channel'd and perspective sides  
 Compact with rooted towers, and flourishing  
 To heav'n with gilded pinnacle and spire,  
 Flows the live current ever to and fro  
 With open aspect and free step !——Clotaldo !  
 Clotaldo !——calling as one scarce dares call  
 For him who suddenly might break the spell  
 One fears to walk without him—Why, that I,  
 With unencumber'd step as any there,  
 Go stumbling through my glory—feeling for  
 That iron leading-string—aye, for myself—  
 For that fast-anchor'd self of yesterday,  
 Of yesterday, and all my life before,  
 Ere drifted clean from self-identity  
 Upon the fluctuation of to-day's  
 Mad whirling circumstance !——And, fool, why not ?  
 If reason, sense, and self-identity  
 Obliterated from a worn-out brain,  
 Art thou not maddest striving to be sane,  
 And catching at that Self of yesterday  
 That, like a leper's rags, best flung away !  
 Or if not mad, then dreaming—dreaming ?——well—  
 Dreaming then—Or, if self to self be true,  
 Not mock'd by that, but as poor souls have been  
 By those who wrong'd them, to give wrong new relish ?  
 Or have those stars indeed they told me of  
 As masters of my wretched life of old,  
 Into some happier constellation roll'd,  
 And brought my better fortune out on earth  
 Clear as themselves in heav'n !——Prince Segismund  
 They call'd me—and at will I shook them off—  
 Will they return again at my command  
 Again to call me so ?——Within there !    You !  
 Segismund calls—Prince Segismund—

*(He has seated himself on the throne. Enter CHAMBER-  
 LAIN, with lords in waiting.)*

*Chamb.* I rejoice  
That unadvised of any but the voice  
Of royal instinct in the blood, your Highness  
Has ta'en the chair that you were born to fill.

*Seg.* The chair?

*Chamb.* The royal throne of Poland, Sir,  
Which may your Royal Highness keep as long  
As he that now rules from it shall have ruled  
When heav'n has call'd him to itself.

*Seg.* When he?—

*Chamb.* Your royal father, King Basilio, Sir.

*Seg.* My royal father—King Basilio.

You see I answer but as Echo does,  
Not knowing what she listens or repeats.  
This is my throne—this is my palace—Oh,  
But this out of the window?—

*Chamb.* Warsaw, Sir,  
Your capital—

*Seg.* And all the moving people?

*Chamb.* Your subjects and your vassals like ourselves.

*Seg.* Aye, aye—my subjects—in my capital—  
Warsaw—and I am Prince of it—You see  
It needs much iteration to strike sense  
Into the human echo.

*Chamb.* Left awhile  
In the quick brain, the word will quickly to  
Full meaning blow.

*Seg.* You think so?

*Chamb.* And meanwhile  
Lest our obsequiousness, which means no worse  
Than customary honour to the Prince  
We most rejoice to welcome, trouble you,  
Should we retire again? or stand apart?  
Or would your Highness have the music play  
Again, which meditation, as they say,  
So often loves to float upon?

*Seg.* The music?

No—yes—perhaps the trumpet—(*Aside*) Yet if that  
Brought back the troop!

*A Lord.* The trumpet! There again  
How trumpet-like spoke out the blood of Poland!

*Chamb.* Before the morning is far up, your Highness  
Will have the trumpet marshalling your soldiers  
Under the Palace windows.

*Seg.* Ah, my soldiers—  
My soldiers—not black-vizor'd?—

*Chamb.* Sir?

*Seg.* No matter.  
But—one thing—for a moment—in your ear—  
Do you know one Clotaldo?

*Chamb.* Oh, my Lord,  
He and myself together, I may say,  
Although in different vocations,  
Have silver'd in your royal father's service;  
And, as I trust, with both of us a few  
White hairs to fall in yours.

*Seg.* Well said, well said!  
Basilio, my father—well—Clotaldo—  
Is he my kinsman too?

*Chamb.* Oh, my good Lord,  
A General simply in your Highness' service,  
Than whom your Highness has no trustier.

*Seg.* Aye, so you said before, I think. And you  
With that white wand of yours—  
Why, now I think on't, I have read of such  
A silver-hair'd magician with a wand,  
Who in a moment, with a wave of it,  
Turn'd rags to jewels, clowns to emperors,  
By some benigner magic than the stars  
Spirited poor good people out of hand  
From all their woes; in some enchanted sleep  
Carried them off on cloud or dragon-back  
Over the mountains, over the wide Deep,  
And set them down to wake in Fairyland.

*Chamb.* Oh, my good Lord, you laugh at me—and I  
Right glad to make you laugh at such a price:  
You know me no enchanter: if I were,  
I and my wand as much your Highness',

As now your chamberlain—

*Seg.* My chamberlain?—

And these that follow you?—

*Chamb.* On you, my Lord ;  
Your Highness' lords in waiting.

*Seg.* Lords in waiting.

Well, I have now learn'd to repeat, I think,  
If only but by rote—This is my palace,  
And this my throne—which unadvised—And that  
Out of the window there my Capital ;

And all the people moving up and down  
My subjects and my vassals like yourselves,  
My chamberlain—and lords in waiting—and  
Clotaldo—and Clotaldo?—

You are an aged, and seem a reverend man—  
You do not—though his fellow-officer—  
You do not mean to mock me ?

*Chamb.* Oh, my Lord !

*Seg.* Well then—If no magician, as you say,  
Yet setting me a riddle, that my brain,  
With all its senses whirling, cannot solve,  
Yourself or one of these with you must answer—  
How I—that only last night fell asleep  
Not knowing that the very soil of earth  
I lay down—chain'd—to sleep upon was Poland—  
Awake to find myself the Lord of it,  
With Lords, and Generals, and Chamberlains,  
And ev'n my very Gaoler, for my vassals !

*Enter suddenly* CLOTALDO.

*Clotaldo.* Stand all aside  
That I may put into his hand the clue  
To lead him out of this amazement. Sir,  
Vouchsafe your Highness from my bended knee  
Receive my homage first.

*Seg.* Clotaldo ! What,  
At last—his old self—undisguised where all  
Is masquerade—to end it !—You kneeling too !  
What ! have the stars you told me long ago



You taught me—elsewhere?—

*Clo.* (*kissing the hilt of his sword*)—Swear it upon this  
Symbol, and champion of the holy faith  
I wear it to defend.

*Seg.* (*to himself*). My eyes have not deceived me, nor my  
ears,

With this transfiguration, nor the strain  
Of royal welcome that arose and blew,  
Breathed from no lying lips, along with it.  
For here Clotaldo comes, his own old self,  
Who, if not Lie and phantom with the rest—  
(*Aloud*) Well then, all this is thus.

For have not these fine people told me so,  
And you, Clotaldo, sworn it? And the Why  
And Wherefore are to follow by and bye!  
And yet—and yet—why wait for that which you  
Who take your oath on it can answer—and  
Indeed it presses hard upon my brain—  
What I was asking of these gentlemen  
When you came in upon us; how it is  
That I—the Segismund you know so long—  
No longer than the sun that rose to-day  
Rose—and from what you know—  
Rose to be Prince of Poland?

*Clo.* So to be  
Acknowledg'd and entreated, sir.

*Seg.* So be  
Acknowledg'd and entreated—  
Well—But if now by all, by some at least  
So known—if not entreated—heretofore—  
Though not by you—For, now I think again,  
Of what should be your attestation worth,  
You that of all my questionable subjects  
Who knowing what, yet left me where, I was,  
You least of all, Clotaldo, till the dawn  
Of this first day that told it to myself.

*Clo.* Oh, let your Highness draw the line across  
Fore-written sorrow, and in this new dawn  
Bury that long sad night.

*Seg.*    Not ev'n the Dead,  
 Call'd to the resurrection of the blest,  
 Shall so directly drop all memory  
 Of woes and wrongs foregone!

*Clo.*    But not resent—  
 Purged by the trial of that sorrow past  
 For full fruition of their present bliss.

*Seg.* But leaving with the Judge what, till this earth  
 Be cancell'd in the burning heav'ns, He leaves  
 His earthly delegates to execute,  
 Of retribution in reward to them  
 And woe to those who wrong'd them—Not as you,  
 Not you, Clotaldo, knowing not—And yet  
 Ev'n to the guiltiest wretch in all the realm,  
 Of any treason guilty short of that,  
 Stern usage—but assuredly not knowing,  
 Not knowing 'twas your sovereign lord, Clotaldo,  
 You used so sternly.

*Clo.*    Aye, sir; with the same  
 Devotion and fidelity that now  
 Does homage to him for my sovereign.

*Seg.* Fidelity that held his Prince in chains!

*Clo.* Fidelity more fast than had it loosed him—

*Seg.* Ev'n from the very dawn of consciousness  
 Down at the bottom of the barren rocks,  
 Where scarce a ray of sunshine found him out,  
 In which the poorest beggar of my realm,  
 At least to human-full proportion grows—  
 Me! Me—whose station was the kingdom's top  
 To flourish in, reaching my head to heav'n,  
 And with my branches overshadowing  
 The meaner growth below!

*Clo.*    Still with the same  
 Fidelity—

*Seg.*    To me!—

*Clo.*    Aye, sir, to you,  
 Through that divine allegiance upon which  
 All Order and Authority is based;  
 Which to revolt against—

*Seg.* Were to revolt  
Against the stars, belike!

*Clo.* And him who reads them;  
And by that right, and by the sovereignty  
He wears as you shall wear it after him;  
Aye, one to whom yourself—  
Yourself, ev'n more than any subject here,  
Are bound by yet another and more strong  
Allegiance—King Basilio—your Father—

*Seg.* Basilio—King—my father!—

*Clo.* Oh, my Lord,  
Let me beseech you on my bended knee,  
For your own sake—for Poland's—and for his,  
Who, looking up for counsel to the skies,  
Did what he did under authority  
To which the kings of earth themselves are subject,  
And whose behest not only he that suffers,  
But he that executes, not comprehends,  
But only He that orders it—

*Seg.* The King—  
My father!—Either I am mad already,  
Or that way driving fast—or I should know  
That fathers do not use their children so,  
Or men were loosed from all allegiance  
To fathers, kings, and heav'n that order'd all.  
But, mad or not, my hour is come, and I  
Will have my reckoning—Either you lie,  
Under the skirt of sinless majesty  
Shrouding your treason; or if *that* indeed,  
Guilty itself, take refuge in the stars  
That cannot hear the charge, or disavow—  
You, whether doer or deviser, who  
Come first to hand, shall pay the penalty  
By the same hand you owe it to—

*(Seizing Clotaldo's sword and about to strike him.)*

*Enter ROSAURA suddenly.*

*Rosaura.* Fie, my lord—forbear,



What! a young hand rais'd against silver hair!—

(*She retreats through the crowd.*)

*Seg.* Stay! stay!—What come and vanisht as before—  
I scarce remember how—but—

*Voices within.* Room for Astolfo, Duke of Muscovy!

*Enter ASTOLFO.*

*Astolfo.* Welcome, thrice welcome, the auspicious day,  
When from the mountain where he darkling lay,  
The Polish sun into the firmament  
Sprung all the brighter for his late ascent,  
And in meridian glory—

*Seg.* Where is he?  
Why must I ask this twice?—

*A Lord.* The Page, my Lord?  
I wonder at his boldness—

*Seg.* But I tell you  
He came with Angel written in his face  
As now it is, when all was black as hell  
About, and none of you who now—he came,  
And Angel-like flung me a shining sword  
To cut my way through darkness; and again  
Angel-like wrests it from me in behalf  
Of one—whom I will spare for sparing him:  
But he must come and plead with that same voice  
That pray'd for me—in vain.

*Chamb.* He is gone for,  
And shall attend your pleasure, sir. Meanwhile,  
Will not your Highness, as in courtesy,  
Return your royal cousin's greeting?

*Seg.* Whose?  
*Chamb.* Astolfo, Duke of Muscovy, my Lord,  
Saluted, and with gallant compliment  
Welcomed you to your royal title.

*Seg. (to Astolfo).* Oh—  
You knew of this then?

*Ast.* Knew of what, my Lord?

*Seg.* That I was Prince of Poland all the while,  
And you my subject?

*Ast.* Pardon me, my Lord ;  
But some few hours ago myself I learn'd  
Your dignity ; but, knowing it, no more  
Than when I knew it not, your subject.

*Seg.* What then ?

*Ast.* Your Highness' chamberlain ev'n now has told you ;  
Astolfo, Duke of Muscovy,  
Your father's sister's son ; your cousin, sir :  
And who as such, and in his own right Prince,  
Expects from you the courtesy he shows.

*Chamb.* His Highness is as yet unused to Court,  
And to the ceremonious interchange  
Of compliment, especially to those  
Who draw their blood from the same royal fountain.

*Seg.* Where is the lad ? I weary of all this—  
Prince, cousins, chamberlains, and compliments—  
Where are my soldiers ? Blow the trumpet, and  
With one sharp blast scatter these butterflies,  
And bring the men of iron to my side,  
With whom a king feels like a king indeed !

*Voices within.* Within there ! room for the Princess Es-  
trella !

*Enter ESTRELLA with Ladies.*

*Estrella.* Welcome, my Lord, right welcome to the  
throne  
That much too long has waited for your coming :  
And, in the general voice of Poland, hear  
A kinswoman and cousin's no less sincere.

*Seg.* Aye, this is welcome welcome-worth indeed,  
And cousin cousin-worth ! Oh, I have thus  
Over the threshold of the mountain seen,  
Leading a bevy of fair stars, the moon  
Enter the court of heav'n—My kinswoman !  
My cousin ! But my subject ?—

*Est.* If you please  
To count your cousin for your subject, sir,  
You shall not find her a disloyal.

*Seg.* Oh,

But there are twin stars in that heav'nly face,  
That now I know for having over-ruled  
Those evil ones that darken'd all my past,  
And brought me forth from that captivity  
To be the slave of her who set me free.

*Est.* Indeed, my Lord, these eyes have no such power  
Over the past or present : but perhaps  
They brighten at your welcome to supply  
The little that a lady's speech commends ;  
And in the hope that, let whichever be  
The other's subject, we may both be friends.

*Seg.* Your hand to that—But why does this warm hand  
Shoot a cold shudder through me ?

*Est.* In revenge  
For likening me to that cold moon, perhaps.

*Seg.* Oh, but the lip whose music tells me so  
Breathes of a warmer planet, and that lip  
Shall remedy the treason of the hand !

(*He catches to embrace her.*)

*Est.* Release me, sir !

*Chamb.* And pardon me, my Lord,  
This lady is a Princess absolute,  
As Prince he is who just saluted you,  
And claims her by affiance.

*Seg.* Hence, old fool,  
For ever thrusting that white stick of yours  
Between me and my pleasure !

*Ast.* This cause is mine.  
Forbear, sir—

*Seg.* What, sir mouth-piece, you again ?

*Ast.* My Lord, I waive your insult to myself  
In recognition of the dignity  
You yet are new to, and that greater still  
You look in time to wear. But for this lady—  
Whom, if my cousin now, I hope to claim  
Henceforth by yet a nearer, dearer name—

*Seg.* And what care I ? She is my cousin too :  
And if you be a Prince—well, am not I ?  
Lord of the very soil you stand upon ?

By that, and by that right beside of blood  
 That like a fiery fountain hitherto  
 Pent in the rock leaps toward her at her touch,  
 Mine, before all the cousins in Muscovy!  
 You call me Prince of Poland, and yourselves  
 My subjects—traitors therefore to this hour,  
 Who let me perish all my youth away  
 Chain'd there among the mountains; till, forsooth,  
 Terrified at your treachery foregone,  
 You spirit me up here, I know not how,  
 Popinjay-like invest me like yourselves,  
 Choke me with scent and music that I loathe,  
 And, worse than all the music and the scent,  
 With false, long-winded, fulsome compliment,  
 That "Oh, you are my subjects!" and in word  
 Reiterating still obedience,  
 Thwart me in deed at every step I take:  
 When just about to wreak a just revenge  
 Upon that old arch-traitor of you all,  
 Filch from my vengeance him I hate; and him  
 I loved—the first and only face—till this—  
 I cared to look on in your ugly court—  
 And now when palpably I grasp at last  
 What hitherto but shadow'd in my dreams—  
 Affiances and interferences,  
 The first who dares to meddle with me more—  
 Princes and chamberlains and counsellors,  
 Touch her who dares!—

*Ast.* That dare I—

*Seg.* (seizing him by the throat). You dare!

*Chamb.* My Lord!—

*A Lord.* His strength 's a lion's—

*Voices within.* The King! The King!—

*Enter KING.*

*A Lord.* And on a sudden how he stands at gaze,  
 As might a wolf just fasten'd on his prey,  
 Glaring at a suddenly encounter'd lion.

*King.* And I that hither flew with open arms

To fold them round my son, must now return  
To press them to an empty heart again!

(*He sits on the throne.*)

*Seg.* That is the King?—My father?—

(*After a long pause.*)

I have heard

That sometimes some blind instinct has been known  
To draw to mutual recognition those  
Of the same blood, beyond all memory  
Divided, or ev'n never met before.

I know not how this is—perhaps in brutes  
That live by kindlier instincts—but I know  
That looking now upon that head whose crown  
Pronounces him a sovereign king, I feel  
No setting of the current in my blood  
Tow'rd him as sire. How is 't with you, old man,  
Tow'rd him they call your son?—

*King.*

Alas! Alas!

*Seg.* Your sorrow, then?

*King.*

Beholding what I do.

*Seg.* Aye, but how know this sorrow, that has grown  
And moulded to this present shape of man,  
As of your own creation?

*King.*

Ev'n from birth.

*Seg.* But from that hour to this, near, as I think,  
Some twenty such renewals of the year  
As trace themselves upon the barren rocks,  
I never saw you, nor you me—unless,  
Unless, indeed, through one of those dark masks  
Through which a son might fail to recognize  
The best of fathers?

*King.*

Be that as you will:

But, now we see each other face to face,  
Know me as you I know; which did I not,  
By whatsoever signs, assuredly  
You were not here to prove it at my risk.

*Seg.* You are my father.

And is it true then, as Clotaldo swears,  
'Twas you that from the dawning birth of one  
Yourself brought into being,—you, I say,

Who stole his very birthright ; not alone  
That secondary and peculiar right  
Of sovereignty, but even that prime  
Inheritance that all men share alike,  
And chain'd him—chain'd him!—like a wild beast's  
whelp,  
Among as savage mountains, to this hour?  
Answer if this be thus.

*King.* Oh, Segismund,  
In all that I have done that seems to you,  
And, without further hearing, fairly seems,  
Unnatural and cruel—'twas not I,  
But One who writes His order in the sky,  
I dared not misinterpret nor neglect,  
Who knows with what reluctance—

*Seg.* Oh, those stars,  
Those stars, that too far up from human blame  
To clear themselves, or careless of the charge,  
Still bear upon their shining shoulders all  
The guilt men shift upon them!

*King.* Nay, but think :  
Not only on the common score of kind,  
But that peculiar count of sovereignty—  
If not behind the beast in brain as heart,  
How should I thus deal with my innocent child,  
Doubly desired, and doubly dear when come,  
As that sweet second-self that all desire,  
And princes more than all, to root themselves  
By that succession in their people's hearts?  
Unless at that superior Will, to which  
Not kings alone, but sovereign nature bows.

*Seg.* And what had those same stars to tell of me  
That should compel a father and a king  
So much against that double instinct?

*King.* That,  
Which I have brought you hither, at my peril,  
Against their written warning, to disprove,  
By justice, mercy, human kindness.

*Seg.* And therefore made yourself their instrument

To make your son the savage and the brute  
 They only prophesied?—Are you not afraid,  
 Lest, irrespective as such creatures are  
 Of such relationship, the brute you made  
 Revenge the man you marr'd—like sire, like son,  
 To do by you as you by me have done?

*King.* You never had a savage heart from me;  
 I may appeal to Poland.

*Seg.* Then from whom?  
 If pure in fountain, poison'd by yourself  
 When scarce begun to flow.—To make a man  
 Not, as I see, degraded from the mould  
 I came from, nor compared to those about,  
 And then to throw your own flesh to the dogs!—  
 Why not at once, I say, if terrified  
 At the prophetic omens of my birth,  
 Have drown'd or stifled me, as they do whelps  
 Too costly or too dangerous to keep?

*King.* That, living, you might learn to live, and rule  
 Yourself and Poland.

*Seg.* By the means you took  
 To spoil for either?

*King.* Nay, but, Segismund!  
 You know not—cannot know—happily wanting  
 The sad experience on which knowledge grows,  
 How the too early consciousness of power  
 Spoils the best blood; nor whether for your long-  
 Constrain'd disheritance (which, but for me,  
 Remember, and for my relenting love  
 Bursting the bond of fate, had been eternal)  
 You have not now a full indemnity;  
 Wearing the blossom of your youth unspent  
 In the voluptuous sunshine of a court,  
 That often, by too early blossoming,  
 Too soon deflowers the rose of royalty.

*Seg.* Aye, but what some precocious warmth may spill,  
 May not an early frost as surely kill?

*King.* But, Segismund, my son, whose quick discourse  
 Proves I have not extinguish'd and destroy'd

The Man you charge me with extinguishing,  
 However it condemn me for the fault  
 Of keeping a good light so long eclips'd,  
 Reflect! This is the moment upon which  
 Those stars, whose eyes, although we see them not,  
 By day as well as night are on us still,  
 Hang watching up in the meridian heaven  
 Which way the balance turns; and if to you—  
 As by your dealing God decide it may,  
 To my confusion!—let me answer it  
 Unto yourself alone, who shall at once  
 Approve yourself to be your father's judge,  
 And sovereign of Poland in his stead,  
 By justice, mercy, self-sobriety,  
 And all the reasonable attributes  
 Without which, impotent to rule himself,  
 Others one cannot, and one must not rule;  
 But which if you but show the blossom of—  
 All that is past we shall but look upon  
 As the first out-fling of a generous nature  
 Rioting in first liberty; and if  
 This blossom do but promise such a flower  
 As promises in turn its kindly fruit:  
 Forthwith upon your brows the royal crown,  
 That now weighs heavy on my aged brows,  
 I will devolve; and while I pass away  
 Into some cloister, with my Maker there  
 To make my peace in penitence and prayer,  
 Happily settle the disorder'd realm  
 That now cries loudly for a lineal heir.

*Seg.* And so—

When the crown falters on your shaking head,  
 And slips the sceptre from your palsied hand,  
 And Poland for her rightful heir cries out;  
 When not only your stol'n monopoly  
 Fails you of earthly power, but 'cross the grave  
 The judgment-trumpet of another world  
 Calls you to count for your abuse of this;  
 Then, oh then, terrified by the double danger,



You drag me from my den—  
 Boast not of giving up at last the power  
 You can no longer hold, and never rightly  
 Held, but in fee for him you robb'd it from ;  
 And be assured your Savage, once let loose,  
 Will not be caged again so quickly ; not  
 By threat or adulation to be tamed,  
 Till he have had his quarrel out with those  
 Who made him what he is.

*King.* Beware ! Beware !  
 Subdue the kindled Tiger in your eye,  
 Nor dream that it was sheer necessity  
 Made me thus far relax the bond of fate,  
 And, with far more of terror than of hope  
 Threaten myself, my people, and the State.  
 Know that, if old, I yet have vigour left  
 To wield the sword as well as wear the crown ;  
 And if my more immediate issue fail,  
 Not wanting scions of collateral blood,  
 Whose wholesome growth shall more than compensate  
 For all the loss of a distorted stem.

*Seg.* That will I straightway bring to trial—Oh,  
 After a revelation such as this,  
 The Last Day shall have little left to show  
 Of righted wrong and villany requited !  
 Nay, Judgment now beginning upon earth,  
 Myself, methinks, in right of all my wrongs,  
 Appointed heav'n's avenging minister,  
 Accuser, judge, and executioner,  
 Sword in hand, cite the guilty—First, as worst,  
 The usurper of his son's inheritance ;  
 Him and his old accomplice, time and crime  
 Inveterate, and unable to repay  
 The golden years of life they stole away.  
 What, does he yet maintain his state, and keep  
 The throne he should be judged from ? Down with him,  
 That I may trample on the false white head  
 So long has worn my crown ! Where are my soldiers ?  
 Of all my subjects and my vassals here

Not one to do my bidding? Hark! A trumpet!  
The trumpet—

*(He pauses as the trumpet sounds as in Act I.,  
and masked Soldiers gradually fill in behind  
the Throne.)*

*King (rising before his throne).* Aye, indeed, the trumpet blows

A memorable note, to summon those  
Who, if forthwith you fall not at the feet  
Of him whose head you threaten with the dust,  
Forthwith shall draw the curtain of the Past  
About you; and this momentary gleam  
Of glory, that you think to hold life-fast,  
So coming, so shall vanish, as a dream.

*Seg.* He prophesies; the old man prophesies;  
And, at his trumpet's summons, from the tower  
The leash-bound shadows loosen'd after me  
My rising glory reach and over-lour—  
But, reach not I my height, he shall not hold,  
But with me back to his own darkness!

*(He dashes toward the throne and is enclosed by  
the soldiers.)*

Traitors!

Hold off! Unhand me!—Am not I your king?  
And you would strangle him!—  
But I am breaking with an inward Fire  
Shall scorch you off, and wrap me on the wings  
Of conflagration from a kindled pyre  
Of lying prophecies and prophet-kings  
Above the extinguisht stars—Reach me the sword  
He flung me—Fill me such a bowl of wine  
As that you woke the day with—

*King.* And shall close,—

But of the vintage that Clotaldo knows.

## ACT III.

SCENE I. *The Tower, &c., as in SCENE I., ACT I.*  
 SEGISMUND, *as at first, and* CLOTALDO.

*Clotaldo.* Princes and princesses, and counsellors,  
 Fluster'd to right and left—my life made at—  
 But that was nothing—  
 Even the white-hair'd, venerable King  
 Seized on—Indeed, you made wild work of it;  
 And so discover'd in your outward action,  
 Flinging your arms about you in your sleep,  
 Grinding your teeth—and, as I now remember,  
 Woke mouthing out judgment and execution,  
 On those about you.

*Seg.* Aye, I did indeed.

*Clo.* Ev'n now your eyes stare wild; your hair stands  
 up—  
 Your pulses throb and flutter, reeling still  
 Under the storm of such a dream—

*Seg.* A dream!  
 That seem'd as swearable reality  
 As what I wake in now.

*Clo.* Aye—wondrous how  
 Imagination in a sleeping brain  
 Out of the uncontingent senses draws  
 Sensations strong as from the real touch;  
 That we not only laugh aloud, and drench  
 With tears our pillow; but in the agony  
 Of some imaginary conflict, fight  
 And struggle—ev'n as you did; some, 'tis thought,  
 Under the dreamt-of stroke of death have died.

*Seg.* And what so very strange too—In that world  
 Where place as well as people all was strange,  
 Ev'n I almost as strange unto myself,  
 You only, you, Clotaldo—you, as much  
 And palpably yourself as now you are,  
 Came in this very garb you ever wore,

By such a token of the past, you said,  
To assure me of that seeming present.

*Clo.* Aye?

*Seg.* Aye; and even told me of the very stars  
You tell me here of—how in spite of them,  
I was enlarged to all that glory.

*Clo.* Aye,  
By the false spirits' nice contrivance thus  
A little truth oft leavens all the false,  
The better to delude us.

*Seg.* For you know  
'Tis nothing but a dream?

*Clo.* Nay, you yourself  
Know best how lately you awoke from that  
You know you went to sleep on?—  
Why, have you never dreamt the like before?

*Seg.* Never, to such reality.

*Clo.* Such dreams  
Are oftentimes the sleeping exhalations  
Of that ambition that lies smouldering  
Under the ashes of the lowest fortune;  
By which, when reason slumbers, or has lost  
The reins of sensible comparison,  
We fly at something higher than we are—  
Scarce ever dive to lower—to be kings,  
Or conquerors, crown'd with laurel or with gold,  
Nay, mounting heav'n itself on eagle wings.  
Which, by the way, now that I think of it,  
May furnish us the key to this high flight—  
That royal Eagle we were watching, and  
Talking of as you went to sleep last night.

*Seg.* Last night? Last night?

*Clo.* Aye, do you not remember  
Envyng his immunity of flight,  
As, rising from his throne of rock, he sail'd  
Above the mountains far into the West,  
That burn'd about him, while with poisoning wings  
He darkled in it as a burning brand  
Is seen to smoulder in the fire it feeds.

*Seg.* Last night—last night—Oh, what a day was that  
Between that last night and this sad To-day!

*Clo.* And yet, perhaps,  
Only some few dark moments, into which  
Imagination, once lit up within  
And unconditional of time and space,  
Can pour infinities.

*Seg.* And I remember  
How the old man they call'd the King, who wore  
The crown of gold about his silver hair,  
And a mysterious girdle round his waist,  
Just when my rage was roaring at its height,  
And after which it all was dark again,  
Bid me beware lest all should be a dream.

*Clo.* Aye—there another specialty of dreams,  
That once the dreamer 'gins to dream he dreams,  
His foot is on the very verge of waking.

*Seg.* Would it had been upon the verge of death  
That knows no waking—  
Lifting me up to glory, to fall back,  
Stunn'd, crippled—wretcheder than ev'n before.

*Clo.* Yet not so glorious, Segismund, if you  
Your visionary honour wore so ill  
As to work murder and revenge on those  
Who meant you well.

*Seg.* Who meant me!—me! their Prince  
Chain'd like a felon—

*Clo.* Stay, stay—Not so fast,  
You dream'd the Prince, remember.

*Seg.* Then in dream  
Revenge'd it only.

*Clo.* True. But as they say  
Dreams are rough copies of the waking soul  
Yet uncorrected of the higher Will,  
So that men sometimes in their dreams confess  
An unsuspected, or forgotten, self;  
One must beware to check—aye, if one may,  
Stifle ere born, such passion in ourselves  
As makes, we see, such havoc with our sleep,

And ill reacts upon the waking day.  
 And, by the bye, for one test, Segismund,  
 Between such swearable realities—  
 Since Dreaming, Madness, Passion, are akin  
 In missing each that salutary rein  
 Of reason, and the guiding will of man :  
 One test, I think, of waking sanity  
 Shall be that conscious power of self-control,  
 To curb all passion, but much most of all  
 That evil and vindictive, that ill squares  
 With human, and with holy canon less,  
 Which bids us pardon ev'n our enemies,  
 And much more those who, out of no ill will,  
 Mistakenly have taken up the rod  
 Which heav'n, they think, has put into their hands.

*Seg.* I think I soon shall have to try again—  
 Sleep has not yet done with me.

*Clo.* Such a sleep.

Take my advice—'tis early yet—the sun  
 Scarce up above the mountain ; go within,  
 And if the night deceived you, try anew  
 With morning ; morning dreams they say come true.

*Seg.* Oh, rather pray for me a sleep so fast  
 As shall obliterate dream and waking too.

*[Exit into the tower.]*

*Clo.* So sleep ; sleep fast : and sleep away those two  
 Night-potions, and the waking dream between  
 Which dream thou must believe ; and, if to see  
 Again, poor Segismund ! that dream must be.—  
 And yet, and yet, in these our ghostly lives,  
 Half night, half day, half sleeping, half awake,  
 How if our waking life, like that of sleep,  
 Be all a dream in that eternal life  
 To which we wake not till we sleep in death ?  
 How if, I say, the senses we now trust  
 For date of sensible comparison,—  
 Aye, ev'n the Reason's self that dates with them,  
 Should be in essence or intensity  
 Hereafter so transcended, and awoke

To a perceptive subtlety so keen  
 As to confess themselves befool'd before,  
 In all that now they will avouch for most?  
 One man—like this—but only so much longer  
 As life is longer than a summer's day,  
 Believed himself a king upon his throne,  
 And play'd at hazard with his fellows' lives,  
 Who cheaply dreamt away their lives to him.  
 The sailor dream'd of tossing on the flood:  
 The soldier of his laurels grown in blood:  
 The lover of the beauty that he knew  
 Must yet dissolve to dusty residue:  
 The merchant and the miser of his bags  
 Of finger'd gold; the beggar of his rags:  
 And all this stage of earth on which we seem  
 Such busy actors, and the parts we play'd,  
 Substantial as the shadow of a shade,  
 And Dreaming but a dream within a dream!

*Fife.* Was it not said, sir,

By some philosopher as yet unborn,  
 That any chimney-sweep who for twelve hours  
 Dreams himself king is happy as the king  
 Who dreams himself twelve hours a chimney-sweep?

*Clo.* A theme indeed for wiser heads than yours  
 To moralize upon—How came you here?—

*Fife.* Not of my own will, I assure you, sir.  
 No matter for myself: but I would know  
 About my mistress—I mean, master—

*Clo.* Oh,  
 Now I remember—Well, your master-mistress  
 Is well, and deftly on its errand speeds,  
 As you shall—if you can but hold your tongue.  
 Can you?

*Fife.* I'd rather be at home again.

*Clo.* Where you shall be the quicker if while here  
 You can keep silence.

*Fife.* I may whistle, then?  
 Which by the virtue of my name I do,  
 And also as a reasonable test

Of waking sanity—

*Clo.* Well, whistle then ;  
And for another reason you forgot,  
That while you whistle, you can chatter not.  
Only remember—if you quit this pass—

*Fife.* (His rhymes are out, or he had call'd it spot)—

*Clo.* A bullet brings you to.  
I must forthwith to court to tell the King  
The issue of this lamentable day,  
That buries all his hope in night. (*To Fife.*) Farewell.  
Remember.

*Fife.* But a moment—but a word !  
When shall I see my mis—mas—

*Clo.* Be content :  
All in good time ; and then, and not before,  
Never to miss your master any more.

[*Exit.*

*Fife.* Such talk of dreaming—dreaming—I begin  
To doubt if I be dreaming I am Fife,  
Who with a lad who call'd herself a boy  
Because—I doubt there's some confusion here—  
He wore no petticoat, came on a time  
Riding from Muscovy on half a horse,  
Who must have dreamt she was a horse entire,  
To cant me off upon my hinder face  
Under this tower, wall-eyed and musket-tongued,  
With sentinels, that pacing up and down,  
Crying All's well when all is far from well,  
All the day long, and all the night, until  
I dream—if what is dreaming be not waking—  
Of bells a-tolling and processions rolling  
With candles, crosses, banners, San-benitos,  
Of which I wear the flamy-finingest,  
Through streets and places throng'd with fiery faces  
To some black platform—  
Oh, I shall take a fire into my hand  
With thinking of my own dear Muscovy—  
Only just over that Sierra there,  
By which we tumbled headlong into—No-land.  
Now, if without a bullet after me,



I could but get a peep of my old home—  
 Perhaps of my own mule to take me there—  
 All's still—perhaps the gentlemen within  
 Are dreaming it is night behind their masks—  
 God send 'em a good nightmare!—Now then—Hark!  
 Voices—and up the rocks—and armèd men  
 Climbing like cats—Puss in the corner then. [*He hides.*]

*Enter SOLDIERS cautiously up the rocks.*

*Captain.* This is the frontier pass, at any rate,  
 Where Poland ends and Muscovy begins.

*Soldier.* We must be close upon the tower, I know,  
 That half way up the mountain lies ensconced.

*Capt.* How know you that?

*Sol.* He told me so—the Page  
 Who put us on the scent.

*Sol. 2.* And, as I think,  
 Will soon be here to run it down with us.

*Capt.* Meantime, our horses on these ugly rocks  
 Useless, and worse than useless with their clatter—  
 Leave them behind, with one or two in charge,  
 And softly, softly, softly.

*Soldiers.*

— There it is!  
 — There what?—  
 — The tower—the fortress—  
 — That the tower!—  
 — That mouse-trap! We could pitch it down the  
 rocks

With our own hands.

The rocks it hangs among  
 Dwarf its proportions and conceal its strength;  
 Larger and stronger than you think.

— No matter;  
 No place for Poland's Prince to be shut up in.  
 At it at once!

*Capt.* No—no—I tell you wait—  
 Till those within give signal. For as yet  
 We know not who side with us, and the fort

Is strong in man and musket.

*Sol.* Shame to wait  
For odds with such a cause at stake.

*Capt.* Because  
Of such a cause at stake we wait for odds—  
For if not won at once, for ever lost :  
For any long resistance on their part  
Would bring Basilio's force to succour them  
Ere we had rescued him we come to rescue.  
So softly, softly, softly, still—

*A Soldier (discovering Fife).* Hilloa !

*Soldiers.*

{ — Hilloa ! Here's some one skulking—  
— Seize and gag him !  
— Stab him at once, say I : the only way  
To make all sure.  
— Hold, every man of you !  
And down upon your knees !—Why, 'tis the Prince !  
— The Prince !—  
— Oh, I should know him anywhere,  
And anyhow disguised.  
— But the Prince is chain'd.  
— And of a loftier presence—  
— 'Tis he, I tell you ;  
Only bewilder'd as he was before.  
God save your Royal Highness ! On our knees  
Beseech you answer us !

*Fife.* Just as you please.  
Well—'tis this country's custom, I suppose,  
To take a poor man every now and then  
And set him on the throne ; just for the fun  
Of tumbling him again into the dirt.  
And now my turn is come. 'Tis very pretty.

*Sol.* His wits have been distemper'd with their drugs.  
But do you ask him, Captain.

*Capt.* On my knees,  
And in the name of all who kneel with me,  
I do beseech your Highness answer to

Your royal title.

*Fife.* Still, just as you please.  
 In my own poor opinion of myself—  
 But that may all be dreaming, which it seems  
 Is very much the fashion in this country—  
 No Polish prince at all, but a poor lad  
 From Muscovy; where only help me back,  
 I promise never to contest the crown  
 Of Poland with whatever gentleman  
 You fancy to set up.

*Soldiers.*

{	—	From Muscovy?	
	—	A spy then—	
	—	Of Astolfo's—	
	—		Spy! a spy!—
	—	Hang him at once!	

*Fife.* No, pray don't dream of that!

*Sol.* How dared you then set yourself up for our  
 Prince Segismund?

*Fife.* I set up!—I like that—  
 When 'twas yourselves be-siegesminded me.

*Capt.* No matter—Look!—The signal from the tower.  
 Prince Segismund!

*Sol. (from the tower).* Prince Segismund!

*Capt.* All's well.  
 Clotaldo safe secured?—

*Sol. (from the tower).* No—by ill luck,  
 Instead of coming in, as we had look'd for,  
 He sprang on horse at once, and off at gallop.

*Capt.* To Court, no doubt—a blunder that—And yet  
 Perchance a blunder that may work as well  
 As better forethought. Having no suspicion,  
 So will he carry none where his not going  
 Were of itself suspicious. But of those  
 Within, who side with us?

*Sol.* Oh, one and all  
 To the last man, persuaded or compell'd.

*Capt.* Enough: whatever be to be retrieved,  
 No moment to be lost. For though Clotaldo

Have no revolt to tell of in the tower,  
 The capital will soon awake to ours,  
 And the King's force come blazing after us.  
 Where is the Prince ?

*Sol.* Within ; so fast asleep  
 We woke him not ev'n striking off the chain  
 We had so cursedly help bind him with,  
 Not knowing what we did ; but too ashamed  
 Not to undo ourselves what we had done.

*Capt.* No matter, nor by whosoever hands,  
 Provided done. Come ; we will bring him forth  
 Out of that stony darkness here abroad,  
 Where air and sunshine sooner shall disperse  
 The sleepy fume which they have drugg'd him with.

*(They enter the tower, and thence bring out SEGISMUND asleep on a pallet, and set him in the middle of the stage.)*

*Capt.* Still, still so dead asleep, the very noise  
 And motion that we make in carrying him  
 Stirs not a leaf in all the living tree.

*Soldiers.*

{ If living—But if by some inward blow  
 For ever and irrevocably fell'd  
 By what strikes deeper to the root than sleep ?  
 — He's dead ! He's dead ! They've killed him—  
 — No—he breathes—  
 And the heart beats—and now he breathes again  
 Deeply, as one about to shake away  
 The load of sleep.

*Capt.* Come, let us all kneel round,  
 And with a blast of warlike instruments,  
 And acclamation of all loyal hearts,  
 Rouse and restore him to his royal right,  
 From which no royal wrong shall drive him more.

*(They all kneel round his bed : trumpets, drums, &c.)*

*Soldiers.* { Segismund ! Segismund ! Prince Segismund !  
 King Segismund ! Down with Basilio !  
 Down with Astolfo ! Segismund our King ! &c.

*Soldier* 1. He stares upon us wildly. He cannot speak.

— 2. I said so—driv'n him mad.

— 3. Speak to him, Captain.

*Capt.* Oh Royal Segismund, our Prince and King,  
 Look on us—listen to us—answer us,  
 Your faithful soldiery and subjects, now  
 About you kneeling, but on fire to rise  
 And cleave a passage through your enemies,  
 Until we seat you on your lawful throne.  
 For though your father, King Basilio,  
 Now King of Poland, jealous of the stars  
 That prophesy his setting with your rise,  
 Here holds you ignominiously eclips'd,  
 And would Astolfo, Duke of Muscovy,  
 Mount to the throne of Poland after him;  
 So will not we, your loyal soldiery  
 And subjects; neither those of us now first  
 Apprised of your existence and your right:  
 Nor those that hitherto deluded by  
 Allegiance false, their vizors now fling down,  
 And craving pardon on their knees with us  
 For that unconscious disloyalty,  
 Offer with us the service of their blood;  
 Not only we and they; but at our heels  
 The heart, if not the bulk, of Poland follows  
 To join their voices and their arms with ours,  
 In vindicating with our lives our own  
 Prince Segismund to Poland and her throne.

*Soldiers.* { Segismund, Segismund, Prince Segismund!  
 Our own King Segismund, &c.

(*They all rise.*)

*Seg.* Again? So soon?—What, not yet done with me?

The sun is little higher up, I think,  
 Than when I last lay down,  
 To bury in the depth of your own sea  
 You that infest its shallows.

*Capt.*

Sir!

*Seg.*

And now,

Not in a palace, not in the fine clothes  
 We all were in ; but here, in the old place,  
 And in our old accoutrement—  
 Only your vizors off, and lips unlockt  
 To mock me with that idle title—

*Capt.* Nay,

Indeed no idle title, but your own,  
 Then, now, and now for ever. For, behold,  
 Ev'n as I speak, the mountain passes fill  
 And bristle with the advancing soldiery  
 That glitters in your rising glory, sir ;  
 And, at our signal, echo to our cry,  
 "Segismund, King of Poland!" &c. (*Shouts, trumpets, &c.*)

*Seg.* Oh, how cheap

The muster of a countless host of shadows,  
 As impotent to do with as to keep !  
 All this they said before—to softer music.

*Capt.* Soft music, sir, to what indeed were shadows,  
 That, following the sunshine of a Court,  
 Shall back be brought with it—if shadows still,  
 Yet to substantial reckoning.

*Seg.* They shall ?

The white-hair'd and white-wanded chamberlain,  
 So busy with his wand too—the old King  
 That I was somewhat hard on—he had been  
 Hard upon me—and the fine-feather'd Prince  
 Who crow'd so loud—my cousin,—and another,  
 Another cousin, we will not bear hard on—  
 And—But Clotaldo ?

*Capt.* Fled, my Lord, but close  
 Pursued ; and then—

*Seg.* Then, as he fled before,  
 And after he had sworn it on his knees,  
 Came back to take me—where I am !—No more,  
 No more of this ! Away with you ! Begone !  
 Whether but visions of ambitious night  
 That morning ought to scatter, or grown out  
 Of night's proportions you invade the day  
 To scare me from my little wits yet left,

Begone! I know I must be near awake,  
 Knowing I dream; or, if not at my voice,  
 Then vanish at the clapping of my hands,  
 Or take this foolish fellow for your sport:  
 Dressing me up in visionary glories,  
 Which the first air of waking consciousness  
 Scatters as fast as from the almander\*—  
 That, waking one fine morning in full flower,  
 One rougher insurrection of the breeze  
 Of all her sudden honour disadorns  
 To the last blossom, and she stands again  
 The winter-naked scare-crow that she was!

*Capt.* I know not what to do, nor what to say,  
 With all this dreaming; I begin to doubt  
 They have driv'n him mad indeed, and he and we  
 Are lost together.

*A Soldier (to Captain).* Stay, stay; I remember—  
 Hark in your ear a moment. (*Whispers.*)

*Capt.* So—so—so?—  
 Oh, now indeed I do not wonder, sir,  
 Your senses dazzle under practices  
 Which treason, shrinking from its own device,  
 Would now persuade you only was a dream;  
 But waking was as absolute as this  
 You wake in now, as some who saw you then,  
 Prince as you were and are, can testify:  
 Not only saw, but under false allegiance  
 Laid hands upon—

*Soldier 1.* I, to my shame!

*Soldier 2.* And I!

*Capt.* Who, to wipe out that shame, have been the  
 first  
 To stir and lead us—Hark! (*Shouts, trumpets, &c.*)

*A Soldier.* Our forces, sir,  
 Challenging King Basilio's, now in sight,  
 And bearing down upon us.

*Capt.* Sir, you hear;

\* Almander, or almandre, Chaucer's word for *almond-tree*,  
 Rom. Rose, 1363.

A little hesitation and delay,  
 And all is lost—your own right, and the lives  
 Of those who now maintain it at that cost ;  
 With you all saved and won ; without, all lost.  
 That former recognition of your right  
 Grant but a dream, if you will have it so ;  
 Great things forecast themselves by shadows great :  
 Or will you have it, this like that dream too,  
 People, and place, and time itself, all dream—  
 Yet, being in't, and as the shadows come  
 Quicker and thicker than you can escape,  
 Adopt your visionary soldiery,  
 Who, having struck a solid chain away,  
 Now put an airy sword into your hand,  
 And harnessing you piece-meal till you stand  
 Amidst us all complete in glittering,  
 If unsubstantial, steel—

*Rosaura* (*without*). The Prince ! The Prince !

*Capt.* Who calls for him ?

*Sol.* The Page who spurr'd us hither,

And now, dismounted from a foaming horse—

*Enter ROSAURA.*

*Rosaura.* Where is—but where I need no further ask,  
 Where the majestic presence, all in arms,  
 Mutely proclaims and vindicates himself.

*Fife.* My darling Lady-lord—

*Ros.* My own good Fife,

Keep to my side—and silence !—Oh, my Lord,  
 For the third time behold me here where first  
 You saw me, by a happy misadventure  
 Losing my own way here to find it out  
 For you to follow with these loyal men,  
 Adding the moment of my little cause  
 To yours ; which, so much mightier as it is,  
 By a strange chance runs hand in hand with mine ;  
 The self-same foe who now pretends your right,  
 Withholding mine—that, of itself alone,  
 I know the royal blood that runs in you



Would vindicate, regardless of your own :  
 The right of injured innocence ; and, more,  
 Spite of this epicene attire, a woman's ;  
 And of a noble stock I will not name  
 Till I, who brought it, have retrieved the shame.

Whom Duke Astolfo, Prince of Muscovy,  
 With all the solemn vows of wedlock won,  
 And would have wedded, as I do believe,  
 Had not the cry of Poland for a Prince  
 Call'd him from Muscovy to join the prize  
 Of Poland with the fair Estrella's eyes.

I, following him hither, as you saw,  
 Was cast upon these rocks ; arrested by  
 Clotaldo : who, for an old debt of love  
 He owes my family, with all his might  
 Served, and had served me further, till my cause  
 Clash'd with his duty to his sovereign,  
 Which, as became a loyal subject, sir,  
 (And never sovereign had a loyaller,)  
 Was still his first. He carried me to Court,  
 Where, for the second time, I cross'd your path ;  
 Where, as I watch'd my opportunity,  
 Suddenly broke this public passion out ;  
 Which, drowning private into public wrong,  
 Yet swiftness sweeps it to revenge along.

*Seg.* Oh God, if this be dreaming, charge it not  
 To burst the channel of enclosing sleep  
 And drown the waking reason ! Not to dream  
 Only what dreamt shall once or twice again  
 Return to buzz about the sleeping brain  
 Till shaken off for ever—

But reassailing one so quick, so thick—  
 The very figure and the circumstance  
 Of sense-confest reality foregone  
 In so-call'd dream so palpably repeated,  
 The copy so like the original,  
 We know not which is which ; and dream so-call'd  
 Itself inweaving so inextricably  
 Into the tissue of acknowledged truth ;

The very figures that empeople it  
 Returning to assert themselves no phantoms  
 In something so much like meridian day,  
 And in the very place that not my worst  
 And veriest disenchanter shall deny  
 For the too well-remember'd theatre  
 Of my long tragedy—Strike up the drums!  
 If this be Truth, and all of us awake,  
 Indeed a famous quarrel is at stake:  
 If but a Vision I will see it out,  
 And, drive the Dream, I can but join the rout.

*Capt.* And in good time, sir, for a palpable  
 Touchstone of truth and rightful vengeance too,  
 Here is Clotaldo taken.

*Soldiers.* In with him!

In with the traitor! (*Clotaldo brought in.*)

*Seg.* Aye, Clotaldo, indeed—  
 Himself—in his old habit—his old self—  
 What! back again, Clotaldo, for awhile  
 To swear me this for truth, and afterwards  
 All for a dreaming lie?

*Clo.* Awake or dreaming,  
 Down with that sword, and down these traitors theirs,  
 Drawn in rebellion 'gainst their Sovereign.

*Seg* (*about to strike*). Traitor! Traitor yourself!—But  
 soft—soft—soft!—

You told me, not so very long ago,  
 Awake or dreaming—I forget—my brain  
 Is not so clear about it—but I know  
 One test you gave me to discern between,  
 Which mad and dreaming people cannot master;  
 Or if the dreamer could, so best secure  
 A comfortable waking—Was't not so?—  
 (*To Rosaura*). Needs not your intercession now, you see,  
 As in the dream before—  
 Clotaldo, rough old nurse and tutor too  
 That only traitor wer't, to me if true—  
 Give him his sword; set him on a fresh horse;  
 Conduct him safely through my rebel force;

And so God speed him to his sovereign's side!  
 Give me your hand; and whether all awake  
 Or all a-dreaming, ride, Clotaldo, ride—  
 Dream-swift—for fear we dreams should overtake.

*(A Battle may be supposed to take place; after which)*

SCENE II. *A wooded pass near the field of battle: drums, trumpets, firing, &c. Cries of "God save Basilio! Segismund," &c. Enter FIFE running.*

*Fife.* God save them both, and save them all! say I!—  
 Oh—what hot work!—Whichever way one turns  
 The whistling bullet at one's ears—I've drifted  
 Far from my mad young—master—whom I saw  
 Tossing upon the very crest of battle,  
 Beside the Prince—God save her first of all!  
 With all my heart I say and pray—and so  
 Commend her to His keeping—bang!—bang!—bang!—  
 And for myself—scarce worth His thinking of—  
 I'll see what I can do to save myself  
 Behind this rock, until the storm blows over.

*(Skirmishes, shouts, firing, &c. After some time enter KING BASILIO, ASTOLFO, and CLOTALDO.)*

*King.* The day is lost!

*Ast.* Do not despair—the rebels—

*King.* Alas! the vanquish't only are the rebels.

*Clotaldo.* Ev'n if this battle lost us, 'tis but one  
 Gain'd on their side, if you not lost in it;  
 Another moment and too late: at once  
 Take horse, and to the capital, my liege,  
 Where in some safe and holy sanctuary  
 Save Poland in your person.

*Ast.* Be persuaded:

You know your son: have tasted of his temper;  
 At his first onset threatening unprovoked  
 The crime predicted for his last and worst.  
 How whetted now with such a taste of blood,  
 And thus far conquest!

*King.* Aye, and how he fought!

Oh how he fought, Astolfo ; ranks of men  
 Falling as swathes of grass before the mower ;  
 I could but pause to gaze at him, although,  
 Like the pale horseman of the Apocalypse,  
 Each moment brought him nearer—Yet I say,  
 I could but pause and gaze on him, and pray  
 Poland had such a warrior for her king.

*Ast.* The cry of triumph upon the other side  
 Gains ground upon us here—there's but a moment  
 For you, my liege, to do, for me to speak,  
 Who back must to the field, and what man may,  
 Do, to retrieve the fortune of the day. (*Firing.*)

*Fife* (*falling forward, shot*). Oh, Lord, have mercy on me.

*King.* What a shriek—

Oh, some poor creature wounded in a cause  
 Perhaps not worth the loss of one poor life!—  
 So young too—and no soldier—

*Fife.* A poor lad,  
 Who choosing play at hide and seek with death,  
 Just hid where death just came to look for him ;  
 For there's no place, I think, can keep him out,  
 Once he's his eye upon you. All grows dark—  
 You glitter finely too—Well—we are dreaming—  
 But when the bullet 's off—Heav'n save the mark !  
 So tell my mister—mastress— (*Dies.*)

*King.* Oh God ! How this poor creature's ignorance  
 Confounds our so-call'd wisdom ! Even now  
 When death has stopt his lips, the wound through which  
 His soul went out, still with its bloody tongue  
 Preaching how vain our struggle against fate !

(*Voices within*). After them ! After them ! This way !

This way !

The day is ours—Down with Basilio, &c.

*Ast.* Fly, sir—

*King.* And slave-like flying not out-ride  
 The fate which better like a King abide !

*Enter* SEGISMUND, ROSAURA, SOLDIERS, &c.

*Segismund.* Where is the King ?

*King (prostrating himself).* Behold him,—by this  
late

Anticipation of resistless fate,  
Thus underneath your feet his golden crown,  
And the white head that wears it, laying down,  
His fond resistance hope to expiate.

*Segismund.* Princes and warriors of Poland—you  
That stare on this unnatural sight aghast,  
Listen to one who, Heav'n-inspired to do  
What in its secret wisdom Heav'n forecast,  
By that same Heav'n instructed prophet-wise  
To justify the present in the past.

What in the sapphire volume of the skies  
Is writ by God's own finger misleads none,  
But him whose vain and misinstructed eyes,  
They mock with misinterpretation,  
Or who, mistaking what he rightly read,  
Ill commentary makes, or misapplies  
Thinking to shirk or thwart it. Which has done  
The wisdom of this venerable head ;

Who, well provided with the secret key  
To that gold alphabet, himself made me,  
Himself, I say, the savage he fore-read  
Fate somehow should be charged with ; nipp'd the  
growth

Of better nature in constraint and sloth,  
That only bring to bear the seed of wrong,  
And turn'd the stream to fury whose out-burst  
Had kept his lawful channel uncoerced,  
And fertilized the land he flow'd along.  
Then like to some unskilful duellist,  
Who having over-reach'd himself pushing too hard  
His foe, or but a moment off his guard—  
What odds, when Fate is one's antagonist !—  
Nay, more, this royal father, self-dismay'd  
At having Fate against himself array'd,  
Upon himself the very sword he knew  
Should wound him, down upon his bosom drew,

That might well handled, well have wrought ; or, kept  
 Undrawn, have harmless in the scabbard slept.  
 But Fate shall not by human force be broke,  
 Nor foil'd by human feint ; the Secret learn'd  
 Against the scholar by that master turn'd  
 Who to himself reserves the master-stroke.  
 Witness whereof this venerable Age,  
 Thrice crown'd as Sire, and Sovereign, and Sage,  
 Down to the very dust dishonour'd by  
 The very means he tempted to defy  
 The irresistible. And shall not I,  
 Till now the mere dumb instrument that wrought  
 The battle Fate has with my father fought,  
 Now the mere mouth-piece of its victory—  
 Oh, shall not I, the champion's sword laid down,  
 Be yet more shamed to wear the teacher's gown,  
 And, blushing at the part I had to play,  
 Down where that honour'd head I was to lay  
 By this more just submission of my own,  
 The treason Fate has forced on me atone !

*King.* Oh, Segismund, in whom I see indeed,  
 Out of the ashes of my self-extinction  
 A better self revive ; if not beneath  
 Your feet, beneath your better wisdom bow'd,  
 The Sovereignty of Poland I resign,  
 With this its golden symbol ; which if thus  
 Saved with its silver head inviolate,  
 Shall nevermore be subject to decline ;  
 But when the head that it alights on now  
 Falls honour'd by the very foe that must,  
 As all things mortal, lay it in the dust,  
 Shall star-like shift to his successor's brow.

*Shouts, trumpets, &c.* God save King Segismund !

*Seg.* For what remains—

As for my own, so for my people's peace,  
 Astolfo's and Estrella's plighted hands  
 I disunite, and taking hers to mine,  
 His to one yet more dearly his resign.

*Shouts, &c.* God save Estrella, Queen of Poland !

*Seg. (to Clotaldo).*

You

That with unflinching duty to your King,  
Till countermanded by the mightier Power,  
Have held your Prince a captive in the tower,  
Henceforth as strictly guard him on the throne,  
No less my people's keeper than my own.\*

You stare upon me all, amazed to hear  
The word of civil justice from such lips  
As never yet seem'd tuned to such discourse.  
But listen—In that same enchanted tower,  
Not long ago I learn'd it from a dream  
Expounded by this ancient prophet here ;  
And which he told me, should it come again,  
How I should bear myself beneath it ; not  
As then with angry passion all on fire,  
Arguing and making a distemper'd soul ;  
But ev'n with justice, mercy, self-control,  
As if the dream I walk'd in were no dream,  
And conscience one day to account for it.  
A dream it was in which I thought myself,  
And you that hail'd me now then hail'd me King,  
In a brave palace that was all my own,  
Within, and all without it, mine ; until,  
Drunk with excess of majesty and pride,  
Methought I tower'd so high and swell'd so wide,  
That of myself I burst the glittering bubble,  
That my ambition had about me blown,

\* In Calderon's drama, the Soldier who liberates Segismund meets with even worse recompense than in the version below. I suppose some such saving clause against prosperous treason was necessary in the days of Philip IV., if not later.

*Capt.* And what for him, my liege, who made you free  
To honour him who held you prisoner ?

*Seg.* By such self-proclamation self-betray'd  
Less to your Prince's service or your King's  
Loyal, than to the recompence it brings ;  
The tower he leaves I make you keeper of  
For life—and, mark you, not to leave alive ;  
For treason may, but not the traitor, thrive.

And all again was darkness. Such a dream  
 As this in which I may be walking now ;  
 Dispensing solemn justice to you shadows,  
 Who make believe to listen ; but anon,  
 With all your glittering arms and equipage,  
 King, princes, captains, warriors, plume and steel,  
 Aye, ev'n with all your airy theatre,  
 May flit into the air you seem to rend  
 With acclamation, leaving me to wake  
 In the dark tower ; or dreaming that I wake  
 From this that waking is ; or this and that  
 Both waking or both dreaming ; such a doubt  
 Confounds and clouds our mortal life about.  
 And, whether wake or dreaming ; this I know,  
 How dream-wise human glories come and go ;  
 Whose momentary tenure not to break,  
 Walking as one who knows he soon may wake,  
 So fairly carry the full cup, so well  
 Disorder'd insolence and passion quell,  
 That there be nothing after to upbraid  
 Dreamer or doer in the part he play'd,  
 Whether To-morrow's dawn shall break the spell,  
 Or the Last Trumpet of the eternal Day,  
 When Dreaming with the Night shall pass away.

THE END.



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